1-1-2012

Photographic Exhibition In The Anti-Cube Gallery : A Case Study Of Daniel Libeskind's Roloff Beny Gallery

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PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION IN THE ANTI-CUBE GALLERY:

A CASE STUDY OF DANIEL LIBESKIND'S ROLOFF BENY GALLERY

by

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Bachelor of Arts, History in Art, Business, University of Victoria, 2010

A thesis

presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the Program of

Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2012

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This paper examines the installation of photography exhibitions within the unconventional gallery spaces that have been produced as a part of the relatively recent wave of "iconic" museum architecture. As a medium that has primarily been displayed within the modernist "white cube," photography presents issues adapting to this new type of gallery interior. This thesis takes, as its case study, the Roloff Beny Gallery, managed by the Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC) as located in Daniel Libeskind's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal – a controversial addition to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), Toronto, Ontario. It examines how photographic exhibitions have addressed design and installation issues in this iconic space through three photographic exhibitions – *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008* and *Edward Burtynsky: Oil*. This paper proposes that it can be productive to consider the installation of photography exhibitions as having affinities with the contextualizing practices of artistic installation.

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Introduction

Matted, framed and hung in linear rows at a standard height.[1] Photography has been primarily exhibited in this manner since Beaumont Newhall–the Museum of Modern Art's (MoMA) first curator of photography–employed this modernist aesthetic in the 1940s.[2] The goal of this approach is to create the impression that the art objects stand alone in the white-walled space, de-contextualized, with no distractions from the gallery architecture.

In 1976, Brian O'Doherty wrote a collection of critical essays on the ideology of the gallery space under the title *Inside the White Cube* that were published in the March, April, and November issues of *Artforum*, one of the most influential American art magazines of the time.[3] O'Doherty described the already-existing, clean, blank modernist gallery space as a *white cube*: a space devoid of natural light and anything related to the outside world. O'Doherty's three essays on the white cube were published ten years later by The Lapis Press in book format.[4] In 1999, the book was republished by the University of California Press with the addition of a 1981 essay by O'Doherty, an indication of their continuing importance.[5] These essays are still some of the most cited in reference to modernist exhibition spaces and the presentation of art objects.

However, at the end of the twentieth century, a new form of gallery space was created with the emergence of a new category of architecture: the iconic.[6] Since the construction of Frank O. Gehry's iconic Guggenheim Museum Bilbao at the turn of the twenty-first century, museum architecture has become iconic in nature. In some cases, this has led to the creation of gallery spaces that move beyond the "invisible" architectural interiors characteristic of the white cube gallery. Eccentric spaces are now emerging that speak to the innovative and creative programming of the institutions, such as Peter Zumthor's *Kunsthaus Bregenz*, Tadao Ando's *Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum*, and Renzo Piano's *Maison Hermès*. Some of these spaces–like the

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[1]Christopher Phillips, "The Judgment Seat of Photography," *October* 22 (Autumn 1982): 38.
[2]Ibid., 35.
[3]Brian O'Doherty, "Inside the White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space, Part I," *Artforum* XIV, no. 7 (March 1976): 24-30; O'Doherty, "Inside the White Cube, Part II: The Eye and the Spectator," *Artforum* XIV, no. 8 (April 1976): 26-34; O'Doherty, "Inside the White Cube Part III: Context as Content," *Artforum* XV, no. 3 (November 1976): 38-44.
[4]The 1986 book, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, includes an introduction by Thomas McEvilley, a fellow *Artforum* contributor and professor at the Institute for the Arts, Rice University, and an afterword by O'Doherty. The afterword was also published in the May 1986 issue of *Artforum International*. O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, introduction by Thomas McEvilley (Santa Monica: The Lapis Press, 1986); O'Doherty, "Books: An Afterword to *Inside the White Cube*," *Artforum International* XXIV, no. 9 (May 1986): 18-19.
[5]The 1999 revised edition of *Inside the White Cube* includes, as a fourth chapter, O'Doherty's essay "The Gallery as a Gesture," which was published in the December 1981 issue of *Artforum*. The essay is not a part of the original series of *Inside the White Cube* essays. O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, introduction by Thomas McEvilley, expanded ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); O'Doherty, "The Gallery as a Gesture," *Artforum* XX, no. 4 (December 1981): 26-34.
[6]Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building: The Power of Enigma* (London: Frances Lincoln Ltd, 2005), 9, 11. As noted by Jencks, there has been a shift towards the icon in architecture. In October 1997, Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao was unveiled and became the most famous building of the 20th century.

exhibition spaces of Zaha Hadid's *MAXXI: Museum of XXI Century Arts*, Rem Koolhaas's *Seoul National University Museum of Art*, and Daniel Libeskind's *Extension to the Denver Art Museum*– undermine the constraints and past conventions of the museum or gallery box: the square architecture or right-angled world, as Charles Jencks, American architectural theorist, architect and designer, puts it.[7] What happens when the architecture begins to assert itself and no longer functions as the discrete "background" to the works hung on the wall? The definitive elements of the white cube have been established, but what defines these emerging eccentric spaces? How do these different types of exhibition spaces affect the installation, presentation and meaning of the cultural objects they contain? Do they encourage innovative approaches to exhibition design?

This essay draws attention to issues related to the installation design of photographic exhibitions within this new form of gallery space that radically departs from the modernist white cube: the art exhibition form that dominated much of the twentieth century. Dubbed the *anti-cube* for the sake of this essay, I explore the relationship between the anti-cube and the exhibition of photography, a medium whose two-dimensionality and lack of relation to its presentation space have historically been emphasized in the conventional white cube. For this reason, photography is an especially challenging medium in terms of adapting to the anti-cube space. To examine the affect of architectural context on installation design, this essay will look at three relatively recent photographic exhibitions that appeared within a single, recently constructed gallery space: the Roloff Beny Gallery.

The Roloff Beny Gallery is the home of the Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC) and presents exhibitions and special events on cultural, social and political issues in contemporary society.[8] The gallery is housed within the architecturally radical Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, a part of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), that was designed by international architect Daniel Libeskind. The Crystal has been both criticized and praised by architectural critics and the Toronto public; it seems no one was indifferent. The iconic structure was constructed in 2007 as a part of the ROM's restoration project, known as Renaissance ROM (RenROM). The controversy surrounding the restoration project is what originally drew me to the building. It is a compelling structure because it abandons conventional spaces entirely with its hard, angular forms.

The inaugural exhibition of the Crystal, *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, took place in the Roloff Beny Gallery on the fourth and top floor of the building. After reading the transcribed

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[7]Jencks, *The Iconic Building*, 9.
[8]"Institute for Contemporary Culture," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed July 2012, www.rom.on.ca/icc/index.php. The gallery is named for Roloff Beny (1924-1984), Canadian painter, print maker and acclaimed photographer. "Obituaries: Roloff Beny is Dead at 60; Painter and Photographer," *New York Times*, published March 17, 1984, http://www.nytimes.com/1984/03/17/obituaries/roloff-beny-is-dead-at-60-painter-and-photographer.html.

Figure 1. The Royal Ontario Museum from Bloor Street, Toronto, Ontario. The Roloff Beny Gallery, located at the apex of the third Crystal (*right*), juts out of the ROM's heritage building. Photograph by author.
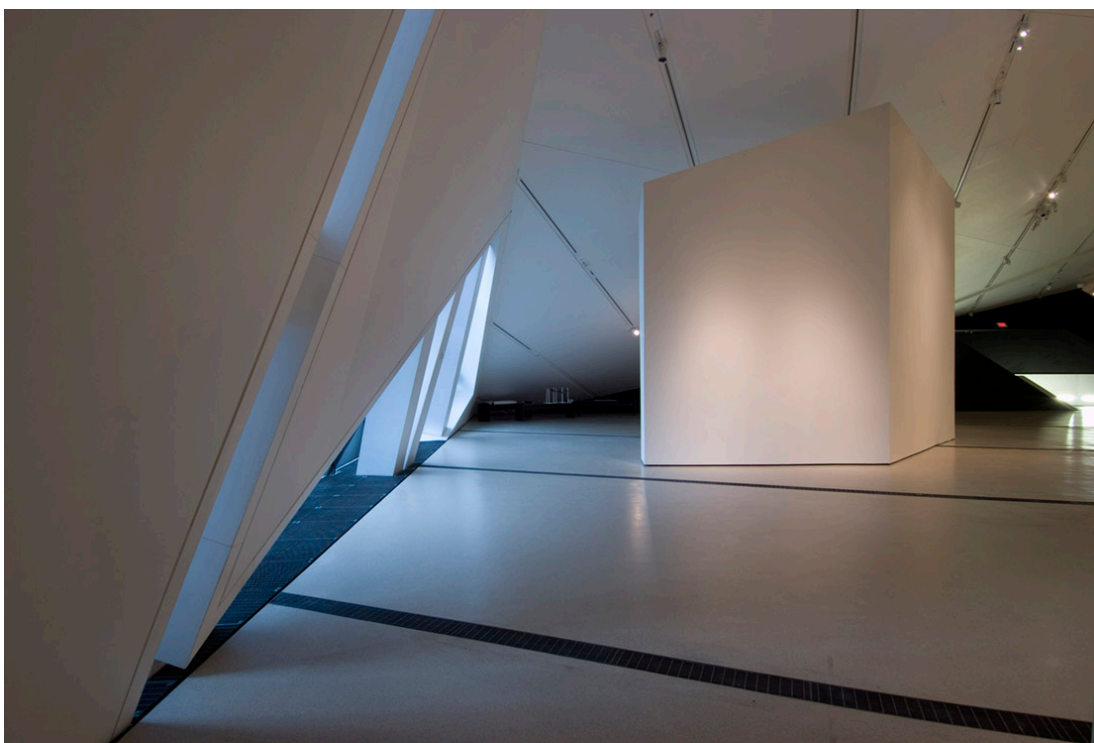
Figure 2. View of interior of Roloff Beny Gallery with no exhibition. Windows face north to Bloor Street (*left*). Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

"conversation" between Libeskind and Sugimoto that took place at the ROM in 2007, I was further intrigued by not only the Crystal, but the Roloff Beny Gallery itself. The "conversation" between architect and artist raised the concerns of the public; furthermore, Libeskind and Sugimoto brought up interesting questions about iconic architecture and the function of museum architecture. The common complaint about these iconic buildings is that they overwhelm the art; the buildings are too formally strong for the contents within and that the interior architecture should be weaker and more accommodating.[9] But what does weaker architecture really mean? Does this mean continued display in the white cube? Should we continue to display objects in an architecture that is meant to efface itself?

The Roloff Beny Gallery is a space created within an iconic structure: a space that has brought into question the conventions of the gallery box. It represents a space that clearly rejects the previously dominant white cube aesthetic. The Roloff Beny Gallery presents primarily contemporary art and touring art exhibitions. It has exhibited a variety of objects, both two and three-dimensional, and explored various forms of exhibition design. In *Shanghai Kaleidoscope*, an exhibition comprised of works by contemporary artists and designers from China,[10] mannequins dressed in couture were suspended from the ceiling and, in *Housepaint, Phase 2: Shelter*, an exhibition of street art by Canadian artists,[11] an entire house façade was hung on one of the slanted exterior walls. In addition to three-dimensional works, drawing has adapted to the space easily in the Roloff Beny Gallery with for example, the site-specific installation *Dan Perjovschi: Late News*. Internationally renowned artist, Perjovschi, drew cartoons and graffiti directly onto the walls, climbing a ladder to take advantage of all of the surfaces the walls offered. Exhibitions containing three-dimensional media seem to easily adapt to the anti-cube; however, the primarily two-dimensional medium of photography seems to be less flexible or less willing to adapt to architectural context. What makes the Roloff Beny Gallery unique, and a focus of this thesis, is that photography-based exhibitions have become a significant part of the programming of the gallery. Displayed extensively in the white cube, photography, as a medium, has both engaged with contemporary issues and, as an influential means of representation, has itself been an important issue in contemporary art. It is thus not surprising that a space like the Roloff Beny Gallery, whose mandate is to engage with current issues and cultural practices, would wish to include photography in its programming.

