



Press Release

Leica Store & Gallery New York Presents "In Conversation: A Photographic Dialogue Between Yesterday and Today"

Featuring Bruce Davidson and Sara Messinger

The special exhibition is part of 12 worldwide exhibitions celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Leica I

New York, NY, April 17, 2025 — In celebration of the centenary of the Leica I, the Leica Store & Gallery New York is proud to present **100 YEARS OF LEICA**, a landmark exhibition honoring a century of innovation in photography. 100 years of Leica photography have produced a host of outstanding photographic moments, which now take center stage in the growing network of 29 Leica Galleries worldwide. As mediators of culture, art and knowledge, the Leica galleries have taken on significant social responsibility. In the process, they are striking a balance between presenting contemporary photography and showcasing the great icons of yesteryear.

To celebrate this centenary, Leica is embracing heritage with a special concept that fosters a conversation between photography of the past and present. An exhibition will open in a selected Leica Gallery every month, linking a contemporary talent with one of the Leica Hall of Fame winners. The result will be twelve captivating pairs whose works complement one another, reference each other, and spark inspiration for all. The New York Exhibition, ***In Conversation: A Photographic Dialogue Between Yesterday and Today*** will showcase the work of Leica Hall of Fame winner, Bruce Davidson and renowned artist Sara Messinger, spotlighting Leica's transformative influence on the world of photography.

Bruce Davidson's, *Brooklyn Gang* will be featured alongside Sara Messinger's, *Teenagers* as a conversation between two subjects with decades in between their stories. Teenagers have been a recurring subject in photography throughout history, offering glimpses into their ever-changing yet timeless spirit. In 1959, Bruce Davidson observed a gang in Brooklyn called The Jokers and became a daily photographer of their alienated youth culture. Davidson began his first major project when he was only 25 – not much older than the youths depicted in his photos. This work became the classic photo project, *Brooklyn Gang*: a collection of images of tough people and tough lives that captured a vision of youth in post-war New York City.



“Capturing the daily lives of The Jokers allowed me to witness their fear, depression, and anger that bonded many of them together in a time of need,” Bruce Davidson explained. “I soon realized that I was feeling some of their pain. In staying close to them, I uncovered my own feelings of failure, frustration, and rage.”

Inspired by Bruce Davidson’s approach, Sara Messinger has spent the past four years documenting a group of New York City youth. By immersing herself in the lives of her young subjects, Sara not only captures their stories but also embarks on her own journey of self-discovery, connecting her past to the untethered vibrant lives of her subjects. “Bruce Davidson’s *Brooklyn Gang* left a profound impression on me and ultimately shaped my philosophy as a photographer,” said Sara Messinger. “His way of working by embedding himself in the world that he was documenting, became pivotal in my own practice as a photographer. I aim to capture both intimacy and honesty, and through that, many of my subjects have also become close personal friends over time.”

This gallery exhibition presents the raw, gritty work of both artists and lies at the forefront of documentary photography by expressing emotion through a strong sense of storytelling. Through their lens, Davidson and Messinger have showcased that although such time has separated their works, the open heart of the New York City teenager remains a constant. Visitors to Leica Store & Gallery New York will have the opportunity to experience the enduring legacy of Leica and how these photographers have left a lasting impression on the community.

The exhibition will be available to the public starting on May 1st through June 15th, 2025, with an opening reception on [Thursday, May 1st](#), from 6pm to 8pm.

The exhibition of Sara Messinger was realised with the kind support of WhiteWall.

— printed by —



100 years of Leica: Witness to a century

In 2025, Leica Camera AG is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Leica I, the first 35mm mass-produced camera, which was introduced to the public at the Leipzig Spring Fair in 1925. This groundbreaking camera exceeded all expectations with its compact, portable design, unlocking new possibilities in photography. Under the theme ***100 Years of Leica: Witness to a Century***, Leica Camera AG commemorates this milestone that transformed photography worldwide. Throughout the year, Leica will host international events in major cities including Dubai, Milan, New York, Shanghai, and Tokyo, showcasing cultural projects and exclusive special product editions. The highlight of the



celebration will be the anniversary week in June at the company's headquarters in Wetzlar. Additionally, the global Leica Gallery network will feature high-caliber exhibitions showcasing works by renowned photographers.

About Leica Camera

Leica Camera AG is a global premium manufacturer of cameras, lenses, and sports optics products, with a company history spanning over 150 years. As part of its growth strategy, Leica has expanded into mobile imaging (smartphones), high-quality eyeglass lenses and watch manufacturing, and is also present in the home cinema segment with its own projectors.

Headquartered in Wetzlar, Germany, with a second production facility in Vila Nova de Famalicão, Portugal, Leica Camera AG operates a global network of sales subsidiaries and more than 120 Leica Stores.

The Leica brand represents excellent quality, German craftsmanship, and industrial design, seamlessly combined with innovative technology. An integral part of the brand's culture is its commitment to fostering photographic culture, exemplified by approximately 30 Leica Galleries worldwide, Leica Academies, and prestigious international awards such as the Leica Hall of Fame Award and the Leica Oskar Barnack Award (LOBA).

About the Artists:

Bruce Davidson

Born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1933, Bruce Davidson attended the Rochester Institute of Technology and Yale University. During military service in Paris, Davidson met Henri Cartier-Bresson, one of the founders of Magnum Photos, and in 1958 became a full-time member. He worked as a freelance photographer for *Life*, and from 1958 to 1961 created such seminal bodies of work as *Circus*, *Brooklyn Gang*, and *Freedom Rides*. Davidson received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1962 and created a profound documentation of the civil rights movement in America, later published as *Time of Change*.

In 1963, the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented his early work in a solo exhibition. Five years later, the first photography grant from the National Endowment for the Arts was awarded to Davidson in 1967. He spent two years witnessing the dire social conditions on one block in East Harlem and went on to publish his book, *East 100th Street*. In the same year, it went on to becoming an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Davidson extended his view of the city in 1980 with *Subway*, which explored the New York underground and its subterranean travellers. His next project, *Central Park*, was a four-year encounter (1992–95) with the city's magnificent green space. Davidson also released a film called *Living off the Land* which received the Critics Award from the



American Film Festival.

Sara Messinger (she/her)

Born in 1998, Sara is a New York-based photographer. She studied at NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study, earning a Bachelor of Arts in History, Documentary, and Memory. Sara has completed special projects and portrait commissions for *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, and other publications. Her personal work delves into long-term stories that explore themes of gender, identity, and subcultures. Since 2021, she has collaborated with a group of teenagers in New York City, documenting their journey of self-discovery alongside her own.

Exhibition Hours:

Leica Gallery New York is open Monday through Saturday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, and Sunday from 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM.

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