

Nineteenth century social realist thought translated itself into a figurative-realistic painting and sculpture of which **Constantin Meunier** was one of the greatest exponents in Belgium. The Meunier exhibition that takes place from April to September 2005 in Leuven under the title "Meunier, a dialogue. Contemporary art meets Constantin Meunier in Leuven" is open to the grand public but also has a strong research aspect [organisation City Museum in cooperation with K.U.Leuven]. Through the confrontation between Meunier's work and contemporary visual art this exhibition has the ambition to discover how new forms of social realism are present in the current art field. It shows that photography today has taken over several key functions from the traditional artistic disciplines. This is particularly the case for the work of the American artist and critic **Allan Sekula**. His body of work is widely considered the most important international representative of what can be labelled as critical realism. In 2005 Sekula exhibits on a regular basis in Leuven, next to other artists such as Sven 't Jolle and Vincent Meessen.

The **symposium** attempts to create a dialogue between artistic researchers and theorists. One of its most central topics will be the possibility to (re)invent a socio-critical art in a globalised visual culture. Do the visual arts still have the potential to critically question the socio-political reality of today? Allan Sekula fulfills a key role within this discussion. He and other speakers will search a middle course in this dialogue.

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Entrance Free

Please register by sending an e-mail to:

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'Constantin Meunier. A dialogue with Allan Sekula' . (September 2005)

English translation of the Constantin Meunier exhibition catalogue, edited by Hilde Van Gelder.
Volume 2 of the LGC - Series

Information on how to order at:

www.lievengevaertcentre.be



Critical Realism in Contemporary Art: around Allan Sekula's photography

Symposium

Friday September 2nd, 2005
Saturday September 3rd, 2005
Sunday September 4th, 2005

Meunier, a Dialogue is organized by Erfgoedcel Leuven, The City Museum Vander Kelen-Mertens and the Lieven Gevaert Research Centre for Photography and Visual Studies in cooperation with Amarant, CinemaZed, Cultuurcentrum Leuven, de factor Y (social artistic atelier, Leuven), FotoMuseum Antwerp, Katholieke Hogeschool Limburg, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Koninklijke Leuvense Gidsenbond, STUK Arts Centre and Vormingplus. With the support of the Flemish Community, Klara and ClearChannel.



STUK Arts Centre - Naamsestraat 96 - 3000 Leuven

Programme

Conference chairs:

Saturday: **Hilde Van Gelder** (K.U.Leuven)

Sunday: **Jan Baetens** (K.U.Leuven)

Friday September 2nd

_18.00 World première of Allan Sekula's new film *The Lottery of the Sea* [2005], accompanied by a keynote lecture by the artist

Saturday September 3rd

_09.30 - 10.00 Ludo Melis (Dean, Faculty of Arts, K.U.Leuven)

Opening Speech

_10.00 - 10.45 Steven Jacobs (University of Ghent / Sint-Lukas Brussels)

Postindustrial Topographics: Places of Labour in Contemporary Urban Photography

break

_11.15 - 12.00 Maarten Vanvolsem (K.U.Leuven)

Photography: Seeing Time

_12.00 - 12.45 Liesbeth Decan (K.U.Leuven / Sint-Lukas Brussels)

"Painting through Photography". Critical reflections on the work of Dirk Braeckman, Luc Tuymans and Anne-Mie van Kerckhoven in the early 1990s

lunch-hour break

_14.15 - 15.00 David Green (University of Brighton)

Suspended Judgement: Photography in the Time of the Archive

_15.00 - 16.30 William J.T. Mitchell - Lieven Gevaert Chair Speaker (University of Chicago)

Realism and the Digital Image

_17.30 Official Opening of the exhibition of new photowork by Allan Sekula, STUK

by Denise Vandervoort (Alderman of Culture of the City of Leuven), Hilde Van Gelder (K.U.Leuven) and Allan Sekula

_18.00 Reception

Sunday September 4th

_09.30 - 10.15 Inge Henneman (Photomuseum Antwerp - Editor in chief Fotomuseum Magazine)

Beyond compassion. How to escape the victim frame in social documentary photography today. Some notes on the making of a multi-disciplinary project on the situation of refugees in Belgium

_10.15 - 11.00 Wouter Davidts (University of Ghent)

Depicting the Contemporary Artist's Studio

break

_11.30 - 12.15 Catharina Manchanda (CUNY)

Against Affirmative Culture: René Block's Appropriation of Capitalist Realism

_12.15 - 13.00 Steve Edwards (Open University)

Horizontal Montage and the Subjects of Labour

lunch-hour break

_14.15 - 15.30 Plenary Session 1 (Moderator: Hilde Van Gelder, K.U.Leuven)

Debate on the historical impact of social realism on contemporary art. Discussants: Allan Sekula, Steve Edwards, Inge Henneman, Steven Jacobs, Eva Brems (University of Ghent) and Frits Gierstberg (Photomuseum Rotterdam)

_16.00 - 17.15 Plenary Session 2 (Moderator: Jan Baetens, K.U.Leuven)

Debate on the theoretical aspects of critical realism today. Discussants: William J.T. Mitchell, David Green, Wouter Davidts, Catharina Manchanda, Liesbeth Decan and Maarten Vanvolsem

_17.15 - 17.30 Concluding remarks by Hilde Van Gelder

