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MoCP hosts one of history's greatest photographers

Lee Friedlander: *At Work and Sticks and Stones*

Museum of Contemporary Photography
Columbia College Chicago
March 12 - May 14, 2005

The Museum of Contemporary Photography is proud to present Lee Friedlander, arguably the most important living American photographer. Lee Friedlander's unique vision underscores the two-dimensionality of the picture plane and the potential for photographs to contain varying levels of reflection, opacity, and transparency. Although usually associated with the late 1960s and early 1970s when he, Garry Winogrand and Diane Arbus were exhibited widely, Friedlander has continued to into the new century to steadily refine his vision and to experiment with new subjects. A major new retrospective and catalog by Peter Galassi are planned for 2005 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Lee Friedlander was born in 1934 in Aberdeen, Washington. He studied photography at the Art Center School in Los Angeles (1953-55) and worked as a freelance photographer. Friedlander has been awarded John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. His work has been widely exhibited and is included in the collections of The Baltimore Museum of Art; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, among other international collections. He has published six books since his large 1988 retrospective, *Like a One-Eyed Cat*. MoCP Director, Rod Slemmons wrote the essay for that catalog.

The Museum will present two exhibitions of 147 photographs by Lee Friedlander, opening to the public March 12, and running through May 14, 2005.

The first, *Lee Friedlander At Work*, is a selection of 60 prints from six projects done in a variety of work places in the United States: small factories in Ohio and Pennsylvania, a steel mill in Cleveland, a computer factory in Wisconsin, the Dreyfus Company in New York, telemarketing firms in Omaha, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. This exhibition was curated and produced for the Columbus Museum of Art by Catherine Evans. The face of American Labor seen in these photographs is varied and at times surprising, from pristine computer assembly rooms to grimy small machine shops, to IT workers staring catatonically at their monitors. While there is much discussion of "post industrial" America in the news media, this exhibition reminds us that actual laborers are rarely seen there, and even more rarely seen at work.

The second exhibition is a selection of 50 photographs from Friedlander's very new body of work, published in 2004 as *Sticks and Stones: Architectural America* (D.A.P and Fraenkel Gallery, essay by James Enyeart). Some of these images date to the mid 1990s, but the majority are from 2002-2004. The central visual premise of *Sticks and Stones* is that our view of American cities is generally obstructed, usually layered, and seldom anything like the simple clarity of an architectural rendering. Friedlander is probably best known for striving to reclaim the complexity of real sight from the ideal simplicity of media-generated visions of

America. This is not an easy game to play with the camera, which is, of course, the main tool of the media he is critiquing. But he has been able to consistently violate and break through the flat field of photographic information, forcing us to look through scrims in the forms of fences and bushes, and to see in several directions at once through reflected transparencies and mirrors. These photographs, which are shown as a body of work exclusively here at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, can be seen as the culmination of 35 years of visual experimentation by Friedlander.

The Museum of Contemporary Photography's exhibitions, presentations, and related programs are **sponsored** in part by William Blair & Co., the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; American Airlines, the official airlines of the Museum of Contemporary Photography, and our members.

The **Museum of Contemporary Photography** is **free** and open to the public weekdays from 10 am until 5 pm (Thursdays until 8 pm) and Saturdays from noon until 5 pm. The Museum is located at 600 S. Michigan Avenue on the corner of Harrison Street. For additional information please call 312-663-5554 or visit us at www.mocp.org.

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