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OPENING SHOT

EQUALITY ACT

Forty years on, Peter Hujar's final solo show is being restaged in New York

New York-based photographer Peter Hujar once described his practice as making "uncomplicated, direct photographs of complicated and difficult subjects". His 1986 exhibition at Gracie Mansion Gallery in the East Village, the final solo show before his death, exemplified this, featuring 70 striking silver gelatin portraits of animals (Skippy the boa constrictor, a sweet little dog named Fanny), magazine editors (Diana Vreeland), drag queens and trans artists (see Greer Lankton's stiletto-adorned feet), alongside melancholic scenes of urban decay. A random assemblage, they were hung in a low, two-row grid - each commanding its own intimacy with the viewer. Forty years on, Ortuzar gallery, which was recently appointed to co-represent Hujar's archive, is restaging the exhibition. "He was intentional about rarely pairing the same genre of image," says the gallery's founder, Ales Ortuzar, of Hujar's curation. "There is a certain equality maintained among all of his subjects... a real tenderness towards them. Such radical empathy is always important." **INÉS CROSS**
Peter Hujar: The Gracie Mansion Show is at Ortuzar, New York, from 22 April to 30 May

Right: Fanny, 1978,
by Peter Hujar

