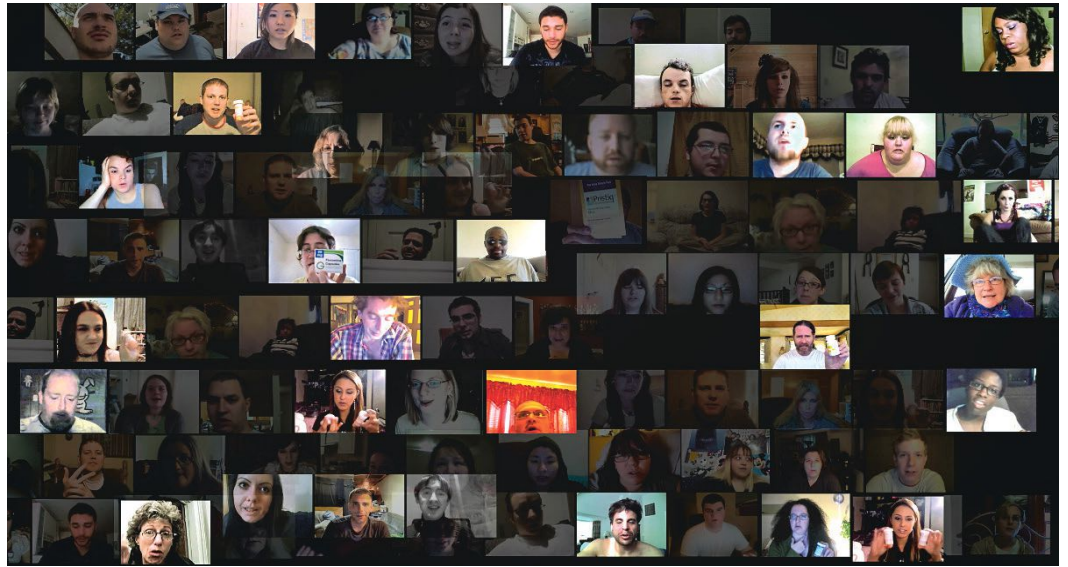


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Natalie Bookchin

▼ Art

'Public, Private, Secret'
ICP Museum
250 Bowery
212-857-0000, icp.org
Through January 8

Natalie Bookchin's "My Meds" (2009), from her Testament series

Exposure Therapy

The ICP Museum takes on internet voyeurism and visibility at its new Bowery location

BY LUCY MCKEON

The first thing visitors see when they enter the International Center of Photography Museum's new 250 Bowery location is themselves — in a way. A pair of screens on the back wall stream live video drawn from eight cameras set up throughout the exhibit and outside the museum. Only, the videos have been stripped of their position information, their pixels reorganized to create an abstracted version of the real thing; as viewers, not only are we watched, we've also been re-mediated.

Called *Clock* and accompanied by a streetward-facing digital rendering of an analog clockface — marking the play between old and new technologies — the installation by David Reinfurt is an astute entry point for "Public, Private, Secret," the museum's inaugural show in its new digs and an often intimate exploration of our place in an increasingly image-centric world. Organized by ICP's first curator-in-residence, Charlotte Cotton, it brings together a wild mix of media and eras, all investigating different aspects of agency, visibility, and voyeurism in the internet age: "Your reading of the exhibition [will be] super personal," Cotton tells the *Voice*. "We've got to work this out, where we position ourselves as individuals within these issues. And this feels like a really good physical starting point."

Of the 150 works on view, one-third hail from the ICP collection (by artists

such as Nan Goldin, Andy Warhol, and Weegee), but the exhibition also includes multimedia offerings from contemporary artists like Martine Syms, whose ongoing *Lessons* randomly sequences Web videos (TV commercials, police cams, home movies) to create a meditation on black identity. "These are really complex social issues," Cotton notes. It was important, she says, to create an environs "where you don't have to leave who you are and what you're experiencing at the front door."

That impulse drives the show. The first exhibition room, on the same floor as the entryway, is dark, mirrored, and minimalist, with videos by three artists, among them Natalie Bookchin. Her 2009–16 Testament series offers vignettes constructed from hundreds of video diaries downloaded from the internet between 2007 and 2008. In one, called "My Meds," people recite the names of the medications they take, their voices overlapping and synchronizing. "What interests me about the videos is that they feel raw and intimate and private," Bookchin says, "but people are making them knowing that they are going to be seen by an untold number of people in perpetuity. So there's this strangeness about the kind of isolation that they reveal and the privacy that they expose."

Meanwhile, the bright downstairs space has a more democratic, crowded feel. "The upstairs gallery [is] where your own body is implicated," Cotton says, but "downstairs, you're the critic...you pace yourself." A 1979

Untitled photograph by Cindy Sherman (she poses with a Marilyn Monroe bob and a languid cigarette) suggests the paparazzi takeover of privacy — and shares wall space with today's rendition of the same: a video slideshow in which disembodied hands flip through *Selfish*, Kim Kardashian's 2015 book of selfies. The pairing elicits the strange sensation of simultaneously being watched — and watching.

The images are organized into constellations rather than by a more standard progression, which at times feels disorienting. "I was trying to think about viewership in an age of the desktop," Cotton says — "a flattened hierarchy." Amid stills from Henri Cartier-Bresson and Garry Winogrand hang live video and image streams sourced from social media, organized by Mark Ghuneim, general manager of Twitter's Curator feature, and students from ICP's New Media Narratives program. These live-screens are sorted by themes according to search queries, many of them ridiculous-sounding — "Transformation," "Hotness," "Creators," "Morality Tales." One of Ghuneim's screens, "Celebrity Leaderboard," feels like both a natural extension of the Sherman and Kardashian pieces and a grotesque distillation of fame: The bare-bones database algorithmically ranks the social-media popularity of stars (like @justinbieber and @taylorswift13) based on real-time surges in their followers' engagement.

Though there are few explicit audience directives (beyond a plaque noting, rather ironically, that by entering you grant consent to being recorded), the exhibition feels thoroughly participatory. Perhaps that's because when we leave "Public, Private, Secret," we carry with us all the same issues it considers, by virtue of our own pocket devices, chatting, updating, streaming — recording and being recorded.