

Biennale

The Lives and Loves of Images

29/02–26/04/2020

Kunsthalle Mannheim

Walker Evans Revisited

Of all the celebrated photographers of the last century, the one who remains the most relevant today is Walker Evans (1903–1975). Some of his images are among the best known in the history of the medium. Direct and generous, analytical, yet lyrical, carefully composed, but unforced, the ways in which he photographed left the door open for countless others to follow.

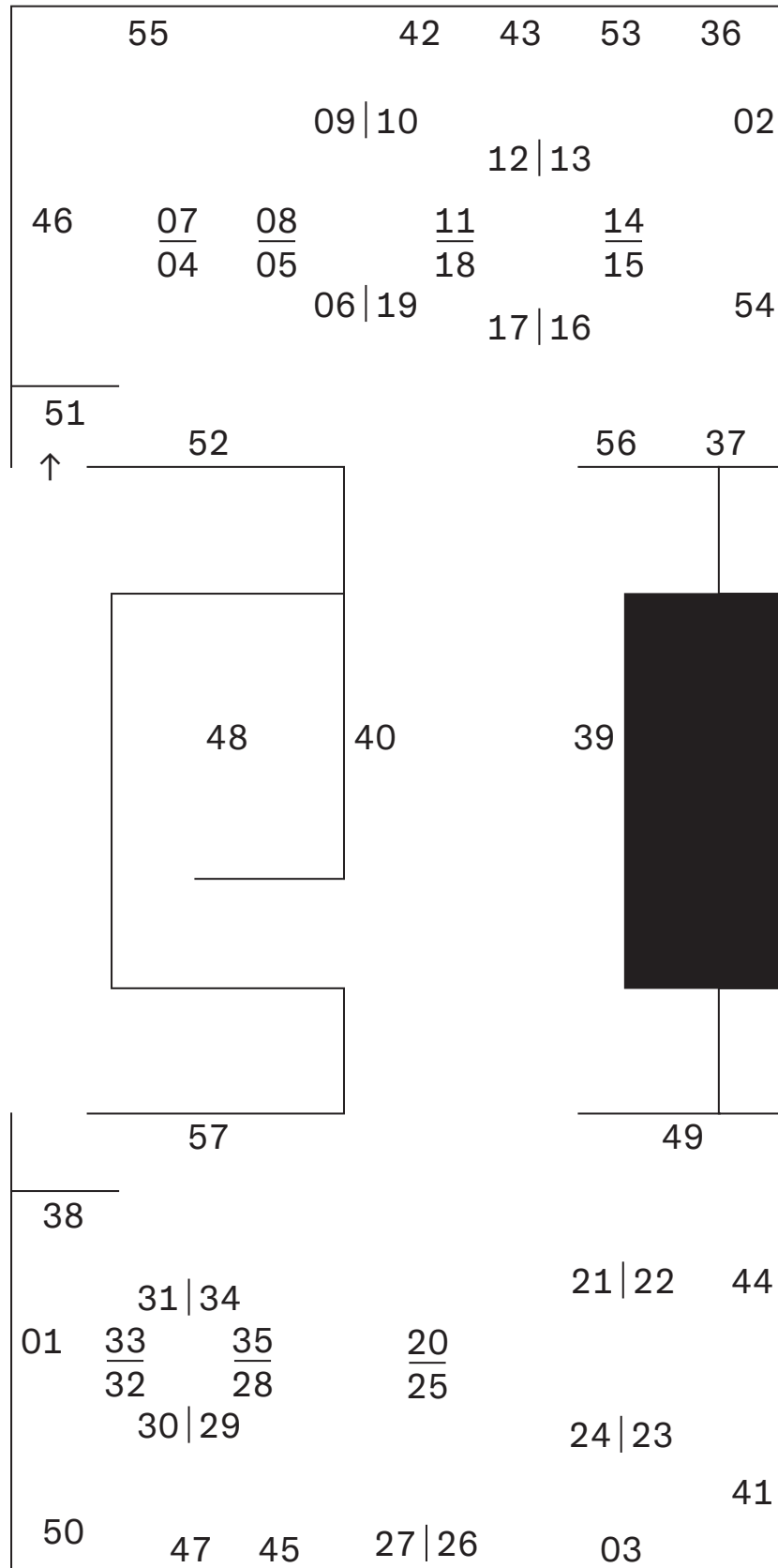
Evans understood that photographic meaning is related to context, text and connections between images, whether on the gallery wall, or on the pages of books and magazines. So, as well as being a remarkable image maker, Evans was also an editor, writer and designer.

