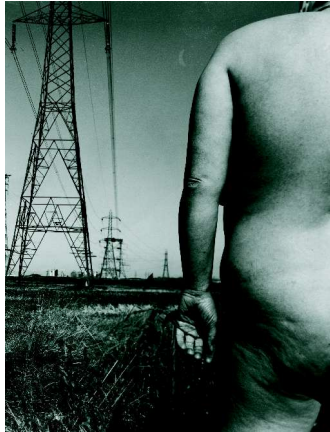


Jo Spence: Beyond the Perfect Image

Opening: March 31, 2006

Duration: April 1 – June 25, 2006



The exhibition showcases the work of British photographer Jo Spence (born in London in 1934) from the mid-1970s to her death in 1992. It reconstructs the process of Jo Spence's development from political and educational approaches to enactment and phototherapy.

Jo Spence was a key figure in the photography and representation critique debate in the 1970s and 1980s, co-founder of the "Photography Workshop" in 1974, of the gallery and later the magazine *Camerawork*, and of the "Hackney Flashers Women's Photography Collective". All of these activities revolved around the question of the construction of social identities and possibilities of reappropriating popular contexts of the use of images. Against this backdrop, Jo Spence often referred in her work to methods of classical modernism, for example montage of pictures and texts, and the associative, critical combination of contexts.

Remodelling Photo History: Industrialization, 1982.

She radically opposed a humanist concept of documentary photography, that, to her, is based on a naturalist conception of photographic truth and representation, as critically reviewed in the "Remodelling Photo History" project in 1982. Consistently, Jo Spence appeared in her pictures herself as author and model, and made photography a means of rebellion and therapy, with which she crusaded against the pathologies that result from forms of life reproduced by images prevalent in culture – for example in the series titled "The Picture of Health?" created between 1982 and 1991. Her works, then, did not primarily address the art context or the art public, but rather – as model experiments of analysing the political and social functions of images – were addressed to an equally politically conceived public.



Libido Uprising, 1989, with Rosy Martin.



The Picture of Health, 1982 – 1986.

With the exhibition "Jo Spence: Beyond the Perfect Image", produced by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and curated by Jorge Ribalta in co-operation with Terry Dennett, Camera Austria is continuing a series of projects that focus on photography as a means of questioning political, social and cultural hegemonies and stereotypes, as are presumably part of every contemporary visual culture.

The exhibition will be accompanied by an English-language publication of the same title featuring texts by Jorge Ribalta, Terry Dennett, John Roberts, Jan Zita Grover, Siona Wilson and Jo Spence.

Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona 2005.

432 pages, 17 cm x 21,5 cm, 359 pictures.

ISBN 84-89771-17-0

EUR 34.00

Further information: Margit Neuhold, T. +43 / (0) 316 / 81 55 500, e-mail: exhibitions@camera-austria.at