



edition GALERIE VEVAIS

RENÉE JACOBS'

PARIS

THE ALLURE AND MAGIC OF RENÉE JACOBS

by Prof. John Wood (From the introduction to *PARIS*)



This is a book about Paris, about passion, and about pleasure. ...Erotic art, like any other visual art, is only good if it pulls us back again and again to gaze, to wonder, and to consider. Its power is the same as that of great music which demands we listen again and again, no matter how many times we already have, or great poetry whose melodies and metaphors make us read, reread, and then read again. The mark of great art is that it is forever fresh and forever rewarding. Unlike pornography, which can lose its erotic charge upon subsequent viewings and necessitate the need for fresh, new examples, true erotic art, regardless of how often it is viewed, remains aesthetically compelling and sexually stimulating. The captured erotic instant must be so caught that the fire of passion burns through time and circumstance.

The sexual drive is sacred, it is consuming, and it is often omnivorous—but above all it is personal. Yet, it deserves and demands celebration the way healthy individuals have always celebrated and delighted in it.

Much of the joy of erotic art, especially erotic photography, is that it is a gift to us from the artist and the model, a gift of the emotion inherent in it. Even though erotic art can be an aphrodisiac, it is never meant to be a substitute for sex, any more so than Caspar David Friedrich's painting of mountains are meant to be a substitute for the actual spiritual experience of the awesomeness of Nature. Both are emotional gifts, one meant to stimulate spiritual contemplation, the other sexual contemplation. All art is a way for us to have more Life. It is the gift of life itself, for it allows us to absorb

into our lives the most essential creative moments in the lives of artists, such as Renée Jacobs, and the lives of her models, as well.

Jacobs, of course, shapes the aesthetic dimension of her photographs, but part of her work's gift to the viewer is also shaped by her models' creative partnership with her. Erotic art is clearly the most generous of the visual arts. Artist and model jointly agree to create and share with others a moment that is usually private, hidden from view, a moment that exists behind closed doors.

These most private of artistic gifts—the erotic ones—are always the rarest and often the most desired. In the West they also have historically been the most denied and the most railed against because of the hostility of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to pleasure and to the senses—or at least those three sister religions' inability to acknowledge and delight openly in the physical.

Consider, however, the joyous, life-affirming work of Renée Jacobs. Consider its allure and magic. Look at the powerful, hieratic female that opens the book. She is certainly no little woman. This could be Phaedra or Antigone or the original model for one of the Erechtheion caryatids. Her allure and magic reside in her sheer presence, her clear power. This is woman as dynamo. But Jacobs also shows us woman as maenad, one of the frenzied orgiastic followers of Dionysus. She is a blend of sensuality and ecstatic emotion. Though she is alluring, there is a sense of danger about her, as well—or at least to some men, or so I have observed. Jacobs' depiction of femininity is both an ancient and a modern

one of women as free spirit—as free as any man. When I look at Jacobs' images, I see something universal: Everywoman—or at least the potential of every woman. In her work we see the quintessence of style, images that could have served as models for that great painter Tamara de Lempicka, who captured “the woman” like no other painter of the 20th Century. Jacobs presents formal elegance, desire, and beauty all coupled within the allure of sexual magic. Her most erotic work is probably that which catches the dream of orgasm, that which gives us an ecstatic vision.

Finally we cannot overlook two other powerful characteristics of Renée Jacobs' art: its occasional humor and also its pure charm. It's wonderful to find photographs that make us smile. Humor is also a gift artists can share with their viewers, but far too many do not in their superficial quests for profundity.

The quality I am perhaps most touched by in Jacobs' art is its charm, a charm which has its own magic, its own narcotic allure. Who could fail to be entranced by the charm she presents? Who could fail to be pulled into its charm? Some of her portraits are of pure joy. The joy sings through Jacobs' lens. The photograph's rhapsodic charm soars out and makes us happy too. Think about it! How often does a photograph make you happy? It is not so common an event. The majority of photographs are banal. The second largest group is painful. Photographs that are the bringers of joy are rare, wonderful things—gifts—that are to be treasured, as Renée Jacobs' art also deserves to be.

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RENÉE JACOBS'

PARIS

published as a Special Softcover
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as a Limited Hand Crafted Hardcover Edition
signed and numbered by the artist

in a Special Limited Edition Boxed Set
with a T-Shirt, signed and numbered by the artist

and as a Special Collectors' Limited Edition Boxed Set
with parfum, signed and numbered by the artist



edition NHSLYPL "] L] HPZ is proud to present a new kind of sensual book:

Renée Jacobs' PARIS is of course a book of nudes, but it is much more than that. It is a document of how a woman sees women in the City of Love. Renée Jacobs' photos are new in many dimensions.

Hers is not a simple erotic picture book from Paris, not a new version of just another erotic book, not a new nude book, and not a new art project of the nude. This book is the very example of a photographer of the female nude who has a social vision, a vision of freedom, secrets, desires, fantasies, dreams and liberty. The important thing here is that the artist does not simply use models for her idea of PARIS. Her art—her entire purpose—is to make a collaborative project, a project for her models, as well—models she knows, not anonymous models from a database or an agency.

Renée Jacobs' fine art nude photography gives the viewer a luxurious peek into the ultra-sensual world of the feminine. Beyond sexy, her photographs are dreamy and secretive, daring and alluring. Her subjects give Renée their trust and the result is a collaborative journey which fulfills fantasies, reveals outrageous seductions and most importantly expresses the power of woman. Renée Jacobs, born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania practiced civil rights and constitutional law in Portland, Oregon and Los Angeles, California until she began photographing again in 2006. Her first book, Slow Burn: A Photodocument of Centralia, Pennsylvania, was published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1986 and favorably reviewed in The New York Times Review of Books. When Renée was 9 years old, someone asked her if she was from Paris. "Why yes!" she said. She, of course, is not. She is American. But perhaps the fact that her American parents gave her a French name, even with an accent, sparked her lifelong fascination with the City of Light. Photographing women in Paris over the last two years has been the perfect blending of Jacobs' erotic message about the sexual power of women and an homage to the city where everything sensual seems possible.

Jacobs is the recipient of the prestigious International Photography Award (Lucies) for Fine Art Nude Photography and her images have been published around the world in such publications as Tachen's New Erotic Photography, Fine Art Photo Magazine, Silvershotz, Adore Noir, PH Magazine and most recently in her solo monograph WERKDRUCK published by Galerie Vevais, edited and with an introduction by Jock Sturges. Professor John Wood wrote in his introduction to PARIS: "The quality I am perhaps most touched by in Jacobs' art is its charm, a charm which has its own magic, its own narcotic allure ... The joy sings through Jacobs' lens."

Jock Sturges wrote about Renée Jacobs: "... Renée's pictures have a combination of intensity and honesty that I don't often encounter. These images aren't a symptom of her thinking; they're a symptom of her life. None of these models represent fleeting acquaintances. She knows them—and well. She's making the pictures because she wants to keep them fixed in her head and heart for all time. Her models trust her to tell the truth about them. And she does. That "truth" is of course half hers, a half that is rich in admiration and affection. For their part, the models are licensed in the moment of the photographs to be—without limit or constraint. Only a few have ever modeled before ..." *From the foreword for] L] HPZWERKDRUCK*



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