

Some scanned research notes for CS Assignment 2:

As 2.

FURTHER READING SUGGESTED BY TUTOR for Literature review

Whilst reading reflect on:

- Documentary and artistic expression in Landscape photography
- Landscape genre. Tension between effect- express and affect -emotional responses

Title? **Mirrors & windows in the Landscape photography of....: Documentation and Artistic expression.**

Benjamin, Walter (1931) in his Little History of Photography, *Die literarische Welt*, (Gesammelte Schriften, II), 368–385. PDF have from shared G drive

P523: "If one thing typifies present day relations between art and photography, it is the unresolved tension between the two introduced by the photography of works of art"

P526: "When photography takes itself out of context, severing the connections illustrated by Sander, Blossfeldt, or Germaine Krull, when it frees itself from physiognomic, political, and scientific interest, it becomes creative.¹⁴ The lens now looks for interesting juxtapositions; photography turns into a sort of arty journalism

The world is beautiful—that is its watchword.²⁵ In it is unmasked the posture of a photography that can endow any soup can with cosmic significance but cannot grasp a single one of the human connections in which it exists, even when this photography's most dream-laden subjects are a forerunner more of its salability than of any knowledge it might produce. But because the true face of this kind of photographic creativity is the advertisement or association, its logical counterpart is the act of unmasking or construction. As Brecht says: "The situation is complicated by the fact that less than ever does the mere reflection of reality reveal anything about reality. A photo-graph of the Krupp works or the AEG tells us next to nothing about these institutions.²⁶ Actual reality has slipped into the functional.

Reference:

Benjamin, Walter (1931) in his Little History of Photography, *Die literarische Welt*, (Gesammelte Schriften, II), 368–385

Photography the whole story (Hacking, 2012) Book

A general romp through history of photography with in depth analysis of images

- Weston p 13 Previsualisation for creative work, group f/64 white
- Subjective photography in the USA p 334
- Siskind: a shift from "what the world looks like to what we feel about the world and what we want the world to mean" p335 p 560 for quote source
- P 335 Aperture- Minor White editor for 20 yrs: encouraged readers to think of photographs as units of independent meaning. Contemplating images at length opens up viewers ability to see beyond surface realities and the metaphoric and expressive mode.
- But Sun and Rock shows how he closely crops to decontextualise.
- P337 Frederick Sommer allusion and metaphor and composite prints
- Jerry Uelsmann studied with Minor White – multiple negatives
- P337 Mirrors and windows Szarkowski

Reference:

Hacking, J. (2012) *Photography: The Whole Story*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Interview: Richard Misrach with Peter Brown in 2011 Spring 2011 issue online

- Prominent photographer this generation retrospective MFA H in 1996. His exhibition on Katrina *Destroy this Memory, photos of words* at MFA H 2011.
- Archive of photographs on the desert Southwest, Cancer Alley Louisiana, Hurricane Katrina...
- Changeable relationship to words and photographs together.
- Essays become dated whilst photographs retain their vitality.

RM: "There are two polarities in photography that I find tremendously compelling. The first is a characteristic that makes it a unique tool for "bearing witness" (which of course has a religious connotation in spite of my stated lack of interest in religion). The work of mine that's closest to a documentary mode – Bravo 20, the dead animal pits, the Salton Sea Flood, Cancer Alley, Katrina, etc. – serves that function for me. I do see this work as cautionary tales, as you've put it. Each one of those disasters is relatively small-scale in nature. But in each case, human folly signals that it would not be too hard to expand these problems

Do this
where I
go to
reference -

globally. The same human apparatus is at work. That said, I'm not just photographing content here. I go to great lengths to make formally engaging pictures. I pay attention to the frame, to the light, etc. I've always felt that the best of my pictures function in a way that historical painting used to. As painting has relinquished this function, photography has become capable of performing that role beautifully. Just as Gericault's Raft of the Medusa was both a remarkable visual experience, it also embodies a specific political event. I hope my pictures function in that way as well – as aesthetic objects and markers of historical moments in America.

