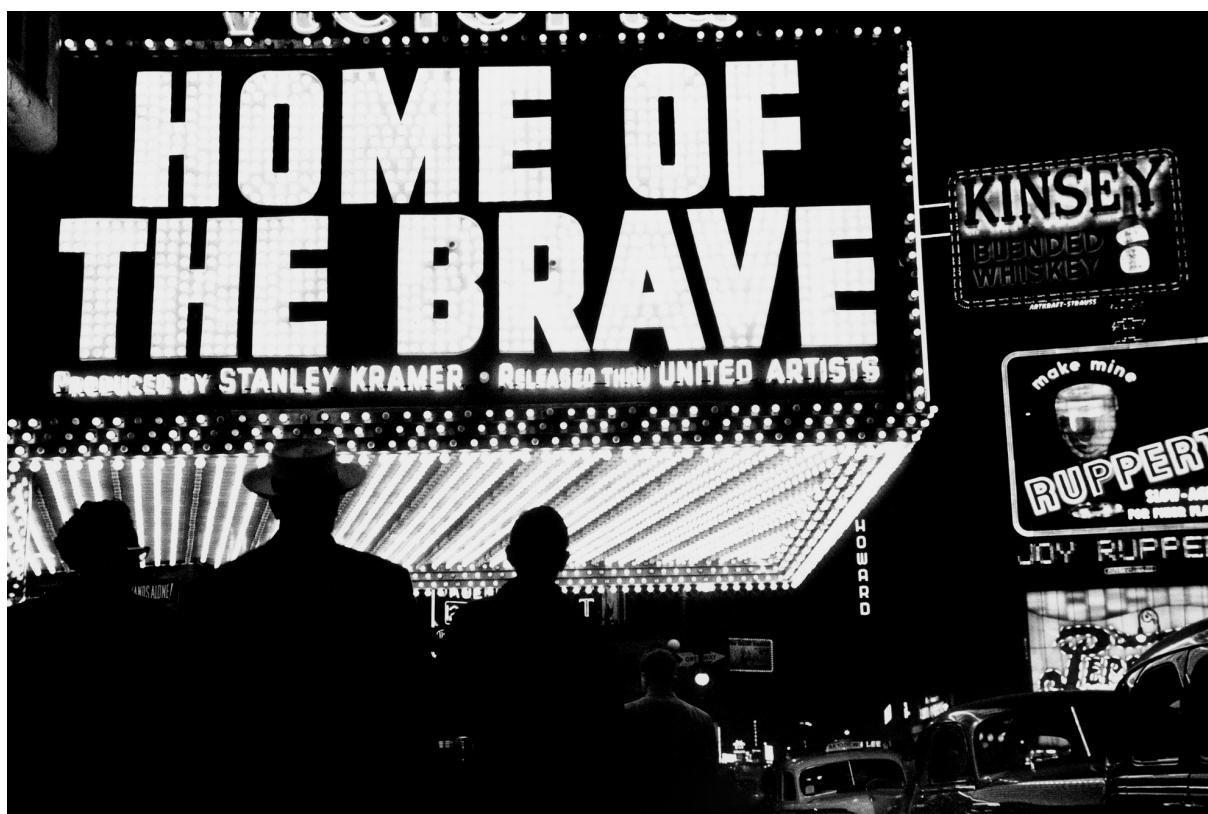


LOUIS FAURER

Le Guetteur Mélancolique

FROM SEPTEMBER 9 TO OCTOBER 29, 2022

OPENING ON SEPTEMBER 8TH FROM 6PM TO 9PM



Louis Faurer, *Victoria Movie Theatre Marquee, Times Square, N.Y.C., 1949* © Louis Faurer / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

We are pleased to present our first solo exhibition of Louis Faurer. An American photographer whose work remains largely confidential but who has left his mark on his contemporaries. Excelling in the hypnotic dusk light with his photographs of Time Square, Louis Faurer flourished in the 40s and 50s New York's, photographing the city with its authentic characters dented by life.

Le Guetteur Mélancolique

PRESS RELEASE

During the 1940s and 1950s, American documentary photography underwent a major transformation. As opposed to the edifying humanistic and “objecture” photo-journalism of the time, the new “street” photographers active mostly in New York City offered an altogether new style of photography based on their personal vision of everyday life. As they strove to demythify a constructed image of what constituted “Americanness” especially evident in such magazines as *Life* and *Look*, which by the late 1950s had seen their heyday – they simultaneously helped liberate photography from a no longer valid set of aesthetic canons.

