

News Release FROM THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET, CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS, U. S. A.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The dramatic power of youth dominates the fifty-nine photographs by Danny Lyon on display in the Art Institute of Chicago through Sunday May 15, 1966.

Motorcyclists, helmeted, goggled, gloved, their leather jackets labeled front and back, park in fields and along curbs, waiting alone and in packs to roar off down the highways, screaming their way to glory on circular tracks and cross-country obstacle courses.

Portraits of girls and young men against chalk-scribbled walls, in dance halls, at lunch counters, on carousels, are alive with the hunger and unrequited vitality of youth.

Five young children, ragged, unkempt, on a rickety-railinged porch hung with washing smile out with pathetic eagerness to be part of the good life.

Danny Lyon's photographs may first give one an uncanny feeling of eavesdropping because the man behind the camera is in such direct private communication with his subject. There's no question about his feeling for people. He likes them - every one. A series of pictures becomes a very human sociological comment and yet he's appealing, not to the viewer's conscience, but to his consciousness.

"I want to show that in an unknown room (in a completely blighted area) there is a hidden paradise where the walls are hung with the richness of life." Again he says, "I want to capture the forty-year old look of a child of twelve" or, "I want to document the life of a Southern community in the North," a way of life which is bound to change, to be metamorphosed into a new way as children grow up in a different environment.

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Danny Lyon's interest in photography began as he studied history at the University of Chicago and visited the extensive collections of photography in the Art Institute of Chicago. (We appreciated his tribute to the inspiration gained in the Art Institute which DU magazine included in the article about his work, October 1965.)

He was born in Brooklyn in 1942 and spent his first seventeen years in Queens. He began photographing motorcyclists during college years and is still himself an active member of a Chicago group of cyclists. In 1962 in Albany, Georgia, he felt impelled to capture the growing social and civil problems of black and white citizens. From Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi he moved across the United States.

Simon and Schuster published his book THE MOVEMENT, subsequently published as a paperback in England by Penguin under the title A MATTER OF COLOUR.

Whatever the current theme, one knows that Danny Lyon is not interested in photography just as an object in itself. One feels his life involvement with photography as a method of feeling and discovering people.
