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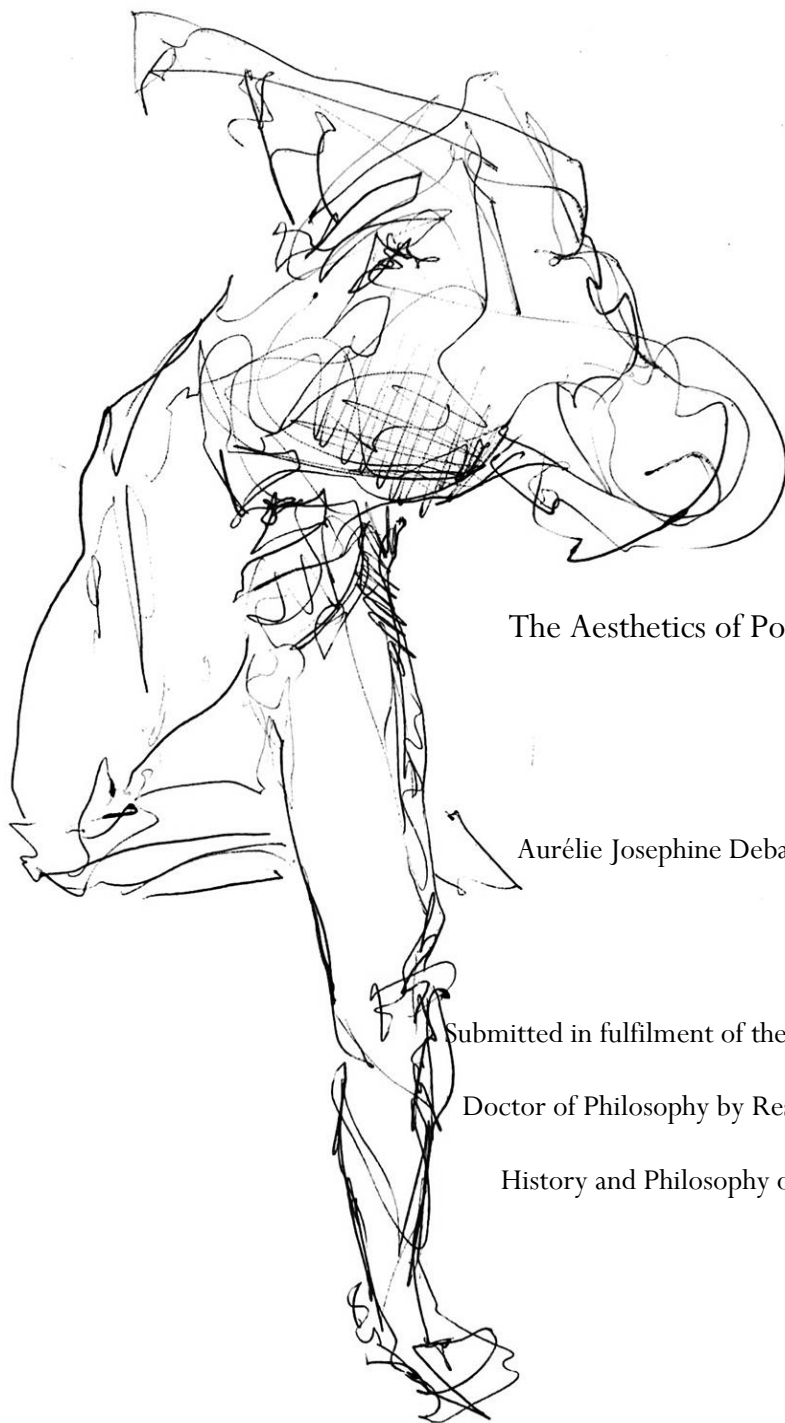
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The Aesthetics of Posing

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Submitted in fulfilment of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy by Research in
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Abstract

This thesis develops an aesthetics of posing, using a framework of analytic aesthetics supported by both contemporary and art historical examples. It responds to a distinct lack of literature in aesthetics dealing directly with posing as a concept and common tool used in art making. It moves beyond existing art historical accounts, which, understandably, tend to focus on the artworks and their content, or the limited archival information available about life models. While posing is treated within a context of photography, and subsequently touches on editorial and commercial modelling, this research does not aim to add to the sociological and anthropological scholarship on the fashion industry's economic and creative exploitation. Instead, it offers a philosophical account of the qualities that constitute posing, by analysing its function within traditional visual media, photography, and fashion runways. Models' experiences are increasingly (self-)reported, unveiling a precarious, at times very in-the-public-eye, position within the art sector and advertising industry. Understanding posing within this context of art making, in turn, ameliorates our aesthetic understanding of how modelling constitutes a skilled artistic practice. Posing can be understood as an artistic tool which the model expertly employs. This thesis traces how the model deeply influences art making, its resulting artworks, as well as their reception.

Cover Image:
Aurélie Debaene, *Sketch after Life Model on Zoom*, pen on paper, 2021.

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My fascination with posing first grew when I observed life models as an art student at the Sint-Lukas Kunsthumaniora in Ghent, Belgium. I continued to draw and think about models, fuelled by becoming a life model myself from 2012 onwards. *The Aesthetics of Posing* would not have been possible without the Vice-Chancellor's Research Scholarship awarded by the University of Kent, which proved to be an encouraging environment of academic exchange that welcomed my curiosity about the phenomenon of posing. I feel both immensely relieved and saddened to close these four years. This is a testimony to the great people I met.

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Introduction

I. Posing

We are surrounded by poses. In interactions at work, with strangers, with friends, on social media, and certainly more broadly present within our highly imaged-oriented society and forms of entertainment, we are continuously viewing, holding, and running into poses. Poses, then, are common and ubiquitous – they have been easily overlooked or taken for granted. This has remained the case when it concerns the use of poses in art, instead favouring notions of the artist as a genius, the famed artist in relation to a renowned muse, or historical accounts of localised practices that use models, for instance in mid-nineteenth century Paris. It is curious, then, that there has been no systematic scholarly research into the nature of poses, given how the arts, traditional and contemporary, do heavily rely on models and poses to create their pieces.

This thesis constitutes an aesthetics of posing, using a framework of analytic aesthetics supported by contemporary and art historical examples. It responds to a distinct lack of literature in philosophical aesthetics dealing directly with posing as a concept and common tool used in art making. The thesis moves beyond existing art historical accounts, which, understandably, tend to focus on the artworks and their content, or the limited archival information available about life models. While posing is treated within a context of photography, and subsequently touches on editorial and commercial modelling, this thesis also does not aim to add to the sociological and anthropological scholarship on the fashion industry's economic and creative exploitation. Instead, it offers a philosophical account of the qualities that constitute posing, by analysing its purpose within traditional visual media, photography, and fashion runways. A systemic philosophical account of posing is overdue, and imperative to illuminate how poses influence not only the active making of art, but also the resulting artworks, and the experience and reception of viewers who engage with such works.

The scholarly importance of this thesis, however, is not merely one of filling a theoretical lacuna. Models' (self-)reported experiences are increasingly pertinent in recent years, and unveil a precarious, at times highly publicised, position within the wider art sector and advertising industry. Understanding posing within this context of art making, in turn, ameliorates our aesthetic understanding of its effects on the parties involved. As a discipline which concerns itself with the arts, matters of beauty, and taste, aesthetics should pay attention to the role of models within art making.

Various protests in recent years have put models into the spotlight and demanded attention for the profession, suggesting economic reform and recognition for what models contribute creatively.¹ The root of the precarity lies in modelling ultimately not being considered skilled work. The loudest and most well-known voices are those of typically famed models within the fashion world, who begin to speak up about the sexual assault and precarious working conditions rife within the industry.² One such voice is supermodel Emily Ratajkowski, who details grappling with being assaulted, feeling exploited and musing on the distribution and ownership of her own images.³ Very recently, fashion institutes facilitate platforms to hold some of these conversations. One of those is a collaboration between *Harper's Bazaar* and *Model Alliance*, a New York collective of and for fashion models that, similarly to the smaller Parisian organisation, advises models on “fair treatment, equal opportunity, and sustainable practices.”⁴ In an uploaded 2017 *YouTube* video, ten known models detail their experiences of sexual assault in the industry.⁵ There exist many more like it on open platforms such as *YouTube*, hosted by magazines and organisations like *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Ted Talks*.

