

Masterpieces of Photography

from

The Museum's Collection

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

GALLERY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

SEPTEMBER 18 - NOVEMBER 8

1959

MASTERPIECES OF PHOTOGRAPHY
FROM THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION
opens a program of exhibitions to be held
in the Art Institute's new gallery of
photography, located in Blackstone Hall,
on the ground floor of the main building.

The first exhibition will be followed by showings of the works of living masters of the medium - among them artists new to the public - interspersed with photographers of the past who have contributed to the traditions of photographic esthetics, and who demonstrate that photography may be a sincere and permanent vehicle for human expression.

As our collection is still in the early stages of its development, we cannot offer an historical survey at the present time. It is the esthetic value and high photographic quality of the Art Institute's collection to which we wish to call attention in this exhibition.

The foundation on which we have been fortunate to build is the gift of Georgia O'Keeffe, in 1949, of a large number of great prints from the Alfred Stieglitz collection, and this alone has been sufficient to attract many visitors to the museum. Other donors have generously come to the rescue when contemporary works were shown.

The present exhibition will indicate what rich beginnings we have to inspire us to the building of a collection of those workers of the past and present whom Ansel Adams has so rightly named "poet-photographers." For photography has, by now, become such a vast field, and there are so many brilliant practitioners

of its many uses, that we may concentrate on the few who employ it to accomplish what no other medium could do so well (and surely this is what makes any art an art), and give to their works the mystery and timelessness which make them permanent.

Herman Melville has said there are esthetics in all things, and it was with this thought in mind that the present exhibition was selected, and with the belief that photography - as much as any other form of expression - can illustrate this truth. It seems that, at last, the time has come when all the discussions as to whether or not photography is an art should be ended, and that they may be closed with Beaumont Newhall's recent statement: "We no longer need to debate the question 'Is photography an art?' We need only define what kind of art it is. More importantly, we need to find and encourage the few who use the camera as artists. It is the privilege of museums to serve this function."

And we feel that in each of these prints - in Hill's "Portrait of James Nasmyth," Julia Margaret Cameron's "Joseph Joachim," Genthe's "Greta Garbo," Steichen's "Clarence White," Stieglitz' "Paula," Callahan's "Dearborn Street," Weston's "William Edmondson," Adams' "Moonrise," Webb's "Jenners-town," to name only a few - will be found caught, spontaneously and forever, some gesture of the human spirit that could not have been captured by any other means.

Hugh Edwards
Curator of Photography

All titles marked * are from the
Alfred Stieglitz Collection.

ANONYMOUS AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS.
About 1850 - 1865.

Six daguerreotypes and three tintypes

BERENICE ABBOTT. American, 1898

Allen Street, New York. 1937

Grand Street, New York. 1937

ANSEL ADAMS. American, 1902 -

Rose and Driftwood

Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico. 1941

Portrait of the Novelist Phyllis Bottome

Mount Williamson, from Manzanar,
California. 1943

Rain, Coast Range Hills, California. 1950

JAMES CRAIG ANNAN. English, 1864 - 1946

*Bolney Backwater. About 1910

BRASSAI (Gyula Halász). Transylvania, 1899 -
living in Paris

"Bijoux" in a Place Pigalle Bar. 1932

HARRY CALLAHAN. American, living in
Chicago

Willow Leaves

Building Front, Dearborn Street, Chicago.
About 1953

JULIA MARGARET CAMERON. English,
1815 - 1879

*Portrait of Joseph Joachim. 1858

*Portrait of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.
1869

*Portrait of Sir John Herschel. 1867

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON. French, 1908 -
Andalusia. 1938

FRANK EUGENE. American, about 1900 -

*Double Portrait

*Portrait of Woman Wearing Hat

*Hortensia. About 1910

FREDERICK H. EVANS. English, 1852 - 1943

*Piscina

FRANCIS FRITH. English, 1822 - 1898

Entrance to the Great Temple of Luxor
(from "Views in Egypt"). 1856

The Approach to Philae (from "Views in
Egypt"). 1856

ARNOLD GENTHE. Born (Berlin) 1869; died
(New York) 1942

Fishermen's Nets

Greta Garbo. About 1925

San Francisco Earthquake and Fire: View
of Sacramento Street. 1906

San Francisco Earthquake and Fire:
Twisted Streets. 1906

Anna Pavlova

DAVID OCTAVIUS HILL, 1802 - 1870, and
ROBERT ADAMSON, 1821 - 1848. Scotch

*Portrait of the Engineer James Nasmyth.
About 1845

*The Sculptors John Henning and Alexander
Handyside Ritchie. About 1845

HEINRICH KUEHN. Austrian, died in 1944

*Two Children. 1910

*Portrait of a Young Boy.

ARNOLD NEWMAN. American, 1918 -

Man in Church Doorway. 1940

ARTHUR SIEGEL. American

Back of a Truck. 1952

EDWARD STEICHEN. American, 1879 -

*The Pool. 1900

*Kitty and Alfred Stieglitz. 1905

*Portrait of Clarence White. About 1905

ALFRED STIEGLITZ. American, 1864 - 1946

*Paula. 1889

*Child. Spring. 1901

- *The Hand of Man. 1902
- *Portrait of Waldo Frank. 1922
- *The Ford. 1935

PAUL STRAND. American, 1890 -

- *Frame Buildings. 1916

TODD WEBB. American, 1905 -

- Jennerstown, Pennsylvania. 1955
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 1948

BRETT WESTON. American, 1911 -

- Church and Smokestack. 1946
- Reeds in the Sand. 1946

EDWARD WESTON. American, 1886 - 1958

- Portrait of Ricardo Rokelo. 1921
- 7:00 A.M., P. W. T. 1945
- A Shell
- M. G. M. 1938
- William Edmondson, Sculptor, Nashville,
Tennessee

CLARENCE H. WHITE. American, 1871 - 1928

- *The Fountain

As this listing cannot contain biographies, historical links or descriptions of technical methods, the interested visitor is referred to Beaumont Newhall's The History of Photography (1949), a lively, readable and authoritative account and Peter Pollack's The Picture History of Photography (1958), as handsome and comprehensive a collection as one could reasonably demand. Both may be purchased at the Museum Store. For those who are stimulated to go further, The History of Photography (1955) by Helmut and Alison Gernsheim, with all its incomparable authority, wit and curious facts, is highly recommended.