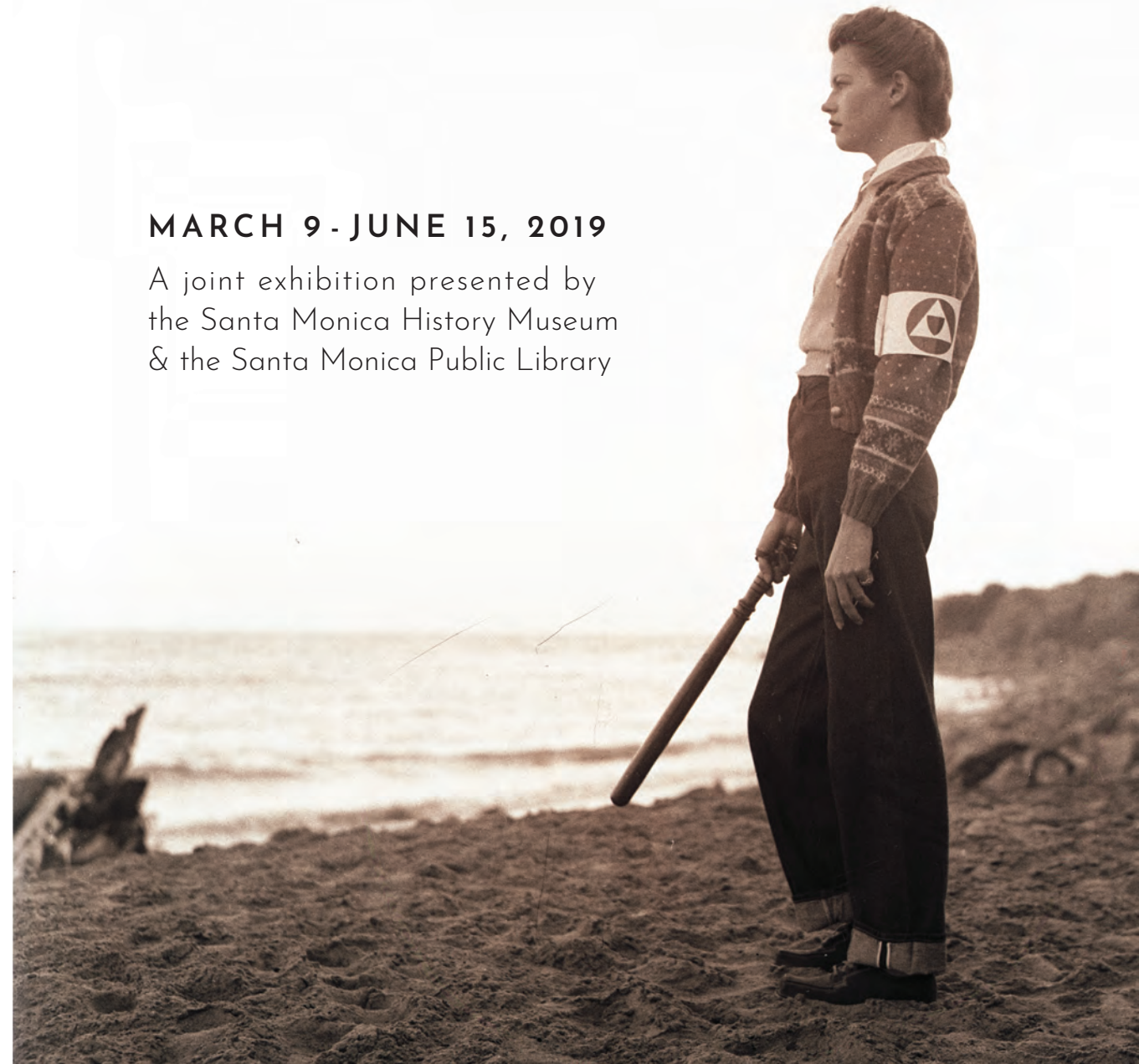


LIGHT & SHADOW:

Capturing Early Santa Monica

MARCH 9 - JUNE 15, 2019

A joint exhibition presented by
the Santa Monica History Museum
& the Santa Monica Public Library



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Santa Monica intersection at night in the Palisades Tract, by Victor Barnaba (c1960)
Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives, City Collections [B109]



Actress Jayne Mansfield at Muscle Beach, by George Tate (c1953)
Santa Monica History Museum, George Tate Collection

Front cover: WWII Women's Beach Patrol, by Emerson Gaze (1942)
Santa Monica History Museum, Bill Beebe Collection

GEORGE TATE, JR.



