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On VIEW May 9 through July, 28, 2001
Oliver Boberg, Nikki S. Lee, Zwelethu Mthethwa

CHICAGO March, 2001 -From May 9 through July 28, 2001, The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College Chicago, will present exhibitions by prominent contemporary artists working with photography: Oliver Boberg, Nikki S. Lee, and Zwelethu Mthethwa.

Oliver Boberg (Germany, born 1965) creates color photographs that appear to be documents of vernacular sites-buildings, highway overpasses, piles of rubble-but the subjects pictured do not in fact exist. Each site is a painted architectural model of a fictitious scene constructed in such a way that it can be recognized only from one angle-that of Boberg's camera. The success of Boberg's art depends upon the viewer's faith in the veracity of the photograph, and recognition-as a memory - of these familiar places.

Nikki S. Lee (United States, born Korea 1970) combines performance with photography through her personal infiltration of sub-cultures (skate-boarders, punk rockers) and various social and/or ethnic groups. After joining these communities through her adoption of a given costume and lifestyle, Lee documents her new identity and friends in "snapshots" that, through scale and presentation, hint at their conceptual foundation.

Zwelethu Mthethwa (South African, born 1965) makes large-scale color and black-and-white portraits of rural emigrants outside of Cape Town that document an atmosphere of social change and political transition in his home country. Each subject is photographed in the interior of his or her home surrounded by various signs of consumer culture such as magazine ads and commercial posters, which illuminate the effects of rapid urbanization and globalization in South Africa.

Nikki S. Lee will be interviewed on Wednesday, May 9, 2001 at 6 pm in the museum by Susette Min, an independent curator and Presidents Postdoctoral Fellow, University of California, Berkeley, Department of Ethnic Studies. The interview will explore Ms. Lee's experiences living within insular communities and the process of creating her photographs. The discussion will also include the interconnections between Lee's performative self-portraiture and her cultural identity as a Korean living in New York.

The opening reception for this exhibition will be held on Friday, May 11, 2001 from 5-8 pm in the galleries of the museum.

During the opening, at 6:30 pm, Oliver Boberg will lead a tour of his exhibition and discuss the concepts informing his labor-intensive process of creating intricate models of sites, that when photographed, appear real.

The Assistant Director and exhibition curator, Natasha Egan, will discuss the works on view during a lunch time gallery talk on Wednesday, June 6, 2001 at 12:15 pm.

The museum is free and open to the public weekdays from 10 until 5 pm (Thursdays until 8 pm) and Saturdays from 12 to 5 pm. The exhibitions, presentations, and related programs of The Museum of Contemporary Photography are supported in part by grants from AOL Foundation; The Chicago Community Trust; The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Marshall Field's Project Imagine; the Sara Lee Foundation; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Oliver Boberg exhibition has been organized in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut of Chicago, German Cultural Center. This ongoing series of exhibitions is principally sponsored by American Airlines, the official airlines of The Museum of Contemporary Photography.