

THE WORK OF  
**ATGET**

NO. 33  
FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE

THE ART OF OLD PARIS

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK  
OCTOBER 14, 1982-JANUARY 4, 1983

SECOND IN SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS  
EXPLORING THE WORK OF ATGET  
TO OPEN AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

THE WORK OF ATGET: THE ART OF OLD PARIS, the second in a series of four exhibitions exploring the art of the French photographer Eugène Atget (1857-1927), will open to the public in the new West Wing Galleries of The Museum of Modern Art on October 14, 1982. Organized by John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, the exhibition will remain on view through January 4, 1983.

The exhibition, part of the Springs Industries Series on the Art of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, will focus on Atget's photographs of Old Paris, the heart of his document of French civilization and the area of his professional specialization for most of his career. Taken between 1898 and 1927, the 117 photographs in the exhibition depict urban scenes, architectural views, and artistic motifs that recreate the atmosphere of the French capital prior to its transformation in the 19th century by social and economic forces and by the urban renewal projects of Baron Georges Haussmann.

Eugène Atget was a commercial photographer who worked in and around Paris

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for more than 30 years. When he died in 1927, his work was known only to a few archivists and artists. In his lifetime, Atget made perhaps 10,000 photographs. Almost all of these describe the historic character of French life, as indicated by its architecture, its landscape, and its traditional labors and vernacular gestures. To many photographers today his work stands not only as a heroic and original achievement, but as an exemplary pedagogical lesson, the full implications of which are only now beginning to be perceived.

Atget's photographs of Old Paris represent an impressive undertaking. To produce his portrait of the capital, Atget had to ignore all elements of contemporary Paris and modern-day life. He photographed districts such as Montmartre, Passy and the Gobelins area that had retained an ambience characteristic of the epoch when they had been villages outside of Old Paris. He recorded little-noticed artifacts such as private townhouses, humble shops, and garden sculpture, as well as famous sites and monuments, such as the Pantheon and the Luxembourg Palace, and was thereby able to recreate the atmosphere of a city that had already vanished.

A lecture on Atget and his art will be presented on Friday, November 12, 1982, at 8 p.m. by Maria Morris Hambourg, art historian and co-author of The Work of Atget. Tickets for the lecture, to be held in the Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 West 53rd Street, are available in advance at the Museum's Lobby Information Desk or by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope with request and payment to the Education Department, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, New York 10019. Prices are \$5.00 for the general public, \$4.00 for MOMA members, and \$3.00 for students with current ID. The lecture is made possible through the generosity of Springs Industries, Inc.

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Following THE ART OF OLD PARIS will be two further exhibitions of Atget's works: THE ANCIEN REGIME, scheduled for 1983, and MODERN TIMES, in 1984. Each exhibition will be accompanied by a volume of The Work of Atget, co-authored by John Szarkowski and Maria Morris Hambourg. The Art of Old Paris contains a biography of Atget by Mrs. Hambourg, 117 full-page plates, and 95 reference illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, the 192-page volume is distributed by the New York Graphic Society Books/Little, Brown and Company, Boston. The volume is priced at \$40.00 and is available in a clothbound edition only. THE WORK OF ATGET exhibition series and the four accompanying volumes have been generously supported by Springs Industries, Inc.

After closing at the Museum, THE WORK OF ATGET: THE ART OF OLD PARIS will travel to: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas, Texas (February 21 - April 3, 1983); Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio (April 28 - June 12, 1983); The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota (September 13 - November 7, 1983); The Saint Louis Museum, St. Louis, Missouri (November 29, 1983 - January 29, 1984); The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan (February 20 - April 1, 1984); and McKissick Museums, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina (April 23 - June 3, 1984).

September 1982

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For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director, or Tamara Real, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, New York 10019 (212) 708-9750

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