



Conference-a-thon 2026 Program

March 8, 2026 | UTC+0

Schedule Overview

Time (UTC+0)	Session	Speaker(s)
12:00 AM – 12:09 AM	Introduction	Rose Teanby and Kris Belden-Adams
12:09 AM – 1:40 AM	Whiteout: Photography in Antarctica; Panel Discussion	Geoffrey Batchen (host), Anne Noble, Joyce Campbell, Elizabeth Watkins

1:40 AM – 2:02 AM	From Archive to Online: Creating PHOTORIA	Sally Jackson
2:02 AM – 2:19 AM	Photomediating Together: Collective Photowalks and Photomontage	Marita Ibañez Sandoval
2:19 AM – 2:41 AM	Traces of Light: Women in Early Photography of China	Stacey Lambrow
2:41 AM – 2:59 AM	Quiet Resilience: Alternative Modernity in Xu Xiaoxiao's “Ki Ki So So Lhargyalo”	Chuqi Min
2:59 AM – 4:12 AM	Panel: Women in Photoboosts	Catlin Langford, Ruth O'Leary, Katherine Griffiths
4:12 AM – 4:32 AM	Homai Vyarawalla: The Lady with the Lens	Nabanita Mitra
4:32 AM – 4:51 AM	Contemporary Encounters with Ethnographic Photography in Britain and the Balkans	Jelena Sofronijevic
4:51 AM – 5:07 AM	Cut Out: Feminist Photographic Collage and Women's Visual Practices, 1840–1960	Fiona Rogers
5:07 AM – 5:27 AM	Excess, Embodiment, and Exposure: Zarina Bhimji in the 1980s	Grace Xiao
5:27 AM – 5:47 AM	Lost in the Blur: The Rediscovery of Betti Mautner's Photographic Legacy	Stefanie Pirker
5:47 AM – 6:06 AM	The African Female Gaze: Identity, Memory, Diaspora, and Resistance	Alessandra Migani

6:06 AM – 7:06 AM	Panel: Fotografiste: Locating Women Photographers in Pre- and Post-Unification Italy	Nicoletta Leonardi, Beatrice Lattanzi, Agnese Ghezzi
7:06 AM – 7:25 AM	Between Theory and Practice: The Impact of Paola Mattioli's Works on Italian Photography and Feminism	Emma Colombi
7:25 AM – 7:44 AM	Constructing Femininity under Fascism: Ghitta Carell, Female Imaginaries, and Competing Visual Models	Bianca Ceriani
7:44 AM – 8:05 AM	Looking with a Feminist Eye: Swedish Photography and the Politics of the Gaze	Ekaterina Skorokhodova
8:05 AM – 8:24 AM	Pia Arke and Maud Sulter's Decolonial Visions Through Photography	Brenda Bikoko
8:24 AM – 8:44 AM	Out of the Shadows, Into Focus: The Case of Jane Clifford	Rachel Bullough Ainscough
8:44 AM – 9:41 AM	Panel: Framing the Front – Women Photographers and the Spanish Civil War	María de los Santos García Felguera, Lourdes Delgado, Marta López Beriso
9:41 AM – 9:59 AM	A Forgotten Pioneer: Maria da Conceição de Lemos Magalhães and Women's Place in International Pictorialism	Susana Lourenço Marques, Emília Tavares
9:59 AM – 10:19 AM	Candelaria Tello Valladares: A Female Entrepreneur and Photographer in Rural Spain at the Turn of the Century	Azahara Lozano Dorado
10:19 AM – 10:39 AM	Making the Invisible Visible: Patricia Aridjis's Documentary Lens on Mexico's Marginalized Women	Eunice Miranda Tapia

10:39 AM – 10:57 AM	Acland to Yevonde: A Feminist Historiography of Colour Photography	Emery Walshe
10:57 AM – 11:19 AM	The Many Faces of Barbara Ker-Seymer: British Modernist Photographer of the 1930s	Clive Coward
11:19 AM – 11:35 AM	The Role of Georgia O'Keeffe in Photography Conservation: A Pioneer Ahead of Her Time	Mireya Arenas Patiño and María Sobrino Estalrich
11:35 AM – 11:54 AM	Lady Researchers Wanted for Lady Photographers: Mrs. Strong and the Bertolacci Sisters	Annebella Pollen, Jayne Knight
11:54 AM – 12:49 PM	Panel: “Herstory: A Female-Only Endeavor?”	Nicole Hudgins, Clare Freestone, Anna Sparham; Discussants: Kris Belden-Adams, Rose Teanyby
12:49 PM – 1:07 PM	Unexpectedly Unearthing Three Victorian Female Stereoscopic Photographers	Rebecca Sharpe
1:07 PM – 1:25 PM	Making Female Labour Visible: Eileen “Dusty” Deste	Sophie Piper
1:25 PM – 1:44 PM	Rosalind Maingot (1893–1957): A Woman of Many Parts	Pamela Glasson Roberts
1:44 PM – 2:04 PM	Constructive Collaborations in Early Colour Photography	Janine Freeston

2:04 PM – 2:23 PM	Writing Photography from the Household: Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn / T. Story-Maskelyne and the Gendered Historiography of Image-Making	Haohao Zhang
2:23 PM – 2:42 PM	Pamela Booth (1914–1981): One of Fifty Women	Deborah Ireland
2:42 PM – 3:02 PM	Framing Ownership: Tracing the Creative and Commercial Lives of Women Photographers through Copyright Records, 1880–1912	Katherine Howells
3:02 PM – 3:24 PM	THE:Theatre to PHO:Photography: Billie Love and Anna Shepherd in the Picture Library	Francesca Issatt
3:24 PM – 3:44 PM	Ursula Clark: Architectural Photographer	David Barber
3:44 PM – 4:00 PM	Out of the Studio: Female Photographers in the RIBA Collections	Valeria Carullo
4:00 PM – 4:19 PM	A Women's Auxiliary Air Force's Tale: The Knicky Chapman Collection	Gary Winter
4:19 PM – 4:38 PM	“Dirty Work” for a Woman: Exploring the Life and Career of Daguerreotypist Sarah Garrett Hewes	Sarah J. Weatherwax
4:38 PM – 4:57 PM	Simulating Sight and Reclaiming Memory: Ana Alesanco's Photographic Reimagining of Her Mother's Blindness in Magna	Eduarne Beltran de Heredia Carmona

4:57 PM – 5:13 PM	Prolific, Artistic, and Overlooked: Annie Powell (1859–1952) and an Accidental Photo Historian	Bernie Zelitch
5:13 PM – 5:33 PM	From Home Demonstration to Migrant Mother: How the Cooperative Extension Service's Female Agents Pioneered Documentary Image Making	Kate Fogle
5:33 PM – 5:51 PM	Through the Lens of Renee Cox	Elizabeth Carmel Hamilton
5:51 PM – 6:07 PM	BREAK	
6:07 PM – 6:28 PM	Love and Solidarity in Nina Berman's An Autobiography of Miss Wish	Linda Steer
6:28 PM – 6:48 PM	Margaret Watkins: Feeling through the Archive	Charlotte Beyries
6:48 PM – 7:07 PM	Josefina Oliver: A Hidden Photographer and Artist	Patricia Viaña
7:07 PM – 7:23 PM	A Claim to Equality of the Sexes: A Woman Daguerreian Voice in Mid-19th Century Americas	Carlos G. Vertanessian
7:23 PM – 8:43 PM	Panel: Female Lenses – Women Photography Historians in Mexico	ERA Colectivo
8:43 PM – 9:02 PM	Mother St. Croix: Ursuline Nun and Pioneering Photographer in Late 19th-Century New Orleans	Amber Shields Johnson

9:02 PM – 9:25 PM	Tracking Texas’s First Photographer, “Mrs. Davis”: Female Frontier Entrepreneur	Kris Belden-Adams
9:25 PM – 9:47 PM	An Art of Grief: Kia LaBeija, Kwan Bennett, and Photographic Processing	Alex Fialho
9:47 PM – 10:07 PM	A Feminist Intersection of an Artist Book and Performance: Carolee Schneemann’s ABC—We Print Anything—In the Cards	Kathleen Wentrack
10:07 PM – 10:24 PM	Chile’s Travestis: AIDS, Politics, and Post-Dictatorship in Pedro Lemebel’s “Loco afán”	Riley Klug
10:24 PM – 10:44 PM	‘Silent, Defenceless Images’: Constrained Bodies in the Photographs of Madame d’Ora	Nicole Entin
10:44 PM – 11:03 PM	Exposing Violence: Women Using Experimental Photography to Confront Gendered Violence	Elizabeth Ransom
11:03 PM – 11:23 PM	Esther Lewittes Mipaas: Photography for the History of Art and Architecture	Nicole Krup Oest
11:23 PM – 11:41 PM	Exploiting the Gaze? Women Workers in the Hula Girl Photo Industry in Wartime Hawai’i	Pippa Oldfield
11:41 PM – 12:00 AM	Conclusion: Conference Co-Organizers’ Thank You	Kris Belden-Adams and Rose Teanby

Co-Convenors/Co-Organizers:

Dr. Rose Teanby (U.K.) & Dr. Kris Belden-Adams (USA)

Kris Belden-Adams is an Associate Professor of Art History at Texas A&M University. She is the Chief Editor of *Art Inquiries* journal, and the author of monographs *Photography, Temporality, Modernity: Time Warped* (2019), and *Photography, Eugenics, 'Aristogenics': Picturing Privilege* (2020). In addition, she is an editor and contributor to the volumes *Photography and Failure: One Medium's Incessant Entanglement with Mishaps, Flops, and Disappointments* (2017), and *Diverse Histories in Photographic Albums: 'These Are Our Stories'* (2022). With Dr. Karen Barber, Belden-Adams is a Content Co-Editor for Smarthistory's/Khan Academy's coverage on the history of photography, and is dedicated to expanding coverage of women photographers. Her research and other projects help to give rise to new voices, illuminate the work of overlooked women photographers, and help enrich our histories. Her scholarly writing is accessible here: <https://tamu.academia.edu/KrisBeldenAdams>

Dr. Rose Teanby is an independent photographic historian specialising in early British women photographers. She is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Rose gained her PhD in Photographic History at the Photographic History Research Centre, De Montfort University, Leicester, researching early British women photographers 1839-1861. Having previously gained a Diploma in Photography in 1983, one of her portraits was acquired by the [National Portrait Gallery, London](#) in 2015.

Rose has presented her research at conferences including *Anna Atkins Symposium*, New York Public Library 2018), *Women, Work and Commerce in the Creative Industries: Britain, 1750-1950* (Westminster University, 2019), Royal Photographic Society (International Women's Day, 2022), *A New Power* (Bodleian Library, Oxford 2023), and *Women and Worlds of Learning* (Oxford University, 2024). Rose contributed two essays to the 2022 publication *A World History of Women Photographers* and online articles for the [Journal of Victorian Culture](#), [Photo Oxford Festival](#), [The Royal Society](#), [V&A](#), [National Portrait Gallery](#) and [Linnean Society](#). She has contributed to the *PhotoHistorian*, *Photography and Culture*, and *Art Inquiries*. Her 2025 Photo Oxford talk about the life of Constance Talbot is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fmB7ZJ9VoE>.

Co-Hosts, by Region, In Order of Appearance:

Dr. Yvette Hamilton, Australia/NZ/Asia

Yvette Hamilton is an Australian interdisciplinary artist and academic of Mauritian descent. She is a Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Art at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, and has been a practising artist for more than fifteen years. Her research and expanded practice probe the limits and expectations of representation within photography, exploring the ontological paradoxes inherent in the medium. This inquiry is underpinned by sustained material experimentation with photographic processes—past, present, and potential futures—and a commitment to sustainable, collaborative practice.

Freya Elmer, Australia/NZ/Asia

Freya Elmer (BA, MA) specialises in research roles and possessing extensive knowledge of documentary heritage and archival collections. She is currently the Archivist at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, where she plays a pivotal role in preserving and managing the gallery's significant archival collections of Aotearoa New Zealand artists and art institutions.

Dr. Francesca Strobino, Co-Host, Europe/Africa

Francesca is a photographic historian whose research focuses on photomechanical processes and the use of photography in scientific contexts, with particular attention to material culture and experimental practices. She holds a PhD in Photographic History and Visual Culture from De Montfort University (UK) and currently lectures in Photographic History at LABA Firenze. From 2025, she is an Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and in the same year, she was awarded the Nuncius Prize.

Dr. Sarah French, Co-Host, Europe/Africa

Sarah French is Curatorial Fellow in Photography, supported by The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. As part of this two-year post in the V&A's Photographs Section, she has supported exhibitions, acquisitions and public programmes. She is currently developing a display about the periodical Sun Artists (1889-1891), which includes the work of Julia Margaret Cameron and Eveleen Myers. She is independently cataloguing and research the RPS's International Exhibition of 1898.

Dr. Karen Barber, Co-Host, The Americas

Dr. Karen Barber is a curator and art historian specializing in the history and theory of photography and Modern art. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Art History and Director of Cade Art Gallery at Anne Arundel Community College. Dr. Barber is also a contributing co-editor for twentieth-century photography at Smarthistory/Khan Academy, and works to expand its coverage of women photographers. Her research explores interwar photography, photobooks, photographic exhibitions, and photography as it relates to Native America within the context of, and as a means of upsetting, traditional settler colonialist narratives.

Kimberly Donnelly, Co-Host, The Americas

Kimberly Donnelly is a Professor of Art History at Grand Rapids Community College in Michigan. She earned an ABD and Masters of Philosophy at The Grad Center of the City University of New York, focusing on German Dada as well as Neue Sachlichkeit. Currently teaching the Histories of Modern Art, Architecture, Interior Design and Photography, she is dedicated to amplifying the awareness of the future generations about the important contributions that women and people of color have made to art and art history.

Dr. Gretchen Gasterland-Gustafsson, Co-Host, The Americas/Production Assistant

Professor of Liberal Arts, Gretchen Gasterland-Gustafsson earned a Ph.D. in Comparative Studies in Discourse and Society. Her dissertation was titled Design for Living: German and Swedish Design in the Early Twentieth Century. She has a Fil.Lic. in art history from Lunds University in Sweden, where she focused on contemporary art and social consciousness, specifically in the work of Adrian Piper, David Hammons, and Glenn Ligon. She was brought to Sweden on a Fulbright scholarship for a project centered on Swedish Emigration to Minnesota. She also holds an MFA in printmaking from Cranbrook Academy of Art.

Production:

Damon Stanek, Video Production Assistant

Damon Stanek is an art historian specializing in contemporary art and theory, photography, and cinema studies. He has taught at a number of colleges and universities including Parsons the New School for Design and CUNY City College. Stanek's writing has been published in Art in America, Afterimage, and InReview. His ongoing research, entitled Seeing the Light, discusses the emergence of projected images in museum and gallery spaces and examines the modes of circulation for artists' films and videos. He is currently in the process of editing a documentary film about the political economy of creative musicians entitled No Place Left to Play.

