

INTERSECTIONS

*Photographs and Videos from the National Gallery of Art
and the Corcoran Gallery of Art*

In 2014, the National Gallery of Art assumed stewardship of the Corcoran Gallery of Art's renowned collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, prints, drawings, photographs, and media arts. *Intersections* explores the connections between the two newly joined photography collections. The exhibition is organized around five themes—movement, sequence, narrative, studio, and identity—found in the work of the pioneers of each collection: Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) and Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946).

In 1887, the acquisition of nearly seven hundred prints from Muybridge's groundbreaking series *Animal Locomotion* initiated the Corcoran's early interest in photography. The 1949 gift of the Key Set of over 1,600 works by Stieglitz from Georgia O'Keeffe and the Alfred Stieglitz Estate launched the photography collection at the National Gallery of Art. Inspired by these two seminal artists, *Intersections* brings together highlights of the recently merged collections, demonstrating how they enrich one another and add to our understanding of art and culture from the last 175 years. The 85 photographs and videos on view made from the 1840s to the present include many that have not previously been exhibited.

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Movement

From the moment photography was first announced in 1839, people were entranced by its ability to stop time and motion. Yet initially slow film and shutter speeds, from a half-second to several seconds, meant that a moving person or object appeared in pictures as a blur, if at all. In the 1870s, Eadweard Muybridge, using faster negatives and newly invented electronic shutters, began a series of groundbreaking experiments to freeze time and motion. Using banks of cameras, each one recording a discrete part of an action, he analyzed sequential movements too fast for the eye and mind to grasp accurately. His work revolutionized the understanding of animal locomotion and laid the foundation for the invention of motion pictures.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, other photographers sought to arrest motion for scientific investigations into how and why things move the way they do. Working in France at approximately the same time as Muybridge, the physiologist Étienne-Jules Marey invented a camera that not only stopped movement but also charted it in a single picture. In the 1930s, Harold Edgerton, an American photographer and professor of electrical engineering, perfected a strobe light that allowed him to freeze a single, often dramatic, instant of time.

Many other photographers have instead used movement as an important aesthetic tool, recognizing that speed, motion, and new concepts of time are central conditions of modern life. Some arrested motion to infuse their pictures with a sense of a specific time and place. The 1860s British photographer Colonel Stuart Wortley, for example, stopped the movement of waves lapping the shore, while, at the turn of the century, Alfred Stieglitz froze racehorses in action. Later, twentieth-century photographers, such as Alexey Brodovitch and Peter Keetman, used blur and movement to reveal the grace of dance or the pace of the city.

Studio

The artist's studio has traditionally been seen as a retreat from the outside world, a place where experimentation can freely occur. Photographers' studios have taken various forms depending on whether they are public or private spaces, designed for commercial, scientific, or artistic purposes. In the nineteenth century, many photographers established commercial studios where they made portraits of customers posed before elaborate backdrops. This tradition continued into the twentieth century in studios such as that of James Van Der Zee in Harlem, which was equipped with scenery and a variety of props and costumes. Other twentieth-century photographers, such as Irving Penn, cleared their studios of such accessories, presenting their subjects in front of neutral backgrounds.

Beginning in the late 1870s, Muybridge's studios functioned much like scientific laboratories, with multiple cameras and devices to measure minute changes through time. For his first motion studies of horses, he designed a large shed to house his equipment next to a race track in Palo Alto, California. In 1884, the University of Pennsylvania commissioned Muybridge to make photographs for a study entitled *Animal Locomotion*, providing him with an elaborate studio with more sophisticated cameras, shutters, and timing mechanisms. Stieglitz, like many other nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographers, never had a designated studio, but instead used his galleries in New York—291, An Intimate Gallery, and An American Place—as well as the New York apartments he shared with the painter Georgia O'Keeffe as artistic “laboratories,” as he phrased it.

In the last fifty years, as numerous photographers have turned away from more traditional genres—landscape, cityscape, photojournalism, or street photography—they have used their work spaces as arenas in which to explore new ideas, construct alternate worlds, or perform for the camera.

Sequence

Muybridge was among the first to exploit fully photography's ability both to freeze time and make sequential pictures. His pioneering publication, *Animal Locomotion* (1887), included 781 plates, each a series of pictures that broke down the movement of a wide variety of animals—from horses, elephants, ostriches, and deer to men, women, and children—into discrete elements for study by scientists, artists, and others. His ideas remained timely for modern conceptual artists, among them Vito Acconci and Bruce Nauman, who began working with issues of time, sequence, and motion during the 1960s, sometimes making series of pictures of the human body, just as Muybridge had done. Other twentieth-century photographers, such as Alfred Stieglitz and Minor White, explored the poetic and expressive power of sequential imagery, while Paul Graham used it to reinvigorate street photography, showing how the urban environment is one of continuous change.

Narrative

The idea that every picture tells a story is one of the most common clichés of photography. Countless nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographers, including Muybridge and Stieglitz, have explored its narrative potential. In the mid-twentieth century, anecdotal photography thrived in magazines such as *Life* or *Look*, where carefully sequenced pictures and texts told stories of modern life. Yet in the last fifty years, artists working with photography have investigated new ways to construct narratives, and in the process have transformed the medium, forging critical links with other art forms, such as performance and installation art. In the late 1960s, Dan Graham and Jeff Wall combined photographs with narrative texts and placed them in art galleries and publications to challenge traditional forms of display and the pristine aesthetics of the fine art print. In the 1970s and 1980s, photographers such as Robert Frank, Jim Goldberg, Larry Sultan, and Nan Goldin exposed their lives and those of others, using single or multiple pictures, to examine broad cultural questions of family and identity. More recently, artists such as Victor Burgin and Judy Fiskin have pushed the narrative possibilities of the medium still further, using video to address the shifting meaning of art at different times and in different contexts.

Identity

From the earliest portraits made in 1839 to today's posed selfies, photography has played an integral role in defining both who we are and how we understand others. Portraits or self-portraits can reveal aspects of a person's identity and ways in which it is influenced by family, class, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, or nationality. Postmodern artists have also explored the influence of mass media on identity, stressing the importance of television, movies, advertising, and the Internet in shaping our beliefs and needs.

Muybridge's self-portraits, made while acting out various types of work, show how he forged his public persona by performing in his own photographic studies. Stieglitz's portraits of Georgia O'Keeffe indicate their intense personal relationship, but also help define his understanding of her as the archetypal woman and artist. August Sander created a vast catalog of portraits of Germans from the 1910s through the 1930s called *People of the 20th Century*, which classifies people by their profession. Lorna Simpson created linguistic and metaphorical connections between photographs of a woman's neckline and words that refer to the horrors of slavery and lynching, while Tomoko Sawada's self-portraits made in a photo booth humorously suggest the malleability of identity based on media stereotypes and outward appearances.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Horses. Running. Phryne L. No. 40, from *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion*

1879

albumen print

Gift of Mary and Dan Solomon 2006.131.7

In order to analyze the movement of racehorses, farm animals, and acrobats, Muybridge pioneered new and innovative ways to stop motion with photography. In 1878, he started making pictures at railroad magnate Leland Stanford's horse farm in Palo Alto, California, where he developed an electronic shutter that enabled exposures as fast as one-thousandth of a second. In this print from Muybridge's 1881 album *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion*, Stanford's prized racehorse Phryne L is shown running in a sequential grid of pictures made by twenty-four different cameras with electromagnetic shutters tripped by wires as the animal ran across the track. These pictures are now considered a critical step in the development of cinema.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Internegative for Horses. Trotting. Abe Edgington. No. 28, for *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion*

1878

collodion negative on glass

Gift of Mary and Dan Solomon and
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2006.133.105

This glass negative shows the sequence of Leland Stanford's horse Abe Edgington trotting across a racetrack in Palo Alto, California—a revolutionary record of the changes in the horse's gait in about one second. Muybridge composed the negative from photographs made by eight different cameras lined up to capture the horse's movements. Used to print the whole sequence together onto albumen paper, this internegative served as an intermediary step in the production of Muybridge's 1881 album *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion* (see illustration).

