

Focus on Photography Works from 1950 to Today



A Guide to the Exhibition



Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College
January 13–March 8, 2009

How to Use This Guide

This brochure is designed to guide you around the galleries of *Focus on Photography: Works from 1950 to Today*. It begins with an introduction to the exhibition and then explores three themes in contemporary photography—the landscape, photojournalism, and portraiture. Within each section several subgroupings are identified.

As you walk through the exhibition, you will notice that its layout does not correspond to the order of the individual photographs discussed within this brochure. This is because *Focus on Photography* highlights the heterogeneous nature of photography since 1950, and the installation was planned to reflect this. The galleries are organized so that visitors can explore the diversity of contemporary photography and interpret the works in a number of ways.

The number located on each photograph's label corresponds to an entry in this guide that describes the work and orients it within the exhibition's thematic groupings. We encourage you to make your own connections among the works on display, either according to the themes we suggest or based on your own ideas regarding subject matter, process, or aesthetics. You may explore the galleries as you choose; simply use the number on a photograph's label to lead you to the related information in this booklet.

A list of events taking place related to this exhibition is included at the back of the brochure.

Cover: Nikki S. Lee, *The Ohio Project (8)* (detail), 1999, Fujiflex print. Purchased through the Elizabeth and David C. Lowenstein '67 Fund; 2007.59

The Exhibition

Over the past decade, the Hood Museum of Art has engaged significantly with the art of photography, adding nearly two thousand photo or photo-based works to our permanent collection. *Focus on Photography* introduces a selection of these works created since 1950, examining the collection along three themes: landscape, photojournalism, and portraiture. Exposing the diverse nature of contemporary photography, this exhibition concentrates on these thematic trends and, within each, a number of subgroupings. While the photographers in this exhibition are predominantly American or working in the United States, included are artists from twelve other countries, representing the global perspective of contemporary art. *Focus on Photography* serves as one bookend to a year centered on the Hood Museum's post-1945 holdings. Our schedule of 2009 exhibitions will conclude with the museum's major survey: *Modern and Contemporary Art at Dartmouth: Highlights from the Hood Museum of Art*.

Photography's beginnings lie in a hazy landscape captured by Nicéphore Niépce in 1826, followed a year later by the highly detailed daguerreotype portraits invented by Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre.¹ Nearly two centuries after its creation, depictions of either the figure or the landscape remain the focal point of the medium, and *Focus on Photography* reflects this tradition. Furthermore, photography has long played a pivotal role as both a producer and reflector of American culture, altering the way we perceive the world even as the medium is being shaped by the changing realities of the world itself. This is evident in both landscape photography and portraiture. Within images of the landscape, *Focus on Photography* examines a fascination with the varying face of our environment and the fast-changing industrial landscape. It explores abstract conceptions of the natural world and understanding the landscape as culture. Investigating trends in portraiture, the exhibition looks at how photography has provided a vehicle for exploring adolescence, cultural identity, and stereotypes, and for experimenting with the creative process itself.

THE EXHIBITION

From its conception, photography has been considered a modernist medium, both in process and in subject. Though initially photographs followed in the styles of the paintings and works on paper that had long comprised the fine arts, modernism changed the face of the medium, and the twentieth century saw a dramatic evolution in its techniques and aesthetics. Once viewed as the most literal of mediums, able to record the precise details of the world at a particular moment in time, photography's image has evolved with the changing times, revealing a complex nature and the capacity to evoke the most individual of visions and interpretations while also suggesting symbolic meanings. Technological advances drove many of these developments as artists, transfixed by the camera's versatile abilities, pushed the medium to produce a myriad of outcomes. Just as the *camera obscura* technique was able to extend exposure time in the nineteenth century at photography's beginnings, today, digital photography, computer manipulation, and photogenics each play a role in transforming the medium. Since the early twentieth century, the widespread use of cameras has made photography a particularly accessible art form, and with the recent popularity of digital images, the photograph has become even more approachable and engaging. *Focus on Photography* underscores how artists working today continue to look to traditional subject matters, styles, and methods, despite new developments that have had drastic effects on the processes and results of this medium.

Focus on Photography presents a mere sampling of post-1950 photography, surveying the Hood Museum's permanent collection in a directed manner. While mapping contemporary themes in the medium's subjects and touching upon trends in processes and techniques, this exhibition also emphasizes the diversity of photography as a fine art and portrays the breadth and depth of the Hood's holdings.

VIEWS AND VISIONS: CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPES

An examination of the changing character of landscape photography in the last half-century presents a number of trends in style, subject, and process. The landscape itself reveals a record of the people who populate it, and each photogra-

pher offers a varying perspective on just how our lands chronicle our lives and cultures.

Stylistically and aesthetically, abstracting the landscape has become an enduring movement in photography. Whether finding abstract compositions in the natural elements and expressive patterns of nature, or crafting abstracted imagery that then is transformed into landscape, these artists play with the camera's ability to visually compress the three-dimensional world onto a two-dimensional plane, reordering space and scale. Idealized or conceptualized, each of the images contains a feeling of mystery and drama. They evoke a sense of contemplation, or, in some cases, spiritual expression, as the natural world offers a vehicle for transcendence.

Perhaps most evident among trends in photography has been an obsession with depicting and negotiating the clash of man versus nature. In capturing or constructing these visions, artists explore our contemporary existence, specifically in relation to the natural world, as we continue to effect permanent change on our lands. This group of works seamlessly merges objective visions with more subjective impressions of the changing world around us—views of our everyday urban realities hang beside constructed dreamlike scenes. Clearly, photographers working today envision our world in polar opposites, yet their fascination with depicting the land, capturing its spirit and evolution, unites them.

One of the richest subjects for landscape photographers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has been the evolving facade of both our urban and rural landscapes. Exploding populations, urban sprawl, and industrialization have left indelible marks on our lands and waters, and the visual results of these clashes between the natural and man-made worlds have since dominated landscape photography. Not all of the images are negative or critical however. Rather, a variety of views of our new landscapes emerge, ranging from a chronicling of the passage of time, to an appreciation of the aging architecture of industrial giants from a time long-past, or a condemnation of the environmental impacts of pollution and global climate changes. Whether personal snapshots or universal representations, these images offer multiple viewpoints on the topography of our everyday lives.

