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THE SOHO WEEKLY NEWS

Thursday, June 17, 1976

29

Eggleston's Guide to the South

SHELLEY RICE

A student once told me that nature is beautiful. Surprised, I asked her how she knew that. After stuttering in amazement for a while, she reached into the bag of assumptions which we all stash clandestinely behind our words and came up with the answer which, alas, I expected: she'd seen a lot of pictures of it.

There were a lot of beautiful people at the Museum of Modern Art's gala opening of the William Eggleston show, and a lot of beautiful clothes. I knew they were beautiful people because I've read about them, and I knew they were beautiful clothes because I follow Bloomingdale's ads. But there were also a lot of pictures on the wall which curator John Szarkowski, in his introduction to *William Eggleston's Guide*, calls "perfect"—and my cultural suspensions of disbelief just won't extend that far.

The Museum's press release for the show, which is comprised of 75 dye transfer prints, calls the artist "one of the most accomplished photographers now working in color." The Modern has clearly thrown its weight behind Eggleston: the extensive downstairs exhibition space, the classy opening, and the concurrent publication of the Museum's first monograph on color photography all attest to this. The question is, why?

The answer, unfortunately, is too clear. Mr. Szarkowski has a definite predilection for picture postcard views of the American

landscape. There are quite a few low horizons, roadside stands, automobiles and suburban houses in this show, and William Eggleston photographs these in color. This makes him different enough from Lee Friedlander to warrant a big party, but similar enough to allow Mr. Szarkowski to ride the same trendy wave into a new field. I'm reminded of Clement Greenberg's reported painting of a David Smith sculpture.

Eggleston's dilution of his own sensibility with the visual patterns of a prominent photographic school creates a too obvious unevenness in the show. Born in Memphis in 1939, Eggleston grew up on a cotton farm in Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. The photographs on view record people and places from this area, and are thus not simply social documents of the South but autobiographical statements as well. The best of his prints reflect a deeply personal interpretation of the South; composition and color work together to realize a romantic and pessimistic vision. So the bland realism of many of the photographs is annoying, and often a waste of color film.

At their best, Eggleston's prints are carefully composed images of living spaces which seem somehow uninhabitable, impermeable to their human presences. The landscape is low and flat, often strewn with debris or ramshackled buildings. Suburban houses seem perched upon this terrain, their vacuity only accentuated by the automobiles, bicycles and barbecues which surround them. A



William Eggleston

Helmut R. Messer

green tiled shower stall with gleaming knobs asserts a glaring and impenetrable surface. Juxtaposed almost surrealistically with these commonplaces of modern life are the remnants of the old Southern tradition: the china, the candelabras, the lush vegetation. The soft southern light suffuses this waste land with a glow which is as decadent and as incongruous as the ornate chandeliers.

The people who inhabit Eggleston's prints seem trapped in the spaces, the cracks left to them within the tensions of their environment. The youth from Mississippi, rigidly seated in the dark back seat of an automobile, hardly represents the American dream of mobility and freedom. Incarcerated rather than liberated, his head is tightly framed by the illusory open space of the thin window. Sunlight

cuts his face as the white metal license plate on the seat beside him presses against his leg.

The red carpeted hotel room in Huntsville, Alabama is clean and orderly. The converging lines of the walls and ceilings are accentuated by the diagonal thrust of the bed, which seems to push toward the jutting sides of an open suitcase on the far wall. Within this force field sits a man, glass in hand. Drained, meditative, he is alien rather than angry, weary rather than aware.

Attired in a richly patterned garment of blue and red, an old woman rests on a brightly flowered yet rusting lounge. The flamboyance of her accessories cannot hide the unstable movements of her aged and skinny body, or revive the dead leaves falling to the

ground. Barren vines creep up the trellis which stands behind her, blocking any retreat.

Eggleston's people are almost always centered within the image, yet they seem to have no control over themselves or their surroundings. Their roles seem superimposed, dictated by the demands of the society which is the dominant motif in all of Eggleston's prints. Omnipresent, cultural artifacts build the superstructure within which these people exist. I am reminded on viewing them of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. After entering the dark and empty stage, the actors are told by their manager that they represent "a mixing up of the parts, according to which you who act your own part become the puppet of yourself." ●

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Photography/Sean Callahan **MOMA LOWERS THE COLOR BAR**

"... Szarkowski's show of Eggleston's work is sure to spur buyers to consider color photographs as items of collectible merit..."

On several occasions over the past few years, John Szarkowski, director of the Museum of Modern Art's photography department, has let it slip in casual conversation that William Eggleston, a 37-year-old photographer from Memphis, has "invented" color photography! And when Szarkowski speaks, everybody listens.

Actually, everybody takes Szarkowski too seriously these days. But because of his position as head of the most ambitious photography program of any museum in the world, and because of his unusual intelligence and discernment, a Szarkowski show endows a photographer with a weighty, if not oppressive, imprimatur.

To be sure, with a MOMA show there comes a shot at financial success—and that will undoubtedly come to Eggleston, whose color photographs are now on view at the museum (through 8/1). But the monetary repercussions of the show are sure to reach far beyond Eggleston. The very fact that Szarkowski is exhibiting color photographs will spur dealers, collectors, curators, and photographers to reconsider color photography as a medium of salable and collectible merit.

Until now, color photography has largely been considered a commercial medium, best suited for advertising and publishing. The theory is that commerce pushes the photographer into an exaggerated approach to color in order to sell a product or idea. The photographer tends to become an illustrator, so that those who are successful in the commercial milieu are seldom taken seriously as artists. At MOMA, Ernst Haas managed to break the color barrier with the museum's first one-man color show, but that was fourteen years ago. Since then Haas has produced a tremendous body of impressive work, while others, such as Art Kane, Jay Maisel, Hiro, and Pete Turner have created images of major import. Yet none has been offered a show by a leading museum or gallery in New York.

But even if color photographers can

Eggleston's eye: In his photographs of people and places in Mississippi (left), William Eggleston combines casual snapshot effects with subtly controlled ranges in color.

get past this snobism in the photo-art world, there are other objections they must contend with. The most troubling is the impermanence of the dye-transfer print (the favored process for reproducing a color image). All dyes, in time, will fade—a negative sales point, for sure. No collector or dealer wants to lose out on an investment. Of course, a replacement can be made from the photographer's permanent separations. In fact, Ken Lieberman of Berkey K + L labs, which printed some of the Eggleston show, offers a 50-year guarantee to replace free any dye transfer his labs produce. Which is fine, but—the artist may not be around 50 years hence to supervise the new print. And that brings us to another problem.

Color photography is a delicate process in which the chemistry operates somewhat independently, creating its own effects, while allowing wide latitude in the interpretation of what the "true" color was when the image was made. Subtle but definable differences occur in different brands of color film and even in the same kind of materials produced at different times in the same plant. Photographers constantly have to compensate for these differences when they are printing their work. A further complication is that the human eye never sees exactly what the film sees, because the "mind's eye" alters the image in the direction of what is psychologically more pleasing. The photographer manipulates the printing of the dye transfer to correspond to the image in his mind's eye. In short, in color photography, "true" color is what the photographer decides it should be.

Technical problems aside, do Eggleston's photographs deserve Szarkowski's formidable accolade?

Most of Eggleston's pictures have been made around Memphis or in the Yazoo basin, where his family has a cotton farm. Life there is simple and unadorned, just as in Eggleston's photographs. The seemingly casual execution of the photos and their mundane subject matter give them the superficial look of snapshots. This offends critics who still bow to the Edward Weston ideal, with its rules about previsualization of subject matter and the

sacred ritual of home-printing. The snapshot aesthetic does tend to look like child's play—all those tilted horizons, headless bodies, grainy prints. In addition, the snapshot artist appears to document the world like a news photographer, but what he documents looks uneventful and commonplace. Such images, however, may characterize our times more accurately than the momentous news shots or the carefully composed pictures of traditional photography. The work of the new documentarians may someday be regarded as a summation of life during the sixties and seventies, just as Walker Evans's photographs symbolize the thirties.

Unlike some of his peers, Eggleston doesn't display a strong social conscience. What makes his photographs of nonevents especially meaningful is his use of color to convey the "feel" of a particular place. He emphasizes hues that soak the scene or resonate in a critical way, virtually creating effects of sound, silence, smell, temperature, pressure—sensations that black-and-white photography has yet to evoke.

In short, Eggleston is an important young artist. But the event of his exhibition (financed largely by Vivitar, Inc.) is apt to overshadow his achievement. Inevitably it raises questions as to why him and why now. There are other young photographers who are better known for their serious efforts in color, such as Stephen Shore, Neal Slavin, and the daringly innovative Syl Labrot. But Eggleston belongs to the personal-documentary school, a style Szarkowski particularly favors. And since one of the pleasures of curatorship is discovering fresh talent, it is understandable that he would want to unveil the work of a man whom he first spotted in 1969—"a terrific artist who had really learned to see in color."

Actually, Eggleston isn't doing anything dramatic with color. His talent is in not overdoing it. In bringing the snapshot aesthetic into the world of color, he has enriched that fragile genre with a subtle interweave of content and hue. It is a masterful achievement that lifts his art well beyond the works that have been summarily dismissed as "snapshot chic."

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▲ TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

SUMNER, MISSISSIPPI ▼



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ASPP newsletter

VOL. VIII, No. III

May/June 1976

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PICTURE PROFESSIONALS, INC.
BOX 5283, GRAND CENTRAL STATION, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

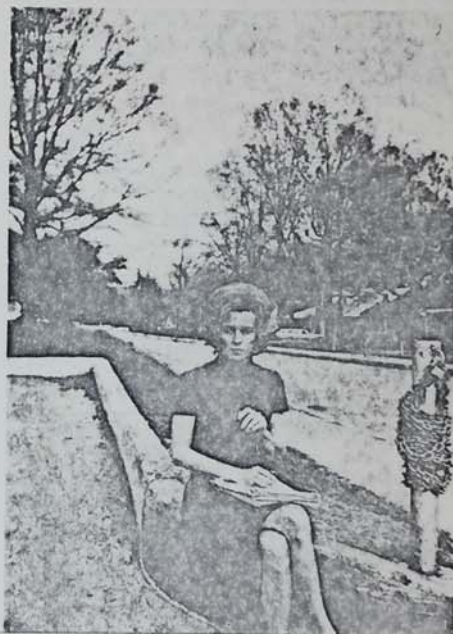
ASPP OFFICERS, 1976

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NEWS AND NOTES, cont.

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Intellectually he inhabits a different
South. Kramer praises these black and
white prints, both the "straight" ones
of bizarre New Orleans architecture and
haunted ruins in the Louisiana country-
side, and the "invented" pictures which
superimpose surrealistic images to make
what Kramer calls "a deliberate, devil-
ish symbolism" with extraordinary sheer
visual power.

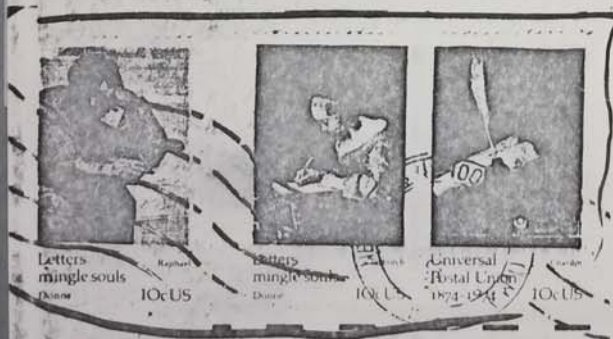


©William Eggleston, from his MOMA show.

Well, whom do you agree with--Starkowski
or Kramer? Let's hear it from the reader.

Helen Faye

Letters to the Editor



STAMP-STORY SEQUEL

Just received a packet of goodies from
you-all. Did you know that one of your
members (namely me!) did the picture re-
search for the stamps circled on this
Xerox? There were 8 in the series--
came out in June 1974. How appropriate
for you to use them on a letter to me!

Cheers,

Marilyn Zipes
London, England

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JOHN ALBOK: PHOTOGRAPHER, TAILOR, PATRIOT

Part I by Mary Anne O'Boyle Leary

John Albok has a tailoring shop at 96th Street and Madison Avenue; it is also a studio, darkroom, and photographic archives. Since the 1920s Albok has walked the streets of New York photographing people, animals, buildings, and parks.

Born in Munkacs, Hungary in 1894, Albok emigrated to the United States in 1921. As a boy, he wanted to become an artist, but, as the oldest of twelve children, his father apprenticed him in the family tailoring business. When he was twelve, the boy found an outlet for his artistic talents. A friend gave him an Eastman Kodak box camera and he began taking pictures and developing them after hours. As he grew older, his enthusiasm for cameras deepened. Wherever he went, he took a camera. In war-ravaged Europe he began to realize the documentary potential of the camera and its power to influence public opinion. He believed photography could awaken people to the misery and suffering around them and that it could also lift their spirits by showing the natural beauty of the world.

In 1921 Albok left Hungary bound for New York with all his worldly possessions, including a 5 x 7 wooden camera with a Goetzlitz 4.5 lens. During the journey he became ill and was forced to spend what little money he had to pay the ship's doctor. He faced the prospect of landing



John Albok outside his shop. (Photo by Raimondo Borea)

literally penniless in America. His camera came to the rescue! By persuading some fellow passengers to record their trip for posterity he made \$24. Once again Manhattan was purchased for that princely sum.

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Editor: Helen Faye
Associate Editors: Myra Schachne,
Phyllis Borea
Raimondo Borea
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Relying on his ability as a tailor, Albok found work and eventually set up a prosperous business that allowed him to pursue his avocation. He acquired a Zeiss Ikon camera, an Eastman Reflex and a Rolleiflex with a 3.8 lens, which he prefers. When the Depression struck, he was amazed that conditions in the United States could be as bad--and in some instances worse--than those he had experienced in Europe. With his camera he began to record the effects of the economic upheaval on the faces of the people and in the streets of his adopted city. A great admirer of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Albok tried "to show how things were when the Great President began pulling this nation out of the terrible Depression...and the change in the economic scene four, five, seven years later." These are Albok's most compelling photographs.

Albok's documentation is subtle; he does not preach. He uses gentle lighting, a controlled focus, yet his subjects are well defined. The depth of field is shallow. His background is not forgotten but kept where it belongs. He catches his subjects unaware in relaxed and natural attitudes. Even when his subjects are posed, he captures the right moment, the exact expression revealing personality and spiritual quality. He uncovers innate dignity in the most wretched human situations.

New Yorkers should know John Albok better. What Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange did for rural America, Albok has done for New York. He has shown that beauty and dignity can exist amidst concrete and steel.

Part II by Phyllis Borea

In this year of red, white, and blue supermarket displays, to meet with genuine patriotism--unsentimental and rather political--comes as a real surprise. The zeal of the emigré enlivens the small shop on Madison Avenue where John Albok does his inimitable tailoring and where he keeps his world-famous collection of photographs. This courtly gentleman is equally proud of both, though one would hardly guess that the tiny old store with its delicate window garden and a calico cat who snuggles up to the iron could possibly hold so much genius.

