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Paul Outerbridge: Command Performance



Synopsis

Paul Outerbridge Jr. (American, 1896–1958) burst onto the photographic art scene in the early 1920s with images that were visually fresh, technically adept, and decidedly Modernist. He also applied his talent for composition to the commercial world, introducing an artist's sensibility to advertisements for men's haberdashery, glassware, and JELL-O® for magazines such as Vogue and Vanity Fair. An early master of the technically complex carbro color process, he used it to photograph nudes, often shown with a variety of props—images that skirted the limits of propriety in their day. This catalogue was produced for the first exhibition of Outerbridge's work since 1981, which was held March 31 through August 9, 2009, at the J. Paul Getty Museum. It brought together one hundred photographs from all periods and styles of the photographer's career, including his Cubistic still-life images, commercial magazine photography, and nudes. The book includes an essay by the curator and a chronology of the artist's life and work.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It would be easy with Outerbridge to be misled by the sharpness of his palette or the oddity of his subjects. One might scale him as a simple eccentric: this would be totally reductionist. His mastery of complex color techniques, his understanding of camera consequences, his control of lighting, and his joy of composition mark him as a technical master on par with the best in more tame genres. That he adds to this an eroticism and sensuality that is non-standard would in itself place him in a

special category. That all this is packaged with a sly commentary on bourgeois values makes him a keeper for anyone seriously interested in photography.

I think most photographers are familiar with the nude with claws photo and that one is included in this collection, along with a few other portraits and figure studies. However the book concentrates a great deal on Outerbridge's commissioned commercial photography. While it is definitely worth studying to improve your composition skills, many of the photos are not that interesting outside of the technical proficiency demonstrated. I would have preferred to see more concentration on personal projects.

kinda hard tell things in the language of the empire:to cut it short, as i see those pics i gather this is a very big case of overlooking an artist; this kandinsky like pics are something i've never seen before, and the pic in the main cover is mind blowing;i have the feeling, that as long you are not too fashionable from the market point of view, you do not even exist, and i think this is here the point with Outerbridge.anyway, he was not too dedicated to the fashion stuff.the book is great in my opinion.

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