ÉTIENNE-JULES MAREY

French, 1830–1904

Chronophotograph of a Man on a Bicycle

c. 1885–1890

glass lantern slide

Gift of Mary and David Robinson 2002.116.1

A scientist and physiologist, Marey became fascinated with movement in the 1870s. Unlike Muybridge, who had already made separate pictures of animals in motion, Marey developed in 1882 a means to record several phases of movement onto one photographic plate using a rotating shutter with slots cut into it. He called this process "chronophotography," meaning photography of time. His photographs, which he published in books and showed in lantern slide presentations, influenced twentieth-century cubist, futurist, and Dada artists who examined the interdependence of time and space.



Eadweard Muybridge, *Horses. Trotting. Edgington. No. 28*, from *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion*, 1878, albumen print, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC

DEX 95

WILLIAM HENRY FOX TALBOT

British, 1800–1877

The Boulevards of Paris

1843

salted paper print

New Century Fund 1997.97.4

As soon as Talbot announced his invention of photography in 1839, he realized that its ability to freeze time enabled him to present the visual spectacle of the world in an entirely new way. By capturing something as mundane as a fleeting moment on a busy street, he could transform life into art, creating a picture that could be savored long after the event had transpired.

DEX 91

DAVID OCTAVIUS HILL AND ROBERT ADAMSON

Scottish, 1802–1870

Scottish, 1821–1848

Colinton Manse and weir, with part of the old mill on the right

1846

salted paper print

Paul Mellon Fund 2007.29.26

In 1843, only four years after Talbot announced his negative/positive process of photography, painter David Octavius Hill teamed up with engineer Robert Adamson. Working in Scotland, they created important early portraits of the local populace and photographed Scottish architecture, rustic landscapes, and city scenes. Today a suburb southwest of Edinburgh, nineteenth-century Colinton was a mill town beside a river known as the Water of Leith. Because of the long exposure time required to make this photograph, the water rushing over a small dam appears as a glassy blur.

DEX 96

COLONEL STUART WORTLEY

British, 1832–1890

A Strong Breeze, Flying Clouds

c. 1863

albumen print

Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation through
Robert and Joyce Menschel 2007.10.1

Although many photographers would agree with the British painter John Constable that clouds were “the chief organ of sentiment” in landscape art, they proved to be a challenge for nineteenth-century practitioners. Early photographic emulsions were not equally sensitive to all parts of the light spectrum, and thus a negative that was properly exposed for the landscape left the sky overexposed and splotchy. Some photographers avoided the problem by painting out the sky on their negatives, rendering it entirely blank; others exposed two negatives, one each for the sky and land, which they printed together. Wortley, who won great acclaim for his atmospheric pictures of billowing clouds, solved the problem by correctly exposing his plate for the sky, allowing the ocean in the foreground to appear as a dark, mysterious mass. Even with these technical limitations, he was able to freeze the motion of the waves breaking on the shore.

DEX 90

THOMAS ANNAN

Scottish, 1829–1887

Old Vennel, Off High Street

1868–1871

carbon print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 1995.36.1

In 1868, Glasgow's City Improvements Trust hired Annan to photograph the “old closes and streets of Glasgow” before the city's tenements were demolished. Annan's pictures constitute one of the first commissioned photographic records of living conditions in urban slums. The collodion process Annan used to make his large, glass negatives required a long exposure time. In the dim light of this narrow passage, it was impossible for the photographer to stop the motion of the restless children, who appear as ghostly blurs moving barefoot across the cobblestones.

DEX 15

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Plate Number 188.

Dancing (fancy)

1887

collotype

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, 1887) 2014.79.231

DEX 2

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

Going to the Post, Morris Park

1904

photogravure

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.280

In the 1880s and 1890s, improvements in photographic processes enabled manufacturers to produce small, handheld cameras that did not need to be mounted on tripods. Faster film speeds and shutters also allowed practitioners to capture rapidly moving objects. Stieglitz was one of the first fine art photographers to exploit the aesthetic potential of these new cameras and films. Around the turn of the century, he made many photographs of rapidly moving trains, horse-drawn carriages, and racetracks that capture the pace of the increasingly modern city.

DEX 8

IMRE KINSZKI

Hungarian, 1901–1945

Man Jumping

1929

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2004.63.2

DEX 19

SASHA STONE

American, born Russia, 1895–1940

Acrobat

c. 1930

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase,
Brenda and Robert Edelson Collection) 2015.19.4590

DEX 94

LOUIS STETTNER

American, born 1922

Times Square, New York City

1952–1954

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2001.67.208

DEX 20

SHŌMEI TŌMATSU

Japanese, 1930–2012

Rush Hour, Tokyo

1981

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection
(Gift of Michael D. Abrams) 2015.19.5234

Best known for his expressive documentation of World War II's impact on Japanese culture, Tōmatsu was one of Japan's most creative and influential photographers. Starting in the early 1960s, he documented the country's dramatic economic, political, and cultural transformation. This photograph—a long exposure made with his camera mounted on a tripod—conveys the chaotic rush of commuters on their way through downtown Tokyo. Tōmatsu used this graphic description of movement, which distorts the faceless bodies of commuters dashing down a flight of stairs, to symbolize the dehumanizing nature of work in the fast-paced city of the early 1980s.

DEX 5

FRANK HORVAT

Italian, born 1928

Paris—Gare Saint-Lazare

1959

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2001.67.105

Gare Saint-Lazare is one of the principal railway stations in Paris. Because of its industrial appearance, steaming locomotives, and teeming crowds, it was a frequent subject for nineteenth-century French painters—including Claude Monet, Édouard Manet, and Gustave Caillebotte—who used it to express the vitality of modern life. Twentieth-century artists such as Horvat also depicted it to address the pace and anonymity that defined their time. Using a telephoto lens and long exposure, he captured the rushing movement of travelers scattered beneath giant destination signs.

DEX 92

PETER KEETMAN

German, 1916–1987

Traffic

1953

gelatin silver print

Joshua P. Smith Collection 2001.128.39

Using a long shutter speed, Keetman depicts movement as a blur to evoke the tension between the private realm of a stationary man and the commotion of the city that engulfs him. Keetman studied photography in Munich following World War II and was a founding member of Fotoform, an influential group of experimental German photographers. In the spirit of the legendary Bauhaus school—closed by the Nazis in 1932—Fotoform advocated an avant-garde, abstract style they called “subjective photography” that prioritized creative expression over realism.

