

## The Photographic Idea: Reconsidering Conceptual Photography

*Afterimage* vol. 26 no. 5, March/April 1999

by Lucy Soutter

They were there simply to indicate a radical art that had already vanished. The photograph was necessary only as a residue for communication.

—Dennis Oppenheim on his use of photographs.(1)

This statement by Dennis Oppenheim introduces the paradox inherent in any discussion of photography within Conceptual Art. Since the mid-1960s, conceptual artists have denied any interest in photography per se. To hear the artists tell it, photography was only useful or interesting to them insofar as it was instrumental in conveying or recording their ideas. Time and again artists describe the photographs themselves as either brute information or uninflected documentation. For many years curators, critics and historians have corroborated this reductive understanding of the role of photography in Conceptual Art. Sidestepping the aesthetic properties of conceptual photographs is convenient; it simplifies the distinction between Conceptualism and the more material-based practices of Pop Art and Minimalism. Taking the artists at their word, writers have also been able to divorce conceptual photography from the history of photography more broadly, maintaining a rigid distinction between conceptual and fine art photography of the same moment.

As we know, however, the intentions of artists and the historical effects of their work are rarely synonymous. For example, artists who have benefited from the renewed critical and curatorial interest in Conceptual Art in the last decade have themselves resisted the label "conceptual."(2) This is understandable - no practicing artist wants to be pigeon-holed as an example of an historical movement. Yet the conceptual designation has been crucial to the historical understanding of this period of work. Along the same lines, the conceptualists' contrary stance on photography should not be accepted at face value. Despite their professed disregard for photography, the conceptualists participated in an important transformation of the medium, fueling a rise in the prominence of photography that attracted critical attention in the "Pictures" generation of the late 1970s and early 1980s.(3)

First-generation Conceptual Art is an important point of origin for the continuing success of photographs by artists who do not consider themselves to be photographers in the traditional sense.(4) The conceptual artists' very lack of investment in photography allowed them to generate new possibilities for the medium. However, they were not alone in this enterprise. Fine art photographers during the late 1960s such as Gary Winogrand and Lee Friedlander shared with the conceptualists an interest in identifying and subverting the conventions of photographic vision.

The refusal of conceptualists to take photography seriously on its own terms is rooted in the earliest definitions of their project. From the beginning, ideas were prioritized over the material form in which they were conveyed. Sol LeWitt provided a seminal formulation of this notion in his 1967 essay "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art": "In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work." LeWitt dismisses the material form of the piece as secondary, an "afterthought" so to speak: "When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art."<sup>(5)</sup> Due to its apparent immediacy, photography was an apt medium with which to pursue this idea-driven art.

Critic Lucy Lippard approached Conceptualism from a slightly different angle, coining the term "the dematerialization of the art object" in the late 1960s.<sup>(6)</sup> Framing conceptual works as a form of disembodied sculpture, the notion of dematerialization has been one of the main obstacles to the serious study of conceptual photography. Like LeWitt, Lippard acknowledges that conceptual works might take a physical form, including photographs, but she does not see the object as the site of the art idea. In the introduction to *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966-72* (1973), Lippard admits to a flaw in the idea of dematerialization, that "a piece of paper or a photograph is as much an object, or as 'material' as a ton of lead" but she sticks with the term because of her conviction that a "deemphasis on material aspects" is key to the conceptual project. Thus Lippard gives critical support to one of the central fallacies of Conceptualism. Text and photographs participate in the production of the work's meaning, but the existence of that form is repeatedly repressed or denied.

The analytic model of Conceptual Art that Joseph Kosuth provides in his 1973 essay "Art After Philosophy" is even more rigorous in undermining the visual, material aspects of the work of art. Playing an end-game with Clement Greenberg's pursuit of the self-referential art object, Kosuth imagines a completely self-contained, tautological artwork, framed in language: ". . . the propositions of art are not factual, but linguistic in character - that is, they do not describe the behavior of physical or even mental objects; they express definitions of art, or the formal consequences of definitions of art."<sup>(7)</sup> Recent writers, however, have begun to remark upon a blind spot in this analytic formulation of Conceptualism. As British art historian John Roberts points out in his 1997 book, *The Impossible Document: Photography and Conceptual Art in Britain 1966-76*, the majority of conceptual artworks contain photographs, unruly visual elements that cannot be adequately matched by or contained in discourse.<sup>(8)</sup> This dynamic is evident in Kosuth's own famous works such as *One And Three Chairs* (1965) in which the three instantiations of the word "chair" - a dictionary definition, a photograph and an actual chair - are not commensurable. The piece clearly demonstrates the failure of language to contain visual or physical form.

