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Rosenberg & Co. announces exhibition:

## OUT OF EXILE: THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF FRED STEIN

April 1–9, 2022

*"I became a photographer by chance, but it seems it was designed for me. There is an excitement... with a camera in front of me. I feel a current between me and the other person; I become something more." —Fred Stein*



Fred Stein, *Popular Front*, 1936

Rosenberg & Co. is pleased to present two screenings of *Out of Exile: The Photography of Fred Stein*, accompanied by an exhibition of photographs featured in the film. Co-directors Dawn Freeman and Peter Stein, the photographer's son, gather letters, interviews, and a wide range of the artist's oeuvre to tell the story of Fred Stein, from fleeing Nazi Germany to photographing street scenes and portraits in Paris and New York City.

Fred Stein (1909–1967) was born a rabbi's son in Dresden, Germany. Due to his Jewish heritage and political activism he was prohibited from practicing law, his field of study, by the Nazi government. Spurred by the threat of the regime, Stein and his wife Lilo fled Dresden and arrived in Paris, France in 1933. There, Stein picked up his 35mm handheld Leica camera and began exploring Paris.

Stein was soon spending each day photographing Paris, capturing honest and engaging compositions of Parisian streets and the people who walked them. Many of the boarders and visitors who frequented the Steins' Montmartre apartment became models for his early portraits, including Robert Capa, who would later become a renowned war photographer. Stein's curiosity propelled his growing passion for photography years before the medium was widely accepted as fine art.

In 1939, Fred Stein was taken to an internment camp outside of Paris. Following a harrowing escape and reunion with Lilo, the couple boarded one of the last ships to leave France and landed in New York City in 1941. This continental shift, from Europe to North America, resulted in a comparable shift in Stein's subject matter. He built upon his growing mastery of composition and lighting within the streets of New York: focusing his lens on the gritty, fast-paced underbelly of the American metropolis, he explored the dynamic neighborhoods of Chinatown, Harlem, Little Italy, and Jewish Brooklyn.

Stein was well-versed in the candid, angular lines of Modernist photography, but also stayed true to his own honest and discreet methods whether on the street or in the studio. He did little in the way of self-promotion or alterations to his photographs, preferring natural light and avoiding props or engineered effects. For his formal portraits, Stein often suggested his subject's home as a familiar background or invited them to his own quiet studio. Rosenberg & Co. is honored to present a selection of Stein's celebrated portraits, including those of Albert Einstein and Georgia O'Keefe.

A lifelong learner, Stein coupled his inquisitive mind and passionate spirit with his keen eye for composition and patience for potent human moments. *Out of Exile: The Photography of Fred Stein* crafts a striking portrait of the photographer and encourages a heightened worldwide appreciation for the pioneering artist, husband, father, and community member.

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