



The Family of Man

*The greatest photographic exhibition of all time—503 pictures from 68 countries—
created by Edward Steichen for The Museum of Modern Art*

Prologue by Carl Sandburg

I believe The Family of Man exhibition, produced and shown first at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and now being circulated throughout the world, is the most ambitious and challenging project photography has ever attempted.

The exhibition, now permanently presented on the pages of this book, demonstrates that the art of photography is a dynamic process of giving form to ideas and of explaining man to man. It was conceived as a mirror of the universal elements and emotions in the everydayness of life—as a mirror of the essential oneness of mankind throughout the world.

Edward Steichen

U.S.A. Wynn Bullock



And God said, let there be light Genesis 1:3

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The Museum of Modern Art, New York*

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*Prologue by
Carl Sandburg*

The first cry of a newborn baby in Chicago or Zamboango, in Amsterdam or Rangoon, has the same pitch and key, each saying, "I am! I have come through! I belong! I am a member of the Family."

Many the babies and grownups here from photographs made in sixty-eight nations round our planet Earth. You travel and see what the camera saw. The wonder of human mind, heart, wit and instinct, is here. You might catch yourself saying, "I'm not a stranger here."

People! flung wide and far, born into toil, struggle, blood and dreams, among lovers, eaters, drinkers, workers, loafers, fighters, players, gamblers. Here are ironworkers, bridgemen, musicians, sandhogs, miners, builders of huts and skyscrapers, jungle hunters, landlords and the landless, the loved and the unloved, the lonely and abandoned, the brutal and the compassionate—one big family hugging close to the ball of Earth for its life and being.

Here or there you may witness a startling harmony where you say, "This will be haunting me a long time with a loveliness I hope to understand better."

In a seething of saints and sinners, winners or losers, in a womb of superstition, faith, genius, crime, sacrifice, here is the People, the one and only source of armies, navies, work-gangs, the living flowing breath of the history of nations, ever lighted by the reality or illusion of hope. Hope is a sustaining human gift.

Everywhere is love and love-making, weddings and babies from generation to generation keeping the Family of Man alive and continuing. Everywhere the sun, moon and stars, the climates and weathers, have meanings for people. Though meanings vary, we are alike in all countries and tribes in trying to read what sky, land and sea say to us. Alike and ever alike we are on all continents in the need of love, food, clothing, work, speech, worship, sleep, games, dancing, fun. From tropics to arctics humanity lives with these needs so alike, so inexorably alike.

Hands here, hands gnarled as thorn tree roots and others soft as faded rose leaves. Hands reaching, praying and groping, hands holding tools, torches, brooms, fishnets, hands doubled in fists of flaring anger, hands moving in caress of beloved faces. The hands and feet of children playing ring-around-a-rosy—countries and languages different but the little ones alike in playing the same game.

Here are set forth babies arriving, suckling, growing into youths restless and questioning. Then as grownups they seek and hope. They mate, toil, fish, quarrel, sing, fight, pray, on all parallels and meridians having likeness. The earliest man, ages ago, had tools, weapons, cattle, as seen in his cave drawings. And like him the latest man of our day has his tools, weapons, cattle. The earliest man struggled through inexpressibly dark chaos of hunger, fear, violence, sex. A long journey it has been from that early Family of Man to the one of today which has become a still more prodigious spectacle.

If the human face is "the masterpiece of God" it is here then in a thousand fateful registrations. Often the faces speak what words can never say. Some tell of eternity and others only the latest tattlings. Child faces of blossom smiles or mouths of hunger are followed by homely faces of majesty carved and worn by love, prayer and hope, along with others light and carefree as thistle-down in a late summer wind. Faces having land and sea on them, faces honest as the morning sun flooding a clean kitchen with light, faces crooked and lost and wondering where to go this afternoon or tomorrow morning. Faces in crowds,

The Family of Man

"... the whole story of mankind ..."
—*Philadelphia Inquirer*

"... as a vast and lovely epic poem ..."
—*Baltimore News-Post*

"... portraying the emotions which all
members of the human family share ..."
—*Life*

"... a fantastically large, rich and extensive
exhibition of human anecdotes ..."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"... global in scope and universal
in its theme ..."
—*New York Herald Tribune*

"... which symbolize the universality of
human emotions ..."
—*The New York Times*

"... and ... the beauty and resources
of the earth ..."
—*The Christian Science Monitor*

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