

The arts at the intersection.

Hybridisations and intermedial proposals in contemporary art

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At least since the historical avant-gardes, the crossing of artistic languages has been one of the driving forces of contemporary creation. In recent decades, and especially within the context of digital culture, this confluence can no longer be understood simply as an experimental gesture or as a kind of deviation toward unexplored zones of relatively stable disciplines; rather, its practice has called into question the very operability of the artistic genres that have been used until now. In this sense, the notion of *intermedia*, formulated early on by Dick Higgins (1966), far from having lost its relevance, acquires renewed currency today.

Accordingly, this issue of *Umática* is articulated around a question that runs, in different ways, through the texts that compose it: what happens when the inherited categories through which we have thought the different artistic disciplines cease to be operative due to the tendency toward hybridization among languages and

proposals? Far from understanding intersection as a mere crossing of languages or a simple sum of techniques, the contributions gathered here address these encounters as a problemat-

ic space from which to reconsider the very conditions of making, thinking, and experiencing art in the present. As Irina O. Rajewsky (2005) points out, intermediality designates not only relations between media, but also a theoretical field that forces us to revise the ways in which meaning, perception, and aesthetic experience are constructed.

As Jacques Rancière (2009) warns, artistic disciplines articulate regimes of visibility, intelligibility, and legitimation. Therefore, disciplinary frictions affect both the technical and linguistic elements of the arts and their sociopolitical status. This turns especially relevant in a context marked by a series of more recent transformations that directly affect artistic practices, modes of perception, and forms of knowledge production. In the post-pandemic scenario, experience has been profoundly reconfigured, and its possibilities even more intensely administered. The intensification of the use of and dependence on

technological devices implies a deep transformation of the conditions of presence, attention, and relation (Higgins and Kahn). One of the most significant purposes of intermedial practices is precisely a critical approach to models of perception, as well as a reflection on the aesthetic effects produced by the management of our lived experiences. Against an aesthetic tradition marked by the primacy of vision and distanced contemplation, hybrid arts activate complex experiential regimes. Authors such as Claire Bishop (2012) and N. Katherine Hayles (2012) have pointed out how many contemporary practices displace the spectator from a passive position toward an embodied, situated, and processual involvement. Aesthetic experience thus ceases to be conceived as the reception of an object and is instead understood relationally, while attempting to avoid the dangers this entails (as in proposals such as those of Bourriaud). These issues emerge within the framework of the crisis of attention, which cannot be understood solely as an individual deficit or cognitive problem, but as a structural element of a regime –fundamentally economic– based on saturation, acceleration, and permanent competition for perceptual time (Crary). From this perspective, intermediality appears not only as a formal strategy, but as a field of experimentation from which to test alternative modes of attention.

Likewise, the normalization of generative artificial intelligence has introduced new tensions around authorship, creativity, and the circulation of images, texts, and sounds. Far from presenting itself as a neutral tool, AI reorders processes of

cultural production, accentuating extractive dynamics and the possibility of aesthetic standardization. At the same time, it opens up the possibility of creating from machinic parameters not yet explored in technological uses traditionally attributed to the human. In this way, when we speak of “digital culture,” since the advent of AI as a tool available to any internet user, we are dealing with a paradigm shift that is still in an emergent phase and that reconfigures the few certainties we had in this regard.

For these reasons, the contributions that make up this issue do not aim to provide a unified theory of intermediality or a closed taxonomy of hybrid arts. Instead, they offer a plural space for reflection that approaches intersection as a site of productive instability, from which to rethink the conditions of contemporary artistic practice. Following the heterodox framework enabled by *Umática*, this issue brings together diverse critical approaches, again organized in relation to their own medial condition.

In the section “Articles,” we find, on the one hand, research that addresses the core questions of the dossier from different theoretical frameworks and, on the other, a series of texts that engage with these issues through specific artistic practices.

