WAYS OF THINKING. SESSION 8.

POSTMODERNISM, DECONSTRUCTION AND SAMPLING.

Estéfani Bouza: e.bouza-arnoso@uwtsd.ac.uk/ November 2024

SESSION OVERVIEW

Today we will discuss key ideas in relation to postmodernism. We will also see how those ideas are articulated with examples from practitioners such as Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons, Sherrie Levine.

KEY IDEAS

-Deconstruction of avant-garde myths including the idea of originality and novelty.
-In postmodernism photography has a key function in deconstructing previous ideas.
-Hybridity - eclectic practices.

PREVIOUS SESSION - MANIFESTOS - AVANT-GARDE - MODERNISM - KEY IDEAS

-Utopia
-Politics
-Trust in progress
-Diversity of voices?
-Gender

PREVIOUS SESSION - WHAT IS A MANIFESTO AND HOW IT RELATES TO YOU AND YOUR PRACTICE?

A manifesto is a declaration of principles, which you wish to hold by, and the intentions you have for your practice as a whole. Therefore your practice becomes an extension of your principles and in that sense it offers a holistic approach towards your life and work.

Manifestos have a political-ethical dimension and outline the methods as well as approaches to making work.

Usually a manifesto sets the limits on what you will and will not do and outlines to a degree how you will do something. But also consider breaking the rules. Maybe certain ideas or positions are relevant in a particular stage of your life but not so later on.

PREVIOUS SESSION - MANIFESTOS - AVANT-GARDE - MODERNISM

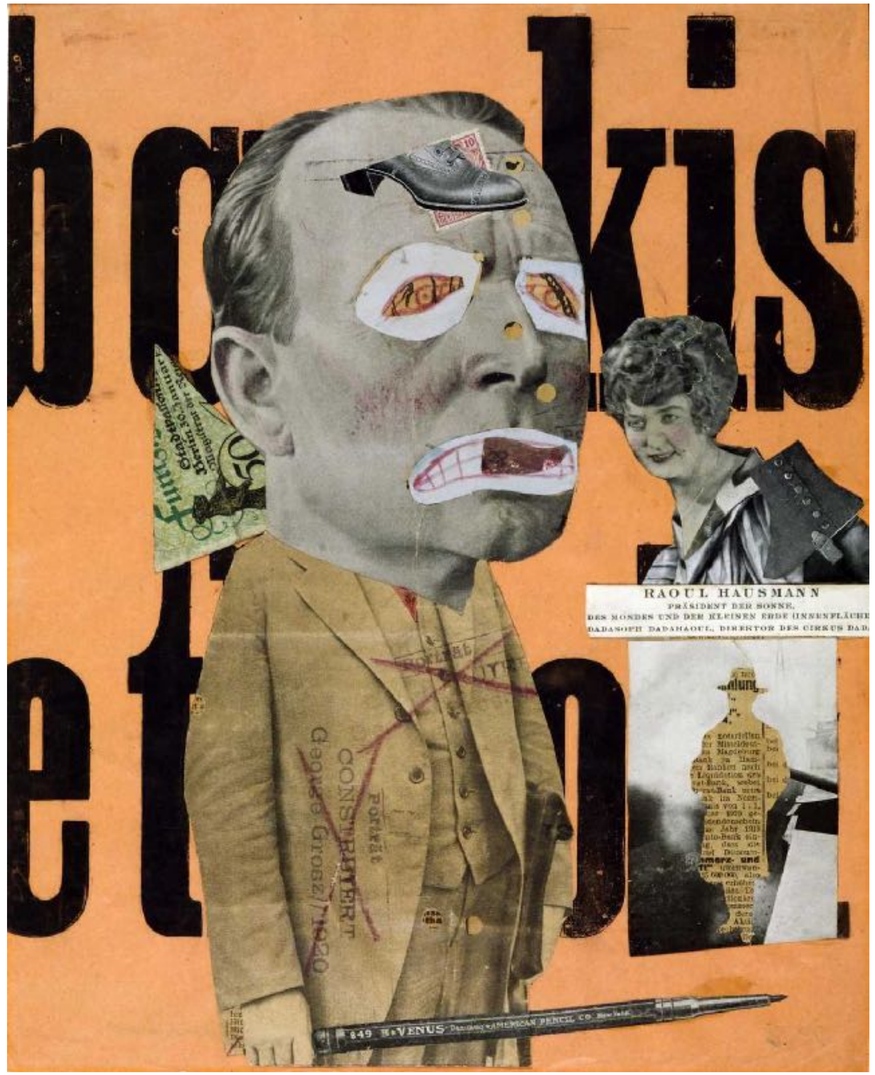
Modernism refers to a global movement in society and culture that from the early decades of the twentieth century sought a new alignment with the experience and values of modern industrial life. Building on late nineteenth-century precedents, artists around the world used new imagery, materials and techniques to create artworks that they felt better reflected the realities and hopes of modern societies.

Avant-garde means art that is innovatory, introducing or exploring new forms or subject matter.

PREVIOUS SESSION - MANIFESTOS - AVANT-GARDE - MODERNISM - MYTHS

-They wanted to challenge the ‘autonomy’ of art, they opposed treating art as a precious activity distinct from everyday life.
-Art practices and their role in the reconstruction of society: instead of painting, sculpture traditional mediums - they use advertising, product design, political propaganda, mass media work.
-They use photography since it was cheap to produce and integrated in the new forms of mass media.
-Novelty, shock.
-Originality.
-Interwar period. The reality of destruction and what it can be re-invented in the future.
-Linked with the idea of utopia.
-Rupture - destroying the ‘traditional’ values as in the case of Dada.
-Mythic idea of the avant-garde.
-Focus on modern life and the metropolis.

DADA - RAOUL HAUSMANN

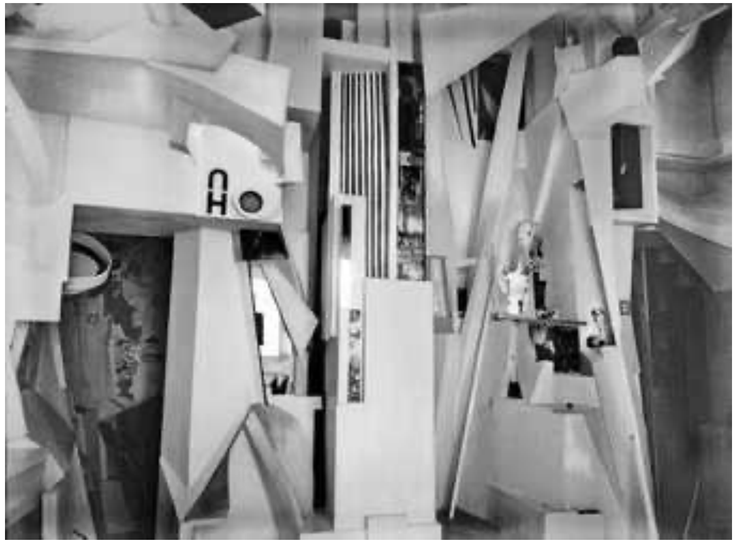


Raoul Hausmann, *The Art Critic,* (1919-1920).



The climax of Berlin Dada was the International Dada Fair of 1920, the central symbol of which was an effigy of a German officer with the head of a pig that hung from the ceiling.

DADA - KURT SCHWITTERS







Kurt Schwitters, *Merzbau,* (1933).

SURREALISM - RENÉ MAGRITTE



René Magritte, *The Treachery of Images,* (1929).

SURREALISM - CLAUDE CAHUN



Claude Cahun, (1920).



Claude Cahun, (1927).

SURREALISM - MERET OPPENHEIM



Meret Oppenheim, *Object.* Paris, (1936).

SURREALISM - DORA MAAR

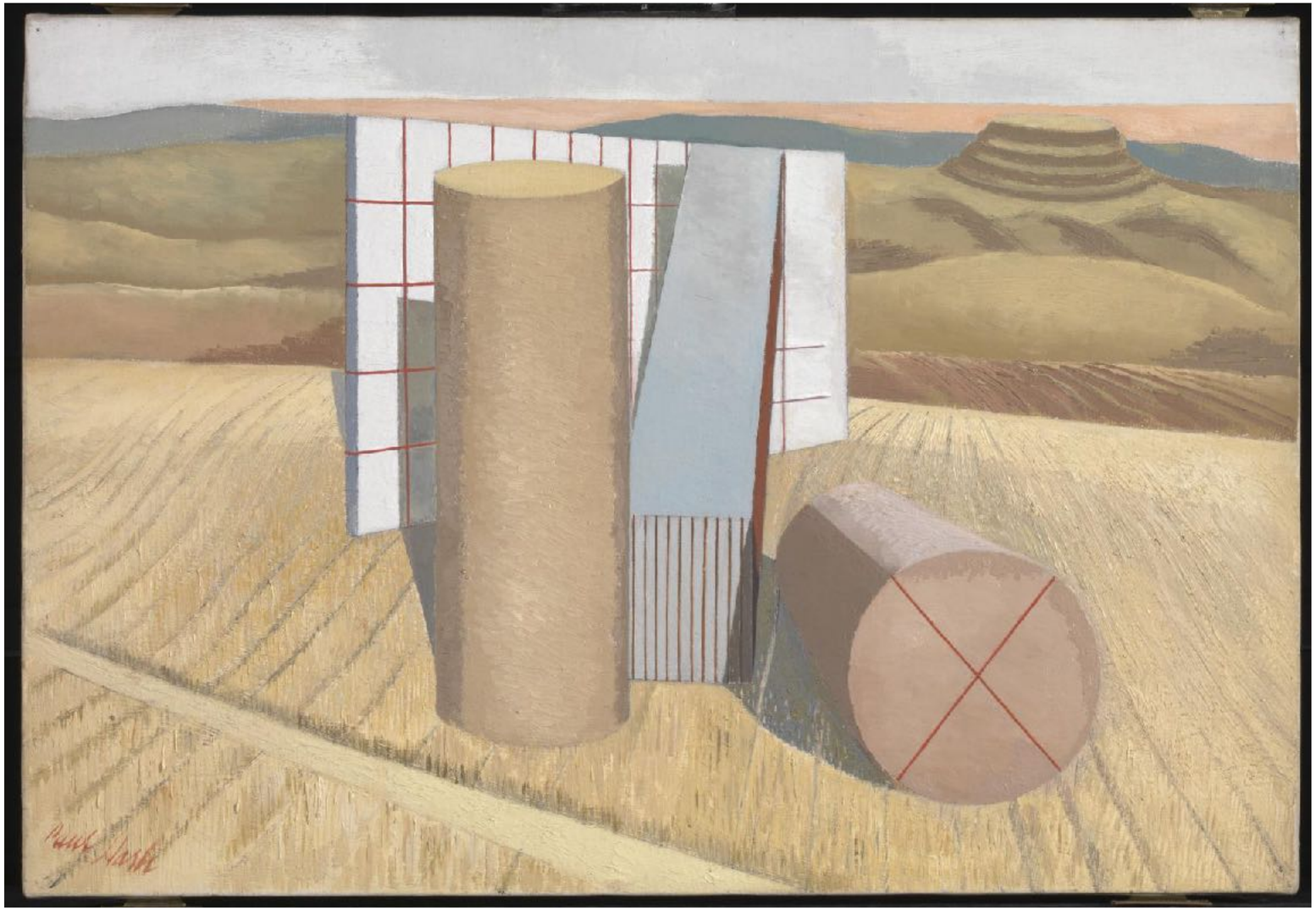


Dora Maar, *Man looking inside a sidewalk inspection door, London,* (1935).



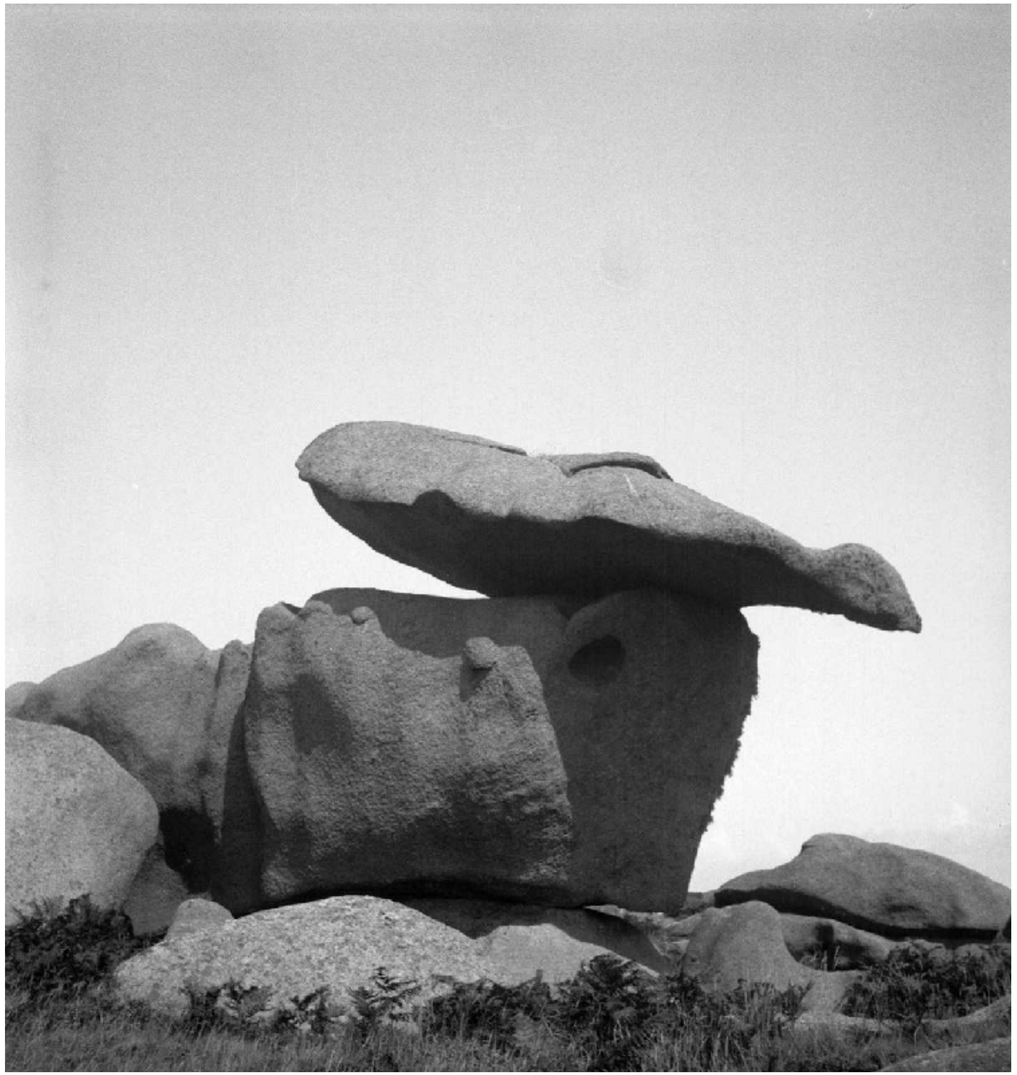
Dora Maar, *Portrait d'Ubu,* (1936).