George Tate, Jr.'s (1920-1992) images express the exuberant energy of Muscle Beach in the 1950s and 1960s. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, Tate served as a United States Air Force photographer during World War II. He taught at the Fort Worth School of Photography for several years before earning a degree at the prestigious ArtCenter School of Photography in Pasadena, California in 1953. Tate's excellent eye for detail and composition led to a long and successful career as a freelance photojournalist from the 1950s until his retirement in 1980.

Tate's 1950s work highlights the health and fitness community of Muscle Beach in Santa Monica. His unique ability to capture fleeting moments — from impish children and weekend beachgoers to preening bodybuilders and nervous pageant contestants — resulted in a stunning collection documenting Santa Monica's beach culture.

George Tate's candid street photography of the late 1950s documents a bustling city filled with coffee shops and storefronts. During the 1970s, Tate began shooting the many gas stations and car washes that popped up to serve new suburban developments throughout Southern California.

The photographer's son, Greg Tate, notes that one of his father's favorite quotes was, "People look, but they don't see." The Tate Family generously donated this collection to the Santa Monica History Museum, which serves as the official repository of George Tate's work.



Top: Weightlifters at Muscle Beach, by George Tate (c1953)
Santa Monica History Museum, George Tate Collection

Bottom: Drinking Fountain at Muscle Beach, by George Tate (c1950s)
Santa Monica History Museum, George Tate Collection

One thousand residents, 160 houses, a school district and a church, the wharf, and a local newspaper. In 1875, those elements constituted Santa Monica, a small coastal community which was officially declared a town that year. Over the past 140 years, Santa Monica has grown immensely to become a city of over 92,000 and attracts millions of visitors every year.

Light & Shadow: Capturing Early Santa Monica, the first joint exhibition presented by the Santa Monica History Museum and Santa Monica Public Library, draws from each institution's photographic archives to showcase the work of seven photographers who captured the city's history from its founding to the 1960s. They are: Victor Barnaba, Adelbert Bartlett, Bill Beebe, Emerson Gaze, H.F. Rile, Kenneth Strickfaden, and George Tate, Jr.

"I am thrilled to partner with our neighbor, the Santa Monica Public Library, to bring you an exhibition highlighting the museum's extensive photography collections. The images presented here represent the long and generous support of our local community, which has helped build the museum's archive of prized Santa Monica material."

Susan Gabriel Potter, President
Santa Monica History Museum

"The Santa Monica History Museum and the Santa Monica Public Library are dedicated to the cultivation and preservation of our local history. This photographic exhibition represents the first of what I hope will be other collaborative opportunities to explore the connections linking our shared history and communities."

Patty Wong, Director of Library Services
Santa Monica Public Library

VICTOR BARNABA



Top: Victor Barnaba (far right) and others, including two young women in "Safety Winner" sashes, at a Safety Committee award ceremony (c1960) Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives, City Collections [F339]

Bottom: Pier Avenue looking north towards Santa Monica Pier (Ocean Park Redevelopment Project), by Victor Barnaba (1964) Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives [N18]

Born in 1904 in Italy, Victor Barnaba served as a U.S. military photographer during World War II in the European theater. There, he witnessed the realities of war and recorded Mussolini as well as dozens of political executions. The end of the war brought Barnaba back to the States; and in 1946, he and his wife Elizabeth (Betty) moved to Santa Monica.

The couple quickly established Victor Barnaba Studios (later Barnaba-Rolf Photography) as one of the most successful photography businesses in the city. Barnaba was active in civic affairs: he served in various positions for the Santa Monica Navy League, Chamber of Commerce, and Professional Photographers of Southern California. He was also the president of Santa Monica City College Advisory Board Committee for two terms.

