

John Hodgkinson

Steve Kahn

Salvatore Pione

Independent Art Fair

Booth 413

House of Seiko

Pier 36, 299 South Street, New York, NY

Steve Kahn (1943 - 2018)

House of Seiko is pleased to present a focused selection of works from *The Hollywood Suites* (1974–1978), a defining body of photographs by Los Angeles-based artist Steve Kahn.

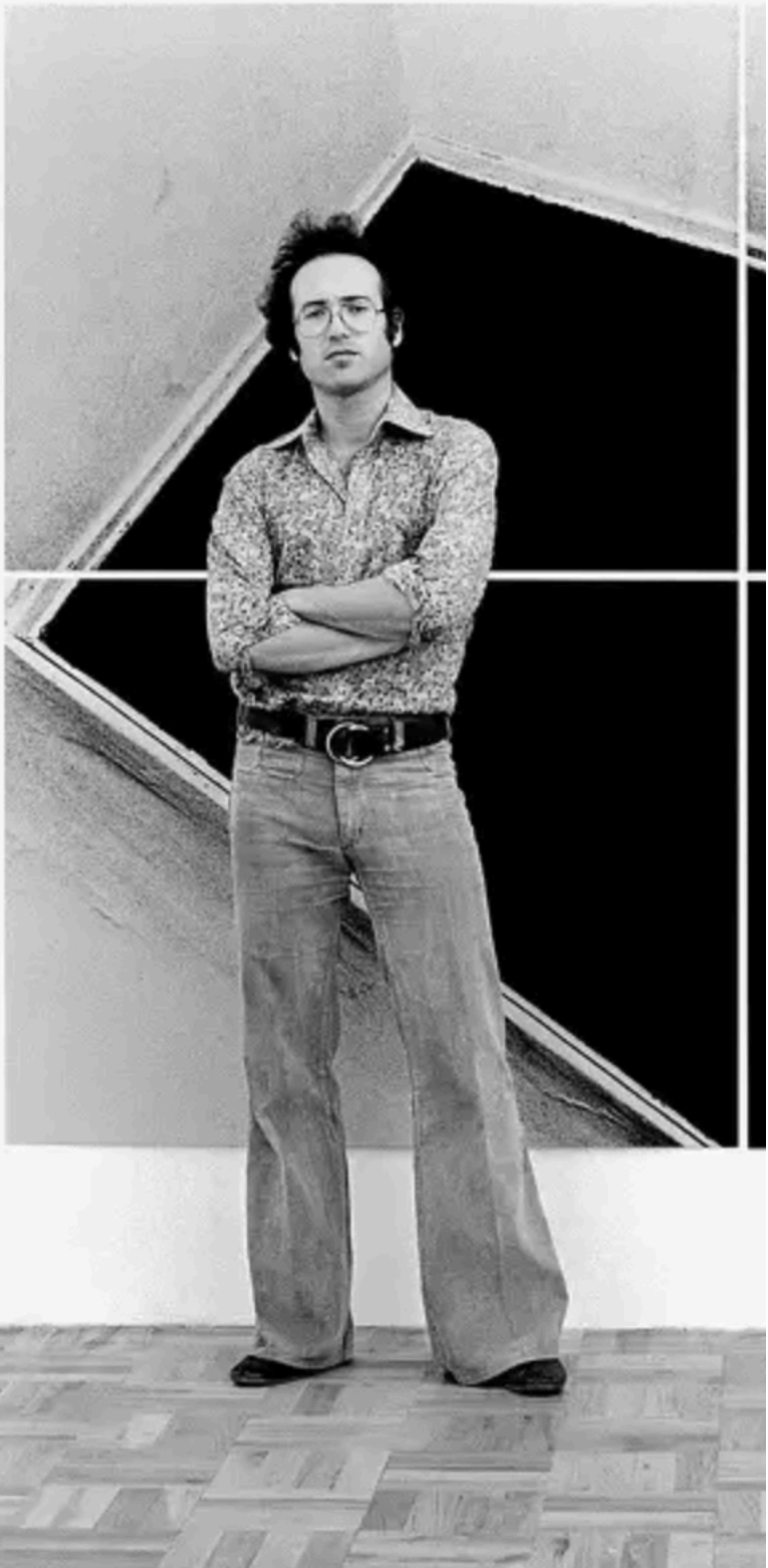
The series emerged almost incidentally, following Kahn's brief work as a photographer for bondage magazines in Los Angeles. What began as a commercial exercise quickly shifted into a more open-ended artistic inquiry. Working in low-rent, one-room apartments scattered across Hollywood, Kahn staged loosely structured situations with professional models, entering each session without a fixed plan. These were, in his words, "no-exit" environments—contained, anxious, and unpredictable—intended to produce images that were at once explicit and psychologically charged, yet resistant to simple narrative.

