

SAUL LEITER WOMEN

9 May 2008 – 21 June 2008

Artist Reception

Thursday, May 8, 2008



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New York -- Saul Leiter's ground-breaking work in photography and painting is only now receiving the international recognition it deserves. Howard Greenberg Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition centered on the theme of women, a subject often visited by Saul Leiter throughout his career in his color, black and white and painted photographs.

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Born in Pittsburgh in 1923, Saul Leiter was the son of a distinguished Talmudic rabbi. Leiter's interest in art began in his late teens, and in 1946, when he was 23, he left Cleveland and moved to New York City to pursue painting. That year he met the Abstract Expressionist painter Richard Pousette-Dart, who was also experimenting with photography. Leiter's friendship with Pousette-Dart, and soon after with W. Eugene Smith, and the photography exhibitions he saw in New York, particularly that of Henri Cartier-Bresson at the Museum of Modern Art in 1947, inspired his growing interest in photography.

Leiter's earliest black and white photographs show an extraordinary affinity for the medium, and by 1948 he began to experiment in color. Edward Steichen included Leiter's black and white photographs in the exhibition *Always the Young Stranger* at the Museum of Modern Art in 1953. In the late 1950s the art director Henry Wolf published Leiter's color fashion work in *Esquire* and later in *Harper's Bazaar*. Leiter continued to work as a fashion photographer for the next 20 years and was published in *Show*, *Elle*, *British Vogue*, *Queen*, and *Nova*.

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Leiter has made an enormous and unique contribution to photography. His abstracted forms and radically innovative compositions have a painterly quality that stands out among the work of his New York School contemporaries. Perhaps this is because Leiter has continued through the years to work as both a photographer and painter. His painterly sensibility reaches its fruition in his painted photographs of nudes on which he has actually applied layers of gouche and watercolor in a whimsical and sensuous way. His masterful use of the two media is apparent in these remarkable pieces.

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Martin Harrison, editor and author of *Saul Leiter Early Color*, writes, "Leiter's sensibility...placed him outside the visceral confrontations with urban anxiety associated with photographers such as Robert Frank or William Klein. Instead, for him the camera provided an alternate way of seeing, of framing events and interpreting reality. He sought out moments of quiet humanity in the Manhattan maelstrom, forging a unique urban pastoral from the most unlikely of circumstances."

Saul Leiter's work is featured prominently in Jane Livingston's *The New York School* and in Martin Harrison's *Appearances: Fashion Photography Since 1945*. His work is in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Victoria and Albert Museum; the National Gallery of Australia; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Milwaukee Art Museum; the Yale University Art Gallery; and other prestigious public and private collections. Earlier this year, The Foundation Henri Cartier-Bresson in Paris mounted Leiter's first museum exhibition in Europe with an accompanying catalog.

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Simultaneously, the South gallery will feature photographs of Times Square by photographers such as William Klein, Robert Frank, Walker Evans, Louis Faurer, and others. Each of their works offers a unique interpretation of the subject, illuminating the endless photographic possibilities that this infamous urban hub inspires.

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For further information, or to request visuals for press,
contact Margit Erb at 212 334 0010 or Margit@howardgreenberg.com.
Starting May 9, the exhibitions [can be viewed at www.howardgreenberg.com](http://www.howardgreenberg.com)

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