

By the Glow of the Jukebox:
THE AMERICANS LIST

RED HOOK EDITIONS

Before I quit the Metropolitan Museum of Art as a security guard in late 2009 after 20 months of standing around, I used the opportunity of The Americans Looking In exhibition to get to know a seminal and central part of photography history. And although I had been a photographer, mostly self-taught, for about 20 years, I had never really studied the book. So I got to work early. I requested a certain section and within that section the rotation that included the show. I got it almost every day for the 2 months before I quit. I was lucky as well to be there on Mondays, when the museum is closed to the public, when there would be special talks and events surrounding the show attended by important people in photography including curators. My fellow guards hop-scotched over me allowing me to stay just outside the room yet still within earshot if there was an especially interesting talk going on. I had many conversations with MET curator Jeff Rosenheim and often tried to stump him with my newfound intimacy with the sequence of 83 images. I mostly failed though I learned much from him. But I also absorbed the show like no other person could by being in those rooms day after day and by already having practiced the art for many years. One day J.K. came through the galleries. When I saw Jeff I said the 2nd most famous living photographer is here. He asked who; I said guess. He said Irving Penn. I said no it's Koudelka. Irving Penn died the next day.

The Americans is probably the one book that connects more photographers than any other, so while guarding the show I saw many photography colleagues enter. I began asking them what was their knock-out favorite image. Though many said it was too hard to choose and that many images were important to them, I insisted. I discovered that many of the answers revealed much more about the photographers themselves. These are some of the choices I acquired while on duty and only after I quit the museum did I backtrack and get their reasons why. On the night of the opening I disrobed from my guard costume, left through the garage ramp, and re-entered the museum through the main entrance. Invite in hand, I sipped their fine whiskey while being looked at askance by my superiors. I ascended the grand staircase and entered the show as a photographer, joining my colleagues, and was introduced to Frank for the first time in my life.

J.E. Red Hook, Brooklyn

By the Glow of the Jukebox:
THE AMERICANS LIST

Conceived and Compiled by Jason Eskenazi

Limited Prototype #25 / 25

Before I quit the Metropolitan Museum of Art as a security guard in 2009 after 20 months of standing around, I used the opportunity of *The Americans Looking In* exhibition to get to know a seminal and central part of photography history. And although I had been a photographer, mostly self-taught, for about 20 years, I had never really studied the book. So I got to work early. I requested a certain section and within that section the rotation that included the show. I got it almost every day for the 2 months before I quit. I was lucky as well to be there on Mondays, when the museum is closed to the public, when there would be special talks and events surrounding the show attended by important people in photography including curators. My fellow guards hop-scotched over me allowing me to stay just outside the room yet still within earshot if there was an especially interesting talk going on. I had many conversations with MET curator Jeff Rosenheim and often tried to stump him with my newfound intimacy with the sequence of 83 images. I mostly failed though I learned much from him. But I also absorbed the show like no other person could by being in those rooms day after day and by already having practiced the art for many years. One day J.K. came through the galleries. When I saw Jeff I said the 2nd most famous living photographer is here. He asked who; I said guess. He said Irving Penn. I said no it's Koudelka. Irving Penn died the next day. *The Americans* is probably the one book that connects more photographers than any other, so while guarding the show I saw many photography colleagues enter. I began asking them what was their knock-out favorite image. Though many said it was too hard to choose and that many images were important to them, I insisted. I discovered that many of the answers revealed much more about the photographers themselves. These are some of the choices I acquired while on duty and only after I quit the museum did I backtrack and get their reasons why. On the night of the opening I disrobed from my guard costume, left through the garage ramp, and re-entered the museum through the main entrance. Invite in hand, I sipped their fine whiskey while being looked at askance by my superiors. I ascended the grand staircase and entered the show as a photographer, joining my colleagues, and was introduced to Frank for the first time in my life.

