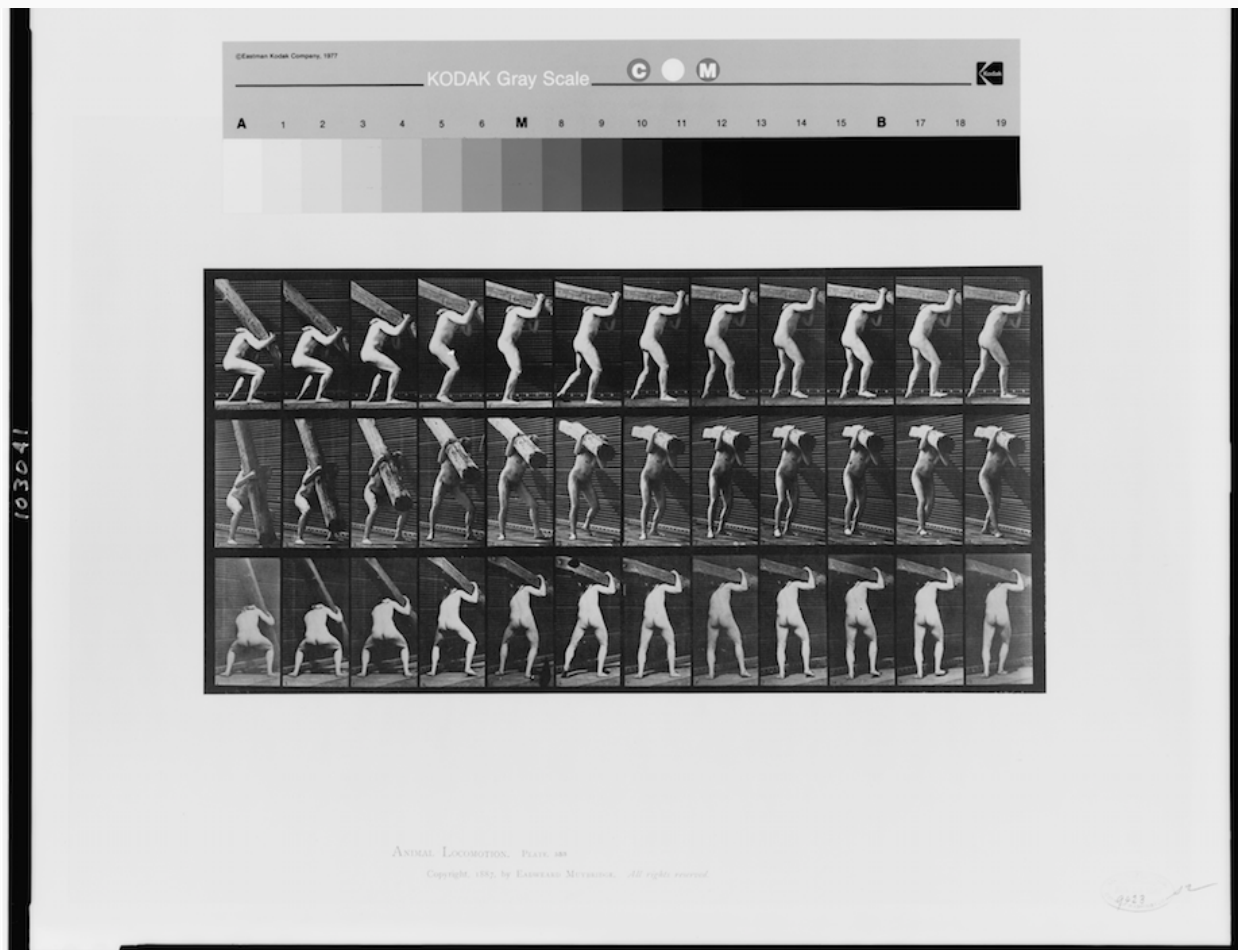


Exhibition Review: Picture Industry at the CCS Bard Hessel Museum

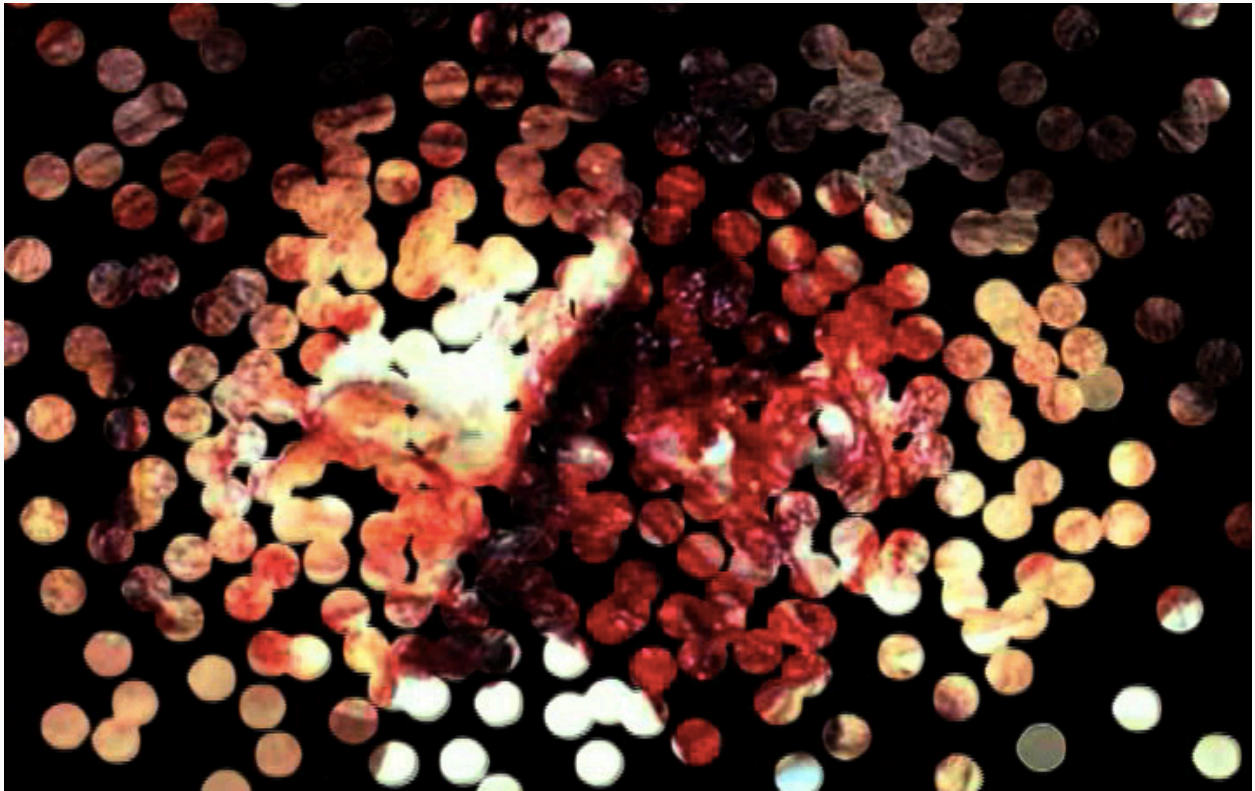
Written by Liz Von Klemperer

Picture Industry, curated by Walead Beshty and currently on view at the CCS Bard Hessel Museum, is a sprawling exploration of photography's past, present, and future. Featuring over 80 artists, *Picture Industry* provides a fresh perspective on photography's place within contemporary art as well as science and the humanities. The exhibit challenges viewer's expectations of what photography can be, as everything from photographs, slide projections, periodicals, film and video installations, and more are on display.

