

**Cindy
Sherman**
Imitation
of Life



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Cindy Sherman Imitation of Life

Philipp Kaiser
Sofia Coppola
Joanne Heyler





THE BROAD

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Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life is the first special exhibition held at The Broad. Crossing this important institutional threshold with the work of Cindy Sherman points to the significance of her shape-changing, convention-disrupting work to visual culture generally, but also, on a more personal level, to the history of Sherman's work in the Broad collection, a remarkable and defining commitment that stretches back almost thirty-five years.

Eli Broad cites Sherman's work as one of the most startling and exciting encounters of his and Edye's lives as art collectors. In November 1982, in the early years of their infatuation with contemporary art, the Broads saw a show featuring Sherman's rear projection series at Metro Pictures gallery in New York. These modestly scaled photographs were made using an old cinematic technique for creating the illusion of outdoor scenes filmed within a soundstage. Intrigued, the Broads were invited downstairs to see work from a previous series that hadn't yet sold. There they were shown Sherman's 8x10 black-and-white "film stills" in which the artist poses as her own model in a variety of nostalgic yet rigorously conceived scenes reminiscent of B-movies of the 1950s and '60s. Although the Broads at that time had not considered collecting photography, they loved these works, which they viewed as documents of performance as much as photographic objects. Very quickly, starting with the acquisition of twenty works from that fateful visit, Cindy Sherman became the most deeply collected artist in their collection and the only one followed so assiduously for decades. Acquiring works from almost every single series the artist has ever produced, the Broad collection now has more than 125 Sherman photographs, a holding unparalleled worldwide.

Visual tropes and techniques from popular film imbue the early work that drew the Broads' interest. *Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life*, conceived with the

artist by guest curator Philipp Kaiser, takes a deeper look at how Sherman's work from throughout her career—not just in the early pieces—takes various cues from film and the cinematic. The artist's own love of film—particularly commercial, popular film, including horror and melodrama—is clear and pervasive in her work, and placed at the center of this show. Imagery from the rear projection series is reimaged and deployed in large, unique photomurals, and the cover image of this catalogue features a Sherman photograph inspired by the 1982 potboiler *Frances*, a film starring Jessica Lange as the unhinged, misunderstood movie and television actress Frances Farmer.

Sherman's photos up to the early 1990s reflect historical typecasting of women in characters defined through both power and debasement—the femme fatale, the sexy librarian, the kitchen-bound, smoldering immigrant housewife in the film stills; the pregnant mistress or Madame de Pompadour courtesan in the history portraits. More contemporary, less nostalgia-tinged figures emerge in the later work: failed symbols of feminine roles, of trying too hard, embodied in the New York socialites and over-the-hill wannabe L.A. actresses. Sherman's work, even from as long as thirty years ago, is perhaps more relevant to the culture at large than ever. So-called identity politics, while less in the foreground for contemporary art today, continue to rile and resonate in society at large where consciousness of increasingly complex, subtle, and more slippery biases are at play and at odds—exactly the territory Sherman mines. Things are uncertain in Sherman's work: Is the artist critiquing a character type or admiring it? Is her "imitation of life"—these sincere but strangely made-up people, with clothing aspirational and amateurish, hair askew or comically coiffed—poignant or repellent or both? Our exhibition *Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life* will not settle these questions as much as amplify them.

Our partners in bringing about this exhibition of Cindy Sherman's work—her first museum show in Los Angeles in almost twenty years—are many. First, I thank Cindy Sherman herself, who generously embraced this exhibition in spite of many concurrent obligations, and who has made enormous contributions above and beyond all expectations, from its conception to its design. Above all, I am grateful for her work, which through its rigor, humor, and beauty has touched many.

I am indebted to Philipp Kaiser, our guest curator for this exhibition, for bringing his long-standing commitment to the artists of the Pictures Generation to bear on Cindy Sherman's important work and for expanding our insight into her practice. I thank Tom Heman, Helene Winer, and Janelle Reiring at Metro Pictures for organizational assistance and their continued support of Sherman's career, and I am grateful to Margaret Lee at Cindy Sherman's studio for navigating the many moving pieces of this project.

Every staff member of The Broad will ultimately have important responsibilities in the exhibition, from visitor services associates to security. However, I want to specifically thank Sarah Loyer, Curatorial Assistant, for her assistance at every stage of its organization, as well as Chelsea Beck, Assistant Curator for Special Projects; Alex Capriotti, Director of Marketing and Communications; Rich Cherry, Deputy Director; Vicki Gambill, Director of Collections Management; Lauren Girard, Associate Director of Visitor Services; Jeannine Guido, Associate Director of Museum Operations; Rob Hudson, Director of Retail Operations; Deborah Kanter, General Counsel; Julia Latané, Head Preparator; Ed Patuto, Director of Audience Engagement; and China Short, Executive Assistant to the Director. This catalogue is specifically the result of the insightful guidance of Ed Schad, Assistant Curator and Publications Manager.

The generosity of lenders is a key part of this presentation of Cindy Sherman's work. We thank Metro Pictures; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Menil Collection; and the Whitney Museum of American Art for graciously lending their artworks.

As always, without the ongoing support and patronage of Eli and Edythe Broad and the board members of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, The Broad Art Foundation, and The Broad, this exhibition would not have been possible. I am deeply appreciative for their profound commitment to collecting and their tireless philanthropy in the arts.



Imitations of Life

Appropriation, the Cinematic Impulse, and Beyond *Philipp Kaiser*

For more than forty years now, Cindy Sherman has presented herself in her photographs in a plethora of chameleonic roles: once as Lucille Ball, once as a fictional actress in a '50s B-movie, then as a daydreaming teenager; and later as Madame de Pompadour, a hysterical clown, and an aging widow of means.

Much has been written about Cindy Sherman.¹ It has been pointed out that she dressed up as a child and came in costume to her job at Artists Space in New York,² and that she has often been the subject and object of her own artwork. It has also been pointed out that the discursive horizon of her work has shifted over the years, and that her photographic performances and permutations of the self simultaneously reflect the numerous “feminisms” with which her work has been interpreted.³ Even though in conversations and interviews Sherman gracefully sidesteps theoretical instrumentalization, her work can in a sense be understood as a case study in postmodern theorizing. Rosalind Krauss complained early on of the division into opposing camps of “humanists” and “feminists” and recognized that Sherman’s early work evaded theoretical categories.⁴ Many years later, Johanna Burton stated that a specific shift had recently occurred in Sherman’s body of work, as well as in criticism about it. Sherman’s most recent photographs, Burton wrote, show women who are often described politely as “past their prime,” coinciding precisely with changes in the artist’s own body.⁵ The work no longer refers to mass-media stereotypes or stable codes, “but rather demands some consideration of identification itself as a relational phenomenon.”⁶ Relational, insofar as the work all of a sudden makes the viewer aware of how it is perceived and by whom.

It isn’t the goal of this essay to discuss the full breadth of Cindy Sherman’s complex body of work, which is emphatically organized in untitled series, although the exhibition in Los Angeles offers a valid overview of the work from 1975 to 2016. Sherman’s decision to title her exhibition *Imitation of Life* moves toward enabling a distinct and specific perspective on her work, first in the title’s referring to Douglas Sirk’s well-known melodrama about a young girl’s identity crisis, and second because the concept of imitation seems essential to Sherman’s artistic practice.⁷ But first things first: let’s flashback.

Opposite:
Cindy Sherman
Untitled #71, 1980 (detail)
Chromogenic color print
23¾ x 31⅞ in. (60 x 79 cm)
plate: page 50

1. The literature is extensive. For an informative overview essay written in connection with Cindy Sherman’s retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in 2012, see Eva Respini, “Will the Real Cindy Sherman Please Stand Up?,” in *Cindy Sherman* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2012), 12–53.

2. Gabriele Schor, *Cindy Sherman: The Early Works, 1975–1977: Catalogue Raisonné* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2012), 13ff./37ff., and Claudia Gould and Valerie Smith, *5000 Artists Return to Artists Space: 25 Years* (New York: Artists Space, 1998), 59.

3. Jan Avgikos, “Burning Down the House,” *Artforum* (January 1993): 74.

4. See Rosalind Krauss interviewed by Paul Taylor in *Art & Text* 8 (1982): 31, but also Johanna Burton, “Cindy Sherman: Abstraction and Empathy,” in *Cindy Sherman* (MoMA, 2012), 62. It can be assumed that by “humanists,” Krauss means Peter Schjeldahl and Arthur Danto. The latter wrote an extensive essay on the Untitled Film Stills. See Danto, “Photography and Performance: Cindy Sherman’s Stills,” in *Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Stills* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990).

5. Burton, “Cindy Sherman: Abstraction and Empathy,” 59.

6. *Ibid.*, 62.

7. *Imitation of Life* was likewise the title of an extensive Sherman profile in *Artnews* written by Gerald Marzorati. In his text, there is no immediate reference to Sirk. See Marzorati, “Imitation of Life,” *Artnews* (September 1983): 78–87.



Cindy Sherman

Untitled Film Still #48, 1979

Gelatin silver print

8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

I. Imitation as Appropriation

When Cindy Sherman moved from Buffalo to Manhattan together with Robert Longo in the summer of 1977 and her first series, *Untitled Film Stills*, was begun, her work was positioned in the discursive orbit surrounding the *Pictures* exhibition, which took place that year and would become legendary. Curated by Douglas Crimp upon the invitation of Artists Space director Helene Winer, the show presented the work of five artists (Troy Brauntuch, Jack Goldstein, Sherrie Levine, Robert Longo, and Philip Smith), but not Cindy Sherman, whose work had already been on view the previous year in the exchange exhibition *Hallwalls/Artists Space*.⁸ As is well known, in conjunction with the *Pictures* show, Crimp authored an influential essay, which two years later he rewrote for *October* into a postmodernist manifesto, refining his argument and at the same time including Sherman and her *Untitled Film Stills* series, which at that point had not yet been concluded.⁹ Matt Mullican calls *Pictures* a “marker” and points out how ironic it is that today Sherman has become the star of the exhibition.¹⁰ This deceptive memory may be explained by an ignorance of historical circumstances; it is also because her early work corresponds prototypically with the categories of the hybrid, subversive, and performative that Crimp established.

So when Sherman chooses the title *Imitation of Life*, we inevitably are reminded of the origin scene of appropriation art that was established through *Pictures*. However, Crimp’s exhibition as well as his essay were an active part of a more comprehensive conversation that reflected the appropriation strategies of a young, postfeminist generation and placed terms such as “imitation” and “mimicry” at the center of their debates. In 1980, Craig Owens wrote that “Sherman’s women are not women but images of women, specular models of femininity projected by the media to encourage imitation, identification; they are, in other words, tropes, figures.”¹¹ Sherman’s meticulous stagings thereby accomplish a total identification with the images so that it is no longer possible to tell the difference between the dancer and the dance. But such a differentiation is essential to Owens, since “it is the picture which inspires imitation, mimesis, not the other way around.”¹²

The dialectic relationship between subject/image and performance, stereotype and imitation, was originally the source of some confusion. While Owens sees a critical aspect in the deconstructive impulse of imitation,¹³ the artist Martha Rosler observed in reference to Sherman’s centerfolds series from 1982 that imitation does not necessarily entail criticality: “Repeating the images of woman bound in the frame will, like Pop, soon be seen as

8. See Douglas Eklund, *The Pictures Generation, 1974–1984* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009).

9. Douglas Crimp, “Pictures,” in *Pictures* (New York: Artists Space, 1977), and Crimp, “Pictures,” *October*, no. 8 (Spring 1979): 75–88.

10. Gould and Smith, *5000 Artists Return to Artists Space*, 61.

11. Craig Owens, “The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism, Part 2” (1980), in Owens, *Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 84.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*, 85.

confirmation by the ‘post-feminist’ society. We need to find a way to maintain not just a critical but a countering practice ...”¹⁴ Rosler’s call to establish a new practice overlooked the fact that Sherman’s early work (but also the works that followed) in their manner of construction are always recognizable as fakes, be it through the forced theatricality, the artificial lighting, the amateurish costumes, or the bodily prostheses, and therefore by no means verge into pure imitation.¹⁵ It could still be asked whether it was precisely the haziness and classical connotations of the term “imitation” that led to such disagreement. It seems noteworthy that in the early 1980s, Jean Baudrillard’s simulation thesis had not yet been widely received and “imitation” and “mimicry” continued to suffice for describing the strategies of appropriation. But Baudrillard had announced almost concurrently that imitation, doubling, or parody were no longer at issue in an era of simulation.¹⁶ Without wanting to get lost in the semantic vortex of early appropriation art, it is certain that with the title *Imitation of Life*, Sherman (intentionally or unintentionally) locates her work in this context. Being imitated are first of all mass-media-generated stereotypes of femininity but also (ersatz) reality in itself. The later photographs appropriate a specific class rhetoric that commands empathy.¹⁷ Sherman’s artistic practice can be considered overall as an imitation of (imitated) life: her series are iterations in art history and in the time of her own life. Meanwhile, she aims to situate herself outside of art with a capital A.¹⁸ Sherman remembers, “When I was in school I was getting disgusted with the attitude of art being so religious or sacred, so I wanted to make something which people could relate to without having read a book about it first. So that anybody off the street could appreciate it... That’s the reason why I wanted to imitate something out of the culture, and also make fun of the culture as I was doing it.”¹⁹

II. Imitation as Cinema

Imitation of Life was Douglas Sirk’s most successful melodrama, which marked the zenith of his career in 1959; as Rainer Werner Fassbinder wrote, “a great, crazy movie about life and about death. And about America.”²⁰ At the center of the film (itself a remake—like an imitation—of a film by the same title from 1934) is the story of Lana Turner and her black domestic employee, Annie, whose daughter denies her identity and wants to be white, and to this end is even willing to break off contact with her mother.²¹ Sirk described his film as social criticism: “The imitation of life is not the real life... There is a wonderful

14. Martha Rosler, “Notes on Quotes,” *wedge*, no. 2 (Fall 1982): 73.

15. Owens replied to Rosler’s critique: “Sherman abandoned the film still format for that of the magazine centerfold, opening herself to charges that she was an accomplice in her own objectification, reinforcing the image of the woman bound by the frame. This may be true; but while Sherman may pose as a pin-up, she still cannot be pinned down.” Owens, “The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism,” in *Beyond Recognition*, 183.

16. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985). Here see also Rosalind Krauss, “A Note on Photography and the Simulacral,” *October*, no. 31 (Winter 1984): 49–68.

17. For an expanded discussion, see Burton, “Cindy Sherman: Abstraction and Empathy.”

18. Interestingly, Sherman also considered the title *Imitation of Art* for the Los Angeles exhibition. Email to the author, January 9, 2016.

19. Cindy Sherman in Sandy Nairne, *State of the Art: Ideas & Images in the 1980s* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1987), 132.

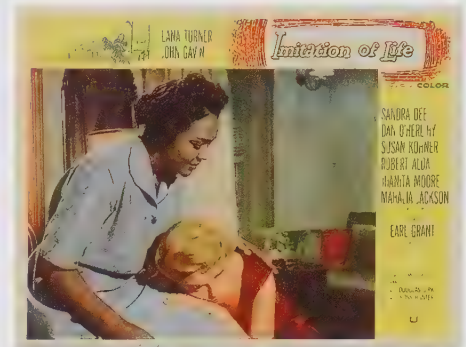
20. Rainer Werner Fassbinder, “Six Films by Douglas Sirk,” in *Douglas Sirk*, ed. Laura Mulvey and Jon Halliday (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Film Festival, 1972), 104.

21. The original version of *Imitation of Life* (1934) was directed by John M. Stahl, based on Fanny Hurst’s eponymous novel of 1933.

expression: seeing through a glass darkly. Everything, even life, is inevitably removed from you. You can't reach, or touch, the real. You see reflections. If you try to grasp happiness itself your fingers only meet glass. It's hopeless."²² Sherman's reference to Sirk may be surprising at first, especially since Alfred Hitchcock served as a common reference for her Untitled Film Stills, although she spoke early on about the influence of European filmmakers on her work.²³ In Laura Mulvey's much-cited essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," a psycho-analytic feminist examination of the so-called male gaze in cinema, the author explicitly discusses Hitchcock's voyeurism. In view of the popularity of Mulvey's essay, Sherman's exegetes have tended to focus on this particularly sanctioned reference figure.²⁴

It is not my intention here to deny Hitchcock's significance for contemporary art—on the contrary. But his appeal for artists was not a product of his subjects; rather, it can be attributed to the manner in which his films visually intertwine an interest in voyeurism with the cinematic apparatus and simultaneously exhibit with perfect openness how his visual tricks are constructed.²⁵ Sherman has pointed out many times how thrilled she was by Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, but also states that the films of Sirk and Sam Fuller have equal importance for her work.²⁶ Sirk's theatrical, melodramatic "weepies" were also brought into play by Rosalind Krauss right at the beginning of her extensive publication on Sherman, when the author examined the specificity of the Untitled Film Stills.²⁷ Sirk's influence was to a certain degree generational and was highly significant precisely in the milieu of the "Pictures generation."²⁸ Particularly important were the emotional intensity of the films and the artificiality of the settings and the lighting, as well as the fact that Sirk came from theater and therefore, according to Mulvey, brought to cinema a "sense of theatrical distancing (drama as spectacle) that works against the tendency of film to absorb the spectator into itself."²⁹

In Sherman's early work in particular, Sirk makes a latent and constant appearance. But the objective here is not to make his influence tangible; rather, what seems crucial is that Sherman's work is permeated by a cinematic impulse from the outset. As early as the mid-1970s, when she was still a student in Buffalo, she realized six little-known films and dealt with the technical prerequisites of film, the authoring of storyboards, and scene sequencing.³⁰ Shortly after, she realized her Untitled Film Stills and positioned her work



Douglas Sirk
Imitation of Life, 1959
Movie poster of
Lana Turner and Juanita Moore

22. Douglas Sirk in *Sirk on Sirk: Interviews with Jon Halliday* (New York: Viking, 1972), 130.

23. She mentioned Jean-Luc Godard and Michelangelo Antonioni in Gould and Smith, *5000 Artists Return to Artists Space*, 84.

24. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975), 6–18. Several years after, Mulvey personally made the attempt, "with this theoretical armature in place" (Rosalind Krauss), to describe Sherman's Untitled Film Stills. See Mulvey, "A Phantasmagoria of the Female

Body: The Work of Cindy Sherman," *New Left Review* 188 (July–August 1991): 137–50.

25. Kerry Brougher, "Hall of Mirrors," in *Hall of Mirrors: Art and Film Since 1945* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996), 104, and Brougher, "Hitch-Hiking in Dreamscapes," in *Notorious: Alfred Hitchcock and Contemporary Art* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1999), 18.

26. Cindy Sherman, "The Making of Untitled," in *Cindy Sherman: The Complete Untitled Film Stills* (New York: MoMA, 2003), 5. The artist mentioned Sirk and Fuller in conversation with the author, January 20, 2016.

27. Rosalind Krauss, *Cindy Sherman, 1975–1993* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 17ff.

28. Both Sherrie Levine and David Salle point out Sirk's influence in their early work. See Eklund, *The Pictures Generation*, 107, 214.

29. Laura Mulvey, "Fassbinder and Sirk," in Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 48.



Cindy Sherman

Untitled #76, 1980

Chromogenic color print

20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)

Whitney Museum of American
Art, New York; Gift of Barbara
and Eugene Schwartz



Cindy Sherman

Untitled #77, 1980

Chromogenic color print
20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)

The Museum of Fine Arts,
Houston; Gift of William F. Stern

squarely in the milieu of cinema and mass culture. Much has been said about the Untitled Film Stills and speculations have been made as to who sees whom how and to what extent the depicted woman ultimately can only be the depiction of her representation. Critical discussions of the “scopophilic regimes of the gaze” have been described in great detail and were illuminating, legitimate, and productive, but, according to Krauss, often did not make the effort to look “under the hood.”³¹ In response to her theoretical appropriation, Sherman has countered that she certainly was not aware of the “male gaze”: “It was the way I was shooting, the mimicry of the style of black and white grade-Z motion pictures that produced the self-consciousness of these characters, not my knowledge of feminist theory.”³² Nonetheless, she seems in a sense to have the same spirit as Mulvey’s arguments and would not disagree that her characters are to a great degree constructed as a spectacle for consumption by the male gaze, and therefore represent projection screens for desire. All the women are characters from imaginary films of the 1940s, ’50s, and ’60s; according to Crimp, “we do not know what is happening in these pictures, but we know for sure that *something* is happening, and that something is a fictional narrative. We would never take these photographs for anything but *staged*.”³³

Along these lines, Sherman has described her Untitled Film Stills as “mini-performances” in public space, in which she enacts her vertiginous role play.³⁴ Sherman always serves as actor and director, i.e., she fills multiple roles in the cinematic production context as well. Whether the stills were shot with a camera on a tripod by Robert Longo, Helene Winer, or Sherman’s father makes no difference since the images were made according to the artist’s instructions.³⁵ One aspect that has been granted little attention until now is to what extent Sherman has to accomplish a dramatic performance for the imitation of stereotypical image making. Because it is the image, according to Craig Owens, that produces the imitation, Sherman’s body must inscribe itself into the regime of the scopophilic gaze with empathy and subordination. The artist herself has persuasively summarized the complexity of the dialectic interrelationship between determined image and performance: “I don’t feel that I am the person. I may be thinking about a certain story or situation, but I don’t become her. There’s this distance. The image in the mirror becomes her—the image the camera gets on the film. And the one thing I’ve always known is that the camera lies.”³⁶

But Sherman’s poses also correspond with the immediate environment in which they appear. Thus, Crimp has stressed that all New York daytime location shots use the

30. Schor, *Cindy Sherman: The Early Works*, 24ff. Her *Cut Outs*, 1975, “something silly, melodramatic” (Sherman), as well as *A Play of Selves* and *Murder Mystery*, both 1976, are also part of this group of works.

31. Krauss, *Cindy Sherman*, 56.

32. Sherman, “The Making of *Untitled*,” 9.

33. Crimp, “Pictures” (1979), 80.

34. Sherman, “The Making of *Untitled*,” 13. In this context, Sherman’s remark on Vito Acconci’s performances is of great interest: “at one time Acconci was really influential on me because he used himself in his art ...

When I saw Acconci my reaction at first was feminist indignation and repulsion. I thought it was macho stuff. But then he came to Buffalo and I discovered he was not about that at all ... Performance and Conceptual Art, what Acconci was doing, turned out to be the most important for me. It was confrontational ...” See Michael Kimmelman, “At the Met with: Cindy Sherman: Portraitist in the Hall of Her Artistic Ancestors,” *New York Times*, May 19, 1995: C1, C7.

35. Sherman described at length who photographed each “mini-performance” in “The Making of *Untitled*.”

36. Sherman in Marzorati, “Imitation of Life,” 81.

relationship of the figure to distinctive architecture to create the emotional timbre of the picture.³⁷ Sherman's claim that she selected mysterious and unidentifiable places and that the buildings in the background of the stills could be anywhere is countered by Crimp's meticulous demonstration of which images were shot where.³⁸ In this way, he establishes an ideal topography that places the fictional *Untitled Film Stills* in a larger urban and historical context and ties into his own biography, nascent queer culture, and the arts scene in New York. It is well known that Sherman shot some of the stills in Arizona, where her parents lived, but it is perhaps less well known that *Untitled Film Still* #49, #50, and #51 were made in Los Angeles.

Back to Crimp: in his "Pictures" essay, he notes the "jarring juxtaposition of close-up face with distant buildings" in several stills, which suggests "the cinematic artifice of rear-screen projection."³⁹ Crimp's observation that the narrative complexity is based primarily on the specific relationship of background and figure, and that moreover, certain stills suggest the outmoded illusionistic technique of rear projection, is remarkable. It is remarkable in that one year later, Sherman decided to conclude the *Untitled Film Still* series entirely and change her working method so as to no longer have to work "on location" and to have more control over image construction. That the "Pictures" essay seems to have anticipated the rear projections, made one year later, in 1980, is coincidental. Nonetheless, it becomes clear here how much Sherman's individual series are linked and how reflexive her practice is.⁴⁰

With her rear projections, a series of only fifteen images that until now has been given relatively little attention and described as "transitional," she realized her first color photographs.⁴¹ Previously, she inadvertently made several color images during the stills when she accidentally inserted color film.⁴² The nostalgic atmosphere of B-movies seemed disturbed in the color shots, however, and she discarded them as too real and contemporary.⁴³ It is not the use of color that is central for the rear projections, however, but rather the artist's (re)defined working method—which could be termed "back to the studio" and which has been in force in her work since that time—as well as the employment of the already obsolete cinematographic illusion technique. Rear projections have been used in cinema since the 1930s, in countless scenes inside taxis, but they fell out of fashion with the rise of color film, which necessitated stronger lighting on the actors, causing the image of the rear projection to fade. Hitchcock famously used rear projections in

37. Douglas Crimp, "El día y la noche de Cindy Sherman," in *1.000 caras/0 caras/1 rostro: Cindy Sherman, Thomas Ruff, Frank Montero*, ed. Gerardo Mosquera (Madrid: Fundación Telefónica y La Fabrica, 2011), 17–34.

38. *Ibid.*, 33.

39. Crimp, "Pictures" (1979), 80.

40. Both Crimp and Sherman confirmed to the author that this was a "coincidence." To the question of whether they talked about her new series in advance, she writes, "I would never have specifically addressed

any theoretical concepts. I barely even knew their writings at that time." And "I never know ahead of time what I'm going to do next, it always evolves on its own." Emails to the author, both January 30, 2016.

41. See Peter Schjeldahl: "However, the 'backscreens' lack thematic direction. Their significance is transitional." Schjeldahl, "The Oracle of Images," in *Cindy Sherman* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1987), 9.

42. Sherman did not include the color photographs in the "official" series. However, several of them were used for benefit purposes.

43. Sherman, "The Making of *Untitled*," 16.

Technicolor, but so did Sirk—recall the endless drive through the Texas oil fields in *Written on the Wind* (1956). In Sherman's case, their extreme artificiality multiplies the deconstructive impulse of photography—but simultaneously drew hasty criticism for calling too much attention to fabrication or the technical.⁴⁴ It is precisely the fissure in the image field resulting from the generally out-of-focus background and the close-up figure that succeeds in positioning the photographs in an otherworldly space, in the realm of the fictional, dreams, and the theatrical.⁴⁵ From today's perspective, it may be surprising how critics of the time agreed that the rear projections no longer referred to cinema but instead to TV movies and commercials, and asserted that they were fundamentally more contemporary than the nostalgic mood of the Untitled Film Stills.⁴⁶ The “seductive heat”⁴⁷ of the rear projections was certainly enhanced through color, so the comparison with advertising is compelling, though above all this is because of the striking compositions, which recall the communicative directness of Jack Goldstein's color films from 1975, in which items such as a ballet shoe, a knife, or a white dove are presented in all their objecthood against a monochrome background.⁴⁸



Jack Goldstein
Still from *White Dove*, 1975
16mm film, color, sound
20 sec.

But atmospherically the images take root elsewhere, in a fictional realm in which women who are more self-aware and independent seem to determine their own fates.⁴⁹ Here, too, it is unclear what exactly is happening, but it is clear *that* something is happening, while the roles are less accentuated than in the stills.⁵⁰ Sherman called the rear projections an experiment with color,⁵¹ and in this sense they must to a certain degree also be read as a formal reflection: it is significant that Sherman turns to color photography and the rear projection as the dominant means of cinematic illusion at the same moment, since color film makes rear projection obsolete. In doing so, she presents cinematic illusionism as completely inadequate, but at the same time makes use of its evocative potential.

