

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NO. 44

"AMERICAN LANDSCAPES" VOLUME TO ACCOMPANY PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

The 55 photographs from AMERICAN LANDSCAPES, part of the continuing Springs Mills Series on the Art of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, will be reproduced in a book to accompany the exhibition. This volume will also contain an introductory essay by John Szarkowski, director of the exhibition and of the Museum's Department of Photography.

The photographs in the book, taken between 1867 and 1978, explore the changing concept and definition of the natural site; among the earliest and most striking works to be included are the survey photographs of Timothy O'Sullivan, who had earlier photographed the Civil War. Other first-generation Western photographers represented are William Henry Jackson, John Hillers, F. Jay Haynes, Eadweard Muybridge and Carleton Watkins.

Toward the end of the 19th century, Szarkowski demonstrates, a new genre of quasi-impressionist landscape photographers arose, among them Clarence White, Alvin Langdon Coburn and Edward Steichen. Then, during the late 1920s Edward Weston and Paul Strand began to photograph "the landscape's small parts -- a cypress root, a mushroom hidden on the forest floor -- and proceeded in steps toward the larger chaotic landscape, learning to describe progressively complex orders or order." Of the two, Szarkowski says, Weston followed the problem farther, and at the height of his powers, made pictures of the "large, complex world that are as clean

continued/

and clear...as his early pictures of the landscape's fragments."

The landscapes of Dorothea Lange and those of Alfred Stieglitz, dealing respectively with social truths and the "secrets of creation," will be included; so, too, will the magnificent photographs by Ansel Adams of those corners of the American terrain that look much the same today as they did hundreds of years ago. Interpretive works by contemporary photographers Robert Adams, William Clift and Frank Gohlke will conclude the chronological survey of the American landscape. Each of the photographers represented has attempted to define what the earth is like and has presented new discoveries concerning the structure, the beauty and the meaning of our habitat.

American Landscapes is being published by The Museum of Modern Art with support from Springs Mills, Inc., and will be distributed by the New York Graphic Society, Boston, at \$14.95 clothbound and \$7.95 paperbound.

June 1981

For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director (212) 956-2648, or Pamela Sweeney, 956-7501, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019