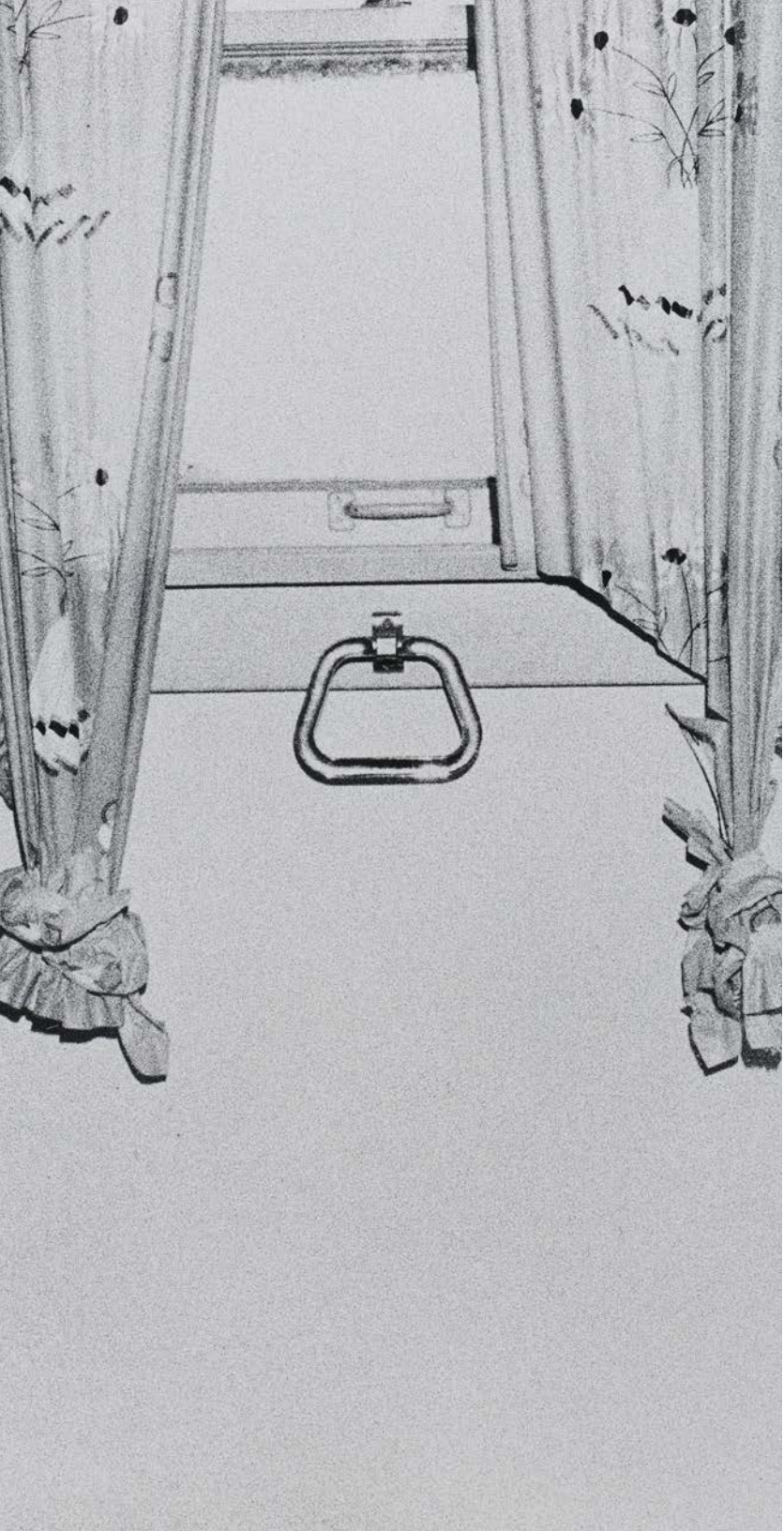
Rather than approaching these scenes as a voyeur, Kahn understood them as a form of self-observation—documents of choice, perception, and experience. Using a Polaroid Land camera with on-camera flash, he worked in real time, allowing each image to inform the next. The immediacy of the process collapsed the distance between event and image, producing photographs that functioned less as records than as active participants in the unfolding situation.

