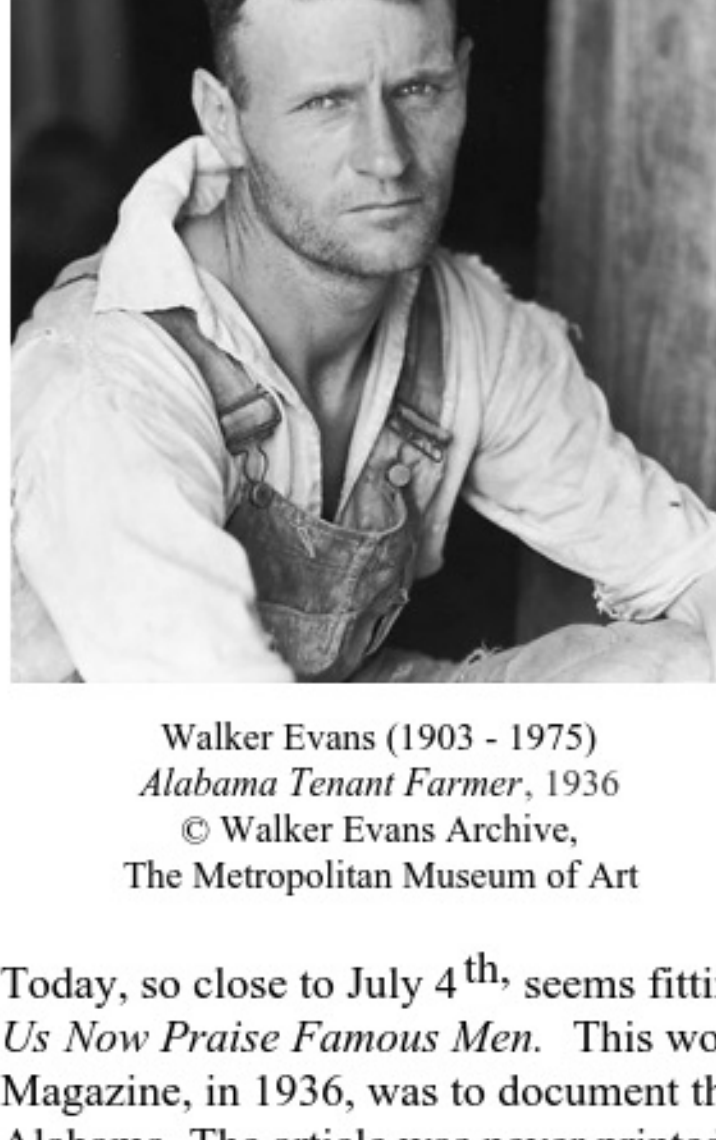
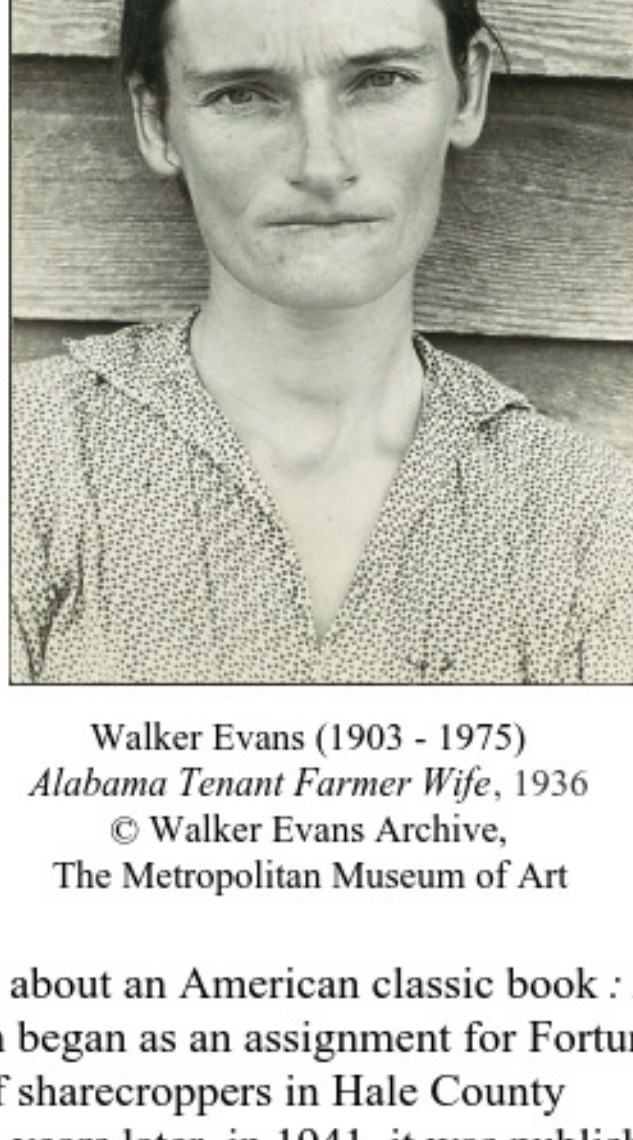


