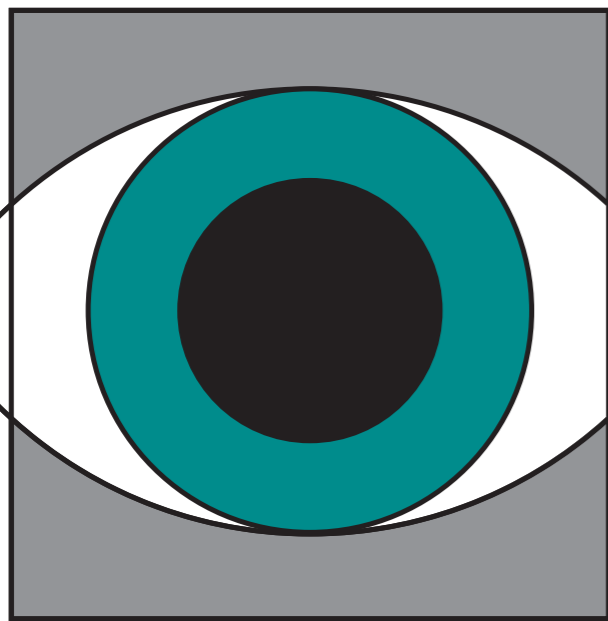


Photo: Science
Photography
and Scientific Discourses
17 – 19 September 2020



CENTRUM PRO VÝZKUM
– FOTOGRAFIE

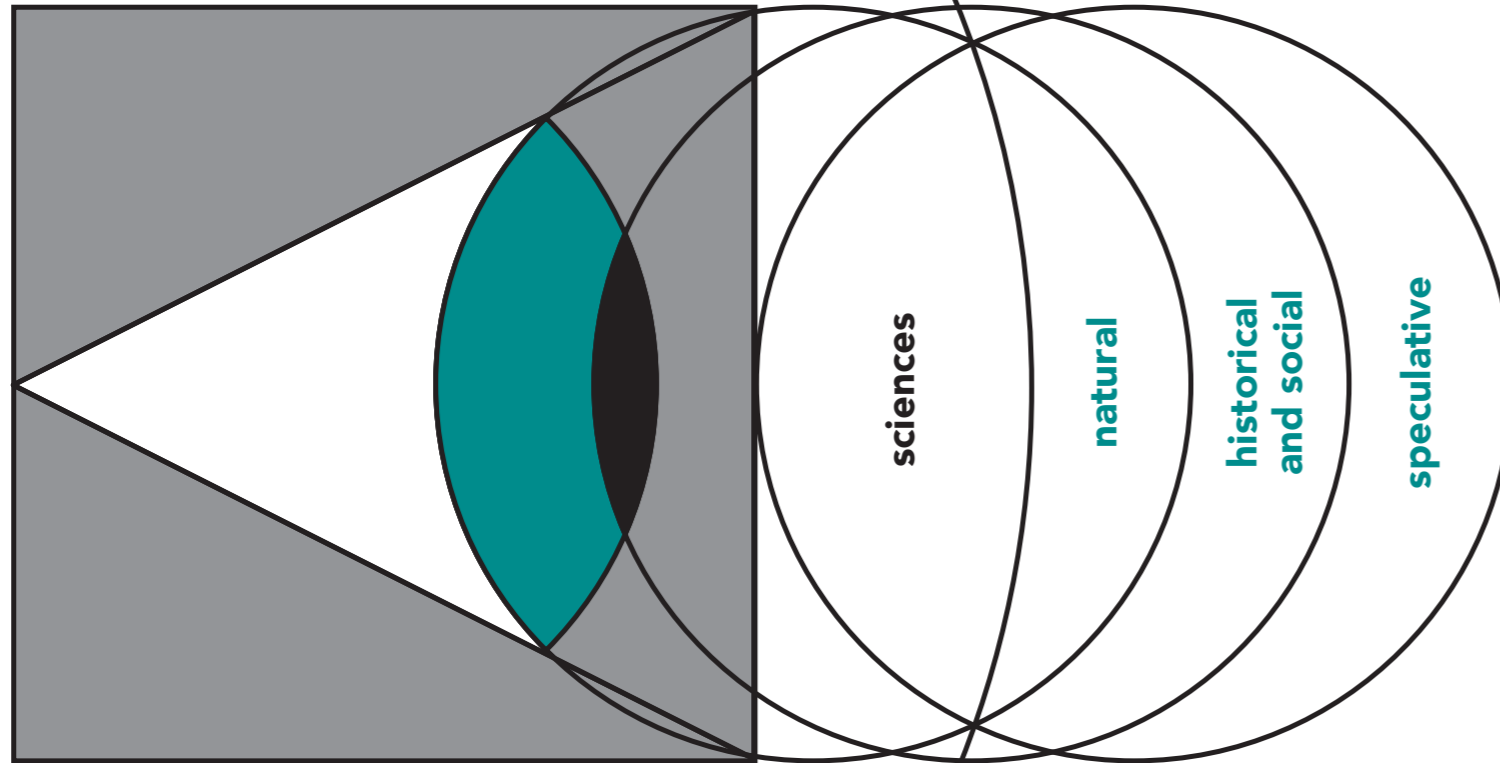
IAH INSTITUTE OF ART HISTORY
THE CZECH ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES

Photography is a linchpin of the cognitive, imaginative and social potential of modern man. As a causal and mechanical image, as a reproduction technique, or as an extension of the visual senses, from its very outset, it fuelled key social changes, influenced the approaches to learning, interpretation, self-reflection and memory, and made major inroads into the system of art and ways in which various art genres and the media functioned. Thanks to photography, the paradoxical dichotomy between truth and manipulation became a leitmotiv of the 20th century: and photography shapes the further development of science, art and communication to this day. Photography is one of the tools with which we approach the world and talk about it. As such, it is, first and foremost, a medium, a carrier of information about things and phenomena. Yet its own establishment, in the sense of the photograph as an autonomous image or phenomenon characterized by a stable identity, history and theory, is far more complex. In the field of aesthetics, catachresis is a frequent topic of discussion. This is no coincidence. The radical polarization with which we approach photography (art/craft, art/documentary, truth/manipulation, etc.) gives rise to its perennial subordination to ingrained interpretation mechanisms which, however, were created for other types of image and originated in different methodological contexts. The results are, on the one hand, the distortion of photography, which is genuinely atypical when compared with the four remaining image types (painting, drawing, graphic art and collage), and on the other, the dissonance intrinsic to the way we address it in various situations. We still talk about “photography”, but it always takes on a slightly different and specific meaning.

This conference is organized by **The Photography Research Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences**. It is the first in a series of interdisciplinary sessions that we would like to continue into the future. Our objective is to start from photography, from its own existence, and to study it as an autonomous entity. These efforts are closely related to what we understand as “material turn”, a burgeoning interest in photographs as such that can be observed both in the humanities (one example is photography as a *subject* of anthropological research) and natural sciences (i.e. the *aesthetic* parameters of scientific photography). The history of art, the various branches of visual culture studies, sociology, general history and speculative disciplines such as philosophy and aesthetics have dedicated considerable energy to photography – and in the long term at that. Photography is similarly well-anchored in the field of the natural sciences, albeit more at the level of applied research. The contrasting influences coming to bear on photography from the individual fields and branches are, nonetheless, only matters for speculation. Our goal is thus to encompass the whole spectrum of relations and contexts surrounding photography, predominantly from its own perspective. In the case of aesthetics, this might mean, for example, a deliberate reflection of photography as a process (not an object), while in the natural sciences it might involve taking into account a particular use of photography in the context of the history of science.

The individual discussion sections will centre upon three basic clusters of themes; the issues listed are illustrative to a greater or lesser extent. The organisers welcome contributions devoted to particular subjects. Our objective is not to generalize or produce new, “universalistic” theories of the photographic image. We are working with the assumption that the approaches of sociology, anthropology, art history, general history and the natural sciences may be radically different, yet inspirational and enriching; a stimulus that we would like to pass on to these disciplines.

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How did photography influence natural sciences?

Did empirical research change in any way with the advent of photography?
In what way was it affected by findings concerning the limits of the human visual sense?

What position does photography hold in the history and philosophy of science?
Have the natural sciences generated their own theory of image?

How did photography influence the historical and social sciences?

How did photography change historical (e.g. archaeological) and anthropological (ethnographic, etc.) research?
How did photography influence the science of images (Bildwissenschaft, etc.), or does its reflection require the creation of new categories and sub-disciplines?

How did the art of photography progress, and in what way did the distribution of relations in the "art world" change with the advent of photography?

How did photography impact on the organisation and functioning of historical and art, (i.e. museum) collections? And what is its status within them in the post-media era?

How did photography influence the reflection of social relations, their documentation and interpretation?

How do the social and historical sciences manage input from photographic production and distribution? And how did photography change our understanding of visual representations?

And how does it resonate in post-colonial studies, or in the current post-Eurocentric world?

How did photography influence the more speculative sciences?

How did art philosophy and art criticism theory react to the advent of photography?

How did creative process change with the advent of photography?

How do current aesthetics studies react to and manage the materiality and developmental aspect of photography?

Is it really possible to maintain the standards of aesthetics after the "post-photography" era (in parallel to "post-Duchamp")?

Can art philosophy and aesthetics contribute in any way to historical research into photography, or to its use in science?

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In what way is photography used in the context of the natural sciences?
Is it understood as only illustrative material and an instrument of interpretation, or does it have its own research potential?
How does photography manifest itself in the development of optics?
Did it influence research in chemistry, mathematics and physics, or their applied forms in any way?