When we look at the photographs of Louis Faurer, we experience a curious feeling of both novelty and nostalgia. He stretched the technical limits of photography, and brought together the “quality photography” traditions of strict composition and fine printing in street photography. His photographs are filled with lights and reflections whose sources we are unable to locate. The lights and shadows of the city are happily joined in his work. People are fixed on the surface of his photographs as if no camera had ever appeared before them. There is no cynicism in his work; nor is there any extreme subjectivity: the photographer is absent from these works. Instead we have an overflowing lyricism, beautiful and tender, indeed, almost an anachronism.

Sawada Yoko

From the magazine *déjà-vu*, N°16 Spring, 1994

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PRESS RELEASE

My earliest experience in art occurred at the Benjamin Rush Public school in Phila., Penna. Miss Duncan, who seemed to float on a rose petal scent, having requested that numbers be written on paper with lead pencil, was shocked when my sheet yielded a drawing of a locomotive. My next surprise, at the age of 13 arrived in the mail. I had submitted my drawings to Walt Disney and he proposed considering me for a position, although he couldn't guarantee it, if I travelled to California. It seemed unreachable and so I didn't go.

After graduating the South Phila. High School for Boys, I enrolled in a Commercial Lettering School. After months of hand trembling, I looked at my first sign, it read "FRESH FISH". From 1934 to 1937 I sketched caricatures on the beach at Atlantic City, N.J. My interest in photography began in 1937. It was greatly intensified when I was awarded first prize in the Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger for the photo of the week contest. Soon, the Farm Security Administration's early books became my bible. I was especially taken by Walker Evans' photography. The world of Harper's Bazaar also fascinated me.

Later, in New York, I was to meet Robert Frank at the Bazaar Studio. Since I was a commuter, he invited me to stay at his loft together with nine cats. He had recently arrived from Switzerland and was alone. New York enchanted and amazed me. Everywhere a new discovery awaited me. Rejection slips from U.S. Camera were transformed into reproduced pages. My work was being accepted, often it seemed unreal. I showed my photographs to Walker Evans. A handsome brass tea kettle in his tiny room in the offices at FORTUNE projected his stability and eloquence. "You wouldn't photograph fat women, would you?" he asked me. Later he warned me, "don't become contaminated." My need to continue photographing was solved by photography for commerce. I worked for periodicals which included Harper's Bazaar.

1946 to 1951 were important years. I photographed almost daily and the hypnotic dusk light led me to Times Square. Several nights of photographing in that area and developing and printing in Robert Frank's dark room became a way of life. He would say, "whatta town", "whatta town". I was represented in Edward Steichen's IN AND OUT OF FOCUS exhibit. Then, work, work, and more work. "Boy," he boomed, "go out and photograph and put the prints on my desk." This command was synchronized with a pound of his fist on the glass top desk. I thought it miraculous, that the glass did not shatter.

I tasted and accepted the offerings of the 50s and 60s. LIFE, COWLES PUBLICATIONS, HEARST and CONDE NAST, enabled me to continue with my personal photography efforts. Often I would carry a 16mm motion picture camera as I would a Leica and photograph in the New York streets. The results were never shown commercially. The negative has been stored.

In 1968, I needed new places, new faces and change. I tried Europe. I returned in the mid-seventies and was overwhelmed by the change that had occurred here. I took to photographing the new New York with an enthusiasm almost equal to the beginning. After the Lunn purchase, the gallery world. I was brought again to the drawing I first experienced, and as an unexpected bonus, the photographer had become an artist! 1978 found me the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Grant and the Creative Public Service Grant for photography. The latter is known as (CAPS). My eyes search for people who are grateful for life, people who forgive and whose doubts have been removed, who understand the truth, whose enduring spirit is bathed by such piercing white light as to provide their present and future hope.

Louis Faurer

*Reproduced, with editorial revisions, from the artist's original text.

Text published at the occasion of the exhibition *Louis Faurer – Photographs from Philadelphia and New York 1937-1973* presented from March 10 to April 23, 1981 at the Art Gallery of University of Maryland.

Les Douches la Galerie

5, rue Legouv  75010 Paris

01 78 94 03 00 | lesdoucheslagalerie.com

Le Guetteur Mélancolique

PRESS RELEASE

These photographs make me think of that long gone time - the fifties in New York City.

Faurer, with these images proves to be an extraordinary artist.

