



AN INCOMPLETE WORLD

*WORKS FROM THE
UBS ART COLLECTION*

EDUCATION KIT

*ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES 19.05.07 – 29.07.07
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA 28.09.07 – 06.01.08*

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EDUCATION KIT OUTLINE

This education kit highlights the key themes and nine works from the exhibition *An incomplete world: works from The UBS Art Collection*. The kit aims to provide a context for using the exhibition and artworks as a resource for K-6 and 7-12 education audiences. It may be used in conjunction with a visit to the exhibition or as pre-visit or post-visit resource material.

The kit has been written with reference to the New South Wales K-6 Creative Arts and 7-12 Visual Arts syllabus. The kit specifically targets teachers and student audiences but may also be of interest to a general audience.

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cover detail: Naoya Hatakeyama *Blast 5416* 1998
© 2007 Naoya Hatakeyama, courtesy L.A. Galerie - Lothar Albrecht, Frankfurt



CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES WITH UBS



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“This exhibition brings together great works of art from the last thirty years, the majority of which have not been seen in Australia before. UBS’s three year commitment to supporting the Gallery’s contemporary collection programs and this exhibition are together the most important sponsorship of contemporary art that the Gallery has received.”

Wayne Tunnicliffe, senior curator Contemporary art, Art Gallery of New South

“We are delighted that we can bring to Australia for the first time a selection of our contemporary art for public viewing. The curators have selected works that provide an insight into the variety and depth of The UBS Art Collection.”

Brad Orgill, Chairman and CEO, UBS

An incomplete world considers ideas in art about our world as it is today and the ways in which we live in it. As the title suggests, this is a partial and fragmentary view, reflecting the reality of both individual experience and artistic practice. It has three broad thematic groups: **portraits and people**; **mapping place** and the **natural and created environments**. The works selected date from the early 1960s to the present and connections are traced across these decades.

This exhibition is selected from one of the world’s finest and most distinguished corporate art collections, The United Banks of Switzerland (UBS) Art Collection. UBS have amassed an impressive selection of international contemporary art in the spirit which reflects the dynamics of pace and change that characterise our modern world. Works from the collection are generously and regularly lent to museums and galleries. In the last three years exhibitions selected from the collection have been presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Fondation Beyeler in Basel and at the Tate Modern in London.

The exhibition *An incomplete world* is co-curated by the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the National Gallery of Victoria. The selection was made by Wayne Tunnicliffe, curator contemporary art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, and Jason Smith, curator contemporary art, National Gallery of Victoria. Over 50 works have been selected by 31 artists to represent the three broad thematic groups.

Highlights of the exhibition include:

American pop artist Andy Warhol’s unique early work *Cagney* 1963, depicts the film actor famous for his gangster roles. This dates from when Warhol first began to make silkscreen paintings and to concentrate on movie stars and film-making. Another Warhol in the exhibition is his iconic portrait of German artist Joseph Beuys from 1984.

British artist Lucian Freud’s *Head of a naked girl* 1999, is a searingly intimate close-up portrait, while *Double portrait* 1988–90, depicts a woman lying with a hound. As Freud has said, “I paint people not because of what they are like, not exactly in spite of what they are like, but how they happen to be.”

Damien Hirst, one of the highest profile contemporary British artists, is represented with a large painting of coloured dots on a white ground. Entitled *Albumin, human, glycated* 1992, it is from his series of randomly arranged spot paintings with titles that refer to pharmaceuticals. Hirst has described this series as happy paintings, and yet that joy has a chemical reference.

A substantial group of influential recent European photography includes such luminaries as Thomas Ruff with enigmatic large-scale colour portraits, Andreas Gursky with his spectacular digitally altered store interior *99 cent* 1999, and sublime image of a glacier, *Aletschgelscher* 1993, and a series of Candida Hofer’s enigmatic, empty, public rooms.

Japanese photographers Miyamoto and Hatakeyama have ominous but impressive works. Miyamoto’s black and white photographs document the damage inflicted on buildings in Kobe after the earthquake in 1995 and Hatakeyama’s abstract, violently beautiful images are of exploding rocks and soil.

ON LOCATION

'Where am I?' is such a simple but profound question, one which asks for a physical location but which can also require a more philosophical response: if you need to ask you are likely to have found yourself out of place and in unfamiliar territory, whether that is geographical, political, cultural or psychological. You could have lost your way or it could be that the familiar no longer seems the same as it once did. It is a question that suggests how a sense of self and place are intimately linked, and how self is experienced through place.

What constitutes place beyond the physical boundaries of a site can be hard to define, but it is usually somewhere where experience, memory and history overlay each other — a sense of place evolves from these elements in conjunction with the topography of the site with which they are associated.¹ Though hard to define, place paradoxically tends to be specific and is shaped by our engagement with it. Even though the concept of place immediately suggests the local, it is essential to how we conceive of regional, national and global perspectives. These larger concepts are composed of many places, locations and sites which add up to a sense of place that may be as large as 'Australia'. This move from the particular to the national involves an epic elision of detail, an ontological shorthand that eliminates complexity and promotes stereotypes, but at its best retains a sense of what is particular within a much greater conception of place.

