

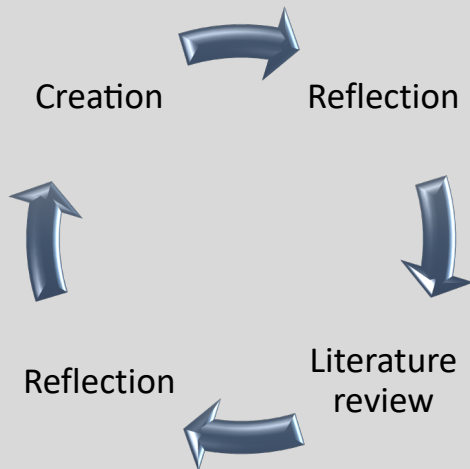


Contextual Presentation

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(1720251)

An Introduction...

- My practice is focused on the creation of **experimental images** that aim to challenge people's **perceptions** by playing with **light, shadow casts**, and **abstraction** to arrive at **surreal** outcomes
- My methodology is **practice-led** as I am driven by a series of questions that I evaluate through my own **reflective practice** and appropriate literature review (Boyle, 2015).
- **Reflection and experience (creation)** come hand in hand in my practice



We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience (Dewey, 1933, p. 78)

Reflection is not on experience but is an experience (Varela et al., 1993, p. 27)

An Introduction...

- Two fundamental aspects that I am considering in my practice:

REPRESENTATION



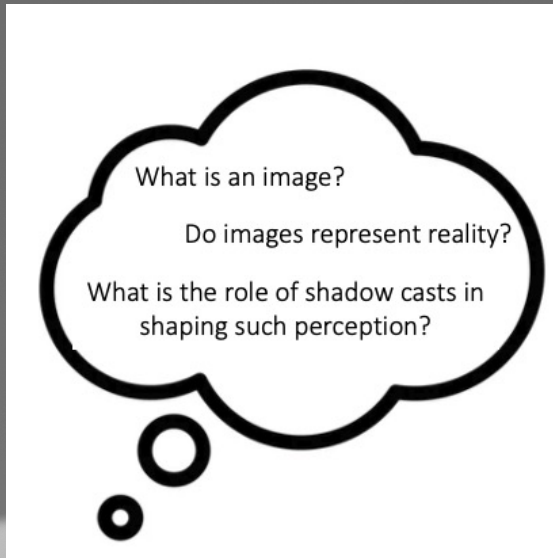
Fig. 1. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2021

INTENTIONALITY (CHANCE)

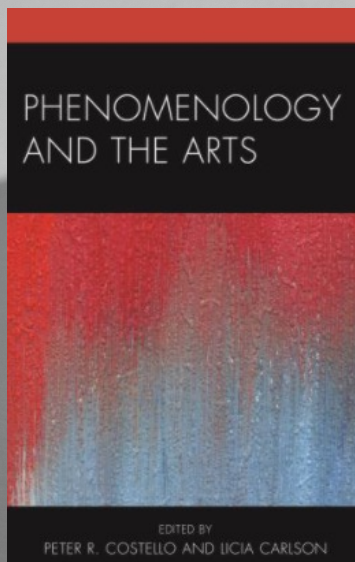


Fig. 2. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2022

The Problem of Representation...

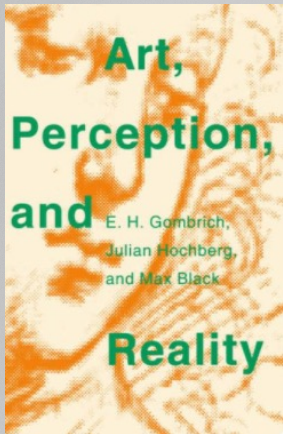


- **Phenomenology** as a starting point since my practice revolves around perception
- Initial philosophers already made a **distinction between perception** (i.e., what we see) and **reality** (i.e, what exists) (e.g., Plato used the terms *visible* vs. *intelligible*; Kant distinguished the *phenomena* from the *noumena*.)
- Agreement between scientists, philosophers, and artists that **perception** is highly **subjective**

