

# JOHN BERGGRUEN GALLERY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Taryn Simon**

*The Picture Collection*

January 16 – March, 2013

**John Berggruen Gallery** is pleased to present *The Picture Collection*, a new series of photographs by Taryn Simon marking not only the first time this body of work will be on view but also, her first exhibition in San Francisco.

*The Picture Collection* is a snapshot from the catalogue of the world's largest circulating picture library; The New York Public Library. The library holds a collection of one million pictures and photographs clipped from books and magazines, as well as prints, postcards, and posters. It is organized by a complex cataloguing system of 12,000 subject headings. Throughout the years, it has been an important resource for writers, artists, historians, filmmakers, fashion companies, and advertising agencies. The artist Diego Rivera used the collection while working on his "Man at the Crossroads" mural at Rockefeller Center. Andy Warhol was also a frequent user of the library, especially keen on borrowing advertising images, some of which were never returned.

This body of work delves deeper into a theme that preoccupies much of Simon's work, that of examining how the photographic image is classified and catalogued. Simon is fascinated with how this system presages image search engines like Google Image, but also how much chance and accident, arbitrary inclusion and exclusion, is written into the system. *The Picture Collection* brings together, under the original subject headings, the images from the Library. It takes us back to the times where there was no search engine.

Simon recognizes the archive of images from multiple sources as a precursor to search engine. She highlights the invisible hands behind seemingly neutral systems of image gathering.

Simon's practice can best be described by the words of Simon Baker, first curator of Photography at the TATE Modern: "There are a small number of photographers who combine the visual and the textual so powerfully, and whose work is sophisticated in terms of contemporary art practice but also hard-wired to the real world. Taryn Simon is certainly one of them."

**Taryn Simon** was born in New York in 1975. She is a graduate of Brown University and a Guggenheim Fellow. Her work is in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; High Museum of Art,

