

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# KARLHEINZ WEINBERGER

## INTIMATE STRANGER

### MAY 21 TO JULY 17, 2011

Presentation House Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of rare vintage photographs by Karlheinz Weinberger (1921-2006), that together with magazines and samples of vintage D.I.Y. clothing, document a youth subculture in Zurich that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War and was “bent on subverting Swiss propriety.”

Living in Zurich, Switzerland, Weinberger was a self-taught “amateur” photographer whose day job working in a factory warehouse allowed him to pursue photography seriously in his free time. In the late 1940s Weinberger began to publish his pictures for a gay magazine using the pseudonym of Jim, later freelancing for a sports magazine, and over the years developing a loyal cult following. Weinberger produced all the prints featured in this exhibition in his home darkroom, which have remained until now, in relative obscurity.

In 1958, Weinberger met and began photographing members of a small band of teenagers. In post-war Switzerland, these self-named “rebels” (referred to by the Swiss as “Halbstark” or “half strong”) were comprised of working class boys and girls dissatisfied by the conservative climate of the day. They adopted a gang identity modeled on American pop icons—with exaggerated hairdos and homemade clothing—in the manner of James Dean and Elvis Presley. Through Weinberger’s empathetic and obsessive gaze, the teens reveal a mix of defiance and vulnerability, like rebellious adolescents anywhere, and a complex expression of social identity.

This exhibition marks the first opportunity to see Karlheinz Weinberger’s compelling photographs in Canada. In keeping with many of Presentation House Gallery’s unique projects, it celebrates previously unknown and vernacular aspects of photographic history.

*Intimate Strangers* is curated by Gianni Jetzer in collaboration with the Estate of Karlheinz Weinberger, Patrik Schedler, Zurich and Artist Resources Management, New York. The exhibition is produced by the Swiss Institute of New York and is accompanied by a documentary film and a publication available at the Presentation House Gallery bookstore.

#### EVENTS FRIDAY, MAY 20

Exhibition Tour with Curator Gianni Jetzer at 7 PM

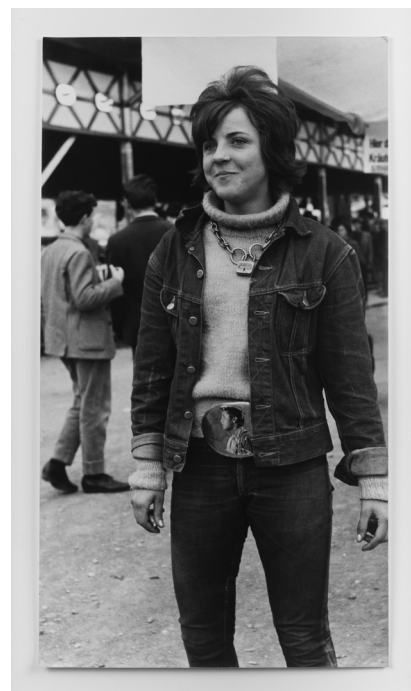
Followed by an Opening Reception at 8 PM

FOR INTERVIEWS / IMAGES: DIANE EVANS, [devans@presentationhousegallery.org](mailto:devans@presentationhousegallery.org) or 604 986 1351

GENEROUS SUPPORT FOR THIS EXHIBITION AND OPENING RECEPTION HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND IN VANCOUVER.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE ONGOING SUPPORT FROM OUR FUNDERS. THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS, THE BC ARTS COUNCIL, THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER AND THE DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER, THE NORTH VANCOUVER ARTS OFFICE, BC GAMING COMMISSION, METRO VANCOUVER AND YOSEF WOSK FOUNDATION.

Right: Karlheinz Weinberger’s, *Yvette, Hardau, Zurich*, circa 1963, vintage B & W photographs, 60.7 x 33.5cm. Copyright: The Estate Of Karlheinz Weinberger In Care Of Patrik Schedler, Zurich. Images Courtesy Of Artist Resources Management and Anna Kustera Gallery, New York.



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PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY

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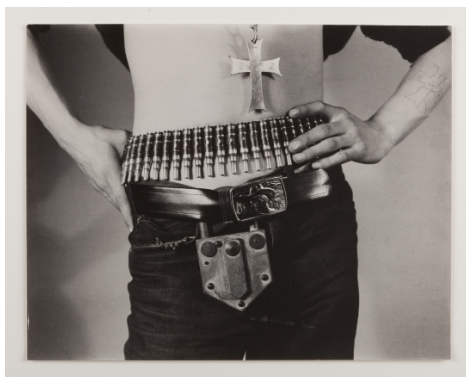


Image Credits Top Left Clockwise: Karlheinz Weinberger, *The King of Killers*, right side *Blacky*, middle *Levis (Matthias)*, circa 1963, (portrait) *Zurich*, 1961, *Hardau*, *Zurich*, circa 1960, (Elvis) *Untitled*, circa 1962, *Untitled*, circa 1962, *Untitled*, *Zurich*, circa 1967, *Member of Tiger Gang*, *Zurich*, circa 1962, Vintage black and white photograph, dimensions variable.  
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