

Y
I?

WHAT'S
NEXT?

A SEARCH INTO THE FUTURE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Next year Foam Amsterdam celebrates its 10 years' jubilee. For us it will be a time to reflect about the future of photography rather than the past. So we have asked ourselves What's Next? and have invited some experts to think with us.

The question What's Next? is urged by our conviction that photography has changed fundamentally over the last twenty years. And the transition is still rapid. Clearly digitalization has altered every aspect of photography, whether it is the photograph as an object, the position of the professional photographer, the function of the photo lab, the news agency or the photography museum.

In fact the question is about far more than just the future of photography. It is about the future of a society directed by visual media, a society in which people primarily communicate with technological tools that are developed and made into consumer products with great speed, a society in which every layman can and will be a photographer, sharing his experiences

with newly made online communities, a society in which the experience of time and space have drastically changed.

In short, What's Next? is about the future of a medium and of a society in transition.

In 2011 Foam will organize a variety of activities in which the question What's Next? will be addressed by a wide range of experts. These leading people from the artistic, technological and sociological field are all asked to think with us, and to try to formulate an idea, a dream or a vision on What's Next? So this is only the beginning. We also need your vision and ideas!

**JOIN US IN OUR
SEARCH FOR
WHAT'S NEXT?
CONTINUE THE DEBATE
AND DISCUSS THE
FUTURE OF PHOTO-
GRAPHY**

**WWW.FOAM.NL/
WHATSNEXT**

P. 4 - 5
**FRED
RITCHIN**
**PHOTOGRAPHY
THEORIST**

P. 6 - 7
**THOMAS
RUFF**
PHOTOGRAPHER

P. 8 - 9
**ERIK
KESSELS**
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

P. 10 - 11
**ALEC
SOTH**
PHOTOGRAPHER

P. 12 - 13
**NICHOLAS
MIRZOEFF**
**PROFESSOR OF
VISUAL CULTURE**

P. 14 - 15
**CONSTANT
DULLAART**
POST-INTERNET ARTIST

The era of the photograph being automatically credible is over, for better and for worse.

Photographs lied, but they also were capable of telling partial truths. They still are - the difference is that now photographs tell more of an individual's truth, the photographer's, and not an automatic truth, that of the recording machine. Photographs no longer say what was there, but what might have been there.

So photographs are less useful for evidence, and as a result we are less sure of what is going on in the world. This can be a welcome change - without the photograph's certainties we are invited to interrogate issues and events, to understand for ourselves.

But the problem is that few are engaged in such reflection, so the world is allowed to evolve without much effective oversight (moral as well as practical). By killing the messenger - the photograph - we no longer have to worry very much about what it has to say to us. In the information age, we are allowed to - even encouraged to - know very little, because knowing without ever doing anything about what one knows is hardly worth the effort.

Will all this media help us understand what we have done to our planet and what we should do about it? Will we want to help? Or will we remain increasingly oblivious, as if we don't live here but in some virtual spaces? (This is the new immortality - avoiding not only who but where we are.)

Remember the photograph that made us believe that something existed? It is largely a relic of the twentieth century, along with reading, debating and discussion based upon agreed-upon facts. Now facts are viewed as an expression of opinion about which we need to be sceptical (the ultimate sign of a consumerist society, and one that can easily turn to fascism). It is all about desire anyway.

Photographs, which used to sometimes prod us into action, even revelation, are now the domain of spaces like Facebook for which we repetitively (obsessively?) photograph ourselves so that we look as 'good' as we can possibly make ourselves look. The world and we are one, refracted together in a self-portrait.

Although, of course, our desires are increasingly fabricated by our societies, experts in hype and branding, to the point where an apple must be nostalgically labelled as 'organic' so as to give us a greater sense of satisfaction when we buy it. The 'natural' (another contested term) is part of the branding process.

So what do we do to remain sane and to survive? Filter the overwhelming amount of imagery in such a way that it might be useful, first having decided that usefulness is a priority, as opposed to distraction. If we are, in a sense, in a boat with holes trying to stay afloat (there is no shore), we can either diagnose the problems to try and fix them, or pretend that the holes, and the boat itself, do not exist - or prematurely resign ourselves to our inability to fix anything. In a consumerist society this would be viewed as normal behaviour (just buy another one); last century we would have called it nihilism.

Or we offer the occasional photograph as a contribution to 'citizen journalism,' that high-minded democratization of media that may well be another form of partially camouflaged consumerism. After all, if we do not want to know what is going on, how much good is it to add yet another photograph to the billions already extant? Or is it for the occasional shock of recognition that keeps us somewhat sentient?

