

Elliott Erwitt

A Tosetti Value's selection from ICONS

Elliott: This is a famous actress. I had the great fortune to have a fairly good number of photo sessions with her.

Biba: Where you on set?

Elliott: No, here we are not on set. She was working in New York and we are at her apartment.

And she permitted me to work in a private setting.

Biba: Was she real so beautiful?

Elliott: She was particularly photogenic, it would have been difficult to make a bad photograph of her. And she was friendly.

Source: Extract from an interview by Biba Giacchetti, SudEst57.

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[...] Icons is a rare survey that expresses the most meaningful aspects of his long career.

Elliott also chose the title. No definition could have been more correct. In this group of images you will find snaps that have spanned time, are global fame and have been used in the most authoritative and most mindless ways.

These photographs found in museum collections all over the world, hung up in teenagers' rooms, printed on postcards and book covers and used by newspapers on all of the continents. They are icons that unleash a collective fever, like the celebrated photo of the mirror. Or that even end up printed on pillows, like the one of the Great Dane and the boots.



What makes a photo iconic remains an open question. Elliott could only comment on what was happening in some of his images. They are of course very beautiful and yet they eclipse other, equally beautiful photographs, taken by equally famous photographers. Elliott Erwitt, with his observations of people and dogs, of historical world events or of celebrities, makes us think, often while also enjoying ourselves.

His photos invite us.

They are universal.

And we can never get enough of them.

As Elliott would say: "You are looking at a photograph that is looking at you."

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Biba Giacchetti
SudEst57



USA, Wyoming, 1954



URSS, Moscow, 1959, Nikita Khrushchev and Richard Nixon

"I rarely stage pictures. I wait for them... Let them take their own time.

Sometimes, you think something's going to happen, so you wait. It may pan out; it may not.

That's a wonderful thing about pictures things can happen."



USA, North Carolina, 1950

"If my pictures help some people to see things in a certain way, it's probably to look at serious things non seriously.

Everything's serious.

Everything's not serious."