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FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL 2016: PHOTOGRAPHY, THE UNDOCUMENT

Third Edition of Biennial Met with Critical Acclaim

FotoFocus Biennial 2016
October 1 – October 31, 2016
Cincinnati, Ohio

#FotoFocus2016

Cincinnati, OH, November 22, 2016 – The FotoFocus Biennial 2016, a month-long celebration of lens-based art in Cincinnati, Ohio, opened with strong attendance and critical acclaim. Centered around the theme of Photography, the Undocument, the Biennial featured over 60 exhibitions that addressed assumptions about the medium’s documentary character, at venues across the Cincinnati region, ranging from major museums and institutions to independent galleries and non-profit organizations presenting a diverse range of work engaging with the topic. Now in its third edition, the FotoFocus Biennial has grown in scope and influence, drawing artists, curators and critics at the forefront of photography and lens-based work to Cincinnati for a series of discussions on the evolving role of the medium. The Biennial program was anchored by eight exhibitions curated by FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator Kevin Moore, including the first US solo museum show of Roe Ethridge’s work at the Contemporary Arts Center and solo presentations by Zanele Muholi, Jackie Nickerson, and Robin Rhode at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

“This year’s Biennial is a milestone for the FotoFocus organization and for the city of Cincinnati. The strong community engagement, incredible response from participating venues and the ambitious curatorial programming speaks to the growing impact of the event, on both a regional and national level,” said FotoFocus Executive Director Mary Ellen Goeke. “FotoFocus is committed to furthering the dialogue on contemporary photography, as well as lens-based practices, and to supporting exhibitions and projects that challenge, educate and inspire. It has been very rewarding to watch this event become a touchpoint for the Cincinnati creative community and a gathering place for leading luminaries in the field.” Over the past six years, FotoFocus, a non-profit organization, has presented nearly 300 projects and contributed over $1.5M in support to over 150 of those presenting partners. Through this support, FotoFocus affirms its commitment to situating Cincinnati as a burgeoning center for photography and lens-based projects. While 17 Participating Venue exhibitions remain open, initial attendance figures show that the Biennial attracted over 60,000 visitors in October. This number is expected to grow as additional venues continue to report.

The FotoFocus Biennial 2016 was officially recognized at the FotoFocus ArtHub on October 5 by Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley, who proclaimed October as the Month of Photography in celebration of the Biennial and its contribution to the region’s creative community. The FotoFocus ArtHub: Satellite Project Space was temporarily erected in front of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, which is set on the banks of the Ohio River, and hosted exhibitions and programming during the Biennial Program.
The Biennial Program, held October 6-9, examined the Biennial’s theme: *Photography, the Undocument* through keynote lectures, talks and panel discussions that explored the agency of photography and its role in a rapidly shifting socio-political and economic climate. Keynote Speaker Roxana Marcoci, Senior Curator of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, opened the Biennial Program with a discussion of “The Representation of Louise Lawler’s Work” on Thursday, October 6, exploring the manner in which documentary photography can act as a vehicle of meaning far greater than the subject of the image itself. Roe Ethridge’s first solo museum exhibition *Nearest Neighbor* was the subject of a panel on Friday, October 7, featuring the artist and a roster of collaborators, including gallerists, designers, and models, who have played an integral role in Ethridge’s career to date. Exhibiting artist Zanele Muholi, accompanied by South African performing artists Andiswa Dlamini, Sebenzile Nkosi, and Thobeka Bengu expanded upon her solo exhibition, *Personae*, on view at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, with a performance held for an engaged audience.

Saturday’s daytime programming delved into the nature of fact and fabrication in the photographic medium and its cultural function, including presentations from New Slideshow artist William E. Jones on the “Rejected Images of the Farm Security Administration” and Julian Cox, Chief Curator and Founding Curator of Photography, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, in conversation with artist Sheila Pree Bright discussing “American Civil Rights Then and Now.”

“It was gratifying to see such a wide variety of people converge in Cincinnati to discuss photography and to make new connections among themselves and attendees from the regional community,” said Fotofocus Artistic Director and Curator Kevin Moore. “This year's biennial felt particularly substantive, with numerous lectures and conversations centered on questions of human rights and social politics. It is exciting to see the ways in which art exhibitions can provoke real discussion of issues central to our lives.”

Among the noted artists and art world professionals who attended and participated in the opening weekend programming were Roe Ethridge; Zanele Muholi; Jackie Nickerson; Mark Ruwedel; John Divola; William E. Jones, Sebastiaan Bremer, Susan Meiselas, Mary Lucier; David Horvitz; and Sheila Pree Bright; Roxana Marcoci, Senior Curator, Department of Photography, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Yancey Richardson, gallerist; Julian Cox, Chief Curator and Founding Curator of Photography at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Brendan Dugan, Gallerist and Publisher, New York; Alice Gray Stites, Museum Director and Chief Curator, 21c Museum Hotels, Louisville; Andy Harman, Production Designer; Sam Orlofsky, Gagosian Gallery Director; Drew Sawyer, William and Sarah Ross Soter Associate Curator of Photography at the Columbus Museum of Art; Paul Moakley, Deputy Director of Photography and Visual Enterprise at TIME; Sophie Hckett, Curator, Photography, Art Gallery of Ontario; Liz Mulholland, Partner at Andrew Kreps Gallery; Gregory Gooding, Collector and Partner at the New York law firm Debovoise & Plimpton LLP; Nion McEvoy, Collector, Chairman and CEO of Chronicle Books, San Francisco; Calcagno Cullen, Wave Pool; and Kevin Moore. Artistic Director and Curator, Fotofocus.

