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Summer 2013

FASHION *magazine*

SNAP DECISION: Photographer Jeff Burton reimagines an icon at the Luminato arts festival.
By Rachel Giese



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PORTRAIT OF DARIA WERBOWY BY JEFF BURTON

EDITOR:
ELIO IANNACCI

CONSIDER THE ROSE: PRETTY YET TREACHER-
ously thorny, its fragrance distilled for perfumes and
elixirs; a symbol of love immortalized by Shakespeare,
Renoir and so many others.

When it was established in 1935, Lancôme, the French
cosmetics firm, adopted the rose as its emblem. To cele-
brate its 75th birthday in 2010, the company commis-
sioned 20 photographers to interpret the flower. The
resulting exhibition, entitled *Roses by...*, lands in Toronto
in June for Luminato, the city's annual arts festival.

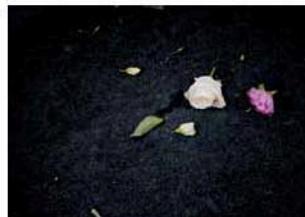
Images range from the reverent (Ruven Afanador's
verdant still life of an overflowing vase) to the erotic
(Patrick Demarchelier's pink blossoms emerging from
a naked woman's crotch). One of the simplest yet most
striking photographs comes from Los Angeles-based
Jeff Burton: A few de-headed blooms lie scattered
underfoot at a flower market. Among the other tab-
leaus, it's a startling reflection on decline and imper-
manence, flipping all the clichés about the ubiquitous
flower on their heads. "Part of the challenge," Burton
says, "was figuring out how to approach the subject of
the rose in a fresh way. When I saw the flowers on the
ground, I was struck by the idea of finding beauty in
different kinds of contexts, and of seeing beauty as a

natural experience and not one you have to fabricate."

A noted fashion photographer, Burton has shot Ukrai-
nian-Canadian super model Daria Werbowy for Lancôme
and created portraits of celebrities as diverse as Gore
Vidal and Tilda Swinton. He also spent years shooting
stills in Southern California's thriving adult film busi-
ness. It was in that most explicit of industries that Bur-
ton became interested in "the in-between spaces," and in
the implicit, not the overt. Despite the graphic nature of
pornography and the blatant money-making demands of
advertising, his work seems, at times, surreal.

"I'm building up glamour and tearing it down simul-
taneously," Burton explains. "Even as I peel away the
glossy surface, I try to keep the fantasy alive." When
he was working on his *Roses by...*

photograph, Burton noticed white
flecks in the asphalt under the
discarded blooms, lending an-
other dimension to the image. The
shorn flowers call to mind Oscar
Wilde's maxim about lying in
the gutter but looking up at the
stars. "I keep my eyes open for the
beauty of imperfection," he says. □



BURTON'S PHOTO FOR *Roses by...*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF BURTON

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"Feldman Pictures" Nero no. 29, summer 2012, p.57-65

FELDMANN PICTURES#1

images by jeff burton

ON THE OCCASION OF AN EXHIBITION FEATURING HIS MAGAZINE OHIO, THE RENOWNED GERMAN ARTIST HANS PETER FELDMANN ASKED PETER FISCHLI AND DAVID WEISS TO SEND HIM PHOTOGRAPHS THAT THEY DID NOT CONSIDER GOOD ENOUGH TO USE IN THEIR WORK, BUT THAT THEY HAD NONETHELESS NOT THROWN AWAY. SINCE THEN, THESE TYPES OF IMAGES HAVE COME TO BE KNOWN AS FELDMANN PICTURES. INSPIRED BY THIS IDEA, WE DECIDED TO CREATE A NEW COLUMN, IN WHICH WE ASK DIFFERENT ARTISTS TO SHARE A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS THAT THEY KEEP SHUT AWAY IN A DRAWER. WE ARE STARTING WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND ARTIST JEFF BURTON, WHO ALSO GAVE US A PERFECT DESCRIPTION FOR THIS COLUMN: "IT'S LIKE HAVING A STUDIO VISIT WITH SOMEONE YOU TRUST AND SHARING MORE THAN YOU NORMALLY WOULD." HERE IS HIS SELECTION, ENCOMPASSING THE VARIOUS GENRES OF HIS PRACTICE: PORTRAITURE, LANDSCAPE, FASHION, PORN, INTERIORS AND STILL-LIFE.

IN OCCASIONE DI UNA MOSTRA A CUI PARTECIPÒ CON LA SUA RIVISTA OHIO, IL FAMOSO ARTISTA TEDESCO HANS PETER FELDMANN CHIESE A PETER FISCHLI E DAVID WEISS DI MANDARGLI DELLE FOTO CHE CONSIDERAVANO NON ABBASTANZA VALIDE DA ESSERE USATE NEI LORO LAVORI, MA CHE NONOSTANTE TUTTO NON AVEVANO ANCORA BUTTATO. DA QUEL MOMENTO IN POI, PER DEFINIRE QUEL GENERE DI IMMAGINI È RIMASTO IL NOME DI FELDMANN PICTURES. ISPIRANDOCI A QUESTA IDEA, ABBIAMO DECISO DI CREARE UNA NUOVA RUBRICA IN CUI CHIEDIAMO AD UN ARTISTA DI CONDIVIDERE ALCUNE IMMAGINI CHE TIENE CHIUSE IN UN CASSETTO. INIZIAMO CON IL FOTOGRAFO E ARTISTA AMERICANO JEFF BURTON, CHE HA ANCHE DATO UNA PERFETTA DEFINIZIONE DEL PROGETTO: "È COME FARE UNO STUDIO VISIT CON QUALCUNO DI CUI TI FIDI, APRENDOTI PIÙ DI QUANTO FARESTI NORMALMENTE." QUI DI SEGUITO LA SUA SELEZIONE, CHE COMPRENDE DIVERSI ASPETTI DELLA SUA PRATICA: RITRATTO, PAESAGGIO, MODA, PORNÒ, INTERNI, NATURE MORTE.

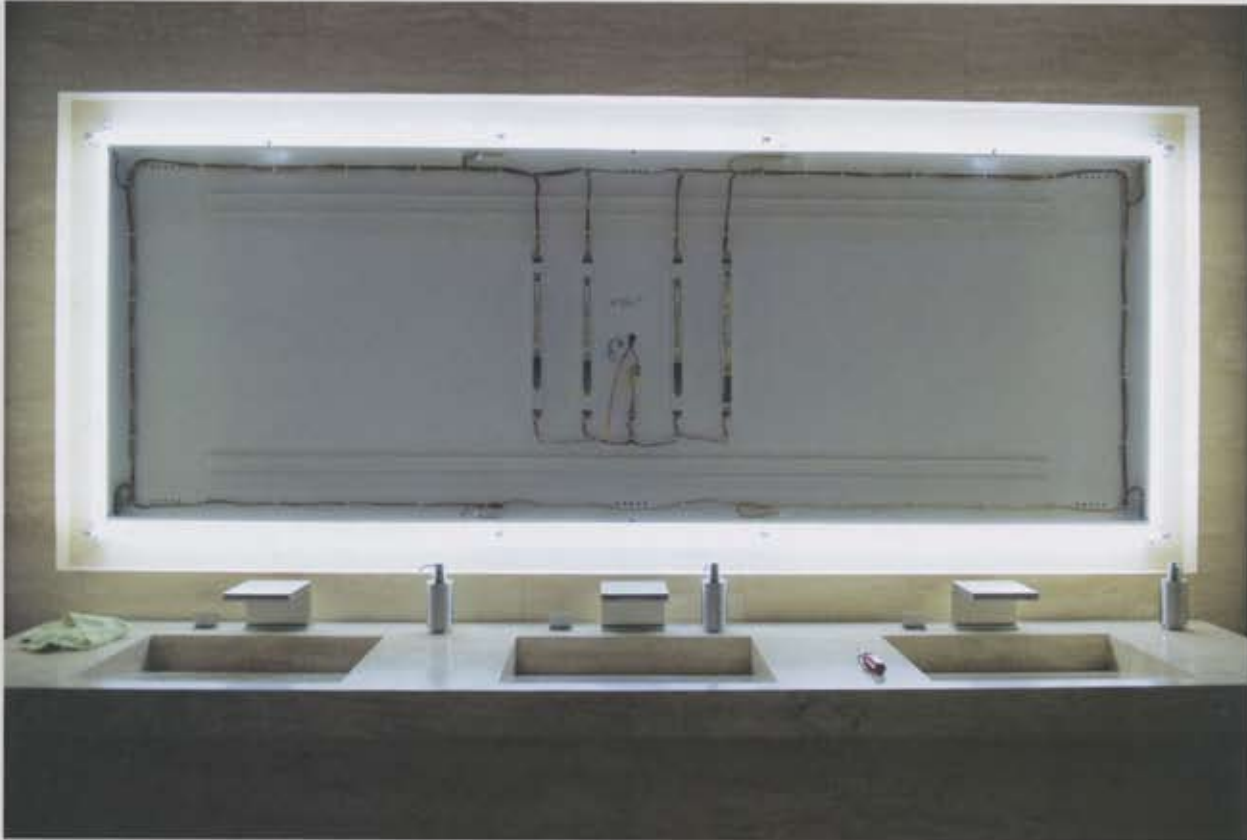
Jeff Burton (1963) is a commercial photographer and artist who lives in Los Angeles. He has held numerous solo shows in the U.S., Japan and Europe. His shoots have appeared in magazines such as 10 Magazine, Fantastic Man, Numéro and Vogue Paris. He has shot campaigns for Tom Ford, YSL and Kris Van Assche.

Jeff Burton (1963) è fotografo professionista e artista. Vive a Los Angeles. Ha avuto numerose mostre personali negli Stati Uniti, in Giappone e in Europa. I suoi scatti sono apparsi su riviste come 10 Magazine, Fantastic Man, Numéro e Vogue Paris. Ha realizzato campagne per Tom Ford, YSL e Kris Van Assche.











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“Porn and Beauty in the California Desert” by Jacqueline Marcus, DAZED and Confused, March 2012.

LAST SHOT:
JEFF BURTON

PORN AND
BEAUTY
IN THE
CALIFORNIAN
DESERT



LA-based photographer Jeff Burton has an innate eye for atmospheric beauty, transforming the raunch of adult films into quixotic images of Hollywood glamour. He spent the 90's working as a stills photographer for gay-porn juggernaut Catalina Video, documenting the schmaltzy ins and outs of the productions.

Intent on breaking the formulaic monotony of xxx action, Burton took covert photos in his own painterly, sun-drenched sensibility, creating fantasies that transcend the crass mercantilism of sex for hire. His voyeuristic tendencies and a fine art background collide on a dreamy haze of SoCal cool. He recalls his heady days on set.

“This picture was taken in 2000 on a porn set in Palm Springs at a classic ranch-style place with tons of bougainvillea on the roof overhang. In order to document the set you have to dance around the cameraman, get on the floor and look from underneath, and then you have to get on something high and you kind of lose your orientation because you're looking to illustrate the action from every possible angle.

Having grown up in puritanical Texas I wanted to divorce myself from judgement. I really identified with the pets that would be around because they looked at it all so differently than we did: as a human watching sex for commerce, there's all this heavy-duty psychosexual, sociological stuff, but to look at it fresh was really freeing.

So, I'm up on this roof trying to get shots of the penetration, because that was the job, but it was

more interesting for me to deviate from the explicitness of graphic sex (which I was shooting all along), and to make a connection between his actions and his pleasure and the beauty of the bougainvillea that was all around. It looks like he's making a vowel sound, as though he's in glorious reverie, and I enjoyed stretching the narrative, twisting it into a different kind of fantasy that was almost more erotic, exciting and pleasureable.

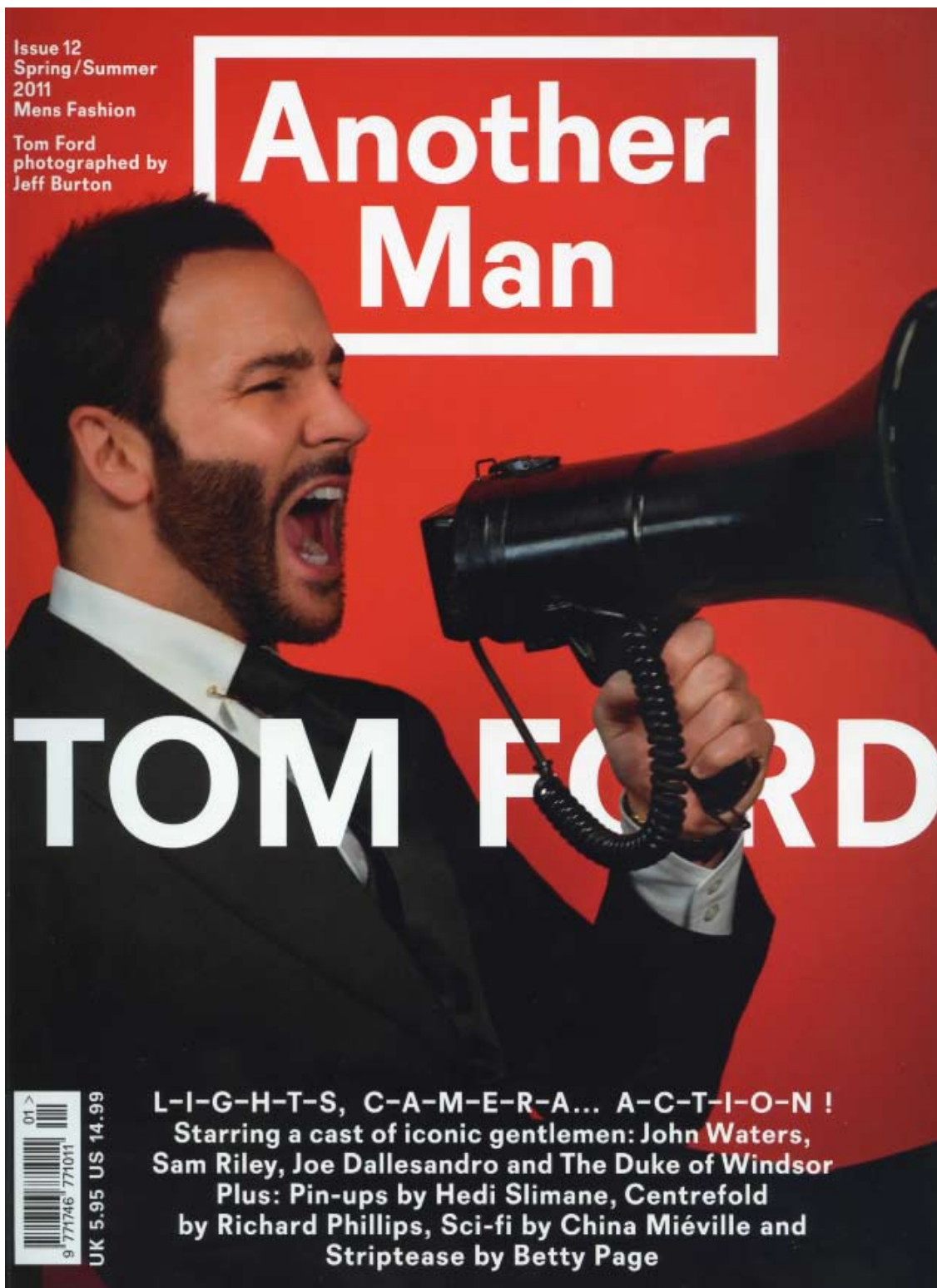
It wasn't all the gristmill of sex for hire. There were really beautiful moments, and it could look like a classical painting sometimes with these nude sculptures just standing around. There's an inbetweenness to this image that's like a cinematic moment between points A and B—you don't know what's happened before and what's happening after. I find that there's a disorienting thing that happens in pleasure and even though I'm beyond conscious when shooting the pictures, there's an element of zoning out.

When I was a kid my sister had Hollywood Babylon, the Kenneth Anger book, and it was kind of the first tabloid of its day. I was in love with the idea of distorted glamour, and my desire when I left home was to become an artist and a painter. Growing up in Texas, it seemed like there were things going on in the world that were worth venturing out for, and LA seemed to be the place.”

-TEXT JACQUELINE MARCUS

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Burton, Jeff (photographer), "Tom Ford: A Man for All Seasons", by Jefferson Hack, *AnOther Man*, Issue no.12, Spring-Summer 2011, cover page and p. 189-197bc, Summer 2009.



From his bed in Los Angeles, Tom Ford- fashion powerhouse, film mogul and old school romantic - gives Jefferson Hack an intimate masterclass in how to be a modern gentleman.

