THOMAS STRUTH’S MUSEUM PHOTOGRAPHS
AND THE TEXTUAL EXPERIENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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By
Ellen Bethany Napier, B.A.

The Ohio State University
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Master’s Examination Committee:
Dr. Stephen Melville, Adviser
Dr. Lisa Florman

Approved by
Adviser
Department of History of Art
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1998
ABSTRACT

Thomas Struth's museum photographs are pictures of people in museums looking at paintings. In each of these photographs, Struth exposes a relationship between a depicted art work and its audience. Struth captures a moment in which the museum visitors repeat the form of the painting at which they look through their poses, clothing, gestures and/or groupings. But as one looks at people looking, one also doubles and therefore belongs to the object being viewed. One might even imagine a photograph being taken of one's own back while looking. In this way, Struth challenges the viewer's position as an exterior subject.

Several critics and curators have suggested that these photographs participate in a critique of the museum setting and/or the experience that it provides. However, the fact that one is implicated as a participant in this situation complicates the possibility of assuming an exterior critical position. Thus Struth's work raises questions about where one stands in issuing a critique of experience.

It is in working through these questions, and in exploring the character of experience itself, that a connection to writings by G.W.F. Hegel and Georges Bataille is explored. In his *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel traces the narrative or process by which the subject comes to take possession of his or her experience. This process, according to Hegel, involves coming to recognize negativity or death as integral to one's being. Bataille later critiques Hegel's project, asserting that the very nature of experience, as put forth by Hegel, exceeds possession. That is, Bataille takes Hegel's claims about death and negativity so seriously, that he applies these to Hegel's own text. This argument between
Hegel and Bataille about experience establishes the character of experience as that which constantly surpasses itself. This is quite close to the chain which Struth's museum works set forth, as the experience of each photograph extends beyond the viewer's own position. In that this experience is always moving outside its own bounds, we might better say that Struth's experience is *self*-critical.

Thinking about Struth's work as a chain of shifting relationships leads to a question about what exactly Struth comes after. Similarly, connections between these photographs and these written works raise questions about the medium in which Struth's project participates and the history to which this series of photographs belongs.

Included is a discussion of Struth's place within the history of photography, as well as the relationship the museum photographs posit between photography and painting. There is a discussion of Benjamin Buchloh's suggestion that certain works by Struth bear a relationship to sculpture through a reenactment of impossibilities. It is here that the act of writing—especially as elaborated in a text by Jacques Derrida—becomes important.

Derrida reads Bataille's reading of Hegel and writes another text, acknowledging his participation in the chain which they set forth. In doing so, Derrida asserts that each text requires another text to come after it to reveal the way in which meaning overflows the language which attempts to hold it. Thus, Derrida holds that writing and experience have the same structure, or that experience is importantly textual. In this way we might understand Struth's work, with its necessary historicity, to be a form of writing.

Thus Struth's museum works engage in a type of history writing, and carry implications for understanding the practice of writing art history. These photographs make evident a necessary relationship between art, history and writing, which has been at work all along in the history of art. The author, then, necessarily acknowledges her own participation in Struth's chain through the writing of this paper, and through her creation of a place for the reader who will follow.
STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION

I would like to thank many people for their help throughout the process of writing this thesis. First, I would like to thank my adviser Stephen Melville for his intellectual generosity, his honest advice, and his constant encouragement. I have gained an incredible amount from the dexterity with which he handles, and the accessibility which he provides to, even the most difficult material. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to Lisa Florman, who in a relatively short period of time has contributed a disproportionately large amount to my understanding of and interest in the art of all periods. I would also like to thank the other professors, students and administrators whom I have come to know over the last three years. Whether at the Wexner Center for the Arts, in the department of the History of Art or elsewhere on campus, each of my encounters have contributed to the rich texture of my graduate experience here at Ohio State. And finally, I must acknowledge my great debt to my family and friends, without whose constant support and constant distractions I might never have survived graduate school.
VITA

September 15, 1972 .................. Born - Indianapolis, Indiana

1993-4 ......................... Attended University College London,
University of London
Department of Art History

1994 ......................... B.A. History of Art & Architecture,
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

1996 - 1997 .................. Graduate Administrative Associate,
Education Department,
Wexner Center for the Arts,
Columbus, Ohio

1997 - 1998 .................. Graduate Teaching Associate,
Department of History of Art
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

1998 - present .................. Exhibitions Assistant
Exhibitions Department
Wexner Center for the Arts
Columbus, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: History of Art
Contemporary Art & Theory
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INTRODUCTION

This is an extended exploration of certain works by the contemporary photographer Thomas Struth. A German artist, Struth studied at the Kunstakademie in Dusseldorf in the 1970's, training under Bernd and Hilla Becher and Gerhard Richter. After school, Struth began exhibiting his work and has participated in many individual and group shows throughout Europe, the United States, and Japan, including exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., and the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

Although he has produced many series of photographs, his works fall into three general categories: photographs of urban sites, family portraits, and museum pictures. There are, of course, works which fall into more than one or none of these groups, such as several photographs of art conservationists which seem to combine the museum pictures and the portraits. The urban photography has been the most widely exhibited and written about, but these works will not be the principal focus of this study.

Struth's museum pictures are of interest here. It is a smaller series consisting of approximately 25 works, the bulk of which were made between 1989 and 1992.1 To date there has been relatively little written about these works, and throughout this study, the existing body of scholarship will be considered. However, because of the limited amount of written resources, most of this paper is based primarily on personal interaction with the photographs and the author's critical reading of them.

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1"[40 years of Aperture: A photographic history]," *Aperture* no.129 (Fall 92) p.26.
The individual photographs in this series are extremely intriguing, each with its own issues and questions. For example, there are two different photographs taken at the Art Institute of Chicago. While the first seems to raise questions about surface (as it relates to both photographs and paintings), the second rather poses questions about space. Because each work functions slightly differently and provokes unique questions, the first chapter of this paper explores several of these works individually. This first section traces the author's initial experiences with these photographs. This experience formed the foundation for the subsequent reading of Struth's work.

In addition to each work's individual issues there is a general structure which almost all of these museum works share. The remaining chapters of this paper aim to explore this structure and its consequences in greater detail. In each of the museum photographs, Struth exposes a relationship between a depicted art work and its audience. Struth captures a moment in which the museum visitors mimic or repeat the form of the painting at which they look, and in holding the viewers and the paintings within a single frame, Struth posits that the people in some way belong to the art in front of them.

But as one looks at people looking, one also doubles and therefore belongs to the object being viewed. One might even imagine a photograph being taken of one's own back while looking. In this way, Struth challenges the viewer's position as an exterior subject.

The second chapter opens with a discussion of the claims by different critics and curators that these photographs participate in some kind of a critique of the museum setting and/or the experience provided by this setting. But while the photographs provide a glimpse of how visitors (including oneself) behave in museums, the very fact that one is implicated as a participant in this situation complicates the possibility of assuming an exterior critical position. This section, entitled "Struth's Critique," closes with questions about where one stands in issuing a critique of experience.

It is in working through these questions, and in exploring the character of
experience itself, that a connection to writings by G.W.F. Hegel and Georges Bataille is
extroded. The third chapter of this paper begins with a discussion of Hegel’s
*Phenomenology of Spirit* as a narrative in which the subject comes to take possession of
his or her experience. This process, according to Hegel, involves coming to recognize
negativity or death as integral to one’s being. In a later essay, Bataille critiques Hegel’s
project, asserting that the very nature of experience, as Hegel puts it forth, exceeds
possession. That is, Bataille takes Hegel’s claims about death and negativity so seriously,
that he applies these to Hegel’s own text. This argument between Hegel and Bataille about
experience establishes the character of experience as that which constantly overflows itself.
This is quite close to the chain of experience which Struth’s photographs set forth, with the
critical stance one might take to the photographed museum visitors quickly being usurped
as the viewer imagines someone coming after him or her. In that this experience is always
moving outside its own bounds, we might better say that Struth’s experience is self-critical.

Thus, the written works by Hegel and Bataille help to establish the chain-like
character of experience set forth by Struth’s photographs. This leads to a question about
what exactly Struth comes after in this chain. In addition, connections between these
photographs and these written works raise questions about the medium in which Struth’s
project participates and the history to which this series of photographs belongs.

This consideration of Struth’s history is the fourth chapter of this paper. Included
is a discussion of Struth’s place within the history of photography, as well as the
relationship the museum photographs posit between photography and painting. In
addition, there is a discussion of an interesting essay by Benjamin Buchloh which suggests
that certain works by Struth bear a relationship to sculpture. In fleshing out Buchloh’s
suggestions about the relationship between Struth’s photographs and sculpture, and about a
repetition of impossibilities, the act of writing—especially as elaborated in a text by Jacques
Derrida—becomes important.
Derrida, after reading Bataille’s reading of Hegel, writes another text, acknowledging his participation in the chain set forth by Hegel and Bataille. In doing so, Derrida’s claim is that each text requires another text to come after it and reveal the way in which meaning overflows the language which attempts to hold it. In this way Derrida issues a claim that writing and experience have the same structure, or that experience is textual. Similarly, we might understand Struth’s work, with its necessary historicity, to be a form of writing.

The final issue this paper explores is the claim that Struth engages in a type of history writing. How does Struth’s work influence the understanding of the practice of writing art history? A comparison between Struth’s museum works and *Past Looking*, a book written by Michael Ann Holly, attempts to bring to light the implications of Struth’s work for this field. Struth’s museum pictures make evident a necessary relationship between art, history and writing, which has been at work all along in the history of art and yet is still not widely recognized today.

