

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum of American Art

PRESS RELEASE

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WHITNEY TO PRESENT INSIDE-OUT: PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHS, FEBRUARY 7 - MAY 23, 2004

Portraiture is the subject of the exhibition Inside-Out: Portrait Photographs from the Permanent Collection, to be shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art from February 7 through May 23, 2004. All recently acquired by the Whitney, these photographs explore the intricate dynamics involved in the relationship between subject and artist, examining issues such as vanity, comfort, and intimacy. The works, by such artists as Chuck Close, Nan Goldin, Sally Mann, Nicholas Nixon, Irving Penn, and Stephen Shore, assert photography's capacity both to register a subject's physical characteristics and to suggest the complexity within the subject's emotional and psychological interior life.

Several artists, including Dawoud Bey, Chan Chao, and Melissa Pinney photograph unknown subjects within their environments. By contrast, Chuck Close, Nan Goldin, and Nicholas Nixon portray friends, family, or people with whom they have cultivated a relationship. More formal portraits describe an activity or commemorate an occasion, as in Paul Shambroom's image of city council members at work, or in Irving Penn's portrait of five esteemed American artists – Chuck Close, Jasper Johns, Ellsworth Kelly, Kenneth Noland, and Robert Rauschenberg.

"When a subject and a photographer come together and agree that a likeness will be made, a complex dynamic is set in motion," said Sylvia Wolf, the Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography at the Whitney. "In the most compelling portraits there is often a collision of wills, an exposure of vulnerability, a seduction, or surrender. The public face that the sitter wants to show the world is tempered by something deeper. Multiple layers of experience are brought to the surface and the inside is turned out for us to see."

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the leading advocate of 20th and 21st-century American art. Founded in 1930, the Museum is widely regarded as the preeminent collection of 20th-century American art and includes the entire artistic estate of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, and Lucas Samaras, as well as significant works by Arshile Gorky, Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense critical and public debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, gauges the state of contemporary art in America today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art:

New Additions: Prints Through April 2004
Inside Out: Portrait Photographs Through May 23, 2004
2004 Biennial March 11-May 30, 2004

The museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. For information, please call 1-800 WHITNEY or visit www.whitney.org.

Current Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria:

Luis Gispert Through March 12, 2004

Architecture by Numbers March 25-July 2, 2004