LIFE AFTER DEATH: PHOTOGRAPHY'S ROLE IN THE AFTERMATH OF LOSS

CHRISTINE LENZEN

Following my mother's illness and death, my photographic practice shifted from documenting the end of a life toward exploring what remains after loss and how photography can facilitate continued connection. This presentation reflects on several interconnected bodies of work created during and after four years of caregiving, including documentary photographs paired with excerpts from my mother's writing, cyanotype photograms made with inherited family objects and bodily traces, altered archival photographs, and works incorporating cremated remains.

As the work evolved, so too did my understanding of photography's potential role in the aftermath of loss. What began as documentary observation gradually expanded into an inquiry about preservation, transformation, and presence. Why do certain objects become emotionally charged after death? What changes when bodily traces, inherited belongings, or family archives are transformed through photography? And how might photographic processes themselves—particularly tactile and materially driven ones—shape the ways we remember, mourn, and remain connected?

Blending artist talk with critical reflection, this presentation considers what photographs are capable of holding during times of grief: memory, bodily trace, family history, or the possibility of continued connection.

ENTANGLED LANDSCAPES: GHOST FORESTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEGACIES

MARGARET LEJEUNE

Thirteen Hours to Fall examines the climate crisis through the recent transformations of lush coastal forests into ghost forests. These landscapes, expanses of dead and dying trees shaped by saltwater intrusion, emerge not as distant catastrophes, but as everyday environments marked by slow, visible change. What appears as stillness or absence becomes a visible record of ecological change, environmental time, and human intervention.

The project situates these ghost forests within a longer, layered history, where ordinary acts such as timber harvesting, farming, and land settlement are bound to larger systems of colonial capitalism and environmental extraction. Over centuries, these repeated acts have contributed to large-scale ecological transformation, demonstrating how the vast scale of climate change emerges through accumulated human decisions.

Drawing on environmental history and an intersectional framework, the series also considers how these landscapes bear the ongoing legacies of Indigenous dispossession, plantation economies, and complicated labor systems. In this context, the ghost forest functions as both site and witness: a space where ecological and social histories converge and where the consequences of the past remain embedded in the present.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN: REPRODUCTIVE AGENCY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY.

RACHEL COX

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My current work examines the personal and cultural stigmas associated with female infertility while also raising awareness for the millions of people who seek to build their families through assisted reproductive technologies (ART). This narrative is told through the photographic lens of my own experience with miscarriage, abortion, in vitro fertilization, and eventual birth of my daughter via a donor egg.

Through image making I celebrate profound intimacy, question gender expectations, and eventually use my camera as a mode for empowerment. I use my body as a tool to reposition the conversation around reproductive rights as well as site for resilience. Portrait of a Woman seeks to expand my own understanding of Motherhood, an action not connected to reproductive potential, but which thrives on mutual acts of care and vulnerability. Within this project I use primarily analog media alongside documentary and appropriated scientific captures. Through dissemination of the work and associated research materials, I aim to broaden accessibility of deeply personal pictures as well as amplify my objectives for advocacy and community building.

My lecture will expand upon my existing research as well as highlight diverse feminist makers who paved the way for a contemporary fine arts discourse centered on bodily autonomy and reproductive education. We are at a critical moment in history where existing federal protections for people with uteruses has been reversed and there is rising support for restrictions on assisted reproductive technologies. Most importantly, the increasing censorship faced by educational and public institutions is bolstering a cultural movement that aims to gatekeep significant and potentially life altering information about how bodies work. My lecture will also disseminate fact-based information on miscarriage, infertility, and the increasing need for access to assisted reproductive technologies faced by numerous communities.

HARMLESS: TO BE PROVEN — STAGED PHOTOGRAPHY, SUSPICION, AND CONDITIONAL BELONGING

JINGYIN CHE

Harmless: To Be Proven is a staged photographic project about Chinese and Chinese American scholars in the United States working within an atmosphere of political suspicion. The work does not center on one case or event. It looks at how mistrust settles into academic life: into classrooms, laboratories, offices, routines, gestures, and silence.

The project grows from interviews, observation, and my own experience moving through physics and engineering programs. I build scenes where research materials, institutional interiors, and the body create a sense of quiet pressure. Some images feel clinical; others lean toward absurdity. This tension allows the photographs to move between recognizable academic spaces and a more psychological reality. Together, they point to a condition in which scholars are asked, directly or indirectly, to prove that they are harmless.

This talk will discuss how staged photography helps me make visible forms of fear that are difficult to document directly, including surveillance, self-censorship, and the uncertainty of belonging. In response to Community in Contrast, the project considers how trust, caution, and shared silence shape the possibility of community.

TO BE LOOKED AT (OR NOT): FAT VISIBILITY AND THE POLITICS OF LOOKING

GABRIELLE BARNETT

This presentation examines the politics of looking at fat bodies through lens-based practices that center visibility, discomfort, and control. Drawing from my research and studio work, I approach looking as an active, charged exchange—one shaped by fatphobia, cultural conditioning, and expectations surrounding desirability and motherhood.

Using photography, video, and installation, I position my own body as both subject and site, refusing the passive roles historically assigned to fat bodies. In works that stage prolonged gaze, intimate proximity, and constrained viewing conditions, I create situations where the viewer becomes aware of their own looking. These encounters disrupt habits of passive consumption and instead produce tension, asking: what does it mean to look, and who holds power in that exchange?

Grounded in feminist discourse and fat studies, this presentation considers visibility as both risk and refusal. Discomfort is not a byproduct but a strategy—one that exposes how deeply ingrained expectations shape our understanding of bodies and value.

In alignment with Community in Contrast, this talk argues that challenging how we look—and how institutions frame what is worth seeing—can open space for more expansive, accountable visual communities. Here, visibility becomes a political act that insists on presence, complexity, and agency.

ILLNESS IS NOT OTHERNESS: MEDICAL INFUSION AND SELF-REPRESENTATION

SARAH J. WINSTON

For the past eleven years I have used my camera to witness a single, intimate act: myself receiving intravenous medication to halt the progression of multiple sclerosis. These images are more than medical documentation; they are a sustained portrait project that traces resilience, vulnerability, adaptation, and the small rituals that make life livable under chronic illness. Over more than a decade I have built a cohesive visual archive—thousands of frames that record changes in light, body, equipment, emotion, and context.

Chronic illness is often perceived as a personal misfortune and private matter, making it a taboo to speak publicly about medical diagnoses, symptoms, treatments, and the financial burden of ongoing care. My art practice debunks this notion, transforming the conventional lived experience of illness into a space for creativity, dialogue, and connection. As an artist and patient knowingly living with Multiple Sclerosis since 2014, I make photographs, often self portraits, to help navigate the blurry, layered boundaries, between care and dependency, amidst vulnerability and agency.

The infusion center, where my photographs are most often situated, is a space of profound contradiction—dominated by medical authority and systemic routines, yet deeply personal and emotionally charged. Reflecting larger societal dynamics of visibility and invisibility, non-normative bodies are often erased or reduced to passive objects of care. Through my images I claim these spaces, asserting agency, creativity, and humanity.

My project offers a rare, self-reflexive narrative documenting the lived experience of ongoing care. It creates an alternative timeline, one that mirrors the non-linear, flexible rhythms that life assumes when shaped by illness. By capturing these moments, the work

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challenges societal ideals of constant productivity and independence, reframing survival not as a triumph over illness, but as a continuous, lived reality.

HOLDING SYSTEMS: PHOTOGRAPHY, MATERIALITY, AND THE LIVING ARCHIVE

TONI PEPE

This presentation explores photographic archives that have been displaced, hidden, or nearly discarded, approaching the archive as a form of holding. Archives preserve the memory, labor, and values of a community, yet these systems are often more tenuous than they appear, dependent on institutional knowledge and individual stewardship. At a moment when cultural and scientific materials face increasing precarity, these projects ask what photographs continue to hold.

Drawing from three bodies of work, the presentation moves across vernacular, institutional, and scientific archives. Mothercraft centers on an archive I built from discarded press photographs sourced through eBay after newspapers folded and collections dispersed. Can I Hold You? grew out of research at the Boston Public Library and focuses on a hidden collection of photographs and newspaper clippings connected to crimes against women, beauty pageants, and women pioneers. More recently, I have been working with astronomical glass plate negatives housed within the Harvard Plate Stacks, including materials previously held by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and nearly discarded following DOGE-related federal cuts.

I am drawn to the physical traces left on photographic objects: silver mirroring, fingerprints, tape marks, chemical discoloration, handwritten notes, and residue from use and handling. Through layering, installation, and material experimentation, the work approaches the archive as unstable and in flux. Across these projects, I am interested in holding as a physical and conceptual structure: the boxes, institutions, and people that preserve these materials, alongside photography's ability to carry memory and traces of community forward.

ELUSIVE MEMORY: WHAT REMAINS

DEBORAH ORLOFF

I recently spent three months in Central and Eastern Europe making "source photos" for my collage project, "Elusive Memory: Constructed Histories," a series which was inspired by predominantly futile attempts to learn my family's diasporic history. While I was documenting Nazi concentration camps and a variety of sites related to my heritage in Poland, I was particularly struck by spaces that had traumatic histories but little to no visual evidence of what had been there. I researched, traveled to, and photographed many places where there were once extermination camps, forced labor camps, ghettos, Jewish cemeteries, synagogues, and similarly important sites – many of which no longer exist or are simply unrecognizable in their current state. I made color images at these places that initially seem like innocuous landscapes, but upon closer inspection and in conjunction with their titles, they reveal a very different reality. These photographs speak to an erasure of both Jewish history and the atrocities of WW II; they have become my newest body of work, Elusive Memory: What Remains.

