

The all-new 330-hp
Infiniti G Coupe.
Unleashing August 2007.



INFINITI.



SITE ACCESS SPONSORED BY

THE COMPANY

SUNDAY 8/7C



VARIETY | INDUSTRY NEWS | WEB

Search

SEARCH POWERED BY:

DIGITAL VARIETY >

SUBSCRIBE >

LOGIN >

DEPARTMENTS

FILM TV INT'L BIZ MUSIC TECH LEGIT HOME ENT.

SECTIONS

V PLUS REVIEWS BLOGS MORE

FEATURED LINKS

Women's Impact Report

VARIETY CAREERS

FILM

Posted: Wed., May 9, 2007, 8:11pm PT

DISCUSS EMAIL PRINT CONTACT RSS

Tribeca

Black White + Gray: A Portrait of Sam Wagstaff and Robert Mapplethorpe (Documentary)

By JAY WEISSBERG

An LM Media GmbH, Arthouse Films production. Produced by James Crump. Executive producers, Stanley Buchthal, David Koh, Maja Hoffmann. Directed, written by James Crump.

With: Patti Smith, Dominick Dunne, Tukey Koffend, Jeffrey Fraenkel, Eugenia Parry, Pierre Apraxine, Philippe Garner, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Jean-Jacques Naudet, John Szarkowski, Ingrid Sischy.

Narrator: Joan Juliet Buck.

Novice helmer James Crump explores the complex relationship between two major forces in the photography world in "Black White + Gray: A Portrait of Sam Wagstaff and Robert Mapplethorpe." Seeking to restore Wagstaff's significance not just to Mapplethorpe's career but to the art market in general, Crump gathers an impressive roster of commentators and friends, though his narrowed focus means certain elements get passed over or misinterpreted. Still, he succeeds in capturing multiple aspects of a complex, charismatic man, ensuring play in art centers and fests before likely PBS broadcast.

Born into privilege and groomed for a life of conservative ease, Wagstaff chucked off his reputation as "the debs' darling" and dove into the art scene, making his mark as an iconoclastic curator with exhibitions celebrating late-flowering Abstract Expressionism and burgeoning Minimalism. By the early '70s, his interest in photography brought him together with the young Mapplethorpe, whose tastes were just beginning to form.

Their relationship, both sexual and professional, became a major force in the art world, propelling Mapplethorpe onto the international stage and providing Wagstaff with a co-participant in the liberating post-Stonewall gay scene. Integral to their partnership was Patti Smith, already Mapplethorpe's muse and herself on the brink of stardom during this heady period.

A noticeable fixture on the auction circuit, Wagstaff championed anonymous photos before anyone else appreciated their value, and sought out works that challenged the viewer with a mixture of beauty and, at times, perversity. Crump and the talking heads he gathers (Philippe Garner is particularly incisive) make clear how formative Wagstaff's collection was on Mapplethorpe's own work, all agreeing that the collection itself, sold to the Getty Museum, should be seen as a form of self-portraiture.

Problems, however, arise in the over-analysis. Too much is made of a disconnect between Wagstaff's patrician background and his attraction to sexual excess and drug culture, as if one is exclusive of the other. Art historian Eugenia Parry in particular delights in the nasty, over-interpretive soundbite, and everyone misses the boat in dismissing Wagstaff's switch from photography to American silver. Wagstaff brought an appreciation of quality and beauty to everything he touched, but the commentators here all treat his world-class silver collection as a regressive aristocratic fancy.

Crump rushes over Wagstaff's work as museum curator, painting Hartford's Wadsworth Atheneum as a staid institution while ignoring the avant-garde groundwork of earlier curator Chick Austin. In the first quarter he has a tendency to toss too much into the mix, piling up stock footage from debutante balls to 1950s suburbia in the cinematic equivalent of footnote overload, but later on he finds his rhythm and does a fine job guiding the viewer toward Wagstaff's untimely AIDS-related death in 1987.

THE COMPANY
Three week television event

- About The Company
- Cast Video Interviews
- Q&A with principals
- More show info.

[CLICK TO PLAY](#)



Weekly Variety
Without the smudgy fingers
[CLICK COVER FOR DIGITAL EDITION](#)
[CLICK HERE FOR ARCHIVES](#)
[FAQ](#)

PAST ISSUES:

Wednesday 08/01/2007
Thursday 08/02/2007
Friday 08/03/2007

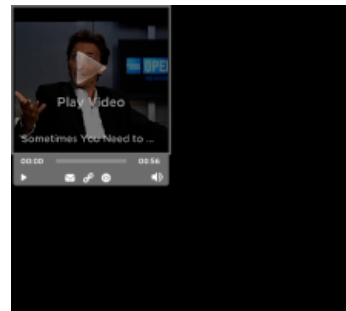
Mouse over to experience REPLAY

The all-new 330-hp Infiniti G Coupe.
Arriving August 2007.

