

Introduction

*Jasmin Kermanchi (University of Hamburg, Germany) &
Anna Wiehl (Independent Scholar, Germany)*

Currently, we are facing various global crises: cataclysmic geopolitical distortions are shattering what we used to call our ‘world order’, economic crises are breaking into our lives, and the endangerments of Democracy and Human Rights are omnipresent. Moreover – or rather hand in hand with these crises –, one can state without dramatizing the issue, that we are living in times of ecological emergency: climate crisis, the loss of biodiversity, global warming, sea level rise, deforestation, exploitation of natural resources, and extreme weather events. Even though they might seem to primarily affect our natural environment, they also entail political radicalization, a widening divide between South and North, East and West, the challenges of digitalization, migration, systemic injustice, critical monopolization, and economic dependencies. In short: the intricate entanglements at play deeply impact our whole existence.

These various crises and their different manifestations are accompanied by a crisis of representation (Ivakhiv 2018, p. 18; see also Zimmermann and Hudson 2019; Lousley 2014; Chang 2015): controversy and a general atmosphere of fear and uncertainty are on the rise, the documentary truth claim is further up to debate, and given the complex interdependencies of matters and concerns, media practices need to be reconceptualized in theory as well as in practice.

Tackling some of the essential issues at the intersection or rather junction of ‘media + ecology’, ‘mediatization + environment’, we will think through possibilities of how emerging – often experimental – practices could contribute to ways out of dead-ends in mediatiza-

tion in times of cataclysm. Revisiting different dimensions of ‘ecologies of images’ and ‘images of ecology’ (cf. Ross 1996), we critically engage with both concepts and conceptualizations of key-clusters in this complex imbroglio. Being aware that ‘media’ and ‘mediatization’ on the one hand and environment and ‘the ecological’ on the other hand need to be distinguished in many ways, we are nonetheless suggesting that they are deeply intermingled and mutually transformative (Chang et al. 2019, p. 3).

This collection of essays sets out to fathom the potential of the currently expanding field of one particularly charged medial practice: documentary – and here especially interactive documentary (i-docs). I-docs (as we use the term here in this anthology) are practices of non-fiction storytelling that utilize interactive digital technologies to facilitate user participation in shaping the narrative or exploring its content. Unlike linear documentaries, i-docs are characterized by their dynamic structures, which often rely on interactivity, modularity, and database-driven architectures (Wiehl 2019, Kermanchi 2025). As we will see in the following, they thus not only allow for a plurality of perspectives, but also encourage audiences to actively engage with documentary material through interfaces, networks, or immersive environments. These most fundamental characteristics relate to the just described challenges of our time as potential venues and open spaces for interactive exchange and eventually change. Still, these ambitious promises need to be critically questioned and scrutinized.

In each of the following essays, we would like to invite you to wander through the expanding sphere of documentary. In the first section of this anthology, we will focus on expanded documentary and interactive documentaries (i-docs) as ecologies of images. We propose to think through factual entanglements in terms of media ecologies – both ontological and epistemic ecologies. In the second part, we will then zoom into what will be titled as *images of ecologies*.

With this approach, we try to bring together these two perspectives: to think through i-docs as catalysts to revise and expand defi-

nitions of documentary on the one hand; and as media *of* and *about* environments to then, again take new perspectives on the expanded field of documentary as entanglements of technologies, as critical interpretive approaches as well as agentic entities. This venue – taking these two perspectives which are in fact different facets of one complex embroglio – hopefully can make a small contribution to providing orientation in times like these and supplies small ponds in the mosaic of making sense of our being in the (post) Anthropocene.

This volume is based on the stimulating discussions we led in the BMBF-funded international research project *Digital Documentary Practices. Topical paradigm shifts and the potential of emerging practices to participate in public discourses*. Over more than three years, we drilled deep into the many layers of what doing documentary in a digitalized world means. It was – among others – in the two volumes of the virtual lecture series (2021/22; 2022/23) that we explored the expanding field of documentary practices in theory and practice. In this context, Patricia Zimmermann, one of the most astute and generous documentary scholars of our time, continually shared her thoughts with us. Patty's untimely passing in August 2023 deeply saddens us: we lost a great colleague and a dear friend.

This book, which features an essay drafted by her and Dale Hudson based on one of their contributions to the joint project, shall be dedicated to her.

