

KINO LORBER

HELMUT NEWTON

THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Written and Directed by GERO VON BOEHM

HELMUT and JUNE NEWTON, NADJA AUERMANN, MARIANNE FAITHFULL,
SYLVIA GOBBEL, GRACE JONES, CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, ISABELLA
ROSSELLINI, CLAUDIA SCHIFFER, HANNA SCHYGULLA, CARLA SOZZANI,
ARJA TOYRYLA, ANNA WINTOUR

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CAST

HELMUT and JUNE NEWTON, NADJA AUERMANN, MARIANNE FAITHFULL, SYLVIA GOBBEL, GRACE JONES, CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, ISABELLA ROSSELLINI, CLAUDIA SCHIFFER, HANNA SCHYGULLA, CARLA SOZZANI, ARJA TOYRYLA, ANNA WINTOUR

CREW

Director and Screenplay	GERO VON BOEHM
Cinematography	PIERRE NATIVEL MARCUS WINTERBAUER ALEXANDER HEIN SVEN JAKOB-ENGELMANN
Sound	ELIE AUFSEESSER MARCO ZACHALSKY MORITZ SPRINGER HARDY HERGT
Film editing	TOM WEICHENHAIN
Production	LUPA FILM, FELIX VON BOEHM
Production Management	CHRISTINE RAU
Production Assistance	TAMARA DENIC, NELE HUSSMANN, KATRIN JOCHIMSEN
Co-Production	MONARDA ARTS
ZDF / 3Sat, Editorial office	JULE BRODA, ELISABETH RUPP
Film- and Sound Post-Production	DIGITAL IMAGES GMBH

Grading

TIM KIESSIG

Sound Design

MARKUS KROHN

Additional Sound Design

HOLGER KLÖDEN

“I love vulgarity. I am very attracted by bad taste – it is a lot more exciting than that supposed good taste, which is nothing more than a standardized way of looking at things. Good taste is anti-fashion, anti-photo, anti-girl, anti-eroticism! Vulgarity is life, amusement, desire, extreme reactions!”

Helmut Newton

SHORT SYNOPSIS

One of the great masters of photography, Helmut Newton made a name for himself exploring the female form, and his cult status continues long after his tragic death in a Los Angeles car crash in 2004. Newton worked around the globe, from Singapore to Australia to Paris to Los Angeles, but Weimar Germany was the visual hallmark of his work. Newton's unique and striking way of depicting women has always posed the question: did he empower his subjects or treat them as sexual objects? Through candid interviews with Grace Jones, Charlotte Rampling, Isabella Rossellini, Anna Wintour, Claudia Schiffer, Marianne Faithfull, Hanna Schygulla, Nadja Auermann, and Newton's wife June (a.k.a. photographer Alice Springs), this documentary captures his legacy and seeks to answer questions about the themes at the core of his life's work – creating provocative and subversive images of women. The film also features Newton's own home movies, archival footage (including a pointed exchange with Susan Sontag) and, of course, scores of iconic Newton photographs. The result: a wildly entertaining portrait of a controversial genius.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

HELMUT NEWTON – THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL shows the legendary photographer of the 20th century both at work, and in private situations. Included are film and audio recordings that were created during Newton's lifetime. For his new documentary, Gero von Boehm had unlimited and exclusive access to the archive of the Helmut Newton Foundation.

Notably, von Boehm's documentary about Helmut Newton comes at a time when the gaze of art, the gaze of painters, photographers and filmmakers on the female body, is being challenged. Individual pieces are considered "immoral". Museums are debating whether they should be hidden from the public view. But is taste being dictated? Helmut Newton's photographs continue to exist in this intriguing area of tension.

HELMUT NEWTON – THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL had its world premiere at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival in New York.

HELMUT NEWTON – THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL is a production of Lupa Film in co-production with ZDF / 3Sat and Monarda Arts in collaboration with the Helmut Newton Foundation and MK2 Films. The film was supported by Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung and the German Film Fund.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Helmut Newton – the young Jewish photographer, driven out of Nazi Berlin, became a superstar after an odyssey traveling the world. With his bold, eye-catching photos, he created a new, often provocative image of women, which still resonates today.

On the occasion of Newton's 100th birthday, the well-known author, journalist and director, Gero von Boehm tells the moving life story of the photographer in his documentary *HELMUT NEWTON – THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL* and takes a very unique look at Newton's oeuvre: the representation of the female body.

In the 1970s, Helmut Newton started a new era with his avant-garde photos. Never before had women been seen in such poses in glamor and fashion magazines and in fashion advertising. Newton posed his women with huge aggressive-looking dogs, on eerily lit night streets, with dangerous paraphernalia like knives, and in men's clothes – in short, challenging societal norms.

How did Newton influence the way we gaze at the female body? What perspectives and desires did he convey through the power of his pictures? Were those strong women he photographed sex objects or sex subjects? How is Newton's photography appreciated today?

Some of his top female subjects have their say in the film – from the worlds of film and fashion: Charlotte Rampling, Isabella Rossellini, Grace Jones, Anna Wintour, Marianne Faithfull, Hanna Schygulla, Claudia Schiffer, Nadja Auermann, Sylvia Gobbel, Carla Sozzani, Arja Toyryla – and of course his wife, June Newton, as well as critical voices like Susan Sontag in a memorable exchange where she accused him directly of being a misogynist.

