

Street Photography Documentary Portraiture

Tom R. Chambers

“The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept of the joys of watching, connoisseur of empathy, the flâneur [observer of society] finds the world picturesque.”

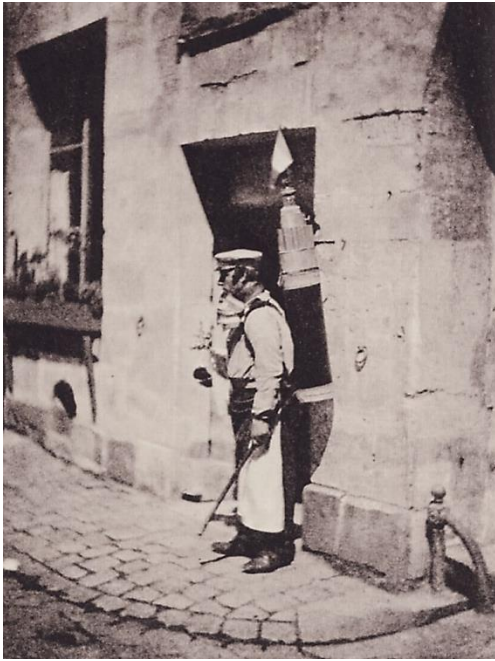
(Susan Sontag, American writer, filmmaker, philosopher, teacher, and political activist. She wrote extensively about photography, culture and media. [January 16, 1933 - December 28, 2004])

Street photography is photography conducted for art or enquiry that features unmediated chance encounters and random incidents within public places. It might be absent of people and can be of an object or environment where the image projects a decidedly human character in facsimile or aesthetic. Framing and timing can be key aspects. It can focus on people and their behavior in public, thereby also recording people's history. It can also focus on traces left by humanity that say something about life. Much of what is regarded, stylistically and subjectively, as definitive street photography was made in the era spanning the end of the 19th century through to the late 1970s. (Mary Warner Marien, 100 Ideas That Changed Photography; Colin Westerbeck, Bystander: A History of Street Photography; What Is Street Photography; Peter Watts, London Street Photography)

I think it is a good idea to begin this workshop with prominent, street photographers who have come before us and who currently work the medium this way. It gives us a sense of their ... our ... humanity, and to be in keeping with the historical aspects of this approach, not to mention picking up some pointers along the way.

Boulevard du Temple, Paris, by Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (Daguerreotype). The first surviving picture of a living person, taken in 1838. The image shows a busy street, but due to exposure time of more than ten minutes, the traffic was moving too fast to appear. The exception is the man at the bottom right, who stood still getting his boots polished long enough to show. Daguerre exposed a silver-plated sheet of copper for several minutes, developed and fixed the image using chemicals.





Waterseller by Charles Nègre (9 May 1820 – 16 January 1880). He was the first photographer to achieve the technical sophistication required to register people in movement on the streets of Paris in the 1850s.



The Crawlers, London (1876–1877) by John Thomson (14 June 1837 – 29 September 1921). He was one of the first photographers to travel to the Far East, to make photographs. His work among the street people of London laid the foundations for photojournalism, making the capture of everyday life on the streets a significant role for the medium.



Organ Grinder (1898) by Eugène Atget (12 February 1857 – 4 August 1927). He is noted for his determination to document all of the architecture and street scenes of Paris before their disappearance to modernization. Most of his photographs were first published by Berenice Abbott after his death.



Child on Street, London (1890s). Paul Martin is considered a pioneer, making candid un-posed photographs of people in London and at the seaside in the late 19th and early 20th century in order to record life. Martin is the first recorded photographer to do so in London with a disguised camera.



Winter – Fifth Avenue (1893) by Alfred Stieglitz (January 1, 1864 – July 13, 1946) was an American photographer and modern art promoter who was instrumental over his fifty-year career in making photography an accepted art form.