The series remained rather small because technical difficulties restricted the breadth of variation. The lighting of the figure led to the projection's seeming washed out and the focal point was lost between the protagonist and the background. Rear screen projection, as a technique, resulted in the repertoire of poses in relation to the backgrounds quickly being exhausted.⁵²

44. Marzorati, “Imitation of Life,” 86.

45. Rosalind Krauss speaks of the “fissure in the image-field,” of the “split it sets up in the experience of density and substance between the three-dimensional character and her flattened, factitious looking scenic surroundings.” Krauss, *Cindy Sherman*, 89.

46. Marzorati, “Imitation of Life,” 86, and Lisa Phillips, “Cindy Sherman's Cindy Shermans,” in *Cindy Sherman* (Whitney, 1987), 15.

47. Schjeldahl, “The Oracle of Images,” 9.

48. Goldstein's color film suite was repeatedly linked to advertising because of his anonymous pictorial language.

49. Amada Cruz, “Movies, Monstrosities, and Masks: Twenty Years of Cindy Sherman,” in *Cindy Sherman, Retrospective* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1997), 5.

50. In a ten-minute film for MICA TV (1981), Sherman speaks with filmmaker Carole Ann Klonarides about her work as if Klonarides were her agent or gallerist. Meanwhile, in front of various rear projections, Sherman transforms into always changing characters. The authentic and informal talk unmasks

itself through a changing subject. Sherman here describes the characters of *Rear Projections* as “harder to get into” since due to the close-ups the “character is more visible.”

51. Sherman in conversation with the author, January 20, 2016.

It could rightly be asserted that Sherman's entire body of work is permeated by a cinematic impulse. Her centerfolds, 1982, are utterly theatrical: the lighting is highly artificial and the poses and gazes are ambivalent. The same holds true for the fashion portraits, 1983–present, for instance, when Sherman channels the rebel actress Frances Farmer in her powerful platinum blonde wig, *Untitled #122*, 1983, as well as for the history portraits, 1988–90, which are based not solely on historical paintings but also on lavish, kitschy costume dramas. In 1997, she co-wrote and directed her first feature film, *Office Killer*, and she began using green screen technology shortly after in her clown series, 2004, even further sealing her relationship to cinema.⁵³ Interestingly enough, Sherman's most recent series features characters inspired by silent film actresses of the early twentieth century.

For over forty years, Sherman's work has moved within the discussion of identity and representation and, in doing so, has maneuvered through various mass-media contexts, among others cinema; its fictional suggestions and typologies have long since become a real ersatz-reality, an imitation of life. Sherman's early *Untitled Film Stills* as well as her rear projections refer explicitly to the cinema: stills, drawing from the existing format of the stationary image, which serves to publicize a film through its obtrusive, seductive allure as visual bait, as well as the rear projection, which was explicitly appropriated from the context of cinema. Moreover, this explicitness, the direct proximity to the cinematic image, entails, beyond the deconstructive impulse of postmodernist photography, that the works contain a suggestive narrative potential. In this way, the imitation of cinema and the imitation of life blur beyond recognition.

52. The problematics of focusing simultaneously on the protagonist and the background suggested close-up shots according to Sherman. Ibid.

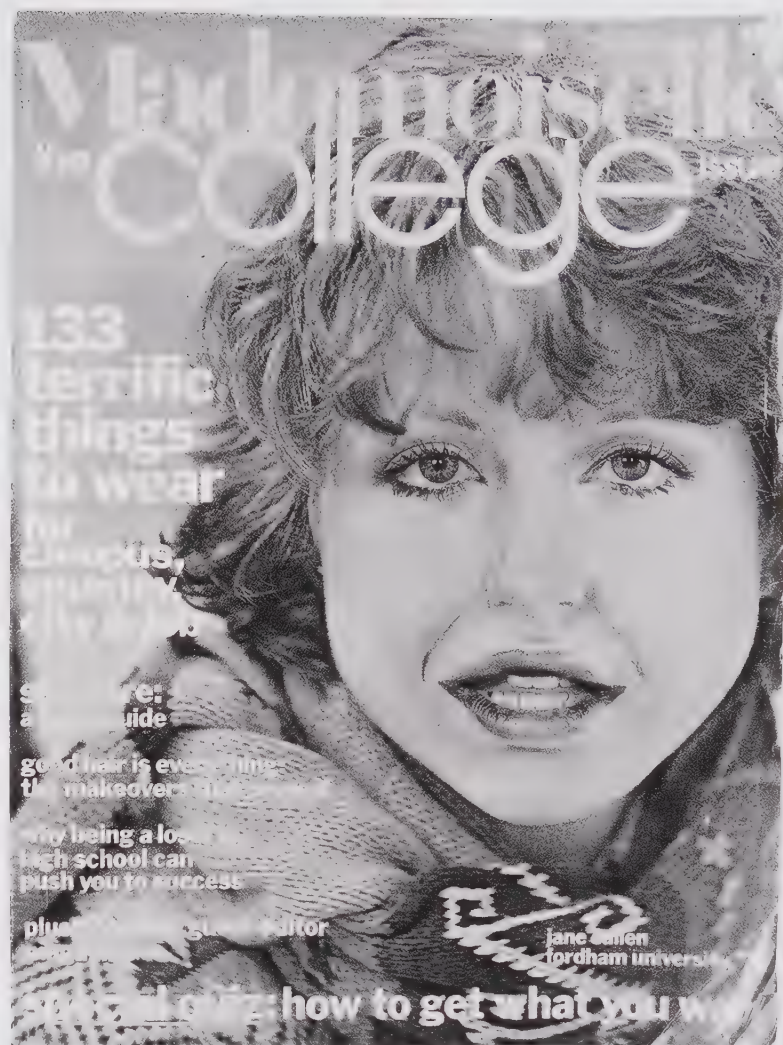
53. See Dahlia Schweitzer, *Cindy Sherman's Office Killer: Another Kind of Monster* (Chicago: Intellect Ltd., 2014).

