

The Museum of Modern Art

West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coinciding with The Museum of Modern Art's publication of THE HAMPTON ALBUM*, 43 platinum prints from the original album by Frances Benjamin Johnston are currently on view in the Edward Steichen Photography Center of the Museum. The Museum's book, with an introduction by Lincoln Kirstein, brings to the public a group of long-forgotten photographs recording the activities of Negro and Indian students at the Hampton Institute in Virginia at the turn of the century.

Mr. Kirstein found the leather-bound album containing the platinum prints while browsing in a Washington, D.C. bookstore during World War II. Last year he gave the album to the Museum's Photography Collection. The Museum's publication reproduces these platinum prints in gravure, retaining the subtle tonal gradations of the originals.

The Hampton Institute had been educating Negro and Indian students for 31 years when Frances Benjamin Johnston was commissioned to photograph it in 1899 and 1900 for the Paris Centennial Exposition of 1900. The pictures document the full range of activities at the school, from academic and trade classes to recreation. Among the prints on view are a series of before and after contrasts, vividly showing the changes which Hampton strived to make in the condition of the Negro. In his introduction to THE HAMPTON ALBUM, Mr. Kirstein notes: "It is a measure of Miss Johnston's vision that she enables us to spy upon so many anonymous, long vanished individuals, who still so vividly speak to us in public of their proper longings for a shared social paradise."

The exhibition will be on view in the Edward Steichen Photography Center through February.

*THE HAMPTON ALBUM, with an introduction by Lincoln Kirstein. 56 pages, 44 illustrations. Paperbound \$1.95; paper over boards \$2.95. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, hardbound distributed by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

Review copies, photographs, additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Patricia Kaplan, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.