SURREALISM - PAUL NASH

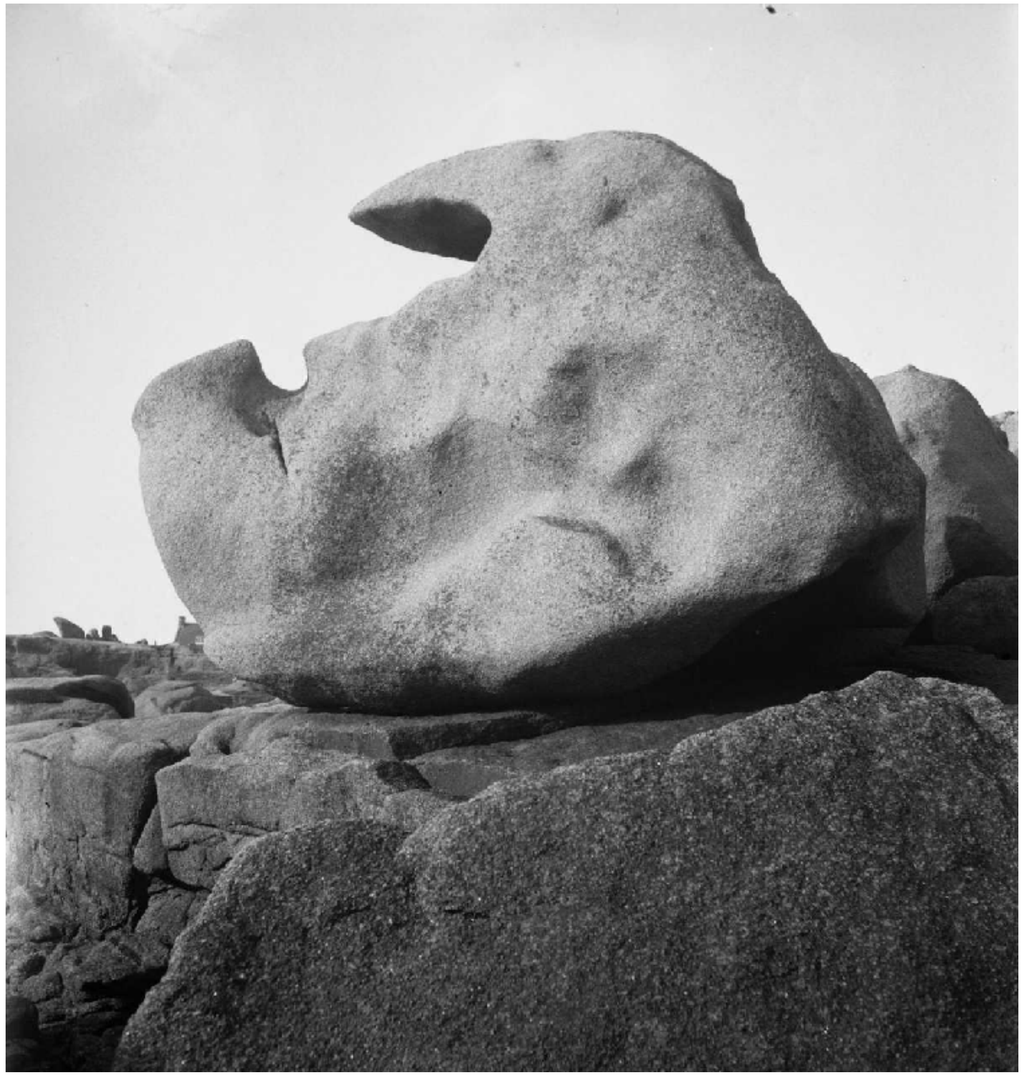


Paul Nash, *Equivalents for the Megaliths,* (1935).

SURREALISM - EILEEN AGAR



Eileen Agar, *Rocks, Ploumanach,* (1936).



Eileen Agar, *Rockface, Ploumanach,* (1936).

POSTMODERNISM

‘In art, postmodernism refers to a reaction against modernism. It is less a cohesive movement than an approach and attitude toward art, culture, and society. Its main characteristics include anti-authoritarianism, or refusal to recognise the authority of any single style or definition of what art should be; and the collapsing of the distinction between high culture and mass or popular culture, and between art and everyday life.

Postmodern art can be also characterised by a deliberate use of earlier styles and conventions, and an eclectic mixing of different artistic and popular styles and mediums.’

https://www.moma.org/collection/terms/postmodernism

MODERNISM - KEY IDEAS - POSTMODERNISM

-Utopia
-Politics
-Trust in progress
-Diversity of voices?
-Gender

-Crisis of the real
-Disbelief - AIDS crisis in the 80s
-End of history
-Lack of diversity of voices - non included
-Feminism position
-The beginning of a post-colonial position

POSTMODERNISM - KEY STRATEGIES

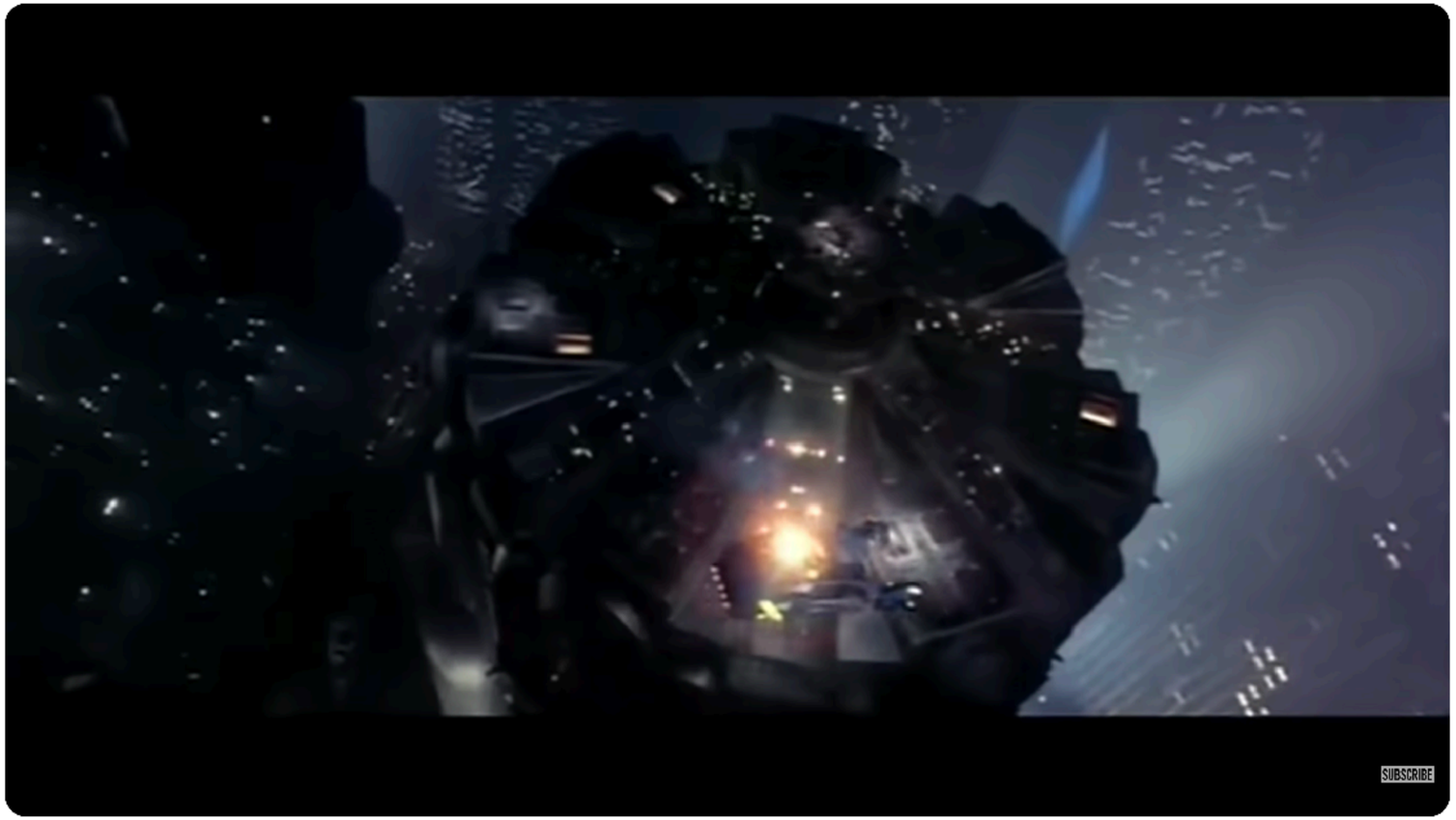
-Pastiche
-Recycling
-Appropriation
-Ready-made
-De-contextualization
-Eclecticism

BLADE RUNNER

Blade Runner (1982) Official Trailer - Ridley Scott, Harrison ...

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Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner,* (1982).

PULP FICTION



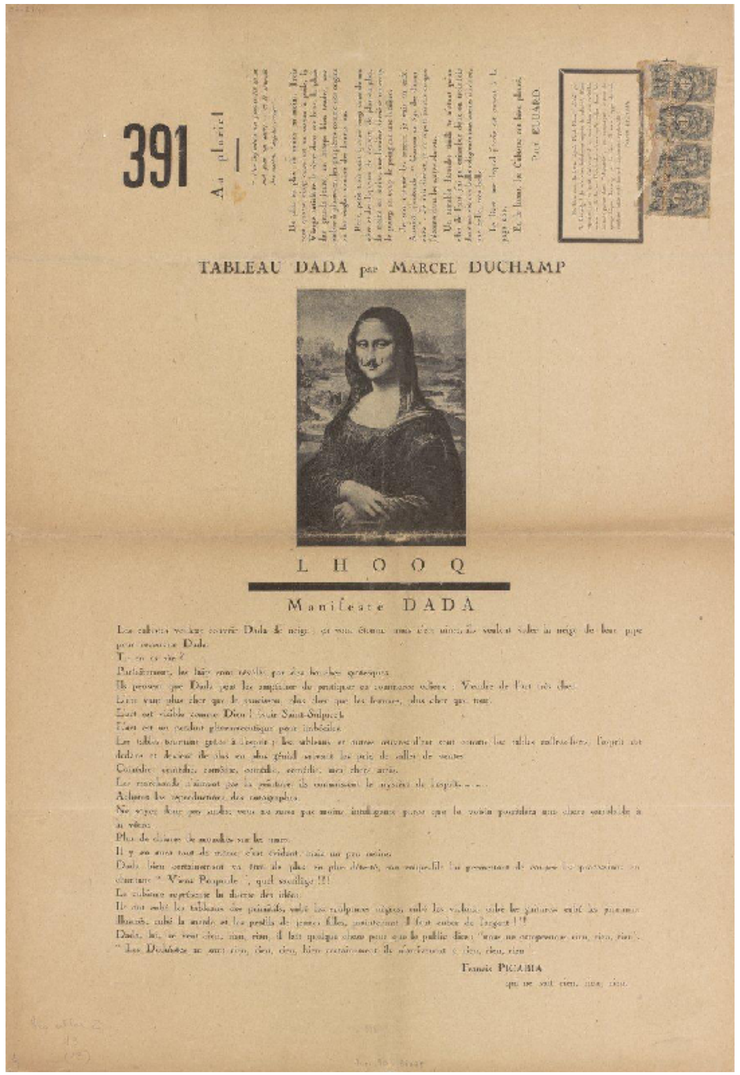
Pulp Fiction | Official Trailer (HD) - John Travolta, Uma Thurman, Samuel L. Jackson | MIRAMAX

Quentin Tarantino, *Pulp Fiction,* (1994).

DADA - MARCEL DUCHAMP

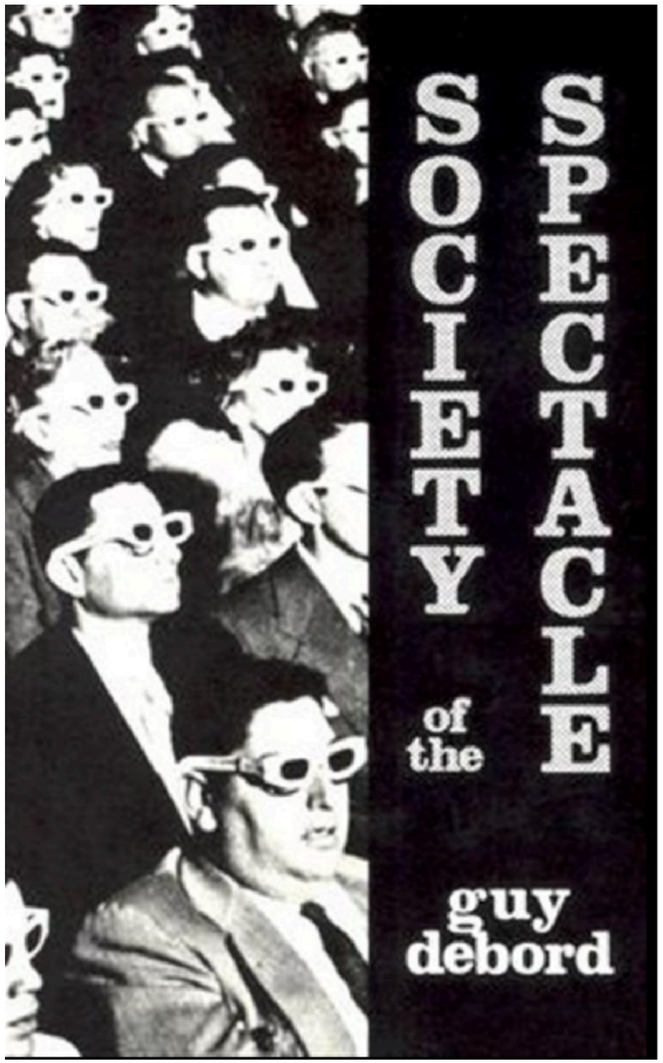


Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain,* (1917).



Marcel Duchamp, (1920).

KEY AUTHOR - GUY DEBORD



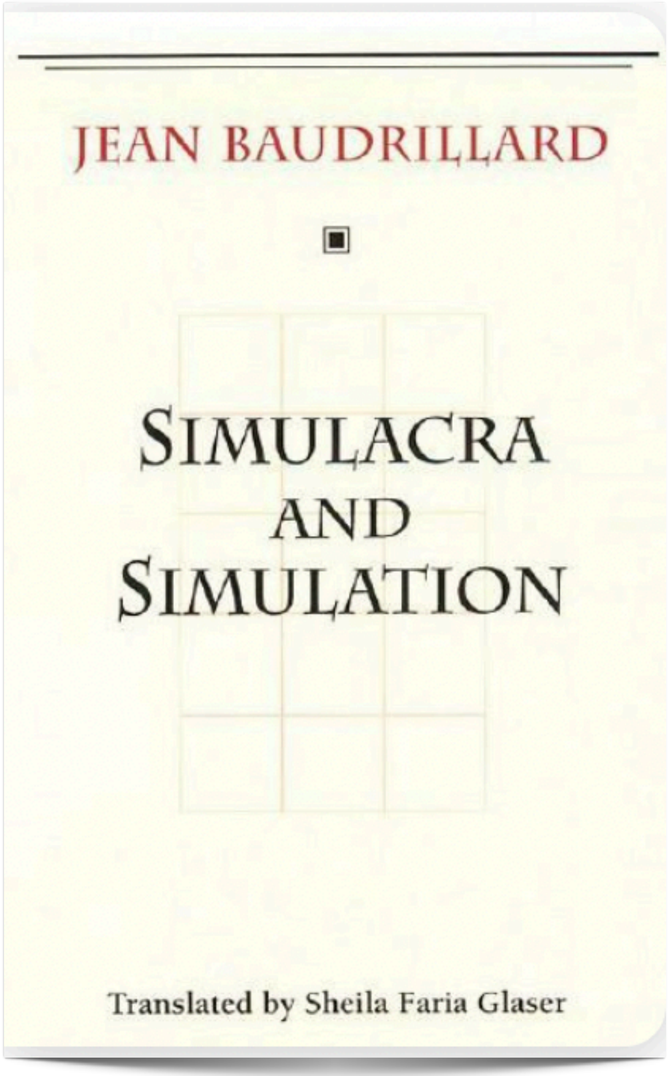
First published in 1967.

