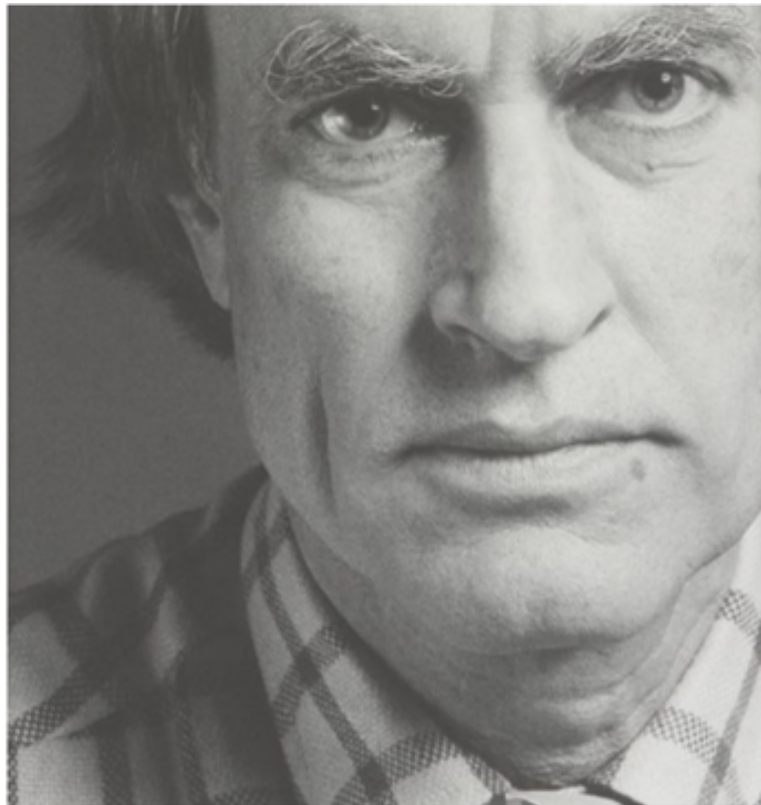


Treasure hunt: tribute to Sam Wagstaff

Exhibition 8 May – 26 July 2025

Curated by Miranda Salt, with vintage works by Eugene Atget,, la Comtesse de Castiglione, Walker Evans, Paul Fachetti, Franco Fontana, Luigi Ghirri, Raoul Hausmann, Charles Jones, Pierre Juster, Robert Mapplethorpe, Etienne-Jules Marey, Lisette Model, Pierre Molinier, Paul Outerbridge, installed around the contemporary photographs of nature by Terri Weifenbach. The exhibition will be dynamic, with new works being added in and others taken out throughout the exhibition duration.



Robert Mapplethorpe
Sam Wagstaff (1979)
Vintage silver gelation print 50 x 40 cm. N° 4/10

The starting point for this exhibition is a magnificent vintage print from baudoin's archives of the iconic portrait by Robert Mapplethorpe of Sam Wagstaff (1921-1987), his lover and celebrated art curator and collector of photography. Wagstaff's "eye" was unique and brought to the new photography market works from wide-ranging periods and styles, from erotica to landscape to portraits: "Wagstaff's curatorial genius and mania was juxtaposition. He paired discontinuous photographs to create a strange beauty, adding to the odd resonance of the photographs themselves." In 2016, the Getty Center's exhibition of Wagstaff's photography collection was entitled the 'The thrill of the chase: the Wagstaff Collection of Photographs' and presented with the following text:

"Samuel J. Wagstaff Jr. was an influential art curator, patron and collector. In 1973, with the assistance of his lover Robert Mapplethorpe, Wagstaff came to believe that art photography was significantly undervalued. Over the next decade, he assembled one of the most important private collections of photographs in the world, which helped raise the profile of the medium and the price

of photographic works. When he sold his collection to the J. Paul Getty Museum in 1984, it became the cornerstone of the Museum's newly formed Department of Photographs." ¹

