

LOUIS FAURER

SEPTEMBER 9 - DECEMBER 18, 2016



Louis Faurer, *Deaf Mute*, New York, 1950 © Louis Faurer Estate

- > Press opening
September 8, 10 am - 12 am
- > Public opening
September 8, 18 pm - 21 pm

FONDATION HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON
2, impasse Lebourg - 75014 Paris



LOUIS FAURER

SEPTEMBER 9 - DECEMBER 18, 2016

CURATOR

The exhibition has been curated and organized by Agnès Sire, director of the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson in association with the Estate of Louis Faurer in New York, Howard Greenberg Gallery in New York and Deborah Bell Photographs.

EXHIBITION TOUR

The exhibition *Louis Faurer* will be presented at the Centro José Guerrero in Granada from April 6 to June 25, 2017.

THE BOOK

The exhibition catalog is published by Steidl. It is available in french and english, and includes a foreword by Agnès Sire, two original texts by Louis Faurer and Walter Hopps, and an essay written by Susan Kismaric.

TANDEM PARIS / NEW-YORK

The exhibition is included in the *Tandem Paris / New-York 2016*, organized by the City of Paris and the Institut Français (French Institut), in association with cultural services of the French Embassy in the USA, the American Embassy in France and the City of New York.



Louis Faurer, «Win, Place, and Show,» 3rd Avenue El at 53rd Street, New York, c.1946-1948 © Estate Louis Faurer

*However, with shocking suddenness in 1976 I came to believe that American
photography of the moment of mid-century belonged to Louis Faurer.*
Walter Hopps

THE EXHIBITION

SEPTEMBER 9 - DECEMBER 18, 2016

From September 9 to December 18, 2016, The Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson dedicates an exhibition to the American photographer, Louis Faurer. This show is the occasion to discover this artist who has not been the subject of an exhibition in France since 1992. A native of Philadelphia, Louis Faurer moved to New York after the War, as if irresistibly pulled into the life of Times Square, where he homed in, objectively and pitilessly, on loneliness in the crowd. Reporting held little interest for him, and journalism even less; he was drawn – as the captions to his photographs sometimes indicate – to the poetic side: the fragility of things and the unconscious revelation. He carried out much-admired commissions for leading magazines including *Flair*, *Junior Bazaar*, *Glamour* and *Mademoiselle*. This gave rise to an unfeigned self-contempt and a paradoxical inner division only humor could counter. These assignments earned a living and helped him pursue a more personal work in New York streets.

Profoundly honest, he refused the excessiveness (or obscenity) of violent scenes that might humiliate his subjects, and deliberately projected himself into the people he photographed; and if he often recognized himself in them, this was the whole point. Sometimes he encountered his double, or even appeared in shot as a reflection. Each of his images was “a challenge to silence and indifference” – theirs and his own.

After studying drawing and being noticed by the Disney Studios at the age of thirteen, Louis Faurer started his professional path by creating advertising posters and sketching caricatures in the seaside of Atlantic City. At the age of 21, he bought his first camera and won first prize for “Photo of the Week” in a contest sponsored by the *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*. Market Street would then be the scene of his first shots. In 1947, he left for New York, as Lilian Bassman, art director for *Junior Bazaar*, hired him as a photographer. He met Robert Frank who was to become a close friend and with who he would share a studio for a while.

In 1968, he abandoned New York, the scene of his most successful work, for personal and financial reasons. Faurer worked briefly in England, and then in Paris where he struggled doing fashion work, with occasional assignments from *Elle* and *French Vogue*. Shortly after Faurer returned to New York in 1974 at the age of 58, he found that photography was being embraced by the art world and was soon to become a commodity in the international art market. The art dealer, Harry Lunn brought his work to public attention through an exhibition at Marlborough Gallery in 1997 and resurrected his career, his contribution then began to be acknowledged. In 1984, a car in New York streets hit Faurer, his wounds prevented him to pursue his career as a photographer. He passed away in Manhattan on March 2, 2001.

