

Untroubled

Irving Penn

Works from the Pinault Collection

17 January - 28 April 2019

opening on January 16, 5 - 9 PM

Curated by Matthieu Humery

At Mina Image Centre

In collaboration with the Pinault Collection

**PINAULT
COLLECTION**

Sponsored by: Banque Libano-Française

On January 16, 2019 Mina Image centre will be launching its first exhibition **“Untroubled”** curated by Matthieu Humery and dedicated to one of the major photographers in the 20th century, Irving Penn, whose work will show for the first time in the Arab World. The exhibition will run till April 28, 2019.

A press conference will be held at Mina Image Centre on Tuesday, January 15th at 11:00 a.m. The Curator of the exhibition Matthieu Humery and Mina's director Manal Khader will be available to answer all your questions.

“Untroubled” draws from **“Resonance”**, an exhibition organized by the Pinault Collection at Palazzo Grassi in Venice in 2014, and includes 50 images combining platinum prints, gelatin silver prints, dye transfer prints.

The show is not a retrospective and does not follow a chronological order, but aims to underline the development of styles, interests and techniques used by Irving Penn by focusing on the main themes tackled by the artist during his entire career: Small Trades, Corner Portraits, Still Life, Hands of Miles Davis, Icons, Decomposition, Vanities/ Memento Mori, Cranium Architecture, World Societies, thereby revealing the diversity in Irving Penn's work, which is in itself an invaluable legacy to the world of photography.

Penn subjects appear at first glance to be quite disparate: celebrities (Pablo Picasso, Alfred Hitchcock, Salvador Dali, Georgia O'Keeffe...), skulls, and cigarette butts... But to Penn, **“It is all one thing”**.

Penn once said: **“A good photograph is one that communicate a fact, touches the heart, leaves the viewer a changed person for having seen it. It is, in a word, effective.”**

Exhibiting the work of Irving Penn to mark the opening **Mina Image Centre** is a mission statement, one that embraces the history of photography and the work of the late masters while looking to the future.

Biography

Irving Penn (1917-2009) recognized as one of the masters of photography of the twentieth century, known for his pioneering work in both commercial and artistic photography. Trained as a painter, with photography as a side interest, Penn went on to study commercial art. Although he was celebrated as one of *Vogue* magazine's top photographers for more than sixty years, Penn's photographs have been shown in numerous international exhibitions and are in major museums and collections throughout the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

About Mina Image Centre

Mina Image Centre is a non-profit organisation, geared towards bringing to a Middle Eastern public the best of photography and artworks from the region and around the world. We look to engage a wide audience of enthusiasts and to propose a new reading for those who, until today, regarded photography as a trivial art.

The contemporary art scene in Lebanon and the region in general, has been thriving over the past two decades mainly within the realm of private initiatives. Mina Image Centre places itself among these endeavors and looks to join efforts with other existing institution in the Middle East to provide a much-needed platform for free and thought provoking artistic expression.

Why specialize in Photography? Our central interest lies in the "Image" with all its complexities and variations. We opted to launch our space with a photographic exhibition to shed light on the long history of photography. Mina looks to provide this dedicated space to debate, not only the past, but also the future of this multifaceted discipline of Art.

An artistic committee and a board of trustees head the Mina Initiative. The director of the Centre is Manal Khader, appointed by the board for a mandate of 3 years.

For additional information about our board, team members, past and upcoming events visit us on our website:

www.minaimagecentre.org



Mina Image Centre

Mina Image Centre Address:

Stone Gardens Building
Darwich Haddad St.
Port District
Beirut

+96170907011

Opening Hours:
10 a.m- 8 p.m

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"The Hand of Miles Davis (C), New York, 1986"

Unframed image size: 48x47cm



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Harlequin Dress (Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn), New York 1950

