

CONTROVERSY

TRUMP'S
ALLY IN
MOSCOW

Pages 5, 6 *Vladimir
Putin*



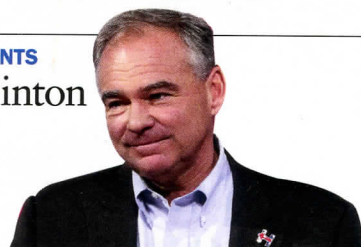
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THE BEST OF THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

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Exhibit of the week Who Shot Sports: A Photographic History, 1843 to the Present

Brooklyn Museum, New York City,
through Jan. 8

Anyone who's ever flicked through an issue of *Sports Illustrated* can understand the drama and power of sports photography, said Taylor Dafoe in *ArtInfo.com*. So it's no surprise that the Brooklyn Museum's new exhibition, "Who Shot Sports," teems with gorgeous photos of athletes and fans. But do the 230 images really belong in a museum? "The answer is yes": They expand and enrich photography's canon. Many major technological advances in photography, we're reminded, are linked to sport. In 1878, Eadweard Muybridge gave birth to cinema when he developed a freeze-frame technique to prove there is a moment when a galloping racehorse has all four hooves off the ground. The best images in this exhibition also do everything we'd expect of fine-art photography. Some, like an overhead shot of Michael Jordan soaring for a slam dunk, are elaborately staged. Others, like Neil Leifer's iconic 1965 photo of Muhammad Ali standing over a fallen Sonny Liston, capture the decisive moments of deeply layered dramas.



Daniel Rodrigues' Football in Guinea-Bissau (2012)

Some of the photographs change the way we think of our sports heroes, said Ian Blair in *The Nation*. In one black-and-white 1922 image, taken by an unknown photographer, boxer Jack Dempsey and Yankees slugger Babe Ruth sit at a small table eating breakfast in their bathrobes. The intimacy of the setting (Ruth's New York apartment) and the two icons' expressions of surprise serve to humanize them: "This is who they are when we aren't looking." Sometimes, an unconventional angle produces a particularly striking image, as happened when *Sports Illustrated* photographer Peter Read Miller chose to shoot gymnast Gabby Douglas from above during her balance beam

routine at the 2012 U.S. Olympic trials. "The symmetry of Douglas' body is arresting: She splays out evenly like a weather vane, looking upward, her head centered over the 4-inch beam." The chalk-dusted blue mat below adds a surreal touch. "It's as if we are staring upward at Douglas pirouetting under a cloudy sky."

Of course, the art world usually ignores sports photographers—"unless they are moonlighting artists of the camera," said Peter Schjeldahl in *The New Yorker*. This show includes a few big names:

Henri Cartier-Bresson is represented by his "cunningly poetic" coverage of a 1957 Paris bicycle race; Leni Riefenstahl contributes a series of 1936 portraits that make German athletes look like Greek gods and thus "both awe and sicken." The work of the full-time sports photographers "can be every bit as brilliant." But normally when we encounter an arresting image in the sports pages, like Barton Silverman's 2010 image of the Yankees' Derek Jeter sliding headfirst into third base in a spray of dirt, we sigh contentedly, and move on without giving the artistry of Silverman and his colleagues a second thought. "Who Shot Sports" offers a chance to show them some penitent tribute."