This paper will look at the installation design of three photographic exhibitions within this

[9]William Thorsell, moderator, "The Conversation: Hiroshi Sugimoto-Daniel Libeskind," written transcript (Toronto: Institute for Contemporary Culture, Royal Ontario Museum, Thursday May 31, 2007), 6-7.
[10]"News Releases: Shanghai Kaleidoscope," Royal Ontario Museum, issued April 4, 2008, http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=t5qfeckjwl.
[11]"News Releases: ICC at the ROM presents Housepaint, Phase 2: Shelter," Royal Ontario Museum, issued November 27, 2008, http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=meowm58t74.

Figure 3. *Housepaint, Phase 2: Shelter.* Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.
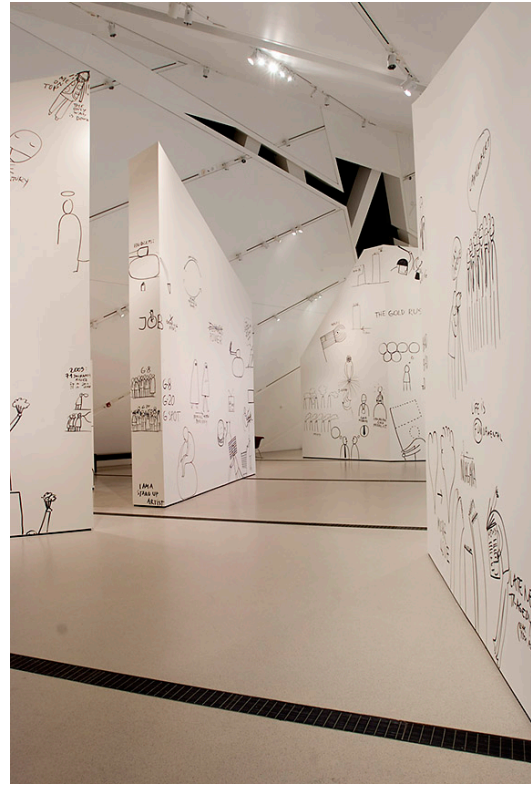
Figure 4. *Dan Perjovschi: Late News.* Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

single complex space: *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History* (June 3 to September 3, 2007), *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008* (September 26, 2009 to January 3, 2010), and *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* (April 1 to August 21, 2011). Are new ways of displaying two-dimensional objects being provoked by the Roloff Beny Gallery? Or are we resorting to using conventional techniques in an unconventional space? How are viewers' relationships to the works and space considered in the conception and presentation of exhibitions in this anti-cube? Does the Roloff Beny Gallery intentionally use the gallery architecture to raise questions about the conventional spaces photography is usually presented in? If so, has this anti-cube affected photographic installation design? This paper will address three different ways of responding to the anti-cube through the differing modes of response displayed by each photographic exhibition. An examination of *History of History* will reveal the first and most innovative form of installation response: *artistic response*. Sugimoto reconfigured the exhibition space to draw specific connections to the meaning of his work. The artist thought about the exhibition anew within the context of the gallery, creating an artistic installation that could not be replicated elsewhere. Incorporating this conceptual practice into its exhibition design is *Vanity Fair Portraits*, which will portray a *thematic response* to the gallery space. As a result of the architectural context, the chronological exhibition was reconfigured into thematic groupings and objects were even added to the "original" exhibition, in order to create a

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balance between the eccentric architecture and the objects on display. This thematic response blends the artistic response that will be seen with *History of History* with the conventional modernist aesthetic of the white cube. Finally, the exhibition *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* will display the employment of white cube conventions in an anti-cube gallery: *white cube response*. As a result of the artist's aesthetic, this exhibition attempts to create "invisible" architecture in a space that exerts a powerful architectural presence. It will present the translation of the conventional mode of hanging a photography exhibition, in linear rows, in addition to the traditional narrative flow of the white cube, from the "original" exhibition design to the eccentric Roloff Beny Gallery.

In order to gauge if and how the installation design of photographic work has moved beyond the white cube critiqued by O'Doherty in the 1970s, previous scholarship on photographic exhibitions will be referenced. Literature on the white cube aesthetic will also be reviewed, in addition to scholarship on iconic architecture, the work of Daniel Libeskind, and the Roloff Beny Gallery. Following this literature survey and a discussion of my methodology, the history of the white cube will be examined, in order to familiarize readers with the meaning of this term and to define conventional exhibition spaces. I will then address photographic exhibitions as a form of installation and the degree to which photography has been the least responsive medium to issues of architectural context in its presentation. Finally, the exhibition space, the Roloff Beny Gallery, will then be described in detail and analyzed in order to establish key differences between the eccentric space and the white cube.

Exhibition design elements such as wall colour, text panels, lighting, and the viewer's path through the three past photographic exhibitions will be examined, in order to understand how architectural context affects installation design and becomes a part of the exhibition's content. The exhibitions suggest some assumptions that can be made about the anti-cube gallery–a space where the architecture and object have an equally weighted relationship with one another and thus must work together–that contrast with the white cube: a conventional space that foregrounds the art and attempts to neutralize itself. This new type of gallery space has been acknowledged, but the discussion has been limited, especially with reference to the exhibitions that take place within iconic cultural institutions. As these spaces raise questions of photographic installation in the gallery interior, this case study will produce a record of photographic exhibitions within the Roloff Beny Gallery, contributing to the relatively meager discourse regarding installation design in the non-white cube space.

LITERATURE ON PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS

In books on the history of photography, such as Michel Frizot's *A New History of Photography* and Mary Werner Marien's *Photography: A Cultural History*, well-known exhibitions such as *Film und Foto* (1929) and *The Family of Man* (1955) are discussed, in order to tell the story of the medium. In contrast, Phaidon's first volume from 2008, *Salon to Biennial – Exhibitions That Made Art History*, presents installation photographs, as well as reviews and catalogues from the time period, to present the significance of the artist through art exhibitions. Included in the publication is one photography exhibition: *Film und Foto*. In his introduction, Bruce Altshuler addresses the connections made between installation and artwork; however, the issue of relationships between architecture and installation or artwork is not explored.

The 2008 publication *Public Photographic Spaces: Exhibitions of Propaganda, from Pressa to The Family of Man*, which is based on an exhibition, is a chronological survey of photographic exhibitions used for propaganda purposes and focuses on the exhibition designs of El Lissitzky; the publication utilizes installation photographs of past exhibitions. In the introduction, Jorge Ribalta states that El Lissitzky introduced an interaction between work and audience that went beyond the traditional relationship between the two,[12] enhancing the perception of the exhibition space by the audience.[13] Ribalta discusses the Soviet pavilion at the International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden, in 1930, where Lissitzky covered the ceiling of the space with posters, creating an all-encompassing, completely visual space.[14] Instead of dealing with a complex exhibition space, Lissitzky worked with a bare, white cube space and created his own dynamic gallery environment through his design.

The majority of publications, focus on the description or analysis of photographic exhibitions that display press photography rather than explore photography within the white cube; however, Christopher Phillips, a photographic historian, critic and curator at the International Center of Photography, utilizes installation photographs at MoMA to criticize the museum's formal isolation of photography in his 1982 essay, "The Judgment Seat of Photography." Phillips focuses on the influence of the institution on the photographs and the status of photography as art. His essay, though focused on the institutional history of MoMA,

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[12]Jorge Ribalta, introduction to *Public Photographic Spaces: Exhibitions of Propaganda, from Pressa to The Family of Man, 1928-55* (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2008), 15.
[13]Ibid., 16.
[14]Ibid., 17-18.

presents images of photographs displayed on the white walls of MoMA that reveal how this modernist mode of installation was utilized for photography exhibitions.

The photography festival, Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal 2009, explored a variety of installation approaches, ranging from using the conventional white cube gallery to displaying photographs on the facade of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA). Gaëlle Morel, art historian and curator at the Ryerson Image Centre in Toronto, Ontario, who was the guest curator of the festival, discusses, in "The Spaces of the Image," the significance of the context of the installation of photographic artwork. The text includes photographs of the work in their display context and focuses on the artists, their works, and how they have considered the use of space. Olivier Lugon writes in the catalogue for Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal 2009 employing the curatorial theme *The Spaces of the Image* in relation to photographic exhibitions of the past, like *Film und Foto*. Lugon, who is a specialist in documentary photography between the World Wars and exhibition design, argues in his "Modern Exhibition of Photography" that images are malleable and are affected by their surrounding context, such as the space they are exhibited in, and notes how this affects the perception of images by the audience. The author speaks of how *Film und Foto* merged graphic design, strong text and headings, and the use of the grid in an attempt to create a communicative space that prompted movement from the viewer.[15] The catalogue, as a whole, addresses the significance of context and in turn demonstrates that attention is being paid to explorations of new modes of installation by contemporary critics. Therefore, this publication–and the absence of others like it–influenced my study and documentation of a contemporary issue in photography: its presentation in the gallery.

LITERATURE ON THE WHITE CUBE

At the end of the 1920s, the modernist gallery aesthetic was inaugurated at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) by the museum's founding director, Alfred Barr, with the exhibition *Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh* (November 7 to December 7, 1929)[16] and as Bruce Altshuler writes in Phaidon's 2008 *Salon to Biennial*, the white cube has remained the dominant space of display for the presentation of artworks.[17] Brian O'Doherty furthers this insight in *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* noting that the white cube is generally devoid of natural light and attempts to shut the work off from the outside world; the walls are painted white so as not to

[15]Olivier Lugon, "Modern Exhibition of Photography," translated by Donald Pistolesi, in *The Spaces of the Image*, edited by Gaëlle Morel (Montréal: Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, 2009), 271-272.
[16]Anne Staniszewski, *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installation at the Museum of Modern Art in New York* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998), 61.
[17]Phaidon Editors and Bruce Altshuler, eds., *Salon to Biennial – Exhibitions That Made Art History*, introduction essay and chapter introductions by Bruce Altshuler (London; New York: Phaidon, 2008), 18.

distract the viewer from the work hung on the wall.[18] The white cube is a space that foregrounds the art while suppressing the architectural space it exists within. It pretends that the gallery is a "neutral" site not connected to the world outside of itself. In his essay "Notes on the Gallery Space," in the same publication, O'Doherty addresses the presentation of photography, referring to the convention of the framed photograph that is still common to this day.[19] Beyond this brief mention of photography, the display of painting and sculpture dominate O'Doherty's discussion of the gallery space in the 1970s.

In 1998, Mary Anne Staniszewski attempted to open up the discussion on twentieth-century installation design with her book *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*. The publication is a comprehensive history of the exhibitions created by the institution that essentially invented the white cube space that O'Doherty discusses in his essays. The roots of the white-walled modernist gallery and the installation designs that did and did not follow from it are present within the history written by Staniszewski and will be drawn upon in discussing and understanding the definition of the white cube. Staniszewski's book is one of a limited number of publications that have dealt with installation design as a specific subject of study. Instead of looking solely at the art object in an exhibition or the social affects of an exhibition, both the space in which the object is placed and how it is placed are discussed. The publication's record of the history of exhibitions at MoMA was crucial to me in understanding the meaning of the white cube beyond O'Doherty's critiques.