Keynote speakers

Dr. Kelley Wilder

Photographic History Research Centre,
De Montfort University, Leicester/ UK

Dr. Dawn Wilson

School of Histories Languages and Cultures,
University of Hull, Hull/ UK

Mag. Magdalena Vuković

Photoinstitut Bonartes, Vienna/ A

and

Dr. Andrea Fischer

Institut für Interdisziplinäre Gebirgsforschung
Österreichische Akademie
der Wissenschaften, Vienna/ A

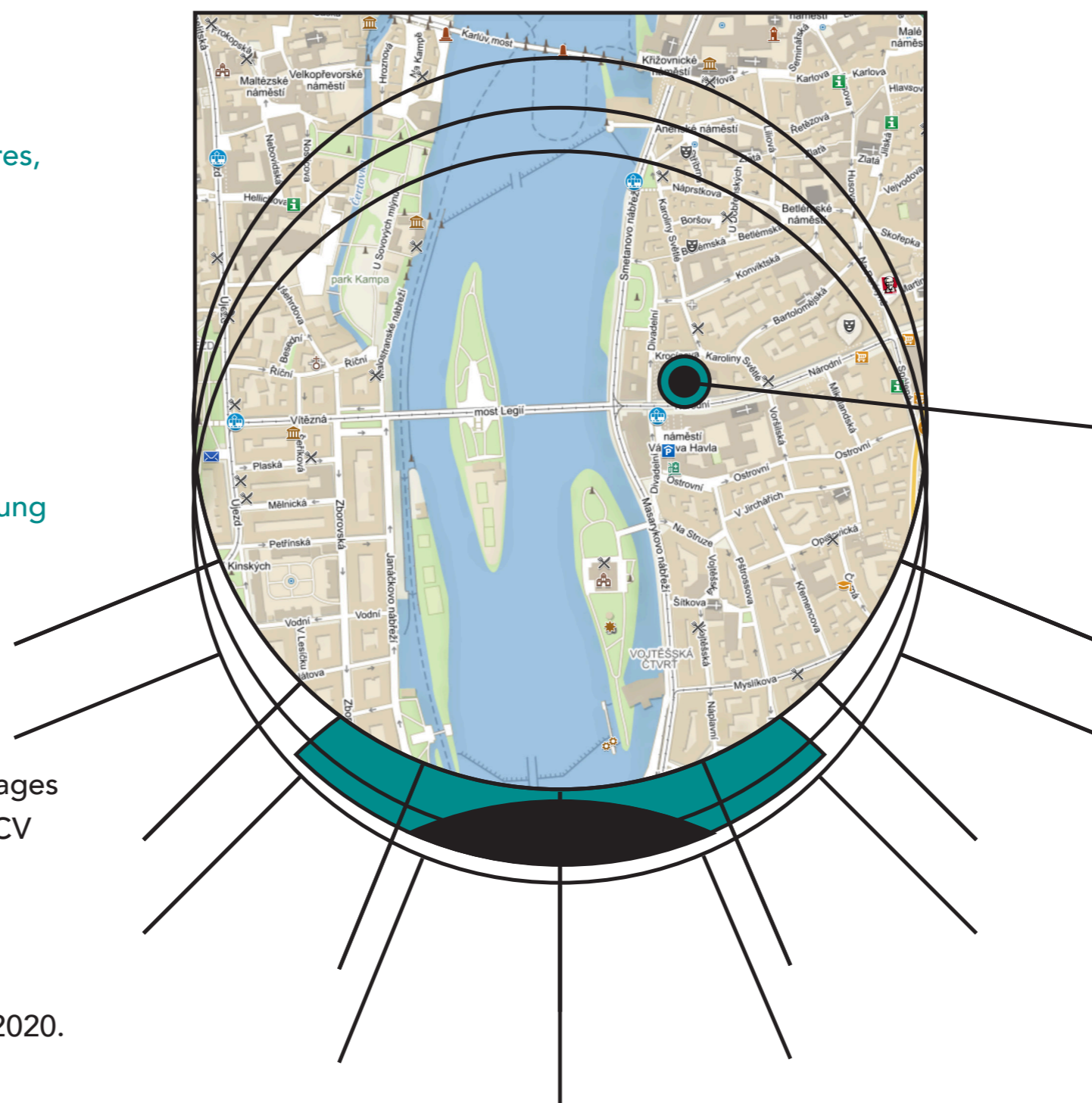
Abstracts in the Czech and English languages
up to 300 words together with a brief CV
should be sent by February 28, 2020
at the latest to the address:
cvf.avcr@gmail.com

Submissions will be notified on April 30, 2020.

Selected papers will be published
in peer-reviewed proceedings (2021).

The conference will be simultaneously
interpreted.

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Organizing Committee

Dr. Barbora Kundračíková

Dr. Hana Buddeus

Dr. Katarína Mašterová

Dr. Fedora Parkmann

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Prague 1**

**conference halls
(205 and 206)**