

**Robert GERO**

***Creativity, The Performative Image, and Consciousness –  
Creating Possible Worlds***

This paper explores the connection between creativity, the performative image, and consciousness. I will argue that the performative image is a creative and dynamic initiating process whose purpose is to affect the world, not to describe it. This is against the more familiar notion of an image as representation of a world observed, in other words, signifying the world. The performative image transcends its status as a sign, thereby gaining the power to affect the user. Not all images are performative, as these are a particular class of images. Often they can be found among, but are not limited to, images that involve a direct interaction, such as interfaces, including websites and networks, that establish an emotional, sensual, or intellectual connection with their users.

To conclude this paper I will show how the performative image is a creative invention that expands our consciousness by undermining and contesting the normative givens of prevailing discourses. Further it allows access to the world in an original – non-representational and non-instrumental – way, producing an unforeseen world.

**Robert GERO** is a philosopher who is also a practicing artist. His work is grounded in the theoretical and practical crossings of philosophy, art, media, cultural theory, and studio practice. He holds an MFA in Fine Art and an M.A. in Philosophy/Aesthetics. He followed this with a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the New School for Social Research in New York. Selected exhibitions include the 45<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Italy, Artist Space, New York, Holly Solomon Gallery New York, Makor Gallery in New York, McDonough Museum of Art, Youngstown, Ohio, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica CA. He is currently teaching at Washington University in Saint Louis. E-mail: [Gero@samfox.wustl.edu](mailto:Gero@samfox.wustl.edu).

