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Camera Arts

Ansel Adams on Visualization/Szarkowski on Atget
W. Eugene Smith's Haiti/Lionel Tiger Sits for Irving Penn
Portfolios: Coupon, Feinstein, Ruetz, Maricevic



Châtillon, glycine, ca. 1920, by Eugène Atget

Celebration

Photographs by Harold Feinstein

Text by Rebecca Rass

These flowers are a reminder: There is beauty in our world; harmony and perfection are within reach.

Holding the flower in one hand and the camera in the other, Harold Feinstein has lovingly photographed each bloom against the sky. He is a person to whom eight different people on eight different occasions in eight different periods of his life gave copies of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*. But they gave no indication whether they likened him to the little prince or to the rose the prince lovingly tended.

To Feinstein, just as to the little prince, the flower is a metaphor for life's possibilities.

His is not a fantasy world. These photographs show what is, indeed, close at hand. But we must choose. Bed of roses, or bed of thorns? Negative, or positive? Feinstein believes that we do not perceive the world with our eyes only; we translate, transform, and recreate it with our minds.

In his little Greenwich Village apartment, Feinstein has literally surrounded himself with flowers. They are, he says, to remind him constantly, as his photographs are to remind us, of the boundless stamina, the efflorescent energy that life holds within itself. Flowers want to be; they always reach toward the light.

Feinstein's father, a meat dealer, once admonished, "You can't eat a photo." Years later, the son would say with a laugh, "And you can't eat a flower." No, you cannot even hug a flower. You can only luxuriate in it, love it with your eyes, perhaps make love to it with a camera. Harold Feinstein does that.

*Harold Feinstein, a photographer for 35 years, conducts a photography workshop in New York City. Rebecca Rass has written a novel, *The Fairy Tales of My Mind*, and several other works.*



Anthurium.



Madonna lily.



Gladiola.



Dendrobium acrobats.



September glory.