

# BEAUTY CULTURE



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## EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

ANNENBERG SPACE  
FOR PHOTOGRAPHY







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## THE ANNENBERG SPACE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

# HISTORY • EXHIBITS • DESIGN

**HISTORY** The Annenberg Space for Photography opened to the public on March 27, 2009. It is the first solely photographic cultural destination in the Los Angeles area. The Photography Space is an initiative of the Annenberg Foundation and its board of directors. Its creation builds upon the Foundation's long history of supporting visual arts.



**EXHIBITS** The Annenberg Space for Photography does not maintain a permanent collection of photographs; instead, exhibitions change every four to six months. The content of each show varies and appeals to a wide variety of audiences.

**DESIGN** The interior of the Space is influenced by the mechanics of a camera and its lens. The central, circular Digital Gallery is contained within the square building much as a convex lens is contained within a camera. The Digital Gallery's ceiling features an iris-like design reminiscent of the aperture of a lens. The aperture design also enhances the Gallery's acoustics.

The Print Gallery curves around the Digital Gallery, representing the way film scrolls within a camera. The curvature of the ceiling line in the Print Gallery mimics the design of a film canister.



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The gray color palette used in the Space was inspired by the standard gray scale card used by photographers for the quality control of colors on printed images and color matching. The beaded glass wall behind the entrance reception desk represents photographic film that has celluloid coating with haloid crystals.



## THE ANNENBERG SPACE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

# FEATURES WITHIN THE SPACE

### FEATURES WITHIN THE SPACE

**DIGITAL GALLERY** Seamless 7' x 14' glass screens and ultra high-definition, rear-projection imaging systems are used to display photography with stunning clarity and saturation. The screens provide 4k resolution that exceeds the level offered by Blu-Ray. In addition to providing professional photographers a long sought after level of image quality, it also allows for the display of thousands of images in a comparatively small location. The technology in use in the Digital Gallery was created expressly for the Photography Space. In addition to showing images from the exhibiting photographers, the Digital Gallery also screens short documentary films created to accompany the print exhibits.

**MICROSOFT SURFACE TABLES** Microsoft Surface is a 30-inch display in a table-like form that's easy for individuals or small groups to interact with in a way that feels familiar, just like in the real world. The two Microsoft Surface Tables allow visitors to experience their own creativity, using actual exhibit photographs and additional photographs from the featured artists. It's a camera-based vision system that lets users create digital content and move information between objects with their hands.

**AUDIO TOUR** Audio tours are available via QR codes on display throughout the exhibit. Guests are encouraged to use smartphones and headphones to access additional information about images and photographers. For those who have not brought smartphones, a few iPod Touch devices are available for checkout at the front desk.



## AGE RECOMMENDATION • OVERVIEW

BEAUTY  
CULTURE

**AGE RECOMMENDATION** BEAUTY **CULTURE** is recommended for ages 14 and older. Some of the photographs in BEAUTY CULTURE include graphic images, such as explicit medical procedures and nudity, and may not be appropriate for all ages.

**OVERVIEW** BEAUTY **CULTURE** is a photographic exploration of how feminine beauty is defined, challenged and revered in modern society.

Featuring works from iconic photographers such as Albert Watson, Bert Stern, Herb Ritts, Melvin Sokolsky, Lauren Greenfield and Tyen, BEAUTY **CULTURE** encourages a social dialogue about the allure and mystique of the pursuit of female beauty, as well as the cult-like glorification and multi-billion dollar industries that surround it.

Daring, provocative and at times controversial, the exhibition presents diverse viewpoints on beauty as it has evolved through the 20th and 21st centuries. The exhibition compellingly illustrates the power of the still image in shaping cultural ideals and expectations of feminine beauty – and photography’s undeniable influence on conceptions of the Self.

Through different lenses focused on the body beautiful, BEAUTY **CULTURE** examines both traditional and unconventional definitions of beauty, challenging stereotypes of gender, race and age. It also explores the cost (in its multiple meanings) of beauty.

The exhibition is accompanied by a short documentary film directed by acclaimed photographer and award-winning documentarian Lauren Greenfield. The digital film expands upon the print exhibit’s themes, and features interviews with well-known photographers, models, historians and beauty experts who guide visitors on a fascinating photographic exploration of the culture – and cult – of beauty.



