

PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHS #PHRC22

Room: Hugh Aston, 2.09

MONDAY 13 June 2022

9.30 – 10.00 Registration and coffee

10.00 – 10.15 Welcome: Kelley Wilder, PHRC

10.15 – 11.00 **Keynote Lecture** (Chair: Kelley Wilder)
Anabella Pollen (University of Brighton)
Writing into the Void: Photographic Imaginaries and Ekphrastic
Descriptions in Mass Observation

11.00 – 11.15 Discussion

11.15– 11.30 Comfort Break

Panel 1. Productive Absences (Chair: Gil Pasternak)

11.30 – 11.45 Desré Barnard (Cape Town Creative Academy) - “The horror without object”: A Philosophical Enquiry Into Photography, Archives, and Absence.

11.45 – 12.00 David Houston Jones (University of Exeter) - Invisible Images: Trevor Paglen and the Eigenface

12.00 – 12.20 Discussion

12.20 – 13.15 Lunch

Panel 2. Edge of Visibility (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)

13.15 – 13.30 Rachel Lee Hutcheson (Columbia University) - Color as Signal Data in Post-Optical Photography.

13.30 – 13.45 Adam Brown (London South Bank University) - Risk as Trace: The Intentional Precarity of the Digital Architectural Image.

13.45 – 14.05 Discussion

14.05 – 15.00 Coffee break

Panel 3. Lost in the Archive (Chair: Jennifer Tucker)

15.00 – 15.15 Ella Ravilious (De Montfort University) - “Are not the photographs which shew Museum objects superfluous, as long as the objects themselves can be seen in the Museum?”: 19th century Painted Photographs in the Museum.

15.15 – 15.30 Katherine Howells (The National Archives of the United Kingdom) - “No copy annexed”: Exploring early British photography through digital analysis of entry forms for photographs registered under the 1862 Fine Arts Copyright Act.

15.30 – 15.50 Discussion

15.50 – 16.00 Comfort Break

16.00 – 16.45 **Plenary** (Chair: Gil Pasternak)
Sigrid Lien (University of Bergen) and Mette Sandbye (University of Copenhagen) - Activating Absences: Methodological Reflections on the Lost Archives of Early Women Photographers in Denmark and Norway.

16.45 – 17.00 Discussion

17.00 – 18.00 Wine reception

19.00 Conference dinner: Kayal (153 Granby St, LE1 6FE, Leicester)

Close of Day 1

TUESDAY 14 June 2020

9.00 Registration and coffee

Panel 4. Making and Unmaking (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)

09.30 – 09.45 Christine Slobogin (Durham University) - Prints after Photographs: Medical Imagery and the Anonymous (?) Index.

09.45 – 10.00 Julien Faure-Conorton (Musée départemental Albert-Kahn, Boulogne-Billancourt) - “À terminer”: Phantom Autochromes from the Archives of the Planet.

10.00 – 10.20 Discussion

10.20 – 10.30 Comfort Break

Panel 5. Silent Histories (Chair: Gil Pasternak)

10.30 – 10.45 Krupa C Desai (Birkbeck University of London) – Fragmented Optics of Development: Looking for Photographic Histories of Displacement.

10.45 – 11.00 Feargal Fitzpatrick (National College of Art and Design, Dublin) – The Invisible Famine.

11.00 – 11.20 Discussion

11.20 – 11.45 Coffee Break

Panel 6. Historiographies Lost (Chair: Donna West Brett)

11.45 – 12.00 Hanin Hannouch (Weltmuseum Wien) – The Wilhelm Zenker/Gabriel Lippmann Debate: The “First” Theory and Photograph of Interferential Color.

12.00 – 12.15 Stefanie Jason (Rutgers University) – Materiality of Absence: The photographic Archive of Mabel Cetu (1910-1990).

12.15 – 12.35 Discussion

12.35 – 13.45 Lunch break

Panel 6 (continued). Historiographies Lost (Chair: Kelley Wilder)

- 13.45 – 14.00 Julieta Pestarino (Buenos Aires University) – Photographic Archeology:
Finding the Photos of *La Carpeta de los Diez*
- 14.00 – 14.15 Alexander Scott (University of Wales Trinity St David) – In Search of
Photographs without an Address: Museums, Photography and the Dilemmas
of Archival Research.
- 14.15 – 14.35 Discussion
- 14.35 – 15.00 Comfort Break
- 15.00 – 15.45 **Keynote Lecture** (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)
Chitra Ramalingam (Yale University)
Fixing and fading: preservation and loss in early photography
- 15.45 – 16.00 Discussion
- 16.00 Close of Conference**

PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHS

#PHRC22

MONDAY 14 June 2021

Keynote Lecture:

Dr Annabella Pollen (University of Brighton UK)

Writing into the Void: Photographic imaginaries and ekphrastic descriptions in Mass Observation

The social research organisation, Mass Observation, founded in 1937 to create ‘an anthropology of ourselves’, has visuality implicit in its title. In its earliest years, photographers, painters and filmmakers were employed as researchers to document British everyday life, but these methods were short-lived, and the results often disconnected from the more prominent research focus, which emphasised the written record. Nonetheless, the founders – whose interests ranged across poetry, ornithology and film – used photographic metaphors extensively and considered ‘the image’ to be central, even if it remained in the mind’s eye and took a written form. This talk will outline how photography has formed an absent presence across Mass Observation since its inception, with a particular exploration of photographic writing in the later Mass Observation Project.

The Mass Observation Project was established in 1981 as a revival of aspects of first-phase Mass Observation (1937-1960s). Its organisers characterise it as a life-writing project first and foremost. A volunteer panel, comprised of several hundred carefully-named correspondents, answers thrice-yearly ‘directives’ on a range of subjects. In 2012, correspondents considered photography and reflected at length on photographs that they had lost and that they had accidentally or deliberately destroyed, as well as photographs that exist only in their minds’ eyes. This talk will argue that these written photographs, vividly and dramatically produced in ekphrastic descriptions, embody the imagistic ambitions of Mass Observation’s founders but also correspond with wider photographic cultures that consider absent photographs, such as Will Steacy’s 2012 collection, *Photographs Not Taken*. This similarly examines, as Lyle Wexler has put it, ‘pictures that could not be taken, pictures that were prevented from being taken, pictures that were

taken and failed, pictures that were almost taken but abandoned, pictures that might have been taken but were renounced, pictures that were missed and became memories before they could be taken, and ... pictures that were taken of one thing and were really about something entirely different that could not be shown directly’.

Panel 1. Productive Absences (Chair: Gil Pasternak)

Desré Barnard (Cape Town Creative Academy)

‘The horror without object’: a philosophical enquiry into photography, archives, and absence

Little was known about South Africa’s chemical and biological warfare (CBW) capabilities before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) began its investigation in 1998. Following the 1997 arrest of Wouter Basson, South Africans watched in horror how the TRC began to unravel one of apartheid South Africa’s most sordid secrets: Project Coast. Although a surprising number of documents survived the various archival purges, there is a conspicuous lack of photographs pertaining directly to the project. Thus, envisioning what the project would have looked like falls largely into the realm of the imaginary.

In this study, I consider the work of photographs in the service of the archive. By situating Project Coast within the present visual economies of similar clandestine international CBW programmes, I argue that the lack of photographic evidence speaks to an ideology of absence, and secrecy as ideological. In the first section, I address the pictures that we do have from private and public archives in the form of news media reports and the narrativised account of Basson’s criminal trial, *Secrets and Lies: Wouter Basson and South Africa’s Chemical and Biological Warfare Programme* (Burger & Gould, 2002). As supplements and placeholders, those photographs which we do have fail to make present the largely fragmented project. However, I argue that this is not tantamount to the failure of the visual. In the second section, I examine the South African History Archive’s CBW Project Collection, AL2922, and begin to tease out how to recognise absence. By thinking of the absences as productive spaces, accessible by considering them as a Thirdspace (Soja, 1996), and engaging with them by seeing a-visually, I argue that the layers of secrecy can be able to be peeled back, leaving the absences that haunt the archive as potentially

affective spaces. The absences in the archive have implications for trauma studies and nation-building, and as such, could be considered as imagined documents wherein we are able to project an image of what Project Coast may have looked like. The absences are far reaching, and exist not only in this archive. As such, I posit that by considering these absences as ‘sites’ worthy of critical engagement, we are able to think anew about how the secrecy of apartheid continues to haunt post-apartheid archives.

