

PEOPLE

Deborah Turbeville

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Bathhouse series, Vogue 1971. PHOTOGRAPHY Deborah Turbeville, courtesy of [salsavista gallery](#), New York.

WORDS [Mitchell Oakley Smith](#) PUBLISHED Wed, 6 Jul 2016 - 10:00 am

An otherworldly storyteller, she was an artist driven entirely by her own agenda. Deborah Turbeville's powerful narratives touch others more than she could ever have known.

“My fashion photography was unorthodox ... The girls weren't normal-looking fashion models and the environments were totally different to what photographers were using.”

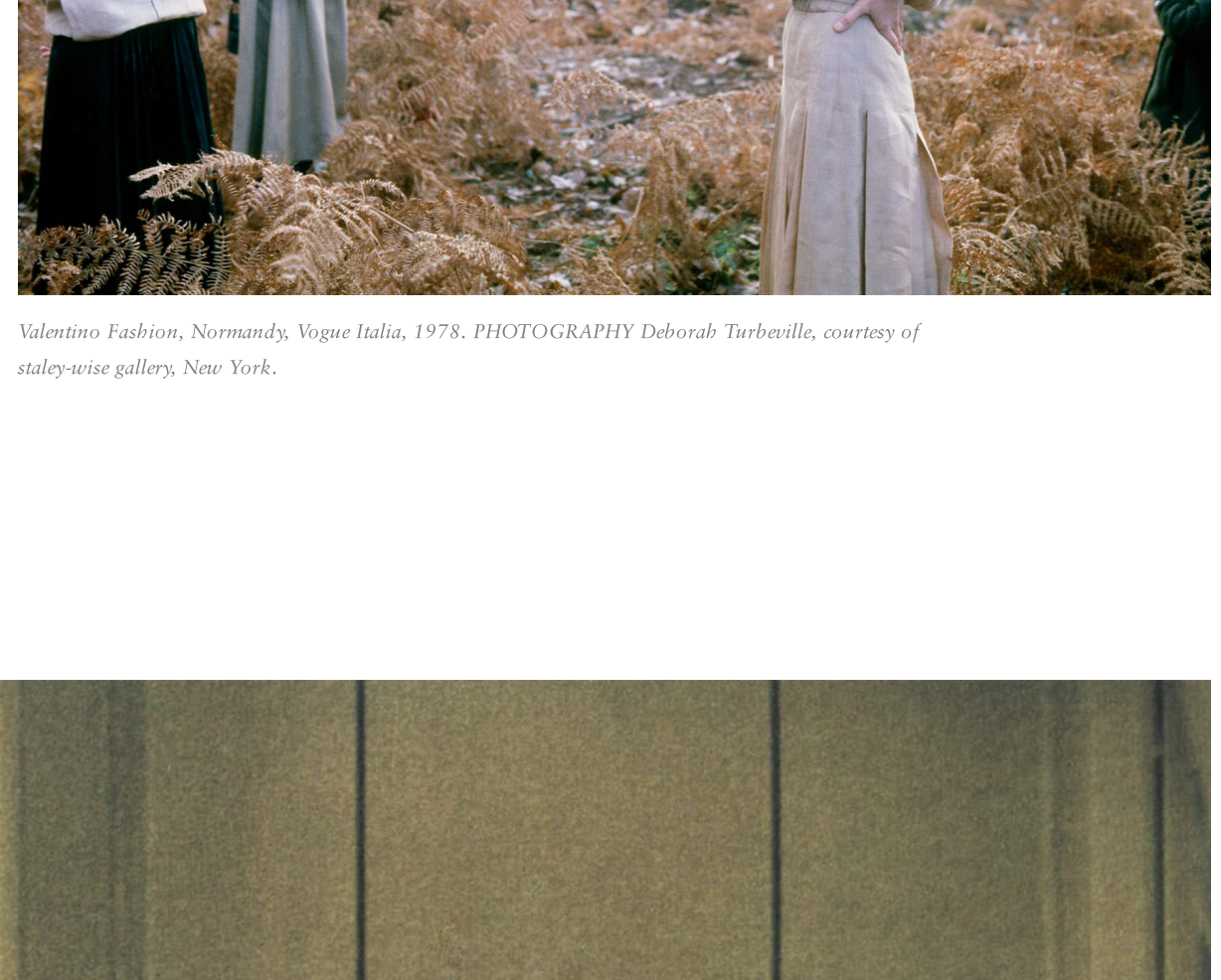


PHOTOGRAPHY Stephen Legros.



