



W E S E R B U R G

PRESS INFORMATION

## Helmut Newton Photographs

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Museum of  
Modern Art

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“Newton’s work is provocative even today. This is what excites me most about the exhibition, because here it becomes clear that culture and art do not take place in an ivory tower, but are a virulent part of our society. With the Newton show, the Weserburg is continuing along its path of presenting outstanding artists of our time in Bremen. As Senator for Culture I can only welcome this course, for it reinforces the museum’s position as a beacon to Bremen’s art scene and as a leading institution for contemporary art in northwestern Germany.”

Mayor Jens Böhrnsen, President of the Senate and Senator for Culture

May 19, 2008

“Helmut is surely a woman’s photographer. The image he creates of her, however, is not necessarily the one men expect. In his own way, he has changed the erotic fantasy of our time, or in any case strongly influenced it. His influence goes beyond what he originally intended. He is a kind sorcerer’s apprentice of the image of the woman of our century. There are only adult, free, and independent women in front of his camera and in his photographs. Women who know no weakness and no doubt. And if Helmut Newton’s photographs could give us an answer to the question of what women will look like in the upcoming century?”  
Karl Lagerfeld, fashion designer

“His perception of women is thoroughly profound and at the same time offending. He adds the base forces of dominance, exploitation, orgasm to the equation. He deploys the entire spectrum of sexual mythology—lesbians, transvestites, whores. His so-called half-baked eroticism always has something to do with a certain concept of the liberated woman.”  
Alexander Libermann, editor-in-chief of Condé Nast

“Helmut Newton’s photographs have an unmistakable individual style. The crucial importance of the battle of the sexes, the sensuality and corporeality of the human being are documented by his precisely calculated photographic orchestrations. Newton’s images are loaded with this human energy. The amazing thing is that these photographs seems to be utterly ageless, even though most of them were produced within the context of fashion photography.”  
Carsten Ahrens, Weserburg

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. It was not by chance that God decreed this commandment in the Old Testament. He knew that whoever creates an image of another is imposing his own on him. In the history of humankind, pictures have no doubt shaped the image of human beings more strongly than words. And we are living in a time



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in which the power of the image is increasing. It is precisely [women] whose are fixed in advertising, the media, film, and art: as whores or saints, as bodies without heads, as objects that can be used or destroyed—completely at the whim of the viewer.”

Alice Schwarzer, author

“He undressed the self-confident businesswoman and gagged and fettered her into an abasing pose. The self-confidence in her eyes has nothing to do with the abasement of the fettered body. Newton clearly avails himself sadomasochistic fantasies, animalizing women and the men who find women in poses like these attractive. I am hoping for a new debate that makes very clear that we do not want women to be portrayed in this way... And by far not all men like Newton’s very particular vision of women.”

Ulrike Hauffe, director of the Bremische Zentralstelle für die Verwirklichung der Gleichberechtigung der Frau (Central Office for the Implementation of Equal Rights for Women)

“My woman are always victors.”

Helmut Newton

“I’m a feminist.”

Helmut Newton

“Nothing was retouched, nothing changed electronically. I took pictures of what I saw.”

Helmut Newton, cited in Françoise Marquet ‘Helmut Newton,’ in ‘Helmut Newton Work’ (Taschen Verlag, Cologne, 2000)

“I’ve always avoided taking pictures in a studio. After all, a women doesn’t spend her life sitting or standing in front of a white paper background. Although it doesn’t make my work any easier, I prefer taking my camera out onto the street, going to public and private places—places often only accessible to the rich. Places like this, which normally remain closed to a photographer, have always appealed to me.”

Helmut Newton, cited in Françoise Marquet ‘Helmut Newton,’ in ‘Helmut Newton Work’ (Taschen Verlag, Cologne, 2000)

“In my opinion, a photographer has to act like a well-behaved child: he should be seen, but keep his mouth shut. I’m convinced that a photographer doesn’t need an explanation, unless it’s a press photograph or a photo novel. Otherwise, enough is said by indicating the date, the location, and the name of the subject... I’m not going to have intellectual discussions about my work.”

Helmut Newton, cited in Françoise Marquet ‘Helmut Newton,’ in ‘Helmut Newton Work’ (Taschen Verlag, Cologne, 2000)

“Newton has a permanent place in the history of photography. There’s no getting around him.”

Fritz Haase, photographer and graphic designer