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# Woman In The Mirror



Woman in the Mirror **Richard Avedon**



## Synopsis

Among the significant projects of the last year of his life, Richard Avedon (1923-2004) completed a book of his photographs of women. Always transcending categorization-he was both a fashion photographer and known as a "poet of portraiture"-Avedon was interested in seeing how elemental facts of modern life and human existence were reflected in his work. And what could be more elemental than women, who have mesmerized artists across the centuries? Looking at his work in this way, Avedon was able to create an unparalleled view of women in his time, a tumultuous half century of rapidly changing social facts, cultural ideals, popular styles, and high fashion. As an artist, Avedon was deeply responsive to nuances of expression, gesture, and comportment, and his photographs unfailingly opened a window to the interior lives of his subjects. These ranged from celebrities (Marilyn Monroe), artists (Marguerite Duras, June Leaf), and high-fashion models (Suzy Parker, Dovima) to anonymous people that simply drew his attention. Like the best of art and literature, they evoke rich lives and complex experiences. An incisive essay by art historian Anne Hollander offers an overview of a half century of Avedon's images of women.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Wealthy or poor, young or old, famous or infamous, all of Avedon's subjects are photographed with the same stark, minimalist touch. This new collection spans five decades of the late photographer's work and focuses on the portraiture king's pictures of women. Beginning with a simple, joyous image of the Italian actress Anna Magnani in all her hearty, make-free glory and

ending with a casual, breezy shot of mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, the loosely chronological succession of Avedon's primarily black-and-white shots demonstrates that, while the idea of photographing women is nothing new, the way the former Harper's Bazaar and Vogue contributor approached his subjects was. As explained in art historian Hollander's ending essay, Avedon was the first photographer to break down the barriers between high, "serious," photography and low, "non-serious," photography by applying his intimate, shadowy style to all of his subjects, regardless of their social background. It is a shift that can be seen in the stirring juxtapositions of toothless street performer Zazi with the model Dorian Leigh, and the full-bodied field marshal Gloria Gonzales with the petite Rose Kennedy. A treat for devotees and newcomers alike, the collection showcases both Avedon's fashion work and celebrity portraits, including such fantastic shots as a bejeweled and be-gowned Elton John in a mid-punch stance and a sexy Geoffrey Beene model posing with a skeleton. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

**\*Starred Review\*** For Richard Avedon, portraits were works of art that contemplate the human form and create windows into the soul. As a radical, then preeminent fashion photographer, he brilliantly captured the complex interplay between his subject's spirit and the fantasy clothes engender. Two years before his sudden death in October 2004, Avedon sorted through 60 years' worth of photographs to select 125 images, some never before published, for this lavish and breathtaking volume. Critic Hollander provides astute commentary, explicating Avedon's passion for photographing women and his profound inquiry into the symbiotic powers of seeing and being seen. Presented in chronological order, Avedon's electrifying photographs also tell the story of how twentieth-century fashion blossomed in sync with film and rock and roll. The fashion models--including such era-defining divas as the classically beautiful Suzy Parker, the otherworldly Penelope Tree, leggy Veruschka, and compact Kate Moss--are no mannequins but, rather, actors collaborating joyfully with the camera. Avedon also photographed such women artists as Katharine Hepburn, Marianne Moore, Tina Turner, and Patti Smith as well as working-class women, establishing an empathic and mutually empowering rapport with each and adding immeasurably to the world's beauty and humanity. Donna Seaman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Richard Avedon was a MASTER !!This book shows how good he was, and how important for the history of photography.Simply Amazing.Huge Fan.

I saw his art exhibition at the Detroit Institute of Arts a few years back. This book is representative of what I had saw at the museum. A great coffee table books filled with beauty!

100% best Avedon book.you get a broad range of all his work throughout the decades.The photograph of Bianca Jagger is my ALL TIME favorite photo, the innocence, the vulnerbilty, the sexiness of that photo changed my life.

a compilation of a master. Glad to have it and share with friends

Great book.

I love having this book in my collection. Its oversized so make sure you have room for it.

This latest by our recently departed R.A. ( I cried like a little girl when he died) is one of his best. With images in his beloved black and white but also rare color that I've never seen before the book is a classic portryal of Avedon's images of women. Dovima with elephants, Suzy Parker, Rose Kennedy, the most erotic image of Stephanie Seymour ever. The color images of Nadja with a skeleton in fashion images that will stay with you for ages, this book is a fantastic portfolio of Americas greatest photographer,( ok Irving Penn & Avedon share that title). If you were not in on Made In France,(which is now a \$1500.00 book )get this one it has more substance aside from the beautiful design of MIF. I miss Avedon and this book brought some memory of his brilliant approach to photography once again.

In this large scale, elegant portfolio produced by Harry N. Abrams, Inc. the photographs from the last year of Richard Avedon's life are beautifully presented in full page, lush black and white prints. Between the years 1945 and 2004 Avedon focused his sensitive lens on women - famous women like Marilyn Monroe, models, artists, and ordinary women who captured his eye and imagination. The result here contained in a survey accompanied by a warm and informative essay by Anne Hollander is a stunning collection of Avedon's best attributes.Avedon was a fashion photographer and a much sought after portrait photographer. He composed photographs like opera settings, emphasizing elements of contrast that would set off the model. Yet he was also one of those photographers who was able to capture the confidence of his subjects, allowing a relationship of

mutual trust to open views of women few other portraitists in the medium have been able to imitate. The final photographs in the book (from his last year in 2004) are portraits of two consummate artists in the music world - Mitsuko Uchida and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson - who are known for their preference for privacy. They are stunning achievements and are fitting homages to a fine photographic artist. Highly Recommended, Grady Harp, October 05

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