Deeply concerned with what he saw, he shares his doubts with us as he chooses anonymous figures spotted amid the ordinariness of the sidewalk: figures pulled out of the ambient melancholy, the film noir, the pervasive distress that seem to have been his personal lot. A remarkably gifted printer, Faurer experimented with blur, overlaid negatives and the marked graininess resulting from his fondness for the nocturnal. His touchiness meant frequent problems with clients and people like the numerous photographers who tried to lend a helping hand; among the latter was William Eggleston, who had discerned the unique depth of Faurer’s work. The issue the elegant Japanese photography quarterly *déjà vu* devoted to him in 1994 speaks of a rediscovery and a style ahead of its time, and quotes Nan Goldin: “Some people believe again that photography can be honest”.

In 1948, Edward Steichen, Head of the Department of Photography of the MoMA, supported Faurer and included him in *In and Out of Focus*. Steichen wrote: “Louis Faurer, a new comer in the field of documentary reporting, is a lyricist with a camera, a seeker and finder of magic in some of the highways and byways of life.” Afterwards, Steichen presented Faurer photographs in a few other exhibitions and in particular *The Family of Man*, in 1955. During his lifetime, Faurer did not have the wherewithal to edit his photographs into a book.

The exhibition is curated by Agnès Sire The Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson director in collaboration with The Louis Faurer Estate in New York, Howard Greenberg Gallery in New York and Deborah Bell Photographs. The show includes a hundred prints and documents has been The exhibition is co-produced with the Centro José Guerrero in Grenada. The book Louis Faurer is published by Steidl and is available in French and English. It proposes two original texts by Louis Faurer and Walter Hopps as well as an essay written by Susan Kismaric.

NARRATIVE OF MY CAREER

LOUIS FAURER

My earliest experience in art occurred at the Benjamin Rush Public school in Phila., Penna. Miss Duncan, who seemed to float on a rose petal scent, having requested that numbers be written on paper with lead pencil, was shocked when my sheet yielded a drawing of a locomotive. My next surprise, at the age of 13 arrived in the mail. I had submitted my drawings to Walt Disney and he proposed considering me for a position, although he couldn't guarantee it, if I travelled to California. It seemed unreachable and so I didn't go.

After graduating the South Phila. High School for Boys, I enrolled in a Commercial Lettering School. After months of hand trembling, I looked at my first sign, it read "FRESH FISH". From 1934 to 1937 I sketched caricatures on the beach at Atlantic City, N.J. My interest in photography began in 1937. It was greatly intensified when I was awarded first prize in the Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger for the photo of the week contest. Soon, the Farm Security Administration's early books became my bible. I was especially taken by Walker Evans' photography. The world of *Harper's Bazaar* also fascinated me.

Later, in New York, I was to meet Robert Frank at the Bazaar Studio. Since I was a commuter, he invited me to stay at his loft together with nine cats. He had recently arrived from Switzerland and was alone. New York enchanted and amazed me. Everywhere a new discovery awaited me. Rejection slips from *U.S. Camera* were transformed into re-produced pages. My work was being accepted, often it seemed unreal. I showed my photographs to Walker Evans. A handsome brass tea kettle in his tiny room in the offices at *FORTUNE* projected his stability and eloquence. "You wouldn't photograph fat women, would you?" he asked me. Later he warned me, "don't become contaminated." My need to continue photographing was solved by photography for commerce. I worked for periodicals which included *Harper's Bazaar*.

1946 to 1951 were important years. I photographed almost daily and the hypnotic dusk light led me to Times Square. Several nights of photographing in that area and developing and printing in Robert Frank's dark room became a way of life. He would say, "whatta town", "whatta town". I was represented in Edward Steichen's *IN AND OUT OF FOCUS* exhibit. Then, work, work, and more work. "Boy," he boomed, "go out and photograph and put the prints on my desk." This command was synchronized with a pound of his fist on the glass top desk. I thought it miraculous, that the glass did not shatter.

I tasted and accepted the offerings of the 50s and 60s. LIFE, COWLES PUBLICATIONS, HEARST and CONDE NAST, enabled me to continue with my personal photography efforts. Often I would carry a 16mm motion picture camera as I would a Leica and photograph in the New York streets. The results were never shown commercially. The negative has been stored.

