

# Hito Steyerl in conversation with João Fernandes

## Art, a Test Site

Vol. VII **comparative cinema**  
No. 12  
2019

106-123

Venice, May 2015. Hito Steyerl has just premiered her latest piece, *Factory of the Sun*, in the German pavilion at the Biennale. We meet at the San Basilio vaporetto stop, opposite the Molino Stucky on the Giudecca. Many times between two places, between the working Venice of the nineteenth century and the channel providing passage to the cruise ships that threaten the history and memory of the ancient city, its *campi* and narrow winding streets. It's the perfect condensation of the conflict between the current economy of value accumulation and the value accumulated by a whole memory; the history of the struggles for identity and the dignity of the human condition were also the subject of representation in the past, as the Venetian painters show us.

From there we go to the house where Hito and her team have been living while they installed the new piece. We start a conversation to contextualize the presentation of her work in the exhibition we are preparing at the Reina Sofía Museum. It's a brief and incisive exchange, like her texts and images, which engage with rare critical lucidity images of our time, responding to their rapidity by stopping them, making a brief pause to think in the flow of the film, aware that "light travels so fast that the image is produced before the event".

In the work of Hito Steyerl (Munich, 1966), the construction of the text and the editing of the image expand the condition of the film essay, reflecting on and intervening in the systems of circulation of information and of the presentation and representation of the work of art. Her writings, lectures, films and audio-visual installations associate philosophical and political reflection with a critical activism inserted in the sphere of the production and circulation of the image and the word. Steyerl's work responds to what Noam Chomsky has called "Orwell's problem": the paradox that even though we have so much evidence and data at our disposal, our knowledge of the rules and conventions that govern reality is so limited.<sup>1</sup> The artist reveals the dialectic of the visible and the invisible that

politically structures the proliferation of images in the cultural industries. In her work she uses references to popular culture (such as action movies, music, song videos or computer games) to give us back, in the form of a reflection, a critical comment on migration, feminism, multiculturalism and globalization. The strategies of value accumulation are investigated and denounced within the realities of war and financial speculation that mark the present. Contemporary art and the transition to post-democracy, the occupation of time by the technologies and industries of culture (art among them), precarious work, control, surveillance and militarization are among the other issues we encounter in Hito Steyerl's works, many of them currently on show in numerous museums, art centres and galleries. But she knows that the places of art are also "a battlefield".

**J F** Hito, your works are not just videos. Many of them are videos that present us with topics and reflections, using the montage as a way of thinking. Your film work is also accompanied by a set of texts and performative readings that redefine and update the ways in which the documentary can be conceived in the era of the digital image.

Robert Smithson might have been the first to present lecture as artwork—for example, in *Hotel Palenque*—but you have further developed the visual essay as both an autonomous art form and an autonomous approach.

**H S** As an art form, it's been around since at least the 1930s. Dziga Vertov's work can be described as film essay. And yes, I was very much trained in this kind of film history. The only problem was that, when I started my professional life, the production context for this kind of work had begun to move into other channels, changing not just its form but its medium. Video, digital media, and so on.

**J F** You started to develop your work during a moment when cinema was not the only reference. Many new systems of production, new ways of working the moving image, had emerged (e.g., TV, video games) that you could use. Your work connects with popular culture, whether gangster movies or the video games. You've used the visual pretext of the image inside the image, something we have today in video games, video clips, etcetera. Were you always interested in connecting this heavy touch from

constructivist cinema with what's happening in popular culture today?

**H S** Yes, because popular culture is the culture of the people. Images from popular culture are being used and processed every day. But, in turn, they also use people every day. People use images, yes. But nowadays images use people for data mining, for extracting information, extracting energy, extracting affect. Rather than proposing some form of classical, elite culture, working with this kind of material is important. This is the material the everyday is made of; it's a part of reality. Not a representation of reality; it really is a material part of reality. In the avant-gardes, people talked about intervening in reality. Intervening in the popular culture image sphere is intervening in reality today.

**J F** Popular culture is both a system of production in an economy and a commodity of the economy.

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**H S** Absolutely. Popular culture has always been a commodity. The commodity has historically been a contraction of energy, time, labor—and now desire. I try to engage with the desires that are condensed in commodity form and to use them differently. This energy if released can be very strong. The affect and the seduction of this type of culture can be used for ends other than those that commodity culture usually pursues.

