

To what effect does photography's appropriation of reality affect our perception of the art it presents, when in comparison to non-duplicative art forms?

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Abstract

This essay questions the effects of photography's duplicative quality on the art it presents. This introduction to an important topic helps us as consumers of an ever increasing visual culture to question our perception. The topic is applicable to all who indulge in the act of seeing, with a focus to understand the visual world which has made seeing images *become* natural. Definition and justification are given to why photography is adopted over more traditional forms of art, with a view to understand its role as a method of artistic presentation. Looking at the history of photography it's evident that the medium has a mixed heritage from subjective professions such as philosophy to objective fields in chemistry. This mixed ethnicity makes it challenging to define a fixed identity which again justifies our investigation. Two works by Dorothy Cross are compared; one presented through photography and the other through sculpture help us to understand the adopted mediums effect upon its viewer. It's evident that photography's objective nature makes us as viewers more accepting to what we see, with a preference for lens based media as a substitute for experience. This increased biased for photographic images over experience makes for an effective tool for artists choosing the art form.

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In this essay we will be looking at how photography's tradition of documenting the world affects our perception when looking at art. This tradition of documentation and photography's duplicative quality still has an effect today on the art it presents; defining this effect on our perception is the purpose of our investigation. In a comparative study, similar artistic concepts presented through different forms will help define the difference in our perception between photography and a more traditional art form.

The topic of this essay is chosen because in my recent projects I have become discontent with technique, which seems solely concerned with fact, and much more captivated by the personal concepts which artists expose. When understanding that photography, painting, sculpture and other mediums are just forms of presenting art, I want to understand the effect of my own chosen medium on the work presented.

Coming from a non-art oriented background which placed emphasis on fact as opposed to abstraction, the revelation of photography's inferiority to the art it presents has made me understand emphasis should be placed *on* abstraction. This idea that art forms aren't in themselves art, made me question my own allegiance to the medium of photography with new thoughts about trying other forms which could be just as, or if not, more effective in artistic expression. Arguably this preference for art over art form isn't fact, but for me and the ideas around my own work, it is a revelation because this changes my own opinion of myself (from being a photographer to an artist) and ultimately has an effect on the work created.

Ultimately the reason for this investigation is to find new knowledge, I do trust that the quality of my work after this investigation will be stronger, but primarily this investigation is driven by a healthy curiosity around myself and the medium of photography.

The first time I became suspicious that photography, like other mediums aren't art in themselves was after reading an interview with the highly influential, Dusseldorf educated, photographer, Thomas Ruff.

Magdelan Vukovic: Do you pay attention to photography these days?

Ruff: Actually, I am not that interested in photography. I am more interested in art. I'd rather go to art exhibitions. If it says "big photography exhibition," I don't even bother going in.¹

This statement instantly shows how Ruff separates art from photography, holding art as a much higher currency. Reading this was the starting point for me when I wanted to understand what photography is and how it affects the work it presents.

Identifying, or attempting to identify photography's effect on the art it presents is a statement in itself, we are questioning a respected art form and trying to ascertain what constraints or benefits it dictates on the art presented. With all research accurate findings are our main goal and hope that this new knowledge will refine our perception of viewing and creating art.

1. ¹ <http://www.viceland.com/int/v16n11/htdocs/dont-say-cheese-222.php?page=1>
Don't Say Cheese, Thomas Ruff interviewed by Magdelan Vukovic and David Bogner, Vice Magazine.

The importance of understanding photography's objective nature is not only beneficial to artists adopting the medium, but also to viewers when attempting to make sense of images. In the same way that an understanding of art history assists us in making sense of historical art, we need to understand photography's out dated traditions of objective documentation.

Many authors and theologians have discussed the impact of the camera on how we look at the world, but few have definitively stated to what extent photography's objective nature effects our perception of art.

The history of photography will be an initial starting point as it helps us understand photography's objective traditions. Our aim when looking at the mediums invention is to understand why photography wasn't initially accepted as an art form, this will then explain in context the mediums objective nature when in contrast to more traditional forms.