**ONGOING FOTOFOCUS EXHIBITION**

The FotoFocus exhibition, *Roe Ethridge: Nearest Neighbor*, curated by Kevin Moore at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, will be on view through March 12, 2017. It is the artist’s first solo museum exhibition in the United States. Presenting over 15 years of photographs drawn from Ethridge’s comprehensive body of work this mid-career survey documents the disparate concepts and photographic methods evident in Ethridge’s expansive methodology and fluidity between the realms of commercial, fine art, and personal photography.
Zanele Muholi: Personae, Jackie Nickerson: August, and Robin Rhode: Three Films will all three be on view at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center until January 23, 2017.

FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL PARTICIPATING VENUES
Participating Venues were open throughout the month of October with several exhibitions open until early 2017. A complete list of exhibitions and dates available at: http://www.fotofocusbiennial.org/venues

1305 Gallery
21c Museum Hotel
Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery
Antioch College: Herndon Gallery
Art Academy of Cincinnati: Pearlman Gallery and Convergys Gallery
Art Beyond Boundaries Gallery
ArtWorks at The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County: Main Branch
Behringer-Crawford Museum
The Betts House
BLDG
Braze Street Studios: C-Link Gallery
Carl Solway Gallery
The Carnegie
The Carnegie: Contemporary Arts Center Black Box Performance Series
Cincinnati Art Museum
Cincinnati Museum Center with Word Play and Chase Public at Hoffner Lodge Gallery
Clay Street Press
Clifton Cultural Arts Center
Columbus Museum of Art
Contemporary Arts Center
DAAP Galleries: Meyers Gallery and Reed Gallery
The Dayton Art Institute
Dayton Visual Arts Center
Downtown Cincinnati, Inc.
FoRealism Tribe at Frameshop
Hudson Jones
i.imagine at Roebling Point Books and Coffee
Iris BookCafé and Gallery
Kennedy Heights Arts Center
Lloyd Library and Museum with Cincinnati Books Arts Society
Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center
Mercantile Library
Miami University Art Museum
Miller Gallery
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
Northern Kentucky University: Visual Arts Galleries
Pop Revolution Gallery
Prairie
Robin Imaging Services
Sinclair Community College
Skirball Museum Cincinnati in partnership with The Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education
Stivers School for the Arts: Fifth Street Gallery
Taft Museum of Art
Thomas More College: Eva G. Farris Gallery
Wash Park Art
Wave Pool
Wave Pool at FotoFocus ArtHub
Wright State University: Gallery 263 At The Robert and Elaine Stein Galleries
Xavier University: Art Gallery at the A.B. Cohen Center
YWCA Women's Art Gallery

FOTOFOCUS EXHIBITIONS CURATED BY KEVIN MOORE
FotoFocus exhibitions curated by Kevin Moore were open throughout the month of October with several exhibitions open into 2017.

Roe Ethridge: Nearest Neighbor
October 7, 2016 – March 12, 2017
Contemporary Arts Center, Downtown Cincinnati

Jackie Nickerson: August
October 1, 2016 – January 23, 2017
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Zanele Muholi: Personae
October 1, 2016 – January 23, 2017
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Marlo Pascual: Three Works
September 23, 2016 – November 27, 2016
Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery

New Slideshow
October 6 - 9, 2016
Contemporary Arts Center, Downtown Cincinnati

Robin Rhode: Three Films
October 1, 2016 – January 23, 2017
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

After Industry
September 23, 2016 – November 27, 2016
Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery

Shifting Coordinates
September 23, 2016 – January 2, 2017
21c Museum Hotel
Co-curated with Alice Gray Stites
About the Biennial
The FotoFocus Biennial runs through the month of October throughout the greater Cincinnati region at participating museums, galleries, universities, and community organizations. It includes concentrated programming and events, including artist and curator talks, screenings, performances, and tours.

About FotoFocus
FotoFocus is a non-profit arts organization whose mission is to present the finest in contemporary photography and lens-based art that is artistically, intellectually, and academically rigorous, and to support programs that are accessible, educational, and enriching to a diverse public. FotoFocus celebrates and champions photography as the medium of our time and aims to encourage dialogue about the world through the art of photography.

Further information about FotoFocus can be found at http://www.fotofocuscincinnati.org.

Follow FotoFocus on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram via the hashtags #FotoFocus, #FotoFocus2016, and #undocument.

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