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## YCBA Debuts Exhibition Contrasting the Work of Influential Contemporary American Photographers Working Abroad

BRUCE DAVIDSON/PAUL CAPONIGRO: TWO AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Yale Center for British Art: June 26–September 14, 2014

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens: November 8, 2014–March 9, 2015

NEW HAVEN – This summer the Yale Center for British Art pairs for the first time works by **Paul Caponigro** (b. 1932) and **Bruce Davidson** (b. 1933), two of the most distinguished and influential photographers of their generation. This exhibition presents approximately 150 works from their visits to Britain and Ireland in the 1960s and later, during which they turned their American eyes to the enduring landscapes and changing cultural scenes. In trips to Britain in 1960 and 1965, Davidson took an impressionistic portrait of the British people at work and play, while during numerous visits starting in 1967, Caponigro focused on the ancient stone circles, dolmens, and early churches in the British and Celtic landscape.



According to curator Scott Wilcox, “Caponigro and Davidson embody two very distinct American traditions: Davidson is a photojournalist and exponent of gritty street photography while Caponigro practices a pure, formalist approach to photographing landscape. If Davidson seeks to capture a specific moment in time, Caponigro dwells on the timeless phenomena of nature in relation to the enduring man-made structures of antiquity, such as Stonehenge.” Working in different artistic styles and temperaments, Caponigro and Davidson are nonetheless devoted to traditional photographic methods, using film and developing black-and-white prints by hand.



**Paul Caponigro**, a protégé of Minor White and a follower of the West Coast movement inspired by Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, has been an active photographer since 1952. Caponigro traveled to Ireland in 1966 on a Guggenheim Fellowship. He planned to explore Egypt as his subject, but was dissuaded by the photographer Dorothea Lange, who urged him to consider the megalithic structures of Ireland and Britain. As Caponigro recalled, “Ireland became my Egypt and the stones became my temples.” He



*Bruce Davidson/Paul Caponigro: Two American Photographers in Britain and Ireland*

visited Ireland and Britain fifteen times between 1966 and 1977, and has continued to make periodic visits.

While Caponigro's work focuses on natural elements and primeval monuments, **Bruce Davidson** has said that he is "not a rocks and trees photographer." Since 1958, Davidson has worked with Magnum Photos, the renowned photo agency co-founded in 1947 by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Capa, and a group of like-minded photojournalists. Davidson's work reflects Cartier-Bresson's concept of capturing the "decisive moment" – a meaningful instant caught and isolated from the ongoing life flowing around the photographer. Following his highly acclaimed late 1950s Brooklyn *Gang* series, Davidson worked on commission for *The Queen* magazine in England and Scotland. He returned in 1965 to photograph Blackpool, a mecca for working-class British holidaymakers, and the mining communities of southern Wales.



*Bruce Davidson/Paul Caponigro: Two American Photographers in Britain and Ireland* has been organized by the Yale Center for British Art and The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Following its debut at Yale, the exhibition will be on view at The Huntington from November 8, 2014 through March 9, 2015. The curators are Jennifer A. Watts, Curator of Photographs, The Huntington Library, and Scott Wilcox, Chief Curator of Art Collections and Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings, Yale Center for British Art. A fully illustrated catalogue with curatorial essays, published in association with Yale University Press, accompanies the exhibition and has been supported by a generous gift from Kelvin Davis.



## YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

The Yale Center for British Art houses the largest and most comprehensive collection of British art outside the United Kingdom. Presented to the University by Paul Mellon (Yale College Class of 1929), the collection of paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, rare books, and manuscripts reflects the development of British art and culture from the Elizabethan period onward. Visit us online at [britishart.yale.edu](http://britishart.yale.edu).



THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY, ART COLLECTIONS, AND BOTANICAL GARDENS  
Located twelve miles from downtown Los Angeles, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public. For more information, visit [huntington.org](http://huntington.org).

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Bruce Davidson, *London*, 1960, gelatin silver print, Yale Center for British Art, Friends of British Art Fund, © Bruce Davidson/Magnum Photos; Paul Caponigro, *Running White Deer, Wicklow, Ireland*, 1967, gelatin silver print, © Paul Caponigro; Paul Caponigro, *Avebury, Wiltshire, England*, 1967, gelatin silver print, © Paul Caponigro