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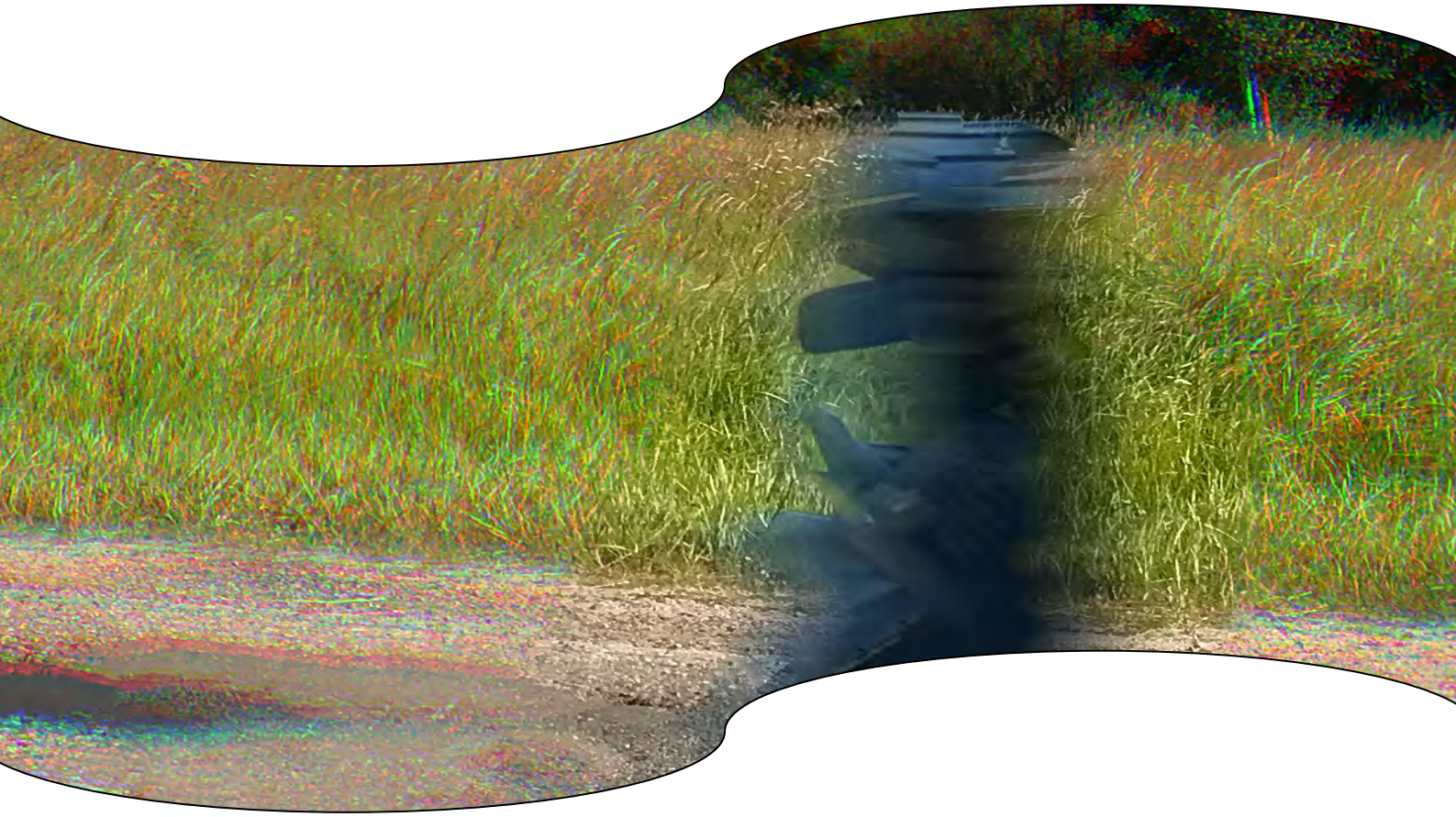

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Юлиане ВЕНЦЛЬ / Juliane WENZL

| Живопись, сшивание, режиссура – создание пространств и нарративов при помощи фотографии / Painting, Sewing, Directing – Creating Spaces and Narratives with Photograph's |

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ЖИВОПИСЬ, СШИВАНИЕ, РЕЖИССУРА – СОЗДАНИЕ ПРОСТРАНСТВ И НАРРАТИВОВ ПРИ ПОМОЩИ ФОТОГРАФИИ

Данная статья посвящена трансформации опытов с восприятием в визуальную игру на примере работ Джойса Нейманаса, Дэвида Хокни и Роберта Франка. Все три художника обходят ограничения «программы фотоаппарата», разрывая ткань реальности на фрагменты-фотографии и используя их как строительные блоки, утверждая, таким образом, автономность художника от аппарата и фотографических конвенций.

Американский фотограф Джойс Нейманас сшивает вместе полароидные снимки на манер квилта в технике «пэтчворк», создавая изображение, кажется, понятной нам ситуации. Британский живописец Дэвид Хокни разбирает ситуацию на части фотографическим способом: его фотомонтажи (Joiner Photographs) кажутся многоперспективными, фрагментированными и движущимися. Американский фотограф и режиссёр документального кино швейцарского происхождения, Роберт Франк, создает из фотографий нарративы-последовательности и нарративы-блоки, используя группы изображений как раскадровки или визуальные дневники.

