ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY MoMA's NEW PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION SERIES WIDENS ITS SCOPE TO 19 ARTISTS, INCLUDING WORKS PRODUCED SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS YEAR'S EDITION, *OCEAN OF IMAGES*

The Series Will Now Be Presented Biannually at MoMA, with a Broader International Reach

Ocean of Images: New Photography 2015
November 7, 2015–March 20, 2016
Edward Steichen Photography Galleries, third floor; The Agnes Gund Garden Lobby, first floor; and the Bauhaus Staircase, second and third floor
Press Preview: Tuesday, November 3, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Remarks at 11:30 a.m.

NEW YORK, June 23, 2015 [Updated October 14, 2015]—New Photography, MoMA's longstanding exhibition series of recent work in photography and a vital manifestation of the Museum's contemporary program, will return this fall in an expanded, biannual format. On the occasion of its 30th anniversary, New Photography is expanding to 19 artists and artist collectives from 14 countries, and includes works made specifically for this exhibition. ***Ocean of Images: New Photography 2015*** will be on view from November 7, 2015, to March 20, 2016, throughout the entirety of the Museum's Edward Steichen Photography Galleries, as well as The Agnes Gund Garden Lobby and the Museum's Bauhaus Staircase. Since its inception in 1985, the New Photography series has introduced the work of nearly 100 artists from around the globe early in their careers, including Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Rineke Dijkstra, Rachel Harrison, and Wolfgang Tillmans. This year's edition explores contemporary photo-based culture, specifically focusing on connectivity, the circulation of images, information networks, and communication models. *Ocean of Images* is organized by Quentin Bajac, The Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz Chief Curator, Lucy Gallun, Assistant Curator, and Roxana Marcoci, Senior Curator; with the assistance of Kristen Gaylord, Beaumont and Nancy Newhall Curatorial Fellow, Department of Photography.

Probing the effects of an image-based post-Internet reality, *Ocean of Images* examines various ways of experiencing the world: through images that are born digitally, made with scanners or lenses in the studio or the real world, presented as still or moving pictures, distributed as zines, morphed into three-dimensional objects, or remixed online. The exhibition's title refers to the Internet as a vortex of images, a site of piracy, and a system of networks, which is reflected in the work of the 19 included artists and collectives. *Ocean of Images* presents new and recent bodies of work that critically redefine photography as a field of experimentation and intellectual inquiry, where digital and analog, virtual and real dimensions cross over. Coinciding with the opening of the exhibition, MoMA will also launch an online platform housing the live archive of the New Photography series, featuring documents and images from its history.

Several artists have created new work specifically for the exhibition, including the art media collective **DIS** and artists **Katharina Gaenssler** and **Katja Novitskova**.

Founded in 2010, the New York–based DIS, comprising Lauren Boyle, Solomon Chase, Marco Roso, and David Toro, routinely interrogates the contemporary conventions of image-making in a culture of hyper-circulation and overproduction. In a special commission, DIS collaborated with the curatorial and marketing teams at MoMA to create a signature image for the advertising campaign featuring Conchita Wurst, the Eurovision 2014 winner. Through image dissemination and amplification Wurst has become a beloved icon of European popular culture and a manifestation of virality, a symbol of queer positivity and a flashpoint for political tensions.

Working at the interface of art and marketing, DIS has created images that expand conceptions of ownership and intellectual copyright. Transforming the MoMA logo into a watermark embedded in a variety of still and moving images, the works construct a fictional image bank for the Museum. As cultural institutions move towards open source imagery, lessening the restrictions on the uses and rights of their images, DIS amplifies the traditional idea of image ownership to an absurdist level, highlighting the ways that stock images manage and commodify the digital.

Gaenssler presents a photo-wallpaper installation, composed of hundreds of individual pictures on MoMA's Bauhaus Staircase platform, that deconstructs and reconstructs the stairway of the 1920s Bauhaus building in Dessau, Germany. The work, dissolving in close-up details and opening up to myriad perspectives, highlights a state of flux, a transitional space within the Museum.

A group of freestanding photographic cutouts of animals and symbols culled from online sources constitutes Novitskova's contribution, both inside the galleries and in front of the large windows in The Agnes Gund Garden Lobby. Her work considers the connections between biological life forms, evolutionary processes, and human expansion. Not precisely representations of nature as much as representations of information networks, Novitskova's works signal a contemporary shift in which digitally circulated images evolve with an agency of their own.

Exploring digital, informational, and software systems, the artists in *Ocean of Images* are not concerned with the question, "What is the picture of?" but rather, "What decisions constitute the image?" **Natalie Czech** transforms images into texts and then back into images. Discovering poems by well-known authors such as Allen Ginsberg, Aram Saroyan, and Gertrude Stein in found text material, she visualizes them by means of omitting or highlighting letters or words. In *A Poem by Repetition by Aram Saroyan* (2013), Czech photographed a 12" single by the English rock band Pink Floyd three times, then reconstructed Saroyan's poem "ney/mo/money" by repeating the text from the record sleeve, erasing some of the letters, and montaging the pictures in a vertical triptych.