Ted Fisher, Video Production Assistant

Ted Fisher is an American director specializing in arts and culture documentaries. His short films have screened at over 30 festivals around the world. He produced 32 episodes of the "Frugal Traveler" series for The New York Times, winning the Webby Award in the Travel Category for Online Film & Video in both 2008 and 2009. To view his work:

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3299032/>

Meg Dolan, Production Assistant

Dr. Meg Dolan's research centres on representations of women in early British narrative photography, particularly as related to literary, mythological, historical, and classical imagery. By making direct comparisons between how women were portrayed by male and female amateur photographers, as well as by investigating trends in the inspiration for these images, she searched for evidence of disparities in the male and female perception of the cultural and gender roles of middle and upper class women of the Victorian era. She received her PhD from the University of St. Andrews, and is a Collections Development Manager at Edinburgh Printmakers.

We thank the many people who helped make this conference possible!

Detailed Session Information

12:00 AM – 12:09 AM

Introduction: Conference Organizers' Welcome

Speakers: Rose Teanby and Kris Belden-Adams

Opening remarks by the conference organizers to welcome participants and frame the day's discussion.

12:09 AM – 1:40 AM

Whiteout: Photography in Antarctica; Panel Discussion – Women of Photography in Antarctica

Moderator & Speakers: Host Geoffrey Batchen with Photographers Anne Noble, Joyce (Jo) Campbell, and photography historian Elizabeth Watkins

Abstract

This panel spotlights the artistic vision and environmental engagement of renowned photographers Anne Noble and Joyce (Jo) Campbell, contextualized by the work of Elizabeth Watkins on the history and delicate ecosystem of Antarctica. This panel examining women, photography, and the icy continent, as it is understood through distinctly female perspectives, explores the ways female artists approach topics of climate change, the sublime, and human impact, reflecting on their processes of collaboration, innovation, and ethical representation in one of the world's most threatened environments. Geoffrey Batchen joins the panel as a moderator and interlocutor, inviting deeper reflection on photographic histories and futures without detracting from the centrality of the female photographic gaze. By focusing on the unique contributions and leadership of women in Antarctic photography, this discussion encourages audiences to reconsider how artistic practice can foster responsibility, resilience, and fresh ways of seeing amidst the shifting ice.

Speaker Biographies

Anne Noble is one of New Zealand's most distinguished photographers, celebrated for her evocative images exploring the human experience in Antarctica and beyond. Her expansive body of work delves into the intersections of science, imagination, and ecological awareness, often collaborating with scientists and communities. Noble's projects, including her long-term Antarctic series, challenge viewers to contemplate care, beauty, and the unknown. She is a passionate advocate for environmental consciousness through art.

Joyce (Jo) Campbell is a multidisciplinary artist whose photography, film, and installation works investigate ecological transformation, microbial life, and deep time. Drawing on direct engagement with Antarctic and New Zealand landscapes, Campbell uses experimental analog techniques to highlight environmental vulnerability. Her practice foregrounds collaboration and ethical storytelling, urging audiences to reconsider our relationship with Earth's threatened frontier.

Dr. Liz Watkins research focuses on film histories of colour and the archive, gesture, feminist theory, the aesthetics and ethics of the digitisation, editing and colourisation of black-and-white analogue photographs and films. She has held research fellowships at the Harry Ransom Research Center (University of Texas at Austin), the University of Oxford and worked as a Lecturer at Universities in the UK and New Zealand. As Caird Fellow at the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich) and supported by the British Academy her research focused on colour, photographic materiality and meaning in visual histories of polar exploration. Watkins' publications include essays in *Screen*, *Journal for Cultural Research*, and *photographies*. She is co-editor of collections on *Color and the Moving Image* (2013), *Gesture and Film* (2017), *Colourised Histories: Reading Analogue/Digital Photography and Film Archives Now* (2025), and *Polar Photography and Film: Exploring the Archive* (forthcoming).

Geoffrey Batchen is an internationally respected photography historian and theorist, currently based in Oxford, England. His scholarship spans the evolution, materiality, and cultural significance of the photographic medium. An engaging moderator, Batchen brings his expertise in visual culture and critical inquiry, fostering nuanced dialogue about the artistic, scientific, and environmental stakes in photographing Antarctica.

1:40 AM – 2:02 AM

From Archive to Online: Creating *PHOTORIA*

Speaker: Sally Jackson

Abstract

PHOTORIA was established to document and celebrate the contributions of Australian women photographers whose work between 1850 and 1950 shaped the nation's visual identity, yet remained largely unrecorded. Conceived as a comprehensive biographical reference and digital archive, the project seeks to uncover, preserve, and present these overlooked stories within the broader context of Australia's photographic and cultural history. This brief presentation explores the conception and development of *PHOTORIA*—from an independent research initiative to an open-access online resource. Drawing on archival materials, newspapers, exhibition catalogues, and private collections, the database now includes hundreds of entries that trace diverse careers across regions and decades. Each profile connects individual achievements with wider artistic, technological, and social developments that influenced photography in Australia.

Attention is given to the research and curatorial challenges of building such a platform, including accuracy, representation, sustainability, and public engagement. The talk also highlights *PHOTORIA*'s collaborative approach, which continues to welcome contributions from researchers, families, and community historians. Ultimately, *PHOTORIA* illustrates how independent scholarship and digital innovation can expand historical visibility, ensuring that the women behind the lens are recognized not only as participants but as pioneering figures in Australia's visual culture.

Speaker Biography

Sally Jackson is an independent researcher and writer specializing in Australian image history, with a particular focus on early cinema and the contributions of women

photographers. After a distinguished 28-year career with the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA), where she served as Curator of Film, Sally continues to explore the intersections of photography, culture, and historical representation. Since retiring from full-time curatorial work, she has launched Photoria, an ambitious online biographical reference dedicated to Australian women working in photographic professions between 1850 and 1950. Through this project, Sally highlights the often-overlooked creative legacies that have shaped Australia's visual heritage. Her research and writing not only recover lost narratives from the nation's cinematic and photographic past but also contribute vital insights into how visual media informs collective memory.

2:02 AM – 2:19 AM

Photomediating Together: Collective Photowalks and Photomontage

Speaker: Marita Ibañez Sandoval

Abstract

This project examines the photomedia practices of Latin American migrant women in the peri-urban city of Jōsō, Ibaraki, Japan. In Jōsō, 40% of the migrant population is of Latin American origin, primarily from Brazil and Peru. Through the use of photomediated participatory methods, such as photowalks and collaborative photomontages, this work investigates the Latin American presence visible in the city's markets, restaurants, and municipal signage, addressing the lack of research that recognizes the visual practices of the migrant community itself. Photos from the collective photowalks through the city were later turned into pieces for participatory photomontages. By cutting, assembling, and reconfiguring these landscapes, often invisible experiences were shaped, such as language barriers, family separation, precarious work, as well as moments of joy and belonging; materializing affective and lived experience through tactile construction. The resulting photomontages resist linear narratives and the bidimensionality of printed photos, offering instead images not about migrants, but made by and with them, challenging dominant ideas of authorship and shifting attention from precision to the collective construction of meaning. In this way, migrant women are positioned not as passive subjects of visual discourse but as co-authors of complex spatial imaginaries.

Speaker Biography

Marita Ibañez Sandoval is a visual researcher and educator based in Ibaraki, Japan. Originally from Lima, Peru, she works across photomedia, visual sociology, and visual literacy. Her research explores Latin American migration in Japan through participatory visual methods, including photowalks, photo elicitation, and collective photomontage. She is a PhD candidate (ABD) in the Doctoral Program in Art at the University of Tsukuba, where she also earned an MSc in Kansei Design. She holds a BA in Fine Arts from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP) and was a Monbukagakusho Scholar (2018–2024). Her work has been presented in various locations across Latin America, Europe, Japan, Korea, and the United States.

2:19 AM – 2:41 AM

Traces of Light: Women in Early Photography of China

Speaker: Stacey Lambrow

Abstract

This paper explores how Chinese women in nineteenth-century China navigated photography as both subjects and participants, appearing before the lens and, in some cases, operating behind it. While archival traces of female photographers remain elusive, one studio portrait appears to reveal a woman behind a camera. Drawing on visual analysis of studio portraits and rare archival references to photographic practice, the paper investigates how women's expressions, gestures, postures, and props are negotiations of visibility and agency within a patriarchal visual economy. In late imperial China, Confucian values dictated gendered codes of visibility, mobility, and modesty. Though written accounts of how Chinese women felt about being photographed are nearly absent, their portraits, when read carefully, become some of the only surviving records of how Chinese women negotiated the act of being seen. The presence of women in the photography studio, whether as wives, daughters, assistants, or technicians, emerges as a crucial but largely invisible force in this history of photography in China. By tracing the spectral presence of women in late Qing dynasty studio photography, this paper proposes new ways of interpreting photographic portraits, spectatorship, intimacy, and authorship in historical contexts.

Speaker Biography

Stacey Lambrow is an independent curator and researcher specializing in nineteenth-century photography, with a focus on the earliest photographs of China. Her work centers on early photographs of Beijing, Shanghai, and Fuzhou, as well as the broader history of photographic practice in the nineteenth century. She is Curator of the Loewentheil Photography of China Collection, one of the world's most extensive archives of early Chinese photography. She has curated national and international exhibitions, including some of the first solo exhibitions focused on nineteenth-century photographers who worked in China.

2:41 AM – 2:59 AM

Quiet Resilience: Alternative Modernity in Xu Xiaoxiao's "Ki Ki So So Lhargyalo"

Speaker: Chuqi Min

Abstract

This essay focuses on contemporary Chinese photographer Xu Xiaoxiao's interpretation and representation of the kinship and estrangement between body and landscape, modernity and heritage, culture and nature. In her most recent series of work titled "Ki Ki So So Lhar Gyal," Xu explores the nuanced entanglement between the people of Ladakhi (located in the far north of India, a land of rich Tibetan Buddhist tradition and cultural diversity) and its fast evolving environment due to challenges posted by military expansion, policy shifts, tourism, and urbanization since the Sino-Indian War in 1962. Born in Qingtian, southeastern China, Xu Xiaoxiao survived a major flood disaster in Wenzhou China in 1994. Moving to the Netherlands at a young age, Xu's diasporic experience informs the ways she takes part in,

observes, and captures the world she inhabits. Crossing borders frequently in the real world, Xu seized the elasticity of her insider-outsider role between cultures, whose oeuvre blurs the boundaries between documentary and autonomous work.

Speaker Biography

Chuji Min (闵楚齐 she/her) is a PhD student in art history at Rice University. She is interested in the art of women/queer persons-in-diaspora from the Global Majority during the modern and post-modern periods, as well as transnational/transcultural (queer) visual culture of East Asia. Chuji coined “Sinofemcentrism,” emphasizing a decolonial, Sino-feminist-centered art historical practice that is grounded in the recognition of plurality, hybridity, locality, and cultural specificity of feminisms.

2:59 AM – 4:12 AM

Panel: Women in Photoboosts

Panelists: Catlin Langford, Ruth O'Leary, Katherine Griffiths

Abstract

2026 marks 100 years since the public debut of the photobooth. Despite their once-ubiquitous presence in urban centres across the world, photoboosts have been underacknowledged and marginalised in the history of photography. So too, then, have women's multifaceted involvement with these photographic machines. As 'Photomatons' spread across the world in the 1920s, women commonly featured in the company's promotional advertisements and were strongly encouraged to patronise the machines through competitions. Following photoboosts' wider proliferation in society since the 1960s, women have used the machines as a safe, private space within the public domain to create expressive artworks. Women artists and creators were drawn to the photobooth as an inexpensive, accessible, and convenient means of producing self-images and bodies of work that fit into their daily lives, including caring duties. This panel will reflect on the role of 'women in the photobooth'. It will consist of an initial paper by curator Catlin Langford on the history of photoboosts and women, before opening to contributions by Australian artists Ruth O'Leary and Katherine Griffiths, who have produced vast bodies of work in the photobooth, inspired by ideas relating to identity, feminism, and motherhood. The panel will conclude with a consideration of women's present role in restoring and ensuring the continued presence of historic photoboosts in current society.

Speaker Biographies

Katherine Griffiths trained as a ceramic designer at Monash University and has since travelled overseas extensively. On a shoestring and frequently without a camera, Griffiths started using photoboosts to document her travels. Once settled back in Melbourne, Griffiths continued to take photographs in the many black-and-white booths that were dotted around Melbourne, experimenting with masks, costumes, makeup and different backgrounds. Griffith's collection now holds several thousand images and continues to expand.

Catlin Langford is a curator, writer and researcher, specialising in photography based in Naarm/Melbourne. She is undertaking a PhD at RMIT focusing on photoboosts and presently works with the V&A and Gallerie d'Italia in curatorial and consultancy roles. Langford previously held positions at the Centre for Contemporary Photography, V&A, Royal

Collection Trust and Royal College of Art. In addition, she has curated exhibitions for Photolux Festival, Photo Oxford and Landskrona Foto Festival, and spoken about photography at the University of Oxford, Windsor Castle, National Galleries of Scotland, The Photographers' Gallery and Birkbeck College, among others. Her debut publication *Colour Mania: Photographing the World in Autochrome* (Thames & Hudson/V&A) was released in 2022, and she recently edited and contributed to *Auto Photo: A Life in Portraits* (2024, Perimeter/Centre for Contemporary Photography).

Ruth O'Leary (based in Djaara Country) holds a BFA from RMIT University and First Class Honours from Monash University. Her practice interlaces feminist, subjective and spatial ideas played out through the expanded field of painted dresses, photography and performance. As a mother of three small children, Ruth's experience of maternity informs all her work. Rather than elide the tension between motherhood and artistic practice, Ruth puts it at the centre of her practice and gives voice and materiality to her experience as a woman, an artist and a mother. She has exhibited in solo exhibitions (Bus Projects, C3, TCB) and participated widely in group shows across Australia.

4:12 AM – 4:32 AM

Homai Vyarawalla: The Lady with the Lens

Speaker: Nabanita Mitra

Abstract

Since the camera was invented, interest in photography has steadily been on the rise, more so because it has the rare ability to freeze moments in time, evoke emotions, document history, transcend cultural barriers, transform perceptions, and usher in social change. Yet, engaging in this field has been far from easy for many—especially women—given the prevailing societal disapproval of professional women photographers. Braving the odds stacked against her, however, the likes of Homai Vyarawalla went on to make a name for herself as the pioneering diva of Indian photography. This paper seeks to explore the life and achievements of India's first woman photojournalist, Homai Vyarawalla, against the backdrop of the momentous changes taking place both within and outside the nation. Her husband, Maneckshaw Vyarawalla's supportive mentorship, combined with her formal training at the J. J. School of Art and the influence of modernist photographs featured in popular magazines, helped shape Homai's photojournalistic sensibilities. The onset of World War II enabled the Vyarawallas to work with the British High Commission in Delhi, marking the beginning of Homai's illustrious career—one in which she strode the public world of photojournalism with effortless ease. While her Rolleiflex camera enabled Homai to capture a wide array of human emotions, her subtle visual language set varied moods in her portraits, often revealing her subjects' innate character. She mastered the art of visual storytelling, weaving a rich tapestry of awe-inspiring monochromes (which she processed herself), chronicling the transformative phases of our nation's history through almost three decades.

