Artistic Photography

Although by the late 19th century photography had become accepted in both Britain and America as a minor visual art - due in part to the promotional efforts of magazines like "American Amateur Photographer", as well as bodies like the "Society of Amateur Photographers", and the "Society of Amateur Photographers of New York", - several photographic artists were keen to show that the new medium could be just as artistic as other types of art, like drawing and painting.

Two such artists were **Alfred Stieglitz** (1864-1946) and **Edward Steichen** (1879-1973). Both were instrumental in helping to make photography a fine art, and Stieglitz in particular (and also his wife, Georgia O'Keeffe) was responsible for introducing it into museum collections. A landmark event occurred in 1902, with Stieglitz's formation in America of **Photo-Secession**, an association of creative photographers, and the publication of its magazine ***Camera Work*** (1902-17), which rapidly became a forum for modern art of all types. In 1905, Stieglitz and Steichen founded the "291" gallery in New York, a venue specializing in avant-garde art, notably photographs, paintings and sculptures.

Venetian Canal (1894) by Alfred Stieglitz

Pictorialism (c.1885-1915)

While Stieglitz and Edward Steichen were doing their best to promote photography as a full-blown art form, **Pictorialism** - the first major style of photographic art - was becoming high fashion among lens-based artists, around the turn of the century. Pictorialism referred to photographs that were effectively "created" in the dark room. Instead of recording the image of a particular subject, the photographer manipulated the printing process, in order to create the desired effect. For a pictorialist cameraman, a photograph was something to be manipulated just like a painter manipulated his canvas and palette of paints. Among the most famous pictorial photographers were Man Ray - noted for his **rayographs** - F. Holland Day, Clarence H. White, William Notman, Sidney Carter, Hugo Henneberg, Ogawa Kazumasa. Although Pictorialism enabled experimental artists like Man Ray to take photography to a new level of creativity, as an art form it proved disappointing, since most of the creativity had little to do with camera work, but involved the manipulation of chemicals and instruments in the dark room (also the German Dada photomontage artists **Raoul Hausmann** and **John Heartfield**, as well as the innovative but controversial camera artist and filmmaker **Leni Riefenstahl**, who was associated with Nazi art in the form of propagandist pictorialism).

Clarence H. White "A Boy with a Camera Box"

Sharp Focus Modernism

As an influential style, Pictorialism faded after 1920, being superceded by the new idiom of photographic Modernism, as the public began to prefer more **sharply-focused** images. Despite the disappointment of Pictorialism, photography gained in artistic status from its new sharper-focus, due to the evocative landscape photography of **Edward Weston** and Ansel Adams, as well as the **Precisionism** of **Charles Sheeler**, which he explored in his famous series of photographs of the Ford Motor Co's River Rouge Car Plant in Michigan, and the Cubist-inspired works of **Paul Strand**. Modern photographers who have continued this tradition include **Bernd and Hilla Becher**, the influential husband and wife team who founded the Dusseldorf School, whose followers include the postmodernist camera artist **Andreas Gursky**.

Portrait of Nahui Olin.
Photographed by Edward Weston.

20th-Century Portraiture

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the photograph began replacing the painting as the modern form of portraiture. During the following century, as camera technology improved, photographic artists extended the medium to embrace a variety of different types of portraits, notably fashion and street portraits, as well as the more conventional formal portraits. Fashion portraiture was pioneered by such highly talented artists as: **Irving Penn**, **Helmut Newton**, **Richard Avedon**,**Patrick Demarchelier**, **Mario Testino**, **Nick Knight**, and **David LaChapelle**. Street (or 'genre') portraits were the province of artists like **Diane Arbus** (1923-1971), **Nan Goldin**; while more conventional portraits were developed by modernists like **Cecil Beaton**, **Norman Parkinson**, **Andy Warhol**, and **Annie Leibovitz**. The German-American photographer **Hans Namuth** introduced a new dynamic approach to portraiture with his photos of the controversial painter Jackson Pollock at work in his studio.

Photojournalism

Now a major branch of modern illustration in newspapers, magazines and online media, news photography has always attracted high calibre camera artists capable of creating a pictorial narrative. Some of the greatest photojournalists include: **Robert Capa** , **Larry Burrows**,**Don McCullin** and **Steve McCurry**.