Let Us Now Praise Famous Men



Walker Evans (1903 - 1975)
Alabama Tenant Farmer, 1936

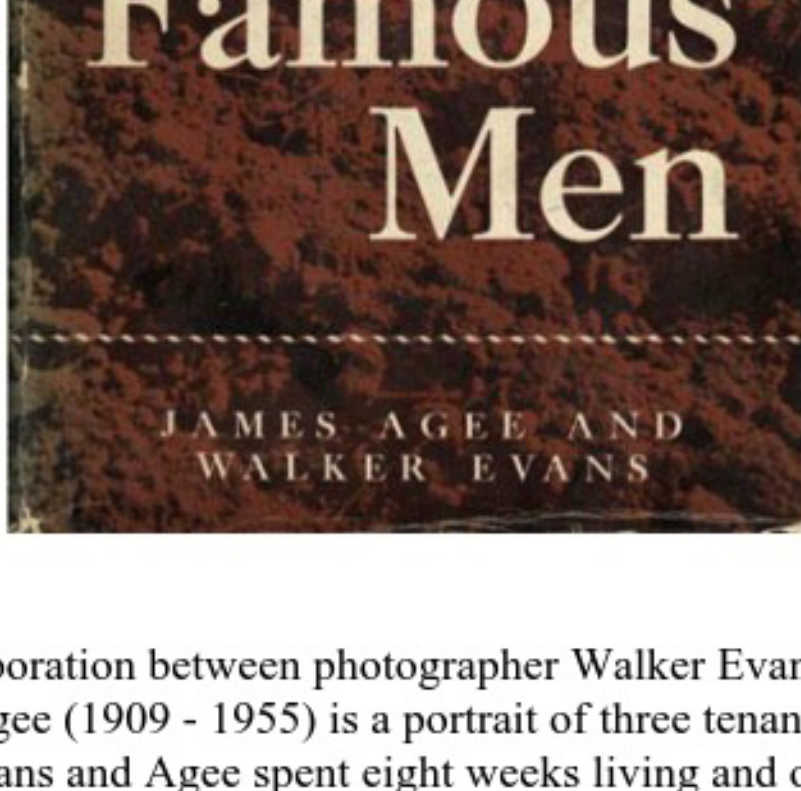
© Walker Evans Archive,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Walker Evans (1903 - 1975)
Alabama Tenant Farmer Wife, 1936

© Walker Evans Archive,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Today, so close to July 4th, seems fitting to talk about an American classic book: *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. This work, which began as an assignment for Fortune Magazine, in 1936, was to document the lives of sharecroppers in Hale County Alabama. The article was never printed, but five years later, in 1941, it was published as a book. Although it sold few copies upon publication, over the years this volume has taken its place alongside other masterpieces and is still studied today for its blend of prose and photography.



