

**The Museum of Contemporary Photography  
Columbia College Chicago**

**on View**



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**Anna + Bernhard Blume**

*Metaphysics Is Men's Work II*, 1991

9 photographs, 98-by-49 1/2 inches each  
silver gelatin prints

Courtesy of the artists



©  
**Jim Dine**  
*Religious Quest*, 1999  
69 1/4-by-48 1/8 inches  
digital pigment print on canvas  
Recent gift of the artist

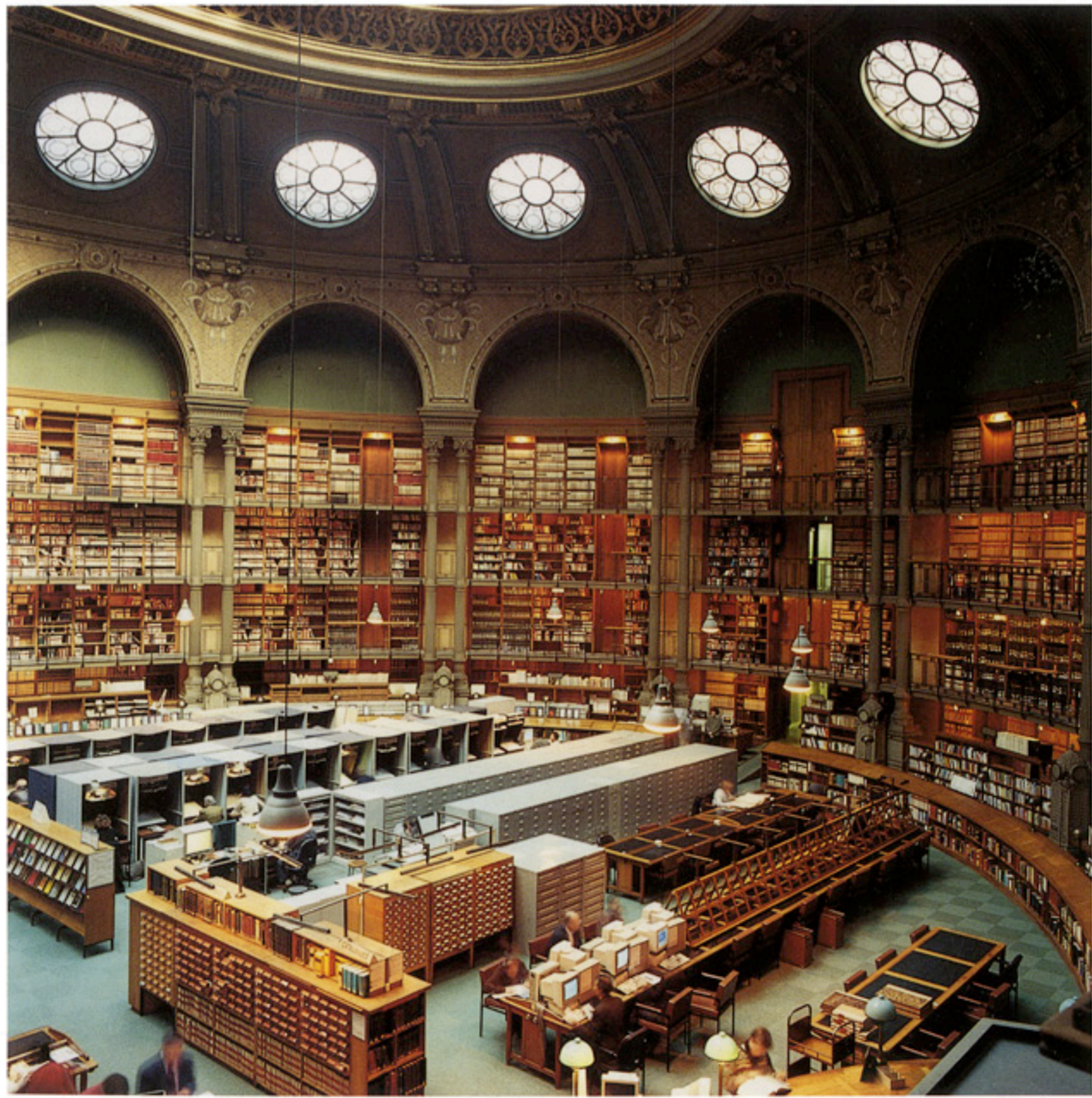


©  
**Flor Garduño**  
*El Sr. de los Pájaros, Polonia*, 1988  
11-by-14 inches  
silver gelatin print  
Courtesy of the artist

AND This was the ICESICKLE  
dropping on the floor  
THE POOR PARQUET-  
that i was in Love for all those years  
and it was ~~only~~ causing me to "SCRATCH"  
For SUFFERING ~~love~~ a silly term  
from lack of love & understanding /  
the soft side of ME - who made life sad and kind & full  
I really never thought I'd be able to COMPREHEND  
how this MONSTER stepped from the HEART  
of so lovely a creature as you!  
So friendly and full of secrets between you 2.  
FALLING DOWN STAIRS,  
THE FAME from the ~~house~~  
ALL ALIZARIN &  
rite across your lovely wound  
SO KISSED, SO FAMILIAR /  
OH DEAR ENEMY  
you should LICK YOUR FINGERS in the MIRROR /  
the blood's all there



**Mat Collishaw**  
*Shrunken Heads*, 1998  
59-by-89-by-62 inches  
mixed media, laserdisc, color monitor  
Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art,  
San Diego



**Candida Höfer**  
*Bibliothèque Nationale de France Paris*, 1998  
23 1/2-by-23 1/2 inches  
chromogenic development print  
Courtesy of the artist

# The Museum of Contemporary Photography Columbia College Chicago

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## June 24 - August 19, 2000

### Anna + Bernhard Blume

*Metaphysics Is Men's Work II*, 1991

