

**May 4 - 30, 2004**

***Four Generations of Photography by the Gilbert Family  
An 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition***

**Photographs and photo-based work by  
Nathan Gilbert, Al Gilbert, Michael Gilbert, Darren Levant, Jack Gilbert and Ina Gilbert**

On view, the Gilbert collection of photographs by Yousuf Karsh and George Hurrell  
Also, vintage cameras, specialty cameras, photographic memorabilia

A chronicle of four generations of one Toronto family's inspired dedication to photography. We see the changing style of photography from Nathan Gilbert's 1923 glass-plate negatives, to son Al's celebrated portraits, to grandson Michael's large format prints, to great-grandson Darren's gritty, tell-all portraits in 2003. Also on view will be the digital photo-art of Jack Gilbert, Al's brother, and his wife Ina Gilbert's photographic collages.

The history of photography is embodied in their output and also experienced in their collection of vintage and specialty cameras, and historic prints by Yousuf Karsh and 1930's Hollywood photographer, George Hurrell.

**Nathan Gilbert's** family portraits created after arriving in Toronto from Kiev, Ukraine in 1922 will be the first images in the exhibition. On display, will be ten of his rare photographs produced with a large format view camera and printed from glass negatives. In 1923, he opened Gilbert Studio in Toronto. There, he taught his sons how to retouch negatives and inspired them with the love of creating photographic images.

**Al Gilbert**, often referred to as the Ambassador of Canadian Photography, was voted Photographer of the Year in Canada several times. He holds a Master's Degree in photography. He is a member of the Order of Canada, holds the Confederate Medal in Canada and is a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Photographic Industry of America and the International Award from the American Society of Photographers.

Throughout his distinguished career, Al Gilbert has photographed people of distinction including Oscar Peterson, Frank Sinatra and Pope John Paul II. A significant part of his career has been the portrayal of weddings and family gatherings, including the series, *27 Years of Laura's Theme* (27, 20x20 inch colour images) in which he photographed his niece Laura on her birthday every year to her marriage.

His most recent series of photographs has recognized prominent Italian Canadian men and women who have made major contributions in their field. These distinguished subjects include: Musician, Guido Basso; Lawyer, Developer, Philanthropist, Rudy Bratty; Sun political cartoonist Andy Donato; Chief of Police, Julian Fantino; Executive Chairman & CEO St. Joseph Corporation, Tony Gagliano; Executive Producer, Radio Arts and Entertainment, CBC, Damiano Pietropaolo; Art Collector, Philanthropist, Vincent Lobraico.

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**Michael Gilbert**, Al's son, will exhibit vibrant, large format photographs that capture the beauty and tranquility of Italian landscapes. Michael is the founder and director of The Pacific Center for Photography - a photography gallery and digital printing studio in Wailuku Maui, Hawaii. Michael was a portrait photographer in Toronto before relocating to Hawaii ten years ago. His fine-art photographs are exhibited and collected throughout the United States and Canada.

**Darren Levant** creates intense black and white portraits that are tight, close-up and personal. His other colour explorations are landscape images.

**Jack Gilbert**, Al's brother, is a retired lawyer. He uses the tools of our time, the digital camera, computer, imaging software and desk-top printer ("the digital darkroom") to create abstracted conceptual compositions, which are as much about imagination as reality. His subjects come from personal experiences - wild animals in Africa, delicate trillium flowers in the woods near his home to ruins in Burma.

**Ina Gilbert**, Jack's wife, is an artist whose paintings have been exhibited in Toronto galleries since 1968. Her recent imaginative collages are constructed from prints of her close-up photographs. Her subjects include the contents of an abandoned fishing boat, blossoms, city buildings and old farm tractors.

**Yousuf Karsh** (1909 -2002) is a Canadian of legendary status. On view, will be original, signed photographs. His portraits have become 20th century icons – the kind of images that define an age and are etched into memory. Included in the display will be his world famous photograph of a grim Sir Winston Churchill.

**George Hurrell** (1904 -1992), the "Grand Seigneur of the Hollywood Portrait", will be represented by 20 original, signed photographs (30x40 and 16x20). Hurrell became famous for his photographs of Hollywood stars like Joan Crawford, Clark Gable Jean Harlow and Greta Garbo. His work set a high standard for movie studio portraits inspiring a new name for the genre – 'glamour photography.' His photographs capture the drama, romance and nostalgia of Hollywood's "Golden Era."

*Four Generations of Photography by the Gilbert Family* is part of the annual *Contact: Toronto Photography Festival*.

**All proceeds from sales will be donated to charity.**

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