

# The Museum of Modern Art

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WALKER EVANS, a volume of photographs representing a broad survey of the photographer's work from 1929 to 1970, with an introduction by John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art. 192 pages; 106 illustrations. Clothbound \$12.50; paperbound \$6.95. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Clothbound edition distributed to the trade by New York Graphic Society in the United States and Canada; Transatlantic Book Service Ltd. in the United Kingdom; and Feffer and Simons internationally.

## WALKER EVANS

A retrospective survey of the photography of Walker Evans -- whose work has influenced not only subsequent photography but modern literature, film and the traditional visual arts -- will be published by The Museum of Modern Art on March 31, 1971.

The 100 works reproduced date from 1929 to 1970, the most complete record ever assembled in book form. The text is by John Szarkowski, Director of The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Photography. He says: "The concept of photography that Evans evolved in the years around 1930 was original and exacting. He thought of photography as a way of preserving segments out of time itself, without regard for the conventional structures of picture building. Nothing was to be imposed on experience; the truth was to be discovered, not constructed. It was a formulation that freed Evans' intuitions and saved him from too solicitous a concern for the purely plastic values that were of central importance to modern painters."

The majority of the photographs reproduced have not been published before. In addition, some of the now classic works published earlier in Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, by James Agee and Walker Evans, in Message from the Interior and in Many Are Called are included.

"It is difficult to know now with certainty whether Evans recorded the America of his youth, or invented it. Beyond doubt, the accepted myth of our recent past is in some measure the creation of this photographer, whose work has persuaded us of the validity of a new set of clues and symbols, bearing on the question of who we are. Whether that work and its judgment was fact or artifice, or half of each, is now part of our history," John Szarkowski says.

In his introduction Szarkowski traces Evans' evolving style; his rejection of the two giants of the 1920's, Edward Steichen and Alfred Stieglitz, and his relation to Atget and the Brady group; his "hot creative streak" of the 1930's when he worked with the Farm Security Administration; his secret subways series when he abandoned most of the photographic  
(more)

controls; his essays as an editor of Fortune magazine; and his recent work.

He concludes: "In addition to continuing his career as an artist, Evans today (because of his importance as exemplar to young photographers) has had imposed upon him the role of prophet. This is a situation that Evans might regard with both embarrassment and amusement. Since paradox and irony have been constant elements in his own work, it is perhaps poetic justice that Evans should now find himself in a position similar in some respects to that of Stieglitz in 1929, when demanding young geniuses called on him. As Professor at Yale since 1965, Evans has approached the function of teaching (the function of achieving a beneficent relationship with the young) with a characteristic respect for the privacy of other minds. His teaching combines a tutorial informality of method with a tactful reserve in attitude, reflecting Evans' distaste for the tendentious."

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Additional information, review copies and photographs available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Telephone: (212) 956-7501.

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