

Saul Leiter

Apr 26th until July 13th 29th 2013

Fifty One Fine Art Photography is showing two shows simultaneously: Vivian Maier (groundfloor) and Saul Leiter (basement). The exhibitions are not correlated with each other.

/Black & White

Fifty One Fine Art Photography is proud to present a new solo show of Saul Leiter (USA, b.1923). A selection of his early black & white photographs, including unpublished ones, from the 50s and 70s will be presented. Although Leiter is mostly known for his contributions to the field of color photography, in which he played a pioneering role and developed a distinct visual language, his black & white photographs are as much witness to his incredible photographic genius as his work in color. Notwithstanding the absence of color, which often causes the image to be more confronting, Leiter's distinct style combining an abstract language with soft graduations is already visible.

Initially formed as a painter, Leiter practices painting and photography in tandem throughout his artistic career. This dynamic has had a clear impact on his artistic gaze and he created a new visual rhythm. His typical visual language is one of abstraction: he compresses spatial dynamics, obstructs sights, and gives up the centered perspective. His painterly sensibility is clearly visible in the soft and unsaturated contrasts that are inherent in his photographs. Moreover, his use of reflections makes his compositions more shattered, more tangled.

Leiter's early black & white photographs capture the energetic street life of New York City in the late 1940s and 50s based upon his own individual experiences and personal perspectives on the places and people he encountered.

Regardless the medium, Saul Leiter's artistic gaze always 'composes' the image. His exquisite visual style is already noticeable in his early black & white photography of the '50s. Today, his photographic oeuvre is still only partially developed. As such, there is a collection of negatives that has remained undeveloped for all these years.

/HERE'S MORE, WHY NOT

On the occasion of the gallery's fourth solo show, Saul Leiter has been digging in his archive and selected 34 unpublished color photographs.

The lyricism and intensity of his vision come into fullest play in his eloquent handling of color: to the rapid recording of the spontaneous unfolding of life on the street, Leiter adds an unconventional sense of form and a brilliantly improvisational, and frequently almost abstract, use of found colors and tones.

A catalogue will be available at the gallery.