JOHN BERGER. WAYS OF SEEING - BBC TV SERIES

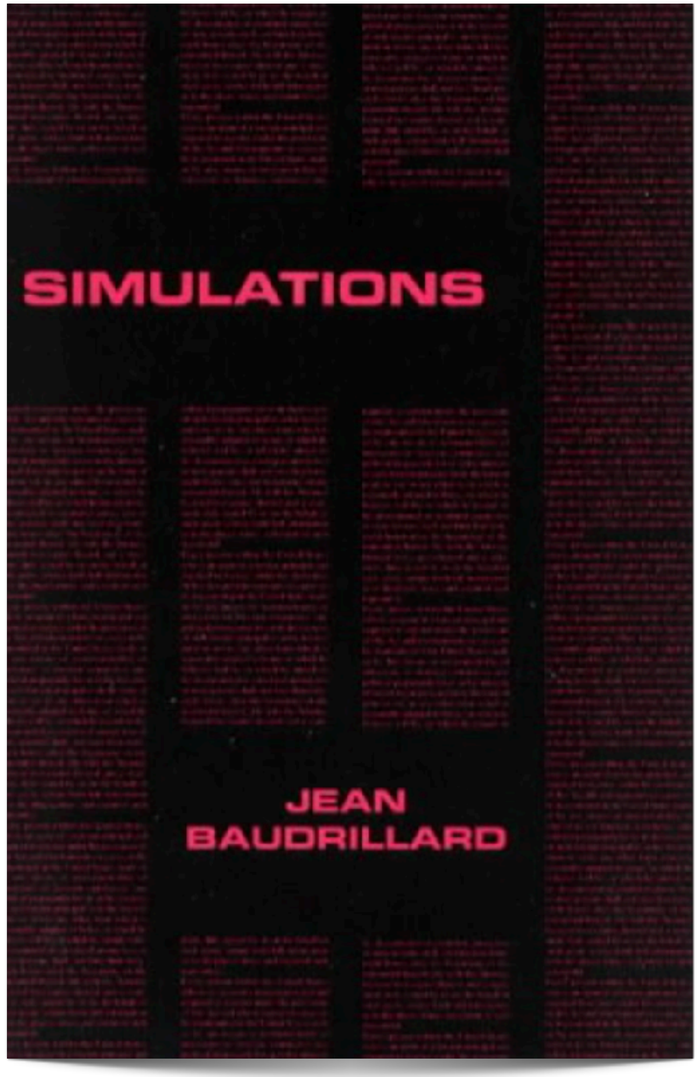


John Berger / Ways of Seeing , Episode 4 (1972)

KEY AUTHOR - JEAN BAUDRILLARD

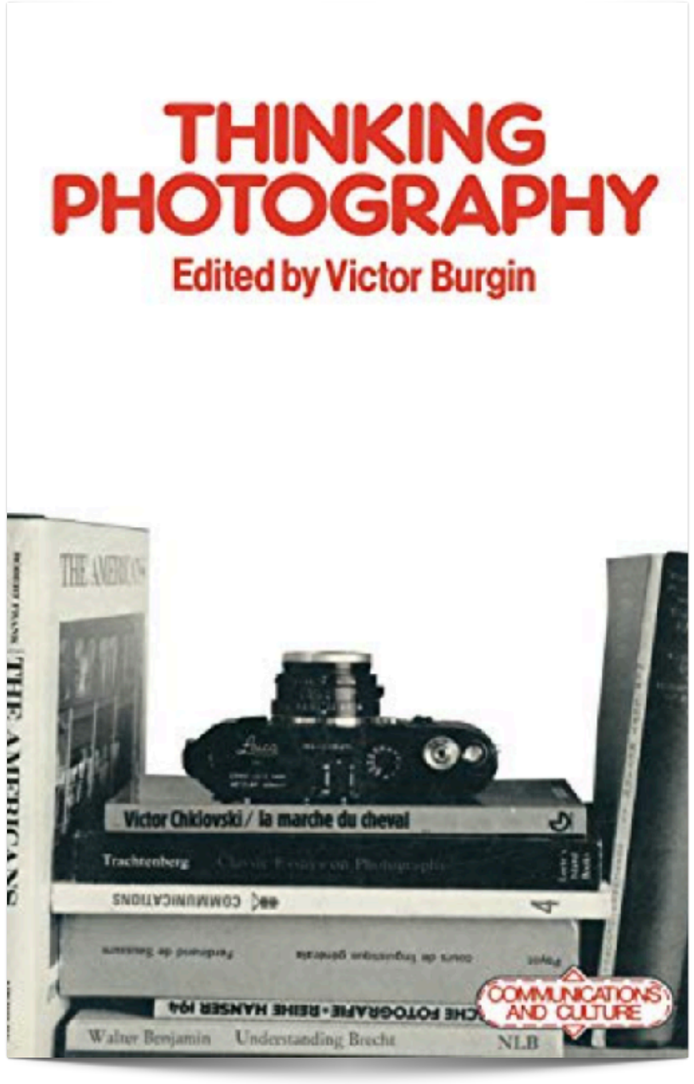


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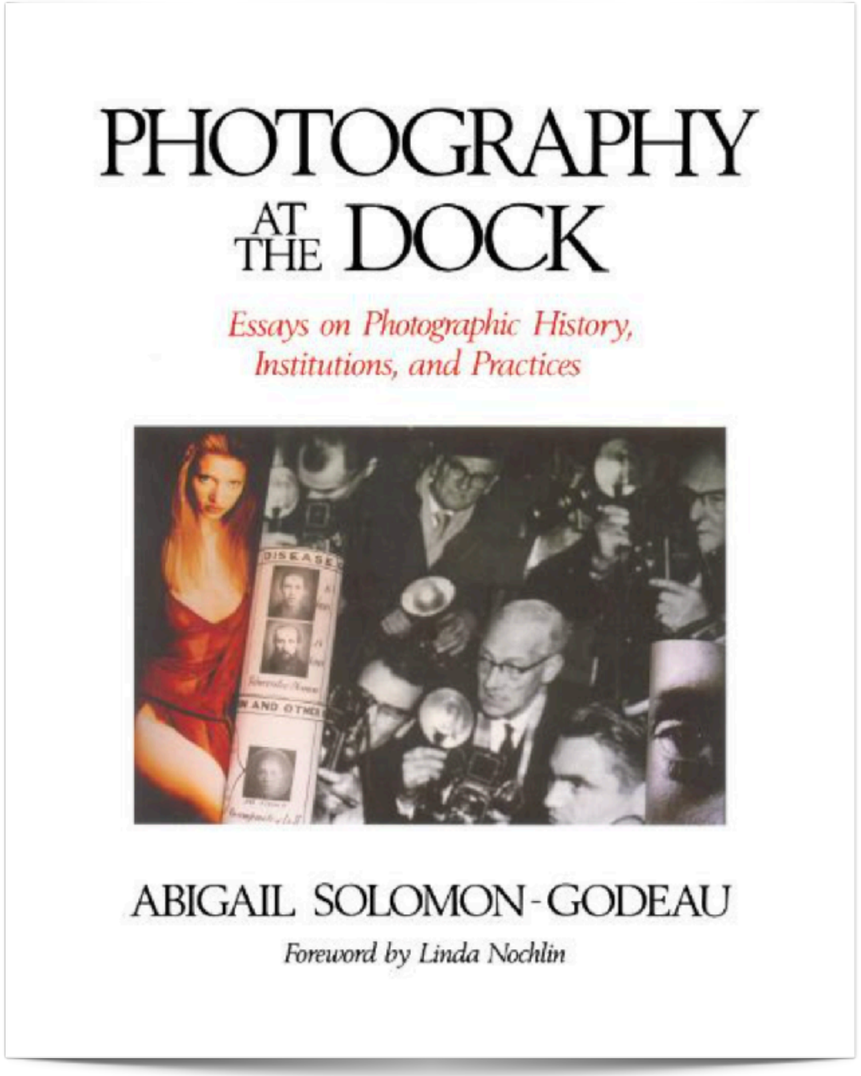


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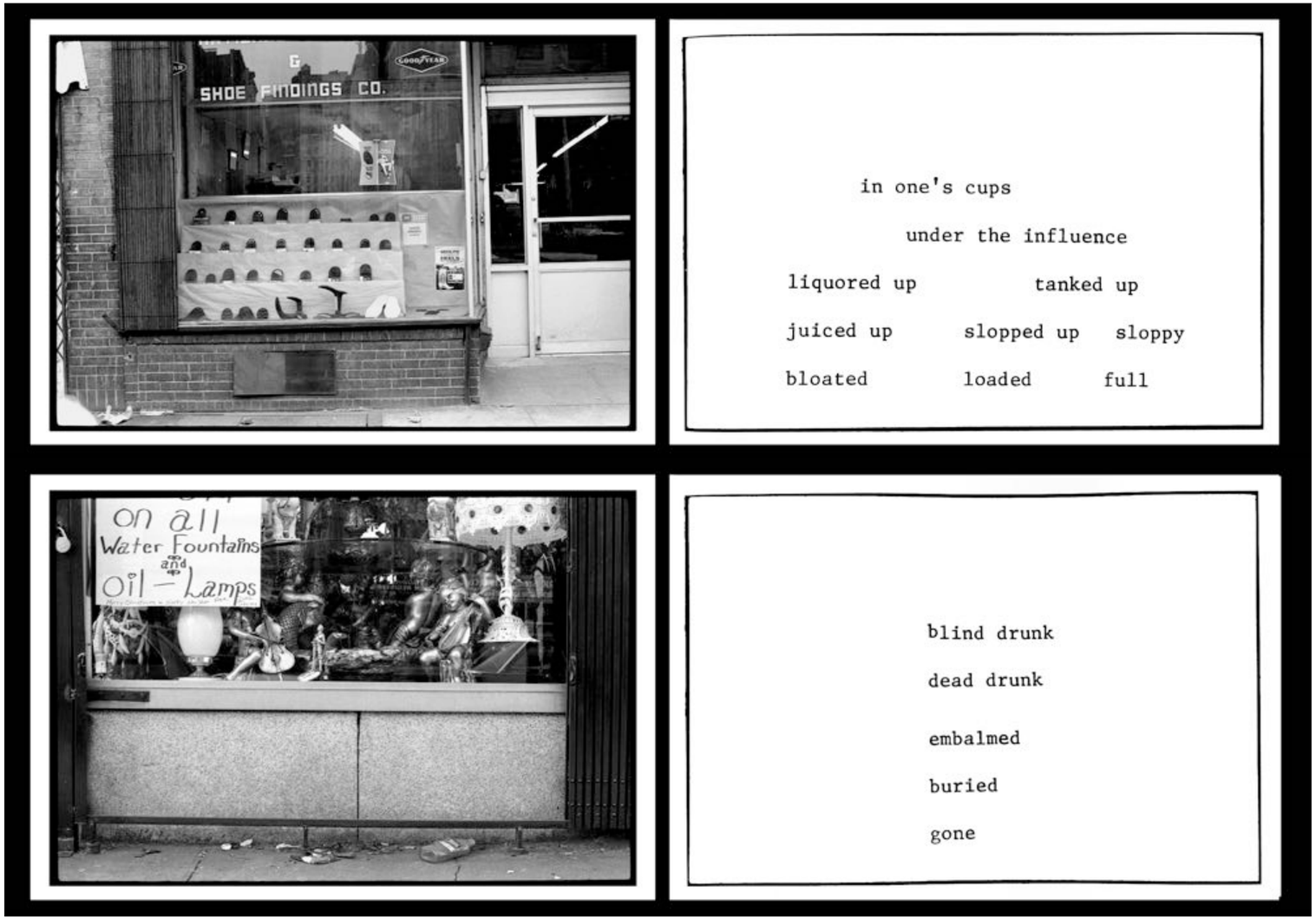


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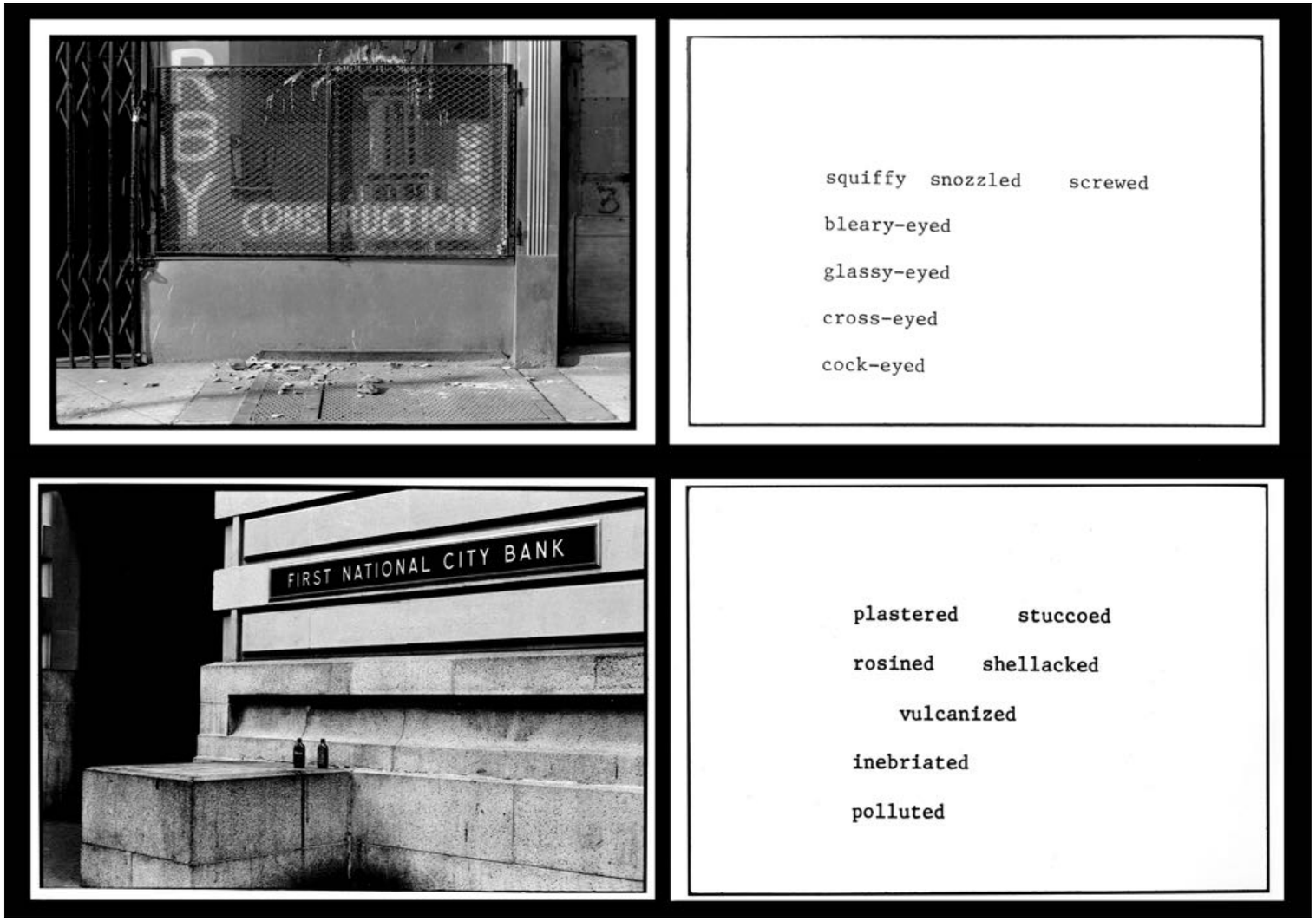
First published in 1991.

MARTHA ROSLER



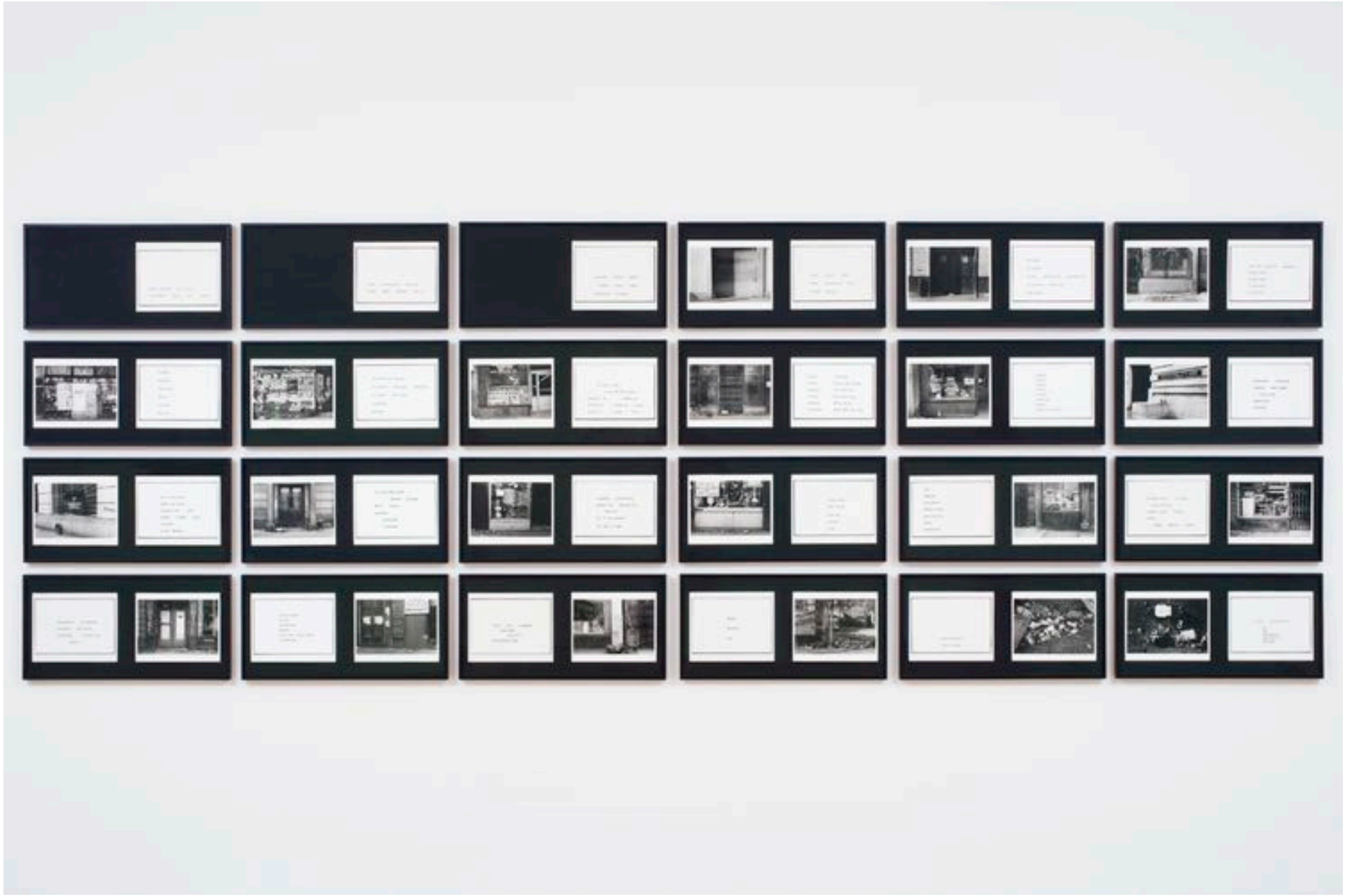
Martha Rosler, *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems* (1974-1975).

