

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

NEWLY PURCHASED WORK BY 51 AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS TO BE EXHIBITED

More than 100 prints made by 51 younger American photographers and recently acquired by the Museum will be put on exhibition beginning August 2 on the first floor of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, where it will be on view through September 17. The photographs, all of them recent, include work of photographers being shown for the first time as well as work by photographers who have made outstanding contributions to Museum exhibitions of the past 3 years. The wide range of the prints, which come from all parts of the country, includes photograms, abstractions, documentary work, f-64 school, landscapes, architectural studies, illustrations and photo-journalism; and also some color prints.

The accent of the exhibition is on youth: therefore Edward Steichen, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, has delegated the installation of the show to his young assistant, Miss Dee Knapp.

The youngest exhibitor, Edward Wallowitch, aged 18, will have 3 prints in the show, 2 of which were made with a Brownie box reflex when he was 17 and attending the Philadelphia high school where he just graduated.

An interesting series in color, which has never been reproduced, was done by Carter to show the U.N. building in the process of construction. Harry Callahan will show 3 prints taken from a series of 15 that are to be sent on tour by the Museum's Circulating Exhibitions Department at the close of this show. Photographs by Charles Eames, creator of the Eames chairs, indicate his strong sense of pattern and design. Homer Page will be represented with some work done recently on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Fred Plaut will show intimate portrait studies of Albert Sweitzer playing the organ in various New York churches when he came to this country last year for the Aspen Goethe festival. Tosh Matsumoto's 35 mm. shots have great technical precision and an Oriental sense of design, and at the same time convey an unusually sensitive human quality. Photographs from Roman Vishniac's deeply moving documentary book "Polish Jews" are included.

MoMA Press Release

A newcomer to Museum exhibitions is Robert Frank who has contributed unusual street scenes of Paris, Washington and New York. Also new are Estelle Smilowitz' visual experiments done in Chicago, Patricia Harris' f-64 California landscapes, and Florence Homolka's portraits, also done in California.

All the prints to be shown have recently been purchased for the Department of Photography's Study Collection. This collection is valuable for editors, for other museums and for many research projects, and it also enables the Museum to have on hand for study purposes representative work by younger photographers. In determining this policy Edward Steichen follows a tradition from which he benefited when he was early encouraged by Alfred Stieglitz. Their first meeting is described in the following excerpt from an article by Charles H. Caffin in The Century Magazine for February 1908:

It was in 1900 that he [Steichen] made his appearance in the New York Camera Club, seeking an interview with Stieglitz. The latter was arranging an exhibition of prints, when a tall young man with a large portfolio under his arm entered the room and announced that he was Steichen. Had Mr. Stieglitz time to look over the contents of his portfolio?.... Mr. Stieglitz said he had. The portfolio held photographs, mostly platinum-prints, sketches in oil and in water-color, lithographs, pen-and-ink, pencil, and charcoal drawings. Stieglitz, recalling the incident, says that he was amazed at the variety and vigor of artistic intention that they revealed.

"Are they for sale?" he asked.

The question was received with a laugh. "Why, nobody wants to buy them."

"I'll buy some," was the rejoinder. "What price?"

The young man shrugged his broad shoulders. "I don't know," he said.

"Well," continued Stieglitz, "you don't look any too rich. I'll give you five dollars apiece, and rob you at that."

To Steichen, at the time, it did not seem like robbery; and, in fact, the prints were bought for the collection that Stieglitz is making not for himself, but for eventual presentation to some museum.

The purchases have been made possible by a donation from Mrs. Charles J. Liebman in conformity with her belief in the importance of supporting new artists. Steichen himself has augmented the fund by turning over to it his 1949 U.S. Camera Achievement Award.

(List of photographers attached)

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHERS WHOSE WORK IS INCLUDED IN EXHIBITION OF NEWLY
PURCHASED WORK BY 51 AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS

August 2 - September 17

Museum of Modern Art

Joseph Bellanca

Lou Bernstein

H. Bowden

Leo Bukzin

Harry Callahan

Carter

Allen Downs

Charles Eames

Morris Engel

Elliott Erwitt

Louis Faurer

Robert Frank

Alfred Gescheidt

Bob Harrah

Patricia Harris

William Heick

Florence Homolka

Morris Huberland

Lotte Jacobi

Nat Jaffee

Robert Janssen

Simpson Kalisher

Kennedy and Everritt

Lisa Larsen

Arthur Leipzig

Jerome Liebling

Tosh Matsumoto

Arthur Nakamichi

Ruth Orkin

Homer Page

Marian Palfi

Alan Palmer

Irving Penn

Fred Plaut

Martha Roberts

Arnold Sadow

Peter Sekaer

Robert Sheehan

Musya S. Sheeler

Arthur Siegel

Arthur Sinsabaugh

Aaron Siskind

Estelle Smilowitz

Frederick Sommer

V. and K. Telberg

David Vestal

Roman Vishniac

Edward Wallowitch

Todd Webb

R.J. Witt

Jasper Wood