With a background in both photography and computer programming, **John Houck** produces works that probe the social and psychological effects of digital technology. In *A History*

of Graph Paper (2013–15), he selected objects of personal relevance from his youth to create still lifes atop sheets of paper, which he then photographed repeatedly, including and removing items in the process. Houck underwent psychoanalysis while making this series, analogizing the human psyche to a photographic plate.

Lucas Blalock uses both an analog 4 x 5" camera and a computer to make his works. In each case, he starts with a picture shot on film—for instance, a tabletop arrangement of a mass-produced canvas bag. Using editing programs, he adds and subtracts elements, and reverses or mirrors motifs, foregrounding the digital process. These glitches and wrinkles give his pictures a weird mutational energy, as if they were not quite sitting still.

A self-described archaeologist, **Zbyněk Baladrán** studies images and artifacts from the past to better understand who we are today. In his two-channel video essay *Diderot's Dream* (2014), Baladrán examines the origin of dreams and their role in contemporary society. Telescopic views of stars and planets serve as a backdrop for burning photographs, while the subtitles recount a dream scenario. Baladrán seems to suggest that photography assumes historically legible forms, and that it is through this medium that the cosmic world reveals itself to us.

Ilit Azoulay also engages with archaeology in *Shifting Degrees of Certainty* (2014), an installation of 85 color photographs. Using a technique similar to scanning, Azoulay facilitates the juxtaposition of multiple points of view into single, digitally composed images that are each custom cut and framed in a map-like composition. This map, or "brain," as the artist calls it, serves as a visual inventory of the sites and objects collected from buildings that Azoulay photographed during a six-month residency in Germany.

The question of how photography, in the present, can represent a suppressed past informs **Indre Šerpytytė**'s *(1944 – 1991) Former NKVD–MVD–MGB–KGB Buildings* (2009–15), a photographic and sculptural series. To make this project, Šerpytytė traveled through Lithuanian villages, locating the houses, barns, and official buildings that served as the stage for atrocities committed by the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs), the military police during World War II; the MGB (Ministry for State Security), the Soviet intelligence agency from 1946 to 1953; the KGB (Committee for State Security), active from 1954; and the Soviet MVD (Ministry of the Interior). After photographing these structures, Šerpytytė commissioned replicas of them from traditional Lithuanian woodcarvers, and then rephotographed the models against bare backdrops. Substituting the originals with replicas reiterates the process by which photography often displaces the reality it documents.

David Hartt's work explores institutional sites along a broad spectrum of ideological positions. In *Belvedere* (2013), a suite of photographs of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy—a free-market think tank and originator of the Overton Window theory (a policy-framing device used to adjust public opinion)—Hartt provides a behind-the-scenes exploration of political lobbying and legislation. The images in *Belvedere* betray the banality of politics, featuring cubicles with plastic

American flags and boxes marked "Health Care," research on topics such as "making schools work" and "urban sprawl," and video cassette covers marked "Greed" and "Freeloaders."

Approaching photography as a social sculptor, **Marina Pinsky** examines the way in which we can read images as material, spatial, and ideological models of the world. The idea for *Role Model Drei (Role Model Three)* (2015), a double-sided, handmade fiberglass structure that displays a child looking at a train diorama in a marketplace on one side, and a man sitting in a bus shelter on the other, stems from the artist's investigation of public spaces in Germany, and refers to that country's psychological and built topography. Pinsky mixes digital and analog techniques, establishing a relational mode between virtual and physical worlds.

Basim Magdy filters a deep skepticism of ideology, and his interest in science, futurology, and the natural world, through a vivid photographic prism. In *The Hollow Desire to Populate Imaginary Cities* (2014), he uses film stocks that have been treated and exposed on metallic papers to produce sensory images. Seemingly mundane motifs, such as people watching a performing seal, or more loaded ones, such as the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn (a highly toxic EPA-designated Superfund site), are rendered eerie through acidic colors, pigmentation, and deterioration. At the crux of Magdy's work is a sense of ecological crisis and impeding apocalypse.

The line between reality and representation is the central issue of *Rasen Kaigan* (2008–12), **Lieko Shiga**'s tour-de-force photographic installation. The pictures in this project were shot before, during, and after the 2011 Tōhoku tsunami that battered Japan's coast. Shiga, however, does not document history in a traditional way. Instead, she uses filters and blatantly manipulates and tweaks the negatives to create a ghostly dramaturgy for acts of remembrance.

Ocean of Images includes several installation environments, including a reconstruction of *The Newsstand*, a project by **Lele Saveri** in collaboration with Alldayeveryday; an installation of multiple takeaway photo-posters by **Edson Chagas**; a photo-architectural installation by **Yuki Kimura**; and explorations of photography's distribution through analog and digital book projects by artists **Mishka Henner**, **David Horvitz**, and **Anouk Kruithof**, who transcribe the dissemination and mutability of visual forms into a newly reconfigured language.

