



California Museum of Photography
Sweeney Art Gallery
Culver Center of the Arts
University of California, Riverside

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PRESS RELEASE
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UCR ARTSblock presents the exhibition

Trouble with the Index

Walead Beshty, Matthew Brandt, John Divola, Victoria Fu, Farrah Karapetian,
Heather Rasmussen, James Welling, Jennifer West, and Mario Ybarra, Jr.

February 1–June 21, 2014

RIVERSIDE, Calif., Dec. 20, 2013 – The California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock presents *Trouble with the Index*, on view in the main gallery of the museum from February 1 through June 21, 2014, featuring works by Walead Beshty, Matthew Brandt, John Divola, Victoria Fu, Farrah Karapetian, Heather Rasmussen, James Welling, Jennifer West, and Mario Ybarra, Jr. A reception celebrating this and other exhibitions will be held at the museum on Saturday, February 1, 6–9pm, and is free and open to the public.

The truth of photographs has always been conflicted. Light hits sensitized paper to produce a picture of the world, capturing a moment in time. *This was here*, every photograph asserts. But the picture is flat and static, bound by edges and defined by depth of field, reproducible and variable in size: an artificial organization of a world that is spatial and temporal. Nevertheless, *this was here*. Since photography was invented, it has carried with it this basic condition of "indexicality." A photograph must exhibit some element of proof, some trace of reality, to be a photograph.

Trouble with the Index presents a selection of photographs by Southern California-based artists whose work grapples with this complicated state of photographic truth. Some of the works included here illustrate an index found in the world, as in John Divola's photograph of light passing through a broken window, and Heather Rasmussen's depiction of a bathroom wall, charred in a fire. There is an attention to size in the works gathered here, as in Mario Ybarra, Jr.'s photomural, which depicts the interior walls of a bunker in near one-to-one scale, and James Welling's use of a common household material – foil – that nevertheless might conjure a vast geographical topography. Some of the works have been generated through direct imprints: Walead Beshty uses FedEx to ship a pristine cube to the museum, where it is displayed bearing all the marks of that transit, and Farrah Karapetian makes photograms of ice, even while the material melts and slips during the print's production.

Victoria Fu's prints are the culminations of numerous in-studio processes that include projection, photography, printing, construction, digital manipulation, re-projection, re-photography, and re-printing. Matthew Brandt's work combines two distinct registers of indexicality: after making a straight photograph of a lake, he then soaks it in that lake's water. Jennifer West also embraces some elements of chance, frequently intervening in the image-making process with unconventional materials. After filming *Spiral Jetty* – an earthwork constructed by the artist

Robert Smithson on the edge of the Great Salt Lake in Utah in 1970 – West exposed the film multiple times, treating it to materials such as saline, brine shrimp, citrus juices, and vinegars.

Photographs alone can no longer secure their truth claim simply by accurately depicting the world in two dimensions. Through additional maneuvers artists privilege the index over pictorialism, pushing their resulting pictures even to complete abstraction. Far from acting as invisible players, the artists themselves – through their actions – are registered in each work; *This was here is now I was here.*

Walead Beshty (b. 1976, London) is an artist and writer working in Los Angeles, and Associate Professor in the Graduate Art Department of Art Center College of Design. Beshty's work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions, including the solo exhibitions *Securities and Exchanges* at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2011); *A Diagram of Forces* at Malmö Konsthall, Sweden and Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid (2011); *Legibility on Color Backgrounds* at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC (2009); and *EMBASSY!: a dismal science waiting room* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2006). Beshty's work is included in the public collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among elsewhere. Monographs on his work include *Walead Beshty: Natural Histories* (JRP|Ringier, 2011) and *Walead Beshty: Selected Correspondences 2001-2010* (Damiani Editore, 2010). Forthcoming publications include a second expanded edition of *Walead Beshty: Natural Histories*; an anthology edited by Beshty and Jason E. Smith, *Post-Fordist Aesthetics*; and an anthology of Beshty's collected writings (all due out on JRP|Ringier, 2014). Beshty earned his BA at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson in 1999, and his MFA at the Yale University School of Art, New Haven in 2002.

