

**Autotheory and
Artists' Video:
Performing Theory,
Philosophy, and Art
Criticism in Canadian
and Indigenous Video
Art, 1968-2018**
By Lauren Fournier

v tape

Back by popular demand...
Autotheory: the screening
November 20 - December 20, 2018

Works by Hiba Ali, Madelyne Beckles, Thirza Cuthand, Andrew James Paterson, Evan Tyler, Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue, and Martha Wilson curated by Lauren Fournier.

Autotheory bridges Lauren Fournier's immersion in Vtape's video art holdings with her doctoral dissertation research on "autotheory" as a post-1960s feminist practice across media. While doing an internship at Vtape Lauren was able to conduct her research on-site, viewing many works to put together her program which screened in May 2018.

On November 20, 2018, *Autotheory* was made available on the Vtape website for a one-month extended exhibition, as Vtape's newest audience outreach project. **Back by popular demand...** gives audiences around the world a chance to see some of the beautifully guest-curated programs that we regularly present at Vtape.



**Autotheory and Artists's Video: Performing
Theory, Philosophy, and Art Criticism in Canadian
and Indigenous Video Art, 1968-2018**

By Lauren Fournier

God is dead. Theory is dead.

- McKenzie Wark, "Review: *I Love Dick*"

Before theory became assimilated, it was embodied.

- Alex Bag, *Untitled Fall '95*

Autotheory bridges my immersion in Vtape's video art holdings with my research on autotheory as a contemporary or post-1960s mode of feminist practice across media. The term "autotheory" began to trend with the publication of American writer Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* in 2015, a text in which Nelson, drawing from Spanish writer and curator Paul B. Preciado's use of the term in their *Testo Junkie* (2008), performatively inscribes queer feminist citation alongside life-writing. In my research, I extended this term to the realm of contemporary art and other text-based practices, including art writing, to consider the resonances of "autotheory" as a feminist aesthetic mode. In this light, autotheory becomes a way of understanding works of art and literature that integrate autobiography



and other explicitly subjective and embodied modes with discourses of philosophy and theory.

In my doctoral research, I contextualized 1990s–2010s works by writers and artists like Chris Kraus and Cauleen Smith alongside earlier works by artists like Adrian Piper, theorizing the autotheoretical impulse as it manifests with the waning of modernism and the emergence of conceptual and multi-medial art practices in the late 1960s. While the term “autotheory” and related terms—including autofiction, theoretical fiction, and life-thinking—have been used to describe third and fourth wave feminist literary texts, autotheory can be traced to earlier writings by women of colour, including Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga, and Audre Lorde, and to earlier works by artists. To be sure, one could argue that the entire history of feminism is autotheoretical, as feminism has a long history of bridging theory and practice, and recognizing the personal as political. And yet, there is something especially performative and art-world-related about autotheory as it has taken shape in recent years, and it is here where my research into autotheory as a trans-medial mode of feminist practice enters the picture.

In the curated screening programme *Autotheory*, I have selected works of video art in which I perceive an autotheoretical impulse. The

degree to which these works can be described as “autotheoretical” varies, but in each one the artist explicitly engages a philosophical project, or invokes the discourse of “theory,” as an integral part of the work. Across these video works, autotheory manifests as an artist’s mode of engaging with philosophy and theory, and as a way of theorizing through feminist, queer, Indigenous/Two Spirit, and other frameworks. In some works, autotheory becomes a way of critiquing the discourses and institutions that uphold this thing known as “contemporary art,” taking the piss out of the elevated language that scaffolds the art and academic worlds. In other works, autotheory is a way of engendering theory from one’s lived experience in the world, or of commenting on systems of philosophy and theory through a video art practice. Spanning the humorous and the somber, the satirical and sincere, this screening presents a survey of artists’ video from 1968–2018 to consider video art’s relationship to autotheory—and vice versa. This text expands my focus beyond autotheory as a feminist and queer mode, to autotheory as a mode that artists of various genders (including cis male folks) might engage when working with theory as material.

