Project 3 – Typologies: A Portrait in Things
A sequence of prints; Due: Thursday, March 26, 2015

Hilla and Bernd Becher, "Water Towers," 1963-1993 and Jenny Odell, "Everything I Discarded…," 2014

INTRODUCTION

In your first project, you were asked to observe your surroundings and shape an aesthetically effective photograph through your lens by **observing** a single location. In the second project you **constructed** something for the camera. This third project combines these activities on some level. It requires you to make a sequence of images that are related by type; this is about defining a thought first and crafting an image to support it. A typology is the study of types, a classification of artifacts or actions, and/or a system for putting things into groups. You may find that thinking with a camera is quite different than making a pretty picture. It will involve some combination of observing and constructing to create a system that renders a successful sequence.

ASSIGNMENT

Create a sequence of six to nine images related by concept and classification. Isolate a person, place or thing so that we as viewers understand what or who we are looking at and why. Create a series that makes us observe the similarities and differences between types and understand your system for classifying artifacts/actions. Document objects or infrastructure that when viewed together create a larger understanding of you and what you notice.

It may be helpful to think of this as a self-portrait through objects, a portrait of someone else through objects, and/or a portrait of the times we live in. It may also be a sequence that portrays evidence of a repetitive act (think of Jenny Odell's "Everything I Discarded Between Feb 10 and March 1 2014") or everything you ate for breakfast last week. If you take the word "act" to a fuller definition, you may also find yourself considering how you can document your conscious actions performed for a camera. Think about the "constructed" project we just completed and how you might apply a systematic approach to documenting difference over time in that regard.

Consider these questions when composing:
1. Am I documenting an action—something that I made happen (construction) or something that happens in a social space (observation)?
2. Am I documenting an existing thing (observation) or building a thing (construction)?
3. What is my idea? How can composition serve my idea?
4. What do I want viewers to notice? How can my camera angle deliver this information?
5. Is there too much clutter in my frame?
6. Are all my shots consistent? Arranged horizontally or vertically?
7. Is my lighting and exposure equivalent from shot to shot?

Arranging your print: You may find that a grid of 6 or 9 works best. You may find that diptychs or individual prints work best. This is the beginning of understanding output and presentation. Experiment. It costs money and takes time to print. Be prepared.

All photos will be turned in as a contact sheet. From that, you will edit a sequence of SIX to NINE related images (choose best, correct the exposure, contrast, and color balance in bridge/photoshop). We will present / critique your prints. TURN IN a print (or prints) and upload digital files to flickr. The digital file(s) should represent what your typology looked like when printed and installed as well as the individual images.

Note: You are responsible for keeping ALL of your work in this class. At the end of the semester you will turn-in a data DVD (with re-sized jpegs and .mov files) and an on-line archive of all your work for final grading. Use your external drive for back-up and storage!!

OBJECTIVES:

- Improve control with DSLR: depth of field and equivalent exposure
- Adjust exposure and focus manually
- Use camera as selective framing device: composition, shot size, camera angle, perspective
- Understand composing to convey an idea
- Continue to play with the differences of observing versus constructing.
- Improving workflow with Photoshop and Bridge
- Basic correction with digital editing software
- Introduction to printing.

Artists for Further Research:

A brief description of photographic typology: http://blog.redbubble.com/2012/04/photographic-typologies-the-study-of-types/

August Sander
Hilla and Bernd Becher
Candida Höfer
Jeff Brouws
Rachel Been
Kevin Bauman
Lorna Simpson: http://www.lsimpsonstudio.com/ (especially "Bio")
Jenny Odell: http://www.jennyodell.com/projects.html
Sam Taylor Wood: especially "Crying Men" series

Consider Layout:
http://cargocollective.com/stevetylerphotography/Typologies

Brian Wagner (MFA student @ UD): http://www.betweenthestripes.com/2014/09/rejects/