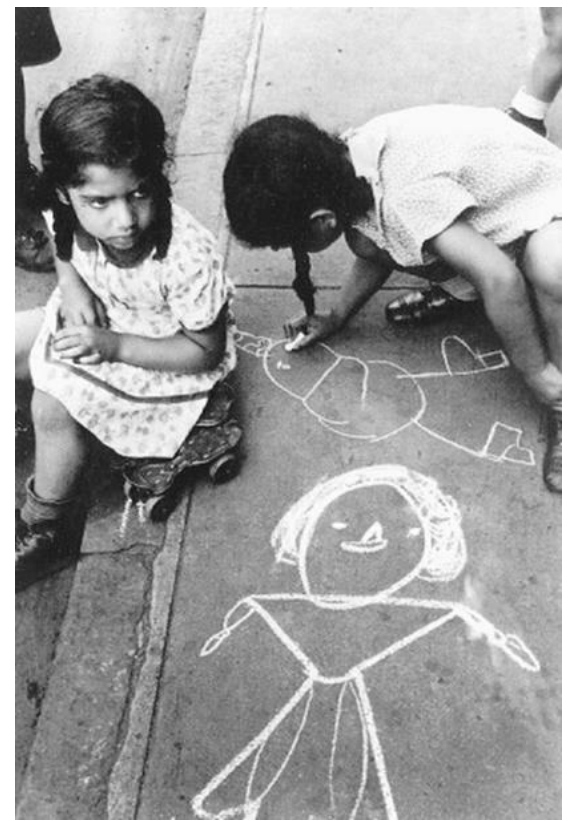
Circus, Budapest (1920) by Andre Kertesz (1894 - 1985), a Hungarian-born photographer known for his groundbreaking contributions to photographic composition and the photo essay. He is considered one of the seminal figures of photojournalism.



Girl In Fulton Street, NYC (1929) by Walker Evans (November 3, 1903 – April 10, 1975). He was an American photographer and photojournalist best known for his work for the Farm Security Administration (FSA) documenting the effects of the Great Depression.



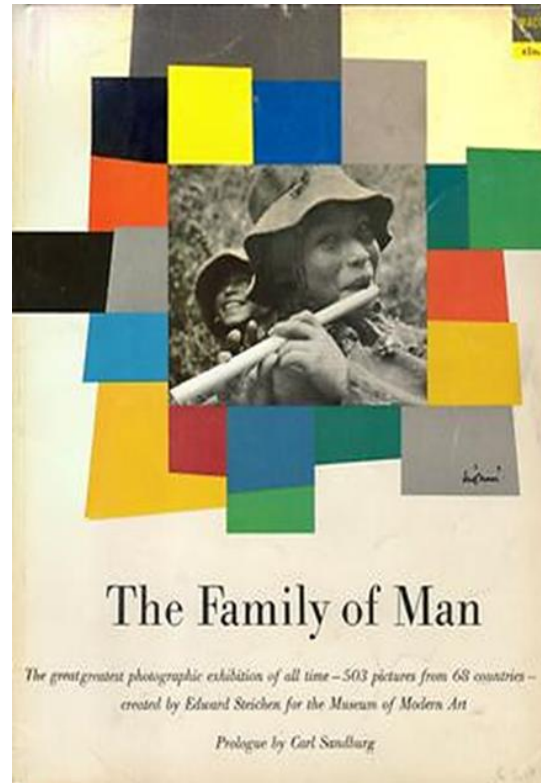
Man and Ladder (1932) by Henri Cartier-Bresson (August 22, 1908 – August 3, 2004). He is considered to be a master of candid photography, and an early user of 35 mm film. He pioneered the genre of street photography, and viewed photography as capturing a *decisive moment*.



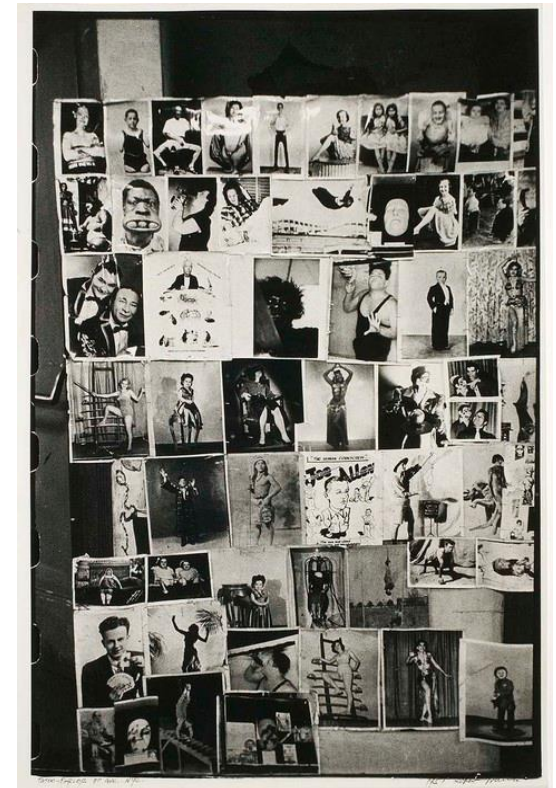
NYC (1940) by Helen Levitt (August 31, 1913 – March 29, 2009). She was an American photographer, and noted for street photography around New York City. She became intrigued with the transitory chalk drawings that were part of the New York children's street culture of the time.



