

RISD MUSEUM

Collective Recollection, July 27, 2018-January 20, 2019

Since the invention of photography in 1839, amateur and professional photographers alike have captured moments when people come together, creating personally meaningful keepsakes and significant historical documents. These photographs act as records; they are collected and held on to, engaged with time and again, allowing viewers to remember and even reimagine the subjects and events pictured. In this way, photography forms notions of who belongs—and who doesn't—to a group.

People frequently use photography to represent their own lived and shared experiences, portraying friends, family, peers, and themselves. People have also employed photography to categorize others—often according to biases and with lasting repercussions. Frequently the line falls somewhere in between, as many photographers, working with respectful intentions, have depicted groups of which they were not a part. When images circulate, they also take on other meanings, depending on the viewer's perspective, adding yet another layer of interpretation.

The photographs in this gallery create and recall various collective identities and experiences, encouraging us to consider who has the power to shape the representation of selfhood—the subject, the photographer, or the viewer?

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RISD Museum 2017–2018

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Conly Studio, American, Boston, active late 19th century
Portrait of Cora Nash, late 1800s
Albumen print cabinet card
Gift of John Carpenter 1986.148

In the second half of the 1800s, standard-sized, mass-produced photographs such as the tintype and cabinet card were introduced. Middle-class and working-class consumers could afford to visit a photography studio and sit for a portrait, buying copies by the dozen to share with friends and family; at the same time, they could purchase portraits of celebrities. Collecting photographs and gathering them in albums became a popular hobby, allowing people to create their own “dream” social networks. People today continue to fill albums with pictures of their loved ones.



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Sebastião Salgado, Brazilian, b. 1944
A Moment of Rest, Serra Pelada Mine, 1986
Gelatin silver print
Nancy Sayles Day Collection of Modern Latin American Art 1991.103

In documentary and journalistic photographs, depictions of crowds can underscore the gravity of dire circumstances. At top, workers haul sacks of earth out of the Serra Pelada gold mine in Brazil. Sebastião Salgado's presentation highlights the appalling conditions and chaotic danger of the operation, which employed more than 100,000 workers at its peak.



Agustín Victor Casasola composed his frame (bottom) so that the line of evacuating civilians extends to either side, suggesting the large number of people affected by the Mexican Revolution's Ten Tragic Days, during which Mexico City suffered catastrophic damage and thousands were killed.

Morris Engel, American, 1918-2005
Coney Island, 1939
Gelatin silver print
Jesse Metcalf Fund 2001.65.1



Gordon Parks, American, 1912-2006
Boys in Car Window, Harlem, 1950s
Gelatin silver print
Georgianna Sayles Aldrich Fund 2001.68.1



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R. Mole, American b. England, 1889-1983

Great Lakes, Illinois, 1920

Gelatin silver print

Partial Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Barnet Fain

Gift from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Barnet Fain 2001.80.96

Arthur Mole specialized in “living photographs”—special patriotic novelty images he made by posing thousands of soldiers to form iconic American symbols. The images ranged from flags to portraits of leaders such as President Woodrow Wilson, and were intended to promote American nationalism and boost morale as the United States entered World War I or—in the case of this photograph—to spell out victory after its conclusion.



Lewis Wickes Hine, American, 1874-1940

Royal Mill Workers, River Point, Rhode Island, 1909

Gelatin silver print

Jesse Metcalf Fund 2002.29.1

In the early 1900s, Lewis Hine documented a number of child laborers, including those working as spinners and doffers at one of Rhode Island’s largest mills, located in West Warwick. A photographer for the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), Hine helped raise awareness of the plight of child workers, which eventually led to the first child-labor laws.



Jules Aarons, American, 1921-2008

North End, Boston, 1955

Gelatin silver print

Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2004.32.2



Henry Horenstein, American, b. 1947, (RISD BFA 1971; MFA 1973, Photography)

RISD Faculty, 1982-present

Bartender, Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, Nashville, Tennessee, 1974

Gelatin silver print

Walter H. Kimball Fund 2007.116.6

The mania for collecting photographs that began in the 1800s continues today through “liking” friends’ and celebrities’ Instagram posts. In the 1900s, Walker Evans and Henry Horenstein captured glimpses of the ways communities picture themselves. Evans’s photo (left) documents pictures displayed in the window of a Depression-



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era studio photographer, enticing other people to take a look and perhaps sit for their own portrait. At right, Horenstein portrays Wanda Lohman presiding over the bar at Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, a famous honky-tonk around the corner from the Grand Ole Opry. Tootsie's "wall of fame" included photographs, signed posters, album covers, and memorabilia, a kind of community scrapbook of the country-music world.

Ernest C. Withers, American, 1922-2007

Panopticon Gallery

Lionel Hampton, The Hippodrome, The Memphis Blues Again 1950's
Gelatin silver print

Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2007.48.3.2



Annu Palakunnathu Matthew, American, b. 1964

Types, from the portfolio "An Indian from India (vol. 2)" 2005

Inkjet print

Gift from the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Chazan 2008.118.2



Here Annu Palakunnathu Matthew presents a self-portrait that plays on her perceived "otherness" as an Indian immigrant living in the United States. Matthew paired a romanticized historical photograph of a Native American by Edward S. Curtis with an image of herself, modifying the garb and stereotypes of the original "other" to reflect her own culture and present questions about the colonial gaze.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Curtis and other photographers depicted Native people as "the vanishing race." Curtis sought to record the dignity of his subjects, but his images staged narratives that rendered the people in them figuratively in the past, obscuring their continued presence.

