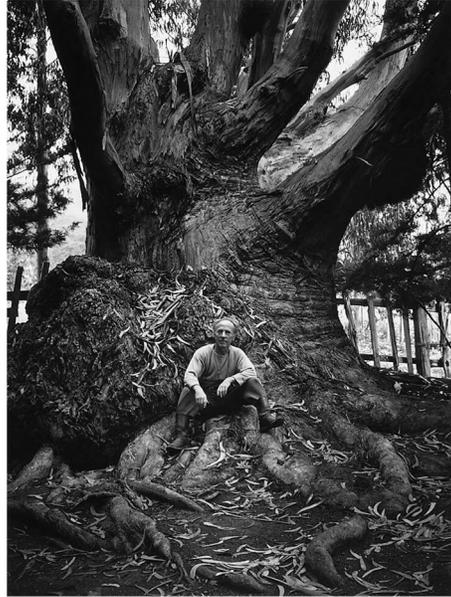


Edward Weston

1886 – 1958

(Portrait by Ansel Adams, 1945)



Dallas Camera Club

1

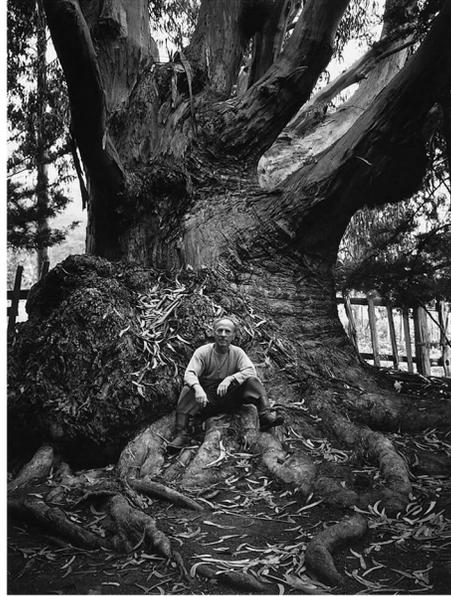
I wish to present to you tonight a brief survey of the seminal photography of Edward Weston.

If you do not know his work, you should!

Edward Weston

1886 – 1958

(Portrait by Ansel Adams, 1945)



Dallas Camera Club

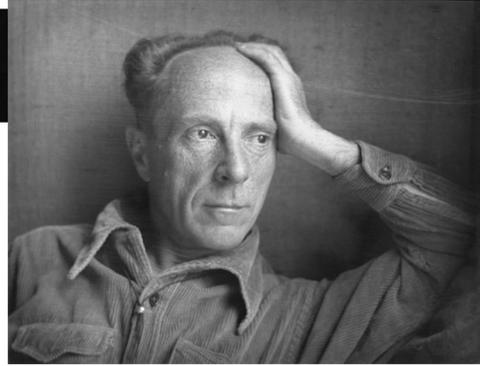
2

Every artist begins by learning their craft and building on all that is available to them, and all that has come before.

We can't help but look, compare, and feel the powerful role of all these influences. It's claimed that Pablo Picasso said "Good artists copy, great artists steal."

Edward Weston

1886 – 1958



Being creative means finding a new undiscovered path, perhaps something that has never been done or seen before. Or simply building on what has been done before.

Edward Weston

1886 – 1958



Weston was a complex man. He came from a conventional middle class, midwestern upbringing and moved to California, where he embraced the art community and its Bohemian ways. He spent significant, formative time in Mexico with some revolutionary artists in many disciplines.

He has been called

**"one of the most innovative
and influential American
photographers"**

and

**"one of the masters of 20th
century photography."**



Dallas Camera Club

6

Other photographers and artists influenced Weston. He influenced Ansel Adams! Adams influenced Alan Ross, John Sexton, and a few hundred (or thousand) others! They in turn influenced more. Weston's influence is in your photography, too; even if you did not know who he was before tonight.

But he deserves that you know who he was, and know his work.

Born in Highland Park, Illinois in 1886

Grew up in Chicago

Parents were an obstetrician and an actress

Let's look at the major stages of his life.

Mother died when he was 5 years old

Mostly raised by his sister Mary (May), who was 9 years older

His father remarried and there was a step brother. There was not necessarily friction in the blended family, but after May married and moved to California in 1904, Edward felt alone.

Father gave him a camera for his 16th birthday in 1902.



A Kodak Bull's- Eye No. 2

His relationship to his father was closer than to his stepfamily.

The gift came with a note that included the helpful advice: ‘Don’t be too far from the object you wish to take, or it’ll be very small’.

He took the new camera on vacation in the Midwest, and by the time he returned home his interest in photography was enough to lead him to purchase a used 5 x 7 inch view camera. He began photographing in Chicago parks and a farm owned by his aunt, and

developed his own film and prints.

Spring, Chicago

Camera and Darkroom
April 1906 issue



Dallas Camera Club

10

He felt confident enough of his photography that he submitted his work to the magazine *Camera and Darkroom*, and in the April 1906 issue they published a fullpage reproduction of his picture Spring, Chicago. This is the first known publication of any of his photographs.



Dallas Camera Club

11

At 21, he moved to Glendale, California to be close to his sister.

He decided to make his living as a photographer, but had enough self awareness to realize he did not have all the necessary skills.

The next year he went back to Illinois to attend photography school and then back to Glendale



Mary (May) Weston



Flora May Chandler

Within days of his return to California, (1908) Weston was introduced to his sister's best friend, Flora May Chandler.

On January 30, 1909, Weston and Chandler married. He was 22, she was 29.

Both pictures are studio portraits by Weston. The one of Flora is signed in the upper left corner (hard to see)

Edward Chandler Weston, 1910

Theodore Brett Weston, 1911

Lawrence Neil Weston, 1916

Cole Weston, 1919

They had four sons, all of whom became photographers with different degrees of success.

Brett is the most well known, and Cole is known primarily for printing Weston's negatives after his father's death, although he did work for Life Magazine.



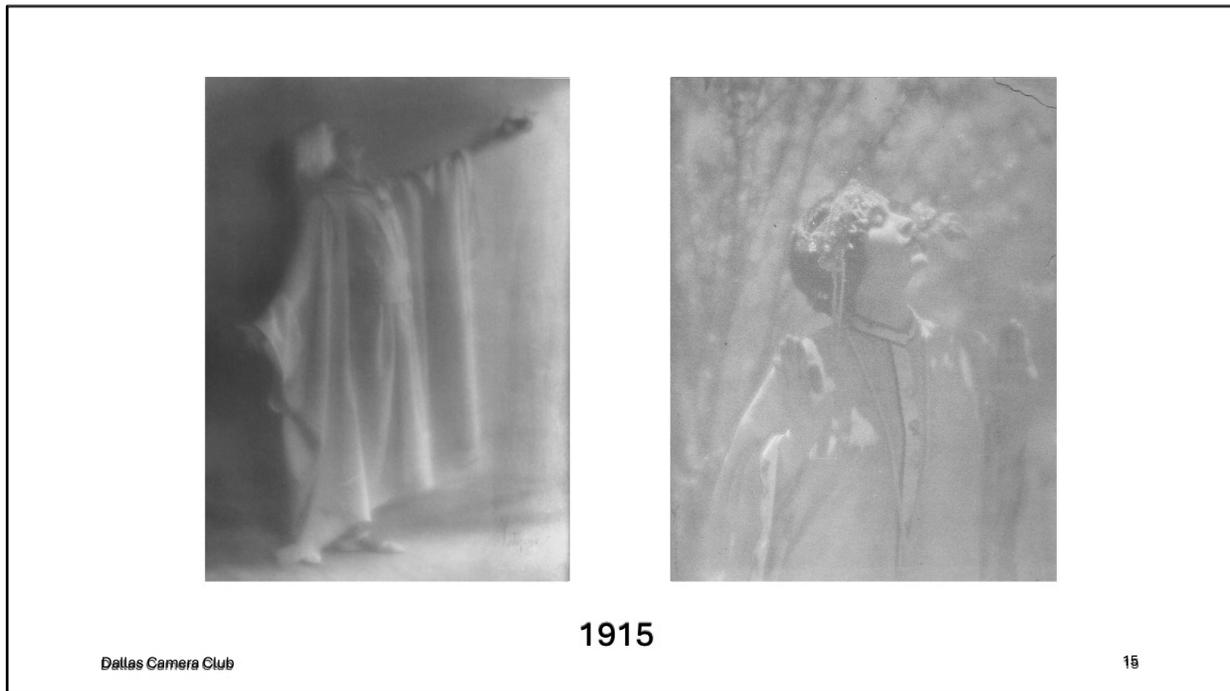
1935

Dallas Camera Club

14

This was made by Brett in 1935. Cole (with the cigarette) would have been 16!

Back row: Chandler, Brett, Neil
Front row: Edward, Cole, Flora



From 1908 – 10, Weston worked for two other photo studios in the LA area. In 1910, he opened his own business, called "The Little Studio", in Tropic. (now Glendale)

His critical eye paid off and he quickly gained more recognition for his work. He won prizes in national competitions, published several more photographs and wrote articles for magazines such as Photo-Era and American Photography, championing the pictorial style that was still prevalent at the time. These are both from 1915.



Amaryllis 1928



Esther 1933

Dallas Camera Club

16

For decades, he made much of his living from portraits, even after changing the way he photographed – everything!

I have this notion that all over southern California, there are, in old photo albums and boxes in attics, Edward Weston portraits.



