

# arts1810

basic black and white photography

CCRI

Fall 2013

3.00 credit hours

section 152: MW 12:00-1:50pm

Flanagan Campus

matthew swarts

[mwswarts@ccri.edu](mailto:mwswarts@ccri.edu)

617.571.2883



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## what is photography for?

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This is a studio course that will introduce you to black and white photography. Over the course of the semester you are likely to discover that photography can be part art, part science, and (perhaps most wonderfully) still part magic. This class will make you a technically competent photographer, as we will cover a range of important technical information. My fundamental interest in photography lies in its relationship to the fine arts, and today we will begin a semester-long discussion about several more abstract ideas related to the process of making artwork. My hope is that by semester's end we will share a similar enthusiasm for how photographs cut through the world, as well as an appreciation for how photography can be one of the most useful tools for examining experience.

Just as the earliest developers of the photographic process accidentally began their work, we will start by making images without either a camera or a negative. From there we will begin a careful, several week-long investigation into how the basic 35mm camera works, covering all aspects of picture-making—from exposure to negative development, to printing, to final presentation. At the end of the semester we will collaborate on an edited portfolio (with each member of the class contributing an image) as a memento of our work. As we proceed through the semester, we will develop a critical methodology and a vocabulary for looking at and talking about photographs. We will constantly be viewing the work of other artist-photographers, making visits to museums and galleries, and deepening an ongoing discussion about photographs and their special connection to consciousness.



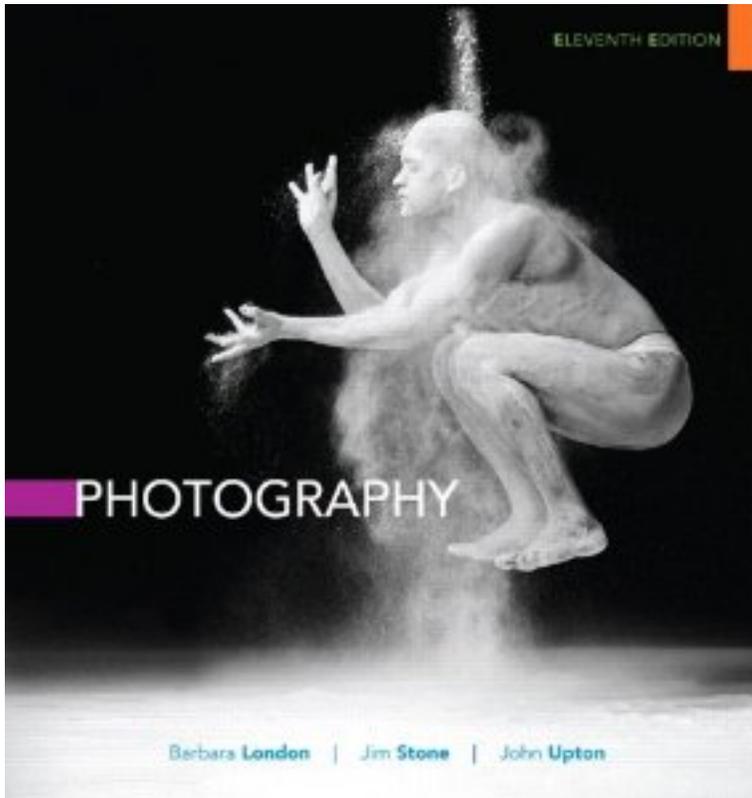
Joseph Koudelka



A word about critiques: each week or at least every other week, we will try to make time to discuss each other's work. This will take the form of a discussion where each of us should have an equal footing, with myself serving as something of a moderator. From the beginning, you should try your best to speak from your hearts and to learn from each other's comments. Please respect each other's voices—often many of the true gems of a workshop experience come from your peers. Remember from the outset when discussing someone else's work to keep comments and criticisms as constructively honest and helpful as possible. This is very important. Hopefully, when we look at pictures, we will be looking at and talking about art. So please remember: *in matters of art, there are no facts, only opinions.* Please act accordingly.

