

# Visual & Cultural Studies

University of Rochester

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## FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

We are pleased to circulate the second annual Newsletter of the Visual and Cultural Studies Graduate Program at the University of Rochester. This issue reports on many aspects of our program, and focuses in most detail on the intellectual activities of our current graduate students who, in addition to their coursework or dissertation writing, are tireless in their involvement in teaching, in art practice and performance, and in giving papers at venues in this country and abroad.

A noteworthy addition to our program this year was Visiting Professor Patricia Matthews, a distinguished feminist scholar and historian of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century art. She taught courses both in art history and in VCS, including 'The Object in Contemporary Art' and 'Crossing Boundaries'. She also served as a fine resource for several students working on conference papers and dissertation topics with a feminist emphasis. We shall miss Pat upon her return to Oberlin!

During summer 2004, Joan Saab will be joining the Department of Art and Art History and the VCS Program as a full-time faculty member. (For several years, as an assistant professor at the Eastman School, she has served as a VCS Core faculty member and taught one course per year.) We are pleased to have this dynamic young faculty member full time on the River Campus.

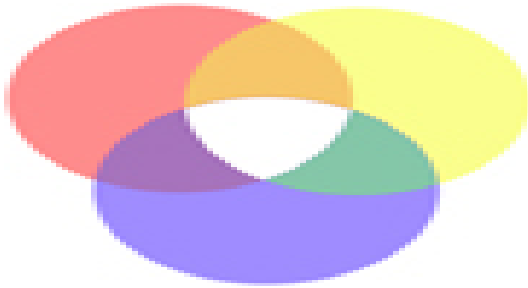
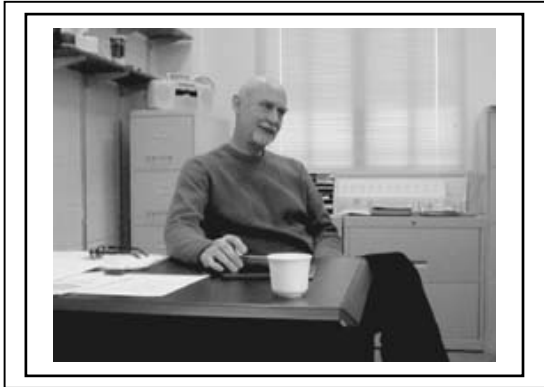
We hope that this newsletter will inform prospective applicants about our many activities, and keep students and alumni up-to-date on each other's publications and whereabouts. Please send us your news!

We gratefully acknowledge the initiative and expertise of VCS graduate students Hossein Khosrowjah and Lauren Crabtree in the compiling and editing of this newsletter.

Lastly, Dean Tom LeBlanc has asked us to continue as co-directors through the 2004-05 academic year. As in the previous two years, Douglas will direct the program in the fall semester, while Janet will serve in the spring and summer.

Sincerely

Janet Berlo and Douglas Crimp



## Crimp appointed to arts professorship

Notable for his extensive work in contemporary art and AIDS education, professor Douglas Crimp was recently appointed the Fanny Knapp Allen Professor of Art History. "Douglas Crimp is internationally known as a cultural critic and AIDS activist. "He is also one of the most intellectually committed and enlightening professors at the University of Rochester," Professor and Chair of the Art and Art History department Paul Duro said. "I am delighted he has been awarded the Fanny Knapp Allen Chair of Art History in recognition of his groundbreaking work," he added. The professorship was created in 1980 to recognize Fanny Knapp Allen, an amateur painter and art supporter whose donations fund University scholarships, according to "Currents". Crimp is also known for published work including, most recently, *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics* (2002), which he wrote while at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health during a year-long Rockefeller Foundation fellowship in 2000. His essays discuss political issues surrounding the gay community and the AIDS activist struggle.

Excerpted from an article by Taylor Yunis from  
CAMPUS TIMES ONLINE, April 22, 2004.