Jose' Clemente Orozco 1934



Igor Stravinsky 1935

Dallas Camera Club

17

He photographed celebrities, writers, other artists, and musicians.



Mathew Brady

Dallas Camera Club

18

Let's discuss pictorialism.

Photography was invented in the 1830s.

We've all seen the stark realism of Mathew Brady's Civil War Photos, less than 3 decades later.



Fading Away 1858

Dallas Camera Club

19

... but this was also happening with photographers trying to make photography an art form, and not just a documentary tool.

They would stage scenes, often from literature or mythology, with actors and sets. But it still looks like a photograph!



Edward Steichen 1904

Dallas Camera Club

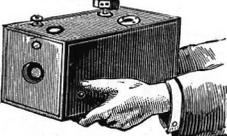
20

Pictorialism as a movement thrived from about mid 1880s to the 1910s, although it was still being promoted by some as late as the 1940s.

It began in response to claims that a photograph was nothing more than a simple record of reality. It was a movement to advance the status of all

photography as a true art form.

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Dallas Camera Club

21

In 1888 Kodak introduced the first handheld amateur camera. It was marketed with the slogan "You press the button, we do the rest."

And: "No previous knowledge of Photography necessary."

The impact of this change was enormous. Suddenly almost anyone could take a photograph, and within the span of a few years, photography became one of the biggest fads in the world.



Everybody's a Photographer!

Blessed Art Thou Among Women

Gertrude Kasebier 1898



Dallas Camera Club

23

So, we got this!

Photographers who wanted their work to be considered art started manipulating their photographs to more closely resemble paintings.



The Hand of Man
Alfred Stieglitz 1902

Dallas Camera Club

24

The tenants of pictorialism were ...

Artistic Intent: To create emotional, imaginative images, elevating photography to painting's status.

Soft Focus & Atmosphere: *Used diffused light, soft focus, and blurred edges for a hazy, atmospheric, or mystical quality*

Manipulation: Employed techniques like gum bichromate, platinum printing, and combining negatives to alter images.



Clarence White 1908

Dallas Camera Club

25

Subject Matter: Often romantic, idealized, or everyday scenes emphasizing mood, light, and texture, inspired by Impressionism and Tonalism.

Craftsmanship: Emphasized the photographer as a skilled artisan, rejecting "point-and-shoot" simplicity.



Everybody's a Photographer!



Betty in Her Attic 1920

Dallas Camera Club

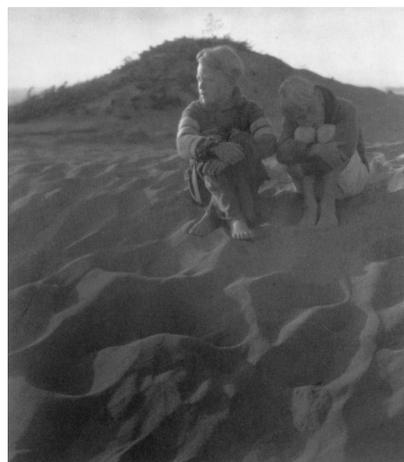
27

Edward Weston was trained in this style of photography and was practicing it into the 1920s.

But, change was coming.



I Believe in Fairies 1913



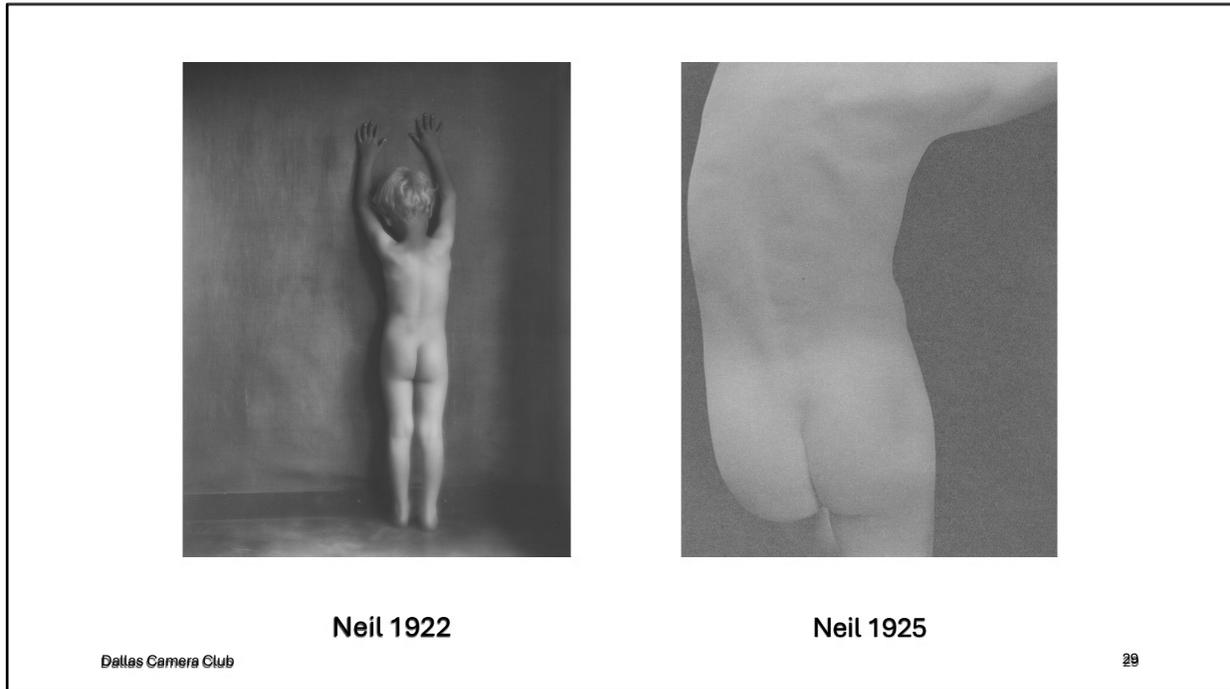
Two Boys 1916

Dallas Camera Club

28

Weston's first "nudes" were of his family, both Flora and the boys. The pictures are in family photo albums and have both nude and clothed images of all of them.

That's Chandler on the left and Chandler and Brett in the right photo.



In 1925, he published a portfolio of images of his third son, Neil.

He had begun photographing nudes of models in the early 1920's.

The first was probably Margrethe Mather.

Margarethe Mather

1886 – 1952



Dallas Camera Club

30

Sometime in the fall of 1913, Los Angeles photographer Margrethe Mather visited Weston's studio because of his growing reputation, and within a few months they developed an intense relationship.

Weston was a quiet Midwestern transplant to California, and Mather was a part of the growing bohemian cultural scene in Los Angeles. She was very outgoing and artistic in a flamboyant way, and her permissive sexual morals were far different from the conservative Weston at the time.



Epilogue 1919

Dallas Camera Club

31

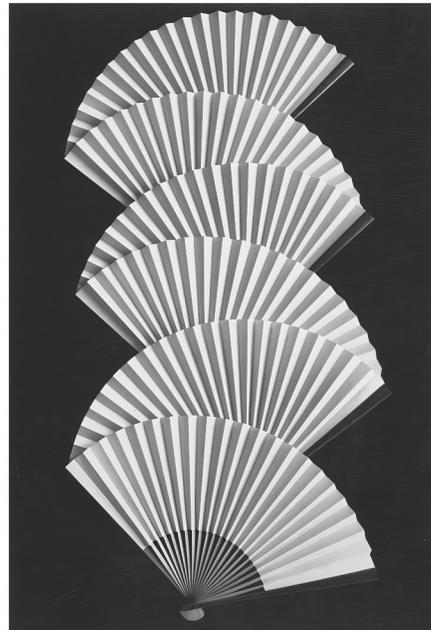
He found Mather's uninhibited lifestyle irresistible and her photographic vision intriguing. He asked Mather to be his studio partner, and for the next decade they worked closely together.

A joint exhibition of their work in 2001 showed that Weston emulated Mather's style and, later, her choice of subjects. On her own Mather photographed fans, hands, eggs, melons, waves, bathroom fixtures, seashells and bird wings, all subjects that Weston would also explore.