I-Docs, the Sphere of ‘Expanded Documentary’ and the Networked|Networking Documentary Nexus

The “i” (in i-docs) represents a vortex of ideas spanning “information”, “interactive”, “immersive”, “intention”, “innovation”, and “indeterminacy”. This process flips the traditional vertical structures of media production into horizontal, iterative, never finished modes that reify the user as a participant and co-creator.

Patricia Zimmermann 2017 in her review of
The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary, n. p.

After more than two decades of digital documentary practices, one thing has become clear: Emerging ‘new’ media documentaries – whatever they may be – offer very specific ways of negotiating ‘the Real’: They not only allow for different qualities of experience from linear documentaries but they also afford different modes of ‘engagement’. Not necessarily video or screen-based, ‘the Documentary in the Digital’ involves the user-interactor in some active way and often calls for participation; it embraces augmented forms of reality and creates immersive realities; it is founded on polyphony, co-creation and networking. Intersections with adjacent fields like digital journalism (e.g. Kermanchi 2019), serious games (e.g. Ibanez-Bueno and Sébastien 2017; Bogost 2007; 2021; Raessens 2009), social media activism (e.g. Aplerstein 2021; Canella 2017), interventionist media making (e.g. Zimmermann and De Michiel 2013; 2018; Auguiste et al. 2020; Hudson and Zimmermann 2015; Wiehl 2018; Rose 2017), citizen sciences (e.g. Wiehl 2021; Rose 2014), and artistic research (e.g. Fetzner and Dornberg 2016; Miles 2017a; 2017b) become more and more influential. As such, storytelling has been transformed, offering new ways to explore, document, and reflect on global issues.

In the context of networked society and novel cultural techniques, documentary configurations have kept evolving and new documentary practices have kept arising. Keywords in this context are interactivity, interaction, participation, collaboration, co-creation, and networking; but also issues of immersion and presence, performativity and procedurality, embeddedness and embodiment, involvement, engagement, empowerment and agency, hybridity, multi-, cross- and trans-mediality, plurivocality, multi-perspectiveness, and non-linearity are central in emerging discourses and manifestations of the documentary impetus – to name just a few. Emerging documentary practices rework and critically engage with the aesthetic and epistemological dimensions of ‘the documentary tradition’ (which certainly is not *one* tradition!) – and certainly, they also transform social, political, ethical as well as rhetorical and pragmatic aspects of what ‘doing documentary’ means.

Hence, many of the projects we will encounter in this anthology move quite far away from what is commonly understood as ‘classic’ documentary cinema, pushing boundaries and interpreting the impetus of documentary making as an active *doing*. One major premise is the fact that ‘the documentary’ cannot be reduced to being an epistemic genre; rather, it is imbued with a transformative impetus and an innate awareness of issues going alongside with politics (and poetics) of representation (cf. Kermanchi 2025). This applies even more to documentary practices in the digital realm. As such, we are setting off from the premises that the expanding field – or rather sphere¹ – of documentary is not formed by objects and artefacts but that it is inhabited by lively processes of mediatization/mediation

1 While a ‘field’ is defined by fixed boundaries, the concept of a ‘sphere’ implies openness – a kind of indeterminacy that radiates outward from a core, evoking the image of expansion. Enfolding various phenomena and areas, a sphere invites for exploration without enforced boundaries. In this sense, it can be considered itself (though on a meta-level) an ‘open space’ – a concept that will be later touched upon when considering i-docs as manifestations of open space documentaries (Zimmermann and De Michiel 2013; 2018).

(Zylinska 2014) – or as Sandra Gaudenzi puts it: we are dealing here with ‘living documentary’ (Gaudenzi 2012).

So, what can be meant by ‘expanded documentary practices’ or ‘the emerging nexus of the Documentary in the Digital’?

One key characteristic is certainly the involvement of user-interactors in some active way and often calls for participation. New forms of expression and new practices of production, distribution, reception, or usage indicate that we need to “devise an expanded definition of documentary in the digital media regime of the twenty-first century”, as Jihoon Kim states in his book *Documentary’s Expanded Fields: New Media and the Twenty-First-Century Documentary* (2022, p. 2). In this book, Kim provides an overview of various documentary practices that have emerged over the past two decades through the proliferation of digital media technologies and new platforms beyond traditional documentary film, such as the use of drones, GoPro cameras, and the production of activist videos. Kim uses the term ‘documentary’s expanded fields’ to refer to non-standardised documentary forms that go along with “new consciousness, behaviors, and cultural or political climates affected by the digital technologies [...] and the nontheatrical experiential platforms” (p. 11). Furthermore, Kim explores innovative practices of observation, recording and visualisation, argumentation, and knowledge transfer “refiguring the image, vision, apparatus, memory, and activism of documentary cinema” (p. 11).

