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The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

NO. 35
FOR RELEASE:

JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON: PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON TO BE PRESENTED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Avedon photographed his father on many different occasions during the last six years up until the week of his father's death on September 1, 1973, just before his 84th birthday. This exhibition, designed by Marvin Israel, consists of eight pictures chosen from those sittings.

John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography, says, "Photographic portraiture, pursued with the high ambition that tradition suggests, is an enormously difficult art. It is most difficult when the photographer and the subject know each other well; in such cases each recognizes and nullifies the other's little tricks of style -- the stuff of our personae. In these circumstances only acceptance and trust can succeed. Richard Avedon's portraits of his father are the deeply moving record of such a success."

Avedon, in speaking of this exhibition, said recently, "At first my father agreed to let me photograph him but I think after a while he began to want me to. He started to rely on it, as I did, because it was a way we had of forcing each other to recognize what we were. I photographed him many times during the last year of his life but I didn't really look at the pictures until after he died. They seem now, out of the context of those moments, completely independent of the experience of taking them. They exist on their own. Whatever happened between us was important to us but it is not important to the pictures. What is in them is self-contained and, in some strange way, free of us both."

Richard Avedon was born in New York City in 1923. He served as a photographer

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PRESS PREVIEW: Tuesday, April 30 - 11am-4pm

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in the Merchant Marine during World War II and later studied and worked with Alexey Brodovitch. He became a staff photographer for Harper's Bazaar in 1945 until 1965 when he joined Vogue. He has published two books of his photographic portraits: "Observations" with text by Truman Capote and "Nothing Personal" with text by James Baldwin. He edited Jacques Henri Lartigue's "Diary of a Century" and last year published a book of his photographs of The Manhattan Project's production of "Alice in Wonderland," with text by Doon Arbus.

In 1970, there was a retrospective exhibition of his portraits at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. This is his first exhibition in New York.

- 1909 Family develops family
- 1910 First by Jewish Civil War Association (Brooklyn, with other artists, William and Robert)
- 1911 Returns to family in Grand Street Avenue 7-8, 191 on 11th and 12th Streets
- 1912 Graduating as one of the first students accepted at Townsend Harris High School
- 1913 Enters College of the City of New York
- 1914 Receives 1914 Fellowship Foundation and qualifies as teacher
- 1915 Works as substitute teacher at 7-8, 19 in Hall's classroom. Assigned as permanent teacher at 7-8, 19 in the Bronx
- 1916 Reestablished Brodovitch's flower shop at 112th Street and Broadway with another man
- 1917 Reestablished Brodovitch's Fifth Avenue, a woman's specialty shop, at 11th Street and 11th Avenue with another man
- 1918 Reestablished Brodovitch's flower shop, January 1918, moved to 11th Street and 11th Avenue

(more)

 Photographs and additional material available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director,
 Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St.,
 New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7501; 956-7504.

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May 1 - June 16, 1974

Wall Label

Biography of Richard Avedon's Father

Jacob Israel Avedon

Father: Israel Avedon Mother: Mathilda Sater

Siblings: Dora, William, Ida, Samuel

1889 Born in Lomzha, Province of Grodna, Russia, October 21st

1890 Father emigrates to America

1891 Mother and family leave for America on Nord Deutscher Lloyd
Line boarding at Hamburg, Germany to join father at 413
Grand Street, New York City

1893 Father deserts family

1894 Sent to Jewish Child Care Association Orphanage, with older
brothers, William and Samuel

1898 Returns to family on Grand Street
Attends P.S. 192 on Ridge and Broome Streets

1902 Graduates as one of three students accepted at Townsend
Harris High School

1905 Enters College of the City of New York

1909 Passes State Pedagogy Examination and qualifies as teacher

1910 Works as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 in Hell's Kitchen
Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 43 in the Bronx

1913 Establishes Avedon's Blouse Shop at 110th Street and Broadway,
with brother Sam

1917 Establishes Avedon's Fifth Avenue, a woman's speciality shop,
at 39th Street and Fifth Avenue with brother Sam

1922 Marries Anna Polansky, January 28th
Moves to 142 West 87th Street

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- 1925 Daughter, Louise, born April 2nd
- 1926 Moves to Villa Place, Cedarhurst, Long Island with family
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Sells insurance for Connecticut Mutual
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- 1932 Becomes buyer for the Tailored Woman, 57th Street and Fifth Avenue
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Commutes weekly from home to Woonsocket, Rhode Island
- 1951 Suffers heart attack
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Moves to Tamiami Circle, Sarasota, Florida
Sells mutual funds for Waddell & Reed
- 1956 Takes Florida Stock Broker Test and passes first in state
Becomes broker for Jules Bache & Company
- 1957 Divorces wife, Anna, June 7th
- 1959 Meets Eleanor Sorenson
- 1968 Daughter, Louise, dies at Rockland State Hospital, New York, January 18th
Suffers second heart attack, November 30th
- 1969 Marries Eleanor Sorenson, March 29th
Moves to 280 Golden Gate Point, Sarasota, Florida
- 1970 Establishes real estate partnership with son, Richard, to purchase Havana Heights property
- 1972 Enters Sarasota Memorial Hospital for operation on primary cancer of the liver, December 16th
Operation unsuccessful
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- 1973 Dies, Sarasota Memorial Hospital, September 1st

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Irving Penn

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 13-NOVEMBER 27, 1984

No.22
For Immediate Release

MAJOR IRVING PENN RETROSPECTIVE TO OPEN AT
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ON SEPTEMBER 13

The first major retrospective of the work of Irving Penn in more than twenty years will open at The Museum of Modern Art on September 13, 1984. The exhibition surveys Penn's long career, spanning the past four decades, and features his work in portraiture, fashion, advertising, the nude, ethnographic subjects and still life, as well as a selection of Penn's early, unpublished photographs. Consisting of approximately 200 color and black and white photographs, the exhibition is being organized by John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition is made possible by a generous grant from SCM Corporation, with additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. IRVING PENN is the sixth exhibition SCM Corporation has sponsored at The Museum of Modern Art in the past decade.

Irving Penn has long been recognized as one of the world's most distinguished practitioners of editorial, advertising and fashion photography. Since his photographs first began to appear regularly in Vogue magazine in the 1940s, his work has been characterized by a technical elegance, a demanding standard of style, and a sensitivity to the quality of light that have influenced a generation of photographers.

Born in 1917 in Plainfield, New Jersey, Penn studied design at the Philadelphia Museum School of Art from 1934 until 1938. For the next three years he worked as a graphic designer in New York, followed by a year spent painting in Mexico. Upon his return to New York City, Penn went to work for Alexander Liberman, the art director at Vogue magazine. Penn produced his first Vogue cover, a photographic still life, in 1943, and his photographs have continued to appear editorially

This exhibition has been made possible by a generous grant from SCM Corporation.
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in Vogue and several other publications since that time. He has also photographed for various commercial clients in America and abroad since 1951.

John Szarkowski notes that it was in the area of still life and portraiture that "Penn first found full confidence in his own intuitions. His memorable double portrait of George Jean Nathan and H.L. Mencken was made in 1947, as was his riotous, joyful Still Life with Watermelon, one of the triumphs of color photography." With the support and influence of Vogue, Penn built up an impressive roster of portrait subjects, including Joan Miró, Jean Cocteau, Balthus, and André Derain. In contrast to the highly ornamental style of fashion magazines of the day, Penn's early portraits are set in anonymous studios, sparsely furnished, and free of reference to the sitter's occupation or habitual environment. By the 1950s, even this undefined space disappears, leaving no environment at all, "only a wordless conversation between the photographer and the sitter," according to Mr. Szarkowski.

This same concentration and economy of vision characterizes Penn's fashion pictures, beginning with his notable series of photographs of the 1950 Paris collections. Unlike the elaborate orchestration of earlier fashion pictures-- by de Meyer, Beaton, and others--in which the dress and its model appear to act out a role, Penn's 1950 pictures ignore plots and dream worlds. "They are not stories, but simply pictures," writes Mr. Szarkowski.

As haute couture declined in the 1950s, Penn found a substitute in "the even more passionate and costly pursuit of style that had survived in the corners of the world not yet completely absorbed by the West." In Peru, West Africa, Nepal, Morocco and other exotic locales, Penn photographed people who had not yet learned to be embarrassed by the art of adornment. Characteristically, Penn photographed them in an abstract, neutral space, revealing nothing of the circumstances of their lives beyond their sense of style.