JAMES AGEE AND WALKER EVANS

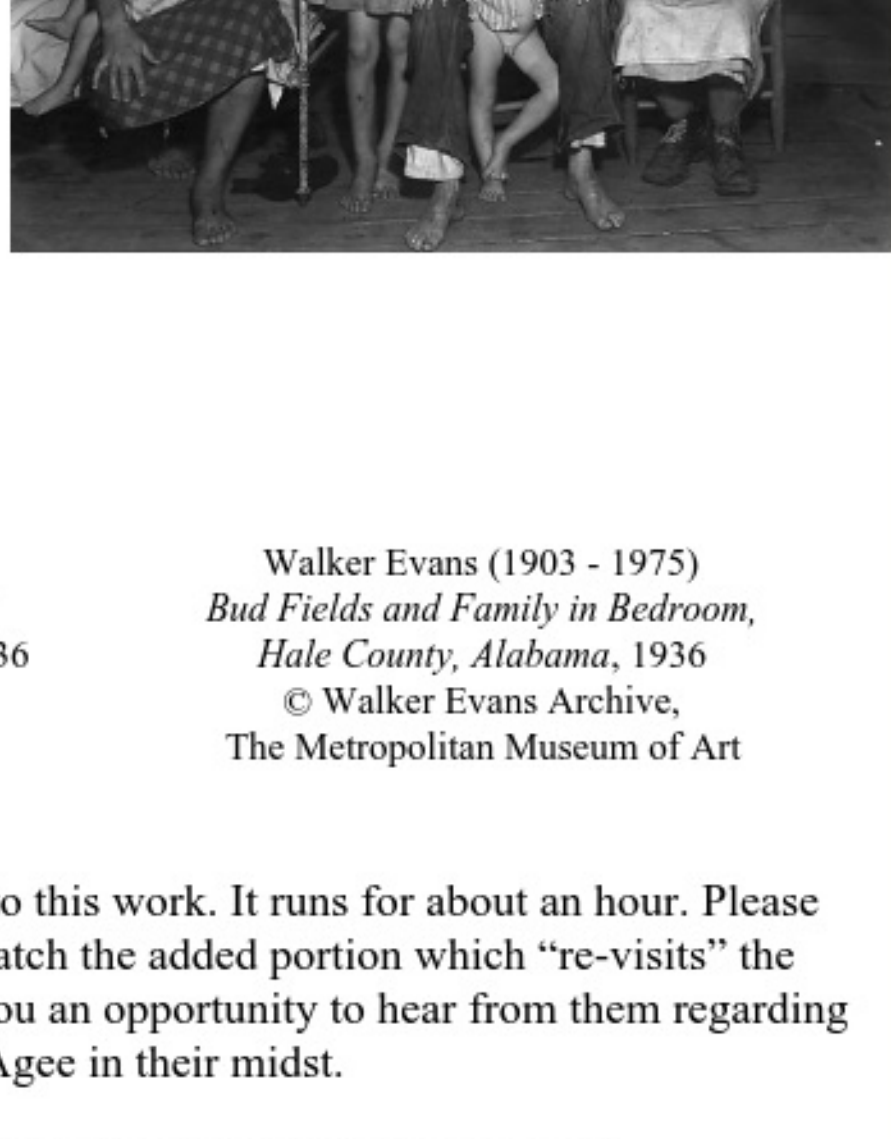
The volume, a collaboration between photographer Walker Evans (1903 - 1975) and writer/poet James Agee (1909 - 1955) is a portrait of three tenant families. In the summer of 1936, Evans and Agee spent eight weeks living and observing the lives of these tenant-farming families revealing the severe poverty and hardships of their existence.

While Walker Evans photographed the families in his straightforward documentary style, which was in keeping with the work he was doing under Roy Stryker for the Farm Security Administration, (FSA), James Agee was not accustomed to working in such a direct style. Agee was more self-conscious about his privileged position, and at times agonized over his role as “spy” and intruder into the lives of these families. His writing is a plea for the reader to see the humanity and the suffering of their lives as well as his personal struggle of having accepted this assignment.



