



Alfred Stieglitz  
American, 1864 - 1946

# *The Last Joke—Bellagio or A Good Joke*

1887

platinum print

sheet (trimmed to image): 11.7 × 14.7 cm (4 5/8 × 5 13/16 in.)

mount: 52 × 36.5 cm (20 1/2 × 14 3/8 in.)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.30

Stieglitz Estate Number 60A

Key Set Number 33

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## KEY SET ENTRY

Related Key Set Photographs

 NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS  
*Alfred Stieglitz Key Set*



Alfred Stieglitz  
*Maria, Bellagio*  
1887, printed 1929/1934  
gelatin silver print  
Key Set Number 34

Remarks

In the summer of 1887 Stieglitz traveled through Italy, stopping in Venice, Chioggia, Pallanza (on Lake Maggiore), Bellagio (on Lake Como), and Riva de Garda (on Lake Garda). This photograph and Key Set numbers 34, 35, 36, 37, and 38 were made in Bellagio. Later that fall, Stieglitz sent twelve photographs made during the trip, including *A Good Joke*, to *The Amateur Photographer's* "Photographic Holiday Work Competition," judged by Peter Henry Emerson (see *The Amateur Photographer* 6 [4 November 1887], 217). This photograph won first prize (see *The Amateur Photographer* 6 [25 November 1887], 253).

The negative for this image was made using a Steinheil Aplanat 19-inch lens on Perutz's Orthochromatic plates and developed using oxalate, pyrosoda, hydroquinone, and eikongen (see exh. cat., Fourth Annual Joint Exhibition, New York, 1891).

Other Collections

A print corresponding with this photograph can also be found in the following collection(s):

**02** NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS  
*Alfred Stieglitz Key Set*

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 370.1964

Private collection

Lifetime Exhibitions

A print from the same negative—perhaps a photograph from the Gallery’s collection—appeared in the following exhibition(s) during Alfred Stieglitz’s lifetime:

1888, Vienna (no. 52.a.6, as *Genrestudie aus Italien*)

1889, Berlin (Special Steinheil Prize)

1890, London, Crystal Palace (no. 836, as *A Good Joke*)

1891, New York (no. 237, as *A Good Joke*, aristotype)

1894, Toronto

1899, New York (no. 22, as *A Good Joke*, 1887–1889, platinum direct)

1921, New York (no. 1, as *My First-Prize Winner*, 1887)

Lifetime Publications

A reproduction of this work appeared in the following publication(s) during Alfred Stieglitz’s lifetime:

*The Amateur Photographer* 7, special number (11 July 1888): frontispiece (ill., *A Good Joke*)

*Photographische Mitteilungen* 26 (September 1889): opp. 153 (ill., untitled)

“Alfred Stieglitz and his Latest Work,” *The Photographic Times* 28: 4 (April 1896): 162 (ill., *A Good Joke*)

Marmaduke Humphrey, “Triumphs in Amateur Photography,” *Godey’s Magazine* 135 (December 1897): 590 (ill., *A Good Joke*)

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## INSCRIPTION

by Alfred Stieglitz, on mount, upper left verso, in graphite: Exhibition / 1921; left center verso: The Last Joke— / Bellagio 1887

by Georgia O’Keeffe, on mount, lower left verso, in graphite: 60A

## PROVENANCE

Georgia O'Keeffe; gift to NGA, 1949.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1958 Photographs by Alfred Stieglitz, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 16–April 27, 1958

1983 Photographs by Alfred Stieglitz, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, February 3–May 8, 1983; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, June 17–August 14, 1983; The Art Institute of Chicago, October 18, 1983–January 3, 1984

2002 Alfred Stieglitz: Known and Unknown, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, June 2–September 2, 2002; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, October 6, 2002–January 5, 2003

2014 A Subtle Beauty: Platinum Photographs from the Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 2014–2015

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1947 Engelhard, Georgia. "Alfred Stieglitz: 'Father of Modern Photography.'" *The Camera* 69 (June 1947): 50.
- 1983 Greenough, Sarah, and Juan Hamilton. *Alfred Stieglitz: Photographs and Writings*. Washington, 1983: no. 1.
- 1983 Homer, William Innes. *Alfred Stieglitz and the Photo-Secession*. Boston, 1983: 12.
- 2002 Greenough, Sarah. *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set: The Alfred Stieglitz Collection of Photographs*. Washington, 2002: vol. 1, cat. 33.
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