В работах этих художников мы видим три подхода к созданию изображения, передающего качество динамического целого. Соединяя частичные значения из видимых фрагментов фото-ассамбляжей, зритель достраивает увиденное до цельного и значимого изображения, до паттерна, промежутка времени, до нарратива.

Ключевые слова: Робет Франк, Дэвид Хокни, Джойс Нейманас, составные фотографические изображения, фотомонтаж, фото-ассамбляж, последовательность, коллаж, перспективные пространства, временные сложности, память, паттерны, конструирование реальностей, нарративы.

PAINTING, SEWING, DIRECTING – CREATING SPACES AND NARRATIVES WITH PHOTOGRAPH'S

By discussing some composite photographic collages by Joyce Neimanas, David Hockney, and Robert Frank from the 1970s and 1980s I investigate how the three artists transform their experiences with the perception of our world into visual interplays. They deal with the limits of the "program of the camera" by tearing the fabric of reality, fragmenting it into photographs and using them as building blocks to assert their artistic autonomy from the apparatus and photographic conventions.

American photographer Joyce Neimanas sews Polaroids together like a patchwork quilt to give an impression of a comprehensive situation. British painter David Hockney takes a situation apart photographically, his Joiner Photographs appear to be multi-perspective, fragmented, and animated. And Swiss-American photographer and documentary filmmaker Robert Frank´s photo compilations construct narrative sequences and blocks, he uses them like storyboards, as visual diaries.

These artists show three concepts of how to bring to the fore the process of shaping an image over

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time that reflects the quality of a dynamic whole. The partial meaning offered by the visible parts of the photographic ensembles encourages beholders to complete what they see, to transform it into a coherent and meaningful image, to build patterns, time-images and narratives.

Key words: Robert Frank, David Hockney, Joyce Neimanas, photographic composites, joiner photographs, photographic ensembles, sequence, collage, perspective spaces, temporal complexities, memory, patterns, constructing realities, narratives.

> *The single photo with its auratic claim to be description, statement, and truth all in one is replaced by complex structures of image and text that do not try to capture and contain meaning but rather open up semantic fields and initiate a dialogue between the work and the viewer with questions about the structures and the world.*[1]

A Swarm of Photos Creating an Image

Instead of one photograph, in David Hockney's composite Polaroid of *Gregory Swimming, Los Angeles, March 31st 1982*[2] there's 120 of them. Instead of one moment, 120 moments; instead of one defined section of space, many sections that seemingly connect and repeat themselves to some degree. There are several instances of a figure scattered across the entire image. Numerous parts of heads, legs, and arms can be seen, sometimes linking beyond the boundaries of the individual picture, with elements reappearing in other photographs. We can only assume that there is just one protagonist, and we cannot be sure the pool is represented in its original shape. Nevertheless, we get the impression that one character, Gregory, as the title suggests, is circling in a pool.

In the following, I discuss some composite photographic collages by Joyce Neimanas, David Hockney, and Robert Frank[3] to investigate how the three artists transform their experience of perceiving our world into visual interplays. All three have said goodbye to the single photographic shot and found ways to deal with the

* I would like to thank Joyce Neimanas, who was both generous and forthright in giving me permission to reproduce her photographs. I would also like to thank the Pace/MacGill Gallery, who, after a productive conversation, made it possible for me to show two of Robert Frank's images. In the absence of reproduction rights to David Hockney's pictures and two other photos by Robert Frank, these are only mentioned in the text. I kindly ask the interested reader to view them by consulting the books referred to here, visiting the URLs listed, or carrying out Internet research.

[1] Urs Stahel, "In einer sinnlosen Welt: Die Polaroids von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), pp. 169–70 [translated].

[2] See David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version; Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), pl. 18. See also http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_u8M9Ipu0rS0/TSDUucljdZI/AAAAAAAAAAs/5X5p9EbpoKA/s1600/gregory_swimming_los_angeles_march_31st_1982.jpg (accessed January 21, 2020).

[3] The images are from the 1970s and 1980s—from the analogue age—which probably determined the processing of the material as well as the forms the images take.

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limits of the "program of the camera" (Flusser) by tearing up the fabric of reality, fragmenting it in the form of photographs, and using them as building blocks. In this way, they are able to create new views and individual perspectives and narratives. In short, the artists use the montage of photos in various ways to obtain composite compilations and ensembles that show more than a single photograph probably could.[4]

Smash and (Re)Construct

In the 1980s, American photographer Joyce Neimanas constructs images composed of several Polaroid photographs. She wants to represent her perception over time and from varied perspectives.[5] And so she collects her material from different angles, and in some cases from different scenes, at times over a period of days, using the camera to obtain lines, contours, patterns, textures, segments of space, and parts of people,[6] and stitches it all together like a patchwork quilt to give an impression of a comprehensive situation.

Fig. 1, Joyce Neimanas, Alice in Wonderland (#11), 1982, courtesy of the artist.

