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## THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS LOOKING THROUGH THE LENS

*Exhibition showcases ground-breaking modern photography from 1900-1960*

BALTIMORE, MD (February 21, 2008)—The Baltimore Museum of Art presents a major exhibition of approximately 150 rarely shown vintage prints by some of the world's best known 20th century photographers in ***Looking through the Lens: Photography 1900–1960***. On view **March 16–June 8, 2008**, the exhibition features iconic works by European and American artists such as Man Ray, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Weston, Paul Strand, Dorothea Lange, Gordon Parks, and Harry Callahan. Organized thematically, these works showcase the impressive range and depth of the Museum's collection while illuminating some of the most important achievements in the history of the medium. Admission to *Looking through the Lens* is free. This exhibition is generously sponsored by PNC Foundation.

"This is a rare opportunity to discover spell-binding images from the most pivotal period in photography, when it became fully recognized as an art form," said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. "I am certain these memorable works of art will captivate and inspire new audiences, just as they did when they were first created."



Max Burchartz. *Lotte's Eye*. c. 1928. The Baltimore Museum of Art: Purchase with exchange funds from the Edward Joseph Gallagher III Memorial Collection; and partial gift of George H. Dalsheimer, Baltimore BMA 1988.247. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

*Looking through the Lens* begins with the influential artist Alfred Stieglitz and his ground-breaking journal *Camera Work* (1903–17), which published many of the greatest photos taken at the turn of the century. Examples include early Pictorialist-style photogravures and color halftones by Alvin Langdon Coburn, Gertrude Käsebier, and Edward Steichen that illustrate their romantic soft-focus photography aesthetic. These works are juxtaposed with Steiglitz's own increasingly crisp shots of Manhattan skyscrapers, portraits of Georgia O'Keeffe, and stunning compositions taken at Lake George.

The years between the wars brought an explosion in experimental photography with brilliant images that embraced unusual viewpoints like Max Burchartz's *Lotte's Eye* (c. 1928) or showed the influence of industry's abstract forms such as Paul Strand's *Lathe Head* (1923). Edward Weston focused on structural clarity and simplicity with his carefully lit shells and peppers set against plain backgrounds, while artists Aleksandr Rodchenko and Raoul Ubac experimented with collage. A large section dedicated to the Surrealist movement features Man Ray's captivating *Le Violon d'Ingres* (1924), as well as his photograms and experiments with solarization. Salvador Dalí's *Study for 'Dream of Venus,'* (1939), created with *Vogue* photographer Horst P. Horst, shows the cross-fertilization between fashion/advertising, film, and art. These works are complemented by Edward Steichen's images of movie stars Charlie Chaplin, Greta Garbo, and Anna May Wong; and Paul Outerbridge's vivid carbro color prints of cropped nudes and festive still lifes.

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Compelling documentary photographs heightened awareness of the social and physical realities of society in the late 1930s—from Farm Security Administration images by Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans that reveal the hardships faced by migrant farmers in California and small-town life in the South to Berenice Abbott and Aaron Siskind's ambitious views of New York City neighborhoods. The impact of photojournalism is seen in works commissioned for *Life* magazine: Margaret Bourke-White's images of the upper, middle, and lower classes in Muncie, Indiana; Robert Capa's shots of soldiers involved in the Sino-Japanese War; and Gordon Parks' portrait of Harlem gang leader Red Jackson.

*Looking through the Lens* concludes with post-war American works. New York School photographers Robert Frank, Louis Faurer, and William Klein used inconspicuous cameras and available light to capture fleeting moments encountered in the street—sidewalk bystanders, Horn & Hardart automats, and out-of-focus adolescents. Harry Callahan's beautiful stark landscapes, nude studies of his wife Eleanor, and multiple-exposure compositions of Chicago demonstrate the new visual language developed by artists affiliated with the progressive Institute of Design in Chicago. These works anticipate new directions for photography in the second half of the century.

*Looking through the Lens: Photography 1900–1960* is curated by BMA Associate Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs Rena Hoisington. The exhibition is generously sponsored by PNC.

#### **LOOKING NOW: BMA DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT**

Become a part of *Looking through the Lens: Photography 1900–1960* by creating digital images inspired by the show—then come back to see which are selected for the exhibition's digital gallery. Everyone is invited to respond to the works in the exhibition and the thematic questions posted on [artbma.org](http://artbma.org) by submitting digital images through the BMA's web site beginning March 16. Whether you embrace Surrealism or street photography, the best of these images will be presented in the exhibition's digital gallery beginning in April.

You can also see how contemporary professional photographers interpret the exhibition's ideas with their own work. These photographers, chosen by the Looking Now advisory committee—artists Peter Bruun, Alex Castro, and Connie Imboden—will have images in the BMA's digital gallery when the show opens in March, as well as in the April issue of *Urbanite* magazine. Also joining the digital gallery in April will be images created by teens involved in photographer Marshall Clarke's Youthlight program. Founded in 2001, Youthlight is committed to engaging young people in using photography as a means of self-expression.

For more information and submission details, visit [artbma.org](http://artbma.org).

#### **BMA'S PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION**

The BMA's photography collection has grown to more than 3,000 works of astonishing quality. Many of the most important images come from the collection of George H. Dalsheimer. Comprised of more than 700 pictures, this 1988 acquisition placed the BMA in a prominent position among other major American museum photography collections. The core of the collection is 20th-century American photography, although there is also an exceptional group of experimental European photographs made between the wars. Many photographers that Dalsheimer collected in depth were among the most important American artists of this century—Robert Frank, Paul Outerbridge, Man Ray, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, and Edward Weston. The strengths of the Gallagher/

Dalsheimer collection (named jointly for Dalsheimer and the Edward Joseph Gallagher III Memorial Collection funds that enabled the Museum to purchase the photographs) have defined the direction of the Museum's photography program during the last decade. Recent additions include works by Gordon Parks and James Welling, as well as photographs by contemporary artists Rineke Dijkstra, Jeff Wall, and Carrie Mae Weems.

**VISITOR INFORMATION**

General admission to the BMA is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit [artbma.org](http://artbma.org).

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