

The Contemporary Challenge to Photography

WHY EXPERIMENT?



Nathan Walker
Walked past here 47
times during 1968
on the 21st May 1968
he looked up

RECOGNITION

or

ENCOUNTER

Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) said that all phenomena eventually need rescuing, not just from the 'discredit and neglect into which they have fallen' but very often from 'a certain strain in their dissemination, their enshrinement as heritage'.

There is a tradition that is
catastrophe...

[T]hat things are 'status quo' *is*
the catastrophe.

Anja Kanngieser talks of the ‘making of worlds’.

Can we do this as photographers, rather than just the describing of worlds?

Andrew Culp speaks of the ‘death of this world’.

“the only future we have comes when we stop reproducing the conditions of the present” – Culp.

Imagine:

If photographers could perform events
rather than describe them.

If observation was provoked rather than
empirical.

What if:

The 'real' is not a strict category.

If the real is located *between* the true
and the false (or fiction).

Gilles Deleuze (1925-95)

“What the artist is, is *creator of truth*, because truth is not to be achieved, formed, or reproduced; it has to be created. There is no other truth than the creation of the New: creativity, emergence.”

PHOTOGRAPHIES RESTRICTIONS Deleuze says:

“photographs are ways of seeing, and as such, they are illustrative and narrative reproductions or representations... they are what is seen, until finally ones sees nothing else”

Photography is ‘an instrument for reproducing representations of reality – a device that iterates images until they are ossified as established stories, icons, or even stagnant perceptions’. (Kramp.)

‘seeks to enclose, surround, or even control the dynamism of life’ (Kramp.)

‘static images that reproduce ostensibly fixed information’ (Kramp.)

It promotes the promise of ‘fixity’, The comfort of ‘order’.

As photographers we need to:

Produce A Creative Accident

Capture the Force of Sensation

Avoid Cliché

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWrMGXwhFLk&list=RDCWrMGXwhFLk>

WHAT IS A CLICHÉ

Always-already thought ideas, they secure and stabilize intellectual, artistic, or corporeal energies, and also serve to inhibit new creative relationships or forces.

A tired or hackneyed idea

That which exists in the image before you have decided what the image will be of.

FIGURATION AND THE 'FIGURE'

Figuration denotes our aesthetic expectation – the anticipated resolution and arrangement of clichés that contributes to our modern classification of ideas and realities.

The **Figure** is immediately and intimately tied to sensation; it causes an intense sensual experience that becomes disruptive, excessive, or even decadent.

A Deleuzian photography is 'rooted not in the capacity of the image to record what has been known, seen ,or experienced, but in its political potential to show us **what might be, what has been forgotten, and what has not yet been imagined**'.

Experimentation and the creation of encounter for the viewer will help us 'create new kinds of knowledges, combine disparate images, and use charged captions to generate disruptive and random signification'.

The question Deleuze poses to an artwork is not '~~what does it mean?~~' but rather '**how does it function?**'.









self portrait talking to vince











