

Theory Lecture: The Real, Surreal, Neoreal and Hyperreal.

The Real:

- A term used in different senses within art history.
- The style represents everyday subjects.
- Examples are **Rembrandt** and **Monet**.



Edward hopper paints the everyday without 'over aesthetisation' in his Morning Sun, 1952 series.

Photorealism:

- Photorealism evolved from the US in the 1900's.
- **Photorealism** is a genre of art that encompasses painting, drawing and other graphic media, in which an artist studies a photograph and then attempts to reproduce the image as realistically as possible in another medium.



Realism

-Realism in the arts is the attempt to represent subject matter truthfully, without artificiality and avoiding artistic conventions, implausible, exotic and supernatural elements.



Thomas Ruff's series 'Typologies' features passport style images that are very objective. He stated "I don't believe in the psychologizing portrait photography that my colleagues do, trying to capture the character with a lot of light and shade," he says. "That's absolutely suspect to me. I can only show the surface. Whatever goes beyond that is more or less chance." The collection features 60 frontal, identically framed photographs of expressionless men and women blown up to a monumental size.

Although these images may seem mundane, Thomas pushes his simple idea theoretically by placing the images into a gallery context, which we would usually not expect.

Fashion Realism

Corrine Day's "Raw" series capturing the raw beauty of Kate Moss highlights realism within fashion photography. The images were seen to be natural and true to the models personality or identity. The images depicted the so called 'heroin-chic' trend and grunge aesthetic of that era. In this collection she did not retouch the images, revealing Kate Moss's natural beauty.

She stated 'Photography is getting as close as you can to the real life, showing us things we don't normally see' these are peoples most intimate moments,' she said.



Nan Goldin



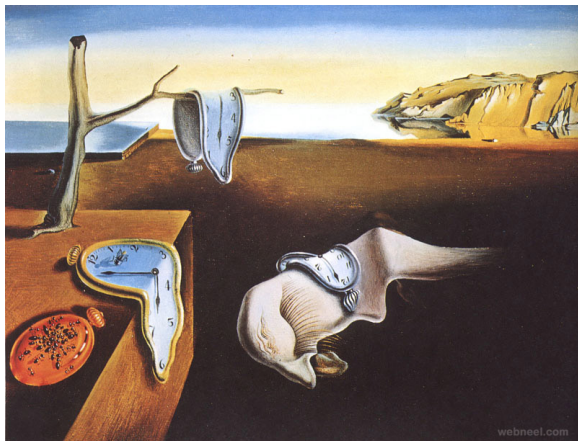
Nan Goldin's approach to fashion documentary photography also aims to capture the 'every day' real approach. Her use of flash creates a snap aesthetic which is revealing the truth.

Theory:

The every day amateur snap is seen as the most honest and real of all documents. Social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram are a prime examples of the typical snap shots we take daily to capture the real.

Surrealism

Surrealism allows for real creativity within an image, and it was derived from paintings as they were as it was easier to portray than within a photograph in order for it to look convincing. **Salvador Dali** is one of the most famous surrealists, he uses random objects such as hands, clocks, torsos and eyes to create symbolisms. Other examples include **Man Ray**, **Angus McBean** and **Juul Kraijer**.



Freud's Theory- 'The Uncanny'- unsettlingly cases of things that appear to be alive are dead and things that are dead which should be alive. This theory has clear parallels within photography as it represents this idea through its reproducing of the subject which once it is capture it can be seen as dead of the 'event'.

Fetishism

Fetishism is a form of sexual behaviour in which gratification is linked to an abnormal degree to a particular object, activity, part of the body, etc.

An object becomes excessively valued because it stands for something else. This term is seen within lots of fashion advertising campaigns in order to grab the viewers attention to buy the product. For example, stiletto heels and fast cars can be seen as a symbol for power and sexual gratification.



