American Dream, American Nightmare

Capitalist Realism in Contemporary Photography



Annie Leibovitz - Donald and Melania Trump (Vogue, 2006)

“The entire life of societies in which modern conditions of production prevail, announces itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles.”

Guy Debord - *The Society of the Spectacle*



Annie Leibovitz



Annie Leibovitz



Socialist Realism







Socialist Realism

The 1934 Soviet Congress outlined these as the prescribed elements of Socialist realism. The Principles are thought to have been sanctioned directly by Josef Stalin himself:

1. Proletarian: art relevant to the workers and understandable to them.

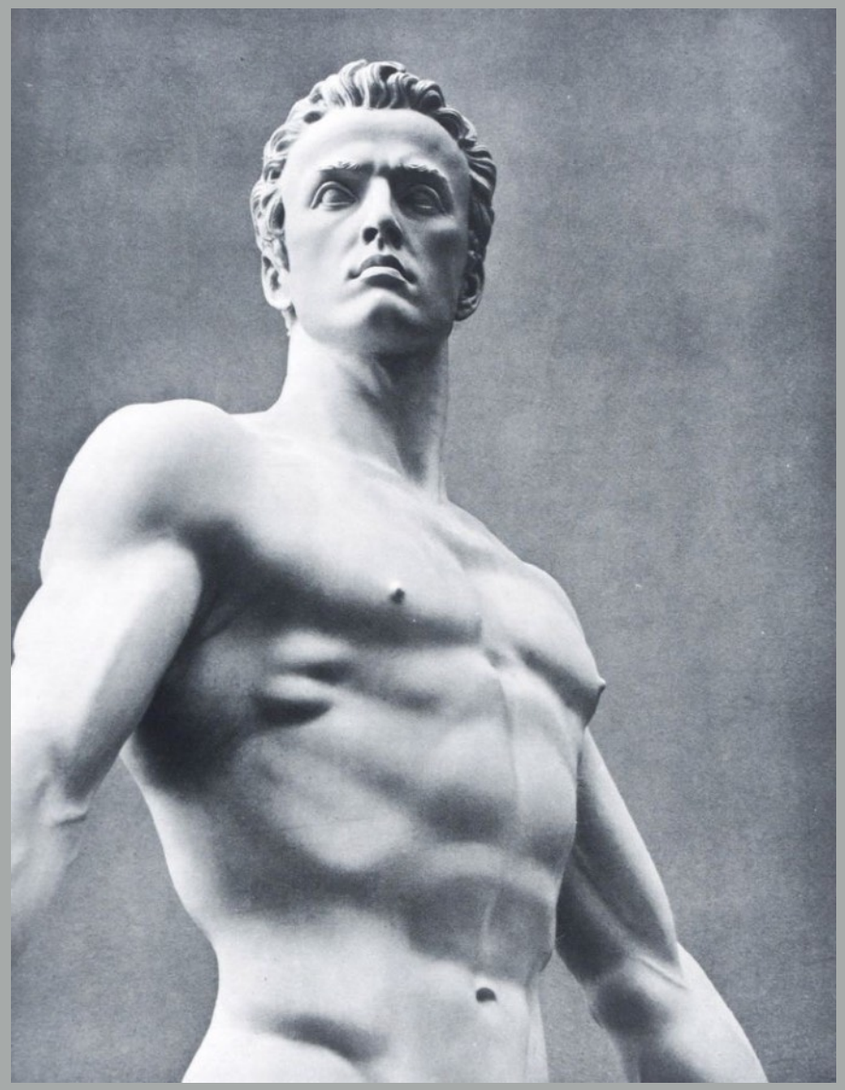
2. Typical: scenes of everyday life of the people.