Walker Evans (1903 - 1975)
Washstand with View Into Dining Area of Burroughs Home, Hale County, Alabama, 1936

© Walker Evans Archive,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



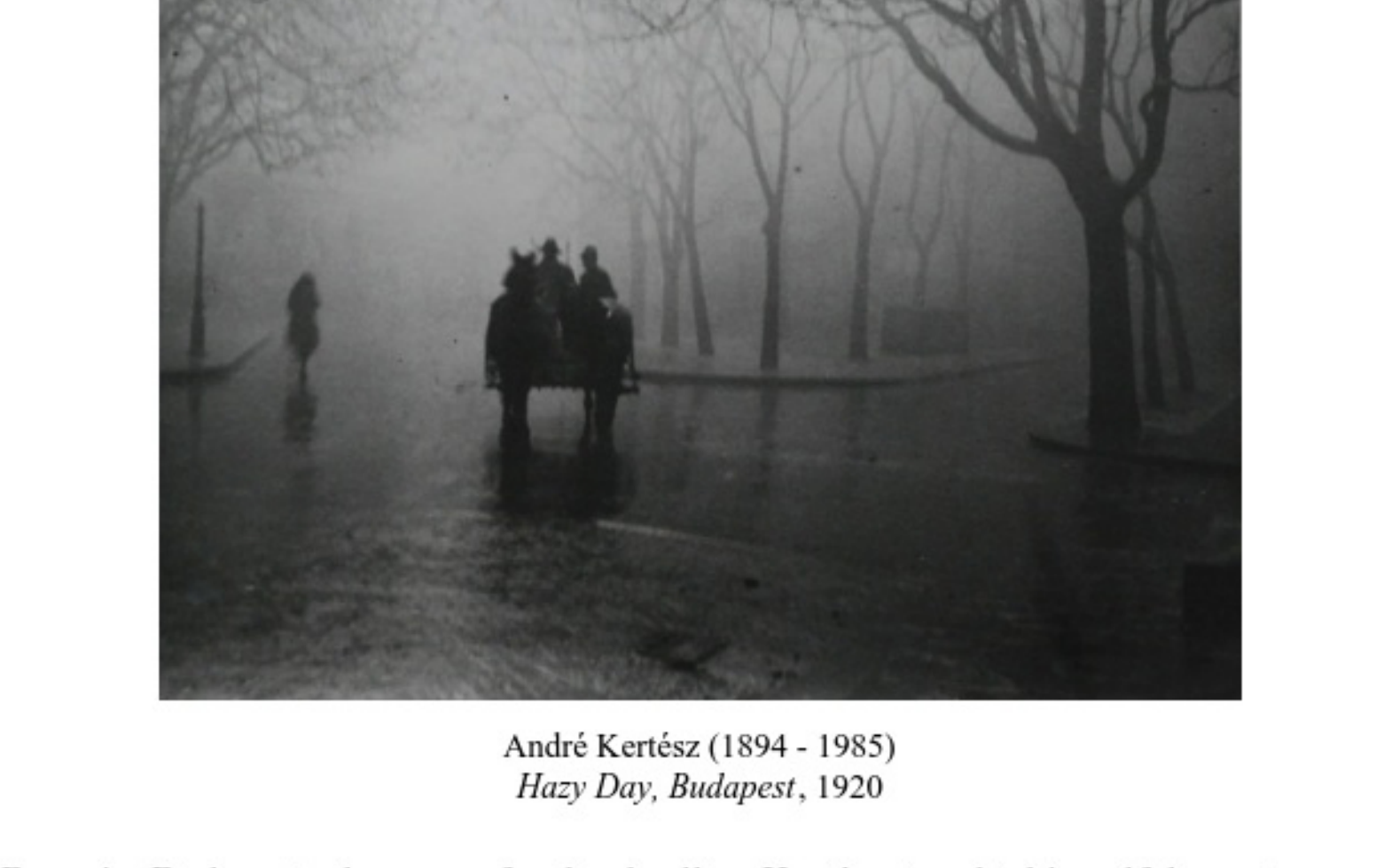
Walker Evans (1903 - 1975)
Bud Fields and Family in Bedroom, Hale County, Alabama, 1936

© Walker Evans Archive,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Today's video you will be introduced to this work. It runs for about an hour. Please watch it through to the end and then watch the added portion which “re-visits” the surviving family members and gives you an opportunity to hear from them regarding their experience of having Evans and Agee in their midst.

