

**Thomas RUFF**  
**Portrait (A. Siekman), 1987**

**contemporary art  
photography**

**on**

**photography**

**motoyama/vision lab-NU**

## **keywords**

- **traditional category**
  - **portrait**
  - **landscape**
  - **object**
  - **fashion**
  - **document**
  - **city**
- **photography on photography**
- **intervisuality**

**is it art?**

**Photography is constantly changing and hard to define. Its discursive and somewhat promiscuous nature has tended to confuse many people as to its status and value as an art form. The trouble is that it lends itself to many varied uses. We see photography in newspapers, surveillance, advertising campaigns and art galleries, and as fashion shots or family snaps. Meanings can slip and slide depending on context, and the fact that photography lacks any kind of unity and seems to have no intrinsic character makes the insistent cry of 'but is it art?' a constant refrain throughout its relatively short but complex history.**

**Susan Bright**

**history  
before  
contemporary**

- **Nadar**
- **pictorialism**
- **surrealism**
- **straight photography**
- **Benjamin**
- **MoMA**
- **pop art**
- **conceptual art**
- **postmodern**

## **portrait**

**the human face has long been read as a  
'window' onto the soul of a person**

**the portrait continues to function as an index  
and a symbol, an icon and a metaphor, making  
claims about 'humankind'**

**Julie MOOS  
Mae & Margaret from the  
Domestic Series, 2001**

**Loretta Lux  
drummer  
2004**



**Hellen van MEENE**  
**Untitled, 1999–2003**

**portrait**

**window of identity**



**no identity**

**nowhere**

## landscape

'as an invention of modernity, photography was central to the desire for a control and ordering of the natural world. It could map terrain topographically in preparation for urban expansion' --David Company

landscape can also offer a form of escape, nostalgia and fantasy away from all that is man-made and 'unnatural'

**Justine KURLAND**  
**West of the Water, 2003**

**landscape**

**site identity**



**utopia**

**road (movie)**

**narrative**

**explore elements of fiction and the relationship  
of photography to reality and realism**

**Gregory CREWDSON**  
**untitled (pregnant woman/pool),**  
**1999**

**narrative**

**story**



**constructed**



**object**

**artists featured constantly deal with questions of subjectivity and objectivity, photographic truthfulness and manipulation, and what makes a photography and, indeed, an art work**

**Wolfgang TILLMANS**  
**Schlüssel, 2002**

**Ricarda ROGGAN**  
**Stuhl, Tisch und Liege**  
**2002**

**object**

**context**



**3D experience**

**studio installation**

**visuality**

**fake**

**constructed**

**art history/painting**

**photography about photography**

**mass media**

**internet**

**distribution**

**Thomas DEMAND  
Gate  
2004**

**nudes vin 05  
2000**

**Andreas Gursky**  
**Bibliothek, 1999**



**Axel Hütte**  
**Vescona, 1991**

**Candida Höfer  
Kunsthaus Bregenz I  
1999**

**Melanie WIORA**  
**Bach**  
**aus der Serie Eyescapes, 2002**

**contemporary art  
photography**

**intervisuality**

**originality**

**photography on photograpy/vision**