

Richard Avedon People

The National Portrait Gallery is thrilled to present the first major exhibition in Australia by American photographer Richard Avedon. The portraits created by Richard Avedon (1923-2004) are considered among the boldest of the twentieth century. His work is renowned for its honesty, candour and frankness and for its remarkable power and unique style. The media are invited to the exhibition preview at 11.00am on Thursday 22 August at the National Portrait Gallery.

The exhibition, *Richard Avedon People* comprises 80 original photographs focuses on his portraits of people, known and unknown, from the second half of the twentieth century. Created in partnership with the Richard Avedon Foundation, New York, the exhibition represents the first time his work has been seen in the southern hemisphere.

With uncompromising rawness and tenderness Avedon captured the character of individuals extraordinary in their uniqueness and united in their shared experience of humanity. The exhibition pays close attention to the dynamic relationship between the photographer and his sitters. National Portrait Gallery curator Dr Christopher Chapman focuses on Avedon's portraits across social strata, particularly his interest in counter-culture. His insightful curatorship reveals Avedon's sensitivity of observation, empathy of identification and clear vision that characterise these portraits.

Executive Director of the Richard Avedon Foundation, James Martin, observed, "It has been a pleasure collaborating with the National Portrait Gallery on *Richard Avedon People* and it is truly exciting to bring this group of photographs to Australia. Christopher Chapman has curated a thoughtful introduction to Richard Avedon for the Southern Hemisphere. The exhibition is complex, innovative, and provides a unique and interesting vision of the photographer's portraiture".

Richard Avedon's photographs for *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* magazines in the 1950s and 1960s established his strikingly bold style. As the chief photographer for *Harper's Bazaar* from 1945-1965, Avedon was considered one of the world's greatest photographers and one of the first to frame fashion in an avant-garde context. Avedon's 1980 exhibition at the University of California's Berkeley Art Museum powerfully demonstrated the pared-back quality of his portraits and the strength of his observational skills. In 1992 Richard Avedon became *The New Yorker* magazine's staff photographer.

Dr Chapman will be available for interview.

Richard Avedon People will be on show at the National Portrait Gallery from 23 August until 24 November 2013. It will then tour to Monash University's Monash Gallery of Art, Melbourne, and the Art Gallery of Western Australia in late 2013 and early 2014.

Media Preview

Thursday 22 August, 11.00am
National Portrait Gallery
King Edward Terrace
Parkes, Canberra

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Abbie Hoffman, member of The Chicago Seven, Chicago May 1971
Richard Avedon © The Richard Avedon Foundation

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23 August – 24 November 2013

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