

**New Equipment Developed by Edward Burtynsky to Scan Major Photo Collection**

*Galleries West*

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The Image Centre at Toronto Metropolitan University will digitize 25,000 press photographs of Canadian events, speeding the normally laborious work with an innovative machine developed by Toronto photographer Edward Burtynsky.

Burtynsky says a vast array of stunning photographs at various institutions languish in dark boxes in temperature-controlled storage with no public access.

"It's a thrill to finally be able to initiate an effective and innovative solution to this problem and bring this important photographic history into the light," he says.

Burtynsky has assembled a team of hardware and software developers to digitize the images with his equipment, known as ARKIV360, along with their folded captions, tear sheets and attached ephemera.

The machine uses cutting-edge technology to scan multiple images and documents to museum standards. AI software is leveraged to read and label the digitized photographs, helping determine keywords and subject information in both official languages.

The project, funded with a \$300,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage, will see images from the Rudolf P. Bratty family's collection, originally from the photo archives of the *New York Times*, placed in a publicly accessible online database.

A promised gift since 2017, the collection represents diverse aspects of Canadian life and history and spans most of the 20th century, including political events, wartime conflicts, travel photographs and portraits of notable and everyday Canadians.

The press prints were produced by *New York Times* staff photographers, as well as other newspaper and freelance photojournalists, international wire services, private corporations and Canadian government agencies.

The collection was highlighted in the centre's 2017 exhibition, *The Faraway Nearby*.

The centre holds various photo collections, including ones amassed by Burtynsky and Christopher Varley. It also holds other press photographs in its archives, including the Black Star Collection, comprising nearly 300,000 photographs by more than 6,000 different image-makers, including many seminal figures of 20th-century photojournalism.

Burtynsky's equipment is also being used to [digitize a trove of Inuit art](#) created in Kinngait, formerly Cape Dorset, on the southern tip of Baffin Island, that is now housed at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection.

For more information, go [here](#).