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MEDIA CONTACTS:
Ali Sivak
Getty Communications
(310) 440-6473
asivak@getty.edu

GETTY MUSEUM EXHIBITION SHOWCASES

NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN PHOTOGRAPHS

Unseen: 35 Years of Collecting Photographs

December 17, 2019-March 8, 2020

At the Getty Center



Left: *See No Evil*, 1992. Carrie Mae Weems (American, born 1953). Dye diffusion print. Image: 61 x 50.5 cm (24 x 19 7/8 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Gift of Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser. Copyright: © Carrie Mae Weems
Center: *Los Angeles #1*, 1969. Anthony Hernandez (American, born 1947). Gelatin silver print. Image: 18.9 x 28.4 cm (7 7/16 x 11 3/16 in.) Mount: 34.3 x 40.6 cm (13 1/2 x 16 in.) Object Credit: The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Purchased in part with funds provided by the Photographs Council © Anthony Hernandez
Right: *Hands*, 1941. Horst P. Horst (American, born Germany, 1906 - 1999). Platinum and palladium print. Image: 23.7 x 17 cm (9 5/16 x 6 11/16 in.) Sheet: 35 x 27.6 cm (13 3/4 x 10 7/8 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Gift of Manfred Heiting © The Estate of Horst P. Horst and Condé Nast

LOS ANGELES – The Getty Museum holds one of the largest collections of photographs in the United States, with more than 148,000 prints. However, only a small percentage of these have ever been exhibited at the Museum. To celebrate the 35th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Photographs, the Getty Museum will exhibit 200 of these never-before-seen photographs and pull back the curtain on the work of the many professionals who care for this important collection in *Unseen: 35 Years of Collecting Photographs*, on view December 17, 2019-March 8, 2020.

“Rather than showcasing again the best-known highlights of the collection, the time is right to dig deeper into our extraordinary holdings and present a selection of never-before-



[Calypso], 1944. Weegee (Arthur Fellig) (American, born Austria, 1899 – 1968). Gelatin silver print. Image: 26.2 x 33.3 cm (10 5/16 x 13 1/8 in.) Sheet: 27.9 x 35.2 cm (11 x 13 7/8 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles © International Center of Photography

including the delicate cyanotypes of Anna Atkins (British, 1799–1871), Polaroids by Carrie Mae Weems (American, born 1953) and Mary Ellen Mark (American, 1940–2015) and an architectural photographic silkscreen on glass by Veronika Kellndorfer (German, born 1962).

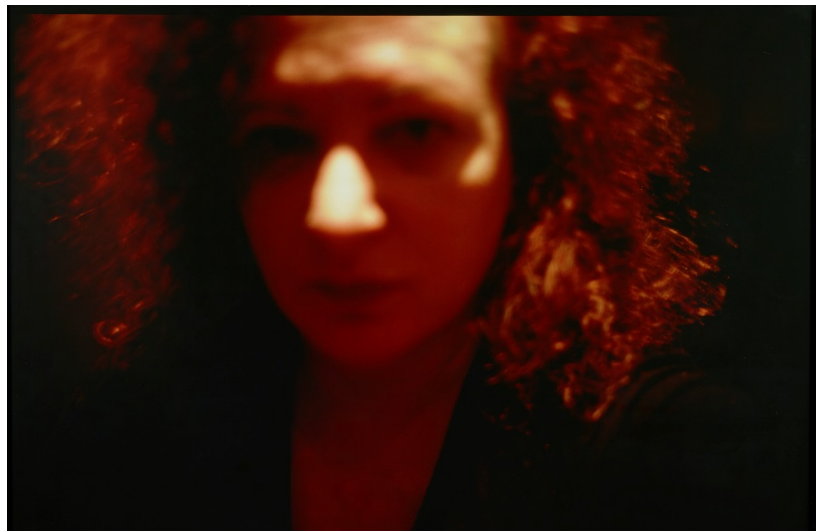
Visual associations among photographs from different places and times illuminate the breadth of the Getty's holdings and underscore a sense of continuity and change within the history of the medium. The curators have also personalized some of the labels in the central galleries to give voice to their individual insights and perspectives.

