

PRESS RELEASE

"THE LAST PICTURE SHOW. Artists using photography, 1960-1982"

DATES:	May 28 – September 19, 2004
VENUE:	Ground floor exhibition rooms MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo, Spain
OPENING TIMES:	Tuesdays to Sundays (including public holidays), from 11.00 am to 9.00 pm
CURATOR:	Douglas Fogle
ORGANIZED BY:	Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
DIRECTOR MARCO:	Carlota Álvarez Basso
CHIEF CURATOR:	Iñaki Martínez Antelo
REGISTRAR:	Gwen Bitz
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR:	Marta García Viña
TOUR VENUES:	Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota (October 11, 2003 – January 4, 2004) UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California (February 8 – May 11, 2004) MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo, España (May 28 – September 19, 2004) Fotomuseum Winterthur, Zurich, Suiza (November 26, 2004 – February 13, 2005)

"THE LAST PICTURE SHOW. Artists using photography, 1960-1982 is organized by Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, and is made possible by generous support from Karen and Ken Heithoff, La Colección Jumex, Matthew O. Fitzmaurice, Carol and Judson Bemis Jr., and Harry M. Drake."

CATALOGUE:

An accompanying exhibition catalogue, published by the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis in 2003, contains essays by Geoffrey Batchen, Kate Bush, Jean-François Chevrier, Douglas Fogle, Stefan Gronet, Pamela M. Lee, James Lingwood, Melanie Mariño and Molly Nesbit, along with reprinted seminal texts by artists and authors such as Vito Acconci, Lawrence Alloway, John Baldessari, Mel Bochner, Sarah Charlesworth, A.D. Coleman, Douglas Crimp, Nancy Foote, Dan Graham, Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, Robert Smithson and Jeff Wall, and the exhibition Checklist.

A *separata* has been published for the Spanish edition, with the translation into Spanish and Galician language of all the texts included in the catalogue.

THE CURATOR:

Douglas Fogle is associate curator of visual arts at the Walker Art Center and organizer of the exhibition *The Last Picture Show: Artists Using Photography. 1960-1982*. During his tenure at the Walker he has initiated a number of other exhibitions, including *Stills: Emerging Photography in the 1990s* (1997); *Painting at the Edge of the World* (2001); *Catherine Opie: Skyways and Icehouses* (2002); and *Julie Mehretu: Drawing into Painting* (2003).

