

Operant Subjectivity

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The Taste Test: Applying Q Methodology to Aesthetic Preference

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Abstract: *The Taste Test* examined if people's aesthetic preferences translate from one medium to another – specifically, if they prefer similar genres of fine-art photography as they do in painting. Twenty-one graduate students in communication completed two separate Q sorts in which they ranked 40 paintings and 40 photographs from “most unappealing” to “most appealing.” The Q sorts were structured according to eight distinct types of art. A brief survey of demographic information and open-ended questions about artistic training and preferences was also used to analyze the data.

Introduction

It took Thomas Hart Benton a year and a half to plan and execute his mural *Social History of the State of Missouri* (1936), which he was commissioned to paint in the House lounge of Missouri's State Capitol (Kammen, 2006, p. 136). The painting, which Benton considered his finest work, attracted mixed reviews. Though the Missouri governor appreciated the mural, others were less sanguine; as a state engineer told a local reporter, “I wouldn't hang a Benton on my shithouse wall” (Kammen, 2006, p. 137).

History is littered with such instances of divisive cultural artifacts. Thus it may come as no surprise that social scientists have attempted to explain aesthetic preference from sundry standpoints, among them viewers' religious orientation (van Eijck, 2012); socioeconomic, cultural, gender, and age differences (van Eijck 2012 p. 394); personality type (Wiersema, van der Schalk, & van Kleef, 2012); even nation of origin and ethnicity, which Hyllegard and Morgado (2001) found to significantly influence tourists' preferences for different colors and designs of Hawaiian shirts. Others have examined qualities intrinsic to the art itself, like visual complexity (Forsythe, Nadal, Sheehy, Cela-Conde, & Sawey, 2011) and composition (Furnham & Rao, 2002; McManus, Cheema, & Stoker, 1993), while experimental psychologists like Berlyne (1974) have looked at behavioral and psychophysiological responses to different kinds of art. In a similar vein, some have looked at the way people relate to, and make meaning of, visual art. For instance, Wolfe and Novak (2012) found that a person's *initial* affinity for sculpture is derived from the artwork's perceived utility; if viewers can understand what the piece might be ‘used for,’ they tend to report liking it (though a sculpture's “obscure” use also led to deep engagement with the piece) (p. 36). All told, multiple elements can influence a person's aesthetic preferences.

Some research into aesthetic preferences examines how and why taste changes. Children, for instance, prefer realistic and representational art over abstraction, and

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tend to focus on the subjects depicted, rather than the art's style (Gardner 1970; Freeman, 1995; Liben, 2003; Parsons 1987; Sharples, Davison, Thomas, & Rudman 2003, as cited by Szechter & Liben, 2007). Yet, over short time periods, people's aesthetic preferences are mostly stable, suggesting that there is something constant, something inside ourselves, that guides (or possibly *is*) taste. For instance, studies on patients with Alzheimer's disease found that, in two separate sessions that took place two weeks apart, participants expressed the same artistic judgments even though they did not remember the paintings (Halpern et al., 2008). In this study, the control group – people without dementia – did not change their aesthetic preferences either.

But is aesthetic preference sufficiently stable such that it transfers from one genre to another? Is there something within or about us, our ways of seeing, expressed in our preference for different media? Such questions about aesthetic preferences – whether it crosses genre lines – have not been so well explored. In this paper, we apply Q methodology, the scientific study of subjectivity, to see if people's aesthetic preferences are the same for painting as they are for fine-art photography. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first study of aesthetic preferences to use Q methodology for analysis of aesthetic taste.

We begin with brief histories of Western painting, from the Renaissance on, and photography, to demonstrate their (historically) different subject matter. We then suggest that the genres' different histories and applications may inspire viewers to hold competing expectations of painting and photography. We move on to discuss how socialization and prior artistic training may influence how a person sees and judges fine art, and in fact compensate for the genres' different histories and contemporary cultural positions. We end with the research questions to be explored.

Literature Review

Painting and Photography Since the Renaissance

“Patron: One who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with indolence, and is paid with flattery.”

Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*, as quoted in Garber, 2008, p. 6.

Historically, patrons comprised monarchs and the church, commissioned painting, architecture, and sacramental objects, even art education and visual art competitions (Johns 1988) as a way of signaling the patron's largesse and commitment to the arts. Patronage also influenced paintings' themes and content. Most notably, Church patronage drove paintings' content such that, until about the 1700s, artworks reflected religious themes, icons, and even ecclesiastical architecture (van Eijck, 2012, p. 396). In addition, artists often included images of their patrons in paintings or stained glass, as in Jan van Eyck's *Rolin Madonna*, which shows patron Nicholas Rohin kneeling before the Virgin Mary (Garber, 2008, p. 3). In these ways, the Church largely drove who made art and what art portrayed.

Beginning in the 18th century, as David Solkin has discussed, painting began to take on value in the market, providing visual artists the opportunity to participate in the economy independent of their patrons (as cited in Garber, 2008, p. 7). Concurrent social and industrial shifts and the emergence of the intelligentsia, merchant, and middle classes further troubled traditional patronage as these groups became patrons and began collecting work by living artists (Garber, 2008, p. 10). In these ways, patronage passed from the church to the private collector, and today most contemporary art is

made by artists independent of “religious institutions” (Howes, 2007, as cited in Van Eijck 2012, p. 396).

Liberation from the religious patron has freed artists to make secular work, thematically and visually, that is as likely to engage “material values” as spiritual ones (Dubin, 1992, p. 80). Such contemporary paintings as Chris Ofili’s painting *Holy Virgin Mary* (1996), painted partly from elephant dung, directly confront the Church’s authority and doctrine. Such works, some of which functioned as lightning rods for criticism during the culture wars of the 1980s, reveal how widely painting has diverged from its financial reliance on the church, demonstrating artists’ freedom to “recast” traditional religious images, and to “alter old symbols or substitute new ones” (Dubin, 1992, p. 80; pp. 100-101).

Photography

Although philosophers and artists as early as Aristotle imagined a device like a camera – a mechanical recording of the physical world – it wasn’t until 1839, when Louis Daguerre shared his invention with the French monarchy, that the medium of photography was born (Hirsch, 2009). (Notably, a number of other inventors, including William Henry Talbot, were developing similar techniques at the same time.) From its beginnings, the medium had an entirely different relationship to patronage, the church, and wealth than painting. Perhaps most important, photography was immediately available to the masses in ways that painting never was (Hirsch 2009 p. 27). By the 1840s, daguerreotype studios, where people could commission portraits of themselves for only \$1, had opened throughout the United States; these studios were so popular, they “spread like crabgrass” (Hirsch, 2009, p. 27; Lee, 2007, p. 2). Further developments of chemistry and printing processes paved the way for the *carte de visite*, a paper-mounted celebrity portrait that could be reproduced in mass quantities (Hirsch, 2009, pp. 62-63). Celebrities, including Abraham Lincoln, Queen Victoria, and Victor Hugo, typically *made* money off of their images – unlike painting’s patrons, who paid artists to paint a single, unique portrait (Hirsch, 2009, p. 64-65). Photography was also widely accessible to practitioners. Since Kodak rolled out its camera in the 1890s – “You press the button and we do the rest,” its ads proclaimed – camera producers and schools have promoted the medium by highlighting how easy it is to take a picture (Schwartz, 1986, p. 165). Even current ads for smartphone cameras bear this out, emphasizing how easy it is to point-and-shoot and edit photos with the touch of a finger (Apple, 2013).