A pivotal shift occurred when a model failed to arrive. In her absence, Kahn began photographing the room itself. What followed marked a decisive turn: the figure disappeared, and the architecture—walls, windows, mirrors, doors—became the subject. The container, as he later described it, proved more compelling than what it contained.

From this point forward, *The Hollywood Suites* evolved into a sustained exploration of interior space as a psychological field. Curtains obscure, mirrors fracture, and thresholds open onto uncertain depths. These images register presence through absence, transforming banal interiors into charged environments that suggest both containment and projection.

Kahn extended this inquiry through a series of formal and conceptual variations. In his triptychs and quadrants, fragments of a room are reassembled into compositions that hover between coherence and dislocation, testing the limits of what can be perceived as "real." In the *Corridors*, he photographs apartment hallways in color, presenting them as continuous, one-point perspectives—spaces of passage that function as connective tissue within what he described as "the





apartment building of the mind.”

Central to the work is Kahn’s distinctive process. Beginning with low-resolution Polaroid prints, he rephotographed the images onto high-speed 35mm film, developing them to emphasize a sharp, pronounced grain. The final silver gelatin prints, made on Agfa Brovira paper and toned in selenium, translate the limited tonal range of the originals into a compressed, atmospheric grayscale. This layered process flattens space and foregrounds surface, shifting attention away from detail and toward structure, value, and form.

Positioned within the broader context of 1970s Los Angeles photography, Kahn’s work shares a conceptual affinity with figures such as Robert Heinecken, Lewis Baltz, and Ed Ruscha. Yet where his contemporaries often emphasized systems, typologies, or media critique, Kahn retained a heightened psychological register. His photographs operate less as documents of external conditions than as projections of interior states—images that feel suspended between observation and construction, closer to cinema than survey.

Today, *The Hollywood Suites* is increasingly recognized as a foundational contribution to post-war American photography. At once formally rigorous and emotionally charged, the work offers a sustained meditation on containment, perception, and the unstable boundary between inside and out.



Steve Kahn

The Hollywood Suites (Nudes) #28, 1974-75

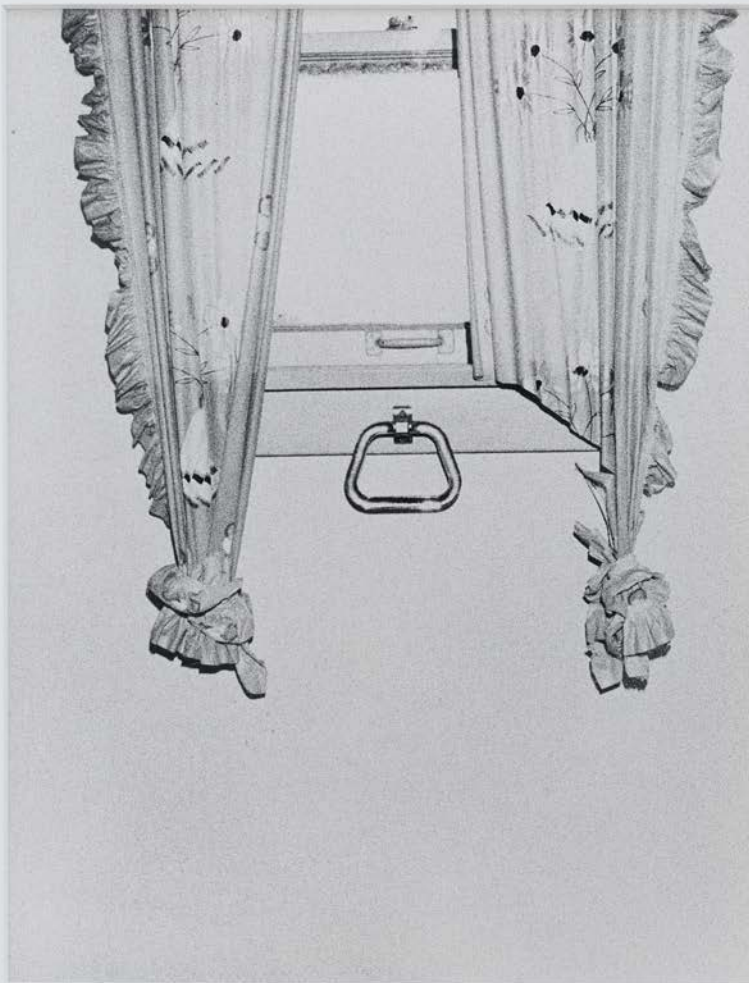
Gelatin silver print; printed c.1974-75
21 x 25 3/8 inches (framed)