Neimanas's Polaroid collage *Alice in Wonderland* (fig. 1) consists of about 100 photos. We are able to identify three individuals or parts of individuals: a toddler on the left, sitting on a floor of black-and-white checkerboard tiles, looking up, a sitting girl on the right whose head we can´t see, and between them, in the upper half of the image, a woman's legs in high heels. All the photos are taken from different perspectives and heights. The room seems twisted, the floor comes toward us. The unsettling black and white of the tiles, the strong colors, the fluctuating proportions and unclear perspectives convey the sense of dizziness after falling down the rabbit hole.

The Polaroids overlap in a disorderly way and form an irregular shape.[7] Although the

[4] Although there are considerable distinctions between the works of the three photographers, and on closer inspection one can easily identify differences between the individual works, too, for this essay I intend to generalize and focus on what they have in common. Although the works mentioned exemplify specific phenomena, they cannot be analyzed comprehensively here, nor can they be reduced to the phenomena discussed.

[5] "Portraits of people appear to be real space but this is an illusion. To create the deception, 2D objects are photographed and the SX70's are arranged to create what appear to be 3D space or items." Neimanas on her website http://joyceneimanas.com/projects/alice-wonderland/ (accessed October 8, 2019).

[6] See Rebekah Modrak, "Seeing, Perceiving, and Mediating Vision," in Rebekah Modrak, Bill Anthes, Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice (London/New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 8.

[7] In other images by Neimanas, they are ordered and sometimes form a rectangle. Owing to the space available here, I will not discuss the outer form of the

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contours of the bodies are aligned to fit exactly, Neimanas's figures do not inevitably become whole bodies, missing a head here and an abdomen there. Even when they are presented in their entirety, they dissolve in a kind of overall pattern. The painted backdrops in some of her Polaroid collages (see fig. 5) emphasize the artificial attitude of the work, which is often reinforced by the color gradients in the composites. Neimanas creates ornamental designs of situations using parts of interiors and bodies. The collages seem to be more or less static – there are no repetitions of body parts or movements, and the images look frozen, like inventories, patterns of memories.

At the same time, British painter David Hockney tries to translate our "natural vision" into photographic composite images.[8] Each of his "joiner" photographs consists of between six and six hundred single photographic shots, taken from varying angles at slightly different moments in time. The resulting images allow us to see multiple viewpoints and moments at once.

Spaces and bodies are fragmented by the photos, connections between the pictures do not fit precisely, parts of the motifs are repeated. Hockney focuses on the movement in the images, the movement of the photographer's body during the session, his moving gaze or rather camera, or the movements of those photographed. Depending on which technique he uses, how he combines the material, and what shape the picture takes at the end, movements appear differently. Obvious movements can form repetitive sequences, such as walking or playing scrabble.

One of Hockney's more epic joiner photographs, *The Scrabble Game, Los Angeles, January 1st 1983*,[9] is composed of around ninety photographs. Hockney himself took part in the game alongside David Graves, Ann Upton, and his mother and took the pictures during the course of it.[10] We can see the tokens in front of Hockney and his fellow players, with letter tiles forming recognizable words on the Scrabble board. We see the players thinking, concentrating, and having fun. Hockney works out the personalities of his opponents by looking at their faces and hands: Graves carefully notes the points, Upton is thoughtful, concentrated and joyful, and Laura Hockney, David's mother, gazes intently, her focus on the game. By looking at the hand of the artist in the foreground of the image and Hockney's own row of letters, both of which might belong to us, we are invited to play along.

This composite photograph is about temporality, a time that is not subject to a linear plot but rather shows repeating subplots that capture the experience of the Scrabble game.

> *And when I pieced the pictures together I took off again because I realized I was opening up something else, that here was a marvellous narrative; what I was doing became clearer: I was using*

composites any further and will concentrate on their inner correlations.

[8] Between 1982 and 1986, Hockney did two series of composites he calls "composite Polaroids" and "photographic collages."

[9] See David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version; Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), p. 90. See also https://www.artsy.net/artwork/david-hockney-the-scrabble-game (accessed January 28, 2020).

[10] See David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version; Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), p. 27.

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narrative for the first time, using
a new dimension of time.[11]

What we see, on the one hand, is an excess of the visual, too much information, movements that could not have happened at the same time. On the other, there are visible gaps, time intervals between the pictures and overlapping phases of action.[12] Hockney calls *Scrabble Game* "my first story," "a new dimension of time," and Ann Upton adds, "It's better than a movie."[13]

So in the composite photos we find the issues that Hockney was dealing with back then: movement, perspective, time, and storytelling. The motifs of Hockney's joiner photographs appear to be fragmented, multi-perspectival, and animated. Even if the photos do not connect accurately, they are combined to form narrative tableaux that evoke a holistic feeling of a situation.

While Hockney's and Neimanas's works have a lot in common on the formal level, Swiss American photographer and documentary filmmaker Robert Frank uses photographs a little differently.[14] Since the 1970s, he has presented composite views of Nova Scotia and of his family and friends. Arrangements of pairs, sequences, or blocks of gelatin silver prints taken from Polaroid or conventional negatives are brought together to fulfill different requirements.