The places in which we live and work, the cities we build, the political, geographic and financial borders, the natural environment and changing perceptions of our place in the world are all subjects of the art in *An incomplete world*. Many artists work 'on location', an appropriate film metaphor which means to work outside of the studio on a site that will appear in a film, whether that site is itself or is standing in for somewhere else. In this exhibition the artists 'on location' address specific places and either have made work that more generally reflects how we live and interact with our environment, whether constructed or natural, or the art itself is a symptom of the greater changes that have occurred to how we regard and experience place over the last four decades.

One of these changes has undoubtedly been the fact that many people are more likely to experience more places than previous generations have. While there are specific economic, cultural and political factors which have resulted in the mass movement of tourists, workers, business travellers and exiles over recent decades, it is perhaps inevitable this would occur as journeying is so fundamental to how we conceive of human life. Moving through space and time is one of the most primary ways we describe human experience, with our life span often being conceived as a journey, whether someone actually travels anywhere or not. The fundamental connection between journeys, human experience, the passage of time and how we account for these things to ourselves has led to claims such as Michel de Certeau's that '... every narrative is a travel narrative'.² The journey is one of the most prevalent forms of cultural metaphor, one in which the traveller is changed for better or worse by the experience, as they traverse territory, proceed through time and encounter an 'other' — whether people, place or mythological creature. However, the voyager 'travels not only geographic locations, but also interior, ontological spaces, territories of negotiation between the psychological, the sexual and the social.'³

As opposed to the voyager of a great historic epic, the contemporary tourist has a much safer experience, generally in which the outcomes of encounter and change are much more predictable. While the experience of the tourist may be very different from that of the traveller, when the tourist returns home they have generally brought back something from their experience even if it is the reassurance that their place is indeed the best place to be. The narrating and experiencing of place in time is a movement which can be forwards or backwards however, though this is somewhat dependent on whether you find yourself in or out of place: 'The opposite of tourism is not "staying at home", but the involuntary travel associated with the predicament of the immigrant. If the tourist travels, for the most part, backwards in time, then the immigrant, the exile and the diasporic travel forwards in time with no promise of a restored home.'⁴ Place can also seem to

1 For a discussion of what constitutes place and its relationship to art practice, see Tacita Dean & Jeremy Millar, *Place*, Thames & Hudson, London 2005

2 Certeau quoted in Georges Van Den Abbeele, *Travel as metaphor from Montaigne to Rousseau*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1992, p xix

3 Nancy Spector, *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, Guggenheim Museum, New York 1995, p 55

4 Barry Curtis & Claire Pajackowska quoted in Cornelia Butler, *Flight patterns*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles 2000, p 52

stand outside of time if we look at great natural sites: to be timeless and enduring and independent of human regard. Place in this instance puts us in our place as nature and natural laws overwhelm human agency and remind us that our desire to control our environment can be so much hubris.

While every place has a location, not every location is a place. In contrast to what we may regard as places are what anthropologist Marc Augé has termed 'non-places' — the shopping malls, motorways, airports, hotels and computer screens that have facilitated the rapidity, speed and mass transit of 'super-modernity'.⁵ In contrast to how place has a memory, these are places with no apparent history or in which history is purely spectacle and which instead encourage an erasure of memory or experience; they are self-contained and always present. These are more than just actual spaces, they are also a type of experience in which 'the space of non-place creates neither singular identity nor relations; only solitude, and similitude'.⁶ As opposed to place which encourages a sense of self and social relations, in non-places we find ourselves both alone and the same: being in these spaces is a homogenous experience which is isolating and disallows individual identity. The internet is in some ways an exemplary non-place, and yet the interaction enabled by the internet, texting and other digital screen-mediated communications, has become a prevalent form of encounter. In cyber-space '... as in the city, you may keep to those that share your faith, ethnicity or social location: yet there are moments when you cannot avoid a momentary encounter with an "Other"'.⁷ The new communities of cyber-space point to a decreased importance in the social relations encouraged by place, something which can cause anxiety due to the loss of face to face social interaction or can be incredibly liberating as like-minded people can be found who may not exist within the actual community in which you live.

Location is a useful term as it bridges place and non-place, geographical site and metaphorical experience, and situates us in all these spaces often simultaneously. In finding ourselves in or out of any of these 'places' there has seldom been anything more useful than a map. Mapping, the scaled down representation in two dimensions of the earth's surface through a system of signs, symbols and words, began to fascinate some artists in the 1960s with the development of conceptual art practices which explored language and meaning. As maps embody territory, politics, geography and economic flows they are always more than an abstracted representation of topography and space. Within this exhibition are two distinct artist's maps, both of which predate the revolutionary changes in cartography that have occurred in recent years with new digital mapping technologies.