J.E. Red Hook, Brooklyn

PHOTOGRAPHER	DESCRIPTION	PLATE #	NOTES
1. Joel Meyerowitz	Canal Street - New Orleans	19	■
2. Ken Schles	St. Francis, gas station, and City Hall - Los Angeles	48	■
3. David Godlis	Candy store - New York City	10	■
4. Ralph Gibson	Salt Lake City, Utah	54	■
5. Ed Graza	Candy store - New York City	10	■
6. Josef Koudelka	Covered car - Long Beach, California	34	■
7. Tod Papageorge	Canal Street - New Orleans	19	■
8. Gary Winogrand	Mississippi River, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	47	■
9. Stanley Greene	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
10. Bruce Gilden	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
11. Julio Mitchel	Cafe - Beaufort, South Carolina	22	■
12. Ed Keating	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
13. Steve Shames	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
14. Jeff Mermelstein	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
15. Eugene Richards	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
16. Phil Perkins	St. Petersburg, Florida	33	■
17. Todd Weinstein	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
18. Paul Fusco	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
19. James Nachrwey	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
20. Bill Owens	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
21. Mary Ellen Mark	Charleston, South Carolina	13	■
22. Rebecca Norris Webb	Barber shop - McClellanville, South Carolina	38	■
23. Alex Webb	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
24. Jeff Ladd	New York City	12	■
25. Joe Rodriguez	Convention hall - Chicago	51	■
26. Larry Fink	Beaufort, South Carolina	55	■
27. Nikos Economopoulos	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
28. Alex Soth	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
29. Maggie Steber	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
30. Peter Turnley	Indianapolis	82	■
31. David Turnley	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
32. Vanessa Winship	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
33. Alen Macweeey	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
34. Mark Cohen	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
35. Tim Hetherington	Movie Premiere - Hollywood	66	■
36. John Gossage	Belle Isle - Detroit	73	■
37. David Alan Harvey	Charity ball - New York City	68	■
38. Jay Colton	Parade - Hoboken	01	■
39. Builder Levy	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
40. Christopher Morris	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
41. James Whitlow Delano	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
42. Luc Delahaye	San Francisco	72	■
43. Francesco Zizola	Movie premiere - Hollywood	66	■
44. Alexandra Avakian	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
45. Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
46. Ron Haviv	Convention hall - Chicago	51	■

PHOTOGRAPHER	DESCRIPTION	PLATE #	NOTES
47. Gary Knight	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
48. Ken Light	Political rally - Chicago	58	■
49. Renato Dagostin	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
50. Darcy Padilla	New York City	12	■
51. Dan Sheehan	City Hall - Reno, Nevada	81	■
52. Frank Fournier	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
53. Paolo Pellegrin	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
54. James Pomerantz	Covered car - Long Beach, California	34	■
55. J. Ross Baughman	Men's room, railway station - Memphis, Tenn.	52	■
56. Andy Levin	Coffee shop, railway station - Indianapolis	70	■
57. Bob Sacha	Charleston, South Carolina	13	■
58. Tom Roma	Belle Isle - Detroit	73	■
59. Stephen Ferry	Public park - Cleveland, Ohio	74	■
60. Claudio Edinger	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
61. Gus Powell	Canal Street - New Orleans	19	■
62. Bill Burke	Funeral - St. Helena, South Carolina	56	■
63. Peter Van Agtmael	Beaufort, South Carolina	55	■
64. Kathryn Cook	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
65. Anders Goldfarb	Los Angeles	61	■
66. Michael Ackerman	Coffee shop, railway station - Indianapolis	70	■
67. Christopher Anderson	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
68. Brenda Ann Kenneally	Charity ball - New York City	68	■
69. Annie Leibovitz	U.S. 90 en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
70. Per-Anders Pettersson	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
71. David Burnett	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
72. Gueorgui Pinkhassov	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
73. Jane Evelyn Atwood	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
74. Igor Moukhin	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
75. Barron Rachman	Navy Recruiting Station - Butte, Montana	07	■
76. Robert Nickelsberg	City fathers - Hoboken, New Jersey	02	■
77. Erica McDonald	Beaufort, South Carolina	55	■
78. Erhan Eisenberg	Bar - New York City	43	■
79. Antonin Kratochvil	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
80. Ted Barron	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
81. Martin Parr	San Francisco	72	■
82. Jason Eskenazi	Men's room, railway station - Memphis, Tenn.	52	■
83. Robert Frank	San Francisco	72	■
84. Ben Fernandez	City fathers - Hoboken, New Jersey	02	■
85. Stephen Dupont	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
86. Andrew Lichtenstein	Funeral - St. Helena, South Carolina	04	■
87. Lucian Perkins	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
88. Jake Price	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
89. Ernesto Bazan	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
90. Ed Kashi	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
91. Doug Sandhage	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
92. Moises Saman	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■

