

A black and white photograph capturing a moment of quiet contemplation. On the left, a young child with dark hair is shown from the chest up, looking down with a serious expression. Their gaze is directed towards a vintage-style toy airplane and a small white cow figurine resting on a dark, weathered wooden surface. The toy airplane, with its long wings and tail, lies horizontally, while the cow figurine stands nearby. The lighting is dramatic, casting deep shadows and highlighting the textures of the child's skin and the wood grain.

Eugene Richards

En marge
An Outsider

Eugene Richards

En marge

Inspirée de quelque cinquante années de photographie, cette exposition pourrait suivre un ordre chronologique, de mes tout premiers récits photographiques dans le sud des États-Unis en 1969 jusqu'à mon retour dans le delta de l'Arkansas en 2019. Elle pourrait aussi être structurée par thèmes: la misère aux États-Unis, le sort des handicapés mentaux, le coût humain de la drogue, de la guerre, le cancer d'une femme. L'une ou l'autre approche donnerait l'impression que j'ai participé à l'élaboration de cette exposition dès le départ. C'est faux. J'ai commencé à chercher ces photos il y a de longs mois, sur les conseils de mon fils Sam qui avait remarqué que j'étais abattu, incapable de faire quoi que ce soit. Les ravages du Covid accaparaient mon esprit, tout comme l'Afghanistan et l'Irak, et le sentiment que d'autres guerres se profilait. J'avais aussi du mal à accepter les fractures au sein de la société ainsi que le nouveau visage du journalisme aux États-Unis. De plus en plus de partisans de la politique identitaire suggéraient que certains photographes méritaient plus de soutien que d'autres. Que l'âge, la race, la classe sociale, le genre des journalistes sont des facteurs à considérer avant de nous envoyer en mission. Il me semblait également qu'à l'exception peut-être des photos de guerre, les images publiées dans les livres et les magazines d'actualités

étaient de moins en moins prises sur le vif, et de plus en plus souvent mises en scène, construites, en collaboration avec les sujets. «Collaboration» étant apparemment le mot à la mode ces temps-ci.

C'est finalement mon fils qui m'a orienté vers une nouvelle manière de publier et de m'exprimer. «Aujourd'hui, il n'y a pratiquement personne pour te soutenir dans ce que tu penses devoir faire, alors publie tes photos sur Instagram», m'a conseillé Sam. «Instagram», ai-je répété, incrédule. Alors, tel un automate, j'ai commencé à parcourir les vieux classeurs craquelés et gondolés remplis de planches-contacts qui occupent sept ou huit étagères d'un débarras au fond de notre maison. Au fil des pages, j'ai cherché des clichés que je n'avais encore jamais montrés ni publiés, triant des centaines de moments de la vie des autres, submergé de souvenirs.

Et puis, à ma grande surprise, Jean-François* m'a téléphoné. C'est un homme qui ne se soucie pas de qui vous êtes, de votre âge, de vos origines ou de votre identité de genre tant que vous vous efforcez de raconter la vérité. C'est son intérêt pour mes photos ainsi que la bienveillance de ma femme Janine et de Sam qui m'ont remis au travail.

Eugene Richards

* Jean-François Leroy, directeur du festival.

LIEU
Église des Dominicains



Eugene Richards

An Outsider

Based on some fifty years of photography, this exhibition could be structured chronologically, from my very first photographic stories in the American South in 1969 till I returned to the Arkansas Delta in 2019. On the other hand, it could be structured thematically: American poverty, the plight of the mentally disabled, the human cost of drugs, of war, a woman's cancer. Either approach would make it seem that from the outset I had a part in planning this exhibition. Not true. I began searching out these photographs long months ago at my son Sam's suggestion. He witnessed my feeling especially down, frozen in place. The deadly spread of Covid was on my mind, as were Afghanistan and Iraq and the realization that other wars were looming. I was also struggling to come to terms with the societal divisions and in turn journalistic changes in America. There were increasing numbers of promoters of identity politics suggesting that some of us are more worthy of support doing stories than others. That the age, race, class, gender of journalists are factors to be considered before sending us out into the world. Additionally it appeared to me that, with the possible exception of photos of war, the pictures being published in books and news magazines were less and less of the moment, more often set up,

constructed, in collaboration with the subjects. "Collaborative" being a kind of buzzword of our time.

As happened, it was my son who directed me toward an alternate way of publishing and speaking out. "There's pretty much no support right now for what you feel you should be doing," Sam observed, "so put your pictures on Instagram." "Instagram," I said incredulously. Then as if on auto-pilot I began to flip through the warped, cracked binders of contact sheets that take up seven or eight shelves in a back room of our house. Leafing through the pages, I went looking for pictures I hadn't shown or published before, sifting through hundreds of moments in the lives of others, awash in memories.

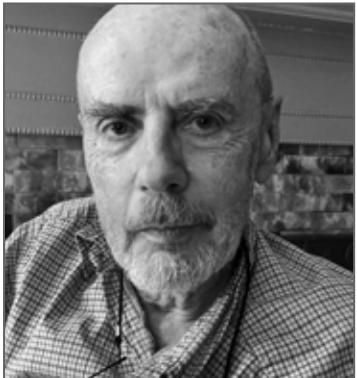
Then, much to my surprise, Jean-Francois* phoned. This is a man who doesn't care who you are, what age you are, where you are from, what your gender identification is, as long as you are attempting to tell the truth. His interest in my pictures, along with Sam's and my wife Janine's tender treatment of me, got me back to work.

Eugene Richards

*Jean-François Leroy, Director-General, Visa pour l'Image

VENUE
Église des Dominicains





Eugene Richards

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Eugene Richards is a photographer, writer and filmmaker who has authored 18 books. His first publication, *Few Comforts or Surprises* (1973), which speaks of the lives of sharecroppers in the Arkansas Delta, was followed by *Dorchester Days* (1978), a portrait of the inner-city neighborhood where he was born. Subsequent books include *Cocaine True, Cocaine Blue* (1994), a study of the impact of hardcore drugs on inner city communities; and *War Is Personal* (2010), a documentation of the consequences of the Iraq war. Recent books include *The Day I Was Born* (2020), which focuses on life and protest in the racially divided Arkansas Delta and *The Run-On of Time* (2017), a career retrospective of his photographic work.

Among numerous honors, Richards has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Award, the Kraszna-Krausz Book Award for Photographic Innovation, and the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award for coverage of the disadvantaged.



Petite fille dans une pataugeoire.
Dorchester, Massachusetts, 1978.
© Eugene Richards

Child in wading pool.
Dorchester, Massachusetts, 1978.
© Eugene Richards



Patients errant dans un hôpital
frappé par des tirs d'obus israéliens.
Beyrouth-Ouest, Liban, 1982.
© Eugene Richards

Patients wandering in a hospital
struck by Israeli artillery fire.
West Beirut, Lebanon, 1982.
© Eugene Richards



Jim, Sarina et leur fils.
Washington, D.C., 1990.
© Eugene Richards

Jim and Sarina's newborn son.
Washington, D.C., 1990.
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