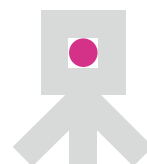


# PhotoResearcher



ESHP European Society for the History of Photography

- 8 Christoph Schaden  
**Wall. Photo. Book.**
- 16 A. D. Coleman  
**Return of the Suppressed  
Pictorialism's Revenge**
- 26 Suzanne Paquet  
**Transcontinental Lines: Migrating  
Images and the Production of Space**
- 36 Rolf H. Krauss  
**"The Cubist Photographer"**  
**George Morrow, Alvin Langdon Coburn  
and the Great English Vortex**
- 44 Nicole Graf  
**The ETH-Bibliothek Image Archive,  
A Collection of Scientific and Historic  
Images**
- 51 Pep Benlloch, Pedro Vicente  
**Turn the Page: Present and Future  
of Photography Magazines**



# Editorial

Dear Reader,

Now the time has come again: the current issue of PhotoResearcher, the scientific platform of the ESHPh for almost 20 years, comes up with many reforms. From now on, our layout will be even more clearly arranged and reader friendly, and – by using colour print – will also be designed more “authentically” in keeping with its model. In future the main section with the essays will be complemented by presentations of important photo historic collections that are not so present in the public eye: we are going to start with the photo collection of the ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, presented by the head of the Images and Maps Section **Nicole Graf**. Likewise, we will revive the *Preview and Reporting* section as a forum for announcing current scientific work and reporting on conferences. In our current issue, **Pep Benlloch** and **Pedro Vicente**, Valencia, will give an overview of the conference: *Turn the Page: Present and Future of Photography Magazines*, which took place in Valencia, Spain in December 2008.

Last year was marked by the *JUBILEE - 30 Years ESHPh* in Vienna. Anna Auer and Uwe Schögl will retrace the most memorable landmarks of this successful Viennese photo congress. Those three days of intensive science transfer were held at such important places as the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the Albertina, the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, and the Museum auf Abruf/Museum on Demand (MUSA) in November 2008.

For **Christoph Schaden**, Cologne, the introduction of a day commemorating the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 provides the thematic bond for a detailed analysis of the photographic representation, interpretation and exhibition of the *Berlin Wall*, especially with reference to photographic cover designs. On the occasion of the travelling exhibition *TruthBeauty: Pictorialism and the Photograph as Art, 1845-1945* (planned by the George Eastman House 2008) **A.D. Coleman**, New York, takes a critical look at pictorialism as a concept of “open photography” within contemporary photography. He draws a picture of the – in his opinion – underestimated American pictorialist of the 1930s, William Mortensen, believing that his low degree of familiarity lies in the acquisition policy of the major American museums. In her essay, **Suzanne Paquet**, Montreal (CA), explains the parallel developments of the railway and photography in the 19th century in Canada, where those new inventions were two allies in the territorial conquests that resulted in the creation of specific geographic imaginations and specific national identities. **Rolf H. Krauss**, Stuttgart, compares illustrations by George Morrow and pictures by A.L. Coburn, who used the prism for his Vortographs and took a first step from the concrete to the abstract in photography.

On our own behalf: the editorial team has now been extended to include Ulla Fischer-Westhauser and Uwe Schögl. We are looking forward to admitting Alistair Crawford, Aberystwyth (UK) as a new honorary member of our society and express our thanks for his long standing work.

Anna Auer, Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Uwe Schögl  
Editors, Vienna, May 2009



Anna Auer, Uwe Schögl, starting the congress (A)



Erich Lessing (A)



Norbert Mayr and Peter Weiermaier (A)



Thomas Friedrich (G)



Michael Pritchard (UK)



left to right: Hannelore Huber (A), Katherine Hoffman (USA), Robert McInnes (A), Steven F. Joseph (B)



Luke Gartlan (UK)



Dinner of the Vienna Convention Bureau in the banqueting-hall (town-hall of Vienna) on 29 April 2009



Katalin Bognár and Emöke Tomsics (H), behind: Alistair Crawford (UK), Monika Schwärzler (A), Valerie Fehlbaum (CH)



At the desk: Hannelore Huber, Uwe Schögl, Anna Auer (A)



Bibliophile book table – staffed by the Fotohof *edition*

# 30 Years Jubilee of ESHPh Vienna 2008

Anna Auer, Uwe Schögl

After two years of intensive preparations, it finally happened: from 6 to 8 November 2008, the first Viennese photography congress was held in the Austrian Academy of Sciences where 120 persons came together in the theatre to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of our society with us.

Among those present were artists and photographers as well as many other people from the fields of science, art, the business world and diplomacy, in addition to all those sponsors without whom this three day event and the production of our catalogue would not have been possible. The following public institutions were represented: the Federal Ministry for Education, Art and Culture; the Federal Ministry for Science and Research; Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Vienna; the City of Vienna's organization for sponsoring the fine arts, science and research, as well as a representative of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Austria and the Uniqa Insurance Company in Vienna.

We were delighted that, in addition to the many international speakers, so many other interested persons from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Norway, Switzerland, and the USA (Matthew S. Witkovsky, Chicago who received the prestigious Vienna Artbook Award in 2008) were able to come to Vienna to create a truly multinational forum. The bibliophile book tables – staffed by the Fotohof *edition*, the publisher of our catalogue, as well as Lia Wolf's bookshop – were especially in demand during the breaks.

At the very beginning, the roundtable discussion on "The Art Market for Photography Exhibitions", chaired by Peter Weiermaier, aroused the greatest interest among the audience. The questions concerning the connections between art production, the market, and exhibitions and their interactions were invested with particular relevance faced with the economic crisis that was starting to make itself felt. The series of presentations were organized following a loose chronology of photography (from the 19th to 20th century) and offered sufficient time for the stimulating discussions that the audience participated in with great enthusiasm.

A particular highlight for our guests was an exclusive welcome for the ESHPh's delegates in the Albertina on the first evening: After a warm greeting from the Albertina's director Klaus Albrecht Schröder, the institute's photo curator Maren Gröning gave us an unforgettable tour through the *Infinite Ice* exhibition that was being shown at the time.

Another memorable event was an exclusive, members-only, visit to Vienna's Academy of Fine Arts (Semper Depot) on the second evening. After his greeting, the deputy director Matthias Hermann presented a video with the – mainly conceptual – work of his students to provide a refreshing impression of the art of photography. Monika Knofler, head of the engraving collection, presented the best of 19th century photography from the Academy's own collection of photographs.

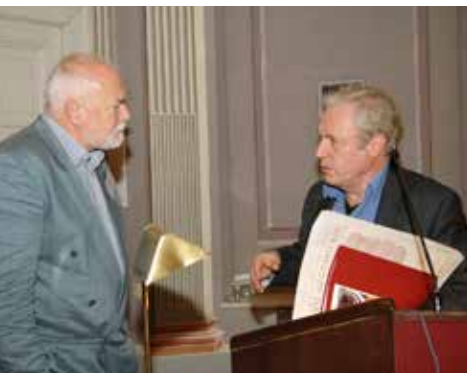


Austrian Academy of Sciences  
(lecture-theatre)



Book table Lia Wolf's bookshop





Hans Christian Adam and Thomas Friedrich (G)



Liz Wells (UK), Monika Schwärzler (A)



Rolf H. Krauss and Christoph Schaden (G)



Michael Pritchard (UK) and Luke Gartlan (UK)

But, what would a symposium be without a festive dinner? And that is why most of the delegates accepted the Lord Mayor of the City of Vienna's invitation to a typical Viennese restaurant & beer garden, where a number of new plans for the future of the ESHPH were forged with the help of the fine wines and cheerful atmosphere, with pleasure. After this high-spirited evening of convivial drinking, a surprising number of participants made it to the final event on the programme: A visit to the Museum on Demand (MUSA) where we were greeted by Berthold Ecker, head of the *Mutations II* exhibition. This was followed by the third and final roundtable discussion, moderated by Gabriele Hofer, where the three young curators Ruth Horak, Ingrid Hölzl and Gabriele Rothemann gave accounts of the wide spectrum of photography in the 21st century and its strategies.

A successful congress with 16 lecturers, 3 podium discussions and numerous newly-established contacts came to an end.

Last but not least, we would like to express our thanks for the awards we were presented during the Viennese photography congress. We received splendid diplomas from internationally recognized institutions: Professor Adrian-Silvan Ionescu (The National University of Arts, Bucharest) presented us with a brevet together with a medal of Carol Pop de Szathmari; the president of the Photographic Society (Vienna) Werner Sobotka awarded us a second brevet. During a ceremony organized by the Vienna Chamber of Commerce and the Vienna Convention Bureau held on 29 April 2009 we received an especially honourable award, signed by the Mayor and Governor of the City and Province of Vienna, for the excellent organization and realization of our three-day congress. Our pleasure at receiving this recognition is, at the same time, an incentive for our activities in the years to come.

We have received letters from all over the world thanking us for this congress and the echo in the press was equally positive. Press reports, as well as snapshots taken during the three days of the congress, can be found under: [www.donau-uni.ac.at/eshph](http://www.donau-uni.ac.at/eshph)

Our anniversary volume *Jubilee – 30 Years ESHPH* is available:  
 ESHPH, Fleischmarkt 16/2/2/31, A-1010 Vienna, Austria  
 Email: [office.eshph@aon.at](mailto:office.eshph@aon.at), phone: +43 (1) 513 71 96

Fotohof *edition*  
 Erhardplatz 3, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria  
 Email: [fotohof@fotohof.at](mailto:fotohof@fotohof.at), phone: 43 (0) 662 849296

UK/USA: distributors via Fotohof *edition*



Alistair Crawford (UK)



Maren Gröning (A) of the Albertina with A.S. Ionescu (RU)



Dainius Junevicius (LT) and Steven F. Joseph (B)



Anna Auer and Klaus Albrecht Schröder (A)



At the Museum On Demand (MUSA), left to right: Gabriele Rotheman, Gunda Achleitner, Thomas Licek, Gabriele Hofer, Ruth Horak, Anna Auer, Ingrid Hölzl, Uwe Schögl, Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Berthold Ecker, Erich und Traudl Lessing



Visit to Vienna's Academy of Fine Arts (Semper Depot)



Adrian-Silvan Ionescu (RU) and Monika Knofler (A)



Ulla Fischer-Westhauser (A)

# Wall. Photo. Book.

**Christoph Schaden** *Everyone will tell you a different story. It's all just a memory now, a history book.*

John Gossage

On the occasion of the preparations for the celebrations commemorating 9 November 1989, the Berlin Wall has, once again, become the centre of focus of a worldwide audience. The controversy between the political decision makers in the German capital over a convincing concept for remembering the day “The Wall” fell has revealed a conflict in dealing with the preserved relics, which in their totality have remained an unpleasant reminder of the calamity of the Cold War, that has still not been resolved. “Should The Wall come down, or be left standing?” With this question, which only superficially appears polemical, the journalist Mechthild Küpper summed up the diffuse mixture of ideas for a suitable memorial concept in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in February 2009. Her question was not simply targeted at the remnants of the “barrier against fascism” but also the visual remembrance paradigms that are relevant in this case. “Discussions on all the plans of the Berlin Senate, all the agreements between Berlin and the federal government, all the highly-praised plans, are once again being held on Bernauer Strasse: precisely there, where the pictures of the construction of the Wall that made the greatest impact were taken on 13 August 1961, where old women sprang – in desperation – into the safety sheets of the West Berlin fire brigade in order to reach freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Twenty years after the fall of The Wall, the question of which concrete images can create a retrospective impression of this monument that is so unique to supplement the partial reconstruction of the blockades and concepts for memorial sites where preservation, tourist and political interests have to be considered as well as the perspectives of the victims of the Wall and their families, has become increasingly virulent. And this, especially because a new generation lacks collective graphic impressions from their own personal experience.<sup>2</sup>

In this case, the focus must naturally be aimed at the visual media in general and photography, in particular that, with its documentary mission of remembrance, must try to position this symbolically charged object in a concrete perception.<sup>3</sup> This essay therefore intends to give an overview of photographically illustrated books which, in spite of their primarily memorial function, are in the position of reflecting on the relevant positions of the time in a compressed form. David Company stated that: “Historically, the connection between photography and the book is closest when dealing with so-called *Straight Photography*; completely frontal and direct: Here, the subject stands in the foreground to such an extent that the photograph appears to be not only a picture but literally cuts out the object or person. A book with such

1 Mechthild Küpper, “Streit ums Gedenken. Immer Ärger um die Mauer”, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20.2.2009; cf. Küpper, “Gedenken an den Mauerbau. ‚Instinktlos, geschichtslos, machtersessen‘”, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13.8.2008.

2 Historical reviews were published on the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. However, their interpretation is limited to oral sources and written documentation. Cf. Frederick Taylor, *Die Mauer. 13. August 1961*

*bis 9. November 1989*, Munich 2009.

3 See the exemplary publication: *Die Berliner Mauer 1961-1989. Fotografien aus den Beständen des Landesarchivs Berlin*. Ausgewählt von Volker Viergutz, 3rd ed., Berlin 2008.

4 David Company, “‘Fast dasselbe?’ Gedanken zum sammelnden Fotografen”, in: Thomas Weski, Emma Dexter, *Cruel and Tender. Zärtlich und grausam – Fotografie und das Wirkliche*, exh. cat., Museum Ludwig Cologne,



pictures becomes a collection of objects as well as a collection of images. It assumes the function of an archive, catalogue or atlas.”<sup>4</sup> The spectrum of functions that the photobook hopes to achieve can be interpreted in an ideal manner in the case of the wall separating the two sections of Berlin. The following comments are intended to give a first overview – without laying any claims to completeness.<sup>5</sup>

### Newsflash

In September 1961, the Federal Ministry for All-German Affairs in Bonn and Berlin reacted to the GDR government’s barricading measures of the previous month with a high-circulation brochure.<sup>6</sup> The hand-written title *Berlin, 13. August* made it absolutely clear that the publication, with a telegraphed newsflash from the upi agency and a photo of a Russian soldier in front of the Brandenburg Gate on the cover, was not merely intended to convey factual information but also an impression of the feelings and opinions of the time. While the texts gave a detailed chronology of the events “of August 1961”, the photographic illustrations, from various photographers, demonstrated absolutely intentional standpoints.<sup>7</sup> In addition to several shots taken from above showing the cordoning off of the inner-urban sector border at the central places, the brochure also contained a number of pictures that were to be interpreted allegorically showing the involuntary separation of the population with waving groups of people on both sides of the wall and border barriers. The captions, with their agitating jargon, took on the function of a bill of indictment and did not balk at comparisons with concentration camps. “How much longer

will the Berliners have to remain separated? How long will inhumanity triumph over human dignity, injustice over justice, Communist terror over liberty?”<sup>8</sup> During the Cold War, the symbolic character of the “Berlin Wall” as evidence of the barbaric socialist system, increasingly obstructed the view of the construction that actually did exist.<sup>9</sup> The books published in the 1960s and 1970s, reflect this tendency exemplarily in the form of commitment-like statements of West German positions. Here, the medium of photography served as reconstructing, affirmative evidence, at best.<sup>10</sup>

## GRENZBEGEHUNG —161 KILOMETER IN WEST-BERLIN—



FOTOGRAFIERT VON HANS W. MENDE

NICOLAI

*Grenzbegehung 161 Kilometer in Westberlin.  
Fotografiert von Hans W. Mende. Nicolai,  
Berlin 1980*

Ostfildern-Ruit 2003, 33.

<sup>5</sup> My sincere thanks to Thomas Friedrich, Berlin, for his suggestions and research assistance.

<sup>6</sup> Berlin 13. August, Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen (ed.), Bonn, Berlin 9. 1961.

<sup>7</sup> The photographs are from berlin bild, federal office at the press and information office at the federal government, dpa, Camillo Fischer, Heinz Gräf,

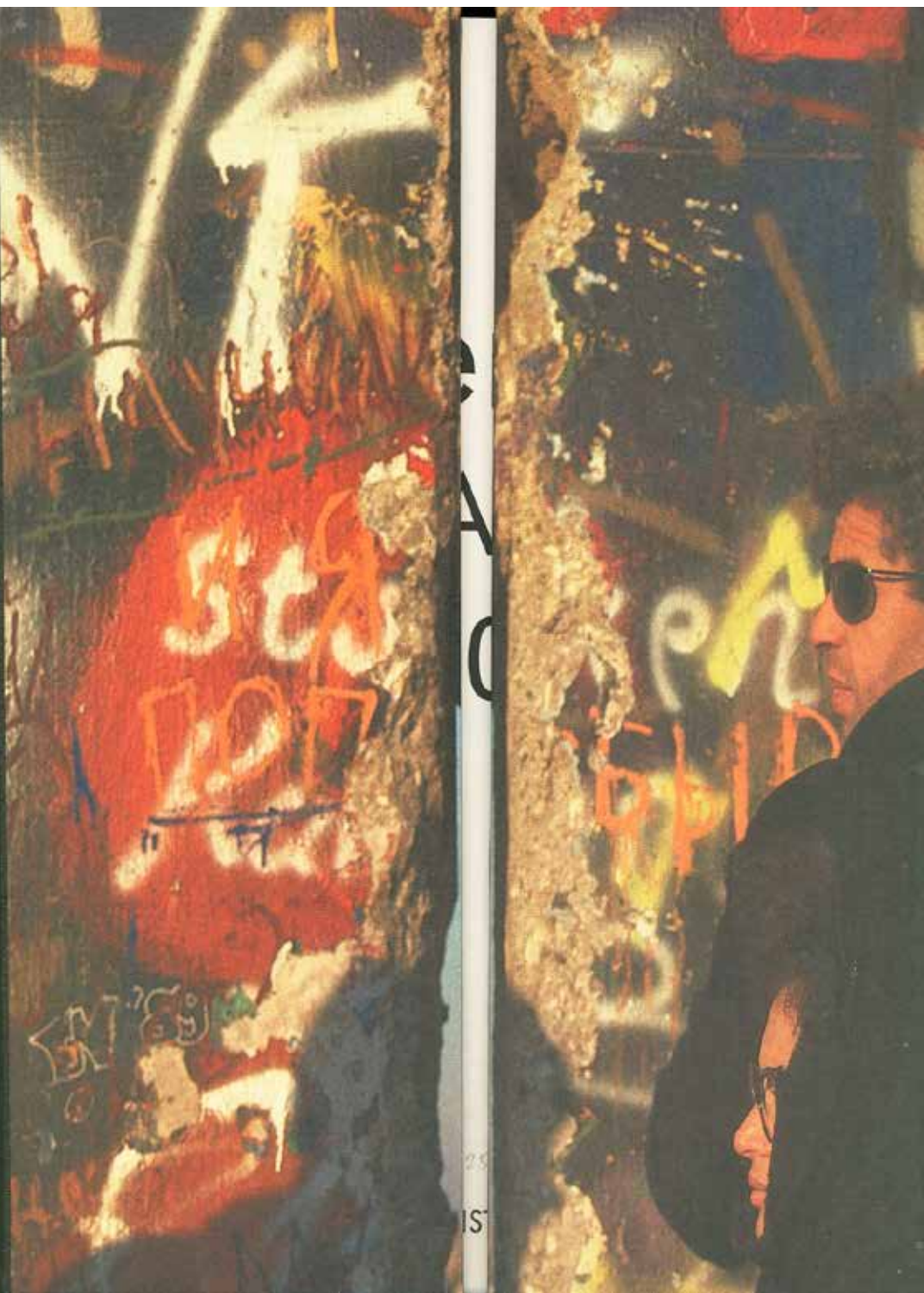
Joachim G. Jung and Kindermann & Co.

