

CORKIN GALLERY

Richard Avedon

American, 1924 - 2004

As one of the most revered and quintessential celebrity photographers of the 20th century, Richard Avedon's name has become synonymous with the glamorous world of fashion icons and celebrity figures. Discovered early in his career by Harper's art director Alexey Brodovitch, Avedon became chief photographer, and eventually staff photographer for Vogue in 1966. By moving away from static, emotionless shots and using candid, lively action-filled images of his models, Avedon stretched the boundaries of fashion photography.

Avedon's work in fashion naturally led to commissions in the field of celebrity portraiture and he photographed everyone from Truman Capote to the Beatles and it was with Audrey Hepburn that Avedon would create some of his most recognizable works. His photographs of her remain among the most iconic images of 20th century pop culture.

Avedon developed a characteristically minimalist style in portraiture which lent itself well to his strong interest in capturing the essence and personality of his subjects. He is also distinguished by his use of large prints, some up to 3 feet high. Although he made his name in the glamorous world of fashion and celebrity, many of his subjects revealed the gritty, blue-collar side of American life. Like Diane Arbus, he ultimately received criticism for his stark depictions of what were considered generally unappealing characters. His book entitled "In the American West" depicts the lives of working people in the western country, and it is regarded as an important hallmark of 20th century photography

In 1992, Avedon became the first ever staff photographer for the New Yorker. He died on October 1st, 2004 of a brain hemorrhage while on assignment for the magazine.