

CAR
GALLERY

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martedì - sabato
tuesday - saturday
10,30 - 13,00 / 15,00 - 19,30

altri giorni solo
su appuntamento

on any other day
by appointment only

La mostra è realizzata
in collaborazione con
The exhibition is realized
in collaboration with
Baudoin Lebon

La Belle et la Bête, Paris, 2017
stampa ai sali d'argento / silver print
68 x 48,5 cm

JOEL-PETER WITKIN

Au revoir

8 marzo / march 19 aprile / april 2025

opening
sabato / saturday 8 marzo / march 2025
h 17,00 - 20,30



CAR Gallery è lieta di ospitare *Au revoir*, mostra personale di Joel-Peter Witkin, attraverso una selezione di fotografie (sintesi del percorso artistico e della ricerca dal 1998 al 2017) e un disegno a matita del 2007.

CAR Gallery is pleased to host *Au revoir*, a solo exhibition by Joel-Peter Witkin, with a selection of photographs (summary of his artistic path and research from 1998 to 2017) and a pencil drawing from 2007.

Joel-Peter Witkin nasce a New York nel 1939 da padre ebreo, immigrato dalla Lituania, e da madre cattolica, di origine italiana, ha un fratello gemello, Jerome-Paul Witkin, affermato pittore.

I genitori di Witkin divorziano, quando lui era ancora bambino, a causa di divergenze religiose e, dopo la scuola primaria a Brooklyn, frequenta la Grover Cleveland High School.

Joel-Peter Witkin was born in New York in 1939. His Jewish father was an immigrant from Lithuania and his Catholic mother was from Italy. He has a son and a twin brother, Jerome-Paul Witkin, who is a well-known painter.

Witkin's parents divorced when he was a child because of religious differences. After primary schooling at Saint Cecilia's in Brooklyn he went to Grover Cleveland High School.



Durante il servizio militare gli vengono assegnati vari incarichi e segue corsi fotografici. Nonostante la guerra in Vietnam, Witkin non venne mai inviato sul campo di battaglia come reporter, gli fu chiesto invece di documentare la vita quotidiana ai campi base del reggimento in Europa, concentrandosi in particolare sul tasso di incidenti e suicidi.

Dopo aver lasciato l'esercito, studia arte alla Cooper Union dove ottiene la laurea. Nel 1974 riceve una borsa di studio dall'Università

During his military service he was assigned to various reporting tasks and received basic training in photography. Despite a persistent legend, and the fact that Vietnam War was in full swing at the time, Witkin was not sent to the battlefields as a war correspondent, but was asked to document everyday life of regiment base in Europe and elsewhere, particularly the rate of accidents and suicides.

When he left the army, he studied art at the Cooper Union, and earned a Bachelor of Art degree. In 1974 he

della Colombia e si trasferisce ad Albuquerque (New Mexico) – dove vive ancora oggi – iscrivendosi all'Università del New Mexico e ottenendo il Master in Belle Arti. Witkin ha spesso raccontato del suo primo periodo di ricerca e del modo in cui ha iniziato a utilizzare la fotografia come “messa in scena” e i modelli non convenzionali (*abnormal models*), reclutati con incontri casuali o annunci e, in particolare, parla del periodo in cui frequentava le star degli spettacoli *freak* per farle posare come soggetti delle sue scenografie ripercorrendo in parte le orme di Diane Arbus o Lisette Model.

Anche se non è un reporter,

received a grant from the University of Colombia. He then moved to Albuquerque (New Mexico), where he still lives today, and enrolled at the University of New Mexico. He graduated as a Master of Fine Arts. This was when his career as a photographer began in earnest. Witkin has often recounted his early research and the way he began to use staged photography and abnormal models, recruited through chance encounters or through classified ads. In particular he talks about his time with a freak show, and making friends with his stars. He subsequently developed a highly individual style of photography and printmaking. He does his own printing, making only a



viaggia molto ed è ricettivo nei confronti delle diverse culture e delle atmosfere che permeano i luoghi che visita. Scatta fotografie in molti paesi costruendo in modo sistematico set molto dettagliati. La cultura artistica di Witkin è immensa, la conoscenza del vocabolario plastico e dei temi della grande arte classica e moderna emerge nelle scelte dei soggetti, nelle composizioni e nelle inquadrature. Talvolta reinterpreta i capolavori dei grandi maestri – Goya, Courbet, Manet – che

