
Large Print Exhibition Labels
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Section: Entrance


"Our family photo album was probably my first significant exposure to photography...on some level, at an early age, it was impressed upon me that it was important to keep the memories of these miners, steelworkers, and farmers alive."
—Russ Marshall

For fifty years, photographer Russ Marshall (American, born 1940) chronicled changing industrial landscapes in Detroit and southeast Michigan through depictions of those who lived in them.

Born into a family of coal miners, farmers, and factory workers, Marshall approached his subjects with deep familiarity and respect. His photographs—looming skylines, bustling streetscapes, and candid portraits—are a testament to the strength and resiliency of people in southeast Michigan and the vibrancy of life in the region.
THINK ABOUT IT:

How do you keep the memory of people you care about and respect alive?

#RussMarshallDIA
Section: Entrance

Recognize anyone?

If you have information about the people pictured in these photographs, send us an email at curators@dia.org
Section: North Entrance

Church Custodian, Delray, Detroit, Michigan, 1986

(printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.165
Section: North Entrance

The Palms Parade Crowd (Thanksgiving Day Parade),

1964 (printed 2004)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.179
Section: North Entrance


Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.162
Section: North Entrance

The Ford Rouge Plant/Neighborhood from Fort St.

Overpass, 1995 (printed 2005)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.177
Section: North Entrance


Gelatin silver print

Museum Purchase, Albert and Peggy de Salle Charitable Trust

DIA No. 2012.28
Section: North Entrance

Detroit Steel Plant Laborers, 1979 (printed 1997)

Gelatin silver print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. 2012.151
Section: North Entrance

Lunch Room Janitor, Delray Shop, Detroit, Michigan, 1986 (printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.169
Section: North Entrance

Woodward City Man, 2000 (printed 2005)

Gelatin silver print

Collection of Russ Marshall
Section: South Entrance

LaMonte Hamilton at the Vanity Ball Room, Detroit, Michigan, 1982 (printed 1994)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.187
Section: South Entrance

Ms. USA, Ford Motor Co., Batavia, Ohio, 1985 (printed 1997)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.166
Section: South Entrance

Ford Rouge Plant and Woodmere Cemetery, 1992

(printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.156
Section: South Entrance

Elizabeth Street and Park Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, 1965 (printed 2004)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.155
Section: South Entrance

Skilled Tradesmen, Ford Motor Company Rouge Engine Plant, Dearborn, Michigan, 1985 (printed 1997)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.173
Section: South Entrance

Jimmy Wilkins at the Detroit Press Club, Detroit, Bob Welch, Drums, 1993 (printed 1994)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.198
Section: South Entrance

Delray Man, Detroit, Michigan, 1986 (printed 2001)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.136
Section: South Entrance

Michigan Central Train Depot, “Drugs, Cigars, Candies,

Detroit, Michigan, 1987 (printed 2012)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.143
Section: South Entrance

2 City Men, 2003 (printed 2004)

Gelatin silver print

Collection of Russ Marshall
Section: Everyday Detroit

Artist Quote:
"I'm drawn to these subjects because it’s what I know. For years I carried a camera with me all the time. On trips, out on the streets, and hanging out with my buddies. Everywhere. Every photographer remembers those shots that are forever lost for lack of a camera at the ready.” —Russ Marshall, American Elegy, 2012

Inspiration from Everyday Detroit
Early in his career, Russ Marshall was drawn to city streets and public life. He photographed everyday Detroit and its commonplace sites: people at newsstands, factories, and parades. These early photographs document the city as he saw it.

Over time, however, Marshall began experimenting with techniques to create more atmospheric representations of the city. The resulting imagery accentuates Detroit’s billowing smokestacks and silhouetted figures.
Section: Everyday Detroit

Ambassador Bridge and Zug Island, 1968 (printed 2004)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.144

The iron and steel mills on Zug Island—shown here just beyond the Ambassador Bridge—have employed thousands of Detroiters for over 100 years. But the factories have also contributed to pollution linked to health issues affecting the residents who live nearby.

Marshall explores this paradox through photography and poetry, as seen in this shadowy image of Zug Island. Notice
how the river seems to shimmer along the shoreline. But nearby, he challenges that aesthetic in his poem “Smells Like Home.”
Section: Everyday Detroit

Artist Poem:

Zug Island—tethered to the Delray shore by erector set

Iron bridges and rail lines and

Made to float huge, hulking

Blast furnaces, strip mills and Coke ovens for the steel corps.

