

Flash Art

FOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY

CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY (PART TWO)

"Focus Photography" concludes *Flash Art's* two-part series examining the state of photography today.

In exploring the medium of photography artists have been taking advantage of continuous dialogues and exchanges with other media: photography often strays into domains such as painting, architecture, video, and performance. In addition to being an end in its own right and an invaluable vehicle for developing work, photography can also serve to document and record fundamental transitions in an artist's practice.

In this edition, *Flash Art* presents 45 contemporary artists currently working with photography. Together they give an indication of the many diverse forms of

Serraiongue both work in the area of documentary photography. Hanayo creates and explores new fantasy worlds made of memories and colors, while it is Thiel and Alexander Apóstol. And the special relationship between contemporary art and fashion is here represented by the work of Matthias Vriens.

In this issue Michael Cohen interviews Miguel Calderón; Michele Robecchi dialogues with Shirana Shahbazi; Julia Peyton Jones talks with Mario Testino; Craig Garrett analyzes photography's subjective objectivity; and Priya Bhatnagar introduces us to the work of Stuart Hawkins. (Research by *Lavinia Garulli and Valentina Sansone*)

ALEXANDER APÓSTOL

Venezuela, 1969.
Lives and works in Madrid and Caracas.
Alexander Apóstol's recent body of work deals with the collapse of modernist utopias in the so-called third world. He has portrayed the emblematic architecture of Caracas of the '50s and the '70s, witness to an unprecedented and vertiginous growth, as well as its dystopian by-products, the shanties, which seem now to be a dominating part of the urban landscape. Digital manipulation of photography is the vehicle for the construction of his allegories of failed progress and utopia. Apóstol presents us with the present ruins of modernity, which he polishes and ornaments in an attempt to recall the original project that gave birth to this architecture and its utopian aspirations. (Julietta González)

Residente Pulido, Royal Copenhagen, 2001.
Digital photograph. 200 x 150 cm.



ZARINA BHIMJI

Mbarara (Uganda), 1963.
Lives and works in London and Berlin.
Zarina Bhimji has created a web of representation that reconstructs time and space for our consciousness, conjuring up different modes of experience, multiple systems of meaning, cultural metaphors and personal expeditions, both real and imaginary, emotionally saturated with and complicated by their original references. These representations are always fragments, pieces of a labyrinth of displacement. (Octavio Zaya, from Documenta 11, Kassel 2002)

Represented by: Talwar, New York.

Howling like dogs, L swallowed solid air, 1998-2003.
Transparency in lightbox. 130 x 170 x 12.5 cm.



SERGEY BRATKOV

Kharkiv (Ukraine), 1960.
Lives and works in Kharkiv.
Sergey Bratkov states the actual, new, post-ideological meaning of subjectivity. While there were obligatory rites for objective acts in the Soviet era and an alternative world of subjectivity existed beside it, today the world of subjectivity and the world of clichéd images become identical inside and outside. (Viktor Misiarso)

Represented by: LipanjePuntin, Trieste (Italy).

Army Girls II (detail), 2000.
C-print on aluminum. 100 x 70 cm.
Courtesy LipanjePuntin, Trieste.



ALLORA & CALZADILLA

Jennifer Allora (Pennsylvania, 1974), Guillermo Calzadilla (Havana, 1973). They live and work in Cambridge (MA) and Guaynabo (Puerto Rico).
"This series shows various people watching the sunset at the ocean. In our photographs, we altered the reflection of light on the ocean with the help of a computer program so that it leads to the person in the photo. We use this image as a poetic element to say that it is impossible to know the inner reality of other people. One can only put oneself in their place with the power of imagination, yet even that is hardly possible as the social, political, economic, and sexual disposition of each individual is completely different." (Allora & Calzadilla)

Represented by: Carmen Rita Pérez Arte Actual, Santo Domingo.

Untitled, 2000 ("Seeing otherwise" series).
Installed near the harbor, Old Havana.
Manipulated photograph, VHS print. 274 x 366 cm.



ANUR

Sarajevo, 1971. Lives and works in Sarajevo.
"Human Condition" is made up of intuitions and fragments from my life. It is a diary in which I use a visual dictionary instead of words.
"Human Condition" is the title of a poster series born from my adventures during the years of the Bosnia war and during my life as a refugee in Milan. They were born from a need, from my personal need to push away dissatisfactions and to put into practice my suffering. I made some collages with copies resuming my thoughts and presenting conclusions regarding social phenomena of that period. (Piacenta Arte press release, Piacenza 2002)

Untitled, 2001 (series). C-print.
Courtesy Piacenta Arte, Piacenza.



DARREN ALMOND

Wigan (England), 1971.
Lives and works in London.
"I have [guides] since I am going to be taking photos in crazy temperatures. I am using these guides as a logistic tool. I have no idea what I will get as far as images go. I imagine that looking into the horizon of a pole at night will produce a total white out. But it's a nice point to stop them on."
(Interview by John Slaye, Flash Art #222)

Represented by: White Cube, London; Matthew Marks, New York; Kerstin Engholm, Vienna; Max Hetzler, Berlin.



GERARD BYRNE

Dublin, 1969. Lives and works in Dublin.
Gerard Byrne's description of his photographs as "images in parenthesis" highlights how crucial to their meaning are such putatively ancillary activities as the titling of individual images and their arrangement in suggestive concatenations. By emphasizing the cultural matrix within which these images are embedded Byrne reminds us that any given photograph occludes as much it reveals.
(Caoimhin Mac Giolla Leith, from 8th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul 2003).

Represented by: Green On Red, Dublin.
"It is comparatively easy to set up a basic model for epic theatre. For practical experiments I usually picked as my example of completely simple, 'natural' epic theatre an incident such as can be seen on any street corner: an eye witness demonstrating to a collection of people how a traffic accident took place." Bertolt Brecht, "The Street scene," Willets, London 1964.
In the News, (series) 2002. C-print. 63 x 53 cm framed.



PHIL COLLINS

Runcorn (England), 1970.
Lives and works in Belfast.
"The violence exacted on the body, while highly particularized, is also able to eloquently hint at other moments of invasion, other scars. The body too can speak about a building — and about completion, absence, or beauty. And it also can speak about nothing more than decoration. In Los Angeles, I took to photographing people who walked. And the people who walked were the disenfranchised. So a kind of negative image of the consumer society is played out. And there is then an evident, supreme and controlled violence exacted by the social fabric there as anywhere."
(Interview by Michèle Robecchi and Massimiliano Gioni, Flash Art #222)

Represented by: Maccaroni Inc., New York; Kerlin, Dublin.



MARTA DESKUR

Krakow, 1962. Lives and works in Krakow.
Men and their image in relation to modernity, identity, spirituality, and their roles in the social group are the subjects that Marja Deskur deals with in her artistic work. While she usually works with photography and video, these are very often treated as raw material for her final creation. Deskur takes a critical approach towards all stereotypes of the family and tries to reach as deep into the question of the relationship between the sexes; by doing so she encourages everyone to consider family from a critical perspective.

(From Prague Biennale 1, Prague 2003)

Represented by: Bunkier Sztuki, Krakow; Potocka, Krakow; Pruss & Oels, Berlin.

