

# *photographies*



CRITICAL ISSUES IN PHOTOGRAPHY TODAY  
International Conference, London, UK

18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

# *photographies*

We welcome you to our tenth anniversary and this two-day conference of the *photographies* journal to celebrate the event.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES IN PHOTOGRAPHY TODAY**

International Conference, London, UK  
18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Our aim has been to bring together a range of international speakers to explore the contemporary condition and currencies of the photographic image. In a spirit of collaboration we invite you all to engage, discuss and develop topical debates on photography.

The talks are grouped into five key themes that address and explore a wealth of different issues and subjects within each of them:

### CRITICAL ISSUES

THEORY AND RESISTANCES

TERRITORY, COMMUNITY AND THE STATE

BORDERS AND BOUNDARIES

EDUCATION

We hope this focus will help to stimulate new thinking and fresh critical debate in both practice and critical theory. Please feel free to participate in all discussions during the event. Thank you for your support in coming to this event and helping us in the interrogation of photography today.

*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.

*photographies* 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.

*photographies* investigates the contemporary condition and currency of the photographic within local and global contexts. The editors seek research papers and innovative visual essays, shorter papers engaging new debates, review essays evaluating publications, cultural events, key developments, exhibitions and conferences.

The conference is convened by:

DAVID BATE – University of Westminster, London, UK

LIZ WELLS – Plymouth University, UK

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UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER

RESEARCH  
WITH  
PLYMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY

 **Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group

09.30 Registration

### INTRODUCTION TO CONFERENCE

10.00 DAVID BATE & LIZ WELLS, Conference Convenors

### CRITICAL ISSUES

ANDREW DEWDNEY – SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY, LONDON, UK

10.15 **MICHELLE HENNING**  
Image Flow: Photography on Tap

10.40 **WINFREID GERLING**  
Photography in the Digital: The Screenshot and In-Game-Photography

11.05 **BEN BURBRIDGE**  
Photography in the Age of Communicative Capitalism

11.30 **SARAH TUCK**  
Drone Vision: Surveillance and Protest

12.00 Discussion

13.00 Lunch

### THEORY AND RESISTANCES

MERJA SALO – AALTO UNIVERSITY, FINLAND

14.00 **CÉCILE BISHOP**  
Photography and Race: The Visual Economy of the French Liberation

14.25 **SYLVIA GRACE BORDA**  
What *has* become of the camera as object?

14.50 **JAN BABNIK**  
For Whom Photography?

15.15 **SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN**  
A Cut through Photography

15.40 Discussion

16.00 Tea/Coffee

### TERRITORY, COMMUNITY AND THE STATE

DAVID BATE – PANEL DISCUSSION

16.30 **OLGA SMITH**  
Making Visible

**STEFANIE GERKE**  
Living on the edge – periphery and marginalisation in urban landscape depictions

**TOBIAS ZIELONY** – Photographer based in Berlin, Germany

18.00 Reception – Refreshments (until 19.00)

**MICHELLE HENNING**  
University of West London, UK

This paper discusses networked digital photographic images, in terms of "image flow". I link current liquid metaphors (photo streams etc.) with theories of televisual "flow", the flow of capital, and of attention. How might singular photographs be attended to in the context of the continuous, on-tap model of electronic and digital media?

**BEN BURBRIDGE**  
University of Sussex, England, UK

How is contemporary photographic culture implicated in the politico-economic machinations of global capitalism? Such a question demands we set our sites beyond the depiction of political subject matter within photographs and focus on the political economies of photography: examining the production, distribution and consumption of images in terms of labour, profit and power.

**CÉCILE BISHOP**  
New York University, USA

This paper explores a new approach to the relationship between race and photography, by moving beyond the question of the representation of race in order to consider how race shapes photographic images and their circulation. It focuses on a corpus of photographs produced during the liberation of Paris in 1944.

**JAN BABNIK**  
Publisher of Fotografija, Slovenia

The presentation will follow the constitution of photography as a theoretical object in the works of Roland Barthes and Jacques Rancière on the example of their "reading" of Alexander Gardner's portrait of Lewis Payne. In both cases, this procedure includes the forgetfulness of its own process. Thus constituting a particular photograph as being the photograph – photography – a theoretical object.

**OLGA SMITH**  
Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

This paper considers the role of photography in making visible the underlying realities of social, cultural and geographical marginalisation in the works of Tobias Zielony, Mathieu Pernot and Mohamed Bourouissa. In order to counter mis-representation of these issues in mass media these artists turn to strategies drawn from contemporary art practices and the tradition of social documentary.

**TOBIAS ZIELONY**  
Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

His critical approach to social documentary makes him one of the most discussed artists in contemporary German photography. He has had solo exhibitions at C/O Berlin, Kunstverein Hamburg,

**WINFREID GERLING**  
University of Applied Sciences, Potsdam, GER

Photography in the digitally-created or digitized reality is an everyday activity that is rarely discussed in the context of photographic debates. This talk will refer to practices such as in-game-photography and the screenshot and focuses on the specific history and status of these images of screens.

**SARAH TUCK**  
Valand Academy, Gothenburg University, SWE

The paper will explore the intersection of the politics of visibility and verticality that drone technologies activate. In particular the paper will explore what affect drone technologies have on understandings of photography and the ways in which drone vision makes complex questions of proximity and distance in real time.