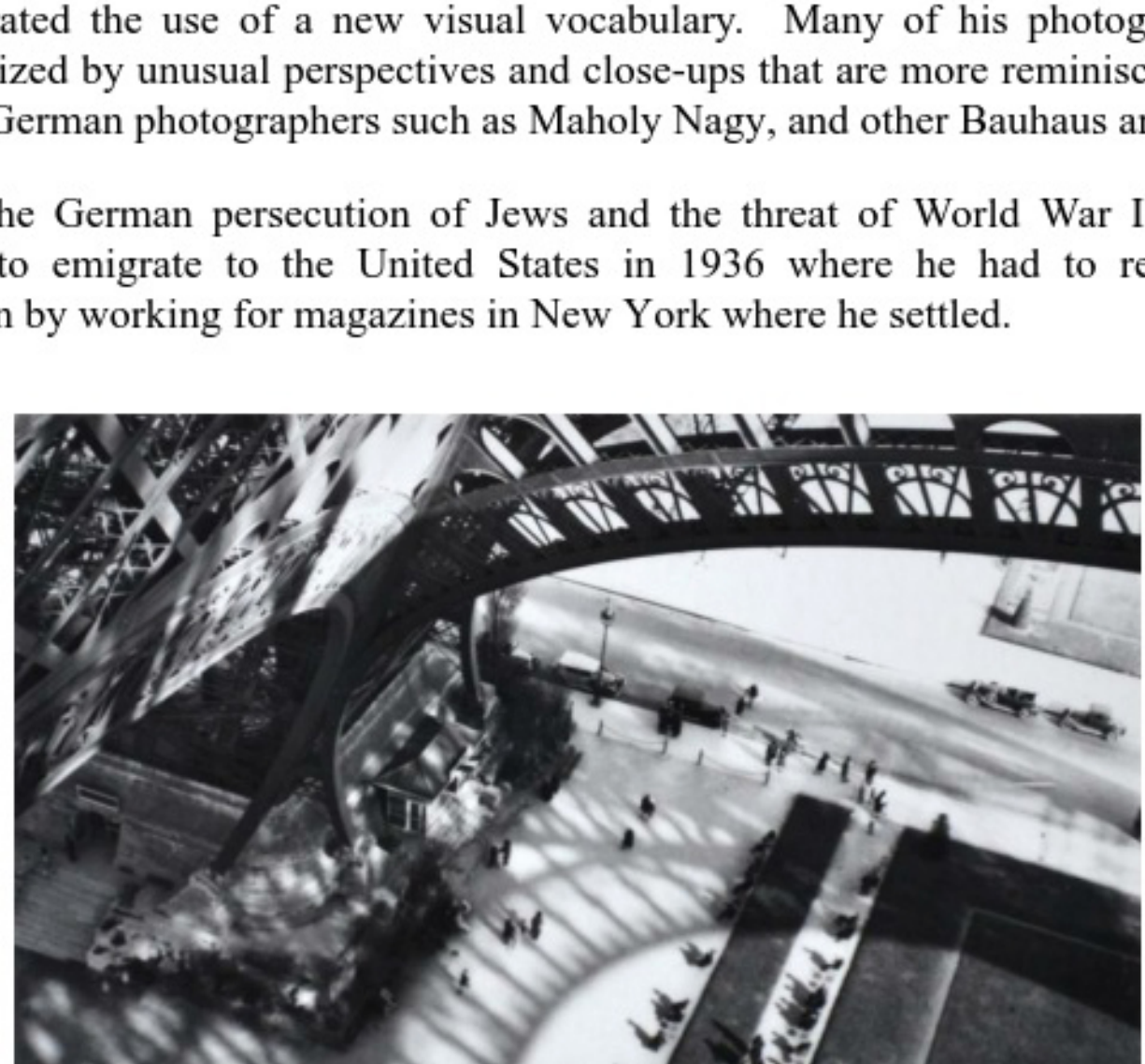
Many issues are brought up in regard to the approach of “documentary” vs. “journalism”. What are the parameters of behavior and what ethics need to be adhered to? Please think about these issues, especially those of you that practice this genre of photography/writing. It also implores one to think about “collaboration”. Do both team members need to be on the same page, or do conflicting opinions make for a more balanced project?