Gero von Boehm's entertaining documentary travels with Helmut Newton and “his” women through the different phases of his extraordinary, sometimes dramatic life, showing his work and his world. He was able to use Newton's extensive photo archive and show many facets of the controversial photographer.

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR AND DIRECTOR GERO VON BOEHM

“Tradition and avant-garde” – Gero von Boehm about Helmut Newton

How did you get to know Helmut Newton?

We met for the first time through friends in Paris. That must have been around 1997. We understood each other right away and discovered that we had a very similar sense of humor, the same sense for bizarre situations. And I immediately liked his wife June, maybe also because, like Helmut, I like intelligent and strong women very much. We saw each other a couple of times in Monte Carlo and especially in Berlin, which he loved so much.

What did you talk about when you met?

We bonded over old German films, about music, about the novels by Arthur Schnitzler. In Monte Carlo, where he lived because of the weather, we sometimes observed people together - eccentrics who live there. He was a voyeur in the best sense. In Berlin he would tell me a lot about his youth in the city, in the 1920s and 1930s, about his friends, about the wonderful fashion photographer Yva, whom he had learned from and then of course of the time after the Nazis seized power. How it was dangerous for him as a Jew at the time, how he hid in basements at night and then, in December 1938, how he fled Berlin. He showed me the platform from which he took the train to board a ship to China. And at some point, of course, I thought: “You have to make a film about this man”. It took a while until I convinced him and especially his wife June. She was extremely protective and he was actually a very private person, but at some point they said: “You have our blessing.” Then we shot in Monte Carlo, Paris, Berlin and Hollywood and finally a TV portrait for ZDF / Arte HELMUT NEWTON – MEIN LEBEN came out. But I still had a lot of unpublished material that has now been integrated into the film, as well as video recordings that June made of Helmut for years. And then, of course, the great blessing of working closely with the Helmut Newton Foundation and being able to use their entire photo archive.

A fundamental idea for the film was to only let women speak. Why?

Women were central to Helmut's life as a photographer. He knew women like no other and women knew him. So I considered that the best way to tell his personal story. I didn't want the usual male anecdotes either. In general, men were just accessories to Helmut. I have known some of the subjects in the film for a long time, for example Isabella Rossellini, Charlotte Rampling and Hanna Schygulla. They quickly agreed to be part of the film. And then there were wonderful women like Grace Jones, Nadja Auermann, Claudia Schiffer, Marianne Faithfull and Anna Wintour who agreed to participate eventually.

They all talked about their encounters with Helmut with tremendous frankness. Grace Jones, for example, remembers how he called her several times and kept forgetting that she has such small breasts and is therefore not a typical "Newton woman". He sent her home every time. But in the end they took famous photos together. A very funny story ... Anna Wintour was supposed to do a shoot in California with Helmut as a young fashion editor at British Vogue, reported sick the day before, because she was simply too much in awe of this giant Newton. Charlotte Rampling talks about how she took her very first nude photos with Helmut on a desk in a hotel room in Arles. Those were also *his* first nude photos. Nadja Auermann, on the other hand, did not want to be photographed naked. He took offense at that.

Above all, he shaped photography in the 1970s and 1980s, and his photos are still iconic today. But what will be his legacy?

The unmistakable nature of his photos. That alone is a sign of quality. For me personally, the memory of a friend, of whom I particularly appreciated certain qualities, remains forever. He embodied a certain tradition, paired with avant-garde. He was elegant, he had style and at the same time he was cheeky, he did not care about political correctness and was very young in his mind. I often think of him, especially in our increasingly uniform, graceless and prudish world. People like him have become extremely rare.

There are people saying that Helmut Newton's gaze at the female body should not be shown anymore...

Censorship by philistines? A dictation of taste? For heaven's sake! Everyone can think and say of Helmut Newton's pictures whatever he or she wants. But they're there now and they exist. I am fundamentally against restricting the freedom of art and forgetting that there has been nudity in art history from the beginning. One would have to put away all antique collections, lock away many Cranachs, Caravaggios and Picassos. And with many of his pictures Helmut Newton shows us just how strong and – certainly frightening for some men – confident women can be.

FETISH, FASHION AND FREEDOM – HELMUT NEWTON'S LIFE'S WORK

By Ulf Pape, author

No other photographer of the 20th century asked the question of power of the naked body as loudly and clearly as Helmut Newton.

Four women move towards the camera slightly offset. In “Dressed” they wear current fashion, “business attire”, one would say today. In “Naked” they wear nothing but the high heels they are walking on, captured by Newton. In both pictures, the four women are in exactly the same postures. The photos are identical twins, apart from the opposite “dressed – naked”. The search for the difference between the two images alone raises a dialectic that stands for Helmut Newton's entire body of work: the question of strength and weakness.

When Nadja Auermann recalls a photo shoot with Newton in a hotel room in Monaco, she makes a statement that describes the tension in Newton's work: “... I look like a Barbie doll left lying there, after somebody played with it”, says Auermann in HELMUT NEWTON – THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL.