Art critic Bruce Hainley writes that, "Although Wagstaff's experience as a curator, at both the Wadsworth Athenaeum and Detroit's Institute of Fine Arts, and his collecting and early love of Minimalist and Pop art contributed to the training of his famous eye, pleasure remained the most important principle behind Wagstaff's turn to photography. It is the best explanation for how and why Wagstaff put together not only one of the most wide-ranging but also one of the most original photography collections in the world, which encompassed... early nineteenth-century French photography, early-twentieth-century British, some late-twentieth-century American, Xeroxes of 'found' images, images to be viewed through a stereoscope, and postcards and photo-graphs of a personal obsession—cats." Attracted to anonymous or provocative images, Wagstaff also championed the artistic genius of early documentarians of the American landscape, such as Timothy H. O'Sullivan, and prompted critical reevaluations of forgotten masters, such as Nadar, Carleton Watkins, and Gustave Le Gray."²

Inspired by Sam Wagstaff's 'thrill of the chase', and by the same pleasure principle driving his choices, gallerist Miranda Salt plunged this winter into the vast archives of baudoïn lebon gallery, amassed over more than 40 years of activity and stored in the gallery's new location in Clairefontaine just outside of Paris, in a converted 12th century monastery. For this exhibition, Miranda has curated a deliberately eclectic proposal of rare works, both classics and curios from the history of photography, treasures to be discovered amidst the lush vegetation of Terri Weifenbach's contemporary images from her recent *Des Oiseaux* and *Cloud Physics* series.

Sam Wagstaff, à propos³

Curator, collector and patron of the arts, mentor and lover of Robert Mapplethorpe, Sam Wagstaff had an incalculable influence on the world of contemporary art and photography, and on the evolution of gay identity in the latter part of the twentieth century. Born in New York City in 1921 into an upper-class family, Wagstaff's early years followed the expected schema of his peers: after attending Hotchkiss and Yale, he served in the Navy and then became an ad executive on Madison Avenue. With his patrician good looks, Wagstaff was considered one of the most eligible bachelors of the late 1940s. However, forced to hide his homosexuality, Wagstaff became increasingly uncomfortable with his career and his double life. Abandoning advertising, he turned to art history and embarked on a personal transformation that echoed the social, cultural, and sexual upheavals of the 1960s. In 1961 Wagstaff became curator of the Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum in Hartford, Connecticut, where he orchestrated "Black, White, and Gray" - the first museum show of minimal art - while lending his early support to artists Andy Warhol, Ray Johnson, and Richard Tuttle, among many others.

Returning to New York City in 1972, fifty-year-old Wagstaff met twenty-five-year-old Robert Mapplethorpe, who was then living with Patti Smith. Throughout their lifelong relationship, as lovers and friends, Mapplethorpe would nourish Wagstaff's interest in contemporary photography and Wagstaff helped build Mapplethorpe's reputation in the art world. Along with a small group of passionate collectors and dealers - Harry Lunn, Rudi Kicken, Gérard Levy, Daniel Wolf, Philippe Garner, Stephen White, George Reinhart - Wagstaff is today considered responsible for creating the photography marketplace as it exists today. Sam Wagstaff died in New York in 1987, of pneumonia arising from AIDS. Mapplethorpe died from AIDS two years later, in 1989, aged 42.

