

## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### **Project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography**

#### **Project involving SBMK, RCE, UvA and thirteen contemporary art collections**

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## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### **Project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography, September 2020-September 2023**

#### **1 Project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography**

The project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography is focused on the preventive conservation of the large, vulnerable group of modern photographic works of art in museum collections. The project is a collaboration of thirteen museum collections, the University of Amsterdam (UvA), Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency (Rijksdienst Cultureel Erfgoed, RCE) and the Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (Stichting Behoud Moderne Kunst, SBMK). These organisations have partnered due to the fact that museums are concerned about the loss of original photographic works.

A number of museums have performed condition scans for part of their photographic collections. This has raised their awareness of the urgency of the various types of problems and the absence of research and knowledge. In this collaborative project the partners take stock of which research is necessary, accumulate the required knowledge, and disseminate and consolidate this in practice.

Specialist knowledge, which most museums do not have, is required for the preventive conservation of photographic works. This concerns technical knowledge of the medium, printing process and finishing techniques, but also of terminology. Photography now is discussed in general terms and in the most basic instances, in terms of colour and black-and-white. Based on this limited information, museums do not actually know which processes they have in their collections, and which conservation measures they should be introducing. With preservation of the photographic works in mind, museums have questions surrounding best practice for storage and exhibition, etc. .

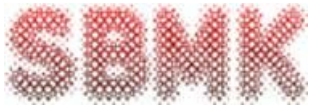
The recommended storage for colour photographs is the so-called 'cold storage'. However, for complex photographic works of art this is may not always be the best method. The appropriate measures depend on the printing process, the medium and the finish. The effect of cold storage on these components and the layering thereof is not sufficiently understood.

In addition, since the beginning of this century, digital technologies and possibilities increased and manufacturers of photographs with specialist knowledge from the twentieth century, such as Kodak and Polaroid, are disappearing. The current (older) generations of photographers, conservators and other museum professionals still understand the analogue processes, the materials that were used, the chemical processes and the decisions taken during the making of a photographic work (printing, finishing, framing). The sharing of this information is necessary for being able to take preventive conservation measures. This project bridges the knowledge islands of digital and analogue printing processes.

In this project we will be limiting ourselves to photographic works of art, but results from the project will have a wider applicability. Photography museums and photographic archives shall be able to benefit from the results because the tool and digital information environment will be made available online.

#### **Photography as the continuation of plastics?**

The project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography is a continuation of the successful project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Pilot Plastics that focused upon the identification and conservation of various types of plastic that are used to make art and design objects. Just as 'plastics' was designated



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as a problem area by museums a number of years ago, photography now has been signaled as an urgent area requiring attention. What is going on?

1. Museums have too little knowledge of photography and do not know best-practice approaches. There are questions concerning: purchase, handling, storage, presentation.
2. Photographs are layered and they need to be considered in layers:
  - How has the photograph been printed?
  - What has the photograph been printed on?
  - How has the photograph been finished?

What is the relevance of this information for the work and the measures for management and conservation?

3. The Dutch terminology for various photography processes and finishes is unambiguous. An artwork registered with one museum as a fibre-based print, is known as a silver print, bromide print or even just black-and-white photograph at another. Which terms should you choose for museum registration system/communication?
4. Unique photographs, for example colour photographs from the 1970-80s, are exchanged for copies that are made to take on the status of original. This means that information stored in the layers of the original is lost.

### **Objective**

The objective of this project is to eliminate the discrepancies in knowledge surrounding photographic art works in institutions. We do this through research and the development and implementation of an immediately applicable tool for the identification of photography collections and through the execution of surveys. This will be achieved during the course of the project through:

- Workshops for the identification of printing processes, media and finishing techniques of photographs.
- Expert meetings for the establishment of the correct Dutch terminology for registering photographic works in the collection registration systems.
- In-house photography collection surveys at the participating museums to identify, register and establish necessary conservation measures for (a part of) their own collection.

A digital tool is being developed for the identification of processes and will be combined with a sample set of photographic processes. This collection of examples of photographic processes, media and finishes that can serve as reference material and support the identification of processes.

The project contributes to the improvement of the preservation, visibility and accessibility of contemporary art in the future. Through identifying and registering sub-collections on location in ten participating museums, and by collaboration in the development of preventative measures, the registration of collections will not just be clearer, the knowledge necessary gained will be shared and anchored within the organisations. Using the developed method, museum employees can identify the photographic works in the Dutch National Art Collection (Collectie Nederland) in the correct way, and take the necessary preservation measures.

### **Education and research**

Two young researchers/restorers be trained in modern photographic processes in the course of the project. They are the specialists of the future and can operate independently after completion of the project. They can advise on the handling of collections, hold workshops and execute photography surveys in the museum world. The specialists in training will take stock of research and knowledge gaps and will undertake part of the research. During their training within the project they will



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develop a do-it-yourself photograph collection survey with the sample set and the digital tool as resources. All this in collaboration with the trainers and the participating museums.

The research and the results can also be employed as the basis for PhD research. The museum world has a need for fundamental research, partly for the development of photography surveys. This involves research into:

1. (ethical) issues regarding the relation between original photographs, with all the inherent information that is stored in them, and new (exhibition) prints;
2. photography exhibition policy;
3. photography storage policy.

