



CONSENT

Complicating Agency
in Photography

A **SPACE** *for* **DIALOGUE** 92

HOOD MUSEUM OF ART, DARTMOUTH



The 2017–18 Hood senior interns laying out their *A Space for Dialogue* exhibition in the expanded and renovated Hood Museum of Art galleries. Photo by Rob Strong.

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INTRODUCTION

Amelia Kahl, Associate Curator of Academic Programming



The 2017–18 senior Hood interns, from left to right: Ashley Dotson '18, Kimberly Yu '18, Tess McGuiness '18, Gina Campanelli '18, and Marie-Therese Cummings '18. Photo by Rob Strong.

Hood Museum of Art interns curated *Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography* over the 2017–2018 academic year. They began with a disparate group of thirty photographs that Dartmouth students had selected for purchase through the Hood’s Museum Collecting 101 program.¹ From these, the interns chose thirteen works to include in their exhibition, which they centered on the theme of consent. In their introductory wall text they wrote:

In light of our current political climate and the issues around privacy, climate change, poverty, identity, and social media, this exhibition hopes to start critical conversations. We hope these photographs—often intimate, sometimes perverse, but all thoughtful and intentional—reflect the diverse challenges presented by our increasingly globalized world.

This essay collection expands upon the themes of the exhibition, presenting focused texts on six photographs that represent each of the four thematic categories of the show: Self-Reflections, Individuals and Identities, Public Spheres, and Global Ethics.

Ashley Dotson writes about issues of identity and ownership in Nikki S. Lee’s *The Ohio Project* (8) and Mário Macilau’s *Untitled* (4). Kimberly Yu looks at issues of race and sexuality in the nude female subject of Nobuyoshi Araki’s *Untitled “Bondage (Kinbaku).”* Gina Campanelli considers masculinity and brotherhood through the lens of Tim Hetherington’s *Specialist Tad Donoho, Korengal Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan*. Marie-Therese Cummings describes the gap between representation and

reality in Daniela Rossell’s photograph depicting a member of the Mexican elite, *Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque, Acapulco, Mexico)*. And Tess McGuiness explores the ubiquity of digital images through Doug Rickard’s *#40.805716, Bronx, NY* (2007).

Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography is the first *Space for Dialogue* exhibition to be shown in the newly expanded and renovated Hood Museum. This program, which began in 2002, has allowed Dartmouth students to gain hands-on curatorial experience while enriching the exhibition program of the museum at large.

The Hood staff gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Class of 1967, Bonnie and Richard Reiss Jr. ’66, and Pamela J. Joyner ’70, which makes *A Space for Dialogue* possible. We also thank Marina and Andrew Lewin ’81 for supporting an annual trip to New York City for students enrolled in Museum Collecting 101 to visit museums, galleries, and collections while making their selection for the Hood’s collection. Our work benefits immeasurably from their understanding that experiential learning is essential to our mission.

NOTE

1. Through the Museum Collecting 101 program, held annually since 2002, Dartmouth students from many of classes and majors meet to learn about the Hood’s collection and its acquisitions policy. Toward the end of each year’s session, participants choose a work—typically a photograph—to be purchased for the museum’s collection. Each object’s credit line includes the names of the students who selected it.

MACILAU VERSUS LEE

Who Owns an Identity?

Ashley Dotson, Class of 2018, Conroy Intern



Mário Macilau, *Untitled (4)*, from the series *Living on the Edge*, 2014, pigment Inkjet print on cotton rag paper. © Mário Macilau

In light of the larger global debate surrounding ownership and appropriation, documenting another person's story in photography can be controversial. This idea is explored through two photographs on view in *Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography: The Ohio Project (8)* by Nikki S. Lee and *Untitled (4)* by Mário Macilau. In both cases, it could be claimed that the lifestyle and culture portrayed are the photographer's. I argue, however, that these artists depict lifestyles that could also be considered foreign to them. The act of representing another person's story as a means for a photographer's personal gain is often considered exploitive, especially when the artist is of a greater social or economic status than the subjects of his or her work. This practice has a long history in the discipline of photography. I would, therefore, like to consider Lee and Macilau's images in the context of ownership: Does the culture and lifestyle that each of these photographers represent belong to them? A person's cultural identity can be defined as a combination of race, socioeconomic status, sexuality, and environment, among other components. Both Lee and Macilau's photographs highlight environment as the determining factor, though the two approach this topic with directly opposing methods. This essay will present the different contexts surrounding each of their photographs and discuss the complex ideas of identity and ownership.