Walker Evans Revisited brings together three kinds of response from contemporary artists and photographers. Firstly, the continuation and extension of Evans' ways of photographing everyday life—anonymous people, typical places, and vernacular buildings and objects. Secondly, the revisiting and re-photographing of locations photographed by Evans. Lastly, the exhibition presents a variety of projects by artists responding very directly to particular images by Evans. These range from appropriation and collage, to re-imaginings and homage.

Curated by David Company

**für aktuelle
Fotografie**

Biennale



Kunsthalle Mannheim

**für aktuelle
Fotografie**

Intro

Dear visitors, the works on the white steles in the room are all by Walker Evans. On the walls you will find reactions of contemporary artists to his work. Pay attention to the visual relationships—surprising parallels can often be found. Discover how diversely the great photographic work of one of the most important photographers of the 20th century is artistically processed. You will find the mentioned audio tracks in the app “*Kunsthalle Mannheim*” (App-Store, Play-Store).

There you can also listen to a comprehensive interview with the curator David Company (Track 800).

Cortis & Sonderegger

- 01 *Making of “Part of the Bedroom of Floyd Burroughs’ cabin” (by Walker Evans, 1936), 2015*
C-Print, 70 × 105 cm

In their works, Cortis and Sonderegger take iconic photographs and physically recreate them in their studio. The work you see here is based on Walker Evans’ photograph *Part of the Bedroom of Floyd Burroughs’ cabin* (No. 33). The three-dimensional reenactment of the room with the bed is framed by the handicraft utensils that the artists used to create the model. The studio situation we encounter here emphasizes the constructional character of photographs as a whole. Choice of motif, cropping, colour or black-and-white photography—these are all decisions that are made by photographers. They are decisions that always play a role in the interpretation of a photograph. This is therefore nothing less than a reflection of the medium of photography.

Further works by the artist duo can be seen in the exhibition *Reconsidering Icons* in the Museum Weltkulturen D5 of the Reiss-Engelhorn Museums.

Julia Curtin

- 02 *[Untitled], Lynchburg, Virginia, from the series Resettlement, 2009*
3 silver gelatine prints, 30,48 × 40,64 cm each

Julia Curtin works between photography, collage and sculpture, to look at the way documents relate to memory and history. Themes of absence and presence pervade her work, in which Curtin dislocates the familiar to explore the structures of perception and representation.

In the series *Resettlement*, she focuses on the vernacular architecture inhabited by the migrant workers of the 1930s’ Great Depression, and makes use of the extensive Farm Security Administration catalogue. Sampling material from the work of the FSA photographers, including Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee and Walker Evans, she reappropriates fragments of these temporary settlements, constructing three-dimensional models of the provisional homes. Through processes of deracination and accretion Curtin recalibrates the tension between photography’s duality as both image and object.

- 03 *Allie Mae Burroughs, wife of cotton sharecropper, Hale County, Alabama, from the series Reparation, 2014*
4 silver gelatine prints, 180 × 127 cm each

For the series *Reparation*, Curtin produced several dresses for which she reconfigured the images of Walker Evans’ groundbreaking work *Let Us Now Praise Famous*

Men. Published in 1941, Evans’ book, which he co-authored with writer James Agee, includes portraits of three cotton tenant families from Hale County, Alabama. *Reparation* focuses on the three mothers. Curtin stitched together photographs of fabric samples that she extracted and reproduced from Evans’ image of Allie Mae Burroughs’ dress (the wife of an Alabama tenant farmer). The dress from photographs was photographed again by the artist. Four large-format photographs of this dress, each from a different angle, are on display. Curtin thus blurs the distinction between two- and three-dimensionality and offers us new ways of looking at the image, material, body, surface and ultimately even photographic history.

