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'Seeing is Believing'
Andrea K. Scott



In a piece by Philip Gourevitch and Errol Morris in this week's issue, Specialist Sabrina Harman explains why she took hundreds of pictures at Abu Ghraib: "to expose what was being allowed." The impulse to stockpile photographs in the hopes of revealing political truths is one subject of the current exhibition "Archive Fever: The Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art," at the International Center of Photography. Not everything in the show is politically explicit: Thomas Ruff's manipulated images of industrial machinery, printed from vintage glass negatives, are about the mechanics of reproduction, for instance. But most of the works are closer in spirit to "Haji Qiamuddin Holding a Photograph of His Brother, Asamuddin, 1998," by the artist-activist Fazal Sheikh. The picture is excerpted from the series "The Victor Weeps: Afghanistan," for which the New York native returned to his family's roots on the border of Afghanistan and northern Pakistan (which was northern India when his grandfather was born there). Sheikh found himself drawn to the region's recent history, to Afghan refugees' stories of death and martyrdom, of flight from Soviet troops and the jihad that drove out the Russians, in 1989, and of the country's devastating civil war. His project, which pairs photographs and interviews, can be viewed online in its entirety [here](#).

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