



California Museum of Photography
Sweeney Art Gallery
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PRESS RELEASE
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California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock presents

Myth and Majesty

Photographs Picturing the American Southwest

Selections from the Permanent Collection of the California Museum of Photography

January 30–May 21, 2016

Winter reception: Saturday, January 30, 6–9pm

Reception is FREE and open to the public

The California Museum of Photography presents photographs depicting Native Americans in the Southwestern region of the United States – including Arizona, New Mexico, and Southern California – dating to the period of the 1870s through the 1930s. Jason Weems, Associate Professor of the History of Art at UC Riverside, will guest author an original essay to accompany the exhibition. *Myth and Majesty* and other exhibitions will be celebrated during ARTSblock's winter reception on Saturday, January 30, 6–9pm. The event is free and open to the public.

Selected from the museum's permanent collection, the photographs were made by Adam Clark Vroman, Edward Sheriff Curtis, John Karl Hillers, William Henry Jackson, and others. They depict Hopi, Zuni, and Navajo peoples and cultures from their Western settler points of view. Each photographer brought his own approaches, attitudes, and aims to create photographs that remain complex in their aesthetic and sociopolitical resonations, at times fraught with contemporaneous stereotypes about Native Americans.

The first half of the exhibition will focus on the museum's extensive holdings of photographs made by Adam Clark Vroman, showing a selection of 72 prints of the 400 in the CMP's holdings. Depicting crafts, cultural rituals, and straight-ahead portraits, Vroman's photographs picture Hopi, Zuni, and Navajo peoples. Often traveling as part of expeditions alongside figures such as Frederick Webb Hodge (1864–1956), an anthropologist, or Charles Fletcher Lummis (1859–1928), *Los Angeles Times* editor, photographer, and Native American activist, Vroman visited myriad pueblos and mesas throughout Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah from the late 1890s through the early 1900s. He was one of the few photographers of his time to continue the tradition of field photography, championed by such photographers as John Karl Hillers and William Henry Jackson, also on view. Vroman's advanced sensibility linked the methods of the field photographers with a sophistication that anticipated the work of twentieth century masters like Ansel Adams (1902–84). Vroman's work remains distinguished from other photographers of the period due to his friendship with many of his subjects and his respect for their cultures.

The photographs held in the CMP collection were all printed by William Webb during the period of 1961-72. Following Vroman's death in 1916, there were few of his prints in circulation. In the 1950s, a trove of his original glass negatives were rediscovered in Los Angeles and came to the attention of Ruth Mahood, then Curator of the History Division of the Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art. In 1961, Mahood published an edited volume entitled *Photographer of the Southwest, Adam Clark Vroman, 1856-1916*, which was followed in 1972 by Webb and Robert A. Weinstein's *Dwellers at the Source*. Webb's reproductions were used to illustrate both publications. The two seminal volumes reintroduced Vroman's work to the public and recovered from obscurity his contributions to the fields of photography, history, and anthropology.

The second part of the exhibition features 15 photographs depicting Hopi people and culture, selected from the museum's vast Keystone-Mast Collection, the world's largest collection of original stereoscopic prints and negatives. A stereoscopic pair of images depicts left-eye and right-eye views of the same scene, and enables a single three-dimensional image. These photographs by Underwood & Underwood and other photographers and photography companies all date to the period 1905-36. New enlarged prints have been produced for exhibition. Additionally, 3D viewers will be available for audience interaction; a selection of Keystone-Mast images are provided in stereoscopic form so that visitors may engage with the 3D images.

The Keystone View Company, on which the Keystone-Mast Collection is based, was active in Meadville, Pennsylvania in 1892-1963. The company commissioned various photographers to make stereoscopic images in a range of topics, from architecture and landscapes, to customs and dress; the archive they amassed spans the globe and offers an encyclopedic view of the world. The stereographs were marketed to a wide consumer base that included schools as well as individuals.

Additional works by Edward Sheriff Curtis, John Karl Hillers, and William Henry Jackson conclude the exhibition.