Nikki S. Lee was born in Kye-Chang, South Korea, in 1970, and moved to the United States in 1994. Growing up exposed to different cultures through the media, she developed her ability to empathize. After coming to the United States, Lee took time to study different American subcultures (yuppies, skateboarders, hip hop culture, lesbians, etc.), and then lived among members of each group for several weeks.¹ In an attempt to have a truly immersive experience, Lee would not immediately reveal herself to be an artist. She spent time at social events and casual gatherings, where she asked other group members to take her photo. The artist claims that the resulting photographs depict her true lifestyle at the time, showing how other "societies affect [her] identity," because she is a different person depending on her surroundings.²

Rather than photograph the culture she grew up in, Lee portrays her acquired culture in a given moment. However, when looking at her work, such as the Hood's photograph from the *Ohio Project*, it appears that Lee's immersion in these cultures is only superficial. In capturing an isolated moment, the medium of photography limits the portrayal of her life in an Ohio trailer park to clothing choice and location. One could arguably describe her as merely an actor in a costume on set, and her supposed cultural immersion as pure performance. Culture consists of more than clothing and environment; it is a web of

history and identity passed down and transformed through generations. At its core, a person's culture affects the way he or she sees—and is seen by—the world, but Lee's self-portraits stop short of portraying this essential feature. Instead, she dons a mask of imitation.

Mário Macilau was born in Maputo, Mozambique. As a child, he received a camera from a friend and started taking photos of his surroundings: the people he passed by and the places he went. Through a series of barter and trades, he acquired a digital camera that he used to post photos on the Internet at the local library. This first step eventually led to the launch of Macilau's global career as a photographer. He went on to have independent shows in the United States and Canada, achieving both critical and financial success. The artist subsequently returned to Mozambique to start his series *Growing in Darkness*, in which he documents street children in his hometown of Maputo. Macilau thus publishes photographs about a culture he grew up in but no longer belongs to, raising questions about identifying with one's home even when that lifestyle is no longer one's own. The artist admits that his new lifestyle is so different that he must spend "time with [his subjects] in order to gain a deeper understanding of their reality."³ Questioning Macilau's right to represent the culture of his youth feels counterintuitive, because we often identify with our backgrounds—our roots. But can Macilau ethically depict a lifestyle he no longer leads?

By a certain logic, one might conclude that Macilau creates images of his own culture whereas Lee does not. However, the artists' own perception of their work confounds this assumption. Macilau admits that his work is not autobiography, but instead captures a lifestyle that is now foreign to him. Lee, on the other hand, views her projects as a real exploration of personal identity, where her transformations become her true self.⁵ Therefore, despite the fact that Lee appears to be a cultural outsider and Macilau an insider, by their own assertions, Lee owns her narrative and Macilau does not. Whom do you choose to believe?

NOTES

1. "About the Photographer: Nikki S. Lee," Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, accessed January 25, 2018, <http://www.mocp.org/detail.php?t=objects&type=all&f=&s=Nikki+s+lee&record=2>.
2. Nikki Lee, "Parts and Projects," University of Michigan School of Art and Design, August 19, 2009, video, 1:12:17, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bs6mlzYBY7E>.
3. Mario Macilau, "Growing in Darkness," interview by Lens Culture, *Lens Culture*, transcript, <http://www.lensculture.com/articles/mario-macilau-growing-in-darkness>. Accessed November 2017.
4. Mario Macilau, "Mario Macilau: The Street Child Who Became a Top Photographer," interview by BBC, September 8, 2015, transcript, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34090145>.
5. Nikki Lee, "Who Am I? The Artist Drawing Attention in New York," interview by Susan McDonald, *INNERview*, AIRANGTV, September 12, 2013, video, 50:18, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMychWgKedA>.



Nikki S. Lee, *The Ohio Project* (8), 1999, Fujiflex print on paper. © Nikki Lee

INTIMACY, BROTHERHOOD, AND HAZING

Tim Hetherington's *Pink Belly*

Gina Campanelli, Class of 2018, Class of 1954 Intern



Tim Hetherington, *Specialist Tad Donoho, Korengal Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan*, negative 2007; print 2012, digital chromogenic print on paper. © Tim Hetherington, Courtesy Yossi Milo Gallery, New York

Through the subject of hazing, Tim Hetherington's *Specialist Tad Donoho, Korengal Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan*, 2007—colloquially known as *Pink Belly*—contrasts intimacy and vulnerability with culturally constructed notions of masculinity. In this image, Hetherington captured the aftermath of a birthday hazing ritual performed by soldiers in the US military. Each member of Donoho's platoon took turns punching him in the stomach until he bruised and bled, thus giving him the appearance of a "pink belly."¹ Later, alone in the barracks, Donoho screams in pain.

Hetherington was an English photojournalist who was interested in documenting the "human impact of combat" through "moments of intimacy and absurdity in war."² He captured this image during his time with a US contingent in Korengal Valley, Afghanistan, one of the most heavily impacted combat zones at the time. He frequently took photographs of the more mundane and quotidian aspects of the soldiers' lives, including photographs of them sleeping, playing games, and joking with one another. He compiled these images in the exhibition *You Never See Them Like This*. "They always look so tough . . . but when they're asleep they look like little boys. They look the way their mothers probably remember them," Hetherington remarked about why he made such vulnerable images.³ The contrast between the idea of the soldier—as a tough, strong, fighting

"machine"—and individual soldiers' more human facets creates an interesting dialogue about the idea of personhood within war. Hetherington strove to capture the combatants' softer side, and to depict three-dimensional people, not two-dimensional soldiers.