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The omnipresence of decay is a recurring motif in Penn's work. Ravelled carpet, lipstick on a dead cigarette butt, flies, stains, etc. appear frequently in his otherwise elegant compositions. A still life is compromised by the stain of spilled coffee or by a rank ashtray.

Penn's Cigarette series in the early seventies heralded a change in his treatment of this motif. The "decay"--the discarded cigarette--now becomes the central subject, but is given an unequivocal nobility and elegance. The Cigarette pictures also represent a shift of interest from the printed page as end product to the expressive possibilities of the photographic print. Through long, meticulous experiment he perfected a command of platinum printing to bring an even greater richness and clarity to his increasingly personal work.

For most of his career, between public editorial projects and private experiments and portraits of the famous, Penn has also undertaken commercial photography--advertisements for perfume, shoes, cosmetics and other consumer products. In this often more restrictive medium, Mr. Szarkowski notes, "Penn's work elevates itself and its role by virtue of its great refinement of craft. The grace, wit, and inventiveness of his patternmaking, the lively and surprising elegance of his line, and his sensitivity to the character, the idiosyncratic humors of light, make Penn's pictures, even the slighter ones, a pleasure for our eyes."

At 67, Penn's powers seem undiminished, Mr. Szarkowski observes, and it is reasonable to assume his work will "continue to delight and challenge us. It demonstrates for photography in our time what must be relearned by most arts in most times: that the apparently inconsequential can be redeemed by artistic seriousness; that a plain vocabulary is the most demanding; that high craft is the just desert not only of monuments and ceremonial vessels, but of the ordinary baggage of our lives."

After closing at The Museum of Modern Art on November 27, IRVING PENN will travel to: Milwaukee Art Museum, July 12 - September 1, 1985; Detroit Institute

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of Arts, September 24 - November 24, 1985; University Art Museum, University of California at Berkeley, January 20 - March 16, 1986; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., April 19 - June 8, 1986; and Fort Worth Art Museum, June 29 - August 31, 1986. The exhibition will circulate abroad under the auspices of The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum is publishing Irving Penn, the first comprehensive volume of Penn's work since Moments Preserved (1960). In addition to an essay by John Szarkowski, which traces Penn's career from its art school beginnings in the 1930s to the provocative work of recent years, this 216-page catalog will contain 191 color and black and white illustrations. A cloth-bound edition of the book will be distributed for the Museum by New York Graphic Society Books/Little, Brown and Company, Boston at \$60; a paperbound version will be available only at the exhibition or by direct order from the Museum, at \$19.95 until November 30, 1984; \$25 thereafter.

August 1984

For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director, or Debra Greenberg, Senior Press Officer, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. (212) 708-9750

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Richard Avedon was born in New York City in 1923. He served as a photographer

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May 1 - June 16, 1974

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Siblings: Dora, William, Ida, Samuel

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JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON: PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON

May 1 - June 16, 1974

Wall Label

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Father: Israel Avedon Mother: Mathilda Sater

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PRESS PREVIEW: Tuesday, April 30 - 11am-4pm

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Moves to 142 West 87th Street

(more)

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- 1923 Son, Richard, born May 15th
- 1925 Daughter, Louise, born April 2nd
- 1926 Moves to Villa Place, Cedarhurst, Long Island with family
- 1930 Closes Avedon's Fifth Avenue due to bankruptcy
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- 1937 Establishes Avedon's Woonsocket, a woman's dress shop
Commutes weekly from home to Woonsocket, Rhode Island
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- 1952 Separates from wife, Anna
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- 1956 Takes Florida Stock Broker Test and passes first in state
Becomes broker for Jules Bache & Company
- 1957 Divorces wife, Anna, June 7th
- 1959 Meets Eleanor Sorenson
- 1968 Daughter, Louise, dies at Rockland State Hospital, New York, January 18th
Suffers second heart attack, November 30th
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Operation unsuccessful
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The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

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FOR RELEASE:

JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON: PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON
TO BE PRESENTED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Avedon photographed his father on many different occasions during the last six years up until the week of his father's death on September 1, 1973, just before his 84th birthday. This exhibition, designed by Marvin Israel, consists of eight pictures chosen from those sittings.

John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography, says, "Photographic portraiture, pursued with the high ambition that tradition suggests, is an enormously difficult art. It is most difficult when the photographer and the subject know each other well; in such cases each recognizes and nullifies the other's little tricks of style -- the stuff of our personae. In these circumstances only acceptance and trust can succeed. Richard Avedon's portraits of his father are the deeply moving record of such a success."

Avedon, in speaking of this exhibition, said recently, "At first my father agreed to let me photograph him but I think after a while he began to want me to. He started to rely on it, as I did, because it was a way we had of forcing each other to recognize what we were. I photographed him many times during the last year of his life but I didn't really look at the pictures until after he died. They seem now, out of the context of those moments, completely independent of the experience of taking them. They exist on their own. Whatever happened between us was important to us but it is not important to the pictures. What is in them is self-contained and, in some strange way, free of us both."

Richard Avedon was born in New York City in 1923. He served as a photographer

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PRESS PREVIEW: Tuesday, April 30 - 11am-4pm

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May 1 - June 16, 1974

Wall Label

Biography of Richard Avedon's Father

Jacob Israel Avedon

Father: Israel Avedon Mother: Mathilda Sater

Siblings: Dora, William, Ida, Samuel

- 1889 Born in Lomzha, Province of Grodna, Russia, October 21st
- 1890 Father emigrates to America
- 1891 Mother and family leave for America on Nord Deutscher Lloyd
Line boarding at Hamburg, Germany to join father at 413
Grand Street, New York City
- 1893 Father deserts family
- 1894 Sent to Jewish Child Care Association Orphanage, with older
brothers, William and Samuel
- 1898 Returns to family on Grand Street
Attends P.S. 192 on Ridge and Broome Streets
- 1902 Graduates as one of three students accepted at Townsend
Harris High School
- 1905 Enters College of the City of New York
- 1909 Passes State Pedagogy Examination and qualifies as teacher
- 1910 Works as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 in Hell's Kitchen
Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 43 in the Bronx
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In 1970, there was a retrospective exhibition of his portraits at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. This is his first exhibition in New York.

- 1941 Father's portrait painted
- 1944 Work as Jewish Child War Administration employee, with other brothers, William and Louis
- 1948 Released by family on Grand Street
- 1948 Attended P.S. 121 on Grand St. between Avenue
- 1952 Graduated as one of three students accepted at Brooklyn College High School
- 1954 Entered College of the City of New York
- 1956 Passed State Pedagogy Examination and qualified as teacher
- 1956 Worked as substitute teacher at P.S. 121 in Ball's Blaine
- Designed as permanent teacher at P.S. 121 in the Bronx
- 1958 Established Brooklyn's Elmer Grey at 125th Street and Broadway with Wesley Lee
- 1961 Established Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue, a school's speciality at 125th Street and Fifth Avenue with Wesley Lee

(more)

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May 1 - June 16, 1974

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Father: Israel Avedon Mother: Mathilda Sater

Siblings: Dora, William, Ida, Samuel

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- 1890 Father emigrates to America
- 1891 Mother and family leave for America on Nord Deutscher Lloyd
Line boarding at Hamburg, Germany to join father at 413
Grand Street, New York City
- 1893 Father deserts family
- 1894 Sent to Jewish Child Care Association Orphanage, with older
brothers, William and Samuel
- 1898 Returns to family on Grand Street
Attends P.S. 192 on Ridge and Broome Streets
- 1902 Graduates as one of three students accepted at Townsend
Harris High School
- 1905 Enters College of the City of New York
- 1909 Passes State Pedagogy Examination and qualifies as teacher
- 1910 Works as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 in Hell's Kitchen
Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 43 in the Bronx
- 1913 Establishes Avedon's Blouse Shop at 110th Street and Broadway,
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- 1917 Establishes Avedon's Fifth Avenue, a woman's speciality shop,
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- 1922 Marries Anna Polansky, January 28th
Moves to 142 West 87th Street