In its early decades photography was limited by extant chemical and scientific technologies in ways that affected its content. Most notably, color photography did not emerge on a commercially-viable scale until 1904 (though hand-painted black-and-white photographs were popular before then) (Hirsch, 2009, p. 143). Well into the 1920s, color film – expensive to work with – was considered second-rate compared with paint (van Gelder & Westgeest, 2011, p. 50).¹ Even the medium’s practitioners differed considerably from painters; many photographers were self-taught, with backgrounds in chemistry and science, not art; still others, amateurs like officers in the British Army, embraced the practice as “a gentlemanly pursuit” (Thomas, 1977, p. 31). This scientific orientation was borne out by the subject matter and chief concerns that described photography’s first few decades, which included an emphasis on capturing a person’s “likeness,” and on exploratory and landscape photographs that surveyed new

¹ In fact, it wasn’t until after the ’60s and ’70s that fine-art photographers would make work using color; until then color photography belonged to advertising, not fine art (Hirsch, 2009, p. 360).

territories or “exotic” locales like the Middle East (Thomas, 1977, p. 12). In the latter case, photography functioned as a tool of imperialism and colonialism.

Notably, unlike painting, photography did not gain widespread acceptance as a fine art until the 1960s, when Museum of Modern Art photography curator John Szarkowski embarked on an ambitious program of photo-collecting and exhibiting (Britten & Smith, 2010, p. 176). The academy was equally slow to examine photography as an aspect of art history; when in 1942 scholars asked the College Art Association to amend its art historical curriculum, they left out photography and its history from their recommendations (Lee, 2007, p.8).

All told, photography evolved in a milieu in which neither the church nor the monarchy influenced content or form nearly as dramatically as they did painting. Where photography was a medium of the masses, painting was the medium of, by, and for the most rarefied segments of society; each form’s cultural heritage is reflected in the medium’s themes and content, particularly before and during the 19th century.

Socialization and Previous Artistic Training

Socialization from parents, school, and culture has also been examined for its impact on aesthetic preference (Szechter & Liben 2007). But the influence of artistic training on taste is less conclusive. Jeffers (1997) found that, when comparing students and teachers with and without art training, formal study of art could not predict aesthetic preferences. By contrast, studies of the *process* of looking at paintings found that viewers with art training look at different pictorial elements than those without any training (Nodine, Locher, & Krupinski, 1993, p. 226). Specifically, art-trained participants focus more on composition than on specific elements within the picture (Nodine et al., 1993, pp. 226-227). In this case, the authors conclude that training teaches people how to see and appreciate composition, which translates into more-robust aesthetic appreciation (Nodine et al., 1993, p. 227). Other researchers suggest that fine-art training in *looking* can help viewers to see photography as fine art, not simply as a representation of “visual facts” (Fey & Bashore, 2000, p. 26).

Synthesis

Painting and photography have long held different positions in relation to mass culture and cultural consumption. Long-regarded as a scientific, descriptive, or newsmaker’s tool, it was only in the 1960s that photography began to command recognition as a fine art. Even still, photography remains more accessible to the average consumer than painting, given the ubiquity and affordability of point-and-shoot cameras and camera phones. Taken together, these components contribute to an “underlying bias that photographs are mechanical, instantaneous recordings that represent the truth” (Fey & Bashore, 2000, p. 26). Although they can be manipulated (and have been, even in the mass media) photographs are still largely regarded as “indexical:” they are records and representations of something real; an “item had to be there for an indexical representation of it to exist” (Olin, 2012: 10, 21). Yet, socialization – and art training in particular – may overcome the very different perspectives that viewers expect from the two media, equipping viewers to “see” and assess the two media with the same critical eye.

Research Question: Does a person’s aesthetic preferences translate from one medium to another?

Method

Q Methodology

Psychologist and physicist William Stephenson developed Q methodology in the 1930s, applying it to research questions in psychology. In its traditional form, participants rank-order statements of opinion along a continuum that stretches from “most appealing” to “most unappealing,” or “most important” to “most unimportant,” and so on. This approach enables participants to evaluate and interpret the opinions that they are sorting, as well as the scale along which they are conducting these sorts, according to their own subjectivity (Brown, 1980, p. 5). In this way, Q methodology reveals how each *individual’s* subjectivity operates, laying bare each person’s unique point of view. It is, unlike R methodology, precisely intended to study subjectivity, not objectivity (Brown, 1980; Giannoulis, Botetzagias, & Skanavis, 2010, p. 436).

Q sets – the actual materials participants rank – are built from the concourse, the full universe of possible materials that can form the sort. The Q set can be random or designed according to an underlying structure. For this project, we used the taxonomy of artistic styles previously employed by van Eijck (2012), discussed below.

Participants rank the Q sets along a continuum. Here, they ranked the paintings separately from the photographs along a continuum that ranged from -4, most unappealing, to +4, most appealing. The researcher then correlates and factor-analyzes the Q sorts, sometimes rotating the factors in order to better “see” how they differ from one another. This analysis reveals people who have ranked their Q sorts similarly, as they will group on the same factor.

Overall, Q methodology is especially useful for research questions seeking to understand, in-depth, how people think (Giannoulis, Botetzagias, & Skanavis, 2010, p. 437). As such, in recent years, Q methodology has been applied to studies of humor; photo stills from *Seinfeld* (Rhoads, 2012); and consumers’ responses to different levels of advertising’s sexual content (Sawang, 2010).

Structure of Q Set

A taxonomy of nine art styles, used in previous studies on aesthetic preferences, provided structure for the Q set (Van Eijck, 2012; Berghman and Van Eijck, 2009). This taxonomy consists of post-impressionism, Flemish primitives, Surrealism, Baroque portraits, Abstract Expressionism, 19th-century landscapes, conceptual art, late Renaissance/Baroque painting, and abstract art (Van Eijck, 2012, p. 400). Preferences for these styles have previously been factor analyzed and shown to align along two factors: so-called traditional style, which includes Baroque portraits, late-Renaissance/Baroque paintings, Flemish primitives, 19th century landscapes, and Post-Impressionism, and a modern style, which includes abstract art, Abstract Expressionism, Surrealism, and conceptual art (Van Eijck, 2012, p. 400).