Alighiero e Boetti's *Mappa del mondo* 1978 is easily recognisable as Mercator's projection in which Europe and America are towards the centre and upper zones and the rest of the world floats to the top or sinks below. It is the world as we knew it, with everything in its place including familiar hierarchies of scale and importance. Boetti has represented each nation's landmass with its flag, whereby concepts of nationhood reduced to a symbol become territorial markers, reflecting the often arbitrary national divides and political instabilities which are more telling than geographical features. Guillermo Kuitca's map of northwest Germany, *Nordrhein* 1992, painted onto a mattress takes us in a different direction. Rather than global politics, there is a personal imperative to this work as the map locates places where Kuitca has lived and the mattress suggests the often vulnerable and private experiences of sleep, birth, death and sex. A mattress itself becomes a form of map over time, with the sweat, bodily fluids and excretions as well as bodily mass leaving stains and imprints on the mattress, a trace of the body that has spent time in that bed. The inability of a map to convey a personal experience of place and the particular meanings and memories that it may have is suggested in the tension between the expression of the hand painting, the mattress as a private and personal site, and the seemingly objective coded systems of mapmaking.

The examining of systems, signs and 'language' integral to many conceptual art practices is reflected in the work of the photographers who studied at the Düsseldorf Academy in the 1970s under Bernd and Hilla Becher. Candida Höfer, Thomas Ruff, Andreas Gursky and Thomas Struth transformed art photography in the 1980s and 90s, with portraits of people and through examining the spaces and places in which we live, work and spend leisure time. Candida Höfer's photographs of public spaces are often disconcertingly empty of people. They are ordered spaces,

5 Marc Augé, *Non-places, an introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*, trans John Howe, Verso, London 1995

6 Augé 1995, p 103

7 Olu Oguibe, 'The digital other, the virtual third world', *Flash Art*, vol xxxii, no 206, May-June 1999, p 63

designed for people's use and yet the necessity of human presence to animate these formal spaces becomes apparent. While a sense of control and ideology is exerted by institutional public space, this is balanced by the fact that they are created to reflect and enhance human aspiration and endeavour. The absence of people leaves a palpable sense of melancholy and a feeling of loss, perhaps leading to thoughts about the current role of these public institutions and the ideals and functions they represent.

Institutional space is also the subject of Thomas Struth's *National Gallery London 1* 1989, from his museum interiors series in which he photographs rooms in museums and art galleries and includes the objects or art displayed, as well as the people viewing the art and each other. These are public spaces and yet the experience of viewing art is generally considered to be a relatively private, contemplative experience. The postures of the people in front of the large central painting in *National Gallery London 1*, and the colour of their clothes, seem to unconsciously echo the figures in the painting itself and its narrative content of doubting spirituality. The art museum as a site of cultural tourism, which offers an experience of the best of human creative endeavour far removed from that of ordinary life, is conveyed in these photographs in an ambivalent way. The photographs seem to embody what is exceptional about art while reflecting our uncertainties as to what it is we expect from the experience of viewing it.

Struth and Gursky both utilised technological advances in the 1980s enabling colour photographs to be printed on a size and scale which could compete on the gallery wall with the presence of paintings. Gursky's work in particular reaches a level of spectacle at times comparable to the subjects he photographs. Gursky's *99 cent* 1999 depicts a discount store in America: ranks of shelves of food and goods fill the image, seeming to extend beyond the photograph and potentially forever, an image of overwhelming consumer abundance and an exemplary generic 'non-place'. Gursky's examination of the spaces of global capitalism has included photographs of luxury stores, retail displays, stock exchanges and trading floors. These are as much symbolic spaces for consumer desire and demand as actual locations through which money moves, suggesting both the non-locatable nature of contemporary financial flows while echoing the fact that the world financial centres are still located in a few privileged countries. Sarah Morris' *Midtown – PaineWebber (with neon)* 1998 a seemingly abstract painting, takes its form from just such a site, the glass and steel facade of generic international modernist corporate architecture. The viewpoint looking up at the building conveys something of the blank impenetrability of this type of architecture, which dominates urban centres across the world.

The experience of place sought in tourism and leisure activities is apparent in photographs by Olivo Barbieri, Walter Niedermayr and in another image by Gursky. The assertion that '... the tourist travels, for the most part, backwards in time ...' finds expression in Barbieri's two large-scale photographs taken from an elevated viewpoint of what seems to be a model of a medieval town square with a crowd of little figures, perhaps a stage set for a Hollywood historical epic. These are in fact documentary images of Siena's renowned civic space, the Piazza del Campo. The crowd of locals and tourists, a commingling that paradoxically defines the experience of place in most of the historical cities and towns of Europe, has gathered for the famous Palio de Siena, the horse race conducted through the city streets and town square each year. The reversal of focus in each print however makes this anticipation of a historically accurate spectacle a vertiginous and disorienting affair.