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- 1930 Closes Avedon's Fifth Avenue due to bankruptcy
Sells insurance for Connecticut Mutual
- 1931 Returns with family to New York City to live at 16 East 98th Street
- 1932 Becomes buyer for the Tailored Woman, 57th Street and Fifth Avenue
- 1934 Moves to 55 East 86th Street with family
- 1937 Establishes Avedon's Woonsocket, a woman's dress shop
Commutes weekly from home to Woonsocket, Rhode Island
- 1951 Suffers heart attack
- 1952 Separates from wife, Anna
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1893 Father's death
1904 Sent to Jewish Child Care Association Orphanage, with other orphans, William and Samuel
1905 Returned to Baltimore Street
Assigned P.M. 10 to 12:30 and 12:30 to 2:00
1907 Continued as one of three students accepted at Townsend Harris High School
1908 Entered College of the City of New York
1909 Passed State Pedagogy Examination and qualified as teacher
1910 Worked as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 to Bell's building. Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 17 to the Bronx
1912 Established Brooklyn's oldest High in 1912 Street and Broadway, with brother Sam
1915 Established Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue, a woman's specialty at 10th Avenue and 41st Avenue with brother Sam
1916 Working Area Pedagogy, January 1916

(more)

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1898 Returns to family on Grand Street
Attends P.S. 192 on Ridge and Broome Streets

1902 Graduates as one of three students accepted at Townsend
Harris High School

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- 1900 Father's American family
- 1904 Tour in Jewish Child Care Association, with other workers, William and Daniel
- 1910 Returns to family on Grand Street, Attends P.S. 107 on Ridge and Irving Streets
- 1917 Graduate as one of three students accepted at Townsend Harris High School
- 1918 Attends College of the City of New York
- 1919 Passes State Pedagogy Examination and qualifies as teacher
- 1920 Works as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 on Wall's Mission. Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 42 on the Lower East
- 1921 Establishes Arnold's Blouse Shop at 11th Street and Broadway, with brother Sam
- 1922 Establishes Arnold's Fifth Avenue, a women's accessory shop, at 5th Street and Fifth Avenue with brother Sam
- 1923 Works as Sales Representative, January 1924. Moves to 1st West 42nd Street

(more)

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Avedon photographed his father on many different occasions during the last six years up until the week of his father's death on September 1, 1973, just before his 84th birthday. This exhibition, designed by Marvin Israel, consists of eight pictures chosen from those sittings.

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Avedon, in speaking of this exhibition, said recently, "At first my father agreed to let me photograph him but I think after a while he began to want me to. He started to rely on it, as I did, because it was a way we had of forcing each other to recognize what we were. I photographed him many times during the last year of his life but I didn't really look at the pictures until after he died. They seem now, out of the context of those moments, completely independent of the experience of taking them. They exist on their own. Whatever happened between us was important to us but it is not important to the pictures. What is in them is self-contained and, in some strange way, free of us both."

Richard Avedon was born in New York City in 1923. He served as a photographer

(more)

PRESS PREVIEW: Tuesday, April 30 - 11am-4pm

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in the Merchant Marine during World War II and later studied and worked with Alexey Brodovitch. He became a staff photographer for Harper's Bazaar in 1945 until 1965 when he joined Vogue. He has published two books of his photographic portraits: "Observations" with text by Truman Capote and "Nothing Personal" with text by James Baldwin. He edited Jacques Henri Lartigue's "Diary of a Century" and last year published a book of his photographs of The Manhattan Project's production of "Alice in Wonderland," with text by Doon Arbus.

In 1970, there was a retrospective exhibition of his portraits at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. This is his first exhibition in New York.

1941 - Working as a photographer, 1941-42, in New York City at 411
Broadway, New York City

1942 - Working as a photographer, 1942-43, in New York City

1943 - Working as a photographer, 1943-44, in New York City, with other
photographers, including the famous

1944 - Working as a photographer, 1944-45, in New York City
at 411 Broadway, New York City

1945 - Working as a photographer, 1945-46, in New York City
at 411 Broadway, New York City

1946 - Working as a photographer, 1946-47, in New York City

1947 - Working as a photographer, 1947-48, in New York City

1948 - Working as a photographer, 1948-49, in New York City
at 411 Broadway, New York City

1949 - Working as a photographer, 1949-50, in New York City
at 411 Broadway, New York City

1950 - Working as a photographer, 1950-51, in New York City
at 411 Broadway, New York City

(more)

Photographs and additional material available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director,
Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St.,
New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7501; 956-7504.

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JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON: PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON

May 1 - June 16, 1974

Wall Label

Biography of Richard Avedon's Father

Jacob Israel Avedon

Father: Israel Avedon Mother: Mathilda Sater

Siblings: Dora, William, Ida, Samuel

- 1889 Born in Lomzha, Province of Grodna, Russia, October 21st
- 1890 Father emigrates to America
- 1891 Mother and family leave for America on Nord Deutscher Lloyd
Line boarding at Hamburg, Germany to join father at 413
Grand Street, New York City
- 1893 Father deserts family
- 1894 Sent to Jewish Child Care Association Orphanage, with older
brothers, William and Samuel
- 1898 Returns to family on Grand Street
Attends P.S. 192 on Ridge and Broome Streets
- 1902 Graduates as one of three students accepted at Townsend
Harris High School
- 1905 Enters College of the City of New York
- 1909 Passes State Pedagogy Examination and qualifies as teacher
- 1910 Works as substitute teacher at P.S. 17 in Hell's Kitchen
Assigned as permanent teacher at P.S. 43 in the Bronx
- 1913 Establishes Avedon's Blouse Shop at 110th Street and Broadway,
with brother Sam
- 1917 Establishes Avedon's Fifth Avenue, a woman's speciality shop,
at 39th Street and Fifth Avenue with brother Sam
- 1922 Marries Anna Polansky, January 28th
Moves to 142 West 87th Street

(more)

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- 1923 Son, Richard, born May 15th
- 1925 Daughter, Louise, born April 2nd
- 1926 Moves to Villa Place, Cedarhurst, Long Island with family
- 1930 Closes Avedon's Fifth Avenue due to bankruptcy
Sells insurance for Connecticut Mutual
- 1931 Returns with family to New York City to live at 16 East 98th Street
- 1932 Becomes buyer for the Tailored Woman, 57th Street and Fifth Avenue
- 1934 Moves to 55 East 86th Street with family
- 1937 Establishes Avedon's Woonsocket, a woman's dress shop
Commutes weekly from home to Woonsocket, Rhode Island
- 1951 Suffers heart attack
- 1952 Separates from wife, Anna
Moves to Tamiami Circle, Sarasota, Florida
Sells mutual funds for Waddell & Reed
- 1956 Takes Florida Stock Broker Test and passes first in state
Becomes broker for Jules Bache & Company
- 1957 Divorces wife, Anna, June 7th
- 1959 Meets Eleanor Sorenson
- 1968 Daughter, Louise, dies at Rockland State Hospital, New York, January 18th
Suffers second heart attack, November 30th
- 1969 Marries Eleanor Sorenson, March 29th
Moves to 280 Golden Gate Point, Sarasota, Florida
- 1970 Establishes real estate partnership with son, Richard, to purchase Havana Heights property
- 1972 Enters Sarasota Memorial Hospital for operation on primary cancer of the liver, December 16th
Operation unsuccessful
Returns home
- 1973 Dies, Sarasota Memorial Hospital, September 1st

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Exh. #1061

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON
May 1 - June, 16, 1974

1. August 9, 1967. photograph, 8 x 9-7/8" (74.348)
2. March 27, 1969. photograph, 14 x 11" (74.349)
3. March 27, 1969. photograph, 14 x 11" (74.350)
4. March 27, 1969. photograph, 47-1/2 x 48-1/8" (74.351)
5. May 15, 1971. photograph, 62 x 51-7/8" (74.352)
6. May 15, 1971. photograph, 41-1/4 x 33-3/8" (74.353)
7. August 25, 1973. photograph, 66-1/2 x 51-3/4" (74.354)
8. August 25, 1973. photograph, 65-7/8 x 51-7/8" (74.355)
9. December 19, 1972. photograph, 78 x 73-7/8" (74.356)

All photographs lent by the photographer.

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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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July 16, 1974

Dear Richard,

I am very tardy in writing to thank you for the pleasure and satisfaction that you have given us by making it possible to do the Jacob Israel Avedon exhibition. I know that very many of the Museum's audience found the exhibition a profound and moving experience, as I did. I am very happy that we were able to play a small part in making this show possible.

In the midst of museum bookkeeping, can I ask you to return the enclosed receipt, indicating that the prints have been returned to you, and return it to the Museum in the enclosed envelope.

New York 10021
It was a pleasure and a privilege.