In order to map this territory, Kim focuses on five areas: The first one he spots is the field of the ‘expansion of the image’. By this, he means that this expansion takes place through digital graphic images and using post-production techniques leading to manipulated images. By questioning an objective truth, hidden truths would become apparent (p. 62). The concept of ‘expanded vision’, then, refers to non-human documentary images, such as those produced by cameras that are attached to objects rather than controlled by people. This would change the relationship between the camera, the filming subject, and profilmic reality (p. 104). Looking at ‘expanded

dispositifs, documentary platforms come to the fore. Kim recognises new possibilities for constructing reality in installations, for example (p. 144). This goes along with ‘expanded archives’. In this context, Kim introduces the term “performative archive” (p. 21) in relation to interactive documentaries, referring to “two types of performativity: the user’s different degrees of performative engagement with i-docs’ audiovisual and textual elements, and the digital platforms’ automatic performativity” (p. 21). Finally, Kim discusses ‘expanded activism’ by examining vernacular online videos that have emerged within various social movements. He states that “hybrid docmedia ecosystems have diversified activist video and political documentary practices” (p. 211), for example, by enabling collectives to produce videos at low cost and distribute them easily via social media (p. 211). The five “expanded fields” (p. 18) described by Kim demonstrate that documentary expands on different levels, which require a media-ecological perspective for their investigation.

Ecologies of Images | Images of Ecology

Our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places. [...] [S]taying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings.

Donna Haraway 2016, p. 1

In *Ecologies of Images | Images of Ecology*, we embark on a journey that traces distinct, yet intertwined, paths through the labyrinth of interactive documentaries, a sphere that exemplifies the expanded field of documentary. By engaging with the concept of expanded

documentary, we recognize i-docs as evolving beyond traditional forms, employing interactive, immersive, and non-linear structures that redefine how documentary engages with audiences and conveys complex narratives.

The part ‘ecologies of images’ invites readers into the realm of media ecological thinking and to consider images as interwoven within complex epistemic networks. Here, we encounter ‘ecologies of knowledge’ that push beyond traditional disciplines, cultivating interdisciplinary exchanges and revealing the labyrinthine routes by which documentary practices negotiate knowledge, memory, and meaning. These ecologies serve as evolving systems of knowing, where images are understood not merely as visual elements but as nodes in a web of interactions that encompass technology, culture, and materiality.

At the same time, the notion of ‘images of ecology’ opens a dialogue with environmental humanities, probing into how ecological crises, non-human agency, and planetary precarity are visually represented and mediated. This component investigates how images serve as critical tools, not only representing ecosystems but also actively shaping ecological consciousness. As such, we discuss i-docs as factual entanglements in terms of media ecologies – both ontological and epistemic ecologies.

Together, these two approaches create a dynamic interplay between representation and relationality. By navigating multiple paths through this double helix of ecology and media, we aim to show how the anthology’s contributors reveal convergent and divergent patterns of thought, illustrating a mosaic of potential approaches within media ecology, eco-criticism, epistemic ecologies, and environmentalist media.

In this anthology, we hope to embrace the complex and messy entanglement of documentary practices at large. Aiming to dive deep

into ‘mesh-works’ (Ingold 2022) of networked|networking² media ecologies (Wiehl 2019), we retrace documentary’s tradition and think through its current and upcoming potential; we explore documentary’s diversifying present and envision documentary’s future; we rethink notions of virtuality and actuality, interactivity, interaction and participation; we probe into the challenges and chances of polyphony and multi-perspectivity; we are interested in the ‘more-than-...’: the more-than-human as well as the-more-than-representational; we try to figure out how interactive documentary practices “rewire the environment” (Chang, Ivakhiv and Walker 2019, p. 3–4) and are agents in complex ecologies. By doing so, we discuss all these concepts reckoning their multifaceted notions – ranging from natural to infrastructural environments, from social and psychic environments. Foremost, however, we always question the implications these practices can have on biological ecologies as well as media ecologies and ecologies of knowledge. As such, we de- and re-construct the often all too vague metaphorical notions of these concepts (Finke 2013; Scolari 2013) in the field of media studies to apply the complex cluster with its various associations afresh in concrete ecologically oriented contexts of current environmental crises.

