

As Stettner makes clear in a 1977 feature (reprinted in 'Wisdom Cries out in the Streets'), Grossman believed that the strength of a photograph originated in the passionate emotional involvement and response of the photographer that enabled him to find significant new meanings. Grossman's own photography was brought to an untimely end by his death at age 40. Stettner is perhaps the ablest of his successors.

In 1940, Stettner, then aged eighteen, enlisted and requested training as a combat photographer. (He was taught to mend radios.) Eventually he was assigned as a photographer, covering a number of invasions and battles in the Philippines.

After the war, he returned to New York, where he took a number of pictures around the city and worked on a series of imposed pictures on subway trains.

Stettner intended to stay in Paris for three weeks when he went in 1946, but fell so much in love with the city that it was five years before he left it. The Photo League asked him to get together a show of French photographers. As well as providing a first New York showing for **Brassai, Willy Ronis, Robert Doisneau, Izis** and other great French contemporaries in 1947, it also helped Stettner to get to know them better.

For his early work in Paris, Stettner was carrying around an 8x10 view camera, the "result of an obsession not to lose and detail, texture or any photographic quality." Later he was to regard this camera as a "magnificent mistake" as it lost him both flexibility of viewpoint and the ability to stop action.

While in France, Stettner freelanced for various magazines and studied cinema at the University of Paris. In 1951 he was awarded a young photographer award by 'Life' magazine.

Stettner returned from France in 1952. On his way back he took the picture 'Coming to America', a man and two children sitting on deck in mid-Atlantic. The man draws himself into his thick overcoat, hand clasped in his sleeves leaving only a small gap of flesh. He looks forwards, to the left of the pictures, wondering what the future will bring. The child on his left, closer to the camera, seems to be adopting a more positive attitude, pulling up out of the reclining chair, eager to get to grips with a new life in the 'New World'.

In New York, he photographed the city as well as working as a freelance for magazines including 'Life', 'Time', 'Fortune' and others. He also traveled widely, spending time in Paris, Spain, Portugal, Holland and Mexico in the following years.

In the 1950s he took some of his best-known pictures of New York. Times Square appears in some of them.