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Peter Gowland's Girls

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First ever comprehensive exhibition of the great Pin-up photographer's life's work on the occasion of Peter Gowland's 100th birthday

Peter Gowland (1916 – 2010) started taking glamor and pin-up photographs of young woman in and around Los Angeles in 1946. In 1954, The New York Times called him »America's No. 1 Pin-up Photographer« early into his career and later situated his pictures »someplace between titillation and art«.

Peter Gowland found his models on Hollywood film sets and at agencies or beauty contests. He posed and photographed them in his studio or on the beaches from Los Angeles to Malibu, thus contributing significantly to the myth of California as a perpetually sunny postwar paradise. *Peter Gowland's Girls* presents some 180 works selected from Peter Gowland's estate, which comprises tens of thousands of superb prints and slides, including the most sensational, most elegant and most daring pictures from his unparalleled career as a pin-up photographer.

The book displays his portraits of stars like Joan Collins and Jayne Mansfield, his work for Playboy and Rolling Stone, and his pictures for innumerable calendars and magazines from the 1940s to the 1970s. The pictures to discover in *Peter Gowland's Girls* are a snapshot of days past but have remained stunningly ageless all the same.

»Casual elegance, athletic freshness, and buoyant lightness characterize the photographs with which Peter Gowland was more successful than any other photographer in the postwar years: in color or black-and-white; in 8 10", 4 5", or 2 2 "; and even in the

form of stereo photography. He was a talented craftsman, a forward-looking tinkerer; he was prudent, clever, good-looking, and blessed with a great deal of charm; but above all, he was a great photographer. During the course of his career, his pictures graced the covers of more than one thousand magazines and countless others were published in various media.

He was trendsetting and pioneering. His art of staging images of young women in a natural way inspired numerous other photographers, including Bunny Yeager, and his Gowlandflex cameras were used by important photographers like Yousuf Karsh and Annie Leibovitz. Since the early 1950s, Peter Gowland was one of the leading photographers in the United States, and yet, to this day, his modesty and reservation have hindered the recognition that he and his wife Alice most certainly deserve«.

– Thomas Schirnböck

»I try to make a nude look like she's got clothes on... I prefer to cover, and glamorize and make things exciting«.

– Peter Gowland

www.petergowlandphotography.com

Exhibition

ZEPHYR - Raum für Fotografie
Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen, Mannheim, Germany
09.10.2016 – 29.01.2017

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