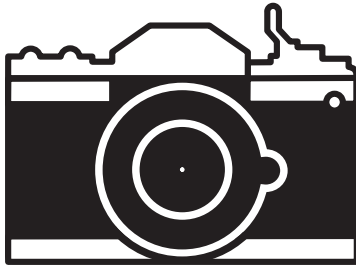


**MOMENTS IN TIME  
INTRODUCTORY BOOKLET**



## Introductory Booklet

### Contents

Introductory booklet  
Four posters  
Four booklets – one to accompany each poster  
Two gallery activity cards  
Four classroom activity cards  
Robert Frank exhibition guide  
Moments in Time exhibition guide

### How to use this kit

The aim of this set of resources is to support critical and reflective learning about still and moving photographic images for students from KS4 and above. You may need to adapt the resources to your subject and age group. The key themes identified on the poster booklets interrelate and should be considered as a 'way in' to ideas and concepts about photographic imagery in modern and contemporary art.

The posters and related booklets are designed for use in the classroom. They suggest some discussion points about two works we have chosen – a video piece and a photograph – and give lots of links to where you can find out about other artists' work that relates to the theme of the poster. The activity cards provide ideas for you to use with your group, either in the gallery or the classroom. Some parts of them can be photocopied to hand out to students. Many of the activities are discussion-based and it is important to remember that there are not always right or wrong answers in relation to understanding and interpreting visual images.

The examples of artists featured are mainly selected from the later part of the 1960s onwards. Some artists refer to their work in video as 'film'. In this resource we have used the term film to refer to 'traditional' celluloid or acetate film and video to refer to work either on video tape or digital video. Web links have been provided to help with researching artists' work. If you intend to download web images straight onto an interactive white board it may be advisable to view them first since in some cases the content is quite challenging.

## Tate Modern's approach to learning

Tate Modern's approach to learning encourages students to think not of one correct reading or interpretation of an artwork, but of plural readings.

The posters and booklets stress the importance of developing visual literacy – how to read images. Throughout this resource there is an emphasis upon the photographic image as a construction of meaning, rather than a recording of what was already known or seen. Thinking of photographic images as constructed promotes a more questioning approach to looking. Questioning what they see encourages students to draw on their own experience in order to build up an understanding of the visual image.

Critical skills developed in image analysis include:

- fact and opinion (differentiating between the two)
- understanding representation and stereotyping
- thinking about culture and society through visual images
- understanding the codes and conventions used to communicate meaning

This methodology and the ideas mentioned above are developed more fully in the Tate Modern Teachers' Kit available in the gallery shop.

## Impact of photography on modern art practice

The development of lens-based media (photography, film and video) has had an immeasurable effect on modern art. For example, the use of photomontage by John Heartfield in anti-Nazi campaign collages was an early example of the politicization of the medium.

The use of photographs in series and the role of film to present narratives were other areas adopted by many artists in the early twentieth century. More recently, major galleries and institutions have begun to acquire photography and video as part of their fine art collections. John-Paul Getty was one of the first fine art collectors to make major purchases for his collections in the 1970s.

## Photographic 'truth'

As lens-based media have developed, the notion of 'truth' has been an intense area of debate for many involved, whether as artists, subjects or viewers. Is it possible to capture a particular moment in time which represents the event as it actually was? What we see in a photographic image is always the result of

a choice the artist made as she or he looks at the subject matter. The medium itself also throws into question the notion of 'truth': how can the flatness of a print represent a multi-dimensional scene; how can a pre-recorded moving image represent real time?

#### Our role as viewers

When looking at photographic images on display, our perception of what our responsibilities are as viewers is crucial in completing the dynamic between audience, image and artist. For example, work by Diane Arbus featuring children and adults with a range of disabilities can be seen today in the context of the social model of disability (how society 'disables' through attitude, and distribution of power and resources). This social model did not exist at the time when she made the work. Works from the 1960s can be seen very differently by contemporary viewers in the present day context. Our readings of artworks are influenced by time and context, as well as our own histories.

#### Work on display

The methods of displaying and distributing artists' work in lens-based media are vast and varied, ranging from art gallery exhibition or installation, to publication in print, to CD, DVD; from television to internet, billboard, postcard or poster. Each of these provides a further context for our reading of the work and influence how we encounter the work and respond to it.

#### Where can you see artists' film and video?

Artists' film and video is sometimes screened on TV, or in festivals of the moving image, or during artists' 'open studio' events. There are several collections of work that are accessible over the web (see web listings). There are increasingly blurred distinctions between artists' film shown in a gallery and video and experimental film shown in the cinema. Production values in artists' film can range from a home movie style to Hollywood production style – and everything in-between.

#### Some differences between video and film

Film is made in different formats – 8mm, 16mm, 35mm – and the image quality has similar characteristics to that of photographic film, for example grain, 'texture', colour sensitivity and colour depth. Film is run through a projector with a bulb in it. The image is made up of light emanating from the (usually) hidden projector onto the screen. The received image is made up of light. Film uses the phenomena of 'persistence of vision' – that is, each frame

that passes in front of the projector lens cannot be perceived as a series of single images. The human brain 'fills in the gap' producing the illusion of continuous movement.

Experimental filmmakers in the 1960s worked directly onto the film stock itself to create extraordinary visual and abstract effects through hand-colouring, drawing, scratching, collage etc. (Stan Brakhage and Len Lye are examples). Some artist-filmmakers have switched from using film to making their work on video. Some video artists have never worked with film, but they may reference the style, formal characteristics and language of this media. Early video is made on quite low grade VHS tape and has a distinct 'rough' look. Digital video makers have a vast range of special effects they can apply to their work – a click of a computer mouse can produce effects that may imitate the appearance of film. However, many effects also exploit the digital nature of the image and the way in which a pixellated image can be broken down and re-worked to create another type of visual language. Some artists work with a mixture of film and video together! Rather than being seen on a small monitor, video is now more often projected onto a screen or wall in a fashion similar to film. It is interesting to debate the discernible differences between the film and the video image. Often colour tones and lighting will be the salient difference. Artists like Isaac Julien or Shirin Neshat would be useful to consider in this respect.

#### Influence of digital media

The advent of digital technology has had a huge impact upon the production and distribution of artists' video. Making and editing a video can be carried out on portable equipment without the need for a production team. Copies of a work can be produced cheaply and sent around the world by streaming over the internet or sending out on DVD. Many artists whose main medium may not be the moving image make video art as one element of their practice.

#### Relationship between film, video and television

In a culture saturated with the visual image and dominated by the language of the media, it is interesting to consider how art, media and popular culture interconnect. One type of image influences the production and the reception of another type of image. Advertising, pop videos, TV genres (such as reality TV) and cinema are all quoted and appropriated by artists for their own means in endless combinations and forms. The growth of video games, played with others over the internet or alone, has also created a new strand of visual imagery and new levels of interactivity.

## **Bibliography**

### Photography

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(mainly from *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Liz Wells)

#### *Background*

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Thames and Hudson

Life Magazine (2003) *100 Photographs that Changed the World*,

Time Incorporated

Reuters (2004) *The Art of Seeing: The Best of Reuters*

*Photography*, Reuters

#### *Theory*

Barthes, Roland (1984) *Camera Lucida*, London: Fontana

Burgin, Victor (ed.) (1982) *Thinking Photography*, London: Macmillan

Sontag, Susan (1979) *On Photography*, Hardmonsworth: Penguin

Tagg, John (1988) *The Burden of Representation: Essays on*

*Photographies and Histories*, London: Macmillan

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London: Routledge

Williamson, Judith (1994) *Decoding Advertisements*, Marion

Boyers Publishers

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Hall, Stuart and Mark Sealy (2001), *Different*, London: Phaidon

Hall, Stuart (1997) *Representation: Cultural Practices and Signifying Practices*, London: Sage

Scharf, Aaron (1974) *Art and Photography*, Hardmonsworth: Pelican, revised edition

Spence, Jo (1987) *Putting Myself in the Picture*, London:

Camden Press

Williams, Val (1991) *The Other Observers: Women Photographers from 1900 to the Present*, London: Virago

#### *Web links*

<http://www.photonet.org.uk/>

The Photographers' Gallery. Images and text from all group and solo exhibitions held at the gallery since 1998.

