

FOTOFEST



# Highlights of FotoFest

1983-2005

FOTOFEST



## A PLATFORM FOR ART AND IDEAS

FotoFest® is the first and longest-running citywide, international photographic art Biennial in the United States. It is recognized as one of the most important photography events in the world and a leader in its field.

FotoFest is known for its discovery of important but little-known artists, its ability to use art as a platform for important social ideas, and its groundbreaking exhibition and portfolio review programs. Based in Houston, Texas, FotoFest was founded as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit arts and education organization in 1983.

1983-85

FOTOFEST  
*the beginning*

**1983** — Trip to the Rencontres Photographiques d'Arles, the oldest European photography festival, after Wendy Watriss won World Press and Oskar Barnack awards. FotoFest is incorporated.

**1984** — FotoFest is created in Houston. FotoFest's mission emphasizes discovery, internationalism, social commitment, and global/local perspectives. FotoFest is formed to foster creative energy, new opportunities for artists, new audiences for photo-related art and broader visibility for Houston's cultural resources. Founders are Frederick Baldwin, Wendy Watriss, and German gallery owner Petra Benteler. (Ms. Benteler returned to Germany in 1986.)

**1985** — FotoFest brings four of the world's best known photographers, Helmut Newton, William Klein, Franco Fontana, and Ikko Narahara, to Houston to photograph the Houston Rodeo and Livestock Show. Parties by numerous prominent Houstonians launch FotoFest.

FotoFest brings the director of The Mois de la Photo in Paris to Houston to meet Mayor Kathy Whitmire and Houston City Council to receive the keys of the city and announce a collaboration with FotoFest. Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac sends telegram of support.

1986-87

### FOTOFEST 1986

FotoFest inaugurates the first citywide international Biennial of Photography in the United States, FOTOFEST 1986.

FotoFest curates and commissions 30 exhibitions for the First Biennial. Six Houston museums, 14 art spaces, 27 commercial galleries, and 17 corporate buildings show photography from 16 countries. The Museum of Fine Arts Houston (MFAH) opens acclaimed exhibit of Robert Frank by MFAH curator, Anne Tucker. 110 international and North American curators, collectors, publishers, and photographic opinion makers come to FotoFest to review photographers' portfolios at The *Meeting Place* at The Warwick Hotel for 14 days.

The *Meeting Place* becomes one of the hallmarks of FotoFest, widely replicated by photo events in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, Mexico, Rumania Slovakia, the U.K. and the U.S. The *Meeting Place* has launched the careers of thousands of photographers since 1986. Fifteen years later, 350 photographers' portfolios are reviewed by 120 museum curators, gallery owners, magazine editors, and representatives of photo agencies, collectors and publishers – from the U.S. and around the world.

FOTOFEST 1986 is covered by Art Forum, Art News, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Cosmopolitan, Herald Tribune, Newsweek, Texas Monthly, USA Today, Vanity Fair, Vogue, and Washington Post. Broadcast media includes BBC, Finnish TV, Italian Radio, Japanese TV, among others. 33 local/ regional publications, 26 national, and 33 international publications with a combined circulation of 46.7 million people, write about FotoFest 1986.

NEWSWEEK [3/31/1986]:

*The numbers are pure Texas: 64 exhibitions, 783 photographers on display, 4,000 photographs spread across a mile of walls...The idea, an entire city like Houston devoting an entire month of attention to ...photography...high visibility shows helped bring critics, curators, and collectors swarming to Houston...the first FotoFest has proved its mettle.*

EUROPEAN PHOTOGRAPHY [9/1986]:

*The first FotoFest was like nothing the Americans had ever seen...As do its cousin events in Europe, the Houston FotoFest in many ways reflected the character and personality of its host region: it was huge, free wheeling, star studded, and utterly sociable. For those Europeans who managed to come it was a Bonanza... it was a genuinely international gathering in composition, characterized overall by one German participant as, 'not just America's first Foto Festival, but really the first International Foto Festival anywhere.*

1987 — Texas Commission on the Arts selects FotoFest as the best cultural organization in the state.

Continental Airlines becomes FotoFest's official carrier.

1988-89

**FOTOFEST 1988**

FotoFest inaugurates three groundbreaking historical and contemporary Japanese exhibits. Princess Christina of Sweden opens FotoFest's exhibit of contemporary Swedish photography. Opening of Nelson Mandela exhibit coincides with Mandela's release from prison. Collaboration with Eastman Kodak brings the predecessor of CD technology to Houston – a laser disk showing over 6,000 images from the portfolios of 300 international photographers.

FotoFest sponsors photographic publishing workshop and photography workshops with photographers Larry Fink, Mary Ellen Mark, Neal Slavin, Duane Michals, George Tice, Maria Cosindas, Jerome Liebling, and Robert Sisson.

Society of Photographic Educators (SPE), the Association of International Photographic Art Dealers (AIPAD) Convention, and the South West Professional Photographers Association Convention come to FotoFest resulting in 10,500 hotel room nights.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE [3/18/1988]:

*The photographic extravaganza known as 'FotoFest'...was a visual feast for photographers, educators, and hangers-on.*

MAARTEN D. REUHLIN, Consulate General of the Netherlands:

*FotoFest is generally regarded as the premier photography event in the U.S.A. There is no doubt that FotoFest has put Houston on the international map of cultural events...*

FotoFest launches its education program, *Literacy Through Photography*®, with Wendy Ewald's workshop at The Children's Museum in Houston. NBC TODAY SHOW covers workshop on national television.