Platinum-palladium print. Printed in 1979

Full image size: 63x55.9cm

Unframed image size: 50x47.7cm



© The Irving Penn Foundation

Hell's Angels, San Francisco, 1967

Platinum-palladium print. Printed in 1969

Full image size: 50.7x60.7cm

Unframed image size: 38x46.7cm



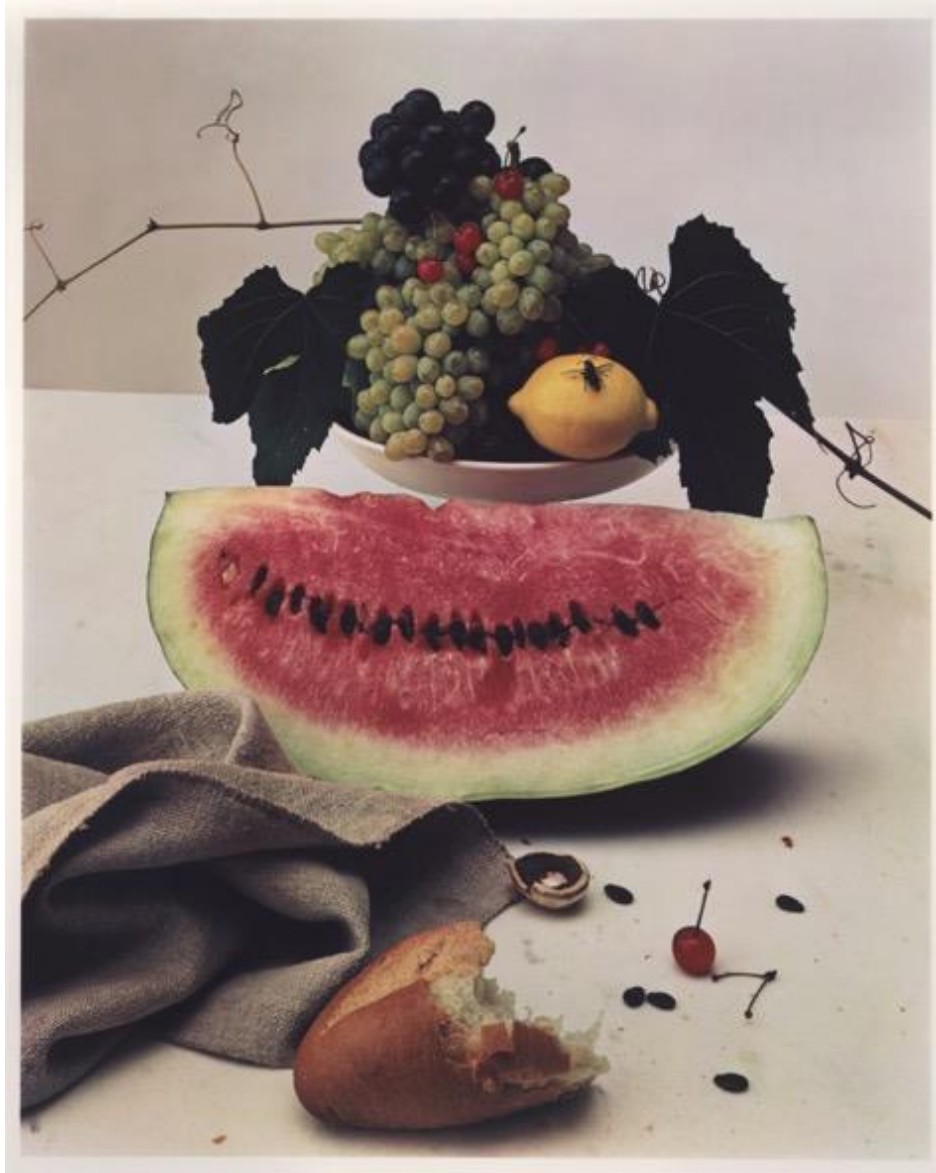
© The Irving Penn Foundation

Cigarette No. 37, New York, 1972

Platinum-palladium print. Printed in 1975

Full image size: 63.2x56cm

Unframed image size: 59.3x44cm



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"Still life with watermelon, New York, 1947"

full image size: 60.64x50.8cm

unframed image size: 56x44.5cm

printed in 1985.

Text by Matthieu Humery

INTRODUCTION

Irving Penn (1917-2009), recognized as one of the masters of photography of the twentieth century, is widely admired for his iconic images of high fashion and for the remarkable portraits of the artists, writers, and celebrities who defined the cultural landscapes of his time.

Drawing inspiration from *Resonance*, an exhibition organized by the Pinault Collection in 2014 at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice, the exhibition *Untroubled* seeks first and foremost to pay tribute to the photographer's unique legacy.

At the heart of the resonance throughout Penn's prolific body of work is the lasting influence of the core photographic principles he studiously developed early on. The serene consistency of his image production is deeply indebted to his scrupulous efforts, through the years, to abide by the technical and artistic commands he devised for himself. This self-imposed discipline result in a nearly flawless production.

