



HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY

For Immediate Release

A Democracy of Imagery curated by Colin Westerbeck March 24 – April 30, 2016

New York – *A Democracy of Imagery*, an exhibition of work by 84 photographers from the 1860s through 2002, will be on view at Howard Greenberg Gallery from March 24 – April 30, 2016. Curated by Colin Westerbeck, the exhibition presents 100 images by artists including Richard Avedon, Edward Burtynsky, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Saul Leiter, Vivian Maier, Man Ray, Robert Mapplethorpe, Joel Meyerowitz, and Gordon Parks. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, March 24 from 6-8 p.m.

A book entitled *A Democracy of Imagery* will be published later this year by Steidl/Howard Greenberg Library, 2016.

In 2014, Colin Westerbeck had the genesis of an idea for a photography exhibition based on a challenge. Writing about Howard Greenberg in the book's foreword, Westerbeck notes, "I approached him because I suspected I could do a museum-quality exhibition—one with the reach and variety of the slow time over which museum holdings accumulate—out of his stock-in-trade."

A Democracy of Imagery affords a rare opportunity to investigate the gallery's famed backrooms and uncover treasures of the medium. Howard Greenberg is widely credited as a leader in the development of the modern photography market. Founded in 1981, the Gallery is known internationally for its pioneering role in exhibiting photography from all periods.

The book and exhibition began with a unique and thoughtful theme: As Westerbeck writes, "From the beginning, the purpose of the exhibition was to include underappreciated photographs by famous photographers and great photographs by underappreciated photographers. To me, in the end, they're all great photographs by great photographers."



A Democracy of Imagery includes historical images both enchanting and ominous. The book's cover image, an anonymous photograph from the mid-1880s, shows the Statue of Liberty under construction in France, before it was disassembled and shipped to New York for installation in the harbor on Liberty Island. Another photograph from 1938 by Margaret Bourke-White depicts thousands of smiling Czechs giving the "Heil Hitler" salute in response to a speech by the Czech Nazi leader Konrad Henlein.

A number of portraits of famous artists and writers provide highlights in the exhibition. Saul Leiter's 1950s photograph of a young Andy Warhol shows the artist reviewing images when he was known as an illustrator. Allen Ginsberg's 1989 photograph of David Hockney and William S. Burroughs reveals two well-dressed gentlemen with their hats on a table facing away from each other. Hockney has the corner of his mouth upturned and Burroughs has a slight frown, as if they're ying and yang, reciprocal spirits of bemusement and disapproval.

Alfred Hitchcock is shown hamming it up for the camera in a 1942 photograph by Gjon Mili using stroboscopic flash. According to Mili, the great director "found the idea of being directed very amusing and behaving accordingly." Also performing for the camera are Secretary of Defense William Cohen, President Clinton, and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright with National Security Advisor Sandy Berger. The 1999 photograph by Diana Walker shows the leaders enacting "hear no evil, see no evil..." in a lighthearted moment in a holding room before a NATO conference.

About Colin Westerbeck

Before moving to Los Angeles, Colin Westerbeck was a Curator of Photography at the Art Institute of Chicago from 1986 through 2003. Since then he has written a weekly column on photography for the Los Angeles Times in 2006 and 2007 and has contributed frequently to *Art in America*. He has also taught photographic history at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Southern California. From 2008 until 2012, he was the Director of the California Museum of Photography at the University of California, Riverside. In 2017, Laurence King will publish the third edition of Westerbeck's book with Joel Meyerowitz, *Bystander, A History of Street Photography*.

About Howard Greenberg Gallery

Since its inception over thirty years ago, Howard Greenberg Gallery has built a vast and ever-changing collection of some of the most important photographs in the medium. The Gallery's collection acts as a living history of photography, offering genres and styles from Pictorialism to Modernism, in addition to contemporary photography and images conceived for industry, advertising, and fashion. Howard Greenberg Gallery is located at 41 East 57th Street, Suite 1406, New York. The gallery exhibits at The ADAA Art Show, The Armory Show, The AIPAD Photography Show New York, Photo London, Art Basel, Paris Photo, and Art Basel Miami Beach. For more information, contact 212-334-0010 or info@howardgreenberg.com or visit www.howardgreenberg.com.

Image Caption: Anonymous, *Untitled*, c. 1886. Gelatin silver print, printed later, 8 5/8 x 6 1/4 inches.

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