DEX 120

JEROME LIEBLING

American, 1924–2011

Málaga, Spain

1966

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of Sandra and David Berler,
in honor of the Women's Committee of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art) 2015.19.4564

DEX 16

HAROLD EUGENE EDGERTON

American, 1903–1990

Wes Fesler Kicking a Football

1934

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase with funds from
the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, DC,
a federal agency, and the Polaroid Corporation) 2015.19.4183

DEX 4

HAROLD EUGENE EDGERTON

American, 1903–1990

Squash Stroke

1938

gelatin silver print

Gift of the Harold and
Esther Edgerton Family Foundation 1996.146.4

A professor of electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Edgerton in the early 1930s invented the stroboscope, a tube filled with gas that produced high-intensity bursts of light at regular and very brief intervals. He used it to illuminate objects in motion so that they could be captured by a camera. At first he was hired by industrial clients to reveal flaws in their production of materials, but by the mid-1930s he began to photograph everyday events, such as someone swinging a squash racket. Edgerton captured phenomena moving too fast for the naked eye to see, and revealed the beauty of people and objects in motion.

DEX 6

ROGER MAYNE

British, 1929–2014

***Goalie, Street Football,
Brindley Road***

1956

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2001.67.142

From 1956 to 1961, Mayne photographed London's North Kensington neighborhood to record its emergence from the devastation and poverty caused by World War II. This dramatic photograph of a young goalie lunging for the ball during an after-school soccer game relies on the camera's ability to freeze the fast-paced and unpredictable action. Because the boy's daring lunge is forever suspended in time, we will never know its outcome.

DEX 17

HARRY CALLAHAN

American, 1912–1999

***Camera Movement on Neon Lights
at Night***

1946

dye imbibition print, printed 1979

Corcoran Collection

(Gift of Richard W. and Susan R. Gessner) 2015.19.4192

DEX 13

HARRY CALLAHAN

American, 1912–1999

Detroit

c. 1943

dye imbibition print, printed c. 1980

Gift of the Callahan Family 2011.95.40

Endowed with the enthusiasm of an amateur and the vision of an artist, Callahan was one of the most innovative photographers of the twentieth century. Throughout his long career, he was intrigued by the movement of people and things through the urban environment. Soon after he began to photograph in the early 1940s, he realized that if he moved his small, hand-held camera during a long exposure, he could quite literally draw with light. He made this photograph and another nearby using newly invented color slide film.

DEX 9

ALEXEY BRODOVITCH

American, born Russia, 1898–1971

Untitled, from “Ballet” series

1938

gelatin silver print

Diana and Mallory Walker Fund 2006.71.1

A graphic artist, Russian-born Brodovitch moved to the United States from Paris in 1930. Known for his innovative use of photographs, illustrations, and type on the printed page, he became art director for *Harper's Bazaar* in 1934, and photographed the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo during their American tours from 1935 to 1939. Using a small-format, 35 mm camera, Brodovitch worked in the backstage shadows and glaring light of the theater to produce a series of rough, grainy pictures that convey the drama and action of the performance. This photograph employs figures in motion, a narrow field of focus, and high-contrast effects to express the stylized movements of Léonide Massine's 1938 choreography for Beethoven's Seventh Symphony.

DEX 85-88

AMERICAN, 20TH CENTURY
Atomic Bomb Test Sequence,
Operation Upshot-Knothole,
Nevada Proving Ground

March 17, 1953

four gelatin silver prints

Gift of Mary and Dan Solomon 2015.137.1–4

During the Cold War, in an effort to maintain superiority over the Soviet Union, numerous nuclear weapons were tested on American soil. On March 17, 1953, a nuclear weapons test named "Annie," part of Operation Upshot-Knothole, was conducted at Yucca Flat on the Nevada Proving Ground, about sixty-five miles northwest of Las Vegas. In an effort to calm fears about weapons testing, civilian reporters were permitted to view it from a site nicknamed News Nob, a little over six miles to the south; cameras enclosed in two-inch lead sheaths were situated closer to the blast site. This house was located 3,500 feet from ground zero. The elapsed time from the first picture to the last was 2.3 seconds.

DEX 98

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Plate Number 180.

Stepping on and over a chair

1887

collotype

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, 1887) 2015.19.4107

Plate Number 180 shows Muybridge's model stepping on and over a chair both in profile and from behind. For Muybridge and his University of Pennsylvania advisors, the study of human and animal locomotion could be applied in aesthetic, scientific, and industrial fields. Inspired in part by Muybridge, Vito Acconci in 1969 used a similar action of stepping on and off a stool in his *Step Piece* (at left).

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Plate Number 504.

Ascending and descending stairs

1887

collotype

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, 1887) 2014.79.490

In 1884, Muybridge obtained new facilities and financing from the University of Pennsylvania and began an extensive technical examination of human and animal locomotion. He frequently photographed his models from several angles and incorporated a grid of white lines to help scientists and artists plot the details of motion. Sometimes, though, he did not present continuous action. *Plate Number 504* depicts fragments of several different sequences cut together like a very short movie: a woman ascends and descends a flight of stairs carrying first a pan of water and then a jug. The result is less analytical and more an experiment in playing with time and sequence for visual effect, an approach that caught the attention of early filmmakers.

VITO ACCONCI

American, born 1940

Step Piece

1970

five gelatin silver prints and
four sheets of typewritten paper, mounted on board
with annotations in black ink

Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection 1994.17.1

Acconci's *Step Piece* is made up of equal parts photography, drawing, performance, and quantitative analysis. It documents a test of endurance: stepping on and off a stool for as long as possible every day. This performance-based conceptual work is rooted in the idea that the body itself can be a medium for making art. To record his activity, Acconci made a series of five photographs spanning one complete action. Like the background grid in many of Muybridge's motion studies, vertical panels in Acconci's studio help delineate the space. His handwritten notes and sketches suggest the patterns of order and chaos associated with the performance, while typewritten sheets, which record his daily progress, were given to people who were invited to observe.

VITO ACCONCI

American, born 1940

Fall

1969

two gelatin silver prints

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2008.30.1

Originally a poet, Acconci became a visual artist in 1969, when he began photographing activities based on his instructions. *Fall* is a small-scale model for a larger multi-image collage of photographs (see illustration) and handwritten text that explores a simple directive: "take photos while falling forward." Acconci used the camera as an extension of his body and put it in motion. His outdoor performance relied on this sequence of two photographs to record his fall for an audience to see later. "These photographic pieces were ways to, literally, throw myself into my environment," he wrote.



Vito Acconci, *Fall*, 1969, two gelatin silver prints, chalk, and chalkboard spray on foam core panels, private collection, courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery.

DEX 31

BRUCE NAUMAN

American, born 1941

***Reproduction Proof of
"Bouncing in the Corner No. 1"***

1968

gelatin silver print

Gift of Eileen and Michael Cohen 2011.93.37

Nauman's video *Bouncing in the Corner No. 1* depicts the artist standing in a corner of his studio; he leans back to hit the wall, rebounds forward, and then repeats the same bouncing action over and over. His portable video camera was positioned on its side, and Nauman's body, which simply repeats this series of mundane, futile, and repetitive movements, is both the subject of his art and his means of making it. As an early example of video art about the body, this work produces a disorienting experience for the viewer, in which gravity and narrative expectations are upended. This sheet shows a sequence of video stills made for magazines and books. It also includes two photographs of another Nauman video, *Slow Angle Walk (Beckett Walk)* (1968).

