# The Cold War Camera (Guatemala City, 21-23 Feb 2014)

Guatemala City, Feb 21–23, 2014
Deadline: Aug 1, 2013

Yen Hong

CFP: THE COLD WAR CAMERA

Confirmed plenary speakers include Ariella Azoulay and Nicholas Mirzoeff.
Photography plays a key role in the cultural politics of the Cold War and its aftermath, from its use in state surveillance operations; through its deployment in acts of resistance to state-sponsored terrorism; to its role in commemorative and on-going judicial processes. While scholars have begun to outline the visual cultural politics of the Cold War in regional and national contexts, there has yet to be a full exploration of the global, interconnected networks of production, circulation and reception of photography during this period. A full picture of photography's role during a war that was prosecuted on multiple fronts requires the collaboration of scholars from multiple disciplines and wide-ranging historical expertise. The aim of this conference is to spark this scholarly network and collaboration. The Cold War Camera is a conference that brings together scholars from varied fields to trace how photography forges these intercultural links and mediates this global conflict.

Participants in this conference are invited to present 20-minute papers on a range of topics relating to the theme of the Cold War Camera, including but by no means limited to:
• the enlistment of photos to prosecute a war with multiple 'fronts' across the globe
• the under-theorized concept of visual propaganda
• the development of a communist visual theory
• photographs' function within state-sponsored regimes of 'anti-subversive' terror
• the role of photos in resisting this terror
• links between desire and subversion
• the relationship between the spectacle of war and the ordinariness of daily life
• zones of production and exhibition, from Havana to Moscow to Beijing
• challenges of archival research
• the impact of archives in constructing public histories and cultural memories

LOCATION AND EVENTS
To shift critical discussion from the US-USSR binary, the conference will be held in Guatemala City, the epicenter of proxy conflicts in Latin America. In 1954, the constitutionally elected president Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán was overthrown in a CIA-backed coup, plunging Guatemala into four decades of political violence. 200,000 citizens are believed to have been killed or disappeared. Guatemala represents an early case of CIA intervention, and training ground for further action in

other, better known 'cold war' sites in the hemisphere, such as Cuba, Argentina, and Chile. For this reason, Guatemala City is a critical location for investigating the global cultural significance of the Cold War Camera.
In addition to discussion following presentation of papers, this conference will include visits to sites for memorializing the Guatemalan Cold War genocide, including the Historical Archive of the Guatemalan National Police and the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation.

INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS
We invite submission of abstracts, from which we expect to select up to twenty, and are delighted to offer funding to cover accommodation and subsistence to those participants whose proposals are accepted.

August 1st, 2013. 500-word proposals and brief biographical note and contact info are due.
September 1st, 2013. Selected participants will be notified.
December 20th, 2013. 10-page drafts of conference papers are due for circulation with co-panelists and discussants.

OTHER INFORMATION
Organizers: This conference has developed out of a two-year collaborative network between the Toronto Photography Seminar and Durham Centre for Advanced Photography Studies, in association with Daniel Hernández-Salazar (http://danielhernandezsalazar.blogspot.mx/). We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, which respectively fund TPS and DCAPS events.

Contact info: Please submit all proposals, cvs, and inquiries to info@inthedarkroom.org under the subject heading “Cold War Camera conference.” Questions can also be directed to the organizers: Thy Phu (tphu@uwo.ca) and Andrea Noble (andrea.noble@durham.ac.uk).
Visit the Cold War Camera website and blog at http://inthedarkroom.org/coldwarcamera/

Publication plans: Participants in the conference are invited to adapt their presentations into a 500-word blog for the Cold War Camera website. Expanded papers from this conference may also be invited for consideration in a co-edited, peer-reviewed volume of essays.
Conference hotel: Information regarding the conference hotel will be posted September 30th, 2013.

Reference:

CFP: The Cold War Camera (Guatemala City, 21-23 Feb 2014). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 4, 2013 (accessed Nov 26, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/5513>.