

# Fashion photography

## The Beginning

1800



The precursors of fashion photography go back to the eighteenth century, when images of fashionable clothes were printed in magazines and often hand-colored. Paris was at that time a center for the production of such magazines, many of which were imported into England. This picture shows a typical example of such an image.



The technique of photography was developed in the 1830s, but it wasn't until much later that the métier of fashion photography came into existence. The earliest popular photographic technique, the daguerreotype, could not be used for mass printing. A later technique enabled the production of the "Carte de Visite" which were made for individuals and which also depicted famous theatre and music hall personalities of the age. It wasn't until advances in halftone printing techniques that fashion photographs came to be featured in magazines. This happened in about the first decade of the 20th century.

### **First Fashion Photographer, Baron Adolphe de Meyer**

1910



The first fashion photographer was probably Baron Adolphe de Meyer who was hired by Conde Nast in 1913 to take experimental pictures for Vogue. His main characteristic was a wonderful use of backlighting and the soft-focus lens. Early fashion pictures were essentially society photographs of aristocrats, actresses and society models wearing their own clothes. The overall key of this photograph is a light grey, the only dark areas being around the sitter's face, arms and lap

### **Edward Jean Steichen**

1911



With Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Jean Steichen founded the Photo-Secession Galleries in New York. He first photographed fashion models in 1911 for the magazine "Art and Decoration", and worked with Conde Nast during the twenties. This photo was made for American Vogue in 1920, and shows Norma Shearer, wearing a Chanel gown.



In 1914 the National Geographic was also one of the first magazines to reproduce color photographs. (Picture is from a 1914 National Geographic magazine). Color photography was itself new at the time, although the idea had tantalized inventors since Talbot and Daguerre. Several processes for producing color had been proposed in the 19th century, but none proved workable outside the laboratory. The Autochrome process, created in 1904 by the Lumières, was both practical and widely marketed. It

utilized a layer of dyed starch grains over a standard black-and-white emulsion; when the monochrome layer was developed after exposure, it produced a positive transparency. The clear areas of the transparency allowed light to shine through the appropriately colored bits of starch, while the shadow areas remained properly dark.



Beaton designed book jackets and costumes for charity matinees, learning the professional craft of photography at the studio of Paul Tanqueray, until Vogue took him on regularly in 1927. He also set up his own studio, and one of his earliest clients and, later, best friends was Stephen Tennant; Beaton's photographs of Tennant and his circle are considered some of the best representations of the "Bright Young Things" of the twenties and thirties. (Tennant in photo) Beaton is best known for his fashion photographs and society portraits. He worked as a staff photographer for Vanity Fair and Vogue in addition to photographing celebrities in Hollywood.

## **George Hoyningen-Huene**

1925



George Hoyningen-Huene was another of the aristocratic practitioners of early fashion photography, and did most of his most memorable work between the mid-twenties and the end of the Second World War. He was born in St Petersburg, but moved to Paris in 1920, where he first did fashion illustration and then photography. He moved to New York in 1935, and worked mainly for Harper's Bazaar.

The photo is a famous swimwear ad by George Hoyningen-Huene. It displays a combination of chic and classicism typical of the age. The image shows a meticulous attitude to detail and arrangement. The models are placed very carefully, with close attention to the effect of light and shadow. The combined outline forms a pleasing U shape, similar to a Greek vase. By illusion, the scene appears to be outdoors, but on closer inspection, we can see that, like most fashion shots of the day, it was taken in a studio, and the "sea" is an area of light grey, with the "sky" and faintly painted clouds above it. A very realistic effect of daylight is achieved by a strong, single light, placed to the above left of the subjects.

If you went to the sea and took a photo of it around midday, the sea would almost certainly appear much darker. The effect of this unnaturally light background is twofold: it makes the models stand out, but more interestingly, it actually simulates how we would see the background in harsh sunlight without sunglasses- very light and slightly fuzzy, due to the smarting of the eyes. The visually inaccurate, but psychologically correct portrayal of the background gives this image its mysterious appeal. The enigmatic quality is heightened by the fact that the models stare away from us, so that we can't see their faces, and appear to be looking at something out on the "sea", to the right, and beyond the frame of the picture. What are they looking at? What are their faces like? And where exactly is this seaside location?