<sup>8</sup> See note 7.

<sup>9</sup> The Wall was a taboo topic in East Germany; photographing the “barrier against fascism” was a punishable offence.

<sup>10</sup> See Axel Springer, *Von Berlin aus gesehen. Zeugnisse eines engagierten Deutschen*, Nachwort von Karl Theodor Freiherr von und zu Guttenberg; Hans Wallenberg (ed.), Gütersloh, Stuttgart 1971.





Viola Sandberg, Ulrich Herold (ed.),  
Berlin, 13. August 1990, Berlin 1990.

### Periphery / Graffiti

The first evidence of the Wall's discovery for the purposes of a photobook comes from the beginning of the 1980s. The West Berlin photographer Hans W. Mende's book, illustrated with black-and-white photographs, under the title of *Grenzbegehung. 161 Kilometer in West-Berlin* (Border Inspection. 161 Kilometres in West Berlin) was published by the Nicolai Verlag around 1980.<sup>11</sup> In his preface to the volume, the renowned photo-historian Janos Frecot initially justified the publication with the observation that this was, first of all, "not a book about 'the Wall'".<sup>12</sup> In retrospect, the photographer's cautious, almost timid, approach from the periphery and outskirts of the city can be described as symptomatic. Without exception, *Grenzbegehung* unites quiet, poetic landscapes and views of the city with motifs of railway tracks, canals, and industrial areas in a manner that no longer has the substance of an accusation but conveys an impression of everyday life. And, not least, the documentary character of the book is evidence of an attempt to live with "The Wall" as a strategy for survival. Frecot writes: "Anybody who lives here for a while, learns to get on with it."<sup>13</sup>

11 Hans W. Mende, *Grenzbegehung. 161 Kilometer in West-Berlin*, foreword by Janos Frecot, Berlin 1980.

12 Mende, 1980 (note 11) 5.

13 Mende, 1980 (note 11) 8.

Philipp J. Bösel & Burkhard Maus, "Berlin Wall 1984 seen from the West", from the project *Die vermessene Mauer* (The surveyed Wall).



The large-format book by the US American photographer Leland Rice from 1987, entitled *Illusions and allusions*, is characterized by a completely different approach.<sup>14</sup> The king-size paperback is the catalogue of an exhibition held at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art showing colour photographs of details of graffiti drawings on the surface of the Berlin Wall. Rice justified his aesthetic artistic approach with a programmatic reference to Brassai's 1958 photobook *Parisian Graffiti* that he quotes at the beginning: "The wall gives its voice to that part of man which, without it, would be condemned to silence.... The remainder of a primitive existence of which the wall may be one of the most faithful mirrors." In the accompanying essay, the renowned author Van Deren Coke created a connection between Leland Rice's artistic process and "Minimalism and Color Field paintings as represented in the work of artists ranging from Jules Olitski to Brice Marden."<sup>15</sup> Analogous to the models of graffiti, the artistic character of this work on the border mutates to an artistic creation that should be assessed according to artistic criteria.

### Foreboding

In the second half of the 1980s, the atmosphere of Berlin, pervaded by gloominess and agony, became an increasingly prominent subject of several artistic photographic publications. In 1987, for example, the US American photographer John Gossage – who had been invited by the *Werkstatt für Fotografie* in Kreuzberg to spend some time in the divided city in 1982 – published a photobook, in a limited edition of 500 copies with the emblematic title of *Stadt des Schwarz* (City of Black), with 18 large-format nocturnal pictures of East and West Berlin.<sup>16</sup> "They exist in tension between what we know about to be a historical fraught locus in time and a sense of unlocated dread, a psychic timelessness" was the way Jane Livingston described it in her programmatic foreword. As an artistic object, the publication develops an almost hypnotic intensity that tries to get to the bottom of the atmospheric reality of the divided city on the narrow grade of the surreal.<sup>17</sup> This engrossment makes it hardly a surprise that John Gossage could not tear himself away from the subject even after the Wall had been opened. In 2004, he published the bulky photobook *Berlin in the Time of the War* that, retrospectively, portrayed a monumental picture of the decade of the 1980s. The tome has the effect of an apocalyptic signal.<sup>18</sup>

14 Leland Rice, *Illusions and allusions. Photographs of the Berlin Wall*, essay by Van Deren Coke, San Francisco 1987.

15 Rice, 1987 (note 14).

16 John Gossage, *Stadt des Schwarz*, Washington DC 1987.

17 "The Berlin Wall gave Gossage the opportunity to add a historical and political dimension to his work, albeit in a deeply poetic, idiosyncratic way": Martin Parr, Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History*, London 2006, vol. 2. 64.

18 John Gossage, *Berlin in the Time of The Wall*, Hong Kong 2004.



One recognizes a similar agony in *Waffenruhe* (Ceasefire), probably the most influential illustrated book on the subject of The Wall in the history of photography, that Michael Schmidt published in the Nishen Verlag in 1987. His black-and-white photos in this volume also evoke internal pictures of the imagination strongly characterized by stagnation and signs of disintegration. Reflecting on the series of pictures, the British essayist Gerry Badger suggested that “Only the Wall – die Mauer – remains solid and potentially enduring – a symbol of entrapment, certainly, but in this city of contradictions, perhaps also the symbol of the ultimate Schopenhauerian escape.”<sup>19</sup> Volker Heinze’s photobook *Ahnung* (Foreboding) also developed out of the circle around the Berlin *Werkstatt für Fotografie* and was published by Nishen Verlag in a limited edition of 800 in 1989. In a deliberately subjective manner, creating space for lack of definition, partially obstructed views and toppling perspectives, Heinze depicts a bizarre scenario of disorientation. This time, the pictures are characterized by an earthy colourfulness and the volume is completely without any text. The title *Ahnung* seems to say it all.

*Stadt des Schwarz. Waffenruhe. Ahnung.* From today’s perspective, all three volumes can be regarded as having a great intuitive strength that finds the appropriate graphic and editorial concept for the condition of collective stagnation. And, last but not least, they seem to foresee the approaching collapse with an impressive sense of anticipation.

### No-man’s-land / First Reflections

“The Wall” became historical the moment the border was opened on 9 November 1989. In an act of liberation, the inhuman construction was physically conquered and, as a result, became an object of a material destruction itself. Soon afterwards, in 1990/91, several photographic books depicted the dramatic occurrences. For example, in his slender paperback *BERLIN WALL. 33 Fotografien vom Zerfall der Mauer* (33 Photographs of the Fall of the Wall), the East Berlin photographer Jochen Knobloch, who had resettled in Hamburg in 1983, interprets his pictorial work as a personal “cry of joy”.<sup>20</sup> In his deliberately small-format colour pictures, Knobloch reflects on the events that took place between 19 November 1989 and

19 Parr, Badger, 2006 (note 17) 65.

20 Jochen Knobloch, *BERLIN WALL. 33 Fotografien 1989/90*, Berlin 1990; cf. Berlin, November 1989. *14 Fotografien aus Ost und West erleben die Öffnung der Mauer*, Exhibition of the Goethe-Institut and of the Senate of Berlin, Berlin 1990.





20 September 1990. The sumptuous publication *Berlin 13. August 1990*, that shows a multi-faceted picture of the changed reality on the anniversary of the construction of The Wall, is also anchored in its time. The sophisticated book project, which is designed in the form of an opened wall, was edited by Viola Sandberg and Ulrich Herold and has contributions by 30 photographers and eight renowned text authors.<sup>21</sup> The variety of the perspectives, themes and opinions are paradigmatic for the newly-gained freedom. The photographer Bettina Flitner's book *Reportage aus dem Niemandsland* (Report from No Man's Land) also deals with differing points of view. The black-and-white photos in the paperback position everyday protagonists of the demolished scenarios – self-assured – along the border strip of the Wall. This is a conscious form of real staging – one of Flitner's characteristic concepts – where the text quotations of those affected provide an authentic spectrum of the opinions of the so fundamentally changed living conditions.<sup>22</sup>

“Five years after the opening of the Berlin Wall, there is no cause for nostalgia, but there are reasons to make a closer inspection. The historic experiences that are stored in the photographs only become visible from a certain distance.”<sup>23</sup> In the preface of the 1994 book *Grenzwechsel* (Border Change), the photo-historian Andreas Krase calls for a new method of reception when dealing with the Berlin Wall. This is followed, in an “emphatically objective documentary manner”, by the black-and-white photographs taken by Karl-Ludwig Lange between 1973 and 1990 in the tradition of the urban photographer, from the point of view of the stroller. Oscillating between the East and the West, pages full of views of everyday life are placed opposite each other, city spaces and groups of people are shown. In retrospective, “The Wall” makes itself felt here as a restrictive control system. On the other hand, in 2002, the Dutch photographer Kim Bouwy devoted herself to a contemporary aspect of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The 85 sensitive colour photographs in her photobook *Niemandsland - Berlin ohne die Mauer* (No Man's Land - Berlin without the Wall) investigate the uncovered terrain of the former death zone.<sup>24</sup> Her point of departure is the ‘past in the present’.<sup>25</sup> In 2005, Brian Rose took a similar approach with the publication of *The Lost Border. The Landscape of the Iron Curtain*.<sup>26</sup> In the style of the visual concepts of US American New Color Photography, the photobook unites decidedly elegiac colour photos of the inter-German border from the 1980s



Bettina Flitner,  
*Reportage aus dem Niemandsland*,  
Berlin 1991.

21 Viola Sandberg, Ulrich Herold (eds.), *Berlin 13. August 1990*, Berlin 1990. The participating photographers included Kurt Buchwald, Christian Borchert, Frank Thiel, Roger Melis, Helga Paris, Hans W. Mende, Harald Hauswald, Evelyn Richter and Sybille Bergemann.

22 Bettina Flitner, *Reportage aus dem Niemandsland*, Berlin 1991.

23 Andreas Krase, in: Karl Ludwig Lange, *Grenzwechsel, Berlin. Potsdam 1973-1990*, Berlin 1994, 6. Lange published an additional photobook

on the subject in 2005: Karl-Ludwig Lange, *Topographie der Berliner Mauer 1973-1990*, Berlin 2005.

24 Kim Bouwy, *Niemandsland - Berlin ohne die Mauer*, Amsterdam 2002.

25 Flip Bool, Germany since 1945. *Through the Eye of Dutch Photographers*, Breda 2008.

26 Brian Rose, *The Lost Border. The Landscape of the Iron Curtain*, Princeton 2005.





and 1990s with the main emphasis on Berlin. It is clear that one can allege that the publication pursued a mental process of bereavement; the novelist Anthony Bailey expressly called his flanking text a “Requiem”.

### The Surveyed Wall

The longer 9 November 1989 lies behind us, the stronger photographic projects showing the Berlin Wall in detail as the subject of their investigation come to the foreground. The artistic documentary efforts made by the US American sculptor Shinkichi Tajiri, who was called to the Berlin University of Arts in 1969 and considered the “barrier against fascism” as the equivalent of the Great Wall of China, must be mentioned here.<sup>27</sup> His panoramic publication *The Wall / Die Mauer / Le Mur*, which was issued by a Dutch publisher in Baarlo in 1971 in an

edition of only 100 copies, is probably the first attempt to grasp the Berlin Wall complex in its entirety. “This book attempts to contain the entire 43 kilometers of the Berlin WALL which will be 10 years this month.”<sup>28</sup> Most of the 600 contact prints are taken from a slightly raised position and give an overview of the real length of the inter-Berlin Wall. With his method of a soberly additive stocktaking, Tajiri consciously refers to the conceptual artist books of Ed Ruscha.<sup>29</sup> In his oeuvre, “The Wall” retrospectively metamorphoses into an unintentional work of art.

At least one other documentary project that is in planning and is unique in its conceptual stringency and reconstructing precision must be mentioned. It is the photobook *Berliner Mauer 1984 von Westen aus gesehen* (Berlin Wall 1984 seen from the West) by the two Cologne photographers



Shinkichi Tajiri, „DE MUUR“, Fotokabinetten Demeentemuseum, Den Haag 2002.

Philipp Bösel and Burkhard Maus.<sup>30</sup> As the title indicates, in the summer of the Orwellian year 1984, when the GDR erected a second barrier between the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz, Bösel and Maus systematically covered an 18.3 kilometre long section of the Wall. The result is an accumulation of 1161 black-and-white photographs in a 4.5 x 6 cm format. One by one, metre by metre, the individual concrete sections of the border barrier were captured with stoic determination. On the receptive level, this series of pictures literally

27 Thomas Deecke, “Shinkichi Tajiri erklärt die Berliner Mauer zur Land Art”, in: *Kunstzeitung* 09/2005.

28 Shinkichi Tajiri, *The Wall. Die Mauer. Le Mur*, Baarlo 1971. Tajiri later published a series of works on the subject of The Wall. Cf. Tajiri., *De Muur*, Den Haag 2003.

29 Boot, 2008 (note 24).

30 The work was shown in the Art Museum Aarhus, Denmark in 1985-86.

An exhibition in Paris is planned in October-November 2009. Current information can be found at: <http://www.enigmart.de/projekte/mauer/index.html>. [05/05/2009]



makes an exact study of the Berlin Wall possible for the first time. In the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Thomas Köster ascertained that “In addition, the photos open up an archaeological stratum of the

German-German past that had become buried in the transfigured perspective of the younger generation. Hidden behind the bushes, the curiously old-fashioned cars, behind crosses and the scaffolding of observation platforms, we find another wall different from the one one remembers falling in 1989.”<sup>31</sup> In this way, the real appearance of “The Wall” will increasingly come into the focus of the future generations. The task seems to be clear: It is necessary to transport the symbol back to the concrete perception. And therefore, a basal collective concept of remembrance is founded in the concern of a surveyed wall as documented so vividly by Bösel and Maus. Whether as an archive, a catalogue or an atlas: Faced with the historic importance of the Berlin Wall, it stands to reason that in future the medium of the photobook will assume a key role.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas Köster, “Die vermessene Mauer”, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8.5.2008.

# Return of the Suppressed: Pictorialism's Revenge

**A. D. Coleman**

Recent events as far-flung as the record-setting sale at auction in 2006 of a gem from Edward Steichen's pictorialist period in New York City<sup>1</sup> and the Vancouver Art Gallery's 2008 mounting of a survey of pictorialist work from North America, the U.K., Europe, Japan, and Australia<sup>2</sup> demonstrate that the photographic ideas gathered under the loose heading of pictorialism have climbed out of the dustbin of history, brushed themselves off, and stepped into the mainstream once again. Herewith some consideration of what this major international movement in photography meant in its own day, and what it signifies now in terms of contemporary photographic theory, historianship, and practice.

Pictorialism originally emerged from the struggle to establish photography as not only a useful tool for functional description and visual documentation but as a creative medium, accessible to the mark of hand and the mind and a suitable vehicle for what, speaking broadly, we might call the concerns of the poet. Its committed practitioners produced bodies of work of different specific gravities that, like most, have gone in and out of fashion collectively and individually. The early 20th-century proponents of this mode among critics and theorists — most

notably, in the United States, Alfred Stieglitz, Sadakichi Hartmann, and Charles Caffin, all three primarily associated with the journal *Camera Work* — led what was arguably the first serious critical and theoretical discourse around photography, with pictorialist praxis as its primary reference point

Pictorialism built up a head of steam in the last quarter of the 19th century and reached its first heyday with the work of Stieglitz and the Photo-Secession in the U.S., the Linked Ring in the U.K., and their counterparts on the continent and in Japan and elsewhere during the period 1905-25. Thereafter, sustained by the international camera-club network, it endured sturdily



Gertrude Käsebier, 1852-1934, photographer.  
"Sunshine in the house", 1913.  
Prints & Photographs Division,  
Library of Congress.

1 On February 14, 2006, at auction at Sotheby's in New York City, Steichen's „The Pond — Moonlight” from 1904 sold for \$2.9 million U.S.

2 "TruthBeauty: Pictorialism and the Photograph as Art, 1845-1945," presented at the Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia, Canada from February 2 to April 27, 2008. The exhibition was organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery in collaboration with George Eastman House International

Museum of Photography and Film, Rochester, NY, and curated by Alison Nordström, Curator of Photographs, George Eastman House. Subsequently it was mounted at the GEH, Feb. 7 through May 31, 2009. See the catalogue: Alison Nordström, *TruthBeauty: Pictorialism and the Photograph as Art, 1845-1945*, Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, Douglas & McIntyre, 2008. This is a considerably revised version of a lecture delivered at that venue on Thursday, March 13, 2008, in conjunction with the exhibition.

for another decade-plus, then gradually waned into (mostly) mere craft exercise until the revival of its methods that resulted from the formalization of post-secondary photography education starting in the mid-1960s.

