

EDITORIAL

ISSUE 11 OCTOBER 2024 Summary

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With Issue 11, *IMG Journal* introduces a moment of deliberate and collective reflection on its editorial trajectory, five years after the launch of the project and following the publication of ten monographic issues devoted to specific aspects of visibility. This volume is not conceived as an additional thematic special issue, but rather as a threshold issue, intended to interrogate what has changed in the field of image research, in theoretical frameworks, in project-based and educational practices, and within the journal itself.

As articulated in the internal call that generated this issue, we sought contributions capable of offering a plural state of the art: texts reflecting on transformations that have occurred over the past five years; research that is now possible and meaningful precisely >

because of these changes; or recent projects that exemplify new configurations of the relationship between image, knowledge, and society. The result is a volume marked by heterogeneity of approaches and disciplinary backgrounds, yet structured by a number of shared thematic lines that ensure its overall coherence.

A first axis of reflection, developed in the contributions by the journal's Co-Editors-in-Chief, concerns the critical reconstruction of the theoretical genealogies of visibility and the epistemological repositioning of the image within the contemporary context. In this direction, Alessandro Luigini offers a systematic reading of the first ten editorials of *IMG Journal* as a coherent theoretical corpus. Rather than adopting a celebratory stance, the essay interprets the journal's trajectory as a progressive redefinition of the image as a form of knowledge, a mediating device, and a situated practice. Concepts such as the image as an epistemic environment, its operative dimension, and critical interdisciplinarity emerge as key interpretative nodes. The contribution thus assumes the value of a metatheoretical reflection on the editorial project, clearly distinguished from its directorial function.

On a complementary plane, explicitly oriented towards pedagogy, Chiara Panciroli addresses the relationship between visual culture, image education, and post-digital innovation. Her contribution proposes an epistemological redefinition of visual culture and identifies three developmental trajectories—image ecologies, immersive instructional design, and computational aesthetics—as foundational axes of a critical visual pedagogy capable

of inhabiting the tensions between the human and the artificial, imagination and technique, creativity and responsibility. In this case, education constitutes the explicit horizon of the argument.

A second thematic line concerns the critical responsibility of the gaze and the status of the image in contemporary culture. Valeria Menchetelli addresses recurring narratives surrounding the “death of the image”, interpreting them not as signs of exhaustion but as indicators of transformation that call into question the ethics of representation and the active role of the observer. The image thus emerges as a space of cultural and interpretative responsibility, rather than as a passive object of consumption.

The relationship between images, design, and disciplinary research constitutes a further axis of inquiry. Edoardo Dotto and Francesco Maggio interpret the experience of *IMG Journal* as a space of methodological “resistance” within the field of drawing and representation, capable of countering the fragmentation and hyper-productivity of contemporary research while reaffirming the value of drawing as a critical and cognitive tool. From a related but distinct perspective, Michael Renner reflects on the role of aesthetic judgement in practice-led research, interrogating the criteria through which artistic and design-based research is evaluated and legitimised within academic contexts.

A strong focus on the territorial, urban, and environmental dimensions of visibility characterises the contribution by Paola Puma, who presents the *Identity Survey* model as a holistic methodology integrating material and immaterial, visual and sensory representations. Here, the image

becomes an instrument of situated knowledge, capable of restituting the complexity of urban contexts through a syncretic reading of the *genius loci*.

The theme of digitality as a cultural and theoretical horizon, rather than as a domain of formal education or digital literacy, traverses several contributions in the volume. Stefano Brusaporci offers a historical and critical reconstruction of key stages in digital culture –from cybernetics to the metaverse and artificial intelligence– providing conceptual tools for a reflective understanding of ongoing transformations. His contribution operates primarily on the level of cultural and theoretical formation. From a complementary perspective grounded in the field of *graphic sciences*, Enrico Cicalò presents a structured mapping of image-based research, distinguishing between basic and applied research and demonstrating how visual production constitutes not merely an outcome, but a method of scientific and disciplinary inquiry, with implications also for higher education.

Taken together, the contributions to Issue 11 delineate a research landscape in which the image is no longer conceived as mere representation, but as an epistemic environment, an operative dispositif, and a situated cultural practice. The heterogeneity of approaches does not result in dispersion, but rather in a critical constellation that confirms *IMG Journal's* vocation as an open interdisciplinary laboratory, capable of connecting theory and practice, memory and project, scientific rigour and experimentation. This issue thus presents itself as a new: not a definitive synthesis, but a reflective threshold from which to observe

the path undertaken and, at the same time, to imagine future trajectories of image research. In this sense, we reaffirm the cultural function of *IMG Journal*: not merely to observe the visible, but to contribute to the construction of the critical conditions necessary to inhabit it consciously.