In fact, the photo taken that day imitates a doll: lying on her back, stiff legs, pink feather boa, hair disheveled from playing, and inhumanly opened eyes. The tension arises from the question of whether Newton criticizes by staging – while at the same time exaggerating the body. The art historian Klaus Honnef writes: “Actually he helped the naked human body to its essential right in photography by emphasizing its erotic charisma.”

Nadja Auermann continues about the motif as a doll: “We can say that this is sexist or misogynistic, but we can also say that he holds up a mirror to society and shows: you want your wife to run around in a mini skirt and basically treat her like a Barbie.”

In the late 19th century, fashion was presented on human-sized wicker dolls, as art historian Sylvie Lécallier portrays in an essay on the role of the model in fashion photography. At the beginning of the 20th century, couturiers said goodbye to them and presented their collections on mannequins. From around 1910 on, fashion photography flourished – and with it the profession of the

model. As fashion grew into an industry, the relationship between fashion photographer and model developed, which in turn was determined by the tension between male and female projections.

The major aesthetic breaks in the first half of the 20th century were made by photographers such as the German Adolphe de Meyer for Vogue, under the publisher Condé Nast in New York, as well as the American Edward Steichen, the Frenchman Man Ray and the Briton Cecil Beaton.

After fashion photography had been dominated by minimalism with Irving Penn and Richard Avedon from New York since the 1950s, the next big epoch came in the late 1960s with Helmut Newton, who sexualized fashion like no one had dared to do in front of such a large audience.

Newton works with rigorous composition, and plays with taboo – indeed, there is hardly a field that offers such versatile disruptions as fashion photography, in which demonstrating fashion brings with it the question of exhibiting women. According to art historian, Caroline Evans, the role of the model moves “in an uncomfortable way between that of a subject and an object, between animated and lifeless, between a living woman and a dummy.” With precisely this problem, Newton generates a photographic capital that, in its outermost forms, echoes fetishes: Tina Chow tied to a counter; Nadja Auermann on crutches, in a wheelchair, or with a prosthetic leg; bodybuilder Lisa Lyon hanging on a pole; a headless woman lying on her back while a German Shepherd climbs over her. Anna Wintour, editor-in-chief of Vogue in America, calls the photo series by Helmut Newton “stoppers” – pictures that nobody can fly over.

Newton finished a typical pin-up pose of a woman crouching on all fours by placing a horse saddle on the woman's back. Newton uses fashion to smash her usual iconography and put it back together as a fetish. It is precisely through fetishization that he focuses on the roles attributed to the sexes. The fact that such images only work within a particular context is as much a source of tension as it is of danger.

The breaking of taboos attracts attention. Newton reached an audience of millions through fashion magazines. But when the taboo triggers horror, the scandal follows. When the Stern magazine advertised a cover story about New York's Club Studio 54 with a motif of Grace Jones on the cover in 1978, a scandal erupted. Jones was naked, smiling at Newton's camera, while chained

to her feet. At that time, Alice Schwarzer gathered prominent women to take the magazine to court for its cover design - "right up to the cattle object". At about the same time, on a French talk show, Helmut Newton met American writer and philosopher, Susan Sontag, who attested that Newton was a friendly man, but: "As a woman, I find your photos very misogynist."

The fact that the conflict over the interpretation of Newton's creations cannot be resolved is primarily due to the ambiguity with which Newton attributed male characteristics to women and female characteristics to men. In his text "World without Men" he wrote in 1975: "The men are women dressed up as men. But the illusion must be as perfect as possible, to try to confuse the reader."

Art historian, Nathalie Herschdorfer writes in her volume *100 Years of Fashion Photography*, "Helmut Newton was one of the first magazine photographers to be recognized as an artist." Newton has given us a new perspective on everything that is negotiated in fashion. In the role of the designer, Newton took nude photography out of its niche and loaded it with glamor, pop and discourse. With the upheavals in the publishing and fashion markets in the 1990s, a new generation of fashion and culture magazines conquered the markets. The titles were Numéro, Purple, i-D, Popcorn and most recently 032c. Their imagery was fed by punk and street culture, rejected glamor, and demanded a new generation of photographers.

At the same time, in the late 1990s, Helmut Newton and his wife June had long been searching for a home for his estate. Berlin, the city where he was born in 1920 as Helmut Neustädter, was to become this home. The city in which the son of a Jewish button maker bought his first camera when he was twelve and began training with the legendary photo artist Yva when he was sixteen.

HELMUT NEWTON – THE MAN BEHIND THE CAMERA / INFLUENCES

Childhood in Berlin

Where did it all come from? Which images of women shaped his own vision? Newton himself repeatedly said that the visual influences in Berlin in the 1920s and 1930s and later the Nazi imagery left traces in his youthful psyche. He was born in 1920 in this city and took photographs at the age of twelve with a Kodak box camera, the “Brownie”. He immediately began experimenting with night shots.

Helmut Newton:

“I don't know where my lifelong love for the night came from. This love was and is strong. So when I was twelve I took my small box camera, the Brownie, and my Agfa box camera, the Tengor, on the subway. I had eight pictures on the film and had taken seven of them and then I saw the radio tower that I had always loved and I took a picture of it. Then I gave the film to the druggist on the corner to develop and everything was black except for the radio tower. But I thought I was a genius. I didn't care that seven pictures were black. The radio tower picture doesn't look like much today, but it seemed mysterious and great to me when I was seven, eight, ten years old.”