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## Recommended texts



**ISBN-10: 0205933807**

[http://www.amazon.com/Photography-11th-Edition-Barbara-London/dp/0205933807/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1376410891&sr=8-1&keywords=london+upton+photography](http://www.amazon.com/Photography-11th-Edition-Barbara-London/dp/0205933807/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1376410891&sr=8-1&keywords=london+upton+photography)

[http://www.amazon.com/Photography-10th-Edition-Barbara-London/dp/0205711499/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1376410776&sr=8-2&keywords=london+upton+photography](http://www.amazon.com/Photography-10th-Edition-Barbara-London/dp/0205711499/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1376410776&sr=8-2&keywords=london+upton+photography)

Please note you may purchase (or rent) either the 10<sup>th</sup> or the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of this book, and that this purchase is recommended, not required.

*Also:*

Barrett, Terry, *Criticizing Photographs* (2005)

Horenstein Henry, *Beyond Basic Photography*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1977.

Adams, Ansel, *The Print and The Negative*. (both) Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1983.

Goldberg, Vicki, *Photography In Print*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1981.

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. and Sontag, Susan, *On Photography*.



Michael Ackerman

### Schedule/Semester-At-A-Glance

Week 1: (September 4)  
 Week 2: (September 9)  
 Week 3: (September 16)  
 Week 4: (September 23)

Week 5: (September 30)

Week 6: (October 7)

Week 7: (October 16)

Week 8: (October 21)

Week 9: (October 28)

Week 10: (November 4)

Week 11: (November 11)

Week 12: (November 18)

Week 13: (November 25)

Week 14: (December 2)

Week 15: (December 9)

Introduction

Photograms/Camera Obscura/Pinhole

Light: Film Exposure and Processing

Contact Sheets/First Prints

Sense of Place

No Friends, All Strangers/

Contrast and Density

No Ideas But In Things/

Burning and Dodging and other tricks

Self Portrait/Making Final Prints

The Constructed Image

Bleaching and Toning

Bleaching and Toning

Open Assignment I

Open Assignment II

Presentation: Spotting and Matting

Thanksgiving!

Open Assignment IV

**F i n a l R e v i e w**

## Requirements



luis gispert

•A word at the outset: **this class will challenge you.**

•Take things seriously from the beginning, and I promise you will find your time spent here rewarding, engaging, and perhaps even fun.

•You must come to class each week, be prepared with all the relevant materials, and complete all the assignments. Assignments are given based upon the technical, formal, and theoretical material discussed each week in class. Late assignments are your responsibility and will not, in most cases, be discussed in class the following week. If

you miss an assignment one week, you are expected to make it up by the end of the following week, knowing that work turned in a week late drops your grade for that assignment by one letter grade.

Assignments not completed after this period result in an incomplete for that class, even if you were in attendance. More than two such incompletes and you will receive an incomplete for the whole semester.

•The class weblog is located at <http://arts1810.wordpress.com>

Each week you will be responsible for uploading work via dropbox.com both as a means for sharing and a record of the semester's progress.

•Assignments are detailed verbally in class and accompanied by an emailed pdf file. Keep this in mind, for although all the material will be available online, you need to be present in class or have a friend relay information to you to know the assignment for coming weeks. You will always have something to do for this class, so allot several hours per week for making your work both in the field and in the lab. These facilities get heavy traffic, so plan ahead and schedule your time in the lab accordingly. It is your responsibility to make arrangements each week to get into the lab to make your work. After we all have proper materials and access, excuses about lab crowds or an inability to access facilities will not be tolerated.

•Photocopied readings will be provided as handouts each week, or will be discussed and referred to in their PDF format. Occasionally, we will read and discuss them as a group, but they are

intended as an optional but highly recommended supplement to our class time. I hope you will find ways to make use of them both within and outside the scope of this class.

- In accordance with College policy, I will use your CCRI college email address (@ccri.edu) to communicate with you about all course related matters.
- One short paper will accompany an assignment investigating the work of an artist who has influenced your work.
- Attendance: No greater than **two** absences will be tolerated. Miss more than two classes—lecture or lab and regardless of excuse—and you receive an automatic incomplete, without exception.
- Students are expected to read and understand CCRI's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in the *CCRI Catalog*. Members of the CCRI community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who are suspected of violating this policy will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.
- Grading: You will receive a grade for each assignment, including the final review, based on the following scale:

**C=Satisfactory.** Work is complete but wholly lacking engagement and originality.

**B=Good.** Complete work with some evidence of originality, technical competence, and thought beyond merely getting things done.