Adam Clark Vroman (born in 1856 in La Salle, Illinois; died in 1916 in Altadena, California) was an American artist best known for his photographs documenting Native Americans of the Southwest and the California Missions. Prior to relocating to California, Vroman spent seventeen years working in a multiplicity of duties related to the railroad industry (some of which included operator, agent, dispatcher, and ticket salesman) in Illinois. A longtime lover and collector of books, he also became the cofounder of The Glasscock and Vroman store (still operating today as Vroman's Bookstore) shortly after his move to Pasadena. Exactly how Vroman became interested in photography remains a mystery. In 1897 and 1899 Vroman was employed by the Bureau of American Ethnology, a research unit of the Smithsonian Institution, on two separate photographic expeditions related to documenting Native Americans and their dwellings in the Southwest. In addition to his work in the Southwest, Vroman made photographs throughout the Eastern United States, Canada, Japan, and Europe. Vroman's works are held in many museum and research collections, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; International Center of Photography, New York; George Eastman Museum, Rochester; and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Edward Sheriff Curtis (born in 1868 in Whitewater, Wisconsin; died in 1952 in Los Angeles, California) was an American photographer and ethnologist. Beginning as a portrait photographer based in Seattle, he later photographed the wilderness and indigenous populations of Alaska as an official photographer for the Harriman Expedition in 1899, an experience that piqued his interest in native cultures and led him to spend an increasing amount of time shooting in the field rather than in the studio. Curtis documented Native Americans extensively throughout his life and spent decades completing an ambitious portfolio of photographs and text documenting some eighty tribes west of the Mississippi river titled *The North American Indian* (1907-1930), an undertaking bolstered by the support of President Theodore Roosevelt and railroad tycoon J.P. Morgan. Sharing a prevailing notion espoused by Roosevelt, Curtis frequently expressed assimilationist attitudes toward Native Americans. Later in life he became involved in Native American activist efforts, including the founding of the Indian Welfare League, which helped pass the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act, a law that issued citizenship to all Native Americans born in the United States. Curtis remains one of the most well recognized photographers of Native peoples and his work and archives are held in many collections, including those of The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; The Huntington Library, Los Angeles; Cleveland Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Library of Congress, Washington, DC; and Smithsonian Institution Libraries, Washington, DC.

John Karl Hillers (born in 1843 in Hanover, Germany; died in 1925 in Washington, DC) was an American government photographer who came to the United States from Europe in 1852. Throughout his lifetime he worked as a photographer for the expeditions of geologist and explorer John Wesley Powell (1834-1902), for the Bureau of Ethnology Affairs, and for the United States Geological Survey. Hillers is known as one of the first to photograph the Grand Canyon from the elevated plateaus of Utah, a feat undertaken while working for Powell as a photographer on his second expedition on the Colorado River. In 1872 he was asked by the Western lands survey to turn his attention from landscape photography to depicting Native peoples and began photographing the Zuni and other Pueblo peoples in New Mexico. His photographs are housed in numerous collections, including the National Archives, USA; New York Public Library; and Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC.

William Henry Jackson (born in 1843 in Keeseville, New York; died in 1942 in New York City, New York) was an American explorer, painter, and geological survey photographer known for his work picturing the American Southwest. Interested in photography from a young age, Jackson settled in Omaha, Nebraska, where he opened a portrait studio with his brother after serving a tour of duty in the Civil War. Jackson held a greater interest in landscape photography than in portraiture, and in 1870 took the opportunity to accompany geologist Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden (1829-87) on an expedition that culminated in the region of Yellowstone Lake. There Jackson shot what became the first published photographs of Yellowstone; partly thanks to the power of Jackson's photographs, Yellowstone was designated the first national park in 1872. He was also the first to photograph the prehistoric Native American dwellings at Mesa Verde, Colorado. He eventually settled in Denver, Colorado to work as a commercial landscape photographer. Jackson's photographs are

held in many public collections, including The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; George Eastman Museum, Rochester; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Museum of Nebraska Art.

The Keystone-Mast Collection, part of the permanent collection at the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock, is the world's largest collection of original stereoscopic prints and negatives. The photographs presented as part of the exhibition *Myth and Majesty* were selected from the hundreds of thousands of images that make up the Keystone-Mast Collection. The collection is based on the archive of the Keystone View Company of Meadville, Pennsylvania, which was active in 1892-1963. Taken together, the 350,000 items that make up the Keystone-Mast Collection offer an encyclopedic view of world history and cultural diversity spanning nearly a century.

Myth and Majesty: Photographs Picturing the American Southwest is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions, and Kathryn Poindexter, CMP Curatorial Assistant. Special thanks to Jason Weems, Associate Professor of the History of Art at UCR; Leigh Gleason, CMP Curator of Collections; Zaid Yousef, ARTSblock Exhibition Designer; and Aide Jovana Esquivel, Collections Assistant.

The exhibition is made possible with the support of UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside.

