



DIAN IN PRAISE OF MEN'S MAGAZINES

By Dan Scapperotti • Dian Hanson photo by Helmut Newton

After spending 25 years editing men's magazine like *Oui*, *Partner*, *Adult Cinema Review* and *Juggs* and becoming the sex editor for Taschen Publishing, Dian Hanson was in a unique position to author **The History of Men's Magazines**.

This impressive six volume encyclopedic set covers everything from those thrilling days of yesteryear when such titles as *Spicy Mystery*, *Spicy Detective*, *French Art* and *Snappy* fought a running battle with the censors up to the 1970s when they didn't push the envelope but threw it away completely with hardcore porn publications.

The books had originally been envisioned as a two volume soft cover set that would begin in 1940 and include the 80s. Those parameters were quickly broken. "As I started to pull in the magazines and did the research, I told Benedikt Taschen that we had to go further back or we would be miss-

ing out on really important elements and, more importantly, really gorgeous magazines," says Hanson. "Finally, I figured a good starting point was 1900."

As Hanson was about to hand in the finished two volumes, the decision was made to make it three. As she put the finishing touches on the third volume the set was expanded to eight. "I was despairing at that point," she says. "I could make six out of three but eight out of three was going to be too difficult. We settled on six. I knew there was a lot of material out there but neither of us realized how much there is. One collector who came into a lot of money decided to collect them and thought when he had 100,000 he'd have everything. He's up to a half million and realizes it represents a tiny drop in the ocean of magazine."

The image laden pages are flawless, surprising for vintage magazines. "It's all been fixed," Hanson says, "and there was a lot of debate over that. A lot of them were in pretty bad shape

and my preference would have been to leave them as artifacts as well loved, well handled, mauled artifacts, but Taschen is a very perfectionist company and they restored them to what they thought was their natural state, the natural color of the pages and natural state of the inks."

Working with her own resources and primarily three collectors, Hanson still needed a huge amount of material. In came the wonder of the ages, Ebay! "Some of it was borrowed, but most of the material I bought myself on Ebay. I worked long, long, long days on Ebay. I was hardly computer literate when I started this project. When I was doing *Leg Show* I had an assistant who did everything on the internet. So I got a DSL line at home, got on there and found the mature audience section of Ebay and began working. I put in 12 hour days. I'd go methodically scour the mature section and the regular section."

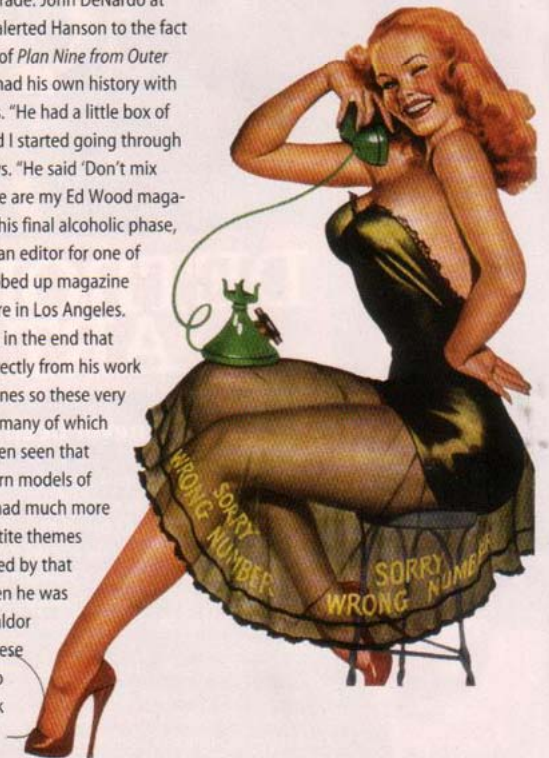
Hanson also discovered the connection between a rundown film director and the porn trade. John DeNardo at Eros Archives alerted Hanson to the fact that Ed Wood of *Plan Nine from Outer Space* infamy had his own history with the magazines. "He had a little box of magazines and I started going through them," she says. "He said 'Don't mix those up, those are my Ed Wood magazines'. During his final alcoholic phase, Ed Wood was an editor for one of the really mobbed up magazine companies here in Los Angeles. He made films in the end that were taken directly from his work on the magazines so these very extreme films many of which have never been seen that were using porn models of the time and had much more overt transvestite themes were all inspired by that end stage when he was working for Caldor publishing. These publishers also had paperback

divisions and that's how his paperbacks got published. It's all tied in together."

No history of these publications would be complete without Playboy's founder Hugh Hefner.

"I had to work really closely with Hefner on the Playboy section," says Hanson "Hugh Hefner is a very meticulous man and very controlling of his material. I had many conversations with him. In order to get him on board with the project I had to write him a long letter explaining my appreciation of Playboy and the importance of Playboy to the project and then got a personal phone call from him responding to it. It was a really nice experience dealing with him on this."

Every Taschen book is published in three languages in the same edition creating a layout nightmare. "German is on average 20-25% longer and French is 10-15% longer than English," says the author. "So you've got to try and make a design that encompasses that in some kind of attractive way. It drives the designers completely insane." ■



All six Taschen volumes are available at better bookstores.