



New Orleans Museum of Art

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New Orleans Museum of Art Presents *Photography and Depression*

Eighty-two works from permanent collection on view through March 1, 2009

[Hi-res images available upon request.]

NEW ORLEANS, La. (Wednesday, November 19, 2008)—From now through March 1, 2009, the New Orleans Museum of Art presents *Photography and Depression*, an examination of depression in all its forms, including mental and financial, through 82 works from the Museum's permanent collection.

Featured artists represent a who's who of photography, including Ansel Adams, William Eggleston, Walker Evans, Andrew Feininger, Lewis Hine, Dorothea Lange, Danny Lyon, Eadweard Muybridge, George Tice, Alfred Steiglitz, Weegee and many more.

The works are accompanied by text excerpted from *Culture and Depression*, a 1985 book by Dr. Arthur M. Kleinman, the distinguished professor, psychiatrist, medical and social anthropologist based at Harvard University.

Photography and Depression, the second exhibition in the museological series at NOMA, is a journey—or, as Brian Eno suggested in 1975, an “oblique strategy”—that began as a reaction to the notion of mania in contemporary art. Underneath the frivolity of contemporary art and fashion, one can quickly locate various types of psychological disorders that often lead to cataclysm, economic breakdown or illness.

The works chosen were felt to be the most relevant to our present day. “It might have been more expedient to use the nineteenth-century term melancholia, rather than depression,” said Diego Cortez, NOMA's Freeman Family Curator of Photography, “but it was felt that the latter term—a more twentieth-century disorder and phenomenon—most accurately described our modern and contemporary society.”

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Photography and Depression at NOMA
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The history of photography, like that of the twentieth century, has an underlying thread of depression—economic, psychological, and destructive trends in society. These prints document all three facets.

The exhibition employs the ideas of Dr. Arthur M. Kleinman, who has led a revolt against his own profession by calling for a broader, more cross-cultural understanding of depressive disorders—one which can encompass widely divergent cultural behaviors, rituals, and beliefs. Excerpts from Kleinman's 1985 book *Culture and Depression*, edited with Byron J. Good, juxtapose images of the last 150 years, helping to expose some of the underlying subtexts of society's sociological, psychological or anthropological collective attitudes.

About NOMA and the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 30,000 art objects encompassing 4,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing temporary exhibitions, are on view in the Museum's 46 galleries Wednesdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Thursdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the Museum is free to Louisiana residents through the generosity of The Helis Foundation.

Admission to the adjacent Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, featuring work by 57 artists, including several of the 20th century's great master sculptors, is always free during regular Museum hours.

The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk.

For more information, call (504) 659-4100 or visit www.noma.org.

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