



Seeing Differently: A History and Theory of Identification and the Visual Arts

By Amelia Jones

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Seeing Differently offers a history and theory of ideas about identity in relation to visual arts discourses and practices in Euro-American culture, from early modern beliefs that art is an expression of an individual, the painted image a "world picture" expressing a comprehensive and coherent point of view, to the rise of identity politics after WWII in the art world and beyond.

The book is both a history of these ideas (for example, tracing the dominance of a binary model of self and other from Hegel through classic 1970s identity politics) and a political response to the common claim in art and popular political discourse that we are "beyond" or "post-" identity. In challenging this latter claim, *Seeing Differently* critically examines how and why we "identify" works of art with an expressive subjectivity, noting the impossibility of claiming we are "post-identity" given the persistence of beliefs in art discourse and broader visual culture about who the subject "is," and offers a new theory of how to think this kind of identification in a more thoughtful and self-reflexive way.

Ultimately, *Seeing Differently* offers a mode of thinking identification as a "queer feminist durational" process that can never be fully resolved but must be accounted for in thinking about art and visual culture. Queer feminist durationality is a mode of relational interpretation that affects both "art" and "interpreter," potentially making us more aware of how we evaluate and give value to art and other kinds of visual culture.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Amelia Jones is Professor and Grierson Chair in Visual Culture at McGill University in Montréal. Her recent publications include major essays on Marina Abramović (in *TDR*), on feminist art and curating, and on performance art histories, as well as the edited volume *Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (2003, 2010). Her most recent book is *Self/Image: Technology, Representation, and the Contemporary Subject* (2006), will be followed in 2012 and her major volume, *Perform Repeat Record: Live Art in History*, co-edited with Adrian Heathfield, is due out in 2011.

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