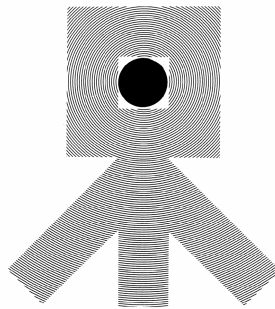


ESHPh

European Society for the History of Photography  
Association Européenne pour l'Histoire de la Photographie  
Europäische Gesellschaft für die Geschichte der Photographie

Open to all interested in photography where ever you live



The International Letter

La lettre internationale

Mitteilungen

Winter 2009/2010

January

Vienna

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## Dear Members

In the last months our members have sent so many letters, therefore we find it more reasonable to come back to our original arrangement - separated into countries.

We are especially pleased that our website has become more and more popular among our members, which also result in promising future contacts. Last autumn the discussion, why Vienna still has no Photo Museum, was sparked off again. In December 2009 WestLicht Photographica Auction offered photographs successfully for the first time after several years of camera auctions. And the Danube University Krems will offer a special series of lectures about digital collection management in spring 2010, where two of our members, Uwe Schoegl (Austrian National Library, Vienna) and Christian Bracht (Bildarchiv Foto Marburg/G) will take part. In 2009 the Gallery Anzenberger (Vienna) published a beautiful Heinrich Kühn Portfolio, showing several of the 214 autochromes from the Austrian National Library.

At Paris Photo 2009 two members of the board, Uwe Schoegl and Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, took part, coming back with a lot of new contacts. The Parisian Photo Fair this time was marked by the Arab and Iranian Photography Scene, which will fit very well into our next topic Oriental Photography in the 19th and 20th Century in PhotoResearcher No 13 that will be published at the end of March 2010.

It was a big surprise for us that our anniversary volume Jubilee. 30 Years ESHPH. Congress of Photography in Vienna was nominated for the German Book Award 2010 by the 'Boersenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels' in Stuttgart. Here we want to thank all international members, who took part in the production of the jubilee volume! Only because of this friendly, good cooperation such a pleasing result could have been achieved. From Ottawa we received a notice by the Library and Archives Canada that in the last few months they had developed a Documentary Heritage Management Framework.

Last but not least we are pleased to tell you that our long term member (since 1981) Alistair Crawford, Aberystwyth (UK) was appointed as honourable member of our society. Due to his great engagement we were able to continue the production of PhotoResearcher in 2004 after a seven years break. As a very rigid editor for him not only content but also the formal quality come first. The success, our magazine in the meantime has earned throughout the world, is mainly due to him. Alistair Crawford will still offer his services within the ESHPH Advisory Board.

On this note we wish you all a good start into 2010!

Anna Auer  
President of the ESHPH

Uwe Schögl  
Vice-President of the ESHPH

Vienna, January 2010

Our book  
Jubilee – 30 Years ESHP  
Congress of Photography in Vienna

has been awarded with the title

NOMINATION 2010

at the German Book Award and will be part of a  
travelling exhibition at books fairs and libraries

in many

European cities all the year 2010

<http://www.deutscher-fotobuchpreis.de/html/auswahl.htm>

## News from AUSTRIA

### Krems

Danube University (member of the ESHPH). Advanced Studies at the Department for Image Science

22 December

#### Database of Virtual Art

Pioneer in the field, the Database of Virtual Art (DVA) has documented the rapidly evolving digital installation art for more than one decade. Cooperating with known media artists, researchers and institutions as members allows the DVA to develop into the collective project in the field. A number of online archives have been supported over the years, but almost all no longer were funded and either disappeared or exist in a frozen condition. The DVA is beginning a renewed phase of further development with exciting and new members. Based on the "concept of expanded documentation" it epitomizes a collective, "face-book-like" project dedicated to media art. 500 artists selected from over 5000 applicants offer the best selection of thousands of high quality artworks. Besides the artists, more than 300 theorists and media-art-historians are contributors. The DVA is a scholarly project and from the beginning a university-based endeavour.

#### New features of the DVA

- Optimized upload system allowing contributors to add, revise, & cross-link information in a clear online procedure.
- Artists can easily upload videos, as well as work descriptions, digital documents, technical data, institutions and bios.
- This rich online resource has a systematic thesaurus built from various international keyword systems.
- Any contributor from the field can submit to the news-ticker.

[www.virtualart.at](http://www.virtualart.at)

#### Lehrgangsstart – Frühjahr 2010

Der berufsbegleitende Universitätslehrgang Digitales Sammlungsmanagement startet am 10. April 2010 zum fünften Mal und bringt Teilnehmer renommierter Einrichtungen - working professionals - zum gemeinsamen Studium an das Zentrum für Bildwissenschaften.

Faculty: Harald Krämer, Michael Freitter, Axel Eermert, Monika Hagedorn-Saupe, Holger Simon, Max Kaiser, Rudolf Gschwind, Michel Pfeiffer, Oliver Grau, Allan Hanbury, Uwe Schögl, Christian Bracht (both are members of the ESHPH) uvm.

<http://www.donau-uni.ac.at/digimanagement>

#### Digitales Sammlungsmanagement 2009 - Studentenprojekte

Die Stadtgemeinde Tulln verfügt mit 200.000 Trägermedien über eine der größten kommunal-historischen Fotosammlungen Niederösterreichs, welche in ihrer jetzigen Form vom zeitlichen Verfall bedroht wird. In Abstimmung mit dem Zentrum für Bildwissenschaften erarbeitete Andreas Pimperls das Konzept zum Aufbau eines soliden Analogarchivs. Die Errichtung des Archivs mit anschließender digitalen Langzeitarchivierung ist für 2010 geplant.

