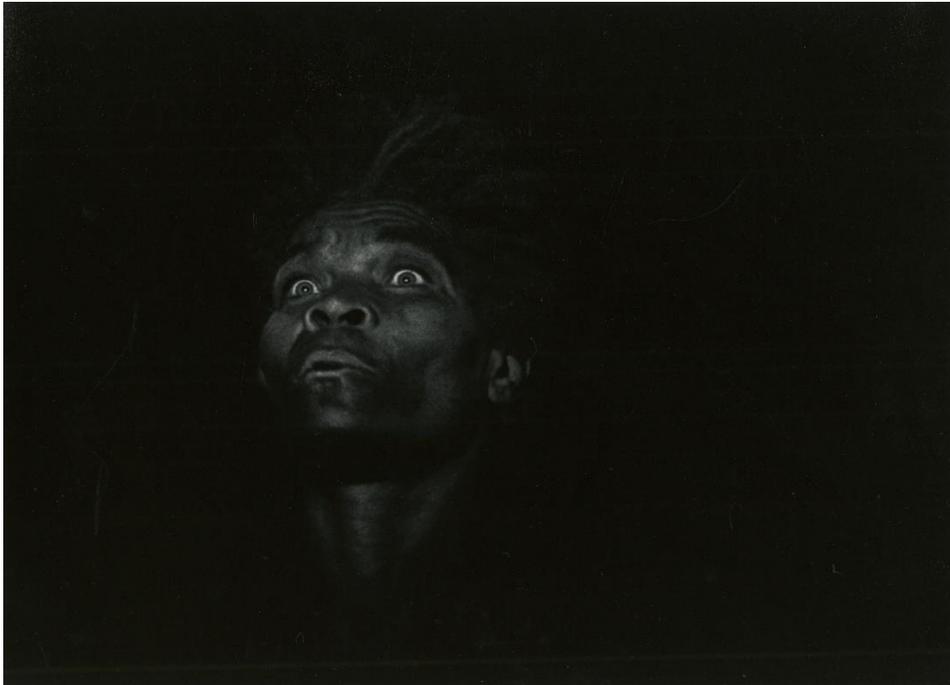


BURN IT IN

ROY DECARAVA, ALEX MAJOLI, RAY K. METZKER, AND W. EUGENE SMITH

November 29 – February 28



W. Eugene Smith, Mad Eyes, Haiti, 1959

Dating back to the Renaissance, artists have used the dramatic technique of painting shadows and bathing a subject in a single light source. The effect was used both to illuminate and lead the viewer's eye, making a particular area the focal point within a painting. The method, known as *chiaroscuro*, derived from two Italian words *chiaro*, meaning clear or bright and *oscuro* meaning dark. *Burn it In* pays homage to the beauty and the power of the dark print, bringing together the work of four internationally renowned photographers: **W. Eugene Smith, Roy DeCarava, Ray K. Metzker and Alex Majoli.**

W. Eugene Smith, perhaps the single most important American photographer in the development of the editorial photo essay, famously instructed his then darkroom assistant, the photographer James Karales: "You have to work it over and over... you have to *burn it in*." For Smith, authenticity of the emotion of a scene outweighed the authenticity of the scene itself. Using heavy contrast, so heavy that it created a dramatic chiaroscuro effect, he believed that 90% of a photographic image was made in the darkroom, using potassium ferrocyanide to paint and pull areas back into the light. *Spanish Wake, 1951* included in this exhibition, could well be considered an homage to one of Rembrandt's masterpieces *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* painted in 1632 both in composition and sensibility of light.



Roy DeCarava, Dancers, NY, 1956

Roy DeCarava in conversation once stated: "I'm not a documentarian, I never have been. I think of myself as poetic, a maker of visions, dreams, and a few nightmares." Combining often pointed political commentary with aesthetic and formal rigor, his pictures were characterized by moody lighting and darker tones to break through a kind of literalness and achieve a creative expression.



Ray K. Metzker, 57 FS-22, Chicago, 1957

Ray Metzker considered himself 'an intellectual wanderer,' his images pushed the boundaries of what seemed formally possible in black and white photography and in the words of Keith F. Davis, senior curator of photography at the Nelson-Atkins, 'transcended any simple notion of technical experimentation of formalism to illuminate a vastly larger human realm.'



Alex Majoli, Scene #9857, Republic of Congo, 2013

Italian-born photographer Alex Majoli is the only photographer in the exhibition making work today and has traveled the world photographing political demonstrations, humanitarian emergencies and quiet moments of daily life. Inspired by the paintings of Caravaggio, whose dramatic use of illumination and extreme shadows came to be known as *tenebrism*, from the Italian *tenebroso* meaning dark and mysterious, Majoli's images possess a quality of light and sense of human theatre which is again highly dramatic. Majoli, despite making his pictures during daylight hours, unlike the other photographers in this exhibition, uses an elaborate off-camera flash method to plunge the surroundings into darkness to create, quoting curator David Company, 'something resembling moonlight,' transforming the scene profoundly.

Pioneers in their field, the photographers in this exhibition, some of whom began working almost a century ago, invite profound reflection upon not only the human condition, but what it is to experience the negative space. Photography begins with darkness; an unexposed sheet of photographic film will produce a clear negative that will print as pure black. The act of 'burning in,' to take a negative in part back towards its original state speaks to origins both of the human condition and of the history of art.

Also on View Mark Cohen



Mark Cohen, Boy and Football, 1974

Mark Cohen was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania where he lived and photographed for most of his life. His work was first exhibited in 1969 at the George Eastman House. Known primarily for his black and white images, he was also a pioneer of the 1970s color movement.

Cohen is the quintessential street photographer, using an aggressive approach in which he closes in on strangers with a camera and flash before they're aware of being photographed. His stark images made on the streets of Wilkes-Barre and other working-class Pennsylvania towns capture moments, gestures, and emotions that, because they might be invisible to others' sensibilities, testify to Cohen's innately superior perception, his gift of precise and ingenious visual ordering. His work received early recognition, with a one-person show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1973 when he was just thirty, and it has garnered critical acclaim ever since. Today, Cohen's work is held in over thirty prominent international collections, ranging from the Metropolitan Museum in New York City to the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography.

About Howard Greenberg Gallery

Since its inception in New York 40 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.

Formerly a photographer and founder of The Center for Photography in Woodstock in 1977, Howard Greenberg has been one of a small group of gallerists, curators and historians responsible for the creation and development of the modern market for photography. Howard Greenberg Gallery—founded in 1981 and originally known as Photofind—was the first to consistently exhibit photojournalism and street photography, now accepted as important components of photographic art.

The Gallery is located at two 57th Street locations: an exhibition space on the 8th floor of the Fuller Building at 41 East 57th Street; and an entire floor at 32 East 57th Street, directly across from the Fuller Building, to house, manage and present its vast archive of over 40,000 prints.

For more information, contact 212-334-0010, info@howardgreenberg.com or visit www.howardgreenberg.com.