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Lewis Hine (1874-1940). *Sadie, a cotton mill spinner, Lancaster, South Carolina, 1908*. Vintage photograph. Lent from the collection of Michael Mattis and Judith Hochberg.



Lewis Hine (1874-1940). *Topping the mast, Empire State Building, 1930*. Vintage photograph. Lent from the collection of Michael Mattis and Judith Hochberg.

**ART MUSEUM, USJ PRESENTS: "OUR STRENGTH IS OUR PEOPLE":  
THE HUMANIST PHOTOGRAPHS OF LEWIS HINE**

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. (Jan. 4, 2017) – The Art Museum at the University of Saint Joseph invites the public to join us for the exhibition "***Our Strength is Our People": The Humanist Photographs of Lewis Hine*** from January 13-March 19, 2017. In conjunction with the exhibition, Alison Nordström, Ph.D., independent scholar and curator of photographs, will deliver the Vincenza Uccello Fine Arts Lecture, ***Lewis Hine: Artist and Activist***, on February 28 at 7 p.m. in Hoffman Auditorium, located on the University's West Hartford campus.

Examining the immigrant and working class experience in early 20<sup>th</sup> century America, "***Our Strength is Our People": The Humanist Photographs of Lewis Hine*** features rare vintage gelatin silver prints spanning the 30 years of Hine's career as a documentary photographer. It addresses major themes of early 20<sup>th</sup> century America, such as the immigrant struggle and cultural assimilation, and child labor and the working class. It concludes with striking images from the construction of the Empire State building.

Lewis Wickes Hine, a sociologist and pioneer in the field of documentary photography, aimed to portray a progressive and empathetic view of immigrants in America, contradicting views of them as criminals, carriers of disease, and contaminants of America's Anglo-Saxon identity. In a funding proposal for the project he titled "*Our Strength is Our People*," Hines noted, "This project should give us light on the kinds of strength we have to build upon as a nation. Much emphasis is being put upon the dangers inherent in our alien groups, our unassimilated or even partly Americanized citizens – criticism based upon insufficient knowledge. A corrective for this would be better facilities for seeing, and so understanding, what the facts are."

Hine's photographs are as powerful today as when they were created. They not only portray the dignity and pride of America's new immigrant labor force, which served as the backbone of American industry, but also underscore the destructive effects of *laissez-faire* capitalism on workers, particularly the exploitation of minors before Congress set national child labor laws in 1938. Hine's photographs reveal America as both a beacon of hope for immigrants and a melting pot plagued by injustices.

All works in "*Our Strength is Our People*" are from the collection of Michael Mattis and Judith Hochberg. This exhibition was organized by art2art Circulating Exhibitions. For more information, visit [www.usj.edu/artmuseum](http://www.usj.edu/artmuseum).

***Life on the Lower East Side: New York 1900-1930***, an exhibition of prints and drawings from the private collection of Ken Ratner, is also on view. The Art Museum, located in Bruyette Athenaeum on USJ's West Hartford campus at 1678 Asylum Avenue, is open Tuesday-Saturday: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Thursday: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.; and Sunday: 1-4p.m.; closed Monday. Admission is free of charge.

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