Peter Hujar: The Gracie Mansion Show
April 22 – May 30, 2026

"Peter Hujar: The Gracie Mansion Show" re-stages the now-legendary exhibition that took place in New York's East Village in 1986, one year before the artist's death. For the show, Gracie Mansion Gallery presented seventy photographs arranged in a long, two-row grid. Portraits of friends and fellow artists appeared alongside nudes, landscapes, animals, and images of abandoned buildings, with genres and subjects freely intermingled. In honor of its fortieth anniversary, Ortuzar's exhibition presents a version of the original 1986 layout, offering contemporary viewers a chance to experience Hujar's work as he conceived it, with its non-hierarchical sequencing encouraging open-ended associations and offering rare insight into how he understood the relationships between his images. The exhibition has been organized in collaboration with Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco, where a version was presented in 2025; it will travel to Basel Unlimited in June.

This exhibition, opening alongside another presentation, "How Beautiful This Living Thing Is," curated by Andrew Durbin, are the gallery's inaugural projects in collaboration with the Peter Hujar Archive and Foundation, following the gallery's announcement of representation earlier this year.

The 1986 exhibition, titled "Peter Hujar: Recent Photographs," was the artist's eighth and final solo show. Before his death, Hujar was recognized for his extraordinary photographs by a small but influential group in downtown New York that included avant-garde artists, writers, and performers, a circle that often overlapped with his portrait subjects. By the time of the show, his work had been featured in solo exhibitions in New York and Europe, and he had published one catalogue and his only book, *Portraits in Life and Death*. Gallerist Gracie Mansion organized the exhibition with Sur Rodney (Sur), at the suggestion of Hujar's close friend, artist David Wojnarowicz. The gallery had included Hujar's work in group shows, but "Recent Photographs" was his first solo exhibition since 1981. Following a difficult period, Hujar had perhaps hoped for sales as the market for photography began to grow, but very few photographs sold. While the show was not a commercial success, the opening reception drew an enthusiastic crowd, followed by an after-party in the Mike Todd Room at the Palladium nightclub. "Looking back to his show, it drew so many of the New York luminaries," recalls Mansion. "Peter was a star. The show was a triumph."

Matted and hung inches apart, the photographs are sequenced so that images from the same genre rarely appear consecutively. A cow chewing straw faces English actor David Warrilow, who is photographed nude. A portrait of Warhol superstar Jackie Curtis lying in a coffin abuts a New Jersey landscape and a drag queen displaying a tattooed thigh. Fashion editor Diana Vreeland sits near a close-up of the feet of Australian artist and dancer Vali Meyer, near an image of a trash pit in Queens. This arrangement emphasizes the singularity of each person, place, or animal, inviting viewers to move in and out of the grid as visual and emotional connections emerge, dissolve, and reform. As Hujar once noted, "I photograph those who push themselves to any extreme. That's what interests me, and people who cling to the freedom to be themselves." Rather than comparing his subjects with each other, he was determined to see the singularity in each, an aim the exhibition supports.

Peter Hujar (b. 1934, Trenton, New Jersey; d. 1987, New York) was born in New Jersey, and lived most of his life in New York City's East Village. His work has been the subject of major institutional exhibitions including "Peter Hujar: Eyes Open in the Dark," Raven Row, London and Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn, Germany (2025–2026); "Peter Hujar: Performance and Portraiture," The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago and Centro Pecci, Prato, Italy (2024–2025); "Peter Hujar: Portraits in Life and Death" as a collateral event of the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (2024); "Peter Hujar: Rialto," The Ukrainian Museum, New York (2024); and "Peter Hujar: Speed of Life," co-organized by the

Morgan Library & Museum, New York and Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid; traveled to Fotomuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands; Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio; Jeu de Paume, Paris (2017–2020). In 2013, the Morgan made a landmark acquisition of Hujar's papers, one-hundred photographic prints, and 5,783 black-and-white contact sheets.

Hujar's work is held in prominent museum collections worldwide, including the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario; the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Fotomuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Morgan Library & Museum, New York; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Tate, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.