Penn's principles remain to this day as relevant as ever, so much so that they are still regarded as empirical truths in spite of the socio-economical, philosophic and aesthetic upheavals of a world that is constantly reinventing itself.

Exhibiting the work of Irving Penn to mark the opening of a new center for contemporary image production is a mission statement, one that embraces the history of photography and the work of the

late masters while looking to the future. Penn's work is a monument of epic artistic resilience, a major reference for contemporary photography and an endless source of inspiration for generations to come.

All the photographs that appear in this exhibition are drawn from the Pinault Collection. Although in date they span more than four decades, they are presented not as a retrospective but are loosely arranged by subject.

Penn was first and foremost a studio photographer. His photographs, with their simple backdrops of paper, canvas, or bare wall, establish a spatial container at once formal and insular. Whether haute couture, still life, ethnography, or memento mori, the image is decontextualized, intense and demanding of attention.

Penn's subjects appear at first glance to be quite disparate – celebrities, skulls, cigarette butts. But removed from their natural environment and with an unflinching focus on their materiality, they achieve a democratic leveling that is the signature of Penn's style. Each subject is equal under his gaze, a quiet yet insistent intruder into the neutral space of the studio. Trained as a painter, with photography as a side interest, Penn went on to study commercial art and was eventually hired in 1943 as assistant to Alexander Liberman, art director of *Vogue* in New York, who will become a life-long mentor and friend. That same year he began working for the magazine as a staff photographer and soon

established himself as the most innovative professional in the field.

Penn's commercial success did not inhibit but rather fueled his personal artistic experimentation. In 1949-50 he embarked on a series of nudes that were remarkable for their abstraction. Unlike his work for the magazine, where the printing was in the hands of technicians and the images were made for wide distribution, in these photographs Penn had total control over every aspect of the printing. This first experience of close involvement with the print led him to investigate other processes in the 1960s, among them platinum-palladium printing. Practiced early in the twentieth century, the platinum process created an image that is virtually unlimited in its range of tonal variation. The various aesthetic possibilities of the platinum printing process also inspired Penn to revisit earlier work, printing in platinum and palladium photographs that he had originally printed in universally used gelatin silver. Indeed, the constant reworking of image would provide the fundamental structure of Penn's creative approach.

The exhibition thus presents the photographs not in a linear, chronological sequence but arranged in a manner that brings out their subliminal affinities. Commercial projects cohabit with ethnographic studies, discarded refuse with sophisticated models, cultural celebrities with animal skulls. As Penn remarked, "It is all one thing".

Irving Penn (1917-2009), reconnu comme l'un des maîtres de la photographie au XX^{ème} siècle, est admiré pour ses images de mode iconiques et pour ses remarquables portraits d'artistes, d'écrivains et de célébrités qui ont marqué le panorama culturel de son temps.

Cette exposition prend sa source dans Resonance mais dispose d'une identité propre : Untroubled met en lumière le caractère immuable de l'œuvre du photographe.

La permanence des principes de création d'Irving Penn est à l'origine de ces résonances entre les différents ensembles de son corpus. Cette fidélité sans faille envers les principes qu'il s'est efforcé de respecter tout au long de sa carrière ont forgé cette sérénité propre à son œuvre. Ainsi, ses principes inchangés rendent son œuvre imperturbable.

Nous pourrions aujourd'hui qualifier les règles édictées par Penn de données empiriques tant ses principes ont traversé et traversent toujours sans encombre notre époque, ce monde où bouleversements socio-économiques, philosophiques et esthétiques répondent aux remises en question perpétuelles des acquis du passé.

Choisir d'exposer cet artiste pour l'ouverture d'un centre tourné vers l'image contemporaine c'est aussi s'inscrire dans une histoire de la photographie, montrer que les grands maîtres font partie intégrante de nos aspirations futures. Cette offre au regard l'œuvre de ce photographe, ce monument immobile à la stabilité inébranlable, qui reste un point de référence majeur pour la création contemporaine et une source d'inspiration

sans faille pour les nouvelles générations d'artistes.

Les photographies présentées dans cette exposition proviennent de la collection Pinault. Même si elles couvrent une période de près de quarante ans, elles n'ont pas vocation à former une rétrospective mais plutôt à initier les visiteurs au monde créé par l'artiste.

