



The American Experience will be Explored through Photography in Two Exhibitions at the Addison

Shows from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta
to travel to Andover

Highlights from the Addison's collection also will be on view

Andover, MA (January 23, 2024) – This winter, the Addison Gallery of American Art, located on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, MA, will present *Robert Frank and Todd Webb: Across America, 1955* and *A Long Arc: Photography and the American South since 1845*. Together, the two exhibitions offer a wide variety of perspectives on the American experience from the 19th century to the present. In addition to 100 photographs by Robert Frank and Todd Webb, nearly 200 works by photographers including Alexander Gardner, James Van Der Zee, Lewis Hine, Margaret Bourke-White, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Edward Weston, Sally Mann, Dawoud Bey, Sheila Pree Bright, Tommy Kha, and RaMell Ross will be on view in *A Long Arc*. The Addison is the second stop for each traveling exhibition.

***Robert Frank and Todd Webb: Across America, 1955* (February 10–July 31, 2024)**

In 1955, two photographers received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation for U.S. survey projects: Robert Frank and Todd Webb. Frank's cross-country trip by car would result in the celebrated book *The Americans*. Webb was awarded a grant to walk, boat, and bike across the United States to depict "vanishing Americana, and the way of life that is taking its place."

Though the men had no knowledge of each other during the application process, both secured a recommendation from famed photographer Walker Evans, and both completed their cross-country surveys—though in radically different ways. Frank's grainy, off-kilter style was matched with his harsh examination of the darker side of American life. An immigrant born in Switzerland, Frank harnessed his outsider perspective. The tender, carefully composed images created by Detroit-born Webb celebrated

ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART

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the individual oddities of the American way of life. Frank's resulting work became a landmark text in the history of photography, and Webb's project remains almost entirely unknown. Bringing together both projects for the first time, this exhibition reveals the impossibility of capturing a singular vision of "America."

This exhibition is organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Todd Webb Archive, Portland, Maine. The Addison's presentation is generously supported by the Mollie Bennett Lupe and Garland M. Lasater Exhibition Fund.

A Long Arc: Photography and the American South since 1845 (March 2–July 31, 2024)

The South has occupied an uneasy place in the history of photography as both an example of regional exceptionalism and as the crucible from which American identity has been forged. The first major survey of Southern photography in 25 years, this exhibition examines that complicated history and reveals the South's critical impact on the evolution of the medium, posing timely questions about American culture and character.

A Long Arc includes photographs of the American Civil War, which transformed the practice of photography across the nation and established visual codes for articulating national identity and expressing collective trauma; images from the Reconstruction era through the Great Depression that examine the changing and industrializing economy of the South and the articulation of the region's identity through photography, particularly for Black Americans; works from the 1930s–1950s, including many created for the Farm Security Administration, that reveal how the era defined a new kind of documentary aesthetic exposing economic and racial disparities; civil rights-era photographs that show how the movement galvanized the nation with raw depictions of violence and the struggle for justice; and contemporary works revealing how photographers continue to explore Southern history and themes to grasp American identity.

This exhibition is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. Generous support for the Addison's presentation of the exhibition has been provided by the Francesca S. Woodman Exhibitions Fund.

"We are thrilled to present these two dynamic exhibitions," said Allison Kemmerer, The Mary Stripp and R. Crosby Kemper Director of the Addison. "As one of the first American museums to actively collect and exhibit photography, the Addison has long appreciated the power of the medium to examine important

narratives in American history. Though these exhibitions tell different stories, each presents perspectives that reveal the ambitions, anxieties, and desires of the nation.”

ALSO ON VIEW

Laying the Foundation: Exploring the Nucleus of the Addison’s Collection (February 10–July 31, 2024)

This exhibition explores the nucleus of the Addison’s permanent collection—the 58 works presented in 1928 by Thomas Cochran, the Addison’s founder, to Phillips Academy in celebration of the institution’s 150th anniversary. Cochran, a partner in J.P. Morgan & Co., had demonstrated no particular interest in collecting art prior to his decision to amass a collection for his beloved alma mater, but he believed in the promise of fine art to permanently enrich the lives of Phillips Academy students. Unconstrained by a strict budget—or, indeed, any budget at all—Cochran set about acquiring exclusively American works of art, primarily paintings, that would lay the foundation of what his advisor Robert G. McIntyre boldly predicted would become, “the finest collection of pictures possessed by any institution of learning in this country.”

This exhibition is generously supported by the Bernard and Louise Palitz Exhibitions Fund and the John-Esther Art Fund.

Finding American Form: 20th-Century Selections from the Permanent Collection (March 2–July 31, 2024)

Across the 20th century, American artists experimented with new modes for capturing the world around them, often mining the space between representation and abstraction. Many drew on the influence of European modern artists like Paul Cézanne and Pablo Picasso or took inspiration from the stylized sculptures and masks of West Africa. Some artists also took cues from the geometries of their urban environment, while others explored the natural world through expressive compositions of organic forms. Works in this exhibition, by artists including Stuart Davis, Richard Diebenkorn, Edward Hopper, Jacob Lawrence, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Hale Woodruff, demonstrate these varied approaches to depicting the modern American experience.

About the Addison Gallery of American Art

Devoted exclusively to American art, the Addison opened in 1931 and holds one of the most important American art collections in the country. Its collection includes more than 26,000 works by artists such as John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, George Bellows, Georgia O’Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, Jennifer Bartlett, Kara Walker, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Kerry James Marshall, and Mark Bradford, as well as photographers Eadweard Muybridge, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Simmons, Sally Mann, Dawoud Bey, Lorna Simpson, Carrie Mae Weems, and many others. The Addison Gallery, located in a stand-alone building on the campus of Phillips Academy—a residential school of grades 9–12 in Andover, Massachusetts—offers a continually rotating series of exhibitions and programs, all of which are free and open to the public. For more information on the Addison, visit addisongallery.org.

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Press images and captions are available for [download](#) for each exhibition.