However, I do need to cleanse the palate after that kind of work! In 1998, for example, I was making my Golden Gate pictures from home at the same time I was taking trips to Cancer Alley. My career, in a way, has been about navigating these two extremes – the political and the aesthetic. And this brings me to the second polarity.

Aside from the more documentary/witness bearing capabilities of the medium, I love the sheer magic of the machine, and the light, and the materials and chemistry that make it up. From my earliest days of experimenting in the darkroom, to my most recent Photoshop experiences, I am never disappointed in the rich aesthetic properties and intellectual challenges of the medium. You want to know if I have deep insights into the nature of this kind of pleasure. Unfortunately, I don't. But it is a deeply gratifying experience.

Interviewer: Robert Adams. His images address the politics of the environment directly – yet he is also compelled to show the beauty that remains in the West. And he takes the same care you describe in the way that he frames and edits – not just for content but for aesthetic pleasure despite the subject.

Reference:

Interview: Richard Misrach with Peter Brown (2011) At: <https://hcponline.org/spot/interview-richard-misrach-with-peter-brown/> (Accessed 06/04/2022).

Richard Mosse: The impossible image

"Artist and photographer Richard Mosse reveals the stories behind the making of his latest film, 'The Enclave' (2013), in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The film was shown in the Irish Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale and was the 2014 winner of the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize".

Was given Infrared 16mm film used primarily for camouflage detection in WW2. It registers infrared light invisible to the human eye, lightreflected in the chlorophyll in green plants. It makes visible the invisible – took to Congo - Saw the congo as an unseen conflict. He describes it as a metaphoric leap.

"Of primal importance is beauty, beauty is one of the main lines to make people feel something, it's the sharpest tool in the box". If you are representing, something that shows suffering, if you represent it with something beautiful, they'll sit up and listen, it creates an ethical problem in the viewers mind, so its good as you've actually got them to think about the act of perception. In this work the beauty is created by the colour, as the infrared film changes green to pink.

Reference:

Frieze (2013) Richard Mosse: The Impossible Image. At: <https://vimeo.com/67115692> (Accessed 07/04/2022).

The Photograph (Clarke, 1997)

Chapter 4 Landscape

"Above all, landscape photography insists on the land as spectacle and involves an element of pleasure" p73

"And yet much landscape photography continues to suggest an emotional index which is crucial to its meaning" p73

Not much new relevant

Reference:

Clarke, G. (1997) *The Photograph*. (s.l.): Oxford University Press.

Aperture Magazine Anthology: The Minor White Years, 1952–1976 (Cronan, 2014) PDF from shared drive & files

- White's major theme was that of reading photographs, the task was to discover photographer's intentions; aiming to get clues to their personality and working out what a picture says. "What an artist means and what a picture says are not the same thing."
- "White distinguishes two senses of intentionality: the artist's conscious intent- what the artist wanted to say- and what a picture actually says at a level beyond the artists conscious"

awareness. As the magazine evolved, a third option emerged: what the work meant to the viewer, regardless of the artists intention."

- Much about audience response. White "Varieties of responses to photographs" (1962) about controlling audience response not downplaying artistic intentionality. Audience response and artistic control.
- Frederick Sommer sceptic of reading photographs also Ansel Adams.
- Carl Chiarenza on finding inner meanings, brings us to artists intentions "or a new experience that comes through the interaction of the work and our own individuality"
- "On the one hand, there was a basic stress on the idea that the photographer intends only one thing. On the other, the act of reading, untethered from the artist, produced an astronomical range of subjective responses"
- **Affect (impact on reader) 1955, the readers subjective reaction taking precedence over the intention of the photographer.**
- **White/aperture distinction between intent and affect led to audience response.**
- **The reading project insisted that photographers photograph more than they intended consciously.**
- The audience completes the gap in meaning.
- White and Walter Chappell "Some methods for Experiencing Photographs" (1957) encourages readers to follow their associations.
- White – gross over-reading, seeing things that are not there.
- Relevance of association determined by a belief it's the artist intention.