Walker Evans

- 04 *Bud Fields and his Family, Hale County, Alabama, Summer 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,6 × 25,4 cm
- 05 *Street Scene, Mississippi, March 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 25,4 × 20,3 cm
- 06 *Floyd Burroughs and Tenge Children, Hale County, Alabama, Summer 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 07 *Street Scene, Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 08 *A Miner’s Home, Vicinity of Morgantown, West Virginia, July 1935*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 09 *Houses and Steel Mill, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, November 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 10 *Roadside Fish and Produce Stand with Young Men Holding Watermelons, Near Birmingham, Alabama, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 11 *Shoe Shine Stand, South-eastern United States, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 12 *Joe’s Auto Graveyard, Pennsylvania, November 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 10,9 × 24,3 cm
- 13 *Hillside, Houses, Pennsylvania, 1935*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 14 *Penny Picture Display, Savannah, Georgia, 1936*
Fibre-based print, 25,4 × 20,3 cm
- 15 *Street Scene, New Orleans, Louisiana, December 1935*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 16 *African-American Barber’s Shop, Atlanta, Georgia, March 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 17 *Ruins of Tabby (Shell) Construction, St. Mary’s, Georgia, 1936*
Silver gelatine print (1970), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- See No. 54 Anastasia Samoylova
- 18 *Street Scene, Vicksburg, Mississippi, March 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 19 *Vicksburg, Negroes and Shopfront, Mississippi, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm

The work specifications are listed in reading direction (from left to right).

- 20 *Allie Mae Burroughs, wife of a cotton sharecropper, Hale County, Alabama, Summer 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 23,4 × 18,9 cm
- 21 *Labour Anonymous*, Fortune Magazine, November 1946
Magazine
- 22 *Steel and Mill Worker's Houses, Birmingham, Alabama, March 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 23 *Window Display, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, November 1935*
Fibre-based print (1990), 25,4 × 20,3 cm
- 24 *Beauties of the Common Tool*, Fortune Magazine, Juli 1955
Magazine
- 28 *American Photographs*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1938
Book
- 29 *Family Snapshots in Frank Tenge's Home, Hale County, Alabama, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 30 *The Crime of Cuba*, (edited by Carleton Beals), J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia & London, 1933
Book
- 31 *A Miner's Home, West Virginia, July 1935*
Fibre-based print (1990), 25,4 × 20,3 cm
- 32 *Come on down*, Architectural Forum, July 1962,
Magazin

In his 20 years of working for the business magazine Fortune, Evans produced photo essays about rather unimportant areas of life, including everyday objects. Since the glorification of the commodity cult was not a concept for Evans, he praised the hidden beauty and elegance of conventional, factory-produced tools in his series *Beauties of the Common Tool*. In doing so, he subversively opposed the actual profile of the magazine that celebrated consumption. The comparisons he made in the essay he wrote, added a humorous note to his presentation. Evans writes that the Swedish steel tongs have swan-like features. And have any of you ever noticed the similarity between a crate opener and a spaceship?

Darren Harvey-Reagan's work is a reformulation of that. Using images of Walker Evans' tools found online, the artist assembled them into novel forms and then reconstructed these digital collages in reality by cutting tools in half and reassembling them. Hereby, the photographic process is reversed: where photography typically begins with something material and creates an image from it, Darren Harvey-Reagan has begun with existing images and created something material from them. This work fits seamlessly into Reagan's oeuvre, in which he explores the relationship between image and object in various projects.

Listen to track 3 in the audio track!

- 25 *First and last*, Harpers & Row; New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London 1978
Book
- 26 *Floyd Burroughs' Shoes, Hale County, Alabama, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 27 *The First Papers of Surrealism (edited by André Breton & Marcel Duchamp), 1942*
Magazine

Sherrie Levine was not the first artist to take Evans' photographs and make them her own. The catalogue of the New York exhibition *The First Papers of Surrealism*, organised by Marcel Duchamp and André Breton in 1942, contained so-called "Compensation Portraits" of the exhibiting artists. None of the portraits used here correspond to the named person. The painter Leonora Carrington was represented by Evans' famous portrait of Allie Mae Burroughs from 1936. Not an entirely arbitrary choice: Carrington bore a certain resemblance to Burroughs.

Evans was very interested in anonymous and popular culture. He had a collection of about 9000 popular American postcards produced between 1890 and 1910. He believed that they provided a better picture of the USA than any official document. At a time when no one was interested, Evans was already producing features for magazines with popular postcards. You are standing in front of one of these features from the *Architectural Forum*, which also includes a map of the "Cliff House", to which Patrick Pound dedicates an entire installation (No. 49).