Penn est avant tout un photographe de studio. Ses photographies dont le fond est constitué d'un simple papier, d'une toile ou d'un mur nu, créent un environnement insulaire et formel. Qu'il s'agisse de haute couture, de natures mortes, d'ethnographie ou de memento mori, le sujet est extrait de son contexte et l'intensité qu'il acquiert force l'attention.

A première vue, les sujets de Penn peuvent sembler disparates – célébrités, vanités, mégots de cigarettes. Mais isolés de leur environnement naturel, dans une perspective résolument centrée sur la matérialité, ils relèvent du même statut, ils font l'objet d'une considération égale et « démocratique », qui devient la signature de l'artiste. Chaque sujet est égal à ses yeux, un intrus discret mais insistant dans l'espace neutre du studio.

Formé tout d'abord à la peinture – la photographie ne constituait au départ qu'une pratique secondaire – Penn poursuit des études d'arts appliqués avant d'être embauché en 1943 comme assistant d'Alexander Liberman, directeur artistique de Vogue à New York, qui deviendra par la suite son mentor et son ami. La même année, il fait ses débuts au magazine comme photographe et s'impose rapidement

comme l'un des professionnels les plus innovateurs dans ce domaine.

Le succès commercial de Penn n'a pas inhibé ses expériences artistiques, qui en ont au contraire bénéficié. En 1949-1950, il se lance dans une série de nus remarquables pour leur extrême abstraction.

Contrairement à ses images de magazine destinées à une large distribution et pour lesquelles l'impression est entre les mains des techniciens, il assume le plein contrôle de toutes les étapes du tirage pour les photographies qu'il réalise à titre personnel. En s'impliquant dans la production même de ses œuvres, il explore de nombreux procédés d'impression, parmi lesquels le tirage au platine. Pratiqué au début du XX^{ème} siècle, le tirage au platine permet de créer une image aux variations tonales virtuellement illimitées. Les riches possibilités esthétiques du procédé au platine amènent Penn à retravailler certaines de ses œuvres plus anciennes, originellement développées aux sels d'argent. Le fait de reprendre constamment ses images constituent un élément fondamental de la démarche créative de l'artiste.

L'exposition présente donc les photographies non pas de façon linéaire ou chronologique mais par des regroupements permettant de saisir les affinités évidentes ou secrètes qui les relie. De projets commerciaux côtoient des études ethnographiques, des déchets abandonnés des mannequins sophistiqués, des célébrités du monde de la culture des crânes d'animaux. Comme Penn l'affirmait lui-même : « Il s'agit d'une seule et même chose ».

SMALL TRADES ***PETITS MÉTIERS***

In the tradition of French photographer Eugène Atget (1857-1927), Penn, on commission from *Vogue*, photographed workers in Small trades"- coalmen and sewer cleaner and fishmongers – first in Paris and London in 1950 and then in New York in 1951. The sitters were asked to arrive at the studio in their work clothes and carrying their tools. The Parisians responded to the request with suspicion, the Londoners with prides. Of the Americans, some in their Sunday best had readied themselves for Hollywood. In 2008, recalling these encounters, he referred to the series as “residual images of enchantment”. Originally printed in gelatin silver, it was among the first bodies of work that Penn revisited once he had mastered the platinum process. Over a period of twenty-three years, from 1967 to 1990, he would return to the negatives finding among the images he had earlier neglected to print, or altering the original cropping and tonal variation to give the figures a new authority.

Dans la lignée du photographe français Eugène Atget (1857-1927), Penn photographie, à la demande de Vogue, des “Petits métiers” – des charbonniers, des égoûtiers et des poissonniers – d’abord à Paris et à Londres en 1950, puis à New York en 1951. Les modèles sont invités à venir dans le studio dans leurs vêtements de travail munis de leurs outils. Alors que les Parisiens accueillent ce projet avec suspicion, les Londoniens y répondent avec fierté. Parmi les Américains, certains se présentent endimanchés comme s’ils faisaient leur premier pas vers Hollywood. En 2008, en se remémorant ces rencontres, il fait référence à cette série comme « des images résiduelles d’enchantement ». A l’origine imprimée au sel d’argent, cette série fait partie du premier ensemble d’œuvres que Penn a retravaillé une fois le processus de tirage au platine maîtrisé. Pendant vingt-trois ans, de 1967 à 1990, il revient à ses négatifs, retrouvant parmi eux des images qu’il n’avait pas pris la peine de tirer et modifiant le cadrage original et les tonalités pour donner aux personnages une nouvelle autorité.