For the painting Q sort, we used eight of the nine groups, leaving out conceptual art because few conceptual artworks (Duchamp’s mustached *Mona Lisa* aside) are paintings. Five examples from each style were selected, for a Q set of 40. The concourse was selected from the collections available on the Web sites of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Guggenheim, the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Kunstmuseum Basel, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Musée D’Orsay, the Tate, the Van Gogh Museum, and catalogues from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium. When possible, paintings by the same artists identified by Van Eijck (2012) were used in the Q set.

We used this same taxonomy to guide the selection of the photography Q set, though photography's shorter history required amendments to Van Eijck's (2012) vision. Nineteenth-century landscapes, abstract art, Surrealism, and (to some degree) post-Impressionism have their equivalents in photography. But for late-Renaissance/Baroque work and Baroque portraits, which date from before photography's invention, we selected portraits from photography's early years with an eye toward pictures visually and thematically similar to their painting counterparts.

For the Flemish primitives, we selected color portraits by contemporary photographers Alec Soth and Rineke Dijkstra, whose work evokes the bold colors and, in some instances, religious iconography similar Flemish primitives. In addition, a substitution was made for Abstract Expressionism, an art movement that did not take place in photography as it did in painting. In its place we selected street photography. Street photography, popularized by Weegee beginning in the 1930s and, later, Robert Frank, Helen Levitt, and more recently Paul Graham, is an art style uniquely suited to the photograph – much as large-scale, gestural, textured Abstract Expressionist canvases are uniquely suited to painting. “Moments – decisive and otherwise,” “that didn't exist earlier or later in time... are what street photography really is all about” (Holland, 1978). In other words, street photography is essentially about, and utterly dependent for its success upon, capturing a precise moment in time; and time is the elemental difference between photography and painting. In addition, Robert Frank's book, *The Americans*, the definitive book of street photography, was published in 1959. It consisted of photos he began taking in 1955 (Cole, 2009), around the same time that Abstract Expressionism got its legs; though visually quite different, the movements are the products of similar cultural moments. Finally, as Van Eijck (2012) showed, factor analysis showed Abstract Expressionism to align on the “modern style” of artworks; street photography is also very modern, given its thematic and visual preoccupations.

For the photography Q set, we chose five examples from each of the eight movements, for a total sample of 40. A balance of black and white and color photographs was sought. The concourse included images selected from the Web sites of *Aperture*, the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, the George Eastman House, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and artists' personal Web sites. A full list of these selections titles, dates, descriptions, as well as the artists who created them is Appendix A (painting) and Appendix B (photography).

A convenience, non-probability sample of 21 graduate students in communication was recruited at a large northeastern university. Participants included students in a class on Q methodology. They consisted of 11 males and 10 female participants, aged 21-46, with a median age of 26. Twelve self-identified as artists (11 photographers and one musician).

Small-group and individual Q sessions took place in August 2012. Participants sorted 40 images of paintings, and 40 images and photographs, from (-4) “most unappealing” to (+4) “most appealing.” The order of the Q sorts was randomized, so that half of the participants first sorted the paintings, and half first sorted the photographs. They were not told that one Q set consisted of paintings while the other consisted of photographs.

Participants were also asked to provide comments about the photos and paintings they ranked +4 and +3, and -4 and -3. In addition to collecting demographic data, we also asked four questions: Are you an artist? If Yes, What is your medium? What kind of art is in your home? And, Have you taken art classes? If so, what kind?

Results

The Q sorts were correlated and factor analyzed using PQMethod, a DOS-based program downloaded from the Internet (Shmolck & Atkinson, 2012). After a centroid analysis, Varimax rotation was used to rotate the factors. Four factors emerged from the analysis of the 21 painting Q sorts, and four factors emerged from the 21 photography Q sorts.

Painting

The four distinct factors are described below. A correlation matrix was created to assess the degree to which the factors correlated with one another. The strongest correlation for the painting factors is between factors B and C, which correlate negatively at $-.65$ (the strongest positive correlation is between A and C, at $.55$). The weakest correlation is between factors A and B, which correlate negatively at $-.08$. The correlation between factors B and C and between A and C are higher than we would like. However, we settled on this four-factor solution in order to understand the subtle and important differences among factors.

Factor A. 19th-century landscape The paintings that this factor ranked +4 and +3 were primarily 19th-century landscape paintings showing trees and mountain. The Post-Impressionists, also from the 19th century, were highly ranked as well; paintings by Cezanne, Paul Gauguin, and Seurat all ranked in +3. By contrast, surrealism and the Flemish Primitives ranked quite negatively. This factor showed a neutral to positive relationship to abstraction, with the majority of the abstract works (but not Abstract Expressionist ones) ranking 0 or +1. Six participants loaded significantly onto this factor.

Factor B. Surreal abstraction Highly-ranked on this factor were abstract and surreal artworks. Surreal work by Yves Tanguy and Salvador Dalí, paintings by the Abstract Expressionists, and abstractions by Piet Mondrian and Vasily Kandinsky held the +4 and +3 positions. In fact, not one of the abstract, surrealistic, or Abstract Expressionist works ranked negatively. By contrast, the older paintings, and the Flemish primitives and Baroque portraits in particular, were negatively ranked. Interestingly, this factor reads as a rough chronological survey of the paintings included in the Q set, from oldest (most negative) to most-recent (most positive). Seven participants loaded significantly on this factor, with one negative loading.

Factor C. The Narrative This factor highly ranked depictions of figures from the nineteenth century and earlier that seemed to suggest a story. For example, Hendrick Terbrugghen's portrait of a musician, which shows a man looking off to the side and gesturing with one hand, his mouth open as if in mid-speech, ranked at +4; Caravaggio's *Musicians*, which shows young men lazily strumming a lute, did as well. The Flemish Primitive painting of a weeping woman and Paul Gauguin's *Two Tahitian Women* (1899) came in at +3. This factor ranked abstract, Abstract Expressionist, and surrealistic work negatively, even those that depicted images that were somewhat figurative. Although highly-correlated with Factor A (at $.55$), this factor clearly preferred figures over landscapes. Two participants loaded significantly onto this factor.

Factor D. Dark Figures This factor highly ranked paintings of figures rendered in dark colors from across all of the categories, and also highly ranked surrealist paintings like Dalí's *Accommodations of Desire* and Magritte's *Time Transfixed*. Many of these works also suggested dark or subversive subject matter, such as Toulouse-Lautrec's *At the Moulin Rouge*, the Flemish Primitive of a woman weeping, and Barbieri's *Two Flayed Men and Skeletons*, ca. 1540-154. Like Factor C, Abstract Expressionism and abstraction were both unpopular with this factor, which ranked Baziot's *The Flesh Eaters*,

Mondrian, Alechinsky's *Gong*, and Mondrian's grid-like *Composition* at -4. Although this factor resembles factor C, it is distinguished by its favorable ranking of Surrealist art. Eight participants loaded significantly; one loaded negatively.

