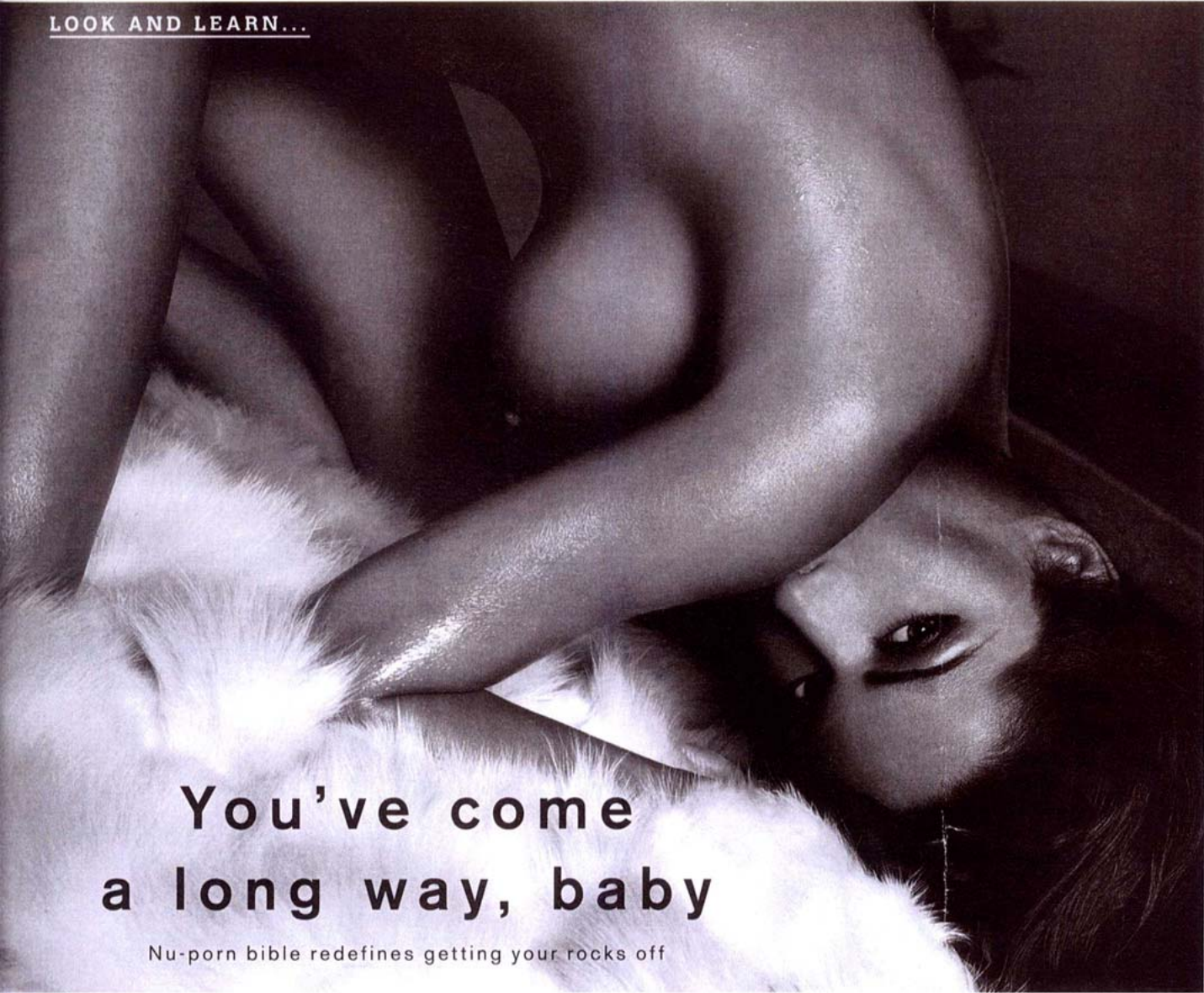


# PORTFOLIO 07/07

LOOK AND LEARN...



## You've come a long way, baby

Nu-porn bible redefines getting your rocks off

It's easy to forget the significance of that moment in the late Nineties when pornography met high culture with the publication of New York art student Natacha Merritt's visual record of her own *outré* sex life, *Digital Diaries*.

Since then we've had high-class swinging, diamond-encrusted butt plugs, the nu-burlesque movement and Italian porn legend Rocco Siffredi starring in adverts for gourmet potato snacks. All of which only goes to show how spoilt and jaded we've become that Merritt's documented kinks are in danger of seeming tiresome in 2007.

Well, stop being reactionary and embrace all that posh porn has to offer with Taschen's *The New Erotic Photography*. It's a characteristically comprehensive and immaculately edited collection of work from the creatives who've carved out art-porn as a niche in its own right. And at an immodest 608 pages, it's a veritable library of contemporary titillation, one of

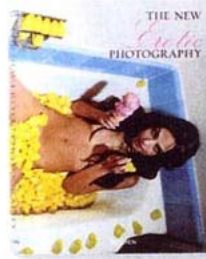


WORDS: STEVE BEALE BLOB ART

(Above) *Emanuela Folliero, Saint-Tropez '02*  
by Bruno Bisang



(Clockwise from far left)  
*Last Stand – Sasha* by  
 Aaron Hawks; *Untitled*  
 by Bob Carlos Clarke;  
 that's one classy nudie  
 book; *Saucer Kitten* by  
 Jeremy MF Thompson



those prestige tomes that certainly won't remain on the bookshelf just for show.

The late Bob Carlos Clarke, Richard Kern, Terry Richardson and a host of other shoo-ins all feature, as do some lesser-known, but no less relevant, names like Petter Hegre (a knowing take on lads' mag-style glamour) and Aaron Hawks (Helmut Newton meets Marilyn Manson). It's these under-the-radar art-pornographers that really add grit to the collection. Many have websites with members areas, just to take the grot affiliation full circle. The aforementioned Natacha Merritt apparently does video clips these days. You'll find them at [digitalgirly.com](http://digitalgirly.com), by the way.

In her introduction, Taschen sex editor Dian Hanson even delivers a robust polemic on the state of the art, lambasting the hypocrisy of po-faced 'erotic' photographers ("Why do so many of them think the way to invest a nude with integrity is to cut her head off?") and stating clearly how she thinks the genre should evolve: "Erotic photography can maintain its dignity by embracing its potential to be more arousing than pornography." Her book certainly is. *The New Erotic Photography* is published by Taschen, priced £30