

McDonough Museum of Art

YSU's Center for Contemporary Ideas, Art, Education + Community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALEX WEBB: **LA CALLE** PHOTOGRAPHS FROM MEXICO

January 20 – March 3, 2017

Public Reception, Friday, January 20, 6-8pm



Alex Webb, Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, 1985

The John J McDonough Museum of Art on the campus of Youngstown State University presents two exciting exhibitions Alex Webb: *La Calle, Photographs from Mexico* and *Selections from the Collection of the Richard M. Ross Art Museum, Ohio Wesleyan University*. There will be an public reception on Friday, January 20 from 6-8pm. The exhibitions are on display through March 3rd.

La Calle brings together nearly thirty years of photography by Alex Webb created between 1978 and 2007 in Mexico City and the surrounding states, villages, and cities. Webb frequently credits the landscapes and cityscapes of Mexico for prompting his shift to color photography. He worked intensely on the U.S.–Mexico border and in the densely populated capital city through the early 1980s, inspired by what poet Octavio Paz calls “Mexicanism—delight in decorations, carelessness and pomp, negligence, passion, and reserve.” In *La Calle*, Webb presents a celebration of the street, taken in a vibrant, colorful place, which has undergone transformations since his first trips to Mexico—including natural disasters, financial resurgence, political corruption, and drug wars.

Since the late 1970s, Webb has consistently created photographs characterized by vivid color and light. His work, with its richly layered complex compositions, touches on multiple genres, including street photography, photojournalism, and fine art, but, as Geoff Dyer states, “Wherever he goes Webb always ends up in a Bermuda-shaped triangle where the distinctions between photojournalism, documentary, and art blur and disappear.” Webb’s ability to distill gesture, color, and contrasting cultural tensions into single, beguiling frames results in evocative images that convey a sense of mystery, irony, and humor.

La Calle is organized by Aperture Foundation, New York, and Televisa Foundation, Mexico City. Curated by Alfonso Morales. All prints courtesy of the Televisa Foundation collection.

Selections from the collection of the
Richard M. Ross Art Museum
Ohio Wesleyan University

We are very pleased to present *Selections from the Collection of the Richard M. Ross Art Museum, Ohio Wesleyan University*. The permanent collection at the Ross Art Museum consists of more than 2,500 works of art including American and European prints, drawings, photographs, paintings and sculpture. Artists featured in the exhibition include Elliot Erwitt, Joel Meyerowitz, Alen MacWeeney and Frank Stella.

Elliott Erwitt (1928 -) is an American advertising and documentary photographer known for his black and white candid shots of ironic and absurd situations within everyday settings—a master of Henri Cartier-Bresson's "decisive moment." "To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place... I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them." He is a member of the elite Magnum Photographers.

Joel Meyerowitz (1938 -) considered a living legend in street photography is also a portrait and landscape photographer. Inspired early on by the work of Robert Frank, he shifted careers to become a professional photographer. "I suddenly understood that there was a poetry, albeit a dark poetry, but there was a poetry to photography and that if you were attuned to things that the world offers you might be able to be a poet in that way."

Alen MacWeeney (1939 -) For over five years, Dublin-born Alen MacWeeney photographed the native itinerants of Ireland known as "Travellers", spending countless evenings in their caravans and by their campfires, drinking tea and listening to their tales, songs and music. "Throughout my life I have regularly traveled to my mother's home city of Dublin. During these trips I would regularly see groups of people living in caravans on the sides of the road, and I always wondered who they were and what their lives were like. I later found out they belonged to a small ethnic minority called "Travellers" —nomads who spend most of their life, literally on the road. While their history has been hard to document—they have no written records—they are thought to have separated from the settled Irish community at least 1,000 years ago."

Frank Stella (1936 -) Black Series II, a portfolio of eight lithographs (6 included in the exhibiton) transpose the compositions of Stella's diamond-pattern Black Paintings (1959-1960) into prints. Stella gave them the same names as the paintings they were based upon and are his most important and radical contributions to post-war abstract painting, only rivaled by the shaped canvases executed in aluminum and copper paint between 1960 and 1961. In speaking of his minimalist work – this series based on bands of color, he remarked, "What you see is what you see."

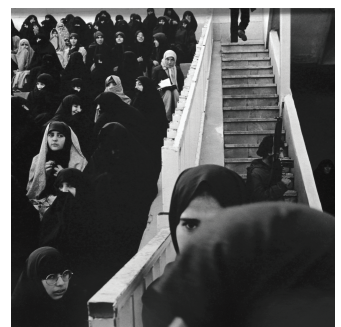
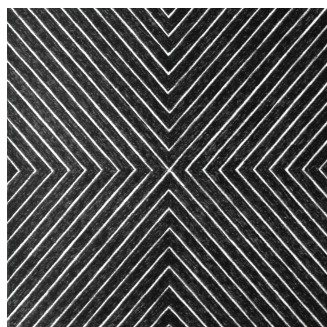
Hours are Tuesday-Saturday from 11am to 4pm • The Museum is open to the public and admission is free.

The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

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detail left to right, on loan from the Richard M. Ross Art Museum: Mary Ellen Mark, *India*, 1989; Frank Stella, *Untitled from Black Series II*, 1967; Miguel Gandert, *Couple in '51 Chevy, Albuquerque, New Mexico*, 1986; Gilles Peress, *Demonstration in a stadium, Tabriz, Iran*, 1979