Plates





Cover Girl (Mademoiselle), 1975/2011













Untitled #365, 1976/2000

Untitled #369, 1976/2000



Untitled #366, 1976/2000



Untitled #364, 1976/2000



Untitled #373, 1976/2000



Untitled #374, 1976/2000



Untitled #371, 1976/2000



Untitled #377, 1976/2000

















Untitled Film Still #52, 1979











Untitled Film Still #43, 1979













Untitled #86, 1981









Untitled #94, 1981





Untitled #112, 1982



Untitled #116, 1982



Untitled #97, 1982



Untitled #98, 1982



Untitled #99, 1982





Untitled #120, 1985





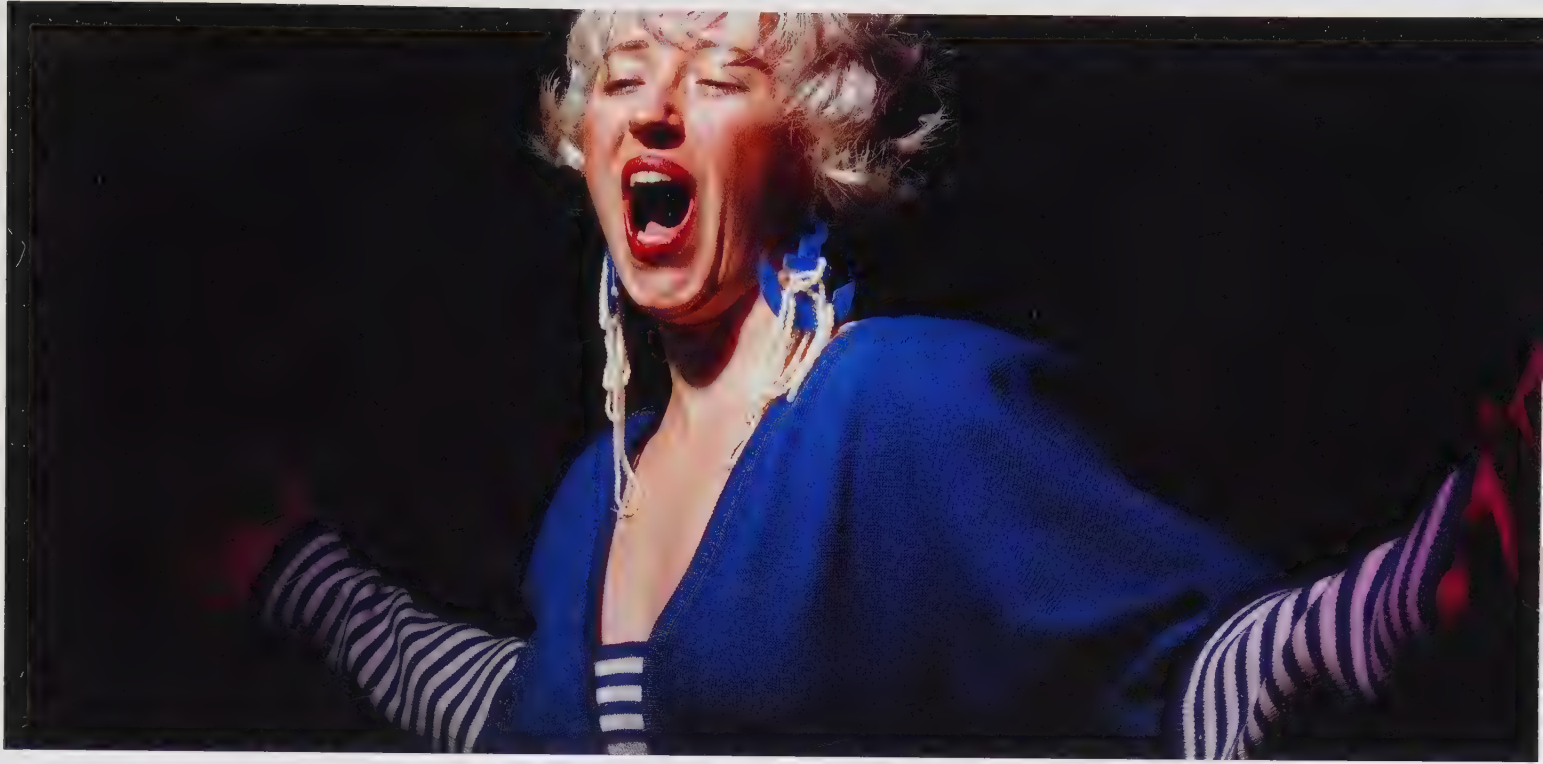
Untitled #118, 1983







Untitled #129, 1983





Untitled #117, 1983



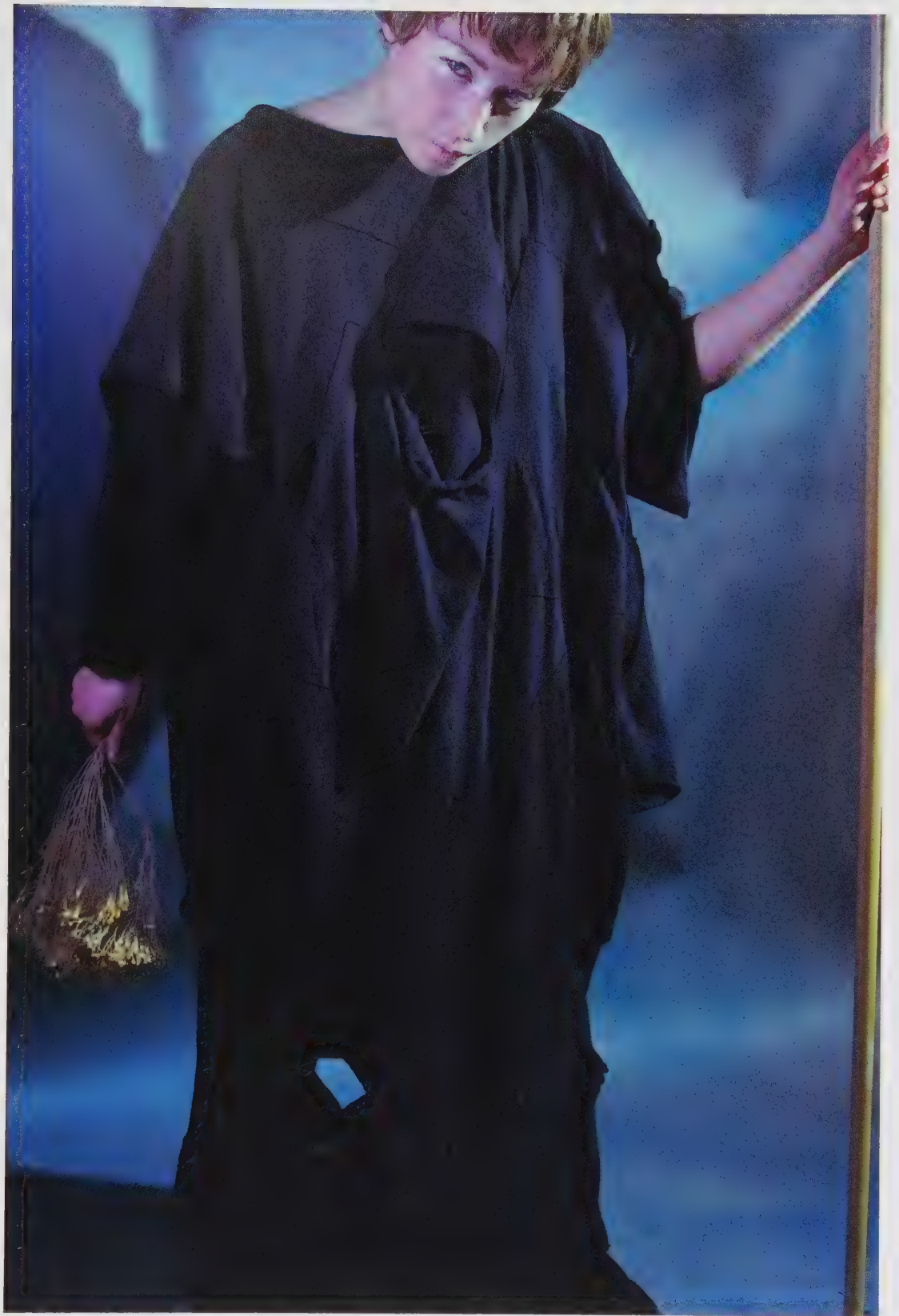
Untitled #139, 1984







Untitled #126, 1983





Untitled #136, 1984

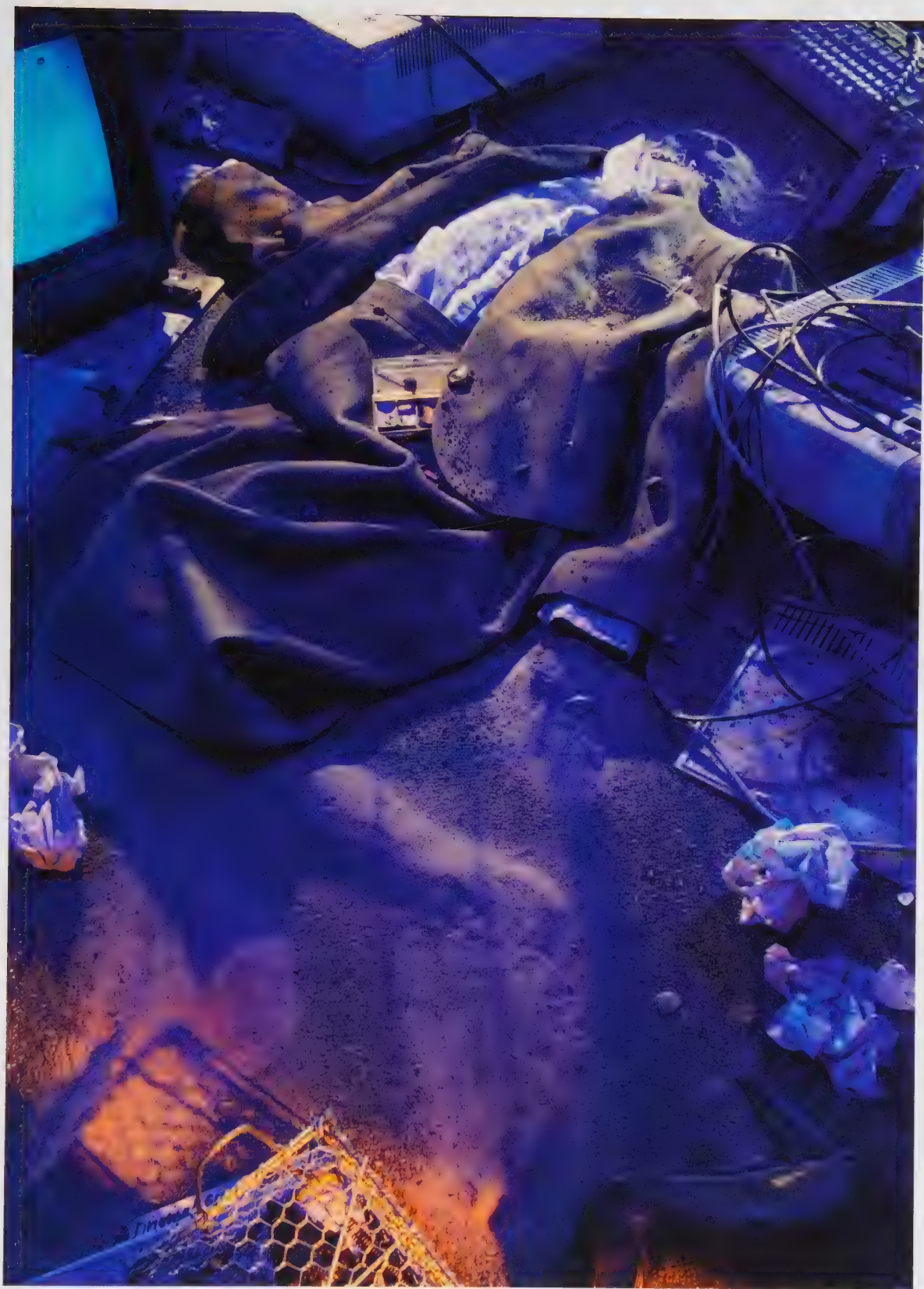


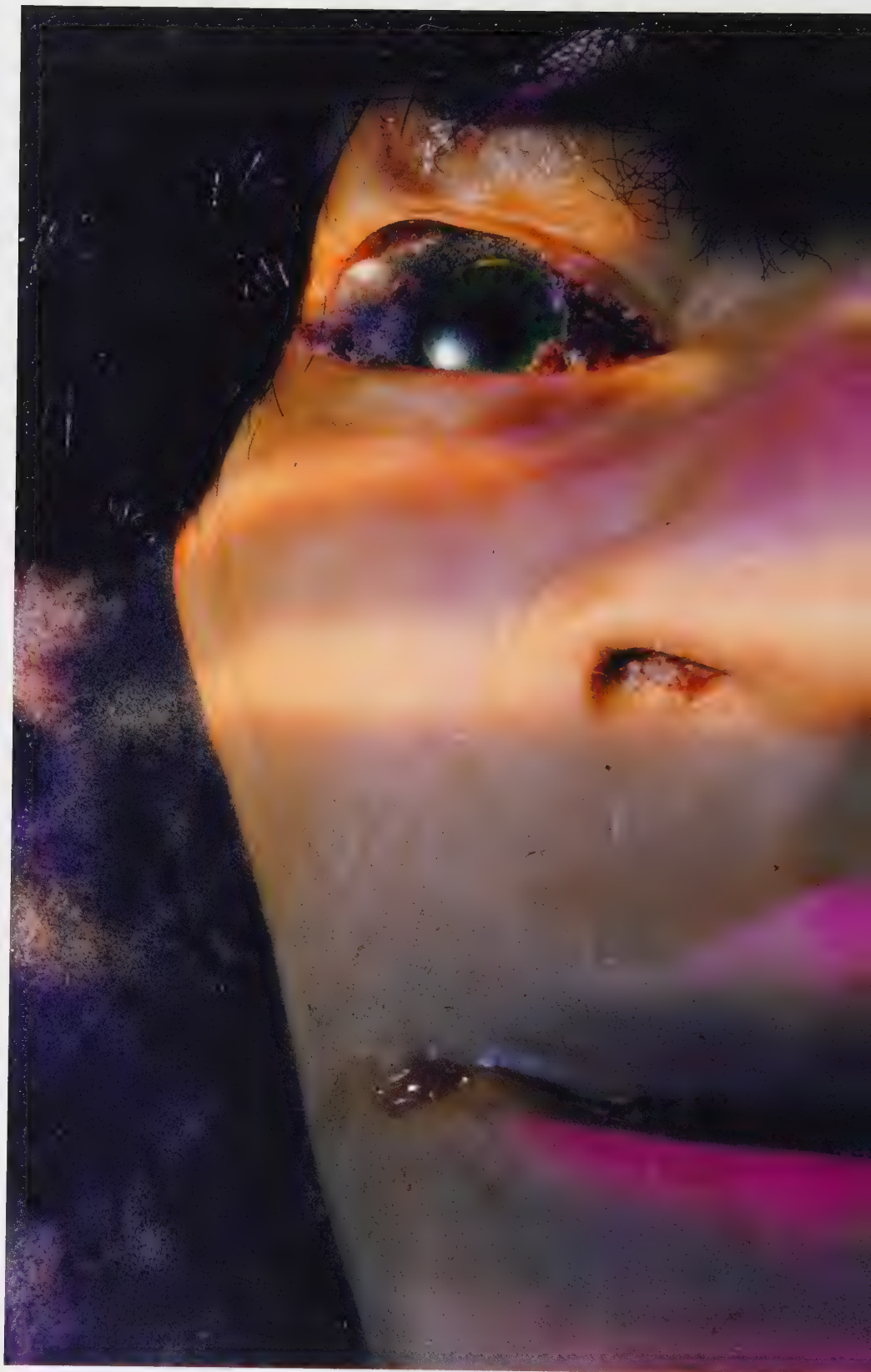


Untitled #146, 1985



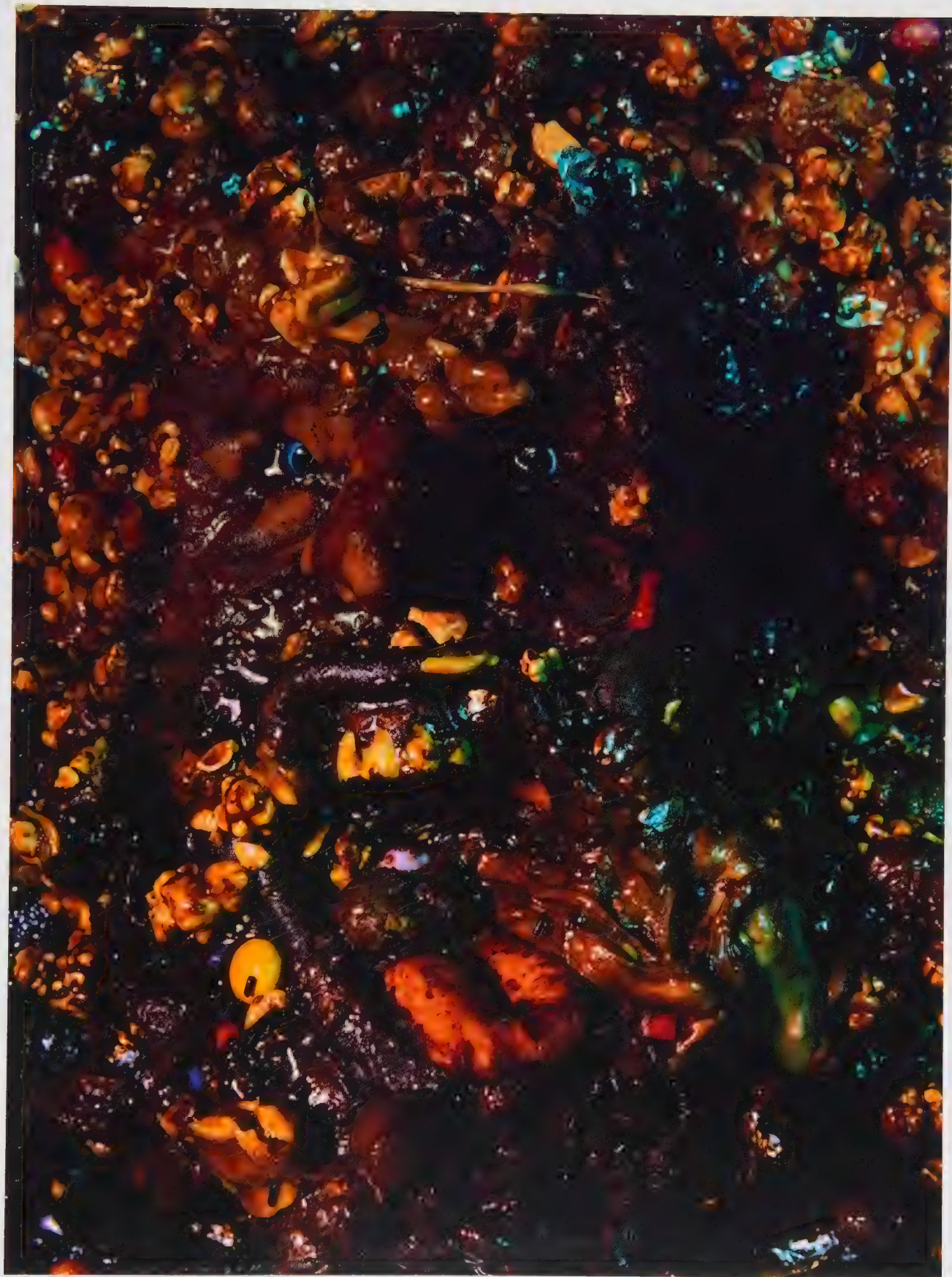






Untitled #180, 1987







Untitled #191, 1989









Untitled #201, 1989











Untitled #216, 1989







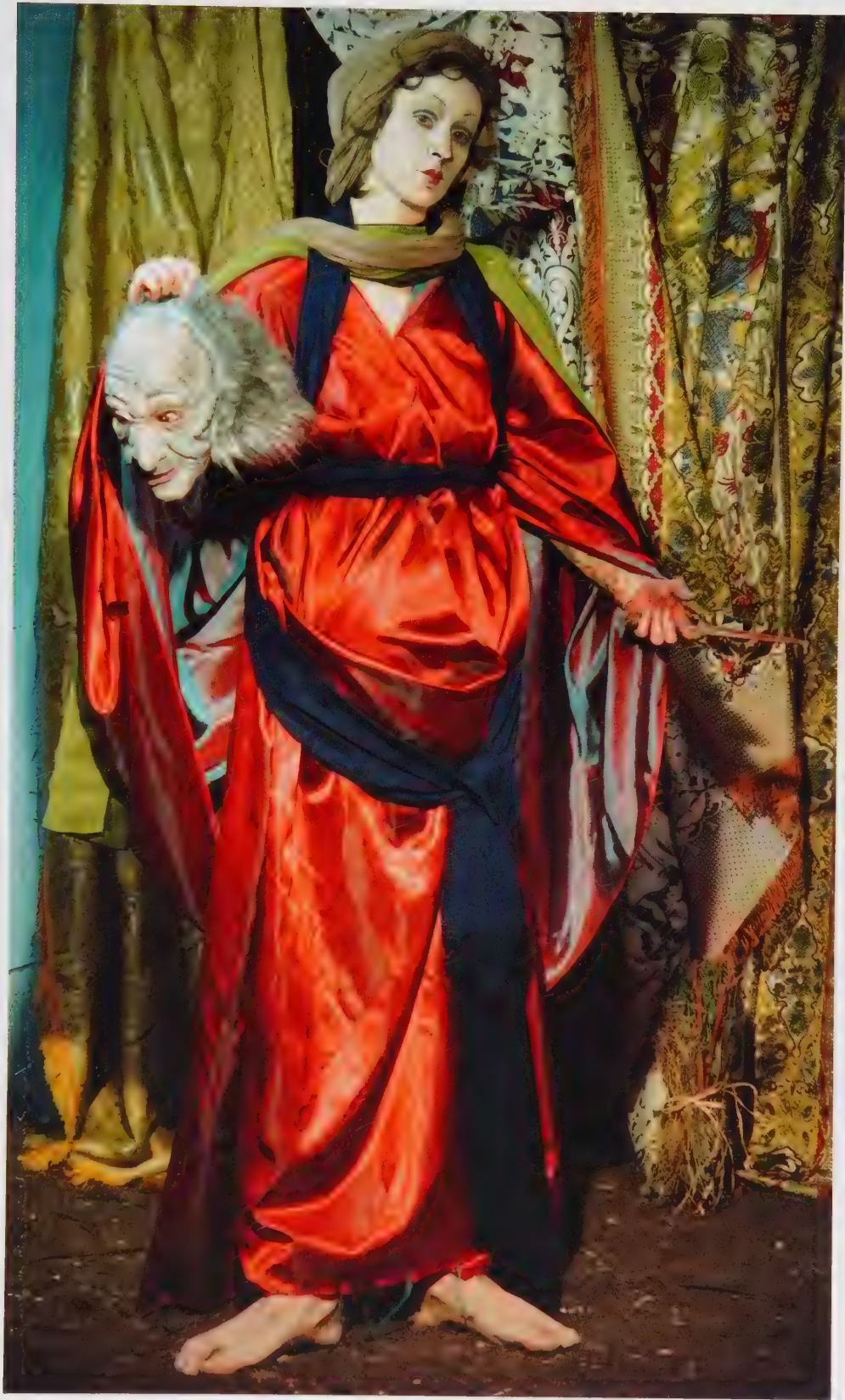


Untitled #209, 1989





Untitled #200, 1989





Untitled #264, 1992





Untitled #278, 1993





Untitled #297, 1994



Untitled #296, 1994







Untitled #356, 2000









Untitled #396, 2000





Untitled #404, 2000











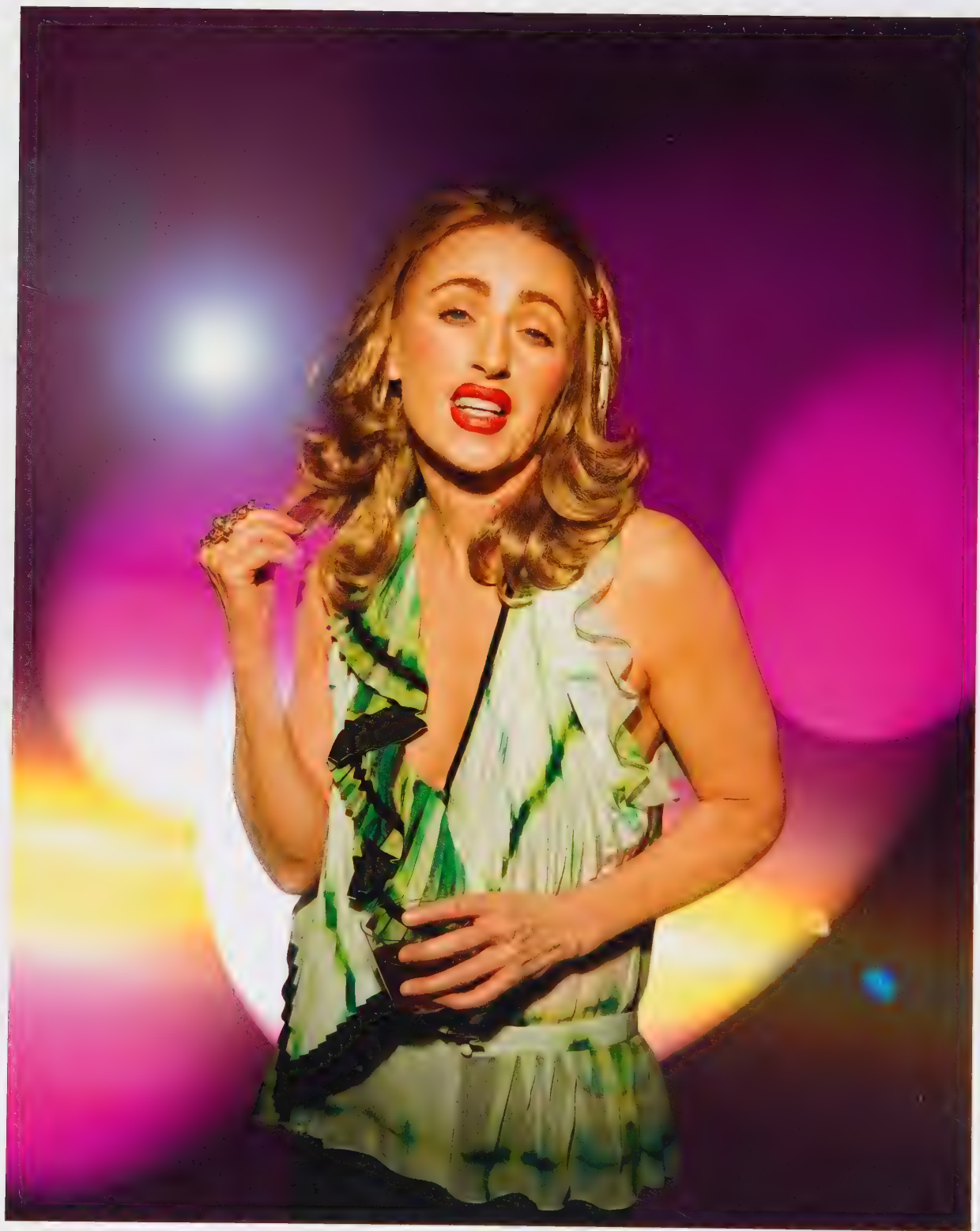






Untitled #420, 2004













Untitled #474, 2008



Untitled #514, 2010/2011





Untitled #512, 2010/2011









A Whole Theater

Sofia Coppola and Cindy Sherman in Conversation

Sofia Coppola: You rent all the wigs?

Cindy Sherman: I do, only because they are human hair, though in the past I bought all these wigs and even human hair ones. However, I work with a woman now who just charges weekly per wig, so it is easier for me to send them back to her when I am done. She styles them. So I just send her pictures and she sends them back to me the way that I want them.

SC: And that's someone in New York who does it for shows?

CS: Yeah, she's done *Saturday Night Live* and a lot of movies and TV.

SC: So you send reference photos and then she styles them?

CS: Yeah.

SC: I read somewhere that you don't work with an assistant, you work alone and do everything?

CS: I have an assistant, but she has another office a mile away. She was here earlier to pick up the wigs that I was finished with and does the exchange of things like that.

SC: But when you are shooting, it is just you?

CS: I am all alone.

SC: Have you always done them alone? Do you look at yourself in a mirror?

Snapshot of Cindy Sherman
(left) and friend Janet Zink
dressed up as old ladies, ca. 1966



CS: I have a mirror.

SC: I wanted to start by asking you, when did making these characters start for you?

CS: As a kid I was always into the idea of transforming and costumes and makeup. It started with regular kids playing dress-up, but—I know this from looking back at snapshots—I tended to be more grotesque. I wasn't just trying to be the ballerina, bride, or whatever little girls usually want to be, I'd be the ugly old witch or the old lady.

SC: Really in the characters.

CS: There is one picture of me dressed up like an old lady when I was twelve. I discovered that my parents had saved some outfit that my great-grandmother had worn, and I found it in storage in the basement. I thought: "Wow, this is so weird." The old undergarments that they would wear, funny long things that would be their...

SC: Bloomers—

CS: Yeah, and then in college I was doing more of the face and makeup transformations.

SC: Were you studying art?

CS: Painting, and I was really good at copying things. I just had no ideas of what I wanted to do with painting. So at the same time, I was transforming in my bedroom, putting on makeup to become somebody else and then just wiping it all off. My boyfriend noticed that I was doing this and he said, "Maybe this is what you should be doing, turning the camera on yourself."

SC: And that's the first time you started?

CS: It was around the same time that I had a teacher who assigned the class a project of confronting something that you don't want to deal with. It was rumored that this teacher, in the spring before graduation, would take her students into the woods and frolic in a waterfall and everybody would be naked, taking pictures of each other. I thought that sounded like the most terrible, horrifying thing and so I thought I better get ready. Luckily it never happened, but I did this series of portraits naked, confronting the camera, and I guess that is when I really started taking pictures of myself.

Opposite left:
Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #193* (detail), 1989
Chromogenic color print
48⁷/₈ x 41¹⁵/₁₆ in. (124.14 x 106.52 cm)
plate: page 90

SC: Were your paintings figurative portraits?

CS: They were composites. Sometimes they were portraits, but I would make collages from magazines and then paint or copy them. Each painting was so different from the last, there was no real theme.

SC: I wanted to be a painter too.

CS: Really?

SC: I went to CalArts, then to Art Center, but the teacher told me I wasn't a painter and I was so upset. But I am glad, because I wasn't a painter, and then I learned about photography. Somehow you stumble into something that is connected to what you want to do.

