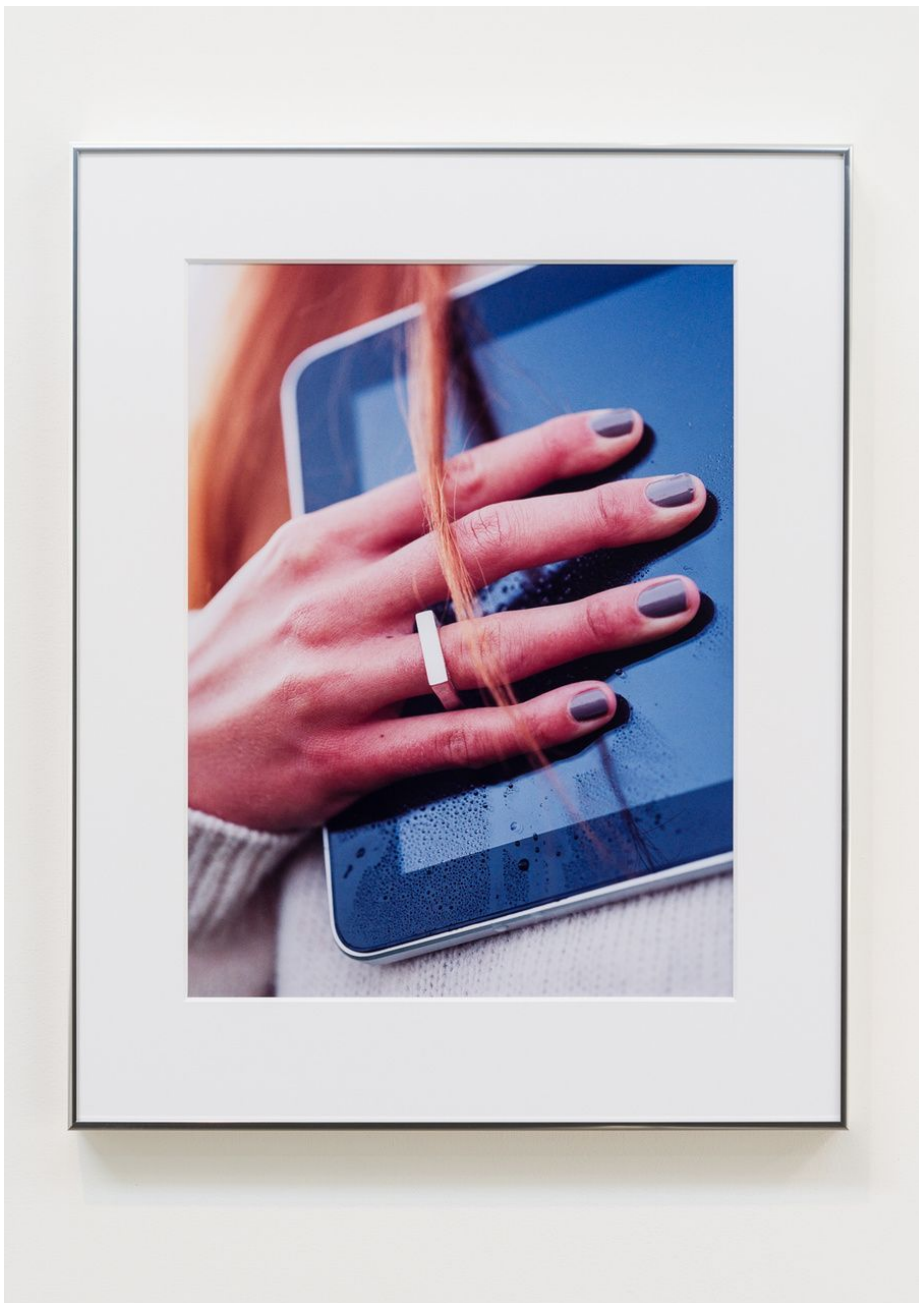


# *Art Viewer*

## Josephine Pryde at CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts

July 19th, 2015



**Artist:** Josephine Pryde

**Exhibition title:** Lapses in Thinking by the Person I Am

**Curated by:** Jamie Stevens

**Venue:** CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, US

**Date:** May 4 – August 1, 2015

**Photography:** Johnna Arnold, images courtesy of the artist and CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco

**San Francisco, Calif., March 12, 2015**—The CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts in San Francisco will present an exhibition of new work by the UK-born, Berlin and London-based artist Josephine Pryde (b.1967) May 5 through August 1, 2015. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Pryde's dual practices of photography and sculpture will be showcased in this first solo presentation of her work in an American institution. Making use of the technical and iconic potential of photography in its various forms, Pryde creates visually arresting and conceptually precise images that play upon the relationship between two dominant historical uses of the camera: scientific analysis and artistic endeavor. *Lapses in Thinking by the Person I Am* will travel to ICA Philadelphia in September 2015.

