

**ACTIVATING INTERCESSORS: A Workshop on Immediation and In-Formation**  
Amélie Brisson-Darveau, Christoph Brunner, Nicole De Brabandere, Verena Ziegler  
Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK)

This workshop investigates two questions crucial to our practices of research-creation: 1) how do we organize a creative process that can put into high relief the intimacy of gathering emergent, collaborative process? 2) What kinds of processes can inform the creative potential of collectivity in the making? In other words, we are interested in occurrent and immediate techniques of in-formation and im-mediation in collective research practices. Relying on our respective backgrounds in arts, interaction design, and cultural theory, we have been working on techniques for collaboration as crucial aspects of our own research-creation practices. We propose a workshop format focused on how specific processes of in-forming generate a sense for an immediate and emergent quality in such practices. This emergent or “immediating” quality, we argue, defines the zone of openness crucial for creative novelty to arise. We believe that the emergent phase of an experimental process allows us to deviate from habitualized presumptions and categorizations attached to academic and artistic disciplines and their own ways of classification and knowledge distribution. More precisely, we think that despite disciplinary specificity which, generates profound research, methods, and knowledge production, we need to emphasize collective practices interested in emergent qualities of experience.

In light of an emergent account of collective practices we want to re-think the function of *mediators* beyond processes of translation or mediation in the sense of conveying information and meaning from one entity or structure to another. While the term mediator remains in the field of communication theory, Deleuze’s actual term in the French original of his interview is *intercesseurs*, meaning, someone intervening on behalf of another. By that, Deleuze creates a concept pertaining to processes of activation and intervention rather than mere mediation. Intercessors are active in their operations, they modulate, shift meaning and open up new processes of formation. Consequently, we want to reconsider the notion of information often associated with knowledge, meaning, or data toward a more activating conception of the term, namely *in-formation*. In-formation, as process of formation relies on the specific activations a situation or an event affords based on the resonance between heterogeneous elements. Such *elements*, we propose, are actually the very stuff research-creation as practice investigates, moving between conceptual, embodied, gestural and material domains. If our work is concerned with the collective, it is because we consider the composition of a field of activation by means of in-formation and intercession one way of interlacing often separated realms of the concrete and abstract, the material and immaterial, or the conceptual and the pragmatic.

Focusing on different *blocks* (conceptual, gestural, embodied, and material), we will explore different techniques of activation together with the audience:

*Informing Membranes:* The membrane is a boundary-concept. In its elasticity a membrane moves between two distinct milieus, without being of either of them, nor being able to exist without them. The membrane as a limit, Deleuze writes, is where life happens at the interstice, constituting and being constituted as a metastable system. Instead of a binary logic of inside and outside, we can conceive of the membrane as a relay for processes of in-formation between heterogeneous milieus. Thinking of the composition of membranes as intercessors might enable us to further investigate how relays between thought, body and materiality co-evolve in practices of research-creation.

*Informing Scripts:* The emphasis of the script foregrounds performative gestures as an intercessor in everyday social, material and disciplinary encounters. Typically, the script is used in theatre contexts to describe and give directions for performing speech, gesture, tendencies to movement and interaction. What if we explore the iterative potential of scripts, not as a pre-given object to be represented but an emergent entry point for expression? If we understand habit as a script or tendency towards everyday movement patterns, how can habitual milieus become consciously available as force for emergent creativity? The scripting exercises that will be developed for this part of the workshop will 'in-form' the felt potential within gestures and encounters rather than aim to achieve objective articulations within a specific media or material context.

*Informing Layers:* How can the quality of layering become a force with an unforeseeable and immediating potential, changing perception and modes of thought? Layering reveals the process of concept formation, translating thought into form and informing thought, while simultaneously enacting our understanding of the world and affecting our actions. These relational qualities of layering - as relaying and in-forming - shapes experience through the activation of seemingly abstract and immaterial notations. The oscillation between different epistemic functions and abstract spheres in the layering process intend to trigger thoughts, allowing speculative aspects to co-emerge with material processes of actualization.

*Informing Patterns:* We can consider patterns in relation to texture, movement and structure. What defines a pattern is its specific relation to rhythm. It is through rhythm that a pattern contains an informational support for movement. Sewing patterns, for instance, activate movement through measurement and specific points of contact, lines, folding, and texturing. Here a patterned rhythm activates the emergence for a texture pertaining to potential embodiment. Thinking of the sewing pattern as instructional-material intercessor for potential embodiment we might think of informing patterns as techniques for folding different materialities and their movements into each other.

In a second part we aim to activate these four blocks in a collective process of diagramming. We hope to engage this process as a problematizing rather than a concluding, an opening rather than foreclosing. We maintain that the persistence of this problematizing process is a crucial element in contemporary, collective modes of artistic research.