MARTHA ROSLER



Martha Rosler, *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems* (1974-1975).

MARTHA ROSLER



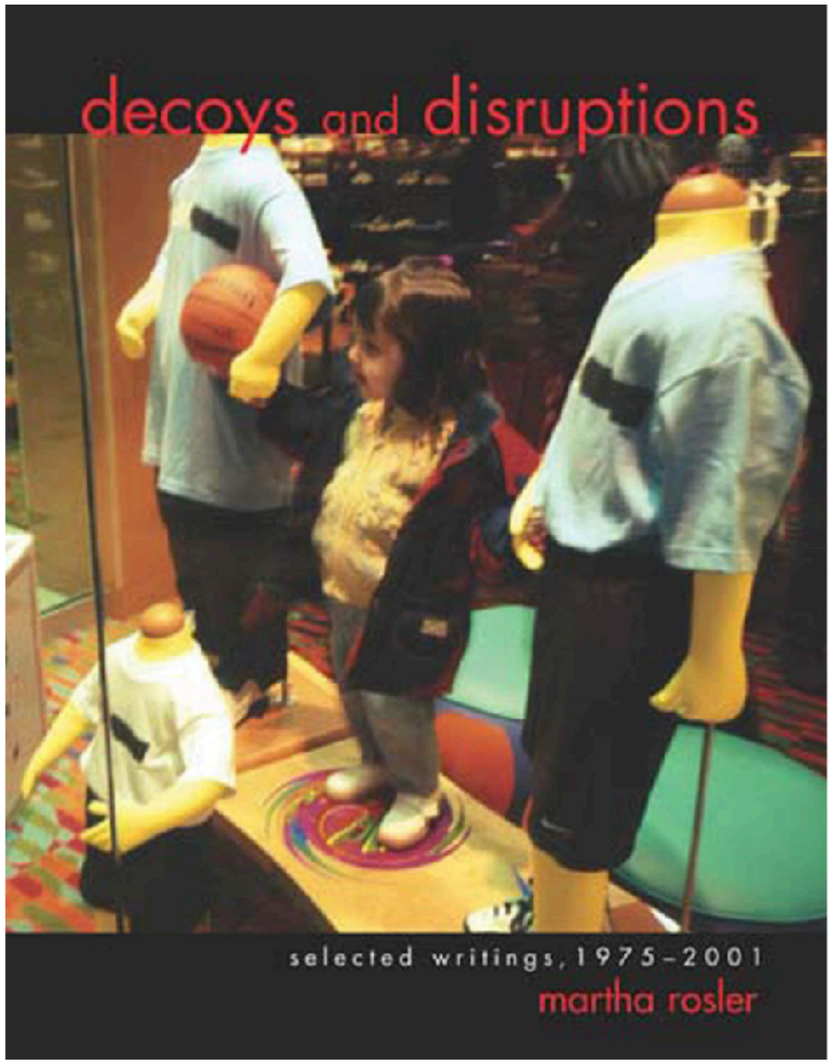
Martha Rosler, *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems* (1974-1975).

MARTHA ROSLER

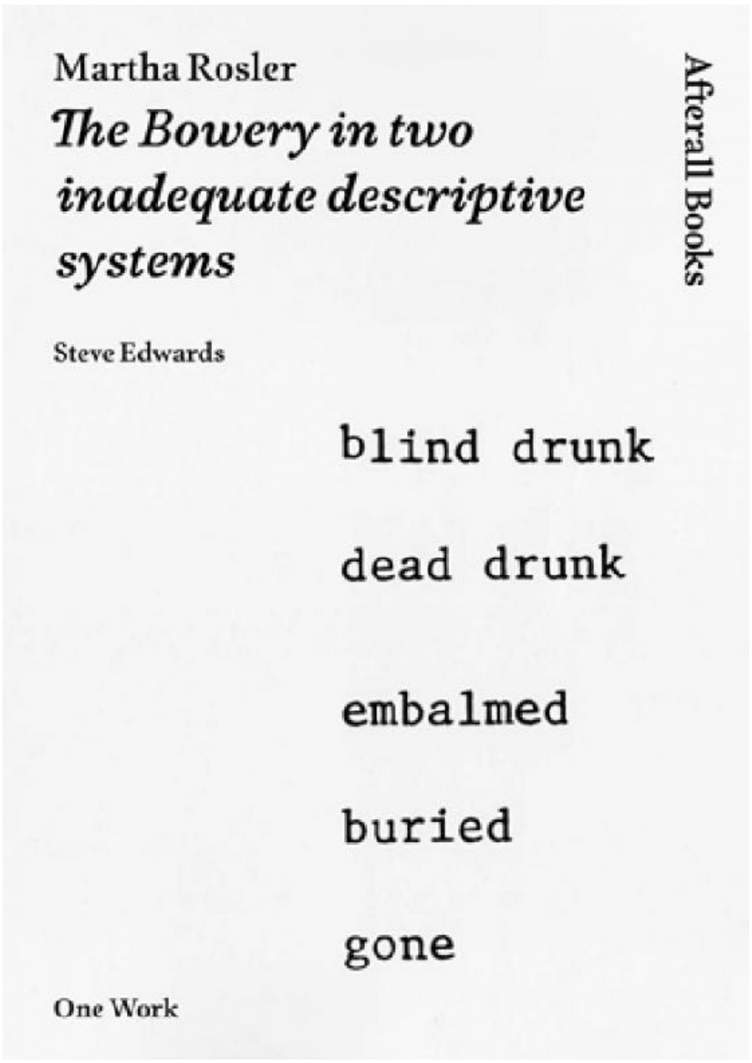


Martha Rosler, *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975).

MARTHA ROSLER



First published in 2006.



First published in 2012.

PICTURES EXHIBITION - DOUGLAS CRIMP



Douglas Crimp (curator), *Installation view of "Pictures," at Artists Space, New York,* (1977).

PICTURES EXHIBITION - DOUGLAS CRIMP



Douglas Crimp (curator), *Installation view of "Pictures," at Artists Space, New York,* (1977).

PICTURES GENERATION - DOUGLAS CRIMP'S WRITING

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Table of Contents

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Pictures (pp. 75-88)

Douglas Crimp

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Cindy Sherman/ *Film Stills*/ 1977-1980

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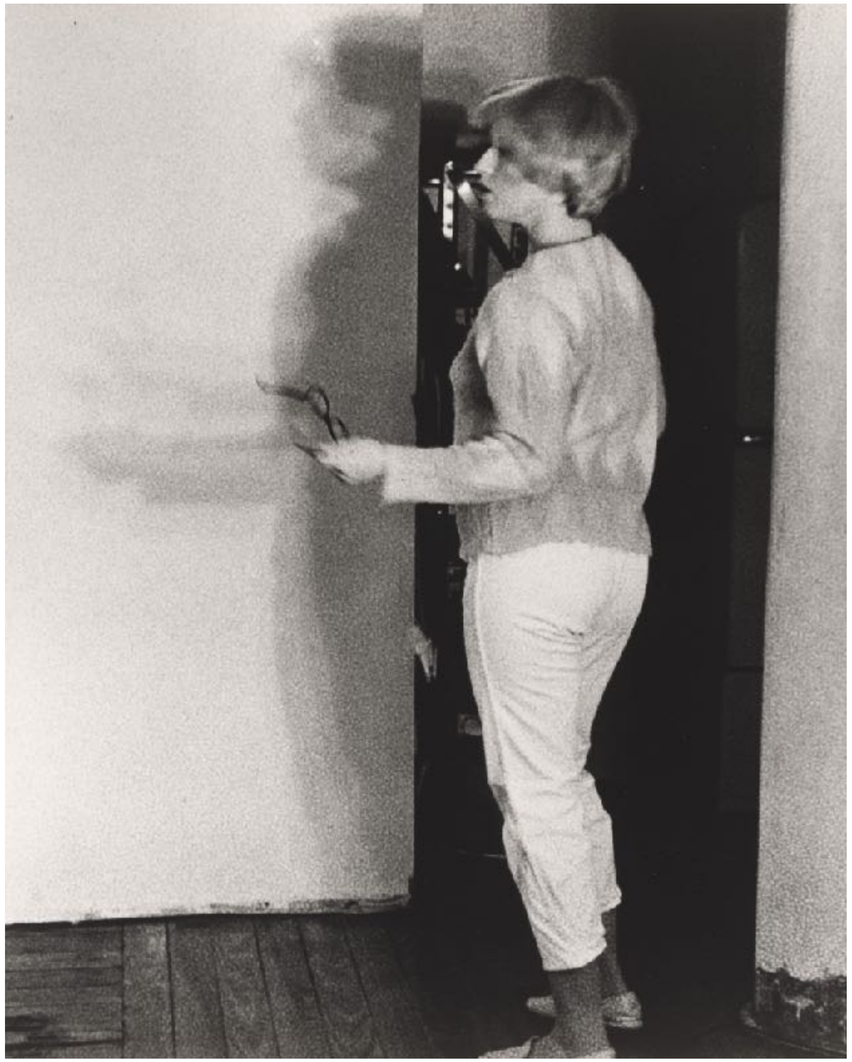


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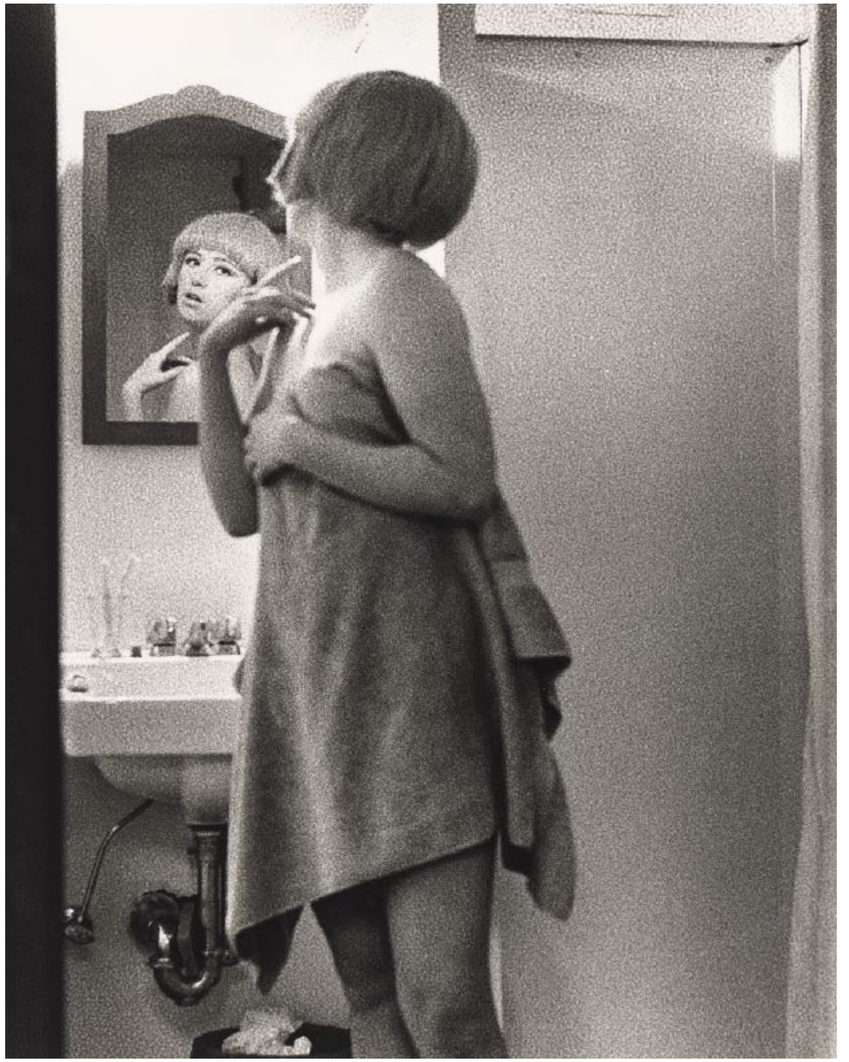
Untitled Film Stills. 1977–80 | SEEING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS

Cindy Sherman/ *Film Stills*/ 1977-1980

EXAMPLES



Untitled Film Still #1, (1977).



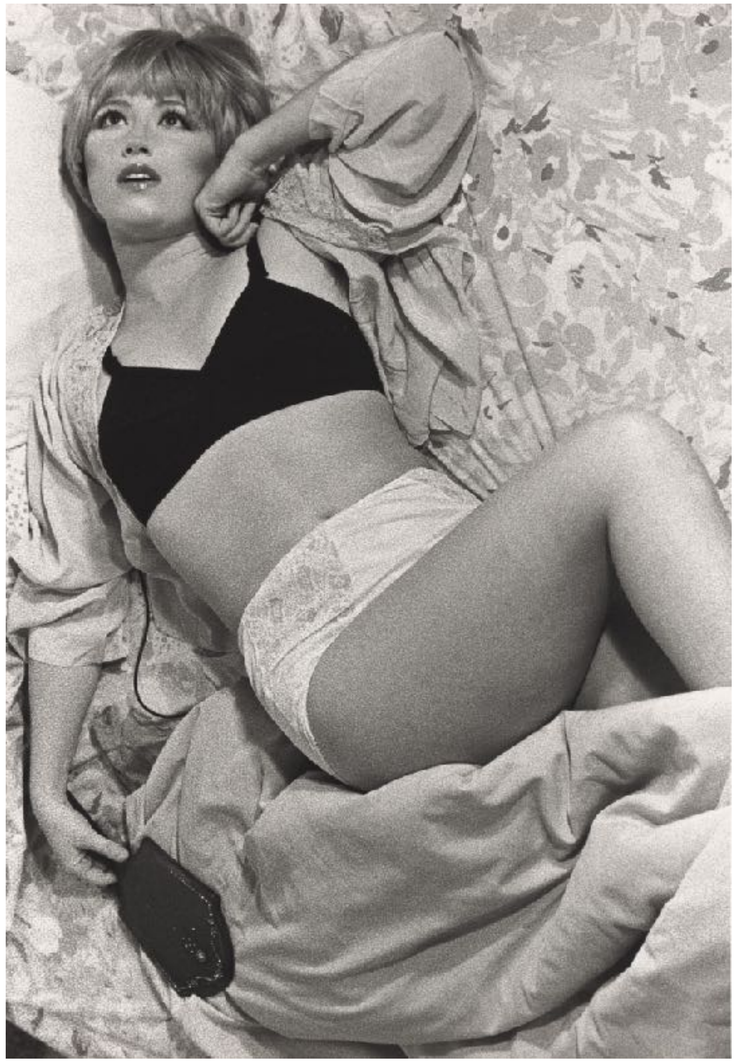
Untitled Film Still #2, (1977).

Cindy Sherman/ *Film Stills*/ 1977-1980

EXAMPLES



Untitled Film Still #3, (1977).



Untitled Film Still #6, (1977).

Cindy Sherman/ *Film Stills*/ 1977-1980

EXAMPLES



Untitled Film Still #7, (1978).