Curatorially, my hope is that this screening will provide insight into autotheory’s historical roots in post-1960s art, and the reverberant philosophical and theoretical



valences of Canadian and Indigenous artists' video. *Autotheory* reveals the pronounced contributions of video art, both historically and in the present, to this burgeoning notion of "autotheory"—a notion that continues to predominantly be read from the perspective of comparative literature and literary studies. As a curator as well as video artist, who has worked with performance for video/performance for the camera as a primary practice, I'm particularly drawn to these video art practices as a ripe site to think through this idea of "autotheory" and bear witness to it as it bubbles up at different periods and in different ways in the history of artist's video. With this screening, I take performance for video and other performative modes within video art, including performance lectures, as a space to reflect on the aesthetics, politics, and ethics of "autotheory" as a self-reflexive practice in the post-medial present. This screening brings together works by emerging/early career artists (Madelyne Beckles, Evan Tyler, Hiba Ali), mid-career artists (Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell, Thirza Cuthand), and well-established artists who have been making work since the 1970s (Martha Wilson, Andrew James Paterson); I want to emphasize the importance of having a cross-generational perspective on autotheory as a practice and, with many of the artists present at the May 2018 screening at Vtape, I hope to foster dynamic, ongoing

intergenerational conversations around autotheory and artists' video.

"Philosophy is not static. It is anything but static. Ergo, philosophers should be on the move constantly. On the move. On the prowl," croons the recognizable voice of Andrew James Paterson in the opening lines of *The Walking Philosopher* (1999-2001). Transferred to video, the work was originally shot by the artist on Super-8 film as he walked along the streets of his home city Toronto. In the work, Paterson continues his philosophical practice of reflecting on epistemology—how we come to acquire knowledge—and his unavoidable hunch that "intellectuals are in fact very sexy." The soundtrack's bass line drives the bumpy, hand-held movement of the film forward, a rhythmic gesture to Paterson's longstanding practice as a musician playing in Toronto-based punk bands like The Government and Derwatt. Over the sonic bass line, the artist decisively speaks a monologue that he's written—himself a philosophical treatise on this figure that Paterson embodies in the video: "the walking philosopher," a modern-day, post-punk flaneur with a borrowed film camera in hand.

It is a treatise whose thesis is that which the walking philosopher embodies through practice: that "philosophy is all about movement and it's at least a two-way street." Repeatedly referring



to himself as "this little philosopher," Paterson becomes the intellectual's version of "this little piggy"—someone adept as a philosopher who, nevertheless, stays humble through a kind of performative self-infantilization. "This little philosopher" references the speaking "I" of the video--presumably Paterson's own identification in the body of the work. "What is this thing called progress anyways?" Paterson asks. As the film moves forward, Paterson advances a philosophical critique of capitalism—one that is soberly grounded in the realities of materialism. The artist is honestly ambivalent about the limitations of living in the material world as a philosopher, calling out the "privilege" of those "pundits" who, despite all the evidence, pretend it's possible to live out their anti-capitalist ideals:

Philosophy must involve exchange,
and not necessarily the material variety.
However, this little philosopher does for
better or worse live in a material world no
matter how much certain pundits who can
afford to claim differently might argue.
Ergo, this philosopher must not only be
consumed, he must truly become a consumer. . .
Marx was at least halfway right.
(Paterson, *Philosopher*)

Nevertheless, the film ends with an anti-capitalist punch, with the word "money"

(pronounced "MUN-KNEE")-- "that frustratingly inflexible material"--closing the film alongside the driving bass line's finishing note. *The Walking Philosopher* is the artist's time-based, post-punk exploration of his own discomfort with "the dominant philosophy" at the end of the twentieth century—namely, neoliberal capitalism—enacted through a film work that foregrounds the body's movement through particular spaces at particular times.