Four participants loaded significantly onto more than one factor. Two participants did not load significantly onto any factor. Table 1 shows participants' factor loadings.

TABLE 1. Factor Loadings - Painting Q Sorts

| Participant | Factor | | | |
|-------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | A 19 th Century Landscape | B Surreal Abstraction | C Narrative | D Dark Figures |
| 1 | 29 | 64 | -20 | 35 |
| 2 | -09 | -09 | 12 | 53 |
| 3 | 09 | -29 | 38 | 41 |
| 4 | -13 | 89 | -15 | 15 |
| 5 | 67 | 33 | 51 | -02 |
| 6 | 47 | 42 | -14 | -43 |
| 7 | -12 | 54 | -19 | 53 |
| 8 | 29 | 08 | -01 | 08 |
| 9 | 46 | -08 | 16 | 26 |
| 10 | 37 | 57 | -16 | -29 |
| 11 | -12 | 92 | -04 | -30 |
| 12 | 31 | -41 | 74 | 29 |
| 13 | 15 | -03 | 11 | 56 |
| 14 | 33 | 34 | -12 | 45 |
| 15 | 73 | 09 | 02 | -02 |
| 16 | 67 | 08 | 02 | -06 |
| 17 | 24 | 13 | -01 | 53 |
| 18 | 76 | -14 | 26 | 02 |
| 19 | 27 | 31 | -12 | 11 |
| 20 | -11 | 04 | 01 | 54 |
| 21 | 21 | -01 | 05 | 23 |

Significant loadings are highlighted in bold; decimals to two places removed

Photography

The four distinct factors are described below. A correlation matrix was created to assess the degree to which the factors correlated with one another. The strongest correlation for the photography factors is between factors C and D, which correlate at .41. The weakest correlation for the photography factors is between factors A and B, which correlate at .05.

Factor A. The Decisive Moment This factor ranked all of the street photography images at +4 and +3 (with the exception of a photograph by Helen Levitt showing a man petting a cat). By contrast, this factor ranked abstract photographs and surrealistic photographs most negatively, such as Lucas Blalock's *Our Man Weschler* (2010) and Harry Callahan's *Weeds in Snow*, Detroit (1943), which ranked -4. All told, this factor favors the most photojournalistic, and realistic, type of work. Nine participants loaded significantly.

Factor B. Atmospheric Optics This factor favored sepia-colored photographs that included surreal images, artful portraits of women, and a night photograph of a cityscape. Rather than depict a decisive moment, these photographs are primarily

atmospheric; they tell us more about atmosphere than about specific points in time. These photographs are artful, evocative, almost romantic. By contrast, photojournalistic images ranked negatively. Five participants loaded significantly; one negative loading.

Factor C. Isolationist Portraits of a single person, as well as stark, deserted landscapes, ranked most highly in this factor, earning it the name “isolationist.” Jeff Wall’s photograph *The Flooded Grave* (1998-2000) earned a +4 ranking; it is a lonely-seeming photograph of an open grave filled with sea-stars and anemone. Richard Avedon’s 1975 portrait of John Szarkowski and Alec Soth’s portrait *Charles, Vasa, Minnesota* (2002) also came in at +4. Another quality that earned this factor its name is that portraits showing two or more people ranked most negatively. Specifically, older photographic processes that show what seem like families seated together, such as the untitled portrait (ca. 1850) of three children and Fallon Horne’s *Youth and Age* (1855) which ranked at -4. Six participants loaded significantly onto this factor.

Factor D. Manifest Destiny This factor highly ranked 19th-century photographs of rugged landscapes and the American west, when the camera was a tool used to document the richness of frontiers. Other images of landscapes from the 19th century were also favored, such as Stieglitz’s urban scene *Reflections, Night – New York* (1897) and Genthe’s *The Street of the Gamblers*, ca. 1899. Like Factor A, abstract photography was negatively ranked, with abstract photographs by Harry Callahan and Lucas Blalock filling the slots at -4. Unlike Factor A, however, this factor was neutral on street photography. And although at .41 this factor correlated highly with Factor C, a preference for landscape – natural and urban – emerged far above the portraits of single people that Factor D preferred.

Four participants produced confounded Q sorts (loading significantly on more than one factor). One participant didn’t load onto any factor. Those who failed to load in the painting sort are different people than the person who failed to load in the photography sort. Table 2 shows participants’ factor loadings.

TABLE 2. Factor Loadings - Photography Q Sorts

| Participant | A The Decisive Moment | B Atmospheric Optics | C Isolationist | D Manifest Destiny |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 01 | 36 | 15 | 48 |
| 2 | 18 | 63 | 18 | 27 |
| 3 | 14 | 13 | 55 | 72 |
| 4 | -01 | 64 | -06 | -06 |
| 5 | 27 | .20 | 09 | 63 |
| 6 | 69 | 06 | 35 | -04 |
| 7 | 48 | -22 | 44 | 15 |
| 8 | 42 | 17 | -11 | 46 |
| 9 | 48 | -07 | 50 | 29 |
| 10 | 07 | 05 | 67 | -16 |
| 11 | 28 | 07 | 51 | 23 |
| 12 | 59 | 10 | -08 | 04 |
| 13 | 06 | 54 | 02 | -07 |

| Participant | A The Decisive Moment | B Atmospheric Optics | C Isolationist | D Manifest Destiny |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 14 | 03 | 06 | 54 | 18 |
| 15 | 68 | 07 | 25 | 23 |
| 16 | 10 | 26 | 38 | 17 |
| 17 | 62 | -30 | 13 | -07 |
| 18 | .60 | 08 | 40 | 24 |
| 19 | -13 | 55 | 14 | 35 |
| 20 | 12 | -69 | -08 | 01 |
| 21 | 55 | -06 | 04 | 35 |

Significant loadings are highlighted in bold; decimals to two places removed

Discussion

As discussed, painting and photography cannot perfectly mirror one another formally, materially, or even stylistically. Yet, this study endeavored to select photos and paintings that embody similar attributes of eight of the styles identified by van Eijck (2012). While none of the painting factors is a perfect likeness of the photo factors, two painting factors and two photography factors strongly resembled one another.

For instance, all seven of the most-highly ranked photos in the “Manifest Destiny” photography factor comprised landscapes, including all five of the 19th-century landscapes included in the sample. Specifically, Francis Frith’s *Waterfall on the Abana, Near Damascus (#609)*, c. 1860; William Henry Jackson’s *Pike’s Peak from the Garden of the Gods* (ca. 1880); and Carleton Watkins’s *Strait of Carquennes, from South Vallejo*, 1868–69, all ranked +4. Painting’s 19th-century landscape factor was also dominated by a strong favoring of 19th-century landscapes, with Albert Bierstadt’s *Rocky Mountains, Lander’s Peak* (1863) and Asher B. Durand’s *Beeches* (1845) both ranking +4. The photographs and paintings of these two factors are strikingly similar in their realistic, though somewhat idealized, depictions of natural landscapes. Some nine people loaded on both of these factors; only one of them loaded on both. This person, a 24-year-old male, seemed to prefer the paintings and photos for their similar content. Regarding the photographs, the comments for those he ranked +4 and +3 was “Nature.” For the paintings, he wrote, “Nature – pretty scenes.” Equally important, this person looked to both painting and photography that he could recognize. “What is it?” he wrote regarding paintings he ranked most unappealing, and “What the hell am I looking at?” regarding photos he ranked most unappealing.