After setting up his tailoring business in the 1920s, Albok appointed himself a unique "story-teller" of the Hungarian people in America. At camps, street festivals, and parades, Albok was there with both still and movie cameras and a disc recorder. Moreover, The Herald Tribune then had photo contests, of which he was a regular winner. In the process of covering Hungarian events and in searching for contest pictures he began to document life in the United States of

Continued-



John Albok's romantic New York.

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A Bicentennial-looking parade taken, however, at the 1939 New York World's Fair by John Albok.

those times--the early 1930s to 1945. Despite the awful sights he captured on film, Albok feels very strongly that those years, when Roosevelt led the country from disaster, were a time of friendship and brotherhood. Also, life offered cultural opportunities not available today.

After the President died, Albok ceased to photograph the social scene. "No more history. This is not the history I like to see." Now it is nature--"the most beautiful thing"--particularly Central Park that he studies.

Mr. Albok's photographs have not lain hidden behind the coats and suits all these years. In 1938 he had his first exhibit, about fifty-five pictures at the Museum of the City of New York.

Eleanor Roosevelt wrote an article about it and later he photographed her at the World's Fair where she spoke at an ILGWU convention. As a result of this friendship his pictures later hung at Hyde Park for three years.

He once showed Steichen some 150 photos of the working classes during the Depression, but the museum director selected only one because, Albok feels, he did not like the subject. In 1966, at a show in the Coliseum CBS showed Albok photographs right beside Steichen photographs. It was in front of Albok that the crowd gathered. In 1974 Prologue, the Journal of the National Archives, published a beautifully reproduced portfolio of his work. Most recently the cultural attaché of a Scandinavian country made a documentary on Albok that he

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hopes to place with public television. And his scrapbooks bulge with prizes and write-ups by Deschin and others.

Now Hungary has invited him to show his work at a great exhibition this summer in Budapest to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of St. Stephen, Hungary's first king. Albok selected 400 pictures of from 10 to 15 thousand stills in his shop and printed, captioned, and sent them to Budapest. A show of his films will be presented there on the Fourth of July. The show will be a celebration of the United States and the people who came here to work and become citizens.

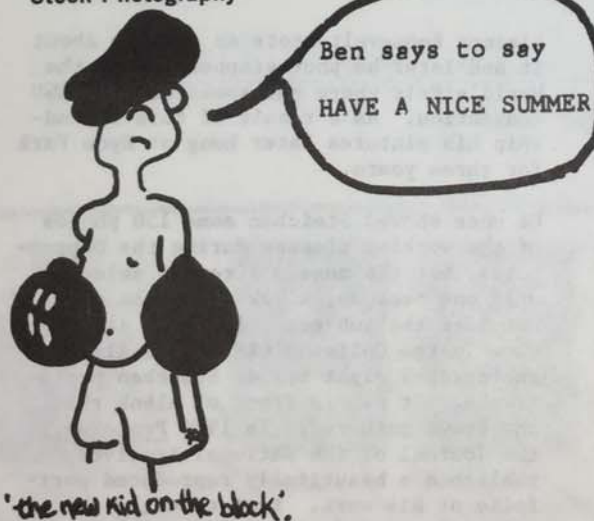
The combination of our Bicentennial, the Hungarian millennial, and the exhibition, proved irresistible and Albok is planning to go to Hungary in August, his first visit since 1921.

TAURUS PHOTOS

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NEWS AND NOTES

ICP ADDS AMELIA EHRENREICH TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES. Mrs. Amelia Ehrenreich (widow of Joseph Ehrenreich, the original distributor of Nikon cameras in the U. S.) has been elected to the 33 member Board of Trustees of the International Center of Photography. She is the first woman on the ICP Board. In February, at the ICP fund raising dinner, Mrs. Ehrenreich presented Cornell Capa with a check for \$10,000 to establish a scholarship fund in the name of her late husband. ICP now has 1500 charter members and offers 20 lectures and 40 workshops in its educational program.

WHY PHOTOS "AS ART" ARE SO EXPENSIVE: the Spring 1976 issue of 35 mm Photography (New York, Ziff-Davis, 120 pgs., \$1.95) has a 24 page article containing interviews with 30 people who have ideas on the subject. Since art galleries have taken on the works of famous photographers to sell, prices for originals have climbed into the stratosphere formerly occupied only by paintings, drawings and other "fine" art. Already existing photo galleries are feeling the competition with the art dealers, and established photographers are torn between loyalty to their old gallery friends and temptation from the art gallery owners. Among the contributors to the 35mm issue on the subject are Lee D. Witkin, photo gallery owner, and Harry Lunn, dealer with Marlborough Gallery.

A new national publication called Photograph will bring out its second issue this September. Photograph aims to present serious critical writing for the photographic community. Reviews of books and exhibits, dialogues, profiles of photographers, reports on photographic collections, education and events are promised. It is to be published 10 times a year at \$.75 a copy and is edited by Will Faller. We will review this new publication more fully after we see the Sept. issue.

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NEWS AND NOTES, cont.

MOMA shows color photos for first time: William Eggleston, May 24 to August 1 at The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.C. Reviewing this show in the N.Y. Times on May 28, Hilton Kramer differed with John Szarkowski (director of MOMA's Photography Dept.) who calls Eggleston's pictures "perfect". Kramer called them "perfectly banal . . . perfectly boring". In the lavish hard cover 4 color book accompanying the show Szarkowski applauds Eggleston's habit of placing most of his subjects (trucks, tricycles, relatives) in the dead center of the photo as an esthetic feat. Kramer, *au contraire*, sees these pictures as "snapshot chic" and "post-Diane Arbus". The picture locations are Southern--Memphis and Mississippi cotton country.

In the same review Hilton Kramer discussed another show: Clarence John Laughlin, "The Transforming Eye," at the International Center of Photography. Laughlin, another Southern photographer has a totally different vision from Eggleston's. Intellectually he inhabits a different South. Kramer praises these black and white prints, both the "straight" ones of bizarre New Orleans architecture and haunted ruins in the Louisiana countryside, and the "invented" pictures which superimpose surrealistic images to make what Kramer calls "a deliberate, devilish symbolism" with extraordinary sheer visual power.

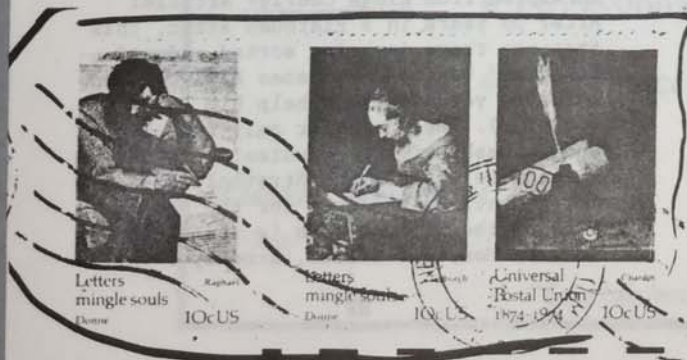


© William Eggleston, from his MOMA show.

Well, whom do you agree with--Starkowski or Kramer? Let's hear it from the reader.

Helen Faye

Letters to the Editor



STAMP STORY SEQUEL

Just received a packet of goodies from you-all. Did you know that one of your members (namely me!) did the picture research for the stamps circled on this Xerox? There were 8 in the series--came out in June 1974. How appropriate for you to use them on a letter to me!

Cheers,
Marilyn Zipes
London, England

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LETTERS, CONTINUED

68,000 LANTERN SLIDES DISCOVERED

I enclose an article from the Brooklyn Kings Courier for April 5, 1976 concerning a recent discovery of a collection of lantern slides. The collection consists of not only the original glass slides, but also scenarios and descriptions of the slides and, in some cases, the accompanying lantern lectures so popular during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in American homes, businesses, and educational institutions.

The slides date from as early as 1870 and cover at least fifty years of lantern slide history and serve as valuable documents of this period of American history as well.

It is a great treasure and provides excellent visual material relating to a broad range of subjects including the Chicago fire, San Francisco earthquake, Mormons, Suffragettes, American and European views, religious and morality tales, flora, fauna and popular book illustration.

Mr. Hamilton, who is involved in the cataloguing, has also unearthed two illuminated projectors of the type used to project the lantern slides and he thus can achieve the effect of an old magic lantern show. He hopes to catalogue and file all 68,000 slides with the help of volunteers in the next year or so in order that the collection be accessible to the public. He welcomes interested visitors and, although at the moment the collection may not be completely accessible without personal visits, he has plans to make it available through publishers, agencies and museums and, by means of actual lantern shows, to schools, homes for the elderly and other non-profit institutions.

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CHARLES E. ROTKIN

I am sure that this collection will be of interest to all members of the ASPP and its discovery may mark the revival of a fascinating phenomenon in the history of the American social scene which heralded the 20th century era of ever-increasing visual consciousness through the communications media.

Most sincerely,
Margaret O. Mathews
Picture Researcher
New York, New York

Excerpted from Kings Courier article:
After 50 years in a Flatbush attic, this treasure trove is being sorted, identified, and restored by James Hamilton who welcomes volunteers to help him (phone 858-6133). He can offer only free lunch and refreshments to volunteers who are willing to work at the Strathclyde Collaborative, his name for the project. Work on the glass slides is done in a loft on Montague Street, Brooklyn.

HF

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LETTERS, continued

MICROPHOTOGRAPHY vs. PHOTOMICROGRAPHY
and A COPYRIGHT CLARIFICATION

The abstracts of the recently conducted seminars are splendidly done and, for those of use who were unable to attend, an excellent service to members of ASPP. My compliments to "Olivia Buehl/PB" for compressing what must of been an endless amount of information into a concise, readable report.

I have one correction, and one comment, to add:

"...micro-photography with its back-breaking hours over a microscope,..."

MICROPHOTOGRAPHY is the making of very small photographs, such as microfilming documents for archival storage. Photography through the microscope is "PHOTO-

MICROGRAPHY," the resulting photos are "PHOTOMICROGRAPHS," and specialists in this field are "PHOTOMICROGRAPHERS."

Copyright: It is my understanding that, according to copyright law, it is the responsibility of the copyright owner (photographer and/or agency) to request and maintain the legal copyright notice whenever a copyrighted photo appears in print. This is more than a credit line and, when not initially requested by the copyright owner--and properly appearing for EVERY subsequent appearance in print --the photo can possibly go into public domain and copyright ownership is lost.

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PAUL STRAND DIES AT 85

Paul Strand, one of America's most original photographers, died on March 31, 1976 at his home in France. Ranking with such 20th century photographers as Steichen, Steiglitz, Adams and Cartier-Bresson, Paul Strand is remembered best for his still photographs of social realism and for his documentary films, notably "The Plow That Broke the Plains" and "The Wave."

Modes of seeing that are commonplace to photographers today were innovated by Strand when he broke away from romantic soft-focus photography early in his career and started documenting the artifacts, the faces, the lives of ordinary people. He was always a photographer engage, wishing to use his camera for the eradication of human misery.

Strand studied photography with Lewis W. Hine while still a high school student (around 1906 at Ethical Culture School). We may assume that some of Hine's social consciousness was passed along to Strand. His first serious work was among the earliest candid photography in the history of the medium and he remained a "straight" photographer without recourse to processing tricks

or manipulation. Unbelievably, he always worked with view cameras, either an 8 x 10 Deardorf or a 5 x 7 Graflex. He never used a 35mm camera nor did he work in color.

In order to earn a living he became a cinematographer and was an early news-reel photographer for Pathé and Fox.

In 1935 he made the film "The Wave" for the Mexican government. This documentary showed the lives of striking fisherman in Vera Cruz and was one of the earliest films to be shot without professional actors. He was one of three photographers who shot the documentary "The Plow That Broke the Plains" which was directed by Pare Lorenz and produced for the U.S. Federal Resettlement Admn. in 1936. Both of these films were extremely successful and were widely shown here and in Europe.

Many of Strand's pioneer documentary films are in the MOMA film collection, and the Modern has exhibited his still pictures in one-man shows. The Metropolitan and other museums have also exhibited Strand, and last year his pictures sold as fine art for as high as \$32,000 each for those printed on platinum paper, and \$3000 for prints made on silver paper.

THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER

Beginning last summer you may have spotted on the newstands around Manhattan a curious periodical called The Picture Newspaper which is actually a new tabloid completely devoid of written copy, devoted exclusively to photography and the graphic arts--but in a cheap, disposable newspaper format. Printed half in color, whose separations resemble the eerie tints of T.V., the paper was conceived by Steve Lawrence, who in 1969-70 published a forerunner of the present paper in 11 issues in black and white only. With the present series, financial setbacks having been the chief reason for numerous delays since then, Lawrence is finally realizing his dream of printing a New York Times-sized periodical of photography.

As it is TPN spans the complete spectrum of graphic and photographic arts, enlisting the contributions of diverse sources. Among these are work by Christian Piper, who designed the poster for the Rolling Stones' last U.S. tour and present European tour; Fashion Institute's own Antonio, including his fashion drawings and numerous pop art photographic series (snapshots of breathy, lipsticked models in sudsy tubs); the dazzling hand-tinted photographs of Richard Schafer whose outrageous, theatrical, deco photo-essays of 50s kitsch have won him the highest award for achievement in magazine illustration in Viva & Playboy and was recently paid tribute in the French photomagazine Zoom. But TPN also boasts portraits from Richard Avedon's last Man-

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THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER, continued

hattan exhibit, the ICP (photos from two young San Francisco photographers shown at the Center last Fall), photo-classics by Man Ray, Milton Green, pictures of Ann Margaret as a child performer, Peter Beard (featuring pictures from his new book about the senseless starvation of 12,000 elephants on a game reserve in Africa from Beard's forthcoming HBJ book Nor Dread Nor Hope Attend), and even single, blown-up frames from the motion picture The Wizard of Oz.

When asked what persuaded him to switch from being a buyer for a department store to producing T.V. commercials to merchandizing for TPN, Victor Kaminoff, business manager for the magazine, says that as he worked with movie film in commercials it was just natural that he eventually got interested in single frames, blown up, and in this case, almost life-size.

Eventually TPN hopes to work up to being a monthly and perhaps with its ever-soaring 3000 subscriptions, it will achieve its goal. It is currently one of the best buys for \$1.00 around. As it now stands, it is one of the most refreshing, entertaining photo-publications to burst upon the New York scene from the ranks of concept art, Madison Avenue and photography as art form.

Grigoris
Daskalogrigorakis



Victor Kaminoff at left, with staff members of The Picture Newspaper.

Photo by Seth Goldstein

GOOD NEWS: ANOTHER PICTURE SOURCE BOOK

The Library of Congress has documented Washington's picture collections in the newly published Pictorial Resources in the Washington, D.C. Area, compiled by Shirley L. Green with the Assistance of Diane Hamilton.

The Nation's capital is rich in picture resources because so many headquarters of national organizations as well as government agencies are concentrated here. But these collections have been largely inaccessible because their availability and content have not been known. Now this long-needed sourcebook has arrived. Three cheers!