So after that, did you start doing self-portraits in characters?

CS: Yeah. Right from the beginning I did this series of headshots: they were meant to look like or reference photo booths.

SC: They're black and white?

CS: They are black and white. They were the first pieces that I ever made where I felt, "This is a piece of art."

SC: Did you always do your own makeup?

CS: Yeah.

SC: That's part of the fun, I guess.

CS: After this I did a series of characters that turn into other characters, and the cutouts came next.

SC: Are these people on the bus or the subway?

CS: I showed them just once on this bus as cutouts, so they were like paper dolls. They were little, so it was a scenario of all these people interacting on a bus. There was even a little bus driver.

SC: And now they exist in the show at The Broad as individual photos?

CS: I printed them as little photos without cutting them out. It is interesting that they are all sitting in the same chair or the same environment.

SC: So this is the first time that you did whole characters with costumes?

CS: I guess it was.

SC: Was that when you were at school?

CS: It was when I was at college. It was so crazy. It was so ambitious. There was another series of cutouts, which I placed all around the room. It was like seventy scenes in four acts. It was very theatrical. I had planned it all out.

SC: This is the murder mystery series. That's cool, I've always thought of your work existing as a moment and not as a whole theater.

CS: It was the most organized thing I've ever done. Well, maybe the funky movie I made, but this was like making a movie because I had to figure out how to print them all in different scales so it would look like one figure was receding into the distance, somebody else was in close-up. I had it all planned out.

SC: Did that lead you into the film stills?

CS: Actually it did, because then when I moved to New York, I was sick of the process of cutting out the paper dolls but I wanted it to be sort of narrative. Still, I've always worked alone, but I had to find a way to make it seem that somebody else was outside the frame.

SC: Were you doing it with a leash?

CS: In some of them, you can actually see the leash.

SC: I love how you create the character and atmosphere. It feels like a moment. Did you watch a lot of film noir movies?

CS: A lot in college, yeah. But I grew up watching them on TV. I think I was more influenced by film than by art, actually.

SC: It definitely feels like you know that genre. I love the details, the subtlety, even the tears. You did a bunch of them all at the same time?

Cindy Sherman

Untitled Film Still #46, 1979

Gelatin silver print

8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and

Metro Pictures



CS: For three or maybe four years, from about 1977 to 1980, I tended to shoot where I lived, but in those days I didn't have a real studio. I'd turn my bedroom into one scene or the front door where I lived into another scene.

SC: It looks like a sort of rear projection.

CS: Well, whenever I would visit my parents in Arizona, I would take my camera with me and an empty suitcase and go to the Salvation Army. I'd buy wigs and costumes and we would take a road trip. I would say to my father, "Stop here, I want to take a picture." He would then snap some of the pictures.

SC: Were your parents encouraging?

CS: They humored me, I would say, mostly as a way of dealing with their creative daughter. They didn't think anything was going to come of it.

SC: Were they from more square backgrounds?

CS: Not artistic at all.

SC: It is cool that they drove around with you and your wigs. Were you showing this work? Did you care what anyone thought about them?

CS: Back then, I would be lucky to show them in an alternative gallery, a place like the Kitchen. There was only a handful of galleries that were selling work like Castelli and Paula Cooper and they were blue chip galleries. A young artist would not expect to show in that type of place, so there were these other, alternative galleries that young artists would aspire to. It was freer then because you could make anything and you wouldn't expect anybody to buy it. You could do whatever you wanted and there was no pressure to "Oh, I need to make something that is going to sell or I hope somebody buys it." You just wanted to show it and get feedback.

SC: Were you a part of a community of artists and did you feel like they got it? Were there other women?

CS: Actually at that time, it was mostly other women who were also working in photography. Guys were into painting, the macho stuff. Me and, like, six other women were branching off into ways of using photography as an art form, and it caused many collectors to start taking it seriously.

SC: I remember as a kid my mom taking me to art fairs and encouraging me to start collecting photography. I like photography, but it was also affordable. You could actually buy a photograph. I notice now, well, it is good that it's regarded as the same [as other mediums].

CS: It's still cheaper.

SC: But it used to be a whole different thing. Did artists do other things so that they could be artists?

CS: I worked for a while as a receptionist at a gallery. A lot of artists would be in bands or making films on the side. People could be funky and creative while driving a cab or waitressing.