In 1968, I needed new places, new faces and change. I tried Europe. I returned in the mid-seventies and was overwhelmed by the change that had occurred here. I took to photographing the new New York with an enthusiasm almost equal to the beginning. After the Lunn purchase, the gallery world. I was brought again to the drawing I first experienced, and as an unexpected bonus, the photographer had become an artist! 1978 found me the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Grant and the Creative Public Service Grant for photography. The latter is known as (CAPS). My eyes search for people who are grateful for life, people who forgive and whose doubts have been removed, who understand the truth, whose enduring spirit is bathed by such piercing white light as to provide their present and future hope.

Louis Faurer

*Reproduced, with editorial revisions, from the artist's original text.

Text published at the occasion of the exhibition *Louis Faurer – Photographs from Philadelphia and New York 1937-1973* presented from March 10 to April 23, 1981 at the Art Gallery of University of Maryland.

Extracts from the book *Louis Faurer* published by Steidl

LOUIS FAURER

CHRONOLOGY

- 1916** Louis Faurer was born on August 28 in Philadelphia from Polish immigrant parents
- 1921-1930** He attends Benjamin Rush Public School in Philadelphia
- 1929** He submits drawings to Walt Disney
- 1930-1934** He attends and graduates from South Philadelphia High School
- 1934-1937** He is employed by various photography studios, such as the Zamsky and Sarony portrait studios in Philadelphia
- He works as a graphologist and sketches caricatures on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, New Jersey
- He meets Ben Somoroff (comercial photographer), who sells him his first camera
- Louis Faurer begins to photograph on Market Street in Philadelphia
- At the age of 21, he receives first prize for the contest « Photo of the Week » organized by the *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*
- He attends the School of Commercial Art and Lettering in Philadelphia until 1940
- 1940** He marries Lillian Snyderman, with whom he has a son (Mark), in 1943
- 1941-1945** He works as a civilian photographic technician for the United States Army Signal Corps in Philadelphia
- 1946-1947** Faurer begins photographing for *Harper's Bazaar*, where he meets artistic director Alexey Brodovitch, founder of *Design Laboratory* which Faurer briefly attends to
- He photographs the streets of New York, mainly around Times Square, almost every day for his personal projects, until the early 1950s
- Begins a friendship with the photographer Robert Frank, who also works for *Harper's Bazaar*. They later share a studio in New York
- 1948** His work is included in Edward Steichen's *In and Out of Focus* exhibition at MoMA in New York
- 1950** Faurer becomes staff photographer for *Flair* magazine, edited by Fleur Cowles
- Continues to photograph regularly for a variety of magazines, including *Charm*, *Flair*, *Glamour*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Look*, *Mademoiselle*, *Seventeen*, and *Vogue* through 1967
- Group exhibition *Photography, Mid-century*, at LACMA, Los Angeles
- Group exhibition *51 American Photographers* at MoMA, New York
- 1952** Group exhibition *Then and Now* at MoMA, New York

LOUIS FAURER

CHRONOLOGY

- 1955** Steichen includes him in his landmark exhibition *The Family of Man* at MoMA, New York
- 1958** Group exhibition *Photographs from the Museum Collection* at MoMA, New York
- 1959** First individual exhibition held at Limelight Gallery, New York
- 1962-1968** Faurer begins to film the excitement on the streets of New York with a 16mm camera
- 1969-1974** He lives and works between London, Paris and Montreal, where he photographs mainly for *Elle*, *Marie Claire*, and *Vogue*
- 1974** Returns to New York and begins to teach at various institutions, such as Parsons School of Design in New York until 1983
- 1976** Viva (famous actress and model) introduces Louis Faurer to William Eggleston and curator Walter Hopps
- 1977** Second individual exhibition, Marlborough Gallery, New York
- 1977-1978** He receives the *National Endowment for the Arts Photographer's Fellowship Grant*; awarded grant again in 1981 and in 1982, which would allow him to begin to organize his archives
- 1979** Louis Faurer receives *John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship Grant*
- 1981** First important exhibition of his work at the University of Maryland Art Gallery
- 1983** Lectures at Yale University and at the School of Visual Arts in New York
- 1984** Interrupts photography following a serious traffic accident while crossing the street in New York
- 1989** Deborah Bell exclusively becomes his agent until 1992
- 1990** Exhibition *Louis Faurer* at the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
- 1991** Group exhibition *Appearances: Fashion Photography Since 1945*, at Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- 1992** Exhibition *Louis Faurer* at Centre National de la Photographie, Paris
- 1994** Exhibition *Louis Faurer: Photographs* at Photo Gallery International, Tokyo, Japan
- 1998** Exhibition *Louis Faurer: USA* at Zentrum für Fotografie, Berlin, Germany
- 2001** Louis Faurer dies on March 2 in New York
- 2002** Exhibition *Louis Faurer Retrospective* at Museum of Fine Arts, Houston



