



Andy Warhol,
Cheryl Tiegs, 1984,
Polaroid®



Versace Dress,
Back View,
El Mirage, 1990,
Herb Ritts,
gelatin silver print

more FotoFocus

Laurel Nakadate's "Polaroids from *Stay the Same Never Change*" — examining women and the male gaze — will be at Art Academy of Cincinnati Oct. 4-31. She will give the FotoFocus lecture at the CAM Oct. 24.

Santeri Tuori, a contemporary Finnish photographer, documented the same forested spot on a remote island, with still camera and video, for five years. The result, *The Forest*, is at University of Cincinnati's Phillip M. Meyers Jr. Memorial Gallery through October.

Cincinnati's Anthony Luensman received an NEA grant to mount *Taint*, featuring a series of animated portraits projected onto surfaces of Weston Gallery, Sept. 28-Dec. 29.

Michael Lowe, a noted dealer of contemporary art, presents work from his collection of 1960s-'70s-era Conceptual photography, *Using Photography*, at his downtown gallery from Oct. 19-27. Artists include Vito Acconci, Marina Abramovic and Christian Boltanski.

At the YWCA Women's Gallery Oct. 5-Jan. 10, *Landscape of the Mind: Metaphor, Archetype and Symbol: 1971-2012* presents Jungian-influenced examinations of urban life by Judi Parks, Jane Alden Stevens' studies of apple-growing in Japan and images of rural Ohio that Nancy Rexroth originally took in the 1970s for her celebrated *Iowa* project.

FotoFocus long has been a goal of its founder (and former *CityBeat* owner) Thomas Schiff, himself a photographer and longtime arts patron. He put up the seed money to get it started in 2010. "It's been very heartwarming to see all the organizations in Cincinnati come together and embrace FotoFocus," Schiff said. "Photography has always been a prominent force in the art world. People are starting to recognize that more and more."

To this point, the non-profit corporation has spent about \$450,000. Participating institutions curate and budget their own shows, while FotoFocus provides support.

While many of the offerings are free, FotoFocus has three levels of Passports that will allow priority access to numerous special events. They are priced at \$25, \$75 and \$250, with information available online.

Meanwhile, even as this event captures the city's attention during October, FotoFocus as an organization has plans for 2014. "In this region, we feel that we will present a biennial festival that people can look forward to and that photographers, curators and artists can anticipate and plan for every two years," says Mary Ellen Goeke, FotoFocus' director. "It will have a wide range of venues here in Cincinnati and in the region."

The aim is for FotoFocus to become a tradition.

FALL FOCUS

FotoFocus set to make its mark on Cincinnati's arts scene

BY STEVEN ROSEN

FotoFocus, which gets fully underway in October, is one of the most ambitious visual-arts events ever attempted in Greater Cincinnati — maybe *the* most ambitious.

Some 75 venues — including ones in Dayton, Springfield and Athens — will feature exhibits throughout October (and often beyond) devoted to photography/lens-based-art. The intent is to show the medium's progression during the 20th century into today's cutting-edge ideas and subject matter.

Under FotoFocus' aegis, shows with marquee names are coming to town — Andy Warhol, Herb Ritts, Doug and Mike Starn, Edward Steichen and more. The exhibits start to debut in September, but the official kick-off is Oct. 5, when an evening carnival-themed party occurs in the alleys of downtown's Backstage Theater District.

The immediate purpose of FotoFocus is — as the name implies — to focus Cincinnati's attention on photography as an inexhaustibly inventive and diverse form of art. To that end, it's a festival. But the greater purpose is to increase public awareness of and interest in contemporary art, as well as to foster collaboration and progressivism among arts organizations.

"The people involved in this have different interests (besides photography," says James Crump, Cincinnati Art Museum's (CAM) chief curator as well as FotoFocus' co-chair (with Raphaela Platow, Contemporary Art Center's director). "Photography has been successful in larger and smaller markets in growing audiences for the arts. It doesn't intimidate those who might be unfamiliar with contemporary art. It's the most ubiquitous art form of our time. Because we're all walking around with iPhones, we're all involved with photography, whether as image makers or consumers."

The spaces connected with FotoFocus include not only major museums, non-profit and commercial art venues, but also such non-tradi-

tional locales as Mount Adams' old Holy Cross Church, Cincinnati Ballet Center and even the Fountain Square Jumbotron. At Fountain Square, a split-screen image will pair photos of Cincinnati taken from the 1930s to the 1950s by Paul Briol with contemporary shots of the same sites.

Two key shows are sponsored by the CAM. *Herb Ritts: L.A. Style*, an exhibit curated for the J. Paul Getty Museum, will review the work of the late photographer whose fashion, celebrity and nude imagery has so captured the public imagination. It's up Oct. 6-Dec. 30. At the same time, CAM is sponsoring Doug and Mike Starn's *Gravity of Light* at Holy Cross Church. It's billed as an immersive installation, using an open arc light for illumination, in which monumental-scale photos play a role.

Two other museum shows also are eagerly awaited. Taft Museum of Art's survey of Edward Steichen's glamour photography of the Roaring 1920s and '30s, *Star Power*, will be up Oct. 12-Jan. 27. And Contemporary Art Center's (CAC) long-planned *Image Machine: Andy Warhol and Photography*, Sept. 22-Jan. 20, looks at how the Pop artist used photographs as source material as well as documentation of his demi-monde life.

And in an artistic cross-pollination, Grammy-winning Jazz musician Bill Frisell and 858 Quartet will perform *Musical Portraits from Heber Springs: Bill Frisell's Disfarmer Project*, at 8 p.m. on Oct. 8 at the Emery Theatre. (The work is inspired by the photographs of the late Mike Disfarmer, who took portraits of rural Arkansas neighbors.)

Beyond those, there is so much going on — and so much that sounds fascinating — that no single newspaper article can do it all justice. Fortunately, a 60-page guide will appear as an insert in *The New York Times* on Sept. 23 and in *CityBeat* on Sept. 26. And the already active site www.fotofocuscincinnati.org will serve as an ongoing center for information. Also, expect much more *CityBeat* coverage in print and on the website as FotoFocus gets underway.