Just ask anybody still alive in Delray how this isle of pollution

Benefits them with their gray Skin, coal-dust curtains and

Bleeding lungs. Some of them Even work over there.
—Russ Marshall, excerpt from “Smells Like Home,” in This Working Life (2011)
Section: Everyday Detroit

Mistersky Stacks, 1999 (printed 2000)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.165
Section: Everyday Detroit

Detroit Skyline with Water Tower #3 (from the Belle Isle Bridge), 1979 (printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.150
Michigan Central Station

Michigan Central Station is one of the most photographed places in Detroit. Vacant for 30 years, it has often been used as a symbol of decline and decay. But Russ Marshall offers a different view.

*Lunch Counter (1959)* suggests a bustling yet transient place. Thousands of travelers crossed paths here briefly before moving on to their next destination.

Returning in 1987, Marshall captured ornate architectural details, many of which were stripped away in the years after the station’s closure. These interiors speak to another era in the otherwise empty and unused station. In 1988, the last train left Michigan Central. Redevelopment is underway.
Men's Lounge, Michigan Central Train Depot, Detroit, Michigan, 1959 (printed 2005)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.164

Notice how the men look directly into the camera. The photograph was taken from inside the Men’s Lounge—a seating area near the bathrooms—it may seem as if they posed for it. But they didn’t. Marshall recalls that after the shot, the man with the newspaper approached him, scolded him, and returned to his seat.
Section: Everyday Detroit


Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.144
Section: Everyday Detroit

Michigan Central Train Depot, Bench, Detroit, Michigan, 1987 (printed 2012)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.149
Section: Everyday Detroit


Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.145
Michigan Central Train Depot, Lunch Counter, Detroit, Michigan, 1959 (printed 2012)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.142
Here, passersby pause to look north down Woodward Avenue over construction fencing. Perhaps the sight felt novel: in the 1950s and ’60s, Detroit’s downtown area saw some of the first major building projects since the 1920s.

Beyond the edges of the photograph, three newly built highways and other demolition projects had leveled predominantly African American neighborhoods and business districts, displacing more than 40,000 people.
Section: Everyday Detroit

Detroit Newsstand at Campus Martius, 1959 (printed 2004)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.149
Section: Everyday Detroit

Tools and Techniques

Many of Marshall’s streetscapes and industrial photographs are intentionally in soft focus, with figures cast in shadow. Explore the photos on the wall nearby and discover the tools and techniques he used to achieve these effects.

Telephoto lenses make far-away objects appear larger and closer together.

City Figures, 2000.

Marshall took the photo of Detroit’s Fisher Building from Keyworth Stadium in nearby Hamtramck. The Fisher Building may seem to be located just a few blocks from the figures in the foreground, but the two sites are nearly three miles apart.
Filters soften images.


When printing, Marshall used a mesh plastic screen as a filter. The filter diffused light and eliminated fine details to soften the photograph. In Cass Café, notice that while the man’s profile is visible, his facial features are difficult to make out.
Cropping adds emphasis.

City Corner, 1959

Find the photograph City Corner. The original shot looked like the illustration above—notice that much of the street is visible. But when Marshall created the print, he cropped out most of the street to direct attention to the person at the corner in the foreground.
Section: Everyday Detroit

Industrial Study 9, 1999 (printed 2005)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.160
Section: Everyday Detroit

City Figures, 2000 (printed 2002)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.244
Section: Everyday Detroit

Cass Café, 2007 (printed 2008)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.253
Section: Everyday Detroit

City Corner, Detroit, Michigan, 1959 (printed 2000)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.132
Section: Everyday Detroit

Steam Driver, 1997 (printed 2003)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.248
Section: Everyday Detroit

Parade Crowd, Detroit, Michigan, 1958 (printed 1997)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.169
Section: Everyday Detroit

Man in Fur Coat, Detroit (Thanksgiving Day Parade on Woodward Ave.), 1958 (printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.170
Section: Everyday Detroit

Detroit’s Eastern Market

An apple farmer appears to haggle with a customer over produce.

Busy lunch counter workers sling sandwiches for hungry marketgoers.

Hog farmers prepare meat for their next buyer.

