McLuhan's wide-ranging knowledge was uncommon in a period when specialization was still a residue of modernity and comments on the culture industry reflected Marxist thought via the Frankfurt School.

McLuhan, on the other hand, was convinced that reorganization of "our intellectual and emotional lives" would be the product of the ordinary flow of news and images from every quarter of the globe.

His ideas about hybridization of culture and the effects of media cross-fertilization, among others, form the background to a set of ideas that became the basis of much contemporary theoretical thought. His writings on the language of media, its non-neutrality, and especially his ideas about the nature of a message were fundamental to theories of deconstruction which have defined the post-modern era. About 20 years ago, Jean Baudrillard reflected on McLuhan— who was dismissed by Baudrillard's colleagues as a "technological determinist"—saying: "There is the technological optimism of Marshall McLuhan. For him the instantaneous mode inaugurated a generalized planetary communication and should conduct us by the mental effect alone of new technologies."

"Resonance: Looking for Mr. McLuhan" is a selection of works from the 1960s to the present which raises insights into the way media alters society and the shift from print culture to visual and oral transmission. When McLuhan was working on "Logan's Run," which brought us to the post-war era when several communications technologies developed for Germany. In spite of the romantic landscape, his video suggests the end of the epoch of the Third Reich, which brought us to the post-war era when several communications technologies developed for use in a period when specialization was still a residue of media art, where no cross-subject system exists. It works as a virtual art encyclopedia whose level of information increases with each user. As McLuhan often said at the end of the 1970s, "The user is the message." McLuhan was speaking in the era of the electronic digital archive, but his thought is confirmed by this piece, where the user generates his/her own content.

It was McLuhan's writings on television that made him internationally recognized. In the 1990s, televisions—the massive extensions of our central nervous system—had enveloped Western man in a film-like, sensuous, and imaginative life. Television, and subsequently portable video, was also a strong influence on the art world. In 1963 the American art viewer was first exposed to an environmental installation using television sets: Wolf Vostell's TV-O-Collage at Smolin Gallery, New York. Vostell's video Vietnam, from 1971, was filmed in Super 8 directly from the TV screen; it shows seven minutes of an unfocused image of a soldier in the midst of a blaze. The sound is heartbeat, and touches upon one of McLuhan's ideas: the electronic media inaugurated a planetary communication and should conduct us by the mental effect alone of new technologies.

One obstacle for academics (and general audiences as well) was McLuhan's language, which was, sparking, yet dense with ideas. He broke academic rules that, since the invention of the printing press, have demanded that people think and express themselves in a linear fashion. In Digital McLuhan, Paul Levinson says McLuhan was "against the expectation of traditional scholarship... he was writing as if he was contributing to the Web." A consummate "Renaissance man" whose friends included the English writer and poet, Wysthaw Lewis, McLuhan had an immense admiration for James Joyce, devoting several years to his work; he also wrote books and articles on Ezra Pound, and wrote his doctoral dissertation on the work of sixteenth century English poet and playwright Thomas Nashe.

"Resonance: Looking for Mr. McLuhan" is a collection of works from the 1960s to the present which raises subtle questions about the mediation and proliferation of images and our digital present, including the transformation of a world of changing futures into a media art movement. The video project is a series of works by Marcel Odenbach, his "The Name is an Anagram" and "The Big Book" by Plöger were among the first experimental works using Google Image Search as a source of material for his series of elegant, leather, hardcover books. Each book contains images culled from Google Image over a period of time. With this usage, Google images have become a new kind of found image, as one art critic put it.

Finally, the film Content, by Chris Petit, is a personal, visual essay exploring lines of communication in both the digital and the real world. This accords with McLuhan's idea of "placelessness"—that the art of communication is independent of any particular place where we live. This film-essay is evidence of the decline of centrality within contemporary society.

Works created 50 years ago and those created today have connections with McLuhan's ideas about the transition from print to electronic culture and the new languages which increasingly supplement writing and print. The world has caught up with his prophecy of an "instantaneous network," which challenges common ideas about space and time and delivers an explosion of visual culture, which McLuhan never witnessed, since he died on New Year's Eve, 1980. In just six years before the Internet Protocol was created. By the mid-1980s the Internet was a well-established technology supporting a broad community of researchers, and a generation after the first experiments with new video technology, electronic mail became a widely used means of communication across the globe.

While organizing this project, I read McLuhan's best-sellers as well as several books published in the past decade which rewrite or explain McLuhan's ideas to the post-Woodstock generation, born when the media books "were sent to the attic" (the phrase is from Lewis H. Lapham's introduction to a revised edition of Understanding Media). Who was Marshall McLuhan? If there is one convincing conclusion from this reading, it is that much of what McLuhan said in the 1960s makes sense today. While McLuhan's "technical" or "mechanical" forms have different meanings in current jargon, his theories about media, on how an older media becomes the content for a new one, and his vision of the spirit of a digital age, are more relevant today than when they were written. As was said elsewhere, the World generation is now turning to McLuhan's work to understand the global village in the digital age.

"Resonance: Looking for Mr. McLuhan" is a brief visit to the vast "Planet Marshall."—his writings include many other ideas useful to understanding the current media environment, which made the selection project possible.
This exhibition, which commemorates the 100th anniversary of the birth of the pioneering media critic Marshall McLuhan, demonstrates how McLuhan’s thinking still resonates with contemporary artists.

**ARTISTS**

- **Terry Berkowitz**
  - *Book Without End*, 2011
  - Video, edition of 10, 8.5 x 5.5 inches
  - Courtesy of the artist

- **Monika Fleischmann & Wolfgang Strauss**
  - *Semantic Map*, 2004
  - Net-art and video wall projection
  - Courtesy of Monika Felischmann and Wolfgang Strauss, ZKM Center for Art and Media/Fraunhofer IAIS

- **Martin Kohoud**
  - *Moonwalk*, 2008
  - Video projection and reflective glass, continuous loop
  - Courtesy of the artist and The Future Gallery, Berlin

- **Marcel Odenbach**
  - *Das große Fenster* (The large window), 2001
  - Video, 12 mins, 79 secs
  - Courtesy of the artist

- **Nam June Paik & John Godfrey**
  - *Global Groove*, 1973
  - Video, 28 mins, 30 secs
  - Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

- **Magdalena Pederin**
  - *The Name is an Anagram*, 2006
  - Video with light box, continuous loop
  - Courtesy of the artist

- **Chris Petit**
  - *Content*, 2009
  - Video, 76 mins, 18 secs
  - An Illuminations Films production made in association with More4 and ZDF in cooperation with ARTE

- **Wolfgang Plöger**
  - *Google Image Search (Map)*, December 1, 2006
  - Video, 7 mins, 28 secs
  - Courtesy of Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin/Düsseldorf

- **Txuspo Poyo**
  - *Control*, 1997
  - Video, 9 mins, 28 secs
  - Courtesy of the artist

- **Camilo Rabascall**
  - *La Voz de Su Amo (His master’s voice)*, 1974
  - Photograph, 39.37 x 39.37 inches
  - His Master’s Voice, 1975
  - Photograph, 39.37 x 39.37 inches
  - *Monument to Mobile Television*, 1994
  - Model, 1.97 x 2.76 x 5.12 inches
  - *Four Ways of Distance Communication*, 1974
  - Four plastic tiny objects inside a wood box covered by methacrylate, 16.54 x 15.54 x 1.97 inches
  - All courtesy of the artist

- **Elena del Rivero**
  - *Mended Flying Letters*, 2010
  - Typewriter, silk thread and ink on collage/handmade ataco paper, 82 x 82 inches
  - Courtesy of the artist