

## **Platform Realism: AI Image Synthesis and the Rise of Generic Visual Content**

With each new version, AI image generation tools such as Midjourney or Dall-E promise us even more »realistic« images. However, the reality they show us has little to do with the reality that surrounds us every day. The realism of AI tools can rather be described as »platform realism«: a generic second-order visuality based on the statistical analysis of vast masses of digital images circulating online. AI images are not only essentially intended to be shared, liked, and commented on in social media; they would be unthinkable without such platforms and their mass aggregation, filtering, and tagging of visual »content.« In light of this, the lecture examines the specific aesthetics of AI images, their infrastructural conditions, and their implications for our future visual culture.