### UNDERSTANDING PHOTOGRAPHS: Example #1

#### VISUAL


#### TECHNICAL

Image taken with 35mm handheld camera (Leica) - lightweight, easy to operate, quick response time. Standard 50mm lens (closest to the viewpoint of the human eye). Fast film (400 ISO?) copes with relatively low light - creates grainy image. Available light - grey, overcast, early evening? Shutter speed (1/125?) captures slight motion blur in the jumping man. However, fast enough to prevent the need for a tripod. Image printed to reveal some shadow detail and range of tones. Un-cropped.

#### CONTEXTUAL

Cartier-Bresson influenced by Surrealism (chance, serendipity, the subconscious, strange juxtapositions, the marvellous in the everyday). Trained as a painter. Adopted 35mm cameras (Leica). Worked as a photo journalist - established Magnum agency - and pioneered distinctive style of candid street photography. Humanitarian approach. Published ‘The Decisive Moment’ (1952) - "To me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression." Huge influence on later photographers e.g. Robert Frank

#### CONCEPTUAL

- Photograph as a “decisive” or significant moment - how does this influence the way the photographer behaves and looks at the world?
- Chance - what role does this play in the creation of all photographic images?
- The city as a type of theatre - pedestrians as actors in a mysterious drama revealed or interpreted by the photographer
- Photographs as historical documents - what can we tell about pre-war Paris from this image?
- Photograph as work of art. Later prints of this image are valued in excess of $20,000

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Henri Cartier-Bresson *Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1932