

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: *Carnival Strippers Color*, Susan Meiselas  
Dates: February 19 – April 23, 2022  
Opening: Saturday, February 26, 2022 (3pm – 6pm)

Address: 16 Main Street, Ground Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Higher Pictures Generation presents the first-ever exhibition of color photographs from Susan Meiselas' series *Carnival Strippers* (1972–75).

From 1972 to 1975 Meiselas followed traveling carnivals in the Midwest and New England each summer, photographing the women who performed striptease and interviewing them, the show managers, and paying customers. *Carnival Strippers* is praised for its nuanced and honest presentation of the women both on stage and off. The complexity of the series and Meiselas' dedication, at the young age of twenty-four, to sharing the women's ambivalent and conflicting feelings about dancing and sex work, their own motivations, and their hopes for their futures—in their own words—is astonishing. This is Meiselas' first full photographic series, which shaped her signature way of working that is rooted in collaboration, contextualization, and re-contextualization.

This is the first time color photographs from *Carnival Strippers* have ever been seen. Meiselas' rolls of color film from the time were forgotten until they were recently discovered in deep storage at Magnum Photos. The vibrant kodachrome color adds another level of immediacy to the intimate photographs and brings back a heightened sense of the carnivalesque in them.

In the five decades that have passed since Meiselas began *Carnival Strippers* much has changed, from the way we consume sex (more voraciously and mostly online) to the recent increase in public attention to sexual violence against women. What persists is how difficult it remains for a woman's body to be solely her own; fifty years on, women in America are now facing a very real threat to Roe v. Wade and the abortion rights it protects. It is, still, a battleground.

The two-volume publication *Carnival Strippers — Revisited* was released by Steidl this year and comprises a third printing of *Carnival Strippers* (1976), newly commissioned texts, and an accompanying volume, *Making Of*, that reproduces the color photographs for the first time alongside archival material from the project.

Susan Meiselas (b. 1948) received her BA from Sarah Lawrence College and her MA in visual education from Harvard University. She was a 1992 MacArthur Fellow and is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship (2015) and the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize (2019), among other awards. *Mediations*, a retrospective exhibition of Meiselas' work, is currently traveling and was previously on view at Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona (2018); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2018); SFMOMA, San Francisco (2018); Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo (2020); and Kunst Haus Wien, Vienna (2021). She has been a member of the photographic collective Magnum Photos since 1976 and has been the president of the Magnum Foundation since 2007. She lives and works in New York City.

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