David Houston Jones (University of Exeter)

Invisible Images: Trevor Paglen and the Eigenface

This paper takes the photographer Trevor Paglen’s notion of ‘invisible images’ as the cue for an investigation of a visual culture whose key operations take place between machines. Many of the transactions of that culture, from automatic number plate recognition to facial recognition systems, are literally invisible to human viewers: their images cannot easily be consumed by the naked eye. What happens when we turn our visual attention to images like these? Machine-to-machine images are ‘operational’, intended to fulfil an instrumental function, often as part of a larger biometric operation. Paglen’s ‘Eigenface’ series, meanwhile, foregrounds the Eigenface method used in facial recognition technologies, assembling a series of two-dimensional views of an individual’s face and projecting them as a composite onto a ‘feature space’. The resulting images lurk on the brink of visibility: they resist full intelligibility and remain blurred. As Paglen argues, the ‘machine-to-machine landscape is not one of representations so much as activations and operations’ (Paglen 2019). Here, though, the field of operations is (re)traversed by the domain of representation: Paglen’s images elaborate a searching critique of the biometric enterprise of which they are part, self-consciously testifying to their operational structure and straining viewing to the limit.

Panel 2. Edge of Visibility (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)

Rachel Lee Hutcherson (Columbia University)

Color as Signal Data in Post-Optical Photography

In 1873, the American inventor Frederic E. Ives was invited to test a new counterfeiting measure used by Brazilian currency that would deter photographic copying. This method secured the new paper currency by printing the word “counterfeit” in a deeper yellow dye

than that of the currency's yellow paper. The security measure relies on the insensitivity of ordinary emulsions to the yellow spectrum which rendered the dark yellow dye as if black. Ives tested the new currency to see if there was a method by which 'counterfeit' would not show in photographs.

The Brazilian Government did not end up adopting the proposed counterfeit proofing measure. Nor do the photographs from Ives' experiment seem to survive, only his recollection of the experiment in an adulating profile from 1896.¹ However, the incident demonstrates a now ubiquitous condition of photography as non-visual, operationalized data. The Counterfeit photograph is not primarily a visual/ optical phenomenon (an object to be looked at) but rather a record of chemical sensation operations that are not visible to the human eye. Referentiality and mimesis is supplemented by functionality. This example, moreover, rejects the simple distinction between analog and digital. Post-optical photography precedes digital technology, but as a paradigm, it is fully articulated only with the digital.² Photography has become aggregate data

and the image itself functionalized according to opaque algorithms that make up machine learning and artificial intelligence.

Post-optical photography is essentially, "photography without the photograph." The photograph has given way to photography which is always already entangled in informational and computational processes. This paper considers specifically the ways in which color is operationalized in photography. From the counterfeit watermark to ubiquitous image processing algorithms, the functionalization of color has quietly supplanted the dominant mimetic and descriptive capacity of color in photography.

Adam Brown (London South Bank University)

Risk as Trace: the intentional precarity of the digital architectural image.

The digital architectural image can be understood as a vulnerable artefact: it predates construction of built form, and either disappears from the visual record post-construction, or in the case of failed projects, languishes in rapidly obsolescing archives, progressively more difficult to retrieve.

The architectural rendering deploys photographic form rhetorically, intended to influence probabilities, to convince funders and those impacted by development of the viability and desirability of a given project. Such images lost to the record can be described as having been ‘documentary’ in their ability to encapsulate a moment at which a ‘speech act’ was productive. Equally, the vanished image of the failed project might be described as representative of an inability to convince: the trace of political or discursive friction. In the case of the Helsinki Guggenheim, unrealised due to widespread dissent, the few remaining renderings appear to link indexically to a lack of the frictionless motion desirable to speculative development, an absence of magical thinking which may be termed ‘realistic.’

Drawing on Harvey’s analyses of economics and urban development, this paper will explore a range of failed projects and speculate on the purposeful precarity of the digital image. The possibility of erasure could be said to be baked in to the functionality of the image, with the appearance or trace of risk a key operator in its rhetorical function and networked operation.

Panel 3. Lost in the Archive (Chair: Jennifer Tucker)

Ella Ravilious (De Montfort University)

‘Are not the photographs which shew Museum objects superfluous, as long as the objects themselves can be seen in the Museum?’ 19th century Painted Photographs in the Museum

The photographs this paper discusses are obscured by paint and are not immediately recognisable as photographic. Made by the V&A and other institutions in the late 19th century as accurate colour reproductions of art objects, in their trajectories within the institution they have been misunderstood, contested, disposed of and dismissed. I will consider the forces which inspired their creation and tell the story of their making, including specific photographic campaigns such as the 1872 facsimile of the Bayeux Tapestry.

The suppression of these objects as photographs is clear, not just through their overpainting but through their positioning and repositioning in museum records and structures. The surviving examples have uncanny aesthetic and act as potent boundary objects situated between photography and painting, original and reproduction, and art

object and reference material. They epitomise the struggles between use value and aesthetic value in the framing of photography.