Dziga Vertov and his influential writings in: *Kino-Eye* attempt to understand how the mechanical eye (the camera) objectively captures truth in comparison to the human eye which is subjective and thus captures a un-truth. Considering this theory that the camera is objective in presenting truth, we will be looking at how artists exploit this perceived objectivity so successfully when presenting a given concept. Vertov's opinion represents an old way of thinking that epitomises photography as objective.

John Berger's influential writing in *Ways of Seeing* discusses the complexities of presenting an objective image. Berger states that an image is a record of how X sees Y.² Emphasis is put on the photographer as the fluctuating variable (X), with what's in front of the lens (Y) being the fixed value. In *Ways of Seeing* a lot of effort is spent in trying to make sense of how we

² John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin, 1972 p. 10.

see, as opposed to what we see, the basis of this is that seeing comes before speaking.

Berger in contrast to Vertov represents a new way of thinking which has witnessed the development of photography as a valid art form.

The work and sentiments of Alfred Stieglitz will also be a source of continual consolidation, even though in a post-modern world we understand the role of art forms, Stieglitz reminds us that all forms of art are subservient to the message they present. This very influential message doesn't take into account the effects of each art form on the work; this is what we will be seeking to find out, with special focus on questioning our assumed authenticity around photography.

To justify the subject area that's in questioning, surely we just need to look around and see how often we are presented with imagery. The act of looking at an image is more unnatural than we care to believe, a large part of seeing depends upon habit and convention. When considering the beginnings of human civilization no imagery existed, only through the development of technology and recent visual culture has the act of seeing images *become* natural.

In the cities in which we live, all of us see hundreds of publicity images every day of our lives. No other kind of image confronts us so frequently. In no other form of society in history has there been such a concentration of images, such a density of visual messages.³

John Berger emphasizes this in a *pre*-internet age, since the development of online media this has undoubtedly increased with it inevitably increasing. Also the definition of art is ever

³ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin, 1972 p. 129.

being challenged by new work, with such an indefinite term as 'art' the more we know around the subject the more accurate our perception becomes.

The analysis and reflection in this writing will be invaluable as so often it is a struggle to put creative thoughts into words. One limitation to this writing may be the accuracy of the written text, as visual thinkers we often think without words, not just words spoken, but not even words in one's head.⁴

Another limitation of the writing could be my personal involvement with photography. This could have an effect when comparing an art form that I know less about, (for example installations) to photography which I am more familiar with.

One technical limitation that is inescapable is the two dimensional presentation of three dimensional work for the purpose of comparative study. This will result in a loss of accuracy when compressing the work, but this is something that we will take into account when viewing images. A photograph of three dimensional work still allows many accurate observations to be made, we understand for a true comparison to be made we need to see the sculpture in its intended format.

When dealing with key terms such as objectivity and subjectivity it's important to understand what these mean for the most accurate critical enquiry. Raymond Williams explains the difference between the two and the formation of each definition.

Western philosophy began to associate subjectivity with a perceiving "I"; and since Immanuel Kant most Western thinkers have agreed to parcel the world into objective phenomena that exist independent of mind, and subjective phenomena

⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6m5flmLiEDA>

that are in one way or another mind-dependant (such as injustice) or wholly attributable to mindedness (such as anxiety). Subjectivity, then, has come to be aligned with the partisan and the partial and objectivity with all that pertains to objects as in themselves they really are (in Matthew Arnolds phrase).⁵

In the late twentieth-century the advancement of audio-visual technologies with computing has forever changed the way in which we record, publish and communicate with the world. We regard this advancement in technologies and social interaction as a defining progression of the twenty first century (the information age). This opinion of historical significance and belief of living at the forefront of a technological revolution isn't new to history. In the 1850's many people also shared this opinion with inventions in the electrical industries, discoveries in optics and in chemistry which all assisted in the invention of the camera.⁶

When attempting to understand photography's objective nature, it's important to realise the context in which the medium was first accepted as an art form, or to put it more accurately, *not* accepted. Before photography, the only image based media was crafted by ones highly regarded nurtured talent. With the invention of photography, this *before* rare ability to produce an image would have become available widespread, meaning that image making was no longer a craft but a technical process. Maybe the most degrading or offensive aspect for people opposed to the medium as an art form was that this *before* esteemed and mysterious gift could somehow now be explained.