LITERATURE ON ICONIC ARCHITECTURE

At the end of the 20th century, a new type of architecture emerged: the iconic building, which is the subject of Charles Jencks 2005 book *The Iconic Building: The Power of Enigma*. Jencks, American architectural theorist, architect and designer, steps back from the reactions and criticisms of this new building type and starts to posit it as a new genre of architecture. He looks at a variety of buildings from skyscrapers to museums. The iconic building gained momentum as a topic of discussion with the unveiling of Frank O. Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in October 1997.[20] Bilbao is known for ignoring the constraints and conventions of the traditional museum or gallery box: the square architecture or right-angled world, as Jencks puts it.[21] In a number of these iconic buildings, the exhibition spaces that are created no longer conform to the

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[18]Brian O'Doherty, "Notes on the Gallery Space," in *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, introduction by Thomas McEvilley, expanded ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 15.
[19]Ibid., 20.
[20]Jencks, *The Iconic Building*, 11.
[21]Ibid., 9.

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traditional ways of displaying two-dimensional objects, including photographs, and further create obstacles for curators and designers.

The discussion around the iconic building took off with the "Bilbao Effect" and has continued with articles, such as "Starchitecture." Co-authored by Nancy Egan and Paul Nakazawa, this essay was published in 2003 in *Urban Land*. It observes that public facilities, such as concert halls, libraries and museums, are the structures affected by these "starchitects" and further, addresses the effect iconic buildings have on the city fabric; however, the article is illustrated with primarily exterior views of these buildings, keeping the focus on the building and the architect. But how do these iconic exteriors relate to their interior spaces? In the case of museums and galleries, does the iconic museum's radical exterior translate into a similar radicalism within the exhibition spaces created inside?

In Ken Carbone's 2004 "The Shell Game," published in the international design magazine *I.D.*, he criticizes how art museums are relying on renowned architects to create "star architecture" at the expense of the art, which he believes should be the draw of a museum. Suzanne MacLeod also addresses the phenomenon of the new museum building as icon and how she feels that architects are privileging dramatic design over a consideration of the needs and aims of the museum in her 2005 essay "Rethinking Museum Architecture." More recently, in February 2011, the visual arts magazine *Apollo* published a feature on gallery architecture written by architect, designer and writer, Edwin Heathcote: "The Architecture of Art." Heathcote asks the question if the approach of producing iconic museum architecture–also referred to as the "blockbuster institution" and the "mega-museum"–is best serving the art. He discusses the various architects and gallery spaces that have been designed recently, producing a record of some of the new gallery exhibition spaces. These articles demonstrate that the debate on iconic buildings has been ongoing over the last decade; however, the critique, although implied, has yet to delve into the gallery space and the exhibitions that take place within them.

LITERATURE ON DANIEL LIBESKIND AND THE ROLOFF BENY GALLERY

Literature on Daniel Libeskind is vast; there are numerous publications on him and his practice, as well as several interviews. Libeskind has even published his own books about his work and practice, including *Radix-matrix: Architecture and Writings* (1997) and *Breaking Ground* (2004). These writings are both prior to the creation of the ROM's Crystal building and therefore, have no specific information regarding the Crystal; however, the 2008 publication *Counterpoint: Daniel Libeskind in Conversation with Paul Goldberger* offers a small amount of information on the project. In the interview with architecture critic Paul Goldberger are sections that feature photographic reproductions and architectural drawings of several of Libeskind's projects but exclude the

Crystal; however, Kelvin Browne's *Bold Visions: The Architecture of the Royal Ontario Museum* is a document of the building history of the ROM and includes an interview with Libeskind specific to RenROM. Browne published this book when he was the ICC's Managing Director. The publication contains an extensive number of images, including the interior of the Crystal; however, it does not address the galleries of the Crystal or the exhibitions held inside.

In the essay "Creative space," from the edited book *Reshaping Museum Space*, David Fleming, who has been involved in the building of several museums, discusses how architecture can help, hinder or bypass the purpose of the museum, which, in his opinion, is to create stimulating and engaging experiences.[22] He states that museum architecture excludes people from the museum and is essentially meant to overwhelm the viewer; museum architects seem to think that the building is more important than what is housed inside.[23] He speaks of Daniel Libeskind's "brilliantly disorienting" Jewish Museum and how it dominates and overpowers museum content.[24] Despite this mention, no publications actually address Libeskind's iconic buildings in terms of the exhibition spaces or the exhibitions that are actually displayed within the structures. Libeskind's deconstructivist buildings and anti-cube gallery spaces make his work the ideal case study for addressing the presentation of photography–historically, a medium most comfortable within the white cube gallery.

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While this new type of cultural space has been acknowledged, it has not been discussed in detail; as such, the literature on the subject is limited. This is especially notable on issues related to the installation of exhibitions within, not only the Roloff Beny Gallery, but galleries that are the result of "iconic" or "experimental" buildings in general and is a particularly glaring omission in regards to photography. Therefore, by using the Roloff Beny Gallery as a case study, I will endeavor to add to the history of photographic installation design, to the literature on the Crystal building, and to the discussion of the influence of architectural context on exhibition design.

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[22]David Fleming, "Creative Space," in *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*, edited by Suzanne MacLeod (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 53.
[23]Ibid., 53.
[24]Ibid., 57.

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Methodology

In order to narrow my study of the effect of architectural context on installation design, I decided to focus on the past photographic exhibitions that have taken place in the Roloff Beny Gallery. The Roloff Beny Gallery has displayed a variety of two and three-dimensional objects; however, the primarily two-dimensional medium of photography provides an interesting study of the unconventional space, as photography has primarily been displayed within the modernist white cube. As mentioned in the "Literature Survey," O'Doherty's 1976 critique of the presentation of photography in "Notes on the Gallery Space" refers to the convention of the framed photograph that is still common to this day.[25] How is this convention of display contested in the Roloff Beny Gallery? By considering three key photography exhibitions, the effect of architectural context on installation design will be addressed and assumptions about the emerging eccentric gallery space will be discussed.

The analysis of the exhibition space is possible due to a series of digital images taken by the ROM that provide visual representation of past exhibitions. These include installation images of *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*, and *Edward Burtynsky: Oil*, in addition to installation images of several other exhibitions that have been presented in the space. Furthermore, the ROM provided images of the Roloff Beny Gallery, as it stands today, with *iceberg walls*[26] that were constructed by Hariri Pontarini Architects, as a solution to the absence of wall space perpendicular to the gallery floor. Other relevant material comprises the design and layout plans for the exhibitions. For example, the ROM has provided me with the floor plan of *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History* and of the gallery with the iceberg walls that were added to Liebeskind's original space approximately two years after the first exhibition took place.

Interviews have been conducted in person, over the phone, and via email with professionals involved in the creation of the Roloff Beny Gallery and with those involved in the curation, design and coordination of past exhibitions, such as the Managing Director of the Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC), Francisco Alvarez, who was part of the team that decided to put the iceberg walls in the gallery. The Creative Director of Hariri Pontarini Architects in Toronto, George Simionopoulos, was also interviewed, as he was involved in the creation of the iceberg walls from concept to realized product. As mentioned in the introduction,

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[25]O'Doherty, "Notes on the Gallery Space," in *Inside the White Cube*, expanded ed., 20.
[26]The walls were inspired by icebergs, according to both Francisco Alvarez and George Simionopoulos. The term iceberg walls is being used for the purpose of this paper. Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012; George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012.

the gallery presents primarily touring exhibitions, so there are various people involved from the ROM and elsewhere.

I viewed *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History* in August of 2007; however, I did not view *Vanity Fair Portraits* or *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* in person. I visited the space in January of 2012, accompanied by Francisco Alvarez, when there was no exhibition in the space and again in April of 2012, accompanied by Laura Comerford, Coordinator of the Institute for Contemporary Culture, when the exhibition *Larry Towell, Donovan Wylie: Afghanistan* (May 5 to July 15, 2012) was partially installed.

The White Cube

[E]ven though there have been noteworthy exceptions – such as the biomorphic installation spaces and evocations of the unconscious in Surrealist display – the white cube has remained the norm for presenting every variety of artistic expression.[27]

> – Bruce Altshuler, Director, Museum Studies, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, New York University

        The white cube emerged from the idea of pure form. In 1976, Brian O'Doherty described the gallery space as a white cube: a space devoid of natural light and anything related to the outside world. It is a space that attempts to create the impression that the objects stand alone, in a de-contextualized interior, with no distractions from the architecture of the space. As O'Doherty writes, "The art is free, as the saying used to go, 'to take on its own life.'"[28]

        The white cube aesthetic was inaugurated at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) by the museum's founding director, Alfred Barr, with the exhibition *Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh*

Figure 5. Installation photograph of the photographic work of Gilbert & George on display in a white cube gallery space. *London Pictures* (March 9 – May 12, 2012), South Galleries, White Cube Bermondsey, London. Photograph courtesy of White Cube © 2012 White Cube.

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[27]Phaidon and Altshuler, eds., *Salon to Biennial*, 18.
[28]O'Doherty, "Notes on the Gallery Space," in *Inside the White Cube*, expanded ed., 15.

(November 7 to December 7, 1929).[29] Paintings were previously hung in a salon-style and Barr, influenced by the international avant-garde, installed the paintings in a linear manner and at a standard height, so that a one on one relationship was created between the artwork and the viewer with no distractions from the other works on display.[30] Today, this seems like such a simple, obvious gallery space, but it was a contrast–a reaction to the previous methods and spaces of installation.[31] Barr used monk's cloth to create neutral walls, as the beige was the most neutral thing he could obtain, according to Phillip Johnson.[32] As Johnson states, this modern design of utilizing beige cloth transitioned to white paint, which is one of the foundations of the white cube and is still employed today.

A primary assumption of the white cube is the wall. As the ROM's Exhibition Designer (2D) Janice Low states, "Walls in [the] conventional cube gallery [are] meant to serve as [the] structure on which to hang artworks."[33] The viewer cannot be distracted by architectural details, like trim, or be influenced by the colour of the walls. The white cube is also known for the sparseness of the hanging; white cube galleries give the works room to breath. The viewer must be able to look at a single work and not be distracted by another; therefore, the works must be spread apart, so that works cannot speak to one another.

As O'Doherty stated over two decades ago in his 1986 afterword, "The gallery space has again become the unchallenged arena of discourse."[34] While alternatives to the white cube space have appeared through movements that take art into the public realm, the white cube is still the predominant gallery form and installation design for photography continues on this path. Will the Roloff Beny Gallery, which challenges the white cube as an institutional gallery form, result in a change in installation practices? Or will installation design resort to the conventions of display produced by the white cube? If we are aware of it, can we break from it? And are there compelling reasons for doing so?

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[29]Staniszewski, *The Power of Display*, 61.
[30]Ibid., 62-66.
[31]The white cube aesthetic meant hanging objects at a standard height, which was low in relation to the salon-style method that was originally developed in eighteenth century France. Phaidon and Altshuler, eds., *Salon to Biennial*, 16.
[32]Staniszewski, *The Power of Display*, 64. Phillip Johnson's comment is from an interview with Staniszewski, January 6, 1994.
[33]Janice Low (Exhibition Designer (2D), ROM), email message to author, May 2, 2012.
[34]O'Doherty, afterword to *Inside the White Cube*, expanded ed., 113.