I first met Andrew James Paterson at gallerywest, a gallery space on Queen West founded and run by artist-curator Evan Tyler, who recently moved to the city from Regina, Saskatchewan. Parkdale-adjacent, gallerywest made space for a different kind of contemporary art community in Toronto—one that showcased work by artists from western Canada (Tyler, like me, hails from Treaty 4 lands) and which functioned as a special kind of hub for inter-generational art-world "outsiders" in the intersecting contexts of the Parkdale neighbourhood and Toronto's alternative, intermedial art scenes. *fear irony, and curating in the 90s* (2011) is Tyler's humorous send-up of the hegemonic art world and the dominant social structures, terminologies, and trends that make its existence possible. *fear* is as much a work of late postmodern video art as it is an incisive piece of institutional critique. Subtitled *A monologue by Miss Priss*, Tyler's



video uses the conceptual persona of "Miss Priss," played by the artist's cat, to embody a fictionalized, female, NYC-based contemporary art curator whose professional reign was in the mid-1990s. Following a period of disillusionment and fatigue, Miss Priss reflects on her high-pressure days of working at a fictionalized museum—"the Trudell in Manhattan"—and a specific exhibition that she poured herself into—"Terrain in Flux."

With Miss Priss captured on camera as the artist's catty, gender-bending, inter-species stand-in, Tyler playfully critiques the workings of the contemporary art world. Coyly describing curatorial work as a fundamentally mimetic and learned practice—"I would take notes in my moleskin black book, you know, big words and key phrases, things that I could incorporate into my own dialogue with contemporary culture"—the artist in this role as Miss Priss points to the performativity of art world discourse and the power of wielding certain terms and phrases. Particularly taken by the centrality of theoretical discourse in contemporary art curation, Miss Priss speaks knowingly, with a melancholic bent: "How far does an MFA and an interesting pair of glasses take you up the professional scale of the academic gods? Well, pretty far I can tell you, in the honest truth." Tyler's cheeky play is at home in the tradition of Canadian-based queer video art, with palpable



resonances between his work and the work of artists like Colin Campbell and Duke & Battersby.

Tyler's video opens the *Autotheory* screening: prompting big laughs among the art-going audience (itself ambivalent, complicit?), this work sets the tone for the programme, establishing my own curatorial stance as someone who is aware of the fundamental tensions within contemporary art curation and academic work. For all its sonorous satire, there is a sincere project of autobiographical processing at the heart of Miss Priss's monologue. Tyler's own history of addiction and recovery, as well as his past life as a curator of contemporary art exhibitions—by such artists as 2fik, Marisa Hoicka, Lee Henderson, Irene Cortes, Christine Negus, Istvan Kantor, and Mani Mazinani—contributes to the honesty of this work.

While autotheory can serve as a way of transforming existing discourses of philosophy and theory, it can also be a way of engendering new ways of practicing theory and philosophy that are responsive to, and embedded in, the lives of those who are theorizing. As Sara Ahmed writes in *Living a Feminist Life*, "Theory itself is often assumed to be abstract: something is more theoretical the more abstract it is, the more it is abstracted from everyday life. To abstract is to drag away, detach, pull away, or divert. We might then have to drag theory back,

to bring theory back to life" (Ahmed 10). In Thirza Cuthand's *Working Baby Dyke Theory: The Diasporic Impact of Cross-Generational Barriers* (1997), one of Cuthand's earliest works of video art, the artist engages in this kind of auto-theoretical engendering of theory from their lived experience as a queer and Indigenous person growing up in Saskatchewan in the 1990s. As a Two Spirit Indigenous artist, Thirza's body is the site of various forms of historical violence and oppression in the context of a white-dominated, patriarchal, heteronormative, cis-centric, colonialist Canada. Long engaging in practices of performance for video, Cuthand finds this to be an efficacious way of foregrounding their particular body and the ways in which their body is "marked" both in the world and in the work. In *Working Baby Dyke Theory: The Diasporic Impact of Cross-Generational Barriers*, a work which Thirza made over two decades ago, Thirza wrestles with questions related to identity, community, belonging, and desire, diaristically using the forms of video art and performance for the camera to make clear their feelings of frustration.