## Neues Konzept für die Süddeutsche Zeitung Photo

Die Süddeutsche Zeitung Photo, Archivdienst der Süddeutschen Zeitung, entsendete zwei Mitarbeiterinnen zum Studium nach Göttweig. Hintergrund ist ein groß angelegtes Kassations- und Digitalisierungsprojekt in dem das 1,4 Millionen Fotos umfassende analoge Archiv aufgearbeitet und mit 400.000 Fotos digital erschlossen werden soll. Cinzia Gianni, M.A. und Julia Schmitt, M.A. entwickelten in ihren Lehrgangprojekten Konzepte zur Integration neu erschlossener Bild- und Metadaten in das bereits vorhandene Datenbanksystem, sowie einer optischen und inhaltlicher Neupositionierung der bereits bestehenden Sammlungen.

## Vorträge/Lectures Prof. Dr. Oliver Grau in 2010

- \*Hamburg, Warburghaus; Frühe Neuzeit - Späte Neuzeit. Phänomene der Wiederkehr in Literatur und Künsten ab 1970“, 22. Januar 2010.
- \*Transmediale, Berlin, Processual Media Art and Theory, 4. Feb. 2010.
- \*London, University of Westminster, Visual Culture Studies in Europe, 5. Feb.2010, Keynote.
- \*Sofia, April 2010
- \*London, EVA, British Computer Society, Covent Garden, July 5th to 7<sup>th</sup> 2010, Keynote.
- \*Belgrad und Novi Sad, Sommer 2010.
- \*Damaskus, Syrien, Oktober 2010.
- \*Kopenhagen, Documents: art, history and cultural memory, internationaler Kongress, 11. Dezember 2010, invited Lecture.

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## Vienna

### Anzenberger Gallery (member of the ESHP)

27 November 2009

The book **WEST** has been awarded with the title NOMINATED 2010 at the German Book Award and will go on a travelling exhibition to book fairs, libraries etc. in Europe in 2010. <http://www.anzenbergergallery.com/en/article/1253.html>

17 December

### Anzenberger Gallery presents: The Collection of Autochrome Plates Heinrich Kuehn 1907-1913 with an Introduction text by Peter Weiermair

The photographer Heinrich Kuehn was born in Dresden in 1866 and lived in Innsbruck and Birgitz (Tyrol) from 1888 until his death in 1944. Heinrich Kuehn is considered to be one of the most important practitioners and theorists of artistic photography in Europe and his photographs are shown in all famous international galleries and museums. He was in close contact with the most renowned photographers of his time including Frank Eugene, Edward Steichen and Alfred Stieglitz. As early as 1908, Kuehn's works were published in Stieglitz's magazine Camera Work as well as in The Studio.

The Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library in Vienna (**member of the ESHPH**) has the largest collection in the world including 214 autochromes from Kuehn's estate. A portfolio of 12 outstanding reprints from these Lumière plates are exclusively presented on archival material. The authenticity – numbered consecutively from 1 to 30 with 5 author's copies – is guaranteed by the signed certificate from the Director of the Austrian National Library. Finally it is possible to obtain these precious colour photographs as limited edition. The portfolio has been produced in cooperation with the Austrian National Library and Intercultural Social Project. Email: [gallery@anzenberger.com](mailto:gallery@anzenberger.com) <http://www.anzenbergergallery.com>

### Gallery WestLicht (Mitglied der ESHPH)

Ausstellung: World Press Photo2009

29. Oktober – 29.11.2009

Seit 1955 schreibt der Vorstand der World Press Photo Foundation, einer unabhängigen Plattform des Fotojournalismus mit Sitz in Amsterdam, den World Press Photo Wettbewerb für Pressefotografen und Fotojournalisten aus. Das Ergebnis des renommierten Wettbewerbs wird alle Jahre wieder als Wanderausstellung rund um die Welt gezeigt. Um die begehrte Auszeichnung bewarben sich heuer 5.508 professionelle Fotografen aus 124 Ländern, 96.268 Fotos waren zu beurteilen. Bereits zum achten Mal in Folge ist WestLicht Schauplatz von World Press Photo. Neben den preisgekrönten Arbeiten waren es diesmal 160 Exponate aus den Bereichen Politik, Sport, Kultur, Umwelt und Wissenschaft. [www.westlicht.com](http://www.westlicht.com)

### WestLicht Photographica Auction

5 December 2009

For the first time the WestLicht Gallery was able - among quit a number of photographica items - to bring together also an excellent selection of 160 fine photographic prints. In addition to the numerous works by well known international photographers that sale had a special focus on Austrian photography. The commitment to the rich artistic heritage and the vivid presence of photography in Austria has been the guiding principle of the WestLicht photo museum for many years which is located in the 7<sup>th</sup> district of Vienna. The photo gallery functions as a lively spot for big names, historical discoveries and new talents. Many of the national and international artists featured in the catalogue are closely connected to the gallery and quiet a few of the photographs have already been shown on one of the exhibitions there. It is not only the sensational results at international auctions which prove that photography is now well established as an art form but also its growing and stable value as investment.