Although Kosuth and other conceptualists claimed not to be interested in photography, in fact photographic properties were at stake in much of their work. The conceptual work of the period provides a sustained exploration of the photographic

medium and its conventions. Such diverse artists as Jan Dibbets, John Baldessari and Oppenheim created work in which the idea and its specific material instantiation are both photographic. In other words, these pieces direct their conceptual interrogation towards photography as medium; they question what a photograph is and does. Not all conceptual works that use photographs address the properties of photography in such a direct way. Nonetheless, the non-art "look" of much conceptual photography should not be taken at face value. Deadpan style conceals an investigation that takes place in visual as well as linguistic terms.

Viewers unfamiliar with Dibbets's perspective corrections often assume that they are manipulated or montaged photographs. Perspective correction - square in grass, Vancouver, 1969 looks as if the photographer has cut out a square from a photograph of earth and pasted it on top of the image of the lawn. Closer observation reveals cast shadows on the top and left-hand side of the dirt square and pieces of string marking the edges of the shape that show that the shape is in fact a hole in the grass. This straight photograph can be understood by remembering what we know about the workings of photography: that the monocular vision of the camera transforms three-dimensional space into a two-dimensional perspectival design. The photograph illustrates that it is possible to anticipate this effect and reverse it, for example, by making an irregular trapezoidal shape (as cut in the grass by Dibbets) that the camera will render as a perfect square. The "idea" of this piece is a visual one that can be most effectively grasped by the audience in the process of viewing.

When interviewed about his work of this period, Dibbets described it as developing out of his troubled relationship with painting and the fixed viewing angle required by most canvases. Dibbets dismisses the photographs as unnecessary to the original intention of the work: "The documentation about the work isn't of real importance to me either. I've done lots of works without taking photographs."<sup>(9)</sup> Yet his documents have an independent existence as self-critical photographs. The most provocative part of the image is the area where photographic representation breaks down, forcing viewers to question their understanding of photographic perspective. The gaping dark square in the well-manicured lawn is disturbingly "wrong," especially when measured against the dutifully receding architecture. Dibbets makes a linguistic play on this wrongness by calling each piece a "correction," as if it is the camera that distorts and the artist who corrects. Perspective correction cuts to the heart of conventionalized photographic space and undermines our confidence in the transparency of the photographic index.

In Wrong (1967) Baldessari makes reference to a different photographic convention: that two shapes that touch in a photograph are understood as touching in the world. The image shows the artist standing on the sidewalk outside a suburban California ranch house. The viewing distance and symmetry of the photograph fit the rigid profile of the amateur snapshot, except that the subject is perfectly lined up with a palm tree, which therefore appears to grow out of his head. This faux pas is one that only the most careless shutterbug would make. Baldessari borrows the format of the image with its caption from photography "how-to" manuals, using the convention of "right" and "wrong" illustrations to skew formulaic art school aesthetics. Capitalizing

on the medium's potential to create perceptual confusion, Wrong undermines photography as a reliable system of representation.

Like Dibbets, Baldessari considered painting to be his frame of reference. He turned to photography in part because it seemed to be a way to free himself from painterly signifiers. He commented in a 1990 interview, "I thought, I'm not using paint, it's a photographic process, and so you can't claim that they're paintings . . . I wanted to be less artful than Rauschenberg or Warhol: this is a photograph, here's a text. That's it."<sup>(10)</sup> Bringing his photographic images and text (hand-lettered by a sign painter) together on canvas, Baldessari reinforces the reading of the works of this period as anti-painting. The image was made by coating the canvas with photoemulsion and projecting a 35mm negative directly onto it in the darkroom. This photographic process was experimental, crude and produced images of rather poor quality. Thus, the technique allowed Baldessari to avoid association with the traditional touch of painting, the pop slickness of photo-silkscreen or the glossy surface of fine art photography.