Coming out as a young lesbian in a prairie city with little queer visibility, Thirza finds them self turning to books as a source of understanding: yet, Thirza states, over a shot of a pile of books on their floor, "I'd gotten tired of just reading about lesbians, so I thought



maybe I should go out to meet other ones." As they seek out community, Thirza confesses their experiences of being tokenized and mistreated in a small lesbian scene which, in Thirza's view, was centered around an older queer community and its needs. With the teenage artist self-positioned as a "Baby Dyke," this work of video art becomes, in effect, a "Working Baby Dyke Theory" that reflects on the specific struggles that Cuthand experiences as queer and Indigenous in a particular place and time in Canada's history. Before *Working Baby Dyke Theory*, Cuthand's putting-into-practice this autotheory of queer experience, was *Lessons in Baby Dyke Theory* (1995), the first piece of video art that Cuthand ever made. In it, the artist reflects on feelings of loneliness and isolation that they experienced as a teenage lesbian in 1990s Saskatchewan; themes they take up explicitly in their later video *Working Baby Dyke Theory*, such as ageism amongst lesbians, are latent here. Using humour, Cuthand imagines ways of finding more lesbians to hang out with at her highschool, including incentivizing "coming out" with "a trip to Vancouver ... or a lollypop." Approaching their difficult experiences with a sense of humour and imagination, Cuthand's video is the beginning of the artist creating theories about queer, Indigenous experience and imagining possibilities for queer community and a more affirming future. In both Thirza's and Tyler's videos, 1990s

television serves as a source of queer identification: mediated by the screen, these video artists find another point of connection in female characters/queer icons on TV. In *Lessons in Baby Dyke Theory*, the sitcom *Ellen* plays in the background, with a pre-out Ellen reading a book on-screen; in *fear*, the Mary Tyler Moore show's rainbow title sequence glimmers on the television monitor as Miss Priss reflects on her new life in Toronto. Both artists use performative ciphers in place of their "I"s—even as performance for the camera is also invoked, to varying degrees (Cuthand appears in their video, while Tyler does not)—and in this way they make use of performativity to provide some figurative distance between themselves and the work even as the work is autobiographical. Reminiscent of the fictocriticism advanced by Winnipeg-based art critic and psychoanalyst Jeanne Randolph, these artists play with the lines between fictionalization, autobiography, and art-world critique. While Tyler casts his cat as the unknowing performer in his film, Cuthand turns to puppets, figurines, and drawings to act out their difficult inter-relational experiences. Not unlike Paterson's driving bass line, Cuthand's *Lessons* ends with a track by Hole—an iconic sound of mid-1990s feminist-leaning punk rock/alt-rock. Across these three works, we witness the ways in which humour and play can serve as potent forms of affirmation—and critique. The theme of queer possibility and the hope for better futures for queers continues in *Hers*



is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon (2016), a work made by the artists-lovers-partners Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue. In the video, the artists represent the act of reading theory as embodied, intimate, and collaborative. The video evolved out of the residency that the artists did at the AGO in 2015, where they performed a live performance iteration of *Hers is Still a Dank Cave*. In the video, Mitchell and Logue appear in front of the green screen, with the floor under them lined with material in a similar chromakey green: an immersive space is created, within which the artists' can playfully perform for the camera. Logue stands, holding a gigantic pink "highlighter," while Mitchell reclines on her side on a piece of enlarged letter-sized paper, one hand resting her head up and the other hand pointing down to a line to be highlighted. Standing 152" high and made of gluten-free papier-mâché, the highlighter that Logue holds is humorously large, pink, and phallic, something that the artist must wield to achieve a purpose. The artists transform the solo act of reading and discerning meaning from a theory text into an act that is best done with two.

