

Copycat Talks

June 22 + 26, 2015

The Theatre Centre

June 28, 2015

The Theatre Centre

Running
Commentary
on Cronenberg

LUMINATO
FESTIVAL



The Copycat Academy

A project by Hannah Hurtzig
Produced by Luminato Festival

Monday, June 22 8PM

Lecture by Dr. Pedro de Niemeyer Cesarino: *Inventions and Transformations of Anthropophagy in Ethnology and Brazilian Arts*

Friday, June 26 8PM

Lecture by Jonathan Beller: *Erotics of Computational Incorporation*

Sunday, June 28 4-7PM

Running Commentary installation

About The Copycat Academy

Designed to engage emerging artists from diverse fields, *The Copycat Academy* takes the work and biography of an artist as the model for its curriculum. Over a one-week intensive learning experience, an artist's method of production – that of the master – will be hijacked and subjected to a temporary parasitic inhabitation. *The Copycat Academy* participants will “ape” the master: gutting, consuming and incorporating the master. It is a critical test of thought and practice, a laboratory where 20 participants can observe the emergence of meaning while they occupy and replicate themselves in the host. It's a masterclass with an absent master.

The 2014 pilot focused on one of the most influential artist collectives of the late 20th century: Toronto-based General Idea. In 2015, the Academy will focus on filmmaker David Cronenberg, with the script for the year's curriculum based on

FACULTY

Jonathan Beller
Marcus Boon
Dr. Pedro de Niemeyer Cesarino
Dr. Bojana Cvejić
Gisèle Gordon
Dr. Mojgan Hodaie
Pedro Neves Marques
Kent Monkman
Archer Pechawis
Jochen Roller
Meg Stuart
Amy Taubin
Jacob Wren

Cronenberg's novel *Consumed* (2014). Inspired by themes and movements connected to Cronenberg's work, *The Copycat Academy* will be taught by colleagues whose practices relate to these same ideas; participants will be exposed to concepts that challenge and inspire their own developing practices.

Some of the topics and practices covered through the week will include:

- Investigative performance art practice
- Exercise in thinking out loud along with moving images
- Antropofagia (or the trope about Brazilian history cannibalizing other cultures in defiance of European hegemony)
- Deep Brain Stimulation and other interfaces of technology and flesh
- Daily bodily practice

SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

Laurence Dauphinais (Montreal)
Bug Davidson (Austin)
Moriah Evans (Brooklyn)
Francesca Fini (Rome)
Helen Flanagan (Rotterdam)
Ellen Furey (Montreal)
Aleksay Grishenko (Novosibirsk)
Chris Heller (Toronto)
Winnie Ho (Montreal)
Gregory Ham Holt (Philadelphia)
Ray Hsu (Vancouver)
Ben Kamino (Toronto)
Sasha Kleinplatz (Montreal)
Eroca Nicols (Toronto)
Simon Portigal (Toronto)
Shaunak Sen (Dehli)
Ellen Söderhult (Stockholm)
Julie Rae Tucker (Ottawa)
David Watson (Brooklyn)
Nine Yamamoto-Masson (Berlin)

The curriculum for this year's *Copycat Academy* follows the four main protagonists, two couples, in Cronenberg's *Consumed*. Two topics are related to the two couples, which we would like to delve into, somewhere between theoretical fiction, scientific study and experimental art practice: cannibalism and investigation by way of flesh. The two topics are dissociated from Cronenberg's stories in *Consumed*. With each new encounter with a philosopher, anthropologist, choreographer, writer or artist, and so on, cannibalism and inquiry into flesh migrate from their original context to a new location. We, which includes the whole Academy population, are both agents and witnesses to the uncertainty of such mutation and drifting as far as one could touch the limits of a loose connection with the absent master.