With all best,

Richard Avedon
75th Street
New York 10021

Jacob Israel
Avedon
photographed by
Richard Avedon

May 1 to June 16
1974

879-6325

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As a detail of museum bookkeeping, can I ask you to sign the enclosed receipt, indicating that the prints have been returned to you, and return it to the Registrar in the enclosed envelope.

New York, New York 10021

Again, it was a pleasure and a privilege.

JS/pw

With all best,

enc.

enc.

Mr. Richard Avedon
407 East 75th Street
New York, New York 10021

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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	MoMA Exhs.	1061.3

July 18, 1974

Dear Dick,

I am enclosing a set of the installation photographs of your show. These are made simply to provide a visual record of the contents of the exhibition, and consequently they are a little flat-footed but I thought you would like a set for your own records.

With all best,

Mr. Richard Avedon
407 East 75th Street
New York, New York 10021

JS/pw

enc.

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Avedon

Photographic portraiture, pursued with the high ambition that tradition suggests, is an enormously difficult art. It is most difficult when the photographer and the subject know each other well; in such cases each recognizes and nullifies the other's little tricks of style - the stuff of our personae. In these circumstances only acceptance and trust can succeed. Richard Avedon's portraits of his father are the deeply moving record of such a success.

Isaac Israel Avedon
1899 - 1973
Photographed by
Richard Avedon

Richard Avedon

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RICHARD AVEDON, 407 EAST 75TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021, 879-6325

February 4, 1974

Dear John:

For any listings:

Jacob Israel Avedon
1889 - 1973
Photographed by
Richard Avedon

Richard Avedon

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Two white copies to be sent to the Registrar 24 hours or more in advance of collection or delivery; 4 days in advance for outgoing foreign shipments.

TO THE REGISTRAR:

Expect ☒ from: Richard Avedon
Collect ☐ from:
Deliver ☐ to:
Release ☐ to:

DATE April 24, 1974

on (date): Monday, April 29, 1974

at (time): 9:30 a.m.

The following objects: (artist, medium, size)

Value if needed for
insurance or invoice

8 large photopanel for exhibition: AVEDON BY AVEDON.

Mr. Avedon will arrive at the 54th Street loading platform and the photopanel will be brought directly to the Northeast Gallery. Also, he will be bringing his own assistants, so no help from the Mezz cu

CUSTOMER'S RECEIPT NUMBER
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TB 21907
TRUCKING DIVISION
Tel. 752-7373



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Date _____

Destination _____

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YOU

LIMIT OF LIABILITY \$50.00
SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS ON
REVERSE SIDE.

PURPOSE Exhibition: AVEDON BY AVEDON

CHARGES

Collect ☐

Prepaid ☐

Bill to:

INSURANCE

Ours ☒

Theirs ☐

Charge to:

VIA

Railway Express ☐

Parcel Post ☐

Air Freight ☐

Ship ☐

Messenger: Ours ☐

Theirs ☐

Truck: Ours ☐

Theirs ☒

Department Registrar

Signed

M. Boudier

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PURPOSE Exhibition: AVEDON BY AVEDON

CHARGES Collect ☐ Prepaid ☐ Bill to:

INSURANCE Ours ☒ Theirs ☐ Charge to:

VIA Railway Express ☐ Parcel Post ☐ Air Freight ☐ Ship ☐

Messenger: Ours ☐ Theirs ☐ Truck: Ours ☐ Theirs ☒

Department Registrar

Signed

M. Boudart

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RICHARD AVEDON, 407 EAST 75TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021. 879-6325

A. South wall (outside-facing corridor)

August 9, 1967

1 print- 10" wide X 8" high

Mr. Dennis Longwell
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
Department of Photography

1 print- 48" wide X 47" high
2 prints- 11" wide X 14" high

22 April 1974

C. West wall

May 15, 1971

1 print- 52" wide X 66" high

Dear Dennis,

1 print- 53" wide X 41" high

D. North wall Enclosed is the information that you requested.

All sizes are inclusive of white borders, as they are
considered as part of the pictures. If I can be of any
assistance, please don't hesitate to call me anytime.

December 19, 1973

1 print- 50" wide X 79" high

Sincerely,

Jeff Niki
Jeff Niki

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	MoMA Exhs.	1061.3

RICHARD AVEDON, 407 EAST 75TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10021. 879-6325

A. South wall (outside-facing corridor)

August 9, 1967

1 print- 10" wide X 8" high

Mr. Dennis Longwell
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
Department of Photography

1 print- 48" wide X 47" high
2 prints- 12" wide X 14" high

22 April 1974

C. West wall

May 15, 1971

1 print- 52" wide X 46" high
1 print- 39" wide X 41" high

Dear Dennis,

D. North wall Enclosed is the information that you requested.

All sizes are inclusive of white borders, as they are considered as part of the pictures. If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to call me anytime.

December 17, 1973

1 print- 40" wide X 79" high

Sincerely,

Jeff Niki
Jeff Niki

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	MoMA Exhs.	1061.3

60

A. South wall (outside-facing corridor)
August 9, 1967 1 print- 10" wide X 8" high 450

B. South wall (inside)
March 27, 1969 1 print- 48" wide X 47" high
2 prints- 11" wide X 14" high 450

C. West wall
May 15, 1971 1 print- 52" wide X 66" high
1 print- 33½" wide X 41" high

D. North wall
August 25, 1973 2 print- 52" wide X 66" High

E. East wall
December 19, 1972 1 print- 74" wide X 79" high

4,500

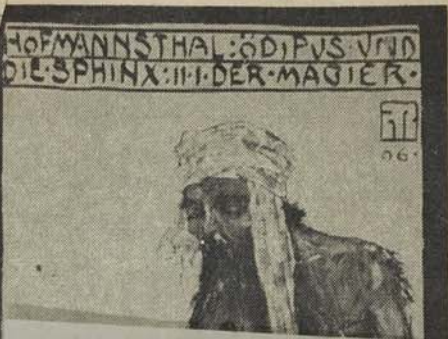
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6/8/74

THE NEW YORK TIMES

HOFMANNSTHAL: OEDIPUS UNTER
DIE SPHINX: IN DER MAGIER.



Memorandum

To John Szarkowski

From Elizabeth Shaw

Date

Re H.Y.

the
now

ART: THE REINHARDT STYLE
And Theater Era Evoked

By HILTON KRAMER

Exhibitions designed to evoke the splendors of distant theatrical achievements are, by their very nature, exercises in magical suggestion. Like archeologists reconstructing the life of a lost civilization, the organizers of such exhibitions must cast their spell by marshaling recovered fragments and elusive myths into a coherent and persuasive image. Everything depends on how vividly a legend can be temporarily invested with an air of reality.

One can hardly ask for a better subject than Max other giants. But though these actors were marvelously projected through Reinhardt's direction without the forfeit of their particular contributions, and though the plays were given fascinating illumination, the whole of Reinhardt's creation was marked by that feeling of opulently sensuous rococo characteristic of the cultivated Middle-European bourgeoisie between 1895 and 1914.

This rococo taste was far less radical than Meyerhold's and offered a less visionary

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
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Art: The Reinhardt Style And Theater Era Evoked

By HILTON KRAMER

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This rococo taste was far less radical than Meyerhold's and offered a less visionary

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Reinhardt, the great producer and director whose birth in Vienna just over 100 years ago—on Sept. 9, 1873—is now being observed, and in "The Theater of Max Reinhardt," the New York Cultural Center has mounted a beguiling retrospective tribute to this versatile genius who not only was a master of dramatic production but also worked in opera and in film in what many still consider the golden age of the modern theater.

What can never be recovered, of course, is the actual experience of the art with which Reinhardt (who died in New York in 1943) dazzled audiences in the theatrical centers of Central Europe from the turn of the century until the nineteen-thirties. But because of the rich visual emphasis that Reinhardt, like his great contemporaries Gordon Craig and Vsevolod Meyerhold, brought to theatrical production, there is a great deal in the way of stage and costume design to give us a sense of what this art consisted of. There are also production photographs, actual costumes, programs, posters, promptbooks and other memorabilia tracing the course of Reinhardt's extraordinary career.

It is out of such materials that Louise Kerz and Gaby Rodgers, the guest curators of the exhibition, have created this absorbing display. Here are Lovis Corinth's pastel sketches for the design of Maurice Maeterlinck's "Pelléas et Mélisande," produced in Berlin in 1903, and Alfred Roller's costume designs for Hugo von Hofmannsthal's "Oedipus and the Sphinx," produced in the same city three years later. Here, too, are designs, sketches and portraits documenting opera productions in Salzburg and New York, and the filming of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in Hollywood. (The movie is being shown at the museum, alternating with a documentary film on Reinhardt, during the run of the exhibition.)