Susan Meiselas

Before the Show, Tunbridge, Vermont, Carnival Strippers

The PRC Portfolio 1974

Gelatin silver print

Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2009.47.11



Susan Meiselas was 24 years old and fresh out of graduate school when she began her first major photographic essay, focused on the women who stripped at small-town carnivals in New England. By talking her way into tents that posted just one hard rule: "No ladies and no babies," Meiselas embedded herself in the dancers' inner

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world, photographing their public performances and private lives, ultimately recording interviews with them to more clearly present their perspectives.

Group Portrait of Athletes, ca. 1880s

Tintype

Gift of Frank G. Lesure 2014.75

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American

Ruth Brandon Hosey, World Series Game, October 7, 1937

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.111

Over the last few decades, snapshots and other everyday photographs have been collected and exhibited with serious interest. These images, celebrated for their fresh, “real” insights into specific times and places, offer what can be critical historical information. However, the act of bringing snapshots into a museum context divorces them from their original use and personal value as private objects—objects that were circulated and cherished. Their arrangement here gives some sense of a traditional photo-album display, but the thematic groups point to layers of collecting interest and curatorial selection.



Peter J. Cohen scoured flea markets, garage sales, and shops for years, amassing a collection of about 50,000 snapshots. Distinctive categories have helped him focus his selections, including *At Play*, *Kids*, *Picnics*, and *Women Organized Neatly*. Cohen has generously donated his snapshots to museums, inviting curators to make selections from his collection.

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American

Untitled, ca. 1930s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.114



American

Rabbits Maybe, ca. 1950

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.118



American

Untitled, ca. 1930s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.135



American

Untitled, May 1969

Color chromogenic print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.137



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American

Photo album, early 1900s

Gelatin silver prints mounted onto black album paper

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.145

American

Untitled, August 1944

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.19



American

Untitled, ca. 1930s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.22



American

Untitled, ca. 1980s

Color chromogenic print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.23



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American

Untitled, ca. 1890s

Cyanotype

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.33



American

Untitled, ca. 1970s

Dye diffusion print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.40



American

Laguna, ca. 1930s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch
1972, Architecture 2015.91.55



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American

Untitled, ca. 1940s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.56



American

Peggy, July 22, 1942

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.58



American

Untitled, ca. 1950

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.62



American

Untitled, ca. 1920s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.74



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American

Untitled, ca. 1940s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.82



American

Untitled, ca. 1953

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.84



American

Hazel's Birthday Party, Age 21, Chicago, Illinois, ca. 1940s

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture 2015.91.99



Bruce Davidson, American, b. 1933

Martin Luther King Jr. at a Press Conference, Birmingham, Alabama, from the series *Time of Change* 1962 (printed later)

Gelatin silver print

The Jerome Corwin and Phyllis Littman Corwin Fund 2017.14

In this portrait, Martin Luther King Jr. focuses intensely on his notes as a press conference swirls around him. Bruce Davidson engaged



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issues of racial equality throughout much of his career, conscious of his position as a white photographer. An African American woman watching Davidson photograph her Harlem street block once admonished, “What you call a ghetto, I call my home”—something he did not forget.

Sory Sanlé, b. Burkina Faso, b. 1943

The Young Music Lovers (Les Jeunes Mélomanes), 1974 (printed 2017)

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase: gift of Mark Pollack 2018.17



Jyoti Bhatt, Indian, b. 1934

Haryana, Woman Making 'Sanjhi' at Craft Village, New Delhi, 1977

Gelatin silver print

Walter H. Kimball Fund 2018.21.2



Walker Evans, American, 1903-1975

Detail from Penny Picture Display Window, Savannah, Georgia, 1936

Gelatin silver print

Gift of James Dow 71.043.28

The mania for collecting photographs that began in the 1800s continues today through “liking” friends’ and celebrities’ Instagram posts. In the 1900s, Walker Evans and Henry Horenstein captured glimpses of the ways communities picture themselves. Evans’s photo (left) documents pictures displayed in the window of a Depression-era studio photographer, enticing other people to take a look and perhaps sit for their own portrait. At right, Horenstein portrays Wanda Lohman presiding over the bar at Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge, a famous honky-tonk around the corner from the Grand Ole Opry. Tootsie’s “wall of fame” included photographs, signed posters, album covers, and memorabilia, a kind of community scrapbook of the country-music world.



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J. Pascal Sébah, Turkish, fl. 1860-1880

Posed Soldiers Thrusting Canon Loading-Pole Towards the Camera,
Album of Photographs of Scenes and People Taken in Egyptlate 1800s
Albumen print

Museum Collection 71.086.10

In the 1800s, stereotypical images of exoticized peoples were commonly created by both foreign and domestic photography studios for consumption by Western tourist audiences.