3. Realistic: in the representational sense.

4. Partisan: supportive of the aims of the State and the Party.



Paul Duerinckx - Memento Park, Budapest









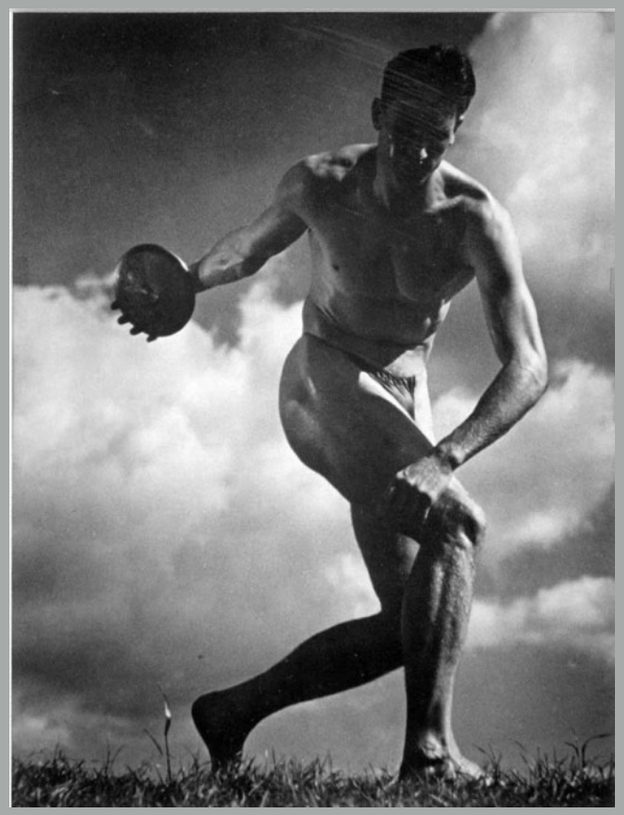
Arno Breker



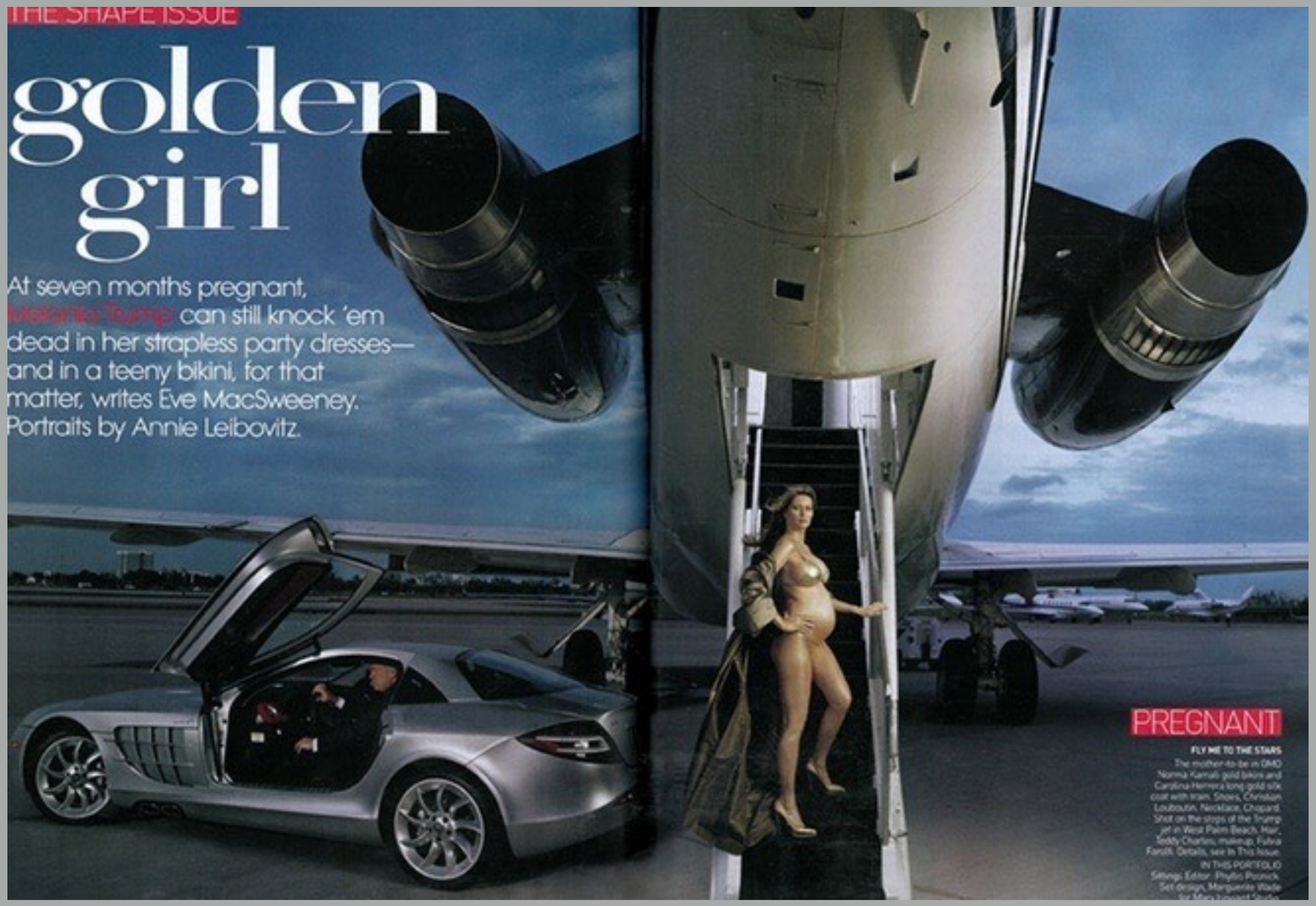
Annie Leibovitz







Leni Reifenstahl - *Olympia*



Annie Leibovitz