Last but not least, Newton's enthusiasm for night shots goes back to the French-Hungarian artist and photographer Brassai.

Helmut Newton:

“Brassai still speaks to me after all these years. The night has a special charm for me, and he was the greatest master of the night, but I'm not bad either.”

Brassai was his idol when it came to photography. Not least because of this, Newton often photographed his models on the night streets of Paris. In the process, cinematic images emerged, mixed with his – often somewhat black – humor.

Helmut Newton:

“Film was of course also an inspiration for me. I have been influenced by art, by the early silent films. And I'm particularly interested in the art of the early 20th century, the art of the 19th, 18th and 17th century. You can discover much of it in my work. If you look at one of my photographs, you can see a kind of echo in it.”

Helmut Newton was a great storyteller, influenced above all by authors like Arthur Schnitzler and Thomas Mann. He always had a copy of Schnitzler's novellas on the bedside table. Another inspiration was the Berlin photojournalist Erich Salomon, who photographed conferences and court cases, mostly with natural light. And Newton also wanted to be a “frenzied reporter” as a boy.

Helmut Newton:

“I'm obsessed with cutting images out of newspapers. I only cut pictures out of daily newspapers, not out of magazines. Only the news or paparazzi photos, things that are really intense.”

I also love crime shows. For example, sometimes I take pictures of something I see on TV on my screen at home ... a weird conversation between a man in a studio and someone else who is thousands of miles away ... With this huge head. This kind of thing, the disproportion of proportions, the strange way of communicating in the electronic media, this exchange of ideas, fascinates me. When you look at my photographs, you see how the ideas have been recycled. Things that I cut out years ago, that I keep in a thick folder, happen today or maybe tomorrow. Some strange news photos, paparazzi photos – you'll recognize them, you'll see what I did to them. So, that's my inspiration. You can see what has influenced my photography.”

Newton was interested in glamour from the beginning, but he never became part of it. Belonging to any group or fixed mindset was foreign to him. To be an observer, in the best sense - a voyeur. He had already learned this in Berlin in the 1930s when his mother took him to the grand hotels for teas and he liked to leaf through his mother's fashion magazines, for example in “Elegante Welt”. These were important ideas for the first fashion photos with his girlfriends as models.

Helmut Newton:

“I always went to the Halensee lido in the morning, I didn't care about school. I was always late, my hair dripped-wet after swimming. I will never forget that I once swam to a barrier with a girl and undressed her there underwater. I was told to get out of the water, the lifeguard looked at the girl, threw me out and told me to never come back. Of course there were also signs saying, “Dogs and Jews prohibited”, but that never stopped me. I liked swimming and I didn't care. I just kept going. I went back and swam as much as I wanted to with my friends.”

The Nazi regime and its “Nuremberg Laws” completely changed the life of Helmut's family. Nothing was the way it had been. His father was no longer the

general manager of the button factory and Helmut saw how he suffered and the world around the family also changed fundamentally.

Helmut Newton:

“When I was thirteen years old Hitler came to power and very soon I was surrounded by Nazi aesthetics. There was nothing else. I was crazy about photography and I loved the cinema, but I was only allowed to go to the Saturday afternoon show. Of course I went as often as I could and sneaked in through the exit. Hans Albers was my hero. A film entitled “F.P.1 antwortet nicht” was fantastic. I also have recordings of all of his songs, he sang beautifully.

For the first time, the means of propaganda were used much more. The Soviets had used it before, but the Nazis were even more savvy and clever at it. I was also accused of this, although everyone knows that I am Jewish, and that's okay with me. But [they] ought to imagine a child that is crazy about pictures and only wants to look at them [and] is only surrounded by Nazi images and their glorification. People accuse me of still being influenced by it today. I think that's normal when you grow up with it. I grew up knowing that if you cross the street at a red traffic light, the Nazis can snap you up. And that you can end up in a concentration camp. It was a time of terror, but children are different – we felt strong even though we knew it was dangerous.”

In 1936, Newton became an apprentice in the studio of Yva (Else Neuländer-Simon), one of the first fashion photographers of the time.

Helmut Newton:

“There I learned everything, the whole craft. I was an apprentice, a real apprentice. I learned to do negative touch-ups, I learned to illuminate the studio. Even though I was the lowest form of a living being. Back then it was difficult to set the lights, the exposure times were extremely long, we were not assistants, we were real apprentices. I learned a lot, I learned to appreciate every inch of film instead of just pressing buttons and doing everything mechanically, with a motor on the camera.”

Goodbye, Berlin

In 1938, Yva's studio was closed under pressure from the Nazis. That year, Helmut Newton left Germany. In November, during the terrible pogrom of “Kristallnacht”, synagogues and Jewish businesses were destroyed and Jews were murdered. More than 30,000 Jews were arrested in Germany and Austria and put in concentration camps. Helmut Newton fled to China, his parents to South America. He never saw them again.