Speaker Biography

Nabanita Mitra has been teaching history at Women's Christian College, Kolkata, since 2001. Her doctoral dissertation was on Indian broadcasting. Her areas of interest include women's history and cultural studies.

4:32 AM – 4:51 AM

Contemporary Encounters with Ethnographic Photography in Britain and the Balkans

Speaker: Jelena Sofronijevic

Abstract

“Contemporary Encounters with Ethnographic Photography in Britain and the Balkans” brings together the photographs of two 20th century British ethnographer women in the Balkans. Rarely displayed, they both expose and challenge the dominant and singular “gaze” of Western/Europe onto Yugoslavia. Born in Aberdeen, Margaret Masson Hardie Hasluck (1885-1948) collected textiles, ceramics, and works of craft during her travels in Albania and Macedonia. She was respected for her research and publications, which included the first English-Albanian language reader, and also took a substantial number of photographs. Departing from London, Mary Edith Durham also extensively documented the Balkans from 1900 to 1921, travelling through Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Macedonia. There, she remains an icon or legend—with concurrent exhibitions in 2024, marking the 80th anniversary of her death—whilst in the UK, the place of her birthday, she has fallen into posthumous obscurity. Just two of over 800 photographs in the British Museum taken by Durham have been digitised, and mistakenly located by the institution in their “Africa, Oceania and the Americas” collections, making them hard to access. In both cases, their collections of “crafts”—often deemed the domain of women, or women’s work—are better kept and known by institutions, than their vital work in the field of photography.

Speaker Biography

Jelena Sofronijevic is a producer, curator, writer, and researcher based in London. Their curatorial projects include *Invasion Ecology* (2024) and *EMPIRE LINES*, a podcast which uncovers the unexpected flows of empires through art. They are pursuing a practice-based PhD with Gray’s School of Art, curating exhibitions of Balkan and Yugoslavian/diasporic artists in British collections. Jelena’s full portfolio is available on their website and Instagram.

4:51 AM – 5:07 AM

Cut Out: Feminist Photographic Collage and Women’s Visual Practices, 1840–1960

Speaker: Fiona Rogers

Abstract

[Abstract here](#)

Speaker Biography

Fiona Rogers (she/her) is the inaugural Parasol Foundation Curator of Women in Photography at the V&A, leading the institution’s ambitious curatorial program to support female artists. She was previously Director of Photography & Operations for Webber, a photographic agency and gallery with offices in London, New York, and Los Angeles, and

prior to that worked for Magnum Photos, rising to Chief Operations Officer. In 2011 Rogers created Firecracker, a digital platform and network which champions female photographers and in 2017 she published *Firecrackers: Female Photographers Now* (Thames & Hudson) with co-author Max Houghton. Her latest book, *Cut Out: A Feminist History of Photo Collage, Montage and Assemblage*, is available for pre-order now.

5:07 AM – 5:27 AM

Excess, Embodiment, and Exposure: Zarina Bhimji in the 1980s

Speaker: Grace Xiao

Abstract

In 1989, lens-based artist Zarina Bhimji was invited by the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) to intervene into the space of the museum with a large-format Polaroid camera. The result was a series of ten haunting photographs that probed the museum's and the photographic medium's fraught ties to colonialism, informed by Bhimji's personal histories of displacement. While Bhimji is perhaps most known for her video work of the 2000s, this paper situates her as an artist emerging from the 1980s, which notably saw the establishment of the British black arts movement and the concurrent rise of Third World feminist movements. Both movements took on questions surrounding representation and visibility in a world still grappling with the legacies of colonialism and its ties to the continued marginalization of people of color. The photographic image is a particular site of contestation for Bhimji as she introduces image noise, chemical seepage, and double exposures to disrupt the notion of photography as neutral surface. Rather than aiming for exhaustiveness, this talk proposes a close reading of some of Bhimji's photographs to explore how photography can be used as a tool of anti-colonial resistance that grants women of color the right to narrate themselves from within.

Speaker Biography

Grace Xiao (she/her) is a curatorial assistant at the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art at the University of California, Davis. Her research focuses on the history of photography read through modern and contemporary artists invested in questions of placemaking, migration, and the construction and deconstruction of images. Her scholarship is informed primarily by postcolonial theory, theories of diaspora, and gender and sexuality studies. She recently graduated from Brown University with a BA in art history and has previously worked across various departments at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, and Princeton University Art Museum.

5:27 AM – 5:47 AM

Lost in the Blur: The Rediscovery of Betti Mautner's (1892–1989) Photographic Legacy

Speaker: Stefanie Pirker

Abstract

This paper focuses on the life and work of the Austrian-British émigré photographer Betti Mautner. Her photographic work reflects the rich cultural currents of early 20th-century Vienna and the artistic movement of Pictorialism. Exhibiting internationally, her promising career was disrupted by political persecution and exile to the UK in 1938 due to rising antisemitism. Despite her membership at the Royal Photographic Society and contributions to Kraszna-Krausz's *Focal Press* photo guide series, Betti Mautner struggled to gain greater prominence in Britain's photography scene. Like many Jewish women artists of her era, her work remains underrepresented. Most of her photographs were discarded after her death, with only a few surviving prints preserved in the Hyman Collection and in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Speaker Biography

Stefanie Pirker, M.A., M.Sc. (b. 1992, Kitzbühel, Austria) is an independent photo historian and curator currently based in London. She has collaborated on exhibitions and publication projects with institutions such as FOTOHOF, the Isokon Gallery, MuseumsEtc, and Schloss Bruck in Lienz. Pirker lectures on the history of photography and photographic practice at the Salzburg University of Applied Sciences, Northern Illinois University, and the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg. Her research interests include the history of photography, exile and migration studies, as well as the analysis and contextualization of photographic materials.

5:47 AM – 6:06 AM

The African Female Gaze: Identity, Memory, Diaspora, and Resistance

Speaker: Alessandra Migani

Abstract

This paper builds on a public seminar held in Rome in June 2025 as part of the Visionary Africa series, inviting the audience to explore the powerful contributions of African women photographers—from early pioneers to contemporary voices. A key theoretical reference is *The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators* (1992) by bell hooks, which introduces the concept of an oppositional gaze—a way of seeing developed by Black women in response to historical exclusion from representation or reduction to stereotypes. The starting point for this paper is a self-portrait by Felicia Abban, Ghana's first professional female photographer who opened a studio in Accra in 1955. In the portrait, Abban poses in profile and three-quarter view, with a carefully styled hairstyle, earrings, and a heart-patterned dress. The image conveys profound modernity—an elegance and pride softened by a gentle gaze that looks confidently toward an independent Ghana's future. Abban's self-portrait tells an insider's story, marked by awareness and creativity. Her many self-portraits act as a ritual of presence—a quiet affirmation of selfhood and authorship.

Speaker Biography

Alessandra Migani is an independent curator and researcher based in Rome, with a focus on African diasporic discourses and interdisciplinary art, especially photography. She holds a Humanities degree from La Sapienza University of Rome, with a focus on art, music, and film. Her projects often explore cultural identity and diaspora. Recent curations include *Intimations* with Othello De'Souza-Hartley and Silvia Rosi, in partnership with Autograph ABP, London. She also created *Visionary Africa*, a seminar series on African photography at

WSP Photography, Rome, and gave a lecture at University Roma Tre in May 2025. She writes for different online art magazines.

6:06 AM – 7:06 AM

Panel: Fotografiste: Locating Women Photographers in Pre- and Post-Unification Italy (1840s–1920s)

Panelists: Agnese Ghezzi, Nicoletta Leonardi, Beatrice Lattanzi

Description

This panel investigates the presence, practices, and professional strategies of women photographers active in Italy from the 1840s to the early twentieth century, spanning the period before and after political unification. The papers examine how women engaged with photography within a fragmented peninsula shaped by multiple sovereignties, uneven legal frameworks, and transnational cultural exchanges. Rather than treating women photographers as isolated exceptions, the panel foregrounds collaboration, family enterprises, mobility, and entrepreneurial agency as key conditions through which photographic authorship was produced and negotiated. This panel stems from the PRIN 2022 PNRR project “Fotografiste. Women in Photography From Italian Archives (1839–1939)”, promoted by IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca (PI Prof. Linda Bertelli) and the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan (Co-PI Prof. Nicoletta Leonardi).

Itinerant Daguerreotypists in Pre-Unification Italy: Josephine Dubray and Elise Link Brosy (1840–1860)

By Agnese Ghezzi

This paper explores the trajectories of two itinerant female daguerreotypists active in the Italian peninsula before its political unification in 1861, a period marked by shifting borders, multiple sovereignties and plurilingual contexts. These cases—Josephine Dubray and Elise Link Brosy—illuminate the entrepreneurship and transnational networks of early women photographers. In 1844, the *Gazzetta di Firenze* introduced Dubray, originally from Paris and described as a “pupil of Monsieur Daguerre,” praising the veracity of her portraiture. From Genoa, she traveled across central Italy, establishing temporary studios in Parma (Duchy of Parma), Bologna and Cesena (Papal States), and Florence (Grand Duchy of Tuscany). Her advertisements highlight both her technical skills and the authority she derived from her direct association with Daguerre. A contrasting case is that of Elise Link Brosy, who worked both independently and alongside her husband, the German photographer Ferdinand Brosy, across northern Italy, then part of the Austrian Empire. From the late 1840s, “Fotografia Brosy” operated in different cities of the Regno Lombardo Veneto—Trento, Bressanone, Verona, Ferrara, Trieste, Venice, Udine—and in the 1850s Elise established a studio in Innsbruck. Her career demonstrates how female practitioners navigated collaboration and family enterprises while contributing to the professionalization of photography in border regions. Foregrounding these two neglected figures, this paper interrogates the gendered dimensions of mobility, authorship, and recognition in the early history of photography, while reflecting on the limits of a “national canon” in the fragmented political and cultural landscape of pre-unification Italy, where such a framework proves inadequate to capture the transnational, multilingual realities and shifting legal conditions that shaped women’s photographic practice.

The Hidden Partner: Gerardine Bate, Photography at the Vatican, and Transnational Feminism in the Italian Risorgimento

By Nicoletta Leonardi

This paper re-examines the history of Robert Macpherson (1814–1872), long celebrated as a pioneering photographer of antiquities in Rome, by foregrounding the decisive role of his wife, Gerardine Bate (1820–1878). Far from being the product of Robert’s individual genius, the Macpherson studio emerges as a collaborative enterprise sustained by Bate’s intellectual formation, cultural capital, and artistic labour. Through her aunt Anna Jameson—art historian, essayist, and proto-feminist—Bate was connected to the Langham Place circle in London, one of the most important centres of mid-Victorian feminism. These ties linked her to a transnational network of women reformers, writers, and activists, which she carried into her life in Rome. It was through these connections that the Macphersons were able to access patrons, publicity channels, and even the Vatican Museums, where Robert obtained rare permissions to photograph antiquities— an opportunity unimaginable for women in the Papal States, where professional agency was structurally denied. After Robert’s death in 1872, Bate could not maintain the photographic business under her own name, but she continued her intellectual and political engagements. She collaborated with Jessie White Mario, the English journalist and activist who became one of the most influential chroniclers of the Italian Risorgimento. This partnership placed Bate at the intersection of feminist reform, political struggle, and cultural exchange in nineteenth-century Europe. By situating Gerardine Bate within the restrictive condition of women in the Vatican State and within the wider framework of transnational feminist circles, this paper highlights how gendered and collaborative structures underpinned photographic authorship. It reframes the Macpherson enterprise not as the isolated achievement of a male pioneer, but as a feminist-inflected transnational cultural practice embedded in the social, political, and intellectual transformations of the Risorgimento.

A Studio of Her Own. The Photographic Enterprise of Maria Spes Bartoli (1888–1981)

By Beatrice Lattanzi

This paper offers a critical perspective on Maria Spes Bartoli’s role as a pioneering woman entrepreneur in early twentieth-century central Italy. Drawing on diaries, photographs, and photographic studio imprints, it highlights her key role in managing and sustaining her family’s photography business — particularly during the First World War, a pivotal period that led to the studio’s official registration under her own name in 1924. Born in 1888 into a culturally active family in Senigallia, Bartoli was introduced to photography at a young age by her father, Beniamino, a science teacher and passionate amateur photographer who shared his technical expertise with both his son and daughters. After the family relocated to Tolentino in 1904, Maria Spes became deeply involved in running the photographic studio formally registered to her brother Giuseppe and based in their family house. During the war years, however, with Giuseppe away at the front, she assumed full responsibility for the business, facing all stages of the photographic process and responding to the high wartime demand for services from both soldiers and civilians. Her diaries from this period reveal a resourceful and determined woman who not only documented her technical and creative work, but also recorded fees, appointments, client interactions, and customer feedback. Her photographic practice encompassed a wide range of subjects — from aristocratic families to rural peasants — and extended beyond the studio: she frequently travelled to neighbouring towns and villages to carry out commissioned portraits, reflecting a dynamic and socially diverse engagement with her clientele. By analysing these writings alongside her

photographic output, this paper offers rare insight into the daily operations of a female-run photographic studio during a time of crisis, highlighting Bartoli's professional confidence and keen awareness of her own value as a photographer and entrepreneur, while also exploring the networks, practices, and representational strategies that shaped her work.

Speaker Biographies

Agnese Ghezzi is Assistant Professor (RTD-a) in Contemporary History at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. Her research interests include the relationships between photographic practices, ethnography, and colonialism in Italy, as well as the analysis and valorisation of photo archives and women's history. She has been a fellow at IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, the PHRC (De Montfort University, Leicester), the KHI in Florence.

Nicoletta Leonardi is Professor of Art History and the History of Photography at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan, where she is responsible for the historical photographic collection. Her research adopts a systemic perspective on photography, examining it not as a self-contained medium but as embedded within broader networks of technologies, material practices, visual imaginaries, and archival infrastructures. She is the author of monographs on American landscape photography and photography and materiality in Italy, and co-editor of *Photography and Other Media in the Nineteenth Century* (Penn State University Press, 2018). She is currently Associate PI of the PRIN PNRR 2022 project *Fotografiste: Women in Photography from Italian Archives, 1839–1939*.

Beatrice Lattanzi is a PhD student in Cultural Systems at IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, focusing on photographic archives. With professional experience in both Italy and the UK, she has collaborated with major cultural institutions such as the Victoria & Albert Museum in London and the Biennial of Female Photography in Mantua.