**J F** You've developed an interesting presentation of what you consider to be the "poor image." The image business took the poor image and has used it in very rich (and self-enriching) ways. Quentin Tarantino, for example, fetishizes the poor image. How do you see the fetishization of the poor image in the dominant culture today? Artists continue to practice the poor image, but, thanks to all the video devices in our lives, we're now all producers of poor images.

**H S** First, the poor image as I described it many years ago hardly exists anymore because even your cell phone is now capable of making a 4K image. Resolution has risen a lot. Second, the poor image has become a trope of authenticity: it's the equivalent of the shaky camera that used to point to a documentary mode

even in Hollywood films. Flash the poor image in order to say, “this is real.” But that has been going on forever. Slightly glitchy forms of communication have forever been appropriated by the dominant consumer culture. That’s inevitable and it’s not about identifying with one medium or one genre or one form or image. Rather, it’s about trying to identify the circuits of distribution, the ways of usage, the forms of production associated with it. The point is certainly not to say, “this is how an image should look.” That changes every six months.

- J F** What is the relationship between your writing and your videos? Some of your videos connect with texts, whether the texts of others or your own lectures, and the lectures themselves reflect some of the videos of work-involved fields. They intersect. And because you work on your videos and your writing simultaneously, you develop ideas from text to video and from video to text.
- H S** Yes, somehow I do. The answer I give to this question has changed a lot over the past years, however. If you had asked me three, four years ago, I would have told you they’re completely separate. The writing is here, and the video is there, and they have nothing to do with each other, as if some sort of modernist rupture had separated both forms. Now I realize that’s an unsustainable position, because the material base of both is the same. The base is bits, it’s digital. You have an image: ones and zeroes. You have a text: ones and zeroes. So why bother separating them? They’re both basically the same kind of matter.
- On the other hand, I also realized something. In cinema you find little writing in the image. Maybe you see a street sign or a shop sign or a title, but writing is not usually part of the image. But in digital culture every image is framed by writing—by advertising, by information about upcoming feeds, and so on. Image and text are much more mixed. You see this in some of my newer works. I start writing on the screen. I use it almost as a computer screen. So even inside the video, writing increases a lot.
- J F** The Internet had something to do with that.
- H S** Absolutely. Of course, on a computer screen you always have several screens open at the same time, so even when you watch video on a computer, to see only the video is rare. You always

have a video plus something else. In that sense, writing and visual production tend to collapse into one another.

**J F** That suggests a coming change in the condition of writing.

**H S** In filmmaking also.

**J F** Just as behind each text you always find more text, behind each window you always find another window.

**H S** Exactly. In my work I don't control these things. I don't make a plan. I never planned to start giving lectures or writing lectures. That just happened somehow. I don't actually consider these to be artworks but rather a space of experimentation, a space to develop or test ideas. A test site.

**J F** The paradigm of modernity championed the separation of art and life in response to the contamination of the latter, while other currents within modernity advocated rapprochement between the two areas. You seem to be denouncing a new situation. It is no longer a question of life invading art but of studying and denouncing the aestheticization and occupation of life by art. Nowadays there are occasions when art dominates life, alters the forms of life of the world and obliges them to mimic the behaviour of images. In your texts you speak of the theorization not only of politics but also of everyday life. The art world is becoming...

**H S** Colonialist.

**J F** Yes, art is colonizing the world. This reversal—art contaminating life—is dangerous.

**H S** Let's say the art system is a small model, a test case. Other industries are of course much more important, but in this small test case you see how the art system colonizes spaces, occupies spaces, gentrifies spaces; transforms cities, minds, resources; creates global systems for extracting talent, new ideas, exotic pictures. Or conversely, art is used to decorate

dictatorships, oligarchies, and so on. This system of colonization is not of the everyday, but it is creating a newly integrated form of global capitalism.

**J F** Art was always more critical of power than architecture, because architecture was always a consequence of the exercise of power, but today art and architecture seem to have converged.

**H S** Art is certainly catching up. Architecture is still running in front, but art is hot on its heels. The situation of structural corruption can create really interesting contradictions too; it's not always linear or simple. An anecdote that illustrates this involves the Qatar Museums Authority in Doha, which recently spent \$20 million on a huge public commission—more than a dozen bronze sculptures of fetuses—by Damien Hirst. The fetuses look awful, like aliens, but they are fetuses, and fetuses do look like aliens, plus they are located in front of a hospital which makes it kind of obvious to think about the human body. So, when the artwork was unveiled, a conservative backlash emerged, because a number of locals think you cannot show a naked body for religious reasons, even the body of a fetus. So the sculptures have been covered with cloth. That is how I saw them. Whenever I drove past them, I would say, “What are these great sculptures? I have to make note of this. Just cover up whatever it is with cloth; it looks wonderful!”

