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## NEWS FROM THE GETTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



*Bowl with Sugar Cubes*, 1928, André Kertész. Gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © Estate of André Kertész.

### THE GETTY MUSEUM PRESENTS *IN FOCUS: STILL LIFE*

At the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center

September 14, 2010 – January 23, 2011

LOS ANGELES—The J. Paul Getty Museum presents *In Focus: Still Life*, a survey of some of the innovative ways photographers have explored and refreshed this traditional genre, on view at the Getty Center in the Center for Photographs from September 14, 2010–January 23, 2011.

"Still life photography has served as both a conventional and an experimental form during periods of significant aesthetic and technological change," said Paul Martineau, assistant curator, Department of Photographs, the J. Paul Getty Museum, and curator of the exhibition. "One of our goals for the exhibition was to show how still life photographs can be both traditional and surprising."

With its roots in antiquity, the term "still life" is derived from the Dutch word *stillevens*, coined during the 17th century, when painted examples enjoyed immense popularity throughout Europe. The impetus for a new term came as artists created compositions of increasing complexity, bringing together a greater variety of objects to communicate allegorical meanings. Still life featured prominently in the early experiments of the pioneers of the photographic medium and, more than 170 years later, it continues to be a significant motif for contemporary photographers.

Drawn exclusively from the Museum's collection, the exhibition includes photographs by Charles Aubry, Henry Bailey, Hans Bellmer, Jo Ann Callis, Sharon Core, Baron Adolf De Meyer, Walker Evans, Roger Fenton, Frederick H. Hollyer, Heinrich Kühn, Sigmar Polke, Man Ray, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Paul Outerbridge, Louis-Rémy Robert, Baron Armand-Pierre Séguier, Paul Strand, Josef Sudek, and Thomas R. Williams.

The exhibition is arranged chronologically and includes a broad range of photographic processes, from daguerreotypes and albumen silver prints made in the 19th century to gelatin silver prints, and cibachrome prints made in the 20th century, to digital prints from the 21st century.

Newly acquired works will be on display for the first time: *Still Life with Triangle and Red Eraser* (1985) by American Irving Penn, *Lorikeet with Green Cloth* (2006) by Australian Marian Drew, and *Blow Up: Untitled 15* (2007) by Israeli Ori Gersht.

For *Bowl with Sugar Cubes*, photographer André Kertész created a still life out of a simple bowl, spoon, and sugar cubes, demonstrating the photographer's interest in the compositional possibilities of layering basic geometric forms on top of one another—three rectangles in a circle (sugar cubes and bowl) and a circle in a square (bowl and the cropped printing paper). A visual sophistication is achieved through his adroit use of simple objects and dramatic lighting.

Other selections from *In Focus: Still Life* include Edward Weston's *Bananas and Orange*, which depicts a symmetrical fan of bananas punctuated by one oddly shaped orange, and Frederick Sommer's *The Anatomy of a Chicken*, which uses the discarded parts of a chicken to create a visual commentary. Influenced by Surrealism, Sommer embraced unexpected juxtapositions and literary allusions to express his intellectual and philosophical ideas. In *Anatomy of a Chicken*, a severed head, three sunken eyes, and eviscerated organs glisten on a white board. Evoking biblical imagery, medieval grotesques, and heraldic emblems, Sommer calls on the viewer to consider the endless cycle of birth and death, the cruel reality of the food chain, and man's role in this violence.

*In Focus: Still Life* will be the seventh installation of the ongoing In Focus series of exhibitions, thematic presentations of photographs from the Getty's permanent collection. Previous exhibitions focused on *The Nude*, *The Landscape*, *The Portrait*, *Making a Scene* (staged photographs), *The Worker*, and most recently, *Tasteful Pictures*.

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Still Life in Photography**

Getty Publications will offer the expanded book *Still Life in Photography*, based on the *In Focus: Still Life* exhibition. This volume surveys some of the innovative ways photographers have explored the traditional genre of still life from photography's earliest years to the present day. The introductory essay is followed by an illuminating sequence and juxtaposition of 80 plates selected from the J. Paul Getty Museum's collection. By Paul Martineau, assistant curator, Department of Photographs, the J. Paul Getty Museum. 112 pages, hardcover, \$24.95. Available October 2010.

### **Related Publication**

*Looking at Photographs: A Guide to Technical Terms* concisely explains technical terms often encountered by museum-goers and has been updated to include entries pertaining to the new age of digital photography. By Gordon Baldwin and Martin Jürgens. Illustrated, revised edition, paperback, \$18.95.

## RELATED EVENTS

All events are free, unless otherwise noted. Seating reservations are required. For reservations and information, please call (310) 440-7300 or visit [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu).

### **Talks**

#### *Curator's Gallery Talk*

Paul Martineau, assistant curator of Photographs, the J. Paul Getty Museum, leads a gallery talk on the exhibition.

Meet under the stairs in the Museum Entrance Hall.

Wednesday, September 22, 1:30 p.m.

### **Family Drawing Hour: Still Lifes**

Come be inspired by still lifes in the Getty's collection and special exhibitions, then create a still life of your own with your family! Space is limited.

Sign-up begins at 3 p.m. at the Museum Information Desk. Museum Galleries.

Saturdays, October 16, November 6, December 4, and January 8, 3:30 p.m.

### **GettyGuide™ Audio Player**

Los Angeles artist Sharon Core discusses her startling photograph *Early American—Still Life with Steak* and two other photographs that reflect on a genre once rooted in painting. Pick up an audio player in the Museum Entrance Hall for \$5.

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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 serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Malibu.

**Visiting the Getty Center**

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. It is closed Monday and major holidays. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is \$15 per car, but free after 5pm on Saturdays and for evening events throughout the week. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is located at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California

**Additional information is available at *www.getty.edu*.**

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