

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Page, Thomas. "Intimate portraits reveal 100 years of West African life." *CNN* (October 27, 2015).



Over a century's worth of portraits detailing the intimate lives of West Africans have gone on show Metropolitan Museum of Art, titled "In and Out of the Studio: Photographic Portraits from West Africa," looks at the earliest pioneers of African photography.

Renowned artists such as Samuel Fosso and Seydou Keita take their place alongside many lesser known photographers in a captivating journey capturing snapshots from the lives of everyone from the metropolitan upper classes through to the very poorest rural communities in countries including Senegal, Cameroon, Mali and Gabon. Drawn deep from the museum's vaults, the exhibition features photos, cartes de visites, postcards, real photo postcards and original negatives taken between the 1870s and the 1970s.

"The earliest images in the exhibition, taken by professional and amateur photographers in the urban centers of Ghana, Togo, and Senegal, are the most moving and should not be missed as they convey an entirely different narrative than the one disseminated through the colonial channels at the time," says curator Yaelle Biro.

"'In and Out of the Studio' is a rare opportunity to see how photographers and sitters collaborate modernity," she continues.

The exhibition runs until January 3, 2016 -- Gallery 916, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Go through the gallery above to see some of the powerful images and read descriptions by the curator.