## Karen Beckman Interview

Car Crashes, Terrorism, and Feminism—  
An Interview with Karen Beckman  
By Aubrey Anable

Since joining the faculty of the English Department in the Fall of 2002 Karen Beckman has been very busy. After arriving from Princeton where she wrote her dissertation on the relationship between vanishing lady illusions and narratives in Victorian culture and their representation in photography and film, the project was turned into a book entitled *Vanishing Women: Magic Film, and Feminism* and published in 2003 by Duke University Press.

In addition to being the instructor of popular courses this semester on feminist and psychoanalytic theory and sound cinema, Beckman's work has recently appeared in *The Scholar and Feminist* and she has another article forthcoming in *Camera Obscura*. Despite this hectic pace she has still managed to be an enthusiastic participant in University events like "Casting Doubt," the graduate student conference sponsored by VCS, and the Susan B. Anthony Institute's research seminars.

Shortly after Beckman returned from giving a paper at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in Atlanta, Georgia (where *Vanishing Women* was named a runner-up for book of the year), I met with her to catch up on her latest projects.

**AA:** Tell me about the car crash films project.

**KB:** When I had been teaching this course on experimental fiction, one of the things I noticed was that there were no women on the syllabus and that there seemed to be a real separation in the discussions of feminist experimental work and what we think of as the avant-garde. So, *Crash* seemed like one of the few places where feminist critics have been interested, either in the novel or in the film, but the text is also of interest to people working on the avant-garde and experimental writing.

As I began working on the novel what interested me most was the way that J. G. Ballard is trying to engage something of a collision between media and is trying to think about how he can translate what he's seeing taking place in the film world into a literary form. In some ways thinking about that question of translation has become the foundation for the larger project which is using image of the car crash as a moment of



violence, but also stasis and pause and integration to think about how film relates to or incorporates or is translated by other media. I think car crash films become a place where film seems to ask itself what film is when movement stops. If it's not movement what is it?

**AA:** You've also written recently on feminism and terrorism and will be expanding that into a larger project. This is a suggestive pairing. What do you find especially interesting about bringing these two terms together?

**KB:** I initially started to work on this project prior to September 11. It seemed to me that in some ways contemporary feminism in its moving away from what seems like an embarrassing moment in earlier feminism, because of its essentialism, seems to have also moved away from somehow acknowledging the level of violence and anger that was present in the language. So I thought it would be interesting to turn back to this moment and think about what kinds of tensions existed. Then after September 11, I was immediately struck by the way in which the rhetoric of the mass media and the violence of the response of the U.S. government to the terrorist attacks was counterbalanced on the left by thinking about the government as "big boys" and women as being the opposite of this. I saw a resurgence of a kind of equation of women with pacifism and gentleness and anti-war status that seems to be really problematic. I thought that one way to think through the problematics of that discourse was really use it to turn back to this earlier moment in feminism when feminists were self-representing as terrorists, as kind of gender terrorists.

**AA:** Violence and violent representations are major themes in your work, but your current work is about much more explosive or hypervisible forms of violence than what interested you in *Vanishing Women*—where violence is connected to invisibility. Is this a conscious shift?

**KB:** Well I think that it is a conscious choice to move to another extreme but still on the violence continuum, but in many ways I think that it's my attempt to try to think through the questions that I didn't feel I was fully able to work out in *Vanishing Women*. People who were reading different sections of the manuscript wanted me to distinguish really clearly between literal violence and metaphoric violence. What interested me so much about the idea of vanishing is that it seems to blur the distinction between those two things and makes unclear which is which. I think that is what's so appealing about the idea of vanishing for ideological regimes is that you can make bodies disappear, but present it as some kind of illusion or just a narrative or something that couldn't really happen. I guess my answer to your question would be that I'm never clear on what the dividing line is between invisible violence or metaphoric violence and real violence or visible violence. I think that is part of what I am trying to work out in doing this, but I guess there is a conscious shift from looking at a performance of violence that also performs the eradication of violence to a performance of violence that is almost kind of spectacular—that shows nothing but its own violence in some ways—which is how I would understand car crashes on film.