Saveri's pop-up store *The Newsstand* (2013–14) was first located in a Brooklyn subway station; featuring thousands of independent zines, magazines, and records, it encourages a form of distributive authorship. At MoMA, one of the stand's original participants will be present to meet with Museum visitors from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, throughout the run of the exhibition. Additionally, once a month, invited guests will hold one-day events at *The Newsstand*, ranging from exhibitions of photographs to participatory programs and collaborations with the Museum's audience. Participants include: Chances with Wolves (November 13, 2015); Pau Wau Publications (December 8, 2015); Nathaniel Matthew (January 13, 2016); Luck You Collective (February 18, 2016); and Lele Saveri (March 14, 2016). For more information, please visit the exhibition website.

Critical to Chagas's photographic series *Found Not Taken* (2013) is the idea of how

discarded or unwanted objects from his native city of Luanda, Angola, inform the way urban spaces are experienced. Presented as stacks of multiple posters on pallets, the images refer to a constantly morphing city, and viewers are invited to take one away, simultaneously disseminating the artist's work and challenging the idea of a precious, singular object.

Working at the intersection of photography and architecture, Kimura presents *KATSURA* (2012), a photographic installation consisting of images of the 17th-century Katsura Imperial Villa in Kyoto, reprinted from a set of pictures shot by the artist's grandfather in the 1960s. Suspended from metal armatures, the pictures are arranged in correspondence to their relative positions within the Edo-period estate. The pictures compress three-dimensional physical reality into two-dimensional views, but Kimura herself expands the site again through her installation, analogizing the relationship between past and present to the relationship between real and represented space.

In his 12-volume *Astronomical* (2011), Mishka Henner maps out the solar system in book format. Playing off of the narrative expectations of the viewer/reader and the immensity of outer space, he re-creates the spatial relationships between the celestial bodies at human scale, with each page of the book representing one million kilometers. Seeing the individual pages, one after another, transports the viewer into seemingly endless darkness, undermining the multi-volume encyclopedia as a genre of knowledge gathering.

David Horvitz explores appropriation and viral imaging in *Mood Disorder* (2015). Having taken an image of himself, head in hands, he uploaded it to Wikipedia, linked to the page on mood disorders. The rhizomatic quality of image sharing on the Internet took over, as Horvitz's picture ended up featured in news articles, blogs, and forums, through associative and tangential pathways, uploaded and downloaded countless times—a process he documents as a book, repeating and expanding the cycles of dissemination and publication.

Contemporary image-technologies are also central to Anouk Kruithof's installation *Subconscious Traveling* (2013). This work includes 99 photo-stickers of images the artist took on an iPhone 5 of empty photo-negative sleeves from a found, anonymous album of travel pictures. The harsh flash of the camera phone contrasts with the lack of information in and about the album, a format designed for archiving and recording.

Artists in *Ocean of Images: New Photography 2015*
Ilit Azoulay (Israeli, b. 1972)
Zbyněk Baladrán (Czech, b. 1973)
Lucas Blalock (American, b. 1978)
Edson Chagas (Angolan, b. 1977)
Natalie Czech (German, b. 1976)
DIS (Collective, founded in New York in 2010)
Katharina Gaenssler (German, b. 1974)
David Hartt (Canadian, b. 1967)
Mishka Henner (Belgian, b. 1976)
David Horvitz (American, b. 1982)
John Houck (American, b. 1977)
Yuki Kimura (Japanese, b. 1971)

Anouk Kruithof (Dutch, b. 1981)
Basim Magdy (Egyptian, b. 1977)
Katja Novitskova (Estonian, b. 1984)
Marina Pinsky (Russian, b. 1986)
Lele Saveri (Italian, b. 1980)
Indrė Šerpytytė (Lithuanian, b. 1983)
Lieko Shiga (Japanese, b. 1980)

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PUBLIC PROGRAM:
In conjunction with the exhibition, a panel discussion with artists and curators takes place on Monday, November 2, at 6:00 p.m. in The Celeste Bartos Theater. The panel addresses the history and impact of the signature New Photography series on the occasion of its 30th anniversary, and the state of photography in the early 21st century. Participants include curators Quentin Bajac, Roxana Marcoci, and Lucy Gallun; artists Ilit Azoulay, Lucas Blalock, David Hartt, and Katja Novitskova; and artist collective DIS.

This program is made possible by the Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro Seminar and Lecture Endowment Fund, established by Jeanne and Bob Savitt, Kristen and A. Andrew Shapiro, and Robert F. Shapiro, Jr.

PUBLICATION:
Released on the occasion of the exhibition's opening is ***Photography at MoMA: 1960 to Now*****,** the first book of a three-volume history of photography presented through the Museum's collection. The book includes scholarly contributions by Quentin Bajac, David Campany, Noam M. Elcott, Lucy Gallun, Roxana Marcoci, Sarah Meister, Eva Respini, and Robert Slifkin. Among its over 300 color plates, the publication will feature the work of 44 artists that have appeared in the New Photography series since 1985.

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