With a sense of humour about contemporary feminist discourse and its discontents, Mitchell dons a white tee-shirt that reads "I'm With Problematic," with the screen-printed sign of a

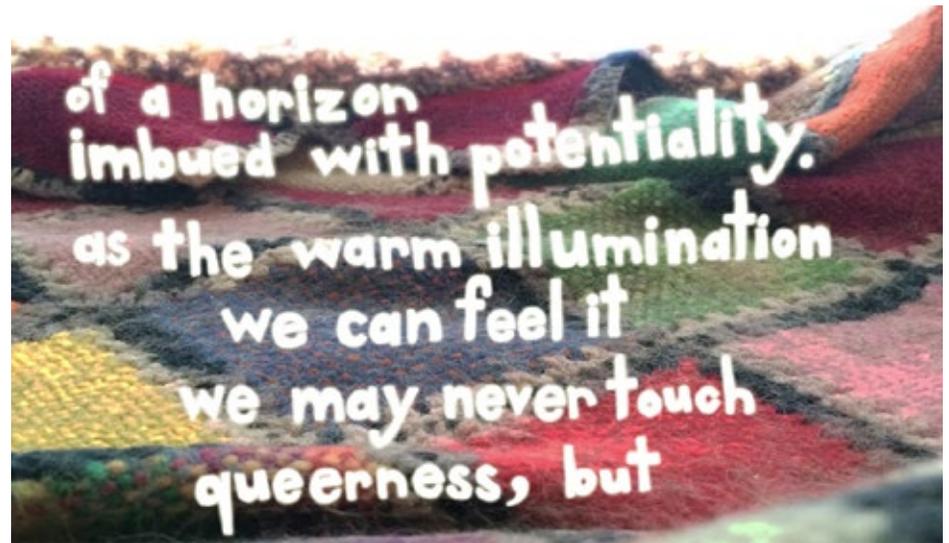


pointing hand mimicking Mitchell's own pointing hand below. The artists work together in front of the green screen, on which written texts from feminist theory are blown up in Mitchell's characteristically maximalist style; Logue positions the mock highlighter to touch the place on the "page" (the green screen) where Mitchell points, and proceeds to underline a passage of text that they find especially important. As Logue moves the massive highlighter, carefully balancing it with her body, the text on the "page" begins to be highlighted in yellow; using performance for the camera, the artists embody the scene of reading theory as something intimate and shared, something laborious that requires support. The humour and play of the first half of the screening ripples throughout Mitchell's and Logue's work, with some of the comedy coming from more widely accessible gestures—the artists dancing in front of the green screen in strange costumes, or green-screened books flying like birds around a bowl of hummus—and other jokes emerging from knowledge of the references being cited—like the cat-lady riffing on Simone de Beauvoir's famous quote from *The Second Sex* to read "One is not born, but rather one becomes a tabby."

As we move through the second decade of the twenty-first century, autotheory takes on a new, slightly more complicated charge as the place of social media—these pervasive post-confessional



technologies—ossifies alongside the ever-swelling imperatives of neoliberalism and capitalist consumption. In Madelyne Beckles's video and performance work, the artist has poked fun at feminist theory itself, approaching the Canon of feminist theory (itself a site of contention, complication) with some skepticism. Beckles uses strategies from infomercials and other modes of selling to comment on the ways that theory is consumed—even in feminist spaces—often to comedic effect. In her previous work *Womanism is a form of feminism focused especially on the conditions and concerns of black women* (2016), for example, Beckles satirizes the fetishization and privilege inherent in Audrey Wollen's *Sad Girl Theory*, with its unchecked privileges of whiteness and class, while showcasing books of anti-racist feminist theory like bell hooks's *Killing Rage: Ending Racism* (1995) as part of her performance for the camera. In other works, like her MoMA performance *In Search of Us* (2017) made in collaboration with Petra Collins, the performers read an oversized version of Angela Davis's *Women, Race, and Class* as they sit on the couch next to a similarly oversized bag of Cheetos. The gesture of transmuting books of theory—specifically notable books of feminist and queer theory—into macro-scale objects in the context of an artwork, or otherwise re-presenting books of theory that are important to the artist's life and work, is a direct thread connecting Beckles's work to



Mitchell's and Logue's, as well as works by other feminist artists, like American artist Cauleen Smith or American-based Canadian artists Hazel Meyer and Cait McKinney.