Another set of complementary photo and painting factors is evidenced by atmospheric optics (photo) and surreal abstraction (painting). Painting’s Surreal Abstraction factor showed a strong preference for surrealism and abstraction, with three surreal paintings – Salvador Dalí’s *Accommodations of Desire* (1929) and Yves Tanguy’s *Mama, Papa is Wounded* (1927) and *Untitled* (n.d.) – ranking +3 and +4. Abstract paintings by Piet Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Alechinsky, and Willem de Kooning’s Abstract Expressionist *Woman I* (1950–52), rounded out the four other +3 and +4 slots. Notably, every single abstract, Abstract Expressionist, and surreal painting was ranked positively, with the exception of Helen Frankenthaler’s *Jacob’s Ladder* (1957), which placed on zero.

Similarly, photo factor B, atmospheric optics, also ranked abstract and surreal images highly, although not as uniformly as painting’s surreal abstraction. Rather, the most

popular images here were sepia-toned, romantic, atmospheric photographs, which included artful portraits of women, surrealist compositions, and night cityscapes. Among these photographs, participants ranked Hans Bellmer's *Doll* (1934–35) and Maurice Tabard's *Composition* (1929) +4 and +3, respectively, especially notable given that these pictures, along with the other surreal photographs, were not ranked positively by the other factors. Notably, only two color photos ranked positively: Walead Beshty's *Six Color Curl* (2008) +2, and Bruce Davidson's untitled photograph from his 1986 book *Subway* at +1. Despite their divergence regarding color, the painting and photo factors resemble one another given participants' preference for surrealism and, to a lesser degree, abstraction. Yet, of the 11 people who loaded on these two factors, only one person loaded on both.

Another interpretation sees painting's "surreal abstraction" factor as a complement to photo Factor A, "the decisive moment." The latter heavily favored contemporary street photography: Gary Winogrand's *Untitled* (1968) photo of a woman holding an ice cream cone and laughing; Paul Graham's *Young Executives, Bank of England, London* (1981); Martin Parr's photo showing children gathered around an overflowing trash can, from his series 1986 book, *Last Resort*; and Bruce Davidson's *Subway* photo (1986) ranked +4 and +3. Although this group did not favor surreal or abstract photography (they ranked two abstract photos, Lucas Blalock's *Our Man Weschler* and Harry Callahan's *Snow in Detroit*, at -4, with surrealists Bellmer and Victor Brauner ranked at -3), like those who clustered on painting's "surreal abstraction" factor, they showed a strong preference for contemporary work. Yet, even seen this way, this preference for the contemporary did not unite participants. A total of 13 people loaded onto these two factors. Two people who loaded on painting's "surreal abstraction" factor loaded onto photography's "decisive moment." The third participant who loaded on both factors, a 27-year-old male, loaded *negatively* on painting's "surreal abstraction" but positively on the "decisive moment."

Even the correlations bare these differences out. Photography's "isolationist" factor correlates with the "manifest destiny" factor at .41. As discussed, the "manifest destiny" factor strongly resembles painting's "19th-century landscape" factor. If we substitute photo's "isolationist" factor for "manifest destiny," and compare the 12 people who loaded on "isolationist" with painting's "landscapes," only a single person loaded on both factors. Likewise, "the narrative" painting factor correlates with the 19th-century landscape factor at .55. If we substitute "the narrative" and compare it with photography's "manifest destiny" factor, and compare the six people who loaded on "manifest destiny" factor with "the narrative," only a single person loaded on both.

These results evoke Marshall McLuhan's famous dictum, "the medium is the message." According to McLuhan, the actual content of communication is not as important as the medium through which it is delivered. Nowhere does McLuhan's theory seem most apt than with regard to the painting and photography factors that heavily favor realistic 19th-century landscapes. The actual content of these paintings and photographs is strikingly similar, but evidently, not as important as their mediums.

Different Aesthetics

As the results show, most people with one aesthetic in painting did not load onto the same factor in photography. In other words, despite sharing the same aesthetic in one medium, participants did not share the same aesthetic in another. Perhaps this indicates that participants have different *expectations* for the two media. In other words, people who might expect photography to describe the world in a very literal way – those who

loaded on factor A, the 19th-century factor, or factor C, “the decisive moment” – do not expect the same from painting.

Participants’ comments suggest that they use different criteria when evaluating paintings and photographs. Regarding his selection of most appealing paintings, a 27-year-old male wrote, “These paintings elicit an emotional response.” Those most unappealing: “These do not.” But his comments on the photographs were practically the inverse; regarding those that he ranked +4 and +3, he wrote: “Real people, real moments.” As for the photos he disliked, he wrote, they are “abstract in concept, not ‘real.’” A 26-year-old male photographer also seemed to look for the opposite in photography and painting: “I like surreal and sometimes abstract art,” he wrote about the paintings he ranked most appealing. Those photos he ranked most unappealing? “Mostly abstract stuff,” he wrote. That said, one participant – a 31-year-old male photographer with the most artistic training – looked for similar qualities in both painting and photography: “absurdity.”

Art history also seemed to be a criterion for the paintings, but not for the photography. Regarding her most highly-ranked paintings, a 21-year-old female photographer wrote, “I recognized the artists and enjoyed their styles.” As for the photos she most highly ranked, she noted that the “color and subjects [are] interesting” – making no mention of familiarity with the works’ movements or the artists themselves. A 25-year-old female photographer made explicit reference to post-impressionism and surrealism in her discussion of the paintings. But she did not mention any art-historical terms in her evaluation of the photographs, pointing instead to “color, composition, light, and mood,” and suggesting that art history does not influence her judgments. In another case, photography’s historical component seemed to count against it: a 22-year-old photographer and graphic designer explained that she appreciates Daguerreotypes’ history, but dislikes the images: “the art form was new and undeveloped.” As for the paintings, she ranked most highly ones whose “history” and “methods” she knows – such as postimpressionism – and thus “appreciates.”

Looking for the story behind a photograph or painting was one point of consensus that emerged. When explaining how they ranked the photos, four explicitly referenced the photos’ ability to tell a story. “Each photograph tells a story,” wrote a 27-year-old male explaining his selections of +4 and +3. A 46-year-old female wrote, “They tell a story I want to hear.” Explaining what she found most unappealing about the photos ranked –4 and –3, a 23-year-old wrote, “No story behind the images.” Two explicitly referenced their expectations that paintings tell a story: “They tell a story or make me want to know what story they are telling,” wrote a 46-year-old female. Two of these people specifically referenced the narrative component of photos and paintings. Despite the similar evaluative criteria, the participants loaded on different factors.

