

Call for Papers

Animation Redux

Montage AV 35/1/2026

After having played only a minor role in film and media studies for decades, research on animation has been attracting increasing attention and interest since the late 2000s. According to a common premise of animation studies, nowadays animation is ubiquitous. Artificially produced images and visual elements are animated almost everywhere – not just in movies, series, and video games, but in social media feeds, online image databases, on public screens, or in software applications. At the same time, the importance of animation as a business sector and artistic practice has undergone an unprecedented positive re-evaluation in the past years.

The omnipresence of animation is often used as an argument to bundle heterogeneous phenomena under an umbrella concept. However, the concept of animation implies specific technical, aesthetic, and discursive genealogies – and thus raises the question of in which cases concrete comparisons between newer and older varieties of animation are appropriate and in which cases artificially made moving pictures are currently developing in new directions. In particular, the development of (partial) automation or AI-generation of moving images presents challenges to the conventional determinations. To what extent can these digitally generated moving pictures be understood as a further extension of animation? Or, to what extent do they make it necessary to define the relationship between animation and live-action film in new ways?

In 2008, the French researcher Hervé Joubert-Laurencin already made the provocative statement, “animated film no longer exists.”¹ In saying that, he did not mean that there are no longer animated movies, but that the defining difference between animated and live-action film has disappeared or become irrelevant. Shortly after, the animation theorist Alan Cholodenko suggested using the term “hyperanimation” to refer to the condition of an undetermined diffusion of animation, alluding to Baudrillard to express how animation in its current expanded and excessive form becomes an indefinite and empty concept.²

The topic, “Animation redux,” aims at discussing concepts like hyperanimation beyond its merely postmodern usage (like in the case of Cholodenko) as an open heuristic for a new determination of the position of animation in the current (digital) film and media culture. This takes up questions raised in a previous issue of *Montage AV* on animated films (22/2/2013), which focused more on historical topics. The focus of the coming issue will expand the

perspective to include current audio-visual forms and to look at digital moving pictures beyond film, such as TV and streaming series, online videos, smartphone apps, data visualization, and visuals on concert stages, artistic installations, or performances. What new aesthetic and medial forms of animation can be found here? To what extent do specific poetics emerge that could, for instance, be called hyper- or post-animation? How do current aesthetics of animation relate to historical variants? Digitally animated images could still appear to be an alternative to ‘real’ or ‘live-action’ film (based on photography) and in that way continue with the modernist project of some earlier movements in the development of animated films. Digital animation can, on the other hand, reproduce existing styles and forms of live-action film, and thus not appear to be an independent visual form, as in the current remakes of Disney animated movies. Is digital animation then anything more than a form of technical production and a certain aesthetic look? How do digital animation techniques remediate earlier cultural techniques such as sketching, drawing, or modelling? How does digital animation relate to simulated, computer-generated, or AI-generated visualization? To what extent is the concept of ‘animation’ still useful as a way to describe motion pictures in today’s media culture?

We welcome the submission of texts in English or German with a length of up to 35.000 characters (approx. 5800 words). The articles will be published in German. When citing sources, please use an author-date format such as the Harvard style, but provide full last and first names of the authors.

Our guest editors Marion Biet (marion.biet@rub.de) and Felix Hasebrink (felix.hasebrink@uni-oldenburg.de) or our editor Kristina Köhler (k.koehler@uni-koeln.de) will be glad to answer any questions or provide further information. Please submit manuscripts by 31 October 2025 to them or to montage@snaflu.de.

¹ Joubert-Laurencin, Hervé (2008): Le cinéma d’animation n’existe plus. In: *Acmé – Revue de cinéma numérique* 1, p. 106–111.

² Cholodenko, Alan (2014) “First Principles” of Animation. In: *Animating Film Theory* ed. by Karen Beckman. Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2014.