



Archive Fever— Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art—



Pre- and Post-Visit Materials for: Junior High School

Anri Sala

***Intervista*, 1998**

Video, 26 min.

Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris



International Center of Photography

January 2008

Dear Educator,

We are pleased to introduce and welcome you to the International Center of Photography's (ICP) Winter 2008 exhibitions including *The Collections of Barbara Bloom* and *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*.

To better acquaint you and your students with the content of the exhibitions, ICP provides Guided Tours, Self-guided Tours, Polaroid Workshops, and Writing Workshops. For the most tailored experience, our Museum Educators lead guided tours focusing on the themes of your curriculum, facilitating dynamic discussions that emphasize visual literacy and looking closely. Please see the attached Group Tour Guidelines and Information Page for more information.

In an effort to provide you with the most comprehensive museum-based learning experience, for every exhibition cycle we create pre-visit activities designed as a starting point from which you and your students can view and discuss our exhibitions and post-visit activities designed to transfer their museum experience to classroom learning and projects. While these materials provide a framework for exploring the themes presented in the exhibitions, we encourage you to modify these materials to the needs of your students. This packet contains activities designed for *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*.

Additionally, ICP has developed an array of Education and Public Programs to support all of these exhibitions including curator and artist panels. To learn more about public programming for these exhibitions, please call 212-857-0001 or visit us online at www.icp.org.

Again, we look forward to welcoming you and your students to the International Center of Photography for our Winter 2008 exhibitions!

Sincerely,

Lacy Austin
Director of Community Programs

Alexandra Gratsas
Coordinator of Community Programs



Hans-Peter Feldmann
9/12 Front Page, 2001
 100 newspapers
 Dimensions variable
Courtesy 303 Gallery, New York

Introduction

In this world of media, data, and image overload, it is understandable for us to seek ways to organize the information we receive. From filing the old-fashioned way or on computer hard drives to tossing old family snapshots in a box for later viewing, each of us finds ways to catalogue data and images. The International Center of Photography's exhibition, *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*, explores the ways in which artists have dealt with and commented upon this overload of information through the concept of the archive.

The archive is traditionally thought of as a musty place filled with filing cabinets and drawers to catalogue and store old documents or artifacts. But in this exhibition, renowned scholar and ICP adjunct curator, Okwui Enwezor, has brought together a collection of artists who have infused the concept of the archive with new life. Several of the artists catalogue violent crimes and their victims – such as Fazal Sheikh who has photo-

graphed Afghans holding images of family members lost or dead in their country's long war. Other artists document media representations of violent events – such as Hans-Peter Feldmann who collected newspaper front pages from around Europe the day after 9/11. Some of the artists seek to learn about humanity as if they were ethnographers – such as Tacita Dean who found anonymous photographs in flea markets and presents them together. And still other artists seek to tell stories, fictional or otherwise, through their photographs – such as Zoe Leonard who created a fictional biography of a black actress from the 1920s and illustrated it through staged photographs. No matter what subject they approach or what goals they have for their art, these artists all display an impulse toward collecting, organizing, or archiving images.

Through viewing this museum exhibition, students will explore how archives can be used to make political comments, to supplement memory, to understand identity, or to tell stories. The accompanying activities will help students to deepen their understanding of the ideas addressed in the exhibition and provide them with hands-on activities that engage them with the photography. These lessons and activities are broken down as pre-visit and post-visit



Ilán Lieberman
Niño Perdido, 2006-7
30 drawings from a larger series
Graphite on paper
Courtesy the artist

activities for elementary (3 – 5), junior high (6 – 8), and high (9 – 12) schools. They are designed to be integrated with Social Studies, Global History, Humanities, Arts, and English Language Arts curricula.

For the elementary school lesson plans, students will investigate how collections of photographs can imply stories or characterizations. Students will act either as archaeologists, collecting evidence about photographs' subjects, or as storytellers, creating images that capture the most important elements of the story they want to tell.

For the junior high school plans, students will delve into how archives can comment on identity. Students will visually archive interviews with family members about important identity-forming memories as well as connect their categories of identity with others in the classroom.

Finally, for the high school plans, students will survey the many works in this exhibition that document atrocities and crimes. They will document and archive events or crimes that they think should be highlighted.

Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art educational materials were written by Jackie Delamatre for the International Center of Photography.

The exhibition was organized by the International Center of Photography with lead support from the ICP Exhibitions Committee; Robert and Gayle Greenhill, Robert and Meryl Meltzer, Jeffrey A. and Marjorie G. Rosen, and Artur Walther. This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Additional funding was provided by the British Council, Cultural Services of the French Embassy, and Fundación/Collección Jumex.

