AMERICAN

COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

HELMUT NEWTON

REMEMBERED

An
Exclusive
Portfolio
of his Iconic
Images

Selected by his Wife, June Newton



MAY/JUNE 2004 U.S.A. \$4.99 CANADA \$5.99 ON DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 15, 2004 WHAT HE WAS REALLY LIKE

HIS MAGNIFICENT OBSESSIONS

HOW HE CHANGED PHOTOGRAPHY **ENTER OUR NEW PHOTO CONTEST**

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SPECIAL SECTION THE FUTURE OF NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

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HILTON
AND THE
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ESSENTIAL LENS REPORT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHAT YOU NEED TO OWN

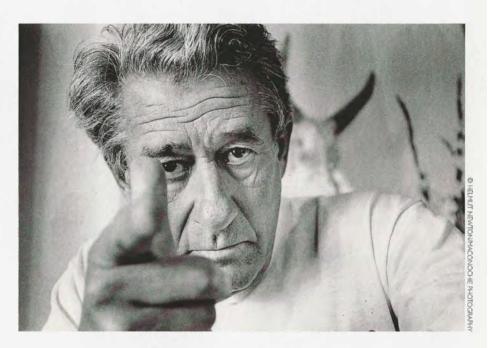
fter his death last January 23 in a car crash outside the Chateau Marmont hotel in Los Angeles, where he wintered each year, Helmut Newton was eulogized in newspapers and magazines around the world as one of photography's modern greats, as well as an agent of social corruption. People magazine called his pictures "elegantly perverse." Germany's Stern magazine asked whether he was a "decadent voyeur or master fashion photographer?" Nearly every obituary described him as a "provocateur." In the end he was photography's ultimate, longlasting sensation, who, to his own seeming amazement—and obvious delight—awoke one morning to find that he had redrawn the boundaries of not only photography and art but also culture with his magazine work and classic books such as White Women (1976), Big Nudes (1982), World Without Men (1984), Pola Woman (1992), and Portraits (1998). The fetishes and fantasies he captured with his cameras have become a kind of default definition of edgy chic that today enlivens the imagery of everything from MTV to Super Bowl pregame shows. A German lew forced to flee the Nazis in 1938. Newton carried memories of Weimar Berlin's artistic avant-garde, as well as the repression of personal freedoms that followed. He mined these memories in his fashion images, never failing to thumb his nose at censorship.

On the following pages, American Photo presents an exclusive tribute to Newton and his most important work, chosen for us by the one person who knew the man and his imagery better than anyone else: his wife and collaborator, June Newton. June, who photographed under the pseudonym Alice Springs, edited Newton's books and curated his exhibitions. For this portfolio she selected many of Newton's most iconic images—the photos, she says, that he will be remembered by.

In addition, we have asked several other people to reminisce about the man and assess his impact on photography, art, and fashion. These contributors—photo historian and curator Philippe Garner, well-known fine-art photographer Ralph Gibson, Vogue editor in chief Anna Wintour, and American Photo editor at large Jean-Jacques Naudet—all knew the public and the private Newton. What emerges is a portrait of an artist who created a uniquely personal photography that was often meant to be seen in the most commercial of settings. "When I take pictures, I don't do it just for myself, to put them away in a drawer," Newton wrote in his last book, Helmut Newton: Autobiography (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 2003). "I want as many people to see them as possible."

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Helmut Newton created a
unique body of work
that was both highly commercial and
very private, capturing a world of
glamour, wealth, decadence, and eroticism
both real and imagined.
In this special portfolio, selected for American Photo
by his wife and collaborator, June,
we glimpse his deepest obsessions
and, as four of his friends note,
his long love affair with photography.





NEWTONTHEARTIST

y friendship with Helmut Newton dates back to 1975. He was holding his first oneman exhibition, in the Nikon Gallery in Paris, on the corner of the rue Jacob and the rue de Seine. I had come from London to see the show and was delighted at the prospect of meeting the man responsible for some of the most powerful and indelible wife, June, seemed intrigued at the thought of an Englishman from a venerable art company—I was working for Sotheby's—directing such a passionate and serious critical attention towards "commercial"

photographs made within the last few years for a fashion magazine, a genre that had yet to establish its credentials in the world of curators and historians.

