

## Press Photography Now!

Five online talks on current themes in photojournalism, discussed from a historical perspective. Each conversation is followed by a Q&A with the online audience and guests.

Presented by Saskia Asser, Curator of Photography, History Department, Rijksmuseum  
Made possible by the Vincent Mentzel Fonds/Rijksmuseum Fonds

THURSDAY, 27 MAY 2021, 3-4 PM CEST

### **The Power of Protest Photography: How Visual Memories of Past Protests Shape Images in the Present**

Moderator: **Thomas Smits**, Post-Doctoral Researcher, University of Antwerp

- **Laurel Chor**, Journalist, Photographer & Filmmaker, Hong Kong
- **John Edwin Mason**, Associate Professor of African History and the History of Photography, University of Virginia

THURSDAY, 3 JUNE 2021, 3-4 PM CEST

### **Reality Check: Truth and Credibility in Photojournalism**

Moderator: **Hans Rooseboom**, Curator of Photography, Rijksmuseum

- **Geert van Kesteren**, Visual Journalist
- **Andrés Mario Zervigón**, Professor of the History of Photography, Rutgers, the State University in New Jersey

THURSDAY, 10 JUNE 2021, 3-4 PM CEST

### **65 Years of World Press Photo: Looking Back and Looking Forward**

Moderator: **Saskia Asser**, Curator of Photography, History Department, Rijksmuseum

- **Joumana El Zein Khoury**, Executive Director of World Press Photo
- **Marloes Krijnen**, Senior Advisor Arts and Culture, Founding Director Foam

THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021, 3-4 PM CEST

### **Photographing *Kemerdekaan Indonesia*: The Indonesian Independence in Photographs, August 1945 & December 1949**

Moderator: **Harm Stevens**, Curator of Twentieth Century, History Department, Rijksmuseum

- **Yudhi Soerjoatmodjo**, Curator-Producer at dapoerdongeng, Indonesia
- **Elwin Hendrikse**, Photographic Collections Specialist, Dutch National Archives

THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021, 3-4 PM CEST

### **Archive & Memory: Chas Gerretsen's Photos of the 1973 Coup d'État in Chile**

Moderator: **Mattie Boom**, Curator of Photography, Rijksmuseum

- **Chas Gerretsen**, Photojournalist
- **Rayén Gutiérrez Cortés**, International Relations Officer, Museo de la Memoria y de los Derechos Humanos, Santiago de Chile
- **Iris Sikking**, Guest Curator for the exhibition *Starring Chas Gerretsen*, Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam

## ABSTRACTS

### **The Power of Protest Photography**

#### **How Visual Memories of Past Protests Shape Images in the Present**

A man throwing a stone at the police seems to levitate just above the pavement he took it from; A lone protester stands defiantly in front of a tank; a woman remains calm, almost serene, as she is violently arrested by the police. For many readers, at least one of these sentences will conjure up a powerful image of protest. Following the massive waves of transnational protests for democratic rights, racial equality and climate justice in 2019 and 2020, it has become clear that images have the power to quickly disperse ideas, demands and tactics over the world. Historians argue that these kinds of images not only travel in space, but also in time. Imagery from previous protests influences how we see and represent them in the present. What makes an image of protest powerful? And how do they transmit the power of protesters in time and space?

In this conversation, visual historian Thomas Smits will talk to (photo)journalist Laurel Chor, whose images of the 2019/2020 Hong Kong protests became iconic, and to historian and photographer John Edward Mason, who wrote several articles on the visual representation of the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests and the historical parallels with images of the Civil Rights Movement.

### **Reality Check**

#### **Truth and Credibility in Photojournalism**

Ever since the invention of photography, some 180 years ago, its truthfulness has been debated. At first, many people thought the camera copied reality in a perfectly objective and truthful way. Soon doubts crept in, however, and rightfully so: from the very first beginnings photographers sometimes staged the scene or manipulated the image afterwards. Especially since magazines and newspapers started to use photography on a large scale in the 1920s, publishers and editors discovered the endless possibilities to bend the truth and to make photographs represent partisan views. At times, photographers engaged themselves in such efforts, sometimes they tried to resist these tendencies and had to find new strategies to keep their independence. The emergence of digital photography only raised the stakes: the larger the possibilities to invisibly alter an image, the bigger the risk that people will not believe what is in a picture.

