

HELMUT NEWTON FOUNDATION

PRESS RELEASE

Saul Leiter. David Lynch. Helmut Newton: Nudes

Press conference: Friday, 30 November 2018, 11 am

Opening: Friday, 30 November 2018, 8 pm

Duration: 1 December 2018 – 19 May 2019



Saul Leiter, Untitled, New York, ca. 1950, copyright Saul Leiter Foundation, courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery



David Lynch, Untitled, Los Angeles, 1990s, copyright David Lynch



Helmut Newton, Jenny Capitan, Pension Florian, Berlin 1977, copyright Helmut Newton Estate

The three-part exhibition “**Saul Leiter. David Lynch. Helmut Newton: Nudes**” will open at the **Helmut Newton Foundation** on **30 November 2018**. It marks the first time in the history of the Berlin institution that an exhibition will be dedicated exclusively to the genre of nude photography.

Saul Leiter, parallel to his fashion photography for *Harper's Bazaar* and the colorful abstractions he captured on the streets of New York from the late 1940s onwards, also photographed nudes in the studio. These pictures remained virtually under lock and key during his lifetime; only a few of his friends knew his quiet, intimate black-and-white images. While Leiter had his color film processed by photo labs in New York, he developed the nudes himself in his own darkroom. His female models were friends or lovers, whom the artist portrayed in his New York apartment.

Following Leiter's death in 2013, Margit Erb, the director of the Saul Leiter Foundation, has worked to re-examine, publish, and publicize his multifaceted artistic legacy. In 2018, a book on Leiter's nudes, *In My Room*, was published by Steidl Books, and Howard Greenberg Gallery in New York exhibited a new selection of his nudes. The Helmut Newton Foundation now presents for the first time more than 200 vintage and late prints. While half of the selection is framed and on the wall, the other half is presented in an exhibition vitrine as snippets, fragmented by Leiter himself. His small-format nudes depict women together or alone as they recline on sofas, become silhouettes against the light, seem lost in thought while smoking a cigarette, or smile and pose for Leiter's camera; not all models are entirely undressed. The images are subtle, sensitive, almost shy approaches to the female body and spirit.

We encounter a similar visual atmosphere in the nudes of **David Lynch**, taken half a century later mostly in Lodz and Los Angeles. Many of them are in black and white; a few are in color. In his abstract images, details often fill the frame; only upon closer examination can we associate them with the human body and compare them to our own in our mind's eye. Lynch decided on unexpected perspectives and a large presentation format enabling most of his female models to appear larger than life; the 25 motifs were selected and printed at an external photo lab exclusively and for the first time for this exhibition in Berlin. This show is also preceded by a book, published under the title *Nudes* by Fondation Cartier in Paris in 2017. The images were created both parallel to and independently of Lynch's cinematic work, which sometimes contains sexual allusions and actions. His photographic nudes, sometimes more observational, sometimes more posed, are as enigmatic as his films. In viewing these images, we sense a cautious, indeed tender exploration of the female body with the camera; such visions are likely only possible through the medium of photography. A sense of intimacy (or the illusion thereof) is achieved through extreme close-ups with an almost tactile physicality, even if only a naked thigh or arm is visible in the frame.

Helmut Newton began photographing nudes in the 1970s, both independently and incorporated into his fashion photography, and worked in this genre until the end of his life in 2004. His series "Naked and Dressed", which marks the transition from fashion to nudes in his work, and his "Big Nudes" made him world-famous and inspired countless photographers and other visual artists to imitate or re-interpret them. This new presentation brings together around 80 iconic nudes from well-known exhibitions and projects such as "Helmut Newton's Illustrated: Pictures from an Exhibition", "White Women", "Sleepless Nights", "Big Nudes", "Sex and Landscapes", "Work", and "Us and Them" as well as some 40 images from the foundation archive that have not yet been exhibited, including numerous original Polaroids. Newton created an incomparable body of work, full of subtle seduction and timeless elegance, especially in the nude genre. He depicts naked bodies populating swimming pools, ingenious shots of undressed mannequins and other fashion-focused nudes, half-clothed models wearing orthopedic prostheses, and provocative stagings of sexual obsession by a female cast – which open up a realm of associations where our imagination can wander.

The nude body has been a theme in art since the famous Venus of Willendorf, crafted some 30,000 years ago by an unknown artist in what is today part of Austria. Nudes featured in the pioneering years of photography, the oldest of the new media, as early as 1839. Since that time, a special combination of exhibitionism and voyeurism has evolved before the lens of thousands of photographers; this has also led to the rampant digital distribution of nude images without regard for aesthetic standards. In stark contrast, the three photographers presented here count among some of the most empathetic and influential nude photographers at the end of the 20th century.

The current exhibition **Between Art & Fashion. Photographs from the Collection of Carla Sozzani / Alice Springs. Portraits** will be on view until 18 November 2018.

On the occasion of the exhibition the publications *In My Room* by Saul Leiter (Steidl) and *Nudes* by David Lynch (Fondation Cartier) will be available for purchase in the Walther König bookshop at the Helmut Newton Foundation.

For media inquiries please contact:

Helmut Newton Foundation
Museum for Photography
Dr. Matthias Harder
Jebensstrasse 2, 10623 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 318 648 56
www.helmutnewton.com
info@helmut-newton-foundation.org

Media contact
Nadine Dinter PR
Fasanenstrasse 70, 10719 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 398 87 411
Cell: +49 (0) 151 123 70 951
presse@nadine-dinter.de
press@helmut-newton-foundation.org

Hours: Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun. 11am – 7pm, Thu. 11am – 8pm // Admission: 10 €, Reduced: 5 €