In Oppenheim's *Reading Position for Second Degree Burn* (1970) the artist's own body functions as a site for conceptual activity. The piece includes a linguistic, propositional caption: "Stage I, Stage II. Book, skin, solar energy. Exposure time: 5 hours. Jones Beach, 1970." This text sets up the work's conceptual parameters, but does not make the images redundant. The impact and humor of *Reading Position* relies upon the two photographs: the "before" image of the artist lying on the beach with a large open book resting on his bare chest and the "after" image, in which the artist's skin is visibly redder, except for a pale rectangle where the book had been. Oppenheim, also, discusses his piece in relation to painting: "The piece has its roots in the notion of colour change. Painters have always artificially instigated colour activity. I allowed myself to be painted, my skin became pigment. I could regulate its intensity through control of the exposure time."<sup>(11)</sup> In some ways, the photographs confirm this reference to painting - though as opposed to the sunburned skin, it is the white rectangle on the artist's chest that looks like a monochrome painting. Yet the piece is clearly photographic as well as painterly, as is clear from Oppenheim's reference to exposure time. In effect, the artist is using the book and the sun to create a photogram on his body.

The photography in Oppenheim's piece bears a special burden because it documents a performance, a mode in which the actions and experience of the artistic subject are themselves identified as a locus of artistic meaning. Photographs of performance or body art have an ambiguous status. By some, including Oppenheim himself, they are seen as mere records of a lost moment of authenticity. By others, they are seen as figurative works of art in and of themselves, gaining their authority by dint of the direct indexical relationship of the photograph to the original event.<sup>(12)</sup> *Reading Position* is a demonstration of the principle of indexicality. By comparing his body to a piece of photographic paper Oppenheim is giving the authority of personal experience to the index; he felt the effects of the sun leaving its physical trace on his body. As opposed to a faked or staged photograph (such as Dibbets's), the presumably painful image created on Oppenheim's body is incontrovertibly "real" - at

least to him. But Oppenheim also underlines the extent to which indexicality is a matter of degree, by contrasting the immediate effects of the sun on his skin to the more mediated process of photography. Comparatively, the photographic index is shown to be constructed rather than natural. Oppenheim signals this with the book, entitled *Tactics*, he chose to shield his chest.

In his essay on photography for the 1995 Conceptualism exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, photographer Jeff Wall takes the position of a critic. He states that Conceptualism did, in fact, explore the medium specificity of photography and that the movement contributed to the acceptance of photography as fine art. He asserts: "Conceptual art played an important role in the transformation of the terms and conditions within which art-photography defined itself and its relationships with the other arts, a transformation which established photography as an institutionalized modernist form evolving explicitly through the dynamics of its auto-critique." (13) Wall attributes this transformation to two factors. First, he sees photographic Conceptualism as having undermined the kinds of artistic subjectivity represented by photojournalism by offering a parodic reportage without event. Second, he argues that the work negated the technique and imagination of traditional fine art photography by substituting a pose of amateurism. As he describes it, the resulting photographs are so visually banal that they demand to be viewed with a new kind of intellectual seriousness. While Wall's overarching point about the impact of Conceptualism on photography is valid, his assessment of the status of the medium in the 1960s is debatable. Characteristics that he describes as unique to Conceptual Art were in fact much more pervasive in photography. Fine art photographers, as well as and perhaps more than conceptualists, defined their project against the professional mode of journalism. Many art photographers resisted the narrative legibility and compositional resolution of journalistic work and instead explored modes familiar to amateur photography.

The Conceptualists and the fine art photographers of the period were grappling with the high formalist theories of the 1950s, although through different channels. Conceptual artists often conceived their works in reaction to Greenberg's writing on formalist painting. Greenberg's own position on photography was dismissive; he only wrote one extended piece on photography - a scathing review of a 1946 Edward Weston exhibition. Greenberg saw photography's uses within an art context as very narrowly circumscribed. For him, the limitation upon the medium's artistic potential was its indexicality (although it was not a term he used himself). As he summarized the issue: "Photography is the most transparent of the art mediums devised or discovered by man. It is probably for this reason that it proves so difficult to make the photograph transcend its almost inevitable function as document, and act as a work of art as well." (14)

In Greenberg's view, photography's transparent relationship to the world undermines any attempts on the part of photographers to make autonomous works of art. A photograph that respects the obligations of its own medium would be anecdotal and literary. Greenberg exiles realism from painting, yet requires it in photography. In accordance with this opinion that photography ought to have "human interest,"

Greenberg finds Walker Evans's photographs to be exemplary. Weston's images, however, in attempting to become autonomous works of art through abstraction, fail to be self-referential. For Greenberg they are self-indulgently photographic, failing to show the true nature of photography and displaying an "excessive concentration on the medium." An overemphasis on the surface of the photograph offers only an "estranging coldness."<sup>(15)</sup> If the photograph placed emphasis on itself as index, rather than pointing outward to the world, it lapsed into a presence of its own. Greenberg considered medium specificity and formalism to be synonymous in painting. His analysis of photography, however, did not allow the medium any formal values of its own.