SPACE RACE: UNCLASSIFIED, A PHOTOGRAPHIC THEIRSTORY IN SPACE EXPLORATION

MMM

My visual language is informed by my eleven year tenure as a photographer for NASA at the Glenn Research Center. NASA has a branding aesthetic that I learned and honed. I use visual language which I learned in art history and at NASA to expand from what is commonly taught versus what I feel should come to light. Much like the Guerrilla Girls' use of the gorilla mask, I too use alien masks to shield the identity of my subjects. Finding my own disguise made a lot of sense metaphorically in the knowledge that the military used regional lore like UFO phenomena to hide missile tests from the public (Paglen e-flux 147). In my case, these are folks who are currently involved in military, aero, and space missions. Images without masks were created in support of the U.S. government missions themselves.

Space travel and scientific breakthroughs are highly complex productions involving state of the art technology, and a commitment with physical and mental exertion often to extremes. I drive long distances to scout and camp near sites of science tourism. I take my time with props, sci-fi costumes, and real space socio-artifacts. While performing, lighting and composing, I consider how space narratives are developed by people like me behind closed doors. These pictorial and everyday scenes of test sites at NASA are shared and taught both within the military bases and outside of them. Making my art in public, I look forward to moments where the incidental audience such as tourists, park rangers, and scientists engage with me while I work. I take my time to create what the sometimes crude commercial and industrial photo industry calls "the money shot". Conversations with witnesses give me a sense of how the picture is going to be perceived. In character, I perform as a gravity-bound astronaut spokesperson.

Making the visual culture of science and space exploration accessible to educators at SPE, I inspire them to create space narratives not funded by military operations.

THE HELSINKI BUS STATION

ARNO RAFAEL MINKKINEN

Instead of always being told your work is too close to its influences, the Helsinki Bus Station provides a solution that can tackle such feedback instantly with an unforgettable metaphor. Connected to Eliel Saarinen's famous super busy train station, the Helsinki Bus Station's many platforms each handle many bus routes, each bus riding out of the city along the same route, each bus stop representing let's say a year's work in photography or any creative endeavor. By the third bus stop, you're ready to present three years of shooting nudes in a landscape to a publisher or gallery director only to be told you're a copycat. They see your influences. So, back to the bus station you go to pick a different platform. How about drone views of dying rivers? Two years later the publisher pulls out a book. Same pictures, but again you're not the author. What to do? It's simple. Stay on the fucking bus! Because soon enough all the buses separate, heading off on totally unique, long-distance routes out of city center. And you can too just by staying on the bus and little by little expanding the difference between your work and what influenced it. Call your route a Community of Shared Inspirations. It builds fast after using a methodology I love teaching called "The Power of Three." It starts with just three pictures : All three are different and remarkably the same. After the third picture you and your bus are off the beaten track.

NEITHER HERE NOR THERE: MATERIAL MEMORY, SENSORY IDENTITY AND THE IMMIGRANT BODY

YASHODA LATKAR

What does it mean to carry a culture in your body? This presentation examines how material objects (sarees, spices, archival photographs, heirlooms) function not as static symbols, but as active repositories of sensory memory that migrate alongside us and reshape who we are. Multimedia artist and educator Yashoda Latkar will present a body of work spanning self-portraiture, collage, and performative video, made across two continents and rooted in the experience of living between them. In one work, she and her mother stand face-to-face, bound together by a saree, with Latkar's face entirely covered in red bindis, creating a visual rupture between belonging and displacement. In another, archival family photographs are layered with fragments of a cherished Paithani saree. Its gold zari weave, loose in some places and tight in others, mirrors the complexity of familial bonds stretched across distance. In a three-channel video performance, she ritually applies turmeric paste to her face layer by layer, then wipes it away with Wonder Bread. The stains that remain are the point: no matter how much she tries, her identity cannot be erased. This in-between state, neither fully here nor there, is not a site of loss but of generative artistic inquiry. Latkar will discuss using cultural materials as active participants in the work rather than mere symbols, and invite dialogue around how immigrant and diasporic artists can build community through image-making and resist assimilationist pressure through art.

MAGIC MIRRORS: TECHNOLOGICAL RECKONING WITHIN CHINESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

JAMIE HO

How does photography, technology, and cultural traditions reconcile with U.S perceptions of the Chinese diasporic community? How does reconstruction and reclamation of ancestral rituals through a queer lens disrupt assimilation within the U.S? This presentation examines these questions through the use of familial memory and traditions within Chinese diaspora, migration, and global markets as an archive in my photographic practice. By investigating the history of Chinese migration into the U.S., I reimagine a magic mirror, a Han Dynasty object and a Victorian term to describe a camera, to recontextualize the impact of hypervisibility and public spectacle of Chinese American women and how technology is inscribed onto bodies that defy western normative logic.

Through the framework of disidentification, my work utilizes photography, GIFs and sculpture to create immersive installations that reimagine altars and offerings as a site of resourcefulness and resistance against hegemony of American culture. The images and sculptures reference historical Chinese objects, display stands and furniture found in global markets and Chinatowns. The GIFs, a vehicle for internet memes, are transformed by engaging with the medium's missing information (or missing frames in an otherwise stop motion animated loop) to examine how traditions morph over time and over generations through repetition and loss. The images of offerings transmute into performative gestures informed by drag aesthetics that defy Western societal ideals. By borrowing from the history of tableau and still life, the offerings use flowers and objects from the domestic sphere to push against the impossible societal constructs of beauty and sexuality. The work invites viewers into an alternative that glimmers, seeps and haunts as offerings are consumed and refilled.

THOSE LEFT BEHIND: GRIEF AND FAMILY AFTER A LOSS

JUSTIN CARNEY

Those Left Behind questions what bonds keep a family together and what drives them to separate after the death of a loved one. After my grandmother passed, the center of my family's world, the dynamics of my family shifted. It changed how often people gathered and the ways in which they showed up. Grief reshaped those bonds and connections.

This project documents the quiet changes that followed between my grandmother's children after the loss of their mother: the struggle to cope, the shift in relationships, how people returned to community with one another again, how connection was redefined, and how the presence of my grandmother continued to live on within those left behind. Through contemporary photographs, archival family photos, and interviews with her children, the work not only shows the effects of death, but it also visualizes a celebration of life and togetherness.

While centered on my family, the project speaks to broader questions about how communities hold together under pressure and how relationships endure after a loss. By discussing both the making of the work and the conversations that emerge around it, I hope to open dialogue around how photography can hold spaces for vulnerability, remembrance, and connection.

PICTURING BELONGING: ON INVISIBLE NARRATIVES

LINDSAY BUCHMAN

What happens when subjecthood is invisible, beyond image, language, and the ability to picture a narrative? When DNA is absent, material history is non-existent, and archival referents can't form a clear lineage. 'Picturing Belonging: On Invisible Narratives' presents Lindsay Buchman's seven-year project, 'Everything I've Ever Loved,' a multimedia autoethnography that considers Orange County, California's history of landholdings, power, and injustice through her lens as a Chicana and transracial adoptee. Exploring autobiographical accounts of place, combined with broader social histories of Southern California, her counternarrative lens-based project examines how location and belonging shape familial and racial mythologies in the absence of kinship. Working from local archives, cutting materials apart, and repositioning them to form a critical analysis of how ideology shapes communities and landscapes, Buchman raises questions about who this land is for and how we got here. She looks to the camera to build new narratives from photo essays, collages, moving images, and text-and-image relationships.

Grounded in cultural deracination, her images take shape through the softness of light, dragged across frames: a gesture in presence and absence, finding shelter in her familial backyard, tethered to the iconography of the Valencia orange, a symbol for Orange County's name and an emblem of migrant labor on its farmlands. Buchman's work images the textures of parklands, coastlines, and neighborhoods as poetic gestures, contrasted by text or subtitles that evoke associations with cultural erasure, colonial histories, and the complexity of homelands. Through a visual presentation, she will raise questions about how photographic narratives are formed around invisible identities, reflecting on the role of landscape photography, public archives, and the construction of a third space between still and moving images, slowly articulating how place shapes who we become.

ADDRESSING AI IN THE CREATIVE CLASSROOM: STRATEGIES FOR ARTS EDUCATORS

CHRISTINE ALEXANDER

As artificial intelligence rapidly reshapes the photographic landscape, educators are being asked to respond in real time, often without clear standards or established best practices. Facilitated by the team at Santa Fe Workshops, this session seeks to provide photography educators with an array of resources to address AI holistically and responsibly in the classroom.

Given AI's impact on the arts, technology, and creativity itself, this session fosters discussion about the questions most pressing to educators. How do we talk about AI with our photography students and why does it matter? What responsibility do we have to acknowledge AI's ethical, environmental, and cultural impacts? What are the changing implications for fine-art, documentary, and commercial practices? How can teachers center humanity within the artistic process and best educate on all facets of this rapidly-evolving technology?

We begin with an overview of the current AI landscape, including:

- Brief of generative AI and how it works
- Environmental impacts of AI and implications for increased global usage
- Photojournalism and documentary photography, including misinformation and ethical concerns
- Copyright and legal attribution in an AI landscape
- Labor concerns and navigating a changing job market for creatives
- Documented impact of AI upon creative and critical thinking

We then move into an open discussion about best practices for empowering students through education, offering strategies for teachers to help students make informed decisions about their AI usage.

