



# DAVENTRY

## PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



© Lee Friedlander

## Lee Friedlander

If you're walking around New York with the intention of taking photographs, you notice how different the city looks every few steps. Your progress is not a line, direct or winding, from one point to another, but a flickering series of scenes. A street is not only its tarred surface, the buildings alongside it, the cars fast or slow, the people around you. It is also the way those things relate to one another, the way they combine and recombine. As some elements slip out of view, new ones become visible: You are moving, the cars are moving, other people are moving, even the sun is moving, slowly, and in the middle of this movable feast you must decide when to press the shutter, decide which of these rapidly refreshing instants is more interesting than the others around it. A second before, it has not yet arrived. A second later, it is already gone. Henri Cartier-Bresson called it "a joint operation of the brain, the eye and the heart."



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Cartier-Bresson's own approach, the famous "decisive moment," which emphasizes elegant geometries and direct emotions, is not the only way to do street photography. Robert Frank's shadowy anomie is influential, too, as is the surrealism of Diane Arbus. But to head out into a city with a camera is still fundamentally about collaborating with chance. A successful street photograph brings into the world not only something that wasn't there before but something that could not have been anticipated.

The pleasure a photographer takes in each of these singular and unrepeatable occurrences must be why, at age 80, Lee Friedlander is still roaming New York's streets in search of his next picture. One of his ongoing interests is our obsession with cellphones. On sunny days in Manhattan, Friedlander takes photos in the mad press of people, some of whom are talking on their phones, reading on their phones or typing into their phones.

Since the mid-1950s, Friedlander's subjects have included all registers of the visual environment, encompassing individuals, crowds, buildings, vehicles and streetscapes, but also posters, signage, lettering, storefronts, chain-link fences and trees, all the fragments and detritus of the American cityscape, landscape and domestic interior. For most of his career, Friedlander, who



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shoots with a variety of cameras, has favoured black-and-white film, which he meticulously develops and prints himself. With the cellphone project, the medium is the same. But this time, out there on the street, he's just another American glued to his gadget, thrilled by the passing scene. Like his subjects, Friedlander is not distracted but rather is deeply absorbed in the task at hand. He is a part of the flow that he records.

Text©. [Teju Cole](#)

## **Lee Friedlander - Photography - The Big Dream - David Lynch**

[Lee Friedlander - Photography - The Big Dream - David Lynch - YouTube](#)

Lee Friedlander, born in 1934, began photographing the American social landscape in 1948. In the 1960s and 70s Friedlander evolved an influential and often imitated visual language of urban "social landscape."



Something different for flower lovers

## **DPS PROGRAMME AND COMPETITION THEMES FEBRUARY 2020**

- 4th Members evening - Back to basics - cameras
- 11th Competition (Projected) - FOOD - Judge: John Lewis
- 18th Members evening - Informal Critique
- 25th Guest Speaker: John Lewis - Social Documentary in the 20th Century

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