"Looking at photographs of the past in general, it seems that the last thing we examine is the photograph itself."

- Socratis Mavrommatis

Course Description
The Greek archaeological photographer, Socratis Mavrommatis, observed that when we look at photographs of antiquity we often privilege the subject over the photograph. In fact, one of the unwritten tenets of archaeological photography is that of impartial depiction. This effectively implies that the "hand" of the photographer should be invisible. But can it actually be made invisible, and to what extent? Perhaps we have desensitized our vision when examining archaeological photographs, considering only the subject and not the photograph that delivers it? In recent years, the photograph itself has become the focus of study, thus transforming it from being a mere document to a cultural object in its own right.

By their nature, photographs and archaeological evidence may appear to document "the facts." Reading a photograph or an artefact at face value, however, can be misleading. In truth, "the facts" are often presented by people with varying agendas. Therefore, one of the primary objectives of this course is to learn to interrogate images to discover their broader context, since photographers and archaeologists are as much cultural producers as they are observers and scientists.

The study of the relationship between photography and archaeology requires a multi-disciplinary approach. We must be practitioners and theorists, researchers and analysts, approaching the depiction of archaeological subjects from a variety of angles. Through lectures and through viewing the work of major figures in the field you will become familiar with the development of the medium alongside the discipline of archaeology. Through site visits, classroom activities and hands-on experience you will gain insight into the mechanics of photography and how it shapes vision. Through examining case-studies and conducting your own research you will discover how photography has often held up a mirror to the greater cultural contexts of archaeology.

Greece is an ideal setting for this course: photography and scientific archaeology were born at roughly the same time and the histories of both disciplines are intricately connected. To explore this relationship, the class will visit archaeological sites, photographic archives and museums. Students will also be required to conduct visits in their own time to complete a photography-based research project.

The goals of the course are:

- To learn to “read” and interrogate photographic images;
- To gain the ability to evaluate archaeological photographs both for their success as a visual record and/or as part of a historical narrative;
- To acquire an understanding and appreciation for the role of photography in archaeology;
- To foster an understanding and appreciation of the art of photography.
- And to develop visual and critical thinking skills relevant to this class and beyond.

Upon completion of the course students are expected:

- To be knowledgeable about historical developments in, and theoretical approaches to, archaeological photography and photography in general;
- To be able to recognize, describe, analyze, and interpret visual images;
- And to be familiar with strategies with which to approach photographic images.

This course does not require any familiarity with photography or photographic processes. Since it is designed as a higher-level art history course, previous knowledge of Western art is expected. Some knowledge of archaeological processes and/or the ancient world is helpful but not necessary.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explore, compare, and contrast historical narratives and artistic vision.
• Exercise critical thinking while looking, reading, writing and speaking about photographers and photographic images.
• Reflect on the importance of the still image both as a recording tool for archaeological work and as a source of information itself with respect to the cultural context of the archaeological process.
• Reflect on and engage with the basic mechanics of the production of archaeological photographs.
• Compare and contrast different perspectives on the same subject by authors and photographers with divergent backgrounds and agendas.
• Craft thoughtful, well-organized and edited, thesis-driven essays in a clear and comprehensible style.
• Employ textual evidence in support of a clearly-stated analytic argument.
• Communicate ideas through images and writing.

Course Resources and Activities

Reading

We will read a wide variety of texts, from historical accounts to essays on image theory. There are a few core texts that will constitute our primary reading and will be required reading in preparation for our lectures and discussions. There is also a longer "reference bibliography" from which you will be reading certain selections that will help you directly with your coursework.

You will be responsible to hand in one reading response assignment each week (see reading response assignments below).

Writing

Writing is an important way of communicating ideas and forms an essential part of this course. You will be expected to present clear, well-written arguments that are backed up by research and observation. Students who want to take their writing to the next level and earn better grades are encouraged to consult the CYA academic skills advisor!

