

The Museum of Modern Art

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PHOTOGRAPHY: RECENT ACQUISITIONS 1974 -- 1976

Stereo view photographs of Teddy Roosevelt's campaign, a 19th century albumen print more than 6 feet long of a Chinese fortress, and an infrared process print by a contemporary American photographer are among the diverse works included in an exhibition of photographs and photographic objects which will open at The Museum of Modern Art on May 14. The 80 works on view have been selected from approximately 3,000 photographs acquired by the Department of Photography since 1974.

Directed by Dennis Longwell, Assistant Curator of Photography, the exhibition will include representative works from every period in photographic history -- from calotypes made in the 1840's by W. H. Fox Talbot, one of the inventors of photography, to photographs by young American and European artists. Mr. Longwell notes that "the restricted sampling shown can only begin to suggest the vigor, intelligence and excellence embodied in contemporary photography."

Among the earliest works shown is a rare book of photographs, Egypt & Palestine, taken by Francis Frith in the 1850's. Also from this early period is one of the most impressive works in the collection -- an albumen print of a Chinese fortress taken in 1860 by Felice Beato, which measures more than six feet by eight inches.

Produced at the turn of the century are a diverse group of photographic books with original prints that have become a valuable part of the Museum's collection. Included are a documentation of the floods in Kashiawar, India of 1899, as well as a collection of photogravures in a book by Thomas Annan entitled Old Closes and Streets of Glasgow.

A unique album of original photographs, April 12, 1945, taken by Wayne Miller during the burial services for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is a touching documentation of the grief-stricken crowd witnessing that funeral.

Concluding the exhibition are recent works by living photographers from the United States and Europe.

Included are an untitled photograph by Abigail Perlmutter of Florida who uses modern infrared film processes to achieve a stark, disquieting quality in her work; a contemporary still life in brilliant color, Breakfast, Trail's End Restaurant, Kanab, Utah, taken by Stephen Shore; and a fascinating set of eleven photographs from the series Eight Months of Daily Self-Portraits by Melissa Shook.

The exhibition will be on view until July 13.

Additional information and photographs available from Lisa Frigand, Assistant, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7504; 7501.
