

Picture This!

Symposium on Photography & Narrative
in Contemporary Literature



March 17, 2006

Penn Humanities Forum

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Symposium on Photography and Narrative
in Contemporary Literature

Friday, March 17, 2006
9:00 am–5:30 pm

Penn Humanities Forum
3619 Locust Walk
University of Pennsylvania

A program of the 2005-2006 Penn Humanities Forum on Word & Image.

Presented by the Penn Humanities Forum, Departments of German, English, Romance Languages, and History of Art, and Program in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory.



In 1837, when Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre invented a process called daguerreotype, they probably had no idea of the flood of photographic images that would follow. Early photographs were unable to capture movement, but they could offer documentary evidence of persons or objects, or rival an older artistic medium, painting. In recent years, photography has stepped up its competition not only with the painted image, but also with the written word. Novelists like W.G. Sebald and Orhan Pamuk include photographs in their work, interspersing their words with images. What is the function of these photographs? How do they change the literary text? And how do we read them?

Program

9:00am: Welcome

Wendy Steiner and Liliane Weissberg, Penn Humanities Forum

9:15am–10:45am: Mapping the Terrain

Chair: Marlis Schweitzer, Penn Humanities Forum

Ulrich Baer, New York University

“Desiring Stories: How Photographs Engender Narrative”

Nancy Shawcross, University of Pennsylvania/Penn Humanities Forum

“The Archives Project: Snapshots from a Discontinuous Narrative”

10:45am–11:00am Coffee Break

11:00am–12:30pm: Theorizing History

Chair: Maurice Samuels, University of Pennsylvania/Penn Humanities Forum

Marcy Dinius, Penn Humanities Forum

“From the Birth of Photography to the Death of the Author:
Melville and DeLillo”

Gerhard Richter, University of California, Davis

“Unsettling Photography: Kafka, Derrida, Stefan Moses”

12:30pm–2:00pm Lunch Break

2:00pm–3:30pm: Crime Scenes

Chair: Alexandra Pappas, Penn Humanities Forum

Jean-Michel Rabaté, University of Pennsylvania

“Revisiting Benjamin’s Scene of the Crime”

Karen Beckman, University of Pennsylvania/Penn Humanities Forum

“‘Nothing to Say’: Mortal Words and Photographs”

3:30pm–4:00pm Coffee Break

4:00pm–5:30pm: Mourning and Melancholia

Chair: Liliane Weissberg

Anneleen Masschelein, K.U. Leuven/ Universiteit Amsterdam

“Can Suffering Be Exquisite? Notes on Sophie Calle’s Exquisite
Pain and Three Types of Autofictional Staging of Grief”

Adrian Daub, University of Pennsylvania

“W.G. Sebald’s Invisible Captions: Photography and the
Construction of Melancholia”

Participants

Ulrich Baer, Professor of Comparative Literature, and Germanic Languages and Literatures, New York University

Karen Beckman, Assistant Professor, History of Art*

Adrian Daub, Doctoral Candidate, Comparative Literature*

Marcy Dinius, Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum (English)*

Alexandra Pappas, Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum (Classical Studies)*

Jean-Michel Rabaté, Professor of English and Comparative Literature*

Gerhard Richter, Associate Professor of German and Russian, University of California, Davis

Maurice Samuels, Assistant Professor, Romance Languages (French)*

Marlis Schweitzer, Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Penn Humanities Forum (History)*

Nancy Shawcross, Curator of Manuscripts, Rare Book & Manuscript Library*

Wendy Steiner, Richard L. Fisher Professor of English, Founding Director, Penn Humanities Forum*

Liliane Weissberg, Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor (German & Comp Lit); Word & Image Topic Co-director, Penn Humanities Forum*

*University of Pennsylvania



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