**1989** — FotoFest provides Czech and Slovak photographers with photographic materials for one of the first international shows of contemporary Czechoslovak art photography at FOTOFEST 1990. In December 1989, FotoFest founders are invited to private dinner for Vaclav Havel and members of the new post-Communist government of Czechoslovakia.

FotoFest organizes international exchange between the Houston Post and Fotokhronika TASS in Moscow. Houston photographers Craig Hartley and Geary Broadnax go to Moscow and Soviet photographer Albert Pushkarev comes to Houston to work at the Houston Post. Exhibit resulting from the exchange is displayed at Houston Post Gallery at FOTOFEST 1990.

1990-91

### FOTOFEST 1990

FotoFest launches the third Biennial at The George R. Brown Convention Center with replica of Berlin Wall. The Biennial salutes historic changes in Central and Eastern Europe.

FotoFest transforms Houston's Convention Center into an immense art gallery with 27 exhibits from 22 countries. There are inaugural exhibits from Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria as well as a special behind-the-scenes look at the rise of Vaclav Havel and the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution. Additional 81 exhibits at Houston museums and galleries. Alley Theatre performs Havel's play *The Audience* at the Convention Center. President Havel does a video for FotoFest and an Outlook piece for The Houston Chronicle.

Twenty-two Czechoslovak and Bulgarian photographers come to Houston. It is the first trip to the U.S. for most of the photographers. FotoFest secures Fulbright Fellowships for four photographers to visit U.S. universities and art schools around U.S.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE - Outlook [2/11/1990]:

*“I wrote the play Audience...during a time when my literary activity was banned – during a time of a certain darkness and isolation ...I am very glad to hear that the play is being staged in Houston, so distant from my home at FotoFest, the International Month of Photography.” Vaclav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia*

FotoFest exhibits include a retrospective of master Japanese photographer, Eikoh Hosoe; work by renowned Japanese artist Daido Moriyama; contemporary Japanese photographers Michiko Kon, Ryuji Miyamoto, and Toshio Shibata; contemporary German photography from the collection of F.C. Gundlach; British artists Helen Chadwick and Philip Jones Griffiths; *España Oculta* by Spanish artist Cristina García Rodero; work from Chile, India and the Soviet Union. There were major exhibits by Marc Riboud, Josef Koudelka, and Michal Rovner.

FotoFest sponsors performances by Houston Grand Opera School, Houston Ballet School, and Da Camera at the Convention Center. There are readings by faculty of the University of Houston Creative Writing Program and a collaboration with CANON USA for workshop in new digital and copier technologies. FotoFest sponsors the Conference and Workshop on Book Publishing and awards the \$10,000 FotoFest Prize for the best book project to New York City photographer Bruce Gilden.

The 1000 member AIPAD Convention returns to FotoFest. Women in Photojournalism hold their convention during FotoFest. Greater Houston Visitors and Convention Bureau seeks ways to develop a working partnership with FotoFest to attract photo-related conventions to Houston.

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM [4/4/1990]:

*We came away with faith rekindled in the power of imagination and commitment to doing good work...for a total of five days, we saw more photographs – more good photographs – than we’ve seen in two years in Fort Worth-Dallas.*

DALLAS MORNING NEWS [4/4/1990]:

*Photos to make you think – Massive Houston show has a global conscience.*

KUHT – PBS CHANNEL 8 creates 50-minute documentary on FOTOFEST 1990.

1991 — FotoFest’s 1990 Czechoslovak exhibit travels to San Francisco and New York City.

FotoFest co-founders Frederick Baldwin and Wendy Watriss travel through Europe and 10 countries in Latin America to find work for FOTOFEST 1992, which features discoveries of important works never, or rarely, seen outside their country of origin.

## FOTOFEST 1992

*Europe and Latin America 1860-1992*

FotoFest creates and commissions 13 exhibits by European artists and 15 exhibits by Latin American artists to reflect important political, economic, and cultural/ aesthetic directions on both continents.

Among the European highlights are Charles Marville's vintage prints showing the rebuilding of Paris from 1865-1880; early editions of the famous Soviet magazine – *USSR under Construction*; 1930s work from the Bauhaus Archive; avant-garde Czech artist and designer Karel Teige; a hidden archive of the World War II *Hunger Winter* photographs from The Netherlands; contemporary Black British photographers; Spanish artist Tony Catany's work on The Mediterranean; contemporary Soviet photography from *Soviet Manifesto*; and Polish artist Wojciech Prazmowski.

1992-93

All exhibits from Latin America are new to U.S. audiences – the first portfolio of war photography in Latin America, *The War of the Triple Alliance 1865-1870*; the Catholic legacy, Guatemala; exploration and opening of Brazil by Marc Ferrez; pioneer women photographers from Argentina; a secret archive of the War in Salvador; contemporary work from Argentina and Uruguay; color work from Brazil; contemporary conceptual work from Colombia and Venezuela. Brazilian ambassador to the U.S., French, Dutch and Argentine cultural officials, and the Director of Bauhaus Archives in Berlin come to Houston to open FotoFest exhibitions.