Photography Jeff Burton

London. 9pm. "Hello? Tom? Are you there?" After a hellish cacophony of bleeps, a fractured and digitised voice eventually echoes back from Los Angeles: "Are... you ... under... water... Jefferson?" This Skype connection isn't working. We agree to abort - I think - and start again. The dial tone sounds promising this time. "Aaah, that's perfect!" says Ford, finally, in his soft Texan twang. "I'd normally give you a visual but I haven't been able to get dressed yet. I'm sitting here naked in bed." With that, he cracks open a can of Diet Coke and takes a loud swig. He's ready...

JEFFERSON HACK: So, let's see, what do you think being a gentleman means today?

TOM FORD: It's interesting and I really don't mean this in an egotistical way - but I'm often complemented on my manners. I grew up in the American South, where manners are very important. As a child I was not allowed to call any adult, even at the supermarket, anything other than Mister or Miss. And I still do that. I ran into James Galanos the other night - he was an American fashion designer who is now in his 80s - I know him quite well but I still call him Mr Galanos. I'm quite formal I suppose, which some people would call un-modern. But I think the most important thing about being a modern gentleman - and having good manners - is actually knowing when things are appropriate. It's appropriate to use different language to different people at different times. And I think a lot of people have forgotten any sense of measuring the situation and weighing up how to treat someone.

JH: Who is the most mannered man you've met? What impression did they leave on you?

TF: I would have to say I am! (Laughs) You know, I treat women very differently from how I treat men and maybe this isn't very modern but I always open doors for women, I carry their coat. I make sure that they're walking on the inside of the street. And that comes from the fact that traditionally women were more physically fragile than we are as men. But this is my recommendation to all straight men. If you want to shag more girls open the doors for them, stand up when they come to the table, stand up when they leave the table. You will be able to get anybody because no one ever does that anymore. I do it at the dinner table and girls just flip-out; they kick their husbands, "Get up! Look at him, why haven't you got up? Look at him, look at his manners. Why don't you do that for me?" It's so seductive.

JH: This is brilliant; I need tips.

TF: But I'm also an equal opportunity stander-upper: so, if a male friend of mine comes to the table I'll stand up and, while I do it half-way as a joke, it's also definitely an acknowledgment.

JH: I need more seduction tips from you because I'm single now. I'm out of practice.

TF: Well, I can give you a lot of seduction tips. No problem. Although - hello! - I'm kind of married and monogamous...

JH: But that can often give you very clear vision.

TF: I guess. It's funny that people always think that I lead this alternate life that I really don't lead. I suppose it's projected in my work and in my imagery.

JH: I don't think it is. For those that read about you in the press, your 24-year relationship with Richard Buckley is a strong part of your personality. And I think that comes out in your work because of the confidence

that gives you to be strong in the ideas and the imagery and the risks that you take... I don't want to put words in your mouth.

TF: No, no. I am relatively fearless in a lot of ways. It doesn't mean I don't have fear but I don't believe in fear stopping me from doing anything. So I'm sure having a very solid home life adds to that, and I also have a very close network of friends. I'm quite balanced really.

JH: What else do you think makes a modern gentleman?

TF: Today a gentleman has to work and traditionally, of course, he didn't. People who do not work are so boring and are usually bored. And I don't think that they're fully formed people because they don't have any sense of contributing to society. They're not engaged. I think to have something that you work at - whether it's a job at a bank or writing a novel - is so important. You have to have a passion, you have to be passionate, you have to be engaged and you have to be contributing to the world.

JH: Absolutely.

TF: And in addition to manners, which are a show of respect to people around you, I think that dressing is an important part of being a gentleman. What I mean by that is, if your style is a mohawk and a lot of piercings, that's fine. I'm not suggesting that everyone needs to be traditionally dressed. But what I do think is that if you're a gentleman - whatever your style - you should put on the best version of yourself when you go out in the world because that is a show of respect to the other people around you. And putting people ahead of yourself is a mark of a modern gentleman.

JH: That also crosses into certain spiritual thought. Sometimes you can go to the poorest countries

in the world and you can see cultures where people have very little compared to what we have, but they put themselves together in such a way that it shows they have respect for the people around them.

TF: Absolutely, absolutely. Having good manners and taking care of the way you look has nothing to do with money. I was raised with that sort of beaten into me. Not literally beaten into me, but when I was seven years old and lying on the floor watching television. If my mother walked into the room and I didn't stand up and say, "Good morning", I got into trouble. She would say, "Look, get up off the floor now and say hello to me." It made me aware that I wasn't the only person on the planet.

JH: That sounds like a strict upbringing. Was that part of why you felt a need to be in New York and at Studio 54 with a whole scene of people that were completely free from rules and regulations?

TF: No, it wasn't strict. My parents were very liberal and they always supported anything that I wanted to do. They never spanked me or beat me. But, you know, as far back as I can remember we sat down at the dinner table every night at eight o'clock.

JH: When did you leave home? What age were you?

TF: I was 17 but when I went home it had nothing whatsoever to do with escape. If anything my good manners and a conscientious upbringing by my parents helped me in New York.

JH: It allowed you to adapt to different situations?

TF: Totally - and people. When I was 18, I had a boyfriend who was 35 and I spent a lot of time with people at dinner parties who were in their 40s and 50s. Even then I knew how to behave so I was very easily accepted. If anything it gave me great freedom to have experiences I wouldn't have been able to have at 18... I'm listening to myself talk and I hope I'm not sounding pretentious. That's another key to being a modern gentleman: not to be pretentious or racist or sexist or judge people by their background. I believe in a meritocracy: That's why I was so supportive of President Obama because he really did come from a very poor background, as did his wife, and they educated themselves

and went to great schools and now this man speaks English like most Americans have forgotten to speak English. He has a terrific vocabulary. He has perfect grammar and when he was running for president so much of the press called him elitist and I was thinking, "How can he be elitist?" Through determination he has lifted himself to a different plane and now he's being called elitist because he chooses to speak properly when the rest of the country has lost any sense of manners and language and nuance and subtlety.

JH: Does it make you angry living in America?

TF: It does. I am an American and I love America but, right now, I find America very upsetting and fragile and frustrating. When I'm here I can't wait to get back to my home in London.

JH: You have bases in Los Angeles, London and Santa Fe...

TF: Yeah. Well, we, have two places in Santa Fe: a townhouse and a ranch an hour away. And we have a little ski place in Sun Valley, Idaho, which we rarely go to. But mostly I'm between Los Angeles and London.

JH: How does your headspace change between those places?

TF: Well, I prefer London in a lot of ways because of the people. I have great friends in England; I love the sense of humour. They're the best group of people on the planet. Los Angeles has the same thing but a much lower percentage. Meaning, I have good friends here but the mass population of Los Angeles is much less sophisticated than the mass population of London. But there is a negative for me to London, and that's because it's a city and the older I get the more and more claustrophobic I get in cities - I think it's because I grew up in the West. That's what's appealing to me about Los Angeles. Right now I'm looking out of my window at the Pacific Ocean and I can look across the whole of Los Angeles and I can see all of the mountains in the background. I'm surrounded by green and I can't see another house, and yet in an hour, when I finally get dressed, I'll drive down the road to

Sunset Boulevard and I'll be in a city. The expanse, the sun, the air that's what I love about Los Angeles.

JH: Do you feel creative there, in a different way?

TF: I feel very creative here. I feel more creative when I'm isolated than when I'm in a city and surrounded by people. I need to be in the city to, gather information books, films, exhibitions, shop windows, people-watching - and hear everyone's opinions but, then, I need to leave the city to process it and work out what I believe in. I need to be isolated to do that, whether its working on ideas for a collection or a screenplay.

JH: Is there such a thing as an off-duty Tom Ford?

TF: Yeah, I suppose it's always to do with sports. I'm off-duty when I'm on my horse or skiing or I'm playing tennis. I like those sports because when you're skiing you can't think about anything except not dying. I grew up skiing and probably ski way too fast, but it clears my head because you can't think about anything apart from making this corner or letting out of the way of that tree. It's the same thing when you're on a horse.

JH: You have to be totally present, is that it?

TF: You have to be totally there, even if everything seems calm. The horse might see a reflection of a tin can and might spook, and the next thing you know the horse is up. It's the same with tennis: you've got to watch that little ball, hit that ball, watch that ball, hit that ball. All your worries go out of your head.

JH: If a man's wearing shorts, should he have his socks pulled up or should they be rolled down?

TF: (Gasps) Shorts?

JH: (Laughs) OK... well, should a man ever wear shorts off the tennis court?

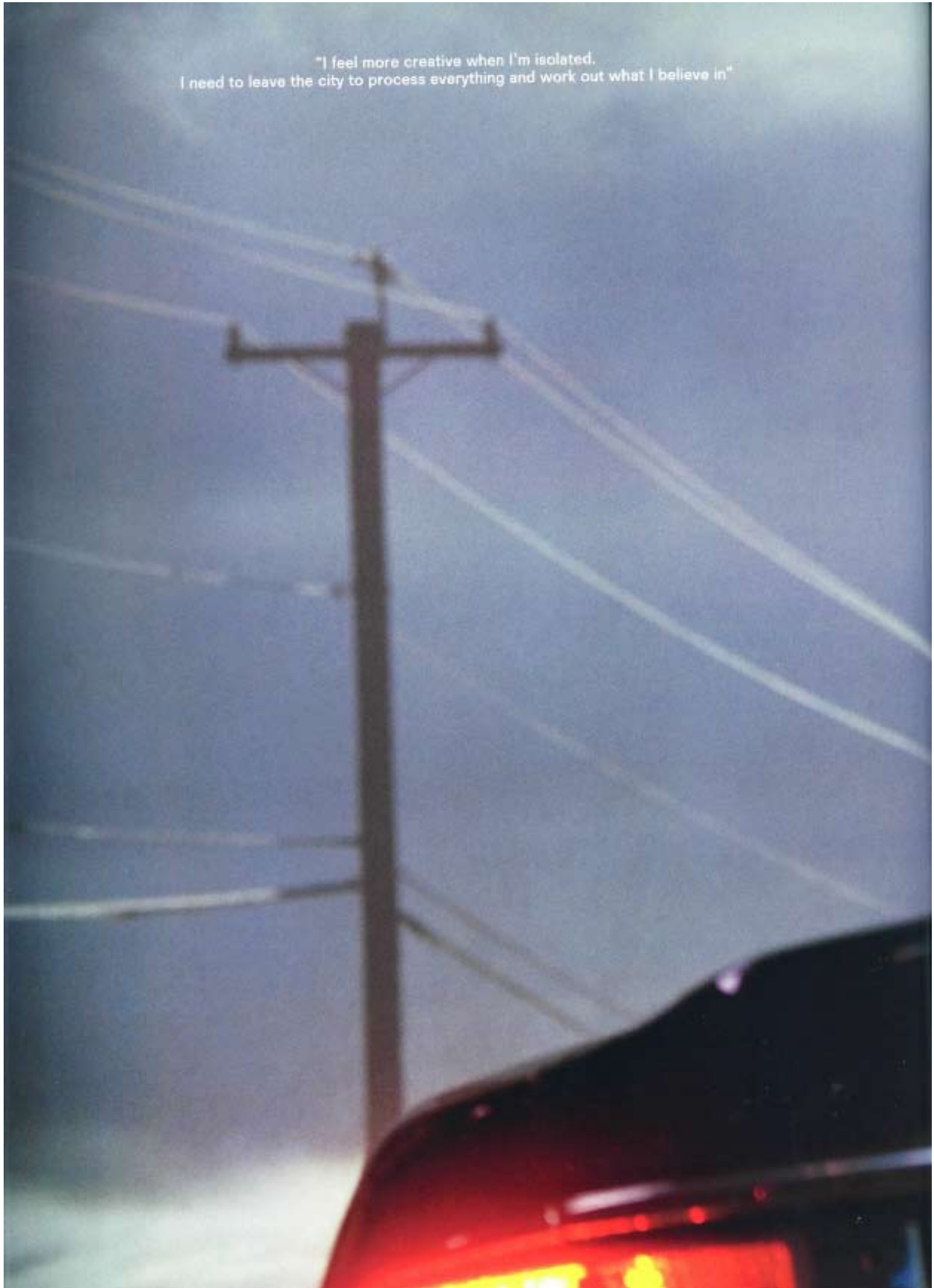
TF: No. Absolutely not. But if I'm on holiday, occasionally I'll put on a pair of shorts with my t-shirt and go barefoot with my towel down to the beach and then take off my top and lie in my shorts, or slip off my shorts and underneath have a bathing suit on - but in the city? Never, That's an American thing, which I just don't get. They walk around in shorts, even the fancy Americans.



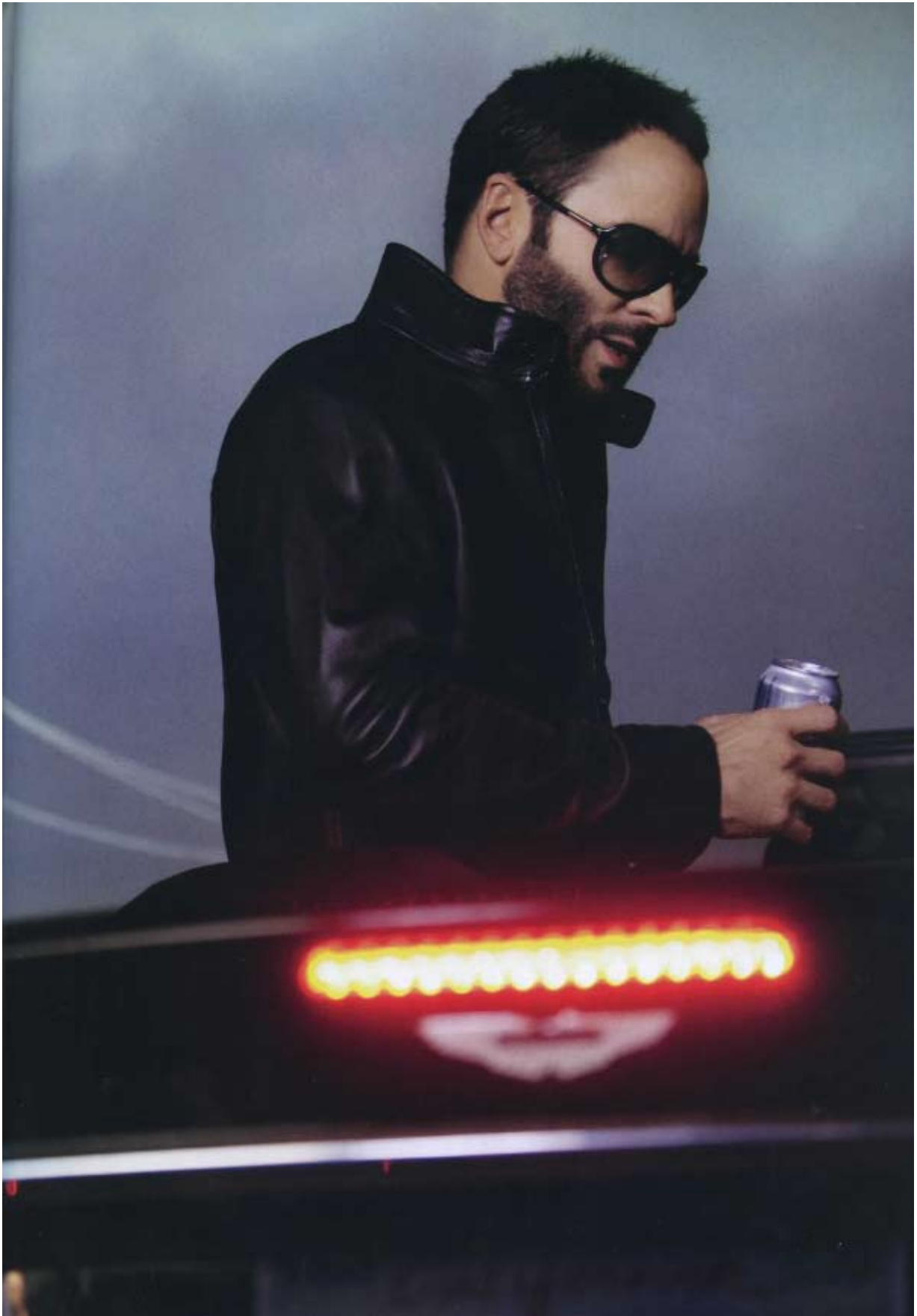
"A gentleman today has to work. People who do not work are so boring and are usually bored. You have to be passionate, you have to be engaged and you have to be contributing to the world"

AnOtherMan

"I feel more creative when I'm isolated.
I need to leave the city to process everything and work out what I believe in"



