



re:collection

July 13 - Oct 1, 2017

This exhibition is organized by Columbia College Chicago graduate students Kalin Haydon, Carissa Meier, and Shawn Rowe, alongside Collection Research Fellow Sophie Haslinger, together with Karen Irvine, Deputy Director and Chief Curator, and Kristin Taylor, Manager of Collections.

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Evan Baden, *The Baptist*, 2013

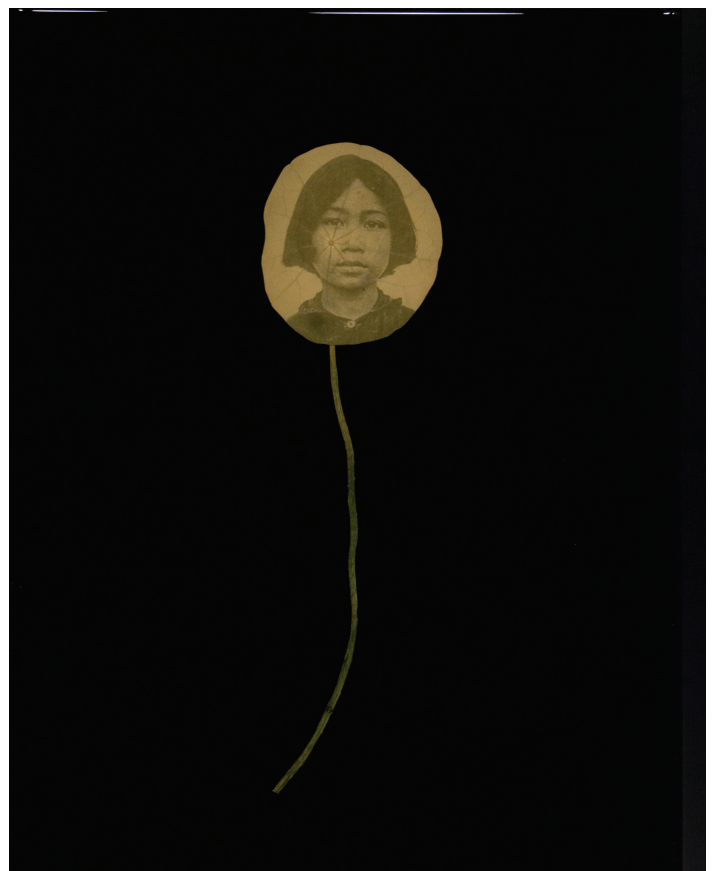
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Photography differs from other mediums in its distinctive relationship to the practice of sequencing. With its origins in cinematic frames and a typically flat, reproducible form, photography lends itself to a storyboard approach. Books and exhibitions on the medium often capitalize on the fact that photographs that work well as stand-alone images can be enhanced and enriched by the presence of other images in their vicinity.

This exhibition explores the various ways that we perceive images. In his famous book *Art as Experience*, the philosopher John Dewey suggests that art's significance does not reside in the art object alone. Works of art affect viewers not simply through perceptions of the object's physical components, but by the entirety of the conditions of perception. The viewer, therefore, is essential to artistic experience,

which is altogether different from the object that exists on its own terms.¹ Spanning the history of photography and offering a diverse array of approaches, each photograph in this exhibition converses with its neighboring photographs in terms of content, form, or another, more subtle, connecting factor waiting to be discovered.

At certain junctures, groups of images form, pooling related ideas and addressing some of the most pressing social issues of our time. Many of the galleries start with a camera-less construction, a nod to the origins of the medium and its fundamental ability to record light and shadow. A significant new acquisition, *Sungazing Scroll* (2015) by Kei Ito, is centered in the main gallery. This 180-foot-long work scroll comprises 108 exposures



Binh Danh, *Memory of Tuol Sleng Prison, Child 7*, 2010

1. John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group, 1934), pp. 82, 219.



of the sun made directly onto Type-C paper, creating a string of undulating black circles surrounded by blazing oranges and yellows. Making a new circle each time he took a breath, Ito considers this work a meditation on his grandfather's firsthand account of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima that he described as "hundreds of suns lighting up the sky." On one side of Ito's photograph are two images by Binh Danh (*Drifting Souls #4*, 2005, and *Memory of Tuol Sleng Prison, Child 7*, 2010). The images are the result of photosynthesis on leaves and thus a reflection on the lasting effects of the Vietnam War. On the other side, Penelope Umbrico's *8,146,774 Suns from Flickr (Partial) 10/15/10* (2010) reveals the human attraction to the sun as both a fundamental life source and a photographic motif. The inclusion of alternative processes and appropriated images throughout the exhibition underscores the unreliability of photographic representation, which is always a translation of reality rather than a direct copy.

re:collection celebrates the Museum of Contemporary Photography's vast archive of photographs—a collection of over 14,000 works by 1,465 artists, that the museum started collecting in 1979. The permanent collection at the MoCP encompasses a variety of works and reflects a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies. Also housed in the museum and featured in this exhibition are works from the rotating archive, the Midwestern Photographers Project (MPP). Serving as a unique and expansive resource on contemporary regional photography, MPP includes more than 100 portfolios on loan from established and emerging artists residing in the Midwest. Both collections support the museum's overall mission: to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and political implications of the image in our world today.

TOP AND BOTTOM

Mary Koga, *Tulips: RG #16*, 1971

Christina Seely, *Metropolis 35°00'N135°45'E (Kyoto)*, 2005-2009

COVER LEFT TO RIGHT:

Guillaume Simoneau, *Grasshopper on rose, Kennesaw, Georgia*, 2006

Rachel Papo, *Dana, a sniper instructor, outside her room, Kibbutz Kfar Hanassi, Israel (#25)*, 2004

An-My Lê, *29 Palms: Rocket-Propelled Grenade Ambush*, 2003-2004

Christian Patterson, *Shotgun Blast*, 2011

Alison Ruttan, *No Trace Left of the Kahama Community*, 2009

Anastasia Samoylova, *Trees in Fog*, 2014

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