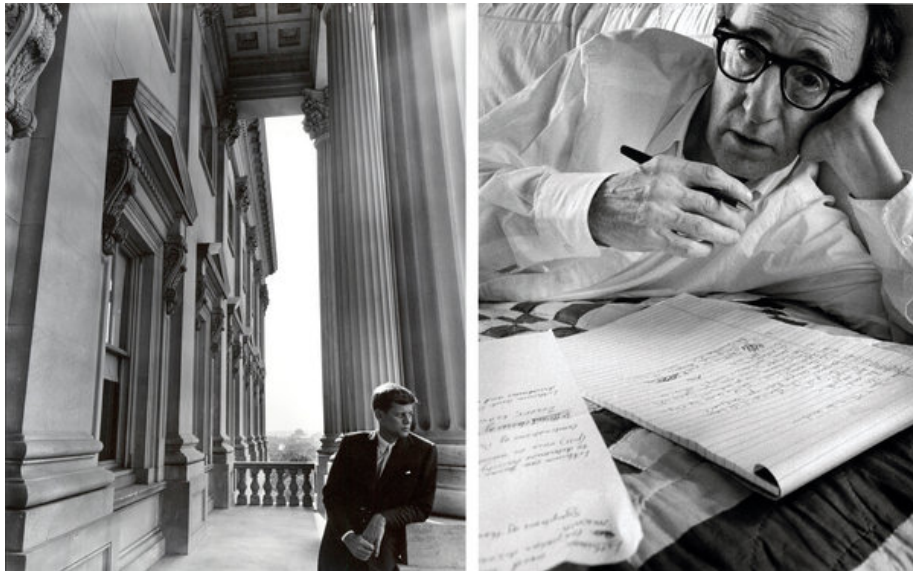


ARTS | LONG ISLAND

Photos of Luminaries, by a Luminary

An Arnold Newman Exhibition at the Emily Lowe Gallery, in Hempstead



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"Woody Allen, New York, New York" (1996), right; "John F. Kennedy, United States Senator, Washington, D.C." (1953), left.

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Pablo Picasso comes first in the lineup, facing the viewer, one hand on his forehead. He is followed by Max Ernst, sitting in his studio in a majestic armchair, a cloud of cigarette smoke circling his head. Next is Piet Mondrian, perched behind his easel in front of panels that form a grid reminiscent of his paintings. Then we come upon Jean Arp, peeking around one of his own curvy sculptures, only one eye visible.

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"Igor Stravinsky, New York, New York" (1946).

Follow the march of portraits around the gallery where they hang and you will soon encounter Frank Lloyd Wright, Igor Stravinsky, Eleanor Roosevelt, Helena Rubinstein and a young John F. Kennedy. They are all part of "Arnold Newman: Luminaries of the 20th Century in Art, Politics and Culture," a collection of 64 photographs by Newman now at the Emily Lowe Gallery at [Hofstra University](#) in Hempstead.

"What makes this exhibition really special is that there is so much brainpower, creativity and enlightenment in one room," said Hava Gurevich, the curator. "They're all heavyweights."

And so is the photographer, who is often called "the father of environmental portraiture," because he captured his subjects in their homes or workplaces, said Beth E. Levinthal, executive director of the [Hofstra University Museum](#), of which the Emily Lowe Gallery is a part.

"He was a pioneer in portraiture," she said. "He spent quite a bit of time with his subjects. He got to know them very, very well."

The influential people photographed by Newman, who [died in 2006](#) at age 88, make the exhibition appealing not only to artists but also to students and other visitors interested in a wide variety of fields, Ms. Levinthal added. The traveling show was organized by Ms. Gurevich, who lives in Lindenhurst, through [art2art Circulating Exhibitions](#), a company she runs, but the Hofstra staff has added elements that make it even more educational.

“Part of our mission is to teach cultural awareness,” Ms. Levinthal said, noting that Newman — who was commissioned by magazines like *Look* and *Life* but also took pictures of artists he knew — largely photographed people who had an impact on society rather than celebrities of the moment.

However, students, she said, often are not familiar with even the most famous people of his era. “If they’re from other parts of the country, they usually don’t know who Robert Moses was,” she said. So Karen Albert, associate director of exhibitions and collections, wrote short biographies of every subject; the biography for Moses says he “is widely regarded as the man responsible for much of the infrastructure of New York City and Long Island” and “helped create the modern suburb.” Ms. Gurevich said she hoped to include the wall labels in future exhibitions in other locations.

An interactive touch screen produced by museum staff members provides even more information, like examples and explanations of the work of artists pictured in the show. A pamphlet titled “Guide to Looking,” also produced by the museum, suggests different ways to appreciate Newman’s artistry, pointing out Moses’s “authoritative body language,” for instance, as he balances, arms akimbo, on a construction beam that appears to extend over the East River with Manhattan in the distance.

Newman often made sketches beforehand of exactly how he wanted his subjects to look, Ms. Albert said. The pamphlet points out that in the portrait of Stravinsky, the open lid of the grand piano at which he sits looks like a musical note, and Stravinsky’s arm, on which he props his head, echoes the lid’s diagonal position.

The Stravinsky photograph is one of the “iconic” images in the show, Ms. Gurevich said, often reproduced in books, as are the portraits of Picasso, Georgia O’Keeffe and Woody Allen, who is shown sprawled sideways on a bed with a pen in one hand and a writing pad in front of him. Newman often rearranged items belonging to his subjects, Ms. Gurevich said. “Nothing was ever accidental,” she said. “He controlled it, but he didn’t want it to look contrived.”

Nearly all the images are silver gelatin prints in black and white, but four prints are in color, including a 1967 portrait of Frank Stella with a large abstract painting in psychedelic hues. An Andy Warhol portrait is a collage of two close-ups, with the torn edges down the left side of Warhol’s face clearly visible. Several artists worked on Long Island, including Jackson Pollock and Roy Lichtenstein. Among photographers, Newman captured Alfred Stieglitz, a mentor who helped Newman achieve early success.

Photographers are in a category separate from artists in the exhibition, which is divided into seven sections. Architects, including Wright and I. M. Pei, have their own section, too, as do scientists (Jonas Salk, developer of the first successful polio vaccine, is seen at his California institute with what look like endless doorways stretching behind him), and writers (among them Langston Hughes in Harlem and Truman Capote in his Manhattan apartment, lying on a couch).

Composers and choreographers share a category (including portraits of Leonard Bernstein and Twyla Tharp and a photograph of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice together in a London theater in 1978, when they collaborated as composer and lyricist on “*Evita*”). A section titled Political and Public Leaders contains formidable figures like Diana Vreeland, the fashion guru, regal in a striped caftan, and Rubinstein, the multimillionaire cosmetics executive, commanding in a dark suit.

The Kennedy portrait was taken in 1953, when the future president had just become a United States senator. He leans against a soaring column on a portico of the Capitol,

looking out wistfully. “It hints of the future, but how could Newman have known?” Ms. Levinthal said. “It’s interesting to think about how much we bring to these photographs and how we interpret them.”

“Arnold Newman: Luminaries of the 20th Century in Art, Politics and Culture” continues through Dec. 13 at the Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University, Hempstead.

Information: hofstra.edu/museum or (516) 463-5672.

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