

Flusseriana “Kammermusik” / “Chamber Music”

Annie Goh

“Chamber Music” is Flusser's utopian model for dialogic, telematic communication. It is a network of interconnected people and apparatus who make up a cybernetic superbrain, with the function of producing new information. Flusser's definition of catastrophes, as the creation of new information, is central; true catastrophes are unpreventable as they are unpredictable, they can only arise out of “improbable situations” (IudtB 1985: 135). Each player, akin to the figure of “homo ludens”, is both simultaneously a sender and receiver of information in the network with the aim to synthesize “new information” through dialogue and “new imagination”*.

The significant position as the nineteenth of twenty chapters of “Into the Universe of Technical Images” (IudtB), shows the extent to which this musical metaphor plays a crucial role in his thought. Flusser confronts the previous absence of the aural and oral in his thoughts in *IudtB* so far and defines the character of technical images as audio-visual. With reference to Renaissance and jazz ensembles, rules are determined by consensus, yet improvisation is demanded, in the process of which the rules are collectively changed.

Flusser synthesizes the two positions of Schopenhauer's alignment of the world of will as music, and the world of representation as images, with his assertion of technical images as “audiovisual images”, not simply mixed, but lifted onto a new level. In the universe of technical images, “composition and computation are synonyms” (IudtB 1985: 137). In his over-arching thesis of the step into a “zero-dimensional” world of technical images, “pure” art is possible, “emancipated from semantic dimensions” which was previously only realisable through music . Therein he places his hope of a new level of consciousness, in which “music is made with imagination (Einbildungskraft)”** (IudtB 1985: 138).

IudtB: Flusser, V., “Ins Universum der technischen Bilder” Göttingen: European Photography, (1985)

- * “neue Einbildungskraft”