



Irving Penn: Beyond Beauty

By Merry Foresta

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An accessible overview of the work of legendary American photographer Irving Penn

Famous for his fashion portraits and experimentation with still life images, Irving Penn (1917–2009) ranks as one of the foremost photographers of the 20th century. In an illustrious career that spanned nearly 70 years, Penn was a master of both black-and-white and color photography, and his revival of platinum printing in the 1960s and 1970s was a catalyst for significant change in the art world.

Drawing from the extensive holdings of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, including a major gift from The Irving Penn Foundation, this magnificent catalogue compiles 161 of Penn's iconic images, including a number of unpublished works. Beautifully designed and illustrated, *Irving Penn: Beyond Beauty* accompanies the first retrospective exhibition of Penn's work in nearly 20 years and features photographs from all stages of his career, including street scenes from the late 1930s, celebrity portraits, Parisian fashion photographs, and more private studio images. Merry A. Foresta's captivating essay introduces this photographer to a younger generation and delves into Penn's use of photography to respond to social and cultural change, speaking to the depths of human existence.

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Editorial Review

Review

"...provides a comprehensive look at the true range of his work."—Erica Schwiegershausen, *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*

(*T: The New York Times Style Magazine* 2015-10-26)

"...Irving Penn: *Beyond Beauty* showcases over 150 of his images, quite a few of which have never been published."—Stephanie Eckardt, *New York* (*New York* 2015-12-08)

About the Author

Merry A. Foresta is an independent curator and arts writer.

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