Copycat Talks

Dr. Pedro de Niemeyer Cesarino

Inventions and Transformations of Anthropophagy in Ethnology and Brazilian Arts

The presentation will depart from a general exposition about ethnological and philosophical investigations on cannibalism and ritual anthropophagy. Differences between omophagy,

cannibalism and anthropophagy will be related to the ontological elaboration of memory, temporality and personhood in Amerindian societies. The general overview will offer the criteria for a

reflection about the Modernist invention of anthropofagia and its relations with Brazilian modern and contemporary arts.

Jonathan Beller

Erotics of Computational Incorporation

In its appeal to the masochism of the spectator, Cronenberg's *Videodrome* evoked the insights of feminist film theory of its period with regard to the feminization of the spectator. At the same time, Dr. Brian Oblivion, the philosopher of television in the film who appears only on television, brilliantly evoked McLuhanite transformations of the social and the

senses by media-formations as yet not understood. Cronenberg combined this dynamic of masochistic spectatorial transformation with the emergence of media networks – here a genuinely cybernetic form in as much as the network fully incorporated the human body. Furthermore, he saw that, taken

as a whole, this networked apparatus was capable of strip-mining the libido and bringing about the collapse of reality. Thus, it is appropriate in the current moment to wonder if *Videodrome*, despite its apparently fantasmatic dimension, was not an early form of contemporary Realism.





Dr. Bojana Cvejić

Running Commentary on Cronenberg

An exercise in thinking out loud along with a moving image

Watching a movie in a cinema includes one unspoken rule in its protocol: one doesn't talk during the screening in order to protect the fantasy of the gaze. However, in the situation where subtitles can't be provided, a voiceover of a translator can turn the lonely crowd of isolated spectators into a community – this was the case in the cinemas in East Europe where the solution of a live simultaneous translation yielded an involuntary experiment: a mixture of narration, performed dialogue and commentary.

Performance, music, film... all time-based events are to be attended by the audience in silence. But being a spectator is an activity and for the audience, watching also involves thinking, imagining, sensing, remembering, arguing, protesting, sleeping, so on. The invention of cinema produced a shock to the brain as a challenge to the ability of the empowered to think. George Duhamel described it by saying: "I can no longer think what I want, the moving images are substituted for my own thoughts." Thought arises from the impossibility to think and, as Gilles Deleuze

noted in *Cinema II* about time-images, it has no other reason to function than its own birth; always the repetition of its own birth. The shock of sensibility is nothing sensational or spectacular – it's just an intense moment of struggle between perception, affection, thought and verbal articulation. *Running Commentary* is a situation in which we are testing the capacity to synchronize perception and verbalization of thought in an experimental action, rather than as a studied textual interpretation of a received object of performance.

The workshop takes a selection of scenes and films from David Cronenberg to be commented on. The exercise starts with the analysis of the viewpoints which the selected material lends itself to. Then comes two divergent components or temporalities: the movement-image or time-image of the film, and the stream of thought and its extemporaneous speech provoked by the images, i.e. the running commentary. The presentation is like a performance: a series of images or a film is projected before an audience like in a

cinema, on a large screen in the dark. Behind the audience, three and more "interpreters" are also watching it from three isolated boxes that resemble translation cabins, providing an audible commentary. The spectators are invited to navigate between channels, editing among several voices to create their own voice-over.

ABOUT THE FACULTY

Jonathan Beller (New York) is a film theorist, culture critic and mediologist. He currently holds the position of Professor of Humanities and Media Studies and Critical and Visual Studies, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY. He is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships including Mellon, J.P. Getty and Fulbright Foundation grants and honours.

Marcus Boon (Toronto) cultural theorist and author of *In Praise of Copying* (2010). His book *Nothing: Three Inquiries in Buddhism* (2015) co-written with Timothy Morton and Eric Cazdyn will be coming out this fall. He is a Professor of English at York University, Toronto.

Dr. Pedro de Niemeyer Cesarino (São Palo) is Professor of Anthropology at the Department of Anthropology, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil. He is author of *Quando a Terra deixou de falar - cantos da mitologia marubo* (Editora 34, 2013), among several other articles and texts.