Do we still believe photographs are telling the truth? Did we ever believe that? Hans Rooseboom will discuss these questions and related issues with Andrés Mario Zervigón of Rutgers, the State University in New Jersey, and photojournalist Geert van Kesteren.

### **65 Years of World Press Photo**

#### **Looking Back and Looking Forward**

The Dutch organisation World Press Photo was established in 1955 to advance the quality of Dutch press photography in particular and to achieve wider recognition of professional photojournalism in general. Not long thereafter, it became a pivotal contest in international photojournalism. Since then, over 15,000 images have been awarded and photojournalism has changed profoundly. These images are, as a former jury chair once put it, as much about the culture of photojournalism as about the events photographed. Aiming to be a contest for the entire world proved to be a troublesome, if not impossible, ambition, and many photographers, events and perspectives are absent. Since 1955, World Press Photo has been constantly trying, with varying degrees of success, to keep up with the times by adjusting the entry rules, jury composition, contest categories and education and debate programmes.

Photo historian Saskia Asser will discuss these and other issues with Joumana El Zein Khoury, since February the new director of World Press Photo, and Marloes Krijnen, director between 1989 and 1999, when photojournalism experienced a golden age and the digital age appeared on the horizon.

## **Photographing *Kemerdekaan Indonesia***

### **The Indonesian Independence in Photographs, August 1945 & December 1949**

The Indonesian struggle for independence lies wedged between two historic moments. The opening chord sounded on 17 August 1945, when Sukarno pronounced the *proklamasi*, the Indonesian independence, on the front porch of his house in Jakarta. The Indonesian photographer Frans Mendur recorded this decisive moment in Indonesia's history. Together with other members of the independent photo agency IPPHOS, Mendur would follow the revolution closely, displaying a keen eye for the human face of the Indonesian state in the making. The symbolic final chord was heard on 28 December 1949, one day after the transfer of sovereignty, when Sukarno addressed an infinitely large crowd from the steps of the Merdeka Palace in Jakarta. Dozens of photographers were present, both Indonesians, such as Alex Mendur, Frans Mendur's brother, and Western photojournalists like Magnum-photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. Due to the excellent connections of his Indonesian wife Ratna Mohini, Cartier-Bresson made an iconic photo series, *The New Nation of Indonesia*, that was published in *LIFE* and other magazines worldwide.

Harm Stevens will talk to Yudhi Soerjoatmodjo, author of *IPPHOS: Remastered* (2013), and Elwin Hendrikse, the photographic collections specialist at the Dutch National Archives in The Hague, about the photographs of these pivotal moments in the history of Indonesia.

## **Archive & Memory**

### **Chas Gerretsen's Photos of the 1973 Coup d'État in Chile**

On 11 September 1973, a violent coup d'état took place in Chile. The army, led by General Augusto Pinochet, bombed the presidential palace La Moneda, forced President Salvador Allende to commit suicide and established a dictatorship that would last until 1990. The Dutch photojournalist Chas Gerretsen was one of the few foreign photographers on the scene. At the time, his photos were an important testimony, and especially his iconic portrait of Pinochet taken days after the coup, allowed a large international solidarity movement to take shape. Now, almost fifty years later, the photographs play a major role in Chile in coming to terms with the past. Not in the least thanks to Chas Gerretsen's extraordinary archive, which has been preserved in the Nederlands Fotomuseum in Rotterdam since 1995. By sharing his photos via social media, Chas makes a connection between the images and the people who suffered under the dictatorship.

Mattie Boom will talk to Chas Gerretsen, Rayén Gutiérrez from the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago and curator Iris Sikking, who curated the exhibition *Starring Chas Gerretsen* at the Nederlands Fotomuseum (on show this autumn).

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Saskia Asser** is a photo historian based in Amsterdam. Since 2016, she has been a regular guest curator at the Rijksmuseum for special research projects. Recently, she developed a series of online events for the Rijksmuseum on the history of photojournalism, including an international online symposium on press photo archives that will take place on 2 July 2021 (all made possible by the Vincent Mentzel Fonds). As a photo historian with World Press Photo's online team, Saskia researched the history of the organization and its activities extensively (2012-2015). She was also a long-time curator at Huis Marseille, Museum for Photography (1999-2011, 2016-2019). More information on her projects can be found on [www.saskiaasser.nl](http://www.saskiaasser.nl)

**Mattie Boom** is curator of photography at the Rijksmuseum. Her publications on 19th-century and 20th-century photography include *Photography between covers: The Dutch Documentary Photobook after 1945* (1989), *A New Art: Photography in the 19th century* (1996, with Hans Rooseboom) and *The First Photograph from Suriname* (2014). She was the editor of the website [www.earlyphotography.nl](http://www.earlyphotography.nl) and of the *Rijksmuseum Studies in Photography* that was supported by the Manfred and Hanna Heiting Fund. Recently, she curated the exhibitions *Modern Times: Photography in the 20th Century* (2014) and *New Realities: Photography in the 19th century* (2017). Her PhD research resulted in the publication *Everyone a Photographer: The Rise of Amateur Photography in the Netherlands 1880-1940* (2019).