Scenes like these were typical when Marshall photographed Detroit’s bustling Eastern Market on a chilly day in 1980. It’s one of the largest open-air markets in the United States, and vendors and customers from around the region have relied on it to sell and purchase goods since 1891. Today, Eastern Market sees more than 40,000 visitors each weekend.
Hog Farmers 3, Detroit Eastern Market, 1980 (printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.181
Section: Everyday Detroit

Sandy’s Lunch Counter, Gratiot Market, Detroit Eastern Market, 1980 (printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.174
Section: Everyday Detroit

Apple Farmer, Detroit Eastern Market, 1980 (printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.184
Section: Public Life

Observing Public Life: 1960s–1980s

Russ Marshall found inspiration in factories and city streets, but he also photographed people: hippies on Belle Isle, business leaders and socialites at exclusive events. The images in this section express both the ease and awkwardness of social dynamics, and convey the humor found in public life when people are caught unawares, people watching, or gossiping.
Section: Public Life

Belle Isle Love-In (1967)

On April 30, 1967, Marshall observed thousands on Detroit’s Belle Isle during a Love-In. His photographs capture the spirit of the event, which was fueled by the anti-war movement and a rejection of mainstream culture. Nearby, look for some visual symbols of the movement: prayer beads, “love” balloons, and references to psychedelic drugs.

Marshall’s encounters with the eclectic crowd took place during the daytime, as the event progressed peacefully. But the Love-In ended in violence when armed police—mounted on horses and in riot gear—forcibly dispersed the crowd.
Section: Public Life

Love Nuns, Love-In at Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan, 1967

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.366
Section: Public Life

Love Balloon, Love-In at Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan, 1967 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.365
Section: Public Life

Becoming Dylan, Love-In at Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan, 1967 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.368
Section: Public Life

Face Painting, Love-In at Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan, 1967 (printed 2018)
Dye-based inkjet print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.370
Section: Public Life

A Symphony for Detroiter

In 1984, Russ Marshall photographed social events surrounding the arrival of acclaimed German conductor Günther Herbig to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Herbig reinvigorated and reestablished Detroit’s classical music reputation during a challenging economic time for the city and the orchestra.

Marshall’s photographs capture some of the social dynamics of high-society Detroiter. In Detroit Symphony Orchestra Reception (upper right), a young woman appears contemplative during a party at the home of Judge Damon Keith, a civil rights activist and arts supporter. In Opening Night, Marshall caught philanthropist and arts patron Stephanie Germack (shown at center) unawares while surrounded by other concertgoers.
Section: Public Life

Detroit Symphony Orchestra Reception for Günther Herbig at Judge Damon Keith Residence, 1984 (printed 2003)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.152
Section: Public Life

Opening Night, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Detroit, Michigan, 1984 (printed 2003)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.168
Section: Public Life

Mink, 1987 (printed 2008)
Gelatin silver print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. 2015.250
Section: Public Life

Lunch Break

Marshall stood near the head of a long table to take these images. But the surroundings are noticeably different. At right, Henry Ford II and Friends shows Henry Ford’s grandson and his wife Kathy (third seat at right) seated at an elaborately decorated table, hosting a private lunch. Photographing from behind Ford, Marshall seems to be an observer.

By contrast, in Break Room, workers gather around a cafeteria table. The photo’s perspective suggests Marshall is seated amongst them; some look in his direction. Perhaps Marshall’s differing approach reflects a greater comfort with factory workers, who may remind him of factory workers in his family.
Section: Public Life


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No.T2020.2
Section: Public Life

Henry Ford II and Friends at the Renaissance Club,

Detroit, Michigan, 1984 (printed 2003)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.158

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2020.1

Lunch buckets line the shelves of the Ford Motor Company valve plant in Northville, Michigan. Hanging above is a photo of the company baseball team from fifty years earlier, indicating that relationships between workers extended beyond the factory floor. The Northville plant was originally part of Henry Ford’s “Village Industries,” which were set up in
the 1920s—40s to employ agricultural workers in their off season.
**Section: Workers**

**Tribute to the Worker**

From 1975 to 2005, Russ Marshall worked as a freelance photographer for labor and trade union magazines. His photographs emphasized the dignity of the workers and captured aspects of their daily routines and surroundings to reveal the humanity behind manufacturing.

Marshall witnessed rapid changes to the automotive industry. Many factories he photographed closed soon after. Of his work, Marshall says “I knew and sensed over time that these jobs and these workers and these factories would someday be gone; replaced by something or nothing. It wasn't lost on me that I had this opportunity to document and preserve the fact that these workers did exist at this time and in this place.” (HuffPost, 2012)

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Consider the people who manufacture a product you use.

