

**Writing Assignment #2 (revised)  
Exhibition Review**

Papers are due: **Tuesday, April 30**

***You must submit 2 copies (one electronic via SafeAssign on Blackboard and one hard copy)! Attach entrance stub/receipt to the paper copy.***

Your paper should be 4 double-spaced pages (4 pages does not mean a 3-page paper plus cover), 1" margins, 12-point type (Please use Arial, Helvetica or Times).

Write a review of the exhibition based on your interpretation and analysis. A key element of this review will be to determine the goal of the curators in putting the exhibition together and then to evaluate the extent to which the curators were successful in achieving this goal. This means you must examine the exhibition carefully. Don't simply walk through the exhibition. In order to critique the show, you should devote enough time to read all the wall texts, to view each work of art carefully, and become conscious of how you and other visitors interact with the works of art and exhibition space. The review should analyze the organization, design, themes, and issues raised in the show. How is the theme of the exhibition conveyed through the objects, design, and subsidiary text (i.e., the wall labels)?

***BEFORE YOU START, please do the following:***

- 1) define for yourself what a curator is and does, and***
- 2) locate the correct exhibition that you wish to review*** (ask a museum guard for help if you cannot find the exhibit)

Choose only **one** of the following exhibitions to review. At the Met, MoMA, ICP, and Schomburg Center, there are two exhibitions available for the assignment, only choose **ONE** to review. Below is a list of museums/galleries located around NYC. I have provided the websites for you to gather basic information such as opening times and directions, but please feel free to ask me any questions.

**1. Metropolitan Museum of Art:**

*Photography and the American Civil War* (Apr 2-Sept 2, 2013)

or

*At War with the Obvious: Photographs by William Eggleston* (Feb 26-Jul 28, 2013)

\*closed Mon, \$12 recommended student admission (which means you can pay less than the suggested admission fee), [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

**2. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA):**

*The Shaping of New Visions: Photography, Film, Photo-Book* (Apr 11, 2012-Apr 29, 2013)

or

*Bill Brandt: Shadow and Light* (Mar 6-Aug 13, 2013)

\*closed Tues, **free with CUNY ID**, [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)

**3. The Studio Museum in Harlem:**

*Gordon Parks, A Harlem Family 1967* (now through Jun 30)

\*closed Mon–Weds, \$3 suggested student donation and free on Sundays,  
<http://www.studiomuseum.org/>

**4. International Center of Photography (ICP):**

*Roman Vishniac Rediscovered* (Jan 18-May 5, 2013)

or

*We Went Back: Photographs from Europe 1933–1956* by Chim (Jan 18-May 5, 2013)

\*closed Mon, \$8 with student ID, pay-what-you-wish on Fridays 5-8 pm, [www.icp.org](http://www.icp.org)

**5. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture/NYPL:**

*Visualizing Emancipation* (now through Mar 16)

or

*Africans in India: From Slaves to Generals and Rulers* (now through Jul 6)

\*closed Sun, **free admission**, [www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg](http://www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg)

**6. NYU/Grey Art Gallery:**

*BEAT MEMORIES: The Photographs of Allen Ginsberg* (Jan 15-Apr 6) \*closed Sun and Mon, \$3 suggested contribution, [www.nyu.edu/greyart](http://www.nyu.edu/greyart)

**7. Brooklyn Museum of Art:**

*LaToya Ruby Frazier: A Haunted Capital* (Mar 22-Aug 11)

\*closed Mon and Tues, \$8 suggested student contribution, <http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/>

**8. El Museo del Barrio:**

*superreal: alternative realities in photography and video* (Feb 6-May 19)

\*closed Sun, Mon and Tues, \$5 suggested student admission, <http://www.elmuseo.org/>

Your review should give the reader an overall impression of the exhibition and your responses to it. Please do not be afraid to take a critical stand but be sure to justify your opinions. Do not simply express an opinion, you must explain why. Most importantly, I am interested in *your* personal review of the show. If you quote other reviews, be sure to cite your sources, otherwise you are plagiarizing someone else's work.

**Address the following questions in your paper:**

- What were the curator's objectives for the show? (The curator is the person responsible for selecting works for display and organizing the exhibition).
- Was the organization of the exhibition logical?
- Were materials in the exhibition presented in an appealing fashion? How did the design shape the visitor's experience of the exhibition?
- What was emphasized, and how? and what impact does that have on the visitor?
- How effective were the displays (i.e., tables in the middle of the rooms)? Did they add or detract from the visitor's viewing of the photographs?
- What do you think could be improved or changed?
- What images affected you and how did the presentation of the photographs in the exhibition affect your response to it?
- Were you impressed or disappointed?
- Lastly, you must address how this exhibition contributes to your knowledge of the history of photography

Please do not simply summarize what you saw. You must write a review that presents a **critical analysis** of the exhibition. Start with a thesis about how you plan to interpret the exhibition then provide a short introductory paragraph that outlines the show giving your reader enough enticing information to continue reading your review. Be selective! Please do not feel compelled to address everything that was included in the exhibition. Use analysis of specific photographic works to

support your argument and assertions. This is not a research paper, therefore, do not include more than a paragraph on the biography of individual artists (it will lower your grade).

Your grade is based on how thorough and how well your review is written and supported.

*Please note: you must make sure that you select one of the above exhibitions to review. Unless you have made previous arrangements to review another exhibition, the highest possible grade for failing to follow the paper directions is a C.*

**PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM AND WILL RESULT UNCONDITIONALLY IN A FAILING GRADE.**