

PHOTOGRAPHY

Exhibit explores ever-changing media fo

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A new exhibit at the Spencer Museum of Art will enable anyone to become a photo editor and choose how history is framed — at least for a day.

The exhibit, “Conversation IX — Media Memes: Images, Technology, and Making the News,” is a showcase of a collection of both published and unpublished photographs from the late 20th century and the 21st century.

Michael Williams, associate professor of journalism and curator of the exhibit, said one point of this exhibit is to engage people in conversation about how news photographs are chosen and how they shape people’s perceptions of events.

Williams said photo editors and the people behind the executive desks at newspapers and other media outlets have to choose which photos make the news, the same way people can change their Facebook profile pictures.

“When people look at news online, or in the paper, or on

TV, they need to understand that someone somewhere made a choice to use that particular picture with that particular story,” Williams said.

The exhibit is divided into three different Memes, or cultural areas. Sports, celebrities and news and technology each have their own walls. Williams said the interesting thing about dividing these subjects is that certain photos from sports can easily fit under the news category depending on the perspective of the viewer.

The exhibit is being held in the modern section of the museum on the fourth floor and there is an interactive technology station so visitors can actively participate. Viewers can edit photos and even write captions and summaries of photos on three computers and two iPads at the station.

“It’s another way for people

to have more of a participatory experience with the images,” said Celka Straughn, director of academic programs for the museum. “Not just looking with their eyes, but manipulating the images and thinking about the ways we interact with images today.”

Technology has obviously changed the way people produce and access images.

Christina Brummett, a sophomore from Wichita, said today’s published images can obscure the perception of truth.

“You can portray things however you want, and it’s harder to tell what the truth is,” Brummett said.

Brummett said she thought that people were more visually oriented now and that pictures could summarize stories more easily than words. Grace Daniels, a senior from Lawrence, agreed.

“Photos are very important

today. People use subjects by which they can identify themselves,” Daniels said.

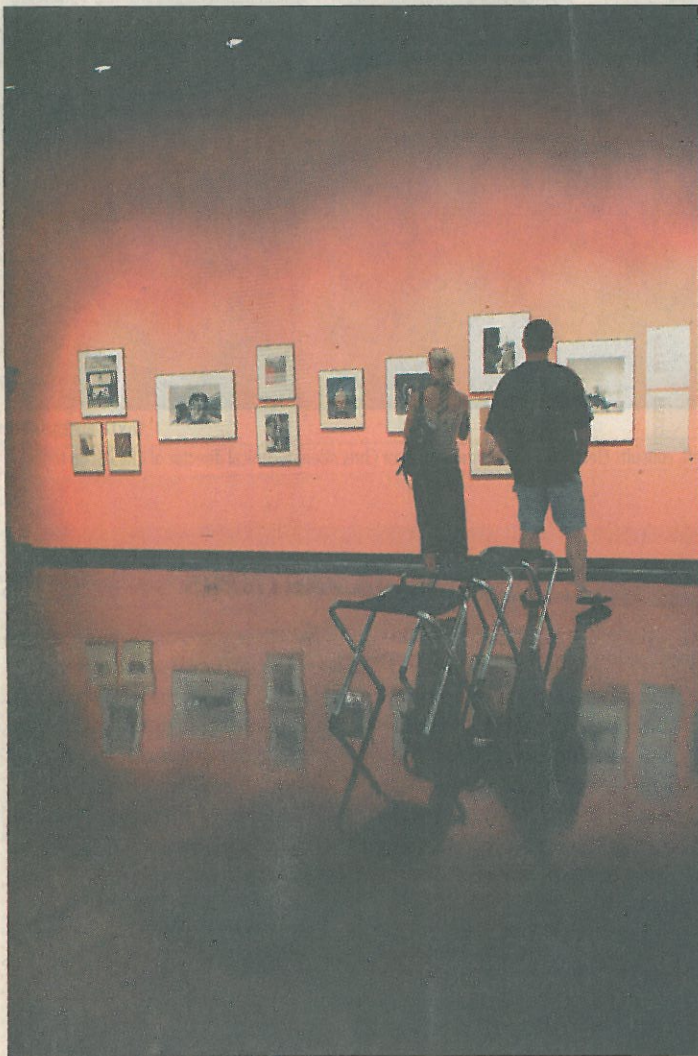
But the ability to manipulate photos can be frustrating, Daniels said she thought technology could skew the perception of truth.

Williams said professional journalism is still an important part of the media. Another one of the highlights of this exhibit is a live news feed projected on a wall. He said live news shows how many photos are printed each day and for editors to choose what are right for publication.

Williams and Straughn hoped this exhibit would start a dialogue among several visitors to the museum about what can be called “the news?”

“What kind of news?” Straughn said. “Technically a world tojournalist, or is it your roommate talking on the phone and posts it?”

— Editor



Dalton Gomez/KANSAN

Marley Simone Cunningham, an alumni from Balwin, and Josh Sinnard explore the Media Memes exhibit Saturday afternoon at the Spencer Museum of Art. The exhibit was compiled in coalition with the School of Journalism and the museum.

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82 53
Showers/Windy

WEDNESDAY
83 54
Sunny