SC: Did you know Kim Gordon?

CS: I did.

SC: I thought maybe you were around New York at the same time.

CS: I remember when she was wearing these sunglasses that flipped up.

SC: Did you have friends that encouraged you? I have a filmmaker friend, our kids go to school together, and we have coffee. It is a different thing than the experience of guys making films in my world. Did you have someone that you could show work to, women or guys?

CS: The women who run my gallery I really trust. They started the gallery in 1980 and I am still with them. They were really supportive, as were a few of my female artist friends and a few guy artists. Guys go to each other's studios for studio visits where they get drunk, have coffee, and tear apart each other's work as a competitive thing. I was not that type of artist. I was more in my head and just working and not really asking for anyone's opinion.

SC: That's the best, when it is just you and you don't need any other opinion. I wanted to ask you about your heroes? Are there certain artists that inspired you?

CS: Duchamp is the most inspiring person to me because of Dada. When I learned about that school of art, it was everything to me—anything could be art, not just painting. Goya would be the other one. His stuff blew my mind. He was ahead of his time and influential. When I was in college in the '70s, many artists were using themselves in their work. And some were using themselves in ads for their work. Linda Benglis did a famous one. She is a painter and sculptor, but in this she is naked, holding this dildo in the mid-'70s. It was so scandalous. Robert Morris did one. Chris Burden was using himself in his work where he would get shot or hammer his hands into his Volkswagen.

SC: Do you take big breaks in between series, or does one feed into the next one?

CS: Sometimes they lead right into one another, but this last time, I hadn't shot anything new in five years. Five years is the longest that I have ever gone where I wasn't shooting. I still had other projects. I did this Vuitton luggage thing and I was in a friend's little film for an opera. There is the production of pieces that need to be reprinted, and then my MoMA show was in the middle of that stretch.

SC: Have you ever done a series that you didn't want anyone to see because it wasn't working?

CS: I've had works like that. The start of a series is completely different from what ultimately results. I just edit those out.

SC: Does it surprise you where they [the series] end up?

CS: Quite often.

SC: I wonder about these photos that go from being quite beautiful to quite ugly. Are they reflective of a mood that you were in at the time? With my movies, if I do something ornate, I want to do something the opposite. If I do something ugly, I want to do something pretty.

CS: That definitely happens, but it isn't quite consecutive. In the '80s, when I started to do things with fake blood and noses and fake body parts, I wanted to challenge myself to see if I had to be in the work. I would, for instance, be in a reflection in a mirror, more like still life in a way. They are also grotesque.

SC: Is that related to the kid who was interested in the grotesque?

Sofia Coppola
Marie Antoinette, 2006
Publicity still of Kirsten Dunst



CS: Yes, I've always loved horror movies! But what really inspired the grotesqueness was once I started to feel successful, in the mid-'80s, I felt like there were many *nouveau riche* collectors who wanted the flavor of the month above their couch. I wanted to make something that I could dare them to buy.

SC: So it was rebellious?

CS: Yeah, it was. So I did these vomit pieces.

SC: I was wondering, when most of your work is pretty and beautiful, where that came from. Did you see it over people's couches?

CS: No, it sort of worked. Now it is accepted, but at the time, it worked and I was sort of happy about that. And then I did a project where I was referencing Marie Antoinette—no, it wasn't Marie Antoinette, you did that—I mean Madame de Pompadour.

SC: The history portraits.

CS: That inspired that whole series. It was fun for me because it was getting back in front of the camera, using makeup and being playful.

I was looking at a lot of paintings and that body of work is in three groups: there was a series that was based on the French Revolution, and then I spent some time in Rome and did a whole Italian themed or inspired group, and another group when I went back to New York.

SC: And some guys.

CS: I photographed some guys then.

SC: It must have been fun to get all the costumes together.

CS: It was fun. Those are just funky costumes. I would just cut off a pair of white pants I had, using each one as a sleeve.

SC: Oh, you didn't go to a costume house?

CS: No, I was going to Salvation Armies and just cutting things up, pinning them together.

SC: It's so cool that you didn't have a costume department.

CS: For the series I am working on now, after I rented these wigs, I thought that I might try to rent some real vintage clothing from the 1920s and I did one shot and it just didn't work. It looked too much like I was mimicking *Downton Abbey* with its perfectly period dress and hairdos. I need to be dependent on something funkier and kind of cobbling something together that is not quite exact.

SC: So what do you do, you make them from what you have?

CS: Yeah. Lately what I've been doing is wrapping fabric around me and that's the dress.

SC: Like kids do. It's funny when things look too professional when I am making something. I don't exactly know what it is. I didn't realize that you make everything and that is part of why your work looks like what it does.

CS: Even with the guy clothing, I got small boy sizes, jackets or whatever, from the Salvation Army.

SC: Do you have a big warehouse or closet?

CS: No, I tend to get rid of stuff if I've used it and don't think that I am going to use it again. Some things I keep, I reuse them sometimes.

SC: Do you still go to the Salvation Army?

CS: I go to vintage stores and flea markets and sometimes I'll find something really vintage or really authentic. I made an image of a guy who is like a monk. Those clothes came from a Roman flea market.

With the history portraits, I felt guilty about it because it was too much fun. I remember thinking, "It's happening too quickly, it's too fast, it's working too well." And then they were hugely popular, and then I felt really guilty. It was right after that that I started to do these sex pictures with body parts.

SC: They looked like sex dolls.

CS: They are medical mannequins, and it was also in response to the NEA. At the time, they were fighting for artists who got grants from them, and the Republican right was furious that money was going to artists who made this objectionable work.

SC: Mapplethorpe was part of that.

CS: There was going to be a Mapplethorpe show in a public museum and they were all up in arms that government money was supporting this exhibition.

SC: Were they saying that about the sex doll pieces?

CS: I was making those in response to that. I thought, "I'm not dependent on government money" so I'm just going to make this work.

SC: In context, it makes sense that you made this work when people were up in arms about what art is acceptable. And it's funny that you feel guilty when things are going too easily. I always think things have to be going hard to be deep, maybe like

it is too frivolous or something, but it seems like the best things come from what you are connected to.

Do you figure out the lighting yourself?

CS: It has all been a learning process.

SC: Do you still shoot on film?

CS: No, I switched to digital about nine years ago and I would never go back to film. Working alone, it is just so much easier with digital.

SC: So you can really see what you are doing?

CS: Yeah, as I'm doing it. Because I used to do all the makeup, get everything ready, shoot a roll of film, maybe two, and then take off the makeup, take the film to the lab, and then come back two hours later to find that it was all out of focus. I would have to redo everything.

SC: Do you take a lot of images and edit them or are you more precise?

CS: I will shoot, like, fifty images. I check them out on my computer and if it looks like I have a good group, as though twenty of them could work, then I know that I am done. But there are times where I have kept at it, thinking "It's not working," and I'll change the lighting, switch the makeup a bit, or sometimes just give up for that day because it's ten o'clock at night and it's still not quite right.

SC: Are you playing more than one character?

CS: Some of them, not every one, but I love that flexibility, which goes back to the early work of the cutouts. It is like I am collaging myself together.

SC: Do you not do the backdrops anymore?

CS: No, it is all done digitally.

SC: Do you use existing images for the background or do you take the picture?

CS: I shoot the picture. I usually shoot something and tweak it with Photoshop, playing with filters. For instance, I shot that one at the National Arts Club, just the background.

SC: So you do real places for the backgrounds and then you do the rest in the studio?

CS: That was at the Cloisters. This one is in Spain. This was just totally made up. Central Park.

SC: I love that lady. Do you see real people and get ideas based on them, or just invent them?

CS: I invent them, but I am sure that I have seen them elsewhere. It is not like, "Oh, I just saw a woman who looks just like that."

SC: You don't take pictures of people as references.

CS: No. Sometimes I wish I did. I have my phone with me, but I always forget to use my phone as a camera. Most of these were inspired by the costumes, because I went to this thrift store on the Upper East Side.

SC: Oh, that's where these ladies came from? It seems like I've seen these ladies around, but it comes from the clothes.

CS: This is a mural I did where I was experimenting with not using any makeup. Then, I just slightly digitally tweaked the face.

SC: I was going to say it doesn't look like you.

CS: I just made the nose a little smaller, the bottom lip a little bigger, the eyes a little more pulled out. Something where each one looked a little bit different. They look like they could all be from the same family or something.

These were all Chanel. They loaned me stuff from their archives.

SC: I remember that outfit. That's so funny. I interned there in the '80s and I remember that outfit. Did you travel to the moors for those backgrounds?

CS: I went to Iceland a couple of times and brought my camera because I just knew that it was going to be inspiring. I wasn't thinking of a series... I went to Iceland maybe four years before I put the body of work together.

SC: Do you have a whole library of landscapes?

CS: It is starting to get bigger now that I am doing a lot of this background stuff.

SC: It is fun to see the green screen all set up. I knew it was homemade, but I didn't realize you had a whole studio setup.

I love these ladies, the head shots, from around 2000.

CS: I was having a show at Gagosian in L.A. and it was right around the time of the Oscars. Larry always has a big show, and I knew that I wanted to do something inspired by sort of wannabe actors in Hollywood and their headshots for promoting themselves.

SC: Do you remember those headshots where they had, like, four all with different personalities? I don't think they do headshots anymore. When I used to meet with actors, they would

bring a headshot and now everything is online. It is not the same, but these came from that tradition.

CS: It would be like a real estate broker or a waitress trying for a part... and then I did a second part based on people in the Hamptons.

SC: They are in the headshot series too?

CS: Part of the same category.

SC: How did the clowns appear?

CS: That was around 2004. It was the first major series that I did after 9/11.

SC: And was there a break between the headshots and the next series?

CS: I made a couple the summer after 9/11, but I was struggling. I mean, how could I make art anymore? I happened to be going through my closet and getting organized and I found an old pair of pajamas that I got at a flea market that somebody had turned into a clown suit by adding big bows to it. Otherwise, it just looked like pajamas. And I thought that was so interesting, taking anything and making it into a clown. I started searching online and found all these pictures of people taking pictures of themselves and there was something so sad about it, it was so desperate that people were trying to be clowns. They didn't look at all professional.

SC: There is something creepy about that.

CS: It was a hard project because I wanted to somehow show the person underneath the clown makeup, that would look different from me, but would look like some sad or troubled person. And some of them aren't all sad and pathetic...

SC: They are like entertainers that you don't really want to employ.

CS: That you wouldn't want around your kids.

SC: I love these kind of cabaret ladies. Did they come after?

CS: Yeah. I did them for Balenciaga. French *Vogue* asked me to do some editorial stuff.

SC: How did these characters with the disco backgrounds come about? When you saw the clothes, did it give you this idea?

CS: No, the works for the magazine were different. It was about people who go to parties who just want their picture taken so that they are put in the party pages. So in most of the scenes I was using a bar or I tried to make it look like a party in the background. It worked in the magazine, but when I wanted to make



Cindy Sherman

Untitled #66, 1980

Chromogenic color print

20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)

The Menil Collection, Houston,

Gift of William F. Stern,

by exchange

it into an artwork, it had to be somehow different. I reworked the environments.

SC: Does the image dictate the size you want it to be? In a series, are the images all the same size?

CS: They are not the same size. In the early days, they would all be the same size in a series but now it all depends on the character. Usually I try to keep them a little larger than lifesize, but occasionally there is one that is so powerful that she needs to be really big.

SC: How did you transition from black and white to color?

CS: I stopped doing the film stills when I felt like I was repeating myself, when one of the later, dark-haired ones seemed like a version of the earlier, light-haired ones. I wanted to work in my studio, but I wanted to make it look like it was outdoors. I set up a really cheap way to do a rear screen projection, but the problem was that my studio situation was so cheap and I was so inexperienced, the only way to light myself and have the projection come through was to have the focal length in between. So, I am mostly out of focus or very close up for the focus. I only did about fifteen of them.

SC: These were way before the green screens. Do you feel that those limitations made you do things that you liked or miss now that you are more high tech?

Office Killer (still), 1997
Collection Quibusci d'andant Film,
35mm, color; 82 minutes
Courtesy of the artist and
Metro Pictures



CS: No, now I can make a lot of mistakes, really do whatever I want. If it is really embarrassing, I can just delete it.

SC: I want to talk about *Office Killer* (1997).

CS: It is feature length, it is very funky.

SC: How did that come about?

CS: I didn't write it. I had the idea for it. What happened was that at my Christmas party, Christine Vachon came and she said, "Someone I know wants to do artist-directed horror movies and you should do it, because all these male artists are doing films and you should do a film." I just didn't want to at all. I didn't want to work with a crew, but she talked me into it and said that she would take care of me. "Everyone will treat you well and they will understand that even though it is your first movie, that you are an artist. It still would make sense for you to do this." She was very supportive. We got somebody to write the script who I worked with, but it started so fast. I was so inexperienced that my storyboard just for the first scene had, like, thirty different angles. I wasn't aware that each angle takes time and money and we didn't have any money. So I didn't storyboard the rest of it. It started before we even had an ending. Like, let's hurry up and get this done.

SC: So it was done really quickly.

CS: Yes. In twenty-five days or something.

SC: Did you enjoy it?

CS: It was so hard. It was the hardest thing that I think I have ever done. I had no idea of the pressure. I mean, I can space out here, I can go online or read a magazine. I can find inspiration by just clearing my head and going shopping if I need to, or look online for the right piece of clothing. But with the pressure of having everybody coming at you fifteen hours a day, I just had no idea.

SC: It is so different from being alone. When I am writing, I feel so guilty about the procrastinating. There is so much pressure, and then I think, it is just part of the process. It is nice to hear that you don't feel guilty if you want to go shopping...

CS: I used to.

SC: How did you get past that?

CS: Because I think you just need to clear out your head, especially if you are deeply working nonstop intense hours. I think you need to break free, clear your mind, and then go back to it fresh. So, you're okay (laughs).

