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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

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Photography
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MUSEUM OF MODERN ART PLANS INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

René d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum of Modern Art, announced today that a major exhibition planned for the forthcoming 25th anniversary year celebration of the Museum will be an international photography show organized by Edward Steichen, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, on the theme of "The Family of Man." This exhibition, one of the most ambitious photography undertakings attempted by any art museum, will open in January 1955 in New York. Additional editions will open simultaneously in Europe, Asia and Latin America and then will circulate throughout the world for at least two years.

Because the Museum wants this exhibition to present the most complete exploration possible of photography's achievements in recording human relations, Mr. Steichen is asking photographers all over the world to submit photographs for consideration.

Mr. Steichen has issued the following statement explaining the aims and purposes of the exhibition:

"The Museum of Modern Art was the first museum to consider the recognition and advancement of the art of photography an important part of its program. The inclusion of THE FAMILY OF MAN project as one of the major international exhibitions celebrating the Museum's 25th anniversary, gives further emphasis and scope to this recognition of photography as an art.

"THE FAMILY OF MAN is planned as an exhibition of photography portraying the universal elements and emotions and the oneness of human beings throughout the world. It is probably the most ambitious and challenging project photography has ever faced and one for which, I believe, the art of photography is uniquely qualified.

"This exhibition will require photographs, made in all parts of the world, of the gamut of life from birth to death with emphasis on the everyday relationships of man to himself, to his family, to the community and to the world we live in: subject matter ranging from babies to philosophers, from the kindergarten to the university, from the child's home-made toys to scientific research, from tribal councils of primitive peoples to the councils of the United Nations. It will require photographs of lovers and marriage and child bearing of the family unit with its joys, trials and tribulations, its deep rooted devotions and its antagonisms, photographs that reveal the selflessness of mother love, not simply the Madonna element in 'mother' but her all embracing love, with the sense of security she gives to her children and to the home she creates in all its warmth and magnificence, its heartaches and exaltations.

"We are not concerned with photographs that border on propaganda for or against any political ideologies.

"We are concerned with following the individual and the family unit from its reactions to the beginnings of life and continuing on through death and burial.

(more)

"We are concerned with man in relation to his environment, to the beauty and richness of the earth he has inherited and what he has done with this inheritance, the good and the great things, the destructive and the stupid things.

"We are concerned with children, as the universality of man is not only accepted but taken for granted among children.

"We are concerned with the religious rather than religions.

"We are concerned with basic human consciousness more than social consciousness.

"We are concerned with photographs which express the universal through the individual and the particular, that demonstrate the importance of the art of photography in explaining man to man across the world, his dreams and aspirations, mirroring the flaming creative forces of love and truth and the corrosive evil inherent in the lie.

"I believe that love should be the dominant and key element in THE FAMILY OF MAN exhibition, just as it is in the individual family.

"Photographers, professional and amateur, in all parts of the world are invited to submit for the Museum's consideration prints they believe are appropriate to the project. It is essential to keep in mind the universal elements and aspects of human relations and the experiences common to all mankind rather than situations that represent conditions exclusively related or peculiar to a race, an event, a time or a place.

"Details of the exhibition cannot be planned until all available photographs from different parts of the world have been collected, as the scope of the exhibition will depend largely on how penetrating and revealing the qualities presented by the photographs are, and how incisively they meet the challenge of the theme.

"If the assembled photographs bring the elements of this theme together, they will demonstrate that the art of photography is a dynamic process for giving form to ideas. This exhibition will then be created in a passionate spirit of devoted love and faith in man. Nothing short of that will do."

-----Edward Steichen

STIPULATIONS FOR SUBMITTING PHOTOGRAPHS

1. THE FAMILY OF MAN exhibition is open to all photographers, amateur and professional.
2. Send contact prints (except 35mm.) or proof enlargements not larger than 8 by 10 inches (24 by 30 centimeters).
3. Do not send negatives.
4. Please send all prints unmounted.
5. Published or unpublished photographs acceptable.
6. Prints cannot be returned.
7. Since this is an exhibition, no payment will be made or prizes awarded for any photographs.
8. Please put your name and address on the back of each photograph.
9. No photographs will be reproduced in connection with this exhibition without express permission of the photographer.
10. Receipt of all photographs will be acknowledged by the Museum of Modern Art.
11. Closing date: All photographs must be received by the Museum of Modern Art by April 10, 1954.

When the final selections for the exhibitions have been made, the photographers will be asked for the necessary exhibition prints or the loan of their negatives when large mural size prints are required.

Please do not write requesting additional details. Unfortunately, we cannot undertake to acknowledge such letters, as this statement contains all necessary and available information.

ADDRESS: THE FAMILY OF MAN Exhibition, Museum of Modern Art
P. O. Box #368, Radio City Post Office
New York 19, N. Y., U. S. A.