<http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk/>

Autograph, The Association of Black Photographers. Summaries of artists' work and image galleries.

<http://www.nmpft.org.uk/>

The National Museum for Photography, Film and Television website. An excellent UK site with on-line exhibitions and teachers' resources (designed for use when visiting the museum but could be adapted).

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/photography/>

V&A photographic collection pages. Photographers' stories, themed gallery tours with commentaries, artists' personal selections.

<http://www.photographymuseum.com>

A virtual museum of mainly 19th and early 20th century images with subjects taken from American history. Excellent links to other US and UK sites.

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/ariadne/>

IRIS – International Centre for Women in Photography. Directory of women photographers, image galleries and listings.

<http://www.getty.edu/art/collections>

Explore the Getty Museum's photography collection with this online resource, which includes video footage of Walker Evans talking about his documentary photography from the time of the Great Depression, as well as footage of a curator discussing 19th and early 20th century photography.

[http://www.guggenheim.org/exhibitions/past\\_exhibitions/moving\\_pictures/overview.html](http://www.guggenheim.org/exhibitions/past_exhibitions/moving_pictures/overview.html)

The Guggenheim Museum. An overview of photography in art from the past decade. Artist biographies and galleries include: Rineke Dijkstra, Sam Taylor-Wood, Andreas Gursky.

<http://www.photography.about.com>

Useful reference to all things photographic with a list of 'notable photographers' that you can access by alphabet.

#### Moving Image

#### *Books*

Rush, Michael (2003) *Video Art*, London: Thames and Hudson

(1999) *New Media in the Late 20th-century Art* (World of Art Series), London: Thames and Hudson

Rees, A. L. (1998) *A History of Experimental Film and Video*, London: BFI Publishing

Ross, David (ed.) (1991) *Illuminating Video: An essential guide to Video Art*, Aperture



### *Web links*

<http://www.vdb.org/>

Site for 'Video Data Bank' that has 1,200 video clips by 260 artists including Mona Hatoum and Bruce Nauman. Also has concise artists' biographies, and interviews with artists such as Cindy Sherman.

<http://www.lux.org.uk/>

Site for the Lux organisation featuring a bibliography of on-line journals and study resources for video art.

<http://www.hi-beam.net/cgi-bin/flicker.pl>

Site for 'Flicker' – a site for (mainly) US video art with artists' statements and images from current, alternative film and video.

<http://www.artnetweb.com/guggenheim/mediascape/>

Guggenheim Museum: 'Mediascape' Video pieces by six artists including Bill Viola, Bruce Nauman and Jenny Holzer with good explanatory text.

<http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions/timezones/>

Website for the Time Zones exhibition at Tate Modern, which focuses on the work of ten international film and video artists.

<http://ukvideoart.tripod.com/>

A chronology of the first two decades of British video art.

<http://bfi.org.uk/education/resources/teaching/secondary>

Some useful teaching resources about the moving image.

<http://www.lfmc.org>

Artist information and essay about the first ten years of the London Filmmakers' Co-op.

## WHAT IS A PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE?



f.8

## What is a Photographic Image?

*Evidence, Document, Witness, Memory, Truth, Fiction...*

What is the nature of a photographic image? What relationship to reality does it have? The status of the image will change according to its use and context. Imagine your portrait on the front of a newspaper, in a family album or on a form in a police file. In each and every case there are different ways in which the image functions and makes its meaning.

*"A photograph is an image that bears the mark of the real."*

David Campany (writer)

*"To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge – and, therefore, like power."*

Susan Sontag (writer)

*"The acts of seeing and photographing have often been made to seem fused into one."* David Campany (writer)

## Photographic 'truth'

Is it possible to capture a particular moment in time, through video or photography, which represents an event as it actually was?

Robert Frank – a year spent driving through the USA in 1955 resulted in 28,000 images, of which 83 were made into a book called 'The Americans' – a ground-breaking portrait of American society. (see Robert Frank exhibition pages of the Tate website [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk))

Lee Friedlander – documentary street scenes seeming 'grabbed' from the flow of time – 'social landscapes' of the USA.

[http://www.fraenkelgallery.com/artists/a\\_friedlander.html](http://www.fraenkelgallery.com/artists/a_friedlander.html)

Sophie Calle – projects that offer documentary 'proof' and also question the viewer's role as collaborator or spectator.

<http://www.dareonline.org/themes/space/calle.html>

Uta Barth – close up evidence of reality, made to look unfamiliar or unrecognisable.

<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/2aa/2aa239.htm>

Philip-Lorca diCorcia – the artist set up a system of flash lights in the street and a radio signal to operate the camera thereby spot lighting passers by. <http://www.robertklein-gallery.com/gallery/dicorcia>

Fazal Sheikh – documentary portraits that are made with agreement from the sitter with any funds resulting being donated to human rights organisations.

<http://www.fazalsheikh.org/>

## Private and public

Many artists work with archival or historical imagery, whether from the family album or from social history. Often this work will trigger ideas about memory and time. For example:

Jo Spence – ground-breaking exhibition 'Beyond the Family Album' unpicks the hidden histories of gender and class within the family. No web reference but see book 'Putting Yourself in the Picture', Jo Spence, Camden Press: 1986.

Roshini Kempadoo – her work presents ideas from history and contemporary events in relation to identity and representation.  
<http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk/gallery/kem.html>

Christian Boltanski – work in all media that explores real and fictional evidence sometimes including documents from the Second World War. The Reserve of Dead Swiss, 1990, is on display at Tate Modern from December 2004.

## Self Portraits – Photography

Many artists use their own image to investigate the idea of truth to reality or as an exploration of how identity is formed.

Donald Rodney – imagery related to illness, identity, family and home. <http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/rodney/introduction.htm>

Maxine Walker – her work aims to 'blow apart the idea of stereotype' and sits between Cindy Sherman and documentary styles.  
<http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk/gallery/wal.html>

John Coplans – images of his ageing body made over time, however, he never reveals his face! (see Collections pages of Tate website [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk))

## Self Portraits – Video

Marina Abramovic – in *Art Must Be Beautiful, Artist Must Be Beautiful*, 1975, the artist repeats the phrase as she brushes her hair with increasing vigour.  
Search for Abramovic on <http://www.newmedia-art.org/>

Bruce Nauman – this artist has made a series of works using his own body as a 'living sculpture', performing actions sometimes choreographed, sometimes 'natural'.  
<http://www.tate.org.uk>

## Portraits – Photography

Thomas Struth – his intense visual objectivity scrutinises contemporary urban existence. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Nan Goldin – a lifelong series of intimate photographs documenting friends and lovers. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Rineke Dijkstra – in making formal portraits she is interested in typologies of people, such as teenagers and new mothers. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Thomas Ruff – a series of colour portraits of family and friends was made between 1981 and 1991. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

## Portraits – Video

Gillian Wearing – *Confess All On Video, Don't Worry You Will Be in Disguise. Intrigued? Call Gillian, Version II* 1994 was inspired by 'fly-on-the-wall' documentaries and confessional TV chat shows. <http://www.tate.org.uk>

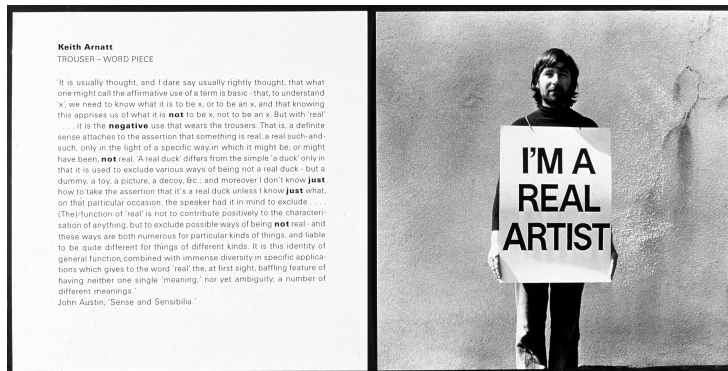
Janane Al-Ani – aspects of her work address the symbolic significance of the veil in contemporary art and culture.  
<http://www.arabnews.com?page=21&section=0&article=51943&d=26&m=9&y=2004>

This section pairs two works which explore ideas and discussion about 'What is a Photographic Image?'. In addition, there is a poster-sized image of the Gillian Wearing work in this kit.