## Begining of Photography in Advertisements

1930



The new approach to photography in the editorial content of magazines was matched by an increasingly sophisticated use of photography in advertisements. Steichen, while also working for Vogue and Vanity Fair magazines, became one of the highest-paid photographers of the 1930s through his work for the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. Together with Anton Bruehl, Nickolas Muray, and others, he helped transform the look of advertising photography from straightforward catalog pictures of a product to more natural and sensuous depictions, often with the addition of a woman's hands to indicate the product's usefulness and practicality. Some advertising photographers began to rely on elaborate stage sets constructed for the camera. The artistry of photography succeeded in manufacturing consumer desire even during the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s.

## Later Cecil Beaton

1930



An interesting development during the 1930's was a change in Beaton's attitude towards the romanticism and indulgence in his earlier work. This quotation from "The Best of Beaton" written in 1968, gives us the photographer's insight into the changing mood:

"The results of my experiments in this genre of photography were considered to prove that I had at last grown up, and had acquired a new sense of reality. "Reality" was taken up by editors as the "new thing".

A result of this change of direction was a contributory factor in the termination of his contract with Vogue in 1938. In the ensuing years he took many war photographs. Beaton was initially posted to the Ministry of Information and given the task of recording images from the home front. During this assignment he captured one of the most enduring images of British suffering during the war, that of three-year-old Blitz victim Eileen Dunne recovering in hospital, clutching her beloved teddy bear (See picture) . When the image was published, America had not yet officially joined the war — but splashed across the press in the USA, images such as Beaton's helped push the American public to put pressure on their Government to help Britain in its hour of need.



Sam Shaw became famous in the Forties for his documentary studies across the pond in the United States. He signed prestigious covers for Life and Look in the Fifties. He entered the cinema with his extraordinary portrait of Marlon Brando in "a Streetcar Named Desire". In 1951 a newcomer caught his attention, Marilyn Monroe, he followed her career, fascinated by this extraordinary woman, he did not cease modulating and modeling this dream creature revealing her beauty. As an adviser to Billy Wilder in the film "The Seven Year Itch" he suggested the famous sequence of the skirt raised by the hot air at the Subway in Lexington Avenue. (see image)



## Dorian Leigh

1940



Dorian Leigh is acclaimed to be the world's first supermodel. She worked in the late 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s,

in a time when modeling for photographs was considered the most prestigious segment of the profession (photographic models were paid more than those who worked fashion shows and considered themselves above such work). While in demand as a cover girl, Dorian Leigh also became the signature model of Fire and Ice for Revlon.



Norman Parkinson came into the world of fashion with a new perspective:

"I was hardly aware of other photographers' work until I went to Harper's, when I learnt about Steichen, Hoyningen-Huene, Durst and Beaton. But the women in their photographs were a rarefied few, an elitist handful. My women behaved quite differently - they drove cars, went shopping, had children and kicked the dog. I wanted to capture that side of women. I wanted them out in the fields jumping over the haycocks - I did not think they needed their knees bolted together. There was always room in a magazine for the scent-laden marble-floored studios with lilies falling out of great bowls of flowers. but there was also room for my sort of photography."

His work, following the lead of Munkacsi at Harper's Bazaar, revolutionised the world of British fashion photography in the '40s by bringing his models from the rigid studio environment into a far more dynamic outdoor setting. Humour played a central role in many of his photographs which often included himself.

## **Lillian Bassman**

1950



One photographer whose work was more at the romantic and impressionistic end of the spectrum was Lillian Bassman, a protegee of the legendary Alexei Brodovitch at Harpers, New York.

This image, dating from 1949, and entitled "New York", is timeless, almost contemporary in its look. With the depiction of a corset, we can see a return to more traditional, romantic vision of femininity. The image looks as if it was exposed sharp in the camera, but given a soft-focus effect at printing. There is slight double exposure, with probable use of a diffusing filter, or possibly an additional exposure was made out of focus. The pose has a sweeping sense of movement, the face and upper body are tipping forwards, the arms are pulling the strings backwards and upwards. The waist is tightly, painfully drawn in, to the extent that it looks unnaturally narrow. The tightness is contrasted with the looseness of the four hanging straps.

A moment is caught in time by the camera, a fleeting glimpse echoed by the reflection in the mirror.

At first the image looks primarily decorative, but in addition to beauty of form, a powerful feeling of constriction is expressed. Perhaps the fact that the photographer is female made her better able to empathise with how it feels to wear a corset.