Of course the professional witness, or 'eyewitness' (a term I particularly dislike given that an effective witnessing requires much more than an eye), can witness all he or she wants, but if few pay attention (and even fewer will pay the professional for the function), then what is the use? Might it be that the enormous archive of beautiful pictures of the earth have shielded us from recognizing that the planet is in crisis?

Instead of becoming a photographer, figure out what to do with the enormous numbers of images - how to find the relevant ones, present them, contextualize them, link them, meld them with other media, use them effectively. This too is 'writing with light.' And then take a deep breath (never forget to breathe), and start making the new kinds of imagery that a digital/quantum/code-based/abstracted/semi-virtual/problematic world requires.

The artist working in photography (or 'writing with light') has an enormous number of new strategies possible, and new themes to plumb. The addition/subtraction/linking of media, linear and non-linear (hypertextual) narratives, the ephemeral screen versus palpable paper, the playing with time (in a digital world where time has become an abstraction), the playing with space (where our closest neighbours might be those physically furthest away), the playing with life forms/identities as code (computer code/DNA), and the playing with credulity (what is it? what is it not? why?).

The artists will find their voices, but they, like us, are just becoming acquainted with the transformed universe that the digital is meant to describe, one that is more quantum than Newtonian, based more on probabilities than certainties, with enormous free-floating chaos (akin to what happened two millennia ago with the advent of major religions).

Van Gogh was liberated to see the world differently by photography, the railroad, the pocket watch, and the Industrial Revolution. We too (some of us) can be liberated by the events of recent decades to make other kinds of imagery. What we produce will probably be much different than the photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson (who needs a fractional instant when we have abstracted time?) or by Don McCullin (empathetic pictures of war and famine hardly resonate anymore). Maybe (one can hope) our images won't always be so rectangular. Maybe they will dance.

Most of all we have to first find ourselves - spiritually and politically - before 'what is next' can be worth very much. And we may have to do it this time with our eyes somewhat averted.