Knowledge of processes and handling can be acquired through oral history, involving interviews held with photography experts, photographers and their assistants.

A win-win situation: museums offer information, data and case studies that are necessary for research and later they can work with the results. Finally, where possible, UvA students Conservation & Restoration and museum interns will be involved in the research and the execution of the project.

The planning for the project dovetails into the curriculum for students (based on the start in September 2020, see page 11 ). The periods planned for research, work experience, and the writing of a thesis/articles will be executed within the scope of this project.

### **Amendments when compared to the Pilot Plastics**

The Photography Project is based on the blueprint for the Pilot Plastics. However for the photograph project there have been a number of amendments and extensions, as the complex nature and surrounding problems demand this. The photography project increases the scope in comparison to the previous project:

1. The amendments are partly due to experience gained from the Project Plastics. The photograph project will operate for three years instead of two, because we in the last phase of the Project Plastics there was insufficient time for finishing and translation of the tool.
2. Another important change is the staffing of the project. In the Project Plastics, RCE was responsible for the training of the young specialists, through the deployment of a large number of 'in kind' hours. In addition, the Plastics Tool was translated by native speakers within RCE. For the Photography Project, the University of Amsterdam will be the training institute, due to the expertise present. Here the possibilities for hours 'in kind' are less.
1. In addition, the nature of the project's content makes different demands. The aforementioned layered nature of photography increases the complexity of the research. This plays out at a theoretical level, for which we have added the research, as well as at a practical level; photography requires a different do-it-yourself kit from plastics. A high-quality printed sample book is required for photography. The production costs for this are high, while the material cost and execution of the do-it-yourself kits for the Plastic Identification Tool was very inexpensive.
2. Project Plastics started with ten so-called iconic works that had been brought together by museums; example works of the types of plastics that occurred in the project. In the Photography Project we select example works from the list that the museums have submitted (see page 13) during the project; once we have determined which problems we will focus on.

### **2 Project background**

The pressure on museums to organise exhibitions has increased in recent years, while the capacity for the accumulation of knowledge regarding research into conservation and restoration has declined. Most museums no longer have conservators on staff and outsource the work to freelance conservators. The volume of knowledge surrounding material and technical information of the



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artworks has consequently declined within art collections. Moreover, the national knowledge centre, RCE, has less expertise in the area of photography. The preventive conservation of contemporary photo-works within collections, and the transfer of knowledge on photograph preservation are under pressure in the current situation.

Initiatives focused on part of the problem, namely the ambition of museums and RCE for the organisation of regional, shared depots with optimum conditions for specific types of materials, and the strengthening of links between museums and education have been established. Since the Museum Letter '*Samen Werken, Samen Sterker*' (Working together, stronger together) from 2013, the collaboration between museums has received more depth through the generous availability of objects and the accessibility of museum collections. The optimum preservation and safety of these key collections are a condition for this collaboration and museum loans. SBMK, RCE and UvA have jointly recognised that to be able to meet these conditions, the transfer and development of knowledge must be intensified, especially in the area of preventive conservation. This project focuses on photographs in modern and contemporary art collections: a vulnerable group of contemporary art objects for which specialist knowledge is required. The registration of photographic works is often not optimal because collection staff cannot identify the different photographic processes, media and finishing techniques, and therefore not determine and implement the appropriate conservation measures. Through the Museum Collaboration Scheme (*Samenwerkende Musea*), the museums place these problems on the agenda of the Gieskes-Strijbis Fund with the project proposal Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography.

Only through collaboration, sharing acquired knowledge and involving collection managers in the further development of knowledge, will contemporary art museums be able to fill the knowledge deficit. Each collection of visual and applied art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries contains a large number of photographic works, not just printed in different ways on various media, but also finished in different ways.

Dialogues with multiple museums and RCE revealed a clear need for applicable methods for identifying photographs. On the one hand this is focused on prints and media and on the other on the terminology with which the findings are subsequently described in the museum registration databases. This with the intention of being able to monitor these objects in the long term, to be able to implement the necessary conservation measures (better), and to keep them available for presentation and loan traffic. Through executing surveys at multiple museums, insight is acquired into the state of affairs regarding photographic works in the Dutch National Art Collection, and more focused research can be undertaken for optimum conservation strategies, from which the wider museum profession can benefit. There is no appropriate institute or forum for this type of research in the Netherlands. This is why training on the job has been opted for. Training that centres around the sharing of knowledge from RCE and UvA experts and researchers. Through on site collaboration, conservators and collection managers can learn to conduct surveys and to identify photographic processes, finishes and media with relatively simple means.

Above all, by collaborating questions regarding preventative conservation and registration are examined and solutions can be sought together. This approach to sharing and transferring knowledge does not just benefit the participating museums in this project, but will benefit *all* collections of photographs and photographic works of art. In the long term, the developed method can be elaborated on for other forms of art and materials, as has previously been done for plastics.