Marlene, Paris (1948) by Brassai (9 September 1899 – 8 July 1984). He wrote that he used photography "in order to capture the beauty of streets and gardens in the rain and fog, and to capture Paris by night." He portrayed scenes from the life of the city.



First shown in 1955 from January 24 to May 8 at MOMA, NYC. Exhibition curated by Edward Steichen. He drew on large numbers of European and American humanistic photographs for this exhibition. It promoted the concept of street photography internationally.



Tattoo Parlor, 8th Avenue, NYC (1958) by Robert Frank (Nov. 9, 1924 – Sept. 9, 2019). His most notable work is the 1958 book titled "*The Americans*". The book was one of the most revolutionary volumes in the history of photography, with a cutting perspective on American culture.



Baltimore, Maryland (1962) by Lee Friedlander (July 14, 1934 -). He evolved an influential visual language of urban "social landscape," with many of his photographs including fragments of store-front reflections, posters, and street signs.



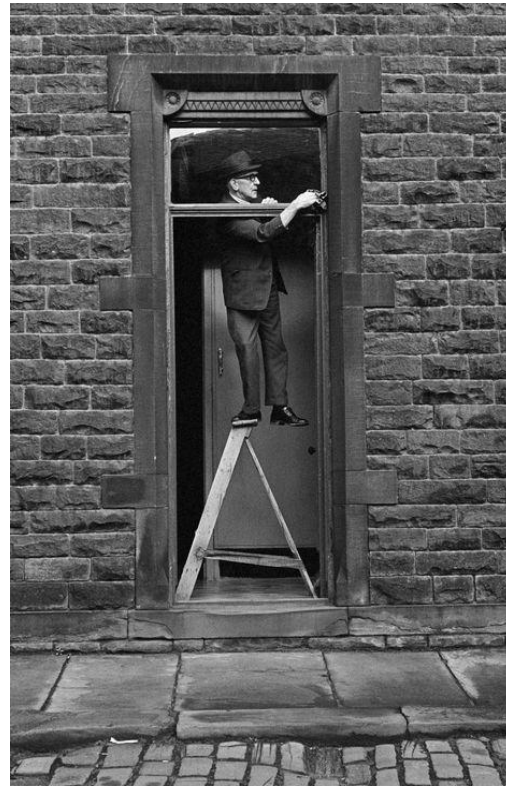
Dallas (1964) by Gary Winogrand (14 January 1928 – 19 March 1984). He was an American street photographer from NYC, known for his portrayal of U.S. life and its social issues. Photo curator, historian, and critic John Szarkowski called Winogrand the central photographer of his generation.



Identical Twins, Roselle, N.J. (1966) by Diane Arbus (March 14, 1923 – July 26, 1971). Part of the New York School of Photography, she worked to normalize marginalized groups and highlight the importance of proper representation of all people. By befriending, not objectifying her subjects, she was able to capture in her work a rare psychological intensity.



Eton (1967) by Tony Ray-Jones (7 June 1941 – 13 March 1972). He was a British photographer who was shocked at the lack of interest in non-commercial photography. His photographs of festivals and leisure activities are full of surreal humor. He was a social anthropologist with a camera.



Tom Greenwood Cleaning, England. Yorkshire (1975) by Martin Parr (23 May 1952 -). He is a British documentary photographer, and photojournalist. He is known for his photographic projects that take an intimate, satirical and anthropological look at aspects of modern life.



Empire State Series: Young Dancer, 34th Street and 9th Avenue, NYC (1978) by Joel Meyerowitz (March 6, 1938 -). He began photographing in color in 1962 and was an early advocate of the use of color during a time when there was significant resistance to the idea of color photography as serious art.