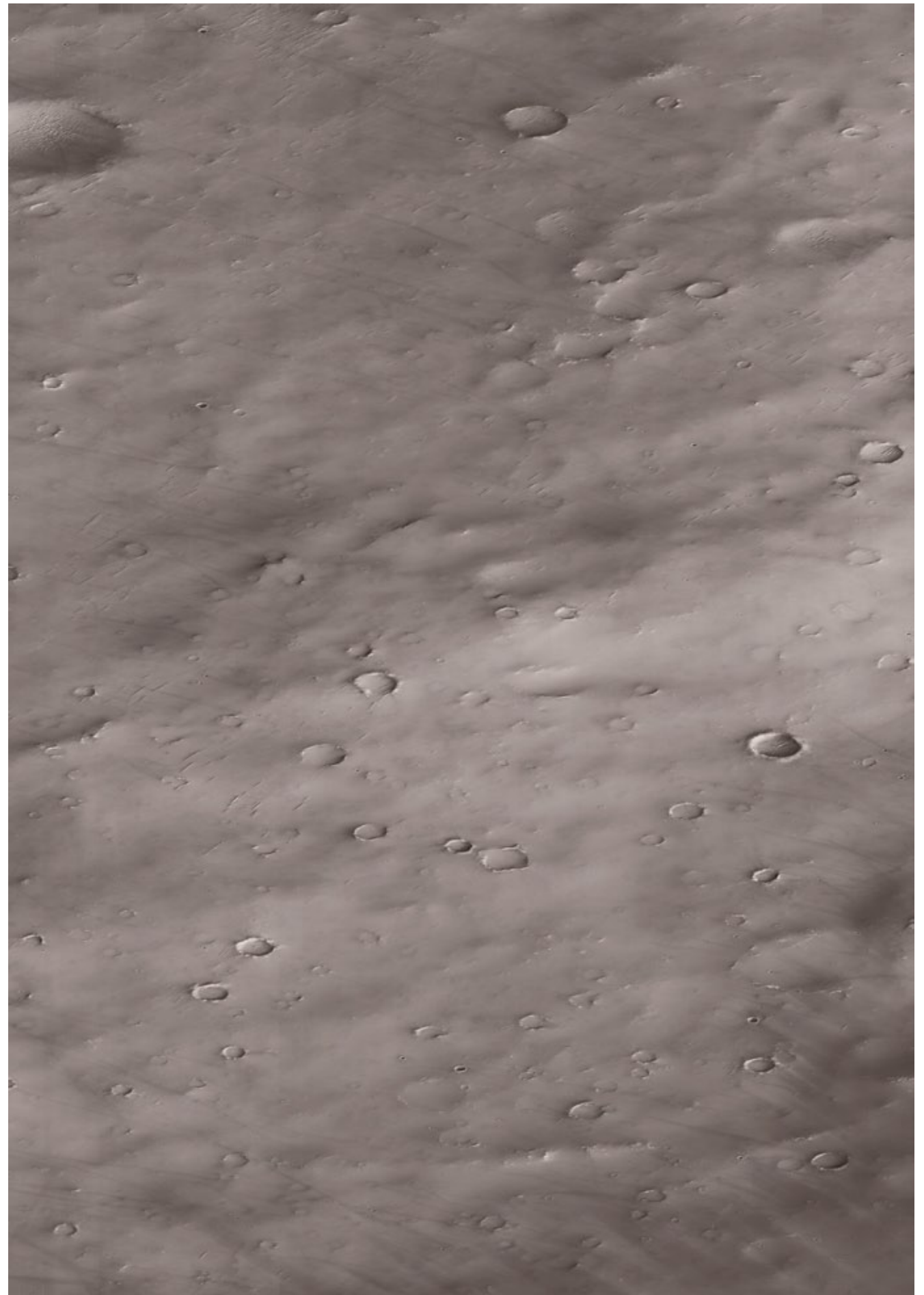
THOMAS RUFF



MA.R.S.11

WHAT'S NEXT?

THOMAS RUFF



MA.R.S.03

FOAM.NL/WHATSNEXT

6

7

AUGUSTIN REBETZ
www.augustinrebetz.com
x
GERALD EDWARDS
www.sofarfromshore.com
x
GUSTAV GUSTAFSSON
www.gustavgustafsson.com
x
CHRISCHA OSWALD
www.irritaction.com
x
JAMIE WARREN
www.dontyoufeelbetter.com
x
FABIAN UNTERNÄHRER
www.fu-photo.ch
x
JULIAN BAUMANN
www.julianbaumann.net
x
SEBASTIAN ARLT
www.bastiarlt.de
x
JULIA BAIER
www.juliabaier.de
x
QUI YANG
www.qiu-yang.com
x
SAM FALLS
www.samfalls.com
x
DAVID BENJAMIN SHERRY
www.davidbenjaminsherry.com
x
GREG STIMAC
www.gregstimac.com
x
PIERRE LE HORS
www.pierrelehors.com
x
NICHOLAS HAGGARD
www.nicholashaggard.com
x
THOBIAS FÄLDT
www.thobias.se
x
ESTELLE HANANIA
www.estellehanania.com
x
JENNI LEE MARIGOMEN
www.jennileemarigomen.com
x
ODETTE ENGLAND
www.odetteengland.com
x
MARTIJN OOSTRA
www.martijnoostra.com
x
SANDRA SCHMALZ
sandraschmalz@gmx.de
x
ANNA BLOCK
www.annablock.ru
x
GEOFFREY SHORT
www.geoffreyshort.com
x
KENJI HIRASAWA
www.kenjihirasawa.com
x
ASHA SCHECHTER
www.ashaxschechter.com
x
HOSANG PARK
www.hosangpark.com
x

KURT TONG
www.kurttong.co.uk
x
MICHELLE ARCILA
www.michellearcila.net
x
RACHEL DE JOODE
www.racheldejoode.com
x
DIM BALSEM
www.dimbalsem.com
x
JESSICA MILAN
www.jessicamilan.es
x
ROSS MCDONNELL
www.rossmcdonnell.com
x
PEDRO RAMOS
www.pedroramos.org
x
LEVI MANDEL
www.levimandel.com
x
KRISTA VAN DER NIET
www.kristavanderniet.nl
x
STEFANIE GRATZ
www.stefaniegratz.nl
x
IVO MAYR
www.ivomayr.com
x
SARAH CARLIER
www.sarahcarlier.nl
x
INA R. DEVIK
www.inadevik.no
x
DEREK VINCENT
www.derekvincent.com
x
LAUREN DUKOFF
www.laurendukoff.com
x
LEO POSTMA
www.leopostma.com
x
MARY AMOR
www.maryamor.com
x
CAROLINE DE VRIES
www.carolinedevries.com
x
NATASHA KASER
www.natashakaser.com
x
INGO MITTELSTAEDT
www.ingomittelstaedtworke.blogspot.com
x
NATALIA TORET
www.nataliatoret.nl
x
KEITH DAVIS YOUNG
www.keithdavisyoung.com
x
LEON DIAPER
www.leondiaperphotography.com
x
ISABELLA ROZENDAAL
www.isabellarozendaal.com
x
SIMON WALD-LASOWSKI
www.simonwaldlasowski.com
x

