

Welcome to the first episode of ECCE the Other Photography Course. I put together this course in 2020, a year that many will experience as special and that will probably go down in history as a turning point. Due to the pandemic, we are often homebound. Exhibitions, courses and meetings are less easily organized physically. But the internet also makes this course possible.

Each episode we look at the work of two photographers, one from history and one from the present. We also think about photography in a reflection on how we take, view and use photos. Then there is a photography activity assignment. So the motto of this course is INSPIRATION - REFLECTION - ACTION. Let's start with looking for inspiration.

200 years of photography in 200 photographers

You can tell the history of photography in many different ways. For example from technology, art history or social history. I sometimes tell this 200-year history with the help of 200 photos from 200 photographers. In this course I discuss two photographers each episode. One from the history and one leading photographer of today.

Joseph Nicéphore Niépce (1765-1833)



We start at the very beginning. With a photo made by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce around 1826: View from the window in Le Gras. Nicéphore Niépce was primarily an inventor. His inventions include the iris diaphragm, the camera bellows, but also the velocipede with saddle and the fuel injection system. But let's stick with his photography.

The oldest surviving photo, now almost 200 years old, was taken with a substance he discovered. This substance is soluble in turpentine, but no longer after a long exposure. The substance, called Syrian asphalt, hardens under the influence of light and thereby turns white. If this material is applied to a dark background, such as a tin plate, we get a mirrored positive image.

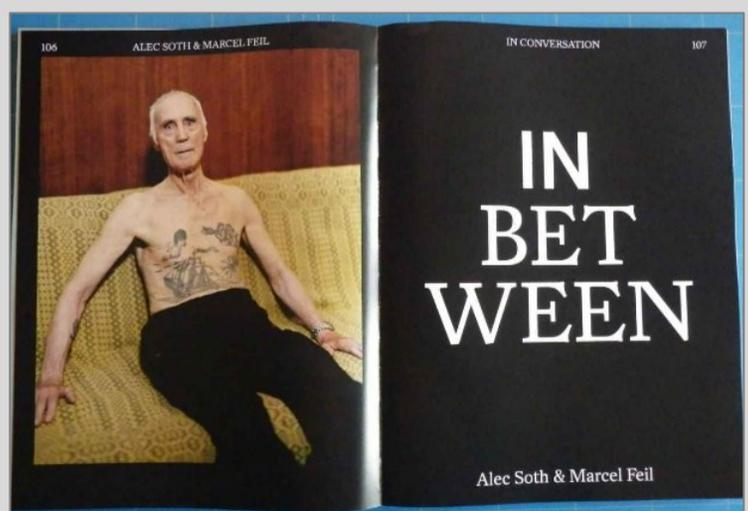
1 Point de vue du Gras, Nicéphore Niépce

He called his process "heliography," which means written with sunlight. Photography as a word still had to be invented. The image is mirrored because he used a lens in which the light passed through a focal point so that left to right and top to bottom rotate. Put the photo upright and you will see a mirrored image. Incidentally, a positive anti-reflective image of the same size could be obtained with rotogravure technique. Remarkable about the image is the lighting. It took many hours, so that the objects on both the left and right of the image were lit by the sun.

You can read and see more on [wikipedia](#) or [Nicéphore Niépce House Photo Museum](#).

Alec Soth (1969-)

Alec Soth is considered one of the most important contemporary photographers of the American social and geographic landscape. His work is a continuation of the on-the-road photography of Walker Evans, Robert Frank and Stephen Shore. Characteristic in his work are melancholy and stillness. His subject is often the lower social class, but his work is not intended to be documentary. Much more than society, his work is about himself and his own desire for travel and adventure. In an interview in NRC he said about this: "I follow an intuitive path through the world and look for a kind of deep, inspired humanity in my portraits. I let myself be guided by my feelings, not by an ideology or a political agenda."



2 FOAM Magazine #57, p106-107



Ik maak portretten van échte mensen, met échte levens'

INTERVIEW ALEC SOTH

Door onze mede-waarder
Stamen van Dijk

Hi was egeelijk een heet-
hoofdegeest. Niemand
had er ooit gevraagd.
Toen de Amerikaanse fotograaf Alec Soth naar
Aankomst van de zanddicht-
lij, iedereen wel natuurlijk weten wat ik
van Trump vind. „Geen woord. Ik was
verbaasd, hoe kan je er ooit naar vragen.
Ik heb vaak de mening Amerika te verdel-
gen als ik in Europa ben. Het is zo veel
meer dan het cliché van Walmart en Mc-
Donald's. Ik heb veel sympathie met het
land, ik hou van de mensen. Maar dat per-
soneel heeft sta at nu op de tocht. Het ik

Soth is groek uit met een '90 als Soth's
wereld al zijn hiele leven in de Midwest, in
Minnesota, en wordt gezien als een van
de belangrijkste hedendaagse chromo-
sopeten van Amerika's sociale en geografi-
sche landschap. Zijn werk is geworteld in
de traditie van de van die eend-fotografe
maak we die lessen van Walker Evans,
Robert Frank en Stephen Shore en weer-
spiegelde de wandelstijl die zo groots
wordt getiteld in Amerikaanse film-
toer en film, van *Harold Lloyd's* *It Happened One Night*
en *Easy Rider* en *Kurosawa's On the Road*.