The first part of the issue includes a text by Gerard Vilar, who addresses the problem of what it means to think in a context dominated by images and to what extent philosophy and the arts need to expand their traditional modes of thought. He begins with a critique of logocentrism –which has historically defined

the philosophical notion of thinking— and proposes an expansion that incorporates aesthetic and non-discursive modes of thought, especially those that operate in and with images. Vilar situates his reflection within a contemporary crisis of thinking, intensified by current political, social, ecological, and technological conflicts, a condition that seems to demand forms of thought that cannot be reduced to concept or word, in order to enable the transformation of imaginaries and the reconfiguration of dominant narratives. He articulates a distinction between “thinking about,” “thinking in,” and “thinking with” images, arriving at an inseparable unity between image and concept—a hybrid form of meaning production that he terms “iconotext,” in which text and image do not subordinate one another but are co-constitutive. Vilar analyzes *El mito trágico del Angelus de Millet* by Salvador Dalí as a prototype of the iconotext. Dalí thus appears as a precursor of new modalities of thought, which can also be traced in contemporary philosophy and artistic practice in figures such as W. G. Sebald, Annie Ernaux, Georges Bataille, or Michel Foucault.

Júlia Lull proposes understanding hybrid practices as dispositifs for reorganizing traditional artistic notions and the expectations associated with perception, attention, and subjectivity. One of the central axes of the article is a critique of modern ocularcentrism and the model of the contemplative spectator, inherited from Kantian aesthetic judgment and a passive conception of perception. Lull-Sanz shows how images—far from being neutral—operate as technologies of subjectivation, configuring desires, affects, and

normative bodies within biopolitical and capitalist dispositifs. Against this regime, hybrid arts emerge as practices that destabilize the primacy of vision and activate alternative modes of perception, understanding, and relation. Drawing on the notion of “disturbed attention,” the article argues for fragmented, intermittent, and multi-sensory forms of attention that allow perceptual automatisms to be suspended and spaces for critical experience to be opened, without reproducing the models imposed by libidinal capitalism. Within this framework, distraction ceases to be a symptom or expression of alienation and becomes a possible strategy of sensible reappropriation. This conception of perception leads to a broader reflection on the role of corporeality in aesthetic experience. According to the author, hybrid arts do not seek to offer clear or easily consumable experiences, but rather to generate uncomfortable, ambiguous, and open encounters, in contrast to regimes of transparency, legibility, and control.

These reflections lead to a deeper question: that of truth, which is addressed in Livia Daniel’s article. The role and validity of the idea of truth are thrown into crisis in the context of digital acceleration, neoliberalism, and the expansion of artificial intelligence, insofar as truth has become fragile, contingent, and increasingly commodified. Daniel positions art as a privileged space of epistemological resistance. She departs from the traditional notion of truth as an eternal and stable instance and instead conceives it in terms of duration and event, as well as its emergence through relational and contextual

processes. More specifically, she defines it as a “territory for the ordering of facts,” a formulation she considers particularly pertinent for thinking about contemporary artistic practices, understood as processes in which materials, bodies, and ideas mutually transform one another, producing situated and non-universalizable forms of truth. The text critically examines the role of artificial intelligence as a new epistemic mediator and questions its supposed neutrality. AI is presented as a technology that reproduces historical biases and is driven by extractivist logics and neoliberal objectives. Particular emphasis is placed on the politics of fear associated with dominant discourses on AI, which foreclose the possibility of thinking technology as a contested field. From this perspective, Daniel analyzes artistic practices that operate as strategies of counter-truth, destabilizing hegemonic regimes of visibility and credibility. Rather than merely reflecting the crisis of truth, the text proposes the possibility of alternative narratives that, for instance, make visible—and explicitly signal the absence of—minorities and underrepresented collectives.

