

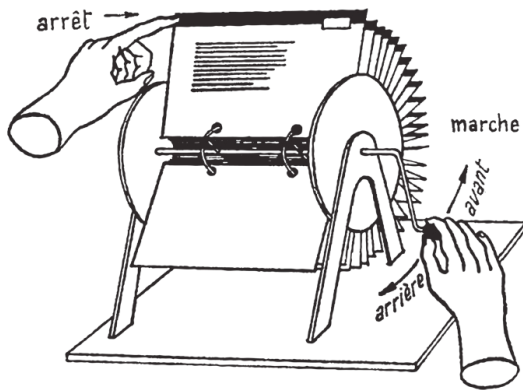
EDITORIAL

MACHINE RESEARCH

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This publication is about *Machine Research* – research on machines, research with machines, and research as a machine. It thus explores machinic perspectives to suggest a situation where the humanities are put into a critical perspective by machine driven ecologies, ontologies and epistemologies of thinking and acting. It aims to engage research and artistic practice that takes into account the new materialist conditions implied by nonhuman techno-ecologies. These include new ontologies and intelligence such as machine learning, machine reading and listening (Geoff Cox, Sam Skinner & Nathan Jones, Brian House), systems-oriented perspectives to broadcast communication and conflict (John Hill, Dave Young), the ethics and aesthetics of autonomous systems (Maya Indira Ganesh, Maja Bak Herrie), and other post-anthropocentric reconsiderations of materiality and infrastructure (Abelardo Gil-Fournier, Etherbox interview).

The papers address these topics in ways that we hope remind readers that all research in-itself is machine-like, following scientific as well as commercial protocols and mechanisms. In this way, the publication also functions as a response to the machinery of academic print and the corresponding rise of open access journals like *APRJA* to promote a culture based on sharing, open distribution and the exchange of ideas. Machines evidently are there to provide opportunities

to both limit and expand autonomy. As Maurizio Lazzarato has highlighted, we can be ‘enslaved’ or ‘subjected’ to a machine:

If we adopt Deleuze and Guattari’s perspective, we can state clearly that capitalism is neither a “mode of production” nor is it a system. Rather it is a series of devices for machinic enslavement and, at the same time, a series of devices for social subjection. [...] The technological machine is only one instance of machinism. There are also technical, aesthetic, economic, social, etc. machines.

Whether technical, social, communicational, we are enslaved when we become one of the constituent parts that enables the machine to function, and subjected to the machine when we are defined purely by its actions. But what are the other possibilities? As a response to this question, it is important to emphasise here that the process leading to the publication of these papers – a three-day workshop hosted by Constant in Brussels – utilised Free, Libre and Open Source collaboration tools, collective notetaking and machinic authoring.[1]

To exemplify this approach and other machinic possibilities, we have included a collectively authored interview with a machine that facilitated our work at the workshop (Etherbox interview). Inter-action with this machine is indicative of the ways in which recursive feedback loops seem to operate at all levels in the writing and reading of the texts in this issue of the journal, and points to far messier entanglements between humans and machines that inform our thinking. These kinds of ontological confusions are elaborated here to establish some of the ways that machines operate on other machines and imaginaries. The critical challenge perhaps is to learn from machines

as much as they learn from us, and to develop a new understanding that includes the machinic in all its guises.

Christian Ulrik Andersen & Geoff Cox
Aarhus, April 2017.

Notes

[1] Details of the Machine Research workshop can be found at <https://machineresearch.wordpress.com/about/>. More details of this process and a resultant publication designed using the PJ tool, designed by Sarah Garcin, can be found at the above website. The print publication that directly resulted from this can be downloaded from <http://www.aprja.net/workshops-newspapers/>. The workshop and this journal issue have been organised in the context of *ever elusive*, the 2017 edition of transmediale festival of art and digital culture, Berlin, <https://2017.transmediale.de/>.

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Works cited

Lazzarato, Maurizio. "The Machine." *eipcp* (2006). <http://eipcp.net/transversal/1106/lazzarato/en>. Web.