### Keith Arnatt

This image of Keith Arnatt wearing a placard is accompanied by a text from J L Austin's 'Sense and Sensibilia'. The text argues that to prove what something is, it is necessary to prove what it is not. The photograph seems to present a straight fact and yet it sows within us an element of doubt about everything that it purports to be.

Keith Arnatt *Trouser Word Piece* 1972–1989  
Black and white photographs on paper 1005 x 1005mm each  
© the artist



Keith Arnatt  
TROUSER - WORD PIECE

'It is usually thought, and I dare say usually rightly thought, that what one might call the affirmative use of a term is basic - that to understand 'x', we need to know what it is to be x, or to be an x, and that knowing this appraises us of what it is **not** to be x, not to be an x. But with 'real' ... it is the **negative** use that wears the trousers. That is, a definite sense attaches to the assertion that something is real, a real such-and-such, only in the light of a specific way in which it might be, or might have been, **not** real. A real duck differs from the simple 'a duck' only in that it is used to exclude various ways of being not a real duck - but a dummy, a toy, a picture, a decoy, &c. - and moreover I don't know **just** how to take the assertion that it's a real duck unless I know **just** what, on that particular occasion, the speaker had it in mind to exclude ... (The) function of 'real' is not to contribute positively to the characterisation of anything, but to exclude possible ways of being **not** real - and these ways are both numerous for particular kinds of things, and liable to be quite different for things of different kinds. It is this identity of general function, combined with immense diversity in specific applications which gives to the word 'real' the at first sight, baffling feature of having neither one single 'meaning', nor yet ambiguity, a number of different meanings.'

John Austin, 'Sense and Sensibilia.'

### Gillian Wearing

A group of police officers pose – as though for a photograph – for 60 minutes. Photography carries an authority and it also fixes identity, so it is very appropriate that this is an image of the Law. As time passes the group starts to fidget, the image starts to unravel and the order breaks down.

Gillian Wearing *Sixty Minute Silence* 1996  
Rear projection video, 60 min. Colour, sound. Dimensions variable  
© the artist



## Discussion points

*Keith Arnatt*

- What are we reading here? The words or the photograph?
- What is a real artist anyway?
- Does he want us to take him seriously?
- Do we have to read all that text in order to understand the image?

*Gillian Wearing*

- Are these people really the police?
- If this is from a video film, why does it look like a photograph?
- Are they looking at me?
- Where are they?

MODERN

TATE

## MAKING AN IMAGE



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## Making an Image

*Focus, Frame, Select, Edit, Construct, Manipulate, Process...*

All photographic and video images have been shaped by the technology the artist chooses and by a process of selection, editing and manipulation. Each and every photographic image is therefore made or constructed, rather than being a window onto the world.

*"I speak of things that are there, anywhere and everywhere easily found, not easily selected or interpreted."*

Robert Frank (artist)

*"The goal of photography is not to make something factually impeccable, but seamlessly persuasive."*

John Szarkowski (writer)

## Photograph as object

A photograph can become an object through incorporation into sculpture or by more conceptual means. Conceptual art puts ideas and definitions centre stage, (see the booklet called 'What is a photographic image?')

Ceal Floyer – in *Light Switch*, 1992/99, an actual size image of a light switch is projected onto the wall at the usual height. It becomes a visual pun, a 'trompe l'oeil', a virtual object existing as light in space.

[http://www.artnet.com/artist/6305/Ceal\\_Floyer.html](http://www.artnet.com/artist/6305/Ceal_Floyer.html)

Helen Chadwick – The work *Ego Geometria Sum*, 1983, consists of photographs transferred to objects – a pram, a piano, a vaulting horse – their shapes simplified to basic outlines, their forms inhabited by ghostly images of the artist. It was a way, Chadwick said, of 'watching her life growing like a crystal, a landscape of memory'.

[http://www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk/site/thesite/institutep/exhibitions\\_past\\_chadwick.html](http://www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk/site/thesite/institutep/exhibitions_past_chadwick.html)

## Photography and collage

Collage is produced by combining several photographs together, maybe from different sources or moments in time, to make a single image. Photomontage, like collage, also assembles different elements, but the technique is more concealed. For example:

Gordon Matta-Clark – photographic collages of sliced up buildings push the limits of descriptive document.  
<http://freespace.virgin.net/robert.holloway/gordon.html>

Martha Rosler – uses pictures from newspapers collaged with domestic interiors to create visual disparity.  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~navva/>

### Using props and locations

Many artists construct complicated 'set ups' using props and careful lighting, either in a studio or on location, in order to 'stage' their photographs, for example:

Cindy Sherman – photographs herself in roles and 'disguises' also using elaborate studio settings.  
See Collections pages of the Tate website  
<http://www.tate.org.uk>

Yinka Shonibare – see *Diary of a Victorian Dandy* (21.00 hours), 1998. Shonibare poses in a fabricated set resembling a satirical painting by William Hogarth.  
<http://www.iniva.org/archive/person/218>

Tim Head – objects set up as tableau or still life.  
<http://www.tate.org.uk>

Boyd Webb – Webb works as sculptor, lighting technician and photographer creating highly theatrical scenes.  
[http://www.eyestorm.com/artist/Boyd\\_Webb.aspx](http://www.eyestorm.com/artist/Boyd_Webb.aspx)

### Text and image

Some artists use text with their image in a way that subverts or undercuts the meaning of the visual image, for example:

Barbara Kruger – the message is 'styled' to mimic the look, like advertising or corporate culture. <http://www.tate.org.uk>

Mitra Tabrizian – references to race, gender and identity using the code of a movie poster.  
<http://www.iniva.org/archive/person/509>

Willie Doherty – much of his work centred on Northern Ireland reveals how words can manipulate our reading of an image.  
<http://www.dareonline.org/themes/space/doherty.html>

### Digital editing and manipulation

Many artists now use digital media to edit their work, add to it, re-build it or make it from scratch, for example:

Andreas Gursky – large digitally-altered images which explore architecture and culture. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Chila Burman – makes highly coloured images of contemporary experience, 'a political fusion of Bollywood and pop art fashions.'  
<http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk/gallery/bur.html>

### Video

Artists can make video art from the extremes of a hand-held 'domestic' camera to a full-blown production costing huge sums of money, with a full crew of professionals – as in making a film, for example:

Matthew Barney – elaborate, fantastical imagery which is shown in the cinema and the gallery (shot on video, then transferred to 35mm film).  
<http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/barney/>

Elija-Liisa Ahtila – her work uses disrupted time sequences.

Shirin Neshat – filmic work that explores cultural representation and sexual politics of her native Iran.  
<http://www.time.com/time/europe/photoessays/neshat/>

This section pairs two works which explore ideas and discussion about 'Making an Image'. In addition, there is a poster-sized image of the Robert Frank work in this kit.

### Robert Frank

Published in 1959, the collection of images in Frank's book 'The Americans' were the result of a road trip around the United States. Frank broke from the previous tradition of photo journalism and documentary photography, taking pictures on a 35mm camera, sometimes secretly and often quickly. The images have a gritty, unpremeditated quality that influenced generations of photographers to come. Frank's vision of America presents themes of isolation and loneliness, together with critical observations of racial and social divisions.

