

I agree and disagree because yes I believe violence is romanticized but I don't agree that we understand the true violence in the world. I believe we are numb. And this exhibition aims to

wake you up and make you see the pain, and make you understand the horrible nature of the actions. So I shall lead you through my exhibition and break down the messages and meaning of the exhibit and the pathway through.

Exhibition Run-Down

This exhibition weaves together a complex narrative about crime, evidence, and the way violence is perceived and romanticized through photography and now you the viewer. Each section builds a journey for you (the viewer) from detached observation, to intimate intrusion, to glamorization, and finally to raw confrontation. I will walk you through a descent into going from the tame to the visceral.

1st wall on entrance - Sophie Calle's *Hotel*

I begin with Sophie Calle's *Hotel*, a body of work where Calle plays investigator and brings an incredibly voyeuristic perspective to this work, photographing the personal spaces of strangers' hotel rooms and their belongings. This is first because this sets the tone for the exhibition: it challenges the viewer to think about evidence without explicitly showing violence or any subject of humanity as Calle said herself **"I never feel I am revealing anything."** **Calle. *The New Yorker*, 2007. Sophie Calle and the Art of Leaving a Trace. *The New Yorker*.** And I agree that although it doesn't show anything, what it does is make you question the voyeurism and invasion of privacy, and how even the most intimate details of life can be collected and exposed. It aims to invite reflection on our innate curiosity and complicity in observing others without consent. I like this because it's in contrast to modern day where a lot of what we do is willingly put out there, we don't protect our privacy as much as we used to, and might be why this is not unnerving for some viewers.

left Wall – Luc Sante's *Evidence*

I then keep you Moving to Luc Sante's *Evidence* series, I aim to deepen the theme of documentation and intrusion. These images were sourced from actual police archives by sante herself, transforming real criminal evidence into an unsettling kind of art. This wall is the 1st step into the violence aspect, i'm using the same message she had herself **"The photographs on the following pages may inspire horror, as well as pity, and maybe morbid fascination and dull voyeurism. This is unavoidable, but it is not intended. I am presenting them because of their terrible eloquence and nagging silence."** **Sante, L., 1992. *Evidence: New York City Police Department Crime Scene Photographs, 1914–1918*.** It's this idea of the "terrible eloquence" that I believe has the ability to emphasize the clinical, detached way institutions gather and display human tragedy, questioning the line between documentation and exploitation. Again bringing a insight as to if we even are sensitive to this violence anymore

right Wall – Mandel and Sultan's *Evidence*

This was what truly inspired me, no malice is seen, this is purely art but not from the original context-evidential photography-and the reason I want it next Next is how the collaborative work of Mandel and Sultan takes us into a more abstract and bureaucratic interpretation of evidence.

The way they turn evidence into art is what I'm trying to do with this exhibition. As they said themselves **"We wanted to take images that were never intended as art and see what happens when you put them in an art context."** Sultan, L. and Mandel, M., 1977. *Evidence*. Greenbrae, California: Clatworthy Colorvues. The way their recontextualization of government and scientific photographs gets turned into art blurs truth and fiction, stripping images of their original context and forcing us and you as the viewer to reconstruct our own narratives. It further complicates the notion of *what* really constitutes as evidence and whether meaning is inherent or imposed.

Archway Rooms – The Krays photos by Don McCullin

Passing through the archway, I have made it so in the rooms either side you encounter images of the infamous Kray twins. Here I hope you notice that a pivot occurs pulling it from evidence of violence to its romanticization. By using The Krays, both real criminals and cultural icons, I aim to represent society's obsession with mythologizing and idolizing violent figures. Especially in pop culture, even being influenced by films like *Goodfellas* or by the Krays people were idolizing these figures. So by isolating these images in small rooms, I try to create an almost shrine-like experience as it often was as said in 1973 in a tv article **"The Krays were not just criminals; they were performers, and the public loved the performance."** Pearson, J., 1972. *The Profession of Violence: The Rise and Fall of the Kray Twins*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson., mirroring how pop culture venerates figures who should otherwise evoke fear or disdain. I always found it interesting how people in my family were sad when Reggie Kray died, and even when you read upon the mass attendance of his funeral it's so shocking how people loved them. I nearly included the photo of Bonnie and Clyde's funeral but it mirrors a similar message.

Curved Wall – Weegee's Work

This then makes it into a finale, as on the curved far wall, the viewer is confronted with Weegee's brutal, unflinching depictions of crime scenes. Weegee's work drags you and me (the audience) back into the visceral reality of violence, the blood, the tragedy, the human cost. These are the types of things that those you idolized just moments ago have committed and is far Unlike the sanitized, glamorized narratives that you have believed in, this is real remember these aren't just artsy photos, as weegee said **"To me a photograph is a page from life, and that being the case, it must be real."** Weegee, 1945. *Naked City*. This ending confronts you with the undeniable physicality of violence and death. You're forced to think again, maybe by forcing a reckoning with everything you have previously romanticized. You will finally see what you were blind for until now.

Conclusion

I wanted to make sure that, after everything, you were forced to reconsider everything you'd just witnessed, the glamorization, the idolization, and see it for what it really is. Weegee's last work reminds you that violence isn't just an aesthetic or a spectacle, but something real that impacts lives. Its violence, violence happening everyday, we see it on our feeds, on the news and on the streets but we are numb. We have decided it's not important and is just normal, but it isn't. By

the end of this exhibition I truly hope you've been forced to reckon with how we view violence, how we ignore it and at worst of times even end up romanticizing it, and how we become numb to it. My goal is for you to leave with a deeper understanding of the impact that images of violence have on us, and a reflection on how we, as a society, engage with these difficult subjects.

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