DAVID BENJAMIN SHERRY
www.davidbenjaminsherry.com
x
PIERRE LE HORS
www.pierrelehors.com
x
NICHOLAS HAGGARD
www.nicholashaggard.com
x
THOBIAS FÄLDT
www.thobias.se
x
ESTELLE HANANIA
www.estellehanania.com
x
JACOB AUE SOBOL
www.auesobol.dk
x
JENNI LEE MARIGOMEN
www.jennileemarigomen.com
x
EVA FIORE KOVACOVSKY
www.kovacovsky.com
x
JAAP SCHEEREN
www.jaapscheeren.nl
x
SCOTT CONARROE
www.scottconarroe.com
x
CLÉMENCE DE LIMBURG
www.clemencedelimburg.com
x
GRATIANE DE MOUSTIER
www.gratianedemoustier.com
x
CHIARA GOIA
www.chiaragoia.com
x
MARKUS GEORG
www.markusgeorg.com
x
CHANTAL RENS
www.chantalrens.blogspot.com
x
CORNELIA HEDIGER
www.corneliahediger.com
x
CLAUDIA SOLA
www.claudiasola.org
x
RUTH VAN BEEK
www.ruthvanbeek.com
x
NATHAN HARGER
www.nathanhargerphotography.com
x
MARGRET HOPPE
www.margrethoppe.com
x
MARION POUSSIER
www.marion.poussier.bookpicturetank.com
x
ANOUC KRUIHOF
www.anoukkruithof.nl
x
TILMAN PESCHEL
www.tilmanpeschel.de
x
SASHA RUDENSKY
www.sasharudensky.com
x
REBECCA RIJSDIJK
www.rebeccarijsdijk.com
x

NICOLE AKSTEIN
www.nicoleakstein.com
x
MATTHEW GENITEMPO
www.matthewgenitempo.com
x
BREA SOUDERS
www.breasouders.com
x
JON FEINSTEIN
www.jonfeinstein.com
x
SANDY KIM
www.sandykim.com
x
WAYNE LAWRENCE
www.waynelawrenceonline.com
x
JAMES BERNAL
www.jamesbernal.com
x
CAROLINE VAN PAGEE
www.carolinevanpagee.nl
x
NADINE WATSON
www.nadinewatson.net
x
FUMIKO IMANO
www.fumikoimano.com
x
VINCENT SKOGLUND
www.vincentskoglund.com
x
DANFUNG DENNIS
www.danfungdennis.com
x
KATARINA HRUSKOVA
www.katarinahruskova.com
x
RINGEL GOSLINGA
www.ringelgoslinga.com
x
LINUS BILL
www.linusbill.com
x
SHIGERU TAKATO
www.shigerutakato.de
x
REGINE PETERSEN
www.reginepetersen.com
x
RENATO LEOTTA
www.rl-1982.blogspot.com
x
FUMINO OSADA
www.fumino-osada.com
x
AARON GUSTAFSON
www.aarongustafson.net
x
MARC BARUTH
www.marcbaruth.com
x
FELIX DOBBERT
www.felixdobbert.de
x
DAVID HORVITZ
www.davidhorvitz.com
x
ANNE HUIJNEN
www.gerritrietveldacademie.nl
x
REBECCA VEIT
www.rebeccaveit.com
x
ÖZANT KAMACI
www.ozant.com
x

