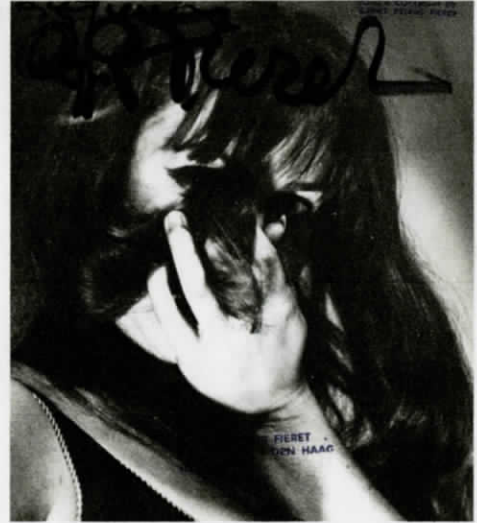


Art Photo Collector

"When I think of all that's happened to me...it's enough to drive you insane." – Gerard (Gerrit) Petrus Fieret (1924-2009)

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If you search Wikipedia, you won't find an entry for Gerard Petrus Fieret. As an artist, he should be considered part of any serious survey of 20th Century photography, yet critical reaction to his work has varied according to the prevailing cultural tastes. Only in the last decade have his photographs achieved the museum-level recognition they deserve. Fieret's photographs are distinct; and whether you love them, hate them or are indifferent to them, his work is important. For anyone who is curious, Deborah Bell Photographs is currently showing his photographs here in New York.

By most accounts, Fieret was always mentally unwell. The sound and the fury in his head fueled an artistic energy that took him far away from the exceptional hardships he endured surviving the Second World War, and into the 1960's and 1970's when, through a camera, he explored and proclaimed his passions.

For a long period he scratched out a living selling artwork and objects from various countries, but in the end, Fieret chose a difficult life. After years of turmoil, high jinx, and creative effusion, his final years were spent poor and neglected. He passed in 2009. Gone, but because of his contributions to photography, not to be forgotten. *(For more insight, here is a fascinating documentary taken over the last two years of his life.)*

Fieret always inscribed his prints, claimed them, stamped them, mishandled them and treated them like he treated his own life. He left thousands of photographs full of a wild power. And he proved in the end, despite the madness, that pursuing Beauty matters. –Lane Nevares