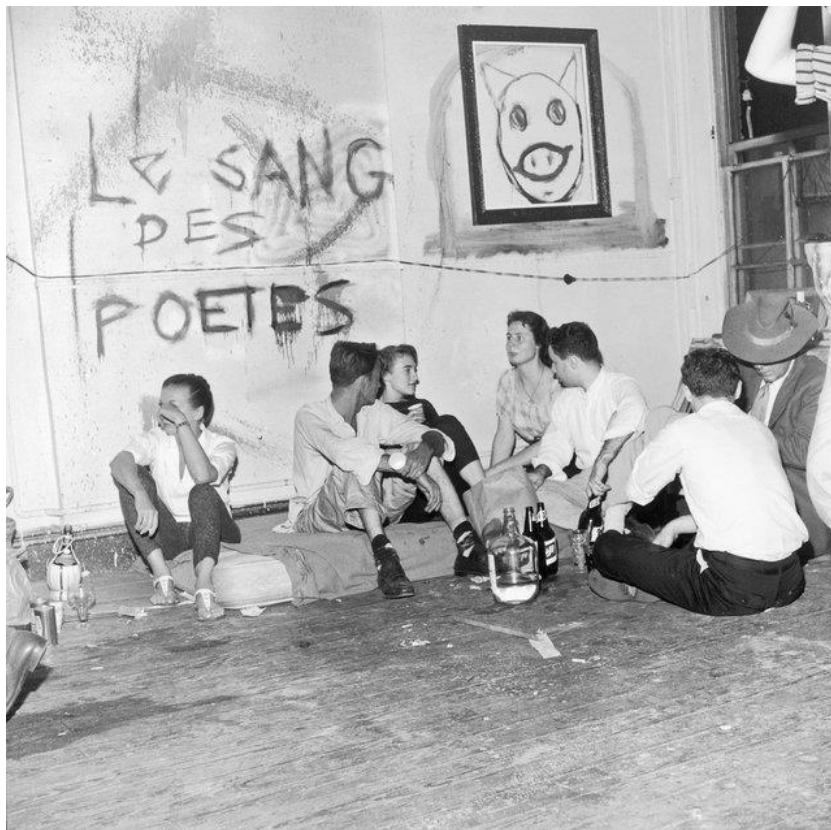


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STIRRING IMAGES FROM LONGTIME VILLAGE VOICE PHOTOGRAPHER
CAPTURE 1950S-1970S NYC

By Jen Carlson – September 21, 2018



For decades, Fred W. McDarrah was the only staff photographer at The Village Voice (RIP), a job he took on after working in ad sales at the paper. He captured New York City in an era that brought us Bob Dylan, the Stonewall riots, the Beats and bohemians. His images capture the energy of "the most vibrant decades of the greatest city in the world," according to the Steven Kasher Gallery, which (as of today) has an exhibit dedicated to the late photographer's work.

Fred W. McDarrah: New York Scenes features nearly 100 vintage black and white prints that bring you from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s (a book of the same name is also out this month). Some of the images will be familiar, like that shot of

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Dylan (which was taken across the street from the Village Voice offices), others you may have never seen. From the press release:

“Through the medium of The Voice many of his images are lodged in our collective memories of bohemia and the counterculture. He covered New York City’s diverse downtown scenes, producing an unmatched and encyclopedic visual record of people, movements, and events. McDarrah frequented the bars, cafés, and galleries where writers, artists, and musicians gathered, and he was welcome in the apartments and lofts of the city’s avant-garde cultural aristocracy. He captured every vital moment, from Jack Kerouac reading poetry to Bob Dylan hanging out in Christopher Park to Andy Warhol filming in the Factory, to the Stonewall rebellion.”

Historian Sean Wilentz spoke of his images recording "the transformation of Greenwich Village from a local bohemian scene into a worldwide movement," noting, "Fred left behind an unprecedented body of work from inside that movable site as it existed in mid-century Greenwich Village, when, for a while anyway, it shook the nation and the world. Nobody had ever come close to depicting what Fred did, and any future bohemian chronicle is bound to be shot differently from the way Fred did it. He was in the right place at the right time, and when the chance came for him to make the most of it, he didn't blow it."

When McDarrah died in 2007, at the age of 81, the NY Times wrote, "He famously shot a generation of young hopefuls who had come to New York to make their reputations — hopefuls named Kerouac and Warhol and Dylan and Joplin. As a photojournalist, Mr. McDarrah chronicled the city in all its postwar bohemian splendor. He shot jazz clubs and coffeehouses; concerts and poetry readings; sit-ins, be-ins, love-ins and teach-ins. He captured famous faces, like Norman Mailer and William S. Burroughs; now-vanished places, like the Peace Eye Bookstore on Avenue A; and historic moments, like the Stonewall uprising in 1969. Among his best-known images is a 1965 portrait of Bob Dylan in Sheridan Square, dressed all in black and saluting the camera."