Lesser-known voices are those of many unknown fashion models who do not have a lucrative career, and a large body of life models who are altogether less visible within our society as it stands, and remain largely confined to a closed network of art practitioners and academies. The life model protests in Paris between 2008 and 2016 demanded improved job security and pay, and to be employed contractually in, for instance, the way stand-up comedians have been. Parisian models, for instance, received no sick pay due to the precarity of their (lack of) contracts. They also used to rely on a tipping system (*le cornet*) to make up for the low wages and precarity, which the Parisian council abolished in 2008.⁶ It is after this that the *Collectif Des Modèles d'Art de Paris*

¹ Wilson Tarbox, “Paris’ Art Models Protest for Job Security and Better Wages,” *Hyperallergic*, February 23 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://hyperallergic.com/277487/pariss-art-models-protest-for-job-security-and-better-wages/>.

² Isabel Cristo, “Fashion Week’s Labor Problem is Our Labor Problem,” *The New Republic*, September 11 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://newrepublic.com/article/155020/fashion-weeks-labor-problem-labor-problem>.

³ Ratajkowski, Emily. “Buying Myself Back: When does a model own her image?” *The Cut*, September 15 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.thecut.com/article/emily-ratajkowski-owning-my-image-essay.html>.

⁴ See <https://www.modelalliance.org/> for more resources.

⁵ Harper’s BAZAAR and The Model Alliance. “Models Share Stories of Sexual Assault in the Fashion Industry,” *YouTube*, uploaded December 19 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lP2lkxCmcE>.

⁶ Anne Crignon, “Poser nu est un métier. Et ils veulent le faire savoir”, *L’Obs – Culture*. March 4 2015. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.nouvelobs.com/culture/20150304.OBS3827/poser-nu-est-un-metier-et-ils-veulent-le-faire-savoir.html>.

was created, with its slogan “Modèles d’art: Poser c’est un métier!” (“Art models: Posing is a profession!” *translation mine*), and subsequently organised protests.⁷

It is worth noting the campaigning by Dominic Blake, who is a full-time life model and performance artist working in London, who has spoken out in recent years about the working conditions of life models. Blake did this via his own contacts and social media, and via a series of talks in 2019, two of which occurred at *Mall Galleries* and *The National Gallery* in London.⁸ He presents a curious case, by being the first model employed as regular staff by the *Royal Academy of Arts* (RA) in London, receiving a pass, contract, and consequently the same access as other staff members. This constitutes a great leap past the temporary one-off agreements typically reserved for models.

It crucially meant that, when the Covid-19 pandemic paralysed the United Kingdom in March 2020, the RA was able to furlough Blake like the other staff on its payroll.⁹ This presents an exceptional case, and the grand majority of models could not rely on furlough. That pandemic context resulted in a curious development, however, that rose out of necessity. Throughout the lockdown of society, which halted any semblance of the social and working life we lived before¹⁰, a multitude of models began to stream their own posing sessions after being rendered unable to work and due to the lack of contractual obligations not in a position to be furloughed. They created themes, focused on a selection of artworks or genres, and engaged with the notion of modelling for a two-dimensional digital image that attendees would receive, considering framing and perspective.¹¹ On private social media accounts, models have reported earning enormously more than they would if they were to work for an academy or drawing group. This is partly due to streaming which allows participants from across the globe to pay to attend. Models are reportedly earning sums like £100 per hour, versus the £12 per hour one

⁷ See the collective’s site, which lists their demands, contract recommendations, and advice in terms of injury and approaching employers: Accessed July 7 2021, <https://sites.google.com/site/collectifdesmodelesdartdeparis/home>.

⁸ Tim Jonze, ‘I love staring at one spot for six hours! Life models on the secrets of disrobing,’ *The Guardian*, August 14 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/aug/14/life-models-on-the-secrets-of-disrobing>.

⁹ Dominic Blake kindly shared this with me when we spoke by videocall at various points throughout 2020.

¹⁰ As I write this in early June 2021, the UK has eased some social distancing measures. However, many restrictions do remain, though it is uncertain to which degree the furloughing of workers will continue within the UK. Professional or social life are still not returned to normal, and people – when their jobs allow – work from home. Models are continuing to livestream at the present, though I have seen the careful beginnings of in-person modelling for the summer of 2021.

¹¹ Fra Breecher, “Working From Home Perspectives of a Life Model,” *The Everyday Magazine*, 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://theeverydaymagazine.co.uk/opinion/working-from-home-perspectives-of-a-life-model>.

can expect at a regular art school in London in 2021.¹² It remains to be seen to which extent models will continue to accept the precarious lack of contractual protections and liveable wages once the Covid-19 pandemic measures fully relax.

The Paris protests, intimate fashion model interviews, and campaigning by people like Blake predate the pandemic, however, and indicate that we may be nearing a point in time where the art world and art education institutes must reconsider how they treat and incorporate models. The existing pressure pre-pandemic, and the taste some models have received of much improved pay and conditions, could mean that the broad art sector will be required to rethink its precarious use of models, and to update their terms of work to acceptable contemporary conditions. This is echoed, too, in the increasing critical attention to narrow body standards and close connection to a plethora of health conditions and eating disorders models face, as well as the difficulty the industry has had incorporating a broader range of body sizes, people with disabilities, and also non-stereotypically Western looking features and ethnicities on the whole.¹³

Examining the nature of posing contributes to gaining an appropriate understanding of how models pose and work with various artistic media, which will add to existing discussions within aesthetics about various art forms such as drawing, painting, sculpting, and photography. It will also strengthen the argument for improved working conditions and insists on the recognition of modelling as a skilled profession which has creative merit.

II. Existing Scholarship

i. Art History and Visual Culture

This study is not the first to examine models. The largest existing body of work on art models can be found in art historical and wider visual culture scholarship, predominantly focusing on life models. These tend to explore

¹² The National Living Wage in the UK as of April 2021 is £8.91 per hour for workers of 23 years of age and over. See: <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>. It is worth considering that models typically do not receive contracts, and at best might expect to be hired for a series of classes which might last 2 to 4 hours per class. As such, the reality is that life models take on many odd jobs simultaneously, patching these together to create something resembling a full-time working week. Taking into account travel cost, the time lost travelling between home, academics and studios, and the fact that travel is often not reimbursed or only partially, models tend to work below the living wage and with constant uncertainty as to when and where the next job will happen.

¹³ France has been at the forefront of this, by passing a law in 2015 as an amendment to the Health minister's Health Bill (which came into effect in 2017), banning extremely thin models from fashion shows and rendering it illegal to promote images that 'glorify anorexia on the internet'. Furthermore, a Charter on Models' Wellbeing was informally agreed by various key fashion houses. See: s.n. "Kering and LVMH Draft Charter on Models' Wellbeing", *The Fashion Law*. 6th September 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.thefashionlaw.com/kering-and-lvmh-join-draft-charter-on-models-well-being/>.

the more renowned individuals who modelled for famous artists, and who were at times artists themselves, such as Victorine Meurent, Elizabeth Siddall, Dora Maar, Quentin Crisp, and George Dyer.¹⁴ One reason for this is that there are more documents available for these more well-known individuals, who constitute a fraction of the total number of models. Jill Berk Jiminez and Joanna Banham edited the first *Dictionary of Artist's Models* (2001), which lists over two-hundred models and their biographies, to the extent that they can be known. Most of these, however, are located within the Victorian era, and focus largely on female models, sustaining existing tropes and stereotypes related to models. Scholarship found that the dominant *académie* models were male models, rather than the nude woman one might imagine when thinking of artists' models in the nineteenth century. Female models within the nineteenth century were initially uncommon, their use and expansion of various 'types' growing throughout the century. Eventually, they overtook the genre of the nude, and only very gradually made their way from the private sphere of the home and private artist's studio, into a more public role as *académie* models.¹⁵

