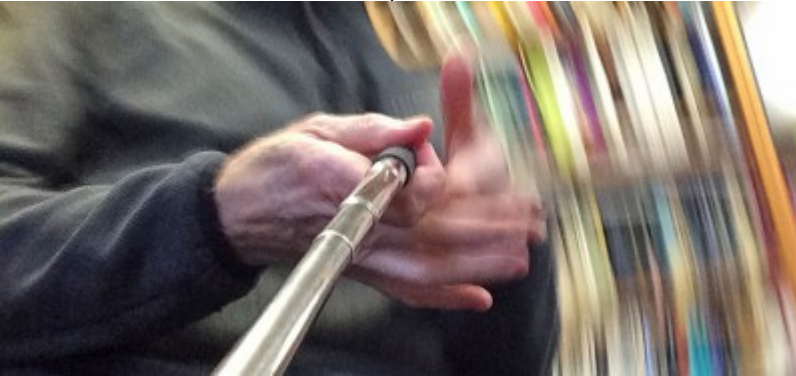


Vertigo on a stick

Description

Rooftoppers are those reckless photographers and video makers who scale tall buildings. It's important in these images that the photographer is in the frame, as evidence that they were there. The vertiginous effect is enhanced by the use of a handheld monopod camera extension known as a "selfie stick."

So climbers hold their cameras about a metre away from their extended arm, sometimes suspending the camera over a ledge, and extending the climber's daring. The climber sees herself in the flat screen viewfinder, and of course the resultant still image or video positions the climber in the



If it's a video then the inevitable sweep of

the arm comes into play, vertiginously. Such photography presents a contemporary and dynamic expression of the sublime — an amplified variant of the iconic romantic paintings of artists such as Caspar David Friedrich.

"Wanderer in the mists" (1818) is the sublime view from the mountaintop featuring the singular contemplative artist. But now the contemplative viewer is the one holding the paint brush — or selfie stick. And the artwork is not in a gallery but multiplied through image and video sharing websites to be commented on, liked, and re-tweeted. Even ground bound video selfies project this first person method of exploring the relationship between person and environment.

Such rooftop antics can invoke joy, jubilation, jackass sangfroid, and cool amongst a range of emotions. Such dynamic practices also bring the sublime into relief.

Iâ??ll be on holiday at the time this post appears. Perhaps Iâ??ll be able to tweet some (safe) Alpine selfies by then. See the twitter feed on richardcoyne.com or twitter.com/Ecran99, or [Facebook](#).

Notes

- Also see blog posts: [Heidegger and vertigo](#), and [What were the skies like when you were young?](#)
- Some selfie stick and rooftoping videos:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4gXN9VcHA4>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acDPJiVGU5g>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2fWTGTxiw8>



Category

1. Film and media

Tags

1. photography
2. Romanticism
3. selfie
4. sublime

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