The directory is arranged in three sections, listing the collections of go-

vernment, international, and private organizations; the government section is further subdivided into agencies and units of agencies. The diverse nature of the collections has required a certain flexibility in the individual descriptions. Most entries, however, include most or all of the following: hour available, source, subjects and scope of collections, restrictions on use and duplication, existence of finding aids, and special notes. The book is heavily illustrated.

Pictorial Resources is available by mail from the Information Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540, or in person from the Library's Information Counter, for \$5.75. Payment must accompany all mail orders.

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MANY ASPP MEMBERS WORKING TO SAVE NYPL PICTURE COLLECTION

In addition to our members who actually work at the Picture Collection, many other ASPPers are involved in trying to raise funds to save this invaluable picture resource. Alice Lundoff who is on the Committee for the picture Collection has sent us the following plea for funds. Lynda Gordon and Raimondo Borea are among those who donated photographs for the auction held at Altmans. Every one of us should do something NOW to aid this cause.



The Opening of the benefit sale at Altman's for the NYPL Picture Collection. (Photo © Lynda Gordon)

From Alice Lundoff:

We are asking all potential and current users of this Collection, as well as all of those who are interested in preserving one of the truly unique aspects of our Library system to help us. (Funds sent to Friends of the Library and other groups are general in scope and are spread throughout the entire system and do not necessarily benefit the Picture Collection per se.)

Checks may be made payable to: COMMITTEE FOR THE PICTURE COLLECTION and sent to Room 73, the New York Public Library, 42nd Street & Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10018

Please check one:

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(Includes a copy of the Picture Collection Checklist when available.)

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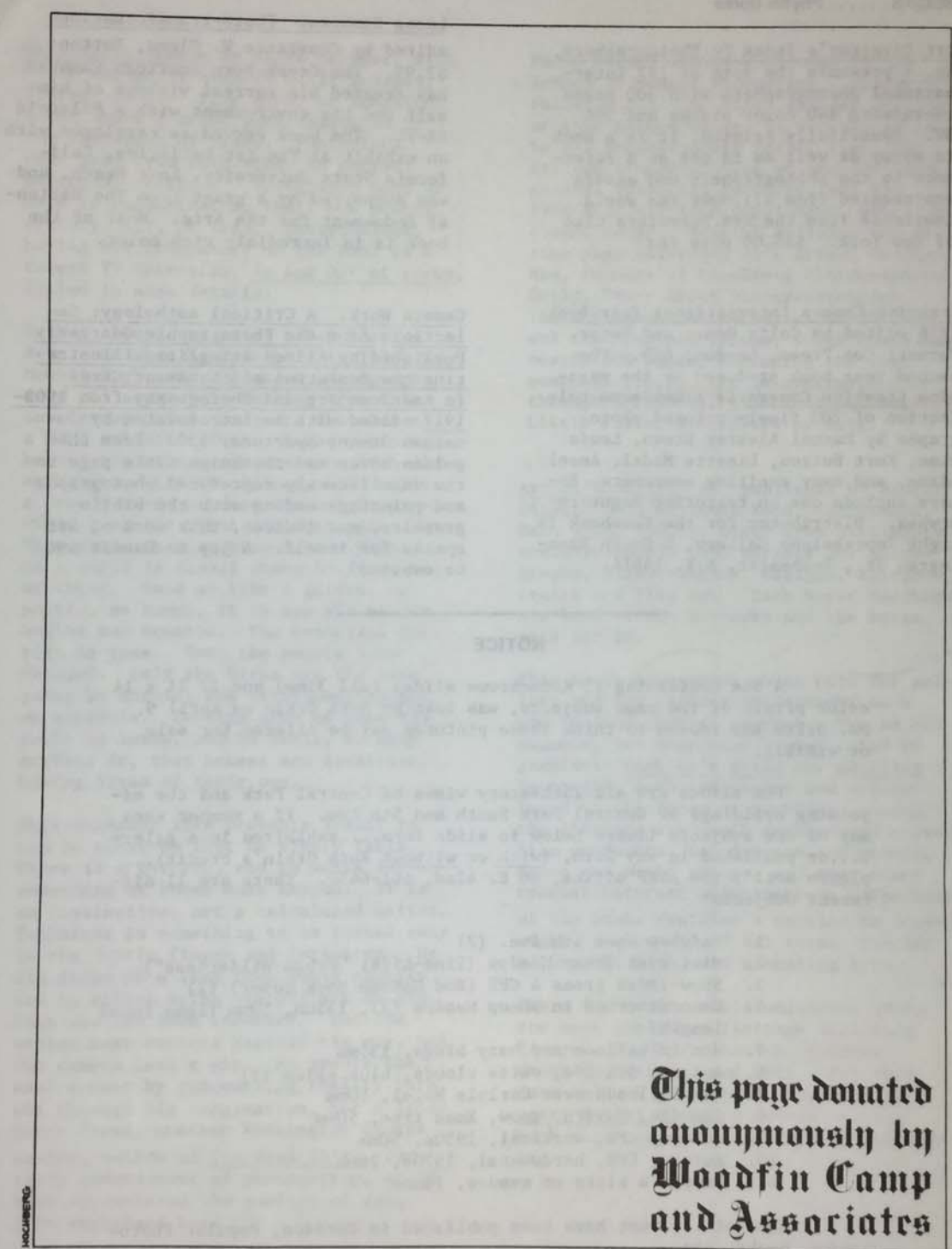
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L to R: Kenneth Charbonneau, Art Director; Lenore Cowan, Curator of NYPL Picture Collection; Milton Duke, Chairperson of Committee for the Picture Coll.; Lila Levant, Committee member. (Photo © Lynda Gordon)

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BOOKS Phyllis Borea

Art Director's Index To Photographers, No. 4 presents the work of 177 international photographers with 300 pages containing 440 color plates and 100 BW. Beautifully printed, it is a book to enjoy as well as to use as a reference to the photographers and agents represented from all over the world. Available from the Art Directors Club of New York. \$35.00 plus tax

Creative Camera International Year Book 1976 edited by Colin Osman and Peter Turner; Coo Press, London; \$20. The second year book produced by the magazine Creative Camera is a handsome collection of 200 finely printed photographs by Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Lewis Hine, Kurt Hutton, Lisette Model, Ansel Adams, and many exciting newcomers. Essays include one on restoring daguerreotypes. Distributor for the Yearbook is Light Impressions Gallery, 8 South Washington St., Rochester, N.Y. 14614.

Lucas Samaras: Photo-transformations edited by Constance W. Glenn; Dutton; \$7.95. The Greek-born American Samaras has created his surreal visions of himself and his environment with a Polaroid SX-70. The book served as catalogue with an exhibit at The Art Galleries, California State University, Long Beach, and was supported by a grant from The National Endowment for the Arts. Most of the book is in incredibly rich color.

Camera Work: A Critical Anthology: Selections from the Photographic Quarterly Published by Alfred Stieglitz, Illustrating the Evolution of the Avant Garde in American Art and Photography from 1903-1917 edited with an introduction by Jonathan Green; Aperture; \$30. From the golden cover and the beige title page to the magnificently reproduced photographs and paintings ending with the bibliographies, and indices, this work of art speaks for itself. A joy to handle and to own.

NOTICE

A box containing 15 Kodachrome slides (all 35mm) and 12 11 x 14 color prints of the same subjects, was lost by Ruth Orkin on April 9. Ms. Orkin has reason to think these pictures may be offered for sale or exhibit.

The slides are all 15th-story views of Central Park and the adjoining buildings of Central Park South and 5th Ave. If a member sees any of the subjects listed below in slide form....exhibited in a galleryor published in any form, (with or without Ruth Orkin's credit)... please notify the ASMP office, 60 E. 42nd, 661-6450. There are 11 different subjects:

1. Rainbow over 5th Ave. (2)
2. Mist over Sheep Meadow (Time-Life: "Urban Wilderness")
3. Snow-laden trees & CPS (Rod McKuen book cover) (2)
4. Concert crowd in Sheep Meadow (2), 135mm, 50mm (lens focal length)
5. Man in balloon and hazy bldgs, 135mm
6. Autumn, 5th Ave, white clouds, blue skies (2)
7. Black clouds over Carlyle Hotel, 50mm
8. Sunrise, Tavern, snow, Xmas tree, 50mm
9. Autumn, CPS, vertical, 1950s, 50mm
10. Autumn, CPS, horizontal, 1970s, 28mm
11. People & kites on meadow, 135mm

Most of the rest have been published in Horizon, Popular Photography, books, etc.

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Washington Square by André Kertész; with appreciation by Brendan Gill; unpagged; Viking; \$5.95. Five moons of lamplight float above a snowy park dominated by the skeletons of trees. Footprints veer away from each other in perfect patterns. Kertész' photographs need no help in communicating their own poetry, mystery, wit, or tale. Nevertheless, having his commentary on the book in a recent TV interview, In and Out of Focus, filled in some details.

He has always, he said, liked looking down, and when he came here in 1936, he, Moholy-Nagy, and a Russian photographer were all separately working from this same perspective, projects that led to a MOMA exhibit. Twenty-three years ago he and his wife chose their twelfth-floor apartment, with the balcony Gill calls a crow's nest, because its height provided just the right working angle. They chose it also because the Square is a world in itself where he finds everything. Once so like a garden, so poetic, so human, it is now all static angles and squares. The beautiful design is gone. Even the people have changed. Only the birds are the same, going by morning and afternoon, always on schedule. Looking down he sees the roofs he loves, and he feels, as many artists do, that houses are sensitive, having lives of their own.

This changing life presents itself to him in pictures that he simply feels. There is a pattern, and he waits for something he knows must happen. It is an instinctive, not a calculated matter. Technique is something to be tucked away in the little finger and forgotten. He did dream of a lens that would magnify and in effect bring the picture to him. Thus was the zoom invented. But the artist must express himself his way, not the camera lens's way. He grasps the real moment by transmuting reality into art through his imagination, not a lens. Henry James, another Washington Square artist, author of The Real Thing, and early connoisseur of photography, would have appreciated the quality of felt life expressed here.

PHOTO MARKET SURVEY published by The School of Modern Photography, Little Falls, N.J.: The fifth revised edition of this market survey is now available to all photographers rather than just its own students. The volume includes several editorial features, and the 1976 8-1/2x11-inch supplement, which includes several helpful articles and a nine-page interview with Arthur Brackman, founder of Freelance Photographers Guild, "More About Picture Agencies." The supplement alone sells for \$5.95, and the complete volume, which comes to nearly 300 pages, including the supplement, is \$10.95. It is available only through SMP/Books, 1500 Cardinal Drive, Little Falls, N.J. 07424 by mail.

Artist's Market '76, published by Writer's Digest, 9933 Alliance Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242 (\$9.95; order from publisher) contains nearly 3000 markets for photographs, illustrations, designs, cartoons, crafts and fine art. Each buyer describes the kind of art he seeks and the rates paid for it.

This handy sourcebook works both for sellers and for picture researchers as a way to find unusual sources. For an odd example, two magazines listed cater to gamblers: Gambler's World and Gambling Quarterly; both use photos and art related to all forms of gambling. Among the listings are craft dealers and shows, film producers, foundations and grants, dance and music groups, and many other special interest organizations. The back of the books contains a section on copyright, a glossary of art terms, the ABC of Graphic Arts, and marketing tips.

There are many notable omissions among the book publisher listings including Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Grolier, Houghton Mifflin, and Holt. For more data on book publishers, consult Literary Market Place, a yearly sourcebook with very full coverage of publishing.

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ASPP JUNE MEETING

"Showing these slides to ASPP is like showing home movies to Cecil B. De Mille," quipped Bob Gerometta in an informative and entertaining slide lecture at the June meeting. As Deputy Director of the city's Municipal Archives and Record Center, Bob filled us in on the treasures housed in that vast city resource.

The photo collection (over 100,000) dates back to 1870 and covers public works, city construction, street scenes, Central Park, and other city properties. A WPA photo project from the 1930's documents a broad section of city life including education and recreation. In addition, over 50,000 glass plate negatives record the history of municipal construction from 1880 through the 1950's.

A current Municipal Archives project is the restoration and filing of 10,000 original drawings of the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge.

The shelves at the Municipal Archives are crammed with interesting documents, letters, and old town records dating as far back as 1636. Bob pointed out that the minutes of Town Council meetings recorded everything, including juicy tidbits of local gossip.

A phonograph record collection containing speeches and public events dates back to the La Guardia Administration and features Mayor La Guardia reading the funnies to kids over the air waves during a news strike.

Located at 23 Park Row, the Municipal Archives and Record Center is open to researchers MWF 9:30-4:30. Head Archivist Idilio Graciapena and a reference staff of eight are on hand for guidance and assistance. So rush on down...and DIG IN!

SK

ASPP JOB EXCHANGE

This is an experiment! In early fall we will send a list of free lancers to selected people in all businesses who hire. So, FREE LANCERS: Photographers, Picture Researchers and Photojournalists who are interested and members of ASPP, send your name, address and phone # (as shown on the Membership list if still correct) and a short, succinct phrase or sentence indicating your specialty to the ASPP Box number by JULY 30. We will try to make this a going concern!

ASPP SEMINARS

Here is the list of our SEMINARS starting in October. The names of the speakers and the whereabouts of each meeting will be on the application issued in September. Only short summaries will be sent next year, generally in the NEWSLETTER. The \$5 cost to members only remains.

October 5, Tuesday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Library Tools For post, post grads, basics you should know to save time.

November 1, Monday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Barnes Press See how your pix get plated and printed - on location.

December 6, Monday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Photo Rights Besides permissions, what happens when pix disappear.

January 10, Monday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Photo Assignments What photographers and researchers need to know and do.

February 8, Tuesday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Research Libraries Finding your way in the inner sanctums, on location.

March 7, Monday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Permissions The publishers' view, the musts and practical how to's.

April 4, Monday, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.
Photography & Imagination Uses of photography in art.

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PHOTOGRAPH

Summer, 1976

Volume 1, Number 1

Seventy-five Cents



NAKED WEEGEE

by Gretchen Berg

The following interview/monologue with photographer Arthur Sledge, known as "Weegee" took place in 1965 in his home in New York. He was then 64 years old: he died in 1968 at the age of 67.

G.B.: First of all, Weegee, what is your real name?

A.F.: None of your fuckin' business!

Alright, here's how I was nicknamed. In the 1920s, there was a craze for the Ouija Board, a little wooden board with an alphabet, and everyone would sit around it and get messages from the outer world. At that time, I worked for a press syndicate, now called United Press International but which at that time was called Acme Newspapers. They used to find pictures of mine there, in the morning, of events that almost hadn't happened yet, or that no one knew had happened yet, but me.

There was this case once—this is quite a story—of me takin' a picture on the corner of Mott and Pell Streets in Chinatown and five minutes later,

the whole street blew up! It took six months to repair the damage, and for six months New Yorkers went without Chinese food! The picture, taken at two o'clock in the morning, appears in my book *Naked City*. There have been people who accuse me of blowing the street up on purpose! So, so many incidents like this occurred where I seemed to prophesy events, that they finally named me after the Ouija Board—"Weegee"!

