

Gabby AND Cleo's
PRESENTATION

ABOUT 'DISTRIBUTION,
DISPERSION, CIRCULATION,
AND MEMES'

WHERE WE ALSO TALK
ABOUT *Alienation*



Matt Roller
@rolldiggity

Fifty years ago, if you wanted to see a picture of a raccoon, you either had to already have it or drive to a library. And raccoon in a funny hat? Forget about it.

1.

Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) &

*The Work of Art in the Age of Its
Mechanical Reproduction*
(1936)

Benjamin outlines **2** functions of reproduction:

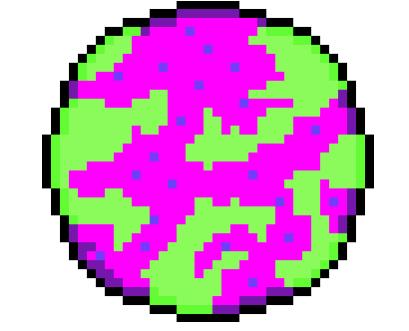
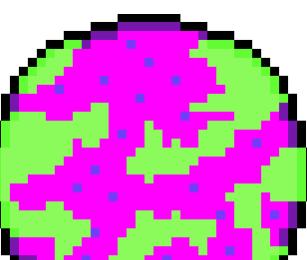


1. Degradation

- a. “To perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look at us in return”
 - i. Photographing a work of art distances the observer from its physical space; the aura withers
 - ii. Focus shifts to value that is gained through circulation: exhibition value

2. Construction

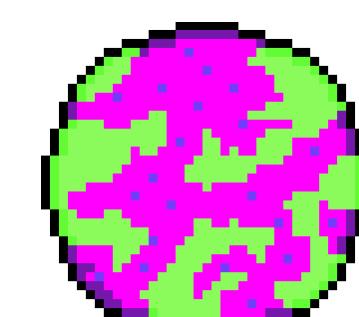
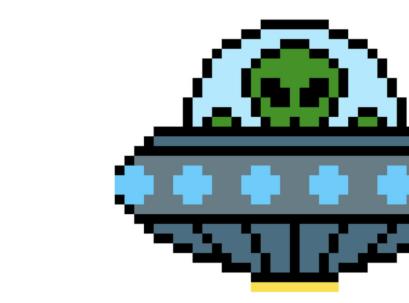
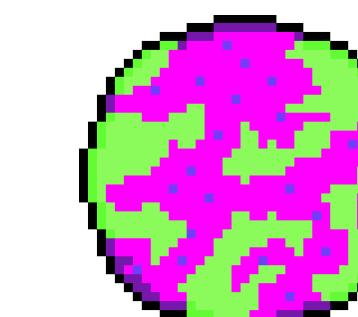
- a. Film, unlike a work of art, has no original physical state or presence
- b. Reproduction is its own beginning



