

ANNUAL FALL SHOWCASE OF NEW PHOTOGRAPHY HIGHLIGHTS THE WORK OF THREE CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

Exhibition Includes Photographers from Britain, Germany, and Switzerland

New Photography 2006: Jonathan Monk, Barbara Probst, Jules Spinatsch

The Robert and Joyce Menschel Gallery, third floor

September 21, 2006—January 8, 2007

New York, July 14, 2006—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***New Photography 2006: Jonathan Monk, Barbara Probst, Jules Spinatsch***, the latest installment of its annual fall showcase of significant recent work in contemporary photography. On view from September 21, 2006, to January 8, 2007, in The Robert and Joyce Menschel Gallery on the third floor, the exhibition features over 30 photographic works and two slide projections. It is organized by Roxana Marcoci, Associate Curator, Department of Photography, The Museum of Modern Art.

Twenty-one years after the first New Photography exhibition, the series continues to highlight the Museum's ongoing commitment to a broad spectrum of current photographic work. Since its inception in 1985, the New Photography exhibition series has featured work by 60 artists from 13 countries. This will be the sixteenth exhibition in the series.

Explains Ms. Marcoci, "Today's photographic-based work holds a complex genealogy—it is rooted in established photographic traditions, and is also an outgrowth of the broader world of contemporary art. This year's exhibition features three artists from Europe whose varied approaches tap into film, video, and digital technologies, attesting to the diversity of the medium."

Jonathan Monk

Born in 1969, the same year in which Sol LeWitt wrote his essay "Sentences on Conceptual Art," the Berlin-based British artist Jonathan Monk offers a personal, humorous twist on the aesthetic of Conceptual and Minimalist strategies of the 1960s and 1970s. His tongue-in-cheek photographs and slide shows include personal histories and family anecdotes, which are of great significance to his work.

One Moment in Time (kitchen) (2002) is a slide show based on a series of family snapshots, postcards, and ephemera that Monk's mother hung in her kitchen. Monk called his sister on the telephone and asked her to describe the items one by one. He then transcribed her verbal descriptions and photographed the typed transcripts to create 35mm slides. Some examples of the phrases that appear on the slides include "You wearing stupid glasses," "Postcard from Jersey," "Is that New York?," "Mum's Mum," and "Dad standing on his head with uncle Sonny

holding his feet." The absence of actual pictures to accompany the captions makes the slide show alluring, as viewers form their own mental images while reading each description.

For another slide show titled *I Do Not Know Where I Am, I Do Not Know Who I Am With* (2004), Monk asked his mother to review the contents of a box of slides his father had shot in the late 1950s and 1960s, and to point out all those she could not identify. The slide show features images of places and friends his father had known before marrying Monk's mother.

Found photographs are a consistent source of inspiration in Monk's work, although the ways in which he mediates their use and presentation is always changing. This is evident in *One in Fifty in One (fishing boats)* (2005), a series of 50 prints that takes Ilford photographic paper as its inspiration. The artist appropriated an image from the lid of the Ilford box showing a picturesque seascape in Maine, and asked a commercial lab in Berlin to print the image on all of the 50 sheets of paper contained in the box. Introducing an element of the absurd, he displays the pictures serially in the spirit of artists Hanna Darboven, On Kawara, and Sol LeWitt.

Experimenting with editing, reordering, and quotation, Monk uses the methods of Conceptualism to explore both familial memories and collective images, generating humorous confusion in the interpretation of his work.

Barbara Probst

German artist Barbara Probst's (b. 1964) photographic work consists of multiple images of a single scene, shot simultaneously with several cameras via a radio-controlled system. Using a mix of color and black-and-white film, she poses her subjects, positioning each lens at a different angle, and then triggers the cameras' shutters all at once, creating tableaux of two or more individually framed images. Although the pictures are of the same subject and are taken at the same instant, they provide a range of perspectives.

In *Exposure #30: N.Y.C., 249 W 34 St. 11.20.04, 2:27 p.m.* (2004) a woman is caught in candid poses in what appears to be four different locales: in a park, beneath a skyscraper, looking into a giant eye, and standing on a floor that is covered with letters. As the pictures show the same woman caught in four different circumstances at the same moment, viewers question how Probst managed to collapse space and time. In actuality, she shot the piece in her studio, and the backdrops are enlarged printouts of both her own photographs and popular film stills. She installed them on three walls and the floor of her studio to create stage sets for the photographs. The park is from Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Blow-Up* (1966); the skyscraper is a snapshot that Probst took from the Empire State Building; the eye comes from Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968); and the letters on the floor spell out an excerpt from a poem by the postwar author Paul C elan.

The act of seeing and the paradoxes associated with it are critical to Probst's work. *Exposure #31: N.Y.C., 249 W 34 St., 1.02.05, 4:41 p.m.* (2005) is a diptych of a couple photographed in tandem in total darkness, but with flash. The man and woman each look into

separate cameras that are placed approximately one foot apart from each other. The photographs show the man and the woman looking at and away from the camera simultaneously.

Probst eschews the possibility of a single, definitive version of how viewers perceive photographs. By experimenting with the temporality and point of view of a shot/counter-shot technique, the artist offers a new interpretation of the traditional idea that photography can freeze a moment in time.

Jules Spinatsch

In his major photographic project called *Temporary Discomfort* (2001–03), the Swiss artist Jules Spinatsch (b. 1964) documented the security preparations surrounding several political events. Instead of presenting a photojournalistic account of the events, such as anti-globalization protests and politicians shaking hands, the panorama shows the meticulously planned and tightly controlled security operations.

The works in the *Temporary Discomfort* project document the January 2001 and January 2003 World Economic Forums (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland; the July 2001 G8 summit in Genoa, Italy; the February 2002 WEF in New York, New York; and the June 2003 G8 summit in Evian, France.

One work in the *Temporary Discomfort* series is an installation comprising a large panorama into which thousands of still images are compiled, along with three video pieces. The images show preparations for a high-security lockdown in the artist's hometown of Davos during the January 2003 WEF. In the period leading up to the WEF, Spinatsch installed three remote-controlled still cameras outside different buildings. The cameras, similar to those used to monitor weather conditions, can also be likened to surveillance cameras. For this work, Spinatsch used images from one of the three cameras, which was programmed to record up to 2,500 single images in the course of three hours, from 6:35 to 9:30 a.m., rotating on the vertical plane from 2 degrees to 62 degrees, and on the horizontal plane from 2.5 degrees to 170 degrees. After the recording, Spinatsch assembled the resulting shots in a gridded, high-resolution panorama that shows random moments captured frame by frame, as well as the transition from dawn to early morning.

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Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs)

Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

Film Admission: \$10 adults; \$8 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D. \$6 full-time students with current I.D. (For admittance to film programs only)

Subway: E or V train to Fifth Avenue/53rd Street

Bus: On Fifth Avenue, take the M1, M2, M3, M4, or M5 to 53rd Street. On Sixth Avenue, take the M5, M6, or M7 to 53rd Street. Or take the M57 and M50 crosstown buses on 57th and 50th Streets.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information.

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