Street photography - street environment, evaluation, activity (movement), juxtapositions, foreground/background relationships, light-play/shadow-play (lighting), camera position, perspective, angle, shape/form, geometry, timing (“decisive moment”), depth-of-field/focal range, anachronism, cultural (other) contrast, repetition, symmetry/asymmetry.

Documentary portraiture - street environment, evaluation, subject(s) engagement, set up of subject(s) - backdrop (background) relationship, posturing/expression of subject(s).



Jill Freedman (October 19, 1939 – October 9, 2019).



Bruce Gilden (October 16, 1946 –).



William Eugene Smith (December 30, 1918 – October 15, 1978).



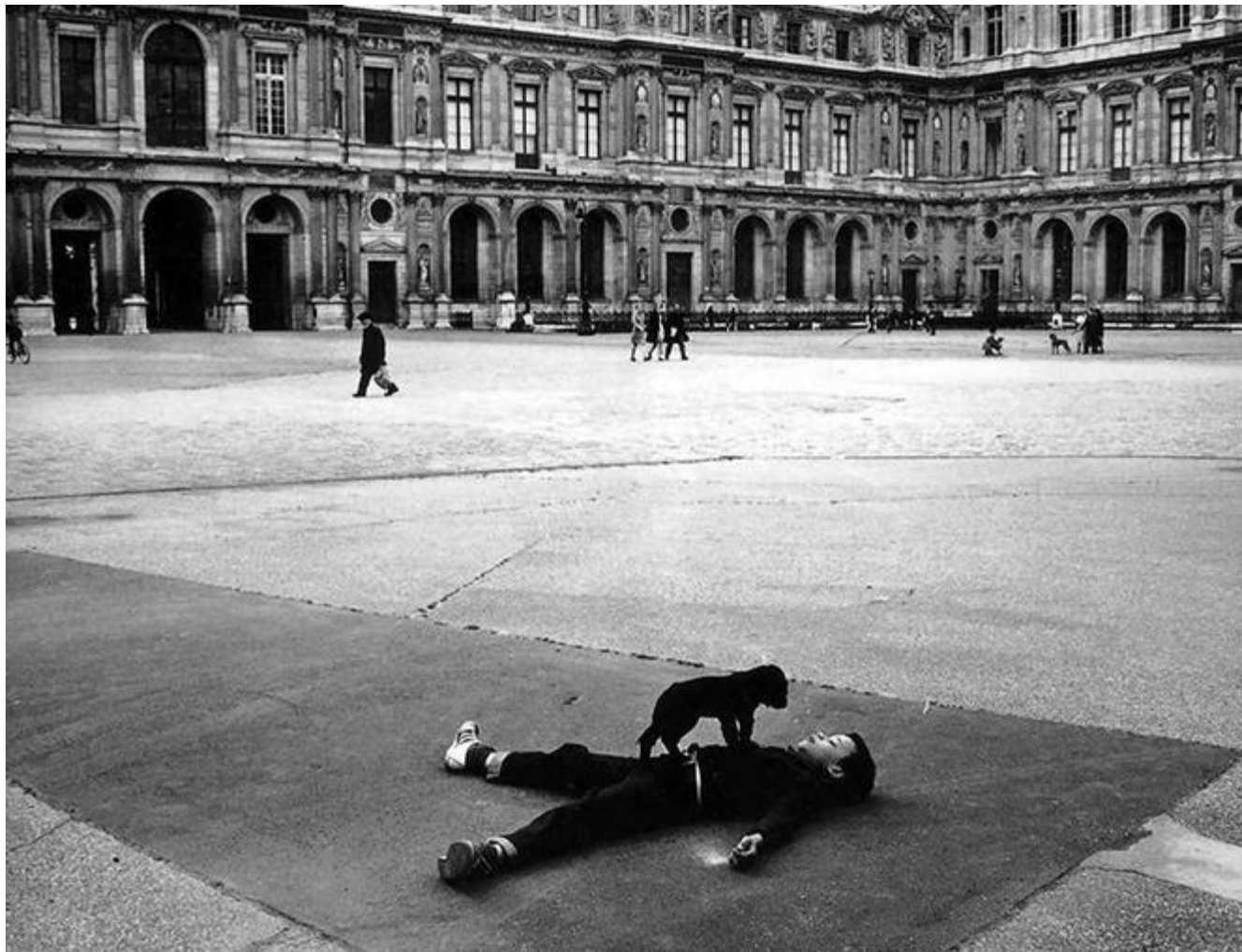
William Klein (April 19, 1928 -).