The next Photographica Auction will take place on 25 May 2010. [www.westlicht-auction.com](http://www.westlicht-auction.com)

Kunsthandel Dr.Kreil

Exhibition: Fritz Simak – Körper: Körper

25. November – 19. Dezember

Wieder einmal überraschte der Fotokünstler und Buchgestalter durch seine Themenvielfalt. Entstanden sind diese Bilder aus seinem reichhaltigen Fundus der verschiedenen Epochen. Die ursprünglichen Vorlagen und gedachten Entwürfe wurden vom Künstler zu überaus komplexen Bildern um- und neu gestaltet. Dass Fritz Simak (Mitglied der ESHPH) auch Kurator von Ausstellungen und ein ebenso begeisterter Sammler von alten und neuen Fotografien ist (s.The International Letter Spring 2008, Seite 7), gab der Ausstellung die nötigen Distanz, verlieh ihr aber gleichzeitig die notwendige Schärfe. [www.keil-kunsthandel.a](http://www.keil-kunsthandel.a)

Kunsthalle Wien

Fotokultur in Österreich

Part I: Fehlt ein Fotomuseum in Österreich?

Montag, 14. September

Mit Peter Coeln (Westlicht - Mitglied der ESHPH), Rainer Iglar (Fotohof Salzburg), Urs Stahel (Direktor Fotomuseum Winterthur), Gerald Matt (Direktor Kunsthalle Wien). Moderation [Moderatorin?].

International hat sich eine lebendige, vielfältige Fotoszene entwickelt, die Fotografie hat sich als Ausdrucksmedium etabliert. Wie sieht die Fotoszene in Österreich aus? Warum gibt es kein Fotomuseum in Österreich? Wie stellt sich die Situation in anderen europäischen Ländern dar? Expertinnen und Experten des Kunstbetriebes diskutierten den Status Quo und die Desiderata der österreichischen Fotografielandschaft.

Part II: Fotoszene Österreich – ein Sonderfall?

Montag, 21. September 2009

Mit Lukas Beck (Fotograf, Wien), Johannes Faber (Galerie Faber, Wien), Elisabeth Gottfried (EIKON, Wien), Ruth Horak, Kuratorin, Fotobeirat des bm:ukk), Gabriele Rothemann (Leiterin der Fotoklasse, Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien). Moderation: Henriette Horny (Kurier).

International hat sich eine lebendige, vielfältige Fotoszene entwickelt, die Fotografie hat sich als Ausdrucksmedium etabliert. Wie sieht die Fotoszene in Österreich aus? Warum gibt es kein Fotomuseum in Österreich? Wie stellt sich die Situation in anderen europäischen Ländern dar? Expertinnen und Experten nahmen zu diesem Thema Stellung. <http://www.kunsthallewien.at>

## Jüdisches Museum der Stadt Wien

Vortrag am 3. Dezember: Anton Holzer (Mitglied der ESHPH)  
Austrian Brutalities (Karl Kraus). Über fotografische Erinnerungen an das Töten 1914-1918. Und über die Vergesslichkeit der Historiker

Bis heute ist wenig über den brutalen Krieg in der k.u.k. Armee gegen die Zivilbevölkerung bekannt. Zehntausende unschuldige Zivilisten wurden während des Ersten Weltkriegs im Osten und Südosten Europas als angebliche „Spione“ am Galgen hingerichtet. Die österreichischen Historiker haben dieses heikle Thema neun Jahrzehnte vergessen“. Die schriftliche Quellenlage ist dürftig. In ost- und südosteuropäischen Archiven finden sich aber - von der Forschung bisher unbeachtet - zahlreiche Fotografien, die die Gewalttaten in erschreckenden Detailaufnahmen zeigen. [www.anton-holzer.at](http://www.anton-holzer.at)

## Photographische Gesellschaft Wien (Mitglied der ESHPH)

### Künstlerhaus Wien

1. Dezember – 10. Januar 2010  
Ausstellung: Horst Stasny - Konstrukte

Ein Konstrukt entsteht als durchdachtes Denkmodell aus verschiedenen Beobachtungen, Perspektiven und Anschauungen. Die daraus resultierenden Ergebnisse werden durch die fotografische Umsetzung gemacht. Gezeigt werden großformatige Pigment Prints aus den verschiedensten Motivbereichen: Menschenstudien, kritische Beobachtungen der Umwelt – ein Spiel mit der Form. <http://www.photographischen-gesellschaft.at> Email: [office.photographische-gesellschaft.at](mailto:office.photographische-gesellschaft.at)

## News from BELGIUM

### Charleroi

Musee de la Photographie (member of the ESHPH)  
Exposition des travaux retenues du 22 mai au 19 septembre 2010

En organisant son 16<sup>e</sup> Prix National Photographie Ouverte, le Musée de la Photographie, en collaboration avec des nombreuses institutions et sociétés, encourage la création et offre un tremplin à la photographie d'aujourd'hui. Unique par son approche ouverte, ce concours attire de nombreux photographes car il n'impose aucune thématique, aucun format et s'adresse aux amateurs ou aux professionnels de tous âges, nés en Belgique ou y résidant depuis plus d'un an. Depuis sa création en 1981 et à travers ses 15 premières éditions, le Prix National Photographie Ouverte a contribué à la mise en lumière des tendances photographiques en Belgique. Le règlement du concours et la formulaire d'inscription sont disponibles sur demande au Musée de la Photographie et téléchargeable sur la site: [www.museephoto.be](http://www.museephoto.be)



## News from CANADA

Ottawa

Library and Archives Canada (member of the ESHPH)  
Documentary Heritage Collection Sector

17 November

### Extraits from the Message to Stakeholders – Acquisitions

As you know, the information environment has been profoundly transformed with new forms of digital information that challenge all memory institutions to adapt what and how they collect. Due to the overwhelming digital production and the use of social technologies by organizations and individuals, new expectations among users have arisen. That said, LAC must ensure that the documentary heritage the institution acquires and preserves today, whether it is rare books, electronic publications or other essential materials, truly contributes in providing the most accurate picture of Canadian life and that its content is of value to Canadian society in the future.

