
History of Photography

OSHER 362-001

Dates: Wednesdays: September 2 – October 7

Time: 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Location: Online via Zoom

Instructor: Jonathan Duncan jonathan@alpinevisionmedia.net

Course Description:

Photography is synonymous with the rise of the modern era. A technology that emerged out of Europe in the 1830s, the photograph quickly became a defining vehicle for self-expression. It brought about a democratization of the arts, in that we all became historians to our own experience. This course explores the changes photography brought to our relationship with history, authenticity, and our understanding of time. It will also provide an art historical perspective of the different movements, personalities, and styles that have defined the medium from its early roots to the rise of digital technology and the age of social media.

Recommended reading:

On Photography, by Susan Sontag

Course Overview:

- Week 1:** Introduction: a tour through photographic history; moments caught in time.
- Week 2:** The Democratization of the Art: the social impact of everyone being their own image makers. The optics and chemistry of the first cameras.
- Week 3:** Windows to History: documentary photography's influence on the reporting of the news and the nature and experience of truth.

- Week 4:** Photography as Art: photography's influence on surrealism, cubism, Bauhaus, and the development of modern art.
- Week 5:** Photography and Social Change: the influence of photography in various social movements, from civil rights, to the environmental movement, climate change, and Black Lives Matter.
- Week 6:** Conclusion: exploring how photography has come to define the modern era.