7:06 AM – 7:25 AM

Between Theory and Practice: The Impact of Paola Mattioli's Works on Italian Photography and Feminism

Speaker: Emma Colombi

Abstract

During the Seventies, photography became a privileged means of political, artistic and personal expression for many Italian women, an indispensable tool for reclaiming and creating their own identity and image. This context provides the backdrop for the experience of Paola Mattioli, a Milanese photographer who is still active today. At the end of the Sixties, she began a profound reflection on the medium of photography, both from a practical perspective, working as an assistant to Ugo Mulas, and from a theoretical one, through courses in philosophy and aesthetics at the University of Milan. This theoretical and practical background led the photographer to conceive her work as a form of critical investigation into photography, marked by a strong theoretical awareness of the medium's expressive potential. Through a critical analysis of Paola Mattioli's most emblematic works, this contribution aims to restore visibility to a still largely unknown figure, highlighting both the role she played in the theoretical-philosophical debate on photography in Italy and her contribution to the process by which women reclaimed their own image and a medium that has long been considered the exclusive preserve of men.

Speaker Biography

Emma Colombi is a PhD student in Contemporary Art History at the University for Foreigners of Perugia, where she conducts research on the work of photographer Paola Mattioli. Her research interests concern the history of photography between the sixties and the seventies, with particular attention to the use that in this period is made of the photographic medium as an instrument, both artistic and documentary, of denunciation and participation in political and social events.

7:25 AM – 7:44 AM

Constructing Femininity under Fascism: Ghitta Carell, Female Imaginaries, and Competing Visual Models

Speaker: Bianca Ceriani

Abstract

Ghitta Carell, a Hungarian-born Jewish photographer, was one of the most influential portraitists in Fascist Italy, yet her work was thoroughly examined only recently. Carell built a successful career photographing leading figures of the cultural, aristocratic, and political spheres, including Fascist hierarchs and Benito Mussolini. Her portraits contributed to the construction of a visual rhetoric that legitimized social and political power. However, her status as an unmarried, financially independent, Jewish woman complicated her position within the regime and distanced her from plain allegiance to fascist values. This research interrogates the visual articulation of gender within the cultural and ideological framework of 1930s Italian authoritarianism. It specifically investigates whether Carell's portraits of high-class women reinforced fascists' gendered ideals—rooted in domesticity and motherhood—or offered more modern, emancipated and international portrayals of femininity. Through a visual analysis of selected portraits drawn from key Italian archives, the research seeks to identify the aesthetic and ideological logic behind Carell's female iconography.

Speaker Biography

Bianca Ceriani is a Master's student in Art History at Roma Tre University, Italy, specializing in contemporary art history with a focus on the history of photography. She received a research grant from the Lemmermann Foundation to support her Master's thesis work on photographer Ghitta Carell. She has worked as a freelance photographer across various commercial and artistic fields—portraiture, architecture, and fashion.

7:44 AM – 8:05 AM

Looking with a Feminist Eye: Swedish Photography and the Politics of the Gaze (1970s–1990s)

Speaker: Ekaterina Skorokhodova

Abstract

From the late 1960s, the Swedish photographic scene was largely shaped by socially oriented documentary practices. Yet, several pioneering women photographers emerged during this period, challenging dominant visual conventions and opening new critical perspectives on the representation of women. Departing from traditional Swedish photographic idioms, they explored more experimental and explicitly artistic approaches, developing highly personal visual languages. Their work engages deeply with themes of the body, sexuality, and femininity, questioning the power relations embedded in photographic imagery. Rather than merely documenting reality, these artists used photography as a space of reflection, ambiguity, and resistance. This presentation examines key works by several Swedish women photographers active between the 1970s and 1990s and analyzes the strategies through which they negotiated the politics of the gaze. Their practices will be discussed within a broader transnational feminist context, in dialogue with global debates on gender and art of the same period.

Speaker Biography

Ekaterina Skorokhodova is a Paris-based doctoral researcher and independent curator whose work explores the intersections between contemporary art, politics, gender theory, and visual aesthetics. She studied in the first cohort (2018–2020) of the international, interdisciplinary MA Curating programme at Aarhus University, Denmark. She is currently a PhD candidate in Art History at Paris Nanterre University (France), in co-supervision with the University of Applied Arts Vienna (Austria). Her doctoral dissertation is entitled: *Four Female or Feminist Strategies in Swedish Photography, 1970–2000: Agneta Ekman, Eva Klasson, Tuija Lindström, and Annika von Hausswolff*.

8:0 AM – 8:24 AM

Pia Arke and Maud Sulter's Decolonial Visions Through Photography

Speaker: Brenda Bikoko

Abstract

Pia Arke (1958–2007) and Maud Sulter (1960–2008) were photographers whose work remains underrepresented, positioned as pioneers of institutional critique that, from the 1990s onward, sought to address alternative and invisible histories. Despite their distinct cultural contexts, both artists developed parallel strategies. Juxtaposing their practices connects the Arctic to the African diaspora, challenging monolithic notions of identity and revealing how racialised histories are inscribed in place and representation. Both returned as adults to their maternal homelands and actively contributed to their communities, operating at the intersections of gender, race, and colonialism. Arke's Danish–Inuit heritage and Sulter's Scottish–Ghanaian background root their work in decolonialism. They reclaim visual narratives traditionally dominated by a Eurocentric vision. Both artists used experimental photographic methods. Language was equally central: Sulter, a prizewinning author, championed vernacular Scots, while Arke advocated for Greenlandic Inuit. Collage became a shared strategy for dismantling the colonial gaze. Together, their practices illuminate how photography can reinscribe silenced histories and expand the geography of decolonial critique.

Speaker Biography

Brenda Bikoko (she/her) is a lecturer at Sint-Lucas Antwerpen and PhD candidate at Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

8:24 AM – 8:44 AM

Out of the Shadows, Into Focus: The Case of Jane Clifford

Speaker: Rachel Bullough Ainscough

Abstract

Jane Clifford was the wife of one of Spain's best-known photographers, Charles Clifford (1819-1863). From 1851-1863, she remained discreetly in his shadow, working behind the scenes in his studio, which he left in her capable hands after his untimely death in 1863. Until recently, the work of Jane Clifford was very much relegated to second place in the light of her husband's. Although it is true that his work was much more extensive and far reaching, it is also true that Jane's contributions to the Clifford archive were often overlooked or underappreciated by historians of photography. By analysing in more detail her known work, especially her considerably large commissions from the South Kensington Museum in London, discovering and attributing authorship to new photographs which have come to light in recent years, it has been possible to construct a more realistic profile of a widow, fighting to hold her own against all odds, whose astute business sense, coupled with a need for survival, led to an extraordinary role as an admirable and prolific photographer.

Speaker Biography

Rachel Bullough Ainscough is an independent photographic historian, specializing in the early photography of Spain and in particular, the image of Spain in the work of British photographers, resident in or visiting Spain in the mid-nineteenth century. Her PhD dissertation *Charles Clifford y su imagen de España, (Charles Clifford and his image of Spain)* (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2019) presented an exhaustive analysis of Clifford's work and explores the reasons behind this work. She has published and given conference papers in Spanish and English on the Cliffords and their contributions to Spanish photographic history.

8:44 AM – 9:41 AM

Panel: Framing the Front – Women Photographers and the Spanish Civil War

Panelists: María de los Santos García Felguera, Lourdes Delgado, Marta López Beriso

Description

A comprehensive panel examining the significant but often overlooked contributions of women photographers to documenting the Spanish Civil War. Through individual papers and collaborative analysis, the panelists reveal the disparities between foreign and Spanish women photographers, recovery efforts of archival materials, and the complex ethical dimensions of women's photographic practices during wartime.

Gerda Grepp: Photojournalism from the Spanish Civil War

By María de los Santos García Felguera

The subject of women who took photographs during the Spanish Civil War has gone from not existing to becoming a monograph on Gerda Taro (1910-1937), as the only one. Over the last decade, thanks to the work of independent researchers, a series of women's names and their works have begun to appear. All of them accompany the German, not leaving her isolated inside her myth: Margaret Michaelis, Kati Horna, Margaret Bourke-White, Vera Elkan, Ana María Martínez Sagi, Ruth von Wild, Claude Kinoull, Elisabeth Hodgson, Remei Rahola, and Carmen Pedrosa. Women professional and amateur, journalists, nurses, teachers and homekeepers; interested in the battle front, in the protagonists of the war and in the anonymous people, in everyday life at the front and the rearguard, in the countryside and in the cities, interested in the combatants and the refugees, in the novelties of the 'Spanish revolution' and the departure of the defeated. One of those women who travelled to Spain, ready to defend the ideals of democracy, was Gerda Grepp (1907-1940), a young Norwegian journalist who reported to her country's press between October 1936 and January 1938. She also took pictures and published them in Norwegian newspapers, mainly from Madrid and Malaga, where she was the last journalist to leave the city before rebel troops took it. Gerda Grepp often acted as a translator, so her role became more important. This essay analyzes Grepp's photographic work in Spain from three sides: the personal one, with Gerda's biographer Elisabeth Vislie; the archival, with Sølvi Bennett Moen, Photoarchivist in The Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library (Oslo), which preserves Gerda's pictures; and their contextualisation among the photographs taken by other women in Spain during those years.

Margaret Bourke-White: Unpublished Photographs of the Spanish Civil War

By Lourdes Delgado

Margaret Bourke-White is undoubtedly the most internationally recognized female photojournalist of the first half of the twentieth century and one of the most widely published photographers of her time. However, despite the extensive bibliography on her professional career, no specific study has yet been published on the images she took in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War. This gap is particularly striking given the growing academic interest in recent years in the participation of women photographers in the conflict. This presentation is part of an ongoing research project that aims to address this gap. In order to reconstruct the photographer's work during her stay in Spain, multiple archives in Spain and the United States were consulted, along with period publications and studies dedicated to her work and to the Spanish Civil War. The research provides a new reading of the biographical literature on Margaret Bourke-White, demonstrating that, before her celebrated war reports during World War II, she had already photographed an armed conflict. This finding positions her Spanish experience as a decisive precedent in her career and also contributes to the historiography of photography of the Spanish Civil War from a gender perspective.

The Subversion of Claudek's False Visual Narrative in the Spanish Civil War

By Marta López Beriso

This paper explores the complex role of British photographer Enid Margaret Hamilton Fellows, known as Claude Kinnoull or Claudek (1904-1985), whose extensive visual record of the Spanish Civil War offers a paradoxical contribution to photographic history. Her ability to navigate traditionally male domains—from war zones to press circles, from aviation to automobile mechanics—was made possible by the immense fortune she inherited. Economic privilege afforded her mobility and resources, shielding her as she pursued a personal crusade

within patriarchal structures. A fervent convert to Catholicism, Kinnoull viewed her actions in Spain as part of a holy war against the perceived threat of communism. Committed to the Nationalist cause, she financed and documented the conflict as an act of ideological allegiance. Her privileged status granted her access to newly captured towns such as Gernika and Belchite, enabling her to create a vivid visual testimony of destruction—a body of work that, contrary to her intentions, evidences the violence inflicted by the insurgent forces she supported, rather than the “red terror” she sought to expose. This case study reflects on the complexities of women’s contributions to photography, revealing how agency and constraint, tradition and disruption, coexist in unexpected ways. It contributes to an international dialogue about women’s roles in shaping photographic history, highlighting how visual materials — even when produced within conservative frameworks — can inadvertently subvert dominant narratives. Whether confronting patriarchy directly or navigating within its frameworks, women’s interventions rupture the positions assigned to them, forcing the creation of new spaces of power, visibility, and historical agency — even, as in Kinnoull’s case, when they believe themselves to be upholding tradition.

Speaker Biographies

María de los Santos García Felguera has a PhD in Art History (Complutense University, Madrid). She is a Professor of History of Photography & History of Art. Part of her research is devoted to women photographers working in Spain (professional and amateur). Her publications and curated exhibitions have established her as a leading scholar on women's contributions to Spanish photographic history.

Dr. Lourdes Delgado Fernández (Barcelona, 1965) is a Lecturer in Photography and Visual Studies at ESDAPC (Escola Superior de Disseny i d'Arts Plàstiques de Catalunya) and a researcher specializing in the history of Spanish and Catalan photography. She is the author of *Mugshot's Bias: A Semantic History of Guilt* (Photography and Culture, 2017). Lourdes has co-authored multiple scholarly articles with art historian Núria F. Rius on women photographers and female-gendered photographic practices.

Marta López Beriso is a Professor of Art History and Cultural Studies at the University of San Diego and the Fundación Ortega-Marañón. Her research focuses on the history of photography, particularly on women's roles within it.

9:41 AM – 9:59 AM

A Forgotten Pioneer: Maria da Conceição de Lemos Magalhães and Women's Place in International Pictorialism

Speakers: Susana Lourenço Marques and Emília Tavares

Abstract

This paper explores the remarkable yet overlooked photographic oeuvre of Maria da Conceição de Lemos Magalhães (1863–1949), a pioneer of pictorialism in Portugal and a rare example of a woman whose amateur practice gained international recognition in the early twentieth century. Her body of work, spanning rural and maritime themes, emerges from a sophisticated command of composition, tonality, and technical processes. A close reading of her images reveals an artist deeply attuned to the expressive potential of photography as an autonomous art form—using nature, atmosphere, and rural labour, particularly women at work, as recurring subjects to evoke poetic and symbolic resonances. Magalhães's

participation in key international exhibitions, including the Salon du Photo-Club de Paris (1906), Torino (1907), Dresden (1909)—alongside her publication in European and American journals such as *The Studio* or *Photo-Revue*, underscores her insertion into global pictorialist networks. Yet, her contributions remain largely absent from canonical histories of photography. This paper repositions her within a wider, transnational history of women's involvement in shaping photographic modernism.

Speaker Biographies

Susana Lourenço Marques is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto and an integrated researcher at I2ADS. With a PhD in Communication and Art, her work spans photography, visual culture, and publishing. She co-founded the independent publishing house Pierrot le Fou and has curated several exhibitions in Portugal, notably at Serralves, Fundação Eugénio de Almeida, and the Bienal de Fotografia do Porto. Her recent research focuses on women photographers in Portugal between 1860 and 1920.

Emília Tavares is Senior Curator of Photography and New Media at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Lisbon. She has curated numerous exhibitions on Portuguese photography and contemporary art, while her research and criticism have contributed significantly to the historiography of Portuguese photography. Her publications include *The History of Portuguese Photography 1900–1938* and *Auto-Retratos do Mundo: Annemarie Schwarzenbach (1908–1942)*.

9:59 AM – 10:19 AM

Candelaria Tello Valladares: A Female Entrepreneur and Photographer in Rural Spain at the Turn of the Century

Speaker: Azahara Lozano Dorado

Abstract

This paper examines the life and photographic legacy of Candelaria Tello Valladares (1841–1931), a pioneering woman photographer and entrepreneur from the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche region in southern Spain. Widowed at a young age, Tello Valladares overcame economic hardship by developing several businesses, including a hardware store, a leather tanning workshop, and a paper factory—each operating under the name “Viuda de Rafael Franco.” This form of identification, typical among women photographers of the time, also served as a professional signature that simultaneously acknowledged and obscured female authorship. Most notably, Tello Valladares practised photography at a professional level in the early 20th century, as evidenced by her postcards dated in 1910, published by the prestigious Hauser y Menet company. Her case resonates with other women photographers of the period and highlights how women asserted entrepreneurship and creative authorship in a field ostensibly dominated by men. By situating Tello Valladares within this broader landscape, this study decentralizes photographic historiography and underscores rural environments not as peripheral, but as fertile grounds where women innovated and thrived.

