

When does a photograph stop being real?

Written by Peter Marx



When does a photograph stop being real?

Written by Peter Marx

For more than 150 years photography has been about capturing and presenting reality. Whether using silver halides or CCDs, a photograph is thought of as a snapshot of some part of the world at a particular time with a particular point of view. We say things like “let me show you what happened on our vacation” or “*Camino Real de Tierra adentro*” as if photographs are unchanging proof of what was and how we saw it.

As every photographer secretly knows, there was never any stopping the development of silver halides once they had been exposed. It just took so much longer once fixer had been applied so that the missive to “keep the photograph out of the sun” was enough to make billions of people think of a photograph as a static document.

Today’s technology has steadily made photographs subject to more and more change downstream of the original shutter click. Digital photographs change rapidly and without any control. Every transmission between devices has the possibility of changing a photograph as each new device may have a new format, a new limitation, or a new set of possibilities. Every time a photograph is shown it is likely to be with a new meaning within a new context.

It may simply be better to think of a digital photograph as a kind of visual hint of what we once might have seen. Uploaded photographs are positively ephemeral (or is that ethereal?).

When does a photograph stop being real?

Written by Peter Marx

facebook


Profile edit Friends ▾ Networks ▾ Inbox (4) ▾


Search ▾

Applications edit

- Photos
- Groups
- Events
- Marketplace
- Mobile
- more

News Feed Preferences

 **Marian Douglas-Ungaro added new photos to a group.**



AFROAMERICAS - 30 photos

 Ric Neil added the **Finetune** application.

 Susan Povich joined the group **Barack Obama (One Million Strong for Barack)**.

 Andrew A. Rosen is full.

 **Reaper premieres 9/25 at 9/8c on The CW.** Sponsored Share +

Meet Satan's favorite tools. *Reaper*, directed by Kevin Smith, premieres Tuesday 9/25 at 9/8c only on **The CW**.

 Lars Buttler added "hip hop" to his favorite music.

 **Jérôme Perani posted a link.** Share +

France-Irlande
<http://tvnomics.typepad.com/ph...>
« Beer and money at Heineken Stadium ! »



[Add a comment](#)

When does a photograph stop being real?

Written by Peter Marx



<http://zonezero.com/editorial/sep07/september07.htm#forums> ~~http://zonezero.com/editorial/sep07/september07.htm#forums~~