

# NEW YORK IN COLOR



Left to right: Saul Leiter, Ernst Haas, and Burt Glinn.

February 3 – March 17, 2012

Opening reception: Thursday, February 2, 6-8pm

Howard Greenberg Gallery is pleased to announce *New York in Color*, an exhibition of photographs by artists including: Bruce Davidson, Ernst Haas, Saul Leiter, Helen Levitt, Joel Meyerowitz, Marvin Newman, and numerous others. The exhibition captures the visual spirit of New York through a wide array of vibrant, romantic, graphic, and consistently colourful images that describe the city in ways not achievable through a monochromatic palette.

It was not until the 1950s that color film offered an accessible artistic medium; prior to that time color photography was a medium primarily confined to fashion, advertising and low quality family snapshots. In fact, there was resistance to color photography in the artistic community and a distinct bias against its use by many in the field. But over the next few decades, as the visual environment of New York increased in intensity as a result of the convergence of commerce and technology, advances in color photography kept pace and a new acceptance for the medium evolved. Many photographers began to experiment with color and the results were striking.

Saul Leiter came to color photography as an accomplished painter and fashion photographer and invented his own poetic and nuanced vocabulary for describing New York. The layered, muted tones of his work are expressive in a way that was new for photographic imagery, particularly when depicting a subject as gritty and stark as the city.

Ernst Haas was seriously experimenting with color photography in the early 1950s and in 1962 was the first artist to have a show at MoMA devoted to color photographs. Through long exposures, his photographs captured patterns of light and motion.

Marvin Newman, a member of the Photo League, had studied at the Chicago Institute of Design where experimentation was encouraged. He captured the garishness of Times

Square and the jarring chaos of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in images that blend elements of street photography with abstraction.

As a successful art director and graphic designer, Joel Meyerowitz understood the potential of color when he began photographing the streets of New York in the early 1960s. He concentrated on the interplay between light and shadow, which when expressed in color, took on a heightened level of specificity and intimacy.

A myriad of other artists and approaches are present in the exhibition, each image possessing its own particular style, emotional state and palette. From the soft, lyrical tones of Helen Levitt's children and the intensely, saturated spectrum of Bruce Davidson's subway, to the graphic compositions of Jeff Mermelstein and Jerry Dantzic, to the focal manipulations of Susan Wides and staged tableaux of Gail Albert Halaban, the exhibition radiates visual dynamism and artistic innovation.

The exhibition was inspired and co-curated by Bob Shamis, photographic historian, independent curator, photographer and author of the recent publication, [New York in Color](#) upon which the exhibition was based.

For further information, please contact Karen Marks at [karen@howardgreenberg.com](mailto:karen@howardgreenberg.com) or 212.334.0010