PAUL GRAHAM

British, born 1956

***Port Authority, 17th August 2010,
11:01:33 a.m.***

2010

three inkjet prints

Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase,
Firestone Contemporary Art Fund) 2015.19.5252.1–3

These photographs of a New York street are part of a series called *The Present*, in which Graham sought to show that life, as he said, is “a continuum and what you thought mattered shifts quickly and transforms itself into another thing that matters for that instant.” By taking three pictures seconds apart, he emphasizes the fleeting nature of time and awareness as our focus shifts from the man in a white shirt to the young man emerging from the shadows to a woman walking her dog. Graham wants the photographs hung low on the wall to give viewers the impression that they could enter the scene.

DEX 34

MINOR WHITE

American, 1908–1976

Sequence 17

1959–1962

twenty-five gelatin silver prints

Corcoran Collection
(Gift of Sharon Keim) 2015.19.5078. 1–25

For White, making and sequencing photographs was a poetic process that helped convey the spiritual connections he found in the natural world. *Sequence 17* merges his portraits of two close friends with photographs of favorite landscapes they visited—the California and Oregon coasts and the Utah desert—to equate the human spirit with natural phenomena. “When a sequence is brewing, the feeling inside is akin to a storm gathering,” wrote White, who was also a renowned teacher and founder of Aperture, an organization that promotes the publication, exhibition, and study of photographic art.

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ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

Water Tower and Radio City, New York

1933

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1246

DEX 103

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***From My Window at
An American Place, Southwest***

April–June 1932

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1240

DEX 102

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***From My Window at
An American Place, Southwest***

April 1932

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1239

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ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***From My Window at
An American Place, Southwest***

March 1932

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1236

DEX 100

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***From My Window at
An American Place, Southwest***

March 1932

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1235

DEX 99

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***From My Window at
An American Place, Southwest***

March 1932

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.1233

Whenever Stieglitz exhibited his photographs of New York City made in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he grouped them into series that record views from the windows of his gallery, An American Place, or his apartment at the Shelton Hotel, showing the gradual growth of the buildings under construction in the background. Although he delighted in the formal beauty of the visual spectacle, he lamented that these buildings, planned in the exuberance of the late 1920s, continued to be built in the depths of the Depression, while “artists starved,” as he said at the time, and museums were “threatened with closure.”

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

***Judith Being Carted from Oaklawn
to the Hill. The Way Art Moves***

1920

gelatin silver print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.441

In 1920, Stieglitz's family sold their Victorian summerhouse on the shore of Lake George, New York, and moved to a farmhouse on a hill above it. This photograph shows three sculptures his father had collected—two nineteenth-century replicas of ancient statues and a circa 1880 bust by Moses Ezekiel depicting the Old Testament heroine Judith—as they were being moved in a wooden cart from one house to another. Stieglitz titled it *The Way Art Moves*, wryly commenting on the low status of art in American society. With her masculine face and bared breast, *Judith* was much maligned by Georgia O'Keeffe and other younger family members. In a playful summer prank, they later buried her somewhere near the farmhouse, where she remained lost, despite many subsequent efforts by the perpetrators themselves to find her.

VICTOR BURGIN

British, born 1941

Watergate

2000

video with sound, 9:58 minutes

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, with funds from the bequest of
Betty Battle to the Women's Committee of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art) CGA 2006.008

An early advocate of conceptual art, Burgin is an artist and writer whose work spans photographs, text, and video. *Watergate* shows how the meaning of art can change depending on the context in which it is seen. Burgin animated digital, 360-degree panoramic photographs of nineteenth-century American art hanging in the Corcoran Gallery of Art and in a hotel room. While the camera circles the gallery, an actor reads from Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, which questions the relationship between presence and absence. Then a dreamlike pan around a hotel room overlooking the nearby Watergate complex mysteriously reveals *Niagara*, the Corcoran's 1859 landscape by Frederic Church, hanging on the wall. In 1859, Niagara Falls was seen as a symbol of the glory and promise of the American nation, yet when Church's painting is placed in the context of the Watergate, an icon of the scandal that led to Richard Nixon's resignation, it assumes a different meaning and suggests an ominous sense of disillusionment.

Burgin normally projects his videos, which are made to be shown in darkened galleries rather than movie theaters or on television. This presentation is an exception so viewers can experience it in the context of other works in this section.

JUDY FISKIN

American, born 1945

The End of Photography

2006

video with sound, 2:28 minutes

Purchased with funds donated by
Michael Abrams and Sandra Stewart and the
Charina Endowment Fund 2013.56.1

Known for her 1970s and 1980s deadpan photographs of vernacular architecture in Southern California, Fiskin turned to film and video in the late 1990s, when illness prevented her from working in the darkroom. With a voice-over by the writer and dance therapist Joan Chodorow, *The End of Photography* is a lament for the passing of analog photography and the pleasures of working in a darkroom. The combination of the simple listing of objects lost by the advent of the digital era—“No more film. No more canisters. No more reels.”—and the humble, dated architecture captured by the shaky, out-of-date Super-8 film underscores the quiet sense of loss. Amusingly, Fiskin digitized her Super-8 film and transferred it to compact disc, exploiting the very technology that obliterated photography as she knew it.

DEX 43

JIM GOLDBERG

American, born 1953

Clyde Norbert, from Rich and Poor

1978

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the artist) 2015.19.4477

Jim Goldberg radically shifted the traditional relationship between photographer and subject by asking the people he photographed to respond to his pictures by writing directly on them. Taken in San Francisco welfare hotels and the homes of wealthy art patrons, these experimental collaborations combine gritty, black-and-white portraits with handwritten reflections that feature the subjects' points of view. Often poignant, sometimes funny, the writing gives people an opportunity to tell their own stories. Guided by questions from the photographer, Clyde Norbert inscribed his own bold ambition on his portrait: "I want to build an empire." When his project was first published in 1985, Goldberg wrote, "I believed that having my subjects write on the photographs would bring an added dimension, a deeper truth."

DEX 44

JIM GOLDBERG

American, born 1953

Vickie Figueroa, from Rich and Poor

1981

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the artist) 2015.19.4479

DEX 46

NAN GOLDIN

American, born 1953

Relapse/Detox Grid

1998–2000

nine silver dye bleach prints

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase with funds donated by the
FRIENDS of the Corcoran Gallery of Art) 2015.19.4709

Goldin has unsparingly chronicled her own community of friends by photographing their struggles, hopes, and dreams through years of camaraderie, abuse, addiction, illness, loss, and redemption. *Relapse/Detox Grid* presents nine colorful yet plaintive pictures in a slide show-like narrative, offering glimpses of a life rooted in struggle, along with Goldin's own recovery at a detox center, seen in the bottom row.

DEX 105

SHIMON ATTIE

American, born 1957

***Mulackstrasse 32: Slide Projections of
Former Jewish Residents and
Hebrew Reading Room, 1932, Berlin***

1992

chromogenic print

Corcoran Collection

(Gift of Julia J. Norrell in honor of
Hillary Allard and Lauren Harry) 2015.19.5081

Attie projected historical photographs made in 1932 onto the sides of a building at Mulackstrasse 32, the site of a Hebrew reading room in a Jewish neighborhood in Berlin during the 1930s. Fusing pictures made before Jews were removed from their homes and killed during World War II with photographs of the same dark, empty street made in 1992, Attie has created a haunting picture of wartime loss.

