

Material from Col. E. S. Stiechen

Stiechen said that Grammys influence on photography was tremendous because she was the first person, man or woman to do "pictorial portraiture" (for lack of a better name) commercially -

At that time (about 1900) photography had been taken up by a few artists, Stiechen, Stieglitz, White, herself, etc - (see history of photography in US Camera etc) but artistic photography had never been tried commercially - It was in this that she was a pioneer -

She contributed to all the current exhibitions, ^{salons} and photographic magazines but also opened a studio where the public could come in and have a portrait made -

Stiechen said "her portraits are to my mind her greatest work, I liked them very much more than her pictorial photography - her finest work was given

To the public rather than made for exhibition pieces -"

Stiechen said she was very vivacious very direct, not always the soul of tact, but very kind and generous, had a quick wit and wonderful sense of humor.

He said she had a falling out with Stieglitz but he didn't know what about. Said Stieglitz was very autocratic and quarrelled with most everyone - Clarence White, Marin etc

Charles Caffin, art critic, came to Granny to be photographed - He didn't like Granny very much - nor she him - He didn't like his pictures either, he told Stiechen.

When he went to be photographed he said Granny put him on a ^{chair on the} large model stand with casters. She looked thru the camera and then came round front and moved the model stand this way or that with her foot - This was her regular method of procedure but Caffin said in his case

she picked the model stand much too hard - she had him at her mercy and took her opportunity to punch him around anything but gently -

c 1907 When Lumiere brought out the first color plates - the autochrome plates he brought the very first ones to leave the factory to Stiechen to try. Stiechen made some studies of Lumiere on them.

About this time Grammy came to Stiechen one day and began talking about the possibilities of color photography. She said she'd like to try some - and suggested that they might try some together - asked if he had ever thought of experimenting with it - He was evasive but asked her to step into his studio and see the negatives he had made of her a few days earlier - He showed them to her - They were color transparencies! She was pretty burned up. He said she had remarked at the time of the sitting that the exposure

were very long, but didn't catch on that she was being done in color.

A normal exposure for black and white film was 5 to 10 seconds. ^{color up to 1/2 hr. dark}

Granny made most of her exposures by taking off the lens cap and counting seconds. The aperture of the lens was changed by slipping different size "stops" into the lens. Granny used the design of these stops for her trade mark monogram



In reference to the poem by Sadakichi Hartman mentioned in material from Harriet Hubbard. Stiechen remembered it well - Said it was printed in "Camera Work" (possibility this caused first rift between Grammy & Stieglitz) The poem was a parody on Hamlet's Soliloquy in which Stiechen was Hamlet & Grammy Aphelia, the Nymph of Newport. I said that Hartman was a pretty poor specimen - Hartman gave Stiechen a tremendous boost in his articles - Extravagant praise. Then suggested to S. that he pay him (Hartman) a salary as press agent - Stiechen turned ^{the proposition} ~~it~~ down and Hartman then threatened to ruin Stiechen by derogatory criticism of his work in articles & talks, unless I would come across - Stiechen threw him out -

When Stieglitz decided to start the magazine Camera Work (1903) Stiechen was living in France, outside of Paris - Stieglitz wrote to him and told him about his proposed venture and suggested dedicating the first issue to Stiechen's work. Stiechen did nothing about it as he was

planning a trip to NY shortly. When he did
 come over and went to spend Sunday with
 the Stiglitzs in the country, Stiglitz told him
 that he had decided to devote the income of C & W
 to granny's work. Granny was also a guest at the
 Stiglitz house. They all returned to the city
 together on the train. Stiglitz & Strichen sat
 together and granny sat in the seat just ahead.
 As granny was partially deaf and the train was
 making a good deal of noise Strichen felt
 perfectly at ease in talking to A.S. He was
 upset at not having the first Camera Work
 for himself - He was young and just starting
 in with photography. Granny was established
 and he felt she didn't need the honor and
 he did - He argued long and loud but
 Stiglitz was firm - He said granny deserved it
 she was the pioneer - She was to have it -

Granny heard every word but said
 nothing. Strichen didn't know, until
 months later when he spoke to Stiglitz about
 granny's coolness to him of late, what the reason
 for it was - Stiglitz told E.S. that granny

had told him only recently of overhearing the train conversation -

Strichen brought the first Picasso exhibition ever shown in this country, over. Just for the hell of it he made a water color à la Picasso and treasured it in among the genuine ones. It was hung and he had quite a time getting out of his joke as there were many offers to buy it -

Note -

Strichen volunteered to go over all granny's prints and select those best for publication. I think there would be no trouble in getting him to write a preface if it seems desirable - He was most cooperative and encouraging.