- 33 *Part of the Bedroom of Floyd Burroughs' Cabin, Hale County, Alabama, 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 20,3 × 25,4 cm
- 34 *Squeaky Burroughs Asleep, Hale County, Alabama, Summer 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 25,4 × 20,3 cm
- 35 *Fire Place and Objects in Bedroom of Ford Burroughs' Home, Hale County, Alabama, Summer 1936*
Fibre-based print (1990), 25,4 × 20,3 cm

Private Collection

Camille Fallet

- 36 *Two-Family Houses in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (American Re-Photographs)*, 2016
Inkjet-Print, 90 × 120 cm

For the French artist Camille Fallet, Walker Evans' work has been a guide, reference point and inspiration for many years. Fallet has created a corpus of works in the spirit of Evans, moving between urban architectural studies and social observation. In some of them, he has also made direct references to Evans, for example by returning to places he photographed in the 1930s and by reworking some of Evans' paintings with paint or in the form of sculptures.

- 37 *License Color Photo Studio, Le Point du Jour, Cherbourg (American Re-Photographs)*, 2018
Inkjet-Print, 50 × 44 cm
- Penny Picture Display, Marseille (American Re-Photographs)*, 2013
Inkjet-Print, 50 × 44 cm

In 2016 Camille Fallet made a physical model of a photo studio. This was a reconstruction (1:2) of Walker Evans' motif from 1934: *License Photo Studio, New York, 1934*.

In 2018 Fallet reassembled that model to photograph it in Evans' manner. The result is a multilayered work: on the one hand, it is the motif of a black-and-white photograph,

reconstructed in color and three-dimensionally; on the other hand, it is a model of a portrait studio, which in turn is photographed in a photo studio; and furthermore, it is a studio, i.e. the place where photographs are shown.

Penny Picture Display, Marseilles takes Evans' work *Penny Picture Display*, Savannah Georgie, 1936 as its model. The lettering "Studio", which stretches across the picture, coloured traps red. By hanging the two works on one line of sight, they enter into a direct dialogue with one another in the exhibition at the Kunsthalle Mannheim.

38 *She Looks Like Alabama Cotton Tenant Farmer Wife 1936 (American Re-Photographs)*, 2016
Inkjet-Print, 50 × 44 cm

You are looking at an image, which is represented not only once in this exhibition; and yet you see it in a new way. Camille Fallet took the Walker Evans' photograph *Allie Mae Burroughs, Hale County, Alabama, 1936*, and lets the viewer re-experience it by colouring the black and white photography. The editing of the image allows us to perceive it with a completely new perspective and breathes new life into the historical image.

George Georgiou

From the series *Americans Parade*:

- 39 *MACE THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE*, New York City, New York, USA, 24/11/2016
MARION COUNTY COUNTRY HAM DAYS, Pigasus Parade, Lebanon, Kentucky, USA, 24/09/2016
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY PARADE, Los Angeles, California, USA, 18/01/2016
- 40 *GEORGE WASHINGTON DAY PARADE*, Laredo, Texas, USA, 20/02/2016
MARDI GRAS PARADE, Algiers, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 06/02/2016
JULY 4TH PARADE, Ripley, West Virginia, USA, 04/07/2016

One associates parades above all with moving images that are loud and chaotic. An anonymous crowd consisting of different people who stand up for something or celebrate certain events together. George Georgiou succeeds in capturing these dynamic events as silent moments. His photographs appear like group portraits that bear witness to the different places where they were taken. Between January and November 2016, Georgiou visited fourteen different states, 24 cities and 26 parades throughout North America and photographed their spectators. Each parade attracted a different, diverse crowd, and each of the resulting photographs presents the viewer with unique pleasures and problems. Viewing them gives the viewer the feeling that he or she is participating in the parades and throws him or her into the midst of an engagement with current political and ideological upheavals and debates.

Listen to track 6 in the audio track!

Darren Harvey-Regan

- 41 *Beauties of the Common Tool, Rephrased I-V*, 2013
5 analogue fibre-based prints, 90 × 70 cm each
Courtesy Copperfield, London

In his 20 years of working for the business magazine *Fortune*, Evans produced photo essays about rather unimportant areas of life, including everyday objects. Since

the glorification of the commodity cult was not a concept for Evans, he praised the hidden beauty and elegance of conventional, factory-produced tools in his series of pictures *Beauties of the Common Tool*. In doing so, he subversively opposed the actual profile of the magazine that celebrated consumption. The comparisons he made in the essay he wrote, added a humorous note to his presentation. Evans writes that the Swedish steel tongs have swan-like features. And have any of you ever noticed the similarity between a crate opener and a spaceship?

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Listen to track 3 in the audio track!

