

Experience Day Arts, Media and Society 27 March 2020



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Lecture:

Title: Serial Shooters: Portraits of Contrast and Conflict in Muholi Muholi's "Hail the Dark Lioness" (2012-2016) and Pyuupiru's "Self Portrait" (2005-2007) Series

Abstract: South African visual artist Muholi (formerly Zanele) Muholi and Japanese mixed-medium artist Pyuupiru both embarked on extensive self-portrait series to wrestle with gender markers imprinted with the racial technologies of blackness and Asianness. The process led to an embrace of their "gender non-conformity" (Steinbock 2017) and a "transcended-gender existence" (Pyuupiru 2017). Rather than individualize their conflict with societal expectations as racialized and transgender subjects, these series seek to disturb expectations of how to properly present the self. How might the genre of portraiture, traditionally reliant on a face and its human expression, be enlisted to dispense with the White Man as Human to process other "genres of the human," as Sylvia Wynter parses (2003)?

These self-portraits catalog the harm of "either:or" logic (O'Grady 1998, 277). "Remember when you violate a person, you do not only violate their structure, a body; it all starts with a face. It's usually the face that disturbs the perpetrator," explains Muholi (2016). To take aim at this disturbance Muholi darkens with high contrast in post-production, which draws the viewer into the obscure details; or to consider the abstracted forms of body, hair, and adornments across the 100-odd images. Taking the opposite approach to contrast through hyper-whiteness, the brightly lit, lurid coloration of Pyuuri's 38 versions of costumed, painted and masked selves loom larger than life. The particularity of their gambits to heighten contrast pushes past "disturbing ambiguity" (Getsy 2017). The elaborate staging skirts inscrutability in a bid for multiplying genres of the human.

Lecturer: Dr. Eliza Steinbock is Assistant Professor in Cultural Analysis at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. They were awarded degrees in Cultural Studies (MA with distinction from Leeds University, 2004) and in Cultural Analysis (funded PhD from the University of Amsterdam, 2011). Eliza takes an interdisciplinary perspective towards the following socially relevant challenges: the aesthetics of bodily difference, the politics of visual culture, the practice of inclusivity and cultural participation. This research brings them to a wide range of visual culture mediums like film, digital media, photography, painting, and museum display, with a special focus on analyzing the intersecting dimensions of gender, sexuality, race, and ability.

Tutorial:

Title: On the scholarly study of Arts, Media and Society

Abstract: This lecture is an introduction to the academic study of Art History from the perspective of the interplay between Arts, Media and Society. The students acquaint themselves with the visual nature of the discipline through a discussion of some exemplary artworks, buildings and objects from Art history. This way students are introduced in what it means and requires to analyze visual objects on an academic level.

Lecturer: Dr. Arthur Crucq is a university lecturer and postdoc, is specialized in theories about the underlying principles of decorative patterns and geometric ornament. Furthermore his research interests concern emotional response on art, theories on style, as well as the implications of applying empirical research methods in art history. At the department he teaches the academic skills courses, the research seminars and lectures in different courses on important art historical texts and artists' writings.