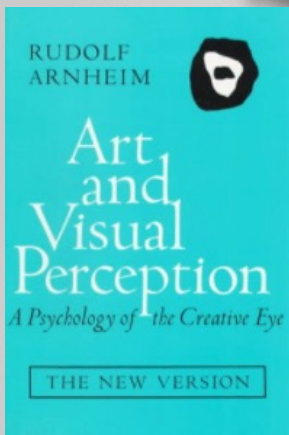


Perception is not a science of the world, it is not even an act, a deliberate taking up of a position; it is the background from which all acts stand out, and is presupposed by them: The world is not an object such that I have in my possession the law of its making; it is the natural setting of, and field for, all my thoughts and all my explicit perceptions (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 10)

The Problem of Representation...



- Classical theories of perception (e.g., Structuralism, Gestalt) distinguish between sensations (i.e., forms, shape) and images (i.e., memories) but assume a passive role of the viewer
- I am more interested in **perception as “skilled sequential behaviour”** → what we perceive depends upon one’s own *knowledge* of the world and the *purpose* (i.e., information one may actively seek)

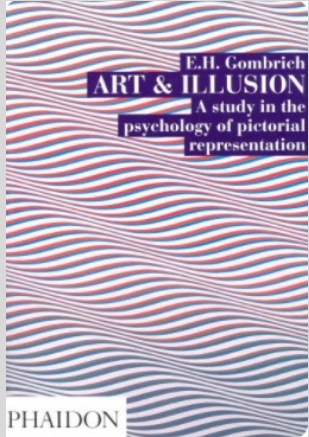


- **Subjective perception** can be affected by **past experiences**; however, **different interpretations** will only arise if the figures are **ambiguous** enough

Every visual experience is embedded in a context of space and time. Just as the appearance of objects is influenced by that of neighbouring objects in space, so also it is influenced by sights that preceded in times (Arnheim, 1974, p. 48)

The Problem of Representation...

- Representation in art happens when we match schemas (i.e., what is essential and common in a class of elements) with **objects in nature**; Schemas can be changed with experience.



To describe the visible world in images we need a developed system of schemata (Gombrich, 2000, p. 87)

Without some starting point, some initial schema, we could never get hold of the flux of experience. Without categories, we could not sort our impressions [...] We can always adjust them according to need (Gombrich, 2000, p. 88)

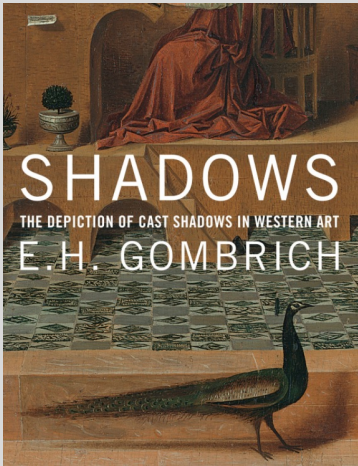


Fig. 5. A. Gonzalez. *Figurative Cot mobile in motion*. 2021



Fig. 6. A. Gonzalez. *Abstract Cot mobile in motion*. 2021

The Problem of Representation...



- In my images, shadow casts have an important role
- Shadow casts have been linked to reality (i.e., proof of existence in the world; story of Adelbert von Chomisso) but also as distortion (e.g., Plato's Cave)

- Shadow casts have been dominant in two movements that highly influence my practice:
 - 1) Cubism used the shadow casts to guide and confuse the beholder
 - 2) Surrealism used shadow casts to heighten the mood of mystery present in many of the creations



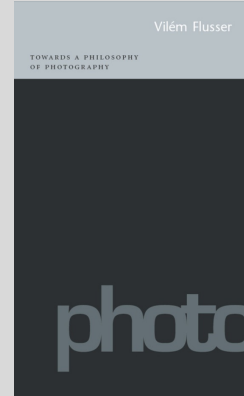
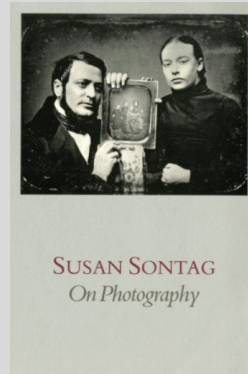
Fig. 7. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2021

The Problem of Representation...in photography

Can photographs represent reality?



