

Gabriel Figueroa - The Collection



My Father, Gabriel Figueroa Mateos, was born in México city the 24th of April,1907. He had very little formal education, studied painting and music in his youth.

Since he was 16 he had to learn a trade and chose photography. As an apprentice he learned to use electrical lighting in a studio. At the age of 21 he was invited to work as a "Stillman" in the young Mexican cinema industry (1929).

In 1934 Figueroa became a cinematographer, studied for a short while in Hollywood, and learned from Greg Toland,(Citizen Kane) who became his mentor. Figueroa is known all over the world for his Mexican films that portraited Mexico´s rural and revolutionary life, landscapes and strong compositions in bw. He earned a reputation as one of the best cameraman in the world winning prizes in Cannes, Berlin, Venice, and an Oscar nomination for John Houston´s "The night of the Iguana" in 1963.

He worked for directors such as Luis Buñuel, John Ford and Emilio Fernández. Some of his best movies are "La Perla" 1945, "The Fugitive"1947", "Los Olvidados"1950, which are among the 235 films he photographed. Mr. Figueroa passed away on the 27th of April 1997 at the age 90.

Honoring his work I decided to rescue and restore a collection of "lighttests" (filmstrips that were used to select the correct printing light of a scene in the film), these lighttests are in 35mm nitrate film, and Mr. Figueroa collected them as a record of his best shots in a film.

After retouching and producing internegatives, I printed, under his supervision, a limited signed and numbered edition of 26 Platinum prints 11x14 inches, that have been exhibited throughout Europe and South America for the last four years. This collection is available to be purchased or exhibited.

TECHNICAL DATA: Each Image is printed in Cranes Parchmont paper 11x14 inches, chemicals provided by Bostick & Sullivan. Each print has a 60-40% of Palladium-Platinum percentage. The number of prints made of each image is of five signed and numbered copies.

With the new digital technology available on scanners and negative production,I set out to produce a bigger portafolio (100 prints) in platinum palladium, trying to complete his favorite images,

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that can stand on their own aesthetic values without the moving images of the film. Up to now there are 30 prints available out of the hundred programmed.

There is a collection of Silver/Gelatin prints 16x20, that is also available (35) prints. For keeping, most of the collection is not framed, and some is not even matted, especially the 16x20 prints.