CORNER PORTRAITS
PORTRAITS EN COIN

From the late 1940s onward, celebrities from the worlds of theater, music, dance, literature, and the fine arts flocked to Penn's studio, enticed by Vogue art editor Alexander Liberman. In a famous series initiated in 1947, the photographer coaxed his sitters to take their place inside a makeshift corner made of two theater flats, leaving them free to assume whatever posture they liked. At once protective and restraining, the corners elicited strong responses from the sitters and encouraged a spontaneous display of body language. Looking out at the reader from the pages of the magazine, the celebrities could be thought of as cornered by their own success.

A partir de la fin des années 40, les personnalités du monde du théâtre, de la musique, de la danse, de la littérature et des beaux-arts affluent dans le studio de Penn, encouragée par le directeur artistique de Vogue, Alexander Liberman. Pour cette série commencée en 1947, le photographe persuade ses modèles de prendre place dans un coin improvisé, constitué de deux planches de décor de scène, les laissant libres d'adopter la position qu'ils souhaitent. Cet angle, à la fois protecteur et contraignant, suscite de fortes réactions de la part de ses modèles qui usent spontanément du langage corporel. En regardant le lecteur depuis les pages de la revue, ces personnalités donnent l'impression d'être coincées par leur propre succès.

STILL LIFE

NATURES MORTES

Still life, often incorporating food, has a long tradition in Western art. Many of Penn's most striking images in this genre were created for the editorial pages of *Vogue*. Some of the group portraits share the same tightly choreographed compositions and the same quality, at once spare and voluptuous. In the vicinity of running camembert and ripe watermelon, a formal group portrait of Ballet Theatre participates in the stillness of time suspended.

La nature morte, représentant souvent de la nourriture, s'inscrit dans une longue tradition de l'art occidental. Un grand nombre de natures mortes ont été spécialement créées pour les pages de Vogue. Certains portraits de groupe partagent avec elles la même qualité à la fois austère et voluptueuse. Un camembert coulant et une pastèque bien mûre, un portrait de groupe du Ballet Theater participent du même effet d'immobilité sereine, de temps suspendu.

HANDS OF MILES DAVIS *LES MAINS DE MILES DAVIS*

This series is among the most iconic images produced by the artist. Penn captures the musician's hands as in both a still life and a portrait. The attention to detail and the frontal angle reveal the magical essence of the subject which seems abstract at first but in reality illustrates rather vividly the character the hands belong to.

In 1986, Irving Penn was asked to design the cover of Miles Davis's album *Tutu*. As soon as the photo shoot started, Penn noticed the unique texture and dramatic contours of the famed trumpeter's hands. He decided right then and there to focus solely on this part of the artist's body.

Nearly twenty years later Penn remembered this meeting as follows:

"At the end of the session, I said, "Thank you very much". He got up, came over to me, and kissed me on the mouth. I didn't know what to say. We shook hands, and he left. Later, I got the chance to know his music, and it struck me as being visual art of a most profound kind. How terrible I couldn't share that with him then (...) This is one of the heartbreaks of the profession, I have only the kiss to remember."

J. Fielden, 'The Stranger Behind the Camera', *Vogue*, November 2004

Ces images font partie des œuvres les plus représentatives de la vision photographique de l'artiste. Il traite ici cette partie du corps comme il aurait pu le faire pour une nature morte mais aussi pour un portrait. La précision des détails et le point de vue frontal nous révèle le double aspect de son sujet: un objet magnifique capable de décrire les caractères du vivant.

En 1986, Irving Penn fut chargé de la réalisation de la pochette du dernier album de Miles Davis, Tutu. Dès le début de la séance, Penn remarqua la surface particulière et les contours dramatiques des mains du musicien. C'est ainsi qu'il décida de se concentrer sur cette partie du corps de l'artiste pour le portraiturer.

Presque 20 ans plus tard, Penn se remémora cette rencontre avec ces mots :

"A la fin de la session il m'a dit "merci infiniment", il s'est levé, il est venu vers moi et m'a embrassé sur la bouche. Je ne savais pas quoi dire. Nous nous sommes serré la main. J'ai par la suite eu la chance de connaître sa musique, et j'ai été bouleversé par le caractère visuel si profond de son art. Quel dommage de ne pas avoir pu partager cela avec lui pendant cette rencontre. (...) c'est un des plus grands regrets de ma carrière, et je n'ai que ce baiser pour souvenir."

J. Fielden, 'The Stranger Behind the Camera', *Vogue*, novembre 2004

ICONS
ICÔNES

Presented without a unifying theme or regard for chronology, the works here are among the artist's most fascinating images and, like a firework, illustrate all aspects of his work.

Les œuvres exposées dans cette section n'ont pas été choisies pour leur sujet ou regroupées chronologiquement. En un véritable feu d'artifice, ces images, parmi les plus fascinantes de l'artiste, éclairent toutes les facettes de son œuvre.

DECOMPOSITION *DÉCOMPOSITION*

From his early years as an emerging artist, Penn was attentive to things discarded—the worn, the disintegrating, the refuse of daily life. The series “Cigarettes”, begun in 1972, was his first body of work conceived as printed exclusively in platinum. In the series, Penn builds a tension between the enhanced presence created by the platinum process and the subject itself, which speaks to that which is ephemeral, frayed, untidy. “Cigarettes” was the culmination of more than a decade of experimentation. When first exhibited in 1975 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the series was met with divided opinion. While some hailed it as a masterpiece, others questioned why Penn’s technical brilliance had been expended on such a paltry subject.

Dès les premières années de sa carrière artistique, Penn est attentif aux objets abandonnés – les choses usées, cassées, rejetées de la vie quotidienne. La série « Cigarettes » commencée en 1972, est le premier ensemble d’œuvres conçu pour être tiré exclusivement au platine. Dans cette série, Penn construit une tension entre la matérialité exaltée par la technique du tirage au platine et le sujet lui-même qui traite de ce qui est éphémère, abîmé, souillé.

Les « Cigarettes » constituent le point culminant d’une décennie d’expérimentations. Lors de leur première exposition en 1975 au Museum of Modern Art à New York, cette série divise la critique. Alors que certains y voient un chef-d’œuvre, d’autres se demandent pourquoi le savoir-faire technique de Penn est gaspillé sur des sujets aussi insignifiants.

VANITIES
VANITÉS

Earlier in the exhibition street refuse, cigarette butts, and wilting flowers were captured by Penn in the process of disintegration. They spoke of transience and the ineluctable dissolution of all things.

In a series of still lifes that Penn made in 1979-80, which he called "Archaeology", the message has become more explicit. Animal bones and human skulls introduce the macabre note of the *memento mori*.

Nous avons déjà pu observer l'intérêt porté par Penn pour les rebuts trouvés dans la rue, les mégots de cigarette, les fleurs fanées, représentés en plein processus de décomposition. Ces sujets témoignent du caractère éphémère et de l'inéluctable dissolution de toute chose. Ce message devient encore plus explicite dans cette salle qui présente une sélection de natures mortes réalisées en 1979-80 appartenant à une série intitulée "Archaeology". Des os d'animaux et des crânes humains introduisent une note macabre propre au memento mori.

CRANIUM ARCHITECTURE
CRANIUM ARCHITECTURE

Visiting the Národní muzeum in Prague in 1985, Penn came upon a collection of animal skulls. The following year he photographed twenty-eight of the skulls, selecting twenty-one to print in selenium-toned gelatin silver. He considered the technique more appropriate to the subject than platinum, the smooth surface of the print echoing the texture of the bone. Of animal skulls Penn wrote in 1988:

“An exquisite edifice and living machine. Hard chambers of bone to guard soft organs, protected conduits and channels. Smooth working mechanism of jaws and teeth.”

En visitant le Národní Muzeum à Prague en 1985, Penn tombe sur une collection de crânes d’animaux. L’année suivante, il photographie vingt-huit de ces crânes, puis en choisit vingt-et-un dont il réalise des tirages argentiques virés au sélénium. Il considère cette technique plus appropriée au sujet que le platine, la surface lisse du tirage faisant écho à la texture de l’os. A propos des crânes, Penn déclare en 1988 :

“Une machine vivante à la structure raffinée. De solides cavités osseuses pour abriter de tendres organes, protéger des canalisations et conduits. Un mécanisme délicat de mâchoires et de dents”.