Speaker Biography

Azahara Lozano Dorado is a photographic archivist and researcher at the University of Seville specializing in the History of Photography in Andalusia and gender studies. She holds a degree in Art History from the University of Seville (2021) and completed a Master's in

Photographic Documentation at the Complutense University of Madrid (2022). She has catalogued and digitized photographic collections for private and public archives and has given many workshops and lectures on identifying 19th-century photographic processes and on archiving contemporary photographic collections.

10:19 AM – 10:39 AM

Making the Invisible Visible: Patricia Aridjis's Documentary Lens on Mexico's Marginalized Women

Speaker: Eunice Miranda Tapia

Abstract

This paper recognizes and highlights the work of Mexican photographer Patricia Aridjis by foregrounding her commitment to making visible women who live on the social margins. After beginning her career in photojournalism in 1992, Aridjis left the logic of breaking news behind to develop long-term documentary projects grounded in patience, attentive listening, and a relationship of trust with her subjects. The corpus under review is organized around three key series in her extensive career. *Las horas negras* (2000–2007) portrays the daily lives of Mexican female inmates and their children born behind bars; *Arrullo para otros* (2008–2014) contrasts the care Indigenous nannies give to the children of affluent families with the shortages their own households face, exposing class, race, and gender gaps; and *Mujeres de peso* (2012–2019) presents portraits—many of them nude—of non-normative female bodies to challenge thin-centrism and prevailing fat-phobia.

Speaker Biography

Eunice Miranda Tapia holds a PhD in Art History and Cultural Management in the Hispanic World from Pablo de Olavide University in Seville. She completed her studies in Architecture at the Autonomous University of Baja California and earned a Master's degree in Visual Arts from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Seville and is a member of the research group HUM-1030 (Avant-Gardes, Latest Trends, and Artistic Heritage). Her research focuses on photography as a heritage element and as a subject of study in contemporary artistic production.

10:39 AM – 10:57 AM

Acland to Yevonde: A Feminist Historiography of Colour Photography

Speaker: Emery Walshe

Abstract

Sarah Angelina Acland (1849–1930) was an early practitioner of colour photography, yet now in today's visually saturated world, she remains largely unknown. This paper puts Acland in conversation with the more widely recognised colour photographer, Madame Yevonde (1893–1975), to explore the revolutionary and radical ways that women shaped colour photography, not as a technical novelty, but as a self-expressive form in its own right.

Speaker Biography

Emery Walshe is a writer and researcher, interested in queer and feminist theory, representation, and memory in photography.

10:57 AM – 11:19 AM

The Many Faces of Barbara Ker-Seymer: British Modernist Photographer of the 1930s

Speaker: Clive Coward

Abstract

This presentation provides an overview of the somewhat neglected photographic career of Barbara Ker-Seymer (1905-1993), a British Modernist photographer of the 1930s. Her unique portrait style, that mixed elements of Germany's New Objectivity movement with her own 'Relaxed' and gently-retouched aesthetic, managed to capture Britain's intelligentsia and society classes at a time of flux, recording the many changing faces of Bright Young Things, London's queer community, young Bloomsbury members and visiting New York Harlem Renaissance entertainers as the onset of World War II. approached. The presentation will trace in detail Ker-Seymer's career and practice as a photographer, highlighting her experimentation in portraiture at her first studio, based at 19 Kings Road, Chelsea, and her career progression to a larger commercial space at 15a Grafton Street, just off Old Bond Street, in 1932. It will highlight how at Grafton Street, she challenged the conventions of the time by dropping her Christian name from her business title, refusing to be known as a female photographer, supported other photographers in their business, and took on high street fashion shoots and editorial work for magazines such as *Harpers Bazaar* and *Town & Country*. This will be the first time Ker-Seymer's photographic career and creativity have been specifically analysed in detail.

Speaker Biography

Clive Coward is a freelance Image Licensing & Picture Library Consultant, specialising in the promotion, licensing and management of image assets created by historical collections. Within his career he has worked with the collections of Bridgeman Images, Royal Geographical Society, Wellcome Trust, British Museum, and Tate. His personal interest in the history of photography has led him to research and edit works on historical photographers, and he is currently researching the photographic oeuvre of the London based portrait photographer Barbara Ker-Seymer.

11:19 AM – 11:35 AM

The Role of Georgia O'Keeffe in Photography Conservation: A Pioneer Ahead of Her Time

Speakers: Mireya Arenas Patiño and María Sobrino Estalrich

Abstract

This paper discusses the artist Georgia O'Keeffe, widely known as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, particularly due to her extensive pictorial production. However, she always maintained a strong connection with photography. This connection existed not only because of her relationship with her husband, Alfred Stieglitz, considered the father of Modern photography, but also because she herself was a talented photographer. However, another aspect of O'Keeffe's photography often goes unnoticed that we would like to highlight: her interest and concern for the conservation of both her husband's work and her own. For this reason, she can be considered a pioneer in the field of photography conservation. After Stieglitz's death in 1946, O'Keeffe, with the help of Doris Bry, organised and distributed the photographer's legacy among various public collections (Mulligan 2000). O'Keeffe developed pioneering recommendations for the care, storage, and exhibition of Alfred Stieglitz's photographic collection (Herrera, 2009). These actions reflect her early awareness of the importance of preserving photography as an artistic heritage, positioning her as a pioneer in the development of conservation practices in the field of photography.

Speaker Biographies

Mireya Arenas Patiño is a UCM PhD holder with a Graduate degree in Fine Arts with an itinerary in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Assets (UCM) and Master's degrees in Conservation of Cultural Heritage (UCM) and in Teacher Training. She is a professor (PAD) in the Department of Painting and Conservation-Restoration at the Faculty of Fine Arts (UCM) and Member of the FotoART research team. Her academic and professional activities follow a common line of action in relation to the field of conservation and restoration of contemporary photographic work.

María Sobrino Estalrich completed her university degree and master's degree at the Universitat Politècnica de Valencia (UPV) and is currently pursuing a PhD within the Doctoral Program in Conservation and Restoration at the same university. Her thesis research is part of the European Project GreenArt, and she also collaborates as a researcher at the UPV. Her field of study focuses on the restoration of graphic artworks and research of new materials.

11:35 AM – 11:54 AM

Lady Researchers Wanted for Lady Photographers: Mrs. Strong and the Bertolacci Sisters

Speakers: Annebella Pollen and Jayne Knight

Description

In 2024, the *cartes-de-visite* collector and founding member of the Photographic Collectors' Club of Great Britain, Ron Cosens, approached Annebella Pollen with a dilemma. The PCCGB was planning a commemorative book to mark its 50th anniversary on Victorian Studio Photographers with 50 biographical essays. However, none of the book's contributors were women and none had selected women as their subjects. To participate, contributors needed to be PCCGB members, and the organisation attracts few women. Annebella Pollen and Jayne Knight will discuss their contributions to this important project and reflect on the broader challenges of centering women's photography histories.

Speaker Biographies

Annebella Pollen is Professor of Visual and Material Culture at University of Brighton. She is the author of five books on art and design history and is widely published in photography studies. Her next book and exhibition project, out 2026 and funded by a three-year Philip Leverhulme Prize, examines the history of photography by children.

Jayne Knight is 2025-26 Assistant National Curator of Photography at the National Trust. She completed her PhD in 2024 on the history of popular photography in the Kodak Museum as an AHRC-funded collaborative project between University of Brighton and National Science and Media Museum.

11:54 AM – 12:49 PM

Panel: “Herstory: A Female-Only Endeavor?”

Panelists: Nicole Hudgins, Clare Freestone, Anna Sparham, Hosts/Discussants: Kris Belden-Adams, Rose Teanby

Description

A 40-minute conversation about the status of making women more visible in the history of photography. This discussion, guided by conference co-convenors Rose Teanby and Kris Belden-Adams, brings together scholars and practitioners to reflect on challenges, progress, and future directions in feminist photography historiography.

Biographies:

Nicole Hudgins is a professor of history and interdisciplinary studies at the University of Baltimore. She is the author of *The Gender of Photography: How Masculine and Feminine Values Shaped the History of Nineteenth-Century Photography*, *Hold Still*, *Madame: Wartime Gender and the Photography of Women in France during the Great War*, and articles about early photography in such publications as *Photographica*, *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historique*, and *Photography & Culture*.

Clare Freestone joined the Photographs department at the National Portrait Gallery in 2000. She curated the exhibitions and wrote accompanying catalogues for *Ida Kar: Bohemian Photographer* (2011) and *Yevonde: Life and Colour* (2023). Clare is working towards the exhibition *Catherine Opie: To Be Seen*, opening in March 2026. As a curator of the Collection which comprises over 250,000 photographs dating from the 1840s to the current day her work includes the care and interpretation of, access to and the acquisition of photographic portraits of all genres. Some of the displays Clare has curated include *Illuminating women: Photographs by Mayotte Magnus*, *Marilyn Monroe: A British Love Affair*, *Famous in the Fifties: Photographs by Daniel Farson* and *Scandal '63: The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Profumo Affair*; and for the Gallery's redevelopment and opening in 2023 Clare formed part of the curatorial team that re-thought and re-displayed the Collections. Her interests span the breadth of portrait photography but a particular focus on women in photography working in the 20th Century has emerged.

Anna Sparham is National Curator for Photography at the National Trust in the UK, working across the organisation to research and drive engagement with its extensive photography collections. For nearly 25 years she has worked across historic collections and with many contemporary practitioners. As former Curator of Photographs at the London

Museum, Sparham created multiple exhibitions on subjects including women's suffrage, the First World War, youth subculture, street photography and London at night. Subsequently, while freelancing in the field, she was awarded an Arts Council England grant to develop her own creative and curatorial practice. Her publications include 'Soldiers and Suffragettes, the Photography of Christina Broom', 'London Nights' and most recently '100 Photographs From the Collections of the National Trust'.

12:49 PM – 1:07 PM

Unexpectedly Unearthing Three Victorian Female Stereoscopic Photographers

Speaker: Rebecca Sharpe

Abstract

This presentation explores how three previously unknown 19th-century English female stereophotographers have appeared through both professional curatorial work and personal enthusiasm for local photographic history research. Of the two professional and one amateur stereographers, the presentation explores their personal backgrounds, motivations, and the context of their 3-D photography pursuits, bringing together, for the first time, a trio of women flying the flag for stereoscopy in a time when it was even more uncommon than it is now.

Speaker Biography

Rebecca Sharpe is a photographic history researcher, author, and practitioner, and has been working as a co-curator and archivist in the Brian May Archive of Stereoscopy for the past seven years. She founded the *Stereoscopy Blog* six years ago to help make stereoscopy accessible to everyone, promoting and educating about the multifaceted applications of the technique to people of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds.

1:07 PM – 1:25 PM

Making Female Labour Visible: Eileen “Dusty” Deste

Speaker: Sophie Piper

Abstract

This paper introduces the accomplished but underappreciated British photographer Eileen “Dusty” Deste and discusses how her work is reshaping the historical visual narrative of women's work in Sunderland, UK. Women have played an instrumental role in Sunderland's industrial economy, yet their contribution lacks the visibility of men's labour in official histories and museum displays. James A Jobling & Co. was a major employer of women in the mid to late twentieth century producing Pyrex and industrial glassware. Yet only eight professional photographic prints of these women existed in the museum collection—until the discovery of 207 remarkable documentary photographs of the factory taken by Deste in 1961. Deste was a commercial female photographer from the 1920s-1970s with a personal interest in documenting disappearing industries. She travelled the country in a Land Rover, which

doubled as a mobile darkroom, photographing tin mines in Cornwall, herring processing in Great Yarmouth, textile mills in Lancashire and the Pyrex Factory in Sunderland. Although her non-commercial work has been digitised and made available online by Historic England, it has remained unknown locally.

Speaker Biography

Sophie Piper is a photographer, curator and researcher currently undertaking a practice-based PhD in collaboration with Northern Centre of Photography and Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens. She was recipient of the Royal Photographic Society Peter Hansell Scholarship in 2017, the North East Photography Network DEVELOP Award in 2016 and was selected as an Emerging British Photographer by the Canadian Publisher Magenta in 2011.

1:25 PM – 1:44 PM

Rosalind Maingot (1893–1957): A Woman of Many Parts

Speaker: Pamela Glasson Roberts

Abstract

Rosalind Maingot, (nee Smeaton), born in Brisbane, Australia, was a gold medal “elocutionist” aged 14, a successful and popular actress, contralto singer in her native Australia, and travelled around the country with theatrical companies, performing everything from musical shows to Shakespeare. By 1928, Smeaton was living in London full time and married hugely respected abdominal surgeon Dr. Rodney Honor Maingot. As the wife of a prestigious, respected and wealthy surgeon, Maingot could not resume her theatrical career so, bored, enlisted in photography tuition at Regent Street Polytechnic in 1930. She had an exuberant, energetic and extrovert character and lived and worked on a grandiose and dramatic scale. She applied her theatrical and artistic talents to her photography, both b/w and colour, to portraits, costume studies, female nudes, still lifes and flower studies. She became a skilled medical photographer of her husband's surgical operations, providing illustrations for his many publications. In 1946, she established the Medical Group of the RPS, whose archive she preserved. Maingot's archive of over 2000 negatives, prints & colour transparencies was donated to the RPS, of which she was a Fellow.

Speaker Biography

Pamela Glasson Roberts is an independent researcher and writer, UK. She served as Curator of the RPS Collection from 1982-2001 and is the author of books on photography history, including works on Madame Yevonde, Julia Margaret Cameron, Edward Steichen, Fred Holland Day, Alvin Langdon Coburn, and the *History of Colour Photography*.

1:44 PM – 2:04 PM

Constructive Collaborations in Early Colour Photography

Speaker: Janine Freeston

Abstract

This paper explores examples of how women contributed technically, educationally, commercially and creatively to developing colour photography prior to 1935. Particular reference is made to Angelina Acland, Florence M. Warner, Agnes Warburg, and Violet Blaiklock—women who worked on unresolved colour processes that demanded more technical, scientific and methodological prowess than that required for monochrome images. They forged links between innovators and potential consumers of colour processes through their commitment and production to promote advances in colour photography. Angelina Acland actively experimented with the latest colour processes and promoted her recommendations through lectures and exhibitions from 1899 to 1909. Florence M. Warner patented her “Florence” chromatic plate in 1905 in partnership with J. H. Powrie. Agnes Warburg used lectures, articles, exhibitions and demonstrations to educate others on the production, exhibition and acceptance of colour photography in Britain. Violet K Blaiklock was a fellow founder member of the Royal Photographic Society's Colour Group and collaborated with Warburg extensively specialising in experimenting with producing colour photographs on paper.

