A PERSONAL VIEW ON HIGH FASHION & STREET STYLE

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE NICOLA ERNI COLLECTION
1930s TO NOW

NORTON MUSEUM OF ART
WEST PALM BEACH
October 8, 2022 – February 12, 2023

This exhibition was curated by Ira Stehmann, Birgit Filzmaier, and the Nicola Erni Collection.
THE EARLY YEARS OF FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY

STREET STYLE. THE BEGINNINGS
THE NEW LOOK
REVOLUTION!

STREET STYLE. 1960s–70s
SEX & PROVOCATION
FICTION & FANTASY
UNREAL
ROMANTICISM
UNFILTERED

STREET STYLE. 1980s TO NOW
NEW BLOOD
FOREWORD

Fashion and photography are great passions of mine. Combining both and collecting fashion photography was therefore obvious to me since the late 1990s. It gives me great joy to mix fashion and street style photography in order to visualize their differences and similarities. I am truly honored to have the opportunity to show this exhibition to a broader audience.

*High Fashion & Street Style* celebrates the trailblazing photographers whose work defines “style” for millions of people who see their photographs in magazines, billboards, and, today, on smart phones. High fashion photography embodies the life to which we aspire, street photography the life we actually lead. Bringing them together and sharing their artistic beauty is my vision.

In this exhibition the work of close to one hundred artists is organized into sections such as Fiction & Fantasy, Romanticism, Unfiltered, or Sex & Provocation, among others. As well as championing the artists, this show also celebrates the designers, fashion houses, and the often era-defining models.

Beauty, style, life, and passion... a fantastic journey through the world of fashion, both past and present.

Enjoy my personal view!

Nicola Erni

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*Steven Meisel*
*Hey Dude. Lester Bagge. Amanda Moore & Jeff Horton, for Vogue Italia, 2006*

Next page: Scott Schuman
*The Sartorialist*
*Nina Ford, New York, 2011*
INTRODUCTION

The divergent worlds of high fashion and street photography coalesce at the Norton Museum of Art with the presentation of more than 250 photographs from the Nicola Erni Collection. In bringing these two photographic genres together from a globally celebrated private collection, we come to understand how they influence and interact with one another, with both celebrating the beauty and strangeness of life. The images in this exhibition underscore the power of personal expression.

The evolution of popular taste and definitions of beauty are likewise featured in this exhibition presenting photography from the 1930s to now. The early decades of fashion photography from Richard Avedon, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and Gordon Parks can be seen alongside today’s new talent with works by Tyler Mitchell and Nadine Ijewere. The candid and frank photographs that define street photography offer a counterpoint through multiple generations of artists from Vivian Maier and Garry Winogrand to social media influencers Tommy Ton and Scott Schuman (The Sartorialist). The exhibition’s scope of compelling photographs translates for viewers into a corporeal experience, in which it feels possible to walk right into the pages of a glossy fashion magazine or onto the streets of bygone New York.

Like the history of Palm Beach County, this exhibition is a convergence of glamour and style, a pendulum of leisure and reality. The Norton Museum of Art is grateful to Nicola Erni for her vision in bringing this world-renowned collection from Switzerland to the United States for its first exhibition at a public institution. Thanks to her support, the Norton has developed innovative programming that extends into the community to inspire local interpretations of the intertwining worlds of fashion and urban life.

For the Nicola Erni Collection, it has been an honor to present this very personal collection and organize a project that communicates the passion of its collector and the artists on view.

Stefan Puttaert
CEO, Nicola Erni Collection

Ghislain d’Humières
Director and CEO, Norton Museum of Art
The earliest fashion photographs in the collection—mostly rare vintage prints—set the scene for what is the bedrock of all that followed. In the 1910s fashion photography began to replace fashion illustration in magazines such as *Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar* and it developed into a central and independent genre in the history of photography.