Photographic Installation and Architectural Context

The modernist white cube aesthetic was employed by Beaumont Newhall in his exhibitions when he became MoMA's first curator of photography in 1940.[35] According to Christopher Phillips, photographs were given the same status as other prints and drawings: matted, framed and hung at a standard height.[36] Even though photography's historic involvement with the white cube exhibition began in the 1940s at MoMA, Edward Steichen's term as curator from 1947[37] to 1962[38] did away with the white, sparsely hung exhibitions. Exhibitions like *The Family of Man* (1955), designed by Paul Rudolph,[39] were filled with images that were exhibited for their content rather than their formal qualities. While still based on formal principles, the images in Steichen's exhibitions were often printed in various sizes and even hung away from the wall or from the ceiling thus responding, not to the architecture of the gallery, but actually producing new architectural space through their installation. It wasn't until the early 1960s that Newhall's sparer version of modernist exhibition design methodology resurfaced with the modernist aesthetic of John Szarkowski, the director of the Department of Photography from 1962 to 1991.[40]

Within art institutions for the better part of the twentieth century, photography has primarily been presented as a two-dimensional art form that has, for the most part, embraced the "neutrality" of the white cube gallery. In contrast, other gallery-based art forms, such as painting and sculpture, have acknowledged their architectural context to a greater degree. For example, the American artist, Sol LeWitt, has created numerous installations within the white cube gallery that have included drawing, painting and sculpture that make use of the existing gallery walls as surfaces. For his wall drawings, installation instructions are devised by the artist and the act of creating the work is carried out by draftsmen;[41] these instructions acknowledge where on the wall the composition should begin.[42] LeWitt's artworks display his thought process, as well as address the context of the gallery space–the white wall. To turn to sculpture, one can see that the fluorescent tube sculptures of artist Dan Flavin incorporate the gallery space into the artwork, as the light projects onto the wall, floor and ceiling becoming a part of the work's content. For

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[35]Phillips, "The Judgment Seat of Photography," 35.
[36]Ibid., 38.
[37]Ibid., 39.
[38]Ibid., 53.
[39]Staniszewski, *Power of Display*, 236.
[40]Staniszewski, *The Power of Display*, 105, 110.
[41]Lynne Cooke, "Wall Drawing 123: Copied lines," in *Sol LeWitt: 100 Views*, edited by Susan Cross and Denise Markonish (North Adams: MASS MoCA in association with Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009), 35.
[42]Susan Cross, "Drawing Restraint," in *Sol LeWitt: 100 Views*, edited by Susan Cross and Denise Markonish (North Adams: MASS MoCA in association with Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009), 39.

example, one of his works is a square comprised of four eight-foot long tubes, framing the bottom corner of a white cube space; two tubes of pink and yellow light face towards the corner and two daylight tubes face towards the rest of the gallery space.[43] By incorporating the usually neglected corner of the gallery into the artwork, Flavin not only responded to the context of the gallery space, but drew attention to the placement of the frame in the white cube gallery.

Both LeWitt and Flavin did not create space, but instead intentionally reacted to the space of the gallery. Their work is characterized as installation art, a term that is continually evolving but that usually refers to artwork conceived and constructed for a particular space and that incorporates space into the work's content: an incorporation that is significant for viewers' understanding of the work.[44] In contrast, as defined by installation art of the early 1960s and late 1970s, site-specific artwork is not possible without the site it was designed for and built in; the work's design, construction and exhibition are derived from a specific site.[45] In addition to being a conceptual form of artistic strategy, installation can refer to the mode of hanging an exhibition. Therefore, installation can be defined as the work of an artist that incorporates space into the work's content and is produced as the result of an artistic or conceptual strategy and secondly, as the physical installation of an exhibition: the process and results of the hanging of an exhibition. This paper refers to these two meanings of installation in relation to photography.

Traditionally, it has been the artist or exhibition designer who has consciously decided to respond to the space of the modernist gallery; however, with the introduction of unconventional gallery spaces, such as the Roloff Beny Gallery, it seems that the architect is now asserting himself or herself, so that the artist and/or curator and exhibition designer may be forced, in a sense, to respond to the space. Therefore, the passivity of the exhibition space is decreased and the creative role of the exhibition designer becomes more significant. How can photographic exhibitions acknowledge architectural or spatial context to a greater degree? Can the distinctions between the two definitions of installation mentioned above become increasingly blurred as a result of the demands of the space?

There is a history of photographic exhibitions as a form of installation with press exhibitions, such as *Pressa*, *Film und Foto* and *The Family of Man*. As previously mentioned, these exhibitions displayed unmated and unframed photographs of various sizes, not only on the gallery wall, but hanging away from the wall and from the ceiling. Viewers did not stand and observe a single photograph, instead they were engulfed in an environment that evoked a particular

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[43]Michael Govan and Tiffany Bell, *Dan Flavin: A Retrospective* (New York: Dia Art Foundation, 2004), 66.
[44]Mary M. Tinti, "Installation art in America," *Oxford Art Online*, accessed June 30, 2012,
http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T2085904.
[45]Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Location Identity*, 1st pbk. ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004), 1. Kwon addresses the evolving definition of site-specific art.

exhibition theme. These press exhibitions explored the possibilities of exhibition design, even utilizing the floor; however, these exhibitions were creating space rather than acknowledging existing space. In that sense they remained a modernist form.

More currently, in a postmodern era defined by an awareness of contingency and context, photography festivals, such as Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal and Toronto's Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, have featured contemporary artists who acknowledge the significance of the exhibition site in the meaning of their work; however, these seem to be often produced for public settings outside of the gallery, utilizing perhaps advertising as a strategy for the public display of photography. For example, in Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal 2009, Robert Burley produced a "site-specific installation," a photographic mural, on the north-facing façade of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA).[46] The image is the negative and positive reproduction of a Polaroid documenting the demolition of the Kodak-Pathé factory in Chalon-sur-Saône, France.[47] The choice of installing the image on the façade of the CCA relates to the institution's dedication to preserving international architecture.

At Scotiabank's 2012 CONTACT Photography Festival, Scott McFarland's photographic mural, *Corner of the Courageous, Repatriation Ceremony for Sergeant Martin Goudreault, Grenville St., Toronto, Ontario, June 9th, 2010* was designated as being part of a series of "public installations," which the festival catalogue describes as "photographic images presented as site-specific installations in urban settings throughout Toronto and across Canada."[48] The photographic installation was situated on the side of a building in the courtyard of the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MoCCA). But what about bringing this outside advertising strategy into the gallery? Photography festivals are fairly progressive in their design strategies; however, as white cube spaces still dominate the museum and gallery world, the idea of photographic installation seems to continue to be embraced more in the public realm rather than inside the gallery.

Photographic installation work appears to be a fairly recent development arriving with, as noted, postmodernism's stress on contextual awareness. Photographic exhibitions, however, still seem primarily conceived of with a modernist hanging in mind. Thus, it is rare for photographic exhibitions in art institutions specifically to acknowledge their architectural context–a confirmation of the ethos of the white cube. The persistence of the formalist presentation method therefore sets up challenges for those working within anti-cube spaces, like Libeskind's Roloff

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[46]Gaëlle Morel, "The Spaces of the Image," translated by Donald McGrath, in *The Spaces of the Image*, edited by Gaëlle Morel (Montréal: Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, 2009), 224.
[47]Ibid.
[48]Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, *Contact: Toronto Photography Festival* (Toronto, Ontario: Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, 2012), 87.

Beny Gallery. How do photographic exhibitions in the Roloff Beny Gallery use installation differently–as an artistic strategy, a mode of display or both?

The Anti-Cube Gallery: THE ROLOFF BENY GALLERY

I think a building that is interesting, a building, or an art, whatever it is, …it's engaged in a dialogue of something, in a struggle, in a tension, …and that's why…I've never been a proponent of the so-called "neutral" box, because they bothered me the most…they are the most aggressive of all architecture, these neutral spaces.[49]

— Daniel Libeskind

The Roloff Beny Gallery is home to the Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC), which presents exhibitions and specials events on cultural, social and political issues in contemporary society.[50] The ICC normally presents contemporary art and touring exhibitions.[51] As mentioned in the introduction, the photographic medium has become a significant part of the ICC's programming and, as Managing Director of the ICC, Francisco Alvarez states, has become a greater part of the exhibition program: more than was originally intended.[52] The gallery is housed at the apex–on the fourth floor–of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, a part of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto, Ontario. Its mandate is to create exhibitions that complement, illustrate, and relate to the ROM's collections and explore human cultures and the natural world.[53] The gallery was constructed in 2007 along with the rest of the Crystal, as a part of the ROM's expansion and restoration project, known as Renaissance ROM (RenROM). The Crystal structure, which juts out of the ROM's heritage building, was designed by Daniel Libeskind, international architect and designer. RenROM was documented in Kelvin Browne's *Bold Visions: The Architecture of the Royal Ontario Museum* (2007), which includes visual documentation of the building's construction and an interview with Libeskind; however, the publication does not address the Roloff Beny Gallery specifically nor the issues faced by those working with the space, such as curators and exhibition designers.

As the space has not been previously discussed in any detail, a description of Libeskind's raw, "original" space constructed in 2007 will follow, in order to offer a sense of this gallery space's complexity.

To enter the gallery, one passes through a white tunnel and crosses over a bridge constructed of black metal grating. One is then confronted by an open bright, white space with

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[49]Thorsell, "The Conversation," 10.
[50]"Institute for Contemporary Culture," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed March 2012, www.rom.on.ca/icc/index.php.
[51]Dan Rahimi (Vice President of Gallery Development, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[52]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[53]Royal Ontario Museum, "Board Policy: Exhibits," PDF file, 2.
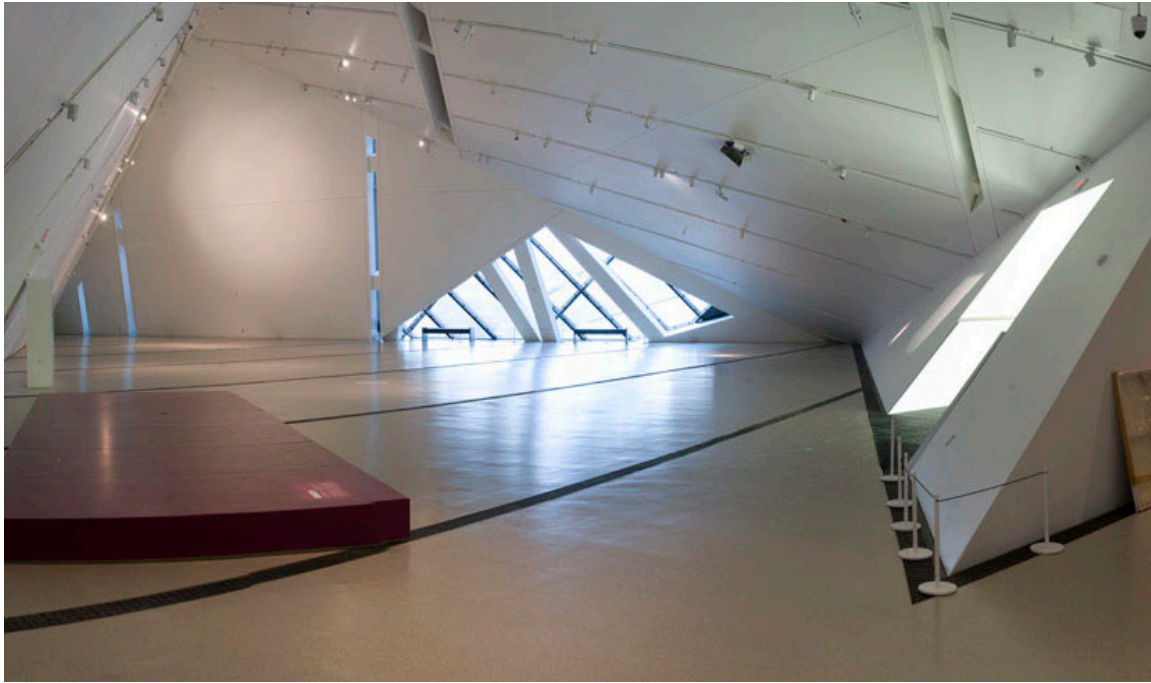
Figure 6. Interior view of Roloff Beny Gallery with transparent, triangular windows that look north to Bloor Street (*centre*) and gallery's main bridge entrance (*right*). Maroon plinth (*left*) used in *Shapeshifters, Time Travellers and Storytellers* (October 6, 2007 to February 28, 2008), which was not a part of the "original" gallery. Image has been cropped on right and left sides. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

