

NOG Masterclass with Dr. Eliza Steinbock

Trans Structures of Feeling: From Cinema to Portraiture

Thursday May 14, 2020

11.30 - 13.00 hrs

Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus this masterclass will be taught online.

Of the three identified aesthetics of change in Eliza Steinbock's *Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change* (Duke University Press, 2019), the before/after transsexual cut lingers on as a reigning chrononormativity for trans people to present selfhood as first changed then fixed in time. It was for this reason that in Steinbock's next book project they have turned to the genre of portraiture that dominates in the art world representation of trans visual art. Portraiture invites questions of trans intelligibility, how we know it, what marks it, and for whom. For this research Steinbock studied how artists lend more to the making of a portrait than just rendering a version of a person, but also cast a signature with aesthetic and political weight. The portrait traditionally confers dignity, status and therefore also value. It circulates to do certain work: a face on a coin promises its worth, heads of organized religions make a space sacred, but they can also be a form of witnessing and documentation, or even like a graffiti of "I was here." For this seminar, Steinbock will introduce some examples of portraiture that yield an archive -- in the terminology of Raymond Williams -- of trans structures of feeling. Central to this book is the attempt to map the incremental values of affects associated to cherishing and perishing in globally comparative practices of portraiture. In conversation with the texts on how it feels to be a problem in media and on the affective relationship of a portraitist and her muse, Steinbock hopes to generate a discussion on how trans feels right about now.

Readings (free to download from: <http://www.elizasteinbock.com/publications/2014-upcoming/>)

1. Eliza Steinbock, "Framing Stigma in Trans* Mediascapes: How does it feel to be a problem?" *Spectator* issue "Transgender Media" 37.2 (2017): 48-57.
2. Eliza Steinbock, "On Affective Exchange in Portraiture: To Follow J. Jackie Baier into the Photographic Dissolve." *How to Do Things with Affects: Affective Triggers in Aesthetic Forms and Cultural Practices*. Eds. Ernst van Alphen and Tomáš Jirsa (Amsterdam: Brill Publishers, 2019), 251-272.

Registration:

Participation is open to PhD and Research Master students, with a max of 15.

PhD and RMA students will be awarded 1 ECTS for attending the masterclass. Additional ECTS is possible for writing a short paper. Please indicate if you wish to receive extra credit for the masterclass with your registration.

Please register for the masterclass before May 4, 2020 by sending an email with a short motivation, your affiliation (study programme, university, research school) and 2 questions related to the readings of the masterclass and in connection to your own research topic/interest to: nog@uu.nl

Biography:

Eliza Steinbock is Assistant Professor in Cultural Analysis at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. Eliza's interdisciplinary 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. Eliza has published over 40+ essays on trans cultural production. Their first monograph published by Duke University Press, *Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change* (2019), traces how cinema offers alternative ways to understand gender transitions through a specific aesthetics of change. It received the best first book award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. A second, NWO funded monograph-in-development is on contemporary transgender (self) portraiture in the wider field of visual activism. They currently lead the NWO Smart Culture project "The Critical Visitor: Intersectional Approaches for Rethinking and Retooling Accessibility and Inclusivity in Heritage Spaces" (2020-2025), which together with fifteen Dutch consortium partners investigates how the organization, collection, and exhibition spaces of heritage can meet the breadth of demands placed by today's "critical visitors" for queering, decolonizing, and crippling.