## Richard Avedon

1951



The one photographer who more than any other came to symbolise the new direction which fashion photography took after the Second World War is Richard Avedon, who was born in 1923. He has been a leading figure in the world of photography since 1945, and is still active.

Dovima with Elephants (see photo) is one of his most celebrated pictures. The image is well-crafted, but its main appeal seems to be that it was the first time anyone had taken a high fashion model together with elephants. It had a certain shock value. Richard Avedon's modernism, had sweeping effect on photography, and there was a consequent rejection of the earlier, more "classical" style:

"By 1945, Hoynigen-Huene's stiff, formal poses, perfectly attuned to the Neo-classicism of the 1930's, suddenly seemed anachronistic...The most devastating critique of Hoyningen-Huene's photography was delivered in 1944 by Dr Agha (formerly Hoyningen-Huene's art director at Vogue) who described it as "a cross between stagecraft, interior decoration, ballet and society portrait painting done by camera."

## The Sixties

1960



In this picture by David Bailey Another quintessential face of that decade is portrayed in this shot, taken in January 1965. What it doesn't say about the clothes it makes up for in the tantalising glimpse we get of Swinging London. The camera is at a "swinging" angle, and fashionable Hampstead Hill is seen silhouetted late in the day, with a tiny figure on a bench just visible.

Marianne Faithfull, looks into the camera with a distant expression, the stray wisp of hair and billowing dress, along with the clouds, alluding to a windy day. The diagonals make for a dynamic image, but it's also dark and brooding, a deliberate effect done at darkroom stage. From the look of the clouds, the sun would appear to be fairly high in the sky.

## Helmut Newton Helmut

1961



Helmut Newton's photos, mostly set in expensive hotels or on the streets of the chic capitals of Europe, feature tall, long-limbed women, often nude, some androgynous. Each picture features an action or situation, inviting viewers to imagine the before and after for themselves. This picture features a woman standing pensively in a man's suit. There is a feeling of sexual ambiguity, with the slicked back hair, reminiscent of Berlin in the 1920's.

Like most of his images, this is in black and white, and the film is quite grainy, giving a slightly harsh, unromanticised effect. The Parisian back street is full of empty atmospheric eeriness. Perhaps the person has stepped out of the rear entrance of a hotel, or some other establishment, to have a cigarette and take a break, from what? What is she thinking about? And why is she dressed like a man?

## Charlotte March

1965



She is the “Grand Dame” of German fashion-photography. Charlotte March, combative non-conformistic, with high artistic potential and inexhaustible creativity. Since the fifties her exceptional photographic work spread even over the borders of Germany, particularly England and to Italy. Suddenly in the sixties the German magazine TWEN started. The unconventional style of TWEN permitted extremely new visual perspectives - and provided, therefore, a very challenging time for Charlotte March with an abundance of publications. Her photo-stories received several awards from the New York Art Directors Club. During the eighties the creative fashion series of Charlotte March found again a worldwide forum, VOGUE Italia.

## Twiggy

1966



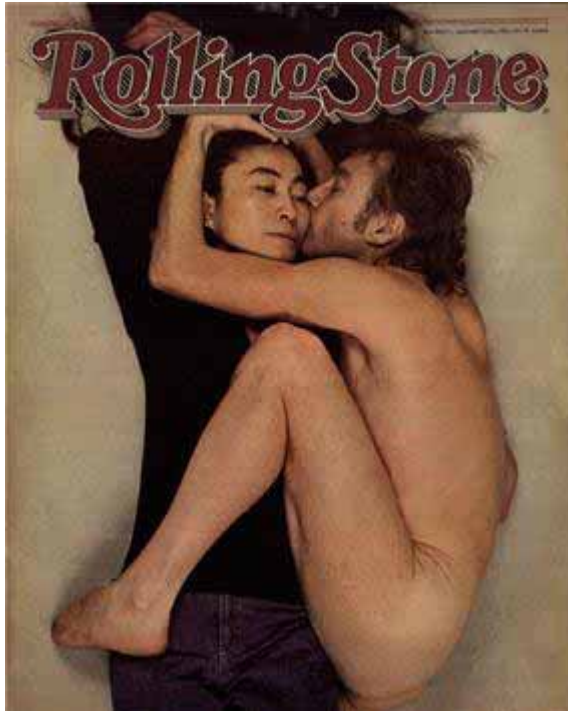
In 1966, Nigel Davies noticed the young Lesley Hornby and offered her a modelling contract.