Or in short: we wander in the transdisciplinary landscape which opens when eco-criticism, the environmental humanities, and documentary theory (and practices) meet.

2 Considering i-docs as simultaneously ‘networked|networking’ (Wiehl 2019) highlights two interdependent dimensions of the same phenomenon. The specific notation, with the mirrored dash, emphasizes their mutual reflection and inseparability while acknowledging their distinct emphases. ‘Networked’ refers to the interconnected, structural nature of i-docs, encompassing aspects like interface design, interaction architecture, and their ontological framework. In contrast, ‘networking’ focuses on the dynamic, generative processes that animate these structures, emphasizing creativity and evolution in practice. This dual perspective resonates throughout the anthology, informing many contributions that explore phenomena within the sphere of expanded documentary.

About this anthology

In this anthology, we aim to emulate Matthew Fuller's approach of "taking every path in a labyrinth simultaneously" (2005, p. 11) by inviting you as readers to wander through the multifaceted nexus of interactive documentaries. Just as Fuller suggested being open to the dynamic simultaneity of paths, so do we: The contributions in this volume share a common starting point – the vast and dynamic field of i-docs (which is already a vast field of phenomena and practices). However, each article ventures down its own path, exploring the doubled theme of 'images of ecology' and 'ecologies of images'.

The diversity of approaches within the anthology reflects the complexity of the subject matter. The contributing authors employ a range of methodologies, texts, and frameworks, often working with similar concepts but emphasizing different aspects or interpretations. This creates a rich, interwoven network of thoughts, where individual chapters may appear divergent; still, together they form a coherent and interconnected map of emerging documentary ecologies. Thus, the volume embraces the complexity and multiplicity inherent in i-docs, offering readers multiple perspectives on the evolving relationships between media, ecology, and documentary practices.

Contributions

The anthology opens with a contribution by **Jasmin Kermanchi** about documentary representations that aim to emancipate the protagonist. In "Expanding Documentary to Emancipate the Protagonist? Documentary Representation Revisited", Jasmin starts from the premise that emerging forms of expression in the digital realm offer new possibilities for documentary representation. She states that interactive documentaries and their use of practices of participation and co-creation appear to have the potential to emancipate the protagonists in the documentary field by allowing them to rep-

resent themselves or creatively contribute to the documentary representation. Her contribution deals with the assumption that this offers those affected by social problems, among others, the opportunity to free themselves from the ‘victim tradition’ of social documentary film and to demand their cultural participation. Instead of being portrayed as victims to be pitied, they can present themselves as they wish. Additionally, new forms of representation can break perceptual conventions and thus ‘expand’ the field of documentary expression. They try to prevent users from falling into mechanisms of pity through the testimonies of those concerned and instead promote attentive listening. However, drawing on philosophical and political approaches, the essay asks: What potentials and limitations do interactive documentaries offer for the emancipation of marginalized protagonists? Furthermore, does involvement in i-docs ensure a representation that demands cultural participation?

Jasmin argues that the concept of representation needs to be rethought, as it does not suffice for protagonists to film themselves and to be seen in a video or on an interactive website. Rather, it is the manner of representation that is decisive and that is also related to the practices of the projects. The contribution shows that representation alone is not enough for cultural participation. It is crucial to break with stereotypical patterns of representation. Sometimes, it can even be more conducive to the emancipation of the protagonists if they are only represented abstractly or not at all, which i-docs offer new possibilities for. The essay therefore distinguishes between ‘*simple* representation’, which is usually the focus of documentary theory, and ‘*emancipatory* representation’, which the contribution understands as a form of intervention.

