The Event of Art

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Marc Lafia, et al.
The Event of Art.

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Photography and Cinema, Recording Instruments of the Everyday, Instruments of Many Registers
I am present to you in recording. No plot, no characters, very realistic.

The archive, an instrument of many registers. The sense of a picture: where does it come from, how do we arrive at it? How do we see pictures?

Memories of Photography

Marc Lafia

Here in this book, an exhibit, an exhibition not held anywhere else but in this book. The book, a space, a limit.

The camera, with me, makes expressive the portrait, makes photography express more than what I can see.
Every image in relation to another image. The image is never alone, but all images stand alone from us. They are all strange, unnatural things.
Photography atomizes the world, fractures it, separates it, gives unnatural powers.

Photography is a way of seeing, mechanical seeing, arresting time, constructing its own event, an event whose result the photograph is often taken for the thing seen. The index maps, registers, invents, atomizes, and puts in relief. In this book, the book, it, a house, architecture, a single tree is photographed and then re-photographed into sections. The photograph is indexed and so presented, presents perhaps “treeness.” The work uses the index card as a way to read photography and to read the book.
Photography is always in conversation with other photographs, always an archive, not necessarily an archive, that can be seen for its affect but as a surface with characteristics and values, shapes and edges. As we produce more and more and more photographs every minute, putting them in vast online social networks, where are they and what of them—they are just photographs, how can we make photographs seen.
The Image of disappearance.
The erotics of search, of seeing at a remove. Seeing is arousing. The pleasure, the power of seeing without having to touch, to see an abstraction.
The image whose sense and import is forgotten, the image now, simply graphic, multiple.

The texture of the image. Not longer seeing anything. Just texture. Removed from anything the camera saw to become its own event, its own reality. There is no elsewhere to the image.
Designing with images.
Photography as multiplicity, as map, a cartography of spaces.

In *Cartographies* I am interested in crossing the disciplines of architecture, science, mapping, illustrated manuscripts, using glyphs, imaging, contemporary photography, and text to assemble new and fanciful maps, networks of possible utopias, new archaeologies, emergent cosmologies.

Art—the image, image making, event making—is not artifice: it is as natural as the river’s meandering, the ocean’s tumult, the tree’s emergence. Man is not extraneous to this world, an actor on a stage, a passive reactor to the cosmos. We go with the world—our musical scores, our maps and legends, our science and performances wind alongside, in and out of, trees and sky and planets and microbes. It is all happening, this great will to emergent complexity.
The image is always multiple, always becoming another image.

**My Image My Self**

The self staged by photography.

Long before the selfie there was self-portraiture.

To create a fiction of one’s self through recording, not a reenactment, not staging yourself exactly, as in a Cindy Sherman, and not simply putting on one self, taking a picture of one’s self, but putting on the environment, the set and the setting.
At this moment, I am sea and sky and everything mythic.

I put on wigs.

2010
I see time that bounds me to the still life of death, me still living.
I pretend to move things.

2016
I become one with D&G, a matador of commerce.

2015
I am rapture. The beat of the drum. 2017
I am located and dislocated only to relocate myself, to become present to myself, by reading the situation in my particularity. I am not simply there, I am creating a particular thereness in the material form of an image. But it is an image photograph, never to be a photograph proper.
Photography as an image, photography as the recording of an encounter, a recording of an apparatus — the aesthetic of the image is the image that reads and performs imaging.
The image as event. The book as messenger of the event. The book, at least for the author, as carrier of import. Later on the book as paper, binding, object, paper, ink, volume, pages. Whatever is in that book, gone. Only the husk remains. The body lives but the life of it dies.
Confessions of an Image, 1999

The moving picture camera makes a double of the world. I am the video world made flesh.

In Confession of an Image, I ask what is it to make an image, what is this realm of the image and imaging, what happens when incandescent light becomes electromagnetic light, when everything becomes seen and imaged?

Confessions is an essay film on cinema made mostly of still images and voice. I shot the film with my Sony digital tape camera and recorded the voice track with a separate cassette tape recorder. Both recordings were happening in parallel, each with a life of their own, and each reflecting the fact that cinema was as much a technological construct. In the digital and in the network environment of ubiquitous recording, narrative, beginning, middle, and end, all of this would begin to take on very new meanings and usage.

Confessions was my end of cinema as a medium essay. It is a series of 21 visual essays, about the image, cinema, and memory, written, filmed, and edited by myself.

The making of the world is inevitably a becoming precisely because it is happening anew before our very eyes. It rewrites, re-records itself continuously.

The fundamental bifurcation is always this one: between machines for liberating desires and mechanisms of control over the imaginary.

(Franco Berardi, Precarious Rhapsody: Semiocapitalism and the Pathologies of the Post-alpha Generation)
Mechanical reproduction and cinema made a double of the world

Movement creates the event, orchestrating a perpetual shift of appearances

This continual shift of appearances is a trick effect to reality

A mise-en-scene with changing sets and disguises

With the acceleration of these effects, there is no longer a here and there

Only the confusion of near and far, present and future
The image is not a symbol of something else that would be a symbol, not an image.

And image is an assemblage of sense-affects.

The camera—and perhaps we’re all cameras—does not look behind the world happening.

How could it?

It does not peel back the surface of the world to reveal what lies below or within; it projects the world precisely and solely as it appears. In this world of the image, all that is what happens. The image is not a monumental event; it is an everyday occurrence.
our images where a celebration and awe of this terrific force

all of this changed with cinema, with a construction of an image projected by an artificial incandescent light

only in darkness could we see

the light of the world gave way to the light projected mechanically through the celluloid of still image projected light has been now replaced with electronic information

information is now part of the equation of energy and matter

this is the story of this transformation

this is the story of the disappearance of astro physical luminosity as it becomes the pulse of electronic signal of total vision

our vision has been absorbed such that we can no longer see

we are blind

we might be able to describe the world but we can not explain it

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once the image gathers enough speed and momentum the image becomes invisible to us

cinema is a machine to forget
it is a history of disappearance
cinema records this speed
this movement
and like the earth that continually moves
when it would stop we sense catastrophe
the still image haunts us
the still image is the anthesis of movement
and so it suggest a certain finality

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