Now one hears talk of just melting them down because they're not socially acceptable. They've become this strange symbol of Enlightenment values, of being able to show a body, talk about women's reproduction, about health issues. Damien Hirst has become a symbol of enlightenment! That's why I say it's not straightforward. But these are systems of colonization, friction, investment. When the main goal is to develop the city as a tourist attraction, you can in the process create some strange twists. My friends and I joked that the fetus sculptures could be melted down and turned into Richard Serra sculptures, because there is no friction between his high modernist abstract monumental gestures and an authoritarian monarchic government.

**J F** Curious that we're taught that the goal of the Left is to destroy the idea of the state, yet what has actually succeeded in

destroying the state, the idea of the state, is capitalism. Capitalism uses the contamination between art and life to originate new products, new economies. And art today has become capitalist-backed, infected by the idea of ever-growing accumulation that is the capitalist system. You argue that even conceptual art—the one moment where art fought against object-hood, against the idea of joining objects and developing systems of value from them—became a model for the neoliberal information economy.

**H S**

Conceptual art was literally easy to handle: it required no shipping costs; and it was very close to advertising. Alex Alberro writes about how public-relations strategies informed conceptual art (and vice-versa) in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> The so-called immaterial artwork became a sort of paradigm or template for the dissemination of information.

One response to the destruction of the state by capitalism has been a return to the nation-state. People want to reclaim it, in part, to protect themselves from the destructive forces of capital. The idea of the nation-state goes back to the nineteenth century, but I'm not sure whether it's a viable model for a future in which people from all kinds of regions and backgrounds will have to live together more and more. More precisely, I absolutely do not think so, having been born and raised in a postgenocidal and hardly postfascist nation state. But if we don't return to the nation-state, what is the alternative if we refuse to align ourselves with the destructive forces of capital? That's a really important question, which needs to be solved without recourse to the 19th-century state form and its inherent tendencies. There are important experiments going on in this respect.

**J F**

Another important political issue today is time. The use of time has become an engine for speeding up the production of value, whether economic value or political value. Today many people who have jobs don't have a regular timetable. At first sight, their lifestyles might seem bohemian, but in fact work is always present in their lives; they work more because they feel freer.

**H S**

You work more but you earn less, right?

**J F**

Exactly. Unemployment becomes a sort of new condition. For the idea of cooperation, the idea of accumulation of



*Abstract* (Hito Steyerl, 2012)





time, people are being robbed of their time while supposedly being given more time. Similarly, the video industry and the film industry, with all of their output of historical movies, for example, transmit an abstract idea of time. Centuries can be represented and synthesized in two hours of a movie. What is your relationship with time in your work? How do you see time and the uses of time in the society outside your work?

**H S**

I think this question needs to be connected to the previous one. What is the nation of time? Is there any political body of time? Is this possible? In my work for Venice—which is a fictional video—Deutsche Bank tries to accelerate the speed of light in order to squeeze another picosecond out of productivity. Time today is a resource that is mined to the millionth of a microsecond. My idea is that the speed of light has probably been accelerated by someone somewhere already. We just didn't notice. Why do I say this? The relation of representation to reality has turned around, as Harun Farocki talks about a lot.

The order is no longer: something happens and then we have an image. Instead, we have an image, and then something happens. In a way, the chain of causality has reversed. The effect precedes the cause, which means that the speed of light has probably been accelerated so much that time has reversed. Light travels so quickly that the image is produced before the thing happens.

**J F**

You talk about “the wretched” in your recent work. The miserable, the wretched were once everywhere and highly visible. Today they are invisible. That is, they're far away, seen in the Western world only when they die while approaching our coasts. Even then they're still far away, because that's how everything looks on the TV news.

The image creates the distance from reality. The image creates distance to reality. People don't usually talk about the kind of information they receive, but a lot of that information corresponds to a very limited experience of today's world and its diversity. The world is reduced to a video game. We no longer identify with the horrors of war. We are a long way from the first photographs of the American Civil War—by Mathew B. Brady, to take one case—because war today is presented to us as a “clean” war against the barbarians, the uncivilized, those who have failed to assimilate our culture. This is also a metaphor for what happens with Western culture and its relationship to the rest of the world's cultures.

Your work seeks to reveal these other sides of the world and begins from a personal story. You had a friend who was killed in one of the far-off, invisible places, and because of your personal relationship you were able to discover connections between this distant place and the daily life of the Western cities you know. What is the relationship between the visible and invisible in our daily politics, the images we daily consume, and thinking politically about the world?