DEX 89

SHIMON ATTIE

American, born 1957

Mulackstrasse 37: Slide Projection of Former Kosher Butcher Shop and Laundry, 1930, Berlin

1992

chromogenic print

Corcoran Collection

(Gift of Julia J. Norrell in honor of
Susan Kenney Battle) 2015.19.5082

DEX 39

DAN GRAHAM

American, born 1942

Homes for America

1966–1967

two chromogenic prints

Glenstone in honor of

Eileen and Michael Cohen 2008.30.20

Beginning in the mid-1960s, conceptual artist Dan Graham created several works of art for magazine pages and slide shows. When *Homes for America* was designed for *Arts* magazine in 1966, his accompanying text critiqued the mass production of cookie-cutter homes, while his photographs—made with an inexpensive Kodak Instamatic camera—described a suburban world of offices, houses, restaurants, highways, and truck stops. With their haphazard composition and amateur technique, Graham's pictures ironically scrutinized the aesthetics of America's postwar housing and inspired other conceptual artists to incorporate photographs into their work. Together, these two photographs link a middle-class family at the opening of a Jersey City highway restaurant with the soulless industrial landscape seen through the window.

DEX 122

JEFF WALL

Canadian, born 1946

Landscape Manual

1970

bound volume with offset lithography

National Gallery of Art Library x.57239

Made while Wall was a student at the University of British Columbia, *Landscape Manual* is a cheaply printed stream-of-consciousness narrative that follows the artist on a drive through the outskirts of Vancouver. As in Dan Graham's *Homes for America* (shown nearby), *Landscape Manual* ironically emulates amateur photography and the expository layout of an instructional brochure. Wall presents a mix of personal diary entries and analytic text that ponders the limitations of pictures and language in describing true experience. The photographs, mostly shot through the window of his car, document mundane sites along the road, such as suburban apartment buildings and tire tracks in the mud. Words conflict with pictures, challenging the traditional idea that text and photographs should agree.

DEX 41

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Plate 175. Crossing brook on step-stones with fishing-pole and can

1887

collotype

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, 1887) 2014.79.220

Using theatrical props in an outdoor studio, Muybridge produced this short sequence of twelve photographs of a model seen from three different angles to represent a rudimentary narrative: a lone woman goes fishing and crosses a brook on stepping stones while carrying her fishing pole and a can. This study of simple storytelling exhibits improbable elegance due to the woman's balletic grace, agility, and balance.

DEX 38

ROBERT FRANK

American, born Switzerland, 1924

Halifax Infirmary

1978

gelatin silver print with
green oil paint and black ink

Robert Frank Collection, Anonymous Gift 1994.31.1

When Frank was a patient at the Halifax Infirmary in Nova Scotia, he photographed his roommate who was dying of cancer. Best known for his groundbreaking book *The Americans*, Frank had moved from New York to Nova Scotia in 1970 after a decade of making films. There he reinvented his work by making personal pictures using Polaroid instant film that produced a negative as well as a positive print. He wrote words like “operation,” “pain,” “nuclear,” and “treatment” directly onto his negatives and combined them, like a storyboard for a film, into a narrative sequence, which was then printed and colored by hand. By linking his photographs as a unit and writing on them, he added a poetic layer of words to an already emotional story.

DEX 45

LARRY SULTAN

American, 1946–2009

Thanksgiving Turkey/Newspaper

1985–1992

two chromogenic prints and
two screen printed plexiglass panels

Corcoran Collection (Gift of FRIENDS of the
Corcoran Gallery of Art) 2015.19.4484

From 1983 to 1992, Sultan photographed his parents in retirement at their Southern California house. His innovative book, *Pictures from Home*, combines his photographs and text with family album snapshots and stills from home movies, mining the family's memories and archives to create a universal narrative about the American dream of work, home, and family. *Thanksgiving Turkey/Newspaper* juxtaposes photographs of his mother and father, each with their face hidden and with adjacent texts where they complain about each other's shortcomings. “I realize that beyond the rolls of film and the few good pictures... is the wish to take photography literally,” Sultan wrote. “To stop time. I want my parents to live forever.”

DEX 57

FRANCESCA WOODMAN

American, 1958–1981

Untitled, Providence, Rhode Island

1975–1978

gelatin silver print

Gift of the Collectors Committee and
R. K. Mellon Family Foundation 2010.60.3

DEX 56

LAURIE SIMMONS

American, born 1949

Woman/Purple Dress/Kitchen

1976

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2008.30.45

In her 1976–1978 series *In and Around the House*, Simmons explores ideas about personal memory and gender stereotyping. Working in her studio, she used toy furniture and a doll to question the portrayal of women found in magazines or on television. Devoid of color, *Woman/Purple Dress/Kitchen* depicts a female doll standing in a playhouse kitchen with an oversized can of Heinz Oven Baked Beans and an oddly placed radio, presenting the home as an environment that both shapes identity and is shaped by it. “I love the photographic image,” says Simmons, “the way scale can become meaningless and everything is unified within the surface.”

DEX 63

DOUG AND MIKE STARN

American, born 1961

Double Rembrandt (with steps)

1987–1991

gelatin silver prints, ortho film, tape, wood,
plexiglass, glue, and silicone

Gift of Susan and Peter MacGill 2014.146.2

Doug and Mike Starn, identical twins who have worked collaboratively since they were thirteen, have a reputation for creating unorthodox works. Using tape, wood, and glue, the brothers assembled sheets of photographic film and paper to create a dynamic composition that includes an appropriated image of Rembrandt van Rijn's *Old Man with a Gold Chain* (1631). *Double Rembrandt (with steps)* challenges the authority of the austere fine art print, as well as the aura of the original painting, while playfully invoking the twins' own double identity.

DEX 58

HARRY CALLAHAN

American, 1912–1999

Cutouts

c. 1956

gelatin silver print

Gift of the Callahan Family 2011.95.24

DEX 64

DAVID LEVINTHAL

American, born 1949

Untitled,
from the series *Hitler Moves East*

1975

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the artist) 2015.19.4339

Levinthal's series of photographs *Hitler Moves East* was made not during World War II, but in 1975, when the news media was saturated with images of the end of America's involvement in the Vietnam War. In this series, he appropriates the grainy look of photojournalism and uses toy soldiers and fabricated environments to stage scenes from Germany's brutal campaign on the Eastern Front during World War II. His pictures are often based on scenes found in television and movies, further distancing them from the actual events. A small stick was used to prop up the falling soldier and the explosion was made with puffs of flour. *Hitler Moves East* casts doubt on the implied authenticity of photojournalism and calls attention to the power of the media to define public understanding of events.

DEX 76

HIROSHI SUGIMOTO

Japanese, born 1948

Oscar Wilde

1999

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the Heather and
Tony Podesta Collection) 2015.19.5239

While most traditional portrait photographers worked in studios, Sugimoto upended this practice in a series of pictures he made at Madame Tussaud's wax museums in London and Amsterdam, where lifelike wax figures, based on paintings or photographs, as is the case with Oscar Wilde, are displayed in staged vignettes. By isolating the figure from its setting, posing it in a three-quarter-length view, illuminating it to convey the impression of a carefully lit studio portrait, and making his final print almost six feet tall, Sugimoto renders the artificial as real. Triply removing his portrait from reality—from Oscar Wilde himself to a portrait photograph to a wax sculpture and back to a photograph—Sugimoto collapses time and confounds our expectations of the nature of photography.

