WEATHER, WEATHER

MAIRA KALMAN
DANIEL HANDLER

MoMA
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Series Editor
Sarah Hermanson Meister

The Museum of Modern Art
New York
I was in my room wondering what it was like somewhere else.

What's the weather like?
It's like summer. It's like doing nothing.

Delicious.
It's like a day so hot you can't do anything but say how hot it is.
It’s like looking around and trying to figure out what it’s like.

It might change. Of course it will.
It was a coup de foudre. I hadn’t the foggiest notion what to do. We were breaking the ice. We were on cloud nine. Everything was right as rain. And then, out of the clear blue sky, there were stormy looks. Are you under the weather? Why the tempest in a teacup? Soon the clouds will part. Blue skies. Clear sailing. It is the weather, after all. — M. K.

I grew up in a place of hardly varying weather. We did not talk about it, because there was nothing to talk about.

I fell in love with a woman from a land where the weather changes seasonally and dramatically. Everyone talks about it all of the time. I had never see this before, and I did not know what to do.

“But doesn’t it get cold every year?” I asked. “Why are we talking about it as if it is the end of the world?”

My sister set me straight. She married a man from a similar land, after studying anthropology. “Daniel,” she said—she calls me Daniel—“You must think of it as an elaborate ceremony, like having tea with an emperor. You don’t just gulp the tea. There are things you must do first. Daniel, you must talk about the weather.”

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but it’s striking how often those pictures are accompanied by even more words: a title or caption that complicates or clarifies what we see in the photograph. This book is the third in a series of collaborations between Daniel Handler and Maira Kalman, using photographs from the collection of The Museum of Modern Art as points of departure. In the first of these books, *Girls Standing on Lawns,* three-quarters of the photographs are untitled; for all but one of those with titles, the title simply identifies the person in the picture (*Agnes Hambrick, Mrs. Northup,* or *Leta, the day she left for Lex*). All of the photographs in the first book are snapshots, and they served a very particular and personal purpose—to document a loved one, or a friend, or a special occasion—although the names of the people who made them (and many of the people who posed in them) are unknown to us now.

We know the names of the photographers who made almost every image included in the second book from this series, *Hurry Up and Wait,* and most of the photographers were making images they considered to be works of art. Some are untitled, many give a brief description or a location as a title, and a few complement their work with a poetic or dramatic phrase (*Leap into the Void*). Perhaps because their work is often tied so closely to what you can observe in the real world, photographers generally prefer to have you look at their photographs and come to your own conclusions rather than give you too much information at the start; they know how profoundly words can affect your interpretation of what you are seeing. The exceptions to this rule are photographers who work for newspapers or news agencies: for them information is essential, and they want to make sure they provide it up front. There are three examples of this in the book you are holding (they appear on pages 26, 27 and 30), and they all have detailed, lengthy captions that were provided on the backs of the prints.

In each book from this series, Maira makes paintings that are inspired by photographs in MoMA’s collection: whether or not the original images are black and white, in her renderings she selects whatever color she likes from her palette. And in each book Daniel writes a prose poem to accompany the paintings and photographs: we provide the original titles at the back of each volume (just in case you’re curious), but these are irrelevant to his purpose. He chooses his words very carefully to tell a story that—in conjunction with the pictures—might just change the way you think about the weather.

Sarah Hermanson Meister
Curator, Department of Photography
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
The Photographs

All works are in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Except where noted, they are gelatin silver prints. The dimensions correspond to the image size, with height proceeding width.

Page 5

Sunbathers, Dan Weiner
(18.9 × 23.9 cm).
Gift of Nihon Keizai Shimbun
Page 6

Chuji Yao
(Japanese, born 1947)
Wind c. 1955. 8 × 10¼" (20.3 × 25.5 cm).
Gift of Nihon Keizai Shimbun

Page 7

Shoji Ueda
(Japanese, 1913–2000)
Snow Surface. c. 1958. 8½ × 13¾" (21.1 × 35 cm).
Gift of Nihon Keizai Shimbun

Page 8

Alfred Stieglitz
(American, 1864–1946)
Salome and Gable, Lake George. 1922. 4⅞ × 3⅛" (11.5 × 9.2 cm).
Anonymous gift

Page 9

Alfred Stieglitz
(American, 1864–1946)
Objects in Snow. 1947. 21¼ × 23½" (54 × 59.6 cm).
Purchase

Page 10

László Moholy-Nagy
(American, 1897–1946)
Clouds, New Mexico. 1940. 7 × 9½" (17.8 × 24.4 cm).
Photography Purchase Fund