Most importantly, please get the book and read it! It is truly a moving experience and indeed an American Masterpiece of photography and writing.



André Kertész (1894 - 1985)

Yesterday (July 2nd) was the birthday of André Kertész.

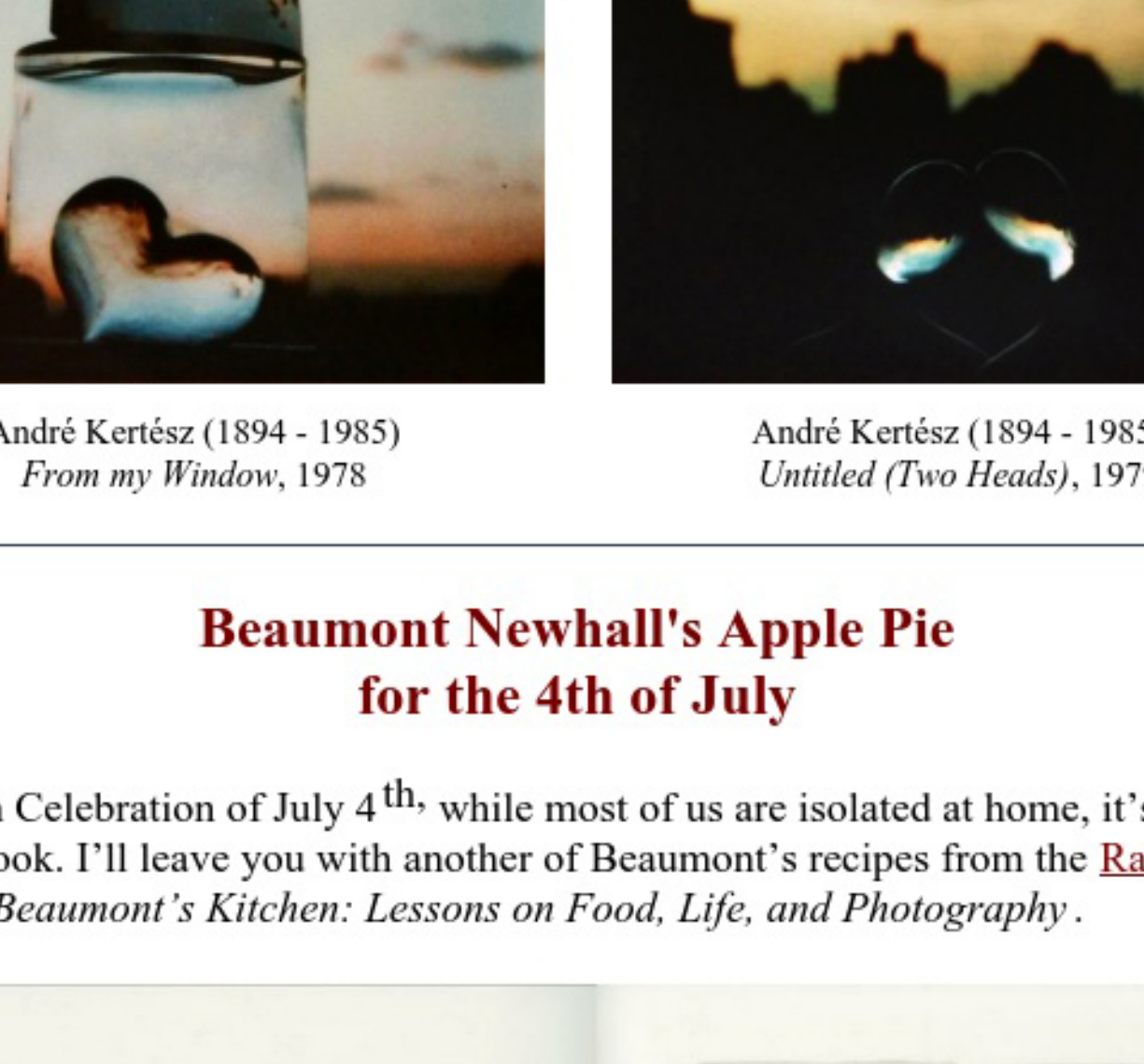


André Kertész (1894 - 1985)
Hazy Day, Budapest, 1920

Born in Budapest, the son of a bookseller, Kertész taught himself how to use a camera and had his first photographs published while a member of the Austro-Hungarian Army during World War I. Even as early as 1914 his distinctive and mature style was already evident.

In 1925, Kertész decided to leave his homeland, Hungary, and move to Paris to begin his career as a photographer. Very quickly his work caught the attention of people in the various avant-garde circles that existed in Paris at the time. Kertész was well aware of the latest developments in the field of photography although he did not have