The desire for an authentic unmediated experience extends to the wilderness and particularly for nature in its more impressive forms. Gursky's *Aletschgletscher* 1993 is a sublimely beautiful image of the largest glacier in Switzerland. However, the viewpoint on a hiking trail from which he has chosen to take this photograph, is one from which many adventurous tourists take snaps. While Gursky's image is beautiful it also points to the ubiquitous ways in which we construct 'landscape' from nature. Walter Niedermayr's *Tokyo skidome II* 2000 is another photograph of an expanse of ice and snow, but this environment is entirely manufactured, a human-made landscape for sport and entertainment. It is the physical equivalent of a virtual environment, a safe pod in which to have an experience that emulates nature but one where there can be no sudden blizzards, avalanches or ice melts.

Both landscape and the built environment come apart in the work of the two photographers Ryuji Miyamoto and Naoya Hatakeyama. Miyamoto's series of photographs *Kobe 1995 after the earthquake* 1995, document the destruction this earthquake wrought on city buildings and streets. Nature has intervened in devastating fashion in the order of town planning and urban human enterprise. Buildings sit slumped, tilted, cracked and split open. The seemingly enduring solidity of our built worlds is suddenly fragile, ephemeral and exposed. And yet, like Candida Höfer's photographs, there are no people to be seen in any of these images. This deliberate decision to exclude human presence gives an eerie ghost-town quality to these streets, as if the city has been abandoned and hope lost in a modern day equivalent to great ruined cities of antiquity. Hatakeyama's *Blast* 1998 series of photographs show the earth literally exploding. Great shards and fragments of rock and soil erupt into the photograph and straight towards us. These images record the mining of limestone which has been used in building many Japanese cities, however, the erupting, disintegrating earth also seems portentous, an image of violent beauty which suggests our world may at any stage come apart.

While post-conceptual photography is one important strand in *An incomplete world*, another is that of painting mediated by photography and other technologies of reproduction, and which participates in a form of mass media or screen space. There is a particularly interesting grouping from the early 1960s of works by Richard Artschwager, Andy Warhol and Gerhard Richter, whose subject matter is derived from pre-existing photographs or film images. For some artists during this period the pervasive everyday imagery of snap shot photography, comic books, advertising graphics, brand designs, film images, photo magazines and the then new medium of television could no longer be ignored. These works presage the emergence of pop art and introduce an array of ideas which dispute the purity and self-referentiality of forms of high modernist art such as abstract expressionism and, later, minimalism. They are also a precursor to post-modernism's fascination with film and mass media culture's construction of identity and erasure of authorial originality.

The space in these works has a correlative in the flatness and immediacy of filmic screen space, not the illusion of a projected image but the screen once the movie has finished. This can be seen in the space without depth in the Warhol silk screen *Cagney* 1962, the non-space in Richter's *Helen* 1963 where the figure emerges from a monochromatic ground, or the space we see in the much later works by Ed Ruscha and Roy Lichtenstein, both of whom established their distinctive practices during the 1960s. Ruscha's *The end* 1991 emulates a scratched film credit sequence: flickering up on the screen, the image is caught between two frames which slices across both sentences. The work depicts and fractures film space; the choice of text rather than an illusionistic image makes the two-dimensional nature of screen space doubly evident. In *Brother sister* 1987 two fully rigged sailing ships appear from a gothic gloom, where sky, sea and atmosphere all merge; but two small white rectangles draw attention to the illusion of the scene depicted, as if the canvas itself is a projection screen. Lichtenstein in *Post visual* 1993 transforms a lounge room, a place of daily intimacy, into one of his distinctly recognisable pop art icons. The room suggests comfort and safety, but is also little more than a graphic cipher for a lounge, a space to host the irony of the title. 'Post-visual' was a short-lived catch phrase at the beginning of the '90s used to describe a world after post-modernism where the visual had been down-graded in more theory dependent art practices in favour of skeins of encoded references.

Dreaming and reverie have a place in this exhibition as well, in works such as Tony Cragg's assemblage *Grey moon* 1985 or Vija Celmins' exquisite painting *Night sky #5* 1992. From a collection of discarded plastic refuse, Cragg has created a waxing crescent moon. As a transformative gesture it seems almost redemptive: the means and its execution remain modest and yet it evokes something which, as the nearest mass to earth, has had great significance to the human race, from ancient mythologies to symbolising human agency in conquering space and time. In Vija Celmins' paintings and drawings of the night sky, points of painted light emerge from a deep black background, stars with their different intensities and hues shimmering in constellations. As only a small fragmentary view of the night sky, the impossibility of representing boundless space and a seemingly infinite number of stars seems as much the subject matter of

these works as what they actually depict. Concepts of place and particular locations diminish when faced with space, not the mapping of the space between places through which we locate ourselves, but the overwhelming space and time of the infinite — somewhere where we have always been prone to lose both a sense of place and a sense of self.