For more information:

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 Wednesday-Saturday: 2-7pm

¹ Getty Center, Los Angeles, March-July 2016 : <https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/wagstaff/>

² HAINLEY, Bruce, The Eye of Sam Wagstaff, Artforum magazine, April 1997. <https://www.artforum.com/events/the-eye-of-sam-wagstaff-193991/>

³ Biography taken from GEFTER, Philip. *Wagstaff: Before and after Mapplethorpe* (WW Norton, 2016)

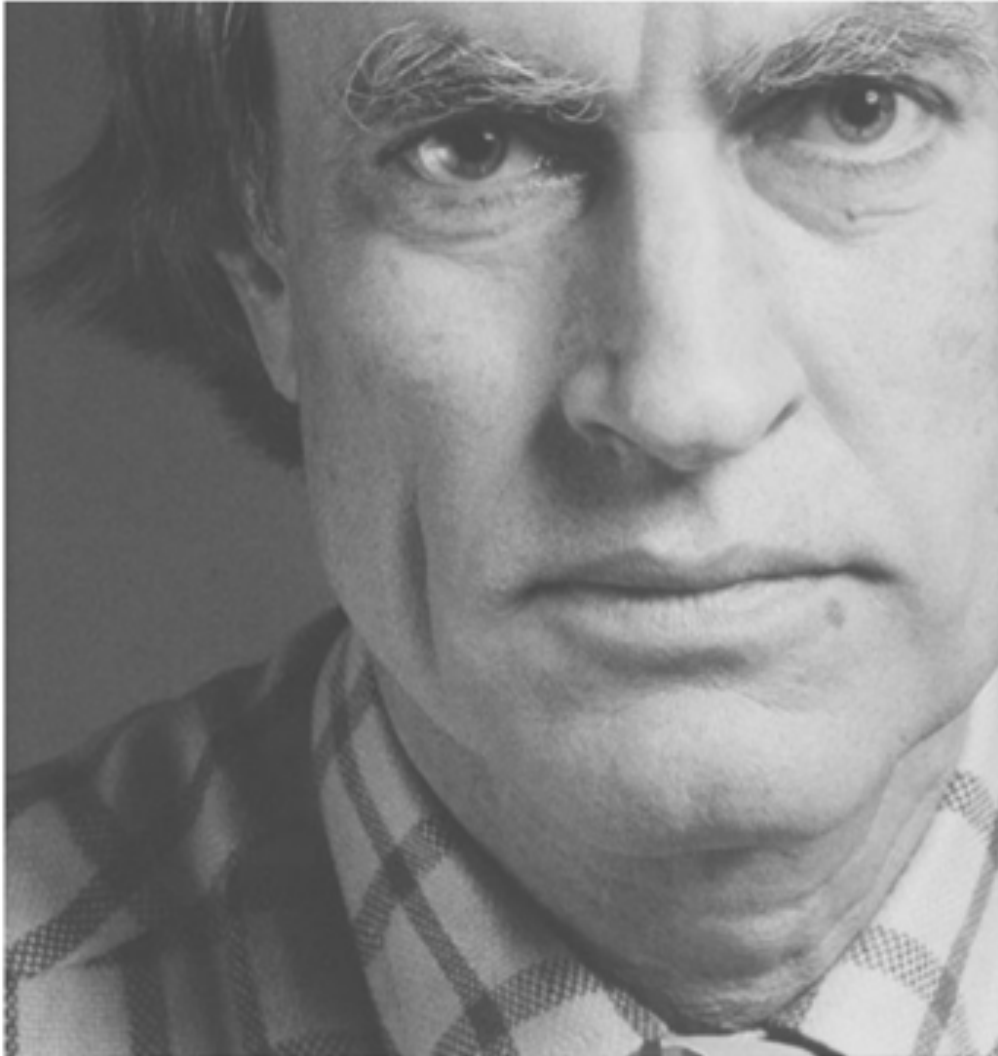
SELECTED WORKS



TERRI WEIFENBACH (1957, American)
Air and Dreams, 2022
Archival pigment print
127 x 91.4 cm / 50 x 36 inches
(c) Terri Weifenbach / Galerie Miranda



WALKER EVANS (1903-1975, American)
Trophy Head, 1935
Vintage silver gelatin print 23 x 16.5 cm
(c) Walker Evans / baudoin lebon



ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE (1946-1989)
Sam Wagstaff (1979)
vintage silver gelation print 50 x 40 cm
Stamped, numbered, signed and dated by the artist
Edition 4/10
(c) Robert Mapplethorpe / baudoin lebon



LISETTE MODEL (1901-1983, Austrian-American)
San Francisco, Woman with Butterfly Broche (1949)
Vintage silver gelatin print 50x40cm
(c) Lisette Model / baudoin lebon



LUIGI GHIRRI (1943-1992, Italian)

Modena, 1973

Vintage chromogenic print, Kodachrome, 17.6 x 12.6 cm. Unique.