And dominating everything in the exhibition is an abundance of photographs of Reinhardt himself—as actor, director, producer and man of the world. We are literally surrounded by his presence wherever we turn, while over the loudspeaker system we are treated to reminiscences by some of the actors who worked with him.

The particular feeling and the particular style evoked by all this material is best summed up, I think, by Harold Clurman in his new book, "The Divine Pastime."

"Reinhardt worked with first-rate actors," Mr. Clurman writes, "as well as with plays by Shakespeare and

experience than Gordon Craig's theater, but it was a remarkable achievement all the same, and this exhibition certainly succeeds in putting us in touch with some of its lost magic.

The exhibition, organized in conjunction with the Max Reinhardt Archive and Foundation at the State University of New York at Binghamton, remains on view at the Cultural Center, 2 Columbus Circle, through Aug. 4.

Other exhibitions this week include:

Richard Avedon (Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53d Street): The eight oversize photographs of the artist's father, Jacob Israel Avedon, that make up this exhibition constitute a pretty harrowing experience. We are invited to observe, at very close quarters and with an almost radical intimacy, as age and disease (cancer of the liver) overtake the subject, and very little—neither the terror nor the resignation—is spared us. It is not something the more tender-hearted among us will relish.

Yet there is a dignity in this unabashed enterprise that is finally more affecting than the undeniable sense of shock that we feel on our initial encounter. We see the elder Avedon, in all his anguish and resentment, with such clarity and precision that the very absence of evasion softens our horror and transforms our response into something more than morbid curiosity. We feel ourselves, oddly enough, intensely in touch with life—and with a side of life that rarely, if ever, is captured in the art of any medium.

We cannot help being aware, too, of the filial drama that is being enacted in these pictures, and this necessarily adds a further, difficult emotion to the entire experience. The eight pictures were taken between 1967 and 1973, when the elder Avedon succumbed just before his 84th birthday.

There has often been an element of voyeuristic thrill in Richard Avedon's portrait photographs, and for this reason it would be easy—but mistaken, I think—to dismiss this work as yet another exercise in facile sensation. His closest affinity, in these portraits of his father, is actually with the work of the late Diane Arbus, who taught us to look with fresh eyes at many sides of life from which the camera had traditionally remained aloof. Mr. Avedon has brought a similar courage and affection to his "forbidden" subject, and the result will forever alter the way we think about such subjects in the future.

GIVE A HAPPY TIME VIA
THE FRESH AIR FUND.

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Portrait of the portraitist

"I think of myself as an underground artist—no one knows or has seen the kind of work, the portraiture that I've been doing for the past ten years." So says Richard Avedon, the fashion photographer, who adds that he has never been successful by his own standards, and is almost apologetic for his commercial success. For all his acclaim, the fact that Avedon has never up till now had a museum show in New York does rankle and his work is often judged, he feels, by preconceived notions of "the perfumed halls" of women's fashion magazines.

His current show, at the Museum of Modern Art, consists of eight portraits of his father, Jacob Israel Avedon, taken when he was 81 to 87 years old. Jacob Avedon was born in the province of Grodno, Russia, in 1889. After immigrating to this country, he operated a blouse shop and, among other things, worked as a buyer for the Tailored Woman and as a substitute school-teacher in Hell's Kitchen. He died last year.

"That is not my father on the wall," Avedon says. "They are photos of my father. They are the way in which I express my feelings about him, how he expresses his towards me, the way he reacts to being photographed—in the end it's something that has been made. It is not reality."

Avedon, an intense, attractive man of 51, was once high-school poet laureate of New York City and co-editor with James Baldwin of the DeWitt Clinton High School literary magazine. He has been a fashion photographer for such magazines as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* for almost 30 years.

"When I do an advertisement or a page for a fashion magazine," he said, "my function is to sell either the issue or the product. That's what I have to do, and I am good at it. But it's far from the most meaningful part of my creative life."

He sees the great advantage in being a fashion photographer as enabling him to be "my own Ford Foundation, my own Guggenheim grantee," providing him with the only way he can afford to do the work that is most important to him. He notes that Edward Steichen, whom he admires greatly, started as a commercial photographer.

Summer 1974

The Museum of Arts and Sciences Daytona Beach, Fla.

—Presents—

Earl Cunningham

Over 60 years of work

One Man Exhibition

For the first time in years these
paintings are on sale.



Mr. Earl Cunningham

August 4 thru September 5

The Largest One-Man
Primitive Art Exhibit in the United States
Over 200 Paintings

Earl Cunningham Studio 1004 Ponce de Leon Blvd., St. Augustine, Fla.

SUMMER EXHIBITION

Artists
of the
Pacific Northwest

Including works by
Mark Tobey and Morris Graves

311 1/2 Occidental South Seattle 12061 622-2833 Cable POSTGALRY

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Richard Avedon, *Jacob Israel Avedon*, photograph, 1973.

"My fashion work is completely commercial photography—it always has been, and I separate that from the photographs that I am not paid to do. That's the work I'm most interested in."

He considers important his 9-by-35-foot photo tableau of the Mission Council in Saigon, the power structure that directed the United States involvement in Vietnam. (Why so large? "I see the group itself as being of mythical proportions") portraits of Isak Dinesen, Oscar Levant, Andy Warhol, Stravinsky and Eisenhower.

"I work every day. I constantly photograph, the way some people speak. It is the language that I am most comfortable with. You should be reading the photos, or listening to them. There's much more there to learn about me that way than by listening to me."

Review of Richard Avedon exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art on page 126.

Advocates for the Arts

Advocates for the Arts, a new organization seeking to assemble the first national constituency of citizens to support economic, public and legal actions for the arts, has just been established by the Associated Councils of the Arts. Announcement of the project was made by David Rockefeller Jr., acting chairman, and John B. Hightower, president of A.C.A., a national organization of state

and community arts councils formed in 1965.

"It is time someone articulated and acted on the concern we share about the constant plight of our finest arts organizations, the impermanence of our architectural heritage, the deterioration of America's cities, the lack of beauty and order and amenities in our man-made environment," Hightower said.

"Advocates for the Arts will disseminate information on precedent-setting court cases, take legal action when required, research legislation, maintain an advocacy library, engage in public issues that affect the arts and testify before Congressional committees."

Advocates for the Arts plans to work for increased financial support of the arts from Congress and from state and local legislatures. They also plan to work on innovative economic plans to improve the general artistic climate—and to finance theater, museums and art centers through bond issues.

Membership is \$15, which is tax deductible. Additional information can be obtained from the organization at 1564 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10036. ■

WASHINGTON

D.C. roundup

BY BENJAMIN FORGEY

Some recent highlights in the Washington galleries:

Allan Bridge filled several rooms of the Washington Gallery of Art with large color abstractions, and helpfully supplied program notes in a drawing that schematized recent transitions in his work from complex geometries to freer and seemingly more random applications of paint so that each painting could be roughly placed in sequence by the viewer. It was an impressive performance in terms of energy and quantity, although only two or three paintings worked strongly by themselves. Bridge has yet to locate a suitable stopping place for the non-stop express train of his formal investigations; until he does no one will be able to tell for sure how good a painter he really is.

William Christenberry grew up in

Hale County, Alabama, the area made famous by Walker Evans and James Agee in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. The Evans-Agee example stimulated Christenberry, while still an art student, to think through his attitude towards his family, acquaintances, the region and its trees, fields and time-crusted artifacts. Ever since, this setting has been the conscious and unconscious resource for his art.

Christenberry made this point explicit in a recent two-gallery show at Henry and Henri II. One part consisted of seven large paintings that date from the early '60s (none shown publicly before) of places and buildings in rural Alabama depicted in a vigorous Abstract Expressionist brushstroke. A painting of an anonymous country grave (a subject both Christenberry and Evans photographed more than once) is particularly memorable.

In their resourceful though not entirely successful attempt to bring together regional subject matter and an accepted High Art style, these early paintings predicted the future course of Christenberry's art. His latest sculpture, which formed the other part of the show, is a more radical effort to unite Hale County with High Art. Actual artifacts are subjected to minimal manipulation; a rusted sign nailed to the edge of a heavy, weathered beam that cradles a string of Alabama gourds, a "gourd tree" (similar to those made by the region's farmers) hung upside down from the ceiling, his late grandfather's calendar from 1947, tersely telling the family's history, arranged on the gallery wall. The show was an extremely evocative environment, marked throughout by the cleanness of construction and sharpness of sensibility that have become Christenberry's trademarks.