From Col. Edward J. Steichen

Steichen said that Granny's influence on photography was tremendous because she was the first person, man or woman, to do "pictorial portraiture" (for lack of a better name) commercially. (This applies to the U.S. as Margaret Cameron of London, 1814-1879 may have done portraits commercially.)

At that time, 1900, photography had been taken up by a few artists, Steichen, Steiglitz, Clarence White, Granny, etc. (See history of photography in "U.S. Camera" etc.) but artistic photography had never been tried commercially. It was in this that she was a pioneer.

She contributed to all the current exhibitions, salons, and photographic magazines, but also opened a studio where the public could come in and have a portrait made.

Steichen said, "Her portraits were to my mind her greatest work, I liked them very much more than her pictorial work. Her finest work was given to the public rather than made for exhibition prices."

Steichen said that she was very vivacious, very direct, not always the soul of tact, but very kind and generous, had a quick wit and a wonderful sense of humour.

He said she had a falling out with Steiglitz, but he, Steichen didn't know what it was about. Said Steiglitz was very autocratic and quarreled with most every one, White, Marin etc.

Charles Caffin, the art critic, came to Granny to be photographed. He didn't like Granny very much nor she him. He told Steichen that he didn't like the pictures Granny made of him either. When he went to be photographed he said Granny sat him in a chair on a large model stand with casters. She looked through the camera, then came around front and moved the model stand this way or that, with her foot. This was her regular method of procedure, but Caffin said, in his case, she kicked the model stand much too hard. She had him at her mercy and took her opportunity to push him around anything but gently.

When Lumiere brought out the first color plates (About 1907) Autochrome plates, he brought the very first ones to leave the factory to Steichen to try. Steichen made some studies of Lumiere on them. About this time, Granny came to Steichen one day and began talking about the possibilities of color photography, not knowing that he had already been experimenting with it. She suggested that they might try some together. Steichen was evasive, but asked her to step into his studio and see the negatives he had made of her a few days earlier. He showed them to her. They were color transparencies! She was pretty burned up. He said that she had remarked at the time of sitting that the exposures were very long, but didn't, of course, realize that she was being done in color. (a normal exposure for black and white film was 3 to 10 seconds, color up to a half hour.)

Granny made most of her exposures by removing the lens cap and counting seconds. The aperture was changed by slipping different size "stops" into a slit in the lens. Granny used the design of these stops as a trade mark monogram.

Re. the poem by S. Hartmann, mentioned in material from Hibbard, Steichen remembered it well. It was printed in Camera Work. (possibly this caused the rift between Granny and Steiglitz, though not likely) The poem was a parody on Hamlet's soliloquy in which Steichen (or Steiglitz) was Hamlet and Granny Ophelia "The Nymph of Newport". Steichen said that Hartmann was a pretty poor specimen. Hartmann gave Steichen a tremendous build up, extravagant praise, in his articles on art, then suggested that Steichen pay him so much a month as a press agent. When Steichen refused Hartmann threatened to ruin him by derogatory criticism in articles etc.

Steichen threw him out.

When Steiglitz decided to start the magazine "Camera Work", (1903) Steichen was living in France. Voulangie, outside of Paris. Steiglitz wrote to him about the magazine and suggested dedicating the first issue to Steichen's work. As Steichen was planning a trip to New York in the near future he neglected to answer A.S.' letter. When he came over, he went to spend Sunday with Granny and the Steiglitzs at the Steiglitz's country home. Steiglitz told him that he had decided to give Granny the first issue of Camera Work. They all returned to the city on the train together. Steiglitz and Steichen sitting together and Granny in the seat ahead.

Knowing that Granny was partially deaf, and that the train was making a lot of noise, Steichen felt perfectly at ease in arguing his case with Steiglitz. He was upset at not having the first Camera Work to himself. He was young and just starting in with photography. Granny was established and he felt she didn't need the publicity and honor it would bring, and he did. He argued long and loud but Steiglitz was firm, saying that Granny was the pioneer, she deserved it, she would have it. Months later when Steichen spoke to Steiglitz about Granny's coolness to him of late, Steiglitz told him that Granny had told him only recently that she overheard every word of their conversation on the train.

Steichen brought the first Picasso exhibition, ever shown in this country, over. For fun he made a water color à la Picasso and tossed it in among the genuine ones. It was not recognized, and he had quite a time getting out of it when there were many offers to buy it.

Note:

Steichen volunteered to go over all of Granny's prints and select those best suited for reproduction in the book. I think there would be no trouble in getting him to write a preface, if it seems desirable. He was most cooperative and encouraging.