The second section, as noted above, is devoted to the analysis and reflection on concrete examples. The text by Carlos Valverde and Rita Cisnal systematically addresses the symbiotic relationship between art and fashion. Particularly relevant is their critical reading of the process of “artification” that emerges at this intersection, showing how fashion seeks to appropriate the auratic character of art—through musealization, collaborations, and immersive experiences

—while certain artists use fashion as a conceptual and performative support. The analysis of cases such as Ana Laura Aláez, Naia del Castillo, and Nicola Costantino situates clothing and the fashion show as sites of intermedial friction, where sculpture, performance, photography, installation, and curatorial practices intersect with elements historically and directly associated with the fashion world, such as the boutique, luxury, and social status. These proposals thus become critical dispositifs that lead to a concluding reflection on the possibility of transforming, through artistic practice, the predominance of Eurocentrism in the configuration of the idea of fashion and its industry. The text also considers the emerging role of artificial intelligence in projecting still-unimaginable forms in processes of creation, dissemination, and consumption, highlighting both its creative potential and its ethical risks, such as aesthetic standardization and the uncritical reproduction of Westernizing biases.

Virginia Pérez Nieto’s contribution offers a critical and updated rereading of the artist’s book from the perspective of digital culture. She starts from the premise that this format is not a stable object but an intermedial practice in continuous transformation. She traces a trajectory that connects the historical avant-gardes, conceptual art, and experimental practices of the twentieth century with contemporary digital forms of the artist’s book. Through this genealogy, Pérez Nieto shows how hybridization—far from being an exclusively digital consequence—has been a structural feature of the artist’s book since its origins, now intensified through the incorporation

of hypertext, interactivity, transmedia narratives, augmented reality, and NFTs. Gradually, the artist's book has shifted from being understood primarily as an object to being conceived as an experience in a broad sense. Particularly significant is the reflection on authorship and participation, where the author problematizes the notion of co-authorship in the digital context. Rather than uncritically celebrating the democratization of the creative process, the article offers a nuanced reading of participatory practices, distinguishing between different degrees of reader–user agency. The digital artist's book thus appears as a space of "conditioned collaboration." The author also addresses the curatorial, archival, and conservation challenges posed by these practices, pointing to the inadequacy of traditional museographic models for accounting for processual, interactive works dependent on technological infrastructures.

The question of writing is addressed in María Garay's text, which focuses on code poetry and articulates a critique of the ideal of technological transparency. Garay shows how exposing source code –often celebrated as a gesture of revelation– can produce an illusion of direct access to the workings of the medium, while in fact obscuring the multiple layers of translation that mediate between human language, programming language, and machine language. The article reconstructs the historical and aesthetic genealogy of code poetry, connecting it to movements such as Oulipo and what has been termed "prehistoric digital poetry." This overview frames code poetry as a practice grounded in the defamiliarization

of language. From this perspective, Garay returns to the question of transparency, arguing that the critical potential of these practices is often weakened by their confinement within closed artistic or editorial circuits, where code becomes an object of contemplation rather than a tool for intervention. Against this, she argues for the need to reintegrate poetic code into the algorithmic architectures of the network, imagining forms of circulation, performance, or integration into living systems that would allow executable poetry to intervene meaningfully in the textual regimes of the digital environment. The concluding question, then, concerns whether techniques of linguistic defamiliarization might be translated into effective forms of transformation of digital systems and their uses.

Carlos Muñecas's article offers a critical re-reading of contemporary public art through the concept of "open functionality," with the aim of reflecting on the relationship between art, the city, and citizenship. The point of departure is the identification of a historical shift in public sculpture, from monumental and commemorative models toward practices that are integrated into everyday life and intertwined with uses, trajectories, and social dynamics. Public sculpture today thus emerges as an element that coexists with and actively participates in the production of urban relations. The concept of open functionality is defined in opposition to closed or prescriptive functionality. Rather than assigning a single, clearly defined use to the work, it seeks to enable a range of possibilities for appropriation. The analysis of cases such as Llobet & Pons, Jeppe

Hein, Basurama, and Tercerunquinto shows that there is no single model of open functionality. Instead, it is a situated strategy that aims to return to citizens a margin of agency over public space, always in relation to the specific conditions under which the city can be constituted and experienced as a shared place.