Another time, Universal Pictures sent me on a tour of the United States to publicize one of their pictures, which was done in a very grand style. I was always two towns ahead of them and \$500 in cash up, because whenever I needed some money I stopped in the nearest Universal office and got some more. The scene shifts to

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Gallery Review: Eggleston at M.O.M.A.

The faded rusting orange sign bursts from a rockstrewn metal rooftop as if perched on a lunar landscape. Joined to it is a ubiquitous Coca Cola sign with art deco trim straight out of Walker Evans. Telephone wires connect everything to a cobalt sky. On the roof, a rag lies crumpled like a disemboweled dog. The shadow of the top of the photographer's head encroaches tentatively at the bottom of the photograph.

It is one of the few of the 75 dye transfer prints in William Eggleston's show at the Museum of Modern Art through August 1st, that doesn't contain the solid surface of the earth. The photograph was made in 1974, but most of the others are dated circa 1970-71.

Eggleston's photographs embrace outwardly bland southern scenes and people in and around Memphis and Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. Most are divided equally between the earth and the sky, or the floor and ceiling of a room. A sense of deep space and subtle tension is achieved through wide-angle optics, which Eggleston uses expertly. Always careful to keep the camera parallel to the subject, he eliminates the over-done wide-angle distortion common in contemporary photography.

Seemingly, these photographs offer little drama or potential for significant statements. But examined more closely, they describe tenuous balances between the subject and its environment. The fact that this is viewed disingenuously in the rural and suburban south at the turn of a tumultuous decade, and among people far removed from protest, only adds heightened irony to the exhibit in the cool Seventies.

The photograph of the suited man at the airport in Huntsville, Alabama, is a prime example of the way Eggleston can take an apparently bland subject and through his sense of color relationships and interlocking patterns create a tension which transforms the simple reality before the camera. His vision is not that of the haphazard snapshot school of photography which depends more on



chance and intuition than careful framing.

The man is seen in direct, unblinking sunlight. His businessman's smile appears to say nothing in relationship to the background. But the smile—and the smooth facade—convince only for as long as we ignore the implications of a two-dimensional reading of the photograph. This reading places his head at the front of the red and white checkered hangar in direct line with the airplane, making more ominous the red warning sign, "Stay Clear of Propellers At All Times." The major lines of the photograph reinforce this idea by projecting diagonally into his head, which is centered.

Much of the subject material in Eggleston's photographs is precariously perched on an uncertain balance. It is a seesaw stride between ground and sky, between hue and hue, between negative and positive shapes, between a human being and the secure groundings he clings to, and ultimately, between life and death. But the balance is maintained "with such taut and cunning that (the photographs) seem true, seen in color from corner to corner," as John Szarkowski writes in his introduction to the book, *William Eggleston's Guide*, published by MOMA to accompany the exhibit.

In that introduction, Szarkowski calls Eggleston's people "descendants of Penrod who seem to live surrounded by spirits, not all of them benign". In looking at these people, we discover that those spirits may be cultural and social as well as personal.

The Sixties was a decade of upheaval in American life. It started with the confident beginning of the Kennedy Administration, but was quickly jolted by his assassination. The Vietnam War, civil rights marches, protests, riots, vast areas of inner cities burned to the ground, further assassinations—these ran through the decade like flames. The sexual revolution, women's liberation, rock music, drugs, the generation gap, long hair, were all symptoms of great changes in our values, and in the structure of society. Anyone not affected by these events probably resided on another planet.

Indirectly, Eggleston is showing us the aftermath of the Sixties. His people exist in an uncertain limbo, trying to maintain their balance on the edge of these cataclysmic events. They still cling to their established values and secure symbols. We encounter them linked tentatively to each other like the children in "Outskirts of Morton, Mississippi, Halloween, 1971," who don't quite grasp each other's hands nor fully separate their haunted faces from the lurid, macabre colors of dusk. Or we see them like the young man in the back seat of an automobile, imprisoned by purple light next to a license plate, which is our traditional *passé* partout to escape. Or we find them facing existential defeat with only a glass in hand on a bed in the drab colors of a motel room.

In still other photographs, phallic symbols become a form of security blanket. Thus we can appreciate the full meaning of the man gently stroking the U.S. Air Force rocketplane mockup in Huntsville, Alabama, or more directly, the old man half holding his pistol on the bed in "Morton, Mississippi."

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In a black-and-white version published in *14 American Photographs*, a catalogue for an exhibit in 1975 at the Baltimore Museum of Art, we are immediately hit by the inner grid pattern of the photograph in tones of grey—particularly the bottom of the bed. As a result, there is a shift in our perception, and the slow unfolding does not take place. We are faced too

(Continued on page 26.)



B & W conversions courtesy Berkey K & L.



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WEEGEE

(Continued from page 24.)

because then I'm encouraged to do better myself. But there's no one who does what I do, anyway. I use everything you can think of. The way I got started on the kaleidoscope was, I had burned my hand on a large flashbulb and couldn't use it, so I was walking past a store one day when I saw a kaleidoscope in the window for 59 cents. I went in, bought it, took it home, tore it to pieces and learned how to do very delicate optical work shooting through it, because I could only use one hand. I'm the only person who can photograph through a kaleidoscope; I have done the impossible, just as I said I would. The ideas never cease or stop; I always think I've reached the end of the rope but there's always new variations.

The invention which I have now, that I'm patenting, the Color Box, I have already sold the designs to textile houses. It's an amazing slide machine that creates colors and designs within the color-slide machine and turns out

very beautiful colors. Now, I know nothing about fashions, I'm very primitive; in fact, I'm the Grandma Moses of Photography, and this machine throws these colors onto the nude or the semi-nude bodies of my girl models, and I photograph the results with a movie or still camera. This is to have a permanent record, because once I have something, I can never duplicate it. It's even bigger than the Mona Lisa.

One of my other memories of Hollywood is the Forest Lawn Cemetery. They have no tombstones, just piped music, and I thought this would be a wonderful place for a comedy film. So, to get in with them, I did some still jobs for them and, one day, I went through on a tour and in one of the vaults there was a painting of the "Last Supper" and the guide said, "This is a painting of the 'Last Supper', painted by an Italian woman abstract artist for \$50,000 and is much bigger and better than the original 'Last Supper'!" They also had a gymnasium over this place, too, where the salesmen of Forest Lawn had rivalries as to which of them sold the most lots! That was Hollywood!

G.B.: What kind of camera did you use?

A.F.: I used to use, in my newspaper days, a 4x5 Speed Graphic, as they all did then, and then we switched to a 2 1/2x2 1/2. Most photographers, when they go out, carry a 35mm camera, like a Nikon, and then a Rolleiflex with a strobe light so you can take care of anything that comes up.

I do my own caricature photos from pictures I already obtain from various sources, pictures of celebrities, or from paintings....

Even though I don't take street shots anymore, I still have a camera with me when I go out into the street, like an old fire horse who'll go when he hears the bells....!

Now, photography has become a fine art for me.... I can't sleep at night, anyway.... I'm up all night working, and in the morning I go out on the street corner and see the people goin' to work, and have a good laugh.... then I go home and go to sleep.... I can only sleep in the day.... the daytime is made for sleep.... the night is for love.... or.... work....

balance and, like Faulkner's people, persevere.

Ultimately, Eggleston's show is uneven. There are many photographs of striking quality, and others that don't meet the expectations of the greater ones. But he has achieved a mastery of color as form and substance. His colors enter our perceptions and impregnate the senses. They are plied over a broad spectrum but graduate into each other. Through his colors, William Eggleston has woven a unique tapestry of life maintained in a modern twilight zone.

Personally, I feel, color photography is a significant art form that has not been given its proper due. Therefore, I was glad to see a show of this size and prominence. Perhaps it will begin to redress the imbalance in photography and dissolve the entrenched opposition to color as a significant medium. Eggleston represents just one of many pioneers employing color to enrich our perception of the world. Ultimately, color photography has the power and force to challenge painting in its ability to alter permanently our understanding not only of values but also of life. Muybridge shook the world with his photographs of animals in locomotion that showed more than the human eye could perceive. Color photography will show even more dramatically that, as in Hamlet's words, "There are more things on heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Horatio."

Eggleston

(Continued from page 12.)

quickly with the overall structure of the photograph where the bed frame assumes equal weight with the shoes, the mirror and the floor. Thus, this becomes a perfect example of a photographic vision only realized in color.

Eggleston's pantheistic search for and exploration of ground and atmosphere also creates problems. The photographs ultimately become stifled when the balance between ground and field coagulates on subject matter that is not so allusive—as in the photograph of a black Shetland pony in a field. It is an image that has been reduced to banality so much that it loses its impact. Other photographs begin to pale as the subject matter veers to the opposite of a private insular hothouse world with suggestions of artistic decadence. An example would be "Church Facade, Rosa Fort, Mississippi, 1972," which strains for symbolic content through a cross of bricks on a concrete wall above ocular windows.

Many of the concerns in William Eggleston's world are southern—a sense of gentility, verve and grace under extreme pressure, which in this case is psychic as well as psychological and cultural. If he just presented us with a southern sensibility, however, his statements would lose significance.

Eggleston joins all his themes when he moves in closer to isolate signs or symbols, as in the "Peaches!" photograph, and in "Just Rite Cafe." Here, we are placed in a limbo, hanging in space with the thinnest wires connecting us to solid structure. Our messages of comfort and reassurance are rusting before our eyes in the late afternoon sun—and the omniscient Coca Cola sign cannot slake our thirst. Even the sun-blinded parched fields of earth have yielded to metallic landscape, and we are in final suspension. And yet, we hold, we cling, we maintain the frightful

Feldman

(Continued from page 5.)


looking for photographs because they're fine art, they're just looking for that memento of their grandfather, or of themselves. That's all right when you consider a memento can be anything that touches people. Greek statues in museums are mementos, too, and they do their job. Look at them. They join people living in different times in a very real way. A memento isn't a memory, it's only a piece of something that a person can touch and look at right now, today, and it helps make the memory easier to share.

"I think you have to wind up saying that a photographer is someone who makes pictures and is careful about what he is doing. He is careful to make prints that look the best he can, and people do respond to that. People jump back from shoddy work very quickly, especially if it's of themselves, they can spot it. A photographer tries to capture for all time a particular moment in a particular person's life through an arrangement of light and shadows. His photograph should be a blending of the photographer's insight into the character of his subject and his skill to make this all evident in his final print for all viewers. And there's another thing; maybe it's the most important thing. A photographer's got to be careful that the picture he's selling, handing out, that it's a picture that won't fade. It ought to stay right; people deserve that much. Photographers, the real photographers, make pictures that last."

PHOTOGRAPH

The advantages of being K+L

II. Good enough for galleries.

We're often asked to print entire shows for galleries and museums. Which makes us feel quite proud, for the standards for such work are obviously the highest. Frequently, the photographer takes up residence at K+L, working with our people on every print. We generally mount the photographs as well...on "floating" frameless-frames, or our well-known museum box mounts. Most labs wouldn't have the room, the time or the people for such projects, but we do. Some more of the reasons why nobody else does quite so many things, quite so well. We also do our bit to support museums: we've just designed and built the color darkroom in New York's International Center of Photography. Write for the K+L Data Guide...it's free. 

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212-661-5600



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Gallery Review: Eggleston at M.O.M.A.

The faded rusting orange sign bursts from a rockstrewn metal rooftop as if perched on a lunar landscape. Joined to it is a ubiquitous Coca Cola sign with art deco trim straight out of Walker Evans. Telephone wires connect everything to a cobalt sky. On the roof, a rag lies crumpled like a disemboweled dog. The shadow of the top of the photographer's head encroaches tentatively at the bottom of the photograph.

It is one of the few of the 75 dye transfer prints in William Eggleston's show at the Museum of Modern Art through August 1st, that doesn't contain the solid surface of the earth. The photograph was made in 1974, but most of the others are dated circa 1970-71.

Eggleston's photographs embrace outwardly bland southern scenes and people in and around Memphis and Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. Most are divided equally between the earth and the sky, or the floor and ceiling of a room. A sense of deep space and subtle tension is achieved through wide-angle optics, which Eggleston uses expertly. Always careful to keep the camera parallel to the subject, he eliminates the over-done wide-angle distortion common in contemporary photography.

Seemingly, these photographs offer little drama or potential for significant statements. But examined more closely, they describe tenuous balances between the subject and its environment. The fact that this is viewed disingenuously in the rural and suburban south at the turn of a tumultuous decade, and among people far removed from protest, only adds heightened irony to the exhibit in the cool Seventies.

The photograph of the suited man



chance and intuition than careful framing.

The man is seen in direct, unblinking sunlight. His businessman's smile appears to say nothing in relationship to the background. But the smile—and the smooth facade—convince only for as long as we ignore the implications of a two-dimensional reading of the photograph. This reading places his head at the front of the red and white checkered hangar in direct line with the airplane, making more ominous the red warning sign, "Stay Clear of Propellers At All Times." The major lines of the photograph reinforce this idea by projecting diagonally into his head, which is centered.

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Consider the photograph of shoes under a bed, taken with artificial electronic flash light. In the color version, one's eye moves from the rich brown of the dress shoes to the more decrepit pairs strewn in a line. The eye travels along the beige glow cast by the flash on the wood floor until it comes to the frame of a mirror. This movement is critical to understanding the photograph, which really suggests passages and the tentative hold of illusory shoe-rooted life in the flux of slow time.

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In that introduction, Szarkowski calls Eggleston's people "descendants of Penrod who seem to live surrounded by spirits, not all of them benign". In looking at these people, we discover that those spirits may be cultural and social as well as personal.

The Sixties was a decade of upheaval in American life. It started with the confident beginning of the Kennedy Administration, but was quickly jolted by his assassination. The Vietnam War, civil rights marches, protests, riots, vast areas of inner cities burned to the ground, further assassinations—these ran through the decade like flames. The sexual revolution, women's liberation, rock music, drugs, the generation gap, long hair, were all symptoms of great changes in our values, and in the structure of society. Anyone not affected by these events probably resided on another planet.