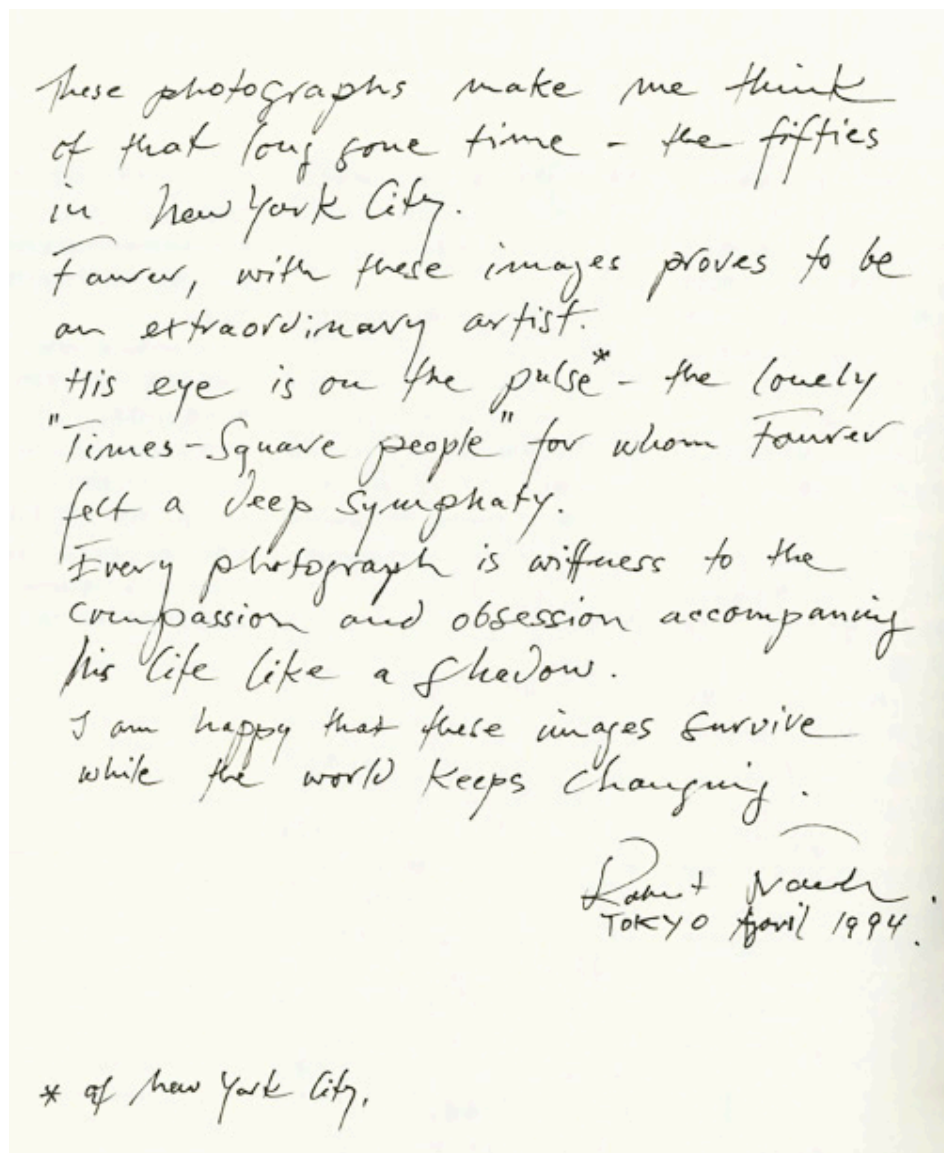
His eye is on the pulse - the lonely «Times Square people» for whom Faurer felt a deep sympathy.*

Every photograph is witness to the compassion and obsession accompanying his life like a shadow.

I am happy that these images survive while the world keeps changing.

**Of New York City*

Message from Robert Frank
TOKYO, April 1994



© déjà-vu, N°16 Spring, 1994

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Le Guetteur Mélancolique

IMAGES

Louis Faurer

Self-portrait, 42nd Street and 3rd Avenue El Station Looking Toward Tudor City, New York, c.1947

Posterior gelatin silver print

Signed in pencil on print verso

Print size: 28 x 35,6 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer / Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2206004



Louis Faurer

Victoria Movie Theatre Marquee, Times Square, New York, 1949

Posterior gelatin-silver print, made in 1979 by 220 Print

Signed, titled and dated in pencil on print verso

Print size: 28 x 35,6 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer / Courtesy Deborah Bell Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2203004



Louis Faurer

El on Third Avenue, New York City, 1942

Posterior gelatin-silver print

Signed, titled, dated and numbered by the artist

Print size: 28 x 35,6 cm

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Stock number: LF1706005



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IMAGES

Louis Faurer

Barnum & Bailey Circus Performers, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY, 1950

Posterior gelatin-silver print, made in 1990 by Chuck Kelton

Signed, titled, dated and numbered in pencil on print verso

Print size: 35,6 x 28 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer / Courtesy Deborah Bell Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2203006