Matthew Brandt (b. 1982, Los Angeles) is a Los Angeles-based artist interested in physicality, process, and landscape. His ability to stretch the readings of images – multiplying them both physically and conceptually – speaks directly to his interest in how images loom and meanings shift within a shared visual history. His work is currently on view in a solo exhibition at the Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (2013-14), and will travel to the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach (2014). Brandt's work is in the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Bidwell Projects, Ohio; the Elton John Collection; the Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio; the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; the Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; the Royal Danish Library, and the Wieland Collection, among others. He received his BFA at Cooper Union in 2004, and his MFA at the University of California, Los Angeles in 2008.
<http://www.matthewbrandt.com>

John Divola (b. 1949, Los Angeles) is an artist who works primarily with photography and digital imaging. While he has approached a broad range of subjects over the course of his career, he is currently moving through the landscape looking for the oscillating edge between the abstract and the specific. His work has been featured in more than seventy solo exhibitions in Japan, Europe, Mexico, Australia, and the United States, including *John Divola: As Far As I Could Get*, an expansive three-venue exhibition organized by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Pomona College Museum of Art (2013-14). Divola has been honored with numerous awards including the Individual Artist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts (1973, 1976, 1979, 1990); the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship (1986); the Fintridge Foundation Fellowship (1998); the City of Los Angeles Artist Grant (1999); and the California Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowship (1998). Since 1975 he has taught photography and art at numerous institutions including the California Institute of the Arts (1978-

1988). Since 1988 he has been a Professor of Art at the University of California, Riverside. He earned his BA at California State University, Northridge in 1971, and his MFA at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1974.
<http://www.divola.com>

Victoria Fu (b. 1978, Santa Monica, CA) is a visual artist who lives and works in San Diego and Los Angeles. She films, photographs, and draws the image. Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the University Art Gallery, UC Irvine (2014); Document Space, Chicago (2014); Savannah College of Art + Design (2009), and elsewhere. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego (2013); Carter & Citizen, Culver City (2013); LAXART, Los Angeles (2012); Chinati Foundation, Marfa (2012); Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC (2011); and De Appel, Amsterdam (2009), among elsewhere, and her work will be included in the upcoming 2014 *Whitney Biennial* in New York. Fu is a 2014-15 Irvine Fellow at Montalvo Arts Center and current grantee of Rema Hort Mann Foundation's YoYoYo Artist Project Fund and Art Matters Foundation. Fu co-directs ART OFFICE's *The Moving Index*. She attended the Whitney Independent Study Program and Skowhegan in 2006. She earned an MFA at California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, an MA in Art History and Museum Studies at the University of Southern California, and a BA in Art at Stanford University.
<http://www.victoriafu.com>

Farrah Karapetian (b. 1978, Marin, CA) is a Los Angeles-based artist who works with camera-less photography in a sculptural and increasingly relational field. Her work has been featured in *Good Sign*, a public installation in abandoned signage for the Flint Public Art Project, Michigan; the 2013 *California-Pacific Triennial*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach; and *Rogue Wave '13 (15 Artists From Los Angeles)*, L.A. Louver Gallery, Venice, among other exhibitions. Her work will be included in several upcoming exhibitions, including at the Centro de Arte Contemporaneo, Puebla, Mexico; the Armory Center for the Arts; and the Torrance Art Museum. Karapetian was associate curator of *The Black Mirror* (curated by James Welling and Diane Rosenstein), Diane Rosenstein Fine Art (2013), and is the curator of *Unsparring Quality*, Diane Rosenstein Fine Art (2014). She was a MacDowell Fellow (2010) and an artist-in-residence at the Wende Museum, Culver City (2009). In 2012 she was awarded a Creative Capital/Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant for her blog *Housing Projects*. She earned her BA at Yale University in 2000, and her MFA at the University of California, Los Angeles in 2008.
<http://www.farahkarapetian.com>

Heather Rasmussen (b. 1982, Santa Ana, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Angels Gate Cultural Center, San Pedro (2012); and the Sandroni Rey Container, Los Angeles (2009). She has exhibited nationally in group exhibitions, including at The Art Institute of Chicago; Mixed Greens, New York; Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Hollywood; and Cohen Gallery, Los Angeles. Rasmussen's work has been published in the book *Unfolded, Paper in Design, Art, Architecture and Industry*, alongside artists such as Olafur Eliasson, Thomas Demand, and Frank Gehry. She also has two self-published catalogs, *ship happens 1* (2009) and *ship happens 2* (2013). Rasmussen earned her BA in Art at the University of California, Irvine in 2004, and her MFA at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia in 2007.
www.heatherrasmussen.com

James Welling (b. 1951, Hartford, CT) is a Los Angeles-based artist who has been questioning the norms of representation since the 1970s. His work centers on an exploration of photography, shuffling the elemental components of the medium to produce a distinctly uncompromising body of work. Welling's work has been exhibited widely in the United States and internationally, including solo exhibitions at the Cincinnati Art Museum (2013); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013-14); University Museum of Contemporary Art, UMASS Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts (2013); Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut (2012); Minneapolis Institute of