Photographers such as George Hoyningen-Huene and his protégé Horst P. Horst became famous with their staged yet elegant fashion photographs that focused on shadow and light, reviving classical forms. In these early years, actresses and society women acted as models for the fashion magazines. During this same period, photographers such as Toni Frissell and Martin Munkácsi were shooting outdoors, showcasing the sportive, self-confident, and increasingly independent women of the time.
As fashion photographers focused on high fashion, “street style” in this early period was captured by street photographers who, in contrast to the idealized studio shots, depicted real life and everyday fashion. Street style in Paris and the Côte d’Azur—elegant and casual looks—is featured in images by Jacques Henri Lartigue. Helen Levitt depicted women on the streets of New York in the early 1940s, capturing fleeting moments and everyday city life in neighborhoods such as the Lower East Side, the Bronx, and Spanish Harlem. American photographers Vivian Maier, Homer Page, and Frank Paulin were attentive observers of how citizens of different social backgrounds moved through the city, producing works that are particularly evocative as they documented real life.
Frank Paulin
*Flower Messenger, New York City, 1955*

Vivian Maier
*Untitled, 1954*
In the European postwar environment, it was Christian Dior who revitalized haute couture in Paris with his New Look in 1947. Nipped-in waists and extravagantly full skirts emphasized the elegant and feminine silhouette. The New Look celebrated elegance, female grace, and a sensual vision. Irving Penn, who photographed the haute couture collections in Paris for *Vogue*, was still working in the studio in a formal manner, focused on couture dresses and depicting the silhouette of the garments, their textures and details. Still connected to the classicism of the preceding decades, the great photographers of this new era created an innovative look of their own, breaking away from the formality and elitism of their predecessors.

In the 1950s photographers such as Frank Horvat and William Klein took their models away from studio backdrops into the urban streets of Paris, Rome, and New York, creating a new look in fashion photography that was disseminated around the world in magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar*—titles that for the first time were reaching much wider audiences.
The 1960s was an era of radical change, mirrored in the fashion photography of the period. Characteristic of this time were revolutions in fashion, youth culture, and pop music, as well as a softening of the class divides of preceding decades. With changing attitudes and the introduction of the pill, Europe and America witnessed a time of sexual liberation. The 1960s saw the birth of models as celebrities. New types of models such as Jean Shrimpton, Twiggy, Penelope Tree, and Veruschka—this last appearing in Michelangelo Antonioni’s legendary 1966 film Blow-up—became household names. The April 1965 issue of Harper’s Bazaar was guest-edited by Richard Avedon: the cover featured a close-up of British model Jean Shrimpton with her face encircled by a Matisse-like pink cutout that vaguely suggested the curves of an astronaut’s helmet. Fashion photography captured the zeitgeist, covering elements from the Space Age to hippie culture.

Thanks to the ubiquity of air travel, photographers set off to exotic places for their fashion shoots. Hiro’s famous photograph of Tilly Tizzani with a blue scarf was photographed in the West Indies; Franco Rubartelli shot Veruschka in Yves Saint Laurent’s famous safari dress in the Central African Republic. But the epicenter of sixties style, culture, and fashion was Swinging London, defined as much by David Bailey and Twiggy as it was by the Beatles and the miniskirt.
Richard Avedon
Jean Shrimpton (cover mock-up), for Harper's Bazaar US, 1965

David Bailey
Vogue Eye View (model), for British Vogue, London, 1967

Hiro
Tilly Tizzani with Blue Scarf, Antigua, West Indies, 1963
Beginning in the second half of the 1960s, self-confident women felt sufficiently liberated to expose more of their bodies, and the fashion of the day reflected this cultural development. In the street style of the time we see bell-bottoms and miniskirts, era-defining and ubiquitous fashion statements.