The art works in *An incomplete world* chart some of the evolving ways we have experienced and conceived of place over the last four decades. These changes have been closely connected with the prevalence of mass media and screen culture since the 1960s and the developing digital world since the 1990s. Writing in the 1990s on place meant that it could be compared to the virtual zones of cyber-space; now virtual and actual experiences of place closely inform each other. Augé's linking of digital space with concepts of non-place remains accurate however, but increasingly a distinction between place and non-place becomes more difficult to maintain. Although place as a site of layered history, memory and experience associated with a specific topography continues to coexist with non-place, the experience of the later grows incrementally each year as more of our lives are spent in transit zones, shopping malls and airport lounges, as touristic spectators or on the internet. However, a desire for both being in place and for experiencing other places on a more profound level remains a very human need. That place may be a familiar environment that is experienced on a daily basis; it can be traveling to another place and engaging closely with its people, history and culture; it can be a natural site, where the history and geography of the earth itself engenders a specific sense of place; or it may be an impossible desire to return to the place you regard as home while experiencing the trauma of being displaced and in exile. In all of these places we may find our selves.

WAYNE TUNNICLIFFE

Senior curator Contemporary art, Art Gallery of New South Wales

APRIL 2007

LOOK

Art Gallery Society of New South Wales



ART OF OUR TIME

WARHOL, LICHTENSTEIN, HIRST, RUSCHA AND
FREUD ON SHOW AT THE AGNSW

Andreas Gursky
99 Cent 1999
C-print, 207 x 336.9 cm
The UBS Art Collection
© ProLitteris, Zurich/ courtesy
Monika Sprüth Galerie, Cologne,
licensed by Viscopy



AN INCOMPLETE WORLD highlights artworks from the last four decades which offer perspectives on the nature of contemporary life, of our world as it is today and the ways in which we live in it. As the title suggests, this can of course only be partial and fragmentary, reflecting the reality of individual experience and of artistic practice. While the title is very open, the exhibition itself has three linked thematic groups: portraits and people, natural and built environments, transforming places. More than 50 artworks by 31 international artists spanning the last four decades have been selected to represent these themes. The exhibition concentrates on images in painting and photography and includes work by prominent artists such as Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Candida Höfer, Sarah Morris, Damien Hirst, Andreas Gursky, Ed Ruscha, Lucian Freud, Gerhard Richter and Cindy Sherman amongst many others.

An incomplete world is curated from the UBS art collection, one of the world's finest corporate art collections. UBS have amassed an impressive selection of contemporary art which they regularly lend

to museums and galleries as well as commissioning research and publishing on these works. In the last three years exhibitions curated from this collection have been presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Fondation Beyeler in Basel and at the Tate Modern in London. A number of significant works have been donated to the Museum of Modern Art (subsequently lent to this exhibition), and Tate Modern is regularly curating exhibitions from the UBS collection that supplement their own holdings and displays. *An incomplete world* has been co-curated with the National Gallery of Victoria and will open in Sydney on May 18 before travelling to Melbourne.

A key section in the exhibition focuses on portraiture and people. It includes works that are more traditionally portraits of individuals as well as other works that consider how films and print media have influenced the way we experience a sense of self. Thomas Ruff's large scale photographic portraits deliberately erase individuality and yet each subject remains distinctive. While they are



photographed unsmiling and in front of a monochromatic coloured background that gives no information about their context and environment, each person photographed remains very much a particular person rather than a 'type'. British artist Lucian Freud is represented in the exhibition by two very fine paintings. *Head of a naked girl* 1999 is a searingly intimate close-up portrait, while *Double portrait* 1988-90 depicts a woman lying beside a hound – a very British subject! As Freud has said, "I paint people not because of what they are like, not exactly in spite of what they are like, but how they happen to be."

We are so used to watching television and film that the conventions of these genres in depicting people are second nature to us. However the language of screen culture is examined in a number of works like American pop artist Andy Warhol's unique early silkscreen *Cagney* 1963 which depicts the film actor famous for his gangster roles. This dates from when Warhol began to make silkscreen paintings and to concentrate on movie stars and film-

making. Another Warhol in the exhibition is his iconic portrait of German artist Joseph Beuys from 1984. Cindy Sherman's famous photographs in which she photographed herself as generic female 'types' from screen roles, such as the secretary or the pin-up girl, are included with two fine colour photographs from the early 1980s.

The influence of painting and photography on each other can be seen in other works such as the early Gerhard Richter painting *Helen* 1963 which is painted from an amateur photograph of a smiling elegantly dressed young woman. The nature of both photography and painting and their particular visual codes seems to be the subject of this work which, while we know it is a painting, seems essentially photographic. Richard Artshwager's *Seated Group* 1962 is another early prescient work that considers the conventions of photography and their relation to other forms of art making, an exploration which became very important in subsequent decades. Much more recently, young Australian artist Maria Kontis, currently the only Australian in the UBS collection, has made beautifully



Left: **Andy Warhol** *Cagney* 1962
Unique silkscreen on paper
76.2 x 101.6 cm
The Museum of Modern Art,
New York, partial and
promised gift of UBS, 2002
©Andy Warhol Foundation/ARS,
Licensed by Viscopy

Right: **Olivo Barbieri**
Siena 3 2002
C-print 100 x 126 cm
The UBS Art Collection
©2007 courtesy the artist
and Isabella Brancolini Arte
Contemporanea, Florence

rendered pastel drawings of old family photographs, transcribing the instant moment of the snapshot back into the time consuming craft of art marking. This seems to highlight how the passing of time and particular memories are so inherent in our response to photographs, even when they are not of our own family members.