Arts, Minnesota (2010); Horticultural Society of New York (2007); Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (2002); Art Gallery of York University, Toronto (2002); Sprengel Museum Hannover (1999); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (1998); and the Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland (1998). In 2000, the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio organized a major survey of his work, which traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Baltimore Museum of Art. In 2009, Welling's work was featured in the critically acclaimed historical survey, *The Pictures Generation, 1974-1984*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and in 2008, he participated in the Whitney Biennial. In 1992, his work was included in documenta IX. Welling's work is held in major museum collections, including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Welling earned his MFA at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia in 1974. After teaching briefly at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Bard College, he moved to Los Angeles in 1995 to head the photography area in the Department of Art at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he continues to teach.
<http://jameswelling.net>

Jennifer West (b. Topanga, CA) is a Los Angeles-based artist who makes films, performances, photographs, drawings, sculptural works, and zines. She employs various unique processes, subjecting film negative and leader to an eclectic range of idiosyncratic substances including nail polish, liquid eyeliner, deodorant, wine, spices, gelatin, alcohol, body glitter, paintballs, and hot springs water, as well as such physical interventions as skateboarding, smearing, crushing, drawing, and throwing. West is influenced by classical structuralist film, urban mythology, folklore, and popular culture, and combines everyday actions and materials to create hypnotic, fast-paced films. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at S1 Artspace, Sheffield, England (2012); Contemporary Art Museum, Houston (2010); Kunstverein Nuremberg, Germany (2010); Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2008); and White Columns, New York (2007), among elsewhere. Her work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, including at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013); Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (2013); Henry Moore Foundation, Leeds, UK (2012); MOCA, Cleveland (2012); Saatchi Gallery, London (2012); White Flag Projects, St. Louis (2011); White Columns, New York (2011); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2010); Seattle Art Museum (2010); Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (2009); Drawing Center, New York (2008); Aspen Art Museum (2008); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2008); CAPC Musee d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux, France (2007); Contemporary Art Museum, Detroit (2007); Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2007); ZKM Museum for New Media, Karlsruhe (2007); and Tate St. Ives (2007). Special projects include commissions for High Line Art, New York (2012); The Aspen Art Museum (2010); and the Turbine Hall at TATE Modern (2009). West was Artist in Residence at the MIT List Visual Arts Center in 2011. She earned her MFA at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena in 2004, and her BA in Film and Gender Studies at Evergreen State College, Olympia. She is an Assistant Professor at the Roski School of Fine Arts, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
<http://www.jweststudio.com>

Mario Ybarra, Jr. (b. 1972, Los Angeles) is a Los Angeles-based artist who incorporates sculpture, painting, installation, and performance into his work. Citing his childhood spent in the port community of Wilmington in Los Angeles as a continual source of inspiration, Ybarra's work resonates both locally and globally. Though much of Ybarra's work has been described as "Chicano art," he is purposefully resistant to such biographical categorizations, attempting to challenge any easy conflation of identity and aesthetics. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions such as *Double Feature*, Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles (2013); *Mario Ybarra, Jr.: The Tío Collection*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (2012); *Wilmington Good*, Cardi Black Box, Milan (2011); *Silver and*

Blacks, Michael Janssen Gallery, Berlin (2010); *Take Me Out... No Man Is An Island*, Art Institute of Chicago (2008); and *Black Squirrel Society*, Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York (2008). Ybarra has been included in numerous group exhibitions including *The Manifest Destiny Billboard Project*, organized by the Los Angeles Nomadic Division (2013–14); *Around The Table: Food, Creativity, and Community*, San Jose Museum of Art (2013); *Made in L.A.*, the Los Angeles Biennial organized by the Hammer Museum in collaboration with LAXART (2012); *Invisible Cities*, Instituto Cervantes, Madrid (2010); *Whitney Biennial*, New York (2008); *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2008); *Prague Biennale 3*, Czech Republic (2007); *The World as a Stage*, Tate Modern, London, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2007); *California Biennial*, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach (2006); and *Alien Nation*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2006). In 2008, Ybarra was awarded a Levitt Fellowship at Williams College, Massachusetts, and in 2011 he was the artist-in-residence at the Århus Kunstbygning Centre for Contemporary Art in Denmark. Ybarra earned his BFA from the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles in 1999, and an MFA from the University of California, Irvine in 2001.
<http://www.marioybarrajr.com>

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Trouble with the Index is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Curator of Exhibitions Joanna Szupinska-Myers.

