


**BOOKS**


**THE BIG BUTT BOOK**
**DIAN HANSON / TASCHEN / \$60**

THE *Kama Sutra* gives detailed instructions on how to spank it. Contemporary Italians touch it for luck before placing a bet. Americans are having it cosmetically enhanced at rates approaching breast-enlargement surgery. The female derrière has long inspired awe, fantasy and slavish devotion.

Curiously, its primary purpose is functional rather than aesthetic: butts balance our bodies while running, according to biologists. But ask any pygophile—as fundament fans are clinically termed—and you'll get the same answer: female hindquarters exist to please the eye, hands and parts south.

A pert posterior causes instant arousal, as Zora Neale Hurston observed in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: "The men noticed her firm buttocks like she had grapefruits in her

hip pockets." Or, as rapper Sir Mix-a-lot proclaimed, "My anaconda don't want none, unless you've got buns, hun."

Having all but disappeared from western culture in the breast-obsessed second half of the 20th Century, the fully-formed bum is currently enjoying a massive resurgence, attributed by some to American actress Jennifer Lopez, and by others to the rise of booty-centric hip-hop culture. Yet this rage for shapely butts is nothing new. The ancient Greeks worshipped at the temple of Aphrodite Kallipygos, Goddess of the Beautiful Buttocks, while a womanly rump has always been an object of worship in most of the Southern Hemisphere.

*The Big Butt Book*—a 372-page, 30cm x 30cm hardcover—explores this perennial

fascination with the female rear, from small and taut to large and sumptuous, in the fourth instalment of Dian Hanson's critically acclaimed body parts series.

There are more than 400 photos from 1900 to the present day, including works by Elmer Batters, Ellen Von Unwerth, Jean-Paul Goude, Ralph Gibson, Richard Kern, Jan Saudek, Ed Fox, Terry Richardson and Sante D'Orazio, of butts ranging from petite Pam Anderson's to sumptuous Serena Williams', are contextualised by interviews with porn icon John 'Buttman' Stagliano, film-maker Tinto Brass, artist Robert Crumb, butt queens Buffie The Body, Coco and Watermelon Woman, plus Eve Howard and her life-long spanking obsession. *The Big Butt Book* puts the backside front and centre!