



JOHN GOODMAN @ AIB

By **BIG RED**

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"John Goodman Photographs: A Retrospective: 1972–present" is a collection of 75 images by one of Boston's most prominent photographers. It overwhelms the small gallery at The Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University, and traces a career that is both commercial and documentary.

Goodman began his career studying with Minor White, and has since created a large body of work showcasing his gritty black-and-white skill. Later works are much brighter, but still contain some small bit of that youthful grit. Portraits of talk-show hosts Jay Leno and Conan O'Brian (a Brookline native, btw) look more like Julia-Margaret Cameron than Entertainment Weekly.

This is not to say that the show lacks a commercial side. Images from *Reebok*, *Boston Magazine*, *The Boston Globe*, *Esquire*, *Elle* and *The GAP* are all represented. Some clearly betray their advertising roots (the Reebok image shows a basketball player sitting atop a hoop, his shoes prominent in the foreground) while others surprise. Some of the most provocative images are from *Boston Magazine* (Jay Leno and Conan O'Brian), and many make you wonder what commercial means were being accomplished with such arty and interesting images.

This show is certainly worth seeing, if only for a glimpse at how one artist balances his creative life with his commercial necessity. Students pondering how to turn their art into a paycheck will have much to chew on here, and artists old and young have to admire such a diverse and interesting career.

Links:

[Lesley University](#)

"John Goodman Photographs: A Retrospective: 1972–present" is on view through October 31 at the AIB Gallery, 700 Beacon Street in Kenmore Square.