### **What already exists?**

The SBMK network and the commitment of the researchers from the RCE and UvA offer a strong starting point for this project and follow-up projects in the future. The partners mentioned have a proven collaborative track record in successful projects. (For examples, see appendix 1, page 23.) The



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created network and past accomplishments will be built upon in this project. SBMK, RCE and UvA together have the necessary infrastructure for the further development and dissemination of knowledge about contemporary art conservation. In the project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Pilot Plastics a blueprint was developed for the project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography. Twenty-one institutions have already registered for the new project of which 10 will be selected.

SBMK has been involved in the problems facing the preservation, conservation, and (re)installation of modern and contemporary art for twenty years. The SBMK network comprises 26 partners who contribute to the activities financially or otherwise. In addition to museums, these include corporate art collections, the RCE Art Collection, the University of Amsterdam, Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg and LIMA. In addition, the network covers the entire field of (prospective) professionals in the management and conservation of modern art, which contributes to the development and dissemination of knowledge. This includes not just conservators, collection managers, registrars and management/conservation employees, but also curators, artists, art historians, scientists, theorists and lawyers.

### **What is missing, what are the questions?**

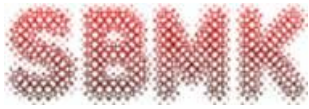
Briefly, the following are missing: a complete list of photographic works in collections, a survey of photographic materials and condition for key collections, a list of preventative measures for the better preservation and accessibility of these collections, and a knowledge infrastructure through which acquired knowledge is anchored in museum practice. It has become clear that a link between available knowledge and practice is seldom made with regard to specialist scientific research. In addition, a lot of questions remain unanswered, and fundamental (PhD) research is required.

In Project Plastics we witnessed that through collaboration a critical mass of properly identified and registered works of art can be created. This can simplify the compilation of future surveys. We have discovered that preventative measures can be formulated generically in such a way that museums can employ them simply using the digital tool and digital information environment created during the project.

In the collaborative photograph project, managed by RCE, UvA, SBMK and SBMK's museum partners, we will make a thorough start in addressing the knowledge deficit surrounding photograph collections. This project will equip museum professionals with the appropriate knowledge to be deployed in daily practice. It facilitates the possibility of performing identification and condition surveys for photographic art collections in the future, to register them using the correct terminology and take appropriate conservation measures.

### **Survey**

The survey we plan to develop is the instrument in which the worlds of research and museum practice meet. A survey provides an overview of the objects, their material identification and registration, and forms a bridge to preventative conservation. In addition, the creation of a survey forms an ideal training model: the 'young' conservators work together with experts in this field, enrich their knowledge and, in so doing, become the experts for the future. The development of the survey also offers opportunities for young professionals within the museums. Museums can also send interns to take part in the survey to gain hands-on experience with identification and other problems surrounding photograph collections faced within the institution. It is a win-win situation: museums acquire extra knowledge about the compilation and conditions of their objects and the young conservation professionals and students gain important practical experience within a museum setting.



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### **Project results**

The project will result in:

1. expertise and a considerable part of photographic works of art in the Dutch National Art Collection will be identified and registered through intensive collaboration between museums and other collection managing institutions, in affiliation with SBMK, and researchers from UvA and RCE.
2. a sample set and digital tool will be developed, with which the professional can identify photographic works of art themselves.
3. a cost-effective and efficient approach for preventative conservation of photographic collections will be developed based upon widely applicable guidelines.
4. these guidelines will find their way into museums because the museums are active participants in the project.
5. knowledge in the field of photography is implemented as collection managers are able to work with the tools themselves and this knowledge is reinforced by practical application.
6. terminology is standardized and the following generation of professionals is trained in the identification and registration of photography collections, as well as the preventative conservation measures.

An innovative, future-oriented knowledge infrastructure is an important basis for the conservation and accessibility of the collections, to which this project - involving SBMK, the participating museums, UvA and RCE – makes a substantial contribution. Existing collaborations are intensified and expanded as a result.

(For information on the Project Plastics: [https://sbmk.nl/en/projects/plastics\\_projects](https://sbmk.nl/en/projects/plastics_projects)

For the digital tool PIT (Plastic Identification Tool):

<https://sbmk.nl/en/tool/plastics>)





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### **3 Project method/structure**

The project has been divided into three phases, that will together last for three years.

#### **Phase I Sept 2020-March 2021**

##### **Contents/time frame**

Phase 1 comprises six months of preparatory work during which the photo surveys, sample set and digital tool will be developed.

The photo team collects available knowledge and information in regards to workshop content, photographic processes that will be included in the sample set, the information that will be made available in the digital tool and in the presentation of the tool.

The issues to be studied will be determined in consultation with the participating museums and corresponding iconic/example works selected from the participating collections.

The terminology work group meets four times. This group of experts determine the Dutch terminology for each process and finishing technique to be implemented in museum registration systems. The group comprises ten specialists from various museums, UvA and RCE.

This content forms the input for the photo surveys in phase two.

##### **Result phase 1**

1. The sample set has been produced
2. A draft of the decision tree for the digital tool has been made
3. The information that needs to be included in the digital environment/ website has been shortlisted
4. The areas of research with corresponding iconic works have been selected
5. The workshops and photo surveys have been planned in consultation with the museums
6. A list with Dutch terms for identification and registration has been prepared.

