

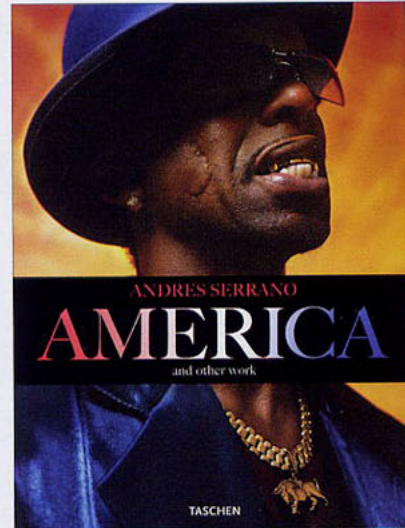
# BEYOND CONTROVERSY ANDRES SERRANO



THE NON CONVENTIONAL LOOK...THE NON CONVENTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER'S ATTITUDE <  
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> BY ANDREAS M. JÜRGEN

"I am looking to express my unconscious. My constructions have become more refined, and in America, the props and uniforms are real. Nevertheless, they still feel like figments of my imagination, like they were twenty years ago. I have always photographed, to some extent, the pictures in my head. Even when dealing with reality, I try to make it look like fantasy or theater. That's what makes it art for me. My desire is to see what ideas look like. Sometimes my choice of models or subjects is a statement in itself. I champion the underdog and the unheralded as much as I applaud the normal or original. My curiosity and interests are constantly extending, yet they remain the same. I am particularly drawn to the strange and unusual. Surfaces are important because that's what the camera sees and that's what the audience responds to. When I first started shooting *The Morgue*, I was at a distance of several feet from my subjects. The more I shot, the closer I got. By the end, I was doing close-ups and focusing on details. It's the same with *America*. Towards the end, the portraits got bigger. As you mature as an artist, you realize that what you leave out of a picture is as important as what you put in..."



Andres Serrano, *America and other Work*  
Edited by: Dian Hanson, Eleanor Heartney and Andres Serrano - Hardcover, 280 x 368 mm, 352 pages  
Editions: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese

"...I remember when I did *The Klan*, a Klansman asked me, 'Do you know much about the Klan? When I went to the morgue I was asked, 'Have you ever seen dead people before?' The answer to both questions was 'No.' I'm an outsider, just like the audience."

- Andres Serrano

Andres Serrano is one of America's most celebrated and mythologized contemporary artists. To many, he's the man responsible for *Piss Christ* and a national scandal over government funding of controversial art. For those who look beyond the headlines, he's a highly accomplished and ever-evolving photographic artist showing us the ordinary in extraordinary ways. With his post-*Piss Christ* series, *Nomads*, he made studio portraits of New York's ethnic homeless and juxtaposed them with members of the Klu Klux Klan. In the *Morgue* series he dissected violent death and found the human thread on the coroner's slab, while *A History of Sex* explored the human mating urge in its infinite variety. Andres considers *America* his greatest achievement. Three years of work, over one hundred 50-by-60-inch photographic portraits describing the cultural diversity of this immigrant country, as filtered through the critical lens of Serrano. There are celebrities: Arthur Miller, Snoop Dogg, Anna Nicole Smith, B.B. King, Vanessa del Rio... and ordinary citizens: a pimp, a boy scout, a Muslim housewife, a doctor, a Russian Orthodox Bishop. The second half of this big volume, *Other Work*, is a retrospective of Serrano's previous photographic series. Together these two impressive halves create the whole of Andres Serrano's artistic oeuvre. In 1989 US Senator Jesse Helms accused Andres Serrano of taunting the American people. *America and Other Work* is the perfect rebuttal...