Reference:

Cronan, T. (2014) 'Aperture Magazine Anthology: The Minor White Years, 1952–1976, by Peter C. Bunnell' In: *History of Photography* 38 (2) pp.204–206. Saved as PDF
How Peter C. Bunnell Shaped the Photography World (2021) At: <https://aperture.org/editorial/how-peter-c-bunnell-shaped-the-photography-world/> (Accessed 05/04/2022). Really useful

To Do:

Follow up from clarkson

John Berger, in *The Uses of Photography*, quotes a passage ("you should simply make the instant stand out") from Brecht's *Portrayal of Past and Present in One*, (1938), in *The Messingkauf Dialogues*. Trans. John Willett (1965), Brecht's Plays, Poetry and Prose Series. London: Methuen.

The photograph replaces memory as they do not retain significance in themselves – interpretation is personal – context gives meaning.

This is an essay to Susan Sontag NY 1980 pantheon I have PDF

John, B. (1980) *USES OF PHOTOGRAPHY*. [Essay for Sontag, S. 1980]. At: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbmxbHMxMDZpbmRyb3RvZG9jc3R1ZGllc3xneDo0ZjVlYmEyZjk1YWUyNjdl> (Accessed 23/04/2022).

Landscape as photograph book: Jussim, E. and Lindquist-Cock, E. (1985) *Landscape as Photograph*.

London: Yale University Press. have

Pp 71 Ideas from inside and outside

Pp 80 white symbolist post pictorial (only symbolic of mood)

Invoking the invisible with the visible

Pp 85 How does form stimulate thought or emotion? How does form act on us?

Pp 57 – Is the fact of landscape the use to which its put?

P 124 semiotics and structural analysis ended ideas of universal beauty

pp 132 landscape photographer shouldn't deny conceptual purposes BOW

Berger: about looking

Berger, J. (2015) *About Looking*. (s.l.): Bloomsbury Publishing.

Meinig, D. W. (1979) 'The Beholding Eye: ten versions of the same scene' In: Meinig, D. W. (ed.) *Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. (s.l.): (s.n.). see Jussim pp XV

Have pdf.

et.

1979

P22-47

Parkin, T. (2011) *Mirrors Messages Manifestations – Minor White*. At:
<https://www.onlandscape.co.uk/2011/06/book-review-minor-white/> (Accessed 23/08/2019).
White Marien p 340

White reconfigured the material world. Should move beyond self-discovery to communication

Walker, I. et al. (2005) Through the picture plane on looking at photographs. P15 in: *Image & Imagination: Le Mois de la Photo À Montréal 2005*. McGill-Queen's Univ. Press. At:
<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=0qyuzQEACAAJ> (accessed 31.3.22)

<https://www.johnblakemore.co.uk/pages/about> Blakemore site more references

Modest ID.

John Blakemore British Image 3: Introduction by Gerry Badger (1977)

P 7. A growing interest in the landscape by British photographers:

"a realisation and utilisation of the photographs propensity for signifying the 'felt' and the unseen as well as the seen". Badger

Blakemore love of landscape, close to the landscape, intimacy with nature,

Badger on Blakemore's intent: "an attempt to define and to quantify a personal contact with the fabric of nature, and to explore the natural processes as manifest in the cycles of growth"

"His iconography is a reflection of himself in nature, a reflection of his own spiritual need to determine a deeper and more lasting reconciliation with existence than that provided by the fragile, everyday realities of urban living and the rigours of establishing often all too transient human relationships"...

Mans place in the natural order – continuity of man and nature and the interrelatedness of all things. Man and place in harmony.

"the act itself of making the photograph must be an integral part of, and not an intrusion into, his wider experience of the land"

P8 *"A process of 'coming to terms with himself' 'tuning his mind to that special state of blank awareness which Minor White has defined'"* A loss of himself in his work, contemplation, oneness with nature. Begins almost meditating.