In the 1960s celebrity models became paragons for women everywhere, and fashion magazines influenced their style and way of life. Prêt-à-porter made it possible for a wider audience to dress fashionably. “The whole point of fashion is to make fashionable clothes available to everyone,” said the British fashion designer Mary Quant in 1966. Pierre Cardin, Emanuel Ungaro, and Yves Saint Laurent were among the European designers who successfully translated a couture aesthetic to ready-to-wear—producing bold and futuristic designs for young people to dress in every day.
In the post-sexual revolution years, provocative and sexually charged images moved out of the underground and counterculture press and into the mainstream. In the 1970s photographers such as Guy Bourdin and Helmut Newton pushed the limits of fashion photography with images that included not only nudity but also references to the world of fetish and fantasy—something that would have been unthinkable only a decade prior. These images appeared not in Playboy magazine but, remarkably, in Vogue. Helmut Newton produced work that fetishized high heels, bondage, and powerful women—and explored the complex and shifting power dynamic between men and women. Bourdin created images that focused more on surreal narratives and tableaux. His iconic and much-referenced campaigns for Charles Jourdan made the shoe a fetish object.

More recently, Juergen Teller, for his part, celebrates the astonishing pose, the unmade-up, and the shocking. His playing with his own surname, “Teller,” the German word for “plate,” to print his iconic images on large-scale plates to display them in a museum context, reflects the humor that is an essential ingredient of Teller’s visual language. This section reveals that sexiness, and what is sexy, is a concept that can be endlessly redefined.

SEX & PROVOCATION

Gian Paolo Barbieri, Guy Bourdin, Jim Lee, Robert Mapplethorpe, Craig McDean, Steven Meisel, Helmut Newton, Walter Pfeiffer, Juergen Teller, Mario Testino, Ellen von Unwerth, Chris von Wangenheim
Ellen von Unwerth
Naomi Campbell, New York, 1994

Helmut Newton
Woman Examining Man,
US Vogue, Saint-Tropez, 1975

Mario Testino
Kate Moss, for British Vogue,
London, 2009
Inspired by cinema and Surrealism, fashion photographers such as Tim Walker and Miles Aldridge create elaborate sets and backdrops for their shoots; in close collaboration with set designers and stylists, they bring their ideas to life, making a dream world reality. “I want people to look at my photographs the same way they watch movies in the cinema that let them forget their reality for a brief moment and submerge in a different, foreign better world,” said Walker. Artists like Larry Sultan tell stories about contemporary life. His work features narratives reminiscent of familiar domestic images, such as in the “family albums” of the Kate Spade Fall/Winter 2002 advertising campaign.

Known as the “Andy Warhol of Marrakech,” Anglo-Moroccan artist Hassan Hajjaj combines elements of high fashion with Moroccan tradition and street culture. With colorful compositions, patterned backdrops, textiles, and typical Moroccan plastic mats, he creates his own universe blending the Orient, the Western world—and Pop Art.

These artists’ images present a fantasy world that is the perfect platform for fashion, which is so much about escapism and illusion. In much of their work, the fashion becomes secondary, with imagery and narrative taking center stage.
Esther Haase
*The Fearless Lola Walking the Lion King,* for Stern, Miami, 1999

Tina Barney
*The Pool Table,* for US *Vogue,* 2019

Miles Aldridge
*Home Works #3,* for *Vogue Italia,* 2008
Even before digital photography and Photoshop were invented, photographers pushed fashion photography to its technical limits. Erwin Blumenfeld was experimenting with mirrors and kaleidoscopes as well as multiple exposures and darkroom manipulation such as solarization and negative printing as early as the 1930s. Later, in the 1980s, Nick Knight rediscovered the manipulative potential of the photographic medium even before the invention of Photoshop. He remembers, “I was working with [analog printer] Brian Dowling, taking the negative and separating it out, working with cross-processing and using masks and pre-flashing to overlay colors on the prints. We would take about three or four days to do one image, experimenting, opening up the possibilities, and pushing the parameters of photography.”

The Dutch duo Inez & Vinoodh were among the first photographers to exploit digital manipulation when Photoshop was still in its infancy in the early 1990s. For the British style magazine *The Face*, Inez & Vinoodh digitally combined studio shots of models with stock imagery to create a hyperrealistic effect. By distorting body parts and manipulating backgrounds, their oeuvre oscillates between the unreal and the real, the subtle and the obvious. They made the now-ubiquitous photo-editing software an integral part of their creative process—as important as the camera. Altering photographs became as essential as taking them. By the mid-1990s an entirely new sort of image, made possible by constantly evolving technology, started to appear in the pages of fashion magazines.
As a counterpoint to the shiny glamour and conspicuous consumption of the late 1970s and 1980s—reflected in the fashion photography of this era—photographers like Sarah Moon and Deborah Turbeville established a new style, one steeped in nostalgia and romanticism. Their work, and that of the other artists in this section, references painting as much as it does photography. “Painting, photography, music, cinema, literature, life … everything I loved influenced me,” stated Moon in an interview with collector Nicola Erni. Both former models, the work of Turbeville and Moon is in spirit romantic rather than sexy.

