

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY FINK ON VIEW AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Approximately 40 photographs by Larry Fink will be on view in the third-floor Steichen Galleries of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, from August 6 through October 30. Fink's black and white photographs depict the personal and social relations of people in two radically different milieus, New York's haut monde and the farming community of Martin's Creek, Pennsylvania.

In 1970 Larry Fink began photographing what he called the "privileged classes" of New York City. Often as a guest, sometimes as the official photographer, he documented the sophisticated party-goers at private gatherings, museum and gallery exhibition openings, and fashionable discotheques. Suspended in the light of the camera's flash, the people depicted in Fink's large, graphic photographs are socially interacting. A gesture, a smile, a surreptitious glance, even the sweat on an arm or a wrinkle of skin, give detailed evidence of the psychology of desire, sensuality, disappointment, or ennui.

When he moved to the farming community of Martin's Creek, Pennsylvania in 1974, Fink turned his attention to his rural neighbors. In the same probing photographic style, he observes these working-class people in the context of their seemingly simpler social network. Again during times of celebration, such as birthday parties, Elks' Club dinners, and county fairs, Fink shows us people in pursuit of their identity.

"Despite the obvious differences between the two social classes, Fink's pictures are not a polemic, but a subtle investigation of human behavior, and proof psychology is photographic subject matter," notes Susan Kismaric, Assistant Curator of Photography and director of the exhibition. "Larry Fink's work is, in a very real sense, autobiographical. It comes out of his own involvement with the situations and individuals he depicts, and I think his work shows a highly unusual commitment to photographing people. Above all, Fink is concerned with making photographs which record, as clearly as possible, the subtle unfolding of emotions which determines our identity."

Larry Fink was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1941. He attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and The New School for Social Research in New York City. In his teens he studied photography privately with Lisette Model and Alexey Brodovitch. A committed photography teacher for more than fifteen years, in 1977-78 he was visiting professor at Yale University. He was the recipient of Guggenheim Fellowships for photography in 1977 and 1979.

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For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director, or Lisa Crockett, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. (212) 956-7504.
