

Rebecca Robertson, "Anne Collier's MCA Chicago Retrospective Explores the Male Gaze,"  
*ARTnews*, November 20, 2014

## ARTnews

# Anne Collier's MCA Chicago Retrospective Explores the Male Gaze

**H**ere is Faye Dunaway shot in black and white, holding a weighty Nikon to her eye, and adjusting the focus ring; here she is again, this time in color, the camera pulled back and uncertainty clouding her stare. The pair of prints—which show publicity photos from the 1978 thriller *Eyes of Laura Mars*—are from [Anne Collier's](#) ongoing series "Woman with a Camera," which explores the power dynamics of taking pictures. Photographed on a plain white background, the text accompanying one press photo reports that the movie is about the vision of a woman who foresees murders and that it was produced, directed, and written by men. In Collier's coolly expressive work, on view in her [first career retrospective](#) opening this month at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, she exposes the sometimes sexist or sublime patterns lurking in popular culture. Using the slick mechanisms of advertising, she isolates old forms of media—photos, pages from books, cassette tapes, and record albums—and reshoots them. Her own photographs draw attention to the assumptions embedded in these artifacts, often about what it means for women to look and be looked at.



Anne Collier's *Woman with a Camera (The Last Sitting, Bert Stern)*, 2009, turns the male gaze on its head. COLLECTION OF MARTIN AND REBECCA EISENBERG

“Her work feels timely and relevant because we’re so photo-obsessed right now,” says Michael Darling, chief curator at MCA Chicago, who organized the show. “Taking a retrospective look at these technologies and how women have been portrayed in them prepares you to think about how photos are being used today,” Darling tells *ARTnews*. While Collier digs through older analog media, her work is useful for thinking about contemporary depictions of women, such as iPhone selfies of . “It’s the same kind of woman with a camera,” says Darling. “In many ways we haven’t come that far from these seemingly super-sexist pictures that Anne has uncovered in her photo archeology. I’m excited about how her work can create visual literacy and inspire critical thinking in our audiences.”