Rebecca Davenport is a young photographer whose technique is exceptional. She loves so well to "get" the textures of things (especially dirt-worn things) that in this show at the Pyramid Gallery of predominantly full-figure works she included an almost *trompe-l'oeil* depiction of a peeling, barren wall. Her typical subjects, however, are people (frequently poor hill-country whites) and things in front of such walls. The objectivity of Davenport's technique neither banishes nor hides passion; on the contrary, there is something uncomfortably hyperbolic about her focus, especially in the group portraits of apparently demented children and

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Art News Summer '74

Pierpont Morgan and the Middle Ages (Pierpont Morgan Library): Even those well acquainted with the extraordinary collections of the Pierpont Morgan Library will be surprised and delighted by the current exhibition, "Pierpont Morgan and the Middle Ages." The second of the library's 50th-anniversary exhibitions devoted to medieval art, it includes more than 70 of the manuscripts and 14 of the objects that J. Pierpont Morgan assembled between 1899 and his death in 1913.

Most of the Morgan's greatest treasures are on display. The enormous 12th-century leaf from Winchester with dramatic illustrations of the Book of Samuel greets visitors to the library. In the main exhibition hall is Morgan Manuscript I, the Lindau Gospels, with its brilliant jewelled gold binding; behind it is the Stavelot Triptych which contains six beautiful Mosan enamels; and in 26 other cases is an unparalleled array that traces the entire history of medieval art in its most important manifestations: books and objects of precious metal.

The interesting juxtaposition of works in different media is an important feature of the exhibition. In addition to the Lindau covers and Stavelot Triptych, it includes a rare 7th-8th century Coptic binding, a noble 13th-century statue of a French king, a charming Franco-Flemish osteopory and a painted polyptych from Catalonia.

The books, however, dominate the display. Exquisite examples of medieval Latin paleography are represented by the sixth-century Pliny, a tenth-century Gospelbook written in gold on purple vellum and by the bold Gothic *bastarde* of several 15th-century books.

The heritage of classical antiquity is faintly preserved in a Greek *Aesop* and a Byzantine evangelist portrait. But the seemingly infinite ways in which medieval artists transformed the ancient figural tradition into ornament for the flat pages of a vellum codex is most striking. In the delicate St. Omer Gospels, for example, St. Luke's garments are conceived as decorative elements not essentially different from the frame and letter patterns; in the "Windmill" Psalter, figures forming an elaborate symbolic program are lost in the tangle of vines; and even the more robust forms of such important Gothic manuscripts as the magnificent Missal from Troyes are set against spaceless, patterned backdrops. Illuminators came to ignore the ornamental founda-

tions of their art only during the 15th and 16th centuries when they began to treat book illustrations as discreet, naturalistic pictures. An early example of the new naturalism is the Egmont Breviary; later examples include such remarkable books as the Hours of Queen Eleanor of Portugal and the Hours of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese by Giulio Clovio.

The Morgan exhibition closes on July 31. Until then, it offers visitors an opportunity to survey the art of the Middle Ages that is equalled only in the exhibition rooms of the greatest European libraries. ● HERBERT L. KESSLER

Richard Avedon (Museum of Modern Art): Jacob Israel Avedon, the father of Richard Avedon, was not close or sympathetic to his son. Abandoned as a child by his father, Jacob dedicated his life to the textile business. Towards the end of his life, he retired to Florida, divorced his wife and became, for six years, his son's most powerful model. Unlike the *Vogue* mannequins who stare coyly into the distance, Jacob Avedon looks directly into the camera. The backgrounds are stark white. The edge of the film forms a bleak and black frame for the image. When Jacob Avedon fell ill with terminal cancer, the

photographic sessions continued. His brow contracts. His skin turns white and transparent. His mouth twists in pain and paralysis. His face becomes a wide-eyed anguished skull. Richard could no longer bear to develop the film and simply stored the rolls after each session. Now, after Jacob's death, they are a remarkable elegy, an assertion not of life after death but of life in the face of death. ● MICHAEL ANDRÉ

Jack Tworok (Nancy Hoffman): Tworok shows recent paintings which use subdued colors and delicate gray tones to effect a masterful union between an allover gestural texture and a superimposed geometric motif. At times, the geometric elements suggest volume or space; and their potentially clamorous juxtaposition with the gestural field is superbly handled. The impression is of swift, often slanted strokes of paint, like falling rain, moved en masse by a personal tempo. Textures—made up of superimposed patterns of small repetitive gestures—are strong and vibrant. Within the different sections of the geometric diagram, the artist rings changes in color or tone. In the process of doing so, subtle poetic shifts produce a unique expressiveness. ● AL BRUNELLE

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FATHERS AND SONS

(Continued from page 147)

striding or standing figures—typical of his late style—express this sense of personal withdrawal, of the conditional relationship of modern man to his unstable world. In his surrealist works of the 'thirties and 'forties—which many critics consider his greatest sculptures—Giacometti frequently placed figures or objects that were often sexual metaphors in cages symbolizing the spiritual imprisonment and isolation of modern man.

Comparing the bleak world of Giacometti with the sunny scenes of happy family life painted by his father, Giovanni, one realizes how much family ties once meant and how much we have lost in human contact through the fragmentation of the family. Despite his obsession with isolated figures, Alberto Giacometti remained close to his family, who supported him both spiritually and financially. His brother Diego was his assistant and modeled for the sculptor's most celebrated colossal heads with narrow proportions and enlarged features reminiscent of the mysterious heads found on Easter Island. For although Giacometti did not represent men as "heroes" in the classical sense, his standing figures are defiantly upright, his portraits deliberately frontal, demanding confrontation, indicating that he identified dignity and courage as modern forms of heroism.

Modern painting and sculpture frequently deal with the human

condition in terms so general and universal they border on the abstract. Often Giacometti's generalized faces and bodies seem to lack individuality; it is difficult to identify the subject of his portraits, because his emphasis is on the universality of the human condition as opposed to the specificity of the features of any single individual. Because it records the fact of a specific person, portrait photography is by definition more concrete. To make a universal statement, the photographer must convince us that the subject represents Everyman—that we may, in some way, empathize with that person's experience.

Richard Avedon's portraits of his father are summations of the complex life of one man. In contrast with Giacometti's closeness to his father, which permitted him to follow his father's footsteps as an artist without conflict, Avedon's ruptured relationship with his father is typical of the American family.

Born in Russia, Jacob Israel Avedon was two when the family arrived in America in 1891. His childhood was spent in an orphanage, because his father deserted the family. Eventually, Jacob Israel changed his name to Allan Jack Avedon, made a considerable fortune in the dress business, suffered catastrophic reversals during the Depression, rebuilt the business, and retired to Florida in his seventies. The elder Avedon completely rejected his son's interest in art. "When I brought home a poem," Richard Avedon recalls, "my father said nothing, except to show me where

I had left out a comma."

"At forty I realized that I didn't know my father; in fact, that I felt I didn't have a father. For the next ten years I worked to know him and finally he worked with me. At first we talked in his language, the language of business; but six years ago it seemed necessary that he should understand me as I had come to understand him. He began to cooperate actively in this, to learn the techniques of my kind of photography as well as my intention in photographing him. Do you see the expression in his eyes? He is looking at you, confronting you. He was not looking at me. He was looking directly into the lens of the camera."

When photographer Avedon learned his father had a terminal illness, he stopped printing the photographs; the negatives were sealed and only opened recently after his father's death last fall. "My father taught me how to die. During the last year of his life, he put his affairs in perfect order; he arranged his own funeral, which was no funeral, and chose the box that would hold his ashes. He left the hospital to come swimming with me at a big Miami hotel. He was an ordinary man, but he was determined to die like a hero. I wanted these photographs to show him as he was: all the hunger, the anger, the courage, and, above all, the dignity."