The dialogue between photography, drawing and painting is a strong theme within *An incomplete world* and Yasumasa Morimura's photographs explore this in relation to famous historical paintings. *Daughter of art history (Princess B)* is a photograph based on one of Velasquez's last paintings, *Infanta Margarita in blue* 1659. Typically Morimura's version stars himself, standing behind the improbable cut-out version of the Infanta's dress he constructed in his studio. What is even more improbable is the detail in the image: the Infanta's left hand now has beautifully manicured long red nails while her right hand holds a parasol. On the stand behind her the small sculpture of what appears to be a dog in the original has been replaced with two soft toys. On the wall behind these is a very modern looking clock. In Morimura's other photograph in the exhibition, *Angels descending a staircase*, Morimura has depicted himself as the angels in Edward Burne-Jones' enigmatic painting *The golden stairs* 1880. Morimura, however, has doubled the original composition and now the angels descend like an over-the-top

Busby Berkeley choreographed Hollywood musical sequence. Morimura's own Japanese face transposed onto these iconic and idealised images from Western art history asks questions about gender and the assumption that Western culture is a global history.

Another key grouping within the exhibition are works that look at the spaces and places in which we live, work and spend leisure time. A number of these works are European, specifically by the photographers that studied with Berndt and Hilla Becher at the Dusseldorf academy, such as Candida Höfer, Thomas Ruff, Andreas Gursky and Thomas Struth. The typological objectivity that the Bechers taught is an influence in all these artists' work. In the series of images in this exhibition, Candida Höfer has photographed public spaces in Zurich. These rooms – in the university, the natural history museum, and other public buildings – are disconcertingly empty of people. They are ordered spaces, designed for people's use. Yet with the absence of figures, the necessity of human presence to animate these formal spaces becomes more apparent. The similar viewpoint and direct style of these works give them the appearance of scientific objectivity, and yet choosing to photograph without people present indicates more about the subjective choices of the photographer.

Thomas Struth and Andreas Gursky are represented within the exhibition by two of their most famous works respectively. Struth's



National Gallery London 1 1989 is from his museum interiors series. The subject of this series is the gallery environment and how art is displayed, and the way this affects how people view art, as well as each other, in these spaces. In this particular photograph the reds, greens and purples of the robes in the central painting of Christ and the apostles are somewhat ironically echoed in the colours of the more mundane clothes of the viewers. Andreas Gursky's *99 cent* 1999 has become an iconic image in contemporary photography. This large scale image is of the interior of a discount store in America. The ranks of shelves of food and goods that are priced under 99 cents fill the image, seeming to extend into infinity, and above them just the heads of a few shoppers can be seen. It is an image of largesse which embodies the excess of consumer capitalism: who could possibly need all these things? While Gursky's images seem purely documentary he digitally manipulates them, adding in this case to the sense of unreal and cheap plenitude.

In contrast to this intensely urban interior, Gursky's *Aletschgletscher* 1993 is a sublimely beautiful image of the largest glacier in Switzerland. The vast landscape, elevated viewpoint, subtle muted colours and broiling clouds have the appearance of a painting from the heyday of 19th century German romanticism. Further poignancy is found in this image in the fact that glaciers the world over are

melting rapidly and that this photograph is as much a memorial as a document. However Gursky's seeming romanticism is not unalloyed as the viewpoint from which he has chosen to take the photograph is one from which many tourists take snaps of this glacier, so while his image is still spectacular it also points to the ubiquity of the way landscapes are perceived and photographed, and how these images circulate.

Public spaces and activities are examined by two Italian photographers, Olivo Barbieri and Walter Niedermayr. Barbieri's two large-scale photographs, taken from an elevated viewpoint, seem to be of a model of a medieval town square with a crowd of little figures. These are in fact documentary images of Siena's renowned civic space, the Piazza del Campo. The crowd has gathered for the famous Palio di Siena, the horse race conducted through the city streets and town square held in July and August each year. Each photograph has a different field of focus: in one the city buildings at the rear of the image are in focus while the crowd is blurred, in the other this is reversed. The effect is disorienting as we are accustomed to documentary photographs being in sharp focus to give as much information as possible.

Walter Niedermayr's even larger scale *Tokyo Skidome II* 2000 shows another almost sublime expanse of ice and snow. This time,



Above: **Cindy Sherman**
Untitled # 96 1981
 Colour photograph 80.65 x 139.07 cm
 The UBS Art Collection
 © Cindy Sherman and Metro Pictures

Right: **Ryuji Miyamoto**
Kobe 1995 After the Earthquake
San-no-miya 1995
 Gelatin silver print 61 x 50.8 cm
 The UBS Art Collection
 ©2007 Ryuji Miyamoto,
 Courtesy Taro Nasu Gallery, Tokyo



however, it is entirely manufactured, a man-made landscape for sport and entertainment. Niedermayr often photographs snow fields and mountain summits, but with the tourist groups in the photographs and the ski-lifts, barriers and kiosks that have made these landscapes accessible to mass tourism. His photographs explore the grey areas of mass consumer desire where, as the artist has said, it is not entirely clear what is being consumed. The landscape and the elements have been made tame and safe in these environments and yet they are still marketed as places of adventure where personal endeavour can give a sense of achievement.

Both landscape and the built environment come apart in other photographs in the exhibition. Ryuji Miyamoto's series of photographs *Kobe 1995 after the earthquake* document the destruction of city buildings and streets. Nature has intervened in devastating fashion in the order of town planning and urban human enterprise. Buildings sit slumped, tilted, cracked and split open. The seeming solidity of our built worlds is suddenly fragile, ephemeral and exposed. And yet, like Candida Höfer's photographs, there are no people to be seen in any of these images. This deliberate decision to exclude human presence gives an eerie ghost-town quality to these streets, as if the city has been abandoned and hope lost in a modern day equivalent to great ruined cities of antiquity.

Naoya Hatakeyama's *Blast* 1998 series of photographs show the earth literally exploding. Great shards and fragments of rock and soil erupt into the photograph and straight towards us. These images record the mining of limestone which has been used in building many Japanese cities. However the erupting, disintegrating earth seems portentous, these images are beautiful and fascinating, yet have an end of the world quality to them. They suggest a moment when everything we know as certain may come apart, fragment and be destroyed.

There is room in this exhibition for dreaming and reverie as well however, in works such as Vija Celmins' exquisite painting *Night Sky #5* 1992. From a deep black background emerge points of painted light, stars with their different intensities and hues, shimmering in constellations. The impossibility of representing infinite space and an infinite number of stars seems as much the subject matter of this painting as what it actually depicts. Inevitably, the limits of our understanding and knowledge are suggested when faced with the endlessness of space, while at the same time we must marvel at human intellectual ingenuity and enterprise as knowledge of our world extends every year, an understanding in which art continues to have an integral and creative role.

WAYNE TUNNICLIFFE

Curator of contemporary Australian art

AN INCOMPLETE WORLD

Works from the UBS art collection
 Rudy Komon Gallery, upper level, May 18 to July 29
 Free admission



ARAKI
ARTSCHWAGER
BALDESSARI
BARBIERI
BOETTI
CELMINS
CLEMENTE
CLOSE
CRAGG
CRAIG-MARTIN
FREUD
GURSKY
GUSTON
HATAKEYAMA
HIRST
HÖFER
KATZ
KONTIS
KUITCA
LICHTENSTEIN
MIYAMOTO
MORIMURA
MORRIS
NIEDERMAYR
RICHTER
RUSCHA
RUFF
SHERMAN
SMITH
STRUTH
WARHOL

The following artists focused on within this education kit are held in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Research the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au and the National Gallery of Victoria www.ngv.vic.gov.au for works by other artists exhibited in *An incomplete world*.

Compare the types and scale of works in the exhibition to works collected by the the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the National Gallery of Victoria. Consider the range of issues effecting the collection of key contemporary artists for state institutions. Discuss the implications.

TONY CRAGG

Spyrogyra 1992
glass and steel
220 x 210 cm

LUCIAN FREUD

After Chardin 2000
print
etching on Somerset
textured white paper
59.7 x 73 cm platemark;
78 x 96 cm sheet

Eli 2002
print
etching
66.0 x 84.5cm platemark;
77.5 x 95.3cm sheet

Girl sitting 1987
print
etching on Somerset Satin
white paper
52.7 x 70 cm platemark;
61 x 77.5 cm sheet

Head on a pillow 1982
print
etching
10.2 x 12.7 cm platemark;
23.0 x 24.5 cm sheet

Man resting 1988
print
etching on Somerset Satin
white paper
36.5 x 40.5 cm platemark;
46.7 x 50.2 cm sheet

Man posing 1985
print
etching on Somerset Satin
white paper
69.5 x 54.5 cm platemark;
89 x 74 cm sheet;
123 x 103.0 x 3 cm frame

Self portrait: reflection 1996
print
etching on Somerset textured
white paper
60 x 43.5 cm platemark;
87.5 x 70 cm sheet

PHILLIP GUSTON

East Tenth 1977
oil on canvas
203.2 x 255.3 cm

Fist 1975
drawing
ink
48.3 x 64.5 cm sheet

Gulf 1979–80
print
lithograph
81.5 x 108 cm sheet

Painter 1979–80
print
lithograph
81.5 x 108 cm sheet

Untitled 1980
drawing
ink
57.5 x 72.5 cm sight;
78.5 x 104 x 3.3 cm frame

YASUMASA MORIMURA

Slaughter Cabinet II 1991
photograph
sculpture
wood, lightbox, gelatin silver
photograph
58 x 43 x 43 cm

**Seasons of passion/
A Requiem: Mishima** 2006
DVD
DVD, wooden (paulownia) box
duration: 7 minutes, 47 seconds
38 x 31 x 4.5 cm box