This is [kind of] non-cynical alienation

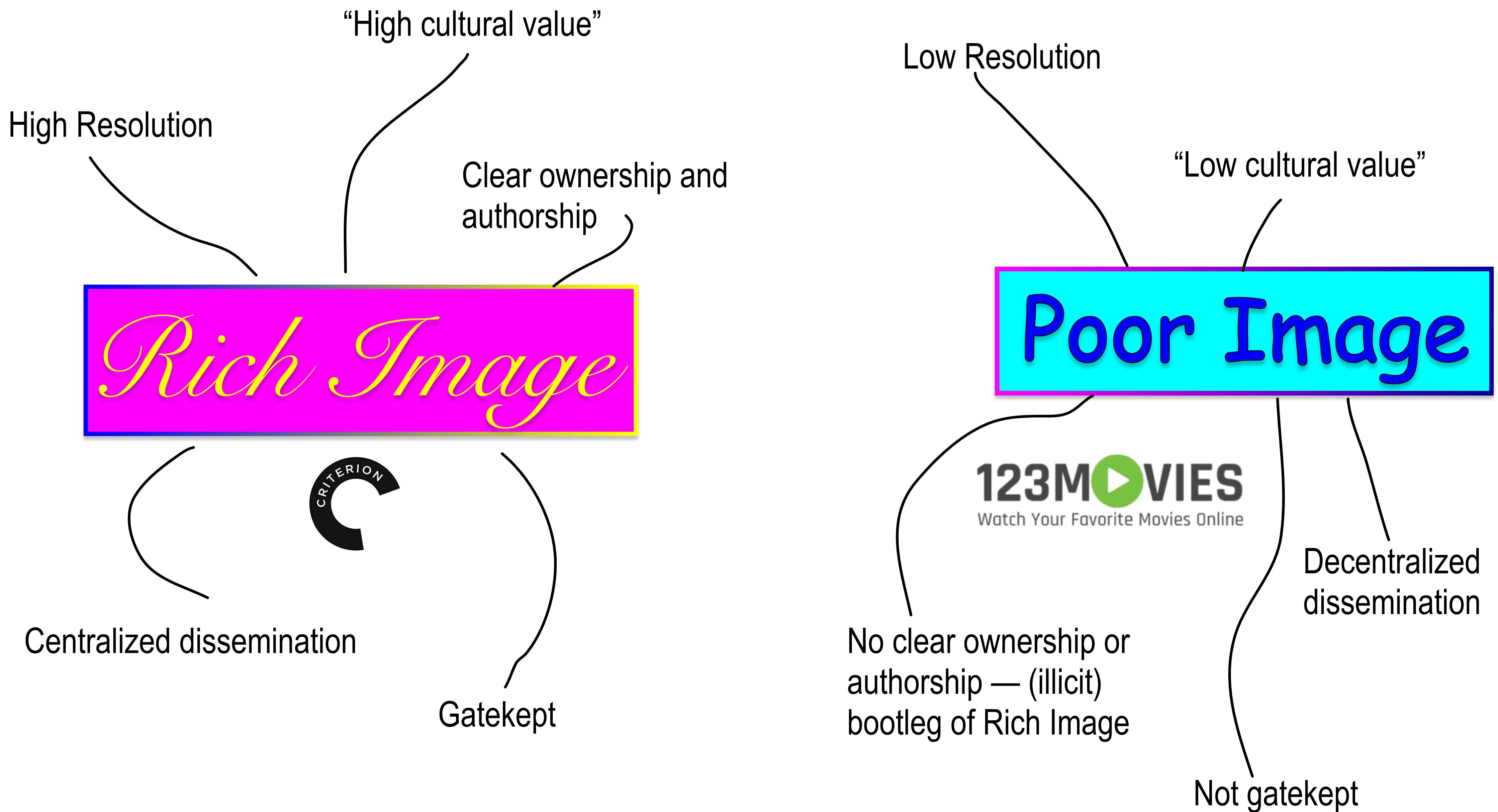


*The film actor generates their humanity [value] in front of the same technology [camera] that corrodes other media [painting]



Me when i'm called to arms In Defense of the
Poor Image





The poor image is no longer about the real thing—the originary original. Instead, it is about its own real conditions of existence: about swarm circulation, digital dispersion, fractured and flexible temporalities. It is about defiance and appropriation just as it is about conformism and exploitation.

In short: it is about reality.

HITO STEYERL
IN DEFENSE OF THE POOR IMAGE

Aria Dean

Poor Meme,

Rich Meme

2016

“the alienation of mediated selfhood [surveillance, diaspora]” vs. “the collective being[/consciousness] of blackness” should mean that “the internet is a prime condition for black culture to thrive.”

David Joselit, *After Art* [2012]

The scale and speed of image circulation now means they function as an international currency

“...regarding images as a global resource (which they are) and working toward global image justice, including the redistribution of image wealth between the global North and global South.”

He quotes art historian Irene Winter:

I speak here of the mounting by Stella Kramrisch of the *Manifestations of Shiva* exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in the 1980s. The government of India, under the Ministry of Education and Culture, made every

IMAGE EXPLOSION

21

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“memes — even when produced by black users — cannot be viewed as objects that once authentically circulated in black circles for the enjoyment of the black collective but instead are always already compromised by the looming presence of the corporate, the capitalist.”

