

The Museum of Modern Art

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

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PRESS PREVIEW:

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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ARTIST AS ADVERSARY

Fifty-seven works by some of the most famous photographers of our time are included along with painting, sculpture, drawings and prints and posters in a major exhibition entitled The Artist as Adversary on view at The Museum of Modern Art from July 1 through September 27, 1971.

The works in the show address themselves in a variety of ways to subjects such as war and a broad range of social and racial topics. The earliest photographs (1863) are from Alexander Gardner's Sketchbook of the Civil War. The Larry Burrows' Vietnam photograph (1968) and two prints by Benedict J. Fernandez from his In Opposition are the most recent. All are from the Museum collection.

The vision of the artist is combined with that of the reformer in the photographs of Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, aimed at bringing to the attention of the authorities at the turn of the century the inhuman conditions in big-city slums and the abuse of child labor. In the thirties the U. S. Farm Security Administration sent out photographers -- among them Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans and Arthur Rothstein -- to photograph the desperate plight of the rural American displaced by Depression, flood and drought so that the public would see what had to be corrected. Lange is represented by five photographs, including On the Road to Los Angeles and Damaged Child, Shacktown.

The agony of war is expressed in four photographs by Robert Capa: Death of a Spanish Loyalist; Spain; The Mothers of Naples Lament Their Sons' Death; and The Last Shot Fired in World War II. Eugene Smith's World War II photograph, Bandaged American Officer, Leyte, Philippines and Leonard McCombe's photographs depicting the aftermath of that war, are on view. Four prints from David Douglas Duncan's series on the Korean conflict, This Is War, are also shown. The Vietnam War is the subject of the Diana Arbus photograph, Pro-War Protester, and of the Larry Burrows work on view.

Racial themes are treated in such photographs as Wilmington, North Carolina by Elliot

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Erwitt, two works by Benedict J. Fernandez and Declan Haun's Justice.

Other photographers represented in the exhibition are: Gordon Bennett, Margaret Bourke-White, Bill Brandt, Roy De Carava, Robert Frank and Edward Weston.

The exhibition includes over 400 works by more than 140 artists from 21 countries ranging from 1863 - 1971.

Selected by Betsy Jones, Associate Curator of Painting and Sculpture, the exhibition brings together from the Museum's own collections a large body of work in which the state of the world, political and military institutions, events and social injustices constitute the subject matter. Acquired during the past four decades, the works are supplemented with promised gifts and extended loans.

Catalogue, checklist and photographs available from Joan Wallace, Coordinator of Press Services, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7297, -7501.