Jasmin’s article is followed by **Florian Mundhenke**’s essay “The VR Documentary – History, Examples, Theory”, which is intended as a first approximation of the form of the VR documentary. Reconstructing the development historically, Florian looks at the VR documentary as a construction block in the large formation of the field of digital documentary, insofar as it builds links to web documen-

tary or documentary AR, which is discussed in more detail later in the article by Patty Zimmermann and Dale Hudson. The VR documentary amalgamates elements of documentary film (focusing on real-world events in the form of an audiovisual reflection in time) with elements of serious games (user-centricity, often first-person perspective, mastering tasks and interacting with objects or people or their virtual representations). Analysing some examples such as *The Real Thing* (FR 2018), *Jerusalem Stories: Faith* (DE 2018) and *4 Feet: Blind Date* (AR 2018), Florian shows that the field is quite differentiated despite its relative novelty. The style (CGI, 3D camera recordings), the design in time (telling a story, offering a game) and the user involvement (contemplation, interaction) are adjusting screws for the composition of VR documentaries. The main part of the contribution deals with theoretical implications of VR documentary focusing on reflections that can be made on the relationship between reference to the real world within the virtual world.

Florian shows that mediated reality is not only space, but also voices, experiences, and other references. Moreover, he reflects on the role of the user, who is involved in the developing events, mostly with the help of the two aspects of storytelling or/and interactivity. Against this background, Florian proposes to speak of a new dispositif of VR that creates a quite different technical, content-related, and social perception situation than previous media dispositifs such as the cinema or television – and that comes to full fruition in documentary VR.

With the next contribution, we smoothly pass to the second section of this anthology: Images of Ecology. This part is opened by an essay on “Climate Change in the Media Realm of Documentaries and Web Documentaries” in which **Thomas Weber** explores concrete images of ecology. Thomas examines how identical content can acquire varying meanings when presented in different media, with a particular focus on the evolution of documentary forms dealing with climate change. As digital technologies have increasingly penetrated museums and exhibitions, new forms of audiovisual media such as

i-docs, web documentaries, and XR documentaries – collectively termed expanded documentary – have emerged alongside traditional formats known from television and film festivals. Thomas’ study aims to analyse the distinct affordances and options for action presented by these various documentary formats. Employing an example-based comparison, the analysis contrasts the classic documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth* (US 2006) with the interactive documentary *The Shore Line* (US/CA 2017), highlighting the added value these diverse documentary formats dealing with climate change offer users.

The essay hypothesizes that the value of these documentary formats extends beyond mere representation, fundamentally influencing user engagement and interaction and offering varied options for action. To this end, Thomas draws on the theoretical concepts of affordance and the media milieus of the documentary. Through a media ecological comparison, the article contributes to the understanding of how documentary formats can be used to foster awareness and action regarding critical environmental issues.

The following three contributions by Dale Hudson and Patricia (Patty) Zimmermann, Elizabeth (Liz) Miller, and Anna Wiehl explore how emergent documentary practices navigate the interplay between local engagement and global interconnection. Together, they foreground the power of augmented and co-creative media to cultivate ecological awareness, emotional resonance, critical self-reflection, and collective care. These works resonate with the anthology’s central themes by emphasizing polyphony, place-based engagement, and the entanglements of human and more-than-human ecologies, demonstrating how documentary forms mediate between the situated and the systemic, the very concrete and issues at a meta-physical meta level.

Dale Hudson’s and **Patricia Zimmermann’s** chapter, “Documentary’s Augmented Realities”, introduces the concept of “augmenting reality” to push beyond the technological novelty of AR, VR, and 360° video, situating them instead as tools for layering material histories and perceptual realities. Where Florian reconstructs in

his contribution the historical legacy of *virtual* reality and proposes to see in VR a novel dispositif that creates unfamiliar perception situation independently from our current physical location, Patricia, Dale, and Liz focus on the affordances of *augmented* reality in order to augment our perception of reality as it surrounds us – i.e. to add further layers on the reality we normally encounter. In this essay, Dale and Patricia specifically analyse micro-local projects like *Exit Zero: An Atlas of One City Block through Time* (US 2022), which uncovers histories of gentrification and dispossession in San Francisco, and *Swimming Upstream* (CA 2021), which visualizes extinct species in Lake Ontario. Also, the other two projects explored in the contribution – Yi Cui’s *Through the Looking Glass* (CN 2017) and *Qiu (Late Summer)* (CN 2016) – make us discover so far unfamiliar images of ecology within a very specific ecology of images: they depict endangered ways of living in Tibet and Beijing.