What would you want to know about their experiences? If
you’re visiting with someone else, consider sharing your answer with them.
Section: Workers


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.406
Section: Workers

Fisher Body Trim Plant, Fort St., Detroit, Michigan, 1982
(printed 2018)
Dye-based inkjet print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.400
Section: Workers

Ingots, Ford Motor Company Rouge Steel, Dearborn, Michigan, 1966 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.395
Section: Workers


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.398

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.405
Section: Workers

Acorn Iron Works, Detroit, Michigan, 1979 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.396
Section: Workers


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.403
Section: Workers


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.401
Section: Workers

American Beauty Electric Irons, Detroit, Michigan, 1993

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.402
Workers, Acorn Iron Works, Detroit, Michigan, 1979

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.397
Section: Workers


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.404
Section: Workers

Fisher Body Trim Plant, Fort St., Detroit, Michigan, 1982

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.399
Kernie Easterday used the tiny parts at his fingertips to assemble more than 100 soldering irons each day. Marshall photographed him while on assignment for Solidarity, a publication of the United Auto Workers Union (UAW). Easterday, a member of UAW Local 985, told Marshall his perspective on the union:
“Our average wage is $8 an hour, we get health care, optical, dental, a pension, and other benefits. Unions keep people together and help make sure we get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work."
Section: Workers

Striker, Detroit Coke Corp., Zug Island, Detroit, Michigan

1986 (printed 2000)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.174
Section: Workers

Factory Rats (Two Welders), GM Stamping, Flint, Michigan, 1985 (printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Museum Purchase, Albert and Peggy de Salle Charitable Trust

DIA No. 2012.31
Section: Workers

Line Assemblers, Ford Rouge Engine Assembly Plant, Dearborn, Michigan, 1985 (printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.42
Section: Workers

Machine Operator, Redman Tool and Die, Ferndale, Michigan, 1986 (printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.163
Section: Workers


Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.147
Section: Workers

UAW Local 1776; Plant Closing Meeting, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 1992 (printed 2000)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.181

Hands clasped and listening intently, a couple attends a meeting of Local 1776, the United Auto Workers branch that represented employees at Willow Run Assembly. The U.S. military hat in the man’s hand suggests he is a veteran.
When Marshall took this photograph, General Motors had recently announced that the plant would close. The couple’s troubled faces emphasize the impact of the closure on 4,000 employees. According to the New York Times, Local 1776 President Bob Harlow prepared for the closure by arranging job retraining sessions and mental health support.
Section: Workers

Night Shift, Pontiac Assembly, 1987 (printed 1999)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2012.167
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Artist Quote:

“I got interested in Jazz because in high school, my mom took me downtown to the Drum Shop on Broadway Street [in Detroit] to pick out a snare drum for my Christmas gift... So it was natural for me to photograph what I loved.” –Russ Marshall, DIA interview, 2019

The Sounds of Detroit

Nearby, images of passionate performers evoke the vibrant ambiance of Detroit’s iconic bars, nightclubs, and festivals. Marshall’s photographs create an important record of legends who performed in Detroit and made it their home.

Jazz and blues have been at the heart of Detroit entertainment since the 1920s. Though some venues depicted nearby have closed, others—like Baker’s Keyboard Lounge and the Annual Detroit Jazz Festival—remain important places of creativity, employment, and leisure.
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Dixie Belle, Singer with the Wolverine Dixieland Jazz Band at the Jazz Center in Detroit, Michigan, 1979

(printed 2013)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. 2015.185
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Don Mayberry with Jimmy Wilkins Orchestra, 1993

Gelatin silver print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.383

“Music is an art form of communication that transcends race, gender, nation, and language. I feel a great privilege to be a part of it. It's wonderful to bring people joy.” –Don Mayberry, Solidarity magazine, 1993.

Beads of sweat across bassist Don Mayberry’s forehead reveal the intensity of the performance captured here. The image appeared in Solidarity, a magazine that emphasized the shared experiences and concerns of union workers across many industries. The article featuring Mayberry explored how
unions helped musicians like him know their music had been used by someone else and ensured they were paid for their work.
Here, vocalist Eric Brandon performs with famous trumpeter Marcus Belgrave (1936—2015). Marshall took the photo at Baker’s Keyboard Lounge, one of the Detroit’s oldest and most legendary clubs. Jazz performances have taken place at Baker’s since 1934.
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Bess Bonnier at the DIA Crystal Gallery, 1982 (printed 1994)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2020.8
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Will Austin (bass), Geri Allen (piano), Detroit

