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FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL
PHOTOGRAPHY,
THE UN-
DOCUMENT
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COMMUNITY, CULTURE, EVENTS, PHOTOGRAPHY

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FOTOFOCUS: THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

By **Olivia Baer** • On October 6, 2016

If you're new to Cincinnati or have never heard of FotoFocus, it's a photography-based celebration for the whole month of October that happens every two years. This year's show is called, "Photography, the Undocument," and explores documentary themes in photography, testing the boundaries of facts and fabrications. Exhibits take place in organizations, the ArtHub, certain museums, and local galleries. It's a show that creates discussion about contemporary art in relation to the rich history of photography. In addition, October 6th through the 9th holds more in depth screenings, performances, and lectures.

"Photography, the Undocument" expands on photography's ties with objectivity, realism, and documentation. It flattens and edits down the chaotic world around us in one single moment. This exhibit challenges the viewer to discover another understanding of documentary photographs. This can be achieved by breaking down the assumptions of the photograph by understanding photography's ability to warp and manipulate the world around us.

This is definitely an event students should take advantage of. If you're someone pursuing the arts or media, or even just have an interest in it, this show will connect you with the art world and community. It's a great opportunity to see how other artists are tackling important universal issues. Also, it offers an incredible chance to network with artists, curators, and other people around Cincinnati. If you put yourself out there, chances are you'll find people who are interested in your work and want to help it grow. So many people from different fields are involved in this event to form connections with to further your own career.

Another reason you should attend some of these showing is because many of them are free and open to the public! There are over 60 different locations for you to explore, including the 21C Museum, the Art Academy, Clay Street Press, Cincinnati Museum of Art, and even the two DAAP Galleries. However, there are some venues that a fee to get in, but you can purchase the 2016 FotoFocus Passport for \$25. The Passport gets you into all the exhibits in the event for free as well as free admission to all of the exclusive events, including receptions, lectures, and tours.

One exhibition I would recommend is the one housed in the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. It features Zanele Muholi, Jackie Nickerson, and Robin Rhode. Muholi prefers the title "visual activist" to "artist" and her work in this exhibit showcases the lives of South African women who identify as lesbians, and a series of self-portraits bringing light to historical stereotypes. Nickerson's work portrays African farm laborers and how their work shapes their identity and their relation to their environment. Rhode is a South African artist that uses a variety of mediums creating fantasy narratives. This exhibit features a loop of three films to reimagine urban landscapes.

So you have no excuse to be bored this October! It's important to get involved in the art and media world early in your career if that's where you're headed. If you see any great shows leave a comment below so others can experience it t