These works collectively demonstrate how augmented documentaries anchor audiences in specific places while fostering critical dialogues about environmental injustices and shared spaces. Unlike epic, feature-length environmental films, these micro-local projects create pathways for experiential and affective knowledge, allowing audiences to connect grand ecological issues to their immediate surroundings. Dale Hudson and Patricia Zimmermann argue that these layered, location-based approaches challenge dominant documentary paradigms, enriching the field through playful, polyphonic, and site-specific storytelling.

Also, the following chapter by **Elizabeth Miller**, “Exploring Waste Relations Across Platform and Place with Augmented Documentary”, examines how augmented documentary and immersive installations reframe human-environment interactions. Through walking and cycling tours in Montréal, Miller examines projects like *As the Gull Flies* (CA 2023), an immersive multi-screen installation designed for Montreal’s environmental museum, the Biosphere, and the *WasteScapes* app (CA 2021), which guides users to waste sites. These projects foreground the relational ecologies of waste, draw-

ing attention to the tensions between human consumption and the more-than-human presences that adapt to urban environments.

The *WasteScapes* app integrates two recent documentary concepts: augmented documentary and open space documentary. Augmented documentary “amplifies an experience of place by invoking layers of histories, sounds, and stories” through archival research, sound design, and mapping (Miller and Zimmermann 2022). Open space documentary, on the other hand, shifts focus from fixed narratives to a “mesh of engagements, experiences, ideas, practices, technologies, and voices”, fostering dialogue and collective responses to unresolved issues (Zimmermann and De Michiel 2019). By combining these approaches, the app seeks to connect environmental educators working on Île Sainte-Hélène and deepen their connection to each other, the place, and its natural inhabitants.

Liz’ polyphonic approach de-centres human perspectives, creating a dialogue between diverse agents and challenging conventional logics of consumption and land use. One of the goals of the projects is to defamiliarize. The walking and cycling tours served as both research tools and pedagogical interventions, enabling participants to collectively address interrelated challenges around waste and climate change.

By emphasizing place-based encounters and multi-platform storytelling, Liz underscores the capacity of augmented documentaries to deepen audience engagement with environmental systems and the inequalities embedded within them. Ultimately, *WasteScapes* exemplifies how iterative, collaborative, and cross-platform approaches can mobilize publics to confront the complexities of ecological crises.

Anna Wiehl’s chapter, “Collaboration & Co-Creative Media Making in Precarious Times”, shifts the focus from augmentation to mobilization, emphasizing the transformative potential of interactive and networked media to confront ecological crises. Drawing on Félix Guattari’s ecosophy and Latour’s notion of ‘matters of concern’ (Latour 2004), Anna advocates for co-creative processes that move beyond communicating scientific facts to fostering ‘matters of care’

(La Puig de Bellacasa 2017). This shift, explicitly highlighted in her subtitle, reflects a paradigm change from detached observation to affective and ethical engagement, underscoring the role of attachment, commitment, and active participation in addressing the climate crisis.

In her essay, Anna focuses on projects which combine co-creation with practices from mobile media making (Baker, Schleser, and Mologa 2009). The three projects explored – *The Disaster Resilience Journal* (CA 2014), *The Climate Witness Project* (NO 2019), and *ISeeChange* (US 2019) – mobilize participants to document and respond to climate change in hyperlocal contexts while connecting these efforts to global systems. Through these projects, she explores how mobile media practices combine aesthetic practices with connectivity, creating opportunities for meaningful, place-based environmental learning, witnessing, and action-taking. One of the grounding arguments runs that transformation, change and sustainability require not only communication but also polyphonic wondering and empathetic thinking through issues in a co-creative manner.

Anna argues that interactive media practices have the potential to transcend cognitive understanding, inspiring participants to “make things matter” and engage in collective action. By prioritizing processes over artefacts, her chapter highlights how mobile, co-creative, and community-based practices can foster communal agency, emotional investment, and a shared sense of responsibility. These practices exemplify Guattari’s ethico-aesthetic paradigm (1995), which links ecological, social, and mental dimensions, and calls for a new sense of responsibility for the future of all life on the planet.

Ultimately, her analysis positions mobile media as a nucleus for expanded ecologies of images and images of ecology. These media assemblages not only address the immediate challenges of climate change but also act as a catalyst for profound mentalities and social practices that embody care, connectivity, and co-creativity.