Margrethe Mather

**FANS
1931**

*Image from the Center for Creative Photography
University of Arizona*

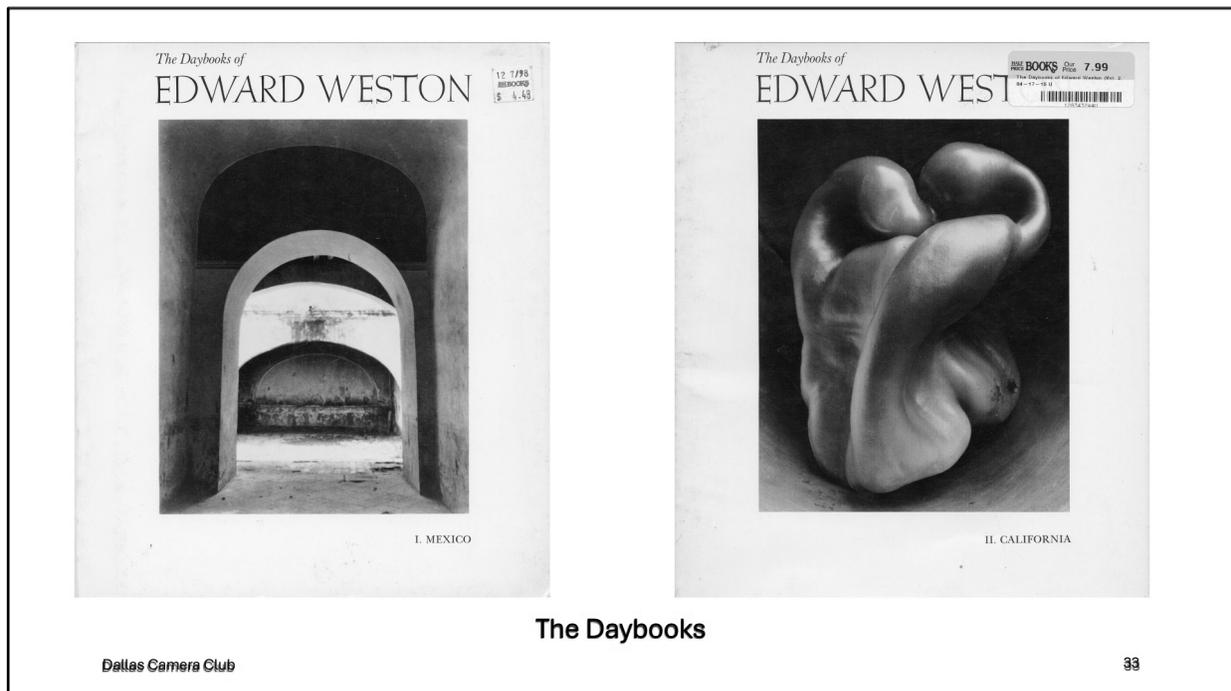


Dallas Camera Club

32

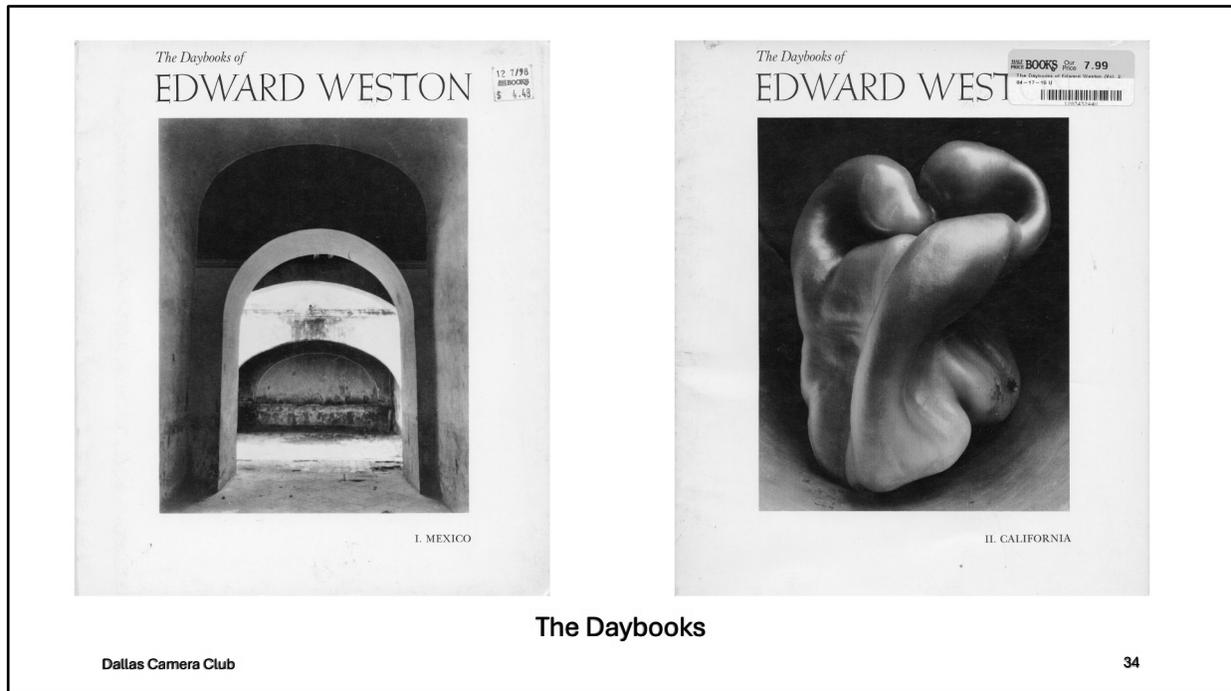
A decade later (1923) he described her as "the first important person in my life, and perhaps even now, though personal contact has gone, the most important."

This photograph of Mather's was in a show at the CCP in 2008.



In early 1915 Weston began keeping detailed journals he later came to call his "Daybooks". For the next two decades he recorded his thoughts about his work, observations about photography, and his interactions with friends, lovers and family.

The second book has entries through 1934 and one last entry in 1944! He destroyed the early daybooks prior to 1923. So the surviving diaries only cover 11 years of his career, not counting the last entry.



Weston's reputation is colored by his extensive writings, both the Daybooks and letters, articles and other things. He was not always a good writer.

Charis Wilson, Weston's second wife remarked that she was shocked by the "cliché-ridden myth" he had become at the hands of his biographers. (which included her). It is mostly the Daybooks, which even Weston himself later lamented. He found them full of "immature thoughts" and "excess emotions". And "a record of a not so nice person"



Tina, Glendale 1921

Dallas Camera Club

35

Over the summer of 1920 Weston met two people who were part of the growing Los Angeles cultural scene: a man called “Robo” Richey, and Tina Modotti.

Weston and Modotti were immediately attracted to each other, and they soon became lovers. Richey knew of Modotti's affair, but he continued to be friends with Weston and later invited him to come to Mexico and share his studio.



ARMCO Steel 1922

Dallas Camera Club

36

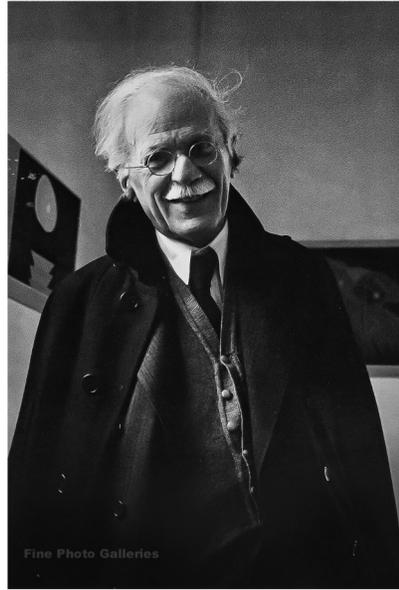
In 1922 he visited his sister and brother-in-law, who had moved to Middletown, Ohio. While there he made five or six photographs of the tall smoke stacks at the nearby Armco steel mill.

These images signaled a change in Weston's photographic style, a transition from the soft-focus pictorialism of the past to a new, cleaner-edge style. He immediately recognized the change and later recorded it in his notes:

"The Middletown visit was something to remember...most of all in importance was my photographing of 'Armco'...That day I made great photographs, even Stieglitz thought they were

important!"

Alfred Stieglitz



Dallas Camera Club

37

New York City was the cultural center for photography as an art form in America. Photographer and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz was the most influential figure in photography at that time. Stieglitz, himself a Pictorialist, had seen a portfolio of “straight photography” as early as 1915.

Weston wanted to go to New York to meet with him, but he did not have enough money to make the trip. His brother-in-law gave him enough money to go to New York City.

He met artist Charles Sheeler and photographers Clarence H. White, Gertrude Kasebier, as well as Stieglitz. Weston wrote that Stieglitz told him, "Your work and attitude reassures me. You have shown me at least several prints which have given me a great deal of joy. And I can seldom say that of photographs."



Desde la Azotea 1924

Dallas Camera Club

38

After the Ohio and New York trip, Weston was increasingly frustrated with having to make a living doing studio portraits. So, at the age of 37 he had his mid-life crisis.

Robo Richey had moved to Mexico and set up a studio.

Within a short while he had arranged for a joint exhibition of his work and of photographs by Weston, Mather and a few others.



Hands, Mexico 1924

Dallas Camera Club

39

Modotti left by train to be with Robo in Mexico, but he contracted smallpox and died shortly before she arrived. Modotti was grief-stricken, but she decided to stay and carry out the exhibition that Robo had planned. The show was a success, and due in no small part to the nude studies of Modotti, it firmly established Weston's artistic reputation in Mexico.

After the show closed Modotti returned to California, and Weston and she made plans to return to Mexico together.



Diego Rivera 1924

(Diego María de la Concepción Juan Nepomuceno Estanislao de la Rivera y Barrientos Acosta y Rodríguez)

Dallas Camera Club

40

On July 30, 1923, Weston, his son Chandler, and Modotti left for the extended trip to Mexico.

They arrived in Mexico City and rented a large hacienda outside of the city. Within a month he had arranged for an exhibition of his work at the Aztec Land Gallery, and the show opened to glowing press reviews.

Weston set up a studio in Mexico City and became part of the thriving post revolutionary art scene in Mexico. Among the people he knew and who encouraged him was Diego Rivera.
(*Mexican Revolution was 1910-20.*)



Two Birds - Gourds1924

Dallas Camera Club

41

He was particularly proud of a review (by Marius de Zayas) that said "Photography is beginning to be photography, for until now it has only been art." (No irony there ...)

The different culture and scenery in Mexico forced Weston to look at things in new ways. He became more responsive to what was in front of him, and he turned his camera on everyday objects like toys, doorways and bathroom fixtures. He also took his camera outside!