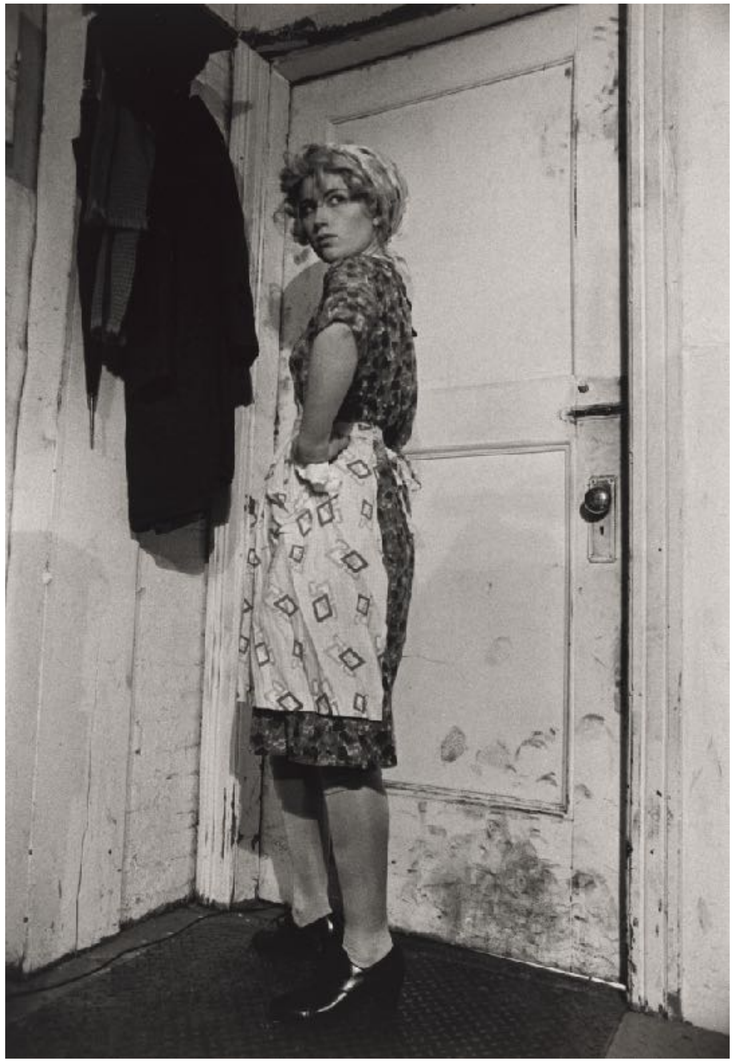
Untitled Film Still #8, (1978).

Cindy Sherman/ *Film Stills*/ 1977-1980

EXAMPLES



Untitled Film Still #32, (1979).



Untitled Film Still #35, (1979).

SHERRIE LEVINE

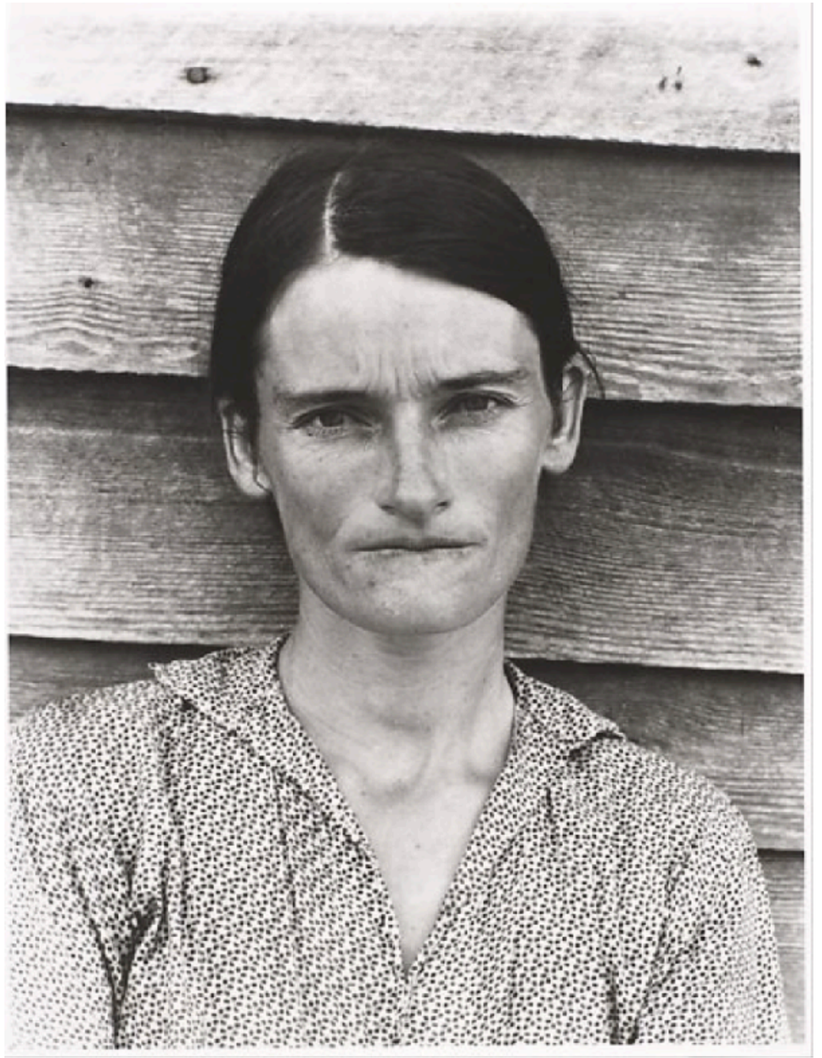


Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 2,* (1981).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 3,* (1981).

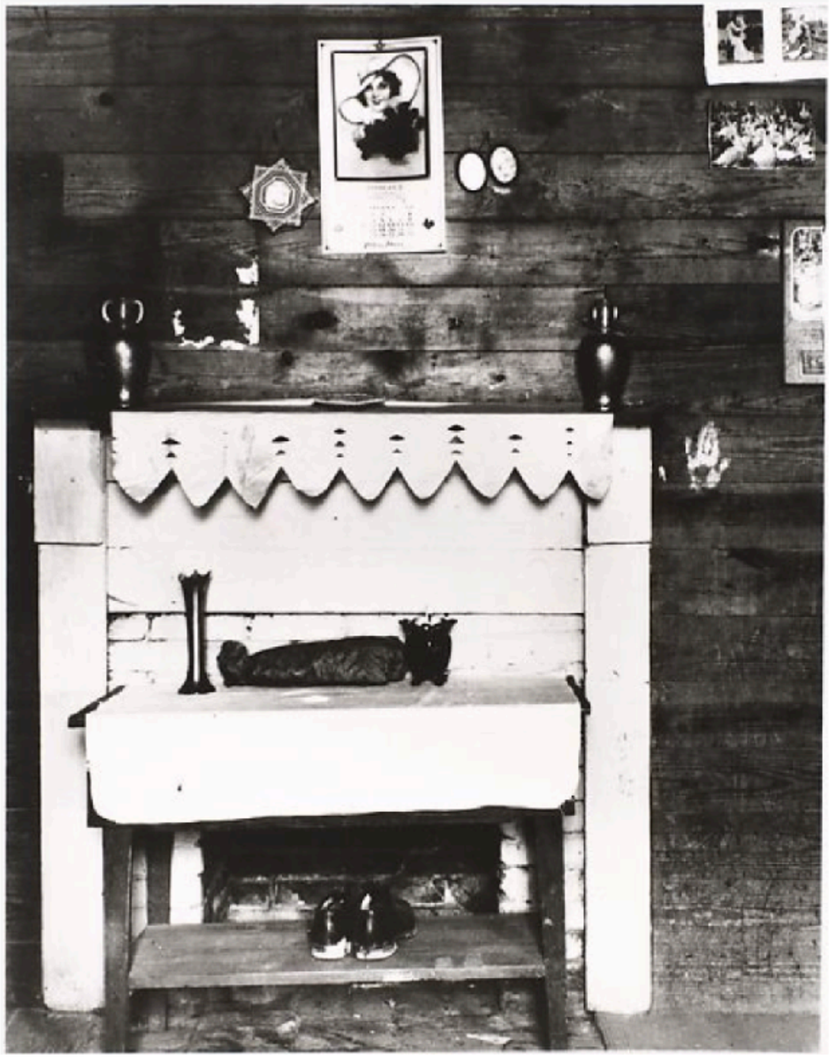


Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 4,* (1981).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 7,* (1981).



Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 8,* (1981).

SHERRIE LEVINE

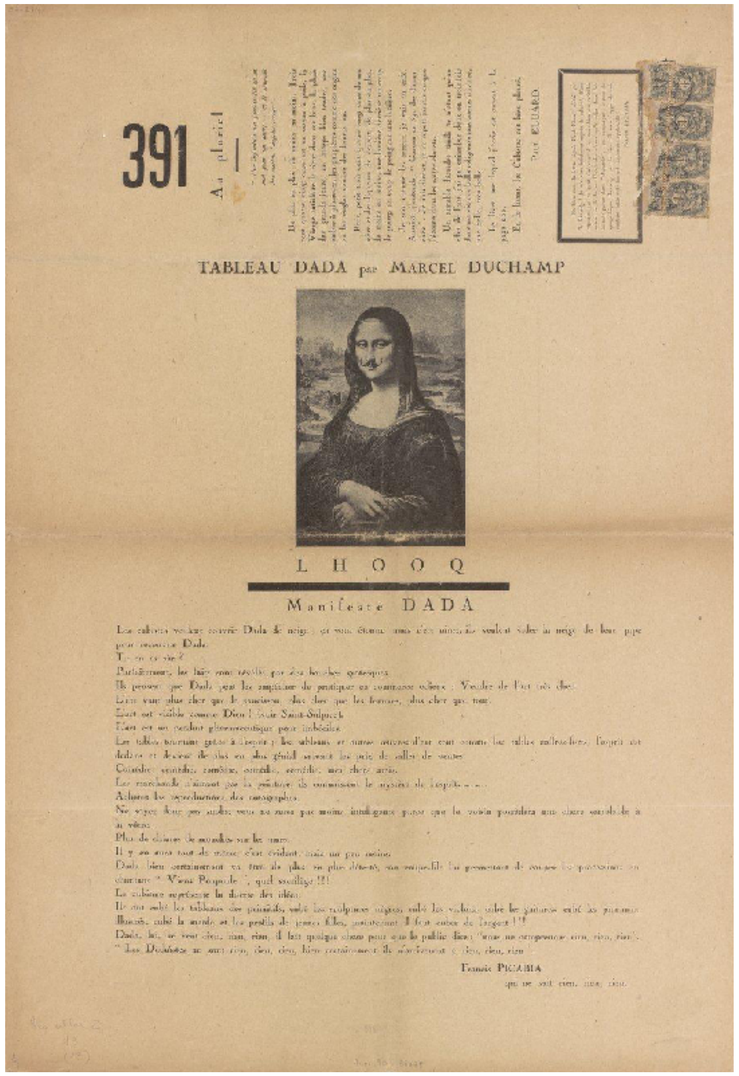


Sherrie Levine, *After Man Ray: Man and Woman,* (2005).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Sherrie Levine, *After Da Vinci,* (2013).



Marcel Duchamp, (1920).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain,* (1917).



Sherrie Levine, *Fountain (Buddha),* (1996).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Sherrie Levine, *African Masks After Walker Evans,* (2014).

SHERRIE LEVINE



Sherrie Levine, *African Masks After Walker Evans,* (2014).

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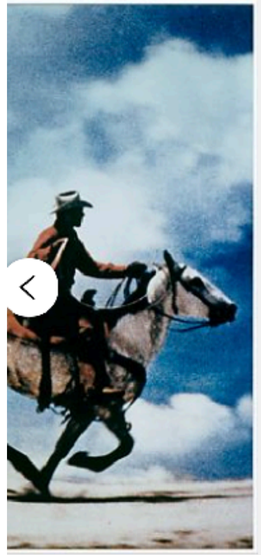
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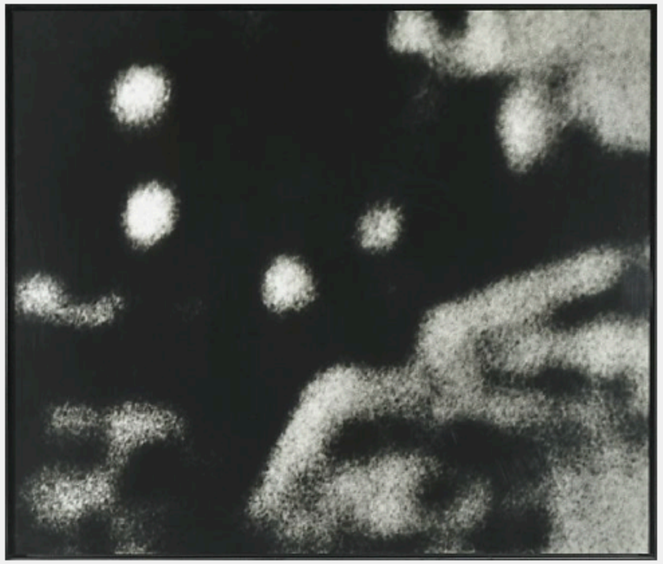
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The Pictures Generation





Perpetual Photo, #209 B

Allan McCollum



Walking Gun

Laurie Simmons

PICTURES GENERATION - FURTHER READING

By Douglas Eklund

Department of Photographs, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

October 2004

Young artists who came of age in the early 1970s were greeted by an America suffused with disillusionment from dashed hopes for political and social transformation to the continuation of the Vietnam War and the looming Watergate crisis. The utopian promise of the counterculture had devolved into a commercialized pastiche of rebellious stances prepackaged for consumption, and the national mood was one of catatonic shell-shock in response to wildly accelerated historical change, from the sexual revolution to race riots and assassinations. Similarly, the elder generation of artists seemed to have both dramatically expanded the field of what was possible in the field of art while staking out its every last claim, either by dematerializing the aesthetic object entirely into the realm of pure idea or linguistic proposition as in Conceptualism, or by rivaling the cataclysmic processes and sublime vistas of the natural world itself as did the so-called earthworks artists such as Robert Smithson, who died in 1973.

What these fledgling artists did have fully to themselves was the sea of images into which they were born—the media culture of movies and television, popular music, and magazines that to them constituted a sort of fifth element or a prevailing kind of weather. Their relationship to such material was productively schizophrenic:

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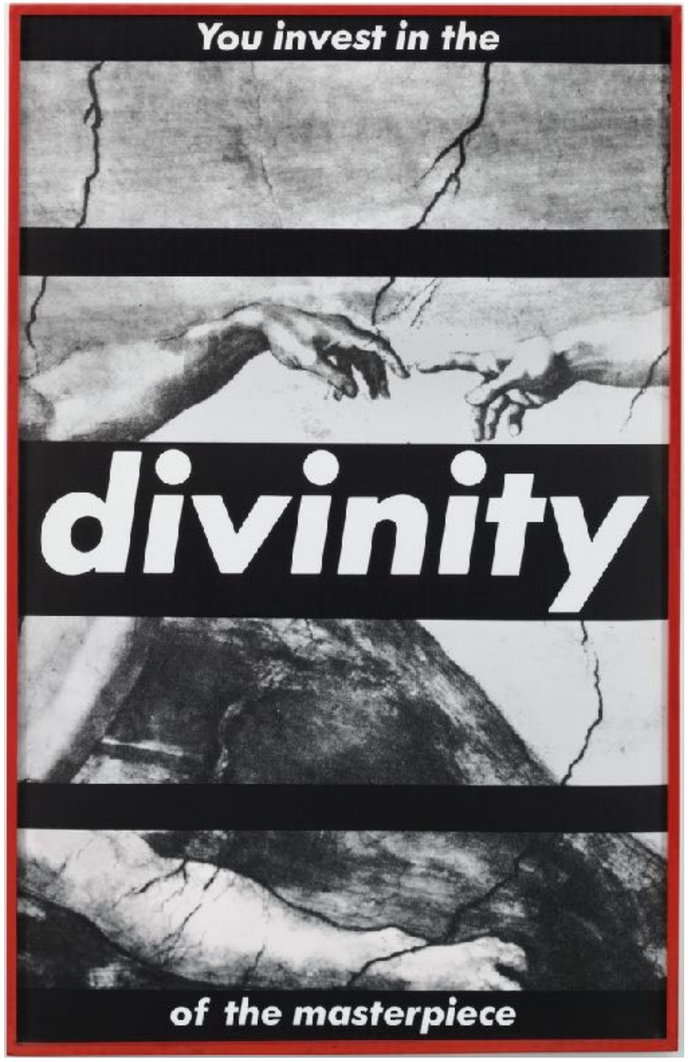
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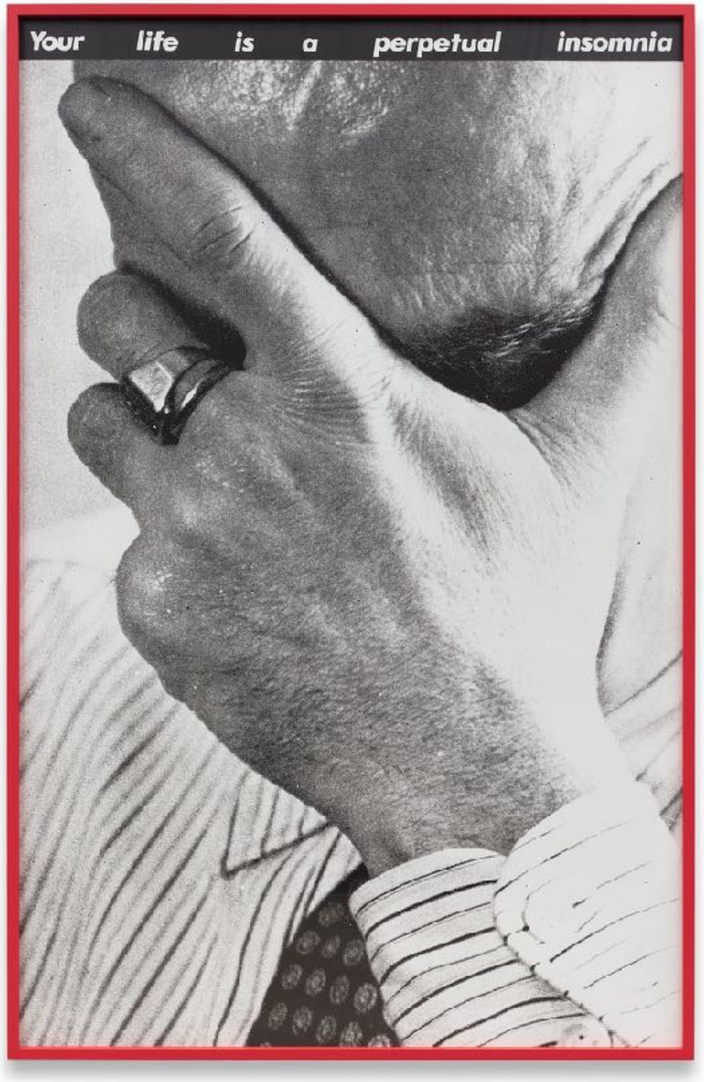
+ Artist or Maker