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© LAUREN GREENFIELD



THE CURRENT EXHIBIT : BEAUTY CULTURE

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE FEATURED ARTISTS

BEAUTY  
CULTURE



### LAUREN GREENFIELD

Photographer/filmmaker Lauren Greenfield is renowned for her remarkable insights into youth culture, body image and the effects of consumerism. Author of the groundbreaking books *Fast Forward*, *Girl Culture* and *Thin*, her work is widely published and in many museum collections including the Getty, LACMA, SFMOMA and the Art Institute of Chicago. *American PHOTO* named Greenfield one of the 25 most influential photographers of our time. Greenfield's Emmy-nominated documentary film *Thin* provided an unprecedented window into the psychology of eating disorders. It premiered at Sundance and won the Best Documentary Award at the London Film Festival. Greenfield was commissioned by the Annenberg Foundation to direct a short film, as part of the BEAUTY **CULTURE** exhibition.



### MELVIN SOKOLSKY

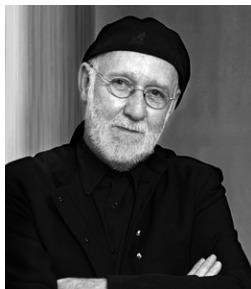
Largely self-taught, Melvin Sokolsky's brief but intense career as a photographer made an important contribution to what is considered the golden age of magazine publishing (1950s - 1970s). Sokolsky was a frequent contributor to *Harper's Bazaar*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Esquire*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times* and *McCall's* (for which he photographed a complete one-man issue in October 1962). After nearly ten years at the top of his profession, Sokolsky translated his work into film and commercials. Sokolsky is the recipient of every major television commercial award, including the coveted Directors Guild nomination and 25 Clio Awards. In 1972, Sokolsky was nominated for an Academy Award for a computerized zoom lens that he designed.



### TYEN

A photographer, makeup design director and master of color, Tyen has worked for the past 30 years with the House of Dior to create some of its most enduring images and products. He moved to Paris at 16. He began his career doing stage makeup for the Paris Opéra, but he was soon discovered by the magazine world, creating looks for photographers such as Richard Avedon, Irving Penn and Bill King. Within a year, Tyen revealed his talents as a photographer, first for his own campaigns, then for established fashion magazines: *Vogue*, *L'Uomo Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Elle*, and for prestigious designers such as Versace, Valentino, Issey Miyake and Gianfranco Ferré, among others.





### ALBERT WATSON

Albert Watson has made his mark as one of the world's most successful fashion and commercial photographers, while creating his own art along the way. His striking images, many of them iconic portraits of celebrities, have appeared on more than 100 covers of *Vogue* and been featured in countless other publications. Watson also has shot campaigns for many major corporations, such as Prada, Revlon and Chanel, and he has photographed dozens of Hollywood movie posters. All the while, Watson has spent his time working on personal projects, creating stunning images from his travels and interests, from Marrakesh to Las Vegas. The photo industry bible *Photo District News* named the Scotsman one of the 20 most influential photographers of all time.





**VISUAL ARTS CONTENT STANDARDS FOR CALIFORNIA**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/vamain.asp>

**1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION**

Students respond to works of art, objects in nature, events and the environment. They use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

- Analyze the use of the elements of art and the principles of design as they relate to meaning in video, film or electronic media.

**3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

- Describe how photography plays a role in reflecting life.
- Examine a work of art created to make a social comment or protest social conditions.
- Identify and describe trends in the visual arts and discuss how the issues of time, place and cultural influence are reflected in selected works of art.
- Identify contemporary artists worldwide who have achieved regional, national or international recognition and discuss ways in which their work reflects, plays a role in and influences present-day culture.

**4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING**

Students analyze, assess and derive meaning from works of art according to the elements of art, the principles of design and aesthetic qualities.

- Identify and describe ways in which culture is being reflected in current works of art.
- Articulate how personal beliefs, cultural traditions and current social and political contexts influence the interpretation of the meaning or message in a work of art.
- Select an artist's work and, using appropriate vocabulary of art, explain its compositional and communicative qualities.

**5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS**

Students apply what is learned in the visual arts to other art forms and subject areas and to careers.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the effects of visual communication media (e.g., television, music videos, film, Internet) on all aspects of society.





## NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/strands>

### THEME 1 CULTURE

- Human beings create, learn, share and adapt to culture.
- By recognizing various cultural perspectives, people acquire the potential to foster more positive relations and interactions with diverse people within our own nation and other nations.
- Cultures are dynamic and change over time.