Acclaimed Benetton art director, Olivier Toscani, comes to FotoFest to talk to an overflow crowd about his creative perspectives, the scandals of his latest ad campaign, and the international controversy his work has generated.

NEW YORK TIMES [4/5/1992] :

*At FotoFest, three shows of material never seen here before – from El Salvador, the Netherlands, and Czechoslovakia – stunningly illustrate the life-and-death struggle between citizen and governments...*

FOTOFEST 1992 — ART NEWS [3/1992]:

*One of the best places to get a rare sense of photography's full richness is at FotoFest in Houston.*

FotoFest sponsors major symposium of Latin American photography with artists, curators and scholars from 12 Latin American countries. A two-days photo conservation workshop is sponsored for Latin American scholars at the Menil Collection.

The Santa Fe Workshops bring their teaching program to FotoFest. A Collectors Symposium is held in conjunction with FotoArt Dealer's Exposition at FOTOFEST 1992.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE - Outlook, JOHN CATER, Chairman, River Oaks Trust Co. [4/3/1992]:

*FotoFest is good for Houston business and a boost to the establishment of Houston as a tourist and cultural destination... We in the business community need to take note of Houston FotoFest and recognize the asset we have in our midst.*

Governor Ann Richards declares Friday, March 27, 1992, *FotoFest Literacy Through Photography Day*.

1993 — FotoFest's 1992 Latin American exhibition *Image and Memory, Photography from Latin America 1865-1994* begins a two-year museum and university tour across the United States. When the *Image and Memory* exhibit arrived at New York's El Museo del Barrio, Holland Cotter writes in the *New York Times*: "The exhibit exudes excitement".

FotoFest does acclaimed AIDS exhibit by New York artist Brian Weil at one of Houston's largest high schools.

THE HOUSTON POST [12/3/1993]:

*In conjunction with World AIDS Day, Milby High School was the site of the opening of the exclusive Texas showing of the nationally acclaimed exhibit, Brian Weil: The AIDS Photographs by FotoFest.*

FotoFest creates three exhibitions for the Houston Grand Opera in The Wortham Center – *Scala Diva, Photographs by Erio Piccagliano* (from the Archives of La Scala); *Guillermo Kahlo, Photographs of Colonial Mexico*; *Four Decades of Mexican History, Mexican Photography 1905-1945*.

FotoFest co-founders go to Cuba at invitation of the Union of Artists and Writers to see the work of a new generation of post-revolutionary contemporary photographers.

1994-95

Spring 1994 — FotoFest presents the first group exhibition of post-revolutionary Cuban contemporary photographers from the island. Unprecedented collaboration with U.S. Department of State gives U.S. visas to exhibiting artists to come to Houston. Anti-Castro groups picket the exhibit site at The Menil Collection's Richmond Hall. FotoFest co-founders travel later to Cuba to open exhibition at Havana Biennial.

HOUSTON PRESS [4/1994]:

*The exhibition of works by 15 artists spans two decades and is one of the first major presentations of contemporary Cuban photography in U.S. The importance of this kind of collaboration is underscored by the request of the artists...and the directors of Fototeca to take this show back to Havana for presentation at the...Havana Biennale arts festival in May.*

FOTOFEST 1994

*American Voices, Latino Photography in the U.S.  
The Global Environment  
Fashion, Evolution/Revolution*

FotoFest produces *American Voices, Latino Photography in the U.S.*, a ground-breaking exhibition of contemporary photographic art by artists from the three oldest and largest Spanish language cultures in the U.S. A Symposium on Latino photography and culture in the U.S. includes Latino artists and scholars as well as cultural leaders from Cuba, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

CRITICAL MASS [September/October, 1994]:

*"...an exhibition which will lay the groundwork for new scholarly and artistic investigation of photographic art within Latino cultures in the U.S.," states Dr. Tomas Ybarra-Frausto of the Rockefeller Foundation.*

NEW YORK TIMES [11/27/1994]:

*What is the lesson about Latino photographers? Mainly that there is more talent among them, and almost as many approaches as exist on the pluralistic art scene.*

FotoFest creates *The Global Environment*, a multi-faceted exhibition featuring still photography, sculptural installations and a six-computer work station on the geography, population and natural resources of the earth. FotoFest creates *The Earth Forum* computer station with the Houston Museum of Natural Science. After 1994, FotoFest donates *The Earth Forum* to The Museum of Natural Science where it is used as an earth study center training 10,000 public school children a year since 1995.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE [11/14/1994]:

*The 'Earth Forum' examines the impact of satisfying needs and wants on our oceans, rain forests and atmosphere. It will become part of the permanent holdings of Houston's Museum of Natural Science.*

During FOTOFEST 1994, FotoFest collaborates with Rice University Continuing Studies to give environmental courses based on *The Global Environment* exhibits. Additional Forums on the environment are presented with U.N. officials and Houston environmental activists.

*Fashion, Evolution/Revolution* is a 20th century look at the evolution of fashion through the eyes of the world's best known fashion photographers. The exhibit is a collaboration with Staley Wise Gallery in New York. The *Fashion* exhibit is accompanied by a Rice University Continuing Studies course.

