

Epistemology of Cargo, Part 2
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Cargo is on the move from one place to another by boat, airplane, train, truck, or other means. Cargo is goods or merchandise in transit. Cargo involves complex conglomerates of performances, some of them by people, others by machines and other technologies, as well as by systems of organising information and things. Much of what goes on in these performances often goes unnoticed. Cargo's modes of operating are intimately connected to digitalisation and the rise of what media theorist Mark Hansen describes as 21st century media. Like them, cargo operates at scales that often remain imperceptible. Cargo's performances, although constitutive of our very material reality, often bypass consciousness, not the least because, as Katherine Hayles observes, consciousness is expensive. In my presentation, I will look at several artistic projects (by BIGHART, Allan Sekula and Rimini Protocoll) that try to grasp aspects of these performances of cargo, bring them to our awareness and, this way, flesh out aspects of cargo as the material unconscious of global economy.

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