D. H. Lawrence 1924

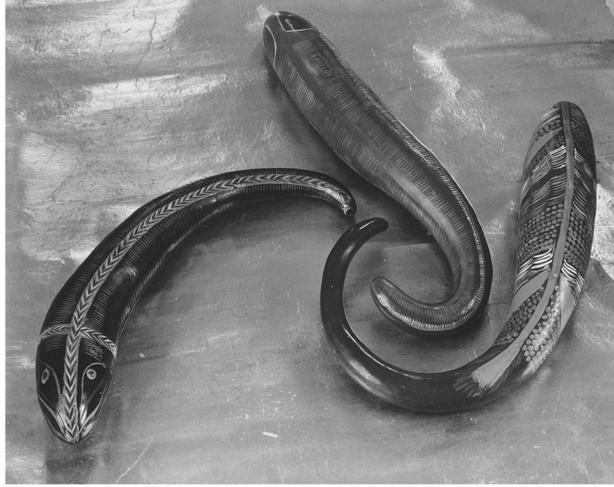


Guadalupe Marin de Rivera 1924

Dallas Camera Club

42

Weston's reputation in Mexico increased the longer he stayed. He had a second exhibition at the Aztec Land Gallery in 1924, and he had a steady stream of local socialites asking him to take their portraits.



Three Fish - Gourds 1925

Dallas Camera Club

43

He and Chandler returned to California at the end of 1924. Weston seemed to be struggling with his past and his future during this period. He burned all of his pre-Mexico journals, as though trying to erase the past.

In August 1925 he returned to Mexico, this time with his son Brett. Modotti had arranged a joint show of their photographs. He received new critical acclaim and six of his prints were purchased for the State Museum.



Pottery 1926

Dallas Camera Club

44

In May 1926 Weston signed a contract with writer Anita Brenner for \$1,000 to make photographs for a book she was writing about Mexican folk art.

It took him until November of that year to complete the work.



Casa de Vecindad 1926

Dallas Camera Club

45

During that 6 months, Brett received a crash course in photography from his father. Edward had given Brett his smaller “portrait camera”. Brett made more than two dozen prints which his father judged to be of exceptional quality.

By the time they returned from this trip, Weston and Modotti's relationship had ended, and in less than two weeks he and Brett returned to California. He never traveled to Mexico again, although he did correspond with several people, including Modotti.



Patzcuaro 1926

Dallas Camera Club

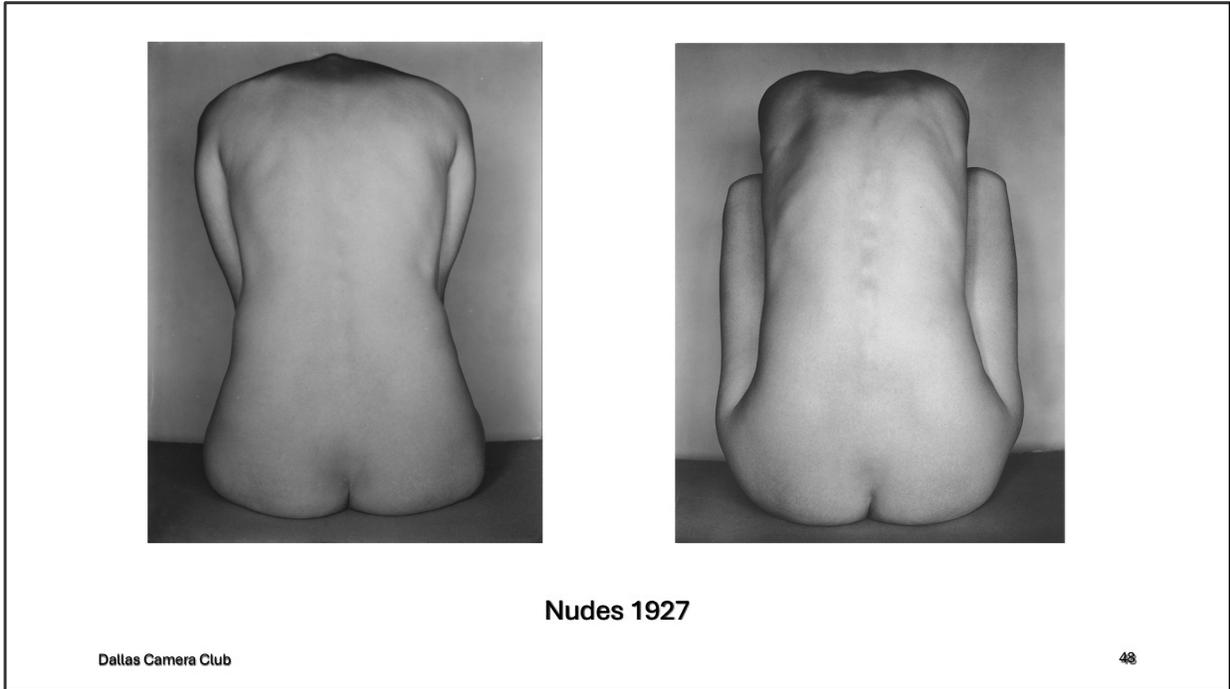
46

He wrote in his Daybooks: “The camera should be used for a recording of life, for rendering the very substance and quintessence of the thing itself...”

“To see the Thing itself is essential ...”

Edward Weston

“... I feel definite in the belief that the approach to photography is through realism.”



In February 1927, after his return from Mexico, he started a new series of nudes. More graphic and sculptural than the past.

He asked painter **Henrietta Shore** to comment on the photographs. He was surprised by her honest critique:

"I wish you would not do so many nudes – you are getting used to them, the subject no longer amazes you – most of these are just nudes."



Henrietta Shore
Shell 1927

He asked to look at her work and was intrigued by her large paintings of sea shells.



Nautilus 1927



Shells 1927

Dallas Camera Club

50

He borrowed several shells from her, thinking he might find some inspiration for a new still life series.



Shells 1927

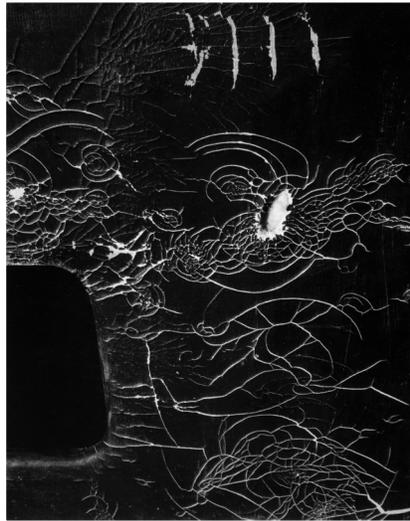


Shells 1927

Dallas Camera Club

51

He explored different kinds of shells and backgrounds.

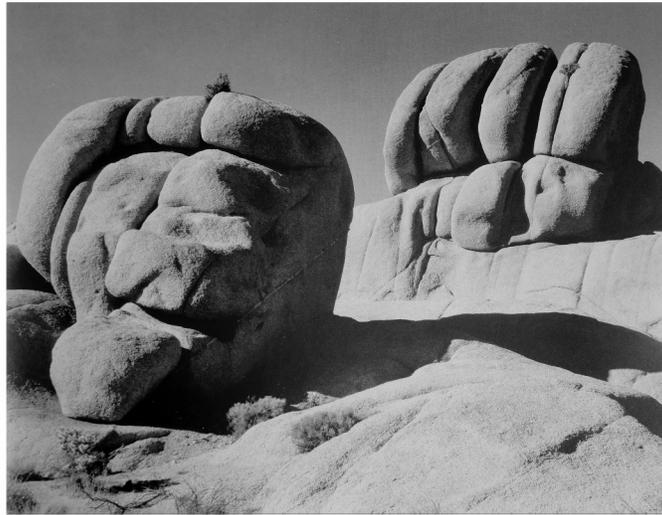


Burned Car, Mohave Desert, 1927

Dallas Camera Club

52

In the same year, Weston and Brett made a brief but important trip to the Mojave Desert.

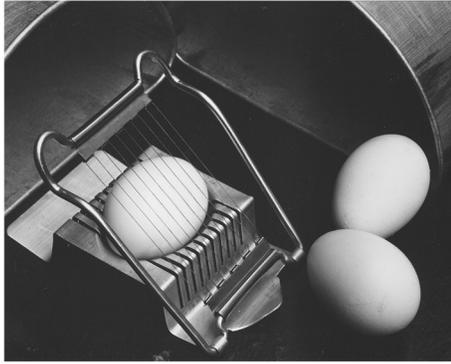


Mohave Desert, 1927

Dallas Camera Club

53

He found the stark rock forms and empty spaces to be a visual revelation, and over a long weekend he took twenty-seven photographs. In his journal he declared "**these negatives are the most important I have ever done.**"



Edward Weston 1930



Ansel Adams 1932

In September of 1927 Weston had a major exhibition at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco.

At the opening of the show he met photographer Willard Van Dyke, who later introduced Weston to Ansel Adams.