Helmut always remained enigmatic. He reveled in mystery and ambiguity, revealed himself very slowly, and usually obliquely. The man was like the photographs—layered and elusive. I loved his photographs I had ever encountered. Helmut and his odd mix of the bourgeois and the bohemian. Helmut was extraordinarily fastidious about his home and his appearance, liked things to be "just so," be it his spotless white trainers or his art books, aligned with military precision. But he was also instinc-

tively subversive; he could be perverse and provocative; he had the intense, insatiable curiosity and the nomadic restlessness of the artist. He could be a wickedly amusing companion, gossipy, hungry for news and ideas, and sharply observant. Helmut loved to relax in the sun, to swim, to eat a lazy lunch on a terrace, to enjoy dinner in a favorite restaurant with friends.

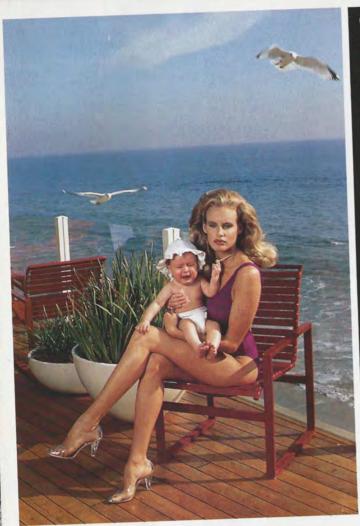
But above all he loved to work. Work was his motor. Helmut the imagemaker was never off duty. Defying the conventional pigeonholes of "fashion," "erotic," "portrait," or "reportage" photography, he

Defying conventional definitions of photography, he created an entire world of imagery that reflected his own taste for luxury and fastidiousness, as well as his natural instincts for subversion. Those who knew him best knew that what really drove him was his work. By Philippe Garner













a ved out his own territory and challenged tradition initations. He invented a hybrid photography that was entirely his own—wordly, sophisticated, ofted laborately constructed, yet with the truthfulness of the toughest photojournalism and the incisives of the most brilliant satire.

