

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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**Joel-Peter Witkin  
Selected Works 1974 - 2018**

July 23 through September 26, 2026

Artist Reception: Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>

Fahey/Klein Gallery is pleased to present *Joel-Peter Witkin: Selected Works 1974 - 2018*, an exhibition of photographs by Joel-Peter Witkin spanning more than four decades of the artist's groundbreaking career. Bringing together seminal works and rare prints, the exhibition offers a timely opportunity to engage with one of the most uncompromising and influential voices in contemporary photography.

For over fifty years, Witkin has challenged the conventions of beauty, morality, and representation through meticulously staged tableaux that merge references to religion, mythology, classical painting, and mortality. His photographs occupy a singular space between the sacred and the profane, confronting viewers with images that are at once unsettling and poetic.

Drawing inspiration from artists such as Francisco Goya, Diego Velázquez, and Pablo Picasso, Witkin constructs elaborate studio scenes using painted backdrops, symbolic props, and carefully choreographed figures. He then subjects his negatives and prints to extensive physical manipulation—scratching, bleaching, toning, and drawing by hand—creating richly textured photographs that blur the line between photography and painting.

Throughout his career, Witkin has explored themes of faith, transformation, sexuality, and death while centering individuals often marginalized or excluded from traditional representations of the body. His work compels viewers to reconsider established notions of normalcy and humanity, confronting the tension between attraction and repulsion, beauty and grotesquery.

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1939, Witkin served in the US Army as a photographer before earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sculpture from Cooper Union, and holds a Master of Arts and a Master of Fine Arts in Photography from the University of New Mexico. Witkin's works are included in numerous public and private collections worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Centre George Pompidou, Paris; Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London; Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, among others. He is the recipient of numerous honors, receiving four National Endowments in Photography, was made Commander of Arts and Letters of France and is an

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inductee to the 2026 International Photography Hall of Fame receiving the Visionary Award. The artist currently lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**Press Photographs & Press Materials Are Available Upon Request.**