

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 23

FOR RELEASE:

Wednesday, May 27, 1964

PRESS PREVIEW:

Monday, May 25, 1964

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

NEW PHOTOGRAPHY CENTER OPENS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Photography will be given new prominence in the program of The Museum of Modern Art when the enlarged and remodeled galleries open on May 27. In addition to presenting a series of temporary loan exhibitions on the ground floor, of which The Photographer's Eye selected by John Szarkowski, Director of the Department, is the first, the Department of Photography now has its own permanent exhibition area on the third and fourth floors of a new wing.

Although The Museum of Modern Art led other institutions in establishing a Department of Photography, this is the first time the unique Photography Collection of about 7,000 prints from 1839 to the present has had its own galleries. In the new Edward Steichen Photography Center, named in honor of the famous photographer who was Director of the Department from 1947 until 1962, about 170 prints will always be on view.

The Center will also house a study room where the remainder of the Collection will be accessible to interested students along with the Department's extensive library of books, periodicals and archive material. The public galleries of the Center will be on the third floor and will be connected with the study areas on the fourth floor by an interior stair.

The inaugural show in the Center, selected by Grace Mayer, Curator, will provide an introduction to the accomplishments of photography as seen in the works of such masters as Hill, Adamson, Negre, Cameron, Emerson, Brady, Atget, Weston, Strand, Cartier-Bresson, Smith, Heyman, Davidson and Heath. Included are Brady's Civil War pictures, Jacob Riis' documentation of New York tenements, portraits by Steichen and Stieglitz, now classic photographs from the Farm Security Project by Lange and

more...

Evans, abstractions by Coburn, color work by Haas and a photo-essay on teenagers by Bruce Davidson. It has been installed by René d'Harnoncourt, Director of the Museum. Exhibitions in these new galleries will be changed periodically.

This new space for photography means that the Museum will always have a photography exhibition on view/^{here} in addition to approximately four temporary loan shows presented periodically throughout the year/^{in other galleries.} In the coming months these include one-man exhibitions by André Kertesz and Dorothea Lange and a survey of the photo-essay.

Publishing activities in the field of photography will also be expanded in the "new" Museum. An enlarged and revised edition of "The History of Photography" by Beaumont Newhall, first head of the Museum's Department and now Director of the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, will be issued in the fall of 1964 in cooperation with George Eastman House. A series of monographs on major photographers is also planned.

The Museum of Modern Art began exhibiting photographs in 1932, three years after the Museum was founded; a separate curatorial department for photography was established in 1940. More than 75 temporary shows have been presented in the Museum galleries while dozens have been sent to other museums and educational institutions here and abroad. Nineteen books on photography have been published. The advisory committee for the Department consists of Dr. Henry Allen Moe, Chairman; James Thrall Soby, Vice-Chairman; Alfred H. Barr, Jr.; Sherman M. Fairchild; René d'Harnoncourt; David H. McAlpin; Beaumont Newhall; John Szarkowski; Shirley C. Burden and Monroe Wheeler.

The Photography Collection in which the achievements of over 1,000 photographers from more than 68 countries are represented is unique in the world. However, until now, this material, which is constantly being expanded by gift or purchase, has been in inaccessible storage.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York 19, N. Y. CI 5-8900.