

Merve Sahin

Dissertation Abstract

Sahin's dissertation covers the history of systems and cybernetics, its influence on art, and case studies of artists who incorporated the principles of cybernetics into their art practices. It studies the paradigm shifts in twentieth-century cybernetics thinking from machine to nature. Biology is broadly conceived as nature, and this conceptualization of nature will proclaim its meaning in terms of its various scales, from cells to land art. In this dissertation, I explore teleology, self-organization, feedback, homeostasis, and autopoiesis within the context of cybernetics. The subsequent chapters dive into the work of specific artists: Gordon Pask and his experimentation with early AI, Nina Sobell's cognition-based art utilizing EEG data, and Agnes Denes' land art and exploration of self-sustaining systems.

Short Bio

Merve Sahin is a Ph.D. Candidate, EODIAH Fellow, in the Visual and Performing Arts Program at the University of Texas at Dallas. She earned her Master of Arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) as a Fulbright Scholar, where her thesis research was included in Leonardo Abstract Service (LABS) and invited to The Media, Arts & Design conference in 2020. Before embarking on her PhD program, she taught art history and visual communication design classes at Sabancı University and Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey. Her research on art and technology focuses on conceptual and historical analysis.