

The Museum of Modern Art

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NEW STANDPOINTS: PHOTOGRAPHY 1940-1955, an exhibition of 57 documentary photographs by 11 photographers, is on view in The Museum of Modern Art's Edward Steichen Photography Center through April 30, 1978. The exhibition, containing rarely exhibited works by artists such as Louis Faurer, Sid Grossman, Robert Frank, Leon Levinstein, Helen Levitt, and Lisette Model, is directed by Peter Collins, Curatorial Intern, Department of Photography.

Peter Collins states that "the common denominator among the 11 photographers shown here is their extension of a style that flourished in the 1930's and was loosely labeled documentary." NEW STANDPOINTS: PHOTOGRAPHY 1940-1955 illustrates the shift in emphasis in documentary photography from the essentially socio-political motivation of the 30's to a clearer understanding of the formal basis of the photograph. "Young photographers," Collins continues, "examining the work of the preceeding generation found in the best of it, especially in the work of Walker Evans and Cartier-Bresson, an ever-present vitality. In a Walker Evans interior, a calendar on a wall could lock the content of a picture to a specific day in history, but it was the perfect juxtaposition of forms within the frame itself which signified the present tense.

"I once asked the photographer Louis Faurer how the work of these two photographers had affected him. Of Evans he said that the work exhibited a perfect truthfulness and that the interesting thing about Bresson was that he came so close to recognizing the subconscious. It seemed to me at the time that in terms of Faurer's own work those were two ways of saying the same thing. It was the personal response to the world that was gaining primacy."

(more)

Other photographers represented in NEW STANDPOINTS: PHOTOGRAPHY 1940-1955 are Lou Stoumen, Walker Evans, Homer Page, Ted Croner, and Max Yavno.

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