Robert Frank *Political Rally (Chicago)* 1956  
Gelatin silver print  
© Robert Frank 'The Americans'



### Gilbert and George

*Death, Hope, Life, Fear* is a large-scale hand-coloured photographic work, composed of a grid. Gilbert and George have often dealt with the theme of the social and spiritual condition of contemporary life. In this work, made up of four parts, they present an allegory rich in symbolism. The artists are dressed in funereal purple and seem to be consumed by flower-like flames. Working as multi-layered collage, the work shifts our sense of scale and viewpoint as the artists ascend and descend from the heart of a flower toward the gruesome, unnatural mouths. Gilbert and George's work is usually a form of self-portraiture, since the artists feature in it.

Gilbert and George *Death Hope Life Fear* 1984  
Hand-coloured photographs, framed on paper  
4220 x 2500mm  
© the artists



## Discussion points

### *Robert Frank*

- Why did he cut off people on either side? Was it deliberate or accidental?
- What is suggested by the face being obliterated by the tuba?
- Think of the sound the tuba makes. Is it comical or serious?
- Would the image have a different meaning without the flag in it?

### *Gilbert and George*

- Name all the different parts making up this image. Why have they come together?
- What is the effect of one figure having his back to the camera?
- Research the other three images that make up this series and see what happens across the series.

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TATE

## THE IMAGE AND TIME



f. 4

## The Image and Time

*Narrative, Series, Sequence, Duration, Moment, Memory...*

Video can be said to be the 'art of time'. Unlike any traditional art form, time can be manipulated – literally slowed down, sped up, repeated or erased – redefining the boundaries of past, present and future. Photographers who work with series and sequences of images also work with the concept of time, reminding us of the then and the now inherent in the still image.

*"The photograph is a certain but fugitive testimony."*

Roland Barthes (writer)

*"The photograph acts as an instrument of travel in time and memory."* Philippe Dubois (writer)

*"All photographs are memento mori. Precisely by slicing this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt."* Susan Sontag (writer)

## About time and video

Video art emerged when the boundaries between traditional art practices were becoming blurred. It grew partly from the need for artists to record their performance work in the 1960s. Artists have used the camera as an extension of their own bodies – whether performing an action, as a type of body sculpture or enabling audience participation in the work itself.

Bruce Nauman – In *Bruce Nauman's early work Performance Corridor, 1968–70*, two video cameras at one end of a narrow tunnel entice viewers to see what is on them. Participants were filmed by a surveillance camera as they nervously inched their way down the space – on the monitor at the end they could watch the recording of themselves.

[http://www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi\\$artistdetail?NAUMANB](http://www.vdb.org/smackn.acgi$artistdetail?NAUMANB)

Sam Taylor Wood – In *Still Life, 2001*, an arrangement of fruit transforms into a mouldy heap as the artist shows her work speeded up and the process of decay occurs unnaturally fast.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/critic/feature/0,1169,728557,00.html>

Douglas Gordon – *24 Hour Psycho, 1993*, is a slowed-down version of Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film *Psycho*. A different take on a familiar classic, it introduces many of the important themes in Gordon's work: recognition and repetition, time and memory, complicity and duplicity, authorship and authenticity, darkness and light.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1724372>

Harold Offeh – in his video *Smile, 2001*, Harold holds a smile on his face throughout the length of Nat King Cole's song with the same name. How long before his face starts to strain with the effort?

<http://www.iniva.org/archive/person/493>

In the exhibition *Time Zones: Recent Film and Video* at Tate Modern (6 October 2004 – 2 January 2005), artists have made work with the passing of time as a subject in itself. Different time frames are evoked, such as past and present, tradition and modernity, and the political and economic time frames in which the work was made. See Tate website <http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions/timezones/>

#### About time in photography

Hiroshi Sugimoto – Sugimoto has made a series of photographs of the entire duration of a film. The very long exposure results in a 'burnt out', white image of the screen with no trace of the film. 'But this is not simply white light; it is the result of too much information.' (Sugimoto) [http://www.eyestorm.com/feature/ED2n\\_article.asp?article\\_id=135](http://www.eyestorm.com/feature/ED2n_article.asp?article_id=135)

Tokihiro Sato – in *Breathing Shadows*, 1988, Sato directs light at the camera lens by moving around his subject for a long time with a mirror. Through this repetition, particles of light are brought onto the photograph through the process of literally measuring space and time. <http://photoarts.com/gallery/SATO/satoexh.html>

John Hilliard – Hilliard made photos of his own camera, taken using mirrors and different combinations of aperture and shutter speed. Hilliard's fingers can be seen operating the camera. Photography is both the medium and the subject of the work, giving not a picture of 'reality', but different versions of reality. Search for John Hilliard at <http://www.the-artists.org/>

Jan Dibbets – Systematic sequences of time, for example photographing through a window every ten minutes from dawn to dusk, making 80 images in all which demarcate time and light. Search for Jan Dibbets at <http://www.artnet.com/>

#### Discussion points

- Think about how time can be cut and manipulated in film and TV. Discuss some examples that you have seen recently, for example, the films *Pulp Fiction* by Quentin Tarantino, *Minority Report* by Steven Spielberg, or the TV series *24*. How is this different from other types of programme or film?
- How could you show the idea of a passage of time in a still image? Discuss some of your ideas and make rough sketches.
- "Robert Frank, when he returned to photography in the 1970s, had abandoned all the formal, classical unities of the single image. The aesthetic of film had intervened. (...) Instead there were composites and serial frames." Liz Jobey, writer. Discuss the issues involved in moving from taking photographs to making films.

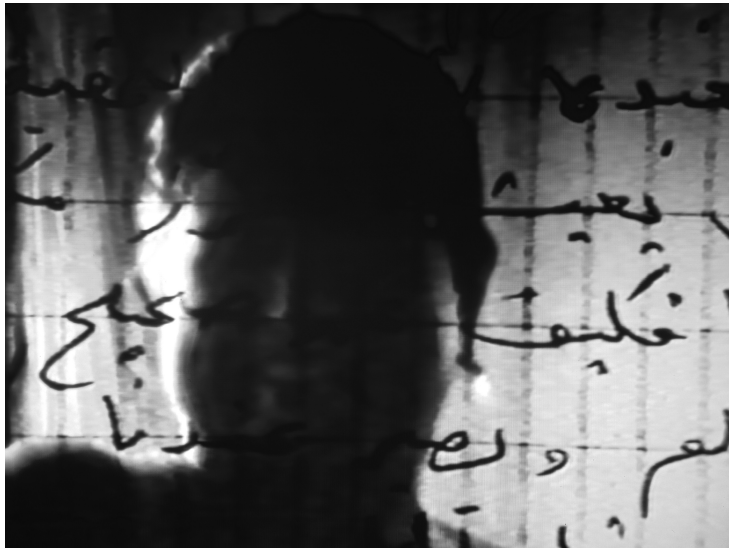


This section pairs two works which explore ideas and discussion about 'The Image and Time'. In addition, there is a poster-sized image of the Mona Hatoum work in this kit.

### Mona Hatoum

Letters written by Hatoum's mother in Beirut to her daughter in London appear as Arabic text moving over the screen and are read aloud in English by the artist. Taped conversations in Arabic between mother and daughter are mixed into the soundtrack. 'The work is constructed visually in such a way that every frame speaks of literal closeness and implied distance.' (Hatoum) Time, distance, space and identity are key themes in the work. Hatoum has said 'my work is about (...) being defined as 'Other' or as one of 'Them'.

