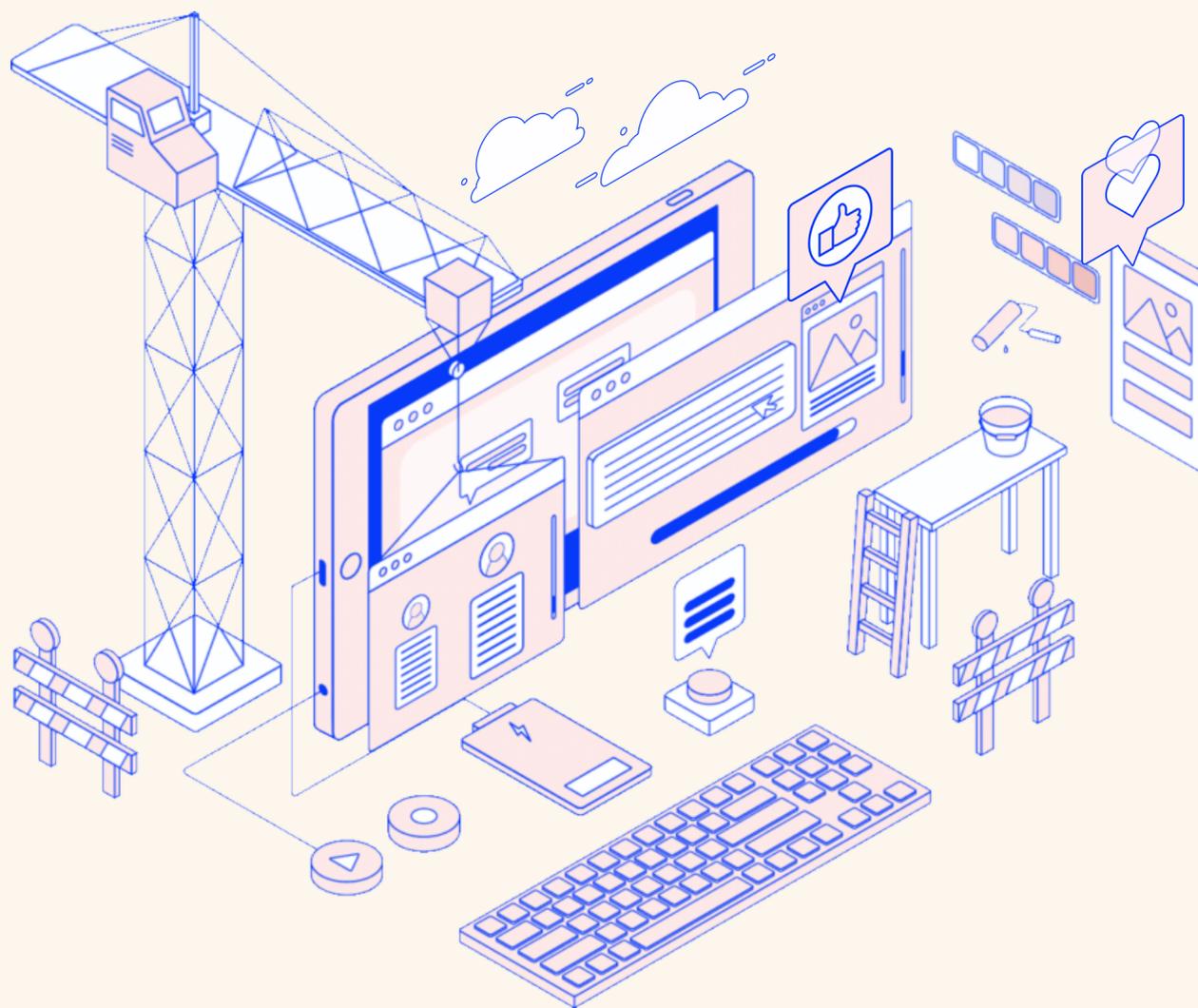


INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

SOCIO-TECHNICAL INTERMEDIARIES & PLATFORMIZATION OF CULTURE



12 APRIL 2024

**SALLE PANORAMIQUE, MSH PARIS NORD
20, AVENUE GEORGE SAND, 93210 LA PLAINE ST-DENIS**

Organised by Simran Agarwal, Vincent Bilem, Philippe Bouquillion & Franck Rebillard

