



# Eadweard Muybridge: The Human and Animal Locomotion Photographs

By Hans-Christian Adam

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### Life in motion: The forerunner of the moving image

English photographer **Eadweard Muybridge** was a pioneer in visual studies of human and animal locomotion. In 1872, he famously helped settle a bet for former California governor Leland Stanford by photographing a galloping horse. Muybridge invented a complex system of electric shutter releases that captured freeze frames—proving conclusively, for the first time, that a galloping horse lifts all four hooves off the ground for a fraction of a second. For the next three decades, **Muybridge continued his quest to fully catalog many aspects of human and animal movement**, shooting hundreds of horses and other animals—and of nude or draped subjects engaged in various activities such as running, walking, boxing, fencing, and descending a staircase (the latter study inspired **Marcel Duchamp**'s famous 1912 painting).

This resplendent book traces the life and work of Muybridge, from his early thinking about anatomy and movement to his latest photographic experiments. The complete 781 plates of Muybridge's groundbreaking *Animal Locomotion* (1887) are reproduced here. In addition, Muybridge's handmade and extremely rare first illustrated album, *The Attitudes of Animals in Motion* (1881) is reproduced in its entirety. A detailed chronology by British researcher Stephen Herbert throws new light on one of the most important pioneers of photography.

Text in English, French, and German

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#### **About the Author**

Hans Christian Adam studied psychology, art history and communication in Göttingen and Vienna. As a specialist in historical images, he has published numerous articles and books, including titles on travel and war photography. He is the author of TASCHEN's Edward Sheriff Curtis: The North American Indian, Karl Blossfeldt, Eugène Atget: Paris and Berlin, Portrait of a City.

Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904), born in England but active as a photographer in the United States for most of his adventurous life, was a key figure in photographic history. On giant glass plates he captured the natural splendor of Yosemite and photographed panoramas of San Francisco. He notoriously shot and killed his wife's lover, but his fame was earned by solving the problems of short-time exposure and exploiting its possibilities. His subsequent studies of human and animal movement became the ultimate passion of Muybridge, the chronophotographer and predecessor of cinema.

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