

## **ICLA Research Committee on *LITERATURE, ARTS, & MEDIA***

**Massimo Fusillo (Chair) and Marina Grishakova (Vice Chair)**

From the time immemorial, literature has been recited, written, printed, illustrated, accompanied with music or dance, adapted to painting, stage and film. Literature, as many literary and media scholars observe in their works, may share some common (transmedial) features with other media, may quote and thematize other media, or be remediated and transposed across media. Literature is one medium among other, closely associated media. With the emergence of new technologies and art forms and the development of media literacy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ignoring the impact and interaction between media, arts, and literature becomes increasingly difficult. Whereas new technologies (photography, film) made available new forms of reproduction and spread of images in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the experiments of avant-garde art highlighted the material aspects of language and the interplay of word and image. Further, digital technologies intensified the interplay of old and new media forms and genres. Artistic practices and scholarly explorations provide interesting insights into the distinct and common semiotic features of media, which may serve as limitations or productive challenges to remediation and cross-media adaptation. As a result, “the dynamics of the literary system simply cannot be tackled without making allowance for developments in the contemporary media system of society... Histories of literature should be written as a part of media histories” (Siegfried Schmidt). The monomedial education and research practices become problematic, and the new forms of interaction of literature with other media offer new challenges to scholars and educators.

The study of a continuing hybridization and diversification of the multisensory milieu in which we live – the emergence of the «culture of convergence», as defined by Henry Jenkins – must certainly involve comparative literature, since literary text is becoming a part of a complex galaxy of media, languages, and cultures. Intermediality can thus regain the comparative tradition of inter-art studies, and offer a medium-aware analysis of various hybrid genres, from the most studied to the new media: musical theatre, theatrical performance, filmic adaptation, TV series, graphic novels, computer games, video-art, and advertising. The research committee on literature, arts, and media will deal with the new roles and the new configurations of

literature in the global polymorphic imagery and the dissemination of literary techniques in every aspect of contemporary culture.

The very concept of “medium” is notoriously multivocal: it may refer, among other things, to communicative channels of transmission, material or technological support for such transmission, artistic systems of expression or institutionalized genres and practices. Additionally, there are various concepts describing and defining relations and interactions between media: intermediality, transmediality, plurimediality, multimodality and others. Whereas transmedial studies mostly focus on features common to various media and their transmission, intermedial studies involve any relations between media and target a media-sensitive analysis. Thanks to these multiple forms of interpretation and analysis, many features of literature have been (re)discovered as means of communication, cognitive processing or artistic expression. The study of literature with other arts and media reveals the undiscovered or unexploited potentialities of literature as a vehicle of aesthetic, cultural and social functions.

The first activity of this research group has been the workshop *Comparison and Intermediality: The Gesamtkunstwerk*, which was part of the 2016 International ICLA Congress in Vienna; the proceedings of this workshop will be published by Peter Lang as a separate volume. The Research Committee had its first workshop in Tartu in December 2018.

The committee accepts new members whose work and research matches the committee profile. New members can join by applying to the committee (by sending their CV and motivation letter) and presenting a paper at any of the panels/workshops organized by the Committee at the ICLA congresses or other comparative literature conferences

#### List of the members:

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Jan Baetens, KU Leuven, Belgium

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