People’s feelings about the artists, or the artworks’ symbolism in the wider world, also came into play with some of these aesthetic choices. One person explained her decision to rank Willem de Kooning’s *Woman I* at –4 because “I know (16) hates women.” Another person who put Gauguin’s *Two Tahitian Women* at –3 wrote, “Gauguin = represents some of the worst parts of colonialism.” Another participant, citing his decision to rank ecclesiastic-seeming Flemish primitives quite negatively, wrote: “I find religiously motivated ‘art’ inherently repulsive.” Finally, regarding some of the older portraits, one participant drolly remarked, “They looked like they owned slaves.” These comments suggest that people bring their own values to their aesthetic judgments.

Finally, in this study, neither demographics nor previous artistic training seemed to influence people's aesthetic choices. However, a random sample, assessed using r-methodology, would more readily investigate those potential influences.

Limitations

Physical size is a limitation for the photographs and paintings included in this study. Though reduced to the same size and printed on the same paper, size confers a significant impact on the viewer's experience. Many of the artworks included in this study, including some of the Abstract Expressionist, Post-Impressionist, and Flemish primitive paintings are quite large – such as Willem de Kooning's six-by-five-foot *Woman I* and Seurat's nearly seven-by-ten-foot *Sunday on La Grande Jatte*. Other works are quite small and presumably suffer less in their reduction; these include Max Ernst's *Barbarians*, which measures 9.5 by 13 inches, and the majority of the earliest photographs, such as the 19th century landscapes and the photographic works used as stand-ins for the Baroque portraits and late-Renaissance/Baroque categories. Therefore, reduced size is likely to have impacted the aesthetics of the paintings more than the photographs.

Photographs, particularly contemporary digital prints are uniquely suited to electronic distribution and reproduction. Although their colors may be more vivid in person, the texture of a photograph (with the exception of work not included in this study, such as Curtis Mann's bleached and whited-out depictions of war) is not so variable. By contrast, the texture of a painting does not translate so well to digital distribution and reproduction. Even more, some of the works included in this sample, such as the Abstract Expressionist paintings, heavily rely upon texture as part of their aesthetic. Thus, the digital reproduction – the very *nature* of the material of the Q set – likely influenced images of paintings more than photographs.

The P sample, a convenience sample, was not randomly selected. Therefore, generalizations about the relationship between such demographic factors as gender, age, and prior artistic training cannot be made with certainty. Additionally, the participants shared much in common, given that they were communications graduate students and that the majority self-identified as photographers.

Finally, the photographic substitutions made here for the Abstract Expressionist and Baroque are subjective. Participants may not have understood these images as true 'substitutes' for their painting counterparts. As a result, the comparison between these categories in painting and photography is imperfect, and participants may not have seen them as equivalent categories.

Conclusion

The Q analysis reveals that even if people share the same artistic preferences in photography, they do not necessarily share the same preferences for painting. In nearly all of the cases, the difference in aesthetic preferences appears to trump content, even when the photographs and paintings depict virtually identical landscapes in very similar styles. In addition, participants' written feedback suggests that they use different criteria when evaluating photographs and paintings. When evaluating two-dimensional visual art, people who do not identify as artists may look to a painting or photograph's capacity to tell a story. Yet, even participants' notions of what constitutes a story seem to differ, given that these people did not load onto the same factors. Thus, this research is consistent with Marshall McLuhan's theory that the medium is the message, and that form trumps content.

It is possible that the different expectations that participants appear to bring to their preferences for fine-art photography and painting may be informed by our cultural “hangover” regarding photography. As one participant wrote, we expect painting to move us; we expect photographs to describe. Aesthetic evaluations of paintings can draw on art-historical information; photography may work best when it looks “new.”

The practical implications for this research are myriad. Art-education, art history, even studio art courses may benefit from discussing what students expect from a given medium. For instance, some people may expect painting to “move” them, and for photography to document a specific moment. Such expectations open up conversations about how we “see” different media. They also suggest discussions about how advertisements or other persuasive messaging might deploy painting, or photography, media for different ends. Discussing these expectations might also prove worthwhile in studio art courses, by allowing students to lay bare what they ultimately expect to achieve with the work that they produce.

Second, the results suggest a different way of thinking about the growing popularity of programs that make recommendations for books, films, and other media based on a person’s previous reported taste. In some cases, these recommendations, based on (or, as Amazon puts it, “inspired by your browsing history”) make suggestions within a certain medium (fiction, say) but also cross media; as an example, these recommendations might include short stories, fine-art (photo and painting) monographs, cookbooks, a collection of nonfiction essays, to say nothing of other consumables, like shoes. In other words, Amazon and other retailers attempt to do exactly what we have set out to do in this experiment, but across all media and products. Yet, as demonstrated, our preferences in one category do not translate so neatly into another. One may find Baroque portraits, contemporary abstract photography, and turn-of-the-20th-century cookbooks appealing – although they represent wholly different aesthetic preferences. Indeed, online sellers’ reliance on predictive and reductive algorithms denies the wild-card possibility that one will like Rubens as much as Robert Frank; and it is this complexity, our capacity for diversity, that makes us human.

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Appendix A. Description of Paintings in the Q Set

Titles, dates, and artists verified with the websites of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Guggenheim, the J. Paul Getty Trust, the Kunstmuseum Basel, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Musée D'Orsay, the Tate, the Van Gogh Museum, and catalogues from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (Stroo, C., Syfer-d'Olne, P., Dubois, A., & Slachmuylders, R., 1999; Stroo, C. & Syfer-d'Olne, P. (1996).