WORLD SOCIETIES *SOCIÉTÉS DU MONDE*

Since 1948, when he photographed Peruvians in Cuzco, Penn had documented the life of various communities in faraway places, especially those which had preserved their traditional way of life.

From 1964 to 1971, Penn traveled around the world on assignment for *Vogue*. To recreate the condition of his New York studio, so conducive to the one-to-one rapport he established with his sitters, he had a portable studio built to his specifications. He took it with to West Africa when he visited Dahomey in 1967 and Cameroon in 1969. In 1970, he set off with his portable studio for the highlands of New Guinea, and the next year for the deserted slopes of the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

The portraits of the Guedra dancers from Morocco and the Mud Men from New Guinea, when they were published in the page for *Vogue*, created a sensation. They are here complemented by the hippies and *Hell's Angels* of San Francisco, whom Penn photographed for *Look Magazine* in 1967. Disenfranchised from the society at large, these groups were but two other tribes, inventing their own culture.

A partir de 1948, année au cours de laquelle il photographie des Péruviens à Cuzco, Penn entame un travail de documentation des communautés vivant dans des contrées retirées en particulier celle ayant conservé un mode de vie traditionnel.

De 1964 à 1971, Penn voyage à travers le monde dans le cadre de sa collaboration avec Vogue. Pour recréer les conditions de son studio new-yorkais, si propice à l'établissement d'un rapport privilégié avec ses modèles, il fait construire un studio portable répondant à ses exigences. Il l'emporte avec lui lorsqu'il se rend en Afrique de l'Ouest, au Dahomey en 1967 et au Cameroun en 1969. En 1970, il part avec son studio portable dans les hautes plaines de la Nouvelle Guinée et l'année suivante dans les montagnes désertées du Haut Atlas marocain.

Les portraits des danseuses Guedra du Maroc ou les Mud Men de la Nouvelle Guinée défrayent la chronique lors de leur parution dans les pages de Vogue. Ces photographies sont complétées par les images des Hell 's Angels de San Francisco que Penn saisit pour Look Magazine en 1967. Marginalisés par la société, ces groupes constituent, eux aussi, des tribus à part entière, inventant leur propre culture.

PINAULT COLLECTION

François Pinault has channeled his passion for contemporary art into assembling one of the most important collections in the world today: it now includes more than three thousand works from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. His approach is fed by his commitment to sharing his passion for art with as broad an audience as possible, and to accompanying artists as they explore new territories.

Since 2006, François Pinault has oriented his cultural project along three axes: presenting exhibitions in Venice, presenting exhibitions in other institutions and supporting and encouraging up-and-coming artists and art historians.

The Pinault Collection's museums are housed in two exceptional buildings in Venice: Palazzo Grassi, inaugurated in 2006, and Punta della Dogana, opened in 2009. These sites were renovated and rehabilitated for their new purpose by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando, a Pritzker Prize laureate. Works in the Pinault Collection are displayed in exhibitions that often involve the artists directly through specific commissions to create new in situ works. The Teatrino, also designed by Tadao Ando and opened in 2013, welcomes a rich cultural and educational programme, organised in collaboration with institutions and universities in Venice and abroad.

In 2020, the new museum of the Pinault Collection will open in Paris, inside the Bourse de Commerce, which will be renovated by Tadao Ando Architect & Associates together with the agency NeM / Niney & Marca Architectes, the agency Pierre-Antoine Gatier and SETEC Bâtiment.

Works in the Pinault Collection are also regularly presented in exhibitions across the world, including in Paris, Moscow, Lille, Essen, Stockholm and Rennes. Solicited by public and private institutions, the Pinault Collection loans many of its works to international exhibitions.

In partnership with the Hauts-de-France region and the city of Lille, François Pinault also founded a residency programme in the former mining town. Housed in a former rectory, adapted to its new purpose by the architects of the agency NeM/Niney & Marca Architectes, it was inaugurated in December 2015. The selection of artists-in-residency is made jointly by the Pinault Collection, the DRAC Hauts-de-France, the FRAC Grand Large-Hauts-de-France, the Louvre-Lens, the Fresnoy-Studio National des Arts Contemporains, now with a new committee member, the LaM (Lille Métropole Musée d'Art Moderne, d'Art Contemporain et d'Art Brut). After welcoming the American duo Melissa Dubbin and Aaron S. Davidson (2016), the Belgian artist Edith Dekyndt (2017), the Brazilian artist Lucas Arruda (2018), the Franco-Moroccan artist Hicham Berrada is currently in residency in Lens.