Intensity captured.

Discover More
Request Updates

INFINITI.



With four credited lensers, tech credits inevitably vary and HD quality jumps from top-notch to adequate. The photographs themselves all sing from the screen, reinforcing Wagstaff's seminal role in how these masterworks are appreciated today.

Camera (color/B&W, HD), Christopher Felver, Harry Geller, Paul Lundahl, Eric Koziol; editors, Dave Giles, William Davis; music, J. Ralph. Reviewed at Tribeca Film Festival (Encounters), May 5, 2007. Running time: 70 MIN.

Variety is striving to present the most thorough review database. To report inaccuracies in review credits, please [click here](#). We do not currently list below-the-line credits, although we hope to include them in the future. Please note we may not respond to every suggestion. Your assistance is appreciated.

Date in print: Mon., May 14, 2007, Weekly

 DISCUSS  EMAIL  PRINT  CONTACT  RSS  RSS

RELATED REVIEWS:

Charlie Bartlett - 5/9/2007 6:27:57 PM

The King of Kong - 5/9/2007 5:56:35 PM

The Grand - 5/8/2007 8:31:26 PM

Day Zero - 5/8/2007 8:11:47 PM

Sons of Sakhnin United - 5/8/2007 5:59:44 PM

Pete Seeger: The Power of Song - 5/8/2007 5:54:53 PM

TALKBACK:

[VIEW ALL DISCUSSIONS](#) |  [COMMENT ON THIS REVIEW](#)

Have an opinion about this article? Be the first to [comment](#)

Ads By Google

Newsletters

[VIEW SAMPLES >](#)
[SIGN UP >](#)

Productions

[FILM SUBMISSIONS >](#)
[TV SUBMISSIONS >](#)

Festival Listings

[GUIDE FORM >](#)
[SUBMISSION DEADLINES >](#)

Real Estate

[FEATURED LISTING >](#)
[VIEW ALL LISTINGS >](#)

-- Advertisement --

Top Film Schools

We found the Top Sites for Film Schools

TopTenRatings.Net/Film

Las Vegas HD Production

Full High Definition
Production Available 24/7. Call
702-257-3348
www.702productions.tv

Submit A Screenplay

Top Producers Are
Scouting New TV Show Ideas
and Screenplays
www.TVWritersVault.com



Featured Jobs

Commercial / Traffic Operations Administrator
NEW YORK
NY NBC Universal

Assistant to VP Marketing Services - Universal Pictures
UNIVERSAL CITY
CA NBC Universal

Pictures - Legal Administrator
UNIVERSAL CITY
CA NBC Universal

Secretary
UNIVERSAL CITY
CA NBC Universal

KEYWORD

CATEGORY

CITY:

[VARIETYCAREERS.COM >](http://VARIETYCAREERS.COM)

[SUBSCRIBE](#) [LOGIN](#) [ABOUT US](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [CONTACT US](#) [HELP](#)

RELATED SITES: [Broadcasting & Cable](#) [Multichannel News](#) [Video Business](#) [ContentAgenda](#) [Twice](#) [Stylephile](#) [LA 411](#) [NY 411](#) [Media Jobs](#)

© 2007 Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Use of this website is subject to its Terms & Conditions of Use. View our Privacy Policy.

MEDIA & PUBLISHING:

Variety | LA 411 | New York 411 | Video Business | ContentAgenda | Broadcasting & Cable | Multichannel News | Publishers Weekly | Library Journal | School Library Journal | Criticas | Tradeshow Week

BUSINESS & PRINTING:

DM2-DecisionMaker | Zibb | Packaging Digest | Graphics Arts Monthly | Graphics Arts Blue Book | Converting | Expert Business Source | HotFrog USA | The Industry Measure

ELECTRONICS:

EDN | Twice | Electronic News | Electronic Business | Test & Measurement World | Semiconductor International | Semisource | Instat

MANUFACTURING:

Design News | Control Engineering | Plant Engineering | Purchasing | Purchasing Data | Logistics Management | Industrial Distribution | Supply Chain Management Review | Modern Materials Handling | Manufacturing Business Technology | Kellysearch

GIFTS & FURNISHINGS:

Furniture Today | Home Textiles Today | Home Accents Today | Casual Living | Kids Today | Gifts & Decorative Accessories | Playthings | Jrs, Circ, Keystone

BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION:

Consulting Specifying Engineer | Interior Design | Bldg Design & Construction | Construction Equipment | HousingZone | Professional Builder | Professional Remodeler | Associated Construction Publications | Reed First Source | RS Means | Reed Construction Data | Building Team Forecast | Reed Construction Bulletin | Reed Connect

HOSPITALITY:

Hotels | R&I | Chain Leader | Foodservice Equipment & Supplies