

Straight Talk on Collecting Photography

I Saw it for Less

This week we are continuing our series on collecting photography. We have produced a series of videos along with added illustrations and handouts that can be viewed weekly on our website. We hope to cover many aspects that we feel are important to both beginning and seasoned collectors. The topics for the videos are a result of many conversations we have had in our gallery with visitors over the past forty years.

Today's video focuses on identifying some of the attributes of photographs prints that affect their values. We discuss differences between vintage and modern prints, as well as portfolio and limited edition prints. Additionally, we talk briefly about prints that were produced by the artist but were not meant for sale.

This week's video is somewhat longer than the others because of the complexity of the topic. Feel free to view it in two parts and possibly accompanied by your favorite beverage.

Below are illustrations of some of the images and works discussed in today's presentation. We suggest watching the video first.

We want to wish you all a happy and safe Thanksgiving during these difficult times.



Following is a glossary of terms that we use in the video.

A majority of these terms, as well as more detailed descriptions of the many topics covered in today's video, can be found on the AIPAD (Association of International Photography Art Dealers) website, along with a listing of its members.

<https://aipad.com/AIPAD/Collecting>

Copy Print - A copy print is made from a negative that is produced by photographing an existing print. A photographer may choose to make a copy negative of a master print if the original negative has been lost or damaged, or if the master print was the product of numerous exposures and/or manipulations not easily replicated. In the case of a manipulated print, the photographer is likely to consider a copy negative his master negative since it alone produces the desired final print. The term is also sometimes used to describe a publicity print which is not a fine art print.

Limited Edition - As applied to fine art photographs, the term "limited edition" is usually understood to mean a stated number of prints of an image in a particular size and in a particular format. When no additional photographic prints in any size or format will be made from a particular negative, that concept is usually communicated by a phrase such as "the negative has been retired" because negatives are rarely destroyed.

Portfolio - A portfolio is a group of photographs published together, usually in a limited edition and usually presented in a custom-made box with or without accompanying text. It is used to distribute a body of a photographer's work, often at a more favorable price than would be asked for individual prints. A portfolio may have a particular theme, illustrate a particular time period in the photographer's career, or give a retrospective overview of his or her best images.

Provenance - (from the French *provenir*, 'to come from/forth') is the chronology of the ownership, custody or location of a historical object.

Vintage/Old/Modern Prints - A photograph printed within a very few years of the date when the negative was made is considered vintage. Prints that were made in the past, but after the period of time in which they would be considered vintage, should be identified as "old" or "later" prints. Prints made recently from the original negatives are called modern prints. Most often modern prints are made by the photographer, or made directly under the supervision of the photographer. Modern prints may also be made posthumously and are specifically noted as posthumous prints often identifying the person who printed the photograph. The date of a print can usually be determined by the paper used, the quality of printing, the presence or absence of a signature and/or stamp, and the condition of the paper surface, which develops a kind of patina with age.

These two images of Beaumont Newhall's photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson illustrated the different interpretations between a vintage and a modern print. The print on the left was printed in 1946, and the print on the right was printed in the 1980s. You will also notice that he selected a different negative in the later printing of this portrait.



Beaumont Newhall (1908 - 1993)
Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1946
Vintage Gelatin Silver Print



Beaumont Newhall (1908 - 1993)
Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1946
Gelatin Silver Print, printed later

Not all photographic processes have the same archival life. The Type C print on the left was made in 1969, and although it was in a box for most of its life, it still has faded quite considerably. The print on the right is a Dye-Transfer print which has a life of approximately 100 years. It is close to how the Type C print looked when it was made in 1969. As a note, most of the digital prints that are made today and sold within the fine art market are quite permanent.