PHOTOGRAPHER	DESCRIPTION	PLATE #	NOTES
93. Les Stone	Political rally - Chicago	58	■
94. Mark Peterson	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
95. Charles Traub	San Francisco	72	■
96. Sid Kaplan (RF's printer)	City Hall - Reno, Nevada	81	■
97. John Trotter	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
98. Ashley Gilbertson	U.S. 91, leaving Blackfoot, Idaho	32	■
99. Alan Chin	Mississippi River, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	47	■
100. Misha Ervitt	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
101. Tim Fadek	Men's room, railway station - Memphis, Tenn.	52	■
102. Robert King	Political rally - Chicago	58	■
103. Christian Hansen	Santa Fe, New Mexico	42	■
104. Kevin C. Downs	Funeral - St. Helena, South Carolina	04	■
105. John Vink	Bar - Gallup, New Mexico	29	■
106. Kadir van Lohuizen	Funeral - St. Helena, South Carolina	04	■
107. Allan Tannenbaum	Indianapolis	82	■
108. Zara Samiriy	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
109. Seamus Murphy	Bar - Gallup, New Mexico	29	■
110. Bill Swersey	Canal Street - New Orleans	19	■
111. Erin Trieb	Barber shop - McClellanville, South Carolina	38	■
112. Karen Ben Khelifa	Rodeo - New York City	65	■
113. Tracy Lane	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
114. Yusuf Dariyerli	Bar - New York City	43	■
115. Asa Guler - Turkey	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
116. Alex Majoli	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
117. Carl De Keyser	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
118. Gael Turine	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
119. Tiane Doan na Champassak	Chicago	79	■
120. Yusef Sevenchili	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
121. Valeri Nistratov	San Francisco	72	■
122. Krisanne Johnson	Chattanooga, Tennessee	71	■
123. Carolyn Drake	Charleston, South Carolina	13	■
124. Zana Briski	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
125. Victor Sira	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
126. Thomas Kern	Coffee shop, railway station - Indianapolis	70	■
127. Nina Berman	Movie premiere - Hollywood	66	■
128. Lori Grinker	Men's room, railway station - Memphis, Tenn.	52	■
129. George Georgeiou	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
130. Chris Hondros	Promised to answer		■
131. William Albert Allard	Picnic ground - Glendale, California	76	■
132. Pavlos Kozalidis	Los Angeles	61	■
133. William Coupon	Ranch market - Hollywood	14	■
134. Mike Kamber	Bar - Gallup New Mexico	29	■
135. Juliana Beasley	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
136. Katja Heineman	Funeral - St. Helena, South Carolina	04	■
137. Ben Lowy	San Francisco	72	■
138. Steve Simon	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■

PHOTOGRAPHER	DESCRIPTION	PLATE #	NOTES
139. Donald Weber	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
140. Cary Conover	Bar - Gallup New Mexico	29	■
141. Bob Black	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
142. Josef Polleross	Los Angeles	61	■
143. Rena Effendi	Bank - Houston, Texas	62	■
144. Olivia Arthur	Indianapolis	82	■
145. Phillip Blenkinsop	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
146. Stephanie Sinclair	Charleston, South Carolina	13	■
147. Andres Gonzales	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
148. Arjen Zwart	Bar - Gallup New Mexico	29	■
149. Christophe Agou	U.S. 91, leaving Blackfoot, Idaho	32	■
150. Claudius Schultz	San Francisco	72	■
151. Rita Leistner	Television studio - Burbank, California	60	■
152. Richard Sandler	U.S. 285, New Mexico	36	■
153. Yulia Serdyukova	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
154. Ara Osagan	Canal Street - New Orleans	19	■
155. Meg Handler	Charleston, South Carolina	13	■
156. Mark Ovaska	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
157. Q. Sakamaki	St. Petersburg, Florida	33	■
158. Patrick O'Hare	Mississippi, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	47	■
159. Harvey Wang	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
160. Gigi Cohen	Bar - New York City	55	■
161. Marina Black	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
162. Arif Asci	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
163. Mark Steinmetz	St. Francis, gas station, and City Hall - Los Angeles	48	■
164. John Cohen	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
165. Tomas Van Houtryve	Ranch market - Hollywood	14	■
166. Matilda Damele	Ranch market - Hollywood	14	■
167. Justin Maxon	Chinese cemetery - San Francisco	57	■
168. Regina Monfort	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
169. Melanie Einzig	Indianapolis	82	■
170. Bruno Stevens	Trolley - New Orleans	18	■
171. Peter Kayfas	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
172. Julian Chatelin	Elevator - Miami Beach	44	■
173. Adriana Lopez Sanfelici	Cafe - Beaufort, South Carolina	22	■
174. Danny Wilcox Frazier	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
175. Jon Lowenstein	Car accident - U.S. 66, Arizona	35	■
176. Yungchi Kim	Beaufort - South Carolina	55	■
177. Yola Monakov	View from hotel window - Butte, Montana	26	■
178. Heidi Bradner	Bar - Gallup New Mexico	29	■
179. Ami Vitale	Parade - Hoboken, New Jersey	01	■
180. Sinem Disli	Barber shop - McClellanville, South Carolina	38	■
181. Sara Terry	Charity ball - New York City	68	■
182. Leila Kuznetsova	Beaufort, South Carolina	55	■
183. Max Sher	U.S. 90, en route to Del Rio, Texas	83	■
184. Xenia Nikolokaya	Covered car - Long Beach	34	■