Blackness as a meme as a poor image

memes move alongside violent content
with the same virality and frequency
white gaze/users circulate black joy and
black death in the same digital space

3 patterns of meme circulation

When u meet his mom and she says
"Oh so you're the girl he's always on
FaceTime with" but you got an android



**1. Black Subjects
featured
(Skai Jackson is <14
in this image)**

When you on the aux and the song boutta
end, but you haven't found the next song
to play



**2. Online Imagined Black
English***
Blackness signaled through
vernacular appropriation

**Manuel Arturo Abreu*



**3. Visible disparities of
uncompensated creative
labor**
(Chewbacca Mom's ~\$500,000
worth of paraphernalia)

Memes will never be liberatory circulating on corporate platforms

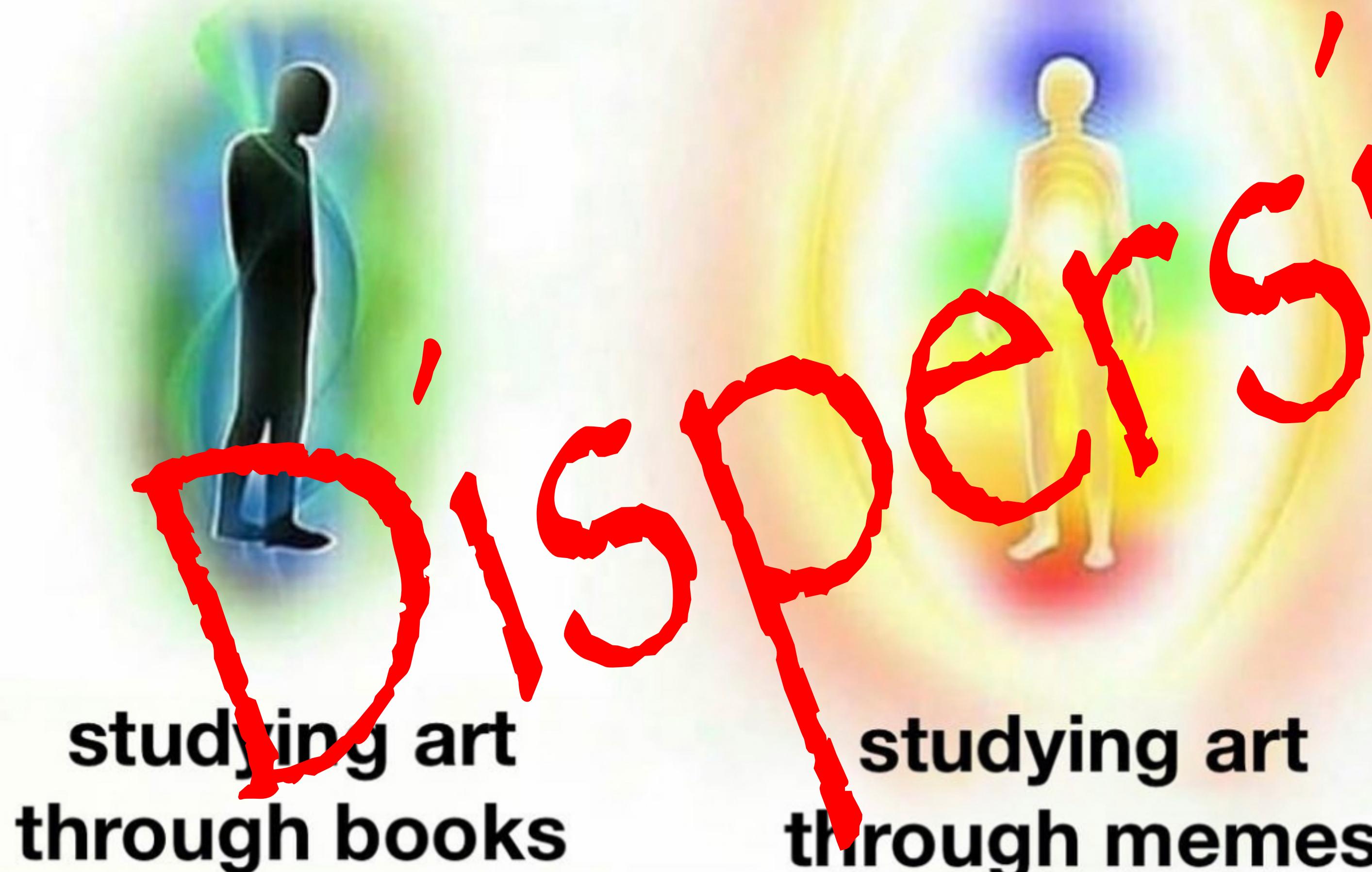
But

“...there may be some power in the readily made, readily unmade, ever shifting, ever distributed meme — power in a “poor image” that slips through borders for those of us who are heavily policed, whom the state and other forces would like to make fixed.”