(c) Luigi Ghirri / baudoin lebon



LUIGI GHIRRI (1943-1992, Italian)

Modena, 1974

Vintage chromogenic print, Kodachrome, 17.6 x
12.6 cm. Unique.

(c) Luigi Ghirri / baudoin lebon



PAUL OUTERBRIDGE (1896-1958, American)
Fruit in Bowl, 1921
Vintage platinum palladium print 10.7x8.4 cm. Signed.
(c) Paul Outerbridge / baudoin lebon



PIERRE-LOUIS PIERSON (1822-1913, France)
La Comtesse de Castiglione, les Costumes 1861-67
Vintage silver gelatin print 10.5 x 9.3 cm. Unique.
(c) Pierre-Louis Pierson / baudoin lebon



PIERRE-LOUIS PIERSON (1822-1913, France)
La Comtesse de Castiglione, Chinoise Dos, 1861-67
Vintage silver gelatin print 11 x 10.5 cm. Unique.
(c) Pierre-Louis Pierson / baudoin lebon



FRANCO FONTANA (1933, Italian)
Sans titre, 1989

Polaroid 7.5 x 9cm, Signé et date. Unique.
(c) Franco Fontana / baudoin lebon

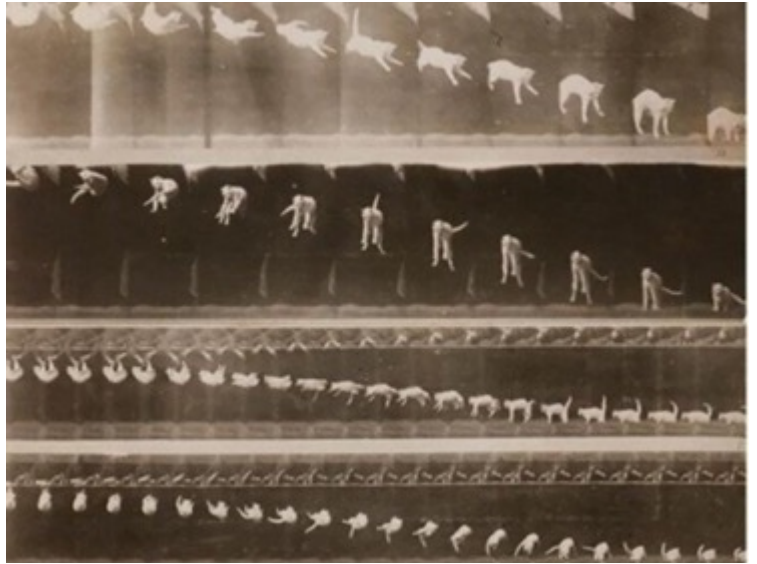


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Sans titre, 1989

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(c) Franco Fontana / baudoin lebon



ETIENNE-JULES MAREY (1830-1904, French)
Falling Cat, 1894. Stills taken from short film.
Two silver gelatin prints attached together
20.5 x 27.5 cm. Unique.



JAN C. SCHLEGEL (1965, German)
Sans titre, 2021, The very last of a legend Polaroid
32.5 x 39 cm. Unique.
(c) Jan C Schlegel / baudoin lebon



TERRI WEIFENBACH (1957, American)
Air and Dreams, 2022
Archival pigment print
76.2 x 50,8 cm / 30 x 20 inches
(c) Terri Weifenbach / Galerie Miranda