

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## MODERN MUSEUM ESTABLISHES STEICHEN ARCHIVE

The Museum of Modern Art is establishing an Edward Steichen Archive to assure the preservation of research material relative to the study of the world-famous photographer's contribution to photography and to modern art, John Szarkowski, Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, announced today. Miss Grace Mayer, a member of the Department's staff since 1959, has been appointed as Curator of the Steichen Archive, in charge of collecting and organizing pertinent material. The archive will include exhibition catalogs, correspondence, notebooks, taped and written interviews, magazine and newspaper articles, and other documentary materials. The nucleus of the Archive consists of material being given to the Museum by Mr. Steichen; other material will be sought by Miss Mayer from institutions and individuals with whom Steichen has had contact.

"Such an archive will be of special value at The Museum of Modern Art, where it can be studied in proximity to the Museum's rich collection of photographs by Steichen and of works by many of the other artists with whom he has been closely associated since the turn of the century," according to Szarkowski.

Mr. Szarkowski also announced that Mr. Peter C. Bunnell, previously with the Museum on temporary assignment, has been appointed Associate Curator of the Department of Photography, and will assume special responsibilities concerning the development and organization of the photography collections. In addition Mr. Bunnell will continue to contribute to the Department's exhibition and education programs.

Edward Steichen, who is 89, was born in Luxembourg but raised in the American Middle West. With Alfred Stieglitz, he was one of the founders of The Photo Secession and assisted him in establishing the famous art gallery at 291 Fifth Avenue. From 1905 until the outbreak of World War I, he advised Stieglitz from Paris, and was instrumental in arranging the first showings in America of Rodin drawings and works by Matisse, John Marin, Cézanne and Brancusi, among others.

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He also exhibited his own photographs and paintings abroad at that time.

In World War I, First Lt. Steichen returned to France with the AEF on the day of Rodin's death and represented General Pershing at the sculptor's funeral. During the war he commanded the Photographic Division of the Air Services. He remained in the army for a year following the armistice to establish Aviation Photography on a permanent basis.

In the early 20's he went to Athens with Isadora Duncan and her pupils and photographed them on the Acropolis. He returned to the U.S. in 1922 and in the following year became Chief Photographer for Condé Nast. Among the famous people he photographed for Vogue and Vanity Fair during the 20's and 30's were Carl Sandburg (his brother-in-law), Gloria Swanson, Mrs. E.E. Cummings, Osgood Perkins and Lee Tracy in The Front Page, Matisse, Katherine Cornell, Charlie Chaplin, Joan Crawford, Maurice Chevalier, Lillian Gish and Greta Garbo.

In 1927-28 Steichen brought a successful landmark suit against the U.S. Government to prove that Brancusi's Bird in Space, which he had bought from the sculptor, was a work of art, and, therefore, not subject to customs duty.

During World War II Steichen was Director of the U.S. Navy Photographic Institute and in command of all Navy combat photography. His exhibition Power in the Pacific was shown at the Museum in 1945. Among other wartime assignments he supervised was the U.S. Navy film The Fighting Lady.

From 1947 to 1962 Steichen was Director of the Museum's Department of Photography, where he presented over forty exhibitions. The most famous, The Family of Man, has now been seen by almost 9 million people in 37 countries and 3 million copies of the book have been sold. The last copy of the exhibition was recently presented to the Duchy of Luxembourg. In 1964 when the enlarged Museum was opened, the photography galleries and study center were named in his honor.

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Steichen's list of awards, medals, citations and honorary degrees is headed by the Presidential Medal of Freedom, awarded in 1963 by President John F. Kennedy.

He now lives in Connecticut with his wife Joanna.

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Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. 245-3200.