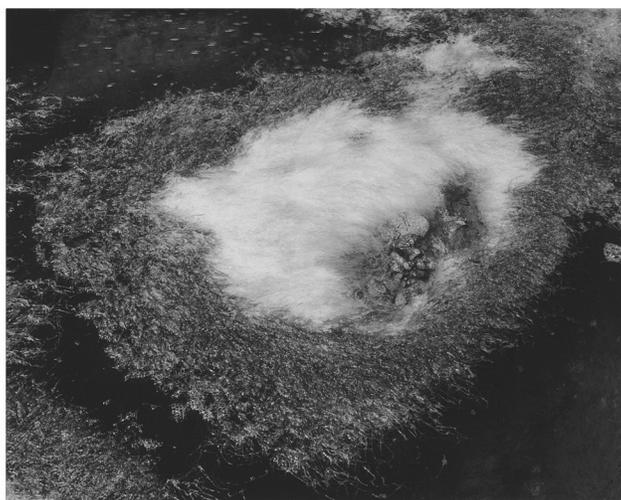
It is well documented that Weston's work influenced Adams. ("Steal from the best")



Point Lobos 1929

In early 1929 he moved to Carmel, on the California coast.

He started making regular trips to nearby **Point Lobos**, where he would continue to photograph until the end of his career.



Kelp 1931

Dallas Camera Club

56

Looking at his work from this period, one biographer wrote: “Weston arranged his compositions so that things happened on the edges; lines almost cross or meet and circular lines just touch the edges tangentially; his compositions were now created exclusively for a space with the proportions of eight by ten. There is no extraneous space nor is there too little.”



Onion Halved 1930

Dallas Camera Club

57

In 1930, Weston began taking close-ups of vegetables and fruits.

He made a variety of photographs of cabbage, kale, onions, bananas, and finally, peppers.

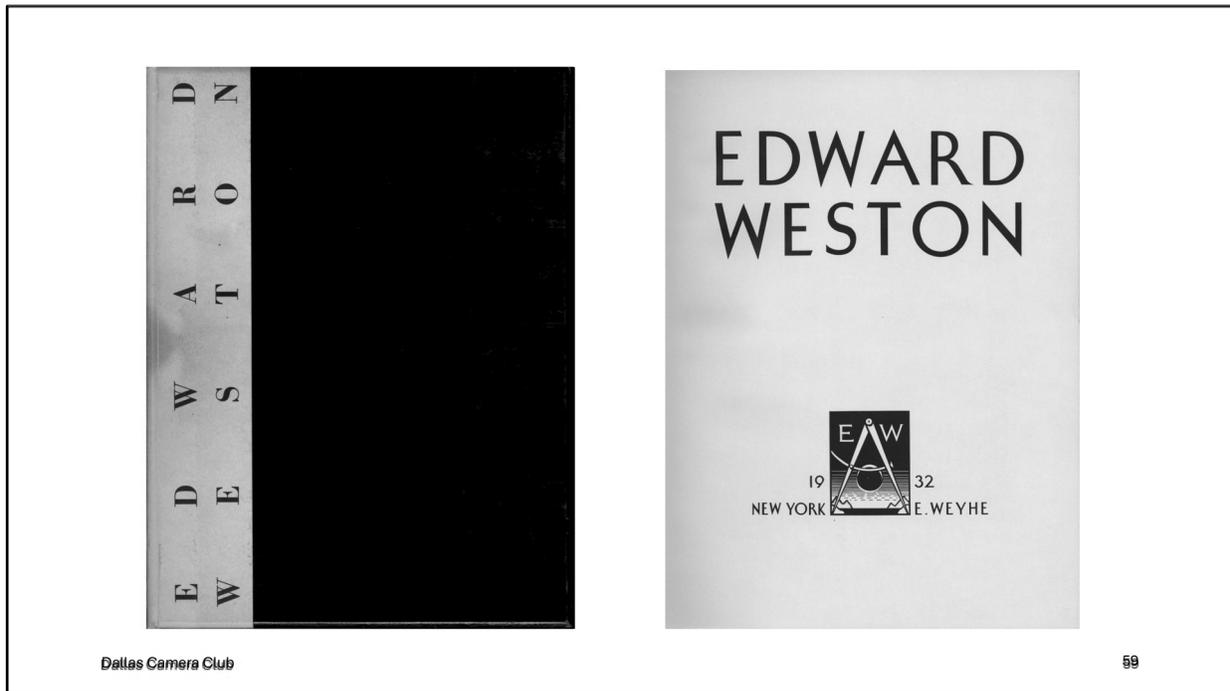


Pepper #30 1930

Dallas Camera Club

58

His “assistant” and current partner Sonya Noskowiak, brought him several green peppers, and over a four-day period he shot at least thirty different negatives. Of these, Pepper No. 30, has been called among the all time masterpieces of photography.



In 1932, *The Art of Edward Weston*, the first book devoted exclusively to Weston's work, was published.

As one of the first major studies of his work, it highlights his shift to "straight photography," featuring sharp, modernist, and intensely detailed images of still lifes, nudes, and

landscapes. This copy can be yours for
\$2000!



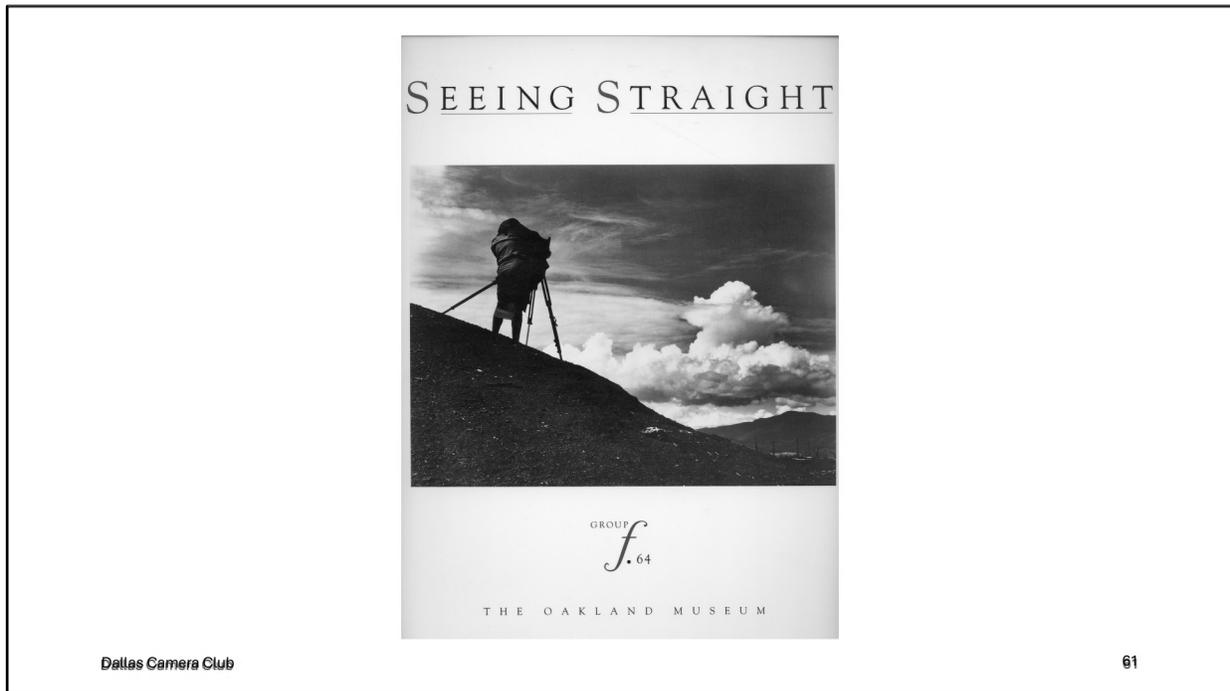
Shell and Rock 1931

Dallas Camera Club

60

Weston had a series of important one-man exhibitions in 1930–31. The first was at a gallery in New York, followed closely by a mounting of the same show at a Gallery in Carmel.

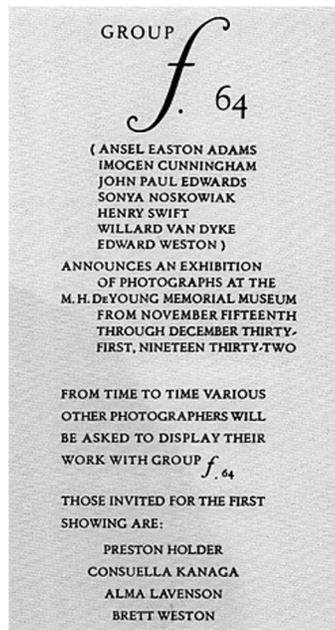
Both received rave reviews, including a two-page article in the New York Times Magazine. These were followed by shows at the De Young Museum in San Francisco and in Paris.



In 1932, a small group of like-minded photographers in the San Francisco area, led by Willard Van Dyke and Ansel Adams, began informally meeting to discuss their common interest and aesthetics. Inspired by Weston's show at the De Young Museum the previous year, they approached the museum with the idea of mounting a group exhibition of their work. They named themselves Group f/64, and in November 1932, an exhibition of 80 of their prints opened at the museum. The show was a

critical success.

Group f.64



Dallas Camera Club

62

The “group” consisted of 7 established West Coast photographers.

For the first exhibition, they invited 4 others, including the young Brett Weston to exhibit with them.

All of the prints were \$10, Except for Edward Weston's, which were \$15.



Ansel Adams



Willard Van Dyke

They shared a common photographic style characterized by sharply focused and carefully framed images. In part, they formed in opposition to the pictorialist photographic style, but moreover, they wanted to promote a new modernist aesthetic. They wanted photographs to look like they were made by a camera.



Imogen Cunningham



John Paul Edwards

In *Camera Craft* magazine in 1935, John Paul Edwards wrote:

“The purpose of Group f.64 is not militant. It has no controversy with the photographic pictorialist. It does feel, however, that the real worth of the medium lies in its pure form rather than in its superficial modifications.”