Not a topological interest but fascinated with place. Intimacy. Seeing rather than looking.

8.2 uses signifying through nature the struggle to "grow and survive" not just literal but metaphorical expression. After Stieglitz developed and white "propagated", equivalence.

On equivalence *"a specific exploration of the metaphorical potentiality of the still photograph...an increased appreciation of the symbolic potency of that which the camera reveal"* Blakemore's vision of equivalence levels.

1. Factual – physical contact with nature
2. formal metaphor *"the poetic signification of formal and spatial elements"* mutual interaction of living things. Inference, nothing is what it seems, signifying. Metamorphosis of suggested states, for imaginative wandering, imaginative experience.
3. personal emotional/spiritual experience in the shooting and the viewing. Metaphor that is less literal more unconscious. Most evident in Premonitions – deep emotions combining to make layers of meaning – visual poem

Badger, G. (1977) 'Introduction' In: *British Image 3: JOHN BLAKEMORE : EXHIBITION*. London: Arts Council. pp.7–10.

Minor white: *Mirrors Messages Manifestations – Minor White*. BOOK REVIEW. By Tim Parkin | June 11, 2011

<https://www.onlandscape.co.uk/2011/06/book-review-minor-white/>

-Modest ID.

Szarkowski notes at CS A2:

MIRRORS AND WINDOWS: AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1960 JOH SZARKOWSKI 1978

PFF.

A critical framework for considering contemporary photographs and other phenomena affecting photography since 1960. It accompanies an array of American photography.

Aperture magazine founded 1952

P17 White- "an intense sensitivity to the mystical content of natural landscape"
"a belief in the existence of a universal form of language"

P18 white- goal of self expression

P19 Szar - romantic the maker as essential to its meaning

P20 "minor white was not interested in what photographs described, but in what they might connote"

The equivalent - Stieglitz = a photograph that stood for "a feeling he had about something other than the subject of the photograph" it must evoke a very special emotion but

End page White and Chappell relaxed to "one of the safer identifying marks of the equivalent is a feeling that for unstated reasons some picture is decidedly significant to you"

P22 Uelsmann ultimate content are equivalents. Technical montages

Tone darker = expression lighter = description

P23 Paul Caponigro early 60s less philosophy Fungus abstract

Walter Chappell prophet of straight photography as a path to self knowledge

P25 Szar suggests a continuum, "a single axis with two poles"

Q: It's the conception of what a photograph is that defines them is it a mirror, reflecting a portrait of the artist who made it, or a window through which one might better know the world?

Reference: X? 1978?

Szarkowski, J. (1980) *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

P2 Press release 1978: MIRRORS AND WINDOWS has been organized around Szarkowski's thesis that such personal visions take one of two forms. In metaphorical terms, the photograph is seen either as a mirror--a romantic expression of the photographer's sensibility as it projects itself on the things and sights of this world; or as a window--through which the exterior world is explored in all its presence and reality.

Reference:

Karapetian, Farrah (2008) *Reframing Mirrors and Windows* (accessed at The Highlights 21.4.16) - <http://thehighlights.org/wp/reframing-mirrors-and-windows>

Szarkowski writes in *Mirrors and Windows* that the boom in photographic education he witnessed between the '60s and '70s (which has only increased exponentially since then) influenced artists 'who previously would have considered their disciplines to be mutually discrete' (2) to become 'increasingly alert to the ideas, effects, and techniques that might be borrowed from one medium and persuaded to serve another.' This line of 'hybrid work' he ties to the work of the 'mirror' artists, observing that a photographer working in this fashion tended to add into his photographic prints 'some evidence that he had hands as well as eyes.' (3)

I have said that the purely formal or abstract is a threat to the art in photography. This threat manifests itself in a variety of ways, of which the worst is not the forthrightly abstract photograph but the trick shot and the odd shot; the long exposure of moving objects, the reversed negative, the close-up or magnified view that brings out the curious, abstractly curious, configurations any sort of object will reveal when seen in microscopic detail. This kind of photography may contribute to knowledge, but it has never been anything but abortive as art: and it is offered as that and taken as that only people whose experience of pictorial art in general is defective. (9)

(1) John Szarkowski, *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1978), p. 25.