Lisa Kereszi

- 42 *Chalkboard, Mrs. La Luz Classroom, P.S. 26*, from the series *Governor's Island*, USA, 2003
Ice Cream Delights, from the series *The Party's Over*, Wildwood, New Jersey, USA, 2010
Private Booths, South Beach Showgirls, from the series *Sunshine State*, Miami Beach, Florida, USA, 2002
Junkyard office with TV, from the series *Joe's Junk Yard*, USA, 2001
Spook-A-Rama, Deno's, from the series *Fun and Games*, Coney Island, New York, USA, 2004
Eloyse sitting in the garage bay, from the series *Joe's Junk Yard*, USA, 2002
Ferris Wheel Mural, from the series *Fun and Games*, Broadway Arcade, Times Square, New York City, USA, 2004
Neon Sign, from the series *The Party's Over*, Times Square Theater, New York City, USA, 2001
Ball Toss, from the series *Fun and Games*, Coney Island, New York, 2001

9 C-Prints, 76,2 × 101,6 cm each
Courtesy Yancey Richardson, New York

Within a period of ten years Lisa Kereszi undertook excursions into the world of part-time hedonism: she visited amusement parks, pubs, motels and nightclubs, haunted houses and strip clubs to critically explore the world of recreation, of escapism. All these buildings harbor desires and fantasies that threaten to fail if they are examined more closely in the mercilessly revealing light of day. In reality, these amusement institutions are in fact rapidly cobbled together, improvised places whose façades threaten to fade away the varnish and glamour of the night. Due to the absence of the corresponding audience, these otherwise dazzling places seem strangely sparse, but at the same time radiate a kind of visual poetry that Kereszi makes visible in her photographs.

Like Walker Evans, Kereszi's photography is a silent testimony to a culture that can be described as a side effect of the American Dream. Both Kereszi and Walker Evans seek beauty in the trivial in their photography. Both artists are united by the always latent, lyrical component that is revealed in their confrontation with folksy signage. Thus it is that in Kereszi's work, as in Evans', numerous photographs of hand-painted signs, murals, and inscriptions can be discerned.

Justine Kurland

43 *American Photographs (Walker Evans)*, 2019
Collage, 53 × 33 × 5 cm

44 *Labour Anonymous (Walker Evans)*, 2019
Collage, 36 × 60 × 5 cm

In 1938, Evans published *American Photographs*, a book that continues to set standards in the photography scene to this day and was published on the occasion of his solo exhibition of the same name—the first ever solo exhibition of a photographer at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMa). The artist Justine Kurland uses this as a basis for creating the work *American Photographs (Walker Evans)*, which on the one hand picks out thematic areas from Evans' work, emphasizes them and offers them a further platform for dissemination. (Look around, some elements of the collage will be found in other works). On the other hand, it destroys and obscures Evans' photographic documentation of the USA. For Kurland, "these collages are a critique of the canon; a means to remove some of the white men from my library". The clear feminist stance is also a theme in the work *Labour Anonymous (Walker Evans)* from 2019. Here, the book *Labour Anonymous* (originally published a few years ago as a series for Fortune Magazine) is the starting point for her work. She removes all the men in it so that only silhouettes remain.

Courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

Sherrie Levine

45 *After Walker Evans: 2*, 1981
C-Print, 37,5 × 47 cm
Courtesy Xavier Hufkens, Brussels

In 1981, New York's Metro Pictures Gallery showed an exhibition entitled *Sherrie Levine After Walker Evans*. Levine had photographed a series of pictures from Evans' illustrated book *First and Last*, which is shown in this exhibition (No. 25). Levine made no changes to the pictures, which can be interpreted as homage, criticism or philosophical reflection. She presents a copy so perfect that the intervention is not visible to the viewer at all, raising highly topical questions about the free circulation of images, the act of copying, copyright and the artwork as a commodity. How many copies surround us every day, whose origin we are not aware of?

As Walker Evans was hired by the US government to take photographs, his works from that period in the 1930s are not protected by copyright. By copying his photographs and appropriating them as her own work, Sherrie Levine plays with the law: the same images that were originally in the public domain are now legally protected.

Listen to track 4 in the audio track!