This presentation builds on the Workshops' experience developing photographic curriculum and best practices for teaching AI, while also inviting broader perspectives from educators across disciplines. Rather than offering definitive conclusions, this session seeks to foster open dialogue, share resources, and thoughtfully consider what it means to teach photography at a time when the medium itself is changing.

STRAIN, SUBVERSION AND RESILIENCE: CAMERALESS PHOTOGRAPHIC PROJECTS

MARY ZOMPETTI

My cameraless photographs interweave the personal and the political, reflecting on the erosion of American social fabric under fascism, the current strain on the sanctity of the natural world, and my own lived experiences as a queer woman. Using light-sensitive photographic materials such as film, paper and chemicals, I seek out conditions that yield unpredictable results under strain, testing the resilience of materials that are traditionally considered fragile or delicate. Embracing chance, subverting "normal" photographic processes through glitch or error, researching evolving current events, and reflecting on my own stories and memories inform the physical act of making the work. I press my resist-coated body onto paper, creating textural imprints shaped by chemical process and chance. I draw graphite lines, grids and repetitive words or phrases onto paper that emerge from, or recede into, the background of the print after chemical processing. I place natural materials and the bodies of found wildlife onto sheet film that erodes slowly within the environment,

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collaborating with weather, the movement of water, and decomposition to create previously unseen beauty outside of my control. I embed symbols, such as the triangle, to represent individual perception, vision, and the inner light I believe is present within each of us. Through my practice, I seek to create imperfect typologies and records of time, change, and memory in this time of the Anthropocene, calling attention to the injustice unfolding around us while affirming that joy, resistance, and hope reside within collective landscapes of body, spirit and community.

REMEMBERING AT WOODLAND POND

NADIA SABLIN & ELIZABETH BALDWIN

In the summer of 2026, professor and student are working together to create images and texts responding to the experience of identity change and memory (re)construction of seniors living in an assisted living facility. We are just getting started on this project, but we are specifically interested in construction of femininity, self (re)invention, and connections between memory and identity formation. We will spend the summer with several seniors in memory care as they go about their days, having conversations, accompanying them in their daily activities, and taking photographs together. It's a new way of working for both of us and we expect to learn a lot from each other and change the way we normally make images.

RECONTEXTUALIZING THE SOUTHERN LANDSCAPE: TEXAS FREEDOM COLONIES AND BLACK SPATIALITIES

ROBIN NORTH

What makes a place a place when official records fail to account for the people who made and sustained it? This session examines that question through The Garcitas Community, a photographic and interdisciplinary media project rooted in Texas Freedom Colonies in the rural Gulf Coast region of Texas. Freedom Colonies were Black settlements founded after Emancipation as self-governed places beyond plantation rule. Many developed outside formal mapping systems and municipal recognition, and because many no longer have standing architecture, they remain vulnerable to archival erasure and exclusion from public memory. Settler colonial preservation systems of exclusion often reduce formerly enslaved people after Emancipation to sharecropping, domestic work, and labor dependency. My work counters that narrative by showing how Black communities shaped land into places of governance, worship, education, burial, care, and continuity.

Grounded in Black Geographies, this project understands landscape as a site of ongoing struggle and self-governance. It shifts the focus from where Black people were located to how they actively authored the world around them. My decolonial practice asks what counts as evidence, who has authority to define place, and how communities remain legible when official records are partial or absent. Through my visual practice, I reconstruct these omitted communities as lived Black geographies.

For SPE's focus on a Community in Contrast to contemporary conditions of power, Texas Freedom Colonies stand in contrast to settler colonial preservation systems of exclusion that failed to recognize them on their own terms. Photography and interdisciplinary media shift authority toward descendants as knowledge keepers and build the evidence needed

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for recognition on community terms.

THE RISING VOICES OF THE MIDWEST ASIAN DIASPORA
RICHARD LEU

The American Midwest, aka the Third Coast, has seen a surging population of Asian descents in recent decades. Artists of Asian diaspora have been making art about their ethnic, cultural, and often their Midwest identities. These sparse communities, scattered across the region, often exist in contrast to the hegemony. Many grew up not knowing or relinquishing the traditions and culture of their parents to fit in.

This panel surveys a selection of Asian American photo-based artists in the Midwest whose work reflects questions of identity, memory, and place. Featured artists include Amy Yeminne Kim, whose work draws from both her adopted Midwestern home and traditional Korean culture; Kevin Miyazaki, a fourth-generation Japanese American raised in Wisconsin whose projects explore family history and the legacy of Japanese American incarceration; and Howard Leu (moderator), whose work examines bereavement and prosthetic memory through family photographs tied to his immigrant parents' experiences. Together, these artists offer perspectives on how Asian American identity is shaped through geography, history, and image-making in the Midwest.

The informative discussion will present an insight from the art and narratives that artists in smaller Asian communities are creating. It draws visibility and validity to those artists who are making meaningful work, in collaboration or contrast, to their geographical environment.

SUBROSA & THE CULT OF APHRODITE
JASON LANGER

Subrosa & the Cult of Aphrodite is Jason Langer's five-year documentary project, to be released as a book and exhibition in 2026, exploring a diverse community of performers in Portland, Oregon. Developed in partnership with the performers, it combines photographic portraiture with first-person narratives and representations that reveal how the performers wish to be seen as their inner selves. Together, these elements create a layered and intimate account of the motivations behind public performance. This presentation pairs a slide lecture with a viewing of unique coffee-toned color prints, emphasizing both a hybrid, hand-crafted process and the narrative depth of a long-term photographic project.

The project includes over 60 portraits and 13 confessional interviews, revealing a wide range of motivations for performance—from artistic expression and identity exploration to political resistance and economic necessity. During the presentation, selected stories will be read aloud, bringing forward voices that address issues such as race relations in Portland, sexual orientation, trans and sex worker visibility, protest against misogyny, and body acceptance. The work foregrounds community as both subject and method, offering a respectful and sensitive portrayal of individuals whose lives and labor challenge conventional boundaries between art, sexuality, public space, and commerce.

In addition to presenting the work, Langer's presentation will engage the public in

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questions of how photography is taught in the modern classroom and how evolving approaches to photographic education are shaped by contemporary cultural, institutional, and financial contexts, including the realities of sustaining an artistic livelihood. Langer will address shifts in visual storytelling, and the importance of craft and socially engaged work in today's image-saturated landscape.

ENGAGING OIL LANDSCAPES THROUGH PLACE-BASED INVESTIGATIONS
MEGHAN KIRKWOOD

This session explores how photographers working with place-based investigations can use post-documentary, lyrical approaches to inform their work. Using my series, Orphan Wells, as an example, I consider how artists concerned with environmental issues and communities affected by environmental harm can attend to multiple narratives that overlap, intertwine, and collectively animate a story of a place.

In my work I explore the long aftermath of oil and gas development on the American landscape through a photographic series about Caddo Parish, Louisiana. This rectangular swath in the northwest corner of the state has figured centrally in the history of oil development in the US: the first overwater oil well was drilled here in 1910. And, representative of a more recent chapter in the oil industry nationally, there is a high density of orphaned oil wells in the Parish's landscapes, cities, and waterbodies.

My work in Caddo Parish highlights the ways oil infrastructure has and continues to interface with landscapes and communities. There, many residents value a history of oil and gas development as part of their heritage and locate their identity as energy producers. Their feelings towards oil are not uniform, and my project seeks to honor the multiple realities at play in the Parish. As such, my project draws upon an evolving view of documentary photography as a way to, as Alejandro Cartagena describes, look at things that have occurred in the world and respond with work that is openly subjective without the pretense of telling the truth.

LOUISE
LISA DI GIACOMO

This session presents a pedagogical framework for teaching performative self-portraiture as a strategy for exploring identity, memory, and intergenerational narrative in contemporary photography. Grounded in both studio practice and critical inquiry, the approach encourages students to move beyond traditional self-representation toward embodied image-making that engages personal history, constructed narrative, and symbolic space.

Students investigate how gesture, costume, environment, and repetition can function as visual language. Emphasis is placed on transforming personal archives—family photographs, oral histories, and domestic artifacts—into conceptual frameworks for image production. By working within familiar or inherited spaces, students are challenged to consider how environments hold emotional residue and how identity can be performed, reconstructed, or questioned through photographic intervention.

The session will outline practical teaching strategies, including project sequencing,

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critique structures, and methods for fostering psychologically safe yet rigorous classroom dialogue. It will also address how humor, discomfort, and contradiction can be leveraged as productive tools in the image-making process. Student outcomes demonstrate increased engagement with conceptual development, stronger narrative cohesion, and a deeper understanding of photography as both a personal and critical medium.

By positioning self-portraiture as both method and inquiry, this approach expands how students understand authorship, presence, and absence. The session offers adaptable strategies for educators seeking to integrate concept-driven, identity-focused practices into introductory and advanced photography curricula.

REFRAIMING THE PHOTOGRAPHIC OBJECT: HISTORIC PROCESS IN CONTEMPORARY FORM

LYNN BIERBAUM

My artist talk traces the evolution of sculptural photography from its early material experiments to its contemporary resurgence, where image-making expands beyond the flat plane and into physical space. Historically, artists have pushed photography toward objecthood—through photograms and early cameraless techniques—laying the groundwork for today's hybrid practices. My work builds on this lineage by merging accessible silver gelatin processes with more challenging historic methods such as wet plate collodion, a nineteenth-century technique I modernize through the integration of digital tools and modern experimental darkroom strategies.

