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Aesthetics of Machine Vision (Odense, 15–16 Sep 22)

University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, Sep 15–16, 2022
Registration deadline: Apr 6, 2022

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Call for Papers:
"Aesthetics of Machine Vision" Conference

This conference aims to bring together a wide range of scholars, researchers and artists who explore the phenomenon of machine vision and the aesthetics of its modes of perception. Machine vision refers to advanced technologies which have been developed to carry out operations of visual automation in areas of inspection and observation in wider society. In referring to "machine" we include not only the software which underlies contemporary algorithmic systems but also reference the hardware and wider concurrent material relations, which constitute its operations. An increasing reliance on these technologies and its modes of seeing have far reaching cultural and socio-political repercussions. In investigating the aesthetics of this phenomenon, we aim to engage with these repercussions critically, analytically as well as speculatively. Within this context a recurrent question within the sciences and in visual culture theory thus appears again: Can we see, seeing? In examining the aesthetics of machine vision, we aim to reveal a machinic seeing, thus allowing us to scrutinize the ways in which it intervenes in the world through "more-than-human" perspectives.

We are interested in the "aisthesis" of machine vision, in the broadest possible sense of its aesthetic-experiential aspects, its affectivities, bodily entanglements, materiality, and the speculative reflections of such sensoria. We invite scholars, artists, and practitioners to engage with how aesthetics/artworks/sensoria as imaginaries can reflect on the power of machinic sensing within the wider contemporary arenas of cultural, ethical, environmental, and socio-political realms.

Exploring the aesthetics of machine vision, we raise the following questions:
How can machine vision engage new epistemic practices? Does the non-human view provide the possibility to overcome ocularcentric modes of seeing the world, and what are the social implications? What can we learn about "non-human" modes of visual sensing which provide perspectives on the human and our environments? In which ways are these operative machinic forms of visions embedded in socio-political structures which execute, disrupt and/or uphold certain power relations?

This conference is organized in four primary directions:

1. Artistic engagements with machine vision

This direction invites artists and art scholars to discuss artistic engagements with technologies of

machine vision that foreground the speculative. We especially invite machine vision appropriations that deal with the cultural and socio-political contexts of its implementation including satirical and critical interventions.

2. Sensing and automation

This direction invites analyses on the sensorial aspects of machine vision technologies engaging with issues around remote–sensing, data sensing, and the architecture of machine vision sensing and its underlying logic. This direction invites submissions that investigate capacities of non-human sensing and machine-human assemblages.

3. Operations and contexts

This direction invites analyses that critically explore the specific applications that machine vision systems have been designed to operate within. The expansion of its systems and the increasing dependency on machine vision systems in various areas of social, economic, and political realms lead to further examination of its use in these wider contexts. It is important to not only look at the architecture and logic behind machine vision processes but also the wider socio-political contexts which these systems engage. This includes examining the distributed forms of labor behind its design and operation and its regional and situated contexts.

4. Histories

Machine vision is not only about computational modes of vision but also about the analogue apparatus that capture the world visually. This direction invites submission that engage with the historical legacies which anticipate machine vision, further examining continuities and disruptions of its logic and technology and how they may relate to historical discourses within but not limited to photography, film, architecture, philosophy, art practices and visual culture.

Venue:
The conference will be held physically at the University of Southern Denmark, Odense.
This conference is organized by Lila Lee-Morrison and Dominique Routhier and members of the research cluster "Drone Imaginaries and Communities" (www.sdu.dk/diac) which is led by Prof. Kathrin Maurer, leader of Center for Culture and Technology (www.sdu.dk/en/cult-tech).

Please send an abstract of up to 300 words, with a short bio and if there is a particular direction you would like to be included in, to: lile@sdu.dk and dominique@sdu.dk

Deadline for Abstracts: April 6, 2022
Notification and Invitations: April 20, 2022