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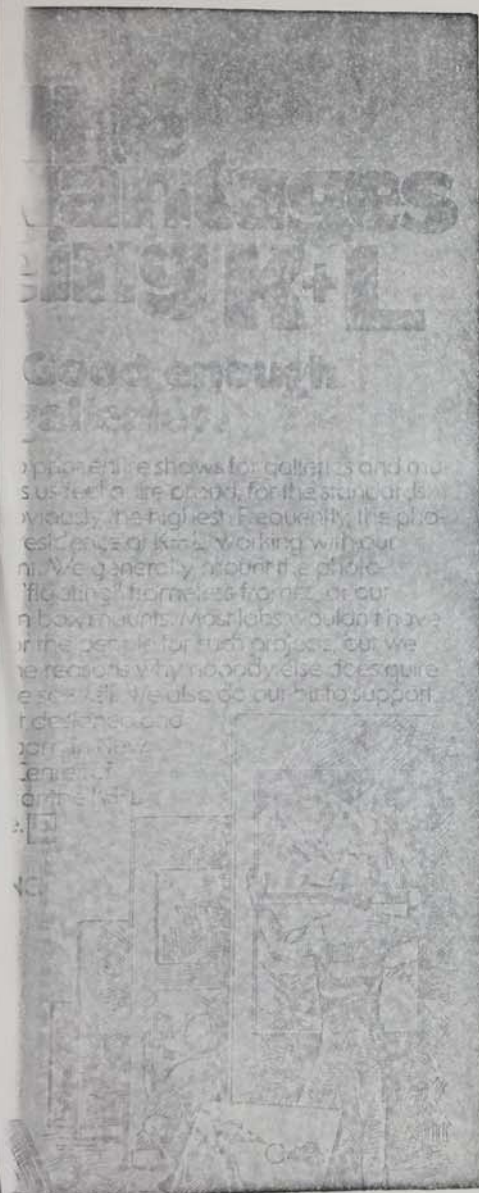
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(Continued on page 26.)



B & W conversions courtesy Berkey K & L

PHOTOGRAPH

SUMMER 1976

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Eggleston

(Continued from page 12.)

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Many of the concerns in William Eggleston's world are southern—a sense of gentility, verve and grace under extreme pressure, which in this case is psychic as well as psychological and cultural. If he just presented us with a southern sensibility, however, his statements would lose significance.

Eggleston joins all his themes when he moves in closer to isolate signs or symbols, as in the "Peaches!" photograph, and in "Just Rite Cafe." Here, we are placed in a limbo, hanging in space with the thinnest wires connecting us to solid structure. Our messages of comfort and reassurance are rusting before our eyes in the late afternoon sun—and the omniscient Coca Cola sign cannot slake our thirst. Even the sun-blinded parched fields of earth have yielded to metallic landscape, and we are in final suspension. And yet, we hold, we cling, we maintain the frightful

balance and, like Faulkner's people, persevere.

Ultimately, Eggleston's show is uneven. There are many photographs of striking quality, and others that don't meet the expectations of the greater ones. But he has achieved a mastery of color as form and substance. His colors enter our perceptions and impregnate the senses. They are plied over a broad spectrum but gradate into each other. Through his colors, William Eggleston has woven a unique tapestry of life maintained in a modern twilight zone.

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Gallery Review: Eggleston at M.O.M.A.

The faded rusting orange sign bursts from a rockstrewn metal rooftop as if perched on a lunar landscape. Joined to it is a ubiquitous Coca Cola sign with art deco trim straight out of Walker Evans. Telephone wires connect everything to a cobalt sky. On the roof, a rag lies crumpled like a disemboweled dog. The shadow of the top of the photographer's head encroaches tentatively at the bottom of the photograph.

It is one of the few of the 75 dye transfer prints in William Eggleston's show at the Museum of Modern Art through August 1st, that doesn't contain the solid surface of the earth. The photograph was made in 1974, but most of the others are dated circa 1970-71.

Eggleston's photographs embrace outwardly bland southern scenes and people in and around Memphis and Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. Most are divided equally between the earth and the sky, or the floor and ceiling of a room. A sense of deep space and subtle tension is achieved through wide-angle optics, which Eggleston uses expertly. Always careful to keep the camera parallel to the subject, he eliminates the over-done wide-angle distortion common in contemporary photography.

Seemingly, these photographs offer little drama or potential for significant statements. But examined more closely, they describe tenuous balances between the subject and its environment. The fact that this is viewed disingenuously in the rural and suburban south at the turn of a tumultuous decade, and among people far removed from protest, only adds heightened irony to the exhibit in the cool Seventies.

The photograph of the suited man at the airport in Huntsville, Alabama, is a prime example of the way Eggleston can take an apparently bland subject and through his sense of color relationships and interlocking patterns create a tension which transforms the simple reality before the camera. His vision is not that of the haphazard snapshot school of photography which depends more on



chance and intuition than careful framing.

The man is seen in direct, unblinking sunlight. His businessman's smile appears to say nothing in relationship to the background. But the smile—and the smooth facade—convince only for as long as we ignore the implications of a two-dimensional reading of the photograph. This reading places his head at the front of the red and white checkered hangar in direct line with the airplane, making more ominous the red warning sign, "Stay Clear of Propellers At All Times." The major lines of the photograph reinforce this idea by projecting diagonally into his head, which is centered.

Much of the subject material in Eggleston's photographs is precariously perched on an uncertain balance. It is a seesaw stride between ground and sky, between hue and hue, between negative and positive shapes, between a human being and the secure groundings he clings to, and ultimately, between life and death. But the balance is maintained "with such tact and cunning that (the photographs) seem true, seen in color from corner to corner," as John Szarkowski writes in his introduction to the book, *William Eggleston's Guide*, published by MOMA to accompany the exhibit.

In that introduction, Szarkowski calls Eggleston's people "descendants of Penrod who seem to live surrounded by spirits, not all of them benign." In looking at these people, we discover that those spirits may be cultural and social as well as personal.

The Sixties was a decade of upheaval in American life. It started with the confident beginning of the Kennedy Administration, but was quickly jolted by his assassination. The Vietnam War, civil rights marches, protests, riots, vast areas of inner cities burned to the ground, further assassinations—these ran through the decade like flames. The sexual revolution, women's liberation, rock music, drugs, the generation gap, long hair, were all symptoms of great changes in our values, and in the structure of society. Anyone not affected by these events probably resided on another planet.

Indirectly, Eggleston is showing us the aftermath of the Sixties. His people exist in an uncertain limbo, trying to maintain their balance on the edge of these cataclysmic events. They still cling to their established values and secure symbols. We encounter them linked tentatively to each other like the children in "Outskirts of Morton, Mississippi, Halloween, 1971," who don't quite grasp each other's hands nor fully separate their haunted faces from the lurid, macabre colors of dusk. Or we see them like the young man in the back seat of an automobile, imprisoned by purple light next to a license plate, which is our traditional *passe partout* to escape. Or we find them facing existential defeat with only a glass in hand on a bed in the drab colors of a motel room.

In still other photographs, phallic symbols become a form of security blanket. Thus we can appreciate the full meaning of the man gently stroking the U.S. Air Force rocketplane mockup in Huntsville, Alabama, or more directly, the old man half holding his pistol on the bed in "Morton, Mississippi."

The book itself is worth separate analysis. But in its visual seriality and the resonances established by the ordering of the photographs, the book accomplishes a structure and completeness that the exhibit lacks. This inner structure establishes the book in the tradition of such classics as Evans' *American Photographs* and Robert Frank's *The Americans*. It is not just a compilation of photographs to guide us through an exhibition, as the title suggests. *William Eggleston's Guide* may in fact be one of the most intensive and introspective guides through an artist's soul, from its flower-freshed door that opens the journey to its pit black suicide oven that almost ends it.

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MUSEUM OF MODERN ART SHOW OF EGGLESTON PHOTOGRAPHS

REAFFIRMS THE VALIDITY OF COLOR IN PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

Museum of Modern Art Issues Its First Color Publication;

Berkey K+L Collaborates In Production of Exhibition Prints

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Berkey K+L, one of the finest custom photographic labs in the world, was selected by MOMA to produce 33 dye transfer prints for the exhibition, working in close, successful collaboration with Eggleston. "We are very proud to have participated in this important show. Through it and the published book, color photography is given its long-denied recognition in full force, and is established as a relevant, eloquent expression of photographic art," said Ken Lieberman, K+L's Executive Vice President.

The MOMA exhibition indicates that work in color, by a new breed of young photographers, offers a significant solid visual experience, in which color functions as a component element of the picture's structure, rather than for its own sake.

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William Eggleston is an outstanding exponent of color photography. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in photography in 1974, and a National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship in 1975. A grant from the National Endowment of the Arts helped to make possible both the Eggleston exhibit and its supplementary book, with 48 color plates, William Eggleston's Guide by John Szarkowski.

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Mademoiselle, July 76

MILE SHOW BIZ, ARTS, ETC.

By Martine Latour



From N.Y.C.'s Museum of Modern Art's William Eggleston photography show.

Color photography's the new craze among serious photographers. And the man to watch is 36-year-old William Eggleston, whose deceptively spare, eerily hermetic studies of family and friends, neighborhood streets, side roads and local trivia from Mississippi's Tallahatchie County area (the region he hails from), spin a private tale

about American life. Above: *Memphis, 1970*. Seen in color, it's unforgettable for its incredible depth and the brilliant, bottle green of the tricycle juxtaposed against a bland background. Like a post-Pop painting. It's one of 80 dye-transfer prints from William Eggleston's *Guide*, an unprecedented all-color monograph for the show. Writes John Szarkowski: "Most photographers [outside the studio] have found it too difficult to see simultaneously both the blue and the sky." Eggleston does both.

Judith Guest's unsolicited first novel *Ordinary People* is a poem of a book. The title doesn't begin to suggest the surprise in store for the reader. Before we know it, Ms Guest has insinuated us into the anima of an earnest, engaging 17-year-old boy who, after a spell in a mental clinic for "trying to off himself," is back home with his well-meaning, nervous parents, patching up his life. Guest is astute on fatherhood, psychiatry and guilt; the writing is warm and

fluid; and the book leaves us with a sense of having lived, for a while, with a family we care for. (Viking, \$8.95.) Summer performing arts centers and festivals: the most pleasant ways to savor top-notch music, theater and dance. This favorite bunch sometimes serves up alfresco fare on blissfully bucolic grounds.

Hie on to Aston Magna (Great Barrington, Mass.), headed by distinguished harpsichordist and baroque music guru Albert Fuller, if you're nuts about music from Monteverdi through Mozart, elegantly embellished on a viola da gamba or a 17th c. wooden flute. Buffs pour into the Mahaiwe Theater, one of those ornate old movie palaces, for Sunday recitals. "Like a room in the Neapolitan Court," says Fuller. Five-weekend series, June 26-July 25.

The Newport Music Festival is the crème de la crème enclave for romantic music. And the most imaginative. Nowhere else can you discover neglected 19th and early 20th c. works performed by mostly young, first-rate artists. And no other has those posh mansions—Marble House, Rosecliff (where *The Great Gatsby* was filmed), even the Breakers' stables—as perfect settings for this kind of salon music. Thrice-daily music & dance programs range from very informal (along the water) to *très chic*. Highlights July 22-31: pianist Agustin Anievas in an all-Chopin recital; Massenet's *Portrait of Manon*; Dick Hyman stomping through Jelly Roll Morton.

Guess where these recent Off Off Bway hits had their first staged readings: David Freeman's *Jesse and the Bandit Queen*; Marsha Sheiness' *The Spelling Bee*; Israel Horowitz's *The Primary English Class*? At last summer's National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center, Waterford, Conn. Get the jump on next year's hot tickets by journeying to this prestigious theater (and now T.V.) haven. Sampling of July 18-Aug. 14 prime movers: Arthur Kopit, Christopher Durang. All performances are public and bargain-priced.

The action for original, experimental music-theater pieces is at Lenox Arts Center, Stockbridge, Mass.—the proving grounds for Jean-Claude van Itallie, Charles Wuorinen, John Guare, Joseph Chaikin and the like. On July 2, Elizabeth Swados (a Peter Brooks disciple who created the elemental music for Serban's *Trilogy*) launches *Night Club Cantata*, based on stories by Carson McCullers, S. Beckett and others, involving vocalists and a slew of home-made instruments; July 22, Eve Merriam's *The Club*, with Tommy Tune directing the all-woman drag work.

Los Angeles Ballet is lucky to have the prolific young dancer/choreographer [continued on page 26]

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The mood: thirsty.
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An Opinion

[continued from page 24]

Reagan's chances for the Presidency c) where the man on line in the Irish tweed hat procured same, or d) why there are not more buses running on your line. Don't wear platform shoes unless you want to be stared at. Don't wear short skirts if it is very cold and bus service is very bad.

Ticket lines for planes, trains and long distance buses allow for greater self-expression; any place where people wait to buy the little stubs of paper which allow them to really get away is a place which encourages conversation—particularly conversation with an aura of money and ease about it. Platform shoes are okay here, as are Afghanistan coats, Gucci luggage, tight bleached blue jeans and long scarves. Don't talk about unemployment lines, especially if you are currently collecting on one; everyone will feel uncomfortable.

Reception lines have their own protocol: "Hello, I am the new girlfriend of your daughter-the-bride's old boyfriend here." "Hello, Congressman, I wrote you that witty letter about fluoridation." But I would skip those queues in favor of lining up at a bank. These are the most private lines of all. No one likes to talk about money when that money is one's own and that money is about to be discreetly manipulated to enable one to go on eating. Do not wave your checks around in a bank. Do not talk, except briefly to the teller, and for heaven's sake, do not make a scene, or carry a suspicious-looking brown paper bag or a gun. If you want your withdrawal slip verified quickly, dress well. Walk deliberately and confidently; act like your account holds more than \$12.73.

Finally, there are movie lines. They terrify me. Moviegoers on line, like operagoers, concertgoers, or people waiting for a boutique to open up in the morning, peer out at the passing scene in a way which rattles me so badly that I would rather detour, wasting time, than pass under that sunglassed gaze.

Passing movie lines by is bad enough. What is worse, though, is queuing up on one of them. It is

enough to make a weaker moviegoer—me, for instance—resign herself to seeing every Truffaut and Woody Allen classic a year late, in the suburbs.

First there is that slow, self-conscious walk to the end. Kohl-rimmed and aviator spec'd eyes appraise length of skirt, height of heel and thinness of brow; mauve-shadowed lids look down on shortness of nail, broadness of waist, sallowness of skin. And all those moustached and bearded faces follow one's progress and count, I am sure, one's pimples.

The saddest part is that however up to it I might feel in the preparation ("Hair properly frizzed—check. Blue jeans proper length—check."), I fall

into slovenly disrepair when I hit those soft lens contact'd eyeballs. A sinking feeling it is—like when your mother tells you that

you look lovely in your tartan jumper and knee socks and when you get to school you find that all the girls are wearing skirts and stockings.

Conversation is impossible. Don't talk about supermarkets or bus stops or hardware stores or normal life. "Rhonda and I wouldn't do this for anyone but Fellini," said one moviegoer to another in a recent *New Yorker* drawing on just such a line. Talk is about movie reviews or parties or est or TM. Or how to make your Christmas-purchase yogurt maker produce anything better than coagulated sour milk.

The talk is positively rarefied, and it leaves me dumb. You know what my friends and I talk about in such a place? Nothing! We stare. We surreptitiously look at women's shoes and men's behinds. We eavesdrop. We become total fools, and depressed fools at that. We end up hating the movie.

And I think how I would much rather camp out all night in a sleeping bag on a line waiting to buy season hockey tickets. Or queue up to use the one non-dime-eating public toilet of a train station. Or take a number at a bakery. Or wait to sit on Santa's lap.