**A=Outstanding.** Work shows clear evidence of originality, passion, and engagement. Technical and conceptual elegance; several noteworthy steps beyond merely going through the motions to complete the assignment.

**Incomplete=Unacceptable.** Assignment must be redone (see above) or incomplete will carry over to final grade.

(Note: there are no "+" or "-" symbols next to these grades. None will be given. Everything is A, B, C, or incomplete until the final grade is averaged.)

Your final class grade will be based upon individual grades for the following criteria:

Attendance	10%
Class Participation	20%
Completion of Assignments	20%
Short Paper/Influence Assignment	10%
Final Review	40%

*Note: if you require course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability, please email me immediately to set up an appointment to meet during office hours.*

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## Materials and Facilities



Mariko Mori

Parts of this class will be expensive. By the third week of class, **each** of you is expected to have the following materials:

- 1) **Fully operational 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera** capable of fully manual operation. Brand and age of your camera is not important so long as the camera itself is fully functional and capable of full manual operation (ability to set focus, shutter speed, aperture, ASA/ISO (film speed), and exposure compensation by hand (that is: not computer assisted or automatic!).
- 2) **Fully functional 50mm lens** for your camera (and/or equivalent). Note: note if you have a zoom lens be certain it can be set at 50mm! No other focal lengths will be tolerated.
- 3) **Fully operational and accurate exposure meter**: most cameras have a meter built-in, but if yours does not you are responsible for having a meter that works correctly. This is essential to accurate exposure of your film.
- 4) **At least 15 rolls of Kodak Tri-X Black and White Film (ASA 400).**
- 5) **100 sheet box of Ilford Multigrade Warmtone Resin Coated Paper (8x10", pearl).**

[http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/153050-REG/Ilford\\_1902523\\_Multigrade\\_Warmtone\\_RC\\_8x10\\_100.html](http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/153050-REG/Ilford_1902523_Multigrade_Warmtone_RC_8x10_100.html)

This paper is remarkably versatile and responds well to toners.

6) **Apron or smock:** if you like your clothes, invest in something to cover them while in the darkroom. Fixer and developer stains can be permanent.

7) **Plastic negative sleeves for 35mm film.** These are essential for storage and protecting your film from damage.



Sally Mann

Purchasing equipment and supplies is relatively easy through the internet. Perhaps the cheapest of all available photographic supply houses is B&H Photo Video (<http://www.bhphotovideo.com/>), or (800)606.6969. Electronic bargains are everywhere, however. The best strategy may be to look at equipment in local electronics stores and then order from an internet supply house. Ask for my help if you are uncertain of what to buy.

- If you are having problems with facilities or equipment, please contact me by phone either in my office, cell, or at home, or by email. If I am not available, please ask either Professor Mark Zellers (401) 825-2068 or Leslie Florio (401) 825-2220 in the equipment office for help.

- If there is a facilities or a health related emergency, please call the Campus Police Department (401-333-7035) immediately.

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## Looking at Images

The web is an incredible resource for looking at work. As part of each class we will look at interesting spaces for web and digital art, and I will include url links in emails and assignments for you to explore on your own. Try to keep an open mind, many of these sites depart from traditional photography (and traditional exhibition space) in interesting ways. I hope viewing them will convince you that nearly everything is possible.

To get you started, check out:

<http://flakphoto.com>  
<http://aperture.org>  
<http://lightwork.org>  
<http://vimeo.com/channels/developphoto>  
<http://www.jmcolberg.com/weblog/>  
<http://www.magnumphotos.com>  
<http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/photobooth/>  
<http://lightbox.time.com>  
<http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/>  
<http://www.rhizome.org/>

Books and periodicals are also terrific ways to encounter work. There is no substitute, however, for experiencing original works and actual installations by artists. Over the course of the semester we will be making several visits to local museums, galleries, and artist's studios to look at work. But if you are already interested please don't wait for me to tell you where and when to go! Art resources in Providence and Boston will offer world class viewing opportunities. Exhibition listings appear regularly in The Boston Globe, The Phoenix, The New York Times, The Village Voice, Time Out New York, and The New Yorker, among other publications. Check them out regularly, especially when you travel.