The City of Santa Monica commissioned Barnaba to document the happenings in the city. Through Barnaba's lens, we now have a sizable record of Santa Monica's civic institutions and projects in the 1960s, including the 1964 Ocean Park Redevelopment Project, Pacific Ocean Park, the Public Library, and others.

Few photographers have left as big of an imprint on the visual history of mid-century Santa Monica as Victor Barnaba. In the 28 years the Barnabas operated their studio, they took one short vacation — for a photographers' convention. After retirement, the couple moved to Oceanside, California, in the mid 1970s. Victor Barnaba died in 1992.



Venice Beach looking north to the Pier, by Kenneth Strickfaden (1925) Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives, Elliott Welsh Collection [C203]

KENNETH STRICKFADEN



Top: "Bake" Loring's Lunchroom at the shore end of the Santa Monica Pier, by Kenneth Strickfaden (c1920)
Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives [D33]

Bottom: Filming on the beach near Santa Monica Pier, by Kenneth Strickfaden (c1920)
Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives, Elliott Welsh Collection [D74]

The second of three sons, Kenneth Strickfaden (1896-1984) spent his childhood in Montana and Oregon, where the countryside was an exciting playground for the clan. Kenneth in particular gained notoriety among locals as a boy who kept a menagerie under his care.

The seemingly idyllic life was upended when his parents divorced in 1912. While his brothers stayed with their mother, Kenneth and his father hopped into a Model T Ford and headed for Santa Monica. The young Strickfaden entered Santa Monica High School, where he developed life-long friendships with classmates and met his future wife, Gladys Ward.

Strickfaden had been fascinated by all things electrical and mechanical since boyhood. He turned his passion into a pioneering career in electrical special effects in films. His credits include classics such as *Frankenstein* (1931) and *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).

Strickfaden's other passion was photography. Fueled by a sense of wonder, once he began taking pictures, he never stopped. He liked to take his camera to high places — in 1920, he climbed a Venice power pole carrying 2,200 volts and took a series of photographs around the horizon. He also took pictures as a Marine in France in 1918; and after the armistice, he captured battlefield ruins and dozens of Marine companies.

In a 1980 interview with the *Evening Outlook*, of the Santa Monica and Venice of his youth, he said, "In those days, everything was just so beautiful. It was just crying out for someone to document it in pictures. I saw everything in the form of beauty."



Lassie and young fans in the Boys and Girls Room, by Victor Barnaba (c1950s)
Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives [M513]

ADELBERT BARTLETT



Top: A Busy Corner in Santa Monica, by Adelbert Bartlett (c1928)
Santa Monica History Museum, Adelbert Bartlett Collection

Bottom: Beach Clubs Viewed from Municipal Pier, by Adelbert Bartlett (c1927)
Santa Monica History Museum, Adelbert Bartlett Collection

Adelbert Bartlett (c1887-1966) was a commercial photographer known for his ethereal representations of daily life in his home city of Santa Monica. He captured residents relaxing in Palisades Park, SAMOHI students performing at Barnham Hall, and views of Santa Monica Bay in the 1920s and 1930s.

A 1927 exhibition of Bartlett's work at the Los Angeles Public Library was sponsored by the Santa Monica — Ocean Park Chamber of Commerce, and was intended to advertise, "the natural beauty spots, fine homes and recreational activities of the Bay region." Original signed prints from the 1927 exhibition are housed in the Santa Monica History Museum's collection.

Bartlett was a supporter of the Los Angeles Near East Relief Fund. He traveled and photographed internationally on behalf of the fund and lectured locally to promote its work. The Near East Relief Fund was formed in response to the Armenian Genocide in 1915 and was an unprecedented fundraising effort by America to provide aid to millions of orphaned children.

In addition to the Santa Monica History Museum, Bartlett's work resides in the collections of the Los Angeles Natural History Museum, the Huntington Library, and the Santa Monica Public Library. His personal papers and photography collection are archived in the Charles E. Young Research Library Special Collections at UCLA.



