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One Hundred Years of Street Photography

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Wright State University Art Galleries

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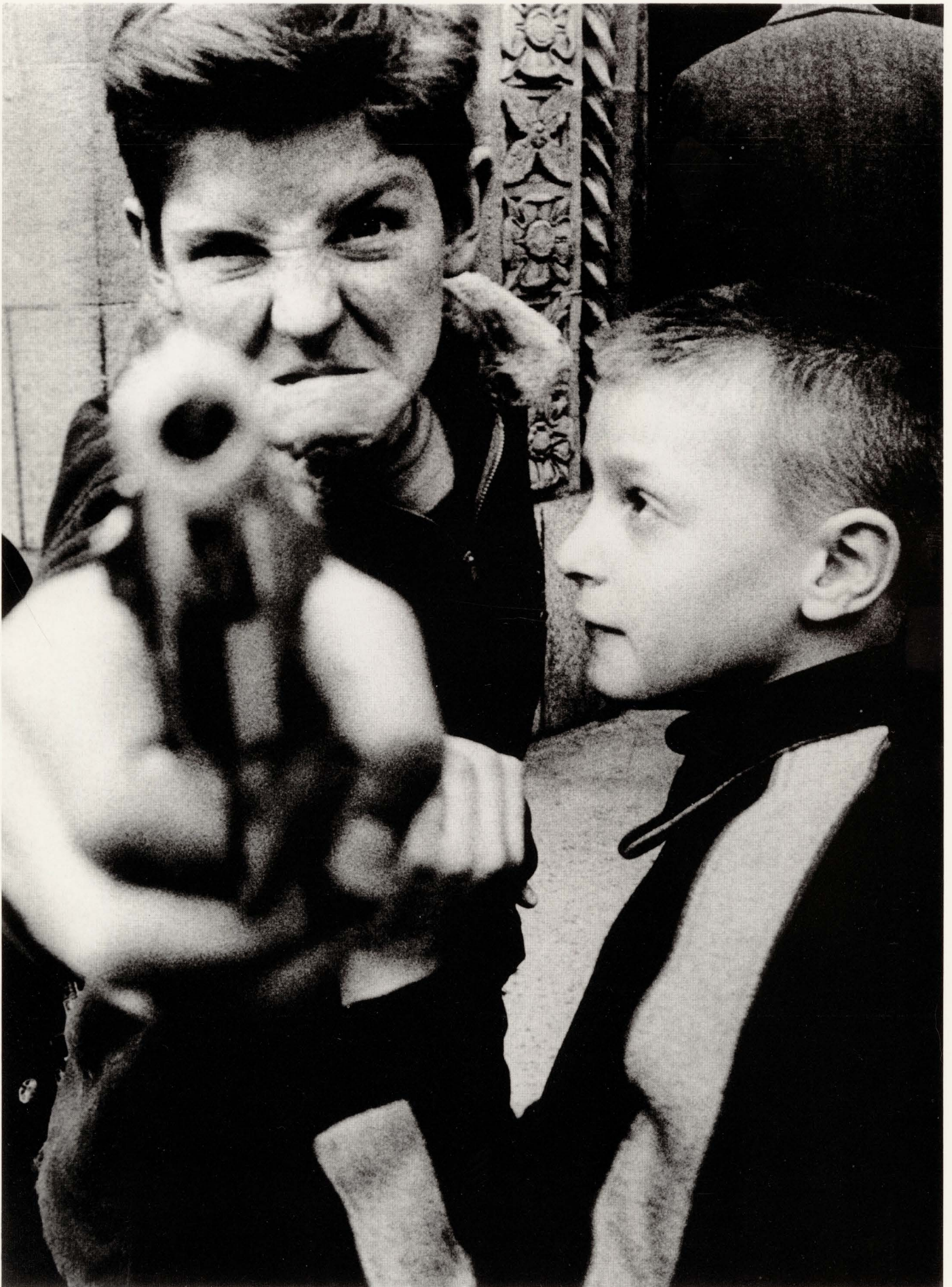
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ONE HUNDRED YEARS
—of—
STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

February 20–April 3, 1994

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
ART GALLERIES
CREATIVE ARTS CENTER
DAYTON, OHIO



Copyright William Klein, Gun 1, New York, 1955

Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York

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— *of* —
STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

February 20–April 3, 1994

**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
ART GALLERIES
CREATIVE ARTS CENTER
DAYTON, OHIO**

with the CD-ROM catalogue
THE NEW STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

Curated by Ron Geibert

Lectures on the history of street photography by

- Colin Westerbeck, Art Institute of Chicago
- Robert Gurbo, André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation
- Sarah Greenough, National Gallery of Art

Sunday, February 27

2–4 P.M.

Creative Arts Center

and

URBAN SPACES AND FACES

A memorial retrospective honoring
Jack D. Teemer, Jr. (1948–1992)

February 20–March 13, 1994

North Gallery

Creative Arts Center



Copyright Henry Wessel, **Waikiki**, 1975

Courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco

“Life is once, forever, and new all the time.”