Davies advised her to go by her childhood nickname, Twiggy. After sweeping England as "The Face of '66" when her modelling pictures, taken by Barry Lategan were made public, Twiggy arrived in New York in March 1967. It was believed that the Twiggy craze would die down within a month; Twiggy, however, became an instant icon and supermodel. Known for the high fashion mod look, Twiggy changed the world of fashion with her short-haired androgynous look. Her style has dominated the runways for forty years.



## Annie Leibovitz

1970



Annie Leibovitz is a noted American portrait photographer whose style is marked by a close collaboration between the photographer and the subject.

In high school, she became interested in various artistic endeavors, and began to write and play music. She attended the San Francisco Art Institute. She became interested in photography after taking pictures on a trip to visit her family in Japan. When Leibovitz returned to America in 1970, she became involved with Rolling Stone magazine, which had launched a short time before. In 1973, publisher Jann Wenner named Leibovitz chief photographer of the magazine, and she remained with the magazine until 1983. Her intimate portraits of celebrities helped define the look of the magazine.

Photo: John Lennon and his wife Yoko

Ono Lennon and the cover of Rolling Stone. It was taken by Leibovitz on December 8, 1980. Leibovitz promised Lennon he would make the cover of Rolling Stone, and she initially tried to get a picture with just Lennon alone. She would recall that, "nobody wanted [Ono] on the cover". When Lennon insisted that both be on the cover Leibovitz then tried to recreate the kissing scene from the Double Fantasy album cover, a picture that she loved. "What is interesting is she said she'd take her top off and I said,

'Leave everything on' ... not really preconceiving the picture at all. Then he curled up next to her and it was very, very strong. You couldn't help but feel that she was cold and he looked like he was clinging on to her...

I shot some test Polaroids first and when I showed them to John and Yoko, John said, 'You've captured our relationship exactly. Promise me it'll be on the cover'. I looked him in the eye and we shook on it. She was the last person to professionally photograph John Lennon because he was killed that night.

## **Patrick Demarchelier**

1975



Patrick Demarchelier is one of the privileged few top photographers of our time. At the age of 17, he started photography. Through different jobs as an assistant, he learned the secrets of the profession and at the end of the sixties; he got his first publications in Elle and Marie-Claire.

Demarchelier lives the same way his career evolved: rapidly and focused. He is open and friendly and able to make you feel at ease in a few minutes. He has a strong vision on image making, but is at the same time a team player. Influenced by the classics of photography and painting, Patrick Demarchelier plays with light, lines and forms of the human body, the fashion cloth or the wild elephant in the African landscape, always looking for beauty. "Beauty is everywhere", he says, "you only have to open your eyes". His photographs have been published and shown worldwide. His art prints are becoming collector's items. The secret of his success is "working hard", his life philosophy "to enjoy every moment of it".

## Michael Eastman

1980



Over the past thirty years, Michael Eastman has produced a body of fine-art photography on subjects ranging from European architecture to Midwestern storefronts. His work is in many collections, including those of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the International Center of Photography in New York City, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Eastman has been the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant and has been published in Time, The New York Times, Life, American Photographer, and Communication Arts. He lives in St. Louis.

## Juergen Teller

1986



Juergen Teller is a German fashion photographer, based in England. He came to London from Germany in 1986. He initially photographed celebrities, and then quickly graduated to shoots for youth style magazines such as *The Face* and *i-D*. He is regarded as one of the most influential of contemporary fashion photographers. He has shot all of the advertisements for Marc Jacobs's clothing line, and (as of Sept 2005) the last two seasons of advertising campaigns for Yves Saint Laurent. Teller has made several short films including, "Can I Own Myself," in 1998, which featured fashion icon Kate Moss. He is known for using a simple point and shoot camera.

## Gisele Bündchen

1990



Gisele Bündchen is a Brazilian supermodel. She is recognized as being one of the most successful and highest-paid models in the world. Since her introduction to the fashion scene in the 1990s, she has appeared on many billboards and magazine covers, as well as numerous TV and print ads. Bündchen is currently the face of more than 20 brands worldwide from countries including the United States, Russia, Brazil, Italy, France, Mexico, Spain, Turkey, South Korea, Germany and Switzerland. According to Forbes, she is currently the sixteenth richest woman in entertainment world, having earned \$33 million in 2006, adding to her estimated \$150 million fortune. She is currently listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the "world's richest supermodel".

