

FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL ■■■  
■■■■ PHOTOGRAPHY, ■■■■  
■■■■ THE UN-  
DOCUMENT ■■■■■■■■■■  
■■■■ OCTOBER ■■■■  
■■■■ 2016 ■■■■

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FotoFocus Announces Complete Exhibition Program  
for the FotoFocus Biennial 2016:  
*Photography, the Undocument*  
October 1-31, 2016**

**Including solo exhibitions of the work of  
Zanele Muholi, Jackie Nickerson, and Robin Rhode**

**FotoFocus Biennial Program: October 6-9, 2016  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
#FotoFocus2016  
#undocument**



Zanele Muholi, *Somnyama Ngonyama II*, 2015  
Gelatin silver print.



Jackie Nickerson, *Ruth*, 2012, digital c-print ©Jackie Nickerson.  
Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

**Cincinnati, OH, May 27, 2016**—FotoFocus is pleased to announce a series of major exhibitions organized by FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator, Kevin Moore, on the occasion of the FotoFocus Biennial 2016, the month-long celebration of photography and lens-based art in Cincinnati this October.

Along with the recently announced ***Roe Ethridge: Nearest Neighbor***, the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States, which will be held at Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), seven additional FotoFocus curated exhibitions will anchor the

programming for the Biennial, which this year is organized around the theme of **Photography, the Undocument**. The exhibitions bear diverse and nuanced, yet interconnected relationships to the theme, which seek to break apart assumptions about photography's documentary character by emphasizing the medium's natural tendency to distort, edit, and reshape the visible world. As Kevin Moore explains, "The Undocument simply questions something basic in photography and its role in our understanding of 'reality': how do we grasp 'realism' or 'reality' through photography and, more importantly, how do we alter and shape reality through imagination to form our own individual point of view, our own reality."

**Zanele Muholi: Personae**, to be held at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC), positions portraiture as a photographic mode with the power to both reveal and disguise through two bodies of the artist's work: *Faces and Phases*, a series begun in 2006 that currently comprises more than 300 images and videos of black, South African women who identify as lesbians; and *Somnyama Ngonyama*, a new series of self-portraits to debut at the Biennial, examining the nature of historical stereotypes through pose, costume, and gesture. Muholi's self-proclaimed mission as an artist and activist is "to re-write a black queer and trans visual history of South Africa", as reflected in her broad engagement with photography—from photojournalism to portraiture—to create compelling new narratives concerning identity and race. Muholi is this year's winner of the ICP Infinity Award for documentary photography.

**Jackie Nickerson: August**, to be held at the NURFC, will feature a collection of Nickerson's dignified and vibrant portraits of African farm laborers. These works, captured over the course of a decade in two bodies of work—*Farm* (2002) and *Terrain* (2013)—depict the physical and psychological impact of agriculture in southern Africa. *Terrain* takes up the earlier concerns of *Farm*, which was made over a three-year period in rural locations all over the continent, expanding *Farm*'s examination of the circular relationship between identity and improvisation to look more broadly at labor and the synergy between cultivation, workers, and the environment.

Also seeking to examine the ways in which photography can articulate the hidden tensions between perception and reality, **After Industry**—a play on the term "after nature," an outdated term for "still life"—will be held at the Weston Art Gallery in Downtown Cincinnati and will display works by American and German artists exploring the intersection of landscape and industry in the post-industrial era from the 1970s onward. The exhibition will seek to contextualize the industrial age as a brief episode within the course of history by emphasizing nature as an irrepressible constant in relation to human industry. Works by John Divola, Lynne Cohen, Thomas Struth and others, from the collection of New York collector and Ohio native Gregory Gooding, in turn invoke the work of earlier photographic masters such as Walker Evans and Albert Renger-Patzsch, whose images both embodied and disrupted notions of historical and representational objectivity. *After Industry* is accompanied by an installation by Marlo Pascual, in the Weston's street-level gallery, comprising enigmatic still lifes, featuring found photographs in relation to common objects.

Two exhibitions will take up questions of film as a counterpart to photography: **Robin Rhode: Three Films**, to be held at the NURFC, will feature three films from the South African artist's multi-media artistic practice: *Rocks* (2011), *A Day in May* (2013), and *The Moon is Asleep* (2016), which will be screened in a continuous loop. Utilizing a variety of visual languages—film, photography, performance, and drawing—to construct lyrical narratives of social and political import, Rhode's works function as strategic interventions,

transforming urban landscapes into imaginary worlds, while revealing underlying socio-economic concerns in the documentation and representation of individual experience. The works featured in *Three Films* draw the quotidian into conversation with the imaginary, the historical with the contemporary, and high art forms, such as drawing, with so-called “low,” such as graffiti, identifying both parallels and dissonances that challenge pre-established notions of each.

Rhode’s film *Open Court* (2012) will also be included in *New Slideshow*, a film exhibition to be held at the CAC, featuring works by artists William E. Jones, Sophia Peer and John Stezaker, among others. Taking the still photograph as a point of departure, this collection of film shorts explores narrative through different techniques, expanding the potential of sequential narrative and the single frame. *New Slideshow* will be shown in a continuous loop, the hour-long program beginning every hour at the top of the hour.

Kevin Moore and Alice Gray Stites, Chief Curator and Museum Director at the 21c Museum Hotels will co-curate an exhibition at 21c Cincinnati for the Biennial drawn from their collection, featuring works that test viewers’ ability to make clear distinctions between race, gender, and age in photographic representations. Artists include Miguel Angel Rojas, Catherine Opie, Pierre Gonnord, Mickalene Thomas, and Nan Goldin.

Under the leadership of **Mary Ellen Goeke**, the FotoFocus Biennial 2016 will include over 60 venues around Cincinnati and the greater region, reflecting the organization’s longstanding commitment to situating the city as a growing center for photography. Exhibitors range from major museums and academic institutions to independent galleries and community organizations, which together represent a comprehensive spectrum of engagement with lens-based art.

“We look forward to welcoming audiences to Cincinnati for the FotoFocus Biennial 2016, where we invite visitors to challenge and expand their expectations of photography as a medium, to learn and be stimulated, and to find new favorites among the unexpected,” says Goeke.

### **About the Biennial**

The 2016 FotoFocus Biennial will run through the month of October throughout the greater Cincinnati region at participating museums, galleries, universities, and community organizations. It will include four days of concentrated programming and events, including a citywide roster of film screenings, lectures, and performances taking place October 6–9, 2016.

### **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 [www.fotofocuscincinnati.org](http://www.fotofocuscincinnati.org), and information about the upcoming 2016 FotoFocus Biennial will soon be available at <http://www.fotofocusbiennial.org>.

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

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