

CORKIN GALLERY

Irving Penn

American, 1917 - 2009

Irving Penn is one of the few photographers of the twentieth century who have successfully crossed the threshold of the commercial into the art world. He has left an indelible mark on a range of genres, including fashion, still life, portraiture and the nude. Penn has not only had a successful career in both commercial and fine art photography, but has created image after image that transcends the barriers of each field.

Penn's photographs are easy to identify for their sculptural lighting, sparse backgrounds, and attention to detail. In his still lifes, such as *Frozen Foods*, Penn finds beauty and vitality in everyday objects. The subject is isolated, the details highlighted, and he delivers an extraordinary, often clever, appreciation for the objects by displacing them from their usual context.

Penn's studies of natives in Peru, New Guinea and Morocco have the same tight composition, sparse backdrops and gracefulness as his still lifes and models. However, there is a darker, more melancholic mood.

Penn worked continuously for American, British and French *Vogue*, in addition to a number of other international publications. His many exhibitions toured broadly in the United States, Asia and Europe. His work exists in museums worldwide and was the subject of a major exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern in Art in 1984.