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*As this newsletter went to press, we learned that Karen Beckman has accepted a job at the University of Pennsylvania. We shall miss her rigor, intellect, and collegiality.*

- Janet Berlo

## Students News

**Lauren Crabtree** gave a paper entitled "Death Becomes Her: Repetitive Death as a Site of Alternative Spectatorship in Buffy the Vampire Slayer" at the Susan B. Anthony Conference. Lauren has received a grant to study intermediate intensive Croatian this summer '04 at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Elizabeth Czach's** article, "Film Festivals, Programming, and the Building of a National Cinema," is forthcoming in *The Moving Image* 4:1, 2004. She is presenting a paper, "Performativity and Mary Pickford's Home Movies" at the *Women and the Silent Screen* conference in Montreal (June 2004).

**Aviva Dove-Viebahn** presented several papers this year: "Negotiating Acceptance and Difference in Contemporary Culture: Lesbian Art Practices and Feminist Art" at the Susan B. Anthony Institute Women's Studies Conference, University of Rochester, (March, 2004); "Nowhere and Everywhere: The Lesbian Presence in Feminist Art of the 1990s" at College Art Association Conference in Seattle, WA, (February 2004); "Generational Dynamics and the Lesbian Presence: American Feminist Art of the 1970s and 1980s" at the QGRAD Conference on Gender and Sexuality, University of California, Los Angeles (Nov. 2003) and the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University.

**Linda Edwards** presented a paper, "'Hermaphrodites Speak' - Identity in Intersex Activism," at the SBAI graduate conference in March 2004.

**Leanne Gilbertson's** essay, "Imaging St. Margaret: IMMITATIO CHRISTI and IMMITATIO MARIAE in the Vanni Altarpiece," is forthcoming in *Image, Relic and Devotion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, S. Montgomery and S. Cornelison, eds. Tempe, Ariz.: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies. She received a research grant from Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender and Women's Studies, and a Luce Foundation Grant, both from the University of Rochester, and earned her Graduate Certificate in Gender and Women's Studies in May, 2004. Leanne has been teaching as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Visual and Performing Arts Program, St. John Fisher College, Rochester.

**Dan Humphrey** presented the paper "Our Bergman: The American Construction of a Swedish Filmmaker" at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference in

Atlanta, GA in March. An expanded version of this paper was subsequently presented as a lecture at the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester on April 14 under the title: "The Birth of Bergmania: Origins of a Cold War Filmmaker." His earlier paper on Bergman which forms a chapter in his dissertation "Watching Ingmar Bergman: Caught Between the Shame of Looking and the Shame of Being Ashamed to Do So" has been selected for publication in the anthology *HETERO*, edited by Sean Griffin.

**Elizabeth Kalbfleisch** presented a paper, "'You're No Oil Painting Ma'am': Lucian Freud's Portrait of Elizabeth II." at the annual conference of the Universities Art Association of Canada. Elizabeth was awarded an SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship for 2004-2005 (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada).

**Hossein Khosrowjahi** was commissioned by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston to write a program booklet for their series on Iranian films (November 2003).

**Akiko Mizoguchi** is living in Japan while writing her dissertation. She is also serving as guest curator at the National Film Center of Japan. Her recent publications include: (in English) "Male-Male Romance by and for Women in Japan: A History and the Subgenres of Yaoi Fictions," *The U.S.- Japan Women's Journal* 25:49-75, 2003; (in Japanese) "Whose and What Kind of 'Real' Is It? Sorting Out the Discursive Space of Yaoi," *Image and Gender* 4: 27-55, 2003; "Homophobic Homos, Rapes of Love, and Queer Lesbians: An Analysis of Recent Yaoi Texts," *Queer Japan*, 2: 193-211, 2000; Akiko delivered several papers this past year: "'Gay Boom' for Women? Male Homosexual Films as Agents for Homo- & Heterosexual Women in Japan," at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, March 2004; and "Homophobic Homos, Rapes of Love, and Queer Lesbians in Japanese Yaoi Comics," at the Association for Asian Studies (March 2003), the conference *Sexuality After Foucault*, University of Manchester (November 2003), the California College of Arts (February 2004) and New York University (March 2004)

**Taro Nettleton** presented a paper "Hi Red Center's Shelter Plan: The Uncanny Body in the Imperial Hotel" on April 17, 2004 at the Frick Symposium on the History of Art presented by The Collection and the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University.