⁵Raymond Williams, *New keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2005, p.245

⁶Liz Wells, *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, 2008, p.13

'If photography is allowed to deputize for art in some of art's activities, it will not be long before it has supplanted or corrupted art altogether'.⁷

It's clear that initially photography wasn't accepted as an art form with its scientific process and duplicative quality. This isn't surprising when studying the context of its discovery as all other previous art forms had little technological or scientific influence.

When initially researching photography's history I naively wanted to prove that photography had a scientific pedigree which would support the idea that the medium is objective, on the basis that chemists were the first to permanently fix an image. After considering various discoveries throughout history it became clear that photography is a combination of various professions and essentially without the necessary ground work by philosophers, mathematicians, artists and inventors the discovery wouldn't have happened.⁸

When considering the specific date of photography's invention several key discoveries from varying practitioners contributed, making this problematic. When consulting the Oxford English dictionary, photography is: 'the art or practice of taking and processing photographs'⁹. Many influential people contributed to the discovery of photography, but it's fair to say that the first person to fulfil the dictionary's definition (and what we recognize today) was Joseph Niépce. Saying this we do understand Joseph Niépce was the first person to fulfil our definition of photography, not invent the whole process.

⁷ Liz Wells, *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, 2008, p.13.

⁸ <http://www.rleggat.com/photohistory/history/daguerr.htm>

⁹ http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0628070#m_en_gb0628070

The purpose of looking at photography's history is to understand its objective nature when considering the medium as an art form. Simply, photography unlike other traditional art forms can copy what's in front of the lens giving a duplicative quality. An example would be a passport photo being more trustworthy in accuracy to a self-portrait. It's clear that photography is an overlapping of several genres, some objective like science and technology with others subjective like art and philosophy. This mixed heritage of objectivism and subjectivism gives the artists adopting the medium many features in which to play upon or exploit for a desired effect.

Before considering various viewpoints on photography as an art form its worth mentioning how our perception changes when an image is presented as art. When looking at art we adopt a whole series of learnt assumptions which reference its history concerning various artists, movements and methodologies.¹⁰

Dziga Vertov's understanding of the camera was that it's superior to painting; he saw the camera as being free from human subjectivity and therefore more trustworthy in its accurate portrayal of truth.

Vertov was a newsreel director, cinema theorist and pioneer in documentary film, born in Poland (1896) and raised in soviet Russia. Vertov in 1919 created a group of like-minded young filmmakers called Kinoks ('kino-oki', meaning cinema-eyes). Under the Kinoks name Vertov published many manifestos and progressive journals setting them apart from the more left winged filmmakers of the time with their avant-garde ideology.¹¹

¹⁰ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin, 1972 p. 11.

¹¹ <http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/03/vertov.html>

Comrades, I am speaking on behalf of the kinok group. As most of you know, our group doesn't connect with its existence or its work with what is called "art". We engage directly in the study of the phenomena of life that surrounds us. We hold the ability to show and elucidate life as it is, considerably higher than the occasionally diverted doll games that people call theatre, cinema, etc,¹²

Vertov believed he wasn't making art, and clearly didn't want to be perceived as an artist. The use of the words 'directly', 'it is' and 'higher' are all in an effort to convince us that his cinema is more accurate than art, considering art as weakened and distanced by one's subjectivity. This direct approach that Vertov explains is one quality that is still present in fine art photography with Artists wanting to make work more relevant to the viewer.

Instead of seeing the camera as another viewfinder or frame that distances us from reality, Vertov believed that it filters out subjectivity and records only objective truth. This belief was the basis of Vertov's documentary styled movies which contained no actors, plots, props or studio shooting. One element that really was a key feature in Vertov's ideology was the fact that the camera is a machine, a machine with no heart or mind that can dilute its perception.

