

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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SCRATCHING THE SURFACE: *Photographs by Dennis Hopper*

Tuesday, 23 September–Saturday, 8 November 2014

Opening reception: Tuesday, September 23rd, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

This is a story of a man/child who chose to develop his five senses and live and experience rather than just read.

—Dennis Hopper

Gagosian Rome is pleased to announce an exhibition of the late Dennis Hopper's photographs of the 1960s, together with the *Drugstore Camera* series of the early 1970s and continuous screenings of his films and interviews. This will be the first major exhibition of Hopper's work in Rome.

Hopper established his reputation as a cult actor and director with *Easy Rider* (1969), and maintained this status with gritty performances in *The American Friend* (1977), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Blue Velvet* (1986), *Hoosiers* (1986), and as director of *Colors* (1988). During his rise to Hollywood stardom, he captured the establishment-busting spirit of the 1960s in photographs that travel from Los Angeles to Harlem to Tijuana, Mexico, and which portray iconic figures including Jane Fonda, Andy Warhol, and John Wayne.

Spontaneous portraits of now-legendary artists, actors, and musicians are among a selection of nearly one hundred signed vintage prints. Claes Oldenburg appears at a wedding, standing among plaster cake slices that he created as party favors, plated and placed in uniform rows on the ground. Andy Warhol, wearing dark sunglasses and a skinny tie, smiles impishly from behind a small flower arrangement, while Ed Ruscha is pictured in front of a neon-lit appliance shop. Balanced at the top of a ladder, Robert Irwin gestures at Hopper while clenching the end of a light bulb between his teeth; members of the Grateful Dead blow kisses at the camera.

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Drugstore Camera photographs were shot in Taos, New Mexico, where Hopper based himself following the production of *Easy Rider* and into the 1980s, and where he is now buried. Taken with quick-use cameras and developed in drugstore photo labs, *Drugstore Camera* documents Hopper's friends and family among the ruins and open vistas of the desert landscape; female nudes in shadowy interiors; road trips to and from his home state of Kansas; and impromptu still lifes of discarded objects. These images, and many other cultural events, iconic individuals, and intimate moments that caught Hopper's attention, constitute a captivating view of the sixties and seventies that combines political idealism and humanistic optimism with California cool.

The exhibition is presented in conjunction with the 13th International Festival of Rome entitled "FOTOGRAFIA".

Dennis Hopper was born in 1936 in Dodge City, Kansas, and died in Venice, California in 2010. Public collections include Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh. Major exhibitions include "Dennis Hopper: Black and White Photographs," Fort Worth Art Center Museum, Texas (1970, traveled to Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.); "Dennis Hopper: A Keen Eye; Artist, Photographer, Filmmaker," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2001); "Dennis Hopper: A System of Moments," Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna (2001); "Dennis Hopper: Double Standard," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2010); "The Lost Album," Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin (2012); "Dennis Hopper: En el camino," Museo Picasso, Málaga (2013); and "The Lost Album," Gagolian New York (2013).

"Dennis Hopper: The Lost Album" is on view at Royal Academy of Arts, London through October 19, 2014.

For further inquiries please contact the gallery at +39.06.4208.6498 or at roma@gagolian.com. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

Press Enquiries

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This exhibition was prepared in close collaboration with the The Hopper Art Trust, which is committed to the preservation of the artistic career and legacy of the late iconic visionary Dennis Hopper. The Hopper Art Trust was established by the Dennis Hopper Estate in 2010 and is based in Los Angeles, California. www.dennishopper.com

Image: *THE ONLY 'ISM FOR ME IS ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM* © Dennis Hopper, Courtesy The Hopper Art Trust

Gagolian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagolian.