

Impact case study (REF3)

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| Institution: University for the Creative Arts | | |
| Unit of Assessment: UoA 32 | | |
| Title of case study: Fast Forward: Changing Attitudes and Experiences for Women in Photography [https://research.uca.ac.uk/5583/] | | |
| Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014 - 2020 | | |
| Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: | | |
| Name(s): | Role(s) (e.g. job title): | Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: |
| Prof. Anna Fox | Professor of Photography | 13/07/2004 – present |
| Prof. Karen Knorr | Professor of Photography | 02/10/2000 – present |
| Prof. Jean Wainwright | Dir. Fine Art & Photography Research Centre | 26/02/2002 – present |
| Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - 2020 | | |
| Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No | | |
| 1. Summary of the impact | | |
| <p><i>Fast Forward</i> progresses the work of women as photographers, addressing the global under-representation and disadvantage of women in this field. Impact is in three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the policies and practices of museums, galleries, collections and festivals, including the National Portrait Gallery, LagosPhoto and the Hyman Collection. The latter has introduced a gender-equal collecting policy as a direct result of <i>Fast Forward</i>. Beneficiaries are the institutions, their audiences and the artists they represent. • Changes in the representation of women photographers in photographic media. <i>Fast Forward</i> has led or contributed to 'women-only' special issues of five photo-industry periodicals, rebalancing the gendered bias of such media and benefitting its audiences and the artists represented. • Changes in the support opportunities available to women photographers. The project has provided networking and mentoring, benefitting established and aspiring women photographers. New organisations, the Old Girls' Club (UK) and Feminist Photography Network (Canada), have been established in direct emulation of <i>Fast Forward</i>. | | |
| 2. Underpinning research | | |
| <p>Individual and collaborative research at UCA by Professors Anna Fox, Karen Knorr and Jean Wainwright collectively constitutes the <i>Fast Forward</i> project. UCA has a long-established specialism in socially and critically-engaged photographic practice and theory (see also Gersht, Gupta, Klenz and Summers in REF2) and <i>Fast Forward</i> builds on this history. Both Fox and Knorr have a long trajectory in examining gender in their photographic practice (e.g. Knorr, <i>Gentlemen</i>; Fox, <i>My Mother's Cupboards and My Father's Words</i>). They have also constantly reflected on their own position as women photographers and as teachers and mentors of students and young photographers.</p> <p><i>Fast Forward</i> works with a network of individuals and institutions, nationally and globally, with key partners including Professor Val Williams and the Photography and the Archive Research Centre, University of the Arts London; Tate galleries; the Lightbox Gallery; National Gallery of Arts and Vitas Luckus Photography Centre, Lithuania; Shanghai Center of Photography; Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, Beijing and Xiamen; and OCAT Xi'an. In addition, <i>Fast Forward</i> has worked with six global partners to deliver networking workshops (detailed below). The project is funded by the Leverhulme Trust, the British Council, and other funders through the many partner organisations. Fox and <i>Fast Forward</i> have led and co-ordinated the activities of all these partners, supported by a Steering Committee.</p> <p>Fox formally initiated <i>Fast Forward</i> at a panel discussion at Tate Modern in April 2014. She presented the results of initial scoping research (conducted with Knorr) which found that, even many decades after pioneering work such as Anne Tucker's <i>The Woman's Eye</i> (1973), Val Williams' <i>The Other Observers</i> (1986) and Naomi Rosenblum's <i>A History of Women Photographers</i> (1994), equal representation for women photographers was still far from being</p> | | |

achieved. Only between two and five per cent of the photographers whose work was published by a sample of internationally-leading art-photography publishers were women, and many survey exhibitions of photography in museums and galleries included few women. This under-representation, its nature and extent, was the project's first research insight. It was developed by subsequent research including Fox's work in the exhibition *The Moon and a Smile* (2017) (R1). The Glynn Vivian Gallery, Swansea, invited photographer Helen Sear to respond to the photographs of Mary Dillwyn in the museum's Dillwyn-Llewellyn family archive. Inspired by *Fast Forward*, Sear expanded the project to take in the wider archive, in which recent discoveries had led to a revision of authorship to acknowledge both Mary and Thereza Dillwyn as photographers alongside their brother/father John Dillwyn. Eight women artists/photographers, including Sear and Fox, were commissioned to make responses to the archive. Fox re-photographed places pictured by the Dillwyn family, extending her longstanding investigation of the gender roles performed in leisure sites.

Following the initial Tate event and a conference (also at Tate) in 2015, in 2017 *Fast Forward* was awarded Leverhulme funding to support a programme of workshops with a network of partners in six countries:

- Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 2017
- Dillon+Lee Gallery, New York, 2017
- AJK Mass Communication Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, 2018
- Finnish Museum of Photography, Helsinki, 2018
- Lagos International Photography Festival, 2018 (with associated mentor scheme)
- Slade School of Fine Art, University College London, 2019.

The networking activities of *Fast Forward* have functioned both as research tools and as pathways to impact, with the case study developing in a non-linear manner as the iterative development of underpinning research has led to the parallel production of both outputs and impacts. As research tools, network activities have enabled the project's researchers to understand in detail the nature of and reasons for women's under-representation within photography, contributing directly to two research outputs, special issues of *Katalog* journal (2019) (R4) and *Photography and Culture* journal (2020) (R5). Discussion at the workshops revealed how gender intersects with ethnicity and global hierarchies, so that women's under-representation cannot be addressed without also decentering Western notions of a photographic canon. This is a central theme in the *Katalog* special issue, which presents the work and voices of women photographers of varied nationalities who attended *Fast Forward* workshops. Fox's opening essay discusses 'herstory', 'a female gaze', 'global stories and networking' and the 'new perspective' which comes from equal representation. The *Photography and Culture* special issue includes many contributors whose work has been developed through the *Fast Forward* conferences.

These networks were developed alongside additional practice, curation and written outputs. In 2018-19 Fox and Knorr's practice was exhibited in the two-person exhibition *Another Way of Telling* (R2) as part of the British Council in China's 'Inspiring Women in the Arts' programme (with associated mentor scheme). Amongst other works Fox's *Resort 2* (REF2 2021) and Knorr's *India Song* (REF2 2014) were re-framed to inspire emerging women photographers, so that the exhibition was a culmination of both photographers' research in which gender is a central theme, intersecting with class, space and place to provide new insights within contexts ranging from working-class Britain to the myths and fables of India.

In 2019 the Lightbox Gallery approached Fox and Wainwright to consult on a comprehensive survey exhibition of the work of British women photographers, the first such exhibition in 30 years. *Women in Photography: A History of British Trailblazers* presented works from collections including the Victoria & Albert Museum, Arts Council, National Portrait Gallery and Scottish National Portrait Gallery, and by photographers such as Edith Tudor-Hart, Lee Miller, Sonia Boyce and Sarah Lucas. It also featured interviews, new and archival, conducted and compiled by Wainwright. This research was further disseminated in Wainwright's paper 'Fast Forward and Rewind' in the *Photography and Culture* special issue edited by Fox, providing

Impact case study (REF3)

an insight into the female photographer's 'voice' as feminine and feminist performance and portraiture, reflecting changes in photographic practice and culture. (R3)

3. References to the research (submitted to REF2 or available via links or on request)

Quality is evidenced by peer review, the commission and support of the works by galleries, curators and significant publications, critical review, and peer-reviewed funding.

R1 Anna Fox, *The Moon and a Smile* (Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea, 2017). **Exhibition**, commissioned and curated by Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, City and County of Swansea, gallery supported by Arts Council Wales and the Heritage Lottery Fund. (REF2). [<https://research.uca.ac.uk/3203/>]

R2 Anna Fox and Karen Knorr, *Another Way of Telling* (Shanghai Art Centre, 2018; Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, Beijing, 2018-19; Three Shadows, Xiamen, 2019; OCAT Xi'an, 2019). **Exhibition** (two-person retrospective, c.100 works), curated by Hao Xu, supported by the British Council 'Inspiring Women in the Arts' programme. Exhibition includes the photographic series: *Resort 2* (Fox, REF2) [<https://research.uca.ac.uk/1864/>]

R3 Jean Wainwright, audio interviews for *Women in Photography: A History of British Trailblazers* (Lightbox Gallery, Woking, 2019). **Exhibition**, commissioned and curated by the Lightbox Gallery (a charitable trust funded by Woking Borough Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Arts Council). This interview research is published in Jean Wainwright, 'Fast Forward and Rewind', **Journal Article** (in **R5**, below), interviews available at <https://research.uca.ac.uk/5544/>

