

On the Contributors

Hans-Joachim Backe holds a Master's degree in Comparative Literature, English and American Literature as well as a doctorate in Comparative Literature, both from Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany. His dissertation topic was "Structures and Functions of Narrative in Computer Games."

He currently is Associate Professor at the Center for Computer Games Research of IT University, Copenhagen. From 2008 to 2013, he was an Assistant Professor (Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter) at the Department of Comparative Literature of Ruhr University, Bochum. Before that, he worked as a lecturer at Saarland University.

He was co-recipient of the International Comparative Literature Association's Anna Balakian Memorial Award of 2010. He was chairperson of the ICLA Research Committee on Comparative Literature in the Digital Age and is a member of both the German Association for Comic Studies (ComFor e.V.) and the German Association for Media Studies' Research Group on Comic Studies. Besides comparative media studies with an emphasis on game and comic studies, his research interests include literary theory and 19th to 21st century literature.

Benjamin Beil graduated in media studies from the University of Siegen. In 2009, he received his doctorate on the topic of "First Person Perspectives – Point of View and Character-Centered Narrative Forms in Film and Video Games".

He is a Professor for Media Studies and Digital Culture at the Department of Media Culture and Theatre of the University of Cologne, Germany.

From 2011 to 2012, he was research assistant in the project "The Television Series as Reflection and Projection of Media Change" funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). From 2010 to 2011, he was a postdoc fellow of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation with the research project "Avatar Images – Avatar as Image. On the Pictoriality of Contemporary Video Games". From 2008 to 2010, he worked within the project "Virtualization of Sculpture: Reconstruction, Presentation, Installation" (DFG, University of Siegen).

His research interests include game studies, inter- and transmediality, television series, and participatory cultures.

Marc Bonner graduated in art history, history of the modern age and information science from Saarland University. In 2013, he received his doctorate on the topic of “Architecture of Distant Worlds – Santiago Calatrava’s Sculptural Understanding of Architecture and the Graphic Quality of his Buildings and Interdependency with Advertising, Film, Music, Computer Games and Fashion”.

He currently has a five-year research project on the topic of “*Open World Structures: Architecture, City- and Natural Landscape as well as Eco-Critical Implications in Computer Games*” funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) ending in 2022. From 2013 to 2017, he was lecturer at the Department of Media Culture and Theatre at University of Cologne. From 2009 to 2013, he was lecturer at Saarland University at the Institute for Art History and at a special BA division with the focus on European Studies. His research interests include history and theory of architecture of the 19th, 20th and 21st century as well as spatiotemporal depiction and use of architecture, cityscapes and natural landscapes in computer games and the architectonics of game space itself. In addition, he is also interested in filmic space, especially science-fiction films, and the eco-critical implications of open world games. Thus, he broaches the issue of transdisciplinary correlations between architecture, film, and computer games by including disciplines like urbanism, philosophy, landscape theory, and anthropogeography, among others.

Marcus Erbe is junior professor of sound studies at the University of Cologne, Germany. He holds a master’s degree in musicology, German studies and pedagogy and was a fellow of the collaborative research centre Media and Cultural Communication. His doctoral dissertation on the problem of transcribing electroacoustic music has been awarded the prize of the Offermann-Hergarten Foundation. Prior to his current position, he worked as lecturer in the field of contemporary music. In 2018, he was visiting professor at the University of Münster.

Continuing his studies on transgressive voices in various forms of art, he has recently begun a research project with the Grimme Institute on the cultural implications of voices constructed in and through media. Other fields of investigation include audio-visibility, game studies, acoustic, and radiophonic art as well as pop culture and popular music.

Erbe is also director of the event series Raum-Musik [Spatial Music] and responsible for the Sound Studio at Cologne University.

Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone's first degrees were in Law and Literature, and she received her PhD from the University of Kent (Canterbury) in 2013. She is currently a visiting senior lecturer at the University of Malta, and research fellow with the Centre for Critical Thought at the University of Kent. Prior to this, she was assistant lecturer with the School of Arts at the University of Kent, and a visiting professor at Jagiellonian University (Krakow), where she delivered modules on videogames, cultural heritage, and history. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK). She has published in the area of game studies, including an article about comedy in adventure games (*Game Studies*), and has recently collaborated with Daniel Vella on two publications about neomedieval cities in games. She published a monograph *The Punk Turn in Comedy* with Palgrave Macmillan and the co-edited volume *Comedy and Critical Thought* with Rowman and Littlefield International, in 2018. She is currently working on co-editing a volume on comedy and games.

Thomas Hawranke received a diploma in Audiovisual Media from the Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM) and holds a doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) in Media Art from Bauhaus University Weimar. In his Ph.D.-Project "*Modding – Artistic Research in Video Games*", he connects subcultural research methods within the practice of modding with traditional game studies research perspectives. The resulting epistemic qualities of this practice are transferred into a method for artistic in-game research. As a member of the artist collective *susigames*, he held a scholarship for artistic research in computer games from the Centre for Art and Media (ZKM) Karlsruhe. In 2009, he co-founded Paidia Institute, a collective that centres around practice-based research at the verge of science, art and technology. He is lecturer and post-doctoral researcher at KHM, where he gives courses in the field of installation art, artistic research, game art, and human-animal studies. His current research interest lies in the representation of animal actors in video games and in subcultures that discuss ethical questions about human-animal relationships. His artistic practice is based on transmedia and includes a variety of technologies such as video games, analogue and digital film, microcontrollers, and low-tech augmented reality systems.

Carolin Höfler is Professor of Design Theory and Research at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences, Cologne International School of Design. She studied art history, modern German literature and theatre & film (M. A.) as well as architecture (TU Diploma) at universities in Cologne, Vienna, and Berlin. In her dissertation, which was completed at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, she explored the history and theory of computational design in architecture (*Form und Zeit. Computerbasiertes Entwerfen in der Architektur*). From 2003 to 2013, she was a teacher and researcher at Technische Universität Braunschweig, Institute of Media and Design (Assistant Professor since 2009). Since 1998, she has been working on project-related topics in the team of “oza _studio for architecture and scenography” in Berlin.

Her research interests include practices, concepts, and media in architecture and design; digital form; mediated matter; the media saturation of public space and informal urbanism. Last published: Nathalie Bredella, Carolin Höfler (eds.): *The agency of digital tools*, arq: Architectural Research Quarterly, Vol. 21, Issue 1. New York: Cambridge University Press 2017; Carolin Höfler: “Grow | Degrow: Becoming Materials between Excess and Calculation”, in: Nikola Doll, Horst Bredekamp, Wolfgang Schäffner (eds.): *+ultra. knowledge & gestaltung*. Leipzig: Seemann Henschel 2017, 192–200; Carolin Höfler: “Unwiederholbare Experimente. Entwerfen zwischen Grenzziehung und Überschreitung”, in: Séverine Marguin, Henrike Rabe, Wolfgang Schäffner, Friedrich Schmidgall (eds.): *Experimentieren. Einblicke in Praktiken und Versuchsaufbauten zwischen Wissenschaft und Gestaltung*. Berlin: transcript 2019, 247–262.

Theresa Krampe holds an MA in National and Transnational Studies from Münster University. Her MA research, parts of which have been published in *Game Studies* (2018), focusses on the political aesthetics of contemporary roleplaying video games from a queer game studies perspective. From 2017 to 2018, she was also a lecturer in literary theory.

In 2018, she transferred to Justus-Liebig University Giessen, where she is a doctoral candidate at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC). She is also a member of the PhD programme Literary and Cultural Studies (IPP) and holds a scholarship with the German Academic Scholarship Foundation. Her PhD project focusses on the forms and functions of metareference in contemporary video games. Her additional research interests include storytelling, worldbuilding and immersion in video games and across media. Furthermore, she is interested in identity politics and popular culture, especially in the construction of national, gendered, and sexual identities.