In Beckles's *Theory of the Young Girl*, the artist advances her practice of performance for video to critique the anonymous French, post-Marxist collective Tiqqun's theory text *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl* (2012).

Reading lines from Tiqqun, like "I'm so happy, I could give a shit about being free," Beckles intimates the problems within Tiqqun's text—which purports to theorize capitalism through the appropriated figure of The Young-Girl—through her physical gestures, intonation, and use of material objects, while also gesturing to the failures of feminism. Applying lipstick and starting straight into the camera, the artist states "The young-girl knows the standard perversions"; her costuming and design of the video gestures to the creepy, daddy-like infantilization within these texts, while at the same time resisting such an infantilizing grip through her adult-woman articulations. At first glance, she might appear to fit into Tiqqun's theory of who or what the Young-Girl signifies, but it soon becomes clear that this artist is something else altogether: a feminist artist with a not-easily-assimilable practice.

In Beckles' video, The Young-Girl is someone subjective—an autobiographically-

inhabited ontological positioning, rather than an abstract construct theorized in the name of male discourse or scholarly pretence. Placing her hand on a handmade book that reads THEORY in bubble letters, Beckles proceeds to paint her fingernails pink. Beckles' video finds home amongst other feminist critiques of Tiqqun, including that of Toronto-based critic Heather Cromarty (her 2013 book review "(NOT) GIRLS AND MADWOMEN" in *LemonHound 3.0*), and Moira Weigel and Mal Ahern's collaboratively written "Further Materials Toward a Theory of the Man-Child" in *The New Inquiry* (2013). *The Young-Girl is not expected to understand you*, Beckles speaks to the camera in the closing lines of the video, maintaining eye contact until the video fades out.

The question of who has access to discourse returns in Hiba Ali's *Postcolonial Language* (2016), a video art piece that integrates a performative lecture into the body of the video to address issues related to borders, migrants, visibility, and drone warfare. Using performance for the camera and the genre of "thesis performance" (in the context of MFA programs)—both forms conducive to an auto-theoretical orientation—Ali's piece enacts ideas from postmodern feminist theory, including Judith Butler's work on the politics of whose lives are *livable* and whose lives are mourned in books like *Precarious Life: The Powers of*



Mourning and Violence (2004) or *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (2009). In Ali's video *Postcolonial Language*, the artist uses the respective media of video art and performance lectures/thesis performance to translate the beliefs of such theory into practice: through the deliberate, repetitive act of naming, Ali mourns those lives that might have gone unmourned, or unrecognized as lives, in the context of American drone warfare in the Middle East. "Do 'I' have the right to enunciate this term? Do 'I' have the privilege, prestige, political authority or affiliation?" is a question that Ali and the other performers return to over the course of the video. This questioning of one's access to the auto or "I," and what that "I" can or ought to enunciate, recalls Claudia Rankine's use of the second-person "you" in lieu of the "I" in her *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014)—a rhetorical move that extends Rankine's own auto-theoretical revelations around everyday, structural racism in twenty-first century America and the ways in which she is precluded from accessing the individuation that non-racialized folks are. Ali's statement that "The experience of the immigrant is deemed as either too personal or too political" strikes a nerve, functioning as a commentary on the limitations of feminism historically and the perhaps naïve assumptions of the inclusivity of feminist mantras like "the personal is political" that developed during the 1960s second-wave. In



Ali's video, the racialized immigrant is posited as that which exceeds the limits of such feminist discourse—as that which is abject from such understandings of the personal-as-political. In this way, Ali's *Postcolonial Language* makes space for the experiences of contemporary immigrants and migrants within an art practice that, while conceptually generative, is also politically direct.