After purchasing the negatives of two European photographers, the Japanese photographer Kimbei printed their images of sumo wrestlers and geisha as well as his own. This hybrid cultural narrative makes it impossible to determine whether his photographs are self-representation or “othering” by an artist from a different culture. Jean Pascal Sébah’s photograph of British soldiers in Egypt is similarly complicated. Sébah, a Turkish photographer of Syrian Armenian descent, sold individual portraits, “types,” and local scenes to both Ottoman and European customers.

German photographer August Sander turned a typological lens on his own country by photographing “people of the 20th century.” His nearly 600 portraits placed his subjects firmly within a larger context by identifying them only by occupation and economic class. The Nazis terminated his project because it contradicted their racial categorizations.

Agustín Victor Casasola, Mexican, 1874-1938

A Village Evacuation During the Ten Tragic Days, February, 1913,
1913

Gelatin silver print

Nancy Sayles Day Collection of Modern Latin American Art 80.105

In documentary and journalistic photographs, depictions of crowds can underscore the gravity of dire circumstances. At top, workers haul sacks of earth out of the Serra Pelada gold mine in Brazil. Sebastião Salgado’s presentation highlights the appalling conditions and chaotic danger of the operation, which employed more than 100,000 workers at its peak.

Agustín Victor Casasola composed his frame (bottom) so that the line of evacuating civilians extends to either side, suggesting the large number of people affected by the Mexican Revolution’s Ten Tragic Days, during which Mexico City suffered catastrophic damage and thousands were killed.



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Lisette Model, American, 1906-1983

Running Feet, 5th Avenue, 1940

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts 80.229



Kusakabe Kimbei, Japanese

Sumo Wrestlers, 1863–1914

Albumen print with hand coloring

Mr. and Mrs. Julius Bloom Photography Fund 81.208

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Danny Lyon, American, b. 1942

The Line, Ferguson Unit, Texas, Danny Lyon 1967-1969

Gelatin silver print

Anonymous gift 81.256.11

The powerful linear composition and strong contrasts of this photograph make a stark visual statement about the institutionalized discrimination that led to belonging in this group, defined by its lack of freedom and choice. Granted permission by the Texas Department of Corrections to photograph freely, Danny Lyon produced a raw,



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visceral portrait of the American penitentiary system.

British

Alpine Landscape with Figures, ca. 1860

Pen and ink, graphite, and albumen prints on paper

Walter H. Kimball Fund 82.013

In the 1800s, many middle- and upper-class British women enjoyed compiling albums, a favored pastime that exhibited the skills in watercolor and lettering that were part of their genteel education. The woman who likely created this scene went on a flight of fancy, adding photographs of people in her intimate sphere to a fictional landscape. Photocollages such as this one were very popular in fashionable circles and ranged from witty to whimsical, allowing their makers to reimagine memories as they saw fit.



Garry Winogrand, American, 1928-1984

New York City, Garry Winogrand 1971

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Mr. Frederick J. Myerson 82.303.8



Aaron Siskind, American, 1903-1991, (RISD Faculty 1971-1976, Photography)

Untitled, from the series "*Harlem Document*" 1932-1940

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Matrix Publications, Inc. and Alpha Partners 83.031.21



Aaron Siskind, American, 1903-1991, (RISD Faculty 1971-1976, Photography)

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, from the series "*Harlem Document*" 1932-1940

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Matrix Publications, Inc. and Alpha Partners 83.031.38



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Here a gentle tension is created by the solitary figure meeting the gaze of the camera with apparent distrust. This photograph depicts the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first labor organization led by African Americans to receive a charter from the American Federation of Labor. Aaron Siskind was a young white photographer working with the Photo League, a left-leaning social-documentary group in New York, when he produced the series *Harlem Document*. Although Siskind intended these photographs to advocate for improved living conditions, they were often used in ways that reinforced negative stereotypes about the neighborhood.

August Sander, German, 1876-1964
Circus Artists, Düren (Zirkusartisten), 1930, printed later
Gelatin silver print
Edgar J. Lownes and Walter H. Kimball Funds 84.022

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James Van Der Zee, American, 1886-1983
Reception in the Office of the CJ Walker Company, 1929
Gelatin silver print
Museum purchase: gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD TL107.2017



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American

Untitled, ca. 1970s

Dye diffusion print (Polaroid)

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.101



American

Untitled, ca. 1950s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.102



American

Untitled, ca. 1950s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.103



American

Untitled, ca. 1910s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.104



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American

Untitled, ca. 1950s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.105



American

Untitled, 1953

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.106



American

Untitled, ca. 1950s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.107



American

Untitled, June 1916

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.108



American

Untitled, ca. 1940s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA 1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.109



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American

Untitled, 1962

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA
1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.110



American

Untitled, January 1951

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA
1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.111



American

Untitled, ca. 1950s

Gelatin silver print

Proposed: Gift of Peter J. Cohen in honor of Luke Cohen, RISD BFA
1971, BArch 1972, Architecture TL46.2018.112