ARTISTS: 55

- Vito Acconci (New York, 1940)
- Bas Jan Ader (Winschoten, The Netherlands, 1942 - 1976)
- Giovanni Anselmo (Borgofranco d'Ivrea, Italy, 1934)
- Eleanor Antin (New York, 1935)
- John Baldessari (National City, California, 1931)
- Bernd & Hilla Becher (Siegen, Germany, 1931; Postdam, Germany, 1934)
- Joseph Beuys (Krefeld, Germany, 1921 - 1986)
- Mel Bochner (Pittsburgh, 1940)
- Christian Boltanski (Paris, 1944)
- Marcel Broodthaers (Brussels, 1924 - 1976)
- Victor Burgin (Sheffield, UK, 1941)
- Sarah Charlesworth (East Orange, New Jersey, 1947)
- Bruce Conner (McPherson, Kansas, 1933)
- Jan Dibbets (Weert, The Netherlands, 1941)
- Valie Export (Linz, Austria, 1940)
- Hans-Peter Feldmann (Düsseldorf, Germany, 1941)
- Peter Fischli & David Weiss (Zurich, Switzerland, 1952; 1946)
- Gilbert & George (Dolomitas, Italy, 1943; Devon, Reino Unido, 1942)
- Dan Graham (Urbana, Illinois, 1942)
- Hans Haacke (Colonia, Germany, 1936)
- Douglas Huebler (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1924 - 1997)
- Yves Klein (Niza, France, 1928 - 1962)
- Imi Knoebel (Dessau, Germany, 1940)
- Silvia Kolbowski (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1953)
- Barbara Kruger (Newark, New Jersey, 1946)
- David Lamelas (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1946)
- Louise Lawler (Bronxville, New York, 1947)
- Sherrie Levine (Hazleton, Pennsylvania, 1947)
- Sol LeWitt (Hartford, Connecticut, 1928)
- Richard Long (Bristol, UK, 1945)
- Gordon Matta-Clark (New York, 1943 - 1978)
- Ana Mendieta (La Habana, 1948 - 1985)
- Nasreen Mohamedi (New Delhi, 1937 - 1990)
- Bruce Nauman (Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1941)
- Hélio Oiticica & Neville d'Almeida (Rio de Janeiro, 1937 - 1980; Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1941)
- Dennis Oppenheim (Electric City, Washington, 1938)
- Giulio Paolini (Génova, Italy, 1940)
- Giuseppe Penone (Gareggio, Italy, 1947)
- Adrian Piper (New York, 1948)
- Sigmar Polke (Olesnica, Germany, 1944)
- Richard Prince (Panamá, Canal Zone, 1949)
- Charles Ray (Chicago, 1953)
- Martha Rosler (Brooklyn, New York, 1943)
- Allen Ruppersberg (Cleveland, Ohio, 1944)
- Edward Ruscha (Omaha, Nebraska, 1937)
- Cindy Sherman (Glen Ridge, New Jersey, 1954)
- Laurie Simmons (Long Island, New York, 1949)
- Robert Smithson (Passaic, New Jersey, 1938 - 1973)
- Ger van Elk (Amsterdam, 1941)
- Jeff Wall (Vancouver, Canada, 1946)
- Andy Warhol (Forest City, Pennsylvania, 1928 - 1987)
- Robert Watts (Burlington, Iowa, 1923 - 1988)
- William Wegman (Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1943)
- James Welling (Hartford, Connecticut, 1951)
- Hannah Wilkie (New York, 1940 - 1993)

NUMBER OF WORKS EXHIBITED:

The exhibition features over 200 works, including photographs and photographic pieces: light boxes, polaroids, slides projections, installations, photographic objects, magazines in which those works were published, and artist's books, among other examples.

SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW. Artists using photography, 1960-1982, organized by Walker Art Centre, traces the development of conceptual trends in photography during two key decades in contemporary aesthetics. MARCO, Vigo Museum of Contemporary Art –its only venue in Spain– presents this exhibition as a unique opportunity to look at the works of artists who, both because of their quality and significance, have become points of reference in the international history of contemporary art. *The Last Picture Show* features major loans from an international array of private collectors, galleries and museums as well as numerous objects from the Walker Art Center's permanent collection.

Photography has become an increasingly pervasive medium of choice of contemporary artists who do not consider themselves photographers. Successfully bridging the chasm from mechanical reproduction to fine-art object in the mid-1950s, photography found a legitimate home in museums and galleries just as its makers joined the ranks of revered artists. On the heels of this acceptance, however, was an entirely new challenge to the medium and its newly acquired place of prestige among artists who identified themselves primarily as painters and sculptors.

This show explores the development of conceptual trends in postwar photographic practice from its first glimmerings in the 1960s in the work of artists such as Bernd and Hilla Becher, Ed Ruscha, and Bruce Nauman, to its rise to art world prominence in the work of the photo-based artists of the late 1970s and early 1980s, including Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, and Cindy Sherman. Intended as a major genealogy of the rise of a still-powerful and evolving photographic practice by artists, the exhibition features over 100 works by more than 50 artists who examine a range of issues that expand the parameters of established photographic modernism as well as hearken back to the origins of photographic practice in the 19th century.

From architectural and environmental interventions to notions of the archive and the "image world" of consumer culture to the treatment of the body in space and the representation of the absurd, the work in *The Last Picture Show* is intended to trace the rise to prominence of a new set of photographic practices by artists who were not necessarily photographers. Painter Sigmar Polke began in the mid-1960s what would become a lifelong obsession with the camera leading to photographic experiments with both sculptural forms and the alchemy of the developing process. By 1966 Bruce Nauman turned to the camera as a way of documenting sculptural acts that were performative, photographic, and conceptual.