Edition #1/1

\$8,000







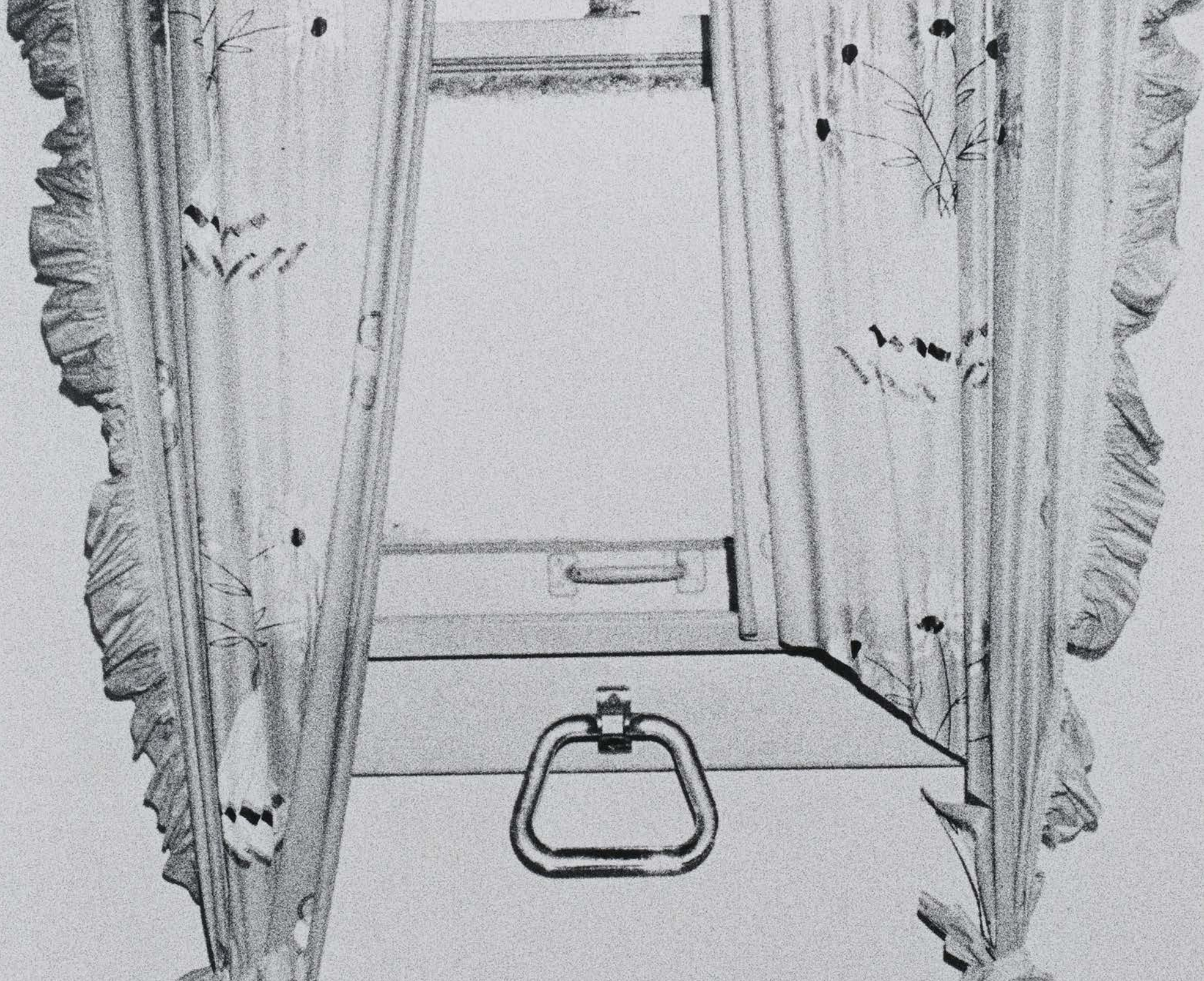
Steve Kahn

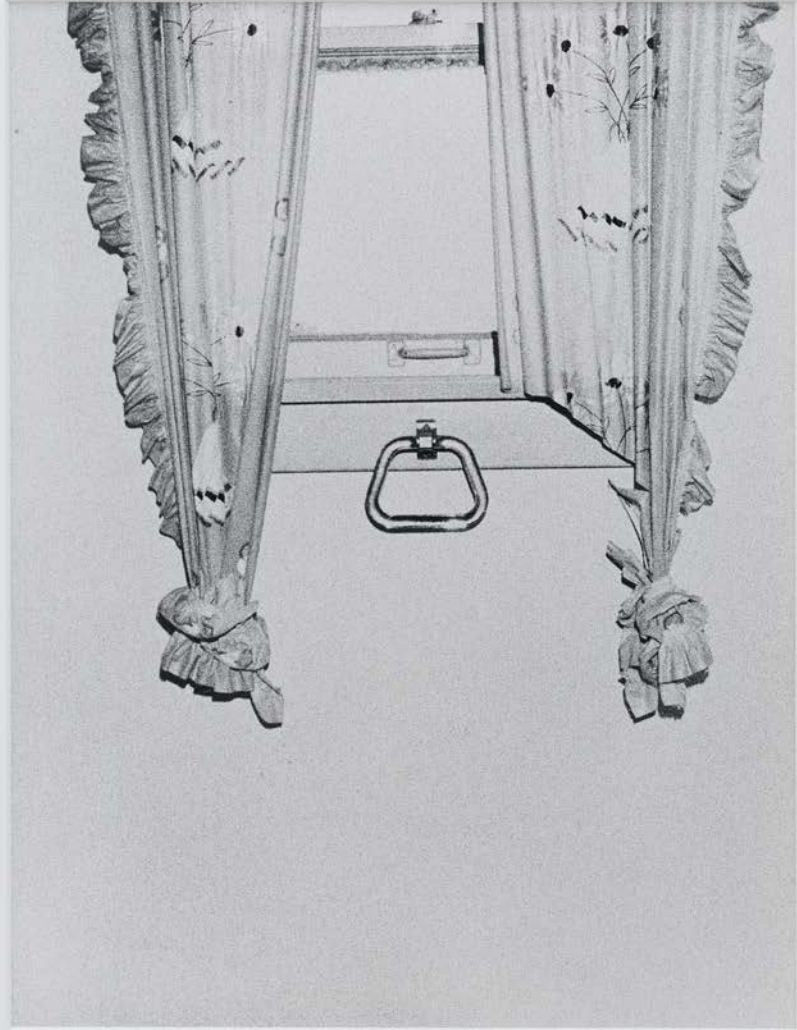
The Hollywood Suites (Windows) #1, 1976

Gelatin silver print; printed c.1976
25 1/8 x 20 3/4 inches (framed)