their mutability could be

WEAK AURA

STRONG AURA



**SETH
PRICE**

aka Why Are
Memes Not Art

DISTRIBUTED MEDIA

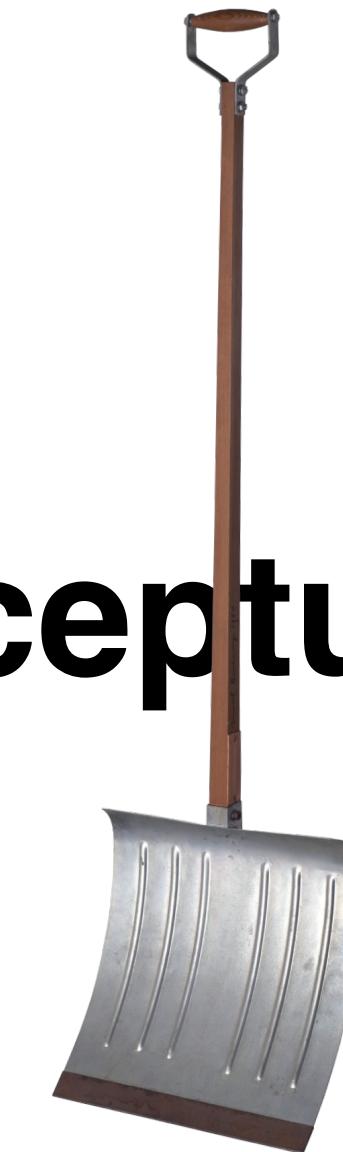
Spade Garden



Roll over image to zoom in



Conceptual Art



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Garden Spade

28" Round Point Shovel

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48" Post Hole Digger

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54" Half Moon Edger

, Metal

Red/Black

Emsco Group

Item Dimensions

4 x 5.5 x 28 inches

LxWxH

Item Weight

2.2 Pounds

Style

28" Garden Spade

▼ See more

DISTRIBUTED MEDIA

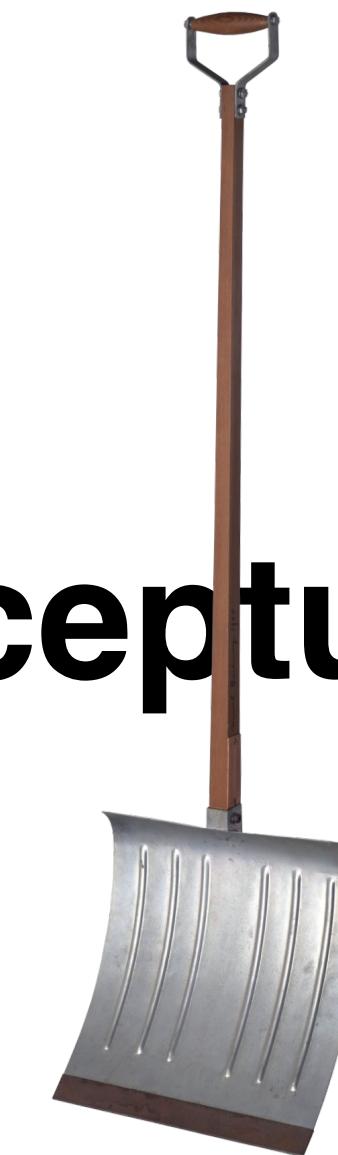
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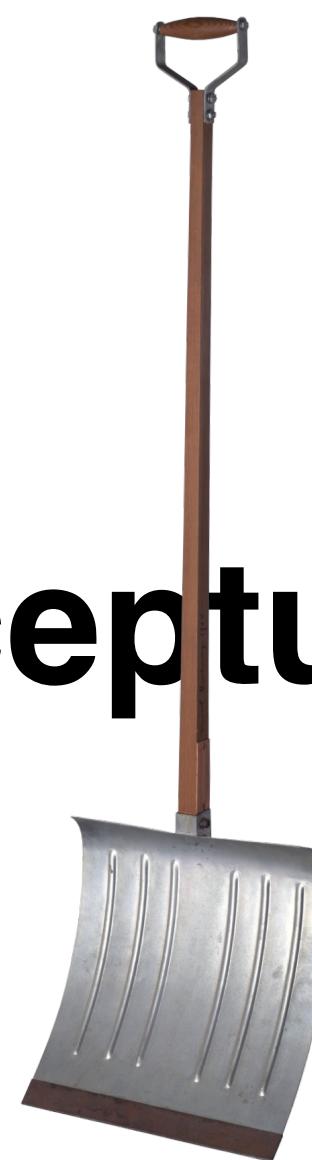
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▼ See more