This paper will discuss these in relation to theories of photographic ecosystems and trajectories, drawing on work by Schwartz, Wilder and Edwards.

These hybrid objects are an expression of Victorian idealism regarding the reproduction and dissemination of art, showing the ambition, technical prowess and resource deployed in making art reproductions. Created to encourage selective appropriation of historic and/or non-British art styles and techniques, these objects are exemplars for 19th century ideals of universalism in museums.

Dr Katherine Howells (The National Archives of the United Kingdom)

'No copy annexed': Exploring early British photography through digital analysis of entry forms for photographs registered under the 1862 Fine Arts Copyright Act

In 1862 the Fine Arts Copyright Act was passed into law in the United Kingdom, conferring copyright protection on paintings, drawings, and photographs for the first time. The Act was controversial in including photographs, since photography was in its infancy as a medium and still ill-defined as a form of artistic expression. Between 1862 and 1912, artists and photographers could register their work for copyright protection by completing an entry form and submitting it to Stationers' Hall. They sometimes attached a copy of their work to the form, but often, and particularly in the early years of the registration system, they did not. This collection of records is now held at The National Archives, offering an incredible insight into the early days of photography, but one which in many cases is devoid of the actual photographs themselves. The entry forms provide descriptions of the photographs and details of those people registering them, and this information has been transcribed into an online catalogue, with the phrase 'no copy annexed' to indicate the lack of a photograph. This paper seeks to examine the nature of British photographic industries in the early 1860s and the response of photographers to the 1862 Act, by relying solely on digital analysis of the catalogue data. Through this analysis, I aim to demonstrate the research potential of using digital tools to conduct distant readings of photograph collections, even when the photographs themselves are missing.

Plenary (Chair: Gil Pasternak)

Sigrid Lien (Professor of Art History, University of Bergen, Norway)

&

Mette Sandbye (Professor of Photography Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark)

Activating Absences: Methodological Reflections on the Lost Archives of Early Women Photographers in Denmark and Norway

It is often claimed that the act of bringing to life dormant and passive archival cultural memories can potentially also subvert the existing, active memories that already circulate in culture: the canons that are formed through repetition, reappreciation, and continuous restaging (Assmann 2008). But how can canons be challenged when there are gaps in the archive, when the memories that call for reinvigoration not only are dormant, but absent – never collected, ruined or lost?

This paper will address such questions with an ongoing research project on early women photographers in Denmark and Norway as a point of departure. Women photographers held a strong position in the early photographic culture of the Nordic countries. Notably, these professional women not only engaged in aesthetic production, but also in political struggles. A considerable number of them made up the core of the organized women's movement. However, as established by Derrida, the archive produces just as much as it records, but can only offer a particular kind of reconstruction, a partial view (Derrida 1996). The women photographers' histories remain largely untold. In most cases, their life-stories and work are lost. The paper will therefore discuss the methodological challenges connected to countering such absences. It will exemplify how research on the women photographers' practices and the connection between their aesthetics and politics requires methodological innovation. It will ask how it may be possible to subvert the archival partiality and absence – that for so long have contributed to making the histories of the early woman photographers so difficult to trace?

TUESDAY 15 June 2022

Panel 4. Making and Unmaking (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)

Christine Slobogin (Durham University)

Prints after Photographs: Medical Imagery and the Anonymous (?) Index

This paper will center around late-nineteenth-century examples of prints (engravings and lithographs) based on clinical patient photographs, exploring how images in these two contrasting mediums connect to and convey emotion, patient identity or anonymity, and indexicality. Auxiliary to the published print, the photographs that had to have existed to make these images were never published and remain unseen; yet thinking through the photographic process's effects on these circulated prints is necessary for understanding the emotional connection to these medical images and to the patients depicted within them.

The “reality” of the photographic medium adds ethical complications to displaying and viewing medical imagery, and it was when photography was widely used in medical texts that the question of anonymizing patient images began to be discussed. But what difference does photography make in medical imagery when the finished product is “just” an engraving or lithograph? What are the ethical considerations of viewing and showing patients’ pathologized likenesses in print?

With images of rhinoplasty, orthopedic surgery, and syphilitic infection, this paper will show that even when unseen, photography was critical to the medical knowledge being conveyed and that photography is still significant in present-day viewers’ understandings of patient experience and identity in these prints.

Julien Faure-Conorton (Musée départemental Albert-Kahn, Boulogne-Billancourt)

“À terminer”: Phantom Autochromes from the Archives of the Planet.