These discoveries allow room less for any conclusions than for one final section in which the author can only acknowledge her own participation in Struth’s chain through the writing of this paper, and through her creation of a place for the reader who will follow.
CHAPTER 1
Exploration of Individual Works

Art Institute of Chicago I, Chicago 1990 (Figure 1)

I am immediately drawn to a huge, brilliant, luminous photograph. From under the blues and greens, it seems to be giving off its own light. My first conscious reaction is a recognition of the painting A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte by Georges Seurat. This ubiquitous painting, so famous for its style (all those dots!) and its figures, for a moment holds me immersed in this work. (The fact that it is a photograph will soon draw me into the work in a very different manner, but I’m getting ahead of myself here.) For now, it seems that the familiarity of this painting extends a comfortable welcome, an invitation to enter.

I notice the slick surface, and am reminded of this work as a photograph. My attention spreads to the photographed people who are looking at the painting. I am given, for the most part, their backs. I am a little bothered by the girl who, at the right edge of the photograph, turns and breaks this form. I become cognizant that the blue sweater on the man in the center of the composition is a little out of focus. Other parts of the photograph which also cause a slight annoyance: the wall label for the Seurat painting is not fully within the boundary of the photograph, but shares its left edge, and I perceive a reflection in the glass covering the painting. These parts of the photograph frustrate me in that they interrupt my complete absorption into this work.

But I forgive the photographer, Thomas Struth, these small troubles, as I begin to pick up on certain parallels between Seurat’s painting and this photograph. For example,
the bright blue clothing in the photograph mimics the colorful palette used by Seurat in his pointillism technique. The brown of the wood paneled floor in the Art Institute of Chicago doubles the colors of the earth and trees in the Parisian park. The girl shown turning to the side doesn’t bother me so much when I recognize her counterpart in the woman profiled on the right in Seurat’s painting. Even the blurring now makes sense in light of the “Impressionism” theme. Also, the painting and the photograph seem to be of similar size relative to the human body. That is, just as the Seurat painting is as wide as three or four people, the Struth seems to be three or four times as wide as I...

My next realization happens as quick as the click of a camera shutter (which is appropriate, since a painting could not achieve this same effect). I suddenly realize that my own position is a repetition of what is photographed. I am struck by the fact that just as these people stand and look at an art work on a wall, I stand and look at their picture. Just as they are in the Art Institute, so do I stand in this arts center, and I envision, at this instant, a photograph taken of my own back, collapsing me into the picture plane. I laugh. Neat! Captured! I am no longer merely a viewer; I have become part of the picture. This second entrance into the photograph is more forceful and intriguing than the familiarity which initially drew me in. (My third entrance just began a few paragraphs ago, but again I’m getting ahead of myself).

*Musée du Louvre IV, Paris 1989* (Figure 2)

I move on to see a second Thomas Struth photograph and instantly this one too delights me with its tricks. This time the museum visitors stand in front of Theodore Gericault’s *The Raft of the Medusa*.

Gericault’s raft dips down in the lower left hand corner of the painting and tips up into the upper right section. Struth’s composition is also heaviest at the lower left. The photographed people stand in a bunch in that corner with the crowd becoming less dense to
the right. Furthest to the right stands one solitary figure whose purple shawl evokes the burgundy flag waved by her counterpart in Gericault's painting.

Gericault's composition moves not only upward and to the right, but also inward as most of the individual bodies strain away from us and into the depths of the painting. This is especially apparent in the central figure of the painting who, with one arm, reaches for the upper end of the boat. This motion finds a photographic complement in the man in the center of Struth's work who stands farthest from us and even bends his head away from us and into the depth of the picture plane.

I, of course, inevitably follow these figures who draw into the work. Just as I had in front of the previous work, I can here imagine a photograph being taken behind me, thrusting me into the depths of art's realm.

*Musée du Louvre I, Paris 1989* (Figure 3)

I move on to another richly colored and enormous work, this one even bigger than the last. This time I find Struth facing a giant: Jacques Louis David and the tradition of history painting. Struth has risen to the challenge and followed David in producing an expansive and highly detailed representation of a moment from the past.

In both David's *The Coronation of Napoleon* and Struth's work, the figures are set within a vast and dark architectural space. There are also, in each case, figures which distinguish themselves through dramatic gestures. In the photograph this includes the young man in the green shirt seated on the bench among a circle of friends, as well as the older bearded man standing behind him pointing with a rolled up piece of paper. Apart from these figures, the general crowd hovers to the left in both compositions, thus making the event of looking at a painting appear like the crowning of a king.

But for the first time in front of one of Struth's works I am not faced with the backs of museum visitor's heads. Here the people face a variety of directions, some of them
towards me, some towards paintings, many towards another photographed visitor or group of visitors. Heads are turned in every direction, although nearly all seem oblivious to my presence. Where is my position, then, in this picture? I am no longer so directly implicated as I was in *Art Institute of Chicago I* or *Musée du Louvre IV*. Although I am in front of an extremely large work of art, I am not in the middle of a crowd of tourists, families and school groups. I can almost imagine the din going on in the Louvre, and it makes me notice how quiet and empty this gallery is. It makes me uncomfortable and I move along.

*National Gallery I, London 1989* (Figure 4)

A fourth photograph immediately shouts out to me. The jewel-like reds, blues and greens are arresting. But no surprises this time; I am ready for all of Struth’s tricks. First thing to do is play “spot-the-similarities” between the photograph and the painting.

The crisp primary colors which drew my attention are also a primary link between the painted and the photographed worlds. The red ski jacket and the green wool coat echo the robes of the disciples, both in their hue and in the visible folds in the cloth. The photographed figure in the blue winter coat bends towards the painting as if keeping with the reverent gestures of Christ’s followers. The figures in both the photograph and the painting hold static poses, so that the photograph looks “staged” (I will later find it amazing that it wasn’t). The clarity of the colors in both works enhances the razor sharp focus (although, really, one can’t focus a painting).

As I shift my attention to the edges of the photograph, I find a few other similarities. Along the top edge, the photograph is cropped so that I am just able to make out the molding of the ceiling of the National Gallery. Its regular decorative floral pattern mirrors the carefully measured ceiling of the painted space. This also points to the fact that while the painting sits in an elaborate architectural framework, Struth uses the architecture
of the building to frame his photograph. And finally, on the right and left sides of the featured painting hang two smaller paintings; there is also a photographed person on each side of the central group of photographed figures. On the right in the photograph I see a woman with extravagantly red hair who wears a deep brown velvety coat. The painting which seems to be her compositional counterpart is equally rich and ornate. The man in the painting even has a funny hat.

I am realizing that the similarity between painting and photograph here goes beyond these details. This photograph, with its very rational and exacting one-to-one correspondence to the painting, replicates the larger ideals behind the Renaissance painting. The absolute symmetry between photograph and painting, and the clarity and logic of their relationship represents the Renaissance work on a deeper level than is usually associated with photographic representation.

*Museum of Modern Art I, New York 1994* (Figure 5)

Speaking of representation... I can see that this photograph once again emulates a painting, but this time Struth has focused on a Jackson Pollock; a tough challenge for any photographer. How does one represent an abstract painting through a group of museum visitors?

First, Struth finds a little boy wearing pants with a frenzied abstract pattern on them. That is one way to use photographic representation to picture a Pollock. Also, Struth captures the man in the blue pants on the left holding his arm up in such a way that it almost looks like he is in the process of painting. And yet the arm, caught moving when the camera shutter closed, is recorded as insubstantial, and it fades into the painting as if it were a part of the beige ground.

And I begin to see how crafty Struth can be. In both the painting and the photograph the figures and lines are held in a state of constant motion. In the photograph,
the line which divides the museum floor from the wall is indistinct, bringing the photographed space into one continuous ground. There is the little boy whose feet appear to stand in two positions at once, and this spatio-temporal simultaneity happens in paint as well; in both cases the before and the after are held together on one surface. In front of and beside are also brought together. Again I notice the legs of the young boy. A portion of the wall is both beside and behind him at once, and it cuts him through the middle.

But through all of these astounding finds and ingenious tricks, what exactly has Struth managed to double here? The mimicry does seem to be beyond just surface similarities (as a matter of fact, Pollock’s surface is the one thing Struth absolutely does not mimic). Yet in this mimicry I am not sure how Struth was able to get past the fundamental differences between a non-representational painting and a very representational photograph. What has Struth gotten his camera to do? Or what has he managed to uncover: in the Pollock?

I look closer at the colors. The woman on the right in the photograph is dark but with a distinctly green tint. I think I also see that green color in the painting, especially in the portion of the painting right beside her. I also think I see the blues, greens and oranges of the other photographed clothing emerge from the painting. Do these colors only emerge because these people came along? Or because Struth came along with a camera?

I realize that in all this motion, there is a fundamental fixedness. The perfect focus of the camera on the painting reveals how still this camera really must have been, just as I, a contemplative viewer, am still. But I belong to this painting less through my contemplation than through my approaching, moving around in it, and walking away.

*Kunsthistorisches Museum III, Vienna 1989* (Figure 6)

I am wise to Struth’s structure by now, and so I don’t get the same “neat trick” effect that I found the first time. But the interest of these works is no less for the
familiarity; my fascination continues with the next picture, this one a very quiet photograph. Its richness of detail and technical perfection hold me spellbound. I am captivated by the nicely dressed gray haired man alone in the corner of an art museum, looking at a portrait of a man by Rembrandt.