Growth of the collection

In 1984, as the J. Paul Getty Trust was in the early stages of conceiving what would eventually become the Getty Center, the Getty Museum created its Department of Photographs. It did so with the acquisition

seen treasures. I have no doubt that visitors will be intrigued and delighted by the diversity and quality of the collection, whose riches will support exhibition and research well into the decades ahead," says Timothy Potts, director of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

The exhibition includes photographs by dozens of artists from the birth of the medium in the mid-19th century to the present day. The selection also encompasses a variety of photographic processes,



Self Portrait, 2002. Nan Goldin (American, born 1953). Silver-dye bleach print Framed: 72.4 x 104.1 cm (28 1/2 x 41 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Gift of Dr. Michael I. Jacobs © Nan Goldin, courtesy of Matthew Marks Gallery and the artist



Three Eagles Flying, 1990. Laura Aguilar (American, 1959 – 2019). Gelatin silver print. Image (each, approximately): 61 × 50.8 cm (24 × 20 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Purchased with funds provided by the Photographs Council. © Laura Aguilar Trust of 2016. Accession No. 2019.15.1

of several world-famous private collections, including those of Sam Wagstaff, André Jammes, Arnold Crane, and Volker Kahmen and Georg Heusch. These dramatic acquisitions immediately established the Museum as a leading center for photography.

While the founding collections are particularly strong in 19th and early 20th century European and American work, the department now embraces contemporary photography and, increasingly, work produced around the world. The collection continues to evolve, has been shaped by several generations of curators and benefits from the generosity of patrons and collectors.

Behind the scenes

In addition to the photographs on view, the exhibition spotlights members of Getty staff who care for, handle, and monitor these works of art.

"What the general public may not realize is that before a single photograph is hung on a wall, the object and its related data is managed by teams of professional conservators, registrars, curators, mount-makers, and many others," says Jim Ganz, senior curator of photographs at the Getty Museum. "In addition to exposing works of art in the collection that are not well known, we wanted to shed light on the largely hidden activity that goes into caring for such a collection."

Collecting Contemporary Photography

The department's collecting of contemporary photography has been given strong encouragement by the Getty Museum Photographs Council, and a section of the exhibition will be dedicated to objects purchased with the Council's funding. Established in 2005, this group supports the department's curatorial program, especially with the acquisition of works made after 1945 by artists not yet represented or underrepresented in the collection. Since its founding, the Council has contributed over \$3 million toward the purchase of nearly five

hundred photographs by artists from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, South Africa, and Taiwan, as well as Europe and the United States.

Looking ahead

The exhibition also looks towards the future of the collection, and includes a gallery of very newly-acquired works by Laura Aguilar (American, 1959–2018), Osamu Shiihara (Japanese, 1905–1974), as well as highlights of the Dennis Reed collection of photographs by Japanese American photographers. The selection represents the department's strengthening of diversity in front of and behind the camera, the collection of works relevant to Southern California communities, and the acquisition of photographs that expand the understanding of the history of the medium.

"With this exhibition we celebrate the past 35 years of collecting, and look forward to the collection's continued expansion, encompassing important work by artists all over the world and across three centuries," adds Potts.

Unseen: 35 Years of Collecting Photographs is on view December 17, 2019-March 8, 2020 at the Getty Center. The exhibition is organized by Jim Ganz, senior curator of photographs at the Getty Museum in collaboration with Getty curators Mazie Harris, Virginia Heckert, Karen Hellman, Arpad Kovacs, Amanda Maddox, and Paul Martineau.

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The J. Paul Getty Museum collects Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts to 1900, as well as photographs from around the world to the present day. The Museum's mission is to display and interpret its collections, and present important loan exhibitions and publications for the enjoyment and education of visitors locally and internationally. This is supported by an active program of research, conservation, and public programs that seek to deepen our knowledge of and connection to works of art.

Visiting the Getty Center

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking rates vary. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California.

Same-day parking at both Museum locations (Getty Center and Getty Villa) is available for one fee through the Getty's Pay Once, Park Twice program. Visit the Museum Information Desk at the Center or the Villa to obtain a coupon good for same-day complimentary parking at the other site.

Additional information is available at www.getty.edu.

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