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BARBARA KRUGER

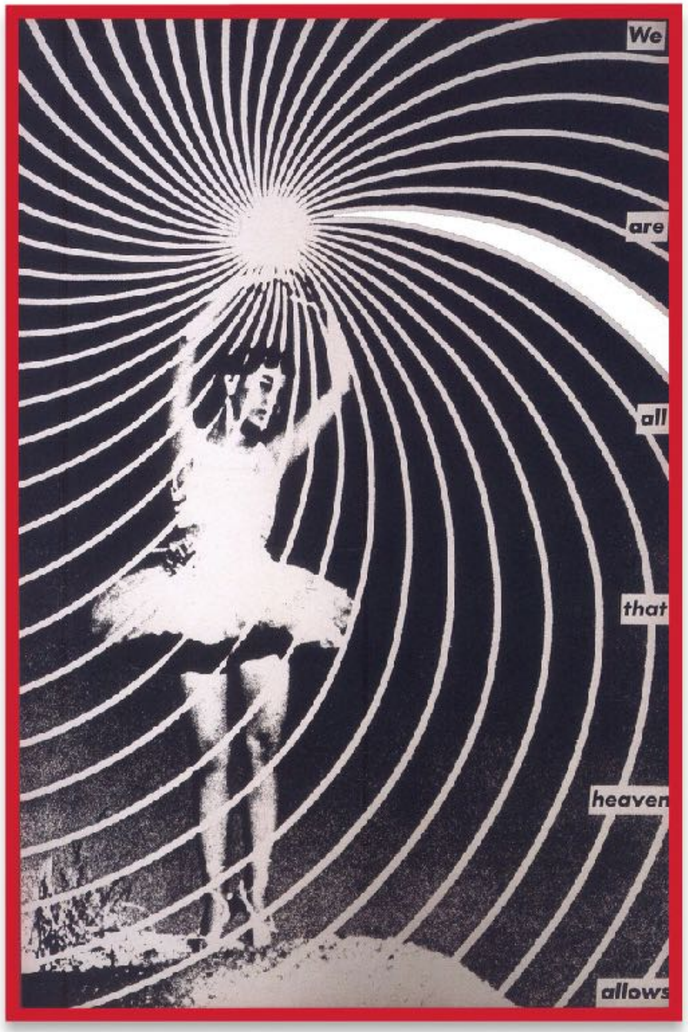


Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (You Invest in the Divinity of the Masterpiece),* (1982).



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your Life is a Perpetual Insomnia),* (1984).

BARBARA KRUGER

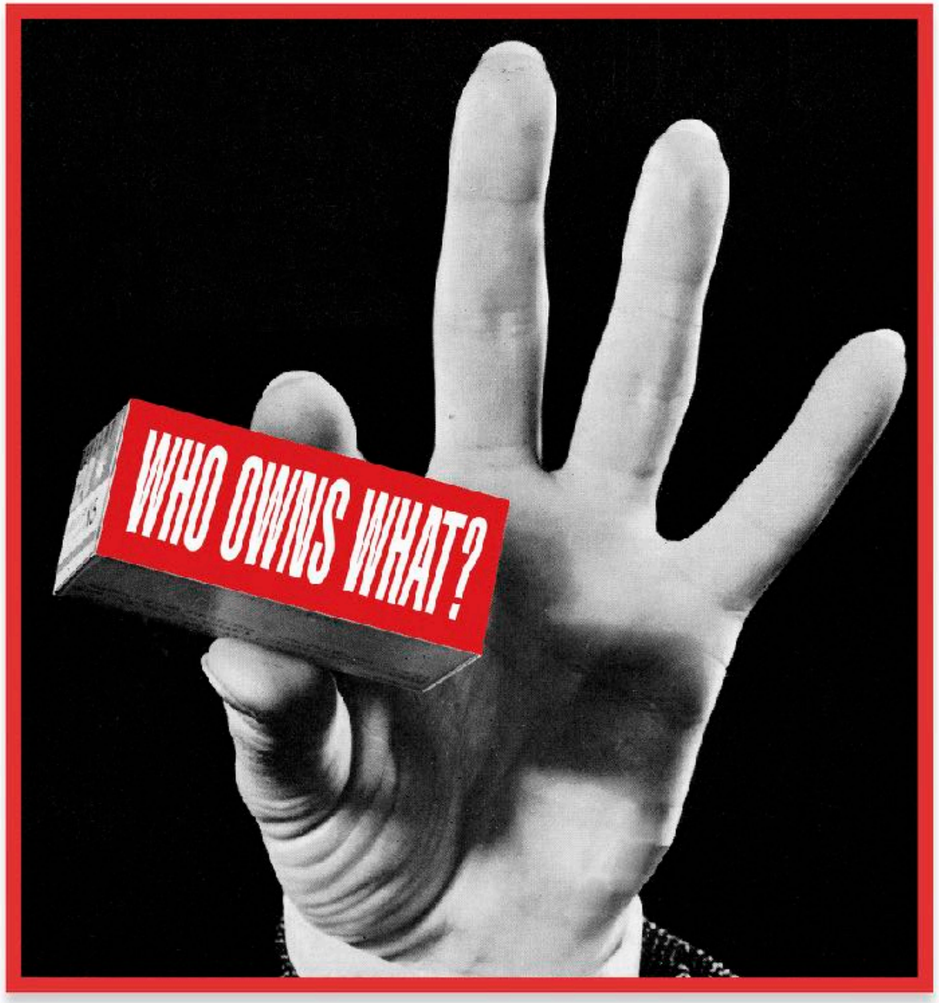


Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (We are All that Heaven Allows),* (1984).



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground),* (1989).

BARBARA KRUGER



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Who Owns What?),* (1991).

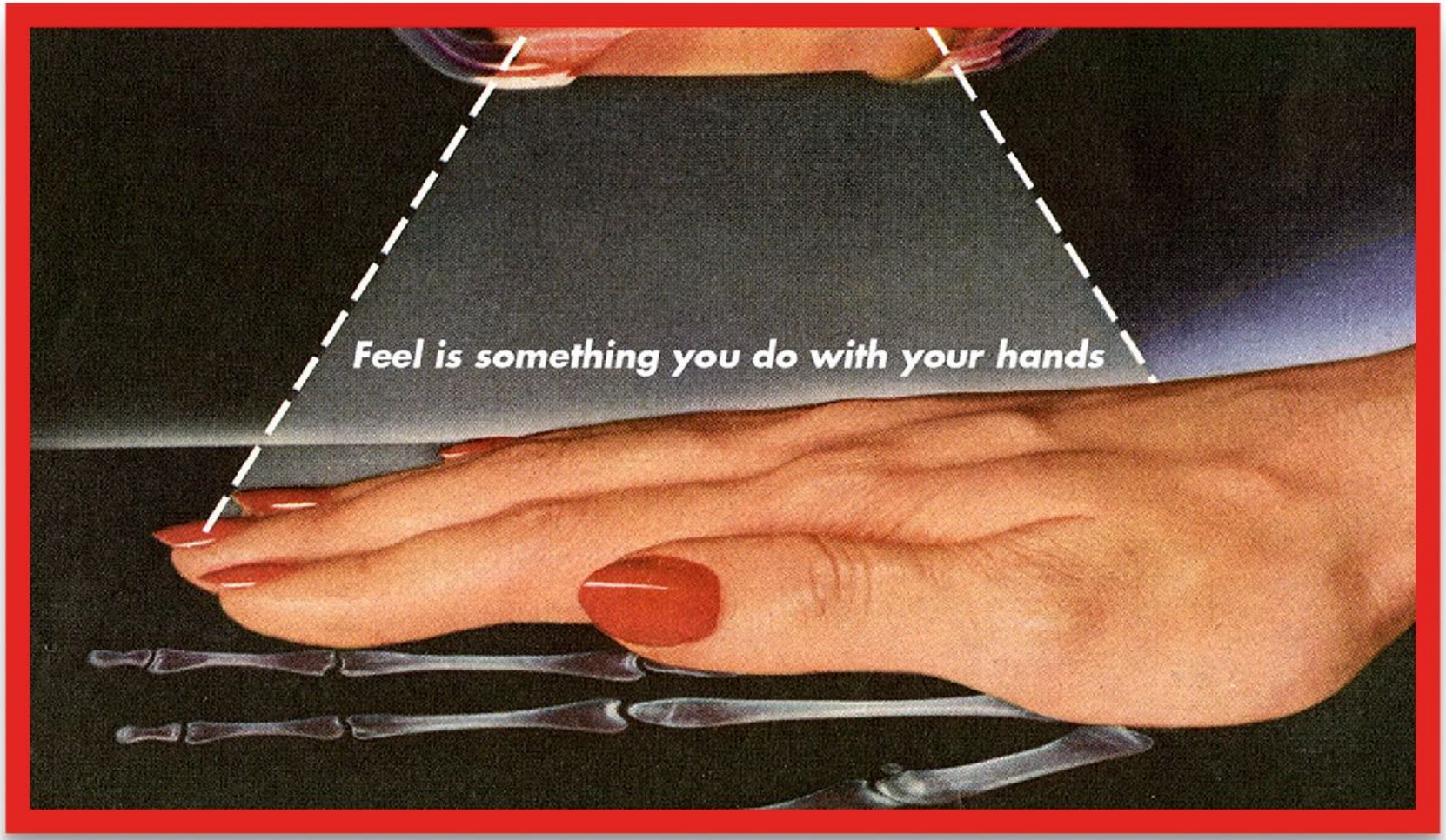
Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground),* (1989).

BARBARA KRUGER



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Truth),* (2013).

BARBARA KRUGER



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Feel Is Something that You Do with Your Hands),* (2020).

BARBARA KRUGER



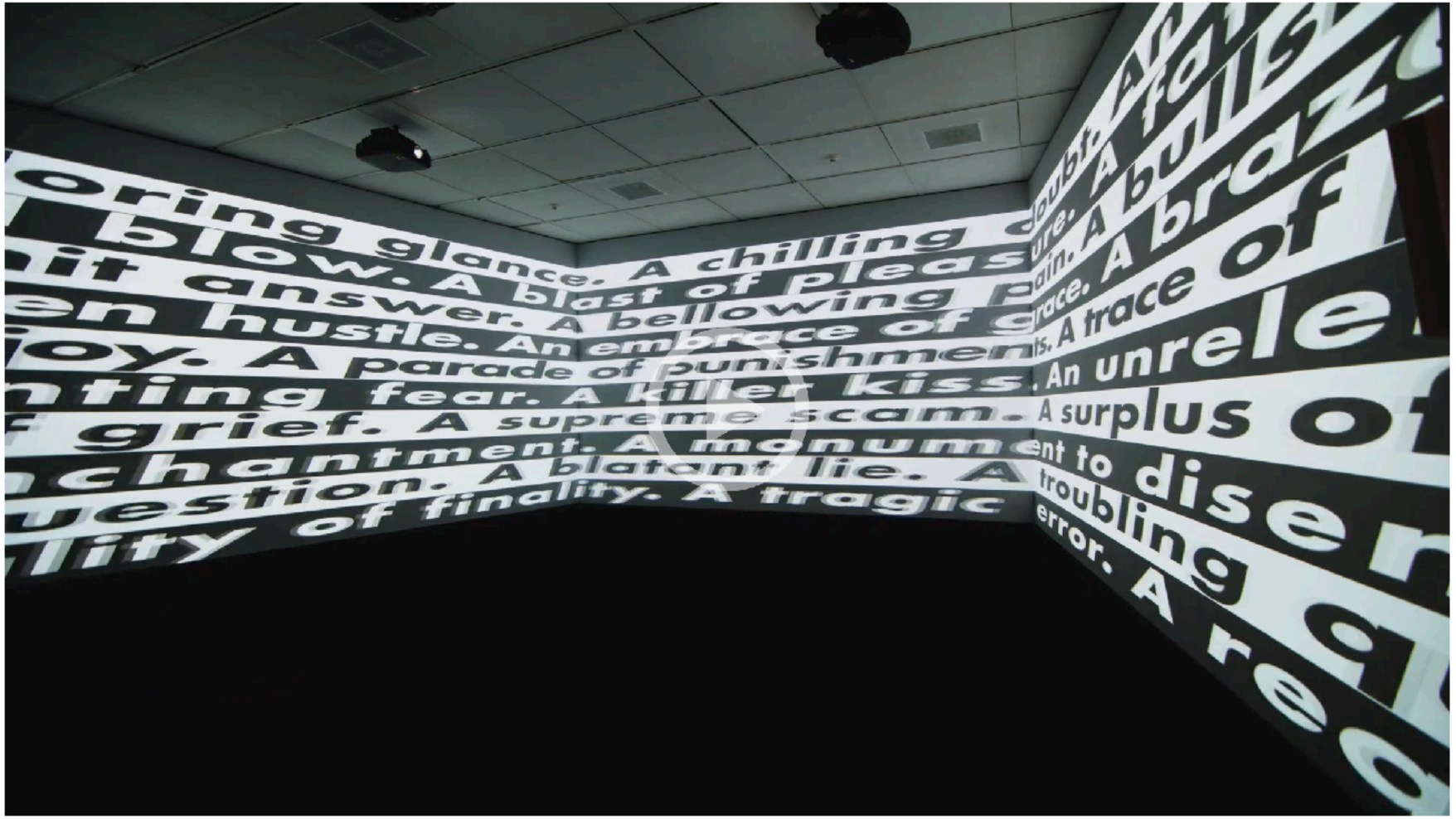
Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Feel Is Something that You Do with Your Hands),* (2020).

BARBARA KRUGER



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Never Perfect Enough),* (2020).

BARBARA KRUGER



Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (No Comment),* (2020).

ANDY WARHOL



Andy Warhol, *Soup Cans,* (1962).