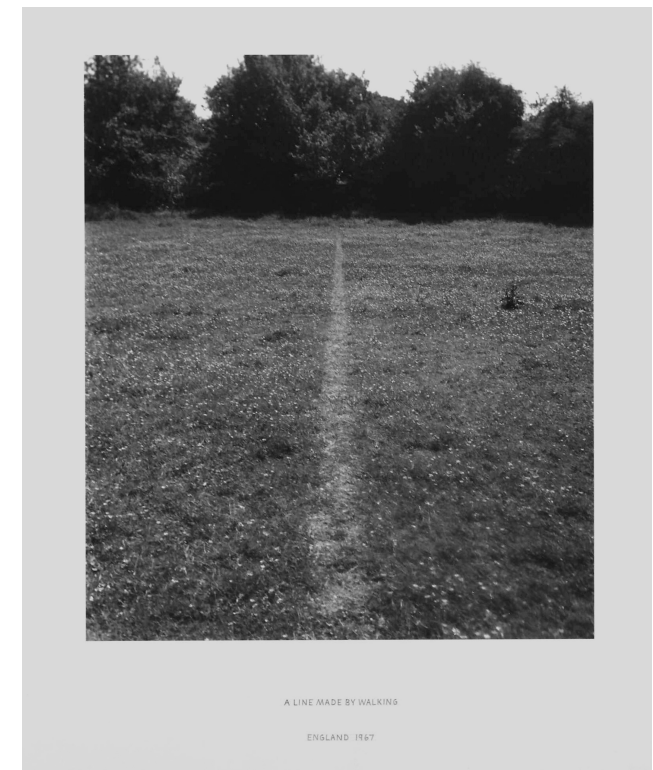
Mona Hatoum *Measures of Distance* 1988  
Video installation  
© the artist



### Richard Long

By walking back and forth in a field in Somerset, Long wore away a path that temporarily altered the appearance of the landscape. The photograph is the sole record of action that the artist made and of the work's existence in time and space. After the photograph, time passed and the grass grew back over the line.

Richard Long *A Line Made by Walking* 1967  
Photograph and pencil on board. 375 x 324mm  
© the artist



## Discussion points

### *Mona Hatoum*

- What are all those marks on the image? Is it writing or drawing?
- Is there a figure there? Why can't we see the face properly?
- This is a 'video still' – a frozen image. How does it look different to a photograph?

### *Richard Long*

- What is the subject matter of this photograph?
- How could you tell what time of day or type of weather it is?
- What viewpoint do you have on the scene? Where has the artist positioned the camera?
- Why do you think it isn't in colour?

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## THE IMAGE AND THE VIEWER



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## The Image and the Viewer

*See, Watch, Look, View, Spectate, Interact...*

The way we look at art can no longer be thought of as a neutral act. The viewer is an important element in the work. How does the artist work with the idea of the spectator when they make their work? Do we act differently in front of photographs on the wall or video projected in a dark space? Is the viewer a participant, a bystander or a voyeur?

*"I like film to be like a wet piece of soap – it slips out your grasp; you have to readjust your position in relation to it, so that it dictates to you, rather than you to it"*

Steve McQueen (artist)

*"In photography the moment of looking at the image has no fixed duration. It can be extended as long as fascination lasts."* Peter Wollen (film maker and writer)

## Video installation

This term covers a wide range of work (since the early 1970s) from multi-screen presentations, to video shown as part of sculptural elements, objects and materials. Installation artists make environments for the viewer to enter into, which creates a physical participation with the work. Over the past 30 years or so, film and video has had an increasing presence in the gallery space, rather than the cinema auditorium. For example:

Lorna Simpson – *31*, 2002, is a mesmerising grid of 31 screens on which are seen the daily routines of a woman from morning to night.

<http://www.whitney.org/information/press/91.html>

Gary Hill – *Tall Ships*, 1992. In this work, viewers walking in a darkened space are confronted by ghostly images of people coming towards them.

[http://www.acmi.net.au/deepspace/ar\\_gh2.php](http://www.acmi.net.au/deepspace/ar_gh2.php)

Mona Hatoum – *Corps Étranger*, 1994, is a video projected on the floor inside a tall, cylindrical, wooden structure. Since the imagery had been filmed with an endoscopic camera (as used by surgeons) the work re-creates the feeling of entering inside the artist's body.

<http://www.brynmawr.edu/anthropology/sdiamond/kellychew/page11.html>

## Photography and installation

Photographs can be printed to any scale from postcard size to giant wall-sized prints. Methods of display can vary accordingly from hanging in space to arrangement with objects or in the form of an artist's book.

*Catherine Yass – this artist's work is made of multiple layers of negatives and presented as lightboxes. (See the Collections pages of the Tate website ([www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)))*

*Annette Messager – this artist's photographs are sometimes suspended in space or tied in with objects such as stuffed toys. (see Tate website)*

*Wolfgang Tillmans – this artist uses the gallery wall as if it were pages in a book and mixes the scale of framed images with laser copies and snapshot size prints.  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/tillmans/>*

*Hannah Collins – some of her large-scale photographs are mounted onto cloth and pinned unframed onto the wall. (see Tate website)*

## Audience interaction

Some video work runs on a loop, for an indefinite period of time; other works have a beginning, middle and end. Many artists use the idea of time, or multiple layers of time within their work. Some artists have picked up on the language of interactive computer games and use this in their work so that there is an interactive element that the viewer can 'play' with via a feedback system. Viewer interaction can be via touch-screen pads, hidden sensors or web links, for example.

*Dan Graham – Performer, Audience, Mirror, 1975, places the audience in an environment of glass, mirror and video camera in a set up which becomes a lesson in viewing and being viewed.  
<http://www.newmedia-art.org/cgi-bin/show-oeu.asp?ID=10150659&lg=GBR>*

*Michael Snow – has also created works that incorporate the viewer. [http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new\\_offscreen/snow\\_dossier.html](http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/snow_dossier.html)*

## Discussion points

- Many artists now use the internet to showcase or present their photographic work. How might this type of viewing be different from the gallery experience?
- Are you a channel surfer? Can you watch more than one TV programme at once? Imagine making a work of video art that reflected this experience. How would you present it?
- Do you like to sit, stand or wander about when you watch films or video at home? Which are you most likely to do in an art gallery installation – sit, stand or wander around?
- When you look at an exhibition of photographs how do you know which wall to start from? Do you go from print to print or do you skip around wherever your eye leads you?
- Everyone feels uncomfortable in front of certain images. Make a list of which images are the hardest for you to confront and why?

This section pairs two works which explore ideas and discussion about 'The Image and the Viewer'. In addition, there is a poster-sized image of the Jeff Wall work in this kit.

### Jeff Wall

In common with film, the image on a light box relies on a hidden space from which light emanates in order to be seen. Wall's images use digital manipulation to collage elements which contrast the real and the fictional. Viewing these large-scale photographs is an overpowering visual experience. 'I saw an illuminated sign somewhere. and it struck me that here was the perfect synthetic technology for me. It was not photography, it was not cinema, it was not painting but it has strong associations with them all.' (Jeff Wall)

Jeff Wall *A Sudden Gust of Wind (after Hokusai)* 1993  
Photographic transparency and illuminated display case  
2500 x 3970 x 340mm  
© the artist



### Bill Viola

In his work with experimental sound and video, Viola aims to create art which operates as a complete experience. The three panels, or triptych, show birth, death and, in the centre, a body floating in water – a metaphorical journey between the other two screens. The three passages are accompanied by the soundtrack of crying, breathing and water. Viola has found video to be the perfect medium for his exploration of time, memory and the human spirit. The work was originally conceived to be shown in a 17th century chapel in Nantes, France.

Bill Viola *Nantes Triptych* 1992  
Video and mixed media installation  
© the artist



## Discussion points

### *Jeff Wall*

- Why is it called 'After Hokusai'?  
(Find out about this famous Japanese print)
- Is there any connection between the characters?
- What type of landscape is this?

### *Bill Viola*

- What is the impact of juxtaposing images of birth and death?
- Where else might we see three images together (a triptych)?
- Was the artist connected to these people in any way?

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## Looking and sketching

Looking is easy, seeing is not! Close, analytical looking is a skill that can be developed, practised and refined. Sketching – a quick drawing to record ideas and impressions rather than a likeness of the artwork – can be a way of enhancing looking.

### *Focused looking*

Divide your group into sets of three. Ask them to select an image. One person is the timekeeper and the listener. The other two are the 'lookers'. The lookers look at the image for a full 60 seconds, without speaking at all! Move away from the image. The lookers make notes and sketches to show everything they remember about the image, without referring to each other. The third person is the arbitrator of who has recalled the most detail. What has been missed out or overlooked?