AnOtherMan

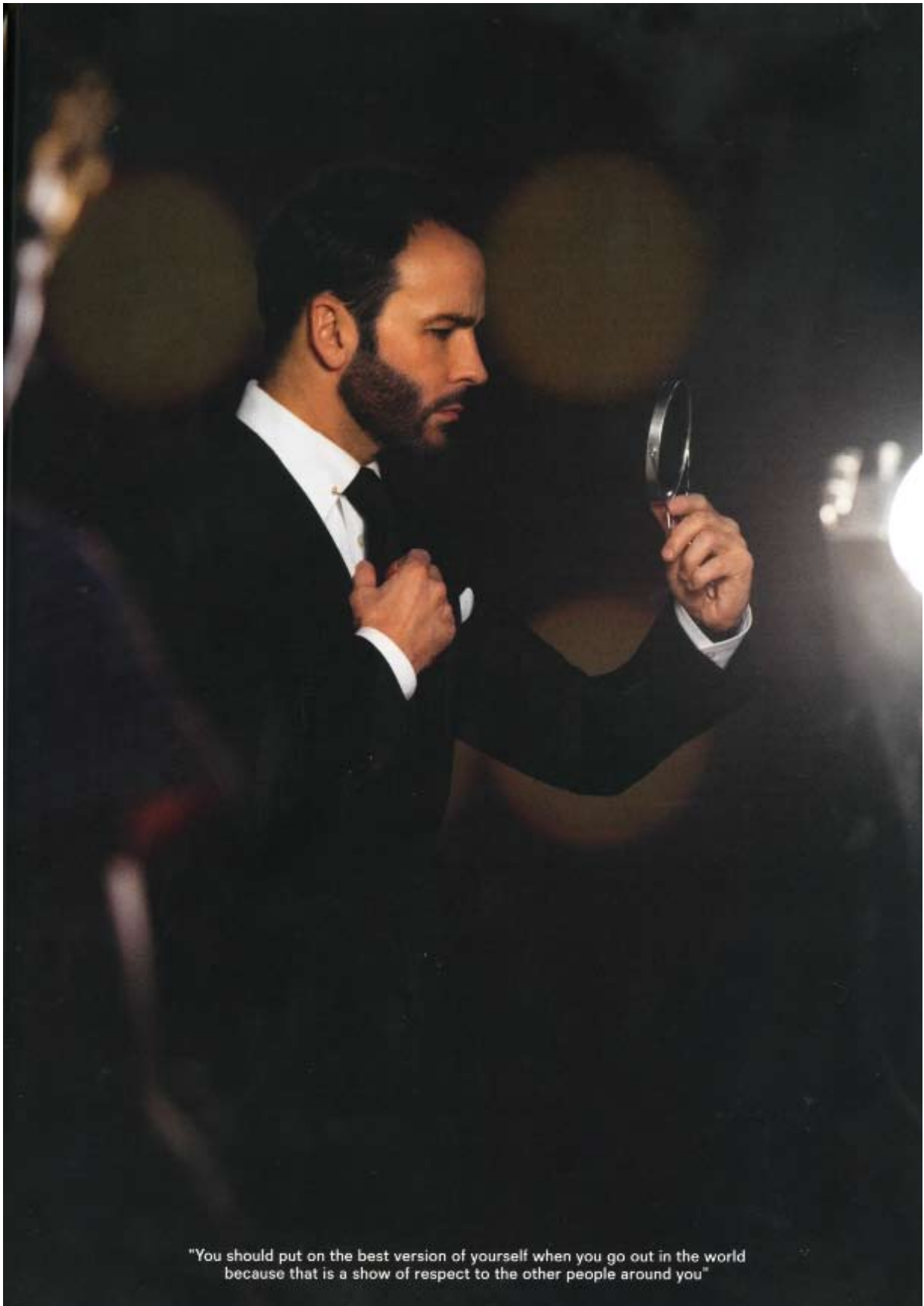


AnOtherMan



"Putting people ahead of yourself is a mark of a modern gentleman"

AnOtherMan



"You should put on the best version of yourself when you go out in the world because that is a show of respect to the other people around you"

AnOtherMan



"Richard is always teasing me about being like a girl because he can't be mean to me all day and then expect sex"

AnOtherMan

JH: Flip-flops and shorts in the city, what is that?

TF: I know, I hate that! I don't understand it. I don't think that's ever appropriate.

JH: Describe a typical night-in with Richard...

TF: (Laughs) A night in with the two of us? Well, we cook dinner Richard is actually a very good cook. Then we might get into bed and watch an episode of Glee, then we take the dogs out and I usually take a bath while Richard works on his computer - and we go to sleep.

JH: Do you need much sleep these days?

TF: I'm probably sleeping a lot more. One of the reasons I didn't sleep well before was because I drank so much. When you drink a lot you go to sleep right away but wake up three hours later and can't go back to sleep. Maybe it's just getting older and becoming more comfortable with yourself, but I spend less time worrying about things. I still don't sleep more than five hours a night, but I don't sleep two or three like I did. So, I sleep well now and I get up very early. I'm usually awake by five.

JH: It's all about the mornings!

TF: A lot of people say how wonderful you feel in the morning when you quit drinking, but one of the things I love the most is the night. It's great to come home and actually feel sharp and clear. I mean, listen, I'm not telling everyone to quit drinking - I'm all for drinking and whatever anyone wants to do - but personally, at this point in my life, I'm happy not drinking. Maybe one day I'll start again.

JH: What's your morning ritual nowadays, then?

TF: Well, right now it's 11.10am here in Los Angeles and I'm still naked in bed, which is pretty much my morning ritual. I wake up very early; this morning I was awake at 4:35am and was online and on the phone to London. And when I'm in London I get up early because I can

still speak to LA before they go to bed. So, usually I'm up early on my computer and unfortunately get caught up in everything and don't get out of the house until noon.

JH: Please don't tell me the first thing you see in the morning is a computer screen...

TF: Yes, I sleep with it. It's next to my bed. When the alarm bell goes off, I lift the computer on to my lap.

JH: That's so sad.

TF: (Laughs) And it's the last thing I see before I go to sleep.

JH: Well, I hope you have a really nice screen saver that makes you happy when you flip the lid.

TF: It's a picture of my ranch with my horses.

JH: Beautiful. That's very telling because, I guess, that's where you dream about escaping to.

TF: (Laughs) Actually, I have perfect WiFi at my ranch so I'm usually on my computer when I'm there as well.

JH: I was hoping your morning ritual would be an elaborate and lengthy affair similar to George's in A Single Man.

TF: Well, when I get dressed it is! That process takes me an hour. I go through the ritual of lying in the bathtub, washing my hair, trimming my beard ... How long do you take to get dressed?

JH: About half an hour.

TF: Okay, and do you shave your body hair?

JH: No. What's that like?

TF: I don't do that. I hate it. But every straight man I know in England does. I had dinner with an English friend last night: he's 46 years old, married with three kids and he shaves his testicles and trims his pubic hair! This is a new trend amongst straight men that I just do not understand.

JH: Is he athletic?

TF: I don't know, but just look at straight porn: they've all got their pubic hair trimmed and their testicles shaved. It's the most bizarre thing.

JH: Do you think pubic trimming for men is a good thing? Because for women I think it's essential. I just don't like a wild bush.

TF: Well, personally, I prefer a woman who is closer to natural than closer to waxed.

JH: I don't mean waxed. Natural is okay but trimmed.

TF: I don't like seeing stubble. So, if a man has pubic hair that's five inches long, clip it back to an inch-and-a-half long.

JH: What's the longest you've been without sex?

TF: Years! I don't mean right now, but there have been periods in my life when I have.

JH: Really? How did that make you feel? Frustrated? Angry?

TF: Oh, no - nothing like that. Because I only like having sex with people that I care about. Richard's always teasing me about being like a girl because I have to like someone to have sex with them. I mean, Richard can't be mean to me all day and then expect that we're going to have sex. It's like ...

JH: That seems to work fine for some people.

TF: Well, it doesn't work with me. He has to have been nice and we have to have had a nice day you can't be an asshole and then all of a sudden...

JH: That means that you're just a big romantic.

TF: Yeah, I'm very romantic. And I have no interest in having sex with someone that I don't know. I have no interest in having sex with someone that I don't like. And it doesn't have to be a beauty thing. A lot of the time I'm attracted to people who are not necessarily considered beautiful in a traditional way, but they have something. There's something in their eyes a kindness or a sweetness or something interesting about them. Nothing to do with how they look, but, you know, that's why I go to bed with my laptop... (Laughs) There are a lot of good porn sites!

Photographic assistants: Eric Larson, Brooke Kegan, Rene Gomez; Digital technician: Matthew Grover; Retouching: Epilogue Inc; Set design: Jamie Dean at Walter Schupfer Management; Set design assistant: Billy Czyzyk; Production: Carol Cohen; Production assistant: Mary Bell; Props: Leather lounge chair from Thanks for the Memories, Mitchum chair by Mogul; Special thanks to Aston Martin for the Aston Martin DBS Volante

Williams, Eliza, "We Are Animals," *British Journal of Photography*, May 2011, p. 26-29

26

Profile
Wrangler advertising



We Are Animals

If there is one advertising campaign in recent years that has stood out for its use of photography, it's Wrangler. Eliza Williams profiles the work of Paris-based agency Fred & Farid, whose ads have turned around a flagging brand by bringing imagery and spontaneity to the fore.

Today's brands and advertising agencies are, as a rule, risk averse. Those risks that are taken are carefully calculated; ideas are tested and retested via research groups to ensure the correct brand messages are being transmitted.

At the receiving end, though, all this caution is a bit of a bore. Audiences love ads that are surprising: relishing the drumming gorillas and the subservient chickens that occasionally make it into the wider world. And perhaps the most conservative genre of advertising today is the poster ad. The days of the subtle, surreal advertising that we saw in the 1980s, particularly for tobacco com-

panies, seems long gone as brands increasingly produce billboards that shout rather than intrigue. With this in mind, the release of Parisian ad agency Fred & Farid's first campaign for Wrangler back in 2008 came as something of a surprise.

The campaign centres on photography, but the images are far from the glossy, immaculate shots usually proffered in ads. Instead, a group of wild yet beautiful models are shown cavorting in nature. The brand's product – denim jeans – rarely features and, if it does make an appearance, it is soaking wet and clinging to the models' skin or smeared with mud. The whole series of posters is unexpect-



Jeff Burton shot the 2009 Red ad campaign for VF Europe Wrangler [far left], working with Paris-based agency Fred & Farid under the art direction of Fred & Farid and Feng Huang.

Ryan McGinley drew on inspiration from the animal world to shoot the 2008 VF Europe Wrangler ad campaign *Flare* [left]. He was art directed by Fred & Farid, Juliette Lavoix and Pauline De Montferriand.

All images © Fred & Farid Paris.

ted and exciting and, when they first aired, struck a highly unusual note in the world of denim advertising, which was largely focused on high glamour.

There is a message featured alongside the logo on the ads, which is positioned discreetly on the bottom right of each poster: “We Are Animals”. This tag is the ad campaign’s “big idea”, devised by Fred & Farid as a way of reintroducing the denim brand to a European market that had largely lost interest in it.

“In Europe, Wrangler is linked to the cowboy, you can’t escape that reality,” says Fred Raillard, co-founder of Fred & Farid. “But the cowboy in Europe was

negative... Because the cowboy means old, white American. It’s marlboro, it’s John Wayne, it’s Bush, who was hated in Europe.”

Fred & Farid recognised that to throw away the brand’s 125-year-old heritage would be a mistake, however, so instead they searched around for a way to bring the idea of the cowboy up to date and make it appeal to a European audience.

“We tried to extract the values of the rodeo – things like wildness, being on an animal, roughness,” says Raillard. “Also the positive aspects of cowboys – environment, nature, living with animals. Living in sync with nature, having courage.

We tried to extract some values that could connect with young people in Europe.”

Back to nature

The creative team at the agency struck upon the simple statement that became the brand’s slogan. “We tried many different sentences but came back to the simplest one – ‘We Are Animals’,” remembers Raillard. “By saying this we were highlighting our animality. But also, if you take it from a brand point of view, it was saying that ‘we, Wrangler, are animals, strong’, you know? It was a really good balance between the past and the future of Wrangler.”



The agency knew it had to avoid featuring any animals in the images, and instead express the attitude behind the idea. “We’re talking about human animality, so a big mistake would be to show an animal,” says Raillard. “Then we thought, with such a strong statement, we couldn’t play, we had to really do it. The whole background had to be ‘animal’ – spontaneous, not too intellectual. We set up a way of working on Wrangler that was more spontaneous, more creative. Not to over-rationalise before the shoot.”

Rather than approaching advertising photographers, the team looked to the art world to find the right person to create the images for the campaign. For the

first series of posters they chose Ryan McGinley, who had become known over the past decade for his loose shooting style, honed documenting his friends and acquaintances in New York engaging in parties, sex and general hedonism. “Already in his personal work he was really driven by this whole idea of our animality,” says Raillard. “Also his way of working was exactly what we were looking for... Because here we needed someone who worked with spontaneity and on-stage creativity.”

McGinley, the creative team and the client embraced an experimental approach on the shoot, which took place over two days in the New Jersey coun-

tryside, and set a template for Wrangler shoots going forward. “We try and make it as crazy as we can,” says Raillard. “At the agency we work on different scenarios – for example, with Ryan we went to the location and selected about 20 different places with ideas we could do there. But then we experiment on set. We find ideas and really go with the flow. It gets crazy, it gets completely out of control. The first shoot, people started making love in front of us. In front of the client!”

Free association

Fred & Farid has now completed three separate campaigns for Wrangler, all based around animalistic traits. The first

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Galleria Franco Noero

Jeff Burton

Polaroids

20 April – 14 May 2011

Galleria Franco Noero gallery is pleased to announce the first exhibition of Jeff Burton's polaroids.

In the early 90's, at the beginning of his professional career as a photographer, Burton fitted his Hasselblad 2 -1/4" with a polaroid back for lighting tests while shooting movie posters for the porn industry, video covers, and stills for printed publicity. Shot over a decade and originally made only for his private use, these photographs bear witness to a process of manufacturing desire, according to a time that now gets the flavour of something past and to an assigned job within which the artist had thought the opportunity to define his own taste for vibrating colours, unexpected details and points of view.

A more sophisticated and constantly changing technology, made easily available by digital photography and internet streaming, has left those polaroids in the dust—of a shoebox in this case—not unlike family photos.

Many aspects of Burton's practice have derived from inspecting the porn environments he became intimate with and by comparing porn's relation and proximity to Hollywood, two closely aligned productions in Los Angeles which paths cross in an unavoidable way, although not as properly distinguished as such. Burton's polaroids reflect on these interactions, and have a different relation to the artist, revealing a stronger intimacy given by their instant quality that does not allow for retouching, rethinking or editing.

Both film industries have influenced one another, and in Burton's case shooting movies with naked porn stars led to influence his later practice of portraying stars from movies wearing designer clothes. The polaroids mark the formative time of Burton's photography, in which the seeming differences between Porn and Hollywood become almost none at all.

Although Burton's trajectory has developed in high-productions in Los Angeles and Europe, these works convey Burton's personal involvement working in an industry which outpour was destined to a non-mainstream circulation, while they are strongly influenced by his living in Los Angeles and get him to portray the very controversial aspects of it, finding his photographic footing on the terrain of fantasy made real and real made into fantasy.

This exhibition is Jeff Burton's fourth solo show with the gallery. Burton's work has been featured in many exhibitions in international Institutions, and the latest ones include: "I want to see how you see", at the Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany, April 2010; "Wall Rockets: Contemporary Artists and Ed Ruscha," at the Flag Art Foundation and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; "Into Me/Out of Me," at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, LIC, NY, which traveled to KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany and to MACRO (Museo d'Arte Contemporanea), Rome, Italy.

