Glitch Art Narratives

An investigation of the relation between noise and meaning

A Master's Thesis for the Degree Master of Arts (Two Years) in Visual Culture

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the ontological meta-narratives of glitch art and focuses on it as the transition from images with noise, into a site of meaning. In the first chapter I will discuss glitch art as a failure in communication that stimulates our perception. By relating glitch art to noise art, I will describe the prevalence of a common artistic approach towards errors, while through Fiske's notion of 'entropy' I will examine how unconventional information affects us. These findings, combined with the analysis of distinct glitch art typologies in the second chapter, will highlight the instrumentalization of accidents as a method for processing reality. This method will be investigated through a content analysis of a digital glitch-art work that will be bound with Lyotard's notion of the 'aesthetics of post-modernity' and Virilio's concept of a 'vision machine'. This contextualization will introduce glitch art as a metonym for reality and as a mechanism that revolutionizes our perception and reinforces our tolerance against the stress that Virilio ascribes to the unknown source of the Original Accident. The third chapter is investigating hybrid glitch art forms as the result of this meaning making process. Through the examination of an oil painting that imitates the visual manifestation of digital errors, I will demonstrate that there is a semiotic interrelation between glitch art and the Accident, which simultaneously redefines the ontology of the former, as glitch art is becoming the Myth of the Accident. As a result, this thesis will investigate the connections of ontological meta-narratives in contemporary art to mechanisms for acquiring knowledge and processing reality, in an example of the current phenomenon of glitch art.

Keywords
Glitch Art
Semiotics
Noise
Accident
Paul Virilio

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a society[1] where the word 'error' is solely connoting negative ideas and feelings, such as those of accidents and fear of failure. The Biblical Fall and the Expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the never-ending awe around technological wrecks and disasters, or simply our irritation and confusion when encountering unpredictable interruptions in our daily routine, are just a few examples that prove that this fear and aversion towards mistakes is omnipresent and deeply ingrained in western culture. This obsession with perfection and correctness compels humans to a constant struggle against any 'irregular' function or act, to a degree that it eventually becomes nothing more than a source of frustration and anxiety. From human to mechanical errors and from writer's block to frozen computer screens, the result is the same. Confusion and anger, as an overwhelming realization of the uncontrolled and chaotic nature smoldering underneath our daily routine's perfectly organized facade inundates us. Dropped phone calls, error messages and operating system's blue screens with pixelated fonts, are a few more examples that most of us have already experienced, and we dread the prospect of their unexpected comeback. This faulty and fragmented visual landscape is to be found all around us and is, in most cases, familiar to anyone that lives in an urban, and technologically enhanced, environment. Those that are eager to examine it form an alternate perspective will realize something more; that it is simultaneously a new form readymade art that is offered generously by all those technological objects that constantly surround us. Could that way of seeing be considered as a conciliatory approach that releases us from the stress and pressure that all the aforementioned events or instances would otherwise generate?

Art has already addressed similar issues and possibilities. With a long history in experimentation, the avant-garde movement has attempted to criticize and validate what would otherwise be considered as 'faulty', 'erratic' or simply just as a failure.[2] In that way, and by embracing errors and 'accidents', artists shed light on new ideas on how to develop resistant approaches towards the world and overcome practical and theoretical restrictions,

[1] For clarity purposes, this thesis has been carried out from a western-world perspective that includes Europe and North America. Hence, the use of words 'culture', 'society', 'our thinking', 'we', etc., is referring to western European and North America.

[2] Lisa Le Feuvre's anthology, *'Failure'*, is one of the first books that deal with failure as a major concern and a central subject of investigation in recent art. An extensive documentation of artistic practices that deem success overrated, highlights failure as a productive space filled with paradox that offers a resistant view of the world. L. L. Feuvre, ***Failure: Documents of Contemporary Art,*** ed. L. Le Feuvre, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2010.

both on a creative and ideological level. But while the outcome of those experimentations would be encountered mostly in museums and art galleries, similar approaches have nowadays become more accessible, and intertwined with our everyday experiences. Regardless whether this has to do with our Internet based culture and with technology permeating our lives, the fact is that what is commonly referred to as 'glitch' is being experienced to an ever-increasing extent. But then again, we often find ourselves recognizing audio or visual patterns from our technological routine in the broader field of Arts, and this is something completely different. Translating technological malfunctions, or glitches, into visual art, music or even designed spaces and buildings, makes one realize that 'errors' of that kind have gradually entered a stage of -cultural- acceptance. In fact, one needs to take a step back in order to discern that a wide array of things surrounding us are inspired by errors and created through them, whether these may be connected to temporal, spatial, communicational or electronic disruptions; an obscure tendency on which if one ruminates, will generate manifold questions in return. What does it say about western contemporaneity and its culture in relation to technology? Is 'glitching' as random as it seems or is there a way to attain knowledge through it? Those issues are to be investigated throughout this thesis, with an emphasis on glitch art as a symptom[3] of a technologically dense world and as an interpretative tool for contemporary western culture.

Problem diagnosis, research question/hypothesis

Certain artistic practices embrace errors as a means of enhancing the artists' creativity and as a way to criticize and challenge the previously mentioned negative stance towards situations and instances that are commonly referred to as 'erroneous'. Since gadget malfunctions, error messages and frozen screens are part of our lives, it is no surprise that an expanded and intentional use of 'errors' have been implemented, for at least a decade now, in various fields, ranging from architecture and design to visual arts and music. This tendency has gradually led to the emergence of what is nowadays referred to as 'glitch art', or 'glitch aesthetics'[4]; terms that could be pointing to a shift in our cultural attitude as well, as they acknowledge glitch,

[3] Throughout the thesis, the term *symptom* is used metaphorically and in an **almost** medical fashion, as I do not necessarily associate it with something negative or undesirable. It is rather used in the sense of an *indication,* a *sign* or *trace* of the existence of a particular feature or condition.

[4] Here, and as in most cases throughout the thesis, the term *aesthetics* is referring to the aesthetic qualities of glitch art, e.g. its style, forms and colors. It is only occasionally, and mostly when ontological aspects are discussed, that the word *aesthetics* is being used in a philosophical context.

something that is by definition undesirable, as culturally accepted and appreciated.

This systematical use and our ever-increasing preoccupation with these matters during the last years, makes me wonder whether we can keep on referring to terms such as 'errors' and 'accidents' any longer, at least when it comes to glitch art. Is experimentation the real drive of it or is it just the symptom of an attempt to deal with the ambivalence of Now, 'with the sense that the world that is at once intensely present and enigmatic'[5], where digital and 'real' are intertwined in an unprecedented way?

This thesis will discuss the emergence of glitch art[6] as a current phenomenon in contemporary art that, after embracing digital errors, becomes a mechanism for processing reality. I will focus on the exploration of the ontological meta-narratives that such visual stimuli create, rather than on the aesthetic aspects of 'errors' in glitch art and their technical background, as several other scholars have already investigated this.[7] What I will do instead is to analyze the consequent effect of glitches regarding the way we form our thinking and negotiate with what surrounds us. More specifically, the research is based on the hypothesis that glitch art can be categorized in different typologies that point towards different stages of a meaning making process which attempts to negotiate the ambivalence of contemporary reality; a life that is blurring the lines between 'virtual' and 'real' in an unprecedented way. Thus, the thesis will be carried out from an exploratory perspective that is mostly investigating rather than seeking for definite answers. Supported by theoretical arguments regarding post-modernity and the accident, my aim to deconstruct glitch-art and explore its ontological meta-narratives in relation to knowledge acquisition, will be further reinforced through theories on communication, and semiotics. This is why the term 'glitch' will be used in an artistic and not

[5] L. Berlant, 'Cruel Optimism', Duke University Press, Durnham NC, 2011 cited in D. Berry, M. van Dartel, M. Dieter, A. Hyde, M. Kasprzak, N. Muller, R. O'Reilly and J.L. de Vicente, ***New Aesthetics, New Anxieties***, ed. A. Hyde, Rotterdam, NAI Publishers/V2, 2012, Available from V2_, Institute For the Unstable Media, (accessed 30 January 2014).

[6] This thesis deals with the visual manifestations of glitch art. Henceforth and for the sake of brevity, whenever I use the term *glitch art*, I am referring to its visual (and two dimensional) version and not in the sense of a genre that varies from musical pieces and videos to designed objects and installations. It is only occasionally that glitch art is used as an all-encompassing term.

[7] See R. Menkman, 'The Glitch Moment(um)', ***Network Notebooks***, vol.4, Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam, 2011, Available from: Institute of Network Cultures, (accessed 12 February 2014); A. Blumenkranz, Instrumentalising the Accident. Critical Methodologies in Glitch Art, Master Thesis, Centre for Cultural Studies Goldsmiths, University of London, 2012; E. den Heijer, 'Evolving Glitch Art', EvoMUSART 2013, Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Evolutionary and Biologically Inspired Music, Sound, Art and Design, Heidelberg, Springer-Verlag Berlin, 2013, pp. 109-120, 2013, http://www.few.vu.nl/~eelco/publications/Eelco-den-Heijer-Evolving-Glitch-2013.pdf, (accessed 4 February 2014).

a technical context throughout my thesis. Selected glitch art examples will be used as supportive sources, in order to elucidate the theories involved, and as providers of knowledge about the experience and meaning of this type of systematized 'errors' and 'accidents'.

I consider this topic as a relatively under-researched one, as glitch art has only recently been dealt with as a phenomenon with cultural extensions or as one that could be used for analyzing and understanding contemporaneity.[8] In that sense, this thesis will contribute with new material to the broader field of Humanities, from film studies, media and communication studies to sociology and art theory to visual culture and anthropology.

Theories and methods

My research initiated by looking at varying perceptions of accidents, in a social, practical or creative context. In each and every case, I was always in search of their relation to the consequent shifts in our psychology, perception and way of experiencing reality.

Guy Debord's '*Society of the Spectacle'* (1967)[9] and the idea of a society where direct experience has been replaced by mediated representations, has been a major source of inspiration but not as much as Paul Virilio's book *'The Original Accident'* (2007),[10] as it brought to my attention the traumatic effects of techno-scientific progress, along with the need for a way to deal with natural and artificial disasters. In this book, Virilio discusses the increased 'speed' brought by technology and the consequent accelerated temporality, as a dangerous characteristic of our society that introduces the Accident, or even the potentiality of a disaster, as inherent to any technological invention. According to Virilio, the accident as 'an invention in the sense of uncovering what was hidden, just waiting to happen',[11] is directly connected to a gradual propagation of catastrophic events which affect us profoundly in a twofold way; firstly, by altering how 'the reality of the moment' is perceived and secondly, by becoming a persistent source of anxiety and anguish that is to be inherited by future generations. Thus, he argues that an urge to 'expose *the accidens in Time'* in order to be aware of it and allow it to become automatic, is the only way to avoid 'the fatal emergence

[8] Le Feuvre.
[9] G. Debord, ***Society of the Spectacle,*** trans. K Knabb, London, Rebel Press, 1987.
[10] P. Virilio, ***The Original Accident,*** trans. J Rose, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2007.
[11] Ibid., p. 9.

of *the accident in knowledge*' that 'would not only amount to unconsciousness but to madness'.[12] By employing this dramatic tone, Virilio attempts to introduce the act of exposing accidents, along with the frequency of their repetition, as '*the imperative of responsibility* for the generations to come';[13] an idea that culminates in the need for a *Museum of the Accident* as an antidote to our habituation to horror and disasters that 'will raise the issue of the unexpected […] to preventive intelligence',[14] helping us to face both natural and artificial accidents.

While Debord and Virilio have been used as the underlying thread of the thesis, an investigative attitude towards them directed my point of view. This has also been combined with John Fiske's *'Introduction to Communication Studies'* (1982)[15] and his interest in culture making and cultural dynamics. Fiske offered me the necessary theoretical background, in order to examine glitch art as a symptom of a communication failure that stimulates our perception.

Having formulated my point of focus through those three books, I have later on collected empirical material from the latest reports on glitch art that would appear on Internet journals and magazines on a frequent basis, in order to support and, at the same time, check the validity of my arguments. Gillian Rose's '*Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to researching with visual materials'* (2001)[16] has been used as a guide for the organization of my investigation and my approach towards the two main case studies of this thesis. Initiating with Rose's interpretation of visual images, which is based on a content analysis methodology,[17] allowed me to proceed to a theoretical analysis of glitch art, in order to bind it with an amalgam of the theories mentioned above. A constant juxtaposition of empirical material with theories became a way to confirm or reformulate my very own ideas and arguments.

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[12] Ibid., pp. 3-6.
[13] Ibid., p.7
[14] Ibid. p. 8.
[15] J. Fiske, ***Introduction to Communication Studies,*** 3rd edition, Routledge, London; New York, 2011.
[16] G. Rose, ***Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to researching with visual materials,*** 3rd edition, London, Sage Publishers, 2012, pp. 19-77.
[17] Following Rose's tripartite approach, the meaning of each and every image is based, created and influenced by the following: the image's site of production, the image itself and its audiences. Then, each and every one of those is characterized by three modalities: the technological, compositional and social aspect. Out of those three, the technological will not be that important in my research, as the other two, compositional and social will be of bigger importance, according to my thesis' delimitation. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

Review and state of current research/sources and literature

Regardless the relatively recent appearance of glitch art, the subject has already been discussed and researched from various aspects, within the fields of Music, the Arts or even Architecture.[18] Although I choose not to focus on technical issues, I have nonetheless consulted various academic papers or articles at an early stage of my research, in order to get an insight into the broader field of glitch aesthetics. Based on the subjects under discussion and on the degree of innovation for the time they were written, I would say that there are three influential works regarding glitch art and its aesthetics: '*The Glitch Moment(um)'* (2011) by Rosa Menkman,[19] '*New Aesthetic, New Anxieties'* (2012) by D. Berry et al[20] and '*Glitch: Designing Imperfection'* (2009) by Iman Moradi et al[21]. Each one of them is representative of their time and indicative of how our approach towards glitch and errors differentiated.

Moradi's '*Glitch: Designing Imperfection'*, could be regarded as a visual anthology of glitches, as in complete contrast with the global cultural quest for high definition images and minimized time for data transfers at that time. Dating back in 2009, Moradi's book is infused with the newborn fascination around glitches and is practically the precursor of the theoretical elaborations to come. Consisting of a wide array of examples resulting from errors and unintentional functions, Moradi's collection of fragments, highlights mistakes as thought-provoking events and aspires to re-introduce errors as a source of inspiration and creativity. This attempts to be validated, by an insight provided by media artists, concerning their methodology and the meaning of glitches to them. However, it still lacks any theoretical foundation.

