

News Release FROM THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eighty-one photographs by William R. Current are on display in the Art Institute of Chicago through May 16.

The exhibition covers Current's interest in the American landscape, his interest in Spanish Colonial architecture and his interest in archeology. Many photographs feature Indian ruins of the southwest - since, for the last two years he has been preparing a book on these ruins, working with grants from the Helen Wurlitzer Foundation and the Simon A. Guggenheim Foundation. Included are the fabled White House, Mummy Cave, Antelope House and Standing Cow Ruins in Canyon de Chelly, the 131 square mile area in the heart of today's Navajo Reservation; the architectural cliff complexes of towers, storerooms, apartments and ceremonial kivas of Mesa Verde in southwest Colorado, inhabited by Indians as early as 300 A.D. and abandoned by 1300 A.D.; and the sites of Keet Seel, Betatakin and Inscription House in the Kayenta region of northeastern Arizona.

Current was born in Pasadena, California in 1923 and attended the Art Center School in Los Angeles. For the past 12 years his work has appeared in national magazines, and in 1963 there were exhibitions in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. Also in 1963 Current's work was included with that of 18 other photographers in a Museum of Modern Art exhibition organized by John Szarkowski, titled THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE.

Concerning his work he says, "I have become tired of the otherness of things, I now want to photograph the real fact." Trees, rivers, rocks, ruins and mountains come into their own in Current's photographs. They are relieved of the heavy symbolism with which many artists have covered and misrepresented them.

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"William R. Current makes use of a technical mastery of the highest quality," says Hugh Edwards, the Art Institute's Curator of Photography. "He adds conscientiousness and strong discretion as a foundation to support the magical apparitions of his pictures. In them light lies on surfaces and comes also from beyond. Exposure and printing overpower nothing and here the West presents no Wagnerian super-drama to disguise hollowness and superficiality. Without human beings life is represented completely (because we feel this is truth) and is heightened by this photographer's rare passion and perception in his desire to bring to permanence his vision of it."

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