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Architectures of the Sensed: Models as Augmented Sites for Resistance in Silwan

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Laboratoire
Approches contemporaines de la **création**
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Université de Strasbourg

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Architectures of the Sensed: Models as Augmented Sites for Resistance in Silwan

How can models render visible the increasingly opaque sensory infrastructures in the city? Moreover, under conditions of surveillance and control how could models understood as both 3D simulatory environments and experimental frameworks serve as augmented sites of resistance?

The project centres on the environs of Silwan, a Palestinian neighbourhood south of the Temple mount in occupied East Jerusalem. Expanding through the neighbourhood is the "City of David", an interlinked archaeological excavation, tourism site, and Jewish-nationalist settlement project. Over the last three decades, Silwan has become one of the most entangled and densely surveyed areas in Palestine. From the underground to the skies, the volume of this site is networked with a myriad of sensory apparatuses, a dense constellation of electromagnetic computational media, central to ongoing processes of civil and military occupation.

While optical computational models are primarily used by state and corporate actors, they also offer new possibilities for resistance and processes of accountability. Drawing on local and global collaborations, this research seeks to explore the changing conditions of computational vision "in the wild": its spatialization, the decision-making logics at its core, and the techno-social realities that form through and around its deployment. Spatial practice does not only produce model environments, as Caine proposes, it should be seen as offering a framework for the development of communities of practice. The site and the production of models not only offer the possibility for changed forms of visibility but simultaneously call for the development of methodologies for collective spatial practices of media. In this expanded sense, the model is an epistemological lens through which to critically engage with the complex interrelations between physical reality and the invisible infrastructural architectures of the sensed.

Ariel Caine is a London based, Jerusalem-born artist and researcher. His practice centres on the intersection of spatial (three-dimensional) photography, modelling and survey technologies, and their operation within the production of cultural memories and national narratives. Ariel Caine is currently a lecturer at the Department of Culture, Communication & Media at University College London. He was a postdoctoral fellow at ICI-Berlin and a Gerda Henkel Stiftung postdoctoral fellow as part of the speculative cameras and post-visual security projects at Tampere University (Finland). between 2016-2021 he was a project coordinator and researcher at the Forensic Architecture agency at Goldsmiths University of London.

Picture Authority is a cycle of talks with artists and researchers. Each of them offers the opportunity to share experiences and question certain established visual politics. The expression "picture authority", to which the cycle owes its title, cultivates a lexical ambiguity, since it is as much a matter of questioning the authority of the picture as the action of representing authority.

This talk is organized by **Antoine Hoffmann** (artist-researcher, PhD student, France) and **Simon Zara** (artist-researcher, PhD student, France) as part of the "Pratiques et politiques visuelles" field of research conducted within **Visual Cultures** research program of the labotary Approches contemporaines de la création et de la réflexion artistiques | UR 3402 at the Strasbourg University.