Menkman's '*Glitch Momentum'*, could be seen as an attempt to make sense of glitch art and aesthetics and finally of them as a whole new culture. Trying to offer a critical overview of error-driven practices, Menkman starts by giving a historical background and continues by binding glitches with theory. She employs classical information and communication theories (e.g. C. Shannon and Weaver) that she later on intermingles with recent approaches (A. Liu, J.

[18] Den Heijer et al.; C. Cloninger, 'GltchLnguistx: The Machine in the Ghost / Static Trapped in Mouths', October 2010, http://lab404.com/glitch/, (accessed 23 February 2014); G. Smith, *Ø|¬! a glitch architecture possibilities primer,* Master Thesis, Royal College of Art, London, 2012, Available from gilesspsmith.com, (accessed 20 January 2014).
[19] Menkman.
[20] Berry et al.
[21] I. Moradi, A. Scott, J. Gilmore and C. Murphy, ***Glitch: Designing Imperfection****,* Brooklyn-New York, Mark Batty Publisher, 2009.

Bolter etc). For her, glitch is an in-between of an artifact and a filter that is always related, generated and influenced by noise, failure or the accident. In a form of a Manifesto, she also stresses that we need to be conscious and clear of the differentiation between technical and cultural aspects of glitch culture and keeps a critical media aesthetics stance towards 'the commodified glitch'. According to her, "To study media-specific artifacts is to take interest in the failure of media to disappear, or in other words, in noise artifacts".[22] Relating that to failure, she categorizes those noise artifacts in compression, feedback and glitch and describes the latter as an 'unaccepted […] unordered' force that is nonetheless giving space to experimentation. After emphasizing on that middle space, Menkman culminates into a phenomenological analysis of glitch through selected works by digital media artist Ant Scott,[23] Internet artists Jodi etc. She also gives a definition for glitch art that according to her

> [i]s best described as a collection of forms and events that oscillate between extremes: the fragile, technologically-based moment(um) of a material brake, the conceptual or techno-cultural investigation of breakages, and the accepted and standardized commodity that a glitch can become.[24]

Even though Menkman approaches glitch art from a broader perspective than Moradi does, she still fails to address some of its functions and characteristics on an ontological level.

The most recent of the three sources that I use, '*New Aesthetics, New Anxieties',* written in 2012 by David Berry and an interdisciplinary group of writers, curators and theorists, is basically describing and attempting to establish 'the concept of a "glitch ontology".'[25] According to Berry, recognising glitch as an ontological condition is the only way to acknowledge the widespread intrusion of the digital into the physical. Overcoming Moradi's initial excitement about glitches and Menkman's early attempt to theorize them, Berry is using the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and terms that are used in his book '*Being and Time'* (1927),[26] as tools for understanding digital aesthetics. More

[22] Menkman, p. 14.
[23] Ant Scott, a multimedia artist from England, is often referred to as 'the grandfather of glitch', for he had been recognizable for his minimalistic pieces since 2001. Placed in the earlier period of glitch art, Scott deals mostly with the pure representation of software anomalies without relying that much on the intervention of artistic intention. L. Khaikin, 'The Radical Capacity of Glitch Art: Expression through an Aesthetic Rooted in Error', ***ReDefine Magazine***, 5 February 2014,http://www.redefinemag.com/2014/glitch-art-expression-through-an-aesthetic-rooted-in-error/, (accessed 4 July 2014).
[24] Menkman, p. 55.
[25] Berry et al, p. 45.
[26] M. Heidegger, 'Being and Time', London, Wiley-Blackwell, 1978, cited in Berry et. al.

specifically, he juxtaposes glitches to everyday objects in order to elucidate what the former are. In order to do so, he refers to Heidegger's example with the hammer (*Zug, a Thing*) that helps us understand how different modes of use affect when an object (or event) will capture our attention (or 'disappear'). Heidegger characterizes a hammer on a table as *Vorhandenheit* (present-at-hand), a term that suggests a decontextualized item and a detached attitude towards it. However, the same hammer would be described as *Zuhandenheit* (ready-at-hand), if used by a carpenter. It would no longer be perceived as a detached object but as an extension of the carpenter's hand, a part of the action itself. What Berry mentions though, is that this subtle shift from one state to the other does not apply to computers. More precisely, he states that 'computational things are constantly becoming ready-to-hand/unready-to-hand in quick alteration'.[27] This is what glitch is: a state of unreadyness-to-hand, or Heidegger's *Unzuhandenheit*. According to Heidegger, there are three forms of unreadyness-to-hand; Obtrusiveness (*Aufdringlichkeit*), Obstinacy (*Aufsässigkeit*) and Conspicuousness (*Auffälligkeit*). While the first two are referring to non-functioning equipment, the latter is *a Thing,* or here equipment, that is not functioning at its full potential.[28] In an attempt to relate that term to computational things Berry is referring to a conspicuousness created by glitch, which interrupts the everyday experience of things; which 'continually forces a contextual slowing-down at the level of the mode of being of the user, thus the continuity of flow or practice is interrupted by minute pauses and breaks (which may be beyond conscious perception, as such).[29] Having a critical approach to digital aesthetics and Internet culture as a whole, the text concludes by asking people to contemplate on the politics of the computational device, as it has proved useful for getting an insight to the present and possible ways to practice and critique that condition.[30]

The expanding interest and concern about the 'glitch phenomenon' is also proven by the fact that it has been discussed quite extensively in academia as well. At an early stage of my research I came across theses that cover various facets of glitch; technical, historical, aesthetic or related to its use as a creative agency. Those examples come from a broad field of studies that vary from Visual Communication and Interactive Media studies to Architecture and Informatics. Out of all, Anna Blumenkranz's '*Instrumentalising the Accident: Critical*

[27] Berry et al., p. 46.
[28] M. Heidegger, 'Being and Time', London, Wiley-Blackwell, 1978, cited in Berry et. al., pp. 45-46.
[29] Berry et al., p. 46.
[30] Ibid., p.62.

Methodologies in glitch Art'[31] has been particularly helpful in formulating my own arguments and perspective. Blumenkranz focuses on the methodological use of accidents in glitch art, and sees them as a source of knowledge. She is stressing the importance of understanding the difference in between different methodologies, as according to her, this could greatly affect 'the critical potential and conceptual sharpness of glitch art'.[32]

Disposition and Structure

This thesis discusses glitch art as the sequence of certain conceptual techniques that our culture employs in order to gradually transform the confusion and uneasiness caused from glitches, into a logical method for processing reality. Therefore, the first chapter presents the historical origins of glitch art and introduces it as a symptom of failure in communication. The second chapter is focusing on glitch art typologies in order to examine how encounters with various categories of unconventional images affect us. The third chapter is dedicated to post-glitch art as the result of a meaning making process, which redefines our relation to the original accident through hybrid techniques and transmedia narratives. Lastly, the final chapter serves as a summary of the main points of the thesis and points to possible directions for further research.

[31] A. Blumenkranz, Instrumentalising the Accident. Critical Methodologies in Glitch Art*,* Master Thesis, Centre for Cultural Studies Goldsmiths, University of London, 2012, Available from Academia.edu (Accessed 23 January 2014).
[32] Blumenkranz, p. 3.

1. THE ORIGINAL GLITCH

This chapter begins with a brief historical contextualization for the erratic use of media and culminates in a short analysis that relates glitch art with failures in communication. In the first section noise art is presented as the predecessor of glitch art and in the second one, a discussion around basic terms from communication theories, lays the foundation for analyzing glitch art as part of a meaning making process.

1. 1: Noise Art as the site of production of Glitch Art

The fact that the term 'glitch' has been coined shortly after the middle of the 20th century does not mean that it did not exist before naming it as such. Artistic practices based on the erratic use of each period's technological culture, have been thriving long time before that, only in different forms and in accordance with each period's technologies.[33] Today it might be glitches in audiovisual media battling against classical art forms and genres but around the middle of 20th century, it was, as Menkman names it, noise art against formal and artistic conventions of that time.[34] Being at the threshold of video art, experimental filmmaking and video art, noise art has its roots in several art movements such as in Dadaism and Fluxus.[35] Having acted as a means to explore different aesthetical qualities through media manipulation, noise art could be described as the outcome of Fluxus philosophy which introduced us to noise aesthetics. Unorthodox techniques and media combinations challenged any conventional distinction in between recognized artistic practices and random creation, establishing destruction as an approved artistic practice. This was achieved in a plethora of

[33] A characteristic example would be Luigi Russolo, an Italian futurist painter, and his work. Russolo states in his 1913 manifesto *L' Arte dei Rumori*, or *The Art of* Noises in English, that the industrial revolution has allowed modern man to appreciate more complex sounds. He considers traditional melodic music confining, so, he designs and constructs a series of noise-generating devices. He calls them *Intonarumori* and makes them produce machine-like sounds, without having to imitate or reproduce those. J. Nechvatal, ***Immersion into Noise***, Open Humanities Press, 2011, p. 41, Available from: openhumanitiespress.org, (accessed 5 August 2014).

[34] Menkman, p. 33.

[35] Even though an equation between glitch art and the aforementioned artistic movements cannot be claimed, a closer look will confirm their affinity. Fluxus for instance, might have had a more participatory character, that was trying to engage the audience through several activities and physical performances, but it was nonetheless concerned with the disruption of any expected conventions. Actions and music included at their events would be produced through reduction, repetition, improvisation and chance. Having a strong ideological background, Fluxus promoted several goals and ideas that uncannily resonate with some of the qualities that glitch art often demonstrates; fighting against professional and commercialized art and culture, promoting anti-art and a non-art reality that could be grasped and available for everyone. Michael Corris, 'Fluxus', Grove Art Online, Oxford University Press, 2009, Available from MoMA Art Terms, The Museum of Modern Art, 2014, <http://www.moma.org/collection/theme.php?theme_id=10457> (accessed 5 July 2014).

audio and visual ways but examples that could be directly related to glitch art would involve scratched, burned or painted celluloid, as in Len Lye's work, or magnetic distortions on a TV monitor, as in the -presently iconic-*Magnet Tv*, by Nam June Paik, in 1965.[36]

Len Lye's *Colour Box,* brought together painting and cinematography as Lye applied direct painting on celluloid. Contrary to what many might have firstly believed, the result was far from catastrophic. Exceptionally captivating effects and vibrating hand-painted abstract patterns amazed cinema audiences, while in several film festivals a special category had to be invented in order to include Len Lye's masterpiece.[37]

I believe that the affinity of those erroneous media manipulations with posterior glitch art is more than obvious, as the interruption of media information flow, through the destruction of a media message, and ultimately the instrumentalization of accidents, proves to be a springboard for exploring a new kind of media 'space' in both cases. Void of coherent and intelligible information, accidents and errors are filled with data that might not be understandable but gives space for new interpretational processes and sensory experiences, which are critical towards materiality, aesthetic structures and eventually media per se.

Hence, what noise art aptly underlines here, is that the manipulation of media 'messages' through artistic practices, has been a source of reflection on our culture for quite a long time. This is highlighted and confirmed by terms such as *technostruggles,*[38] a word coined by John Fiske in 1994, in his attempt to describe exactly that kind of dynamics of technology that allows its function as an 'agent of cultural change'.[39] Even though Fiske was relatively disinterested in technology itself, he had quite extensively discussed popular media from television to the Internet, as a space of constant battles and incessant struggles over power, meaning, pleasure and knowledge.[40] He denied any model that would put forward specific media technologies as means of cultural domination and focused on them instead as reflectors of their cultural context that yet, could not overcome socioeconomic, cultural or political

[36] Ibid. See fig. 6; fig. 7 in Appendix, p. 45.
[37] 'Free Radical: The Films of Len Lye', Harvard Film Archive, Harvard College Library, 2007, <http://hcl.harvard.edu/hfa/films/2007novedec/lye.html>, (accessed 5 July 2014).
[38] J. Fiske, 'Media Matters: Everyday Culture and Political Change', Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis, Minn., 1994, cited in Fiske, 2011, p. xii.
[39] Fiske, 2011, p. xii
[40] J. Fiske, ***Television Culture,*** London, Routledge, 1988; Fiske, 1994.

factors.[41] Therefore, what he essentially did was to deny technological determinism, suggesting that socio-cultural factors are influencing technology rather than the other way round. However, this approach is to be questioned throughout my thesis, for I deem it insufficient for providing a contemporary stance that recognizes the intricate nature of this techno-cultural interrelation, which cannot be described through a cause and effect model. Regardless whether Fiske's 'factors' are referring to shifts, prevailing trends or dynamics, I opt for regarding them as another type of 'noise'; an 'error' or a hindrance in between technology and flow of information that affects humans and society which in turn transforms the content and nature of media itself.

What I suggest is that the affinity of noise- and glitch art highlights an ongoing feedback loop in between society and technology, and vice-versa; rather than a strictly linear and techno-deterministic perspective, where society adapts to technology, or contrariwise. What I propound here is that the way masses interact with new media and technologies should be seen as a two-folded act that firstly comprehends and in turn influences technology; exactly as it happened with Avanteguardism and Fluxus. Stages and not final ends of a techno-social interaction, these artistic movements negotiated social and technical conventions that were partly propelled by technology, but resulted in new conditions, which in turn shaped posterior media and technology.

Through a similar process, glitch art has managed to become a media genre on its own during the last decade. Due to repeated and systematized attempts to comprehend the nature of software accidents and malfunctions, glitch art brought the hidden structure of computer software on the surface and altered our perception in a way that in turn influenced the appearances of contemporary media.

The first time that the word glitch has been recorded was during the 1960s, as part of astronautical slang that was describing a technical malfunction.[42] Even though the word has initially been generated in order to describe 'a sudden surge of electrical current', a 'malfunction' or 'hitch' in astronautical slang,[43] it has later on been established as a term that describes a wide variety of mishaps, from 'sudden malfunctions or faults', to 'unexpected

[41] Fiske, 1994, p. 219.
[42] 'Glitch', Oxford Dictionaries, Oxford University Press, 2014, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/glitch?q=glitch, (accessed 12 March 2014).
[43] Ibid.

setbacks'.[44] The word is of German origin and results from the word *glitschen, which* means to slip.[45] However, as Rosa Menkman notes, regardless the term's technical undertones since its emergence, the word glitch has gradually entered the sphere of art and music since the beginning of this century, in order to describe a new artistic methodology.[46] The result of it was Glitch art; an artistic practice that employs software malfunctions in order to discover new aesthetics, through image (and/or sound) manipulation. In that way, the 'accidental methodology' of noise art has been re-introduced, only that this time, the new forms and structures to be explored were to be dependent and shaped by contemporary technological conditions.

