

A NOTE AHEAD

This book is a map. It maps the landscapes of the country of digital images, or, as it was lately renamed, the realms of Computational Visualistics.

Like any picture, a map – and hence this book – is a context builder: it allows the readers to explore different paths in an abstract region, to connect many landmarks on several ways, and to establish their own distinctions of figures and backgrounds according to their proper interests.

However, a text is bound to its linear progression of propositions woven into the digital fabric of argumentation that only mimics the true spatial quality of images. As an extended path, reading this text snakes through the map in the effort to systematically cover all of its regions: the map only appears in the reader's mind. Not all of the details present may be integrated on first view. After all: a real map presents all its details simultaneously, but only those details are actually "read" that are relevant for the reader's present intentions. The map reveals its contents not on a single glance. That is to say: this text is explicitly written with the intention to be read more than one time.

enormously extended medial access to the thoughts of others. It has actually become impossible to explicitly quote or even remember everything that has contributed ideas to an ambitious academic work: apart from the classical form of scientific papers, books, talks, discussions, dialogues, and (long ago) lectures, which usually can be traced back easily, there have been documentaries in television, features in radio, articles in newspapers, fictional films and novels, comics and advertisements transmitting views effective in this book; from visits to exhibitions to web-browsing, many other kinds of mediated communication have provided arguments to the present text without the author being able to remember them in detail.

Although I am not able to trace back all the "underground" elements not originated by the author, and to list their sources: without them, this work would not have been possible.

Magdeburg, October 2003