Students are also expected to look up any words they are unfamiliar with. Vocabulary building is an important part of any college course. You may be tested on your understanding of the vocabulary in the assigned texts during quizzes and of course will be expected to use correct vocabulary when necessary in describing concepts and processes.

Midterm

You will have a short midterm exam in which you will be asked to respond to some of the reading assignments.

Presentations

Each student in this class will be required to give a short presentation (5 minutes max) on a specific photograph. Photographs will be assigned during the first class. A list of photographs is set out below. After each presentation, 3 students will be chosen to ask a question of the presenter.

Each presentation should contain:

• a) a brief (1 minute) description of the photographer: who were/are they? What was/is their background? etc.
• b) a brief (2 minute) description of the subject matter, content and the style of the photograph. For example, who or what is pictured in the photograph? What observation can you make about the subject matter and content? How does the photograph relate to the idea of “looking at or through” the image? How does the historical context of the photograph impact its meaning?

• c) a consideration of the image under review: what do you think the photographer is trying to impart / say / convey and/or achieve with their photograph? What do you make of the mood, tone, style and content of the photography? Do you think it is an effective / successful image, and if so why (and if not, why not)?

Photographs for student presentations:

• Petros Moraites, the Parthenon “liberated,” 1870
• View of the Parthenon from the west with the Erechtheum in the background. Athens, 1907 Underwood & Underwood
• Delphi, Greece, 1894, the rediscovery of a statue of Antinous
• Fred Boissonnas, Parthenon, 1908
• Nelly’s, The Hungarian dancer Nikolska in the Parthenon. Athens, Greece 1929
• Herbert List, Athens. 1937. "Marble statue from Antikythera I"
• Raising of the Swastika: German Federal Archives, 1941
• Alison Frantz, West Frieze, Parthenon, 1958
• Voula Papaoannou, Women carrying stones. Epirus, Greece, circa 1945
• Andreas Embiricos, Elefsina in a 1955 photograph
• Dimitris Harissiadis, Archaeological finds from Piraeus, 1959"
• Anagnostopoulos Bros. OE, Melina in front of the Parthenon, 1985
• Martin Parr, Athens, Acropolis, 1991, from the series Small World - A Global Project
• Socrates Mavrommatis, Cella Floor, Conservation works on the Athenian Acropolis (1975-2002)"

Debates

During the course we will engage in classroom debates based on our readings. You will be expected to present arguments for or against ideas presented in these readings. An example is set forth below:

The filmmaker Errol Morris says “believing is seeing, not the other way around.”

Archaeological photography aims to be a scientific, unbiased recording of what is seen. Is this possible or is what is perceived always skewed through the interpretation of a human operator?

Argue for or against this statement using specific examples from archaeological photography.

Photography

This course presents a multidisciplinary approach to the subject. In order to put yourself in the shoes of the photographer and gain an inside understanding of the photographer's thoughts and processes that result in a final image, you will be required to produce some practice-based work. All photography work created during the course will be posted directly to an Instagram account created specifically for this purpose. By the end of the course you will have a “feed” that will represent all of your visual investigations during this course. (If you are not familiar with Instagram you will find some tutorials here: https://help.instagram.com)

Several of our meetings will be on-site at archives, museums or archaeological sites. You are not required to have any specialist equipment to participate. Where equipment is not provided, a decent smartphone camera will suffice. If you have your own camera, so much the better.

Your course Instagram feed will contain images posted as follows:
Weekly photography:

You will be asked for Instagram post per week that addresses the question: How are photography and archaeology interrelated? These images may also form part of your Final Project; (For more information see assignment description below)

Your in-class assignments (completed during our class sessions and resulting photos added to your feed):

- A single image from a large format field camera during one of two site visits;
- Object photographs taken during an object photography studio session;
- On-site photography assignment from a field trip to an archaeological site;
- Photographic archives assignment.
For their final project, you will address the question: How are photography and archaeology interrelated? You will come up with an answer that is put forth through words and photographs.