Speaker Biography

Janine Freeston, MPhil, MA, ARPS, works freelance as a researcher, photographic archive cataloguer and digitizer, author, consultant, exhibition curator, tutor, and lecturer. She specializes in early colour photography and photographic processes, conducting in-depth research into the technological and legal dimensions of trichromatic technology up to the 1930s. Since 2022, she has co-managed and co-convened the monthly meetings for the international Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine's working group on 'Color Photography in the 19th Century and Early 20th Century: Sciences, Technologies, Empires.'

2:04 PM – 2:23 PM

Writing Photography from the Household: Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn / T. Story-Maskelyne and the Gendered Historiography of Image-Making

Speaker: Haohao Zhang

Abstract

Before photography became the subject of formal historiographical accounts in the 1880s, Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn (1834–1926) composed an alternative historical writing within her scientific household context. Her journals, mainly produced between the 1850s and 70s, are now preserved at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre and the British Library. Instead of constructing a chronology of technological progress, Thereza reframed photography within the daily rhythms of household life and embodied practices. Her records indicate that photography emerged from intergenerational and interdisciplinary collaboration. One example comes from her detailed records of the 1858 Donati's Comet, during which she logged photographic exposure settings, telescope alignments, lunar phase shifts, and diary reflections on the collaboration with her father, John Dillwyn Llewelyn. Thereza's writings challenge assumptions about where photography's historiography began and who was authorised to shape it. The early history of photography might be better understood through

the often neglected life writings of women who were part of the collaborative atmosphere of scientific households.

Speaker Biography

Haohao Zhang holds an MPhil in the history of science and is developing his PhD project on nineteenth-century knowledge and visual culture. His research examines how household practices operated in parallel with institutional science, with particular emphasis on the Maskelyne family as a site of intergenerational transmission of optical, chemical, and photographic knowledge. His work foregrounds the central roles of women and assistants.

2:23 PM – 2:42 PM

Pamela Booth (1914–1981): One of Fifty Women

Speaker: Deborah Ireland

Abstract

In 1994, The Royal Photographic Society exhibited *50 Women, 50 Prints* selected from the RPS Collection. Each photograph was chosen for the quality of the print and the process. Photographers such as Julia Margaret Cameron, Gertrude Käsebier, and Dorothy Wilding, were very well documented, but they were the exception. Little information was available on the majority, despite their work being considered outstanding and the best of its type. So, on this day of celebration I have chosen the work of Pamela Booth (1914–1981), one of those women who I feel is greatly underappreciated. How she studied, worked and exhibited before and during the Second World War informs our understanding of how women came to the fore and created successful careers. A student of the Regent Street Polytechnic she studied under Professor Rudolf Koppitz (1884–1936) the Austrian Photo-Secessionist who greatly influenced the way she approached her own work. Her portrait of Frau Anna Koppitz is a distinctive daylight portrait contact printed on Gevaluxe paper, and was taken between September 1933–March 1934. Her portraiture style is distinctive, the study of the author Daphne du Maurier published in *The Bystander* on August 10, 1938, was taken in the year the novel “Rebecca” was published, and reflects the mood of the novel. Her work was considered fine enough to be used in an advert for Kodak Super Sensitive Panchromatic Film, and her portraiture filled the pages of *The Bystander* and *The Queen*, and was in marked contrast to her more personal nude studies. With the appointment of a Project Manager for the digitisation of the Royal Photographic Society Collection by the V&A, this seems the perfect time to carry out further research on the *50 Women* in the RPS Collection.

Speaker Biography:

Deborah Ireland is a writer, curator, and researcher on the history of photography with a special interest in travel photography. She has worked with both The Royal Geographic Society and Royal Photographic Society with her most recent exhibition, *Space Steps* at the RPS in 2019, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon Landing. In October 2025 she led a tour to China following in the steps of John Thomson and Isabella Bird. Her publications include *Isabella Bird: A Photographic Journal of Travels through China 1894–1896*, in association with The Royal Geographical Society in 2015; *Hasselblad and the Moon Landing*, 2018. Ireland also judges Travel Photographer of The Year for the British Guild of Travel Writers’ annual awards.

2:42 PM – 3:02 PM

Framing ownership: Tracing the creative and commercial lives of women photographers through copyright records, 1880–1912

Speaker: Katherine Howells

Abstract

The 1862 Fine Arts Copyright Act allowed women experimenting with photography and building photographic businesses to register their photographs for copyright protection for the first time. This groundbreaking legislation has resulted in the accumulation of a vast archival collection of over 100,000 photographs, originally registered with the Stationers' Company between 1862 and 1912, and now held at The National Archives. The collection includes not only well-known and influential photographers, but also little-known small-scale pioneers. Encompassing women who took up photography for financial and business security, as a form of creative expression, or to record personal activities and familial connections, the records offer a unique insight into the variety of creative and commercial ways women chose to engage with photography and copyright. This paper leverages the collection to investigate the creative and commercial lives of a small number of women who approached the medium of photography in very different ways and explore what the records can tell us about their attitudes to intellectual property.

Speaker Biography:

Katherine Howells is a principal records specialist and leads the Modern Britain team at The National Archives of the UK. She specialises in nineteenth- and twentieth-century British visual culture and digital research methods, and she focuses particularly on The National Archives' collections of photographs, government publicity and intellectual property records. Katherine holds a PhD in Digital Humanities and an MA in Early Modern History, both from King's College London. Her main research interest is in how historical images are remembered and reused in culture and society, and the impact of this reuse on people's sense of identity and perception of the past. Katherine's doctoral research focused on British cultural memory of famous propaganda posters produced by the government during the Second World War. This was part of a larger AHRC-funded project researching the publishing history of the Ministry of Information. Prior to this, she has explored the impact of photography and film in shaping the cultural memory of the First World War and how images, architecture and the heritage industry have influenced how British people imagine the Tudor period.

3:02 PM – 3:22 PM

THE:Theatre to PHO:Photography: Billie Love and Anna Shepherd in the Picture Library

Speaker: Francesca Issatt

Abstract

This paper looks at the work of photographer Billie Love (1923-2012) and her partner Anna Shepherd, a former picture researcher, and their picture library business the Billie Love Historical Picture Library located in their shared home on the Isle of Wight, UK. Love started her career as a stage actress before taking up photography in the early 1950s. She specialised in theatre portraits, taking pictures of notable twentieth-century film and television performers. Love operated under the name of 'Amanda' and ran a successful portrait studio in London. Shepherd worked as a picture librarian and researcher at the BBC's Hulton Picture Library. In the 1960s Love and Shepherd started collecting historical photographs and the couple set up their own picture library business after Shepherd was made redundant when the Hulton Library closed in 1988. The Billie Love Historical Picture Library grew to be an esoteric collection, which combined images taken by Love with a broad variety of nineteenth and twentieth century photographic images. Through the twentieth century picture libraries were largely staffed by women and their work was undervalued. The paper explores what it meant for two gay women to run their own picture library business and bring to it their skills as a photographer and picture researcher. Love and Shepherd collected and curated a photographic collection that included figures from the canonical history of photography, such as William Henry Fox Talbot, alongside images of and by themselves. The paper considers how these women represented themselves in a history of photography that didn't otherwise reflect LGBTQ+ people.

Speaker Biography:

Francesca Issatt is Curator of Photography and Photographic Technology at the National Science and Media Museum, Bradford (UK). She has worked with photography collections in museums and archives for the last 10 years. Francesca recently completed her PhD titled *Women and architectural photography in Britain, 1920-1939* at Birkbeck College (University of London) and the Victoria & Albert Museum. Her research looked at photographic societies, education, and publishing to explore how gender expectations, societal changes, and fraternalism shaped amateur and professional architectural photography by women in interwar Britain.

3:22 PM – 3:42 PM

Ursula Clark: Architectural Photographer

Speaker: David Barber

Abstract

The architectural photographer Ursula Clark (1940-2000) is best-known for her archive of around 20,000 negatives now in the care of Historic England. It is the largest by a woman photographer held by the conservation body and some 2,000 images from the Ursula Clark Collection have now been digitized. Born in Newcastle upon Tyne, Ursula was appointed photographic editor of Oriel Press, Newcastle upon Tyne, England on its launch in 1962. She then spent the next decade creating images to illustrate a series of its popular illustrated architectural guides featuring England, France, Italy, Scotland and Spain as well as cities such as Leeds and Newcastle and counties including Durham and Northumberland. The 25th anniversary of Ursula Clark's death in February 2025 was marked by events and articles/blogposts sharing new research into her life and career. With the support of Gary Winter, Engagement and Content Officer, Historic England, this paper will share fresh

research findings and previously unseen images from Ursula's negative archive including examples of her colour work.

Speaker Biography

Dr. David Barber is a photo historian. His latest research is shared in a weekly blog. Dr. Barber was awarded a doctorate in photographic history by Durham University, U.K., in 2021 and an MA in photographic history and practice by De Montfort University, Leicester, U.K., in 2016. His research interests include stereoscopic photographers and the photographic history of North East England.

3:42 PM – 3:58 PM

Out of the Studio: Female Photographers in the RIBA Collections

Speaker: Valeria Carullo

Abstract

While female photographers had traditionally specialised in portraiture and still life, at the beginning of the 20th century many of them left the studio and started either working in social documentary or capturing the built and natural environment. The RIBA Photographs Collection, one of the richest and most extensive repositories of architectural imagery worldwide, includes the work of several female photographers but the disproportionate majority in the collection of their male counterparts tells a very clear story: this was not a field in which many women have been willing to specialise, at least until the 21st century, which has undoubtedly seen an increase in the number of female architectural photographers. This presentation will include images of a few renowned names such as Edith Tudor-Hart and Hélène Binet, but especially feature the work of little-known 20th century photographers, some of them non-professional but with an editorial or literary background.

Speaker Biography:

Valeria Carullo is Photographs Curator at the Royal Institute of British Architects. Her principal area of research is the relationship between modern architecture and modern photography in the inter-war years. She has curated or co-curated several exhibitions, both in Britain and abroad, including *Ordinary Beauty: The Photography of Edwin Smith* (RIBA Architecture Gallery, London, 2014), *Eternal City: Rome in the Photographs Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects* (Vittoriano, Rome, 2018), *Rationalism on Set: Glamour and Modernity in 1930s Italian Cinema* (Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London, 2018, and The Mac, Belfast, 2019) and *Wide-Angle View: architecture as social space in the Manplan series 1969-70* (RIBA Architecture Gallery, London, 2023-24). Valeria regularly writes and lectures on both architectural and photographic subjects, and in 2019, she published the book *Moholy-Nagy in Britain 1935-1937*. She is co-organiser at the RIBA of the annual Colin Rowe Lectures, which explore the relationship between architecture and its image, and was the main organiser of the international symposium on architecture and photography “Building with Light”, held at the RIBA in 2014. In 2023 she organised the RIBA Photo Festival, the first international festival devoted to the photography of the built environment.

3:58 PM – 4:17 PM

A Women's Auxiliary Air Force's Tale: The Knicky Chapman Collection

Speaker: Gary Winter

Abstract

Knicky Chapman was one of the first intake of Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) personnel to attend the No. 2 School of Photography during the Second World War. This paper will shed light on the WAAF's training at the school, as recorded by photographs in the Historic England Archive's Knicky Chapman Collection. It will also consider Chapman's posting to the Royal Air Force Film Production Unit at Pinewood Studios and her post-war photography of historic buildings and vernacular architecture, which comprises the bulk of the content of the collection.

Speaker Biography:

Gary Winter is the Archive Engagement and Content Officer for Historic England—the public body that champions England's historic environment. He has worked in various roles at Historic England and its predecessors—the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and English Heritage—for over 25 years. He has used the Archive's extensive collections to produce public exhibitions, create online content, share images via social media and to undertake engagement activities with young people and older people. He has co-authored several books, including *England's Seaside Resorts* (with Allan Brodie; Swindon: English Heritage, 2007), and *Picturing England: The Photographic Collections of Historic England* (with Mike Evans and Anne Woodward; Swindon: Historic England, 2015).

4:19 PM – 4:38 PM

"Dirty Work" for a Woman: Exploring the Life and Career of Daguerreotypist Sarah Garrett Hewes

Speaker: Sarah J. Weatherwax

Abstract

Sarah Garrett Hewes (1819-1853) did not conform to the norms expected of a woman living in mid-19th century America. Born into a financially comfortable Quaker family in southeastern Pennsylvania, challenging life circumstances led Hewes to become a daguerreotypist at a time when less than 5% of that profession in the United States were women. Hewes's decision to not join her brother's daguerreotype studio made her even more of an outlier since many of the women practicing photography in its earliest years worked side by side with a male family member, or only briefly carried on the work of a studio after the death of their spouse. From 1850 until her death, Hewes, however, worked both independently and in partnership with the well-established daguerreotypist Samuel Broadbent, travelling around the Delaware Valley region before finally setting up a studio in a very advantageous location in Philadelphia. Through her daguerreotype work, Hewes supported herself and her three young children. Only a few daguerreotypes taken by Hewes still exist today, but in part because of her family's prominence, it has been possible to build a fairly extensive biographical portrait

of Sarah Hewes. This presentation examines Sarah Garrett Hewes's life and career, showing examples of her daguerreotypes, newspaper advertisements, studio views, and other pieces of ephemera to explore why she became a daguerreotypist and her degree of success with her chosen career path.

Speaker Biography:

Sarah Weatherwax has worked at the Library Company of Philadelphia since 1993. She received a B.A. in History from the College of Wooster (Ohio), and a M.A. in History from the College of William and Mary. She has published articles in the *Daguerreian Annual*, *The Magazine Antiques*, *Pennsylvania History*, and *Imprint: The Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society*, and contributed a chapter about lithographer Peter S. Duval to *Philadelphia on Stone: Commercial Lithography in Philadelphia, 1828-1878*. Exhibitions she has curated at the Library Company include *Catching a Shadow: Daguerreotypes in Philadelphia, 1839-1860*; *Together We Win: The Philadelphia Homefront during the First World War*; *William Birch, Ingenious Artist: His Life, His Philadelphia Views, and His Legacy*; and *Imperfect History: Curating the Graphic Arts Collection at Benjamin Franklin's Public Library*. Her research interests include women in photography and Philadelphia's built environment. She currently serves on the board of the American Historical Print Collectors Society.