Intersections with the sonic have also received particular attention in this issue. Joan Gómez Alemany offers an expansive cartography of the relationships between opera, cinema, and the audiovisual in contemporary music, with the aim of reclaiming intermediality as a structural condition of contemporary creation. One of the article's main contributions is its historical and conceptual reading of opera as an intermedial art form, capable of functioning as a privileged laboratory for analyzing transformations in the audiovisual, insofar as the influence of opera can be traced from the beginnings of cinema until the point at which both languages begin to converge. In contemporary creation, video thus becomes a structural element of dramaturgy, on a par with music and singing. This leads to the notion of video opera or "deconstructive opera," concepts used to name contemporary practices that integrate video, electronics, performance, and digital technologies and that, while exceeding the traditional operatic framework, reveal the difficulty of classifying these creations within established disciplinary boundaries. The proposals discussed reinforce the idea that contemporary music is now produced in an intermediate territory, where the sonic, the visual, and the performative are inextricably intertwined. These

practices are therefore not merely additive combinations of media, but complex systems of hybridization among artistic languages.

The relationship between music and painting also appears, though in an expanded sense, in Gonzalo Carbó's text. Here, the project *Moving Picture (046-3) Kyoto Version* is examined as a paradigmatic case of interdisciplinary encounter between painting, cinema, and contemporary music, articulated around the synesthetic notion of "seeing the music," formulated by Luciano Berio. Through an analysis of this immersive installation—realized in 2019 at the Kiyomizu-dera Temple in Kyoto—the text explores how image and sound intertwine to produce an aesthetic experience that exceeds traditional disciplinary boundaries, positioning itself in an intermediate space between the visible and the audible. The study takes as its starting point Gerhard Richter's painting *Abstraktes Bild (CR 046-3)* (2016), subjected to processes of division, reflection, and repetition that Corinna Belz translates cinematically into a large-format film. This visual material is, in turn, deployed in Rebecca Saunders's homonymous musical composition for solo trumpet and acoustically manipulated sounds, configuring an apparatus in which moving image and sound co-determine one another. The article analyzes this process as an intermedial translation, in which the structural principles of painting find temporal and timbral equivalents in music. In particular, the author focuses on the notion of "sonic color" through red—a fundamental tonal value for both Richter and Saunders in the visual domain—and, in the musical domain,

on the importance of silence, which appears in both practices and fosters a liminal experience between presence and disappearance.

Finally, Alberto Bernal reflects on "Composing Between Disciplines": His text is directly connected to the previous articles, insofar as it offers a critical reflection on the historical, institutional, and aesthetic limits of the idea of artistic disciplines, taking contemporary academic music as its point of departure. To this end, he combines text, conceptual diagrams, and images in order to show how many contemporary works generate confusion when they are situated within traditional disciplinary frameworks, revealing the constructed and normative character of such categories. He thus frames discipline as a mechanism that transforms confusion into order, establishes hierarchies of knowledge, and produces models of excellence, pedagogy, and mastery. Against this logic, the essay attends to practices that deliberately operate through dislocation, ambiguity, and misalignment—practices that present themselves as openly anti-disciplinary, "a mode of making that does not privilege a unitary 'what is' over a 'that is.'" This gesture encapsulates one of the driving forces behind this monographic issue: the question of what we still do not know what the arts can do.

In the following part, Libe Belandí's visual essay is presented, which explores the experience of scrolling on vertical video platforms and examines how regimes of continuous image consumption affect our perception of time, attention, and, in particular, the construction of memory. The project, in dialogue with some of

the approaches presented in the "Articles" section, is organized as an immersive compilation of images that does not seek to represent or replicate the functioning of social media within the article format, but rather to situate the viewer—reader in an experience of saturation, looping, and constant overlap.

The essay is structured through a non-linear narrative in which appropriated images from TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are layered through digital collages, often illegible or difficult to decipher. This accumulation produces what the author terms a "turbulent image": an image in perpetual motion that never fully stabilizes and leaves only residual traces in memory. The accompanying text is written in a language that, in a sense, seeks to provoke the viewer—reader and prompt reflection on what is being seen.