Therefore, over the past few months, we have been developing a Documentary Heritage Management Framework (DHMF) based on three pillars of documentary heritage: acquisition, preservation and resource discovery. The DHMF will be based on four guiding principles designed to assess the value of acquisitions: Significance, Sufficiency, Sustainability, and Society and on key roles: foundation building, collaboration, program, and transfer.

A preliminary Acquisition Orientation Instrument was developed, to guide our decision making by using standardized criteria and understandings. The purpose of this instrument is to institute a systematic approach to the professional justification of the acquisitions of documentary heritage. At the same time, the intent is to be open to new approaches with other memory institutions. The feedback we have received to date from our stakeholders were factored into the Acquisition Orientation Instrument.

We invite you to consult the Documentary Heritage Management Framework and the Acquisitions Orientation discussion documents at [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca) and encourage you to provide feedback and comments. Stakeholder consultations are being prepared and your input is needed to further develop this acquisitions approach. Also, please consider either making a link to our website or posting the contents of our discussion documents on your website.

As part of the ongoing exercise of considering new approaches to the management of Canada's documentary heritage and evaluating the way acquisitions are carried out at LAC, we implemented a short-term moratorium, which will be lifted, effective January 30, 2010. This is allowing us the time to evaluate business practices within LAC's collections and to fine-tune and prepare the implementation of the new Framework and Orientation. For more information, or if you wish to consult with us on the discussion documents, please contact Chantal Marin-Comeau, Director of Acquisitions at [chantal.marin-comeau@lac-bac.gc.ca](mailto:chantal.marin-comeau@lac-bac.gc.ca) or 819-997-7003, or with me at [doug.rimmer@lac-bac.gc.ca](mailto:doug.rimmer@lac-bac.gc.ca) or 819-934-5790.

## News from FRANCE

Paris Photo 2009  
At the Carrousel du Louvre

Arab and Iranian Photography Scene  
19 - 22 November

In mid-November 2009, Paris Photo, the world's leading photography fair, brought together 101 exhibitors from 23 countries. The 2009 selection was conducted according to a number of criteria which included the quality and originality of the projects submitted as well as achieving a balance between the various periods of photographic expression, ranging from 19th Century to present day work. Another consideration was content renewal and the overall freshness of the fair with 30 newcomers this year. The 2009 edition of Paris Photo proposed to undertake an unprecedented exploration of the **Arab and Iranian photography scene**. Guest curator Catherine David had been charged with this project which is composed of three distinct elements: the Central Exhibition showcasing photographs from the Arab Image Foundation and the Statement section which offers an overview of the scene currently emerging from the region - from Tehran to Beirut, Gaza to Cairo and Tangiers to Dubai. Finally, the third element is the Project Room screening a selection of video work by artists from the region. - Now in its sixth edition, the BMW - Paris Photo Prize, worth 12 000 euro, will offer a glimpse of current trends in international photography while rewarding the work of a promising artist. Presided by Philippe Dehennin - CEO of BMW France, the members of the 2009 jury have been: Robert Delpire, photographer and publisher, TJ Demos, art critic and writer, Matthias Harder, director of the Helmut Newton Foundation, **Manfred Heiting (member of the ESHPh)**, collector, Sandra S. Phillips, Curator of photography for SFMOMA. The theme was "When was the last time you experienced something for the first time?" A number of outstanding photographic exhibitions coincided with the fair, including Michael Kenna retrospective at the Bibliothèque Nationale, La subversion des images, Surréalisme, photographie, film at the Centre Pompidou, August Sander at the Fondation Henri Cartier Bresson, Delpire & Cie at the Maison Européenne de la photographie, Federico Fellini at the Jeu de Paume, 100 ans de photographie iranienne at the Musée du Quai Branly and Palestine, la création dans tous ses états at the Institut du monde arabe.  
[www.parisphoto.fr](http://www.parisphoto.fr)

## News from GERMANY

Heidelberg  
3. Oktober

Kulturpreis 2009 der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Photographie (DGPh)  
wurde an Wolfgang Tillmans verliehen

Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie (DGPh) verlieh ihren diesjährigen Kulturpreis 2009 an den in London lebenden, deutschen Photographen **Wolfgang Tillmans**. Als Photograph hat er in der internationalen Kunstwelt höchste Auszeichnungen erhalten – wie in 2000, wo er als erster Photograph und Ausländer den renommierten Turner Prize von der Tate Gallery in London erhielt. Sein umfassendes und vielfältiges photographisches Oeuvre ist vor allem durch

achtsame Beobachtung seiner Umwelt, ein bewusstes künstlerisches Spiel zwischen Perfektion und Unvollkommenheit sowie den konsequenten und innovativen Präsentationsformen geprägt. Einflussreich und stilbildend hat er den Wirkungskreis der Photographie in den letzten 20 Jahren auf ungewöhnliche Art und Weise ständig erweitert. Deshalb sah die DGPh in **Wolfgang Tillmans** eine „Persönlichkeit mit bedeutenden Leistungen im Bereich der Photographie“ und verlieh ihm die – neben dem **Dr.Erich-Salomon-Preis** (ergeht am 6.Februar 2010 an die amerikanische Fotografin **Sylvia Plachy**) für die vorbildliche Anwendung der Photographie in der Publizistik - höchste Ehrung ihrer Gesellschaft.

