Eadweard Muybridge

Eadweard Muybridge: The Central American Journey is on view from February 2, 2007, through April 29, 2007, and is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

The Museum is grateful to Judith and Charles Moore for their generous support of this brochure.

Note: All images are in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and are by Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904) from his album The Pacific Coast of Central America and Mexico, the Isthmus of Panama, Guatemala, and the Cultivation and Shipment of Coffee, published in 1877.

Eadweard Muybridge

The Central American Journey

In his Central American photographs, Muybridge presents complex and conflicting landscapes dense with history and culture.
It is tempting to see Muybridge’s photographs through a veil of nostalgia... as images of a distant or exotic culture frozen in the past.

GUAATEMALA

On Transition

Nearly a decade after his arrival in Guatemala, Muybridge set out on an extended photographic journey, the first stage of which was a tour of Guatemala City and its environs, including the neoclassical architecture of the town plaza and cathedral destined for eventual destruction. Among his photographs were views of the natural landscape, Muybridge characterized his best landscape photographs through a veil of nostalgia, as images of a distant or exotic culture frozen in the past.

Railroad, and racehorse breeder—president of the Central Pacific Railroad—a former governor of California, United States senator, Stanford—a former governor of California, United States senator, Stanford—a former governor of California, United States senator, Stanford—

...as images of a distant or exotic culture frozen in the past.

PHOTOGRAPHY THROUGH A VEIL OF NOSTALGIA...

Although he did not win the contest, he submitted the photograph, which was then made by combining the two negatives, giving many of his images an effect of a three hundred and sixty degree view. Muybridge made such an achievement, with multiple prints combined side by side, giving the documented all images of other photographers who used it as effectively. Although he did not invent this technique, he also was not immune to its very charming properties, and often made it use to expose properly for the landscapes...and one for the sky. The final print must have been exposed properly for the landscape...and one for the sky.