Photographs as mirrors
(e.g., Walton, 1984)



Photographs as constructions with biases
(Alward, 2012; Barthes, 1977; Scruton, 1981, Sontag, 1977)



Photographs as iconically indexical → high resemblance between the world and what is shown in the image, but the beholder needs an active role to construct the meaning (Friday, 2009).

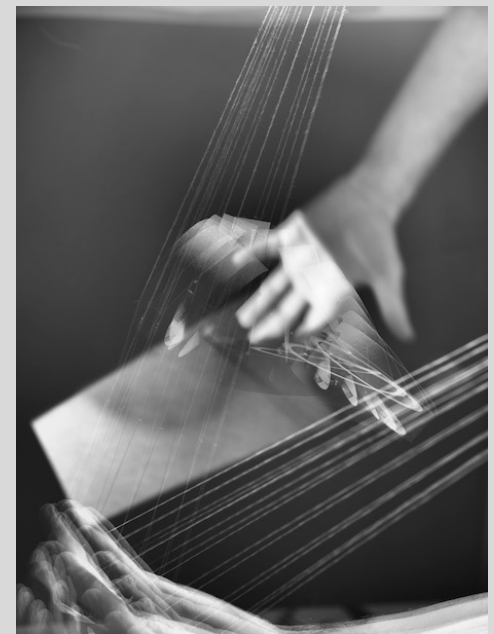
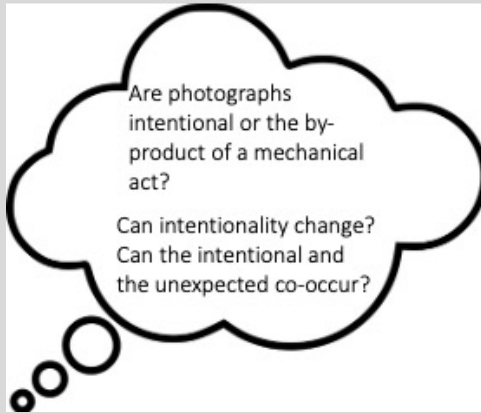


Fig. 8. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2021

The Role of Intentionality (Chance)



- Taking images can be understood as a mechanical process but the outcome depends on the photographer (from selecting what to photograph to choosing the final image; Flusser, 2000)
- Jacquette (2014) suggests the **artistic creation is all intentional** since there are conscious choices even when there are unexpected/chance elements → the **intentionality of the unexpected** (Mitcheson, 2010)



Fig. 9. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2022

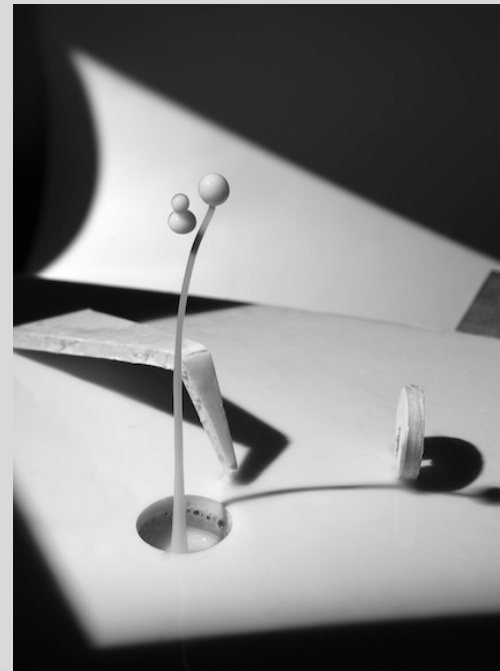


Fig. 10. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2022

The Role of Intentionality (Chance)



