

Representation of emotional and physical intimacy within the work of Nan Goldin and Elinor Carucci

During the years, intimate relationships have been subject of investigation of scientists, artists, psychologists and many others. Photography by its own is a way of capturing moments defending point of views as well as presenting and representing opinions, themes, personal and social relations and attitudes. Human being's behavior and way of existing include on a very important stage, which occupy substantial place of their life, often described as the 'most important' to people relationships - family, friendship, sexual relationships.

Each person occupies several faces and places during their life – from the very start when they are born, till the moment they pass away. Moreover, people spent their lifetime surrounded by relationships – social and personal; meeting others, gaining goals, moving from one place to another, loosing and winning battles. They spent their life being in relationships with themselves, with intimate partners, family, friends and children. These relations, often described as the 'most important', are detached and saturated world in people's emotional universe. A universe separated from the ongoing narrative in a daily round, usually kept unblemished and protected from outer incoming. A universe full of vulnerable, pure gentleness and transparent feelings in which appears both successful seduction and vile behavior.

During their life, people are involved at least once in intimate relationships, such as a friendship or love relationship. These relationships can provide important sources of social support, including a sense of belonging or a feeling of closeness with someone. On the other hand, people who do not have access to intimate relationships may feel isolated and lonely. Nevertheless, what exactly is meant by intimacy? According to Lynn Jamieson's book 'Intimacy', this is often a very specific sort of knowing, loving and 'being close to' another person. The word intimacy is derived from the Latin *intimus*, meaning "inner" or "inmost". In a wide variety of languages, the word intimate refers to a person's innermost qualities. For example, the French *intimate* signifies "secret, deep, fervent, ardent." The Italian *intimo* conveys "internal, close in friendship." In Spanish, *intimo* means "private, close, innermost." To be intimate means to be close to another. In deeply intimate relationships, friends and lovers feel free to reveal far more facets of themselves. They reveal more of their complexities and contradictions. As a result, intimates share profound information about one another's histories, values, strengths, and weaknesses, idiosyncracies, hopes, and fears (Valerian J. Derlega, Communication, Intimacy and Close Relationships).

Is there some fundamental level of intimacy which is a basic human need? The ways and degrees of being intimate vary enormously within and between human societies. Disclosing intimacy is by no means the only type of intimacy to be found in primary or personal relationships. 'Really knowing' is privileged knowledge to an inner self only permitted to those who are loved and trusted. *Trust*, faith that confidence will not be betrayed and privileged knowledge will not be used against the self, is perhaps a more fundamental dimension of intimacy than knowing and understanding as these terms are now used.

During the years, intimacy within relationships has been a subject of investigation of scientists, as was already explained higher up. Photography by its own is a way of capturing moments defending point of views, presenting and representing opinions, themes, personal and social relations and attitudes. The emotional and physical intimacy is usually too delicate to be presented in front of someone else except the participants. Although, it is too real, too fragile and bare to be exposed, numerous artists have chosen to display the face of exactly that human reality. People surrounded by others in a social environment usually are not those who they are in their private, personal space. Therefore, capturing moments like these need not only patience, but also a confidential trust. Those already existed narratives in every single relation, ask questions, reveal and discover truths about the artists represented them as well as about the viewers themselves.

Intimate photography' structure is based on borrowing and in the same time redirecting the language of basic domestic life and family snaps, displaying it publicly in favorable light. Generally family pictures have been taken every now and then as way of trying keeping record of symbolic to the family members' moments. They are times of family and general holidays, special occasions, vacancies or unexpectations. What remains absent in such images, however, are things which society perceive as culturally mundane or taboo, as it is pointed in 'Chapter 5 "Intimate Life". While embellishing the aesthetics of family snaps, art photography, frequently display the exactly opposite side of those story lines – sadness, disputes, addiction and illness. Moreover, intimate photography contains as its subject the non-events during everyday routine such as sleeping, eating, talking on the phone, antisocial or bored. In the captured frames when social events do appear, they are usually not the main subject, but rather delicately slightly showed as elements, such as beautifully packed present on a dining room.

