

# DANZIGER

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## On Madison

ROBERT FRANK'S AMERICA

February 9 - March 16, 2019.

Danziger Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition devoted to the American photographs of Robert Frank, his best known and arguably most important work. The exhibition will be comprised of 40 photographs - 15 from Frank's seminal book "The Americans" (now celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its American publication) and 25 unpublished works from Frank's travels at the time.

Born in Zurich in 1924, Frank began his career in photography in the mid-1940s before emigrating to America in 1947. As an immigrant, Frank was fascinated by America and after his first travels around the country he applied for a Guggenheim Fellowship to fund a longer and deeper journey around all parts of the country.

In his proposal to the Guggenheim Foundation Frank wrote: "The photographing of America is a large order - read at all literally, the phrase would be an absurdity." The "total production" of such a project, he added, would be "voluminous." However surprisingly the proposal was accepted and Frank embarked on a two-year journey around America during which he took over 28,000 photographs.

Eighty-three of the images were subsequently published in the book "The Americans" — widely recognized as one of the greatest photography books ever published.

What Frank brought to the medium was an improvisational quality that saw the world in a different but more truthful way than the commonly perceived visual clichés of his time. While the often dark and idiosyncratic nature of his vision shocked many people, it led the way to much of what has followed in photography.

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Sarah Greenough, senior curator of photography at the [National Gallery of Art](#) in Washington noted: “Frank revealed a people who were plagued by racism, ill-served by their politicians, and rendered increasingly numb by the rising culture of consumerism. But it’s also important to point out that he found new areas of beauty in those simple, overlooked corners of American life - in diners, or on the street. He pioneered a whole new subject matter that we now define as icons: cars, jukeboxes, even the road itself. All of these things, coupled with his style - which is seemingly intuitive, immediate, and off-kilter - were radically new at the time.”

As with every photo editing process, out of necessity many great photographs were left out of “The Americans”, but rather than being forgotten, Frank chose to print these images in the same 11 x 14 inch format as the ones included in the book. There were no plans to ever publish a second volume, but from the quality of the unpublished images we will be exhibiting, it is clear there would have been little drop-off in quality.

About the prints:

By the late 1970s, Frank had turned his primary attention away from photography to film making and in order to fund both his life and his

film work, in 1978 he sold his existing archive of vintage prints along with many hundreds of prints made to complete the transaction. The prints exhibited here all come from that purchase — the largest collection of this most important figure in the history of the medium. They are either vintage prints (printed at approximately the same time as they were taken) or printed no later than 1978 by Sid Kaplan who made most of Robert Franks prints for three decades.