Wife and husband team Anna and Bernhard Blume studied at the Düsseldorf Kunstakademie in the 1960s and have been creating artworks collaboratively since the 1970s. Often using themselves as the protagonists, the Blumes have produced numerous suites of staged photographs that create ambiguous narratives. Informed by conventional German middle-class values, the Blumes are inspired by cultural stereotypes and clichés such as the German romance with the forest. *Metaphysics Is Men's Work II*, a tableau of nine 98-by-49 1/2-inch black-and-white photographs, features a couple moving through a mysterious wood; a strong sense of motion is created by the use of diagonals and blurred focus in the composition. Often marked by an ironic humor reminiscent of vaudeville, the Blumes' work both questions and illuminates traditional gender roles and domesticity. Their subject matter ranges from kitchens and mealtimes to family outings and excursions, but their approach consistently evokes the strangeness, rather than the normalcy, of these seemingly quotidian settings and objects. Anna and Bernhard Johannes Blume were both born in 1937.

### Sophie Calle

*The Birthday Ceremony*, 1997

*Autobiographical Stories*, 1988-89, 1992

Beginning in 1980 and for thirteen consecutive years, French artist Sophie Calle threw a dinner party on her birthday in her own honor. Each year she invited the exact number of people corresponding to her age, always including one stranger chosen by one of her guests. Instead of using the gifts she received, she collected them and created *The Birthday Ceremony*, a chronology of white cases displaying the gifts and accompanied by text on the front cataloguing each item. In 1993 Calle ended the birthday ritual, and created two cases: the first contains the usual selection of gifts; the other holds only a large plaster angel with a banner between its hands reading "Gloria In Excelsis Deo!!" The other works on view here come from a series entitled *Autobiographical Stories*, comprising short textual recounts of memories accompanied by five-foot-high black-and-white photographic illustrations. It is impossible to ascertain if the memories are true, invented, or a mixture of both. "What is between truth and fiction is the activity. The text and images are the reports of that reality," explains Calle. Born in 1953, Sophie Calle resides in Paris.