Dr. Bojana Cvejić (Belgrade) is a performance theorist and performance maker, and co-author of many dance and theater performances, her latest book is *Choreographing Problems: Expressive Concepts in European Contemporary Dance and Performance* (Palgrave, upcoming).

Gisèle Gordon (Toronto) is a media artist with an interest in exploring enigmatic connections. Her solo work includes video installations and single channel films. She also has a long-standing film and video collaborative practice with Canadian Cree artist Kent Monkman.

Dr. Mojgan Hodaie (Toronto) is a neurosurgeon at the Toronto Western Hospital with subspecialty training in stereotactic and functional neurosurgery and the surgical co-director of the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Family Gamma Knife Centre at the Toronto Western Hospital.

Pedro Neves Marques (Lisbon/New York). Pedro Neves Marques' art practice focuses on the politics of nature, in its relation to ecology, economics, cultural production, and social and ontological segregation (between men as well as between man and other species). In recent years, he has explored South American animist cosmologies, in order to understand current cosmopolitical transformations of both capitalism and anti-capitalist struggles.

Kent Monkman (Toronto) is well known for his provocative reinterpretations of romantic North American landscapes. An artist of Cree ancestry, Monkman works with a variety of mediums, including painting, film/video, site specific performances, and installation.

Archer Pechawis (Toronto) is a new media and performance artist, filmmaker, writer, curator and educator. His particular interest is in the intersection of Plains Cree culture and digital technology, merging "traditional" objects such as hand drums with digital video and audio sampling.

Jochen Roller (Berlin) is a choreographer whose next production *Blutsbrüder* will montage German-engineered images of Indian culture against the cultural and social reality of the life of the Cree Nation with a mixed cast of German, Canadian and Cree performers in Dresden, Berlin, Montréal and Oujé-Bougoumou.

Meg Stuart (Berlin/Brussels) is an American choreographer and dancer. With her company Damaged Goods she has created a wide variety of productions, ranging from solos to large-scale choreographies, site-specific creations and improvisation projects.

Amy Taubin (New York) is a film critic and contributing editor for *Film Comment* and *Sight and Sound*; regular contributor to *Artforum*; author of *Taxi Driver* (BFI, 2000); and co-author of *James Nares* (Rizzoli, 2014).

Jacob Wren (Montreal) is the co-artistic director of Montreal-based interdisciplinary group PME-ART; he makes literature, performances and exhibitions. His books include: *Families Are Formed Through Copulation, Revenge Fantasies of the Politically Dispossessed* and *Polyamorous Love Song*, one of *The Globe and Mail*'s 100 best books of 2014.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Laurence Dauphinais (Montreal), actress, creator, director and musician/songwriter, is a multidisciplinary artist particularly interested in the invisible within ourselves. She recently returned from a 6 week tour in France with *ishow*, an unclassifiable performative theatre piece she co-directed, and will produce the second EP of her solo music project *La Dauphine* as well as create a short solo about the relationship of a woman with Siri in a time of crisis for the OFFTA 2015.

Bug Davidson (Austin) is a motion image artist and film director that lives and works in Austin, Texas. Davidson tracks in ideas of the gendered body, sound theory for moving images and dance for camera.

Moriah Evans (Brooklyn) is a choreographer. Her work has been presented at MoMA/PS1, Issue Project Room, Danspace Project, the Kitchen, Judson Church, American Realness, CallT2, Kampnagel & Theatre de l'Usine. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Performance Journal*. During her 2011-2013 residency at Movement Research, she initiated The Bureau for the Future of Choreography.

Francesca Fini (Rome) is an Italian artist working with new media and performance art. Her live projects, addressing social and political issues, are mixed with lo-fi technology, homemade interaction design devices, live audio and video.

Helen Flanagan (Rotterdam) is a British multimedia artist. Her work makes use of the potential continuity between moving image, musical score and narration to imbue mundane reality with theatrical ebbs and flows.

