

Ken Schles

Born: Brooklyn, New York. 1960.

Solo Exhibits

2011 Noorderlicht Gallery, Groningen, NL
2011 1st International Bursa Photo Festival, Bursa, Turkey
2009 Noorderlicht Gallery, Groningen, NL
2005 Lucas Schoormans Gallery, NYC
2002 C/O Gallery, Berlin
2002 Galerie Thomas Zander, Köln
2002 New School for Social Research, NYC
1996 Jan Kesner Gallery, LA
1992 Christine Burgin Gallery, NYC
1989 The Photography Center, NYC
1987 Greathouse Gallery, NYC
1985 Greathouse Gallery, NYC

Selected Group Exhibits

2011 Paris Photo, Paris
2010 Photo-Book Works, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, NY
2009 Les Rencontres d'Arles Photographie, Contemporary Book Award Finalist, Arles, France
2007 Cityscapes: From Metropoism To Micropoism Foto-Expositie USVA Galerie (NL)
2005 Traces and Omens, Noorderlicht, Groningen (NL)
2005 Promised Land, Noorderlicht, Groningen (NL)
2005 Marks of Honour: A Striking Library, FOAM, and Galerie Van Zoetendaal Amsterdam
1999 Wonderland, Noorderlicht, Groningen (NL)
1999 Under/Exposed, (site specific) Stockholm
1994 Downtown, Nederlands Foto Instituut, Rotterdam
1993 Disorderly Conduct, PPOW, NYC
1992 More Than One Photography, MoMA
1989 Fifteen Photographers for the Next 150 Years, Tempo, Hamburg
1988 100 Years: A Tradition of Social and Political Art on the Lower East Side, PPOW

Bibliography: Books by Ken Schles

2011 Oculus, Stichting Fotografie Noorderlicht
2008 A New History Of Photography: The World Outside And The Pictures In Our Heads, White Press
2001 The Geometry of Innocence, Hatje Cantz
1988 Invisible City: Photographs By Ken Schles, Twelvetees Press

Bibliography: Books and Catalogs Containing Work by Ken Schles

2007 802 Photo Books from the M.-M. Auer Collection (Auer#676)
2005 Traces and Omens, Stichting Aurora Borealis
2004 Promised Land, Stichting Aurora Borealis
2004 FOAM Issue #5 Near
2002 Here is New York: a democracy of photographs, Scalo

2001 Sense of Space, Stichting Aurora Borealis

1999 Wonderland, Published by Stichting Aurora Borealis, edited by Wim Melis and Machiel Botman

Public Collections Museum of Modern Art, NYC, USA; The Cleveland Museum Of Art, Cleveland, USA; Library at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, USA; Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs at The New York Public Library; LACMA, Los Angeles, USA; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC, USA; The Brooklyn Museum, NYC, USA; Art Institute of Chicago, USA; Corcoran Museum of Art, Wash. D.C., USA; SFMoMA Architecture and Design Permanent Collection, SF, USA; The Manfred Heiting Collection, Los Angeles, USA

Education Studied with Len Jenschel, William Gedney and Larry Fink at Cooper Union receiving a BFA in 1982. Also studied with Lisette Model at the New School for Social Research

Talks and Guest Lectures

Light Work/SPE Joint Regional Conference, Bursa Photo Festival (Master Lecture Series), Harvard, International Center of Photography, Noorderlicht Foundation (NL), New York University, The New School for Social Research, Parsons School of Design, School of Visual Arts. Also have given studio talks to visiting students from Rhode Island School of Design and the Rochester Institute of Technology. Also developed a private workshop program with Jeff Ladd and given portfolio critiques at the Bursa International Photo Festival as well as on an *ad hoc* basis.

Teaching International Center of Photography, New York (adjunct), also see above guest talks and critiques.

Writing (see monographs above)

Essay "Infinite Stupidity" guest blogging for A.D. Coleman's Photocritic International site January 2012

Interview with Christian Patterson for Aperture's *Photobook Review* issue 2, April 2012

"We Make Lists Because We Don't Want To Die." This 2010 essay was in response to Umberto Eco's 11/09 Interview in Der Spiegel, "We Like Lists Because We Don't Want To Die."

