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**Left image:** Enrico Natali, *Untitled* from the series *Subway, New York City*, 1960. Gelatin silver print. SBMA, Museum Purchase, General Art Acquisition Fund.  
**Right image:** Doug Rickard, *2332.700542, Dallas TX*, 2009, 2011. Archival pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Wirtz Gallery.

***Publicly Private Enrico Natali and Doug Rickard***  
***Second Exhibition in the Year-Long SBMA Photography Series***  
***January 14 – April 22, 2012***

**November 28, 2011** – In the ongoing series of exhibitions entitled ***Vantage Point***, the second installation in this series of contemporary works from California photographers takes two very different approaches to find their particular “vantage point” on the American scene. ***Publicly Private*** reveals quiet truths about human interaction that span era and place. Location, however, is only part of the story. A multitude of distinctly personal decisions determine the look of a photograph and subtly communicates the photographer’s unique point of view.

Both Enrico Natali and Doug Rickard capture real moments in public spaces but their approaches couldn’t be further apart. The American Dream, a promise that shaped a nation, is represented in Natali’s work in the earnest faces that neatly shine through in his clean, black and white images of America’s middle class. Rickard follows in the tradition of street photographers with a focus on the American experience, but he also expands the tradition by embracing new possibilities and new models of image-making in an increasingly hi-tech world, all while exploring the deconstruction of the American dream.



**All images:** Enrico Natali, *Untitled* from the series *Subway, New York City*, 1960. Gelatin silver print. SBMA, Museum Purchase, General Art Acquisition Fund.

***Enrico Natali***

Enrico Natali grew up and attended public schools in Carthage, a village located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in New York. In 1951 he developed an interest in photography while a cadet at the United States Coast Guard Academy. He left the academy in 1954 and shortly thereafter went to work for New York illustrator/photographer Anton Bruehl.

In the 1960s, this young, talented photographer took to the underground subway trains of New York City to photograph people. In an attempt to overcome his shyness, Natali rode the subways with an unobtrusive camera by his side. He could look down into the viewfinder rather than through it at eye level, so that views remained “publicly private.” Respectful and intimate, his small, square portraits document a seemingly gentler time. Unlike the earlier Walker Evans subway photographs taken in the late 1930s and early 1940s, or the later in-your-face color images of Bruce Davidsons subways laced with irony and graffiti, Natali’s black and white images read like family snapshots. Author Ben Maddow wrote of Natali’s portraits, “. . .they are quite simply, plainly, frankly, the American middle-class; they are neat, shaved, friendly affectionate, good neighbors.”

Shortly thereafter, in the late 1960s, Natali retreated once again as he began a meditation practice that eventually became his primary focus and culminated in his abandoning photography while raising a family and building a home in the wilds of California’s Los Padres National Forest near Ojai.

Natali sums up his artistic work in the following statement: “My intent is to make visible the beauty of that which we take for granted, that which is so common that it all but disappears. For in the experience of the beautiful, the inherent nature of reality—*that every moment is complete in and of itself, independent of subject matter, time or place*—is revealed. From this perspective, the door to Paradise is as easily accessed through McDonald’s as through the Museum of Modern Art.”



**Left image:** Doug Rickard, *39.259736 Baltimore MD, 2009*, 2011. Archival pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Wirtz Gallery.

**Center image:** Doug Rickard, *2342.318327 Detroit, MI, 2009*, 2011. Archival pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Wirtz Gallery.

**Right image:** Doug Rickard, *2333.665001 Atlanta, GA, 2009*, 2011. Archival pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Wirtz Gallery.

### ***Doug Rickard***

In contrast to Enrico Natali’s on-the-scene approach, Doug Rickard’s 21<sup>st</sup>- century documentary platform is outer space, accessed by computer over a span of nearly ten months from his home in Sacramento, CA. He roams the mean streets of carefully researched neighborhoods and cities without ever leaving his house, screening thousands of images that are publicly available on the internet by way of the 360 degree virtual space of Google Street View. Rickard selects and re-photographs images on his computer monitor, and manipulates them so that places and faces are blurred, in these large-scale pigment prints. However, the shabby, downtrodden environments can’t be disguised. Rickard reveals the forgotten America in our midst, a document which he describes as “A New American Picture,” and while these captured moments invade privacy, they are publicly available to the world, images previously photographed by the automated eye of Google’s roof-mounted cameras. Adjusting the views from side to side or up and down, the artist selects scenes of startling and poignant beauty.

Carmen Winant, writing for SquareCylinder.com, comments on Rickard’s unique process: “His method is deliberate: rather than grab images online directly, he digitally photographs his illuminated computer screen in a darkened room. As a result of that process, he is able to print the pictures quite large (up to 40” x 60”), and, while muddy, the images don’t appear hyper-pixelated. The affect is a little disarming. While the images clearly read as photographic, there is a painterly quality to their surface and composition, recalling the haunting loneliness of an Andrew Wyeth painting.”

Rickard is currently enjoying national attention, with his work showcased at MoMa's *New Photography 2011* exhibition.

### ***Upcoming Vantage Point exhibitions***



Joseph Sterling, *The Age of Adolescence 1953-1964* 2006. Gelatin silver print. SBMA, Museum purchase with funds provided by Jane and Michael G. Wilson.

### ***Behind the Wheel***

May 5 – August 12, 2012

On December 12, 1925, the world's first motel opened just north of Santa Barbara. At that time, the Milestone Mo-Tel in San Luis Obispo sat along the nascent two-lane highway, the "101," and charged \$1.25 a night for a bungalow with attached garage. The era of automobiles as status symbols had begun; for it was only those with cruise-worthy cars that would stop at the Motel Inn on their way between LA and San Francisco. Today, Southern California is still a car culture. This exhibition will examine the enduring love affair between Southern Californians and their automobiles. Chosen from SBMA's permanent collection, these photographs explore the psychological place of the car in Southern California life. Whether in celebration, investigation, or incrimination, all of the photographs depict those unique mental states that can only be produced behind the wheel.



Doug Busch, *Couple Money to Loan, Dana*, 1986. Silver chloride contact print. Courtesy of the Artist.

### ***Scene/Seen on the Street: Doug Busch***

August 25 – December 2, 2012

Busch's large format black and white photographs, taken with a 20 x 24 camera that the artist designed and built himself, are images of great subtlety and irony. Through a combination of Busch's photographic sensibility and his impeccable technique, the ordinary is raised to a monumental scale. The street scenes presented in this exhibition open our eyes to the beauty and subtlety of the everyday. Ranging in scale from 8x20" to 20x24", the images are Busch's attempt to "record reality more accurately than I can actually see it."

***The Santa Barbara Museum of Art*** is a privately funded, not-for-profit institution that presents internationally recognized collections and exhibitions and a broad array of cultural and educational activities as well as travel opportunities around the world.

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