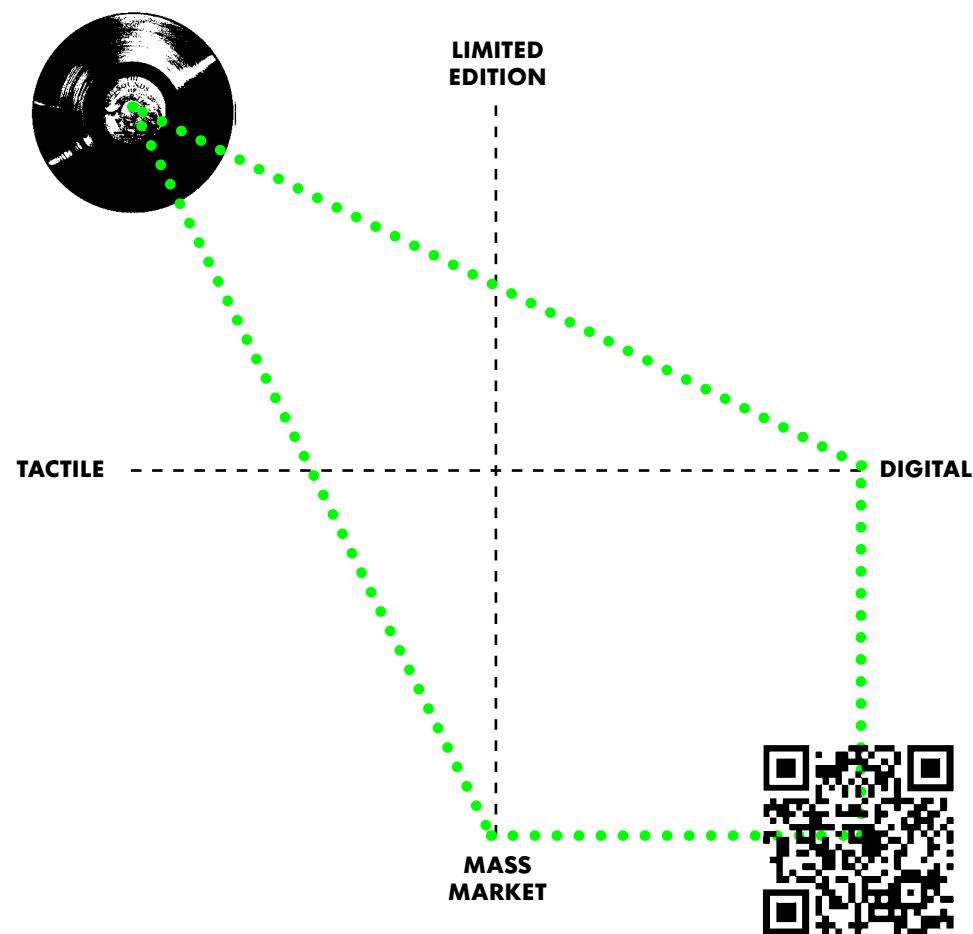
MATTHEW PORTER
www.matthewporterphoto.com
x
MARTIN KOLLAR
www.martinkollar.com
x
NOËL LOOZEN
www.noelloozen.com
x
THEKLA AHRENS
www.gerritrietveldacademie.nl
x
JAN-DIRK VAN DER BURG
www.jandirk.com
x
MADOKA SAKAMOTO
www.madokasakamoto.com
x
REED YOUNG
www.reedyoung.com
x
JULIAN FAULHABER
www.julian-faulhaber.com
x
POPEL COUMOU
www.popelcoumou.nl
x
MIRTE SLAATS
www.mirteslaats.com
x
BEN ROBERTS
www.benrobertsphotography.com
x
SANJA MEDIC
www.sanjamedic.com
x
FLEUR VAN DODEWAARD
www.fleurvandodewaard.com
x
LISA WISEMAN
www.lisawiseman.com
x
KATRIN TRAUTNER
www.katrintrautner.de
x
UTE KLEIN
www.uteklein.com
x
SUZANNE LUDWIG
www.susanne-ludwig.de
x
ROBERT VOIT
www.robertvoit.com
x
CLAUDIA MOZZILLO
www.lacameradiclaudia.com
x
FLORA HANITIJO
www.florahanitijo.com
x
LOUISE FAGO-RUSKIN
www.louisefagoruskin.co.uk
x
THOMAS BRODIN
www.thomasbrodinphotography.com
x
THOMAS MAILAENDER
www.thomasmailaender.com
x
YANAI TOISTER
www.yanaitoister.com
x
GERT-JAN VAN DEN BEMD
www.ongekend.nu/?p=295
x

KEVIN REKKERS
www.krekkers.blogspot.com
x
TIM GEORGESON
www.timgeorgeson.com
x
MATT STUART
www.mattstuart.com
x
CORTNEY ANDREWS
www.cortneyandrews.com
x
ALEJANDRA LAVIADA
www.alejandraaviada.com
x
JAN ADRIAANS
www.janadriaans.com
x
BRENT LEWIN
www.brentlewin.com
x
AMIRA FRITZ
www.amirafritz.com
x
NATALIA CALVOCRESSI
www.santucciandco.com
x
SARAH ENGELHARD
www.sarahengelhard.com
x
DIANA SCHERER
www.dianascherer.nl
x
PETER WILDANGER
www.peter-wildanger.de
x
LUCAS BLALOCK
www.lucasblalock.com
x
OVIDIU PAVEL
www.oviduipavel.com
x
MATT EICH
www.matteichphoto.com
x
LOUISE TE POELE
www.louisetepoele.nl
x
REMI NOEL
www.reminoel.com
x
PHILIP SCHUETTE
www.philipshuette.com
x
FLORIAN REXROTH
www.florianrexroth.de
x
GISÈLE DIDI
www.giseledidi.net
x
CHRISTIAN TIEFENSEE
www.christiantiefensee.de
x
KENJI HIRASAWA
www.kenjihirasawa.com
x
BARRETTEMKE
www.barrettemke.chompwomp.com