few copies, and takes few photographs. Although he is not a reporter or event photographer, he travels widely. He is receptive to different cultures and the atmosphere that emanates from them. He takes photographs in many different countries, systematically setting the stage with great attention to details. Witkin's artistic culture is immense, and his knowledge of the plastic vocabulary and themes of great art - classical and modern - transpires in his choices of subjects, staging, and viewing angles. He sometimes

vengono dichiarati nei titoli o come una presenza latente che è una costante nella sua opera. L'immagine è pensata in anticipo e preparata con meticolosi disegni a matita o carboncino la cui elaborazione avviene anche durante la fase di stampa utilizzando, con grande abilità, una serie di procedure molto personali (graffi, strappi, posizioni verticali del negativo, filtri e mascherine tra la carta e l'ingranditore), spesso applica manualmente sulla stampa finale elementi a effetto collage e, occupandosi lui stesso delle stampe fotografiche in poche copie, sviluppa uno stile fortemente personale e inconfondibile. Il processo creativo in camera oscura è per Witkin un punto cruciale poiché non delega ad altri questa fase dell'opera in quanto parte fondante e vera sostanza della fotografia come soggetto di sé stessa ricollocandola nella sfera dell'arte come manufatto e non in quella del reportage come documento.

All'inizio della sua carriera venne notato da Edward Steichen, direttore della collezione di fotografia del MoMA di New York, che lo incluse nella mostra *Great Photographs from the Museum Collection* (1959) e, da quel momento, la sua opera è stata esposta in tutto il mondo come una delle pietre miliari del Novecento. Le sue opere sono state acquisite da numerose collezioni pubbliche e private decretandolo un maestro da cui oggi non si può prescindere.

reinterprets works by classical painters such as Goya, Courbet, Manet... Whether clearly stated in the titles or merely an underlying presence, this element is a constant in his work. Instead, he applies collage effects manually on the final print. The image is thought out beforehand, usually prepared with meticulous pencil or charcoal drawings. The highly individual elaboration of the image, that makes his photographs immediately identifiable, is done during the printing stage. He has developed great skill with a number of very personal procedures (scratching, tearing or standing the negative, inserting filters and various obstacles between the support and the enlarger), and will go to any lengths in his printing methods. He enters the darkroom, and does not stop working until he achieves the perfect print. This is a particularly crucial point, because many photographers delegate this phase of production to a printer: for Witkin the material process of creation is of capital importance. What Witkin exhibits is certainly a "subject", but it is also a very substance of the photograph, an object in itself.

Witkin's work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions all over the world. At the beginning of his career, he was noticed by Edward Steichen, then head of the photograph collection at the MoMA, New York, who included his work in the 1959 exhibition *Great Photographs from the Museum Collection*. Mr. Witkin's work is acquired by numerous public and private collections, decreeing him a master who cannot be ignored today.

Raphael and La Fornarina, Paris, 2003
stampa ai sali d'argento / silver print
50,5 x 40,5 cm

Imperfect Thirst, New Mexico, 2016
stampa ai sali d'argento / silver print
50,5 x 40,5 cm

Beauty has three nipples, Berlin, 1998
stampa ai sali d'argento / silver print
50,5 x 40,5 cm



Collezioni pubbliche / Public collection:

Bibliothèque National de France, Paris, FR; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, FR; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, FR; Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, FR; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg, FR; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK; Centre d'Art Reina Sofía, Madrid, ES; Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Castello di Rivoli, Torino, IT; MEF – Museo Ettore Fico, Torino, IT; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL; Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca, ES; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, JP; Akron Art Museum, Akron, OH, USA; Cleveland Museum, Cleveland, OH, USA; Columbia College, Chicago, USA; George Eastman House, Rochester, NY, USA; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA, USA; Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, MO, USA; Library of Congress, USA; LACMA Los Angeles, CA, USA; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA; The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., USA; The Whitney Museum, New York, NY, USA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, USA



Au Revoir, 2007
disegno a matita / pencil drawing
16,5 x 10,5 cm