The world's first photograph comes to FOTOFEST 1994 in a Brink's armored truck. FotoFest creates special technology to enable the first public showing of the Niépce (1826) work in almost 100 years.

The first *FotoFest Fine Print Auction* is inaugurated. Denise Bethel, Director of Sotheby's Photography Department, donates her services as auctioneer and 100+ photographers from all over the world give prints to benefit The Meeting Place and FotoFest's *Literacy Through Photography* program.

THE ART NEWSPAPER [11/1994]:

*(FotoFest's) year-round educational activities are exemplified by the festival's 650 text/image posters created by Houston school children as part of the superb Literacy Through Photography program.*

There are overflow audiences for FotoFest's symposium about the *National Geographic* includes senior editors from the *National Geographic*. Conference of the Association of Texas Photography Instructors comes to FOTOFEST 1994.

**1995** — Inauguration of FotoFest's 1994 *Earth Forum* at the Houston Museum of Natural Science as a permanent earth study center for students and the general public. The *Earth Forum* is a donation from FotoFest.

In a special issue, *Childhood in America*, the New York Times Magazine chose four children from FotoFest's Literacy Through Photography program for publication. "This project was most successful in that it offered our readers, and us, a candid and intimate look into the emotional world of children in America." wrote Sarah Harbutt, Deputy Picture Editor.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE [10/16/1995]:

*...86 percent of the thousands of students participating in Literacy Through Photography pass the writing portion of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test, as compared to 46 percent average in the general (school) population.*

1996-97

## FOTOFEST 1996

*Discover Art, Discover The City*

FotoFest moves the Biennial to Houston's Downtown Historic District as part of the city's Downtown Revitalization program.

FOTOFEST 1996 opens eight empty downtown buildings and creates temporary art galleries for the Biennial in collaboration with The Downtown District. FotoFest commissions eight Houston-based artists to create art installations in the Historic District. Opening Night for FOTOFEST 1996 is a downtown walk-around with exhibit openings, music on the streets, special street lighting, and café entertainment. An estimated 50,000 people attend opening night.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE - Editorial [3/17/1996]:

*Several projects signal potential for downtown rebirth. Houstonians worried about the deterioration of the inner city can take comfort from several encouraging developments... (FotoFest) will focus on historic areas of downtown...a block of old commercial buildings is being converted to galleries...Their arrival will signal that downtown revitalization is well under way.*

FotoFest is awarded statewide Downtown Association award for best Downtown event. FotoFest is credited with helping to “open” Downtown Houston.

FOTOFEST 1996 creates an exhibit with Susan Meiselas from her book project *Kurdistan, In the Shadow of History*. Opening at Houston’s Menil Collection, the exhibit travels to York England, Madrid, Seattle, Athens, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Cherbourg, and closed its eight-year tour at Hotel de Ville in Paris in July 2004.

FOTOFEST sponsors *The Mountain People of Yuman Province*, by previously unknown Chinese photographer, Wu Jialin, who comes to Houston from mainland China. Wu Jialin becomes internationally known as a result of this exhibit. Work from this exhibition continues to travel.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE [2/25/1996]:

*FotoFest’96 spreads eclectic vision citywide – The messy, tragic history of Kurdistan and on-the-edge technology are brought together as only FotoFest’96 can do it.*

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL [4/9/1996]:

*FotoFest: Right Place, Right Time for Photographers: Many great artists remain unknown during their own lifetimes because they weren’t at the right place at the right time. For many contemporary art photographers, that place and time is Houston during FotoFest...and more specifically, it is the festival’s Meeting Place, where the international photographic community converges every two years to scout for new talent.*

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO [12/26/1996]:

*All Things Considered* features FotoFest’s *Literacy Through Photography* program.

CANON USA donates 2000 cameras to FotoFest’s *Literacy Through Photography* program, a gift worth \$200,000.

Copenhagen 1996, European City of Culture presents Ingo Guenther’s *Hall of Globes* from FotoFest’s 1994 Global Environment exhibition and FotoFest’s 1994 *Fashion, Evolution/Revolution* exhibition. FotoFest’s *Meeting Place* is replicated in three cities in Denmark. The *Fashion* exhibit goes to Japan after Denmark.

**1997** — The Smithsonian Institution opens a three-month presentation of FotoFest's 1994 *American Voices, Latino Photographers in the U.S.* in Washington D.C.

FotoFest's 1996 *Kurdistan, In the Shadow of History* exhibit begins its eight-year international tour in England. HRH Prince Andrew, Duke of York, meets with FotoFest co-founders and artist Susan Meiselas.

FotoFest's 1996 *Mountain People of Yuman Province* travels to France and Germany. Chinese photographer Wu Jialin receives Leica Medal of Excellence and Mother Jones Documentary Award.

1998-99

**FOTOFEST 1998**

FotoFest expands its Biennial exhibits in Houston's Downtown Historic District into the city's Downtown Warehouse Districts. The Biennial creates the public inauguration of one of the city's most successful warehouse restorations, Vine Street Studios. FotoFest creates graphic "way-finding" system on city streets and buildings.