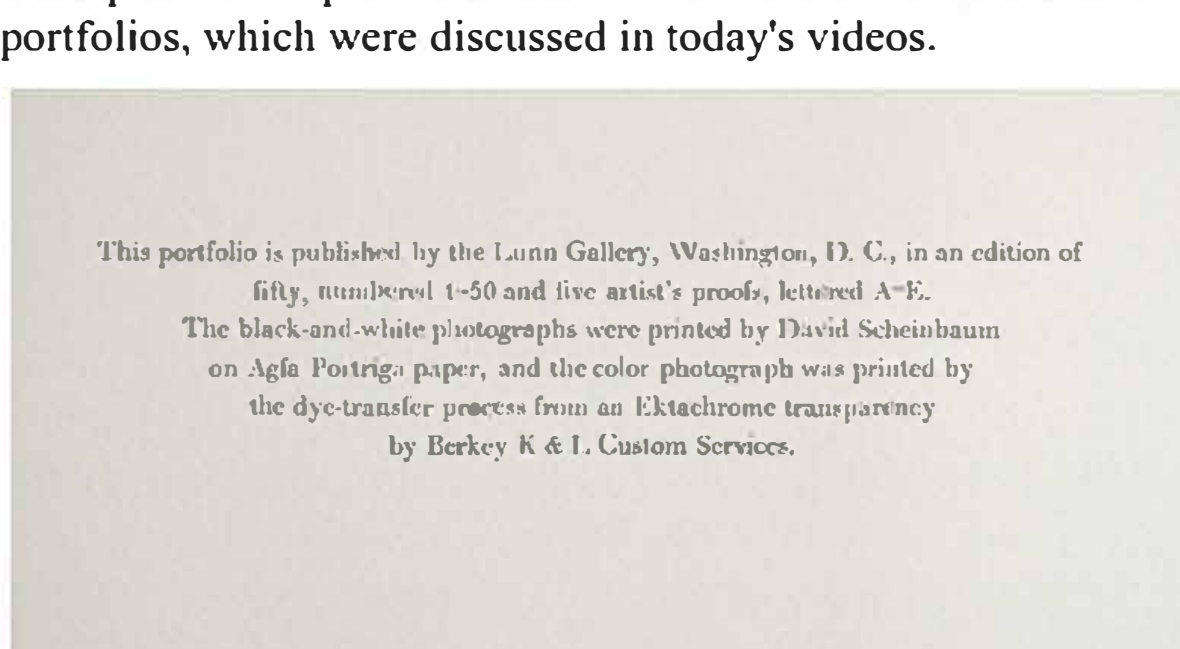


Beaumont Newhall (1908 - 1993)
Street Photographer, Chichicastenango, Guatemala, 1969
Type C Print

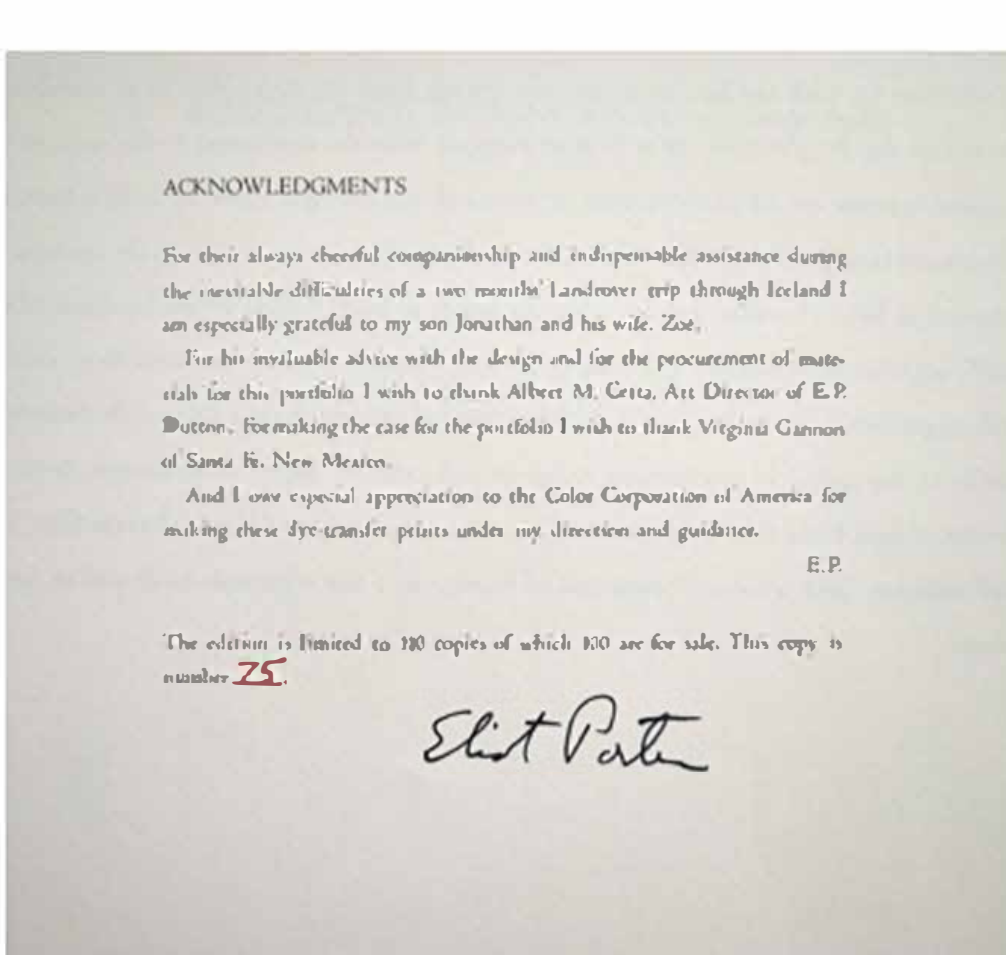


Beaumont Newhall (1908 - 1993)
Street Photographer, Chichicastenango, Guatemala, 1969
Dye-Transfer Print

Below are examples of colophon statements from Eliot Porter and Beaumont Newhall's portfolios, which were discussed in today's videos.



This is portfolio *E*



Below are illustrations and explanations of the various stamps and labels that Ansel Adams used on his prints over the years. These help date and evaluate various printings of his photographs. These illustrations are reproduced from *Ansel Adams in the Lane Collection*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2005.

Click on the below images to view them larger.



We have updated our website and created a new section for [Works by Various Artists](#). This page includes a wonderful variety of photographs. We will be posting new inventory on this page as it arrives at the gallery.

We again want to thank you for the feedback and wonderful responses. Your emails and calls mean the world to us and continue to motivate.

Many of you have also asked about accessing our previous emails. We have added a new page on our website entitled "[History of Photography](#)". All our past and future weekly mailings will be located there for viewing. Please feel free to share them and encourage interested parties to join our mailing list under "[contact](#)".

Thank you, please stay safe, healthy, productive, and involved.

Please visit our website www.photographydealers.com to view our current inventory.