**Laurel Chor** is an Emmy-nominated freelance journalist, photographer, filmmaker, and National Geographic Explorer from Hong Kong. She has reported from more than 20 countries, having worked for the New York Times, National Geographic, Getty, AFP, Reuters, EPA, and more. As a current masters student studying Biodiversity, Conservation and Management at Christ Church, Oxford University, Laurel is particularly interested in exploring the relationship between people and nature. She is working on a long-term photography project on traditional Chinese medicine, culture, and the environment. Previously, Laurel was the Asia

reporter and producer for VICE News Tonight on HBO, covering news, culture and politics across the region.

**Chas Gerretsen**, born in 1943 in the Netherlands, worked as a freelance cameraman and photojournalist in Vietnam, Cambodia (1968–1972) and Latin America (1973-1975). Chas won the Robert Capa Gold Medal for his photographs of the 1973 coup d'état in Chile. In 1975, Chas moved to Hollywood, where he photographed many of the famous actors of the seventies and eighties. Francis Ford Coppola hired Chas, as a former combat photographer, to photograph the filming of the anti-war film *Apocalypse Now*. In 1989 Chas quit photography, bought a sailboat and has been sailing the oceans ever since.

**Rayén Gutiérrez Cortés** is a museologist with an MA in Museum Studies from University College London (UCL) and a BA in History. In the past ten years, she has dedicated her research and work on processes of memorialization in Latin America, with a special focus on the role that museums play in collective memory. Since 2010, she has been working in the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Chile, coordinating transnational collaborative projects with cultural institutions supporting the development of initiatives of memory in the region.

**Elwin Hendrikse** (1963), art historian, is the photographic collections specialist at the Dutch National Archives (Nationaal Archief). Since 2011, he has been the curator of the largest photography collection in the Netherlands. This collection of about 16 million photographs consists mainly of press and documentary photographs from picture agencies, news bureaus, magazines and newspapers. The family archives in the collection contain important examples of early photography, such as the photographs made by Alexine Tinne (1835-1869), the first female Dutch photographer. Elwin Hendrikse curated several exhibitions, including the first major exhibition of photographs from the National Archives: *Blikvangers, Highlights from the largest photo collection of the Netherlands* (2015).

**Joumana El Zein Khoury** is the executive director of the World Press Photo Foundation. She has over 15 years of experience in international cultural exchange, developing programs and fostering new talent. She was previously the director of the Prince Claus Fund, an internationally renowned institution supporting culture under pressure, where she was crucial to strengthening fundraising capabilities. Joumana was the director of Lutfia Rabbani Foundation for Euro-Arab exchange, for which she now continues her involvement as a board member. She has also worked with organizations including the Arab Image Foundation and the Baalbeck Festival. Of Lebanese origin, Joumana has lived and studied internationally.

**Geert van Kesteren** (1966, The Netherlands) is a visual journalist who effectively explores critical issues about the relations between photography and film, between conflict, migration and religion, and the claims to territory. In addition to more traditional methods of visual reporting, he also uses innovative and experimental forms of presentation. *Why, Mister Why?* (2004) and *Baghdad Calling* (2008) are considered the most ground-breaking photo books on the Iraq War. These publications raised the bar for future photo books in relation to photo reporting, and demonstrated what citizen journalism could mean for photojournalism. Van Kesteren received numerous awards, such as the International Center of Photography's Infinity Award in Photojournalism and the PhotoEspaña Book of the Year. His work is part of the collection of the Rijksmuseum.