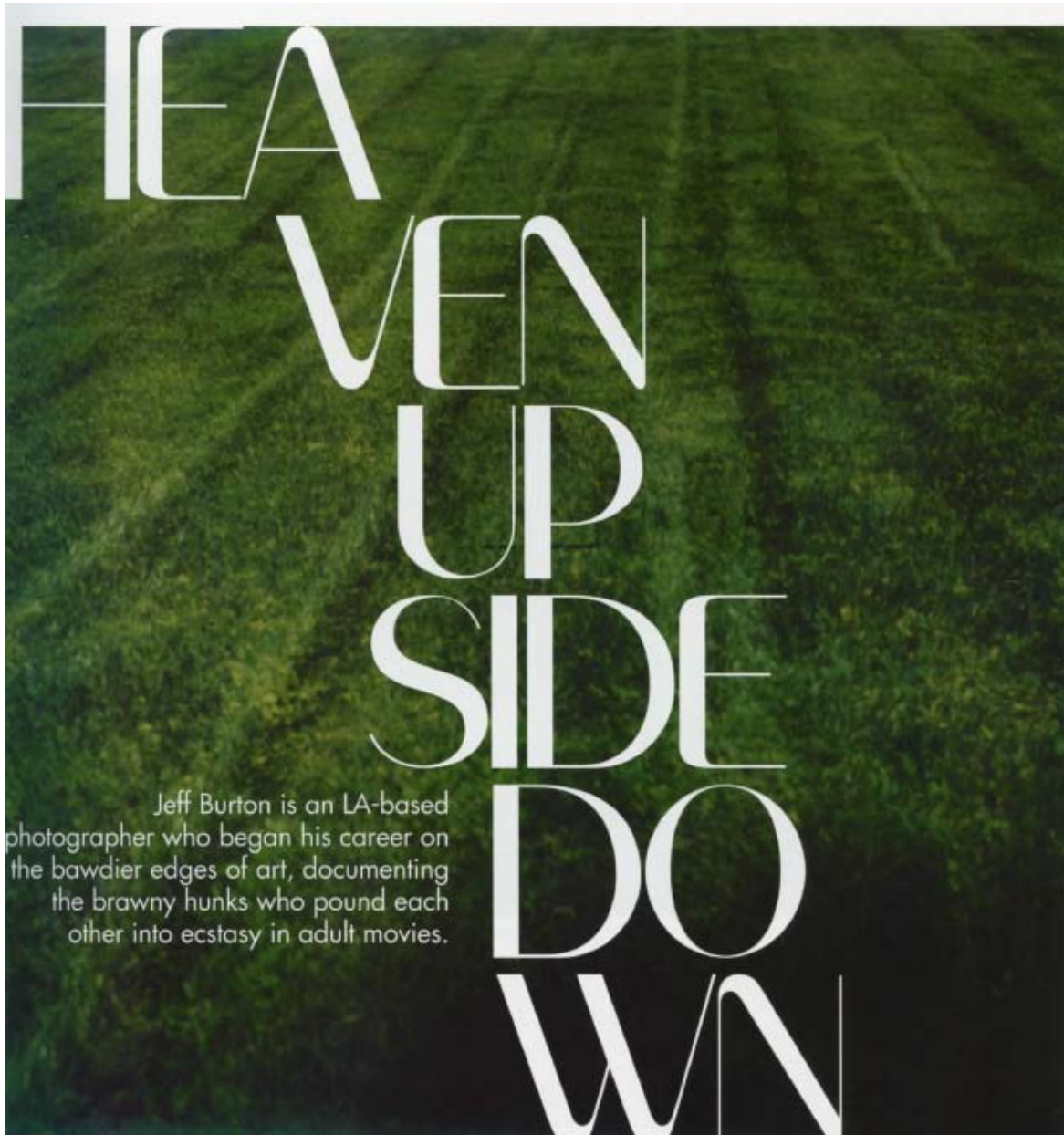
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Burton, Jeff (photographer), "Heaven Upside Down", by Max Blagg, *Ten Magazine*, Art Issue no 40, Autumn-Winter 2011, p. 104-113.



PALM SPRINGS 1993

THIS *VISUAL RECORD* OF THE RAW AND THE FUCKED HAS GRADUALLY MORPHED INTO AN ELEGANT AND VARIED BODY OF WORK, MOSTLY

Photographer JEFF BURTON
Text MAX BLAGG



PALM SPRINGS 1996

PORTRAITURE.

Burton's compassionate eye has caught the high and the low of Hollywood, the glamour and the grit, the struggle toward, "STARDOM", the peddling of spirit and flesh, "the bumping and grinding of strangers". He spoke about the trove of old Polaroids he recently dusted off for Ten.



PALM SPRINGS 1997

TEN: “YOUR FIRST ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE, AS A KID STRANDED IN THE WILDS OF TEXAS, WAS THE MOVIE THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE?”

JB: “When I saw that movie, somewhere inside my nine-year-old head the idea of glamour got bent into wild, new shapes. There was something so visually abstract and exciting about the bodies of the people all dressed up and messed up. The art direction was so great - that massive ballroom, the Christmas tree to my mind one of the best sculptures of the late 20th century. And, of course, the capsizing, and the decor/decorum going to hell in an instant. Strangers slamming into one another. Hell upside down.”

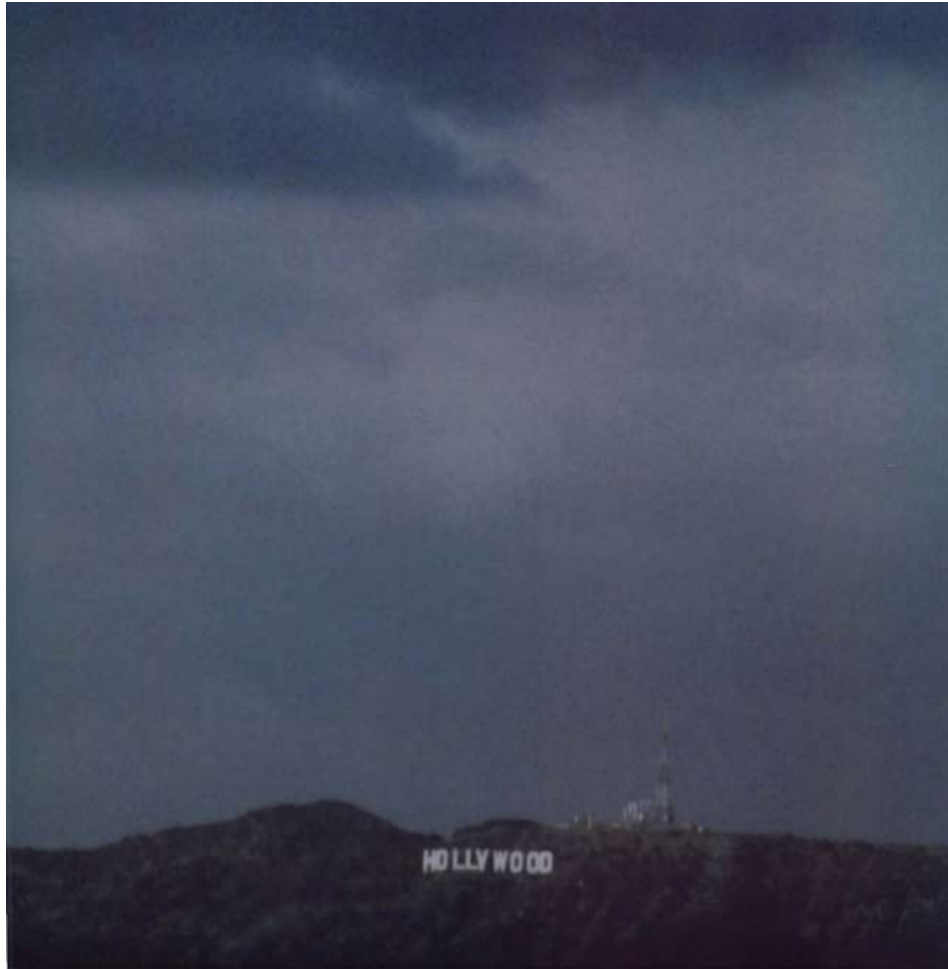
TEN: “AND STELLA STEVENS AS LINDA ROGO, IN THAT OFF-WHITE DRESS IN THE MIDST OF THE MAYHEM... MY IMBD REPORT SAYS ROGO IS AN EX-PROSTITUTE, MARRIED TO A COP PLAYED BY ERNEST BORGNINE, AN UNLIKELY PAIRING OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.”

JB: “I fell madly in love with Stella’s character, Linda. Her styling confused my incipient sexuality even more... She was so pretty in the tight, white sheath... And those perfect breasts... And her gutter mouth. There are probably several thousand gay men and a few dozen straight men in their late forties who know exactly what happened to me.”

TEN: “MORE PEOPLE OUGHT TO REALISE THAT THE FIRST STEP TO MAKING YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE IS BELIEVING WHAT YOU SEE AT THE MOVIES, AND THEN GETTING THE HELL OUT OF YOUR HOMETOWN.”

JB: “Exactly. I dreamed of meeting Stella for years, and finally did, by some magical coincidence. Then I photographed her a couple of years ago- a crazy Hollywood dream come true, fantasy made real. I used to look at porn mags and say to myself, ‘I could do this!’ and then I did. Tawdry, impossible dreams, and then they come true. Am I a geisha or a street-walker? Artist or pornographer- is there a difference? I don’t make huge distinctions between making porn images, mainstream movie star portraits, ‘artworks’. I’m just working here.”

TEN: “LET’S TALK ABOUT THESE STEAMY POLAROIDS. I LOVE THEM AS PHYSICAL OBJECTS, APART FROM THE PLEASURE OF THAT INSTANT RECORDING OF SOMETHING/SOMEONE, THE ‘OCULAR PROOF’,



HOLLYWOOD 1999

AN AUTHENTIC SECRET DOCUMENT, IN LIVID COLOUR, FRESH FROM THE INNARDS OF THE SX-70.”

JB: I have shoe boxes full of them, like family pictures. They were shot with a Hasselblad with a Polaroid back. My glorified Polaroid machine. These were the kind you peel apart after 90 seconds, and sort of smell like sex.”

TEN: “YES, THEY STILL HAVE A TANGY ODOUR TO THEM.”

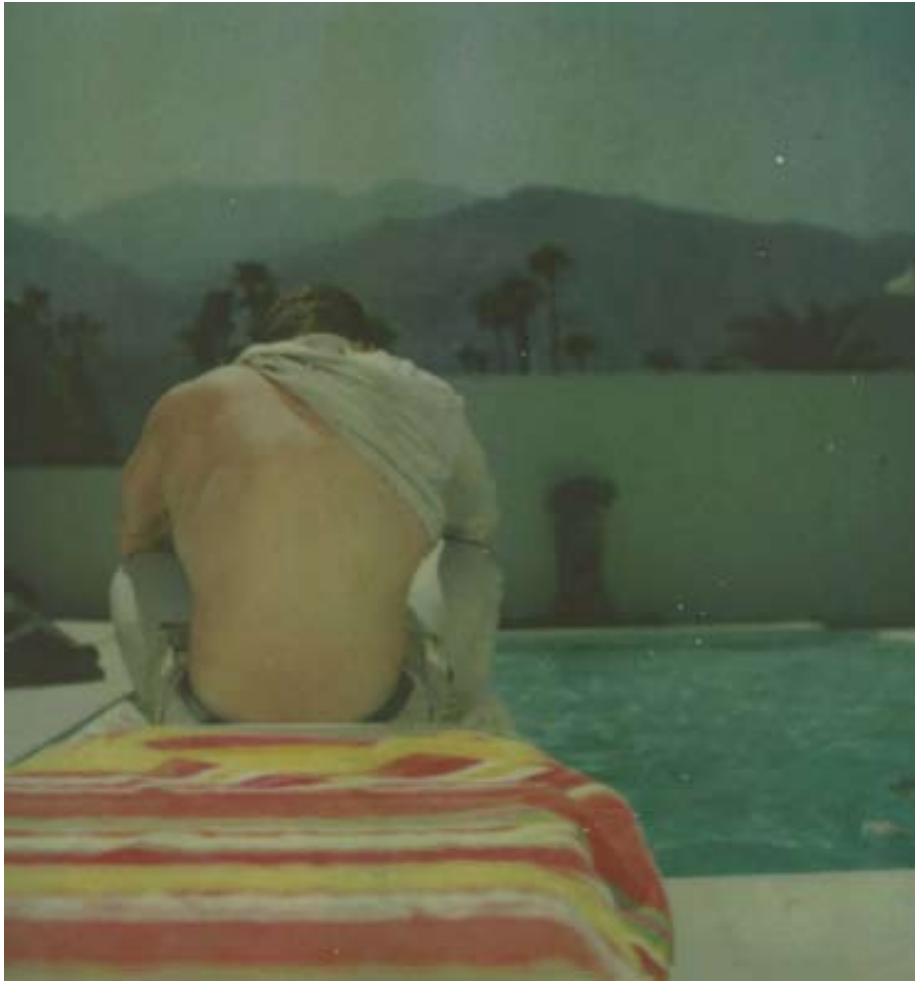
JB: “These are all from the 1990s - taken on set, shooting for the posters and box covers of porn movies. They needed lots of pictures for printed material back then, before the internet. It was also before digital photography killed Polaroid. The companies used to really make ‘movies’ in the 1980s/1990s and also aggressively market them. You had to go to the video store back then to watch them.”

TEN: “I SNEAKED AROUND THE TIMES SQUARE PARLOURS QUITE A BIT MYSELF- I REMEMBER DOING A SHARP TURN ON EXITING AND GETTING BACK INTO THE PEDESTRIAN FLOW AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. NOWADAYS YOU DON’T HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR DESK TO FIND THE MOST OUTLANDISH PORN YOU COULD WISH FOR.”

JB: “Back then I was always sincerely proud to see the posters on the wall, the box covers on the shelves, and the covers I shot for magazines like Playguy, and Honcho, Stroke, etc. I used to call the porn shops ‘my other galleries’. Pointing out my work to friends as we passed - ‘I shot that, and that’, and so on. But I always knew - even at the time - that being there, shooting, was hilarious, ridiculous, beautiful, maybe even sad, and sometimes someplace else altogether. All along, there was something very honest about my relationship with the subjects and the experience.”

TEN: YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS HAVE A REAL WARMTH AND SENSE OF CONNECTION WITH THEIR SUBJECTS, WHICH IS OFTEN NOT THE CASE, ESPECIALLY WITH PORN.”

JB: “I saw it as part of the star-making machinery, which I am still doing in other forms- magazine covers again, portraits of people that people fantasise about, and selling things. The Polaroids are a bit different from most of the work I’ve shown... which tends to have no gravity, no centre, more poetic, hopefully. I was taking my cues from studying painting for years...Pollock, even. Modernist grids...contour continuation, the stuff of high art...I think Warhol once said about sex, ‘It’s so abstract!’ and I get that. In my art I was making abstractions, but invested with... anthropology? I thought of most of this material as belonging to the ‘commercial’ world, although there were some poetic crossovers while I had the Polar-



PALM SPRINGS 1998

oid machine in my hand. These stars of my past - it seems light years away and back again. Or maybe parallel time. I'm so glad I kept them. Look at that one. What a great backyard! I could live there."

TEN: "IT LOOKS LIKE YOU DID LIVE THERE. YOU COULD CREATE A KIND OF MODERN GAY TAROT DECK- THE HUNG MAN RATHER THAN THE HANGED MAN, THE PRINCE OF SWORDS, THE TWO KNIGHTS AKIMBO. THE BENT RIDER. THE LIGHTING IS BEAUTIFUL, TOO

JB: "It's funny because, on the porn sets, sometimes the lighting was so crude and quickly thrown together I'd often find gorgeous lighting shooting from the absolute opposite side of the 'stage'- Ass Backwards will be the title of my autobiography."

TEN: "DO YOU THINK A MOVIE LIKE BOOGIE NIGHTS WAS AN ACCURATE DEPICTION OF THE PORN SCENE?"

JB: "It'd been a long time since I saw it, but I think I remember that all of the performers were portrayed as losers who wanted to be or do other things and were comically bad at those things. It was kind of puritanical and meanspirited in its depiction of the talent. It would have been more effective if they had made some of the actors smart and evolved in addition to being able to perform sexually for the camera. People like that do exist.

TEN: "YOU SEEM TO ENJOY WORKING AT THAT INTERSECTION WHERE THE BEAUTIFUL COLLIDES WITH THE DAMNED. CORNER OF HOLLYWOOD AND BABYLON?"

JB: "That's my address! That book [Hollywood Babylon by Kenneth Anger] was also a huge influence . All the Tinseltown scandals, the rank weeds flourishing in the flowerbed. It really made me want to live here. I also love Anger's films. They were way ahead of their time. I actually got to know Kenneth; he was an amazing mentor. We used to go to the movie together and I did some portraits of him, but we had a falling out Kenneth said, among other things, that my books were printed on cheap paper, so we haven't spoken in a while. It's complicated."

TEN: "CERTAIN ARTISTS MAY BE SACRED, BUT THEY CAN STILL BE MONSTERS. IN YOUR WORK YOU SEEM AT EASE WITH BOTH AGE AND YOUTH. FROM THAT ELEGIAC PORTRAIT OF GORE VIDAL TO A VIVACIOUS 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL LIKE SID WILLIAMS, WHOM YOU SHOT FOR THE COVER OF A RECENT ISSUE OF TEN [SPRING SUMMER 2011]."



PALM SPRINGS 1998

JB: “Sid is Such a lovely girL .. That was an intense shoot for both of us. I think Hedi Slimane discovered her at Coachella. She’s only 15 and I had her modelling out in public in downtown Los Angeles, which can be a little hairy. She’s a trouper and a really great human being. Not a hint of pretence. Being a parent would be the end of me, though.”

TEN: “WELL SHE HAD FABULOUS PARENTS. THE LATE, GREAT LARRY WILLIAMS AND HER MARVELLOUS MOM THE DIRECTOR LESLIE LIBMAN.”

JB: “Leslie was cool. I hope Sid was happy with the cover - aside from her name being misspelled, dammit - and the rest of the shots, and Leslie, too.”

