

1947, Simone de Beauvoir in America

13 Dec 2018 — 9 Feb 2019 at the Sous Les Etoiles Gallery in New York, United States

20 DECEMBER 2018



Wayne Miller, From "The Way of Life of the Northern Negro," Chicago (Afternoon Game at Table 2), 1946-1948 courtesy Stephen Daiter Gallery/Sous Les Etoiles Gallery

Sous Les Etoiles Gallery is pleased to present «1947, Simone de Beauvoir in America» a photographic journey inspired by her diary «America Day by Day» published in France in 1948. This book was released in the United States in 1999 after its first translation to English in Great Britain in 1952. This exhibition curated by Corinne Tapia, director of Sous Les Etoiles Gallery, aims to illustrate the depiction of De Beauvoir's encounter with America at the time. It is the first time that this book becomes the subject of an exhibition.

In January of 1947, the French writer and intellectual, Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986) landed in New York's La Guardia Airport, beginning a four-month journey across America. She traveled from East to the West coast by trains, cars and even Greyhound buses. She has recounted her travels in her personal diary and recorded every experience with minute detail. She stayed 116 days, traveling through 19 states and 56 cities.

“The Second Sex”, published in 1949, became a reference in the feminist movement but has certainly masked the talent of diarist of Simone de Beauvoir. Careful observer, endowed with a chiseled and precise writing style, traveling was a central guidance of the existential experience of S. de Beauvoir: a woman with an infinite curiosity, a thirst for experiencing and discovering everything. In 1929, she made her first trips to Spain, Italy and England with her lifelong partner, the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. In 1947, she made, this time alone, her first trip to the United States, a trip that would have change her life: “Usually, traveling is an attempt to annex a new object to my universe; this in itself is an undertaking: but today it's different. I feel I'm leaving my life behind. I don't know if it will be through anger or hope, but something is going to be revealed – a world so full, so rich and so unexpected that I have the extraordinary adventure of becoming a different of me.”

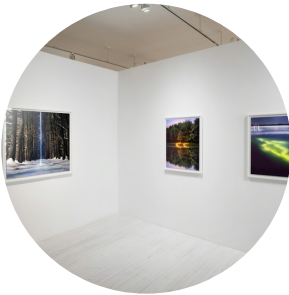
After WWII, in 1947, and in the context of the Cold War, the United States took the lead of the “free world”, while Europe was just beginning to recover from its wounds. Invited by the cultural services of the French Embassy, Simone de Beauvoir conducted a series of conferences on existentialism in American universities. “America Day by Day is at the same time a book of travel, of politics and sociology on this time period,” explains Corinne Tapia. In fact, De Beauvoir decorticates everything she

sees, immersing herself in the New World. She seems completely open and delighted to explore the vertigo of New York, to enjoy the beauty of the landscape of Arizona, to examine the segregation in the South, to be seduced by Chicago and to be intrigued by the College girls.

It is also most certainly a very photographic book. As you read it, you can easily imagine the footsteps of Simone de Beauvoir in places she discovers for the first time, the atmosphere of the night, of the cabarets and their music of this period, impressed by the American way of life that begins to take effect." I wanted the viewer to be as close to her reality at that time, so most of the photographs exhibited are in the year of 1947", said Corinne Tapia.

Their shades and different tones catch the spontaneous energy of the everyday American life. Much of the photographers were street photographers working often for publications like Life Magazine, Ted Croner with his haunting night photography, Louis Faurer and his double exposure, Ferenc Berko giving an abstract geometry to Chicago, Wayne Miller and his daily life series about the black community in Chicago, Esther Bubley with her Bus Series... This exhibition includes also the works by Ansel Adams, Henri Cartier - Bresson, Morris Engel, William Gottlieb, Sid Grossman, Sy Kattelson, Saul Leiter, Rebecca Lepkoff, Fred Lyon, Wayne Miller, Gjon Mili, Ruth Orkin, Arnold Roth, Art Shay, Fred Stein, Tony Vaccaro, Todd Webb, Brett Weston, Ida Wyman, Max Yavno.

This exhibition was made possible with the help of the following galleries: PDNB Gallery, Deborah Bell Gallery, Stephen Cohen Gallery, Stephen Daiter Gallery, Etherton Gallery, Peter Fetterman Gallery, Howard Greenberg Gallery, Gitterman Gallery, Monroe Gallery, Scott Nichols Gallery, Rosenberg and Co Gallery and Todd Webb Archives.



Sous Les Etoiles Gallery

Sous Les Etoiles Gallery is a contemporary exhibition space specializing in fine art photography and photo-based art.



[Gallery profile](#)

Location

New York, United States

Founded in

2007



ROAD EAST TO





1. Esher Bublely, Coast to Coast, SONJ, 1947, @Estate Esther Bublely/ courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery/ Sous Les Etoiles Gallery
2. Max Yavno, Ferry Building, San Francisco, 1947, Courtesy Scott Nichols Gallery/ Sous Les Etoiles Gallery
3. Ida Wyman, Looking East on 41st Street, New York , 1947, courtesy Stephen Cohen Gallery/ Sous Les Etoiles Gallery