

Photographic Resilience and Sociopolitical Change (online, 5–7 Nov 26)

Online, Nov 5–07, 2026

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Vision and Veiling: Photographic Resilience and Sociopolitical Change

Photography Network's Annual Symposium, November 5-7, 2026 (online)

Registration is now open!

<https://www.photographynetwork.net/symposium>

Photography practitioners, historians, and curators respond in a multitude of ways to political and cultural contexts that challenge their work. Moreover, in response to efforts to remove, omit, occlude, obscure, or manipulate, photographs often persist, transform, and recirculate, reformulating visual worlds. Photographs bear a complex relationship to political and social power; authorities might manipulate or remove photographs to further their goals, but forms of covering up, self-censorship, or self-fashioning might also function in the name of individual privacy, safety, or resistance. Furthermore, as the material capabilities and limitations of photography shift, new questions continually emerge about the role of photographic removal and photographic resilience in constricting cultural climates.

This symposium offers a platform for scholarship that investigates the adaptability of photography and photo history in the face of constraints, be they cultural, governmental, institutional, editorial, individual, or otherwise. What do historians, curators, and photographers do when limitations are placed on their work, and what do the limitations themselves reveal about photography? Relatedly, when is restriction, refusal, or withdrawal protective, strategic, or empowering? Finally, what, if anything, has changed about how the medium navigates social or cultural boundaries—what can we learn from how practitioners have done this in the past that might shed light on present-day questions?

Please join us for sessions spread across three days that will approach this topic from a variety of perspectives—we will discuss artistic strategies, exhibitions, archival work, commercial studios, political propaganda, and more.

Symposium registration is \$15, and you must be a PN member in order to attend. Free memberships and symposium registration are available to those in need. Please email photographynetworksymposium@gmail.com for further information.

See the full program and register here:

<https://www.photographynetwork.net/symposium>

Thursday, November 5

Symposium Introduction (12:00 pm EST)

Welcome Remarks

Announcement of Book Awards and Project Grants

Meet and Greet (12:30 pm EST)

Keynote: Gil Pasternak (1:00 pm EST)

The Unsettled Photo Archive: Censorship, Decolonial Praxis, and the Limits of Visual Sovereignty

Friday, November 6

Panel 1: Artistic practices of strategic veiling and unveiling

10:00-11:30 am EST

Moderated by Natalie Zelt

Nam Huh, The Algorithmic Veil: Archival Refusal and ESEA Diasporic Memory in Nhu Xuan Hua's Tropism

Myles Little, Alvin Baltrop's Waterfront Opacities

Samuel Allen, From Covert Sense to Incipient Utterance: Edmund Teske's Queer Photographic Abstractions

Panel 2: Repressive governments and photographic persistence

12:00-1:45 pm EST

Moderated by Sarah Miller

Ozan Yavuz, From Censorship to Containment: Photography Exhibitions and Strategies of Resilience in Turkey, 2000–2023

Jesse Dritz, "Paper Monuments": Cityscape Magazine and the Remapping of Washington, D.C.

João Ferreira, An image and its many publics: political restagings of Vladimir Herzog's Staged Suicide Photograph under the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship and Beyond

Evan Hume, Clandestine Camera: Deep Politics and Photographic Intelligence

Artist dialogue

2:00-3:00 pm EST

Zora Murff and Jabari Zuberi, Martyrdom and the Museum

Moderated by Mtume Gant

Saturday, November 7

Panel 3: Commercial subversion

10:00-11:30 am EST

Moderated by Gia Del Pino

Louis Kaplan, A Photographic Amusement Can Mean Serious Business: On Lotte Jacobi's Subterfuges in Response to the Aryanization of German Photography (1933-1935)

Caitlin Ryan, "For the Price of a Bullet": Photography and the Politics of Peace in 1930s France

Valentine Nyamndon, When the Backdrop Speaks Without the Painter: Signature Erasure and Visual Rhetoric in Cameroonian Studio Photography

Panel 4: Archives and the impact of seeing

11:45-1:30 pm EST

Moderated by Zulay Chang

Caroline Riley, *Beyond Viewing: Concentration Camps and the Ethics of Interpretation in Thérèse Bonney's Photography*

Giuseppe Chiavaroli, *Veiled Looks: Clandestine Photography and the Resilience of Working-Class Vision in Reggio Emilia, Late 1950s–Early 1970s*

Mehrdad Mirzaie, *After the Massacre: Photography, Blackout, and Collective Memory*

Ioanna Sakellarakis, *Ruins, Capital, Bodies: Afterlives of Cancelled Negatives in the Smithsonian's Underwood & Underwood Glass Stereograph Collection*

Reference:

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