Ute Mahler & Werner Mahler

46 *Kleinstadt#84*, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 65 × 52 cm

Kleinstadt#40, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 41 cm

Kleinstadt#74, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 41 cm

Kleinstadt#70, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 41 cm

Kleinstadt#54, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 34 cm

Kleinstadt#42, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 52 cm

Kleinstadt#82, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 52 cm

Kleinstadt#87, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 34 cm

Kleinstadt#128, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 34 cm

Kleinstadt#102, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 41 × 52 cm

Kleinstadt#52, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 65 cm

Kleinstadt#50, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 65 cm

Kleinstadt#9, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 65 × 52 cm

Kleinstadt#67, 2015–18
Silver gelatine print, 52 × 65 cm

Courtesy OSTKREUZ, Berlin

The series *Kleinstadt* can be understood as a contemporary homage to Walker Evans in the German-speaking world: the third joint publication of the former GDR photographers is an expedition into the German hinterland. The respective cities remain unnamed. The character of the small town as such, is captured by the composition of many small towns and the consistent, nostalgic black and white aesthetic. The visual language varies between tragic and witty: the dreariness and dilapidation of the townscape is contrasted with bizarre found objects. Thus the pedantic gardening in #74 is an expression of the inevitable networking of the neighbourhood and the strong social control. The ticket vending machine in #87 refers to the bizarreness and obstinacy of small-town-festivals. In #52, a bus stop becomes a meeting point for the younger generation, who ultimately decide the fate of their small town. The series focuses on their everyday life in the small town. It reveals how the young people come to terms with the circumstances and how they organise their leisure time. Thus, as in Walker Evans, the unexpected beauty of these neglected places becomes visible. *Kleinstadt* is also a declaration of love to popular culture and its proud bearers.

Michael Mandiberg

47 *AfterSherrieLevine.com*, 2001
Website, Print, 25,4 × 20,3 cm

Michael Mandiberg reacts in terms of content to Sherrie Levine's work *After Walker Evans* (see no. 44) and takes up

the title of her 1981 exhibition at New York's *Metro Pictures Gallery*. The artist dedicated himself to the complete collection of Levine's photographs in the Metropolitan Museum and gives a new twist to Levine's strategy: Mandiberg scans the same images from the same edition of the Evans book that Sherrie Levine used for her copies and puts them online. By publishing them on the Internet and explicitly requesting that the images be downloaded, printed on photographic paper and framed, the artist is making the previously public domain images available to the public again.

James Nares

48 *Street*, 2011
HDV, 61 min.
Courtesy Kasmin, New York

James Nares works with many media—from painting to film to video—but he always tests the limits of what is technologically and aesthetically possible. In 2011, he filmed the streets of Manhattan from a moving car with a high-resolution camera, as used to capture fast-moving objects such as bullets and birds. From the 15 hours of footage, Nares edited a one-hour film. The soundtrack is by Thurston Moore, co-founder of the band Sonic Youth.

The camera glides past pedestrians and registers small details, clues to the complex inner life and dramas that constantly take place just below the surface of everyday life. While the image does not allow us to see the next moment, Nares' video is extremely captivating because the next movement is only a few seconds away and we are allowed to perceive it with a precision that we would otherwise not be able to.

In addition to the clear reference to Thomas Edison and the Lumière brothers' films of the late 19th century, which were shot in a single shot at the end of the 19th century, there is also a connection to Walker Evans' profound interest in photographing nameless citizens. Evans first did this systematically in 1938, using a new wide-angle lens on his Contax camera, which enabled him to photograph passers-by in the dim light of the New York subway. Evans hid the camera under his coat and thus photographed the passengers sitting opposite him. Later, Evans made photo series of workers on the streets of Bridgeport and Detroit.

"I wanted the film to be about people. All it needed were magic moments, and there are plenty of those—every moment of every day." – James Nares

Listen to track 6 in the audio track!

Jessica Potter

49 *150 Sentences (Labour Anonymous)*, 2013
Installation, vinyl lettering,
3 wooden panels, 206 × 116 cm each

Labor Anonymous (Cropped details from all of the photographs from the Walker Evans' *Labor Anonymous* series), 2013
Installation, 150 silver gelatine prints,
23 × 20,6 cm each

Jessica Potter's *150 Sentences (Labour Anonymous)*, refer specifically to Walker Evans' photographs of anonymous workers, which he took in Detroit in July 1946. Commissioned by Fortune magazine, Evans spent an afternoon photographing passers-by at an intersection in downtown Detroit with a Rolleiflex camera held at waist level, running

from right to left from his perspective. The images were published in a two-page issue of *Labor in U.S. Industry* magazine entitled *Labor Anonymous*. The serial arrangement and the uniform composition of the pictures tempt one to compare the images and the appearance of the persons with one another and to see in them a kind of typology of the American worker, for example in external features such as pipe, cigar, cigarette, felt hat or flat cap.