## Mario Testino

1990



One of fashion's most sought-after snappers, Mario Testino was born in 1954 in Lima, Peru. Today he is best known for his highly polished, exotically bright ad campaigns and his exquisitely styled photographs of the couture scene all of which carry a deceptive air of nonchalance.

Now at the top of his profession, Testino has shot Madonna for Versace as well as photographing the late Diana, Princess of Wales for her famous Vanity Fair cover in 1997. His popularity with designers and fashion editors stems as much from his professionalism and good nature as his unerring ability to take beautiful pictures which sell clothes. Testino is also credited with bringing to an end the reign of the ubermodel: rather than pay the exorbitant fees demanded by Linda, Naomi et al, in the early Nineties Testino championed a new breed of model, including Kate Moss, Stella Tennant and several other new Brit-pack beauties.

## Mert and Marcus

1994



Mert and Marcus, both born in 1971 in Turkey and Wales, respectively, met for the first time in England in 1994 after having worked for a brief period in completely different areas, the first in classical music and the second in graphic design. Marcus was an assistant photographer and Mert was a fashion photo modeler. After working together in the photography business, they decided to create a team. When they showed their first photos to "Dazed and Confused", the London fashion magazine, they immediately made the cover.

Known for their portraits of sophisticated, powerful women, Alas and Piggott's photos lend an air of grace and unmistakable perfection to advertising. "The difference between us and other photographers is that we care a lot about appearance," says Alas. "We spend most of the time in the make-up and hairstyling rooms, focusing more on the look than on more technical aspects. The technical part influences the final result by about 80-90%." "We rely totally on retouching, and we wouldn't be where we are now without a good group of operators behind us". The team works today for magazines such as Vogue USA, Vogue Italia, W Magazine, Pop Magazine, Numero and Arena Homme Plus. Some of their major clients are top fashion labels such as Louis Vuitton, Missoni, Giorgio Armani, Roberto Cavalli, Fendi and Miu Miu. They created the images for perfume houses such as Gucci, Yves St Laurent, Givenchy and Lancôme. Alas and Piggott have also worked with celebrities of the

caliber of Jennifer Lopez, Madonna, Björk, Lindsay Lohan, Scarlett Johansson, Charlotte Rampling, and Kylie Minogue.

## Heidi Klum

1995



Heidi Klum has been on the cover of most of the well-known fashion magazines, including *Vogue Magazine*, *ELLE*, and *Marie Claire*.

She became widely known after appearing on the cover of *Playboy* and for her work with *Victoria's Secret*. She is currently the latest celebrity spokesmodel for *Jordache*.

In July 2007, having earned an estimated \$8 million in the previous 12 months, Klum was named by *Forbes* as third in the list of the World's 15 Top-Earning Supermodels.

(This photo is from a *Marie Claire* interview)



## Eros Messina

1996



Eros Messina, an Italian national, began his photography career in the fashion capital of the world, Milan. From there, his photos have taken him all around the world, from Australia to Spain, and finally to New York City, where he launched his current project Fizz Photography. Recently, Eros photographed handbags for fashion designer Zac Posen's much anticipated accessory line and look book. He also created an editorial piece for fashion and culture magazine Butter. In addition to fashion photography, Eros' portfolio includes an impressive range of landscape photography and fashion portraits.

## Mario Sorrenti

1998



Mario Sorrenti is a photographer best known for his spreads of nude models in the pages of Vogue and Harper's Bazaar. Sorrenti was born in Naples, Italy, but moved to New York City at the age of ten where

he is still based. He is the son of New York based advertiser, Francesca Sorrenti. He has had exhibitions in London (Victoria and Albert Museum), Paris, Monaco and New York (Museum of Modern Art). He has undertaken campaigns and directed commercials for Calvin Klein. He has also worked for Lancôme, Paco Rabanne and Benetton. Additionally, Sorrenti is responsible for the photographs on several music releases, most notably Shakira's Oral Fixation Vol. 1, as well as R&B artist Maxwell's album Embrya and a solo album by John Taylor of Duran Duran. His first musical project was the photography for rock group Del Amitri's 1995 album, Twisted, and its associated single releases.

