

Rudolph Janu
Wall Street Art
exhibition: May-June
1962.

Rudolph Janu was born in Chicago in 1934 and after attending school here enlisted in the Air Corps. When he returned to Chicago he worked as a commercial artist, but during the last year and a half has dedicated all his efforts to photography. The result is a large amount of serious and expressive accomplishment from which a selection has been made for this exhibition, his introduction to the Chicago public. In February and March of this year his photographs were shown at the Leica Gallery in New York City where they attracted favorable attention and the larger part of the current issue of the Leica Magazine is devoted to them. Other than a few landscapes in West Virginia and the portraits of members of a Comanche family in Oklahoma (the first three photographs on the last panel on this wall) all the pictures in the present showing were taken in and around Chicago.

They show us what may be anywhere before our eyes but what we may rarely notice and they have captured that period of time which is ours and which others in the future (hard as it may be to believe) will doubtless look back to with nostalgia. Here we are privileged to see contemporary life with the guidance of a living photographer at an early yet surprisingly full stage of his development. He is discreet and considerate enough not to bore us with the platitudes of hasty and misdirected sociological solutions or the hocus-pocus of mental esthetics. The originality of these photographs is invariably sincere and never pretentious or exhibitionistic; it is shown again and again in simple statements which may be appreciated and comprehended by anyone. In other words, these pictures communicate and if we give them our attention, they will provoke our own thoughts and personal interpretations. Their esthetic characteristics are displayed with such ease and good sense that they have no need

to hide and bury themselves in the futilities of fake profundities. And this expression has employed the camera and its techniques for what photography can do so well and with the strongest certainty.

The world they faithfully portray is that of everyday people at their ordinary pastimes: the large human world on which all of us depend and which is the one by which we will be finally judged. Perhaps the closest parallel to come to mind when we look at these pictures is the atmosphere and milieu of The Stranger by Albert Camus. It is a human situation which concerns an increasing number of young photographers and they seem better equipped for its portrayal than any other interpreters in these times. That Rudolph Janu is one of them and that for the admirable realization of his purposes he has no need for belonging to some esthetic wolf pack is only one obvious compliment to the quiet courage of his work and its successful accomplishment.

Hugh Edwards.