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PRESS RELEASE

Phillips to Host **That Day: Laura Wilson** *Pictures in the American West*

**Photographs Exhibition to be Held in New York from
3 January – 9 February**



Cowboys Walking, J.R. Green Cattle Company, Shackelford County, Texas, May 13, 1997

NEW YORK - 14 DECEMBER 2016 - This winter, Phillips will present an exhibition devoted to the esteemed photographer Laura Wilson and her experiences in the American West. *That Day: Laura Wilson, Pictures in the American West* is a travelling exhibition comprised of eighty-two photographs that will be on view in Phillips' Park Avenue galleries from 3 January to 9 February. The works in the exhibition, which chronicle Wilson's three-decades-long exploration of the United States, have been generously loaned by a devoted private collector for a tour across the country. As the photographs have rarely been exhibited, this provides viewers in the Northeast with a unique opportunity to see and appreciate Wilson's masterful view of the Great Plains and Western landscape. The exhibition was previously on view at The Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas, which also introduced the world to Richard Avedon's *In the American West*, the project Wilson famously assisted with from 1979-1985. Following its tour to New York, *That Day: Laura Wilson, Pictures in the American West* will be exhibited at the Whitney Western Art Museum in Cody, Wyoming.

“I took these pictures in the West over the course of nearly thirty-five years,” said **Laura Wilson**. “Some were taken on assignment from magazines or newspapers; others were taken on my own. I photographed what interested me and I was drawn to people who live in an enclosed world – those people who live in isolated communities, whether by circumstance or accomplishment. I hope that those who are able to view the exhibition at Phillips share my interest in the people and places that compose this incredible region.”

Rachel Peart, Phillips’ Photographs Specialist, said, “Laura Wilson has established herself as one of the most significant contemporary photographers of the great American West. The works in this exhibition explore the diverse characteristics that compose the region’s rich identity, from cattle ranches and vast landscapes, to local debutantes and world-famous artists. We are delighted to work with both Mrs. Wilson, and the devoted collector who has acquired these stunning works, in bringing them to the public in New York for the first time.”

Laura Wilson

Laura Wilson lived in the small town of Norwell, Massachusetts, until 1966 when she moved to Dallas after her husband was hired by the city’s television and radio stations. While living there, she was keen to pursue a career for herself in photography, going as far as building a darkroom in their house. She eventually met Richard Avedon, who hired Wilson to assist him with what has since become known as a defining moment in his career – a project entitled *In the American West: Photographs by Richard Avedon*. For six summers, she travelled with him around the country, all the while taking her own photographs and keeping notes documenting Avedon's creative process, which eventually led to a book called *Avedon at Work*. In the thirty years since her travels with Avedon, Wilson has published five separate books of her own photography. Her work has also appeared in such publications as *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, and *GQ*, among others.

Highlights from The Exhibition

Among the highlights of the exhibition is *Emma, Hutterite Girl in Field, Duncan Ranch Colony, Harlowton, Montana, June 17, 1994* (illustrated right). The Hutterites are a group of people who have largely resided in the Great Plains of the United States, as well as Western Canada, since the 1870s. They remain far removed from mainstream America in an attempt to preserve their communal identity, strictly adhering to their traditions and beliefs. Photography is explicitly against Hutterite beliefs, a fact that Wilson was very much aware of during her many visits to the region. Beginning in 1985, she made several trips to the colonies in Montana and did not take a single photo. Eventually, however, as Wilson gained their trust, and as it was made clear the photos would be in black and white, she was permitted to work among them. She continued to return to the area for fourteen years, eventually publishing a book in 2000 called *Hutterites of Montana*. On her last visit there, she recalls that some members of the colony were in fact hopeful that her book would bring awareness of the people and their beliefs to the rest of the world.



Emma, Hutterite Girl in Field, Duncan Ranch Colony, Harlowton, Montana, June 17, 1994

Additional highlights from the exhibition include a portrait of artist Bruce Nauman on his ranch in New Mexico, vast landscapes of the Southwest deserts, and age-old traditions, such as Laredo’s annual Colonial Pageant and Ball. These works uniquely capture the diverse spirit of the great American West, a region that continues to inspire artists across the globe.



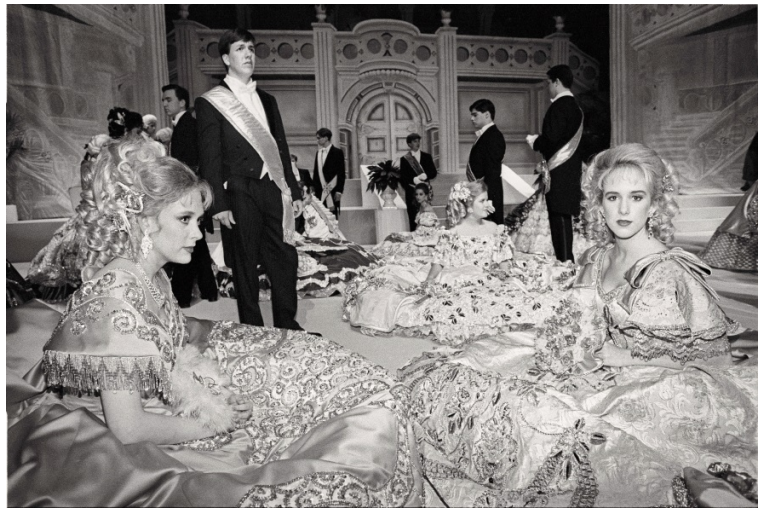
*Hutterite girls during hay making season,
Surprise Creek Colony Stanford, Montana, August 22, 1991*



*Hutterite Boy on Appaloosa,
Golden Valley Colony Ryegate, Montana, June 15, 1993*



Bruce Nauman, Galisteo, New Mexico, May 26, 1998



Debutantes on Stage, Laredo, Texas, February 19, 1993

Exhibition: 3 January – 9 February 2017

Hours: Monday to Saturday 10am-6pm (Closed 14-16 January)

Location: 450 Park Avenue, New York

Link to more information: <https://www.phillips.com/auctions/exhibition/EX040117>

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