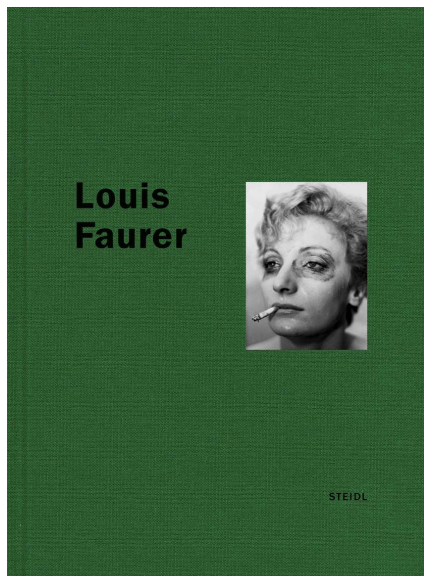
Louis Faurer, *42nd Street, New York*, c. 1948 © Estate Louis Faurer

"I have an intense desire to record life as I see it, as I feel it. As long as I'm amazed and astonished, as long as I feel that events, messages, expressions and movements are all shot through with the miraculous, I'll feel filled with the certainty I need to keep going. When that day comes, my doubts will vanish."

Louis Faurer

THE BOOK

STEIDL



Louis Faurer
Steidl Verlag

Foreword: Agnès Sire. Essay: Susan Kismaric. Original texts: Louis Faurer and Walter Hopps

34 euros
208 pages
24 x 17.6 cm
100 illustrations
ISBN: 978-3-95829-241-3
September 2016

EXTRACTS

New York City has been the major center of the Faurer's work, and that city's life at mid-century, his great subject. The city is totally Faurer's natural habitat. He can be at home, at one, with people on its streets, in its rooms. However serene or edgy his encounters, one senses Faurer (if at all) as *being* the same as the people in his photographs. And since these people are extremely varied, it is a transcendent vision that allows the photographer to be so many "others." Faurer's at-oneness with his subjects contrasts with both the mode of working and the results of Evans and Frank. They have proved to be great and wide-ranging explorers and finders of their images. Faurer made only one important trip: from Philadelphia (where he made his first, early brilliant photographs) to New York, where he stayed, and where in the course of things his vision consumed, whether ordinary or odd, the all of it.

Walter Hopps

Louis Faurer was a "photographer's photographer", one whose work was not known to a broad audience, or appreciated by the art world, but was loved by photographers. They saw in his pictures a purity of seeing, akin to what Faurer saw in the work of Walker Evans, the "poetic use of facts". Faurer distinguished himself within this way of working through his instinct and his uncanny eye for people who radiate a rare and convincing sense of privacy, an inner life. They are people who would be true in any time and place, who are emblematic of human struggle.

For whatever reasons, Faurer did not have the wherewithal to edit his photographs into a book, the most visible and long-lasting expression of a photographer's work. Yet his pictures are indelible. Their content presages a major shift in subject matter within the rubric of "documentary" American photography that was to come to fruition almost two decades later. In 1967 John Szarkowski identified this radical change when he wrote in his wall text for New Documents, an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, about the work of Diane Arbus, Lee Friedlander, and Garry Winogrand: «...In the past decade, a new generation of photographers has directed the documentary approach toward more personal ends. Their aim has been not to reform life, but to know it».

Susan Kismaric

EXHIBITION EVENTS

LES RENDEZ-VOUS DU LIVRE

Les Rendez-vous du livre, led by Rémi Coignet, founder of the website *Des livres et des photos* and editor in chief of the magazine *The Eyes*, questions the photobook field, key element of the contemporary artistic practice. The conferences will alternate between interviews with artists for who the book is at core of their approach and debates with professionals from the photography publishing world, whether they be photographer, publisher, designer, expert or bookseller.

