

The Museum of Modern Art

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK COHEN

The first New York exhibition of photographs by 29-year-old Mark Cohen will be on view from March 21 through May 27 at The Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition includes 48 photographs, selected and installed by Dennis Longwell, Assistant Curator of Photography, all made in and around Wilkes-Barre, a flood-prone coal-mining town in northeastern Pennsylvania where Cohen lives.

"Cohen's achievement," according to Dennis Longwell, "has been to create from the 'fact' of a Wilkes-Barre the 'reality' of an Illyria -- a new world existing solely in the tonalities of these photographic pictures." Longwell links Cohen's work with a sensibility exemplified by photographers such as Jacques Lartigue-- romantic, intuitive, irreverent, and technically innovative. Like Lartigue, and the tradition he represents, Cohen transmutes the physical world into an impalpable, mythic one. Everyday events, shorn of their context, become lyrical, mysterious, enigmatic: "Illumined by twin suns, it [the world of Cohen's pictures] is furnished with quiet gardens and people with beautiful maidens and entranced princes. It is blessed with dogs. Quite simply, this is a world of natural goodness, bounty, mystery and noble aspiration."

Mark Cohen is a commercial photographer specializing in children's portraits, wedding albums, and advertising brochures. He was first exhibited at the Museum in "Recent Acquisitions" in 1970 and was a Guggenheim Fellow in 1971-72. He teaches photography at King's College and Wilkes College in his home town.

The Museum of Modern Art gratefully acknowledges the support of its exhibition program by the New York State Council on the Arts.

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