Renaissance Live Session, 1979

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.378
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Joan Crawford with the Jimmy Wilkins Orchestra, 1993

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.384
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Alma Smith Trio at the Detroit Press Club, 1993

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.385
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Ursula Walker, Detroit, Michigan, 1978 (printed 1994)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.390
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Juanita McCray, Detroit Blues Festival, Detroit, Michigan, 1977 (printed 2019)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.387
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Lil' Jr. Cannaday, Detroit Blues Festival, Detroit, Michigan, 1979 (printed 2019)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.392
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

First Annual Detroit Blues Festival, Detroit, Michigan, 1977 (printed 2019)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.388
Section: The Sounds of Detroit

Sippie Wallace, Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival, Detroit, Michigan, 1980 (printed 1994)

Gelatin silver print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.393

Here, Marshall photographed Blues singer Sippie Wallace (1898—1986) at the first annual Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival, known today as the Detroit International Jazz Festival. Wallace started her Blues career in Chicago in the 1920s, later moved to Detroit, and became a church organist and singer. Her legacy grew globally until her death.
In the 1980s, riverfront festivals like the Detroit Jazz Festival reinvigorated Detroit and drew international attention to its prestigious music scene. Today, it is considered one of the largest free jazz festivals in the world.
Eileen Orr, Pianist, Union Street Bar, Detroit, Michigan, 1978 (printed 2019)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.389
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Turning His Lens Toward Europe: 1987–90

In the 1980s and ’90s, major events dramatically shifted society and politics in Europe. These included:

• Revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe that ended communist control
• Demolition of the Berlin Wall that divided Germany for 28 years
• The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War (1947—91)

Against this backdrop, Marshall travelled to Europe, sometimes on assignment for U.S. based labor publications. He photographed in streets and alleys, in parks and public squares, and on public transport. His photographs explore everyday people’s routines and activities, as well as the challenges brought about by the changes happening around them.
Section: A Lens Toward Europe


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.407
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Guarding Lenin, Budapest, Hungary, 1989 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.408

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.409
Section: A Lens Toward Europe


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.410

Artist Quote:

"I work two ways. At times I wade into an oncoming crowd with the camera plastered against my face, shooting the swiftly changing scene on instinct.

At other times, I’m more calculating, planting myself before a pertinent scene, waiting for the people to arrange themselves in my viewfinder as they pass through. In this latter mode I'm
more anticipatory than instinctive—more deliberate than spontaneous.”

–Russ Marshall, Outtakes magazine, 1994

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.411
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Dye-based inkjet print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.412
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Woman in the Window, Budapest, Hungary, 1989

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.413
Section: A Lens Toward Europe


Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.414
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Dye-based inkjet print
Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.415

The blankets, bottles, and newspapers in the makeshift shelter convey none of the wealth suggested by the British Petroleum advertisement in the background. For Marshall, this photograph suggests the effects of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s policies, which favored corporate interests and sold public housing.
The title refers to the writing scrawled on the concrete. In reflection, Marshall says, “I’ve concluded that her scrawl on the wall was her stab at declaring her immortality. That she did exist on that day, and in that place, as a real and alive person.”
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Berlin Wall, Berlin, East and West Germany, 1990
(printed 2018)
Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall
DIA No. T2019.416

Exposing the Berlin Wall:
Marshall took these images along the Berlin Wall, which divided East and West Berlin, shortly before Germany was reunified and the wall was demolished. Notice that the wall is worn away, exposing interior reinforcements. People had slowly chipped away at the wall—some in anger, others for souvenirs. At center, a child holds a piece of it.
At bottom left, Marshall photographed from where some of the wall was already torn down, capturing East Germany to his left. The area shown—a trench without vegetation—was known by locals as the “death corridor” because it was heavily guarded to prevent people from leaving.
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Genevieve and Boris, Berlin, East Germany, 1990

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.417
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

May Day at the Reichstag, Berlin, West Germany, 1990

(printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.418
Section: A Lens Toward Europe

Natasha and Jozsef, Budapest, Hungary, 1990 (printed 2018)

Dye-based inkjet print

Gift of the artist Russ Marshall

DIA No. T2019.419
SHARE IT

Many of Russ Marshall’s subjects lived through moments of profound change that affected the ways they worked and lived their lives. How did you adapt and overcome when faced with changes beyond your control?

Share your experience:

By scanning this code:

![QR Code](image)

or via text at: 313.217.3690

or online at: Link.dia.org/R

We’ll add your response to the screen next week.