ANDY WARHOL



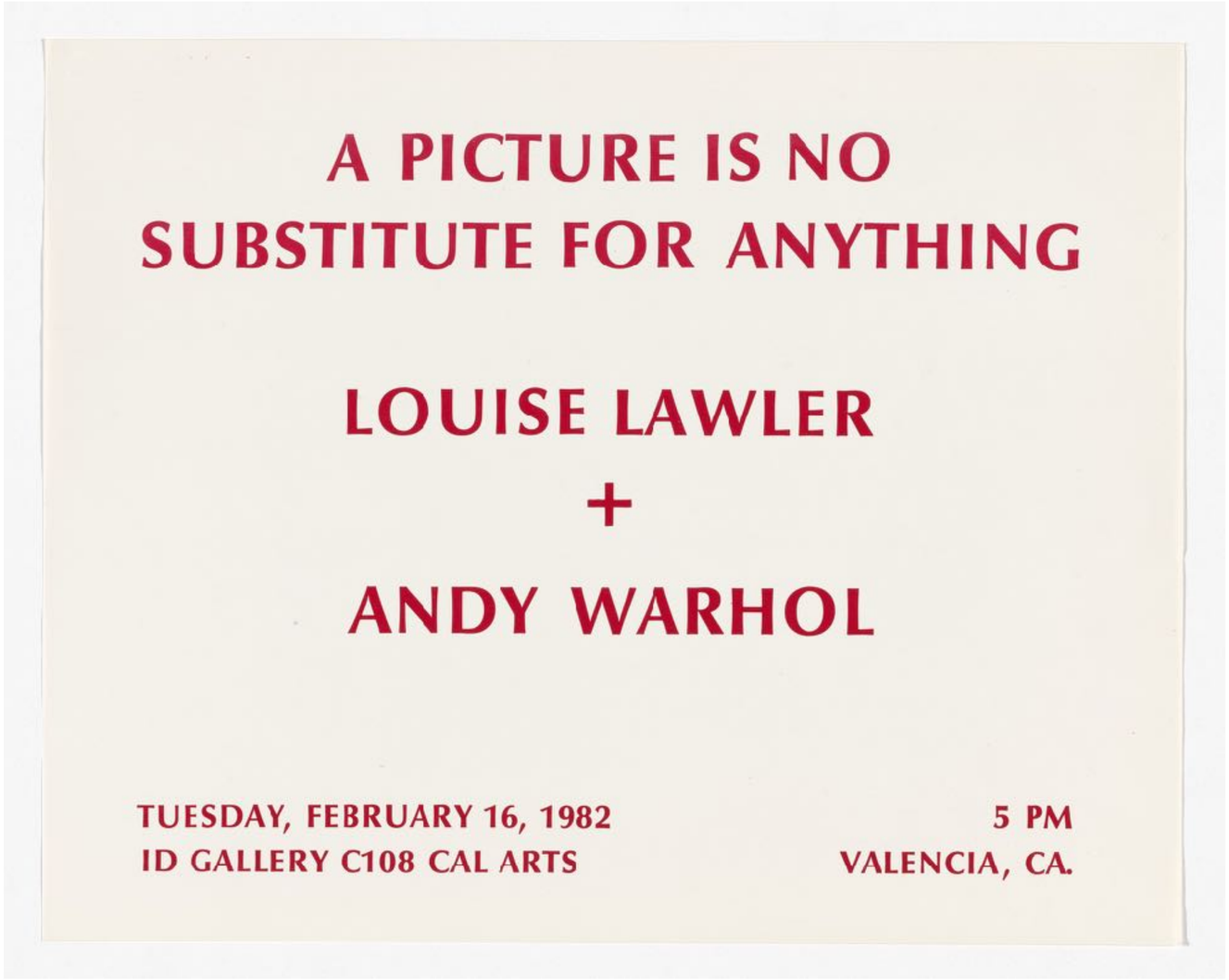
Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Tomato Juice Box,* (1964).

LOUISE LAWLER



Louise Lawler, *Why Pictures Now,* (1981).

LOUISE LAWLER



Louise Lawler, *Poster for A Picture Is No Substitute for Anything: Louise Lawler + Andy Warhol,* (1982).

LOUISE LAWLER



Louise Lawler, *Pollock and Tureen (traced),* (1984/2013).

LOUISE LAWLER



Louise Lawler, *Does Andy Warhol Make You Cry?,* (1988).

LAURIE SIMMONS



Laurie Simmons, *1st Bathroom/Woman Standing, from the series Interiors,* (1978).

LAURIE SIMMONS



Laurie Simmons, *Woman Opening Refrigerator,* (1979).

LAURIE SIMMONS

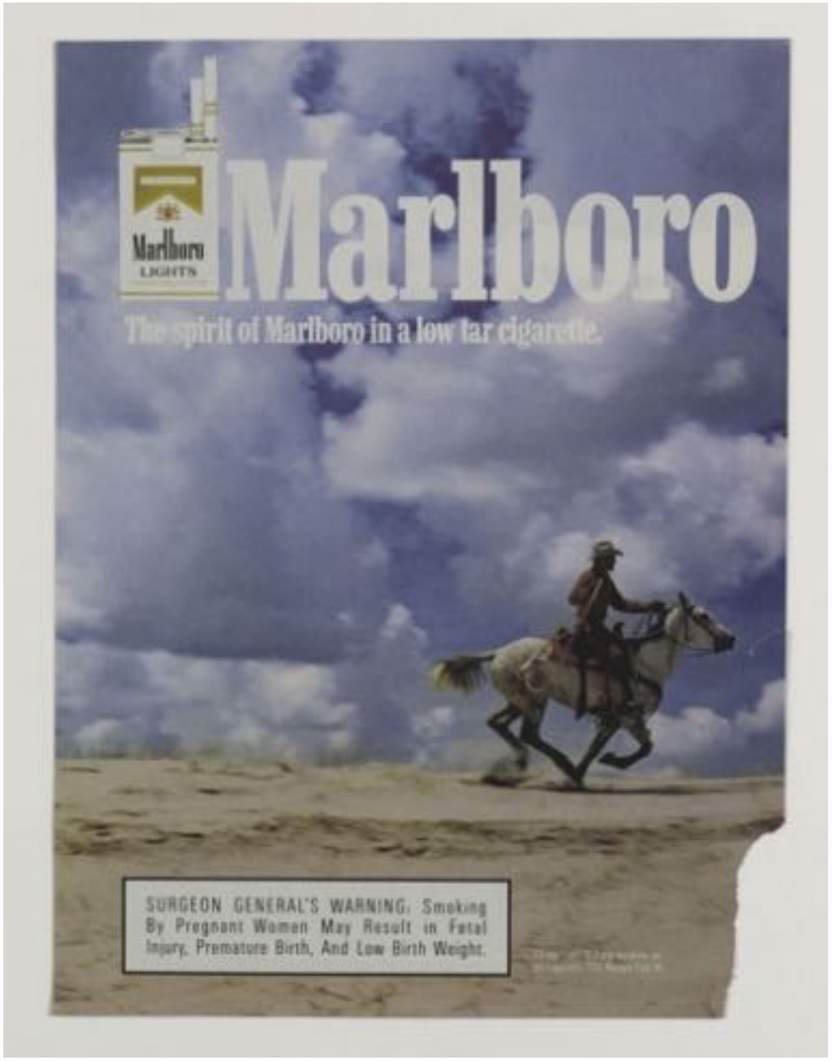


Laurie Simmons, *Three Red Petit-Fours,* (1990).

RICHARD PRINCE



Richard Prince, *Untitled (Cowboy),* (1989).



Magazine Ad.

ACTIVITY

Activity - 10min.

-What words come to mind when you view this image? Discuss the qualities associated with this photograph that might be attractive to a consumer.

-In its original form Prince’s image was part of a magazine ad that also included a slogan and picture of a pack of Marlboro cigarettes. How does the impact of the image change after it is taken from a magazine page, cropped, enlarged, framed, and placed on the gallery or museum wall? Discuss.

-This Marlboro advertising campaign was one of the most successful in history. What attributes do you think contributed to this success? What qualities associated with cowboys would be attractive to an advertiser? How has Prince changed the message?

-The photos we find in print ads are intended to help us not only identify the product but also identify with the target audience who will buy and use it. Who do you think would be the intended audience for this ad? How can you tell?

RICHARD PRINCE - RELATED IDEAS

- Cowboy as a ‘myth’ and the mythic American West. How does it relate to ‘myth’ as proposed by Roland Barthes?

- Archetype through mass media, advertising, art. What is still an appealing figure?

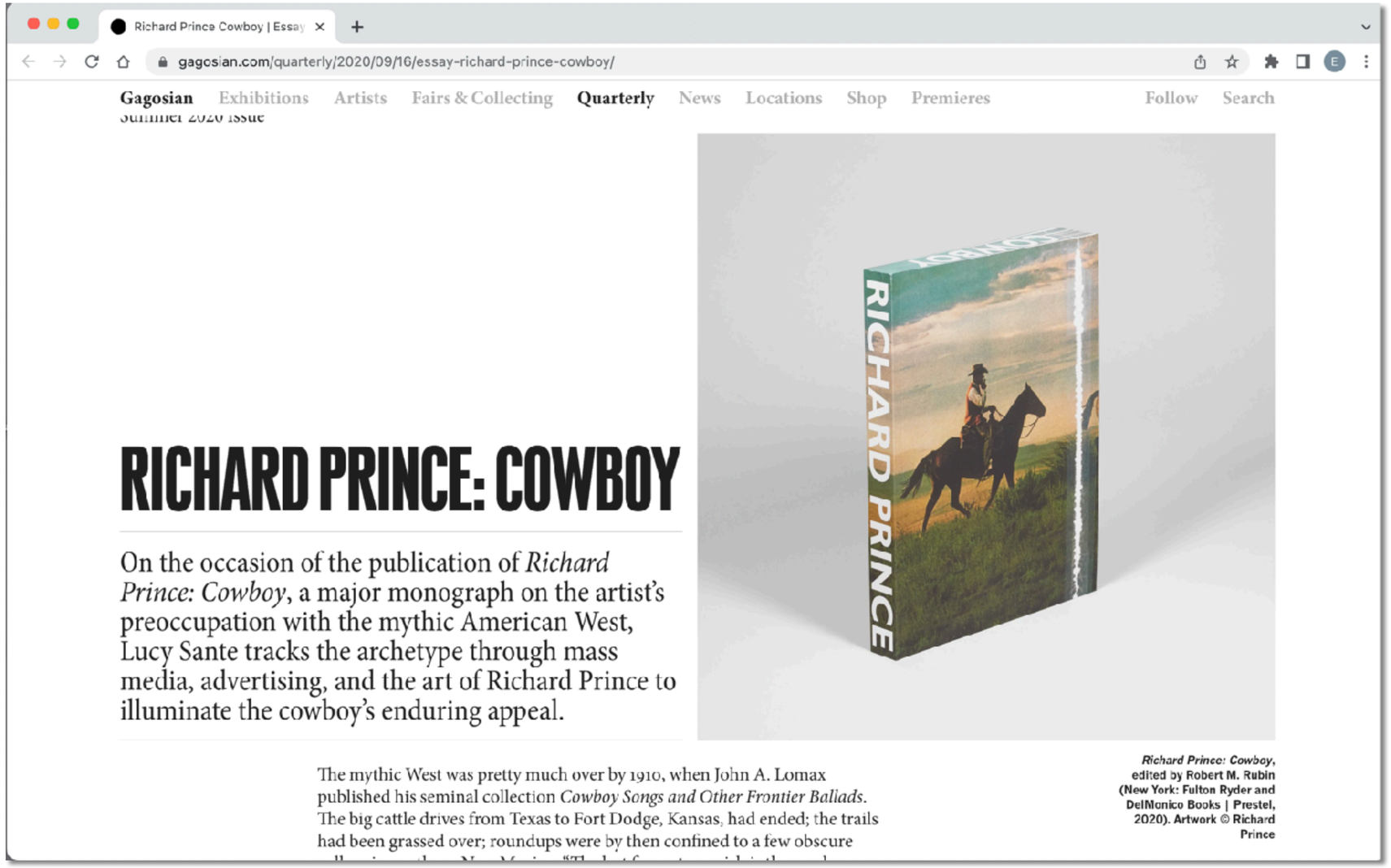
- Constructed figure, everything in it seems to be ‘natural’ and related to ideas such as wilderness and being free in nature. However it is a choreographic construction where everything the landscape, the weather, the cowboy outfit and horse are measured and have a specific role.

- Prince is using the cowboy because it is part of a ‘shared culture’ and it has a series of connoted messages. It becomes an aspiration, a dream. What are the associations we make with that figure?

- He integrates a magazine ‘ad’ within a gallery context bringing together high and low culture. Similarly to what Quentin Tarantino does with *Pulp Fiction* from 1991 as we have seen in the previous session.

- Have you considered how the cowboy relates as well to the vast size and weather conditions of the US in comparison to the UK as an island?

RICHARD PRINCE



COWBOY - REFERENCES - CINEMA

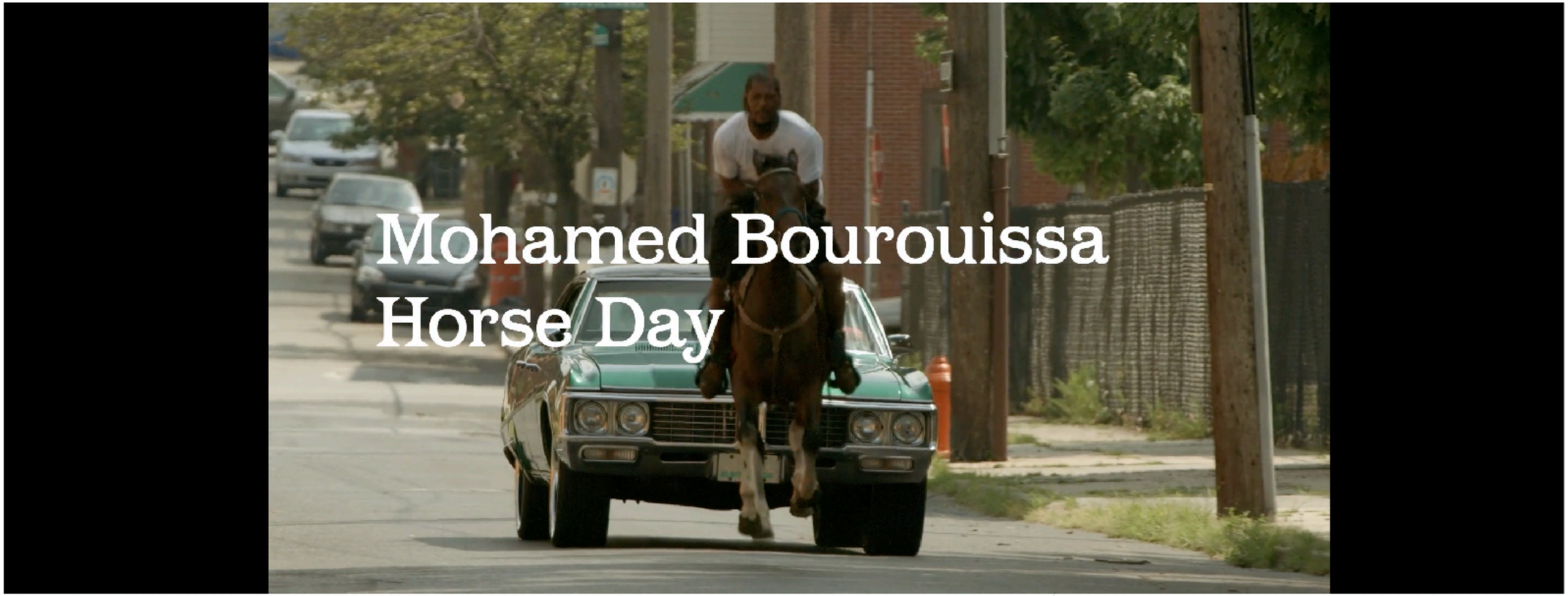


John Ford, *The Searchers,* (1956).