Edition #1/5

\$8,000







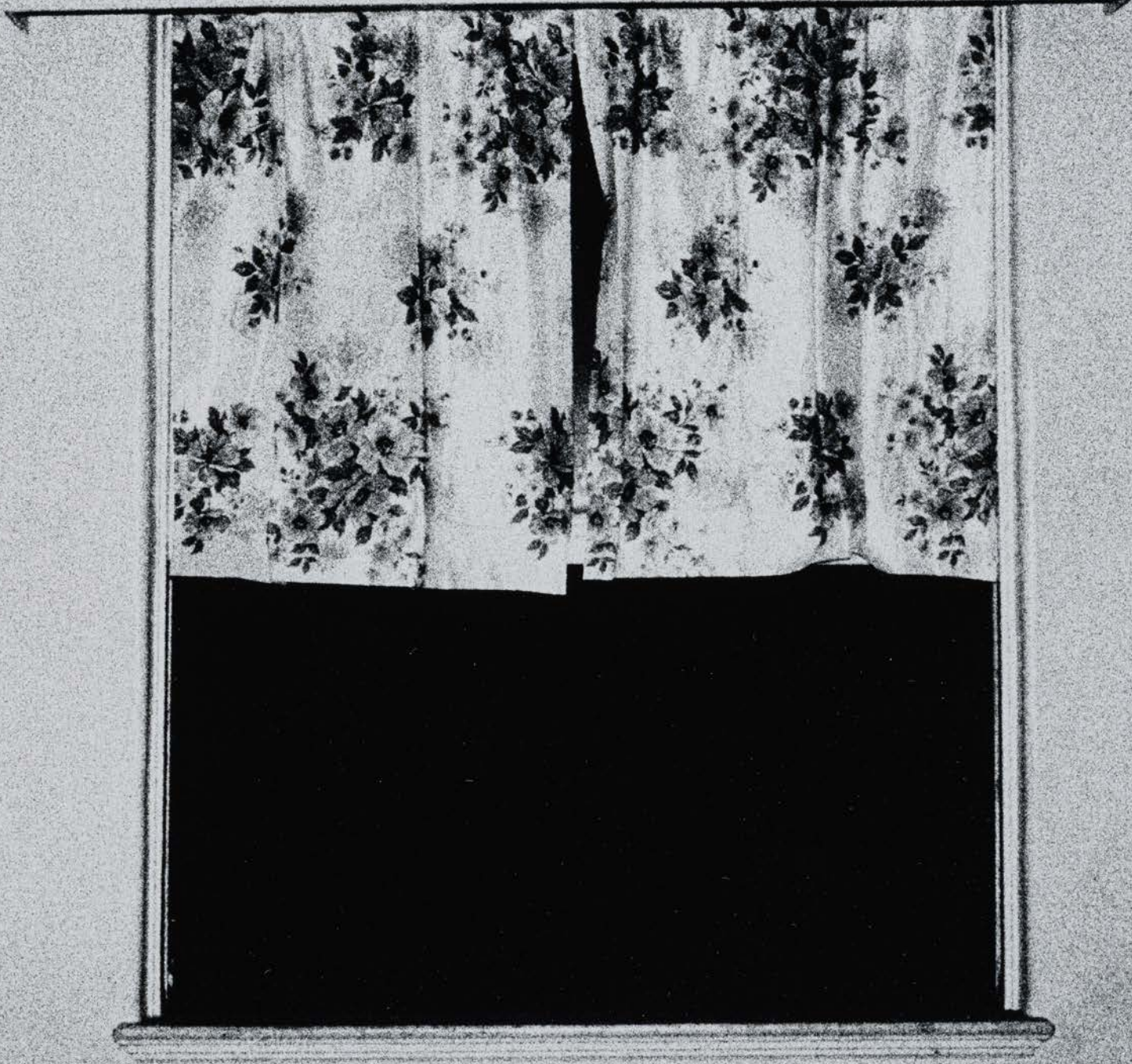
Steve Kahn

The Hollywood Suites (Windows) #4, 1976

Gelatin silver print; printed c.1976
13 3/4 x 16 3/4 inches (framed)

Edition #4/15

\$6,000







Steve Kahn (1943 - 2018)

Polaroid #514, 1974-75

Polaroid

3.5 x 4.25 in.

10.75 x 11.75 in. (framed)

\$6,000







Steve Kahn (1943 - 2018)

Polaroid #520, 1974-75

Polaroid

3½ x 4¼ in.

10.75 x 11.75 in. (framed)

\$6,000







Steve Kahn (1943 - 2018)

Polaroid #1287, 1974-75

Polaroid

3½ x 4¼ in.

10.75 x 11.75 in. (framed)

\$6,000







Steve Kahn (1943 - 2018)

Polaroid #500-1, 1974-75

Polaroid

4.25 x 3.5 in.

11.75 x 10.75 in. (framed)

\$6,000







Steve Kahn

The Hollywood Suites (Windows) #13, 1977

Gelatin silver print; printed c.1977
20 1/4 x 24 3/4 in. framed

\$8,000





Salvatore Pione (b.1995 lives and works between London and Sicily)

Salvatore Pione's sculptures operate at the threshold between containment and release, where the body is both implied and withheld. Working primarily with industrial materials—steel, plaster, resin, and cast elements—Pione constructs forms that feel at once provisional and resolved, as if arrested mid-transformation. Surfaces are often sealed, bound, or compressed, suggesting an internal pressure that never fully discloses itself.

Rather than representing the figure directly, Pione approaches the body obliquely—through absence, tension, and structural analogy. His works recall fragments of architecture, supports, or restraints, yet resist fixed identification. What emerges is a quiet negotiation between interior and exterior states: the visible form acting as both container and barrier to something held within. This dynamic produces a subtle psychological charge, where stillness becomes an active condition rather than a passive one.

