

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 245-3200 Cable: Modernart

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FOR RELEASE:
Saturday, August 3, 1968

PRESS PREVIEW:
Friday, August 2, 1968
1-4 P.M.

MY EUROPEAN TRIP: Photographs from the Car by Joel Meyerowitz will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from August 3 through September. The exhibition of 40 photographs taken from a moving automobile during a 20,000-mile tour of the British Isles, Europe, Morocco, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey in 1966-7 was selected by John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography.

In the wall text accompanying the show, Mr. Szarkowski asks and then answers the question of why a photographer would handicap himself by attempting to capture a subject that flies past at fifty miles an hour. "Perhaps the nature of his life allows him small choice. The old pedestrian's way of seeing the world, which allowed a subject to be walked around and studied and measured against the recollection of similiar subjects on other days, seems largely the victim of technological progress. What we see of the world now reaches us as a succession of kaleidoscopic glimpses, unconnected and unexplained and unconsummated. Cartier-Bresson [whose work is on view this summer in a major exhibition at the Museum] said that photographers deal in things that are continually vanishing. This is true, and they vanish more rapidly than they used to. He also said that there was no contrivance on earth which can make them come back again, by which he meant no contrivance except photography.

"Joel Meyerowitz drove a car past 20,000 miles of European life and history, each mile of it a mystery to him. With his camera he tried to reach out and touch what he did not understand, and what the exigency of his pace did not allow him to study. Making a photograph was a gesture of recognition to his experience, and later a proof that he had indeed passed such scenes.

"The pictures he made have to do with the character of photography itself, and with the fragmentation of modern experience, and also with the quality of response

(more)

of Joel Meyerowitz, who made these irreversible observations while the car was moving."

Born in New York City in 1938, Joel Meyerowitz studied painting and received a BFA degree from Ohio State University in 1959. He had one-man shows in 1966 at The George Eastman House, Rochester, and at the Underground Gallery in New York, and his work is currently included in a group show at the Smithsonian Institution. He was included in The Photographer's Eye exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art in 1964.

MY EUROPEAN TRIP is one of a series of small exhibitions presented throughout the year in the Edward Steichen Photography Center galleries. The exhibition of 150 photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson will remain on view in the Museum's first-floor galleries through September 2, and a one-man show of work by Brassai will open there on October 28.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. 245-3200.

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MY EUROPEAN TRIP

by Joel Meyerowitz

August 3 - September, 1968

Wall Label

Making photographs from a moving automobile would seem roughly analogous to running a sack race. Obviously it can be done, but why should it be? A photographer's job is to show us precisely, not approximately, what he thought important. Why then should he handicap himself by attempting a subject that flies past at fifty miles an hour?

Perhaps the nature of his life allows him small choice. The old pedestrian's way of seeing the world, which allowed a subject to be walked around and studied and measured against the recollection of similar subjects on other days, seems largely the victim of technological progress. What we see of the world now, in the normal course of our comings and goings, reaches us as a succession of kaleidoscopic glimpses, unconnected and unexplained and unconsummated. (The face in the crowded elevator, seen just as the doors closed, is gone forever. The next car will not overtake her.)

Cartier-Bresson said that photographers deal in things that are continually vanishing. This is true, and they vanish more rapidly now than they used to. He also said that there was no contrivance on earth which can make them come back again, by which he meant no contrivance except photography.

Joel Meyerowitz drove a car past 20,000 miles of European life and history, each mile of it a mystery to him. With his camera he tried to reach out and touch what he did not understand, and what the exigency of his pace did not allow him to study. Making a photograph was a gesture of recognition to his experience, and later a proof that he had indeed passed such scenes.

The pictures he made have to do with the character of photography itself, and with the fragmentation of modern experience, and also with the quality of response of Joel Meyerowitz, who made these irreversible observations while the car was moving.

John Szarkowski

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MY EUROPEAN TRIP: Photographs from the Car by Joel Meyerowitz

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Checklist

France. Rt. N10, near Chartres

Greece. Corfu

France. Rt. N460

Turkey. Rt. E104, near Troy

Paris. Boulevard de Vaugirard

Ireland. Rt. 103, between Inch & Dingle

Spain. Carretera de Cadiz, Malaga

Wales. Rt. 483, near Welshpool

France. Rt. N10

ENGLAND. Rt. A58

London. Trafalgar Square

Turkey. Rt. E104, near Pergamum

Wales. Rt. 55

Greece. Rt. E87, near Trokala

Ireland. Road near Black Ball Head, County Cork

Spain. Rt. E103, near Salobrena

Scotland. Rt. A77

Spain. Paseo de Martificos, Malaga

Bulgaria. near Sofia

Germany. Rt. 31, Bodensee

Morocco. Street, Chechaouen

Ireland. Rt. 68, near Limerick

Wales. Rt. 40

Turkey. Street, Ayvalik

Spain. Camino de Antequerra, Malaga

Turkey. Rt. 2, near Kutahya

England. Rt. 40

Spain. Rt. E25, between Sevilla & Cordoba

Spain. Rt. 340, near Murcia

England. Rt. A592, Cumberland County

Germany. Rt. 31

Paris. Port de Clignancourt

Spain. Rt. 335

Wales. Rt. 40, near Llangollen

Scotland Rt. A77

Spain. Rt. E26

Scotland. Rt. A77

Spain. Calle Marmoles, Malaga

Turkey. Istanbul

Bulgaria. Rt. E95, Ploudiv