Louis Faurer

Broadway Convertible, New York, NY, 1949-50

Posterior gelatin-silver print, made by Chuck Kelton in 1990

Signed, titled, dated and numbered in pencil on print verso

Print size: 40 x 50 cm

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Stock number: LF2206001



Louis Faurer

Philadelphia, c. 1945

Posterior gelatin-silver print, made in 1980-81 by 220 Print

Signed, titled and dated in pencil on print verso

Print size: 35,6 x 28 cm

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Stock number: LF2203002



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IMAGES

Louis Faurer

Robert and Mary Frank, San Germano Festival, New York, 1950

Posterior gelatin-silver print

Signed, titled, dated and numbered by the artist

Print size: 35,6 x 28 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer/ Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2206008



Louis Faurer

Park Avenue Garage, New York, 1950

Posterior gelatin-silver print, made by Sid Kaplan in 1990

Signed, titled, dated and numbered in pencil on print verso by the artist

Print size: 40 x 50 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer / Courtesy Deborah Bell Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2206002



Louis Faurer

Untitled (writing in the sky, two people in silhouette), 1947

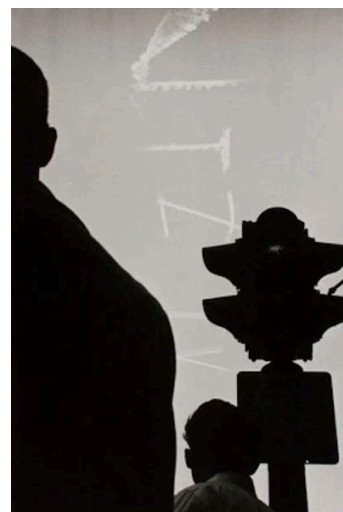
Posterior gelatin-silver print made in 1970

Signed and dated in ink on print verso

Print size: 35,6 x 28 cm

© Estate of Louis Faurer/ Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery / Courtesy les Douches la Galerie, Paris

Stock number: LF2206009



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Louis Faurer

ABOUT

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1916 to Russian-Polish immigrant parents, Louis Faurer spent his early years in South Philadelphia. He studied at the School of Commercial Art and Lettering in Philadelphia in 1937. He also worked on commission, painting billboards and lettering posters. That same year, he bought his first camera. With the exception of an introductory class he took in the army, Faurer never took a class in photography.

In the late 1940s, Faurer and several of his Philadelphia colleagues opened studios in New York City. Like many photographers of his generation, he sought work with magazines, but unlike his photojournalist peers, who made careers for publications such as Life magazine, he turned to fashion photography. In 1947, he was offered to join the staff of Harper's Bazaar magazine. The young magazine also hired Robert Franck, recently emigrated from Switzerland, with whom he would maintain a friendship of over fifty years.

During the 1950s, Faurer began to focus more on his professional assignments, moving away from street photography, working regularly for magazines such as Glamour, Charm, Seventeen, Vogue and Mademoiselle. He did most of his fashion photography in the studio.

In 1968, Faurer abandoned New York – one account quotes him as saying that he left because he couldn't pay his income taxes. He was also fleeing his marriage. Faurer moved briefly to London and then to Paris. He returned to street photography in Paris, but the photographs from this period lack the clarity of vision that was the strength of his work from the 1930s through the early 1950s. Upon his return from Europe in 1974, at the age of 58, he tried to return to photographing the streets of New York, but the city had changed and so had he. In the fall of 1984, while getting off the bus, Faurer was hit by a car. This serious accident effectively ended his career as a photographer. He died in New York in 2001.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 : *Louis Faurer*, Fondation Henri Cartier Bresson, Paris, France

2002 : *Louis Faurer Retrospective*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA

1998 : *Louis Faurer: USA*, Zentrum für Fotografie, Berlin, Germany

1994 : *Louis Faurer: Photographs*, Photo Gallery International, Tokyo, Japan

1992 : *Louis Faurer*, Centre National de la Photographie, Paris, France

1990 : *Louis Faurer*, Colbert space at the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, France

1981 : First important exhibition of his work at the University of Maryland Art Gallery, USA

1977 : Second individual exhibition, Marlborough Gallery, New York, USA

1959 : First individual exhibition held at Limelight Gallery, New York, USA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021 : *L'Éloge de la main*, Les Douches la Galerie, Paris, France

2020 : *Les photographes de l'École de New York 1935-1965*, Pavillon populaire, Montpellier, France

1991 : *Appearances: Fashion Photography Since 1945*, at Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England

1958 : *Photographs from the Museum Collection*, MoMA, New York, USA

1952 : *Then and Now*, MoMA, New York, USA

1950 : *Photography, Mid-century*, LACMA, Los Angeles, USA

51 American Photographers, MoMA, New York, USA

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Du mercredi au samedi de 14h à 19h

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