Pione's practice is informed by a sensitivity to material behavior—how substances bend, harden, or fracture under constraint. These processes are not merely technical, but conceptual, indexing time, pressure, and resistance within the object itself. In this sense, each sculpture can be understood as a record of forces rather than an image, shaped as much by what is withheld as by what is present.

In a broader art historical context, Pione's work can be situated in quiet dialogue with Arte Povera, particularly in its emphasis on material presence and transformation over overt representation. While his sculptures remain more contained and formally resolved than many of his predecessors, they share a sensitivity to the expressive potential of raw and industrial materials under tension. This lineage also extends to the notion of the constructed or "reconstructed" environment, as developed by artists such as Michelangelo Pistoletto, where the artwork operates not as a singular object but as a spatial condition that implicates the viewer. Pione's sculptures, though often discrete, carry this environmental charge inward—compressing the logic of a surrounding space into bounded forms that suggest both architecture and its psychological residue.

At House of Seiko's presentation for Independent 2026, Pione's work enters into dialogue with a broader exploration of space, perception, and the limits of the body. His sculptures do not resolve into singular readings; instead, they hold tension in suspension, inviting a prolonged encounter with form as a site of quiet, unresolved intensity.



Salvatore Pione

Counting Together, 2025

Steel, mdf, steel blackener
11 1/2 x 18 1/5 x 1 1/2 in.

\$6,000







Salvatore Pione

Senza Titolo, 2025

MDF, wood stain, shellac, steel
14 x 17 1/2 x 6 in.

\$6,000







Salvatore Pione

Spillo, 2025

Steel, aluminum, pine
6 x 4 1/2 x 3 in.

\$4,000





Salvatore Pione

Aura, 2025

Steel, aluminum, pine
9 1/2 x 9 1/2 x 5 in.

\$4,500





John Hodgkinson (b. 1989)

Produced following an informal residency at Return to Freedom, a wild horse sanctuary on California's central coast. Developed within a working environment structured around containment and gradual release, the works extend Hodgkinson's longstanding investigation into perception, psychological orientation, and the spatial conditions that shape experience.

During the summer of 2025, Hodgkinson lived in a small studio apartment within a vast steel stable that housed newly rescued wild stallions. The animals, temporarily confined as they acclimated to communal life before release into open ranges, occupied enclosures directly visible from a single elevated window, recalling a panopticon's logic of observation. From this position, Hodgkinson witnessed a slow behavioral transformation, produced not by force but by architecture.

Significantly, the horses never appear in the paintings. Instead, Hodgkinson renders the structures that mediated their condition: railings, partitions, beams, and expanses of weathered wood. These elements function as psychological agents. Spatial compression and restricted viewpoints displace conventional spectatorship, repositioning the viewer within the perceptual field of the enclosed subject.

Hodgkinson's practice has consistently approached painting as a phenomenological encounter rather than an image-making exercise. Reflecting Maurice Merleau-Ponty's conception of embodied perception, the works propose vision as a condition shaped by physical circumstance. Architecture becomes experiential rather than background. The stable, in this sense, operates as a site where freedom is suspended but not erased.

The paintings also resonate with broader discourses surrounding surveillance and spatial discipline articulated by Michel Foucault, yet Hodgkinson avoids overt critique. Instead, psychological tension emerges through restraint. Woodgrain and subtle tonal shifts register as temporal records of looking. The quiet surfaces recall traditions of perceptual painting from Fairfield Porter's observational intimacy to the charged stillness of Vilhelm Hammershøi.

These works form an environment defined by hesitation and anticipation. Hodgkinson replaces narrative depiction with experiential alignment. The paintings ultimately stage a subtle but destabilizing reversal: the viewer becomes aware not of watching, but of being situated.



John Hodgkinson

Banister No. 1, 2025

Oil on linen, aluminum frame
20 1/4 x 17 3/4 in.

\$8,000



Additional Information

Steve Kahn: A Curatorial Dossier on the *Hollywood Suites*

Biography

Steve Kahn (b. 1943, Los Angeles; d. 2018) was a pivotal figure in postwar American photography, working primarily in Southern California. Emerging in the late 1960s, Kahn operated within a generation of West Coast artists who expanded photography beyond documentary function into a space of conceptual and psychological inquiry. His work is most closely associated with Los Angeles, where he developed a sustained engagement with the city's architecture, interiors, and cinematic atmosphere. Though he maintained a relatively low public profile compared to some of his peers, Kahn's work has gained increasing institutional attention in recent years. His photographs are held in major collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Kahn's legacy lies in his ability to expand the conceptual possibilities of photography while maintaining a deeply affective register. His work anticipates later practices that engage with interior space, staging, and the instability of photographic meaning. Today, *The Hollywood Suites* is increasingly understood as a foundational body of work within the history of postwar American photography.