THE LANDSCAPE ABSTRACTED

Though best known for her photographic portraits of twentieth century writers, artists, and politicians such as W. E. B. DuBois, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Alfred Stieglitz, Lotte Jacobi made an important contribution to the medium with her experimentation with the process of photogenics. Creating abstract black-and-white images by moving torches and candles over light-sensitive paper, Jacobi fashioned fictional landscapes of rolling hills and hazy skies.² In the gentle curving lines of *Landscape* (no. 2), it is hard to discern if this is indeed a slope enveloped in fog or an entirely abstract composition.

For photographer Ralph Steiner, looking at clouds was an exercise in visualization, and the sky was his primary subject matter for over fifteen years. Printing expressive and contemplative images of the play of sun off the clouds, such as *Clouds IV* (no. 5), Steiner created photographs straight from life that have a surprisingly similar look to Jacobi's photogenic works. Here however, the ghostly yet lush tonal gradations are honest depictions of the world before him. Explaining his process, Steiner wrote, "There are occasions when, if you photograph what light does, you have to move fast. The sun and clouds never hold still, and when you see a miracle of light happening out front, you are certain that within seconds it will disappear. Even if the sun does come out again shortly, it will not look the same or as magical."³

Minor White's deep belief in the spiritual quality of photography guided his artistic practice. White often depicted mundane objects made special by the quality of light in which they were photographed and the beautiful surfaces that were revealed, in this case that of a wall (no. 8). There is a powerfully surreal quality to his work, one which belies the artist's philosophy that what is seen in the image is important, but the meaning behind the image is even more so, indicating that a photograph should function as an experience, not a thing.⁴



Japanese photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto repeatedly creates breathtaking views of the sea and sky with a minimalist approach (no. 7). Contrasting



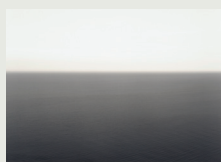
2. Lotte Jacobi, American, 1896–1990, *Landscape*, number 2 from the portfolio *Lotte Jacobi Portfolio 3*, 1946–55; portfolio published 1981, Photogenics. Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund; 2007.25.24



5. Ralph Steiner, American, 1899–1986, *Clouds IV*, about 1970, gelatin silver print. Gift of Willard van Dyke; PH.975.51



8. Minor White, American, 1908–1976, *The Wall*, from the sequence *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, 1960, gelatin silver print. Gift of Varujan Boghosian; PH.988.64.1



7. Hiroshi Sugimoto, Japanese, born 1948, *Marmara Sea, Sivili*, 1991, gelatin silver print. Purchased through a gift from the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation; PH.994.38.2 © Hiroshi Sugimoto

light and darkness, void and substance, Sugimoto's perspective is rooted in conceptual art, with the goal to evoke the emotional response of early man when he first encountered the vast open sea. He writes, "Mystery of mysteries, water and air are right there before us in the sea. Every time I view the sea, I feel a calming sense of security, as if visiting my ancestral home; I embark on a voyage of seeing."⁵ Like Minor White, Sugimoto intends his photographs to function as more than concrete objects; rather, he hopes that they will instigate emotional experiences.

Painter Sean Scully, renowned for his abstract "stripe" compositions, has worked for years exploring the possibilities of the colored stripe. In *Land, Sea, Sky* (no. 9), one can see his obsession with bands of color translated to the landscape, as a slice of an ocean view against the land becomes nature's own stripe painting. The artist explains, "*Land, Sea, Sky* is a very important photograph for me because it is our world, land, sea, sky. It's what we have. I try to show it in a way that's very simple, giving equal importance to each of those elements, and I take out the space just to show the elements."⁶



Abelardo Morell utilizes a long-established process in crafting abstract images of the architectural landscape (no. 6). The camera obscura, developed by Renaissance artists, is a darkened box or room with a pinhole piercing one side, through which light casts an inverted image of the outside world. With a camera obscura in Morell's hands, ephemeral scenes that dance a line between fantasy and reality soon ensue. Yet Morell's camera obscura landscapes point to the enduring existence of the scenes around us—here the crown of the fortress castle in Havana, Cuba. Though upside down and projected onto a crumbling interior wall, La Giralddilla is immediately recognizable as a defining visual symbol of Cuba's landscape, proud amongst the aging architectural gems of the city.

From 1968 to 1972, Thomas Barrow worked on two series simultaneously, *Pink Stuff* and *Pink Dualities* (nos. 3 and 4), using a diptych format in the tradition of the stereograph (where two images are presented side by side to create the illusion of three dimensionality) and adopting an antique



9. Sean Scully, American, born 1945, *Land, Sea, Sky*, 1999, C-print face mounted to Plexiglas and framed. Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund; 2007.93. Image courtesy of Galerie Lelong



6. Abelardo Morell, American, born 1948, *Camera Obscura Image of La Giralddilla de la Habana in Room under Construction (Camera Obscura Image of La Giralddilla de la Habana in Room with Broken Wall)*, 2002, gelatin silver print (mounted on aluminum support). Purchased through the Olivia H. Parker and John O. Parker 1958 Acquisition Fund, the Contemporary Art Fund, the William S. Rubin Fund, and the Fund for Contemporary Photography; PH.2003.71



3. Thomas Francis Barrow, American, born 1938, *Stockbridge Shadow*, from the series *Pink Stuff*, 1972, pink-toned gelatin silver print. Gift of Bart Osman, Class of 1990, Tuck 1996; PH.2003.70.4



4. Thomas Francis Barrow, American, born 1938, *San Diego Porch*, from the series *Pink Dualites*, 1974, pink-toned gelatin silver print. Gift of Bart Osman, Class of 1990, Tuck 1996; PH.2003.70.5

toning process. Yet these works only masquerade as stereographs, as the prints in the *Pink Stuff* series are always multiples of the same image, while those in *Pink Dualities* are of distinctly different frames or subjects.⁷ The focus of the works becomes the dialogue between the two frames, either a subtle visual and perceptual interaction or a disjunctive shifting between the two. Barrow's choice of the unsettling pink hue was made precisely because it was the color farthest from the classical landscape photography canons of Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, and Minor White. Rather than idealizing the sublime natural world, these works illustrate Barrow's fascination with the everyday oddities of contemporary culture: slices of architecture, backyards, and examples of industrial technology.