much personal contact with other progressive photographers such as Man Ray and Germaine Krull, although he did know their work from exhibitions and publications. Kertész's work during those Paris years was experimental and demonstrated the use of a new visual vocabulary. Many of his photographs are characterized by unusual perspectives and close-ups that are more reminiscent of the work of German photographers such as Maholy Nagy, and other Bauhaus artists.

Due to the German persecution of Jews and the threat of World War II Kertész decided to emigrate to the United States in 1936 where he had to rebuild his reputation by working for magazines in New York where he settled.



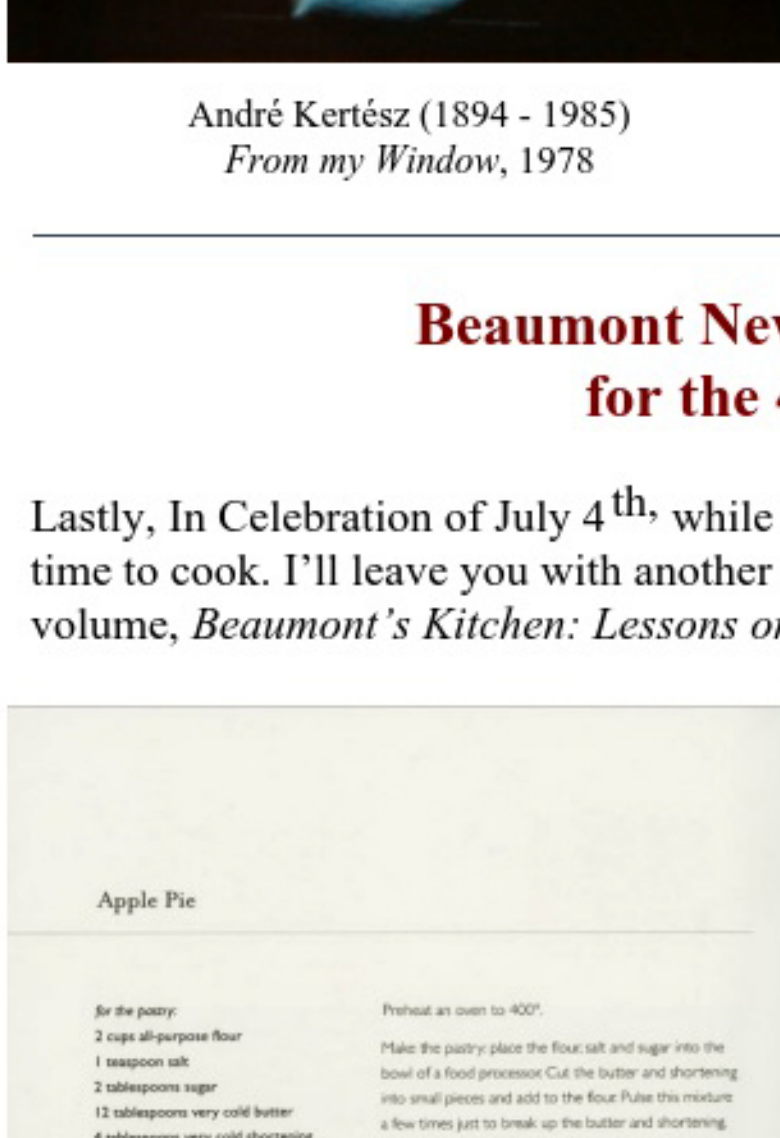
André Kertész (1894 - 1985)
Eiffel Tower, 1929

Toward the end of his life, Kertész began a series of photographs from his apartment window in New York. That project culminated with him using a Polaroid SX70 camera.