TEN: “I’M SURPRISED SHE HASN’T CALLED YOU. WHAT’S GOING ON IN THE LA OFFICE TODAY?”

JB: “Star schedules. Not astrology, unfortunately... Booking hair and makeup, resisting nicotin ... Screening calls. We’re working on several projects, one ofwhich is with Tilda Swinton in Greece, a dream date indeed. Cranking all the necessary mechanisms to get close and yet still keep enough distance to continue and not have the dream feel lik a nightmare. Mostly, though, it’s heaven upside down.”

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PALM SPRINGS 1995

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PALM SPRINGS 1996

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SACRAMENTO 1996

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BEVERLY HILLS 1993

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THE NEW YORKER

April 13, 2010

FRAMES FROM FICTION: SETS, DOLLS, AND NUDES

Posted by Jessie Wender



While shooting stills for the porn industry, Jeff Burton kept his camera by his side at all times—on set, but also while driving to and from sets. Burton’s “Untitled #172 (Buffy Eyes)” (2003) is a photograph of a huge fabric billboard at Highland and Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, advertising “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.” Burton writes that he was “interested in the surreal effect it had with landscape and the multiple layers of voyeurism. Complete with surveillance cameras. It was shot in an instant but references effects and ideas that have interested me in my practice for a long time.” A retrospective of Burton’s work is on view at Casey Kaplan Gallery through May 1st.

Read more: <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/photobooth/2010/04/frames-from-fiction-sets-dolls-and-nudes.html#ixzz0lO2ubLS6>

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sacré numéro



Independent Muse

propos recueillis par Hans Ulrich Obrist, portraits Jeff Burton

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Tilda Swinton porte des vêtements, **LANVIN**. Réalisation: Jerry Stafford. Maquillage: Yumi pour Chanel chez Frank Reys. Coiffure: Syd Curry pour Bumble and bumble chez Opus Beauty. Production: Nima Ghedami.

Egérie malgré elle, Tilda Swinton est fréquemment appelée par Hollywood, en dépit de son ancrage dans le cinéma indépendant. A l'occasion de la sortie de *Amore*, de Luca Guadagnino, l'actrice revient sur son parcours et évoque son désir d'écriture.

Numéro : Qu'est-ce qui vous a amenée à devenir comédienne?

Tilda Swinton : Paradoxalement, avoir été mise en pension à l'âge de 10 ans a été une bénédiction. J'y étais si malheureuse que j'ai été obligée de m'évader et je crois que c'est ce qui m'a poussée à écrire très jeune, et durant toute mon adolescence, jusqu'à ce que j'arrive à Cambridge et que j'arrête. Je ne me voyais pas du tout comme une actrice, mais vraiment comme un écrivain. A Cambridge, j'ai commencé à jouer sur scène, mais principalement pour échanger avec d'autres personnes. Peut-être étais-je lassée de ma propre compagnie.

Le théâtre était donc un prétexte pour converser avec les autres ?

Je le crois. La conversation, c'est tout l'objet du cinéma, et, d'une certaine façon, de toute œuvre d'art. Même si, aujourd'hui, j'aime travailler seule ; je veux d'ailleurs vraiment me remettre à l'écriture. Il me semble que je me débats pour reprendre le contrôle sur le hasard. Je n'ai jamais cherché à devenir actrice, je n'ai jamais rien fait pour cela. En regardant en arrière, je réalise que c'est arrivé à cause d'une "conversation" que j'ai engagée avec Derek Jarman.

Parlez-nous de votre rencontre ; cela a dû être une révélation.

Travailler avec lui a été une révélation monumentale, car il était le premier artiste que je rencontrais. Auparavant je n'avais aucune entrée dans le monde de l'art. Je ne suis pas issue de cet environnement. Mais Derek venait d'un milieu qui n'était pas si différent du mien. Son exemple m'ouvrait véritablement une fenêtre sur un univers dans lequel je pouvais m'imaginer vivre.

Que ce soit dans le cinéma, la mode ou l'écriture, l'influence de votre travail avec Jarman est perceptible dans toutes vos activités.

Cette époque a été capitale pour moi. Pour commencer, Derek ne me demandait pas de jouer, de tenir un rôle ou d'être une interprète. Le premier film que j'ai fait avec lui, c'est *Caravaggio* [1986], dans lequel j'incarnais le modèle d'un peintre. J'ai alors réalisé que je me sentais plus à l'aise en tant

que modèle d'un artiste. Mais très vite, nous nous sommes mis à faire ces films en super-huit qui capturaient des performances entièrement improvisées; des espèces de *home movies*, fonctionnant de temps à autre avec un élément de fantasmagorie, de déguisement, et un certain degré de scénarisation. Par exemple, mon rôle de la fiancée dans *The Last of England* [1988] était entièrement improvisé. C'était incarné, mais pas joué. Cela m'offrait une grande liberté, car à l'époque, j'étais absolument formelle : je ne voulais pas être actrice. Mes premiers films avec Derek – *Aria* [1987], *The Last of England* [1988] et *The Garden* [1990] – étaient autobiographiques, donc nous n'interprétons rien à proprement parler.

Vous aimez associer la comédie, la poésie, l'écriture, la mode, la performance, le militantisme et la politique. L'œuvre de Derek Jarman, de même, était transdisciplinaire. Quelle a été la plus intense de vos collaborations avec lui ?

Dans *The Last of England*, la pureté de la dernière partie exprime vraiment l'essence de notre travail ensemble. Le film a été tourné en super-huit, il était franchement autobiographique : il s'agissait de séquences tournées durant l'année où nous sillonnions le monde pour montrer *Caravaggio*, elles étaient comme des fragments de notre vie. A la fin du processus de tournage, nous avons visionné les images accumulées en les considérant un peu comme les textes d'une anthologie de poésie : nous avons regardé tous les fragments, puis nous nous sommes efforcés de créer des passages entre eux, de façon plus formelle. La séquence finale où je suis en robe de mariée, nous l'avons mise en scène. Mais pour le reste, Derek installait un dispositif, puis

“Je ne suis pas complètement engagée dans le cinéma à temps plein à la manière d’une artiste comme Jeanne Moreau. J’entre et je sors : j’essaie de concevoir mon travail moi-même...”

il le laissait se dérouler à son rythme. Pour cette séquence, il a fait venir une bande d’amis équipés de caméras super-huit. Toutes les images ont été mélangées dans un grand désordre, et personne n’a jamais su qui avait tourné celles qui apparaissent dans la version finale. En tout cas, dans cette scène j’ai commencé à danser et Derek s’est contenté de me suivre. Je crois que c’est ce qui rend vraiment le mieux compte de notre façon de travailler ensemble, de l’intensité des tournages. La liberté du super-huit était enivrante, je regrette cette époque.

A vos débuts, aviez-vous des modèles ?

Celle qui me revient toujours à l’esprit, c’est Delphine Seyrig : en partie à cause d’une certaine attitude dans son travail, mais aussi parce que j’ai eu la chance de faire un petit peu sa connaissance. Un jour, je suis partie avec elle en voyage en Géorgie dans le cadre du Congrès international des femmes cinéastes. J’ai découvert à ce moment-là qu’elle aussi était issue du monde de l’art ; elle avait toujours vécu entourée de peintres. Sinon, je m’intéressais à des acteurs de films muets comme Buster Keaton et Lillian Gish, et aussi à des chanteuses et des chanteurs comme Patti Smith ou David Bowie. Ma connaissance, mon intérêt et ma relation au jeu d’acteurs “orthodoxes” ont toujours été sous-développés. Disons que je ne m’incline pas devant cet autel-là.

Jeanne Moreau a dit que tous les films qu’elle n’avait pas faits constituaient les plus importantes décisions de sa vie. En va-t-il de même pour vous ?

C’est extrêmement intéressant. Je suppose que c’est vrai dans mon cas, dans le sens où je suis un drôle d’hybride : je travaille avec le matériau d’une star de cinéma, mais un peu en retrait. Je ne suis pas

complètement engagée dans le cinéma à temps plein à la manière d’une artiste comme Jeanne Moreau. J’entre et je sors : j’essaie de concevoir mon travail moi-même, que ce soit en collaboration avec quelqu’un ou toute seule, et de temps en temps je fais le choix d’aller participer temporairement aux “festivités” des autres.

Vous avez joué dans des films sur le Caravage et Bacon, et vous avez souvent collaboré avec des artistes. Que vous apportent-ils ?

Depuis ma rencontre avec Derek Jarman, je vis dans le monde des artistes, et plus précisément des peintres : le père de mes enfants, mon amoureux également – tous deux figuratifs, d’ailleurs. Et beaucoup des cinéastes avec qui j’ai travaillé sont d’abord et avant tout des peintres : David Siegel, Francis Lawrence... J’ai le sentiment que ça a peut-être à voir avec le fait que je me sens comme un objet : l’artiste en moi voit que l’objet que je suis a une pertinence dans le monde de la peinture, qu’il n’a pas dans le monde du cinéma. Très souvent, je dois me déguiser pour me faire accepter à Hollywood ; dans le monde de l’art et de la peinture, je peux garder mon propre visage et mon teint pâle parce que la peinture figurative représente des modèles qui me ressemblent depuis l’époque de Giotto [rires].

En 1995, vous avez collaboré avec Cornelia Parker pour une performance artistique [intitulée *The Maybe*] à la Serpentine Gallery à Londres, dans laquelle vous passiez huit heures par jour dans un cabinet de verre. D’où vous venait ce concept de sculpture vivante ?

Derek Jarman était en train de mourir. Je devais alors affronter l’idée que mon jeu pouvait avoir une date d’expiration, car il était possible que je ne puisse pas être comédienne avec quelqu’un d’autre, n’étant pas formatée, et n’ayant nulle intention de le devenir. Alors toute la question de la paternité artistique s’est imposée à moi. Je me suis demandé : “Suis-je une artiste ou juste le modèle d’une artiste ?” car désormais je ne pouvais plus être les deux. J’avais le sentiment d’avoir pu être les deux avec Derek. J’ai commencé à penser à un hybride entre ce que j’aime dans la performance vivante – l’alchimie

“Jamais auparavant je n’avais vu une projection plus formidable des *Larmes amères de Petra von Kant* que lorsque le film a été montré dans une salle pleine de vieilles dames, de pêcheurs et de mères célibataires – c’était tout à fait extraordinaire.”

unique créée par tous ces corps dans une salle au même moment, où tout peut arriver – et ce qui me plaît le plus dans le jeu cinématographique, à savoir la possibilité d’un regard très rapproché. J’ai trouvé cette idée d’un personnage qui dort, et il est devenu évident pour moi qu’il s’agissait d’une question que je m’adressais à moi-même sur ma qualité de performeuse, pas seulement sur ma qualité d’artiste. Alors j’ai développé *The Maybe*, et cela a été un tournant très significatif pour moi. Il était très intéressant de constater que les médias tenaient tous pour acquis que Cornelia était l’artiste et moi son sujet. **Vous avez toujours attaché une grande importance au fait de montrer l’art, et en particulier le cinéma, dans des lieux inattendus [notamment avec le festival Ballerina Ballroom Cinema of Dreams que Tilda Swinton organise dans la campagne écosaise]. Quelle est votre motivation ?**

Toute la question est de trouver un public actif. Une fois de plus, cela renvoie à *The Maybe* : l’œuvre n’existait pas tant que le public n’avait pas pénétré dans la salle. De même, vous pouvez projeter *Au hasard Balthazar* de Bresson dans les Highlands écossais, dans un endroit sans aucune ville à quatre-vingts kilomètres à la ronde ; le film peut passer là, où personne ne le regarde sauf une vache. Mais installez un enfant devant l’écran, et ce qui se produit est vraiment extraordinaire. Nous avons montré Fellini, Rainer Werner Fassbinder et d’autres films complexes aux gens du village où je vis. Jamais auparavant – dans aucune cinémathèque et dans aucun musée – je n’avais vu une projection plus formidable des *Larmes amères de Petra von Kant* que lorsque le film a été montré dans une salle pleine de vieilles dames, de pêcheurs et de mères célibataires – c’était tout à fait extraordinaire. C’était comme si le film faisait deux fois plus d’effort et que les gens faisaient deux fois plus d’effort ; j’irais même jusqu’à suggérer que le public a tiré du film deux fois plus que n’importe quel public de cinémathèque ne pourra jamais en tirer. Alors, vous savez, on essaie d’offrir activement quelque chose qui leur soit accessible, car c’est une des choses que peut accomplir l’art – et peut-être le cinéma plus puissamment que toute

autre forme : inviter les gens à se mettre dans la peau de quelqu’un d’autre. Très peu de personnes de ces régions reculées ont vu un film de ce genre auparavant : elles peuvent très bien n’avoir jamais regardé une version originale sous-titrée, ou du noir et blanc, bref rien sauf la programmation du multiplexe près de chez elles ou ce qui passe à la télévision... Et sentir grandir en elles cette confiance dans la culture du cinéma, c’est vraiment très puissant.

Qu’en est-il de votre participation au cinéma *mainstream*, où vous touchez des publics complètement différents ? Avez-vous le sentiment d’être une sorte “d’infiltrée” dans ce genre d’environnement ?

Je me considère comme une cinéphile très curieuse, qui a bénéficié d’une expérience unique : être invitée dans ces milieux industriels sur lesquels j’ignore tant de choses et dont j’apprends de plus en plus. C’est un univers extrêmement différent du monde d’où je viens. Lorsque j’ai conçu *The Maybe*, je me demandais dans quel registre je pourrais être bonne. Aussi quand on m’en a donné l’opportunité – je ne me suis jamais invitée à Hollywood, c’était l’idée de quelqu’un d’autre – ça a été une véritable aubaine d’y aller, de tester ma capacité et mon degré d’autosuffisance... ou de dépendance. Et c’est une expérience qui continue pour moi, même si je dois dire que je suis un peu fatiguée pour l’instant et que je ne compte pas poursuivre ces infiltrations à l’avenir. Mais j’ai vraiment appris beaucoup sur la nature du processus créatif : si vous prenez un film comme *Le Monde de Narnia*, mille cinq cents personnes se trouvaient sur le plateau, chaque jour, à l’heure du déjeuner. Je trouve cela très intéressant, sans doute en partie parce que je suis la fille d’un militaire, cette façon de canaliser ainsi les énergies

d'un important groupe de personnes. Et quand vous travaillez avec une équipe de cette taille, et sur un projet d'un tel coût, ce que j'ai réalisé, c'est que les décisions sont prises des mois, parfois même des années avant. Le moment du tournage correspond en quelque sorte à cocher les cases, mener à bien les objectifs. Cette démarche est en soi passionnante. C'est très différente du travail avec, par exemple, Nicholas Roeg ou Derek Jarman, qui composent avec le chaos, comme je le fais moi aussi, en portant une grande attention à l'instant. Si vous décidez qu'une scène doit être filmée par grand soleil sur un tournage comme *Le Monde de Narnia*, et qu'il commence à pleuvoir, vous attendez trois semaines que le soleil revienne. Si vous décidez qu'une scène doit être filmée par grand soleil sur un tournage de Derek Jarman et qu'il pleut, vous changez tout simplement d'avis, vous finirez par trouver que les intempéries conviennent parfaitement et vous faites avec.

Dans quel camp se situe votre dernier film, *Amore* ?

Le réalisateur, Luca Guadagnino et moi sommes amis depuis plus de vingt ans et nous parlons de ce projet depuis onze ans. Nous avons conçu ce film ensemble, et c'est aussi un projet possédant une sorte de majesté apparue comme par miracle : lui et moi, nous avons déjà collaboré sur deux tournages, mais nous n'avons jamais connu cette alchimie auparavant. *Amore* est notre tentative de donner une nouvelle direction évolutive à ce que j'appelle le cinéma de sensation : j'entends par là celui qui crée en même temps du sens, c'est-à-dire ce que nous aimons dans les œuvres de tous les grands réalisateurs, d'Alfred Hitchcock à John Carpenter et de

John Huston à Douglas Sirk. Le portrait de la femme que j'interprète est en grande partie silencieux : j'espère qu'il est teinté d'humour et que les gens apercevront l'ombre de Delphine Seyrig.

Et la suite ? Quels sont vos projets ?

Ils relèvent du domaine de l'écriture. Je suis également en conversation ininterrompue avec plusieurs artistes, dont Luca Guadagnino et Apichatpong Weerasethakul, mais avant tout, je veux du temps et de la tranquillité. Je n'ai pas vraiment de projet précis d'ici avril prochain, et cette simple pensée me remplit de joie.

L'écriture est-elle pour vous une pratique régulière ?

Oui, je me suis remise à la prose en 2002, puis, lentement, à la poésie. Cela me rend très heureuse. Peut-être que plus j'écrirai, moins je jouerai, j'aimerais que cela soit vrai. Peut-être que ces deux activités sont deux vents opposés sur une girouette ; ils ne peuvent coexister. Comme l'a dit Greta Garbo, je crois que j'ai fait assez de grimaces. Alors pour être honnête, je suis prête à abandonner mon métier de comédienne car j'ai un grand désir d'écrire et cette activité me nourrit vraiment.

