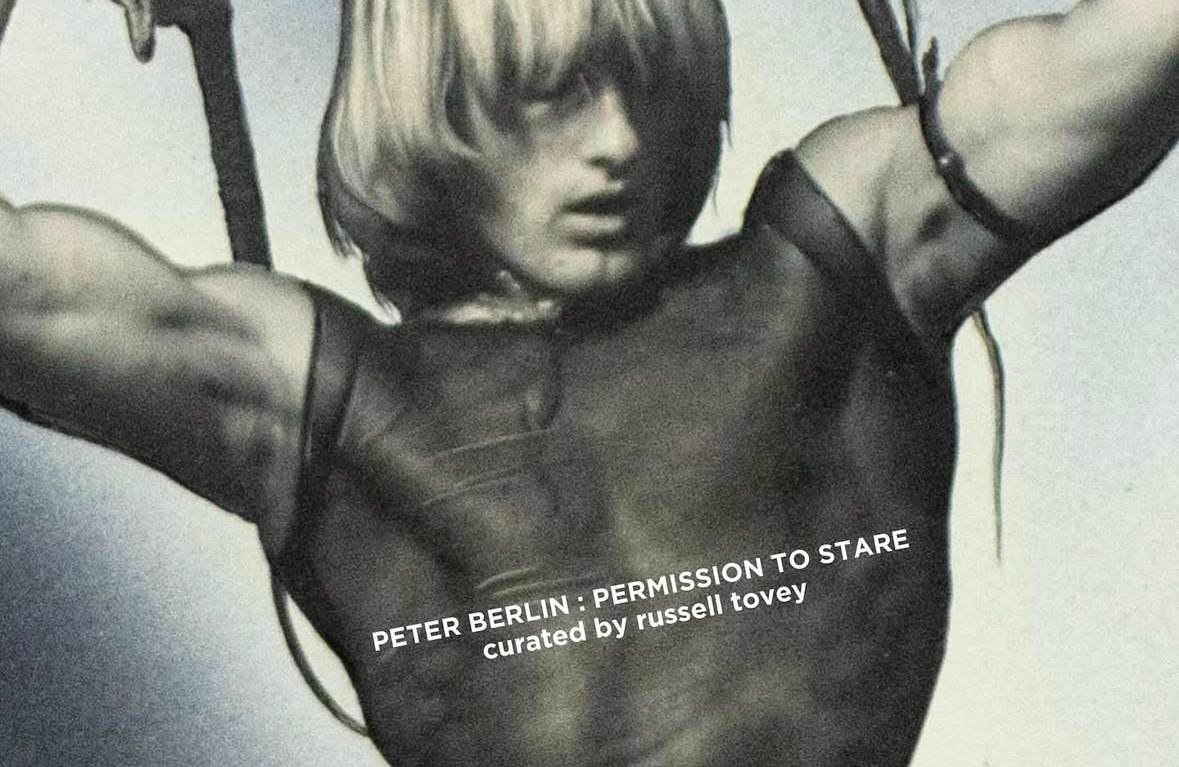
# Russell Tovey curates exhibition about 'cruise culture icon' and major trouser-snake Peter Berlin



Mariposa Gallery is set to launch its first exhibition in Los Angeles, showcasing the work of Peter Berlin, an artist known for revolutionising queer self-representation and male eroticism from the 1970s onwards. This landmark exhibition will take place at 526 N. Western Avenue, in the Melrose Hill gallery district. It has been curated by actor and host Russell Tovey of Talk Art fame, and is set to be a display of Berlin’s iconic self-portraits famous for eye-watering bulges, as well as innovative painted photographs, and personal artefacts, including clothing he designed during his ascent as a self-styled gay icon. This will mark the first occasion that Berlin’s work has been exhibited in Los Angeles.

Peter Berlin, born Armin Hagen Freiherr von Hoyningen Huene in 1942, rose to prominence for his bold self-portraits, often set against the backdrops of public spaces in cities like Berlin, Paris, New York, and San Francisco. His imagery, often featuring form-fitting costumes and his distinctive pageboy haircut, challenges traditional notions of masculinity and public persona.

Berlin’s thematic focus on “cruising as career” led him to produce self-portraits that interrogated male sexuality and queer identity, many of which graced the covers of various gay publications, establishing him as an internationally recognised gay sex symbol. The exhibition will also display selections from his media presence during the '70s and '80s, tracing the evolution of gay aesthetics in that transformative period.

As Russell Tovey says, "Peter Berlin, the fearless and enigmatic, otherworldly icon of 1970s cruise culture, created work that resonates around the world—sparkling, searing, and blazing with vitality. His images burn with eternal desire, offering us the ultimate permission to stare. It’s a privilege to share his groundbreaking art with new and familiar audiences alike. Peter Berlin remains a profoundly significant yet often overlooked figure in the history of art."

Berlin's influence was not just confined to photography; he also made notable contributions to film, with works such as Nights in Black Leather (1973) and That Boy (1974), both of which have since achieved cult classic status. A 2019 monograph dedicated to his oeuvre, titled Icon, Artist, Photosexual, features commentary from various contributors who celebrate Berlin's unique impact on queer art and culture.

The exhibition will run alongside Ethan James Green’s BOMBSHELL, presenting silver gelatin prints of friends and affiliates from Green's artistic circle, including notable figures such as Dara Allen, Hari Nef, Martine Gutierrez, and Connie Fleming.

## References

* <https://www.mariposa.gallery> - This URL supports the claim that Mariposa Gallery is hosting its inaugural Los Angeles exhibition featuring Peter Berlin's work, curated by Russell Tovey. The exhibition showcases Berlin's photography, art, and personal artifacts.
* <https://hero-magazine.com/article/272212/peter-berlin> - This article corroborates Peter Berlin's influence on 1970s gay culture and his work as a photographer and actor in films like Nights in Black Leather and That Boy. It also highlights his iconic status in the queer community.
* <https://www.abaa.org/booksellers/details/gerard-koskovich-queer-antiquarian-books> - This URL provides information about Gerard Koskovich, who is involved in facilitating the Peter Berlin Collection for institutional acquisition, supporting the exhibition at Mariposa Gallery.