



NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

DEPARTMENT OF FASHION

"The portrayal of Women in Fashion
photography by Male and Female
Photographers, and looking at how
Female Photographers of the
Twentieth Century have created
their own Genre of Fashion
Photography"

by

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INTRODUCTION

Fashion photography at it's simplest is a picture of beauty. Conveying that beauty is to discern an ideal which is too great to be expressed in words. It is an image of a beautiful dress with a complementary background, on a beautiful woman. The beauty of the female form has always been celebrated by observers through painting and later photography. A panorama of woman's ideals has been portrayed over the centuries. The female image has radically changed over the one hundred years. Fashion photography is about adoration. The photographer is a voyeur whether male or female, the model is the exhibitionist. The fashion image as a genre is a series of images whose nature lies in transitoriness. Since the Sixties it has become instilled with narrative and sexual context. Some photographers deal with outrageous sexual themes or taboo subjects. Fashion photography can be labelled trivial because what is it's relevance, what is the purpose of it? Photographers respond by being melodramatic, satarical or burlesque to emphasize or exaggerate their approaches and interpretations of situations.

Fashion photography presents an icon; women read or look and copy the ideas, spurred on by their visual interpretation of the images. Some photographers for cheaper magazines or for portraits make the sitter pretty and attractive with no innuendo and without any attitude, very straightforward. Other photographers interpret the model and garments to the other extreme so that neither are visible. They may use an amazing technique but it might not be appreciated at the time. Photographers who choose to work more idiosyncratically risk being ignored when their style loses novelty, for example Lillian Bassman and Madame Yevonde, and it will not be until they are given a retrospective exhibition that their images and approach may be acclaimed as art.

Fig. 1 Deborah Turbeville



DEBORAH TURBEVILLE, Sicily, 1987

Fashion photographers have characteristics attributed to them. Cecil Beaton, Norman Parkinson, Richard Avedon, Lillian Bassman and Erwin Blumenfeld have undeniable elegance as is evident from their photographs. Fashion photography borrows inspiration from fine art and popular culture. Herb Ritts has chosen to reinterpret the romantic, heroic shots of the Thirties and Forties into the eighties, the Calvin Klein advertisements and Deborah Turbeville (Fig 1) has used the frozen turn of the century poses as a source. Photographers want to create an image to recur and reappear. An image a consumer will want to see or observe on their wall or coffee table. Photographers must try to express in the photograph what the designer is trying to say without being unnatural because the designer wants to sell the dress and the photographer is not being paid to obscure a viewer's view.

Fashion photography can be a vision conjuring up idealised people in a perfect world but it must be clearly visible.

Nancy Honey in her book, Woman to Woman, commented that "In visual terms men have largely defined and constructed the media images of female and male representation through music, fashion, film and advertising." How do women think about these images or themselves? How do they look at them? Do they have a different approach and attitude? When a woman photographer is deciding what kind of style, imagery and theme she wants is she going to create a stereotypical feminine image of a woman? Is the female photographer stuck in a particular social and political morality?

Sex and gender are common to all photographers and photographs. It is evident from early photographs that it was not necessary for the model to be overtly sexual to sell the garment; photography was used more to satirize fashion and to depict social history rather than what was in vogue.

Approaches to fashion photography are based on artifice. Fashion photographers are attempting to give solid form to women's dreams and secret ideals by conveying glamour. The expression used for these ideals may be harsh, blunt or direct in one photograph or incantatory in another. When comparing male and female photographers gender is a common denominator between the two, so how and why are the varieties of sexuality different? Are men the voyeurs and are women narcissistic and do their respective photographs convey this? How do these images seduce us into believing the dress is beautiful, that the viewer must look like this, that this is the way the female role is and we must react in accordance to our gender. I want to examine the work of female photographers to see if their attitudes and approaches are different; do they take a male role when observing their models or a strictly female one? A woman's presence expresses her own attitude to herself as John Berger commented in Ways of Seeing. Her clothes, gestures, voice, opinion, all state what she will and will not allow to be done to her. So does a male photographer portray a dominant or submissive woman or does he combine both characteristics? Men survey women and her appearance determines the treatment and approach he will attack her with. So does a female photographer attempt to defend women in her portrayal of them or equate the balance of power? Does a male photographer see a woman model as beautiful and unique but feeding a male appetite: A woman photographer sympathises with fellow mate and role-plays with the model. Female photographers like to photograph woman who are free and independent. What is expected of a photograph whether male or female? Truth and profundity about a person. The photography should do something more than simply record the cut and drape of the garment. Fashion photographers are associated with external appearances as well as internal expression and what comes across in the pose, gestures and aura of the model. The techniques and props they use to convey these features vary greatly.



Fig.2

Cecil Beaton

reactions



Fig.3

Helmut Newton



Fig.4 Ellen von Unwerth

Although women have operated successfully within photography since the 1900's, they were never given the chance to create a methodology and market which was not defined by feminist principles until the Sixties in America and Great Britain. This was due to the role of women in society until the Sixties; women were restricted and confined but with the new freedom and liberation they were able to express their beliefs and exhibit their work. I want to look at the work of female photographers from two periods during this century and discuss their approaches to their metier, to examine their portrayals of female glamour and how they direct their work towards a women's audience, where is it published.

Since the Thirties fashion photography and photographers have continued to emphasize the reliance of desirable looks on completely ephemeral visual satisfaction, the harmony of the immediate moment only, which exists totally and changes totally. Models are seen as muses as well as toys. Women viewers idealise them in the fabulous surroundings and men mentally exploit them? Or do they? I want to look at the male stance on female portrayal. Cecil Beaton (fig 2) was undeniably sympathetic, but was or is Helmut Newton? (fig 3). Ellen von Unwerth (fig 4) has an empathetic approach but she often focuses solely on the tactile eroticism of clothing, the way the garments feel as they hug or caress the skin. Madame Yevonde had a wild imagination. She achieved amusing and eclectic photographs. She was fascinated by colour and her innovative way of dealing with it shows this. But she was reticent about disclosing her inspiration and motivation for her projects, probably due to the position of women at that time, the 1920's, when the suffragettes were flagrantly publicising the struggle of women. What influence did Madame Yevonde have on female photographers and how have societies socially and politically changed, in a cultural context, to aid women photographers to equate the balance of influence and power between male and female photographers?

I do not think the earlier female photographers were just experimenting and producing with no reasons or explanations with no direct audience to criticise or praise their work: They were aware of the reasons but were not explicit about them.

Maybe it is a mistake to over-emphasize the difference between male and female photographers. Men look and women watch themselves being looked at, but "the eye is an erogenous zone for both sexes" (The Idealising Vision, pg. 96), the voyeur and exhibitionist are in every personality. It is maybe the manipulative or what seems manipulative, way we see women being portrayed by men that is offensive. Maybe it is too disturbing or pushing beyond the limits of a relatively innocent genre.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter looks at early female photographers
and their approach to their work.



Fig.5 Carte de visites

Although fashion photography existed in the nineteenth century many observers of this genre would be unaware of this. (Vogue History of Fashion Photograph). Paris was making contributions to fashion photography as early as the 1840's. Photography was a social history rather than a commentary of fashion. There were fashion portraits known as Cartes de visites (fig 5) which were quite common, in these portraits the sitter poses rigidly in front of a classical column or a painted backdrop holding an object of interest or of their profession. Later society women or models were posing in the same manner with couturier garments. Fashion photographs of this period were made to look like fashion plates. They were styled on paintings from Tissot, Velázquez, Renoir. They could be handpainted to nearly look like one. No true fashion photographs were taken until the 1850's and later in the 1870's in Europe. It was a matter of technology. Reproduction was also another problem and it was not until 1892 that the first representation of fashion photographs occurred. This early work has often been overlooked in favour of the more artistic work to follow. Yet their simple straightforward technique for photography reflects the values of the period and is informative.

In the 1920's women were tasting individuality. They took up hobbies and one was photography. Female photographers appeared around the turn of the century when fashion plates were still quite popular. Women did not vote or voice their opinions, unless they were independent and striving for individual status, the suffragettes. A lot of middle class women with time to spare partook in this new hobby. These women did not work, so indoctrinated by the morale of the period, they had money from their husbands and could afford the necessary equipment. Lots of photography classes started up; for example Lallie Charles in London, Ernest Chandler and Marion Neilso offered apprenticeships.

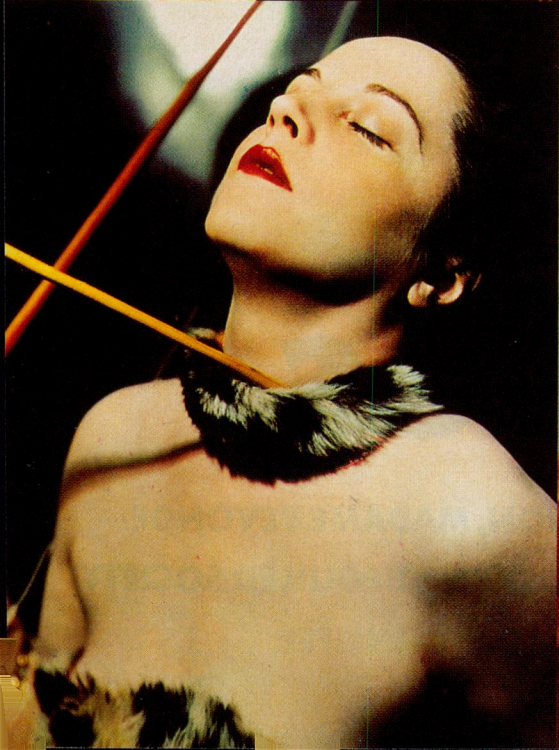


Fig.6

Madame Yevonde



Fig.7

Madame Yevonde

These women were experimenting with their new hobby. Studio portraiture became very popular. Photographic techniques were developed but actual visual innovation was mundane and slow.

Three photographers I particularly like and am attracted to are Louise Dahl-Wolfe, an American, Madame Yevonde, English, and Lillian Bassman, American, all between 1920 and 1940 and even up to the Sixties. Their work is quite different from each other but the first time I saw their photographs I was captivated by them. Dahl-Wolfe was greatly influenced by action and movement. She portrayed her models partaking in an activity, they were not stagnant or dead. Lillian Bassman created beautifully tender and gentle photographs with the soft focus technique. Edith Plummer, otherwise known as Madame Yevonde created spectacularly colour studio photographs of Mayfair society ladies in outrageous costumes.(fig 6 and 7) These women made visual innovations as well as progressing the technology of photography. But their actual reasons for attempting new techniques are not really evident. (Madame Yevonde exhibition catalogue London 1990). They did not publish them nor discuss them in public.



Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Harper's Bazaar, May 1948
Fashion: Claire McCardell

Fig.8 Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Louise Dahl-Wolfe first had work published in Harpers Bazaar, an American fashion magazine, in the mid 1930's. These were peak years for fashion. After the war and depression. Women wanted to dress up in the feminine fluid fashions of the day. Photographers changed their styles and sourced new influences. Dahl Wolfe believed that "the photograhper was not a free agent" (Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Quartet Books London '84), one must try to express in the photograph what the designer is saying without being unnatural, corny or way-out. It was about taste and elegance. It did not seem necessary then to put the model into contortions in order to sell the garment or to introduce sex, to illustrate how sexy a dress could be.(fig 8). She liked feminine non-contortionist poses. She was more interested in Degas composition than in fashion styling. "I was much more interested in paintings or looking at a Degas" (Louise Dahl-Wolfe. Quartet Books). She had a long life in photography and she managed to recharge her vitality with her enthusiasm. Each time she found a new inspiration source she threw herself fully into it with rapture and delight. Louise Dahl-Wolfe pioneered a specifically American approach to fashion photography, that is the healthy outdoor girl look in sunny locations.

In the Thirties colour photography was mediocre. Dahl-Wolfe loved colour, although she disliked red. She liked skin tones of a greeny-yellow tone. Dahl Wolfe felt that the camera was a medium of light, "I believe the camera is a medium of light, that one actually paints with light" (Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Quartet Books). She used spotlights with reflecting lights to control the quality of the forms revealed to build a composition. She had a 'reason' approach to photography due to the colour theory classes she had in the beginning at the San Francisco Institute of Art under the direction of Rudolph Schaeffer. She did not consider photography a fine art because a painter has the licence to remove or place something from or into a picture which makes it more creative.



Fig.9 Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Dahl-Wolfe believed life drawing classes helped a great deal to become aware of the differences between males and females in dealing with fashion physically, helping her to understand action and movement better. Dahl-Wolfe looked to the history of art and illumination and borrowed ideas with her racing wit. She was brimming with ideas and very humorous. Her mind was full of images from art history. She posed models with Toulouse Lautrecs blow-ups, she posed lingerie models in peignours next to voluptuous nudes of Rubens, and in her Matisse period she was fascinated by holes and abstract colour and cut out backgrounds.(fig 9). Her use of over-sized graphics became a signature of her work.

She worked very hard, she was communicative and models understood her. She was challenging and engrossing according to Mary Jane Russell, a model who worked with her, (Louise Dahl-Wolfe Quartet Books). Dahl-Wolfe's work was elegant, her colour combinations provoking emotion. Her belief was to build up a picture with colour planes.

Madame Yevonde's portraiture began in the 1920's. Photographers took their cue from Europe but Madame Yevonde's origins are more interesting and experimental. She trained with Lallie Charles a London society portraitist. There she observed the techniques of soft focus and rose tinting photographs. Her process through photography is characterised by her opportunism as much as her innovation. Yevonde was great with colour and props especially when combined with her other favourite subject, glamorous women. Her images are full of props. First of all they seem to be women decked out in full regalia but considering the mood of the time, the suffragettes and wars, money being spent on weapons, Yevonde was also satirizing society. She debunked the society portrait by totally over-dressing her sitters in clothes not associated with their status/position, and sanctified the notions of women's heroism and strength.

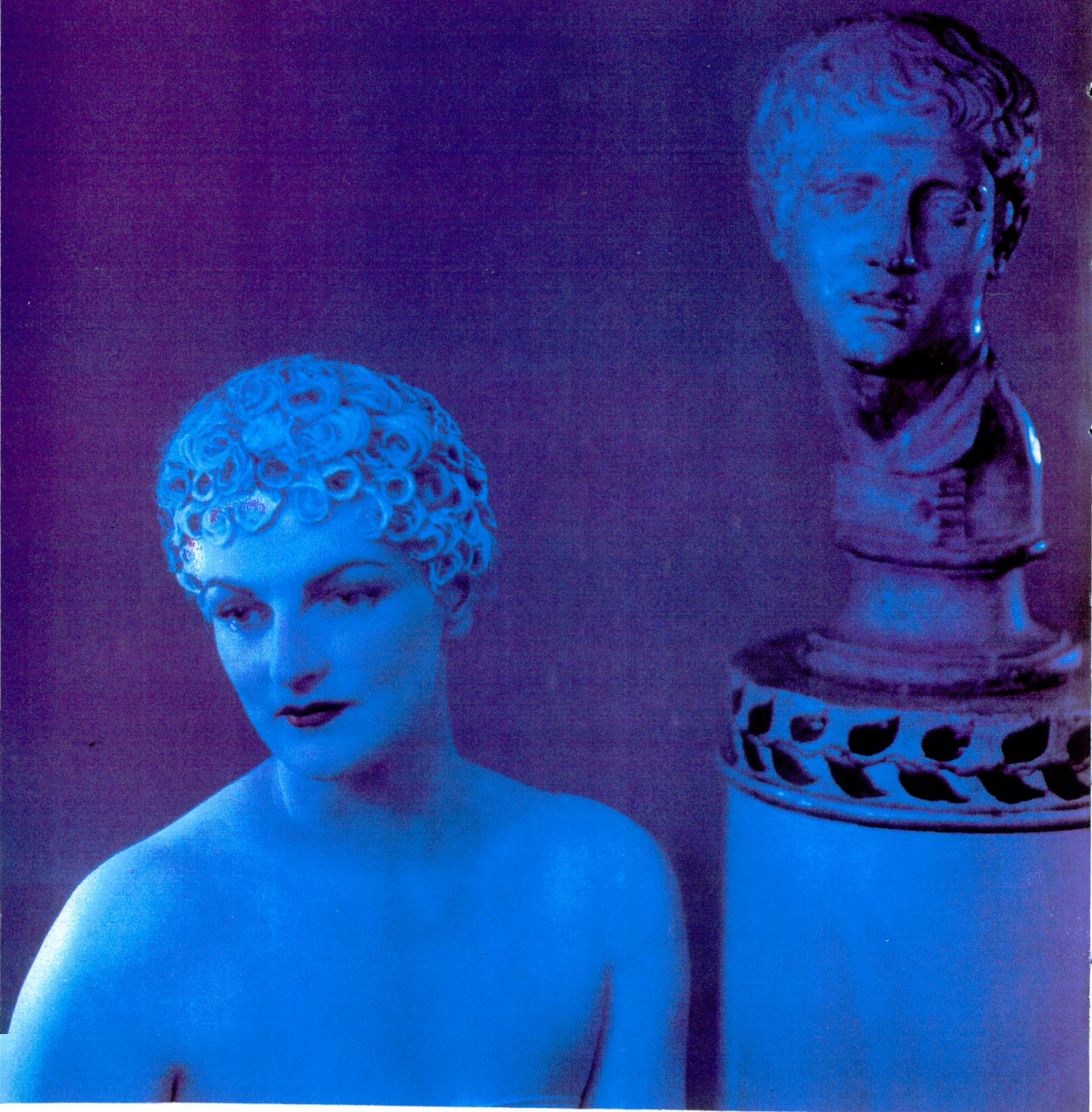


Fig.10 Madame Yevonde



Her use of vivid colour explores the ideas of glamour and sexuality. She liked to use art and fantasy, evident in her themes, with props of snakes reminiscent of Greek mythology. She liked her pictures to be idiosyncratic. Her women subjects were scarlet women, "contrived in their poses, as contrived as the myth of a scarlet woman!" (Madame Yevonde, NPG, 1990). Surrealism appealed to her and this is evident in her incongruous photographs, a set with a Julius Ceasar bust, with sunglasses, and a coolie hat with butterflies fluttering around; the combination is amusing rather than upsetting or disturbing. Her goddesses project is a satire on the Edwardian ornateness and strict moral values. (fig 10) She used bizarre props which exploited how people felt about property and the values attached to them. Yevonde was not trying to create a surrealist thought-provoking image, just an eclectic assortment of components. Her lack of statement is balanced by her chutzah, her humour and colour manipulation. She has an exuberant personality which manifests itself in her work. Her use of colour was fun, not ridiculous. She gave her models a statutory look by placing blue translucent paper over the lights or she bathed her figures in purple and green light making them look ill and pale. Her styling was at times grotesque, with weird headdresses. Yevonde refutes myths of mythology. Yevonde photographs featured the parallel ideas of women as strong and militant warriors in the women's cause and of women as mere creatures of elegance. Her presentation of women glorified to do battle is a disclaimer of passive femininity and what was expected of a 1920's woman.

Yevonde's colour process was called vivex. It gave a rich colour resolution with strong luminous reds and yellows with vibrant highlights. Yevonde would underexpose negatives. Usually her images were very sharp to get quality and reflections in the shadows. She evidently enjoyed playing with light sources, covering lenses with cellophane to intensify an effect.



