

FRÆNKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

For immediate release:



LEE FRIEDLANDER

MARIA

September 10 – October 24, 2026

Lee Friedlander: Maria presents a seven-decade portrait of the artist's wife, tracing the arc of their relationship through marriage, parenthood, grandparenthood, and beyond. Spanning the 1950s to the 2020s, approximately 50 photographs reflect Friedlander's inimitable style and record his wife with tenderness, awe, and amusement. A new hardcover publication accompanies the exhibition.

The photographs catalogue scenes from everyday life—Maria reading, driving, talking on the phone, lying in the sun, reading another book. Many images reflect Friedlander's sustained appreciation for his wife's self-possessed style, recording her chic look through decades of print dresses and oversized sunglasses. In some, nothing more happens beyond a man marveling at his wife. Other portraits take on the attributes of Friedlander's idiosyncratic approach to image-making—Maria's silhouette casts a shadow on a newspaper at breakfast, or her face appears among reflected clouds in a truck's windows. Some nod to Friedlander's own presence or absence—his empty suit jacket hangs on a doorknob while Maria sleeps, and his shadow falls across her in a doorway.

FRAENKEL

49 GEARY STREET SAN FRANCISCO 94108 415 981 2661

Friedlander's photographs belong to a tradition of artists who have made long-term studies of their spouses. But in these images, Maria is rarely a classical muse. Rather she is startlingly human and vulnerable, regarding Friedlander's lens without pretense. Made over a period in which the role of photography in everyday life has changed profoundly, Friedlander's lifelong portrait is a singular look at a rich and complicated partnership.

Lee Friedlander (born 1934) began photographing in 1948. His work was included in the influential 1967 exhibition *New Documents* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, curated by John Szarkowski, among countless other exhibitions. His more than 50 monographs include *Life Still*, *Lee Friedlander Framed by Joel Coen*, *Signs*, *Self-Portrait*, *Cherry Blossom Time in Japan*, *Letters from the People*, *At Work*, and *Sticks and Stones*, among many others. One of the most influential living photographers, Friedlander's prints are held by major collections including the Art Institute of Chicago; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among many others.

* * *

Image: LEE FRIEDLANDER, *Maria, Las Vegas, Nevada*, 1970
For press inquiries and images, please contact Rebecca Robertson
at 415.981.2661 or rrobertson@fraenkelgallery.com