



ON VIEW
PHOTOGRAPHING THE MUSEUM

July 7 – August 26, 2005

Opening Reception Thursday, July 7, 2005, 6-8 pm

Summer Hours: Monday – Friday, 10am – 6 pm

The Yancey Richardson Gallery is pleased to present *On View: Photographing the Museum*, a group exhibition of photographs and video that explores the ways in which artists have engaged the museum as a subject, an inspiration and a studio. Running from July 7 through August 26, the exhibition will include the work of Thomas Struth, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Candida Höfer, Diane Arbus, Richard Misrach, Tim Davis, Terry Evans, Jodie Vicenta Jacobson, Ken Josephson, Lisa Kereszi, Chad Kleitsch, Karen Knorr, David Hilliard, Andrew Moore, Abelardo Morrell, Matthew Pillsbury, Lynn Saville, Elliott Erwitt, and Doug Hall.

Struth has described his well-known museum pictures as being about "the contemplation of art as a self-reflection." In his piece *Galleria Accademia, Venice*, Struth photographs the act of looking as evidenced by people in the museum and mirrored by we the viewers. At the same time he observes the relationship of the figures to each other and to the work of art they are contemplating. Also observing the behavior of museum visitors, Elliot Erwitt humorously captures a crowd of men contemplating Goya's *Naked Maja* while a lone female visitor studies the painting of the *Clothed Maja* hanging directly adjacent.

Several artists transform the museum space through their work. In her video, *Montauk Point*, Jodie Vicenta Jacobson amplifies her experience at the Dan Flavin Art Institute by transporting Polaroids of Flavin's sculptures outside and juxtaposing them with the color and light of the surrounding natural environment. British photographer Karen Knorr has long made work about museums and collecting. In *Carnavalet IV* she intervenes in the pristine decorative arts setting by inserting foxes as visitors to the space. Kenneth Josephson's 1970 collage, *Postcard Visit, Buffalo* integrates pieces of his own photograph of the Albright Knox Museum with a sliced up postcard view of the building, essentially reconstructing the museum.

The museum can be a transformational space as well. In Lisa Kereszi's photograph, *Painter in Diorama*, an American Museum of Natural History worker meticulously painting the illusionistic background of a diorama becomes part of the illusion himself, appearing to be a woodsman on display. Both Arbus and Sugimoto conflate life, sculpture and photography in their views made at wax museums. Sugimoto's *Pope* looks fully alive while Kereszi's live worker appears

to be artificial. Chad Kleitch shows how the institutional setting of the museum can empower mundane objects within it, particularly in this post-Duchampian age; thus, a pile of folded packing blankets take on the significance of sculpture.

Several artists have looked closely at the contents of museums. In Terry Evans' *Specimens* series and Matthew Pillsbury's *Museums* series, the artists investigate man's compulsion to gather, study and archive artifacts in order to understand the world and reconstruct a history. In Andrew Moore's *Restoration Studio, Russia* layers of time, culture and history are compressed into one room.

Tim Davis' recent series *Permanent Collection* investigates the viewing experience and the way in which light and glare upon the surface of a painting obscure certain elements, thus changing the original meaning of the artwork. Richard Misrach also photographed museum paintings in order to show how certain religious and political views were promulgated through the art that western museums chose to collect and display.

In several cases, art objects become animate through the process of being photographed. In Saville's nocturnal *Rooftop, Metropolitan Museum* a voluptuous sculpted nude by Gaston LaChaise appears to sing an aria for the moon. In another photograph by Elliott Erwitt, the Metropolitan Museum's sculpture of *Diana the Huntress* appears to draw her bow in aim at a male figure in the distance. In *Inghirami, Gardner Museum*, made while Abelardo Morrell was the artist-in-residence of the Isabel Gardner Museum, the figure looks searchingly at the corner of the frame as if seeking escape.

Finally Candida Höfer's spectacular view of the *Museo Correr Civico*, in Venice layers the experience of the space as a preserved cultural object itself with its role as a container for objects to be displayed and consumed.

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