Carl F. Schader with Liquor Wagon, by H.F. Rile (1895)
Santa Monica History Museum, Santa Monica History Museum Collection

H.F. RILE



H.F. (Harry Frantz) Rile (1860-1949) was active from the 1880s through the 1910s and produced cabinet cards documenting everything from local businesses and school children to city celebrations and views of Palisades Park.

As a young man, Rile worked his way west from Philadelphia, finally settling in Santa Monica sometime between 1885 and 1888. He succeeded two of Santa Monica's earliest documentarians, Carleton Watkins and E.G. Morrison. Upon Morrison's death, Rile purchased his photography business and opened the Pacific Photograph Gallery on the sand near Santa Monica's popular North Beach Bath House. Beachgoers could pose with a variety of backdrops in his studio or purchase pre-printed views of Santa Monica.

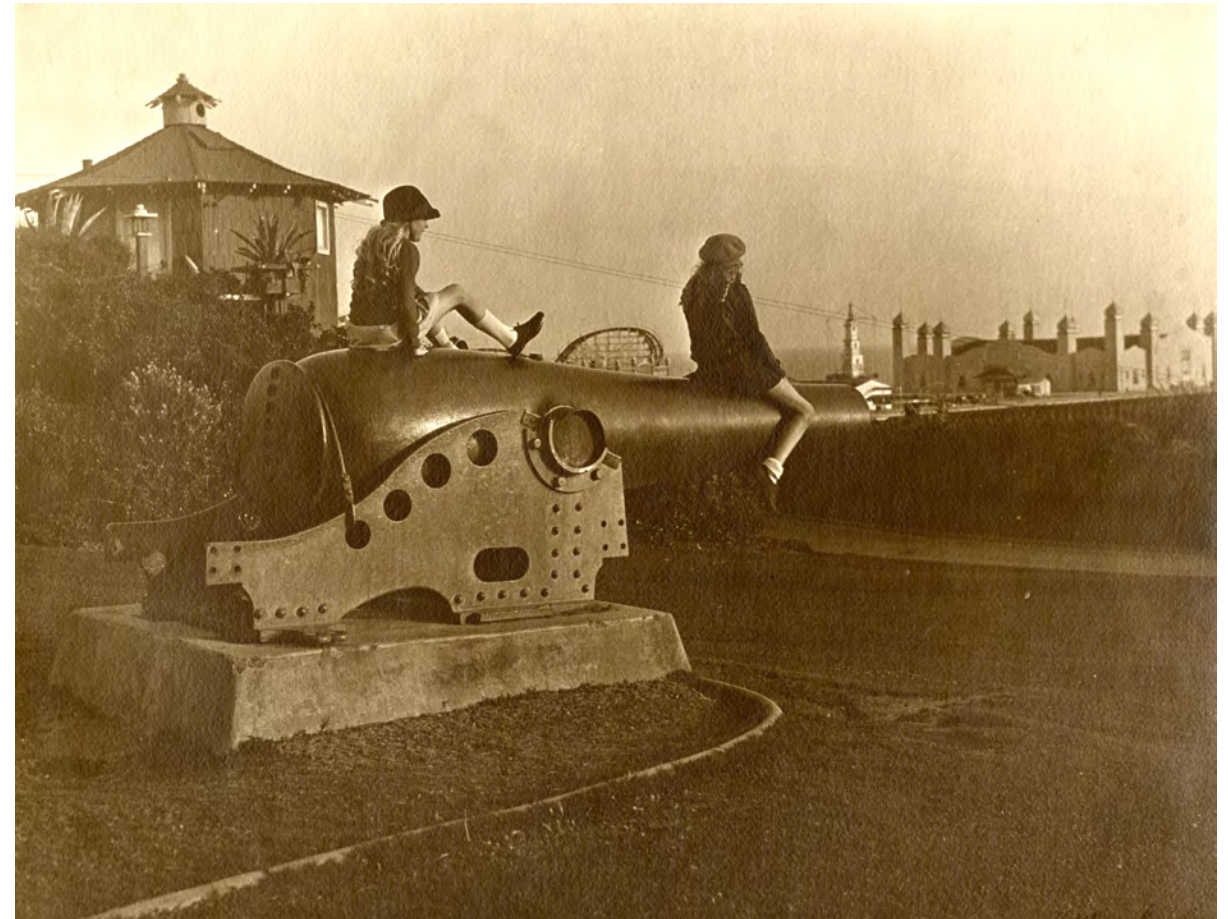


Top: Alberts Family at the Beach, by H.F. Rile (1894)
Santa Monica History Museum, Santa Monica History Museum Collection