Unsurprisingly then, photographic aesthetics languished during the 1940s and '50s. While Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) curator Beaumont Newhall had begun to develop a formalist theory of photography in the 1930s, relying in particular on a binary opposition between tone and detail, he was replaced by Edward Steichen after World War II. Steichen's shows and publications, *The Family of Man* (1955) foremost among them, prioritized subject matter and did not hesitate to violate the form of photographs by cropping them, enlarging or grouping them theatrically in space. There was no real advocate of formalism in photography until John Szarkowski became Director of the Department of Photography at MoMA in 1962.<sup>(16)</sup> With a directive and desire to legitimate photography as a fine art, Szarkowski generated a transliteration of Greenberg's formalist aesthetics into photographic terms. He embraced the notion of medium specificity but rejected Greenberg's emphasis on the indexical essence of photography.

Szarkowski laid out his approach in 1966, in a brief but highly influential eponymous catalog essay for the exhibition "The Photographer's Eye." In it he distills the photographic medium to five properties: "The Thing Itself," "The Detail," "The Frame," "Time" and "Vantage Point." He defines "The Thing Itself" as the actual, the presence of reality in the photograph, what is called the index. While Greenberg describes transparency as the key defining characteristic of photography, Szarkowski seeks to undermine the power of the index by revealing its artificially conventionalized nature. He writes that our faith in the thing itself "is naive and illusory, but it persists."<sup>(17)</sup> For him, photographs offer an illusion of transparency, which need not serve as a limitation, but merely add a frisson of reality to the image. Identifying the trace of the real as one of the defining characteristics of photography, Szarkowski claims it as part of his formalist model, even though it is a semiotic rather than an aesthetic property of the medium. Similarly, "The Detail" is a category designed to refute the notion that photographs are fundamentally anecdotal. The term does not refer to the precision of photographs, but rather to their capacity to resist narrative. Szarkowski asserts that the fragmentation created by cropping photographs allows an image to function as a symbol rather than a story because it is cut off from spatial and temporal continuity. "The Frame" and "Vantage Point" are the two most dearly formal categories. The former refers to the edges of each image and the resulting geometric patterns created within the picture, while the latter describes the spatial relationship between camera and subject. "Time" also becomes a formal category for

Szarkowski; it refers to the lines and shapes created in the composition at the moment of exposure.

This brief overview of Szarkowski's formalist categories reveals that each is threatened by the presence of impinging non-formal concerns. The scheme presented in "The Photographer's Eye" was effective in legitimating a form of photographic modernism, complete with autonomous artworks and inspired authors. The theory was particularly useful to MoMA in allowing photographs made at any time for any reason to be judged aesthetically without reference to their original context. By daring to attempt to define photography in terms of medium specificity, Szarkowski opened the door to photographers making use of all photographic properties, including those that he deliberately repressed - indexicality, contingency and conventionality. These were precisely the properties foregrounded in the works of Szarkowski's protégés Winogrand and Friedlander.

In an untitled Winogrand photograph from the early 1970s, a middle-aged woman and a boy walk hand-in-hand toward a cannon. The picture is full of visual incident. It appears to have been taken with a wide-angle lens, allowing the photographer to incorporate a broad swath of space from a close vantage point. Reflective puddles show that it was taken on a rainy day. The wood planks of the ground and the word "boat" on a building indicate that the picture was made in a maritime setting. The figures are framed by buildings and cars, including a wildly painted Morris Minor. The photograph's force, however, derives from the cannon in the bottom right-hand corner, which points up at an angle towards the two figures in the center of the frame. The visual anecdote created by this composition is entirely an element of the photographer's position. Szarkowski saw Winogrand as constantly supplementing the subject matter that he found before him: "He believed that a successful photograph must be more interesting than the thing photographed."<sup>(18)</sup> In this case, the photograph's success resides in its creation of a visual anecdote out of unrelated elements in the world. While Szarkowski might see this as a triumph of the photographer's unique vision, it could also be read as a subversion of originality. Making use of the imaginary sight line between the old cannon and the figures, Winogrand is playing on the same photographic rules targeted by Baldessari in *Wrong*. As in that piece, the photographer relies upon a perceptual error to give the picture meaning.

