

HAMILTONS

NICK WAPLINGTON- WE DANCE IN MYSTERIES: THE ISAAC MIZRAHI PHOTOGRAPHS

26th June – 23rd September 2025

In the autumn of 1989, photographer Nick Waplington was introduced to fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi through their mutual friend, the titan of photography Richard Avedon. This initial meeting would turn into a three-year working and personal relationship, resulting in a collection of photographs of the goings-on behind the scenes at Mizrahi's studio in downtown Manhattan.

With his daylight hours filled with the creativity and chaos of the fashion studio, Waplington also turned his lens by night to the pounding and equally innovative world of the New York City house and techno scene. Waplington describes his decision to bring the two sets of images together as a riotous juxtaposition which "describes the vibrancy of a vanished moment in New York's cultural history."

The clubs that Waplington documents in his photographs include The Sound Factory and Save The Robots. These clubs were spaces where time was suspended, boundaries were porous and evolving, and music was everything. Now long-gone and almost mythical emblems to future generations of clubbers, these institutions were places of worship where people made pilgrimages to dance, sweat and experiment.

A few blocks downtown on Wooster Street, Mizrahi's studio also served as a temple of artistry. Waplington's images show supermodels such as Christy Turlington, Linda Evangelista, Naomi Campbell and Veronica Webb in the midst of endless fittings and adjustments for a number of Mizrahi's acclaimed collections. Characterised by a clean-cut, playful elegance and a pastel colour palette, Mizrahi's eponymous clothing brand was phenomenally successful, and the designer's process was immortalised in the 1995 documentary *Unzipped*. The film would go on to win the Audience Award for US Documentary at the 1995 Sundance Film Festival.

Hamiltons is delighted to be showing this sparkling and vivacious selection of photographs following the artist's highly acclaimed 2024 show, *Living Room*, at the gallery. Waplington's own unique style grants us access to a golden moment where the worlds of fashion, art and music offered limitless expression and unadulterated freedom. In these images, the seam that separates night and day holds a crackling electricity and invites us to experience the burning intensity of a now-vanished world.

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ARTIST BIO

UK and US-based artist Nick Waplington uses the medium of photography to immerse himself in communities, resulting in both personal involvement and visual work. He caught the attention of John Berger and Richard Avedon, along with the rest of the world, in the 1990s with *Living Room* and has since then created recognisable, frank representations of people and their socio-political backgrounds. Making work since his teenage years, Waplington's subjects range from post-punk youth culture against the backdrop of Thatcherism to the heyday of house and rave culture in 1990s New York City. In 2008 and 2009 Waplington documented the production of the Alexander McQueen's final collection, *Horn of Plenty*, at his London studio. These photographs were shown in a major show at the Tate Britain in 2015 entitled *Working Process*.

Waplington has had solo shows across the UK and the USA, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art (*The 'Living Room' and 'Circles of Civilization' Series*, 1992) and The Photographers' Gallery London (*'Living Room' 1990-1991*). His works have also featured in group shows at the Venice Biennale (*'Learn How To Die the Easy Way'*, 2001), Brooklyn Museum in New York City (*'This Place'*, 2016) and Whitechapel Gallery (June-September 2017).

His works are part of the permanent collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Government Art Collection in London and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, alongside being honoured with the *Infinity Award: Young Photographer* in 1993 by the International Centre of Photography in New York City.

He continues to work in London and New York on a series of photographic and mixed medium projects.

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