



Media Contact:

Jerry Beck, Director of Marketing & Community
Engagement Museum 978-345-4207 ext. 312
Cell Phone: 978-590-3759
Email: jbeck@fitchburgartmuseum.org
Web: fitchburgartmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Building a Collection: Photography at the Fitchburg Art Museum offers a dynamic exhibition of important photographs

*Opening Reception, Sunday, June 23, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
The exhibition will be on view from June 23– September 1, 2013*

Fitchburg, MA. -- This special exhibition, organized by Consulting Curator of Photography Stephen Jareckie, features historically significant photographers including Peter Henry Emerson, Alexander Gardner, Alfred Stieglitz, Charles Sheeler, Berenice Abbott, Edward Weston, Bradford Washburn, Harold E. Edgerton, and Paul Caponigro.

The Fitchburg Art Museum began collecting fine art photographs in 1980 by accepting the anonymous donation of Charles Sheeler's *Lever House*, an image celebrating an iconic international-style, glass-faced structure erected in mid-town Manhattan during New York's building boom after World War II. Two more Sheeler photographs, taken in 1929 at Chartres, France, were donated in 1981, which laid the foundation for what has become a collection of over 450 photographic prints.

Next, the Museum created a special gallery for changing photography exhibitions in the new Simonds Building, opened in 1989. The Museum has since mounted over forty special photography exhibitions - both major presentations and one-person shows. The photography collection developed as an outgrowth of the exhibition program. Generous donors – photographers and collectors – gave impetus to the Museum's collecting activity, and advantageous purchases have also strengthened the Museum photographic holdings. In particular, Jude Peterson, a Massachusetts collector and a friend of the Museum, helped sustain FAM's photography program from the late 1990s until his untimely death in 2009. He left over 330 photographs to the Museum.

The Jude Peterson Collection, which includes works by major artists, serves as a solid base for the growing collection. The pictures displayed in these newly installed galleries

trace the history of photography from the 1860s to the 21st century. These images, mainly American in character, present an overview of a photography collection built over three decades.

This exhibition was organized by FAM Consulting Curator of Photography Stephen Jareckie, and is supported by the Robert and Elaine Smith Photography Fund. Thanks to the Culley Street Frame Shop, Fitchburg, MA, for assisting with artwork preparation.

Attached image: Photo of Building a Collection: Photography at the Fitchburg Art Museum (view of gallery, foreground photo by Harold "Doc" Edgerton).

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The Fitchburg Art Museum is one of the most treasured cultural institutions in Central New England and serves the Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster and surrounding communities in North Central Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire.

Museum Hours: Wednesday – Friday, Noon – 4pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am – 5 pm.

Admission: Free for members, children 12 years and under, Fitchburg State University and Fitchburg Public School Students, Faculty & Staff, and to Fitchburg Residents of Ward 4 B. \$9 for adults, \$5 for seniors (62 plus).

Fitchburg Art Museum is **free** from 4.00 p.m. – 7 p.m. every first Thursday of the month.

The Museum is wheelchair accessible.

Info: Call 978 345-4207 or visit www.fitchburgartmuseum.org

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