In the later decades of the twentieth century, an increasing interest in tracing the socio-economic circumstances of models resulted in a series of published writings. This research predominantly zooms in on the long nineteenth century in France and England, with Paris and London presenting understandable hotspots in a changing artistic landscape. Frances Borzello's *The Artist's Model* (1982) provided a much-needed scholarly approach to the progression of the life model's context both inside and outside the academies in France and England, from the eighteenth century to today. Borzello highlights attitudes to models, the tensions between their representation and socio-economic status, and importantly, why life models have become more of an afterthought in the later twentieth century art education and practice. Janet Hobhouse's *The Bride Stripped Bare* (1988) follows closely on Borzello's *The Artist's Model*. Hobhouse, however, examines a series of renowned male artists such as Renoir, Henry Moore, or Pablo Picasso, and the way they express erotic sensibilities in their works about women. In this manner, *The Bride Stripped Bare* does not manage to loosen itself from the male artist

¹⁴ See for instance works such as: Bullen, J. B. on renowned women like Elizabeth Siddal in *The Pre-Raphaelite Body: Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism* (1998); the autobiography by model Quentin Crisp, *The Naked Civil Servant* (1968); Mary Matthew Gedo, *Monet and His Muse: Camille Monet in the Artist's Life* (2010); Lois Oliver, *Bodies of Work: Models as Artists* (2001) which discusses renowned female models who were often also artists, in relation to the male artists they worked with, such as Elizabeth Siddal and Rossetti, Mary Cassatt and Degas, Dora Maar and Picasso, Saskia and Rembrandt, Suzanne Valadon and Renoir, Camille Claudel and Rodin, Lee Miller and Edward Steichen.

¹⁵ Susan Waller, *The Invention of the Model* (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006), 24-25

who creates a female nude which in turn is meant to seduce, and perpetuates those same eroticised dynamics. While some of those dynamics will have certainly existed between some artists and models, the model herself and nature of modelling tends to be lost by virtue of attending, instead, to the romanticised aspects of the artist-model relationship.

The nude itself is likely the main art historical area of research within which models are considered, and brought into scholarship by the mid-twentieth century via the seminal work by Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study of Ideal Art* (1956). While Clark's work was fundamental to understanding the nude, and the dichotomy, for instance, between the Naked and the Nude, and female versus male nudes, Clark has been greatly resisted, too. First by John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (1972) where Berger dives into the continuous self-monitoring and absorbed male gaze that women maintain towards themselves. Lynda Nead, however, argues in *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (1992), against the many assumptions Clark incorporates in his treatment of both male and female nude artworks. Nead offers a feminist reading which is highly critical of how Clark speaks of the nude's aesthetic achievements in opposition to the merely naked body, and implicitly echoes a mind versus body classified distinction.¹⁶ She is also critical of Berger for not resisting Clark enough, and still working within the same framework of naked versus nude, despite engaging in a critical account of the male gaze and presentation of nude women. Particularly, Berger presupposes private relationships within his discussion of the female nude, arguing that love transforms the nude into a naked woman.¹⁷ Nead also discusses the position of the life model within her eroticised mythology, which, she argues, reaffirms the male artist's authoritative foundation of artistic creation which the female model does not possess.¹⁸ Not long after Nead's book, the male nude began to be paid further critical attention to. It was treated, for instance, in Emmanuel Cooper's *Fully Exposed: The Male Nude in Photography* (1995) and shortly after also Abigail Solomon-Godeau's *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation* (1997).

More recent studies on life models continued the trend for localised historical studies. Some examples of these are *The Artist's Model: Its Role in British Art from Lely to Etty* by Ilaria Bignamini and Martin Postle, which examines that history of the British context of modelling and art academies. Susan Waller's *The Invention of the Model: Artists and Models in Paris, 1830-1870* (2006) accomplishes a similarly narrow study of art models within

¹⁶ Lynda Nead, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (Taylor & Francis, 1992), 14.

¹⁷ Nead, *The Female Nude*, 15.

¹⁸ Nead, *The Female Nude*, 49-50.

that rich mid-nineteenth century Parisian context. *Bodies of Art: French Literary Realism and the Artist's Model* (2001) by Marie Lathers traces the use of models in French nineteenth century literature, in conjunction with historical findings about types of models available at the time, and their interaction with class. Another British counterweight presents itself in *Model and Supermodel: The Artist's Model in British Art and Culture* (2006), edited by Jane Desmarais, Martin Postle, and Martin Vaughan. This selection of essays examines the artist and model myth, but also male models and more contemporary cases that move beyond the long nineteenth century. These studies are highly enriching about the contexts they discuss, and they do illuminate more, for instance, about the plight of working-class models, the overall relation of the professional art world and class, the stigma of prostitution for models, or indeed economic findings such as the academy system and precarity of model jobs.

ii. Social Sciences

Another key area within which models have been researched, is in the fields of fashion theory and (auto)ethnographic sociological research. This context is that of fashion models who work within the wider advertising industry, ranging from mass-commercial work to editorial pieces. Important scholars here are Joanne Entwistle, who wrote several seminal pieces such as *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory* (1990), *Body Dressing* (2001) which Entwistle edited with Elizabeth Wilson, and *The Aesthetic Economy of Fashion: Markets and Value in Clothing and Modelling* (2009). Throughout these works, Entwistle explores the relation between the body and its appearance in dress, Capitalism-driven precarious practices which models face, and the complexity of the market in relation to a kind of aesthetic market that profits from 'cultural' qualities.¹⁹ Entwistle also edited a recent series of essays with Elizabeth Wissinger, *Fashioning Models: Image, Text and Industry* (2012), which delves into the way in which fashion models engage with glamour, reality, and varying societal standards of beauty, attractiveness and gender. Wissinger wrote key works herself, for instance, *This Year's Model: Fashion, Media, and the Making of Glamour* (2015), within which she curiously does interview models to gain insight behind the scenes of the runway, and the manner in which models must manage their own bodies, and are indeed managed by bookers, agents and brands. An underexplored area, which Wissinger touched upon, is race within the industry, in *Managing the Semiotics of Skin Tone: Race and Aesthetic Labor in the Fashion Modeling*

¹⁹ Joanne Entwistle, *The Aesthetic Economy of Fashion: Markets and Value in Clothing and Modelling* (Oxford: Berg, 2009), 23.

Industry (2011), within which she sketches, with the use of quantitative data, a stark image of the reality of how exclusive the fashion industry has remained, and how recent many of its changes are in terms of including a broader representation of models of ethnic minorities.

Ashley Mears must also be mentioned in this list, particularly given her *Pricing Beauty: The Making of a Fashion Model* (2011), within which she details her ethnographic study with a particular agency, where she interviewed a range of models, male and female, as well as bookers involved in organising models and their jobs. These studies are heavily tied to the fashion industry, and as mentioned before, are heavily embedded within a critique of the exploitative economic system within which these processes work, and within which models encounter a great number of harmful situations, ranging from assault to a deteriorating health in an industry that is still enormously focused on a narrow set of body ideals, and what Mears calls a magical ‘look’ which models seemingly either have, or do not have.²⁰ A sociological outlier is the series of interviews conducted by Sarah Phillips in 2006. *Modeling Life: Art Models Speak about Nudity, Sexuality, and the Creative Process* was researched in Portland, Oregon, in the mid-nineties. This work stands out because she focused on life models, rather than fashion models, and predominantly brings out the models’ own experiences and thoughts on some of the dynamics within the life class or one-to-one model sessions.

There exist a small number of autoethnographic publications, like Patricia Soley-Beltran’s *Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity* (2006) and Alessandra Bruni Lopez y Rojo’s *Modeling as an Older Woman: Exploitation or Subversion?* (2015). Both scholars draw on their own experiences as a fashion model and older model respectively, which they take as the impetus to explore the interrelation between modelling, the representation of beauty ideals or even fantasy, and the realities of the industry. One can also find non-academic autobiographies, such as *The Naked Civil Servant* by Quentin Crisp (1968), and recently *The Naked Muse* by Kelley Swain (2016), in which both authors detail their experiences as life models. Cindy Crawford (*Becoming*, 2015), Kate Moss (*Kate*, 1997; *Kate: The Kate Moss Book*, 2012), and Alek Wek (*Sudanese Refugee to International Supermodel*, 2008) are some examples of supermodels who offer a personal account of their backgrounds, success as models, the occasional beauty tip, and unpublished photographs within their autobiographies. They are, however, written rather sensationally and intended to excite the reader.