**H S** The wretched are everywhere. But we're taught not to see them in our daily lives. We have to actively unlearn how not to see them. But the miserables are everywhere. We are just led to believe that they are always outside and always absent. So how do we learn to see them, or maybe rather sense them? Sometimes you have to use proxies, like translation devices, stand-ins or avatars. I might use a mental image from a TV show, for example.

**J F** Is that related to your idea that documentary language is not determined by content but by form, in the sense that you have to have these positives to translate the reality? When you talk about forming that documentary language, are you talking about these positives? Because, for me, documentary is very much related to content.

**H S** I've always had difficulty taking an image from somewhere, placing it somewhere else where it's decontextualized, and then saying, "this is reality." I think the documentary image is the image of the relation, of the misunderstanding, of the way of communication between A and B. How is the image related? (By which I also mean, how is it relayed, passed on?)

I mean form in the sense of social form, social relation, which is mostly technologically mediated. This was the topic of my early film November. How does an image travel from A to B, how does it change on the way, how does it change its meaning? If I take a poster of a so-called martyr in a heroic pose, a poster created by the Kurdish PKK movement, what does it mean in a different place? I don't think I am able to understand it without translation and mediation. Otherwise it just remains exotic, something I can fetishize or not.

**J F** Documentary and fiction have been intersecting since the

beginning, but today fiction is sort of like a hidden fiction, too, because the documentaries are used as documents and are revealed in a particular system that allows some images to be revealed and others not. How do you see, in this profusion of images, the more hidden and secret images? Or do you see a relationship between the visible and the invisible in images today?

**H S** I was talking to Laura Poitras about this recently. Her work and its revelations open onto a completely different angle. I used to think that vast parts of knowledge relating to power would always be secret, that we'd never have any way of knowing them. Suddenly it's not only possible; it's possible also to know what the other side does.

Organisations like the NSA map. They create a complete map of activities, information, in real time. I used to think you could never have a complete map of everything. A hole would always remain, something would always be missing. (That's how paranoia is created.) But what happens if you suddenly have a complete map of everything, where everything is visible? It's terrifying. It's really, really terrifying. Much more than worrying about missing pieces of information.

**J F** Making it visible is the perfect foil.

**H S** Exactly. There's this dialectical relationship, when everything's visible, nothing is visible.

**J F** In *Duty-Free* you talk about the "withdrawal" of artworks to freeport art storage spaces. These are works we'll probably never see. They exist, they're somewhere, they're very valuable, but they're hidden.

**H S** The best reaction I've heard about this was from an audience member in Moscow who said, "This is great! We don't have to see all this art. This is hideous auction art. We don't want to burn it, we don't want to destroy it, so let's just hide it."

**J F** In the nineteenth century the artist proclaimed himself the enemy of bourgeois life because he was excluded from that

life. At that time the bourgeoisie created the museums, and the artists were on the outside. Over time, the artists transformed the museums, turning them into institutions that not only showed and collected works of art, but also produced artwork. It was essential that the museums should open up to the artists. Today a new way of thinking dominates, in which the museums have become a system of conventions for everything, both for destruction and construction. For you, what is the museum as a place of conventions and contradictions?

**H S**

I come at this question from a very different angle, because the museum did not emerge for me as any sort of site until the cinema stopped working as a viable realm of production. At that point it was a refuge, almost an asylum. During the period of early 90s institutional critique, I kept saying to myself, "What are they talking about? It's great. You can shut off the lights. There's a projector. What are they complaining about?" That was my first entry into the museum world.

Later I started asking why people are always trying to dissociate themselves from the museum system when it is now a prime site of class struggle. This is one of the trenches, the front lines of the thing formerly called struggle. This is where things happen, so we've got to try to own it instead of refusing it. Instead of allowing the museum to remain in a position of false innocence and trying to dissociate ourselves from it, we should struggle to make it the space we want it to be.

**J F**

Some of your works point out to us how the economy of the museums intersects with other aspects of the economy, including those of war. In *Guards* you show how the museums' security staff are recruited from other external security systems, such as the police or the military. The recent film by Frederick Wiseman, *National Gallery*, also sets out to expose the reality of the museum, but it steers clear of its hidden systems, of note among these being the economy of the museum, which is increasingly dependent on the complex relationships of the patrons that fund it. The economy of the museum is a private economy, independent of the public interest; that private economy today affects the system of collecting and of the presentation and representation of art in museums.

