

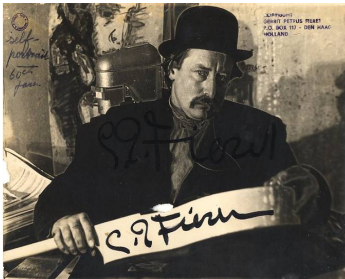
# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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**ON PHOTOGRAPHY**  
**WILLIAM MEYERS**

## **Gerard Petrus Fieret: Portraits from the 1960s & 1970s**

Deborah Bell Photographs  
16 E. 71st St., Suite 1D  
(212) 249-9400  
Through July 31



A self-portrait of Gerard Petrus Fieret from the 1960s. PHOTO: HEIRS OF G.P. FIERET/DEBORAH BELL PHOTOGRAPHS, NEW YORK

One easy way to identify a photograph by Gerard Petrus Fieret is that many of them have his name slashed across the image with a broad-tipped felt pen. Another way is that most of them have a stamp with his copyright notice, name and address on the image. Many have both the name and the stamp, and the stamp repeated several times. But even without any of that you can tell his pictures—they are that unique. Fieret (1924-2009) was born in The Hague and

spent his life there, except for the time in 1943 when he was transported to Germany as a forced laborer. He escaped after a year and a half, and set upon a career as an artist, poet and bohemian. He never formally studied photography, but began taking pictures when he acquired a second-hand 35mm Praktiflex SLR in 1959. He sometimes took self-portraits, but the majority of his pictures are of women; portraits of women, women dressed, women partly undressed, women naked, women in awkward poses and almost all the women with his signature and stamp on the prints.

Fieret's pictures, all untitled, tend to be grainy and dark, sometimes slightly out of focus, occasionally solarized and frequently shot from idiosyncratic points of view. Many, although not all, of the women are attractive. But no matter how provocative their poses, the images are saved from being pornographic by the affection Fieret shows for his subjects, and the sense that taking and processing the pictures was such anarchic fun.

Mr. Meyers writes on photography for The Wall Street Journal. His "Outer Boroughs: New York Beyond Manhattan" is on display at the New York Public Library through June 30.