FotoFest commissions and creates 18 exhibits: a groundbreaking exhibit on contemporary Slovak staged photography; contemporary photography from Mexico; photographic art from South Africa, with one of the first U.S. presentations of world-renowned South African artist, William Kentridge; Finnish master photographer Pentti Sammallahti; Brazilian artist Eustaquio Neves; large-scale contemporary Italian landscape photography; and historical Peruvian work by Eugene Courret.

**FOTOFEST 1998** — WASHINGTON POST [3/29/1998]:

*Some people...take Houston's FotoFest biennial as an answer to the question of where photography is going...This is an era when literally all the styles and techniques from photography's century and a half have ardent advocates... and FotoFest...reflects that diversity.*

FotoFest initiates global network of major city photography events in 22 countries, the *Festival of Light*. Thirty international festival directors meet in Houston to develop an Internet network and Website [www.festivaloflight.org](http://www.festivaloflight.org). The network expands international awareness of photography events and encourages international photography exchanges between festivals across three continents. Exhibition exchanges and internship programs take place through this network.

Publication of award-winning, internationally acclaimed book on Latin American photography, *IMAGE AND MEMORY, Photography from Latin America 1865-1994* (University of Texas Press, 1998), based on FOTOFEST 1992 exhibitions.

**1999** — FotoFest inaugurates new headquarters and gallery in historic Vine Street Studios warehouse near downtown Houston. The gallery becomes FotoFest's Biennial headquarters and year-round Inter-Biennial exhibition space.

**INTER-BIENNIAL EXHIBITIONS, 1999** — FOTOFEST 1998 Slovak and Mexico exhibitions travel to New York, Denver, and San Antonio.

Exhibitions inaugurating FotoFest's headquarters include Czech and Slovak work from 1980s and 1990s commemorating a decade of political change; selections from the FotoFest collection; and *African Ceremonies* by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher.

2000-01

### FOTOFEST 2000

FotoFest creates widely praised inaugural showing of contemporary Korean photography; the work of Spanish photographer Chema Madoz; *Highlights in Nordic Photogravure* from the Museet for Fotokunst in Denmark; mixed-media installations by Robin Hill, Linda Darling, and Linda Orloff; work by contemporary Mexican photographer Mauricio Alejo; photographs by Texas-based photographer Neil Maurer; Argentine photographer Paula Luttringer's work *El Matadero* and Swedish artist Anders Petersen's work on the mentally disturbed, *Nobody has Seen It All*.

FotoFest commissions 17 installations by Houston-based artists for display windows in Foley's Department store downtown.

THE ART NEWSPAPER, *International Edition* [1/2000]:

*Crème de la crème* - 'FotoFest 2000' is one of the pre-eminent photography events in the U.S... new work from Korea, Spain, Scandinavia, Germany, Israel and the U.S...The festival also marks the beginning of a new international collaboration, known as the "Festival of Light", among twenty-two photography festivals from cities around the world, including Paris, Moscow, Madrid, Rotterdam, Buenos Aires and Mexico City.

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO [3/31/2000]:

*All Things Considered* features an eight-minute report on FOTOFEST 2000.

WASHINGTON POST [3/21/2000]:

*In Houston, FotoFest Opens Even the Most Jaded Eyes to the Wonders of Photography ...The point of FotoFest is artists...The passion and excellence of the pictures throughout FotoFest is startling, even the portfolios of hobbyists and amateurs...For sheer eye-joy and ice cream for the mind, I couldn't stay away from the digital – not pictures colored or lightly altered with computers...but digital pictures that couldn't be made with anything but computers, scanners and inkjet printers.*

NEW YORK TIMES [4/30/2000]:

*FotoFest...presented strong evidence that the still camera, and specifically the festival devoted to it , continue to play important roles on both local and international levels...On the local level, FotoFest has contributed to both the increasingly lively Houston and the revival of the city's downtown...FotoFest, working with the Houston Downtown Management District and the Downtown Historic District, took over some long-abandoned spaces, patched them up and mounted photographic shows. Then the festival staged an evening round of opening, filling the streets of the city with lights, music, art and crowds.*

HOUSTON CHRONICLE - Editorial [2/29/2000]:

*FotoFest has earned a reputation for its ground-breaking exhibitions and discovery of new artists, and that tradition continues...Houstonians should ...avail themselves of the opportunity to discover some spectacular art from around the world and rediscover both some local talent and interesting parts of their own city.*

**INTER-BIENNIAL EXHIBITIONS, 2000-2001** — Exhibitions include 10 years of Mother Jones documentary award winners; ground-breaking presentation of contemporary conceptual and documentary work from Leipzig, Germany, *The Generation of Transition*; and the inaugural U.S. presentation of 1950s Neo-Realist photography from Italy, *Italian Neo-Realism*. Fall 2001 exhibit highlights Houston-based photographer Suzy Paul.

2002-03

## FOTOFEST 2002

### *The Classical Eye and Beyond*

FotoFest creates one of the major presentations of new technology, multi-media photographic art in the U.S., spanning digitally created photographic imagery to Web-based Internet art.