Bathhouse series, Vogue 1971. PHOTOGRAPHY Deborah Turbeville, courtesy of [salsavista gallery](#), New York.

Turbeville was born and raised in America's northeast, moving to [New York](#) at 20-years-old. With the guidance and support of famed fashion photographer Richard Avedon, who, alongside influential art director Marvin Israel, had given a series of advanced lectures that Turbeville attended, she set about a career in photography.



Yuletide Fashion, November, Vogue Italia, 1975. PHOTOGRAPHY Deborah Turbeville, courtesy of [salsavista gallery](#), New York.

“[Saint Petersburg] became a second home for me ... and it's really inspiring. I like the shabbiness of it ... I like the greyness of it.”



Five girls in a room in Pigiulla, Paris, Vogue Italia, 1982. PHOTOGRAPHY Deborah Turbeville, courtesy of [salsavista gallery](#), New York.

Even more significant than the sheer size of Deborah Turbeville's body of work was her invention of a new school of photography, bringing charm and romanticism to images with a clever use of lighting, mist and smoke, immobility of movement and emotional distance from her subjects. In many ways, such an approach, when she began, sought to oppose her male contemporaries like [Helmut Newton](#), whose overstyled approach was far the opposite. Her aesthetic has never been successfully replicated, but certainly paved the way for contemporary photographers to present more ethereal, feminine visions.



“I have an idea and a place and a subject and I put them together because they say something to me that I can't explain to anybody else.”

Bathhouse series, Vogue 1971. PHOTOGRAPHY Deborah Turbeville, courtesy of [salsavista gallery](#), New York.

Thanks to [Julie Warr Gallery, New York](#), and [The Museum Project, Berkeley](#)