These artists, and many others in the exhibition, independently used the photographic process toward conceptual ends that were counter to the prevailing modes of photography, painting, and sculpture. In fact, these practices set photography free from its former subordination to the painted or sculptural form. By the end of the 1960s it was becoming clear that experimental and conceptual uses of photography were gaining both momentum and credence within the international art world.

By the beginning of the 1980s, the delectation associated with the connoisseurial appreciation of the tradition of the master photographic print had been joined by a newly minted attitude towards photography that was more interested in the uses of the medium for conceptual ends than in the aesthetic pretensions of its predecessors. It is this legacy that finds its descendants in a new generation of photographers today that *The Last Picture Show* examines.

Exhibition's Sections

The Last Picture Show is organized around a number of themes: from **architecture and seriality** –Both Bernd & Hilla Becher and Dan Graham undertook photographic analyses of architectural forms in the 1960s, focusing on the formal and social analysis of the built environment– to the **minimalist photographic geometries** of Mel Bochner, Sol LeWitt or the Indian artist Nasreen Mohamedi, and the profusion and growing power of photographic images in the **mass media**, which called the interest of artists such as Christian Boltanski or Hans-Peter Feldmann in the 1960s and 1970s.

Other sections of the exhibition have to do with **interventions in the natural and built environments**: in the work of Gordon Matta Clark and Robert Smithson, for example, the camera becomes an aesthetic accomplice at once documenting and completing the work of art. Also the **conceptual strategies** of artists such as Dennis Oppenheim and Douglas Huebler in the 1970s have their own place in this show, as well as the use of photography to construct scenarios that are at once **fantastic and absurd**, as in the photographic work of Bas Jan Ader, Ger van Elk, William Wegman, and Peter Fischli & David Weiss. And we could not forget **the landscape**, which has traditionally been a major subject of both painting and photography: in the 1960s and 1970s a number of artists –Jan Dibbets, Richard Long and Giovanni Anselmo, among others– embarked on a series of photographic projects that sought to rework the traditional history of the landscape.

The body in space has also been a primary subject for photography since its invention in the early 19th century. In the 1960s and 1970s a wide variety of artists reasserted the phenomenological primacy of embodiment in performative works that were often done solely in front of the camera. Vito Acconci was one of the primary innovators in this field Vito Acconci, and other artists such as Bruce Nauman, Charles Ray, and Bruce Conner used their own bodies in constructing sculptural photographic experiments in their studios. Valie Export, who became well known for her performative interventions that questioned the role of men and women in society, completed a large body of conceptual photographic work in the 1970s.

The use of the artist's body in the photographic practice of the time was closely related to another use of **self-portraiture** in the service of the interrogation of **identity**. Gilbert and George's earliest works, Hannah Wilke's or Adrian Piper's series, used the camera to construct sculptural photographic documents of states of being. Artists further explored questions of identity later in the 1970s in terms of what many critics have referred to as **the masquerade**, that could be seen here in the works of David LaPlacette and Cindy Sherman, or in the Polaroid self-portraits of Andy Warhol in drag –images that can be linked back to the early portrait of Marcel Duchamp dressed as his alter ego Rose Selavy.

Finally, another two sections have to do with **the media world**, the "image world" of consumer culture that became a defining aspect of the uses of photography in the later part of the 1970s into the 1980s (John Baldessari, Barbara Kruger, Sarah Charlesworth), and the **strategies of appropriation** that became a prime aesthetic marker of the uses of photography in the 1980s (Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince). Both sections are closely related to both the circulatory systems of images in the *media* as well as the state of American identity in the 1980s.

REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

EXHIBITION

“THE LAST PICTURE SHOW”
Artists using photography, 1960-1982

GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS:

CD including texts and photographs of the exhibition in different formats.

IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE DOCUMENTATION, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT BY E-MAIL, FAX OR MAIL POST TO:

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

Rúa Príncipe 54
36202 Vigo (Pontevedra). Spain

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