Central to my practice is the material presence of blown glass, which functions simultaneously as canvas, tool, and collaborator. Glass carries its own history of craft and transformation, and its ability to bend, scatter, and concentrate light allows it to intervene directly in the photographic process. In the darkroom, I use glass to warp illumination, cast sculptural shadows, and physically shape the exposure itself. These objects—whether vessels, lenses, or abstract forms—extend my hands into the emulsion, guiding light through space in ways that are both intentional and uncontrollable.

The resulting images occupy a space between two and three dimensions, existing as impermanent impressions formed through the choreography of light, chemistry, and material form. Silver gelatin paper becomes a responsive surface, recording not only optical effects but the spatial and energetic qualities of the glass. Collodion plates demand a heightened presence, their sensitivity to timing and environment echoing the fragility of the images they hold.

By merging sculptural form, historic processes, and contemporary technologies, my work asks viewers to reconsider what a photograph can be—not a fixed window onto the world, but a material event shaped by light, gesture, and transformation.

PRESERVING COUNTER-HISTORIES THROUGH ARCHIVING

MAHSA ALAFAR

This presentation explores the role of archiving fragile internet materials as a means of shaping subaltern narratives and preserving counter-histories. In an era where digital

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Content is both abundant and precarious, subject to deletion, censorship, and algorithmic marginalization, archival practices can function as acts of resistance. The talk examines methods of materializing online traces through analog processes, foregrounding voices and experiences often excluded from dominant historical records.

Focusing on Iran's vast political archive, much of which is censored, unpublished, or circulated online in poor quality, the presentation considers how digital materials can be translated into tactile forms. It also expands beyond public archives to include buried familial photographs, images often kept hidden from the regime's surveillance. Bringing these private materials into dialogue with political archives challenges reductive representations of Iranians as merely oppressed and instead highlights resilience, intimacy, and everyday joy sustained over decades of constraint.

By discussing both public and private archives, the presentation positions analog materialization as a critical strategy for challenging hegemonic narratives and sustaining plural, contested histories.

JOURNEYS ACROSS BORDERS AND WITHIN: PHOTOGRAPHY, TRANSITION, AND BELONGING

NATCHA WONGCHANGLAW

This visual presentation examines how experiences of migration, grief, temporary living, and cultural transition have shaped an expanded photographic practice exploring identity, memory, and belonging. Drawing from projects including The In-Between, His Invisible Presence, Borrowed Room, and Rights of Passage, the presentation traces how photography can move beyond documentation and become a spatial, material, and emotional process.

Beginning with family memory and objects, domestic spaces, and documents left behind after my father's passing in Thailand, the work considers how personal archives carry traces of presence across generations. These questions extend into self-representation, passport-based portraiture, and temporary interiors, where identity is shaped by movement, bureaucracy, cultural negotiation, and the unstable conditions of home.

Through translucent fabric installations from The In-Between, anaglyph acrylic objects, cyanotype prints, staged self-portraiture, and documentary-based portraiture, the work asks how photography can hold multiple realities at once: personal and collective, visible and invisible, rooted and displaced. Viewers encounter images not only as surfaces, but as environments, objects, and traces that must be physically and emotionally navigated.

Within the context of Community in Contrast, this presentation considers how lens-based practices can create spaces for reflection, empathy, and dialogue around belonging amid social, political, and emotional uncertainty.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? PHOTOGRAPHING IN TROUBLED TIMES

PAUL SHAMBROOM

In 2020 17 year-old Darnella Frazier's cell phone video of George Floyd's murder by

CONT'D

Minneapolis police ignited international outrage. 100 years earlier Lewis Hine's photographs helped curtail child labor. In spite of growing doubts over the integrity of traditional and social media and eroding trust in photography's veracity, pictures can still make a difference. And we are increasingly aware that they can mislead and disrupt our democracy at the behest of moneyed and political interests.

The legacy of Hine's photographs led to citizen-made images of the Rodney King beating, Frazier's courageous video, and images of the recent murders by federal agents of Renée Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis.

At the SPE national conference in Minneapolis in 1985, the discourse discredited notions of photography as an agent of change. I was put off, and soon embarked on a series of projects exploring American military and political power, including the US nuclear weapons complex (1990s), small town council meetings (1999-2003), Homeland Security training sites after 9/11, and politically divided communities (2016-2024). I tried to balance my own scepticism about the efficacy of such work with optimism that it can make a difference.

My motivation at first was to see how close a regular guy with a camera could get to the levers of power. I came to believe that by pursuing my curiosity, my work could impact others. I didn't think my photographs would end the nuclear arms race, but I believe they played a part in the conversation. Likewise, talking to people in conservative rural towns may help us understand how we come to our own beliefs, even if we disagree.

Photographing across the US for decades became my coping mechanism to endure our nation's travails. My version of "If you don't laugh, you'll cry" has been "if you don't photograph, you'll cry." Over the last difficult year it's been hard to get out of bed, let alone believe that my photographs matter. I'll get over it.

REIMAGINING PHOTOGRAPHY EDUCATION: WHAT MAKES A WORKSHOP WORK

LEAH WOODRUFF

As photography education continues to evolve, instructors are rethinking not just what they teach, but how they teach it. This panel brings together aspiring educators and workshop leaders to share approaches to building meaningful, engaging learning experiences across short-term workshops, online classes, and longer programs.

The panel explores what makes a workshop successful from both the instructor and student perspective. Panelists share insights into relevant topics within photography education, how to design engaging learning experiences, and how to create space for connection, creativity, and critical thinking within a limited timeframe.

Led by members of the production team at Santa Fe Workshops, an independent educational institution, this session draws on experience working with hundreds of instructors teaching photography workshops worldwide. It also offers best practices for submitting a successful pitch to teach with a creative business or non-profit, including how to present yourself and your curriculum clearly and how to tailor proposals to an organization's audience.

CONT'D

From balancing technical skills with creative thinking to making room for feedback and discussion, the panel shares practical ideas for building classes that connect with students. It also opens a larger conversation around access, experimentation, and where photography education is headed.

During our time together, we cover:
What photographers want to learn right now and why
Structuring workshops for engagement and impact
Critique, feedback, and building community in short formats
Adapting teaching approaches for online vs. in-person learning
Translating semester-based curricula into workshop formats
Expanding access and rethinking traditional education models

This session is designed for aspiring photography educators, recent graduates interested in diverse teaching pathways, workshop instructors seeking to enhance their practice, program directors, and workshop organizers.

FRAMING THE ANSARI WEAVERS: A PHOTO ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

SOON-HWA OH

This photographic series, a meticulously edited essay of approximately 100 images, explores the intricate lives of Varanasi's Muslim weaving community. Grounded in a decade-long relationship with a master weaver's family, the ethnography documents both the detailed production processes of the silk saree trade and the daily rhythms of the families sustaining it. Crucially, the narrative centers on the often-invisible women in these households. While adhering to religious and cultural norms that confine them to private quarters, these women remain indispensable to the local economy—managing accounts, spinning yarn, trimming silk, and balancing demanding household duties. Operating from an Asian female perspective, this presentation critically examines the methodological and ethical dilemmas of documenting a community where traditional practices frequently prohibit women from being seen by outsiders. It raises essential reflexive questions: How does a photographer visually translate a culture of seclusion? Furthermore, how does the photographer's own gender influence access and shape the revelation of this complex, socially interwoven society?

ART IN THE FLOODPLAIN: STUDENTS REIMAGINE RELATIONSHIPS TO LAND (AND PICTURES)

ELIZA GREGORY

What happens when the floodplain is allowed to function? Fish return and flourish, ducks feed, a dynamic ecosystem repairs itself, and the Pacific Flyway inspires awe in anyone who looks up.

[Placeholder: Flooded Fields] showcased the work of 25 seniors in the Sacramento State Photography BFA Program. Through field trips, diverse creative research, interviews and collaborative dialogue, this group of artists has begun the process of connecting themselves to the land surrounding them, and investigating the floodplain ecosystems

CONT'D

and infrastructure of the Sacramento Valley.

These students--predominantly first generation to college--receive opportunities to make work inside of a multi-year, ongoing project. They then get to bring that work to specific publics through exhibitions, publications, slide shows, conferences and short films. The project combines professional practices with collaborative art making, within the structure of a studio class. We use the camera as a tool of inquiry and connection. We flatten things so we can think about them differently.

The project addresses themes of social and environmental justice, including questions like: Who gets to belong to the land around them? Who gets to make environmental art? Who gets to enter the cultural conversation? Who does our society listen to? How do we repair relationships with more-than-human-life and each other? and How does a colonial present obscure a pre-colonial past?

The project is coordinated by Eliza Gregory, artist and Professor of Photography and Social Practice at Sacramento State University, with guidance from Carson Jeffres of the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences, and John Brennan, rice farmer and land manager of Brennan, Jewett, Hackett. It was presented at Verge Center for the Arts, the Crocker Student and Community Gallery, and will travel to SF Camerawork in September 2026.

THE SPECULAR GHOST: RESISTING THE INVISIBLE APPARATUS IN VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

ASHLEY GILLANDERS

Photography's lineage is historically bound to the mirror. From the daguerreotype's silver surface to the SLR's pentaprism. This lineage implies a pact: the image indexes not only the world but, inherently, the witness and the apparatus. However, as contemporary image systems move toward mirrorless mechanics and generative pipelines (3D rendering/AI), this pact is broken. In these virtual optics, reflective surfaces routinely omit the camera. A structural omission I define as "specular bias".

