

News Release FROM THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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The unique landscape of Wisconsin has been recorded continuously for the past decade by Paul Vanderbilt's camera, and the photographs on view in the Art Institute of Chicago through November 21, sharply honest, shaped by the light of changing seasons, bisect land, sky, and the vital relations of man to an environment.

Through this past decade, Paul Vanderbilt has been Curator of Iconographic Collections, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. From 1946-1950 he was Chief of the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, and a consultant in Iconography for the library until 1954. During that time he wrote a GUIDE TO THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS OF PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (1955.)

His first study was in the Clarence White School of Photography (1922). He holds a B.A. degree from Harvard, 1927, where his studies included art history, museum curatorship in graphic arts, typography and illustration.

In 1941 he became consultant to the U.S. Navy devising controls for incoming still and motion picture photographs. In 1942 his article, FILING, appeared in the Encyclopedia of Photography. From 1942-4 he served in the Office of War Information as a visual Information Specialist, during which time he planned the National Film Library for the Library of Congress. The years of 1944-5 found him Chief of the Photograph Section, Library of Congress, with the job of reorganizing the photographic sociological and economic survey of America (chiefly rural USA) made by Roy Stryker for the Farm Security Administration. The project was converted from a government documentary one to a national historical one.

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Vanderbilt's photographs were included in the Museum of Modern Art's THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE (1963) which featured the work of 19 men including T. H. O'Sullivan (whose fame began with Civil War photographs) H. H. Bennett (who himself recorded Wisconsin landscapes for 50 years after the Civil War) Edward Steichen, Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Alfred Stieglitz, Eliot Porter, William R. Current, and Paul Caponigro, born in 1932.

Someone has said that Vanderbilt's sensitive penetrating photographs of the Wisconsin scene "look like the present tense of the traditional past."