

VISUAL GRAMMAR OF DESIGNED TRUTH IN OSINT

January 22–24
2025

Freilager-Platz
Basel

Wednesday, January 22th, 2025

Venue: HGK D1.04 Aula

Morning panel:

This first panel will explore the role of images in OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) investigations, focusing on how designers work with visual data and how their perspective enhances its analysis, organization, and contextualization, shaping the investigative process. It will address challenges such as verification, manipulation, and interpretation of visual content, highlighting how designers help construct accurate visual narratives that support complex investigations. The discussion will also consider the evolving role of journalism in visual investigations, where journalists face similar challenges and rely on design-driven methods.

By examining the intersection of design, investigation, and journalism, this panel will underscore the importance of visual literacy in OSINT and the techniques used to transform raw images into powerful investigative tools.

Afternoon workshop:

The workshop will create a space for dialogue and exchange to reflect on the evolving role of images in OSINT investigations, emphasizing the growing importance of visual literacy and the specialized expertise required to analyze and work with images effectively. Participants will explore how images function not only as evidence but also as integral components of the investigative process through their organization, interpretation, and presentation. Discussions will address methodologies for sourcing, verifying, and contextualizing visual evidence in OSINT communication formats, as well as the ethical and political challenges of working with images.

Evening Screening:

Private Footage (Filme Particular) by Janaína Nagata, Brazil, 2022, 91 min

To extend the day's reflections, the evening will feature a screening of *Private Footage* by Janaína Nagata. In 2018, the artist and filmmaker bought an old reel for a 16mm projector online. It turned out to contain a vacation film of a couple and their young daughter in South Africa. The movie included scenes of a safari in Kruger Park, rickshaw drivers dressed in "traditional" costume in Durban, Bantu women in the parched countryside, and white women amusing themselves at a swimming pool. *Private Footage* starts with the vacation film; then Nagata uses open sources on the Internet (Google, YouTube, etc.) to find the other reality, the one not shown in the film.

DAY 01	VISUAL INVESTIGATIONS
AULA, talks	
08:30 - 09:00	doors open
09:00 - 09:30	Opening Notes by Berenice Serra and Allan Deneuveville Session 01: How to investigate with images?
09:30 - 09:35	technical interlude
09:35 - 10:15	Liselotte Mas
10:15 - 10:20	technical interlude
10:20 - 11:00	Antoine Schirer
11:00 - 11:15	coffee break
11:15 - 11:20	technical interlude
11:20 - 12:00	Janaína Nagata
12:00 - 12:30	Panel Discussion
12:30 - 14:30	lunch
D4.04, workshop	
14:30 - 17:30	Workshop 01: Images as Tools <i>guests + public (registration needed)</i>
17:30 - 18:30	welcome apéro in CIVIC, open to all
Studiokino, screening	
18:30 - 20:30	Screening <i>Private Footage</i> by Janaína Nagata

Thursday, January 23th, 2025

Venue: HGK D1.04 Aula

Morning panel:

The second day of the symposium will center on the communication of OSINT investigations, focusing on how findings are shaped and conveyed through images, videos, and other visual formats. Discussions will explore the power of visual storytelling in making complex information accessible while critically examining the narratives it constructs. Participants will also examine the "blind spots" inherent in these representations—exploring what is omitted, simplified, or obscured during the process of crafting visual narratives.

Afternoon workshop:

The workshop will critically examine the visual grammar employed in OSINT demonstrations and its dual function as both a mechanism for establishing truth and a target for manipulation. Through case studies, such as the Bucha massacre and the explosion at Al-Ahli Hospital, participants will explore how conspiracy groups and other actors distort visual evidence to shape narratives and sow doubt. It will also allow participants to investigate the cultural foundations of this visual language. By comparing OSINT visual practices across regions—particularly between Western frameworks and those originating from the Middle East—it aims to uncover cultural assumptions about visual truth and examine how these resonate or clash with different audiences.

Evening Screening:

Screening of OSINT investigation videos, open program.

DAY 02	COMMUNICATING OSINT
AULA, talks	
08:30 - 09:00	doors open
09:00 - 09:10	Introduction by Allan Deneuille Session 02: OSINT demonstrations
09:10 - 09:15	technical interlude
09:15 - 09:35	Barnaby Skinner
09:35 - 10:15	Adina Renner & Jessica Eberhart
10:15 - 10:20	technical interlude
10:20 - 11:00	Laura Ranca
11:00 - 11:15	coffee break
11:15 - 11:20	technical interlude
11:20 - 12:00	Charles Heller
12:00 - 12:30	Panel Discussion
12:30 - 14:00	lunch
D4.04, workshop	
14:00 - 17:00	Workshop 02: OSINT aesthetics <i>guests + public (registration needed)</i>
17:00 - 18:30	break
Studiokino, screening	
18:30 - 20:00	Screening of OSINT demos, open program

Friday, January 24th, 2025

Venue: HGK D1.04 Aula

Morning panel:

The third day will focus on the challenge of representing data that is not readily accessible in OSINT investigations. This panel will discuss the professional vision necessary to navigate the complexities of these investigations and the ethical considerations tied to the representation of missing or incomplete data. We will explore what it means to confront gaps in evidence and how these absences influence the narratives constructed in OSINT. Key questions will include the responsibility of investigators in handling uncertainty and the professional standards required to ensure integrity and transparency in their work.

Afternoon workshop:

The workshop will focus on the challenge of representing data that is not directly visible in OSINT investigations. How do we handle gaps in data or missing evidence? Participants will explore methods for visualizing absence—whether by showing the void itself or reconstructing it through 3D models or other innovative techniques. The workshop will also critically engage with the potential of immersive formats, such as virtual and augmented reality, questioning their role in representing complex or inaccessible data. Participants will reflect on how these formats shape our understanding of OSINT findings, considering both their possibilities and limitations.

Evening Screening:

Screening of the room-scale interactive virtual reality experience, *Home After War* by Gayatri Parameswaran, NowHere Media, 2018, 20 min.

DAY 03	TRANSPARENCY IN OSINT
AULA, talks	
08:30 - 09:00	doors open
09:00 - 09:10	Introduction by Berenice Serra Session 03: Representing the unseen in OSINT
09:10 - 09:15	technical interlude
09:15 - 09:55	Francesco Luzzana
09:55 - 10:00	technical interlude
10:00 - 10:40	Rosa Cinelli
10:40 - 10:55	coffee break
10:55 - 11:00	technical interlude
11:00 - 11:30	Thibault Le Page
11:30 - 11:35	technical interlude
11:35 - 12:10	Matthieu Vitse & Galdric Fleury
12:10 - 12:30	Panel Discussion
12:30 - 14:00	lunch
D4.04, workshop	
14:00 - 17:00	Workshop 03: Representing the unseen <i>guests + public (registration needed)</i>
17:00 - 18:00	break
Studiokino, screening	
18:00 - 18:30	Closing Notes
18:30 - 20:00	Screening of <i>Home After War</i> by Gayatri Parameswaran (RSVP)