

## PRESS RELEASE

# 'Just Kids' at the Minneapolis Institute of Art Explores a Century of Photographs of, by, and for Young People

Organized in partnership with local middle and high school students, the show presents nearly 200 photographic works drawn from Mia's permanent collection and private collections, alongside original texts by student curators.

**Minneapolis Institute of Art**  
2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
artsmia.org



Jack Delano, American (born Russia), 1914-1997, *Pledging Allegiance to the Flag in a School in Puerto Rico*, 1946, gelatin silver print. Gift of Stuart Klipper, in memory of his father, 93.73

**MINNEAPOLIS—December 17, 2019**—“Just Kids,” opening at the [Minneapolis Institute of Art](#) (Mia) on January 4, 2020, explores the complex relationship between young people and photography. Comprised of nearly 200 objects, the exhibition includes images of children and teens by both celebrated and emerging photographers, as well as photographic books and series created for and by young people. Middle and high school students were integral to the curatorial process, writing and editing the gallery texts and weighing in on exhibition design. “Just Kids” will be on view in Mia’s Harrison Gallery through June 14, 2020, and is organized by Casey Riley, PhD, curator and head of the Department of Photography and New Media at Mia.

“Photography is vital to young people. In many cases, it is central to their self-presentation and navigation of the world,” Riley said. “At the same time, photography has profoundly impacted the lives of children, for good and for ill. In recent history, photographs of children have driven governmental policies and played a role in addressing global conflicts. We live in a time when photography has never mattered more to the lives of children. They are represented in millions of images, they communicate in images, and they care about photography—they’re making and sharing pictures, all day, every day. They have broad expertise in the field and deserve to share it.”

# Mia

“Just Kids” exhibition highlights include:

- One hundred photographs from Mia’s permanent collection, with new acquisitions in dialogue with historic works of art
- Eighty snapshot photographs of children, on loan from the collection of Peter J. Cohen
- Five large-format vintage portraits of children and young adults by Dawoud Bey (b. 1953) taken between 1988 and 1990
- Recently acquired work by Rania Matar (b. 1964) of Samira, a young Palestinian woman coming of age in the Bourj El Barajneh Refugee Camp in Beirut, Lebanon
- Photographs of child laborers in the early 1900s created by Lewis Hine (1874–1940)
- Nine photographs taken by Carmen Soth (b. 2003), daughter of Alec Soth, for the Brighton Photography Biennial in 2010
- Twenty photographically illustrated children’s books from the collection of author and photographer Alec Soth (b. 1969)

In addition, middle and high school students from the Minneapolis School District organized nearly 80 snapshot photographs owned by New York-based Peter J. Cohen, whose collection of vernacular photographs totals more than 60,000 objects. The young people also composed label texts and suggested designs to make the show more accessible to younger audiences. The colorful and varied installation will include many works installed lower to the ground, at the sightline of younger visitors.

“Young people’s voices are at the heart of this show,” said Riley, who was a classroom teacher prior to receiving her PhD in American Studies and becoming a photographic historian. “Kids have rich, complex inner lives, and we can learn from their responses to the museum’s photography collection to make them more inclusive and accessible.”

“Just Kids” was organized in collaboration with the [Center for Empathy and the Visual Arts](#), a Mia-based project that researches and explores practices for fostering empathy and global understanding through the power of art.

Accompanying programming for the exhibition includes:

- March 21, 2020: [Carmen Winant](#) will be at Mia to discuss the impact of her children and her experiences as a mother upon her artistic practice.
- April 30, 2020: Rania Matar will deliver the museum’s annual Newman Lecture and reflect upon her work with young women in photography.
- Pop-up conversations and tours led by [Art Team](#)—a group of teen staff members who help create and host public events at Mia—and student curators throughout the duration of the exhibition.

For more information on “Just Kids,” please visit <https://new.artsmia.org/exhibition/just-kids/>.

### **About the Center for Empathy in the Visual Arts**

All great art is an endeavor to understand the human condition. At Mia, we believe that engagement with objects offers new ways of seeing, perspective-taking, and possibilities of changing the way that we view and act in the world. In our increasingly connected, yet divisive world, our failures to understand other people’s thoughts and feelings are exacerbating prejudice, conflict, and inequality. Mia, with our incredible collections illustrating the creativity and stories of humanity, and our dialogue-based teaching practices, is well poised to play a vital role in fostering empathy and understanding among our staff, visitors, and the communities we serve. This belief is the founding principle of Mia’s [Center for Empathy and the Visual Arts](#) (CEVA), which was established in 2017.



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## Press Contacts

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## About The Minneapolis Institute Of Art

Home to more than 90,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest art collections in the country—from all corners of the globe, and from ancient to contemporary—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration. General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee. For more information, call 612.870.3000 or visit [artsmia.org](http://artsmia.org).

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## Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday 10am–5pm

Thursday, Friday 10am–9pm

Sunday 11am–5pm

Monday Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit [artsmia.org](http://artsmia.org)

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