#### **Phase II April 2021- April 2023**

##### **Contents/time frame**

Phase two is the core of the project and lasts two years.

In this phase, the workshop process identification will be implemented at the ten participating museums, and theory is put into practice during the photo survey that follows workshop. The sample set and digital tool will be utilised for the surveys.

Each workshop lasts three days and has eight participants: two from each participating museum, six external. The photo surveys comprise seven days of identification in the museum's own collection.

Other participants are those that have followed the process identification workshop and students from the UvA. During the survey the two young conservators will be present and supported by a researcher from UvA and/or RCE who will be present for at least 3 days..

In addition, research surrounding the iconic works will be performed during this phase and other issues that are of importance for both the photo team and the students will be addressed.

During this phase, two work groups will be active:

##### **1 Thesaurus and registration systems**

This group will focus on the development of the thesaurus and the necessary amendments this will require in the existing registration systems. To date, five people from various museums and RCE have registered for this.

##### **2 Photography acquisition process**





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Although many photographic works of art have already been purchased, there is no unequivocal picture of what needs to be considered in the decision-making process leading to a purchase. What information do you need from the photographer or gallery when you purchase a photographic work? What do you need to know about the production process, how does the artist wish the work to function, which prelimiting conditions exist for its presentation, etc. This concerns information for the correct management and preservation of the work. With the optimum preventive conservation measures based on this information, we can limit the necessity of conservation treatments in the future.

Eight people from various museums and UvA have registered for this work group.

The work group photography acquisition process will compile a questionnaire/check list.

### **Result phase 2**

Results for phase 2 are

1. that museum employees:
1. can perform an independent initial survey/identification of photographic works of art, with the help of the sample set and the digital tool;
2. preventative conservation guidelines have been determined for the works from their own sub-collection;
3. the necessary knowledge and information have been made available through the digital tool.
4. Ultimately each participating institution has an identified and registered sub-collection of photographic works of art.
5. Research results are available on the research questions and iconic works selected that can be processed in the tool and in publications. These can provide direction for PhD research.
6. There is a proposal for amendments to museum registration systems for new thesauri/terminology.
7. There is a questionnaire/checklist for acquisition of photographic works of art.

### **Phase III April 2023- Sept 2023**

In the last six months of the project the tool and website will be completed and translated into English.

The research results from phase two will be completed and possibly published.

The work group results will be published, at the very least on the SBMK and RCE websites.

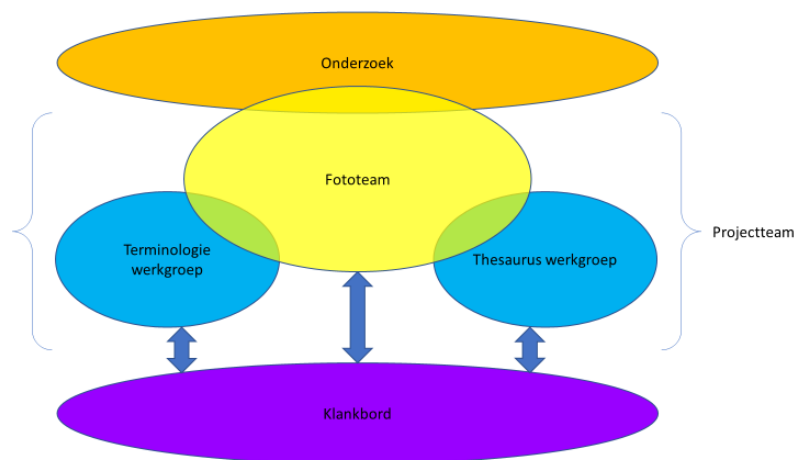
### **Execution and supervision of the project**

The photo team executes the project; this will include photographic conservator/lecturer Clara von Waldthausen (UvA) and the two young researchers in training. The two young researchers are given a freelance contract by SBMK for this.

The wider project team includes other experts/joint trainers for the two young researchers, from UvA (Sanneke Stigter, Katrin Pietsch), RCE (Han Nevel and Bill Wei) and the Rijksmuseum (Martin Jürgens).

The project leader is Paulien 't Hoen, coordinator SBMK.

A sounding board group will be created to supervise the project. This will include experts from the Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands National Archive and the Nederlands Fotomuseum (Netherlands Photography Museum), as well as Ella Hendriks, professor of Conservation and Restoration at UvA and Nicole Delissen (on behalf of the SBMK board). The sounding board focuses on progress and (research) quality.