## **Paolo Pellizzari**

1999



In 1999, Paolo was an independent photographer in Belgium. He created a group exhibit in Brussels known as Moving Art. He was awarded first prize for Grand Prix d'auteur Couleur de France. Afterwards, he established another group exhibition in Paris entitled Around the World FFP. In 2000, Paolo established another exhibit known as Around the World in... Moreover, he published a book entitled La France du Tour. In 2001, he created another exhibit in Hasselt entitled Around the World Musée d'art Moderne and published one of his works, Tour de France, in the newspaper, Libération. In 2002, Paolo created a group exhibit in Charleroi entitled Musée de la Photographie and also created another group exhibit called Recyclart. He published a work entitled Les Classiques Journal Equipe in Vélo Magazine and also published Soccer World Cup 2002 in the newspaper Libération. Paolo created another group exhibit known as Couleur Café and had an exhibition at the Queen Galleries in Brussels for his work entitled One Billion Indians.

## Nick Knight

2000



Nick Knight is a British photographer and Director of SHOWstudio.com. He is known for his personal, experimental vision, resulting in work that exists outside the conventions of fashion photography - charged with energy and emotion yet imbued with a sense of quiet elegance.

Knight's first book of photographs, *Skinheads*, was published in 1982, when he was a 24-year-old photography student at Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design. He was then commissioned by i-D editor Terry Jones to create a series of 100 portraits for the magazine's fifth anniversary issue. As a result of those black-and-white portraits, his work caught the attention of art director Marc Ascoli, who commissioned Knight to shoot the 1986 catalogue of avant-gard Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto in collaboration with renowned graphic designer Peter Saville. Since this first foray into fashion photography, he has shot both editorial and advertising projects for clients including Alexander McQueen, Audi, Calvin Klein, Christian Dior, Jil Sander, Lancôme, Levi Strauss, Martine Sitbon, Mercedes-Benz, Royal Ballet, Royal Opera House, Swarovski and Yves Saint Laurent.

## Mark Seliger

© 2000



Mark Seliger currently lives and works in New York City, and is under contract to Conde Nast Publications, working for GQ and Vanity Fair. Until recently, Mark was the chief photographer for Rolling Stone Magazine for more than ten years, featuring stories on the worlds' top musicians and actors. (Image of Leonardo Di Caprio)

## David Drebin

2001



"I decided to become a photographer over 10 years ago strictly because I wanted to understand my own imagination and what I really thought about other human beings. I guess one could call it Fashion photography even though I have yet to put myself in any category. I love Fashion but I am more fascinated by the people who wear the fashion than the actual fashion hence the photograph of the person who happens to wear the fashion without intending to be a fashion photograph but merely a photograph...self involved but not self conscious necessarily."-David Drebin

"I like pictures that are often duplicitous and have hidden meanings that are ultimately gripping and stay in mind far beyond the moment of looking at the picture for the first time. I like the pictures that the picture I am looking at makes me think about in my own imagination. I like pictures that often say one thing but mean another...maybe that is what is now referred to as "narrative" photography."-David Drebin

This Photograph entitled "The Girl in the Red Dress" has an element of mystery to it. Where is she going?? Where is she coming from??

## Floriane de Lassée

2003



Floriane de Lassée was born and raised in Paris, France. After graduating from Penninghen-ESAG (Paris – 2000) as a master in graphic design and fine art, she worked in Paris, then moved to New York City. In 2004, she received a Certificate from the International Center of Photography and quickly began to show her work in american galleries. That same year, Floriane won the Grand Prize in the Photo District News magazine Edu with her Night Views series. In 2006, she returned to her native country, showing her new work in France (Galerie Philippe Chaume, Salon Jeune Création 2006), United States (KrampfPei gallery - NYC) and Russia (Na Solyanke gallery - Moscou) while continuing to capture cityscapes in Paris, Shanghai and Tokyo. (this Image was taken in Tokyo).

## Ana Black

2006



Ana Black is a creative photographer specializing in fashion, music, film, editorial and advertising work. Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Ana Black has worked in Vancouver, Paris and New York. Black has received several national and international awards and grants for her work including a Canada Council for the Arts Grant. With a background in fine art, Ana Black.'s projects offer an impressive array of innovative imagery for her clients.

## Conclusion

2008



In the past few years, fashion photography has become the guiding medium of contemporary visual culture. Its status has evolved from a support for fashion into a maker of icons and ideas. Fashion photography has a determining influence in all fields of communication and it is considered a form of art in every sense. Fashion photography tends to be a credible watermark of beauty ideals of a given era, as well as an indicator of the political and social climate. The power of fashion photography is to record images and more often, it deeply influences the "here and now".