**SYLVIA GRACE BORDA**  
University of Stirling, Scotland, UK

Artist-photographer, Sylvia Grace Borda, examines the evolving system of 'value' in photography using the film camera as an unexplored subject in a digital age. Sylvia argues that the camera's rendered self is analogous to Malevich's The Black Square (1915) as a marker of transformation.

**SANDRA KRIŽIĆ ROBAN**  
Institute of Art History, Zagreb, Croatia

New dimensions and new ways of visualisation, which appeared already in the late 1950s, are being considered within the framework of the non-functional, non-representing, elementary and conceptual photography. In such a context, photography operates as a communication channel, an experimental and research-based medium questioning the nature of art itself.

**STEFANIE GERKE**  
Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

This paper aims to analyse the reflection of economical, social and cultural isolation in contemporary depictions of urban peripheries. It asks in what way the liminal spaces of satellite cities, formerly idealistic social housing projects and urban slums constitute a background that contributes to the social production of marginalized spaces.

Folkwang Museum Essen, MMK Zollamt Frankfurt, Camera Austria Graz and Berlinische Galerie. He was selected for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennial 2015.

9.30 Coffee / Tea

### BORDERS AND BOUNDARIES

THEOPISTI STYLIANOU-LAMBERT, UNI. OF TECHNOLOGY, CYPRUS

10.00 **METTE SANDBYE**

New Mixtures: Migration, war and cultural differences in contemporary (art) photography

10.25 **TOMAS PABEDINSKAS**

Mythologies of Nationhood

10.50 **DAHLIA MAHMOOD**

Tribal Affiliations in the Public Sphere

11.15 **MARIA ROMAKINA**

Representation of the Frontier

11.40 **MEGHAN GILBRIDE**

Lost and Found: The Family Photo Album as Documentation of Refugee Experience

12.10 Discussion

13.00 Lunch

### EDUCATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY

OH SOON-HWA, NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNI., SINGAPORE

14.00 **GABRIELLE MOSER**

No Looking After the Internet

14.30 **LUCY SOUTTER**

Photography and Cultural Translation

15.00 **ZHOU GENGYAN**

Reframing "Documentary" and Photography in China

15.30 **JULIET HACKING**

Photographic Exceptionalism

16.00 Discussion

16.30 Tea/Coffee

### ROUND TABLE-PLENARY

LIZ WELLS

17.00 **DAVID BATE, JUSTIN CARVILLE, ERINA DUGANNE, PATRIZIA DI BELLO**

#### METTE SANDBYE

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

The spectrum between documentary and art provides photography with a specific opportunity to address difficult subject matter between the personal and the political. Using Danish examples, this talk identifies a current of new conceptual strategies of socially and politically engaged documentary, or what could be called "the happy marriage of concept and content".

#### DAHLIA MAHMOOD

Zayed University, United Arab Emirates

Tribal affiliations are constituted upon an articulated framework of references, geographical and socio-cultural boundaries, convened via dialects, adornments as well as rituals and body language. The paper aims to explore said dynamics, by analyzing responses to how photography in the Middle East is streamlining the inherently dichotomous private and public spheres.

#### MEGHAN GILBRIDE

University College London, UK

Lost and Found: The Family Photo Album as Documentation of Refugee Experience. Family photos taken amidst periods of oppression or refuge can expose histories that may have otherwise been erased from official archives. The artistic projects discussed in this essay contemplate what has been lost, preserved, uncovered, or altered in the production and circulation of such images.

#### GABRIELLE MOSER

University in Toronto, Canada

What are the possibilities of learning from difficult images in an era in which digital technologies have made photographs of social violence ubiquitous? This paper critically reflects on this question through the curatorial experiments and pedagogical failures encountered in organizing No Looking After the Internet: a "looking group" that has met since 2012.

#### ZHOU GENGYAN

Beijing, China

This presentation addresses the process of institutionalizing "documentary photography" in China. It examines curatorial, journalistic and academic interpretations of "documentary" and argues that the promotion of "documentary" as a genre of contemporary art in this process undermines photography's claim to truth but crucial to the reformulation of Chinese socialist realism.

#### TOMAS PABEDINSKAS

Vytautas Magnus University

The paper discusses Andrew Miksys' photographs of discos in Lithuanian villages. The photographer of Lithuanian origin born in the U.S.A. created a subjective mythology of Lithuanian nationhood, which didn't comply with the state ideology. In this respect, his work exemplifies migration as drifting between different symbolic representations of the world.

#### MARIA ROMAKINA

Moscow State University, Russia

The borderzone is a unique spatial myth. The idea of belonging to something on the basis of denying something different. Heighten peculiar-alien relationships. On the basis of personal documentary project from the Russian-Mongolian adjacency "Frontiersmen" the author is reflecting on the possible ways of photographic representation of the borderland.

#### LUCY SOUTTER

University of Westminster, London, UK

How can we generate productive, cross-cultural discussions of photography, particularly between East and West, when we are using different words, concepts and traditions to speak and write? This talk draws on theories of cultural translation to offer some strategies for addressing recent case studies.

#### JULIET HACKING

Sotheby's Institute of Art, London, UK

Stephen Bann used the phrase 'photographic exceptionalism' to describe 'the conviction that the phenomenon of photography can be properly understood only by detaching it from any comparison with the other visual media.' Is photographic exceptionalism at stake in the teaching of the history of photography?