I think about the reciprocity between photograph and painting. Both represent gentlemen belonging to a cultural system of a time past. One man's hands echo the other's. Both gentlemen are presented by the artist in the traditional three-quarter portraiture view (except that one is unconventionally seen from behind). Both artists use restrained, classic colors: white, navy, black, gold. Both evoke a quiet dignity; both employ a careful handicraft.

But I participate in this photograph differently than I did in *Art Institute of Chicago* I. This time my relationship to the figure is one of distance, of difference. I am neither elderly nor male. I generally meet Struth photographs not in traditional art museums, but in contemporary art centers or galleries. Yet in looking at this a picture of a person looking, I recognize myself in this Other world. The man and I, we are different, but belong to each other; we are a pair.

There are actually two Rembrandt portraits within Struth's frame. The second portrait, which hangs to the right of the first, is the painted wife of the painted gentleman. They also form a pair, but since there is no photographed woman standing in front of the painted man's "better half," she could have just as easily been cropped out by Struth. However, he understood that one half needs the other, needs the Other, to be what it is. So the pairing occurs in two and three dimensions.

On the opposite side of the composition, along the left edge of the photograph, the right edge of a frame is cropped in. The inclusion of this bit of frame reveals the intentionality of the cropping; the cropping reveals the signification to be found in the framing.
Pantheon, Rome 1990 (Figure 7)

A picture of the Pantheon, the building which is supposed to be impossible to photograph. How does Struth go about representing it? It seems that he plays up the inherent problem in this task by emphasizing the interplay between roundness and flatness. The upper half of the photograph shows the curving lines of the Pantheon's dome. These sweeping curves intersect with the right angles of the corners of the photograph.

This also leads me to think about the interaction of flatness and space. I have in front of me a two dimensional representation of a three dimensional experience. Seen in this way, this work is unlike the other museum works at which I have been looking. Although there are a few paintings in the Pantheon and I still look at a group of people looking, I am not implicated here as I had been in the other photographs. There are still instances here in which I am a repetition of the photograph; just as these visitors are dwarfed by the architecture, the photograph looms large above me. Yet because I do not look at people looking at something on a wall, I am not a repetition of the photographed world. In that way, this picture must work differently.

I guess I should qualify that claim: I think the difference between this photograph and the other museum pictures depends on where it is hung. Hanging in a round or domed room, this photograph would not function in the same way as it does hanging on a flat white wall. I had not previously noticed the extent to which these works depend on their surroundings in order to function as they do. It reminds me of the concerns in showing sculpture.

There are also many references to sculpture to be found within this photograph. For example, the man, woman and child grouping to the left can be related to the statue of

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2"The impact of this interior, awe-inspiring and harmonious at the same time, is impossible to convey in photographs; even the painting we have chosen renders it only imperfectly." from H.W. Janson, History of Art, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1991) p.224.
Mary in a nearby niche. Also, several people in the central group look up, their faces flooded by a sort of divine light, reminiscent of baroque sculpture.

But is there a difference between Struth’s works which refer to paintings and this one which refers to sculpture? Imagine that Pantheon was hanging in a round or domed room so that my position was implicated like it is in the rest of the museum works. As long as I recognize myself inside the work, does it ultimately make any difference whether Struth focuses on a painting or a sculpture? And if so, what is at stake in that difference?

*Art Institute of Chicago II, Chicago 1990* (Figure 8)

I approach another luminescent and beautiful object. Back to the Art Institute of Chicago, it seems, the same place where I began. This time Struth has found a Caillbotte painting and its viewers.

I first notice that the arrangement of the painting into foreground, middleground, and background is copied in Struth’s photograph, in which museum visitors stand on three distinct planes. I think it is interesting that there are also the three distinct zones set up by the painting, the photograph, and the here and now, my own writing of the photograph. This is interesting, but I have not yet sorted out how that may be important. And now that I have officially marked and acknowledged my participation in the photograph, what comes next? After the tricks have been realized, what exactly do I understand these works as trying to say or mean?

There is also another set of questions that I confront in looking at this photograph. There are many intricacies of this work, small similarities between it and the painting, shown in shimmering colors and razor sharp detail. For example, the lamppost which marks the mathematical center of the painted space is continued down into the guard post in Chicago. The streets of Paris are painted as shiny, pink-grey stone, which seems to continue and merge into the floors of the Chicago gallery. The photographed woman with
the baby carriage seems about to stroll right into the space of the Parisian street in the painting, and the top edge of the photograph is the upper molding of the Art Institute wall, as if I, too, could enter what once seemed like a two dimensional space. Even the photographed woman’s plaid dress might allude to the grid of analytical space. But I get so wrapped up in the details of this photograph and how clever it is, that I am no longer surprised by these photographs in the way I once was. I am now familiar with the trick of these works and they no longer strike me with the original impact. The amusement I initially felt now lacks satisfaction. What does that mean? Is a Struth a little bit like a trompe l’oeil in that once you discover its secret, it can never be experienced in the same way again? Does the experience of the Struth, once grasped, once understood, grow stale?

Perhaps this staleness suggests that I need to move on to another stage of my investigation of these works. Although I have begun to process my experience of them, I still haven’t figured out what the significance of my participation is. The questions I move on with, then, are these: What might I find if I pursue the logic set forth in the structure of these works? What (or how) do these works mean?
CHAPTER 2
Struth's Critique

Upon arriving at the point at which we realize that we are implicated in Struth’s museum pictures, a logical next step may be to look for more specific ways in which our poses, clothing and groupings double the scenes in the photographs. We look around us in a new way and, in the process, become aware of our own physical relationship to art and of the environment in which it is received. One might assume that a heightened self-awareness is the aim or meaning of Struth’s museum photographs. Struth’s own comments would seem to back up this view:

The photos illuminate the connection and should lead the viewers away from regarding the works as mere fetish-objects and initiate their own understanding or intervention in historical relationships.... Therein lies the moment of pause or questioning. Because the viewers are reflected in their activity, they have to wonder what they are themselves doing at the moment.3

Although this may at first seem rather straightforward, various curators and writers have followed the logic of this work and represented Struth’s position in slightly different ways.

One reading of Struth’s museum works may be called the “institutional critique.” This position is reflected by his inclusion in an exhibition titled Art Museum, held at the Center of Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in 1995. This show aimed to bring together works whose concern is not only the nature of the objects themselves but the neutralizing force of the museum setting, a highly codified space. They call attention to the configurations and conventions of the

museum gallery; they scan its walls, its arrangement of objects, its use of written direction, the nature of its light, its use of color, props, and decorative finishes.4

Thus it is not so much a self-awareness, but an attention to and awareness of the museum setting, which the curator, Trudy Wilner Stack, here aims to emphasize. Stack, in the catalogue essay for the show, continues,

Photography, the frequent weapon of the postmodern artist, is not a classical museum medium....A different breed, photography is well suited to the role of contemporary onlooker (invited to the dinner party, but not important enough to be seated to social advantage).5

In this view, Struth engages in some sort of an attack on the museum via his camera, and through the medium of photography, he is able to take an outsider’s view of the museum setting.

However, this is a position in which Struth’s work rests rather uneasily. Structurally, Struth’s works deny the ability to take such an outside critical stance toward art works and art institutions. The fact that we could not stand simply outside Musée du Louvre IV (Struth’s photograph of Gericault’s painting), but came to understand ourselves as interior to that work, suggests that Struth does not encourage the viewer to stand outside and criticize the presentation of art. Since Struth has offered such a powerful challenge to the position of external observer, it would seem inappropriate to ask him to act as one in this exhibition. This is not to say that the curator has gotten Struth’s work wrong, exactly. Struth’s work does provoke an interest in the museum setting, but also portrays the audience as participants; we are interested because we are involved.


5Ibid., emphases added.
This point may be further clarified by comparing *Musée du Louvre IV* to a photograph titled *Volunteer Docents: Unpaid Women Workers* by Diane Neumaier (Figure 9), which was also included in the *Art Museum* show. Initially, Neumaier’s work may strike the viewer as being similar to Struth’s in that photographed people mimic the art objects by which they stand. In the Neumaier, a woman docent holds her hands at her chest next to a statue of a nude woman whose gender is emphasized by her long breasts and round tummy. As in the Struth photograph, there are museum visitors in back of whom the viewer stands. In Neumaier’s photograph there is a space for the viewer in the circle of visitors, and having a place in the crowd makes one a part of the work.

But there is a major difference between the positions set up for the viewer by each of these photographers. Neumaier positions the viewer within a group of observers without challenging the role of viewing subject. If one were to imagine someone observing from behind while in front of Neumaier’s photograph, that person would simply stand with the viewer in the crowd and look at the same object in the same way. If anything, such a person would reinforce the viewer’s position as observer. Struth, on the other hand, does not let us rest comfortably as observers. To understand ourselves as observers in front of a Struth is to recognize ourselves in the work, and thus to be interior to the work. In standing as subjects in front of a Struth, we are also inherently objects.

A second but related difference is that while the Struth work is a glossy, richly colored, carefully crafted object, Neumaier’s photographs are grainy black and white images that appear to be quickly taken snapshots. In this way, Neumaier’s objects purport to take an outside and advantageous stance to the realm of “high art,” and as such take a critical stance toward the museum’s systems of display. Struth’s photograph of the Gericault work, on the other hand, acknowledges its place within the class of art objects, and functions based on its inclusion in that system. So if Struth’s work sets up a position of interiority (the viewer as interior to the work, his photograph as interior to the museum
world), how could this work be interpreted as a critique? How exactly is it critical and what is it critical of?