**H S**

Museums now seem to inhabit two distinct zones: their

traditional one and a second in which they function as a form of art storage for collectors. Art freeports now bleed into museums as more and more public museums, lacking funding to put on shows, ask collectors if they can supply not just the money but their own collections for shows.

**J F** Tony Bennett's essay "The Exhibitionary Complex"<sup>3</sup> addresses the current trends in British museums, describing the Science Museum in London, for example, as essentially a monument to a new kind of communicational capitalism. The museum has an extraordinary sculpture called *Listening Post* that displays snippets of text taken from comments posted by people to online forums and public chat rooms. The idea is that the public is contributing. But really the museum is extracting all of this text—from people—displaying these "overheard" conversations on a huge bank of electronic displays in the museum; it reminds me of *The Matrix*.

**H S** But they think they're giving something to the people. It's extraordinary; it reflects the precarious times we live in. The system of work inside the museum is also increasingly based on precarity. Before, the artist's presence in the museum was precarious. Today, the jobs of everybody working in the museum are precarious, from the directors to the guards.

**J F** Does the world of cinema express any curiosity about your artwork?

**H S** Yes, but it's mediated. They think, "What are the art people talking about? Are you sure we need to look at this?" The film world is fragmented, though. The movie industry couldn't care less, but some of the festivals—the Rotterdam Film Festival, for example—have a curious and very knowledgeable feel. There you can encounter people who are interested, and you'll see many artists showing their works. But even when the work isn't just black and white, the film and television industry couldn't care less. That's fine. I don't care about them either.

**J F** In your installations you try to address an intelligent spectator. Someone inside one of your installations is in the classical position of someone in a cinema theater. This "cine-spectator"

sits alone in a more-or-less darkened room that is also a space for reflection. You are trying to get people to think about something. At the same time, the system of images you use sometimes doesn't leave much time to think about things. That's perhaps a reflection of popular culture today where everything is so speedy. You don't think about it; you just watch it. How do you feel about these contradictions between seeing and thinking?

**H S**

This relates to what we were discussing earlier about time, about how it's an extremely scarce commodity or resource. Well that's true for spectators too. I don't want to extract too much time from them, because they don't have that much time. To insist otherwise is to take a violent position. Forcing someone to sacrifice six hours to endure some sort of slomo pontification when he or she could be cooking or playing with children or doing just about anything else, is quite a modernist, arrogant, privileged gesture. So I try to be gentle with peoples' time.

In the installation here in Venice many people were just sitting on beach chairs, reading their emails, which I find really nice. They take their time and use the space for their needs.

**J F**

People were also having drinks and food while they were watching, and they'd come and go from the installation space. I got the sense that real-world time was seeping into the installation space.

**H S**

This is a way of organizing time. And of giving freedom to people. You have to give people space and time to do whatever they want and whatever they need to do, which means acknowledging that they don't necessarily have to watch or think about your installation. Too often the etiquette of film museum culture dictates you have to sit straight for twelve hours, looking but not moving, not going to the bathroom. Like in *A Clockwork Orange*.

**J F**

Well, the films that want to impose that sort of etiquette are interested in bringing real time into cinema, into this compressed system of presenting images. In one sense, a seven-hour film is a seven-hour intermission in your life. But it's also a representation of time. Time is real because you are there for seven hours, but at the same time you're seeing an



intersection between your personal time and the time of the image, which might be representing someone sleeping or the construction of a building, for example. Is real time a problem for you?

**H S** No, it's not a problem: but real time today is fragmented and plural. Real time as a monolith block happens only in detention, in a prison, some kinds of monastery or watching soccer. Surveillance is also very much about real time. You cannot connect things in real time easily unless you have multiple channels, multiple screens, and at that point you're already moving toward montage.

The challenge is to bring together times and spaces that do not necessarily seem to belong to one another. This is why I was never that much attracted to real time. Farocki points out that real time is basically television time. Real time is always already captured by advertising.

**J F** Editing also can be connected in real time. Didn't Godard, for example, connect the cut with the guillotine? Editing, for you, is to connect, to isolate, to build in a way that produces ideas?

**H S** Yes, absolutely. The cut is about decapitation, but it's also about creating new bodies in space or time or in the imagination—a new body politic, if you like. You cannot do that without montage. Yes, splicing is violent—it begins with a cut—but it ends with joining.

**J F** Producing an exhibition is very different from producing a single work. How do you deal with the idea of the exhibition when your works are presented together in an exhibition space?