Extension activity for classroom:

Continue this idea of concentrated visual analysis by working in small groups to plan a 60-second video. Is this more or less difficult than planning a 60-minute video? Make preparatory notes and sketches and work together to decide exactly what will be in the shot etc.

### *Visual/verbal feedback*

Working in pairs, A selects an image and ensures that B has not seen it. B has their back to the image and sketches according to the description given by A in order to make as detailed and accurate representation of the image as possible. Allow around one minute for this exercise. Compare experiences and how the sketch does or does not reflect the image. Swap and repeat.

### *Beyond the frame*

Try sketching an image and extending the drawing beyond the frame to explore what might be outside or around the image. This can be partly imaginative and partly analytical, for example to show the light source or to invent contextual information.



## Language and discussion

### *Key words*

Photocopy the key words on the card. Break into eight small groups and give each group one word. Ask students to apply the word on their card to one work and to make a sentence that clearly states the reasons for their choice.

### *Extension activity for classroom:*

Using a dictionary compare the definitions of the following words: record, photo-journalism, documentary, reportage, propaganda, evidence. Search through books and printed media such as newspapers and magazines to collect images that could be examples of each definition.

### *Quotation (gallery or classroom activity)*

'Most issues of importance cannot be photographed'. John Szarkowski said this in his book 'The Photographer's Eye' in 1966. He may have been referring to the assassination of John F Kennedy. Film and film stills of this event exist, but cannot explain to the viewer the political and emotional significance of the incident. When visiting a photography exhibition, or by selecting images from a wide variety of daily newspapers, use this quotation as your argument and see if you can select images that either support or contradict this statement. You could also discuss how this statement relates to the moving image, to film and video.

### *Text, title, caption*

#### *(gallery or classroom activity)*

Notice how different artists use titles in different ways: factual, descriptive or allusive. Re-write the title for several works that you think have a very factual title. Present the new title to a partner, without showing them the original. Discuss between you how your reading of the image changes with the old and new titles. Similarly, re-write the caption accompanying the work in your own words to emphasise your own interpretation.

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**FACT**

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**DOCUMENT**

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**FICTION**

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**MEMORY**

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**MOMENT**

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**ONE-OFF**

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**NARRATIVE**

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**SEQUENCE**



## Pinhole photography and camera obscura

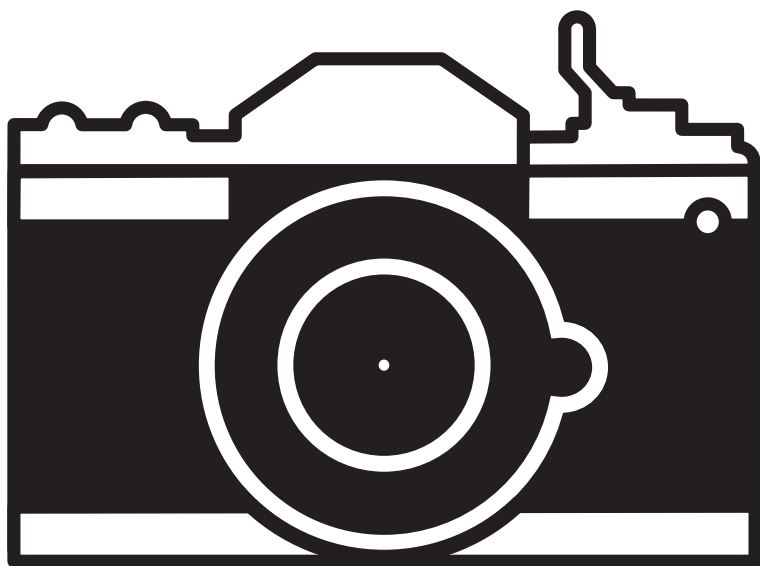
A camera obscura is an image projected from outside into a darkened room through a tiny aperture. The image exists in real time and space and you can be a part of it. The room in effect becomes a camera. The image, however, will be upside down, since there is no lens to correct it, as in a camera.

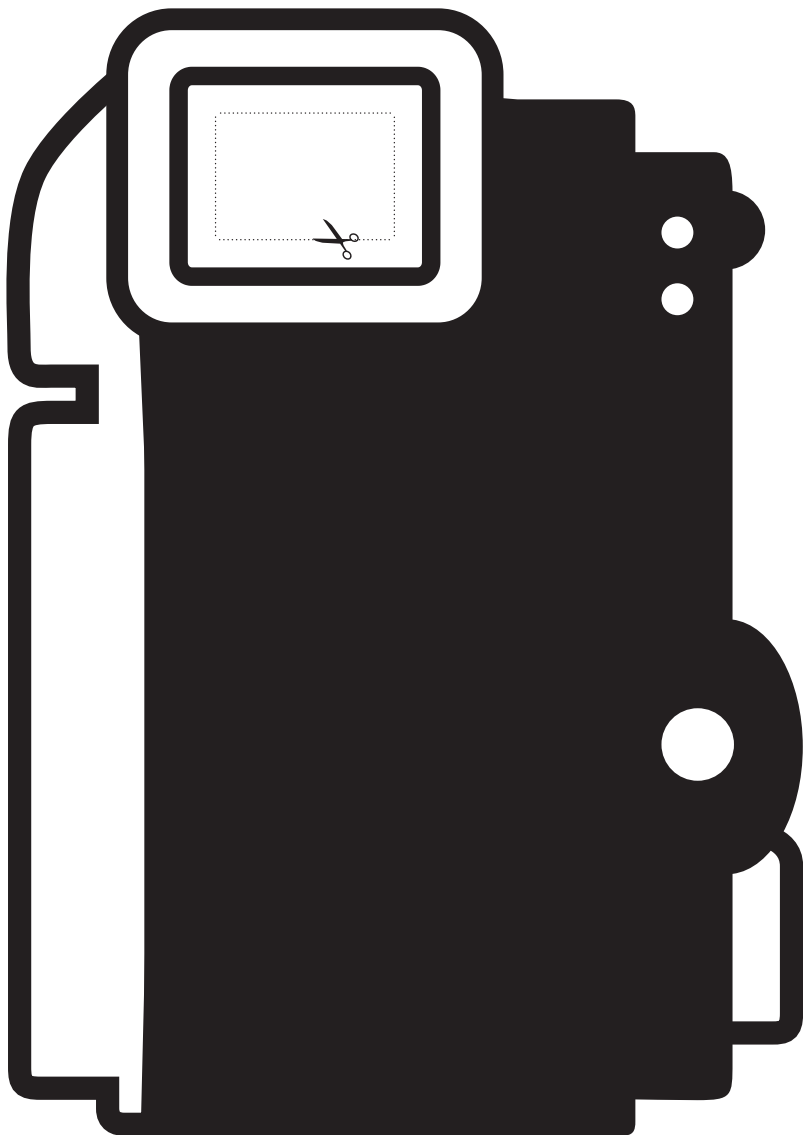
Visit [http://www.acmi.net.au/AIC/CAMERA\\_OBSCURA.html](http://www.acmi.net.au/AIC/CAMERA_OBSCURA.html) and <http://www.brightbytes.com/cosite.what.html>  
(The Magic Mirror of Life – An appreciation of the camera obscura)

Pinhole photography is relatively simple to do and develops an understanding of the relationship between time and image production, science and art.  
<http://www.pinholephotography.org>

## Pinhole camera instructions

1. Find some black tape, pin or needle, photographic paper and a stop watch. You will also need a dark room.
2. Carefully make a small hole with a pin or needle in the centre of the 'lens' on the top of this box.
3. Load the camera in a darkroom (with a safe light on) by taping photographic paper into the box with the shiny side facing the hole. Put the lid back onto the box and seal all round with black tape to prevent any light from getting in (including the pin hole).
4. Choose a location or position that you want to photograph with the pinhole camera.
5. Take the tape off the pin hole for one minute, then cover again. Take back into the darkroom and remove the paper to develop.
6. Try out different exposure times or moving objects for different effects.







