

# Critical Media Lab Basel:

# Opening

Design, Media and  
Criticality

— 20. NOVEMBER 2014



**We are happy to invite you to the opening of the Critical Media Lab Basel. The lab is an integral part of the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures (ixdm) at the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel. We celebrate the opening on Thursday, 20th November 2014 with scholarly and artistic presentations, discussions and sound performances all arranged around the topic of »Design, Media and Criticality«.**

#### **— About the Critical Media Lab**

Located within the new Campus of the Arts at the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel the Critical Media Lab is a vibrant, international hub for historically and contextually engaged critical design and media practices. A group of media artists, design researchers and scholars from the fields of cultural, media and social studies operates under the direction of Prof. Dr. Claudia Mareis and conducts highly innovative, interdisciplinary research projects at the crossroads of design, media arts, science and technology. Outputs include publications, lectures, as well as public-facing artefacts and exhibition designs. Concurrently the Critical Media Lab is developing a set of contemporary and pioneering research methods through projects supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI). These methods include practice-based research through critically reconstituting, restoring and examining historical technologies, the technology-based sensibilisation for algorithms and imperceptible media sig-

nals, and steering public discourse towards media technological issues through artistic and designerly practice. The recently established lab facility at the new campus provides a space and up-to-date media technologies supporting our projects.

#### **— Opening Programme**

For the opening event the US-American media and design historian Prof. Dr. Orit Halpern (The New School/Parsons The New School for Design) will give a keynote on cybernetics, postwar design and intelligence. Artist and activist Gordan Savičić, one of the founders of »Critical Engineering«, and the renowned Swiss-based artist group !Mediengruppe Bitnik will present their projects and works at the crossroads of and oscillating between art, design, technology and criticality. The opening culminates in a sound performance by the Swiss-based sound artist Iris Rennert and a short 8-bit music session by local DJ STU from Micromusic Basel. ●

**The entrance is free, although places are limited.**

# Design, Media and Criticality

## 20-11-2014

18:00 Introduction

18:15 Keynote

**Orit Halpern** (New York)

19:15 Presentations

**Gordan Savičić** (Lausanne)

**!Mediengruppe**

**Bitnik** (Zurich)

20:15 Discussion

— Apéro riche

21:00 Performances

**Iris Rennert** (Zurich)

**STU** (Basel)

— **Orit Halpern** is an assistant professor in history at the New School and member of the new Design MA program at Parsons School of Design. Orit's research interests include histories of digital media and cybernetics, tackled from cultural and social science perspectives and exemplified in art and design projects. Her forthcoming book, titled »Beautiful Data: A History of Vision and Reason since 1945« (Duke University Press) constructs a history of »big data« and maps contemporary obsessions with storage and interactivity in digital systems to previous modernist concerns with temporality, representation, and archiving. She completed her PhD in History of Science at Harvard University (2006). Fellowships at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin and at the Digital Cultures Research Lab of Leuphana University of Lüneburg.

— **Gordan Savičić** is an artist fascinated by issues of our contemporary existence caused by the effects of new media on subjectivity and its deep social implications. He is currently based in Lausanne and holds a BA in Digital Art and New Media from University of Applied Arts Vienna and an MA from the Piet Zwart Institute Rotterdam. Gordan has been teaching media art practices at various schools and universities such as the Piet Zwart Institute, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Zurich University of the Arts, University of Applied Arts Vienna and HEAD Geneva. His works, collaborative projects and performances have been shown in festivals and institutions such as Transmediale, Arco

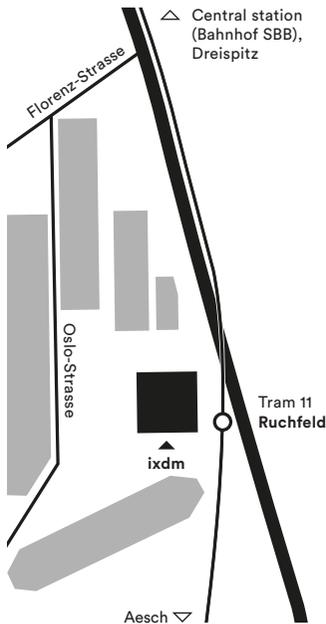
Madrid, IRCAM, V2 as well as HeK in Basel.

— **!Mediengruppe Bitnik** live and work in Zurich and London. Using hacking as an artistic strategy, their works re-contextualise the familiar to allow for new readings of established structures and mechanisms. One of the projects represented an intervention into London's surveillance space by hijacking CCTV cameras and replacing the video images with an invitation to play chess. In early 2013 the group sent a parcel to Wikileaks founder Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian embassy. The parcel contained a camera which broadcasted its journey

through the postal system live on the internet. They call this work a system\_test and a live mail art piece.

— **Iris Rennert** is a sound and media artist. She is teaching media art at Bern University of the Arts. Iris is developing and conducting projects on Circuit Bending and Hardware Hacking as well as artistic research on sonification.

— **STU** is a Basel-based chip-tune composer (on the Atari ST), producer and DJ. He is an active member of »Drop da Bomb« (founded 1997) and the »Micromusic« movement. ●



## Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures

Academy of Art and Design  
Campus of the Arts Basel

Freilager-Platz 1  
CH-4023 Basel

Building D (Tower)  
3rd floor

contact@ixdm.ch  
+41 61 228 40 22

[www.ixdm.ch](http://www.ixdm.ch)

### How to get here:

From Basel central station (»Basel SBB«) take **tram 11** (direction to »Aesch«) until »Ruchfeld«. The tram stop is directly in front of the building. Take the lift to the 3rd floor.



University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland  
Academy of Art and Design