In the volume entitled *André Kertész: The Polaroids*, Robert Gurbo writes,

“After the death of his wife, André Kertész consoled himself by taking up a new camera, the Polaroid SX70. As with earlier equipment, he mastered the camera and produced a provocative body of work that both honored his wife and lifted him out of depression.”

Taken in his apartment just north of New York City's Washington Square, many of these photographs were shot either from his window or in the windowsill... combining personal objects into striking still lifes set against cityscape backgrounds, reflected and transformed in glass surfaces as a way of dealing with the grief and the missing of a beloved one.



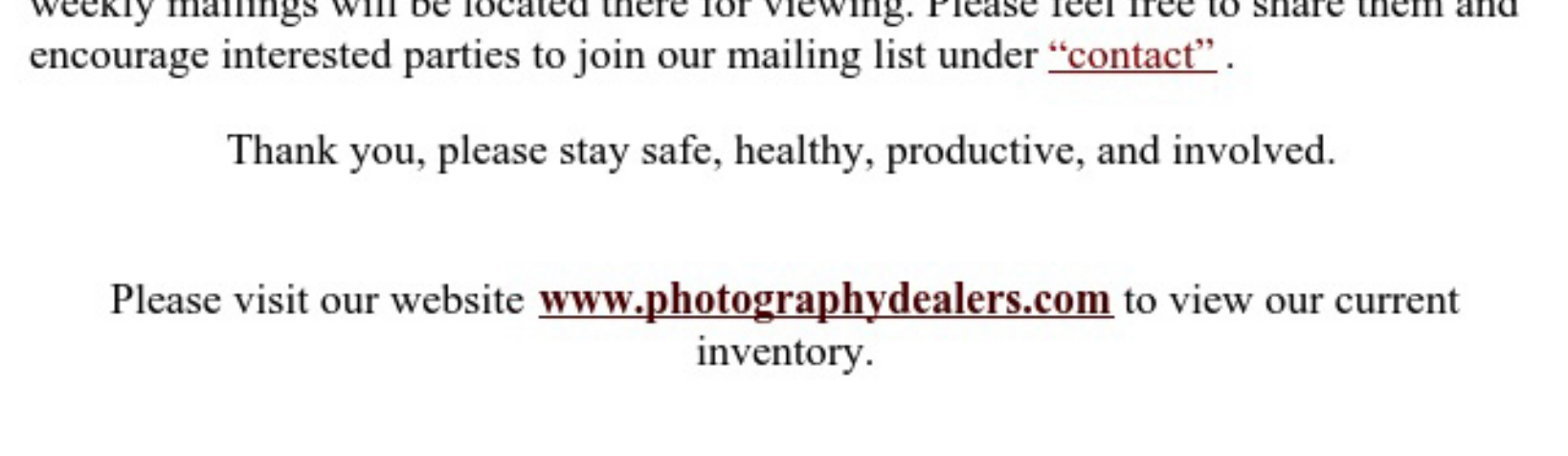
André Kertész (1894 - 1985)
From my Window, 1978



André Kertész (1894 - 1985)
Untitled (Two Heads), 1979

Beaumont Newhall's Apple Pie for the 4th of July

Lastly, in Celebration of July 4th, while most of us are isolated at home, it's a good time to cook. I'll leave you with another of Beaumont's recipes from the [Radius](#) volume, *Beaumont's Kitchen: Lessons on Food, Life, and Photography*.



To see a larger version of the recipe [click here](#).

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

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.