Will We Ever Become Used to Immersion? Art History and Image Science
Speaker: Oliver Grau

Oliver Grau's main research is in the history of media art, immersive images, and images and emotions, as well as the history, idea and culture of telepresence and artificial life. Grau's book “Virtual Art.

ABSTRACT
3D Television and Immersive Cinema, Virtual and Augmented Reality, do we enter soon a total space of polysensual illusion? The aim of this contribution is to create an understanding that the present image revolution using indeed new technologies has also developed a large number of so far unknown visual expressions that cannot be conceived without our image history. Art History and Image Science help in understanding the leading and forming functions of today’s image worlds in our society. With the history of illusion and immersion, the history of artificial life or the tradition of telepresence, Image Science offers sub-histories of the present image revolutions.

We know that a central problem of current cultural policy stems from serious lack of knowledge about the origins of the audiovisual media and this stands in complete contradistinction to current demands for more media and image competence. Social media competence, which goes beyond mere technical skills, is difficult to acquire if the area of historic media experience is excluded.

Although many people view the concept of presence, virtual or mixed realities as a totally new phenomenon, it has its foundations in an unrecognized history of immersive images. Immersion is undoubtedly a key to any understanding of the development of media in general.

Overseeing 2000 years of immersive images and by bringing them in a relativity with the image competence of their users, this talk aims to gain distance and with that a reflective thinking space towards the desire to create ever new immersive image experiences.