

# FOTOFOCUS

## FotoFocus Announces Fall 2025 Symposium: *Photo-Economics*

*With keynote conversation between Mitch Epstein and Robert Slifkin, and talks featuring Lauren Bon, Lee Ann Daffner, Katy Grannan, Danielle Jackson, Alison Rossiter, and others*

**Saturday, October 4, 2025**



Mitch Epstein, *Ashton Clatterbuck, Lancaster, Pennsylvania*, 2018. ©Black River Productions, Ltd./Mitch Epstein. Courtesy of Sikkema Malloy Jenkins and Yancey Richardson

**Cincinnati, OH** (August 21, 2025) — **FotoFocus** announces its **Fall 2025 Symposium: *Photo-Economics***, an all-day event on Saturday, October 4, 2025, at Lightborne Studios (212 E 14th Street). Delving into the industrial history of photography and its role in shaping social narratives, the lineup includes leading voices, such as artists Mitch Epstein, Katy Grannan, Alison Rossiter, and Lauren Bon, as well as scholars such as Robert Slifkin, Monica Bravo, Lee Ann Daffner, and Benjamin Young, each exploring aspects of photography's part in systems of global industrialization and distribution, including the impacts of these realities on social and political systems. A reception following the symposium will feature live music from local band Red Cedars.

“The FotoFocus symposium and biennial themes always address some essential aspect of photography while at the same time exploring how that aspect functions in the larger human sphere,” says **Kevin Moore, Artistic Director and Curator** at FotoFocus. “*Photo-Economics* is about the resources of photography—what photography is materially, *what it’s actually made of*—and the impact on people’s lives that inevitably arise over competition for those material resources.”

The keynote conversation will feature leading American photographer Mitch Epstein and NYU professor Robert Slifkin. They will elaborate upon the themes of the day, offering a deeper look at the medium of photography against the backdrop of labor and political struggles in relation to resources, class, and consumption, while emphasizing the beauty of the American landscape and the people who feel compelled to protect it.

“FotoFocus is pleased to announce this timely theme and welcome guests to this year’s symposium,” says **Katherine Ryckman Siegwarth, Executive Director**. “*Photo-Economics* marks the tenth anniversary of this signature program and continues a tradition of collaborative thinking about the contemporary world through the medium of photography.”

The event is **free and open to the public, but registration is requested**. Those interested can register [here](#). For more information, please visit [fotofocus.org](http://fotofocus.org). Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) will be provided, financially assisted by H.B., E.W. & F.R. Luther Charitable Foundation, Fifth Third Bank, N.A., Trustee. For questions regarding accessibility accommodations at FotoFocus events, please contact [info@fotofocus.org](mailto:info@fotofocus.org).



# Photo-Economics

## SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

### **Morning Session: *Material Economics***

Centering on the materials of photographic processes, such as silver, platinum, and bitumen, these conversations consider photography’s embeddedness with economies of mining, industrialization, land use, and environmental degradation.

10am

**Panel: *Photography’s Resource Dependencies***

Moderated by **Monica Bravo**, Assistant Professor at Princeton University, Philadelphia, PA, with panelists: **Katherine “Kappy” Mintie**, Head of Collections at the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ; and **Kristen Gaylord**, Herzfeld Curator of Photography and Media Arts at the Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI

11am                    **Artist Spotlight: Lauren Bon**  
**Lauren Bon**, Metabolic Studio, Topanga, CA

11:30am                Break

Noon                    **Conversation: Lee Ann Daffner and Alison Rossiter**  
**Lee Ann Daffner**, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Conservator of Photographs at The Museum of Modern Art, Brooklyn, NY; and **Alison Rossiter**, Photographer, Atlantic Highlands, NJ

1pm                     Lunch

**Afternoon Session: *Social Economics***

The afternoon session examines photography’s role in communicating the human consequences of extractive capitalism, documenting and disseminating narratives ranging from post-industrial poverty to boom-time wealth.