Fig.11 Lillian Bassman

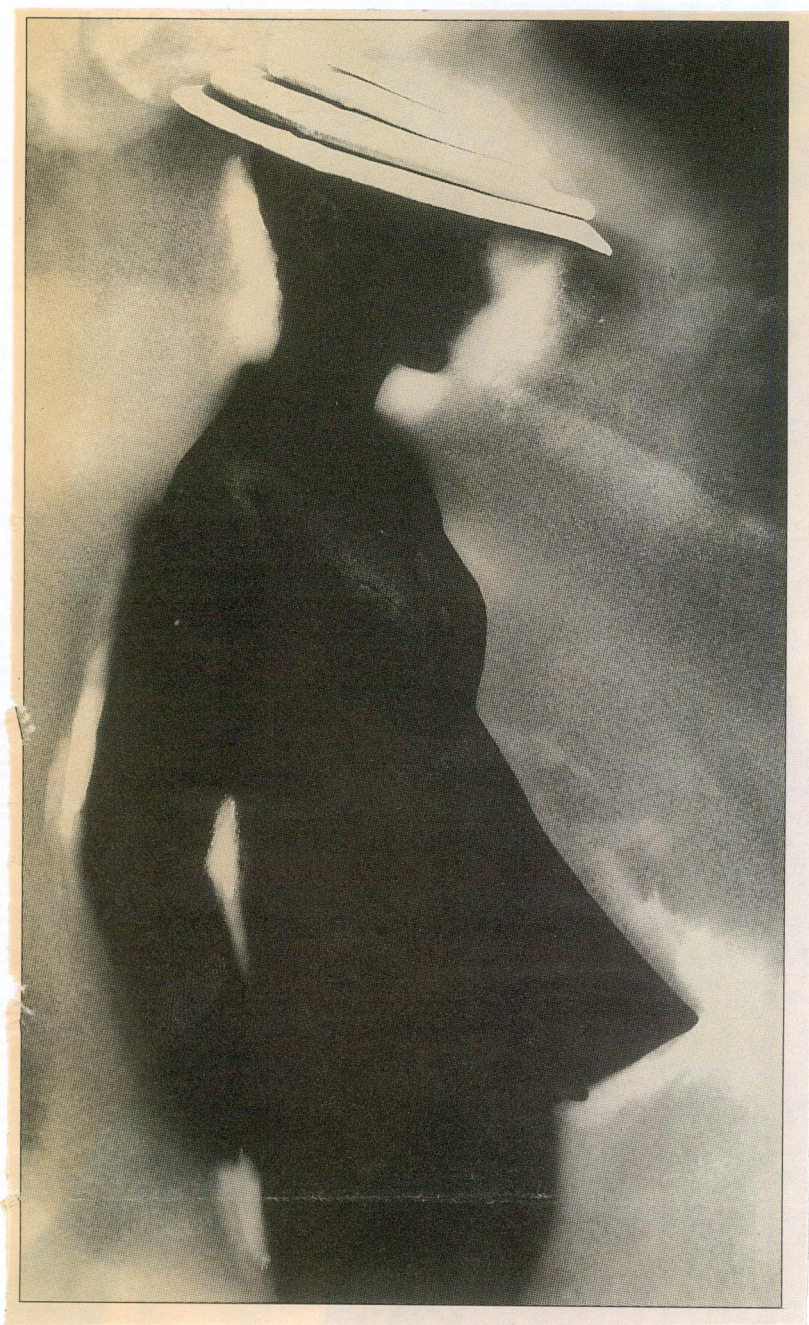


Fig.12 Lillian Bassman

The vivex process helped Yevonde fulfil her tenet, "be original or die" (Madame Yevonde, NPG, 1990). She juxtaposed just about everything she could. Her poses were generally repeated and it was with texture and surfaces she experimented with, as compared to Louise Dahl-Wolfe who focused on body movement.

The Suffrage movement propelled Yevonde into expressing her ideas. The first World War gave women the opportunity to travel for reportage and broadened women's horizons. Yevonde was an innovator and a visionary. She documented the sculptural and linear qualities of fashions. She continued photographing up to the 1960's but by then she lacked the verve and wit of the Thirties, but she continued her interest in photographic application and technique.

Lillian Bassman's photographs graced the pages of Harpers Bazaar in the Forties and Fifties. She began as an art director at Harpers, but frustration with others for having a lack of impetuosity at her suggestions encouraged her to take up photography herself. She had already studied fashion illustration and began to teach herself how to print at the dark room of the photographer, George Hoyningen-Heune. She began by enlarging Heune's negatives through tissue paper, softening and diffusing the edges. She wanted to push the graphic and textural qualities of the image into something more expressive. She became hooked and turned into a full time photographer. Her graphic effects were essential to her style. Her prints were made much denser than normal and then after fixing and washing she reduced certain parts of the image in tone by applying bleach with cotton swabs; this gives a delicate brush finish to the print. She exposed certain areas of the print to the light by holding a piece of card with a pin in it when exposure was taking place. (fig 11 and 12).



Lillian Bassman
Unpublished photograph for *Harper's Bazaar*, May 1949
Fashion: Piguet

Fig.13 Lillian Bassman

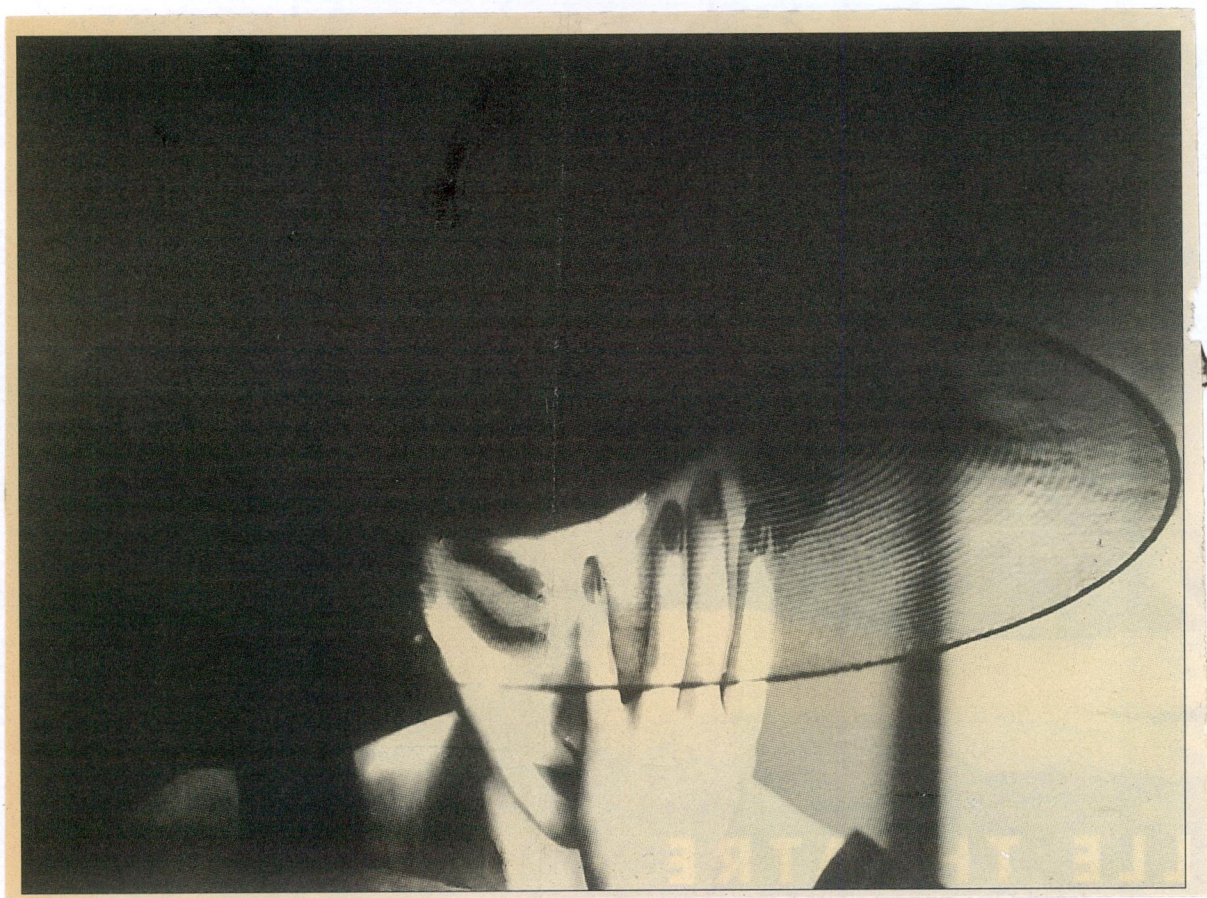


Fig.14 Lillian Bassman

Of course Bassman was reminded she was not making art but selling clothes. She manipulated her photographs. Bodies were distorted, self-portraits were life size and made to be scary with cement or wire mesh on them. A lot of her work has been lost because she saw no reason to keep it. She had a carefree life on Long Island. This informality is evident in her work. Her romantic, diffused images carried idiosyncratic gestures, poses showing couture garments rather unsettlingly, too unsettling for many critics. In the nineteen fifties Bassmann had to succumb to the authorities and show every stitch. Her work was too innovative to be acclaimed then. Carmel Snow editor of Harpers Bazaar, was horrified when Lillian Bassman conceived to photograph a diaphanous yellow chiffon dress by photographing it held up from the hem, with its reflection to resemble a butterfly. Carmel Snow said "you are her to show the bottons and bows Lillian" (Fig 13) (The History of Fashion Photography, Nancy Hall-Duncan). The designer did not intend the dress to be a butterfly but a column of fabric. Bassman was intrigued by the potential of fashion photography.

Her models were stylish and demure women. (fig 14). She photographed lingerie beautifully and evolved an intimate feminine way of photographing. She established a female relationship with the model often spending whole days with her talking and lunching in a relaxed environment, conceiving ideas on how to portray the chosen garments. She took the embarrassment and priggishness out of lingerie photography. She made it alluring and beautiful. Her photographs succeed in conveying the essence of the clothes with fluency and panache.

These early fashion photographers liked to create art but were forced to abide by the restrictions of the magazine publishers, as Carmel Snow ordered Lillian Bassman. They found freedom by expressing themselves in a new, alternative way. Yvonne's social commentary was subtle whereas today it would be known what was being discussed in her photographs. These early photographers commented very little publically but retrospectively it is evident they set women on a new expressive crusade.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter looks at male photographers of this century, briefly on the pre-war period and more focused on the seventies.



Fig.15 George Platt Lynes

The male photographers of the thirties and forties were as innovative as the women but they achieved recognition first. They were inspired by surrealism. Such as George Platt Lynes who was a simple yet amusing photographer. He was forced into fashion photography for a means of living but used the surrealism influence to provide a more amusing slant. He obscured his models by placing an incongruous object near them. He was concerned about light and texture. His source like so many others was art history especially Renaissance painting. He adapted classical poses to modern with a touch of gimmickry. (fig 15)

The photographer who best illustrates the integration of the arts into photography in the Thirties is Cecil Beaton. His sources of inspiration varied from portraiture to stage design. He was concerned with splendour, opulence and surface ornamentation. He liked the use of shadows in his photographs. He placed his models nonchalantly yet elegantly idling amidst the debris of delapidating buildings. He did not try to distort the garments he was photographing but changed their environment to heighten their beauty. Beaton produced what he called "realistic" fashion photography. (History of Fashion Photography pg. 115). He was warned not to make his models unladylike as was Lillian Bassman. His poses were charming and elegant, his models pristine and envied. They have/had an aura of grandeur. Beaton as a male photographer glorified female beauty in it's natural state, he didn't distort his focusing or lenses to the extent of Lillian Bassman or Madame Yevonde. He did not insult his viewers nor his models. (fig 16)



Fig.16 Cecil Beaton





Fig.17 Irving Penn

Irving Penn "aimed for monumentality, formal clarity and quiet truth" (History of Fashion Photography pg 144). The photographs are of elegance. tasteful and controlled. He observed line volume and silhouette. "Penn has no rival in terms of formal complexity, the elegance of silhouette and the relationship between line and volume." (History of Fashion Photography). He transforms objects into complex shapes, a form such as a hand or a hat, or a glass. Penn applied his knowledge of painting to his work. He combines the simplicity and directness of the nineteenth century portrait with a modern formal sophistication. Penn chose women of impeccable style. His models knew they were sexy in the 1950's definition because of their femininity and how they exploited it: clinched waists, coiffed hair and high heels. They did not have the eroticism or self searching which Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin produced/explored in the Seventies. Penn's photographic process connected him to nineteenth century traditions. He did not explore distortions of the image so much as Lillian Bassman, but strove for classic elegance. (Fig 17)

The leap between fashion photography of the Fifties, Sixties, and Seventies was gigantic. Sexuality was used much more in this new rebellious period. It attracted attention, contempt and praise. It was shocking, images which were ordinary were heightened with suspense, such as impeccable model in front of dead meat, it was bizarre if not upsetting. Photographers it seems, wanted to assault the viewers, repulsively.