Szarkowski writes that Winogrand would look through the viewfinder and if he saw a familiar image he would not take the photograph.<sup>(19)</sup> The critic reads this as a sign of genius, but we could also understand it as a surrender of control, especially given the extraneous fact that Winogrand often let curators select works themselves from his mountains of contact sheets. That Winogrand avoided composing his pictures suggests less that he wanted the naïveté of an amateur photographer than that he hoped to stumble upon someone else's amateur photographs and use them like readymades. Like the conceptualists, Winogrand exploits a de-skilled photographic aesthetic - though, in his case, with formal ends in mind. For Winogrand there is no linguistic content. The goal is to produce pictures that are interesting to look at specifically because they teeter on the brink of banality. In a process parallel to the

way conceptualists defined themselves against formalist painting, many of the fine art photographers of the 1960s and '70s set themselves up against the narrative richness and formal fullness of both journalistic and fine art photography.

In much of Friedlander's photography, the "wrong" model of photography is elevated to a signature style. In *Lafayette, Louisiana* (1968), Friedlander deliberately places a conspicuous vertical object, with no inherent value, in the foreground of the picture field, blocking our entry into the photographic space. While Baldessari's palm tree is read as a signifier of bad photography, Friedlander uses it as a formal leitmotif. With these obstacles, Friedlander repeatedly demonstrates his resistance to a professionalized photographic aesthetic. *Lafayette, Louisiana* is one of several parade images in which the photographer avoids conventional frontal views and offers instead an anti-journalistic rear view of the event. In this case we see the backs of three uniformed figures and a lone majorette. Any importance the event may have had, other than as a configuration of shapes in space, is lost. At the base of the telephone or electrical pole, we see the shadow of a head, presumably the photographer's. This inclusion of Friedlander's shadow or reflection is characteristic of many other photographs. The projection of the author into the plane of the image is another violation of journalistic practice. With the shadow, Friedlander shows that the work is intended to be self-reflexive and subjective. If it were not so completely associated with Szarkowski and his formalist approach, this series of self-portraits might be seen as a kind of performance piece.

In her discussion of the origins of postmodern art, art historian Abigail Solomon-Godeau describes the decline of photographic formalism in the 1960s and '70s and the corresponding rise of interest in photographic works by artists who were able to approach the medium without the theoretical or institutional baggage of photographic modernism.<sup>(20)</sup> She sees the fine art photography of the period as characterized by "exhaustion, academicism and repetition."<sup>(21)</sup> This state resulted not only from the failure of Szarkowski-style formalism, but also from the photographers' exploration of medium-specific, but non-formal characteristics of their medium. Winogrand and Friedlander simultaneously fetishize and collapse form in their photographs. Event is indistinguishable from non-event, bad timing is celebrated and tropes of photographic "failure" are used as signatures of a newly self-aware, self-critical tendency. These works were certainly framed institutionally as high modernism and were promoted with an emphasis on mastery and originality. Nonetheless, the photographs have similarities with the conceptual works of the same period and the boundaries between them were sustained with a certain amount of anxiety. Conceptualists and fine art photographers shared common attitudes: neither was content continuing reliance on the transparency of the photographic index or on the naturalness of familiar photographic conventions.

Photographic postmodernism owes a debt to both austere photographic Conceptualism and MoMA-style photographic formalism. Artists such as Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger and Louise Lawler advanced the conceptual exploration of the nature of art into a critique of the political, institutional and semiotic conditions of representation. At the same time, their work has a formal component, relying

explicitly on meanings produced within the pictures themselves. Sherman's "Untitled Film Stills" of the late 1970s, for example, interrogate the conditions of photography from both angles. Like Dibbets, Baldessari or Oppenheim, Sherman preconceives a conceptual project that she then carries out with photographs. Alleged stills from films that never existed, the "Untitled Film Stills" remind us yet again that the photographic index is illusory and that our vision is powerfully influenced by convention. Like Winogrand, Sherman plays with a found photographic aesthetic, though she creates seemingly familiar, clichéd images rather than apparently flesh ones. Like Friedlander, she uses her own presence in the images as a formal leitmotif. In her case, however, self-portraiture does not point toward the photographer's own subjectivity, but rather to a gendered critique of the gaze. Photography produced since the 1970s has relied on discoveries made in the work of the conceptualists and the formalist photographers of the 1960s. While the former worked in opposition to Greenberg's formalist scheme for painting, and the latter were influenced by Szarkowski's version of photographic formalism, together they demonstrated that medium specificity for photography could encompass both images and ideas. Inverting Greenberg's criticism of photography as anecdotal, they showed that a system of reference to the outside world, indexicality with all its perceptual tricks and pitfalls, was itself a strength of the medium. Whether tempering photographic modernism with the look of amateurism, like Winogrand and Friedlander, or making use of a banal instrumental aesthetic, like the conceptualists, 1960s practitioners opened stylistic avenues for photography while at the same time generating new subject matter within the dynamics of photographic representation. Contingency, which both Greenberg and Szarkowski identified as a central weakness of photography as a modernist medium, earned photography a key role in contemporary art.

