

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
February 1993

A NEW INSTALLATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE COLLECTION
Opens February 4, 1993

RECENT ACQUISITIONS: PHOTOGRAPHY
February 4 - April 6, 1993

A complete reinstallation of the photography galleries, containing dozens of works exhibited for the first time or for the first time in many years, opens at The Museum of Modern Art on February 4, 1993. Selected by the curatorial staff of the Department of Photography, **A NEW INSTALLATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE COLLECTION** surveys photography's history in nearly 200 pictures. Opening at the same time and continuing through April 6, **RECENT ACQUISITIONS: PHOTOGRAPHY** presents some thirty works, most of them acquired over the past year and a half, during which time more than 300 photographs were added to the Museum's collection.

Peter Galassi, Director, Department of Photography, writes, "Each new installation of photography from the collection is not merely a display of remarkable or interesting pictures, but an attempt at historical synopsis -- an outline of photography's growth. Many plausible surveys might be drawn from the collection, each one not *the* history of photography but a history of photography. Especially for recent work, it is impossible at any one time to tell all of the stories the collection might tell, which is why the gallery for contemporary photography is reinstalled more frequently than the others."

The organizing principle of the installation is not neutral chronology, but a series of groupings that interpret episodes in photography's evolving

traditions. The emphasis of these groupings will change with subsequent installations, usually in one or two galleries at a time. One section of the present installation explores the stylistic inventions of the European avant-garde between the two World Wars. Another brings together diverse works by Larry Burrows, Robert Rauschenberg, Garry Winogrand, and others, each a response to American experience of the 1960s.

Together with celebrated photographs by Edgar Degas, Walker Evans, Alexander Rodchenko, Diane Arbus, and many others, there will be less familiar pictures by such photographers as Claudia Andujar, Gjon Mili, Lucia Radochonska, and Antonio Reynoso. Among the photographs exhibited for the first time since they entered the collection are works by Vito Acconci, Germaine Krull, Francis Frith, Maurice Tabard, and James Van Der Zee.

The installation contains photographic books, a Soviet propaganda poster, and tearsheets from *Life* magazine, which evoke photography's roles outside the studio. There are also pictures by artists who have worked in a variety of mediums, from Josef Albers and László Moholy-Nagy to Lucas Samaras and Sigmar Polke. The gallery devoted to contemporary work presents both traditionally scaled photography and larger pictures, including a major five-part work by Bernhard and Anna Blume.

Mr. Galassi states, "Dozens of museums in the Western world present permanent surveys of post-Renaissance or modern painting. The Museum of Modern Art is one of only a tiny handful of museums where visitors can count on finding a synoptic overview of the history of photography. That is an important reason why we devote six of our seven galleries to this function."

RECENT ACQUISITIONS is installed in the photography gallery for temporary exhibitions, which has been redesigned for greater flexibility and to better

accommodate large works. The selection reflects the range of the Museum's collecting program, presenting major works by Julia Margaret Cameron, John Gutmann, Robert Rauschenberg and Susan Weil, Cindy Sherman, and Doug and Mike Starn. Other works, such as those made in the 1930s by Trude Fleischmann and Arkady Shaikhet, exemplify the evolving rediscovery of photography's past. About half of the exhibition is comprised of contemporary works, including pictures by Lois Conner, Bruce Gilden, Jan Groover, John O'Reilly, Eric Rondepierre, and Madoka Takagi.

A NEW INSTALLATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE COLLECTION and RECENT ACQUISITIONS were organized by, in addition to Mr. Galassi, the following members of the staff of the Department of Photography: Nicole Friedler, study center supervisor; Edna Russak Goldstaub, curatorial assistant; Susan Kismaric, curator; and Edward Robinson, Newhall fellow.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.