| Number | Title and date | Artist | Description | Category |
|--------|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Portrait of Remigius Faesch</i> , 1621 | Bartholomäus Sarburgh | Portrait of regal-looking mustached young man, wearing Elizabethan collar, arm on a sword, royal crest in the upper left | Baroque portrait |
| 2 | <i>Bridget Holmes (1591-1691)</i> , 1686 | John Riley | Woman in servant's clothing holds a broom; a young boy peeks playfully at her from behind a curtain | Baroque portrait |
| 3 | <i>Mama, Papa Is Wounded!</i> , 1927 | Yves Tanguy | Surrealistic desert with cacti | Surrealism |
| 4 | <i>Death of the Virgin</i> , 1601-1605/1606 | Caravaggio | Men crowded around a woman in a red dress, lying dead on a bed; though not Ecclesiastic-seeming, the men are apostles, the woman Mary Magdalene | Late Renaissance/Baroque |
| 5 | <i>Jacob's Ladder</i> , 1957 | Helen Frankenthaler | Abstract figure ascending a ladder in bursts of oranges, violets, and greens | Abstract Expressionism |
| 6 | <i>Upward (Empor)</i> , 1929 | Wassily Kandinsky | Abstract figure against green-blue background | Abstraction |
| 7 | <i>Untitled</i> , 1926 | Yves Tanguy | Sketch-like rendering of an open hand, mountain, and the number seven | Surrealism |
| 8 | <i>Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies</i> , 1899 | Claude Monet | A delicate bridge arcs over this lily-covered pond in a verdant wood | 19 th -century landscape |
| 9 | <i>Portrait of King Charles II</i> , ca. 1685 | John Riley | Portrait of Charles II in armor | Baroque portrait |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|--------|--|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 10 | <i>Weeping Woman</i> , 16 th century (?) | After Rogier van der Wyden | Portrait of woman weeping, handkerchief to her eyes, wearing a white wimple | Flemish primitive |
| 11 | <i>Composition No. 1 with Grey and Red 1938 / Composition with Red 1939</i> , 1939-39 | Piet Mondrian | Black grid on white background; small red square at bottom right | Abstraction |
| 12 | <i>The Beeches</i> , 1845 | Asher B. Durand | Beech forest at the golden hour | 19 th -century landscape |
| 13 | <i>Two Flayed Men and Skeletons</i> , ca. 1540- 1545 | Domenico de Barbieri | A study in anatomy: two flayed men, each muscle articulated, stand beside their skeletons | Late Renaissance/Baroque |
| 14 | <i>The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak</i> , 1863 | Albert Bierstadt | Landscape showing horses in a clearing, mountains, and blue sky. | 19 th -century landscape |
| 15 | <i>Two Tahitian Women</i> , 1899 | Paul Gauguin | Portrait of two women in Tahitian dress | Post-Impressionism |
| 16 | <i>Woman I</i> , 1950-52 | Willem de Kooning | Abstract portrait of a grimacing woman painted with aggressive lines | Abstract Expressionism |
| 17 | <i>Portrait of Willem Morell</i> , ca. 1482 | Hans Memling | Portrait showing a man in three- quarter profile, hands in supplication | Flemish Primitive |
| 18 | <i>Still Life with Tenora</i> , summer or fall 2013 | Georges Braque | Collage-like abstraction that resembles plywood stacked on brown rectangles | Abstraction |
| 19 | <i>Still Life: Flask, Glass, and Jug</i> , ca. 1877 | Paul Cezanne | Still-life of wine flask, glass, jug, fruit, on white tablecloth | Post-Impressionism |
| 20 | <i>Justice of Emperor Otto III. Ordeal by Fire</i> , ca. 1471-1473 | Dirk Bouts | Court scene showing a woman holding a man's head, kneeling before the emperor | Flemish primitive |
| 21 | <i>Time Transfixed</i> , 1938 | René Magritte | A train sails through a marble fireplace, its mantle bare but for candlesticks, a mirror, and a clock | Surrealism |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|---------------|--|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 22 | <i>Number 1A, 1948, 1948</i> | Jackson Pollock | Paint splatters of black, blue, white, red, against ocher background | Abstract Expressionism |
| 23 | <i>Gong, 1967</i> | Pierre Alechinsky | Swirls of dark blue forms | Abstract Expressionism |
| 24 | <i>Man with a Guitar, summer 1911-early 1912</i> | Georges Braque | Cubist rendering in browns, greys, and yellows of a man with a guitar | Abstraction |
| 25 | <i>Haystacks: Autumn, ca. 1874</i> | Jean-Francois Millet | Landscape of haystacks and sheep beneath dark clouds | 19 th -century landscape |
| 26 | <i>A Pair of Leather Clogs, 1888</i> | Vincent van Gogh | Still life of clogs, seen from above | Post-Impressionism |
| 27 | <i>Self-Portrait, ca. 1623</i> | Gian Lorenzo Bernini | Self-portrait of the artist as a young man, rendered in dark tones | Baroque portrait |
| 28 | <i>Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness, ca. 1600-1602</i> | Annibale Caracci | In a wooded glen Saint John, a halo round his head, points to Mary, clothed in a blue robe, in the background | Late Renaissance/Baroque |
| 29 | <i>The Musicians, ca. 1595</i> | Caravaggio | Four young men strum their instruments lazily | Late Renaissance/Baroque |
| 30 | <i>The Flesh Eaters, 1952</i> | William Baziotes | Abstracted figural forms against charcoal, pink, and green | Abstract Expressionism |
| 31 | <i>The Edge of the Woods at Fontainebleau Forest, 1852-54</i> | Théodore Rousseau | Green forest against light-blue, clouded sky | 19 th -century landscape |
| 32 | <i>At the Moulin Rouge, 1892/95</i> | Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec | Darkly-rendered interior view of top-hatted men and women in sumptuous dresses at the Moulin Rouge dance hall | Post-Impressionism |
| 33 | <i>Virgin and Child Triptych, first quarter of 16th century</i> | After Rogier van der Wyden | Triptych showing Mary Magdelene nursing baby Jesus (center), a maiden at either side (left and right panels) | Flemish primitive |

| Introduction | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 34 | <i>The Barbarians</i> , 1937 | Max Ernst | Two beaked figures with claw-like hands stand in warrior-like positions | Surrealism |
| 35 | <i>A Sunday on La Grande Jatte</i> – 1884, 1884-86 | Georges Seurat | Pointlist rendering of women, children, their toys and pets relaxing at the edge of the Seine | Post-Impressionism |
| 36 | <i>Suprematist Composition: White on White</i> , 1918 | Kazimir Malevich | White square, tilted on white square of slightly different hue | Abstraction |
| 37 | <i>Venus and Adonis</i> , mid- or late 1630s | Peter Paul Rubens | Venus struggles with Adonis, cupid beneath them, in a forest | Late Renaissance/Baroque |
| 38 | <i>Portrait of Marie de Pacy</i> , after 1562 | After the Master of Flemalle | Portrait of a plump woman in a red dress trimmed with white fur, wearing a white snood and jewels | Flemish primitive |
| 40 | <i>A Laughing Bravo with a Bass Viol and a Glass</i> , 1625 | Hendrick Terbrugghen | Portrait of a musician holding a bass in his hand, laughing and gesturing, as if in conversation | Baroque portrait |

Appendix B. Description of Photographs in the Q Set

Titles, dates, and artists verified with the websites of *Aperture*, the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, the George Eastman House, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and artists' personal websites.