Figure 7. Interior view of Daniel Libeskind's Extension to the Denver Art Museum, Frederic C. Hamilton Building, Denver, Colorado. Photograph courtesy of Studio Daniel Libeskind © Bitter Bredt.

angular walls sliced with windows that allow light to shine down onto the gallery floor. The white floor contains black lines running parallel to each other that are reflected in the lighting tracks in the ceiling. Two slanted ceilings–or walls–with black lighting tracks converge on each other, meeting at the farthest end of the gallery; they both intersect with another exterior wall that contains transparent windows framed with triangular forms that look north to Bloor Street.

The Roloff Beny Gallery is not based on any right-angles; it does not take the form of a box. There are no vertical walls or horizontal ceilings. These dynamic angles are characteristic of Libeskind's work (please see figure 7). The gallery floor is in the shape of a triangle and instead of having walls that rise up perpendicular to the floor, its walls rise from the floor at an angle, coming in on the viewer, creating a tent-like space that reaches a height of thirty-five feet.[54] These walls not only function as the gallery's walls, but as the exterior walls of the building: they essentially make up the building's roof. The walls contain a fixed track lighting system, speakers, sprinklers and electrical wires.[55]

Due to the slanted walls, the full floor space of the triangle is not available for use by viewers. In addition to the main triangular space, there is a small space that is to the left of the viewer when they first enter the gallery from the tunnel and bridge. There is no obvious way for a viewer to interact with this space as there is no clear indication of which direction to move first, except for perhaps one element that might draw the viewer: the triangular windows that let the outside world–of Bloor Street–into the gallery. Finally, it is important to note that the gallery was not designed with the key element of the white cube–the plumb wall.

A GALLERY WITH WALLS

How do you relate to a space that is not traditionally rectilinear?[56]

– George Simionopoulos, Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects

From the gallery's inauguration in 2007, exhibition walls were constructed specifically for each exhibition in the Roloff Beny Gallery. It wasn't until the 2009 exhibition of *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*, a collaboration between *Vanity Fair* and the National Portrait Gallery, London, that a more permanent solution for displaying objects was undertaken. This solution was the design and construction of iceberg-inspired walls that would accommodate

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[54]"Exhibition Spaces: Roloff Beny Gallery," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed March 2012, http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/spaces/benygallery.php.
[55]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[56]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012. Quotation transcribed from a recorded interview.

various mediums and exhibitions. It was to be a permanent solution, in the sense that the walls–referred to as *iceberg walls* for the purposes of this paper–would become a part of the gallery for years to come.

After walking through the white space of overpowering iceberg-like structures, a number of questions arose: how was the sculptural form of the walls arrived at? How did the architecture effect what type of structures were designed? How did the space determine how many walls were constructed? What types of objects was the design trying to accommodate?

The walls were designed by the Toronto-based architectural firm, Hariri Pontarini Architects. According to the firm's Creative Director, George Simionopoulos, who worked on the project, the architectural team was requested to produce a certain amount of linear footage that would accommodate *Vanity Fair Portraits*. Even though this two-dimensional exhibition was the first exhibition to utilize the walls, the architectural team had to think of the various types of objects and exhibitions that could be presented within the space. Furthermore, the firm wanted the walls to have a visual presence; they did not want the walls to simply support the artwork as had been done in the rectilinear white cube.[57] The walls had to have a presence that mirrored the

Figure 8. View from the gallery's main bridge entrance, with no exhibition installed in the space, of the main corridor of visual relief created by the placement and design of the iceberg walls. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

[57]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012.

power of Libeskind's space.

The project resulted in the construction of five iceberg walls in the gallery, four of which are freestanding (please see the floor plan). These walls are permanent; they were constructed in the space and are made of steel, poured concrete, plywood and gypsum wallboard.[58] The firm also designed rectangular temporary walls that are moveable.

To study the elements of the space, such as slanted exterior walls, lighting tracks, flooring, and viewer flow through the space, the firm constructed a physical 3D model and a digital model.[59] As the walls rise from the floor and angle in towards viewers, Simionopoulos describes how the firm had to define a zone of circulation available for viewers using human scale. By establishing this zone, the firm produced a working space in which walls might be placed. In addition to establishing the actual inhabitable space in the gallery, the slanted walls also affected the height and shape of the walls designed. The form of the walls was inspired by icebergs, as the gallery evokes the feeling that the viewer is within an iceberg.[60] The walls are all different sizes and shapes; a single wall is not the same thickness throughout, as can be seen in the floor plan. Furthermore, each individual wall has its own relationship to the slanted walls or ceiling; for example, some of the tops of the walls run parallel to the ceiling and others do not. George Simionopoulos believes that this creates a non-static relationship:

I think when you play with angles, curves, and shifts it sets your spirits and your visual
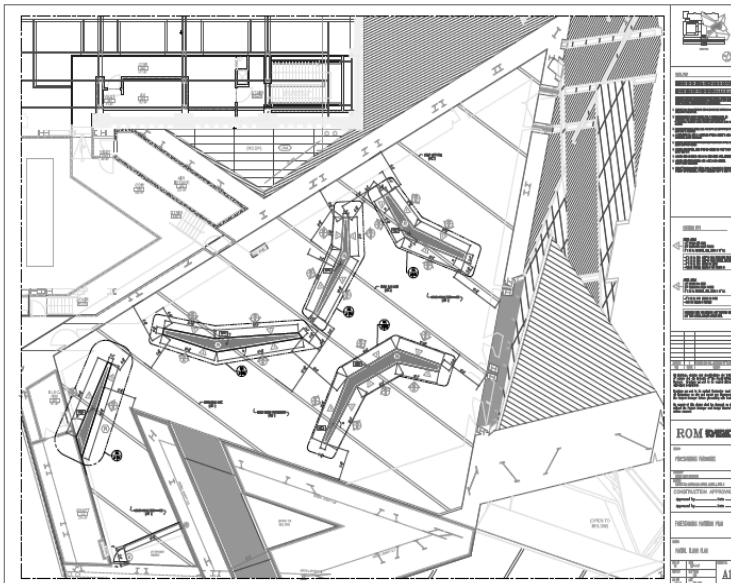
Figure 9. Partial floor plan drawing of placement and design of iceberg walls in the Roloff Beny Gallery. Courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

[58]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012. Construction elements also stated in figure 9: A1 drawing of partial floor plan for the freestanding partitions.
[59]Ibid.
[60]Ibid.; Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012; Simionopoulos and Alvarez both spoke of the influence of icebergs for the walls.

Figure 10. View towards gallery's main bridge entrance with no exhibition installed in the space, showing track lighting, grates in gallery floor, and various shapes of iceberg walls. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

> connectivity in motion, so you're always kind of measuring yourself against the space and it doesn't create a static condition, but one more of a dynamic experience of the space.[61]

When designing the tops of the walls, the lighting grid designed by Libeskind had to be considered. The tops of the walls had to be shaped so that the artificial light from the tracks on the ceiling could penetrate through.

The placement of the four walls was not only determined by the zone inhabitable by viewers, but also the flooring. The black grates that run parallel to each other in the white gallery floor are the source of electrical wiring in the space;[62] therefore, each wall had to be placed on top of at least one grate. The walls are freestanding and therefore, the floor is the source of power for the walls. These grates allow for works to be displayed on the walls without an electrical cord running from the object, down the wall, and along the floor.[63] For example, if a power source was not accessible from the grates, then photographic works like the light boxes of Jeff Wall or Rodney Graham, would have a cord running from a freestanding wall to the edge of the gallery.

[61]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012. Quotation transcribed from a recorded interview.
[62]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[63]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), in conversation with the author, January 27, 2012.

Figure 11. View of iceberg wall from gallery's main bridge entrance during the exhibition *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008* (September 26, 2009 to January 3, 2010). Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

Another element of the gallery, the entrance, affected the placement of the walls. The architectural firm wanted to place a wall, so that a work could be displayed and seen by viewers, as they walked through the tunnel.[64] They wanted there to be a place for a work to pull viewers into an exhibition. The placement of this wall affected the others as a result. A corridor from the entrance to the window–facing Bloor Street–was created by constructing walls that each evoke a broken curve, whose concave-like side faces towards the exterior walls; the corridor created runs beneath the centre of the tent-structure, creating an area of visual relief.[65] It was designed, so that viewers would notice the light from Bloor Street and might move in that direction.[66]

As stated by Janice Low, Exhibition Designer (2D) at the ROM, the viewer flow is difficult to control in the space.[67] The viewer isn't necessarily given clues as to how to move through the space as they would in a white cube gallery–chronologically or left to right; there is no spatial "narrative" to follow in the Roloff Beny Gallery. The walls open up to the viewer and also close in on them; the viewer must move around the walls and discover the spaces of the

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[64]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012.
[65]Valérie Matteau (Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC)), in conversation with the author, February 14, 2012; Marcus Schubert (Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Edward Burtynsky Photography), telephone interview with the author, March 16, 2012. This "visual relief" was noted by Matteau and Schubert.
[66]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012.
[67]Janice Low (Exhibition Designer (2D), ROM), email message to author, May 2, 2012.

gallery. As is typical in the white cube, the viewer is never surrounded completely by artwork, as noted by Valérie Matteau, Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC).[68]

The walls are a response to the architectural context of Libeskind's eccentric space and, in this sense, could be referred to as a long-term installation. This long-term installation is a powerful architectural context for all future exhibitions displayed in the space. As Janice Low states, "[T]he height and arrangement of [the] walls do not allow for much flexibility in designing space. [The walls create] set conditions that cannot be changed."[69] As Libeskind suggested, his intention was to create a space where a neutral and static space was not an option. He forced the team at Hariri Pontarini Architects into producing walls; however, through his design, he forced them to create walls that do not conform to white cube conventions. As the walls were designed as a result of a photography exhibition, the architectural firm attempted to make photography intelligible in the space by creating surfaces that were perpendicular to the floor. In a sense, the walls make the space a partial cube; therefore, it is even more significant to think of installation as having affinities with artistic installation, so that photographic exhibitions explore display methods beyond the conventions of hanging.