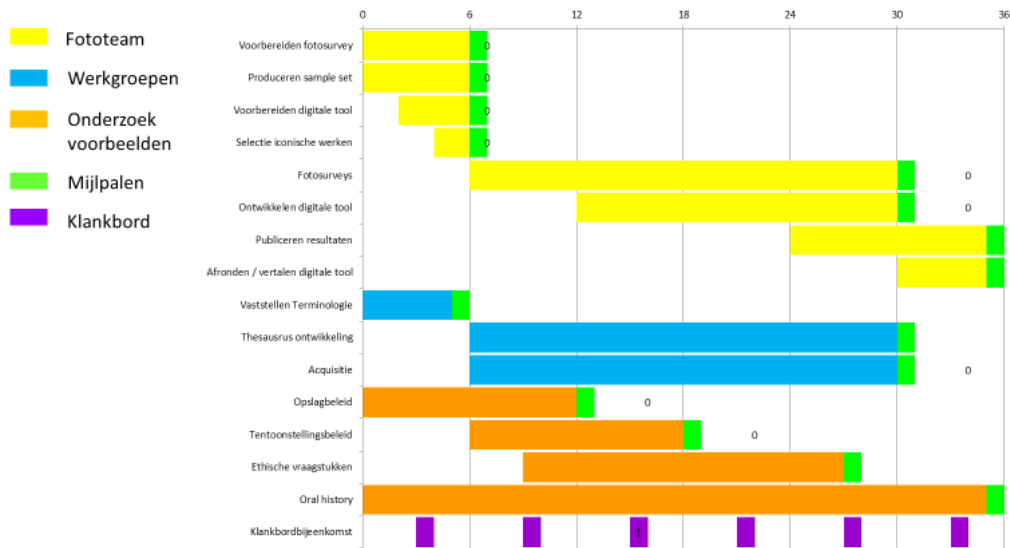
[Research, Photo team, Terminology work group, Thesaurus work group, Sounding board, Project team]

### Execution of research

The research that can be performed by UvA-C&R students, is in line with the curriculum.

Year	Post-Master	Master Thesis	Post-Master research
Sept 2020-2021	7 students		
Sept 2021-2022		Number unknown	7 students
Sept 2022-2023	Number unknown		

**Project time frame**



[Photo team, Work groups, Research examples, Milestones, Sounding board – Photo survey preparation, Sample set production, Digital tool preparation, Iconic work selection, Photo surveys, Digital tool development, Result publication, Rounding off/translation digital tool, Terminology establishment, Thesaurus development, Acquisition, Storage policy, Exhibition policy, Ethics issues, Oral history, Sounding board meeting]



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### **4 Project participants**

All SBMK partners are invited to participate in the project. As a result of the project, a number of new partners have even registered with us. Twenty institutions have indicated that they wish to participate in the project.

#### **Participants:**

1. Kröller-Müller Museum
2. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen
3. Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
4. Kunstmuseum Den Haag
5. RCE-collectie
6. Amsterdam Museum
7. Bonnefanten
8. Het Nieuwe Instituut
9. Huis Marseille
10. De Domijnen
11. Frans Halsmuseum | De Hallen
12. Nationaal Museum voor Wereldculturen
13. RABO Kunstcollectie

#### **Workshop participants and surveys at participating museums**

In addition, a number of SBMK partner museums have made known that they at least wish to join the workshops/surveys at the participating museums:

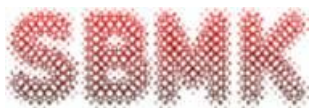
14. Centraal Museum
15. Museum De Pont
16. Van Abbemuseum
17. Eye Filmmuseum

These will be supplemented with other collections through open registration.

#### **Participation in other ways**

A number of institutions will participate in the project in working groups and/or sounding boards in connection with their specific expertise. In addition, they will make their photographic collection as available as possible for research within the realms of this project.

18. Rijksmuseum
19. Nationaal Archief
20. Nederlands Fotomuseum



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### **5 The problems and iconic/example works**

The museums have submitted a list with problems/research topics. Based on this list, we have compiled three work groups and we will select the iconic works from the collections and institutions that participate in the project.

The problems/research topics have been divided into four categories:

#### **I Work groups**

##### **I.1 Terminology**

Modern colour photography is chock-a-block with English terms that are translated in many different ways. The terminology work group will get to grips with this list and will select the most appropriate Dutch terms that will be used in the tool. This will facilitate the development of a single language for all museums and make completely clear what they have in their collections/ can loan to each other and the issues that are important here.

Work group for the first six months, prior to the surveys (see page 9 phase 1)

##### **I.2 Thesaurus and registration systems**

How well suited is the Dutch terminology determined by work group 1 to current museum registration systems? Which amendments are necessary and how should this be tackled? The work group Photography terminology in museum systems will focus on this:

Work group March 2021-March 2023 (see page 9, phase 2)

##### **I.3 Acquisition information**

What information do you need from the photographer or gallery when you purchase a photographic work?

The work group photography acquisition process will compile a questionnaire/check list:

Work group March 2021 – March 2023 (see page 10, phase 2)

#### **II Problems/iconic works**

II.1 XL photographs

II.2 Laminated photographs

II.3 Frame as integral part of the work

II.4 Hand-coloured or otherwise retouched photographs

II.5 Rare processes

II.6 Unprotected photographs

#### **III Fundamental research**

III.1 Signs of deterioration

III.2 Theme value and authenticity

III.3 Theme photograph as an image or material object

#### **IV Practical sub-research**

In addition, a number of general practical problems play a role that could form a sub-research project, which are not elaborated on in detail in this project plan, such as:

IV.1 Handling and storage

IV.2 Presentation, monitoring and measuring

IV.3 Cleaning

IV.4 Suspension systems

### AD II Issues/iconic works

#### II.1 XL photographs



Edwin Zwakman, *Three Things*, 2006, 130 x 265 cm, Chromogenic / dye coupler

Zwakman is famous for his large dimension works, affixed to aluminium and unframed. These works sometimes have a plastic film (PE laminate) that has been affixed to the photograph. Other works have no protection, the emulsion is exposed to fingerprints and soiling from the atmosphere. How can you distinguish laminates from 'unprotected' emulsion? Both are extremely vulnerable and preventative conservation is extremely important. How can these works be best kept/stored without the risk of damage? Could a conservation frame be made for this and what requirements would there be for such a frame?