This type of photography seemed to take over realism in photography, and upstage what already had been done, in disregard for predecessors. Some viewers may have felt this type of photography fulfilled a fantasy unavailable in general. This fantasy in fashion photography is often sexual thus linking sex, clothes (exquisite) and women (beautiful) together with violence, something that was not as obvious before.

Photography like film and literature does give the viewer or reader something they do not have in reality. And as the reader becomes accustomed to one type of violence or sex, he or she wants more. Violence in fashion photography seems to be about vulnerability and female insecurity. Male photographers who have been accused of making women vulnerable and insecure in photographs have defended their images by saying that these women are not weak but show the ability to be dominant and strong-willed, that they are enjoying what they are doing and in control. Invariably a man is presumed to be looking at the scene in the frame, also if these women were being forced what would their faces express? They do not have panic-stricken faces nor blood, nor bruising. As I said, when these photographs first appeared the element of chancery increased as the furor decreased. The insight has also changed in these photographs. Now they have been widely publicised, exhibited and acclaimed. They were based on shock value for the public and enjoyment for the photographer.

It seems that with this new photography that satisfaction and gratification are more important than the inspiration or techniques used in the photograph as in the Thirties, Forties and Fifties. But maybe opinions were more easily expressed due to social revolution in the Sixties. Fashion photography is about showing off, exhibitionism, and the surveyor is looking voyeurism. The relationship can at its simplest be palyful and at its most erotic, perverse. In photography sex is an abiding theme. By sex I imply gender the portrayal of feminine beauty and the constraints associated with it. The new wave of photography during the Sixties and Seventies seems to be more arousing, controversial and concerned with actual sexuality.

Socially the Sixties were revolutionary. Subjects and acts previously taboo became acceptable and lost their shock appeal. This is what contributed to an escalation of shock approaches in the Seventies in film, literature, videos, photography and art. Some considered fashion photography indistinguishable from pornography. The juxtapositions of women in positions incongruous to their femininity implied eroticism, which was something which happened behind closed doors. The female model of beauty was now a prostitute, an exhibitionist, androgynous or a fetishist. Some images were just too incongruous for many critics and photographers were just producing photographs for male titillation. But these photographs are produced with female models wearing clothes for the woman who will flick through the pages of the women's magazines. It is an ambiguity which arises. Women have to contemplate the images as well.

Traditionally in portraiture women were naked or close to it and men were fully or partially naked; and this has infuriated feminists, but this has been reversed and avoids offending feminist beliefs. In the advertisements of Calvin Klein the man is scantily clad or aftershave advertisements have a woman with clothes on and a naked man.

Helmut Newton gave up magazine fashion photography in 1972. He decided to photograph on commission and for himself. Although he does not categorise his work into private and public. His subjects for publication are printed regardless of the content. His trademarks are aggressive femininity, female nudity and tuxedos, androgynous women as men symbolising strength. His photographs are provocative and explicit (something for behind closed doors?) Newton has portrayed women in the way of what they have become in his opinion, free, modern and bold. His women are in control, even when wearing high heels!, strong and sexy.



covered/uncovered: a cutaway
halter dress that shows some
skin, and capri pants that
make the peekaboo point
lace. Patiently taking
backseat here—Prince Dimitri
of Yugoslavia, a regular on the
intercontinental night scene.
Silk dress (about \$635) and
lace capris (about \$215) by
Isaac Mizrahi. Bergdorf
Goodman; Saks Fifth Avenue
Neiman Marcus. Adding a
sensual note—the mix of
jasmine and ylang-ylang
in Escada perfume.

Fig.18 Helmut Newton



Fig.19 Helmut Newton



Helmut Newton
Vogue, May 1975
Fashion: Calvin Klein

Fig.20 Helmut Newton

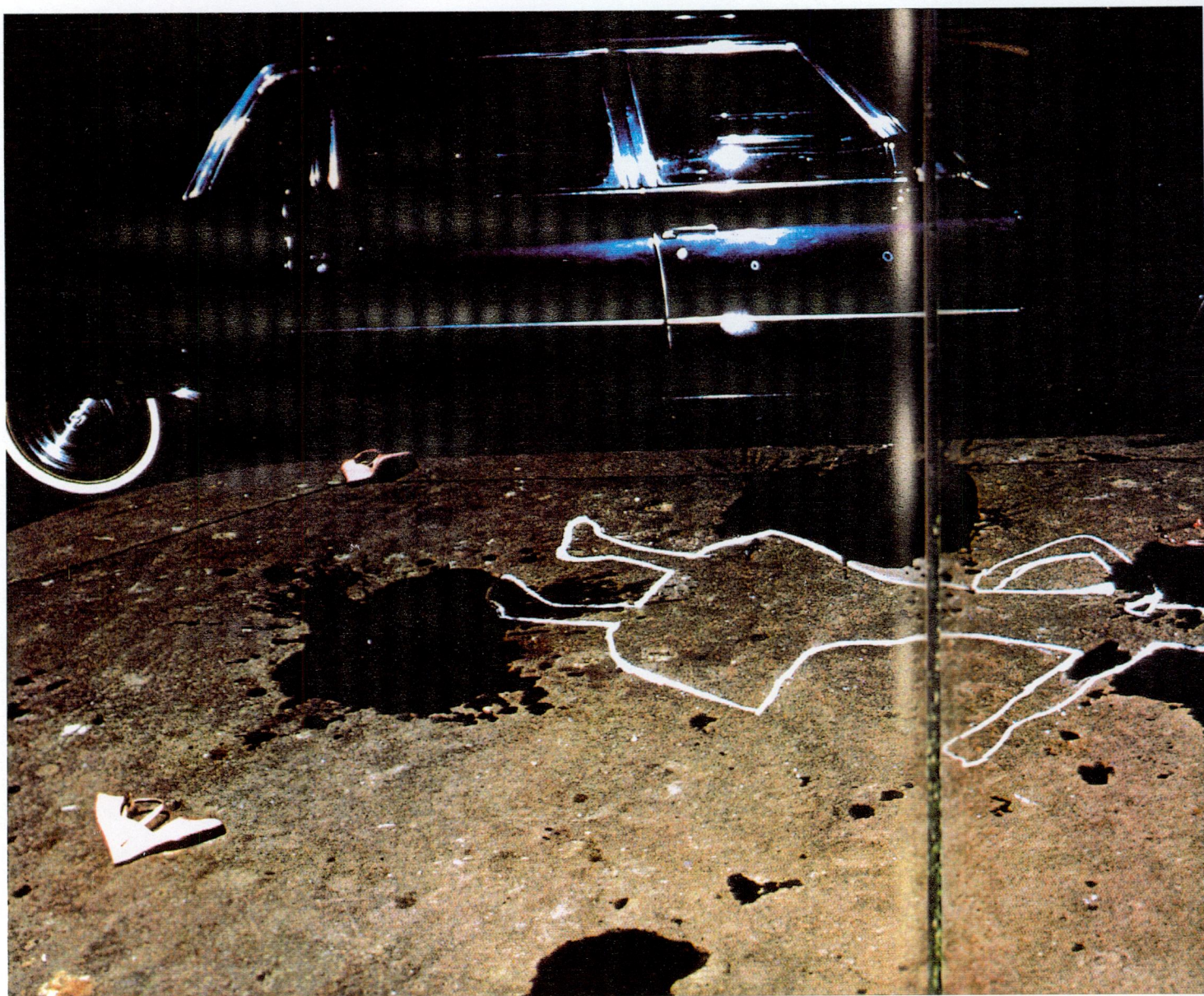


Fig.21 Guy Bourdin

Newton has given the female nude, which was helpless, power. Previously women just seemed to lie back and smile, but he made them symbols of power and force. He made fetishism chic. His influence is seen all over fashion catwalks: Dolce and Gabanna, Jean-Paul Gaultier and Gianni Versace. he likes tight clothes with slits and zips, these designers all produce garments with hints of bondage in them. Newton chose to go beyond fashion, when he chose eroticism as his medium. (Fig 18, 19, 20). He has worked against formal constraints. He has seen the images of his photographs in reality. He has chosen to exhibit these 'petty sins' people are stigmatised for. People are conditioned what to see, hear and interpret and this leads to hysterical reactions or furores over his content. His women are haughty but waiting for an encounter. I think his images arrived when free expression was just beginning and Newton prophesied very well what a modern was to be. Newton specialises in going too far. But how come his models or private clients agree? They perform what he asks in these so called appalling photographs. Newton is upfront and honest, his wholesome candour and ordinariness counter any suggestion of the future. His models are absorbed in their sexuality, self confidence, poise and exhibitionism and this is what he likes to photograph. In 1975 a furore arose over a series of photographs of models with legs apart with men caressing them. He does not consider the so called elements of eroticism, whips, as elements of violence.

Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin were seen to be intrusive in the world of real fashion photography. Guy Bourdin's Charles Jourdan shoe advertisements were distressing but successful. (Fig 21). He did not advertise his subject matter so much as the situations they might find themselves in. Fashion photographs seem to be on a borderline of two worlds, the consumer public and an elitism created in the photograph. These elite are in a kind of sealed untouchable world.

People who have reacted against the work of Helmut Newton have felt that women have been exploited. They feel a woman's personality is diminished and ceases to represent anything. They feel these images are alien and false which leads them to being stereotyped.