Over the course of this semester we are going to concern ourselves repeatedly with the ideas framed most poignantly by the following statements:

"Documentary photography has nothing whatsoever to do with art, but it is an art for all that."
- Walker Evans (photographer)

“Every image of the past that is not recognised by the present as one of its own threatens to disappear irretrievably.”
- Walter Benjamin (philosopher)

We will be discussing and debating the ideas that arise from these statements all semester. We will look at different ways these concepts manifest themselves when photography is applied to archaeology and vice versa. Finally, considering the interrelation of these two fields will lead us to a greater understanding of how we interpret material culture as a whole.

In order to arrive at your response, you will be taking the following steps:

**Step One:**
Read and reread the Evans and Benjamin quotes. Be sure you know exactly what they are saying and understand the greater context of their statements (this will be gained through your readings and our discussions). How do they address the question of interrelatedness?

**Step Two:**
Think about the photographs we will study this semester and ask yourself: how do they address the question of interrelatedness? What styles do they use? What approach do they take? Are they archaeological in spirit or photographic? What is their attitude to their subject?

Then, consider your current surroundings and think what the most meaningful trace of the past for you (it doesn’t have to be ancient!) and why? How would you incorporate this into a single photograph that both displays the subject but communicates its meaning for you?

**Step Three:**
Start to assemble a portfolio of photographs (yours and/or the work of others). These can be drawn from your weekly Instagram photos, your photographic research in archives and books, or they can be generated entirely for the purpose of this project. Ideally you should choose between 6 and 8 photographs that address the question. At the same time, you should be making notes about your choices and your intentions. In addition to your photographic portfolio you will need to produce an essay (2,500 words) which answers the interrelation question and explains your choices and intentions along with the relevant bibliography.

**Step Four:**
You will present your paper to our class during finals week. You will conduct a 5 minute presentation showing your photographs via digital projection.
Reading Response Assignments

You will be required to write a reading response every week that reading is assigned and it will be due before the beginning of class.

For your weekly reading response assignment, you will:

1. Carefully read the assigned texts
2. Write an analysis of the assigned texts.

Your response should explore the significance of the reading, using your own words and in essay form. Do not summarize: instead, analyze!

Some questions you might consider:

- What is the subject/argument of the assigned reading and why is it significant?
- What is the thesis or main theme of the reading?
- What is the perspective of the author? (In other words, what is the author’s position, slant, or opinion?)
- Do you agree or disagree with the reading, and why?

You should not attempt to answer all of these; instead focus on one or two and discuss them in a meaningful way.

LENGTH: Approximately 250 words

DUE: Before the beginning of class

NOTE

- Responses should be uploaded in PDF form to the assignment created in Moodle.
- Late responses will not be accepted.
- You will be allowed to miss 2 reading responses with no penalty to your grade.
- If you are involved in a scheduled class debate, you will be exempt from the reading response for that class.
Photography Assignment

You will be expected to post at least one image per week to an Instagram account created especially for this purpose. If you are already an Instagram user, you should have no problem switching between accounts. Accounts will be assigned on the first day of class.

Posts can be in the form of a single image, an image sequence or even a video. All posts must be accompanied by a caption explaining accurately the subject matter and can have a personal observation.

Make sure when photographing:

- You **always** consider every element of your composition!!
- Lighting and focus are as you want them.
- You apply any desired post-production editing before posting.

The most important thing is that they are considered images and express your view on a particular subject matter.

Posts will address the question: How are photography and archaeology interrelated?