**Marloes Krijnen** studied mass communication and political sciences at the University of Amsterdam. She was the managing director of the World Press Photo Foundation from 1989 until 1999. During this period the contest grew from 10,000 to 40,000 entries while expanding the organisation with new activities like the Joop Swart Masterclass and international seminars in emerging countries. After working at World Press Photo, she became director and owner of Transworld Features, an international photo agency. In 2001 she founded Foam, photography museum in Amsterdam and established Foam magazine and the Unseen photography fair. She left Foam in 2019 and is now among other

positions, chair of Amsterdam Art Week, vice chair of the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation and a member of the supervisory board of Kunsthal Rotterdam. She took part in juries like the ICP infinity awards, the rencontres in Arles and rencontres Africaines de la photographie in Bamako.

**John Edwin Mason** teaches African history and the history of photography at the University of Virginia. He has published extensively on both topics and is now writing a book about Gordon Parks, the African American photographer, writer, and filmmaker. Mason is also a documentary photographer whose work has been featured, most recently, in *Bitter Southerner*. He is a member of the board of directors of Everyday Projects, Women Photograph, and the Aftermath Project, organizations that serve the international photography community.

**Hans Rooseboom** is curator of photography at the Rijksmuseum. He is co-author (with Mattie Boom) of *New Realities: Photography in the Nineteenth Century* (2017) and *Modern Times: Photography in the Twentieth Century* (2014). In 2019 he published a thematic history of photography (in Dutch): *Lichtjaren*. In 2006 he wrote his PhD on the socio-economic position of Dutch 19th-century professional photographers, *De schaduw van de fotograaf* (with a summary in English).

**Iris Sikking** (1968, Amsterdam) was educated as a film editor and photo historian and works as an independent curator. For the Nederlands Fotomuseum in Rotterdam, she is currently putting together an exhibition and photo book on the oeuvre of Chas Gerretsen. She is continuing her research on photographic exhibition practices, which will be published in 2022 by Fw:books in the volume *Curating Images – Perspectives on Photography Curation* (working title). Recently, she has been appointed chief curator of the Biennale für Aktuelle Fotografie, which will be shown in Mannheim, Ludwigshafen and Heidelberg (Germany) from March 2022 onwards. Information on these and other projects can be found on [www.irissikking.nl](http://www.irissikking.nl)

**Thomas Smits** is a prize-winning historian of nineteenth- and early-twentieth century visual news culture. As a postdoc for the Remembering Activism project at the University of Utrecht, he studied how images of a previous protests shape them in the present. He currently works at the University of Antwerp where he studies the history of visual implicit bias in the nineteenth century.

**Yudhi Soerjoatmodjo** is curator-producer and the author of *IPPHOS (Indonesian Press Photo Service): Remastered* (Antara, 2013). He has produced over 200 local and international exhibitions and cultural events for Galeri Foto Jurnalistik Antara, Indonesia's first photography gallery, Galeri "i see", the Goethe Haus, and others. His seminal essays on Indonesia's photography history include *Cephas, Yogyakarta: Photography in the Service of the Sultan* (KITLV, 1999) and 'The Challenge of Space: Photography in Indonesia, 1841-1999' in *Serendipity, Photography, Video, Experimental Film and Multimedia Installation from Asia* (Japan Foundation Centre, 2000). Soerjoatmodjo is currently founder-director of dapoerdongeng, a cultural-education organization. Contact: [y.soerjoatmodjo@dapoerdongeng.com](mailto:y.soerjoatmodjo@dapoerdongeng.com)

**Harm Stevens** is a curator of the twentieth century at the History Department in the Rijksmuseum. Together with a team of researchers from Indonesia, he is currently working on an exhibition about the Indonesian Revolution (1945-1949): *Revolusi! Indonesia Independent* (the opening in the Rijksmuseum is planned for February 2022). One of the focusses in the exhibition will be on the visual culture of the Indonesian Revolution: paintings, photography, film, posters pamphlets and other documents. Furthermore, this question will be addressed: why are so many of these historical Indonesian documents in archives and museum collections in the Netherlands?

**Andrés Mario Zervigón** is Professor of the History of Photography at Rutgers, the State University in New Jersey (USA). He is author of *John Heartfield and the Agitated Image* (2012) and *Photography and Germany* (2017). With Tanya Sheehan he edited *Photography and Its Origins* (2014), with Sabine Kriebel *Photography and Doubt* (2017), and with Donna Gustafson *Subjective-Objective: A Century of Social Photography* (2017). His current book project is a history of *Die Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung*, for which he received a CASVA Senior Fellowship (2013-14). Zervigón leads The Developing Room, an academic working group at Rutgers devoted to photography studies.