Die öffentliche Preisverleihung fand am 3. Oktober 2009 im Heidelberger Kunstverein im Rahmen des 3. Fotofestivals Mannheim-Ludwigshafen-Heidelberg statt. [www.dgph.de](http://www.dgph.de)

## News from the NETHERLANDS

### Amsterdam

Huis Marseille Foundation of Photography (member of the ESHPH)

Exposition: **Fazal Sheikh**

5 September – 29 November 2009

This fall Huis Marseille presented, for the first time, a large retrospective of the work of the American photographer **Fazahl Sheikh** (New York, 1965). Sheikh is not unknown in the Netherlands. In his previous exhibitions held at the Nederlands Fotomuseum (1997, 2001) and during the photography festival Noorderlicht (1997), he showed his impressive portraits of homeless people and refugees in Africa and Asia. These exhibitions have been the start of a substantial later career.

In monumental and tranquil black-and-white portraits, Sheikh gives names and faces to the people in refugee camps in Kenya, Tanzania and Pakistan. He also records their stories in extensive statements. **Fazal Sheikh** has developed an impressive body of work. The exhibition at Huis Marseille also includes his most recent series of photographs, taken in India: of women and children forced to survive under dire circumstances. This retrospective has been realized in close collaboration with the artist and curator Carlos Gollonet and Fundación MAPFRE in Madrid, which organized the tour.

Publication: The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive publication in English, available at Huis Marseille. Texts by Carlos Gollonet, Liz Jobey and Eduardo Cadava. Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid, 2009. E-mail:

[info@huismarseille.nl](mailto:info@huismarseille.nl) [www.huismarseille.nl](http://www.huismarseille.nl)

## News from NORWAY

### Horten

Preus Museum (member of the ESHPH)

Exhibition: **Spotlight - Eight Women Photographers from the Collection**

8 March – 25 October

About the museum: Preus Museum is Norway's national museum of photography. The collection is covering all aspects of the history of photography,

the museum offers visitors insight into the earliest technical and scientific experiments to modern photographic art that has pushed back the boundaries of what a photograph can be. The library is a unique specialist resource for photography, and displays a selection of cameras from the museum's technical collection. The museum is located at idyllic Karljohansvern in Horten, an hour's drive from Oslo. [www.preusmuseum.no](http://www.preusmuseum.no)

## News from SWEDEN

Göteborg

Hasselblad Foundation (member of the ESHPh)

6 November: Robert Adams - Hasselblad Award Winner 2009

Exhibition: 6 November – 10 January 2010.

19 – 20 November 2009

Symposium: Photography and Landscape

The symposium was hosted in connection with the exhibit **Robert Adams** at the Hasselblad Center. The speaker was **Mark Klett** from Phoenix, USA. He is a photographer and professor in art at Arizona State University and has worked with landscape photography in the American South West since the mid 1970's. At the moment, Klett is collaborating with Byron Wolfe in Grand Canyon on the project Charting the Canyon. [www.hasselbladfoundation.org](http://www.hasselbladfoundation.org)

## News from SWITZERLAND

Winterthur

Fotomuseum (member of the ESHPh)

Exhibition: Graciela Iturbide – Das innere Auge

28 November 2009 – 7 February 2010

The work of Mexico City based photographer **Graciela Iturbide** (born 1942) is the Hasselblad Award Winner 2008. The exhibition highlights Iturbide's work with surviving indigenous communities in Oaxaca, Mexico (the Zapotec Indians and Juchitán and Mixtec Indians of Huajuapán), Mexican American neighbourhoods in East Los Angeles (members of the White Fence barrio), and individuals struggling at la Frontera, the United States-Mexico border. Concentrating on the photographer's North American pictures, the exhibition examines her more recent landscape studies from the American South as well as Mexico and presents images from her native city created almost forty years ago.

Exhibition: Christian Vogt – Today I've been you

24. Oktober 2009 bis 14. Februar 2010

**Christian Vogt** (geb.1946) macht seit vierzig Jahren mit außergewöhnlichen Projekten auf sich aufmerksam. Zu seinen zentralen Themen gehört – neben Arbeiten, in denen Bildlegenden oder kurze Texte überraschende Assoziationen hervorrufen – die Darstellung von Zeit und Raum. Fotografie ist bei Vogt jedoch nie Abbild, sondern immer auch eine Frage nach dem, was sich an Bedeutung oder Geschichte hinter der Oberfläche verbirgt, eine Reflexion über die

Subjektivität des fotografischen Bildes, im Bewusstsein, dass das eigentliche Bild erst in der Wahrnehmung des Betrachters entsteht. [www.fotomuseum.ch](http://www.fotomuseum.ch)

## News from the USA

### Los Angeles

J. Paul Getty Museum (member of ESHPH)

Exhibition: Walls of Algier – Narratives of the City

Until 19 October 2009

When the French occupied Algiers in 1830, they transformed the city. There was an influx of settlers from France, as well as southern Italy and Spain. European norms and the French system of governance were imposed. The land was mapped, its people surveyed and classified. The "Arab" city on the hillside, known as the Casbah, was separated from the "French" or "European" city that spread out in districts below and around the Casbah. The division, engraved into the spaces of Algiers, endured during the 132 years of French rule ending with the War of Independence (1954-1962).

**Walls of Algiers** examines the city's complex history by considering its places and peoples through diverse 19th- and 20th-century visual sources. The exhibition traces, for example, an itinerary of the Casbah and the European quarters through vintage postcards, and juxtaposes the long tradition of staged Orientalist representations of "indigenous" people with photojournalistic coverage from the Algerian War. The visual documents are reconsidered textually with the help of voices drawn from government and military reports, scholarly essays, travel accounts, novels, and poems.