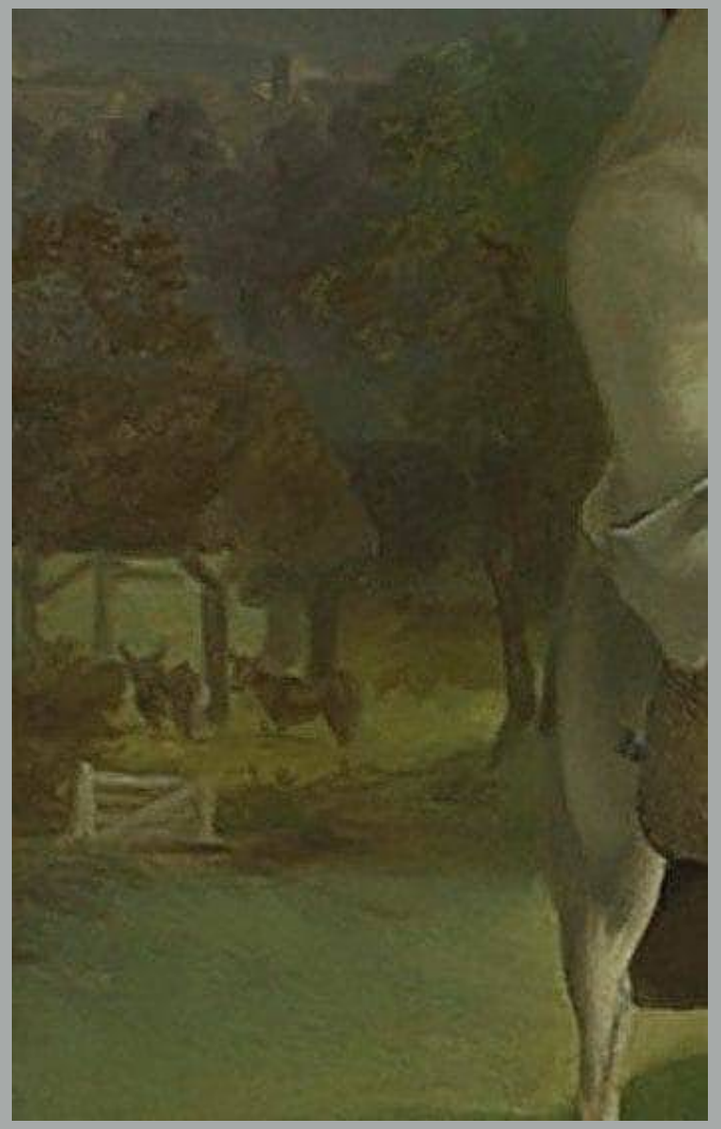


Thomas Gainsborough - *Mr and Mrs Andrews* (circa 1750)









Gainsborough - *Mr and Mrs Andrews* (details)



Jan van Eyck - *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434









Donald Trump’s Trump Tower Apartment

“The Spectacle is capital…accumulated to the point where it becomes image.”

Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*



Gregory Crewdson - from *Twilight*



Annie Leibovitz - Queen Latifah as Ursula



Gregory Crewdson - set



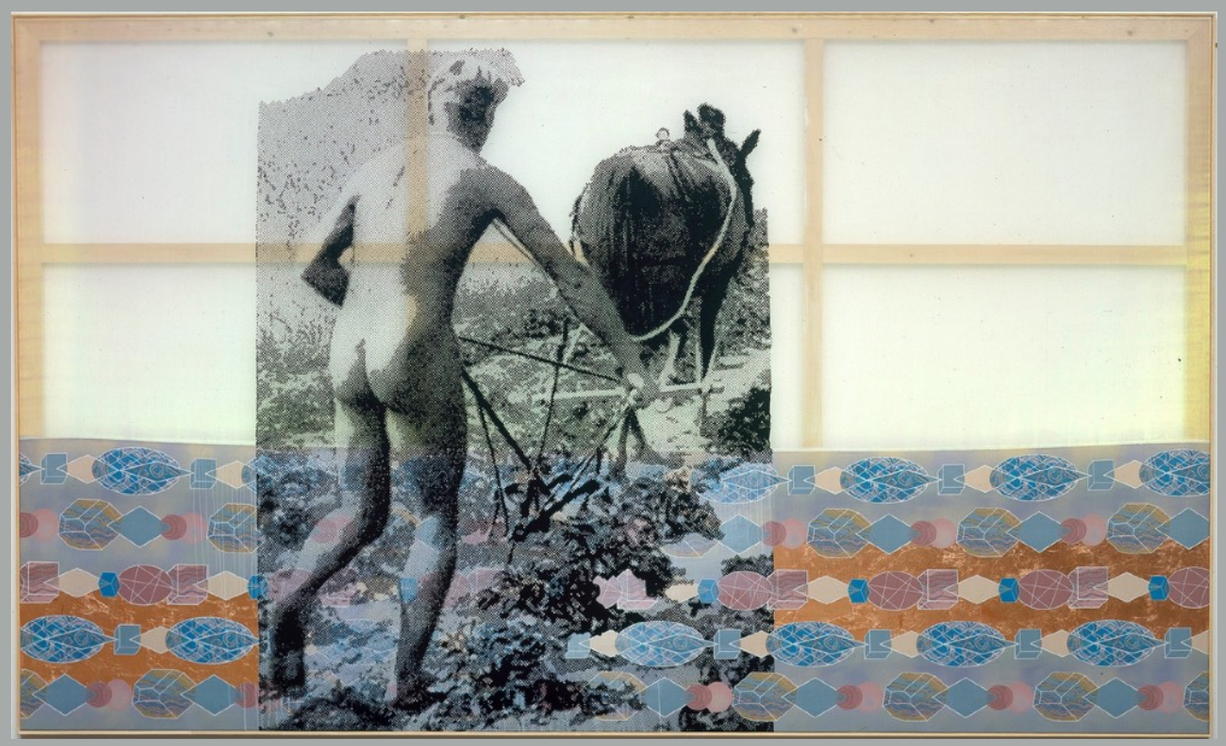
Annie Leibovitz - set



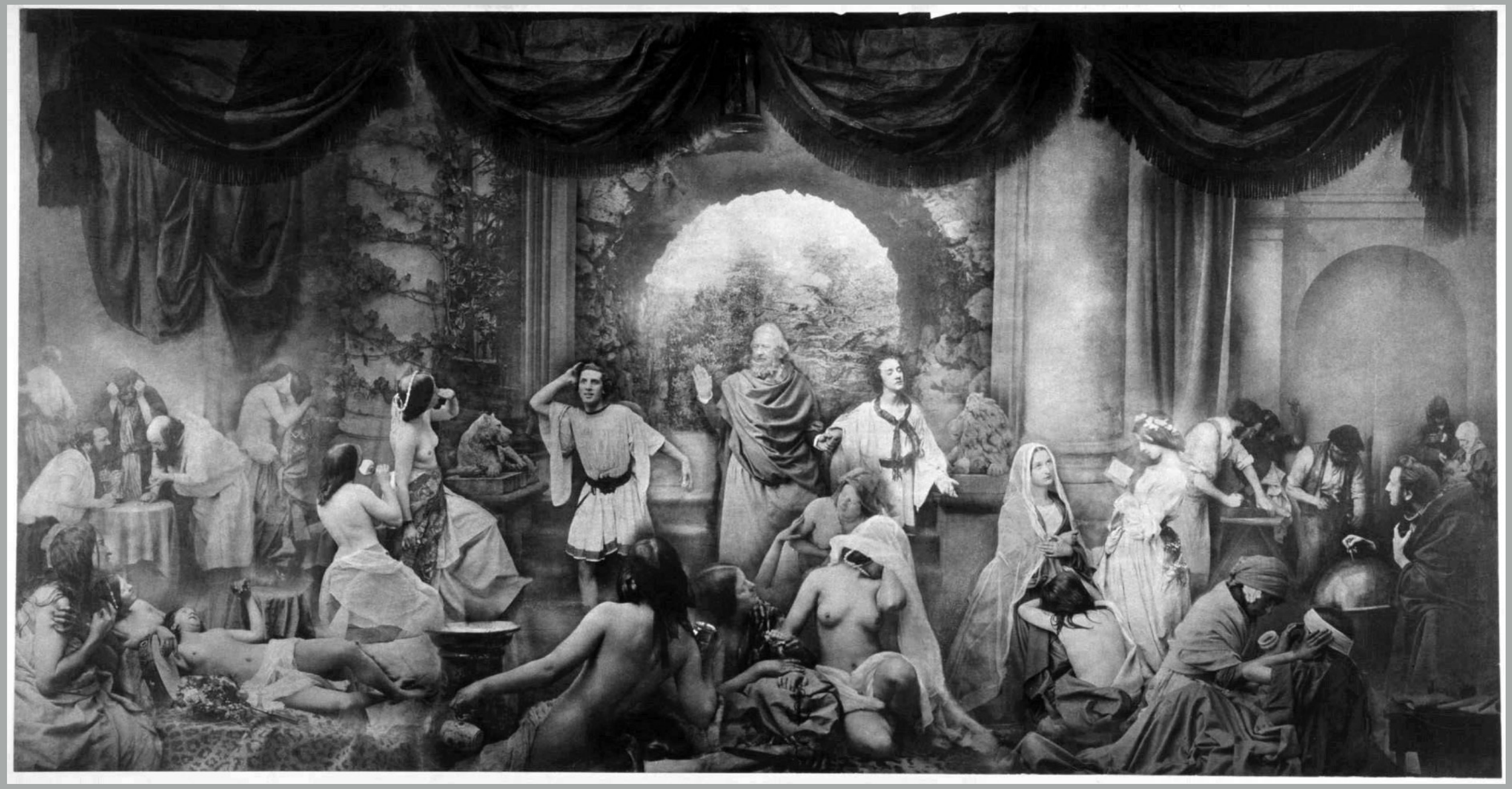
Sigmar Polke - Capitalist Realism







Sigmar Polke - Capitalist Realism



Oscar Gustav Rejlander - *The Two Ways of Life* (1857)