Helmut Newton:

"I got out by train ... I left Berlin on December 5, 1938, from a platform at the Zoo station. And in 2000 I had my exhibition in Berlin, and they hung huge posters for the exhibition at the Zoo station, on the very same platform from which I went to Trieste to catch a ship to China. I remember the name, it was called "Conte Rosso", a Lloyd Triestino ship. And when my exhibition was in Berlin, I went to the Zoo train station and took a photo of the poster with all the passengers, who boarded the train on the same quay."

He never arrived in China, but stayed in Singapore, where he worked as a newspaper photographer for the "Straits Times".

Helmut Newton:

"It was a strange time and I was such a bad reporter that after two weeks I was kicked out and stood on the street without a penny. I was too slow. By the time I had my Rolleicord ready, everything had fizzled out, the event was over."

After the early formative experiences in Berlin in the 1920s and 1930s and after emigration, he made an important encounter in his life in the 1940s. In Australia, he met the photographer and actress, June Brown. He married her in 1948 and a fruitful and exciting collaboration began.

In later years, June Newton, who is a highly regarded photographer in her own right as "Alice Springs", curated many Helmut exhibitions and designed his books. The Newtons stayed in Australia for seventeen years. Helmut worked primarily as a fashion photographer and was granted Australian citizenship. In 1956, the couple spent a year in London before moving to Paris and living there until 1981.

Helmut and June

The collaboration, but also the differences in June's and Helmut's work can be seen above all in "Us and Them" – a shared photo collection of their universe of people, places and situations. Newton produced masterfully illuminated portraits of Anjelica Huston and her like on the one hand; June's shots of her husband without a shirt or on a terrace in Monaco in shorts and graceful high-heeled shoes on the other. And in Paris, Helmut took photos of June while she was watching him at a photo session. This picture is of great importance.

Helmut Newton:

“The picture has a lot to do with my life. I took it at Vogue Studios, where I spent years and years and years. June came over, she was never there as a model, and wanted to have lunch with me in the canteen. But I wasn't done yet and she just sat down. She didn't even know that she was in the frame, she had no idea. And the whole context is very interesting, because you can see June's different facial expressions during my photo session. Usually, she never comes to a photo shoot unless she takes photos herself.”

Or the picture of the hands of a woman, adorned with Bulgari diamonds, tearing a fried chicken into pieces. This photo outraged the luxury jeweler so much that the company threatened to stop advertising in French Vogue.

Newton anticipated the current fashion theme of wealth, sex and excess by decades. In the fashion world, Newton changed the way photographers portrayed the latest trends. Instead of just photographing women wearing clothes, he always created a story and a mood that seemed desirable to women. Even on the pages of the high-gloss fashion magazines, Newton's works demonstrate his desire to create scenes of lust, sexuality and flawless style.

But he never made any secret of the fact that, especially in fashion, he often just did it for the money: “I am a gun for hire”.

Helmut Newton:

“Often, like a whore, I needed money. I was poor, and then, of course, there comes a time, thank God, that the Americans call “fuck-you-money”. Where you can say, I don't like your face, I don't like your style, I don't like your assignment, I won't do it. Of course that is very important and very nice once you get there – to this point.”

A different gaze at the female body

He described the women in his oeuvre as “triumphant” and rejected the claim that he often portrayed them as absurd or as objects. For him, men were just accessories such as hats or shoes. In Newton's 1999 photo “Miami”, for example, an indefinable, barely visible man looks out of the shadows at the main attraction, a peroxide blonde in a bikini, who lounges amidst the reflecting shadows in an exhibitionistic manner. On the whole, women are threatening, dangerous and often exhibitionistic femmes fatales. “Dangerous” is a word that Helmut Newton quite liked.

In 1979 there was an interesting verbal exchange of blows on the French television program “Apostrophes” when the American writer, Susan Sontag (“On Photography”) called Helmut Newton a hater of women. She could not accept his objection that he loved women very much. *“Le maître adore son esclave – The master adores his slave”*, she said, admitting that she had never suspected such a nice person behind these pictures. Neither Susan Sontag nor Helmut Newton can be negated. And every viewer of the photos is free to make a judgment about Newton's image of women.

In Helmut Newton's world, things are either “interesting” or “boring” – it's that simple.

Helmut Newton:

“If you can do whatever you want, where's the fun in that? The forbidden things are much more interesting. A wallflower that is neither intelligent nor strong nor self-confident is tedious – to put it mildly. I have a lot of friends, who prefer to take chicks to dinner than interesting women, I don't. But a woman, who doesn't show everything, can be very sexy.”

But did Newton, who described himself as a “feminist”, love “dominant” women?

Helmut Newton:

“I like strong women. A dominant woman is just as boring as a male macho.”

For him, Yves Saint Laurent's designs meant everything a woman had to be. *“Elegant, desirable, sensual, stylish, and expensive ... But I never wanted ladies to be ladylike; I wanted them to look like they were available when the situation and conditions were right.”*

Despite all the elaborate fantasies that Newton created in his pictures, his work is closer to the documentary than most of the fashion photography that came after him. He “took a picture”, did not “edit” or retouch it, and as far as he was concerned, he was a “really old-fashioned photographer”. For this reason, Newton always rejected the term “artist”. “Whatever is on the film appears on the photo paper.”