#1. Well this took far too long and tried your patience many times over I suspect but life can get in the way of the best of intentions and my life was loaded with twists and turns this year and I have neglected you and your request so I apologize but it kept being pushed to the back burner. Just the way things are sometimes so thank you for your understanding and patience.
The photograph of Robert's that was a significant turning point for me is the Canal Street, New Orleans photograph of people just walking by the camera.
This image had always puzzled me, as if it was saying, "see this undifferentiated mass of pedestrians? It's worthy of an image." But why I asked myself dozens of times as I paged through the Americans. Why did Robert make this photograph? What was he thinking? Why did he use it in the book when it seems so generalized? Over time I came to realize that the reasons for making a photograph and what it may mean to you later are two different things, and as a third step in this process what it means to somebody else is open for misreading. This image came to life for me years after I first puzzled about it when I was undertaking a transformation in my own work and realized that Robert had planted a seed that was then sprouting.

#2. plate 48; Outwardly it's not the most seductive image. I may have gone with 66, 67, 68 or a host of others that were more overtly visual. But I went with 48 because, to me, foremost, The Americans is a book of images about an image of America. And 48 has it all: the road, the cars, the parking lot, the gas station, the fading city hall, the telephone poles receding in the distance—and all of them are presided over by, and seemingly being blessed in their emptiness by another symbol, the crucifix held by a dark statue of stone of St. Francis. And they are all empty and alone in their being. They denote a world, a time and a place where image supplants any life lived, for in this image there is no life. No people—save two microscopic figures almost in silhouette, two diminutive stick figures in this place of nowhere that is everywhere, unaware of each other and going in opposite directions. K.S. New York

#3. I moved to NYC in 1976, armed with everything I had learned about photography up to that point, all set to conquer the world of street photography. I eventually landed on the Bowery, at the punk rock club CBGB's, where I set out with my Leica to document that particular place at that particular time. And this one photograph of Robert Frank's - Candy Store NYC 1955 - was the dominant photograph spinning through my senses every night there. For the next three years, I wanted to make a whole set of pictures based on this one photograph. The look of The Americans was my template. The black & white grain was my medium. And this photograph was my "sacred harp" - streetwise and pound foolish
These kids sitting in front of the jukebox were for me the equivalent of those "kids" I was documenting creating a new scene on the Bowery (note: Patti Smith's book title "Just Kids"). The spirit of the 1950s was inside each and every one of us rock & roll kids at that time. 1956, the year when The Americans was being shot (a book that changed photography), was also the year that Elvis Presley broke out and rock & roll was effectively born. Twenty years later, in 1976, rock & roll was dying, and it was up to "us kids" - us Americans who grew up in the 1950's - to change it.
Little did I know at the time that Robert Frank lived a few doors away from CBGB's on Bleeker Street. But one night in 1977, into CBGB's he walked - the man whose photographs informed all the work I was doing in that place. I remember him saying to me "it looks like

