Introduction to Digital Media

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One conclusion – FN, 3 Feb 2020

Our last and concluding meeting will offer two parts:

- two former students of the study program will tell their stories of living in the world out there – Roksolana Pleshkanovska and David Beermann;
- the two teachers of the course will present their views of what digital media is (or may be).

One of them in an attempt to boil down into a short statement offers this.

- "Digital Media" is a field of Media Studies, a field in the study of media.
- "Digital Media" is a *field* of study, not a discipline.
- "Digital Media" can be positioned between *algorithmics and aesthetics*. Algorithmics is about algorithms, i.e. about computable functions in practice, and that's programming; aesthetics is about perception, i.e. about human senses in practice, and that's designing.
- "Digital Media" is construction and interpretation, and there a lot of intuition is needed for success.
- In "Digital Media", we may follow Paul Klee who in 1928 wrote: We construct and construct, and yet intuition still has its uses.
- "Digital Media", like all media studies, is about *communication*. It is about communication between humans. It is also about quasi-communication between humans and computers.
- "Digital Media" is strongly connected to *semiotics*. It is a study of semioses (sign processes). It is a study of algorithmic semioses, i.e. of semioses of algorithmic signs. Algorithmic signs are signs with two interpretants: an *intentional interpretant* (generated by a human as result of an open interpretation) and a *determined interpretant* (constructed by a computer as result of a closed determination). Interpretation is always unlimited, determination is always unique.
- Studying "Digital Media" leads to some understanding of computing as well as some understanding of philosophy. The strict and hard as well as the fuzzy and soft.
- We can span the field of "Digital Media" from computability via interactivity to connectivity. Computability is about the computer all by itself, i.e. as a machine to carry out computable functions. Interactivity is about the computer and a human making use of it by taking turns in operation. Connectivity is about computers bound together to ever growing networks, it is about computers as the new technological infrastructure of society.