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Peter Hujar

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In his studio at Second Avenue and 12th Street, Peter Hujar (1934-87) took photographs of lovers, friends, babies, dogs and exhibitionists. A leonine Susan Sontag and the Warhol superstar Candy Darling are among his most famous subjects, but this exhibition of some 40 other photographs includes various downtown luminaries of the 1970s and '80s. The portraits retain some conventions of commercial fashion photography, Hujar's erstwhile occupation, while flaunting alternative lifestyles and personalities.

His square-format photographs, almost all of which were taken in the Second Avenue loft, show varying levels of intimacy. "John Zorn" (1978) and "Paul Thek in Black T-Shirt" (1976) are introspective, bust-length portraits of fellow artists, but several images of nude and shirtless men leave less to the imagination. "Orgasm" (1969), which shows only a man's contorted face, could be a missing frame from an infamous Warhol film.

Death is as implicit as sex is explicit. Hujar's subjects are often photographed in semi-repose, with heavy-lidded eyes, double chins and dramatically foreshortened bodies. "Girl in My Hallway" shows a young woman slumped in the stairwell of his building; whether exhausted or intoxicated, she is disturbingly sepulchral.

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