

The Museum of Modern Art

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NEW EDWARD ~~M.~~ STEICHEN PHOTOGRAPHY CENTER AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART May 1964 Opening

When the Edward ~~M.~~ Steichen Photography Center at The Museum of Modern Art opened in May 1964, photography assumed increased prominence in the Museum's program.

The Museum initially exhibited photographs in 1932, three years after the institution was founded, and began to acquire them for the Collection in 1933. In 1940, it became the first art museum to establish a curatorial department devoted exclusively to this medium. But it is only now with the addition of the new Photography Center that the Department has permanent exhibition space and accessible study-storage so that its outstanding collection of photographs can be consulted and viewed as a background to the program of temporary loan shows.

Describing the role of the Museum in this medium, John Szarkowski, Director of the Department since 1962 says: "The...photography program of The Museum of Modern Art is as unpredictable as the outcome of the searches and experiments of a thousand serious photographers. The Museum will try to remain alertly responsive to these searches, and to seek out and publish that work which makes a relevant human statement with the intensity that identifies a work of art."

The Photography Collection, unique in the world, consists of about 7,000 prints by 1,000 photographers, ranging from the 1840's to the present, with emphasis on 20th century work. In the new Edward ~~M.~~ Steichen Photography Center's third floor galleries about 200 prints are always on view.

The Center also houses a study room where the remainder of the Collection - including an extensive library and archival material - is accessible to students. It is named in honor of the master photographer who was the Director of the Department from 1947 until 1962. During the first five months the Center was open, 270 people visited and used these new facilities: photographers, students, publishers, picture editors, television producers, teachers, etc.

In addition to this permanent display of a rotating selection of works from the more...

Collection; the Department of Photography presents four small temporary shows each year in the Steichen Center. Large and small loan shows are also presented periodically on the ground floor as a regular part of the Museum's exhibition program.

During the 1964-65 season these loan shows included The Photographer's Eye, consisting of 200 photographs delineating the various aspects of the "special visual language" of photography; a one-man exhibition of the works of André Kertész, the Budapest-born photographer, who is considered one of the pioneers of modern photography; The Photo Essay, reviewing the result of modern magazines' attempts to combine photographs, text and graphics to produce an integral statement; and Glamour Portraits, presenting historical and contemporary works that have expressed and helped to formulate the changing concept of fashionable female beauty.

The inaugural show in the Photography Center itself consists of work from the Museum Collection selected by Grace M. Mayer, Curator, and installed by René d'Harnoncourt, Director of The Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition provides an introduction to the accomplishments of photography as seen in the works of such masters as Hill, Adamson, Nègre, Cameron, Brady, Atget, Weston, Strand, Cartier-Bresson, Smith, Heyman, Davidson and Heath. Included are Brady's Civil War pictures, Jacob Riis' record of "How the Other Half Live," documents made by Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans and others from the Farm Security Administration, abstractions by Coburn, color by Haas, and a photo-essay on teenagers by Bruce Davidson. Exhibitions in these galleries will be changed periodically as the Collection is constantly being augmented by gifts or purchases.

Publishing activities in the field of photography have also been expanded. An enlarged and revised edition of The History of Photography by Beaumont Newhall, first head of the Museum's Department of Photography and now Director of the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, was issued in the fall of 1964 in cooperation with the Rochester institution. A monograph, André Kertész by John Szarkowski, was published by the Museum in November. Other current titles are: Photographs by Jacques Henri Lartigue and The Photographer and the American Landscape.

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In addition to presenting more than 75 temporary exhibitions in the Museum galleries since the establishment of the Department of Photography in 1940, dozens of exhibitions have been sent to other museums and educational institutions here and abroad. Shown in the United States and overseas during the 1964-65 season: The Bitter Years, Lucien Clergue-Yasuhiro Ishimoto, Paul Strand's Mexico, The Photographer and the American Landscape, Harry Callahan and Robert Frank, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Walker Evans, Photographs by Irving Penn and Steichen the Photographer. (For information on rental fees and availability, write Marie Frost)

The Advisory Committee for the Department consists of Dr. Henry Allen Moe, Chairman; James Thrall Soby, Vice-Chairman; Alfred H. Barr, Jr.; Sherman M. Fairchild; René d'Harnoncourt; David H. McAlpin; Beaumont Newhall; John Szarkowski; Shirley C. Burden and Monroe Wheeler.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Masters of Modern Art, edited by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Photography section by Edward Steichen, illustrated with photographs from Museum Collection.

Saturday Review (May 26, 1962), "Great Photographs at The Museum of Modern Art" by Margaret Weiss.

Camera 35 (September 1964), "The World's Greatest Picture Collection."

Museum Publications, Photography:

The New Department of Photography, Bulletin Vol. VII, No. 2

Photography Acquisitions, Bulletin Vol. IX, No. 3

Road to Victory with text by Carl Sandburg, Bulletin Vol. IX, No. 5-6

The Museum of Modern Art Photography Center, Bulletin Vol. IX, No. 2

Eliot Porter: Birds in Color and Helen Levitt: Photographs of Children, Bulletin Vol. XI, No. 4

Music and Musicians, Bulletin Vol. XV, No. 2

Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, Bulletin Vol. XIX, No. 4

The Photographs of Jacques Henri Lartigue, by John Szarkowski, Bulletin Vol. XXX, No. 1

Murals by American Painters and Photographers, edited by Julian Levy (1932)

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Photography: 1839-1937 by Beaumont Newhall

Walker Evans: American Photographs, with introduction by Lincoln Kirstein (1938, reprinted 1962*) \$7.50 hardbound.

Photography: A Short Critical History, by Beaumont Newhall

Britain at War, edited by Monroe Wheeler, text by T.S. Eliot, Herbert Read, E. J. Carter and Carlos Dyer (1941)

The American Snapshot, edited by W. D. Morgan (1944)

Paul Strand: Photographs 1915-1945 by Nancy Newhall (1945)

The Photographs of Edward Weston by Nancy Newhall (1946)

The Photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson by Lincoln Kirstein and Beaumont Newhall (1947)

The Family of Man, prologue by Carl Sandburg, introduction by Edward Steichen (1955*) \$3.95 hardbound; \$1.50 paperbound.

Seventy Photographers Look at New York, with quotations from Walt Whitman, E. B. White, Le Corbusier, Carl Sandburg, Christopher Morley, et al. (1957)

The Bitter Years: 1935-41, edited by Edward Steichen (1962*) \$1.25 paperbound.

The Photographer and The American Landscape by John Szarkowski (1963*) \$2.95 paperbound.

The History of Photography by Beaumont Newhall (revised edition, 1964*) \$12.50 hardbound.

André Kertész, edited by John Szarkowski (1964*) \$2.95 paperbound.

*In Print - Available by mail from Publications Sales, add 25 cents for postage.

Articles by John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography:

"World-Wide Photo Survey" - Popular Photography, July 1963.

"Critic's Choice" - Popular Photography, April 1964.

A review of the recently published Sander portrait collection, - Infinity, June 1963.

"Photographing Architecture" - Art In America, No. 2, 1959.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.