²⁰ Ashley Mears, *Pricing Beauty: The Making of a Fashion Model* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 88.

Curiously missing in many of these accounts, of which the academic sources typically delve into the economic and sociological processes that surround modelling, and the more sensationalist autobiographies tend to play into thrilling model myths to engage the reader, is a treatment of the artistic medium and subsequent artworks that the models work towards.

iii. Philosophical Aesthetics

While no recent published work in philosophical aesthetics relates directly to models in their own right, in recent years there *has* been an increasing interest in the body in various areas of research. One influential scholar, who at times straddles the boundaries of sociology and philosophy, is Irving Goffman, whose *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) became a highly significant work that in many ways deals with everyday roles and interactions between people, among which poses can be counted. This work is concerned with a predominantly sociological approach to the day-to-day living of people, leaving much room for a focused philosophical exploration of posing within the arts. It is several decades later, when Richard Shusterman brought a holistic view of the body and embodied practices into the focus of philosophy, founding the *somaesthetics* movement in the mid-nineties. Particularly in his research on “Photography as a Performative Process” (2012), Shusterman does touch on his own proprioceptive experiences while posing and notions of self-presentation in relation to the camera, by drawing on his artistic collaboration with photographer Yann Toma. While certainly pointing to the act of posing, this too offers no systematic approach to posing, but instead remains focused on the performative qualities of photography.

In recent years, research into the body has become more popularised within aesthetics, even if not directly focused on modelling. Peg Zeglin Brand edited a collection of essays, *Beauty Unlimited* (2013), within which a broad range of scholars shared their insights on beauty, often in relation to the body by virtue of speaking about ethnic bodies and beauty, the nude, performance, and in relation to the state. Shortly after this, Sherri Irvin’s edited collection *Body Aesthetics* (2016) presented a range of essays focused precisely on the body’s representation, its appearance, the body in relation to performance, and also various forms of practice. The closest relation to posing can be found in the essay by Anne Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?” (2012), where she applies Martha Nussbaum’s modes of objectification to a pictorial objectification engendered by artworks. This objectifying effect is often achieved by the *poses* within which the figures are represented.

The body has been looked at more closely in recent philosophy on the nature of expert movement and its connection to skill and this immersive ‘flow’ body experts report feeling: see for instance the work by David Velleman (“The Way of Wanton”, 2008) and Barbara Montero’s *Thought in Action: Expertise and the Conscious Mind* (2016). Other philosophical areas in which the body is of great interest is in Performance Theory, and of course in the philosophy of acting, theatre and dance. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone has worked on “Thinking in Movement” (1981), in which she relates a philosophy of knowing through moving to an analysis of dance and improvisation. More recently, she published *The Corporeal Turn: An Interdisciplinary Reader* (2009), which traces the growing interest in the body within philosophy and linked disciplines. Sondra Fraleigh published *Dance and the Lived Body* (1987), within which she proposes an aesthetics of dance as an art form by focusing on the experience of dancing framed in an existential and phenomenological framework. Others have also argued for various performing arts to be understood as artistic events and objects in their own right. For instance, Erika Fischer-Lichte’s *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (2008) makes the case for performance, and the body which is central in this, as an art event. She also explores the concept of performativity in relation to experimental case studies across theatre and performance art. James Hamilton published on *The Art of Theater* (2007) and “Acting” (2013), arguing for theatre as an art form, and offering a philosophical account of acting. More recently, Wesley D. Cray has published on “Transparent and Opaque Performance Personas” (2019), and the kind of role they play in the making and reception of a variety of performances. David Davies must also be mentioned, for his arguments (almost in reverse, as it were) towards the consideration of artworks as, in fact, processes or performances instead of art products, in *Art as Performance* (2003).

Parallel to this increased attention for the body and performance is an intensifying interest in the genre of portraiture within aesthetics. This has necessarily meant that scholars have taken opportunities to consider not only the nature of portraiture, but indeed also the role of the sitter and subsequent posing within portraiture. Sitting on the cusp of art history and theory is *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* by Harry Berger Jr. (2002). While providing a lot of cultural and historical background to the portraits, Berger Jr. also makes the point that the portraits are not merely likenesses of people, but of their active sitting. In other words, he pays attention to the sitter’s act of posing and influence on her own (self-)portrayal. Portraiture is a promising genre where research into the pose is concerned, though it presents only one, special, context within which posing occurs. Paolo Spinicci argued for the nature of portrait sitting as being necessarily removed from activity

and frozen in “Portraits: Some Phenomenological Remarks” (2009), which begins to come closer to an aesthetic account of posing. Important recent scholarship here is that of Cynthia Freeland, *Portraits in Painting and Photography* (2007) and *Portraits and Persons* (2010), within which she works through the various qualities of portraiture, and what even makes a portrait in the first place. Freeland considers the role of the sitter, what it is about the sitter that is relevant to the portrait, as well as any differences across artistic media. Within this scholarship, part of the debate has been whether portraiture necessarily requires posing, something which Hans Maes, for instance, does not think is a necessary condition in *What is a Portrait?* (2015). His edited collection of essays *Portraits & Philosophy* (2019) engages further with portraiture, and includes more work on posing, for instance, in the essays by Diarmuid Costello and Paul Guyer. Costello works through self-presentation and shame in “Without Shame? Lee Friedlander’s Late Self-Portraits” and discusses how Friedlander creates an ambivalent appearance in front of his own camera. In Guyer’s “Portraits, Persons, and Poses,” Guyer argues that the portrait pose is the location of a struggle between the desires of both artist and sitter over how the portrait should be seen, as well as their anticipation of a later audience.

III. Contributions to the Field

Having highlighted the typical focus of these existing studies which directly, or indirectly, relate to modelling and the act of posing, it is then worth indicating where *The Aesthetics of Posing* fits. This thesis does not endeavour to achieve a comprehensive historical account of contemporary models, whether life models or photographic models. Instead, its mode of inquiry is philosophical in nature. While art historical and ethnographic studies have proven useful to gather archival evidence and oral testimony by models respectively, I have shown that there has been no comprehensive study of the nature of posing itself. Certainly, a comprehensive account is missing which considers the nature of posing, rather than its history, in relation to *both* life and photographic models. Elizabeth Hollander attempted this in *Subject Matter: Models for Different Media* (1991). Hollander narrates her own experience as a life model, but does not systematise her approach to posing in terms of identifying its key qualities. While Hollander does argue for the model as “both the author and occupant of her pose”²¹, she does not take this far enough and remains stuck in self-expression – a view which I will oppose throughout this

²¹ Elizabeth Hollander, “Subject Matter: Models for Different Media,” *Representations*, No. 36 (1991): 134.

thesis, in favour of accommodating for highly performative posing that moves past self-expression. Furthermore, Hollander heavily favours the traditional arts over photography, claiming that photography reduces a model to two-dimensionality, forces a lack of control, and has no interest in embodied space.²² In the interest of the nature of posing, firstly, and to argue for the model as a creative collaborator in the right circumstances, secondly, this art philosophical approach endeavours to lay bare the similarities and differences of modelling in relation to various media and contexts which maintain particular strengths.

Art historical accounts are confined to the period and people they examine, and understandably cannot move beyond available archival evidence. They also tend to focus on more renowned individuals, perhaps partially because more material is available about them. The recent social sciences studies typically focus on a capitalist reading that challenges the precarious nature of fashion modelling and the inner workings of *cultural capital*, for instance in *Pricing Beauty* by Ashley Mears (2011). The other side is that they interview models without prioritising the artistic medium and artworks models collaborate on. Their focus, understandably, is the social conceptions and roles that feed into a highly exploitative economic system. Missing in these accounts is an art philosophical investigation into the role of posing within art making, across the visual arts, which comprises drawing, painting, sculpting, photography, and fashion runways. Curiously, this kind of investigation is missing within the field of aesthetics, too. While aesthetics has concerned itself with matters of beauty, taste, the human body, perception, distinctive art media and their artworks' qualities, as well as increasingly an interest in the genre of portraiture and its sitters, which begins to come close; there exists no art philosophical account of posing. That is especially surprising given how omnipresent modelling is across art media and genres. The research into posing necessarily touches upon many existing debates within aesthetics, and is in this sense highly relevant in virtue of its contributions to these various topics.