Conversation with JH Engström

October 20, 6:30 pm to 8 pm

- > Free entrance subject to availability
- > Mandatory registration : contact@henricartierbresson.org



LES CONVERSATIONS

The Fondation HCB hosts a cycle of Conversations - conferences on photography - led by art critic Natacha Wolinski, with different actors of the photography world.

Photosensitive history of photography without camera

With Marc Lenot, art historian and founder of the blog *Lunettes rouges*, Juliana Borinski, photographer, and Denis Bernard, photographer and graphic design teacher.

Thursday, November 24, 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Literature to the test of image

With Jean-Pierre Montier, professor at Université Rennes 2 et Liliane Louvel, professor emeritus at Université de Poitiers.

Thursday, December 15, 6:30 pm to 8 pm

- > Free entrance subject to availability
- > Mandatory registration : contact@henricartierbresson.org

FREE ADMISSION ON WEDNESDAY!

Every Wednesday, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, free admission to exhibitions for everybody.

- > Free admission
- > On Wednesday, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

SATURDAY GUIDED VISIT

Last saturday of every month, the Foundation offers a guided visit of the exhibition in French led by a art historian at 11:30 am.

- > Last saturday of every month, 11:30 am
- > Free admission with entrance ticket
- > Mandatory registration : anaelle.rod@henricartierbresson.org

The cultural activities of the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson are supported by:

OLYMPUS

Your Vision, Our Future



Accident, New York, 1952 © Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Deborah Bell

PRESS IMAGES

REPRODUCTION CONDITIONS

Use of press visuals is authorized and exempted of rights during the exhibition at the Fondation HCB. Visuals must not be cropped.

001

Louis Faurer
Market Street, Philadelphia
1937
© Louis Faurer Estate



002

Louis Faurer
Staten Island Ferry, New York
1946
© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Deborah Bell



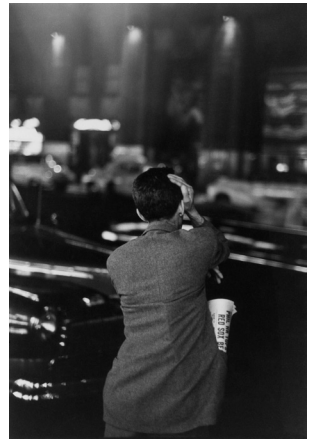
003

Louis Faurer
«Win, Place, and Show», 3rd Avenue El at 53rd Street, New York, New York
c.1946-1948
© Louis Faurer Estate



004

Louis Faurer
Unemployed and Looking at Rockefeller Center, New York
1947
© Louis Faurer Estate



005

Louis Faurer
Eddie, New York
1948
© Louis Faurer Estate



006

Louis Faurer
Union Square from Ohrbach's Window, New York,
c. 1948-1950
© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery



007

Louis Faurer

Untitled, New York

1949

© Louis Faurer Estate



008

Louis Faurer

New York

1949

© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery



009

Louis Faurer

Champion, New York

1950

© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery



010

Louis Faurer
Deaf Mute, New York
1950
© Louis Faurer Estate



011

Louis Faurer
Accident, New York
1952
© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Deborah Bell



012

Louis Faurer
Viva, New York
1962
© Louis Faurer Estate, Courtesy Christophe Lunn



PRACTICAL INFOS

PRESS OPENING

We are pleased to invite you to a press coffee & croissants opening on Thursday, September 8, 2016, from 10am to 12am.

RSVP : Emilie Hanmer / T +33 1 56 80 27 03 / emilie.hanmer@henricartierbresson.org
or through this link : [RSVP on line](#)

ADDRESS

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01 56 80 27 00

www.henricartierbresson.org

Metro :

Ligne 13: Gaîté

Ligne 6: Edgar Quinet

OPENING TIMES

Tuesday to Sunday 1:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Wednesday (late-night opening) 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Saturday 11:00 am - 6:45 pm

ADMISSION

Full-price 8 € / Reduced price 4 €

Free admission for members of the Fondation HCB

Free admission during late-night openings on Wednesdays (6:30 pm - 8:30 pm)

MEMBERS

Members enjoy an unlimited access to exhibitions for a year, invitations for exhibitions openings, a discount of 10% at the bookshop, priority to attend conferences at the Fondation HCB, private visits of exhibitions in attendance of curators.

Member : 100 euros

Student / Reduced price : 60 euros

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