IC industries
culturelles &
CA création
artistique



UNIVERSITÉ
SORBONNE PARIS NORD

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Nouvelle**

IRMÉCCEN - EA 7546
institut de recherche médias,
cultures, communication
et numérique



SEMINAR BRIEF

The platformization of cultural production, distribution, and monetization has encapsulated and reconfigured existing market systems and cultural economies around the world. Incumbent players in cultural industries - of gaming, news, music, publishing, cinema, and artisanal craft have faced many pressures to accommodate new players, infrastructures, and logic.

Relatedly, platformization has also led to the formalization of a new layer of cultural intermediaries. These include third-party service and technology providers that enable and facilitate the platformization of cultural industries. This seminar draws attention to the multitude of intermediaries that exist between cultural producers and large infrastructural platforms, thus creating an additional, meso-layer of socio-technical cultural intermediaries in the value chain. These intermediaries disburse technological infrastructure for production, optimize content for a platformed environment, negotiate the payment relationship between producers and platforms, and others.

In this seminar, experts from different disciplines of media and culture studies and information and communication sciences will discuss the function of socio-technical cultural intermediaries in platformization. The discussions centre around two axes:

1. The relationship between large Silicon Valley platforms and smaller socio-technical cultural intermediaries that provide technological, algorithmic and management services that retain and entrench the power of the former. This axis will focus on how intermediaries gain opportunities with platforms through economic partnerships, interoperable infrastructures, and other strategies.
2. The technical tools and market strategies through which socio-technical cultural intermediaries influence and reconfigure industrial practices, products, and players to suit a platformed ecosystem. This axis will critically question the influence of software (including AI) and hardware technology, and strategies and consultations upon the production of cultural and creative content

The seminar hopes to further critical research on the role and influence of socio-technical cultural intermediaries in furthering platformisation and reorganizing the logics of cultural production. It will engage with interdisciplinary approaches and global case studies on, but not limited to, questions such as:

- How do sociotechnical cultural intermediaries encapsulate (and even lock) industrial practices by providing technical infrastructure, tools, or AI learning stocks?
- How does the strategic advice of cultural intermediaries reshape the production logics and imperatives in diverse sectors?
- How do cultural intermediaries establish relationships and gain opportunities with platform behemoths?
- How do their strategies expand platform power and control over the value generated by cultural producers?

SEMINAR PROGRAMME

09:30 Keynote Address: **Examining Cultural Intermediaries within Platform Ecosystems**

Thomas Poell

University of Amsterdam

14:15 **Hollywood Data Specialists and the Reshaping of Production Logics**

Violaine Roussel

University of Paris VIII

BREAK

11:00 **Strategies in the Emerging Virtual Reality Sector Facing the Platformization of Culture Industries**

Sophie Balcon Fourmaux

Sorbonne Nouvelle University

15:00 **No News Is Good News? Marginalizing Journalism on Digital Platforms**

Efrat Nechushtai

George Washington University

BREAK

11:45 **Optimizing News for Platforms: Emerging Intermediaries in India**

Simran Agarwal

Sorbonne Paris Nord University

16:00 **The « Platform Turn » in French Video Game Professional Biographies**

Vinciane Zabban

Sorbonne Paris Nord University

12:15 **“Join us, we have opportunities”: The Influence of Intermediaries in French Content Production**

Maria Rasskazova

Sorbonne Paris Nord University

16:45 **Silicon Valley Platforms and Other Digital Players in the Reconfiguration of the Craft Sector in India**

Christine Ithurbide

National Centre for Scientific Research

LUNCH

COCKTAIL

PRESENTERS & ORGANIZERS

Simran Agarwal is a doctoral researcher at the Laboratory of Excellence for Culture Industries and Artistic Creation (LabEx ICCA), Sorbonne Paris Nord University in France. Her research closely looks at the various forms, mechanisms, and impacts of state and platform governance on the digital news landscape in India. Her research interests include the political economy of free speech, platform governance, and platformization of culture industries

Sophie Balcon Fourmaux is a doctoral student under the direction of Franck Rebillard and Fabrice Rochelandet, from the IRMÉCCEN laboratory at Sorbonne-Nouvelle University, and LabEx ICCA. The subject of her thesis concerns the comparison of practices of professionals in the VR sector, and the public when VR works are offered in museum institutions.