Elliott Erwitt (July 26, 1928 -).



Vivian Maier (February 1, 1926 – April 21, 2009).



Robert Doisneau (14 April 1912 – 1 April 1994).



Saul Leiter (December 3, 1923 – November 26, 2013).



Bill Brandt (2 May 1904 – 20 December 1983).



Harry Morey Callahan (October 22, 1912 – March 15, 1999).



Bruce Landon Davidson (September 5, 1933 -).



William Eggleston (July 27, 1939 -).



Alfred Eisenstaedt (December 6, 1898 – August 23, 1995).



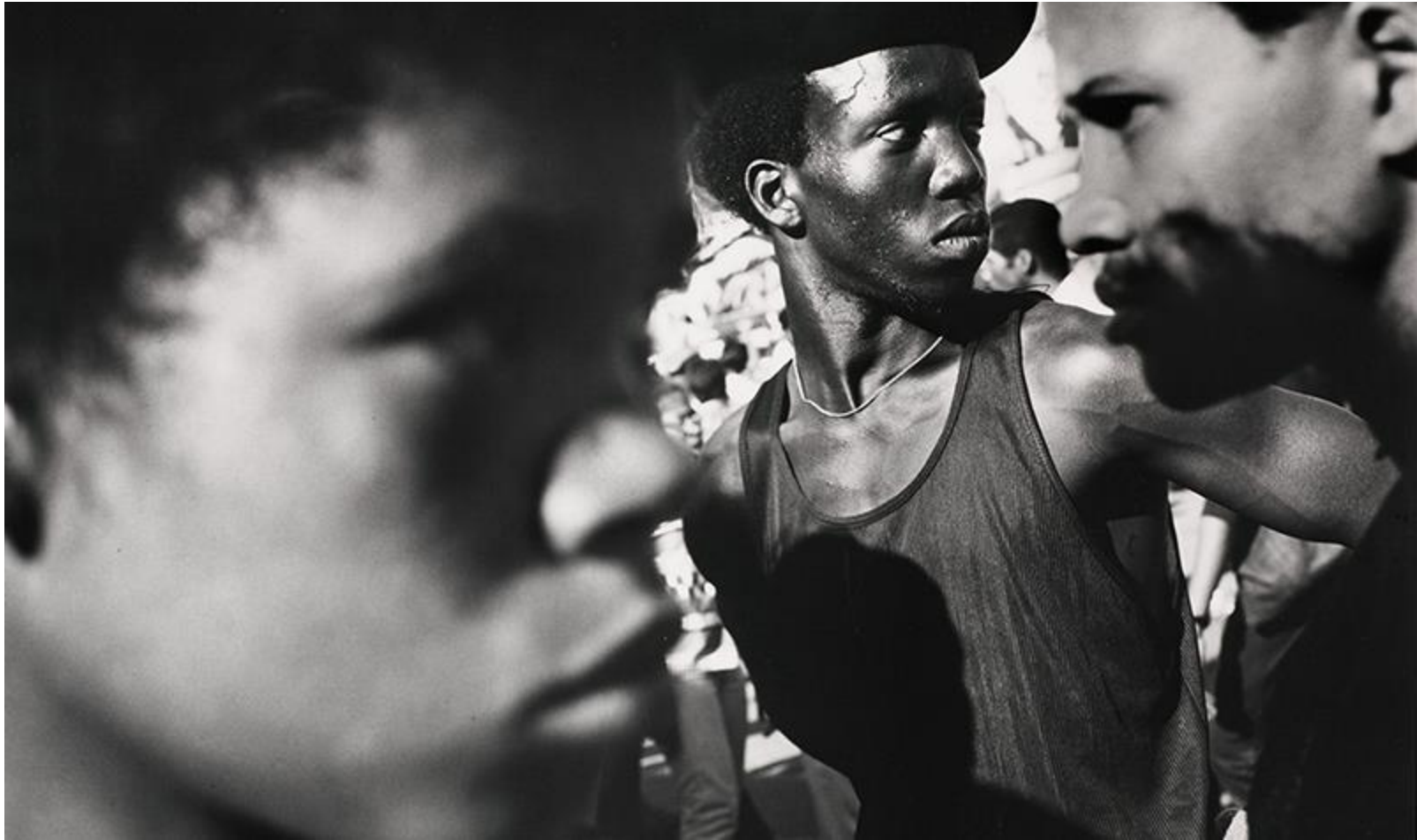
Harold Martin Feinstein (April 17, 1931 – June 20, 2015).