Pink Belly, in particular, represents how vulnerability and masculinity can coexist within the male body. As scholar Christina Jarvis has observed, in the American context, "cultural definitions of masculinity [are] predicated on the notion of the 'whole' strong body."⁴ In Hetherington's photograph, the tension between Donoho's chiseled physique and his wounds creates an uncomfortable juxtaposition of strength and physical weakness. This notion is further complicated by Donoho's reaction—his scream of pain, emphasized by straining muscles and the grimace on his face, negates the masculine construct of bearing an injury stoically. Hetherington captured this vulnerability in the intimate setting of the barracks, where the visual signifiers of other soldiers—hanging jackets and empty beds—mirror the physical traces they left in Donoho's wounds. The fact that Donoho's own platoon inflicted these injuries subverts the viewer's expectation of a soldier being wounded by the enemy "other," forcing us to contemplate how this abuse fits into traditional notions of friendship and brotherhood.

The environment of an isolated military base in a combat zone

provides further complicating factors in the definitions of masculinity and intimacy. "Combat produces a range of masculinities, which both reinforce and undermine cultural definitions," Jarvis writes, since the range of acceptable interactions changes in this context.⁵ During his time in the Korengal Valley, Hetherington observed, "the formation of a strong brotherhood consolidated over a period of one year, underpinned by themes including sexuality, alienation/isolation and the sense of loss and fear."⁶ The brotherhood created in these types of environments grows out of necessity, as a way to cope with the overwhelming loneliness, stress, and fear of combat. Psychology defines this as "groupthink," and it occurs when "the group has low self-esteem and is required to make consequential decisions under high stress."⁷ This leads to an "escalation of commitment," which typically involves hazing. There is an evolutionarily driven aversion to being in the "out-group," and hazing is a way for members to solidify their allegiance to the "in-group." By participating in these hazing rituals, the group can increase its self-esteem and cohesion, and mitigate feelings of loneliness and isolation. In an environment with a rigid and well-defined power structure, like the military, hazing is also a way to curry favor with those ranked higher.

The formation of a tight-knit brotherhood in combination with flexible

definitions of masculinity created the environment in Hetherington's image. The photographer's ability to invoke this complex dialogue stems from his understanding of and participation in the group itself. *Pink Belly* captures the visual backdrop of these tensions and juxtapositions, and Hetherington's photograph fosters a broader inquiry into the concepts of masculinity, vulnerability, and intimacy within these specialized environments.

NOTES

1. "Tim Hetherington: Infidel," Magnum Photos Newsroom, 2008, <https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/conflict/tim-hetherington-infidel/>.
2. David Batty, "Tim Hetherington's War Photographs Show Moments of Intimacy and Absurdity," *Guardian*, September 6, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/photography-blog/2013/sep/06/tim-hetherington-war-photographs-exhibition>.
3. Ibid.
4. Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004), 87.
5. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 96.
6. "Tim Hetherington: You Never See Them Like This," Open Eye Gallery, September 6–November 24, 2013, <https://openeye.org.uk/whatson/tim-hetherington-you-never-see-them-like-this/>.
7. Gregory Scott Parks and Tiffany Southerland, "The Psychology and Law of Hazing Consent," *Marquette Law Review* (March 19, 2013), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2235742>.



Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography installed in Gutman Gallery, with views into Kim and Albright Galleries. Photo by Alison Palizzolo.

NOBUYOSHI ARAKI AT THE HOOD

The Ethics of Viewing at the Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nationality

Kimberly Yu, Class of 2018, Homma Family Intern



Nobuyoshi Araki, *Untitled "Bondage (Kinbaku)"*, negative 1988; print 2005, gelatin silver print.
© Nobuyoshi Araki

The female nude has been a constant throughout the history of Western art since as far back as 30,000 years ago, when the Venus of Willendorf was created. During the Renaissance, Italian masters like Titian (1488/90–1576) were employed to paint sensuously beautiful nude women to hang in private homes, for the viewing pleasure of the male head of the household and his guests. Inviting eyes, rosy cheeks, plump soft skin, and a hand placed along the inner thigh encourage the viewer to let his eyes consume the exquisite female body delightfully depicted before him. Nobuyoshi Araki's photograph *Untitled "Bondage (Kinbaku)"* continues in this tradition, depicting a nude woman lying on her side, making direct eye contact with the viewer. However, Araki's nude is perhaps the most controversial work in the Hood's collection, warranting content warnings when put on display. In contrast, Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1432/34–38) and Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Grande Odalisque* (1814) are hung openly in some of the world's biggest museums for millions of people to see,¹ and no one so much as blinks an eye. Of course, what is different about Araki's image is its medium, the rope that binds the woman, the artist's and the model's ethnicity, and the intended audiences for these works of art. On the floor, the Japanese model's body is tied up in the Japanese practice of *kinbaku*, or rope bondage. Her neck is tied to a wooden post. Her head rests

on a pillow. A can of a popular Japanese soft drink, Pocari Sweat, lies next to the pillow, casting a shadow just as the model's body does.