As that practice evolved from the end of the 19th century through the mid-20th century, its practitioners insisted on using the entire spectrum of available tools, materials, and processes of their medium. They did not function as revivalists, in that they did not recuperate or persist in using such already obsolesced technologies as the daguerreotype, the ambrotype, or the wet-collodion process. Instead, they felt free to experiment widely with all of the then-current processes, such as calotypy, cyanotypy, gum-printing, platinum printing, bromoil, and Autochrome color. They also treated the negative and print as objects not held sacrosanct, but instead altered manually via such devices as scratching, hand-coloring, and even the addition of text.

The pictorialist movement served as the seedbed for what we call the „alternative processes“ movement.<sup>3</sup> We live today in the context of what I call an “open photography,” whose hallmarks include the remarkable fact that the entire creative toolkit of the medium — comprising virtually all of its tools, materials, processes, and styles, from the very beginning through the immediate present — has been recuperated and is available as a matter of course to the contemporary practitioner. And one can see the influence of “alternative processes” and/or pictorialist ways of thought in works by picture-makers not normally associated with those ideas: in Robert Frank’s collages and mixed-media pieces, in Mary Ellen Mark’s platinum prints, in Mike and Doug Starn’s taped-together celluloid assemblages, in John Dugdale’s cyanotypes, in Jeff Wall’s restaging of a Hokusai woodblock print.

More broadly stated, the pictorialists saw photography as a means rather than an end in itself. They therefore felt free to experiment and play not only with the tools, materials, and processes with which they addressed their chosen subject matter but also with the subject matter itself: to orchestrate scenarios, arrange elaborate still lifes, and otherwise alter and even determine the reality at which they pointed their lenses.

The pictorialists shared this underlying set of assumptions regarding the nonjudgmental relationship to production methods with no less a figure than the Hungarian emigré artist and educator László Moholy-Nagy, who founded the photography and film program at the Bauhaus in the Weimar Republic between the wars and in 1937 transplanted both himself and that program to Chicago’s Institute of Design as Europe lurched toward catastrophe. Moholy believed in laying out the entire toolkit of the medium for students, requiring them to experiment with and master numerous approaches thereto and consider it infrastructurally.

3 Unless we’re prepared to define as „antiquarian“ any living visual artists who practice fresco and tempera painting, draw with charcoal and lead pencil, sculpt in marble or cast in bronze, and any musicians who persist in performing on violins and harpsichords and tympani and flutes, then I consider Lyle Rexer’s use of the term “antiquarian” for photographers who choose to work in processes less than 170 years old merely glib and, pre-

cisely because it’s catchy, less than useful. See Lyle Rexer, *Photography’s Antiquarian Avant-Garde: The New Wave in Old Processes*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002.



Moholy, perhaps photography's most archetypal European modernist, had no revivalist tendencies; and, as a consequence of his commitment to modernism, his teaching did not include engaging with the outmoded printmaking processes that several earlier generations had explored and some still practiced. But he too believed that the photographic negative and print represented raw materials with which photographers and artists could and should play — via photomontage and photocollage, the addition of hand-drawn elements and applied color, the inclusion of text, and other methods. He also emphasized photography as an ideational process, and the creation of structures meant to be photographed. Moholy's pedagogy became the foundation on which post-secondary photography education in North America got built for the late 1930s on.

I endorse that set of attitudes, which I see as common to both pictorialism and to the European (not the U.S.) version of modernism. I view it as a necessary and healthy counterbalance to the U.S. version of modernism, a rigorously formalist and reductive line of inquiry that became known as "straight" or "pure" photography in the States, familiar to us primarily from the work and writings of the Group f/64, especially its most prominent members, Edward Weston and Ansel Adams. They abominated not only any form of handwork on print or negative (save for spotting of defects and selenium toning) but even such inherently photographic techniques as solarization, grain enlargement, in-camera multiple exposure, and true photomontage (as distinct from photocollage). They also anathematized directorial photography (beyond adjusting the pose of a nude model) and eschewed any relation to text aside from the minimally annotative caption offering date and place and literal identification of the subject.

This represented an extremely narrow and confining relationship to the possibilities of photographic picture-making.<sup>4</sup> While acknowledging purism's developmental and evolutionary value as a counterbalancing paradigm of photographic practice, and considering that a valuable and fruitful experiment to have conducted and a fully legitimate mode within which to work, one can also recognize that from the day of its ascendancy circa 1940 to its eventual waning in the 1970s photographers in the U.S. chafed and suffered under those strictures.

Notably, many eventual modernists — including Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Steichen, Imogen Cunningham, Edward Weston, and Ansel Adams — began their careers in photography as ardent pictorialists. Some simply melded elements of the two; think here of Pierre Dubreuil, Paul Outerbridge, and Josef Sudek. Others (Cunningham, E. O. Hoppé) evolved from one mode to the other without apparent crisis. But a few — notably, and peculiarly, almost all of them from the U.S. — felt it necessary to renounce their former commitment and publicly don the mantle of puritanical Luther-like heretic. Most vehement among these were Weston and Adams.

<sup>4</sup> It's pertinent to note here that, starting in fall 2008, gelatin-silver printmaking, the mainstay of modernist photography and its unquestioned vehicle of choice for imagery, and the only printmaking process approved by the Group f/64, will be taught as an "alternative process" at the Rochester Institute of Technology.



F(red) Holland Day, 1864-1933. Untitled, 1906.  
[Nude boy in rocky landscape, arms raised].  
Prints & Photographs Division,  
Library of Congress.

The U.S. version of modernism was represented by the Group f/64, spearheaded by Weston and Adams, supported by some of its devotees in the then-small museum world of photography, specifically the influential historian and curator Beaumont Newhall and his wife Nancy, also a curator and writer, both of them close friends of Weston and Adams and ardent advocates of their work and their approach to praxis. This modernist cluster locked horns in the 1930s and early 1940s with the U.S. pictorialists, who found in William Mortensen their movement's most effective voice.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Group f/64's edicts are readily available. For an example of the pictorialist position at the time, see William Mortensen, "Venus and Vulcan 5. A Manifesto and a Prophecy," *Camera Craft* Vol. 41, no. 6, July 1934, 310-312.



William Mortensen, "L'Amour", ca 1936.  
Gelatin silver print, 15.5 x 14.5 cm  
Center for Creative Photography, University  
of Arizona, Tucson (USA)

For reasons I've elaborated elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> this small but influential coterie of promulgators of "straight" photography exerted unusual influence. Beaumont Newhall headed the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, a department in whose activities Adams played a prominent role and whose influence on the field internationally proved de facto if not de jure hegemonic. In victory they practiced a scorched-earth, totalitarian policy, trumpeting the theoretical and polemical premises of the "purist" position, elevating its practitioners to the pantheon, reducing the significance of the original pictorialist movement to a mere passing phase, dismissing that form's then-current practitioners out of hand, largely ignoring the European modernists with their more widely embrace approach to praxis, and purging the name of William Mortensen from the medium's history.

Yet even during the very heyday of formalist or "straight" photography in the States, which we might say lasted from 1940-1975, there was no unity. A strict „purism“ of camera usage and printing procedures certainly held sway and affected, even determined the methods of those working in the f/64 mode, in documentary, and in small-camera social commentary. But the repressed — or, in this case, the suppressed — didn't ever really have to return; it stayed around all along, bubbling along beneath the surface: Val Telberg, Clarence John Laughlin, Lotte Jacobi, Edmund Teske, Romare Bearden, Barbara Morgan, John Guttman, Carlotta Corpron, Harry Callahan, Frederick Sommer, Ruth Orkin, Henry Holmes Smith, making collages and montages and in-camera multiple exposures and "light drawings," staging events for the camera, and such.

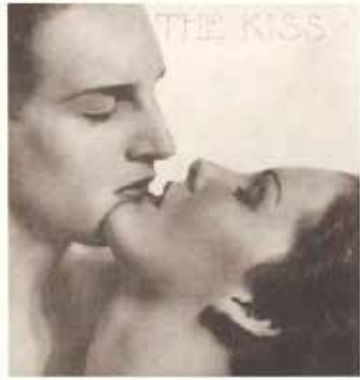
But one of the reasons Thomas S. Kuhn disowned the application of his model to a field such as ours is that in art old paradigms never die; instead, they undergo a conversion process that turns them from belief system into style. "Purism" or "straight" photography didn't demolish or permanently impeach pictorialism (or, more broadly, process experimentation); it merely marginalized it for a few decades, and only in a few countries at that. The innumerable variations now being practiced, and the freedom practitioners feel to move at will between them from project to project without apology or explanation are the distinguishing mark of contemporary photographic praxis world-wide.

As previously mentioned, the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art played a key role in the contest between pictorialism and purism or straight photography in

<sup>6</sup> See my essay, "The Impact on Photography: 'No Other Institution Even Comes Close,'" *ARTnews* 78:8 (October 1979; Museum of Modern Art Fiftieth Anniversary Issue), 102-5. Reprinted as "Photography at MoMA: A Brief History" in my book *Tarnished Silver: After the Photo Boom, Essays and Lectures 1979-1989*, Midmarch Arts Press, 1996, 98-106.

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Phillips, "The Judgment Seat of Photography," October 22 (Fall 1982), 27-63.

<sup>8</sup> Galassi served under Szarkowski from 1981 until the latter's retirement in 1991, at which time he replaced him as director of the MoMA department. While Galassi has rectified some of the MoMA department's notable omissions (for example, through major retrospectives of the work of Manuel Alvarez Bravo and Roy DeCarava), he does not seem inclined to revisit the 1960s through the 1980s in order to reconsider approaches from that period that his predecessor disregarded. Nor has he evidenced interest in



William Mortensen, "The Kiss", ca 1930.  
Gelatin silver print, 15.5 x 14.5 cm  
Center for Creative Photography, University  
of Arizona, Tucson (USA)

the 1930s and 1940s. Christopher Phillips has rightly called that curatorial position at MoMA during a certain period in the past „the judgment seat of photography.“<sup>7</sup> It hasn't qualified as such since the mid-1980s, and its current occupant, Peter Galassi, does not seem possessed of anything resembling a substantial or distinctive curatorial vision,<sup>8</sup> so the MoMA photo department's authority has decreased in almost direct proportion to the expansion of its collection and its exhibition space. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, between 1970 and the present the number of museum departments of photography, augmented by photo-specific museums, multiplied so exponentially in North America and elsewhere that the power once concentrated at and exercised by MoMA has become dispersed and subdivided internationally among a variety of institutions.

This makes it hard to convey to a younger generation the impact of MoMA's positions on photography not just in the U.S. but around the world up through 1985. Edward Steichen, who took over the curatorship of the department from Beaumont Newhall after World War Two, did not disown his pictorialist roots but showed little interest in any subsequent form of experimental or non-„straight“ photography. John Szarkowski, who died in 2007, succeeded Edward Steichen in that curatorial role in 1963; he concentrated the department's attention on a later iteration of that „purist“ formalism, reflecting the influence of the art critic Clement Greenberg, and successfully prevented his department from paying substantive attention to virtually any form of photographic process experimentation, directorial efforts, or other explorations during three decades that witnessed a proliferation of such work.

Yet even after his relinquishing of the „judgment seat“ in 1991 Szarkowski felt compelled — as late as 2000 — to attack Mortensen and anyone who advocated reconsidering his contribution to the field. In a review of a slim William Mortensen monograph, the first ever produced, published by the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona,<sup>9</sup> which holds the major archive of Mortensen's work, Szarkowski savaged the Center for having the temerity to devote its resources to Mortensen. In his screed, published in the journal *Art On Paper*, he took pains to excoriate the volume's scholarly contributors, with particular attention paid to this author.<sup>10</sup> (It's worth noting that Szarkowski had been paid handsomely for curating the posthumous touring retrospective of Adams's work and authoring the accompanying monograph.)

No point in taking you through that whole debate. You can go dig up the exchange between Szarkowski, the CCP's then-director Terence Pitts, and myself;<sup>11</sup> you can find the Mortensen monograph; you can find my earlier essay about Mortensen in my 1998 book *Depth of Field*.<sup>12</sup>

exploring the breadth of photographic practice prior to the 1960s. However, Galassi has shown a number of younger photographers I would consider neo-pictorialists, or at least influenced by pictorialist practice: Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall, and Laurie Simmons, for example.

<sup>9</sup> Nancy Solomon (ed.), *William Mortensen: A Revival*, Tucson: Center for Creative Photography, 1998. My essay therein, titled "Beyond Recall: In the William Mortensen Archive," appears on pages 80-95.

<sup>10</sup> John Szarkowski, "Book Review," *Art On Paper* 3:5, May-June 1999, 69-71.

<sup>11</sup> For the letters between Szarkowski, Pitts, and myself, see *Art On Paper* 4:1, September-October 1999.

<sup>12</sup> "Conspicuous By His Absence: Concerning the Mysterious Disappearance of William Mortensen" in A. D. Coleman, *Depth of Field: Essays on Photography, Mass Media and Lens Culture*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998, 91-112.



And, in my 1976 essay on the directorial mode,<sup>13</sup> you can find the footnote that touched off what many have called the “Mortensen revival” and forced a reluctant Beaumont Newhall to mention Mortensen in the last edition of his *History of Photography*.<sup>14</sup>

My point here is that Mortensen, and the pictorialist position for which he served as spokesperson, remain controversial even today. I don’t believe in erasing influential people from history for political reasons, or self-promotional motives. So I’ve argued over the past 30-plus years for the necessity of restoring Mortensen to the history, if not placing him in the pantheon, and have pushed also for recognition of the importance of the underlying premise of pictorialism, that nonprejudicial relationship to the medium’s complete toolkit.

Contemporary photographic practice, including much work that generally gets lumped together under the rubric of postmodern photography and photo-based art, owes a major debt, almost entirely unacknowledged, to the movement known as pictorialism.

I propose that such figures as Andres Serrano, Barbara Kruger, Mike and Doug Starn, Joel-Peter Witkin, Robert Mapplethorpe, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Simmons, Jeff Koons, Sarah Charlesworth, Yasumasa Morimura, and a flock of others represent a late-20th century (and now 21st century) resurgence of pictorialism. I’ll go further, to suggest that many of the structural and stylistic tropes that postmodernism employs for the purposes that its advocates identify as “transgressive” come straight from the pictorialist toolkit.

I’m not accusing the contemporary figures I’m singling out here of consciously raiding the pictorialist cupboards, though I see no reason why they shouldn’t. But photography’s classic pictorialist period, once seriously neglected, has received a great deal of critical, historical, and curatorial attention over the past quarter-century. This imagery has returned to circulation and visibility via books and exhibitions and auctions and presence on the web. So of course it seeps into the collective unconscious, including the right brains of artists, who, as Archibald MacLeish once put it, have the same relationship to influence as a boy in an apple orchard; they take “what they have an appetite for and can carry off.”

Aside from the many pleasures that the creative output of the original pictorialists continues to offer to us all as lookers at photographs, pictorialism itself constitutes an abiding legacy in the area that, with some trepidation, I would call the conceptual.

Let me list some of the tools, materials, processes, and techniques that either originated in pictorialist practice or else became absorbed into it:

- photogrammetry;
- solarization, the Sabbatier effect;

13 “The Directorial Mode: Notes Toward a Definition,” first published in *Artforum* 15:1, September 1976, 55-61. Reprinted in A. D. Coleman, *Light Readings: A Photography Critic’s Writings, 1968-1978*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979; University of New Mexico Press, 1998, 246-57.

14 Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography: From 1839 to the Present Day*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982, 188-192.

- true photomontage — the layering of exposures either in the original negative or in the print;
- alternative processes: cyanotype, platinum printing, etc.;
- pinhole cameras, banquet cameras, homemade cameras, altered cameras, consumer cameras, and a wide variety of lenses, including some that do not render everything in sharp focus;
- the physical alteration of the negative and/or the print.

And now let me indicate some of the imagistic or content-related activities that pictorialism endorsed:

- what I identified in 1976 as the directorial mode — staging events for the camera as a general practice;
- a subset thereof, the staging of historical and/or legendary or mythical scenes, scenes from literature, etc.;
- another such subset, the creation of photographic counterparts of famous works of visual art from other media, the pictorialist version of appropriation;
- the incorporation of text into images;
- rendering the subject in less than sharp focus;
- the creation of complex still lifes;
- and the making of deliberately and specifically politically symbolic imagery.

In a nutshell, the long-suppressed photographic tendency that we know as pictorialism has returned — with a vengeance. And, as I've tried to indicate in a quick-sketch way, the creative assumptions of the original pictorialists, their production methods, and in some cases even the look of classic pictorialist work have undergone reconsideration and adoption by a wide range of contemporary practitioners, including many thought of as on the cutting edge. The pictorialist attitude has survived, and has come to thrive among us once again.

If revenge is, as some have said, a dish best eaten cold, then the resurgence of pictorialist methods and pictorialist tropes at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, at a time when purism and/or straight photography appear to have entered a stage somewhere between attenuation and entropy, represents not just survival but triumph for an approach formerly maligned by so many — including so many postmodern theorists of photography. And if, as others say, the best revenge is living well, then pictorialism presently lives very well indeed, drawing avid collectors, setting record auction prices, undergoing substantive critical and historical reconsideration, and getting itself exhibited splendidly in beautiful spaces.

So far as I know, none of the artists who originated the form still live to enjoy the vindication that this reemergence represents. But a new generation of viewers finds it rewarding to engage with their output, and a new generation of photographers and photo-based artists finds it productive to reconsider and draw from their techniques and ideas. No creative intelligence can ask for more than that.

#### Further reading

In addition the works cited in the notes, I recommend the following sources on pictorialism in the U.S. and the Department of Photographs at the Museum of Modern Art.

Peter C. Bunnell, *A Photographic Vision: Pictorial Photography, 1889-1923*, Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1980.

Charles Henry Caffin, *Photography as a Fine Art*, New York: Amphoto, 1972.

A. D. Coleman, "On the Subject of John Szarkowski: An Open Letter to the Directors and Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art," *Picture Magazine* 2:2, January 1978, unpaginated. Reprinted in A. D. Coleman, *Light Readings: A Photography Critic's Writings, 1968-1978*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979; University of New Mexico Press, 1998, 287-94.

Marianne Fulton, *Pictorialism into Modernism: The Clarence H. White School of Photography*, New York: Rizzoli, 1996.

Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Valiant Knights of Daguerre*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Margery Mann, *California Pictorialism*, San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1977.