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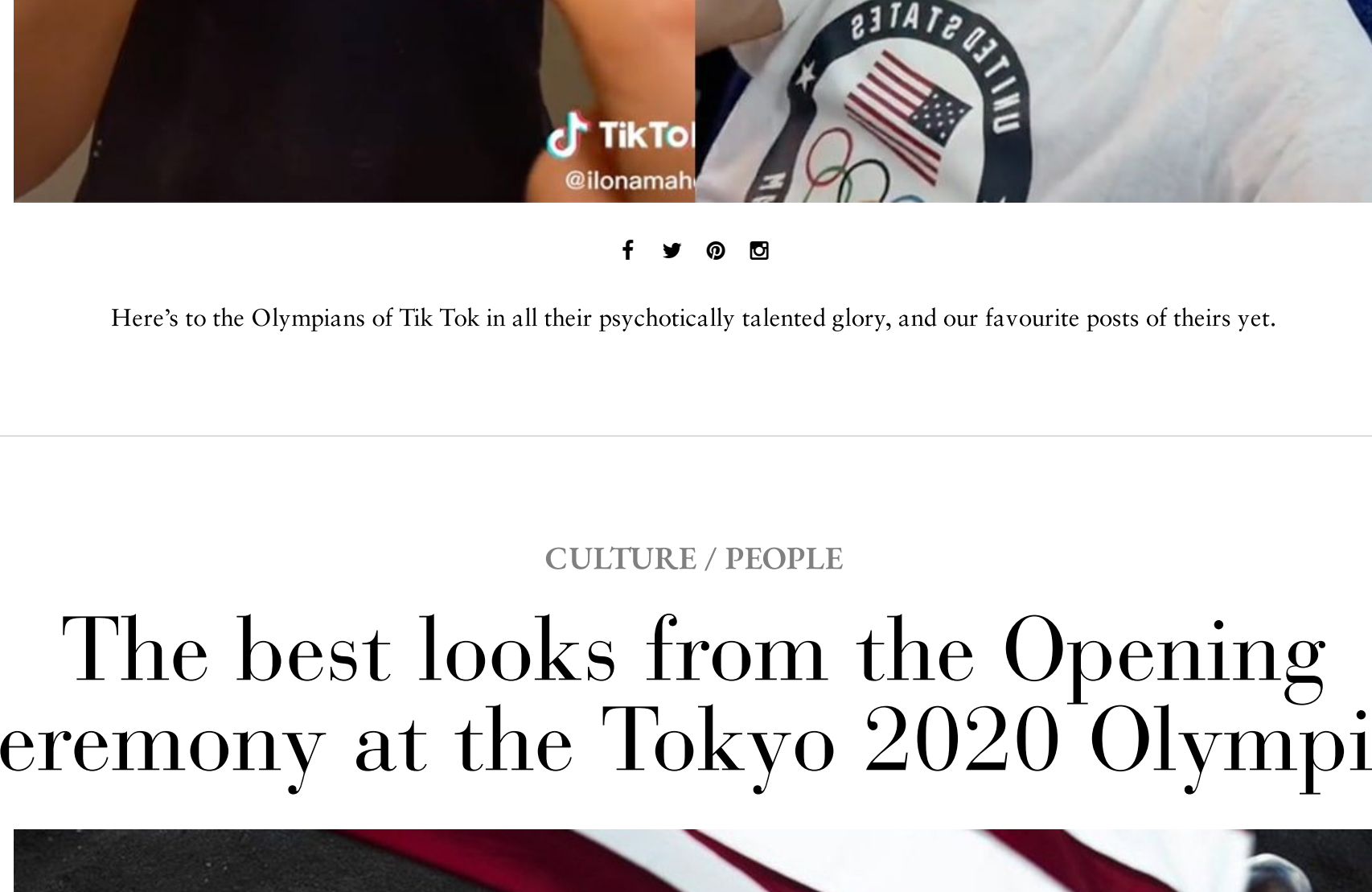
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