



Earthly Bodies: Irving Penn's Nudes, 1949-50

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One of the world's preeminent photographers, Irving Penn is famous for portraiture, still life, and other commercial work. He is less well known as a superb photographer of the female nude. His most important pictures in this genre were made in 1949-50 during intense sessions with artist's models that were essentially an artistic antidote to the ephemeral fashion world. Charged with powerful, physical, and sexual energy, yet somehow chaste, the images are among the most ambitious and successful nudes ever made. Sequenced to reveal the artist's progressive exploration of his theme, the photographs constitute a remarkable whole -- a frieze of life based on a love affair with earthly goddesses.

-- The great 1949-50 nudes by Irving Penn have scarcely been seen and have never been the subject of serious book-length study.

-- The book features faithful tritone reproductions of Penn's exquisitely wrought prints in silver and platinum and four dramatic gatefolds.

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