

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Edward Weston
American (1886-1958)
White Radish, 1933
Gelatin silver
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Center for Creative Photography
The J. Paul Getty Museum
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NEW GETTY EXHIBITION TRACES THE BREADTH OF
EDWARD WESTON'S PHOTOGRAPHIC CAREER

Edward Weston: Enduring Vision

At the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Center
July 31-November 25, 2007

*"I want the greater mystery of things revealed
more clearly than the eyes see."*

—Edward Weston, Daybook, April 26, 1930

LOS ANGELES—A presentation of Edward Weston's work will be on view in ***Edward Weston: Enduring Vision***, at the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Center, July 31-November 25, 2007.

Drawn primarily from the Museum's holdings along with a selection of complementary loans, this exhibition will feature approximately 150 photographs that trace the breadth of Weston's accomplishments from the 1900s into the 1940s in California, Mexico, and across the United States.

"Weston is a seminal figure in the history of photography," says Michael Brand, director of the J. Paul Getty Museum. "We are fortunate to have a strong holding of his works and delighted to be able to share them with the public in this major exhibition."

Born outside Chicago, in Highland Park, Illinois, Weston (American, 1886–1958) ranks among America's most revered photographers. After completing training in 1908 at the Illinois College of Photography, Weston married Flora Chandler and settled in Tropic, a suburb of Los Angeles (now Glendale), where he opened his own studio and quickly gained a reputation as a portrait photographer.

A proponent of tripod-mounted cameras and large-format negatives, he avoided sociopolitical subjects and handheld cameras that exploited the efficiency of multiple exposures on rolls of film. A craftsman with the camera, Weston wed a straight, unmanipulated

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photographic aesthetic with everyday subjects, pursuing Modern art as a personal way of seeing the world.

In Tropico, Weston developed friendships with a number of artists and photographers, including Margrethe Mather, Tina Modotti, and Imogen Cunningham. During this period, his work progressed in the soft-focus, romanticized Pictorialist style before maturing toward a more modernist sensibility in which a careful geometry of form played an increasingly important role.

On July 30, 1923, Weston made a life-changing decision. He left his wife, three youngest sons, and the Los Angeles artistic milieu where he had gained prominence to set sail for Mexico with his oldest son, Chandler, and his model, student, and lover, Modotti.

Weston's time in Mexico was characterized by stylistic exploration and maturation. During his two and a half years there, he received his first major commission and the inspiration to explore and expand the range of his work, adding clouds, still lifes, and landscapes to his repertoire of portraits and nudes. His work from that time resulted in sharper images with an emphasis on simplified, volumetric form.

Returning to California in November 1926, Weston turned his attention to nudes and still life compositions, expanding the exploration of form he had started in Mexico. "Weston's work from the late 1920s to the early 1930s is remarkably coherent, despite the diversity of subject matter," says Brett Abbott, who curated this exhibition and serves as an assistant curator in the department of photographs at the J. Paul Getty Museum.

"In these compositions, the forms of shells, nudes, vegetables, and rocks come to resemble one another, revealing Weston's interest in universal life rhythms and his concept that 'all basic forms are so closely related as to be visually equivalent,'" adds Abbott.

His deliberate, methodical technique of the late 1920s to the early 1930s, when he spent hours composing and photographing single still life arrangements in his studio, gave way to greater spontaneity in the late 1930s, when he received the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation's fellowship. The fellowship afforded him the opportunity to travel around the western United States and focus on large-scale landscape.

Although Weston was an independent spirit, he did not work in isolation. Influenced by both the people and places he photographed, Weston's creativity blossomed in response to his relationships with others; he, in turn, acted as a role model for a host of photographers in the West including Modotti, Ansel Adams, and his son, Brett Weston. The presentation includes one gallery devoted to Weston's close colleagues and students, whose work provided a context for the growth and continuation of Weston's approach to the medium.

The presentation will be shown alongside the exhibition ***Recent History: Photographs of Luc Delahaye*** also on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Center, July 31-November 25, 2007.

Both exhibitions will be in the Center for Photographs, the Getty Museum's new and expanded suite of galleries devoted to photographs, which opened in October 2006.

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Desiree Alcalde-Wayne
Getty Communications
310-440-7304
dalcaldewayne@getty.edu

Beth Brett
Getty Communications
310-440-6473
bbrett@getty.edu

The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that features the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Malibu.

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