Therefore, the team at Hariri Pontarini Architects had to create a long-term installation or site-specific work for the Roloff Beny Gallery, producing walls–referred to as iceberg walls–that were sculptural artworks in themselves with a relationship to the space and walls that would accommodate the presentation of various objects, both two and three dimensional.

[68]Valérie Matteau (Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC)), in conversation with the author, February 14, 2012.
[69]Janice Low (Exhibition Designer (2D), ROM), email message to author, May 2, 2012.

The Case Studies: THE EXHIBITIONS

<u>HIROSHI SUGIMOTO: HISTORY OF HISTORY</u>
(June 3 to September 3, 2007)

I've been working on many museum shows and most of the spaces are designed by famous architects: Rem Koolhaas, Renzo Piano, Tadao Ando, Frank Gehry. They don't think of the user's point of view. I'm always fighting with the architecture.[70]
– Hiroshi Sugimoto

But what was I suppose to do with my photographs? Were there no walls on which to hang pictures? I felt as if he were challenging me to a dare, "Give it your best shot, let's see how ya' cope. This oughta be fun!"[71]
– Hiroshi Sugimoto

After making one's way to the fourth and top floor of the Crystal, one turns to the right to see the name of the artist, "HIROSHI SUGIMOTO," in dark grey type against a white wall. The angular edge leads one over the bridge and points the eye towards an artifact set into a white wall. This artifact leads one into the dimly lit interior where one looks up at a tent-like ceiling that reaches to thirty-five feet;[72] a window–skylight–pierces the white, slanted wall and light shines down onto the white floor. The viewer begins to move to the right along a curved wall. Works, such as hanging scrolls and works on silk,[73] are set in to the convex wall and are juxtaposed with artifacts in rectangular display cases; the display cases are placed underneath the low, angled ceiling and follow the curve of the wall. At the end of the curve, there is a single artifact sitting in another rectangular display case; one turns to the left, around the corner of the wall, and the concave side of the wall is unveiled. A series of seven large-format photographs from Sugimoto's *Seascapes* series are presented evenly spaced apart, on a grey wall; the photographs are all the same size and framed in neutral matts in simple, silver frames. The images are all taken with the horizon–where the sky meets the water–in the centre, creating a singular horizon through all of

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[70]Hiroshi Sugimoto and Daniel Libeskind, ["Conversation between Sugimoto and Libeskind"], *Crystallized* (magazine by Swarovski), issue 7 (Winter 2006), PDF file.

[71]Hiroshi Sugimoto, "Betraying the Unbuilt: Daniel Libeskind; Royal Ontario Museum," in 空間感 [Sense of Space] (essays by Sugimoto in Japanese with photographs) (Tokyo: Magazine House, 2011), Microsoft Word file.

[72]"Exhibition Spaces: Roloff Beny Gallery," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed July 2012, http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/spaces/benygallery.php.

[73]"News Releases: The ICC at the ROM Announces *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*," Royal Ontario Museum, issued February 12, 2007, http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=tqvecfxby9.
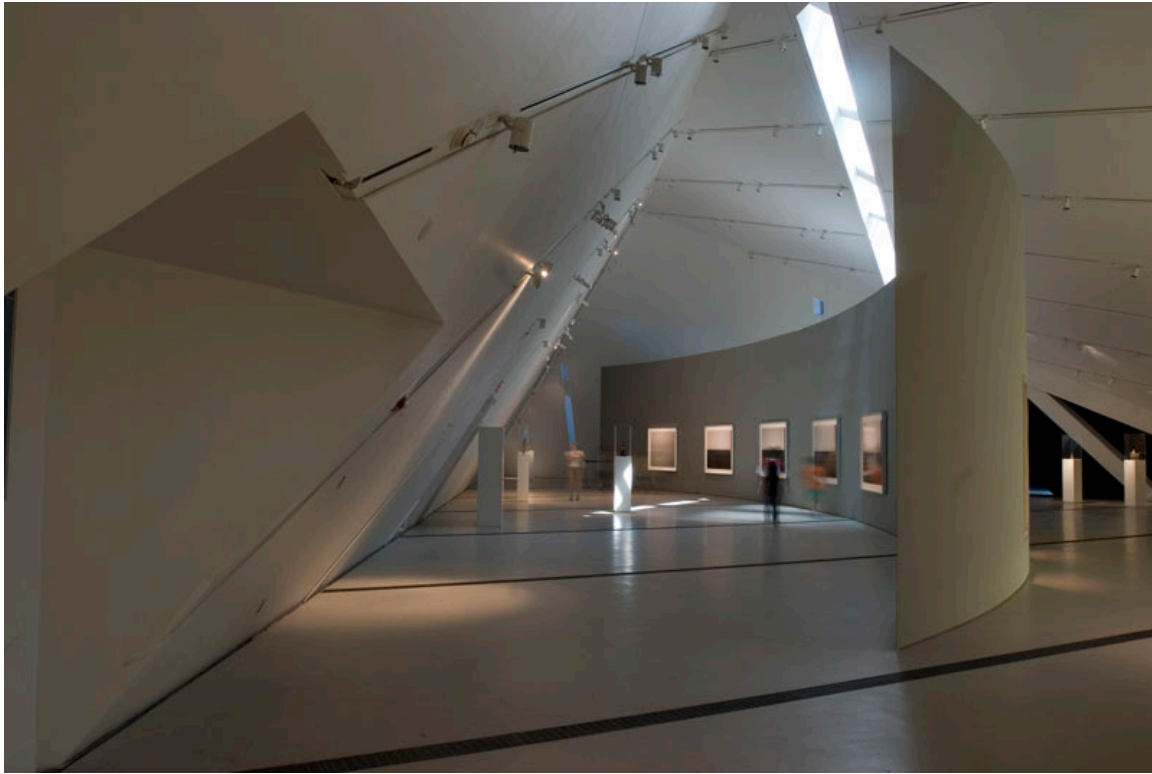
Figure 12. View of *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History* with curved wall placed beneath the tent-like gallery. Main bridge entrance is located outside the right of the frame. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

the photographs. Each photograph is framed with a square light,[74] highlighting them individually, while unifying the aesthetic of the works further, telling the viewer that they are to be viewed equally. Also, the focused, square lighting evokes the sense that the photographs are floating.[75] The curve of the wall envelopes the viewer, in order to wrap one in the horizon and the feeling evoked by the display.

The first response to the Roloff Beny Gallery's unconventional space was *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, which was curated by the artist himself, Japanese contemporary artist Hiroshi Sugimoto. It was the first exhibition in the building; it was a part of the Architectural Opening and Building Dedication of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal on June 2nd, 2007.[76] The exhibition included photographs by Sugimoto (his *Seascapes*), in addition to ancient and medieval Japanese artworks and religious artifacts from the artist's personal collection.[77] The exhibition was shown

[74]Marcus Schubert (Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Edward Burtynsky Photography), telephone interview with the author, March 16, 2012.

[75]Marcus Schubert (Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Edward Burtynsky Photography), telephone interview with the author, March 16, 2012.

[76]"News Releases: The ICC at the ROM Announces *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*," Royal Ontario Museum, issued February 12, 2007, http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=tqvecfxby9.

[77]Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Hiroshi Sugimoto: L'histoire de l'histoire*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum (Tokyo: Rikuyosha, 2004), front jacket.

Figure 13. View of Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Seascapes* on the concave side of the wall during *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

first in 2003 at Maison Hermès Forum in Tokyo and then in 2005 at the Japanese Society Gallery in New York; it was from seeing this exhibition at the Japanese Society that the ROM decided they wanted this exhibition for the Institute for Contemporary Culture's space: the Roloff Beny Gallery.[78] The exhibition also travelled to the Smithsonian, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington D.C., in 2006; the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco in 2007; the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, in 2008; and The National Museum of Art, Osaka, in 2009.[79]

Sugimoto curated the show within a space that had no walls to hang his photographs on. The artist did not respond with flat white cube walls, but instead responded by creating a fifteen foot high, ninety foot long[80] temporary wall that curved through the gallery, contrasting with the gallery's geometric, angular walls. The wall was two metres thick at the widest point–in the middle of the curve–and became narrower at either end until reaching a point; the wall was made out of fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP).[81]

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[78]Thorsell, "The Conversation," 2.
[79]"Bibliography," Hiroshi Sugimoto's Official Website, accessed March 2012, www.sugimotohiroshi.com/Bio.html.
[80]"News Releases: *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*," Royal Ontario Museum, issued April 16, 2007, https://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=39ppljognj.
[82]Sugimoto, "Betraying the Unbuilt," Microsoft Word file.

As Dave Hollands, the ROM's Head of Design has suggested, Sugimoto selected his works based on his theme of the exhibition; however, the way he arranged his selection was a direct response to the interior architecture of the space.[82] His arrangement was directly linked to how he wanted the viewer to move through the space.[83] This awareness of the interior architecture, as well as the viewers' role in the exhibition, demonstrate that Sugimoto thought about the exhibition conceptually, rather than simply as a mode of displaying objects.

The ROM's Vice President of Gallery Development, Dan Rahimi, states that the relationships between adjacent objects is significant in the Roloff Beny Gallery.[84] In Sugimoto's exhibition, the concave wall created a space that unified the works, combining to evoke a feeling that differs from viewing one of the seascapes on its own–the display of a series on the concave wall, tells the viewer that they are meant to be seen together and viewed in series. Displaying two-dimensional objects on a curved wall further defies photographic display conventions.

The simple straight horizon line in the photographs echoed the straight lines of the interior. The simple forms of the images created a visual relief, as Valérie Matteau, Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC) states,[85] that was a contrast to the overwhelming power and grandeur of the architecture of the space. A conversation between artist Hiroshi Sugimoto and Crystal architect, Daniel Libeskind, occurred at the opening of *History of History* on May 31st, 2007. In the "conversation," Libeskind states that architecture is bound to the idea of being a passive instrument;[86] essentially, architecture is accustomed to being "invisible," as is typical in the white cube gallery. Libeskind further speaks of the "recovery of architecture"[87] in the contemporary era: recovering architecture from its creation of conventional rectilinear spaces. When speaking about the Roloff Beny Gallery, Libeskind states that he believes the tension between art and architecture is a part of the beauty of a space.[88] Essentially, he views his anti-cube gallery as a space that creates tension: a space that is dynamic.

In the "conversation," Libeskind discusses the success of Sugimoto's exhibition.

I think it's the proportions of that wall, the exact curve, the location of the curve, the way [Sugimoto] work[s] with the light and the openings and how the objects are placed – I think it's…a revelatory kind of exhibit.[89]

When measuring the success of *History of History*, Dave Hollands states

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[82]Dave Hollands (Head of Design, ROM), email message to author, March 20, 2012.
[83]Ibid.
[84]Dan Rahimi (Vice President of Gallery Development, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[85]Valérie Matteau (Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC)), in conversation with the author, February 14, 2012.
[86]Thorsell, "The Conversation," 7.
[87]Ibid.
[88]Ibid.
[89]Ibid., 8.

[Sugimoto] created a moving and appropriate intervention in the space – an auspicious launch to the new gallery…[I]t was intellectual, aesthetic and important. He created a forum for dialogue with the new architecture – something every subsequent installation must rise to.[90]

Sugimoto's exhibition was an *artistic response* to the gallery; he created an artistic installation, as he produced a site-specific response to Libeskind's space, designing and conceiving of his exhibition within the context of the gallery space. Essentially, the architecture of the gallery cannot be ignored. This eccentric space demands a dialogue with the architecture–thinking about installation not only as a mode of hanging, but as an artistic strategy and part of the meaning of the work itself.