1. 2: The Original Glitch as a Communicational disruption

> 'Communication is too often taken for granted when it should be taken to pieces.'[47]
>
> John Fiske

The reason for choosing Fiske's 'Introduction to Communication Studies' (1982), as a theoretical background for this part of my thesis is that he takes a similar stance regarding 'misreadings', errors and failures (in communication). What other theoreticians see as misconceptions or failure in communication,[48] 'Fiske understood as culturally generative and politically productive'.[49] Fiske offers an extensive overview of various approaches and tendencies in Communication studies but the whole book is in fact built on how to understand and benefit from any communicational process. Whether that includes errors or a failed, in strictly technical or procedural sense, transmission of information, is of minor importance; a fact that encouraged me to bind Fiske's ideas with glitch art. As Fiske mentions, there are two main schools in communication studies; one that he names as the 'process school' and another one, the 'semiotic school'. [50] What they differ in is their point of focus; the former has

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[44] Ibid.
[45] A. Mitchell, 'Glitch Art – Making Art out of Errors', **ArtGallery.co.uk**, 17 March 2014, http://www.artgallery.co.uk/blog/post/2014/03/17/glitch_art.aspx, (accessed 17 March 2014).
[46] Menkman, pp. 7-9.
[47] T. O'Sullivan, J. Hartley, D. Saunders, M. Montgomery and J. Fiske, ***Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies***, ed. John Fiske, 2nd edn., London and New York, Routledge, 1994, p. viii.
[48] See C. E. Shannon, W. Weaver, ***The Mathematical Theory of Communication***, Illinois, University of Illinois Press, 1998.
[49] Fiske, 2011, p. xxvi
[50] Ibid., p. 2.

generally the successful transmission of information in its core, while the latter is rather concerned with how meanings are produced when people and information interact. While Fiske draws a definite line in between those two schools and their divergent approaches, I nonetheless believe that they can in fact meet and offer an enhanced theoretical tool for understanding glitches and glitch art. Thus, John Fiske's reading of communicational theories proved to be indispensable for me, in order to comprehend and later on demonstrate how noise in communication affects the way we construct meanings and perceive reality. In pursuance of elucidating what I mean by that, I will start by giving an insight to certain main concepts, that originate from both schools, and use them as an introduction for this section. The first two terms I will present, communication and message, are based on the semiotics-school approach, while the concept of redundancy and entropy is taken from the process school. However, I consider all of them as being absolutely applicable to my subject. As the compilation of that mini lexicon will provide me with a necessary theoretical backbone, Fiske's ideas will simultaneously be intermingled with my own observations on glitches and glitch art. This merging will bring theory and glitches into perspective in order to achieve the needed contextualization and generate a new hybrid theoretical approach for glitch studies that stands somewhere in the middle of the two aforementioned schools. Henceforth, this amalgam will be used as a guide for the formulation of my own thoughts throughout the thesis.

What is communication?

What is important to be noted, is that the essence of communication, for Fiske, lies in it as a process, or a social space where meaning making and negotiation is achieved, rather than in it as a mere and unidirectional transmission of a message. In such a context, factors such as efficiency and accuracy are deemed as trivial, if not completely irrelevant. Therefore, terms such as *communication failure* are also out of context, as *misunderstandings* are not necessarily regarded as a symptom for the former ones, rather than possible indications of cultural differences between the sender and the receiver. Hence, the communication moves on a different ontological level, where the significance of its text and culture arises, with signs and potential meanings as integral parts of the former.[51]

[51] Ibid., p. 2.

What is a message?

While a message can be considered as a signal[52] that is transmitted during the communication process, with intention as the most crucial factor for its constitution, Fiske opts for an alternate view. Leaving aside the conscious or unconscious, stated or unstated intention of the sender, and the possibility to retrieve that through analysis, Fiske places the signs that are forming the message in focus instead. According to that approach, the reading process can be fruitful solely if the reader interacts and negotiates with the signs and codes that form the message, guided by his or her cultural background and social experiences. The message, then, is not part of linear and unidirectional process, where information is sent from point A to B. As with the intricate interrelation between technology and society, the message is part of a complicated and multidirectional relationship in which external reality, the producer and the reader of the text are involved. Only that in his specific triangular loop, the receiver of the message, or the reader, is bearing a more active and important role.[53]

These terms, 'communication' and 'message', could be directly applied to glitches and glitch art; especially if one ponders on W. J. T Mitchell's suggestion that images are not inert objects but rather entities with desires and drives of their own, that convey meaning if only they 'interact' with their readers.[54] All combined, justify what I have already mentioned in the introduction; that I opt for considering glitch art, as a communicational process and not as a dry technical one. Moreover, its analysis as the result of a media-inundated culture can facilitate the understanding of the message that glitch art bears; a message about the intentions of glitch art, about the way humans and technology get influenced by each other. Even though someone would be tempted to characterize those as trivial details, I insist once more on them as being vital for comprehending what surround us, leaving aside the technical malfunctions and failures that are also involved, whether those are intentional or not; I deal with them as symptoms, or else signs, of a culture that waits to be deciphered and negotiated.

[52] A signal is an encoded message that a transmitter sends through a communicational channel to a receiver. During a discussion, mouths would be the transmitters, sound waves traveling through the channel of air, the signal, and ears the receivers. Fiske, 2011, p. 7.
[53] Fiske, 2011, p. 3.
[54] See W.J.T. Mitchell, ***What do pictures want? : The lives and loves of images***, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Redundancy vs. Entropy [55]

Both terms are indicative of the predictability of a message, used as factors that describe the conventionality of the information to be shared, regarding its content. Nonetheless, as the title suggests, those two terms are also opposite. Hence, while redundancy is related to high predictability, therefore to low informational value too, an entropic message would contrarily be characterized by low predictability and high informational value.[56] Here Fiske stresses once more that the implied uselessness of redundancy is misleading, as it is in fact facilitating practical communication.

Fiske also refers to redundancy's two-fold function. The first one is technical and provides us with a means of decoding, as well as with one for locating errors. This is also how deficiencies of a noisy[57] channel or the 'unreadability' of an entropic message can be moderated, as it is due to the conventionality of the content that one can easily predict and fill in the missing parts of it; whether that is a written text, an image or a phone conversation. The second one is more socially oriented, as Fiske relates redundant communication to subcultures that share certain conventions regarding their taste or way of communicating. Since there is no new information in them, they are deemed as highly redundant but still, they manage to strengthen already existing relationships, along with the sense of belonging to that specific social group.

In the same context, Fiske refers to how audiences react to certain types of art. Namely, he links social behavior with the reception of unconventional, or else *entropic*, art. He correctly stresses though that one should not consider the audience's reception as something static that never changes. The original reception of any provocative art form might be characterized as outrageous or offensive but that can later change and become widely accepted; for it might

[55] Fiske, 2011, pp. 9-16.
[56] The French physicist Léon Brillouin gives another interesting definition for the term entropy. According to him, entropy is usually described as measuring the amount of disorder in a physical system, or better, the lack of information about the actual structure of the system. As Brillouin continues: '[T]his luck of information introduces the possibility of a great variety of microscopically distinct structures, which we are, in practice, unable to distinguish from one another. Since any one of these different microstructures can actually be realized at any given time, the lack of information corresponds to actual disorder in the hidden degrees of freedom.' L. Brillouin, ***Science and Information Theory***, 2nd edn., New York, Dover publications, 1962, p. 160.
[57] Noise is any unintended addition to the signal between its transmission and reception. This could be distorted sound in a telephone call, or 'snow' on a TV screen. As a concept, *noise* can also be referring to any signal received that was not transmitted by the source, or anything that interferes with the accurate decoding of the intended signal. An example for that would be distracting thoughts during a lecture. Fiske, 2011, p. 7.

firstly appear as a highly entropic message to its initial audiences but it can also gradually establish its own conventions, ascribing to it redundant qualities. Therefore, as Fiske ably concludes, redundant messages could be regarded as audience-centered, caring about a smooth communication process with the minimum or no noise, while entropic ones are subject-matter-centered, concerned about the form of the message. As a closure, he employs a generalized conclusion, according to which redundancy can be equated with a force that fights for the status quo and against change. Entropy on the other hand, might be less comfortable or even shocking, thus not that easy to communicate; which in turn constitutes a reason for equating entropy with highly stimulating interactions.[58]

Once more, glitches and glitch art respectively, resonate with Fiske's descriptions about entropy and redundancy. According to what has just been described, any conventional image that we encounter could be just another example for a redundant form of communication. As we are used to being constantly surrounded by them, such images eventually cause little if no intellectual stimulation at all. I would even parallel them with what the semiotician Roman Jakobson names as *phatic communication,*[59] the one that we employ in our social interactions while waving our hand and saying 'hello' to a friend we see in the street. That offers nothing new; it just reaffirms and maintains an existing relationship, or a communicational channel. In other words, it is a gesture; a cultural message, that is understandable only to those that share the same cultural codes.

Respectively, glitches would be the equivalent of noise in oral communication; hindrances to a smooth decoding of the message's content. Moreover, the exact same entropic qualities of glitches, partially justify the controversial character of glitch art and discussions around the genre's artistic merit. Apart from those practical parallelisms, I consider what follows as of paramount importance for my thesis: if we accept that any entropic message has a potential for multiple meanings which stimulate our attention, then glitch art can respectively be examined as a message bearing multivalent interpretations that are able to affect how we perceive the world around us. Viewing glitch art as a par-excellence (meta)post-modern art form, allows me to relate its analysis and apprehension to what Lyotard ascribes to post-

[58] It would be interesting to further research glitch art through a different perspective that is more inclined towards natural sciences. Engaging Brillouin's analysis of the relation between information and entropy, would allow the discussion of glitch through the concept of negative entropy, or *negentropy*, a principle of information that aims at decreasing entropy (and increasing order respectively). Brillouin, pp. 152-161.
[59] Ibid. p.12.

modern knowledge in general; the ability to refine our sensitivity to differences; a reinforcement of our tolerance towards whatever is incommensurable.[60] This transubstantiates glitch art into a defensive mechanism against our inability to comprehend hypermediatized contemporaneity; into a remedy for the anxiety, stress and doubt that its precariousness evokes. As we get involved with glitch art, either as creators or viewers, we manage to incorporate glitches in an ordered whole, i.e. art genre, therefore experience it in a different way and finally comprehend it, without any confusion or stress around its nature and sudden emergence. Exactly as Virilio states, behaviours as such have their roots at the non-palpable origin of the accident and they aim at the administration of fear through the synchronization of collective emotions.[61] A characteristic example for that can be drawn from Internet culture and its online groups and activities, a subject that Virilio also touches upon. Focusing on video-games and their ability to drive users into a 'groundless, parallel world', allows him to give a new (positive) dimension to an otherwise 'panic phenomenon of dependence' that psychiatry would relate to a mental disorder; the case for Virilio here is not the loss of sense of reality rather than the cathartic qualities of such an environment 'where each individual gradually gets used to inhabiting the accident of an audiovisual continuum, independent of the real space of their life.'[62] Consequently, glitch art could be considered as the next step of such behaviours where a more active role in the digital environment is adopted; where humans are involved as co-creators of the accidents that appear on the screen. In other words, glitch art could be eventually defined as the way to create order where there seems to be chaos, in an attempt to acquire knowledge where there seems to be no meaning at all.

[60] J-F. Lyotard, ***The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge****,* trans. G Bennington and B Massumi, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1993, p. xxv.
[61] Virilio, 2007, p. 17.
[62] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

2. GLITCH ART

This chapter begins with a brief description of glitch art that continuous as a focus on its various typologies in order to understand how different categories of unconventional images affect us. Supported by content analysis of a specific glitch-art 'painting', these findings will highlight the instrumentalization of accidents as a method for processing reality. Finally, a theoretical contextualization will further investigate this method and discuss glitch art as a metonym for reality; as a mechanism that revolutionizes our perception and reinforces our tolerance against the stress that is connected to the unknown source of the Original Accident.

Glitch Art could be briefly described as the systematized production of (visual) stimuli that are –the most often- fragmented, discolored or generally distorted due to various technological errors. That could be attributed either to an equipment malfunction, as well as to a faulty or broken mechanical part, or to a manipulated digital image code. In order to capture those effects and let such an image with corrupted data arise, glitch artists have to collect their material from a combination of analogue and digital resources. Once more, the affinity with posterior experimental artistic practices, such as noise or video art becomes quite apparent, with visual errors that arise 'naturally' and not through software for the simulation of the effect, as the boldest difference. Taking into account the vast possibilities of computer software, make variations for glitch art seem infinite; however they all flirt with the unrecognizable.[63] Shifted perspectives, superimposed layers, linear or pixelated patterns, asymmetrical repetitions and jagged images define and compose the identifying character of the form. One of the many ways that this fractured aesthetics affects us can be described by the disturbance of our habitual visual routine that challenges our perceptive capabilities. And if that sounds too random or 'accidental', one must keep in mind that even if glitch art is digitally produced, it still requires effort and skills, so that the initial image-source is not completely destroyed; or at least not in an aesthetically pleasing way. As Sabato Visconti, a Brazilian glitch artist, characteristically notes, 'Glitching is the careful simulation of malfunction. It's an absurd scheme that requires some finesse, because some glitches will break a file beyond recognition and other glitches will have no effect at all.'[64] What he

[63] It would be interesting to juxtapose the term *unrecognizable* with Lyotard's notion of the *unpresentable.* Lyotard refers to it as a condition of post-modernity that denies the solace of good forms and intensifies the sense of un-representability through its search for new presentations. Avantegarde and its search for the sublime would be an appropriate example for that, while the *unrecognizable* would be exemplified by glitch art and its idea of a fleeting whole, and meaning. Lyotard, p. 81.

[64] Khaikin, 'The Radical Capacity of Glitch Art: Expression through an Aesthetic Rooted in Error'.

skillfully underlines is that apart from all the technical specifications that generate the visual outcome of the glitch, there are many more factors to be involved that will determine the oeuvre's aesthetic and compositional qualities; especially for it is a human being controlling the machine and not the other way around. Therefore, some more constraints and limits to be overcome, are pointing to the 'man-made' nature of glitch art and not the technological. The artist's technique, his or her conceptual and ideological intentions, would be some of them.

