

White Angel Bread Line, San Francisco 1933

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Albert M. Bender

Hear Dyanna Taylor on why this was a pivotal photograph for her grandmother.

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English only

About this photograph, one of the first made outside her studio, Lange recalled, “I was just gathering my forces and that took a little bit because I wasn’t accustomed to jostling about in groups of tormented, depressed and angry men, with a camera.”

Imperial Valley, California March 1935
Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

When this portrait appeared in “Establishment of Rural Rehabilitation Camps for Migrants in California,” a report Paul Taylor produced for the State Emergency Relief Administration in 1935, it was accompanied by the caption “Mexican field worker—father of six. Riverside Co. March 1, 1935.” Throughout the report, a selection of which is on view nearby, the captions describe a human dimension beyond what is immediately visible—locations, racial and ethnic differences, forms of labor, routes of travel—providing additional information about the individuals pictured.

**Daughter of Migrant Tennessee Coal Miner
Living in American River Camp Near
Sacramento, California** November 1936

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the Farm Security Administration

Across from this photograph in *Land of the Free*, Archibald MacLeish's text reads, "We're wondering," suggesting the woman's thoughts and an imagined future. In contrast, Lange's field notes provide added detail: "Ruby is the daughter in a Tennessee family of six who moved to California a little over a year ago. . . . They have worked in grapes near Lodi, in walnuts elsewhere, and on a wood job near Marysville. From November to March, they 'tuk to the hills'—went back to Tennessee, came right back to California. March is when the cannery starts here, and they have camped here since March."

**Six Tenant Farmers without Farms,
Hardeman County, Texas 1937**

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

Hear Lange's granddaughter on the challenge
of making a group portrait.

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English only

This image appeared in *Land of the Free* and later in Lange and Paul Taylor's documentary photobook *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion* (1941), where Lange cropped out the sixth, smaller man, perhaps to simplify the idea of strength and virility conveyed there.

Woman of the High Plains, Texas Panhandle

June 1938

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

When it was published in *An American Exodus*, this portrait was captioned “If you die, you’re dead—that’s all.” This line was taken from Lange’s field notes, which quote the woman at greater length: “We made good money a pullin’ bolls, when we could pull. But we’ve had no work since March. . . . You can’t get no relief here until you’ve lived here a year. This county’s a hard country. They won’t help bury you here. If you die, you’re dead, that’s all.”

Tractored Out, Childress County, Texas

June 1938

Gelatin silver print

Purchase

See page 65 of the exhibition catalogue for Wendy Red Star's response to this photograph.

Hear Red Star reflect on displacement.

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English only

Lange and Taylor's captions in *An American Exodus* consider the human impact of environmental crises. The one for this image reads, "Tractors replace not only mules but people. They cultivate to the very door of the houses of those whom they replace."

Richmond, California 1942

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

During World War II, at the height of anti-Japanese sentiment, Lange documented an explicitly racist billboard advertising the Southern Pacific railroad company. Rather than portraying the billboard in isolation, she disrupted the frame with a handmade sign that seems to undermine the commodification of such political sentiments.

Oakland, California February 27, 1942

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist

Lange captured the racist language of *San Francisco Examiner* headlines just after President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which led to the establishment of internment camps in which 117,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were imprisoned.

Richmond, California c. 1943
Gelatin silver print, printed 1965
Gift of the artist

The tension between the woman and the man at the right edge is charged by the words above them: "Serve You" hangs like a provocative question or command. Lange's notes on this portrait read, "Item on race relations. Scene on main street. The girl was a taxi driver in New Orleans. She came to Richmond with her husband two years ago."

**Plantation Overseer and His Field Hands,
Mississippi Delta** June 1936

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the Farm Security Administration

See page 84 of the exhibition catalogue for Robert Slifkin's response to this photograph.

Dyanna Taylor speaks about her grandparents' collaborative methods.

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English only

In *12 Million Black Voices* this image appears slightly cropped, excluding Lange's husband, the agricultural economist Paul Taylor (visible on the left edge of the frame). To the consternation of Lange and subsequent scholars, it was significantly cropped in *Land of the Free*—isolating and elevating the overseer and excluding all but one of the African American men around him.

First Born, Berkeley 1952

Gelatin silver print

Purchase

This image shows Lange's son and first grandchild. In the exhibition catalogue, the spread on which this portrait appears includes the lyrics of a lullaby from the Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw) people of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. This text was chosen by the humanitarian and writer Dorothy Norman, who also selected the quotations that were featured on the walls of the exhibition.

Installation view of the exhibition

The Family of Man January 24–May 8, 1955

Photograph by Rolf Petersen

The Museum of Modern Art Archives,
New York

The exhibition's immersive design included mural-size prints hung alongside a variety of smaller ones, evoking the layouts of popular illustrated magazines. The humanitarian and writer Dorothy Norman selected the quotations that were featured on the walls of the exhibition and in the accompanying catalogue. The quotation on the center panel of a section of photographs of children, from the social critic Lilian Smith, reads, "Deep inside that silent place where a child's fears crouch." The quotation on the wall with Lange's *Filipinos Cutting Lettuce* is a Māori proverb, "The land is a mother that never dies."

Philip Greene

American, 1927–2017

Richard Moore

American, 1920–2015

Dorothea Lange: Under the Trees 1965

First part of two-part documentary produced by KQED San Francisco

Digital transfer from 16mm film (black and white, sound)

27 min.

WNET Properties LLC

As writer and director Richard Moore offers in the film's introduction, "This is not about photography. It is about Dorothea Lange, who, in her long, rich, and frequently painful life, has used the camera to enrich our perception of ourselves and of the human condition." Made in Berkeley during the last months of her life, as she prepared for her 1966 retrospective at MoMA, the film captured Lange's humility and desire to continue innovating: "I'm just really beginning to sense what's in this medium."

Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California

March 1936

Gelatin silver print

Purchase

Hear Lange's granddaughter on this iconic image.

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English only

The captions used to describe *Migrant Mother* are as varied as the publications in which they appeared: “A destitute mother, the type aided by the WPA.” “A worker in the ‘peach bowl.’” “Draggin’-around people.” “In a camp of migratory pea-pickers, San Luis Obispo County, California.” Even in ostensibly factual settings such as newspapers, government reports, or a museum cataloguing sheet, no fixed phrase or set of words was associated with the image until 1952, when it was published as *Migrant Mother*.

**“A Destitute Mother: The Type Aided by
the WPA”** March 1936

Gelatin silver print with gouache (painted and
airbrushed), ink, and grease pencil

Verso: Pigmented inkjet print, printed 2020

The New York Times Collection

This is the heavily retouched print the *New York Times* used when first reproducing this image on July 26, 1936. Facsimiles of the print’s verso and the page of the *Times* on which the image appeared are presented below. The verso bears evidence of its subsequent appearances in 1966, 1970 (twice), 1976, 1992, and 1995.

Black Maria, Oakland 1957

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

This image was reproduced in the handbook *Minimizing Racism in Jury Trials*, opposite the “Brief Statement of Facts” outlining the case of California v. Huey P. Newton, cofounder and Minister of Defense of the Black Panther Party. The battered doors of the police vehicle seem to show traces of violent struggle, evoking the racial bias and harassment described in the text.

**The Public Defender, Alameda County
Courthouse, California 1957**

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the photographer

Lange's research files contain notes that begin to tell the story of this photograph: "Martin Pulich, Chief Assistant Public Defender, Civil Servant, an experienced criminal lawyer, a moody man with a brilliant legal mind, one of seven lawyers on a staff that also includes three stenographers and an investigator. During the past eight years, at age 36 he has handled 3000 cases and earns 696 dollars a month. It is not the public defender's job to 'get people off' at the taxpayers' expense. 'It's that it's properly fought—not if we win or lose.' His duty is to see that no injustice is done."

Berryessa Valley, Napa County, California

1956

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

See page 149 of the exhibition catalogue for
Rebecca Solnit's response to this photograph.

This portrait featured prominently in Lange's last photo-essay, "Death of a Valley." The story wove together captions, prose, and quotations from the people she encountered to narrate the destructive preparations for the Monticello Dam, which still stands today.

Walking Wounded, Oakland 1954

Gelatin silver print, printed c. 1958

Gift of the artist

Lange's choice of title for this image was almost certainly influenced by her own experience with disability. As a child she had contracted polio, which left her with a permanent limp. Toward the end of her life she reflected, "No one who hasn't lived the life of a semi-cripple knows how much that means. I think it perhaps was the most important thing that happened to me, and formed me, guided me, instructed me, helped me, and humiliated me. All those things at once. I've never gotten over it and I am aware of the force and the power of it."

Paul's Hands 1957

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

See page 152 of the exhibition catalogue for Sam Contis's response to this photograph.

Artist Sam Contis discusses Lange and this loving gesture.

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English only

This closely cropped photograph was presented in Lange's 1966 MoMA retrospective as if she had taken the picture herself. While the artist Sam Contis was conducting research in Lange's archive, however, she discovered a contact sheet revealing that these hands belong to Paul Taylor, Lange's husband and collaborator, and that the back they embrace is Lange's. Lange's adoption and use of the image as her own encouraged Contis to take a parallel approach to Lange's work. Contis's series of photogravures drawing from and recontextualizing Lange's work are on view nearby.

Bad Trouble over the Weekend 1964

Gelatin silver print, printed 1965

Purchase

Lange grappled extensively with the titles of the photographs included in her 1966 MoMA retrospective. In a letter to the curator, John Szarkowski, she wrote, “I propose also to caption each print separately, beyond time and place, sometimes with two or three words, sometimes with a quotation, sometimes with a brief commentary. This textual material I shall be working on for some time, on and off.” Rather than identify the subject of this photo as her daughter-in-law, Lange’s title extends the image’s affective reach.

Sam Contis

American, born 1982

LEFT TO RIGHT:

Untitled (Lange series III) 2020

Untitled (Lange series II) 2020

Untitled (Lange series I) 2020

Photogravures

Courtesy the artist and Klaus von
Nichtssagend Gallery

Artist Sam Contis responds to Lange's work.

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English only

Contis has long been inspired by Lange's tireless experimentation with the capacities of photography to capture the everyday. By sequencing, sometimes cropping, and reprinting rarely seen images from Lange's archive, Contis finds resonance between her own and Lange's ways of seeing. Contis recounts, "There's such a strong kinship there, Lange's work felt familiar to me, almost like it was my work that I was just seeing again after a long period."