

Individual Practice

Y1

Photojournalism & Documentary
Photography

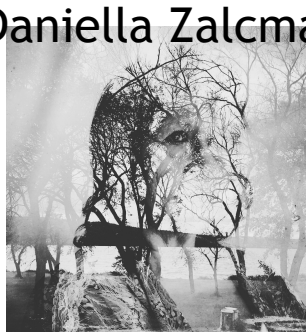
Task

- What is documentary photography?
- What is photojournalism?
- When we look at an image, can we tell if it is a documentary image or photojournalistic image?
- In small groups consider the images in front of you. Discuss in your groups the characteristics that define an image in either genre.



Ed Kashi

Daniella Zalcman



Zanele Muholi

Sebastao Salgado



Edward Burtynsky



Robert Capa

Alex Webb

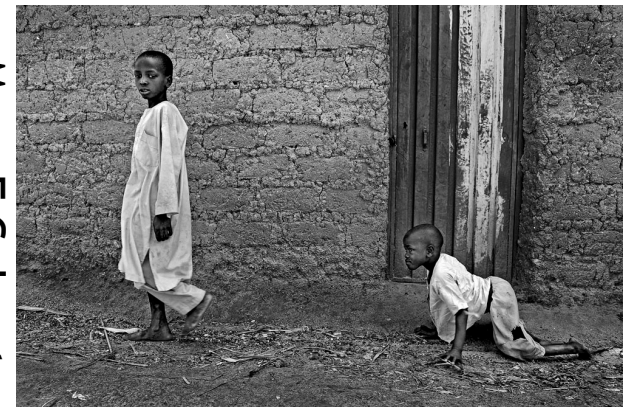


Christina De Middel



Walker Evans

Mary F Calvert



“Documentary photography is a very broad discipline within photography that on one end touches photojournalism and this idea of the photograph as evidence and witness, but now really extends to the creative arts.”

Ed Kashi, documentary photographer and member of the VII photo agency

“The story deals with the past and that invokes memory and for me, a straight series of portraits wasn’t going to be enough to tell the story. Double exposure adds an extra layer of storytelling” says Zalcman.

“Is my double exposure work reportage? Maybe not. Is it journalism? I think so. More and more people are agreeing with me and are expanding the definition of reportage. Maybe that isn’t photojournalism...but it’s storytelling, and it’s incredibly powerful.

“Why does photography have to be either documentary or an art piece?”

“Why do we feel the need to classify? And why is one better than the other?”

Cristina De Middel

What is Documentary?

There are two kinds of documents, or two tendencies within the documentary genre.

The first, the more common, gives information.

The second informs the emotions. This is how documentary—of both kinds—works. It defies comment; it imposes its meaning.

The heart of documentary is not form or style or medium, **but always content.**

- all good photojournalists are documentarians, but not all documentary photography is photojournalism.
- a covenant of truth exists between the photojournalist and the viewer that says, “what you see in this frame is as it was.”

“what you see in this frame is as it was.”

Does this acknowledge the changing media landscape, post truth? How we receive the news? What about fake news ?

If documentary still bears the responsibility of truth, how do we reconcile that with our understanding that the photograph is a representation, not a fact, and even if it were a fact, it is never the truth, only a piece of truth?