Archaeology uses photography to document and record, but art photography also uses archaeology as subject matter and archaeological processes to express ideas. To help you think about this consider some of the following ideas:

“Digging in the ground and revealing a fragment has some kind of affinity with photography itself, understood as a medium of fragmentary traces of the past, fragments that cannot explain themselves.”
– David Campany

"Photographers found in the process of monumentalization, ready-made themes, which were staged and framed for them by archaeologists."
- Yannis Hamilakis

"Even at its most seemingly straightforward, then, archaeological photography records how a site virtually never looks, but rather how its directors want it to be for the record."
- Frederick Bohrer

“The dividing line between a work that is directed towards art and another made for the purpose of recording is artificial and subject to a suggested interpretation, a suggestion, finally, of whatever is required to be seen in a specific work."
- Costis Antoniadis

“Even when photographs are acknowledged as artefacts, they may also take on the status of found objects, harnessing the magic of the real…”
- Michael Shanks

You are never more than a few minutes’ walk from archaeological and historical sites in Athens. If you are feeling a lack of inspiration try some of the following:

- Do a before and after shot. Find an image of a monument in the library and go out and take the exact same image from the same vantage point.
- Take a short walk to any of the nearby archaeological sites to CYA - the Panathenaic Stadium, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the Byzantine Museum Gardens, Aristotle’s Lyceum, and many more! Create an image that juxtaposes something within the site with something contemporary. What does
this tell us about then and now? Consider how your photograph might be viewed 100 years from
now? 500 years from now?

• Pick a monument and upload a different picture of it every week. Pictures can be separated by time,
intentions (i.e. archaeological research, postcards, advertising, news, etc.), author (photographer), and
more.

• Go look at photographs of sites and objects in the library. Take a photo of one of the images that
grabs your attention. Consider what grabbed your attention, the subject of the image or the image
itself?

• Remember, photography allows you to manipulate your subject matter in many ways! Try taking
images that create some sort of abstraction from your subject. Juxtapose these with a record shot of
the same subject (showing your subject clearly and precisely).

• Consider photographs and reconstructions of monuments. Find reconstructions (drawings, digital
models, etc. from the CYA library or online) of ancient monuments. View these alongside your
photographs of the actual sites. What information does each representation provide? What
information do they not provide? How are each faithful/faithful representations of what they
depict?

• Experiment with black and white. Many photographers prefer black and white when documenting
sculpture and architecture. How does it change the way you view the subject? Does it show it more
clearly? Less clearly?

• Photograph people interacting with archaeological sites. One of the things modern archaeology has
done is to make many archaeological sites into open-air museums, thus removing them in a way from
the city fabric. Athens, and Greece in general, has many sites that are not fenced off and exist within
the everyday life of the city/countryside.

• Focus on a theme like “Greek heroes.” Whenever you visit museums or are walking about in the city
and you see statues (old or new!), photograph them.

• Compare aerial images with “on the ground” images. Find an aerial image of a site or monument from
the internet (top-down views like those from Google Earth and oblique from drone, balloon etc.) and
compare it to one of your own photographs of the site. How does it change your perception of the site
seeing it from above versus experiencing it (and photographing it) on the ground?
Course Requirements
You will be assessed based on your assignments, your presentation, your final project and your classroom participation.

Final grades will be based upon the following:

- 20% Informed class participation, including in-class presentation
- 30% Final project
- 20% Reading responses
- 20% Weekly photography posts
- 10% Midterm Exam

Grades are intended to give you a sense of the quality of a particular piece of work: roughly speaking, a B means that you have done a good job with the writing, the ideas, and the organization of the work; a C conveys that the work lacks some important qualities and has some problems, while an A means that the work is exemplary in some key ways: the writing is particularly clear, the ideas thoroughly treated, the organization of the presentation well considered and effective.

Class Participation: You must attend class having completed all reading assignments. You will be expected to engage fully in class discussions. The quality of your class participation will affect your final grade.

Use of Laptops: Electronic devices may not be used in class to access readings or other materials. In this class, our focus is on creating a learning community and developing your critical thinking and ability to discuss and debate ideas. All research shows that students who use electronic devices during class are less engaged, make fewer friends, and master less of the material. So, this rule is designed to benefit you and help you succeed. We will occasionally do in-class projects or research that may call for the use of electronic devices, but you will be told when you can use them.