R4 Anna Fox, 'Look Out' in *Fast Forward* special issue, *Katalog journal of photography and video* (30.2 II, November, 2019). **Journal Article** and editing of special issue. Review of special issue, *Le Monde*, 19 November 2019: 'This is a remarkable initiative . . . which raises the level and enthusiasm of reflection on the equal representation of both gender and ethnicity in photography.' [<https://research.uca.ac.uk/5585/>]

R5 Anna Fox (ed.), *Journal of Photography and Culture, Fast Forward* special issue, 13: 3 & 4 (2020) (DOI: [10.1080/17514517.2020.1762347](https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2020.1762347)) [<https://research.uca.ac.uk/5544/>]

Funding (£184,475)

- Leverhulme Trust International Networks, *Fast Forward 2*, Fox PI, 2017-19: £124,475
- British Council, *Fast Forward* emerging women photographers mentoring, £10,000
- British Council, *Another Way of Telling* exhibition, £50,000

4. Details of the impact

Pathways to impact

- **Conferences:** *Fast Forward's* conferences have allowed presenters and audiences to share practice and research and develop debate. Held twice at Tate and in the National Gallery, Lithuania, 67 presenters and 600 attendees have taken part, focussing on established and early-career photographers, students, and curators in influential institutions. (S1)
- **Workshops:** *Fast Forward's* workshops initiate and sustain relationships between emerging and established women photographers and galleries, industry actors and institutions. Six workshops in 6 different institutions were attended by 152 people from 25 countries. (S1)
- **Mentoring:** *Fast Forward* research demonstrated that although women constitute a large proportion of photography students, few succeed in the industry. *Fast Forward's* mentoring, built around the *Another Way of Telling* exhibition in China and the 2018 LagosPhoto festival, paired 19 emerging women photographers with 10 mentors from 8 international organisations. (S1)
- **Exhibitions:** exhibition outputs (*The Moon and a Smile*, *Another Way of Telling*, and *Trailblazers*) have been held at 6 galleries and collectively attracted 30,510 visitors. (S1)
- **Social Media:** *Fast Forward's* website and online presence has resulted in sustained exposure for the work of women photographers. The online gallery received 28,736 visits from April 28 2019 to the end of 2020 and the opportunities database has 1,376 subscribers. *Fast Forward's* social media platforms have considerable reach within relevant constituencies with 3,597 Twitter followers and 15,300 Instagram followers. (S1)

Fast Forward is located within a broad movement towards gender equality within photography and beyond it, with contributions from many individuals and groups. Evidence below shows how *Fast Forward*'s research has led directly to specific impacts within this broader change.

Changes in the policy and practice of museums, galleries, collections and festivals (beneficiaries: the organisations cited, which have been enabled to diversify their curating and collecting; their audiences; women photographers whose opportunities are expanded)

Three *Fast Forward* events (2014, 2015 and 2019) were in partnership with Tate Modern.

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One of the presenters at the 2015 Tate *Fast Forward* conference was subsequently appointed curator at the National Portrait Gallery (NPG). She describes how *Fast Forward* inspired her to prioritise research into the NPG's collection of women photographers, so that as the gallery works on a major rehang for 2023 '*one of the key priorities is to represent more women artists and sitters*'. As a consequence, 3 new curators have been appointed to research this subject within the permanent collection and through the acquisition of new works by under-represented groups, including women, in the 'Inspiring People, Missing Narratives' research project. Beyond the NPG, this curator has disseminated work on women photographers at Tate, London Art Fair, and in writings for publishers such as Textuel. She notes that *Fast Forward* has '*certainly had an impact on the status of women photographers in the UK and abroad, with a re-energised focus on reinstating their importance in histories of the medium, through articles, exhibitions and publications, where previously their contributions had been marginalised or excluded.*' (C2)

The Hyman Collection, the UK's leading private photographic collection, has changed its collecting policy as a direct result of *Fast Forward*. Hyman states of *Fast Forward* that '*as well as its wider national and international impact, it has had an impact on our view on collecting photography and desire to champion women photographers. Inspired by Fast Forward, we . . . [are] proud that our collection is committed to including a minimum of 50% women photographers*'. The Hyman Collection has recently set up the Hyman Foundation charity, with Anna Fox on the Advisory Board, with one of its aims being to provide support to photographers through grants and commissions focussing in particular on '*young artists and women working with photography*'. (C3)