"LANDSCAPE AS CULTURE"



10. Walker Evans, American, 1903–1975, *Trinity Church, Cornish, New Hampshire*, 1972, gelatin silver print. Gift of the Class of 1935; PH.973.9 © Walker Evans Archive, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In 1972, Walker Evans became the first artist-in-residence in photography at Dartmouth College. The artist began his residency by traveling throughout the Upper Valley with Dartmouth Professor of Studio Art Varujan Boghosian and Director of Visual Studies Matthew Wsocki. Here he created works such as *Trinity Church, Cornish New Hampshire* (no. 10). Reacting to the artifice of Pictorialism, which was in vogue in American photography of the 1920s, Evans developed a straightforward, documentary style early in his celebrated career as a photographer. This carefully framed image offers a revealing slice of Americana and a meditative reflection on the everyday.



1. Andrew Moore, American, born 1957, *El Rapido, Havana*, 1999, Cibachrome print. Gift of the artist; 2006.91

Shot in the heat of the day and close up, Andrew Moore's *El Rapido, Havana* (no. 1) depicts an urban Cuban residence, once elegant but now broken into makeshift apartments. Moore's images preserve a piece of Havana's rich architectural history, highlighting its still-jewel-like colors even as the building itself falls into decay. Large-scale and beautifully detailed, *El Rapido* conveys the resiliency of both the beautiful city and its inhabitants as each balcony and window hints at a separate story unfolding inside.



In 1955, Ogle Winston Link began to document the Norfolk and Western Railway, the last

system in America to use steam engine locomotives. Link's theatrical approach and carefully staged scene freeze the motion of the locomotive to capture the bucolic vision of man living contentedly alongside machine. Link preferred to work at night, when he was better able to capture details through his carefully engineered lighting systems, a rarity in an age where candid "street photography" was at its peak. Link's *Hawksbill Creek Swimming Hole, Luray NW1126* (no. 11) preserves the romanticism and majesty of an era of American life that is gone but far from forgotten.

Using a 7 x 17-inch format banquet camera, Lois Conner produces platinum prints that are lush yet ghostly, with a meticulously crafted surface that is the result of hand-painting the emulsion (no. 12). Conner is interested in the landscape, specifically that of China, and how culture can be revealed through it. In each of her images, Conner explores her relationship with both the mythical and real China as she investigates the cultural stereotypes embedded in the idealized landscape. She writes, "My subject is landscape as culture. I am not interested in an untouched, untrammelled world. What I am trying to reveal through photography in a deliberated yet subtle way is a sense of history. I want my photographs to describe my relationship to both the tangible and the imagined, to fact and fiction."⁸

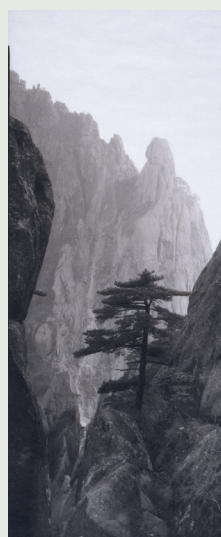


Throughout his photographic career, George Tice has depicted the vestiges of American culture on the verge of extinction—from people in rural communities to suburban buildings and neighborhoods that are often in decline—but is best known for his near flawless black-and-white prints of his native New Jersey. Tice writes of his choice of subject, "It takes the passage of time before an image of a commonplace subject can be assessed. The great difficulty of what I attempt is seeing beyond the moment; the everydayness of life gets in the way of the eternal."⁹ Here, he focuses on a typical small-town gas station (no. 13). The water tower behind it eerily emerges from the night sky lending a surreal, movie-set quality to what is an otherwise ordinary scene.

Similar to George Tice in subject matter is photographer Stephen Shore. In the early 1970s, Shore



11. Ogle Winston Link, American, 1914–2001, *Hawksbill Creek Swimming Hole, Luray NW1126*, 1958, print 1996, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the Charles F. Verrick 1936 Fund, and a gift from David V. Picker, Class of 1953. Selected by participants in the Winter 2002 Miniversity Class at the Hood Museum of Art; PH.2002.10



12. Lois Conner, American, born 1951, *Huang Shan, Anhui, China*, 1985, platinum print. Purchased through a gift from the Prospero Foundation, and a gift from Peter A. Vogt, Class of 1947; PH.998.30.1



13. George A. Tice, American, born 1938, *Petit's Mobil Station, Cherry Hill, New Jersey*, 1974, 1974, gelatin silver print. Gift of Jane and Raphael Bernstein; PH.986.77.17. Image courtesy of the artist



15. Stephen Shore, American, born 1947, *Broad Street, Regina, Saskatchewan*, 1974, Type C print. Gift of Barbara and Robert Levine, Class of 1954, Tuck 1955; PH.2000.1.2



14. William Christenberry, American, born 1936, *Post Office, Sprott, Alabama*, 1971, 1971, print 1988, Polaroid. Gift of Marc Efron, Class of 1965, and Barbara Bares; PH.2001.44.1



16. Subhankar Banerjee, Indian, born 1967, *Caribou Migration I*, 2002, UltraChrome print. Purchased through the Charles F. Venrick 1936 Fund; 2006.61. Image courtesy of the artist

embarked on a series of cross-country trips, making “on the road” photographs of American and Canadian landscapes and framing deadpan images of the banal scenes of everyday life. Shore’s photographs, such as *Broad Street, Regina, Saskatchewan* (no. 15), depict the suburban streets, box stores, and movie theaters that have become our new traditional landscape.

William Christenberry grew up in Hale County, Alabama, and since 1961 has returned there each summer, revisiting the same places in forgotten corners of the region. Melding memory, nostalgia, and documentary photography in the same vein as Walker Evans, Christenberry documents how the places of his youth have changed, chronicling the passage of time and, much like Lois Conner, the landscapes that illustrate the culture of a specific place. *Post Office, Sprott, Alabama*, 1971 (no. 14) reveals the character of a small Southern town at a particular moment in time, and Christenberry depicts it as a native of this rural community would: an everyday building with faded paint, yet probably, in many ways, the heart of this town.

THE URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

Subhankar Banerjee uses photography to raise awareness of issues that threaten the health and wellbeing of our planet, and since late 2000 he has focused all his efforts on indigenous human rights and land conservation issues in the Arctic. *Caribou Migration I* (no. 16) depicts a herd of 123,000 caribou named after the Porcupine River, which meanders through much of their range, traversing northern Alaska, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. All of these territories are at risk for drastic change due to global warming and human encroachment. Banerjee’s exquisite large-scale photographs serve as a visual exploration of the Arctic’s connection to larger global issues such as resource wars, climate change, toxic migration, and human rights struggles of the indigenous northern communities.