The issue closes with two further sections, which once again speak to one another and to what precedes them. In "Projects of Creation," four works are presented. In *En sí del no. Poesía son disturbios*, by María Salgado, we encounter a project of expanded writing that explores the relationship between poetry, insurrection, and negativity. To do so, it moves through different forms of negation, from the Paris Commune to twenty-first-century urban uprisings, traversed by punk, feminism, experimental poetry, and cultures of resistance. Drawing on both personal and borrowed materials, the writing proceeds through layering, repetition, diversion, and montage, in order to foreground the force of "no" beyond its function as a sign of refusal—namely, as an opening of possibility. In the "no" that poetry

conjures, the invention of a present is fabulated even –or especially– under conditions of precarity, disorientation, and the exhaustion of political desire. Writing is thus proposed as a practice of overwriting and erasure, comparable to fire or riot, transforming whatever it touches.

Felipe Cussen likewise presents a concrete exercise in discursive insurrection, prompted by a range of textual experiences associated with the Chilean social uprising of 2019. From the vast quantity of expressions that emerged from that event, the poet revisits both those that amounted to a critical taking of the word by the social body and the accumulation of exegetical deliriums and rejoinders that accompanied them. The project situates us in the main written responses –through graffiti, pamphlets, and publications– that took political positions during those days, and that many collectives sought to record, preserve, and archive. Cussen casts that impulse in perspective not only by contextualizing it within various publications –academic, literary, and others– that attempted to condense those textual forces, but above all through his own perplexed response. The essay published here leads to *La realidad es simple*, an appropriation-based writing exercise through which Cussen replied to that mass of discourse. Tracking both the civic desire to participate in public opinion and the logics that shaped its forms of expression, the piece appropriates the less emancipatory textual underside of those days by drawing on comments posted on the Emol.com forum (El Mercurio's online platform). From there, a selection of some of the most extreme examples of hate speech in

digital media –running alongside the subversive use of language in the streets– is presented in all its rawness, confronting us with the fact that constructive appropriations of language can be accompanied by an intensely destructive reaction. More pointedly, it asks what forms, spaces, and apparatuses allow both to appear.

La música in{visible}: música, sinestesia, abstracción y compositoras, by Inmaculada Martínez Ayora and Andrea Lerma Casany, addresses –as its title anticipates– the central issues of synesthesia, abstraction, and intermedial translation, with a particular emphasis on making women composers visible to non-specialist audiences –composers who have not been incorporated into historiographic narratives and thus remain beyond the canon. One of the article's main contributions lies in its rigorous historical review of relationships between music and color, from classical and Baroque treatises to twentieth-century avant-gardes. This provides the theoretical substrate for tracing the relationship between sound and image as a historical practice of hybridization, rather than merely a modernist pursuit. The research takes material form in an exhibition held at the Museu de la Rajoleria in Paiporta (Valencia) –whose continuation has been called into question by the October 2024 tragedy in Valencia caused by a cut-off low (DANA)– in which a series of abstract paintings entered into direct dialogue with musical works composed by women between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, activating a perceptual experience that combines listening, looking, and digital mediation. The core of the project lies in

translating musical parameters from selected works into an abstract visual language. Each chosen piece is pictorially reinterpreted through chromatic palettes, gestures, textures, and compositions that seek to render visually the temporality, tension, expressive character, and rhetorical force of the sonic discourse. Painting does not aspire to illustrate musical "content," but to operate as a space of sensory transformation. The exhibition therefore shifts listening from the traditional concert setting to the museum and visual domain: the paintings were accompanied by digital audio guides accessed via QR codes, which extended and complemented visitors' experience. It is, then, an example of intermedial practice oriented toward knowledge transfer.

The section concludes with Marina Salazar's presentation of *La Tetamundi*. The work emerged in 2017 in an academic context as a critical question produced by the fusion of the globe and the female breast, turning the body into the symbolic infrastructure of the world in order to displace patriarchal imaginaries and foreground values of care, autonomy, and agency. Its visual and iconographic genealogy draws on classical mythology, religious iconography, pop art, and kitsch aesthetics, and it later became viral through its appearance in Rigoberta Bandini's performance of *Ay mamá* at the Benidorm Fest in 2022. From that point on, *La Tetamundi* detached itself from its original context and entered a regime of expanded circulation: memes, tattoos, performances, merchandising, *fallas*, digital reinterpretations, and multiple appropriations turned it into a living and mutable sign. Rather than framing

this drift as a loss of control or a banalization of meaning, the project takes intermediality and circulation as constitutive dimensions of the work. Indeed, *La Tetamundi* is proposed through the notion of expanded authorship, capable of intervening in debates on the body, censorship, feminism, and power through accessibility, circulation, and collective reappropriation.