Impact is not limited to institutions based in the UK. The Director of LagosPhoto attests how '*as a result of the research within Fast Forward . . . LagosPhoto took the radical approach to elect four women to curate the festival exhibitions in 2018 and as a result, LagosPhoto 2018 had approximately 80 percent women photographers exhibiting*'. In 2019 the festival was 54 per cent female, evidencing a '*long term impact on our exhibition policies*'. (C4)

In March 2020 *Fast Forward* advocated for change through the 'Manifesto for Increased Involvement of Women In Photography' (S5), aimed at photographic organisations, media, galleries and museums. By the end of 2020 it had attracted 816 signatories who pledged to change their practice. They include Auckland Festival of Photography, Bristol Photo Festival, EXIT magazine, FotoDocument, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Fourcorners, Impressions Gallery, Ingram Collection, Northern Narratives, Paranapiacaba Festival São Paulo, Photo Ireland, Photo Oxford, Photomonitor magazine, Photoworks magazine, and the Royal Photographic Society. Women Photographers International Archive drew up their own seven-point action list in response to the Manifesto, committing to '*research and recover primary-source material and critical documents related to womxn and photography for the benefit of artists, researchers, scholars, and curious members of the general public*', to '*support womxn photographers through prizes, artist residency programs and other opportunities*', and to '*develop community projects exploring opportunities to provoke social change through photography*' [<https://research.uca.ac.uk/5583/1/index.html>].

Changes in the representation of women photographers in photographic media

(beneficiaries: media outlets; their audiences; the artists represented)

The research has drawn attention to the habitual neglect of women photographers in the photo-media, achieving change through substantial coverage of this issue and increased representation of individual women photographers in an arena where they have been overlooked. Five notable industry periodicals have published women in photography special issues wholly or partly as a direct result of *Fast Forward*. The initial *Fast Forward* event at Tate Modern (2014) was accompanied by a 'women-only' issue of the *British Journal of Photography*, in which Fox was interviewed to launch the project (S2). Norwegian photography magazine *Objektiv*'s November 2015 issue was directly 'inspired by' *Fast Forward* and released at the 2015 Tate conference (S2) as was *Photoworks*' 'Women' issue, in which Fox was one of five 'photography world luminaries' asked to choose an emerging female photographer to introduce to readers (S2). The special issues of *Katalog* and *Photography and Culture* (R4, R5) stand both as research outputs and continue the influence of *Fast Forward* in making women photographers more visible in photo-media.

Changes for women photographers through mentoring and support networks

(beneficiaries: aspiring and established women photographers)

Participation in *Fast Forward*'s activities has led directly to change for individual women photographers. Feedback from 30 attendees at the 2019 Tate conference demonstrates impact in encouraging further networking and collaboration, inspiring new creative practice and fostering confidence. One attendee spoke of her intention to 'elevate other females in the industry', another commented that 'the whole event has been incredibly inspiring and reinvigorating', and another vowed to 'go to more talks. Apply for grants. Get my work into archives and gain more awareness of my own projects... Keep pushing'. (S3)

The 10 participants in *Fast Forward*'s China mentoring programme went on to show their work in the 2019 exhibition *A Room of Our Own* at Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, and to start their own artists' group to foster mutual support (S4). *Fast Forward* has thus stimulated women photographers to create their own organisations to lobby for change and form networks. Inspired by the 2014 Tate event, two women photographers formed the Old Girls' Club in emulation of *Fast Forward* (C5). In 2015 a group of photographers in Canada formed the Feminist Photography Network. Their website explains how 'we all attended the *Fast Forward* conference We were all moved to continue this vital discussion around gender and our medium . . . to create grassroots ways of supporting women's engagement with, and interrogation of, photography' [<https://www.feministphotographynetwork.com/about>].

Sources to corroborate the impact

(available from UCA on request; S = documentary/online source; C = corroborator/testimonial)

- S1 *Fast Forward* Quantitative Report
- S2 *Fast Forward* Media Report
- S3 Tate 2019 conference audience feedback
- S4 Open Eye Gallery folio review participant feedback
- S5 *Fast Forward* Manifesto [<https://manifesto.fastforward.photography/>]
- C1 [REDACTED]
- C2 Testimonial letter from Curator, National Portrait Gallery (Corroborator 2)
- C3 Testimonial letter from Hyman Collection (Corroborator 3)
- C4 Testimonial letter from Director, LagosPhoto (Corroborator 4)
- C5 Testimonial letter from Old Girls' Club (Corroborator 5)