This thesis, then, proposes an aesthetics of posing intended to illuminate the pose as an artistic tool. It draws out its merits in relation to the medium it works with and the artwork it helps to produce. This investigation traces the way modelling interacts with those directly present in art making, and the later viewers of the resulting artworks. Furthermore, this thesis illuminates the various types of poses that exist, the abilities required for the model to become proficient at modelling, and the salient aesthetic qualities one can find in

²² Hollander, "Subject Matter: Models for Different Media," 141.

modelling. This academic journey concludes by proposing that modelling should be recognised as a hybrid art form, and should therefore be appreciated differently than it has been. While it often works within a supporting capacity for other artists and their media, I will nonetheless make the case that the artistic expertise and distinct abilities of models must be recognised, with particular attention to situations within which models are rather like independent creatives. Doing so not only enriches our understanding of a model's work, but greatly improves our understanding of those artworks and artistic processes to which models contribute. Recognising the importance of posing, and the many aesthetic, art historical, and social areas of interest this study feeds into, serves to demonstrate the breadth of the topic, and the many possibilities that are left to pursue both within the professional art sector, as well as within academia.

Having highlighted the contributions I endeavour to make, I wish to pause for clarity's sake at the approach taken to theories and topics before I set out the chapter summary. A reader first needs to be conscious of the fact that many of my initial thoughts about modelling arose from the life drawing I did as a fine art student and the work I have done as a life model. I first started modelling at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent (Belgium) in 2012, constituting nine years of work to this day – though with less work conducted during the pandemic. I modelled for a range of art academies, drawing groups and classes, as well as privately for professional artists. When I first started modelling I accepted photography jobs. I eventually found that I preferred life modelling, puzzled about my own feelings with regards to the differences between working for traditional artistic media versus photography. The worries that fed into my inclination towards life modelling were largely privacy-based, rather than medium-based, and most issues related to the difficulty I experienced in pinpointing legitimate photographers with an interest in and respect for the body, versus people with a camera who were rather interested in taking an active part in objectification and transgressing boundaries. (Though I will explore throughout this thesis how a photographer can indeed be both legitimate and objectifying).

My main musings as a model grew in connection to how and why my performance as a model carried the life class or 'posing session', my interactions with art students and artists, how I related to the many images made of myself, and trying to understand the circumstances of those situations that presented more uncomfortable experiences of objectification. These notions spurred on my interest in the role and activities of models within art making from a philosophical perspective, growing out of two earlier investigations in my art historical undergraduate dissertation at Ghent University (2015) and my philosophical MA dissertation at the

University of Kent (2016).²³ Throughout this doctoral thesis, particularly in the areas where I explore the model's expertise and physical know-how, I often start with an assumption that is rooted in my own practice as a model, which I then seek to investigate with the help of a range of areas in philosophical aesthetics, for instance philosophy of dance, or philosophy more broadly such as philosophy of action. One of the challenges of this thesis, and the lacuna within philosophical aesthetics, has been to narrow down the selection of topics to create a robust art philosophical framework for posing. Beyond investigating foundational questions such as "what is a pose?", topics often focus on themes that comprise more negative, uncomfortable experiences and feelings. This might seem odd given the ultimately positive account of modelling constructed throughout this thesis.

The purpose of exploring uncomfortable aspects is to dispel some of the preconceptions and worries one might encounter around posing, while simultaneously clarifying its qualities. Across the seven chapters are discussions of awkwardness, unwillingness to pose, shame, voyeurism and objectification, which intersect at various points. Building on these insights reveals something about the pose itself, how it interacts with self-presentation, the process of image making and the resulting image. Furthermore, it creates an understanding of how viewers might receive poses and their depictions, and it certainly lays bare the many areas of philosophy that a critical investigation of posing touches on. By assessing these negative aspects, the skill and creativity models possess can be illuminated starkly – even admired, in contrast. My hope is to show the richness and possibilities of posing as an area of research, and to demonstrate why aesthetics, and philosophy broadly, ought to be interested.

i. Chapter Summary

Chapter one, 'A Typology of Poses' explores the ontological question of 'What is a pose?'. I characterise the pose as a particular physical configuration that one maintains to be registered. Here, I distinguish between public and artistic poses. Public poses are all those poses maintained within a non-art making setting, as we go by our everyday lives. Artistic poses are self-explanatory, namely those poses which occur within contexts of art

²³ Undergraduate dissertation at Ghent University was supervised by Prof. Marjan Sterckx, tr. "Female models at the Ghent academy: from its early start in the 19th century to snapshots in class", originally: "*Vrouwelijke modellen aan de Gentse academie: van het prille begin in de 19de eeuw tot kiekjes in de les*", (2015). Master dissertation at the University of Kent was supervised by Dr. Jonathan Friday, "Fleshing out the Pose: an investigation of the art model's collaborative and performative significance within professional artistic creation" (2016).

making. Secondly, I then touch upon three key contexts. These constitute the situation of the life model, the photographic model, and the portrait sitter, the last of which entails a special case. Importantly, throughout these contexts I introduce limit cases of posing that challenge the concept. One such limit is that of the pose in its most diminished and outward forms. Both the highly diminished and highly performed pose risk no longer being perceived as a pose. For instance, because the posing is so diminished that its subject is rather unstructured, or, the pose is highly performed by say a supermodel who is an expert, resulting in her highly mannerist poses being understood as her behaving ‘naturally’. Third, I further delve into my characterisation of poses. I do so by arguing for poses as highly active and dynamic, as opposed to still or removed from daily activities (Spinicci 2009). Finally, I finish by introducing a typology of poses which can occur throughout the previously discussed contexts. These are the guided, self-improvised, and collaborative poses, founded in the model’s varying degrees of skill and knowledge states (Stanley and Williamson 2017). Within these types of poses, one can find highly performative variants that I term ‘mannerist’. The aim of this first chapter is to set the table for the coming chapters that build on this notion of posing with its typology, to illuminate the implications for the model herself, those further involved in the art making process, and any resulting artworks and their viewers.

Following from this typology, chapter two: ‘Understanding Posing as a Skill’ pinpoints why some poses are aesthetically more significant by identifying the abilities that contribute to rendering successful poses. I first touch on mind-body dualism and its rejection, particularly in performance and dance (Fraleigh 1987; Sheets-Johnstone 1981; Shusterman 2008). This then feeds into the discussion of expert movement, spontaneity, and bodily immersion (Montero 2016; Davies 2011). The second section of this chapter connects the idea of the model as a body expert to creativity and skill (Gaut 2009, 2018), and imagination and action (Van Leeuwen 2016). This, to argue for the model as a *creative* agent who maintains particular abilities that can be learnt and improved. Her expertise, then, helps to configure relevant poses in the context of the creative work she is doing. I conclude by applying the case for ‘effortlessness’ as a marker of success and skill to the situation of models (Montero 2016). This is further exemplified in a brief appendix, where I point towards a special case study in relation to effortlessness, about photogenic qualities and the enhancement of the photographic subject.