Your CCRI identification card will gain you discounted, if not completely free admission to most art institutions. Take advantage of this often! Some places to think about visiting include:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston: <http://mfa.org>  
Brown University: <http://brown.edu>  
The Rhode Island School of Design: <http://risd.edu>  
Harvard University: <http://harvard.edu>  
The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston: <http://icaboston.org>  
The Photographic Resource Center: <http://prc.org>  
The Massachusetts College of Art and Design: <http://massart.edu>  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art: <http://www.metmuseum.org/>  
The Museum of Modern Art: <http://www.moma.org/>  
The International Center for Photography: <http://www.icp.org/>  
The Whitney Museum : <http://www.whitney.org/index.php>  
The Guggenheim Museum: <http://www.guggenheim.org/>  
The Brooklyn Museum of Art: <http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/>  
P.S. 1 Contemporary Arts Center: <http://www.ps1.org/>

Plus Many Commercial Galleries, with exhibitions listed in The Boston Globe, The Phoenix, The New York Times, The New Yorker, TimeOut New York, and other publications. Please ask me for resources if you are traveling to galleries and/or museums in other cities.



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### Photographic Books and Artist's Monographs

Books by or about photographers are often wonderful ways to experience work. They are, however, difficult to locate in general libraries or conventional bookstores. Museums and galleries are often a better source for hard-to-reach titles. Even though Amazon.com will often have most titles at great discounts, it's worth it to call Photo-Eye (address below) and request a free monthly photo-specific book catalog. At the very least, it will keep you up to date on monograph publication. Photo-eye, incidentally, also specializes in hard to find or out of print books:

Photo-Eye Books, 376 Garcia Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. (800) 227-6941  
([www.photoeye.com](http://www.photoeye.com))

International Center of Photography Bookstore: <http://www.icp.org/>

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## Periodicals and Journals

The following fine art photography periodicals should be available in Frost Library and better bookstores in the area. Search for subscription information on their web pages if you can't locate the actual magazine. Digital artists may not be as well represented in print as they are on the web. Still worth at least a browse are:

*Aperture*

*Portfolio*

*Blind Spot*

*Big*

*Contact Sheet*

*See*

*AfterImage*

*ArtForum*

*Art in America*

and *Creative Camera*

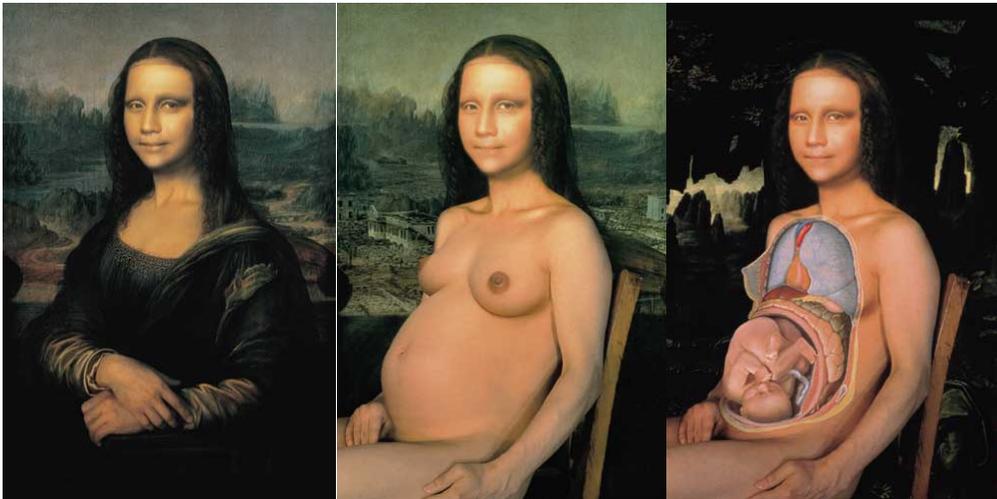
For the best deals on technical materials cameras, darkroom equipment, and other want ad listings for just about every variation of photographic equipment, consult:

*Shutterbug*

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## A final word

You know by now that some aspects of photography can be very technical. I will try my best to make things as simple as possible. If you have difficulty with a particular skill or operation, please don't be discouraged. Ask for help! Some things take a very long time to master. Your time in this course should be in the spirits of fun and self-discovery. Try to help each other.



yasumasa morimura

"Do not hurry; do not rest" --Goethe