



**DATE: April 27, 2005  
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**THE GETTY OFFERS SPECIAL SHOWCASE  
OF AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY  
*American Visions at the Getty Center***

May 10–September 4, 2005

***Three Roads Taken: The Photographs of Paul Strand  
The Photographs of Frederick Sommer: A Centennial Tribute***

September 20, 2005–January 22, 2006

***Scene of the Crime: Photo by Weegee  
Pictures for the Press***

LOS ANGELES—The Getty will present *American Visions*, a special showcase of four exhibitions featuring preeminent photographers and notable images from the Getty's collection. Focusing on 20<sup>th</sup>-century American innovators Paul Strand (1890–1976), Frederick Sommer (1905–1999), and the great crime photographer Weegee (1899–1968), the exhibitions span 75 years of American photography. A fourth exhibition highlights new acquisitions recording historic events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

More than 200 photographs from the Getty Museum's collection will be on view over the course of the four exhibitions. They range from modernist cityscapes by Strand and Sommer's surrealist-inspired still lifes to sensational crime scenes by Weegee and memorable news images from the 1940s to the 1970s. Collectively they reveal the creativity, power, and vision of these photographers who continue to influence generations of artists. *American Visions* also reflects the depth and breadth of the museum's renowned photographs collection, where emphasis is placed on acquiring groups of works by a diverse array of preeminent photographers.

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*American Visions* premieres in May with a side-by-side examination of works by two of the country's most respected photographers. ***Three Roads Taken: The Photographs of Paul Strand*** and ***The Photographs of Frederick Sommer: A Centennial Tribute***, will both be on view at the Getty Center from May 10 to September 4, 2005. In September, the presentation will conclude with a focus on the Getty's growing collection of photojournalism, with ***Scene of the Crime: Photo by Weegee*** and ***Pictures for the Press***, both on view from September 20, 2005 to January 22, 2006.

***Three Roads Taken*** explores the development of Paul Strand's aesthetic as he sought to express the principles of modern art through photography, convey a sense of place, and create truthful portraits of people. The exhibition pursues these three paths in a chronological survey of the photographer's work that presents his cubist-inspired still lifes of 1916 with the experimental landscapes of New Mexico from 1931, alongside his heroizing series of portraits from Italy and Scotland made in 1953–54. More than 70 photographs will be presented in the show, which also includes a continuous screening of Strand's experimental and influential short film *Manhatta*, which he made in 1920 with fellow American photographer Charles Sheeler (1883–1965). The exhibition coincides with the Getty's publication of *In Focus: Paul Strand, Photographs from the J. Paul Getty Museum*. The exhibition is sponsored by Merrill Lynch.

The long and influential career of Frederick Sommer, one of the most venerated American photographers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is celebrated in ***The Photographs of Frederick Sommer: A Centennial Tribute***. Sommer strove for a cross-fertilization among drawing, sculpture, music, philosophy, and photography, producing works that reflected a philosophical and radical streak and a surrealist sensibility. The high point of this interplay came in the 1950s, when Sommer started creating cameraless negatives of abstract compositions that he painted on glass. He also experimented with making negatives by placing paint on cellophane and smoke on foil.

***Scene of the Crime*** features approximately 70 photographs by the great photographer Arthur Fellig who became known in the 1930s as Weegee the Famous. Weegee (a nickname derived from the Ouija board game) seemed to materialize

wherever news was happening. With his Speed Graphic camera and plenty of flash bulbs, Weegee covered all aspects of Manhattan nightlife, selling pictures by morning to the tabloids, broadsheets, and picture agencies. On the police beat, he stepped into scenes of murder, fire, riot, and accidents. He also took his camera to the opera, the movies, the circus, jazz concerts, and Greenwich Village parties. Spanning two decades of Weegee's career, this exhibition will be introduced by the earlier pictures of pioneering Los Angeles news photographer George Watson and his nephew Coy Watson, Jr., with whom Weegee worked briefly in the early 1930s.

Complementing the Weegee show is *Pictures for the Press*, which focuses on photographs of newsworthy events from the 1940s to the 1970s taken by well-known photojournalists, like Robert Capa and W. Eugene Smith, as well as lesser-known press photographers. The show includes iconic images of the atomic explosion over Nagasaki, the D-Day invasion of Omaha Beach during World War II, the assassinations of President Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald, civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, during the 1960s, and the evacuation of Saigon in 1975. Drawn from the Getty's collection of rare works by photojournalists, many of the photographs were originally used for reproduction in newspapers or magazines and bear stamps and captions, and exhibit the worn quality typical of prints from working archives.

The Getty Museum's photographs collection was established in 1984 through the simultaneous acquisition of several major American and European collections of photographs. This commitment elevated Los Angeles as a center for the study of the history of photography, ranging from its experimental beginnings in England and France in the 1830s to the social documentary tradition of 20<sup>th</sup>-century American photography. Today, the Getty's photographs collection includes about 35,000 individual prints, 1,500 daguerreotypes and other cased objects, 30,000 stereographs and cartes-de-visite, and 475 albums containing almost 40,000 mounted photographs.

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**Note to editors: Images available on request.**

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**The J. Paul Getty Trust** is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that features the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs are based at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

**Visiting the Getty Center:**

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**Additional information is available on the Getty Web site at *www.getty.edu*.**