Jackson Pollock -
Number One (1949)





Mark Rothko - *Black on Maroon* (1958)



Willem de Kooning - *Police Gazette* (1955)


Campbell's
CONDENSED
ONION
SOUP
CREAM OF
MUSHROOM
SOUP
BEEF
SOUP
CONSOMMÉ
SOUP
GREEN PEA
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TOMATO
SOUP
BLACK BEAN
SOUP

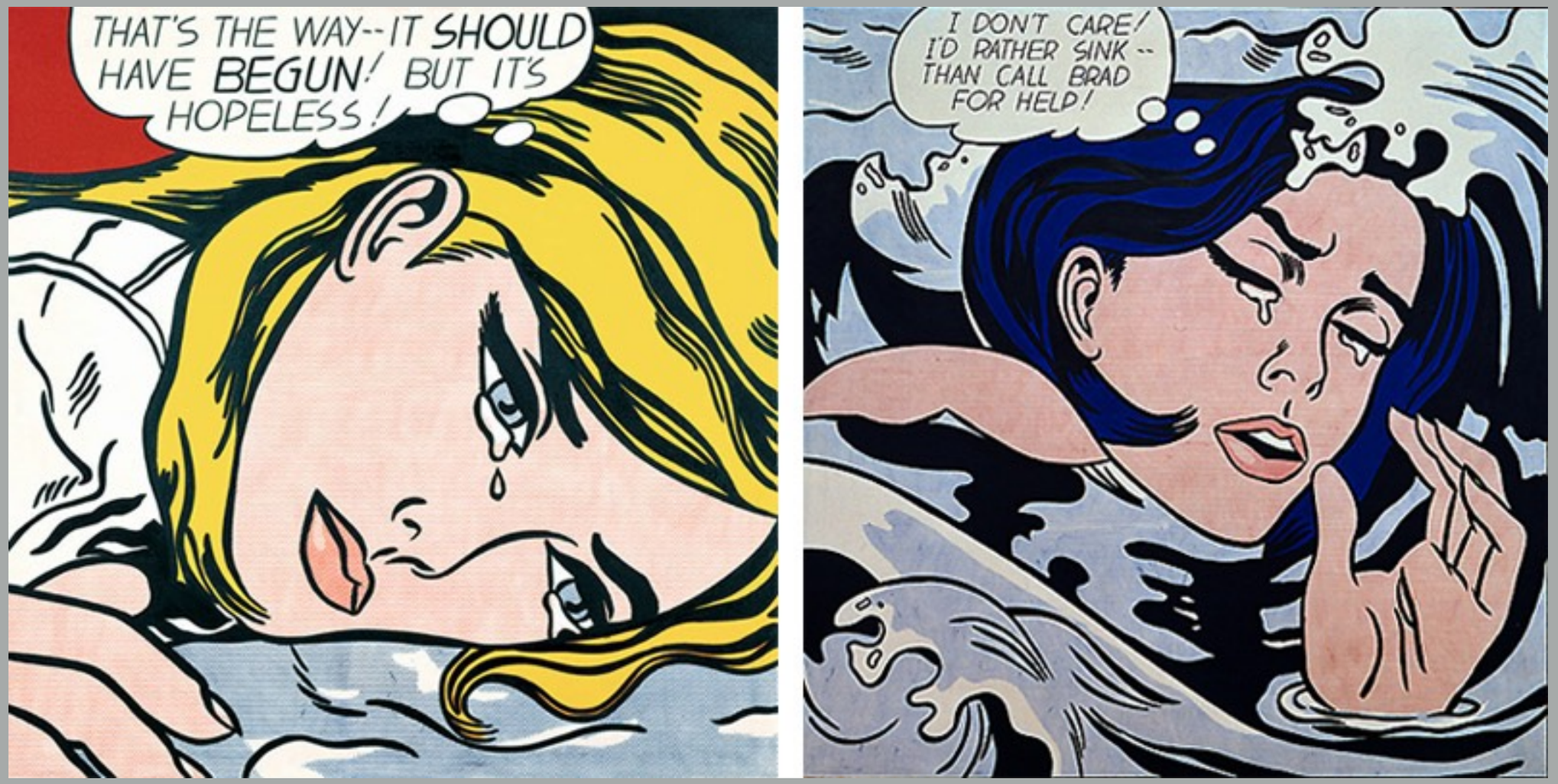


Andy Warhol





Ed Ruscha



Roy Lichtenstein



Richard Prince - Untitled (Cowboy)







