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Art+Photography

Beyond Fashion: Women in Landscape

28 June 2017 / by Irina Lakicevic



William Silano, Harper's Bazaar, May 1968, p. 136, gelatin silver print, 14 x 11". Courtesy Deborah Bell Photographs.



William Silano, for Harper's Bazaar, May 1968, chromogenic color print, 21 x 30-1/2". Copyright William Silano Estate/
Courtesy Deborah Bell Photographs.



A handful of the 19th century period pieces are sepia-toned, others are a colourful ode to surrealism which bloomed during the 1920's. Neatly hanging in the apartment-like gallery at Deborah Bell Photographs, they serve as a charming testament to the ever-fascinating artistic genre of Women in Landscape. Whilst the motif of the female figure, especially in relation to fashion photography is hardly groundbreaking, the way the photographers exhibited at the gallery have manipulated the female body as a tool in creative expression – certainly was. While some photographers had a discernibly lyrical approach towards the placing of the female figure within the canvas, the others had a more graphic vision. In the case of Deborah Turbeville and Henry Callahan's work, the body framed suggests a lingering narrative, imbued in the sentiment of black and white photography, it resonates beyond the visual plane – inciting curiosity and delectable poignancy within the onlooker. The selected works thus seduce with a delectable torment as a pretence of the structural rigour and tenderness which they simultaneously exude which ensures their abiding place in beholders memory.

In the case of the other photographers included in the exhibition the employment of architectural qualities of the female figure has been paramount to their oeuvre. The vivid composition of Harper's Bazaar photographer William Silanos comes to mind, as his stupendous employment of the line within the architectural compositions make a compelling case for surrealistic photography. In similar style the reclining female form hints to the grandeur of the mythical sphinx, whilst in others the figures' statuesque integrity resembles that of an obelisk, rising above the landscape – sovereign and mighty – unequivocally reaching towards the sky The aforementioned are without doubt the most alluring aspects of the exhibition and whilst all the works are absolutely marvelous pieces of photography, they are undoubtedly stronger for the women portrayed within them.

PHOTOGRAPHY

"BEYOND FASHION: WOMAN IN LANDSCAPE"

by [NOOVO](#) • 22/06/2017

Gösta PETERSON (American, b. Sweden 1923) Untitled for Henri Bendel, 1980 gelatin silver print; printed 1996 paper 11 x 14" (28 x 35.6 cm) image 9 x 13-1/4" (22.9 x 33.7 cm) signed, titled, dated & annotated in pencil on verso

Deborah Bell Photographs is pleased to present a group exhibition of photographs based on a theme long favored in art: woman in the landscape. Inspired by the progressive photographs made by James Moore, Gösta Peterson, William Silano, and Deborah Turbeville for the editorial pages of leading fashion magazines in the 1960s and 1970s, this exhibition features prints by those photographers, and by Susan Paulsen and Marcia Resnick, and incorporates selected photographs by Robert Adams, Diane Arbus, Harry Callahan, Louis Faurer, and Lee Friedlander. We are also delighted to include 19th century prints by Roger Fenton, Charles Nègre, Sydney Richard Percy, and Nevil Story-

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The photographs on exhibit by James Moore and William Silano, both of whom worked for Harper's Bazaar in the 1960s and 1970s, may be new to many viewers. James Moore, a former assistant to Richard Avedon, became a regular contributor to the Bazaar in 1962. Moore often showed models roving through an open, sweeping landscape, as if they were discovering a new frontier. Like Turbeville, Moore acknowledged the influence of the new European films of the 1960s and 1970s, especially those by Bernardo Bertolucci and Michelangelo Antonioni. Photographs by William Silano, who began working for Harper's Bazaar in 1966, will be on view for the first time in a Manhattan gallery. In Silano's pictures, women appear to reign in surrealistic landscapes, rendered even more dramatic through his wide-angle lens, worm's-eye vistas, and bold, saturated color.

Arbus, Friedlander and Faurer were contemporaries who also photographed on assignment for, or contributed to, Harper's Bazaar and other magazines, but they, along with Callahan and Adams, signal the emergence of the photographer as an artist in the 1960s and 1970s. Their pictures, whether made for hire or as art-for-art's-sake, influence on her decision to become a photographer. Peterson's famous ads for Henri Bendel, the legendary New York boutique, appeared in *The New York Times* almost every Sunday from 1978 to 1986.

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Eleanor and their daughter Barbara; and a selection from Friedlander's "Little Screens" series. Later in the 1970s, conceptual approaches to photography were explored by artists such as Marcia Resnick. An image from her 1974 series, See, depicting a woman facing the landscape of her apartment complex, is included in this exhibition.