Missing so far is an analysis of attitudes towards posing, and the artwork that it appears in. I will conduct this across chapters three and four to give ample attention to its breadth, starting with ‘(Self-)Presentation and the Unwilling Subject’ in chapter three. To create an idea of what it is the model expresses, and how this may

be perceived, I first distinguish between ‘presentational’ and ‘performative’ posing. These are based on the performance of ‘self’ or ‘other’ that the model engages in. Performative posing is less intimately involved with the self, and feeds into what I have called the ‘mannerist’ modifier of the typology of poses introduced in chapter one. I further highlight differences between what I consider ‘posing’ and ‘modelling’, posing being more akin to the posing a portrait sitter does, constituting posing as an activity broadly which can also occur outside of art making (while, of course, the model does *pose*) – this is typically more related to presentational posing of the self. Conversely, there is also ‘modelling’ which comprises the profession itself and will rather be a performative type of posing. I employ Gillian Wearing’s *Self-Portrait as My Sister Jane* (2003) to illustrate this point. I introduce the notions of ‘immediate’ reception and ‘reflective’ reception. The immediate reception of the pose which occurs as it is manifested in the studio offers the chance for feedback and alteration, by virtue of being present with the posing model. The reflective reception of the image comes after a cognitive process has taken place, rendering one in a position to regard and judge the artwork, but also the pose that is visible within the artwork. Importantly, I identify a feedback loop which occurs, first and foremost, between artist and model as they experiment in the studio, but also between their active art making and the artwork’s viewers. The anticipated and past reaction of viewers in this sense influences what occurs within the studio as artist and model formulate a response. Case studies discussed here are *Portraits* by Joachim Müller-Ruchholtz (2016-2018), and Juergen Teller’s photographs of Jonathan Majors (2021). A larger study follows from this, looking into embarrassment and awkwardness (Purshouse 2001). Importantly, how awkwardness functions in posing and pictures to continue to flesh out the tension between ‘self’ and ‘other’, and the reception of such artworks. The cases discussed here are a selection of 1970s studio photographs by Van Mechelen, the portrait of Maerten Soolmans by Rembrandt (1634), and Ed Milliband’s bacon sandwich paparazzo pictures by Jeremy Selwyn (2014). Rising from awkwardness as a special, though illuminating area, I venture to the idea of the unwilling photographic subject, and the discomfort Barthes has described in *Camera Lucida* (1981). The unwilling photographic subject helps to tease out what it is people feel hesitant about when it comes to posing themselves, viewing pictures of themselves, and ultimately begins to touch on what they might hesitate about when viewing images of others. I conclude with some considerations of portraiture (Freeland 2007) in relation to unwilling subjects and the interpersonal difficulties of portraiture.

The reception analysis continues with an investigation into attitudes towards authenticity in portraiture in chapter four: 'Authenticity and Posing in Portraiture'. I examine in-depth how the portrait itself can still be considered an authentic portrayal of its sitter, knowing that the sitter has posed for it. It often remains unclear whether a portrait shows the sitter in a way that expresses who they are, which features of a person can even plausibly be represented and viewed to begin with, or whether it is rather a performance of 'other'. The worry about poses is that they are likely to deceive or be artificial (Shusterman 2012). I argue against this assumption by introducing the thought that posing constitutes an artistic tool which can be used to enhance authenticity, or indeed to show something wholly different from the private person. To do so, I delve into the differences between painted and photographed portraits, the function of portraits, and how posing crucially interplays with its qualities (Freeland 2007, 2010). This is followed by a discussion of different views on what constitutes the self. Instead of committing to any one of these, I apply Bernard Williams' notion of truthfulness as a virtue and attitude to posing and art making, taking this attitude as something which carries over into the picture (Williams 2002). The application of truthfulness is predominantly argued via two case studies: Joe Klamar's *Olympic Portraits* (2012) and Annie Kevans' self-proclaimed 'anti-portraits', of which *Coco Chanel* (2010) from her *Collaborators* series is examined.

Chapter five on 'Nudity, Shame, and Moral Considerations for Posing' is the first of two chapters that deal with ethical challenges to posing. Before getting to chapter six, which investigates the connection between posing and objectification, chapter five starts by tracing the relation of the body to nudity and shame (Danto 1998; Williams 1993). Nudity is central both within the artworks we engage with, as well as the practice that helps create them. A significant portion of posing consists of nude modelling, and this comes with its own difficulties. I first illuminate the contexts of 'fine art' and 'commercial' modelling to improve the discussions surrounding nudity, shame, and work precarity within these different environments (Entwistle 2009). I then introduce some key discussions with regards to Western conceptions of nudity in art, and touch upon the conceptions of 'naked' versus 'nude' in particular (Danto 1998; Clark 1960; Nead 1992; Eaton 2012). Modelling holds a complex position within these discussions in relation to gender (Pointon 1990). As such, I make use of the life model interviews conducted by Sarah Phillips in 2006 to relate models' own thinking to those concepts. I also pause with the male nude, its relation to masculinity, class, and of course the female nude (Callen 2003; Tosh 1999). The difficulties surrounding the male and female nude then give rise to the discussion

of shame. I proceed by illuminating bodily functions in relation to shame and modelling. This discussion about body shame in particular is focused on both fine art and commercial modelling, and the difference between the private and public presentation of bodies (Entwistle 2004; Dolezal 2014; Sherri 2017). Having discussed gender, I also turn to race and widespread attitudes towards minorities and their bodies which enter modelling, particularly within the commercial industry (Wissinger 2012). This chapter concludes by drawing out implications of sexualisation associated with shame and in the context of nude modelling (Danto 1998; Williams 1993).

This leads to the concerns of chapter six, which trace the deep entanglement of objectification with posing. I first situate objectification within various accounts and commit to a cluster-account that does not only view objectification within a context of sexualisation (Langton 2006; Nussbaum 1999, Stock 2018). While many forms of objectification are morally objectionable, I make the case that modelling is inescapably objectifying – but that it can do so in a differently qualified form, which I coin ‘aesthetic’ objectification, as distinct from ‘mere’ objectification. This need not be objectionable and can instead become an artistic aid in the right context. The chapter then reviews Martha Nussbaum and Rae Langton’s modes of objectification in light of modelling, in both objectionable and unobjectionable ways. The third section deals with pictorial objectification, and whether modelling can subvert those harmful effects. This section discusses the categories by Anne Eaton as applied to the genre of the female nude, here related to modelling (Eaton 2012). I make use of various case studies to argue for morally good, harmful, or neutral objectifying effects within both artworks and the art making as it occurs in the studio. This chapter argues for ‘aesthetic’ objectification as a helpful tool within art making, and for the capacity of poses to subvert harmful objectifying mechanisms both in terms of the treatment of a person, the model, as well as subverting harmful pictorial mechanisms within the images. Not all modes of objectification can be neutralised, and should not be excused, but what this chapter aims to demonstrate is the richness of modelling and its influence both internal and external to the studio when it concerns the objectification of bodies. This chapter includes a broad variety of discussed artworks, some central ones being: Souvid Datta’s photojournalist image of a child prostitute (2015), *Self-Portrait with Wife and Models* by Helmut Newton (1981), the perfume advertisement created for KENZO World by Spike Jonze with Margaret Qualley (2016).

The final chapter seven: ‘The Aesthetic Value of Modelling’ constructs an account of modelling as a creative practice and source of aesthetic appreciation. To achieve this, I propose that while models can work within a supportive practice to other art forms, modelling itself should be understood as a hybrid art form. (Levinson 1984) I argue that it shares qualities with performance (Davies 2004), theatre (Hamilton 2010; Stern 2014) and follows recent findings on audience presentation and reception (Spaid 2019). I further trace the way in which modelling relates to style and improvisation (Bresnahan 2015; Sirridge and Armelagos 1977). I frame the manner within which models’ poses beg to be captured within a discussion of the *picturesque* and *sculpturesque*, further exemplifying its hybrid art status with an example of Erwin Wurm’s *One Minute Sculptures* (1997). The second section, then, brings these findings related to its art status and qualities within aesthetic appreciation. Not merely appreciating the poses we see in artworks, or those the model performs in-person, but also recognising that the model can engage within an aesthetic appreciation of her posing *while she poses*. The complex relationship between the interplay of creative and responsive aesthetic appreciation both within the act of posing and upon witnessing the represented pose is detailed in my application of *twofoldness* (Wollheim 1998; Nanay 2005). This is followed by a discussion of kinesthesia and its crucial role in the multi-modal experience and self-reflection that informs modelling (Boucher 2004). The last section investigates the performativity of modelling, first by exploring the model’s representation and this relation to her performance of self. Here I object to Kendall Walton’s thoughts on representation, matching, and the subject of an artwork (Walton 1990). Instead, I make the case that while models may represent a fiction, and that this fiction is the subject of the artwork, the model creates the framework via which this fiction is made – her expertise, appearance, and creative input matter greatly. I conclude, then, by comparing models to performance personas (Cray 2019) in order to elucidate why it matters who poses for an artwork, and highlight their contribution to the understanding of artworks. This is exemplified by the work of Francesca Woodman, Sasha O, and the recent developments in identifying figures and changing our engagement with the artworks they appear in, such as the exhibition *Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today* in The Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University (October 2018 – February 2019), and at Musée d’Orsay in Paris (March – July 2019), as well as Amsterdam’s Rijksmuseum giving a new title to *Isabella* by Simon Maris (1906), following the recent discovery of her identity.

