

## The Photographer's Assistants (Leicester/online, 17-18 Jun 24)

Online / De Montfort University Leicester, UK., Jun 17-18, 2024

Deadline: Feb 2, 2024

Prof Gil Pasternak

The Photographer's Assistants.

There have always been unacknowledged or under-acknowledged forces that operate around photography. Some of them are human, like family members, camera assistants, darkroom personnel, curators, editors and the like. Others are non-human, like algorithms, chemicals, equipment of various sorts and transportation. The explosion of AI has pushed the field of photography studies to once again consider the practices surrounding photographs, but has at the same time neglected existing assistants like the skills force, the editors, image technicians, programmers, curators, and historians that enable and narrate photographic making. In the face of so many assistants, the primacy of the photographer as a central person through whom we understand photography recedes.

For this year's annual conference at the Photographic History Research Centre (PHRC) we would like speakers to consider the role and agency of human and non-human assistants in the making, collecting and dissemination of photographs. We look for papers from diverse methodological perspectives that not only enlarge the notion of the photographic assistant, but also consider the role of those assistants (or that assistance) in the formation of photographic practices, images, archives and histories.

We welcome 15-minute papers on topics that address themes like (but not limited to):

- Technological, physical or chemical photographic assistants
- Catalysts like war and conflict, the environment, and race as assistants to photographic practices
- Non-human assistants and AI
- Senses as photographic assistants
- History of assistants and their changing roles
- Agency of the assistant
- Issues of authorship
- Practice as a collaborative endeavour
- Supply lines and transportation

Please send paper proposals to [phrc@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:phrc@dmu.ac.uk) by Friday the 2nd of February 2024, embedding in the document your name, contact details, up to 5 keywords and institutional affiliation (when

ArtHist.net

applicable).

Visit the conference webpage for additional information and updates:  
<https://photographichistory.wordpress.com/annual-conference-2024/>

Reference:

CFP: The Photographer's Assistants (Leicester/online, 17-18 Jun 24). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 11, 2024  
(accessed Apr 3, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/40926>>.