Albino Boy, Biafra (1969)
Photographed by Don McCullin

Stieglitz: 1924-46

By 1924, Stieglitz's exhibitions and writings in support of photography as an artistic medium were beginning to have an impact. In the same year, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts acquired a collection of 27 of his photographs: it was the first time a major American art museum had included photographs in its permanent collection. Stieglitz himself was consumed by two things: the promotion of Georgia O'Keeffe's art, and also his three hundred or so photographic studies of her - many of which were female nudes - and the promotion of high quality modernist American art, including fine art photography such as the black-and-white lens-based images of Ansel Adams, for whom he put on one of the first shows in 1936. In 1937, the Cleveland Museum of Art held the first major exhibition of Stieglitz's own photography.

Edward Steichen: 1946-62

Stieglitz's partner in "291", Steichen was a photographer for *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* during the period 1923–1938, during which he was the best known and highest paid lens-based artist in the world. After the war, he was appointed Director of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MOMA) until 1962. A highly influential figure, he did a huge amount to raise the status of photography among American institutions and the public. In 1955, for instance, he curated the exhibition known as *The Family of Man*, which toured to 69 countries, and was visited by 9 million people.

John Szarkowski: 1962-91

In 1962, Edward Steichen hand-picked the photographer, curator, historian, and critic John Szarkowski (1925-2007) to be his successor as Director of Photography at MOMA, a position Szarkowski held until 1991. Awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, as well as numerous one-man shows, he published several seminal books, including *Looking at Photographs* - a practical handbook on how to write about photographs, which is still required reading in the best art schools. A lecturer at Harvard, Yale, Cornell, and New York University, he was one of the most successful advocates of artistic photography.

taken and adapted from http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/

Artistic Photography

Reading Comprehension

1. By the late 19th century photography was not accepted in both Britain and America as a minor visual art.

T / F / DS

2. Stieglitz's magazine (1902-17) was called Photo-Secession.

T / F / DS

3. Stieglitz and Steichen founded the "291" gallery in New York, in which all the best artists from the country gathered.

T / F / DS

4. "Pictorialism - the first major style of photographic art - was becoming high fashion among lens-based artists, <u>around the turn of the century</u>."
What does the underlined part of the sentence refer to?

a) the end of the century
b) the beginning of the century
c) the mid part of the century

5. Pictorialist cameramen

a) manipulated the printing process, in order to create the undesired effect
b) did not manipulate the printing process, in order to create the desired effect
c) manipulated the printing process, in order to create the desired effect

6. Who was associated with Nazi art in the form of propagandist pictorialism?

a) Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield, and Leni Riefenstahl
b) Raoul Hausmann and John Heartfield
c) Leni Riefenstahl

7. "Pictorialism <u>faded</u> after 1920."
    What does the underlined part of the sentence refer to?

a) it stopped right after 1920
b) it was slowly loosing in its importance after 1920
c) it was slowly becoming more important after 1920

8. Which of the photographers produced a series of photographs of the Ford Motor Co's River Rouge Car Plant in Michigan?

a) Ansel Adams
b) Paul Strand
c) Charles Sheeler

9. Andreas Gursky was a camera artist who

a) established the Dusseldorf School
b) firstly was a Cubist-inspired postmodernist
c) followed the Becher team

10. Fashion and street portraits were the only types of portraits to be embraced by photographic artists during the XX century.

T / F / DS

11. Andy Warhol pioneered Street (or 'genre') portraits.

T / F / DS

12. News photography is now a major branch of modern illustration in newspapers, magazines and online media.

T / F / DS

13. The first time a major American art museum included photographs in its permanent collection was...

a) in 1936
b) in 1924
c) in 1937

14. The first post-war Director of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, New York was

a) Edward Steichen
b) Alfred Stieglitz
c) John Szarkowski

15. "Edward Steichen <u>hand-picked</u> the photographer, curator, historian, and critic John Szarkowski (...)"
In other words, ...

a) Edward Steichen taught Szarkowski how to use hands skilfully when taking photos.
b) Edward Steichen gave manual instructions to Szarkowski on how to take photos.
c) Edward Steichen himself chose Szarkowski for the job.

HOW THE GORGEOUS COSTUMES IN ANNA KARENINA WERE DESIGNED

1. Watch the video **CREATING THE STUNNING COSTUMES OF ANNA KARENINA** at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpCEzsUwIIQ

2. Watch the video again and answer the following question in detail:

How were the costumes used to build the characters in the movie?

- 1870s and 1950s mix: _____

_____

- Anna: _____

_____

_____

_____

- Betsy: _____

_____

- Karenin: _____

_____

- Princess Myagkaya: _____

_____

- Countess Wronskaya: _____

_____

- Count Wronsky and Russian officers: _____

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