Penn, Irving (1917-) Encyclopedia Article

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Irving Penn began his photographic career with *Vogue* magazine in 1943. Rejecting the ornate, theatrical style of fashion photography that predominated at the time, he produced simple powerful images that revolutionized the discipline. Penn's subsequent work falls into a variety of categories: fashion, portraits, still lifes, nudes, travel, ethnographic studies, and street photography. In his advertising work, his straightforward manner of focusing on the subject while stripping away superfluous elements is especially apparent, as in the product-centered Clinique advertisements. Penn's photographs—especially his portraits of influential individuals, including actors, artists, politicians, writers, and more—serve as a record of cultural, economic, and political trends in the second half of the twentieth century.

Further Reading:

Penn, Irving. *Passage: A Work Record.* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

Westerbeck, Colin, editor. *Irving Penn, A Career in Photography.* Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago in association with Bulfinch Press/Little Brown and Company, 1997.