In a show about consent, Araki's image poses questions that traverse oceans and continents. Among Japanese audiences, the body in Araki's photograph is not seen as an exotic Asian body the way it is by Western viewers. Over 99 percent of people in Japan are Asian; thus Asian is not a subaltern racial category to Caucasian in the way that race is constructed in the United States. Therefore, in Japan, Araki's work is not racially coded. Its offense solely lies in its portrayal of women, which Japanese feminists have critiqued for verging on the pornographic, but without concern for how it portrays Japanese or Asian women in particular. Other Japanese women have even embraced Araki's photographs as a representation of "sexual freedom."² Some outside of Japan, however, suggest that Araki intentionally caters to Western appetites for the exoticized Orient.³ In the United States, and more specifically in the context of Dartmouth, Araki's photograph has had a much more complicated reception.

Asian women in North America are sexualized in a way that is specific to their race. The Orient has long promised the exotic and tantalizing. The West began to sexualize Asian women when introduced to images of geishas in the 1840s. World War II, the Korean

War, and the Vietnam War continued to propagate this sexually charged fascination with Asian women, as brothel industries servicing European and US military troops sprung up in Asian countries.⁴ Today, the idea that Asian women are submissive, quiet, and delicate persists. These stereotypes fuel racist phenomena ranging from “yellow fever,” which describes men exclusively attracted to Asian women, to the attacks on Asian women in New York City in 2015 by a man distraught that Asian women would not talk to him. On Dartmouth’s campus, Asian and Asian American women have reported a disproportionate amount of sexual assault. In the late 1990s, Asian women reported 30–40 percent of all sexual assault incidents on campus despite the group composing “only 12.3 percent of undergraduate women at the College.”⁵ In 2013, when Araki’s image was exhibited in *Shadowplay: Transgressive Photography from the Hood Museum of Art*, Dartmouth’s dean of Pan Asian students was concerned with how the work might affect the Asian women on campus. When we consider Araki’s photograph within our cultural context, it is important to attend to the specific ways Asian women are stereotyped in the United States, and how Araki’s subject is distinctively sexualized because of her race.

Titian, Ingres, and Araki all depict the female nude as a sexual object

to be possessed. The women in their works recline, completely exposed and devoid of facial expression. They are vulnerable, exist entirely for voyeuristic aesthetic pleasure, and do not possess agency. However, contemporary Western audiences more comfortably read Araki’s image as stripping the female subject of her agency because of her race and the explicitly sexual rope that binds her. Additionally, some scholars argue that Araki’s models’ race allows for the artist’s work to escape greater criticism in the West due to the evocation of a “different cultural background”; the same photos taken in a Western context would face much more backlash and less uncritical praise.⁶ Consent in this photograph, as they point out, is fraught along lines of gender, race, and nationality.

Araki’s works affect different communities based on the contexts in which they are viewed. An artwork by a Japanese photographer of a Japanese woman viewed in Japan does not have the same implications as the same work viewed in Hanover, New Hampshire. We must be critical of how images like this contribute to threatening racial constructions of Asian women in the American context. As responsible museumgoers we must reconcile how art is subject to the same politics that govern people’s lives outside of the museum, understanding that aesthetics is never devoid of politics.

NOTES

Note: In April 2018, during the exhibition-planning process, the artist Nobuyoshi Araki was accused of exploiting one of his models from 2001 to 2016. He is one of the first prominent artists in Japan to be implicated in the #MeToo movement. The student curators wished to take this information into account in their exhibition. The group was divided as to whether to include the object in the show. Some argued that this exhibition, with its theme of consent, is the perfect context in which to explore the issue of the exploitation of women. Others argued that putting the photograph on the wall validates Araki as an artist and implicitly condones his behavior by eliminating professional repercussions. Ultimately, the museum decided not to hang the photograph and instead to replace it with a panel discussing this issue that includes a reproduction of the work.

1. The Uffizi Gallery, Florence, and the Louvre, Paris, respectively.
2. H. Hiroko, "Representation, Distribution, and Formation of Sexuality in the Photography of Araki Nobuyoshi," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 18, no. 1 (2010), 231–52, *Project MUSE*, muse.jhu.edu/article/379206.
3. Christian Kravagna, "Bring on the Little Japanese Girls!" *Third Text* 13, no. 48 (September 1999): 65–70, doi:10.1080/09528829908576809.
4. Patricia Park, "The Madame Butterfly Effect," *Bitch Magazine: Feminist Response to Pop Culture*, no. 64 (Fall 2014): 28–33. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,url,uid&db=a9h&AN=97868920&site=ehost-live&scope=site.
5. Ritika Nandkeolyar, "Asian Council Creates Assault Committee," *The Dartmouth*, 24 (February 2000): 1–3.
6. Kravagna, "Bring on the Little Japanese Girls!"