Like Anna, **Daniel Fetzner** also takes up Latour’s transition from matters of fact to matters of concern. However, he develops

this train of thought into a different direction. In his contribution, Daniel focuses on the metaphor of the garden and takes the idea of ‘matters’ further to the conceptual figure of the mater – Mother Earth and the allegory of the garden. In the artistic research project *Jardin Glocal*, Daniel investigates new ways of thinking about our planetary interconnectedness. Through a media ecological lens, he revisits the geology and ecology of the Upper Rhine Valley, questioning on a meta-level human exclusivity in agency, reflecting from the outset the observer’s position, and highlighting the entanglement of technical artifacts and their inherent vitality. Exploring the concept allegory of the garden, the text reflects on order, disorder, and the interconnectedness of all beings, drawing on Goethe’s concept of a global garden and its ecological resonances. In this context, the garden becomes a metaphorical laboratory for exploring relationships between humans and their terrestrial home, oscillating between cultivation and exploitation. In a at the same time personal, philosophical, and poetic journey, the chapter traverses geological, ecological, and philosophical concerns, culminating in a reflection on care and belonging within the networks of life.

Certainly, this anthology weaves together diverse perspectives on *ecologies of images* and *images of ecology*, bridging the conceptual and the practical, the local and the global, the concrete and the metaphysical: from interrogations of the evolving affordances and ethics of representation to the promises and challenges of VR and AR, to discussions of situated, relational and polyphonic engagements with environmental and social ecologies. Throughout the essays, a shared commitment to care, connectivity, and embracing complexity emerges as a unifying thread, underscoring the transformative potential of documentary media in navigating our precarious planetary future.

Bibliography

- Auguiste, Reece; De Michiel, Helen; Longfellow, Brenda; Naaman, Dorit; Zimmermann, Patricia (2020): "Co-creation in Documentary". In: *After-image* vol. 47, no. 1, pp. 34–35.
- Baker, Camille; Schleser, Max; Molga, Kasia (2009): "Aesthetics of Mobile Media Art". In: *Journal of Media Practice* vol. 10, no. 2/3, pp. 101–122.
- Bogost, Ian (2007): *Persuasive games. The Expressive Power of Videogames*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Bogost, Ian (2021): "Persuasive Games, A Decade Later". In: Teresa de La Hera, Jeroen Jansz, Joost Raessens and Ben Schouten (eds.): *Persuasive Gaming in Context*. Amsterdam University Press, pp. 29–40.
- Brundiers, Katja; Barth, Matthias; Cebrián, Gisela; Cohen, Matthew; Diaz, Liliana; Doucette-Remington, Sonya et al. (2021): "Key competencies in sustainability in higher education-toward an agreed-upon reference framework". In: *Sustain Sci* vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 13–29.
- Canella, Gino (2017): "Social movement documentary practices: digital storytelling, social media and organizing". In: *Digital Creativity* vol 28, no. 1, pp. 24–37.
- Chang, Alenda (2015): "Environmental Remediation". In: *Electronic Book Review*. Online: <https://www.filmandmedia.ucsb.edu/publication/environmental-remediation/> [last visited 30.10.2024].
- Chang, Alenda; Ivakhiv, Adrian J.; Walker, Janet (2019): "States of Media+Environment: Editors' Introduction". In: *Media+Environment* vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–5.
- Fetzner, Daniel; Dornberg, Martin (2016): "Partizipatives Parasitieren. Zum methodischen Potential interaktiver Webdokumentationen in der künstlerischen Forschung". In: Beate Ochsner, Oliver Fahle, and Anna Wiehl (eds.): *Die Herstellung von Evidenz oder: Zum Phänomen interaktiver Web Dokumentationen*. Marburg: Schüren, pp. 40–56.
- Finke, Peter (2013): "A Brief Outline of Evolutionary Cultural Ecology". In: Darrell Arnold (ed.): *Traditions of Systems Theory*. London: Routledge, pp. 240–262.