Nature transformed through industry is a predominant theme in Edward Burtynsky’s photographs. In *Shipbreaking #31, Chittagong, Bangladesh* (no. 17), a lone barefoot figure running towards the shore nearly disappears, ironically juxtaposed with the vast ship that is a mere shell of its for-

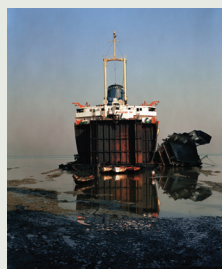
mer industrial triumph. The process of shipbreaking can only take place where large ships can be beached, and due to environmental hazards, the industrial recycling typically happens in developing countries. With his large-format viewfinder camera, Burtynsky creates highly detailed images in the hopes of documenting and exposing the practice. He explains, “Our dependence on nature to provide the materials for our consumption and our concern for the health of our planet sets us into an uneasy contradiction. For me, these images function as reflecting pools of our times.”¹⁰

Sze Tsung Leong’s *Chaotianmen, Yuzhong District, Chongqing* (no. 18) is part of the larger series *History Images*, which addresses the notion of histories seen through the form of Chinese cities either in the process of being destroyed or created. Leong’s images conflate a multitude of histories: the past emerges in traditional buildings, urban neighborhoods, and natural landscapes even as they are being erased; an absence of histories is found in new construction built upon sites marking an erasure of the past; and the anticipation of future histories appears in the form of newly built cities. *Chaotianmen, Yuzhong District, Chongqing* registers China’s economic explosion and all that it entails—rapid expansion, developing industries, and the resulting pollution—in an eerily calm vision devoid of any figures.



Alex MacLean’s aerial photographs offer unfamiliar views of familiar Vermont terrain. Collaborating with planner Elizabeth Humstone and landscape architect Julie Campoli, MacLean seeks to chart the changes in settlement patterns and land use in Vermont from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Although Vermont is generally perceived as bucking the trends in land development, the state is actually experiencing a pattern of increasing suburban sprawl. The radical shift in perspective of *Saint Albans, Vermont, Large Lot Subdivision* (no. 19), created by placing the camera on the gyroscope of MacLean’s Cessna 182, defamiliarizes the landscape and in doing so forces us to reassess our notion of the rural and pastoral.

In crystal clear and brilliant color prints, Joel Sternfeld, Dartmouth Class of 1965, captures images of everyday scenes caught in surreal mo-



17. Edward Burtynsky, Canadian, born 1955, *Shipbreaking #31, Chittagong, Bangladesh*, 2001, dye-coupler print. Gift of Jane and Raphael Bernstein; 2005.20 © Edward Burtynsky. Image courtesy of Charles Cowles Gallery, New York



18. Sze Tsung Leong, American and British, born 1970, *Chaotianmen, Yuzhong District, Chongqing*, from the series *History Images*, 2002, C-Print. Promised gift of Andrew E. Lewin, Class of 1981 © Sze Tsung Leong, Image courtesy of Yossi Milo Gallery, New York



19. Alex S. MacLean, American, born 1947 (with Julie Campoli and Elizabeth Humstone), *Saint Albans, Vermont, Large Lot Subdivision*, 1995, Cibachrome. Purchased through gifts from Peter A. Vogt, Class of 1947, and Robert Eckerson, Class of 1948; PH.998.35.6



21. Joel Sternfeld, American, born 1944, *McLean, Virginia (Pumpkins)*, December 1978, dye transfer print. Gift of Joel Sternfeld, Class of 1965, and Neil Grossman, Class of 1965, in memory of John Pickells, Class of 1965; PH.986.24



20. Joel Sternfeld, American, born 1944, *After a Flash Flood, Rancho Mirage, California*, negative July 1979, print 1984, dye transfer print. Purchased through the William S. Rubin Fund; PH.986.25



22. Serge Hambourg, French, born 1936, *Scovill Manufacturing Company, Waterbury, Connecticut*, 1982–85, print 1987, Chromogenic-development (Ektacolor) print. Purchased through a gift from the Bernstein Development Foundation, courtesy of Jane and Raphael Bernstein; PH.988.2.81

ments: the destructive but planned fire staged as a training exercise that sets the scene for a fireman perusing pumpkins for purchase in *McLean, Virginia (Pumpkins)*, December 1978 (no. 21) or the aftermath of a devastating landslide in *After a Flash Flood, Rancho Mirage, California* (no. 20). With a strange disconnect between artificial and real, Sternfeld crafts images that are simultaneously humorous and disturbing. Taking a less idealized approach to nature and culture, Sternfeld tackles the visual challenges of the modern American landscape.

Over the course of three years in the early 1980s, Serge Hambourg photographed more than four hundred examples of historic New England industrial buildings. Capturing the commanding presence of these historic structures, Hambourg simultaneously documents and celebrates the unwritten history of industrialization in this region. An essential part of the classic New England landscape, deserted buildings like that depicted in *Scovill, Manufacturing Company, Waterbury, Connecticut* (no. 22) define a specific time, place, and culture in our history, that of an industrial boom now long since past.

EYEWITNESS: PHOTOJOURNALISM AND DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY

Building on the photograph's original purpose, to record, photojournalism broadened the scope of the medium of photography in the twentieth century. This section includes works made with a different intention from the landscapes or portraits on view. They are not strictly fine art objects, but documentary works that tell a story with a certain level of objectivity and timeliness. Nonetheless, these photographers have created compelling images whose aesthetic, stylistic, and technical qualities cannot be denied. Whether documenting tragic or revolutionary events in modern history, or the plight of those unable to speak for themselves, these photographers serve as vital witnesses and their images as crucial testimony to moments that must not be forgotten.

W. Eugene Smith is best known for his vivid World War II photographs made with incredible technical competence during his time working for *Life Magazine*. After leaving *Life* in 1955, Smith

joined the Magnum photo agency and started an ambitious project to document the city of Pittsburgh and its inhabitants. This monumental picture essay allowed Smith to move from straight documentary photography in the photojournalistic tradition to more artistic compositions in the tradition of fine art photography. *Untitled (Pittsburgh Steel Worker)* (no. 23) depicts an unnamed steel factory laborer, framed by blasts of sparks and light, adding a flair of drama that brings the scene to life.

