

Anders Michelsen
Associate Prof., PhD
Director of Studies
Coordinator of Visual Culture
Department of Arts and Cultural Studies
University of Copenhagen
Karen Blixen Vej 1, DK-2300 K
+ 45 27 58 42 57
amichel@hum.ku.dk

FROM PARODY TO PARADOX: IMAGINATION BEYOND THE POSTMODERN

The paper debates the Western conception of the imagination vis-a-vis postmodern notions of the image; further 'visual culture' as the articulation of a creative imago formation pertinent to the present era. While the postmodern image-conception is mostly known for its showdown with the idea of iconic representation as realism in some capacity, the paper argues that it has neglected a focus on creativity. The paper attempts to qualify postmodern positions in this regard: (a) In the first two sections it treats a lurking paradox in the postmodern image-conception by looking at the assumption of signifiatory immanence in new media. (b) On this background it reviews the traditional paradox of the external and the internal in notions of the imagination in the West. (c) Third, this is confronted in the fourth section with what Richard Kearney has termed the *parody* of postmodern imagination. (d) In conclusion the paper briefly indicates a possible turn from parodial to paradoxical imagination based on Cornelius Castoriadis's philosophy of the creative imagination and Willard Van Orman Quine's analysis of the historicity of paradox, circumscribing different forms and institutionalizations, from Zenon to Gödel.