Lisa Schwarzbaum, a 1972 Guest Editor, is a freelance writer based in Boston.

Show Biz

[continued from page 14]

John Clifford (a N.Y. City Ballet expatriate) at its helm. Trade marks of this fledgling company (which includes Johnna Kirkland, Gelsey's sister): drive, a highly polished sheen, versatility. In L.A., July 7 into August: 30 ballets, including a Clifford premiere set to Gershwin and Burch Mann's full-length *The Legend of the Seven Sisters*.

The Fort Worth Art Museum has become one of the liveliest, most ambitious showcases that side of the Mississippi. For their spectacular *Great American Rodeo* (to commemorate the yearly F.W. Fat Stock Show and now touring), they commissioned Red Grooms' "Ruckus Rodeo," another one of his gigantic, colorful 3-D ride 'em cartoons, and Mimi Grooms' "Waitin' Behind the Bullpen;" Rauschenberg's 16-foot long collage-construction "Rodeo Palace;" Garry Winogrand's suite of photos; Andy Mann's video environments; and slews of local artists. Robert Irwin, the California apostle of minimal sculpture cut to the bones—he redefines existing space by using light and shade—has been installing his on-going *Continuing Responses*; while Dan Flavin's exhibit of fluorescent lights and graphics ends this month.



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\$17.95; flared pants, \$22.

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From N.Y.C.'s Museum of Modern Art's William Eggleston photography show.

Color photography's the new craze among serious photographers. And the man to watch is 36-year-old William Eggleston, whose deceptively spare, eerily hermetic studies of family and friends, neighborhood streets, side roads and local trivia from Mississippi's Tallahatchie County area (the region he hails from), spin a private tale

about American life. Above: *Memphis, 1970*. Seen in color, it's unforgettable for its incredible depth and the brilliant, bottle green of the tricycle juxtaposed against a bland background. Like a post-Pop painting. It's one of 80 dye-transfer prints from William Eggleston's *Guide*, an unprecedented all-color monograph for the show. Writes John Szarkowski: "Most photographers [outside the studio] have found it too difficult to see simultaneously both the blue and the sky." Eggleston does both.

Judith Guest's unsolicited first novel *Ordinary People* is a poem of a book. The title doesn't begin to suggest the surprise in store for the reader. Before we know it, Ms Guest has insinuated us into the anima of an earnest, engaging 17-year-old boy who, after a spell in a mental clinic for "trying to off himself," is back home with his well-meaning, nervous parents, patching up his life. Guest is astute on fatherhood, psychiatry and guilt; the writing is warm and

fluid; and the book leaves us with a sense of having lived, for a while, with a family we care for. (Viking, \$8.95.)

Summer performing arts centers and festivals: the most pleasant ways to savor top-notch music, theater and dance. This favorite bunch sometimes serves up alfresco fare on blissfully bucolic grounds.

Hie on to Aston Magna (Great Barrington, Mass.), headed by distinguished harpsichordist and baroque music guru Albert Fuller. If you're nuts about music from Monteverdi through Mozart, elegantly embellished on a viola da gamba or a 17th c. wooden flute. Bufts pour into the Mahaiwe Theater, one of those ornate old movie palaces, for Sunday recitals. "Like a room in the Neapolitan Court," says Fuller. Five-weekend series, June 26-July 25.

The Newport Music Festival is the crème de la crème enclave for romantic music. And the most imaginative. Nowhere else can you discover neglected 19th and early 20th c. works performed by mostly young, first-rate artists. And no other has those posh mansions—Marble House, Rosecliff (where *The Great Gatsby* was filmed), even the Breakers' stables—as perfect settings for this kind of salon music. Thrice-daily music & dance programs range from very informal (along the water) to très chic. Highlights July 22-31: pianist Agustin Anievas in an all-Chopin recital; Massenet's *Portrait of Manon*; Dick Hyman stomping through Jelly Roll Morton.

Guess where these recent Off Off Bway hits had their first staged readings: David Freeman's *Jesse and the Bandit Queen*; Marsha Sheiness' *The Spelling Bee*; Israel Horowitz's *The Primary English Class*? At last summer's National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center, Waterford, Conn. Get the jump on next year's hot tickets by journeying to this prestigious theater (and now T.V.) haven. Sampling of July 18-Aug. 14 prime movers: Arthur Kopit, Christopher Durang. All performances are public and bargain-priced.

The action for original, experimental music-theater pieces is at Lenox Arts Center, Stockbridge, Mass.—the proving grounds for Jean-Claude van Itallie, Charles Wuorinen, John Guare, Joseph Chaikin and the like. On July 2, Elizabeth Swados (a Peter Brooks disciple who created the elemental music for Serban's *Trilogy*) launches *Night Club Cantata*, based on stories by Carson McCullers, S. Beckett and others, involving vocalists and a slew of home-made instruments; July 22, Eve Merriam's *The Club*, with Tommy Tune directing the all-woman drag work.

Los Angeles Ballet is lucky to have the prolific young dancer/choreographer [continued on page 26]

The place: hot.
The mood: thirsty.
The drink: Kahlúa & Soda.

Over ice, an ounce of Kahlúa, a fill-up of soda, a squeeze of lime. A great way to cool it! For other Kahlúa refreshments, send for our recipe book. Free. Because you deserve something nice.

Kahlúa 53 Proof Coffee Liqueur from Sunny Mexico. Madestone Importers, 116 No. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90048.

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PHOTO REVIEW

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Thomas Barrow - Light Gallery

I did not like Mr. Barrow's one person exhibition because it was not attractive, nor did it move or engage me in any way. The twenty brown-toned prints aptly called "Cancellations" are random images of streets, buildings, vacant lots and anonymous architectural details all with either scratched x's or gouges or round punctures. The press release says of them - "They offer a complex statement on the veracity of a photograph, the subject before the camera, and the nature of photographic meaning." To me they offer the veracity of a constipated concept, insensitivity and indifference to the subject and are meaningless as photographs. In fairness to Mr. Barrow I did enjoy a striking image of an unusual building with a canon on its roof. It is interesting to note, however, that of the twenty pieces this one is the least "helped" by the photographer and might certainly live removed from its dreary companions.

Continuing our way through this cheerless, pointless show, we come upon fourteen nontoned photographs of books on shelves! Of this Barrow series, "Libraries", the release says: "They are concerned with the simultaneity of time and the interweaving of thought revealed through the juxtapositions of book titles". As idea, fair, maybe worth a few moments consideration, but why make it permanent? Thoughts are not always sensual and certainly not always visual. The photograph as record guarantees nothing. A computer's hum sings sweeter than these images.

In the adjoining room was another "one person exhibition" - Grant Mudford - showed eleven large, sharp brilliantly printed pictures of very straight walls, columns, and facades of buildings. They are flamboyant architectural pictures, fashion-like and a little slick, though two or three are striking. While Mr. Mudford's work may have merit, proper evaluation is difficult with this showing. Why do we see eleven pictures? What statement can he or almost anyone make with so few images? Is this all he has? How can we consider eleven pictures a "one person exhibition"? There are many ways to fill a gallery wall.

Judith Appelton - Modernage 48th Street. One wonders who is doing a service for whom? When space is provided for display of photographs, more than just walls are needed.

Ms. Appelton "showed" twenty-one portraits which could barely be seen. The light level at the floor appeared considerably brighter than the wall! Other than seeing their name on an announcement or in the listings of a newspaper, what possible benefit could any photographer receive showing in such a useless space?

Two group shows I enjoyed -- one at the Floating Foundation of Photography (thru June 27th) called "A Celebration of Life Below Fourteenth Street - Photographs from 1946 to 1976". Assembled by guest curator Ed Baynard, the show was a joyous melange of things that keep us going, living in New York: streets, crazies, lovers, strippers, artists, and all kinds of people. There are wonderful pictures by Weegee, Bob D'Alessandro, Larry Fink, Peter Hujar, Bernard Pierre Wolff, and by painter-writer Baynard himself, among others. The exhibition treats the greater and lesser events, personalities and movements that is "Downtown"! The quality of the work is high, and despite the very large size of the show, the pictures do not appear crowded or haphazardly arranged. Thanks to Ed, Maggie, and all the collaborators.

While I generally prefer theme group shows, I found "The Photographers' Choice" show at the Witkin Gallery (thru June 19) had much to offer. The show is drawn from the book of portfolios and critical opinion "The Photographers' Choice", edited by photographer-teacher Kelly Wise. The exhibition is unique in combining well-known photographers with lesser-known ones and featuring mostly previously unseen and unpublished pieces. Forty-five contemporary photographers are represented, with generally three to six prints each. About one third of them are well-known. The works selected are generally solid, no-nonsense pictures that convey a sense of seriousness of purpose. This is true even for work which I myself didn't particularly like. Mr. Wise has selected well. The show as a whole projects convincingly and the viewer moves easily from one group of photos to the next. Of the

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work by well-known photographers, I really was surprised by an unstiff, beautiful and sensitive nude portrait by Wynn Bullock which possessed great tenderness and intimacy. There was also a mysterious and affecting photo by Minor White, a totemesque image of the water of a stream and the bed below it, entitled Schoodic Sequence #1. Harry Callahan's radiant beach pictures are masterful images of space and light. My favorite of this group was the foggy one with sand, water, and fog enveloping and becoming one with the small figure of a man--a glowing image. Duane Michals provides a fascinating, intense, and strangely believable sequence of fifteen small images with text called "The Pleasures of the Glove". The pictures are "timed" to the text and virtually every "frame" is striking. The result is rewarding theater, artifice without artificiality. Michals writes as well as he photographs here, and the combined effect is an unusual experience. I enjoyed the work of the somewhat-known Ray Metzker, particularly a magical image of a parking lot with clouds unexpectedly appearing below it. Of the less well-known (?) people, Paul Diamond stands out with his powerful images of an intensely-lived life. These are scintillating photographs and really impressed me. Roswell Angier impressed me too with a haunting and seductive image of a woman waiting her turn at a pool table. John McWilliams presents a lovely and lyrical image of a male nude showering on a small dock. A strange, floating Xmas tree by William Larson (in color) has a disquieting effect, a kind of sinister desentimentalizing of the usual image of the Xmas tree. It may also be a comment on our way of celebrating in this country.

The press release mentions that this is the first show at Witkin that did not originate in the gallery. Lee Witkin is to be congratulated for being open to presenting shows prepared by others. And I hope he will continue to show the work of lesser-known photographers.

More On RC

This is short for lack of space. Read Kodak pamphlet J-19 "B/W Processing For Permanence." The point is, the daguerrotype is obsolete but still visible!

TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS

PHOTOGRAPH: Within the next few weeks a new magazine called "Photograph" will appear. It is staffed mostly by photographers. The contents include: exhibition reviews, news features, interviews, open forum and dialogue and other articles. Subscription is \$7.50 for ten issues. For more information contact Photograph, 210 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010, MU 3-9221.

THE FLASH: Is an opiate for Aperture. It is a simple, direct, strongly visual quarterly tabloid, edited and published by photographer Charles Gatewood and friends. It feels like Red Grooms and Max Ernst are among them. The Flash is short on text and long on alive photographs. Subscriptions are by contribution. Write The Flash, c/o Charles Gatewood, 50 West 22nd Street, New York City, N.Y. 10011. Be the first on your block!

The editor wishes to thank those who responded with comments and criticisms to the first issue of Photo Review. And to the new subscribers for their support. This is the last free issue and we invite your subscription, to start in September. Please send \$5.00 for ten month subscription to Photo Review, The Midtown "Y" Gallery, 344 East 14th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Photo Review invites the public to submit short articles and critical pieces to be considered for publication. Photo Review will not publish during July and August. The Midtown "Y" Gallery will be closed as well during this time.

ERRATA (MAY ISSUE)

- Pg. 1: Right column fourth line from bottom, publish not public
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Clarence John Laughlin -

The Transforming Eye

This exhibition was prepared and "packaged" by the International Exhibitions Foundation and the Lunn Gallery/Graphics International of Washington, D.C. Seventy-five mostly terrific photographs were poorly shown at I.C.P. One felt they were jumbled together, all of the framed and matted prints were displayed on two rows, making them appear awkward and chaotic. A simple solution would have been to stand or suspend three 4' X 8' panels running lengthwise in the center of the room. At least one third of the prints could then have been removed from the walls making for a better and more spacious hanging that these images deserve.

For those who do not know Laughlin's work, a short description is in order. Using a view camera, the photographer has produced superb prints of fascinating architectural details and remains of old buildings, much in Louisiana. The sense and feelings of the buildings themselves have been rendered in a strong and striking manner. In addition, Laughlin often adds a human presence either as portrait or allegory. The effect is often magical. We see overgrown, deserted plantations, cemeteries and cabins, often inhabited with convincing "ghosts". My only complaint with this truly imaginative photographer is his tacky titles - "Mistress of Pneumatic Bliss, Worn Lives and Houses, Poem at Sunset", etc, and his insistence on providing extended captions that not only "explain" the picture but literally tell us how to look at it! His passion for annotation and anecdote is fierce. He got it all out in his catalog--Buy it.

Moonlighting Stars - The fund raising exhibition "Moonlighting Stars" displayed photographs made by famous personages not known as photographers. Among the 25 who showed were Senator Howard Baker, Justice William O. Douglas, Peter Falk, Celeste Holm, Anthony Quinn, Eli Wallach, Gina Lollobrigida and Nelson Rockefeller. While I admit to having been curious as to what they would do, I was struck, ultimately, by how similar a level of banality was manifested by the participants. I liked Veruschka best and probably Charles Eames least because of his icy slickness. "Moonlighting Stars" had a strange fascination.

Merce Cunningham - The Merce Cunningham pictures of James Klosty appeared a competent photojournalistic group of dry interest.

I am in favor of a center in New York devoted to photography. ICP appears successful in terms of its courses, workshops and lectures. It seems to fall down in its program and focus of exhibitions. Mr. Capa and his staff surely must have their hands full in supporting their venture from the public relations, fund raising and administrative ends. I hope the way will soon be found to present a strong, relevant and consistent program of exhibitions commensurate with the aims of ICP.