VANITY FAIR PORTRAITS: PHOTOGRAPHS 1913-2008
(September 26, 2009 to January 3, 2010)

The black angles from the tunnel point the eye towards a single black and white portrait of a woman–*Louise Brooks* (1928) by Edward Steichen[91]–hung on a white sculptural wall. The title to the right of the white matted and black, framed portrait reads "Vintage Vanity Fair." Looking to the right, another title reads "Modern Vanity Fair" and is placed to the left of a contemporary, colour group portrait: *Legends of Hollywood* (2001) by Annie Leibovitz.[92] Both of the title walls open up onto a large, grand corridor. The space is white and bright with black accents from the track lighting on the ceiling, the frames of the objects, and the black grates in the floor. The following questions arose: was the feeling of the white cube trying to be evoked? What type of space was the exhibition designed for? Was it a white cube? How did the architecture–including the new iceberg walls–affect how the show was conceived of and presented?

The traveling exhibition *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008* was a collaboration between *Vanity Fair* and the National Portrait Gallery, London and was curated by Terence Pepper, Curator of Photographs at the National Portrait Gallery, and David Friend, *Vanity Fair's* Editor of Creative Development.[93] The walls designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects, that are currently part of the gallery, were first employed for *Vanity Fair Portraits* to display almost one hundred and fifty vintage and contemporary photographs.[94]

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[90]Dave Hollands (Head of Design, ROM), email message to author, March 20, 2012.
[91]Graydon Carter and David Friend, eds., *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs, 1913-2008*, texts by David Friend, Christopher Hitchens and Terence Pepper (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2008), 103.
[92]Ibid., 198.
[93]"News Releases: *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed March 2012, http://www.rom.on.ca/news/releases/public.php?mediakey=5pn6cra0ia.
[94]"Past Exhibitions: *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed March 2012, http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/special/vanityfair/index.php.

Figure 14. View from gallery's main bridge entrance with "Vintage Vanity Fair" on the left side of the main corridor and "Modern Vanity Fair" (*right*) during *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

The iceberg walls were produced with a white paint finish. *Vanity Fair* seems to have attempted to neutralize the walls and architecture by keeping the iceberg walls white; these walls blend with the slanted walls of the ceiling, resulting on a focus on the works: the works seem to stand out. Most of the photographs were matted in white and framed in thin, simple, black frames: a modernist convention for presenting photography.[95] In this sense, it evoked a conventional space; however, the exhibition's arrangement and the viewers' movement through the space was anything but conventional.

The exhibition was designed by the National Portrait Gallery and *Vanity Fair* to unfold chronologically to viewers; however, there is no obvious viewer flow or route for viewers to move through the gallery, making it difficult to present objects in a particular order.[96] With the original chronological design and a gallery space that does not easily facilitate such a progression, Francisco Alvarez states that "sub-stories" had to be pulled from the original show design;[97] this produced new groupings of pictures that worked well together visually. The titles and text panels

[95]This modernist convention is noted by O'Doherty and Phillips, see *Inside the White Cube*, expanded ed. and "The Judgment Seat of Photography."
[96]Janice Low (Exhibition Designer (2D), ROM), email message to author, May 2, 2012.
[97]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.

for the two time periods–vintage and modern periods–were placed on either side of the corridor and were visible to viewers from the entrance. This appears to be an attempt to break up the two periods in the space. Furthermore, when the viewer moves behind an iceberg wall–for example behind "Modern Vanity Fair," so that the wall closed in on them–more photographs from the magazine's modern period would be revealed. In addition, as a result of the amount of space per wall and their height, the size of the text panels and object labels were increased from the original design.[98]

As Janice Low describes, the standard height for hanging photographs was too high for the space. When people enter the space, as she described, they tend to look up at the space to observe it; therefore, the photographs and text were hung slightly lower than the convention in an attempt to lower the eye to a more comfortable viewing level.[99] Furthermore, the size of the photographs affected where they were placed in the space. For example, as depicted in "The Gallery with Walls," from the entrance, down the main corridor of the gallery, an iceberg wall stands at the end of the gallery–opened up to the space. On the right plane of the wall, a large, vertical portrait of Margaret Thatcher by Helmut Newton[100] is hung to the left of Mario Testino's 1997 portrait of Diana, Princess of Wales,[101] which is smaller in size (please see figure 14). The size of these two objects is much larger than the majority of the photographs in the exhibition. The wall at the end needed works to be visible from the entrance and therefore, needed large works for the wall that is at the farthest end of the gallery space. In addition, the shape of the wall affects the placement of these two images; the portrait of Princess Diana is hung to the right of the portrait of Margaret Thatcher because it is smaller in size and therefore, follows the line of the top of the wall: the proportions of the wall.

The arrangement of the objects was not only altered from the original design, but the type of objects presented also changed, as a result of the spatial layout. The floor plan of the gallery is triangular in shape; however, to the left of the entrance, there is a space that is an askew rectangle with various angles surrounding the viewer.[102] A rectangular vitrine holding past issues of the magazine was placed in the awkward area.[103] These were objects that were not a part of the original show; they were added, in order to make the exhibition stronger.[104] The curators

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[98]Janice Low (Exhibition Designer (2D), ROM), email message to author, May 2, 2012.
[99]Ibid.
[100]Carter and Friend, eds., *Vanity Fair Portraits*, 169.
[101]Ibid., 182.
[102]George Simionopoulos (Creative Director, Hariri Pontarini Architects), interview with the author, March 21, 2012. The iceberg wall, the one wall designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects that is not freestanding, has a perpendicular relationship to the floor.
[103]Francisco Alvarez (Managing Director, Institute for Contemporary Culture, ROM), interview with the author, January 27, 2012.
[104]Ibid.

Figure 15. Display of modern period photographs on concave side of "Modern Vanity Fair" title wall and on a temporary wall. *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

Figure 16. View of gallery corner–to left of main bridge entrance–with vitrine displaying issues *of Vanity Fair* magazine (*left*) and photographs installed on an iceberg wall (*right*)–the one "new" wall that is not freestanding. *Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008*. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

responded to the spaces of the gallery, making it a part of the content of the show. Therefore, the way the exhibit was presented was a direct result of the architectural context.

   Vanity Fair Portraits was an existing exhibition–designed with a "neutral" gallery in mind– that had to consider the architecture as a part of the content of the exhibition. As a consequence, the exhibition organization, not the theme, was altered as a result, merging both installation as an artistic strategy and as a mode of hanging. This *thematic response* to the space blends the artistic response seen with *History of History* with the conventional modernist aesthetic of the white cube. In regards to the exhibition's response to the space, *Vanity Fair Portraits* did not go as far as Sugimoto's self-curated exhibition in responding to the space conceptually; however, it did display a flexibility that allowed for it to explore the provocative possibilities of the space.

EDWARD BURTYNSKY: OIL
                                 (April 1 to August 21, 2011)

   The solo traveling exhibition *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* included fifty-three large-format colour photographs by Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky; the exhibition was organized by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; presented by the Ryerson Image Centre, the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, and Scotiabank Group; and hosted by the ICC.[105] Therefore, the exhibition was originally meant to be presented in a space with architecture that acts as a background to Burtynsky's large scale, colour-saturated photographs.

   One key element to the exhibition design was the use of paint; three different shades of grey were used in an attempt to visually break up the themes within the exhibition: "Extraction and Refinement," "Transportation and Motor Culture," and "The End of Oil." These grey shades were the same shades used in the original design created by the Corcoran Gallery of Art.[106] The grey shade is a modernist alternative to employing white; grey is neutral in this exhibition, as the colour does not detract from the photographs or compete with the range of colour in many of Burtynsky's prints.

   The first sightline from the main entrance presents *Oil Fields #22* on a light grey wall–it almost appears white due to the strong and even light levels directed on the work. The lines within the image mimic the line of the top of the wall directing the viewer's eye to move to the right towards "Transportation and Motor Culture"; however, this is not the direction the viewer was designed to look first.

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[105]"Past Exhibitions: *Edward Burtynsky: Oil*," Royal Ontario Museum, accessed December 2011, http://www.rom.on.ca/exhibitions/special/oil.php.
[106]Valérie Matteau (Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC)), in conversation with the author, February 14, 2012.

Figure 17. View of *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* from gallery's main bridge entrance with *Oil Fields #22* (*far left*). Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.
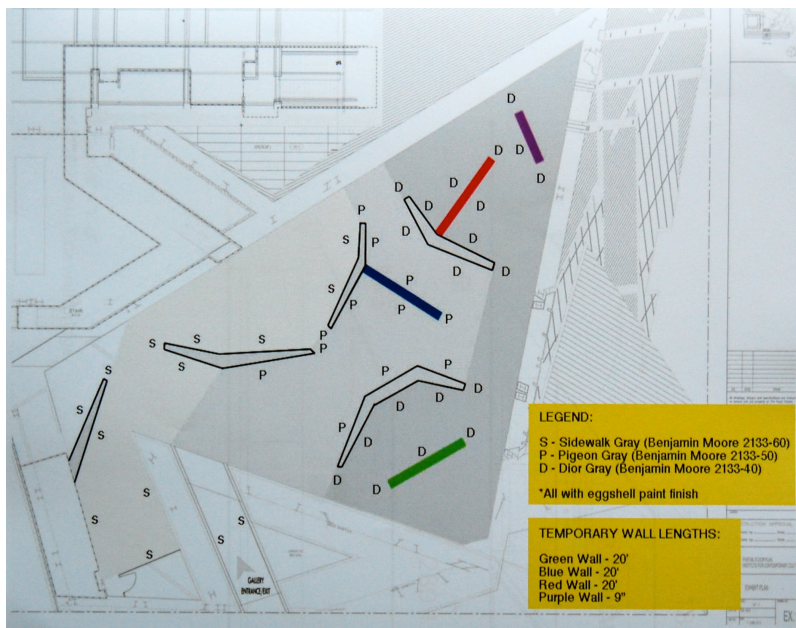

Figure 18. Exhibition layout plan of *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* in the Roloff Beny Gallery. View of three shades of grey–the three themes–and of temporary walls in green, blue, red and purple. Courtesy of Valérie Matteau, Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC), Toronto.

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The design of the visitor flow through the exhibition space was a different approach than that taken by *Vanity Fair*. The traditional narrative flow of the white cube was translated from the Corcoran Gallery of Art design to the Roloff Beny Gallery for *Edward Burtynsky: Oil*. Viewers usually move clockwise through a space and the exhibition was designed around this conventional idea.[107] The viewer was meant to enter the space and view "Extraction and Refinement" on the viewer's left and then make their way through the space from this front point, moving from the entrance area to the back of the gallery–the back being the apex of the gallery where the purple temporary wall was positioned–and then along the exterior wall that faces Bloor Street.[108] The layout plan of the exhibition depicts the three different themes–shades of grey–and demonstrates that a traditional "narrative" flow, or clockwise approach to moving the viewer through the space, is not suited to this kind of gallery.

