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News Release

UBS Donates 166 Works of Photography to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC

The selection, united under the theme of “Land Use in America,” is the largest donation by UBS to an individual museum

New York, April 22, 2024 – UBS today announced it donated a group of 166 photographs to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the firm’s largest donation by number of works at one time. Dating from the 19th and 20th century, this group of photographs by 96 artists illustrates a multifaceted story of land use covering a range of themes including the impact of industry, the transformation of the environment, and the celebration of the rich and diverse American landscape.

In the 1990s, John Szarkowski, photographer, curator, and former director of photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, assembled the photography collection for PaineWebber. When PaineWebber was acquired by UBS in 2000, the works subsequently became part of the UBS Art Collection, which is widely recognized as one of the world’s most important corporate art collections.

The gift is comprised of work by some of the most celebrated American photographers of the last two centuries, including Dorothea Lange, Alfred Stieglitz, and Carleton Watkins. Also included are works by lesser-known photographers whose art expands and adds depth to our understanding of the ways in which Americans have conceived of, cared for, celebrated, and impacted the land around them. Seventy-five of the 96 photographers in the collection are new to or are underrepresented in the National Gallery, including several photographers who are women and artists of color.

“We are thrilled to be able to donate this group of historically significant photographs to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.,” said **Mary Rozell, Global Head of the UBS Art Collection**. “This gift demonstrates UBS’s ongoing commitment to sharing its artworks with a wide audience.”

“The Gallery’s status as a national museum with free admission to the public, together with its recognized scholarship in the field of photography, make it the ideal institution to receive these distinctly American photographs. The museum is positioned to preserve this valuable visual record of our country’s unique landscape for generations to come, exhibiting these works in context and providing access for research.”

The National Gallery’s photography collection consists of more than 22,000 works covering the history of the medium from its beginnings in 1839 to the present. It also features in-depth holdings of work by many key figures of the art form. Among the collection’s greatest strengths are photographs by major 20th century American practitioners. Visitors can take advantage of the Gallery’s exhibitions and publications, as well as its [Photograph Study Room](#) to examine and enjoy examples of the art of photography.

“This wonderful gift from UBS adds important work to the National Gallery’s photography collection that will allow us to explore how artists have viewed our use of and relationship to the land over the last 160 years,” said

Sarah Greenough, senior curator and head of the department of photographs at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Additional Information about the collection gifted by UBS:

The collection began in 1991 after chairman and chief executive officer of PaineWebber, Donald Marron, asked the former director of the photography department at the Museum of Modern Art, John Szarkowski, to collect a series of photographs that would complement the firm's contemporary art holdings. Szarkowski spent several years building the collection, choosing images that paid particular attention to land use in America. He hoped that this collection, which documented the changing American landscape from the 19th and 20th century, would contribute to a fuller understanding of this critical and complex subject. These photographs joined the UBS Art Collection in 2000 when PaineWebber was acquired by UBS.

The collection includes photographs by the widely celebrated western expeditionary photographers of the 1860s and 1870s – such as Eadweard Muybridge, Timothy O'Sullivan, Charles Savage, and Carleton Watkins – whose magisterial views of towering mountains, commanding waterfalls, and vast deserts celebrated the West as a symbol of the country's power and promise. The collection also includes works by lesser-known photographers that question and enrich that narrative, interpreting the landscape as a sanctuary, a battleground, and site of conquest.

The impact of humans on the land is further explored in the works by Robert Adams, Edward Burtynsky, Terry Evans, Emmet Gowin, Mark Klett, and David Maisel. Often making aerial photographs, these artists depicted vast stretches of land that have been transformed by human habitation. Also part of the collection are photos by the second-generation of photographers of the American West, including F. Jay Haynes, John Hillers, Darius Kinsey, Frederick Monsen, and Isaiah West Taber, who recorded the impact of the railroads, mining, and logging on the land and the interaction between white settlers and indigenous communities.

Additionally, the collection includes early 20th century social documentary by celebrated Farm Security Administration (FSA) photographers such as Dorothea Lange, Arthur Rothstein, Peter Sekaer, and Marion Post Wolcott. Their images poignantly demonstrate how the depleted land could no longer support the inhabitants who depended on it. Two of the most iconic and celebrated photographs from these years that directly address this point are Rothstein's *Dust Storm, Cimarron County, Oklahoma* (1936) and Lange's *Power farming displaces tenants from the land in the western dry cotton area, Childress County, Texas* (June 1938, printed 1950s).

Latin and South American photographers, such as Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Valdir Cruz, Agustin Estrada, Flor Garduño, Graciela Iturbide, and Sebastião Salgado, who worked in Mexico, Brazil, and Guatemala, commemorate the bounties the earth provided – the fruits, vegetables, birds, and fish that help sustain and enrich human life – as well as its destruction by mining. Other photographs in the collection depict nature's quiet corners and intimate vistas, highlighting the land by transforming it from a symbol of power and awe into one of manicured beauty and peaceful harmony. The late 19th and early 20th century Pictorialist works by Laura Adams Armer, Jean Bernard, John G. Bullock, Nancy Ford Cones, Martha Hale Harvey, Gertrude Käsebier, William B. Post, Robert S. Redfield, and Edward Steichen evocatively present the landscape in a very different manner from their predecessors.

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About UBS

UBS is the largest truly global wealth manager and the leading universal bank in Switzerland. It also provides large-scale and diversified asset management solutions and focused investment banking capabilities. UBS helps clients achieve their financial goals through personalized advice, solutions and products. Headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, the firm has operations and offices around the globe. UBS shares are listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange and the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

About UBS Art Collection

The UBS Art Collection consists of more than 30,000 works, including paintings, works on paper, photography, sculpture, video, and installations by artists from around the world and is widely recognized as one of the most important corporate art collections. It is comprised of various individual art collections with unique attributes that have been integrated over time through a series of mergers and acquisitions – notably Union Bank of Switzerland, Swiss Bank Corporation and PaineWebber Inc. The UBS Art Collection's guiding mission is to collaborate with and collect works by the most significant artists of our time. Additionally, the collection presents a curated exhibition program in the public UBS Art Gallery in New York.

About the National Gallery of Art

The National Gallery of Art welcomes all people to explore art, creativity, and our shared humanity. Nearly four million people come through our doors each year—with millions more online—making us one of the most visited art museums in the world. Our renowned collection includes nearly 160,000 works of art, from the ancient world to today. Admission to the West and East Buildings, Sculpture Garden, special exhibitions, and public programs is always free.

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