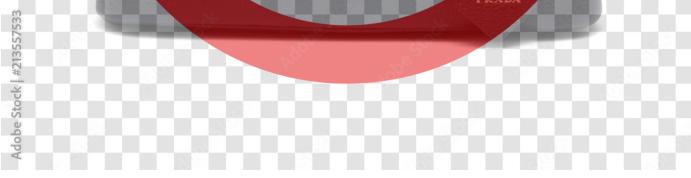
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munity and its history. Reflecting on his experience running a gallery in the 1960s, Dan Graham observed: "if a work of art wasn't written about and reproduced in a magazine it would have difficulty attaining the status of 'art'. It seemed that in order to be defined as having value, that is as 'art', a work had only to be exhibited in a gallery and then to be written about and reproduced as a photograph in an art magazine." Art, then, with its reliance on discussion through refereed forums and journals, is similar to a professional field like science.



Roll over in



Some of the most interesting recent artistic activity has taken place outside the art market and its forums. Collaborative and sometimes anonymous groups work in fashion, music, video, or performance, garnering admiration within the art world while somehow retaining their status as outsiders, perhaps due to their preference for theatrical, distribution-oriented modes. Maybe this is what Duchamp meant by his intriguing throwaway comment, late in life, that the artist of the future will be underground.

Item Weight

2

Style

28

▼ See more





Seth Price's practice often involves inhabiting a given system of cultural production and distribution, and working within its constraints and formulae. An early example of this strategy can be seen in the style of his website from the early 2000s, which was created in the mode of a 1990s-era personal home page, including such tropes as a visitor counter.

The "Daniel Pearl Video"

Even without the label "Propaganda Video", which CBS helpfully added to the excerpt they aired last spring, it's clear that the "Daniel Pearl Video", as it's come to be called, is a complex document. The FBI's unsuccessful attempt at suppression of the clip has only increased its notoriety: this past summer, "Daniel Pearl video", "Pearl video", and other variations of the phrase, were among the terms most frequently submitted to Internet search engines.

One of the video's most striking aspects is not the grisly, though clinical, climax (which, in descriptions of the tape, has come to stand in for the entire content), but the slick production strategies, which seem to draw on American political campaign advertisements.

The work was originally intended for television screening, if not broadcast. It seems to be unavailable in this country as a videocassette. Anyone able to locate it is likely to see it as a compressed stream of data, transmitted from a web hosting service in the Netherlands or Virginia.

One question is whether it has been "relegated" to the internet, or in some way "liberated" by that technology. Does the piece count as "info-war" because of its nature as a proliferating computer file, or is it a video forced to assume that form because of suppression in this country?

Unlike television, the net provides information only on demand, and much of the debate over the video concerns not the legality or morality of making it available, but whether one should choose to watch it or not—as if an individual's act of viewing will in some way either enlighten or contaminate.

Traffic Patterns

Visitor Data

- Operating System
- Browser
- Country
- Language
- Screen Size
- Screen Resolution

ICP+

Screenshot of [Phytognomica](#), extracted from Internet Archive using [Webrecorder](#).

David Joselit, *After Art* (2012)

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Appropriation



Art for the Offline Internet: El Paquete Semanal on The Download

2018-02-01 7PM - 8:30PM EST



A composite image showing a web browser window and three iPhone screens. The browser window displays the website for "GEN Z" water, featuring a blue background with cartoonish illustrations of animals like a chicken, a fish, and a butterfly, along with recycling symbols and a "Welcome" sign. The URL is https://drinkgenz.com/shop. The three iPhone screens show tweets from the Red Bull account (@redbull). The first tweet, at 2:14 PM on March 24, 2019, says "there's a Red Bull that tastes like peaches now". The second tweet, at 2:32 PM on the same day, says "oh my god so many peaches". The third tweet, at 2:38 PM, says "inside every peach is the potential to be the thing someone thinks about when they drink new Red Bull Peach Edition".

