

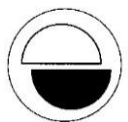
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Press Release
Weegee by Weegee
July 5th | November 5th 2017



Coney Island Beach, 1940. © Weegee, International Center of Photography. Courtesy: M.+M. Auer Collection

Exhibition coproduced by:



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Press Release

One of the world's most important private collections of
Weegee's photographs arrives in Barcelona

Foto Colectania presents 'Weegee by Weegee' An exhibition of the most obscure chronicler of New York in the 30s and 40s



© Weegee, International Center of Photography. Courtesy: M.+M. Auer Collection

The exhibition brings together more than one hundred vintage photographs from one of the best photographic collections in the world, M. + M. Auer in Switzerland; an exquisitely curated selection of photos from Weegee's own books.

From July 5th through November 5th, the Foto Colectania Foundation in Barcelona, in a co-production with the Banco Sabadell Foundation, presents "Weegee by Weegee", an exhibition of more than 100 photographs by the famous photojournalist, from the M. + M Auer Collection.

In New York's tumultuous years of the 30s and 40s, Weegee was a freelance graphic reporter who had his work published in all the major newspapers and who turned crime into spectacle. Always alert, in his car he carried a radio tuned to the frequency of the police that allowed him to arrive first to the scene of the crime. His technique, based on harsh backlights, gave the photos an aura of realm and drama that still creates a great impact to the viewer.

In his biography, Weegee explains: *"My car became my home. It was a two-seater, with an extra large trunk. I kept everything there, an extra camera, flashlight bulbs, a typewriter, firefighter boots, cigar boxes, salami, infrared film to shoot in the dark, a change of underwear, uniforms, costumes and extra shoes and socks. (...) Since then I was no longer attached to the teletype of the police headquarters. I had wings. I no longer had to wait for the crime to come to me; I could go after him. Police radio was my way of life. My camera ... my life and my love ... was my Aladdin lamp. "*

The exhibition presents a curated selection of his work, from images of crimes, fires or accidents to scenes of social and popular events, such as the conglomerations on the beaches of Coney Island or other places of leisure for the New Yorkers of the time. Weegee photographed a corpse, but also a masked dance or a solitary child; in his photos there is darkness, but also tenderness. Nevertheless, one of the singularities of this exhibition at Foto Colectania is that it shows, along with the photographs of the author, the most famous photobooks the reporter published, such as the original edition of "Naked City", which was published in 1945 and immediately became a best seller.

The 'Weegee by Weegee' exhibition follows the photographs and texts that the author published in his first five books: Naked City (1945), Weegee's People (1946), Naked Hollywood (1953), Weegee's Creative Camera (1959) and Weegee's Creative Photography (1964), as well as in the autobiography of the same title that he published in 1961. These first books, real jewels, were designed by the author and were essential to get the enormous popularity of his work. The prominence of the magnificent vintage copies is complemented by the original publications that can be seen thanks to the filming of the books, as well as by the fragment of the documentary "The Naked Eye", directed by Lou Stoumen in 1956, in which Weegee appears going across the city of New York.

Weegee, a pseudonym of Arthur Fellig, had a hazardous life, moved easily between the police and the mafia, and was always aware of the quality of the work he was doing, maybe that's why he signed all his photos as "Weegee The Famous." His carefree attitude and his adventures inspired black movies such as "The Public Eye" (Howard Franklin, 1992), "L.A. Confidential" (Curtis Hanson, 1997), "Road to Perdition" (Sam Mendes, 2002) or "Nightcrawler" (Dan Gilroy, 2014), among others. Almost a century after he took his first photos, Weegee's work continues to excite both the public and the critics, thanks to his stark and dramatic style that managed to reflect the society and nightlife of a city he knew better than anyone else.

The exhibition comes from the **Michel and Michèle Auer Collection**, Swiss collectors with whom the Foundation has collaborated in several projects. In 2005, the exhibition "A Swiss Passion" presented a selection of some of the most emblematic photographs in the collection. The Weegee exhibition is complemented by a selection of 25 books from their collection that are presented in Foto Colectania's Library. The books have in common Switzerland, either by the origin of the author, the city of edition, etc.

The "Weegee by Weegee" exhibition is part of the year-round program of Foto Colectania, whose main theme for 2017 is **Photography: In print | Online**.