The Generalized Answer

The medium is moving in two directions simultaneously. It is becoming both increasingly digital and physical. The obvious analogy is the music industry. Most people get their music via inexpensive digital downloads. But at the same time, vinyl album sales were up 33% last year. The diehards crave something physical.

In the world of photographic publishing, 99% of trade publications will become digital. Most photo magazines, museum catalogs and other photographic publications will be read on digital tablets. But then there will be the glorious 1% of handcrafted, physical books. If I were in marketing, I might show you an illustration like this:



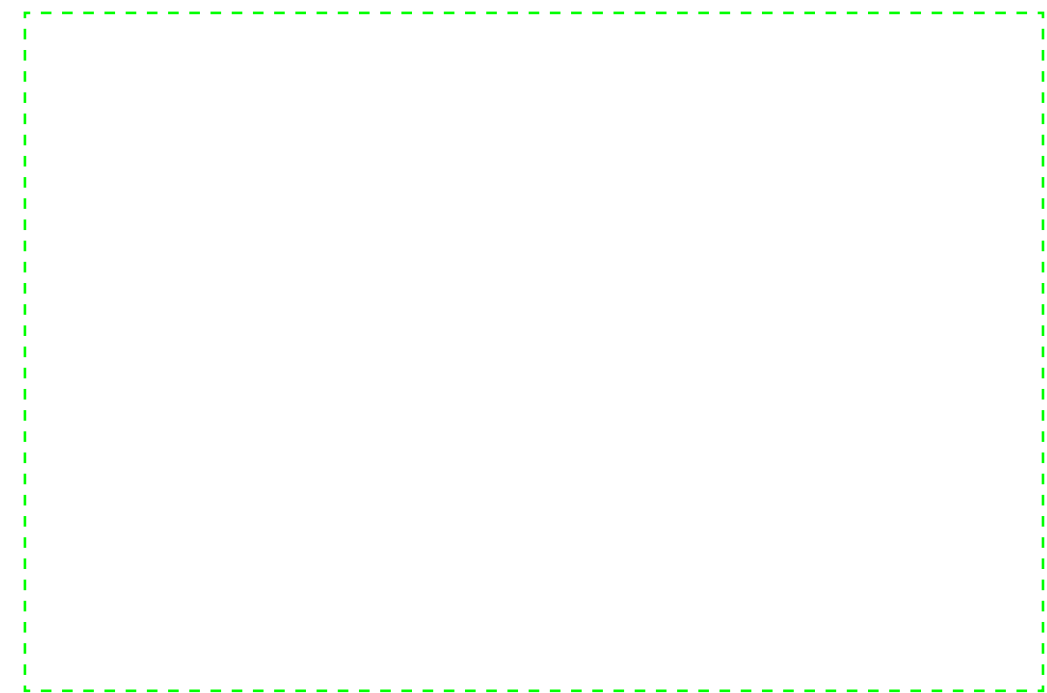
Thank God I'm a photographer and am not in marketing.

The Personal Answer

Both Henry and I lived in the countryside. We were socially awkward and lonely and slept with our dogs (we both happened to have Great Danes). We were 14-years-old and best friends.

Henry called our experiments adventures. Once we bribed the janitor to let us into the tunnels beneath the school. But the adventure I remember most was at my house. My parents were gone for the night. Henry and I decided to explore the dark woods behind the

barn. We reached the end of the forest near the lake when the flashlight went dead. Total dark. The path was immediately lost. Our only choice was to take each other's hand and venture into the dense web of the woods. By the end we were on our hands and knees. Our arms were bloody from thorns, but we still held onto each other. This is a picture of what we looked like (or maybe a picture of the woods, or our Great Danes):



Don't you wish you could see this picture? Whether it is a 3-D digital holograph or an image burned onto a piece of wood, the thing that makes you want to see the picture is the story. In the end, what's next is what always was: the story.