Fig. 11. P. Halsman. *Dali Atomicus*. 1948

- **Chance** has been a **creative strategy** used by many different artists (Diaz, 2011)
- **Dadaists** use chance to break with previous conventions and to challenge what we understand by art and the role of the artist in the creative process → chance = random (Molesworth, 2003)
- **Surrealists** use chance to embrace with the unconscious → chance = irrational (Susik, 2016).

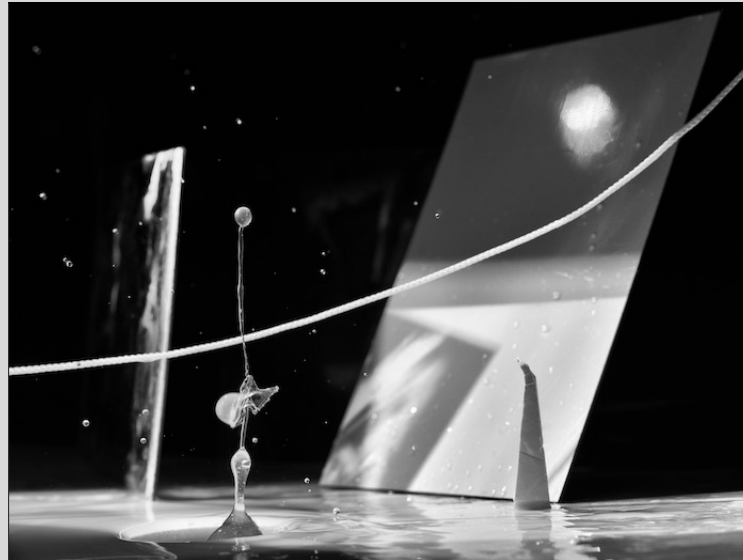


Fig. 12. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2022

In my practice, I have used chance as a strategy to make it more experimental

The Role of Intentionality (Chance)

- **Abstract expressionism** was another movement that placed importance on **spontaneity and improvisation** (Golub, 1955). Improvisation was a mechanism through which the unconscious could be revealed (Hobbs, 1985). The **unconscious** at the same time, led different automatisms to happen in the artistic creation (Orton, 1991).
- For my series relying on stroboscopic photography, I took inspiration from **Jackson Pollock's** dripping technique, which is considered the perfect example of spontaneity as paint is poured over a canvas placed on the floor (Rampley, 1996; Taylor, 2002).



While Pollock relied on pouring paint, I relied on multiple flash shots to create different patterns.

Fig. 13. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled*. 2021

The Role of Intentionality (Chance)

- Within **chance**, I have looked at the role of **materials** that could behave unpredictably (e.g., water) but also with **motion**, as it is hard to predict the possible patterns that might be created by different objects.
- **Motion** opens the window to extend my practice from **still to moved images**. In fact, the relationship between the two has been argued to be very fluid (i.e., Baumach, 2012; Company, 2008; Pink, 2011).
- **Motion** is intrinsically related to **chance** as it has been linked to the unexpected (e.g., some of Cartier Bresson's images; Cookman, 2008). It is also related to **representation** since some authors argue about the importance role of the beholders in the construction of motion when facing images (i.e., *Corpothetics*, Pinney, 2009).