Rolf F. Nohr is professor for media aesthetics/media culture at the University of Arts, Braunschweig and External Affiliate at the College of Humanities at the University of Arizona. He graduated in Film, Television and Theater Studies, Sociology and Philosophy in 1999 at Ruhr University Bochum and received his doctorate on the topic of “Maps in Television. The Production of Positioning”. Afterwards, he was Research Assistant at the SFB 427: “Media and cultural communication” (University of Cologne). He was director of the research projects “Play strategy. Control techniques and strategic action” and “Business games as a cultural technique” and a member of the graduate school “The Dispositive of the Photographic”. He is editor of the book series “Medien’Welten. Braunschweig Publications on Media Culture”.

His research interests include game history and theory, methods of critical discourse analysis, philosophy of space, metal studies, and Polaroid photography.

More: <http://nuetzliche-bilder.de/>.

Derek Price is a PhD candidate at Vanderbilt University in German and Media Studies. During the 2018/2019 academic year, he was a Fulbright Research grantee associated with Universität zu Köln, where he worked on his dissertation “Machines with a Soul of Their Own: Simulator Games in Germany between Art, Industry, and Player Practices.” His project investigates how and why simulation games about industrial machines and work became popular in and beyond Germany, as well as the role that German players, developers, and publishers played in this unique genre. Derek is also the creator and co-host of “Scholars At Play,” a podcast dedicated to the critical discussion of games in society and the academy.

Vladimir Rizov is a lecturer in the department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Southampton. He researches the history of documentary photography in relation to urban studies, the development of video game photography, and the cinematic representation of crime control. He has published in *CITY, Theory, Culture & Society* and *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*. He is currently working on a co-authored monograph on crime control and cinema for *Palgrave Macmillan*, as well as developing a project on Henri Lefebvre, urban space and visual culture. Recently, he has been awarded a grant by the University of Southampton’s Web Science Institute to conduct research into video game photography and reflective gameplay.

Cornelia J. Schnaars received a bachelor's degree in Media Culture and English Studies from the University of Cologne in 2018.

She is currently a master's student of Media Studies at University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. Besides the international workshop "Architectonics of Game Worlds" in March 2019, she also presented papers at the "Young Academics Workshop" as part of the "Clash of Realities Conference" in 2017 and 2018.

Her research interests include aesthetics and structure of game worlds as well as game mechanics invested with narrative or affective meaning. Apart from that, she is mainly concerned with the aesthetics and mechanics of horror video games in general and the idiosyncrasies of survival horror in particular, as well as (conventions of) horror across media.

Daniel Vella is a lecturer at the Institute of Digital Games at the University of Malta, where he teaches classes on the formal properties of digital games, player experience, and narrative in games. Following degrees in Communications and English literature at the University of Malta, he pursued his doctoral studies at the IT University of Copenhagen, obtaining his doctorate in 2015 with the title "The Ludic Subject and the Ludic Self: Analyzing the I-in-the-Gameworld." His research topics include the phenomenology of player experience, aesthetic theory and digital games, subjectivity, identity and being in virtual worlds, narrativity and fictionality in games, and the philosophy and poetics of game places. His work has been published in a number of international journals and edited volumes, including *Game Studies*, *CounterText*, *Journal of Virtual Worlds Research*, *Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology*, and, recently, in *Ludotopia: Space, Place and Territory in Computer Games* (transcript 2019). He is the co-author of *Virtual Existentialism: Meaning and Subjectivity in Virtual Worlds* (Palgrave 2020). He is also active as a writer and narrative designer for board games, having most recently worked on *Posthuman Saga* (Mighty Boards, 2019).

Felix Zimmermann is a doctoral candidate at the a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne at the University of Cologne. His research focuses on experience-based engagements with the past and especially on the atmospheric potential of digital games and its implications for questions of authenticity. Also, he is interested in representations of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes in digital games. He is a member of the working group "Geschichtswissenschaft und Digitale Spiele" (Historical Science and Digital Games [AKGWDS]). His publications include the anthology "History in Games. Contingencies of an Authentic Past" (with Martin Lorber, 2020), the peer reviewed journal article "From Walking Simulator to Ambience Action Game – A philosophical approach to a misunderstood genre" (with Christian Huberts, 2019), and his master thesis "Digitale Spiele als historische Erlebnisräume. Ein Zugang zu Vergangenheitsatmosphären im Explorative Game" (2019).