Attendance: Students are expected to report for classes promptly. CYA regards attendance in class and on-site as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately in the Student Affairs Office.

Policy on Original Work: Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. (Check Student handbook, pg. 9)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Director of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Books, Course Materials, Moodle
Frederick N. Bohrer, Photography and Archaeology
John K. Papadopoulos, Antiquity & Photography
Mary Warner Marien, Photography: A Cultural History
Brian Leigh Molyneaux, The Cultural Life of Images
Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, True Illusions- Early Photographs of Athens
Naomi Rosenblum, A World History of Photography
Melissa Publishing, Greece Through Photographs
Ansel Adams, The Camera
Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida
Susan Sontag, On Photography
Errol Morris, Seeing is Believing
Benaki Museum, The Creative Photograph in Archaeology
Ian Jeffrey, How to Read a Photograph
Peter G. Dorrell, Photography in Archaeology and Conservation
Ian Farrell, Complete Guide to Digital Photography
Terry Barrett, Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images

Suggested viewing:
John Berger, Ways of Seeing
David Hockney, Secret Knowledge
BBC: The Genius of Photography: Fixing the Shadows
BBC: The Genius of Photography: Documents for Artists
BBC: The Genius of Photography: Right Time, Right Place
WEEK 1: Intro - How Technology Shapes Vision

GROUP WORK: Photograph comparison exercise
READING: Brian Leigh Molyneaux, "Introduction: The Cultural Life of Images"

WEEK 2: Object Studio

ACTIVITY: Object photography studio session at CYA.
READING: Frederick N. Bohrer, “The Image as Object,” Photography and Archaeology
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 3: Reading a Photograph

GROUP WORK: Photograph comparison exercise
PRESENTATIONS: Petros Moraites, Underwood & Underwood, Institute Francais, Fred Poisons
READING: Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida, Part I pp. 3-60
REFERENCE: Terry Barrett, "Interpreting Photographs," Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 4: Art of the Document

ACTIVITY: Visit Byzantine Museum and Lyceum
READING: Costis Antoniadis, “Photography: Documentation and Art,” The Creative Photograph in Archaeology
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 5: The Large Format Field Camera

ACTIVITY: Outdoor photography session with a large format field camera
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 6: The Real and the Actual

DEBATE: "Believing is seeing, not the other way around" (Errol Morris)
PRESENTATIONS: Nelly’s, Herbert List, German Federal Archives, Alison Frantz
Errol Morris, “The Case of the Inappropriate Alarm Clock"
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 7: The Archive - Visit to the Benaki Museum Photographic Archives

ACTIVITY: Visit the Benaki Museum Photographic Archives
READING: Frederick N. Bohrer, “Meaning or the Archive,” Photography and Archaeology; Allan Sekula, “Reading and Archive: Photography Between Labour and Capital” The Photography Reader
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 8: Studying Antiquity Through Photographs

GROUP WORK: Photograph comparison exercise
PRESENTATIONS: Voula Papaioannou, Andreas Embricos, Dimitris Harissiadis
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 9: Photography, Archaeology and Propaganda

DEBATE: TBA
PRESENTATIONS: Anagnostopoulos Bros. Martin Parr, Socrates Mavrommatis
READING: Yiannis Hamilakis, The Photographic and the Archaeological: The ‘Other Acropolis’, Camera Graeca
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 10: The Whole Picture

ACTIVITY: Visit to the Athenian Agora Excavations
READING: Frederick N. Bohrer, “Travel, or Presence,” Photography and Archaeology
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 11: The “Digital Age”

ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting

WEEK 12: Art and Artefacts for the Future

GROUP WORK: Photograph comparison exercise
READING: Frederick N. Bohrer, “Art, or Reframing,” Photography and Archaeology; Diana Mille, Creative Intention and New Vision Photography, The Creative Photograph in Archaeology
ASSIGNMENT: Reading response + weekly photography posting