Our eyes see very little and very badly – so people dreamed up the microscope to let them see invisible phenomena; they invented the telescope...now they have perfected the cinecamera to penetrate more deeply into the visible world, to explore

¹² Catherine Fowler, *The European Cinema Reader*, Routledge, 2002, p. 47.

and record visual phenomena so that what is happening now, which will have to be taken account of in the future, is not forgotten.¹³

When considering; how photography's objective nature effects its portrayal of art? Vertov's writings are a clear example, the basic principle is photography objectively documents instead of subjectively translating.

John Berger, novelist, painter, playwright and art historian was born in Hackney (London) in 1926. Attended the Central School of Art and the Chelsea School of Art where he studied and taught drawing. While teaching drawing (from 1948 to 1955), Berger became an art critic, publishing many essays and reviews in the New Statesman. His Marxist views and strongly stated opinions on modern art made him a controversial figure early in his career.¹⁴

When considering the literary work of John Berger in *Ways of Seeing*, his views on the camera as a subjective eye are in contrast to that of Vertov. Where Vertov believed that the camera was superior to painting in presenting an objective depiction of reality, Berger disagrees, directly comparing photography to painting.¹⁵

Every image embodies a way of seeing. Even a photograph. For photographs are not, as is often assumed, a mechanical record. Every time we look at a photograph, we are aware, however slightly, of the photographer selecting that sight from an infinity or other possible sights. The photographer's way of seeing is reflected in his choice

¹³ Catherine Fowler, *The European Cinema Reader*, Routledge, 2002, p. 34.

¹⁴ <http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/b/john-berger/>

¹⁵ <http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/b/john-berger/>

of subject. The painter's way of seeing is reconstituted by the marks he makes on the canvas or paper.¹⁶

When considering Vertov's statement rejecting that he is creating art, an artist's subjectivity determines subject matter, but the scientific nature of the camera will always produce this 'direct' and identical version of what's in front of the lens. This element of truth gives Vertov's ideology an authentic feel which was very influential at the time. If the camera was able to photograph without an operator, then maybe there would be a basis for stating the images produced are totally objective.

It's clear that Vertov sees the camera as a catalyst for presenting objectivity. The cinecamera is compared to the microscope, a device which deals with scientific fact and only that. It's interesting how our eyes are being described as limited by inadequacy, as opposed to our minds being the impaired factor. It's almost as though Vertov is suggesting the cinecamera is an upgrade from our antiquated biological eyes with his use of the word 'perfected'.

When considering Berger's opinion, he compares the photographer's selection of subject matter to that of a painter's strokes. In the same way that paint is merely a medium for an artist, photography is the same. Both Vertov's and Berger's ideologies are taken from varying points in history, so understandably they have a difference in opinion. Vertov's writings are a clear example of photography's objective heritage and nature, whilst Berger's opinion is formulated after the medium has been proven as a valid art form.

¹⁶ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin, 1972 p. 10.

The purpose of this writing is to question photography as a form of art, as opposed to the art it presents. The reason why I'm interested in the art form and not the art itself, is to better understand my personal relationship with the medium and to ultimately conclude: am I an artist or a photographer? These above statements about photography being just a form of art, as opposed to art itself have been revelatory. Before the research and reflection of this essay, I believed painting, sculpture, instillation and photography were themselves art. I now understand that they are just couriers of a more valuable message. I first realized this when reading the words of Alfred Stieglitz the influential promoter of photography as an art form.