Further questions about the position which Struth sets up and about the critique his work issues may be illuminated by looking at a similar exhibition in which Struth’s work was included. The exhibition, titled *The Image of the Exhibition*, was held at the Heiligenkreuzhof in Vienna in 1993. In a review of that exhibition, critic Donald Kuspit summarizes the central theme by saying that “images in this category assume that the exhibition makes the art the way the clothes make the man.” Kuspit goes on to write.

Images of exhibitions are peculiarly cynical arguments that art truly—“ontologically,” “epistemologically”—exists only when it is socially exhibited. In fact, “art” no longer resides in the object but in its exhibition, along with other objects, in a social context...6

Once again, a close look finds this to be a slightly awkward position for Struth to occupy. Granted, Struth’s museum works acknowledge and even assert the importance of social exhibition; the works actually *depend* on having viewers in an exhibition setting in order to function. But Kuspit is only acknowledging half of what is, in Struth’s case, a reciprocal relationship between viewer and object. Regarding Struth’s photographs, it is not quite right to say that art “no longer resides in the object” because the experience of these photographs is so dependant on the work’s identity as an object. In the case of *Art Institute of Chicago I*, for example, the physical qualities of the photograph, its size, its smoothness, its incandescent light and color, are why we approach this work as subjects; and it is only when we do so that the full force of this work can strike us.

Struth does not just want us to realize that we are interior to the object; he wants us to be both subject and object, and to feel the ground shift beneath our feet. He gets us to understand ourselves not only as subjects, but also not only as objects; instead we are both,

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6Kuspit, Donald. “The Art of Exhibition: The Only Art Worth Exhibiting?” *New Art Examiner* v.21 (Nov 93) p.15. It should be noted that this is Kuspit’s view of the center of this show, which reflects but is not necessarily the same as the curator’s intention.
we are two things at once, we are split. It is presumably this position to which critic Jerry Saltz refers when he writes about Struth’s work, “You are carried into it—yet you don’t abandon yourself to it. You’re of two minds.”

So the institutional critique reading we have just explored does not quite fit Struth’s work, nor does it get his work wrong. Instead, it seems to get Struth’s work half right, acknowledging only half of his stance. Struth sets up a position for us which is not inside or outside, but is essentially divided. One might pause to question, then, what type of a critical stance Struth is able to take. It must be a divided position, somehow. How can the movement between two positions be an effective critical stance?

In thinking about Struth’s position as being split, or of “two minds,” one inevitably arrives at the larger problem with the idea of the institutional critique. There is the paradox that any image and/or exhibition which aims to criticize the institutions of art must do so only by participating in those very systems it criticizes, giving way to a poorly concealed complicity and an ultimate failure. Kuspit, in the review mentioned above, seems to realize this critical paradox in a way he feels the curator, Markus Brüderlin, does not. But while Kuspit may not entirely agree with Brüderlin’s project, Kuspit sees the failure of the exhibition as a failure on the part of the artists. He writes that the occasion of the exhibition

...becomes the exemplary demonstration that artists are so possessed by the infantile wish to exhibit themselves that they cannot (or they defensively refuse to?) understand with any depth the character of the stage on which they do so.8

Is this how we ought to understand Struth’s divided position, as one of hypocrisy and failure? While that question cannot be fully answered, it in not necessary to agree with Kuspit on the point that Struth lacks an “understanding” of his position. Struth has crafted

7Saltz, Jerry. “What is the Reason for Your Visit to this Museum?” Arts Magazine v.65 (Jan 91) p.14.

this position very carefully, and perhaps understands the potential and the limitations of his split stance in a way that Kuspit does not.

In another review of Struth’s museum works, Kuspit writes,

Struth comes to the horrendous conclusion that the relationship [of art to life] is absurd, impossible; art has nothing to do with life, or rather, forces falseness on it, compels it to betray itself. The people in the museum seem to rebel against this situation; it is striking how restless and bothered they seem in the presence of art, how their interest in it seems reduced to a mere transient curiosity, like a pigeon picking at a stale piece of bread.9

It is not true that Struth depicts primarily restless or bored viewers. While many of Struth’s works certainly show movement on the part of the viewers, that movement frequently displays the viewers’ participation in the painting, even when it is a contrary reaction to the painting. An example of this is Musée du Louvre I. Although many of the people in this photograph appear to be focusing on individual conversations, such as the seated man in the green shirt, or the standing bearded man who holds a rolled up piece of paper, these figures are caught in poses that evoke the gestures of the figures in the grand history paintings behind them. Their very disregard for the works which surround them is exactly the thing which creates their relationship to those works. Furthermore, there are just as many examples in which the viewers stand and look fixedly at the art in front of them. In both cases, the museum visitors are not restless, but are absorbed into the works by which they stand.

But despite this misreading, Kuspit’s review also marks an important shift in the discussion of Struth’s critique. While Stack and Bruderlin understood Struth’s work as an institutional critique, Kuspit notes that the critique Struth issues is somehow about experience. That is, it is not so much the walls or signs or power structures of the museum which Struth brings to light, but it is the interaction of museum visitor and art work which

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9Kuspit, Donald. “[Marian Goodman Gallery, New York: exhibit]” Artforum v.29 (Dec 90) p.132.
is featured. Even so, Kuspit still would argue that Struth’s critique is no less hypocritical or “cynical” than the other works in *The Image of the Exhibition*.

Interestingly, Saltz gives the exact opposite comment:

Struth’s no cynic. He’s not judgmental. He’s not waving an accusatory finger or saying museums are bad or crowds are like herds of animals. He’s much more generative than that.  

How is one to understand the difference between these two writers? Both recognize the split position of Struth’s museum works. Yet one writer (Kuspit) finds this to be a failure on the part of the artist, while the other (Saltz) finds it to be a “generative” position. Who is right?

The original questions about locating the meaning of Struth’s works, understanding his critical position have not yet been answered. How can being split be a critical position, and how can Struth’s critique of experience be effective if it is issued by shifting between positions? Is Struth hypocritical or productive? Or is he neither? Or is he both? Struth’s work and some of the questions it has provoked may be further illuminated by looking to a text which explores the very essence of experience itself.

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10Saltz, p.14.
CHAPTER 3
Experience, Criticism, Dividedness, and the Self

Hegel

The subtitle of G.W.F. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is "The Science of the Experience of Consciousness."\(^{11}\) Like Struth's photographs, this account of experience is bound up with a discussion of the interrelationship of subject and object.

One of the basic claims of Hegel's book is that exterior objects are integral parts of our being as subjects. We are, in Hegel's view, essentially divided creatures, but it is this very division which gives us consciousness. That is, one is an individual thinking subject not only in one's positive existence, but also in a certain negative distinction from what one is not. Hegel calls this distinction or diremption "simple negativity."\(^{12}\) Thus, our being as subjects depends in part on a certain negativity or violence. Hegel highlights the importance of this violence in his preface when he writes,

> But the life of Spirit is not the life that shrinks from death and keeps itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it. It wins its truth only when, in utter dismemberment, it finds itself.\(^{13}\)

It is a circular movement between the two extremes of ourselves and otherness which eventually allows us to become whole. The primary proposition in this book is that as

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\(^{12}\) Ibid., p.10.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p.19.
spiritual beings we are unified in motion, but are also dirempted into self and other, subject and object. Thus, according to Hegel, a spiritual being is a dialectical one. What is positive is inherently negative, life finds itself in death, and identity is bound up in what is not-it.

Hegel recognizes that this is a difficult proposition to grasp, and the book begins at the point at which we do not comprehend ourselves as being divided. We gradually come to find that our relationship with the world, from our Understanding of the forces that operate in Nature to our relationships with one another, are actually a series of stages through which we learn to see this movement in ourselves. Or, in Hegel’s own words,

In my view, which can be justified only by the exposition of the system itself, everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as Substance, but equally as Subject. 14

Thus, the dialectical structure which we are continually working to recognize in ourselves ultimately underlies each advancing stage of self-awareness. For example, the fourth chapter in the Phenomenology contains the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman or the master and the slave. This chapter traces the particular stage in a spirit’s drive for completeness in which there occurs a desire to abolish otherness. In order to find self-certainty, one desires to be recognized as complete by the other. This initially results in an interpersonal struggle in which one side achieves the status of lord and the other becomes its bondsman. This mastery may be thought of as a physical, economic or social domination of one person over another, or it can be the intellectual domination which knowledge or consciousness posits over its subject matter. In any case, mastery is achieved through risk, while servitude, the opposite of mastery, requires conservation (servus). But since the ultimate basis of this struggle is the being’s coming to terms with the otherness which is actually part of him or herself, what will inevitably be discovered is

14 Ibid., p.9-10.
that mastery and servitude are intertwined. The lord wins the struggle, but only to become dependent on the slave for his masterful status. In a dialectical turn the lord becomes servile and the bondsman becomes the independent self-consciousness. Just as Hegel exposed the death inherent in life, and the negativity inherent in the construction of a subject, he also finds that in order to be a master, one is dependant on there being a slave, and thus, the struggle comes full circle so that “the truth of the independent consciousness is accordingly the servile consciousness of the bondsman.”

The larger project of the entire book also forms one large dialectical circle. The story begins with an exploration of senses and perception as subjects look outward at the objects and things of the world. From there the spirit struggles against its otherness, as in the desire which created the master/slave relationship. Then gradually the spirit becomes aware of the otherness as a part of itself. The book closes with a chapter called “absolute knowing” in which the subject finally achieves this awareness of itself as divided and returns to itself as whole.