2. 1: Glitch Art Typologies

During my research I came across diverse approaches on how to classify glitches. Based on their multi-faceted nature and the ever-expanding vocabulary around them, Moradi and Menkman have introduced new terms that are attempting to describe and differentiate mostly technical or methodological aspects within the glitch art genre, rather than the visual –or else compositional- ones. Since then, minor alterations, or additions have been made in articles and dissertations, as already mentioned; however, I believe that an improved categorization is still needed, in order to examine Glitch art as an 'accident that reveals the substance'.[65] According to Virilio, this happens 'because WHAT CROPS UP (*accidens*) is a sort of analysis, a techno-analysis of WHAT IS BENEATH (*substare*) any knowledge.'[66] Building upon this perspective, I will develop a classification that refers more to what is 'depicted', rather than on the 'accidentally'-revealed software structure, or the procedural qualities of the art pieces themselves. Through this analysis I will approach the 'substance' of those 'accidents' that concerns how meaning can be acquired through glitch art. Before introducing the division of glitch art according to its visual and compositional qualities, I will briefly present Moradi's and Menkman's typologies, in order to facilitate the understanding of my own approach.

Technical-methodological categorization

Iman Moradi, one of the first to discuss the term glitch as an art genre, tries to separate technical from constructed glitches and ends up categorizing them according to their final

[65] Virilio, 2007, p. 10.
[66] Ibid.

visual outcome. Hence, he employs the terms *pure glitch* and *glitch-alike*.[67] For him, *pure glitch* is only the one that emerges unexpectedly, due to a malfunction or change of voltage that inhibits electrical flow. Therefore, it is not intentional but it appears accidentally, as it is triggered by machine-made errors. G*litch-alike,* on the other hand, is referring to a 'constructed' glitch, or a man-made 'error' that is being re-appropriated as a creative practice.

What Menkman proposes is a categorization that shifts its focus to methodological and procedural matters. Yet again, the outcome is just another binary system, only that this time it involves the terms *cool glitch* and *hot glitch.*[68] Thus, cool glitches exist only the moment that the error occurs and just before this is thought and established as a failure. We could say that this term is in fact attempting to 'freeze' those seconds that are oscillating between complete destruction and innovative creation. The crossing of this temporal limit and the hunt or standardization of this erroneous effect is what hot glitches describe instead. With a critical stance towards them, Menkman warns us about this kind of reproduction, as it sets the ground for 'a "new" form of conservative glitch art that puts an emphasis on design […] rather than on the post-procedural and political breaking of flows'.[69] Therefore, she is judgmental of this kind of predictability that according to her generates a new type of commodities, the *domesticated glitches*.[70]

As Blumenkranz aptly notices, while Menkman seems to be against Moradi's dual scheme, arguing for it to be restrictive and lacking a critical stance, she is in fact proposing yet another binary system. Then, as expected, Bluemenkranz tries to 'mend' the aforementioned approaches by discussing the concept of integrated errors in the creative process that allow partly initiated accidents.[71] Yet, she is not satisfied by rational and mathematical tactics of that kind, so she chooses to build upon Menkman and explore 'the strengths and potentials of a critical exploration of *accident* as opposed to its engineering.'[72] Ironically enough, I will argue that both Blumenkranz and Menkman still fail to be sufficiently critical, as they do not even discuss the possibility that even a normalized, hot or domesticated glitch could still be

[67] I. Moradi, GLTCH AESTHETICS, Unpublished Bachelor Thesis, School of Design and Technology-Department of Architecture, University of Huddersfield, 2004, pp. 9-10. http://www.haraldpeterstrom.com/content/5.pdfs/Iman%20Moradi%20%E2%80%93%20Glitch%20Aesthetics.pdf, (accessed 11 May 2014).
[68] Menkman, p. 44.
[69] Ibid., p. 55
[70] Ibid.
[71] Blumenkranz, pp. 9-11.
[72] Ibid., p.13.

valued as an index of our media culture and of the way those two interact (i.e. media and culture).

Towards a Visual (content-based) Categorization

Before elaborating on my own categories, it should be noted that I am not claiming a rigorous and comprehensive categorization of glitches and glitch art. Since glitches are constantly evolving, following the incessant evolution of hardware and software technologies, along with social and human situations and interactions, such a pursuit would be at least vain if not impossible at all. Yet, I consider this categorization as a decisive stage of my analysis. As Berlant also observes, this is exactly what art and cultural experimentation do; they both process our networked and neoliberal present along with its possibilities, leading to aesthetic relations to it, through defined and detectable 'genres' or forms. In turn, the latter ones allow contemporary subjects to relate to and deal with contradictions and the ambivalence of our present and lastly apprehend it.[73] Commenting on Berlant's ideas, Berry adds something more that simultaneously validates Fiske's notion of entropic messages as highly stimulant and beneficial for human perception; '[W]e pay attention to new forms of art and aesthetic encounters so that something, indeed anything, about the present might become more knowable'.[74] In order to elaborate more on that in the second section of this chapter, I will firstly have to proceed to a descriptive, rather than definitive, distinction of glitches. Despite the fact that these typologies are temporal and, therefore, might soon become obsolete, they are nonetheless indispensable as analytical tools.[75]

The easiest way to start categorizing glitches would be by separating those who are merely visual pieces from the ones that include audio in the form of distorted sound or otherwise. In the latter case, sound could be either descriptive and elaborating on what the viewer

[73] Berlant, pp. 15-20.
[74] Berry et al., p. 17.
[75] According to the German sociologist and philosopher, Max Weber, and his methodology of '*Ideal Types'* (*Idealtypus),* types and typologies are ephemeral analytical constructs. They might be subjective and fictional, as they can be encountered as such nowhere in reality, but according to Weber, their use is both unavoidable and necessary; for they facilitate our correspondence with reality and the acquisition of meaningful knowledge. T. Burger, ***Max Weber's theory of concept formation: history, laws and ideal types***, Durham, Duke University Press, 1987, pp. 115-140.

experiences, or supplementary, creating a parallel narration and an extra layer of meanings.[76] However, I should stress once more that my thesis is focusing on glitches as images, rather than as audiovisual projects.[77] After this brief reminder, I will now zoom into the branch of visual glitches.

GLITCH TYPOLOGIES								
Visual-technical		Methodological-procedural		Visual-compositional				
Pure-glitch	Glitch-alike	Cool glitches	Hot glitches (Domesticated)	Abstract	Residual			
					Typographic traces	Spatial traces	Human traces	Mixed

Fig. 1 Read from left to right, and in order of appearance, this table presents various Glitch Typologies as defined by I. Moradi, R. Menkman and the author respectively.

I can pinpoint two main typologies according to the visual content of glitch-art pieces. The first category consists of completely abstract forms or patterns and unrecognizable objects, while the second one includes images of distorted human figures or 'familiar' spatial compositions, that could also be enmeshed with any other partially 'legible' objects or symbols; for instance words, numbers, or even sentences.[78] Therefore, I will refer to them as the 'abstract' and 'residual' respectively (fig. 1). This might seem oversimplified but using those typologies as a starting point, will help me dive further into the ontology of glitch art and understand how it affects the way we 'read' and perceive 'reality' through it and how it points to a generalized attitude towards art and technology; something that will be further elaborated in the next chapter, where post-glitch art will be in focus.

While I see abstract forms as prone to subjective interpretations, thus easily connected to individual memories and experiences, I would also suggest that the residual type appeals to us in a different way, as it urges us on restoring the image and its 'missing' parts. At the same time, and on a more fundamental level, I believe that both types affect viewers in a similar way that could be shortly analyzed through a philosophical discussion (or through semiotics).

[76] See R. Menkman, 'Dear Mr. Compression', [online video], 2010, http://vimeo.com/11147006, (accessed 23 January 2014).
[77] On the contrary, the typologies I introduce could be used for describing any piece of glitch art, whether that is an installation or a video, and especially if a visual part is included.
[78] See exemplary images for each category in Appendix, fig. 8, p. 46.

Lyotard would describe that as *the aesthetic of post-modernity*, 'that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unpresentable'.[79] Resonating with what Lyotard mentions about post-modern artistic production and its intentions, both typologies could then be paralleled with the work of a philosopher that seeks to 'formulate the rules of what *will have been done',*[80] rather than to be principled by pre-established rules and categories. Then, I would add that this attitude is also indicative of an attempt to reconcile with the unpredictability of the accident and of post-modernity itself, where established rules and categories are giving their place to ever-increasing new stimuli that emerge from accidents; just like glitch-art does. However, each of the glitch categories I have introduced, manifest different qualities that worth being discussed separately.

The abstract category could ironically enough be described as the more 'realistic' one out of the two, because of its technological trace. In that sense, one could claim that what we see here is 'real', as it has initially been introduced to us in similar forms and in the exact same medium. On the other hand, the residual one, that bears recognizable traces of physical objects or human figures, inevitably unveils and stresses their digital ontology, for their distorted forms can be encountered as such only in a digital 'environment'. In turn, this observation leads me to the following realization which resonates with Debord's ideas about a fully mediatized reality;[81] that what the distorted image of a depiction of a real object practically unveils is the fact that what I see is nothing but a replica of the 'real' and physical or analogue object.

Another interesting aspect of 'glitched' human figures and semi-recognizable places and spaces, is that they instantly evoke feelings of nostalgia or 'unhomeliness',[82] due to the recognition of a space where traces of life extinguished are still to be found; traces of a space that was once lived.[83] The recognition of a distorted human figure that hovers in a spaceless

[79] Lyotard, p. 81.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Debord, p. 8.
[82] The Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud describes that feeling as 'uncanny' or *unheimlich* in German. Freud defines the word uncanny as a terrifying feeling that leads to something that was once very familiar. Borrowing Schelling's words, Freud presents another aspect that could also be related to glitch art: '"Unheimlich" is the name for everything that ought to have remained…hidden and secret and has become visible'. S. Freud, 'The "Uncanny"', 1919, pp.1-4, http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf, (accessed 9 February 2014).
[83] A. Vidler, ***Warped Space: Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture,*** Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2000, p. 146.

space and a fragmented, frozen 'reality' creates an *uncanny* feeling that intensifies the viewer's feeling of estrangement.[84] This distantiation, or glitch in our usual aesthetical experiences is what constitutes, according to Virilio, 'an accident in historical knowledge […] in the perception of things, a veritable loss of the sense of reality.'[85] Pointing to issues of memory, loss, temporality and fragility, what the residual typology also accomplishes, is to unveil our inability to fully perceive and understand the temporal continuum. In other words, it stresses the futility of trying to control time and avoid decay, issues that could also be connected with a culture traumatized by accidents.[86]

Another aspect to be examined is the interrelation of distorted images and words or arithmetic symbols. As Fiske mentions, borrowing Barthes' term *anchorage,* words offer a *parasitic message* to the image that provides the reader with a greater range of possible interpretations. In a complementary or contrasting way, they direct our reading.[87] In glitch art however, this also makes the composition less abstract, while it simultaneously becomes a proof; the evidence of the destruction itself, as we can clearly distinguish that there was once text and letters that stood there whole and intact.[88] Once more, Virilio becomes extremely relevant here, as this 'artificial' accident in the form of glitched typography, uncovers what was once hidden[89] and brings into our attention this 'digital artificiality' as a momentary realization of Debord's Spectacle, that 'philosophizes reality, reducing everyone's concrete life to a universe of speculation'.[90] The same applies to any form of residual trace in glitch art, whether that it' s typographic, or including a fragment of a space, an object or a human figure. In each and every case, these remnants create a gap in our perception which reminds us of the, once, clear distinction between artificial and physical, digital and analogue, between an event and its trace. Such a realization, in a life that has become sheer-luck and a never-ending accident,[91] can be nothing but a source of added confusion and disquiet as it challenges human cognition on a fundamental level.

After analyzing some of the effects of residual subcategories on the viewer, someone could hurriedly deduce that the abstract pieces should pass unnoticed, as they are merely

[84] Ibid., p. 204.
[85] Virilio, 2007, p. 34.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Fiske, 2011, pp. 104-105.
[88] Cloninger, 'GltchLnguistx: The Machine in the Ghost / Static Trapped in Mouths'.
[89] Virilio, 2007, p. 9.
[90] Debord, p. 11.
[91] Virilio, 2007, p. 47.

reproducing and imitating the images we experience through our techno-cultural routine. On the contrary, I strongly hold that abstract pieces can be visually captivating, urging us to a further analysis of their qualities and composition, almost by reflex, in an attempt to understand the overwhelming effect that they have on us. This is what will be discussed in the following section, where such a glitch-art piece will be analyzed.

2. 2: Understanding Glitch Art through Mathieu St-Pierre's work

Mathieu St-Pierre is an artist coming from Montreal, Canada, who is currently living and working in Andong, South Korea. He employs computer programmes and analogue video signals in order to test the possibilities of technology and creates data based images through video corruption and data manipulation, for over ten years now.[92] According to himself, his background in film studies, and his interest in experimental cinema and art, led him to see imperfections and corrupted files as an occasion to 'explore new possibilities of the digital canvas'.[93] St-Pierre's series of glitches are intentionally corrupted 'landscapes and narrative images (stills)'[94] that are 'usually associated with speed and coolness'.[95] At the same time, they also manifest the fragility of virtual data and 'question the technology itself and the wired world we live in'.[96] Mathieu St-Pierre also claims that electronic malfunctions of that kind have the potential to trigger memories from real world life experiences, while the viewer encounters this opposition between pixels and the perfect imagery. Interestingly enough, St-Pierre holds that, in contrast to classic paintings where what is depicted cannot be negotiated, glitch art is open to various interpretations. A 'content' that is depending on different technological memories among various age groups, is what allows his mother to recognize VHS videos stills in his work, while all a younger kid can see is a part of a computer game.[97] This observation underlines the temporal character of glitch-art, while it stresses simultaneously the ambiguity of what we refer to as 'present' and 'reality'. Partly explaining our confusion around glitch art, this reminder also adds another aspect regarding the existential dimensions of glitch art that have been discussed in the previous section.