Quel rôle le hasard joue-t-il dans votre vie ?

C'est un élément très important. Il existe une grâce du hasard et je l'accueille à bras ouverts. Pour être honnête, tout ce qui ne requiert aucun effort de ma part est bienvenu ; je suis une adepte de la célèbre phrase de Robert Mitchum : "*Le plus grand rendement possible pour le moins d'effort possible.*"

Avez-vous une devise ?

Celle qui me passe par la tête, qui me vient en fait de ma grand-mère, c'est : "*Tout finira par s'arranger.*"

Qu'est-ce qui devrait changer dans le monde ?

La résistance au changement. Pour moi, il a toujours été très clair que le changement est le seul atout dont nous disposons.

Pour finir, quel serait, en 2010, votre conseil à un jeune acteur ou à un jeune artiste ?

Trouver un entourage de qualité et le chérir, car c'est tout ce dont vous avez besoin.

Amore, de Luca Guadagnino. Sortie le 22 septembre.

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The New York Times

Fashion & Style

GIMLET EYE

A 6-Acre Preserve Where Artists Roam

By GUY TREBAY

Published: July 28, 2010

Water Mill, N.Y.

ARTISTS and their antics are central to the Hamptons mythos: car crashes, bonfires, wife swapping, boyfriend swapping, dune trysts and drunken carousing, all interrupted by spells of intense creativity under the area's fabled luminous skies.

The artists are pretty well gone now, all but the wealthiest ones. Everybody knows that Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner couldn't find a quarter-share in a renovated chicken coop in a market where even a teardown in Sag Harbor — long since elevated from its lowly status as the poor relation of hamlets like East Hampton — is priced at \$1.8 million. (Admittedly it's just a few doors down from Cindy Sherman's Greek Revival place on Madison Street, but still.)

If the creative types, from William Merritt Chase to Willem de Kooning, who long enlivened culture on the East End are now more memory than active presence, there is at least one holdout for the anarchic spirit of creation. And on Saturday evening, over 600 paying guests gathered at the Watermill Center, the arts complex founded in 1992 by the director Robert Wilson in a former Western Union building hidden in the Water Mill woods, to celebrate those who make art — or anyway, to underwrite their room and board

The theme of the 17th annual Watermill Center benefit was Paradiso, and once you filtered out the kitsch of performers dressed as snow monkeys, the smoking tiki torches and the dreadful weather, it was still possible to recall how much a paradise the Hamptons can seem.

Scattered throughout the six-acre site on Saturday were 24 artworks created and installed for that night and that particular party, a fete that is unlike any other on the East End and possibly anyplace. Is the Watermill Center benefit the party of the season, as some claim? You would have to take that up with fans of the annual Parrish Art Museum benefit or the fund-raiser staged to help Guild Hall in East Hampton. Those events routinely draw out the moguls and the social gratin of the Hamptons, two groups that do not necessarily overlap.

Only the Watermill Center pulls elements of the two worlds together, and then mashes them up with the area's population of seasonally nomadic celebrities (Alan Cumming, Miranda Richardson, Alec Baldwin, Emily Mortimer) along with a posse of the 70 artists from two dozen countries that took residence at the center this year.

Artists made up the labor force for the event, behind the scenes, in the woods and in the trees. They had assistance, of course, from caterers, security goons, the perfumers providing scented leaves for the snow monkeys to distribute to guests and from Mr. Wilson's high-powered friends.

Sharon Stone, for one, played host and auctioneer for an event that ultimately raised \$1.4 million. Briefly, at the start of the evening, the blond star was spotted making her way through a grove at the center, where the tree trunks had been covered from roots to chest height in aluminum foil.

Dappled light filtering through the leaf canopy reflected off the surfaces and cast an odd glow reminiscent of Grade Z movies. It may not be the lighting Ms. Stone is accustomed to, but even without it she was a paragon of ... well, whatever it is that keeps age at bay. (She is 52.)

Her fellow guests teetering along bark-covered paths past weird artworks in their stilettos also called to mind elements of old flicks, specifically those featuring intergalactic molls who always seemed overdressed for trips to Mars. Tiffany Dubin, for instance, the vintage clothing expert and director of business development for Heritage Galleries, wore a cocktail sheath and belt with a jeweled eyeball buckle that was highly reminiscent of the getup Zsa Zsa Gabor favored for her career-defining role as the cruel Venusian scientist in “Queen of Outer Space.”

“Here comes Tiffany Dubin, wood nymph,” Bob Morris, the memoirist, remarked brightly, as Ms. Dubin moved toward and then past him, heading in the direction of an oversize box inside of which a man on a stool sat looking bored while a woman peeled an apple and two other men, naked but for tangled wigs, writhed on the floor: Adam and Eve meet Eiko & Koma.

The woods were literally alive with artists — crawling through the leaf litter, twined in webs in the crotch of a tree (note to self: call exterminator about tent moths), hanging in nets curled in fetal balls.

Apparitions wafted past, like the lunar beauty Marisa Berenson, who meandered through the living installations arm-in-arm with Starlite Randall, her daughter from an early marriage to a rivet king.

Passing the autistic artist and poet Christopher Knowles in a clearing, where he hugged a stele and intoned what sounded like gibberish, Ms. Berenson cocked her pretty head and looked bemused.

“What’s he on?” she said. He was not on anything. He was part of an artwork. This particular one was staged by Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, a Watermill Center artist who was a man once and a member of the industrial rock band Throbbing Gristle and is now a self-styled “pandrogynous” being, given to making oracular statements like “There is no gender anymore.”

If the wood was full of nymphs and gender-various beings, the gravel plaza where drinks were served was packed with sweaty angels. Some, like Joy Marks, had taken the cue to dress in “heavenly” fashion as an excuse to slip on some wings. But Ms. Marks’s wings were wilting in the infernal heat, and all around her people with clothes stuck to their torsos and mascara running down their cheeks struggled to look cool. Only Calvin Klein, accompanied by a person who could have been his grandson, seemed impervious to the atmospherics. No drop of moisture beaded his taut brow.

“I’m dying,” Beth Swofford, the CAA agent and contemporary art collector, said, struggling to restrict all movement while simultaneously engaging in lively discussion with Maja Hoffmann, the art collector and heiress to a pharmaceutical fortune, about the perils of the auction room.

“I kept bidding on this piece by an unknown artist and I didn’t realize it was the wrong lot and then I didn’t want to say afterward, ‘Oh, I didn’t mean it,’ ” Ms. Hoffmann said.

“You didn’t keep the piece, did you?” Ms. Swofford inquired, icily.

There was reason to recall this exchange later in the evening, when Ms. Stone sashayed onto a low stage set amid tables where guests were tucking into white asparagus, ripe figs and prosciutto to auction the first of many works of art donated to the center by Mr. Wilson’s friends.

“If you talk or move or breathe, it’s a bid,” said the actress, whose take-no-prisoners policy as a charity auctioneer is legendary. Suddenly leaping backward when a bug flew up her dress, she recovered her composure quickly and said, “I have this theory that money talks and cash screams, and it has served me very well over the years.”

It did that night as Ms. Stone rapidly roused the audience into bidding twice on an edition of a Robert Wilson sculpture, a menacing bronze chair titled “Winter Tales,” although only one was originally on offer; sold an immense pastel picture by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, and also works by Donald Judd and Marina Abramovic; and then lifted money from the deep pockets around the tent with the ease of a cutpurse.

“Jay, do I hear 30 from you?” Ms. Stone said briskly, of a lot offering a private concert by Rufus Wainwright. Mr. Wainwright, whose boyfriend, Jorn Weisbrodt, is director of the center, had made a bid of his own early in the evening, \$5,000 for a surprisingly tasteful photograph by Jeff Burton, official art photographer of the pornography world, of a man performing an acrobatic act of sexual self-gratification. “I’m on tour so much, Jorn and I can put it above our bed,” Mr. Wainwright explained.

The Jay Ms. Stone was referring to was McInerney, of course, and a stricken look crept over the novelist's face after his hand shot up, committing him to \$30,000, a gesture followed by the realization that no one was acting to raise his bid. Tense seconds became years before Ms. Stone, in a moment of improvisatory genius, suddenly ran around the tent triangulating an on-the-spot deal permitting Mr. McInerney and Mr. Baldwin to share Mr. Wainwright's services, for a total of \$50,000 and change.

It was cheap at the price. Mr. Wainwright made that very clear when, moments earlier, he took to the floor to sing an unaccompanied version of "Over the Rainbow," evoking for a thrilling instant a special realm in whose existence everyone present had some personal stake in believing.

You know the place, the one you get to when you hang a left at the diner onto Highway 27, and join the line of traffic bound for a string of enchanted summer villages where all the happy little bluebirds fly.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/29/fashion/29gimlet.html?ref=fashion>
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 THE NEW YORK TIMES STYLE MAGAZINE

Artifacts | Jeff Burton's Fantasy Life Beyond Porn

CULTURE By LINDA YABLONSKY APRIL 19, 2010 4:33 PM



Jeff Burton/Courtesy Casey Kaplan Gallery

Stella Stevens

Jeff Burton was smitten with Stella Stevens the instant he saw “The Poseidon Adventure.” That was in 1972. He was 9. In the movie, Stevens played an ultrachic former call girl who had married a burly cop, Ernest Borgnine, and fell to her death shod in silver platform shoes. The young Burton developed a raging obsession with both Stevens and the film. Thirty-five years later, after working as a still photographer on porn movie shoots in Los Angeles, where he lives, Burton got to direct her himself — for a portrait now hanging in his seventh solo show at the Casey Kaplan Gallery.

In the picture, Stevens is Burton's dream come true: a fantasy image made real. Dressed in a glittering gown and a red fox fur matched to the color of her hair, she looks off to the side with her hand on her hip, a steely dame no one would dare to cross. Hanging nearby is a portrait of the writer Bret Easton Ellis, another “Poseidon” fan, posed in dark shades against the Hollywood skyline at dusk. He looks movie-star suave and slightly dangerous.



Jeff Burton/Courtesy Casey Kaplan Gallery

Gore Vidal

The Stevens portrait was a labor of love; the Ellis resulted from a magazine assignment, as did the other 20 images in the show, simply titled “Portraits.” Some faces are instantly recognizable: open-faced Morrissey, glowering Tom Ford, moody Vincent Gallo, gay Chi Chi Larue and the kittenish Annette Schwartz (a friend from his years on porn sets). Others, friends of the photographer, seem familiar and aren’t. And with some, like Burton’s deeply introspective Gore Vidal, it takes a moment to register the face with the name.

The gallery positions Burton on the blurry line between art and commerce, but that is true of so much photography today, especially in fashion, where almost any image could pass for an ad, while ads can be indistinguishable from conceptual art. The big difference is the prices they command.

Burton works in the George Hurrell tradition of celebrity portraiture, rooted in carefully lit Hollywood glamour. But the pictures in this show look entirely personal. Many are shot extremely close up, making each subject an intimate. Vidal looks particularly vulnerable. Kenneth Anger is almost indistinguishable from the devil mask in his hand. Joaquin Phoenix emerges from a half light that emphasizes a cheekbone and an eye as well as his cleft palate.

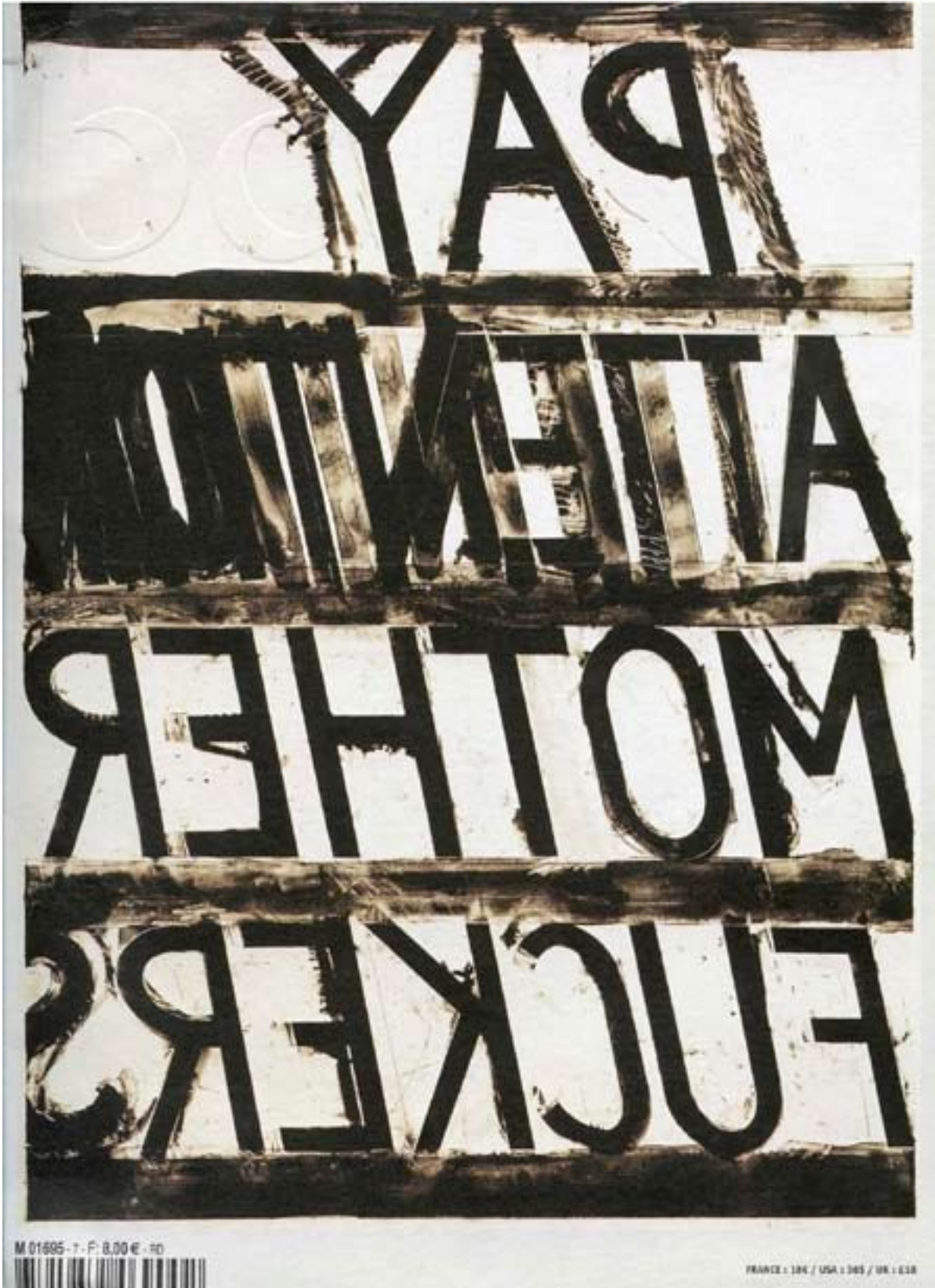
None of the photos have been retouched (Schwartz has bloodshot eyes) and all have been printed with a layer of hand-coated varnish that gives them a painting-like texture and considerable warmth. That doesn’t show up on a magazine page the way it does on a print — and Burton’s are not billboard size but modest, giving the whole enterprise a greater sense of humility than artifice. It’s clear that Burton adores each subject without reservation, par for the course in a realm where a public image must be burnished at all costs. But his most striking pictures have an honesty that doesn’t follow any script, and it’s refreshing to find a commercial photographer whose art is to appeal to his subjects’ vanity and flatter us all at once.

“Jeff Burton: Portraits” continues through May 1 at Casey Kaplan Gallery, 525 West 21st Street.

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Burton, Jeff (photographer), "Who's Afraid of the F Word", by Katerina Gregos, *bc*, Brussels, April 14, 2009, *bc*, Summer 2009.





Who's afraid of the F-word

by Katerina Gregos, Brussels, April 14th 2009

E 'Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time. Write yourself. Your body must be heard.' (Hélène Cixous, *The Laugh of the Medusa*)

Who's Afraid of the F-word is a curatorial project in print. As the title infers, the project evokes, in various ways, two words which still today are contested in many ways: feminism and 'the four letter word', both of which relate to issues of corporeality and the body, the central theme of this issue of BC. But mostly, the artists presented here are concerned with issues of representation, and are preoccupied with the body as *image*. As images of the

body have become increasingly standardized and commodified by the media, fashion, advertising and entertainment industries, it has become more urgent to counteract the unrealistic, hyper-perfect, implausibly 'normalized' and now increasingly 'photoshopped' variants proffered by them. Similarly, questions of gender, sexuality and identity are more often than not dealt with as neat little packages that seem to suggest the commonality of experience—whether female, male or gay. Identity, of course, is a much more fluid, fucked up field and gender is bound up in subjectivities, paradoxes and ambiguities.