In addition to the unusual shape of the gallery and placement of the iceberg walls, the power and grandeur of the space impacted the height at which the works were hung. The photographs were hung very low, in an attempt to have the viewer focus on the work first–draw the viewer into the image first–and the space second.[109] The aesthetic qualities of the photographs are what are meant to draw the viewer into Burtynsky's photographs, whereupon the viewer is meant to realize the troubling content of what is actually being depicted in the image. For this reason, Burtynsky's flat, colour-saturated photographs are usually displayed in the modernist white cube where the photographs can stand on their own with no distractions from the architecture of the space. Furthermore, in the display of Burtynsky's photographs, the labels that accompany the works are usually hung very low in an attempt to allow the labels to disappear into the wall–like the architecture, the labels should not distract from the work.[110]

Lighting was a significant design element of the exhibition because colour is significant to the meaning of Burtynsky's work and therefore, the lighting is crucial in his exhibitions. All of the windows or skylights were blacked out with the exception of the triangular window that faces onto Bloor Street: a scrim covered the window, allowing limited light to penetrate into the space while allowing the light levels to remain constant in the exhibition, regardless of the time of day.[111] The scrim also reduced the transparency to the outside world; the scrim makes it difficult to see details of the buildings and the street outside of the gallery. This creates a more contained space, with affinities to the white cube approach that attempts to keep the gallery interior separate from the

[107]Marcus Schubert (Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Edward Burtynsky Photography), telephone interview with the author, March 16, 2012.
[108]Ibid.
[109]Ibid.
[110]Valérie Matteau (Arts Programmer and Exhibitions Coordinator, Ryerson Image Centre (RIC)), in conversation with the author, February 14, 2012. Burtynsky prefers that the labels disappear into the wall, so that the viewer almost doesn't see them unless he/she is looking for them.
[111]Ibid. The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., insisted that the scrim cover the window.

Figure 19. View of "Extraction and Refinement" showing the low height at which the photographs were hung and the even lighting of the works. *Edward Burtynsky: Oil*. Photograph courtesy of © Royal Ontario Museum.

outside world. With regards to the track lighting, the lights were positioned, so that each work was evenly lit and lit with the same amount of light. This was a challenge in the Roloff Beny Gallery, as the lights are all at different heights from the floor; therefore, different filtrations had to be used.[112]

　　Edward Burtynsky: Oil was an existing exhibition packaged for a white cube gallery that responded to the anti-cube gallery by employing white cube conventions: *white cube response*. As a result of the artist's aesthetic, the exhibition attempted to create "invisible" architecture in a space that exerts a powerful architectural presence. Three "themes" and a large number of works had to be accommodated in the relatively small gallery; this provided a challenge as how to best distribute the themes and works in the space. Due to the physical scale and large number of works, the exhibition may have benefited with less work on display and a reduction in the number of temporary walls that were used, allowing for additional visual relief and greater ease for viewers moving through the space. Most significantly, this exhibition makes obvious that attempting to create chronological and/or linear narratives is perhaps a less successful approach than creating thematic areas for viewers to discover and observe the works in the order they choose. Essentially,

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[112] Marcus Schubert (Director of Exhibitions and Publications, Edward Burtynsky Photography), telephone interview with the author, March 16, 2012.

the gallery is designed to work episodically, establishing thematic constellations of work; it is not easily used for linear narratives. Based on this observation, one can speculate that these new kinds of anti-cube spaces, like the Roloff Beny Gallery, may force curators and designers to be more flexible in how they organize the works in an exhibition, which may in turn result in a change in presentation modes. This is especially true for touring exhibitions that will increasingly encounter venues quite divergent in their configuration.

Conclusion

It is rare for photographic exhibitions in art institutions specifically to acknowledge their architectural context. The persistence of the formalist white cube presentation mode creates challenges for such exhibitions when they move to anti-cube spaces, like Libeskind's Roloff Beny Gallery. As mentioned, the term "installation" is a complex one in which installation can be understood as the work of an artist that incorporates space into the work's content and is produced as the result of an artistic or conceptual strategy or secondly, as the process and results of hanging an exhibition. What does the relationship of photographic work to architecture in the three exhibitions examined reveal about exhibition practices in the anti-cube gallery space? What role does the installation of iceberg walls in the space tell us about the constraints and possibilities of iconic museum galleries as a space for viewing photography?

Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History utilized installation as an artistic or conceptual strategy producing an *artistic response*. Even though the exhibition already existed, Sugimoto thought about his exhibition within the context of the space, creating an exhibition design–including a curved wall to hang his *Seascapes* on–that could not be replicated elsewhere. The photographer and designer took on Libeskind's "challenge" and responded to a particular site, essentially creating a site-specific work.

Merging both installation as a conceptual strategy and as a mode of hanging was the *thematic response* of the travelling exhibition *Vanity Fair Portraits*. Those working in the space hung the exhibition in a seemingly conventional manner–matted, framed photographs hung on white walls–as the exhibition did not originate from the Roloff Beny Gallery. However, the curators and designers working in the anti-cube space had to re-conceive the linear exhibition, shifting away from its original organization and design. In their response to the exhibition site, they created thematic groupings rather than hanging the photographs chronologically, as well as added objects to the original exhibition, in order to strive for a balance between the strong, assertive architectural context and the objects on display.

In contrast, *Edward Burtynsky: Oil* responded to the eccentric space with a *white cube response*, utilizing installation in the more conventional sense: as a mode of hanging. The exhibition attempted to adapt the space to the work, rather than rethink the exhibition anew in the gallery. Works were removed due to the size of the Roloff Beny Gallery; however, as mentioned within the exhibition's case study, despite this adaption, the linear viewer flow of the conventional gallery was maintained in the design of the exhibition in the Roloff Beny Gallery; in short, the exhibition attempted to be a conventional exhibition in an unconventional space.

In this paper, I have asked whether the presentation of an exhibition of photography can be seen as a form of artistic installation and have attempted to answer this question by looking at how photographic exhibitions have been conceived of and presented to the viewer in one particular emerging complex, recently constructed gallery space. In order to develop this study further, other anti-cube galleries that present photography will have to be looked at. This topic would also benefit from more research on the way viewers react to this new form of gallery architecture–how they move through the gallery space–and if and how visitor mobility differs from that of the white cube gallery experience. This might be explored through observing viewers and perhaps creating questionnaires to be answered by exhibition viewers after their visits.

As well, by focusing on the importance of the gallery space, two key, related areas of absence are addressed by my paper. First, there is limited published documentation of photographic exhibitions; installation views, in particular, are scarce. Therefore, innovations in exhibition design, if they occur, can easily be forgotten, over-looked or lost. The inclusion of installation views and their discussion becomes part of a meager historical record of photographic exhibition installations. Second, while there is literature published on architects and their iconic building creations there has been little published to date on the new unconventional types of exhibiting spaces in these buildings and specifically on issues related to the exhibition of photographs in these new galleries. Therefore, I hope that my work will help to advance the notion that there has been a lack of discourse around these related subjects.

For touring exhibitions coming to these kinds of unconventional, anti-cube spaces, it seems that such exhibitions can benefit from being considered anew within the context of the space. Artists, curators and those working in the gallery should not be afraid to consider context-sensitive alternatives for the contents and arrangement of the pre-packaged exhibition, as has been discussed regarding *Vanity Fair Portraits*, for example. Site-specific projects or installations– exhibitions like *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, as well as *Housepaint, Phase 2: Shelter* and *Dan Perjovschi: Late News*–should be encouraged in these types of spaces that reject the conventions of the white cube gallery. As the case study exhibitions in my essay show, it can be productive to think beyond the gallery wall that has historically defined the modernist gallery and to take advantage of the floor, ceiling, windows and angles of the space; in short, considering the display of photographic exhibitions as a part of the meaning of the work itself–responding to the space conceptually– and, therefore, as having affinities with the contextualizing practices of artistic installation.

Appendix: LIST OF EXHIBITIONS IN THE ROLOFF BENY GALLERY

LIST OF EXHIBITIONS IN THE ROLOFF BENY GALLERY,
LEVEL 4, MICHAEL LEE-CHIN CRYSTAL
(June 2007 to July 2012)

Larry Towell & Donovan Wylie: Afghanistan
(May 5 to July 15, 2012)[113]

The exhibition displayed the photographic work of two Magnum photographers depicting the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan: the black and white photographs of Canadian Larry Towell and the large-scale colour photographs of Donovan Wylie.

David Hockney's fresh flowers: Drawings on the iPhone and iPad
(October 8, 2011 to January 1, 2012)

Contemporary artist David Hockney created digital drawings, including flowers, self-portraits and landscapes, on the iPhone and iPad using the Brushes app. The iPhone's and iPad's were displayed in the exhibition, where Hockney was able to insert drawings into the exhibition via email. The exhibition presented the artist's exploration and use of this new medium.

Edward Burtynsky: Oil
(April 1 to August 21, 2011)

The exhibition presented fifty-three large format colour photographs by Canadian artist Edward Burtynsky on the production of oil. The exhibition was organized in three themes: Extraction and Refinement, Transportation and Motor Culture, and The End of Oil.

El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa
(October 2, 2010 to February 27, 2011)

Displaying over sixty works by internationally renowned artist El Anatsui, the exhibition includes drawings, paintings, wood, ceramics and metal sculptures. The artist's large sculptural tapestries, made of overlooked objects like liquor-bottle caps, were hung from the sculptural *iceberg walls* designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects.

Dan Perjovschi: Late News
(February 13 to August 15, 2010)

The editorial line drawings of artist Dan Perjovschi were drawn directly on to the *iceberg walls*–and temporary moveable walls–of the gallery during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. The artist utilized permanent markers to report the news, climbing a ladder to take advantage of his canvas: the walls.

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[113]Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, *Contact: Toronto Photography Festival* (Toronto, Ontario: Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, 2012), 60.

Cut/Paste: Creative Reuse in Canadian Design
(January 10 to 31, 2010)

For the Toronto International Design Festival, a design exhibition was presented in the Roloff Beny Galley, where the creative studio *Motherbrand* explored the idea of creative reuse, recycling and upscaling in Canadian design.

Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008
(September 26, 2009 to January 3, 2010)

The exhibition, presented by *The Bay*, displayed almost one hundred and fifty photographs from *Vanity Fair*'s vintage (1913-1936) and modern (1983-present) periods. In addition to framed portraits, the exhibition included open spreads of past issues of the magazine.

Housepaint, Phase 2: Shelter
(December 13, 2008 to July 5, 2009)

This exhibition brought street art into the gallery, drawing attention to issues of poverty and homelessness. In memory of the former residents of Tent City–a shanty town on the shores of Lake Ontario that developed in the late 1990s with residents evicted in 2002–ten street artists painted canvas houses that were displayed in the gallery. Also, during the exhibition, five artists created original works that responded to the previous installations.

Shanghai Kaleidoscope
(May 4 to November 2, 2008)

A wide variety of works was presented in this exhibition of the architecture, urban design, contemporary art and fashion of a city that has transformed itself into a leading destination, Shanghai. On display was the work of leading contemporary artists, architects and fashion designers of Shanghai: architectural models and digital simulations; designer fashion apparel, drawings and runway videos; and paintings, photo-works and video installations.

Shapeshifters, Time Travellers and Storytellers
(October 6, 2007 to February 28, 2008)

The exhibition displayed eight installations by eight contemporary Aboriginal artists, whose work explores the relationship between the past and present: Suvinai Ahsoona, Faye HeavyShield, Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Isuma Productions (Zacharias Kunuk and Norman Cohn), Brian Jungen, Alan Michelson, Nadia Myre and Kent Monkman. The installations included video, sound, sculpture, drawing, painting and performance art.

Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History
(June 3 to September 3, 2007)

Conceived and curated by the artist, contemporary artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, the exhibition presented photographs from Sugimoto's *Seascapes* series, in addition to Asian artifacts and natural specimens from his personal collection. The travelling exhibition was customized to the space: a direct response to the architectural interior created by Daniel Libeskind's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

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