**Daniela Sandler** presented a paper "Beyond Local and Global: A Critique of Urbanistic Discourse and Urban Interventions in Sao Paulo." at the Social Science History Association Conference in Baltimore (November 2003). In April 2004, she spoke on "Place and Process: The Luz Cultural Corridor, Sao Paulo" at the Annual Meeting of The Society of Architectural Historians, Providence, RI. Daniela spent the 2003-04 academic year in Berlin doing field research for her dissertation with a grant from the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service)

**Lisa Soccio** was awarded the Gene Wise-Warren Susman Prize for best graduate student paper for "Locust Abortion Technician Meets 'Hamburger Lady': Shock as Symbolic Violence and Subcultural Signifier," at the American Studies Association Annual Conference, in Hartford, Connecticut, October 2003. She presented a similar paper at the third annual Pop Music conference at the Experience Music Project in Seattle, Washington, April 2004.

**Lucia Sommer's** many presentations and performances this past year were "Mapping Biopower: Cyberfeminist Participatory Theater and the Politics of Site," presentation at the Feminist Activist Art Roundtable of The NWSA Conference, "Women in the Middle: Borders, Barriers, Intersections," June, 2004, Milwaukee Sites, "Performing Publics," panel presentation, "Infecting the Sick Society: Performance as Virus", at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Crossroads in Cultural Studies Conference, June, 2004, University of Illinois, Urbana. Lucia's Performative installation: "Can You See Us Now?" with subRosa art collective, can be seen in *Tactical Interventions*, a group exhibition, MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA, from May 2004-2005. She received a Susan B. Anthony Institute Research Grant, to attend the National Women's Studies Association conference, June 2004 and with subRosa, received a Creative Capital Foundation Artist Grant: Emerging Fields, 2002-2003. Lucia's recent publications include several essays in *Domain Errors! Cyberfeminist Practices: a subRosa Project* (New York: Autonomedia, 2003). M.Fernandez, F. Wilding, and M. M. Wright, eds.; and "Tactical Cyberfeminism: An Art and Technology of Social Relations," *artwomen.org*, Winter 2003; reprinted in *Les Penelopes*, Paris, <http://www.penelopes.org>, April 2004.

(Continued - Students News)

**Claire Sykes** was co-organizer of an international interdisciplinary conference *Approaching the Unapproachable / Au bord de l'inapproachable* held at Queen's University, Canada, December, 2003. Her paper, "Collecting as Historiography: Walter Benjamin's Collector and the Task of the Historian," was presented in the "Materials of History: Stories of Collected Objects," panel at the Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association Conference, in San Antonio, Texas, April, 2004.

**Lisa Uddin** presented a paper, "Canine Citizenship and the Intimate Public Sphere" at an interdisciplinary conference *Representing Animals* at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario (November 2003). Her paper, "The World According to Humboldt: Global Witnessing in 18th Century Natural History," was part of a panel on globalization and representation at the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester (April 2004). Lisa also taught a cultural studies of medicine seminar in the Fall of 2003 in the U of R's Division of Medical Humanities.

**Norman Vorano**, who is living and working this year in Ottawa, while working on his dissertation was awarded a Luce Foundation Grant from the VCS Program. His two exhibition reviews will be published in the journal *Inuit Art Quarterly* in the summer of 2004.

**Catherine Zuromskis'** paper "Andy Warhol's Snapshots: Countercultural Identity and Photographic Practice" was given at the Cultural Studies Association's annual conference in Boston (April 2004). She was awarded an Ailsa Mellon Bruce Predoctoral Fellowship for Travel Abroad, given by the National Gallery's Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts. She will use it to travel in Mexico and Central America. During the summer of 2004 she will attend the Cornell School for Criticism and Theory.