Another problem with these works is the development of the suspension systems. These start with the systems designed by the artists themselves to the more or less standard use of aluminium sections. Prior to the more or less standardisation of suspension systems using aluminium section, all sorts of things were used and not all the suspension systems are equally stable, with damage as a result. Sometimes a photograph does not even have a suspension system on the back of the aluminium or Dibond.

#### II.2 Laminated photographs



Andreas Gursky, *Rhine II*, 1999. 190 x 360 cm, Chromogenic / dye-coupler print

Ruff, Axel Hütte and Andreas Gursky made large dimension works from around the year 2000 that were laminated with a single sheet of acrylic (PMMA) on the image side of the photograph, as a

finishing method. The PMMA is an inseparable part of the work. PMMA is extremely sensitive to scratches, attracts dust (static charge) and has a different expansion coefficient than the photograph. We have also seen in practice that the frame corner joints are often broken because the PMMA with which they have been framed has expanded and has pushed the joints apart. An important question regarding laminated works deals with whether or not they can be stored in cold depots. The concern is that the PMMA has a different dimension at around 30%RV (cold depot) than during presentation (around 55% RV). And what do the RV fluctuations do to the photograph under the PMMA? Cleaning these works is problematic too. What is the best way to clean these works?

### II.3 Frame as integral part of the work



Daan van Golden, *Wales Picture*, 1967 (1975)

Works by Daan van Golden are often framed in golden frames that are sealed with multiplex and tiny nails around the entire frame. The frame cannot be opened without damaging it. Van Golden's work often suffers from discolouration and patches in the image. This damage is likely caused by the discharge of gases from the framed materials. What is the value of the frame made by Van Golden when compared to the deterioration that the framing is causing? What treatments can be performed to stabilise the photograph in the frame and what are the consequences of the treatment for the authenticity of the work?



## II.4 Hand-coloured or otherwise retouched photographs



Gilbert & George, *Yell*, 1992, 253 x 213 cm Silver Gelatin Print, hand-coloured

Until around 2004, Gilbert & George made black-and-white photographs (gelatine silver prints) that they then coloured by hand. The early colours are green and red and later (in the 1990s) many other colours were introduced. How are these photographs coloured and with what materials? We know that a number of the dyes are extremely sensitive to light but how much light can they tolerate? These works are exhibited a lot too...

We witness this same problem with colour photographs that are also sensitive to exposure to light. Can we create a policy for the measurement and monitoring of colour photographs and photographs that have been coloured by hand?

## II.5 Rare and new photographic materials



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled # 581*, 2016, 156,8 x 116,2 cm, Dye Sublimation Metal Print (ChromaLuxe®)

It occurs that artists use photographic materials that are not in common use. New photographic processes continually enter the market. Cindy Sherman, for example, has printed her work on ChromaLuxe. We do not know enough about these procedures to take the right decisions with regard to exhibiting and storage. No research is available on these processes, materials, finishes and the stability of the materials.

### II.6 Unprotected photographs (unglazed)



Covered with fabric



Scratches

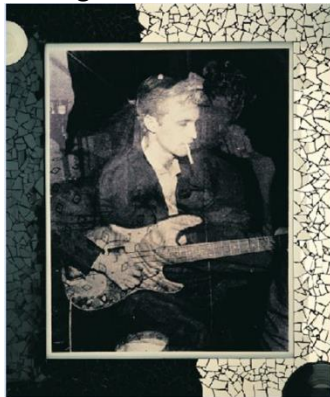


Imprint from bubble wrap

How can unglazed works be best protected from soiling, contamination and mechanical damage? Should depot frames be constructed? Which type of fabric is most suitable as a cover?

### AD III Fundamental research

#### III.1 Signs of deterioration



Henk Tas, *Jet*, 1989, 129 x 160 cm, Silver Gelatin Print

This work was framed by the artist with a frame he had made himself. He framed the majority of his work himself and the frames are an integral part of the work of art. A cloudy haze is visible on the inside of the glass that the work is framed with. Is this glass degradation? What are the consequences of this for the work of art?

#### III.2 Value and authenticity of the exhibition copy when compared to the original

Colour photographs are sensitive to light and can consequently only be exhibited for a limited number of hours each year. To avoid the premature discolouration of valuable colour photographs exhibition copies are made and displayed during exhibitions. What are the requirements for an exhibition copy? What do you do if an artist wishes a new print of his photograph and wants that to be seen as 'the real work'? How can the purchase of a second print help in the monitoring of a first print?

### III.3 Theme photograph as an image or material object

Underlying research is required to explore the (ethical) issues regarding the relation between original photographs, with all the inherent information that is stored in them, and new (exhibition) prints that represent the image but are disengaged from the original medium, process and finish.