It is clear from the summaries that I will not offer an ethnographic account, since the aim is to construct a philosophical framework for posing within a context of art making. The thesis also encounters some limits and clarifications that must be made before starting the first chapter.

First and foremost, throughout the thesis I refer to all examples as ‘she’, which is common philosophical practice. I make this point explicitly, however, because much of the scholarship on models does maintain a distinction between the artist as a male and the model as a female. I will refer to all hypothetical artists and models as she, except in those cases where the context or case study requires a male pronoun.

Furthermore, I do not study the dynamics of race within the various contexts of modelling. While race is briefly touched upon in chapter five, this remains limited and is an area which requires further in-depth research. The reason for this is that the aim was to focus on the nature of posing itself, which remains the same regardless of race; I will characterise the pose in chapter one as an intentional bodily configuration that one maintains with the aim of being registered. Any differences across race, and gender, for that matter, will be found in the *treatment* of models and their representations, which becomes a different area of study altogether that warrants its own free-standing research.

I have included more on gender across chapters five and six, where I treat nudity and objectification respectively. Due to the nature of the naked versus the nude, and the often gendered, sexualised modes of objectifying a person and mythologising the model, I have necessarily spent more time delving into gender here – but have kept this limited, too. Finally, this thesis is intended as a fundamental blueprint about the aesthetic nature of modelling, one upon which various intersections can be built.

Chapter 1: A Typology of Poses

The pose is ever-present in many forms, from daily self-presentation to functioning as a strategic creative tool in the making of art. Many classical postures have inspired Western art, such as the Venus Pudica, Apollo Belvedere, and Laocoon. Analyses of these persisted within the territory of iconography typically concerned with the stylistic construction of the artwork, or more recently, art historical approaches to the use of models. They focus on either the societal dynamics surrounding art making, like the working relationship between artists and life models, or on the posing effect visible in the subsequent artwork rather than the act of posing itself. Consequently, such research remains bound to archival and biographical knowledge. Lacking in this narrative is a philosophical examination of the pose itself as an active, corporeal event. The formulation of an aesthetics of posing strives to lay bare its process and identifies new questions about the pose in relation to the body at the centre of art *praxis*.

This first chapter is concerned with working towards a substantial characterisation of the phenomenon of posing. The predominant focus of this thesis centres on the use of poses in the visual arts; looking at drawing, painting, sculpture, and photography will offer a comprehensive overview of the artistic pose. While this thesis will not provide an exact definition, it aims to create an appreciation of key qualities that contribute to posing and its machinations within the artistic process. Partly because poses are a common thing that do not merely exist within art making, I refrain from defining a concept that is too open and would include all forms without efficiently differentiating between their different contexts. It is for this reason that, in order to achieve a substantial characterisation, other forms of poses must first be distinguished from those poses typically present in art making. How does an artistic pose differ from one that a person maintains in her day-to-day life? Do they focus on different qualities and effects, or are they different purely due to the nature of their context?

After establishing the limits of the phenomenon, I introduce a characterisation of how I understand posing. Lastly, I introduce three categories of posing in art: the guided pose, the self-improvised pose, and the collaborative pose. A 'mannerist' qualifier can be applied to these three cases, when they display great artifice. The goal is not to expand a theory of posing into lengthily documented philosophies of theatre or dance, but to shape an appreciation and understanding of the pose via an art philosophical lens that is supported by case studies.

1.1 Key Contexts and Features

The first step to contemplate the ontology of posing is to take a closer look at the contexts in which posing occurs, to demonstrate that it constitutes a broad spectrum not purely confined to the art world. There is usually at least a minimal amount of posing present when we go about our daily business, considering, for instance, the adolescent who poses for a selfie in front of her mirror, to the manner in which one professionally presents oneself at work.

Under the artistic poses I discern three situational distinctions drawn from the supporting function of the pose within art making: these are the poses from the life model, the photographic model, as well as the sitter of a portrait. The life model context is bound to traditional arts, in which she poses for life drawing, painting, and sculpting. The kinds of poses this brings forward will vary from the photographic medium, which requires the pose to be constructed and recorded differently in front of the camera's mechanical eye. I reserve a third category for portrait-sitting, since portraiture as an artistic genre maintains very particular modes of treating and representing its sitters, which in turn heavily influences the poses typically used within such a context. Therefore, portraiture stands out from the usual contexts of the life and photographic model, although, of course, both types of model can work in portraiture's unique posing environment.

Both artistic and public poses share that the subject is presenting herself. They differ in their intended goal: the artistic poses will be closely involved in art making, and so, as I will argue throughout this thesis, the pose takes on the function of an artistic tool. Comparatively, for instance, the adolescent's pose is entirely self-interested, concerned with largely unfiltered expressions of self.

Any 'filtering' that takes place reacts to conventional standards of appearance, but one can also find a degree of experimenting. By re-enacting these poses, they envision and embody themselves in particular appearances and roles. "To be a given kind of person, then, is not merely to possess the required attributes, but also to sustain the standards of conduct and appearance that one's social grouping attaches thereto."²⁴ In contrast to the adolescent's personal experimentation with her appearance, the photographic or life model plays with a keen awareness of what is required of her throughout the 'posing session', to reach the artistic goals of the job she is working on. I use the term 'posing session' to designate the collaboration between artist and model, in

²⁴ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1971), 81.

which it is the model's task to pose. Posing need not necessarily amount to an expression of self, though personal interests can be implemented. This also counts for the young professional, for instance, whose appearance is embedded in conventions that dictate how she should appear in the workplace. These conventions, in turn, can be subverted by breaking away and appearing very differently – choosing to make a visual statement that potentially expresses something personal. I consider such public poses 'conventional' poses. These are the appearances that we maintain in public, as we engage with others in accepted roles. There is no necessary intention to be artistic, though the way in which we present ourselves can be creative or border on what is commonly accepted within a particular social context.

The life model's context encompasses the poses in traditional visual media such as drawing, painting, and sculpture. Characteristic here is the wide array of temporal limits. In the case of sketching and drawing, these can allow fast poses that are held for one minute, five minutes, twenty minutes, but they can also last up to several hours in the case of sculpture and other time-intensive pieces. Temporal restrictions influence what is physically feasible to pose. A shorter time span allows more physically taxing posing, whereas longer poses need to be configured to remain manageable. The second feature to note is that the model is very much alive, and as such the pose cannot be continuously held in perfect form (in the way that a still-life arrangement is entirely still) to achieve a successful impression by the medium. What this means for the pose is that there may be more leeway in its configuration, because the model's representation relies on the artist's own hand.

The photographic model faces different medium constraints when she poses. The mechanism of the camera means that at this stage, it rapidly captures what is in front of it.²⁵ This constrains the pose more, in the sense that what is posed will be registered plainly. The pose you see is the pose that was held, it cannot fabricate an absent pose – or would need to resort to editing *post factum*. The emphasis on form need not necessarily restrain the photographic pose. A key feature to photographic poses, especially in the case of fashion models, is their speed of posing. The camera's own fast shutter speed allows the model to fire many poses, drawing out a great repertoire of movements in minutes. This also ensures that the pose can be modified instantly: by shifting slightly or turning angles, the model explores the most suitable ways to achieve what she needs to communicate. Despite

²⁵ Such mechanical speed was not always the case, and still need not be the case for photographers who work with long exposure times. Certainly in the early days of the medium, posing for a Daguerrotype, or other form of photograph, was rather close to posing for a painting in that it took a significant time of sitting exceptionally still to achieve a recognisable photograph.

the formal constraints of the photographic pose, it attains a high degree of freedom by transforming the pose through a series of movements. In front of the backdrop, the photographic model performs poses respond to, for instance, a moodboard, theme, or another cue of the photographer. Another case is the catwalk model. I consider her a photographic model as well, and extension of fashion models, because her function is to show off the form of the clothes as a living mannequin, but also to present these to an audience and cameras that register her for fashion magazines.

