



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

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Irving Penn “Cigarettes”

Dates: March 20 – April 19, 2014

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film (AXIS Bldg, Roppongi)

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to present “Cigarettes,” a solo exhibition of works by Irving Penn, from March 20 to April 19. Irving Penn, who is best known for his fashion photography, also made still life photographs of various objects throughout his life. This exhibition will feature approximately 16 images from the *Cigarettes* series, which he made during a fertile period that also produced his most spectacular still life photographs. The series was also the first that Penn presented as platinum palladium prints.

“Photographing a cake can be art.”

- Irving Penn

(stated when he opened his studio in 1953)

In 1972, he produced a series of photographs of cigarette butts... [which] had been smoked down to the end then discarded. He placed one, two or three of these on a white background and photographed them using a large-format camera. The prints were made in the platinum-palladium process that provides a rich tonal range, showing clearly the dirt, wrinkles, mud and dust that disfigured them. The elegance of these pictures is similar to that which we find in his pictures for Chanel's cologne for men, for Clinique's lipstick or in brightly colored still lifes of flowers. Whether the subject be cigarette butts or high fashion, they find equivalence through the elegance of Penn's technique.

- Michiko Kasahara, excerpted from an essay published in *Irving Penn Photographs*

(Wildenstein Tokyo, 1997)

Irving Penn was born in 1917 in New Jersey (and passed in 2009). While he was still attending the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art he began working as a designer at the fashion magazine *Harper's Bazaar* under Alexey Brodovitch. He began photographing in New York City with a Rolleiflex camera, which he purchased with the first check he received from *Harper's* for an illustration published in the same magazine. His talents as a photographer developed quickly and in 1943, he photographed his first cover for U.S. *Vogue*, which was also the magazine's first cover to exclusively feature objects, such as gloves and a bag, without a model. For over 60 years since, Penn photographed a variety of subjects including still lifes, flowers, nudes, portraits, fashion photographs, street photographs, and photographs of minority tribes around the world. His major publications include *Inventive Paris Clothes: 1909-1939* (1977), *Flowers* (1980), *Passage: A Work Record* (1992), and *Still Life* (2001).

Penn's wide range of photographic subjects, his unique compositions in which the subject is positioned against a simple background with ample natural light, and his use of the platinum palladium printing process, which was thought to be an antiquated method at the time, all evince his desire to push the possibilities of photography. His efforts in photographic experimentation and transgression of the boundary between commercial and art photography are widely acclaimed and continue to influence photographers today.

For further information please contact:

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Gallery hours: 11:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon and National holidays



Irving Penn

“Cigarette No. 17” New York, 1972/1975

Platinum palladium print

Image size : 59.1 x 47 cm

Paper size : 63.5 x 55.9 cm

Mount size: 66 x 55.9 cm

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Irving Penn

“Cigarette No. 50” New York, 1972/1975

Platinum palladium print

Image size : 59.7 x 45.1 cm

Paper size : 63.5 x 55.9 cm

Mount size: 66 x 55.9 cm

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