EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN VIEWPOINT

A WORKSHOP BASED ON HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Centre Pompidou

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EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN VIEWPOINT

For children aged 3 to 8 with their families

Photography means putting the head, eye and heart in the same line of sight.
Henri Cartier-Bresson

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TRAVELLING EXHIBITION
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1 – GENERAL PRESENTATION

In the digital age, everything becomes a subject to photograph. Pressing the shutter release has become an automatic gesture for both adults and children, from a very young age.

Can photography still be considered an art today, or is taking a "good" picture just a matter of chance? Multiples and throwaways have replaced the unique picture selected from all the rest by the sharp-eyed photographer.
The project "A chacun son point de vue" consists of a series of activities to educate the eye while having fun. Framing a detail, changing the scale or viewing angle, moving up to a subject "stealthily" (as Cartier-Bresson put it), making play with shadows and light – all this involves savouring aspects of everyday life with the eyes, to get as close to things as possible. Zooming in on a detail, a substance or a colour opens up a world of sensations.

The workshop is an opportunity for children to build up a specific vocabulary linked to the way they read images. Using words while exploring photography enables them to appropriate reality and see their daily environment through different eyes.
The basic goals of this workshop are to stage images so that children can learn to look at things more carefully, and enrich their cultural heritage through the discovery of a film and a selection of photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson.

The educational approach of the Atelier des Enfants means that young audiences take part in experiments before analysing what they produce. By inventing little scenes using the photographic backgrounds and accessories, children create images that can be endlessly renewed. Little by little, they acquire the necessary distance to read and decipher them.

2 – DISPOSITIFS ET ANIMATIONS

A – The photo studio

This centralises the essential stages for young budding photographers:

-Making viewfinders with the aid of patterns, to be cut out and assembled by the children or their families. This tool for exploring is useful during this session and afterwards as well, to continue looking at the environment in a different way.
The children take their viewfinder home as a souvenir of their visit.

-Posing; staging oneself
The art of the portrait is like "*placing a question mark over someone.*" HCB.
Each child in turn poses in front of the panoramic background to create a trompe l'oeil image, as though they were actually there!

-Observing
Starting from this situation, children explore their model from different points of view, in their first photographic approach.

-Taking a photograph
"If there is no emotion, if there is no shock, if you don't react to sensitivity, you shouldn't take photos. It's the photo that takes us." HCB
The staged scene is recorded using a tablet. All the photographs of the previous days are displayed in a loop on a second tablet, showing the wide range of attitudes and points of view.

-**Drawing**
"*I've always adored painting. As a child, I did it on Thursdays and Sundays, and dreamed about it on the other days.*" HCB
An additional way for older children to sharpen their eyes. As a child, Henri Cartier-Bresson began to draw very early on. He illustrated his letters with little drawings and filled his notebooks with sketches. He gradually stopped painting when he started to draw. He went back to drawing at the end of his life.

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© Centre Pompidou – Photo: Hervé Véronèse

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B - Creating small scenes

Six large photographic backgrounds created by the photographer Hervé Véronèse are hung up at child height on telescopic supports. Using these, children invent their own sets. They add materials to them, and place a few figurines in the foreground. The elements can be in the same register (architecture, accessories, atmosphere, lighting, etc.) or children can try out the effect of something completely different, thus giving another meaning to the initial image. What element could be placed in front, or behind? Through play, children begin to get an idea of scale and perspective.

By looking through their viewfinders, children discover that the initial image and the constructed scene are now one and the same!
A webcam linked to a screen enables them to use all the functions of the camera (composition, movement, choice of viewing angles, scale, etc.) while showing the film to everyone on the screen.

C- Different compositions

-7 panels with a series of geometric cut-outs make it possible to isolate details in the image
(below and opposite)

"It is so difficult to look. We are used to thinking; we reflect all the time, fairly well, but we don't teach people to look… Learning to look takes a very long time". HCB

D – Different lighting

In the end, it is a matter of giving life and movement to the scene, as though prefiguring a filmed sequence.
Children can give life to the image by moving their torches, as a source of light, over their set.

They observe that the direction of the light alters things, with front- and back-lighting, shadows and variations in the intensity of the light.

SOME EXAMPLES:

ACCESSORIES

PHOTO BACKGROUNDS

**La Défense: Vertical world with
towers in glass and steel**

**Accessories:
Blocks of black and white foam
Figures on different scales**

**The quays: facades and rhythms in
the surfaces**

**Accessories: houses, tower blocks,
wooden blocks**

➢ **SOME EXAMPLES**

The Seine:
Water, reflections, vegetation

Accessories:
Animals, vegetation, plastic blocks

Tree-lined avenue:
Vegetation

Accessories:
Animals, vegetation

> **SOME EXAMPLES**

Roofs of Paris

Accessories:
Animals, huts, pots, pipes, etc.

Arc de Triomphe and Champs Elysées

Accessories:
Cars, trees, lines, arches, pavements, etc.

3 – A FILM

With a selection of photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson

"Taking photographs is an attitude, a way of being, a way of life." HCB

Photographs - portraits, objects, figures, unusual scenes and so on are selected to stimulate the curiosity of young children.

Compositions, zooms and visual animations make for a fun and lively first discovery of Henri Cartier-Bresson's work.

The film encourages children to look at the world around them, together with the work of other photographers.

4 - **SOME CREATIVE AVENUES TO BE EXPLORED :**

The partner can set up the following at its own initiative:

• An exhibition based on photographers of its choice
• A library area with a selection of photo books/documentation on the history of photography
• Workshops for scientific and/or artistic experiments
• Contact photograms (Man Ray)
• Stronger partnerships with photo libraries, the Maison de la Science, etc.
• Photographic rambles with children and their families

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5 — TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Insurance: covered by the Centre Pompidou
Minimum exhibition area required: around 150 m2
Volume: 20 m3
Weight: 500 kg
Exhibition components: 4 cases
Storage surface: 15 m3

EXPENSES TO BE COVERED BY THE PARTNER
INSTITUTION:

✓ Rental charge: on request
✓ Transport there and back

✓ Creation of signage (title, introductory text, generic panel,
   quotations)
✓ Equipment for the exhibition:
- Provision of around thirty cushions for the film screening area
- 10 black floor mats (plastic flooring or thin carpeting,) around
2m x 2 m
- 7 small bases
- Computer equipment: 2 screens and 2 DVD players

✓ Equipment for activities:
- Around 20 pocket torches (e.g. Maglite)
- One drawing book or 2 sheets of A4 paper per child, colouring
crayons, scissors, tubes of glue
- One printed viewfinder per child

✓ Staff to be provided (assembly and dismantling)
✓ Coordinators to be provided (1 coordinator per 15 children)
International :
- Translation of the texts
- Interpreter for the Centre Pompidou teams (assembly and
dismantling)

MISSIONS (4 missions)

-1 mission (travel, accommodation, daily meal allowance) for the
exhibition curator to oversee assembly and dismantling, train the
coordinators and supervise the first activities.

- 1 mission (travel, accommodation, daily meal allowance) for
the travelling exhibition manager to oversee assembly and
dismantling, the inspection report and the pack-up of the
workshop components.