The images created by Cecil Beaton and Richard Avedon were glamorous women, exuding their femininity, there was a stylistic intimacy with the model, a sense of spontaneity something maybe Newton's pictures do not have, they are contrived and look forced and false. Beaton's images were stereotypical too, women being feminine doing what they should, good, nice, beautiful girls. So did Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin create the bad girl image? She was released from a secretive room but she had been there all through history. In a photograph is a person looking for a portrait or a photograph? A photographer can reveal the sitters identity as it is in reality, a portrait, or have the sitter role play and their identity expressed in an entirely different way, not changing the actual body features just what they might wear. Models are role players in a way. Newton seems to investigate normality versus deviation with a play on deviation. The laugh is on the startled or credulously gullible viewer. Some of Newton's pictures are blatantly perverse and these I feel are not the best examples of his work. It is the cool sophisticated poses with the haughty levity of his models that stands out as his cleverest work. The models have an air of detachment. Some offence may be caused by the lack of clothing on the models or the suggestive garments they are wearing but take a look at the beaches of the Mediterranean or Miami and what they are wearing? Or even the paintings of Rubens. On the beaches bodies are exhibited for the opposite sex, but photograph it and change the context and some see it as tawdry.



Fig.22 Helmut Newton



Fig.23 Helmut Newton

Helmut Newton recognised and exploits the sensuality of wealth and power. Initially he was more concerned with drama than eroticism, his models have chased down dark corridors, with an ominous feeling or they strove purposefully through city streets surrounded by men chasing or claiming them. (Fig 22 and 23). Newton moved fashion photography from naivety and innocence to confidence and independence. Newton's integrity is intact. His photographs do not reflect a sordid sex life. His wife of thirty years insists they are very happy and stable. Newton has admitted to be abashed at the reactions elicited by his work. Yet he is aroused by the wrath of the women who picket his exhibitions. One of Newton's critics Hilton Kramer has said "the subject matter is control of others bodies by power or violence." But an element of artifice is some of the time present in a fashion photograph, what Hilton Kramer sees as power is perhaps artifice. It is difficult to decide whether Newton is portraying remote, reclusive women or dominant forthright women. It depends on the viewer's objectivity, frame of mind, and their honesty in being frank about tabooed subjects.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter dicusses contemporary female
photograhers and their approach to their metier.

In general men have largely defined and constructed the media images of sexuality and gender through various visual forms of representation in cinema, fashion, rock music, fine art and pornography. So women photographers who have infiltrated their way into the genre have strove to define the metier be female beliefs and standards to separate them from the men. How do women look at images taken by men of women and do they try to objectify by photographing with obvious femininity. Men and women relate differently to images and visual objects producing different meanings. "Women are depicted differently to men not because femininity is different to masculinity but because the viewer is assumed to be male" (The Naked Eye. Bailey and Harrison pg 61.); a woman's image is to flatter herself and the man she is with.

Some poses denote stereotypes, a loving mother figure, a sex object, a mistress, a carefree, independent woman. A woman's presence is intrinsic to her explanation and expression of what she is. Society is conditioned to this idea. Deciding what is erotic or glamorous is a photograph is subjective and it is difficult to decide if either verges on pornography.

Female photography of the early part of this century seems to have been exploring the surface of images; there was no real attack or visual statement on a topic. People did not read into photographs. Female photography of the past twenty years has gone through significant changes. With the Sixties women perceived new ideas of glamour and female photographers had a chance after the war. Where as pre 1948 women had featured as interpreters of elegance, to express themselves through fashion photography for decoration, women photographers now directd their work towards a woman's audience.

Everyone likes to look, observe and record images, a pleasure innate in us all. Fashion photography is a series of representations whose essence lies in transitoriness. Over the years it has become instilled with sexual narrative content. I would like to look at how this content is interpreted by contemporary women. Female photographers demonstrate the concerns of women today and the confidence they have to interpret these with a wide choice of techniques. Women photographers working with their own sex are identifying with their models, they have an empathy with them rather than confronting them on a physical level. Female photographers are not quenching or satisfying a hunger, that maybe male photographers seem to do, they are not satisfying a demand but creating a hunger for more photographs in their style because of the content and approach.

In the fashion world today there are more female fashion designers (Lolita Lempicka and Donna Karan), more female supermodels (Cindy Crawford and Christy Turlington) with celebrity status, and female photographers (Ellen von Unwerth and Bettina Rheims) highly paid. The old master/slave relationship between a male photographer and a female model has gone. This was portrayed in the Sixties movie "Blow-up". A simplification of this is: The model anxiously awaits praise from the arrogant male photographer, who is in control. She succumbs to him and eventually idolises him. The weak female falling for the strong domineering male. Slightly exaggerated, but this is the sort of idea that surrounded male photographers with female models. The balance of people has now changed.

Female images do not differ hugely from their male counterparts. Sex is a common denominator. It is the varieties of sexuality that are different. Women chose women they want to photograph, as did their predecessors deliberating over establishing a rapport. What women models would have felt ill at ease doing for a male photographer is okay to do for a female; sulky expressions are no longer exclusively sexual expressions enticing or titilating the viewer but femininity, girltalk on camera. Sulky provocative expressions are now an element of attractive femininity. Female photographers are interpreting female glamour from what they know and feel, not what they presume or interpret as males might.

Female fashion photographers I admire are Sheila Metxner, Ellen von Unwerth, Deborah Turberville and Annie Leibovitz. Deborah Turberville had a powerful effect on the relevance and interpretation of female photographers. In the 1970's she dealt with women who relate to neither themselves nor their environment (History of Fashion Photography; pg 216).



Fig.24 Ellen von Unwerth

Peggy Surota and Andrea Blanche, Americans, concentrate on reality and shooting models in situations they experience or observe, they appreciate a model who likes to be photographed and is appreciative of instruction (not in a 'do this, that' manner but in a way to reveal oneself): They photograph for fashion magazines, Vogue, Vanity Fair and Harpers and Queen. These photographers have particular types or styles attributed to them: the ice maidens of Sheila Metzner, the flirts of Ellen von Unwerth, the sensuous real women of Andrea Blanche and the cheeky cute girls of Peggy Surota. Annie Leibowitz is always searching for a new way to photograph a celebrity, almost shocking. Her cover of 'Vanity Fair' in August 1991 of Demi Moore pregnant and naked caused a flurry of excitement as well as uproar because she was naked, pregnant and sexy. So women can be as controversial as their male counterparts but not as exploitive. The characteristics of the photographers reflects their image or what they like. Some of these women were apprenticed to the classic male photographers. Andrea Blanche started with Richard Avedon. She reflects lifestyle in her shots, and is aware of the need to show the clothes and details. Occasionally she can do a one-off totally free of any constraints.

Ellen von Unwerth a former model who likes lively feminine models, obviously in direct reference to her own experience. She does not glorify her subjects - they are regular everyday happenings. She likes to create an atmosphere. She likes having two models reaching to each other in the picture, playing them off together, like friends, in everyday life, reality. This is similar to Helmut Newton but he was playing on sexual ambiguity while von Unwerth is more humorous.



It was slightly risqué for women to wear pants in 1930, but that didn't stop Dietrich, who wore a man's suit and even took a cinematic bow in the bend-from-the-waist masculine style. At ease here: a menswear jacket, collared vest, and narrow pants, finished with a neat necktie, a fedora—and eye-catching platform lace-ups. Wool three-piece suit by Complice, about \$1,300. Saks Fifth Avenue; Shauna Stein, Los Angeles.

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Fig.25

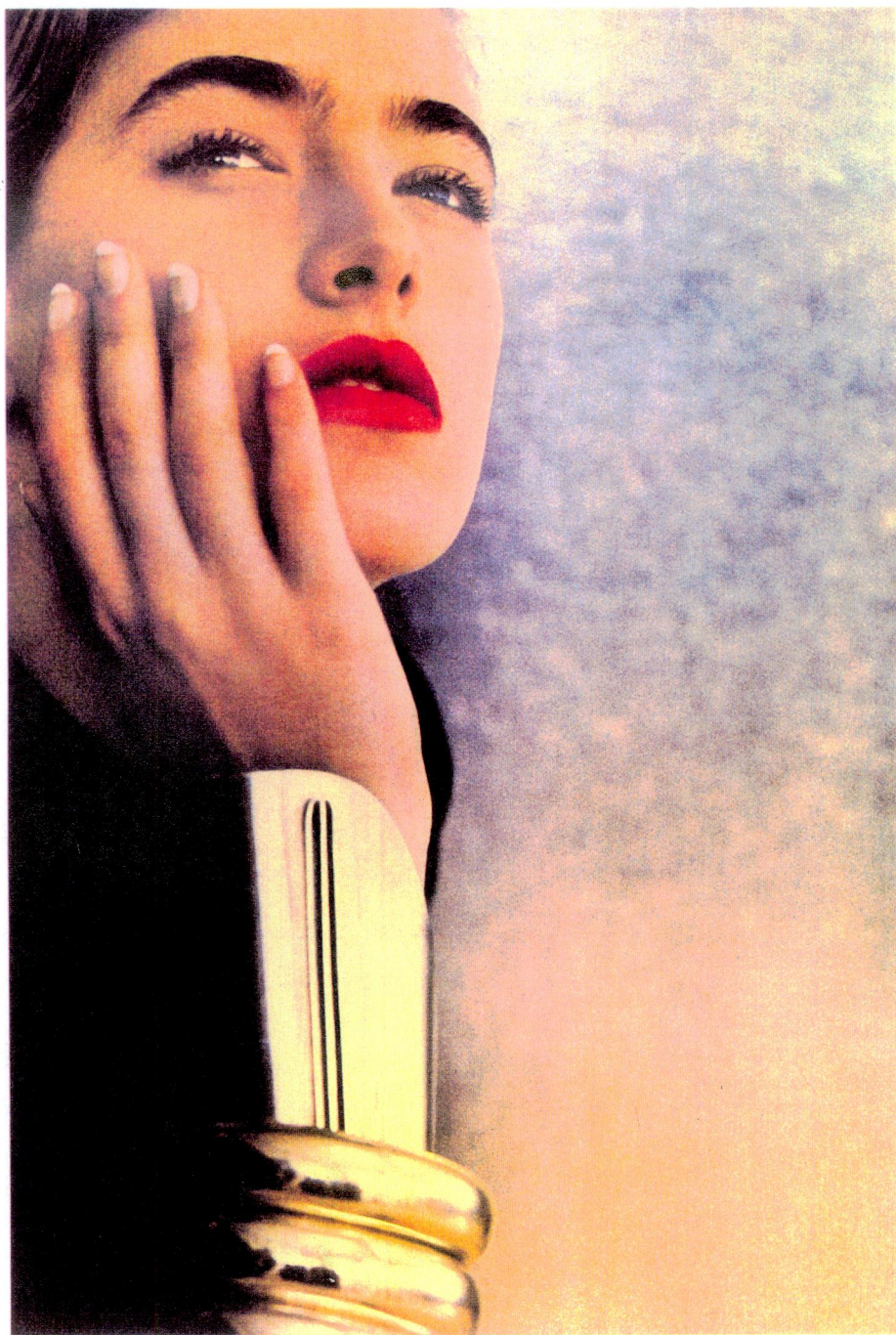
Ellen von Unwerth



See-through receives a slightly more hard-edged treatment as a beaded mesh top contrasts with trousers and a sleek 1930s-style beret. Trousers (about \$500) and top by Marc Jacobs for Perry Ellis. Barneys New York, NYC; Bloomingdale's. Chanel beret. The sensual fragrance: Givenchy's Amarige. Details, more stores, see In This Issue.



