

Graciela Iturbide: Shadowlines

14 June 2024 - 22 September 2024

'Photography never ceases to surprise me. It continues to give me a reason to learn about the world and about myself.' - **Graciela Iturbide**

This summer at The Photographers' Gallery, *Graciela Iturbide: Shadowlines* celebrates the work and world of Mexican photographer Graciela Iturbide (b. 1942, Mexico City). Widely recognised for the poetry and introspection of her work, Iturbide's captivating black and white images explore themes of Mexican culture, identity and belonging.

From the Seri people of the Sonaran desert to the Mexican-American cholo gangs of Los Angeles and Tijuana; the cinematic flatlands of American highways to the sculptural cacti of the botanical gardens of Oaxaca, Iturbide captures her subjects with depth and sensitivity.

Describing her black and white photography as '*an abstraction of the mind*', Iturbide's work offers a unique perspective on Mexican society and culture by combining a documentary and humanist approach with an imaginative quality of image-making. With a belief that photography is '*self-discovery*', she has said '*I just take photographs of what surprises me and what I like.*'

Throughout her career, Iturbide has documented the lives of Indigenous people of Mexico, often living closely with them for months. She offers a glimpse into the rituals, traditions and struggles of their everyday lives, capturing their resilience and dignity.

"I lived with them in their homes, so they would see me, always with my camera and know that I am a photographer. In this way, we were able to become partners."

The exhibition will include works from several of her most iconic series, including *Juchitán de las Mujeres (1979-1989)*, focusing on the matriarchal society of the Zapotec people of Tehuantepec, south-eastern Mexico. Having immersed herself in their lives for a decade, her photographs show the strength and vitality of the Juchitán women who lead all aspects of social life, from the economy to religious rituals.

Iturbide's iconic images reference Catholic traditions and prehistoric rituals, portraying a culture in a state of constant transition. By engaging directly with her subjects, she reveals a utopian, dream-like world, imbued with empathy and complicity.

Over time, Iturbide's images have gradually become empty of people as she has focussed on materials, textures, nature and light. As people disappeared from her work, instead she concentrated on photographing empty landscapes and cacti, sometimes bandaged in protective canvas and netting or tied to ropes and cables stretching across the sky. Whatever her subject, Graciela Iturbide seems to have never stopped tracking the sunlight with her camera and experimenting with 'shadow lines.'

The exhibition is curated by Alexis Fabry in collaboration with Anna Dannemann, Senior Curator at The Photographers' Gallery.

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Notes for Editors

Graciela Iturbide

Born in 1942 in Mexico City, Iturbide was introduced to photography in the 1960s when she studied filmmaking at the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. However, it was during a photography workshop with the renowned photographer Manuel Álvarez Bravo (1902-2002, Mexico) that she developed her distinctive photographic language that would come to define her work. Today she is considered one of the most important and influential Latin American photographers.

Iturbide has travelled extensively, producing work in different areas in Mexico, Germany, Spain, Ecuador, Japan, the United States, India, Madagascar, Argentina, Peru and Panama.

Iturbide was awarded the W. Eugene Smith Grant in 1987, the Hasselblad Award in 2008 and the Outstanding Contribution to Photography at the 2021 Sony World Photography Awards. Her work has been exhibited widely internationally and is included in many major museum collections, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and The J. Paul Getty Museum.

The Photographers' Gallery

The Photographers' Gallery explores how photography is connecting, captivating and radically changing our world today. The Gallery's programme and spaces – from exhibitions, events and digital platforms, to the galleries, shop and café – all explore the beauty, complexity and future of photography. Right outside the Gallery, the very best of contemporary photography is shown for free, day and night, in Soho Photography Quarter.

Find out more at: thephotographersgallery.org.uk

Visitor information – The Photographers' Gallery

Mon – Weds 10am – 6pm

Thurs & Fri 10am – 8pm (Friday free from 5pm)

Sat 10am – 6pm

Sun 11am- 6pm

Tickets - your ticket covers entry to all exhibitions on the day of your visit

£8 / £5 concessions (members go free)

Advance online booking: £6.50 / £4 concessions

Also on show at The Photographers' Gallery, 14 June - 22 September 2024 is [Ernest Cole: House of Bondage](#)

In Soho Photography Quarter, [Sian Davey - The Garden](#) is on show until November 2024, free.

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