

RESEARCH INTEREST

The topic of maps and mapping and the initiative for the Symposium, Exhibition, and this publication stems from Christine Schranz's research interest which has been an ongoing theme throughout her teaching, research projects, and her practice as a professional designer and researcher for many years. Two research projects in particular were central to the conception of this publication and the formats of the Symposium and Exhibition on which it is based:

First, an SNSF-funded international research visit at the Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, and the project "A Journey to Palmyra" at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures (IXDM) in 2018.

The project's intention was to explore an inaccessible location through the remaining semantic information left on the Internet. In doing this research, she asked herself: "What is the digital mind of Palmyra?" The war-torn country of Syria can be explored on the Internet, even as it remains unreachable in the 'real world'. Its infrastructure is visible, but most of it has been damaged or is controlled by various interest groups. The Internet has become an unregulated space; Google and others decide on how this public space is perceived through their map services.

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Second, inspiration was drawn from an SNSF-funded research project "Augmented Space" at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures (IXDM) from 2015-2019, and its resulting book publication: "Augmented Spaces and Maps. Das Design von kartenbasierten Interfaces", which was published in 2020 by Birkhäuser Verlag Basel and which is available for download in German as an open-access publication.

The research project is based on the assumption that knowledge and its production in digital cultures is spatially organized, structured, formed, and received. It investigates how a

place's visibility and legibility are changed and reconfigured by the use of interactive and locative media technologies. The design practice and the end-user are central in this inquiry: How does the user orient himself in these hybrid spaces and what are the effects of this kind of knowledge production on spatial navigation and reception?

The book is an introduction to the field of digital cartographies. It sketches out important influences, theories, and approaches and, with contemporary design and artistic project examples, represents how map-based interfaces might function. These sketches also offer inspiration for critical and experimental approaches that are relevant for both designers and other practitioners in the field. Furthermore, it laid the foundation for the Symposium and Exhibition presented in this publication.

The Symposium "Shifts in Mapping" and the Exhibition "Shaping the Invisible World" were grounded in the aforementioned works. The Exhibition was developed in cooperation with HeK (House of Electronic Arts Basel) and was co-curated with Boris Magrini.

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The planning and implementation of this jointly conceived format challenged us during this special, pandemic-stricken year. Thus, the Exhibition and the Symposium first had to be postponed, but were then partly adapted into online events. However, this exceptional year also allowed us to be creative and to develop formats that would not have been created without the restrictions in place during 2020. In addition, the live streams of the Symposium and of the Exhibition's online opening allowed us to reach many more people than we could have ever hoped for.