The screening ends with Martha Wilson's *Art Sucks* (1972), a representative work of 1970s feminist conceptualism in which the artist takes up the role that influence plays in an artist's practice. While the title reads at first as a deprecatory statement about art, it soon becomes clear that it refers to the way in which art can be said to proverbially suck--in the sense of sucking things up, sucking things into itself, like a vacuum, or a mouth. Seated at a table with a small stack of paper in front of her, Wilson begins to speak to the camera:

Art-making is a process which sucks identity from individuals who are close to it, but not participating themselves. The only way to recover identity is to make art yourself. In early June, 1972, I captured the soul of Richards Jarden in a color photograph. As soon as I ingest the photograph I will recover the identity that was drained from me in the past, and we will be of equal power. (Wilson, *Art Sucks*)



Through the physical act of eating the citation (here, the photograph of American conceptual artist Richards Jarden), Wilson literalizes the consumptive act of influence and referencing in contemporary art. Working auto-theoretically, Wilson often reads the artist statement of the given work before moving into the "work" proper, raising questions around the line dividing "work" from "context": with the way the video art is presented, Wilson's artist statement, itself a framing device, becomes part of the body of the work. In this way, the work contains an exegesis of itself—a move seen in autotheoretical literary texts as well, like Chris Kraus's *I Love Dick* (1997). Performatively enacting a communion-like ritual of ingesting the photograph, taking it into her artist-body and capturing the act on camera, Wilson "consumes" this formative male artist / Wilson's contemporary as a means of recovering her own artistic agency.

Such autotheoretical impulses are present in other works by Wilson made around this time.

Psychology of Camera Presence (1974), for example, is a self-reflexive anticipation of the theory that art historian Rosalind Krauss would advance two years later in her essay "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism" (1976). Krauss, following her mentor Clement Greenberg's hegemonic art historical work on "medium specificity," argues that the "medium" of video is



not something aesthetic but, rather, the psychic mechanism of "narcissism" itself. Wilson's work is as much an articulation of this theory as is the work of those artists, like Vito Acconci and

Joan Jonas, whom Krauss discusses. Following her time as an art student at NSCAD in Halifax, Wilson sits on the floor cross-legged and begins to speak: "In the presence of a camera I split from my body, I see myself from the outside.

My watching myself now on the video monitor symbolizes this state of split awareness" (Wilson, *Psychology*). These lines bring to mind

French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir's section on "Narcissism" in *The Second Sex*, where de Beauvoir theorizes the reasons behind men's and women's starkly different relationships to narcissism: women gravitate toward the "doubling" mechanism of the mirror because they do not have access to themselves as fundamentally whole persons in the way that men do; this is not because of something inherent about women as a gender, but is the result of living within patriarchal social and representational systems that privilege the phallic as the standard.

After describing her artistic aim of splitting herself from her body through the practice of performing for the camera, Wilson proceeds to stretch, eventually moving her body out of the frame so that only the founds of her body can be heard. We can hear the movements of the artist

shuffling along the floor, and then a leg pokes into frame. In 1976, the year that Krauss's essay on video-as-narcissism is published in *October*, Wilson will go on to found the performance-focused artist-run centre Franklin Furnace in New York City, where she continues to serve as Founding Director. Wilson's early work on the performativity of life and identity, and of the complex explorations of "narcissism" and self-reflection that performance for the camera makes possible, resonates with contemporary feminist, queer, Indigenous, and other practices that engage performance for the camera to fresh ends. Indeed, in *Autotheory*, we witness works that extend Krauss's thesis in "Video" *The Aesthetics of Narcissism* to renewed, self-reflexively theoretical—and practical—directions, with artists engaging discourses of philosophy, theory, and art criticism in performative, conceptual, and satirical ways in their video art work. With this screening, *Autotheory* takes performance for video and related strategies in Indigenous and Canadian video art as a ripe area within which to reflect on the aesthetics and politics of autotheory as a self-reflexive and performative practice in the post-medial present. ■



Dr. Lauren Fournier is a curator, writer, and artist. Her research is focused on the histories and practices of "autotheory," contemporary feminist art and literature, and experimental approaches to narrative, theory, and art writing.

She is the recipient of the 2018 Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators, and is currently editorial resident at Canadian Art.

A practicing artist herself, her video work is distributed through Vtape. www.laurenfournier.net



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