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[92] Unknown, 'Mathieu St-Pierre!'*,* ***Hot 'n' Gold Magazine***, vol.2, 2014, http://www.hotngoldmag.com/#!mathieu-st-pierre/c1aif , (accessed 11 April 2014).
[93] M. St-Pierre, *About,* Mathieu St-Pierre: Images and Glitches, <http://matstpierre.wordpress.com/category/about/>, (accessed 23 February 2014).
[94] Ibid.
[95] Unknown, 'Mathieu St-Pierre!'
[96] Ibid.
[97] M. St-Pierre, interviewed online by the author, 19 April 2014, See Appendix, pp. 48-50.

2. 2. 1: Compositional interpretation

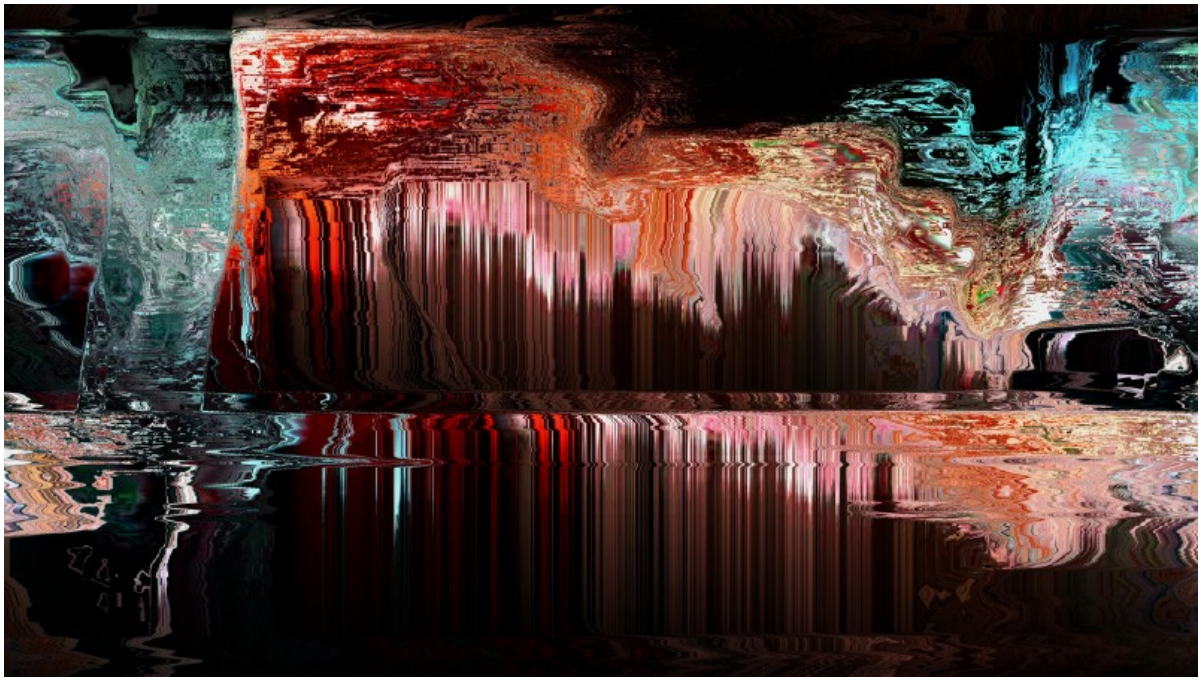

Fig. 2. Mathieu St-Pierre, 'Fish, Fire & Ice', 2012, (digital print, original dimensions: 144,5 x 81,28 cm) © Mathieu St-Pierre

Fish / Fire & Ice is one of St-Pierre's earlier works that reflects his overall approach in an exemplary way. In order to understand better this piece I will firstly approach it through a compositional interpretation and analyze aspects such as its content, colours, spatial organization etc.[98] After that, I will proceed to a theoretical interpretation, concerning the work's potential to be 'read' as a cultural product that reflects our attitude towards technology and our attempt to comprehend contemporary culture; as an indication of a play of meanings that would unavoidably lead towards concepts and terms that are common in the broader filed of semiotics.

On forms-Content

What one sees while looking at *Fish / Fire & Ice* is the result of manipulated computer glitches (fig. 2). There are no geometrical forms, neither any point where the viewer's eyes

[98] Rose, pp 55-77.

can rest. I realize I find myself scanning the image again and again, trying to grasp the essence of this complicated synthesis, in an attempt to distinguish any traits or fragments that would lead me closer to 'reconstructing' the image's initial source. *Fish / Fire & Ice* is characterized by high formal complexity, as abstract patterns and its chaotic synthesis hinder any possibility to recognize a familiar subject or object, regardless the title's attempt to make us 'see'. If we try to parallel its visual complexity with anything similar, that would probably be with the impression of an unusual ultrasound image, '…the geologic artistry of opals and agates, and the rippling distortions of liquids',[99] or with '…wavering, repetitive lines like brushstrokes in a reflective sea of colour.'[100]

Chromatic Composition-Colour

The work's colours are really intense and vivid, offering the image high colour saturation. This fact combined with the complicated formal synthesis, creates a particularly overwhelming result that intensifies the viewer's perceptual confusion. The colour hue consists of red and blue-green undertones, with a hint of white, but in most parts all colours are gradually fading into black. Colours might seem like melting but they don't blend into each other. This could partly explain the image's overwhelming effect, as I find myself looking at it for longer time than I would normally spend if looking at any other 'ordinary' online picture. What surprises me, is that the more I look at it, trying to decipher it and get accustomed to it, the more the whole synthesis starts creating a harmonious feeling, regardless its contrasting colours and complex composition. Almost like a Zen exercise, I feel like melting along with it, somewhere that time has ceased to exist.[101] Moreover, the use of black colour, that creates an illusion of perspective, or else 'atmospheric perspective',[102] and results in a feeling of being drawn further into the image itself, could be another way to explain the image's effect on me.

[99] Khaikin, 'The Radical Capacity of Glitch Art: Expression through an Aesthetic Rooted in Error'.
[100] G. Wong, 'It's not a bug, it's a feature: the rise of glitch art', ***The Guardian***, 25 October 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/oct/25/rise-of-glitch-art, (accessed14 January 2014).
[101] '…virtual image spaces should be understood as a vanishing point, as an extreme, where the relationships of humans to images is highlighted with particular clarity.' O. Grau, ***Virtual Art: From Illusion to Immersion***, trans. G Custance, Cambridge Massachusetts, MIT Press, 2003, p. 341.
[102] Rose, p. 60.

Spatial Organization

The work's spatial organization is chaotic, with its two horizontal lines in the middle of the picture as the sole point where the viewer's eyes can rest and recognize a substitute for the traditional geometrical perspective with its Cartesian plane.[103] Volumes cannot be discerned, as everything can be conceived as a distortion of lines on a two dimensional surface. Yet again, *Fish / Fire & Ice* was conceived and created on such a surface anyway, i.e. the artist's computer screen. What this observation emphasizes, is that *logic of figuration*[104] acquires a new meaning, as the position of the viewer is not predetermined. Contrary to conventional images, where the perspective and spatial organization guides our gaze from a fixed point, *Fish / Fire & Ice* makes that point variable, as it is solely dependent on the viewer's repositioning in front of the computer screen.

2. 2. 2: Glitch Art as a Metonym for reality

After this brief formal analysis of *Fish / Fire & Ice*, I will continue with a more theoretical approach, that explores the image's extensions to an ontological level. Through its visual complexity, I will comment on glitch art as a visual disruption or fracture (accident)[105] that is getting increasingly familiar to us, leading us eventually to the discovery of new realities.[106] Thus, I will argue that a new interpretation or function of the accident is introduced, one that according to Virilio is

> ...the accident in its perception as visibly present – a 'cinematic' and shortly 'digital' perception that changes its direction, its customary rhythm […] promoting instead the ultra-short time span of this televisual instantaneity that is revolutionizing our vision of

[103] The Cartesian plane is part of a coordinate system, introduced by the French philosopher, mathematician and writer, René Descartes (1596-1650). According to that system, the relative position of a point can be represented by its distances from two intersecting lines on a two dimensional plane. Analogous systems may be defined for describing points in spaces of more than two directions. 'Cartesian coordinates', Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th edition, Columbia University Press, 2014, Available from Online Literary Reference Center, Lund University Libraries, 2014, http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/detail/detail?sid=c1d32e0d-cc4e-48bb-a790-cea42fe05d11%40sessionmgr110&vid=0&hid=109&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=lfh&AN=39050703, (accessed 24 August 2014).
[104] This refers to the way in which the spatial organization of a picture offers a particular position to its viewers. Rose, p. 65.
[105] Virilio, 2007, p. 15.
[106] Lyotard, p. 77.

the world.[107]

What *Fish Fire & Ice* skilfully manages to bring forward, is a mimetic behaviour towards digital errors and accidents, which borrows their visual symptoms and transcribes them into art, challenging pre-established conventions and human perception. This in turn reminds me of what Virilio ascribes to new visualizing technologies; something I would also apply to any new, on a formal and compositional level, visual stimuli that arises repeatedly; the creation of a 'vision machine' in which we are all caught,[108] or else, a mechanism through which our perception is enhanced. What is of interest for me here is behavioural patterns concerning the reception of glitch art, that will offer me an insight to how glitch art functions as a vision machine, rather than the artist's intention or the work per se. As the English art critic John Berger notes, 'we never look just at one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves.'[109] Similarly, an investigation inspired by that idea, would lead me to a deeper understanding of the interrelation of reality, glitches and our perception.

Therefore, while *Fish Fire & Ice* reproduces the effect of a glitch, it is in fact becoming a tool for me to understand what I have mentioned in the introduction as *ontological meta-narratives*; the stories that the work itself has to say, regardless the artist's original intentions; narratives which, as I believe, reflect our attempt to make sense out of glitches. Thus, I begin by accepting that while I choose this specific work of art I am simultaneously creating a *metonym,*[110] as I am making part of the glitch art scene to stand for the whole. In the same manner, when Mathieu St-Pierre opts for specific glitched effects, he is creating another metonym that represents the 'reality' of glitches in the same way an image of a street with traffic would become a metonym for urban city life in a magazine article. Borrowing Fiske's words once more, the selection of the metonym is utterly crucial as the unknown remainder of reality is to be constructed based on it.[111]In a way it becomes a stimulant for creating the missing part of the whole, while it is also mocking us, for it is being disguised as a *natural*

[107] Virilio, 2007, p. 25.
[108] With this term Virilio discusses virtuality and simulation as a historical process that is resulting from a shift in human perception. According to Virilio, a *visual machine* is a synthetic-perception machine that is designed to execute operations for which human visual capacities are inadequate. Virilio stresses that unlike with the case of telescopes and microscopes, here the issue is not the limited depth of focus of our ocular system, but the limited *depth of time* of the human physiological 'take'. P. Virilio, *The Vision Machine,* trans. J. Rose, London, British Film Institute, 1994, p. 61.
[109] J. Berger, *Ways of Seeing,* London, British Broadcasting Corporation and Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972, p. 9, cited in G. Rose, Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials, p. 13.
[110] Fiske, 2011, p. 89.
[111] Ibid.

index[112] or sign of glitch that claims to be 'real'; that is not to be questioned.

This in turn, validates Debord's ideas of a masqueraded reality, of 'a spectacle that has taken on a visible form'.[113] As he continues, 'the spectacle presents itself as a vast inaccessible reality that can never be questioned.'[114] Could that spectacle be considered as a metonym for reality then? And if so, is there a way to overcome this disguise? The potential for moving towards that direction will be examined in the following chapter.

[112] Ibid.
[113] Debord, p. 9.
[114] Ibid.

3. POST-GLITCH AND TRANSMEDIA NARRATIVES

In my endeavour to comprehend the connections among glitch art, our emotional response to it, and knowledge acquisition, the research has gradually led me towards the discussion of how glitch art could be interpreted through semiotics. Thus, this chapter will firstly investigate hybrid glitch art forms as the symptom of an alteration in our perception that stems from our familiarization with glitches. Secondly, and through the examination of an oil painting that imitates the visual manifestation of digital errors, a semiotic interrelation between glitch art and the Accident will come about as a knowledge acquisition mechanism.

3. 1: Hybrid forms of Glitch Art

As if in full compliance with Debord's Spectacle, artists have started merging together digital art and physical objects, bringing us closer to realizing how immersive our technological culture is, and how our altered perception of physicality, tangibility and reality can be identified through these hybrid creations. As a sign of the extent to which we got accustomed to technological errors, one can now encounter 'analogue-ized' glitches. In this uncanny encounter, mutated digital characteristics are re-introduced as integral part of our daily rituals, while appearing on everyday physical objects. This bizarre, backwards-looking evolutionary process of the glitch merges diverse methods and media, giving birth to new concepts and refreshing methods available for artistic production.

Few examples would be textiles, such as blankets, tapestries or carpets that their weave imitates the visual result of corrupted computer coding[115] or oil paintings that are reproducing the fragmented or displaced visual effect of a mechanical malfunction on our digital screens[116]. A mobile phone application that 'allows everyday users to make glitch art out of images and GIFS'[117] would be just another facet of the augmenting popularity of glitches, suggesting that we are reaching –if not having achieved already- their normalization and

[115] N. Hurst, 'Artist hacks digital cameras to produce trippy fabric', ***Wired***, 8 September 2012, http://www.wired.com/2012/08/glitch-textile/, (accessed 18 July 2014)
[116] Z. Sokol, 'Stuck In Motion With Slurred Glitch Paintings', ***The Creators Project***, 30 October 2013, http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/stuck-in-motion-with-slurred-glitch-paintings, (accessed 18 July 2014).
[117] DJ Pangburn, 'The GLTCH App is trivializing the Art of Digital Glitch', ***Motherboard,*** 1 November 2013, http://motherboard.vice.com/blog/the-gltch-app-is-trivializing-the-art-of-digital-glitch?trk_source=recommended, (accessed 2 April 2014).

entering a stage of their acceptance.[118]

What fascinates me the most is that this kind of oscillation between analogue and digital, between newer and older media and production tools that seems to be a persistent and recurring scheme. Remember Len Lye and his noise art works, as mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, where he applied paint directly on films, creating innovative visual outcomes, or Kostas' Tsoklis (b.1930) *Harpooned Fish,* a video projection on a painted surface that made people start talking about 'living paintings' back in 1985.[119]

Whether this is merely a reflexive act, in an attempt to ease our discomfort with anything new and unfamiliar to us, or an indication of our need to arrange things and phenomena in already existing categories in order to comprehend them, is something to be yet discussed. Andy Denzler's work will be used as a prism through which those questions will be explored and analyzed in the following section.

3. 2: Moving towards a Semiotic Analysis of Glitch Art through Andy Denzler's work

Andy Denzler (b.1965) is a Swiss artist that employs a traditional method (oil painting) in order to create a hand-made interpretation of digital glitches and technological errors.[120] Using multiple, thick layers on the canvas allows him to congeal and 'capture' the movement of his brush and spatula onto the image carrier, creating a contrast with the geometric shapes of the composition. This interplay of different textures and shades of colours is eventually questioning the medium of painting itself as it oscillates between abstraction and concretion. Another interesting detail is that Denzler employs new media such as 3D rendering programs, at an early, conceptual stage in order to get an idea of the final composition, that he later on executes in stages through traditional media. After 2005 he brings his perfected technique together with his interest in photography and cinema. He starts using motifs from popular visual culture that when combined with his wet-on-wet technique,[121] are transforming into

[118] See exemplary images in the Appendix, fig. 9; fig. 10, pp. 46-47.
[119] A. Hatziyannaki, '1990: The first steps of Greek media art', trans. Katerina Gkoutziouli, ArtUP! Media Art in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, Goethe Institute, http://www.goethe.de/ins/tr/lp/prj/art/med/bgt/gri/en9859659.htm, (accessed 18 July 2014). See Fig. 11 in the Appendix, p. 47.
[62] S. Bors, 'From Clipping the Intermediate to Framing the Image', http://www.andydenzler.com/paintings/2010-distorted-fragments/77c8085ff5f6d01266f315a935ccf5bf/15/, (accessed 24 February 2014).
[121] A painting technique in which paint is applied to a wet ground or onto wet paint. 'Wet on wet', **Getty Research-Art & Architecture Thesaurus Online**, J. Paul Getty Trust,

images with a timeless aura. In his series 'Figures Urban' (2007) and 'Blur Motions' (2007-2009), Denzler puts his main subjects in an abstract structure of geometric colour fields, after he has firstly deprived human figures from their original background. These are usually based on found or self-made photographs. Then, Denzler uses selectively a motion-blur effect, or else analogue glitches, by painting with horizontal streaks of colour that finally distort and obscure the subject.[122] As curator Susan Bors describes:

> Denzler's abstract photorealism shows, therefore, the stop-frame, the « cut » and distorted frame that deconstitutes the image and shirks the image from reality, undermining the authority and possession of the real upon the movement and the human. Painting is here the tearing of the image, cutting not from the reality of the movement, but into its reality. Painting as incision into the real.[123]

In order to explore those qualities, I will focus on one of Denzler' s paintings that aptly unveils his conceptual approach and work philosophy. Apart from that, the selected piece will offer the chance to discuss hybrid glitches as the result of a meaning making process that has already managed to familiarize us with glitches and bring us closer to reality, in the sense of knowledge acquisition.

3. 2. 1: Compositional Interpretation

'I Know Wath You Are' (2009) is a painting taken from Denzler's 2010 series, called *Distorted Fragments.* The work's title could be considered as pure irony, for when one firstly encounters the piece, can hardly discern whether it mostly resembles a frozen still taken from videotape or an oil painting. On a compositional level, the image could be described as fairly minimalistic or even simplistic, with a content that lacks formal complexity. '*I Know Wath You Are'* consists of a shape that is reminiscent of a human figure which is placed in the middle of a rectangular, almost monochrome canvas (fig. 3). What perplexes that however, is that the subject is obscured in an unexpected way that imitates the effect of a computerized

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http://www.getty.edu/vow/AATFullDisplay?find=wet-on-wet&logic=AND&note=painting&english=N&prev_page=1&subjectid=300389854, (accessed 12 April 2014).

[122] 'Andy Denzler', Swiss Institute for Art Research, SIK-ISEA, http://www.sikart.ch/KuenstlerInnen.aspx?id=4029726, (accessed 9 April 2014).

[123] Bors, 'From Clipping the Intermediate to Framing the Image'

error. Its colour palette consists of 'a generalized grisaille'[124] that varies from grey undertones to washed-out blacks and creates a neutral, almost foggy, impression. With a colour value that would be defined as average and tones that are harmoniously blending into each other, the images expressive content, that of a dreamy and nostalgic atmosphere, is further reinforced.

Fig. 3. A. Denzler, *I know Wath You Are, 2009,* (oil on canvas, original dimensions: 80x100 cm), © Andy Denzler.

Concerning the image's spatial organisation, one can easily notice an equally simplistic approach. Horizontal lines dominate the whole composition, with the distorted human figure as the only exception. Its vertical positioning combined with its darker colour tones deranges

[124] Bors, 'From Clipping the Intermediate to Framing the Image'; *Grisaille* is a painting technique, which employs solely monochromatic shades of grey, or other neutral colors. Particularly common in the Renaissance, and with a revival of popularity among the 18th century French artists, grisaille was used in order to imitate the appearance of a sculpture. 'Grisaille', **The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms**, 2nd edn., New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 116.

the image's equilibrium and transforms it into a focal point. At the same time, there is an intense impression of absent volumes, something that I attribute to the painting technique that Denzler employs. This kind of distortion is subconsciously referring to flat surfaces, computers, television screens and monitors. Maybe this is why an illusion of a flickering rhythm is also created; similar to what one would experience while putting videotapes on hold, or while monitoring a computer screen, revealing its refresh rate process. Another outcome of the painting's borrowed characteristics from a digital and two dimensional environment, is that the viewer's position is neither set nor absolute, giving the freedom to look at it from any desired angle or distance. Eventually, no matter if it is an oil painting, '*I Know Wath You Are'* is in fact demonstrating similar qualities to those of digital imagery.

3. 2. 2: Post-Glitch and the Myth of the Accident

The transfer of digital qualities into a material and analogue context is what I found extremely fruitful for my thesis, as it makes even more evident that there is a generalised attempt to deal with the existential dimensions of glitches. Connected with subjects that are touching upon reality, time and transmediality, this kind of mimicry could be considered as a sign of confusion around glitches and as an attempt to negotiate them. On the other hand, this type of hybridity could also be the eventuality, or better the accomplishment, of a negotiation that has already been performed; a possibility that will be shortly examined.

An interesting way to comment on transmediality and Denzler's painting would be through its use of grisaille. As a technique that has mainly been used during the Renaissance, grisaille creates not just a dialogue in between different eras, but also an urge to ponder on the painting's ontological dimensions. Something that was usually employed on a flat surface, in order to replicate the impression of a sculpture, is now being used in order to imitate a software malfunction that manifests itself on a two dimensional screen. The oscillation between analogue and digital would be of course something more to think about. In any case, the issue is not what the image depicts, rather than the intentional use of a technique that is 'reproducing permanently the violence of the accident',[125] even more so the violence of an otherwise digital accident. Moving one step beyond Debord's claim, according to which the negation of reality is the only way to understand the true extent of the present society's

[125] P. Virilio, ***The Aesthetics of Disappearance,*** trans. P Beitchman, New York, Semioetext(e), 1991, p. 101.

domination by images,[126] Denzler and post-glitch art seem to have already dealt with that cognitive gap. Having overcome the initial confusion around software malfunctions and the consecutive attempts to 'know' them better through their reproduction in a controlled environment, hybrid glitches seem to have fully comprehended and accepted accidents of that kind. A proof for their acceptance is the re-introduction of glitches as an embedded feature of three-dimensional objects, where errors and accidents are transubstantiated from a generative force into a merely stylistic element.

Comparing Denzler's artistic approach to Mathieu St-Pierre's, and both of them with Fiske's theories, highlights a common characteristic of their work; the ability to create connections between glitch art and glitches in communication respectively. The images turn into corrupted files, the data of which cannot be retrieved. In a way, they both express an attempt to 'normalize' errors and accidents, so that they become less disruptive, producing less cultural anxiety.[127] This is achieved through the systematized and repetitive reproduction of an artificial accident, or else, an accident in substances, that interestingly enough, Virilio relates with an accident in knowledge and recognizes computer science as a sign of it.[128]

But then how does this repetitive encounter with 'accidents' functions as a recuperative act towards the uneasiness and stress that they once caused? Do they have a cathartic effect on the viewer?

Suzan Sontag would claim that we gradually and eventually get anesthetized in front of images that cause unpleasant feelings, as we get habituated to them, due to our repeated exposure to whatever was once shocking.[129] While I partially agree with her, I would suggest that beyond obscure psychological functions lie some more pragmatic methods, which our culture employs in order to relieve our 'anxiety and doubt about the origin of the accident'.[130] Among such techniques, I would name semiotics[131] as the most relevant methodology to my

[126] Debord, p. 109.
[127] Fiske, 2011, p. 116.
[128] Virilio, 2007, p. 6.
[129] S. Sontag, ***Regarding the Pain of Others***, New York, Picador, 2003, pp. 82-83.
[130] Virilio, 2007, p. 17.
[131] Semiotics, or else semiology, is the study of signs through social phenomena and behavior in different fields. The interest in the structure behind the use of particular signs links semiotics' principles to a variety of fields, some of which are: anthropology, aesthetics and communications. *'Semiotics',* ***Encyclopaedia Britannica***, Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 2014, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/534099/semiotics, (accessed 8 August 2014).

topic. Simultaneously, the previous quote highlights the 'unknown' as a major source of uneasiness and stress, taking me back to Virilio and his thoughts on the interconnectedness of accidents in substance and accidents in knowledge, which was mentioned a bit earlier in this section. Combining nearly all my theoretical references here, will allow me to give an alternative way to 'read' and 'decode' glitch art, that could also be seen as an answer to why and how computer glitches evolved in what we name as glitch, or post-glitch art. Thus, I would relate the 'unknown', as described by Virilio, to Debord's *Society of Spectacle* and its obscure and concealed functions, and then bind it with Fiske, suggesting that semiotics is a way to get as close as possible to a reality that is stripped off any disguise.[132]

What I suggest here is that in order to create an illusion of order in our hyper mediatised culture, we employ culturally established ways that produce meaning. If the original glitches would be considered as instigators of that tendency, then the emergence of glitch art, and post-glitch respectively, would be the outcome of that analytical process. Through this type of reasoning, arises the possibility for exploring glitch art, and its interrelation with external reality, through semiotic narratives. What that technique like this essentially achieves, is to categorize and place glitches in a system where noise, glitch art and glitches as an event, become related one to another and altogether to an external reality.[133] More specifically, what will be shortly discussed, is glitch- and post-glitch art as the results of different stages of an intricate cognitive mechanism that is partly based on the use of metonyms and their ability to function as indexes.[134]

With glitch art in particular, what metonyms do is to transform the selected 'domesticated glitches' into a Peircean index; 'a sign with a direct existential connection to its object'.[135] In accordance with that model, 'wild glitches', i.e. the unintentional ones, would be an icon for the accident, glitch art an index for it and post-glitch a symbol of the accident. Thus, another possible explanation for how and why glitch art has acted as an alleviation for our stress and

[132] Fiske, 2011, p. 91.
[133] Ibid., p.43.
[134] Ibid., p.90. Peirce produced three categories of a sign, in his attempt to describe the way in which signs convey meaning. Those are: icon, index and symbol, with each of them describing a different relationship between the sign and the object. An icon resembles to the object, in an index there is a connection between a sign and its object, while a symbol offers no connection or resemblance between sign and object. It communicates meaning only because people agreed that this would stand for what it does. For further information see C. S. Peirce, ***Peirce on signs***: ***writings on semiotic***, ed. J. Hoopes, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1991.
[135] Fiske, 2011, p. 45.

confusion around the origin of the accident, would be that as we move further into the chain of semiosis, we also move further from the original accident and its source. On the other hand, and by using Saussure, a sign is composed of a signifier and a signified. The first one, 'the sign's image as we perceive it', would be the original glitch, while the latter, 'the mental concept to whom (the signifier) refers', would be glitch art. [136]

	Original Glitch	**Glitch Art**	**Post-glitch Art**
S. Peirce	Icon	Index	Symbol
R. Barthes	Signifier	Signified	Myth

Fig. 4. This table is read horizontally and presents the relation of glitches and glitch art to the Accident, based on a Peircean and Barthean semiotic analysis respectively.

According to Barthes, post-glitch art would be then better described as the *myth* of the accident for as he notes,

> [M]yth has in fact a double function: it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us. [---] Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact [---] it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences, it does away with all dialectics, with any going back beyond what it is immediately visible, it organizes a world which is without contradictions. [137]

The fact that I have already discussed the role of glitch art as an attempt to normalize errors and accidents, simply confirms the connection between the Myth and post-glitch art (fig. 4). Therefore, glitch art, and even more so glitch art as the quintessential example for semiotic methodology, is leading to the normalization of accidents, making sense of our experiences through culture. At the same time, another thing that this cultural convention accomplishes is

[136] Ibid., p.41.
[137] R. Barthes, ***Mythologies***, trans. A. Lavers, New York, The Noonday Press-Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1972, pp. 115-143.

to addresses the trauma that, according to Virilio, has been caused from the unknown origin of the accident. What remains to be answered then is how, and if, this process affects Debord's Spectacle. Someone could claim that the Spectacle remains intact; if not that it even gets reinforced, since the transformation of the notion of the accident into a myth, involves a reality emptied of memory and a loss of the accident's historical quality.[138] However, the fact that I have already related the notion of the Spectacle with Virilio's idea around the 'unknown' origin of the accident, offers an opposite perspective. According to that, if our problematic response towards accidents has been resolved through semiotics, then the term and whole idea of the Spectacle is rendered obsolete. In addition to that, a claim for a state where reality is experienced un-mediated, could only be rhetorical, if not utterly unrealistic, as our technological and cultural progress cannot be reversed. What my research suggests anyway is to regard our culture's technologically dense and complex character as a mere fact, rather than as a necessarily negative aspect with irreversible effects. In other words, I believe that what is most important, has been already achieved, and that is to a certain extend related to what Grau states:

> The processes of digitization create new areas of perception, which will lead to noticeable transformations in everyday life; however, they do not turn the concepts of truth and reality completely upside down. [---] Their quest […] is to re-discover the criterion of self-reflection, the awareness of inner distance and perception. [---] Media art is, therefore, an essential component of how contemporary societies may achieve an adequate self-description and by which means they can seek to attain a critical distance to the increasing pace of change.[139]

Through the processes that have already been examined, the emergence of new stimuli and media with an entropic character has been culturally manipulated, in a way that unexpected events or unknown concepts are not sources of stress or confusion anymore. What they managed to do instead is to re-activate a meaning making processes that acknowledges glitches as an ontological condition, allowing us to overcome the overwhelming effects of the Original Accident. What remains to be seen is whether this condition can indefinitely eradicate our stress around accidents, or if it will simply introduce us to the next type of undecipherable and unconventional situations (fig. 5).