Frank gave up "straight" photography out of frustration with the single image. He instead begun to create narrative compilations: he manipulates his negatives before and after exposure, and pictures are not just taken but executed and pursued.[15] Often the photos contain writing, sometimes scratched directly onto the negatives. Words are used as notes, as remarks; they function as stage directions.[16] Frank does not fragment space and figures – in general, he does not try to give a coherent overall view, and often there is more than one version of an image.[17] In many cases, he uses his photocollages like storyboards. Though the form is static, our imagination and emotions are set into motion. As Susan Greenough points out, he is not primarily interested in the credibility and coherence of the sequence. What Frank wants is to prevent his images being dismembered and valued as

[11] David Hockney, That's the Way I See It (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), p. 97.

[12] See Steffen Siegel, "Das potenzielle photographische Bild," in Ingeborg Reichle, Steffen Siegel (eds.), Maßlose Bilder: Visuelle Ästhetik der Transgression (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2009), p. 93.

[13] David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version; Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), p. 69.

[14] The differences start with the number of photos used. While Hockney and Neimanas tend to collage forty or fifty plus photos, Frank's ensembles include from five to perhaps thirty pictures.

[15] "I appreciate montages, which you could also call 'series', because I am always happy with chance. And with several photographs and text I can always invent the rules for every work. I couldn't just continue with my previous images, but I stuck to the language of photography." Robert Frank, quoted in Ute Eskildsen, "In conversation with Robert Frank," in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank: hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), p. 114.

[16] "They destroy the myth of the camera as a machine of truth." Christoph Ribbat, "behind words: robert frank's american poetry," in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank, hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), p. 116.

[17] It is precisely because of these differences to Hockney's and Neimanas's artworks that it is productive to look at Frank's works to get an idea of what different pictorial forms the montage of photographs allows and what different attitudes it can reflect.

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individual pieces – their meaning should arise from the concatenation of the whole.[18]

Frank's photo ensembles are manifold. *Giles Groulx, 1973*[19] shows two of the combinations he uses. We have six photographs on the upper page forming a sequence that, seen from a distance while the angle of the camera changes slightly, shows the protagonist (probably Groulx) chopping wood. Two photos below depict a portrait of three people (the one in the middle is Canadian film director Gilles Groulx) and a landscape view. The two blocks of photos connect associatively: both show Groulx, and both show people in the wilderness of Nova Scotia. The flipbook sequence of wood chopping is contrasted with the silent confrontation between man and nature. We get the impression of a narrative about life with and in nature, our submission to it, and everyday life in the barren and lonely countryside.

The photo compilations evoke narratives, although Frank "is not interested in chronology. He is looking for an intrinsic, intelligible movement that is not built from rigid segments of time."[20] Sometimes Frank's photographs form panoramic views, sometimes they display narrative sequences, on other occasions they are only loosely held together by content and form. The ensembles are imbued with an autobiographical attitude. Like his films, they are personal maps, sections of visual diaries.

Differences and Shared Strategies

It is striking that all three photographers generally call photography "one-eyed," the picture taken in "a blink of the eye."[21] They are aware that the exposure time and the viewpoint selected define a specific segment of a setting or an action. Hockney, Neimanas, and Frank try to overcome this limitation by using montage to investigate how photographs can be interlaced, how more open or compressed spaces are created, and what impressions they convey.

The formal structures of the resulting images vary. The composition may have a regular or irregular rhythm, it can be oriented according to how exactly the individual pictures fit together, conform to a grid structure, or follow other requirements. The shapes of the artworks vary too. They may give the impression of a complete panel picture (as can be seen here and also in David Hockney's picture *Patrick Procktor, Pembroke*

[18] See Sarah Greenough, "Fragments That Make a Whole: Meaning in Photographic Sequences," in Robert Frank: Moving Out, exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (1994), pp. 96–125.

[19] See Robert Frank: Moving Out, exh. cat. (German version; Zurich: Scalo, 1995), p. 274. See also https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.77641.html, (Giles Groulx, Mabou, Nova Scotia 1978; accessed January 28, 2020).

[20] Wolfgang Beilendorf, "a film by robert frank," in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank, hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), p. 127.

[21] Frank addresses the photograph as a glossy surface that captures the "frozen movement, the stasis of motion. . . . The photograph is a blink of the eye, what your eye barely sees, what is held behind the eyelid, the wit of the unconscious." Robert Frank, in Robert Frank: New York to Nova Scotia, exh. cat. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (1986), p. 66. "I mean, photography is all right if you don't mind looking at the world from the point of view of a paralyzed cyclops – for a split second." David Hockney, in Lawrence Weschler, True to Life: Twenty-Five Years of Conversations with David Hockney (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 6, emphasis in original. "A lot of people forget that the camera is one-eyed; it doesn't see the way we do." Joyce Neimanas, in Michelle Bogre, Photography 4.0: A Teaching Guide for the 21st Century (London/New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 92.

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Studios, London 7th May 1982[22]) or form an open dynamic shape.

Fig. 2, Joyce Neimanas, R on Couch (#3), 1980, courtesy of the artist.