Turbeville’s work has a melancholic and cinematic quality that evokes an emotional response from the beholder—a rare thing in fashion photography. Paolo Roversi, a gifted colorist and visual poet, produces work that feels as close to painting as it does to photography. Indeed, some of his Polaroids have applied gold leaf, creating an effect that is reminiscent of Byzantine painting.
Arthur Elgort
*Romance: Christian Lacroix*
*Haute Couture Atelier in Paris,*
for *House & Garden,* 1988

Paolo Roversi

Erık Madigan Heck
*Without a Face: (Red),* Old Future, 2013
Natural beauty, rawness, and imperfection marked a new decade in fashion photography. The late 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of the supermodel, a new type of model created and best celebrated by Peter Lindbergh. The backdrop of these shoots were often sand dunes, beaches, the desert, and the ocean.

Allusions to classical art with regard to the celebration of the athletic body are typical of the work of Herb Ritts, Bruce Weber, and others. The late 1980s also saw a return to black-and-white photography—without the sheen and glamour of, for example, Guy Bourdin’s work of the previous decade. Pure and direct portraits are common in these artists’ visual languages. There is much less staging and stiffness in their work—instead there is often a simple, fluid, and direct dialogue between artist and model.
The sociocultural approach of Amy Arbus, shooting subcultures in New York in the 1980s, and Anthony Hernandez, capturing people on LA’s iconic Rodeo Drive, is contrasted by the photographs taken by Bill Cunningham, Scott Schuman, and Tommy Ton. Considered the godfather of street style photography, Cunningham searched New York City streets for ordinary people in stylish clothes: “The best fashion show is definitely on the street. Always has been, always will be.” Cunningham anticipated style bloggers like Schuman and Ton by decades. These latter two photographers have depicted fashionistas on the streets or during international fashion weeks in Milan, Paris, London, and New York since 2005, when the fashion industry’s obsession with street style began. Today, fashion blogs and street style photographers have conquered the realm of the classical fashion magazine through social media and the Internet.
Fashion photography—like fashion itself—is always changing, and new talents continue to emerge, in the fields of both fashion design and photography; indeed the two are fundamentally intertwined. Alasdair McLellan resisted using digital photography, employed by almost all of his peers, and insisted on analog despite resistance from magazines and publishers. His aesthetic is in tune with the sports chic favored by the urban youth.

Harley Weir takes this grittiness to another level. She is known for her youth-focused fashion photography that celebrates modern femininity and the female gaze through the intimacy and color of her images. Indeed, gender fluidity, which in a way represents a kind of second sexual revolution, is embodied in the work of both McLellan and Weir. For her part, Emma Summerton, another rising star, shows that classicism isn’t dead. A gifted colorist and storyteller, she demonstrates that fashion is a broad church and that there is not one single style governing fashion photography, but many.

In the United States we see Tyler Mitchell breaking many boundaries. Now known for his images that reflect and celebrate the beauty and intimacy of Black American life, he had already begun to introduce an original visual language to fashion photography when, in 2018, he became the first African American photographer to shoot the cover of US Vogue.
Tyler Mitchell
Untitled (Hijab Couture), for US Vogue, 2019

Emma Summerton
Janice with a Lister Lady, for Vogue Australia, Sydney, 2014

Nadine Ijewere
Fluffy Dresses, for Garage magazine, 2019
FASHION AND STREET STYLE PHOTOGRAPHERS

