

## Arbus/Avedon photographic exhibit at UCSD

**November 7, 1977**

An exhibition of photographs by Diane Arbus and Richard Avedon, two unsparing observers of the human condition, will open with a reception at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10, in the Mandeville Art Gallery at the University of California, San Diego.

Diane Arbus, called "a huntress stalking photographs," claimed her favorite activity was "to go where I've never been." Until her death by suicide in 1971 at the age of 48, Arbus selected as her subjects people obviously different, too different to permit polite society to ignore their distinctiveness -- freaks and eccentrics who seemed to stare back at the viewer, as one critic said, "with relaxed acceptance of their being."

Richard Avedon, who began as a fashion photographer, a man credited with elevating fashion photography to the level of an art form, in more recent years has preferred to capture the famous and near-famous in a "caustic view of the decadence of affluent American society." The New York Times' Gene Thornton has called this period in Avedon's career an indication of a "lack of interest in what human beings are really like" while conceding that the pictures "in spite of their lack of humanity . . . . made a splendid theatrical spectacle."

Arbus said once of her subjects, "They tend to like me . . . . I'm very ingratiating . . . I'm just sort of a little too nice . . . . I hear myself saying, 'How terrific . . . . I don't mean I wish I looked like that . . . . But I mean that's amazingly, undeniably something."

Avedon's work has been called "classy but not exactly classical . . . . the photographer who actually was a schoolboy poet, is the aspiring balladeer of man's elite, given to brief conventionalized tales of woe about hero and villain. In the end the balladeer proclaims the lamentable ugliness of chin and jowl and we learn how we share with 'the great' a surely fallen, though not quite tragic, humanity."

The San Diego exhibition, which will run from Friday, Nov. 11, through Sunday, Dec. 11, marks the first time a major body of work by these two American artists will have been on display locally.

After the Nov. 10 opening reception from 7 to 9 p.m., gallery hours will be noon-5 p.m., Sunday through Friday and 7-10 p.m. Wednesdays. The gallery will be closed on Thanksgiving.

The Arbus/Avedon exhibition has been organized by Larry Urrutia, director of the Center for Photographic Arts and Gerry McAllister, director of the Mandeville Art Gallery, under a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and with the cooperation of Richard Avedon, the Marlborough Gallery of New York and the Harry Lunn Gallery of Washington, D.C.

For information contact: Mandeville Art Gallery, 452-2864 or Public Information Office, 452-3120

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