Exhibitions include DJ and video performances, mobile video installations and projections. FotoFest also presents five classical, black and white photography exhibitions, including the first showing of late 19th and early 20th century Russian Pictorialism. This exhibit begins a long-term collaboration between Russian museum institutions and FotoFest.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE - Editorial [3/1/2002]:

*The Russians are coming. So are the French...and the Bolivians...many others as Houston today kicks off the largest and possibly the most complex and visually stunning Houston FotoFest ever...*

NEW YORK TIMES [4/21/02]:

*With more than 130 pictures by 16 photographers from the 1880's to the 1930's, this was the largest show of Russian Pictorialism seen since a 1928 exhibition in Italy, and it was the first time most Americans had a chance to see any of it.*

TEXAS MONTHLY [5/2002]:

*The first major exhibition of new media on Texas soil - FotoFest was also the first major new media exhibition of 2002 ... the overall impression was one of clarity and command, with production values that were often as slick as the best commercial advertising and messages that transcended the mere shock of the new. All of a sudden, technological art...was being done well. It was impossible to stroll the streets of Houston in March and not feel the seismic cultural moment, a sense that this Next big Thing might really be the next big thing."*

DALLAS MORNING NEWS [3/17/2002]:

*When the whole world's watching, it's important to get things right. And FotoFest founders Wendy Watriss and Fred Baldwin rarely falter. The huge international photography festival they started in 1986 has given American audiences their first glimpse of great pictures by under-recognized artists from every corner of the globe, setting a standard few can meet...There's no describing the thrill of seeing so much work by so many artists from so many places. Visitors – photographers, museum curators, dealers, collectors, writers, government officials, film makers – came from as far away as Russia, the Czech Republic, Israel, Nigeria, Japan and countries throughout Latin America.*

THE WASHINGTON POST [4/10/2002]:

*... Houston FotoFest, a biennial, month-long photography gathering that among other functions serves as a barometer of the medium's art practices...*

The first Festival of Light internship program is started with a representative of the Month of Photography in Bratislava, Slovakia spending three months working at FotoFest 2002.

FOTOFEST 2002 creates a scholarship program for talented photographers unable to afford the costs of coming to the FotoFest portfolio review, the *Meeting Place*. The first recipients are Bulgarian photographers. In 2004, photographers from Argentina, Russia, and Singapore receive scholarships to the *Meeting Place*.

Russian Pictorialism exhibit from FOTOFEST 2002 travels to Slovakia and Russia. Venezuelan, Greek and classical exhibitions from the 2002 Biennial travel in Europe and Latin America. New media artists from FOTOFEST 2002 are featured in national publications on art and new technologies.

FotoFest begins an international photographic arts event in Russia in collaboration with the Museums and Collections Department of the Russian Ministry of Culture.

Letter from U.S. EMBASSY, MOSCOW [7/17/2003]:

*...As someone who has made a career of public diplomacy, I applaud FotoFest, your colleagues from the Cultural Arts Council of Houston, and the photographers themselves who made the exhibits possible. You were truly cultural ambassadors, communicating through the art of photography the common values that unite humanity. The photographs themselves represented both the finest achievements of classical photography and 21st century digital editing techniques.*

Letter from the PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW [12/2003]:

*The year 2003 is marked by cooperation of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts and Moscow Museum of Modern Art with the International Festival of Photography FotoFest...These were public events of major importance.*

### INTER-BIENNIAL EXHIBITIONS, 2002-03

Record-breaking crowds see FotoFest's presentation of *Here is New York, 9.11* in Houston in conjunction with Miller Outdoor Theatre and Houston's official commemoration of 9.11.01, followed by a three-week presentation of the show at Memorial City Mall. The New York City exhibition is accompanied by two exhibitions about Afghanistan by Simon Norfolk and Dominique Darbois at FotoFest's downtown gallery.

Later exhibitions include American Blues musicians and historic Blues sites, *State of the Blues* by Jeff Dunas; inaugural presentation of three contemporary Central European photographers, *The Photographic Eye*; historical exhibit of Mexican photographer, *Romualdo Garcia. Portraits of Guanajuato*; book-signing and presentation of *Circus* by Kimberly Gremillion.

FotoFest creates four exhibitions and presents *Here Is New York, 9.11* in Russia's third largest city, Samara, and in Moscow. The exhibitions are accompanied by a round-table in Samara and Togliatti, Russia between U.S. and Russian business and government leaders on public and private support for the arts.

A new photography festival in Colombia opens with a tribute to FotoFest, FotoFest's international programs and contributions to Latin American photography.

New Digital and English as a Second Language (ESL) curricula are developed for FotoFest's education program, *Literacy Through Photography*, as extensions of the original film-based program.

2004-05

**FOTOFEST 2004**

*Water*

*Celebrating Water. Exploring the Global Crisis.*

The Tenth Biennial is dedicated to the theme of Water through art, science, and public policy. FotoFest creates 29 exhibitions, forums, film and video program and student curriculum on Water. FotoFest collaborates with the Institute for Flow Sciences in Herrischreid, Germany to show its pioneering methods of visually recording the internal, generally unseen movements of Water. The Institute's work is designed to stimulate a new understanding of the sensitivity and complexity of water and establish new benchmarks for judging the purity of water systems.