[138] Ibid., p. 142.
[139] Grau, p. 347.

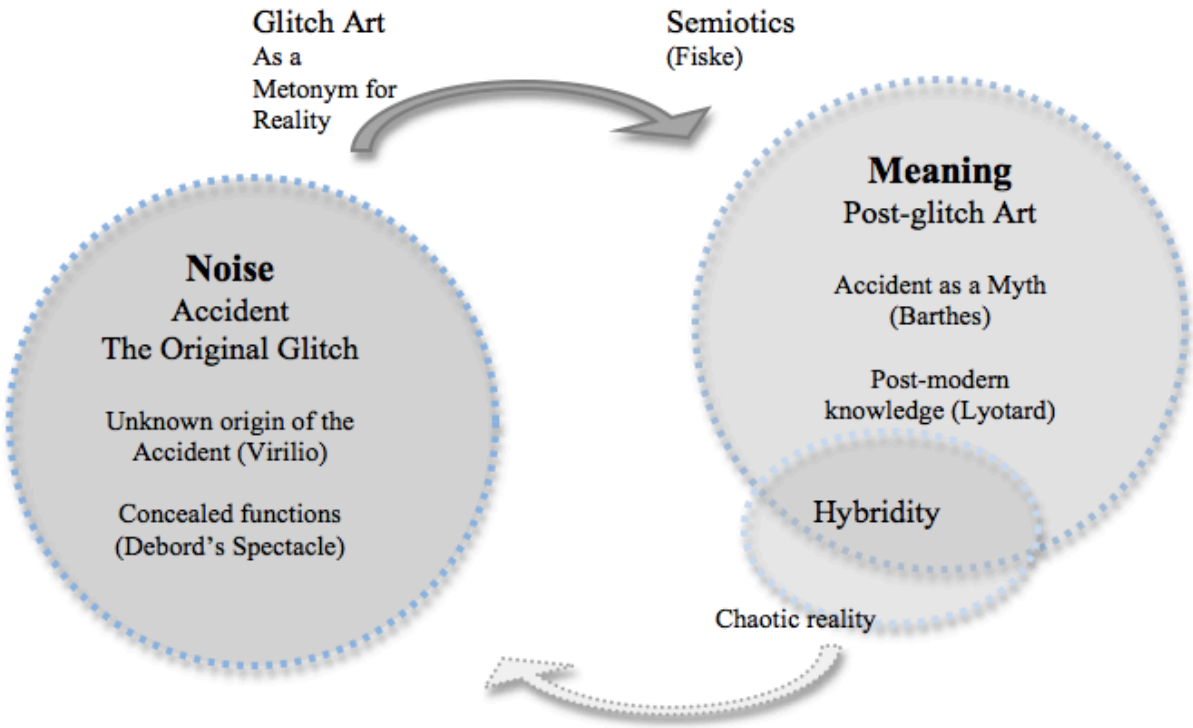

Fig. 5. This model describes the transition from Noise to Meaning in relation to Glitch Art and leaves open the possibility of it being a loop, rather than a unidirectional and linear process.

4. CONCLUSION

A need to explain the lingering interest around the concepts of error, accident and failure within contemporary art, is what led me to this investigation about glitch art. As theories and research relevant to it are most often concerned with technical and aesthetical aspects, I felt that a more extensive and philosophical approach regarding the effects of glitches on an ontological level was still missing. Therefore, I wanted to examine glitch art as a phenomenon with cultural extensions and as the result of a conceptual mechanism through which meaning can be acquired. This thesis explored how glitch art affects our perception and redefines our relation to the world, while it transitions from unconventional stimuli into new and hybrid, yet culturally accepted glitches. Based on an amalgam of theories that are related to accidents or errors (Virilio and Fiske), and post-modernity respectively (Debord and Lyotard), this thesis discusses why the repeated reproduction of a malfunction matters. Moreover, by relating glitches to concepts from communicational theories, such as entropy, it introduces the idea of glitch art as part of a culturally established method for processing information and reality. The case study of two glitch art works, served as the gateway to the sequence in which the notion of the original glitch transforms, pointing towards a direction that examines post-glitch art as the outcome of this meaning making process. In the coming sections I will present the results from my research on glitch art that has been carried out through selected theory, articles and the work of two artists. This will be followed by an overview of my thesis' contributions to the field of Arts and Humanities and suggestions on how these could be used as the foundation for further research.

4.1: Empirical Findings

In my attempt to deconstruct glitch art and interpret its underlying intentions on an ontological level, I have implemented an investigatory method, which bound theory together with empirical material. This amalgam was simultaneously formulating and testing my arguments on a constant basis. This looped, rather than linear process, resulted in three basic findings; the first one is that glitch art, due to its entropic qualities, promotes an interpretational process and a critical attitude towards media and reality; the second finding is that glitch art and its mimetic behaviour towards digital errors, becomes a mechanism for categorizing accidents of that kind into detectable 'genres', something that eventually

addresses the traumatic experience of the Original Accident;[140] the third main empirical finding is that glitches are always semiotically related to the accident, with hybrid glitch becoming the Myth of the accident, where errors are re-introduced as a merely aesthetic feature that is embedded in culturally accepted objects.

The first finding highlights glitch art as a medium that is only phenomenally void of information. Exploring the connection between glitch art and noise art establishes the instrumentalization of accidents as a means for negotiating reality. My attempt to deconstruct this process brings forward glitches as an entropic message that stimulates our attention,[141] as we try to navigate through its multiple interpretations. Relating that to what Lyotard ascribes to post-modern knowledge, offers a further clarification; glitch art, as a par-excellence post-modern art form, refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our tolerance towards whatever is incommensurable.[142]

The second finding refers to glitch art as a mechanism that allows us to relate glitches to the present and perceive them as a form of visual accident to which we are getting increasingly accustomed. This is partly attributed to our tendency to categorize glitches into detectable typologies, through the mimetic reproduction of digital malfunctions and their visual manifestation. The organization of glitches into recognisable categories, combined with their function as metonyms, becomes eventually a way for overcoming the cognitive gap that is caused by their unconventional qualities. In that way, the cultural anxiety connected with the unknown origin of the accident is finally addressed, leading to our reconciliation with this type of accident; hence, partly with the unpredictability that characterizes post-modernity.[143]

Hybrid objects that employ glitches through mixed media arise as the proof for this type of alteration in our perception that stems from our habituation to digital errors. During my endeavour to further investigate how glitch art, our perception and technology are interconnected, a semiotical interpretation of glitch comes about as a knowledge acquisition mechanism. This resulted in the third main finding of this thesis; glitch art, regardless its typology or used media, is semiotically related to the accident. In post-glitch art in particular, the use of digital error aesthetics represents the Myth of an accident, another proof that the

[140] Virilio, 2007, pp. 3-9.
[141] Fiske, 2011, pp. 9-16.
[142] Lyotard, p. xxv
[143] Ibid.

accident has already been normalized. This eventually redefines glitch art as a mechanism through which media with an entropic character can be culturally manipulated so that 'noise' and glitches acquire meaning.

4.2: Overview of contributions - Prospects of future research

By juxtaposing communication and post-modern theories with glitch art, this thesis contributes to creating a solid theoretical foundation for visual phenomena of the last decade. A discourse with those qualities is something that I found missing during my research, with Virilio's *Original Accident* as the only exception. At the same time, this intermingling allowed me to investigate the validity of those theories in order to introduce updated approaches that would correspond to contemporaneity. Fiske's ideas of entropy and redundancy clarifies how what we initially perceive as error, is actually a cognitive stimulation that initiates a meaning making sequence. This offers a new perspective, which stresses noise of any kind, both in communication and media, as an instigator of critical attitude towards media and reality, thus as important means for comprehending them also. By applying Barthes' semiotic theories onto the conception of a destabilized and concealed reality that traumatizes us, I contribute to post-modern and post-structural theories by providing a model of the process through which those negative effects, along with the unconventional stimuli that caused them, are eventually processed and counteracted. The basic understanding of hybrid forms of glitch art as the result of a meaning making process that was initiated by technological errors creates new questions. Can we describe the relation between culture and technology through a cause and effect scheme? What this thesis highlights instead is that the way the two relate could be better defined as a circular interrelationship, rather than a linear process. Through this inference we can re-evaluate already existing theories that are characterized by techno-deterministic views regarding the driving forces for the development of cultural values and social structure, in order to contemplate on new approaches to whatever we understand as random and *accidental*. By exploring how it is possible to communicate the notion of the accident through different media within the field of glitch art, this thesis provides a framework through which debates about the possibility of acknowledging glitch as an ontological condition might proceed. This in turn provides a new starting point, around which the idea of an aesthetic that describes contemporaneity could be developed.

APPENDIX

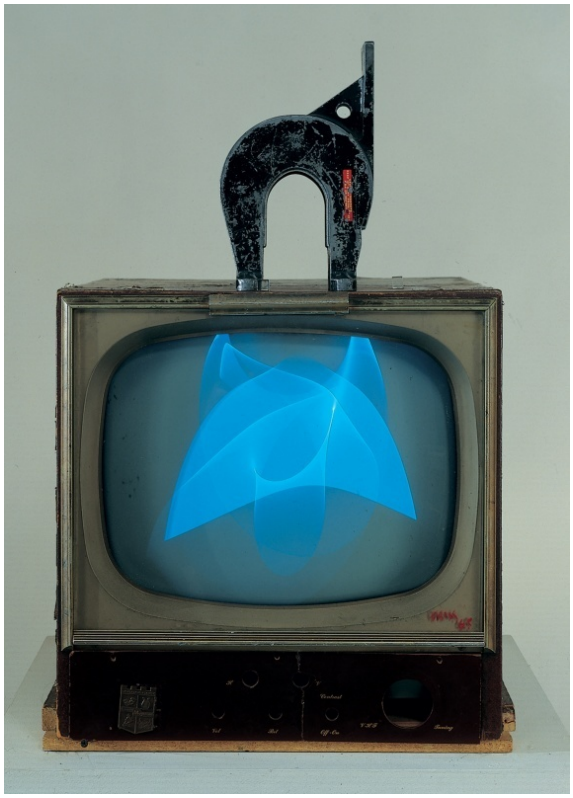

Fig. **6.** Nam June Paik, *Magnet TV,* 1965, Whitney Museum of American Art, © Nam June Paik Estate http://whitney.org/Collection/NamJunePaik/8660aB, (accessed 4 May 2014)

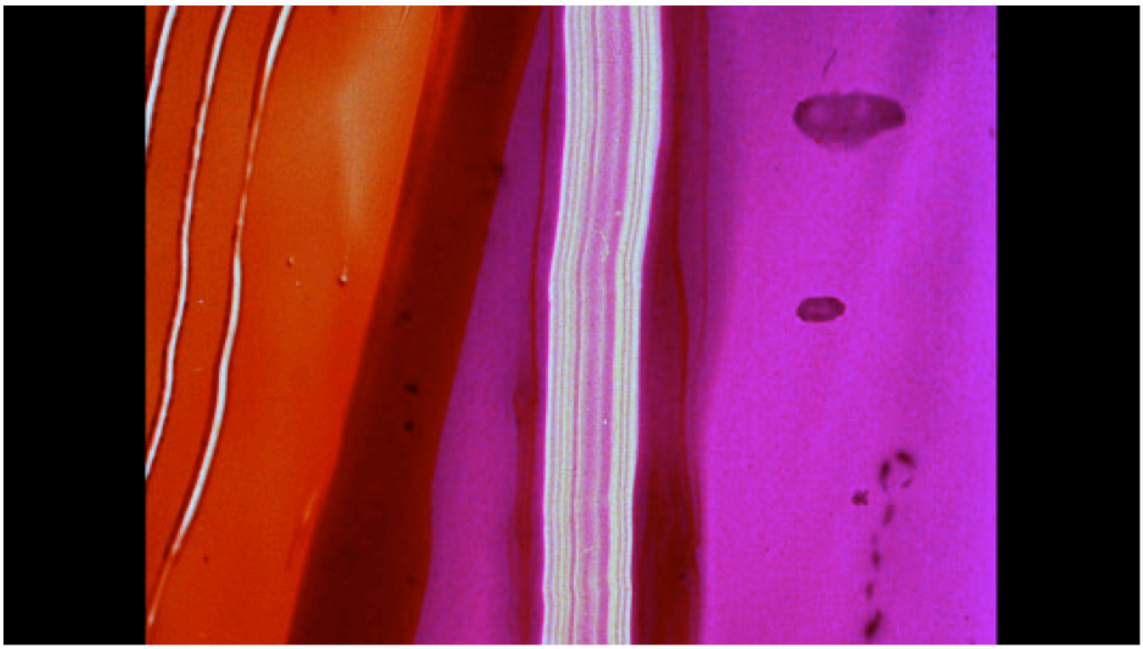

Fig. 7. Len Lye, *A Colour Box*, (35mm, 4min, colour) 1935 © BFI National Archive [online photograph], http://now-here-this.timeout.com/2011/06/15/watch-me-move-barbican-centre/7-len-lye-a-colour-box-barbican/, (accessed 4 May 2014)

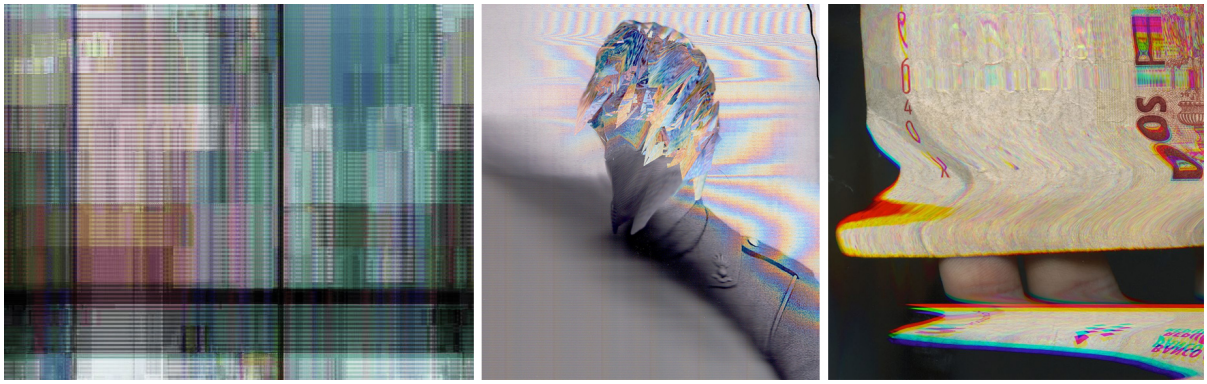

Fig. 8. Exemplary images for different typologies of Glitch Art based on a Visual Content Categorization. Read from left to right: abstract, residual with human traces and residual with typographic traces.
(from left to right): Karl Klomp, from the series of 'Mozaik Gritch' 2008, [online photograph], http://www.karlklomp.nl/mda/still.html#moltan, (accessed 4 July 2014), © K. Klomp; David Szauder 'Heroic Portrait', 2013 (made with scanner and code), [online photograph], http://pixelnoizz.tumblr.com/post/65330252456/likeafieldmouse-david-szauder-heroic-portrait, (accessed 4 July 2014) © D. Zdauer; Glitchrama 'Ticket $$$', 2013 (made with scanner), [online photograph], http://glitchrama.tumblr.com/post/51558980494/billete-http-bit-ly-17m3l2p, (accessed 4 July 2014) ©Glitchrama.