Stephen Shore, *Beverly Blvd at La Brea Ave. 21 June, 1975 & 2014*, Chromogenic Print / Inkjet



## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### **6 The digital environment and the Photographic Identification Tool**

A website/digital tool will be developed within the scope of the project. On the one hand as a tool for the identification of photographic processes, media and finishes, on the other hand for the determination of appropriate preventative conservation measures. We use the Plastic Identification Tool that we developed in the pilot project Collection Knowledge 2.0 as an example. On the one hand a useful standard, and on the other there will be a lot of differences because photography is more complicated. The website/digital tool will be filled during the course of the project. It will contain the ten from the project (the ten iconic works) with more detailed information about the ten photographic works of art, the issues for which they are good examples and the conservation of them. The research information comprises texts and images. This can be accessed through an interactive computer programme (wizard) from various perspectives.

An important part of the website/digital tool is the decision tree. Based on the questions about the outward appearance of a material and possible visible damage phenomena, and through deploying the steps from, the decision tree, the user arrives at a specific photographic process, medium, finish and, from there, the preventative conservation solutions. The explanatory terminology list is linked to existing thesauri where possible. The website/tool is bi-lingual and interactive.

See:

[https://sbmk.nl/en/projects/plastics\\_projects](https://sbmk.nl/en/projects/plastics_projects)

<https://sbmk.nl/en/tool/plastics>



## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### **7 Communication plan and use of logos**

As was the case with the pilot project Plastics, the Photography project will not be accompanied by an extensive communication plan as a consequence of the nature of the project. In the first instance it is focused on museums themselves and not particularly on other target groups or the general public. The regular channels will be employed. The project, provided with logos from the funds below, will be mentioned in the annual reports, newsletters and on the SBMK, RCE, UvA and museum partner websites at the very least. Of course, if one of the project participants communicates publicly directly or indirectly, the funds will be mentioned, and logos displayed.

In the digital portal in which the project will result, the logos will be clearly visible for ever.

In the second phase of the project, museums can choose to conduct part of the research in the exhibition hall to generate publicity that is in line with their communication policy, with mention of the funds' sponsorship. During this phase, the photographic restorer Clara von Waldthausen will hold lectures for the public in the museums where we are at work, for which the same applies.

It is the intention to conclude the project with a symposium in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Collection Building. Of course, this symposium will go hand in hand with a publicity plan that focuses on the wider field and the public at large. The funds will have a prominent place in all this.

Also, during presentations of the project at (international) symposia and congresses, the funds will be mentioned.

## 8 Budget project Collection Knowledge 2.0/Photography

### 1. Own contribution organisations\*

Employee hours RCE, SBMK and participating museums 3302 hours at 50 Euro*	165,000
Hours UvA, 3 years 0.32 FTE	162,500
	<hr/>
	<b>327,500</b>

### 2. Direct costs

<b>Project leader</b>	64,000
3 years at 44 weeks, 8 hours per week at 60 Euro	
<b>Photographic specialist 1 to be trained</b>	80,000
3 years at 44 weeks, 16 hours per week at 38 Euro	
<b>Photographic specialist 2 to be trained</b>	80,000
3 years at 44 weeks, 16 hours per week at 38 Euro	
<b>Trainer and researcher</b>	180,000
3 years, 0.40 FTE	
<b>Expert supervision phase 1, restorer next to trainers</b>	
12 months, 8 hours per month, at 98.30 Euro	9,500
<b>Expert terminology workshops, restorer next to trainers</b>	
40 hours at 98.30 Euro	4,000
<b>Expert supervision phase 2</b>	
10 x 4 hours at 98.30 Euro	4,000
<b>Production costs sample set (40 copies)**</b>	52,500
<b>Design of data structure/layout of website</b>	25,000
<b>Translation costs</b>	12,000
<b>Concluding symposium</b>	16,500
<b>Contingencies</b>	25,000
	<hr/>
	<b>552,500</b>
	<b>880,000</b>

### BACKING

<b>Partners' own contribution in hours (UvA, RCE, museums) (allocated)</b>	327,500
<b>Stichting Behoud Moderne Kunst (project leader) (allocated)</b>	32,000
<b>RCE (allocated)</b>	30,000
<b>Archeoflex 1st year (allocated)</b>	28,000
<b>Contribution museums in Euro (10 x 3000) (allocated)</b>	30,000
<b>Workshop participants in addition to participating museums (already registered)</b>	37,500
<b>Mondriaan Fonds (allocated)</b>	150,000
<b>Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds</b>	25,000
<b>Gieskes-Strijbis Fonds (allocated)</b>	200,000
<b>Sale of 27 sample sets</b>	20,000
	<hr/>
	<b>880,000</b>