DEX 1

VIK MUNIZ

American, born Brazil, 1961

Alfred Stieglitz,
from the series *Pictures of Ink*

2000

silver dye bleach print

Corcoran Collection
(Museum Purchase with funds provided by the
FRIENDS of the Corcoran Gallery of Art) 2014.136.415

Muniz has spent his career remaking works of art by artists as varied as Botticelli and Warhol using unusual materials—sugar, diamonds, and even junk. He has been especially interested in Stieglitz and has re-created his photographs using chocolate syrup and cotton. Here, he refashioned Stieglitz's celebrated self-portrait using wet ink and mimicking the dot matrix of a halftone reproduction. He then photographed his drawing and greatly enlarged it so that the dot matrix itself becomes as important as the picture it replicates.

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

Self-Portrait

probably 1911

platinum print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.303

Unlike many other photographers, Stieglitz made few self-portraits. He created this one shortly before he embarked on a series of portraits of the artists who frequented his New York gallery, 291. Focusing only on his face and leaving all else in shadow, he presents himself not as an artist at work or play, but as a charismatic leader who would guide American art and culture into the twentieth century.

WALLACE BERMAN

American, 1926–1976

Silence Series #7

1965–1968

Verifax (wet process photocopy) collage

Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase,
William A. Clark Fund) CGA 1970.3

An influential artist of California's Beat Generation during the 1950s and 1960s, Berman was a visionary thinker and publisher of the underground magazine *Semina*. His mysterious and playful juxtapositions of diverse objects, images, and texts were often inspired by Dada and surrealist art. *Silence Series #7* presents a cinematic sequence of his trademark transistor radios, each displaying military, religious, or mechanical images along with those of athletes and cultural icons, such as Andy Warhol. Appropriated from mass media, reversed in tone, and printed backward using an early version of a photocopy machine, these found images, pieced together and recopied as photomontages, replace the news transmitted through the radios. Beat poet Robert Duncan once called Berman's Verifax collages a "series of magic 'TV' lantern shows."

MARTHA ROSLER

American, born 1943

Cleaning the Drapes, from the series House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home

1967–1972

inkjet print, printed 2007

Gift of the Collectors Committee and the
Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund 2015.76.1

A painter, photographer, video artist, feminist, activist writer, and teacher, Martha Rosler made this photomontage while she was a graduate student in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Frustrated by the portrayal of the Vietnam War on television and in other media, she wrote: "The images were always very far away and of a place we couldn't imagine." To bring "the war home," as she announced in her title, she cut out images from *Life* magazine and *House Beautiful* to make powerfully layered collages that contrast American middle-class life with the realities of the war. She selected color pictures of the idealized American life rich in the trappings of consumer society, and used black-and-white pictures of troops in Vietnam to heighten the contrast between here and there, while also calling attention to stereotypical views of men and women.

DEX 62

ROBERT HEINECKEN

American, 1931–2006

Untitled Newswomen, Suite B

1984

four dye diffusion transfer prints

Gift of the Collectors Committee 2011.137.1.1–4

From 1980 to 1986, Heinecken conducted an extended examination of television and the ways in which the media inculcates modes of behavior, dress, and values in its viewers. For *Untitled Newswomen, Suite B* he photographed three different anchorwomen, all with similar hairstyles, skin tones, and facial expressions, directly from a television using a 20 x 24-inch Polaroid camera. Mimicking nineteenth-century scientific studies that sought to determine racial and social types by superimposing numerous photographs on top of one another, he combined all three portraits into a fourth composite image on the far right, as if to suggest the ideal anchorwoman who could make the news palatable to the broad public.

DEX 52

JAMES VAN DER ZEE

American, 1886–1983

Sisters

1926

gelatin silver print

Horace W. Goldstein Foundation through
Robert and Joyce Menschel 2000.83.2

James Van Der Zee was a prolific studio photographer in Harlem during a period known as the Harlem Renaissance, from the end of World War I to the middle of the 1930s. He photographed many of Harlem's celebrities, middle-class residents, and community organizations, establishing a visual archive that remains one of the best records of the era. He stands out for his playful use of props and retouching, thereby personalizing each picture and enhancing the sitter's appearance. In this portrait of three sisters, clasped hands show the tender bond of the two youngest, one of whom holds a celebrity portrait, revealing her enthusiasm for popular culture.

DEX 66

SALLY MANN

American, born 1951

Self-Portrait

1974

gelatin silver print

Corcoran Collection

(Gift of Olga Hirshhorn) 2015.19.4924

Sally Mann, who is best known for the pictures of her children she made in the 1980s and 1990s, began to photograph when she was a teenager. In this rare, early, and intimate self-portrait, the artist is reflected in a mirror, clasping her loose shirt as she stands in a friend's bathroom. Her thoughtful, expectant expression, coupled with her finger pointing directly at the lens of the large view camera that towers above her, foreshadows the commanding presence photography would have in her life.

DEX 53

IRVING PENN

American, 1917–2009

Cuzco Children

1948

platinum/palladium print, printed 1978

Gift of Irving Penn 2002.119.26

Penn once remarked that as a young photographer, confined to work in a windowless commercial studio, he dreamed of being mysteriously transported to his "ideal studio [in] remote parts of the earth." In 1948, he traveled to Cuzco, Peru, and rented a studio with natural light from a portrait photographer who had a single painted curtain as a backdrop. Reversing the normal practice, Penn paid people to pose for him, including these diminutive children whom he depicted with as much respect as he did the celebrities who sat for him in New York.

NADAR

French, 1820–1910

Self-Portrait with Wife Ernestine in a Balloon Gondola

c. 1865

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1890

Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation through
Robert and Joyce Menschel 2000.21.1

Nadar (a pseudonym for Gaspard-Félix Tournachon) was not only a celebrated portrait photographer, but also a journalist, caricaturist, and early proponent of manned flight. In 1863, he commissioned a prominent balloonist to build an enormous balloon 196 feet high, which he named The Giant. The ascents he made from 1863 to 1867 were widely covered in the press and celebrated by the cartoonist Honoré Daumier, who depicted Nadar soaring above Paris, its buildings festooned with signs for photography studios. Nadar made and sold small prints like this self-portrait to promote his ballooning ventures. The obviously artificial construction of this picture—Nadar and his wife sit in a basket far too small for a real ascent and are posed in front of a painted backdrop—and its untrimmed edges showing assistants at either side make it less of the self-aggrandizing statement that Nadar wished and more of an amusing behind-the-scenes look at studio practice.



Honoré Daumier, *Nadar élevant la Photographie à la hauteur de l'Art* (Nadar elevating Photography to the Height of Art), 1862, lithograph, National Gallery of Art, Washington

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

291—Picasso-Braque Exhibition

1915

platinum print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.374

291 was Stieglitz's legendary gallery in New York City (its name derived from its address on Fifth Avenue), where he introduced modern European and American art and photography to the American public. He also used 291 as a studio, frequently photographing friends and colleagues there, as well as the views from its windows. This picture records what Stieglitz called a "demonstration"—a short display of no more than a few days designed to prompt a focused discussion. Including two works by Picasso, an African mask from the Kota people, a wasps' nest, and 291's signature brass bowl, the photograph calls into question the relationship between nature and culture, Western and African art.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Plate Number 521.