(3) *ibid.* p. 16.

(6) Clement Greenberg, "Four Photographers: Review of A Vision of Paris by Eugène-Auguste Atget; A Life in Photographs by Edward Steichen; The World Through My Eyes by Andréas Feininger; and

Photographs by Cartier-Bresson, introduced by Lincoln Kirstein" Clement Greenberg: The collected essays and criticism Volume 4 Modernism with a Vengeance 1957-1969, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 184.

(9) *ibid.* p. 186.

Reference: <http://thehighlights.org/wp/reframing-mirrors-and-windows/>

Explore also:

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/jul/20/john-szarkowski-photography-moma>

Good history of Szarkowski

Mirrors Messages Manifestations Szarkowski on White's only book Minor White only really had one major publication of his own in his lifetime. Mirrors Messages Manifestations was published in 1968 and is a strange work. A combination of spiritual guide book, art... The previous quote in:

Parkin, T. (2011) *Mirrors Messages Manifestations – Minor White*. At:

<https://www.onlandscape.co.uk/2011/06/book-review-minor-white/> (Accessed 23/08/2019).

ordered.

blog or 1970 text or

Szarkowski: Of those photographers who reached their creative maturity after the Second War, none has been more influential than Minor White.

This new retrospective monograph of his work, selected and structured by White himself, guarantees that his own work will not again be obscured by his peripheral roles this book records the work of an important...

White's work derives from the work of Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, and from the ideas of Alfred Stieglitz. From Adams he learned to trust the beauty of natural light, and the eloquence of the photographic gray scale. From the immensely talented, intuitive, visceral Weston he learned that the image of a fact could reveal meanings that were invisible in the fact itself. From Stieglitz artist, bourgeois intellectual and prophet — he adopted the idea that photographs might explicate a personal philosophy of life.

Same

White's best pictures are rarely comforting; they describe the knife-sharp edge of new experience. Although their meaning seems at first to be wrapped in metaphor, we see finally that they are frank and open records of discovery.

For many years White has worked within the discipline that he calls the sequence a series of photographs linked not by thematic unity or narrative line, but by a felt resonance in the pictures' inexplicit meanings. The form is a linear extension of the concept of the equivalent — Stieglitz's near synonym for symbol. White has on occasion also referred to these groups of photographs as constellations, a term that personally find more satisfactory, since it emphasizes the coeval independence of the individual pictures, and avoids the suggestion that the meaning of the sequence is essentially cinematic. By whatever name, the best of these associations of pictures are very affecting.

This difference between work and success is an especially difficult problem for the serious photographer, who characteristically defines his pictures in a fraction of a second, and enjoys only in small measure the painter's pleasure of deliberately constructing an individual picture — reconsidering, scratching out, reconstructing and savoring slow success. The photographer can, however, find this satisfaction in a form comprised of more than one photograph. For Minor White this form has been the intuitive photographic sequence.

article

Szarkowski, B. J. (1970) 'Mirrors Messages Manifestations' In: *The New York Times* 08/03/1970 At: <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/03/08/archives/mirrors-messages-manifestations-mirrors-american-manhattan.html> (Accessed 21/08/2019).