During World War II, Russian photographer Dmitri Baltermants covered the Battle of Stalingrad and the battles of the Red Army in Ukraine, Poland, and Germany, producing dynamic images that Soviet authorities censored in order to preserve morale throughout the country. In 1949, he was appointed official photographer of the Kremlin and worked daily under Joseph Stalin, photographing a number of his diplomatic encounters.¹¹ *Announcement of the Death of Stalin, Dynamo Factory, Moscow* (no. 24) is a classic image of Socialist Realism, and although it was created in service to the State (posed and manipulated), it preserves a true visual heritage of daily life and international activities in Russia during the 1950s. Melding his artistic vision with political realities, Baltermants's photographs bear witness to the ideological stance of the ruling elite of his nation.



As a draftee in the Vietnam War in 1966, Dick Durrance, Dartmouth Class of 1965, successfully sought assignment with the Army's elite combat photo unit, DASPO, and produced a body of work later published in a book titled *Where War Lives: A Photographic Journal of Vietnam*.¹² Carrying his camera from the moment he was inducted to the day he was discharged from the U.S. Army, Durrance documented and shared stories of his time in Vietnam as well as those of countless soldiers with whom he served. His photographs are honest depictions of the daily lives of American soldiers fighting in Vietnam and the painful scenes that they continually faced (no. 26).

James Nachtwey's images focus on agonizing scenes of war and its effects, in an attempt to persuade others to renounce war's devastation. Making beautiful and compelling pictures of suffering, Nachtwey puts the most vulnerable on display in hopes of bringing the atrocities of war—here the



23. W. Eugene Smith, American, 1918–1978, *Untitled (Pittsburgh Steel Worker)*, 1955, gelatin silver print. Gift of Franklin Davidson, MD, Class of 1955; PH.2004.74.5
© 1955, 2009 The Heirs of W. Eugene Smith



24. Dmitri Baltermants, Russian, 1912–1990, *Announcement of the Death of Stalin, Dynamo Factory, Moscow (composite photo)*, negative March 6, 1953; print 2003, gelatin silver print. Purchased through a gift from Harley and Stephen C. Osman, Class of 1956, Tuck 1957; PH.2003.56.644



26. Dick Durrance, American, born 1942, *Crewman, CH-47A (Chinook) helicopter on mission over Mekong Delta, August 1967*, August 1967, gelatin silver print. Gift of Jeffrey Hinman, Class of 1968, in memory of William Smoyer, Class of 1967, and J. Robert Peacock, Class of 1968; PH.2004.45.1



27. James Nachtwey, American, born 1948, *Rwanda*, 1994, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund; 2006.39



25. Sebastião Salgado, Brazilian, born 1944, *Brazil (Hand, Serra Pelada)*, 1986, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the Fund for Contemporary Photography. Selected by participants in the Fall 2002 Hood Museum of Art Seminar; PH.2002.59 © Sebastião Salgado/ Amazonas Images / Contact Press Images

genocide in Rwanda in 1994—to the public’s attention. In *Rwanda* (no. 27), a man recently liberated from a Hutu death camp turns his head to reveal the brutal aftermath of a machete attack. Recording crimes against humanity, Nachtwey himself serves as a witness, while his photographs offer testimony. He writes, “I use what I know about the formal elements of photography at the service of the people I’m photographing—not the other way around. I’m not trying to make statements about photography. I’m trying to use photography to make statements about what’s happening in the world.”¹³

Similar to the ambitions of James Nachtwey, Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado has dedicated his career to documenting the suffering and survival of the world’s refugee and migrant populations. *Brasil (Hand Serra Pelada)* (no. 25) is part of the larger series *Workers*, a six-year photographic survey of manual labor around the world, and here depicts the harsh reality for a worker in the gold mines of Brazil. Drawn in by dreams of gold and freedom, thousands of field workers of northern Brazil have left their land to pursue gold mining in a corner of the Amazon, yet rather than riches they have found inhuman living conditions and near slave labor.

THE REAL AND THE IMAGINED: PORTRAITURE SINCE 1950

Contemporary portraiture can be explored through a variety of themes, including images of adolescence, the negotiation of cultural identity and stereotypes, the power of representation and self-representation, and a focus on process. Throughout these works is a continual blurring of the lines between the real and the imagined, the genuine and the constructed, and objective straightforward portrayals versus carefully contrived and controlled depictions. Particularly important has been a focus on the power of the sitter’s gaze: whether the eyes of the subject look directly into the camera’s lens, challenging the photographer and the viewer alike, or quite the opposite, refuse to meet the eyes of both. These two elements, negotiating the “fact” versus “fiction” nature of a photograph and the participation of the subject, speak to the power of visual culture and the disparity between those who create and those who are depicted in these images.

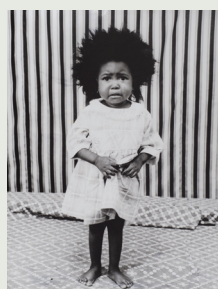
Children have long been popular subjects for photographers, predominantly for women artists, including Helen Levitt, Julia Margaret Cameron, and Dorothea Lange, yet in the last fifty years adolescence in particular has emerged as a dominant theme. This time in a child's life when identity can be tried on and set aside with ease, when reality and imaginary worlds collide through play on a daily basis, and when the tenuous transition to adulthood begins, has proven to be a fertile subject for photographers.

In contemporary photography, portraiture has also become a favorite tool for exploring the construction of cultural identity through visual and popular culture. Similarly, many artists have challenged with their own photographs the stereotypes perpetuated through images, recognizing the authority of representation and the power and freedom inherent in self-representation.

Finally, within portraiture the importance of process, and its transparency, is a key trend. How does one create a portrait? Setting or props receive careful attention. Timing—in the form of Henri Cartier-Bresson's "decisive moment" or in experimenting with prolonged exposures or extended series—is decisive for a number of these artists' works.¹⁴ Whether making a contemplative study or taking snapshots on the street, photographers attempt to capture not just the image of their subjects, but their defining character as well.

