

>DEPART FOUNDATION
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REDISCOVERING GENIUS: THE WORKS OF EDWARD S. CURTIS
CURATED BY BRUCE KAPSON

Premier Showing of Curtis's Masterwork Copper Photogravure Printing Plates
NOVEMBER 18, 2016–JANUARY 5, 2017



PUBLIC OPENING

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2016, 6-9PM

DEPART Foundation, 9105 West Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90069

Los Angeles, CA., - Depart Foundation announced today that it will present a comprehensive exhibition of rare and important historical works by one of the most influential photographers of the American West, Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952). Curated by Bruce Kapson, ***Rediscovering Genius: The Works Of Edward S. Curtis*** will mark the premier institutional showing of Curtis's masterwork body of Copper Photogravure Printing Plates used in the production of his epic publishing venture *The North American Indian*, and will include examples from every photographic medium in which the artist worked.

The Copper Photogravure Printing Plates are the source of origin for every vintage photogravure print extant and produced in *The North American Indian*. The exhibition's compilation of 30 individual Plates, presented in their original copper and inked state, is being shown for the first time in the 110-year history of this rediscovered body of the artist's work. Each Plate is a unique work and a primary document of one of the most significant publishing ventures of the 20th century. Curtis spent more time refining and perfecting the imagery in these Plates than in any other medium. "Their three-dimensionality offers a wholly new material and aesthetic

experience that is distinct from Curtis's more widely exhibited gravures, photographic prints, and orotones. The immediacy of the copper Plates is unlike any other vehicle for these iconic images; it is as though they allow the viewer to be transmitted through the frame to the very moment the image was captured," said Kapson.

In addition to these unique Copper Photogravure Printing Plates, *Rediscovering Genius* will showcase rare and notable examples drawn from every other photographic medium with which Curtis worked to help contextualize their significance. Among them, a very rare Hand-Colored Glass Lantern Slide from Curtis's "Musical" lecture series, in which he displayed photographic images alongside his early recordings of Native American music and languages to illustrate their rituals and traditions.

A pioneer in many respects, Curtis in 1904, only a few years after field motion picture cameras were available, was using them to document Navajo, Hopi and Cheyenne rituals. As part of the exhibition, Curtis's pioneering 1914 feature film, *In the Land of the Head-Hunters (War Canoes)* will run continuously and Anne Makepeace's biographical documentary on Curtis, *Coming to Light, Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indians*, will be screened as a separate event at Depart Foundation in Los Angeles on Friday, December 9, 2016. Kapson says, "Believing that motion pictures were increasingly the medium to reach the masses – and that this first film might lead to other motion pictures based on Indian subjects – Curtis founded his own film company in Seattle and created a full-length film on Kwakiutl Indian life in 1914. Curtis lived and worked with the Kwakiutl for three years, and as Makepeace's documentary *Coming to Light* reveals, Curtis and his work are still cherished and honored by the descendants of those who participated."

Edward S. Curtis's work had the duality of being an incredible artistic creation and a document of a people. He was the first photographer to portray American Indians as anything other than objects of curiosity, and the first photographer to involve them as both active participants and contributing collaborators in the making of their own image.

Curtis created a vision of the American Indian that had never existed and never been surpassed. He produced images that not only record real daily activity, but also convey a dignity, universal humanity and majesty.

Bruce Kapson

Bruce Kapson is a respected expert on Edward S. Curtis and is widely regarded as the leading research authority on the Master Exhibition Prints of Curtis. As a Curtis curator and independent research scholar, he is responsible for several groundbreaking discoveries in the field and he has appraised major institutional and private collections. The consulting expert and a partner in the world's largest archive of Original Copper Photogravure Plates from Curtis's *The North American Indian*, Kapson's gallery is considered the expert source for original works.

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DEPART Foundation provides an alternative platform for creative experimentation and exploration, set within a global context, that thrives outside of conventional, cultural structures. The impact of its work can best be understood as the charting of new artistic destinations with every project and program it undertakes.

Since its founding in 2008, DEPART Foundation has served as a catalyst for the Italian art and cultural community, strengthening the dialogue between Italy and the international art world. Like multiple outposts in Europe and U.S., DEPART Foundation has actively encouraged artistic production through sponsorship of young and established artists and the provision of spaces and resources conducive to the research, production and exhibition of new work, and to the presentation of educational and public programs.

Some of the most interesting and dynamic artists of our time, from around the world, have been presented for the first time in Rome by DEPART Foundation. They include Cory Arcangel, Joe Bradley, Nate Lowman, Ryan McGinley, Tauba Auerbach, Darren Bader, Louis Eisner, Roe Ethridge, Sam Falls, Mark Flood, Elias Hansen, Brendan Lynch, Oscar Murillo, Sarah Braman, Seth Price, Jon Rafman, Stephen G. Rhodes, Amanda Ross-Ho, Sterling Ruby, Lucien Smith, Valerie Snobeck and Frances Stark.

Image credits: Edward S. Curtis, *Pulini and Koyame - Walpi*, Volume 12, 1921, Copper Photogravure Printing Plate, 9 x 6 inches. Edward S. Curtis, *The Rush Gatherer - Kutenai*, Plate 255, 1910, Copper Photogravure Printing Plate, 13 1/2 x 17 1/2 inches, courtesy Bruce Kapson Gallery.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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