

Harold Edgerton
American, 1903-1990
Rising Dove, 1934
Gelatin silver print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of the Harold and Esther Edgerton Foundation
1996.18.32

Harold Edgerton
American, 1903-1990
Cicada, ca. 1939
Gelatin silver print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of the Harold and Esther Edgerton Foundation
1996.18.18

19th-century photographer Eadweard Muybridge focused on animals of every description, in controlled settings, in order to study the ways in which animals moved. Fifty years later, in “strobe alley” at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, scientist Harold Edgerton pushed the boundaries of knowledge about animal locomotion as he made multiple photographs, using stroboscopic flash, to record the mechanisms of movement. In these images, Prof. Edgerton captures a *Rising Dove* a bird in flight, both frontally and from the side. These photographs were not only of scientific importance, they also revealed grace of movement and elegance of form.

Lukas Felzmann
Swiss, b. 1959
Swarm No. 92-23, 2011
Gelatin silver print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum purchase with funds provided by PhotoFutures
2013.16

A professor at Stanford University, Felzmann roams the Sacramento Valley in Winter, hoping to catch a glimpse (and photographs) of swarming Redwing Blackbirds. Birds and fish swarm, enabling a group to fend off predators as well as forage for food more successfully. The intricate choreography and murmurations remain mysterious, but scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in trying to program a group of robots to act as one unit, have learned how difficult it is. The elegant dance of flocks, acting without centralized authority in perfect synchronicity, is yet another phenomenon that *Homo sapiens* do not fully understand.

Michael Flomen
Canadian, b. 1952
Emotional, 2001
Gelatin silver print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum purchase with funds provided by Howard Stein and the Wallis Foundation
2003.36

In this camera-less image, Michael Flomen captures the magical dance of fireflies on a summer night. By placing a light-sensitive sheet of photographic paper on the floor of a box that contains the flies, the

night journey of these creatures is mapped and recorded, leaving only trace evidence of their appearance...or existence. The appearance of these mini-lanterns during the hot, humid summer months that some areas experience, is a little-understood phenomenon, yet, as the artist has reminded us, the wonder and beauty of these nocturnal visitors is indeed *Emotional*.

William Heick
American, 1916-2012
Mrs. Zellerbach's Poodle, 1946
Gelatin silver print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Paula Juelke Carr
2001.17

Animal behaviorist, Dr. Vint Varga, relates the story of a professor in Hungary who announced to his laboratory students and post-doctoral fellows, in the early 1990s, that he had a “great idea” –to do research on dog behavior. A young graduate student inwardly groaned, thinking his career was over, for until relatively recently, scientists would not have been considered serious if they chose to study domesticated animals, such as dogs and cats. Yet Charles Darwin continually referenced dogs as he studied the universality of expression and emotion in humans and animals. He believed that animals had gained some emotional and cognitive similarities to humans through their relationships, but that they also retained the instinctual qualities of their ancestors—their genetic inheritance.

The photographer William Heick, who photographed *Mrs. Zellerbach's Poodle*, shot from a very low vantage point. He thereby heightened the dogs supremacy, and in fact noted that the dog (in his opinion) mimicked the reflected attitude of her owner.

Gregori Maiofis
Russian, b. 1970
Know Thyself, 2008
Bromoil print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum purchase with funds provided by Eric Skipsey
2006.83

Russian-born artist Gregori Maiofis creates images that are derived from, and deeply rooted in, the timeless philosophical issues that confront *Homo sapiens*. Inspired by his study of literature and history, both Russian and Western, he posits difficult truths often using circus animals as metaphor. Framed with wit and humor that transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, Maiofis works with the trainers – though both photographer and trainer are often surprised by the unbidden and unplanned response of the animals. In *Know Thyself*, a huge bear sits in a chair staring intently into a full-length mirror. Flanked by man, wearing a not-so-subtle bear mask who attempts to instruct his subject, the bear seems far more intelligent than the man in the silly costume.

Technically, Maiofis is a superb craftsman who has mastered difficult photographic processes such as bromoil which requires a hand-on approach to produce unique prints. His images have a painterly quality with their textured surfaces and subtle palette.

Richard H. Ross
American, b. 1947
Booth's Bird Museum, Brighton, England, 1986

Chromogenic print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Bruce and Nancy Berman
1998.57.43

Richard H. Ross
American, b. 1947
Working Elephants, Burma, 1979
Gelatin silver print
Loan, Courtesy of private collection

Richard H. Ross
American, b. 1947
Warner Brothers, Spiders, 1990
Chromogenic print
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Bruce and Nancy Berman
1998.57.42

One of the many self-generated projects that Distinguished Professor of Art, Richard Ross, assigned himself was the night-time investigation of museums and other spaces, once the doors were closed to visitors. In his behind-the-scenes look at storage rooms and closets, Ross discovered the carefully classified, taxidermy remains of multiple species, such as birds, as well as models of insects fabricated at a film studio. On assignment in Burma (now Myanmar), the photographer happened upon a string of elephants, who are used to haul huge teak logs from (then) pristine forests. The twenty-five elephants seem relaxed and ready for their close-up, with a few elephants raising their trunks (a gesture now understood to be a form of communication).

Taken together, these formally-composed records of existing events or places, challenge the attitudes, beliefs and assumptions that *homo sapiens* makes about fellow inhabitants of planet Earth.

Shaun Walton
South African, b. 1986
Nocturnus 5, 2010 (printed 2012)
Inkjet print, ed. 1/10
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum purchase with funds provided by Susan Bowey and Jane Eagleton
2012.17

South-African born photographer, Shaun Walton, began working for company that took visitors into the *velte* to observe the “exotic” animals such as lions, cheetahs, zebras and giraffes. But the visitors retreated to their cocktails and comfortable lodging by sundown when, Walton realized, the true animal nature of the big cats emerged. Enlisting the help of fellow guides, the photographer and his cohorts drove back into the savannah, shone the lights of their Range Rovers, and waited for animals to appear...which they sometime did, sometimes not.

This image of a lion, his gaze intent, the drool at the corner of his mouth visible, is unlike the sleepy lions--the lion pride lying listlessly under a blazing sun--pictured in safari photographs. Here one feels

that all senses of the animal are on alert, trained on the environment—sound and smell being primary, but stealth and speed also at the ready.