Droomer:
In de tentoonstelling zijn vier van zijn fo-
touses en bijvoegebracht. Ze zijn het resul-
taat van de intensieve reizen die Soth

schijnen en creëert in een sfeer van me-
dianiteit en wereldlig.
Het maakt hem een dichter met beel-
den, we lener dan een documentaire fo-
tograaf voorrang, en de serie-voorzien-
kelijk is de en uitgebreid in hoeverre me-
werde hore een futuristisch op bij foto-
persoonlijk Magazine.
In zijn volgende serie, *Allegory* (2006),
van plek voor spectaculaire zelfportretten
en goetkope huwelijksportretten, richtte hij
zijn lens op stellen die in het kinische ge-
decor van de wester willen hopen op een
getuigenis van hun samen- en ontbren-
nende die portretten met foto's van ordi-
naire mensen en naar hartverwende ma-
ke foto's-brieven. Als ik een fijn apparte-
ment en hebben een een foto's die

Ik gebruik
mensen voor
mijn kunst.
Daar heb ik
gevoeld
insette mee

It is striking for a photographer that Alec explains a lot about his photography. On youtube and his website littlebrownmushroom you will find his videos and podcasts. In FOAM magazine #57 (fall 2020) there is an interview in which he explains his vision.

The header of an article (Dutch) in nrc.nl of 23 februari 2017 gets to the point of his photography: 'I make portraits of real people with real lives.'

You can read (and above all see) more on his [website alecsoth.com](http://websitealecsoth.com) or foam.org about his exposition / *know how furiously your heart is beating* in Fotomuseum Amsterdam Foam.

3 NRC Handelsblad, 23 februari 2017

Reflection: Two creative types: the conceptual and the experimental. Which one do you recognize in yourself?

Photography is a combination of technique and creativity. In this course I will pay much attention to the creative side of photography. So I start with the results of a study by David W. Galenson (professor at the University of Chicago). Based on extensive research, he came to the conclusion that there are two different creative types. He speaks of old masters versus young geniuses as the two life cycles of artistic creativity.

He describes the young geniuses as conceptual whoppers who break through in their 20s with innovative work. Think of Picasso, Einstein, Vermeer, Van Gogh, Orson Welles or Bill Gates.

Perhaps this is a reason for the art world's preoccupation with young talent. Besides the annual oversupply of graduates from the academies. It is often the question whether this talent really lasts. When I look at the talent numbers of photo magazines from about ten years ago, I see a lot of names that we didn't hear from later.

Galenson contrasts this with the old masters he calls the experimental researchers. Examples are Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Cézanne, Jackson Pollock, Alfred Hitchcock and Mark Twain. The experimental researchers work with trial and error and gradually arrive at their great works at a later age.

He saw this distinction not only in the visual arts, but also in music, business, science and literature. It is a general descriptive theory supported by a lot of evidence. Galenson published this theory after years of research at the age of 55, placing him directly in the category of experimental researchers. Which category would you fall into? And what are you going to do with it today? Read more about his research at davidgalenson.com.

Action: The view from here

The fact that we have to stay indoors during a lock down does not mean that we cannot take pictures of the outside world. The assignment here is: photograph your view from your window. Follow the strategy of looking-thinking-doing.

Look: go to your window, take a look. Do the same for other windows in your house. Look at the window frame that forms the frame for your image. Name what you see: nature, garden, street, building, traffic, weather, light, shadow.

Think: What can you show in a photo? Will it be a landscape photo, a street photo or an intimate portrait of a backyard in the rain? Or do you look out on a roof terrace such as Nicéphore Niépce? How much do you show of the window, frame or interior? Are you making a series about the day and night? What do you focus on (frame or view)?

Do: It doesn't matter which camera you shoot with. A tripod always helps for a series from the same position. Open your window, ventilation is good against the corona. And perfect pictures do not exist.

Are you still looking for inspiration? Take a look at the website of [Andrew Amundsen](#).

Send your photo (series) to: ecce@nemus.nl for a review. A few tips: make sure your files are no more than 2MB in total. You can also share via a cloud service such as one drive, google drive or dropbox.



Observations

"Beauty is a human right."

- Maxime Februari

Is brown a color? Not to be found in a rainbow or color circle. It is orange with a little black in it. Actually, I have always thought orange was a poo color.