Michel Oren, "On the 'Impurity' of Group f/64 Photography," *History of Photography*, Vol. 15, no. 2, Summer 1991, 119-27.

Christian A. Peterson, *Pictorialism in America: The Minneapolis salon of photography, 1932-1946*, Minneapolis: the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1983.

Christian A. Peterson, *After the Photo-Secession: American Pictorial Photography, 1910-1955*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.

Phillip Prodger, Patrick Daum, and Francis Ribemont, *Impressionist Camera: Pictorial Photography in Europe, 1888-1918*, London and New York: Merrell, 2006.

Michael G. Wilson and Dennis Reed, *Pictorialism in California: Photographs 1900-1940*, Santa Monica, CA: Getty Publications, 1994.

© Copyright 2008 by A. D. Coleman. All rights reserved. By permission of the author and Image/World Syndication Services, [imageworld@nearbycafe.com](mailto:imageworld@nearbycafe.com).

## THE HEINRICH KÜHN COLLECTION OF AUTOCHROME PLATES 1907-1913

*The Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library in Vienna presents a portfolio of twelve outstanding reprints of autochrome Lumière plates made by the Austrian photographer Heinrich Kuehn (Dresden 1866–1944 Innsbruck). The autochromes that were created between 1907 and 1913 show all his classic motives; pictures of children, along with still-lives, portraits and animated landscapes.*

*Medium: pigment print on Hahnemuehle fine art paper, 310 gr  
Dimensions: 14 x 18 inches, Edition: 30 + V, Box: gray linen*

*Production by Intercultural Social Project, Graz  
Distribution by Anzenberger Gallery, Vienna,  
[gallerie@anzenberger.com](mailto:gallerie@anzenberger.com) [www.anzenbergergallery.com](http://www.anzenbergergallery.com)*



Anton Josef Trcka (1893–1940), Elinor, 2 photos, 1934, gelatin silver print,  
Auction April 2009, price realised € 4,750

**DOROTHEUM**  
SEIT 1707

Palais Dorotheum

## Photography

Valuations and acceptance of  
consignments for our  
international auctions

Dorotheergasse 17, 1010 Vienna, Austria

Enquiries: Eva Königseder

Tel. +43-1-515 60-421

[eva.koenigseder@dorotheum.at](mailto:eva.koenigseder@dorotheum.at)

Catalogues: Tel. +43-1-515 60-200

[kataloge@dorotheum.at](mailto:kataloge@dorotheum.at)

Online Catalogues: [www.dorotheum.com](http://www.dorotheum.com)



# Transcontinental Lines: Migrating Images and the Production of Space

**Suzanne Paquet** The transformational power of the train and other modes of high-speed transportation on the landscape and our perception of it is legendary: the territory is changed or re-organized by the impact and passage of the lines and railways, and travellers acquire a new way to experience places and views – sideways, through the window of a high-speed vehicle (Chéroux, 1996; Corbin, 2001; Jackson, 1980; Wilson 1991). The characteristic view or vision generated by train travel not only “standardizes” the countryside – everyone sees the same thing through the window – but it also renders it distant and panoramic (Foster, 2003: 155), like a photograph. And as Louis de Cormenin said in 1852, “by a happy coincidence, photography was discovered at the very same time as the railways” (de Cormenin, 1852: 124). He added that since trains made travel easier and explorers now had a means of mechanical reproduction, “[photography], entrusted to a few intrepid practitioners, will make the world tour on our behalf, without ever having to leave our armchairs” (Ibid.). Yet while it is easy to recognize the transforming power of the railway, we tend to neglect the operative power of photographic images, perhaps because they quickly became so commonplace. More than a simple symbolic contribution or the post-operative symbolization of other modes of representation, photography – in addition to being complicit in this process that changes places into landscapes – is one of those spatial practices which, because of the way the images are used by certain political and economic players, determine the way space is configured in the West.

John Urry (2002: 148) was right to say that the middle of the 19th century “is one of those remarkable moments when the world seems to shift and a new patterning of relationships becomes irreversibly established.” While Urry sees 1840 as the magic moment when the “tourist gaze” became a component of Western modernity, I would go beyond the travel/photography link at the foundation of tourism to suggest that this was the dawning of a specific system of values and standards that affects our perception of the world, through a combined action that unfailingly (re)fashions both the world and our vision (or interpretation) of it. The link between human travel and image transmission was formed through the association of recently invented technologies. Photography and the railway – two technologies developed at the same time in the second half of the 19th century and between which close relations developed almost immediately – would become the two indissociable agents behind a logic of mobility that is, in fact, a logic of landscape. What I wish to describe here, in relation to Canada, are the means through which this phenomenon was developed and its effects.

## Emergence of a logic of landscape

In the 19th century, railway and photography were two allies in the territorial conquests that resulted in the creation of specific geographic imaginations and specific national identities.

While the train and its railroads provided a physical means of dominating territories, photography was a remarkable instrument for taking ownership of them. Henri Lefebvre (2000: 31) suggests that a society produces its space by forging and appropriating it, the space containing its symbolic representations and the representations acting on the space: “they intervene in and modify spatial textures” (Lefebvre, 2000: 42). The railway/photography interaction exemplifies the tight mesh of spatial practices and representation Lefebvre was talking about. Photography contributes to the creation of the landscape as a practice that is inherent or intimately associated with it. And the representations coincide with the practice, rather than following after it. “We should have to study not only the history of space,” adds Lefebvre, “but also the history of representations, along with that of their relationships – with each other, with practice and with ideology” (Lefebvre, 2000: 42).

Since the 19th century, Canada has been “coast to coast,” a famous concept that guaranteed national unity. And drawn from one ocean to the other, the major line of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) both physically and symbolically unified this disjointed ensemble, while also opening up the central and western territories to colonization. For a number of the coastal establishments which were originally reluctant to embrace the idea of a union, it was the promise of a railway linking them to the provinces of United Canada (Ontario and Quebec) that convinced the people and governments to join confederation between 1867 and 1873 (Waite, 1990: 344-345). And it is no exaggeration to say that it was the photographs or the train trips they took, that created the beautiful image or symbol of a coast-to-coast Canadian federation, at the very time they were also playing a fundamental role in the production of its space.

An examination of the commercial activities of the Montreal photography studio William Notman & Sons, especially in the 1870s, 80s and 90s, clearly shows what railways owe to photography and vice-versa, and what these two technologies did for Canadian unity, the fashioning of a country and its landscapes. Let us note in passing that in other dominions or emancipated British colonies, such as the United States and South Africa,<sup>1</sup> there are similar associations between train, photography, territorial conquest and the birth of the national geographic imagination at the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th. The combined action of these two developing technologies on the configuration of Canadian space can be observed by examining three aspects of the way the Notman photographs were used (or the functions they fulfilled): search for knowledge and ideology, development of the geographic imagination, and the movement of people and subsequent transformation of the territory.

<sup>1</sup> See Snyder (2002) on the United States and Foster (2003) on South Africa.

In 1871, the year that British Columbia agreed to join confederation on the promise of a rail link with the centre, photographer Benjamin Baltzly was dispatched westward by William Notman. Baltzly was to photograph the unexplored interior of BC, around the North Thompson River, for the CPR and Geological Survey, a joint federal government-CPR venture, to survey the future route of the railway and acquire detailed information about the geography and mineral wealth of the area. Alfred Selwyn was the director of the survey.

The political and economic aims of unification and territorial ascendancy were bound up with a “scientific” desire for information, in which photography played a role. Knowledge and domination went hand in hand at the end of the 19th century, and “photographs, like maps, [were] linked to the exercise of government and business” (Schwartz, 1995: 45). Thus, “insofar as knowledge is a symbolic system, an ordering of reality in all its complexity, it also appears as a representational effect that seeks to create a universe that is less enigmatic to the mind” (Tacussel, 1992: 123)<sup>2</sup>. In the organization of reality – as in any organized knowledge or system of intelligibility – representation is an important and extremely powerful tool (Tacussel, 1992: 129) – ergo the documentary and instrumental functions that scientists in many fields ascribed to photography immediately upon its invention.

Figure 1: W. M. Notman, “Nipigon Bridge (ON) on the Canadian Pacific Railway, Darkroom Car”, 1887. William Notman & Sons. Silver salts on glass, gelatine dry plate process 20 x 25 cm. McCord Museum Collection, Montreal, VIEW-1605.



In the Geological Survey, photographic images played a documentary role the same as all the other types of statements. It was an essential tool for knowledge of the terrain and consequently in the choice of the route for the construction of the railway. But the neutral and scientific function was not the only use reserved for Baltzly's photographs. The cost of the photographer's trip was shared by the CPR, the Canadian government and the Notman Studio, which, in exchange, kept all the negatives and copyrights, issuing only a set of prints to Alfred Selwyn: “William Notman was hoping to obtain a group of exciting photographs that would have a good market, while Selwyn, the geologist, was interested in compiling an accurate record of the terrain and geological formations in the area” (Triggs, 1985: 55).

Baltzly's images saw double duty. Like the survey photographs from other New World nations-in-the-making

<sup>2</sup> Free translation. My emphasis.



Figure 2: W. M. Notman, "Reaping, Brandon, Manitoba", v. 1900. William Notman & Sons. Silver salts on glass, gelatine dry plate process 17 x 23 cm. McCord Museum Collection, Montreal, VIEW-3635.

at the time, they were at once the pictorial results of a geographic inventory and a consumer product. Beyond the mercantile aspect – Baltzly's photographs were a great commercial success in Montreal – these images of western Canada revealed hitherto unknown grandiose landscapes to those thousands of kilometres away from the photographed view. The image of a country unfolded, and with it a geographic imagination that was typically Canadian. Furthermore, the epic nature

of these conquests and the sense they generated in the East of the imminent physical domination of these majestic if hostile territories certainly helped create a national pride of which photography was the illustration and soon the remembrance.

In 1884, a year before the transcontinental railway was finished, the Canadian Pacific Railway and its executive director William Van Horne came to an agreement with William Notman that gave the studio free transportation on the railway in exchange for photographs that the CPR could use for promotional purposes. Notman once again kept the copyrights and negatives and was allowed to sell the photographs not only in his studios but all along the railway. William McFarlane Notman, William Notman's eldest son, took his first cross-Canada journey in 1884, making parts of the journey by boat, as the railroad was not yet completed. He had repeated the experience seven times by 1909. For these twenty-five years, the William Notman & Sons studio was the CPR's preferred provider of images, even after the company set up its own photography department in 1892 (Triggs, 1985: 71). Starting in 1887, Notman Jr. had the right to his own railcar, with a living apartment and a complete dark room, Photographic Car Number One (fig. 1). A number of the photographs taken on Notman Jr.'s first journeys show both the train or railway and the countryside this new technology was enabling humankind to discover and dominate: the country was built through the railway network and introduced by way of photographs containing the image of the railway, taken by the railway's intermediary.

Between the fascination with technological progress and travel, of which photography and trains were the emblems, and the need to develop the country, the photographs were widely circulated: "Notman and Van Horne both recognized the value of photographs in announcing the attractions of Western Canada to tourists and settlers alike" (Triggs, 1985: 70)<sup>3</sup>. Circulation of the images encouraged the movement – transitory and long-term – of the people.

3 My emphasis.





Figure 3: W. M. Notman, "Field and Mount Stephen, B.C.", 1904. William Notman & Sons. Silver salts on glass, gelatine dry plate process 20 x 25 cm. McCord Museum Collection, Montreal, VIEW-3821.

The Canadian government needed to occupy and cultivate the land so newly opened by the railway, and the directors of the CPR naturally wanted to see the number of travellers increase. CPR also owned thousands of acres of cultivable land adjacent to the railroad. Notman and Sons was to produce appealing images of these new, fertile lands ready for agriculture. Of course, the subsequent movement of people, both temporary and permanent, resulted in significant changes and the creation of a new, humanized landscape (fig. 2). The tracts of untamed nature that were the prairies were transformed into farmland, and photography took an active part in the process (Osborne, 2003: 164). For several decades, idyllic Canadian scenes showing this image of a countryside under cultivation were distributed to Europeans and Americans to tempt them to immigrate to the fertile lands of the Canadian West. Notman provided images for this purpose: brochures, packed with pastoral views to entice Canadians and foreigners alike to migrate westward, were produced by the Ministry of the Interior. They

invariably touted the ease of access provided by the railway and explained that in addition to the 160 free acres offered by the government, homesteaders could buy or rent more land (described as “most desirable”) from the railway,<sup>4</sup> which was, in turn, expanding its network as the western population grew.

During this period, a travel market – not to say monopoly – developed. Like the occupation of the land by homesteaders, the new market and, in many ways, the actions of the CPR itself transformed the country. In addition to the railroad and its related structures, Canadian Pacific was building hotels in the most majestic landscapes. Commercial and tourist areas appeared that were almost incorporated into these landscapes (fig. 3). Other images and other humanized landscapes that would become a lasting part of the collective imagination circulated freely, beckoning people to travel, thanks to the CPR’s profitable association with Notman & Sons studio. Along with the brochures encouraging settlement of the new lands, other brochures were produced to target travellers. Serving as collector’s items for armchair travellers, incitements to travel or souvenir albums for those who succumbed to the call, they were sold everywhere. These small albums were usually made up of a short text followed by several images showing the grandiose sights along the CP route, following an orderly geographic progression, usually from east to west. They were called *Canadian Pacific Rockies: A Series of Views Illustrating the Chief Points of Interest to Be Seen on a Trip through the Canadian Pacific Rockies and Rockies and Selkirk Mountains of Canada: A Series of Views Illustrating the Chief Points of Interest to Be Seen on a Trip through the Canadian Pacific Rockies on Line of Canadian Pacific Railway*, and the CPR published them regularly, releasing new editions for several decades.

Indeed, from railway construction to settlement of the centre-west and tourism – over which CPR long held the Canadian monopoly – in terms of practice, ideology and representation, to use Lefebvre’s words, the association of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian government and the Notman studio was essential to the history of space in Canada.

### Spatial practices and representations of space

The images travelled back from the expeditions, impressed the sedentary public, crafted a geographic imagination and then led to the movement of tourists. They also travelled to distant countries where they convinced workers to emigrate. Thanks to certain features, including lightness and ease of transportation, photography is indissociable from the logic of landscape rooted in the mobility that arose at the end of the 19th century. Another particular feature of photography is that it provides proof, in more ways than one. It shows what “is

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of the Interior brochures *The Evolution of the Prairie by the Plow* (1902) and *Atlas de l'Ouest canadien contenant des cartes géographiques d'Ontario, Québec, Nouveau Brunswick, Nouvelle Écosse, Île du Prince Édouard, Manitoba, Colombie Anglaise, des districts d'Assiniboia, Alberta, Saskatchewan et de la Puissance du Canada* (1903) (fig. 4).

there” because it is the imprint of something that exists: referents, as Roland Barthes said (1981: 76-77), are “the very essence, the noeme of Photography.” But of course someone also had to be there. There also had to be an operator, standing before the view – the something – to capture it. And this suggests movement, the journey of images. It also makes photography a completely unique means of representation: the artist’s landscape, for example, does not include this double imperative of the physical existence of the referent and the presence of an operator before it. Although photography embraces a code that has been fully integrated and ensconced in landscape representation since the Renaissance – legitimate perspective – its compliance with this code merely adds to the veracity of the photographic image, since the perspectivist system has already been adopted whole-scale by western society (Bourdieu, 1965: 109). Beyond esthetic appreciation, which is often in fact secondary, and thanks in part to its adherence to this well-established code and in part to the proof-like quality of its conformity with reality – the print’s<sup>5</sup> proof that “this is what was there” – photography demands assent, the belief in the reality of the photographed object. To the point that people often feel they are not seeing a photograph but rather the sight itself – this lake, that mountain, that valley. Therein lies the effectiveness of photography and the use made of it, which were, especially in the 19th century, the two sides of the same coin or the two ends of a chain: on one side is the function sought by the issuer, and on the other the undeniable effect on the recipient.

The recipient (or consumer) of the photograph takes ownership of the landscapes, the reality of which is never in question – and this is even truer with amateur photography. Peculiar attitudes develop: the compulsion to collect and armchair travel, the sometimes-fulfilled desire to travel, national pride that requires a referent – a figure and a motivation – to be revealed or elicited. Furthermore, photography is multiplicitious, that is, reproducible and ubiquitous, transportable and transmissible. This multiplicity presumes an absence of value of the object itself (proven not only by its rapid propagation but also by the interminable battle to recognize photography as one of the fine arts), a non-value that is essential to its integration into certain spatial and social practices related to mobility. As far back as the 1870s, photographs were mass produced. Collecting images available for purchase everywhere was a common activity, and landscape photographs were considered to be recorded sights, views that people could then go and recognize in situ. Since photographic images were designed as the product of a shared or distributed vision, “one that transcends individual subjectivity” (Snyder, 2002: 183), their value had to reside in the photographed object rather than in the photographic object, the image itself being merely a copy of the reality, thus eliciting the desire to go see it in person.

5 “As distinct from symbols, indexes establish their meaning along the axis of a physical relationship to their referents. They are the marks or traces of a particular cause, and that cause is the thing to which they refer, the object they signify” (Krauss, 1993: 198).



Figure 4: W. M. Notman, "Moraine Lake, Ten Peaks Valley, AB", 1904. William Notman & Sons. Silver salts on glass, gelatine dry plate process 20 x 25 cm. McCord Museum Collection, Montreal, VIEW-3807.

At the other extremity of the chain are the intentions of the issuer, a term I prefer to "producer," since in the 19th century the production of photographic images generally involved several players: the photographer, the studio and the sponsor, whom I refer to here as the issuer. The issuer – in our example, the CPR, the Canadian government or both together – benefits precisely from the recipient's belief,

and makes use of particular representations to attract people and entice them to move, in order to achieve the occupation and operation of the territory and its economic return – planned objectives that will inevitably and irrevocably change the scenery. So the space is produced along with its representations. The photographs were active agents or agents of change in the joint productive activity of the Canadian government and the Canadian Pacific Railway. They also forged a defined and defining image of the country, of the Canadian landscape that appears to be destined to be immutable. Because, as Barthes says (1981: 76), in photography, "[t]here is a superimposition here: of reality and of the past." Photography is also memory.