Junior High School Pre-Visit: Connecting Identities

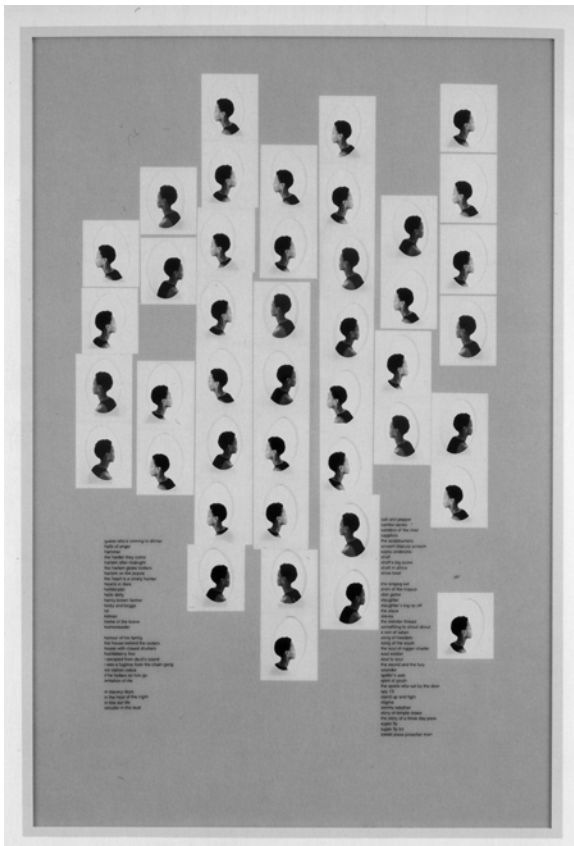
Overarching Question	How do we define our identities and connect them with others?
Supporting Questions	How do our friends' identities shape our own? How do we categorize ourselves and others?
Objective	To examine the ways in which we define our identities and categorize ourselves in society.
Suggested Time Frame	2 class periods
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual image below • Internet access • Paper and blue or red pen
Related Image	<p>Plate 1: <i>Untitled (guess who's coming to dinner)</i>, Lorna Simpson</p> <p>Plate 2: Detail from <i>Untitled (guess who's coming to dinner)</i>, Lorna Simpson</p>
Preliminary Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange students into pairs. Have them write down their three favorite movies and explain to their partner why they like them so much. 2. Together look at <i>Untitled (guess who's coming to dinner)</i> by Lorna Simpson. Ask students what they notice. Do they have any ideas about why these images and words are placed next to each other? 3. Let students know that the words listed in this piece are the titles of films starring black actors or actresses. The images are in the form of a cameo – a raised relief portrait often worn as jewelry that dates back to Greek and Roman times. Do they have any additional ideas about why these are juxtaposed? 4. Lorna Simpson is known for making art about black identity. What do you think she is trying to say about black identity in this image? 5. Go back to the movies you listed above. How do movies define your identity? What else defines your identity? (For instance, your neighborhood, your ethnicity, or your hobbies might define your identity.)

Project Procedure

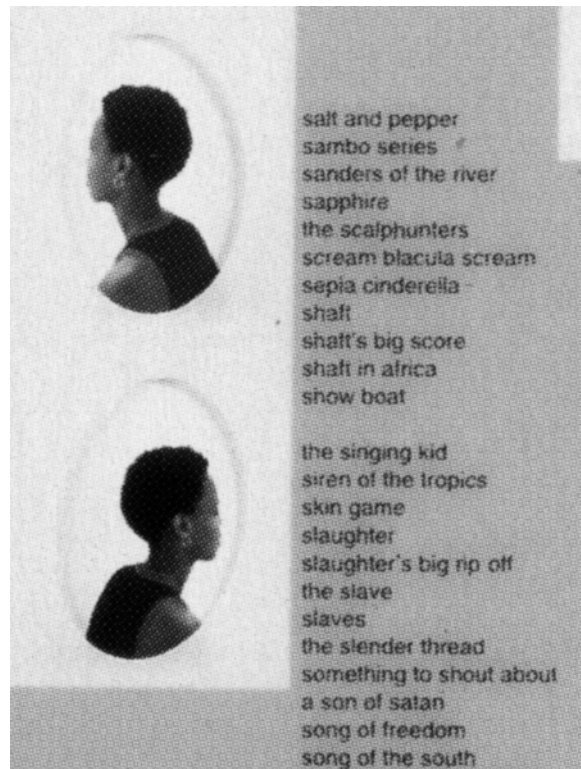
1. For this project, students should look at a social networking site like Facebook or Friendster as a class. What are the categories that these sites choose to identify each user? How are people connected through these categories? (For instance, you can search Friendster for others who have the same favorite bands or live in the same city or town.)
2. First in small groups, then as a class, make a web connecting students in the class through identity-defining likes/dislikes. You can connect likes with red pen, and dislikes with blue. For instance, you can start by writing the teacher's name and three lines emanating from it with red pen. One line can lead to a favorite television show. One line can lead to a favorite singer and another can lead to a favorite movie. The next student can write his or her name and connect to one of the above favorites with a blue or red line while also adding a couple more spokes of their own favorites. The web can grow in this way. You can also have the content of the categories relate more directly to what you are studying in class.
3. Can you make a web as a class in which you connect with each other's values? For instance, instead of favorite movies, see if you can connect values such as taking care of the elderly, keeping the school clean, etc. Again, the categories can be flexible according to your curriculum.
4. What connections do you think are the most important? What do you think are the least? How are the categories on social networking sites beneficial? How are they potentially dangerous? What are some other connections we could add to this web that would be more important?