GERHARD RICHTER

Abstract painting (812) 1994
painting
oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm

Ema 1992
photograph
Cibachrome photograph
227.5 x 153.5 cm frame

Hotel Diana 1967
print
colour photo lithograph
29.5 x 40.2 cm image;
59.6 x 84 cm sheet

KEY WORDS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS THAT RELATE TO THE ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS SELECTED FOR AN INCOMPLETE WORLD.

abstract expressionism:

a form of abstract art and expressionism which allows the subconscious to express itself. It is freed from the portrayal of everyday subject matter.

appropriation: incorporating an existing image or images into a context different to the original in order to alter their meaning and to comment on originality.

arte povera: an Italian art movement from the mid-to-late 1960s made from poor or cast-off materials. Artists include Giulio Paolini, Jannis Kounellis and Eva Hesse.

candid: not posed or rehearsed.

cinematic: refers to qualities specific to motion pictures, films or movies.

commercial: prepared, done, or acting with sole or chief emphasis on saleability, profit, or success

consumerism: attachment to materialistic values or possessions.

composition: the arrangement of the elements of art in a work, connected to the principles of design, as well as to the relative emphasis of the composition's parts.

conceptual art: conceptual art emerged as an art movement in the 1960s. Crucial to any understanding is the influence of Marcel Duchamp and the profound questioning of culture and institutions at that time. Simply, the traditional object disappears. The ideas become more important than the objects.

documentary: based on or re-creating an actual event, era, life story, etc., that purports to be factually accurate and contains no fictional elements.

editing: to modify or adapt so as to make suitable or acceptable.

figurative art: the straightforward representation of life and individual objects as seen purely by the eye and with no artistic interpretation.

found object: a natural or manufactured object that is perceived as being aesthetically satisfying and exhibited as such.

icon: an object of devotion or intense admiration.

identity: the sense of self, providing sameness and continuity in personality over time.

ironic: a rhetorical effect in which the real meaning (or intention) is the opposite of the surface meaning.

mass media: any of the means of communication, as television or newspapers, that reach very large numbers of people.

metaphor: one thing representing another; symbol.

minimalism: art where the work – predominantly three dimensional and reductive in form- takes the look of industrial manufacture.

pop: pop art emerged in the mid 1950s in England but realised its fullest potential in New York. Media and advertising were favourite subjects for pop artist's witty celebrations of consumer culture.

pop culture: the opposite of high art, with its origins in the church and the royal courts. Newspapers, comics, advertising and movies are relatively modern things that emerged in cities in the late 1800s when people started to have more leisure time. Artists, who up till then had elitist audiences, started to put mass-media references in their work, like Picasso and Braque with newspapers cut-up into their paintings.

portraiture: the representation of a person or a group of people in a work of art.

pose: position in which the body is held in place without moving.

post-minimalist: a term coined by an American critic to refer to work that was more embellished and pictorial compared to the cold, industrial look of minimalism.

random: without definite aim, purpose, method, or adherence to a prior arrangement; in a haphazard way

ready made: a kind of found art that uses common manufactured objects. The term was first used to describe the work of Marcel Duchamp.

representation: a creation that is a visual or tangible rendering of someone or something

romantic: in art, romanticism is characterised by an emotionally intense and subjective approach. Though not identified by a single style or technique, its attitude is often visionary or elusive and shows an affinity with nature in its wild or awesome

satire: a literary technique of writing or art which exposes the follies of its subject (for example, individuals, organizations, or states) to ridicule, often as an intended means of provoking or preventing change.

scale: a progressive classification, as of size, amount, importance, or rank.

spontaneity: a state that is unplanned, impulsive.

staged: contrived for a desired impression.

stereotype: a conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image.

subjectivity: expressions of the individuality and personal experiences and perceptions of an artist or author.

surreal: having the disorienting, hallucinatory quality of a dream or fantasy.

taxonomy: a system of naming, classifying and arranging everything on a database.

traditional: the handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, information etc, from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or by practice.

unique: being the only one of its kind.

An incomplete world

Works from The UBS Art Collection
exhibition catalogue

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National Gallery of Victoria

Contemporary

Art Gallery of New South Wales
contemporary collection

Commissioning editors: Anthony Bond and
Wayne Tunncliffe
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Encounters with contemporary art

An education kit for the contemporary collection
Public Programs Department
© 2003 Art Gallery of New South Wales

Focus on photography

An education kit for the photography
collection

Public Programs Department
Art Gallery of New South Wales
© 2004 Art Gallery of New South Wales

**Art Gallery of New South Wales on-line
resources:**

Self-portrait: Renaissance to Contemporary
Public Programs Department
© 2006 Art Gallery of New South Wales

**For further resources, information and
programs related to *An incomplete world*
see the following on-line resources:**

Art Gallery of New South Wales
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection
www.contemporary-art.com.au

National Gallery of Victoria
www.ngv.vic.gov.au

The UBS Art Collection
www.ubs.com/4/artcollection