



Photography at MoMA: 1920 to 1960

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An epic dive into modernist photography by the museum that helped shape its history

The history of photography has been told many times, but never before through the incomparable collection of photographs at The Museum of Modern Art. As the second volume in a set of three books that together present a new and comprehensive history of photography through works from MoMA's collection, this publication charts the medium during the height of the modernist period, from 1920 to 1960.

Only one other volume--*Looking at Photographs*, published in 1973--highlights the photographic treasures of MoMA's collection; neither Beaumont Newhall's classic *History of Photography* nor John Szarkowski's *Photography Until Now* used the Museum collection as a springboard to approach photography's distinctive history. The Museum's significant role in the development of this history, and in the construction of a canon that championed photography as an art form (but also eclipsed certain alternative or unfamiliar practices) requires a reconsidered history for the 21st century. This publication offers a fresh critical lens through which to appreciate works of exceptional significance, surprise and influence, encouraging creative new readings.

The book begins with an in-depth introduction followed by eight chapters of full-color plates, each introduced by a short essay. Masterworks by photographers such as Alfred Stieglitz, Dorothea Lange, Man Ray and Aleksander Rodchenko appear alongside lesser-known gems, and diverse notions of modernism enrich classic interpretations, so that the beautiful fictions and messy realities of photography are complicated, refreshed and, above all, enjoyed.

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