Both Nan Goldin and Elinor Carucci are photographers, creating, capturing and displaying narratives of personal life. Recording the present – intimate truthful moments; close relationships – it is writing the history. Moreover, it is not denying the past, but a transformation by a different awareness of the truth of reality. Intimate photography also leaves a special place to the objects around people. They are usually given the meaning and represented as marks of intimacy; little stories into the story; compliments.

Nan Goldin is a photographer whose work has one of the most direct influences on intimate photography. Her work is genuine record of a personal line. The objects of her photographs are her selected 'family' and the relationships (in) between. She expresses the true face of reality with all the positive and painful moments, because, tears, as well as laughter, as an inescapable part of human' life. Recording her surroundings, Nan Goldin is also described as impassioned historian of love in the age of fluid sexuality, glamour, beauty, violence, death, intoxication, and masquerade. But by constantly picture taking of the present, Goldin fabricate also a very strong record of a past. Her photographs contain stories about love, friendship, desire, and their aftermaths. Her camera freezes the comings and goings of the social experience of desire: love and hate in intimate relationships, moments of isolation, self-revelation, and adoration. In her book 'I'll Be Your Mirror', Luc Sante describes her as a portraitist of souls "She looks through the eyes of her subjects and sees herself in them; the doors between her life and her work are kept wide open."

Another artist I'd like to mention in my essay is the Israeli-American Elinor Carucci. Although, her work is also based on intimacy like Nan Goldin, she has different way and objects of presentation. Carucci follow the family life that goes on around her and represents her private world working more with herself in a connection with her loved ones. Mainly based on self portraits, it shows the observer a way of capturing emotional and physical intimacy without the shame of reviling the most private. Usually, humans have that shyness of being seen and exposed. But that doesn't respond to Elinor's work. Her unflinching self-portraits and captures of undisguised family relationships, display another way of how intimate photography might look. It is about time passing in ordinary life without embellishment and moralizing. The relationship between the photographer and their loved ones, which provoke observer's thought about the main bare moments in life. The camera examines details as if it was magnifying glass. Bites, kisses, touches, haircut or even menstrual period and nipple hair are just some of Carucci's images tittles. Her affecting photographs stuck in the memory, not necessarily because we want to remember them, but rather because we can't forget them.

But what they have in common? - Both Goldin and Carucci have in common emotional and physical intimacy, represented in two different ways - one is presenting much darker side of human's life and the other - soft and gentle biological family look. However, each two of them are transparently honest with the viewer, which gains theirs follows. On the other hand, the incredibility of using details as complimenting elements in the exploring situations, transfer the observer into Goldin/Carucci's world, and meanwhile connecting them with their own one.

During this investigation, the audience starts looking into their own relationships and ways of keeping, saving and improving them. Looking over Goldin and Carucci's work help for evaluate the importance in life as love, friendship, truth, as well as the inevitable - physical and psychical illness, and death. It helps to react and understand more correctly this unique experience - life. Because of social boundaries, seeing this type of work, it might be asked questions as: To what extend is appropriate to get into someone's personal space? What intimacy means and where is the barrier of showing, investigate and talked about? These are questions for which could be get an answer only getting familiar with artist's work. Morality is actually something setting up of society and religion. However, going beyond basic understanding such as nakedness as a shame, allows more open and gained over much valuables perspective.

Relations between humans and surroundings are a constant every now and then. Emotional and physical intimacy is strongly connected in between. They are very delicate sphere, truthfully represented into the work of Nan Goldin and Elinor Carucci. Using everyday objects, situations and real relationships, both artist explain and transform the reality into an art. Goldin and Carucci are only one example of serious amount of artists, who while capturing and creating their art, place one new way of seeing intimacy. They also help audience realize, investigate and improve one on one relationship with themselves as well as with others around.

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