This essay was first published in *Afterimage* vol. 26, no. 5 (March/April 1999), pp. 8-10.

#### NOTES

1. Dennis Oppenheim, cited by Alison de Lima Greene, "Dennis Oppenheim: No Photography," *Spot* Vol. 12, no. 1 (Spring 1993), p. 5.
2. Here I am thinking in particular of the panel discussion "When Art Became Ideas: Rethinking the Late 60s and Early 70s" moderated by Robert C. Morgan at the School of Visual Arts in New York City on March 12, 1998, in which Dan Graham, Lawrence Weiner, Robert Barry and Adrian Piper expressed their ambivalence towards art historical labels assigned by the academy.
3. For one of the first discussions of postmodern photography see Douglas Crimp's essay "Pictures," first published in *October* no. 8 (Spring 1979), pp. 75-88.
4. For a discussion of the peculiar art world status of photographs made by non-photographers see Michael Starenko, "On Photography by Artists," *Artpaper* Vol. 9, no. 2, p. 8.
5. Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967), p. 8.

6. Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," *Art International* Vol. 12, no. 2 (February 1968), pp. 31-36. Lippard reiterated the term as the subtitle of her anthology, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966-72* (New York: Praeger, 1973).
7. Joseph Kosuth, "Art After Philosophy," in Gregory Battcock, ed., *Idea Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Dutton, 1973), p. 84.
8. John Roberts, "Photography, Iconophobia and the Ruins of Conceptual Art," *The Impossible Document: Photography and Conceptual Art in Britain 1966-76* (London: Camerawork, 1997), p. 9.
9. Jan Dibbets, interview with *Avalanche* 1 (Fall 1970), p. 37.
10. John Baldessari cited in Coosje van Bruggen, *John Baldessari* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), p. 29.
11. "Dennis Oppenheim Interviewed by Willoughby Sharp," *Studio International* 182, no. 938 (November 1971), p. 188.
12. For a discussion of the production of authenticity in performance and performance documentation see Mary Kelly, "Re-viewing Modernist Criticism," in Brian Wallis, ed., *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), pp. 87-103.
13. Jeff Wall, "'Marks of Indifference': Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art," in Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer, eds., *Reconsidering the Object of Art: 1965-75* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1995), p. 247.
14. Clement Greenberg, "The Camera's Glass Eye: Review of an Exhibition of Edward Weston," in John O'Brian, ed., *Clement Greenberg, Collected Essays and Criticism, Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 60.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
16. For an overview of the institutionalization of fine art photography in the United States see Christopher Phillips, "The Judgment Seat of Photography," in Richard Bolton, ed., *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989), pp. 15-46.
17. John Szarkowski, *The Photographer's Eye* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 12.
18. John Szarkowski, *Winogrand: Figments from the Real World* (New York MoMA, 1988), p. 21.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
20. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Photography After Art Photography," in *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 103-23.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY. From the online book *Photographic Psychology: Image and Psyche* by John Suler. We live in an age of concepts and images. Consider images in magazines that attempt. In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions. Strike two against photography as conceptual art. Fortunately, there is no strike three and you're out. In fact, I'd like to step into the game here and call a foul. Photo-Secession held its own exhibitions and published *Camera Work*, a pre-eminent quarterly photographic journal, until 1917. 6. Biography Cont. Stieglitz's camera work ended in 1937 due to heart disease. No longer concerned with photographs that looked like paintings, Stieglitz now emphasized modern art and photographs that looked like the work of a camera rather than a paintbrush. He added concerns of modern art like line, shape and balance. 26. Part Two: Influence a Publisher and Gallery Owner. 27. Getting Photography Published Stieglitz was the leader of the movement, started the magazine *Camera Work*. He would publish the works of artists whom he considered representative for the movement. Cover of *Camera Work*, No 2, 1903. Conceptual photography is a type of conceptual art is a photography genre in which the artist makes a photograph of a concept or illustrates an idea. Usually the conception of the idea precedes the realization of the photography. Creative photos are invaluable asset for any professional designer. However when it comes to finding the right photo; one can easily spend hours searching for it. So here I have some imaginative examples of conceptual photography. You may be interested in the following modern related articles as well.