"Image As Container," excerpt from A New History of Photography by Ken Schles. Excerpt translated by Andrian Kreye for publication in Germany's largest daily paper. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* September 26, 2008

Cornell Capa obituary, article by Ken Schles. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* May 26, 2008

Awards/Citations Les Rencontres d'Arles Photographie, Contemporary Book Award Finalist (short-list), Arles, France 2009 for A New History of Photography; 5b4: Best of Year Photography Book List (2008 for A New History of Photography); ADC Silver Award; Addy's Best of Show; AIGA (for Invisible City); American Photography; Black Book AR 100; Communication Arts Critique Magazine's The Big Crit; PA (Photographer of the Year for Culture, 2003); New York Times Notable Book of the Year (1988 for Invisible City); PDN; Photo Book Club "B@lt of 2011" for Oculus; Photo-Eye: Best of Year Photography Book (2009 A New History of Photography and 2011 Oculus); PrintPrint Run: Best of Year Photography Book List (#2 2008 for A New History of Photography); Show South Society of Magazine Designers Gold Award, Viewbook; Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Gold Award, "In Our Community" diversity booklet; Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) **Ken Schles is a New York State Foundation for the Arts Fellow**

Selected reviews, articles and mentions in reverse chronology

- 2012 January 25 and 30. Guest blog for the esteemed photocritic A.D. Coleman on his blog Photocritic International. What do an evolutionary biologist and a Situational theorist have to teach us about the contemporary state of photographic criticism? Read my essay "Infinite Stupidity."
- 2012 January 12 Marc Feustel's Eyecurious Blog entry "On introspection, navel-gazing and nitpicking" references my musings on Umberto Eco's Lists.
- This on the Photobookclub site (UK): "A few months ago Ken Schles spoke at the SPE Northeast Conference in Syracuse [link to talk embedded at their site or see November 5th, 2011 entry below], if ever there was a dream-team conference, this was it for me! Ken's talk was posted online yesterday and I recommend anyone with even a passing interest in photobooks must take the time to view it. Ken takes us through all four of his monographs, looking both at content and theme as well as the publication challenges and triumphs he experienced. What most interested me is just how much Ken's books seem ultimately to form chapters in a much larger body of work, his interests and more importantly questions are never repeated, but we are reminded of them constantly. Ken is proof that Tod Papageorge knew what he was talking about: "If your pictures aren't good enough, you aren't reading enough" – Tod Papageorge This talk is best enjoyed with a chilled beverage and note taking device."
- 2011 December 27 Photo-Eye Best Photobooks of 2011. Oculus "A poignant meditation on images and memory, Schles' book is as evocative as it is beautiful."
- 2011 December 22 Photo-Eye Review of Oculus by Adam Bell "Oculus is an unusual and uniquely important book, and defies easy categorization. Equal parts philosophical treatise and artist book, Oculus asks profound questions about how we find meaning in the world and how images give shape to memory and our lives. Viewers willing to spend time with this powerful work will be greatly rewarded."
- 2011 December 20 Marc Feustel's Eyecurious Blog entry "Photobooks 2011: And the winner is..." This seems to be the year of the photobook lists, of lists "talking" to lists. What do these lists signify? (Note: this entry was updated subsequently to include other books- including Oculus, which made it onto a few more lists after this blog entry's original pub date.)
- 2011 December 16 Conveyor Blog Photobook Friday report on my sold out book signing at the International Center of Photography the night before "Oculus, [sic] released this October by Stichting Aurora Borealis, is an absolutely drop dead gorgeous, twelve inch by nine inch, ninety-six page book-fetishist's delight..."
- 2011 December 1 New York Foundation for the Arts Currents Meet A NYFA Artist Interview with 1989 Fellow Ken Schles ahead of a booksigning for Oculus at the International Center of Photography. Ken Schles looks at his career and focuses on his new book Oculus. "Our images are projections that are representative of our awareness of the world."
- 2011 November 27 ICP Library Blog Round-up of books from Paris Photo. Includes Oculus and a photograph of me at Paris Photo Offprint signing copies of my newly released book.
- 2011 November 19 Quoted: "Ken - I hope you don't mind if I chime in here. I had the pleasure of seeing Oculus at Paris Photo and quite simply it's one of the best new photobooks I have seen in years: a towering accomplishment filled with aesthetic beauty and emotional depth. I can assure you this book will be a classic. Thanks for making it. I'll add that Ken's essay in the rear of the book is beautifully written. Ken's comments on people's silent suffering in the wake of the economic downturn is perfectly rendered. I have just looked at the book again after unpacking my trunks from Paris, and it gave me chills from beginning to end." --Harper Levine, Harper's Books (Jury Selection Committee Member for Le Prix du Livre Paris Photo 2011)
- 2011 November 5 Light Work hosts SPE Joint Regional Conference on "Photographers + Publishing": A talk by Ken Schles 4 Books (runtime 57:57).
- 2011 October 14 Guide to Useful Photography (GUP), NL RECOMMENDED. Write-up of Oculus: "Schles invokes Nabokov's idea that memories are the brief separation between the soul's abyss before life, and after death. If these images are a collection of Schles's memories, he's shared them with us, not because we can ever touch his memories, or see them fully, or even understand them; but because we are human, and we can project our own meanings, our own memories."
- 2011 September (all month) The Photo Book Club (UK) crowd sources and hosts a month long discussion of Invisible City. Click through for commentary.
- 2009 September 9 From A.D. Coleman's blog Photocritic International: "I've known photographers who speak and write wonderfully, even brilliantly, about their own work — Mark Klett, Arno Rafael Minkinen, and Ken Schles, to name three."