At the beginning of the third Christian millennium, much of the planet was asking itself what's next? In a mixture of excitement and trepidation the possibilities of a new era were set against fears that computers worldwide would cease to function. The first minutes of the much-anticipated year 2000 took place in the Pacific island nation of Kiribati. Due to some finagling of the International Date Line, the newly renamed Millennium Island, otherwise uninhabited, broadcast those minutes across the world. A dance troupe performed a 'traditional' routine in missionary-approved clothing for the cameras, and for the invisible global audience in the pitch darkness. I don't wish to mock because for all its post-modern fakery there was something evocative about this moment, still to be seen on grainy YouTube footage. The irony was not long in coming; after just ten years Kiribati is one of the countries most threatened by the rise in sea level caused by global climate change. Photographs show flooded taro patches and broken sea walls, images that seem somehow invisible, given the way developed nations discuss climate change as a problem for the future, rather than an everyday crisis.

What relationship does such a photograph establish with what it depicts and with those who view it? French philosopher, historian and critic Jacques Rancière argues that in creating subjectivity, the police do not, as Louis Althusser once argued, call out to us 'Hey, you there.' In other words, I hear myself hailed and am thus recognized as a subject. Rather, Rancière says, the police say to us 'move

on, there's nothing to see here.' Except that there is, and we know it, and so do they. The question is rather who is authorized to see what, conceptually and practically, there is to be seen. This reframing accords not only with our everyday experience but with the automatic insistence on secrecy at the heart of the state. Rancière cautions though that the goal is not simply to move the line of what is allowed to be seen but to recast the entire means by which this 'division of the sensible' is to be made.

He recalls that in the time of the ancient Roman Republic the people rose in revolt and made their way to the Senate with their demands. The Senators, however, insisted that they could not understand them, saying that the people were not using language but simply making noise. As long as the relationship between the Senate and the people holds there is nothing that the people can say, because they have no place. The people are to keep moving, keep circulating and to do useful work—and nothing else. Thus the U.S. Senate has blocked all climate change legislation, despite the clear mandate for such a policy in the 2008 elections, while its French equivalent imposed a retirement age change against the manifest popular will.

While the ancient divisions are still in place, the contemporary means by which the police claim and sustain their monopoly of what there is to see have of course

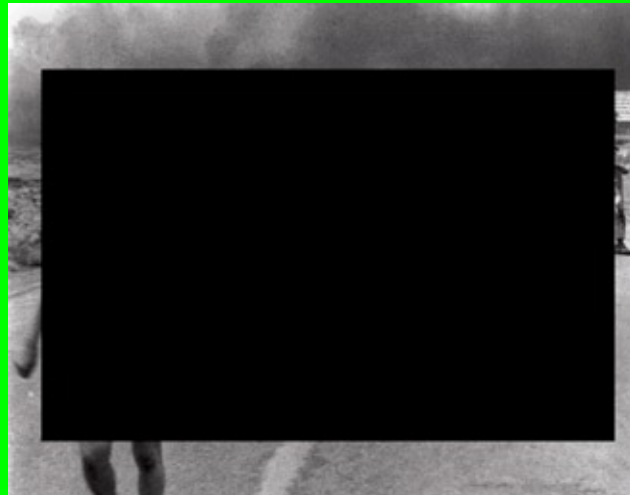
changed dramatically. What's next here—the latest device—is the Gorgon Stare, which will be attached to the MQ-9 Reaper Unmanned Aerial Vehicle now widely in use in Afghanistan, Pakistan and elsewhere as a remote surveillance and weapons platform. The current model can only 'see' in a narrow band, often compared to looking through a straw. The Gorgon Stare uses multiple cameras, some of them infra-red cameras to generate a surveillance field of 4 km². The operator can direct the single high-resolution feed to an area of interest without losing all awareness of the surrounding area. These machines are already being developed for domestic police work, following long use in Israel/Palestine, perhaps the metonymic global location for visualized policing.

The Gorgon Stare is not vulnerable to being photographed, as was made brutally clear by the targeted assassination of Reuter's photographer Namir Noor-Eldeen by a US Apache helicopter in 2007, seen in a video later posted to Wikileaks (Iraq War Diaries). The identification of Namir's camera as a Rocket Propelled Grenade was deemed enough to justify the attack both before and after the full story was known. There's a contradiction here. The Gorgon famously killed her victims by looking at them, turning them to stone. Equally famously, although apparently not to the military, Perseus killed the Gorgon by holding up a shiny shield so that she saw her own reflection and killed herself. One could say that this was the first photograph.