The structure of Hegel’s book is necessarily a narrative. Just as Hegel finds life to be in the movement between positive and negative, rather than in existing as one complete point, so must this book engage in this process of returning to ourselves rather than simply existing in its conclusion. The final achievement of his text, then, is not so much that we at the end know ourselves, but that all along we were in the process of taking possession of our experience.

So finally we return to the question of experience. Hegel’s book charts out the path of our experience, and claims that this experience is the way by which we come to ourselves. But how does all of this relate to the museum pictures of Thomas Struth?

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15Ibid., p.117.
Some of the links between the works of Struth and Hegel are readily apparent, including their shared interest in subjects and objects, and a shared belief about the dialectical link between them. For example, in Struth's National Gallery I we come to the photograph as subjects, but recognize ourselves in the object in front of us. In this Struth reveals the objecthood inherent in being a subject, so that our own position is challenged. Similarly, one begins reading Hegel's book as an exterior subject. The book, as we initially understand it, is generally about dialectics and the advancing stages of consciousness. As we continue reading, however, we find that we ourselves are not so much subjects to the book as the subjects of the book. That is, the book is about us and our own process. Both Struth and Hegel then provide a shifting place for their viewer/reader.

In addition, both find a dialectical structure to work within power relationships. In Hegel's text this takes the form of the relationship between master and slave, whereas in Struth's work power issues arose in the discussion of the institutional critique (think of words used in this discussion such as "weapon," "attack," and "reinforce"). The institutional critique assumes an outside critical position toward arts institutions and their systems of display. This critique is based on the assumption that what is exterior also possesses a superior vantage point, so that power lies in the position of knowledge. But just as Hegel found the master to be truly servile, so in Struth's work did we find that the outside position bears within it an interiority. Thus, both Hegel and Struth reveal that a privileged position bears within it a servile nature. This being stated, we might suggest that Struth sees the museum not as the site of knowledge, but rather as the site of experience.

If one claims that the experience with which Hegel and Struth are concerned has a similar character, and that in both cases the experience is bound up with the interrelation of subjects and objects, could one say that Struth also aims for us to take possession of our
experience? And if so, how does that relate to the prior questions about Struth’s work issuing a critique of experience?

To consider these questions, it may be important to note that experience occurs in Struth’s work in two different ways. First of all, Struth represents a relationship between art objects and museum visitors in his photographs. That is, he pictures the distinction and yet interaction that forms the basis of Hegelian life and Hegelian experience. More simply, Struth’s photographs represent experience.

But although we as viewers may initially think we are taking possession of that experience, we also in turn are discovering a dividedness in our own position. To say this another way, Struth’s works not only represent a graspable experience, but they also are an experience, which extends beyond the grasp of our position.

Each of these levels of experience also can be found in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. Hegel’s project was described as a taking possession of experience. In unpacking this, it was noted that Hegel not only states that man is in movement, but also that he conveys this to us through movement, or, just as I found it necessary to do in describing the effect of Struth’s work, through a narrative structure. In Hegel’s project, as in Struth’s, there is both the representation of experience, as well as experience itself.

But does anything of importance lie in this distinction between the grasping or representing of experience and the process of experience? This question might be explored through an essay which Georges Bataille wrote in response to Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. Bataille, it could be said, argues that the very essence of experience is at stake in this difference. If we found a relationship between the works of Hegel and Struth, then to look in detail at Bataille’s examination of Hegel’s project might bring further insights to this series of museum photographs.
Bataille

Bataille read *Phenomenology of Spirit* and was drawn to Hegel’s dialectical structure. In his essay “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice,” Bataille in particular picks up on Hegel’s claim about the positive aspect of negativity or violence.\(^{16}\) Bataille spends the first section of his essay discussing this interrelationship of death and life as it appears in Hegel’s text, and quotes extensively from the preface to *Phenomenology*.

Bataille’s reaction to Hegel’s writing is complex, however. Not only does he follow and elaborate on Hegel’s writing, but Bataille takes Hegel one step further. He takes seriously Hegel’s consideration of negativity, violence and death; Bataille takes this so seriously, in fact, that he applies this violence to Hegel’s own text.

This turning Hegel’s own text against itself happens in the second section of Bataille’s essay. Here Bataille relates the taking possession of experience that Hegel attempts to the act of sacrifice. Bataille’s claim is that both are similar tasks: both recognize the death inherent in human life, and both desire to defeat that death. In the case of sacrifice, the one who kills identifies with what is killed, so that one may watch one’s own death. At that moment, man truly knows death and thus life. Hegel strives to defeat this death or master this negativity by taking possession of it, and in order to do so, he must turn death into a representation, into mere words. That is, Hegel’s writings of death transform that death into a term or concept which a reader can then grasp.

The absolute position Hegel aims at through this possession is what Bataille calls “sovereignty.” Sovereignty is even more masterful than mastery, because it can grasp mastery, take possession of it, understand it, know it, thereby defeating it. Therefore, sovereignty is attempted through sacrifice, representation, or even reading(!).

But Bataille finds that Hegel’s grasping of experience in the end falls short of true sovereignty. Bataille claims that both the act of sacrifice and Hegel’s project, like all mastery, ultimately become servile. The institution of sacrifice became servile when it was taken out of myth and “into vulgar, self-serving interpretation,” just as Hegel’s negativity became servile when it was put into meaningful discourse, into language. “Utter dismemberment,” which is essential to experience, was for Hegel a positive term, something which holds meaning, rather than the negativity or destructiveness which it purports to signify. In that Hegel must use words in order to grasp this negativity, there is a conservation he must make. The writing by which Hegel attempted sovereignty was then simultaneously the way in which he failed to achieve it, and as such, Hegel’s position of possession suffers “a slippage...to the benefit of servitude.”

Bataille, then, takes seriously Hegel’s idea about negativity or loss being integral to experience and life. And in so doing, Bataille notes the absurdity of trying to take possession of this loss. Bataille finds comedy in the failure of Hegel’s project and in our negotiation of self-possession with self-loss. It is through this comedy that Bataille takes a sovereign position over Hegel’s text. That is, Bataille cannot logically oppose or contradict Hegel in order to expose Hegel’s failure, because Hegel has consumed logic and contradiction into his system; what Hegel cannot account for is the reader’s laughter. In laughing, Bataille attempts to dispossess experience.

However, even in Hegel’s failure to achieve sovereignty, Bataille does not think that Hegel has gotten anything wrong, but instead that Hegel “did not know the extent to

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18 Ibid.
which he was right.”19 At the end of his essay Bataille writes,

Do I intend to minimize Hegel’s attitude? But the contrary is true!
I want to show the incomparable scope of his approach. To that end
I cannot veil the very minimal (and even inevitable) part of failure.20

That is, Bataille found it very important to show Hegel’s failure. Bataille understood that if
Hegel was right about the loss or negativity inherent in experience, then one could never
claim to take possession of experience without losing it. Hegel’s own loss or failure then
only showed how right he was! Hegel’s failure was inevitable due to the very character of
experience itself.

Furthermore, this necessary failure, or the inherent impossibility of Hegel’s project,
itself has value. That is, if Hegel did fail in achieving an

authentic sovereignty, he came as near to it as he could. What
separated him from it would even be imperceptible were we not able
to glimpse a richer image through these alterations of meaning,...21

And this is where Bataille locates the value of Hegel’s necessary failure: the true meaning
or value of Hegelian experience is not located in any of the terms or concepts which
represent it. Instead, through the failure of Hegel’s terms, we find that experience and
even meaning itself is located between various terms or concepts and in their constantly
shifting relationships. Meaning is not a point of knowing, but a chain of experience.

It might here be useful to reestablish the relationship between Bataille and Struth.
Questions about Struth’s critique of experience, and how a critique might be issued from
the split position which Struth took (between the examiner of the art museum and the object
in the art museum) and which Struth simultaneously set up for us (between subject and

19 Ibid., p.22.
20 Ibid., p.27.
object) had arisen. It was in sorting out these questions that Hegel’s ideas became important.

The aim of Hegel’s *Phenomenology* is for the reader to take possession of his or her experience. That is, Hegel claims that our being involves a movement between the two poles of self and other, identity and diremption. Experience is the process of coming to terms with that movement as a part of ourselves and becoming whole. Hegel’s book seems important to Struth’s museum photographs because, in both cases, experience involves our coming to see ourselves as divided. Struth, then, presents (and re-presents) the museum as a site of experience.

And an interest in Bataille arose through a question about the difference between the process of experience and the representation of it, or how we come to understand or take hold of it. One might say that Bataille’s essay exposes the fact that representing or grasping experience is bound for failure, because to hold it in the mind or to fix it on paper is contrary to the movement and negativity which is part of the very character of experience. In other words, experience is oriented towards its own loss. So now what has Bataille added to the exploration of the meaning of the works of Thomas Struth?

Struth’s work is quite close to Bataille’s in that, in his essay, Bataille stood outside the Hegelian dialectic, sovereign to its position of absolute knowing, revealing the slippage of Hegel’s terms into servitude. In the same way, Struth begins with a Hegelian dialectic: a group of museum visitors standing apart from but belonging to a work of art. Struth then reveals this by introducing a third position, our position (as viewers, not yet as readers), by photographing the scene. We become even more subjects than the original subjects (although we won’t remain so for long).