And that is also the strength of Newton's portraiture – his cold, uncompromising look. Leni Riefenstahl, the Nazi photographer, powders her incredibly wrinkled

features. Princess Caroline of Monaco wearing a tiara and leading a dog on a leash. Catherine Deneuve – seductively in black lingerie and with a cigarette between her teeth.

Helmut Newton:

“What interests me in my portrait photography is power and sex. Sex and power. How sex bequeaths power. I think when I take portraits of people, who have political power, financial power, or sexual power, they are pretty good subjects for my camera.”

Self-portraits as protection

Nevertheless, Newton made a lot of self-portraits in seemingly “helpless” situations at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City after his heart attack in 1973 – using the camera as a protective shield. That was his way of dealing with difficult situations.

Helmut Newton:

“When I am faced with difficult or embarrassing, uncomfortable and painful situations, my camera helps me. It creates an umbrella, a protection between me and what is happening in my environment. Then I see the world through the little hole, the seeker, and somehow I am separated from what is happening.”

Helmut Newton was a prophet of our moment with his sharp, often nihilistic spirit – and the obsession of our society with incredible wealth and exaggerated claims; our fascination and our disgust with the excesses of the rich and famous. He knew what fun it was to make fun of the bad behavior and sexual quirks of the powerful while indulging in it – without venturing into the minefield of political criticism.

Helmut Newton:

“I refuse to think about death – these are very unproductive thoughts. ... If it comes, it is either too early or too late and there is nothing I can do about it. I don't want to spend my time thinking about that. I believe in spending my time doing more positive things. And I don't think death is positive.”

On the morning of January 23, 2004, Helmut Newton got into his white SUV in the garage of his “winter quarters”, the Chateau Marmont [in Los Angeles], for a shoot. He had a heart attack while driving out. His car crashed into a concrete

wall opposite with full force. Helmut Newton was brought to Cedars Sinai Hospital and he died there. His wife June captured the farewell in a photo.

The following archives were used for the film:

- Gero von Boehm: “Helmut Newton – My Life” (Arte, 2002)
- Helmut by June (Cinema and not published material, 1995)
- Adrian Maben: “Frames from the Edge” (BBC, 1989)
- Helmut Newton and Susan Sontag in “Apostrophes” (France 2, 1979)
- Photographs and objects by Helmut Newton: Helmut Newton Foundation

NEWTON’S WOMEN – INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

Interviews with:

GRACE JONES, SYLVIA GOBBEL, ISABELLA ROSSELLINI, ANNA WINTOUR, NADJA AUERMANN, PHYLLIS POSNICK, CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, MARIANNE FAITHFULL, CLAUDIA SCHIFFER, HANNA SCHYGULLA, CARLA SOZZANI, ARJA TOYRYLA, JUNE NEWTON

GRACE JONES

Grace Jones, born May 19, 1948, in Jamaica, is a singer, songwriter and actress. In the 1960s she started her career as a model in New York and Paris. As a singer, she made a name for herself in the late 1970s and released several disco albums. Her music is influenced by African, Jamaican and European influences and she is famous for her provocative and extravagant performances. Her autobiography was released in 2015. Today, Grace Jones lives in Jamaica.

SYLVIA GOBBEL

The Austrian-born model's career began when an agent approached her when she was 19 when she was studying law in Vienna. Her major breakthrough came in Paris in 1981, including photos of Helmut Newton at Vogue in Paris. When she later became a mother of two daughters, she initially ended her career in the modeling business to devote herself to the family. She returned a few years ago: the young girl who once conquered Paris has become an elegant power woman, who still works as a model.

ISABELLA ROSSELLINI

Isabella Rossellini, born in Rome on June 18, 1952, to Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rossellini, is an actress. Her career began as a fashion designer and journalist in New York. In 1976 she played in her first film A MATTER OF TIME by Vincente Minnelli, alongside her mother. Afterwards Isabella Rossellini became internationally known mainly through the films BLUE VELVET (1986) and WILD AT HEART (1990) by David Lynch. She presented her directorial debut GREEN PORNO at the Berlinale 2008. At the Berlinale 2011 she took over the chair of the international jury, in 2013 she received the Berlinale Kamera at the 63rd Berlinale. Isabella Rossellini has lived in New York City and Bellport, Long Island since 1979.

ANNA WINTOUR

Anna Wintour, born in London on November 3, 1949, is the editor-in-chief of American Vogue and one of the most influential people in the fashion world. Her career began at Harper's Bazaar in the 1970s before moving to American Vogue in 1986. Since then, her influence in the fashion world has grown steadily. In 2017, she received a new title DBE (Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire) from Queen Elizabeth II.

NADJA AUERMANN

Nadja Auermann, born on March 19, 1971, in Berlin, is a model and actress. In 1991 she was photographed by Ellen von Unwerth for the British Vogue, which started her career. She's considered one of the legendary supermodels in the 1990s, alongside Claudia Schiffer, Naomi Campbell, Christy Turlington, Linda Evangelista and others. With her ice cool blond look, she was a welcome contrast to her other models in the industry at the time. In 2003, she largely retired from the fashion business and devoted herself to acting. Today the mother of four lives in Dresden.