### Post-Exam Presentations

On February 25, 2004, three VCS students currently working on their dissertations off campus came back to the U of R to give their post-qualifying exams presentations. A capacity audience at Rush Rhees's G113 intently listened to the following talks and enthusiastically participated in the post-talk discussions:

### Daniela Sandler

"Incarnate Politics: History, National Identity, and Architectural Heritage in Post War Berlin." The dissertation examines the postwar preservation policies and practices in Berlin and how they construct or transform historical narratives in the context of Germany's controverted past, focusing on buildings from the Nazi era, medieval urban areas, the 19<sup>th</sup> century city, and wartime ruins.

### Norman Vorano

"The Culture of Inuit Art: Modernism, Museums and the Popular Imagination". Since the early 1950s, Inuit art has toured around the world in international art exhibitions, and celebrated as a distinctly 'Canadian' icon. Today, artmaking is crucial to the northern economy, and is a vital resource in the ongoing construction of Inuit social and cultural identities. This dissertation is a cultural history of Inuit art which examines its rise, development and reception in the mid-twentieth century.

### T'ai Smith

"Weaving Work at the Bauhaus: The Gender and Engendering of a Medium," examines weaving as it was practiced, discussed, and gendered as feminine at the Bauhaus school of design in Germany between 1919 and 1932, and considers the ramifications of a theory of the textile medium and tactility for art history and visual studies.

### Celeste Heughes Bishop Award

The Celeste Heughes Bishop Award, given by the VCS Program to recognize outstanding achievement and all-around excellence in academics, leadership, service and collegiality was awarded in 2004 to Hossein Khosrowjah and Lisa Uddin. Each received \$2000 in prize money in support of their research.

### Congratulations to Those Who Were Awarded Their PhD's in 2003-2004

#### Reni Celeste

"The Tragic Screen: Cinema at the Limits of Philosophy"

#### Jonathan M. Finn

"Police Photography: Visual Representation, Scientific Evidence and the Construction of the Criminal"

### PhD Candidates who passed their Qualifying Examination, 2003-2004

#### Dore Bowen

"The Moment of Vision: Phenomenology and Post-War Photography"

#### Catherine Zuromskis

"Private Photographs, Public Contexts: Snapshot Culture in the Public Sphere"

### PDOG

The Professional Development Organizing Group (PDOG), run by Linda Edwards, Claire Sykes, and Aviva Dove-Viebahn organized two workshops for grad students this year. Paul Duro presented a workshop on writing cv's and job applications. Karen Beckman's and Janet Berlo's workshop on dissertation writing was presented to grad students in both VCS and English.

### Invisible Culture

[www.rochester.edu/in\\_visible\\_culture/ivchome.html](http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/ivchome.html)

This journal is dedicated to explorations of material and political dimensions of cultural practices: the means by which cultural objects and communities are produced, the historical contexts in which they emerge, and the regimes of knowledge or modes of social interaction to which they contribute.

The current issue of Invisible Culture titled  *Casting Doubt*  was co-edited by Elizabeth Kalfleisch and Leanne Gilbertson.

### Incoming Students 2004-2005

#### Cynthia Foo

[cynthia\_foo@yahoo.com]  
MA, Art History, York University  
BA, Art History, University of Victoria  
BA, Economics, Univ. of British Columbia

#### Yuichiro Kugo

[ykugo@df7.so-net.ne.jp]  
BA, History, Aoyama Gakuin University  
MA, Art History, Musashino Art University  
MA, Art History, University of CA-Davis

#### Dinah Holtzman

[deh200@nyu.edu]  
BA, Film, Mount Holyoke  
MA, Cinema, New York University  
MA, Art History, SUNY Purchase