Email: [museumevents@getty.edu](mailto:museumevents@getty.edu)

[www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu)

## Members Voice

University of Haifa, Israel

28 December – Conference: Photojournalism – from hard to soft news

Monika Schwärzler (member of the ESHPH)

Lecture: Cold War Photographic Records and Their Specific Rhetoric

Monika Schwärzler attended a conference on **Photojournalism – from hard to soft news** held at the University of Haifa, Israel on December 28, 2009. She gave her presentation in the section of the conference that was dedicated to "Photojournalism in Historical Perspectives". Her paper focussed on **Cold War Photographic Records and Their Specific Rhetoric** concentrating on the photojournalistic oeuvre of **Erich Lessing (member of the ESHPH)**. In her presentation Schwärzler tried to pinpoint certain characteristics of cold war imagery of the 50s and 60s such as the post war optimism of these images and the particular narrative patterns of these reportages.

The second part of the conference dealt with Israeli photojournalism, for instance with Maxim Salomon's work. Ruth Oren, organizer of the conference, and Oren Meyers provided an analysis of illustrated Israeli magazines of the time. In the third section of the conference, highly accomplished, award winning

photographers like Micha Bar-Am, Alex Levak, Rina Castelnuevo-Hollander, and Ziv Koren gave insights into their photographic practice and discussed the role of the photojournalist in today's world with its altered communication structures.

## Czech

### Prague

The City Gallery Prague, The Stone Bell-House, Old Town Square 13

28 October 2009 – 3 January 2010

Exhibition: Czechs through the Eyes of Photographers, 1948–1989

Vladimír Birgus (member **of the ESHP**) and **Tomáš Pospěch** are curators of the exhibition

The exhibition is neither a historically relevant image of life in Czechoslovakia during the Communist regime from its establishment in 1948 to its demise in 1989, nor an attempt to cover all the main trends, photographers, critics, as well as works of Czech documentary photography of this period. By presenting well-known, forgotten, and also hitherto unpublished photographs, it seeks to show aspects of the lives of ordinary people in Czech lands at the time, when one was required to do so much and permitted to do so little. With selected examples from a broad range of photos of varying artistic quality, the exhibition seeks to show the changes in the political and social atmosphere, and way of life, as well as to show official Communist festivities and demonstrations, the ubiquitous ideological propaganda and the devastation of both the society and the environment under a single-party rule. It also aims to show how many people escaped into their private lives, pubs and cottages, where less official, but more truthful and spontaneous life took place. The exhibition features samples of official agency photographs from the Photobank of the Czech Press Agency (ČTK), period fashion and advertisement shots, photographs promoting the famous Unified Farmers' Cooperative in Slušovice, and even shots clandestinely taken by the secret police (StB) when monitoring dissidents, people considered dangerous to the régime, and foreigners. The backbone of the exhibition, however, is formed by thematic sets of works by well-known, forgotten as well as totally unknown Czech photographers. Many are published here for the first time.

After the Communist takeover in February 1948 all Czech photography underwent profound changes which influenced it for decades to come. Many magazines ceased to exist. Heavy censorship began to be applied. The regime required the dogmatic application of the principles of Socialist Realism and the social and propagandistic function of photography, ideological involvement, an optimistic approach, transparent traditional composition, with subject matter that could be understood by the masses. We know most of Czech photographs in the style of Socialist Realism only from periodicals of the time, since most of the originals have been lost. Fortunately, the ČTK Photobank, a kind of 'pictorial memory of the nation', contains many official shots from that period, including sad evidence of the show trials, in which dozens of innocent victims were convicted to years in prison, and sometimes given death sentences.

After the death of Stalin and Gottwald in 1953, there was, in connection with mild political détente, a gradual departure from Socialist Realism. The 'poetry of everyday life', which began to appear ever more distinctly in Czech literature, film, sculpture and painting of the time, also found its place in photography. A strong impulse for the development of Czech photojournalism had the conception



of humanistic photojournalism, represented by leading members of the Magnum Photo agency, became a model for many Czech photographers, for instance Václav Jírů, Erich Einhorn, Pavel Dias, Miroslav Hucek, Jiří Všetečka. Strong influence of humanistic photojournalism can be found for the most part in works by several prominent amateur photographers who did not care whether their photographs might not be found ideologically acceptable or might not be published or exhibited. An exceptional body of work was made by Gustav Aulehla, who was hitherto almost unknown. His raw, authentic, generalizing shots of life in the small town of Krnov from the late 1950s onwards, capture absurd and grotesque elements of official Communist celebrations, the loss of individuality of people in the crowd, and the contradiction between the optimistic slogans of propaganda and the harsh reality. And we find it in the bequest of the practically unknown Josef Kohout, who made his living as a photographer after being released from a Communist prison, but who was not permitted to publish his bitter photos taken in Prague streets. A more lyrical ring is to be found in the photos of everyday life by another long-ignored amateur photographer, Miloslav Kubeš. The pinnacle of Czech documentary photography of the 1960s is undoubtedly the oeuvre of Josef Koudelka. This is evident for instance in his series of visually strong, objective, and generalizing photographs from the Soviet occupation of Prague in August 1968. These photos show the resistance of defenceless people to armed violence, as well as their solidarity, hope, despair, and delusion.