12

what people wear is very important here". Who could argue with that? I tried to explain to music friends asking that night who Robert Frank was (this was a rock club, not a photo gallery). "The Americans" - they didn't respond. "Lines of My Hand" - same. But when I mentioned "Exile on Main Street" that struck a chord. "He did the cover" - that impressed them. For me, that Robert Frank, who took the pictures that underlie every photograph I took in CBGB's over the next 3 years, walked into that club while I was shooting them was a sign of the cross. D.G. - written seated at a train station in Union New Jersey, September 2011

#4. This image reached my psyche while I was still in art school.....the idea of an art school being depicted in primary shapes, i.e. sphere, triangle etc. seemed resonate in a formal as well as a social way. Dark, slightly askew as only Robert could do with his floating Leica....definitely a bit of camera handling used to animate the otherwise static architecture...R.G. NYC

#5. I chose Candy Store NYC because when I first saw The Americans, I hit me so hard that Robert had photographed the world that I had grown up in - the 1950s - I am (or could have been) the blond haired kid in the picture listening to Chuck Berry sing Maybelline on the candy store juke box. E.G. New York City

#6. Refers to when I saw JK at the MET and asked him his favorite. His answer was that he did not have a favorite but remembered the covered car when he saw photo magazines in the 60's in Prague.

#8. This was Garry Winogrand's favorite according to Tod Papageorge, and later confirmed by Stuart Alexander. The reason is the tilt in the frame.

#9. Jason ... This is for you ... The first time I saw the picture of the girl on the elevator, I was taken by the innocent beauty, it reminded me of the girls from my high school, you know the ones dreaming of their prince to come and to take them away from the day to day ... you can see it her eyes just in another space and time, she also has that timeless beauty of a Laura Petrie from the "Dick Van Dyke Show" which was set in New York and New Rochelle where I grew up, so there was some kind of connect, also I think I might have gone out with a girl just like her, her name was Joan, we use to hang out at the local diner drinking cokes, munching down western cheeseburgers and fries following it with a milk shake and sex and I do remember she had the same hair and maybe the skirt, and she was dreaming of a prince to come and take her away I guess I was not that Prince so we broke up, and then again she was not that Princess, and she was no Laurie Petrie, but she was cute, and sexy just like the elevator girl, but that picture, it does cause one to dream back to another time just like she is doing on that elevator, dreaming of her Prince, for her sake I hope he did come and take her to a castle and just like Jack, I might have wanted to pick her up too, and

13

#48. I have always loved Frank's many gems, and sorry I didn't see you on guard when I visited the show in NYC. I like to think about the many reviewers who canned Frank and said his work is a "meaningless blur, grainy, muddy exposures, drunken horizons and general sloppiness." All things that have been embraced by the next generation and I imagine future generations would be wise to do the same. The image I am drawn to is the tuba player and bunting a wonderful vision of America, the white noise of everyday life...best on your travels - K.L. - Berkeley CA.

#49. The reason why I chose Trolley, New Orleans is for the importance it represents. An icon of that society in that time. A very complex image, full of tension even if almost static. The look in those eyes, all different from person to person tell many stories and you can almost imagine and navigate through the life of each of them. It's a great portrait of many portraits. It perfectly embodies the power and strength of the medium of photography, translating a fraction of reality into an icon. R.D. Venice.

#50. It is the only picture in the book that is of transvestites. I also like the three transvestites playfulness with Frank, engaging him and us. Appreciated that Frank include the photograph in his book. D.P. San Francisco

#51. Selecting only one is like breaking apart a string of pearls and saying this one is my favorite. He put them all together, sequenced, juxtaposing them in an order that gave them a particular meaning. Telling a story. Picking apart the thread and isolating one image changes its meaning. But since you asked, my favorite picture changes almost every time I seriously look at the book. I like #81 City Hall, Reno, Nevada, 1956, these days, after having shot more than my share of just married couples in the past few years. He nailed it. D.S. Portland, Oregon

#52. One day a friend sent me an email asking me which picture of "The Americans" I like most. I thought the question was open-ended. It sounded like which dish do you like most. I found myself answering quickly from the top of my head. But a few weeks later, I was then asked to write a few lines about my favorite picture... For me photographs are like children, I like them all and at all times. Yet somehow this photograph of an elevator scene in Miami strikes me because among many things it evokes Kerouac, mystery, life, wealth. Many before have experienced the mood of this photograph but the composition taken on the fly brings a sense of Frank's unrestrained approach while the questions that bother him all along the book are there as well. From time to time I keep looking at this book. Like all successful pieces it always raises new questions and satisfying pleasures. F.F. New York.

