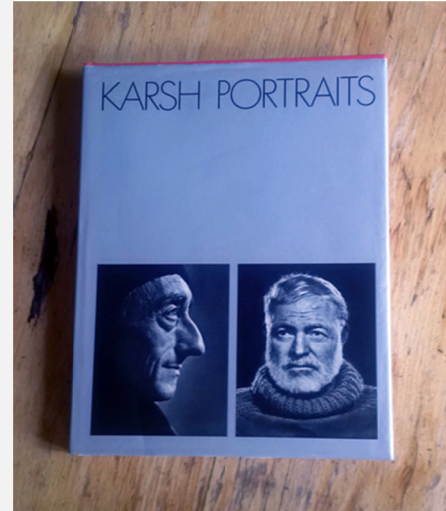


John Fitzgerald Kennedy

35th President of the United States; the youngest man, and the first Roman Catholic, to be elected to that office. Born in 1917 and educated at Harvard University. Served with distinction as commander of a U.S Navy motor torpedo boat during World War II. Member of the U.S House of Representatives, 1947-53. U.S Senator from Massachusetts, 1953-61. Author of *Profiles in Courage*, for which he won the 1957 Pulitzer Prize for biography, and three other books. As Democratic candidate in the 1960 presidential election, he won a narrow victory over Richard M. Nixon. On November 22, 1963, during a visit to Dallas Texas, he was shot and killed by a sniper.



I photographed John F. Kennedy twice during his campaign in 1960 for the Presidency of the United States. The first time, in August, was with Mrs. Kennedy at the home of her mother, Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss. Working with those two young people was a rare experience. It is always pleasant to photograph a handsome man beside one of the world's most alluring woman. They needed no coaching. Between them one sensed a wonderful intuitive understanding.

The Senator was under considerable pressure that morning. Several bills of the utmost importance were pending. Every few minutes he would excuse himself to telephone for a progress report, in case he should need to rush off to vote. Yet between these interruptions, during a session which lasted two hours, he seemed completely able to throw off politics. I was enormously impressed by his ability to live in the present, to concentrate completely on the job of the moment.

The next time we meet was in the Senate offices, where I was to photograph both Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. The elections were closer now. One might have expected to find the Presidential candidate tired and harassed; but like any thoroughbred, he had summoned fresh reserves as the chance of triumph approached. He was thoughtful enough to suggest that instead of moving my photography equipment, he would come to Johnson's office.

Kennedy had not realized that the pictures would be taken in colour as well as in black and white and considered his necktie unsuitable. 'Well then,' he said, 'let me have yours.' As a result, the portrait on the facing page shows this most meticulous dresser wearing a borrowed tie on the spur of the moment.

'Senator Kennedy,' I asked, 'the constitution allows a President only two terms. Even if you serve for eight years, you will still be a young man in 1968. What will you do then? Do you think an ex-President should be made a Senator for life? Will you write? Will you work for the party?' He replied, 'Those are too many questions to ask at once. Let me reflect a bit.' After a long silence, he said: 'No, I would like to start something altogether different.' At this moment the door opened and Johnson came in. Claspng his hands, Kennedy looked up at his running mate as they discussed some details of campaign strategy. And in retrospect, there is in this attitude a poignant prophetic note. I clicked the shutter, but lost the chance to enquire further into his post-Presidential plans. To the world's tragic loss, there were to be no such years for him.

From: KARSH Portraits, Yousuf Karsh, University of Toronto Press, 1976.