This pairing of ourselves as subject and the museum visitors as object is similarly usurped as we imagine the next set of subjects into being. A burst of laughter. Thus, just as Bataille revealed to us that no one term holds meaning, but that meaning is created in the
chain of constantly shifting relationships between terms, so no one position is set in Struth’s work. Instead, the meaning of the work is achieved through an ever shifting chain of positions. This chain is made up of successive experiences, each of which always overflows itself.

Bataille revealed in Hegel that to represent experience is to fail, but that his failure also proved Hegel to be right. In the same way, even though we have seen Struth’s work as challenging and even funny, to understand Struth’s trick, for his work to become too fixed in our minds, too easily grasped, reveals that Struth has failed. Our laughter grows stale and lacks satisfaction. Yet it is a necessary and inevitable failure of value and meaning. Earlier the question arose as to whether Struth’s dividedness was a generative position or one of hypocrisy and failure. Here one finds the answer to be yes.

It is now possible to answer any other questions which might remain from the preceding chapter of this paper. Hopefully by now we have seen how the split position can be seen as effective and generative, as well as hypocritical and bearing failure. Also, we have seen that it no longer seems tempting to read his work as critical of museum institutions, although we still have not fully explored Kuspit’s assertion that Struth’s work serves as a critique of experience. We have found through Bataille that experience constantly overflows itself so that the shape of experience is less a Hegelian circle than an ongoing looped chain. As such, each successive position attempts to stand outside experience, but ultimately cannot. It follows that the position of the critique of experience is actually just another part of experience itself. It might be said that what both Bataille and Struth reveal to us is that experience is self-critical.

A similar position is expressed by Stanley Cavell in his forward to Must We Mean What We Say?\textsuperscript{22} Cavell’s claim is that there is no distinction between philosophy and

\textsuperscript{22}Cavell, Stanley. Must We Mean What We Say? (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
“meta-philosophy, the philosophy of philosophy.”23 Instead, Cavell claims that remarks about philosophy are still themselves philosophy, and that “philosophy is one of its own normal topics.”24 I think a similar argument gets made here about the character of experience and the criticism of experience, that in fact they are two versions of the same issue.

In thinking about Struth as engaging in this type of perpetual self-criticism, and especially in this last comparison between the character of experience and that of philosophy, one might pause for a moment and think further about the relationship between Struth’s museum photographs and the texts of Hegel and Bataille. Could one say that Struth somehow figures into the history of philosophy and the practice of writing? Or that Hegel and Bataille somehow count in the history of Struth’s field? What exactly is Struth’s field?

This last set of questions gains further validity if we have kept in our mind the idea of Struth’s work participating in a chain of experience which overflows itself and goes on indefinitely. We have noted that Struth invites us to come after his works and then to imagine those who come after us, creating an ongoing chain of experiences. But we have not yet stopped to consider in the process of this chain exactly whom or what Struth comes after. This may simply be a restatement of the questions just asked: exactly to which history does Struth’s work belong?

23 Ibid., p.xviii.

24 Ibid.
CHAPTER 4
The History of Struth’s Medium

Photography

Of course, Struth is a photographer, but even within the practice of photography, there are conflicting histories and a variety of legacies within which to view contemporary work. The lineage most commonly associated with Struth, via the Bechers, includes Eugene Atget and August Sander. The Bechers are frequently associated with a movement called the “New Objectivity” or *Neue Sachlichkeit*, and Struth’s work has sometimes been explained as a continuation of its principles. As the name implies, the movement promotes a return to the ideals of verism and accuracy which have historically been a large part of the camera’s identity. Does this make sense in connection with the works by Struth with which this study is concerned?

It could be said that Struth depends on a certain veracity for his museum photographs to work; it is necessary that the image we receive is an index of reality, so that we are able to imagine our own reality becoming an object. However, while Struth depends on the camera’s ability to accurately record reality, he is simultaneously critical of the objective stance which the camera has claimed. So is this what Struth comes after, the ideals of the “New Objectivity?”

In an essay accompanying an exhibition of Struth’s urban photography, Benjamin Buchloh discusses the relationship of Struth’s urban photographs to the tradition of *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Struth’s urban photographs are generally taken of buildings or streets in cities throughout Europe, Asia and America (Figures 10-12). These sites are almost
always shown without any human inhabitants, and although there is frequently a great deal of depth to the depicted space, the vanishing point is consistently blocked from view. The works seem very straight-faced, even dead-pan, with their very even lighting and incredibly sharp focus. Buchloh refers to this group of Struth’s photographs as Struth’s “archive.” Within the single body of the archive there are a wide variety of represented places, as well as assorted formats and print sizes. For example, there are both large black and white photographs and small color prints, pictures of Eastern European apartment buildings and of Asian markets, of Italian churches and of American corporate skyscrapers. In his essay for this exhibition, Buchloh writes,

Inevitably, these continuous internal ruptures and fragmentations, oppositions and asynchronicities, transitions and margins....induce a reading of their static photographic representation in terms of a modernist montage or collage aesthetic--paradoxically, the very aesthetic that the rigorous confinement to a unified object and representation of the photography of Neue Sachlichkeit had criticized and rejected. This inversion of terms, or more precisely, the fact that the disparate and discontinuous spatial fragments of urban architecture appear in a unified photographic representation.... make Struth’s photographs historically specific and transcend the mere continuation of a photographic tradition of Neue Sachlichkeit.25

In the photographs to which Buchloh refers, it is their seamless existence as an indexical representation combined with the gaps between the photographs, causing a rupture in the very fabric of Struth’s archive, which gives this work its special character. That is, the individual urban photographs use the camera to create a faithful depiction of reality, but those same works as a group are filled with spaces and gaps which reveal the photograph’s discontinuity with reality. Buchloh in this passage explains that the internally split structure of this project can be seen as Struth’s reaction to the conflicting legacies of modernism.

This may also seem to be a valid way of thinking about Struth’s museum works, since they are both seamless representations of reality while simultaneously being made up of jumps and gaps, in this case between viewer and object. If one understands the history of photography as Buchloh presents it, as split between on the one hand “a modernist montage or collage aesthetic,” and on the other the Neue Sachlichkeit photography, then one way in to think about Struth’s work is as a transcendence of the apparently contradictory movements of the past.

However, the questions in this study have been limited only to and by the museum works themselves, and it may be worth continuing that approach in considering what Struth’s works ultimately come after.

Painting

In looking at Art Institute of Chicago I, the photograph with which we began, I first remarked on being drawn in by my recognition of Seurat’s painting. In a very literal way, one could say that Struth’s museum works come directly after paintings. After commenting on this recognition, my subsequent observations of this photograph concerned the unusual use of the photographic conventions of focusing and cropping. When considered further, these observations lead both to a discussion of photography and to further references to painting.

The lack of focus in the foreground of the photograph serves to mimic the hazing effect created by Seurat’s pointillism. But while Seurat’s work may be called “painterly,” the same term could not be used to describe a photographic effect. Instead, “blurring,” or “diffusion” may be more apt. These differences in language point to the fact that a photograph and a painting achieve this effect in critically different ways. The term “painterly” implies that the paint is on the surface in separate or ill-connected strokes. In a
photograph, on the other hand, hazing is evidence of the continuity of the surface and the absolute absence of other structural materials such as paint.

A similar distinction can be seen through Struth's unusual cropping. Struth opens up his photograph to the left by providing us with only half of the wall label. Seurat's composition is oriented to the left, with many figures prominently facing in that direction, yet that is not to say that this painting also opens to the left. Even with the possibility that Seurat painted the other side of the bank in Une Baignade, Asnières (1993-4), it would be the division or the boundary between these two parts of the scene which is emphasized, rather than their continuity. This points to another important difference between photography and painting: a photograph not only has a continuous surface which a painting does not, but also it has a special connection to a continuous world. With their juxtaposition, Struth seems to play the two media off of each other, challenging the way one speaks about photography and provoking an awareness of its inherent difference from painting.

So what might Struth be saying or doing here by coming after painting? It is certainly nothing new or interesting to figure out that photography and painting are different. But it could be quite interesting to think that Struth has initiated a discussion of photography through a mimicry of painting, suggesting that photography does not only stand apart from painting, in opposition to painting, but that photography belongs to painting in an integral way. Just as we found that we belonged to Struth's photographs in that we recognized ourselves in them, perhaps Struth here suggests by doubling painting that photography belongs to painting. Thus Struth's museum works could be called photographs, but not simply photographs. In a way, Struth is also making a claim that these works exist as "non-paintings."

A particularly interesting comparison at this point is between Struth's photographs and the Photo-Paintings by Gerhard Richter. Richter, of course, also explores the territory
between painting and photography, but this comparison is additionally rich for the historical connection between the two artists: Richter was Struth’s teacher at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. Richter’s photo-paintings, such as Kitchen Chair [97] from 1965 (Figure 13), are fashioned using a photographic image (sometimes found, sometimes taken for or by Richter) which is mechanically projected onto a canvas. Richter then meticulously paints the image and finally blurs the result by going over the paint with a soft dry brush. These works create an interesting series of denials, with the photograph (historically) assuming the representational role of painting, only to be re-assumed by painting. This final displacement by painting, however, is not quite complete in that its manually blurred surface prohibits its final assumption of the practice of iconic representation.

However, a sort of finality occurs in Richter’s work which does not occur in Struth’s. Richter’s works are always finally and insistently paintings, despite what they may have borrowed from photography’s relationship to the world (in the representational works) or from photography’s surface (in Richter’s Free Abstract Paintings (Figure 14)). While Richter’s works may have detoured through photography, it would seem that their final aim is to reclaim the power of photography for painting (even if that power is somehow questioned or problematized, as evidenced by the perceptual limitations set by the blurring). Struth’s photographs, however, present themselves as following painting and belonging to painting, so that Struth is not using the photograph to privilege one medium over another.

