



# Photography in Virtual Culture

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 09:00 – 18:00 BST

**Location:** University of Westminster, Little Titchfield Street Campus & The Photographers' Gallery, London

**Registration:** [Photography in Virtual Culture](#)

## INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen a clear shift in the operational frameworks for the production, dissemination and consumption of photographs in contemporary computerised societies. The representational apparatus of photography is being progressively converted into algorithmic and generative processes through computer automation, connectivity and algorithmic control. Recent developments of AI systems and expanded technologies exponentially transform the possibilities for image making and the ways in which photographic images might be created and used within and beyond virtual space. While this might be exciting times for creators, thinkers and developers, it is also a pivotal moment in the history of photography, with debates taking place about its materiality, social function and essence. Through this conference, we aim to develop a communal discussion, inform critiques and thinking on the making of 'virtual photography'.

## Conference conveners:

**Prof. David Bate**, Professor of Photography, University of Westminster, UK

**Dr Paula Gortázar**, Senior Lecturer in Photography, University of Westminster, UK

## PROGRAMME

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 09:00 – 14:00

University of Westminster, Little Titchfield Street Campus

9:00 Registration

9:30 Introduction: David Bate and Paula Gortázar

10:00 **VIRTUALITY AND THE STILL IMAGE**, chaired by Lucy Soutter

**Peter Ainsworth and Sam Plagerson**, Goldsmiths, University of London, UK  
*The Fractional Space of 3D Computational Images and Ruptures in Visuality*

**Liat Lavi**, Bezalel Academy for Arts and Design, Israel  
*Ethical Imaginariums and Grassroots Metaphysics*

**Ziggy Kolker**, University of Portsmouth, UK  
*Chasing the Trace*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

11:20 Break

11:40 **LIQUID IDENTITIES**, chaired by David Bate

**Gemma Marmalade**, University of Derby, UK  
*V is for Virtual: 'Thirst Trap' Lesbians and Masculine Performativity of TikTok Visual Content*

**Chu Yinhua**, National Taipei University of Education, Taiwan  
*Beyond the Mirror: Selfie Expression in the Age of Virtual Imaging*

**Stephanie Hartle**, Sheffield Hallam University, UK  
*'To Weave the Mirror's Magic Sights': Mimesis and Posthumanism in the Virtual Selfie*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

13:00 Lunch Break

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 14:00 – 18:00

The Photographers' Gallery, Ramillies Street

**14:00 NEW PRACTICES IN VISUAL AND COMPUTATIONAL ART**, chaired by Jon Uriarte

**Roc Herms**, Visual Artist, Spain

*This is Real, Man!*

**Juanrie Strydom**, Solent University, UK

*Disability as a Visual Language: Technology and Accessibility*

**George Legrady**, University of California, USA

*Creative Continuity in MidJourney and Stable Diffusion*

**Simone Santilli**, Visual Artist, Independent Researcher and Educator, Italy

*Galactic Mine. Photography and Extractivism in the Procedural Universe of No Man's Sky*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**15:50 Break**

**16:10 PERFORMING NETWORKED ARCHIVES**, chaired by Ioanna Zouli

**Anshul Roy**, Syracuse University, USA

*Rage Against the Archive: Institutional Critique through New Media Art*

**Livia Foldes**, Rhode Island School of Design, USA

*NSFW Venus: On Classifying Bodies, from Colonial Archives to Machine Learning Datasets*

**Ochi Reyes**, University of Westminster, UK

*She Dreamt...*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**17:30 Plenary Session**

**18:00 Social Drinks**

Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 09:00 – 14:00

University of Westminster, Little Titchfield Street Campus

**9:00 Registration**

**9:30 GENERATIVE POLITICS AND ACTIVISM**, chaired by Paula Gortázar

**Lee Wing Ki**, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

*Disobedient Imageries: Netizens and their Critical-political Practices in Hong Kong*

**Nina Mangalanayagam**, HDK-Valand, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

*Generating the Past*

**Megan Williams**, Journalist, Creative Review, UK

*Visualising Unrest in the Age of Generative AI*

**Basil Al-Rawi**, Visual Artist, Independent Researcher and Educator, Ireland

*Building a House of Memory: Expanding Iraqi Archive Photos with Oral History and VR*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**11:20 Break**

**11:40 THE MACHINE AS CO-CURATOR**, chaired by Christian Le Messurier

**Nicolas Malevé**, Aarhus University, Denmark

*The Exhibitionary Complex of Image Generation*

**Nathalie Dietschy**, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

*Towards Techno-Worlds: Photography in the Hands of AI Systems*

**Catherine Troiano**, V&A Museum, London

*Distilling the Dataset: Ethics and Artistic Practice in Generative Image Cultures*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**13:00 Lunch Break**

Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 14:00 – 17:30

The Photographers' Gallery, Ramillies Street

**14:00 REBEL ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES**, chaired by Roshini Kempadoo

**Catherine M. Weir**, Glasgow School of Art, UK

*Frankenstein's Camera: Reflections on Practice Between Photography and AI*

**Benjamin Mehigan**, Royal College of Art, UK

*Light Without Heat: The Virtual Reproduction of Wildfire*

**Adam Brown**, London South Bank University, UK

*Images in Advance of the State: Photorealistic Architectures after the Blockchain.*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**15:20 Break**

**15:40 EXPANDED VISION AND HYPERSPACE**, chaired by Arie Frosh

**Alison Bennett**, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

*The Desire of a Third Dimension in Photography*

**Jack Lander**, Visual Artist, UK

*Indexical Encroachment in Semi-Synthetic Landscapes*

**Giles Price**, Visual Artist, UK

*Remote Documentary: What is it to Document Virtually?*

Panel Discussion and Q&A

**17:00 Closing Remarks**

**17:30 End**