"YES, I AM RICH, AND SO WHAT?"

Marie-Therese Cummings, Class of 2018, Levinson Intern



Daniela Rossell, *Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque, Acapulco, Mexico)*, from the series *Ricas y Famosas*, 2001, chromogenic print. © Daniela Rossell

The photograph *Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque, Acapulco, Mexico)*, 2001, is part of the series *Ricas y Famosas (Rich and Famous)* by Mexican photographer Daniela Rossell. From 1998 to 2002, she took pictures of her female relatives and friends in their homes. Rossell is the daughter of a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which was the dominant political party at the time, and the women depicted in this series are members of Mexico's political and economic elite. According to Rossell, her subjects were eager to pose for her, since they liked how others had looked in her photos.¹ Furthermore, Rossell did not style her subjects or alter the settings; she gave her subjects a great deal of liberty in choosing how to represent themselves.²

Therefore, the unnamed woman in this photograph presumably invited Rossell to take her portrait. She was photographed in the Harem Room of the Villa Arabesque, an elaborate vacation home that was built by an infamous Italian playboy and featured in a James Bond film.³ The Harem room is opulent and garish, stuffed with a large divan, patterned fabrics, and little tchotchkes—including three small “blackamoors,” or highly stylized statuettes of people of color portrayed in an exotic manner. The photograph's subject reclines on a blue-striped sofa that extends the full length of the room. She stares into a round gilt mirror, one arm playing with her tousled, (dyed)

brassy-blond curls. Perhaps her languid pose was inspired by the harem scene painted on the wall behind her.

The woman in the photograph differs from the mural's female figures in one critical way, however: the subject of the picture is utterly focused on her reflection in her hand mirror. Since her gaze is averted from the lens of the camera, she does not interact with the viewer. Meanwhile, the women in the mural are not so self-absorbed. One of them holds a mandolin, seemingly about to play music. The other painted figures converse with each other, fan each other, and fix each other's hair. Through these interactions, they appear more life-like than the flesh-and-blood woman lying on the divan below them, who seems to be little more than a mannequin in an over-decorated room.

There are no hairbrushes or make-up palettes next to the woman on the divan to justify her use of the hand-mirror. She has not chosen to be depicted while getting ready to go out, nor at her toilette. Instead, one could assume that she is looking in the mirror merely for the sake of seeing herself—and that she wished to be photographed while consciously ignoring the viewer. Rossell, when interviewed by the *New York Times*, said that she admired the brazenness of the women she photographed. “They had the courage to say, ‘Yes, I am rich, and this is where I live, so what?’”⁴

The publication of the series *Ricas y Famosas* was met with public outcry in Mexico. The photographs of these wealthy women quickly became infamous in a country where 10 percent of the population controlled 40 percent of the country's wealth.⁵ Also, many of the women pictured in the series employ domestic workers, some of whom appear in the series' other photographs. In Mexico, 2.3 million domestic workers, mostly indigenous women, toil more than thirteen hours a day for an average weekly wage of \$5.⁶

Lorenzo Meyer, a historian, wrote that Mexicans should recognize *Ricas y Famosas* in the same way an oncologist would perceive a clear image of a cancerous cell,⁷ the cancer being socioeconomic inequality and political corruption. When one considers the political and economic circumstances in Mexico at the time, this image of the woman in the Villa Arabesque becomes a particularly striking example of Meyer's "cancer." The setting the woman has chosen flaunts a vast wealth that many others do not have; the "blackamoors" decorating the setting for her portrait suggests her lack of awareness of the damage caused by racial inequality. She also happens to ignore the viewer, just as the many members of her social circle have chosen to ignore the unhappy and unfair circumstances experienced by other members of her society.

The sense of entitlement—the utter disregard for other people—captured

by Rossell in this series was repugnant to many. Viewers of this portrait are encouraged to acknowledge their own privilege, to look beyond themselves and their immediate surroundings, and not to disdain what lies beyond the mirror.

NOTES

1. Daniela Rossell, interview by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, video, March 2012, <https://www.sfmoma.org/how-daniela-rossells-photographs-came-to-be-viewed-as-images-of-mexicos-poster-girls-of-corruption/>.
2. Ginger Thompson, "Mexico City Journal; The Rich, Famous and Aghast: A Peep-Show Book," *New York Times*, September 22, 2002, www.nytimes.com/2002/09/25/world/mexico-city-journal-the-rich-famous-and-aghast-a-peep-show-book.html.
3. Isabella Geist, "Baron's Beach Mansion," *Forbes*, March 29, 2004, www.forbes.com/2004/03/28/cx_bs_0329how.html#759f2df470dc.
4. Thompson, "Mexico City Journal."
5. Ibid.
6. Nina Lakhani, "Mexico City's Domestic Workers: A Life Being Treated as a Lesser Person," *Guardian*, November 10, 2015, www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/nov/10/mexico-city-domestic-workers-life-lesser-person.
7. Thompson, "Mexico City Journal."



Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography installed along the Charles Moore stairway in the renovated museum. Photo by Rob Strong.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE AGE OF THE SMARTPHONE

Amateur versus Artist

Tess McGuinness, Class of 2018, Conroy Intern



Doug Rickard, #40.805716, Bronx, NY (2007), from the series *A New American Picture*, negative 2007; print 2011, archival pigment print. © Doug Rickard, Courtesy Yossi Milo Gallery

Doug Rickard's photography series *A New American Picture* layers two forms of photography: the first, a screenshot of a Google Maps site configured on his computer screen using the Street View feature; the second, a photograph of the image on screen, captured with a digital camera. The result: pictures of seemingly anonymous places and people, photos whose dissolved and pixilated qualities are almost surrealist. While Rickard's intention with the series was to shed light on low-income and rarely exposed areas throughout the United States, his methods as a photographer raise some imperative questions regarding the integrity of photography as an artistic medium. In an increasingly digitalized world, how does the accessibility of technology play a part in shaping the future of the art world? If we all possess the ability to become photographers with the snap of an iPhone camera, what delineates an amateur from an artist?

The answer for many in the artistic community has not been to reject technology, but rather to embrace it. For example, *Searching for Sugar Man*, the Academy Award winner for Best Feature Documentary in 2012, was shot with the assistance of an iPhone camera.¹ Contemporary French artist David Swann manipulates photos on his iPhone to print on canvas.² "New media" photographer Richard Koci Hernandez, who has won an Emmy and two Pulitzer Prizes, now primarily uses mobile photography

because it allows him to experiment more drastically, feel more flexible in his process, and release work and receive input at a faster rate.³ Countless more have exploited the convenience and flexibility of smartphone technology in conjunction with social media apps as creative outlets for creation and presentation. In the context of this digital age of photography, the burgeoning trend of self-photography ("selfies") has also reflected ethical, genre, and artistic complications in what can be considered portraiture. "Smartphone art," as it has been deemed by some, is quickly becoming a legitimate medium; mobile art is the new canvas, applications such as VSCO and Instagram the new art galleries.

The nearly universal accessibility of smartphones has inevitably complicated the practice of street photography, a tradition whose roots can be traced back to invention of the daguerreotype in the nineteenth century. Paul Martin pioneered the practice in the streets of London, with photographers such as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, and Vivian Maier furthering and mastering candid photography techniques and methodologies.⁴ The candid aesthetic of street photography reflected contemporary interest in the modern world. In an urban environment, the public sphere felt increasingly random, the anonymity of human subjects increasingly palpable—anxieties that, subsequently, were explored and exploited

in art and photography. Today, the very existence of the flaneur, or street observer, is threatened by the fact that almost *everyone* in the public sphere is absorbed by and has access to photo-capable technological devices, rendering the delineations between artist, subject, and environment as somewhat indistinct. Unlike conventional street photographers, however, Rickard has never actually visited these urban sites or directly captured a candid moment of these lives on the street; instead, his use of Google Street View exploits the massive digital archive of public space available universally. He becomes a second-degree flaneur, separated from his subject matter by the very technology that he relies on to create art.

Rickard's *A New American Picture* suggests a correlation between his work and traditional street photography; however, his use of Google Street View reflects the changes transforming street photography and the art of photography as a whole. Rickard furthers the evolution of street photography by both relying and commenting on the technological world—a world where, as Rickard states, “a camera mounted on a moving car can generate evidence of the people and places it is leaving behind.”⁵ With their faces blurred, their identities indistinct, the people and places that dominate Rickard's work are far more anonymous than the urban subjects of his fellow street photographers. Ironically, it is only with technology that Rickard

can expose these socioeconomically immobilized and socially disenfranchised environments as art works in their own right.

So, the question remains—how can one differentiate technological images and, well, *art*, especially as it pertains to photography? The answer lies in the artist. Sure, everyone has access to these technological devices, but how are we using them? What does it mean to be a flaneur in this age of modernity, and what does it mean to be a subject? Why do we take the pictures we take? What are we trying to say with these photos, if anything at all? Moving forward in this digital world, the answers to these questions, along with the future of photography itself, will entirely depend on artists' ability to exploit, integrate, and innovate with technology and subject matter. Like Rickard, artists need not reject technology, but rather utilize it as another layer of meaning in artistic expression.