For her work, Jessica Potter looks at the images in a new way, but not only at the photographs published in Fortune magazine, but also at all the material of the *Labor Anonymous* series from Walker Evans' archive. She picks fragments from Evans' series and arranges them in the form of large tableaux. By maintaining the square format of the original negative, Potter emphasises its original character. The fragmentation of the images directs the viewer's gaze to specific body regions of the people depicted. The images thus take on a completely new meaning and elude the typification Evans made at the time. The sentences accompanying the pictures—descriptive and poetic at the same time—refer to the respective poses and actions of the passers-by depicted. This conceptual interweaving of image and text reflects Potter's intensive and personal involvement with Evans' visual language.

Patrick Pound

50 *The Cliff House Postcard Puzzle*, 2019
Mixed media
Site specific installation

The Australian artist Patrick Pound collects images and arranges them by placing their associations, pictorial content and mental affinities in a context of meaning. Rows and columns of photos—snapshots, postcards, news images—overlap in a creative mental map that guides viewers through a series of connections. The images located at the point of intersection unite the image contents of the respective axes. The key to this work is *The Cliff House*, a spectacular and strange building in San Francisco, California, whose history Pound traces from its heyday to when it was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in a completely different form.

Walker Evans was also interested in *The Cliff House* (No. 32). He had added a picture of the house to the illustration of *Come on Down*, the last of his three magazine articles on American postcards, which appeared in July 1962 in the *Architectural Forum*.

RaMell Ross

From the series *South County, Alabama, (a Hale County)*, 2012–14:

51 *Here*
52 *Landscape*
Brothers Z
Antonio
Ladrewya and Michelangelo
Dakesha and Marquise
Giving tree
iHome
Column

9 C-Prints, 48,2 × 61 cm each

Many of Walker Evans' iconic works were created in Hale County, a small town in the state of Alabama. Although Hale County is predominantly inhabited by

African Americans, they are conspicuously underrepresented in Evans' work. The discussion is largely superficial: one learns little about the everyday life of African Americans, instead Evans portrays them as a group. The series *South County, AL* by photographer and filmmaker RaMell Ross is not an explicit response to or criticism of Evans' omissions, but a necessary, complementary statement and revelation of the everyday life of predominantly young African Americans living in the precarious conditions of the American suburbs. Observations on ethnicity and cultural identity are made in order to create a collective awareness of the presence of African Americans in the USA. In order to approach this way of life authentically, RaMell Ross' photographs show the protagonists in sometimes absurd, sometimes striking moments in which they feel supposedly unobserved.

The documentary film *Hale County this Morning, This Evening*, which was released in 2018 and has received several awards, is based on these photographs. The series combines cinematic character with photographically skilful precision. The film rounds out the series by devoting itself profoundly to individual fates and captures the entire spectrum of human emotions and life situations in an uncensored manner.

Mark Ruwedel

53 *Evans Street #5*, 1982–83

Evans Street #2, 1982–83

Evans Street #1, 1982–83

Evans Street #9, 1982–83

4 silver gelatine print (2019), 20,3 × 25,4 cm each
Courtesy Gallery Luisotti, Santa Monica, USA

The first time I saw a picture by Evans—taken in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, my hometown – was as a student in an art history seminar. It was used to illustrate workers housing and I don't think the author was even named. It caught my attention, because this photo showed my girlfriend's house and I would park on that street a few hours later. In my bachelor's degree I studied painting, not photography. At the end of my studies I came to the conclusion that the imperative of photography to look at the world was far more exciting than looking at a piece of canvas. I began to get more involved with Evans, probably because of my interest in the New Topographics photographers. I liked Evans' idea of what he called "lyrical documentation". When I was asked where I came from during my postgraduate studies in Montreal, I sometimes heard, "Oh, that's where Walker Evans took those pictures during the Great Depression." In search of the right theme for a project, I decided to take a closer look at these photos. It began as a kind of homage, but then evolved into something more related to photographic syntax and how meaning is constructed through things like the photographer's choice of focal length, framing, light and the way the photographer prints. I think some of Evans' Bethlehem photos are among his most politically charged (and I'm sure he would have denied it). This way of reading between the lines, his "transparency" really got to me." – Mark Ruwedel