Using the vampire as a metaphor for a presence that exists without being reflected, this presentation examines how the modern apparatus behaves "vampirically" across virtual and cultural optics. When the camera is systematically hidden or costumed, we are trained to expect an image that witnesses without appearing. In a climate of "Community in Contrast," this invisibility mirrors broader contemporary conditions of power where the mechanisms of observation remain unseen and unaccountable.

This talk moves between two bodies of work: speculative scenes created in 3D software that stage "impossible reflections" to expose specular bias, and an archive of film/TV stills where the camera is disguised within the frame. By making the "vampire" visible, this session resists the efficacy-driven models of "seamless" digital production. Rather than offering technical fixes, I propose that the future of lens-based education depends on our ability to replace the mirror with a new ethics of visibility, fostering a community that recognizes the "lived experience" of the apparatus itself.

FOREST ACTIVISM: THE LORAX SPEAKS

ASHLEY BEATTY

CONT'D

This photographic and installation work investigates forests as living, communicating systems—an urgent counter to the Anthropocene's extractive logic. Bridging scientific research, metaphysical inquiry, and Indigenous knowledge traditions, it reframes the human–forest relationship by treating the landscape not as backdrop but as an active participant.

Across three interconnected bodies of work—Uprooted, Erosion, and Generational Calculations—the project moves from grief and impermanence to visual evidence of alpine degradation, and finally to a stark, quantifiable question: how many human generations remain before deforestation compromises breathable oxygen. Research informed by conversations with Smithsonian scientists underscores the tension between publicly shared climate data and information constrained by institutional and governmental pressures.

Grounded in Dr. Suzanne Simard's studies of mycorrhizal "Mother Tree" networks, the project pairs photographic images with a temporary outdoor installation that mirrors below-ground fungal communication through above-ground human infrastructures. Recent iterations expand toward ecofeminist inquiry, linking the oppression of nature with threats to bodily autonomy and the gendered politics of care. Through fractured imagery and a formal language of square and cube geometries—shapes shared by minerals and human-made technology—the work traces how industry commodifies the natural world, while inviting viewers to consider regenerative ways of living: the Onceler, or the Lorax.

TO RESIST IS TO BECOME A CONDUCTIVE THREAD: ARCHIVING THE 2020 MPLS. UPRISINGS

CHRISTOPHER MEERDO & DANIEL GILES

Our collaboration began in the Photography Department of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where we co-developed the course "Observing Power." This pedagogical foundation established a sustained research trajectory examining how image technologies operate as instruments of state control. This presentation traces the evolution of that research into our current project, "To Resist is to Become a Conductive Thread," which centers on 72 minutes of declassified Predator drone footage obtained via a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

The session will begin with a discussion of the project's methodology, focusing on the technical and ethical process of reframing forensic imagery captured by U.S. Customs and Border Protection during the 2020 Minneapolis uprisings. We will screen a portion of the resulting film, which subverts the technological gaze of the drone by pairing its clinical, silent imagery with a polyvocal counter-archive of sound and text. This work moves beyond documentation, utilizing the camera's output as a site for political redress.

As the project moves toward its future manifestation as a case-bound publication and vinyl record with Mousse Publishing, this presentation marks a strategic return of the footage to its site of origin. We will conclude by inviting Minneapolis-based artists, activists, and educators to collaborate on future local screenings and public programming. By situating this work within the SPE community, we aim to foster a dialogue on the role of the photographic archive in communal resistance and the sovereignty of the image in a climate of persistent surveillance.

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BOTANICALLY TONED CYANOTYPES: EXPLORING THE PLANT COMMUNITIES OF THE MIDWEST

JOSEPH MOUGEL

This workshop introduces participants to the creative possibilities of botanical toning in cyanotype photography. Cyanotype is an accessible historic photographic printing process known for its distinctive Prussian blue color, and toning offers opportunities to expand that palette through the use of plant-based materials. Participants use botanicals to catalyze interactions with cyanotype prints, creating a range of colors and tonal variations while preserving image detail and contrast.

During the workshop, participants will create two cyanotype prints from digital negatives prepared in advance by the instructor using submitted images from each student. The workshop covers the basics of cyanotype printing, including paper coating, exposure, washing, and print processing. Participants will tone their prints using baths and extracts made from Midwest native and invasive plants provided by the instructor. Discussion will include how different botanical materials influence the final appearance of prints and how locally sourced plants can become part of a photographic workflow.

DELIBERATE POROSITY: BUILDING THE CONDITIONS FOR A PEDAGOGY OF CARE

MAGGIE FLANIGAN & SETH PERRY

At the heart of the classroom, educators have the ability to model community in and outside of the classroom with tools like class guests, co-teaching, and book clubs. Despite the obvious benefits of mutual learning and deepened engagement for educators and students alike, these tools can still feel difficult to reach without the collaborators to sustain them in siloed institutional settings. The workshop Deliberate Porosity: Building the Conditions for a Pedagogy of Care focuses on practical steps to build out generative pedagogical communities. Blending Joan Tronto's concept of care as a complex process with bell hooks' call for education as a tool for shaping beloved communities, participants will consider how interconnectedness is a core element of caring pedagogy. Teaching practice is reframed to include maintaining these relationships as a part of an educational responsibility.

This workshop embraces the idea of a "porous pedagogy": a classroom without fixed walls, where the outside world flows in and the inside flows out. Members leave and bring something back. Others enter and leave something behind. Through real-life examples and mapping exercises, participants will learn strategies to identify and begin outreach to connect their own pedagogical communities to generate porous learning, benefitting students and educators alike.

PREPARING FOR CAREERS IN PHOTOGRAPHY: FOUNDATIONS FOR EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHERS

ROB DICKES

This workshop responds directly to student interest in gaining practical knowledge about building a career in photography. While many photography programs emphasize the fine art aspects of the discipline, they often provide limited exposure to the business realities graduates will face. This session is designed to bridge that gap by introducing essential business concepts for photographers.

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Participants will explore a range of professional pathways, from selling artwork in galleries to operating a full-time photography business. The workshop will begin with an overview of potential career avenues, followed by a deeper dive into key business practices that support long-term success.

Topics will include:
• Business structures and models
• Portfolio development
• Marketing strategies
• Pricing and valuation
• Writing estimates and invoices
• Contracts and client agreements
• Licensing and usage rights
• Taxes and insurance
• Financial management

This two-hour workshop is intended as an interactive session, encouraging questions and discussion throughout. While the content is tailored primarily for students preparing to enter the field, faculty members are also welcome to attend, whether for their own professional development or to inform curriculum design.

WALKING WITH LIGHT: A SOLARGRAPHY WORKSHOP FOR COMMUNITY-BASED IMAGE MAKING

CODY TRACY

This workshop introduces solargraphy as an accessible photographic practice that requires no darkroom or chemical processing. Using simple materials—a can, light-sensitive photographic paper, tape, and basic tools—participants will construct pinhole cameras designed for long-duration exposure. A flatbed scanner and computer will be used to review sample results and demonstrate the full imaging process.

Designed for college students, high school students, and community participants, the workshop focuses on foundational photographic concepts through low-cost, hands-on methods. Participants will build and deploy their own cameras, make site-specific placement decisions, and learn how light, time, and environment shape the resulting image.

CORITA KENT AND THE PRACTICE OF SLOW LOOKING

JEN GREENWOOD

Inspired by the teachings and artistic practice of Corita Kent, this workshop explores slow looking, collective observation, and photography as a form of social art practice.

The session begins with a short introduction to Corita Kent's work and teaching methods, including how she took her students outside the classroom to engage directly with the visual world around them through observation, street photography, advertising, and everyday encounters. Her work encouraged people to slow down, pay attention, and use

CONT'D

visual language to engage more deeply with the world around them. Participants will also consider how Corita responded to the political and social tensions of her time with bravery, grace, humanity, and hope.

The majority of the workshop is centered on observation, image-making, and reflection. Participants will use paper viewfinders during a guided 30-minute slow looking exercise in Loring Greenway near the hotel. The exercise intentionally separates observing from photographing so participants can focus first on framing, detail, and context before picking up a camera.

Participants will then use the camera of their choice to create photographs informed by this experience of slow observation. The session concludes with a group reflection where participants share images, observations, and thoughts about collective looking, community, and intentional image-making.

As an added collaborative component, student conference volunteers will create a small zine as an artifact of the workshop that includes photographs, reflections, and observations generated during the session.

This workshop grows out of an exercise I facilitated in my Introduction to Digital Photography course last semester at Cal Poly Pomona. The experience noticeably shaped how students approached image-making. Their photographs became more intentional, reflective, observant, and connected to their surroundings.

QUEERING THE VERNACULAR: CREATING PERSONAL NARRATIVES THROUGH FOUND PHOTOGRAPHS

KRISTEN BARTLEY

Who gets to be remembered? Family albums and public archives have long reflected the communities deemed worth preserving — leaving LGBTQ+ lives, and those of other marginalized groups, hidden in plain sight or absent altogether. This workshop asks what it means to look again and reclaim what was never meant to be found, even in images where you don't see yourself reflected.

Led by Kristen Welles Bartley, this hands-on workshop draws on her new book, I will always remember our good short love — a personal narrative built around found photographs of a woman she recognizes as a lost queer ancestor. The intimate book brings vernacular photography, personal memoir, and queer history together in conversation.

Participants will work with found vernacular images and a series of visual and writing prompts to construct their own personal narratives — examining how photographs can carry and change meaning across time, identity, and community. The workshop also embraces contrast as a creative tool: the anonymous and the intimate, the historical and the personal, and text and image.

