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Edward Weston

Edward Weston was born on March 24, 1886 in Highland Park, Illinois. When he was 16, Edward's father gave him a Bulls Eye #2 Kodak camera. This is when he began exploring the world of photography, taking pictures at the nearby park and his aunt’s farm. Edward ended self-teaching himself the art of photography, working on portraits and postcards in his early stages. In 1908, Weston entered and began his studies at the Illinois College of Photography in Chicago. Afterwards, he moved to the state of California and opened up a photography studio in Los Angeles in 1911. He, at first, made business by capturing film stars and ballerinas using a pictorial style that consist of using soft –focus lenses. It was at this time when he began to develop and practice many different photography techniques that would affect his career in the future. For example, Weston became a master printer, which is a skill he would soon combine with his knowledge of natural forms to capture the significant, yet simple beauty of natural forms, such as shells and vegetables. Also, it was around this time that Weston would transfer from the romantic style of photography to a new form known as “straight” photography. Straight photography was developed by a group called “Group f/64 which Weston cofounded with Ansel Adams and a few others in 1932. Members of this group would use large-format negatives and small lens apertures to produce the highest quality depth of field and a superior level of sharpness.

Edward Weston is most known for his landscape photos and studies of natural form, which have an unsurpassed beauty to them. Weston goal and ambition was to celebrate the variety, yet highly related shapes and forms of nature. His photos had an identity of ripples, rounded edges which brought out their forms and textures. His use of light is evident in his abstracted images of sea shells, wrinkled cabbage leaves, and waxy peppers, and, well, his portraits of woman.

Around 1937, photographers, such as the world renowned Dorothea Lange (who also was a friend of Weston), were documenting the effects of the Great Depression. It was then that Weston became the first photographer to be awarded with the Guggenheim Foundation.

In 1946, when Weston was about 60 years of age, he began experiencing symptoms of Parkinson’s disease. That same year, the Museum of Modern Art featured and presented 300 prints of Weston’s life works in his honor. Edward Weston finally died at his home in wildcat Hill in Carmel California on January 1, 1958, some 10 years after he stopped photography career. His ashes were scattered into the pacific ocean at Pebbly Beach in Point Lobos, California.

sources

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