William SILANO (American, 1934-2014) Harper's Bazaar, May 1968, p. 136 [WS10] gelatin silver print; printed 1970s-80s paper 14 x 11" (35.6 x 28 cm) image 12-1/4 x 9-1/2" (31.1 x 24.1 cm) Estate stamp on verso with initials of George Silano, Executor, in ink on verso

More Info: <http://www.deborahbellphotographs.com>

Tags:

JUN 13

Exhibition Review: Woman In Landscape at Deborah Bell Photographs

REVIEWS (/CULTURE/?CATEGORY=REVIEWS)



© William Silano Estate / Courtesy Deborah Bell Photographs

by Madeleine Leddy

From Monet's *Coquelicots* (http://www.musee-orsay.fr/fr/collections/oeuvres-commentees/peinture/commentaire_id/poppy-field-8951.html?cHash=127d35492d) and *Femme avec ombrelle* (<http://www.musee-orsay.fr/fr/collections/catalogue-des-oeuvres/notice.html?numid=1182>); to Richard Avedon's classic cliché of *Carmen* (<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O82823/carmen-homage-to-munkacsi-coat-photograph-avedon-richard/>) mid-step in Paris's Place François-Premier; to Jane Campion's haunting stills from *The Piano* (<http://therealists.com/wiki-2-17-513-863-824-1231-view-drama-emotion-8-profile-1993-bthe-piano-b.html>) of Holly Hunter in period getup, posed next to an enormous grand piano on a hazy stretch of New Zealand shoreline; the motifs of female figure and picturesque landscape have long complemented one another in painting, photography, and cinema alike. Deborah Bell, curator and owner of Deborah Bell Photographs on the Upper East Side, has assembled a small series of works that explores this paradigm across eras and genres of photography.

Bell's apartment-style gallery is currently lined with original prints that range from British photographer Roger Fenton's ghostly composition of a young, white-clad woman dwarfed by the Gothic arches of Wales's Tintern Abbey, to a pair of Bill Silano's sultry desert pieces for a 1968 edition of *Harper's Bazaar*—and beyond, to some even more contemporary pieces. The exhibit is called "Beyond Fashion: Woman in Landscape," and its situation of pieces dating from the nineteenth century next to colorful prints from the early Golden Ages of American fashion photography in the fifties and sixties makes a statement about the timelessness of both the female form and the earth she walks.

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE



© Bill Silano 1968 *Harper's Bazaar*

Bell's acquisition of several nineteenth century works—salt and albumen prints from the repertoires of Fenton and fellow early English photographers, Nevil Story-Maskelyne and Sydney Richard Percy, as well as from French painter-photographer Charles Nègre—was part of what motivated her to curate this group show. Her gallery represents a roster of contemporary photographers (some of whose work, such as that of longtime New York mainstay Marcia Resnick, is also included in the current show), and many of the gallery's recent exhibitions have been solo shows, focusing on the works of these and other more modern artists. Bell had been waiting for an opportunity to put these antique pieces on display; as her collection grew to include more photographs of women and spaces, she ultimately conceived the idea of assembling multi-era works around a visual theme.

"Woman in Landscape" boasts several photographs by Lee Friedlander and Diane Arbus, those two names synonymous with the sixties and the birth—or rebirth—of photography as a fine art form. Another pioneer in un-staged art photography, Henry Callahan, is also featured in the exhibit; Callahan has been featured alongside Friedlander before (<http://www.americansuburbx.com/2011/06/gowin-friedlander-callahan-model-wife.html>), as both were avid capturers—albeit with very different perspectives—of their significant others. Four excerpts from his "Eleanor" series, which depict his wife from afar—dwarfed by the towering Chicago skyline, or the expanse of a public park, or the sheer endlessness of Lake Michigan—are arranged in a square on one wall. From these pictures, we learn little of the intimacy that existed between Henry and Eleanor (though she was, without a doubt, his greatest muse (<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/02/arts/design/02call.html>)), and she appears as a transient mirage, floating between imposing surroundings. But Henry was always nearby to frame and document her, and his decision to place her, delicate and smiling, amid the grandeur of cities and nature speaks to the notion that the woman completes the landscape: a notion that aligns his work with the others on display.

Interestingly, though, it isn't the Friedlanders and Arbuses, or even the slightly enigmatic Callahan series, that steal the show; rather, it is the four minuscule 19th-century prints at one corner of the room and the gallery—which mark the starting point of the show's timeline—and, in stark visual juxtaposition, the large, high-contrast prints of Bill Silano's fashion features for *Harper's Bazaar*, which fall towards the end of this timeline.

MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

The nineteenth century photos seem straight out of a Brontë novel. Nevil Story-Maskelyne's "Portrait of two women, standing and seated" and Fenton's ethereal figure at Tintern Abbey both seem to be rather grandiose bourgeois portraits: both depict women dressed in white, in rather classic Romantic settings—the English garden in the former, and the Gothic abbey in the latter. Only Percy's "Gypsy Girls" shows its subjects actively interacting with the landscape—they are coarsely clad and carrying what appears to be hay or fire kindling. The final print, Nègre's "Woman at the seashore," offers a mystery to the viewer: the black-clad woman is walking far away from the camera, taken from a distance (comparable to that from which Callahan portrayed his wife) that makes her seem more *part* of the landscape than *within* it: she is unknown to us, but just as integral to the scene as the imposing rocks behind her or the ocean to her side.

Over a century passed between the creation of these photographs and Bill Silano's, and yet something of the grandeur of the female figure, and her integrality to the landscape is reflected in his, just as it is in the Nègre and Fenton prints in particular. Silano admitted, in one of his rare interviews with *Glass*, to finding inspiration in Surrealism, and this influence is especially evident in the two *Harper's Bazaar* prints (both originally included in the May 1968 issue) that depict models in what appears to be a desert or arid beach. One is a color print of a feline-esque model, elongated on the sand and dressed in a brightly patterned day robe; the evocation of the sphinx, a mythological figure referenced by Surrealists such as Dali (<https://www.dalipaintings.com/barcelona-sphinx.jsp>) and Leonor Fini (http://www.artnet.com/artists/leonor-fini/sphinx-ygIBtdrt56w_vC11ClSe2g2), has been a motif of dream-related art for centuries. The other *Harper's* photo, a black-and-white composition of a woman levitating above a similar stretch of sand, sporting a rather fantastic swimsuit with a futuristic plastic collar. She, too, resembles a mirage; a superhuman figure who could only appear to us in a dream.

It is indeed the sheer span of time that "Woman in Landscape" traverses that makes its message so potent. The woman—like the great solid architecture of the cathedrals that served as sets for Fenton, or the immovable expanse of Lake Michigan that did the same for Callahan—is immutable, and many a muse has dominated a landscape for time eternal in both painting and photography. Deborah Bell Photographs' exhibit comes at a time when women's agency has, by political upsets around the world, been unduly called into question; these works are a reassertion of the woman, and of her enduring place in art.



Courtesy Deborah Bell Photographs and Hans P. Kraus Jr. Inc.



Beyond Fashion: Woman In Landscape

June 12, 2017

Beyond Fashion: Woman In Landscape

Deborah Bell Photographs

16 East 71st Street, Suite 1D, 4th Floor, New York

May 11 - June 30, 2017



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Gösta Peterson, whose photographs appeared throughout the 1960s and 1970s in *Harper's Bazaar*, *Mademoiselle*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and other major publications, began as a fashion illustrator when he moved to New York from his native Sweden. Deborah Turbeville often cited Peterson as a mentor, and as a profound influence on her decision to become a photographer. Peterson's famous ads for Henri Bendel, the legendary New York boutique, appeared in *The New York Times* almost every Sunday from 1978 to 1986.



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Header: Deborah Turbeville. Non-silver or gelatin silver print, 1978. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

Picture #1: William Silano. Gelatin silver print, printed 1970s-80s. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

Picture #2: Deborah Turbeville. Two (2) non-silver or gelatin silver prints, 1977. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

Picture #3: William Silano. Chromogenic color print; printed 1990s. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

Picture #4: James Moore. Gelatin silver print; printed ca. 1990. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

Gallery hours for the exhibition are Tuesday-Saturday, 11-6. For further information please contact Leigh Blanchard at 212-249-9400 or by email at info@deborahbellphotographs.com.

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HOME MAGAZINE EVENT BEYOND FASHION: WOMAN IN LANDSCAPE

EVENT

Beyond Fashion: Woman in landscape

JUNE 5, 2017 - UNITED STATES , WRITTEN BY [L'OEIL DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE](#)



Deborah Turbeville, *Montova, Italy, 1977*



Roger Fenton

This exhibition currently on view at Deborah Bell Photographs in New York features a group of photographs based on a theme long favored in art: woman in the landscape. Inspired by the progressive photographs made by James Moore, Gösta Peterson, William Silano, and Deborah Turbeville for the editorial pages of leading fashion magazines in the 1960s and 1970s, it features prints by those photographers, and by Susan Paulsen and Marcia Resnick, and incorporates selected photographs by Robert Adams, Diane Arbus, Harry Callahan, Louis Faurer, and Lee Friedlander. Also included are 19th century prints by Roger Fenton, Charles Nègre, Sydney Richard Percy, and Nevil Story- Maskelyne, antecedents whose photographs, made more than a century earlier, convey early explorations of this traditional genre.

Beyond Fashion: Woman in landscape

May 11 – June 30, 2017

Deborah Bell Photographs

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Beyond Fashion: Woman in Landscape

11 May – 30 Jun 2017 at Deborah Bell Photographs in New York, United States



William Silano. for Harper's Bazaar, May 1968. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.

13 MAY 2017

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Opening hours

Tuesday to Saturday

From 11am to 6pm



Google



Captions

1. Deborah Turbeville. Montova, Italy, 1977. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.
2. Louis Faurer. New York City, 1970 & 1981. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs
3. Deborah Turbeville. Montova, Italy, 1978. Courtesy of Deborah Bell Photographs.