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seven two-hour private sessions which consist of action, demonstration, and actual working. When we asked Captain Borst why it was so hard to locate darkrooms available for rent, he explained "I've seen 20 places come and go, but running a place like this is a time-consuming operation. You have to be on hand constantly and pay attention to the details." This place is special because of its impeccable maintenance, its informal spirit, and its careful organization. You'll get the prints you want and have a good time making them here as well. (BORST DARKROOM RENTAL SERVICE, 133 Prince Street, 254-9511, \$3 an hour, open Mondays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.) VVVV

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Borst's Prince Street darkroom-for-hire, Captain Borst in insert

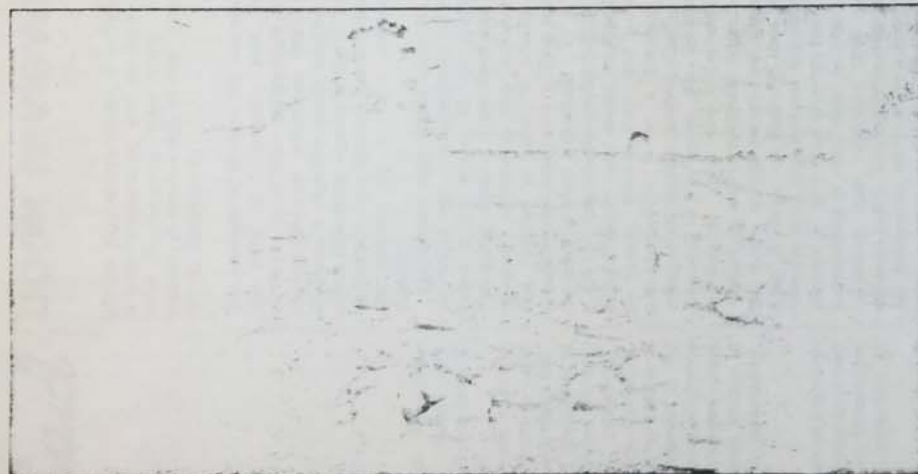
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Landscape photographed by William Eggleston

William Eggleston, courtesy the Museum of Modern Art

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Art Direction, Aug 76

They Said book reviews

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"Advertising is a barometer of everything that's happening around us—and everything around us is changing fast. There are new groups and new points of view popping up all the time: ecology, conservation, women's lib, integration, consumerism, the education explosion, group sex. You can add another fifty buzz words, but when you add them all up the sum is always the same: constant change in our daily lives, a revolution every day. So, there has to be constant change in advertising, a revolution in advertising, too."

Carl W. Nichols, chairman of Cunningham & Walsh, Inc. and former chairman of the American Advertising Federation, at the AAF National Convention in Washington, D.C.:

"If you look at advertising like a manufacturer looks at his product, we have a great product to sell: packaged communications....The new battle front for the advertising industry is at the state and city level. What happens there directly affects us all. Local restrictions set precedent for national actions."

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Eggleston's work raises questions by no means new in photographic circles. There is the matter of the so-called "snapshot school." More obvious is the renaissance controversy over the nature and function of color in relation to principles developed only decades ago on the basis of black and white.

As Mr. Szarkowski emphasizes in his perceptive and lucid essay, photography by nature defines form and subject simultaneously; it is a medium of selective elimination, accommodating the strictures of the frame. The additional problem of color has constituted a distracting and irresolvable superfluity for many photographers and viewers alike. At best, we have felt that color intrudes upon and confuses the delicate element of form. But this has been the shortcoming of most color failures: the insistence upon regarding color as a separate entity. To succeed in color, says Mr. Szarkowski, we must see a world that exists in color—as though "the blue and the sky were one thing." Color photography can succeed on its own, we are to believe, only when form and color are recognized as inseparable.

Eggleston's photographs very nearly represent the complete realization of this natural partnership. His subject matter is specific, deeply personal—he pictures people and scenes in his native Memphis and rural Mississippi. The color is unusual—muted, strained. In a vacuum, it possess an other-worldly eeriness amplified by exceptionally sharp focus.

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Undoubtedly the color questions will resolve themselves as more photographers discover the unalterable oneness of color and form. (And for those who must define art on the basis of financial worth, the advances that promise longer-lasting color dyes will prove investment in color photographs to be a worthwhile speculation). Finally, color photography will invite the conceptual sort of consideration that pervades the judgment of other "legitimate" art forms. What will emerge once again as most important—as it has in Eggleston's fine photographs—is the nature of the vision, its validity and its function for the artist and his public.

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Editor: Alexandra Anderson, Assistant Editor: Rosemary Cira
The Voice Rates New York: O V VV VVV VVVV NR

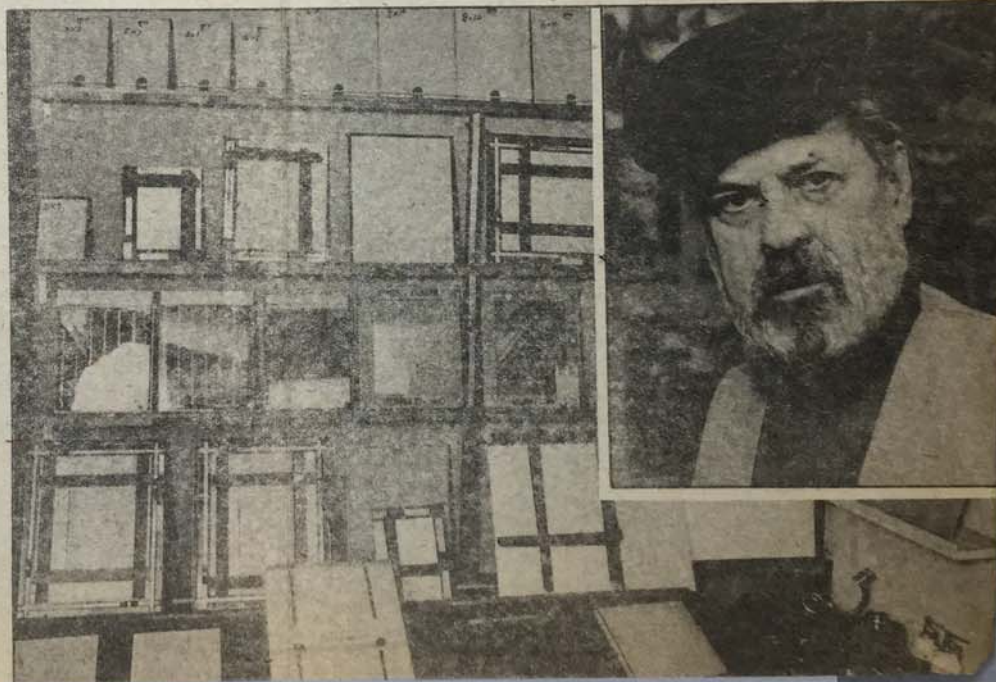
741-0030 ext. 328
May 6-May 12

SPOTLIGHT ON DARKROOMS

What do you do if you're a fledgling photographer complete with Nikon, appropriate lenses, and light meters, but have no darkroom in which to print your work? Or if you're a professional photographer from out of town and need to develop and print your pictures in New York City? You could send everything out to a lab like Modern Age, thus relinquishing control over the final product, or you could take a trip to Prince Street and do everything yourself in one of Captain Robert Borst's darkrooms-for-hire.

Captain Borst spent 25 years as a steamship captain and traveled all over the world before he came to rest 15 years ago on Prince Street. There his unique business grew room by room until now there are five darkrooms to rent. Borst's studio is meticulously maintained and supervised. Classical music plays gently over stereo speakers. His equipment is fully professional, and organized with Omega D2 variable enlargers fitted with El Nikor lenses, appropriate paper-carrying easels, chemicals, and dryers. The spacious darkrooms are equipped to print pictures up to 16-by-20 inches (black and white only) and are individually outfitted with sinks and trays so you can complete the printing process in each darkroom. Captain Borst's assistant, Anthony Grasso, gives advice to the faltering, and he even offers a hand with the printing if you need it. The studio provides everything except paper and can, on occasion, develop film, although you are encouraged to arrive with your negatives ready.

Captain Borst suggests that people reserve a four-hour time block for working the first few times, since little can be accomplished with less time. Anthony Grasso offers a special course for beginners who need to learn darkroom techniques from the ground up. The course costs \$100 for



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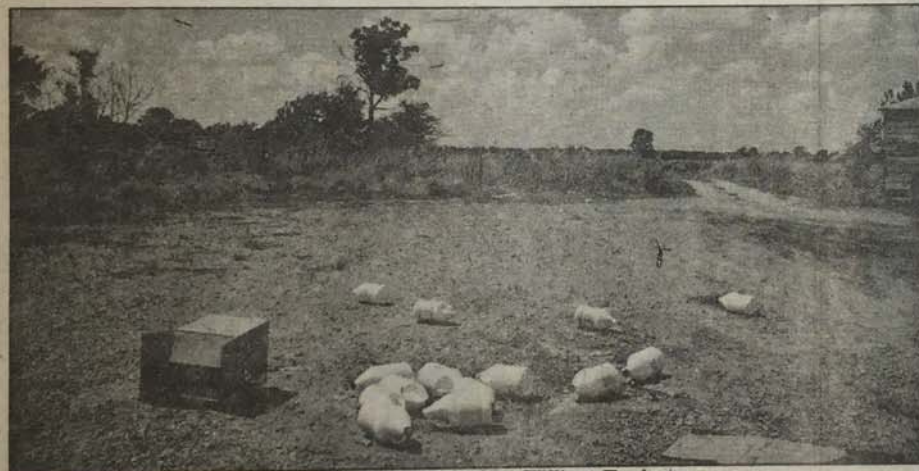
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Advertising Trade Publications, Inc.

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Elizabeth Shaw
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd. Street
New York, NY

23 August, 1976

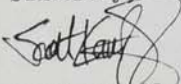
Dear Ms. Shaw,

I have enclosed a copy of the latest ART DIRECTION as well as two tear sheets of our review of William Eggleston's Guide, which is featured in this issue.

As you will see from the review, I was impressed and delighted by both the book and the exhibition--particularly because they exemplify the integrity of the artistic vision. Too, their timeliness and relevance to a most pertinent aesthetic matter honor the courage and foresight of the Museum.

Thanks for an exciting and ground-breaking exhibition, a lovely book, and the chance to inform our own readership of some very important issues.

Sincerely,



Scott Kanoff
Editorial Department.

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book reviews

Art Direction
Aug '76

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shows we've seen

Oct. 1976

William Eggleston—Color Photographs.
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continued on page 228

SHOWS SEEN—*continued from page 31*
unassuaged ego. Since my initial reaction (literally within five seconds) to William Eggleston's show was negative, I felt that in all fairness I should return for another look. Which I did. Now I'm *positive* that my opinion is negative.

It's not just that the pictures are mediocre. It's that they're presented with such fulsome flattery.

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In his simplistic misinterpretation of what he saw, he features the lowest, most common denominator, signs: *Coca-Cola*, *7-Up*, *Pabst Blue Ribbon*, *Wonder Bread*; also *STOP*, *Elect-Hutchison Sheriff*, *Just-Rite Cafe*, *Bozo's Cafe*, and *Father* (in a cemetery). This approach was okay when Walker Evans did it, back in the Burma-Shave era, but Eggleston makes it tiresomely repetitious.

A glorified snapshotter, Eggleston is described as having "discovered the work of Cartier-Bresson" in 1962. But his indecisive moments are omnipresent: a man standing and staring in a cemetery; somebody touching a blimp U.S. Air Force thing; a swimming pool minus swimmers, or even good color, people in a car looking



William Eggleston

toward someone (off-frame) whose legs are unaccountably on the car door.

These photos embody little thought and less feeling. Many are dull in color and concept. The execrably rendered "Candlesticks on table" would be unacceptable if submitted by one of my basic photography students. The exhibit even includes the ultimate cop-out—an image of an image (close-up of a football scene on TV).

You may have guessed by now that I don't like the photographs of William Eggleston. *Somebody* did, though; the exhibition and book were supported by grants from Vivitar, Inc., and the National Endowment for the Arts. But differences of opinion are the reason for horse races . . . and possibly for photography exhibits at The Museum of Modern Art.

—Harvey V. Fondiller

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POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY shows we've seen OCT. 1976

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Eggleston (born 1939) was a 1974 Guggenheim Fellow and held a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship last year. He has been a lecturer at Carpenter Center, Harvard College. Most of his photographs were made in Tennessee and northern Mississippi before 1971.

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A glorified snapshooter, Eggleston is described as having "discovered the work of Cartier-Bresson" in 1962. But his indecisive moments are omnipresent: a man standing and staring in a cemetery; somebody touching a blimpy U.S. Air Force thing; a swimming pool minus swimmers, or even good color, people in a car looking



William Eggleston

toward someone (off-frame) whose legs are unaccountably on the car door.

These photos embody little thought and less feeling. Many are dull in color and concept. The execrably rendered "Candlesticks on table" would be unacceptable if submitted by one of my basic photography students. The exhibit even includes the ultimate cop-out—an image of an image (close-up of a football scene on TV).

You may have guessed by now that I don't like the photographs of William Eggleston. *Somebody* did, though; the exhibition and book were supported by grants from Vivitar, Inc., and the National Endowment for the Arts. But differences of opinion are the reason for horse races . . . and possibly for photography exhibits at The Museum of Modern Art.

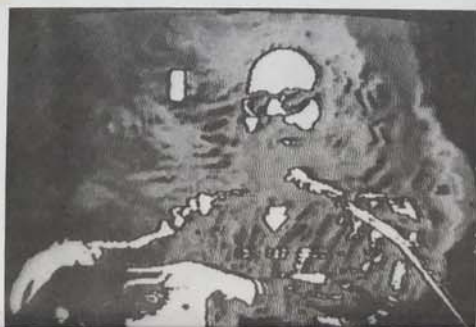
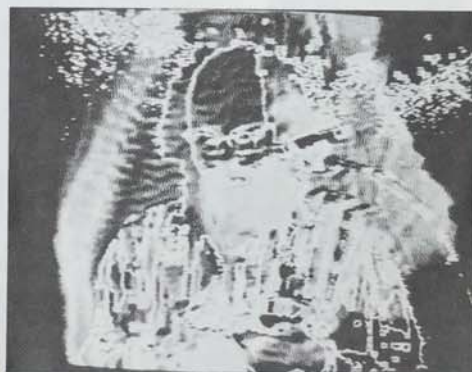
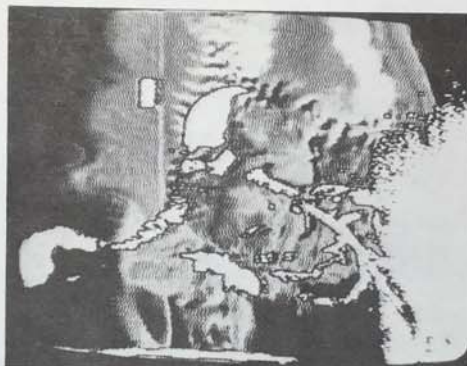
—Harvey V. Fondiller

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reviews

Color me MOMA

Photographs by William Eggleston
Museum of Modern Art
May 25 — Aug. 1, 1976

William Eggleston's Guide

Introduction by John Szarkowski
Museum of Modern Art/112 pp./\$12.50 (hb)

The showing of William Eggleston's photographs at the Museum of Modern Art was, inevitably, surrounded by contingencies that have little to do with his work. It is well known, at least within the art world upon which the operations of MOMA wield such influence, that the circumstances in which a person's work are shown can have more effect on his or her acceptance as an artist than does the work itself. The very existence of a Museum of Modern Art confirms the fact. Its existence, additionally, also confirms its power, and there is no doubt that Eggleston is now "in"—nothing short of holocaust could make him "out." That, however, is not an issue of major concern. Important, on the other hand, is the extent to which factors external to Eggleston's photographs have affected appreciation of them.