4:38 PM – 4:57 PM

Simulating Sight and Reclaiming Memory: Ana Alesanco's Photographic Reimagining of Her Mother's Blindness in *Magna*

Speaker: Edurne Beltran de Heredia Carmona

Abstract

This presentation focuses on *Magna*, a photobook by Spanish photographer Ana Alesanco, in which she visually simulates how her mother—legally blind due to a late-diagnosed degenerative eye condition—might perceive the world. Through carefully constructed images marked by blur, desaturation, and fluctuating focus, Alesanco speculates about her mother's sensory experience, layering both women's perspectives within a single frame. What makes *Magna* especially compelling is its intergenerational relationship with photography. Before losing her sight, Alesanco's mother used photography to document family life, creating a visual archive for her daughter. Now, her access to those images depends increasingly on memory. In *Magna*, Alesanco reverses this act: she uses photography to offer her mother a simulated way of seeing, constructing images that can be mentally reconstructed through shared affective memory. This paper explores how *Magna* challenges visual norms shaped by the medical gaze and patriarchal authority, replacing them with a feminist, empathic, and speculative gaze. Informed by Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag, I argue that Alesanco's work refuses narratives of blindness as absence, instead using simulation to reimagine the female gaze through intimacy and narrative resistance. The medical humanities in photography is still an emerging field in contemporary Spain, and *Magna* exemplifies its critical potential. Ultimately, the photobook positions photography not just as a record of the visible, but as a tool to reclaim memory and expand what—and how—we are allowed to see.

Speaker Biography:

Edurne Carmona's research and teaching interests span a diverse array of topics within the realms of health humanities, visual studies, and women's studies. She focuses particularly on the representation of health disparities through visual media, such as photography and graphic narratives, with a distinct emphasis on amplifying the voices of women and migrant communities in the Hispanic world. She graduated with a PhD in Spanish from Arizona State University, currently works as an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Coastal Carolina University (U.S.)

4:57 PM – 5:13 PM

Prolific, Artistic, and Overlooked: Annie Powell (1859–1952) and an Accidental Photo Historian

Speaker: Bernie Zelitch

Abstract

Annie Powell (1859–1952) took thousands of black and white photographs of Lowell, Massachusetts, USA, from 1891 to 1951. Today they survive as cabinet cards, books, postcards, and urban municipal images. With the exception of nine years, 1897–1906, she subsumed her professional name to her husband, studios, and photo contractors. As a result, in the archives of University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell National Historical Park, and Harvard University, her work is unattributed or misattributed, and overlooked by history. Powell was born in West Yorkshire, England, and worked in textile mills as a child completing only a few years of school. Despite being from a poor family, she owned a box camera. With her husband John, she became the proprietor of a photo studio. She migrated to Lowell in 1891, a year before John, making a living as a freelance photographer for municipal projects and souvenir books. She used glass plate negatives for her entire career, often skillfully retouching them for composition and interest. She left behind an extraordinary corpus that documents the life and landscape of Lowell over fifty years.

Speaker Biography

Bernie Zelitch is the founder and director of By Annie Powell, a Lowell, Massachusetts, U.S., nonprofit which researches and promotes photographer Annie Powell (1859-1952). His careers included music composing, software engineering, and community journalism where he investigated stories, trained photographers, and managed a darkroom. In December 2020, he began research to show Powell was responsible for thousands of uncredited or miscredited artistic images in public archives. He has worked extensively on recovery and digitization of her photographic materials.

5:13 PM – 5:33 PM

From Home Demonstration to *Migrant Mother*: How the Cooperative Extension Service's Female Agents Pioneered Documentary Image Making

Speaker: Kate Fogle

Abstract

Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother* is known to many as a documentary masterpiece and an apotheosis of a female photojournalist's efforts at art. While scholars have rightfully examined the U.S. government's Farm Security Administration files that prompted this and other famous photographic output, Lange and her female FSA colleagues were not the first women to take up lenses on behalf of their government and a society in flux. With the introduction of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, the U.S. government's Cooperative Extension Service united land-grant universities in a collective vision to educate rural communities and farmers. Essential to the reporting of conditions encountered and progress made were cameras used by the agents as a means of documentation. Forgotten in the bowels of institutional archives, the files relating to Black female agents, including their textual reports and pictorial contributions, are part of an erasure that remains a lacuna in the narrative of women's photowork. Black women, like Mannie Bradley, who came of age in a small Texas town, often served as home demonstration agents in their own communities. Bradley's extant photographs highlight the experiences of those she reached through her demonstrations while underpinning the use of amateur cameras as documentary and art-making tools among Black women. Though it remains unclear how widely disseminated these images were, their existence speaks to the government's insistence on visual proof and the freedom provided to Black agents to shape their own narratives. While many view *Migrant Mother* as a beginning for women's documentary contributions, the Cooperative Extension Services employed women as proto-photojournalists decades earlier.

Speaker Biography

Kate Fogle is a mother, independent photography scholar, and practitioner of historical photographic processes. She is trained in photography preservation and collections management and previously worked as a curator of women's photographic works at the Library of Congress. She is currently endeavoring on multiple independent research projects meant to further elucidate the underacknowledged roles women have played within the early photographic canon as creators as well as advocates for the use of photography in its many formats.

5:33 PM – 5:51 PM

Through the Lens of Renee Cox

Speaker: Elizabeth Carmel Hamilton

Abstract

Since its inception, photography has been used as a documentary tool, providing visual proof of scientific ideas and theories. Some of the earliest photographs of enslaved people were taken on a South Carolina plantation in 1850 to support racist pseudo-scientific theories. Photographer René Cox has insisted that history is her work, and throughout her partly autobiographical body of work, she confronts historical racist perceptions of Black womanhood. Recasting the visual image of Black women has been a priority in Cox's photographs. This paper considers Cox's disruptions of images from the past and the ways in which she uses her camera as if it were a time machine to revise undesirable histories of women of African descent. Cox's oeuvre portrays a counter-history to the representations of Black womanhood as pathological or deviant. By performing in her photographs as her various alter egos—Saartjie Baartman, Yo Mama, Raje, and Queen Nanny—Cox rewrites history, thus remaking the visual field as a site of radical possibility and justice.

Speaker Biography

Elizabeth Carmel Hamilton, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor at Fort Valley State University and art historian whose research focuses on visual culture of the African diaspora, feminism, and Afrofuturism. Her first book is *Charting the Afrofuturist Imaginary in African American Art: The Black Female Fantastic* (Routledge), which is the winner of the Wyeth Foundation for American Art Publication Grant. Dr. Hamilton has published research in *Nka: The Journal of Contemporary African Art*, *African Arts*, the *International Review of African American Art*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Smithsonian Voices*, and *CAA Reviews*. She was awarded funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) to work on her next book, *Black Womanhood through the Figurative in the Oeuvre of Alison Saar*.

5:51 PM – 6:07 PM - Break

6:07 PM – 6:26 PM

Love and Solidarity in Nina Berman's *An Autobiography of Miss Wish*

Speaker: Linda Steer

Abstract

This paper examines photography as a catalyst for feminist allyship in American documentary photographer Nina Berman's collaborative photobook *An Autobiography of Miss Wish* (2018). The book recounts Kimberly Stevens' life story, one marked by notable resilience amid sexual violence, addiction, and illness. Berman initially met Stevens when she was photographing "street kids" in London in 1990, and eventually became her "de facto next of kin," supporting her through years in penal, psychiatric, residential, and medical institutions, all the while taking care of Stevens' documents, diaries, and drawings that became material for the book. Borrowing Aruna d'Souza's notion of an "imperfect solidarity...defined by its respect for opacity" (*Imperfect Solidarities*, 2024, 81) and bell hooks' ideas about love as redemptive (*All About Love: New Visions*, 2001), I investigate how love is expressed through the act of photographing in Berman's work and what that might mean for our understanding of female allyship. Documentary photography typically promises legibility and knowledge about the other. However, Berman's sometimes blurry and out of focus photographs articulate the impossibility of knowing another's experience. Rather than attempt to elicit empathy, which is problematic, as D'Souza and others have argued, for its colonialist roots in demanding knowledge of the other, Berman's photographs of Stevens, I argue, allow for opacity. Love and solidarity develop both through the collaborative acts of photography and book making, and through the act of negation. In choosing to not make certain photographs, Berman denies legibility of some of the most traumatic moments in Stevens' life. If all photographs are collaborative (Azoulay et al., 2023), how might we read this interplay between a Black woman's life story and a white woman's photographic telling of it? How does *An Autobiography of Miss Wish* convey feminist allyship?

Speaker Biography:

Dr. Linda Steer is an Associate Professor of the History of Art & Visual Culture in the Department of Visual Arts at Brock University in St. Catharines, Niagara Region, Canada. She

is the former Director of the PhD Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities at Brock University. A specialist in photography studies, Steer is the author of *Appropriated Photographs in French Surrealist Periodicals, 1924-1939* (Routledge, 2016), and has published articles in journals such as *History of Photography* and *Photography and Culture*. Steer's current research examines drug photography from the 1970s to the present through the lens of affect and empathy. She is also the creator of *Unboxing the Canon*, an open-source podcast for first-year art history courses that takes a thematic approach to simultaneously introduce and critique of the canon of Western art.

6:26 PM – 6:46 PM

Margaret Watkins: Feeling through the Archive

Speaker: Charlotte Beyries

Abstract

Towards the end of her life, Canadian photographer Margaret Watkins began revising and annotating her personal documents, leaving behind short notes and quips throughout the materials. This paper explores the artist's residual presence in the archive and how, from within the materials, Watkins voices her subjective thoughts, connecting the past and the present in the archive's liminal space. Through Margaret Watkins's annotations, her private archive becomes a public space: a space of agency and self-determination where the artist guides and dictates the way others interpret her life, her accomplishments, and her sense of self. While exploring Margaret Watkins's archive in a non-linear approach, this paper raises the following research questions: following the work of Mary O'Connor and Katherine Tweedie, what does it mean to annotate one's own archive? What can an artist's archival practices disclose about their approach to artistic expression and reflection? What kind of affective resonances come through the material possessions collected by artists? And finally, how does the archive affect the viewer/researcher and how is this experience a product of the artist's own subjectivity? To understand Margaret Watkins's turn to the archive, I refer to *Listening to Images* by Tina Campt who illuminates that photographs and archives should be approached in an exploratory manner, based on the senses and using affective and haptic realms to uncover realities otherwise silenced. According to Ernst van Alphen, Jacques Derrida's archival drive – or the impulse to record, organize, collect and consign knowledge – intersects with photography's fundamental ability to record and index reality. Finally, this paper serves as a case-study for the relationship between the photographer, the archive, and the viewer/researcher, while considering the photographic practice of a lesser known female photographer.

Speaker Biography

Charlotte Beyries is an emerging researcher and museum professional, recently graduated from the Art History and Visual Culture Master's program at York University in Toronto. Her master's research focused on Canadian photographer Margaret Watkins and the interactions between artists and their archives. Her research experience includes a wide range of topics related to historical and contemporary photography and Canadian art, rooted in archival and

feminist perspectives. She currently holds a Thomson Canadian Art Junior Fellowship at the Art Gallery of Ontario and has previously worked in collections management at the Agnes Etherington Art Center in Kingston, Ontario, and at the McCord Stewart Museum in Montreal, Quebec.

6:46 PM – 7:05 PM

Josefina Oliver: A Hidden Photographer and Artist

Speaker: Patricia Viaña

Abstract

Josefina Oliver was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on March 1, 1875. Her parents came from the middle class of Mallorca, Spain. In 1896 she approached photography with her social circle and continued by herself until 1921. The vivid colour she impressed on her copies brings her to the twenty-first century. In those sexist times she asked herself about the fact of being a woman, so she captured with her camera one hundred self-portraits, many of them in disguise, performing a lot of Josefinas. Women were not allowed to go outside without company, or to work, otherwise they could be considered public women, so Oliver couldn't take outdoor pictures alone. She used to make sets for her ideas and took photos in her house and farm. Her friends called her to photograph familiar events, such as birthdays and marriages. Although she was a passionate amateur, she behaved as a professional. In 1907 she married her cousin Pepe Salas Oliver; they had four children. He was a great companion that supported her as a photographer, and developed her first photographic plates in 1926. She lived and died unaware of the enormous corpus she had accomplished. It comprises her diary—twenty volumes, 8400 pages with photos and loose items—as well as 2700 photographs (1200 coloured); 200 postcards made with her own coloured photos attached to cardboards, and a volume of collages named by her *Libro de Curiosidades (Curiosities' Book)*. As it happens to many creative women, her oeuvre appeared fifty years after her death.

Speaker Biography

Patricia Viaña is an independent researcher of Argentinian photography. Since 1994, she has preserved and promoted different archives. She has published books including *Yo Josefina Oliver* (2019), *Devenir Fotógrafa - Julie Méndez Ezcurra* (2022), and *1923. Inicio del Turismo de Cruceros a Ushuaia* (2023). She created the Josefina Oliver Fund and has been active in presenting her research across Argentina, Spain, and Latin America. In October 2025, she donated the Josefina Oliver Fund to the Centro de Estudios Espigas at the Universidad Nacional de San Martín in Buenos Aires.

7:05 PM – 7:21 PM

A Claim to Equality of the Sexes: A Woman Daguerreian Voice in Mid-19th Century Americas

Speaker: Carlos G. Vertanessian

Abstract

This presentation sheds light on the work of Marcelia W. Barnes, a previously overlooked North American woman daguerreian practitioner from the 1850s. Through her unexamined experiences and progressive vision, she asserted her place in the male-dominated field, paving the way for other women artists. In her letter to the Daguerreian Association, she wrote, “I am not disposed to reiterate the claim to equality of the sexes... but if the above is the case, I would simply ask if... the intricacies of the art, and its perplexities may not be overcome by the quick perceptions and patient perseverance of the female mind.” She spoke on behalf of women practitioners, and as a poet, articulated her thoughts eloquently. By addressing the Association, she sought to promote recognition and opportunities for women photographers. Despite entering photography late in life, she remained committed to the art and never married. This presentation provides an understanding of the challenges women faced in the earliest photographic technology: the daguerreotype.

Speaker Biography

Carlos G. Vertanessian is an Argentine independent scholar on the daguerreian period in Argentina. He has authored four books including *Primeros Daguerrotipos en Argentina*, *El retrato imposible. Imagen y poder en el Río de la Plata*, *Retratos del Plata. Historias del daguerrotipo*, and *PRIMERAS. Las argentinas y la fotografía. 1840-1870*. His work has been declared of national cultural interest by the National Academy of Fine Arts. He received The Daguerreian Society Fellowship Award “for the advancement of scholarship in the field of photo history and the willingness to share that knowledge.” He serves as a guest lecturer and writer, and is a board member of The Daguerreian Society (U.S.).

7:21 PM – 8:41 PM

Panel: Female Lenses – Women Photography Historians in Mexico

Panelists: ERA Colectivo (Elizabeth Chávez Serrano, Ariadna Martínez Olivera, Raúl Mújica Astorga)

Description

This panel involves three Mexican emergent researchers who are interested in Mexican women on photography. As a collective, their work addresses the topic of Mexican female researchers specialized in the study of photography who address female representation and participation as creative producers of photography. Their panel will focus on: 1) The problem of the invisibility of women photographers in Mexican historiography; 2) the social role of the photographic representation of women in different eras; 3) some significant contributions of Mexican women to photography; and 4) the development of a line of research on this topic in Mexico.

