SEEING SLOWLY: THE ANTI-SELFIE

Photography
Sue Barr

TERM 1 - Weds, AM SESSION – 0900 -1200 (BST)
TERM 2 - Weds, PM SESSION – 1300-1600 (BST)

The American photographer Minor White claimed that all photographs are essentially self-portraits and the prevalence of the ‘selfie’ in contemporary culture would lead us to believe they are one and the same, but the ‘selfie’ is not reflective or a considered study, it is spontaneous and ephemeral.

This course will explore the precisely constructed image, where by engaging with the slowness of photography, each student will fully control image composition, embracing ideas of memory, identity and fiction within the construction of the anti-selfie portrait.

Every week, prior to the timetabled class, students will make a maximum of 5 photographs which must be printed photographs in time for presentation and discussion in the weekly classes.

A selection of the photographs made each week will be curated into a final project in the form of a physical printed book. Using A4 home printers, we will explore simple ‘lo-fi’ fanzine aesthetics and bookbinding techniques to produce the ultimate ‘anti-selfie photo album’.

Core learning issues include: technical camera controls, RAW file digital processing, composition, observation, photographic seeing, visual language, aesthetics, evaluation and critical decision making.

Technical requirements: Digital Camera, A4 printer
WEEKLY SESSIONS

Week 1:
Presentation: Introduction to history of photography
Digital camera workshop - technical camera controls, photographic composition

Week 2:
Presentation: Birgit Jürgenssen, Germaine Krull and the influence of the Düsseldorf School
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 3:
Presentation: The Americans: Cindy Sherman, Francesca Woodman and Lee Friedlander et al.
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 4:
Presentation: Nick Waplington, Richard Billingham and British photographic realism
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 5:
Presentation: Andy Warhol, David Hockney and the influence of painting of self-portraiture
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 6:
Presentation: Zumi Miyazaki, Izima Kaoru, and contemporary Japanese photography
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 7:
Presentation: Zanele Muholi, Samuel Fosso, Malick Sidibe and the African school of photography
Reviewing & Editing of previous week’s photographs

Week 8:
Final Jury presentation

Reading List:
Ways of Seeing
John Berger

On Photography
Susan Sontag

Photography: The Key Concepts
David Bate

The Nature of Photographs
Stephen Shore

Why People Photograph
Robert Adams

Beauty in Photography
Robert Adams
Thoughts on Landscape
Frank Gohlke

So Present, So Invisible. Conversations on Photography
David Campany

Luigi Ghirri

Sue Barr is Head of Photography at the AA and holds a PhD from the Royal College of Art. She works internationally and is currently exhibiting at Museum Morsbroich in Leverkeusen. Her latest book, ‘The Architecture of Transit’, was published by Hartmann Projects in May.