In the period of 'normalization' policy, after Gustáv Husák became the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in April 1969, hard times set in also for photojournalists. Amongst the photographs in periodicals, obligatorily optimistic works not seeking broader contexts or with little ambition to reflect their photographers' own styles again began to dominate. The situation in documentary photography, on the other hand, was far better. Such photographs were usually not made on commission, and therefore had little chance of immediate publication in the press or in books or of being shown at exhibitions. Consequently, people making such works had great creative freedom to depict the difficult period with honesty. Some of them (for example, Ivo Loos, Dana Kyndrová, Gustav Aulehla, and Viktor Kolář) used this freedom in ironically conceived photographs capturing the absurdity of mass celebrations of May Day and other holidays, Communist iconography, and the bleakness of life in 'real Socialism'. Jindřich Štreit made raw, sometimes almost surreal pictures of rural life in the difficult conditions of the Bruntál region near the western frontier of Moravian Silesia. A unique, effective set of documentary photographs about a squad in the Czechoslovak People's Army in Mošnov, a suburb of Ostrava, was made by Josef Moucha. It was not published till twenty-seven years after he made it.

Pavel Štecha devoted himself to working with sociologists over a long period, creating austere, pithy, compositionally simple, though somewhat cold sets of photos as illustrations to various research projects. In the set Windows Jaroslav Bárta juxtaposed the remains of original facades of old houses with their insensitive, even brutal remodelling. His photos of bricked-up, 'silenced' windows contain not only a reflection on the passing of time, but also the inseparable political subtext. Their effect is similar to that achieved in Jiří Poláček's ghostly night-time photos of fragments of the Smíchov district in Prague. In his large set Signs, Luboš Kotek shows the ubiquitous Communist propaganda.

The private lives of most people in 'real Socialism' were radically different from what they had officially been portrayed to be. People escaped into the psychological security of their homes and weekend cottages; they focused on bringing up their children, chatting with their friends, going to pubs and football matches, watching television series, going on excursions, playing sports, and having sex. Many photographs show that life in those days was not so grey and full of anxiety as may appear from today's point of view. Jaroslav Kučera in the early Seventies photographed students' wild parties at the Strahov dormitories in Prague. Jan Jindra made picturesque photos of New Year's celebrations in the Hotel Jalta, Prague. Similarly, Libuše Jarcovjáčková made pictures without visual embellishments; she photographed this famous nightclub, winning the trust of the gays who used to meet there. Zdeněk Lhoták in the series Sparta Prague created a many-layered view of football and its fans. Václav Podestát depicts the final round of the Porta festival competition, Pilsen, where tens of thousands of people used to meet to enjoy moments of togetherness and freedom while listening to live folk and country music.

In the Eighties, mainly after the introduction of Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost, it was becoming clear to some people that the totalitarian system was getting weaker. More and more people were finding the courage to take a critical attitude towards the artificially maintained régime and to seek alternatives to the existing two-faced approach to life. Karel Cudlín photographed the westward exodus of East Germans by way of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague in summer 1989. Several months later the Velvet Revolution helped to end one-party rule in Czechoslovakia. That was also contributed to by the photographs of Radovan Boček and Pavel Štecha, which were distributed in mass print-runs. While the state-controlled communications media were either keeping silent or outright lying about events, these photos showed what had really happened during the brutal beatings of demonstrators by the riot police on Národní třída in Prague and during the first big demonstrations.

In their staged photographs the group Bratrstvo, in the late Eighties and early Nineties, exploited themes from Communist iconography. Martin Plitz also started from themes of the Communist era, reconstructing the sentimental heroism of women depicted on the covers of Vlasta magazine in those days. Many years later he sought out the same women who had posed as lathe operators, pilots, architects, and journalists, and photographed them in the same settings as the staff photographers on this women's weekly had once done.

As the forty-one years of single-party rule recedes increasingly farther into the past, the perception of one of the saddest chapters in Czech history changes. More and more young people have not experienced it, and for older people the period is becoming the background of the fond memories of their youth once upon a time in the East.

The exhibition has been organized by the City Gallery Prague in association with the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, the CTK Photobank, KANT Publishers and the Institute of Creative Photography, Silesian University in Opava. [www.ghmp.cz](http://www.ghmp.cz) [www.citygalleryprague.cz](http://www.citygalleryprague.cz)



USA

New York

23 November 2009

A.D.Coleman (member of the ESHPH)

What Did Polaroid Know, and When Did Polaroid Know It? (continued)

In [my previous post](#), I presented evidence indicating that the Polaroid Corporation has always known that it didn't own outright most of the works in its collection. Let me continue by exploring briefly the implications and ramifications of that possibility in the current situation.

The shell entity now in possession of the Polaroid Collection, legally (and confusingly) known as the Polaroid Corporation, is composed of debtors left holding the bag when [Petters International imploded in 2008](#). They've already sold off the Polaroid brand, its IP, and other assets to an entity known as [PLR IP Holdings, LLC](#), which bought everything except the Polaroid Collection from them in April 2009, and will continue to manufacture and sell products under the Polaroid name.

Here's [the April 17, 2009 "Revised Notice of Prevailing Bidder" from the Minnesota Bankruptcy Court](#), which rubber-stamps that sale and validates the exclusion of the Polaroid Collection from the list of acquired assets. Attached to it is Schedule 1.2(q), which itemizes the 15,934 works officially included in the collection at that point — and which PLR IP Holdings, LLC chose not to acquire, for undisclosed reasons.

Now, to finalize settling their debts, and to avoid accumulating new ones before dissolving, the Polaroid Corporation seeks to dispose of the Polaroid Collection for cash, claiming that storage and maintenance of the collection costs them upwards of \$400K per year. So they desperately want to end their expensive involvement with this unique asset — for which, remarkably, its uniqueness notwithstanding, they assert that they have never received even a single "formal bid." This seemingly inexplicable absence of interest in the collection from the photo/art market begs for the application of the Occam's Razor principle: The simplest answer is usually the right one. But simple doesn't mean simple-minded, or naïve, or ingenuous, or credulous.