The borders of the Polaroids by Hockney and Neimanas form a grid that dominates the initial impression of the collage. It is part of the image and at the same time accessory to it. Thus, its status oscillates between visible and invisible, when with a closer look our attention is put on hold between the single shots and the complete picture. The motifs seem motionless, despite a slight shift in perspective from photo to photo. At first glance, the overall impression of the picture remains static. But on further inspection, the structural rhythmicization is accompanied by another shift resulting from the irregularly offset depth of the space. Picture parts that supposedly show perfectly fitting connections are actually constructed.[23] In the deconstruction of the picture, it becomes obvious how the artists succeed in "assembling" an image that has little in common with a single photographic picture and yet – or perhaps because of this – manages to appear realistic and holistic. The supposedly static image is more moving than it initially seemed. It encompasses the photographer's movements in space and his positioning in relation to and handling of the recorded objects. These movements are essential for the composition, enabling a representation beyond the depiction. The Polaroid composites show spaces and actions "that could have plausibly existed but never did."[24]

For Hockney, it is crucial to demonstrate that the photographer is *in* the picture. Therefore, he uses either his movements during the process of taking the pictures or indications of his presence, such as his hands or feet at the edges of the images or empty film boxes, which make the body of the photographer a fixed point within the photographs. The movements of the photographer that took place during the photographic session are inscribed in the image as an invisible choreography. He is part of the virtual space of the picture and therefore part of the subject of the picture, as are his relations to the things he photographs.

Frank also deals with the question of the photographer as an image object and with his relationships to the things he photographs. He is

[22] See David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version; Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), p. 43. See also http://www.hockney.com/img/gallery/photos/composites/CP-119.jpg (accessed January 28, 2020).

[23] This can be made clear by a thorough analysis of *Patrick Procktor*. Space constraints oblige me to dispense with this here.

[24] Rebekah Modrak, "Seeing, Perceiving, and Mediating Vision," in Rebekah Modrak, Bill Anthes, Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice (London/New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 9.

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said to have had his images look as if he had been in them and then stepped out to make them.[25] His photographs are at once moments and memories, documentations and fictions.

Fig. 3, Robert Frank, Halifax Infirmary, 1978, © Robert Frank; courtesy Pace/MacGill Gallery, New York.

Hockney initiates narrations through implied movements, and "Frank the observer of the 'moments in between' seems to have a more moving vision."[26] Both narrate in fragments, while Hockney breaks down a rather short time lapse into segments of time and space and displays them simultaneously, Frank threads his pictures like pearls on a chain, snapshots of a (hospital) diary, building an autobiographical space of memories.

Two phenomena find their expression in all of the works we are looking at here: the visible fragmentation, which co-determines our perception, a constant reference to the fact that the work is constructed, and the connection of its elements to a larger whole, whose meaning goes beyond the mere sum of the individual arguments. We observe a simultaneous representation of the successive. Fragmenting and synthesizing moments are contained in the procedures, a holistic visual impression of a place or a movement, a sequence, a feeling, is disassembled by technical means in order to be synthesized on both the material and the perceptual level.

Fight for Your Right to Autonomy

The three photographers experiment with different concepts of how to use photography without submitting to the rules of its *dispositif*, thus asserting their artistic autonomy vis-à-vis the apparatus. In 1983, Vilém Flusser put forward the thesis that the camera is "programmed to produce photographs, and every photograph is a realization of one of the possibilities contained within the program of the camera."[27] We must reconsider the role of photographers. For inasmuch as they need cameras for their purpose, they have no chance to

[25] Gilles Mora, "Von Walker Evans zu Robert Frank: eine Linie, die sich verläuft," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), pp. 40–41.

[26] Christoph Ribbat, "behind words: robert frank's american poetry," in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank, hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), p. 122.

[27] Vilém Flusser, Towards a Philosophy of Photography, trans. Anthony Mathews (London: Reaktion, 2006), p. 26. Originally published in German in 1983 as Für eine Philosophie der Photographie.

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outwit the device and always remain restricted to the possibilities it provides.

> *On the other hand, they can assert their autonomy if they develop a program themselves. Since they are neither engineers nor computer scientists, however, it does not serve the production of new images, but instead the possibility most original and meaningful treatment of preexisting images. They must become conceptual artists and find different methods of dealing with images than other people.*[28]

The decisive moment no longer lies in the taking of a photo but in the creation of a work. The artists create an artwork "through the arrangement and contextualization" of existing views by "semantically charging them."[29] The processes of decision, evaluation, and design come to the fore. As a result, the specifications of particular techniques and media become less relevant and are subordinated to the results of their combination.

The three artists willingly pursue the camera's program, its specifications and limitations, as well as those of an automated development process.[30] By compiling the photos, they regain their artistic power and autonomy.[31] An artistic attitude is no longer expressed in the individual photograph but in the arrangement of the whole.

Processing the Artwork

Only in their compilation do the pictures become a sustainable form of expression. There is no instant, no decisive moment, just connections.[32] The process of producing the artwork gains visibility. The concepts of fragmentation and montage are both methods that direct our gaze to the construction of the work, the breaks and dicontinuities, and how its elements interact. Gaps in the material create conceptual openings. Looking at them, viewers realize what is *not* in the picture.[33] The idea of an illusionistic,

[28] Wolfgang Ullrich, "Sentimental Bureaucrats, Ashamed Aristocrats, or: Who Practices Conceptual Photography?," trans. Aimée Ducey-Gessner, in Christina Leber (ed.), Fotofinish: Siegeszug der Fotografie als künstlerische Gattung (Cologne: Snoeck, 2018), p. 445.