Actual aspect of the original plate Digitally developed image available online Frédéric Gadmer, Vodun Priestesses, Zado, Dahomey, 28 February 1930 Unfinished autochrome plate (12 x 9 cm) Département des Hauts-de-Seine, Musée départemental Albert-Kahn, Collection Archives de la Planète As it is well-known, the Archives of the Planet consist of autochromes and films gathered between 1909 and 1932 by various operators working for the banker-philanthropist Albert Kahn under the scientific direction of geographer Jean Brunhes. Today, that collection represents approximately 72 000 autochromes,

the largest in the world using that process. What is lesser-known is that about two-thirds of them are unfinished, i.e. autochromes only partially developed and/or not retouched, doubled and bound. The status of these unfinished plates is problematic. At the time, they were not meant to be shown and were stored in separate boxes labelled “AT”, for “À terminer” (“To be completed”). When in the early 2000’s, the autochrome collection was digitised to create the museum’s database, the choice was made to digitally develop the unfinished plates to show what they would have looked like, had they been finished. This led to the creation of “phantom” autochromes, images that exist only as digital files as the plates physically kept in our storage rooms are not at all in the state of development in which they appear on our database and website. How should these virtual images be addressed today and what ethics should preside over their use and circulation? Should we challenge their mere existence or, on the contrary, consider them no less legitimate than finished plates? What should matter most: the object or the image? These are several of the questions this paper will address

Panel 5. Silent Histories (Chair: Gil Pasternak)

Krupa C Desai (Birkbeck University of London)

Fragmented Optics of Development: Looking for Photographic Histories of Displacement

The construction of the Bhakra-Nangal Dam (1947-63) was significant to the developmental optics of post-colonial India. Spectacular landscape photographs of this Dam were published internationally and became synonymous to nation-building and progress in the 1950s. Simultaneous to this Dam construction, four hundred and seventy-one villages were drowned by the Dam reservoir, displacing thousands of new citizens, turning them into *Oustees* – those who were ousted by the grand developmental vision. The state archives suppress the visual and affective histories of displacement by limiting it as a rehabilitation and claim resettlement issue. Situated in this gap, my paper intends to uncover the lost visual histories of development induced displacement. Two questions will guide my analysis here - When the state vision engendered an optics that suppressed the grim contradictions of the developmental process, how can we read the available spectacular images for what it suppresses, rather than what it depicts? What possible sources and methods can help unearth those histories of displacement made undiscoverable by design?

Feargal Fitzpatrick (National College of Art and Design, Dublin)

The Invisible Famine.

The Great Famine in Ireland during the late 1840s was the first humanitarian crisis to become a heavily-mediated event, drawing significant international coverage in print media across the English-speaking world. Though substantially addressed through text and illustration, and with photographic practices expanding exponentially in Ireland at the time, there is no known archive of Famine photographs. Imaging of catastrophe brings about a crisis in discourses of representation, and draws attention to some profound contradictions in modernity. This is a familiar argument in contemporary scholarship on photography, but requires a deeper critique when oriented towards the Irish Famine (1845-1852). Specifically, the absence of photographs 'of' the Famine poses a series of questions to contemporary critical-historical studies on photography. Our tendency to frame the lack of such images as a gap speaks to a set of expectations that cannot be historically 'retro-fitted'. The implications expand into the fields of politics, ethics and historiography, demanding a negotiation of the continuities and disjunctions between horizons of expectation historically and now. This paper draws upon a methodology informed by the work of Jacques Rancière, Georges Didi-Huberman, Homi K. Bhabha and Margaret Kelleher. It reshapes some familiar questions and proposes new routes through this difficult terrain.

Panel 6. Historiographies Lost (Chair: Donna West Brett)

Hanin Hannouch (Weltmuseum Wien)

The Wilhelm Zenker/Gabriel Lippmann Debate: The "First" Theory and Photograph of Interferential Color.

When and how did color photography begin and what does "photography" mean? Photography's foundational dates are the crux of the hierarchy of knowledge around which practitioners and historians articulate both the medium's streamlined pre-history and its "general" and often nationalistic historiographies. Yet the beginning of color photography was a fraught territory between photographic practice and photographic theories. While the former resulted in iconic images collected by museums, the latter often pertained to questions about light and vision which were, to some extent, independent of

the photograph as material object. My research interrogates the place theoretical formulations of photography and of photochemistry have played in the history of the medium by focusing two competing historiographies about the beginning of interferential color photography: On the one hand, the French narrative positioning physicist Gabriel Lippmann as the medium's inventor after his presentation of a color photograph of the spectrum in 1891. On the other hand, the German narrative contending that scientist Wilhelm Zenker was interferential photography's founding father thanks to his 1868 theoretical work *Lehrbuch der Photochromie* despite Zenker never having used photography.