David Martin Heath (June 27, 1931 – June 27, 2016).



Nigel Henderson (1 April 1917 - 15 May 1985).



Leon Levinstein (1910–1988).



Susan Meiselas (June 21, 1948 -).



Lisette Model (November 10, 1901 – March 30, 1983).



Aaron Siskind (December 4, 1903 – February 8, 1991).



Fred Stein (July 3, 1909 – September 27, 1967).



Paul Strand (October 16, 1890 – March 31, 1976).



Peter N. Turnley (born June 22, 1955).



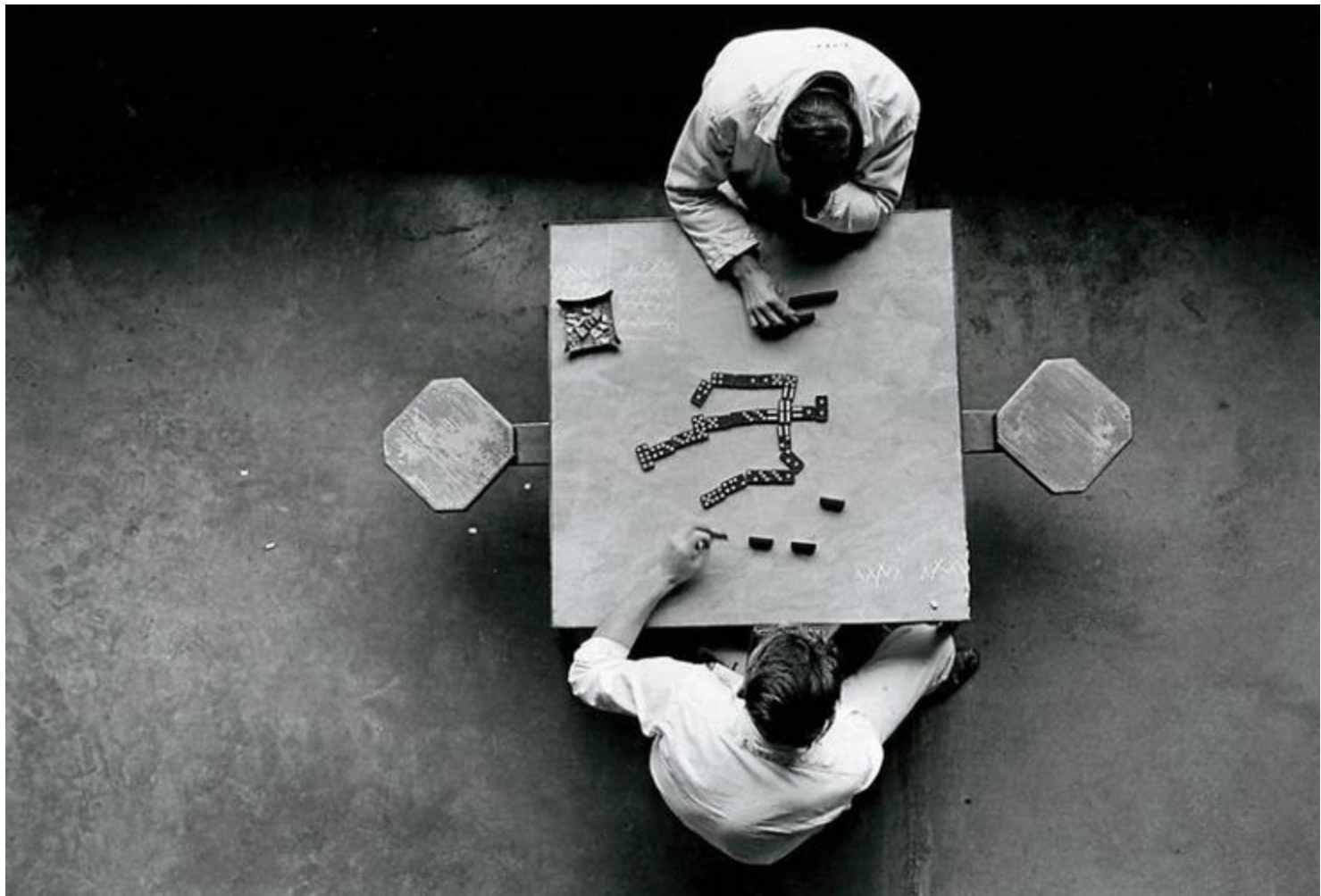
Arthur "Weegee" Fellig (June 12, 1899 – December 26, 1968).