Participants are encouraged to bring in found images of their own, though materials will be provided. All are welcome, with particular attention to voices and histories that have been overlooked.

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BECOMING EARTH: RESTORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFRICAN AMERICANS AND EARTH
IKECHUKWU SHARPE

In “Touching the Earth,” bell hooks writes, “Collective Black self-recovery takes place when we begin to renew our relationship to the earth.” For African Americans, 400+ years of forced labor and systemic oppression led to a temporary rupture in our connection to the land. Yet, before and parallel to this history of exploitation exists a resilient legacy of African Americans who maintained a sacred reverence for earth – farming and cultivating a spirit of awe, autonomy and environmental reciprocity.

This session explores Becoming Earth, flowing water, a photographic project documenting rice cultivation and the changing seasons at Ever-Growing Family Farm in Kerhonkson, NY. Led by Malick Badije and the Badije/Diedhiou/Hyote family, the project centers the dignity of West African (Jola) farmers adapting ancestral knowledge to the Northeast, proving rice as a climate-resilient regional staple.

HAUNTING THE ARCHIVE: INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION AND SIMULATION
ETHAN SORGE

At the turn of the 20th century, it was widely believed that the Indigenous population of the United States was on the verge of extinction. As a result, a concerted effort was made to memorialize the "vanishing race". Photographers such as Joseph K. Dixon and Edward S. Curtis were commissioned by business magnates to travel to the American West and capture "authentic" photographs and films of tribes during a period of land loss and assimilation efforts. These photographs and films are now understood to be highly romanticized and contain numerous fabrications, calling their authenticity in to question and limiting their value as a historical resource. Yet, like ghosts, these images haunt the visual archive of the Native American. These misconceptions, simulations and romanticized depictions of Native Americans form an essential part of America's visual canon. Despite a turn away from outright discrimination and racist imagery, the colonial thinking behind these photographs continue to be a part of the underlying fabric of the American consciousness. What is to be done with this? How can artists unsettle the archive and address these misconceptions and inconsistencies?

GRAFTING SITES: INTERGENERATIONAL REPAIR
DANI HUGHES

Grafting Sites is an ongoing photographic collaboration between Dani F. Hughes and her father that examines working-class labor, disability, ecological knowledge, and care. From the age of fourteen, Hughes’ father worked in road construction until a workplace accident resulted in traumatic brain injury, memory loss, and chronic pain. As he navigates ongoing health challenges, he now spends much of his time caring for their rural Michigan property, where he continues applying self-taught ecological knowledge through tending the land. This presentation considers photography as a collaborative, care-based practice that moves documentation into a participatory mode of image-making. It reflects on the role photography plays in representing family, class, disability, and inherited knowledge, while preserving overlooked labor histories and building an intergenerational archive.

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NO PLACE BUT HERE
DILLON BRYANT

No place but here is an ongoing body of work that uses collage, scripts, object making, performance, and constructed photographs to play with and against familial and broader narratives of power, connection, and whiteness associated within the American West. Underpinned and intersected by interior questions revolving around ambiguity, artifice, legibility, and queerness, I focus my inquiry on land now known as the Black Hills that span South Dakota and Wyoming. Beneath the surface of how western lands are looked at and used, the work intersects with my relationship (or lack of one) to relatives and ancestors, using photography as an extended hand back in time to offer care and make sense of cycles of inheritance and foreclosed histories. Western America has been looked at as a stage for a certain flavor of mythology and through the arrangement of cut photographs I attempt to write my own. The resulting collages, montages, and photographs assembled from the strata of images act as vessels for the absurdity and contradictions left in the wake of grief.

CARRIED FORWARD: THE ARCHIVE AS COLLABORATION
SHELBY WELTE

Many photographers informally assume the role of family archivist, producing and preserving images within their familial networks without fully recognizing the creative, ethical, and relational implications of this position. This presentation reframes the family archive as a site of community where authorship is intergenerational and inherited materials remain unfinished.

Working with photographs, documents, and textiles from my own family, I transform archival remnants through laborious hand processes. Records are pulped and remade into handmade paper; worn garments and linens are cut and stitched into quilts. These acts are gestures of care and acknowledge grief, absence, and the weight inherited materials can carry. The family archive and the slowness of handwork become a form of place-making through collaboration in contrast to dominant models of authorship that often shape institutional documentation.

EXPANDED HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY
ALINA FERRER VAN RYZIN

The anthotype process is conspiratorially simple: its recipe consists of just water and plant matter yet its "invention" is credited to Sir John Herschel in 1842. After experimenting with this process myself, noting the simplicity of the emulsion and the instability i.e impermanence of the final image, I began to fundamentally doubt its 19th century origin, and instead began to speculate that it has ancient and primordial origins. From here, I began to critically fabulate an alternate history of photography. In linking the anthotype process to the field of archeo-optics, the study of the experience and ritual use of light by ancient peoples, one can begin to imagine what an ancient photographic practice might have looked like.

THE CHASM OF THE REACH: PHOTOGRAPHIC STRATEGIES IN QUEERING DESIRE
ROSE CUNNINGHAM

CONT'D

This presentation shares my ongoing research practice examining photography and language as a form of self-fashioning queer identity and performing desire as it manifests in absence, dissolve, and imagination. These projects not only focus on personal translations of queer desire and experience, but they are also exercises in endeavoring to more broadly understand the functions of desire through gesture and signification.

My practice has largely centered around having recurring dreams of queer, erotic experiences that had not been a part of my identity or desire in my waking, conscious life. What began as a practice of dream journaling quickly became a ritual in piecing together a new understanding of my queer identity and sexuality, allowing these once latent desires to manifest in my conscious life. In reframing the visual and literary legacy of Surrealism, the work challenges the implications of looking, depicting, and performing queerness for the camera.

MATERIALIZING CONOCIMIENTO AS A METHOD FOR A NEW COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS
SAMMIE CORREA

This session examines Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of Conocimiento through my photographic installation practice, Sana Sana and Private Revelations. Using large-format photography, archival fragments, domestic objects, and constructed environments, my work explores how inherited trauma, ritual, migration, and maternal memory are transmitted through embodied practices rather than direct narration. The session argues how the act of materializing conocimiento creates a tool to navigate the unstable thresholds between personal, cultural, and institutional histories, where new forms of collective consciousness can emerge through acts of witnessing, reinterpretation, and shared vulnerability.

LOOKING DOWN / LOOKING BACK: SELF-PORTRAITURE AND THE FAT ARCHIVE
ANNA GUYTON

Looking Down / Looking Back is a 20-minute experimental lecture performance combining comedy, autobiography, art history, and archival research. As a lecture performance, the work merges scholarly presentation with storytelling, images, humor, and embodied reflection. Through close readings of Eadweard Muybridge, Mariken Wessels, Jenny Saville, Laura Aguilar, and my own family archive, I examine how fat bodies have art historically been documented, aestheticized, and misunderstood. I ask who gets to represent fatness and from what perspective, while considering the relative absence of nuanced fat representation within photographic history compared to other communities and identities.

JOHN WAYNE AND OTHER VICIOUS MEN IN AMERICA
ZACHARY BEGLER

The questions that I am researching are: How are violence and aggressive masculinity normalized and sustained in everyday environments across the American empire? How do cultural artifacts and collective spaces contribute to their persistence? Over the past two years, I have produced hundreds of large-format images, Polaroids, and hundreds of feet of Super8 film while researching these questions.

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TRACING LIGHT
ELEANOR OAKES, ALLISON EVANS, JOSHUA MOKRY, & SYDNEY KING

Photography's history has long been anchored to 1839 as a singular moment of invention as a Western, technologically-driven origin story centered on fixing an image onto a flat surface. While convenient, this narrative is incomplete. It overlooks parallel developments across cultures, obscures pre-existing image-making technologies, and reinforces frameworks shaped by colonial, patriarchal, and capitalist systems.

UNFIXED proposes a critical reexamination of this foundation. This panel brings together artists, historians, and scholars who challenge traditional definitions of photography by foregrounding expanded lineages that include, but are not limited to, revised uses of historical processes, material experimentation, performance, social practice, camera-less making, collaborations with artificial intelligence, and other practices that broaden how photography is understood. This session invites each participant to define photography and their understanding of its origins.
In alignment with SPE's theme Community in Contrast, this panel understands photographic history as a collective and contested space shaped through multiple communities of knowledge. By unfixing photography's origin story, we aim to resist erasure, expand disciplinary boundaries, and open new possibilities for how the medium can be understood, taught, and practiced.

This session also serves as a platform to initiate contributions for "UNFIXED: Essays Toward a Revised History of Photography" [working title], an edited volume that will gather diverse voices to reimagine the field's past and future.

THE EMBEDDED LENS: AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES OF KINSHIP
ARMON MEANS, ANGELA WELLS, ABBEY HEPNER, EMILY HANAKO MOMOHARA, & SOUZEINA MUSHTAQ

In a societal climate that frequently defaults to deficit-based narratives when depicting marginalized or niche groups, image-makers hold the critical agency to construct profound counter-narratives. The Embedded Lens: Auto-Ethnography and Counter-Narratives of Kinship proposes a panel discussion exploring the methodology and ethics of photographing communities from within. This session investigates how the embedded lens—where the artist is an active participant in their subject matter—cultivates what bell hooks describes as "life-sustaining communities of resistance."