2pm                     **Critic Spotlight: Danielle Jackson on *Tulsa***  
**Danielle Jackson**, Critic and Researcher, Bronx, NY

2:30pm                **Panel: *After Allan Sekula’s Fish Story***  
Moderated by **Benjamin Young**, Clinical Assistant Professor of Art History & Museum Studies at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, with panelists: **Jaime Acosta Gonzalez**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Riverside, CA; and **Jill Dawsey**, Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, CA

3:30pm                Break

4pm                     **Artist Spotlight: Katy Grannan**  
**Katy Grannan**, Photographer, Big Lagoon, CA

4:30pm                **Keynote Conversation: Mitch Epstein and Robert Slifkin**  
**Mitch Epstein**, Photographer, New York, NY; and **Robert Slifkin**, Edith Kitzmiller Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, New York, NY

6–8pm

**Red Cedars Performance and Reception**

**Red Cedars: Patrick Kennedy**, Musician, Petersburg, KY; and **Dinah Devoto**, Musician, Villa Hills, KY

[Participant Bios here](#)

**ABOUT MITCH EPSTEIN**

A pioneer in fine-art color photography, Mitch Epstein has photographed the landscape and culture of America for half a century. A graduate of Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, Epstein has been inducted into the National Academy of Design (2020) and was awarded the Prix Pictet (2011), Berlin Prize Fellowship (2008), and Guggenheim Fellowship (2002). Recent exhibitions include *American Nature* at the Gallerie d'Italia in Torino, Italy (2024–2025); *In India* at Les Rencontres d'Arles in Arles, France (2022); and *Property Rights* at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas (2020–2021).

Epstein's recent exhibition, *American Nature*, assembles three photographic series (*Old Growth*, *Property Rights*, and *American Power*); a multi-channel video-sound installation; and a looped projection. These five pieces investigate notions of wilderness, human society, and their collaborative and troubled co-existence.

Epstein has published 17 books including *Recreation* (2022, 2005), *Property Rights* (2021), *New York Arbor* (2013), *American Power* (2009), and *Family Business* (2004), winner of the Kraszna-Krausz Photography Book Award. In documentary film, Epstein was director of *Dad and Retail* (2003) and director of photography for *India Cabaret* (1988). He was production designer and co-producer for the feature films *Mississippi Masala* (1991) and *Salaam Bombay!* (1988). His work has been shown and collected by museums worldwide including: The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Art Institute of Chicago; Tate Modern, London; Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

**ABOUT ROBERT SLIFKIN**

Robert Slifkin is the Edith Kitzmiller Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, where he teaches modern and contemporary art and photography. He is the author of *Quitting Your Day Job: Chauncey Hare's Photographic Work* (MACK, 2022), which received the Historical Book Award at Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles, France; *The New Monuments and the End of Man: U.S. Sculpture Between War and Peace, 1945–1975* (Princeton University Press, 2019); and *Out of Time: Philip Guston and the Refiguration of Postwar American Art* (University of California Press, 2013) which was awarded the Philips Book Prize. His essays and reviews have appeared in such journals as *American Art*, *The Art Bulletin*, *Art Journal*, *Artforum*, *Aperture Magazine*, *Burlington Magazine*, *October*, and *Oxford Art Journal*.

## ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time. With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. FotoFocus has collaborated with organizations, curators, academics, and more than 3,000 artists and participants, to present over 800 exhibitions and programs. In 2025, FotoFocus anticipates the opening of the FotoFocus Center, a 14,700 square foot facility dedicated to the presentation of exhibitions and related programming.

Signature FotoFocus programming includes the **FotoFocus Biennial**, which has been held in October since 2012, most recently taking place in 2024 with the theme *backstories*. Past editions have presented work across the Cincinnati region by historic and contemporary artists, including Berenice Abbott, Eugène Atget, John Edmonds, Roe Ethridge, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, David Hartt, Baseera Khan, Zanele Muholi, Tony Oursler, Barbara Probst, Thomas Ruff, Ming Smith, Ian Strange, Chip Thomas, and Akram Zaatari. Other landmark events include the **FotoFocus Symposium**, which has contributed significant dialogue and insight to culturally relevant topics including the controversial Mapplethorpe exhibition, and the **FotoFocus Lecture and Visiting Artist Series**, which has brought globally renowned artists such as An-My Lê, Sky Hopinka, Zoe Leonard, William Wegman, and Roger Ross Williams to Cincinnati.

## CONNECT

WEBSITE: [www.fotofocus.org](http://www.fotofocus.org)

INSTAGRAM: [@fotofocuscincinnati](https://www.instagram.com/fotofocuscincinnati)

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