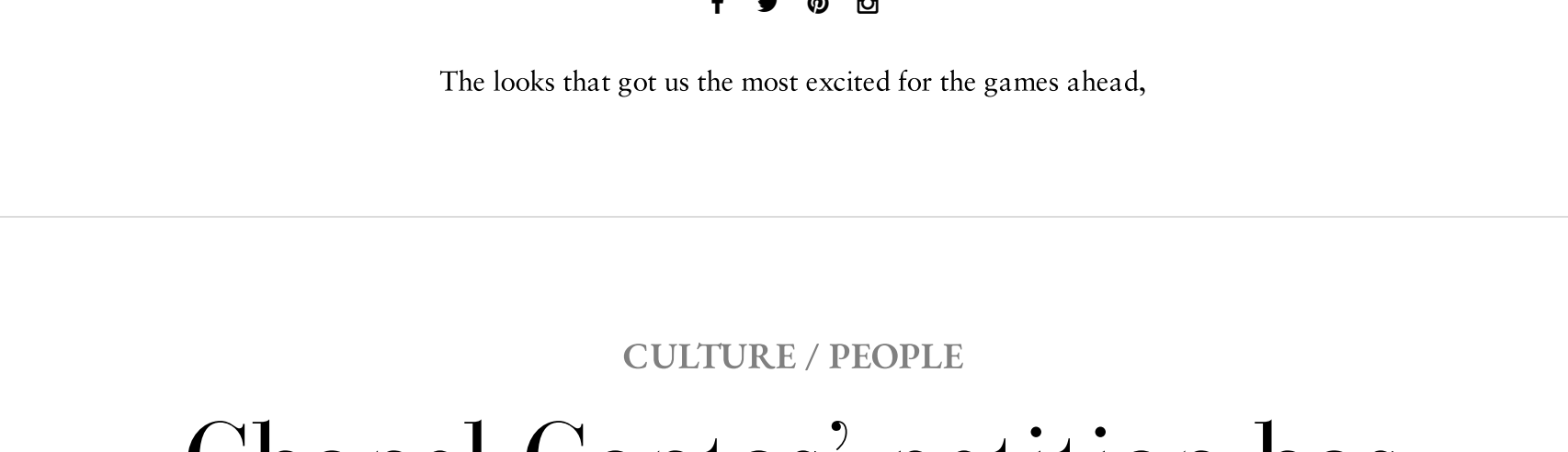
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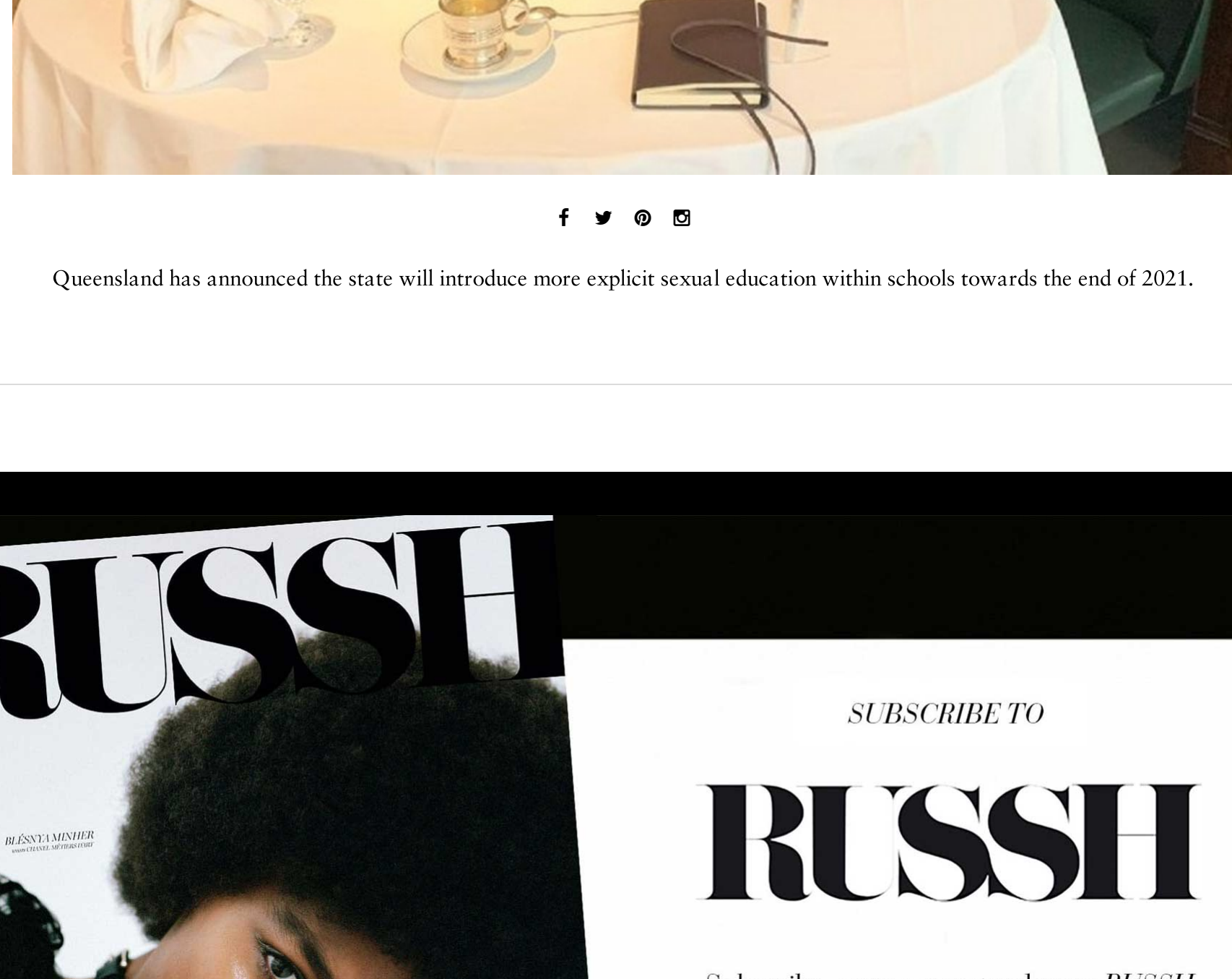


