

**612. AN EYE AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 1947**

*(French, 1908-2004)*

*Gelatin silver print.*

*13 5/8 x 9 1/8" (34.7 x 23.4 cm).*

*Gift of the photographer*

*Audio courtesy of Acoustiguide*



**PETER GALASSI:**

Cartier-Bresson was extremely talented at photography's trick of turning anything, no matter how boring or ugly, into a beautiful picture. This one called An Eye at The Museum of Modern Art, because the fellow in the middle, who is smoking a cigarette has his finger right below his eye, has a lovely history behind it. It was made at The Museum of Modern Art, in 1947, at the time of Cartier-Bresson's first exhibition here, at what was then the entrance to the Museum. But when the museum expanded in 1964 this part of that entrance was taken away.

The curved glass wall is vital to how this picture looks; you can see the lines in the sidewalk as they're reflected in the curved glass. (Pause) From 1964 until November of 2004, this spot didn't exist. But when Ronald S. and Jo Carole Lauder so generously restored the facade of this building to its original 1939 design, the site of this picture came back.