#### Maia Dauner

[bewareinjastealth@hotmail.com]  
BA, Art History, Smith College

## VCS Faculty News

**Janet Berlo** and R. Phillips, "Our (Museum) World Turned Upside Down'. Re-presenting Native American Arts", has been reprinted in C. Farago and D. Preziosi, eds., *Framing Memory: The Idea of the Museum* (London: Ashgate Press, 2004) (Originally published in Art Bulletin, 1995) Janet Berlo will be a resident fellow at The Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA during July 2004, doing research and writing on Women, Textiles, and 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Visual Culture. She also has an article in press: "Anthropologies and Histories of Art: A View from the Terrain of Native North American Art History", in Michael Holly, ed., *Anthropologies and Histories of Art* (Williamstown, MA: The Clark Research Institute, forthcoming, Summer 2004). She gave a lecture "Returning the Gaze: Images of the Other in later 19<sup>th</sup> Century Plains Indian Drawings", at Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Connecticut, December 13, 2003.

**Douglas Crimp** gave the keynote address at the Cornell Annual Art History Graduate Conference, this year called "Queer Eye for the Art Historian: Points of Departure in Art Historical Criticism", April 23-24, 2004.

He also gave a number of other invited lectures:

"Coming Together to Stay Apart: Ronald Tavel's Screenplays for Andy Warhol's Films," in the Queer Origins of Modern American Culture Lecture Series of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project of University of Chicago Center for Gender Studies, March 4, 2004; Masters Colloquium Visiting Lecture, State University of New York, Purchase, April 30, 2003.

He participated in the conference "Sexual Rights: What We Can Show and Tell", organized by the Law and Policy Project and the Program for the Study of Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, Tarrytown, NY, June 11-12, 2003.

His interview with members of the AIDS activist art collection Gran Fury appeared in the April 2003 issue of *Artforum*.

Two interviews with him also appeared this year:

Juan Vicente Aliaga and José Miguel G. Cortés, "Conversation with Douglas Crimp", in *Micropolitics: Art and Everyday Life 2001-1968*, Castelló, Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló, 2003; and Tina Takemoto, "The Melancholy of AIDS: Interview with Douglas Crimp," *Art Journal*, 62, no. 4, Winter 2003.

Translations of his essays on Warhol, "Getting the Warhol We Deserve," "Face Value," and "Mario Montez, For Shame," appeared in journals in Poland, Russia, and Spain. A collection of his essays translated into Spanish, titled *Posicionamientos críticos: ensayos sobre las políticas de arte y la identidad*, is in press from Akal/Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid.

**Randall Halle's** new book '*Queer Social Philosophy*' will appear this Summer 2004. His essay '*German Film Augenhoben*' appeared in the 2003 issue of the *New German Critique*. Randall will be a Fellow at the Center for Advanced German and European Studies.

## Lectures

### The Craig Owens Memorial Lecture

On September 15, 2003, Leo Bersani gave the annual Craig Owens Memorial Lecture titled, "Almodovar's Girls", about Pedro Almodovar's film "All About My Mother".

## Alumni News

(Send your Alumni news to [chry@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:chry@mail.rochester.edu))

VCS alumni Warren Zanes was featured in the *Wall Street Journal* this past winter. Excerpts from the article are reprinted below.

**Warren Zanes** joined the popular Boston roots pop band the Del Fuegos in 1983. Twenty years later, Warren Zanes is on the road again, moving from New York to Cleveland, for a different but not unrelated gig. At 37 -- married and a father -- Mr. Zanes was appointed vice president of education for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on Sept. 25.

"They wanted someone who had a deep academic background, with a Ph.D., who knew the music business from the inside, and who was eager to remain active in both spheres -- a very hard conundrum!" he said in a telephone interview.

Mr. Zanes happens to meet those highly selective criteria precisely. In the years after leaving the band, he achieved a bachelor's degree in creative writing and art history at New Orleans' Loyola University, a master's in contemporary art theory at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, then a second master's and follow-up doctorate from the **University of Rochester** in visual and cultural studies. His thesis was a cross-disciplinary look at the impact of globalization on culture high and low— from architecture to radio programming.