If at the same time that one considers Struth’s museum works to function as non-paintings and as belonging to painting, one also considers the fact that these works provoke a discussion of the terms and elements of photography, then one may not be far from Buchloh’s claim that Struth’s work is a response to the conflicting legacies of modernism. That is, while on the one hand Struth could be understood as responding to a modernist call
to be clear about what a photograph is and does, on the other hand Struth makes the focus of his works paintings. It is as if Struth is claiming that, through the modernist search of each media to find its respective identity, the very aspect of their identity for which they were searching lay outside of it, in the non-it. It is this response to modernism which seems at stake in the Richter/Struth comparison: whereas Richter's Photo-Paintings want to claim a power specifically for their medium, Struth's museum works engage in an internal struggle between media, and it is finally in painting that photography finds itself again.\textsuperscript{26}

**Sculpture**

Struth has now been understood as belonging to a history of photography, as well as belonging to a history of painting. It has also been suggested by Benjamin Buchloh that some of Struth's photographs can be understood as participating in the field of sculpture. In his essay about Struth's urban photographs, Buchloh writes,

> [Struth's proposition] results, to an equal degree, from a critical examination of the contemporary options of painting and sculpture .... If one accepts the shift of a framework of reading for these photographs from (the history of) photography to contemporary artistic practice, a number of perspectives open up on Struth's reflection on the historic and current conditions of the experience of public (architectural) space.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{26}A parallel rather than contrary example of a photography which, in exploring painting, finds itself and its own origins can be found in Thierry de Duve's reading of Jeff Wall's photographs. De Duve writes: "But everything changes if in Wall's works painting is the referent of his photographic practice. One must be perverse enough to push Greenberg's observation to its thorough conclusion. If Wall copes with the paradox of being the painter of modern life by being a photographer, then the paradox closes in on him in a double bind, and he does not escape the 'force of historical development' which has compelled painting to take the route to Modernism. I want to show that this is the case, and that the beautiful, in his work, testifies to this. Knowingly, deliberately, in an explicitly self-critical or self-referential manner, the double bind is taken on. Wall only really copes with being the painter of modern life by being at the same time a modernist photographer." See Thierry de Duve, "The Mainstream and the Crooked Path," in **Jeff Wall**, (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996) p.29.

\textsuperscript{27}Buchloh, "Thomas Struth's Archive," p.10.
Buchloh later describes that sculptural/architectural experience as an ever increasing schism between the public spaces of production and consumption and the actual existential conditions of the producers and consumers in those spaces, which they seem to populate but not inhabit.\textsuperscript{28}

According to Buchloh, this inability of public spaces and "Anonymous Sculptures"\textsuperscript{29} to represent the lives which happen within those spaces is not pictured but "reenacted" by Struth’s photographs.\textsuperscript{30} That is, “rather than mimetically incorporating fragmentation and discontinuity into the representation itself,” Struth’s archive conveys this alienation of public space by being itself internally discontinuous, and without the possibility of ever becoming whole.\textsuperscript{31}

One place Buchloh sees this reenactment of the “difficulties—if not impossibilities—of contemporary public sculpture” in Struth’s urban works work is in the lack of people represented therein.\textsuperscript{32} Buchloh attributes this absence or loss to the inability of the camera’s still images to capture the spatio-temporal processes which form and take place in the represented spaces. The quiet stillness of Struth’s photographs highlight this absence or loss, thus reflecting the equal inadequacy of architectural or sculptural space.

Another inadequacy or impossibility of Struth’s urban photographs lies in the fact that Struth’s archive could never finally be completed or whole. Buchloh states this in the

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p.7.

\textsuperscript{29}"Anonymous Sculptures" was the name of the earliest publication of Bernd and Hilla Becher’s photographs of industrial buildings.

\textsuperscript{30}Buchloh, “Thomas Struth’s Archive,” p.8.

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p.10.

\textsuperscript{32}Ibid.
form of a question:

And one wonders whether the apparent randomness of selection and the potentially unlimited number of images of Struth’s archive, whether the repetitiveness of the venture, its ambition--while clearly unachievable--toward encyclopedic completeness, redeem the photographic project and compensate for the continually renewed experience of the photographer to be barred from access to the representation of the real.33

In the above passage, Buchloh not only points out a way in which Struth’s project bears an inherent impossibility (in its unachievable completeness), he also asks whether the repetition of this impossibility will in some way compensate for what the camera is unable to do. In other words, Buchloh wonders what good it does to simply repeat an impossible situation.

There are two aspects of Buchloh’s claims which are important to this study, the first of which being a relationship between Struth’s photographs and sculpture/architecture, and the second of which being a question about the repetition of impossibilities. These two things are related in that Buchloh claims that Struth’s photographs repeat the failure of sculpture/architecture before it. Before proceeding to consider these claims, it is important to re-center this discussion on the objects and issues specific to our investigation. Buchloh’s essay deals with a different group of photographs than the ones on which this study has focused, and it is necessary to think about his claims specifically in terms of Struth’s museum photographs.

Struth’s photograph of the Pantheon seems like the most obvious candidate for discussion here. Pantheon not only is a photograph of architecture, but also is filled with references to sculpture, such as the photographed mother, father and infant grouping standing near a statue of Mary. A further reference to sculpture is created in the fact that this photograph in particular calls to our attention the great degree to which Struth’s

33Ibid., p.8.
museum works depend on our three-dimensional space in order to function. That is, we are not implicated in this work in exactly the same way we are implicated in the rest of the museum works, unless we stand in a round domed room. This difference highlights the extent to which Struth’s museum photographs not only appropriate, but depend on their surrounding space. In that way the concerns in displaying a Struth seem related to the concerns of showing sculpture.

But despite this relationship between Struth’s museum works and sculpture/architecture, it is not convincing that Struth’s works come after sculpture, which was the original question in this section, or even that Pantheon repeats a sculptural condition, which was the question regarding Buchloh’s claims. When I stood in front of Pantheon, as was described earlier, I did not find myself to be interior to the picture; that is, I was not tempted to think of someone taking a photograph behind me, because here I did not mimic the stance and actions of the photographed people. Thus, saying that Struth’s museum photographs come after or repeat sculpture does not seem quite right.

It has also been noted, however, that the Pantheon is known for being impossible to photograph; this opens up consideration of the second part of Buchloh’s claim. The idea of reenacting (rather than representing) an impossible situation relates not only to Pantheon, but sounds very much like the character of experience and the chain of failures which we discussed around Struth’s museum works and the writing of Georges Bataille. There is, in fact, another text written in response to Bataille’s which is directly related to this question of the repetition of impossibilities. Perhaps that would be the most useful place to move next.
Writing/Derrida

Jacques Derrida read Bataille’s reading of Hegel and wrote about what he found in an essay titled “From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve.”

Derrida, as Bataille had done with Hegel, both praises Bataille and uses Bataille’s text against itself. To do so, Derrida in particular takes up Bataille’s writing of sovereignty and laughter.

In the case of sovereignty, Derrida recognizes its success in that it points to something beyond Hegel’s mastery over negativity, and to a position which Hegel was ultimately unable to achieve. Derrida writes,

Simultaneously more and less a lordship than lordship, sovereignty is totally other. Bataille pulls it out of dialectics. He withdraws it from the horizon of meaning and knowledge.

But Derrida holds that Bataille’s sovereignty does not ultimately triumph over or go beyond Hegel’s position, but only “displaces” it. Derrida points out that to write sovereignty is for it to hold meaning and work within the same system of logic as “absolute knowing” had before it. Just as “utter dismemberment” in being named had slipped into servitude, so goes sovereignty. And Derrida finds that, after all, “in doubling lordship, sovereignty does not escape dialectics.”

The same is true of Bataille’s laughter. As was discussed earlier, Bataille’s claim was that through laughter he dispossesses experience. Derrida recognizes this power of laughter when he writes,


\[ \text{35} \text{Ibid., p.256.} \]

\[ \text{36} \text{Ibid., p.260.} \]
Laughter alone exceeds dialectics and the dialectician: it bursts out only on the basis of an absolute renunciation of meaning, an absolute risking of death...\textsuperscript{37}

However, Derrida also takes seriously Bataille’s claim that anything absolute, anything with power, will always bear within it servitude. That is, when Bataille laughs at the representation of experience, that laughter is itself an experience (of Hegel’s text), and thus is also oriented toward its own loss. In being an experience, laughter cannot dispossess experience, as that would be to dispossess itself. Derrida struggles with how to reveal this, how to convey the negativity or dispossess which laughter ultimately cannot be. Derrida reaches out for something “which must not even be called the negative of laughter for fear of once more being sucked in by Hegel’s discourse.”\textsuperscript{38}

So how can Derrida respond to Bataille? How can he reveal that Bataille failed, just as Hegel had before him, and that his concepts extend outside themselves? Derrida writes:

\begin{quote}
...I mean in a discourse, by means of which philosophy, in completing itself, could both include within itself and anticipate all the figures of its beyond, all the forms and resources of the exterior; and could do so in order to keep those forms and resources close to itself by simply taking hold of their enunciation. Except, perhaps, for a certain laughter. And yet.\textsuperscript{39}
\end{quote}

That is, Derrida writes what Hegel and Bataille had written before him, after which he simply adds, “And yet.” This “and yet” reveals the way in which Bataille’s laughter opens up and overflows the writing of it.