Fig.27 a. Sheila Metzner
 b. Sheila Metzner
 c. Sheila Metzner
 d. Sheila Metzner








Of course her models may be wearing red and black underwear, huge voluminous gowns or silky, slinky column dresses with teetering heels, the same sort of clothes that Newton had on his models, in place incongruous to the apparel. But there is no ambiguity in von Unwerth's poses, they are models exhibiting their enthusiasm and fun. Her pictures are bright, highlighting the verve and sparkling characters of the models. (Fig 26).

Sheila Metzner is a fashion photographer as well as a general photographer. She has a cooler approach to fashion. Her approach is more subtle yet she looks for similar qualities as her contemporaries, a model whose looks speak and carry emotion. Photography to her is studying people. It does not have to have shining beauty but it could be the shape, strength or some quirk in disposition. She deals a lot with light and shadow, shape and texture and how fabrics and jewellery build the composition of a photograph. (Fig 27, B, C, D). She photographs fashion images in a more decorative, painterly manner that is similar to the approach of Madame Yevonde whose pictures were almost portraits. Metzner sees the photograph as a frame in which she must tease out everything she can. She provokes a model to exhibit what she has sensed in her. Sometimes she may role play with her models, as something to play with and one can get totally carried away with amazing lively spur-of-the moment shots.

Role playing is something that female fashion photographers admit to freely. It is a particularly strong characteristic. Maybe it makes the relationship easier, whereas if a male photographer suggests role playing there might be too much sexual innuendo. Popular cinema creates role models that people are attracted to. A particular style of dressing becomes known as 'a la actress' and magazines imitate it for the public to do the same, for example the vamp look or the androgynous look portrayed by Marlene Dietrich. (Fig 26, 25).



STREET-STALKING in a military-style, foam redingote, *this page*, £495, at Jean Paul Gaultier.

Crepe body with mesh insert, by Liza Bruce, £150, at A La Mode; Firenze, Dublin. Gloves, by Dents-Pittards, £35, at Fenwick. High patent boots, by Crisca, £312, at the Laurel boutique

CREATURE OF THE NIGHT in tailored wool herringbone trousers, *opposite*, £320, at Loewe. Stretch mesh body, by Pierre Mantoux, £30, at Browns. Cossack-style hat, £100, at the Laurel boutique; Solo, Glasgow

I think women enjoy dressing up and imagining how they would look in certain outfits not for a male viewer but for themselves to feel good and confident, as a morale boost. This is what female photographers have identified with.

Deborah Turberville is not satisfied with communicating a fashion photograph. She questions the basis of a fashion photograph and undermines the traditional idea that fashion should be shown clearly (History of Fashion Photography, pg. 216). Her models are not chosen for their identity with a stereotype but usually for their divergence from the type. She creates drama and uses mystery as do Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin. She shifts the fashion photograph from a static image to a more narrative dynamic image. Her images border between clarity and confusion, confusion being mystery. Her scenes are distressed, decaying buildings. Her models echo this vagueness, and are distracted. There is no contact between them in the photograph or contact with the viewer. Her models do nothing, they are decorative, yet alienated. The purpose of the image is lost.

Newton's work is based on artifice and fantasy but his narrative stimulates and excites, whereas Turberville's is elusive. Her models are hesitant and much more reticent. When comparing the two photographers' work, Newton's women are more powerful and stronger and he has been accused of exercising submission onto his models. Turberville's idea seems to be about fantasy but not disclosing what it might be. Turberville's models pose laconically. This is a similar characteristic to the photographs of Avedon. His models seem unreachable, beautiful and idolised but a dream-like quality makes them like statues. Turbervilles most controversial photographs were produced in the early Seventies known as The Bathhouse Series for Vogue. (Fig 28).

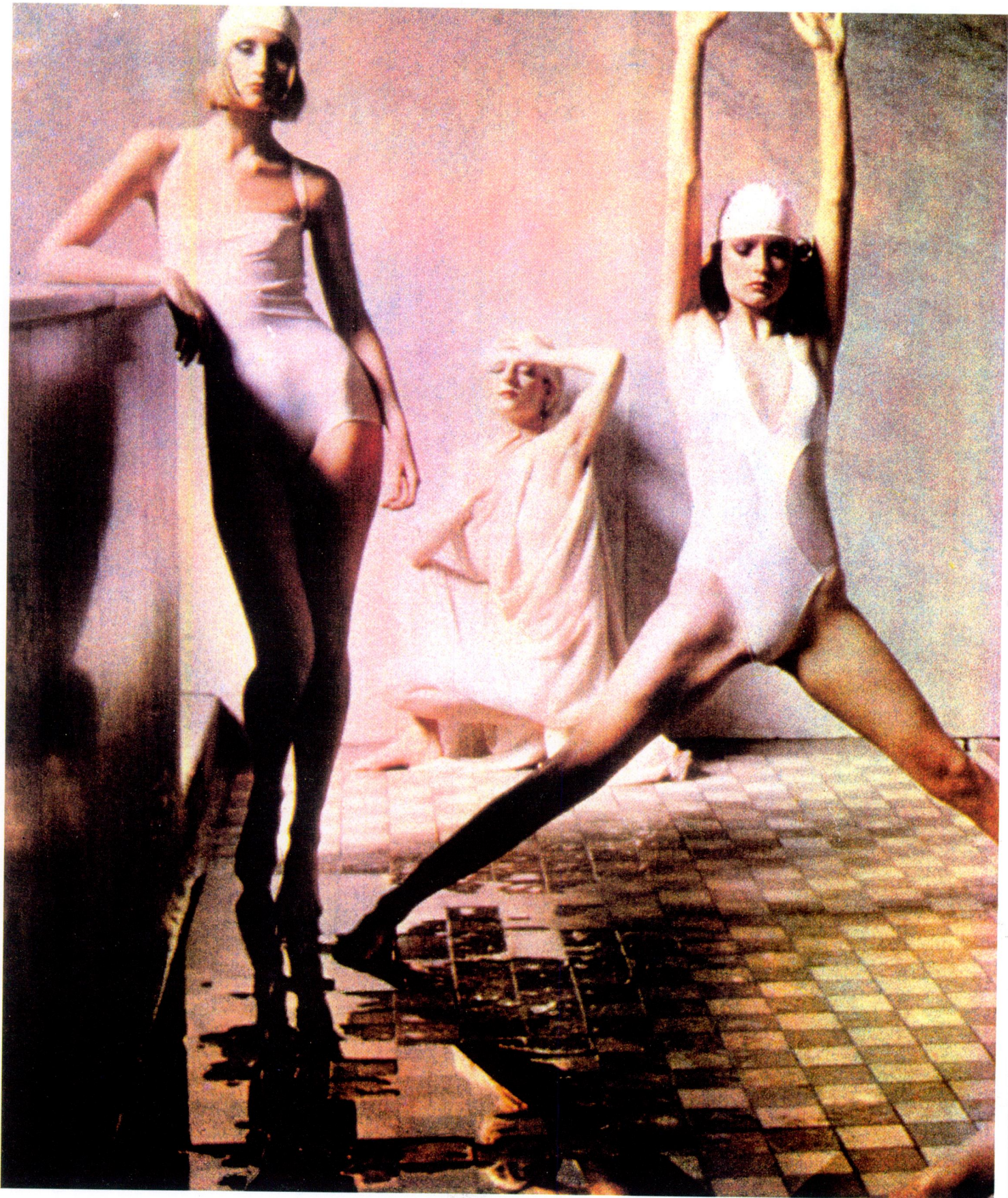


Fig.28 Deborah Tuberville



Deborah Turbeville
Vogue, May 1975
Fashion: (left to right) Jean-Louis Scherrer
(gauze); Stephen Burrows; Courrèges; Ungai



Fig.29 Deborah Tuberville



Fig.30 Sarah Moon

Sarah Moon
g photograph for L'Oréal, 1989



The precursor of these was Edward Steichen who posed three models dressed in white, Turberville's interpretation was a ceramic tiled white bathroom with five models, the controversy was over what were the five females doing, the poses being provocative in a steamy bathroom. The realistic fashion photography of the Thirties was straightforward. Today it is not quite as simple. Turberville used the soft focus technique (Fig 29), similar to Sarah Moon, (Fig 30), French, a contemporary and reminiscent of Lillian Bassman and Baron de Meyer. Turberville seems to use colour in a monochromatic way. Maybe her sense of disassociation is psycholological and represents a dissatisfaction with modern world and society. (The History of Fashion Photography)

The American female photographer Annie Leibowitz adores simplicity and emotion. Her work is art, she feels people are lucky to be in her pictures (The South Bank Show, ITV Feb 7th). Photography has seduced her. She took photographs after the main event had happened, a detail missed yet very powerful. She watches life unfold in front of her and this is what she photographs. Her pictures are performances, she likes to give information in the photographs. She has been labelled as a cult photographer. Her notorious photographs of Demi Moore, naked and pregnant, were a ground breaking celebrity picture, it said everything, rejecting of glitz and babies what everyone was talking about. It was a woman's photograph, women exuding sex when pregnant, a taboo subject, women are usually covered up when pregnant. Leibowitz always has to top her last photograph with the next. Her intention as a photographer is that people want to know something secret about the stars, and she tries to disclose this secret. She photographs nudity with a twist, for example she paints the naked body. The photographs seem to be natural but they are actually stylised and theatrical. Her pictures have an electric energy.

