

Elliott Erwitt was born in Paris to Russian émigré parents on July 26th, 1928. His formative years were spent in Milan. At the age of 10 his family moved back to Paris only to immigrate to New York a year later, then transferring to Los Angeles in 1941. While attending Hollywood High School he worked in a commercial darkroom processing “signed” prints for fans of movie stars.

In 1948 by good fortune while looking for work on exploratory trips to New York City, Erwitt met Edward Steichen, Robert Capa and Roy Stryker who liked his photographs and took a personal guiding interest becoming significant mentors. The following year he returned to Europe traveling and photographing in Italy and France thus marking the start of his professional career. Drafted in to the US Army in 1951 he continued taking photographs for various publications totally apart from his military duties while stationed in New Jersey, Germany and France.

In 1953 freshly decommissioned from military service, Erwitt was invited to join Magnum Photos as a member by its founder Capa. In 1968 he became President of the prestigious agency for 3 terms. To date he continues to be one of the leading figures in the competitive field of photography. His journalistic essays, illustrations, and advertisements have been featured in publications around the world for over half a century.

While continuing his work as a photographer, Erwitt began making films in the '70s. His documentaries include BEAUTY KNOWS NO PAIN (1971), RED WHITE AND BLUE GRASS (1973) sponsored with a grant from the American Film Institute, and the awarded THE GLASSMAKERS OF HERAT (1979). He also produced 17 comedies and special satire programs for Home Box Office in the '80s.

While actively working for magazine, industrial and advertising clients Erwitte devotes all his spare time toward creating books and exhibitions of his work.

To date he is the author of over 20 photography books including: Eastern Europe (1965), Photographs and Anti-photographs (1972), Observations on American Architecture (1972), The Private Experience (1974), Son of Bitch (1974), Recent Developments (1978), The Angel Tree (1984), Personal Exposures (1988), On the Beach (1991), To the Dogs (1992), Between the Sexes (1994), Dog Dogs (1996), Museum Watching (1998), Snaps (2001), Elliott Erwitte's Handbook (2002), Woof (2005), Personal Best (2006), Unseen (2007), Elliott Erwitte's Dogs (2008), Elliott Erwitte's Rome (2009), Elliott Erwitte's New York (2009), The Art of André S. Solidor (2009), Elliott Erwitte's Paris (2010). Forthcoming: Sequentially Yours, Elliott Erwitte's Color, Kids, Angel Tree III.

A listing of one man shows at significant public venues include: The Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Chicago Art Institute, The Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., The Museum of Modern Art in Paris (Palais de Tokyo), The Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, The Barbican in London, The Royal Photographic Society in Bath, The Museum of Art of New South Wales in Sydney, The Spazio Oberdan in Milan, various Asian venues too difficult to pronounce and many others. Private galleries scattered throughout the world display, promote and sell Erwitte's "fine art" photographs.

Since the early '50s Erwitte has settled himself in New York, establishing his fundamental base of operations ...although 'settling' in Erwitte parlance means "where you are at the moment for as long as you don't go somewhere else". Flexibility and adaptation to the requirements of the profession and personal interests have kept him moving about the globe before returning to base.

Elliott Erwitte likes children and dogs.