Vincent Bilem is a PhD Candidate at Sorbonne Nouvelle University. His research focuses on the emergence of information media on the platform Twitch in France, the new practices of journalism on the Internet, and the narrative modalities of online and synchronous exchanges. He is conducting his doctoral research under the supervision of Franck Rebillard, within the IRMÉCCEN laboratory.

Philippe Bouquillion is a Professor of Information and Communication Sciences at Sorbonne Paris Nord University. He is the director of the LabEx ICCA and of the Laboratory Information and Communication Sciences (LabSIC). His research focuses on the cultural, creative, and digital industries in France and India, with a particular emphasis on digital platforms. He recently co-edited, with C. Ithurbide and T. Mattelart, a book published by Routledge entitled *Digital Platforms and the Global South: Reconfiguring Power Relations in the Cultural Industries*.

Christine Ithurbide is a Research Fellow at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) with UMR 5319 Passages, France. Her research focuses on the socio-economic transformation of cultural industries in India and more recently on the deployment of digital platforms in music, audiovisual and craft. She is the principal investigator of the International Research Network SOUTH-STREAM exploring cultural platforms made in Africa, Asia and Latin America

Efrat Nechushtai is an Assistant Professor at the George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs. Dr. Nechushtai's research focuses on journalism studies and political communication, and she is particularly interested in the impact of platformization and political polarization on journalism, both in the United States and internationally. She has published qualitative, quantitative, and theoretical studies on these topics in *Journalism*, *Digital Journalism*, *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *Mass Communication and Society*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *Journalism Studies*, and *Information & Culture*.

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Thomas Poell is Professor of Data, Culture & Institutions at the University of Amsterdam, program director MA Media Studies, and founder of the Research Priority Area on Global Digital Cultures. His research is focused on the digitisation of cultural institutions in the light of the proliferation of data, the growing importance of AI, and the rise of major platform corporations. Poell is co-author of *Platforms and Cultural Production* with David Nieborg and Brooke Erin Duffy (Polity, 2021) and *The Platform Society* with José van Dijck and Martijn de Waal (Oxford University Press, 2018). Furthermore, he co-edited *The Sage Handbook of Social Media* (Sage, 2018), *Social Media Materialities and Protest* (Routledge, 2018), and *Global Cultures of Contestation* (Palgrave/McMillan, 2017).

Maria Rasskazova is a doctoral student in digital economics at CEPN and LabEx ICCA, at the Sorbonne Paris Nord University. Her research looks at the creators' economy in France and examines the mutual influence of content production and monetization.

Franck Rebillard is a Professor of Media Studies at Sorbonne Nouvelle University and a member of LabEx ICCA. Author of books dedicated to the Web 2.0 (2007) and the digital transformations of media and cultural industries (2016), he also co-edited collections concerning media diversity (2013), social media regulation (2021) and the politics of YouTube (2022).

Violaine Roussel is Professor of Sociology at the University of Paris VIII, member of the CRESPPA Research Center in Paris, and Visiting Scholar at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. Her recent publications include: *Representing Talent: Hollywood Agents and the Making of Movies* (2017, University of Chicago Press), *Penser les frontières sociales. Enquêtes sur l'engagement, la culture et la politique* (codir. avec L. Mathieu, 2019, PUL), *Art et Contestation aux États-Unis* (2019, PUF), "Faire sens de la transformation numérique d'Hollywood. Naissance et métamorphoses du digital agenting" (*Sociologie du Travail*, 2023). She is currently working on a new book about data specialists in Hollywood.

Vinciane Zabban is a lecturer in sociology at Sorbonne Paris Nord University. A member of the EXPERICE laboratory and LabEx ICCA, her research focuses on the effects of digital techniques on leisure activities, both in terms of consumption and production. She is interested in how new technologies transform their social and economic dimensions.