Photography is not an art. Neither is painting, nor sculpture, literature or music. They are only different media for the individual to express his aesthetic feelings... You do not have to be a painter or a sculptor to be an artist. You may be a shoemaker. You may be creative as such. And, if so, you are a greater artist than the majority of the painters whose work is shown in the art galleries of today.¹⁷

In order to accurately question; how does photography's objective nature affect its portrayal of art, when in contrast to more traditional art forms, it seems logical to compare and contrast varying examples. To ensure that the findings are most accurate we will be comparing the same concept from the same practitioner but presented through sculpture and photography. The logic behind choosing different work from the same artist help to ensure that the concepts in both forms are most similar. At first it may *seem* logical to compare the same subject matter presented through different media e.g. the identical

¹⁷ Alfred Stieglitz (March 14 1922). "Is Photography a Failure?". New York Sun: 5

mountain top view from a photo and a painting, but this only questions the form adopted, not the concept itself.

The artist whose work we will be comparing is Dorothy Cross. Frequently adopting various art forms which include, photography, sculpture and installation, which tackle reoccurring themes of sexual and cultural identity, personal history, and the gap between the conscious and subconscious.¹⁸ When looking at sculpture for our analysis we will have to consult a photograph of the object, this is a slight limitation due to the levelling out that occurs when 3D translates to 2D but this is taken into account.

¹⁸ http://www.frithstreetgallery.com/artists/bio/dorothy_cross

Virgin Shroud, 1993

Cowhide, muslin, silk satin and metal stand
2010 x 810 x 1200 mm



The first work that we will consider is presented in a traditional art form, which doesn't rely on a technological or scientific methodology, which is sculpture. This piece created in 1993 and titled 'Virgin Shroud' was part of a series called 'udders'. The series consisted of covering a variety of familiar objects with cowhide. The cowhide was strategically positioned on objects so that the teats were used to appropriate other connotations along with suggestive titles.

Under the cowhide exterior a metal frame for the body and plaster shaped head help to give the recognizable shape of a human body. Cross feels that this detail about the unseeable isn't important as its impression of human presence is the sole purpose. The exterior of the sculpture consists of a cowhide which is perished from age laid on top of a fine silk, which was once the wedding trail of Cross's Grandmother. When looking at the head of the sculpture the teats have been positioned to replicate a crown, this confirms the use of the silk and suggestive 'virgin' title. When looking at the location of the human form and its positioning, she faces the corner preventing viewers from seeing any facial details.

Like much of Cross's other works, many themes are intertwined, examining the patterns of inheritance and authority that run through society and which questions ideals about identity, sexuality, and religion.

When considering how the piece tackles identity, Cross's own is being questioned, born in Ireland to post catholic traditions, which are again emphasised with a suggestive title. The use of a family member's sentimental possession confirms this personal element which again ties into the virgin bride. The work also presents us with various juxtapositions, with

contrasting materials and the unseeable face of such a recognisable figure. This shyness of the figure effectively forces us to reaffirm her identity by studying her facade.

When considering the use of sculpture as a form of presentation, it seems to have various strengths that wouldn't be present with photography. Firstly the three dimensional quality of sculpture lends itself well with this specific work, notably because it helps to convey the virgin's presence. For a viewer (or more accurately, a participant) this presence of inhabiting the same space as the mother of Christ could be overwhelming. This effect of presence can confront viewers in a way that they can't deny, with the sculpture being physically in front of their eyes, this transcends any possibilities when presented as a photograph.

An obvious influence for Cross is catholic iconography, this use of sculpture seems to draw clear parallels to entering an atmosphere dedicated to a specific deity, which we can only speculate in two dimensional form. Sculpture in this instance clearly reveals Cross's influences, maximizing the works emotive efficiency.

Mantegna & Crucifix, 1996

Black and white print and cibachrome print on MDF

76 x 51 cm each



The second work is two photographs viewed together which are titled '*Mantegna & Crucifix*'. The two images sit horizontally to each other, with the first image in colour and the second in monochrome. The first image depicts a crucifix which has had the Christ figure removed, we can tell this from the residue outline of the body and two outstretched arms. The background of the first image appears to be a natural stone like marble which carries connotations of a church. In contrast to the right, a naked female lifelessly rests on a long metal table; again associations with this material can be extracted. The cold, wet and definitive façade of the metal confirms a fatal diagnosis.

