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Chris Campanioni is Lecturer of Creative Writing and Media Studies at Pace University. His work on migration and media theory has been awarded the Calder Prize for interdisciplinary research and a Mellon Foundation fellowship, and his writing has received the Pushcart Prize, International Latino Book Award, and Academy of American Poets College Prize.



"A remarkable achievement ...Bold, elegantly written, and breath-takingly ambitious, this book is illuminating and vital in a way few contemporary works manage to be. The author frictionlessly weaves links between many different areas and modes of thought for a study that—while theory-laden—reads smoothly, accessibly, and poetically."

—José Alaniz, University of Washington, Seattle and author of *Comics of the Anthropocene: Graphic Narrative at the End of Nature*

DRIFT NET

The Aesthetics of Literature and Media in Migration By Chris Campanioni

Today's aesthetic strategies to compose content and identity across digital media are neither new nor exclusively digital, but emerged from migration. In *Drift Net: The Aesthetics of Literature and Media in Migration*, Chris Campanioni theorizes an aesthetics of transmedia as a framework for civic activism, while showing how migrants have forecasted and reshaped new media practices and norms, producing a political subjectivity that resists subjectification. As borders, global inequality, racism, and xenophobia proliferate, migrants continue to enact the possibilities of something else, beyond being spoken about and spoken for.

Through a model Campanioni calls a "migratory text," *Drift Net* advances a theory of literature and art born in translation that calls into question established theories of world literature, national literatures, literary periodization, and translation itself. Through an analysis of works born in translation and produced in passage, detention, and exile, Campanioni utilizes this model to read creatively across a wide range of social and political formations, from the experience of his parents' exiles to alternative housing initiatives and asylum reform efforts throughout Europe, including the largest LGBT+ refugee center in the world. Drawing on a mixed methodology of qualitative interviews with asylum applicants and shelter directors, textual analysis, and autoethnographic narrative, *Drift Net* traces literary developments alongside contemporary social and political interventions. This approach proposes interventions on the organizational levels of asylum, integration, public housing, and membership. It also marks the ways migrant creators have reformulated subjectivity through the same genres and modes that have contributed to their devaluation as minoritized subjects.

Drift Net both deepens and broadens our conceptualization of migrant literature, and recovers an understanding and application of transmedia that predates digital cultures. Campanioni offers a wide-ranging study of texts including Edward Said and Jean Mohr's *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives*, Edgar Garcia's *Skins of Columbus*, Anna Seghers's *Transit*, Francis Ponge's *Soap*, Walid Raad's *The Atlas Group*, Klára Hosnedlová's embroidered paintings, Reem Karssli and Caroline Williams's *Now is the Time To Say Nothing*, Cornelia Schleime's paper prints, and more. *Drift Net* formulates the "migratory" as a site of artistic production, resistance, and possibility, where theory is not an end but the beginning of tools and practices that might help researchers, instructors, and organizers to develop their strategies.