### The Canadian landscape

Through the combined actions of the railway and photography, the 19th century began to see the dawn of the phenomenon of "interconnection," that logic of landscape that is now so familiar to us, which can be summarized as follows: ability to move and constantly circulating images that entice us to move. Under this schema, photographic images are inducers of movement – which corresponds to true action – and territories or sites are conceived as so many destinations (both aim and location), presupposing journeys made from an image to its object rather than from one geographic point to another (Paquet, 2009). Conquest, quest for a national identity, colonization, tourism: photography participates in all these dynamics, and the transformation of the territory ensues, in keeping with the uses prescribed by the planners who are also the issuers of the images. And thus agricultural landscapes, typical scenery, Canadian scenes and emblematic images are born (fig. 4).





Figure 5: Search results for images of “Moraine Lake,” September 16, 2007: Google, first page.

ing, infinitely reproduced, and living on to propagate itself once more. From the photographs sold by the Notman studio to the digital images found today on the web, there is no notable difference – except perhaps the colour. The geographic imagination, although it has shifted from national to international, with the help of improved means of communication, is still curiously stable, for two reasons. First, many of the territories represented have long been put on reserve. Because while the CPR was installing tourist stations in certain landscapes, the Canadian government, even back in the 19th century, was turning others into national parks or landscape reserves.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, these landscapes are often inaccessible and therefore visible from only one side – which makes them all the more photographic or photogenic, since the photographic mechanism, as we know, developed in compliance with the unique point of view of perspective. This is how images of the Canadian landscape cut through the century, always the same, always a mirror of themselves.

On the topic of the photographs taken by the Notman studio photographers in the latter decades of the 19th century, Stanley Triggs (1992: 46) stated: “The photographs [...] from these expeditions – western scenes of mountain grandeur, gigantic trees, Native people and tepees [...] – were very popular with tourists and local populations alike.” Some 130 years later, is there any better way to name or describe what Canada has become in the globalized geographic imagination?

<sup>6</sup> The first zone of what would become Banff National Park, in Alberta, was set aside as a reserve by the Canadian government in 1885. In 1888, the first CPR hotel, the Banff Springs, was opened, followed by Chateau Lake Louise in 1890.

Photography became the guardian of the memory of these landscapes, guarantor this time of the durability or time resistance of certain symbolic or meaningful places. And once again thanks to photography’s ease of travel, now greatly amplified, the Canadian landscape can be ever more widely appreciated. Today, through modes of transmission far faster than trains, photographic images travel even more widely (fig. 5). With these modes of transmission at hand, we can not deny that “every place is potentially visible from everywhere else” (Mitchell, 2003: 299-300). Was this not already a definite potentiality – even a virtuality – at the end of the 19th century, since photographs were already travelling so extensively? In many respects, when it comes to natural landscapes, such as the grandiose views photographed by Notman Jr. for twenty-five years, it would always be the same image circulat-

## Bibliography

- Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida: Reflections on photography*. (Richard Howard, Trans.) New York: Hill and Wang, 1981 (Original work published 1980).
- Andrew Birrell, *Benjamin Baltzly: Photographs and journal of an ethrough British Columbia: 1871*, Toronto: Coach House Press, 1978.
- Pierre Bourdieu, «La définition sociale de la photographie», in P. Bourdieu (Ed.), *Un art moyen: Essai sur les usages sociaux de la photographie*. Paris: Minuit, 1965. 107 – 138.
- Alain Corbin, *L'homme dans le paysage*, Paris: Textuel. 2001.
- Louis de Cormenin, «À propos de Égypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie, de Maxime Ducamp. 1852», in A. Rouillé (Ed.), *La photographie en France: Textes et controverses: une anthologie 1816-1871*, Paris: Macula 1989. 124 – 125.
- Clément Chéroux, «Vues du train: Vision et mobilité au XIXe siècle», *Études photographiques*, 1 November 1996. 73-88.
- Stephen, Daniels, *Field of vision: Landscape imagery and national identity in England and the United States*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.
- Jeremy, Foster, "Capturing and losing the 'lie of the land': Railway photography and colonial nationalism in early twentieth-century South Africa" in J. M. Schwartz and J. R. Ryan (Eds.), *Picturing place. photography and the geographical imagination*, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003. 141 – 161.
- John B. Jackson, *The necessity for ruins and other topics*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.
- Rosalind, Krauss, "Notes on the Index", Part 1. *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, Boston: MIT Press, 1995. 196 – 209.
- Henri Levebre, *The Production of Space*. (Donald Nicholson-Smith, Trans.) Malden, MA: Blackwell. 1994 (Original work published 1974).
- William J. Mitchell, "Wunderkammer to world wide web: Picturing place in the post-photographic era" in J. M. Schwartz and J. R. Ryan (Eds.), *Picturing place. photography and the geographical imagination*, New York, I. B. Tauris, 2003. 283 – 304.
- W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape" in W. J. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Landscape and power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002 [1994]. 5 – 34.
- Alison Nordström, "Making a journey: The Tupper scrapbooks and the travels they describe" in E. Edwards and J. Hart (Eds.), *Photographs, Objects, Histories. On the Materiality of Images*. New York; Routledge, 2004. 81-95.
- Brian S. Osborne, "Constructing the state, managing the corporation, transforming the individual: Photography, immigration and the Canadian National Railway", in J. M. Schwartz and J. R. Ryan (Eds.), *Picturing place. photography and the geographical imagination*, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003. 162 – 191.
- Suzanne Paquet, *Le paysage façonné: Les territoires postindustriels l'art et l'usage*. Quebec City: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2009.
- Joanna Sassoon, "Photographic materiality in the age of digital reproduction" in E. Edwards and J. Hart (Eds.), *Photographs, objects, histories: On the materiality of images*, New York: Routledge, 2004. 186 – 202.
- Joan M. Schwartz, "'We make our tools and our tools make us': Lessons from photographs for the practice, politics, and poetics of diplomatics", *Archivaria*, 40, Fall 1995, 40-74.
- Joel Snyder, "Territorial photography" in W. J. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Landscape and power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002 [1994]. 175 – 201.
- Patrick Tacussel, «Imaginaire et esthétique sociale: Proximité épistémologique» in J. Gayon and J.J. Wunenburger (Eds.), *Les figures de la forme*, Paris: l'Harmattan, 1992. 123 – 133.
- Stanley G. Triggs, *William Notman's studio: The Canadian picture*, Montreal: McCord Museum, 1992.
- Stanley G. Triggs, *William Notman: The Stamp of a Studio*, Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario/Coach House Press, 1985.
- John Urry, *The tourist gaze*. London: Sage Publications, 2002.
- Peter Waite, «Un défi continental 1840-1900», in C. Brown (Ed.), *Histoire générale du Canada* (French edition edited by P.-A. Linteau), Montreal: Boréal, 1990. 333 – 448.
- Alexander Wilson, *The culture of nature. North American landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez*, Toronto: Between the Lines. 1991.
- Collections, McCord Museum of Canadian History:  
Notman Photographic Archives  
Omer Lavallée Collection  
John Mappin Collection  
[www.mccord-museum.qc.ca](http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca)
- With thanks to Hélène Samson, curator of the Notman Collection at the McCord Museum.

# “The Cubist Photographer” George Morrow, Alvin Langdon Coburn and the Great English Vortex<sup>1</sup>

**Rolf H. Krauss** This essay begins with two images. The first one (fig. 1) is showing an illustration by George Morrow (1869–1955), which appeared in *Punch* magazine on 17 June 1914 with the caption “The Cubist Photographer”. The other one (fig. 2) is showing a Vortograph, a photographic portrait of the American poet Ezra Pound (1885–1972), which was taken by the photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882–1966) late 1916 or early 1917. Morrow’s illustration takes us into a photo studio. At first sight, it seems to show a familiar situation. The photographer, standing poised behind his studio camera, is about to take a picture of his customer who is seated on an armchair. Unusual, however, is a large crystal prism that is placed on a pedestal between the photographer and the model. Insofar as photos are apparently taken through it, it seems to serve the purpose of generating ‘Cubist’ images such as those found on the wall of the studio. If one imagines that it is Ezra Pound who is sitting on the chair and Coburn is the man behind the camera, then the photograph shown in figure 2 – independent of the fact that two and a half years lie between their respective executions – might very well be the result of such a manipulation of the photographic process. Indeed, this connection has already been made,<sup>2</sup> but its wider significance for the genesis of the first signs of concrete photography – the Vortographs – has not as yet been explored. This shall therefore be the object of the following remarks.

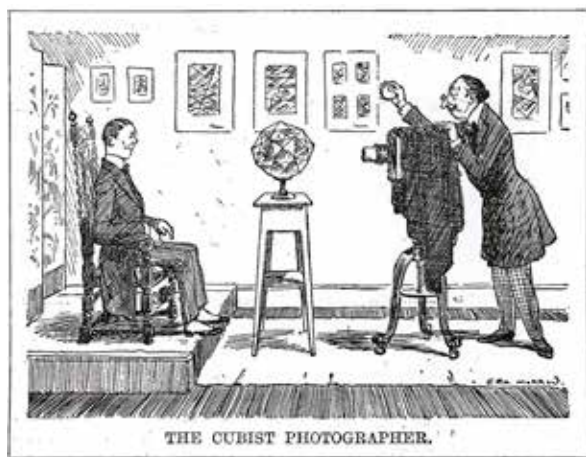


Figure 1: George Morrow, “The Cubist Photographer”, in: *Punch*, 17 June 1914, 480.

Alvin Langdon Coburn’s Vortographs are much more than mere artistic tricks undertaken by a curious and playful photographer keen on experimenting. In the field of photography, they have come to represent a similar sort of aesthetic revolution as that ushered in by Wassily Kandinsky’s or Kazimir Malewich’s abstract paintings. For this reason, the history of their origins has been studied in detail and their sources and minutiae often discussed.<sup>3</sup> So the well-known history of the Vortographs begins with an essay by Coburn entitled “The Future of Pictorial Photography” in *Photograms of the Year 1916*<sup>4</sup>, which is wholly expressed in the style of a manifesto. Coburn addresses his photographer colleagues, inviting them to join the avant-garde movements “in Painting, in Music, and in Literature”.<sup>5</sup> He asks: “Why should not the camera also throw off the shackles of

conventional representation and attempt something fresh and untried? Why should not its subtle rapidity be utilised to study movement? Why not repeated successive exposures of an object in motion on the same plate? Why should not perspective be studied from angles hitherto neglected or unobserved? Why, I ask you earnestly, need we go on making commonplace little exposures of subjects that may be sorted into groups of landscapes, portraits, and figure

<sup>1</sup> From the subtitle of the first edition of *BLAST*, *Review of the Great English Vortex*, the magazine of the English avant-garde movement Vorticism.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Richard Cork, in: *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the first Machine Age*, 2 vols; London: Gordon Fraser, 1976, 499 (Cork only speaks of “the prophetic 1914 *Punch* cartoon”); cf. Bill Jay in an unpublished text from 1985: “Cubist Photography, a possible caption for a *Punch* cartoon”, [www.billjayonphotography.com/CubistPhotography.pdf](http://www.billjayonphotography.com/CubistPhotography.pdf). [1 February 2009]

<sup>3</sup> For instance, cf. Rolf H Krauss, “Das Geistige in der Fotografie, oder: Der fotografische Weg in die Abstraktion: Quedenfeldt – Coburn – Bruguière, [The Spiritual in Photography, or: The Photographic Path to Abstraction]” in: Gottfried Jäger (ed.), *Die Kunst der Abstrakten Fotografie, [The Art of Abstract Photography]*, Stuttgart: Arnold’sche Art Publishers, 2002, 103–137.

<sup>4</sup> Alvin Langdon Coburn, “The Future of Pictorial Photography”, in: *Photograms of the Year 1916, The Annual of the World’s Pictorial Photography*



Figure 2: Alvin Langdon Coburn, "Vortograph of Ezra Pound", 1916/1917, gelatine-silver print, 20.4 x 15.4 cm, in: Karl Steinorth, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Fotografien 1900–1924, Zurich/New York: Edition Stemmle, 1998, 163.

studies?"<sup>6</sup> "Wake up!", he summons his colleagues, "if it is not possible to be 'modern' with the newest of all the arts, we had better bury our black boxes". Finally, as a further possibility of emancipation, he mentions "the use of prisms for the splitting of images into segments".<sup>7</sup>

But this written note will not be the end of the story. Coburn constructs a simple device which allows him to do precisely this, and which Pound refers to as a 'Vortoscope'. "For this purpose", Coburn writes, "I devised the Vortoscope late in 1916. This instrument is composed of three mirrors fastened together in the form of a triangle, and resembling to a certain extent the Kaleidoscope [...]. The mirrors acted as a prism splitting the image formed by the lens into segments".<sup>8</sup> This was the contraption through which Coburn photographed Ezra Pound. The result was a number of portraits and figure 2 shows one of them. The features of Pound's face can still be recognised in these images; this, however, is not radical enough a step for Coburn. "Carefully arranging a group of nondescript objects", writes Cork, "usually bits of wood and crystals, on a glass table-top, he set about turning their multifarious refractions into dazzling configurations of light and shade"<sup>9</sup> (fig. 3). In this way, the transition from the abstract to the concrete was accomplished. Every trace of reality is obliterated in the photographs that were thus made; the forms and structures shown refer solely to themselves. Indeed, the Vortographs, as Pound calls them, turn into the incunabula of a concrete photography.<sup>10</sup>

Since *Photograms of the Year 1916* was published at the outset of 1917, Coburn must have written his text in late 1916. In February 1917, Coburn's one-man show opened in the Camera Club in London. Eighteen Vortographs were shown from a group of over forty works of the kind still existing today.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the penning of the essay, the invention of the Vortoscope, the portraits of Ezra Pound and the creation of an impressive number of non-figurative Vortographs must altogether have taken place over the course of several months – a veritable creative explosion. As already said, all this is known. Yet the question of how such a creative output was generated, and how Coburn even arrived at the prismatic segmentation of reality with the help of a camera has not as yet been sufficiently answered. Thinking about a series of interrelated ideas might help us to find a response.

Vorticism is the first avant-garde movement in England. It owes its name to the 'vortex', and was used by Ezra Pound for the first time in the context of literature and poetry. It was also Pound who referred to a small group of English painters and sculptors as Vorticists who, like their colleagues on the continent, were protesting against the prevailing conception of art. The Vorticists, writes Karin Orchard, were "searching for that moment of rest at the centre of the whirlwind, the point from which they could intently contemplate as well as orchestrate

Work, London: Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., 1915, 23–24.

5 Coburn, 1916 (note 4), 23.

6 Coburn, 1916 (note 4), 23.

7 Coburn, 1916 (note 4), 24.

8 Helmut and Alison Gernsheim (eds.), *Alvin Langdon Coburn, Photographer, an Autobiography*, New York: Dover Publications, 1978, 102.

9 Cork, 1976 (note 2), 501.

10 Cf. Rolf H Krauss, "A Small History of Concrete Photography", in: Gottfried Jäger, Rolf H. Krauss, Beate Reese, *Konkrete Fotografie [Concrete Photography]*, Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2005, 67–76.

11 Together with 13 paintings by Coburn.





Figure 3: Alvin Langdon Coburn, "Vortograph", chloro-bromide, 21.5 x 28.5 cm, 1917, in: Richard Cork, *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age*, London: Gordon Fraser, 1976, 502.

Figure 4: Wyndham Lewis, "Composition", 1913, pencil, ink and watercolour, 34.5 x 26.5 cm, in: Richard Cork, *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age*, London: Gordon Fraser, 1976, 127.

the chaos around them. For this is the point around which all energies are funnelled.”<sup>12</sup> The group – who practiced a crystalline, cultrate artistic style abstracted from reality and moving towards the non-representational (fig. 4) – formed itself in stark contrast to the Cubists and the Futurists. The Futurists, in particular, showed strong performances in London; since their exhibition 'Italian Futurist Painters' in March 1912, Marinetti, the spokesman for Futurism, was keen to recruit supporters for his group through repeated visits to the English capital. Yet Vorticism was destined to have a short lifespan. The group made its first appearance in public with the publication of the first issue of the magazine *BLAST* in July 1914, which formulated the aims and principles of Vorticism in two manifestos. The second and last issue of the magazine was published in July 1915 as the 'War Number', since World War One had meanwhile broken out in the autumn of 1914. The majority of members were drafted and several died in its outcome; with the end of the war in 1918, the group also dissolved. The only Vorticist exhibition in England in June 1915 could not change this.

After a number of previous visits to London, the financially independent American photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn chose to settle in the English capital, making it his permanent residence. In 1904, he launched a project that would bring him in personal contact with the most important figures of the old and new world – these were his books *Men of Mark*<sup>13</sup> and *More Men of Mark*<sup>14</sup> which appeared in 1913 and 1914 respectively, each comprising 33 photographs of authors, painters, politicians, philosophers, etc. He had photographed Ezra Pound in October 1913. Between 1914 and 1916, he photographed the main representatives of Vorticism – the painter Wyndham Lewis and his colleague Edward Wadsworth, both in their studios in front of Vorticist canvases – as well as the sculptor, Jacob Epstein, who also belonged to the group. Coburn was thus very familiar with the artists and the works of the Vorticists, and it can be expected that he actively followed the developments and public appearances of the group with great interest over the years.

12 Karin Orchard, "'Ein Lachen wie eine Bombe'. Geschichte und Ideen der Vortizisten", in: Karin Orchard (ed.), *BLAST: Vortizismus – die erste Avantgarde in England, 1914–1918*, exhibition catalogue, Hanover, 1996, 9–21, here 16.

13 Alvin Langdon Coburn, *Men of Mark*, London/New York: Duckworth & Co.; Mitchel Kennerly, 1913.

14 Alvin Langdon Coburn, *More Men of Mark*, London: Duckworth & Co., 1922.





Figure 5: George Morrow, "Our Curio Cranks", in: *Punch*, 1 April 1914, 260. Enthusiast (to diner who has just told a good story). "Would you mind repeating that? It has been so well received. I wish to add it to my collection of Records of Good Things."