Stefanie Jason (Rutgers University)

Materiality of Absence: The photographic Archive of Mabel Cetu (1910-1990)

practiced photojournalism in South Africa's mid-twentieth century time when apartheid was newly entrenched across the country, and racial, gender and economic policies fortified subjection for the country's black majority population. Despite being labelled as the "first black woman photographer of South Africa" –a designation that arguably indicts prejudicial socio-political and cultural landscapes–this paper questions the palpable absence of Cetu's photographs from the country's photographic histories. In this paper, I provoke the limits of the archives of the Golden City Press and Drum Magazine, two of the many publications Cetu worked for in the late 1950s, either as contributor or as staff. Moreover, this paper lays bare the existent gaps within these repositories as they relate not only to Cetu's legacy but to the mechanisms of silencing which have served to obscure the voices, or visions, of black cultural producers within historical records today. Drawing on my interviews with Cetu's family and the minimal works that engage with Cetu's memory, this paper seeks to query new and alternative ways to contemplate Cetu's photography when so little of her practice remains visible today. Furthermore, underlining the tensions between the materiality of the archive and the immateriality of Cetu's photographs, this essay draws on Black feminist imagination and decoloniality to weave a tapestry from the archival fragments, and posit strategies for reclaiming peripheralized black expressive culture by cultural producers such as Cetu.

Panel 6 (continued). Historiographies Lost (Chair: Kelley Wilder)

Julieta Pestarino (Buenos Aires University)

Photographic Archeology: Finding the photos of La Carpeta de los Diez

An exceptional photography initiative took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the 1950s: ten professional photographers founded a group to exchange information, discuss their photos, and make them circulate beyond their studios and labs. The group was called *La Carpeta de los Diez* [*The Folder of Ten*]; it was a cornerstone in the construction of Argentine photographic modernity, and with the consolidation of a specialized local photographic medium.

As part of their regular activities, they held six exhibitions between 1953 and 1959 that were highly relevant to Argentinean photography. Despite its importance, the group did not keep any archives of images, whereby the photos that had participated in its exhibitions were not known. Shortly after starting my Ph.D. research in 2015, I found some photos of these exhibitions that had been taken by one of their members. I compared these photos with the press of the time and with the personal archives of most of the members of the group. From a detailed search of the photos that can be seen hanging in these exhibition's photos, I have been able to identify more than 130. These images came from both work photography commissions and experimental searches, being most of them extremely relevant for Argentine photography.

Many of the photographs that were part of *La Carpeta de los Diez* were forgotten, some of them are not well known, and most never were studied. This group constitutes—for its presence throughout the decade, for the activities they developed, and for their professional practice, and the photographic work carried out by its members individually—a crucial instance through which it is possible to review and analyze the period.

Alexander Scott (University of Wales Trinity St David)

In Search of Photographs without an Address: Museums, Photography and the Dilemmas of Archival Research.

This paper ponders a methodological dilemma: *how does one write about photographs that do not exist (anymore)?* When conducting archival research on the history of Liverpool public museum, I came across references to photographs taken “direct from life from natives of

various countries who come to the port of Liverpool.” These photographs had been used to illustrate the museum’s anthropological galleries in the late 19th century, and were thought to be unique. The photographs thus could offer a tantalising glimpse of the distinctive ethnic diversity of Victorian Liverpool, and how this informed museum professionals’ research. They *could* do this, that is, but for one all-important detail: despite searching numerous archives, I have yet to find extant versions of the photographs – and there is reason to believe the originals were lost when Liverpool museum was bombed during World War Two.

Rather than treating this situation as an impasse, this paper constructs a speculative narrative about the missing photographs by using visual sources that *are* available at my disposal. The paper reads photographic materials “along the grain,” acquiescing to the invitations and refusals, warnings and prohibitions, encountered during the process of archival research. By analysing a variety of photographs produced by museums and charitable organisations, the paper aims to evoke a sense of the lost photographs’ possible contents and meaning while addressing broader historiographical questions: *Might my inability to locate the photographs say something about how historians ‘do’ history? What else do archives conceal or obscure? Can archives be a barrier to rather than facilitator of knowledge?*

Keynote Lecture (Chair: Beatriz Pichel)

Chitra Ramalingam (Yale University)

Fixing and fading: preservation and loss in early photography

What kind of historical object is a faded photograph, and what are the conditions under which it continues to have meaning? The ongoing decay of the image was an undeniable and essential element of the early photograph’s chemical nature, its aesthetics, and its cultural life as an object. Yet our most prominent photographic histories continue to implicitly center the “display-worthy” print—or in some famous cases, carefully manipulated reproductions of a faded relic—rather than upon the much broader archive of faded, decayed, damaged, and illegible photographs that remain in storage in collections across the world. What histories might be told from the faded photograph or the decaying photographic archive?