The artists whose work is on view here probe issues of body, gender politics and sexuality, beyond standardized norms and stereotypes. They wrest back control of the image of the body, to deconstruct normative conventions and point to alternative ways of inhabiting and 'displaying' it, while also intimating the constructedness of identity. They are concerned with 'writing the body', to borrow the term by Hélène Cixous, or inferring its relationships in an altogether more subjective, even open-ended way, that highlights the complexity of gender and sexuality. They breach taboos of various kinds, all of them linked to the representation of the physical

body, in order to re-signify the notion of gender and sexuality. In effect, they aim to counteract those representations of the body that have been produced and legitimized by the market, opening up a freer field of interpretation and suggestion. They challenge the stereotypical perceptions of the representation of gender, pointing to a more variable, even shifting notion of identity and sexuality, one in which masculinities and femininities are more intertwined and cross-pollinating rather than located at diametrically opposing poles, and thus suggesting overlapping sensibilities. Feminist undertones may on occasion also abound, but they are not of the old-fashioned,



essentialist, bra-burning type which disavows femininity, rather seen from a more contemporary perspective which acknowledges the complex, multi-layered feminine formation, as well as female and male subjectivity.

At the same time, the work of these artists also encourages us to look beyond the surface, to consider the space in between the dichotomies that the debate around the body often centres on: between exterior and interior, inner and outer worlds, desire and decorum, freedom and repression. In many ways, our understanding, experience and even use of the body is still partial. Though the knowledge is there, many of us have no idea how the body works. Furthermore, we are, in many ways, still unable to reconcile interior and exterior, primeval and rational, natural disposi-

tion and the socially constructed. We still pretty much conceive of the body as a surface or a skin, an externality, and beyond that is a *corps étranger*. This, coupled with the taboos imposed by society, no doubt reinforces the sense of alienation some people feel as regards their own body, a body which they treat as a mere vehicle in which they are temporary occupants. Sexual liberation aside, the contemporary relationship with the body is still not one of total ease. From the increasingly widespread mania with frenetic modes of exercise, the fear of fat, and obsessive narcissism to the apathy, neglect, contempt and self-hatred of the body that lies at the opposite end of the spectrum, at which point and how does one manage to feel comfortable in ones' own skin, so to speak, both physically as well as metaphorically?

Religion, bourgeois morality and the incessant politics of concealment and repression that go with them have certainly not fostered a better understanding of acceptance of the body, sexuality, and all associated sticky, smelly, messy, viscous functions, not to mention forms of gender alterity. In any case, what is a 'normal' way of inhabiting, experiencing, using, altering and displaying the body? What is 'normal' in terms of sexual impulses and desires? And who is to decide? What we often fail to realize is that the perceptions of the physical body are in a constant process of transformation, in which there is a continuous negotiation of definition, experience, behaviour and cultural coding. In his book *Corpus*, the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy argues that in the light of the technological, biological, and political changes that have taken

place, creating a new understanding of the body becomes even more urgent. Georges Bataille, on the other hand, repeatedly wrote about the repression of the body, and its desires, and about the false—socially constructed—decorum that subjugates and shrouds sexual impulses and other primeval instincts. In many ways, the artists featured in this project, as well as in the pages of the magazine, attempt to grapple with both these issues, while at the same time trying to somehow counteract the stultifying world of reason and social order that has been imposed on the body. In their work, the body becomes a site of transgression that throws into question conventional ideas of representation and accompanying ideas of morality, propriety, and beauty. III



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Beccaria, Marcella. "Jeff Burton." *Domus*, February 2008, p. 118 – 131.

Jeff Burton

FONDAZIONE LIVIO E MARIA GARZANTI, HOTEL DE LA VILLE

December 2007

PISCINA DEL ROYAL HOTEL

December 2007

•Jeff Burton has two professions: he is a photographer for the red-light movie industry, and he is an artist. The first powers the second in a circuit of logical necessity. As a commercial photographer, Burton spends a lot of time on porno movie sets taking live pictures of the actors and actresses and their performances. As aficionados of the genre like to point out, in these days of the digital and of the most sophisticated cinematographic tricks, the porno industry is conspicuous for its unconditioned adherence to reality. Yes, the faces are lifted and wrinkle-free, the bodies siliconised, depilated and tanned; and the rest is certainly lubricated and kept going by Viagra. Nevertheless, it's all true; every act filmed by the cine camera is performed in front of it. The actors don't have stand-ins. The locations are real apartments, villas, hotels and pools. Against this background Burton's images are highly explicit. Since their purpose is to promote the movies, they have to get their message and contents across as directly as possible. Mostly, they are used for DVD covers, but sometimes they are sold to the trade magazines. Burton loves his work as a set photographer, or so he says whenever he is interviewed.

As an artist, Burton spends much of his time on redlight movie sets. The repetition of the gambit here isn't a typo; it's the same because the context does not change. The actors, actresses and locations are identical as well. And the medium chosen is again photography. The pictures, though, are a far cry from the ones he is paid to take, and their quality has made Burton an artist to be reckoned with in the suspicious world of contemporary art. Burton has collected his works into the books that he has published to date, the most recent being *Dreamland* (2001) and *The Other Place* (2005). His photo-

graphs reveal a precise formal system, a leitmotif that prompts him to push the actor's actions out onto the edge of the picture. Thus the "truth" allegedly associated with the porno world is relegated to a limbo. Burton's lens picks out the "spaces in the middle", or the crannies which reality hides within itself. Sometimes he is attracted by details of no apparent value. In one photograph, for example, the intertwining of muscular male bodies creates a sort of frame, the core of the image being structured around the non-forms of clothes and towels dropped onto the floor. In another, the sex act performed in an apartment is totally out of focus and relegated to the background, whereas the outlines of an Empire period chair and of a decorated lampshade are viewed in such a way as to emphasise the incongruous presence of an office stapler resting on a low table. Again, in another photo, the naked body of a man, whose face is not visible, is cut by the right edge of the frame and the whole picture is focused on a crack in the low white wall. In all his works, Burton seems driven by an urge to use the camera as if it were a sharpened scalpel. By drawing its blade over reality and incising notable portions of it, he seeks an intentional ambiguity. He uses the resulting void as a logical trap, deliberately laying it on the images' visual web to capture and titillate individual fantasies.

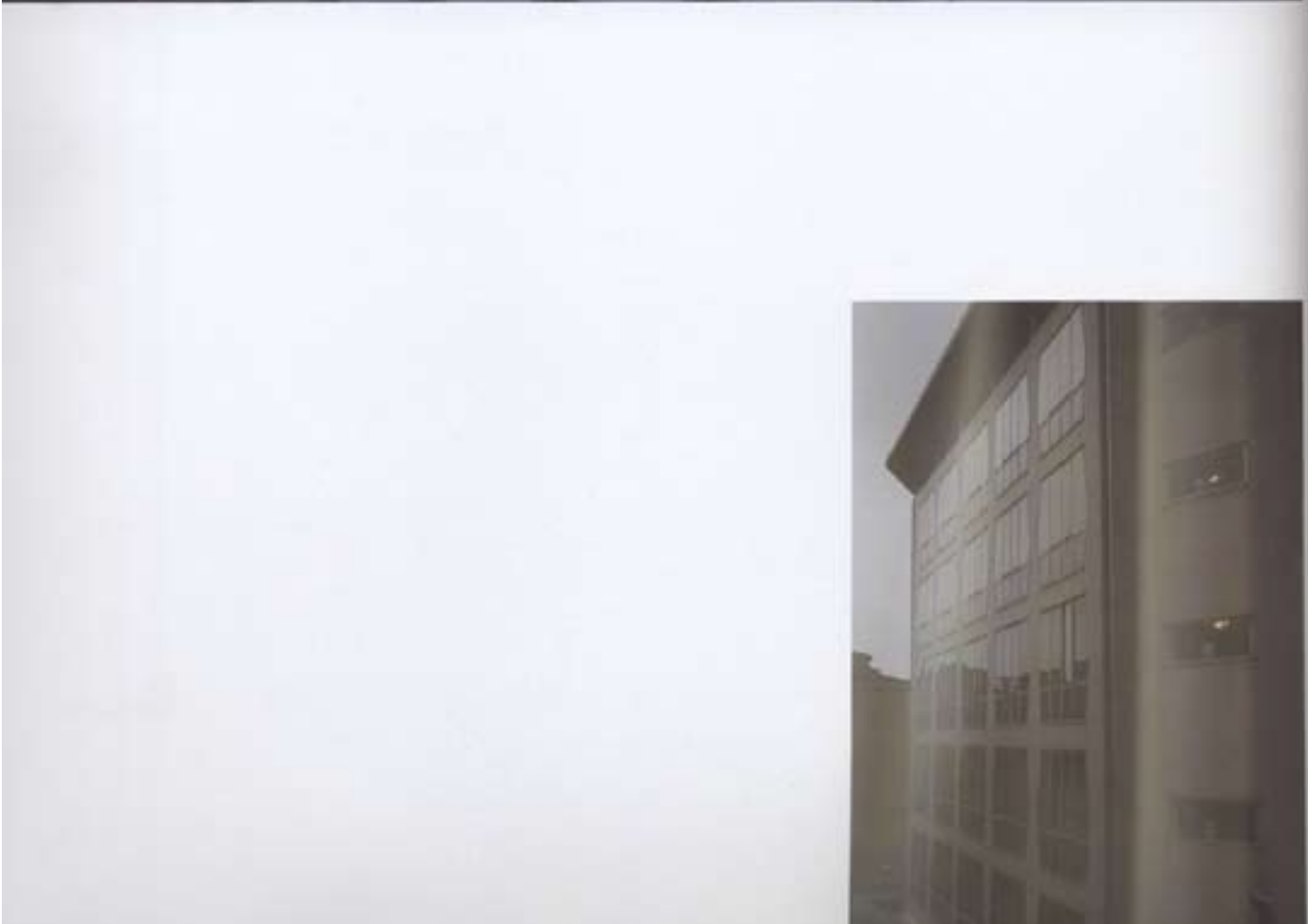
Burton's encounter with Gio Ponti's architecture came as a further step in his work as an artist. Burton adopts the architecture, furniture and decorative details of Ponti's idiom to interpret them as constructive elements, but he makes them the protagonists of an elegantly reconstructed desire. In the photographs dedicated to the Hotel de la Ville in Forli, the fluid geometry of seating designed by Ponti is charged with a sense of sensual expecta-

tion. The armrests seem to reach out to one another and the space that separates them is electric. In another image, the wavy curves of a curtain are narcissistically mirrored in a table, offering their best side. Again, the exact design of the building's exteriors is veiled in atmospheric reflections, or screened behind a languid vapour. At Sanremo the swimming pool is seen as a sleeping organism, ready to change its shape and skin whenever it awakes. The mosaic pieces turn into iridescent scales, the protuberances into tentacles, the steps into vivid undulations. The whole architectural body is a marine creature, a siren portrayed as it prepares to seduce. As a movie-like interpretation (Burton lives in Los Angeles), the elements that the photographer has chosen from these two works by Ponti seem to stress the fictional potential of the two places. At the same time, albeit from an acutely personal angle, his images hint at ways of reflecting on the actual nature of architecture. By constructing his photographs to arouse the viewer's fantasy, Burton also sparks memories of how architecture can be oriented towards the construction of desire. After all, isn't the desire to live in a certain house, to stay at a particular hotel, or to sit in a special chair precisely what every architect would like to stimulate in people's minds and bodies?

Marcella Beccaria

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Domus thanks Paola Mazzitelli (Regional office of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Emilia Romagna); Roberto Pasini (Hotel de la Ville, Forli); Peter Müller, Ivana Giordana (Royal Hotel, Sanremo).







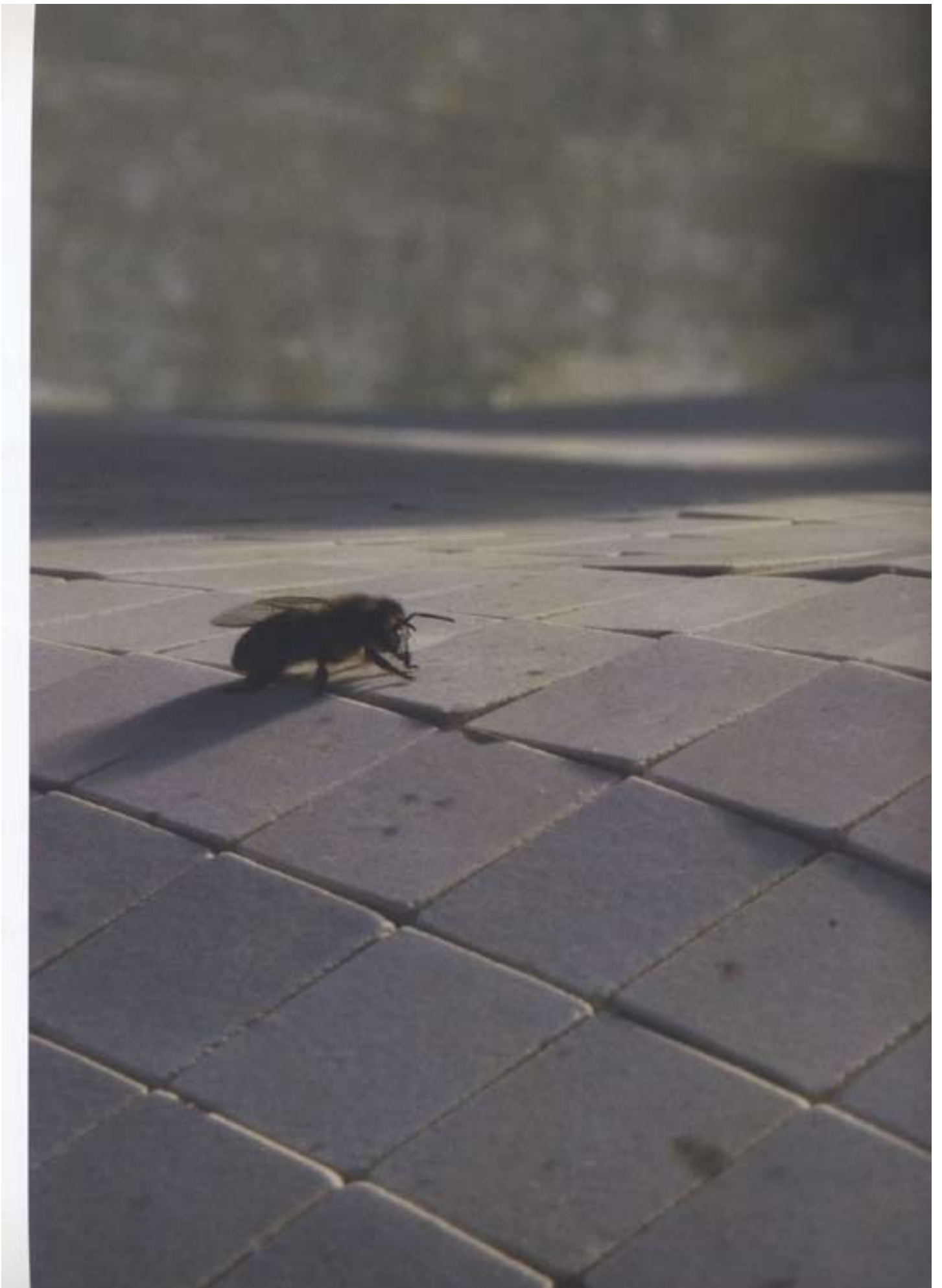




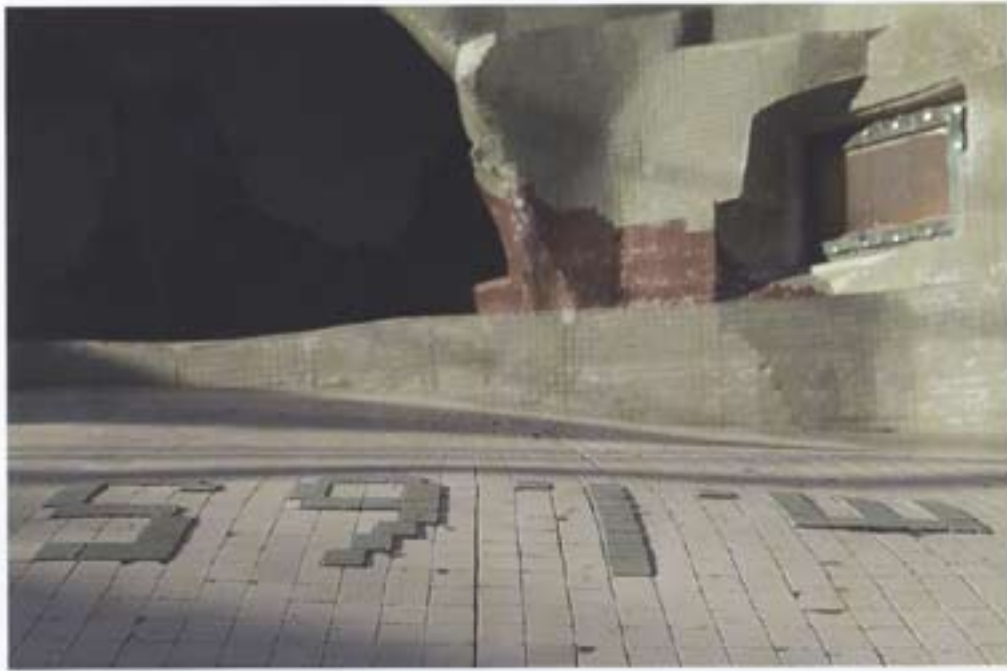














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Interview with Jeff Burton

Monica Portillo

You have described LA as "a set within a set within a set", where everybody is the object of pervasive viewing.