Henri Cartier-Bresson, Photographer

From a Paris rooftop, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre trained his camera down upon a busy street in 1838. All the activity that passed before his lens disappeared. The people walking up and down, the horses and carriages, everything that moved vanished from Daguerre's plate, blurred into oblivion because of the long exposure it required. Aside from the buildings and the street itself, only a single man having his boots brushed stood still long enough to be recorded, the first human subject of photography.

At the end of the 19th century, several improvements combined to make possible “instantaneous” photographs, pictures made with cameras that could be carried easily, held in the hand, and operated quickly and easily. The novelty of catching people unposed attracted vast numbers of amateur photographers. So pervasive were their intrusions on the unsuspecting that a popular period publication recommended that subjects defensively “put a brick through his camera whenever you suspect he has taken you unawares. And if there is any doubt, give the benefit of it to the brick, not the camera.”

Outrage and threats did not prevent many early photographers from taking their cameras into the streets to explore the fresh visual territory of the fleeting moment. Alfred Stieglitz put aside the conventions of pictorialism and relaxed the intensity of his modernist gaze to experiment with the idea of the snapshot. André Kertész used the hand-held camera with lyricism and humor, while Brassai explored the underworld of Paris at night. Henri Cartier-Bresson defined “the decisive moment” through his sophisticated use of pictorial space and a magician's sense of timing. Helen Levitt's seemingly casual pictures disclose city streets as theatre and children as masters of expressive gesture.

In the complacent 1950s, Robert Frank and William Klein shocked viewers with their gritty, rough, aggressive pictures of mean streets and lost souls. The fragmented and sardonic photographs of Lee Friedlander reflected the turbulence of the 1960s. In the 1970s, Diane Arbus stared unflinchingly into the dark side of the human psyche, and Garry Winogrand demonstrated his uncanny eye for moments of absurdity and revelation in the midst of visual chaos.

The meaning of street photography has evolved, just as our ideas about the portrait, landscape, and still-life have changed and continue to change. Street photography, in common with other traditional genres, is more inclusive and less strictly categorized than it was once. In some instances, the “street” is more metaphorical than literal and describes a way of seeing more than a specific kind of place. Yet the term “street photography” still implies a sense of immediacy and activity, a reflexive response to something in flux, the fullness that can be discovered in a fraction of a second. The instantaneous image remains a lively arena in which alert photographers perform remarkable and illuminating feats of seeing.

Whether or not they show us actual streets, these photographs are clearly within the realm of what we understand to be street photography. Writing about the pictures of Cartier-Bresson, John Szarkowski remarked, “They possess grace, balance, surprise, economy, tension, and visual wit: the qualities of a good gymnast or dancer. Or the qualities of a good picture.”

How true.

Ron Geibert
Curator

Exhibition Artists

Diane Arbus (1923–1971)
Eugène Atget (1857–1927)
Ross Barker (1950–)
Richard Bram (1952–)
Brassaï (Gyula Halász) (1899–1984)
Saul Bromberger (1957–)
Nicole Burkart (1968–)
Harry Callahan (1912–)
Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908–)
David Dapogny (1945–)
William DePalma (1951–)
David DeVries (1951–)
Robert Doisneau (1912–)
Robert Eggleston (1939–)
Robert Embrey (1939–)
Mitch Epstein (1952–)
Walker Evans (1903–1975)
Jed Fielding (1953–)

Larry Fink (1941–)
Robert Frank (1924–)
Lee Friedlander (1934–)
Robert Friedman (1948–)
Ron Geibert (1952–)
Steve Giovinco (1961–)
John Gutmann (1905–)
Steve Hart (1962–)
Lewis Hine (1874–1940)
John Hopkins (1958–)
André Kertész (1894–1985)
William Klein (1928–)
Dorothea Lange (1895–1965)
Russell Lee (1903–1986)
Helen Levitt (1918–)
Pamela Mayers (1969–)
Joel Meyerowitz (1938–)
James Newberry (1937–)

Nicholas Nixon (1947–)
Tod Papageorge (1940–)
Martin Parr (1952–)
Tom Patton (1954–)
Ed Petrosky (1951–)
Donna Pinckley (1960–)
Dave Read (1938–)
Orville Robertson (1957–)
Jeff Smith (1953–)
Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946)
Paul Strand (1890–1976)
Jack D. Teemer, Jr. (1948–1992)
John Valentino (1968–)
Weegee (Arthur Fellig) (1899–1968)
Henry Wessel (1942–)
Garry Winogrand (1928–1984)

(Italic denotes inclusion on *The New Street Photography* CD-ROM.)

Exhibition prints provided by the artists and the

Akron Art Museum
Art Institute of Chicago
Dayton Art Institute
Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco
Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York
Janet Borden Gallery, New York
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Museum of Modern Art, New York

Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Pace/MacGill Gallery, New York
Robert Miller Gallery, New York
Seattle Art Museum
University of Louisville Photographic Archives
Wright State University
Zabriskie Gallery, New York

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Gallery hours:

Tuesday–Friday, 10 A.M.–4 P.M.

Saturday–Sunday, Noon–5 P.M.

For more information, phone 873-2978.



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Wright State University

Art Galleries
Creative Arts Center
Dayton, Ohio 45435

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