She makes people seem larger than life. Her sense of aesthetics is about handsome, robust strength and well balanced proportion in health, the American sense of aesthetics. She has constraints placed upon her when photographing celebrities as she cannot undercut the already conceived notion of them. She is a public relations machine. She wants a memorable shot.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter deals with male and female objectives and what men and women expect from a photograph.

Fashion photography creates images, visions and objects of desirability as does pornography. Pornography is often defined as prurient, but an interest in sex is supposed present in our minds a lot of the time, (whether this is acknowledged is another matter). So fashion photography that is verging on pornography can be prurient. Models are muses to men and women. Female viewers want part of that model in them whereas male viewers fetishize the model. Models are implements to stimulate the viewer's desires whether they are narcissistic or gratifying. As discussed in The Idealizing Vision, "photography is uniquely well suited to expressing the instinct for pleasure inherent in the libido for looking".

The photographer is a voyeur. We are all exhibitionists, no matter how modest we may think we are; clothes provide us with what Freud called "a loophole to display and enhance our physical charms". As Valerie Steele says in The Idealizing Vision, "fashion photography owes its fundamental eroticism to the power of the visual imagination, which is a basic element of the human sex drive". Photography is suitable for expressing the desire to look and instinct for pleasure; it is just that some observers disagree that there is a need to be so blatant or violent. Some images are ambiguous because they are out of their situation so words can be added to clarify the situation; this is what happens in fashion advertising.

What do women want from images of women? Perhaps this is determined by background and culture. Images can seduce, do seduce, us into wanting to have something, to be someone, to do something. They play on our imaginations. A woman's presence expresses her attitude to herself, it is evident through her expressions, gestures and clothes. It is intrinsic to her and men see this aura and are attracted to it.

A man's presence as John Bergers discusses in Ways of Seeing, is based on the power he embodies suggestive of what he is capable of. Men survey a woman before they are introduced and this can determine his method of approach and treatment. Men act, look at women, women appear. This determines the relationship between a man and a woman but as well the relationship between a woman to a woman. This is an image that women visually satisfy the male sexual appetite, sales of Page Three models and pornography magazines show that this is evident. This is how society operates. Appearances are based on sexuality. Female photographers are in the female role, I think they portray women with sincerity, sensitivity and concern. There is no real hard-core explicitness. Male photographers follow the male role orientated towards sex.

Fashion photography is the language of dress. In the commercial sense a photographer's value is measured on how effectively they illustrate an item of clothing. I have shown those who go deeper, whose obsession is not with clothes but communication and interpretation.

When Lillian Bassman pictured a diaphanous dress reflected like a butterfly, for Harpers Bazaar in 1950, that was sexual, the body was exhibited through the fabric and the fabric suggested the boudoir (sleep, private, bed), but the reaction against it was not for its sexual innuendo but because the dress was not being represented as it was, a long straight slightly gathered dress. Sexuality is inherent in fashion photographs but in some it is zoomed in on more. The unequal relationship that seems to be apparent between men and women is deeply embedded in society and structures and in the consciousness of many women.

Fashion photography gives concrete form to the dreams of women. Women enjoy the images, because they use them for role models, as do men who find them sexual, they envisage their wives, or girlfriends wearing the pictured garments. Some models may feel the need to be photographed by men to reaffirm their appeal and attraction. So they are aware that they may be directed to a male audience and maybe enjoy knowing they can control men in this way. Gender difference is not how narcissism manifests itself, but rather it's presence/absence. Femininity, that is having the qualities associated with women, is a combination of voyeurism and narcissism. "The genders always mirror each other" (Male Order). Every form of masculinity has a mirror form of femininity, they complement each other like yin and yang. Women and men's basic needs are complementary.

In practice, in the modern workplace in society 1993, women are still in a secondary role to men, giving him attention, looking after him and gaining his approval. It has been traditionally so, the role of a woman is not to compromise a male role. The idea of women as victims of male lust has contributed to the focus of some feminists upon pornography as one of the key supports of male supremacy. "Pornography exploits mens anxieties about women and their own inadequacies" (Formations of Pleasure). Andrea Dwortan believes this is not biological, and could change and is cultural. This could be changed by training and care. Fashion photographs remain a fascination (not an obsessive fascination) with men and female observers. So are they unequivocally responsible for the reproduction of a harsh social definition of femininity? Women's bodies have not been mutilated or damaged. But their portrayal in fashion photographs is subject to discussion on the position of women socially and male dominance. The naked (or near naked) female body and it's appearance in photographic images could be seen as a result of patriarchal society, women exploited by men, sexually objectified in images used by men for sexual pleasure.



Fig.31 Helmut Newton

Images articulate meanings as well as re-representing a world already meaningful to somebody. Sexuality is deviant. Newton's sexuality might not be seen as natural to some; he is a voyeur. He plays upon this by wearing a trench coat in his self portraits with naked models. He represents a flasher, a social problem as well as a clicker of the camera button. (fig 31)

But the woman is also in the role of the flasher, the male role transcended onto her in Helmut Newton's quirky way. Simone de Beauvoir commented "Porn is a symptom, not a cause of women's oppression, only part of the wider image that advertises 'passive' fashion models, hostesses, happy housewives and secretaries. "Campaign against these degrading images too!" (Male Order). Feminists have campaigned for different ideals with reference to fashion imagery and portrayal, radical, social and liberal, but maybe because offensive or what some see as offensive photography is so blatantly published and widely accessible that the commotion about it is heard more.

This relationship between man and woman, unequal and unbalanced is firmly established in a culture that still builds the consciousness of many women. John Berger, in Ways of Seeing, believes women do what men do to them, survey their own femininity, but it is strange that fashion photographs are published for a female audience (to sell the garments) with all this emphasis on the models titillation role in a fashion photograph.

Fashion photography may be an art and if it was it would be freer and less criticized. It is art and commerce, advertising mixed together. Newton moved outside the fashion magazine medium and heightened his artistic profile, making himself susceptible to acclaim and attack. Newton says he cannot help being a male with male fantasies and this is why he produces his material. (Appearances, pg 238). Sarah Moon, photographer, has said that men have created a coded language of exterior symbols for women (Appearances pg 242) but women observing these signs realise they are faked while men do not. She has no objection to Newton's portrayal and presents her idea of femininity as serene. Deborah Turberville's Bathhouse series (published in Vogue, May 1975) which I have already mentioned, does exhibit her view on femininity, her interpretation was in answer to the "unquestioning glossy cheeriness that prevailed in American Vogue" (Appearances pg 250). So women photographers were dissatisfied with the imagery of femininity as much as the 'attackers' and critics.

Female fashion photography of the 70's and 80's is evidence of a new independence reflecting the times, that is, the Sixties revolution. These women (Ellen von Unwerth, Sheila Metzner, Deborah Turberville) are aware of criticisms of female portrayal and have established their interpretation. They have re-evaluated the reading of a fashion photograph from a woman's point of view. These photographs supposedly represent the woman of the day. It can be said that meanings of images are neither intrinsic or fixed and that the viewer produces the image rather than consuming it. The viewer produces the meanings of the image from a historic and social point of view which is subject to change. Things or objects which were scandalous in their day are now heroic, for example a blond ambition stereotyped because of her looks, Marilyn Monroe.

Historically male fashions were more glamorous than female costume because of their higher 'stature' (Male Order), so males have always been narcissistic (dormant or not). But in the latter half of this century men had to dispel their narcissism to be seen as the 'one who looks' to enforce the dominant male role. Men's clothes tend to project an image of indifference to themselves but they simultaneously have a deep concern about their appearance. Men are seen as above fashion imagery and photography because women have the narcissistic 'how do I look ? role' attached to them. So all this appearance emphasis is placed on women.

Femininity is a social and idealogical constraint in which women can be controlled (by men). Femininity is simultaneously natural and acquired through labour. This sets up a complex tension for the reader. On one hand she is addressed as 'woman' - the reader, on the other hand she is addressed as already a woman - this is after all the ground on which she is identified as a reader. This is how Lee Wright has expressed that feminists have come to the conclusion that there is no natural femininity which could liberate them. So the images of women produced by female photographers are to challenge male images and expectations.

Femininity in my opinion is an important criterion in fashion photography. First of all because the garments or objects such as perfume, make-up, are for a female market, they project an image which the designer wants to sell. But all femininity is important because a woman's femininity is intrinsic to her and how she exudes this can be misinterpreted by different photographers and readers. The idea that the male has the prerogative to observe and a woman does not, is what female photographers are trying to combat, photographs are made not for male stimulation or titilation (by men) which add insult to a woman's femininity, eg. Newton, but show more sensitivity and less heightened drama.

As Nick Knight said in The Idealizing Vision (pg 96)
"fashion photography expresses quite crass views of
sexuality. Why should the model always be talking about
sex?".

