

MORE AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHS

Lower Galleries

October 04, 2011 to December 17, 2011

As the United States slowly emerges from its most significant economic downturn since the Great Depression, the CCA Wattis Institute will reexamine the well-known photography program of the Farm Security Administration, 1935-44, which included artists such as Walker Evans, Ben Shahn, Dorothea Lange and Marion Post Wolcott. For *More American Photographs*, twelve contemporary photographers will be commissioned to travel the United States, documenting its land and people. The resulting images will be presented in an exhibition at the Wattis Institute, alongside a number of the original images by the FSA photographers.

Artists include:

Walead Beshty
Larry Clark
Roe Ethridge
Katy Grannan
William E. Jones
Sharon Lockhart
Catherine Opie
Martha Rosler
Collier SchorrStephen Shore
Alec Soth
Hank Willis Thomas
Esther Bubley
Walker Evans
Dorothea Lange
Russell Lee
Gordon Parks
Marion Post Wolcott
Ben Shahn

The Farm Security Administration was implemented as part of Roosevelt's New Deal Program, which sought to create relief, recovery, and reform after the devastating years of the Great

Depression. Over a period of almost nine years, headed by the director of the Historical Section, Roy Stryker, the Farm Security Administration employed a number of photographers, who were tasked with bringing to light the “third of a nation” that President Roosevelt defined as “ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished.”

Stryker meticulously prepared his photographers with exhaustive shooting scripts, which listed all the subjects of which he wanted photographs for his famous ‘File’ - ‘chicken dinners’, ‘18th Amendment’, ‘Corner drug store’ - notes that led to the thorough and engaging documentation of American culture and habits. Eighty years on, many of the 250,000 FSA images produced have endured and become iconic. Constituting a visual record of American life in the 1930s and 40s, the work of the FSA photo program introduced a never-before-seen style of photographic realism that would change the aesthetic of documentary photography forever.

More American Photographs will feature a number of original FSA photographs together with the new commissions. Given the inflections of the twenty-first century, including environmental disasters, factory-ghost towns, the collapse of the housing boom, the lack of economic mobility, and the increasing disparity between the rich and poor, this photographic project hopes to update Stryker’s file, showing how some parts of America have floundered while others have flourished.

More American Photographs traveled to the **Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver** March 1 - June 3, 2012 and the **Wexner Center for the Arts** January 26 - April 7, 2013. In 2014 the show will travel to the **California Museum of Photography** at the University of California, Riverside from September 28, 2013 - January 11, 2014.

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