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Szarkowski Mirrors and windows
that the previous 20 yrs **photographs could be seen either as mirrors of romantic expressionism or windows through which the exterior world is explored. Referencing white in Aperture as a mirror and Franks the Americans as a window – Minor White, who was to edit Aperture Magazine for twenty years, was interested in Eastern philosophy and according to Sabina Jaskot-Gill (3 – p.335) wanted his readers to “think of photographs as independent units of meaning”. Sun in Rock is typical of his approach where he cropped the subject to detach it from the wider landscape, distilling it to an abstract form. His intent extended beyond creating the aesthetically pleasing composition shown here as he believed that this form of abstraction could, in Jaskot Gill’s words “metaphorically reveal inner states of mind and emotion” (3 – p. 336). As an editor, teacher and practitioner White was highly influential; two of his students Jerry Uelsmann and Paul Caponigro featured in the Mirrors and Windows exhibition with Caponigro’s studies of the standing stones at Avebury and Stonehenge having a particular resonance for lovers of landscape detail as an artistic form”.**

Szarkowski himself is one of the great influencers of photography and played a significant, if not primary role, in moving the market for the professional photographer from publications to the gallery. He was a thinker and critic rather than an evangelist for photography and speaking of his predecessors, Beaumont Newhall and Edward Steichen said “consciously or otherwise, (they) felt more compelled than I to be advocates for photography, whereas I – largely because of their work – could assume a more analytic, less apostolic attitude.” (6) He curated a series of exhibitions, that can now be seen as landmarks along the road to contemporary photography not just in America but world-wide.

A photograph that might be called a mirror will tend towards being subjective as opposed to a window being objective, reflective as opposed to a direct view, expressive rather than documentary and potentially manipulated instead of being straight. So, whilst a mirror might achieve an abstract simplicity and exhibit what Szarkowski calls a “single minded concern for formal coherence” (1 – p.22)

An interesting and subtle twist to Szarkowski’s theory is that **mirrors and windows are the points at the end of a spectrum and that photographs are rarely entirely one or the other but fall somewhere on the curve between the two and that any given photographer may produce work that falls at different points on the same curve.** The theory is well known and often repeated but the photographs Szarkowski selected are perhaps less discussed. Given his reputation for prescience, it is perhaps surprising that only a minority of these photographers went on from this exhibition to establish themselves as significant and influential practitioners; indeed **some of the mirrors photographers who have subsequently made their mark on the history of the medium, such as Bruce Davidson, Danny Lyons and Ernst Haas, have done so not by using abstraction but in documentary or reportage.** This does not undermine Szarkowski’s ideas, in fact it strengthens his argument that **the same practitioner will potentially operate at different points on the axis between mirrors and windows.** Pdkn.

It is perhaps too easy to categorise the mirrors as conceptual but that is my overriding impression. Some practitioners, such as **Jerry Uelsmann, offer surreal landscapes by combining multiple photographs that display a mastery of darkroom techniques. And whilst out of context, his intent is obscure, his work is a prime example of photography as self expression. Critics tend to describe his work as metaphorical, and no doubt it is, but like much of surreal art in any medium the code to translate the metaphors can be elusive to the untrained eye.**

The overriding impression of both the examples included in Mirrors and Windows and of his wider work is of constructed landscapes in the surrealist tradition that are perfectly targeted as gallery photography. It is inventive, creative, technically highly accomplished, visually arresting and saleable. Uelsmann’s work has stood the test of time in sense that the MoMA still shows twenty six of his photographs in their on-line collections but despite the fact that he was still creating new work as recently as 2007 his collection at the MoMA only reflects the sixties. My hypothesis is that many of the mirror photographers follow this same pattern, recognised and selected by Szarkowski at a particular moment in time but whose work has mostly been forgotten in the following forty years.

Szarkowski, John (1978) *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art

(3) Jaskot-Gill, Sabina (2012) *Subjective Photography in the USA*. An essay included in *Photography The Whole Story* edited by Juliet Hacking. London: Thames and Hudson **Book ordered**

(1) Szarkowski, John (1978) *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art **Got PDF**

(2) Szarkowski, John (1978) *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960* [Press Release] (accessed at MOMA 21.4.16) **SA**

– http://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/5624/releases/MOMA_1978_0060_56.pdf?2010

(7) Uelsmann, Jerry Collection (accessed at The MoMA 25.4.16)

– <http://www.moma.org/collection/artists/6001?locale=en>

Timida book review on ladies -

Mrs. Mary Mayekows - Mrs. Ste-

11.6.2011.