

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

## Eye to Eye

June 14 – July 26, 2015

Opening Reception: Saturday, June 13, 7pm

May 28, 2015, North Vancouver, BC – Presentation House Gallery is pleased to present *Eye to Eye*, an exhibition of portrait photography drawn from the private collection of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft, from June 14 to July 26, 2015.

The exhibition comprises over 50 exceptional works by more than 40 historical and contemporary artists, including rare vintage prints by some of the most significant figures in the history of photography including Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Eugène Atget, Robert Capa, Robert Frank, Helen Levitt, Daido Moriyama, August Sander, Aaron Siskind, Weegee, Edward Weston and Garry Winogrand.

Embracing a broad interpretation of portraiture, *Eye to Eye* brings together a selection of photographic prints and videos from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, including famous classics, unknown images and new experiments in art from across the globe. Carefully-posed, formal portraits by Richard Learoyd and Pierre Petit are juxtaposed with more spontaneous decisive moments by Bruce Davidson and Miroslav Tichý. Iconic twentieth-century prints by Henri Cartier-Bresson and Diane Arbus are placed in dialogue with recent works by contemporary artists such as Kristen Abdai, Katy Grannan and Raymond Boisjoly.

As suggested by the title, the exhibition animates the dynamics of looking between photographer and subject, of observing and being observed. Pushing the limits of what can be considered portraiture, in some images faces are obscured, and in others, the viewer makes eye contact with an inanimate object. The works in *Eye to Eye* foreground the complexities of "capturing" people through a camera, as suggested by Diane Arbus: "What I'm trying to describe is that it is impossible to get out of your skin and into somebody else's."

Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft, who live in Vancouver, have collected photography and media art for four decades. From 1976 to 1982, they operated NOVA Gallery, Vancouver's first commercial gallery devoted to photography. Their ever-growing collection, which spans from photography's beginnings in the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, was the focus of a significant exhibition, *Real Pictures: Photographs from the Collection of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft*, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and accompanying publication.

The exhibition is organized by Presentation House Gallery and curated by Helga Pakasaar.

*Eye to Eye* is a selection of photographs from the Collection of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft and is generously supported by PARC Retirement Living through its membership in the Gallery's Exhibition Circle.

Images and interviews are available upon request.

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All images courtesy the Collection of Claudia Beck and Andrew Graft.



Hiroshi Watanabe, *Aikichi 2*, 2008,  
pigment ink print, 20.3 x 20.3 cm



Pierre Petit, *Emile Erckmann and Alexandre Chatrain*, c.1884, woodburytype, 23.5 x 19.9 cm



Helen Levitt, *Untitled*, c.1980, dye transfer print, 23 x 33 cm