

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

ELLE

The famous photographer Peter Lindbergh came to Athens and spoke to Elle

The German artist replied to our questions on the occasion of his exhibition taking place at the Gagorian Gallery of Athens until the 23rd of April.

Fotini Simou



Φωτο: Nadja Auermann, Καλιφόρνια, 1996.

Which is your favorite city for shooting?

There are many different favorite cities that inspire me, from Paris and London to New York and Los Angeles. I also like the endless beaches in Deauville and Le Touquet in France or industrial settings that remind me of the city I grew up in Germany. I also love the unique light of Camargue, but also Mojave Desert in the USA among others.

What do you think about the way social media has formed our time? How do you feel about fashion instagrammers?

Instagram is the ultimate tool if you want to share work and ideas with everybody around the world. What is great about social media, is that there are no boundaries, no social restrictions,

anyone that has internet connection can participate. Whoever wants to can follow me @therealpeterlindbergh.

What do you prefer, a portrait or a fashion shooting?

I do not categorize photography as “fashion” or “portrait”. Whatever the assignment is, I try to capture the subjects’ soul in my images and show something that others - maybe even the models themselves- have not been able to express or see. Every picture with a human being in is a portrait for me.

What inspires you nowadays?

Everything...

Even though you are a famous fashion photographer, you do not attend fashion shows. Why?

If everybody goes to the same shows they will get inspired by the same things, like fashion designers, and shoot the images in the same way. There are so many things to be inspired by; the most important to me is human beings.

Your photographs have an Old World feeling, a vintage warmth. Why?

I do not follow trends – where the timeless look of the “Old World” is hot trend for some. Also, I do not use much of the retouching tool as it takes out all the natural beauty of people. I like reality and I try to photograph truthful portraits, so people can recognize themselves in the photographs. It is a bit awkward that magazines have to put the stars’ names next to their image because they might not be recognizable because of too much retouching.

You have said: “My images make people at last look at the woman herself. All the rest, fashion included, come afterwards.” Could be this an advice for new photographers?

The only advice I would give to young photographers is to never become assistants of their famous colleagues, because it will be difficult to find their own direction afterwards.

Also you have always portrayed femininity without using artifacts. How important do you consider it nowadays?

I don’t really like woman who live through their social status and wear too much makeup or too many jewelry. I like to see what people really look like. I am, inspired by strong and independent women. Anyone should have a voice and stand for their ideas, I do not believe that one person is more important than the other just because of their looks.

What is the photographers’ responsibility towards women?

To free them from the terror of youth and perfection. Wrinkles and imperfections are elements of beauty that make each woman unique.

You have shot many campaigns. In your opinion, can art and commerce really coexist?

Art and commerce have always linked, even back to Titian's time, artworks can be commercial too. It is interesting how people are labeled as artists and how many just create work in order to sell, without thinking that they should do what they truly love.

Are there any new upstart photographers that you like?

Many, but I am not good with names! I like the work of Tim Walker, his storytelling and cinematic feeling always attract my attention...

Is there a writer that you really love that has inspired you?

Peter Handke.