Steiglitz 1919



Steiglitz 1933

Dallas Camera Club

65

Even Steiglitz got it!

However, by 1934 the effects of the Great Depression were being felt, and the Group members had a series of difficult discussions about the premises for art in those challenging economic times. The effects of the Depression, coupled with the departure of several members of the group from San Francisco (including Weston and Van Dyke) led to the dissolution of Group *f/64* by the end of 1935.



1934

Dallas Camera Club

66

At a concert in 1934, Weston met 20-year-old Charis Wilson. He was closer to 50. Even more than with his previous partners, Weston was immediately captivated by her beauty and her personality. He wrote: "A new love came into my life, a most beautiful one, one which will, I believe, stand the test of time."

He photographed her nude and they entered into an intense relationship. He was still living with Sonya Noskowiak, but within two weeks he asked Sonya to move out, declaring that for him other women were "as inevitable as the tides".



Nude 1936

Dallas Camera Club

67

With the intensity of his new relationship, he stopped writing in his Daybooks. In December he wrote one final entry: “After eight months we are closer together than ever. Perhaps C. will be remembered as the great love of my life. ... ”

He finally asked Flora for a divorce and eventually married Charis in 1939. Charis was not a photographer. She was a writer. She stayed with the older man for another decade. There were no Weston lovers after her.



Iceberg Lake 1937

Dallas Camera Club

68

In spite of the successes of the late 20s and early 30s, it was the Great Depression, and by January 1935 Weston was facing increasing financial difficulties. He decided to apply for a Guggenheim Foundation grant (now known as a Guggenheim Fellowship).

On March 22, 1937, Weston received notification that he had been awarded a Guggenheim grant, the first ever given to a photographer. The award was \$2,000 (\$40-50K) for one year.



Mono Lake 1937

Dallas Camera Club

69

They purchased a new car and set out on Weston's dream trip to go and photograph whatever he wanted. Over the next twelve months they made seventeen trips and covered almost 17,000 miles. Weston made 1,260 negatives.

He was able to further capitalize on the award by arranging to provide the editor of AAA Westway Magazine with 8–10 photos for \$50 per month during their travels, with Charis Wilson getting an additional \$15 monthly for photo captions and short narratives.



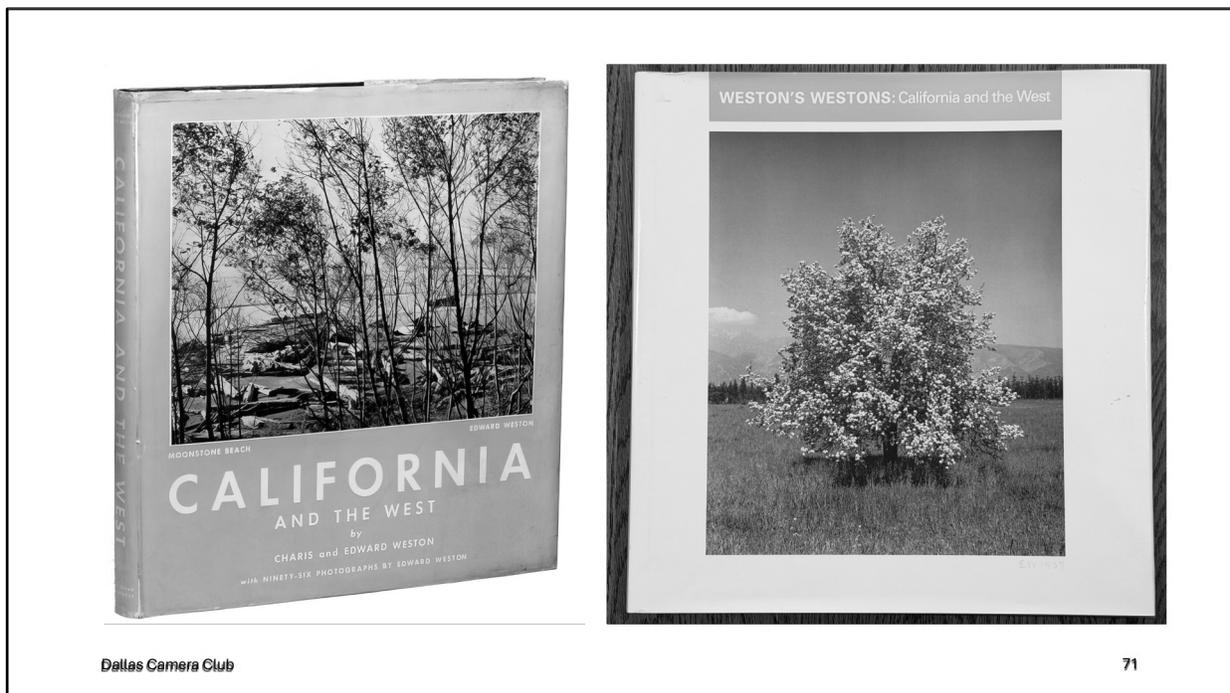
Wildcat Hill

Dallas Camera Club

70

Due to the success of the past year, Weston applied for and received a second year of Guggenheim support.

Although he wanted to do some additional traveling, he intended to use most of the money to allow him to print his past year's work. He commissioned (his son) Neil to build a small home in the Carmel Highlands on property owned by Wilson's father. They named the place "Wildcat Hill" because of the many domestic cats that soon occupied the grounds.



Wilson set up a writing studio in what was intended to be a small garage behind the house, and she spent several months writing and editing stories from their travels. In 1939, *Seeing California with Edward Weston* was published, with photographs by Weston and writing by Wilson.

Buoyed by the success of their first book, in 1940 they published *California and the West*. The first edition featured 96 of Weston's photos with text by Wilson.

A newer version of the book was published in 1994 by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

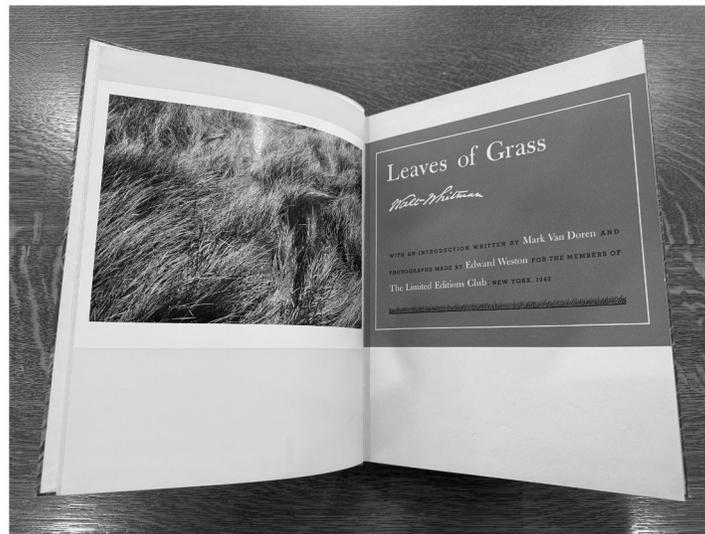


Ansel Adam's Darkroom, Yosemite National Park. 1938

Dallas Camera Club

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Over the summer of 1940, Weston taught photography at the first Ansel Adams Workshop at Yosemite National Park.



Leaves of Grass
(The copy at the Dallas Public Library)

Dallas Camera Club

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Just as the Guggenheim money was running out, Weston was invited to illustrate a new edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* in 1941. He would receive \$1,000 for photographs and \$500 travel expenses.

**“I hear America singing,
the varied carols I hear,
Singing with open mouths the
strong melodious songs”**



Dallas Camera Club

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Just like on the Guggenheim, Weston traveled with Charis, to capture a "modern" America that reflected the spirit of Whitman's poetry rather than directly illustrating specific lines.



Mr. and Mrs. Fry of Burnet, Texas 1941

Dallas Camera Club

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Known as "Real American Places," these images featured diverse, often, gritty landscapes, from the West to the South, showcasing scenes like "Mr. and Mrs. Fry of Burnet, Texas". (BURN-it)



Louisiana 1941

Dallas Camera Club

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“We’ve been having heat, too much humidity. These sticky breathless days with temperatures over ninety and staying there knock out the coastal tenderfeet. I sigh for the invigorating (by comparison) dry heat of Death Valley.”