FotoFest creates a *Global Forum on Water* with three inter-disciplinary academic centers at Rice University bringing to Houston some of the world's leading scientists, technology experts, economists, urban designers, and public policymakers to address the state of *Water* in the world and its future. The four-day forum is done with the Environmental and Energy Systems Institute, Center for the Study of Society and the Environment, Shell Center for Sustainability, and, in the area of public policy, The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy. The Global Forum is simulcast at Rice and available through links at [www.fotofest.org](http://www.fotofest.org) and [www.rice.edu/webcast/waterforum/](http://www.rice.edu/webcast/waterforum/).

FotoFest and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership sponsor an environmental workshop by Herbert Dreiseitl, a German water landscape architect, to plan the reconstruction of a decommissioned waste water treatment plant as a public park.

FotoFest and Artist Boat develop a *Water* curriculum — *Just a Drop* - for the Houston-Galveston public schools as an extension of FotoFest's year-round, classroom-based *Literacy Through Photography* program. Works are displayed at the Astros Minute Maid Park in April, 2004.

*European Photography Magazine* devotes its 25th anniversary issue in Summer/Fall 2004 to *Water* and FotoFest 2004. There is strong support for the *Water* theme and future projects in the U.S. and abroad.

**INTER-BIENNIAL EXHIBITIONS, 2004-2005** — FOTOFEST 2004 images of *Water* are presented at the opening of Houston's Northeast Water Purification facility.

FotoFest organizes *Home and Garden*, an exhibition of work by eight young Texas-based artists, presenting humorous and sometimes macabre perspectives of vernacular culture and family life in the United States.

2004-05

NAZAR - *Photographs from the Arab World* — an exhibit of 17 Arab photographers and 15 European, U.S. and Middle Eastern photographers about Arab cultures in the Middle East and northern Africa. The show, originally organized by Noorderlicht Photofestival in The Netherlands, presents 250 photographs, most of which have never been seen in the U.S. NAZAR was shown at two venues: *Arab Eyes* and *A Look Back*, at FotoFest's Vine Street Studios and *Western Eyes* at The ArtCar Museum. The presentation of NAZAR in the U.S. is a collaboration between FotoFest and Aperture Foundation in New York. The exhibit goes to Aperture's new gallery in New York in fall 2005.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE EDITORIAL - Look Both Ways [4/2/05]:

*As the U.S. tries to better project its ideals to Muslims, a photographic exhibit offers Houstonians insight into the Arab world beyond the news.*

*Nazar is the Arab word for seeing, insight and reflection. It is also the title of the first major exhibit of Arab photographers to come to the United States...television is awash with images of violence, destruction and protest in the Middle East, but the still photograph can capture a texture and emotion more enduring than video. These photographs...believe the stereotype that the Arab world is all camels, oil, tyranny and terrorism....Mutual understanding requires the Nazar that comes from looking both ways. Don't miss it.*

The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy and FotoFest present *Image Making: Culture and Photography in the Arab World* at the Baker on May 3. Michket Krifa, an Arab scholar and curator born in Tunisia, and Issa Touma, Arab photographer and curator from Syria make presentations.

ARAB NEWS [4/28/05]:

*...Edward P. Djerejian, former U.S. ambassador to Syria [and president of The Baker Institute], says, that the role of art in personifying the human condition “brings it home to individuals who are mostly exposed to political, economic, and unfortunately the military dimensions of these issues ... We at the Baker Institute favor more programs like NAZAR because they do so much to promote understanding.”*

FotoFest's *Literacy Through Photography* premieres its first *FotoFun – Kids for Kids* fundraising event in March 2005 and a large exhibition of student work, *Hey Listen To Me, Writing Pictures*, in the fall 2005.

In fall 2005, FotoFest creates the exhibition *Photography in Houston Galleries* to draw attention to number of commercial galleries showing photography as part of their visual arts programs and the importance of galleries in making photography central to the contemporary fine art scene in Houston and Texas. Twelve galleries present works by 41 artists.

FREDERICK BALDWIN



Co-Founders *and Directors*

WENDY WATRIS

*As a platform for art and ideas, FotoFest is a product of the social values that are important to our lives and our professional work experience. As independent practitioners of photography, our work depended on what we learned about the world through encounters with people, events and work of art that led us through the often unfamiliar complexities of diverse cultures and political environments. Commitment and curiosity helped us respond to challenges that called for shifts in our own perspectives. The selection of exhibitions and programs for FotoFest reflects these experiences.*

FREDERICK BALDWIN was born in Switzerland where his father served as a U.S. diplomat. In 1950-51, Baldwin served as a Marine in Korea. During the summer of his junior year at college he tried writing and photography in Europe. Baldwin persuaded Picasso to let him spend the day with him in Cannes. This became a major turning point in Baldwin's life. After earning his B.A. degree from Columbia College, New York in 1956, he began a free-lance photography career which continued until 1982.

Baldwin worked for Audubon, LIFE, National Geographic, GEO, Camera (Switzerland), Bunte, STERN, Esquire, Sports Illustrated, Time Life Books, Natural History, Town and Country, Science Digest, Smithsonian Magazine, Newsweek, and the New York Times among others.