In this talk I approach these questions through the paradox of photographs that have become iconic even as the physical object itself has become illegible. I look at 3 singular

early photographs by Nicéphore Niépce, William Henry Fox Talbot, and John Draper that have played a powerful role in structuring influential late 20th-century Euro-American narratives about the origins and meaning of photography. Bringing the early history of photography into conversation with scholarship in history of science, science studies, and the material history of art, I follow these objects' trajectories of change and transformation, along with the material and discursive conditions that have allowed for their endurance as photographs.

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Anabella Pollen teaches and researches at University of Brighton, UK, where, from 1st September, she will take up a new title as Professor in Material and Visual Culture. Her books include *Mass Photography: Collective Histories of Everyday Life*, *The Kindred of the Kibbo Kift: Intellectual Barbarians* (a study of an artist-led interwar group of utopians, whose principal photographer was a young Angus McBean) and, most recently, *Nudism in a Cold Climate: The Visual Culture of Naturists in Mid-20th-Century Britain*. From 2022-24 she is on research leave, funded by a 2021 Philip Leverhulme Prize, which she will be using to develop a new book and exhibition about the history of photography by children.

Desré Barnard is an academic, PhD student, and lecturer based in Cape Town. Their work deals with myriad topics, but their current independent research focuses on imagining absences as productive spaces, and engaging the imaginative qualities of what they have termed ‘seeing a-visibility’. In their MA thesis, they investigated the absence of photographs in the South African History Archives’ chemical and biological weapons (CBW) programme collection, and questioned, very broadly, the implications of absence and secrets in national trauma work and healing. Central to their MA was a philosophical interrogation of how a nation may be able to heal from the horrors inflicted on her people by regimes of power when all evidence of atrocities and human rights violations have been destroyed. Barnard’s PhD is in its infancy, but deals with queering pedagogy, ethics of care, new materialisms and posthumanism. They describe themselves as a passionate teacher-student, a gentle anarchist, and a proud South African.

David Houston Jones is Professor of French and Visual Culture, University of Exeter. His books include *Visual Culture and the Forensic* (2022), *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism* (2016), *Samuel Beckett and Testimony* (2011); and (with Marjorie Gehrhardt) *Paddy Hartley: of Faces and Facades* (2015). He was co-editor of *Samuel Beckett and Contemporary Art* (Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2017). His work is concerned with ideas of visual evidence as they emerge in installation, photography and medical discourses. His work in the medical humanities has focused on facial injury, and he co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of*

War and Culture Studies (2017) entitled *Assessing the Legacy of the Gueules cassées: from Surgery to Art*. His current work addresses mediation and the forensic in visual culture.

Rachel Lee Hutcheson is a PhD candidate at Columbia University in Art History. Her research interests include histories of photography, film and video, twentieth century American art, media theory and media archaeology. She is currently working on a dissertation that engages with the relationship between color, color vision, and photo-filmic technology at the turn of the twentieth century. Her research has been supported by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the Lee MacCormick Edwards Fellowship. She has degrees from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Virginia Commonwealth University.

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Sigrid Lien is professor in art history and photography studies at the University of Bergen, Norway. Project leader for the Norwegian team in the HERA-project “PhotoClec” (Museums, Colonial past and Photography) 2010-2012, and for the project “Negotiating History: Photography in Sámi Culture», funded by the Norwegian Research Council (2014-2017). Lien has published extensively on nineteenth century as well as modern and contemporary photography. Recent publications include *Uncertain Images: Museums and the Work of Photographs*, 2014, (Elizabeth Edwards and Sigrid Lien eds.); *Pictures of Longing. Photography in the History of the Norwegian U.S.-migration*, 2018; *Contact Zones: Photography, Migration and America*, 2021 (Justin Carville and Sigrid Lien eds.); *Adjusting the Lens, Indigenous Activism, Colonial Legacies, and Photographic Heritage*, 2021 (Sigrid Lien and Hilde Wallem Nielssen eds.).

