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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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WORK BY AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS NEW TO THE MUSEUM TO BE SHOWN

An exhibition of work by about 25 young American photographers who have never before been shown at the Museum of Modern Art will open on February 26 under the title "Always the Young Strangers" - the Carl Sandburg title is used in honor of this well-known author's 75th birthday. The exhibition, which will include from 3 to 6 prints by each photographer, has been organized by Edward Steichen, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography; it will remain on view in a first floor gallery through April 1st. Most of the prints have been acquired by the Department of Photography during the past 3 years. The exhibition is to be installed by Florence Bezruczyk, a young member of the Museum's staff.

The exhibition will include both color and black and white, prints and transparencies. Six prints to be shown are by a guest exhibitor, Gitel Steed, an anthropologist who is Director of Columbia University Research in a Contemporary India Field Project. She recently spent 2 years studying a Hindu village in Gujarat, Bombay Presidency, and a Muslim village in the United Provinces. Here she photographed for purposes of anthropological records a remarkable series on the people of the villages that ranks, in the opinion of the Department, with first-rate human interpretations by professional photographers.

Youngest photographer to be represented is Ken Wittenberg who will show an extraordinarily sensitive group of photographs of children, taken last year when he was 17 years old. Saul Leiter will show several prints of a surrealist nature. A holiday outing of young people from West 102nd Street, New York, has been recorded by David Linton. Patterns and designs play a major role in some striking photographs of chair backs by Mary Ann Dorr, and in a series of high-keyed prints of television antennae and billboards by Mr. Shirley Burden.

Roy de Carava will show 5 prints from a large series on his people in Harlem made last year on a Guggenheim Fellowship. Yasuhiro Ishimoto

has printed a long panel of people's legs standing at hot dog stands. Fantastic shadows of people on the street are the theme of Marvin Newman's photographs.

A group of striking abstractions in 35 mm. color transparencies is contributed by R.E. Christie.

Mr. Steichen, in commenting on the exhibition, says:

"Always the Young Strangers" - photographs assembled by the Department since 1950 - presents samplings from the beginning of a new decade in photography. The exhibition is almost as varied in its aspects as the range of the medium itself. The refusal of the preceding decade to be bound to any group or "ism" still holds; however, the dominant tendency of the great majority of our younger photographers today is towards photo-journalism; and in the aggregate, most such photography does not get beyond casual or trite "snap-shottery."

While there are few signs of either intentional or subconscious revolt in the photographs assembled here, the reiteration or the re-statements found here are those born of intelligent and sensitive understanding or individuality. Imagination and fantasy - qualities largely in evidence here - are not the "going-haywire" kind, but are based on physical realities, whether in the butterfly and flower-like shadows of metal chairs, the pattern of television antennae, or the dream-like wistful sweetness of children or their impish deviltry. The various images of children seem to be blessed with a new warmth of understanding in the work by these young strangers.

While there is a lack of appreciation of the advantages inherent in a wide range of technical skills, this is preferable to technical virtuosity used as an end instead of a means.