PHYLLIS POSNICK

Since 1987 Phyllis Posnick has enriched Vogue in the United States as a stylist and fashion editor. She is known for her work with well-known photographers such as Irving Penn and Helmut Newton, in which provocative, sometimes shocking, yet aesthetic fashion and beauty spreads are created. In 2016, "Stoppers. Photographs from My Life at Vogue", a collection of her photos was published by Vogue. Phyllis Posnick lives in New York.

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING

Charlotte Rampling, born on February 5, 1946, in England, is an actress. At the beginning of her career, she initially worked as a model before taking acting classes and taking on her first major film role in *GEORGY GIRL* in 1966, which made her internationally known. In 1969 she played in Luchino Visconti's controversial political drama *THE DAMNED*; in 1974 her starring role in Liliana Cavani's *THE NIGHT PORTER*, triggered a great scandal, because it showed a sadomasochistic relationship between the former warden of a concentration camp (Dirk Bogarde) and his female prisoner. For her role in *SWIMMING POOL*, she was awarded the European Film Award in the category Best Actress in 2003. In 2000, she was named OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) for her services to cultural relations between France and Great Britain. In 2015, her autobiography "Qui je suis" was published.

MARIANNE FAITHFULL

Marianne Faithfull, born in London on December 29, 1946, is a musician and actress. In the 1960s she became world-famous as a British pop singer alongside the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. With the latter, she wrote some major hits. In 1979 she released her critically-acclaimed comeback album "Broken English" and continued to play music through the 1980s. Her autobiography *Faithfull: An Autobiography* was released in 1994. After many years in Paris, she now lives in London.

CLAUDIA SCHIFFER

Claudia Schiffer, born on August 25, 1970, in Rheinberg, is a model and actress. In 1987 she was discovered in a discotheque in Düsseldorf and a year later she became Karl Lagerfeld's muse. In the 90s she was considered one of the world's top supermodels. During this time, she also began to work as an actress. Today the mother of three lives with her family in London.

HANNA SCHYGULLA

Hanna Schygulla, born on December 25, 1943, is an actress and singer. She became known for her collaboration with Rainer Werner Fassbinder, with whom she shaped the author's film. She became internationally known in 1978 for her role in *THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA BRAUN* and from then on played in French, Italian and US films. In the 1990s she appeared as a chanson singer. In 2010 she was awarded the Golden Bear for her life's work. She lives in Paris and Berlin.

CARLA SOZZANI

Carla Sozzani, born on June 29, 1947, in Lombardy, is an editor and gallery owner. In the 1970s and 1980s she worked as editor-in-chief of the Italian Vogue and Elle. In 1990 she founded the “10 Corso Como” concept store in Milan and opened the “Galleria Carla Sozzani”, where she has managed more than 250 exhibitions of works by great photographers since then. She expanded with “10 Corso Como” to Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and New York. In 2016 she founded the “Fondazione Sozzani”.

ARJA TOYRYLA

Arja Toyryla, born in the small village of Pukaro in southern Finland, is a model and actress. She worked with the great photographers of the time in the 1970s and was featured several times on the front pages of Vogue. She acted in films such as *ROADS TO THE SOUTH* (1978) and *MARRAKECH CULT* (1979). Today Arja Toyryla lives as a painter in the southern French city of Arles.

JUNE NEWTON

June Newton, born June 3, 1923, in Melbourne, is a photographer. In 1947 she met her future husband Helmut Newton in his photo studio in Melbourne and married him a year later. While celebrating her first successes as an actress, the couple lived in Melbourne, London and Paris. In 1970, however, she opted for photography and has been working under her pseudonym “Alice Springs”. She exhibited her portraits for the first time in 1978 in Amsterdam and published an illustrated book in 1983. As art director, she oversaw her husband's work and made the documentary “Helmut by June”. In 2004, she opened the Museum of Photography in Berlin. June Newton has lived in Monte Carlo since 1981.

THE DIRECTOR

Gero von Boehm was born in Hanover in 1954. He grew up in Hamburg and Heidelberg. During his studies in law and social sciences, he moderated the radio station SWF 3 and wrote for various newspapers, including *DIE ZEIT*. In 1975 he made his first television documentary for what was then SWF, and three years later he founded the production company interscience film GmbH.

From 1980 to 1990 in a series called “Wortwechsel”, on the television channel S 3 (today SWR), he interviewed more than fifty different personalities, such as Federico Fellini, Roman Polanski, Arthur Miller, Peter Ustinov, Eugène Ionesco,

Loriot, Golo Mann, Elisabeth Mann-Borgese, Edward Teller and Alfred Herrhausen.

Gero von Boehm is the author and director of documentaries and documentary productions for ARD, ZDF, ARTE, FRANCE 3 and Swiss television. His topics range between science, art and contemporary history.

In several films he traced the history and present of the mafia; with Joachim Fest he adapted his book “Im Gegenlicht – eine italienische Reise”. He portrayed people like Stephen Hawking, Umberto Eco, Ernst Jünger, Susan Sontag, Alberto Giacometti, Henri Matisse, Henry Moore, Balthus, Kurt Masur, David Hockney, Karl Lagerfeld, Helmut Newton, I.M. Pei, Gore Vidal and Isabella Rossellini.