Thomas Wood (14 January 1951 -).



Louis Stettner (November 7, 1922 – October 13, 2016).



Danny Lyon (March 16, 1942 -).



Jacques Henri Lartigue (June 13, 1894 – September 12, 1986).



Arthur Leipzig (October 25, 1918 – December 5, 2014).



Mark Cohen (1943 -).



William "Bill" Cunningham Jr. (March 13, 1929 – June 25, 2016).



Carolyn Drake (1971 -).



Daidō Moriyama (October 10, 1938 -).



David Vestal (March 21, 1924 – December 5, 2013).



Fred Herzog (September 21, 1930 – September 9, 2019).



Shirley Baker (9 July 1932 – 21 September 2014).



Mary Ellen Mark (March 20, 1940 – May 25, 2015).

Personal



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



Ahmedabad, India (2006)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



China (2003-2005)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



Budapest, Hungary (2006)



New Orleans, Louisiana (2015)



New Orleans, Louisiana (2015)



New York City, New York (2015)



New York City, New York (2015)



New York City, New York (2015)



Zimbabwe (1995)



Zimbabwe (1995)



Zimbabwe (1995)



Zimbabwe (1995)



Zimbabwe (1995)



DSP-1



DSP-2



DSP-3



DSP-4



DSP-5



DSP-6



DSP-7



DSP-8



DSP-9



DSP-10



DSP-11



DSP-12

Dyer Street Portraiture

This photo documentary project focuses on the denizens of a military street in El Paso, Texas, 1983.

"Dyer Street Portraiture", "Photo 1991" (group show), Lincoln [Flanagan] Campus Art Gallery, Community College of Rhode Island, Lincoln, Rhode Island, U.S.A., 1991.

"Dyer Street Portraiture", "Photo Show 1988" (group show), Corridor Gallery, Department of Transportation, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. (sponsored by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts), 1988.

"Dyer Street Portraiture" (solo show), The Silver Bullet Gallery, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A. (listed in the Notable Exhibitions section of American Photo magazine, March, 1986), 1986.

"Dyer Street Portraiture", "Photo 1985" (group show), The Gallery of Fine Arts (Southeast Museum of Photography) , Daytona State College (Daytona Beach Community College), Daytona Beach, Florida, U.S.A., 1985.

"Dyer Street Portraiture" (solo show), Southern Light Gallery, Amarillo College, Amarillo, Texas, U.S.A., 1985.

Comments/Reviews:

"The black-and-white images record a diversity of common people in an urban habitat with an ambiance of film noir." (Notable Exhibitions section, American Photo magazine, March, 1986)

"Your images are strong, direct and honest." (Arthur Goldsmith, Editorial Director, Popular Photography magazine) (1984)

"The images are well seen, and the concept seems to be viable. The series is a clean, well-photographed group of pictures." (Beaumont Newhall, Photographic Historian, The University of New Mexico) (1984)

"I hope a wider public will have an opportunity to see the pictures." (Peter Bunnell, Photographic Historian, Princeton University) (1984)

"It was very good to see the images, and I found them quite strong, both formally and emotionally." (Keith Davis, Curator, Photographic Collections, Hallmark Cards Incorporated) (1984)

"You have some very good pictures. I wish you lots of luck." (Mary Ellen Mark, Documentary Photographer) (1984)

"I always appreciate another person's very sincere efforts at his craft." (Judy Dater, Fine Arts Photographer) (1984)

"I was pleasantly surprised to look at your work. I believe it's the strongest I've seen." (Robert Hirsch, Director, Southern Light Gallery, Amarillo College) (1984)

Gwangju, South Korea

Exhibition:

Kumho Art Center,
Gwangju,
South Korea
(accepted as
a part of the
Kumho Art
Foundation
Archives),
1997.



P to P-1



P to P-2



P to P-3



P to P-4



P to P-5



P to P-6



P to P-7



P to P-8



P to P-9

Thank you.

www.tomrchambers.com

tom@tomrchambers.com