The major of these factors is that practical photographic processes in color have existed since the turn of the century—and have been used by photographers in increasing numbers ever since—and yet that Eggleston's is the first major exhibition of color photographs at the Modern. This in itself makes the exhibition more important than a display of a photographer's work.

It, in a very real sense, makes it a verification of color photography, a certification that this distinct medium-within-a-medium has begun to come of age. In addition, this is Eggleston's first major exhibition. His work has previously been available only in isolated examples, and he has been placed in the equivocal position of being judged not merely for his own worth but for whether he merits the distinction of being the Modern's first color exhibitor.

In his introduction to **William Eggleston's Guide**, the book released by MOMA in conjunction with the exhibition, John Szarkowski discusses the reasons for his choice of Eggleston. He begins by characterizing the failures of most previous color photography as twofold: one failure being (in specific reference to color) a lack of form, the other a lack of content. "The more interesting of these (failures) might," he says, "be described as black-and-white photographs made with color film, in which the problem of color is solved by inattention...the color in such pictures is extraneous." The other, presumably less interesting category of failure, he says, "comprises photographs of beautiful colors in pleasing relationships. The nominal subject matter of these pictures is often the walls of old buildings, or the prows of sailboats reflected in rippled water."

In short, he is describing the struggles of workers in any new medium to merge the demands of process with the demands of expression. He goes on to say, however, that in recent years "a number of photographers have begun to work in color in a more confident, more natural, and yet more ambitious spirit, working not as though color were a separate issue, a problem to be solved in isolation...but rather as though the world itself existed in color." Eggleston he of course includes as one of their number. "One can say," he says, "that in Eggleston's

pictures form and content are indistinguishable."

No fool, however, he qualifies this by stating that the same could be said of any picture. It is, in other words, up to the picturemaker to give viable form to estimable content. "The ambitious photographer...seeks those pictures that have a visceral relation to his own self and his own privileged knowledge, those that belong to him by genetic right, in which form matches not only content but intent."

Eggleston's photographs describe a limited environment. Taken almost exclusively in and around Memphis, Tenn., and small towns in Mississippi, they avoid what might be defined as public spaces, and concentrate, instead, on more private ones. Many are of his family and friends, or of homes, roads, buildings, or objects that constitute an enclosed circuit. The objects—tricycles, cars, shoes, mailboxes, barbecues, shower stalls, oven interiors, etc.—are commonplace, but the treatment of them is not. The photographs remove them from their environment and present them in large size and vivid color, and in a way that suggests that for Eggleston these things are emblematic.

It would be difficult, however, to state exactly what they are emblematic of. If, as the book's title suggests, the photographs are, collectively, a guide to something, what is it that they are a guide to? Their titles—which invariably note only where the pictures were taken—offer no guidance, except to confirm the suggestion that Eggleston makes no distinction between people and objects as indicators of his intent. One of his aunts, uncles, or cousins is, after all, no more "Memphis" or "Tallahatchie County, Mississippi" than is a 1956 Buick or the storefront of the King Cotton Beverage Co. Inc.

If, as becomes immediately obvious, this seemingly random collection of items does not assemble itself around a theme larger than Eggleston's personal circuit, the subjects of his photographs can be taken only as emblematic of themselves. The photographs become specific translations of private meaning into public, and it is here that the syntax by which they convey meaning—their color—becomes pivotal.

A spindly woman in a brightly-flowered dress thus becomes lost not only within her dress but within the brightly-colored floral patterns of the outdoor couch on which she sits, and within the leaves which surround the couch. The expansive red face of a man standing on an Alabama airfield would be sinister if it were not cartoonized by being made the central, propellant, element in a poster-bright aggregate of objects which include a sign which warns us to "Stay Clear of Propellers at All Times." The sickly green of a young man's jacket links him inexorably to the sickly green hues of the drapes and walls of the room in which he lounges. The lurid colors of the flowers which decorate an enormous and excessive gravestone labelled "Father" in ornate script express the nature of the sentiment which erected the thing.

In effect, the subjects of Eggleston's pictures seem to have dictated a personal response in Eggleston which makes them accessible to the viewer only as artifacts. In their isolation within the photographs, his subjects, whether people or not, are so remote that their presence provides no suggestion of context other than that of the photographs. Eggleston seems to have mastered his medium to allow his array of subjects to speak and, collectively, to say nothing. That in itself may say something, but it is a curious message.

John Szarkowski, confronted with the hermetic nature of the photographs, conceives an explanation in kind: "These subjects appear to be no more overtly

interesting or exotic than those in our own family albums, nor do they identify themselves as representatives of a general human condition. They are simply present: clearly realized, precisely fixed, themselves, in the service of no extraneous roles. Or so the photographs would have us believe. In truth the people and places described here are not so sovereign as they seem, for they serve the role of subject matter. They serve Eggleston's interests." Any person making photographs for a family album, however, is serving his or her own interests, and though probably he or she also makes color photographs (almost all family album pictures are made in color) it is hardly likely that the pictures would be blown up by the photographer to large size and shown in a museum. Eggleston's interests, no matter how private and insular, are, however, being—spectacularly—made public, and the oracularity he achieves may well be the mark of his intent.

Understandably, this makes it difficult to show the photographs effectively. Eggleston's field of interest is so wide-ranged that it can appear scattered, and, in fact, he does occasionally tread thin ground. He apparently does not strive to contain a diversity of interests, and although this tendency may or may not be seen as a fault, it is in the degree to which it is revealed that exhibition and book differ widely. The show tends to show it, while the book does not.

It is of course impossible to be absolutely true to a photographer's intent by reproducing his or her work in a book. Reproductions are not photographs, and unless the photographer is working specifically in book format—which Eggleston is not doing—reproducing photographs is in some way misrepresenting them. That, being inevitable, does not critically change the experience of Eggleston's photographs when seen in the book. Some suffer from the reduction in size, and from the loss in sharpness and color fidelity to the prints. Others do not.

The editing of the book, however, differs significantly from that of the show. For one thing, it reproduces no work done after 1971, a time when Eggleston concentrated far more exclusively (although by no means exclusively) on people than he did later. The exhibition includes work, done through 1974, which shows greater attention to objects. It contains some of his most extravagantly successful photographs, and some photographs which pale by comparison.

The **Guide**, however, is assembled from a less diverse body of work, and therefore gives a far more unified impression. In fact, it omits a number of the earlier images in the show which do not easily fit the "family album" concept, and includes images, omitted from the show, which do. One might wonder if the book is in actuality an accurate guide to Eggleston.

It may be, though, an accurate guide to John Szarkowski. Presumably, Szarkowski had the major hand in editing both book and exhibition, and so must have had his reasons for making them so different. Clearly, since the book will exist far longer than the show, and will reach many more people, it is meant to stand as the major counterpart of the event. Given the historical circumstances, the trace will be more important than the thing it is tracing. Few people, for example, now remember the exhibition of Walker Evans' **American Photographs** at the Museum of Modern Art. They must assume that the book is an accurate reflection of the exhibition, and of his work at the time. They might, however, well assume so, since the book was copyrighted and edited by Evans. **William Eggleston's Guide**, on the other hand, is copyrighted by the Museum.

—Dan Meinwald

from William Eggleston's Guide



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AROUS

October 8, 1976

You Can't Judge a Photographer by his Backers

By BRUCE BROWN

Christopher Columbus was wrong, for as Andy Warhol and a raft of lesser satellites in orbit around the glittering wreck of American popular culture have recently discovered, the world is irrefutably square.

Take Dayton, for instance. Or Baltimore. Or Seattle, good Lord. Any way you cut it, it comes out Campbell's Soup cans and comics and the Chamber of Commerce. Millions of dull, boring lives. Why, outside of a few of your closest friends, it hardly matters who you talk to at all. It's just like eating in one fast food franchise or another. They're all the same, and they're everywhere.

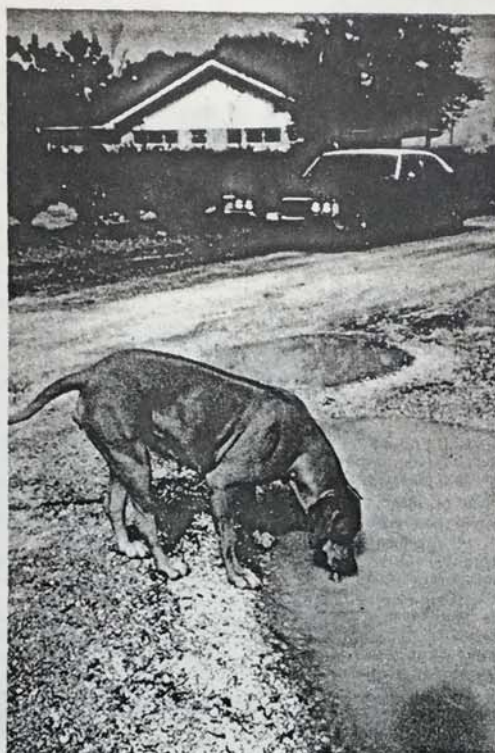
Not that it would really be any better if they were all gone. I mean, you've never been bored until you've had to stare at nothing but the horizon all day. No, let all of these good citizens stay right where they are. They can be of use to you.

Make a note of their curious subdivisions and second cars, their slicer-dicers and Seven-Ups. If the modern world is square, and you are a modern artist, then they can provide you with the subject matter (inspiration hardly seems the appropriate term) for the ultimate avant garde expression of our times: square art.

Besides, it's so easy. No need to worry about the actual content of these people's lives. Hang it all on form, the essential canon of modernism. "A poem should not mean, but be," and all that jazz. It's perfect, and not only that, there's a good chance that these people are so square that they'll actually buy it.

A good chance indeed. The Seattle Art Museum's Modern Art Pavilion opened an exhibition of color photos by William Eggleston last week that John Szarkowski, the photography director for the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York, would have us view in much this way.

Szarkowski, who organized the Eggleston show for MOMA last May, argues in the show's handsome hard-bound catalog that "form is perhaps the point of art. For many excellent reasons," he says, "it would be convenient if one could claim, or suggest, that this book of



William Eggleston's color photo, "Algiers, Louisiana."

photographs answers some large social questions, such as, Whither the South? or Whither America? . . . The fact is that Eggleston's work does not seem to be concerned with large questions of this sort."

The real virtue of Eggleston's work, according to Szarkowski, is its formal "elegance" and use of photographic color that "seems real."

Szarkowski makes his points with considerable verbal élan ("It is not clear whether the bucolic modesty of the work's subject matter should be taken at face value, or whether it should be understood as a posture, an assumed ingenuousness designed to camouflage the artist's Faustian ambition."), but Eggleston clearly deserves better.

The more than 40 photos on display at the Pavilion take the viewer on a lazy journey through the butt-end of the South. Algiers, Louisiana; Tallahatchie County, Mississippi; Huntsville,

camera with an opaque intensity that is riveting. Behind the two a field of dead autumn leaves stretches away to the muddy waters of Cassidy Bayou.

Again and again, Eggleston uses images like this (a wisteria-draped hot rod parked in front of an aging mansion, the King Cotton Beverage Co.) to illustrate quite clearly his own persona vision of "Whither the South."

Eggleston also manages on several occasions to capture images that resonate beyond the specific geographical and social boundaries of the South, and touch the nation as a whole. His "Southern environs of Memphis" and "Tallahatchie County, Mississippi" with their housing subdivisions set against an expansive, remarkably distant sky, could be shots of the outskirts of Anywhere, U.S.A. The alienation and loneliness that he finds there are a strongly rendered, if not altogether original, vision of "Whither America."

At their best, Eggleston's portraits have much the same effect. In "Memphis" he offers a front view of a remarkably prim woman with stiffly lacquered hair sitting on a curb. Beside her is a steel post with several yards of chain wrapped around it and firmly padlocked at the top. In "Huntsville, Alabama" he shows an open-faced man in a decidedly square suit standing on the runway of a nearly deserted small town airport. The high dome of his forehead echoes the high dome of the clouds above and the well ordered hopes within. Off to the side, a clean white sign with red letters further enunciates the simple order of what is rapidly becoming a vanishing world: "stay clear of the propellers at all times."

Eggleston fails (and he fails at least as often as he succeeds) when his imagery is weaker and the photos are forced to rely more completely on the effects of the color and formalist arrangement that Szarkowski touts so highly.

Although it is doubtless intentional, Eggleston's greatest weakness is his sense of composition. More often than not, the good photos struggle to rise above the essentially static nature of the vision. Lacking this force, the

weaker photos succumb to a pervading sense of sameness. Photo after photo is organized around the same land-sky relationship. The point of focus is usually blunt, and dead center. The converging angles of streets and rooms play on the same simple geometry again and again. Rarely is there a sense of motion.

The subtle verisimilitude of Eggleston's 3-color dye transfer process initially rescues some of these lesser works, but eventually it (like black and white) becomes a given, and like any given, it leaves the weak and the strong to fend for themselves.

That Szarkowski has chosen to emphasize Eggleston's greatest weakness, and ignore his greatest strength, is shocking, but hardly surprising. The pundits of modernism have erected a structure of theory that is founded on an essentially fallacious premise. The point of communication, as they see it, is grammar, not information.

This approach has launched innumerable schools over the last few decades, and although it has won tolerance, it has failed to elicit anything more dynamic from the general public than boredom (they're so square).

Now that modernism is grabbing for the next sensation to throw into the hungry maw of the moment, it has belatedly looked to photography and beyond to the former wasteland of color photography. Proclaiming a discovery, a breakthrough, a triumph, it has trotted out this latest find under the ratty old banner of Form, Not Content.

This approach may serve lesser photographers, but it hardly does justice to Eggleston, any more than Szarkowski's somewhat bemused speculation that all those people living out there in that world of "irredeemable dullness" actually have recognizable human qualities ("pride, adaptability, irrationality") does justice to the modern American world.

And although Szarkowski concludes that "such speculations . . . presumably relate only to Eggleston's pictures . . . not to the real world," Eggleston knows better, and shows it.

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The more than 40 photos on display at the Pavilion take the viewer on a lazy journey through the butt-end of the South. Algiers, Louisiana; Tallahatchie County, Mississippi; Huntsville,

Alabama and a score of other sleepy locales are rendered with an eye to the mundane, the flat and the graceless.

Garbage strewn lots, dogs drinking out of mud puddles and boxy buildings are offered in a manner that is often humdrum, but occasionally insightful in precisely the way that Szarkowski would deny. Like Cartier-Bresson (whom Eggleston credits as his principal inspiration) and Walker Evans, Eggleston can sometimes wring from the ordinary a startling image of a people and a time that derives its power from its truth, rather than its formalist composition.

"Summer, Mississippi, Cassidy Bayou in the background" is a particularly strong example. In the foreground, a white man in a dapper business suit and old school tie stands with his hands in his pockets. His gaze is abstracted and he is biting his lip. To the right and slightly behind him stands a black man in a white servant's coat. Unlike his companion (boss?), he is gazing directly into the

camera with an opaque intensity that is riveting. Behind the two a field of dead autumn leaves stretches away to the muddy waters of Cassidy Bayou.

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