### Video camera viewfinder

Use the viewfinder to re-frame a chosen image. Move the viewfinder to isolate sections. Consider the viewfinder as a zoom tool by moving it closer and further away and note how your reading of the image is altered. Make notes and sketches from your observations.

The activities below make some links between different subject area in the curriculum, for example art, citizenship, language, media and communications.

#### *Image and text*

Through using a word processor and image scanner as well as magazines and photographs as source material, it has become easier to 'cut and paste' images and text to create a photomontage. Get the students to make their own photomontages, using text to subvert the image or create an alternative reading. Work by *Barbara Kruger*, for example, exemplifies a very distinctive use of personal pronouns to set up a direct address to the viewer. The combination of text and image is seamless and this enhances the power of the image.

#### *Big ideas – language and conceptual art*

Conceptual art emphasises the relationship between word and image and how they are inextricably linked to one another as two parallel representational systems. By looking at examples of conceptual artists' work, (see posters in this pack plus work by *Joseph Kosuth*, *Keith Arnatt*, *Marcel Broodthaers*, *John Baldessari*, *Bruce Nauman* etc.), students may be able to conceive of and produce images themselves that re-produce aspects of conceptual art or experiment with ideas in both photography and video.

#### *Word bank or word wall*

Create an on-going word bank related to contemporary art, photography and the moving image. For example:

Technical terms:

edit, crop, cut, frame, zoom, close-up, medium shot, long shot, pan, 'point-of-view'

Terms related to lens based media, ie. photography, video, film: experimental, interactive, multi-screen, split screen, single screen, installation, still image, moving image, site specific, performance.

#### *Citizenship and society*

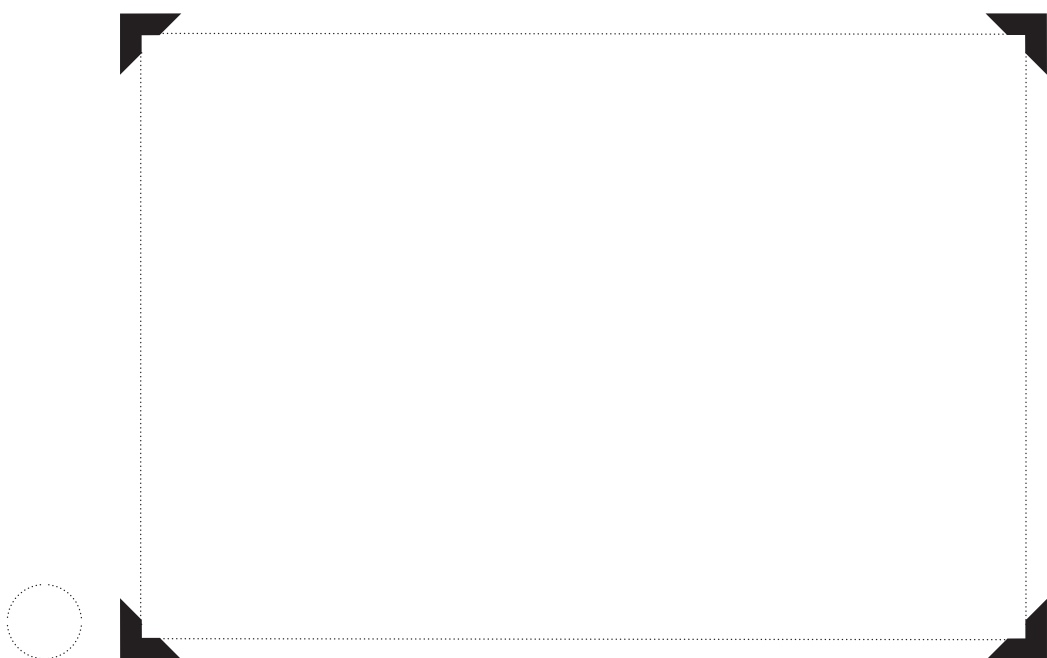
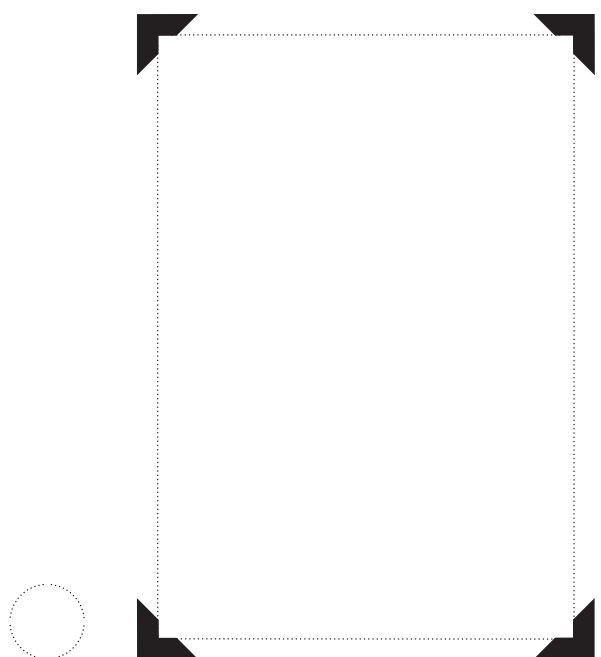
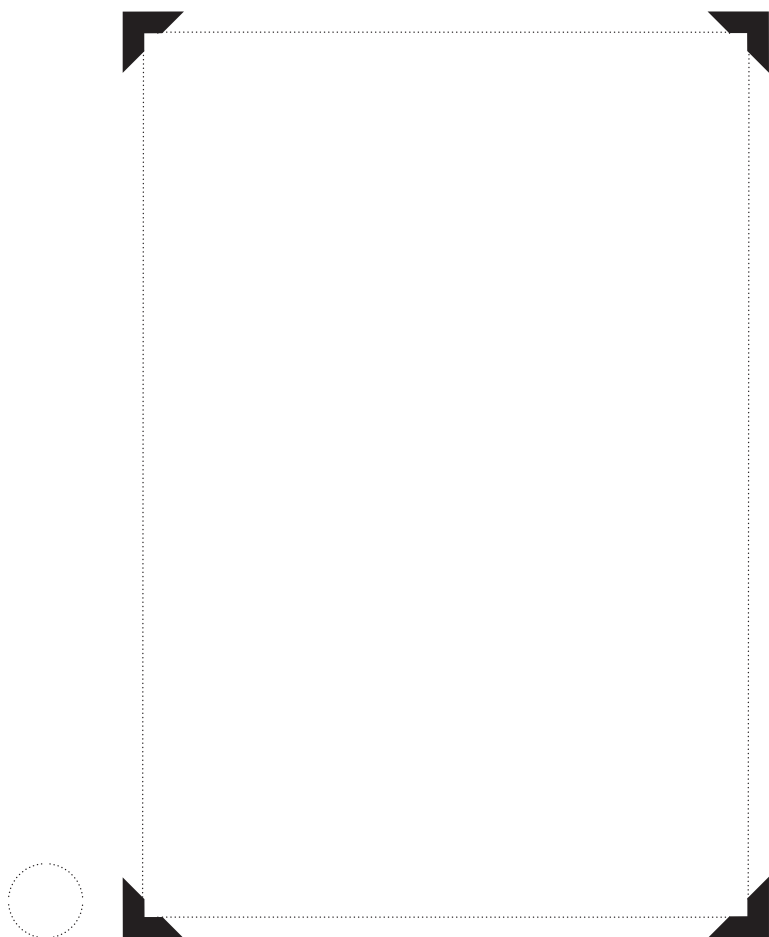
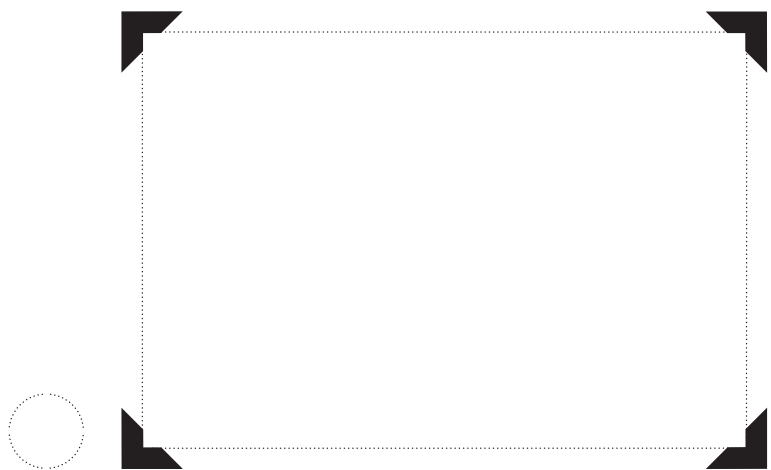
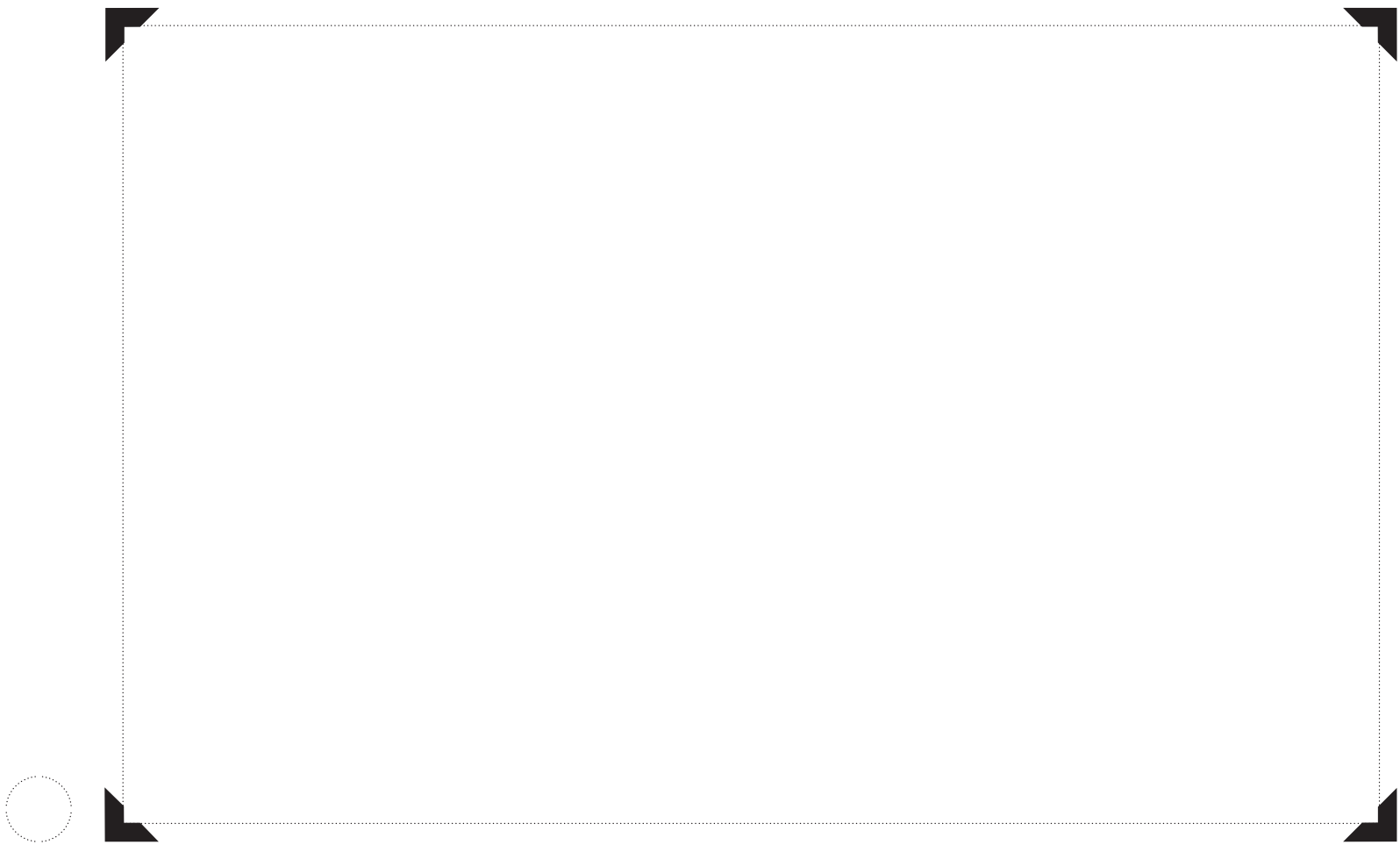
Issues about representation and stereotyping are closely tied to photography and the moving image. Debating who gets represented in the arts and the media and how they are represented are not only issues about the media, but also about moral, social and cultural responsibilities. How do artists respond to controversial and topical events? Can the work of artists effect change in society? Do photographers sometimes exploit their subjects – particularly if they are vulnerable people? Find out about the work of *Boris Mikhailov* and *Fazal Sheikh* and debate the ethics of representation involved in each case.