In contrast to his photographer colleague, Malcolm Arbuthnot, who at least signed the Vorticist manifesto, Coburn was not taken in by the group. The painting that he practised at the time apparently did not meet their standards, and traditional photography was still a far cry from being accepted as a proper art form in those days. And so it might at first seem unusual that Pound took up contact again with Coburn in 1916. Yet it was through similar interests that the two Americans in wartime London met and joined forces. On the one hand, Coburn, as we already saw, was seeking a means of elevating photography to the level of an avant-garde art, whereby in all likelihood he probably had a formal Vorticist vocabulary in mind. On the other hand, Pound was searching for new impulses to extend

the short lifespan of Vorticism, which he himself was propagating and journalistically underpinning. And so it was an obvious temptation to try and integrate photography into Pound's conceptions of a Vorticist art. This was made all the easier, due to the fact that Pound did not set out from the wish to apply the principles of Vorticism solely to the visual arts. In this regard, Hubertus Gaßner writes, "according to Pound, the artistic genres are to be differentiated through their varying pigment. It is up to the artist to organise this in one rhythmical way or another".<sup>15</sup> For Pound, this meant that what was said "about the one Vorticist art [...] can be applied to another".<sup>16</sup> Thus, he was able to practise Vorticist poetry and propagate Vorticist music as well as an identical form of dance.

As a result of their mutual reflections (in a letter dated 22 September 1916, Pound writes, "Coburn and I have discovered Vortography"<sup>17</sup>), they both pursued the idea which George Morrow had already, in June 1912, sketched out in the literal sense of the word with his aforementioned illustration – namely, the idea of taking photographs through a prism, in order to destroy the claim of a truthful depiction of reality, the characteristic which had hitherto constituted photography. As Pound states, "the camera is freed from reality".<sup>18</sup> Even though there is no tangible proof in the matter, it can be assumed that at least one of the two protagonists, well informed as they both were of the contemporary artistic scene, must have known Morrow's illustration. This, however, is irrelevant in the final analysis, as the cartoon appeared in a printed medium that was readily available for everyone, and was therefore disseminated into the world – no matter who saw or did not see it at which moment in time.

The history of the Vortographs and, with it, the genesis of concrete photography thus begins earlier than has hitherto been assumed: not with Coburn's essay in *The Photographs of the Year* 1916, but with the appearance of Morrow's cartoon in *Punch* in June of 1914. Therefore, the in-

15 Hubertus Gaßner, "Der Vortex – Intensität als Entschleunigung", in: Orchard, 1996 (note 12), 25.

16 Ezra Pound, *Wort und Weise*, Frankfurt a.M., 1981, 157.

17 Cited in: Eva Hesse, *Die Achse Avantgardismus – Faschismus, Reflexionen über Filippo Tommaso Marinetti und Ezra Pound*, Zurich, 1991, 35.

18 Ezra Pound, Introduction to Coburn's 1917 Camera Club, exhibition catalogue.



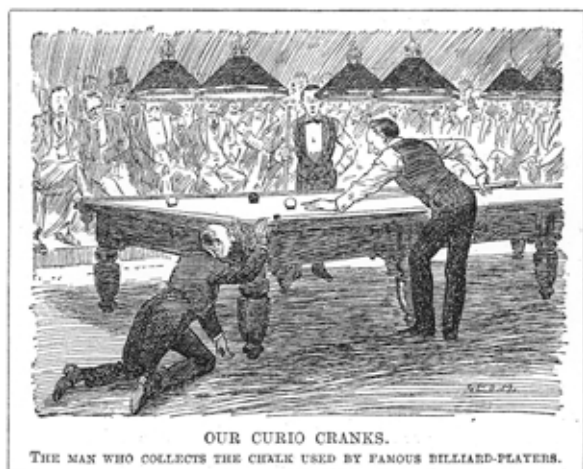


Figure 6: George Morrow, "Our Curio Cranks", in: *Punch*, 15 April 1914, 300. "The man who collects the chalk used by famous billiard-players."



Figure 7: George Morrow, "The Spread of Cubism", in: *Punch*, 29 April 1914, 310.

ventor of a 'segmentary' type of photography is George Morrow, whereby it should be noted, in particular, that the latter already had other things on his mind than the portrait. For upon closer scrutiny of his illustration (fig. 1), one will notice that the pictures hanging on the wall of the photo studio clearly do not show portraits, but are non-figurative, concrete representations instead. Coburn came to produce these, as already mentioned, only in a second attempt, after he had already completed the series of portraits of Pound. Coburn's indisputable merit lies in the fact that he succeeded in realising Morrow's proposition in his own unique way. Indeed, the Vortographs produced in this way have rightly written both art and photo history.

It remains to be seen how Morrow came to his idea. George Morrow, born in Belgrade, studied art in Paris and began contributing to *Punch* magazine in 1906. He joined the staff of the magazine in 1924 and later became art editor (1932–1937). In 1914, the year that concerns us, he belonged to those illustrators who contributed the majority of the artistic output to the magazine. He was represented almost every week with one or more cartoons. In the context of a magazine such as *Punch*, however, these cartoons could not simply depict just anything. They had to address the educated middle and upper class, following and satirically commenting on major events in their social and cultural lives. This meant that the cartoonist, along with his colleagues, had to be sure to keep abreast with the events taking place around him so that he could react to them as promptly as possible. Morrow was particularly interested in the visual arts. Over years, he built up a series, for instance, entitled "Royal Academy Depressions" in which, using the tools of caricature, he critically assessed the time-honoured London institution of the Royal Academy.

Therefore it can most certainly be assumed that Morrow also keenly followed the activities of the Vorticists as they set about forming their group – the more so as the events in question were particularly abundant in the first half of the year 1914. In the autumn of 1913, the events had culminated in a coalition of the English radicals. Representatives of the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, Cubists, Futurists, etc. had decided to step out into the public under the label of the 'London Group'. This resulted in an exhibition held in the Brighton Public Art Galleries from December 1913 to January 1914 entitled 'The Camden Town Group and Others'. Despite the professed common ground, Wyndham Lewis used the opportunity to showcase his work, and that of his



comrades, in an independent room which he called 'The Cubist Room'. In a catalogue accompanying the exhibition, he developed the "all-important concept of a 'revolutionary' art"<sup>19</sup> which, interestingly enough, also envisaged "an alienation from the traditional photographer's trade".<sup>20</sup>

A number of factors – the name 'The Cubist Room', together with the great commotion that the event stirred in public consciousness, as well as the reference to the "photographer's trade" – may possibly have inspired Morrow's illustration, "The Cubist Photographer". Even more so, indeed, as Lewis and the Cubist Room participants were to instigate further events with substantial audience appeal during the following months. In March 1914, the Rebel Art Centre was opened in London (which, admittedly, already had to shut its doors already in July); it aimed to "familiarise those who are interested with the ideas of the great modern revolution in art" through "public discussion, lectures and gatherings of people".<sup>21</sup> The publication of *BLAST* in July 1914 has already been mentioned. In this respect, Morrow's cartoon dated 17 June 1914 came just at the perfect moment to expect an interested and informed Punch readership.

The explanation above concerning the origin of the illustration is particularly helpful when seen in the light of the set requirements of a satirical magazine which, with its multitude of contributions, necessitated, as it were, a form of serial work. The perfect opportunity to react also had to be seized at just the right moment, as long as one was still able to rely on the reader's interest in a particular subject. Looking more closely at the different issues of *Punch* reveals that "The Cubist Photographer" was not Morrow's sole caricature on the subject of Cubism, but simply the last in a series of three which, among a total of eight consecutive drawings that are all interrelated, ultimately sheds significant light on the cartoonist's particular way of working.

In the issue of 18 March 1914, Morrow begins a series in five episodes entitled "Our Curio Cranks" in which he presents the whimsical quirks of collectors. There is, for instance, a man standing at the side of the road who tries to collect the splatter of dirt on his canvas from a passing celebrity's car (18 March); then, a week later, there is another man who tries to cast the footprints left on a path by a famous writer for his plaster collection (25 March). In the issue dated 1 April, a guest at a formal dinner asks a fellow guest to repeat a particularly successful expression he had uttered, so that he may record it for his "collection of records of good things" using a sort of hand gramophone (fig. 5). One week later, in turn, a man is introduced "who takes every opportunity of adding to his gallery of hats of famous men". He is

19 Cork, 1976 [note 2], 137.

20 Wyndham Lewis, "Room II [The Cubist Room]", introduction to the catalogue of The Camden Town Group and Others exhibition, 1913.

21 Taken from the brochure *The Rebel Art Centre*, 1914, cited in: Cork 1976 [note 2], 158.



THE ART OF ACHIEVING THE IMPOSSIBLE—A CUBIST PICTURE GETS A PLACE ON THE LINE.

Figure 8: George Morrow, "The Art of Achieving the Impossible - A Cubist Picture Gets a Place on the Line", in: *Punch*, 20 May 1914, 389.

shown stealing away from a wardrobe with a hat much too large for him, and which belongs to a man who obviously bears the traits of Einstein (8 April). The conclusion to this sequence is unveiled on 15 April. Here, the illustration shows a large billiard table, two players and a furtively sneaking "man who collects the chalk used by famous billiard players" (fig. 6).

This billiard table forms the link, so to speak, to the ensuing three-part series on Cubism begun on 29 April 1914. The table again fills almost the entire frame of the illustration, but it has decisively changed in appearance (fig. 7). 'The Spread of Cubism', as the caption reads, has now taken place. Everything formerly round, curved, level or straight is now angular, sharp-edged and broken up into crystalline shapes and forms. This applies to the tabletop and its surface as well as to the pyramid-shaped legs of the table and the lamps hanging above it. Even the three billiard balls have got prismatic shapes. The surprising metamorphosis afforded a profound glimpse into the studio of the artist. Cubism was evidently fashionable now, and the cartoon shows the way in which Morrow, with his astounding talent, sought to articulate his own personal take on the subject. Three weeks later, on 20 May, an illustration followed that addressed "the art of the impossible - a Cubist picture gets a place on the line" (fig. 8). The

cartoon "The Cubist Photographer", the object of discussion here, formed the conclusion to the series and appeared in the issue of 17 June 1914 (fig. 1).

Altogether, two things should be noted. Firstly, there is a connection between the idea of a 'hand recorder' in the shape of a mini gramophone from the series entitled "Our Curio Cranks" (fig. 5), in which - ahead of its time back then in terms of form - auditive information could be recorded and collected, and the photographic camera that was able to achieve similar things in the visual field. Secondly, the significance of the billiard balls in figure 6 should be pointed out. Their prismatic configuration recurs to the crystalline and upwards-shooting mountain landscape shown in figure 8, a landscape that the goddess of Modernity must conquer first in order to attain the realm of the museum. Enlarged they turn into a crystal ball, with the help of which "The Cubist Photographer" has set out to change the world. Both can be called to explain George Morrow's astounding invention.

# The ETH-Bibliothek Image Archive

## A Collection of Scientific and Historic Images

**Nicole Graf** The ETH-Bibliothek (Library of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich) has had image documents in its collection for several decades: photographs, photographic albums and slides are constantly included in bequests that academics leave to the ETH-Bibliothek. For a long time, the ETH-Bibliothek and its users tended to regard the various image collections as only marginally important. However, the technical developments in information technology in the late 1990s brought about a fundamental change in the handling of image documents,

from production and administration to the use of the images. The change in this situation led the ETH-Bibliothek to consider the role of the image as an information medium and scientific source as part of the strategic planning of its electronic library. As a whole, the special collections were also intended to make a contribution to the strategic realignment and set new priorities. During the reorganisation of the special collections in 2000, these developments were taken into account with the creation of the Image Archive. The Image Archive is part of the special collections of the ETH-Bibliothek, alongside the Archives and Private Collections, Rare Books and Maps Collection. This article describes the sub-collections of the Image Archive of the ETH-Bibliothek, their administration and publication in the online image database as well as open access as the latest step in making documents available.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: (ETH/Laboratory of Organic Chemistry (interior shot)). 1955.  
Black-and-white print, rectangular (landscape format), 9 x 11.5 cm, ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, Image Archive (Ans\_00068).

### Collection Profile

The thematic focus of the Image Archive is a historical and technical/scientific collection with a link to the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) and Switzerland. The history of the ETH Zurich, major events and developments in teaching and research are documented. Architectural and technical developments (figure 1) at the ETH Zurich that impact on the whole of Switzerland and beyond can be impressively retraced. There is no current image material in the Image Archive. Only photographic documents are collected in all kinds of forms (prints, albums, negatives, glass plates, postcards etc. in various formats).

### Sub-collections

With around 1.8 million documents, the library of the ETH Zurich boasts one of Switzerland's largest historical image archives. Following the acquisition of the Comet Photo Archive at the end of the 1990s, the Image Archive has become a major player on the Swiss market.

The diverse contents of the Image Archive consist of the following sub-collections:

**View collection** (around 20,000 documents): Historical shots of buildings, institutes, lecture theatres and laboratories of the ETH Zurich make up a significant part of the views and rare

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed description, see Rudolf Mumenthaler, 2008.

In May 2008, an exhibition at ETH Zurich was dedicated to the images from research trips, entitled *Forscher auf Reisen* (Researchers' Expeditions) with the exhibition catalogue: *ETH-Bibliothek: Forscher auf Reisen: Fotografien als wissenschaftliches Souvenir* (Researchers' Expeditions: Photographs Scientific Souvenirs) Zurich, 2008.

Figure 3: Ice sheet. Wind measurement, Alfred de Quervain. Greenland expedition. 1912. Glass slide, rectangular (landscape format), 8.5 x 10 cm, ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, Image Archive (Dia\_297-71).



books collection. In addition, depictions of the history of science and technology, as well as landscape and scenery views focusing on Switzerland have been collected. For instance, many depictions of instruments and people, as well as image material that had been used at the observatory for research and teaching (figure 2), have been transferred from the collection of the observatory of the ETH Zurich.

**Picture holdings in personal papers** (around 450,000 documents): The numerous archive contributions of ETH institutes, as well as bequests from ETH professors, which are now maintained in the Archives and Private Collections group of the ETH-Bibliothek, also contain image collections of great historical interest in addition to documents. For instance, professorial bequests include portraits, shots of employees, group images from conferences and scientific shots of research objects and field trips to serve as teaching aids or for publication purposes. These image collections are usually accompanied by written documents that place the images in a scientific context and are also very useful for assessing and indexing the content.

Of particular note are photographs from the early 20th century that were taken all over the world on research trips by geologists Leo Wehrli (1870-1954), Arnold (1882-1965) and Albert Heim (1849-1937), volcanologist Immanuel Friedländer (1871-1948), meteorologist Alfred de Quervain (1879-1927) (figure 3), botanist Albert Frey-Wyssling (1900-1988) and astronomer Max Waldmeier (1912-2000).<sup>2</sup> Not only did the researchers work with their specialist field in mind but, very often, they also photographed the population and their environment. This has resulted in unique insights that record long-vanished or changed cultures, cities and landscapes. For example, the ETH-Bibliothek has image material from a wide variety of regions and



Figure 2: Rutherford, Lewis M.: Moon, N.Y. March 6, 1865. Black-and-white print, rectangular (portrait format), 53 x 43 cm, ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, Image Archive (Ans\_02775-018-PL).

<sup>2</sup> In May 2008, an exhibition at ETH Zurich was dedicated to the images from research trips, entitled *Forscher auf Reisen (Researchers' Expeditions)* with the exhibition catalogue: ETH-Bibliothek: *Forscher auf Reisen: Fotografien als wissenschaftliches Souvenir (Researchers' Expeditions: Photographs Scientific Souvenirs)* Zurich, 2008.



countries across Asia that must be regarded as especially relevant and interesting (particularly in the context of the current upturn in this antiquarian image market).

However, the various sub-collections also contain photographs that show interesting social and technical developments within Switzerland. In agriculture, there are collections from the ETH's Agriculture and Forestry Institute (figure 4), of research trips by botanist Carl Schröter (1855-1939) (figure 5), on dairy farming by agronomist Markus Rudolf Bachmann (born 1928) and field trips by entomologist Paul Bovey (1905-1991). Several tunnel and bridge construction engineers (figure 6), such as Robert Maillart (1872-1940), Eugen Labhardt (1873-1963), Charles Andreae (1874-1964), Othmar Amman (1879-1965) and Fritz Stüssi (1901-1981), are represented. In addition, the archive of the Glaciological Committee of the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SANW) contains scientifically unique photographic depictions of the development of glaciers and of the Swiss Alps in particular. Another noteworthy part of the collection is the bequest of the Photographic Institute of the ETH Zurich (dating from 1886 to 1979), which charts key developments in photography.

**Portrait collection** (around 18,000 documents): The portrait collection comprises portraits of professors as well as some students of the ETH Zurich who worked at the university at the time of its founding. This collection also includes portraits of scientists from all over the world and from different periods.



Figure 4: Testing facility for culturing parasitic fungi for the purpose of extracting wilting toxins. 1953. Black-and-white print, rectangular (landscape format), 13 x 18 cm, ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, Image Archive (Ans\_03015-043).

**Comet Photo Archive** (around 1 million documents): This image collection is a special one, both thematically and in terms of how much space it requires. It records various aspects of the history of Switzerland from 1952 to 1999 more or less extensively. The range of subjects extends from architecture, culture and nature through politics to sports and technology. Portraits of prominent Swiss people and world-famous personalities are also included, as well as shots from other countries. Traffic and urban areas in Switzerland occupy a large part of the collection. With some 90,000 items, the collection of aerial images illustrates the settlement processes in Switzerland and changes to its infrastructure, individual buildings and in the agriculture sector. At present, around 25,000 images in the overall collection are digitised, mainly the aerial images. News report images are scanned for customers on request (figure 7).

**Luftbild Schweiz** (around 250,000 images, 200 films): At the beginning of 2009, the ETH-Bibliothek acquired the archive of Luftbild Schweiz together with the photo archive of Swissair. The collections consist of around 250,000 images and 200 films, including the important glass negatives collection of Swiss aviation pioneer and Swissair



Figure 5: Bohny: The salt mill in Fruthwald, the German colony in Formazza, Italy. The cattle salt is supplied in coarse crystals and finely ground here.  
Final field trip 1901, July 28.  
Black-and-white print, rectangular (portrait format), ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, Image Archive (Hs\_1360-0206).

founder Walter Mittelholzer (1894-1937), early historical shots of civil aviation and aerial images in oblique projection from 1965 to the present day. The archive will be transferred to the ETH-Bibliothek by 2013. Selected older collections will be digitised from 2009 on. Retired Swissair employees have already been taken on board for indexing images with missing metadata.

