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(Abstract)

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Page: 1

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Photography, Continuity and Change. Impact on the Conservation Field

Bertrand Lavédrine

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View from afar, the history of photography seems to be a long quiet river (to paraphrase the title of a French movie from the 1980s). Technically, each decade and each century has brought its tribute of innovations and discoveries through a linear evolution process. Like in the 19th and 20th centuries, we are still producing photographs with our cameras, and trying to keep them. It is true that photography today inherits from all the technical and artistic contributions from the past. However, the introduction of digital technologies has created discontinuities that are not always clearly tangible. The first one is the use, for a sake of convenience, of the traditional terminology such as «photograph» for naming digital images. This may create the feeling that we are still in the same domain, however, technically, we have moved in another dimension that has impacted our private, public, and professional areas. This paper will address, through a few examples, some changes that digital imaging has induced on the way we are assessing or preserving images and on the scientific researches in the conservation field.

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