



HOT OF THE PRESS

Publisher Benedikt Taschen once famously said: 'I don't make masterpieces, I make masturbation pieces.' No wonder Taschen's 'body part' series takes pride of place on our top shelf, along with erotic folios from *Deliciae Vitae* and *Avant Garde*, both much-loved though now defunct

Wallpaper*

F**K ART

*The respectable rise and shine
of coffee-table erotica*

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUKE KIRWAN
WRITER: HENRIETTA THOMPSON

Carefully researching the history of luxury erotic publishing, we dutifully put in the hours. We uncovered a handful of pioneers who have made sex more socially acceptable, removing it from its sleazy wrapping and slamming it down on the coffee table instead.

Taschen is well known as a lavish publisher of salacious subject matter. Dian Hanson, who has held the fabulous job title of sexy book editor at Taschen since 2001, uses fringe photographers and bold design to satisfy her readership. 'We are proud of what we do and treat art and pornography with the same reverence. In fact, the bigger the slut the glossier the finish – we pull out all the stops for a risky subject,' says Hanson.

The pioneering magazine *Deliciae Vitae* was only published three times before founder Kinder Aggugini left to set up his own fashion label, and yet it still had a major influence. One iconic shoot featured Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell sitting nearly naked facing each other on a loo. 'The models would always have fabulous shoes and hair, so the whole look was attractive to women as well as men. We also frequently used women photographers – ironically they would end up taking some of the most shocking images. We didn't start from sex, we started from beauty,' explains Aggugini.

Proud branding and fashion-friendly design are two approaches that Joseph Corre knows how to work. When he discovered that the biggest seller on his Agent Provocateur website was the company's catalogue, Corre capitalised on demand and launched a publishing arm of photographic books and erotic short stories for high-end readers. In a world where censorship still rules, 'we have to find ways and means. And that means using different media,' he says.

So what's next for sex publishing? Corre is planning a major retrospective, while Aggugini is keen to relaunch his magazine as an annual publication. We're also looking forward to Taschen's delightfully named *Mid-Century Modern Interiors with Nudes* volume as well as its new additions to its 'body part' series. ✳
See more images on www.wallpaper.com