**Junior High School
Pre-Visit: Connecting Identities**

Plates 1 and 2



Lorna Simpson
Untitled (guess who's coming to dinner), 2001
Gelatin silver prints under semitransparent plexiglass with vinyl lettering
Courtesy the artist



Lorna Simpson
Detail from Untitled (guess who's coming to dinner), 2001
Gelatin silver prints under semitransparent plexiglass with vinyl lettering
Courtesy the artist

Junior High School Post-Visit: Shaping Identities

Overarching Question	How do our families shape our identities?
Supporting Questions	How do our families' political beliefs affect our identities? How can we learn about and document our families' political beliefs?
Objective	To investigate the identities of students' families and the ways in which their identities influence students.
Suggested Time Frame	2 class periods
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visual images below• Paper and pencil• Cameras (depending on availability)• Optional: internet or research books
Related Images	Plate 1: <i>Intervista</i> , Anri Sala Plate 2: <i>Intervista</i> , Anri Sala Plate 3: <i>Intervista</i> , Anri Sala Plate 4: <i>Intervista</i> , Anri Sala Plate 5: <i>Intervista</i> , Anri Sala
Preliminary Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As a class, brainstorm important areas of a person's identity. These areas may include: political, national, ethnic, religious, linguistic, artistic, etc. Individually, each student should then note down three important ways in which their families have influenced their identities (i.e. family gatherings center around food or their family has always voted Democratic). How do our families influence us in the brainstormed areas? What areas do our families have less of a role in shaping (i.e. our musical choices, our clothing)?2. Students should then note down three questions they have about their families that, if answered, might help them learn about their families' identity as well as their own. (For example, students might ask: where did my grandparents live?)3. In pairs or small groups, ask students to look at the stills from Anri Sala's video <i>Intervista</i> and try to make sense of them. Tell them they are stills from a longer video entitled <i>Interview</i> in English. What do they notice? What do they think might be happening in the video? What can they learn from the words and from the body language?4. Ask students what they were able to surmise from the stills and how. Tell them that most of these stills are from a film that an Albanian artist discovered in his parents' house many years after it was made. He had to restore it in order to learn that the film included footage of his mother interviewing a Communist leader and giving a speech to a Communist congress. (Depending on their

familiarity with history, you might tell students that the Communist government in Sala's country was replaced in the 1980s after protests from citizens about its control of the media, corruption, and isolation from the rest of the world.) Sala then interviewed his mother about those times in his country and combined both to make a video.

5. Look back at the stills with your partner or small group. Now that you have this information, what more can you guess about what's going on? What emotions do you think the artist, Anri Sala, felt when he learned that his mother was involved with a part of political history that is often looked upon negatively by young Albanians today? As an analogy, ask students to imagine that they have discovered that one of their parents lived during the civil rights movement in the United States. What if a student discovered that their parents were supportive of a Southern governor's attempt to maintain segregation? What emotions might they have?

6. Ask students to think about what they might not know about their families' history and add three more questions to their list of what they would like to ask them.

Homework Assignment

Students should take their list of questions home and ask their families what they want to know. If there is time, students might want to research the time period in which and where their parents or grandparents grew up in order to be better prepared for their interviews.

Project Procedure

1. For this project, students will create stills from an imagined "video" of an interview with a family member.

2. Students should go back into their interview notes and find:

- a) the most important 1 – 2 questions they asked their family member
- b) the most important 1 – 2 answers the family member gave back

These should be chosen based on their importance for the student's identity. Next, students should create images of the family member and themselves to relate in terms of body language, clothing, setting, and framing with the questions and answers. Ideally, students will create these stills by taking pictures of their family member and themselves. For ease of use, students might want to use Polaroid cameras. (In a photography class, of course, students can use their own cameras.) If neither technology is available, students can make drawings based on old photographs or observation.

3. Finally, students should type up and print out these questions and answers and attach them to the photographs of their family member and themselves as subtitles.

4. Have students exchange their interview stills with a partner. What can the partner guess about the other student's identity or family member's identity through the choice of subtitles and photographs? What can the student add or change to express their identity? As a class discuss what we can learn about moments in national history from finding out about our families' histories?

**Junior High School
Post-Visit: Shaping Identities**

Plates 1 and 2



Anri Sala

***Intervista*, 1998**

Video, 26 min.

Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris

**Junior High School
Post-Visit: Shaping Identities**

Plates 3 and 4



Anri Sala
***Intervista*, 1998**
Video, 26 min.
Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris

**Junior High School
Post-Visit: Shaping Identities**

Plates 5 and 6



Read your lips, Mom!



It was real Anri,
because we were building.

Anri Sala

***Intervista*, 1998**

Video, 26 min.

Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris