

## VISUAL ART

## High puts focus on photographer Bullock

June 2014 exhibit will include many works donated by his estate.

By Howard Pousner  
hpousner@ajc.com

The High Museum of Art, where photography is the largest and fastest-growing collection, has announced that it will mount a major retrospective of the work of Wynn Bullock, considered

one of the masters of mid-20th-century photography.

Opening in June 2014 and organized in collaboration with the University of Arizona's Center for Creative Photography, "Wynn Bullock: Revelations" will be the first career-spanning exhibition of the California photographer's work by a major museum in nearly four decades.

The exhibit will coincide with a gift to the High from Bullock's estate of more than 100 vintage photographs, en-

sureing that the High will become the largest repository of the innovative modernist's work in the eastern U.S.

High Museum photography curator Brett Abbott, who

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Read more about other happenings at the High Museum of Art, including our look at "The Bunnan Collection," at [MyAJC.com/living](http://MyAJC.com/living). Get news when and where you want it: from your computer, tablet or smartphone at [MyAJC.com](http://MyAJC.com).

worked closely with the photographer's estate as an associate curator at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles before joining the High in 2011, said the 110-work exhibit and gift are an opportunity to return Bullock's "powerful work" to prominence and to engage a new generation.

Bullock received early recognition in 1941 when the Los Angeles County Museum of Art mounted his first solo ex-

**Bullock** continued on **D5**

hibition. Edward Steichen's 1955 exhibit at New York's Museum of Modern Art, "The Family of Man," cemented his reputation nationally and internationally.

"Child in Forest" (1951) and "Let There Be Light" (1954), Bullock photos selected by Steichen for that landmark MOMA show, became iconic images of the modernist era. Both will be included in the High retrospective. Meanwhile, Bullock's "Old Typewriter" (1951) is on view in the current High exhibit "The Bunnan Collection."

Shortly after World War II, the Chicago-born artist settled in Monterey and shot extensively around the moody Monterey Peninsula and other nat-

ural spots in Northern California. He became close friends with California photographers Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, the latter of whom he initially imitated before developing his own vision.

Bullock's changing approach

was influenced by broad reading about physics, philosophy, psychology, Eastern religion, art and other topics. "The medium of photography can record not only what the eyes see, but that which the mind's eye sees as well," he once said.

The High exhibit will trace Bullock's evolution starting with his early experimental work of the 1940s, through mysterious black-and-white imagery of the 1950s, color light abstractions of the 1960s, to his late metaphysical photographs of the 1970s.

Though he is represented in more than 90 museum collections around the world, his work has not remained on the radar nearly to the extent of his friends Adams and Weston.

Abbott cites several reasons, including that Bullock "was much more interested in making work than in promoting it." Bullock also had a "strained" relationship with Beaumont and Nancy Newhall, the influential mid-century curators and photography historians.

Another factor: Bullock died of cancer in 1975, at age 73, at a time when modernism "was being questioned within the museum-sphere by a new breed of artist-photographer," Abbott said.

Taking the long view, the High curator considers Bullock's body of work "pivotal" in the history of photography. Abbott believes the retrospec-

tive and accompanying catalog from the University of Texas Press will re-establish the photographer, and that the estate's



gift to the High will lead to future regional and international exhibits.

“It’s a remarkable story of generosity on the part of the Bullock estate,” Abbott said. “They are by no means a wealthy family, and this is truly a gift made with noble intentions.”

#### ON VIEW

##### **The Bunnan Collection**

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays (until 8 p.m. Thursdays), noon-5 p.m. Sundays. \$19.50; \$16.50, students and seniors; \$12, ages 6-17; free, 5 and younger. Through Feb. 2. High Museum of Art, 1280 Peachtree St. N.E., Atlanta. 404-733-4200, [www.high.org](http://www.high.org).

##### **Wynn Bullock: Revelations**

opens June 2014. Bullock’s black-and-white work is represented in Atlanta by Lumiere gallery, [www.lumieregallery.net](http://www.lumieregallery.net).



“Lynne, Point Lobos,” by Wynn Bullock (1902-1975), will be part of the retrospective, “Wynn Bullock: Revelations,” opening at the High Museum of Art in summer 2014 in collaboration with the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona. CONTRIBUTED