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NEW YORK STREET PHOTOGRAPHY



Jerome Liebling - Butterfly Boy, New York City, 1949

The show features 50 black and white and color photographs taken in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx over a five decade span. The exhibition highlights Liebling's roots in, love for, and inspired representations of his home city. Jerome Liebling (1924–

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2011) was born in Harlem and grew up poor in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn.

Liebling studied art under the G.I. Bill. Ad Reinhardt's Bauhaus-influenced design classes honed his formal sensibility; documentary photographer Walter Rosenblum opened his eyes to the power of the photographic image. In 1947, Liebling joined the Photo League, a socially minded collective of photographers who fanned across New York to document hidden corners of the city. In 1949 Liebling accepted a position teaching photography and filmmaking at the University of Minnesota.

Twenty years later, he returned to New York to discover that the city of his childhood had vanished. In the late 1970s, Liebling rediscovered the long-lost Brooklyn of his childhood in the oceanside neighborhood known as "Little Odessa" in Brighton Beach. He spent three decades photographing there in brilliant chromogenic color as the old wave of Jewish denizens gave way to the new wave of Russian immigrants.