**AV media** (around 1,200 documents): The small collection of audiovisual media is also geared towards technical and scientific subjects and mainly consists of bequests and recordings from the ETH Zurich. For instance, the inaugural and valedictory lectures by ETH professors have been systematically recorded on audio tape from 1971 to 1986 and on video since 1987. This collection is currently being digitised in a pilot project and, if there are no legal objections, is to be made available online on an open access basis as soon as possible.

The Image Archive of the ETH-Bibliothek fulfils the traditional functions of a library, with a focus on accessibility and propagation of the images.

At the same time, the long-term safeguarding of the collections is also a key element. In this respect, the Image Archive pursues the strategy of digitising selected image collections, then entering and indexing them in the database. The original documents are restored as required, packed into non-corroding containers, labelled and stored in the storeroom in the best possible climatic conditions. In addition, the scans are output to microfiche.

### E-Pics: Image Management and Online Publication

Since 2005, the Image Archive has had a digital asset management database, based on the Canto Cumulus Enterprise Solution software,<sup>3</sup> in which the digitised images are managed, indexed and published in the online database BildarchivOnline.<sup>4</sup> As part of a campus-wide major project, the image information platform E-Pics has been developed by the ETH-Bibliothek. This has seen one of the primary aims of the ETH Zurich achieved, namely bundling the many individual applications at the University into one holistic solution. For this, users must be provided with a functioning web client with differentiated indexing and search options as well as long-term data backup.

E-Pics is a service for institutes, agencies, archives and collections of the ETH Zurich that arrange for their own Cumulus image catalogue to be set up in order to enable efficient management of image collections from the areas of teaching and research. The Image Archive is available to give advice as required on questions relating to organisation, itemisation, digitalisation, rights and preservation.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.canto.de/> [30.03.09]

<sup>4</sup> <http://ba.e-pics.ethz.ch/> [30.03.09]



Figure 6:  
“Salginatobel Bridge at Schiers. Bh.:  
Graubünden canton”. Execution: Prader & Cie.  
AG, Zurich - Chur, centring: project and execu-  
tion R. Coray, Chur. 1929/30. Black-and-white  
print, rectangular (landscape format), 6.5 x  
8.5 cm, ETH-Bibliothek Zurich, image archive  
(Hs\_1085-1929-30-1-37).

The central database runs on a server of the ETH-Bibliothek. The original data (assets) are saved centrally via the SAN of the IT Services of the ETH Zurich and backed up. In this way, maximum security and reliability are ensured when managing access by various user groups at various locations. The web client offers all key functions on a non-platform-dependent basis. The native client is only provided for administration purposes; in particular, for one-off creation of the data fields, categories and authorisations, as well as for the migration of data from other systems. As at March 2009, there are 14 catalogues. Three of these, with around 44,000 images in total, are available online.<sup>5</sup>

### Functionalities and Enhancements

In addition to the basic functionalities of a database, such as storage and retrieval, the following items are also crucial to E-Pics users as far as image processing and publication are concerned: for each image, it is possible to define whether it is to be viewable on the Internet and which persons or groups are allowed to access it. In the event of publication on the Internet, the images can be protected with a watermark.

Another important element is the continuous enhancement of the client in order to keep the technology state-of-the-art. In July 2008, in response to the results of a usability walkthrough, the new web interface, offering the following enhanced functionalities: general improvement in the usability of the web applications, in particular for image indexing, was introduced. Incorporation of new functionalities from Cumulus version 7 (in particular PDF masters and PowerPoint export) as well as adaptations to the needs of E-Pics users (extended personalisation, ordering process, direct download).

### Implementation of the Open Access Policy of the ETH Zurich

A qualitative user survey conducted by the ETH-Bibliothek in 2006<sup>6</sup> produced the following findings with regard to the use of images:

- Even ETH professors primarily look in Google Image Search for image material for lectures
- There is little awareness of the option of image searches in the online image archive or E-Pics in general
- There is great uncertainty regarding the legal situation
- The use of images in teaching is therefore a delicate matter, especially if a lecture is also to be filmed and published as a podcast.

This shows that a legally secure set of images that can be easily accessed via search engines would meet a stated need of the primary target group of the ETH-Bibliothek. It is also clear that

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.e-pics.ethz.ch> [30.03.09]

<sup>6</sup> Eva Ramming, Nicole Graf (2007), Informationsmanagement an der ETH Zürich. Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Expertenbefragung der ETH-Bibliothek zum Umgang mit Literatur und Informationsressourcen in Forschung und

Lehre [Information Management at ETH Zurich. Results of a qualitative expert survey by the ETH-Bibliothek on the use of literature and information resources in research and teaching].

Zurich: ETH-Bibliothek. <http://e-collection.ethbib.ethz.ch/view/eth:29883>.

a move towards open access would be very much welcomed by scientific customers. The ETH Zurich approved an Open Access Policy in July 2008. This primarily involves the free publication of research results on the ETH E-Collection document server.<sup>7</sup>

To date, as a member of the Swiss Association of Photo Agencies and Archives (SAB), the Image Archive has focused on commercial image agencies and developed corresponding organisational procedures in recent years. It is now apparent that the major administrative investment required for this is only justified with commercial orders. The income from non-commercial orders often fails to cover the expenses necessary to handle them. Therefore,

Figure 7: *Glacier*.  
Black-and-white photo negative,  
rectangular (landscape format), 9 x 12 cm,  
ETH-Bibliothek Zurich,  
Image Archive (Hs\_1458-GK-B000-0000-04).



<sup>7</sup> <http://e-collection.ethbib.ethz.ch/> [30.03.09]



Figure 8: Vogt: *Geneva International Moto Show*,  
*Saab Sonnett II*. 1966.  
 Black-and-white photo negative,  
 rectangular (landscape format), 2.4 x 3.6 cm,  
 ETH-Bibliothek Zurich,  
 Image Archive (Com\_L15-0143-0608).



simplified procedures for non-commercial use would also be desirable from an organisational viewpoint. Image database access figures also show that the major search streams on the Internet bypass the Image Archive. Approx. 1,000 users access the online image archive every month. If it were possible to find the images via common search engines, access figures could be hugely increased.

Having made preparations since mid-2008, the ETH-Bibliothek decided to release its image material (as well as its own digitised collections) for non-commercial use in February 2009. Insofar as copyright allows, the images will be published at a defined quality (resolution, size, format) under a Creative Commons license. This means that images can be obtained and published in JPEG format with a 72 dpi resolution and at a maximum size of 640x640 pixels, together with image information, free of charge for non-commercial purposes. Integration into the Google Image Search is the most effective way to increase open access use of the images of the ETH-Bibliothek. However, as before, the database will not be opened to crawlers. Google itself provides the image sitemap with an extensive specification for the integration of images. Accordingly, images will be published on individual websites with their metadata. These individual pages will be linked via index pages and combined via a higher-level image sitemap, an XML file (image 8). Open access 'self-service users' can download the images in the Google Image Search. At the time of writing, it is not possible to say how this will affect commercial use. However, open access and integration of the digital image collections into Google image searches are a further and important step towards making the diverse collections of the Image Archive of the ETH-Bibliothek more accessible.

# Turn the Page: Present and Future of Photography Magazines

Pep Benlloch  
Pedro Vicente

Pasar página: presente y futuro de la revistas de fotografía

On 15th, 16th and 17th December 2008 the international conference 'Pasar página: presente y futuro de la revistas de fotografía' took place at the MuVIM in Valencia, Spain. The conference, directed by Pep Benlloch and Pedro Vicente, aimed at 're-thinking' the concept and function of photography magazines in the 21st century. On the basis of the importance and influence of magazines in the diffusion and development of photography, the necessity of providing a context in which this significance of photography magazines could be studied became increasingly clear to us. The conference was organised by the Study Center at MuVIM with the collaboration of the Vicerrectorado de Cultura de la Universitat de València (UV), Facultad de Bellas Artes de San Carlos, Departamento de Documentación Audiovisual, Historia del Arte y Documentación de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (UPV), University of Creative Arts (UCA) and Book Room.

During its three days, the conference not only looked into the history of photography magazines and their historical importance and influence, but also focused on alternative ways of publishing magazines as self-publishing, in contemporary photography magazine publishing, and the co-existence of online publications with paper based magazines. Renowned academics, theoreticians, editors and artists including Liz Wells, Juan Naranjo, Sunil Gupta, Rosa Olivares and the artists collective NOPHOTO exposed their views on how photography magazines should be in the 21st Century.

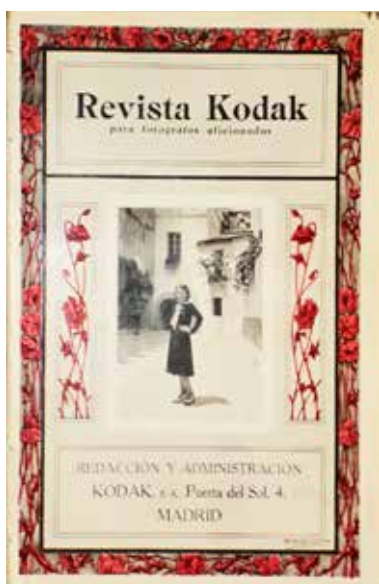
One of the common factors of the most relevant artistic movements that characterised the 20th century was that almost all of them had a periodic publication somehow attached to them. These publications had a double function; on the one hand, they consolidated those movements, their components, ideas and manifestos; on the other hand, artistic movements crystallised as such. Surrealism and Dada would not have been the same without publications such as *Littérature*, *VVV*, *Surréalisme*, *Révolution Surréaliste*, *Die Schamade* or *291*. In fact, part of the success and fast dissemination of many 20th century artistic movements was because of publications that operated as agile 'mass media' between the different members of such movements in a time when communications and distance were very different from what we know nowadays. In this sense, photography (and its validation, acceptance and evolution as a means of artistic expression) has been closely bound to photography magazines.<sup>1</sup>

Photography, and its history, cannot be understood without the function of photography magazines, bulletins and publications attached to photographic societies. In their time, magazines such

as *Camera Work*, *La Lumière*, *Modern Photography*, *Popular Photography*, *Creative Camera*, *Contrejour*, *Photographica* and *Aperture* performed a major role in the artistic, technical, theoretical, aesthetic, ontological and critical development of photography; many of them still do today. The magazine format, halfway between the immediacy of the newspaper and the more reflexive and academic approach of the book, has been – and undoubtedly still is – an adequate means for the diffusion of any of the possible dimensions of photography. Their flexible format allowed editors to be more subversive than in the more rigid and slower structure of the book. In that respect, magazines place themselves between newspapers and books in a space to be filled with nimble and active points of view that are an alternative to more conventional thinking. The specificity of the magazine provides an invaluable space for reflexive thinking, making a critical analysis going beyond merely journalistic information, and which other means of communication cannot offer because of their very own nature, possible. In addition, magazines are agents of intervention, spaces for ethical and aesthetic thought from which theoretical and critical regeneration can be proposed. This 'medium distance' of the magazine, which is perhaps its best trick and advantage over other means of communication, is probably, at the same time, its principal disadvantage. As Thierry de Duve<sup>2</sup> says of the very specific nature of

<sup>1</sup> The first publication on photography was The *Daguerrian Journal* devoted to the Daguerrian and Photographic Arts, edited in New York in 1850 and whose content was general and technical information. In Europe, the first photography magazine was *La Lumière*, published in Paris in 1851 as the official publication of the Heliographic Society of Paris. Through the 19th century, photography magazines were published in many European countries in which photography was being researched. For example, in 1864 there

were 25 photography magazines in Europe, eleven in the UK, six in France, two in Spain, one in Italy and one in The Netherlands. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries all photographic societies, clubs and cultural associations related to photography had their own publications or magazines. Of relevant importance were the *Boletín* (1899) published by the Italian Society of Photography and *La Revue Photographique* (1903), published by the Photo Club of Paris. Another prestigious photography pub-



Revista Kodak para fotógrafos aficionados,  
Madrid 1936.

photography, they are 'not anymore and not yet'; magazines are always too late, but repeatedly too early. However, from this no-man's-land, magazines have a vocation of continuance, of being consulted, read and re-read.

### Looking into History

Photography was public from its very beginnings.<sup>3</sup> Photography, as a public medium, became the defining feature of a new kind of illustrated press that made it possible to inspect objects from far away through photographs.<sup>4</sup> This has been of particular interest in the case of war photography where events that happened a great distance away are displayed publicly.<sup>5</sup> The use of war photographs in the 'mass media' has had two stages; a first one in which the photograph acted more as a document, a probe of facts, and a second one where the photograph is transformed into a political artefact. The photographs by Roger Fenton or Timothy O'Sullivan are closer to 'pure' documentation (even when we know or suspect that some photographs were altered and arranged) than photographs from the Vietnam War, for example, which could be defined as being more 'political'. Through the pages of magazines, photography moved from documenting war to changing it.

However, there is an interesting paradox here. Contemporary war (or technological warfare as has been defined somewhere else) does not produce 'real' victims. The victims on a piece of paper are not real, blood does not make our hands dirty, and corpses do not smell. War uses photography to 'publicize' the victims, but they lose their identity and become anonymous in the process, persons become just 'victims'. A certain 'distance' is implicit in the notion of technology (both photography and war technology); there is a 'here' and a 'there', but more importantly, there is an 'in between'. It is this non-distance in which, paradoxically, war victims exist and do not exist at the same time. And, as a technological tool (a direct consequence of the Industrial Revolution), photography is the perfect medium to be used by technological warfare. As Juan José Lahuerta suggested,<sup>6</sup> this was the case of the Spanish Civil War<sup>7</sup> and the use of photography in magazines in that period. Magazines published during the Spanish Civil War like *El Comisario*, *Levante*, *Nova Cultura*, *Nuestra Bandera* or *Mundo Obrero* used photographs of anonymous victims as political propaganda with repetition as the most effective weapon.

According to Lahuerta, manipulation was widely used. It was crucial to 'have' victims inside the magazines, to use magazines as propaganda; propaganda with and of victims, no matter if they were friend or foe. The repeated use of such images can generate a loss of effectiveness and viewer's sensibility. Ignacio Ramonet<sup>8</sup> argued that contemporary censorship operates not so

lication of that time was the *Revue Belge de Photographie*, edited monthly in Brussels.

2 Thierry de Duve, 'Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox' in *Photography Theory*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2007.

3 Horacio Fernández, *Fotografía pública: Photography in Print, 1919-1939*, Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 1999, 28.

4 Jordana Mendelson, *Catálogo Guerra y Revistas*, Ministerio de Cultura, 2007, 16.

5 Like a metaphor of the very own nature of photography, what did occur there and then is shown here and now.

6 Juan José Lahuerta, *Publicaciones y revistas en la Guerra Civil*, 2008, unpublished paper delivered at the conference.

7 Many historians consider the Spanish Civil War to be a 'field of study' for many technological war devices that later were used in the Second World War.

8 Ignacio Ramonet, *La tiranía de la comunicación*, Madrid: Editorial

# indice FOTOGRAFICO Y DE LAS ARTES



Indice Fotografico y de las Artes,  
(Federico Velilla, ed.), Madrid 1971.

much as the retention and banning of information but more as information saturation. The saturation of images we suffer from in the 'mass media' not only provokes a loss of awareness and sensibility about what is happening in the world, but also fills the media with images of particular events that distract the viewer from other facts.

Also on the first day of the conference, Enric Mira looked back to the history of *PhotoVision*, a Spanish photography magazine of the 1980s in which photography was the pretext for addressing an endless number of subjects: architecture, literature, thought and new technologies. *PhotoVision* was created in 1980 by a group of independent photographers (Joan Fontcuberta, Ignacio González, Rafael Leventfeld and Adolfo Martínez) and, from its launch, its aim was renovation – especially in Spain where the only existent photography magazines were technical magazines or publications associated to photographic societies. According to Mira, we must recover the past,<sup>9</sup> in this case through the legacy of *PhotoVision*, which must to be recognised and legitimised as one of the key factors on which Spanish photography has been built in the past decades.

Similar to *PhotoVision*, magazines like *AFAL* and *Nueva Lente* marked the rise of Spanish photography between the 1950s and 70s. However, they disappeared with a rich legacy (which was not always valued) and without a natural successor. *AFAL*<sup>10</sup> was a magazine which was started in 1956 (published until 1963) as the local bulletin of a photographic society in the small Spanish city of Almería. However, *AFAL*<sup>11</sup> soon became the leading magazine of Spanish photography gaining its relevance from its new aesthetic approaches to photography, escaping from Pictorialism and Salonism. Also, the publication of portfolios of photographers from abroad helped Spanish photography to open up its, until then, very narrow-minded understanding of photography. *Nueva Lente* was published in Madrid from 1971 to 1984 as an independent publication. Unlike *AFAL*, *Nueva Lente* featured colour photographs and, for the first time, montage as a form artistic expression, breaking many links with old photographic conceptions. In this sense, *Nueva Lente* had a provocative nature and new designs and ways of understanding photography became possible on its pages.

## Living the Present

On the second day of the conference, artist and curator Sunil Gupta<sup>12</sup> shared the adventure of publishing and launching a photography magazine in India with the audience. *Camerawork Delhi*<sup>13</sup> is produced by three individuals (Radhika Singh, Gauri Gill and Sunil Gupta) on a voluntary basis in New Delhi. In the absence of any critical discussion in print about photography in India, they felt it was time to make a publication available to the local community. *Camerawork*

Debate, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> This is of relevant importance in Spain where the scene and reality of photography magazines is more devastating than ever. In Spain there were eleven photography magazines in the period 1864-1914 and 23 photography magazines in the period 1914-1939. In 2009 there are only two photography magazines. This desolating scheme was one of the motivations to organise the conference. Facts and statistics from: Elisabet Insenser, *La fotografía*

en España en el periodo de entreguerras, Biblioteca de la imagen.

<sup>10</sup> Marie-Loup Sougez, *Tres revistas, tres momentos de la fotografía española*, catalogue of the exhibition: *'El papel de la fotografía: AFAL, Nueva Lente y PhotoVisión'*.

