

Corkin Gallery Announces Forthcoming Diane Arbus Exhibition and New Director, Rachel Graham



Diane Arbus, *Blonde girl, Washington Square Park, N.Y.C. 1965.*
© The Estate of Diane Arbus.



Diane Arbus, *Two friends in the park, N.Y.C. 1965.* © The Estate of Diane Arbus.

Diane Arbus

Pursuing Difference

On view through August 28, 2021

Thirty years after showing revolutionary photographer Diane Arbus (1923 – 1971) for the first time, Corkin Gallery is very pleased to present *Pursuing Difference*, an exhibition of work by the artist who transformed the world’s cultural perception and critical reception of photography.

Presented on the 50th anniversary of Arbus’s death, the exhibition brings together photographs the artist took in the 1960s, many in New York City parks. For Arbus, parks were a democratizing setting — spaces for unexpected encounters and chance interactions with a cross-section of diverse people whose bodies, genders, abilities, and behaviours didn’t necessarily conform with socially-prescribed or -sanctioned conventions. Championing people’s “differences” — what she expanded upon as “those of birth, accident, choice, belief, predilection, inertia” — Arbus turned her lens on singularities and identities that challenged hegemonic norms of representation, thereby expanding the public’s understanding of who matters and whose stories get to be told.

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After a protracted period of lockdown that has seen surges of global unrest, protest, and calls for social justice, *Pursuing Difference* returns us to a previous era in North America — the 1960s — in which people were similarly agitating and advocating for a social revolution. “As an American who came to Canada in the late ‘60s, Arbus represents a cultural era that called for meaningful change,” says Jane Corkin, owner of the Gallery. “It feels important to be bringing Diane Arbus back to the public during a moment in time when people around the world are calling for change once again.” Arbus’s photographs remind us of the power of art to challenge paradigms, shift perceptions, and summon enduring transformations with respect to representation and equity.

Arbus was the first photographer to exhibit at the Venice Biennale in 1972. Her work, which embraces vulnerability, grit, and nonconformity, constitutes a raw and unflinching celebration of difference. Arbus’s work effectively helped liberate street photography from its documentary associations to solidify its importance in the trajectory of art history. Held in 1972, the *Diane Arbus* retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York still holds the highest attendance record to date at the museum. Her art inaugurated new aesthetic standards for photography and continues to influence contemporary artists working across diverse media.

Pursuing Difference coincides with the 30th anniversary of the first gallery exhibition dedicated to Diane Arbus in Canada, presented by Jane Corkin Gallery in 1991. Corkin Gallery’s long-standing commitment to Arbus — and photography by women more generally — has had an impact on Toronto’s connection to the artist. The Art Gallery of Ontario recently acquired a significant collection of Arbus photographs, which were on exhibition last year in their show *Diane Arbus: Photographs, 1956-1971*.

Rachel Graham joins Corkin Gallery as Director, leading new program of exhibitions

Corkin Gallery is delighted to announce that Rachel Graham has joined the Gallery as its new Director. In this role, Graham will work hand-in-glove with owner Jane Corkin to develop the Gallery’s exhibition program and help cultivate relationships with collectors, institutions, and corporations across North America.

Graham brings nearly a decade of experience shaping world-class collections of modern and contemporary art to Corkin Gallery. Prior to returning to Toronto, she served as Associate Director of New York-based advisory firm Adler Beatty, where she worked collaboratively with artists and estates to organize exhibitions and specialized in helping new and established collectors access works by some of the most influential artists of the twentieth century.



Rachel Graham, Director, Corkin Gallery.

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Previously, Graham held positions at the gallery of the late Richard L. Feigen, one of New York's most influential dealers, where she oversaw its presentations at global art fairs, including Art Basel (Basel, Switzerland) and the Art Dealer Association of America's The Art Show (New York, USA). Graham also helped managed the estate of influential queer artist Ray Johnson.

"I'm excited to welcome Rachel to the Corkin Gallery team and home to Toronto," says Corkin. "Rachel brings a singular expertise in twentieth-century art and an exceptional track record, which includes thoughtfully stewarding the careers and legacies of seminal artists. Her vision and rigour align precisely with the Gallery's longstanding commitment to exhibiting iconic works of art alongside the emerging and mid-career voices of tomorrow. It's been a thrill to work with Rachel so far, and we can't wait to share what's coming next."

Under Graham's leadership, Corkin Gallery will be opening a number of major exhibitions during the summer and fall of 2021, including a presentation of photographs from Irving Penn's renowned bodies of work, including 1960s San Francisco, small trades, and fashion (August / September 2021); *Traces of Abstraction: 1960-1980*, a survey of works by landmark abstract painters from North and South America (September / October 2021); and a debut solo exhibition of paintings by Toronto-based artist Christian Butterfield (November 2021).

Corkin Gallery, founded in 1979, has presented hundreds of exhibitions across all media. Corkin Gallery is committed to the founding principles that moved art history forward and its mandate includes significant works of art across a spectrum of media including painting, sculpture, photography, and installation.

Corkin Gallery's roots laid in a focus on photography: closely examining its relationship to other media as a means of enriching our understanding of the medium. Exhibitions traced the evolution of photography through the lens' of twentieth and twenty-first century masters including André Kertész, Richard Avedon, Diane Arbus, Irving Penn, Giselle Freund, Harry Callahan, Horst, Scavullo, Sara Moon, and Nan Goldin.

True to its commitment to modernism, and exhibiting iconic works of art, Corkin Gallery features a roster of emerging and mid-career artists from around the globe whose voices and vision are trailblazing the ideas of tomorrow.

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