- Fuller, Matthew (2005): *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Gaudenzi, Sandra (2013): *The Living Documentary. From representing reality to co-creating reality in digital interactive documentary*. London: Goldsmiths University of London.
- Guattari, Félix (1995): *Chaosmosis: An ethico-aesthetic paradigm*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Haraway, Donna (2016): *Staying with the trouble. Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham, London: Duke University Press.
- Hudson, Dale; Zimmermann, Patricia (2015): *Thinking through digital media. Transnational environments and locative places*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ibanez-Bueno, Jacques; Sébastien, Allain (2017): "From documentary film-making to serious game: interactions model to bring the real to learners". In: *French Journal for Media Research* 8. Online: <http://frenchjournalformedia-research.com/lodel/index.php?id=1363> [last visited 30.10.2024].
- Ingold, Tim (2022): *Being alive. Essays on movement, knowledge and description*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Ivakhiv, Adrian (2018): *Shadowing the anthropocene. Eco-realism for turbulent times*. Santa Barbara CA: Punctum Books.
- Kermanchi, Jasmin (2019): *Interaktiv Investigativ. Zum Funktionswandel des investigativen Journalismus in interaktiven Webprojekten*. Hamburg: AVINUS.
- Kermanchi, Jasmin (2025): *Dokumentieren – Partizipieren – Intervenieren. Teilnahme und Teilhabe in Interactive Documentaries*. Hamburg: AVINUS.
- Kim, Jihoon (2022): *Documentary's Expanded Fields: New Media and the Twenty-First-Century Documentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- La Puig de Bellacasa, María (2017): *Matters of care. Speculative ethics in more than human worlds*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Latour, Bruno (2004): "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern". In: *Critical Inquiry* 30, pp. 225–248.
- Lousley, Cheryl (2014): "Ecocriticism and the Politics of Representation". In: Greg Garrard (ed.): *The Oxford handbook of ecocriticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 155–171.

- Miles, Adrian (2017a): "Matters of concern and interactive documentary: notes for a computational nonfiction". In: *Studies in Documentary Film* 11, pp. 1–17.
- Miles, Adrian (2017b): "a murmuration is not a story". In: Adrian Miles (ed.): *The Material Turn and Interactive Documentary*. s.l., pp. 6–22.
- Miller, Elizabeth; Zimmermann, Patricia (2022): "How Augmented Documentary Illuminates the Politics of Place". In: *The Edge*, August. Online: <https://www.theedgemediaworld.org/augmented-documentary-illuminates-politics-of-place/> [last visited 03.10.2024].
- Raessens, Joost (2009): "Serious games from an apparatus perspective". In: Marianne van Boomen, Sybille Lammes, Ann-Sophie Lehmann, Joost Raessens, and Mirko Tobias Schäfer (eds.): *Digital material. Tracing new media in everyday life and technology*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 21–34.
- Rose, Mandy (2014): "Documentary as DIY Citizenship". In: Matt Ratto and Boler Megan (eds.): *DIY citizenship. Critical making and social media*. Boston: MIT Press, pp. 201–212.
- Rose, Mandy (2017): "Not Media About, but Media With: Co-Creation for Activism". In: Sandra Gaudenzi, Mandy Rose, and Judith Aston (eds.): *i-docs - The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary*. New York: Wallflower, pp. 49–65.
- Ross, Andrew (1996): *The Chicago gangster theory of life. Nature's debt to society*. London: Verso.
- Scolari, Carlos A. (2013): "Media Ecology. Exploring the Metaphor to Expand the Theory". In: *International Journal of Communication* 7, pp. 1418–1441.
- Wiehl, Anna (2018): "Approaching Participatory documentary networks and networking: From Actor Network Theory to Interventionist Networking Methodology". In: *Interfaces numériques* vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 689–706.
- Wiehl, Anna (2019): *The 'New' Documentary Nexus. Networked | Networking in Interactive Assemblages*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Wiehl, Anna (2021): "Post-Mass-Media as networked | networking Performativity. Revisiting Guattari's Concept of Thinking through Current Docu-

- mentary and Artistic Practices”. In: Michel Schreiber and Milan Stürmer (eds.): *Post-Mass-Media and participation*. Marburg: Schüren, pp. 47–65.
- Wiek, Arnim; Withycombe, Lauren; Redman, Charles L. (2011): “Key competencies in sustainability: a reference framework for academic program development”. In: *Sustain Sci* vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 203–218.
- Zimmermann, Patricia; De Michiel, Helen (2013): “Documentary as Open Space”. In: Brian Winston (ed.): *The documentary film book*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 355–365.
- Zimmermann, Patricia; De Michiel, Helene (2018): *Open Space New Media Documentary: A Toolkit for Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Zylinska, Joanna (2014): *Minimal ethics for the anthropocene*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Open Humanities Press.