

The Museum of Modern Art

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

A selection of ten photographs from the 32-page portfolio which illustrates the book on The Negro American published by Houghton Mifflin Company on August 4th, is included in the current one-man exhibition of work by the young photographer BRUCE DAVIDSON on view at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City through October 2.

The Negro American is a scholarly study, issued in the Daedalus Library series of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. It was edited by Talcott Parsons, Professor of Sociology at Harvard University, and Kenneth B. Clark, Professor of Psychology at the City College of New York. President Lyndon B. Johnson wrote the foreword.

In his introduction to the photographic portfolio, Arthur D. Trottenberg, Assistant Dean at Harvard University, says, "The editors of this volume recognized that some qualities such as tenderness, bitterness and dignity in the face of great adversity form a substantial portion of this exacting examination. They found in the photographs of Bruce Davidson an opportunity to illustrate for the reader those human dimensions that cannot be fully described in the text."

The photographs by Mr. Davidson are divided in four parts in the portfolio: a study of the faces, gestures, the posture of the Negro in America; the conditions under which he lives -- in Tennessee, Mississippi, West Virginia, New York, in rural and urban areas throughout the country; the manner in which he earns his living and, in the last group of photographs, the protest movement in all its forms. The photographs in the exhibition have been selected from each of these sections of the portfolio.

Also included in the Museum exhibition are 42 works from Mr. Davidson's essays on England, Wales, and Los Angeles. John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, who selected the photographs for the exhibition, says, "Few contemporary photographers give us their observation so unembellished -- so free of apparent craft or artifice -- as does Bruce Davidson. In his work formal and technical concerns remain below the surface, all but invisible. The presence that fills these pictures seems the presence

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of the life that is described, scarcely changed by its transmutation into art."

Bruce Davidson was born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1933. He became interested in photography during childhood and committed to a career in that field while still in high school. After undergraduate study at the Rochester Institute of Technology, he studied art and philosophy at Yale University. In 1958, he joined Magnum Photos, Inc. In 1962, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship and produced a photographic study on the American Negro.

Davidson's work has been widely published in the United States and abroad and has been exhibited often in this country. His photographs were first shown at The Museum of Modern Art in 1958-59 in an exhibition drawn from the Museum's Collection; his photographic essay "Brooklyn Gang" was included in the inaugural exhibition in the Steichen Galleries in May 1964. Last year a one-man exhibition of his works was held at The Art Institute of Chicago.

The present exhibition is part of a continuing series of small shows in the Steichen Galleries emphasizing the work of one photographer or presenting recent photographic acquisitions. These shows are presented in addition to the larger photography exhibitions shown periodically in the Museum's first floor galleries.

The Edward Steichen Photography Center, which opened in May 1964, contains the Museum's unique Collection of over 7,000 photographic prints dating from 1839 to the present day. About 200 photographs from the Collection are continuously on view; those not on view may be seen, by appointment, in the fourth floor Study Room of the Steichen Center.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.