

# Basic Detail Report

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**Title**

First Avenue

**Artist**

William Klein, Jean-Marc Bustamante

**Date**

January 1955

**Dimensions**

image: 8 x 11 7/8 in. (204 x 300 mm) sheet: 12 in. (304 mm) x 15 7/8 in. (404 mm)

**Medium**

Gelatin silver print

**Classifications**

Photographs

**Credit Line**

Mrs. George W. Stevens Art Fund and Carl B. Spitzer Fund

**Object number**

2003.13H

**Published References**

cf.: Andrew Roth, *The Book of 101 Books* (New York: PPP Editions in association with Roth Horowitz, 2001): 140-41. cf.: Jane Livingston, *The New York School: Photographs 1936-1963* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1992). cf.: William Klein, *Life is Good & Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels* / [essay by] Sandra S. Phillips (San Francisco, Calif.: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1995). cf.: William Klein, *New York, 1954-55*. English ed. (Manchester, England: Dewi Lewis Pub., 1995).

**Exhibition History**

TMA New Works on Paper Dec. 2005 - Mar. 5, 2006

**Label Text**

William Klein: In 1954, William Klein returned to New York from Paris, where he had been studying painting with Fernand Léger. Klein wanted to do a book about his home, New York City. Alexander Lieberman, art director of *Vogue*, arranged to fund a portfolio of photographs. One of Klein's inspirations for the series was the *New York Daily News*, a tabloid known for grainy images and brutal headlines. To create this work of urban theater, Klein used only one 35 mm camera with three different lenses. Taking pictures rapidly and often not having the time or inclination to focus, the results are at once confrontational and lyrical, graphically harsh and poignantly honest. He wrote, "I saw the book as a tabloid gone berserk, gross, over-inked, brutal layout, bull-horn headlines. This is what New York deserved and would get." (From the Introduction to the 1995 edition of the book *William Klein, New York 1954-55*)

**Not On View**