### Mat Collishaw

*Shrunken Heads*, 1998

British artist Mat Collishaw, a manipulator of photography and video, utilized his vast technical expertise to create his 1998 piece *Shrunken Heads*. This three-dimensional architectural model of a picturesque town center in England includes a brick church, school, and thatch-roof pub, all surrounding an idyllic fountain. It becomes the stage for a semi-violent video projected by laserdisc into the town square. The scenario begins with a quiet night broken only by sounds of religious hymns emanating from the church. The peace is shattered when a crowd of hooligans bursts out of the pub. A fight breaks out, a gun is fired, a woman screams from a second-floor window, an SUV blows up. The group then slowly staggers and crawls back into the pub only to be thrown out again onto the street. Collishaw's narrative lures the viewer into the role of voyeur, simultaneously revealing and questioning society's fascination with violence, as well as the ubiquity of brutality and aggression in our culture today. Born in 1966 in Nottingham, England, Mat Collishaw lives and works in London.

### Jim Dine

*Religious Quest*, 1999

*Removing the Ache*, 2000

These digital pigment prints on canvas recently donated to the museum by Jim Dine represent his most current work. Using a digital camera to capture the images, Dine then transferred the output onto canvas. Internationally known for his mastery in a multitude of mediums, Dine has responded to a similarly broad spectrum of inspirations, ranging from Abstract Expressionist influences to poetry to the most cutting-edge innovations in contemporary digital artmaking. He has consistently experimented with technique, such as his application of found objects to canvas, or his fashioning of large-scale tools and other common objects. Found and commonplace objects are a recurrent theme in Dine's art, such as hardware and clothing; the artist relates to these objects in a personal manner, and uses them in his work as vehicles of expression. Born in 1935, Jim Dine lives and works in New York.

### Flor Garduño

In her silver gelatin prints, Flor Garduño explores ideas of history and tradition as they relate to both mythology and the natural world. Photographing in many countries and working in genres that include still life, landscape, and portraiture, she addresses the grand themes of life and death in images of disembodied sculpture, holy relics, and mystical animals. Through her use of iconic imagery, Garduño creates a mythical view of the world that is both timeless and placeless. For example, her image *El Sr. de los Pájaros, Polonia*, 1988 (Lord of the Birds, Poland) depicts a formal oil painting of a gentleman, surrounded by an eclectic array of wooden birds. The figure in the painting seems to be asserting authority over the birds, which are fixed to the wall huddling around the painting, awaiting his command. Flor Garduño was born in Mexico City in 1957 and currently divides her time between Mexico and Switzerland.

### Candida Höfer

Reading Rooms

Candida Höfer's photographs present a systematic visual study of rooms in various libraries, some modern and institutional, others centuries old and grand. People are noticeably absent from these highly formal images. Instead, Höfer has emphasized repeated forms within the rooms such as chairs, tables, bookshelves, and light fixtures to create patterns and produce a sense of orderliness in her photographs. In some of the images such as *Bibliothèque Nationale de France Paris*, 1998, modern furnishings such as computers and prefabricated gray metal shelves appear out of place within the neoclassical architecture of the old library. Höfer's straightforward and detached style at first seems very objective and purely documentary. However, her juxtaposition of incongruous elements and the mimetic nature of her subject matter hint at wit, sarcasm, and the surreal. Before photographing reading rooms, Höfer recorded museums and zoos with the same precision and attention to detail. These three bodies of work reveal the artist's interest in documenting collections of like things. Born in 1944 in Eberswalde, Germany, Candida Höfer lives in Cologne.

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COVER

### Sophie Calle

*The Birthday Ceremony (1987)*, 1997

67-by-33 1/2-by-18 3/4 inches

gifts, text, and display case

Courtesy Donald Young Gallery, Chicago