



## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Eleni Alexandri

We are delighted to bring to our readers the 9th edition of *Hortus Semioticus*, which focuses on pop culture, media, and transmediality. The goal behind this issue was to provide a forum for young academics who enthusiastically and professionally approach topics related to these primary themes, and to assist them in demonstrating that the study of pop culture should not be overlooked or discounted academically. We can better comprehend our society, the logic underlying the structure and operation of various industries, as well as the demands and expectations of the public by thoroughly examining pop culture. Furthermore, our society's problematic areas and pathogens are being raised, and we are able to establish an intellectual discourse based on rigorous, methodical observations. On the other hand, media analysis and transmediality are innately semiotic themes that allow pop culture studies to reach new depths and more diverse layers and angles.

We, the editorial team, were also proud to receive articles from all over the world for our thematic issue, and we hope that the channel of communication between Tartu University and other institutions globally will continue to grow in the future. The seven published articles, written in either English, Estonian, or Spanish, feature fresh academic research and exciting findings, and will hopefully not only pave the way for future studies, but will also convince young academics of the importance of our primary issues.

In the first article "Sherlock Holmes of the 21st century: Intersemiotic translation in the BBC series" the author, **Tamara Ovchinnikova**, applies semiotics to highlight the complex and multilayered intertextual elements, as well as the intersemiotic translation of the Sherlock Holmes original novel to the BBC series. By presenting a detailed examination of the series' pilot episode, the author demonstrates how it is more than just a modernisation and a translation of the original text, but a complete conveyance of the source's functionalities, and a development of the detective-stories genre.

**Irma Susana Carbajal Vaca** and **Hugo David Tiscareño Talavera**'s article "Activaciones semióticas para el violín acompañante: Institucionalización de la inteligencia colectiva emergente en escenarios de educación informal" ("Semiotic activations for the accompanying violin: Institutionalization of collective intelligence emerging from informal education scenarios") aims at drawing attention to the methods by which musical practices are taught, highlighting the gap in formal education that does not adequately equip artists



to perform in the contemporary work sector. In the case study of the violin, semiotics is applied in order to analyse informal learning methods and spaces, as well as to offer a semiotic proposal of musical learning that has the potential to bring a much-needed change to the field of classical pedagogy, and ultimately to assist artists in reaching the point of *musical noesis*.

**Samantha Herrerías'** article, "Netflix and Narco-pop culture", examines how popular series such as *Narcos: Mexico* are posing as an unofficial history teacher for young audiences, and through remediation manage to re-create and shape cultural memory. Subsequently, the author investigates the negative aspects of these productions, scrutinising their marketing methods and underlying motives, a logic of monetising original stories, a byproduct of our hypermodern, capitalistic society.

**Andrew Mark Creighton's** article "Postemotionalism, McDonaldization, and transmedial worlds as commodifying mechanisms in fan fiction communities" provides an in-depth examination of the complexities of fan production, evaluating the phenomenon in the light of McDonalization and convergence culture. The author explains how formal rationalisation and implosion, which govern virtual space, are turning leisure into a synonym of labour, and how fan productions, that are continuously providing new material to fuel transmedial worlds, are being monetised by the media and culture industries.

In her article "Totalitarianism in video games: A semiotic analysis of *Beholder's* narrative", **Eleni Vatala** analyses the dystopian, choice-driven video game *Beholder*, examining the role of agency in the created semiotic space and the structure of the narrative. Finally, the author highlights the cultivated feelings of frustration, which triggers a survival instinct within the player. The Lotmanian perspective Vatala utilises in this text connects the game's virtual architectural environment to another semiosphere with precise boundaries and two distinct levels of semiotic activity.

**Heidi Campana Piva's** article, "An overview of fan production and participatory culture in the digital age", draws attention, through a comparative historical literature review, to the necessity of developing a methodological framework that could be used to efficiently analyse fan production in the context of participatory and cyber-culture. The author emphasises the complexities of such an endeavour by throwing light on participatory and cyber-culture, their characteristics, and meaning-making processes.

Finally, **Jorge Flore's** article, "*Ong's Hat* and the Construction of a Suspicious Model Reader", investigates the multimedia narrative of *Ong's Hat*, a group of scientists who reportedly traversed across dimensions. Through different mediums, the textual intricacy of *Ong's Hat* gives a superb illustration of transmediality and textual collaboration. Moreover, the author manages to demonstrate how certain texts have the capacity to confound and manipulate the reader.



This special issue also includes an interview with **Rhea Colaso**, a semiotics master's degree graduate who currently works as the head of marketing at Bedford Row Capital. Rhea discusses pop culture, semiotics and its role in marketing and advertising, and attempts to forecast what the future holds for modern media and our discipline. Finally, **Mohar Kalra**, an American artist and visiting researcher at Tartu University, discusses his interactive artwork and the role of semiotics in his creative process. Rhea and Mohar both provide shining examples of how semiotics may be utilised outside of academia, not merely to investigate phenomena, but also to develop systems of meaning and sophisticated narratives.

Personally, I would like to thank all the people who contributed to the making of this issue, our mentors, all the authors and reviewers, **Andrew Mark Creighton** for co-editing and proofreading, translators and language editors (**Daniel Viveros Santillana**, **Karl Joosep Pihel**, **Keily Tammaru**) and everyone who aided in spreading the word about this *Hortus Semioticus* special issue. I am grateful for all the contributions and happy to see the final result of our common efforts.

This issue was edited by **Eleni Alexandri** and **Andrew Mark Creighton**, with the assistance of **Katre Pärn** and **Nelly Mäekivi**. The edition's cover art was created by **Heidi Campana Piva**.