## Frederick Baldwin *Chairman*

1960 and 1962 - Baldwin raised funds for a scientific expeditions to the islands of Spitsbergen (600 miles from the North Pole) to determine the feasibility of capturing, marking and tracking polar bears. Sponsored by the New York Zoological Society, Baldwin led the expedition, and he was the first to film polar bears from underwater; his polar bear photos appeared in LIFE. In 1961, he worked in Baja California, Mexico making underwater photos of marlin fishing, as homage to Ernest Hemingway who he met in Cuba some years before.

1963 - Baldwin worked for Attorney General Robert Kennedy photographing street gangs and drug users in New York City's Mobilization for Youth program. In 1963-64,

he worked in the civil rights movement as a volunteer photographer for the SCLC and raised money for an African American anti-juvenile delinquency group in Georgia. Baldwin's book, *We Ain't What We Used to Be*, published in 1984, includes oral histories and photographs dating from the SCLC period. An exhibition of this work, organized by the Telfair Museum and Anacostia Museum (Smithsonian), toured the U.S. from 1985-86.

1964-66 - Baldwin directed the Peace Corps in Sarawak (Borneo) supervising 180 volunteers.

1966 - Baldwin documented rural poverty in the South; his photos shown before Sen. McGovern's Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs resulting in a \$600,000 federal grant to build the Beaufort-Jasper County Clinic in South Carolina.

1971 - Baldwin began a documentary collaboration on rural America with photographer Wendy Watriss. They completed a four-year photo/oral history project on two Texas counties, funded by The Rockefeller Foundation, The National Endowment for the Humanities, and Texas foundations. A special fellowship, The Winedale Fellowship of American Studies, was created for Baldwin and Watriss by the University of Texas in Austin. This project resulted in a series of exhibitions, as well as the 1991 book *Coming to Terms, the German Hill Country of Texas*. The work was exhibited at Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, Menil Collection, Amon Carter Museum, Baltimore Museum, Smithsonian, Phillips Collection, Santa Fe Museum, Philadelphia Museum, and the Library of Congress, USIA Traveling, and Fotokina,

1981-82, Baldwin taught documentary photography in the School of Communications at the University of Texas in Austin. From 1982-87, he directed the Photojournalism Program at the University of Houston as Associate Professor.

Baldwin was awarded the Joseph Petzuval medal, Ministry of Culture of Czechoslovakia, for FotoFest's promotion of Czechoslovak culture. He was elected to Class XI of the American Leadership Forum, and awarded the Purple Heart medal twice for wounds received in Korea.

WENDY WATRISS is a photographer, curator, journalist, and writer. She is one of the founders of FotoFest, the internationally known photographic arts and education organization based in Houston, Texas. She has served as FotoFest's artistic director since 1991. Watriss began her professional career as a reporter and writer for national newspapers in the U.S. and later became a producer of news documentaries for national public television in New York.

From 1970 to 1992, she worked internationally as a professional photographer. In her editorial and photojournalistic work, she has covered the 1968 political upheavals in East and Central Europe, the effects of drought in the African Sahel, civil wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the lives of U.S.

## Wendy Watriss *Artistic Director*

veterans of the Vietnam War affected by the herbicide Agent Orange, and the political history of Texas' cultural frontiers. Her photographic work has been published and exhibited around the world, and she is the recipient of numerous international awards for her photography.

Watriss is the author of numerous essays on international politics as well as photography. She is the editor/producer of the bilingual book *IMAGE AND MEMORY*, Photography from Latin America 1866 -1994 (University of Texas Press, 1998) - recipient of American Publisher Association's Art Book of the Year Award (1999), the Golden Light Award for the Best Photography Book of the Year (1998), and

Choice's 35th Annual Outstanding Academic Books list (1998). She co-authored the book, *Coming to Terms, The German Hill Country of Texas* (Texas A&M University Press, 1991). Watriss has worked extensively in Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.

As curator and artistic director for FotoFest, Watriss has organized exhibits from Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the U.S. She is fluent in two foreign languages, French and Spanish.

Recipient of grants for photography from The National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts/Mid-Atlantic Arts Alliance, The Rockefeller Foundation, The Texas State Historical Foundation, The Sid Richardson Foundation, the Texas Committee for the Humanities among others. Recipient of awards from The World Press Foundation (The Netherlands), Oskar Barnack Award, Missouri School of Journalism 'Pictures of the Year', The XI International Interpress Photo and The Women's International Democratic Federation (Germany). Numerous one-person museum exhibitions in the U.S., Western and Eastern Europe, Canada, Mexico. Work included in collections at The Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin; Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; Musée de la Photographie, Charleroi, Belgium, and numerous private collections.

Fellow of the American Leadership Forum (1992). Co-founder of public foundation for social justice, The Live Oak Fund for Change (1980-1992). Recipient of 'Woman On The Move' Award from the Houston Post and Texas Executive Women (1990). Founding member of FotoFest. Member of Advisory Board of the Texas Photographic Society and Board of Directors of the Texas Low Income Housing Service. Panelist and juror for National Endowment for the Arts, regional and state arts councils, international juried exhibitions and international photography conferences.

For a complete list of exhibits, artists and FotoFest programs, see Archive on FotoFest's web site:  
[www.fotofest.org](http://www.fotofest.org)

FotoFest, Inc.  
1113 Vine Street  
Suite 101  
Houston, TX 77002  
tel. 713-223-5522  
fax. 713-223-4411  
info@fotofest.org  
www.fotofest.org.