**H S** I still have to figure that out! I've been trying, but I don't have the answer yet.

**J F** I often see a contradiction when I work with artists. When they produce a work not for an exhibition but for its own sake and that work is later used in an exhibition, the exhibition creates new problems.

- H S** Major exhibitions are particularly liable to give rise to questions of montage, of editing. You try to create a certain dynamic, like in a film, but I don't have enough experience to know what will work well. I'm still figuring out how this works. Please just tell me!
- J F** We'll find out together...
- H S** Exactly. We'll know after the fact.
- J F** I suspect the type of exhibition makes a difference. Creating a dynamic is easier when viewers are just strolling from one painting to another painting, one sculpture to another sculpture. But when they're going from one dark room to another dark room, the situation is totally different. Often when I see your works in an exhibition, I get frustrated because I can't take all the time I need.
- H S** I realize that. Most of my work is time-based, so what can you do?
- J F** When Henri Langlois created the first cinematheque, it was a cinema room, and the museum activity was focused on preserving, collecting, and showing films inside the cinema room. Today we have museums of the moving image, museums of cinema, and they are totally different from Langlois's first cinematheque. Exhibiting film changed everything. Today even the cinematheques produce exhibitions. And exhibitions with moving images create new problems. I suppose we are facing the birth of a new equation.
- H S** Yes, it's all about orchestrating time, again.
- J F** I find that the most difficult thing about art exhibitions with moving images is entering into the room at a random point, trying to remembering the first frame you see, and then waiting until you see that frame again. I recall one film I saw recently that I thought was amazing, really beautiful, but so many of its images repeated that I found myself constantly just focusing on trying to recognize the exact point at which I started watching. I

find this frustrating.

**H S**

I try to factor this into my work. I try to structure things so they have small chapters—three, four minutes and then a new substory starts. With each new chapter you can try to follow from the beginning. Then you repeat at a certain point, start from the beginning but in a condensed form.

It's the same with this conversation. We have to bring it to a close: Hito is leaving Venice and we don't have much time. Our conversation is interrupted just when she was speaking of the loop as a strategy for orchestrating time and a way of condensing the viewer's experience. The loop is always another way of restarting time, of reliving and reinterpreting what we have seen or experienced before, of being aware that no one steps into the same river twice. To watch a film over again is also to reedit it, adding in the invisible work of the viewer; it always involves a reinterpretation, the association and reorganization of the images to new concepts. Between production and reproduction, between interpretation and ongoing reinterpretation, Hito Steyerl's work leads her to discover the differences between a model of productivity and a critical model of post-productivity that she calls circulationism. In the words of the artist:

“Circulationism is not about the art of making an image, but of post-producing, launching, and accelerating it. It is about the public relations of images across social networks, about advertisement and alienation, and about being as suavely vacuous as possible. [...]. Crucially, circulationism, if reinvented, could also be about short-circuiting existing networks, circumventing and bypassing corporate friendship and hardware monopolies. It could become the art of recoding or rewiring the system by exposing state scopophilia, capital compliance, and wholesale surveillance.”<sup>4</sup>

Embracing the notion that art is a test site, Hito Steyerl critically reinvents the place of art. She reminds us that, just as there is no *topos* without utopia, occupying the place of art can be a way of reinventing that place. By intervening in reality, her works are an example of the fact that they cannot be made other than politically. As Godard said: it's not a matter of making political films, but rather of making films politically... Or as Hito Steyerl proposes, in thinking about the possibilities of applying free

internet access beyond the internet: “If images can be shared and circulated, why can’t everything else be too?”<sup>5</sup>

Published in: GUERRA, Carles; STEYERL, Hito; FERNANDES, João (2015). *Hito Steyerl: duty-free art*. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia. Catalogue published to accompany the exhibition held from 10 November 2015 to 21 March 2016.

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1/ “[The] ability of totalitarian systems to instill beliefs that are firmly held and widely accepted although they are completely without foundation and often plainly at variance with obvious facts about the world around us.” Noam Chomsky, *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origin, and Use*, New York, Praeger, 1986.

2/ Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*, Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 2003.

3/ [http://www.amielandmelburn.org.uk/collections/newformations/04\\_73.pdf](http://www.amielandmelburn.org.uk/collections/newformations/04_73.pdf) (accessed October 2015).

4/ Hito Steyerl, “Too Much World: Is the Internet Dead?”, *e-flux journal* No. 49. Available online in <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/too-much-world-is-the-internet-dead/>

5/ Ibid.