

Books and Manuscripts (1706)

May 20, 2021 EST, Freeman's

Lot 50

Estimate: \$1000 - \$1500 (plus Buyer's Premium)

[Photography] Weston, Edward *Fifty Photographs*

New York: Duell Sloan & Pearce, (1947). Limited edition, #105 of 1,500 copies initialed by Weston. 4to. An great association copy, inscribed to American photographer, Arnold Newman, by the book's designer, introduction author, and American set designer, Merle Armitage, on dedication page: "For that fine artist & delightful person/Arnold Newman/with admiration/Merle Armitage/1949". Illustrated with 51 black and white photographic plates. Original printed black bevelled boards over black cloth, stamped in silver; all edges trimmed; in original printed dust-jacket, spine panel perished, extremities chipped and creased, light dampstaining on front panel, front and rear panel toned; front hinge worn; in quarter black morocco chemise and slip case.

Merle Armitage was a close friend of Weston's, helping produce two books on the author's work--the above, as well as *The Art of Edward Weston* (1932). Released a year before Parkinson's disease would cut short his career, *Fifty Photographs* highlights Weston's eclectic work as a photographer--the nudes, abstract still lifes, sparse landscapes, to his more traditional portraits (including Merle's wife at the time, Elsa Armitage, plate 35). As Armitage describes the process of choosing what to include, in the book's introduction, "Sitting in on the selection of the fifty prints for this book was a thrilling but exasperating experience. Within a five day period, we looked at hundreds of superb photographs. It would have been possible to have picked a dozen groups of fifty photographs to grace as many books. The quality is so high, and the range so broad that a book containing three hundred prints would not tell the full Edward Weston story", and as Weston himself describes the selection, "fifty of my favorite photographs chosen because they have lived well and because they have not been reproduced...in book form before." (*Edward Weston on Photography*).