The panel's foundational anchor examines the intersection of fine art photography, sociological research, and solidarity across varying structures of identity within BIPOC, mixed-race, and broader minority or marginalized communities. While rooted in an initial case study utilizing multimedia portraiture to unpack paternal legacies and embedded documentary practices within the Black motorcycle community, the session expands to investigate similar methodologies across diverse cultural landscapes. Whether documenting the inherent kinship of niche subcultures—seen through shared lived experience, or exploring the intersectional realities of marginalized groups, the panel highlights how embedded methodologies transform photographic practice from passive observation into active, localized participation.

This panel will dissect the complexities of auto-ethnographic image-making, the dismantling of systemic stereotypes, and how teaching community-engaged art actively champions equity, belonging, and solidarity.

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WITHIN YOUR MEANS: EXPERIMENTAL EXHIBITION-MAKING AS PEDAGOGY
ASHLEY KAUSCHINGER, TAHIA FARHIN HAQUE, & BOBBY LEE

Experimental exhibition-making exists on the edges of the art world, in storefront windows, empty lots, online platforms, library community rooms, U-hauls, and artist-run spaces built from ingenuity and collective effort. These projects, often born from necessity, become something larger: sites of community connection, professional development, and genuine artistic risk-taking that traditional exhibition contexts rarely accommodate. Structured around budget sizes ranging from $0 to large-scale, as a framework for conceptualizing experimental exhibition methods across various contexts.

This panel brings together artists, educators, and curators working within experimental exhibition models, focusing on how these practices translate inside and outside of the classroom. Experimental exhibitions enable unique pedagogical practices by either encouraging accessible professional development or opening new possibilities. This interactive panel will engage the audience through experimental exhibition activations, including sticker packs, receipt printing, a collaborative digital exhibition, and more!

NO TURNING BACK: DOCUMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES IN THE AMERICAN WEST
ALEXANDER HEILNER, ALEJANDRO ACIERTO, AMELIA DIGIANO, AMANDA THOMAS, & SANT KHALSA

The environmental catastrophes currently unfolding are global in scope, with dire implications for all peoples and nations. But the American West continues to be a place where evidence of our most urgent problems is often writ large upon the land, and easy to see if one knows where to look.

In 2026, the West is ground zero for social, political and economic battles that are poised to shape our lives for generations to come. From agriculture and infrastructure, to energy and extraction, to wildfires and water; many of our systems are on the brink of collapse, but there seems to be scant will to make the hard decisions necessary to avert radical entropy.

This panel will highlight artists, critics, and researchers whose work documents physical evidence in the landscape, as well as the political and cultural forces that are currently driving these outcomes. Aesthetics and activism are equally welcome, with an aim of moving past resignation and toward potential solutions.

WITCHING HOUR 2: PEDAGOGY, COMMUNITY ACTIVATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

ZEN COHEN, JOHANNA WINTERS, RIEL STURCHIO, & SARAH MINOR

Witching Hour 2 expands the conversations initiated during the 2026 SPE Witching Hour panel, where panelists and attendees expressed a desire for deeper dialogue surrounding how witch identities intersect with artistic practice, pedagogy, research, and institutional spaces. This session invites presentation proposals from lens-based practitioners whose work engages ritual-based image-making, documents queer and occult communities, explores alternative systems of collective knowledge and magical pedagogies, radical experimentation, studio "weirding," classroom rituals, community collaboration, and navigating making and being within the institution.

CONT'D

We welcome presentations addressing how students engage in photographic ritual, how educators cultivate radical pedagogies rooted in care and embodiment, and how communities form within and beyond academic spaces. Particular attention will be given to projects that foster collective activation, collaborative research, and unexpected forms of support among peers, students, and broader communities.

With a focus on speculative, experimental, and mysterious studio practices that propel artistic research, Witching Hour 2 proposes a nontraditional conference format that encourages participation beyond the standard lecture model. Participants are invited to enact visual ephemera, temporary altars, performative gestures, and collaborative activations that blur the boundaries between presentation, ritual, and communal gathering. Through collective reflection and embodied exchange, this session aims to create space for alternative modes of learning, visibility, resistance, and belonging within contemporary lens-based practice.

THE PHOTOBOOK REINVENTED: PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE IN BOOK FORM

VANESSA WOODS, ALLIE HAEUSSLEIN, PAULA MCCARTNEY, & ZOE LEMELSON

Though photographic experience is increasingly dispersed across screens, many contemporary photographers have turned to the printed book as a sculptural, tactile, and materially contingent site of photographic meaning. This panel brings together photographers who view the book not simply as a vessel for images, but as an object in its own right — one whose scale, binding, sequencing, paper, folds, inserts, and physicality shape the experience of the work.

Rather than serving as a substitute for an exhibition, or a neutral format for reproduction, the photobook can operate as a materially specific space in which photographs are encountered through touch, pacing, interruption, and close attention. The panel will examine how artists use the book's objecthood in experimental ways to complicate narrative, activate form, and extend photographic practice. In this sense, the book becomes not only a publishing format, but also a space that can deepen the conceptual and experiential dimensions of the work.

Panelists will address collaborations and processes between photographer, designer, and publisher, asking how these relationships shape the final object, and how self-publishing/independent publishing have served to reinvent the book form. Together, the panel will explore how contemporary, artist books use material form to produce experiences of photography that cannot be replicated in either digital spaces or traditional exhibition contexts.

DEL MERO CENTRO DEL MEDIO VENIMOS, DEL CENTRO DE AMERICA — Y LO DAMOS TODO.

MARTIN WANNAM, EMILIA YANG, DOMINIQUE MUÑOZ, & DIEGO MORALES-PORTILLO

Central America remains fixed in the U.S. imaginary as a tropical region where violence and disorder must be controlled. Shaped by a long history of empire, U.S. political intervention, and economic extraction, the isthmus continues to produce waves of migration — and with each new generation, new strategies of adaptation, survival, and cultural negotiation emerge.

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This panel uplifts the expanded photographic practices of Central American artists navigating cultural assimilation, diaspora, migration, and representation in the United States. While Central Americans are often subsumed under the broader Latinx diaspora, this grouping frequently obscures the specificity of our countries, our histories, and the particular strategies we employ to survive and move through U.S. spaces.

Drawing on Dr. Kency Cornejo's framework of Visual Disobedience, we argue that Central American image-makers are not simply documenting suffering — they are interrupting, exposing, and constructing counter-narratives and other ways of seeing. This is not art made from victimhood; it is art made from agency.

The panel brings together photographers whose work enacts this disobedience — centering joy, memory, community, and self-determination as political acts, rooted in the mero centro del medio: not on the margins, but at the very heart of the conversation.

MONUMENTALLY DIRTY

COLLEEN MULLINS, KELLY KRISTIN JONES, CARLOS DIAZ, & ROSE DESIANO GALJANIC

In 1991 performance duo, Men of the World (Mark Alice Durant and Mathew Wilson), systematically washed statues throughout Chicago, responding to inquiries from the public who asked, "Is father dirty?"

Father's dirty, alright.

Artists have continually interacted with, recorded, performed and intervened as an act of voicing objection, or drawing attention to the monuments everyday Americans have passed without much notice for 250 years. Until 2017, when Sam Durant's "Scaffold" was removed from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, our host city—a true community in contrast—the largest objection ever launched against a monument here was in 2001 over a TV Land-sponsored work depicting Mary Tyler Moore as iconic television character, Mary Richards, throwing her tam jubilantly in the air. What are the moments that turn community to look harder, or at all, at these objects in our everyday peripheral view? And how do artists and writers who have, through lens-based, prose and/or performative means, examined the monument?

SHARED POWER: ARTIST COLLECTIVES AND THE WORK OF COMMUNITY

MELISSA BORMAN, SOPHIE SCHWARTZ, JESSICA SWANK, & THALASSA RAASCH

Artist collectives offer alternatives to art-world systems shaped by scarcity, isolation, and gatekeeping. This session invites artists, educators, and organizers to consider how collective structures can generate care, access, mentorship, and opportunity while sustaining artistic practice over time. Drawing from the experiences of FotoMatter and Form+Content Gallery, I offer two examples of artist-run models that build infrastructure through exhibitions, publications, public programs, shared labor, and reciprocal support.

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Rather than presenting a single model, this session creates space for multiple perspectives on collective practice. Panelists may speak to the ways their collectives form, evolve, and respond to changing needs, including questions of access, inclusion, financial burden, labor, leadership, and public engagement. The session welcomes a range of formats and experiences, from critique groups and artist-run spaces to hybrid and informal collectives.

Within the context of Community in Contrast, this session asks how artist collectives can resist profit-driven and pay-to-play models by centering inclusion, sustainability, and shared responsibility. It also considers how collective practice shapes community beyond the studio, in educational, civic, and relational life. By bringing together varied perspectives, the session aims to generate dialogue about how artists make structures that support one another and expand what community can mean.

PHOTOGRAPHY AFTER THE SABINES: RAPE AND ITS DISPOSSESSION

TESORA GARCIA, JIAYI LIANG, ELLIE LOOR, & DAVID HANDFORTH

The Latin root for rape is raptio — seizure, carrying off, taking by force. Europe romanticized it in canons of Renaissance painting, psychoanalysis suppressed it and called it hysteria, and the manosphere attempts to engineer it as a domestic weapon in online chatrooms and websites. Rape is all around us, and seemingly nowhere. In her comments on the absence of rape in photographic archives, Ariella Azoulay exposes a paradox of vision: even when sexual violence appears in cultural narratives, its crime is allegorized or aestheticized into obscurity, leaving collective appeals for justice underdeveloped and incomplete.