<sup>11</sup> *AFAL* had a bilingual Spanish-French edition of 2500 copies in its time.

<sup>12</sup> Sunil Gupta, *The Adventure of Publishing a Photography Magazine in India*, 2008, unpublished paper delivered at the conference.





Sombras (portrait of a woman),  
(Eduardo Susana, ed.), Madrid n.d.

*Delhi* appears in print only and is freely distributed in New Delhi. It features reviews, news, portfolios, and interviews with photographers, curators, technicians in the industry, formal and non-formal education and theoretical articles. According to Gupta, India does not have specialised photography galleries, it barely has a history of photography readily available. It is not taught in formal education and, in most art education, photography takes a secondary position. In India, photography is caught between craft and art, between a professional trade and an amateur hobby, between the utilitarian and the intellectual, away from a certain kind of medium specificity. It was in this scenario that *Camerawork Delhi* was born; its adventure is one which has to deal with the old tradition and conception of photography and, at the same time, with the one in which the immediacy of digital photography is available to everyone. Indian teenagers revel in their mobile phone cameras and instant postings to their albums on the net.

From a completely different perspective, Liz Wells delivered a paper on photography magazines published in English. Wells pointed out that “magazines influence expressing opinions and therefore offer a valid forum for debates about art and society”.<sup>14</sup> For her, “despite the burgeoning of internet-based chat rooms and email networks, published and online journals and magazines remain central as vehicles of information and critical challenge”.<sup>15</sup> Wells emphasized the political and ideological debates within photography magazines “associated with structuralism and post-structuralism which influenced developments in photography theory”.<sup>16</sup> As an example of this, Wells mentioned the journals *Screen* and *Screen Education*, both influenced by French theorists Althusser, Barthes, Foucault or Derrida. For Wells, editor of the two last issues of *Camerawork* in 1985, ‘contemporary critical scholarly work on photography is constrained by the legacy of these theoretical debates of the late twentieth century. Some theorists continue to seek the elusive ‘photographic’ and its essence in the index, the punctum, subjectivity, and the experience and technology of modernity. On the other hand, there are those who want to address only the present and future, formulating the impact of the digital as ‘post-photographic’, transcending photography as previously constituted’.<sup>17</sup> *Photographies*, an academic journal published by Routledge of which Wells is a co-editor, aims to ‘construct a new agenda for theorising the photographic, one that is alert to photography’s changing contexts and meanings, and to the unprecedented scale and diversity of sites of image production, reproduction and consumption now. It aims to further develop the history and theory of photography, considering new frameworks for thinking and addressing questions arising from the present context of technological, economic, political and cultural change. It will investigate the contemporary condition and currency of the photographic within local and global contexts’<sup>18</sup>. The importance of photography journals and magazines resides in the forum they

13 Originally planned as a quarterly, but time constraints mean that it currently issues three numbers a year. The first issue was designed by Sunil Gupta and the printing costs were subsidised by Khoj, an arts workshop in Delhi that is part of the Triangle Group based at London’s Gasworks. Thereafter, further funding was provided by the French Embassy in Delhi and the size of the issues became larger and definable parts to the magazine have emerged. The print run varies between 1500 and 2000 copies which are dis-

seminated around the city and also nationally and internationally.

14 Liz Wells, *Photography Magazines in Europe*, 2008, unpublished paper delivered at the conference.

15 Wells, 2008 [note 14].

16 Wells, 2008 [note 14].

17 Wells, 2008 [note 14].

18 Wells, 2008 [note 14].



FOTO Año IV Número 36; Publicación Mensual Ilustrada de Fotografía y Cinematografía, (José P. Noguera. Ed.), Barcelona 1932.

offer for “critical debate, for exposure of new work, or new ideas, including new research”,<sup>19</sup> But for Wells the point is that “whilst the forum for debate may shift, as more and more happens online and as web practices develop, debate in itself must continue”.<sup>20</sup>

### Using New Technologies

The conference was closed with two papers delivered by Spanish editors Rosa Olivares<sup>21</sup> and Nacho Fernández<sup>22</sup>, who reflected on the future of photography magazines, focusing on the role of technology and the possibility, or impossibility, of the coexistence between paper and the monitor in the 21st century. Digital photography magazines are not a new genre, but undoubtedly there are fundamental changes with regard to the printed magazine. Perhaps the first of these novelties is the understanding of the concepts of diffusion and distribution. Electronic magazines do not have to be distributed physically; nowadays anyone, anywhere, at anytime, can access a magazine published in the World Wide Web. Conversely, anyone, anywhere, at anytime, can be a publisher and launch a photography magazine. New forms of printing technologies have made it easier and cheaper to publish a printed magazine than ever before but, without doubt, there has been a higher increase in the appearance of online publications.<sup>23</sup>

One of the traditional functions of the photography magazine, publishing photographer's portfolios, is more readily available to photographers nowadays, and they also have the possibility of becoming an editor at the same time. In this sense, the meaning and role of distribution has changed dramatically. Internet breaks through the barriers of time, frontiers and space; on the net, nationalities are not attached to cultural, political and historical issues; the new nationality is an idiomatic one, new borders are delimited by language, not so much the one we speak as the language we understand. Digital magazines are more democratic; as a matter of fact, they encourage the democratization of culture and ultimately, the digital format culminates the real function of the magazine: the popularisation of culture.

When speaking of photography and photography magazines, it is particularly evident that it is not possible to understand photography today without the digital and the internet. The digital questions, the notion of materialization, lead to a potential dematerialization of photography and magazines. It is still an unresolved problem of digital magazines that they have to develop

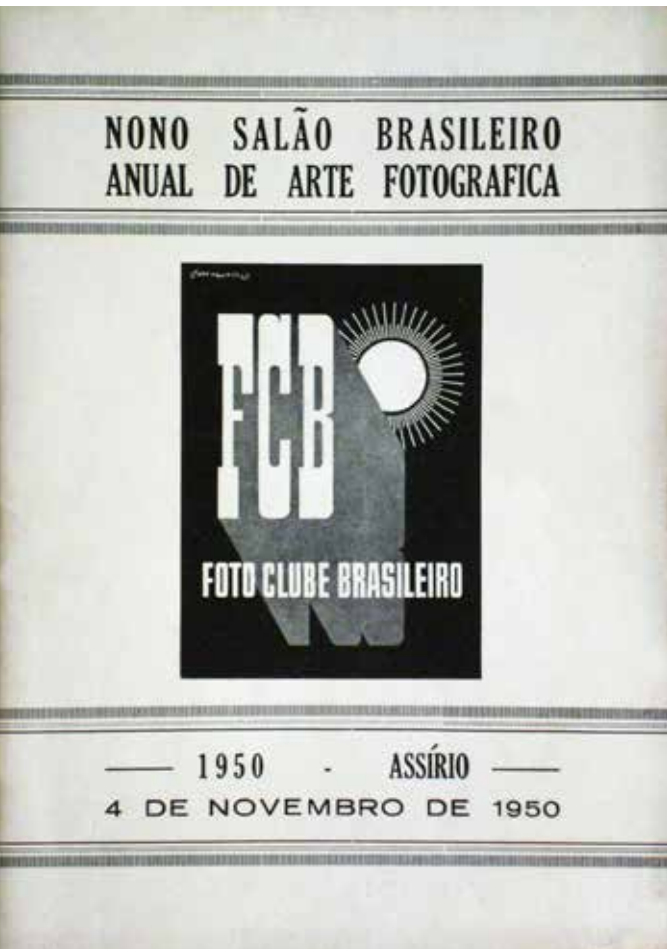
<sup>19</sup> Wells, 2008 (note 14).

<sup>20</sup> Wells, 2008 (note 14).

<sup>21</sup> Rosa Olivares, *Presente y futuro de las revistas de papel*, 2008, unpublished paper delivered at the conference.

<sup>22</sup> Nacho Fernández, *Coesistencia de la revista impresa con la revista online*, 2008, unpublished paper delivered at the conference.

<sup>23</sup> And to some extent there has been a notable rise of paper photography magazines in the past few years.



Nono Salao Brasileiro, "Annual de Arte Fotografica", (Noguera Borges, ed.), Rio de Janeiro 4 De Novembro de 1950.

further and quicker, as fast as technology does, if not even faster, without imitating paper magazines. As two different mediums, with two different purposes, it is inevitable that paper and the monitor have to learn to co-exist and improve their cohabitation. The reader has to find out how to use both without prejudice and make the most of the two formats. In the meantime, institutions should turn their attention to digital magazines with more rigor and seriousness than before. Institutions should also establish regulations regarding the notion of the 'archive', especially in these digital times, where manipulation and misleading happens more often than ever before; the storage of digital cultural heritage has to be seriously considered by them.

#### Towards a new present

In our opinion, we must re-think the notion and understanding of photography magazines, not only in formal and historical aspects but also in conceptual terms. The role of the photography magazine has to be an agile and indispensable medium of, and for, the communication of photography. And, not only between the different agents involved in photography, but also as an indispensable element for the definitive consolidation, legitimization and recognition of photography as something much more than a mere graphic document or, as Rosalind Krauss stated, a 'metalanguage' of art, and beyond the eternal (sometimes nonsensical) debate about the similarities between photography and reality. Ultimately, as Liz Wells said in her paper, there are many photographs, and many magazines should exist to publish all of those photographs. With this understanding of photography, it is obvious that the notion of photography magazines has to evolve at the same time. Historic models have their importance and relevance – we are here because of them – but they cannot determinate the future. We must build on the ruins but not ruin.

## Biographies

### **Anna Auer** (Vienna),

President of the ESHPh. 1975, she initiated the photographic collection Fotografis (now UniCredit Bank Austria AG) in Vienna, curator from 1976-1986. 1992 grant from the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, which led to the exhibition *Exodus from Austria - Emigration of Austrian photographers 1920-1940*, Kunsthalle Wien, 1998. Author of numerous publications on the history of photography. 2008, co-author of the catalogue *Jubilee. 30 Years ESHPh and PhotoResearcher* (together with Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Uwe Schögl). In 2008 she became professor.

### **Pep Benlloch** (Valencia, Spain),

director of Galería Visor, since 1982 lecturer of photography at Facultad de Bellas Artes in Valencia, director of Master of Photography at the Polytechnic University of Valencia, co-director of the doctorate program Fotografía y nuevos medios audiovisuales: De lo analógico a lo digital and co-director of the postgraduate photography program at Escola ELISAVA, Barcelona, Spain. In 2008 director of the international conference *Pasar página: presente y futuro de la revistas de fotografía* in Valencia, Spain together with Pedro Vicente.

### **A. D. Coleman** (New York),

has published eight books and more than 2000 essays on photography and related subjects. Formerly a columnist for the *Village Voice*, the *New York Times*, and the *New York Observer*, Coleman has contributed to *ARTnews*, *Art On Paper*, *Technology Review*, *Juliet Art Magazine* (Italy), *European Photography* (Germany), *La Fotografía* (Spain), and *Art Today* (China). His work has been translated into 21 languages and published in 31 countries. Since 2005, exhibitions that he has curated have opened at museums and galleries in Canada, China, Finland, Italy, Rumania, Slovakia, and the U.S.

### **Ulla Fischer-Westhauser** (Vienna),

first secretary of the ESHPh; English lecturer and historian; curator at photo-museum WestLicht. Schauplatz für Fotografie. Exhibitions and publications about history of economics and photo history; most recent exhibition *Che Guevara - Kultbild einer Generation*.

### **Nicole Graf** (Zurich),

is a librarian and a sociologist; she is head of the Section Images and Maps of the ETH-Bibliothek at the ETH Zurich since March 2008. Before that she managed a pilot project on retro-digitising journals, available on the Seals portal.

### **Rolf H. Krauss** (Stuttgart),

entrepreneurial activity in the retail industry. From 1977 to 1996 Chairman of the History Section of Deutsche Gesellschaft der Photographie (German Society of Photography). Studies in Art History and German Literature. Until 2004, teaching assignment at the Institute for Art History at the University of Stuttgart. Focus of research: History and Theory of Photography. Most recent publication: *Kunst mit Fotografie, und andere ausgewählte Texte zur Fotografie* (Art with Photography, and other selected texts on photography), Bielefeld 2006.

### **Suzanne Paquet** (Montreal, Canada),

is professor of History of Photography at University of Montreal, Department of History of Art and Cinematographic Studies. She completed a PhD in History of Art at University of Montreal and a Postdoctoral research project in Geography (Laval University, Quebec, and Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour). Her thesis, *Le paysage façonné. Les territoires postindustriels, l'art et l'usage*, was published by the Presses de l'Université Laval in January 2009.

### **Christoph Schaden** (Cologne),

studies in Art History, Psychology and Contemporary German Literature. Since 1997/98 partner of the publishing house Schaden Verlag and of the bookshop Schaden.com in Cologne. Since 2004 member of the board of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Photographie (DGPh) and lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences Nuremberg, the University of Bochum and the University of Applied Sciences Darmstadt. Since 2005 freelance work on photography and art. Numerous publications on photography, in *Photonews*, *Foam*, *European Photography* and *Camera Austria* among others.

### **Uwe Schögl** (Vienna),

Vice President of the ESHPh. Assistant Director and Senior Curator of Photography of the Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library, Vienna. Since 2006 visiting lecturer at the Danube University Krems/Images Sciences. Research on Heinrich Kühn and the Pictorialism in Austria, photography in the 20th century, especially on the manifestations of art and photography in totalitarian regimes. Most recent publication: *Ferdinand Schmutzer. Photographic Works 1894-1928* (2008).

### **Pedro Vicente** (Valencia, Spain),

co-director of the postgraduate photography program at Escola ELISAVA, Barcelona, Spain, lecturer on history and theory of photography at UCA, Farnham, UK; director of the International Symposium Instantáneas de la Teoría de la Fotografía, 2009, part of SCAN 09, *Manifestació Fotográfica* in Tarragona, Spain; published in several photography magazines and curator of numerous photography exhibitions. In 2008 director of the international conference *Pasar página: presente y futuro de la revistas de fotografía* in Valencia, Spain together with Pep Benlloch.



## **Imprint**

**PhotoResearcher** No 12, May 2009

The magazine of the European Society for the History of Photography (ESHP)

A-1010 Vienna, Fleischmarkt 16/2/2/31

E-mail: office.eshph@aon.at

T: +43 (1) 513 71 96

www.donau-uni.ac.at/eshph

## **Editors**

Anna Auer, Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Uwe Schögl

## **Copy editing**

Anna Auer, Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Uwe Schögl

## **Contributors**

Anna Auer & Uwe Schögl, A. D. Coleman, Nicole Graf, Rolf H. Krauss,  
Suzanne Paquet, Christoph Schaden, Pedro Vicente & Pep Benlloch

## **Translators**

Ulla Fischer-Westhauser, Robert Scott McInnes

## **Graphic design**

Thomas Freiler

## **Credits**

Cover-Illustration: Philipp J. Bösel & Burckhard Maus, "Berlin Wall 1984 seen  
from the West", from the project 'Die vermessene Mauer' (the surveyed Wall)  
Library of Congress, Print & Photographs Division, Washington D.C.

16, 19

Center of Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson, USA

20, 21

Notman Collection at the McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal

28, 29, 30, 33

ETH-Bibliothek, Image Archive, Zurich,

44, 45, 46, 47 48, 49, 50

@ Illustrations 4 to 7

Rolf Aigner, Thomas Freiler, Hannelore Huber, Manfred Litscher, Johannes Stoll,  
Vienna Convention Bureau (all in Austria)

## **Printed in Austria**

by Holzhausen Druck & Medien GmbH., Vienna

© 2009 European Society for the History of Photography (ESHP) and authors.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any  
form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording  
or any other information storage and retrieval system, without the written permis-  
sion of the publisher. Every effort has been made to locate the copyright holders for  
the photographs used in the magazine. We welcome any pertaining information.

ISSN: 0958 2606

Price: € 10



# visual arts journals

from Routledge

## **History of Photography**

*History of Photography* is an international journal devoted exclusively to the history and criticism of the basic semantic unit of all modern media, the photograph.

[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/thph](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/thph)

## **Photographies**

*Photographies* seeks to construct a new agenda for theorising photography as a heterogeneous medium that is changing in an ever more dynamic relation to all aspects of contemporary culture.

[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rpho](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rpho)

## **Visual Culture in Britain**

**NEW to Routledge in 2009**

*Visual Culture in Britain* places visual culture – painting and sculpture, architecture and design, print, film, photography and the performing arts – in relation to the wider culture historically and geographically from the 18th century to the present.

[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rvcb](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rvcb)

## **Visual Studies**

*Visual Studies* provides the key resource where issues of a visual nature, whether it be epistemological, methodological, empirical, symbolic, or ethical, may be aired and debated.

[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rvst](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rvst)

**Visit the websites to  
request free sample copies**

## Susanne Regener (Hg.) **Amateurs. Laien verändern die visuelle Kultur**

Am Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts haben digitale Fotografie und Internet die Rolle des Fotoamateurs verändert. Er verlässt die Dunkelkammer, das Terrain aus Optik und Chemie und wechselt über in die Abstraktion des Digitalen. Neue Kameratechnologien, Scanner, Bildbearbeitungssoftware und ein netzfähiger Computer müssen beherrscht werden. Das Themenheft beschäftigt sich mit „alten“ und „neuen“ Fotoamateuren. Das Spektrum der Beiträge reicht von der Arbeiterfotografie der Zwischenkriegszeit bis zu den Akteuren des so genannten Web 2.0, des „Mitmach-Netzes“.

**Susanne Regener** Medienamateure im digitalen Zeitalter

**Timm Starl** Inszenierung des Privaten. Knipsfotos auf Postkarten

**Wolfgang Hesse** Der Amateur als politischer Akteur. Anmerkungen zur Arbeiterfotografie der Weimarer Republik

**Gunnar Schmidt** Dilettantische Ästhetik. Fotografie zwischen Laien- und Kunstsphäre

**Karin Bruns** All by Myself. Audiovisuelle Techniken der Selbstveröffentlichung in pornografischen Webforen

Rezensionen – Bücher – Forschung



Gebr. König Postkartenverlag, Köln: „Ralph Gibson: ‚Holidays on Sea‘, 1948“