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The central theme and general question we ask at the first *Julije Knifer Forum* is “How does art concern us?”. With this seemingly very simple question, The Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek intends to begin a multi-year journey through various aspects of contemporary art. We are trying to determine the direction of this event as the one that problematizes contemporary art, media and culture by asking specific questions and discussing how the society of spectacle and ubiquitous visual communication affect the life of each of us. Contemporary art and its various derivatives, such as performative practices, new musical expressions or thematic exhibition projects, require from the audience a different approach to visual, musical and theatrical phenomena than they are accustomed to in everyday life. Very often, the barrier that is created between art and the audience is such that the audience loses interest in something that is not at first glance understandable to them. That is why this, as well as all future editions of *Julije Knifer Forums*, will be designed to bring the complex ideas of contemporary artists closer to both general and professional public and offer them innovative methods of understanding art as a vital component of human beings.

**Participants:**

Marco Senaldi, Piacenza, Italy

W,J.T. Mitchell, Chicago, USA

Emmanuel Alloa, Fribourg, Switzerland

Krešimir Purgar, Osijek, Croatia (moderator)

**The program:**

**Marco Senaldi, “Anemic Photoplay – Marcel Duchamp and the Moving Image”**

Duchamp's engagement with the moving image was constant throughout all his artistic career. In particular, in his *Notes* (published posthumous, in 1980, dating back in the 1920s), we may find some projects of never ever made abstract movies. These movies were intended not only *as images-en-mouvement*, but as images that can “move” the eyes and the mind of the viewer. This detail demonstrates that, as in the case of the “ready-mades”, artistic images are, for Duchamp, true “tests”, i.e. “psychological trials” to examine memory, attention, taste etc. of the viewer. He continued to challenge the attention of the spectators in the subsequent years, when he came to use television medium, where he was able to fabricate an “optical illusion” not yet discovered until today.

Marco Senaldi is a philosopher and curator based in Italy. He published extensively on contemporary art theory: *Enjoy! Il godimento* estetico, Meltemi, Rome (2003); *Doppio sguardo. Cinema e arte* contemporanea, Bompiani, Milan (2008, winner of Limina Award best book on Cinema Theory 2008); *Arte & Televisione. Da Andy Warhol a Grande Fratello*, Postmedia, Milan (2009); and recently *Duchamp. La scienza dell’arte*, Meltemi, Milan (2019, best essay on art 2019 by the magazine *Artribune*). He also curated Contemporary Art Exhibitions such as *Cover Theory. Contemporary Art as Re-interpretation* (2003). He is currently working on a book about *Merda d’artista* by Piero Manzoni.

Time: November 17, at 2 PM Europe/Zagreb

Link to the zoom lecture: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89603878244?pwd=QjkvSm1HNjJ5N3Fkc0xMME9TZ1dDdz09>

Passcode: 419051

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**W.J.T. Mitchell, “Mental Traveller – On Madness and Art”**

In this lecture, a renowned scholar in visual studies, W.J.T. Mitchell, will tell the story – at once representative and unique – of one family’s encounter with mental illness bearing witness to the life of the talented young man who was his son. Gabriel Mitchell was diagnosed with schizophrenia at age twenty-one and died by suicide eighteen years later. He left behind a remarkable archive of creative work and a father determined to honor his son’s attempts to conquer his own illness. Before his death, Gabe had been working on a film that would show madness from inside and out, as media stereotype and spectacle, symptom and stigma, malady and minority status, disability and gateway to insight. He was convinced that madness is an extreme form of subjective experience that we all endure at some point in our lives, whether in moments of ecstasy or melancholy, or in the enduring trauma of a broken heart. Gabriels’s declared ambition was to transform schizophrenia from a death sentence to a learning experience, and madness from a curse to a critical perspective.

W.J.T. Mitchell is the Gaylord Donnelley Distinguished Service Professor of English and Art History at the University of Chicago. He is also the editor of *Critical Inquiry*, and contributes to the journal *October*. He is the author of well-known books, among which are Iconology – Image, text, Ideology (1986), *Picture Theory* (1994), The Last Dinosaur Book (1998), *What do Pictures Want?* (2005), *Image Science* (2015) and many others. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2017.

Time: November 17, at 5 PM Europe/Zagreb

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88638621490?pwd=Q3BzYlMrL21vU3hvK2p4ZVFtRVdzdz09>

Passcode: 615678

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**Emmanuel Alloa, “Neo-perspectivism – Towards a New Alliance between Arts & Philosophy”**

Under the banner of realism in all its forms (material, speculative, new realism), in recent years there has been a desire to celebrate a kind of "chymical wedding" between art and philosophy. The success of formulas such as speculative poetics, eco-realism or object-oriented aesthetics, and the vast production of works of art that give us a glimpse of what a world would look like without us, a world from which humans would be absent, and put the spectator in this delightful enjoyment of being able to witness his own eclipse. While many of these productions are generated by the new ecological imperative, and the need to think the real beyond merely human perspectives, there is also a bestriding naiveté in believing that one might adopt a “view from nowhere”. Rather than yielding to the dream of overcoming perspectives, towards some “Great Outdoors”, the lecture will argue for a new to radicalize the awareness of the situated nature of any take on the world. Neo-perspectivism is the name for a new research program, which takes the plurality of viewpoints serious, and takes heed from artistic strategies as how to change our own perspectives on things. This also entails rethinking the status of the real which is no longer, as in the classic 19th century artistic realism, in front of us nor, as in metaphysical realism, quite elsewhere and out of our reach, but perhaps in the margins, next to us, and manifests itself in an indirect way, by refraction and echoes.

Emmanuel Alloa is professor of aesthetics and philosophy at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. After studying philosophy, history and art history in Freiburg (D), Padua, Berlin and Paris, he obtained a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Paris I-Panthéon and from the Freie Universität Berlin (cotutelle) in 2009. He was a postdoctoral researcher at the National Research Center eikones (Basel) and assistant professor of philosophy at the University of St. Gallen.

Time: November 18, at 3.30 PM Europe/Zagreb

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82717775836?pwd=UEEreU9sREVkdGM1czBwbUJDcUcxQT09>

Passcode: 599286