



Photo by Gregory Crewdson

## THE PHOTOGRAPHIC CONCEPT

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This course immerses students in conceptual or “idea-based” photography. Although the course uses a fine art approach, it is still highly relevant to stylistically driven commercial photography. Students examine how the art market for conceptual photography contrasts and compares with commercial or editorial photography.

Using a combination of exercise, application and theory in the students’ own work, we define conceptual photography in popular culture as well as explore contemporary fine art genres including narrative, abstraction, portraiture and allegory.

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Instructors:

**Pennylane Shen:** holds a Master’s degree in Visual Culture from New York University and has been a curator and educator in Vancouver for the past 10 years. She currently curates for the Bau-Xi Gallery and runs the alternative artists’ collective Phantoms in the Front Yard.

**Shane O’Brien** completed his Masters of Fine Art degree in Photography at the University of Colorado (Boulder). He has worked as a practicing artist, university educator and is currently the owner of Gallery Jones, one of Canada’s leading contemporary art galleries.

## WEEK BY WEEK SESSIONAL OUTLINE

1	<b>Introduction to Conceptual Art</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to course, syllabus and assignments</li><li>• Brief general history of photography</li><li>• Brief general history of Conceptual Art</li></ul>
2	<b>Practices of Looking Beyond the Lens</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuation of conceptual photography discussion introduced in Week 1.</li><li>• Introduction to Semiotics and Visual Culture</li></ul>
3	Shooting session
4	<b>The Big Idea (In Many Parts)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of serial photography, examples and discussion.</li><li>• Comparing and contrasting “serial” photography with “documentary” photography.</li></ul>
5	<b>And Then What Happens...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examination of narrative photography</li><li>• A look at various ways to tell a story using metaphor, abstraction and allegory</li></ul>
6	Shooting session
7	<b>Leap into the Void: Performance Art and Identity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examining alternative photo-based media, including video, performance, interactive and participatory art.</li></ul>
8	<b>The Still Photo to the Moving Picture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The influence of conceptual photography in popular culture, including movies, television and music videos</li><li>• <i>Memento</i>, <i>Downton Abbey</i>, etc.</li></ul>
9	<b>Gallery Visit to Bau-Xi Gallery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gallery visit Bau-Xi Gallery / Gallery Jones</li><li>• Students present their Finding Inspiration project</li></ul>
10	<b>“Those Guys” and The Marketplace</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A look at the history, current practice, and major players in the Vancouver School of Photo-Conceptualism</li><li>• How the art market operates: commercial galleries, artist run centres, public spaces</li><li>• How the market for conceptual photography differs from the market for historical and commercially-oriented photography.</li></ul>
11	<b>Student Presentations</b>
12	<b>It's a Wrap</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final in class exercise: utilizing your camera and the skills covered in the past 11 weeks</li><li>• 60 minutes for photographic exercise with critique to follow</li></ul>



*Leap into the Void* by Yves Klein