



# Autotheory

Curated by Lauren Fournier

Wednesday, May 9, 2018, 7:00 – 9:00 pm  
Doors at 6:30pm, Screening starts at 7pm

IN THE BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

@401 Richmond St. W., 4th floor

Featuring work by [Hiba Ali](#), [Madelyne Beckles](#), [Thirza Cuthand](#), [Andrew James Paterson](#), [Evan Tyler](#), [Allyson Michell](#) and [Deirdre Logue](#), and [Martha Wilson](#).

**Autotheory** bridges my immersion in Vtape’s video art holdings with my doctoral dissertation research on “autotheory” as a post-1960s feminist practice across media. “Autotheory” is a term that has emerged to describe contemporary works of literature, art, and art writing that integrate autobiography and other explicitly subjective and embodied modes with discourses of philosophy and theory in ways that transgress genre conventions and disciplinary boundaries. Auto-theory is an emergent term, one which began to trend after the publication of Maggie Nelson’s 2015 book *The Argonauts*, where Nelson, riffing on Paul B. Preciado’s use of the term “auto-theory” in *Testo Junkie*, inscribed a particularly performative mode of citation alongside a kind of post-memoir, queer feminist life writing text. And yet, auto-theory as an impulse can also be traced through earlier feminist performance art, body art, and conceptual art practices, as well as intersectional feminist writings by women of colour like Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, and Audre Lorde. One could argue that the entire history of feminist theory and practice is one of auto-theory, though the resonances of “auto-theory” as a twenty-first century term bears consideration, particularly when it comes to the twenty-first century context of neoliberalism, late capitalism, and the post-confessional technologies of social media. I approach auto-theory as a practice of performing, embodying, enacting,

processing, metabolizing, and reiterating philosophy, theory, and art criticism. With this screening, *Autotheory* takes performance for video as a ripe space to reflect on the aesthetics, politics, and ethics of “auto-theory” as an often self-reflexive and performative practice in the post-medial present.

– [Lauren Fournier](#), guest curator

Screening program:

Evan Tyler, *fear, irony, and curating in the 90s*, 2011, 04:35, colour and sound (English)

Andrew James Paterson, *The Walking Philosopher*, 2001, 03:30, b&w and sound (English)

Hiba Ali, *Postcolonial Language*, 2016, 25:00, colour and sound (English)

Thirza Cuthand, *Lessons In Baby Dyke Theory*, 1995, 03:00, colour and sound (English)

Madelyne Beckles, *Theory of the Young Girl*, 2017, 04:21, colour and sound (English)

Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell, *Hers is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon*, 2016, 24:32 colour and sound (English)

Martha Wilson, *Art Sucks*, 1972, 01:25, b&w and sound (English)

Running time of the screening: 70 minutes

Most of the artists will be in attendance.

[Lauren Fournier](#) is a curator, writer, artist, and PhD candidate. Her research is focused on the histories and practices of “auto-theory,” contemporary feminist art and literature, and experimental approaches to narrative, theory, and art writing. Born and raised in Regina/Treaty 4 Territory, Saskatchewan, she is currently based in Toronto where she is completing her PhD in the Department of English at York University. She has published widely on contemporary art and literary practices, and her writing appears in *Canadian Art*, *Magenta*, *Contemporary Women’s Writing*, *a/b: Journal of Autobiography Studies*, *Comparative Media Arts Journal*, *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*, *Canadian Journal of Woman Studies*, and *West Coast Line*, and in the edited collection *Desire Change: Contemporary Feminist Art in Canada*. Recently she presented her research on auto-theory at the MLA (Modern Language Association) in New York City and the ACLA (American Comparative Literature Association) in Los Angeles. Lauren is the director of [Fermenting Feminism](#) (Berlin: Laboratory for Aesthetics and Ecology) and *Self Care for Sceptics*, and is the Associate Editor of [Kapsula](#) Magazine, an interactive platform for experimental, web-based approaches to art writing and criticism. She has served on the Board of Directors of Trinity Square Video and has worked at artist-run centres across Canada. Recent curatorial projects include *You’re Hysterical* (forthcoming 2019), *The Sustenance Rite* ([Blackwood Gallery](#)), *Fermenting Feminism* ([Critical Distance](#), [Front/Space](#), [Büro BDP](#)), and *Out of Repetition, Difference* ([Zalucky Contemporary](#)). She is the recipient of the 2018 [Middlebrook Prize for Young Canadian Curators](#), and her exhibition *epistemologies of the moon* will open at the Art Gallery of Guelph in September 2018. A practicing artist herself, her video work is distributed through Vtape. [www.laurenfournier.net](http://www.laurenfournier.net)

Cover image: still from [Madelyne Beckles](#), *Theory of the Young Girl*, 2017.