So it's intriguing to consider that perhaps the most noticeable innovation in the vernacular photography boom—consider that 478 billion photographs were estimated to have been taken in 2008—is the self-portrait. Taken by web-cams, timers or simply by holding the camera at arm's length and checking the results until a good one is obtained, the self-portrait is the counter to the Gorgon Stare. It asserts presence, the right to be seen and the right to look. I would call the genre 'photograffiti'. By this I mean that unlike the photograph with its claim to be a pencil of nature, photograffiti is human made. It creates a mark that is not necessarily knowable to the human and machine intelligences trying to contain the global populace.

Face-recognition software is still poor at best, while many portrait photographs cannot be crawled by whatever bots Google and others might devise, because they are never posted anywhere, remaining literally in camera. Such vernacular secrecy creates a certain space to be seen. Not concerned with what's next or what has been (Roland Barthes), photograffiti exists in an expanded present, one that intrudes briefly into the past but is experienced as a continuum. Techniques such as slow-motion replay and the ability to pause and rewind live digital television broadcasts have accustomed us to this new present. The photograffiti artist knows that the first task is to refuse to move on and to circulate but instead to claim the existence of the present as the site of the right to look. What happens next? That's up to you.

For this What's Next? I asked the editors of Foam Magazine to publish a sequence of 12 images, filling two pages, or a spread in the magazine. The images I have supplied are versions, most of them manipulated in Adobe's culturally dominant Image manipulation software Photoshop, of the same famous Pulitzer prize-winning news photograph*, owned by the Associated Press. As I am not being paid for my contribution I assume Foam Magazine will not want to spend any money on paying the



manipulation software it is not only the saturation, the cropping or the situation of the photograph that leads to discussions of authenticity. It is no longer only the camera itself and the film development process that influence the way reality is documented by the photographer. News images are debunked as real or valid after amateur Photoshop fanatics discover how the image had been manipulated. Lets assume for now that because of the sheer volume of visual news not all



Associated Press for the right to use the image. The editors will have to make a choice which versions of the image they think can be published without infringing copyright. Which manipulation of the image disconnects the image from its copyrighted original, and which manipulation is too close? In the space left open by the images that the editors decided not to publish, I asked them to place this text. Hopefully some of the most extremely modified and manipulated images will be published.



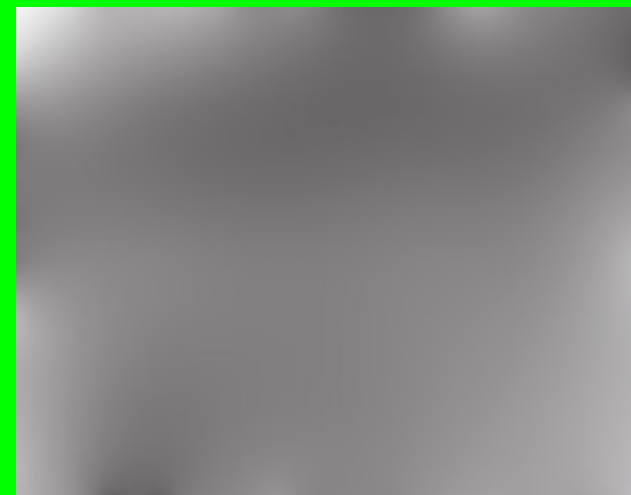
manipulated images are correctly identified as such by the large quantity of visual news consumers worldwide; that a lot of doctored images do pass as authentic. Sometimes it reminds me of old paintings of sea battles, the news consumer just had to deal with the fact that he could not rely on the painter's accurate depiction of reality. Why can we not view photography closer to the way we look at paintings, allowing artistic expression, always openly doubting what is in the image, checking

14

15



The image chosen for this experiment has a clear history to the discussion of authenticity. How the image was cropped, who the girl in the picture was running towards, the saturation and contrast of the image, all have been used to question its authenticity. This discussion even had political consequences when Richard Nixon, at that time President of the United States of America, joined in by openly doubting the way the photo was made. With accelerating public use of image



alternative sources, and never taking any image too seriously?

Constant Dullaart, Sunday the 7th of November 2010 in Berlin

* Most likely Nick Ut's (Associated Press, 1972) iconic image of Phan Thi Kim Phu.
 ** The image used as the original for the manipulated versions was acquired through Google image search's Similar Images function, where I found multiple existing online versions of the image, and took the one with the largest file size.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION AT WWW.FOAM.NL/WHATSNEXT

A SEARCH INTO THE FUTURE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

WILL

WILL
TECHNOLOGY
KILL THE
PHOTOGRAPH

RESEARCH

WHAT IS THE
FUTURE OF
PHOTO-
JOURNALISM?



foam
Keizersgracht 609
1017 DS Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www.foam.nl