Barbara Kruger





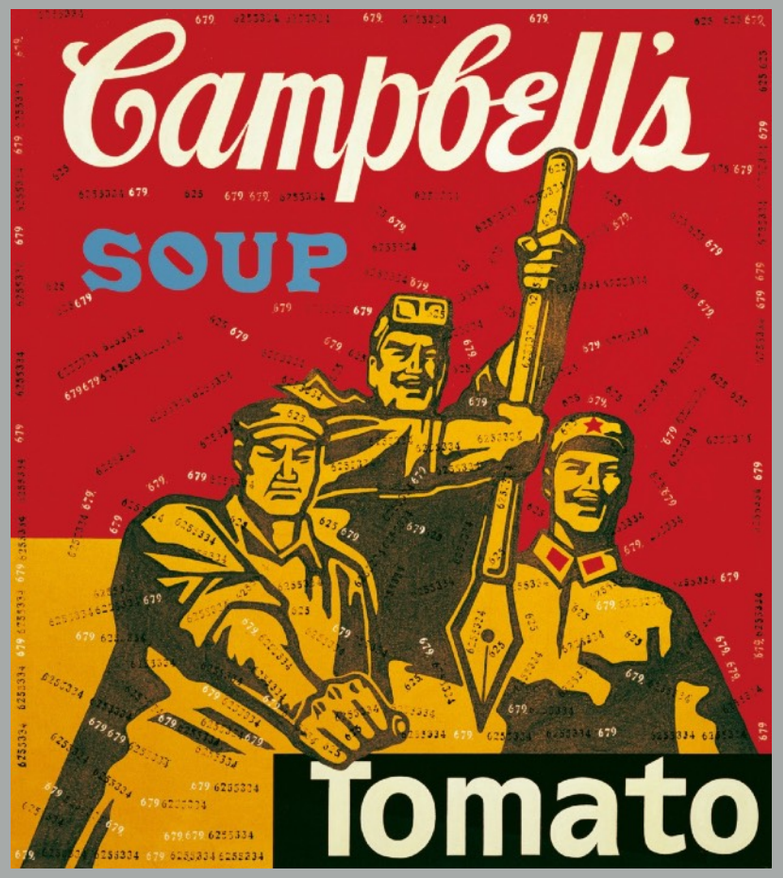


Jeff Coons



Wang Guangyi

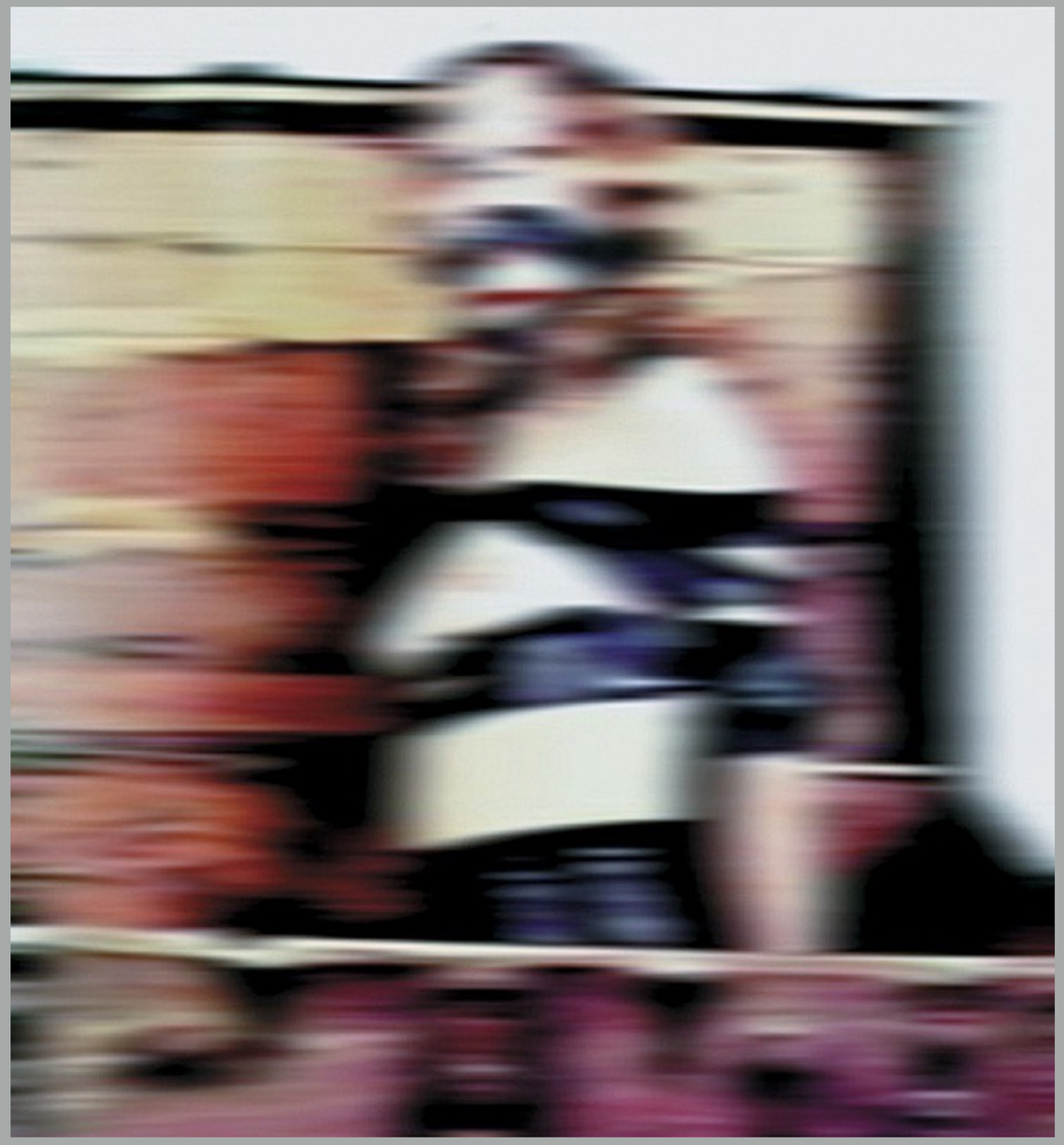








Wang Guangyi





Thomas Ruff - *Nudes*



Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses*



Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses*





Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses; Twilight*



Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*



Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*



Jeff Wall - *The Storyteller* (1986)



Edouard Manet - *Déjeuner Sur L'Herbe* (1863)



Eugène Delacroix - *The Death of Sardanapalus* (1827)

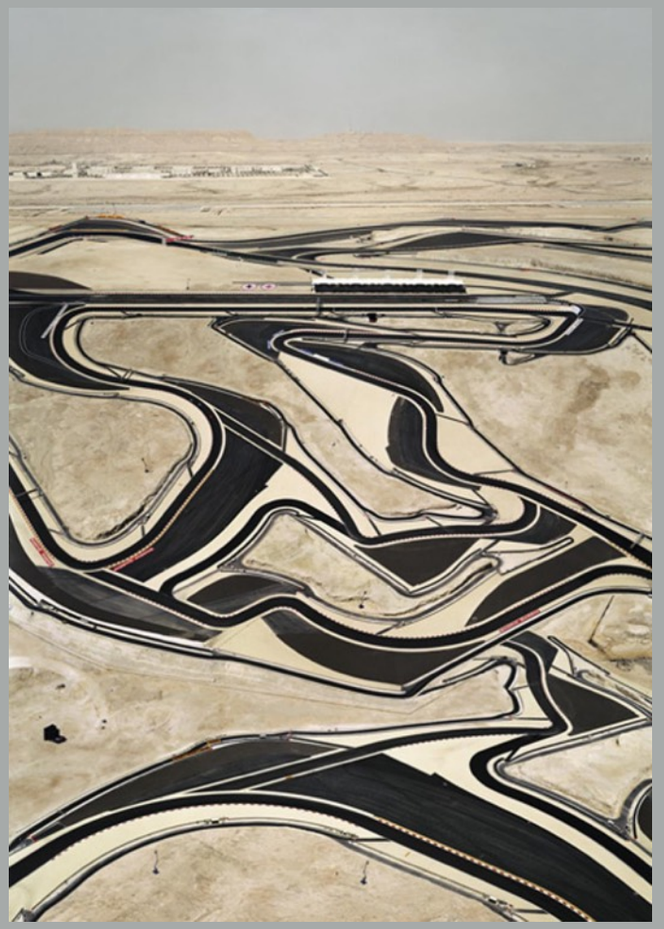


Jeff Wall - *The Destroyed Room* (1978)



Andreas Gursky - Salerno (1990)