PICTURING CHILDHOOD

Malian photographer Malick Sidibé is best known for his black-and-white studies of popular culture and the youth of Mali's capital, Bamako, during the 1960s. In the 1970s, he turned toward the making of studio portraits, while continuing his street photography, and worked primarily with the burgeoning youth and club scene. Sidibé's pictures describe the convivial and carefree atmosphere of a post-colonial African capital. Simple, spontaneous, and extremely beautiful images, works such as *Untitled (Crying Child)* (no. 34) illustrate both the photographer's love of people and passion for photography, while allowing viewers to witness another face of Africa.



34. Malick Sidibé, Malian, born 1936, *Untitled (Crying Child)*, 1960s, print 2006, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the William B. and Evelyn F. Jaffe (58, 60, & 63) Fund and the Hood Museum of Art Acquisitions Fund; 2006.82.2



33. Loretta Lux, German, born 1969, *The Drummer*, 2004, lfochrome print. Purchased through the Fund for Contemporary Photography; selected by Dartmouth College students who participated in the Hood Museum of Art Seminar Museum Collecting 101; 2006.34



30. Diane Arbus, American, 1923–1971, *Loser at a Diaper Derby*, 1967, gelatin silver print. Purchased through a gift from the Cremer Foundation in memory of J. Theodor Cremer; PH.986.49 © 1972 The Estate of Diane Arbus



31. Andrea Modica, American, born 1960, *Treadwell, New York*, 1993, 1993, platinum palladium contact print. Purchased through gifts from Robert A. Levinson, Class of 1946, Eleanor Platt Caldwell, and Fredrick Goldstein in honor of Joseph Millimet and Ruth Cserr, Class of 1988; PH.997.24

Loretta Lux, who studied as a painter in her native Germany, creates what she calls “imaginary portraits” of children with the help of the digital program Adobe PhotoShop. Using the same processes as a painter—a central focus on planning and organizing the composition of color and form—and stylistic qualities reminiscent of early Flemish and also Mannerist portraits by Bronzino, Lux carefully controls and alters every aspect of the image, spending an average of three months to complete one photograph. *The Drummer* (no. 33) is typical of her portraits: a single child is carefully costumed, situated through digital manipulation into a neutral, dreamlike space, and depicted through a pale, milky palette, lending an eerie quality to the otherwise innocent, wide-eyed subject.

A pivotal figure in contemporary documentary photography, Diane Arbus is renowned for her portraits of people on the fringes of society: transvestites, dwarfs, giants, prostitutes, as well as working-class citizens in unconventional poses and settings. *Loser at a Diaper Derby* (no. 30) conveys not only Arbus’s impeccable timing with the camera and mastery of lighting, but also her command of titling. The *Loser* in the contest referred to here transforms the image of a mother holding her child, traditionally a standard for peace and maternal devotion, into one of repulsion, with the child’s flushed crying face dominating the foreground.



In her series *Treadwell* (no. 31), Andrea Modica repeatedly photographs the same young girls in a small rural community in New York, working with an 8 x 10-inch view camera that allows her to achieve a fine-grained detailed surface. Modica creates images that are caught between a dream world and reality, fantastic scenes that hint at a complicated narrative the audience is left to construct. With a wonderful taste for the surreal, Modica captures (or devises) images in which an otherwise unexceptional scene is distorted by an element of the peculiar.

Justine Kurland photographs adolescent girls in wide-open landscapes—near-Eden-like scenes filled with imaginary runaways. The jungle-like forest that surrounds the girls in *Jungle Gym*

(*Jungle Gym Jungle*) (no. 38) evokes a wild freedom of its own and the girls, alternately lounging on or scaling the massive trees, nonchalantly flaunt their own independence. Guided by the photographer's view, seemingly spying on her subjects from a safe distance, the viewer is free to complete a half-conceived narrative of escape by these feisty girls.



Sally Mann's view camera portraits of her own children often recall the romantic images of nineteenth century photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, laden with psychosexual overtones that some viewers find disconcerting. The setting and figures of *Luncheon in the Grasses* (no. 29) mimic the composition of Edouard Manet's *Dejeuner sur l'herbe*, 1863, which depicts two partially nude women in the company of two clothed men. This emulation only emphasizes the vulnerability of Mann's youthful subjects and captures the "in-betweenness" of young women on the edge of puberty, creating a powerful combination of awkward innocence and budding adult knowledge. Furthermore, the pictorial dynamics of Mann's work raises important questions about power relations between photographers and sitters in general, made all the more palpable in this case due to the age of her subjects and Mann's intimate relationship with them.

Carrie Mae Weems utilizes her photography to comment upon political and social issues, engaging questions of race, class, and the position of African American women in America. Yet through her use of simple character and emotional appeal, her themes expand to deal with issues that affect all of humankind. *Untitled (Make-up with Daughter)* (no. 35) is part of her *Kitchen Table Series*, a project composed of images and text that construct a woman's story through her relationships with her man, child, friends, and herself. Here, mother and daughter apply makeup together in a scene of daughterly mimicry, yet this is more than a symbol of budding adolescence: the act allows the woman and girl to conceal, reveal, and accentuate their relationship to cultural expectations, both fulfilling and contesting them. As viewers, we observe an intimate moment open to public scrutiny, an interaction between generations based upon teaching, imitation, and shadowing.



38. Justine Kurland, American, born 1969, *Jungle Gym (Jungle Gym Jungle)*, 2001, C-print laminated on 1/8 inch Sintra panel. Purchased through the Olivia H. Parker and John O. Parker 1958 Acquisition Fund; PH.2003.57



29. Sally Mann, American, born 1951, *Luncheon in the Grasses*, 1991, printed 1996, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund; PH.997.10 © Sally Mann



35. Carrie Mae Weems, American, born 1953, *Untitled (Make-up with Daughter)*, from the *Kitchen Table Series*, 1990, gelatin silver print. Purchased through the Harry Shafer Fisher 1966 Memorial Fund; PH.991.46

EXPLORING CULTURAL IDENTITIES



36. Daniela Rossell, Mexican, born 1973, *Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque, Acapulco, Mexico)*, from the series *Ricas y Famosas*, 2001, C-print. Purchased through gifts from Charles W. Gaillard, Class of 1962, Kenneth I. Reich, Class of 1960, James and Susan Wright, Lee and Marguerite Berlin, Karen Berlin, Class of 1989, Elizabeth E. Craig, Class of 1944W, Jan Seidler Ramirez, Class of 1973, and the Class of 1952. Selected by participants in the Winter 2004 Hood Museum of Art Seminar; PH.2004.18. Courtesy of the artist and Greene Naftali, New York