But in writing his “and yet,” Derrida also fails in the same way Bataille had before him. Derrida’s phrase displaces sovereignty, but in using words, it too expects to be displaced.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p.256.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., p.252.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid.
Like Bataille’s, Derrida’s failure is also a success in that, although his words slip into servitude, he has still managed to bring out the relationship that creates meaning and which cannot ever be objectified or fixed into words. This relationship is ungraspable and beyond Understanding; even to say that we “get” Derrida, or that his effort met profit, would be to get it wrong. He invites the reader (me) to reveal his failure and feel the weight of my own words. The reader’s (your) job here, then, if you buy any of this, is to reveal my failure and take your own place in continuing the chain. But where exactly would that get us? And for that matter, if Bataille had already failed, and Hegel before him, what did Derrida hope to achieve in failing yet again?

By intentionally repeating an impossible task, Derrida is doing something markedly different from Bataille. While Bataille may have engaged with Hegel in an argument about experience, what Derrida seems to focus on is discourse or words. Derrida’s argument, it could be said, is about a necessary impossibility in the task of writing. Words, as was seen through Hegel’s text, try to hold meaning which can never be held, nor can they, as was seen through Bataille’s text, give up their meaning which can never be dispossessed. Words, then, are a funny mixture of transparency and opacity and the writer can never face both aspects at the same time.

This impossibility of words drives a chain of writing. What is transparent must have its opacity revealed, so that every written word needs another text. Language, in this view, is less like a vehicle or container that holds meaning than a series of encounters through which meaning is created. Writing is a chain which drives itself, a chain with no beginning and no end. Writing, as a practice, overflows itself. Although he does not say this (and he encourages one to listen not to what is said, but to what is \textit{between} what is said), Derrida connects the character of experience and the practice of writing. To say this another way, Derrida reveals that experience is importantly \textit{textual}.
Once again it is necessary to re-center this discussion on the museum pictures of Thomas Struth. After reading Bataille’s essay, it was noted that Struth’s museum works set up a chain of shifting positions, in which we usurp the photographed subjects and then we imagine ourselves to be usurped. What Derrida’s text makes evident in Struth’s work is that this chain of rotating subjects and objects has no possibility of an end. There is no “furthest back” point at which we could stand to a Struth photograph; there is always another position which is never enough.

As for my own particular experience, the furthest vantage point which I could achieve was in writing my experiences (chapter one of this paper) and then writing after my writing (chapters two through four). But in doing so I only have set up a position for the one who would come after me, and along you came.

One might say, then, that Struth’s museum photographs are textual in structure.\(^{40}\) The central question of this chapter is about which history Struth belongs to, or what exactly Struth comes after. Now it would seem that the answer was all along embedded in the question. In that we understood Struth’s work as being a part of a chain, we had already all along been exploring the practice of writing in which Struth’s work participates. Think of where we recognized Struth, in the texts of Hegel, Bataille and Derrida. Think of where Struth has led us, to this very paragraph.

\(^{40}\)This is somewhat different from Rosalind Krauss’ claim about the writing that occurs in Surrealist photography. The textual system in which Krauss is interested in much like the one presented here by Struth (that is, discourse as created through relationships within a diacritical system, so that each message is an event of which there is no original). However, Krauss sees this happen within the frame of the Surrealist photograph, so that in Man Ray’s Hat (1933), for example, the shifting elements of that discourse (the oscillation between hat and genitalia, penis and vagina) are found within the image of the hat itself. In Struth’s museum photographs, on the other hand, the elements of discourse extend beyond the frame to implicate my own position and my own activity. The relationship of Krauss as a writer to the writing of the Surrealist photographers then is understood differently than is my own writing after Struth. See Rosalind Krauss, “The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism,” in The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985) p.87-118.
In thinking about Struth’s history, Derrida’s text made clear the way in which Thomas Struth’s museum photographs participate in this chain of impossibilities, and provoked an evaluation of Buchloh’s claim about a relationship to sculpture in Struth’s work. It now seems that the important part of Buchloh’s claim was not that Struth’s works were related to sculpture, but that the nature of the relationship which Buchloh noticed is importantly *textual*. That is, what Buchloh noticed in Struth’s urban photographs was a reenactment, or a conscious repetition of the failure of public space. What Buchloh does not go on to say, and which can be discovered through Derrida, is that the very nature of this intentional repetition is textual.

Buchloh also specifically asked whether or not Struth’s repetition of an unachievable task in someway redeems what the photographs are unable to do. One might reply that the repetition of failure not only redeems photographic limitations, but that it actually reveals the way in which photographic meaning is created. That is, the photograph has a special relationship to our world, and it is through this relationship, rather than as a contained representation or bounded object, that the photographs’ meaning comes into being.

There is one final comparison which may be helpful in thinking about Struth’s museum photographs as a kind of writing. Michael Ann Holly published a book in 1996 called *Past Looking*, which aims to bring to light ways in which art works prefigure what is later written about them.41 This seems sufficiently close to Struth’s thesis, as explored here, that paintings prefigure the subjects who write after them, that it may prove interesting to compare Holly’s text to Struth’s.

Holly and Struth both claim that what comes after in some way belongs to what came before, and both claim that this “after” has something to do with writing. However,

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while Struth’s work sets up a chain, Holly’s text engages in a slightly different structure. In the first chapter of *Past Looking*, Holly sets the structural basis for her book. In short, her claim is that the work of art and the historian who later writes about it stand as two poles, subject and object. Both contribute equally to any piece of art historical writing, which Holly positions between these two poles. Or, in her own words, she explores “the ground of common meaning generated by the interaction between visual and verbal discourse.”

42 For a theoretical foundation, she calls on Lacan, Alberti and Gadamer. The following chapters of Holly’s book work through specific examples in which certain works of art “systematize their own historical accounts,” for example, how Renaissance painting pre-figured the writings of the cultural historian Jacob Burkhardt.

43 This dialectical structure is the foundation for Holly’s project, with art or the visual on one side of a partition, and writing or the verbal on the other. Despite her claim that “I want to chip away at the walls that separate the domains of verbal and visual signification, the distinctions between past and present,” the fact that she finds it at all possible to work in only one direction, examining the visual impact on the textual, shows the extent to which she sees the visual past and the verbal present as distinct.


43 Although there is neither time nor space to explore this here, it is important to note how incredibly disparate in structure and content the writings of Gadamer, Alberti and Lacan are, and what an uneasy group they form.

44 Holly, p.110.

She claims that she is trying to “redress the balance by taking a look at the past’s role in the act of construction” of the art historical text,46 but this of course suggests that there is a balance which can be redressed by focusing on the role of one side more than that of the other. The justification for her project comes from her view that the present time is one in which the field of art history has been unsettled by questions about the subjectivity of interpretation put forth by poststructuralist theory. Holly’s response to this unrest might best be exemplified by the question she puts forth in the first chapter:

Yet might it not also be possible that the pervasive poststructuralist activity of defamiliarizing the past could also serve as a prelude to renewing contact in unforeseen ways?47

What initially seemed quite close to Struth’s work now seems to bear within it a crucial difference: while Holly attempts to “redress” and “renew” the stability of the relationship between the visual and the verbal which has recently been upset, Struth would insist that unbalanced and unsettled are necessarily how works of art and writing are. That is, Struth’s work does not reflect an unrest in his time, but enacts the unrest that has been a part of art from the very beginning. What Struth’s work has done, then, is to make explicit the fact that history and art and writing do not interact from separate spheres but are necessarily and ontologically intertwined.


47Ibid., p.4-5.
CHAPTER 5
Acknowledgment

It would somehow be wrong to write a conclusion to a paper about Thomas Struth’s museum photographs. Instead it may be more appropriate here to re-trace some of our steps and think about where Struth’s work leaves us.

This paper began with several expanded excerpts from my journals written during my first encounter with Struth’s work. These entries not only traced the process which Struth sets forth, they also mark my participation in the photographs in a physical way. We moved into chapter two of the paper, motivated by questions about the logical conclusion of Struth’s works, or what these photographs ultimately mean. This initially led to an evaluation of claims that Struth’s photographs issue an institutional critique, or a critique of experience.

What was discovered was that a critique of experience is actually a part of experience itself, rather than something issued from the outside. The experience which Struth’s work puts forth is essentially self-critical and continually extended outside its own bounds. Thus thinking about what these works mean became a matter of how these works mean.

The discovery was that Struth’s photographs chart out what it is for an art work to be meaningful. That is to say, Struth shows us that meaning in art does not exist in any one term, figure, object or media, but in the constantly shifting relationships between terms, figures, objects and media. To say this another way, art is based on a system of relationships and as such is necessarily historical and textual.
And with this I have also come to understand something about what it is to write art history. My role here is not to analyze objects and communicate their meanings, but to continue a chain set forth by G.W.F. Hegel, Georges Bataille, Jacques Derrida, and, of course, Thomas Struth. And where does that leave this master’s thesis of art history? In a very servile place, indeed.
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Figure 4. Thomas Struth, *National Gallery I*
London 1989
Figure 6. Thomas Struth, *Kunsthistorisches Museum III*
Vienna 1989
Figure 7. Thomas Struth, *Pantheon*
Rome 1990
Figure 10. Thomas Struth, *Bernhardstrasse*
Leipzig 1991
Figure 11. Thomas Struth, *Via del Parco Margherita*
Naples 1988
Figure 13. Gerhard Richter, *Kitchen Chair* [97]
Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, 1965