| Number | Title and date | Artist | Description | Category |
|--------|--|------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | <i>The Apotheosis of Lincoln</i> | Unknown | Black and white print showing Abraham Lincoln embracing George Washington, angels descending from above | Late Renaissance |
| 2 | <i>Georgia O'Keeffe - Neck, 1921</i> | Alfred Stieglitz | Sepia-toned portrait showing O'Keeffe in profile, from collarbone to lips | Post-Impressionism |
| 3 | <i>From the Back Window, 291, 1915</i> | Alfred Stieglitz | Black-and-white night image showing downtown Manhattan, lights on in the buildings | Post-Impressionism |
| 4 | <i>The Flooded Grave, 1998-2000</i> | Jeff Wall | An open grave filled with sea-stars and other marine life in an otherwise unremarkable cemetery | Surrealism |
| 5 | <i>The Doll, 1934-45</i> | Hans Bellmar | Negative print showing a Frankenstein-like doll made of robotic and human parts | Surrealism |
| 6 | <i>Untitled ca. 1860s</i> | Unknown | Daguerreotype showing a man in profile in vest and tie | Baroque portrait |
| 7 | <i>Untitled, 1968</i> | Gary Winogrand | Woman, laughing, holding an ice cream cone outside a men's shop | Street photography |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 8 | <i>Six Color Curl</i> , 2008 | Walead Beshty | Vertical bolts of oranges, greens, blues, and almost-black | Abstraction |
| 9 | <i>Study After Nature</i> , ca. 1853 | Julien Vallou de Villeneuve | Portrait of a woman standing, wearing beads, face turned from the camera | Baroque portrait |
| 10 | <i>Composition</i> , 1929 | Maurice Tabard | Sepia-toned female nude; shadows of hands are overlaid atop the figure | Surrealism |
| 11 | <i>Executives, Bank of England, London</i> (1981) | Paul Graham | Two men in suits examine what appears to be a photo as others stride past | Street photography |
| 12 | <i>Edward James in Front of On the Threshold of Liberty</i> , 1937 | René Magritte | A man stands facing a wall of paintings; one, depicting a canon, appears to be aimed at his head | Surrealism |
| 13 | <i>Rebecca</i> , 2005 | Alec Soth | A woman standing on cracked pavement cradling her newborn | Flemish primitive |
| 14 | <i>Our Man Weschler</i> , 2010 | Lucas Blalock | Abstract wooden shingles overlaid with a rough-hewn yellow rectangular form | Abstraction |
| 15 | <i>Mrs. Lincoln</i> , ca. 1865 | William H. Mumler | Head and neck portrait showing a middle-aged Mary Lincoln, her hair pulled up in two buns | Baroque portrait |
| 16 | Untitled, ca. 1850 | Unknown | Portrait of three children with hand-painted details | Baroque portrait |
| 17 | <i>Adelyn, Ash Wednesday, New Orleans, Louisiana</i> , 2000 | Alec Soth | Portrait of a red-haired woman, looking off to the side, cross of ashes on her forehead | Flemish primitive |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|--------|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 18 | <i>New York</i> , 1978 | Helen Levitt | Color photograph showing a man bending to greet a cat on a leash | Street photography |
| 19 | Untitled, ca. 2000s | Lucas Blalock | Images of wood-like chips on a furry seeming red-bricked background repeat throughout the images | Abstraction |
| 20 | <i>Pike's Peak From the Garden of the Gods</i> , ca. 1880 | William Henry Jackson | Sepia-toned landscape of a forested valley surrounded by craggy mountains | 19 th century landscape |
| 21 | <i>Weeds in snow, Detroit</i> , 1943 | Harry Callahan | Spare, almost drawing-like photograph of single weeds in thick snow. Black and white. | Abstraction |
| 22 | <i>Nude</i> , 1856-60 | Auguste Belloc | Sepia-toned print of a female nude lounging on her side on a chaise, her back to the camera. | Late Renaissance |
| 23 | <i>Lewis Payne</i> , 1865 | Alexander Gardner | Portrait, in profile, of a young Lewis Payne (attempted murderer of William C Seward) | Baroque portrait |
| 24 | Untitled, from the <i>Subway</i> series, ca. 1986 | Bruce Davidson | Straphanger in suit and tie, glasses, riding a graffitied subway car | Street photography |
| 25 | <i>Charles, Vasa, Minnesota</i> , 2002 | Alec Soth | Portrait showing a man in paint-splattered flysuit, holding two model airplanes, standing on a roof | Flemish primitive |
| 26 | Untitled from <i>Last Resort</i> , ca. 1986 | Martin Parr | Children and parents gathered around an overflowing trash can | Street photography |
| 27 | <i>Eight Young Roosters</i> , 1938 | Frederick Sommer | Pieces of roosters – feet and innards. | Surrealism |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|--------|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 28 | <i>Strait of Carquennes, from South Vallejo, 1868-69</i> | Carleton Watkins | Sepia-toned landscape showing a pier jutting into a serene bay | 19 th century landscape |
| 29 | <i>John Szarkowski, Curator, New York, 1975</i> | Richard Avedon | Black-and-white portrait of John Szarkowski looking contemplative, glasses in hand | Late Renaissance |
| 30 | <i>Equivalent, 1930</i> | Alfred Stieglitz | Sepia-toned print of streak-like clouds in the sky | Post-Impressionism |
| 31 | <i>Waterfall on the Abana, Near Damascus (#609), ca. 1860</i> | Francis Frith | Stone arches beneath a waterfall and copse | 19 th century landscape |
| 32 | <i>Miss Bell, ca. 1841-48</i> | David Octavius Hill with Robert Adamson | A sleeping young girl grasps her doll, toys strewn about her, in this sepia-toned print. | Late Renaissance |
| 33 | <i>Portrait of a Woman Holding a Child, 1857</i> | A. Le Blondel | This hand-painted print shows a woman in a voluminous black gown holding a girl on her lap | Flemish primitive |
| 34 | <i>The Street of the Gamblers, ca. 1899</i> | Arnold Genthe | Black-and-white streetscape showing men on a crowded street. | Post-Impressionism |
| 35 | <i>Tea Pot Rock, 1870</i> | William Henry Jackson | Sepia-toned print showing a large rock casting a shadow onto a desert landscape | 19 th century landscape |
| 36 | <i>Lake Cliffs, Kaweah Gap, Sierra Nevada, ca. 1932</i> | Ansel Adams | Sharp-looking cliffs are reflected in the partly frozen lake in this black and white landscape | 19 th century landscape |
| 37 | <i>Youth and Age, 1855</i> | Fallon Horne | An elderly man, holding a cane, places his hand on the head of an adolescent boy who kneels beside him | Late Renaissance |

| Number | Title and Date | Artist | Description | Category |
|---------------|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| 38 | <i>Max Weidingen, Luxembourg, August 7, 2003, 2003</i> | Rineke Dijkstra | A boy in shorts, shirt, and sneakers relaxes on the grass beneath a tree in this almost-erotic portrait. | Flemish primitive |
| 39 | <i>Self-portrait, lighting a cigarette, 1924</i> | Laszlo Moholy-Nagy | Photogram (black and white) showing a hand, lips, flame | Surrealism |
| 40 | <i>Reflections, Night - New York, 1897</i> | Alfred Stieglitz | Night landscape showing trees and buildings, streetlights reflecting on wet pavement | Post-Impressionism |