Useful Information

'Weegee by Weegee'

From July 5th through November 5th, 2017

Pictures available at

<http://www.mahala.org/public/Weegee>

Foto Colectania Foundation

Passeig Picasso 14

08003 Barcelona

www.fotocolectania.org/

Opening Hours

Tuesday to Saturday: 11am to 8 pm; Sundays, 11am to 3 pm.

Entrance fee: 4 € (Concessions: 3 €. Free entrance on the 1st Sunday of the month)

August: Monday to Friday, 12 noon to 8 pm. Closed on the weekend and on August 15th.

Exhibition coproduced by:



FOTO COLECTANIA

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Weegee



Arthur "Weegee" Fellig, *A Self Portrait*

Arthur H. Fellig (Zloczwe, now Ukraine, 1899-New York, 1968) was a photojournalist who worked for media and agencies such as the Acme Newspictures, where it is said that he was named "Weegee", a motto derived from "ouija", in allusion to his supposed ability to communicate with the dead. He started working in a crime-ridden New York and indeed, he is a very cinematographic photographer.

He lived a few years in Hollywood, when he was already famous and his book, *Naked City*, had become a bestseller that inspired a film to Jules Dassin. Years before, in New York, he specialized in murders, accidents

and events in general that illustrated the society of the time. He lived at night, when the most truculent facts occurred. Using cameras equipped with large flash lamps, he extracted from the shadows criminals and victims, policemen and firemen, surprised in the most dramatic moments. He always arrived in time and even before the police, tuning their radio, for those "uprisings of the corpse" that he transformed into memorable images. He managed to get the sensationalist point of view, the theatrical atmosphere, to focus and get the quintessence of "black photography". Weegee worked "on the fly", in his trunk, where he had photographic material, food, clothes, a typewriter and even costumes.

He was very talented in accommodating eloquent details on his compositions, such as double-reading signs or visual commentaries added by the morbid witnesses.

Weegee's photographs depicting scenes of crime, victims of bloody traffic crashes, or crowded urban beaches are still shocking and not surprising, as opposed to those images depicting the ladies of New York's high society dressed in their headscarves and diadems attending to cinematographic releases, opera or theatrical premieres.

M.+M. Auer



@Gregory Maillot

Michel and Michèle Auer met in 1974 and their fondness for collecting and photography led them to start a collection that, 40 years later, is the most important private collection of photography in Switzerland and one of the most significant in Europe. The collection traces a history of photography from 1839 until today, and nowadays, it holds 50,000 photographs, more than 500 cameras and about 24,000 books.

Among the most important legacies of the Auer collection are the more than 280 original vintage photographs by Weegee, a hundred of them shown at the exhibition, as well as the exceptional collection of photography books, represented at our library space through a selection of more than twenty books. Switzerland is the link between these editions.

In 2009, the Auer created the Fondation Auer Ory pour la Photographie, in Hermance (Switzerland), with the aim of preserving their collection, promoting it, acquiring new items and photographs, organizing exhibitions, and disseminating and updating their International Encyclopedia of Photographers. The Foundation also publishes books that contribute to a better understanding of the medium, helps communicate the work of young artists and forgotten authors, organizes seminars and workshops and welcomes research staff, artists, students and fellows. More information at www.auerphoto.com.

The Foto Colectania Foundation



@MahalaNuuk

Foto Colectania is a non-profit organisation, founded in Barcelona in 2002, with the aim of disseminating photography and introducing it within the social, artistic and educational field in our country. The programs undertaken at the Foundation, from exhibitions to activities and publications, are based on the creation of an innovative, participatory and inclusive project focused on thought around image and its basic foundations, enhancing its communicative capacity and its suitability to generate critical thinking.

Foto Colectania especially works at two different levels: on the one hand, within the context of the city of Barcelona, presenting a high quality cultural offer focused on excellence; and on the other hand, within the international context, producing and disseminating projects by Catalan and Spanish artists abroad.

The Foundation has also a library specialized in Photography and a collection of photographs that holds more than 3,000 works by Catalan, Spanish and Portuguese photographers; besides, the collection includes the archive of the Spanish photographer Francisco Gómez, donated by his family in 2001, as well as the archives of several private collectors.

To know more about who we are and what we do, please visit: www.fotocolectania.org.



#WeegeeByWeegee
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