

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

**Autotheory as a Literary Practice**

Ghent University, Belgium | 17 September 2026

*Venue: Rustpunt, Ghent*

<b>Registration</b>	<i>from 8.30</i>
<b>Opening &amp; welcome remarks by the organising committee</b>	<i>9.00 – 9.15</i>
<b>First session: Writing the Body: Motherhood and Illness</b>	<i>9.15 – 10.45</i>
Kim Schoof (VU), 'Literary Experimentation in Recent Dutch-language Autotheory on Childbirth'	
Dagmar Vandebosch (KU Leuven), 'Autotheory and (Non-)Motherhood in María Fernanda Ampuero's <i>Visceral</i> '	
Zoë Mendelson (Glasgow School of Art), 'Fever Dream: Writing through Ill-Being and Medical Fictioning'	
<b>Break</b>	<i>10.45 – 11.00</i>
<b>Second session: Inquiries into (Material) Form</b>	<i>11.00 – 12.30</i>
Tessel Veneboer (LUCA School of Arts – KU Leuven), 'Pseudo-autobiography and the Politics of Form in Kathy Acker's Early Work'	
Laura Haynes (Glasgow School of Art): 'Autotheory in the Archive: Tillie Olsen's Collective Memoir as Literary Counter-History'	
Beth Casserly (KU Leuven), 'Mind the Gap: Text, Image, and Narratorial Control in Graphic Autotheory'	
<b>Lunch</b>	<i>12.30 – 13.40</i>
<b>Keynote Lecture</b>	<i>13.40 – 14.40</i>
Lauren Fournier, 'Autotheoryfictions: On the Inextricability of Auto, Theory, and Fiction'	
<b>Third session: Beyond the Anglophone</b>	<i>14.40 – 15.40</i>
Alex Brostoff (Georgetown University), 'The Autotheory Effect'	

Helena Van Praet (UGent – FWO), ‘Whose Autotheories? A Model for an Appreciation and Extension of Autotheory from a Literary Perspective’

**Break** *15.40 – 16.00*

**Fourth session: Autotheory and the Neoliberal Economy** *16.00 – 17.30*

Luisa Wan (University of Cambridge), ‘Putting “I” on the page: Complicity as an Autotheoretical Style in Cathy Park Hong’s *Minor Feelings* (2020)’

Smriti Verma (University of Oxford), ‘Autotheory and Discursive Self-Knowledge in Contemporary British Women’s Life-Writing, 2000–2024’

Liza Mattutat (Leuphana University Lüneburg), ‘Writing Intimacy: Autotheory and the Aesthetics of Immediacy’

**Closing remarks by the organising committee** *17.30 – 17.45*

Organising committee:

Lars Bernaerts (Ghent University), Hannah Van Hove (VUB – FWO) & Helena Van Praet (Ghent University – FWO)

Scientific committee:

- Lars Bernaerts (Ghent University)
- Laura Cernat (KU Leuven – FWO)
- Maria Gil Ulldemolins (Hasselt University)
- Kris Pint (Hasselt University)
- Hannah Van Hove (VUB – FWO)
- Helena Van Praet (Ghent University – FWO)
- Sven Vitse (Utrecht University)