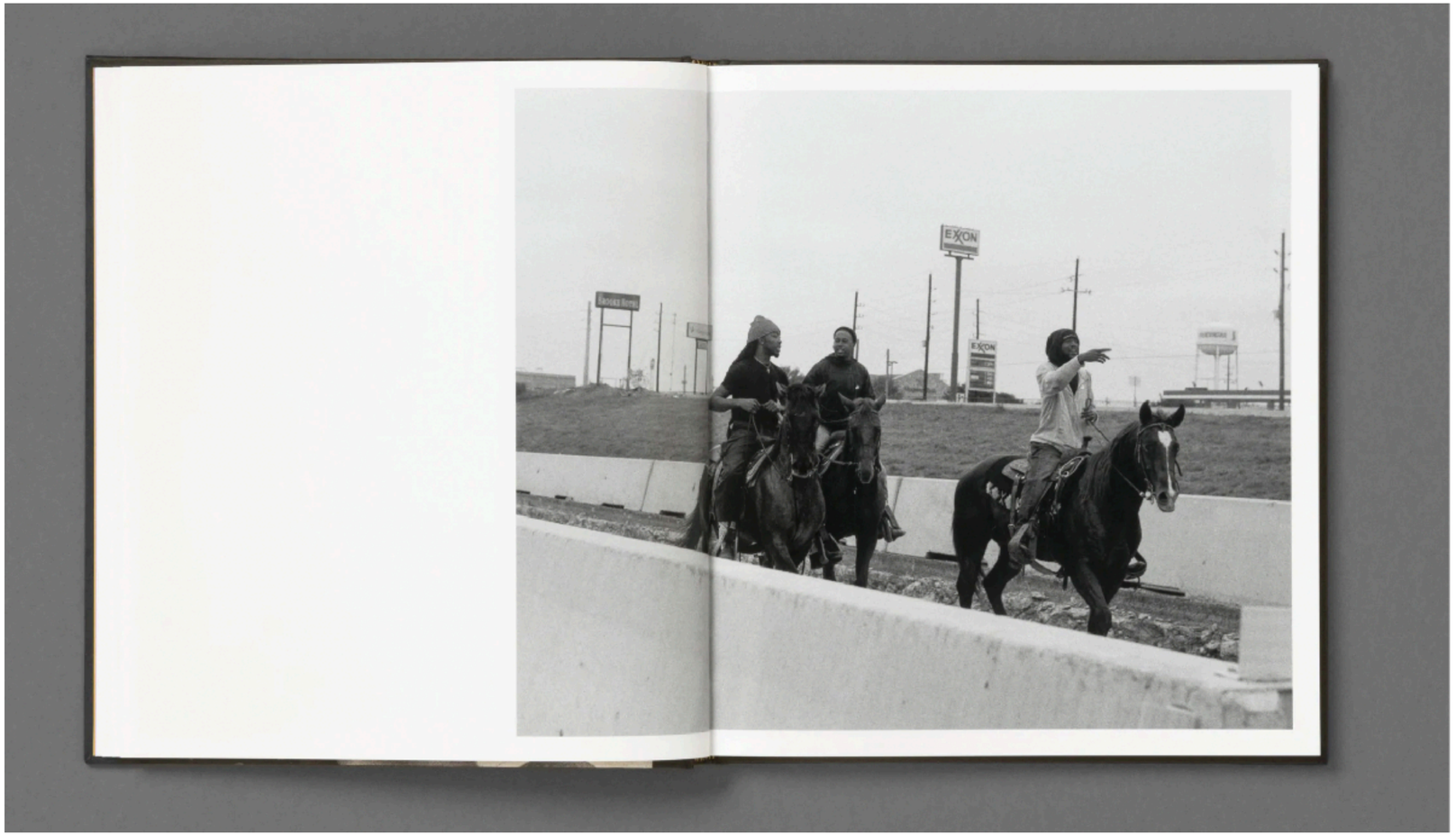


Actor John Wayne in *The Searchers,* (1956).

COWBOY - REFERENCES - CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES



COWBOY - REFERENCES -CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES



Rahim Fortune, *I Can't Stand to See You Cry,* (2021).

COWBOY - REFERENCES - SHERIFF WOODY PRIDE - TOY STORY



John Lasseter, *Toy Story,* (1995).

COWBOY - REFERENCES - LIL NAS X



#LilNasX #OldTownRoad #BillyRayCyrus

Lil Nas X - Old Town Road (Official Video) ft. Billy Ray Cyrus

Lil Nas X, *Old Town Road*, (2019).

COWBOY - REFERENCES - LIL NAS X



Lil Nas X at the 62nd Annual Grammy Award, (2020).

COWBOY - REFERENCES - BAD BUNNY



Bad Bunny, *Nadie sabe lo que va a pasar mañana*, (2023).

POSTMODERNISM - 80S - COMMODITIES



Brand New: Art and Commodity in the 1980s

HAIM STEINBACH



Haim Steinbach, *Supremely Black,* (1985).

HAIM STEINBACH



Haim Steinbach, *Untitled (cone, bear, kong),* (2014).

JEFF KOONS



Jeff Koons, *Equilibrium,* (1985).



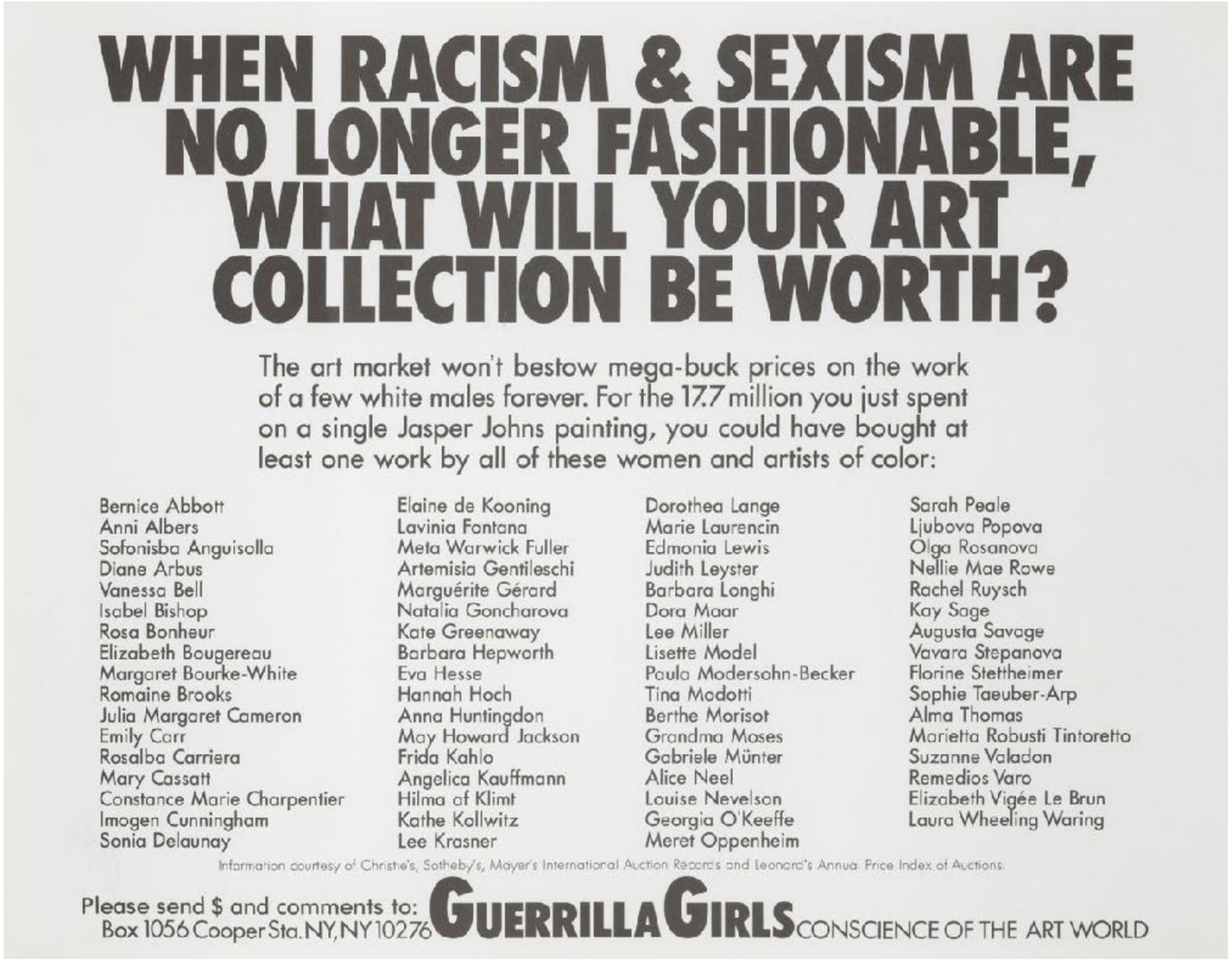
Jeff Koons, *New Hoover Convertibles, Green, Red, Brown, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Displaced Doubledecker,* (1981-1987).

GUERRILLA GIRLS



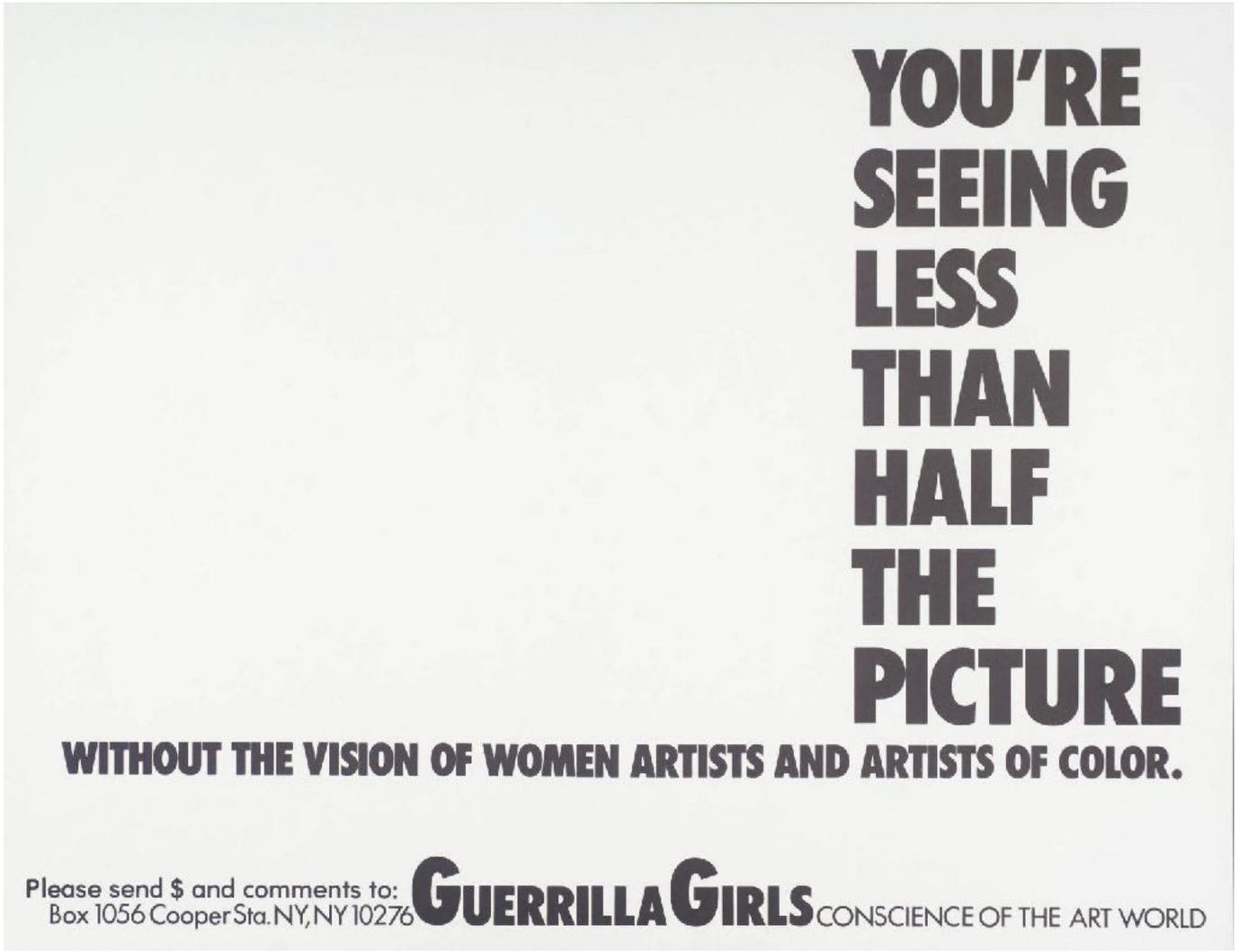
Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?,* (1989).

GUERRILLA GIRLS



Guerrilla Girls, *When Racism And Sexism Are No Longer Fashionable, How Much Will Your Art Collection Be Worth?,* (1989).

GUERRILLA GIRLS



Guerrilla Girls, *You're Seeing Less Than Half The Picture,* (1989).

GUERRILLA GIRLS



Guerrilla Girls, *Guerrilla Girls' Identities Exposed!,* (1990).

VICTOR BURGIN



Victor Burgin, *Gradiva* (1982).



Victor Burgin, *InGrenoble* (1981).

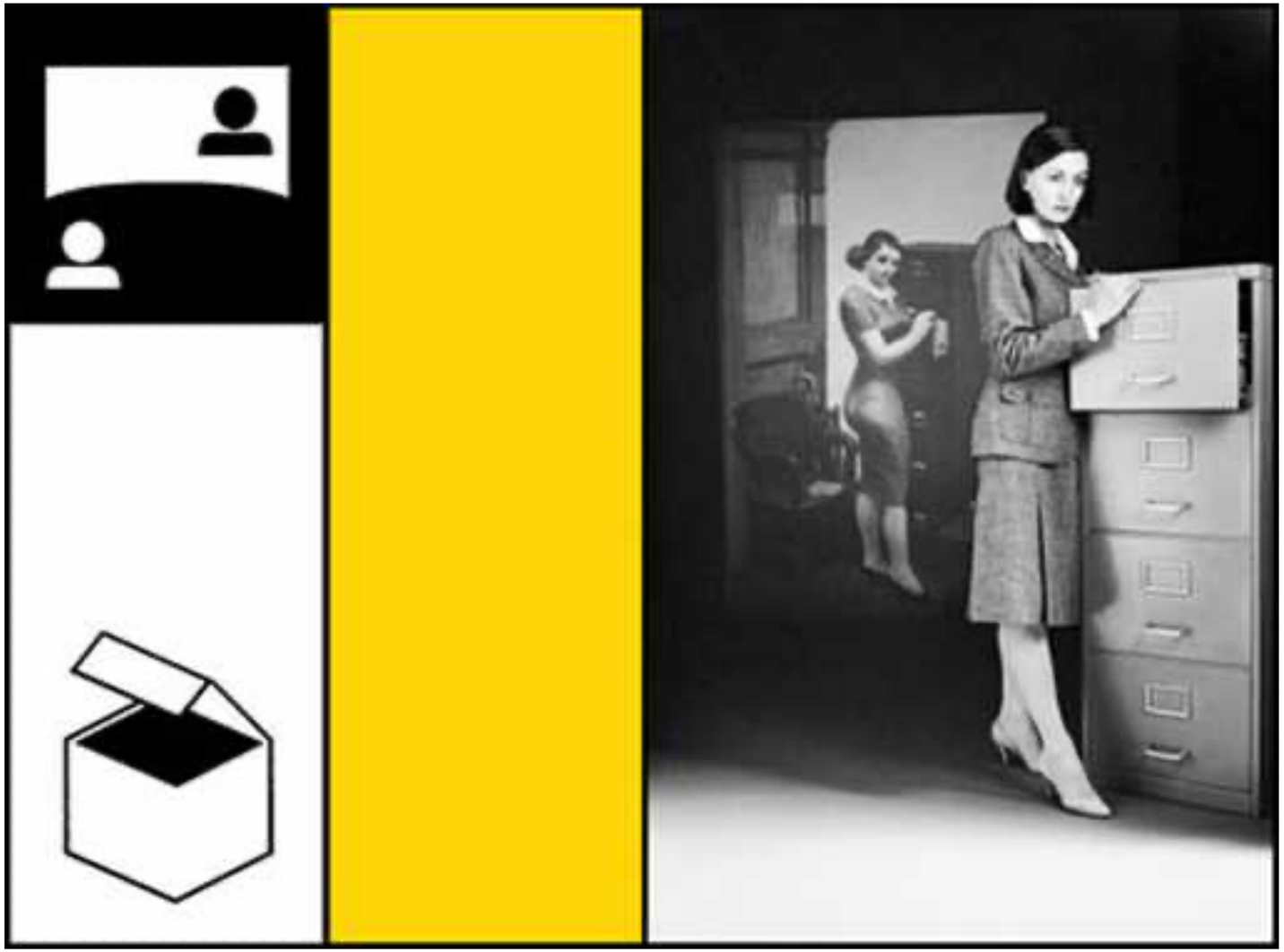
VICTOR BURGIN



SILENT AND ALL-ENCOMPASSING WOODS WHICH PRESS AGAINST THE WINDOW-PANES

Victor Burgin, *Hôtel Latône* (1982).

VICTOR BURGIN



Victor Burgin, *Section from Office at Night* (1986).

KAREN KNORR



A House in Town brings much
Splendour and Comfort to a Gentleman
who must spend there the time
required for the administration
of State Affairs as well as
Patrimony and Property.



There are hardly any
pink bits left
Before the War
you just had to look
at the map.
There were marvellous
pink bits all over
India, Africa, the Isles
one fourth of the world
was pink
English.

SUMMARY

Some of the ideas that we discussed in our previous session:

- **Postmodernism** and its relation to **semiotics**.

- Key ideas and strategies in relation to **postmodernism**.
  For example, we considered what it was called ‘the crisis of the real’ and the subsequent disbelief in politics. A questioning of ‘big narratives’ and an ‘end of history’. Feminism positions in relation to art and the lack of a diversity of voices.

- Some of the main strategies used in **postmodernism** include pastiche, recycling, appropriation, ready-made, de-contextualisation and eclecticism.

- The centrality of images in the questioning of narratives within **postmodernism**.
  We see an example with the ‘Pictures Generation’ and their understanding of visual representations of any form as ‘pictures’ instead of as paintings or photographs.

NEXT SESSION

Session 9.
Representing Bodies and the Representation of Violence.

THANK YOU

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