#55. My favorite Robert Frank photo (from a fresh look today) would be the men's room shoe shining in Memphis, Tennessee. It was one that may well have required the most courage to take. J.R.B. Washington, D.C.

20

#56. I am going with the coffee shop in the railroad station, the feeling of loneliness, and the way that the lights seem to float about the worker. Robert Frank had a beautiful eye for design, and for people, and an uncanny ability to create sequences of images that rose above any particular frame. The Americans is about restlessness, and change, and this particular image stands out for me. A.L. New Orleans

#57. I love this image by Robert Frank for a few reasons: it's very straightforward, formal and direct in terms of composition and light but in terms of meaning and metaphor, it's pretty phenomenal. Jumping over the obvious black and white connections, it very much reminds me of how kids are born good and they tend to learn their view of the world from their parents. I also love it because I think babies and old people look so alike, and it makes me smile at how much the baby the african american woman is holding looks like some elderly, white southern man. B.S. New York

#59. Because the image shows a young virile cowboy, sleeping alone, on the grass, in a public place. His posture, and the optical effect created by the tree which bisects him below the waist, suggest sexual desire and loneliness. Like he is having an erotic dream, maybe in that dream he is accompanied, but in public. he is alone. All of which is very intimate and yet public. For me, The Americans is filled with these moments of private yearning,, and personal loneliness, played out in public. S.F. New York

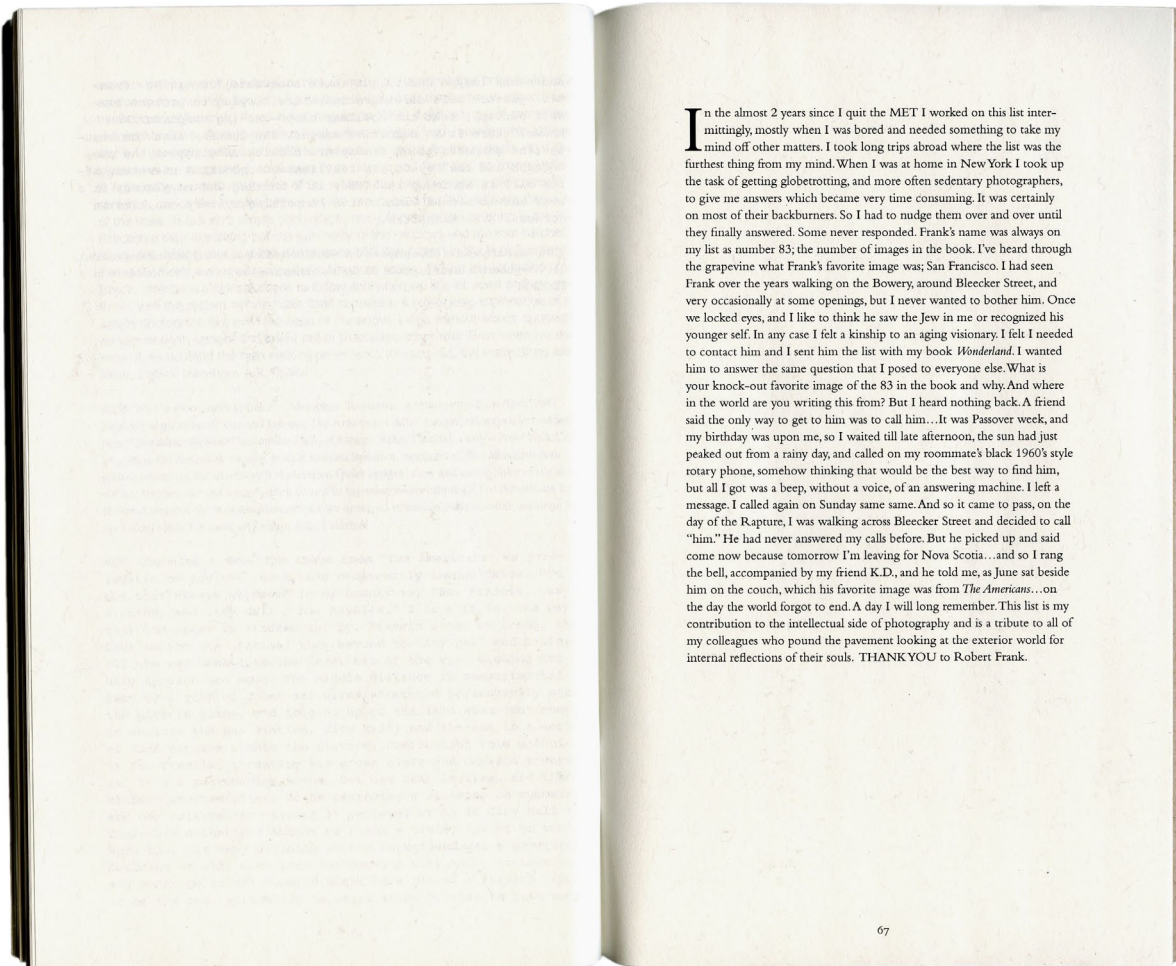
#63. Beaufort, South Carolina isn't my favorite image now, but it was the first picture that drew me into the book. I loved the mysterious scene, the sun burning the morning fog away, and that moment of intimacy and distance with a stranger that represents the meaning that photography brings to my life. The excitement of seeing something that compels interaction, however fleeting. A moment in time instantly gone that hopefully for undefinable reasons becomes something permanent. P.V.A. Red Hook, Brooklyn