SC: When I lived in L.A., driving gave me that space-out time, but now with email, you just don't have that space-out time. It is so tempting to check your email on your phone or whatever. Are you able to cut off from that?

CS: I do while I am shooting.

SC: It is good to know that spacing out is all part of it. I am often asked what my work means and I often say, "I just felt like it." Do you feel that artists need to be required to answer questions in this vein?

CS: We shouldn't because it is up to the viewer. I feel like when I make things, I think the best response is multiple responses, good and bad even. A long time ago, a feminist writer criticized my early work, the centerfolds, because it featured these women in prone or vulnerable positions. She was saying that I should have some text next to it to say that it is ironic or that it is not meant to be a titillating picture. I just thought, "I am not going to do that." I am not going to pound something into someone's head, you either figure it out or you don't, and that is part of it.

SC: I totally agree, however, it seems now there is just so much promo involved that didn't exist before.

CS: I can get away with not talking about it as much. With you, in your business, it's different because it really is about...

SC: Selling.

CS: Yeah, selling.

SC: Do you feel like there is not as much of it [in your field]?

CS: No, sometimes it really is brutal and I don't want to explain it to anybody. I hate talking about myself, I feel like the attention needs to be on the work. There is also this built-in curiosity about what I look like because of the work.

SC: Do people recognize you?

CS: Not really.

SC: Do you ever feel like you don't want to make anything?

CS: Actually, with this recent stuff, it was so hard to get going that I felt, "Man, this is the last time I want to be doing this." This is enough. Because now that I am using this bigger digital camera, this Leica, which is super clear, and the fact that it has been five years, I see every little wrinkle.

SC: I hate high def.

CS: Funny. I get tired of shooting, but then something sparks my imagination. But what I really want to do one of these days is another film. That's my goal.

SC: You don't want to be in it?

CS: Maybe I do. Years ago, I bought a high-def video camera as a reminder, as if to say "just turn it on" while I am working. I feel like I just need to start using it, documenting what I do and then just feeling free about that. I feel so nervous about it because it is not something I know about.

SC: I know lots of nice camera guys.

CS: I would like to get to know how to use the camera myself, so I know what to ask for.

SC: With digital, it is not as precious, so you can try different things. I never learned the lenses, they present me with a couple and I choose which one. I never really know the personalities of them. I always wish I knew more technically. My brother is really good so I just ask him. You don't have to be good at everything. Do you take photos in real life?

CS: If I am traveling, for use in backgrounds. I am not always taking pictures.

SC: What else would you like to do, if you weren't doing this? For instance, I have the wish of being an art director.

CS: I'd be a gardener. I love to garden. I have chickens in the Hamptons. Mostly, I pay people to garden, but I would love to do it myself. I did, for a couple of summers, I grew vegetables on my terrace. Or I would have a thrift store.

Works in the Broad Collection and Exhibition Checklist

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1
Cover Girl (Mademoiselle).
1975/2011
Three gelatin silver prints
Each 10½ x 8 in. (26.7 x 20.32 cm)
<i>pp. 22–23</i> | 5
Untitled #365. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 28</i> | 10
Untitled #370. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 26</i> | 15
Untitled #375. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 27</i> |
| 2
Murder Mystery. 1976
Six gelatin silver print cutouts
mounted on board
Parts 1/6, 2/6, 3/6, 5/6, 6/6:
framed, each 16½ x 21½ in. (41.91
x 54.61 cm)
Part 4/6, framed: 21½ x 16½ in.
(54.61 x 41.91 cm)
<i>pp. 24–25</i> | 6
Untitled #366. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 29</i> | 11
Untitled #371. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 31</i> | 16
Untitled #376. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm) |
| 3
Untitled #363. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm) | 7
Untitled #367. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm) | 12
Untitled #372. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm) | 17
Untitled #377. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 31</i> |
| 4
Untitled #364. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 29</i> | 8
Untitled #368. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm) | 13
Untitled #373. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 50</i> | 18
Untitled Film Still #06. 1977
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 55</i> |
| | 9
Untitled #369. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 28</i> | 14
Untitled #374. 1976/2000
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 30</i> | 19
Untitled Film Still #07. 1978
Gelatin silver print
10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
<i>p. 34</i> |



20
Untitled Film Still #13, 1978
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 32

21
Untitled Film Still #15, 1978
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 33

22
Untitled Film Still #16, 1978
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 36

23
Untitled Film Still #27, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 37

24
Untitled Film Still #34, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 39

25
Untitled Film Still #35, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 42

26
Untitled Film Still #37, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 10 x 8 in. (25.4 x 20.32 cm)
p. 45

27
Untitled Film Still #43, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
pp. 46–47

28 ♦
Untitled Film Still #46, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro
 Pictures
p. 144

29
Untitled Film Still #47, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
p. 43

30 ♦
Untitled Film Still #48, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro
 Pictures
p. 10

31
Untitled Film Still #52, 1979
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
pp. 40–41

32
Untitled Film Still #54, 1980
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
p. 48

33
Untitled Film Still #58, 1980
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 in. (20.32 x 25.4 cm)
p. 49

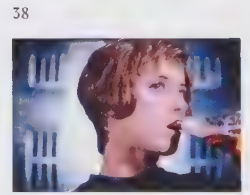
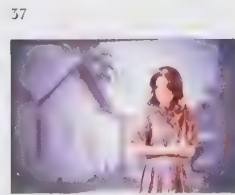
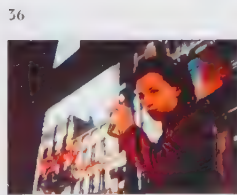
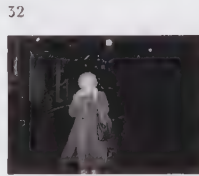
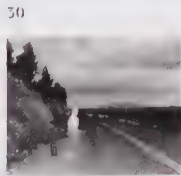
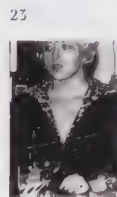
34 ♦
Untitled #66, 1980
 Chromogenic color print
 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)
 The Menil Collection, Houston,
 Gift of William F. Stern, by
 exchange
p. 149

35 ♦
Untitled #77, 1980
 Chromogenic color print
 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.79 cm)
 The Museum of Fine Arts,
 Houston; Gift of William F. Stern
p. 15

36
Untitled #70, 1980
 Chromogenic color print
 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)
p. 51

37
Untitled #71, 1980
 Chromogenic color print
 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)
p. 50

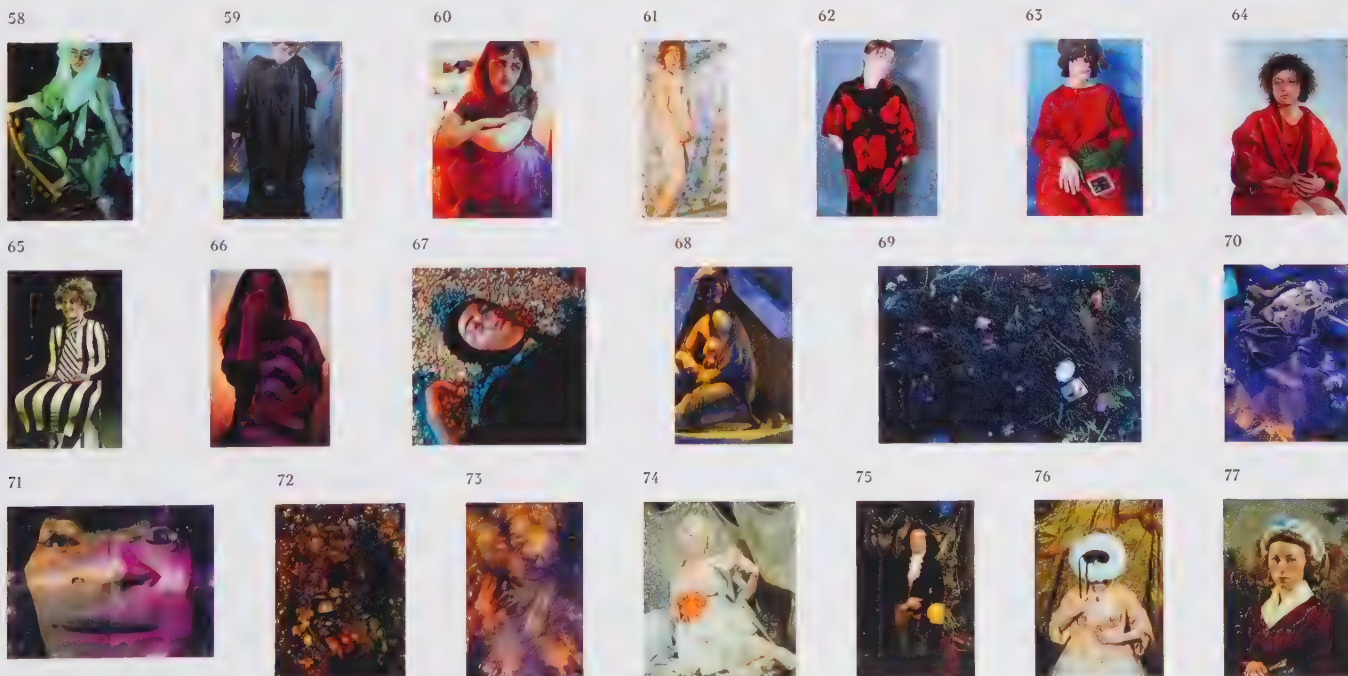
38 ♦
Untitled #76, 1980
 Chromogenic color print
 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.79 cm)
 Whitney Museum of American
 Art, New York; Gift of Barbara
 and Eugene Schwartz
p. 14



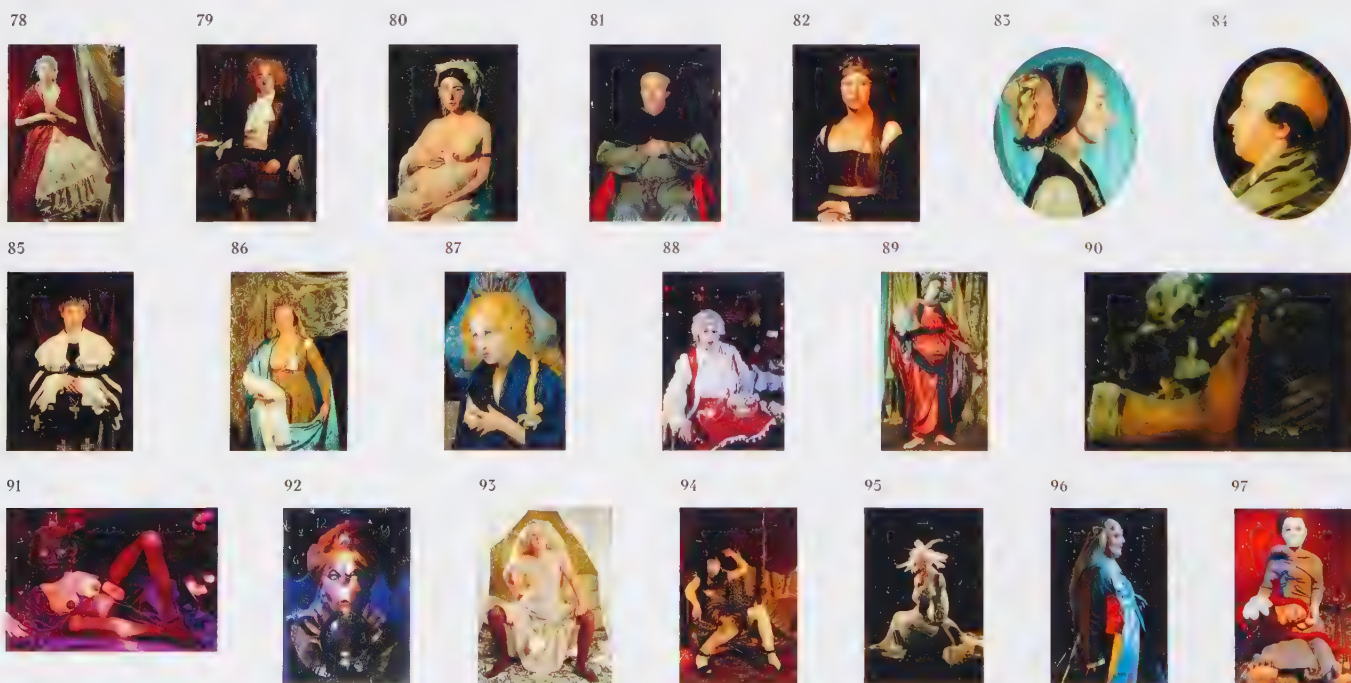
- 39
Untitled (Richard Prince and Cindy Sherman), 1980
Two Ektacolor photographs
Each 20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)
- 40
Untitled #85, 1981
Chromogenic color print
24 x 48 in. (60.96 x 121.92 cm)
p. 54
- 41
Untitled #86, 1981
Chromogenic color print
24 x 48 in. (60.96 x 121.92 cm)
pp. 52–53
- 42
Untitled #92, 1981
Chromogenic color print
24 x 48 in. (60.96 x 121.92 cm)
p. 55
- 43
Untitled #94, 1981
Chromogenic color print
24 x 48 in. (60.96 x 121.92 cm)
pp. 56–57
- 44
Untitled #97, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45 x 30 in. (114.3 x 76.2 cm)
p. 60
- 45
Untitled #98, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45 x 30 in. (114.3 x 76.2 cm)
p. 61
- 46
Untitled #99, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45 x 30 in. (114.3 x 76.2 cm)
p. 62
- 47
Untitled #100, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45 x 30 in. (114.3 x 76.2 cm)
p. 63
- 48
Untitled #112, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45 x 30½ in. (114.3 x 77.47 cm)
p. 58
- 49
Untitled #114, 1982
Chromogenic color print
49 x 30 in. (124.46 x 76.2 cm)
p. 65
- 50
Untitled #116, 1982
Chromogenic color print
45¼ x 30 in. (114.94 x 76.2 cm)
p. 59
- 51
Untitled #117, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34½ x 41 in. (88.27 x 104.14 cm)
p. 72
- 52
Untitled #118, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34½ x 23¼ in. (87.63 x 59.06 cm)
p. 66
- 53
Untitled #119, 1983
Chromogenic color print
17½ x 36 in. (44.45 x 91.44 cm)
p. 71
- 54
Untitled #120, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34½ x 21¼ in. (87.63 x 55.25 cm)
p. 64
- 55
Untitled #122, 1983
Chromogenic color print
35¼ x 21¼ in. (89.54 x 53.98 cm)
p. 69
- 56
Untitled #124, 1983
Chromogenic color print
24½ x 33 in. (62.23 x 83.82 cm)
p. 74
- 57
Untitled #125, 1983
Chromogenic color print
19¼ x 36 in. (48.9 x 91.44 cm)
p. 75
- 58
Untitled #126, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34½ x 22½ in. (87.63 x 57.15 cm)
p. 76



