



Aperture Spring Issue Illuminates the Evolving Exchange between Photography & Painting

(New York—March 13, 2025) – How has the relationship between painting and photography evolved since the invention of the latter nearly two centuries ago? This spring, *Aperture* presents “Photography & Painting,” featuring artists from around the world who draw inspiration from both mediums in their work, illuminating how the dialogue between camera and canvas continues to unfold today in fascinating, unexpected ways.

Aperture No. 258 is anchored by three in-depth conversations with Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Vija Celmins, and Christopher Wool—three of the most significant painters of their generations. Through different strategies, these artists integrate photographic surfaces into their work, collapsing mediums to find new ways of marking time and space and of expanding our sense of how memories can be represented, from Akunyili Crosby’s spellbinding meditations on Nigerian culture incorporating family and found photographs; to Christopher Wool’s conceptual images of urban decay, talismanic objects, and his own abstract paintings; to Vija Celmins’s painstaking renderings of ocean waves and galaxies. As Celmins tells the photographer Richard Learoyd, “My tools are like hours.”

Rather than treat painting and photography as rivals, this issue frames them as sources of mutual inspiration. Brian Dillon examines photographers’ abiding fascination with the painter’s studio, drawing connections among Luigi Ghirri’s pictures of Giorgio Morandi’s atelier, Collier Schorr’s portraits of Nicole Eisenman, and Sally Mann’s tender trespass into Cy Twombly’s Virginia workspace. David Campany looks at the surprising resonances between gestural painting and photography in the 1950s, while Lucy Ives reflects on the misunderstood legacy of photorealism, showing how a movement long disparaged by critics continues to exert a powerful influence on younger artists. Elsewhere in the issue, Lynne Tillman rediscovers the photography of Pierre Bonnard, while Jarrett Earnest—looking at recent paintings of Britney Spears, *Casablanca* stills, and Judy Garland’s Dorothy—asks: Why are so many contemporary painters remaking famous images right now? And portfolios by Poppy Jones, Lia Darjes, and Shirana Shahbazi use painterly references to offer meditations on the past that reject nostalgia for more mysterious, unsettled attitudes toward memory.

The cover of *Aperture* No. 258 features a 2021 work by Kunié Sugiura, whose hybrid, dreamlike forms have tested the limits of photographic expression for nearly six decades. Made of painted color blocks and X-rays of her body as well as those of strangers—transfixed by the X-ray’s spectra representations of the human form, she collected them while hospitalized in the 1990s and printed them in her own darkroom—the work is Sugiura’s first large-scale grid, and can be configured in various ways.

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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In an essay coinciding with the retrospective of Sugiura’s work at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the curator Erin O’Toole traces the artist’s career through its trials and triumphs.

“We live in an age of images, an age of too-muchness, including a flood of art,” the editors write. “After around two hundred years of coexistence, photography and painting are still talking, still defining each other through an exchange of mark making and an examination of the surfaces around us that sometimes allows for fuller—and slower—experiences.”



For more information and to preview select content from the issue, visit aperture.org/magazine.

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About Aperture

Aperture is a nonprofit publisher that leads conversations around photography worldwide. From its base in New York, Aperture connects global audiences and supports artists through its acclaimed quarterly magazine, books, exhibitions, digital platforms, public programs, limited-edition prints, and awards. Established in 1952 to advance "creative thinking, significantly expressed in words and photographs, Aperture champions photography's vital role in nurturing curiosity and encouraging a more just, tolerant society.

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