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Mike Tyson

Photographs by Lori Grinker

November 3 - January 7, 2023

Opening reception:

Thursday, November 8, 2022

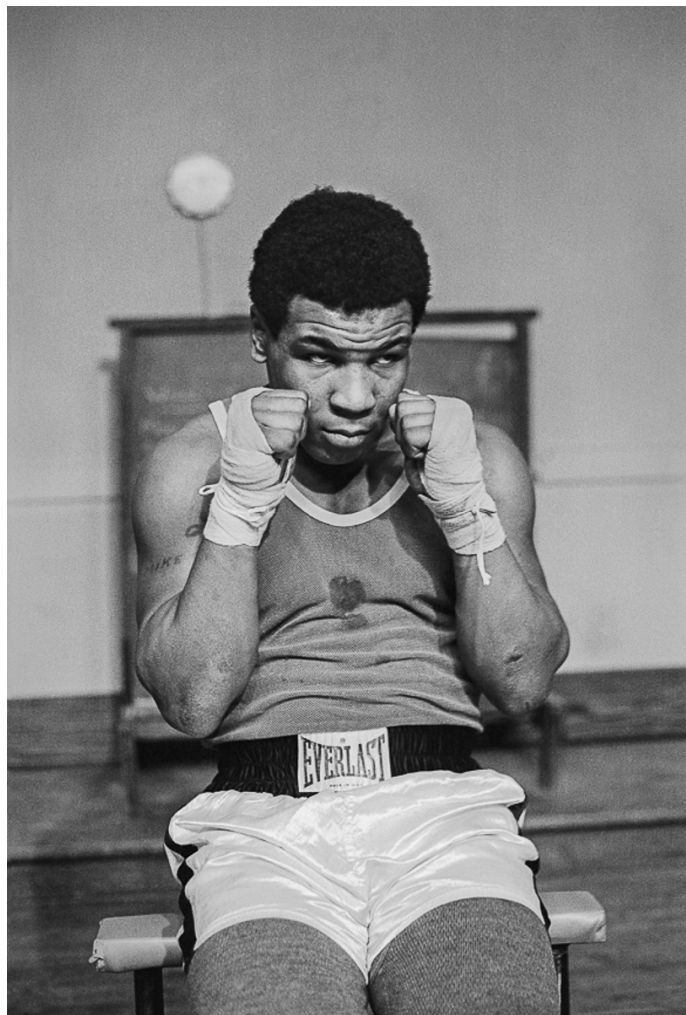
6:00–8:00 pm

CLAMP is pleased to present “Mike Tyson,” an exhibition of photographs by Lori Grinker. The exhibition coincides with the release of Grinker’s monograph titled *Mike Tyson* (powerHouse Books, New York: 2022).

Grinker first met Mike Tyson in the early 1980s, when he was 13 years old training with legendary manager Cus D’amato in Catskill, New York.

Initially photographing D’amato and his young fighters, including Tyson, for a term assignment at Parsons, Grinker continued to work with the young prodigy, and their photographic relationship continued to flourish as Tyson’s star rose.

Eventually, Grinker was traveling the globe with Tyson as he racked up championships, rubbing elbows with celebrities like Madonna, Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson, Jesse Jackson, and Donald Trump, to name a few.



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The photographs presented in the exhibition “Mike Tyson” span this timeline, from Catskill in the early 1980s to Tokyo in 1990, where Tyson would lose his World Boxing Council title.

Grinker writes:

The world of boxing intrigued me: the electric atmosphere at matches, no matter how small the venue; the training that was like a dance, with footwork and speed, rhythm, and choreography. But I wasn't there for the sport. My interest was the kids, where they came from and how boxing was changing their lives. Like me, they'd come in search of something. A way out, maybe. Or a way through to something else.

Living in the house with Cus D'Amato meant that training went on all the time, including Cus demonstrating different moves at night in his bathrobe. Mike, I remember, was particularly studious. He read books about boxers and boxing history, and even had a movie projector in the attic, where he spent many nights watching old fights, studying moves.

He was a shy teen, exceedingly polite, and he didn't love being photographed. But because Cus made me feel so welcome in the house, Mike accepted my presence and gradually began to get more comfortable with the camera.

On November 22, 1986, Mike won his first title fight against Trevor Berbick for the World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight championship, followed by the WBA and IBF titles. Overnight he seemed to go from being this shy kid wondering if he'd ever go out on a date, to having girls he didn't know leave messages on his answering machine. He gained an entourage, including some old friends with their own agendas. I saw his rise and the beginning of his fall when he lost his WBC title. . .

I came to boxing as a student of photography. By chance I met a young fighter name Mike Tyson. We both turned pro around the same time. Mike's world over the course of the following decade—years when he rose to the pinnacle of glory and then began to lose it all—is represented in these photographs.

Lori Grinker (American, b. 1957, Freeport, NY) has garnered many honors and awards including, Orange County Arts Council; Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant; NYFA Arts Grant; W. Eugene Smith Memorial Fellowship; Ernst Hass Grant; Open Society Community Engagement Grant; Hasselblad Foundation Grant; Center (Santa Fe) Project Grant; and a World Press Foundation (1st Prize).

Grinker's work has been published around the world and exhibited in solo and group shows. She is the author of *Mike Tyson, 1981-1991* (Powerhouse Books, 2022); *Afterwar: Veterans from a World in Conflict* (de.MO 2004); and *The Invisible Thread: A Portrait of Jewish American Women* (Jewish Publication Society 1989). A multimedia memoir “Six Days from Forty,” exploring the history of AIDS, gay rights, and sexual identity, is ongoing. Her newest work, *All the Little Things*, employs still life and portrait photography to explore memory, loss, and love. She is currently working on her first feature documentary film, “The Charlie Show.”

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Lori is part-time faculty at The New School, Lang College, and New York University's Arthur L. Carter Graduate School of Journalism. Grinker is a senior member of Contact Press Images. She lives and works in New York City and Newburgh, NY.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see www.clampart.com. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Image: © Lori Grinker; "Untitled (Mike Tyson, 14, does sit ups. . .)," March 1981/2022; Gelatin silver print; 20 x 16 inches; Courtesy of the artist and CLAMP, New York.