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**WESTON, EDWARD (1886-1958) Word Count: 227**

Edward Weston was one of the leading photographers of the Western and California landscape in the early-twentieth century and one of the pioneers of photography as abstract art. Born in Highland Park, Illinois in 1886 and raised there and nearby in Chicago, he became interested in photography as a teenager. In 1908 to 1909 he studied photography at the Illinois College of Photography in Effingham, Illinois. In the 1910s in California, he made a living and became well known as a photographer of portraits and dancers. In 1922, he visited the ARMCO plant in Middletown, Ohio, and this changed the development of his photography. He became an early adherent to the Precisionist aesthetics of firm contours, smooth and flat surfaces and geometric, industrial forms. In 1926 Weston returned to California, doing his most famous and important work: photographs of peppers, shells, sliced vegetables and fruit, and other small, natural objects seen up close and manipulated tonally to emphasize their pictorial, abstract qualities and the beauty and fascination in their organic forms. Weston was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in 1946 and its symptoms caused him to cease taking photographs in 1948, although he continued to supervise the printing of his work for the next several years. He died in 1958 in Carmel.

**References and further reading:**

[www.edwardweston.com](http://www.edwardweston.com)

Stebbins, T. et al. (1999) *Edward Weston: Photography and Modernism.* Boston: Museum of Fine Arts.