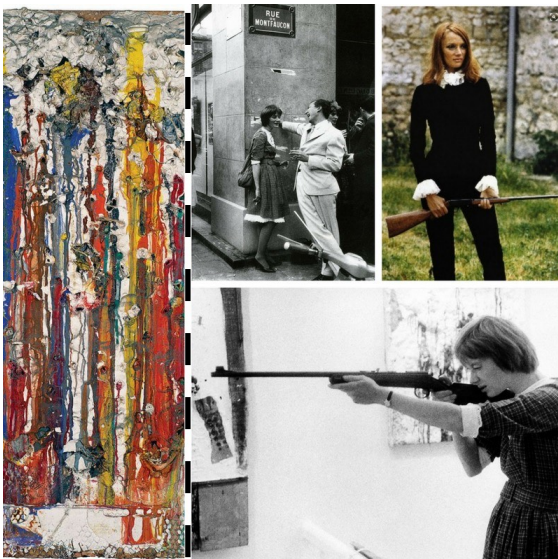


acts of inscribing the forms. As indicated at the beginning of this introduction, we will focus on the notion of *uttered enunciation* which concerns the representation of the acts of production and of observation in the image via simulacra (perspective, delegated observers, etc.), but we will also focus on the memory of the forces and gesturalities which established the image (*enunciative act*). In order to study this memory of the forces involved, our attention will shift from the sole forms of expression (for example, perspective) towards the **substance of expression**, that is, towards what we could call a “**memory of the gestures and materials serving to establish the image.**”

To conclude this introduction, it must be stressed that the challenges facing visual semiotics since its inception at the end of the 1970s have been numerous. If it was for a long time limited<sup>32</sup> to the study of images as visual enunciations, this is because one of its first concerns was to demonstrate that visual enunciations are as much articulated by means of a linear syntax as are verbal enunciations, in addition to being articulated by means of a tabular syntax, the latter being specific to the topology of images.<sup>33</sup> Following this, it became necessary to demonstrate that visual enunciations possess a **double articulation of expression/content** (Groupe  $\mu$  1992) and that there exists “**plastic content**” (Basso Fossali 2004). More specifically, the challenge was

*Highlights in a text passage on semiotics by Maria Giulia Dondero (2021) made by ThB Saturday March 4th 2023 (including the highlighter on list can be compared to listing Brian Eno as a [tape-recorder player](#) in Roxy Music)*

The passage above is from *The language of images—The forms and the forces*, by Maria Giulia Dondero (2020), it is published by Springer, translated by Virginia Kuhn in a series directed by Alessandro Sarti, who is attached to CAMS Centre for Mathematics, CNRS-EHESS (trans-disciplinary institution in Paris). The series is called *Lectures in morphogenesis*. The page in display comes from that book, it is rather short (145 pages). It is relevant and concise.



*Assemblage: photos with facets of Niki St. Phalle's shooting performance and the paintings resulting from it. (1961). Fire at will. 30<sup>th</sup> June-12<sup>th</sup> July.*

Dondero, Maria Giulia. (2020). *The language of images—The forms and the forces*. (Virginia Kuhn Trans.). *Lectures in morphogenesis*. (Sarti, Alessandro ed.). (Barth, Theodor [highlighter]). Springer.

A book for whoever needs to battle with images over semiotics, without having to read 50 even more difficult books and bringing them together on your own. If you received this copy it comes with **multi-colour highlighting**. In your hands they add *metadata* of a personal origin. The reactions to such metadata vary: some people are annoyed, others are interested. But whether they mess things up, feature a secret code or flag an ongoing investigation, they force the receiver to see the page as an *image*. 2D (+).

Hence the moment of confusion: which one comes *first*, the image or the text? Incidentally, the book discusses this very question, among a number of other related topics. The colours, my highlights, mean the following (from *top to bottom* in the image above): **blue** = system; **green** = unstable balance; **yellow** = stable statement; **purple** = insight; **pink** = cheese-cake; **underline** = argument. So, they come out of

*pushing-hands* with the text. But to the *receivers* they come out as somebody else's *footprints*.

The point is not whether they agree, but that if they read the book and define their own path—or, new footprints—through the book, a interaction would emerge with the first reader (in this case me). **A)** Walking alone finding a path. **B)** Being together hand-to-hand. Between **A** and **B**, the **X-factor** of the pursuit: *where are we going?* The **X-factor** defines where, in the start, there is *nothing*. As the line in the photo-assemblage: it measures a *stretch* and defines a *separation*.

So, we start scouting. With the *St Phalle Games* in mind this becomes alot easier, since we have an *assignment*. We know that, March 24<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon, we are going to shoot balloons filled with colour-paint and air, on the paper the Kjetil Smedal is currently cutting and smoothing out for us. It is different to *assign* than to *assume*. This is where I have some beef with Dondero's book: though really commendable as a whole, I profoundly disagree on her on one *specific* point.

“The memory and gestures and materials serving to establish the image” (purple highlighter): this focus is so *crisp* and *core*. But then she starts to discuss these as *simulacra*: as though the different elements of the painting—colours, layers, transparency, composition, the play of these in instructing the gaze—were *mimicking* the painter's memory, gestures and materials, instead of seeing these as scenographic elements *assigning* the signifying acts performed by the *receiver*.

These issues can clearly be turned, developed and articulated on the basis of the type-set drawings that Nicolas Vittori circulated in class. As reflected in the master-class discussion we had of these—in the QUAD session we had in class Friday (Febr. 24<sup>th</sup>): the question of the relative importance of his drawings and the text in embossed type superposed are similar to the questions raised in this handout, discussed by Dondero in terms close to [figurative/operative](#).

That is, Piaget's theory of our reception of *static* and *dynamic* aspects of reality. When looking at work focussing on theory development, our main attention is on the *reception* (even when dealing with production aspects, it is how we receive these). Here: how reception is somehow scripted/ instructed. Therefore Alejandro Rebollar Jeres' overview of the kabbalistic tradition—*kabbalah* means 'reception'—is relevant to the course: when receiving, we span the *landscape* of the will.

Hatching the *will* is one of the most difficult things that we do: and landscaping work—our own or that of others—we are performing in a receptive mode. This is true if we come from a *Modern* tradition (or, from a *Jewish* tradition as in the above mentioned overview). Landscaping a process inquiry into content/container relationships as in Julia Jaiko Fosslund's illustration work, or Josephine Sassu's landscaping of summer 2022, spending *local* crypto-currency in Switzerland.

All of these examples can be further articulated in conversation with Dondero's semiotic concentrate. This includes the finery of Åsta Sparr's referencing *memes* in APA7<sup>th</sup>. They also provide excellent examples how the initial *emptiness* between our solitary *footprints* and our interactive *handouts* will develop *contents* that are linked to receptive work (such as reading). Underlinings, colophons, *designs*, APA7<sup>th</sup> references, highlights: all of these are *metadata*.

In the *St Phalle* assemblage [*recto*], the top centre image is a *metadatum*: it says that the shooting is taking place in a *backyard*. So if, in producing something, we go from the *information-out*; then,



when receiving something, we move from the *metadata-in*. Put simply: *the last effort we put in as producers is often the first thing the receiver meets*. And here we have an example of a theory developed here: a theory of communication.

A theory that moves from a naive concept of an exchange of *messages* through a *media*, to a more complex *transaction* involving behaviour and interaction. It does not involve decoding/interpretation but *only* (immersively) *description, analysis* and *synthesis*. That is, what communication can be when *assignment-based* (rather than based on *assumption*).

Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO), alongside the waterfall Øvrefoss in the Aker river, Oslo downtown. Members of the school's production team will participate.