Bottom: The Crystal Plunge, by H.F. Rile (1887)
Santa Monica History Museum, Santa Monica History Museum Collection

Rile was an effective marketer — labeling images with his distinctive “H.F. Rile Photo” mark and a title for each scene. He also devised a number of different advertisements printed on the back of his cabinet cards. An ill-fated move to the Decatur Hotel in Ocean Park, which suffered a devastating fire in 1912, caused Rile to close up shop and reopen at Jefferson Boulevard and Western Avenue in Los Angeles. He is believed to have left the photography business in the late-1910s due to problems with his vision.

Over the past forty years, the Santa Monica History Museum has acquired a large collection of original Rile cabinet cards generously donated by members of our community.



In Palisades Park, by Adelbert Bartlett (c1920s)
Santa Monica History Museum, Adelbert Bartlett Collection

BILL BEEBE



Top: Victor Rothschild and Actress Vera-Ellen Obtain Marriage License, by Bill Beebe (1954)

Santa Monica History Museum, Bill Beebe Collection

Bottom: Children's Doll Show, by Bill Beebe (1948)
Santa Monica History Museum, Bill Beebe Collection

Bill Beebe (b1927) was a preeminent local photojournalist whose 1962 image of John F. Kennedy emerging from the Santa Monica surf was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. Beebe was born in West Los Angeles and moved to Santa Monica as a child. After joining the Navy during high school, he developed an interest in photography and was one of the first to major in the subject at Santa Monica College (then SMCC) in 1946.

After graduating, Beebe joined Emerson Gaze's Pacific Press Photos, a group of photographers who provided images to local news organizations. Beebe then spent ten years working for the *Los Angeles Mirror*, where he won multiple photojournalism awards. After the *Mirror* merged with the *Los Angeles Times*, he stayed on as a staff photographer until 1963. He then moved to the *Evening Outlook*, where he devoted three decades to capturing Santa Monica notables and happenings.

Beebe was an avid conservationist and edited a regular outdoor column for the *Evening Outlook*. Upon being honored with a lifetime achievement award from the Los Angeles Press Photographers Association in 2000, Beebe said, "My job was my hobby. Didn't make much money, but I made a lot of friends and had a lot of fun."

Beebe retained the rights to the images he produced while working for the *Evening Outlook*, and upon the newspaper's closure in 1998, generously donated his collection of over 100,000 negatives to the Santa Monica History Museum. Beebe's images are an invaluable resource for the museum and are used on a regular basis by academic researchers, members of the public, and fellow journalists.

EMERSON GAZE



Top: WWII Smoke Defense Test, by Emerson Gaze (1943)
Santa Monica History Museum, Bill Beebe Collection

Bottom: WWII Victory Celebration Aftermath, by Emerson Gaze (1945)
Santa Monica History Museum, Bill Beebe Collection

Emerson Gaze (c1905-1966) captured illuminated storefronts, noteworthy events, celebrities, athletes, and children. In the 1930s, he founded Pacific Press Photography, a bureau of photojournalists who produced images for Los Angeles-area newspapers.

Gaze lived in Santa Monica and spent his career documenting the city. His self-portraits poke fun at the chaotic life of an exhausted news photographer racing from one assignment to the next. Though his sense of humor comes through in many of his images, those of Santa Monica during World War II are sedate and strikingly capture daily life in an era of uncertainty.

Fellow photojournalist Bill Beebe acted as steward of Gaze and Pacific Press Photography's vast image archives for years before donating them to the Santa Monica History Museum as part of the museum's invaluable Bill Beebe Collection.