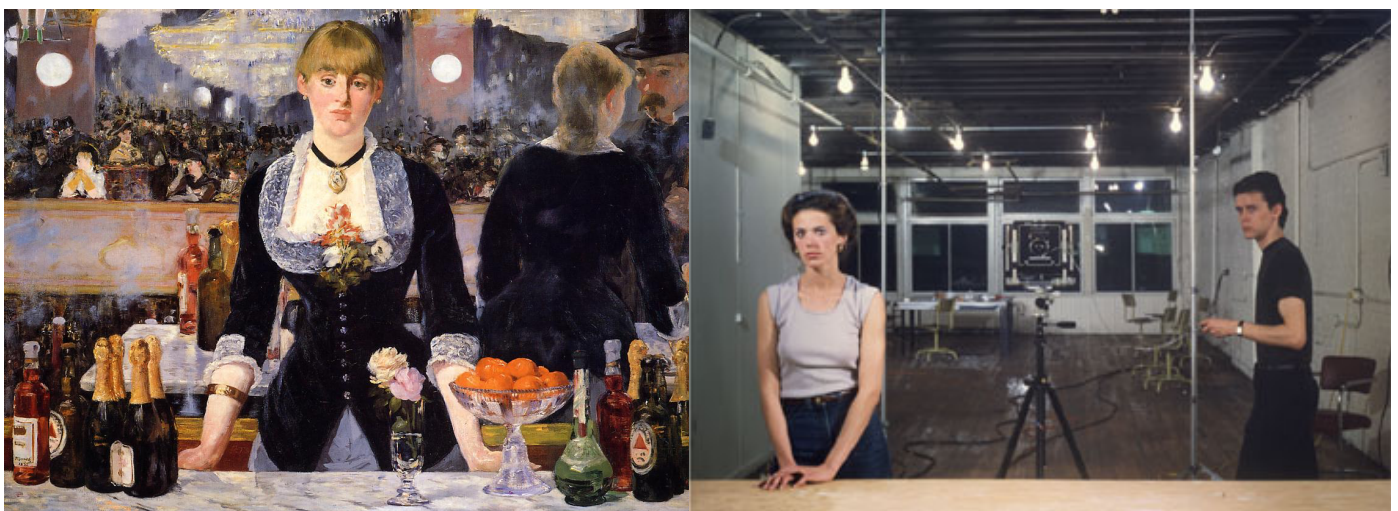
Neorealism

Neorealism is characterised by a general atmosphere of authenticity. André Bazin, a French film theorist and critic, argued that neorealism portrays: truth, naturalness, authenticity, and is a cinema of duration. The necessary characteristics of neo-realism in film include:^[2]

- a definite social context;
- a sense of historical actuality and immediacy;
- political commitment to progressive social change;
- authentic on-location shooting as opposed to the artificial studio;
- a rejection of classical Hollywood acting styles; extensive use of non-professional actors as much as possible;
- a documentary style of cinematography.

Neo-realism is constructed documentary practice that looks real but actually isn't; it is all about recreating. **Jeff Wall's** photographs are often carefully staged like a scene in a film, with full control of all details; he often borrows ideas or themes from classical painters like **Edouard Manet**. Wall's themes are usually social and political – such as racism, gender and class conflicts etc.

Edouard Manet's painting 'A Bar at the Folies-Bergères' inspired **Jeff Wall's** photograph 'Picture for Women', (see below). If you compare the two you can see the complex viewpoints are both present amongst the reflections; then there's also the figures reflected in the mirror that are similar and the gaze both females have.



Hypereality

Hyperreality is seen as a condition in which what is real and what is fiction are seamlessly blended together so that there is no clear distinction between where one ends and the other begins.

Theorist **Jean Baudrillard** is mostly concerned with the way technological progress affects social change. He believes that the world is becoming a 'copy world'.

Examples:

Disney Land visitors start to feel like they are in a fantasy world by the surroundings.



Thomas Dumand's image of an office room pushes boundaries as he creates the mini set from paper, which may be seen as 'hyperreal'.

Andreas Gursky's image 'Pyongyang I, 2007.' is also hyper real as he has digitally manipulated the image on Photoshop by copying the figures to create a hyper real outcome. It makes the image visually exciting with a eye catching aesthetic.