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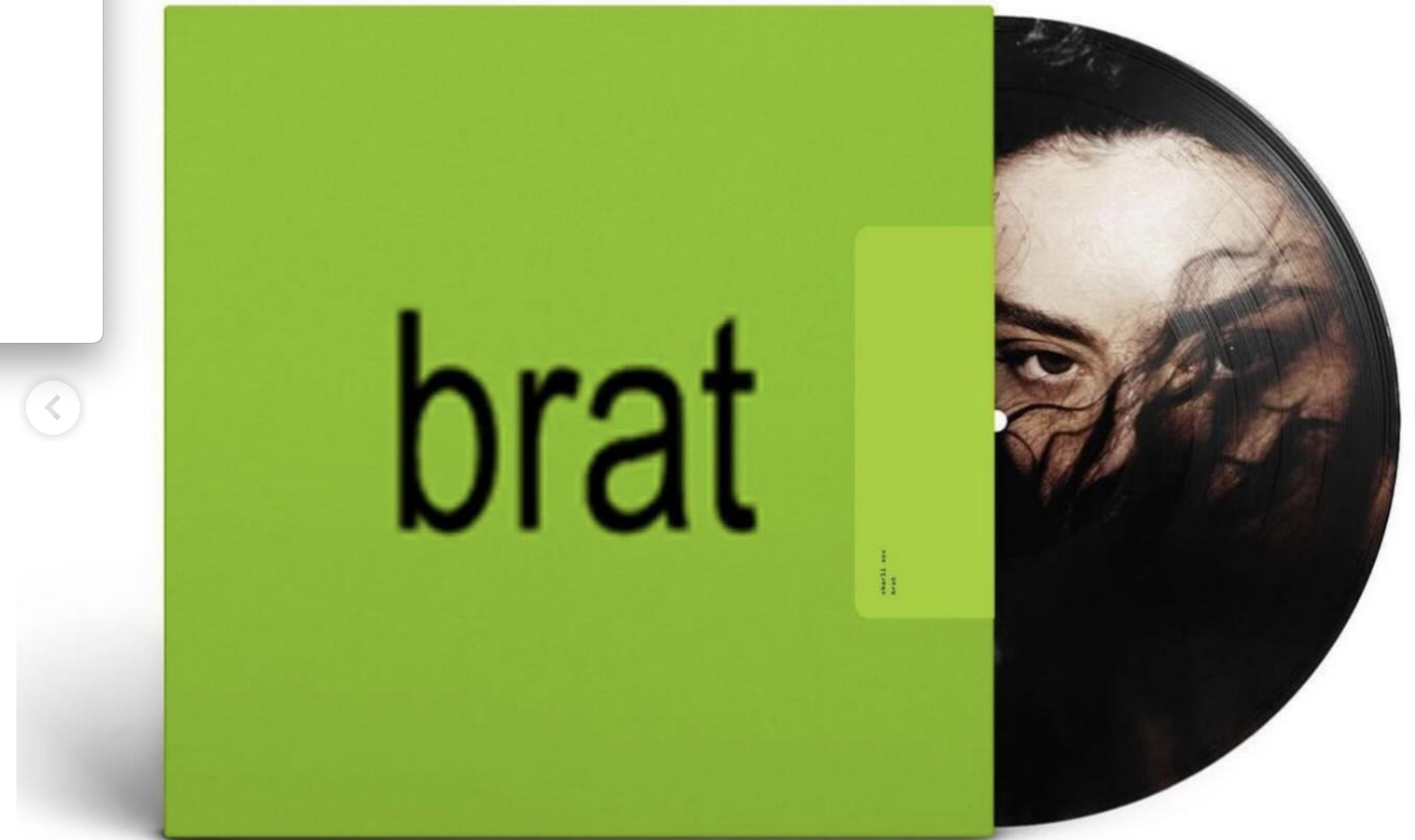
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f X i Y G A M D



The internet and its methods of circulation exist both in the abstract and physical

*Servers are *real objects*, but memes are one example of its mutability

From Benjamin, to Steyerl, to Dean, to Price & others reproduction and circulation expands the spacial dimension of content

[you no longer have to be at a museum to see a work of art]

In this way, it is made concrete as it occupies space, reified

re: alienation

Memes, in a way, deny the rationalization of the post-industrial world yet imagining a utopian use of the web/utopia presupposes a concrete understanding of our reality—everything might appear in its reified, static form to sense it must change—how do we face this outlier mutation?

Questions??



Alienation (vs circulation) –
can art remove itself from
the system completely?

Inversion of image
hierarchies?

**Works of art
circulating like
non-art?**

Radical
potentiality of
the poor image?

consequences and/or moral
or political implications of
appropriating poor images?
"Fake" poor images? EG
corporate memes/
commodity fetishism