- 2009 March 11 The International Center of Photography Lecture: A New History of Photography. Runtime: 45 minutes. Link takes you off-site.
- 2009 February 4 and 11 Photo-Eye Magazine review: "Ken Schles: A New History of Photography" by George Slade. Response by Ken Schles. Of the exchange, Daniel Espeset, Managing Editor of Photo-Eye Magazine said, "when first designing the magazine online we were very excited about the potential for creating dialogue and interaction, rather than simply offering unidirectional interpretations of the work. This is the first time I feel like we've fully achieved that goal..."
- 2008 December 31 Photo-Eye Magazine feature story: "a host of photo-world luminaries weigh in on the Best PhotoBooks of 2008" See Jeff Ladd and Markus Schaden's lists.
- 2008 December 30 Print Run "Best New Books I 2008" #2 A New History of Photography by Ken Schles "One of the most original and challenging books published this year."
- 2008 December 13 5b4 "Best Books of 2008" #4 A New History of Photography by Ken Schles (Schaden/White Press) Inventive, witty, smart and great book craftsmanship and concept.
- 2008 Winter 1000 Words Photography #03 winter 2008. Review of A New History of Photography by Ken Schles
- 2008 November 28 FAZ "How does a photographic style develop? By observing the themes of our time!" Article on A New History of Photography by Ken Schles
- 2008 October 13 5b4 "Monkey see, Monkey do, everything I say sticks twice on you." review of A New History of Photography by Ken Schles
- 2008 September 26 Süddeutsche Zeitung Image As Container, excerpt from A New History of Photography by Ken Schles. Excerpt was translated by Andrian Kreye for publication in Germany's largest daily paper.
- 2008 August/September Hotshoe "Hot Books Ken Schles: A New History of Photography Insight into the mind of a great photographer," article by Bill Kouwenhoven.
- 2008 May 26 Süddeutsche Zeitung Cornell Capa obituary, article by Ken Schles.
- 2008 Spring The Hill Artists on the Hill, Kate Hanley (on the publication of A New History of Photography).
- 2006 March Art in America Ken Schles at Lucas Schoormans, Edward Leffingwell.
- 2005 November New Yorker Goings On About Town Galleries-Chelsea, Vince Aletti.
- Interview between Miriam Nooi (050 Uitmagazine Groningen) and Ken Schles, August 1st 2005 regarding his project An Absence in the Presence of Things in the Promised Land exhibit at the Noorderlicht Gallery in Groningen, The Netherlands, which ran July 30th 2005 through October 9th 2005.
- 2004 November/December Photograph Photo Books, Vice Aletti.
- 2004 FOAM Issue #5 NEAR, a portfolio from Invisible City. (Link is to IC on this site).
- N.D. A description of Invisible City found on modernrare.com.
- N.D. A description of The Geometry of Innocence found on modernrare.com.
- 2003 February PDN Something About Mary, Kristina Feliciano.
- 2002 Winter Issue 70 Volume 22 Issue 2 European Photography Chris Miller.
- Translation forthcoming:
"Schles's "The Geometry of Innocence" is a daring, sophisticated photo book, which the publisher has produced in technical brilliance."
Kölnner Stadt-Anzeiger
- Translation forthcoming:
"Breathless, endless pictures clips between trauma and Trance, Death & Delirium." FotoMAGAZIN
- Translation forthcoming:
"The new work of the 40 year-old American Ken Schles is simply breathtaking. A photographic masterpiece." Photo News
- 1999 September Foto Portfolio Nieuw Werk van Ken Schles, Eddie Marsman.
- 1993 January Photometro, Letter From New York, No. 38 by A.D. Coleman.
- 1989 April Splash, Thomas Beller.
- 1989 Spring SF Camerawork, Regarding Postmodernism Volume 16 Number 1, Marnie Gillett.
- 1989 April VLS, Guy Trebay
- 1988 December NY Times, Andy Grundberg selects Invisible City as a notable book of the year.