

After the United States invasion of Cambodia in April 1970 and the killings of four students and wounding of nine others by Ohio National Guardsmen at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, anti-Vietnam war demonstrations grew considerably more violent. On May 8, a riot erupted on Wall Street between antiwar demonstrators and construction workers in which more than seventy people were injured. Similar protests also took place that same week in Washington, D.C., New Haven, Connecticut, and elsewhere across the country. Then, on May 14, two students were killed and twelve others injured in riots with the police at Jackson State College in Jackson, Mississippi.

On May 18, more than 1,000 artists, dealers, museum officials, and other members of the art community gathered at New York University's Loeb Student Center and drew up a series of resolutions that included the call for "a one-day stoppage on May 22, of business-as-usual, a demand that all museums and galleries close as a protest against repression, sexism, and war." New York City museums responded to this declared moratorium in different ways. The Jewish Museum complied with the demands of the majority of the artists in a group show, "Using Walls," by closing the exhibit for two weeks, and the Whitney Museum honored Robert Morris's request to shut down his one-man retrospective two weeks ahead of schedule. The Metropolitan Museum of Art opted for what museum officials termed a "positive gesture" by keeping the museum open for five hours longer than usual on May 22, a gesture that was regarded as an act of bad faith by the leaders of the Art Strike, who staged a peaceful sit-in on the Museum steps that evening.

The Museum of Modern Art also decided to keep its galleries open and free to the public, although a retrospective exhibition of paintings by Frank Stella was closed for the day at the artist's request. The Museum also heeded the request of three other artists, Jo Baer, Robert Mangold, and Robert Smithson, to remove their works from a drawing exhibition and replace them with political statements. Members of the Museum's staff set up tables with anti-war literature in the lobby, and Erik Barnouw's film on the atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was shown continuously in the theater (it will again be shown in the film series that accompanies this present exhibition). A black banner was flown in honor of the four students killed at Kent State, as well as those who had been killed in Southeast Asia.

John Szarkowski, then the Director of the Department of Photography, installed an exhibition of fifty-seven black-and-white photographs taken by photojournalists from *The New York Times*, *Magnum*, and other news agencies of the street protests that had occurred between May 5 and 9 on Wall Street and in Washington, D.C. and New Haven. These photographs were pinned directly to the wall, without any descriptive text. The dates on which they were taken, typed and enlarged on a sheet of white paper, served as the exhibition's title. Of the fifty-seven photographs originally exhibited, seven are shown here in the same manner.

From the exhibition:  
**"The Path of Resistance.  
MoMA meets Moderna 1960 – 2000,"**  
Held at the Museum of Modern Art, NYC  
2001-05-19 until 2001-08-26