### THEME 2 TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

- Studying the past makes it possible for us to understand the human story across time.
- Historians use a variety of sources to support their interpretations of the history of societies, cultures and humankind.

### THEME 4 INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTITY

- Social, cultural and national norms influence individual identity.
- Complex and varied interactions among individuals, groups, cultures and nations contribute to the dynamic nature of personal identity.

### THEME 8 SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

- Science and its practical application, technology, have had a major influence on social and cultural change, and on the ways people interact with the world.
- The world is media saturated and technologically dependent. How media is created and received depends on cultural contexts.



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# SUGGESTED QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

for online viewing of Exhibit Films and Print Galleries



© ALBERT WATSON

## VIDEO GALLERY

### BEAUTY CULTURE Trailer

- Pause the video at 15 seconds to have short discussion -
  - o What does the title BEAUTY CULTURE suggest to you?
  - o The opening moments of the trailer show both a young beauty pageant contestant and an older model. Based on this, what do you think this exhibit is going to be about?
- "It is a business, and people are in it because they are going to make money." Explain how people make money in the beauty industry. Who should be making the most money? Who should be making the least money?
- Explain the meaning of these quotes:
  - o "Every street is a runway."
  - o "Don't you want it to be that the way you look every day is the epitome of beauty?"

Which quote reflects your attitude about beauty and fashion? How about your attitude about beauty and fashion for the opposite sex?

- "People tend to think that we live in a beauty culture now. And what I explain is that we've always lived in a beauty culture. Every civilization has revered beauty, pursued it at enormous cost and suffered the tragic and comic consequences of that pursuit." Can you give some examples of both tragic and comic consequences in the pursuit of beauty? How is beauty perceived in other cultures?

### Lauren Greenfield Video - *"In deconstructing the pressures of the world around us, it starts to take their power away."*

- Lauren Greenfield comes at photography from a social commentary perspective and doesn't consider herself an artist. Explain the difference.
- Our perception of beauty is influenced by the culture around us. Describe the culture in which you live. Include your family, friends, school and neighborhood environment. How is your perception of beauty influenced by your culture? Who or what influences you the most?
- "I was able to look at the grit beneath the glamour; the kind of pain behind what it takes to have this beautiful façade." What does façade mean to you? Is our outward appearance a façade? Why?
- What role should parents have when it comes to the beauty and fashion choices of their children? Is it your experience that they make matters better or worse? Give examples of both.

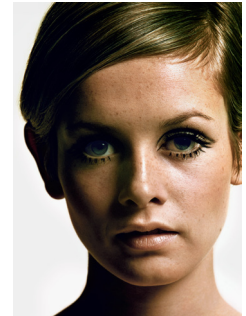


© LAUREN GREENFIELD

# SUGGESTED QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

## Melvin Sokolsky Video - *"Ideas are not digital."*

- Melvin Sokolsky said, "We're living in a tool world now. The tools are more important than anything...but without the idea – what good is the tool?" Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
- **Activity:** Melvin Sokolsky took photographs of the model Twiggy surrounded by people wearing Twiggy masks to illustrate how much people wanted to look like Twiggy. Create your own photo using the image of a popular personality today. You can either take a photo of many people wearing the same mask or use photo-editing software to create the same effect. The setting of the photograph should have significance to the person you choose, either in an obvious or incongruent way.



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## Tyen Video - *"Beauty is in my blood..."*

- "I think color is a beautiful language, a silent language," said Tyen. Describe your feelings about the color(s) Tyen uses on the models in these pictures. Explain how the effect the image has on you would change if different colors were used.

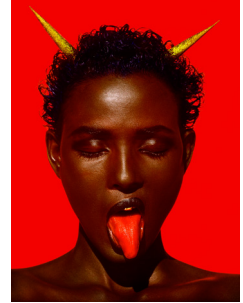


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## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### Albert Watson Video - "...a love affair with photography"

- Albert Watson became interested in enriching his fashion photography by including artistic elements and focusing on pure imagery. Describe this photo using:
  - o Elements of art: color, line, texture, shape
  - o Principles of design: balance, emphasis, patterns, movement



© ALBERT WATSON

## EXHIBIT VIDEO TOUR

### Activity

1. After viewing the video tour clips, choose a theme that interests you.
2. Explain your interest in the theme you chose.
3. Click on the Exhibit Print Gallery. View the images and select 4 – 6 images that fit into your theme.
4. Explain why these images illustrate your theme.
5. Or, create your own theme. Select images and explain how they fit into your theme.