Christine Slobogin is an art historian working within the medical humanities. She is currently ECR Development Lead and Network Coordinator for the Northern Network for Medical Humanities Research, based at the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University – but starting in July 2022 she will be a Postdoctoral Fellow in the History of Medicine and the Center for Medical Humanities & Social Medicine at Johns Hopkins University. She has been published in *Medical Humanities* and has two pieces forthcoming: one on colour photography in 1940s Britain, propaganda, and surgery, and one on Second World War surgical cartoons and humour. She has also recently worked as a freelance curator for both the National Portrait Gallery, London and the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons.

Photography historian **Julien Faure-Conorton** is part of the curatorial team at the musée départemental Albert-Kahn in Boulogne-Billancourt, France, in charge of research and valorisation of the collections. He also teaches at the École du Louvre in Paris. Specialised on pictorial photography, he is the author of two books on the subject and currently works on a third one, to be published next year in the “Photo Poche” collection.

Krupa Desai has recently submitted her PhD thesis on “Photographic histories of postcolonial India: The Politics of Seeing and Unseeing”, supervised by Professor Steve Edwards, at the Department of History of Art, Birkbeck. Her research interests span the visual histories of twentieth century South Asia, especially those that inform our understanding of development, progress, state-society-nature relationship, its critique, and possible alternatives.

Feargal Fitzpatrick is Head of the Department of Fine Art Media at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Ireland. His PhD thesis, supervised by Professor Colin Graham, was entitled *The Politics of the Image: Ireland, Landscape and Nineteenth-Century Photography*. It presented a contemporary theoretical reading of a discontinuous field that, up until recently, has been dealt with largely on an empirical or historical basis.

Hanin Hannouch is Curator for Analog and Digital Media (photography, film, and audio collections) at the Weltmuseum Wien. Her upcoming edited book *Gabriel Lippmann's*

Colour Photography: Science, Media, Museums will be out with Amsterdam University Press in July 2022. She has guest-curated the exhibition "Slow Color Photography" about interferential colour photography at Preus Museum: National Museum of Photography (Norway) and is the guest-editor of the journal *PhotoResearcher* Nr. 37 "Three-Colour Photography around 1900: Technologies, Expeditions, Empires". She is currently writing her monograph about the history of colour photography in Imperial Germany. She was Post-Doc at the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck Institut. In 2017, she received her PhD from IMT Lucca, Scuola Alti Studi with a doctoral thesis on Sergei Eisenstein as an art historian. In 2013, she completed the International Master Program in Art History and Museology (IMKM) at the University of Heidelberg and the Ecole du Louvre (Paris) after a first Masters and Bachelor in European Art history at the University of Saint-Esprit De Kaslik.

Stefanie Jason works at the intersection of research, curating and archiving. Currently an Art History PhD student at Rutgers University, Stefanie's work is focused on memory and desire in contemporary African diasporic art. With an MA in Curatorial Practice from Wits University, Stefanie's thesis centres the absence of pioneering photojournalist Mabel Cetu from South Africa's official records, which she produced alongside a zine featuring a collection of responses to Cetu's memory. Stefanie is a 2022 ArtTable Fellow working with Amant Foundation on the forthcoming exhibition *Jayne Cortez: A Poet's Guide to the World*, and has written for publications such as *Contemporary And*, *Africa South Art Initiative (ASAI)*, and *ARTS.BLACK*.

Julieta Pestarino is a photographer with a degree in Anthropology (Buenos Aires University), a Master in Curatorial Studies (Tres de Febrero National University) and a PhD in History and Theory of Arts (Buenos Aires University). She is a member of the Group on Contemporary Photography, Art, and Politics (FoCo) of the Gino Germani Institute (FSOC-UBA). Julieta carried out several abroad experiences as a photographer and researcher at the State University of Campinas (Brazil, 2012), Institute of the City of Quito (Ecuador, 2016), Montevideo Photography Center (Uruguay, 2016), Masaryk University (Czech Republic, 2018), Casa de Velázquez (Spain, 2019), and at the Italian-Latin American Institute (Italy, 2019). She worked as a research assistant and

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Chitra Ramalingam is an interdisciplinary curator and academic working between history of science, history of photography, and museum studies. She has been a research fellow at the Science Museum London and the University of Cambridge and was the inaugural photography curator at the Yale Center for British Art from 2017-2021. She teaches the visual and material culture of science in the History of Science and Medicine Program at Yale University, and develops experimental, collaborative pedagogies around university collections. She is author of *To See a Spark: Experiment and Visual Experience in Victorian Science* (under contract, Yale University Press), and co-editor of *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (Yale University Press, 2013).