Anastasia Samoylova

54 *Ruins of Tabby (Shell) Construction, St Mary, Georgia, USA, 2018*

1 Inkjet-Print, 130 × 160 cm

2 Inkjet-Prints, 130 × 104 cm each

Courtesy Galerie Caroline O'Brien, Amsterdam

Just north of St. Mary's are the Macintosh Sugar Mill Tabby Ruins, the remains of a former sugar factory. It was probably by chance that Walker Evans discovered the extraordinary building in 1936 while driving from New York to Alabama in his car and photographed it. The factory was built from a coarse type of shell limestone called "tabby", a typical material for colonial buildings. The ruin has a particularly striking surface materiality. This special appearance of the ruin in the dense forest gives the place something dreamlike and surreal.

Walker Evans took several photographs here, one of which can be seen on the stele behind you (see no. 17). The special feature of the photograph exhibited here is that the walls and the forest cannot be seen separately, the foreground and background are not clearly distinguishable in the black and white photograph. Thus it allows associations with Magritte. Fascinated by the strange beauty of this photograph, Anastasia Samoylova also visited the Tabby Ruins. Thus, 80 years later, she created her photograph of the ruin as a homage to Walker Evans—the juxtaposition of the two works reflects the momentary, the relationship of photography to time.

Bryan Schutmaat

55 From the series *Vessels*, 2014–present

Broken Window
69,5 × 56 cm

Chris
69,5 × 56 cm

Distant Headlights
101,6 × 127 cm

Eva
69,5 × 56 cm

Abandoned House
101,6 × 127 cm

Jimmy
69,5 × 56 cm

Bryan Schutmaat's ongoing series *Vessels* features portraits as well as landscape and still-life photographs taken in the American Southwest. The people depicted are mostly hitchhikers and drifters who live their lives along the highway network. Just as Walker Evans' photographs showed the consequences of the Great Depression in the 1930s, Schutmaat's portraits capture the effects of environmental destruction, economic expropriation and social neglect nowadays. In order to find and get to know his portrait subjects, he usually picks up hitchhikers or introduces himself to people at campgrounds along the highway. Like Walker Evans, he shows them in a format-filling and dignified way and works with the slow, "documentary style" that Evans had developed. By juxtaposing them with the landscape depictions, however, he does not (only) portray them as individual persons, but as symbols of the current situation in Americas Southwest.

Stephen Shore

56 *Eddie's Wagon Wheel, Bridge Street, Struthers, Ohio, October 27, 1977*
C-Print, 40,5 × 33 cm
Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York

Stephen Shore learned and practiced photography at the age of six. A neighbour knew of his interest and gave him a copy of Walker Evans' *American Photographs*, which is shown in the exhibition (No. 28). The book impressed him and influenced his work as a photographer to such an extent that he speaks not only of being influenced by Evans, but also of a kinship in the way he works. Like Walker Evans, he documents everyday scenes and objects and transforms them into works of art. Shore dealt with Evans' photo essays from *Fortune* magazine, which his wife Ginger—who worked as a picture archivist at the magazine—occasionally took home for him. Similar to Walker Evans, Stephen Shore was commissioned in 1976 with a specific photo essay about America. The *Fortune* magazine had planned a redesign of the magazine format, so that the size was to be reduced and no long articles and large, classic photo essays were to be published anymore. Stephen Shore was commissioned with the photo essay of the last classic issue. The theme of the photo essay was the decline of cities like Buffalo, New York and several places in Ohio that were originally shaped by the steel industry. *Eddie's Wagon Wheel, Bridge Street, Struthers, Ohio, October 27, 1977* is part of this series. In the poorly decorated shop window and the surroundings reflected in it, the state of Ohio is subtly mirrored.

Vanessa Winship

57 From the series *She Dances on Jackson*, 2011–12
11 Inkjet-Prints, various dimensions

In 2011, Vanessa Winship traveled through the USA (from California to Virginia, from Mexico to Montana) for a year to get to the bottom of the legendary "American Dream". *she dances on Jackson* shows a conversation between landscapes and portraits that explores the vastness of the USA and tries to understand the relationship between the country and its inhabitants. For Winship personally, this connection is a complicated one, because the places take on special meanings depending on the people she meets there, what she sees and what it does to her personally. Similar to Evans, Winship also tries to portray the country and its people—objectively and at the same time subjectively, shaped by her experiences. The series *she dances on Jackson* is not a direct examination of Evans' work. What Evans and Winship have in common is the intention from which they wanted to capture American life photographically.