

# Art and knowledge



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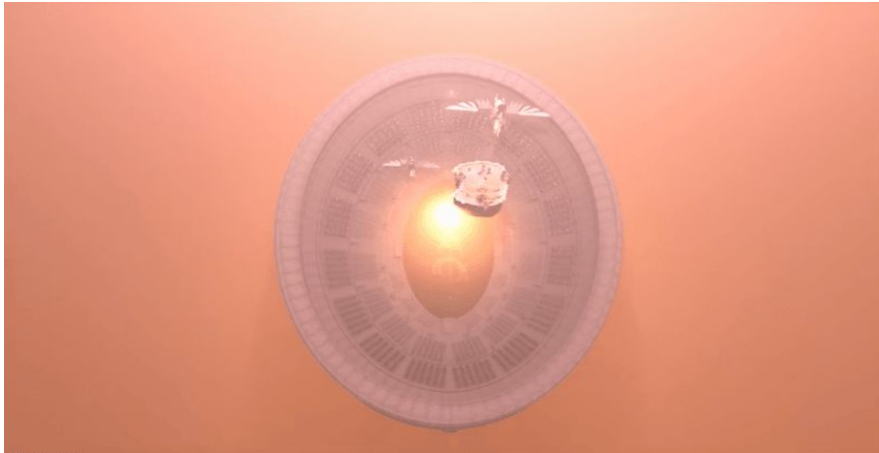
# Issues with scientific knowledge

- ❑ recap: false sense of rationality, recreating existing unjust power structures
- ❑ Criticism of Enlightenment
- ❑ “the blackmail of Enlightenment” (Michel Foucault)
- ❑ Disillusionment with “progress” after the 2nd World War (latest)
- ❑ Ideology critique

# The problem of authoritarian knowledge

- ❑ Applies in particular to social/human sciences but also relevant in other forms of science
- ❑ Claiming to see beyond what the majority of people are able to see (seeing beyond ideology)
- ❑ Knowledge from above
- ❑ Falsity isn't enough

- ❑ Looping effects (Ian Hacking)
- ❑ Care-giver example (Sally Haslanger)
- ❑ Factuality not always a good way to measure reality



Birds in Paradise (still) by Jacolby Satterwhite

- ❑ Limits of language and concepts
- ❑ Violence of concepts and identity thinking (Theodor Adorno)
- ❑ Priority of the concept over the particular
- ❑ Contingent/arbitrary things start to seem natural
- ❑ Justifying things through their current existence, this is how things are so this is as they should be
- ❑ Seeing knowledge as ahistorical, universal

- ❑ Are there phenomenon that are questioned in your field that people at large seem to take at face value?
- ❑ Are there things in general you can think of that people see as “natural” or universal when they, in fact, are not?
- ❑ How do you think we could successfully discuss factually true but ideological social phenomenon as scientists?
- ❑ Do you think scientists should have some sort of authority over the general public? To what extent?

- ❑ A need for more practice based approaches that allow new experiences, ways of thinking and tools for social change (Sally Haslanger)
- ❑ Art as a way to glimpse at different possibilities
- ❑ “A non-discursive moment of truth” (Seyla Benhabib)
- ❑ Relatability without generalization
- ❑ Art is always made, never given (Henk Borgdorff)



Auto Wing IV by Hanna Antonsson

# Art as a negative utopia

- ❑ Art does not have to rely on concepts, generalisations or abstraction
- ❑ Why negative?
- ❑ Foucault: rather heterotopia instead of utopia
- ❑ Adorno: togetherness of diversity, can be only glimpsed through art
- ❑ Both negativistic definitions of utopias, any concrete vision of utopia coming from our current condition will recreate some of its issues
- ❑ Art does not produce the same type of knowledge as science, nor should it aim to
- ❑ Art as a way to ask and formulate questions (Inkeri Koskinen)
- ❑ Modesty as a key value (Amy Allen), melancholy science (Gillian Rose)



- ❑ Can you think of a piece of art that made you think of possibilities, options or scenarios that you wouldn't have thought otherwise?
- ❑ What do you think are the ethical issues with generalizations and conceptual thinking?
- ❑ What do you think S. Benhabib means with "ethics and politics of non-identical"? What is the role of art within the idea of the non-identical?
- ❑ Do you think a negative utopia is desirable or is it too vague to be appealing? Would it be more beneficial to be more straightforward but risk overlooking some aspects/points of view?

# A constellation of knowledge?



Fuzz Dungeon (still) by Jeremy Couillard

# Artistic research

- ❑ Should it be held to the same academic standards as other academic fields?
  - If not, what is its status as research?
  - If yes, do we lose something in the trade-off?
  
- ❑ Art as research poses the question: what is academia in the first place?
  
- ❑ Historically there is no reason to see the divisions between humanities and natural sciences, sciences and arts as definitive
  
- ❑ Scientific vs. artistic experiments: maybe not that different after all?

“In artistic practices, too, experience and expertise that have sedimented into tacit knowledge form a fertile ground for a dynamic, creative, and constructive process that enables the emergence of the new and the unforeseen.”

Henk Borgdorff “Artistic Practices and Epistemic Things” in *Experimental systems: future knowledge in artistic research* (2013)

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