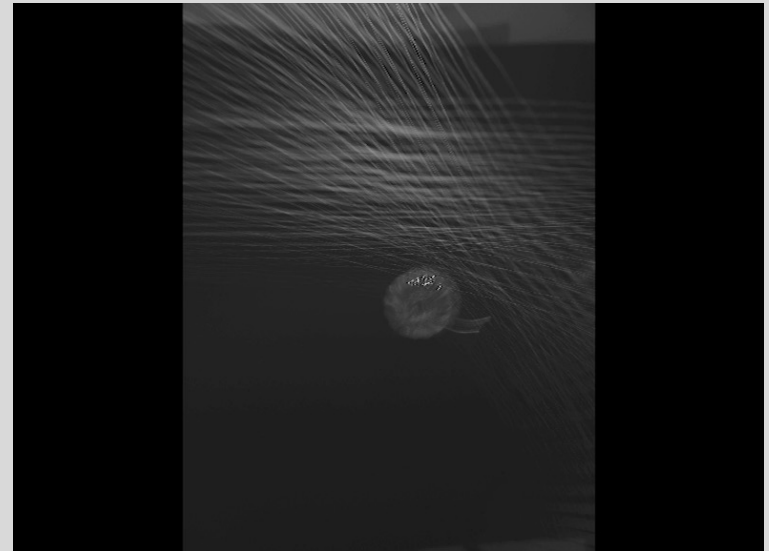


Fig. 14. A. Gonzalez. *Untitled time-lapse*. 2022

Some Influences in my Practice

REPRESENTATION

Jaroslav Rössler and Jaromir Funke worked with geometric shapes and placed a great emphasis on lights and shadow casts (Birgus, 1999; Witkowsky, 2005).



Fig. 15. J. Funke. *Composition (bottles)*. 1927

Man Ray and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy use of photograms challenged people's perceptions of everyday objects (Laxton, 2009)



Fig. 16. M. Ray. *Rayograph*. 1925

Lotte Jacobi's and Carlota Corpron's use of lighting deceived beholders in the perception of the materials (Moore, 2004)

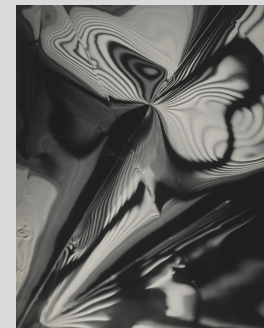


Fig. 17. C. Corpron. *Fluid Rhythm*. 1950

Some Influences in my Practice

CHANCE

Harold Edgerton's experiments with flashes and water allowed capturing droplets (Elkins, 2004).

Ori Gersht's images looked at the concept of chance by photographing elements when exploding (Wainbright, 2008).

Sally Mann and Pierre Cordier explored the concept of chance through the medium (Parsons, 2008).

Sophie Calle and Joachim Schmidt approached the concept of chance by seeking for the unknown (Chadwick, 2000).

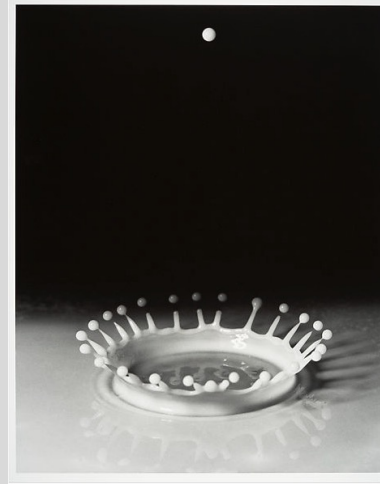


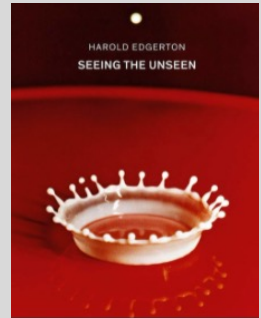
Fig. 18. H. Edgerton. *Drop splash coronet*. 1936



Fig. 19. O. Gersht. *Untitled*. 2018

Final Reflection on my Practice

- In my practice, I try to **challenge** myself as much as possible. **Experimentation** is something that happens continuously throughout the different projects (i.e., notion of *alchemy*, Elkins, 2000).
- Photography gives me the opportunity to **learn about other disciplines** and incorporate them into my practice (e.g., theory of fluids).
- **Reading and reflecting** upon my practice has been invaluable to keep **progressing** and advancing my work



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