- 59
Untitled #128, 1983
Chromogenic color print
36 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (92.08 x 59.06 cm)
p. 77
- 60
Untitled #129, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (88.27 x 59.69 cm)
p. 70
- 61
Untitled #131, 1983
Chromogenic color print
34 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (88.27 x 41.91 cm)
p. 67
- 62
Untitled #135, 1984
Chromogenic color print
69 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 47 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (177.17 x 121.29 cm)
- 63
Untitled #136, 1984
Chromogenic color print
72 x 47 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (182.88 x 120.65 cm)
p. 78
- 64
Untitled #137, 1984
Chromogenic color print
70 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 47 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (179.07 x 121.29 cm)
- 65
Untitled #138, 1984
Chromogenic color print
71 x 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (180.34 x 123.19 cm)
p. 79
- 66
Untitled #139, 1984
Chromogenic color print
71 x 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (180.34 x 123.19 cm)
p. 73
- 67
Untitled #143, 1985
Chromogenic color print
51 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 49 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (131.45 x 125.41 cm)
p. 81
- 68
Untitled #146, 1985
Chromogenic color print
72 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 49 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (184.15 x 125.41 cm)
p. 80
- 69
Untitled #167, 1986
Chromogenic color print
60 x 90 in. (152.4 x 228.6 cm)
p. 82
- 70
Untitled #168, 1987
Chromogenic color print
85 x 60 in. (215.9 x 152.4 cm)
p. 83
- 71
Untitled #180, 1987
Chromogenic color prints (two panels)
Overall 96 x 120 in. (243.84 x 304.8 cm)
pp. 84–85
- 72
Untitled #190, 1989
Chromogenic color prints (two panels)
Overall 96 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 73 x 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (245.11 x 185.42 x 6.67 cm)
p. 87
- 73
Untitled #191, 1989
Chromogenic color print
90 x 60 in. (228.6 x 152.4 cm)
p. 88
- 74
Untitled #193, 1989
Chromogenic color print
48 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 41 $\frac{5}{16}$ in. (124.14 x 106.52 cm)
p. 90
- 75
Untitled #196, 1989
Chromogenic color print
66 x 44 in. (167.64 x 111.76 cm)
p. 91
- 76
Untitled #198, 1989
Chromogenic color print
38 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (97.47 x 70.8 cm)
p. 93
- 77
Untitled #199, 1989
Chromogenic color print
25 x 18 in. (63.5 x 45.72 cm)
p. 97



- 78
Untitled #200, 1989
Chromogenic color print
30¹⁵/₁₆ x 20⁷/₈ in. (78.58 x 53.02 cm)
p. 104
- 79
Untitled #201, 1989
Chromogenic color print
52⁷/₈ x 35⁷/₈ in. (134.3 x 91.12 cm)
p. 92
- 80
Untitled #205, 1989
Chromogenic color print
53¹/₂ x 40¹/₂ in. (135.89 x 102.87 cm)
p. 101
- 81
Untitled #207, 1989
Chromogenic color print
65¹/₂ x 49¹/₂ in. (166.37 x 125.73 cm)
p. 100
- 82
Untitled #209, 1989
Chromogenic color print
57 x 41 in. (144.78 x 104.14 cm)
p. 102
- 83
Untitled #211, 1989
Chromogenic color print
37 x 31 in. (93.98 x 78.74 cm)
p. 96
- 84
Untitled #214, 1989
Chromogenic color print
29¹/₂ x 24 in. (74.93 x 60.96 cm)
p. 99
- 85
Untitled #215, 1989
Chromogenic color print
74¹/₄ x 51 in. (188.6 x 129.54 cm)
p. 103
- 86
Untitled #216, 1989
Chromogenic color print
87 x 56 in. (220.98 x 142.24 cm)
p. 98
- 87
Untitled #225, 1990
Chromogenic color print
48 x 33 in. (121.92 x 83.82 cm)
p. 95
- 88
Untitled, 1990
Chromogenic color print
13 x 10 in. (33.02 x 25.4 cm)
p. 105
- 89
Untitled #228, 1990
Chromogenic color print
82 x 48 in. (208.28 x 121.92 cm)
p. 105
- 90
Untitled #243, 1991
Chromogenic color print
49 x 72 in. (124.46 x 182.88 cm)
p. 89
- 91
Untitled #264, 1992
Chromogenic color print
50 x 75 in. (127 x 190.5 cm)
pp. 106-7
- 92
Untitled, 1993
Chromogenic color print
7 x 5 in. (17.78 x 12.7 cm)
p. 107
- 93
Untitled #276, 1993
Chromogenic color print
80¹/₂ x 61 in. (204.47 x 154.94 cm)
p. 109
- 94
Untitled #278, 1993
Chromogenic color print
73 x 49 in. (185.42 x 124.46 cm)
p. 108
- 95
Untitled #296, 1994
Chromogenic color print
69¹/₄ x 45¹/₄ in. (175.9 x 114.94 cm)
p. 111
- 96
Untitled #297, 1994
Chromogenic color print
50 x 33 in. (127 x 83.82 cm)
p. 110
- 97
Untitled #304, 1994
Chromogenic color print
61 x 41 in. (154.94 x 104.14 cm)
p. 112



98
Untitled #311, 1994
 Cibachrome
 76 x 51 in. (193.04 x 129.54 cm)

99
Untitled #315, 1995
 Cibachrome
 60 x 40 in. (152.4 x 101.6 cm)

100
Untitled #321, 1996
 Cibachrome
 57½ x 38½ in. (146.05 x 97.79 cm)

101
Untitled #324, 1996
 Cibachrome
 57¼ x 39 in. (146.69 x 99.06 cm)

102
Untitled #330, 1996
 Cibachrome
 57⅞ x 38 in. (147 x 96.52 cm)

103 ♦
Office Killer (still), 1997
 Collection Quibusci dendant Film,
 35mm, color: 82 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro
 Pictures
p. 150

104
Untitled #332, 1999
 Gelatin silver print
 38½ x 25½ in. (97.79 x 64.77 cm)

105
Untitled #334, 1999
 Gelatin silver print
 47½ x 31½ in. (120.65 x 80.01 cm)

106
Untitled #339, 1999
 Gelatin silver print
 35½ x 23½ in. (90.17 x 59.69 cm)

107
Untitled #353, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 112

108
Untitled #354, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 113

109
Untitled #355, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 115

110
Untitled #356, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 30 x 20 in. (76.2 x 50.8 cm)
p. 114

111
Untitled #357, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 30 x 20 in. (76.2 x 50.8 cm)
p. 116

112
Untitled #361, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 117

113
Untitled #396, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 118

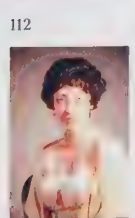
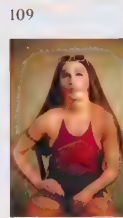
114
Untitled #397, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 36 x 24 in. (91.44 x 60.96 cm)
p. 119

115
Untitled #403, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 22 x 15 in. (55.88 x 38.1 cm)

116
Untitled #404, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 32½ x 22 in. (82.55 x 55.88 cm)
p. 120

117
Untitled #405, 2000
 Chromogenic color print
 33 x 22 in. (83.82 x 55.88 cm)
p. 121

118
Untitled #409, 2002
 Chromogenic color print
 54 x 36 in. (137.16 x 91.44 cm)
p. 122



119
Untitled #410, 2003
 Chromogenic color print
 57 x 41½ in. (144.78 x 104.78 cm)
p. 123

120
Untitled #413, 2003
 Chromogenic color print
 46 x 31½ in. (116.84 x 79.06 cm)
p. 124

121
Untitled #418, 2004
 Chromogenic color print
 71⅞ x 46 in. (182.56 x 112.4 cm)
p. 125

122
Untitled #420, 2004
 Chromogenic color prints (two panels)
 Overall 73⅝ x 94¾ in. (187.01 x 240.67 cm)
pp. 128–29

123
Untitled #421, 2004
 Chromogenic color print
 54⅞ x 78⅞ in. (139.38 x 200.34 cm)
p. 127

124
Untitled #447, 2005
 Chromogenic color print
 48 x 72 in. (121.92 x 182.88 cm)
p. 126

125
Untitled #460, 2007/2008
 Chromogenic color print
 44½ x 34 in. (113.03 x 86.36 cm)
p. 131

126
Untitled #461, 2007/2008
 Chromogenic color print
 60½ x 48 in. (153.67 x 121.92 cm)
p. 130

127
Untitled #468, 2008
 Chromogenic color print
 70¼ x 54 in. (178.44 x 137.16 cm)
p. 133

128
Untitled #474, 2008
 Chromogenic color print
 90¾ x 60 in. (230.51 x 152.4 cm)
p. 135

129
Untitled #475, 2008
 Chromogenic color print
 86⅝ x 71½ in. (219.39 x 181.61 cm)
p. 134

130
Untitled #512, 2010/2011
 Chromogenic color print
 79¾ x 136⅞ in. (202.57 x 347.66 cm)
pp. 138–39

131
Untitled #514, 2010/2011
 Chromogenic color print
 92 x 115⅞ in. (233.68 x 293.53 cm)
p. 136–37

132
Untitled #571, 2016
 Dye sublimation metal print
 54 x 69½ in. (137.16 x 176.53 cm)
p. 140

133
Untitled #574, 2016
 Dye sublimation metal print
 46 x 39 in. (116.84 x 99.06 cm)
p. 141

134
Untitled #570, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 56¼ x 48 in. (142.9 x 121.9 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

135
Untitled #577, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 48⅞ x 52½ (122.2 x 133.4 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

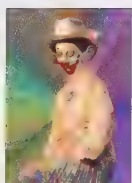
136
Untitled #576, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 49 x 42⅝ in. (124.5 x 108.3 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

137
Untitled #566, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 48 x 50½ in. 121.9 x 128.3 cm
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

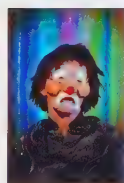
138
Untitled #565, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 51¼ x 45 in. (131.4 x 114.3 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

139
Untitled #569, 2016 ♦
 Dye sublimation metal print
 49⅞ x 33 in. (125.3 x 83.8 cm)
 Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures

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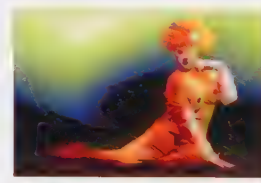
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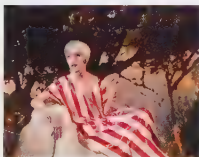
130



131



132



133



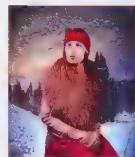
134



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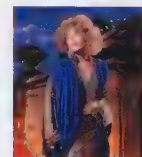
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Acknowledgments

Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life is the first museum exhibition of Cindy Sherman's work in Los Angeles in almost twenty years. For The Broad, however, this exhibition is nearly thirty-five years in the making. This book is a document and extension of a significant event in the life of a new museum, but also a record of Eli and Edye Broad's great commitment to Sherman's photography, a collecting interest that began in early 1980s.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Broads for their support of this exhibition and publication. I thank Joanne Heyler, Founding Director of The Broad, for working with me at every stage, bringing her extensive knowledge of Cindy Sherman and Los Angeles to bear on this presentation. Furthermore, I am grateful to The Broad's fiduciary and advisory boards for their support and dedication to The Broad's mission.

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Philipp Kaiser, Guest Curator and Editor in Chief

The exhibition *Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life* was organized by The Broad, Los Angeles, and curated by Philipp Kaiser

Exhibition dates: June 11, 2016 to October 2, 2016

Exhibition Lenders:
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Metro Pictures Gallery, New York
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

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Cover:

Untitled #122 (detail), 1983
Chromogenic color print
35¼ x 21¼ in. (89.54 x 53.98 cm)

Pages 2–3:

Untitled #70 (detail), 1980
Chromogenic color print
20 x 24 in. (50.8 x 60.96 cm)

Page 4:

Untitled #114 (detail), 1982
Chromogenic color print
34½ x 21¾ in. (87.63 x 55.25 cm)

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Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life is the first career survey to explore the full range of the artist's photographic series through the critical lens of cinema. Featuring more than 130 illustrations, the book draws heavily upon works in the Broad collection, which has assembled the world's largest collection of Sherman's photography. It explores the artist's use of cinematic artifice across almost 40 years of work, beginning with her early experiments in character-driven portraiture, including the Untitled Film Stills series and lesser-known color images that feature the classic cinematic technique of rear-screen projection. The book goes on to showcase highlights from the artist's subsequent major series of centerfolds, history portraits, clowns, society portraits, and, most recently, actresses of the silent screen. An essay by curator Philipp Kaiser investigates the prevalent role of cinematic themes in Sherman's critical reception, while an interview by director Sofia Coppola offers an intimate behind-the-scenes look at the artist's image making.

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