From stating the obvious visual content it becomes evident that Cross is making us question religious traditions through the use of visual contradiction. This act of physically removing the Christ figure from the cross is in itself metaphoric in understanding Cross' own opinions. This removing of Christ seems to highlight a Catholic tradition which over emphasises symbolic human forms and their suffering. The first image bluntly points out the obvious fact that Christ rose from the dead, indicating again Catholicism seems to be a religion in itself with its apparent short sighted emphasis on symbolism in human form, with a disdain for spiritual significance. With most of Cross's work contradiction and juxtaposition are ever present, and it's no exception here. With this optimistic first window it's instantly followed by a second window of pessimism, a cold corpse fills the composition. Cross's own identity is mixed in this contradiction with the lifeless figure on the right resembling her own form. This act of taking Jesus from the cross and replacing him with a female, who draws visual similarities to herself, throws up shocking imagery and religious taboos.

With the vantage point and strategic composition working in alliance with the suggestive title, the viewer can't help but draw comparisons to the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, painted by Mantegna. This clearly shows us one asset that photography has over sculpture; with photography and painting sharing similar constraints being the viewfinder/frame, the two can easily and directly reference each other in a way three dimensional forms can't. When looking at the work as a whole it seems that Dorothy Cross has placed two frames in front of us, taken the Christ figure off the cross (first frame) and placing the figure in the second frame. Now that the work makes us focus on Cross's own identity, we become aware that the crucifix may belong to a family member and be a comment on her own spiritual inheritance.

When considering our original question: How does photography's objective nature effect its portrayal of art when in contrast to more traditional art forms?

We become aware that photography draws parallels to the conventions of painting more so than other art forms, as both are two dimensional. This is demonstrated when comparing Dorothy Cross's *Mantegna & Crucifix* to *Mantegna's Lamentation over the Dead Christ*. The frame of the camera is a key similarity that can be exploited to maximize the similarities between the original painting and photograph. Cross has chosen to rotate the format of the camera/photo so that it mimics its master copy. The two dimensional format shared by photography and painting means that both mediums are viewed in a very similar prejudged way. The historical conventions of painting which can include, lighting, perspective, iconography, nudity and positioning are all considered when viewing photography in an art context. This archive of artistic progression can be an effective tool in successfully presenting concepts through the medium of photography.

Our perception of authenticity increases when we look at a photograph, preferring it almost more than real life¹⁹, we like to believe what is mechanically made (and therefore more trustworthy) over what is man-made. Vertov represents this mind set. Being so frequently presented with imagery whether it's in books, television or the internet we regularly substitute first-hand experience for lens based media. This characteristic of increased authority and reality seems to be the main effect of photography's irrationally accepted objective nature. As revealed earlier in this writing by Alfred Stieglitz, all art forms are methods of presentation which we shouldn't over emphasise, but arguably, in today's society, photography is currently more relevant than traditional art forms.

All artists want their work to be accessible, and the majority of images we see in our lives are captured by the camera, this would indicate that as viewers of the world, not art, we are more open minded to images captured through the lens of a camera. This preference for lens based media over first-hand experience shapes a social and financial context in which we live, especially with progressive advertising strategies such as reality marketing. Examples of this are companies who specifically sponsor documentary television in an effort to build up a reputation for honesty and truth.²⁰

When studying both sculpture and photography's methods of presenting art, the latter's accuracy doesn't dilute when reproduced. All the time when studying the reproduction of 'Virgin Shroud' we were aware that the reproduction was a form of a form of art, which seems totally removed from the artist's original intentions. This original accuracy is lacking from photographic reproductions of non-lens based art forms. Arguably a copy of a

¹⁹ Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, 1855, Harvard College Library

²⁰ <http://ezinearticles.com/?Internet-Marketing-Reality-Check---They-Will-All-Tell-You-It-Cannot-Be-Done&id=5056280>

photograph or film being shown in another location is identical to its master copy, but a photographic reproduction of a sculpture seems to lose some value in exchange for the viewer's convenience. So in conclusion photography's objective nature preserves the accuracy of the original work which is lost with more traditional forms when reproduced.