Speaker Biography

ERA Colectivo is an emergent research group interested in the study and production of female photography. Individually their work specializes in various aspects of the photographic image in Mexico, including the history of pioneer women photographers, the relationship between cinema and photography, and diverse forms of constructing the photographic image. As a group, they propose a space to discuss and study the female role as

object (theme), and as subject (creator) in the history of photography in Mexico, Latin America, and the world.

8:41 PM – 9:00 PM

Mother St. Croix: Ursuline Nun and Pioneering Photographer in Late-19th-Century New Orleans

Speaker: Amber Shields Johnson

Abstract

Mother St. Croix, a sister of the Order of Saint Ursula from 1873 to 1940, moved to New Orleans from France at the age of 19. For the next 50 years, she dedicated her life to photographing the Ursuline Academy, the oldest continuously operating school for girls in the United States, as well as the Ursuline Convent where she lived. Although she is among the earliest female photographers in America, Mother St. Croix remains relatively unknown. Standing barely five feet tall and dressed in a habit, she used large-format view cameras and glass plates ranging from 6" x 8" to 14" x 17" to capture life within her cloistered community and beyond. Her subject matter included the extensive campus, once a plantation next to the Mississippi River, the intimidating exteriors and intimate interiors of its buildings, carefully arranged scenes of students' daily lives, and formal portraits of nuns, priests, and the religious statue Our Lady of Prompt Succor. She also documented religious events in New Orleans and the construction of a new convent, often from the top of partially built structures. Mother St. Croix's photographs are not only a fascinating visual record of a rarely seen female-centered environment, but they are also historically significant as documentation of a place and time that no longer exists. In 1912, the city relocated the nuns and demolished the campus to make way for the construction of the Industrial Canal. Although she continued to photograph after the move, most of her work was produced between 1874 and 1912. Mother St. Croix's meticulous eye for composition, masterful technical skills, and adventurous spirit produced images that transcend mere documentation. This paper aims to raise her profile and contribute to the growing recognition of pioneering female photographers of her era.

Speaker Biography

Amber Shields Johnson is an artist and cultural heritage photographer. She earned an MFA from San Jose State University in California, and a BA in Photojournalism from Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana. She resides in New Orleans where she works as a photographer for the Historical New Orleans Collection.

9:00 PM – 9:23 PM

Tracking Texas's First Photographer, 'Mrs. Davis': Female Frontier Entrepreneur

Speaker: Kris Belden-Adams

Abstract

This paper tracks the identity and story of the enigmatic “Mrs. Davis,” the earliest known photographer to work in Texas. She set up a commercial portrait practice just four years after the daguerreotype process came to the United States, and would advertise her temporary drop-in photography studio for two or three weeks in late 1843. Operating out of the Houston House at the corner of Market and Diamond Streets in Houston, Mrs. Davis left no known archive, and no certain first name or maiden name by which she could be traced.

Mrs. Davis represents a significant but overlooked presence at the intersection of early Texas history that predated its status as one of the United States of America. Her story connects to larger narratives of women’s place in the settlement of the Western frontier, photographic innovation, and of women’s labor in the photography studios. While her story remains unknown and difficult to recover, advertisements in local newspapers documented her offering portrait services to the public, marking a rare instance of a woman visibly engaged in a technical profession during the Republic of Texas era (the period following its declaration of independence from Mexico during the Texas Revolution).

This study combines archival research, including newspaper records, city directories, hotel registries, passenger ship manifests, and early Texas correspondence, to reconstruct the social, political, and commercial contexts in which Mrs. Davis trained and worked. It places her practice within the broader narrative of the spread of daguerreotype technology in the U.S. South/West, with particular attention to the challenges faced by women entering this emerging field and this part of the U.S. (unaccompanied by a husband). This research contributes to the growing scholarship on early U.S. photography and gender, challenging the assumption that photographic pioneers were exclusively male, and located in the established urban centers of the Northeastern U.S.A. Furthermore, the study explores how photography—then a novel and experimental medium—was situated within the itinerant economy of frontier Texas. By tracing Mrs. Davis’s brief but significant presence, the paper raises broader questions about authorship, visibility, and the archival silences surrounding women’s contributions to photographic history. Ultimately, this research not only recovers a forgotten figure from the margins of photographic and Texas history, but also illustrates how ephemeral traces—such as a single advertisement—can open new pathways for understanding gender, technology, and entrepreneurship in the 19th-century American South/West.

Speaker Biography

Kris Belden-Adams is an Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Culture at Texas A&M University and a co-convenor of the annual Women of Photography 24-Hour Conference-a-Thon on International Women’s Day. Kris is the Editor in Chief of *Art Inquiries* journal, and is the author of monographs *Photography, Temporality, Modernity: Time Warped* (2019), and *Photography, Eugenics, ‘Aristogenics’: Picturing Privilege* (2020). In addition, she is an editor and contributor to the volumes *Photography and Failure: One Medium’s Incessant Entanglement with Mishaps, Flops, and Disappointments* (2017), and *Diverse Histories in Photographic Albums: ‘These Are Our Stories’* (2022). With Dr. Karen Barber, Belden-Adams is a Content Co-Editor for Smarthistory’s/Khan Academy’s coverage on the history of photography. She received her PhD in Art History from the City University of New York – Graduate Center.

9:23 PM – 9:43 PM

An Art of Grief: Kia LaBeija, Kwan Bennett, and Photographic Processing

Speaker: Alex Fialho

Abstract

Kia LaBeija is an underknown woman photographer whose art involves self-portraits and photographs as a testament to her personal narratives growing up in New York City and beyond. LaBeija creates her photographs to work through her experiences being born with HIV, losing her mother Kwan Bennett to AIDS-related complications, and long-term-survival with HIV for over three decades. LaBeija's mother-daughter story points to the ongoing impact of the AIDS pandemic when at present over 36 million people have passed from AIDS-related complications and 38 million people are living with HIV.

Speaker Biography

Alex Fialho is a PhD candidate in Yale University's Combined PhD program in the History of Art and African American Studies. As an art historian and curator, he focuses on Modern and contemporary art, Black queer and feminist thought, and AIDS cultural studies. His dissertation, *Apertures Onto AIDS: African American Photography and the Art History of the Storage Unit*, examines AIDS-related histories through artists including Lola Flash, Darrel Ellis, Lyle Ashton Harris, and Kia LaBeija. He has held fellowships at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program and the Getty Research Institute and previously served as Programs Director at Visual AIDS.

9:43 PM – 10:03 PM

A Feminist Intersection of an Artist Book and Performance: Carolee Schneemann's *ABC—We Print Anything—In the Cards*

Speaker: Kathleen Wentrack (US, NYC)

Abstract

ABC—We Print Anything—In the Cards (1976) exemplifies several 1970s art phenomena, including new approaches to self-portraiture, documentary practice, and the blurring of media, as well as rethinking relations between artist/writer and audience/reader. While Carolee Schneemann is best known for provocative performances and films such as *Eye/Body* (1963), *Meat Joy* (1964), *Fuses* (1964–67), and *Interior Scroll* (1975), this focus has overshadowed her broader practice. *ABC* manifests concerns that emerged in the 1960s, yet

its dual status as performance and artist's book has complicated its reception. This paper offers a close reading of *ABC* to examine how the book functions as the content of a performance piece and how it challenges traditional notions of reading and viewing.

Speaker Biography

Kathleen Wentrack, Ph.D., is Professor and Chair of the Department of Art and Design at Queensborough Community College, CUNY. She holds a Master's degree from the University of Amsterdam and a Ph.D. from the CUNY Graduate Center. Her publications on Carolee Schneemann include "Carolee Schneemann: Eye/Body #5," *The Female Side of God. Art and Ritual*, Jewish Museum Frankfurt, 2020 and "Female Sexuality in Performance and Film: Erotic, Political, Controllable? The Contested Female Body in the Work of Carolee Schneemann and VALIE EXPORT," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift*, 2014. Other select publications include: "1970s Feminist Practice as Heterotopian: The Stichting Vrouwen in de Beeldende Kunst and the Schule für kreativen Feminismus," in *All Women Art Spaces in the Long 1970s*, Liverpool University Press, 2018. She is a Managing Committee member of The Feminist Art Project.

10:03 PM – 10:20 PM

Chile's Travestis: AIDS, Politics, and Post-Dictatorship in Pedro Lemebel's *Loco afán*

Speaker: Riley Klug

Abstract

This paper situates Pedro Lemebel's *Loco afán* within the context of Chile's civic-military dictatorship and its aftermath, when dissident sexualities, especially travestis, faced intensified persecution and were associated with political subversion. Travesti film, photography, and literature in the 1980s–90s articulated alternatives to capitalist and patriarchal ideologies through representations of trans bodies and experiences. *Loco afán* chronicles the lives of travestis living with the possibility of AIDS after dictatorship, weaving together grief for those lost to the epidemic with mourning for victims of state terror. Connected visual works, including *Casa particular* and media by Yeguas del Apocalipsis, deepen this critique of neoliberalism and normative sexuality. The paper argues that Lemebel's writing and related visual culture offer powerful political commentary on AIDS, dictatorship, and queer life in Chile.

Speaker Biography

Riley Klug is a master's student in Latin American Studies at the University of California, San Diego. Their thesis focuses on post-dictatorship literature and photography in Latin America's Southern Cone, examining connections between AIDS and neoliberalism in the work of Pedro Lemebel and Néstor Perlongher. With a background in art history and

anthropology from West Virginia University, they previously researched post-dictatorship photography in Argentina and plan to pursue a PhD in Cinema and Media Studies.

10:20 PM – 10:40 PM

‘Silent, Defenceless Images’: Constrained Bodies in the Photographs of Madame d’Ora

Speaker: Nicole Entin

Abstract

This paper examines how Madame d’Ora’s photography confronts the ethical implications of photography’s often-cited “silence and immobility.” Born Dora Kallmus in Vienna, d’Ora built a career photographing European high society before World War II., later turning her lens toward displaced persons camps and slaughterhouses. Drawing on her lived experiences of gendered and religious constraints, the paper analyses a 1922 portrait of dancer Anita Berber and a 1948 photograph of an elderly woman in a displaced persons camp to explore recurring strategies for representing constrained bodies. Comparing these images reveals compositional choices that evoke claustrophobia and vulnerability while raising questions about transforming subjects into “silent, defenceless images.” The talk probes the tension between this susceptibility and d’Ora’s empathetic engagement with marginalized sitters.

Speaker Biography

Nicole Entin is the 2025–26 Curatorial Graduate Intern in the J. Paul Getty Museum’s Department of Photographs. She holds an MSt in History of Art and Visual Culture from the University of Oxford, and an MA in Art History and English from the University of St. Andrews, where she received the Principal’s Medal. Her research focuses on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century photography, especially women makers and intersections between literature and visual art.

10:40 PM – 10:59 PM

Exposing Violence: Women Using Experimental Photography to Confront Gendered Violence

Speaker: Elizabeth Ransom

Abstract

This paper analyses experimental photographic works addressing gender-based violence, created either by survivors or by artists who foreground women’s oppression. Using methods

such as cyanotype, surface interventions, and lumen printing, these works visualize women's narratives and expose structures of violence. Drawing on feminist frameworks by Françoise Vergès and Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, the paper shows how alternative processes can challenge conventional representations of abuse and offer platforms for survivor voices. This research highlights case studies whose projects address femicide, domestic abuse, and other gender-based violence.

Speaker Biography

Elizabeth Ransom is an artist, researcher, and curator based between the Pacific Northwest and the south of England. She founded the Women Alternative Photography Group, a feminist research project celebrating women, trans, and non-binary artists working with alternative photographic processes. She lectures in photography at Central Washington University and teaches at institutions in the U.K. and U.S., with research focused on migration, homesickness, and transnationality.

10:59 PM – 11:19 PM

Esther Lewittes Mipaas: Photography for the History of Art and Architecture

Speaker: Nicole Krup Oest

Abstract

This talk presents photographs and writings from the personal collection of Esther Lewittes Mipaas (1911–1995), an art historian, drafts person, and industrial designer who specialized in photographing art, design, and architecture. Her images for Los Angeles's public housing program circulated widely in the 1940s, and later projects documented cast iron in New York City and murals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Although she did not earn a steady income from photography, Mipaas created a rich archive of negatives, slides, and prints, often accompanied by her own texts, now preserved at the Getty Research Institute and Columbia University. Incorporating an oral history segment with her daughter Judith Hibbard-Mipaas, this paper considers what can we learn about the role of photography in art and architectural history when we look beyond institutional collections or those of the most famous art historians.

Speaker Biography

Nicole Krup Oest is a historian of art and photography and an instructor at City College of San Francisco. She received her doctorate from the University of Zurich in 2020. Her book *Photography and Modern Public Housing in Los Angeles* was published with support from the Swiss National Science Foundation, and is available open access via arthistoricum.net.

11:19 PM – 11:39 PM

Exploiting the Gaze? Women Workers in the Hula Girl Photo Industry in Wartime Hawai'i

Speaker: Dr Pippa Oldfield

Abstract

This paper examines the “hula girl” souvenir photo industry in Hawai'i during the Second World War, where US servicemen posed with local women in staged tropical scenes. While these images can be read as playful mementos, they also evoke the male gaze, exoticism, and American imperialism. Using business history methods and sources such as job advertisements, press articles, and personal remembrances, the paper reveals women's significant roles as models, photographers, printers, managers, and concession owners. Despite the industry's problematic aspects, wages often surpassed other low-status jobs, allowing women to exercise entrepreneurial agency and even exploit servicemen's desires. The analysis complicates simplistic victim narratives and highlights women's resourcefulness within wartime economies.

Speaker Biography

Dr Pippa Oldfield is a curator and photo-historian specializing in gender, conflict, history, and politics. She is Special Lecturer in Photography at Teesside University and former Head of Programme at Impressions Gallery. Her projects include the touring exhibition *No Man's Land: Women's Photography and the First World War* and the book *Photography and War*. She is currently writing a new book on war and women's photography for University of Texas Press.

11:39 PM – 12:00 AM

Conclusion: Conference Organizers' Thank You

Speakers: Kris Belden-Adams and Rose Teanby

Additional Information

Conference Date: March 8, 2026 (UTC+0); Duration: 24 hours. Features 72 speakers presenting original research.

About This Conference

This international conference celebrating women in photography brings together scholars, curators, artists, and researchers from around the globe to examine the contributions, challenges, and legacies of women photographers from the nineteenth century to the present day. Through presentations, panel discussions, and conversations, participants will explore how women have shaped photographic practice, theory, and historiography, and continue to challenge dominant narratives in the field.

Key Themes

- Women photographers in colonial and postcolonial contexts
- Feminist historiography and recovery work
- Technical innovation and artistic experimentation
- Gender, race, and representation in photography
- Women's photographic networks and collaborations
- Archival preservation and digitization
- Contemporary practices and decolonial visions

For More Information

Contact the conference organizers: Rose Teanby and Kris Belden-Adams

Women and Photography Conference Program | March 8, 2026 | UTC+0