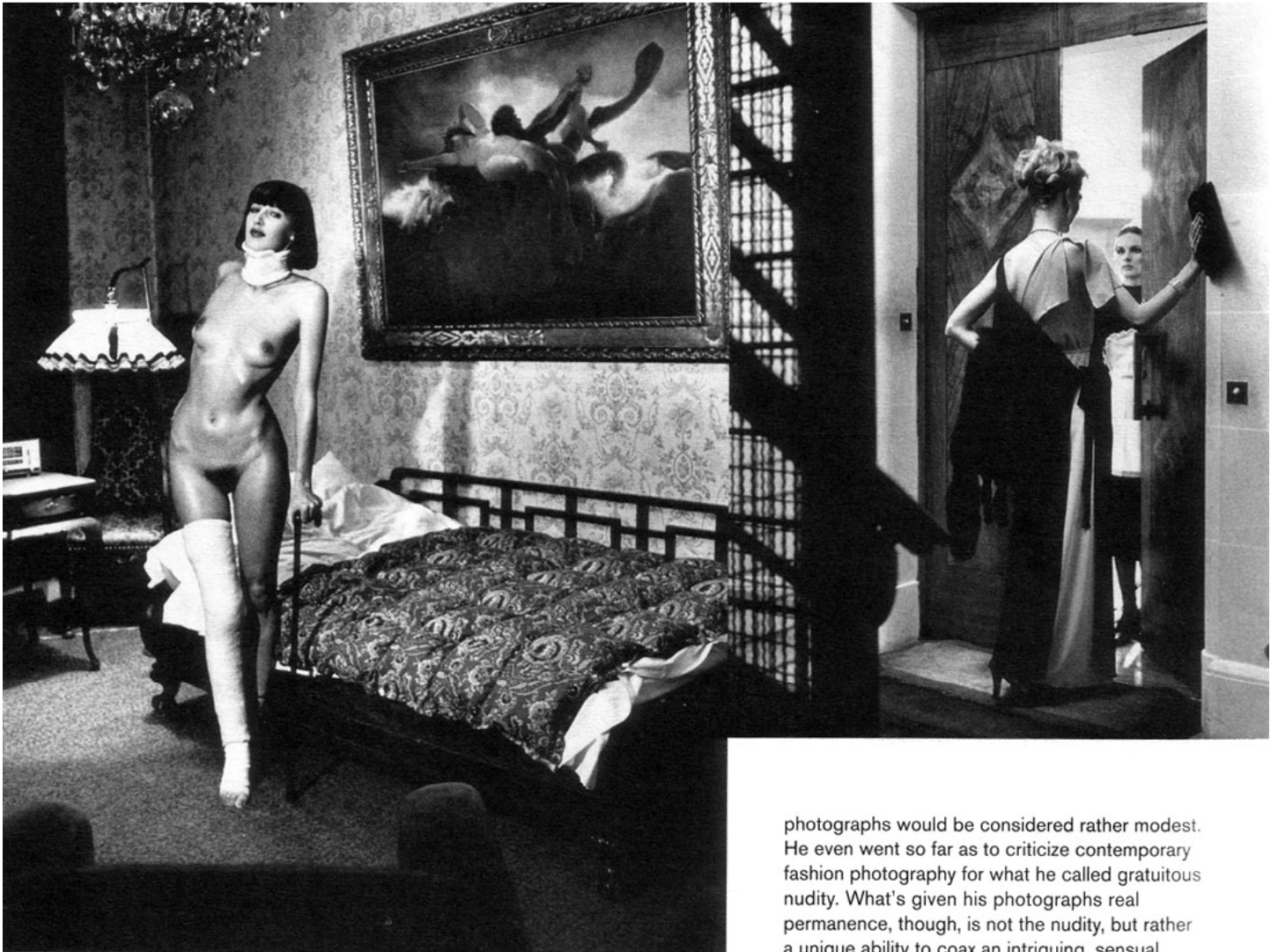


# HELMUT NEWTON

Revisiting the celebrated photographer's illustrious career.



Helmut Newton lived a dream only meant for postcards and glamour-wandering imaginations: a monumental fashion career in Paris, residence in Monte Carlo, and wintering in sun-drenched Los Angeles. Known for his sexually provocative, black-and-white fashion photography for *French Vogue* in the 1960s and 70s, this larger-than-life photographer garnered for himself the sobriquet, the "King of Kink."

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of his groundbreaking, over-sized, and rare photographic book *Sumo*, Taschen is releasing a smaller, more economically priced version. The anniversary addition maintains the 464 pages of sumptuous, large photographs and text of the original, but its trim 11"x15" (nearly half the size of the original) makes it a tad more manageable.

Though infamous for the sexuality of his images, by contemporary standards, Helmut Newton's

photographs would be considered rather modest. He even went so far as to criticize contemporary fashion photography for what he called gratuitous nudity. What's given his photographs real permanence, though, is not the nudity, but rather a unique ability to coax an intriguing, sensual narrative from a single image.

The path that led Newton to his incredible rise, though, was not the stuff of fantasy, which may explain the complexity of his contribution to fashion. Born in Berlin in 1920 to a well-to-do Jewish family, he and his family fled Nazi persecution. Newton sought refuge in Singapore and then Australia, only to be interned for two years on the basis of his nationality. Perhaps this personal history serves as testimony for why his photography was never going to feature waifs wandering aimlessly in search of Mr. Handsome.

Though sometimes clumsily criticized for objectifying women, Newton's preference for strong, robust females that reminded him of those from his Prussian childhood—capable, independent women—was, in many ways, a visual precursor to the feminist movement. Further proof of this underlying feminism was his creation of an entire fashion series dedicated to the idea that the perfect man is... a woman, of course. ☒