

# FRAENKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

For immediate release:



## ROBERT ADAMS: CONTACT

October 29 – December 19, 2026

*Robert Adams: Contact*, a new exhibition at Fraenkel Gallery, brings together Adams's photographs of the Western landscape with the original contact sheets from which they were selected. On view for the first time, the contact sheets reproduce entire rolls of medium-format film and groups of 4x5 negatives, making visible every frame Adams considered. Each is paired with the photograph he ultimately chose, offering unprecedented insight into his working process and his search for precise arrangements of clouds, trees, roads, and light. The exhibition is accompanied by a new, hardcover monograph published by Fraenkel Gallery. On Saturday, November 7, from 11am–4pm, the gallery will host a book launch featuring *Robert Adams: Contact* and other books by the artist.

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Spanning roughly 20 years, from the 1960s to the mid-1980s, the sheets provide a deeper understanding of Adams's working methods. One reveals Adams made only a single exposure of an image that would become one of his best-known photographs. Others include sequences in which he worked his way through a landscape or suburban neighborhood, refining a composition frame by frame. Red and black markings and cropping lines trace his selections, while 3x5 cards record handwritten notes on exposure times and paper choices. Together, these materials provide a rare glimpse into the decisions behind photographs that can appear inevitable in their final form.

The exhibition also includes a new selection of Adams's painted woodblocks, many on view for the first time. Made between 2020 and 2024, the modestly sized works draw on Adams's memories of the Colorado prairie and are painted in luminous, springlike hues. Their simplified depictions of expansive skies echo motifs found throughout his photographs. Created as his darkroom practice came to an end, they might be understood as a kind of afterimage: a continuation of Adams's lifelong attention to landscape seen through a different medium.

Photographs by Robert Adams (b. 1937) are held in museums around the world and have been published in numerous monographs. He has received Guggenheim and MacArthur Foundation fellowships, the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize, and the Hasselblad Foundation International Award. In 2022, his work was the subject of the major traveling retrospective *American Silence: The Photographs of Robert Adams*, organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Other major touring exhibitions include *The Place We Live*, organized by Yale University Art Gallery, and *To Make It Home: Photographs of the American West, 1965-1986*, which originated at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

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Image: ROBERT ADAMS, *Contact Sheet*, 1969. Private Collection, San Francisco

For press inquiries and images, please contact Rebecca Robertson  
at 415.981.2661 or [rrobertson@fraenkelgallery.com](mailto:rrobertson@fraenkelgallery.com)