

ENGAGED OBSERVERS

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE THE SIXTIES

June 29–November 14, 2010

DATE: May 21, 2010
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Melissa Crowley
(310) 440-6795 • mcrowley@getty.edu

NEW BOOK HIGHLIGHTS THE TRADITION OF SOCIALLY CONCERNED PHOTO-REPORTAGE

LOS ANGELES— In the decades following World War II, an independently minded, critically engaged form of photography began to flourish. Situated between journalism and art, its practitioners created extended photographic essays that delve deeply into subjects and present distinct personal visions of the world. *Engaged Observers: Documentary Photography Since the Sixties* (Getty Publications, 2010, \$49.95 hardcover) looks in depth at projects by a selection of the most vital figures who have contributed to this documentary approach. Passionately committed to their subjects, these photographers captured both meditative and searing images, from the deep south in the civil rights era, to the war in Iraq, to the contemporary scene of American popular culture. Disseminated beyond traditional media outlets, their evocative bodies of pictures transcend the realm of traditional photojournalism.

Engaged Observers begins with an essay that follows the development of socially aware photography, setting work since the 1960s within a rich tradition that extends back to the nineteenth century. Surveyed in depth in subsequent pages are Leonard Freed's *Black in White America* project (released around 1968), Philip Jones Griffiths's *Vietnam Inc.* (1971), W. Eugene and Aileen M. Smith's *Minamata* (1975), Susan Meiselas's *Nicaragua, June 1978–July 1979* (1981), Mary Ellen Mark's *Streetwise* (1988), Lauren Greenfield's *Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood* (1997) and *Girl Culture* (2002), Larry Towell's *The Mennonites* (2000), Sebastião Salgado's *Migrations: Humanity in Transition* (2000), and James Nachtwey's *The Sacrifice* (2007). These powerful visual reports, often published as books, explore aspects of life that are sometimes difficult and troubling but are worthy of attention. Each section opens with a focused essay that grounds the project within its evolving historical context and the photographer's larger body of work.

– more –



The book is published on the occasion of an exhibition of the same name, on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum from June 29 through November 14, 2010.

About the Author

Brett Abbott is associate curator in the Department of Photographs at the J. Paul Getty Museum. He is the editor of *Edward Weston's Book of Nudes* and the author of *In Focus: Edward Weston*.

Publication Information

Engaged Observers

Documentary Photography Since the Sixties

Brett Abbott

J. Paul Getty Museum

256 pages, 11 x 11 inches, hardcover

70 color and 175 duotone illustrations

ISBN 978-1-60606-022-3, \$49.95 [CAN \$59.95] [UK £36.00]

Publication Date: June 29, 2010

#

For more information about the exhibition, please contact Desiree Zenowich at 310-440-7304 or dzenowich@getty.edu.

Kindly send two tearsheets of your review when published to Melissa Crowley, Getty Publications, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1682.

Available at bookstores or through Getty Publications (800-223-3431). Distributed to the trade in the U.S. by Oxford University Press, in the U.K. and Europe by Orca Book Services, and in Canada by the Jaguar Book Group.