***A, walking; B, ascending step;
C, throwing disk; D, using shovel;
E, using pick; F, using pick***

1887

collotype

Corcoran Collection

(Museum Purchase, 1887) 2014.79.505

When Muybridge first began work on his *Animal Locomotion* series in 1884, he experimented with photographs that depict one action, frozen in time, from multiple points of view. These pictures were shot with six cameras arranged in an arc around the subject with shutters that were triggered simultaneously. Muybridge posed himself for this work, creating a series of self-portraits that show his physique while walking, climbing, throwing, shoveling, and wielding a pick. Because of his obsessive work ethic, Muybridge had long identified with laborers, such as miners, construction workers, and lumberjacks. He produced 781 plates in four years for *Animal Locomotion*, which was finally published in 1887. That year the Corcoran Gallery of Art acquired an almost complete set of plates directly from the artist.

DEX 52

JAMES VAN DER ZEE

American, 1886–1983

Sisters

1926

gelatin silver print

Horace W. Goldstein Foundation through
Robert and Joyce Menschel 2000.83.2

James Van Der Zee was a prolific studio photographer in Harlem during a period known as the Harlem Renaissance, from the end of World War I to the middle of the 1930s. He photographed many of Harlem's celebrities, middle-class residents, and community organizations, establishing a visual archive that remains one of the best records of the era. He stands out for his playful use of props and retouching, thereby personalizing each picture and enhancing the sitter's appearance. In this portrait of three sisters, clasped hands show the tender bond of the two youngest, one of whom holds a celebrity portrait, revealing her enthusiasm for popular culture.

DEX 50

ALFRED STIEGLITZ

American, 1864–1946

291—Picasso-Braque Exhibition

1915

platinum print

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.374

291 was Stieglitz's legendary gallery in New York City (its name derived from its address on Fifth Avenue), where he introduced modern European and American art and photography to the American public. He also used 291 as a studio, frequently photographing friends and colleagues there, as well as the views from its windows. This picture records what Stieglitz called a "demonstration"—a short display of no more than a few days designed to prompt a focused discussion. Including two works by Picasso, an African mask from the Kota people, a wasps' nest, and 291's signature brass bowl, the photograph calls into question the relationship between nature and culture, Western and African art.

ROY DECARAVA

American, 1919–2009

David

1952

gelatin silver print

Joshua P. Smith Collection 2001.128.23

Trained as a painter, DeCarava became the first African American photographer to win a prestigious Guggenheim award in 1952. He wrote in his application that he sought to “show the strength, the wisdom of the Negro people. Not the famous and the well-known, but the unknown and the unnamed, revealing the roots from which springs the greatness of all human beings.” DeCarava struggled and triumphed over photographic films and papers that were calibrated to record and depict lighter complexions, rendering dark skin only as an undifferentiated black tone. Instead, DeCarava’s portrait of David shows the sheen of the young boy’s skin as it glistens in the noonday sun, as well as the soft blackness of his hair and the lush, rich blackness of his neck and arms, revealing a more genuine image of this African American boy.

DEX 73

LORNA SIMPSON

American, born 1960

Untitled (Two Necklines)

1989

two gelatin silver prints with eleven plastic plaques

Gift of the Collectors Committee 2005.44.1.1 – 3

From the mid-1980s to the present, Simpson has created provocative works that question stereotypes of gender, identity, history, and culture, often by combining photographs and words. *Two Necklines* shows two circular and identical photographs of an African American woman's mouth, chin, neck, and collarbone, as well as the bodice of her simple shift. Set in between are black plaques, each inscribed with a single word: "ring, surround, lasso, noose, eye, areola, halo, cuffs, collar, loop." The words connote things that bind and conjure a sense of menace, yet when placed between the two calm, elegant photographs, their meaning is at first uncertain. But when we read the red plaque inscribed "feel the ground sliding from under you" and note the location of the word "noose" adjacent to the two necklines, we realize that Simpson is quietly but chillingly referring to the act of lynching.

DEX 114

ANA MENDIETA

American, born Cuba, 1948–1985

Untitled (Silueta series)

1979

gelatin silver print

Gift of the Collectors Committee 2007.2.3

Untitled (Silueta series) documents the residue of a performance in which an anthropomorphic shape, representing the artist's body, was carved into the ground and accentuated or fertilized with dark ash and soil. Fusing a silhouette of the female form with organic soil, Mendieta equates her identity as a woman in exile—she left Cuba as a child—with natural materials that sustain the earth. She is both present and absent in this photograph; the corporal outline is only temporary, as it is eroded by nature's forces over time.

HANK WILLIS THOMAS

American, born 1976

And One

2011

digital chromogenic print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the artist and
Jack Shainman Gallery, New York) 2015.19.5250

And One is from Thomas's *Strange Fruit* series, which explores the concepts of spectacle and display as they relate to modern African American identity. Popularized by singer Billie Holiday, the series title *Strange Fruit* comes from a poem by Abel Meeropol, who wrote the infamous words, "Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze; Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees," after seeing a photograph of a lynching in 1936. In *And One*, a contemporary African American artist reflects on how black bodies have been represented in two different contexts: lynching and professional sports. Thomas ponders the connections between these disparate forms through his dramatic photograph of two basketball players frozen in midair, one dunking a ball through a hanging noose.

CLARISSA SLIGH

American, born 1939

She Sucked Her Thumb

1989

cyanotype print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of the FRIENDS of
the Corcoran Gallery of Art) 2015.19.4483

Sligh uses cyanotype printing, photomontage, and words to represent both personal memories and African American history. *She Sucked Her Thumb* is from her series *Reframing the Past*, made from 1984 to 1994, which she calls “a re-investigation and re-evaluation” of her family’s photo album. This contemplative self-portrait depicts Sligh reflecting on her childhood in a segregated neighborhood of Arlington, Virginia with words and pictures literally displayed as both positive and negative images. One of the oldest techniques in photography, the cyanotype or blueprint process uses light-sensitive iron salts rather than traditional silver-based chemistry to achieve its rich, deep blue tones.

DEX 77

LALLA ESSAYDI

Moroccan, born 1956

Converging Territories #30

2004

chromogenic print

Corcoran Collection (Gift of Julia J. Norrell,
in honor of Nell Hennessy) 2015.19.5242

Moroccan-born Essaydi undermines traditional gender roles in her *Converging Territories* series, in which she examines Arab feminism through carefully constructed portraits. Her photographs of female relatives and friends wearing simple, white cotton haiks are intricately inscribed with gently furling Arabic script. Men traditionally use calligraphy to transcribe holy texts, while the henna ink Essaydi uses is a common feminine adornment. Essaydi explains: "My photographs are about the women subjects' participation in contributing to the greater emancipation of Arab women, while at the same time conveying to an outside audience a very rich tradition of practice, relationships, and ideas that are so often misunderstood and misrepresented in the West."

DEX 72

DIANE ARBUS

American, 1923–1971

Triplets in their Bedroom, N.J.

