

JOHN GOODMAN

The Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University
Boston, MA
September 9 – October 31, 2004

Our thanks to John Goodman for the opportunity to host this first major retrospective of his work, celebrating a career that spans more than thirty years.

This exhibition of over 75 images highlights early work during his studies with Minor White, street and editorial photography of the 70s, a survey of subjects central to his career in fashion, editorial, and advertising, and, finally, his contributions to personal documentary and fine art. In this last category, we are especially pleased to include photographs made for Goodman's own private purposes, as well as those from his now classic book on boxing, Times Square Gym. Few contemporary photographers have enjoyed such a protean career or moved with such ease between the worlds of commerce and art. Given our objectives in the education of young artists at the Art Institute of Boston, we especially value John Goodman's example of a professional who has not sacrificed personal commitments in favor of accommodating the marketplace.

Working with John on this exhibition, I have come to think of him as something of a boxer himself--challenging, focused, alert, constantly sparring with ideas and testing possibilities. During this time, another side of him has also emerged, that of the dancer--expressive, intuitive, and creative, yet always mindful of a tradition.

In Goodman's photography we encounter a great zest for life and people. His energetic and lively approach to his subjects--whether for a GAP ad or for a portrait of someone he loves--testifies to his desire to connect with what is vital. In so much fashion and portrait photography we are aware of the search for a perfect moment which, for all its elegance, can seem detached from life. For Goodman, beauty is only beautiful when coupled with vitality. Looking through this catalogue and exhibition, in the sequences of light and dark, focus and blur, we can discover the movement of life itself.

Bonnell Robinson
Director of Exhibitions, The Art Institute of Boston
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