

## GEORGE S. ZIMBEL

(1929-2023)

*“A lot goes into a finished documentary photograph: a very personal view of life, a knowledge of technique, and of course information. It is the information that grabs the viewer, but it is the photographer's art that holds them”*

In an era of increased manipulation of the photographic image by computer technology, George S. Zimbel's commitment to the straight photograph became stronger. A hallmark of his approach is non-intervention. He photographed what was really happening and felt that serious observation is more important than creating a scene.

When Zimbel exhibited his work, the walls were hung with photographs spanning decades from the 1940s onwards, always printed by the artist himself. Zimbel photographed for over 70 years with an eye that was life positive and he regularly produced new work.

An alumnus of Columbia University, the Photo League and the Alexey Brodovitch Seminar, Zimbel honed his craft in New York City, working for national magazines (*Look, The New York Times, Redbook, Parents, Architectural Forum*). Parallel to assignments he was always at work on self initiated projects. These included diverse subjects such as 1950s European Photographs, Readers from libraries to submarines, Politics in the U.S. and Canada, Marilyn Monroe in *Seven Year Itch*, and the ongoing story of his family.

The Zimbels operated Bona Fide Farm on Prince Edward Island from 1971-1980. After moving to Montréal in 1980 he printed and exhibited from his extensive archive and had many solo exhibitions at galleries and museums. In 2000, he was honoured with the largest photography exhibit ever shown at Institut Valencià d'Art Modern in Spain, which was accompanied by a major catalogue. In 2001, he was given the Lifetime Achievement Award of Canadian Photographers in Communications and was short listed for the Roloff Beny Award for best Canadian photographic book. In 2004, he had a retrospective exhibition at Confederation Centre Museum and later that year was a major presence in the Marilyn Monroe exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. He was subsequently featured in the PBS American Master's production “Marilyn Monroe: Still Life.” In 2005, he had a retrospective exhibition at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo and the Owens Art Gallery at Mount Allison University followed by the publication of his book *Bourbon Street New Orleans 1955*. In 2006, he was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Art.

His work is in the collections of National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Musée national des Beaux-Arts du Québec, Québec City; Musée des beaux Arts de Montréal, Montréal; Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal, Montréal; Confederation Centre Art Gallery & Museum, Charlottetown; Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa; Museum of Modern Art, New York City; The Jewish Museum International Center of Photography, New York City; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencià; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara; and Musée National d'histoire d'art de Luxembourg; Luxembourg.