François Pinault founded the Pierre Daix Prize, in homage to his friend who passed away in 2014, the art historian Pierre Daix. It is awarded each year to an exceptional study of modern or contemporary art. In 2018, the prize was given to Pierre Wat for *Pérégrinations. Paysages entre nature et histoire*, published in by Editions Hazan.

Joseph Brodsky's chapka

In December 2016, at the Tretyakov Gallery, one of the numerous museums of Moscow, Anastasia tells me while we are on our way out, after having spent nearly two hours visiting numerous rooms and artworks, put back our coats on to face the Moscow winter, she says but we forgot to listen to Joseph Brodsky! We rush back in, climb the monumental stairway two by two and she hands me the earphones to listen to Brodsky say one of his poems. I don't speak Russian, but I let myself be rocked by this powerful voice, as powerful as was the image I saw of him, a portrait of him by Irving Penn. I didn't know Brodsky then and hardly Penn. The only image of Penn I already knew before seeing Brodsky's was that of two children in a room, around a table, called *Cuzco children*. But even then, it's only after I saw Brodsky's portrait and researched Penn that I realised *Cuzco children* was Penn's, so strong that one never forgets it after seeing it, even only once, just as Brodsky's.

On this image, square, one can see the profile of Brodsky's face, surmounted by a shapka of which one could almost count all the hairs. In my memory, it was a portrait that had a texture, the hairs of his beard and the hairs of his hat. There was something rough, and tough, which suggested a go-ahead personality, strong and courageous.

This strength that Penn felt and expressed in just as strong an image, reminds me, beyond his well-known work on fashion, of his work on cigarette butts. When I discovered this series, I was amazed. Never before had I seen that strong cigarette butts, butts that by their power of evocation, allowed me to imagine trunks, ears of wheat, exotic plants, rocks, mountains... images of ashes made to stimulate imagination.

Penn's work is protean, he photographed everything or almost everything. Still life, Nudes, Celebrities, Vanities. And everywhere is elegance. Sometimes with pure genius, like in this image of Bergman, the film director, asked to close his eyes, sometimes though with a touch of exoticism – somewhat disturbing I'd like to add – in his portraits of black African women photographed bare breast, or with a touch of courage in his images of Moroccan women totally covered.

There again, one must see the shape and especially the material of the burkas that cover these women, it is similar to that of Brodsky's shapka. In his "ethnic" portraits (a term that hardly means anything today), the more bodies didn't look like those of humans, the more Penn seemed to find pleasure. These portraits are remarkable of precision, as Penn highlighted only the essential. It's as if, before each image, he found himself removing all that, that brought no strength to the image. A big sweeper.

Fouad Elkoury, december 2018

In The Shades Of Irving Penn

Manal khader

With an eye on history and the other on the future, Mina Image Centre, thrives to present a platform that endorses questions as opposed to veracities. In a highly polarized world this new space will look for the tones in-between and the tonalities that make all the difference in the image in its large sense.

For its opening exhibition, Mina Image Centre is hosting the works of Irving Penn, one of the great masters of the twentieth century that transformed modern photography. He changed the aesthetic of the fashion industry, with over 165 covers of Vogue magazine, until his work became too "severe" for the taste of its editors, and he was no longer satisfied with the commercial restraints that compromised his work. "They hurt too much" Penn said about his images when he could no longer see the tonalities in his work.

In the early seventies Penn worked on the revival of the Platinum-Palladium process used in the 19th century which allowed him to take control over the subtle variations he sought in a print.

The universality of his art, his austerity, sophistication, and tonal subtleties are radical propositions that set the bar high for artists and art initiatives including Mina Image Centre.

The closest Penn got to in this region was Morocco where he photographed his iconic series with Moroccan women, and yet his work around the world is so pertinent today and here as much as it is anywhere else.

Penn once said about his studio/tent photographs "in this limbo there was for us both the possibility of contact that was a revelation to me and often, I could tell, a moving experience for the subjects themselves, who without words—by only their stance and their concentration—were able to say much that spanned the gulf between our different worlds".

"Untroubled" is a tremendous occasion for us. There is so much that we can say to each other by the mere fact of observing Penn's works intimately.

Beirut, 28 December 2018