\*Explanation of own contribution on following page

<b>RCE research department phase 1, 2 researchers/supervisors</b>	
2 researchers, 16 months, 16 hours per month at 50*	25,600
<b>Sounding board group phase 1, 5 participants UvA, RCE, SBMK</b>	
4 x 6 hours incl. preparation, 5 participants at 50	6,000
<b>Sounding board group phase 2, 5 participants UvA, RCE, SBMK</b>	
2 x 6 hours incl. preparation, 5 participants at 50	3,000
<b>Various work groups 20 participants</b>	
5 x a 1/2 day = 20 hours at 50 x 20 participants	20,000
preparation: 5 x 1/2-day x 20 participants	20,000
Travel costs 20 participants x 5	2,500
<b>Workshops process identification phase 1, 2 employees per collection</b>	
3 days for 2 museum employees	24,000
48 hours at 50 x 10 partners	
<b>Collection surveys on the job phase 2, 2 employees per collection</b>	
7 days for 2 museum employees	56,000
112 hours at 50 x 10 partners	
<b>database and website; submitting information and feedback,</b>	
<b>1 employee per collection</b>	
2 days for 1 employee = 16 hours at 50 x 10 partners	<u>8,000</u>
	<b><u>165,100</u></b>

\*Calculation rate of 50 Euro is based on an average hourly rate that RCE and museums employ for national and European projects.

\*\* 40 example processes and types of paper in each sample set, at an average of 35 Euro each.  
The intention is to compile 40 sets: 13 for the project participants and photographic team and 27 for sale.

Budget is based on ten participating museums





## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### Appendix 1

#### SBMK

SBMK has been involved in the problems facing the conservation, restoration and (re)installation of modern and contemporary art for twenty years. The SBMK network comprises 26 partners who contribute financially or otherwise, through for example participation in a board or steering committee, to activities and research. In addition to museums, these include company collections, RCE Art Collections, the University of Amsterdam, Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg and LIMA (video and new media). In addition, SBMK involves (prospective) professionals in management and conservation of modern art, who contribute to the development and dissemination of knowledge. This includes not just restorers, collection managers, registrars and management/conservation employees, but also curators, artists, art historians, scientists, theorists and lawyers.

#### Examples

One of the regular SBMK activities is the Platform Conservation Issues. During this platform's meetings it becomes apparent how the capacities that the museums do dispose of, can be put to optimum use when a problem arises that is relevant for multiple collections. It is a platform for discussing such problems with all the disciplines who could contribute and wish to exchange knowledge about this. This sometimes leads to joint action, such as for a project concerning site-specific works of art by Richard Serra. This SBMK research project, exploring the consequences of the changing context for his works, in which four Dutch museums participated, ultimately resulted in the symposium *Serra on the Move* in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (November 2014). This joint action formed part of the side programme during the exhibition *Doorlopend in beweging, een wandeling door de geschiedenis van Serra's Wassende Bogen* in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. The project was recently continued with an international symposium *Revisited: Site Specificity in Recent Outdoor Sculptures*, organised by Situation Kunst (Bochum, Germany, 2016), in collaboration with the Art History Institute from Münster University.

#### Examples of collaborative projects:

Collection Knowledge 2.0, Pilot Plastics (2017-2019)  
Conservation Media Art Collection Netherlands (2010-2013)  
PRACTICS (2008-2011)  
Inside Installations (2004-2007)  
Artists interviews/archives (1998-2013)  
Modern Art: Who Cares? (1996)

#### Publications

##### Website Plastics

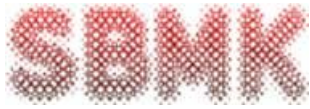
[https://www.sbmknl.nl/projecten/plastics\\_projects](https://www.sbmknl.nl/projecten/plastics_projects).

##### Digital Plastic Identification Tool

<https://plastic.tool.cultureelerfgoed.nl/>

##### Films

Two films made for a wider (museum) public, available via internet:  
Installation Art: Who Cares? <http://www.sbmknl/pubs/detail/id/7>  
Digital Art: Who Cares? <http://www.sbmknl/pubs/detail/id/22>



## PROJECT PLAN COLLECTION KNOWLEDGE 2.0/PHOTOGRAPHY

### Books

Beerkens, L. et al, eds. (2012), *The Artist Interview. Guidelines and Practice for Conservation and Presentation of Contemporary Art*, Jap Sam Books, Heijningen.

*Born Digital Kunstwerken in Nederland* (2012), Collaborative project for Virtual Platform, Digitaal Erfgoed Nederland, Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art and Netherlands Media Art Institute.

Also digital: <http://www.den.nl/art/uploads/files/Publicaties/Publicatie-born-digital-kunst-klein.pdf>

Scholte, T. and Wharton, G. eds (2011). *Inside Installations: Theory and Practice in the Care of Complex Artworks*, Amsterdam University Press.

*Schermen met auteursrecht. Auteursrechtelijke aspecten van het online ontsluiten van videokunst* (2010). Collaborative project SBMK, Netherlands Media Art Institute and Kennisland.

Also digital: <http://www.sbmkn.nl/uploads/schermen-met.pdf>

Wijers, G. et al, eds. (2003), *De houdbaarheid van videokunst/Sustainability of video art*, Foundation for the Conservation of Contemporary Art .

Also digital: [http://www.sbmkn.nl/uploads/conservering\\_1tm80.pdf](http://www.sbmkn.nl/uploads/conservering_1tm80.pdf)

Hummelen, IJ. & Sillé, D. eds. (2005 [1998]), *Modern Art: Who Cares? An interdisciplinary research project and an international symposium on the conservation of modern and contemporary art*, Archetype Publications, Amsterdam.