Page 11

Anonymous gift

Page 12

Nicholas Nixon
(American, born 1947)
Northeast Court, Tennis Club of Albuquerque. August 1973. 7⅛ × 9½" (19.6 × 24.5 cm).
Purchase

Page 13

Thomas Roma
(American, born 1950)
Sunset Park, Brooklyn, New York. 1991. 9½ × 12¾" (25.1 × 32.9 cm). The Fellows of Photography Fund

Page 14

Alma Lavenson
(American, 1897–1989)
Objects in Snow. 1947. 21¼ × 23½" (54 × 59.6 cm).
Purchase

Page 15

Bill Brandt
(British, born Germany 1904–1983)
Top Withens, West Riding, Yorkshire. 1945. 9⅞ × 7⅞" (23.3 × 19.7 cm). Acquired through the generosity of Clarissa Alcock Bronfman and Richard E. Salomon

Page 16

Dorothea Lange
(American, 1895–1965)
Arbutus Menziesii, Objects in Snow. 1947. 5⅞ × 4⅜" (15.2 × 11 cm).
Purchase

Page 17

Hiroshi Hamaya
(Japanese, 1915–1999)
Woman Hurrying on the Snow Road, Shigaraki, Japan. 1956. 11½ × 7⅛" (29.2 × 20 cm).
Gift of the artist

Page 18

Harry Callahan
(American, 1912–1999)
Objects in Snow. 1947. 21¼ × 23½" (54 × 59.6 cm).
Purchase

Page 19

Harry Callahan
(American, 1912–1999)
Objects in Snow. 1947. 21¼ × 23½" (54 × 59.6 cm).
Purchase

Page 20

John Vachon
(American, 1914–1975)
Children Playing in Snow. 1940. 12¼ × 9½" (31.4 × 24.1 cm).
Gift of the artist

Page 21

Valery Shchekoldin
(Russian, born 1946)
Ulyanovsk. 1978. 11⅛ × 7¾" (28.2 × 18.8 cm).
The Family of Man Fund

Page 22

Carleton E. Watkins
(American, born 1829–1916)
Arbutus Menziesii, California. 1861. Albumen silver print, 14¼ × 21¼" (36.5 × 54.3 cm).
Purchase

Page 23

Alfred Stieglitz
(American, 1864–1946)
Apples and Gable, Lake George. 1922. 4⅛ × 3¼" (11.5 × 9.2 cm).
Anonymous gift

Page 24

The Family of Man

Page 25

Valery Shchekoldin
(Russian, born 1946)
Big Snow, 42nd Street. 1956. 10⅛ × 11¼" (26 × 29.8 cm).
Gift of the artist

Page 26

Barney Ingoglia
(The New York Times, American, born 1928)
The New York Times Collection

Page 27

Alfred Stieglitz
(American, 1864–1946)
This Photo Was Made Just before 4 PM at Broadway and 43rd Street, Looking East across Times Square. July 24, 1959. 7½ × 11¼" (20.3 × 28.6 cm).
The New York Times Collection

Page 28

Louis Stettner
(American, born 1924)
Windshield, Saratoga Springs, New York. 1957. 16¹⁄₄ × 18½" (40.8 × 46 cm).
Gift of the artist in honor of David Stettner

Page 29

Andreas Feininger
(American, born France 1906–1999)
Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1945. 7⅞ × 10½" (20.3 × 26.7 cm).
Anonymous gift

Page 30

International News Photo

Page 31

Frank Gohlke
(American, born 1942)
Southmore Manor Apartments—Looking South, from the series Aftermath: The Wichita Falls Tornado. April 14, 1979. 14½ × 17¾" (36.3 × 44.7 cm). Extended loan from Warner Communications, Inc.

Page 32

Henry Wessel, Jr.
(American, born 1942)
Untitled. 1966. 9 × 13½" (22.9 × 34.3 cm). Purchase

Page 33

Ansel Adams
(American, 1902–1946)
New Mexico. 1933. 7½ × 11¼" (18.4 × 24.1 cm).
Gift of Albert M. Bender

Page 34

André Kertész
(American, born Hungary 1894–1986)
Bocskay-tér, Budapest. 1914. 1⅛ × 2½" (3.7 × 5.2 cm). Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther

Page 35

Valery Shchekoldin
(Russian, born 1946)
Big Snow, 42nd Street. 1956. 10⅛ × 11¼" (26 × 29.8 cm).
Gift of the artist

Page 36

International News Photo

Page 37

Valery Shchekoldin
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Big Snow, 42nd Street. 1956. 10⅛ × 11¼" (26 × 29.8 cm).
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Page 38

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