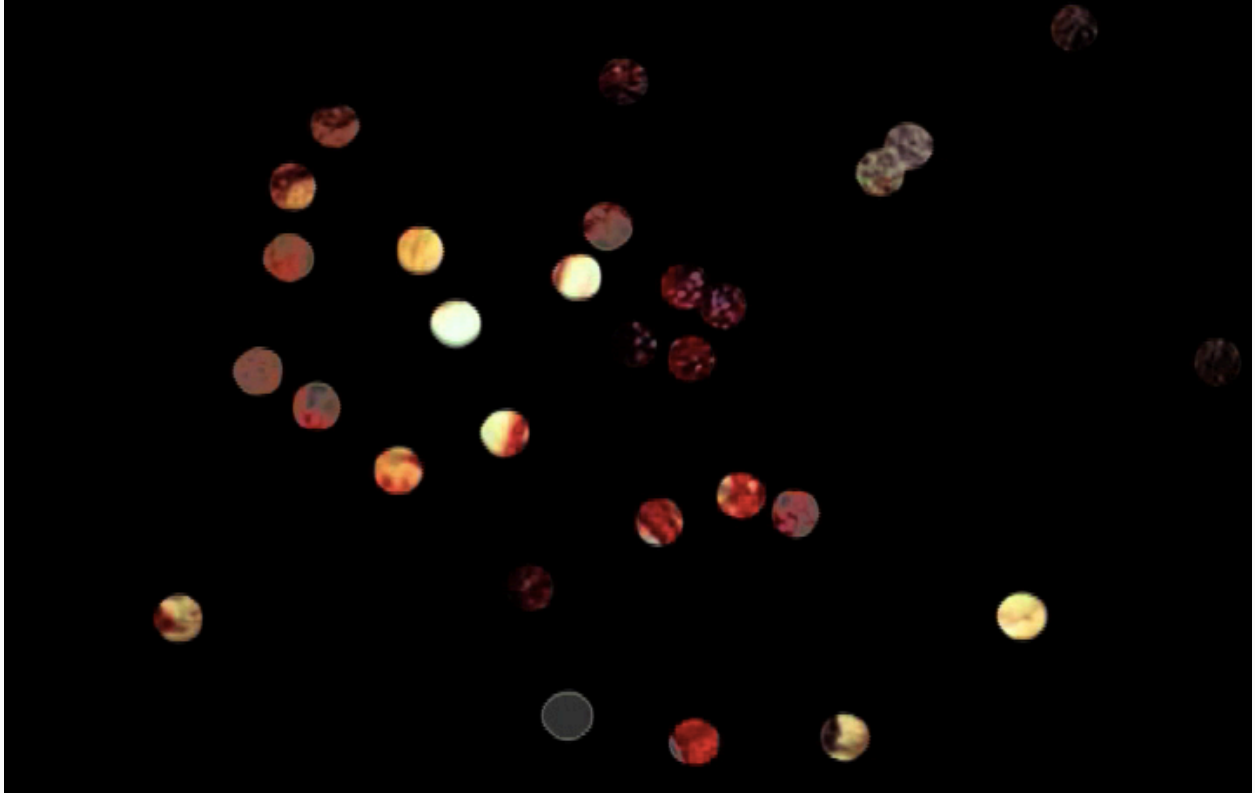


From: Animal locomotion / Eadweard Muybridge. Philadelphia : Photogravure Company of New York, 1887, pl. 383. © Eadweard Muybridge.

Eadweard Muybridge's *Animal Locomotion* acts as a springboard into photography's origins as a means of documentation. This pioneering 19th century photographer is known for his contribution to early motion-picture projection through capturing images of people in motion. Muybridge used multiple cameras to capture movement in stop-motion photographs and was viewed using the zoopraxiscope, an invention used to project motion pictures. The inclusion of Muybridge's work highlights the fact that photography's origins were in documentation and the desire to advance technology. By juxtaposing the early uses of photography with later artistic expression, Beshty reveals the complexity and multifaceted nature of the medium.



Stills from Digital Video Effect: Seth Price, *Holes*, 2003, video, 7:25 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel gallery, New York.



Stills from Digital Video Effect: Seth Price, *Spills*, video, 2004, 11:57 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist and Petzel gallery, New York.

The exhibit jumps to the modern day, featuring contemporary living artists such as Seth Price and Arthur Jafa, among others. Seth Price's digital video installations pieces *Holes* and *Spills* represent the role of the image in today's digital culture. Price appropriates web content and recasts them through filters he has created. In *Holes*, gory images play through hole punches in a black background. "People take 'content' and feed it through a set of digital effects," Price said. "I decided to focus on the effects themselves." Price sidesteps the image, opting instead for alteration. The holes resemble paper-punch waste, rendering the image almost completely obscured. Price pulls content from unexpected places such as websites that accumulate images car accident victims and maimed bodies. The horrific becomes detritus, the original grotesque intensity drained.



© Arthur Jafa. Still from *Love is the Message, The Message is Death*. (2016) Courtesy the artist and Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York/Rome.

Arthur Jafa's piece *Love is the Message, The Message is Death* produces an opposite effect. In this 2016 piece, Jafa culled images from news castings, popular culture, footage of civil rights protests and marches and creates a wrenching tableau of African American history. Jafa aims to create a piece that "replicates the power, beauty, and alienation of black music," and acts as a counter message to the whitewashing of American culture. Here Jafa is compiling primary source documents to create a work that is more than the sum of its parts, further demonstrating the haziness of the line between documentation and art.

Picture Industry is, ultimately, a photographic journey through time and perspective. This plethora of material is ultimately woven together in a publication edited and designed by Beshty. The text is published by JRP and produced by the LUMA Foundation, and acts as an alternative approach to the many questions associated with photographic representation. The exhibit will be on view until December 15, 2017.