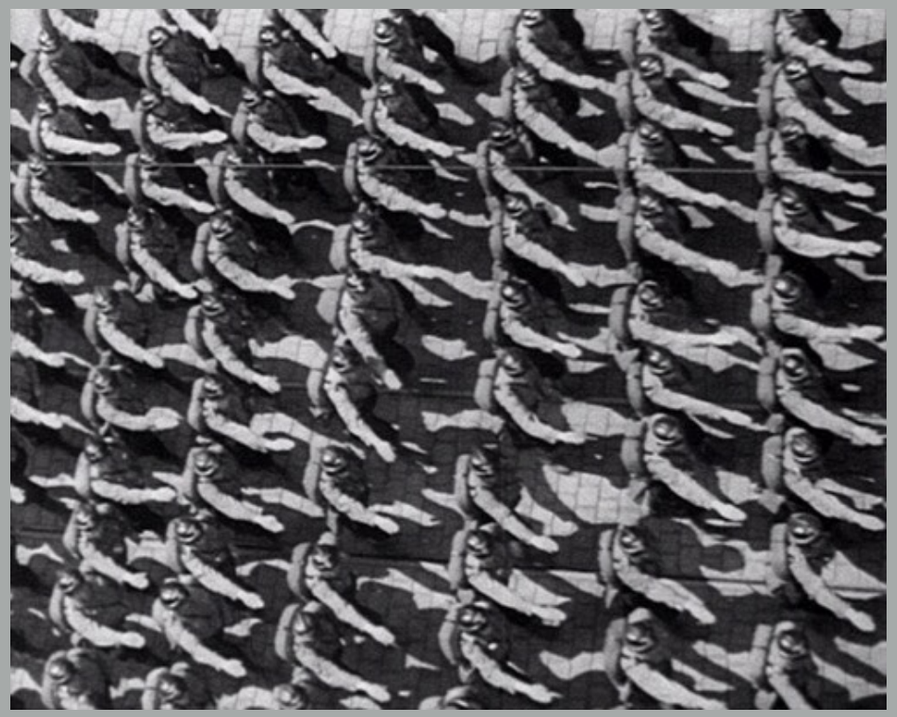






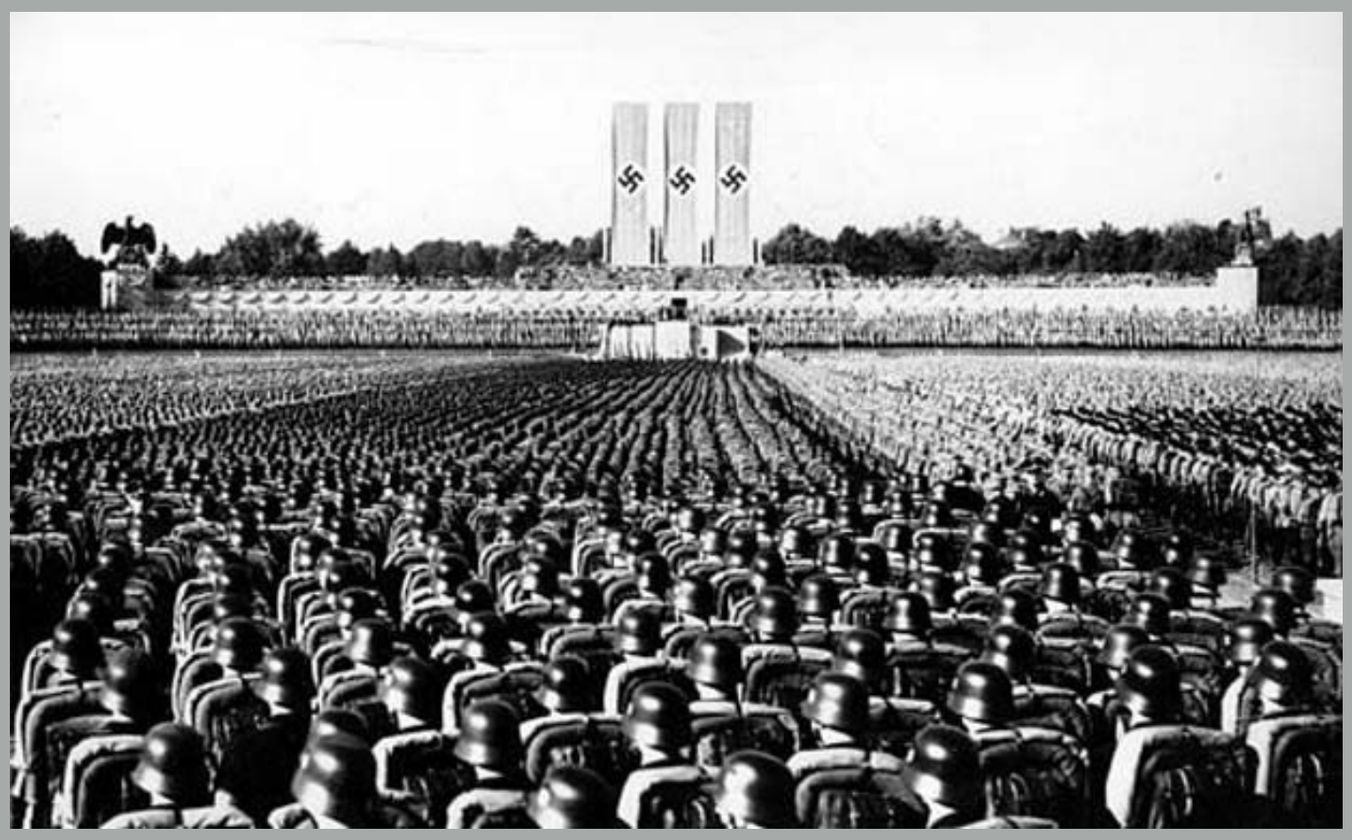


Andreas Gursky - (clockwise from left) Grand Prix Boxstop 1; Bahrain I (2005); Chicago Mercantile Exchange (1997); Hyatt Regency, Atlanta (1996)





Andreas Gursky - *Chicago Board of Trade II* (1999)



Leni Reifenstahl - *Triumph of the Will*





Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*



‘Some day we shall no longer need pictures: we shall just be happy.’

Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter, 1966

(Founders of the Capitalist Realism movement)