His ZDF science series “Odyssee 3000 – Reisen in die Zukunft” was shown in many countries – as was the series “Die großen Clans”, in which he portrayed families like the Kennedys, Rothschilds and Agnellis, which were some of most successful programs of 2001.

In his 3Sat broadcast show “Gero von Boehm begegnet...”, a 45-minute conversation with some of the most interesting people of our time, from 2002 to 2010, he interviewed top-class guests such as Isabella Rossellini, Charlotte Rampling, Norman Mailer, Harry Belafonte, Peter Ustinov, IM Pei, Klaus Maria Brandauer and Christoph Schlingensief. In 2004, Gero von Boehm produced a ZDF series called “Paläste der Macht”, which was continued successfully in 2007. On the first anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II, ZDF 2006 showed the documentary drama “Karol Wojtyla – Geheimnisse eines Papstes”, which was starring Michael Mendl, Mario Adorf, Devid Striesow and Cosma Shiva Hagen and others. It was directed by Gero von Boehm as well as the three-part series “Giganten” (Beethoven, Einstein, Humboldt – with Maximilian Schell, Matthias Habich and Uwe Ochsenknecht), which was also broadcast on ZDF in 2007. In 2008, the ZDF showed the much-noticed two-part documentary series “Zwischen den Fronten” by Gero von Boehm and Peter Scholl-Latour.

The two-part documentary “Eine Nacht im November” about Germany in the year 1989 was broadcast on ZDF in 2008; the “Kreml, Kaviar und Milliarden” series about Russian oligarchs in 2009. In 2011, the six-part Terra X series “Unterwegs in der Weltgeschichte – mit Hape Kerkeling” had an average viewership of 5,1 million. In the same year he developed the interview program

“Close Up” and, together with Felix von Boehm, founded the company LUPA Film for the development and production of fictional material for television and cinema.

In 2014, ZDF broadcasted “Der Clan – Die Geschichte der Familie Wagner”. The TV film was produced by Oliver Berben and Gero von Boehm, followed by Gero von Boehm's documentary on the “Clan”. His portrait of Karl Lagerfeld for the ARD series “Deutschland, Deine Künstler” was broadcast in 2014, followed by a portrait of star photographer Peter Lindbergh. The six-part series “Deutschland-Saga”, moderated by the Australian historian and best-selling author Sir Christopher Clark (“The Sleepwalkers”), reached 4,5 million people on a Sunday evening on ZDF. Additionally he made the six-part series “Die Europa-Saga” on the history of the continent, also with Christopher Clark. Gero von Boehm and Clark are currently producing the Terra X series “Unsere Schätze – Das Erbe der Menschheit” about the UNESCO World Heritage.

Gero von Boehm has been producing the philosophical series “PRECHT” with Richard Precht for ZDF since 2012, and since 2014 also “Zeugen des Jahrhunderts” with guests such as Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Martin Walser and Margarethe von Trotta.

In 2000, a retrospective of his films was shown at the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt. He has since published an audio book and eight books, including those about the painter Balthus, the Kennedys and Albert Einstein. His books “Begegnungen – Menschenbilder aus drei Jahrzehnten” and “Nahaufnahmen – fünfzig Gespräche mit dem Leben” were recently published.

Gero von Boehm is a two-time winner of the Bavarian Television Award, the Eduard Rhein Foundation's Culture Award, the Wilhelmine-Lübke Award, the Hartmannbund's Television Award (2x), the German Media Journalism Award, the Steiger Award and other awards. Since 2011 he has been Chevalier des Arts et Lettres of the French Republic and a member of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in New York.

Gero von Boehm lives in France and Berlin.

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

LUPA FILM GmbH, based in Berlin and Heidelberg, has been developing and realizing fictional and documentary projects with selected film authors with high artistic standards for a primary evaluation in cinemas at home and abroad since 2012. Projects with an international focus and usability play a key role. In addition, LUPA FILM GmbH develops and realizes mini series and serial programs for the international television market.

Management: Felix von Boehm

Production management: Marie Ernst

Dramaturgy: Constantin Lieb

Production assistant: Katrin Jochimsen

Technical support: Nica Hoffschör

About KINO LORBER

With a library of over 2,800 titles, Kino Lorber Inc. has been a leader in independent art house distribution for 35 years, releasing 30 films per year theatrically under its Kino Lorber, Kino Repertory and Alive Mind Cinema banners, garnering seven Academy Award® nominations in nine years. In addition, the company brings over 350 titles yearly to the home entertainment and educational markets through physical and digital media releases. With an expanding family of distributed labels, Kino Lorber handles releases in ancillary media for Zeitgeist Films, Carlotta USA, Adopt Films, Greenwich Entertainment, Raro Video, and others, placing physical titles through all wholesale, retail, and direct to consumer channels, as well as direct digital distribution through over 40 OTT services including all major TVOD and SVOD platforms. In 2019, the company launched its new art house digital channel Kino Now which features over 1000 titles from the acclaimed Kino Lorber library. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kino Marquee initiative was launched in 2020 pioneering "virtual theatrical" releases of art house films with revenue shares that allows audiences to support almost 400 local independent theaters.