

Irving Penn

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 13-NOVEMBER 27, 1984

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IRVING PENN VOLUME TO ACCOMPANY EXHIBITION

The Museum of Modern Art will publish a survey of the work of photographer Irving Penn in conjunction with its retrospective exhibition of Penn's career, on view at the Museum from September 13 through November 27, 1984. The 216-page volume, entitled Irving Penn, documents Penn's work in portraiture, fashion, advertising, the nude, ethnographic subjects and still life, and includes a selection of his early, unpublished pictures. Featuring an introductory essay by John Szarkowski, Director of the exhibition and the Museum's Department of Photography, the book contains 135 black and white and 21 color plates, and 20 color and black and white reference illustrations. Many of the black and white plates have been printed with three impressions to reproduce nuances of Penn's original prints.

Irving Penn has long been considered one of the world's most distinguished practitioners of editorial, fashion and advertising photography. His work has been admired for its formal invention, technical elegance, breadth of reach, and for the confidence with which it has combined great boldness with artistic poise. In both his personal and commercial work--his photographs have appeared in Vogue magazine since 1944--Penn has brought a classic concentration and economy of vision to the overblown world of fashion photography, portraits of artists, writers and theater people, and to ethnographic studies of style and ornament in distant reaches of West Africa, Nepal, Peru and New Guinea. By the late 1970s Penn's interest shifted from the printed page as end product to the expressive potential of the photographic print. Through long, meticulous experiment he perfected a command of the platinum printing process to bring an even greater richness and clarity to his increasingly personal work.

John Szarkowski's essay follows Penn's career from its art-school beginnings to the

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provocative work of recent years, the cigarettes and still lifes of street detritus. Of these eloquent photographs, made from the least consequential of subject matter, Mr. Szarkowski writes, "Penn's work elevates itself and its role by virtue of its great refinement of craft. The grace, wit, and inventiveness of his patternmaking, the lively and surprising elegance of his line, and his sensitivity to the character, the idiosyncratic humors of light, make Penn's pictures, even the slighter ones, a pleasure for our eyes."

Irving Penn will be published by The Museum of Modern Art in clothbound and paperbound editions. The clothbound version of the book will be distributed for the Museum by New York Graphic Society Books/Little, Brown and Company, Boston at \$60; a paperbound edition will be available only at the exhibition or by direct order from the Museum, at \$19.95 until November 30, 1984; \$25 thereafter.

For further information, please contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director, or Debra Greenberg, Senior Press Officer, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. (212) 708-9750
