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Beyond Beefcake: Bob Mizer Excavation at 80WSE Gallery

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In the first solo presentation of the work of trailblazing photographer and film maker Bob Mizer, the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development will present DEVOTION, an exhibition and live-archiving event at the 80 Washington Square East Gallery from November 23 through February 15.

Organized by Billy Miller, Jonathan Berger, and Dennis Bell of the Bob Mizer Foundation, the exhibition will feature 45 black and white and color photographs that span Mizer's career, the majority of which are on view for the first time. The exhibit also features a live archiving component, through which students from the NYU Steinhardt Department of Art and Art Professions will unearth over 500,000 of the Foundation's never-before-seen negatives.

"Mizer is known primarily for pioneering what is now widely regarded as, "Beefcake" photography via his company the Athletic Model Guild (AMG), but this genre is only one of many that he pursued over the course of nearly 50 years of creative production," said Berger. "We literally have no idea what we will find. That's what's so exciting. The students working on the preservation will be discovering new artworks and information about Mizer's life each day."

DEVOTION delves in to these many recently unearthed expansive and unknown bodies of work, which Mizer produced privately, for himself, independently of AMG and its associated publication, Physique Pictorial. A significant portion of the material serves to document American cultural history, recording virtually every popular and subcultural "scene" and "type" to emerge between the 1940s and 1990s including "nature boys", beatniks, greasers, female and male body builders, beauty queens, soldiers, religious figures, magicians, circus performers, Hollywood actresses, gang members, cowboys, hippies, hustlers and their girlfriends, punks, new wavers, drifters, farm boys, surfers, druggies, construction workers, artists, activists, ex-cons, would-be politicians, among others in addition to portraits of children and animals.

"Mizer also staged a remarkable series of photographs employing AMG models and their girlfriends, for his own non-AMG images, posed in often abstract, surreal, and politically provocative tableaux, for which he constructed sets and costumes," said Billy Miller, co-curator of the exhibition. "These images retain Mizer's exploration of eroticism; however, they complicate the functionality and more standard conventional erotic appeal of the AMG beefcake images."

The previously unknown bodies of work sampled in the exhibition are indicative of The Bob Mizer Foundation's continuing effort to preserve the entirety of the artist's life and work. In addition to the exhibition's presentation of printed photographs, a large portion of the Mizer estate—which consists of well over a million negatives and slides, three thousand films, and thousands of objects—will be shipped to NYC and installed at 80WSE. The galleries will contain large worktables with light boxes and archiving equipment. Throughout each day of the exhibition, students will work on organizing and returning negatives to Mizer's original order, scanning transparencies, and cataloging the archive for preservation.

The public nature of the archiving process will also afford visitors to the exhibition the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the new bodies of work being discovered. A selection of images unearthed through the archiving process will be displayed and changed daily by those processing the archive.

"This act of excavating Mizer's work is, by extension, an excavation of his life," Berger added. "In this regard, each image serves as evidence, the occasion for further research, and a contribution towards building a biography for this enigmatic American photographer; arguably one of the most compellingly prolific cultural documentarians of the 20th century."

A number of public programs will take place in conjunction with the exhibition including series of panel discussions, addressing Bob Mizer's influence on art and culture, hosted by the artist Vaginal Davis and curators Pati Hertling and Billy Miller. Andrew Lampert, Curator of Collections at Anthology Film Archives, will host a screening of selections from the 3000 films which Mizer shot over the course of his career. For a full schedule of events, please visit: <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/80wse/>. A fully illustrated publication, documenting the project in its entirety, will be produced in collaboration with the NY based publisher KARMA.

Accompanying DEVOTION will be a presentation of new works by artist and designer Ross Menez (a.k.a. SALVOR), produced in collaboration with The Bob Mizer Foundation on the occasion of the exhibition. The project is on view 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through February 15th at 80WSE's satellite space, the Broadway Windows, located at the corner of Broadway and 10th Street.

80WSE Gallery is located at 80 Washington Square East, between West 4th Street and Washington Street. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 10:30AM-6PM. For more information about the exhibition, please contact the gallery at 212-998-5751 or email 80wsefrontdesk@nyu.edu. Press inquiries can be directed to 80wsepress@nyu.edu.

The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

Located in the heart of Greenwich Village, NYU's Steinhardt School prepares students for careers in the arts, education, health, media, and psychology. Since its founding in 1890, the Steinhardt School's mission has been to expand human capacity through public service, global collaboration, research, scholarship, and practice.

DEVOTION is made possible through the generous support of ITS Academic Technology Services and the Advanced Media Studio (AMS). For more information please visit: <http://www.nyu.edu/its/ams>.

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The unseen works of Bob Mizer, famous for creating the "beefcake" photography genre in the 40s and 50s, will be excavated and displayed at 80WSE Gallery starting November 23.

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NYU In the News

[Big Man on a Global Campus \(http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/06/nyregion/andrew-hamilton-new-york-university-president.html\)](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/06/nyregion/andrew-hamilton-new-york-university-president.html)

The *New York Times* profiles NYU's new president, Andy Hamilton.

[NYU Received a Record Number of Applications \(http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/01/8560046/record-60000-students-applied-nyu-class-19\)](http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/01/8560046/record-60000-students-applied-nyu-class-19)

Capital New York reported NYU received a record 60,322 applications for the class of 2019, an increase of about 15 percent since last year.

[NYU Students Help City Crack Down on Hookah Bars \(http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/01/8559646/nyu-students-help-city-crack-down-hookah-bars\)](http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/01/8559646/nyu-students-help-city-crack-down-hookah-bars)

Capital New York reported that NYU students helped New York City crack down on hookah bars that illegally include tobacco in their hookahs:

[Rudin Center Study Says Mass Transit Helps](http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2013/10/25/unknown-works-of-beefcake-photo-icon-excavated-at-80wse.html)

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/report-connects-jobs-transportation-web-1420246652?cb=logged0.41238251025788486>

The Wall Street Journal wrote about a report by Wagner's Rudin Center that showed that mass transit could be more important than education in determining economic mobility.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/government-elections-politics/big-sky-big-money/report-after-citizens-united-outside-spending-doubles/>

Frontline did a piece about a report by the Brennan Center for Justice that said that campaign spending by outside groups has more than doubled in the last five years.

<http://www.hometalk.com/6444015/most-impressive-dorms>

Hometalk.com ranked NYU's student residences third in the country in its list of best college dorms.
