Real Abstractions #6: Visualization (Lucerne, 1 Oct 26)

Lucerne School of Design, Film and Art, Nylsuisseplatz 1, 6020 Lucerne-Emmenbrücke, Oct 01, 2026

Tobias Ertl

Real Abstractions. Reconsidering Realism's Role for the Present.
Workshop 6: Visualization.

Visualization has become a key tool through which contemporary society understands and negotiates reality. From algorithmic image generation and CGI to forensic reconstructions, and data visualizations - renderings of the otherwise imperceptible increasingly mediates the way we access information. This workshop aims to examine visualization as a critical aesthetic and epistemic operation far from neutral representation. It asks how visual practices produce knowledge of social realities that are structured by processes of abstraction, such as financial systems, computational infrastructures, surveillance technologies, ecological networks, or global logistics.
As part of the SNSF project Real Abstractions: Reconsidering Realism's Role for the Present, our workshop brings together perspectives from media studies, visual culture, artistic research, and critical theory. By investigating how artistic and theoretical practices engage with the challenge of rendering abstract social relations perceptible, we seek to rethink realism for an age in which the most consequential dimensions of reality are often too complex to be directly seen and hence need to be visualized.

10:00 arrival, welcome, introduction

10:30 EVA CETINIC
The Realities of Synthetic Imagery: Particularity and Abstraction in Generative AI

12:00 lunch break

13:00 MAUD CRAIGIE
Indications of Guilt, pt.1, Screening

14:00 MAUD CRAIGIE
Feedback Loops

15:30 coffee break

15:45 ANDRA POP-JURJ
Reconstructing environments: on evidence and speculation

17:15 end of the workshop

EVA CETINIC
The Realities of Synthetic Imagery: Particularity and Abstraction in Generative AI

What kinds of visual realities emerge from the vast parametric entanglements of contemporary multimodal AI models? What does it mean to translate words into images using generative AI? This talk examines how these models learn relationships between language, images, concepts, and cultural contexts.

MAUD CRAIGIE
Feedback Loops

Artist and researcher Maud Craigie will discuss her work and examine the role of screen-based fiction in legal and investigative contexts. The talk will consider how storytelling techniques from film and television inform these systems and how they are used within them. It will also explore the ways in which fictional forms shape the production and interpretation of evidence.

ANDRA POP-JURJ
Reconstructing environments: on evidence and speculation

This talk will explore methods including spatial and environmental simulation, as well as the role of investigative aesthetics in producing and communicating evidence. It will begin with an introduction to the work of Forensic Architecture, before looking more closely at investigations such as the use of tear gas as a form of crowd control in Portland and a chemical fire at the Marathon Petroleum refinery in Louisiana.

Reference:
CONF: Real Abstractions #6: Visualization (Lucerne, 1 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 24, 2026 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/54378>.