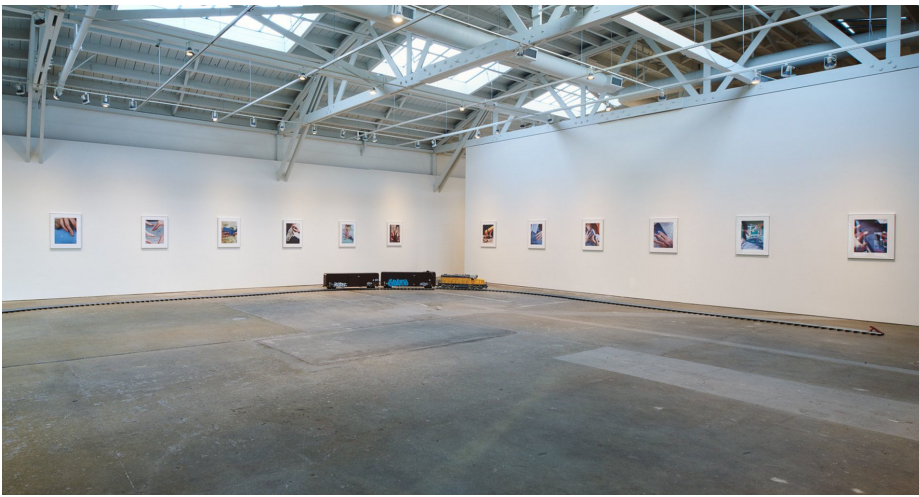
Pryde's exhibitions— which often feature sculptural forms as well as photography— connect and flatten signifiers from political, pop cultural, and art historical discourses. In 2011, for instance, Pryde produced *It's Not My Body*, a series of digitally retouched scans of a fetus that superimposed an MRI scan onto desert-like landscapes and introduced psychedelic colors, constructing final images that were stylistically fluent with certain tendencies present in fashion photography. Spatial relations between works are carefully configured to create allegorical, sometimes quasi-narrative installations in which the complex network of artwork, artist, exhibition, and institution is foregrounded and performed.

At the center of Pryde's exhibition at CCA Wattis Institute is a new installation that takes into consideration the rise of interactive or 'relational' artworks as key symbolic events in the

activities of cultural institutions, revising the role of audience from that of viewership to experience-driven exchange. A fully functioning ride-on model train will travel along a point-to-point track, installed in the main gallery, where it will pass a series of framed photographs along its route. The train, a freight locomotive in the Union Pacific livery, pulling two boxcars, is covered in the patina of miniaturized graffiti; it takes passengers on a brief journey through the exhibition at approximately 2 miles per hour. Trains “bombed” by graffiti artists (in America, done so with the threat of felony charges) conjure an image that is both a globalized urban truism and an emblem of the shifting destiny of the graffiti artist: a figure of lawless self-expression but also a proponent of a discipline now celebrated by corporate executives and urban planners.

The train is shown alongside Pryde’s new photographic series, which feature hands touching, and in contact with, various materials: their own chest, a tablet, a phone, a touch-sensitive lamp base. The bodies in these photographs are always faceless, and the photographer uses tight angles in which hands express, author, control, and animate according to slight deviations in movement. These relentless close-ups of hands— there will be about 20 photographs on view— create a semiotic body language between the works, a gestural code that is defined by haptic control, perhaps an attempt by Pryde to consider the consequences of the mass transferal toward finger- based interactivity with touch-screen devices. These works also address classic feminist critiques of body language (the socialized differences of behavior between men and women) and reference the many works made by women artists that deploy imagery of hands: a symbol of domestic labor, idealized femininity, craft, and self-image.

This exhibition at CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts coincides with a period of critical acclaim for Pryde, with her work featured on the front cover of *Artforum* (April 2012), her inclusion in the major group exhibition *New Photography* at the Museum of Modern Art (2013), and *The Enjoyment of Photography* (2015), a monographic book on her photography, recently published by JRP Ringier in collaboration with Kunsthalle Bern and Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf.













Josephine Pryde

# lapses in Thinking By the person I Am

May 5 –  
August 1, 2015

A train track takes a particular route through the main gallery of the Wattis.

The model train that it carries is defaced with graffiti and allows visitors to ride past a series of photographs on the walls that enclose its path. Moving amid these elements, in a manner both fluid and awkward, are various transmissions of text and image.

The exhibition's title sounds like a statement, but its voice is ambiguous and addresses an unknown subject.

The title is laid out on the gallery wall in a graphic style alien to its surrounding context, the words rendered as image, much like the spray-painted "tags" that adorn the train. Photographs of hands seem to wave on the train, in communication with one another as well as with the objects that they touch.

Josephine Pryde's exhibition will travel to the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, from September 14 to December 27, 2015. It is curated by Anna Stevens, curator and head of programs at CCA Wattis Institute, and assisted and advised by Kate Smith, curator-in-residence at CCA Wattis Institute.

This exhibition is made possible by the Art Fund, Institute for Contemporary Art, British Council, and Laura and John Taubman, with special thanks to Maria Speranza Fine Art, New York, Lawrence Ross, Seattle, and Robert La Camera, London. The artist thanks Dan Aronson, Suzanne Kirschner, Christine Farnsworth, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra, and Robert Rauschenberg.

The CCA Wattis Institute program is generously supported by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, grants for the Arts by the San Francisco Music Trust Fund, and the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation by CCA Wattis Institute's fund administrator Patricia W. Fitzgerald, Judy and Bill Trisman, Ruth and Alan Stein, Peter Wright and Jo Brown, Laura Bragg, and Peter Saperstein. With the CCA Wattis Institute's Phyllis C. Wattis was the generous founding partner.