[29] Wolfgang Ullrich, "Sentimental Bureaucrats, Ashamed Aristocrats, or: Who Practices Conceptual Photography?," trans. Aimée Ducey-Gessner, in Christina Leber (ed.), Fotofinish: Siegeszug der Fotografie als künstlerische Gattung (Cologne: Snoeck, 2018), p. 446.

[30] Even though Frank intervenes in the development process, all three artists use the photographs as a whole and do not modify their original format.

[31] "Robert Frank . . . changes over time from the photographer he was to the artist who uses photography – photography as a poetic means, as an expressive means, away from its supposed truthfulness as testimony to a pictorial truth, to the reality of fiction." Urs Stahel, "In einer sinnlosen Welt: Die Polaroids von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), pp. 170–171.

[32] See Sarah Greenough, "Fragments That Make a Whole: Meaning in Photographic Sequences," in Robert Frank: Moving Out, exh. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (1994), pp. 96–125.

[33] "Setting out to write about individual photos you soon realise it is impossible: you would also have to find some way of inscribing the really important element: the SPACES IN-BETWEEN." Ian Penman, in Robert Frank, storylines (Göttingen: Steidl, 2004), p. 28, emphasis in original.

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mimetic representation is deconstructed. Although the shape of the individual photo is unaltered and shows a naturalistic likeness, the compilation is fragile – its unity seems temporary. The photos interact on different levels with each other and with their surroundings. Our experience in front of the composites is shaped by the simultaneity of their being many photographs and one image, by the boundaries within the image, the image's borders, and the gestures of transgression. The responsibility for making the picture coherent is shifted from the author to the beholder. The partial meaning offered in the visible parts of the picture encourages us to complete what we see, transforming it into a coherent and meaningful concept.

> *In fact, the post-post-photographic shift of the focus from the images to the practices and from the indexicality of photography to its iconicity makes us aware that photography is as much about generating realities as it is about recording them.*[34]

Montage practices create openings, both in material and meaning, which open up scope for interpretation. The aim is to create a context that originates from the work itself and that is caused, among other things, by the type of composition used. Part of our attention is devoted to the construction principles of what we perceive, so that the difference between image perception and general perception is depicted.

Time-Images and Narrativization

In these composite photographs, fragments of time and space are presented simultaneously in such a way that a purely sequential, chronological, or hodological reading is not adequate. They are movement-images,[35] since their photographs are taken with a moving camera and these movements of the camera as well as the movements of the subjects photographed are reflected in them. They are also time-images,[36] because they show a discontinuous space-time, whose elements they present simultaneously.

The photographic composites show no fixed space and no linear and self-contained movements. Although the pictorial space seems to be holistic in many cases, there are always fractures, missing or inaccurate connections, not to mention the nonexistent temporal continuum.[37] The recording of movements is not uninterrupted either. The representation does not conceal these breaks but rather reveals them. The fact that the photographic sections are temporally and spatially defined and do not connect to each other continuously means that the visible space-time can

[34] Friedrich Tietjen, "Post-Post-Photography," in Moritz Neumüller (ed.), The Routledge Companion to Photography and Visual Culture (London/New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 378.

[35] See Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 1: The Movement-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). Originally published in French in 1983 as Cinéma 1: L'Image-Mouvement.

[36] See Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 2: The Time-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). Originally published in French in 1985 as Cinéma 2: L'Image-Temps.

[37] Please refer to David Hockney's Gregory Swimming, Los Angeles March 31st 1982 and The Scrabble Game, Los Angeles, January 1st 1983, see David Hockney, Cameraworks (German version: Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1984), p. 18 and p. 90.

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only be discontinuous. The sensory-motor schema that Deleuze observes in the movement-image is not ruptured but has never existed as an uninterrupted whole. Thus, a spatio-temporal continuity is always only alleged.[38] The images must now be "read." Our attention no longer focuses on action but becomes reflexive.[39] Whereas movement-images have a beginning, a middle, and an end, time-images change the significance of chronology. It's no longer a simple matter of succession, but all sorts of concatenations complicate a linear decoding and form rhizomatic structures.

Time-images are virtual to themselves and are simultaneously permeated by past and future. They bring together the before and after in a becoming; they infuse difference into the present. Each photograph shows one picture, the current picture of the moment it was taken. These moments together form the virtual picture of the situation. Each photo is an actual picture, and the overall picture is both actual – materially present and visible – and virtual at the same time.

Time-images show new orders of time or, as Deleuze puts it, "the coexistence of relations or the simultaneity of the elements internal to time."[40] We are dealing with encapsulated space-time units, which in turn are assembled into a faceted overall structure. It links its fragments anew to a rudimentary narrative in time. Actual and virtual perception intersect: what we see cannot be conclusively grasped by language.

