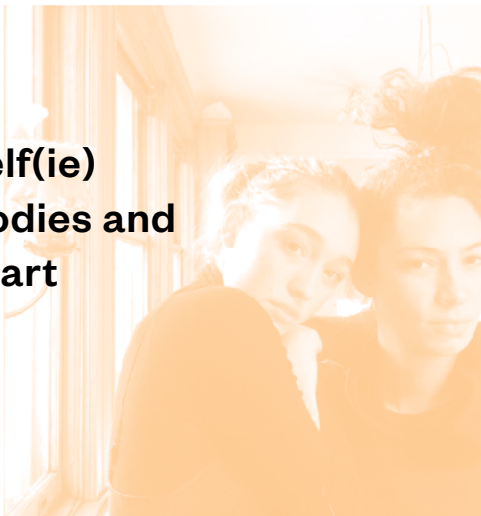




Hypothèses



**Posting the self(ie)
performing bodies and
post-internet art**



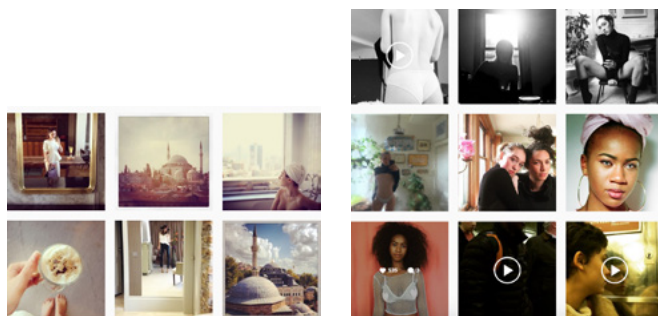
18 janvier 2017 | January 18, 2017



Performance and Gesture in Selfies, *Excellences & Perfections*

For *Excellences and Perfections* (2014), artist Amalia Ulman constructed, performed and photographed an identity for her Instagram account, reinventing herself as an aspiring actress. While posing many questions concerning female body image, celebrity culture, authenticity and the changing demarcations between artist, consumer and prosumer, Ulman's project does not feature any traditional selfies. This paper will take a closer look at this absence to better describe the selfie's performative nature. *Excellences & Perfections* is a performance in the sense that Ulman is acting out a social role and sharing traces of it online. Her identity has been transformed into an image of itself, and we do not get a sense of her corporeality through the Instagram posts. This is fundamentally opposed to what happens in a selfie, where the picture is necessarily showing the gesture of its taking. The selfie is therefore performative in a linguistic sense: it shows the process, it enacts it, and the body is engaged with the camera. This paper will show how these different types of performativity and the corporeality they reveal help us to better qualify the narcissism at play in such images.

Marina Merlo is a PhD candidate in Film Studies at the University of Montreal. She completed an M.A. in Art History and her Master's thesis was on identity formation in picture postcards of the city of Algiers at the turn of the 20th century. Her current research is on the selfie. In focusing on the gesture of taking the image, her doctoral thesis argues for a relational understanding of the practice that goes against the typical narcissistic reading.



Amalia Ulman, *Excellences & Perfections*, 2014
<https://www.instagram.com/amaliulman/>
 (screenshot), accessed July 8th, 2016.

Lula Hyers, Screenshot of her Instagram account,
 March 2016.

Post-Internet Art and the Threat of Whitening Intersectionality: Petra Collins and Lula Hyers

This presentation will examine the power relations that are at stake in the Instagram art of Petra Collins (b. 1992) and eighteen-year old Lula Hyers, two New York-based artists whose images offer a subversive re-interpretation of hyper-feminine stereotypes, asserting a female gaze that is feminist. The two young women publicly defend an all-inclusive intersectional feminism. The concept of intersectionality emerged in the late 1980s to refer to the variety of women's experiences of oppression, depending on their class, gender, and race/ethnicity. Intersectional feminist activism was thus intended to battle against systemic inequalities and injustices. In Petra Collins and Lula Hyers photographs, the experience and the body of racialized women are looked at through the lens of white women: it thus reduce the political potential of intersectionality and its subversive character. This "neutralization" (Sirma Bilge) of the concept is strengthened by the trendiness of their work and the collaboration of the artists with fashion brands. As a result, the cooptation of the movement empowers white artists more than the models. My interest lies in the threat of whitening intersectionality through post-internet art and feminist academic discourses, as I myself am a white researcher addressing intersectionality.

Estelle Wathieu is currently pursuing an M.A. in Art History at Concordia University (Montreal, unceded Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory), and holds a B.A. in Art History from PSL Research University, as well as a Certificate in Media and Journalism from Paris Dauphine University. Working under the supervision of Dr. Alice Ming Wai Jim on intersectionality and post-Internet art, her research is supported by a Faculty of Fine Arts Fellowship (2015-2017) and an International Tuition Fee Remission Award (2015-2016). Involved since September 2015 in the Art History Graduate Student Association and the Ethnocultural Art History Research Group, she has been elected Coordinator of the 2017 Art History Graduate Conference. From June to mid-October 2016, Estelle was the Curatorial Assistant to Clément Minighetti, Chief Curator at Mudam Luxembourg, *Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean* and coordinated - among other tasks - Cristina Lucas' exhibition *Trading Transcendence* (8.10.2016 - 14.05.2017) on power relations and capitalism.

Président de séance | Chair : Frances Cullen

Frances Cullen is a PhD candidate in Art History at McGill University's Department of Art History and Communication Studies and a specialist in the theory and historiography of photography, cinema, and media. Her research areas include the cultural and institutional histories of media and media discourse; media archaeology; media art history; and critical theories of time, history, materiality, and obsolescence. In her dissertation she examines the analogue photography's rhetorical force as an old medium in the twenty-first century. Previous research projects have concerned the material and institutional status of film stills and the role of cinematic time as a theme in the contemporary art gallery.

Toutes les conférences Hypothèses ont lieu à 16h
au Salon du Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal,
et seront suivies d'un cocktail discussion

Pavillon J.-N. Desmarais, Niveau 2
1380, rue Sherbrooke Ouest

All Hypothèses conferences are scheduled at 4pm
at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts Lounge and are
followed by a cocktail

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