1963

gelatin silver print

R. K. Mellon Family Foundation 2003.122.3

Celebrated for her portraits of people traditionally on the margins of society—dwarfs and giants—as well as those on the inside—society matrons and crying babies—Arbus was fascinated with the relationship between appearance and identity. Many of her subjects, such as these triplets, face the camera, tacitly aware of their collaboration in her art. Rendering the familiar strange and the strange familiar, her carefully composed pictures compel us to look at the world in new ways. "We've all got an identity," she said. "You can't avoid it. It's what's left when you take away everything else."

DEX 79

TOMOKO SAWADA

Japanese, born 1977

ID-400 (#1 – 100)

1998

one hundred gelatin silver prints

Promised Gift of Betsy Karel x.49976

In *ID-400*, Sawada created four hundred different personas by varying her dress, hair, makeup, and facial expression and then recording each iteration in a public photo booth. Made while she was an art student, her pictures express a wide range of personalities and types, each invented and performed by the artist based on stereotypes and categories of people in Japanese culture. The resulting grid of one hundred prints creates what Sawada calls an “army of me” that reveals the camera’s utility in the pursuit of persuasive self-reinvention.

DEX 110

WALKER EVANS

American, 1903–1975

Photographer’s Display Window, Birmingham, Alabama

1936

gelatin silver print

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

in honor of Jacob Kainen and in honor of the

50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art 1989.89.8

DEX 119

STANISLAW IGNACY WITKIEWICZ

Polish, 1885 – 1939

Self-Portrait (Collapse by the Lamp/ Kolaps przy lampie)

c. 1913

gelatin silver print

Foto Fund and Robert Menschel and
the Vital Projects Fund 2009.56.1

A writer, painter, and philosopher, Witkiewicz began to photograph while he was a teenager. From 1911 to 1914, while undergoing psychoanalysis and involved in two tumultuous relationships (one ending when his pregnant fiancée killed herself in 1914), he made a series of startling self-portraits. Close-up, confrontational, and searching, they are pictures in which the artist seems to seek understanding of himself by scrutinizing his visage.

DEX 70

DEX 70

AUGUST SANDER

German, 1876–1964

The Bricklayer

1928

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1950

Gift of Gerhard and Christine Sander, in honor of the
50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art 1990.120.1

In 1911, Sander began a massive project to document “people of the twentieth century.” Identifying them by their professions, not their names, he aimed to create a typological record of citizens of the Weimar Republic. He photographed people from all walks of life—from bakers, bankers, and businessmen to soldiers, students, and tradesmen, as well as gypsies, the unemployed, and the homeless. The Nazis banned his project in the 1930s because his pictures did not conform to the ideal Aryan type. Although he stopped working after World War II, he made this rare enlargement of a bricklayer for an exhibition of his photographs in the early 1950s.

DEX 115

**ALEKSANDR MIKHAILOVICH
RODCHENKO**

Russian, 1891–1956

Vladimir Mayakovsky

1924

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2004.122.7

Beginning in 1923, when Soviet artists were pioneering new styles to align their work with the goals of the Russian Revolution, Rodchenko, a painter, sculptor, and graphic artist, worked closely with poet Vladimir Mayakovsky on advertisements, posters, books, illustrated poetry, and the avant-garde publication *LEF* (Left Front of the Arts). The following year, Rodchenko made portraits of Mayakovsky—some of his very first photographs—staring stonily at the camera and posed like a passport photograph or a mug shot. The straightforward lighting and bold frontal pose of this work, devoid of self-conscious artistic manipulation, had little precedent in fine art photography.

DEX 111

EDMUND KESTING

German, 1892–1970

Self-Portrait

c. 1926

gelatin silver print

Robert Menschel and the Vital Projects Fund 2009.48.1

A painter, professor, and photographer, Kesting served in World War I. Using smoke to obliterate half of his face, his self-portrait alludes to the horrifying physical and psychological disfiguration many soldiers suffered during the war.

DEX 108

ERNO BERDA

Hungarian, 1914–1961

Kéz (My Hand)

c. 1928

gelatin silver print

Patrons' Permanent Fund 2004.72.1

From the prehistoric cave paintings in Lascaux to twentieth-century works by Jasper Johns, artists for centuries have imprinted their hands onto their work, physically and metaphorically affirming the actions of their body to create their art. In this greatly underexposed picture, the Hungarian teenager Berda depicted his ghostlike fingers emerging from a black void, as if to suggest the indomitable human spirit.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Studies of Foreshortenings. Horses. Walking. Mahomet. Nos. 119–120, from The Attitudes of Animals in Motion

1879

albumen print

Gift of Mary and Dan Solomon and
Patrons' Permanent Fund 2006.133.106

In 1879, Muybridge produced photographs documenting the gait of moving horses seen from different angles. By depicting them from an oblique angle, he produced a foreshortened view that helped artists and scientists study different positions of a horse's movement. Muybridge used five cameras arranged in a semicircle with a wire drawn across the track. When the breast of the running horse broke the wire, it triggered all five shutters, thus making all of the photographs at the same instant.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE

American, born England, 1830–1904

Arrangement of the Cameras for Taking the Illustrations of the Paces, 1879, in J. D. B. Stillman, The Horse in Motion as Shown by Instantaneous Photography with a Study on Animal Mechanics

1881–1882

heliotype

Gift of Mary and Dan Solomon 2008.11.2

Commissioned by railroad magnate Leland Stanford, Muybridge made his first extensive study of horses in motion in a specially constructed, large, indoor and outdoor studio. It included a battery of up to twenty-four cameras lined up in a shed. To get the fastest exposure times, he had the wooden background painted white and the horse track covered in lime in order to reflect as much light as possible. Muybridge's assistants are shown adjusting the measuring devices and the wire used to trigger electronic shutters placed in front of the cameras. Here, cameras are set up to photograph the horse from five different angles. Produced by Stanford and authored by J. D. B. Stillman, *The Horse in Motion* was published in 1882 and sadly failed to recognize Muybridge for his work on the project.

MIKE MANDEL

American, born 1950

Baseball Photographer Trading Cards

1975

68 cards, offset lithography

Corcoran Collection (Corcoran Gallery of Art),
Gift of Sarah Greenough, and Gift of Philip Brookman

In the mid-1970s, as photography was more widely exhibited in museums and commercial galleries, conceptual artist and photographer Mike Mandel responded by making the *Baseball Photographer Trading Cards*, 134 informal portraits of leading photographers, curators, historians, and critics posing as baseball players. Sold in packs of ten with bad bubble gum, the trading cards included statistics about each individual on the back—their height, weight, hometown, and favorite film, camera, and photographer, along with a personal statement. As Mandel noted, the project "lampooned the newfound celebrity-hood of photo personalities in the art marketplace." It also testifies to the good-humored, supportive nature of the small, tight-knit community.

ED RUSCHA

American, born 1937

Every Building on the Sunset Strip

1966

offset lithography

Corcoran Collection (Gift of Philip Brookman and
Amy Brookman) 2015.19.5295

Ruscha's small, influential books of photographs examine ubiquitous aspects of everyday life: gasoline stations, apartment buildings, swimming pools, roads, and parking lots. In 1966, he photographed every building on both sides of Los Angeles's famous "Sunset Strip," which runs through Hollywood. Ruscha mounted a 35 mm camera equipped with a motor drive and loaded with a continuous roll of motion picture film on the roof of a car to achieve the seamless sequence. When fully open, the book is almost twenty-five feet long.