

UCSD's University Art Gallery to present an exhibition of 19th century photographs of Egypt

October 24, 1994

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AN EXHIBITION OF 19TH CENTURY PHOTOGRAPHS OF EGYPT

Between the invention of photography in 1839, and the introduction of the Kodak camera in the last decade of the 19th century, more than 250 professional photographers took pictures of the Middle East.

Egypt, one of the oldest civilizations on earth and home to many historically revered monuments, was a particularly popular setting for photographers. Because Egypt also was relatively available to European travellers, it soon developed into a major tourist destination, which encouraged professional photographers to reproduce the images for a commercial market.

The University Art Gallery at the University of California, San Diego will present an exhibition that examines the photographic representation of Egypt during the mid- to late-19th century.

The exhibition will feature approximately 100 photographs, including albumen prints, salt prints, daguerreotypes and tintypes, and will provide viewers with the opportunity to survey an important aspect of Western culture's enduring obsession with "the Orient."

Titled "Real Hieroglyphics: Photography and Egypt 1850-1900," the exhibition will be on view from Nov. 10 through Dec. 15. There will be an opening reception at the gallery from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10. The public is invited to attend.

The exhibition, curated by UCSD Visual Arts faculty member Geoffrey Batchen Ph.D., will feature a number of important 19th century photographers, including Francis Frith, Maxime Du Camp, Felix Teynard, Francis Bedford, J. Pascal Sebah, Antoine Beato, the Zangaki brothers, Maison Bonfils, W. Hammerschmidt and G. Lekegian.

"Real Hieroglyphics" was made possible with the loan of material by a number of institutions. The California Museum of Photography at the University of California, Riverside has loaned a number of prints from their extensive collection. Albumen prints have been loaned by the San Diego Museum of Photographic Arts and the San Diego Museum of Man. Added to this foundation of material are pieces from private collections. One of the features of the exhibition is a display of rare 19th century books, many of them illustrated with original photographs. These books have been loaned by the university libraries at UCSD, UCLA, and UC Berkeley.

The UCSD University Art Gallery is open from noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is free. The gallery will be closed Nov. 24-25, for Thanksgiving. A parking fee is required. Parking permits may be purchased at the Gilman Drive and Northview Drive information pavilions. For more information, call 534-2864.

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