Also on view at UCR ARTSblock

CMP Projects: Marie Bovo

How to Survive Abstraction

California Museum of Photography

December 19, 2015–April 16, 2016

CMP Projects presents *How to Survive Abstraction*, featuring the work of Marseille-based artist Marie Bovo. CMP's presentation constitutes Bovo's first solo museum exhibition outside of Europe. Threaded throughout her practice is her interest in the human act of carving out a space for community within inhospitable urban landscapes, and more broadly, within the confinement of law, the logics of nations, and the systems of globalism. She variably employs the abstracting quality of her medium to give us openness or to construct more claustrophobic spaces.

CMP Projects is an ongoing exhibition series that features new and recent photo-based works by contemporary artists. The exhibitions are organized by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions, and are presented on the second floor of the CMP. This presentation is made possible by the generous support of FRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur; Institut français; and kamel mennour, Paris. Additional support is provided by UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside. Special thanks to Susan Ossman, Professor of Anthropology at UCR.

Aaron Siskind: Pleasures and Terrors

Selections from the Permanent Collection of the California Museum of Photography

California Museum of Photography

August 8, 2015–January 30, 2016

Mined from the collection of the California Museum of Photography, *Aaron Siskind: Pleasures and Terrors* draws on six decades of the seminal artist's career. Siskind's photographic beginnings took place in the 1930s as a member of the New York-based Film and Photo League, a socially and politically conscious organization that sought to document urban life in New York in the midst of the Great Depression. Within a decade he would migrate toward a photographic sensibility simultaneously defined as radically abstract and concretely representational. Frequently taking close shots of hand painted signage, politically-fueled graffiti, and weathered urban surfaces as his subject matter, Siskind is most known for his mythic compositions that at times bear a striking resemblance to the work of important twentieth century Abstract Expressionist painters.

Aaron Siskind: Pleasures and Terrors is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock, and is curated by Kathryn Poindexter, CMP Curatorial Assistant. Support is provided by UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside. Special thanks to John Divola, Professor of Art at UCR.

Flash: David Weldzius

Estrada Courts, USA

California Museum of Photography

November 21, 2015–March 5, 2016

FLASH: David Weldzius is the presentation of an in-progress work from the artist's new series based on the community murals at Estrada Courts. Known for its murals, many of which have been designed and painted by current and past residents, Estrada Courts is a public housing project in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles, constructed for the families of factory workers and returning servicemen in the 1940s. Weldzius photographs sections of the murals, makes monochrome prints, and then applies oil paint to infuse the works with color.

Flash! contemporary art series features single works made within the last year. The exhibitions are presented on the third floor of the CMP, and are organized by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions. *FLASH: David Weldzius* is the eleventh exhibition in the series.

Recollection: Contemporary Artists Working with the Keystone-Mast Collection

Selections from the Permanent Collection of the California Museum of Photography

California Museum of Photography

October 17, 2015–February 20, 2016

Drawing on the permanent collection of the California Museum of Photography, *Recollection: Contemporary Artists Working with the Keystone-Mast Collection* features works by Jim Pomeroy, Esther Parada, Mark Klett and Byron Wolfe, and Ethan Turpin. Because of its broad appeal, the Keystone-Mast Collection, the world's largest archive of stereoscopic photographs and negatives, is the most frequently accessed collection at the museum. Artists have utilized these photographs to make new images. The works in *Recollection* have been produced by five artists who manipulated, edited, or composited the historic photographs to make new, contemporary images in their own voices.

Recollection is organized by the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Leigh Gleason, CMP Curator of Collections. This presentation was made possible in part by UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside.

SECOND WAVE

Aesthetics of the 80s in Today's Contemporary Art

Sweeney Art Gallery and Culver Center of the Arts

November 14, 2015–March 19, 2016

SECOND WAVE: Aesthetics of the 80s in Today's Contemporary Art explores the influence of artistic styles of artists working in the 1980s on a new generation of artists born or raised during that decade. The exhibition is organized around aesthetic trajectories such as Appropriation, Feminism, Graffiti Art, Neo-Expressionism, Neo-Geo, Mass Media, and Multiculturalism.

SECOND WAVE is organized by UCR ARTSblock and is curated by Jennifer Frias, Associate Curator, Sweeney Art Gallery. The exhibition was made possible by the generous support of UCR's College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) and the City of Riverside.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND PRESS INQUIRIES

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main Steet, Riverside, CA 92501, and encompasses three venues: the California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. ARTSBlock is open Tuesday-Saturday, noon-5pm. Admission is \$3, and includes entry to all three venues. Galleries are open late and admission is free during First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month, 6-9pm.

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