What photography inherits from this history is not neutrality but a set of unresolved iconographic debts. Unlike confession or testimony, devotional image traditions have long held space for what exceeds forensic language — for grief, violation, and bodily knowledge that resists direct representation. This session asks what it means to reclaim that capacity: to make images that bear witness without demanding disclosure, that analyze without spectacularizing, that build toward justice without requiring survivors to re-perform harm.

We will discuss the iconography of sexual violence while centering historical and contemporary image-makers speaking from their positions as survivors and theorists of bodies, memory, and sight. How can something that exceeds the registers of vision be captured as an object of analysis? To what ends can this analysis be deployed? This session models a collective practice of devotional looking that refuses sensationalism and the confessional posture alike — proposing instead an ethics of sustained, justice-oriented attention .

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BEYOND PAY-TO-PRINT: RECLAIMING THE PHOTOBOOK ECONOMY
MICAH CASH, EVAN BADEN, & ETHAN JONES

As photobook publishing becomes a crucial component of contemporary photographic practice, the industry continues to exploit emerging and mid-career artists who seek publication with business models that require substantial upfront financial investment while offering limited transparency, ownership, or long-term return. This approach often eschews large-scale distribution and broader public readership, placing emphasis on the photobook as an artistic object for limited audiences rather than a vehicle for engagement and broad dissemination.

Positioned within the framework of Community in Contrast, this panel considers how photobook publishing can resist extractive systems that disproportionately burden artists. Bringing together photographers, publishers, and industry professionals, this panel will examine how both traditional publishing structures and alternative publishing models might offer more sustainable and photographer-friendly pathways for photographic publishing.

Panelists will explore the possibilities and challenges of positioning photobooks within broader commercial and cultural publishing ecosystems alongside art, documentary, and narrative nonfiction titles. Topics will include distributor relationships, audience development, production scale, editorial positioning, bookstore access, and how publishers might better balance financial sustainability with fair treatment of photographers as authors and creative stakeholders. The discussion also addresses how more accessible publishing and distribution models could expand public engagement with photography while creating stronger economic opportunities for artists.

Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of traditional publishing strategies, concrete examples of alternative models, and the encouragement to reject paying any money up front for a publication.

MATRILINEAL: WOMEN ON HERITAGE, LEGACY, AND COMMUNITY NETWORKS
JESSICA HAYS, LAURA FISHER, SONJA THOMSEN, KRISTA LEIGH STINKE

Lineage can be traced through bloodlines, and as academics, we often think of lineage as the people you study directly under. I am proposing a panel focused on women whose practices engage with matrilineal heritage and lineage in an expanded sense. Beyond our direct ancestors or the considerations of our direct descendants, how do we engage with the rhizomic network of female and femme identifying artists who precede us, as well as those that will follow. Matrilineal knowledge lines could be passed to through parent/child relationships, mentor/mentee, historical predecessor/current practitioner. How do we grow from our matrilineal knowledge heritage, and what are we building for the future?

I will present The First Photobook was Blue, which integrates cyanotype photographs, research-based text, and personal reflections to examine the idea of leaving a legacy, roles of motherhood and non-motherhood, and reproductive justice in a time when the right to choose one's own path in life is increasingly under attack. Plants used as abortifacients and birth control are recorded in cyanotype, paying homage to Anna Atkins, the 19th century artist and scientist credited with making the first photo book. Atkins never had children herself, while contributing to the advancement of both photography and science. This work draws parallels between the dismissal of her work at the time and the ways in which the professionalization of medicine erased women's contributions to the field.

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Outside of my own practice, I am already aware of several artists working with similar ideas, and would like to invite them to apply alongside other artists who will apply that I have yet to meet!

WHAT AI CAN'T FIND: PHOTOGRAPHIC SCHOLARS AS STEWARDS OF THE UNSEEN ARCHIVE

CHRISTINE LEE SMITH, JODIE GOODNOUGH, & TERESA MORRISON

As AI becomes the default research tool for students, a critical blind spot is emerging in humanistic scholarship. Students aren't simply choosing convenience—they are bypassing entire knowledge systems, treating AI-generated responses as sufficient and complete. But AI LLMs are only as deep as the digitized record, and vast analog archives remain entirely outside their reach.

This creates a profound epistemological problem: when students rely on AI to define what counts as valid knowledge, un-digitized archives become invisible — not because they lack value, but because they lack a digital footprint. The result is a new generation of scholars who may never encounter the knowledge they don't know to look for.

Photographic scholars are uniquely positioned to have concerns (with archival data spanning texts, equipment, and prints) and are uniquely suited to address this gap in student research knowledge. As many of us are scholars and practitioners, we hold knowledge AI cannot retrieve, interpret, or distribute. In a time when learning communities are increasingly siloed and screen-mediated, the responsibility to bridge analog and digital knowledge systems falls to us.

This panel asks how photographic scholars and researchers can communicate archival knowledge to their learning communities and beyond—and how we do so with both urgency and care. How do we ensure our research remains accessible as the shape of education shifts in real time? Do we prioritize digitization, or do we make deliberate choices to preserve the analog? And how do we use emerging educational spaces to offer our communities a sober, grounded hope—one rooted not in algorithmic shortcuts, but in the deep, irreplaceable work of the archive?

The session consists of a facilitated conversation among panelists moderated by Christine Lee Smith. Q&A and audience discussion to follow.

OUT TO DRY: ON REPRESENTATION, OVEREXPOSURE, & THE FUTURE OF TRANS IMAGE CULTURE

JUNE T SANDERS, KELSEY SUCENA, & SKY MAGGIORE

Following the ascendance of the second Trump administration, transgender Americans have entered into a state of near daily crisis that has largely gone unheard among our colleagues, allies, and fellow citizens. New policies prohibiting the federal funding of art dealing with transgender themes, the removal of protections and privacy for transgender students, the genocidal prohibition of care for transgender minors in some states, and recent National Security efforts to designate "pro-transgender" groups alongside formal terrorist cells, all cast serious doubt on Trans* futures. In the midst of this, little is being

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done to support us.

Out to Dry invites photographers, community members, anti-scholars, teachers, and wayward thinkers to contribute to essays, presentations, projects, observations, thoughts, and hybrid/alternative approaches centered around these concepts and themes. Together we will ask: Has the push for "representation" lent itself to our thriving or persecution? How do photographers navigate the tricky question of representation during times of active political repression, and what are the consequences of either our advancement or our retreat?

This round-robin discussion seeks to better understand the potential role of photography in this "post-tipping point" context. Here, chairs and panelists will critically engage with the successes and failures of "representation-first" models of trans liberation so common throughout 2010s, questioning the efficacy of these efforts while drawing attention to the critical failure of the institutions which once championed us and to new methodologies for the production of a trans* image culture that matters.

BEYOND DOCUMENTARY: REIMAGINING EXPANDED PRACTICES

NATE LARSON, DANIEL FERNANDEZ, & LESLIE GRANT

This panel will consider photography as a collaborative, process-driven practice that can foster resilience within communities shaped by trauma. Expanding documentary modes, strategies to be discussed will emphasize participation, co-authorship, and ethical accountability, positioning image-makers in a continuing and expanding partnership with their subjects to promote belonging, create space for agency, self-representation, and shared narrative control.

Central questions include analysis of power: who controls representation, how images circulate, and what responsibilities do practitioners have to/for/with communities with whom they engage? We will also explore how participants actively shape the conditions of their own visibility, while negotiating and redirecting the gaze to challenge histories of marginalization and imposed ways of seeing. The panel will also explore the nature of long-term and ongoing engagements: how do relationships form and change over time and how does this shift the work itself? How can social practice and engagement support dignity and community resilience over expanded timeframes?

FUMBLING IN THE DARK

MEGGAN GOULD, PRIYA KAMBLI, ANDREW THOMPSON, CAROL GOLEMBOSKI, & MICHAEL BINDER

The photographic darkroom was the historic epicenter of photographic labor, brimming with all of the complexities, toxicities, and pleasures of two centuries of image-making. Photographs of the experience of the darkroom are, by necessity, limited by light conditions—and when pictured at all it is often reduced to a cinematic trope of a lone

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photographer's epiphany under a dangling red bulb. Within these spaces, however, I see so much more: a larger societal picture defined by aesthetic thirst and experimental innovation, but also interwoven with tangled threads of labor histories, corporate successes and failures, gender inequities, and ecological disquiet.

This session will look at the darkroom as a surprisingly undertheorized site of photographic experience. What are the complexities of this unique relationship to latency and darkness? How have the esoteric tools of analog photographic labor shaped how we experience photography today? How is community experienced in the space of the darkroom? This session invites a broad range of conversation about experiences in the darkroom—as practitioners, as students, and as teachers.

TEACHING ART HISTORY IN A POST-AI WORLD

EPIPHANY KNEDLER, DANA SMESSAERT, KAITLYN JO SMITH, & MONICA HAMILTON

During the turn of the twentieth century, photography was reckoning with its place in the art world. As it has increasingly become the visual language in our lives, we are inundated with thousands of images every day. Over the last few years, a new medium has emerged that is unsure of its place in our visual system – AI imagery. Teaching visual literacy in our classrooms becomes more important than ever. Finding truth in images has always been difficult, but with the daily progressions in AI's ability to render realistic images, the skills to decipher differences and why that is important is being ignored. Using art history as the guide, this session will explore the considerations that must be made to address the changes in how we teach art in the higher education classroom, including an overview of the current situation, ways art programs are engaging with these updates and guidelines, as well as a look at how the art world has managed these changes previously. This session will also include some suggestions for incorporating this into your own curriculum.