

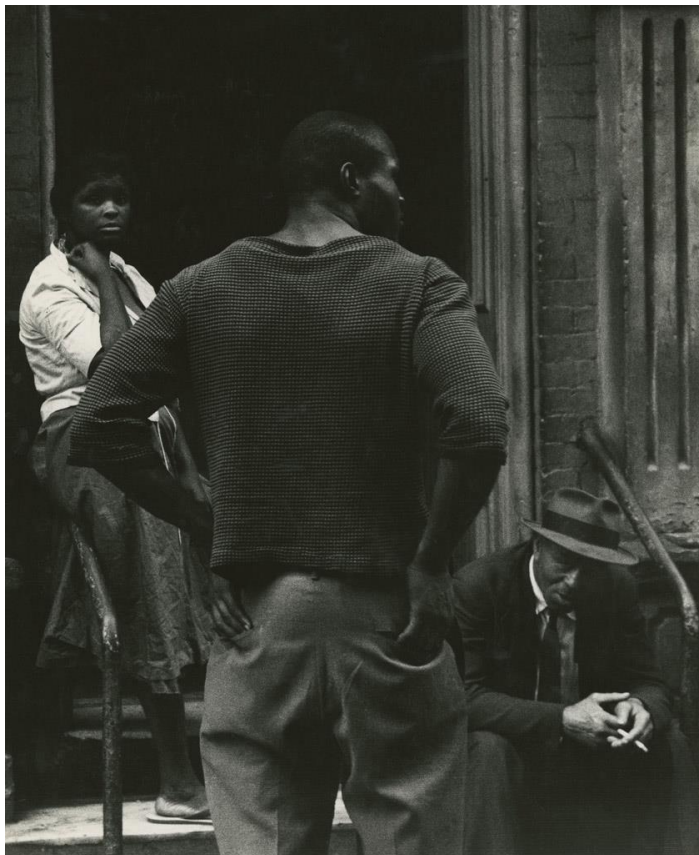
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New York : Louis Draper, A Retrospective

January 20, 2016

Steven Kasher Gallery presents its two new exhibitions, the first, a retrospective of the most important prints from the photographer's archive : Louis Draper. The exhibition features over 75 vintage black and white prints spanning Draper's career from the 1950s – 1980s. Along with Roy DeCarava, Louis Draper (1935-2002) eschewed the documentary statement, instead making personal and highly refined pictures that portray the joys and sorrows of the everyday people of his Harlem community. This exhibition brings to attention the work of one of the most accomplished and influential proponents of the Black Aesthetic in photography.



Draper called his photography a means of “engaged resistance”. In 1963, the same year the Civil Rights Bill was introduced into the U.S. Senate, Draper became a founding member of the Kamoinge Workshop, an eminent and enduring black photography collective. Draper's goal, and the collective goal of the Kamoinge Workshop, was to elevate the photographic representation of African-Americans, to transcend the stereotype of African-Americans as victims of social oppression by endowing their subjects with agency and grandeur. The founding members of Kamoinge included Draper, Roy DeCarava, Herbert Randall and Shawn Walker.

Alongside his Harlem street photography the exhibition features Draper's images from Mississippi in the 1960's, including his iconic portrait of Civil Rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer. Also featured are portraits of artists and leaders such as Malcolm X, Hughie Lee

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Smith and Katherine Dunham. In 1977 and 1978, Draper traveled to Senegal, where he photographed children, teenagers and street signs, recurring subjects in his work.

Draper's influence was as a photographer, mentor and educator. "Lou Draper's photographs of blacks in the streets of Harlem showed their dignity, grace and sense of pride," Shawn Walker, a member of Kamoinge, told Ten 8 magazine in 1987. "His photographs were printed so well, they were three-dimensional. I'd never seen such beautiful photographs of ordinary black people." In addition to his lifelong involvement with Kamoinge, Draper taught photography for over three decades, dedicating his life to inspiring the next generation of artists.



EXHIBITION

Louis Draper

From January 14th to February 20th, 2015

Also : PM New York Daily: 1940-48

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