CONCLUSION



Fig.32 Herb Ritts



Fig.33

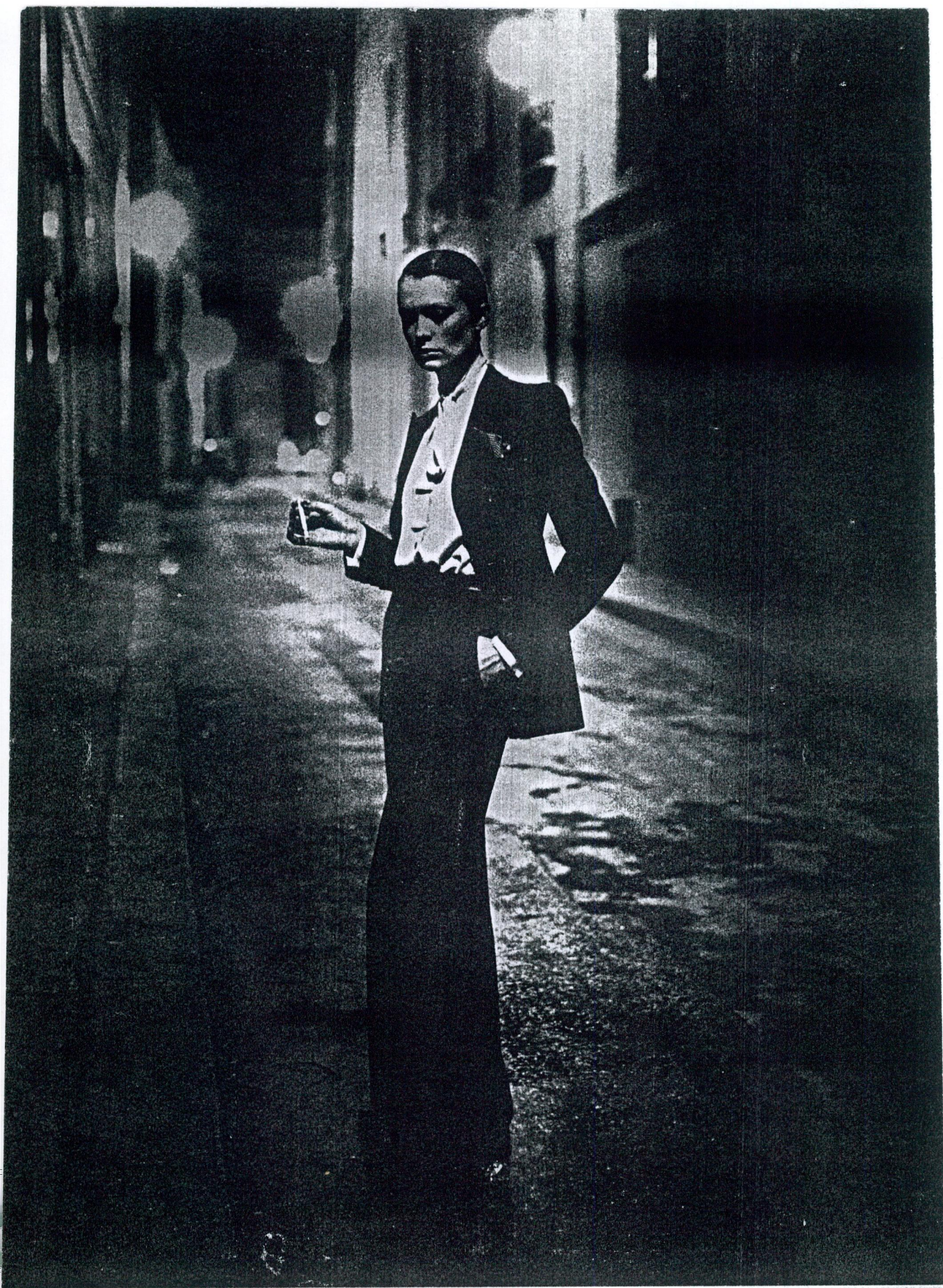
Newton
a. Newton
b. Newton
c. Newton

A





Graphic demo of how sheer can play off something more solid. Here, a side-slit, seriously pin-striped wool suit contends with a net bodysuit. The wildly sexy accessories: stockings with a racy stripe of lace, transparent gloves with rhinestone fingernails built in. Suit and bodysuit by Christian Dior Boutique. Suit at Christian Dior Boutique, NYC. Thierry Mugler gloves. Christian Lacroix stockings. In this story: hair, Susan Sterling at Amelle Dubrule; makeup, Carlo Alberto at Studio 3, Rome. Details, see In This Issue.



Fashion photographs are made for magazines with a female spectatorship, Vogue, Harpers and Queen and Marie Claire. They offer an idea as to what femininity is. Some images are family-orientated, gentle, serene, whereas others are more sexually intimate, suggesting either a weak male - submissive, or a dominant forthright (role) model. The portrayal of male models in fashion photography did not really become evident until the late Seventies and Eighties. Only then did male photographers have to deal with male sexuality. This maybe illustrates why female portrayal in photography became so dominated because men could not photograph men and women were accessible and easier to deal with. Men were allowed (by whom? men) to photograph women in whatever way they liked, preceived by a male viewer. Women did not photograph men but have tried to establish a female approach to photography. Herb Ritts and Bruce Weber have photographed men to the extremes women have been photographed, although in fashion photography male sexuality is not presented as equally as female sexuality; men do not have to go as far. (Fig 32).

Newton sexualizes the fashion image. His masculine logic is imposed on the feminine genre of the fashion photograph. He highlights his manipulation of women and intervention into the supposedly feminine world of fashion by making the sexual content of the intervention explicit. Newton has addressed a female viewer who enjoys images of women requiring the models to enact gestures and poses of dominance and submission and also does not mind the male presence in the form of a photographer. (Fig 33).

I think stereotypes will always be read into photographs. And these images will recur and reappear, just like Herb Ritt's reinterpretation of Thirties and Forties romantic heroes, Deborah Tuberville's use of turn of the century atmospheres and poses and Stephen Meisel's poses from the Twenties and Thirties. They all wish to create a dynamic decorative beautiful stimulating picture.

As for fashion photography specifically becoming a cult it seems to be doing just so. The fashion photographers of the earlier part of this century, Steichen, Man-Ray were at that time making a living as are Von Unwerth, Leibowitz, Metzner now in present day, so they are commercial. But as time passes their images reflect their period in time and they may gain acclaim. This acclaim I think will not have to be until they are dead but photographers will achieve celebrity status while alive.

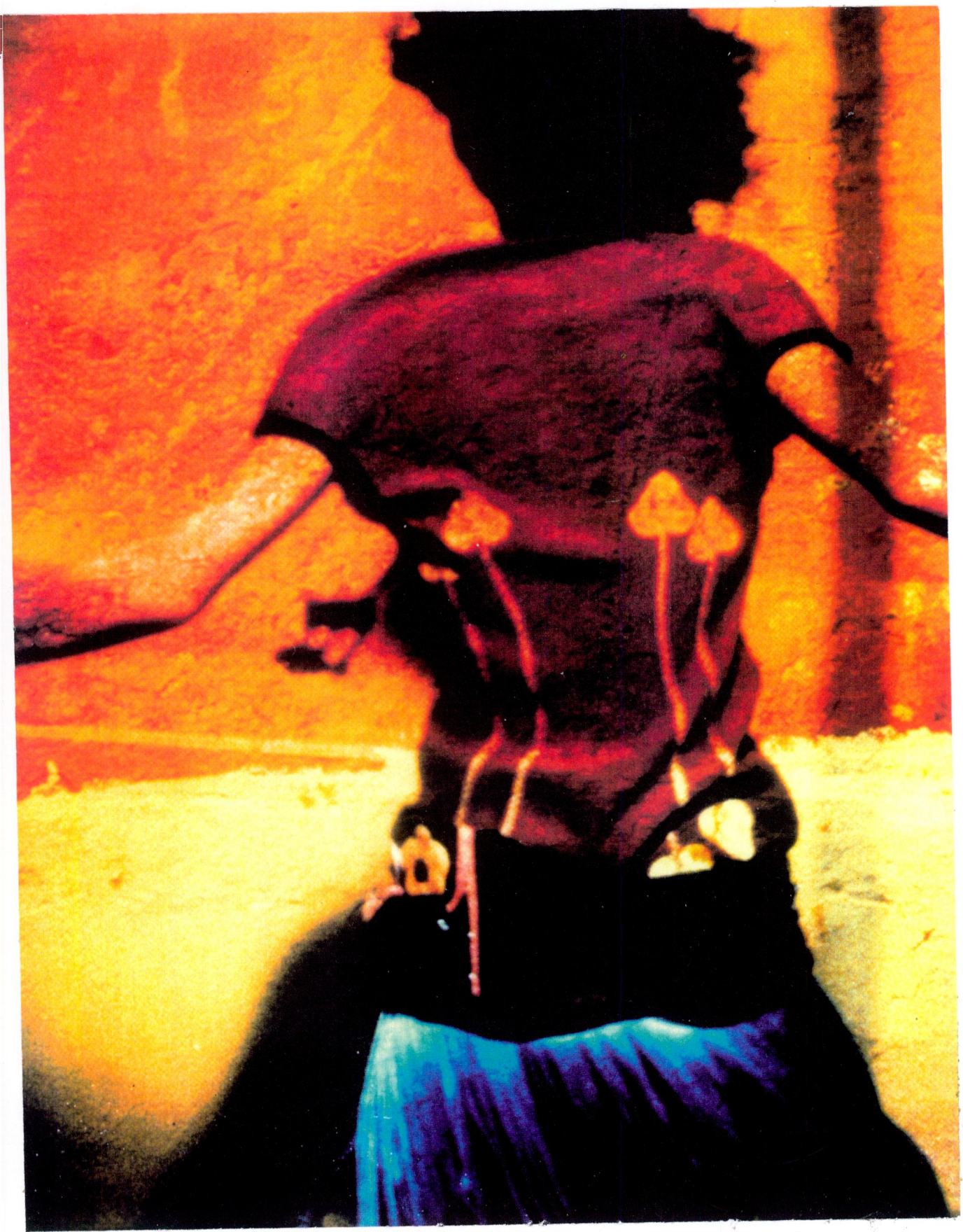


Fig.34 Enrique Bauldulescu



Fig.35 Stephane Sedna oui



Fig.36 Pierre et Gilles



Fig.37 Koto Bolofo



Fig.38 Paolo Roversi

The image of fashion photography can convey the art of a garment, pushing it to it's limits. Designers need it to exhibit their work to it's extremes. I think that new younger photographers are doing that. They are focusing on the garments' texture and colour but also discovering new presentations for these garments, enhancing their look and creating an atmosphere.

American fashion photography seems to deal with the graphic depiction of clothing, while European photography often deals more with mood or fantasy. Enrique Badulescu is Mexican and his work is colourful and textural (Fig 34). Stephane Sednaoui is Parisian. He was a model and very much influenced by Jean-Paul Gaultier, his work is of minimal content yet full of impact. (Fig 35). As for photographers looking back to their predecessors, Pierre et Gilles are two French photographers whose 'Pleureuse Zuleika' and 'Meduse' (Fig 36) are very much influenced by Madame Yevonde, but the make-up and attire is modern. Koto Bolofo is South African. His work is action photography and his models bear resemblance to Louise Dahl-Wolfe's healthy outdoor girl look of the 1940's and 1950's. (Fig 37). Paolo Roversi, an Italian, creates demure fawn-like girls. (Fig 38). They are almost angelic and preclude lewd fantasies. His imagery is well suited to the work of Romeo Gigli (designer). They are reminiscent of Lillian Bassman's images, softly blurred to create an aura of innocence, yet sophisticated as well. So the new will always look to the old.

I think a woman's /model's sexuality is intensified when a female is behind the lens, there is no confrontation as there seems to have been with male photographers. Fashion imagery produces images of women for women that both evoke and deny meaning.

In the 1990's I think pop art and culture and MTV (music television, video) will all have an increasing effect and stimulation on fashion imagery. Restraints are not as restricting as they were. The designers want publically astonishing or overwhelming images to entice their customers to buy. Female photography has helped this awareness of sensitivity, so that femininity is portrayed without a sense of enforcement or falsity and with more empathy.

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