How do you experience the difference between "being" and "playing" yourself for someone else's gaze?

I find it difficult at times to differentiate between a "true" versus a "performative" self. There is a distinct difference for me specifically between being the voyeur (the photographer) and the exhibitionist (the artist).

In your opinion how is reality constructed through the fascination with watching?

Whatever reality is I'm not certain. What I think I'm noticing might be the unreal in the environments I find myself in, whether it be on a porn set or elsewhere. This notion of the unreal is difficult to address with language. I could talk about odd juxtapositions, disparities in scale, and other strange encounters between the animate and inanimate, but I'd rather let the photographs develop this sensation within the viewer.

LA seems a catalyst of legends where everyday reality and fiction can easily fade into one another, like an endless palimpsest. When arriving there, did you bring specific associations and ideas into it?

I moved to LA to study painting at CalArts. I must admit I chose it over other options because it held the potential (at least in my imagination) for more excitement and glamour. I was strongly attracted to the cinema I saw in Texas. I was landlocked there and films were evidence of other worlds. My influences were mostly from pop culture, record album covers, Hollywood movies, publicity stills, fashion magazines, TV shows... However, Fort Worth also had three world-class art museums. These spaces also offered solitude, visual delight and contemplation for years growing up in an otherwise glacial absence of inspiration. And then, of course, pornography eventually became something very visceral and powerful before I made my way to California. Regarding cinema, when I was 9 years old I saw one of the first disaster films of the 70s: *The Poseidon Adventure*. Within a singular spectacular event (an ocean liner capsizing on New Year's Eve) all that was known was changed forever. Up was down and down was up. A new way of looking at things was necessary for survival. This notion of climbing from the top to the bottom to reach the surface was very influential in my thought process: concepts of perception and orientation taken for granted could be changed within a blink of an eye. There was one character in particular, Linda Rogo, portrayed by Stella Stevens. She was an ex-prostitute with an extreme will to live. She wasn't a sympathetic character, but for me she was the most beautiful and compelling creature on board. The prostitute operated as the heroine. Sadly, after arduous effort she doesn't make it. This was a huge disappointment. This year I met with Stella and photographed her in vintage and contemporary couture. It was an opportunity to bring Linda back to life 35 years later. To direct and resurrect this unattainable screen goddess I had fantasized about since I was 9; fantasy made real and the real made into fantasy. It brought together personal obsession, performance and fashion.

At the beginning, you had some pretty dark ideas about the porn industry. What brought you there?

Primarily, I was very interested in sex like most young people. But, I was a somewhat sheltered 26-year-old when I interviewed to be a still photographer for the sex industry in 1989. I suppose risk and danger are parts in the rites of passage when learning about sex. American culture has portrayed the adult film industry as a sad environment. It's seen as a last resort resulting from failed attempts at more "respectable" occupations. So, I think it was natural to be skeptical at first that I could flourish there. I soon learned that, like most work environments, it was actually more complex and diverse. I had no intentions, at the time, of making my work in porn a part of my art. The need to earn a living tipped the scales to take a chance and push myself. Painting in my studio was somewhat lonely and far from lucrative.

What do you think are the reasons for the frequent divorce of good stories from explicit sexual imagery?

That is a good question that has no easy answer. The answer involves religion, politics, and economics. For most pornography studios, the primary goal is to document hot sex to arouse viewers. In that respect, narrative has been

Jeff Burton. *Untitled #203 (Black Marble)*, 2005. Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York.



artifice to allow pornography to exist within the laws governing obscenity. The contrived narratives within a pornographic film allowed companies to distribute their product with the conceit that the film told a story, therefore was art, and had socially redeeming value. It would seem for some people sex for sex's sake is obscene. Of course, I disagree with this idea that sex in and of itself is not art. There are some interesting side effects of the narrative in the adult film genre: humor and camp, for example. The fact is narrative is not the driving force for sex films. Economically, there are very real limitations to production. A typical crew could be as few as four people. I've worked on films that were made entirely by the same person or shot in one day. Meeting these unrealistic challenges requires a lot of stamina and shared responsibility. I'd also like to point out that amazing sex performance played before the camera is a very specific, demanding, and underrated talent. I wonder if the likes of Meryl Streep or Dustin Hoffman could deliver such a performance or would even if they could. For the sake of optimism, perhaps the homemade explicit material on the Internet of documentary nature might surprise us with a new kind of story in the future. While I have a lot to say about narrative and explicit sex in films having worked in that industry for almost 20 years, my pictures don't reveal in that way. They don't pretend to have a beginning and end. They are more about in-between moments located somewhere else.

You've talked about how intense the porn working environment can get, how unpredictable it can be both in terms of logistics and emotion. What is the effect of an ever-renewed anxiety on your photographic production on the sets?

Oh, anxiety. Well, I'm sure this goes back far before my job on the sets of sex films. To survive the Wild West of Texas as an artist actually took some guts. For me, a side effect of being sensitive and different was hyper-vigilance. Feeling like an outsider, wanting to fit in, and attempting to avoid unwanted attention (a voyeur doesn't want someone looking over their shoulder—it just doesn't work), all this created a situation where I was watching with great attention for signs. Multiply that with an education at CalArts and years devoted to the visual arts and you have someone who is actually paying attention to details. One thing certain on set is that nothing is certain. There are also so many variables beyond my control. Starting with the location itself to the interactions of personalities inserted within it and how they move about it. When can I get a shot? When am I in the way? It's a process of losing and gaining control. Since I am relatively observant of so many elements unfolding simultaneously, full of psychosexual activity, it does produce a certain amount of anxiety. I think the anxiety I experience is an important ingredient in my looking at the situation in different ways.

What interests are at work when you make images which reveal fragments, reflections or hints of hard core instead of straightforward sexual images?

It's important for me to point out that I have taken thousands and thousands of explicit sex images that have been widely circulated in pornographic media. I've also taken a lot of portraiture with direct eye contact with the camera. I'm a much more prolific and published "pornographer" than "artist". In the beginning it was very clear to me which images belonged to "porn" and which belonged to "art". As I continue, this has been more and more difficult for me to discern. There are images in my last book that are not so easy to classify. However, early on, I began taking images in the set environment that didn't reveal the intention or purpose of the image as easily as explicit pornographic images did. That was exciting for me. I began to play with the gaze and see how subjective it could be in that environment. Disrupting the intention of picture taking. The visual hyper-vigilance came into play. Years of studying painting, the classical nude, and the still life came into play as well as abstraction and modernism. I was straying from the strict requirements of the role of pornographer, but the social content was still present. The function of the image itself was brought into question. I found this kind of situation—where form and content pushed and pulled together and apart—opened up interpretation and ideas for me.

While the porn film is being shot, how do you move your gaze amongst the sexual scenes to the decoration? How do you find the images, or rather, do they find you? What makes your gaze stop and shoot an image?



Jeff Burton. *Untitled #18 (Dish Washer)*, 1995. Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York.



Jeff Burton. *Untitled #20 (Oven)*, 1995. Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York.

Well, it's a somewhat schizophrenic headspace. The images and I find each other. While I'm documenting what is expected to satisfy the job at hand, something uncanny will reveal itself. It can be as simple as suddenly noticing that everything in the set happens to be brown, including the talent. A pack of cards is pushed off the table revealing a four of a kind of Queens while the patterned fabric of the pillows echoes the pattern of the cards not overturned. A man's tattoo, while he is servicing his partner, matches the detail of the ornament of her silk stockings. In that way categories like masculine and feminine seem less dependable. These chance events are "real" within a staged environment.

Your photographs set multiple gazes (the actors', the director's, the spectator's, the location's owner's...), plays of presence and absence. While taking the shots, are you aware of these other gazes?

I'm taking all sorts of photographs simultaneously when I'm working on a film set. Some gazes, as you call them, are more transparent in their purpose. Some images imply narrative and some are aimed at titillation and sexual arousal. The images that I find most interesting have a more complex and less specific point of view. You call them multiple gazes. These pictures often contain elements that are struggling to be identified and to gain priority. Interpretation becomes less dependable and meaning less plausible. I'm aware of these elements or "gazes" ricocheting off one another while I'm composing. When these gazes overlap is when I feel I'm onto something.

In your photographs, the center often becomes empty, like in the scene of a crime. There is a lot of theory on the photographic impossibility of (re)producing information, of reconstructing meaning. How do you think your photographs document, induce associations, and therefore are able to 'tell'?

The center is often empty because there is no center. The edge cannot contain the far reaches of imagination and association. I hope the pictures induce associations and lead to a different way of looking. I don't feel they tell complete stories. Your crime question is making me think about something else. I have been able to gain access to photograph other places with different kinds of situations other than the porn sets that my work is mostly known for. For instance, Kenneth Anger, the legendary filmmaker, asked me to document his apartment and his body after a supposed break-in and beating. I also photographed Carlo Mollino's house in Turin. I was interested in his public life as a designer and his private life as a pornographer and how those bodies of work do and don't overlap. My mother said it poetically to me once when I began to explain my occupation to her. She said, "Well... Jeff, beauty comes from strange places. "

Formally, your photographs sometimes seem like a "cadavre exquis", due to the folding and rendering contiguous of otherwise discreet spatial planes (real and reflected, flat and three-dimensional) and objects (bodies and furniture). Is there a strategy to produce failure in the spectator's attempt to find a viewpoint?

I suppose there may be some modernist painting strategies that are in play. Things like contour continuation, where lines and boundaries between the animate and the inanimate connect and make these "separations" indecipherable. I remember watching the film *The Shock of the New* while I was still living in Texas. Someone said something in that film that had an effect on me: that they were interested in making images that looked like they happened all at once. This notion of contour continuation has this effect. It creates an abstraction, a contemplative space where your eye never really rests or deciphers. My pictures have more to do with formalism struggling with content and the elusive nature of meaning and purpose. The pictures have a more philosophical concern than a self-conscious or overt political strategy.

Which of the sectors you work in —porn, art, fashion—is susceptible to development, change and risk taking?

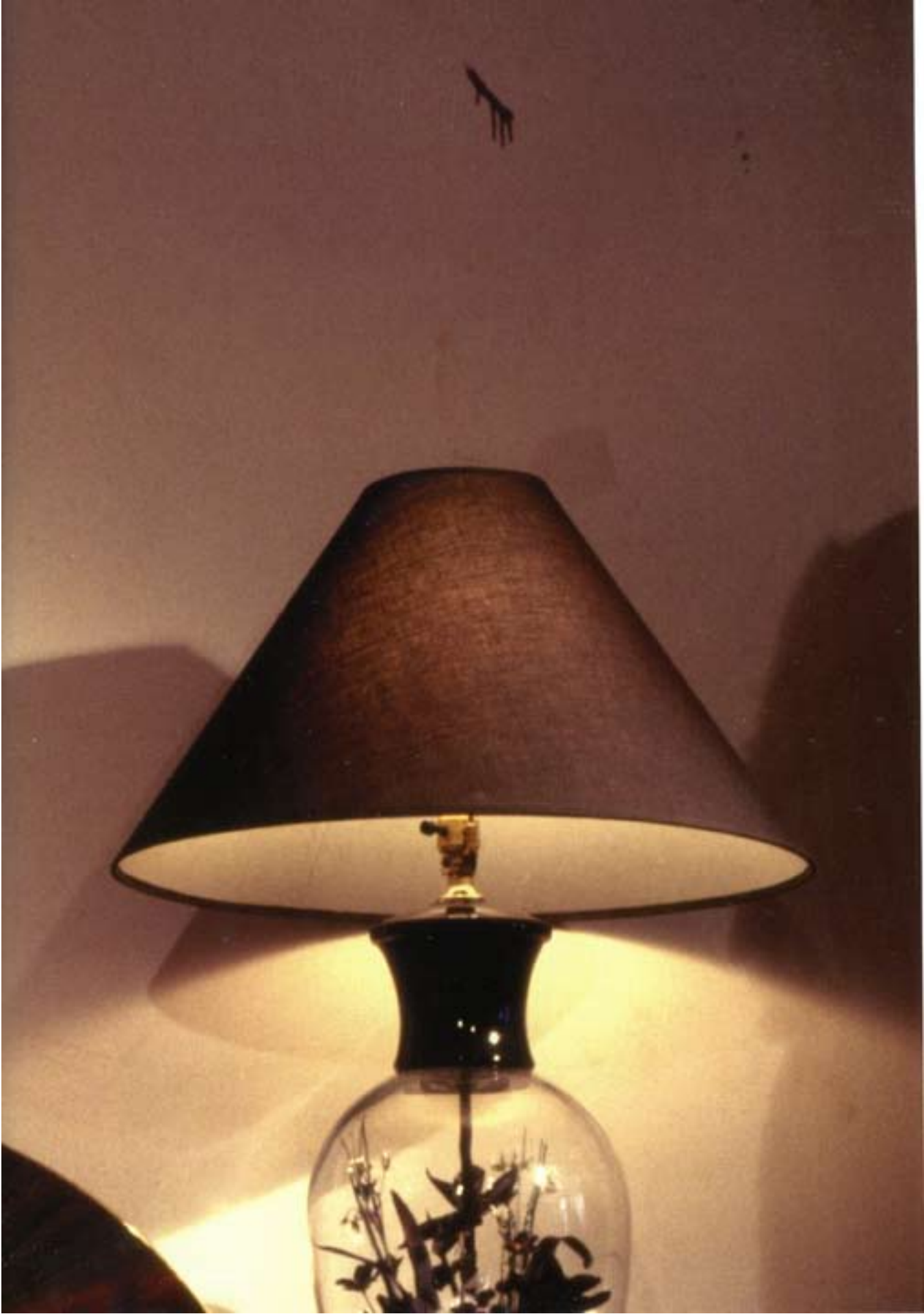
I suppose exhibiting art has the most freedom and personal stamp. However, all three sectors are market driven environments that in the end impose certain requirements and restrictions. My optimism is to resist the impulse to impose boundaries and not necessarily approach taking photographs differently for different venues. This is something I think about. I'm not as interested in the difference between sectors as I am in thinking about their interchangeability and permeability. Maybe that's where this risk is.

Monica Portillo is an independent critic and curator based in London and Madrid.

Jeff Burton. *Untitled #32 (Lighting Sconce)*, 1996. Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York.







Jeff Burton. *Untitled #23 (Flying Cowboy)*, 1995. Courtesy of the artist and Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York.

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Schwendener, Marth, "New Review: Jeff Burton, Casey Kaplan, through Jun 24," *Time Out New York*, Issue 550, June 15-21, 2006

Art

New Review

Jeff Burton



Casey Kaplan, through Jun 24

L.A. artists often seem haunted by the fact that they work in a town devoted to image production—not art, mind you, but Hollywood entertainment and its seedier sibling, porn. Jeff Burton's photographs move between categories, providing plenty of X-rated titillation, but also ample cues to signal that this is art, not smut.

Gay sex is the subject, but viewed obliquely. In one photograph, the camera focuses on a glass table laden with a low-budget, movie-set buffet; beneath the table, a man receives a blow job. Elsewhere, a man's sweaty footprints take visual precedence over his naked body, while a third image features a close-up of a blue curtain whose taut fastener suggests the crotch of a too-tight pair of pants. Photos of drawings, blocking notes from '70s porn shoots, and strange portraits of filmmaker and *Hollywood's Babylon* author Kenneth Anger with a broken nose round out the show.



The ghost of Robert Mapplethorpe hovers over Burton's photos, what with their arty gay-sex bent (an image of a man with a fist shoved up his rectum recalls Mapplethorpe's famous self-portrait with bullwhip). But Burton rejects Mapplethorpe's *haute moderne* techniques (and reliance on Edward Weston), trading the black-and-white of traditional art photography for heavily saturated color and arranging his images to emphasize their eclecticism. These are familiar strategies, borrowed from photo-conceptualists like Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman and Thomas Ruff, but Burton, steeped in the climate of SoCal media excess, makes them his own. —Marth Schwendener