

ICP

FAMILY GUIDE

Capa in Color

What Is a Photograph?

Exhibitions on view
Jan 31, 2014 – May 4, 2014

LOOK AROUND. First you will enter the exhibition *Capa in Color*. Robert Capa was a photojournalist renowned for his black-and-white war photography. This is the first exhibition to show the range of his color photographs.

FIND the photograph *[British soldiers watching a boxing match on a troop ship from England to North Africa], 1943.*

In the vitrine near the photograph, you will find the black-and-white version of this scene that was printed in a magazine.

COMPARE THEM. What are the differences? Is one more effective than the other? Why and in what ways?



Color film had recently become available to photojournalists at the time Capa made this photograph in 1943, but few chose to use it. Capa took the risk of trying something new. **DISCUSS:** Have you ever taken a risk and tried something new? Share examples, along with their benefits and drawbacks.

Capa carried two cameras with him—one with color film and the other with black-and-white—and chose which camera to use depending on his subject. **TALK** about why you think he chose color film for this photograph.

Photos Above: Robert Capa, *[British soldiers watching a boxing match on a troop ship from England to North Africa], 1943.* © Robert Capa/International Center of Photography/Magnum Photos. Color has been removed from the bottom image.

Some of the reasons for Capa's choice of color versus black-and-white film were technical. Color film had a slower processing time, which made it less than ideal for time-sensitive news. It was also slower to capture images and therefore more difficult to use when photographing moving subjects. In addition, it was more expensive to print.

WALK AROUND the exhibition together and pretend that you are editors of a magazine. Robert Capa has just presented you with these color photographs. Because of the time and expense of printing in color, select only three photos.

DISCUSS which three you would choose. In your discussion, try using photographic terms such as:

lighting, contrast, composition, cropping, focus, point of view.

Also, talk about Capa's use of color—how does it enhance the photographs?

Below, SKETCH the three photos you have selected and next to each drawing, write a note to Capa and your fellow editors explaining why you chose it. Continue to use the photographic terms above in your explanation.



Gerhard Richter, *16.3.03*, 2003

CONTINUE downstairs, where you will find the exhibition *What Is a Photograph?*. This exhibition presents photographers who have experimented with and challenged the definition of photography from the 1970s to the present.

FIND Gerhard Richter's *16.3.03* (2003).

TELL your family what you notice about it. The photographs in this series came about by chance. One day Richter noticed that the photograph he was using as a basis for his painting had drips of paint on it. He then decided to use

this technique in a series of works. He began to use the paint left on his squeegee after a day of painting to make these "overpainted photographs." They are often casual snapshots from his travels or of his family.

LOOK at the photograph again and discuss the artist's choices. What did Richter paint over? What did he leave exposed?

Richter often explores the idea of chance in his artwork. **DISCUSS:** In this artwork, what did Richter leave to chance? Why would an artist be willing to give up control

in making a work of art? What are the benefits and drawbacks of this technique of art making?

Return to the cover of this guide, and **EXPERIMENT** with chance versus control. Hold your pencil above the color version of Capa's photograph and, without looking, draw on top of it with any technique you'd like: dots, scribbles, etc. Then, draw on the black-and-white version, but this time allow yourself to look.

CONSIDER the results. What are the differences between the "over-drawn" photographs? How did the element of chance introduced by not being able to see change the process and product? Which do you like better and why?

Now LOOK at Kate Steciw's image.

LIST what you see aloud, and have someone you are with record your words below.



Kate Steciw, *Armchair. Background. Basic. Beauty. Bed. Bedside. Bread. Breakfast. Bright. Cereal. Closeup. Cloth. Color. Contemporary. Couch. Crust. Day. Décor. Fox. Frame. Grain. Ingredient. Interior. Invitation. Irregular. Juice. Life. Living. Loaf. Luxury. Macro. Sofa. Speed. Style. Sweet. Texture.* 2013

Above is the title of Steciw's piece. **COMPARE** your words to those in the artist's list. How many words do you have in common? Of the words you did not list, can you see them in the work of art?

Steciw's artworks are inspired by Internet searches that lead her from one image to the next. She then collages images using Photoshop to create abstract digital compositions, and adds 3D objects and materials.

Steciw's work uses associative logic, or mental connections between ideas or objects. Try it yourself!

DISCUSS: Have you ever been led on a winding Internet search from one subject to another? Where did you start and where did you end up?

WRITE one word inspired by an artwork in this gallery in the first box. Then, ask someone for another word that comes to mind, and add it the second box. Keep doing this until all boxes are filled.

Find other images that inspire you and enjoy exploring the rest of the exhibitions!



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