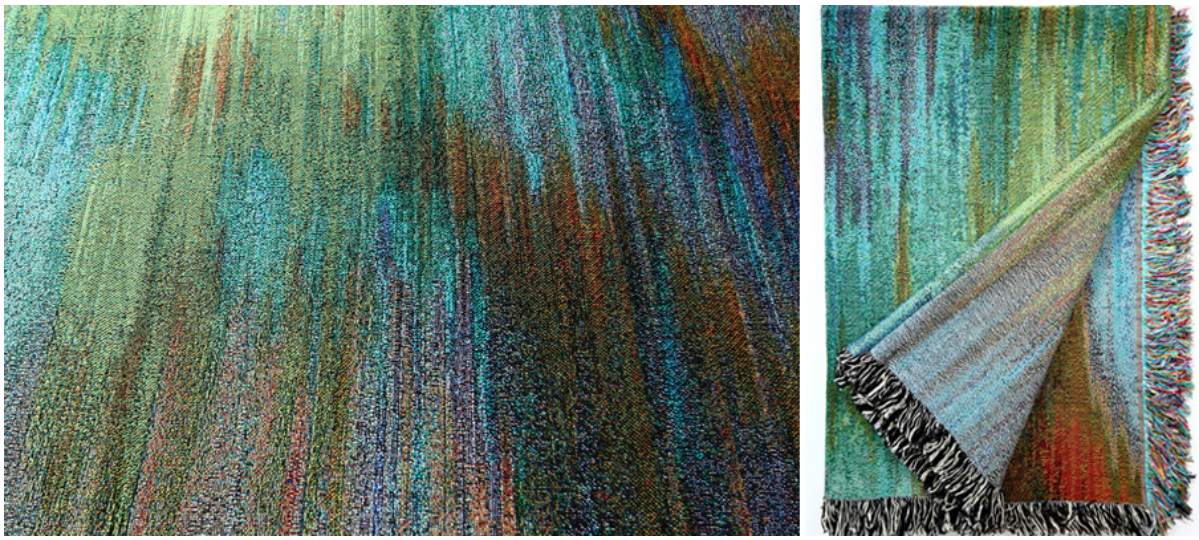

Fig. 9. Custom designed blanket, made by using a modified digital point-and-shoot camera. Image © Philip Stearns, [online photograph], http://glitch-textiles.myshopify.com/collections/woven-glitch-blankets/products/p1010006, (accessed 18 July 2014)

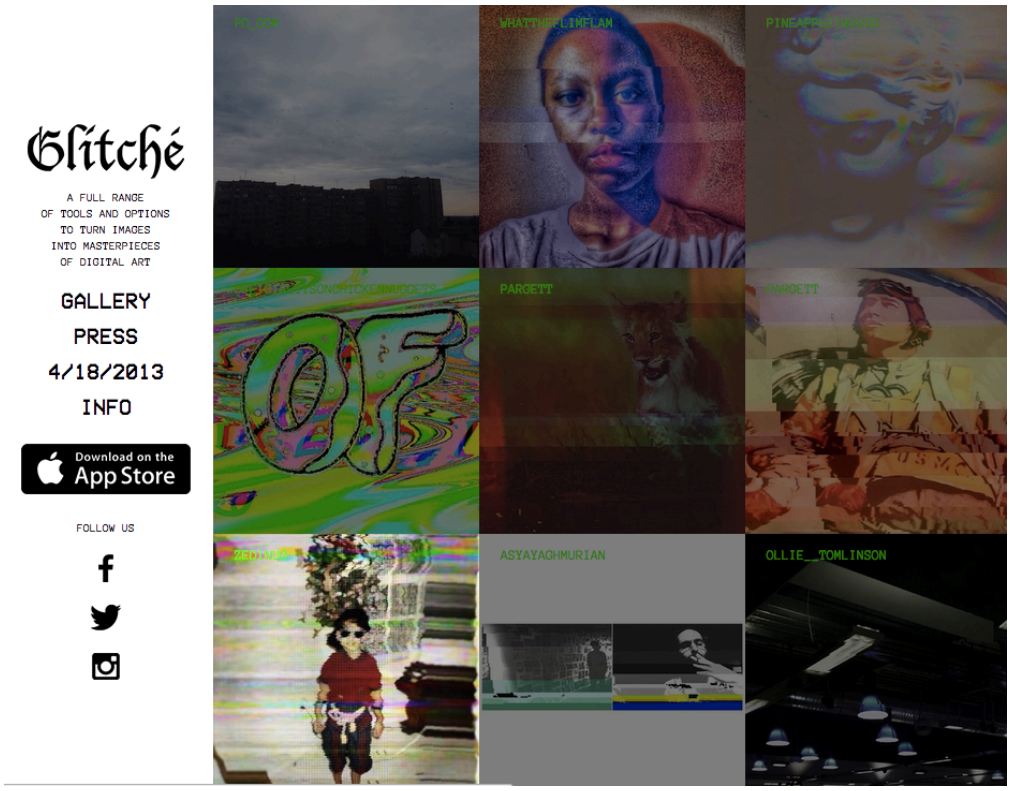

Fig. **10.** Mobile application *Glitché*, 2013 ©Vladimir Shreyder (screen shot) http://glitche.com/ (accessed 18 July 2014)

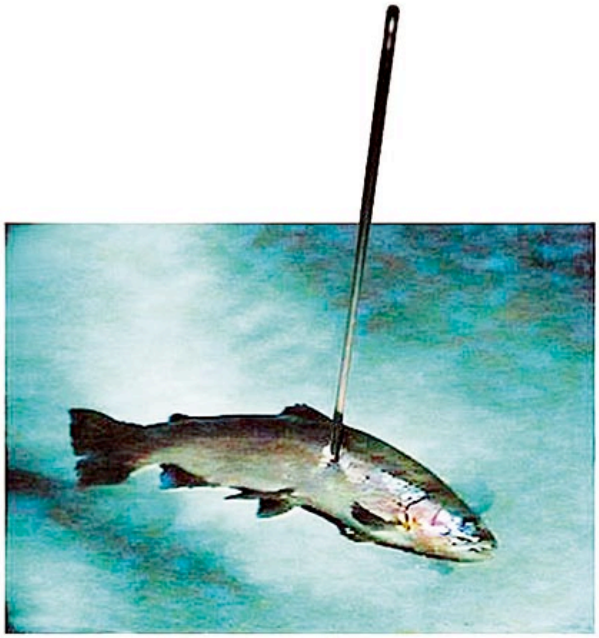

Fig. **11.** Costas Tsoklis, *The Harpooned Fish,* 1985, mixed media: video projection on painting, private collection, © Costas Tsoklis http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22784&subid=2&pubid=2754817 (accessed 18 July 2014)

Interview

Mathieu St-Pierre – Artist (interviewed online by the author 25.04.2014)

Virginia Sotiraki: What made you move from your computer screen to printed glitches?

Mathieu St-Pierre: Mainly because I want my work to be displayed in art galleries and eventually perhaps museums, who knows… Everything related with glitch art is mostly computer and internet based which is where it started which is great, but it needs to be shown in museums, it needs to be shown to the public. Then it feels more like an art piece than just something on the Internet. It's great to create glitch art but I think there is a boundary where you should make it physical, so that people can own it. It's the problem with every artist. If you want to make something, you want people to be able to collect it and if you just keep it on the Internet then nobody's going to buy it. Art galleries are still very cautious when they try something new like digital art. Well, especially because I live in Korea now and in Korea it's all sculpture or painting. If anything goes outside of that then it's risky for art galleries and you need to be a big name or otherwise they won't take you for art galleries or anything else. Even photography is not that popular in Korea.

V.S.: Ok, that's interesting. I had no idea about it…

M.St.P.: Yes, things are quite conservative here. So, my view with that is just that nowadays we see so many online art galleries, like Saatchi, and it looks like all the art galleries are trying to be online, but I feel like as a glitch artist, we need to get out of the online and go into the real world and show the real world what the virtual art is.

V.S.: In an interview you mention that your works have the ability to trigger memories and associations from real life world experience. What do you mean exactly by that?

M.St.P: That it's unique for each and every one. Glitch art, for older generations, for example my mother, or people of her age, represents something totally different. And it's very funny and strange when they give me they're opinion. 'Oh, it looks like something on TV that was broken' and so on, and they immediately offer me a different perspective. Younger kids will say 'oh it looks like a video game' and so on. So, it triggers something in your memory that it's different for each and every person. But if you look at a classic painting, it's pretty much the same for everyone. It's a representation of fruits in a bowl; it's something obvious. But with glitch art, it's kind of interesting and fascinating that you can get so many levels and different interpretations.

V.S.: Speaking of fascination, why did you start doing glitches or better, what kept you doing that?

M.St.P.: How I started doing that… Very good question! Well, I've been an art student, since I was in college. That's where I started to work with art, mostly drawing and photography. And then my major when I was in university was cinema. I was mostly attracted to experimental cinema. So I guess it comes from a mix of all of that. But since I came to Korea, I would say it was a 10-year period that I didn't do anything. I just worked with real video camera and here and there but nothing really outstanding our ground breaking. And it came up 3 or 4 years ago, when I started experimenting with different techniques.

V.S.: I recently noticed that there is a phone application that you can use for creating glitches through a filter. What do you think about it?

M.St.P.: Well, there was a problem I think, since the beginning. People just find a new glitch and then everybody's trying it and then there is a new one coming out and everybody wants to try that one, so it become like filters anyway. But they're also tools just like a painter would have a brush. With glitch art is about maybe the same thing. You can do many things, but there's a limit of things with the hardware and the software you have. But year after a year, there are more and more techniques, more and more software and more different glitches and if you can mix them well together then this is how you can notice who is an artist and who is just using filters so to speak.

V.S.: Would you say that the composition in glitch art is as important as in traditional painting?

M.St.P.: Yes, of course. Also colours… I think it's one of the most important things when people are glitching. They're using a glitch and they say it's cool but they don't seem to care that most of the areas in the image are greyish and nothing really stands out. They just have the effect for the shake of the effect but there is no colour, there is no composition, there's nothing.

V.S.: Your use of colours in *Fish / Fire and Ice*, was one of the reasons for choosing it as a main example for my thesis. Could you share some more information about it? What was the inspiration for it?

M.St.P.: With the Fish and Ice work I didn't tweak any colours, I haven't touched any colours. I came up with those glitches as they were. I think I submitted one of these to a think tank magazine in Switzerland. They wanted something abstract that they would relate to their text, so I made some work for them, like 8 images, but I've never seen it printed (laughs). So, I think I used the Fire and Ice one, they needed something colourful, and so I gave them that one.

V.S.: What about the original source? Are they found images or do you use pictures you take yourself?

M.St.P.: Most of the time I work with video files. I rarely work with photo files. What I do is I take a couple of videos, I glitch the videos and then I put them in an editing programme and that is where I kind of put them in layers. This creates new glitches or backgrounds and so on. So, this is about how I created those two images, it was from the same video. I think they were two videos overlapped and that was like 2 frames out of a maybe 3-minute video. I usually take at least one erotic movie, cause it's so easy to find on the Internet and they're kind of everywhere… So if you find a small clip, you just download it and then one thing that is again easy to do when you glitch, is that you go on a torrent and just download it but 90%. Don't finish the download and then take that file and play it. And it's going to come out glitched. So that's a very very very easy and simple way of glitching on the fly, let's say. So, that's one thing… and again with the pornography videos, I feel it's also a social comment at the same time because that's all you see everywhere. There's always a pop up, there's always an ad somewhere on the Internet; you can't escape it. Again, even in Korea, I can't escape it, even though it's blocked, it's not blocked (laughs). It's like one of the few things that it's common to everyone using Internet in the world. Pornography is present everywhere.

V.S.: But then don't you end up censoring it yourself by glitching it?

M.St.P.: (laughs) Yes, but I am not there just to show that. And also there are always the legal problems, so if you destroy it to a point that it's unrecognisable then nobody cares. So that's what I'm doing. It's just like a base for me, when I start working.

V.S.: The first time I saw fire and Ice, I caught myself scanning it with my eyes again and again. It was overwhelming. I was trying to see what was the original source; I was trying to notice every little detail in an attempt to find something familiar, and then after some time it started having a relaxing effect on me. How would you describe your feelings during the creative process? Do you experience a similar shift?

M.St.P.: It's not relaxing. Ah well, it is in a sense. If I can come up with something brilliant then I feel satisfied. But sometimes it's really frustrating also, cause I might be working all day and nothing will come up or nothing that I feel is worth keeping. And sometimes also, cause it's digital files, you save something and when you open it up again, it didn't save the way you saw it on the screen the first time it popped up, so that's even more frustrating!

V.S.: How do you explain the increasing hype around glitch? Glitch apps, even glitch fabrics are available now.

M.St.P.: I've also made a music video before… Somebody asked for a video that would give the same feeling with my images. They gave me some themes to work with and it ended up being the video clip for a hip-hop-like song. So, glitch-art hype… Most people would say that it's another kind of a ready made, a kind of pop art. Somebody takes a comic book and just reproduces it on a huge canvas and that's pop art, but it was initially something else. You just copy something and blow it up. With glitch art you are using an image that already existed and then just destroy it, and make something new. Well… It's kind of ready-made too in a way!

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