37. Luis Gispert, American, born 1972, *Untitled (Dinner Girls)*, 2002, Cibachrome mounted on aluminum. Purchased through the Harry Shafer Fisher 1966 Memorial Fund; PH.2003.34



32. Fiona Foley, Australian, born 1964, *HHH #1 (2004)*, 2004, Ultrachrome print on paper. Purchased through the Harry Shafer Fisher 1966 Memorial Fund; 2007.60 © 2009 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VISCOPY, Australia

A member of Mexico's elite, photographer Daniela Rossell worked with women and men from the same social class to fashion outrageous portraits set in their garish homes. The positioning of the subject of *Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque, Acapulco, Mexico)* (no. 36) mirrors the pose of the Harem woman in the Orientalist mural behind her and introduces a subtle commentary on gender, sexuality, and class in contemporary Mexico. Rossell's subjects, dressed in haute couture and elaborately styled, seem to merge with their settings: the luxurious, modern grandeur of their homes. Dressing and posing themselves, they are depicted as they want to be seen—the central figure in an idealized dream world. Though Rossell poses as a documentarian with this project, she seems to mock her subjects, as they are caught in a contest of one-upmanship of wealth, beauty, and possessions.

The art of Cuban American Luis Gispert uses humor and irony to critique cultural continuity and authenticity. *Untitled (Dinner Girls)* (no. 37) is part of Gispert's *Cheerleader Series*, which combines stereo culture and hip-hop paraphernalia with models meant to unsettle viewer expectations and standards of femininity. Here his cheerleaders embody the simultaneous pull of tradition and modernity and the mainstream and the marginal. The heavy, Baroque décor of the dining room, reminiscent of Latin American traditions, contrasts with the pre-fab furniture and architecture of the typical modern American home. The women's cheerleader uniforms invoke the dreams of suburban Middle America while their tattoos, jewelry, and makeup are in contrast to the clean-cut appearance inherent in white American beauty standards. Finally, their trancelike state and levitating jewelry (the result of digital manipulation) call to mind a traditional séance or private ritual, yet the gang signs they flash with their hands situate them within an urban time and place.

Fiona Foley's powerful image *HHH #1 (2004)* (no. 32) is the Hood Museum of Art's first contemporary photograph by an indigenous Australian. With her striking depiction of a group of colorfully hooded figures, Foley tells an alternative history to the stories that figures in such a uniform traditionally evoke: that of the Hedon-

nistic Honkey Haters, a secret society founded in 1965 in direct opposition to the Ku Klux Klan. More than a portrait of this anonymous group, the image is a representation of a particular culture, place, and moment in time that has remained largely untold.

Nikki Lee uses her own body, adopting a particular style, dress, and mannerisms in an effort to integrate into a community, thereby exploring subcultures and ethnic groups, and at the same time, their associated stereotypes. *The Ohio Project* (8) (no. 28) depicts Lee in a pink halter-top and rolled jean shorts, defiantly hanging out of the door of a trailer, with an army jacket hanging behind her. Her clothes and setting mark Lee as a stereotypical working-class woman, yet the bleach-blonde tousled hair against her Korean features underscores how an otherwise familiar social identity can seem strange or even comical.

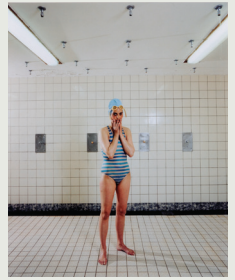
TIME AND PROCESS IN PORTRAITURE

Dutch photographer Rineke Dijkstra is primarily interested in how life experience manifests itself at a particular moment in the facial expressions and body language of her sitter, often working in a series of portraits that records her subjects over time. In the four months prior to taking *Self Portrait, Marnixbad, Amsterdam* (no. 39), Dijkstra was bedridden, recovering from an accident in which she had broken several bones. To improve her strength she began to swim laps in a local pool. She took this photograph in the pool's shower room immediately after she had exercised to the point of exhaustion. In doing so, she stripped herself of the artificial, allowing her body and face to register more clearly their recent history of trauma and struggle.

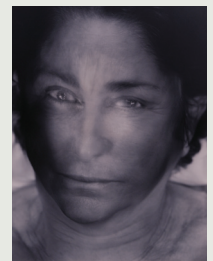
In 1988, photographer Gary Schneider began creating long-exposure “durational portraits” of his friends and family with a large-format view camera and a complex process. Positioning his subjects on pillows on the floor and suspending the camera above them, Schneider turns out the lights and in the pitch black moves to within inches of his subject’s face, painstakingly illuminating it section by section with a small flashlight.¹⁵ The unearthly images that result are intimate, extremely close-up, and almost claustrophobic in perspec-



28. Nikki S. Lee, American, born 1970, *The Ohio Project* (8), 1999, Fujiflex print. Purchased through the Elizabeth and David C. Lowenstein '67 Fund; 2007.59



39. Rineke Dijkstra, Dutch, born 1959, *Self Portrait, Marnixbad, Amsterdam*, 1991, C-print. Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund and the Contemporary Art Fund in honor of Derrick R. Cartwright, Director of the Hood Museum of Art, 2000–2004; PH.2004.52



45. Gary Schneider, American, born 1954, *Miriam*, 1989, selenium-toned silver gelatin print. Purchased through the Hood Museum of Art Acquisitions Fund; PH.997.41.1

tive. *Miriam* (no. 45) depicts the artist's mother, who would become the subject of an important memorial series by Schneider after her death from lung cancer in 1994.



44. Hiroh Kikai, Japanese, born 1945, *An Old Man with a Penetrating Gaze (wearing a face mask)*, 2001, gelatin silver print. Purchased through a gift from Andrew E. Lewin, Class of 1981; 2008.2.2



40. Andy Warhol, American, 1928–1987, *Dorothy Hamill*, 1977, Polacolor Type 108. Gift of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; 2008.3.2



42. Andy Warhol, American, 1928–1987, *Giorgio Armani*, 1981, Polacolor 2. Gift of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; 2008.3.58

Japanese photographer Hiroh Kikai takes black-and-white portraits of the residents of Asakusa, Tokyo, a neighborhood with a colorful past that is now known for both traditional comedic theater and some of the most innovative burlesque in the world. Over the past three decades, Kikai has created an extensive and unforgettable series of street portraits from the diverse mass of people who pass through this district. Posed against the stark walls of the temple, his impromptu portraits radiate a sense of hard-won individuality. *An Old Man with a Penetrating Gaze (wearing a face mask)* (no. 44) exemplifies Kikai's distinctly individual and personalized style of portraiture as well as his ability to capture his subject's essential character with an economy of photographic means.

