



Treasury Building from J. P. Morgan's Office

Date

1938 (printed 1979)

Primary Maker

Berenice Abbott

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

There is no irony in Abbott's choosing to photograph the former Sub-Treasury Building (1862-1925), which was from the office of J.P. Morgan. (Jack Morgan - J.P. Morgan, Jr. - the son of banking legend J. Pierpont Morgan, headed the dynastic firm, House of Morgan, from 1913-1943.)

Rather, the image of one Wall Street fiduciary icon obliquely frozen in time within the scrutiny of another, in the heart of Manhattan's financial district, suggests the intimate, powerful, and ongoing relationship between public and private commercial institutions. Occupying the site of New York's second city hall, where George Washington was sworn in as President and which served as the seat of the federal government until 1790, the present neo-classical building, inspired by the Parthenon, was built (1833-1842) as the U.S. Custom House. Designed by prominent architects Ithiel Town and Alexander Jackson Davis, Federal Hall National Memorial is New York's finest extant Greek Revival temple front.

Dimensions

Sight: 19 1/2 x 15 3/8 in. (49.5 x 39.1 cm) Mat: 30 x 24 in. (76.2 x 61 cm)