#### *Portraits and identity*

Using a computer and a scanner has opened up a wide range of methods for image manipulation. Ideas for self-portraits could include 'how people see me' collecting phrases and statements made by others and incorporating these into a self-portrait contrasted with 'how I see myself'. Work on public and private images of the self could use personal images from the family album and found imagery from newspapers and the media. Using the same themes with video may present an opportunity to explore how new meanings are generated by using different media.

In addition to artists on the poster 'What is a photographic image?', look at work by *Carrie Mae Weems*, *Adrian Piper* and *Lorna Simpson*.





Critical and analytical viewing

*Sequences and series*  
Find a set of images that are grouped together. Discuss what the relationship between the images is. What could be taken away or added to the set? Is it a series or a sequence?

A sequence is a continuous related series; in cinema a series of shots forms an uninterrupted episode. A series is something that joins together; a number of similar things, persons or events produced as a related group or set. You can put a series together to make a sequence.

Photocopy the other side of this sheet to use as a template for each pupil to make sketches of their chosen works. Number each image if appropriate.

Extension activity for classroom:  
Make a series of photographs and storyboard them, creating visual links and connections. Discuss how you might move from this stage into making a video or moving image sequence.

*Curating a room*  
Choose one room in a display. Your task is to reduce the display by half and re-curate the works. What decisions will you make and why? What's in and what's out? How will the public make sense of your newly selected exhibition? Make sketches or plans to show the arrangement of the works. Make notes about lighting, colour of the walls, text labels etc. Again, you can use the template overleaf for this activity if appropriate.

Extension activity for classroom:  
Each person in the whole class makes a sequence of five photographic images of the same subject, using a digital or conventional camera. Each person edits from five images to just one image. Discuss the results in terms of the representation of the subject and the editorial decision making process.

*Analytical viewing*  
Divide your group into small groups and allocate tasks to do whilst in any video installation or display.

Photocopy the bottom of this sheet and cut into four for each discussion group to take with them.

Come back together as a whole group and compare ideas to form a very detailed and close analysis of all the aspects of the work.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

GROUP ONE: SOUNDS

FOCUS ON THE SOUNDS YOU CAN HEAR (MAYBE SPEND SOME TIME WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED TO ISOLATE YOUR SENSE OF HEARING)  
ANALYSE HOW SOUNDS RELATE TO THE IMAGE, CHANGES OUR SENSE OF SPACE, INFLUENCES OUR BEHAVIOUR IN THE SPACE ETC.

GROUP THREE: IDEAS

ANALYSE THE ISSUES, THEME, CONCEPT OR IDEAS IN THE WORK.

GROUP TWO: FRAMING

ANALYSE THE VIEWPOINT THE CAMERA HAS ON THE SUBJECT, THE ANGLE OF THE CAMERA AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE IMAGE IN THE FRAME.

GROUP FOUR: TECHNIQUES

ANALYSE SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES USED BY THE ARTIST, FOR EXAMPLE, COLOUR OR COLOUR BALANCE, LIGHTING, IMAGE MANIPULATION ETC.