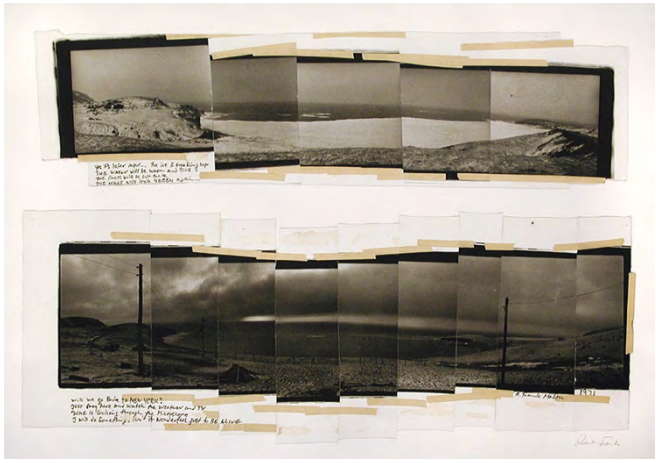

Fig. 4, Robert Frank, Isn´t It Wonderful Just to Be Alive, 1971, © Robert Frank; courtesy Pace/MacGill Gallery, New York.

While Hockney and Neimanas create crystal images from facets of situations, in Frank's case time is enclosed in nature. "For filmmaker Robert Frank, landscape . . . is nothing other than time becoming visible."[41] Time is extended and stretched by the mounted photographs, mirrored in the gaps between the collages.

Through the fragmentation of the connections a new, "thinking" image becomes necessary, which Deleuze finds "beyond

[38] This would generally suggest classification as a time-image. Of course, there inevitably remains a difference to moving images (such as the movies Deleuze refers to) that cannot be resolved. Rather, it is worth asking to what extent the composite photographs can be classified as movement-images or time-images. I attempt such a classification with Hockney's joiner photographs in my dissertation, which I hope to complete next year.

[39] See Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 2: The Time-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 272.

[40] Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 2: The Time-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 155.

[41] Georg Seeßlen, "Zeit-Bilder, Lebens-Bilder: Anmerkungen zu den Filmen von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), p. 134 [translated].

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movement."[42] Where no distinct narration directs the expression, the elements of the picture can enter into innumerable connections. A shift takes place, away from the representation of an action to a description. The beholder experiences the expressive value of the image beyond an ongoing storyline; time is no longer faceted but stretched into eternity.

Fig. 5, Joyce Neimanas, J. A., 1984, courtesy of the artist.

In contrast to Hockney's and Frank's works, Neimanas's Polaroid collages seem to be timeless. We see faceted but frozen situations, in which no movements are recognizable. Reinforced by colored Polaroid borders and overpainted backdrops, each photo looks like a tile in a mosaic. If we want to bring the collages together with narration at all, we can call them anti-narrative. But in contrast to this out-of-time feeling that the image transmits, we know that the act of photographing must have taken place at different moments. In this way, we experience the paradox of an accumulation of time in a seemingly static image.

The composite works exhibit the conditions of their production as well as their perception. They are not to be read as holistic perceptive impressions nor as descriptions nor as camera movements, but as images. They demonstrate what images are capable of.

> *Different temporalities in the medium of the image do not erase each other, just as they would become senseless within language; they vary, overlap, and compete with each other. It is always the coexistence of different modulations in one and the same image that challenges conventional, logical thinking.*[43]

The perceptibility of the composites lies beyond what can be understood linguistically – they show a "simultaneity of divergent time

[42] Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 1: The Movement-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 215; see also Georg Seeßlen, "Zeit-Bilder, Lebens-Bilder: Anmerkungen zu den Filmen von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), p. 136.

[43] Miriam Schaub, Gilles Deleuze im Kino: Das Sichtbare und das Sagbare (Munich: Verlag Wilhelm Fink, 2003), p. 231 [translated].

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relations in one and the same medium."[44] The perception of these images allows our imagination to charge the composite photos with movement and with a diffuse temporality as well as with a plot and thus with a kind of narrative.

This can be illustrated by looking at the example of Frank's *Home Improvements,* 1985.[45] Five photos in a row remind us of a film strip, but the pictures merely show snapshots of people and places and are only formally connected by the viewing direction of the protagonists. The three photos on the left are linked by their blue, black, and white colors – they are all close-ups. The two photos on the right are more or less black and white and seem to have been taken from a greater distance. We need to know something about Frank and his family to be able to decipher the image a bit further.[46] There is no story told, but in our imagination many stories are conjured up when we look at the picture strip. Each photo seems to stand for an entire scene of a movie, together they provide an autobiographical insight into the fixed points in Frank's life, perhaps saying something about his attitude to life.

The composite images are not narratives, but they indicate narrations and enable narrativization by those viewing them.[47] The images, which should be situated between sequences of images, tableaux, and single images, can tell stories at least to the extent that they comply with certain criteria of narrative theory. The combination of design and narrative moments gives rise to a fragmentary, discontinuous form of perceptual reproduction. Representations of movements and pictorial narrations emerge, which are made accessible through perceptual comprehension without ever being completed. The composite photographs are narratives that produce no fixed narration, narratives without beginning or end, without plot, narratives without a tangible story.

An Impression Of

The photos only connect allegedly, temporarily; the unity of the image is volatile. In this way, the composite photographs run counter to the fetish of the single picture's auratic claim to be a statement and a truth.[48] They use, preserve,

[44] Miriam Schaub, Gilles Deleuze im Kino: Das Sichtbare und das Sagbare (Munich: Verlag Wilhelm Fink, 2003), p. 226.

[45] See Robert Frank: New York to Nova Scotia, exh. cat. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (1986), pp. 98–99. See also URL: https://www.foto-museum.ch/de/explore/collection/series/16660_home_improvements_1985 (accessed January 28, 2020).