Modern artists seem to be saying that to face man's fate with dignity and courage is the heroic act of our time. In this sense, Avedon chose to see his own father as Everyman. ▽

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POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, SEPT '74
(REV. BY HARVEY FONDILLER)

shows we've seen



Jacob Israel Avedon, by Richard Avedon

*Jacob Israel Avedon: Photographed by Richard Avedon, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (May 1-June 16). My father was a man to whom I didn't speak for 20 years. We were reconciled before the end, but though I loved him (and I know he loved me) I didn't like him. Yet the day I learned that it was all over, it seemed fitting and proper that something be done to mark his passing. At *The New York Times*, I requested—no, demanded—to see a reporter, to whom I told the facts of my father's life. On reading his obituary the next day, I was proud to be his son.*

I mention all this only because it may, in some way, help to explain my interpretation—photographic and otherwise—of Richard Avedon's photographs of his father. (Certain points in the latter's biography happen to parallel those in my father's life, including the divorce and remarriage.) What motivation impelled Avedon—world-renowned photographer of a thousand famous faces—to exhibit, as his first New York show, eight portraits of his father at the end of his life?

One ponders on this while reading the
SEPTEMBER 1974

chronology posted outside the exhibit room. It serves, along with the dates on the photos, as background material and captions for a picture story that shows the wasting away of a vigorous man.

The chronology capsulizes the life of Jacob Israel Avedon. We learn the names of his father, mother, and siblings . . . that he was born in Lomzha, Province of Grodno, Russia, Oct. 21, 1889, and that his father emigrated to America the following year. That the mother and family joined the father at 413 Grand St., New York City. Then, after a spell of living on the Lower East Side: "1893—Father deserts family." Jacob was sent to an orphanage, later returned to the family on Grand St., attended P.S. 192, then Townsend Harris High School and the College of the City of New York, worked as a teacher in the Bronx, established Avedon's Blouse Shop (1913) and Avedon's Fifth Avenue (1917), married (1922). Then: "1923—Son, Richard, born May 15th." The family moves to Cedarhurst, Avedon's Fifth Ave. shop goes bankrupt, the family moves to East 98th St., then East 86th St. Mr. Avedon sepa-

rates from his wife (1952), moves to Florida, divorces his wife (1957), meets Eleanor Sorenson (1959), marries her a decade later, establishes real-estate partnership with son, Richard, in 1970, is operated on for cancer of the liver in 1972, and dies eight months later.

The first, heroic-size photograph, dated March 27, 1969, is a frontal portrait of an alert 79-year-old bridegroom (Mr. Avedon was married two days later). Sporting a striped tie with Windsor knot, he is obviously a natty dresser. His furrowed face is blotched with pigmented spots. Adjacent to this print are two smaller images, apparently made at the same sitting. In one of these pictures the subject looks down; in the other, aside.

In the next photograph, dated May 15, 1971, the subject's hair is white and the face blotches have faded. He's still partial to jaunty ties (this one has polka-dots), but one wonders whether senility has set in, whether his vague expression is an attempt to appear alert.

On December 19, 1972—three days after an unsuccessful operation—the subject is wearing pajamas. The suit is gone, along with the Windsor knot and square-set pocket handkerchief that are talismen, in certain circles, of snappy style. Part of the face is in shadow . . . a harbinger of things to come.

Two photographs are dated August 25, 1973—a week before the subject died. In them, he wears a suit again (strange apparel for one so ill). His tie is just slightly askew, and he appears to be apprehensive in the portraits—one frontal and the other with eyes averted. The face is noticeably lighter than in the previous pictures, adding to the impression of fragility. There is anxiety and pain around the mouth. The question it seems to ask is, "How long?"

Avedon the photographer knows all the tricks of his trade—in fact, he invented some of them. For reasons we can only imagine, he adopted the passport esthetic for these portraits—frontal head and shoulders, every detail sharp, light background. Except in one photograph, the lighting is flat. The huge enlargements include the negatives' black edges—encouraging the viewer to believe that the photographer's statement is frank and total . . . that nothing has been concealed.

Photographic portraiture, according to John Szarkowski, director of the Department of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, is most difficult when photographer and subject know each other well. Each "recognizes and nullifies the other's little tricks of style . . . In these circumstances, only trust and acceptance

continued on page 28

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SHOWS SEEN *continued from page 27*
can succeed." He believes that Avedon's portraits of his father are "the deeply moving record of such a success." This statement, however, is inapplicable to these portraits, except for the first in the series. Anyone who has ever photographed a dying person—especially a loved one—knows that both photographer and subject realize that it's too late for what Szarkowski calls "tricks of style."

What the viewer takes from this exhibit must necessarily reflect what he brings to it in terms of life experience. The photographs may leave you unmoved, they may appall you, or they may haunt you. They may make you think of someone else, or of your own ultimate destiny. Or remind you of what Edward Weston called "the camera's innate honesty" when he wrote: "... it enables the photographer to reveal the essence of what lies before his lens with such clear insight that the beholder may find the re-created image more real than the actual object." If the beholder was also the photographer, the photographs may reveal something about the subject that he did not previously perceive—especially in a loved one, in a case where "... I didn't really look at the pictures until after he died" (Avedon). This from a man who has also stated: "At first my father agreed to let me photograph him but I think after a while he began to want me to. He started to rely on it, as I did, because it was a way we had of forcing each other to recognize what we were."

More than a decade ago, Richard Avedon was described in *The Encyclopedia of Photography* as "the most successful and versatile photographer of his generation." He was named by *POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY* as one of the world's 10 greatest photographers. But it remains for each viewer to decide whether Avedon's first New York show is a memento mori or an attempt to make private moments into a public monument.

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WHAT'S WHAT WHAT'S WHAT

Ric Is 47 Feet, Nude, Hangs At MOMA And Is Made By 3M

A man of the cloth would be one way to describe 47-ft. tall Ric, who stretches, nude, on polyester, around three walls of New York's Museum of Modern Art. Ric is also available in plastic, mylar, paper, zinc and "bridal satin."

The people in Minnesota who mine and manufacture would be surprised to see what their 3M color copier has wrought. Photographers Keith Smith and Sonia Lanoy Sheridan have worked together to produce nine Rics by using 3M's System I and System II machines. They moved their subject across the machine's image plate—getting 8½ x 11 exact-size prints of whatever was pressed against the copier. Thirty pieces of paper later Ric was completely "man-scanned." The two artists then cut up the prints, made transparencies of the now 600 pieces, then enlarged them using the System II's enlarging capacity. Finally, the results were heat transferred onto quilt-like rectangles of cloth, onto etching plates, onto plastic and yes, as the wall label makes a point of stating, onto bridal satin. MOMA then hung the resulting huge assemblages as part of its "Projects" series.

The use of the 3M technology in photography is a

recent development. California museums have featured shows created solely by this office machine method, and multimedia exhibits have included hints that the copier is a coming photographic device. The work it produces is recognizable by its flat, grainy quality, by its lack of fine details and by its warp of perspective, as things pressed against the machine become 2D. It's a process that allows for one-step multiple printing, for unusual size relationships and for whimsy.

Sheridan and Smith recognize this playful quality and exploit it in their environmental works. They hang, for example, another 47-ft. long Ric but this time with only the back of his head and raised hands showing. The remainder of him rests in pleats on the floor.

Avedon Focuses On His Father

Objectivity is all right if you're studying the mating ritual of the vanishing American prairie dog, but if you can watch your parent's approaching death with scientific detachment and a 2¼ camera you have to realize you're opening yourself up to some criticism. Here it is.

Perhaps the answer to Richard Avedon's detached style lies in the titles of his two previously published books of portraits. They are *Observations* and *Nothing Personal*. In the MOMA show, there is nothing personal, at least to a



Ultracrisp Richard Avedon document exposes pain of approaching death, seen in the eyes of his father.

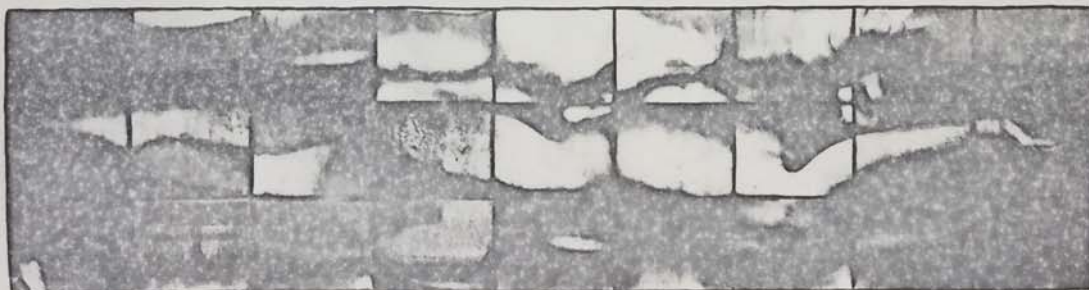
viewer, about the photographer's relationship to his subject, Jacob Israel Avedon.