Take Marion Maneker's ["Polaroid Wants to Go to Auction,"](#) a piece subtitled "No One Offered Privately on the Polaroid Collection. Why?" and published by Art Market Monitor online on August 13th, 2009, just weeks before [the Minnesota Bankruptcy Court hearing that authorized the sale at auction of the collection](#). In the article, Maneker phrases her question thus: "Does the photography market lack deep pockets willing to buy a big collection?" This narrows her inquiry strictly to the issue of asking price (which figure the current owners of the collection have never made public). Maneker next takes at face value a statement from the Polaroid Corporation quoted from the [Wall Street Journal](#): "Polaroid said that its own attempts to find buyers for the art had attracted interest from individuals, investors and institutions, but that it had yet to receive any formal bids." And she concludes from this, "In other words, no one

had the money or wanted to take the risk in buying so many photographs.”

As I stated in [my previous post](#), that represents neither sound reasoning nor investigative journalism. We know that, the current meltdown notwithstanding, there’s more than enough money afloat in the art world to make acquisition of the plum Polaroid Collection by some truly interested party easily affordable at its estimated auction value of 8-12 million USD, certainly at the necessarily lower asking price for the collection as a whole. (I include in this prognosis potential purchasers from the Middle East, where new major photo collections have begun to emerge and new museums of photography are getting conceived and built, such as the one in Qatar, designed by Santiago Calatrava.)

The Polaroid Collection is truly and literally unique; not only is it an enormous, synergistic, one-of-a-kind archive of half a century’s creative work with a specific set of photographic tools, materials, and processes by hundreds of artists and photographers, but the vast majority of the 16,000 works it contains are one-of-a-kind pieces. It would form the cornerstone for any emerging museum collection, or serve as centerpiece and major enhancement for an existing repository. Properly managed and promoted, it would make the institution that housed it into what’s now called a destination venue — especially given the surprisingly widespread nostalgia for all things Polaroid (in the product line’s analog forms).

In short, the Polaroid Collection is highly desirable and, even at the high end of Sotheby’s estimate, reasonably priced. Given that a single Steichen print went for close to \$3 million just a few years back, and a single Gursky sold for over \$3 million shortly thereafter, the notion that no one in what Maneker calls “the photography market” can afford to buy the Polaroid Collection is laughable on its face.

For some reason, Maneker elected not to pose her key question to anyone save herself. She didn’t ask anyone at PLR IP Holdings, LLC why they chose to acquire everything but the Polaroid Collection from remnants of the Petters company. She didn’t ask David Ross, former director of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, [why the Whitney didn’t take the collection](#) when it was offered to them as a donation sometime in the 1990s. She didn’t call any of the major institutions that would seem likely to find acquisition of this archive worth considering. (I’ve heard, from an anonymous source, that both the Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston wanted it, but that both deals were scotched by people inside the Polaroid Corporation.)

If (pace Maneker) price is no object, then what is?

This brings me to the logical conclusion that every potential buyer — “individuals, investors and institutions” — has discovered in examining the collection’s documentation that the bulk of it is contractually encumbered in ways that prohibit (or at least problematize) its sale, thus also making perilous its purchase as a whole. ([For samples of the Polaroid Collection’s release forms and letters of agreement with photographers and artists, click here.](#)) If that’s true, then all prospects have had good reason to back off and not bid on the collection.

What does “encumbered” mean? From [the court-approved motion that enabled the transfer of all Polaroid holdings except the collection to its current owners](#), here’s the definition: “‘Encumbrance’ means any lien, pledge, charge, security interest, option, right of first refusal, mortgage, easement, right of way, lease, sublease, license, sublicense, adverse claim, title defect, encroachment, other survey defect, or other encumbrance of any kind, including, with respect to real property, any covenant or restriction relating thereto.” Certainly the “non-exclusive” rights to utilize works in the collection, licensed to Polaroid by the photographers represented, and those photographers’ contractual rights “in perpetuity” to borrow their works for exhibition and publication purposes, constitute encumbrances. And encumbrances, in turn, prevent free and clear transfer of ownership; indeed, they undermine any claim to full ownership.

And that in turn might explain why the current incarnation of the Polaroid Corporation, as a last resort, hastened this past spring and summer to have the Minnesota Bankruptcy Court recertify all the collection’s contents as free and unencumbered contractually, and got that same court to approve the piecemeal auctioning off of all that work. If that happens, the dismantling of the collection will become a done deal. Because once that sale takes place it will become impossible to retrieve the dispersed pieces, or enforce any encumbering contracts related to them.

Sotheby’s, which has the Minnesota Bankruptcy Court’s authorization to proceed with the sale, has no obligation to disclose the names of successful bidders (quite the opposite, in fact; its privacy policies prohibit such disclosure). No one will know who owns these works once they’re auctioned off. Pieces will end up scattered everywhere, untraceable. Something akin to the operations of an automotive chop shop, one might say, although — with the welcome endorsement of the Minnesota Bankruptcy Court — all now open and aboveboard.

(To be continued.)

P.S. For anyone tracking the fallout from the larger Tom Petters Ponzi scheme in which the Polaroid Collection became enmeshed, let me also recommend a site apparently called [Petters-Fraud.com](#), run by Laser Haas, which offers (so far as I can tell) the most extensive online documentation of and commentary on the complete Petters scam. [There’s a section devoted to the Polaroid bankruptcy](#), which contains a number of relevant links and documents, but no specific tracking of the narrative thread relating to the collection. This serves as a reminder that our special concern in this situation constitutes a very small piece of a much larger puzzle.

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Please, have also short glimpse at our continually updated website!

Vienna, January 2010

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