NOTES

1. See <https://newatlas.com/searching-for-sugar-man-iphone-oscar/26400>.
2. See <https://www.cnn.com/2012/09/19/living/iphone-art/index.html>.
3. See <https://iphonophotographyschool.com/koci-interview/>.
4. See <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/04/arts/henri-cartierbresson-artist-who-used-lens-dies-at-95.html>.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

SELF-REFLECTIONS

Vivian Maier, American, 1926–2009

Self-Portrait

Negative 1950s; print 2017

Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood W'18 Fund; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Annabelle Bardenheier, Class of 2019; Maria Sarela Brenes, Class of 2017; Maclean Calihan, Class of 2017; Kang-Chun Cheng, Class of 2017; Palden Flynn, Class of 2018; Lena S. Gandevia, Class of 2019; Ishaan H. Jajodia, Class of 2020; Makena Kauhane, Class of 2019; John Ling, Class of 2017; Morgan Moinian, Class of 2020; Oscar Rodriguez de la Vega Olivares, Tuck Class of 2017; Emily H. Yang, Class of 2018; 2017.40.2

Tierney Gearon, American, born 1963

Untitled

From the series *The Mother Project*

2001

Chromogenic print

Purchased through the Fund for Contemporary Photography, and a gift from the Krehbiel Foundation; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Anna Leah Berstein Simpson, Class of 2013; Bay Lauris ByrneSim, Class of 2015; Jane Cavalier, Class of 2014; Eric Chalif, Class of 2016; Joshua Kornberg, Class of 2013; Katharine Kranenburg, Class of 2013; Shweta Raghu, Class of 2015; Emily Stronski, Class of 2013; Laura Vang, Class of 2015; Elizabeth Wilkins, Class of 2016; Junaid Timtooni Yakubu, Class of 2016; 2013.17

Nikki S. Lee, American (born South Korea), born 1970

The Ohio Project (8)

1999

Fujiflex print on paper

Purchased through the Elizabeth and David C. Lowenstein '67 Fund; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Zachary P. Dorner, Class of 2008; Claire M. Dunning, Class of 2008; Celeste Griffin-Churchill, Class of 2007; Kathryn J. Hagy, Class of 2008; Gina Lee, Class of 2008; Lisa Moon, Class of 2008; Marissa A. Slany, Class of 2008; and Sherry S. Zhao, Class of 2007; 2007.59

INDIVIDUALS AND IDENTITIES

Nobuyoshi Araki, Japanese, born 1940

Untitled "Bondage (Kinbaku)"

Negative 1988; print 2005

Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Anonymous Fund #144; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Zachary P. Dorner, Class of 2008; Claire M. Dunning, Class of 2008; Celeste Griffin-Churchill, Class of 2007; Kathryn J. Hagy, Class of 2008; Gina Lee, Class of 2008; Lisa Moon, Class of 2008; Marissa A. Slany, Class of 2008; and Sherry S. Zhao, Class of 2007; 2007.35

Tim Hetherington, English and American,
1970–2011

*Specialist Tad Donoho, Korengal Valley,
Kunar Province, Afghanistan*

Negative 2007; print 2012

Digital chromogenic print on paper

Purchased through a gift from Modie J. Spiegel,
Class of 1922, by exchange; Selected by
participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting
101": Kate G. Bradshaw, Class of 2014; Allison
M. Chou, Class of 2017; David S. Cordero, Class
of 2016; Yasmeen Erritouni, Class of 2017; Lauren
Gatewood, Class of 2014; Juliana S. Park, Class of
2014; Matt Sturm, Class of 2013; Iris Yu, Class of
2014; 2014.27

Daniela Rossell, Mexican, born 1973

*Untitled (Janita Harem Room, Villa Arabesque,
Acapulco, Mexico)*

From the series *Ricas y Famosas*

2001

Chromogenic 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 seminar "Museum Collecting
101": Sarah Bohlman, Class of 2004; Jeffrey
Cooperman, Class of 2006; Joanne Kim, Class
of 2005; Amy Kurtz, Class of 2006; Sarah Murray,
Class of 2004; Rolaine Ossman, Class of 2004;
Arielle Ring, Class of 2007; Catherine Roberts,
Class of 2005; Emily Salas, Class of 2006; Liz Seru,
Class of 2004; Eleanor Smith, Class of 2004;
Miell Y. Yi, Class of 2002; PH.2004.18

PUBLIC SPHERES

Vivian Maier, American, 1926–2009

Untitled

Negative 1954; print 2017

Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood W'18
Fund; Selected by participants in the seminar
"Museum Collecting 101": Annabelle Bardenheier,
Class of 2019; Maria Sarela Brenes, Class of 2017;
Maclean Calihan, Class of 2017; Kang-Chun Cheng,
Class of 2017; Palden Flynn, Class of 2018; Lena S.
Gandevia, Class of 2019; Ishaan H. Jajodia, Class of
2020; Makena Kauhane, Class of 2019; John Ling,
Class of 2017; Morgan Moinian, Class of 2020;
Oscar Rodriguez de la Vega Olivares, Tuck Class of
2017; Emily H. Yang, Class of 2018; 2017.40.1

