

Press release

# Bob Colacello

## *It Just Happened, Photographs 1976—1982*

Curated by Elena Foster and the Ivorypress team

21 January—4 March 2023  
Opening Saturday 21 January 2023, 4—7pm

Thaddaeus Ropac  
Paris Marais  
7, rue Debelleye, 75003 Paris



Bob Colacello, Bianca Jagger, Halston's House, New York, 1976

*It Just Happened* is an exhibition of photographs by the American photographer and writer Bob Colacello, documenting his long-standing collaboration with Andy Warhol and the cycle of parties and travelling that animated their frenetic lives. Curated by Elena Foster and the Ivorypress team, the exhibition will include letters, magazines and memorabilia along with the photographs, which help bring to life the era's feeling of hedonism and endless possibility. As Colacello writes in his introduction to the exhibition catalogue: 'It just happened that the 1970s was the most wide-open decade since the Roaring Twenties.'

Between 1971 and 1983, Colacello was the editor of *Interview* magazine and Andy Warhol's right hand. On one of his many trips with Warhol, Colacello acquired a Minox – a tiny camera said to have been used by spies during the Cold War. From that moment on, he carried this pocket camera with him to numerous jet-set parties, dinners and weddings held in such emblematic settings as the Factory, Studio 54, and presidential inaugurations at the White House. In *It Just Happened*, Colacello shares photographs from his personal album taken between the late 1970s and early 1980s, providing



Bob Colacello,  
*Andy's Room Service Breakfast, Naples, 1976*

an intimate and faithful chronicle of the fascinating social circle around the so-called Pope of Pop.

Barbara Allen, Thomas Ammann, Joseph Beuys, Peter Beard, Willy Brandt, Bianca Jagger, Robert Mapplethorpe, Valentino Garavani, George Hamilton, Robert Rauschenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, Cher, Truman Capote, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mick Jagger, Paul Morrissey, Paloma Picasso, Audrey Hepburn, Robert Wilson, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, Jean Pigozzi, Lord George Weidenfeld and Raquel Welch are just a few of the icons that make up the select cast in Colacello's photographs. This body of work captures like no other both the privacy of places where access to paparazzi was restricted and the feeling of freedom of the time.

In one of the photographs on view, the flash of Colacello's camera reflects into a mirror in Roy Halston's New York townhouse, reverberating against Bianca Jagger, who is dressed in black velvet knotted around her chest, while a male hand protrudes into the frame from the left. The ambiguous composition blurs the lines between public and private: is this a dressing room, or is the actress outside, being swarmed by paparazzi? Elsewhere, Robert Rauschenberg is portrayed with his right arm out of shot as he shares the frame with a painting by Georgia O'Keeffe and a small Buddhist

statuette. Warhol, meanwhile, is seen sitting in his hotel room eating breakfast in what Colacello acerbically describes as Warhol's 'regular sleeping attire – Brooks Brothers shirt, Jockey shorts and Supp-hose socks.'

*I never planned or plotted any of this. I have, however, always followed my mother's dictum: 'When opportunity knocks, open the door!' — Bob Colacello*

These 'stolen' snapshots, with unexpected frames and overexposed lighting, demonstrate Colacello's rebellious spirit and disregard for photography's formal conventions of symmetry, exposure and balance. 'It just happened that at the parties we were constantly going to in New York, Los Angeles, Paris and London, lesser-known people kept blocking my view of better-known people, but I took the picture anyway, because I realised parties were like that, producing a layered look that I came to see as my style.' It is in this subversive attitude and irrepressible rhythm that lies the photographer's contribution to his medium: the construction of a new aesthetic identity within the photojournalistic genre of the 1970s and 1980s.



Bob Colacello, *James Randall and Marisa Berenson, on their Wedding Day, Beverly Hills, 1976*

The exhibition will be accompanied by a book with the same title, published by Ivorypress. Conceived as a photographic album, the publication presents Colacello's photographs in chronological order, accompanied by captions handwritten by the photographer to explain and contextualise the images.



Bob Colacello, *Bob Colacello and Fred Hughes*, c. 1980

### About the artist

Bob Colacello (b.1947) was born in Brooklyn and raised in Long Island, New York. In 1969, he graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and two years later completed an MFA in Film at Columbia University School of the Arts. He was the editor of Andy Warhol's *Interview* magazine from 1971 to 1983. He then worked for *Vanity Fair* until 2017, writing profiles and research articles on cultural, social and political subjects.

His memoir *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up* (1990) was acclaimed by *The New York Times* as the 'best-written and the most killingly observed' book on Andy Warhol's inner circle. He has also published *Ronnie and Nancy: Their Path to the White House* (2004), the first of a two-volume biography of the Reagans, and is currently working on the second. His photography book *Bob Colacello's OUT* (2007), published by 7L/Steidl, documents the wild and glamorous life of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

He has had solo exhibitions at Boca Raton Museum of Art, Florida; Newport Art Museum, Rhode Island; Vito Schnabel Gallery, New York and St. Moritz, Switzerland; Mary Boone Gallery, New York; Govinda Gallery, Washington D.C.; Steven Kasher Gallery, New York and Ivorypress, Madrid. Colacello's photographs have been included in group exhibitions at the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; MoMA PS1, New York; Tate Modern, London; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg; and Museu de Serralves, Portugal.

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