#65. One of many reasons I like this print is that it says to me "Keep Going" (among other things) which is an inscription Robert has written in some of his books 30+ years after taking the picture. It also says anonymity, vulnerability, alienation, pariah perhaps, but I need to take another look at it and collect more thoughts on the matter! ...and above all else the extreme black and white atmosphere reflects his eternal theme of hope and despair. A.G. New York City.

#66. I'm sorry it took me so long to answer. I've been away a lot and when home completely involved with my daughter. I don't have the Americans with me. The picture that keeps coming to my mind is of a black waitress behind the counter of a diner, as I remember her she's looking slightly over her shoulder at Robert Frank. That instant when a photographer is caught looking and taking. In this instant neither of them backed down. I imagine he fell in love for a moment, smiled at her and left. When I hear the song invitation to the blues by Tom Waits I think of her. M.A. Berlin.

#67. Hey I keep meaning to send you this: I picked the picture with the car and headlight and family inside. The picture is about love for his family, but also about the contradiction of being outside with his work and looking at them

21



In the almost 2 years since I quit the MET I worked on this list intermittently, mostly when I was bored and needed something to take my mind off other matters. I took long trips abroad where the list was the furthest thing from my mind. When I was at home in New York I took up the task of getting globetrotting, and more often sedentary photographers, to give me answers which became very time consuming. It was certainly on most of their backburners. So I had to nudge them over and over until they finally answered. Some never responded. Frank's name was always on my list as number 83; the number of images in the book. I've heard through the grapevine what Frank's favorite image was; San Francisco. I had seen Frank over the years walking on the Bowery, around Bleeker Street, and very occasionally at some openings, but I never wanted to bother him. Once we locked eyes, and I like to think he saw the Jew in me or recognized his younger self. In any case I felt a kinship to an aging visionary. I felt I needed to contact him and I sent him the list with my book *Wonderland*. I wanted him to answer the same question that I posed to everyone else. What is your knock-out favorite image of the 83 in the book and why. And where in the world are you writing this from? But I heard nothing back. A friend said the only way to get to him was to call him...It was Passover week, and my birthday was upon me, so I waited till late afternoon, the sun had just peeked out from a rainy day, and called on my roommate's black 1960's style rotary phone, somehow thinking that would be the best way to find him, but all I got was a beep, without a voice, of an answering machine. I left a message. I called again on Sunday same same. And so it came to pass, on the day of the Rapture, I was walking across Bleeker Street and decided to call "him." He had never answered my calls before. But he picked up and said come now because tomorrow I'm leaving for Nova Scotia...and so I rang the bell, accompanied by my friend K.D., and he told me, as June sat beside him on the couch, which his favorite image was from *The Americans*...on the day the world forgot to end. A day I will long remember. This list is my contribution to the intellectual side of photography and is a tribute to all of my colleagues who pound the pavement looking at the exterior world for internal reflections of their souls. THANKYOU to Robert Frank.

