This exhibition is the first to examine the portrait photographs of Andrea Robbins and Max Becher. Their portraits—like their radical landscapes and city-scenes—are powerfully evocative, boldly subverting our expectations of the discipline. Rather than “capturing” the visual essence of a sitter, they reveal identity to be complex, transitive, and culturally and historically defined. The artists capture their subjects in ways that transform, enhance, and accentuate our understanding of them. They do so with the full complicity and respect of the people they photograph. They spend weeks living with each community they document. They immerse themselves in its history. They interview its residents and participate in their rituals and customs. They photograph them in various, active stages of work, play, and home life. Ultimately, Robbins and Becher allow their subjects to represent themselves—not only as they would like to been seen, but also in ways that illuminate the complexity of their humanity. By seeing identity as changeable and conditional, these improbable portraits remind us that who we are is as much a matter of choice as destiny.
Exhibition (organized by Maurice Berger)
Thursday
31 January – 15 March
2008

Opening Reception
31 January
5 – 7 pm

Visiting Artist Lecture
Wednesday
30 January
5 pm
Albin O. Kuhn Library Gallery (First Floor)

Illustrated exhibition catalog available.

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Center for Art Design and Visual Culture UMBC

ANDREA ROBBINS AND MAX BECHER

PORTRAITS