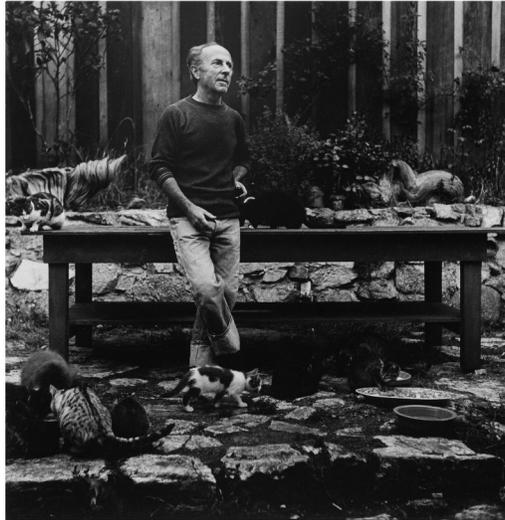


Brooklyn 1941

Dallas Camera Club

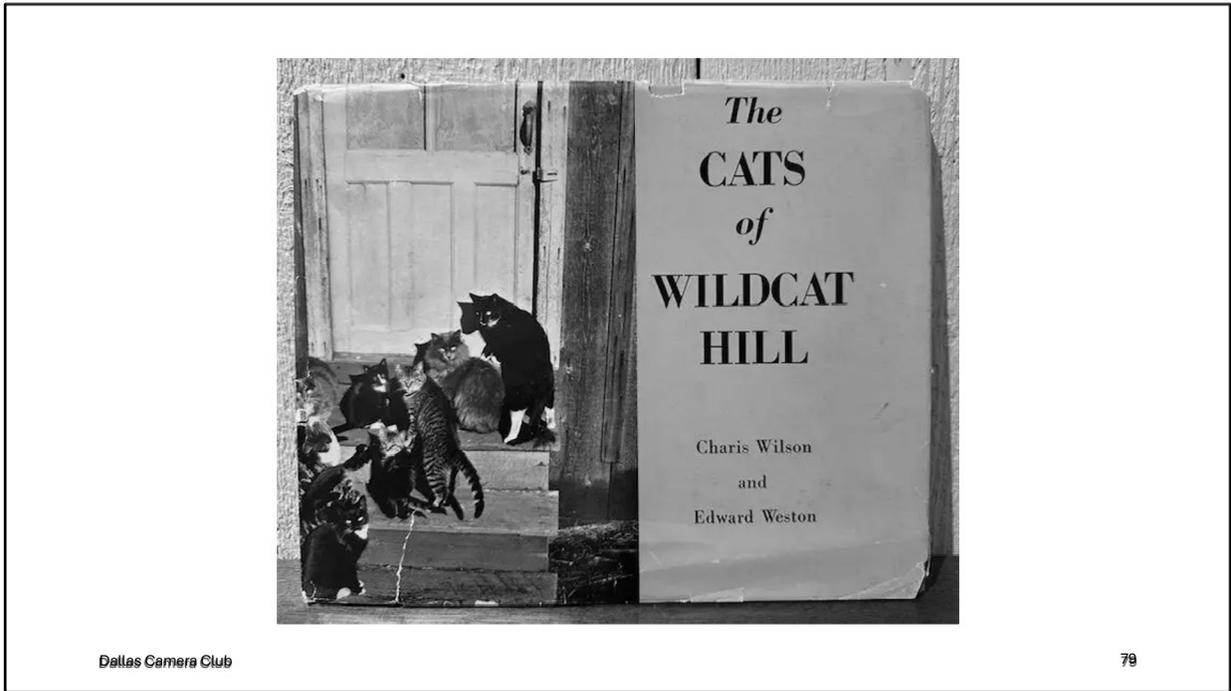
77

They got as far as New York. On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked, and he and Charis went home.

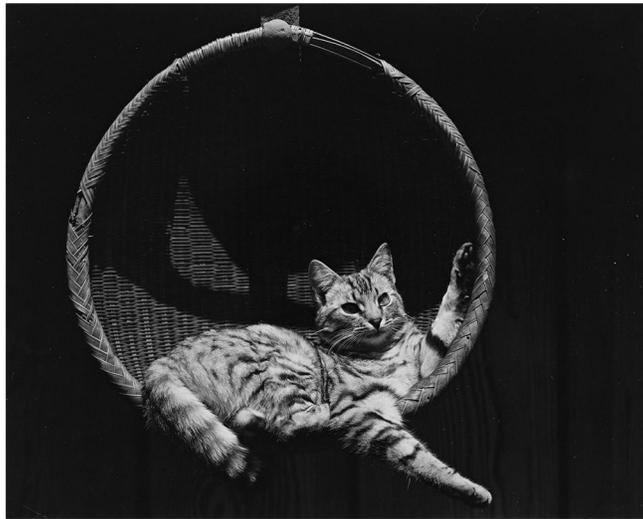


Wildcat Hill

During WW2, Weston almost never left Wildcat Hill. He had a lot of cats.
(Photo by Imogen Cunningham)



Charis and Edward published a cat book in 1942.



Franky (FDR Weston)

Dallas Camera Club

80

This is Franky ...



Johnny

Dallas Camera Club

81

... and Johnny.

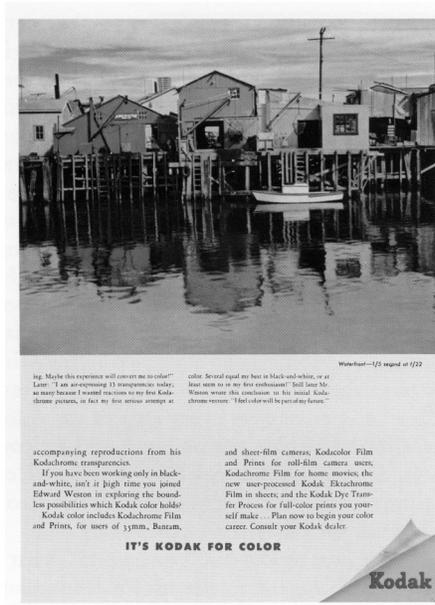


The war eventually ended ...

In February 1946, Weston's major retrospective opened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. He and the curator Beaumont Newhall selected 313 prints for the exhibition, and eventually 250 photographs were displayed along with 11 negatives.

He sold 97 prints from the MOMA exhibit at \$25 per print.

Weston in color?



Dallas Camera Club

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Did he shoot in color?

Later that year, Weston was asked by Kodak to produce 8 x 10 Kodachrome transparencies for their advertising campaign.



Weston had never worked in color before, primarily because he had no means of developing or printing the more complicated color process.

He accepted their offer in no small part because they offered him \$250 (\$5000) per image, the highest amount he would be paid for any single work in his lifetime. He eventually sold seven color works to Kodak of landscapes and scenery at Point Lobos and elsewhere.



Zabrieski Point 1938 and 1947

Dallas Camera Club

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For the color project he mostly revisited earlier places he had photographed, and usually close to home, although he did travel back to Death Valley.



Rocks and Pebbles 1948

Dallas Camera Club

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Around this time he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and he soon stopped photographing. He spent the remaining years of his life overseeing the printing of his most famous images by Brett and Cole.

This is likely the last photograph he made at Point Lobos in 1948.



Brett and Edward during filming of "The Photographer" 1948

Dallas Camera Club

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Willard Van Dyke made a film about Weston in 1948 entitled "The Photographer", for the United State Information Service.

Weston looked very frail in the movie. It's on Youtube, albeit a very bad copy.



Dallas Camera Club

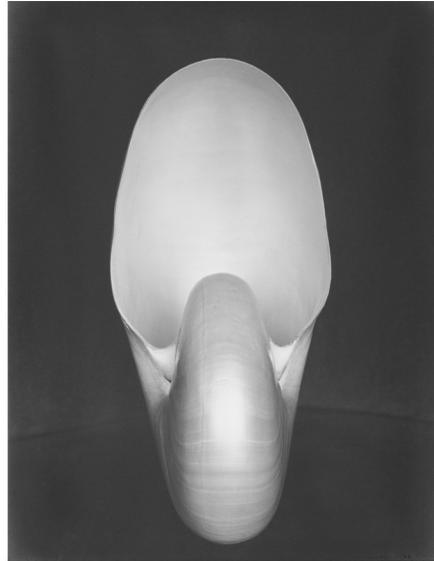
88

Although diminished in his capacity, Weston never stopped being a photographer. He worked with his sons to catalog his images and especially to oversee the publication and printing of his work. In 1950 there was a major retrospective of his work at the National Museum of Modern Art in Paris, and in 1952 he published a Fiftieth Anniversary portfolio, with images printed by Brett.

Currently listed by a New York gallery:

“Printed 1953 by Edward and Brett Weston. Initialed and dated, in pencil, on mount recto. Titled, dated and numbered on affixed photographer's descriptive label in typeset on mount verso.”

“Price on request”



Dallas Camera Club

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During this time he worked with Cole, Brett, and Dody Thompson (Brett's wife by 1952), to select and have them print a master set of what he considered his best work. They spent many long hours together in the darkroom, and by 1956 they had produced what Weston called "The Project Prints", eight sets of 8" x 10" prints from 830 of his negatives.

Edward Weston,
Tenaya Lake,
Yosemite National Park
1937

Ansel Adams



Dallas Camera Club

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Weston died on New Years Day in 1958. He was 71.

His sons scattered his ashes into the Pacific Ocean at an area then known as Pebbly Beach on Point Lobos.

The beach was later renamed Weston Beach.