Visit artsblock.ucr.edu for further details about the exhibition and related public programs.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND PRESS INQUIRIES

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501, and includes three venues: the California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. ARTSblock is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5pm. Admission is \$3, which includes entry to all three venues. Galleries are open late 6–9pm and admission is free during First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month. Film screenings are held on Fridays and Saturdays in the Culver Theater. The Culver Center opens 30 minutes prior to film screenings.

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FLASH! Job Piston
California Museum of Photography
November 9, 2013–February 22, 2014

Flash: Job Piston is the presentation of six works from "Reds" (2012-13), a series of photograms made by pressing light-sensitive darkroom paper to the surface of a glowing laptop screen, then, as the artists describes, "dipping the pixels into a chemical bath." This groundbreaking process produces intimate yet provocative red portraits, each one unique, which hover in a state both analog and digital.

Flash! features recent photo-based works by contemporary artists and is presented on the third floor of the CMP. The series is curated by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions.

CMP Projects: Claudia Joskowicz
California Museum of Photography
November 23, 2013–April 12, 2014

Sympathy for the Devil (2011) by Claudia Joskowicz depicts a reenacted encounter between two immigrant neighbors living in La Paz, Bolivia as they wordlessly pass one another in the elevator of their building. The installation is comprised of two video channels, one for each of the protagonists – an anonymous Polish Jew who fled Europe during World War II, and the notorious former Gestapo Captain Klaus Barbie – in this anecdote from the 1970s that has been passed down in the artist's family.

CMP Projects is an ongoing series of solo presentations on the second floor of the CMP. The series is curated by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions.

Sentry: Works by Joe Biel
Sweeney Art Gallery and Culver Center for the Arts
December 21, 2013–March 22, 2014

Sentry: Works by Joe Biel features large-scale drawings on paper and a monumental drawing installation specifically produced for the Culver Center of the Arts. Working primarily with watercolor, graphite, and color pencils, Biel's figurative drawings are loosely composed in panoramic landscapes with latent narratives that tamper with the complexity and irony of the human existence. In addition to the works on paper, visitors will be able to view Biel's new work in progress – a site-specific drawing that will encompass the grand atrium walls of the Culver Center. This large-scale installation drawing, *Sentry*, will be completed by the opening date of the exhibition on December 21, 2013.

Sentry: Works by Joe Biel is organized by UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Jennifer Frias, Associate Curator, Sweeney Art Gallery. UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) have provided support.

Barbara Morgan: Body Montage
California Museum of Photography
January 4–May 17, 2014

American photographer Barbara Morgan (1900-92) is most known for her photographs of luminaries in American modern dance in the 1940s and 50s such as choreographers Martha Graham, Pearl Primus, and Charles Weidman. Her photographs capture modern dance's sense of dramatic action characteristic of the time through her intimate portraits of choreographers and dancers. Her use of shadow and curvilinear line distills American modern dance as expressing a youthful, exuberant spirit reflective of national attitudes. Morgan also produced a series of photomontages –

in the 40s still an uncommon practice in the field of American fine art photography – in which she layered images of city buildings, parks, human bodies, and natural objects to make surreal, singular images. This exhibition proposes aesthetic and conceptual relationships between Morgan's photomontages and her dance photography. Both bodies of work synthesize movement, curving lines, and contrasting forms into expressive portraits of energetic action.

Barbara Morgan: Body Montage is organized by UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Harmony Wolfe, CMP Collections Assistant.

Flaws in the Diamond: Exploitation and Empire in South Africa, c. 1900
Selections from the Keystone-Mast Collection
California Museum of Photography
February 22–July 19, 2014

Flaws in the Diamond: Exploitation and Empire in South Africa, c. 1900 presents South Africa in forty pictures culled from the extraordinary riches of the Keystone-Mast Collection, part of the permanent collection of the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock. Organized in four sections, *Flaws in the Diamond* forms a valuable portrait of South Africa undergoing rapid social and political change at the beginning of the last century. This presentation offers a glimpse of the forces that would lead to apartheid, the system of racial segregation that would remain in place until 1994, and its eventual dismantling.

The California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock maintains the world's largest collection of original stereoscopic prints and negatives. The forty photographs presented as part of the exhibition *Flaws in the Diamond* were selected from the thousands held within the Keystone-Mast Collection, part of the museum's permanent collection since 1977.

Flaws in the Diamond is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock, and is guest curated by Thomas Cogswell, UCR Professor of History, with Santos Z. Roman, UCR graduate student in History.

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