Historical Context: Los Angeles in the 1970s

Kahn's practice developed within a distinctly Los Angeles context, where photography in the 1970s moved away from traditional documentary modes toward a more conceptual, system-based approach. Artists working in the region were increasingly attentive to seriality, neutrality, and the built environment, often treating photography as a tool for examining perception itself. At the same time, Los Angeles offered a uniquely cinematic landscape—one defined by illusion, staging, and the porous boundary between public and private space. Kahn's work sits precisely at this intersection. While his images share certain formal affinities with contemporaries concerned with architecture and urban space, they are distinguished by a heightened psychological tension and an underlying sense of narrative that never fully resolves.

The Hollywood Suites (1974–1978)

Kahn's most significant body of work, *The Hollywood Suites*, was produced between 1974 and 1978. The series centers on a group of modest, low-rent apartments in Hollywood, which Kahn used as a recurring site for photographic exploration. Initially, the project included staged scenarios with figures—often models posed in ambiguous or suggestive situations. Over time, however, Kahn eliminated the figure entirely, allowing the spaces themselves to carry the emotional and conceptual weight of the work. What remains are images of rooms, windows, mirrors, and thresholds—spaces that feel at once inhabited and empty. Curtains partially obscure views; doorways open onto ambiguous depths; mirrors fracture and redirect vision. The photographs resist narrative closure, instead presenting a kind of suspended moment in which something has either just occurred or is about to happen. In this way, *The Hollywood Suites* can be understood as a meditation on absence. The removal of the human subject does not neutralize the image but intensifies it, transforming architecture into a proxy for psychological presence.

Process and Material Strategy

Kahn's technical approach is central to the character of the work. Rather than printing directly from negatives, he often began with Polaroid images, which he then rephotographed onto 35mm film before producing final silver gelatin prints. This process introduced multiple layers of mediation, flattening spatial depth and producing a distinctive grain structure. The resulting images possess a subdued tonal range and a slightly degraded surface, which contributes to their atmospheric quality. The process also destabilizes the photograph's claim to immediacy, emphasizing instead its constructed nature. Kahn's work thus operates at a remove from straightforward documentation, foregrounding the act of image-making as a layered and interpretive process.

Exhibition History and Reception

During the 1970s and early 1980s, Kahn exhibited in a number of galleries and institutions, though his work did not achieve widespread recognition at the time. In recent years, however, there has been a renewed interest in his practice, particularly in relation to the history of Los Angeles photography. *The Hollywood Suites* has been the subject of focused exhibitions and has entered major institutional collections. Critics and curators have increasingly recognized the work as a key contribution to the development of conceptual photography on the West Coast, particularly in its ability to merge formal rigor with psychological complexity.

Positioning: Heinecken, Baltz, Ruscha

Kahn's work occupies a distinct position within the broader field of 1970s Los Angeles photography. With Robert Heinecken, Kahn shares an interest in mediation and constructed imagery. Both artists reject the photograph as a transparent document, instead foregrounding processes of reproduction and transformation. However, where Heinecken often engages mass media and appropriation directly, Kahn turns inward, using architecture and interior space as a site of psychological projection. In relation to Lewis Baltz, Kahn departs from the austere neutrality associated with the New Topographics. Baltz's industrial landscapes emphasize seriality, surface, and systemic observation, whereas Kahn introduces atmosphere and ambiguity. His spaces are not simply recorded but activated, suggesting an interior condition rather than an external system. Ed Ruscha provides perhaps the closest conceptual parallel in terms of Los Angeles as subject. Like Ruscha, Kahn treats the city as a constructed and cinematic environment. Yet while Ruscha's work often adopts a deadpan, indexical logic, Kahn's photographs remain charged with latent narrative. His interiors feel inhabited by implication, closer to a suspended film still than a typological record. Taken together, Kahn can be understood as a bridge between conceptual rigor and psychological resonance—an artist who maintains the structural concerns of his peers while reintroducing tension, mood, and ambiguity into the image.