In the "Dialogues" section, two further texts invite us to revisit some of the key dynamics for thinking about the arts at their intersections. Mela Dávila Freire's contribution examines the artist publications of Marie Orensanz, a crucial figure for understanding disciplinary convergences (painting, sculpture, and textual practice) and the concept of the "artist's book" itself. The text focuses on the posters, manifestos, postcards, and books that sustained Orensanz's activity, showing experimental publishing as a space in which thought, political action, and public circulation take shape. Her readiness to work with verbal linguistic systems (and not only visual ones) and her commitment to the coexistence of representational and communicative codes enabled her to address, in an expansive and organic way, the semioses at stake in her historical context. Orensanz's work begins from direct confrontation with censorship, political repression, and patriarchal structures in late-1960s Argentina, a context that profoundly marked her practice. Dávila highlights how print media can operate in social space beyond the gallery or museum and how these media contributed to the expansion of Orensanz's practice. Above all, the text helps us gauge the importance of multiple layers of

meaning—literal as well as symbolic—that come to the fore in intermedial practices.

Haize Lizarazu and Carmen Pardo discuss *Music from somewhere* by Fran MM Cabeza de Vaca (2017–2019), using it as a point of departure for a shared reflection on gesture, memory, body, technology, and creation more broadly, since the work operates at the intersection of hybridization, intermediality, and musical performativity. The dialogue begins from Lizarazu's experience on stage as a performer in a piece that removes the piano as a physical object, shifting attention to the pre-gesture, where the pianist's body becomes an archive of musical memory and a transductive agent. The sonic unfolds both in what is heard and in what is remembered, imagined, and anticipated. The conversation considers to what extent *Music from somewhere* can be understood as a hybrid work not only through its combination of media (body, light, electronics), but through the cognitive and aesthetic transformation that emerges from their interaction. Intermediality here shifts toward an experience of in-mediacy, in which the performer's body and the audience's bodies inhabit a space "between" media, memories, and expectations about what counts as "piano," "pianist," and "sound," among other categories. Central to this discussion is the suspended gesture in contact with the table as a surrogate keyboard surface, which stages the tensions the piece generates between presence and absence, as well as between the visible and the sonic.

The articles, essays, projects, and dialogues gathered here, as we have sought to show, do not offer definitive answers, but conceptual tools, situated experiences, and open questions. Perhaps it is precisely in this instability—in this "between" of languages, disciplines, and modes of making—that one of the most fertile possibilities for contemporary thought and creation is at stake today. The cover of the issue, a fragment of a work by Carolina Cerezo Dávila, provides a concrete articulation of these concerns. Cerezo Dávila typically works at the intersection of music and dramaturgy. Her scores do not function only as musical objects, but as intermedial apparatuses. Music is no longer—if it ever was—a self-sufficient language; it is deliberately permeated by other systems of signification: text, action, theatricality, and even the visual dimension of the page. Notation therefore ceases to aspire to transparency as a medium for sonic production and becomes a site of friction between languages—especially here, in its dialogue with dramaturgy. The performer is also transformed: no longer understood solely as an executor of pitches and durations, or as a translator of the composer's idea, but as an actor within a situation who at times co-writes the piece through their own practice. Ultimately, this score enacts a proposal for music to relinquish its hierarchical primacy and become a crossroads of multiple productive vectors. The cover thus expresses a desire to sabotage the conceptual affinity between discipline as "observance of laws" and the

sense hidden in its etymology, linked to “pupil” and therefore centered on the practice of learning. In other words, this gesture also condenses a position that runs through the entire issue: to defend a discipline that does not close itself off within its norms, but remains under suspicion, allows itself to be affected by other languages, and treats the ongoing critical revision of its foundations as the condition of possibility for its own continuity.

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