MILES ALDRIDGE, SHOICHI AOKI, AMY ARBUS,
RICHARD AVEDON, DAVID BAILEY, GIAN PAOLO BARBIERI,
TINA BARNEY, LILLIAN BASSMAN, CECIL BEATON, ERWIN
BLUMENFELD, GUY BOURDIN, HARRY CALLAHAN,
HAROLD CHAPMAN, BILL CUNNINGHAM, LOUISE DAHL-WOLFE,
PATRICK DEMARCHELIER, GLEB DERUJINSKY,
TERENCE DONOVAN, ARTHUR ELGORT, LEE FRIEDLANDER,
TONI FRISSELL, ESTHER HAASE, HASSAN HAJJAJ, ERIK MADIGAN
HECK, WILLIAM HELBURN, ANTHONY HERNANDEZ, HIRO,
HORST P. HORST, FRANK HORVAT, GEORGE HOYningen-Huene,
WALDE HUTH, NADINE IJEWERE, INEZ & VINOODH,
WILLIAM KLEIN, PETER KNAPP, NICK KNIGHT,
JACQUES HENRI LARTIGUE, JIM LEE, SAUL LEITER,
LEON LEVINSTEIN, HELEN LEVITT, PETER LINDBERGH,
VIVIAN MAIER, ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE, CRAIG McDEAN,
FRANCES MCLAUGHLIN-GILL, ALASDAIR MCLELLAN,
STEVEN MEISEL, TONI MENEGUZZO, SHEILA METZNER,
JOEL MEYEROWITZ, TYLER MITCHELL,, SARAH MOON,
JAMES MOORE, MARTIN MUNKÁSCI, CATHLEEN NAUNDORF,
HELMUT NEWTON, HOMER PAGE, TOM PALUMBO,
NORMAN PARKINSON, GORDON PARKS, FRANK PAULIN,
IRVING PENN, GÖSTA PETERSON, WALTER PFEIFFER, RANKIN,
BOB RICHARDSON, HERB RITTS, PAOLO ROVERSI,
FRANCO RUBARTELLI, FRANCESCO SCAVULLO,
JERRY SCHATZBERG, SCOTT SCHUMAN (THE SARTORIALIST),
DAVID SEIDNER, CINDY SHERMAN, TYLER SHIELDS,
JEANLOUP SIEFF, WILLIAM SILANO, MELVIN SOKOLSKY,
BERT STERN, LARRY SULTAN, EMMA SUMMERTON,
JUERGEN TELLER, MARIO TESTINO, TOMMY TON,
DEBORAH TURBEVILLE, ELLEN VON UNWERTH,
CHRIS VON WANGENHEIM, TIM WALKER, ALBERT WATSON,
BRUCE WEBER, HARLEY WEIR, GARRY WINOGRAND
Birgit Filzmaier is an art historian and photography expert based in Zurich, Switzerland. She started her professional career at Galerie Zur Stockeregg, where she focused mainly on twentieth-century American and European vintage photography. At SCALO publishers, she was responsible for the start-up of the newly founded gallery specialized in contemporary photography. Since 1998 she has been working as a private dealer with a special emphasis on advising private and institutional clients in forming their collections. Filzmaier has widely published and lectured on photography and was commissioned to be guest curator for selected exhibitions, such as Allure: Collection Susanne von Meiss at c/o Berlin in 2016. Since 2018 Filzmaier has been advising the Nicola Erni Collection on various projects.

Ira Stehmann is a curator, book editor, and art advisor, showcasing contemporary art in her project space in Munich where she lives. For thirty years Stehmann has been advising clients, curating exhibitions, and promoting contemporary art, liaising with both private and institutional collectors and individuals. The focus of her work is on photography, but also includes the act of intermediary for paintings, sculpture, and installations.

Since 2005 Stehmann has been advising the Nicola Erni Collection on various projects. She has curated two major exhibitions: Zeitgeist & Glamour at the NRW-Forum Düsseldorf in 2011, and Shoot!Shoot!Shoot! at the Stadt-museum, Munich, in 2016–17, both comprising photographs of the 1960s and 1970s from the Nicola Erni Collection. Following her passion for books, she has published extensively on contemporary photography.