Ellen Furey (Montreal) is an artist working in dance and has performed with Dancemakers, Daniel Levéillé, and Márten Spångberg among others. Her work deals with the performance of performance.

Aleksay Grishenko (Novosibirsk) is an artist working with New Media and Interactivity. He graduated from the Novosibirsk Institute of Technology and has been working with research, educational and artistic institutions since 2004.

Chris Heller (Toronto), born in Virginia, matriculated in Toronto, is a performance-based video artist unraveling the ways in which the body (its behaviour), mind (through language) and environment (as we know and not know it) motivate one another.

Winnie Ho (Montreal) is a performance artist who is drawn to finding various experiential and intimate ways to fully immerse our personal and collective bodies together in space. Her durational and site specific works and performances have been shown in various places in Europe and North America.

Gregory Holt (Philadelphia) is a dancer who combines somatic approaches with a social view of the body inspired by popular education and critical cultural theory.

Ray Hsu (Vancouver), @thewayofray, is co-founder of Art Song Lab and the Medici Group.

Ben Kamino (Toronto) is an artist living and working between Montreal and Toronto. His work has been shown in Austria, Brazil, Canada, Mexico and the United States. Kamino maintains his practice as a dancer by engaging in contracts with independent choreographers as well as dance companies, most notably, Peggy Baker Dance Projects, Ame Henderson, Michael Trent, Sasha Kleinplatz and Virgil Baruchal. Kamino holds a BFA in Dance from the Tisch School for the Arts (NYU), and is currently a curator at Dancemakers Centre for Creation (Toronto).

Sasha Kleinplatz (Montreal) is a contemporary dance choreographer from Montreal. Her most recent work is *L'Échauffement*, a work structured by non-stop running, a 24 foot long slide, and many pieces of neon clothing. Sasha and creative partner Andrew Tay run the company Wants & Needs Dance, a platform for the performance events *Piss in the Pool*, *Short & Sweet*, and *Involved*.

Eroca Nicols (Toronto) a.k.a. Lady Janitor combs the globe looking for places to incite radical moments of art chaos,

consume massive amounts of coffee, wear amazing unisuits and confer with movers and thinkers of all varieties.

Simon Portigal (Toronto) is a current member of experimental dance company Dancemakers in Toronto. He maintains simultaneous work as an independent dancer and choreographer.

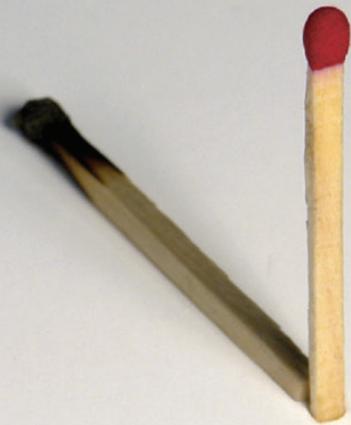
Shaunak Sen (New Delhi) is a filmmaker and artist based in New Delhi. He is currently finishing his first feature-length film *Cities of Sleep*. Shaunak is also currently pursuing a PhD in cinema studies.

Ellen Söderhult (Stockholm) was born in Stockholm, Sweden. At the moment she is completing her second BA, this one in contemporary dance performance, at DOCH School of Dance and Circus.

Julie Rae Tucker (Ottawa) is an Ottawa-based artist, independent curator, cultural worker and a proud member of the Munsee-Delaware Nation. She loves cooking, especially with her friend Kathleen, in their financially unsuccessful food business the Friday Lunch Project.

David Watson (Brooklyn) is an experimental musician, living and working in New York since 1987. He generally performs as a guitarist or highland bagpiper. Other than music contexts, he has made music for dance and for film. He has an ongoing project creating processions, including one at the Stedelijk Museum last year.

Nine Yamamoto-Masson (Berlin) is a French-Japanese artist, curator, translator and PhD researcher working on issues of hybrid identities within structures of power, issues of memory and trauma related to state violence, image-politics, visibility and access, and possibilities of counter-hegemonic narratives and networks of resistance.



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