

# The PSA Print Collection and *Reconsidering The Family of Man* at [Artspace] at Untitled

Jon Burris  
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Shortly into the start of 2011, a collection of nearly 5,000 photographic prints acquired by the Photographic Society of America (PSA) since 1934—comprised primarily of works by members worldwide, but also including photographs from well known artists that were collected by members—was placed into 135 archival storage boxes for transfer from PSA's offices in Oklahoma City to the Photographic Resource Center at [Artspace] at Untitled, a contemporary arts center located in downtown Oklahoma City. Thus began an association that has brought to light what I believe to be one of the most important photographic archives in existence.

My association with the PSA collection began some 23 years ago when it was moved from the organization's former headquarters in Philadelphia. As a private art consultant specializing in photography, I was asked to appraise the collection for insurance purposes. Over the many years that I did this, I made the suggestion to PSA that they should utilize their great resource by sharing it with scholars and photographic historians, and by making it accessible to the general public. It seemed to me

this would benefit the Society as well as countless photography enthusiasts.

Concurrent to my assuming the directorship at [Artspace] at Untitled in 2009, the new PSA President, **Fred Greene, Hon. PSA, FPSA, GMPSA**, visited me. He wanted to discuss the future of the collection. He mentioned that the Royal Photographic Society in London had sold their collection but retained rights to use it. His suggestion was that PSA might consider the George Eastman House in Rochester as a potential home for the collection with a similar arrangement. I then proposed a plan that would keep it in Oklahoma. In collaboration with the PSA Board of Directors, Fred and I outlined an agreement that would move the collection to Untitled where we would create a climatized, fireproof, safe storage facility in which to house it and establish an office onsite that would be devoted to the scanning and cataloging of the thousands of prints. We discussed multiple uses of the collection that would keep it in the hands of PSA while making it more profitable to the organization and Untitled, and also bring public attention to it as a great photographic resource.

Over the course of the first year of our

Interior view of  
the exhibition 1