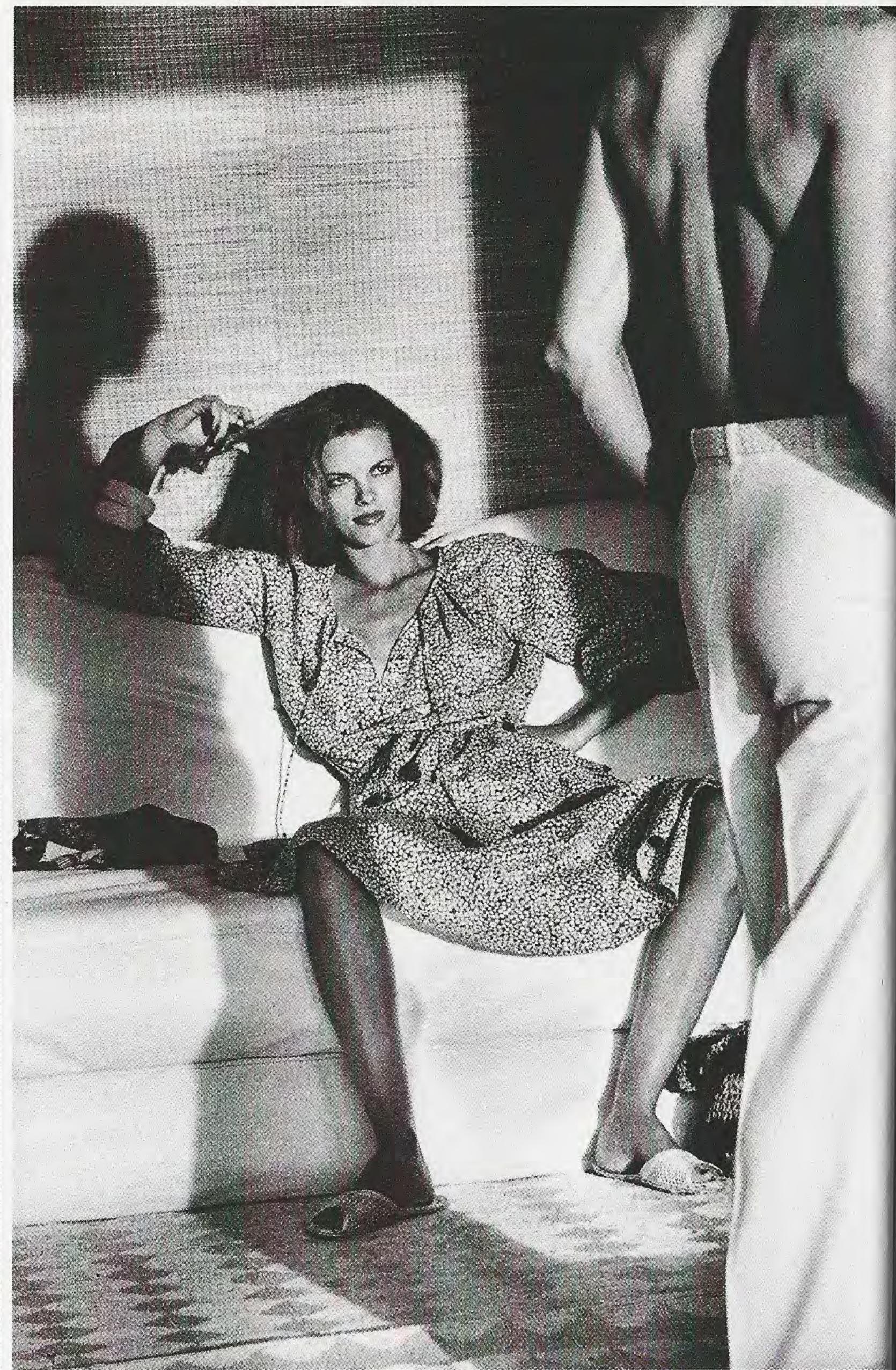
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Helmut's destiny as a photographer gave his real purpose. He knew that he was blessed with remarkable gift and that he must exploit this g the fullest, pushing his vision and his imaginat to the limit. Helmut showed extraordinary sing mindedness in delving deep into his own person and experience to develop his independent phographic perspective on the world. He believed sonately in freedom of expression, and his recipublished portfolio for Reporters sans frontière (Reporters Without Borders), Helmut Newton the Press Freedom, is a fitting reminder of the significant dimension to his life and work.

Philippe Garner, author, curator, photo historia and auction expert, lives in London.

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EXPERIENCINGHELMUI

Recalling a lifetime of conversations about photography. By Raiph Gibson

met Helmut Newton in 1974 at the Relais Christine, a gallery and restaurant in Paris. It was love at first sight, and that same day he made my portrait.

Our friendship continued to grow through the years, and we would travel to different cities to meet, along with our wonderful ladies, June and Mary Jane. We had lots of adventures, wine, and laughs. But most important were the conversations about photography and our personal thoughts. He was fascinated by the fact that I didn't do commercial assignments, and I was equally amazed that he could do such good work on commission. I was fascinated by his European dimension, and he liked my velocity as an American. The difference in our ages didn't really seem to matter much, and until quite recently our swim-

ming races against each other were very close. He really could swim.

We had absolute confidence in each other's discretion. Our discussions about women would last for hours—especially when it came to how we defined beauty or allure. Glamour was something we both learned from our mothers, but, of course, he celebrated glamour and erotic attraction to the highest degree.

We both admired anything done well in photography, and recently he said to me that the young postmodernists were just like we were when we were young—they were looking for a way to do something different. We were both of a generation called the "old school," which came of age before the days of pre-mixed developers and

sensitive exposure meters. The films of yore were slow and difficult to control. But there is a look to the work of a photographer who started in this way, and part of the intensity of Helmut's images come from his total mastery of his materials. I once saw him shoot a very high-paying job for Chanel on ten frames of film. He always knew exactly where to place the camera.

At our first meeting, in 1974, Helmut told me is was only at age 50 that he "got good" at photog raphy. I'd heard the same comment from another master, Bill Brandt. Now my life continues, but with Helmut at a great distance. There is nothing more to say about him. His life has been said.

Photographer Ralph Gibson lives in New York City