



# **Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology (Posthumanities)**

*Jussi Parikka*

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# Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology (Posthumanities)

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Since the early nineteenth century, when entomologists first popularized the unique biological and behavioral characteristics of insects, technological innovators and theorists have proposed insects as templates for a wide range of technologies. In *Insect Media*, Jussi Parikka analyzes how insect forms of social organization—swarms, hives, webs, and distributed intelligence—have been used to structure modern media technologies and the network society, providing a radical new perspective on the interconnection of biology and technology.

Through close engagement with the pioneering work of insect ethologists, including Jakob von Uexküll and Karl von Frisch, posthumanist philosophers, media theorists, and contemporary filmmakers and artists, Parikka develops an insect theory of media, one that conceptualizes modern media as more than the products of individual human actors, social interests, or technological determinants. They are, rather, profoundly nonhuman phenomena that both draw on and mimic the alien lifeworlds of insects.

Deftly moving from the life sciences to digital technology, from popular culture to avant-garde art and architecture, and from philosophy to cybernetics and game theory, Parikka provides innovative conceptual tools for exploring the phenomena of network society and culture. Challenging anthropocentric approaches to contemporary science and culture, *Insect Media* reveals the possibilities that insects and other nonhuman animals offer for rethinking media, the conflation of biology and technology, and our understanding of, and interaction with, contemporary digital culture.

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