Andy Warhol's Polaroid portraits, taken from 1973 to 1985, depict the various subjects of his famous silkscreen works, including Olympic skater Dorothy Hamill (no. 40), fashion designer Giorgio Armani (no. 42), musician John Denver, and celebrity Candy Spelling, Warhol's Polaroids provide a wealth of information about the artist's process as well as his interactions with his sitters. Not only was the Polaroid camera an essential element in the making of Warhol's silkscreen paintings, but the photograph is also the basis for his appropriated pop culture images. These images demonstrate Warhol's talent as a photographer and his use of the Polaroid as a personal artistic statement. Through his rigorous consistency in shooting these portraits, both in format and style, the idiosyncrasies of his subjects were revealed.

Emily Shubert Burke
Assistant Curator, Special Projects

Notes

1. Anne Havinga, Karen Haas, Nancy Keeler, *Photography: MFA Highlights*, Boston, Mass: Museum of Fine Arts Publications, 2007.
2. Kelly Wise, ed., *Lotte Jacobi*, Danbury, N.H: Addison House, 1978, p. 25.
3. Ralph Steiner, *Ralph Steiner: A Point of View*, Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University, 1978, p. 66.
4. Nathan Lyons, ed. *Eye Mind Spirit: The Enduring Legacy of Minor White*, New York: Howard Greenberg Gallery, 2008.
5. Hiroshi Sugimoto, "Artist's Statement: Seascapes," <http://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/seascape.html>.
6. Brian Kennedy, *Sean Scully: The Art of the Stripe*, Hanover, N.H.: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 2008, p. 59.
7. Kathleen McCarthy Gauss, *Inventories and Transformations: The Photographs of Thomas Barrow*, Albuquerque, N. M.: University of New Mexico Press, 1987, p. 66.
8. Lois Conner, "Artist's Statement," <http://www.loisconner.net/>.
9. George Tice quoted in Joan Labanca, "Shedding Light," *x-it Artzene* Spring 2008, p. 42.
10. Edward Burtynsky, "Exploring the Residual Landscape," <http://www.edwardburtynsky.com/>.
11. Dmitri Baltermants and Olga Slibova, *Dmitri Baltermants*, Moscow: Moscow House of Photography, 2005.
12. Dick Durrance II, *Where War Lives: A Photographic Journal of Vietnam*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1988.
13. John Paul Caponigro, "Inferno: A Conversation with James Nachtwey," *Camera Arts*, June/July 2000, p. 12.
14. Henri Cartier-Bresson, *The Decisive Moment*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952.
15. Deborah Martin Kao, *Gary Schneider Portraits* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Art Museums, 2004 p. 8–9.

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The generosity of our supporters, many of whom are alumni and/or board members, has made our collection what it is today. In particular, the works in this exhibition were either gifted or acquired with funds from the following donors, whom we warmly thank: Jane and Raphael Bernstein; Marc Efron, Class of 1965, and Barbara Bares; Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr.; Barbara and Robert Levine, Class of 1954, Tuck 1955; Andrew E. Lewin, Class of 1981; Elizabeth and David C. Lowenstein, Class of 1967; Olivia H. Parker and John O. Parker; Bart Osman, Class of 1990, Tuck 1996; and Harley and Stephen C. Osman, Class of 1956, Tuck 1957.

RELATED EVENTS

13 January, Tuesday, 5:00 P.M.
Member reception and sneak preview of
Focus on Photography

27 January, Tuesday, 12:30 P.M.
Lunchtime Gallery Talk
**PHOTOGRAPHERS ON PHOTOGRAPHY: A
CONVERSATION WITH VIRGINIA BEAHAN
AND BRIAN MILLER**

3 February, Tuesday, 12:30 P.M.
Lunchtime Gallery Talk
**PHOTOGRAPHY AND LIFE:
THE REAL AND THE IMAGINED**
Subhankar Banerjee, photographer and artist-in-residence, Studio Art Department
Subhankar Banerjee is a well-known photographer of landscapes and people in the northern regions of Alaska. As an artist and a sought-after public speaker, Banerjee has fought to stop drilling and the dumping of toxic waste in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

7 February, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
Introductory Tour of *Focus on Photography*

10 February, Tuesday, 12:30 P.M.
Lunchtime Gallery Talk
**CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN
PORTRAITURE**
Emily Burke,
Assistant Curator, Special Projects
Join the curator of *Focus on Photography* for a discussion of themes in contemporary portraiture, including images of adolescence, the negotiation of cultural identity and stereotypes, and the power of representation.

24 February, Tuesday, 4:30 P.M.
Lecture and Reception
**ANDREA MODICA:
TREADWELL AND FOUNTAIN**
Andrea Modica, photographer
Known for her haunting photographs of young girls in upstate New York, Andrea Modica creates images that are caught between a dream world and reality. Cosponsored by the Studio Art Department.

7 March, Saturday, 2:00 P.M.
Introductory Tour of *Focus on Photography*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Group Tours



Guided tours of the museum are available for groups by appointment. Contact the museum's education department at (603) 646-1469 or hood.museum.tours@dartmouth.edu.

Museum and Shop Hours

Tuesday–Saturday: 10 A.M.–5 P.M.

Sunday: 12 noon–5 P.M.

Wednesday evening to 9 P.M.

Assistive listening devices are available for all events. The museum, including the Arthur M. Loew Auditorium, is wheelchair accessible. For accessibility requests, please call (603) 646-2809 or email access.hood@dartmouth.edu.  

Admission and Parking

All museum exhibitions and events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Metered public parking is available in front of the museum on Wheelock Street and behind the museum on Lebanon Street. All-day public parking is available at the Parking Garage on Lebanon Street. For more information about exhibitions and programs and for directions to the Hood Museum of Art, please call (603) 646-2808 or visit our Web site: www.hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu.

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HOOD

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