[46] According to the caption under the strip, we see Pablo, Frank's son, Frank's wife June Leaf. and Frank himself, with photos of their living environments, New York and Nova Scotia, between them.

[47] In his essay "Das Problem der Narrativität in Literatur, bildender Kunst und Musik: Ein Beitrag zu einer intermedialen Erzähltheorie," in Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning, (eds.), Erzähltheorie transgenerisch, Intermedial, Interdisziplinär (Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2002), pp. 23–104, Werner Wolf presents a convincing model that can be used to investigate narrative theory approaches in pictorial narratives. Central to his theory is the concept of narremes, basic elements of a narrative and its structure, which as stimuli evoke the cognitive schema of narrativization. Narremes make it possible to analyze whether and to what extent the selection and arrangement of discourse fragments have a narrative structure, regardless of the medium used.

[48] See Urs Stahel, "In einer sinnlosen Welt: Die Polaroids von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005),

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and reinforce this claim and at the same time undermine it by shaking the truth of the individual photo in the composition and dissolving it into a multi-perspectival form. The composite photographs demonstrate the possibility of expanding the pictorial space, and with it the time recorded, to infinity. Thus, the photographic collages open up fields of interplay and meaning. We are confronted with a complex structure of pictures and references. This, at best, leads to "a productive, because inquisitive, exchange between image and subject matter, image, images"[49] and mental images.

The composite images hover between instantaneous recording and the processes of perceiving and narrating that are brought to mind. In the spatialization, the representation as constellation, the potency of the fragmented combined image is presented together with its subject. Different perspectives are not shown one after another but simultaneously. The fixation of the perspectival perceptual space is suspended in the multiplication of the pictures, as it is in film by the moving camera. The composite photographs do not necessarily aim at temporal or causal sequences–they are conditional and form a fragmented tension and interplay.

Each photograph displays a section of a view in a vantage point perspective, while in a painting or a film the observation of the subject is spread across time and a change of viewpoints. With the composite photographs, the perspectival spaces and the temporal complexities that painting and film have always involved are brought into photography. The photos are used in a way that no longer refers to the photographic *dispositif* alone. The artists treat photos in a non-photographic way without denying their medium. The process of producing the composite photographs becomes more important than the moments in which the pictures are taken. And with this, the compilation of the photographs comes into focus. The single photograph

> *becomes an object that may be transported and used as an element in an arrangement of images. Starting from the reproduction of images in the context of montage, he [Frank – but this is true for Neimanas and Hockney as well] developed a specific use of photographs, of language, and of manipulation with paint that runs counter to the fetish of the photographic "original", while still allowing him to produce unique works of art.*[50]

The single picture becomes a set piece in a composition which, although produced by photography, bears witness to a way of thinking beyond photography.

The composite photos show a mixed form of photographic access and painterly or cinematic thinking in the combination process—two ways of seeing and processing merge. Hockney refers to his composite Polaroids as "drawings with a

pp. 169–70. See also the quote at the beginning of this article.

[49] Ute Eskildsen, "HOLD STILL _ keep going: Image in image; Images to images", in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank: hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), pp. 144–45.

[50] Ute Eskildsen, "HOLD STILL _ keep going: Image in image; Images to images", in Ute Eskildsen (ed.), Robert Frank: hold still keep going (Göttingen: Steidl, 2016), p. 143.

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camera."[51] He therefore puts an emphasis on the process of shaping a picture through time. In his photographic collages, one photo is blended into another – he works "as a painter, using each image as a brush-stroke within the larger tableau."[52] As I pointed out earlier, Neimanas uses her Polaroids to draw a patchwork pattern by sewing a quilt of memory fragments. And Frank's images work like film stills or storyboards: "They transform the diachronic principle of a filmstrip into a synchronous display on a sheet."[53]

The principle of montage is used to create images that give an impression beyond common photography. Not only does the fragmented presentation of the pictorial content lead to a temporalization and dispersion of time, this dispersion is already found in the production, in the non-simultaneous taking of the photographs. A spatial and temporal constellation becomes faceted and is spread over the picture plane. Owing to the combination of the photos, rhythmic and narrative aspects are emphasized differently. With Neimanas, there seem to be only short or no intervals between the single shots that form a cluster. With Frank, very long intervals between the pictures produce a feeling of eternity. There is a narrative not only in but also with structures. Perception here becomes a comprehensive activity that is at the same time self-reflexive, a different way of looking at images.

Both production and reception should be understood as equal parts of the process of becoming and perceiving a picture. There is not one "decisive moment" – it is split up and multiplied in lots of moments and viewpoints. The decisions are not made only in the moments the photographs are taken but also in the processes of selection and arrangement. The temporal and spatial blanks that indicate invisible information and movement become the actual message of the picture and merge with the meaning of the visible content. In the photographic composites, the presentation becomes part of the representation. The static image reflects through its composite shape the quality of a dynamic whole, provoking an ongoing update of the seen in our perception, our thinking, and our imagination.

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[53] Urs Stahel, "In einer sinnlosen Welt: Die Polaroids von Robert Frank," in Martin Gasser, Urs Stahel, Peter Pfrunder, and Thomas Seelig (eds.), Essays über Robert Frank (Göttingen: Steidl, 2005), p. 169.

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