In the same way that our perception is altered when we look at art, it's clear that each art form has its own effect upon our perception due to the medium's traditions and conventions. When looking at Dorothy Cross's sculpture it was evident that we were viewing the work with a certain regard for the environment that it occupied. This arguably is a good and bad thing, but the fact we considered it was an assumption nonetheless. When considering the assumptions made with the photographic work in relation to *Mantegna & Crucifix*, we accepted what we saw as being genuine. We have no reason no doubt what we are seeing as the sight is visually plausible, yet the fact we chose not to question it is a comment about the effect of the medium's objective traditions on our perception. Artists are aware of the conventions and seeing styles that people adopt when mentally digesting work, so if a medium like photography dictates increased importance and confirms reality more than reality itself then this should be responsibly exploited.

The purpose of this writing was to understand how photography's objective nature affects its presentation of art when considering more traditional forms.

We've mentioned how a photograph confirms authenticity by a notion of mechanical construction and also how the camera captures a trace of reality. These combined elements, aware of or not, make us put greater emphasis on the art produced. We are aware that art in itself is regarded higher over other genres such as advertising and documentary, so to

have an art form that again puts emphasis in this context makes for very effective work. It's fair to say; photography, by its methodology makes us choose to accept what we are seeing. Now that this understanding has been attained we can exploit this in creating the most effective work possible.

In summary we discovered that this increased authenticity presents itself in many forms, not only in that it presents a trace of reality, but the two dimensional format allows us to show multiple images in close proximity. This use of multiple imagery can depict varying subject matter, which would otherwise be impossible to visually digest at the same time. This point seems more practical than theoretical but any exercise which makes us question our *now* natural way of seeing images is beneficial in understanding perception.

After studying similar concepts presented through different art forms, it gave an insight into the effects of photography's objective nature on our perception. With the two examples of Dorothy Cross's work it became clear with her use of photography (in *Mantegna & Crucifix*) she was able to effectively reference a previous work in history. Obviously part of this was assisted by a suggestive title but the almost identical composition helped to increase the works validity as an effective piece.

At the beginning and middle parts of this essay we considered the ideology of Alfred Stieglitz, and now in conclusion his words seem more applicable than before. In the same way that we now understand photography's benefits as a medium over more traditional forms, Stieglitz reminds us that all forms are equal. This makes us question our topic further by asking what advantages are associated with other art forms that aren't present with

photography. This question that has been formulated from the understanding of new knowledge attained in this comparative study.

In terms of future research, the personal discovery of not just being a photographer looks very optimistic with a variety of future art forms to adopt. Realistically a continual progression of ideology is the natural path for any artist, and to be able to verbally define a conclusion would seem to be an anathema for creativity. This gap between an internal concept and physical outcome is the parameters in which an artist can effectively present through a chosen medium.

The considered analysis that has been undertaken in this writing is essential in defining what our aims were, but a theoretical examination into a practical subject seems half-hearted. Whilst it is pragmatic to consider the influential works of varying practitioners, to acquire a personal and fully formed opinion, first hand research will be carried out. This introductory investigation into a complex topic has provided us with the key points. Now that we have a basic knowledge around the subject, practical, first hand research can be undertaken to achieve that fully formed opinion.

As for acquiring a better understanding of myself, I now, with the help of Stieglitz consider myself an artist. Saying this, my portfolio of work exclusively features the adoption of photography as a favoured form of art. Now knowing that all art forms are essentially equal I have a real ambition to experiment with other mediums, with no fear of lacking experience.

The purpose of this writing was to acquire new knowledge, which most definitely has happened, but the ambiguity around other mediums has provided me with a new question to answer.

How do my concepts and individual ideology, which I'm used to presenting through photography, present themselves, when adopting more traditional art forms?

Fortunately new knowledge brings new questions, so a natural progression will hopefully be the perusal of a vocation which realistically won't end with contentment.

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