Eight close-up portraits taken over a six-year period document the changes in Avedon's 83-year-old father, up to his death in September of last year. No props are included, no hint of environment, of other family members, of changing ideas or relationships are allowed to intrude to add information or warmth. Rather, Avedon's mercilessly sharp camera work combines with his trick of photographing posed subjects just as they lose their pose or poise. The resulting enormous blowups, ragged

black borders included *à la* Diane Arbus (it is worth mentioning that Marvin Israel, a close friend of the late Diane Arbus, designed this show) are haunting—not for the information that is in them but for the information you get when you realize all that is missing.

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Got \$10,000 to spare every once in a while? If so, you can qualify as a recipient of any new Kodak film format plan at least 18



Made-by-machine Ric, hung at MOMA, is 47-feet long, polyester and bent around three walls.

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art



Michael Todd

Michael Todd: Caligraphic sculptures of welded steel throughout which unfold emotional content in a narrative manner all too uncommon to the conventional "drawing in space" stance taken by much current non-objective sculpture. It is work full of surprises and rewards. (Zabriske Gallery, 29 West 57th Street, through May 25) (AA) VVV

El Dorado, The Gold of Ancient Columbia: Most Precolumbian Gold objects were made and used for personal adornment. The breathtaking intricacy, wit and originality of forms in this quiet installation of an extraordinary treasure become even more impressive with the realization of how much else was lost in the plundering of the Spanish conquest. Hairpins, clasps, noserings of exquisite formal simplification are on view and should not be missed. An excellent film accompanies the exhibition. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Avenue, through July 28) (AA) VVV

Richard Avedon: An unusual and touching expression of filial-piety—portrait-documentation with 8 emulsion treated canvases of this famous photographer's father who died at 84. In explaining the pictures Avedon writes "Whatever happened between us was important to us but it is not important to the pictures." The biography of Jacob Israel Avedon is essential to these works. As a first N.Y. show this is a puzzling selection. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, 959-6100, through June 16) (FMCD) VV

Village Voice 5/9/74

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Memorandum

To J. Szarkowski

From Elizabeth Shaw

Date

Re F41

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Szeulowski

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 12, 1974

Photography

Avedon's Father, Adams' Nature, Siskind's Homage



Portrait of Richard Avedon's father, one month before he died of cancer.
"The sitter is not a celebrity, so there is no public image to contradict"

By GENE THORNTON

ONE thing that Ansel Adams, Richard Avedon and Aaron Siskind have in common is that all three are virtuoso performers with the camera. That is about the only thing they have in common, except the pure accident that all three are currently having exhibitions in New York.

Richard Avedon's show, at the Museum of Modern Art through June 16, is a small group of portraits of an old man dying. Six enormous shots, unframed and unmounted, hang limp and curling in a tiny gray-painted room with two smaller portraits conventionally mounted and framed. At the age of 79, when the first pictures were taken, the old man had just remarried. His hair is still dark (dyed?), his skin is tanned by the Florida sun, and he looks no more puzzled and lost than an average successful, still-active business man has a right to be.

portraits, even the portraits of his dying father, do seem to lack the classic, calm finality of truth that puts the superficially similar portraits of Diane Arbus in a class by themselves.

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next pictures, taken two years later, his hair is white, his skin pale and transparent, and the nervous distress evident even in the first pictures seems to have turned inwards. The third "take" is a single enormous head shot taken in the hospital three days after an unsuccessful operation for primary cancer of the liver. The old man is alert and almost determined. In the last group, however, taken less than a month before his death at 83, everything is faded and drowned in light. He is feeble and disorganized. The skull is visible beneath the skin, and the eyes bug out as if he were staring straight at the Angel of Death.

These pictures are taken in Avedon's ugly, distressing style in which every wrinkle and blemish is magnified and the subject is caught—or so this viewer suspects—in moments of wholly atypical doyness. Usually Avedon reserves this style for celebrities whose glamorous public image it contradicts, producing the effect of shocking revelation. In this instance, the sitter is not a celebrity, so there is no public image to contradict. However, he does happen to be the photographer's father, as the helpful wall label once again makes clear, so the average conventional viewer (whose voice I try to be) is bound to ask what kind of son it could be who would take such pictures of his dying father, yet.

This question distracts from the images themselves, but not enough to allay my suspicions that, in these pictures, as in Avedon's downputting celebrity portraits, the effect comes more from the virtuoso style than from any real penetration of the subject matter. Despite my admiration, I cannot rid myself of the suspicion that the bizarre twists and turns of expression, like the searching examination of stubble and pore, do not necessarily connect with the real thoughts and feelings of the sitter. When so much theatrical brilliance is offered one feels a censorious prig to ask for more. But Avedon's

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The Museum of Modern Art

To Eleanor

From Monique MB

Date June 13, 1974

Re Dismantling of Avedon Exhibition

cc. F. Coxen
D. Longwell ✓
R. Palmer
Security

Dear Eleanor: As you know, the Avedon Exhibition closes Sunday, June 16. Mr. Avedon's assistant, Mr. Gideon, and his staff will dismantle the exhibition. They should arrive at the 5th Street platform between 9:30 and 9:45. All we need to do is bring the packing materials to the floor on Monday at 9:30.

Thanks.

Note to Security: Mr. Gideon and his assistants may need to use the 11 entrance.

Sachs Gallery
May 10-September 8, 1974

cc: F. Skryanz
Schwab/Ristuccia
F. Coxen/B. Williams
S. Hoge
E. Ladage
B. Cambridge

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The Museum of Modern Art

Depart
Books, The Museum of Modern Art N? 6390
Film, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019
To Rosett I have authorized release INFORMATION
From COPY
to Mr. Gideon, representative for Mr. Avedon
Date March on June 17, 1974, of the material itemized below:
Re New ex

	Museum number	Artist or maker	Description
Please	All by Avedon:		
	74.348		August 9, 1967. photograph
Acct. #	74.349		March 27, 1969. photograph
	74.350		March 27, 1969. photograph
2142	74.351		March 27, 1969. " " "
	74.352		May 15, 1970. " " "
	74.353		May 15, 1971. " " "
	74.354		August 25, 1973. " " "
	74.355		August 25, 1973. " " "
2143	75.356		December 19, 1972. photograph

cc: F. Remarks: Being returned to owner. Lent for exhibition
Sc JACOB ISRAEL AVEDON PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICHARD AVEDON.
F.
S.
E.
B.

The Department of Photography is hereby notified.
If the material is not collected within the date(s) shown, this release will be voided
and the department informed at once.

June 17, 1974

(date signed)

Registrar Eric B. Rowllson

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The Museum of Modern Art

Department of Painting and Sculpture, Drawings, Prints and Illustrated
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Film, Architecture and Design, International Program

To
From Rosette Bakish
Date March 7, 1974
Re New exhibitions

Please add the following two exhibitions to your list:

<u>Acct. #</u>	<u>Title/Director/Gallery/Date</u>
2142	<u>AVEDON'S FATHER</u> 1889-1973 John Szarkowski Northeast Gallery May 1-June 16, 1974
2143	<u>PRINTED, FOLDED, CUT & TORN</u> Howardena Pindell Sachs Gallery May 10-September 8, 1974

cc: F. Skryanz
Schwab/Ristuccia
F. Coxen/B. Williams
S. Hoge
E. Ladage
B. Cambridge

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PROJECT ORDER № 6037

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

May 3

for photography done by Avedon photographer

CHARGE TO: Avedon exhibition

DATE WORK MUST BE COMPLETED.

ACCOUNT NAME:

7532-2142

COST LIMIT

8.57

IF COSTS EXCEED THIS LIMIT, NEW APPROVAL MUST BE OBTAINED.

APPROVED

DEPARTMENT HEAD

ASSISTANT TREASURER

LABOR

MATERIAL

[illegible]

TOTAL LABOR

8	34
---	----

TOTAL MATERIAL

FOR PRODUCTION MANAGER'S USE

FOR ASSISTANT TREASURER'S USE ONLY

TOTAL LABOR AND MATERIAL

8.34

CHGS. _____ A/C _____

APPROVED

PROD. MGR.

APPROVED

___ CHECKED

ORIGINATOR - COMPLETION NOTICE