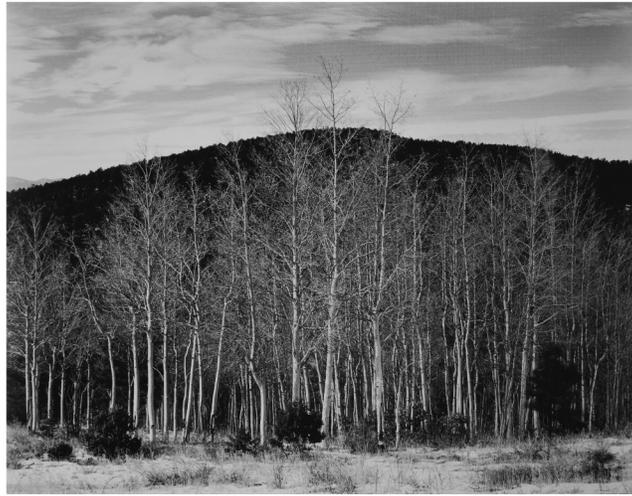


At Weston Beach, Point Lobos 2014

Dallas Camera Club

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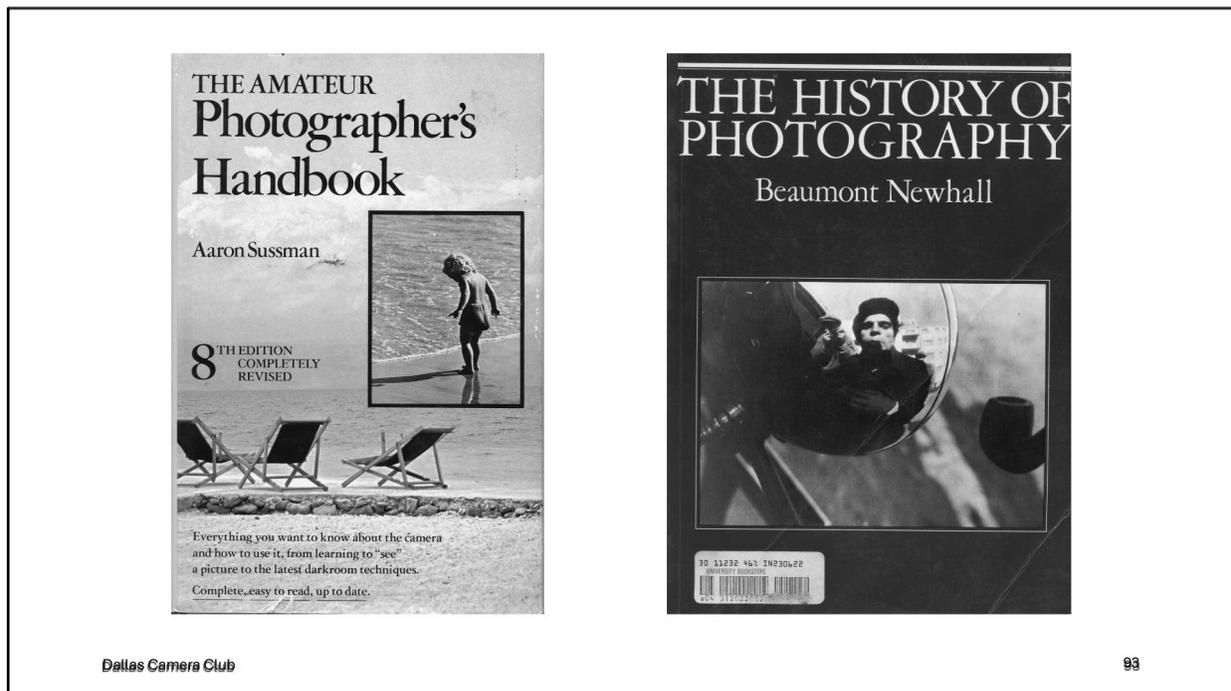
I have appreciated the photographs of Edward my whole adult life. Back in my 20s, when I was newly serious about photography, I would read everything about photography that I could get my hands on; which included subscriptions to multiple photography magazines and many books in the public library.



Aspen Valley 1937

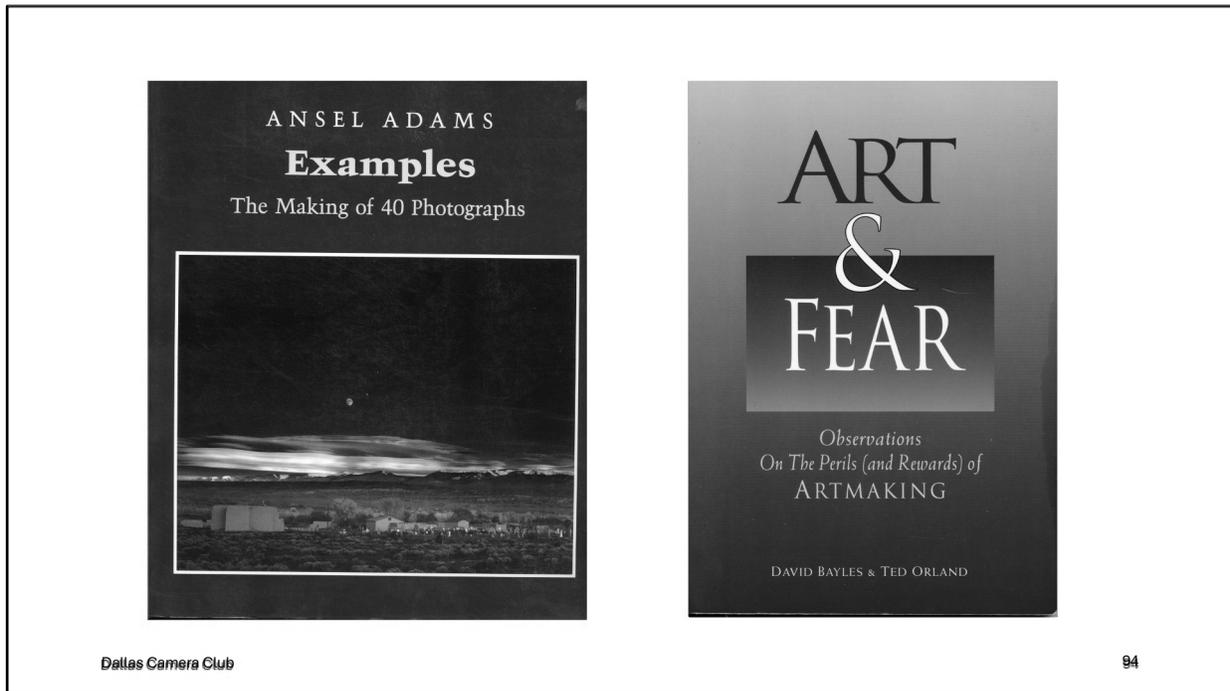
“Weston” was mentioned constantly.
(Along with others: Stieglitz, St. Ansel,
Strand, Lange, etc., etc.)

One cannot study the history of
photography, even superficially, without
encountering Edward Weston.



In *The Amateur Photographer's Handbook* (my handbook at the time) he is mentioned 6 times!

In the *The History of Photography* by Beaumont Newhall, he's discussed in detail along with 6 or 8 of his photographs.



In Ansel Adam's *Examples, The Making of 40 Photographs*, one of them is Adam's portrait of Weston.

In *Art and Fear* there are multiple anecdotes about Weston.



White Sands 1941

I was a black and white film and darkroom guy, and this stuff was like catnip to me.



Attic 1921

Dallas Camera Club

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As amateurs, we are not obligated to advance the art, only to practice it for our own pleasure. We can keep making the same pictures we've always made,

or we can make pictures that are different from what we used to do, but still like someone else's.

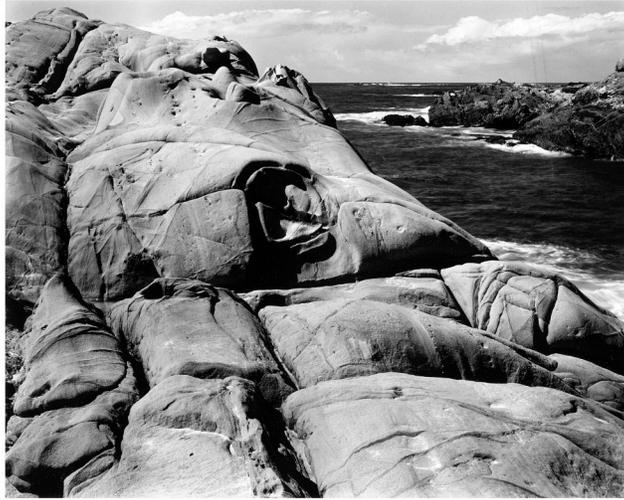
It's hard to be original, with so many

making photographs.



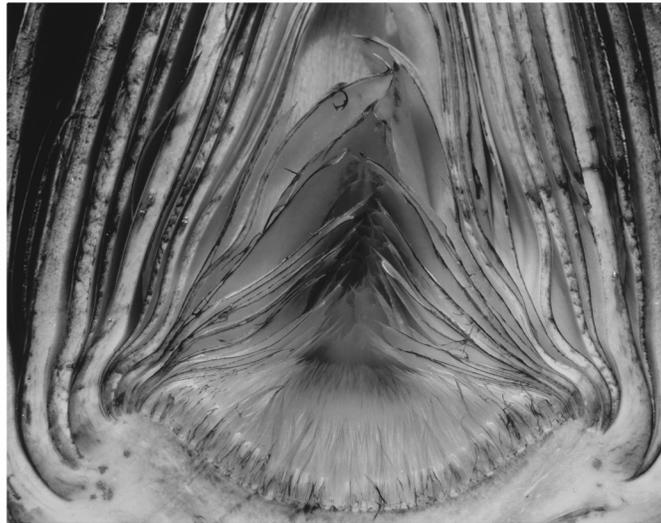
Cabbage Leaf 1930

Like Weston, we can strive to do something different. Our only need is to get better at whatever we are doing. And hope that our latest photographs are the best ones ever.



Rock and Sea, Point Lobos 1938

All of us, whether amateur or professional, whether creative and original or happily derivative; we stand on the shoulders of giants. Edward Weston pioneered so much of modern photography. He was not the only one, surely, but was at the forefront of the movement. He helped make “Photography (become) photography”.



Artichoke 1930

Dallas Camera Club

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When I see someone's work that I like, I remember this quote from him in the same situation.

“I wish I had taken that!”



Chambered Nautilus 1927

Dallas Camera Club

Questions?

Comments.

Corrections!

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