



Alfred Stieglitz
American, 1864 - 1946

Rebecca Salsbury Strand

1922

palladium print

image: 18.9 × 23.1 cm (7 7/16 × 9 1/8 in.)

sheet: 20.1 × 25.1 cm (7 15/16 × 9 7/8 in.)

mount: 56.5 × 45.6 cm (22 1/4 × 17 15/16 in.)

Alfred Stieglitz Collection 1949.3.545

Stieglitz Estate Number 85E

Key Set Number 740

KEY SET ENTRY

Remarks

The daughter of the manager of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Rebecca "Beck" Salsbury married Paul Strand in 1922 and quickly became close to both Stieglitz and O'Keeffe. Their friendship endured even after her separation and subsequent divorce from Strand in 1932.

On 10 July 1922 Rebecca Strand wrote Stieglitz: "Did you get anything of my paws?" In a letter by Stieglitz written on 13 July 1922, but which he incorrectly dated 1921, he responded: "Yes, the hands were developed a few days ago.—And proofed. —You were gloriously still. Really.—Not a quiver. One of the negatives promises a stunning result—different from anything I have. The first one.—The second is not a success. —I wasn't ready when the storm came—that is the one hand was just right—expressive—the other wasn't—I knew it when I made the

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Alfred Stieglitz Key Set

exposure.—It's a beginning. Thanks greatly for your perfect stillness.—I believe it was a 3–4 minutes [sic] exposure. This is good to remember when you need references for being able to sit still.”

On 16 August 1922 Stieglitz wrote Paul Strand: “Last night I looked through the bunch of prints I haven't destroyed. Most of them are ready to be guillotined. There are just a few that seem to say: I'm not so bad—you'll spare me awhile. There may be 15—amongst them one of Beck's hands. That print, there are really two prints, seems to keep its aliveness. I have come very close to the Centre of the Bull's Eye in several others. It's that darned Centre that is the only satisfying thing. It's like the Centre of Woman that man tries in vain to reach—nature is certainly an Arch Humanist” (all letters YCAL and CCP).

Other Collections

A print corresponding with this photograph can also be found in the following collection(s):

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 91.XM.63.2 [platinum] (oriented 90° clockwise)

Lifetime Exhibitions

A print from the same negative—perhaps a photograph from the Gallery's collection—appeared in the following exhibition(s) during Alfred Stieglitz's lifetime:

possibly 1923, New York (nos. 16–21, as *Rebecca Salisbury Strand*, 1922)

INSCRIPTION

by Doris Bry, on mount, lower left, in graphite: Treated by Steichen—6/50; lower left verso: 85 E

PROVENANCE

Georgia O'Keeffe; gift to NGA, 1949.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2002 Greenough, Sarah. *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set: The Alfred Stieglitz Collection of Photographs*. Washington, 2002: vol. 1, cat. 740.

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