



Taka Ishii Gallery

Photography / Film

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## Graciela Iturbide “Graciela Iturbide 1969 – 1990”

Dates: Apr 2 – May 14, 2016

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film

Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works by Graciela Iturbide. The exhibition will feature 19 vintage prints taken mainly in Mexico from 1969-1990. The exhibition, which will be the artist's first solo exhibition at Taka Ishii Gallery, includes several photographs from her iconic series *Juchitán de Las Mujeres* (Juchitan, A Town of Women).

Iturbide's artistic career began when, wishing to become a film director, she started studying cinematography at the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in 1969. There she met one of the great Mexican photographers, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, who was greatly impressed by her talent. She worked as Bravo's assistant in 1970-71, accompanying him on his photographic journeys to areas inhabited by Mexico's indigenous peoples.

Throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s, her attention was focused on Mexico. Deeply influenced by Bravo's and Josef Koudelka's poetic style, Cartier-Bresson's notion of the “decisive moment,” and filmmaker Luis Buñuel's surrealistic style, she discovered her own style of documentary photography, which she describes as the “photo essay,” based on her strong interest in culture, ritual, and everyday life in her native Mexico and other countries. The invitation which the National Indigenous Institute (INI) extended to Iturbide in 1979 was her first major project, the series entitled *Los que Viven en la Arena* (Those who live in the sand). In it she captured the lives of the Seri, an indigenous people living in the Sonoran Desert, in the transition between their traditional way of life and modernization shaped by capitalism. This first experience as a photographer shaped Iturbide's views on life, making her a strong and lifelong supporter of feminism.

Also in 1979, she was invited to study and take pictures of Zapotec Indians in Juchitán by the artist Francisco Toledo. She was deeply inspired by Zapotec women, who were economically and politically independent and enjoyed sexual freedom in their community. She entitled the series *Juchitán de Las Mujeres* (Juchitan, A Town of Women). The best-known image in the series, *Nuestra Señora de las Iguanas* (Our Lady of the Iguanas) (1979), is that of a woman who carries on her head live iguanas for sale. The iguanas form a bizarre crown, and this photograph powerfully demonstrates the power and dignity of Zapotec women. She dedicated almost a decade to this series, which won the Eugene Smith Memorial Foundation Award in 1987. It was published in book form in 1989. Iturbide says, “I try to find something poetic in what I'm photographing.” She photographs her subjects with a poetic sensibility in which a constant theme is the interplay of urban and rural life, tradition and modernity, celebration and death. The current exhibition serves to introduce an essential factor of photographer Graciela Iturbide's extensive oeuvre.

Graciela Iturbide (b.1942 in Mexico City) lives and works in Mexico City. She studied cinematography in 1969 - 1972, and then specialized in photography at the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Iturbide's major solo exhibitions include “Graciela Iturbide Retrospective,” Tate Modern (2013); Museo Frida Kahlo, Mexico City (2012); Barbican Art Gallery, London (2012); Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City (2011); MAPFRE Foundation, Madrid (2009); Fotomuseum Winterthur (2009); Americas Society, New York (2008); J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2007); Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro (1993); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1990); Centre Pompidou, Paris (1982). Major awards include the Cornell Capa Lifetime Achievement Award (2015); the Lucie Award (2010); National Prize of Sciences and Arts, Mexico City (2009); Hasselblad Foundation Photography Award (2008); Legacy Award (2007); Hugo Erfurth Award (1989); a Guggenheim Fellowship (1988); the Eugene Smith Memorial Foundation Award (1987).

For further information please contact:

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Gallery hours: 11:00-19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon and National holidays



Graciela Iturbide  
"Seri Woman, Sonora desert"  
1979  
Gelatin silver print  
Image size: 22.5 x 19 cm  
Paper size: 25.4 x 20.3 cm  
© Graciela Iturbide



Graciela Iturbide  
"Convent of Hidalgo"  
1981  
Gelatin silver print  
Image size: 17.5 x 26 cm  
Paper size: 24.1 x 30.5 cm  
© Graciela Iturbide



Graciela Iturbide  
"Stone curlew, Juchitan"  
1985  
Gelatin silver print  
Image size: 20.5 x 30.5 cm  
Paper size: 28 x 35.6 cm  
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