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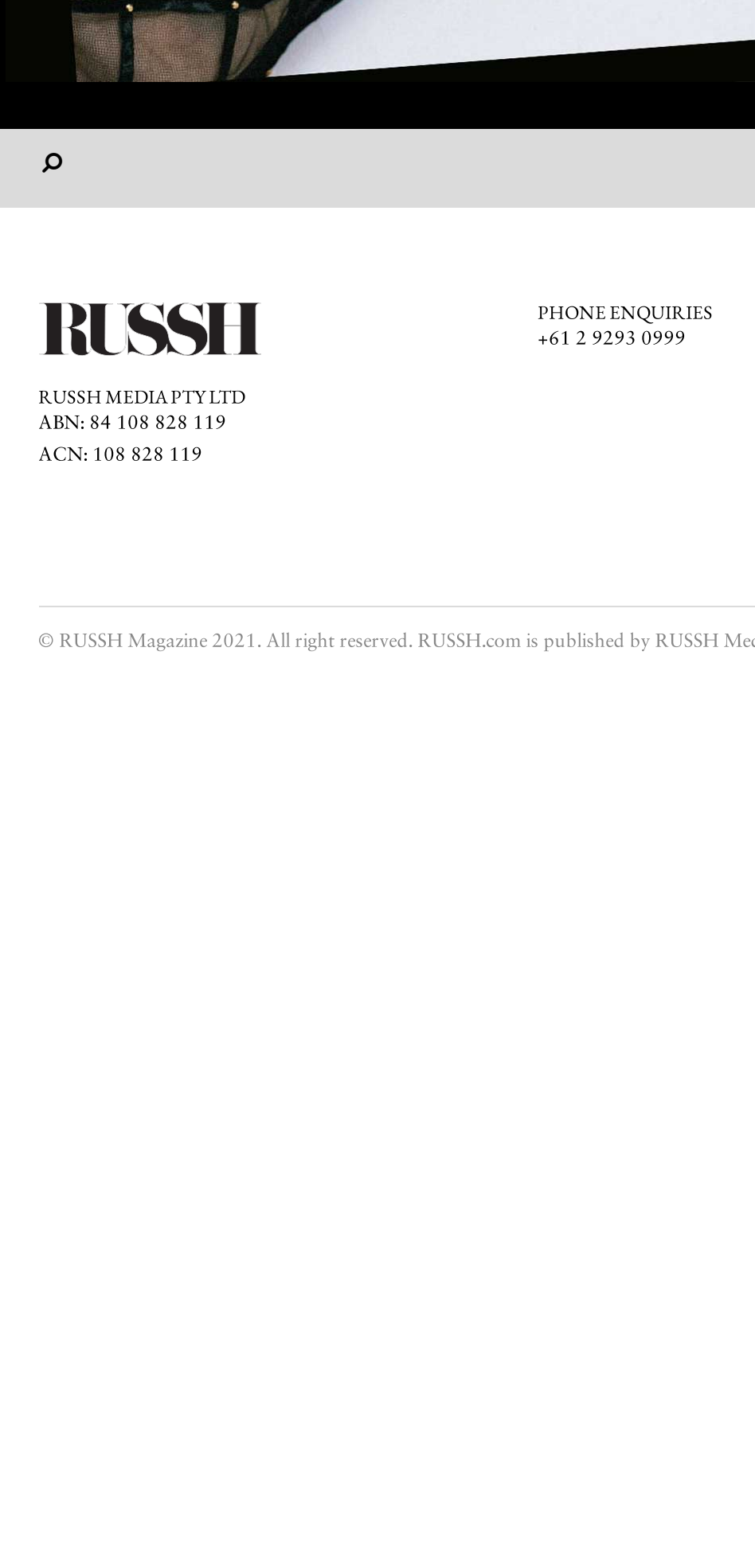
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