Doug Rickard, American, born 1968

#40.805716, Bronx, NY (2007)

From the series *A New American Picture*

Negative 2007; print 2011

Archival pigment print

Purchased through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood
W'18 Fund and the James and Barbara Block
Acquisitions Endowment; Selected by participants
in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101":
Annabelle Bardenheier, Class of 2019; Maria Sarela
Brenes, Class of 2017; Maclean Calihan, Class of
2017; Kang-Chun Cheng, Class of 2017; Palden
Flynn, Class of 2018; Lena S. Gandevia, Class of
2019; Ishaan H. Jajodia, Class of 2020; Makena
Kauhane, Class of 2019; John Ling, Class of 2017;
Morgan Moinian, Class of 2020; Oscar Rodriguez
de la Vega Olivares, Tuck Class of 2017; Emily H.
Yang, Class of 2018; 2017.38

Jerome Liebling, American, 1924–2011
May Day Union Square Park, New York City
1948
Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Mrs. Harvey P. Hood W'18 Fund; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Jonathan A. Busam, Class of 2017; Amy Chang, Class of 2016; Xiyue (Bonita) Chen, Class of 2016; Tangent Ting Cheung Cheng, Class of 2016; Sharon J. Cho, Class of 2017; Byrne Hollander, Class of 2017; Felicia B. Jia, Class of 2016; Suhyeon Kim, Class of 2019; Catherine M. Most, Class of 2016; Eva M. Munday, Class of 2016; Julia M. Pomerantz, Class of 2016; Katherine C. Schreiber, Class of 2018; Joseph Wang, Class of 2016; Nancy L. Wu, Class of 2016; Regina L. Yan, Class of 2019; Eun Kyung Yoon, Class of 2019; 2016.22

James Karales, American, 1930–2002
Selma to Montgomery March
Negative 1965; print 2008
Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Sondra and Charles Gilman Jr. Foundation Fund and through gifts by exchange; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Kate G. Bradshaw, Class of 2014; Allison M. Chou, Class of 2017; David S. Cordero, Class of 2016; Yasmeen Erritouni, Class of 2017; Lauren Gatewood, Class of 2014; Juliana S. Park, Class of 2014; Matt Sturm, Class of 2013; Iris Yu, Class of 2014; 2014.19

GLOBAL ETHICS

Atta Kim, Korean, born 1956
Museum Project #004
From the series *Field*
1996
Chromogenic print

Purchased through a gift from the Krehbiel Foundation and gifts given in memory of Vicky Ransmeier, docent and friend of the museum; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Katherine J. Briggs, Class of 2010; Kendall P. Frank, Class of 2010; Anna Y. M. Gaissert, Class of 2013; Thisbe N. Gensler, Class of 2010; Marguerite V. Imbert, Class of 2011; Cassie R. Jackson, Class of 2012; Tien-Tien L. Jong, Class of 2010; Ji Lin, Class of 2011; Jonathan W. Lohse, Class of 2010; Jean W. Mason, Class of 2011; Caroline E. Poorman, Class of 2012; Jake R. Routhier, Class of 2010; Sydney A. Thomashow, Class of 2011; Stephanie A. Trejo, Class of 2010; Jin Yan, Class of 2011; 2010.41.1

Mário Macilau, Mozambican, born 1984
Untitled (4)
From the series *Living on the Edge*
2014
Pigment Inkjet print on cotton rag paper

Purchased through the James and Barbara Block Acquisitions Endowment; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Julie F. Goodrich, MALS; Lauren K. Mitchell, Class of 2018; Gabriel Barrios, Class of 2015; Joyce J. Pan, Class of 2015; 2015.41

Sebastiao Salgado, Brazilian, born 1944
Brasil (Serra Pelada Gold Mine)
1986
Gelatin silver print

Purchased through the Fund for Contemporary Photography; Selected by participants in the seminar "Museum Collecting 101": Betty Baez-Melo, Class of 2005; Gabriela Jaramillo, Class of 2004; Marilyn Nyanteh, Class of 2005; Lia Rothstein, Holly Shaffer, Class of 2003; and Yin Zhao, Class of 2006; PH.2002.59

CONSENT

Complicating Agency in Photography

The exhibition *Consent: Complicating Agency in Photography*, part of the museum's student-curated *A Space for Dialogue* series, is on view at the Hood Museum of Art, January 26–May 5, 2019.

A Space for Dialogue: Fresh Perspectives on the Permanent Collection from Dartmouth's Students, founded with support from the Class of 1948, is made possible with generous endowments from the Class of 1967, Bonnie and Richard Reiss Jr. '66, and Pamela J. Joyner '70.

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Front cover: Mário Macilau, *Untitled (4)* (detail), from the series *Living on the Edge*, 2014, pigment Inkjet print on cotton rag paper. © Mário Macilau

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