HUXLEY-PARLOUR
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Cecil Beaton

26 April - 20 May 2017

Beetles+Huxley are pleased to announce an exhibition of over 70 vintage Cecil Beaton photographs.

The photographs have been held in an American private collection for over 60 years and this April they will finally be brought back to London, where this unique group will go on display for the first time.

Originally purchased in the early 1950s, the works form a complete survey of Beaton's early photography ranging from portraits of the "Bright Young People" in the 1920s, innovative fashion pictures for Vogue, portraits from Hollywood in the 1930s, to his lesser-known wartime documentary photographs commissioned by the British Ministry of Information.

Portraits included in the exhibition include figures such as Queen Elizabeth (subsequently the Queen Mother), The Duke and Duchess of Windsor on their wedding day, Salvador Dali, Vivien Leigh, Augustus John, Charles de Gaulle, Orson Welles, H G Wells and Aldous Huxley.

Baba and Nancy Beaton, Circa 1926

Photographer, artist, designer and socialite, Cecil Beaton was born in Hampstead, London, on 14 January 1904, into the family of a wealthy merchant. Whilst at Harrow School, he developed a passion for both photography and social advancement which, combined with his natural talent for aesthetics, subsequently propelled him to the heights of fame.

As a prominent member of the "Bright Young People" during the 1920s a set he had purposefully adopted Beaton photographed a generation of glitzy young socialites and artists with unique style. His sparkling photographs provide a fascinating record of this enduringly popular group, but his ambition was not satisfied. In the late 1920s, he headed for Hollywood and New York, working for Condé Nast as a portrait and fashion photographer, and quickly created a formidable reputation, and an international demand for his work.

During the Second World War Beaton worked, like many artists, for the British Ministry of Information taking photographs that recorded various aspects of the war effort, from ship builders on the Newcastle docks to commandos in the African Desert.

After the war Beaton continued as before, albeit altering his style to fit with changing times. He also earned acclaim for his costume designs, winning Oscars for "Gigi" in 1957 and "My Fair Lady" in 1964. Beaton's brilliant eye, theatrical persona, ruthless ambition and addiction to social advancement kept him in work for over six decades.

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