When the model walks down the runway, she maintains an intense, controlled movement to model the clothes and communicate the desired attributes of a brand. The fashion model, to an extent, disappears underneath the clothes she presents, which continues in the often rigorous body standards. Not only does it make it simpler to change the clothes if only the same sizes must ever be considered, but they undergo a process of interchangeability as mannequins themselves. Only a select few, supermodels like Claudia Schiffer, manage to retain personal celebrity due to their iconic features and capability. Schiffer is not interchangeable for other mannequins, and does not disappear in the clothes – she wears the clothes, and poses recognisably as herself. The catwalk transforms the photographic model's poses into a dynamic configuration of formal features of clothing and body, communicated by the body as an instrument within a designated context of fashion.

The artistic medium is less important in dictating the key features of the sitter's posing. The same limits associated with photography, as well as traditional visual arts are present. It must be noted that the sitter's pose regularly strays into qualities of the conventional pose. This is partly due to the sitter oftentimes commissioning her own portrait, and therefore attaining more power in how she wants to see herself depicted. Most important is the reality that the sitter is usually represented *as herself* when she sits. There is in other words a greater degree of personal interest involved in the sitter's pose. The way she expresses herself, as well as the manner in which she is represented, is directly related to who she might be as a person. The sitter is more easily subjected to a greater degree of guidance by the artist, given that the sitter is not necessarily a model who possesses expertise. To achieve the desired impression, the artist structures the sitter towards suitable poses. The sitter's pose presents features of the ordinary in an extraordinary context of art. Features of the ordinary are features such as personal states of mind, character, and perhaps other references to aspects of the sitter's private life. The everyday is then elevated into a pose, which encompasses some of these features in the final artwork.

1.1.1 Commercial Modelling and Fine Art Modelling

Having discussed the contexts of interest to this thesis, something more needs to be said about the economic considerations that influence modelling in terms of the types of jobs and pay models receive, and subsequently how models can contribute creatively. I introduce a distinction between commercial modelling and what I will call ‘fine art’ modelling. This is not strictly separate; there are some commercial features in fine art modelling, and some commercial modelling has fine art features. The term ‘fine art’ modelling covers both photographic and life models who find themselves in similarly motivated artistic arrangements. Such a fine art context is not as motivated by the advertising industry, and, for instance, focuses on the traditional artist or photographer’s own personal artistic practice. While there is still the commercial element of the art market, in which artworks can be displayed and sold via numerous galleries and auctions, they are not mass-produced or mass-consumed pieces. A further type of model that has become increasingly popular in recent years with the rise of social media is that of the influencer who offers the impression of living a lucrative, beautiful, and appealing lifestyle. The more famed influencers will strike sponsorship deals, and as such their Instagram pages, for instance, should be considered more like a business page than a personal blog. Given the sponsorships, their posing is rather aligned with commercial modelling. The sale and consumption of images influence their purpose and the manner in which they are created, greatly affecting the model’s position within these larger economic grids. This is where commercial modelling sits, comprising both editorial and catalogue work within the advertising industry. One stark difference between fine art modelling and commercial modelling, with far-reaching ramifications, is the decision-making power agencies and bookers hold over commercial models. Comparatively, these official channels are virtually non-existent for life models beyond a handful of model-led initiatives.²⁶

Commercial models are employed to sell a mass-marketed product – think of the clothes or cosmetic products that catalogue models advertise, or, instead of a physical product, selling the fantasy and lifestyle of a particular brand. Contrary to this, fine art models are employed in jobs that are rather about experimenting to

²⁶ Some of these initiatives organised by and for life models in the United Kingdom include *Register for Artists’ Models* (<https://www.modelreg.co.uk/>) and *Art Nude UK* (<https://www.life-models.co.uk/>). There are also various county-specific Facebook groups where artists and models can interact. This too counts for photographic models, who use social media to get in touch with photographers and advertise their portfolio. The most important directory for photographic models is *UK Models* (<https://www.ukmodels.co.uk/>); they are not an agency but point aspiring models towards many resources to begin to understand the world of commercial photography, agencies, bookers, contractual precarity, and so on. The largest global directory for photographic models is *Model Mayhem* (<https://www.modelmayhem.com/>), where models, photographers, make-up artists, and stylists can connect and share their portfolios. Links accessed July 7 2021.

create artistically innovative pieces, or representing a high-end luxury brand which offers cultural capital for the model, rather than an economic capital. Only a minority of models do make it in editorial modelling²⁷, and manage to manoeuvre into a position where they obtain both lucrative economic gains, as well as the cultural value of working with these luxury brands. The distinction is one of high fashion versus mass market.²⁸ Joanne Entwistle has done much work on the aesthetic and economic capital of fashion models. A fashion model's career depends on how she positions herself in terms of cultural value; even well-known models continue to opt for editorial high fashion work throughout their career despite its small and uncertain remunerations. "Models who manage to book both sorts of work have to ensure that the economic value of one does not diminish the cultural value of the other."²⁹ Their commercial images do not tend to make it into their portfolio, and at worst can indeed negatively impact the model's prestige.

Body part modelling constitutes a highly lucrative form of commercial modelling, worth touching upon to offer a sense of the monies involved. One such example is hands-model Nina Taylor, who insured her hands for two million pounds. Taylor regularly works with high-end fashion brands, advertising jobs, and even acts as a 'hands stand-in' for other supermodels and actresses. The discrepancy between editorial and commercial work remains present in body-part modelling; Taylor describes in an interview how she would earn very little when modelling high-end jewellery for a luxury brand, while conversely being able to rely on a much higher and more certain income shooting product advert scenes.³⁰

Delving into ethical worries about modelling helps formulate an answer to the peculiar observation that models are in precarious positions economically, creatively, and even personally. For instance, by not being recognised as a creative agent when they do in fact contribute significantly, or by attitudes that inform harmful

²⁷ The term 'editorial' relates to high fashion model jobs, "(...) named after 'editorial' pages that showcase editors' opinions,...magazine shoots and catwalk shows." quoted from Ashley Mears, *Pricing Beauty: The Making of a Fashion Model* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 37.

²⁸ Mears, *Pricing Beauty*, 39. Mears differentiates editorial and commercial modelling within the fashion world based on the type of model jobs, earnings, prestige, intended audience, and looks. Editorial comprises magazines, campaigns, prints, and catwalks, versus the more commercial catalogs, showrooms, fittings, and print advertising. While editorial jobs are more prestigious, their earnings are on the lower end and sporadic, in contrast with the consistently high income of commercial modelling. Editorial models tend to be "edgy, strange", often skinny and teenage, versus the commercial model's "classic, safe" and thin, young look. Their audiences also differ; 'field insiders' will be interacting with editorial work, whereas 'mass consumers' are concerned with the commercial market pieces.

²⁹ Joanne Entwistle, *The Aesthetic Economy of Fashion: Markets and Value in Clothing and Modelling* (Oxford: Berg, 2009), 65.

³⁰ Kevin Rawlinson, "The Supermodel You Wouldn't Recognise," *Independent*, 23 October 2011. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/advertising/supermodel-you-wouldn-t-recognise-2047309.html>.

interactions. One needs to question how it is that modelling, while so central to art education and making, is systematically undervalued.

1.1.2 Conceptual Distinctions and Limit Cases

Contemplating the limits of posing helps understand how far the idea can be stretched, further clarifying its key qualities. A first important conceptual distinction within the roles ascribed to people who model is that of the *muse*. The muse is a lasting stereotype still regularly referred to in larger exhibitions and writings on canonical artists. The word itself traditionally alludes to a woman who is rendered a passive instrument to the conventionally male artist's artistic inspiration. This feeds into a still-existing assumption, which dismisses the potential agency some models could claim. This thesis argues contrarily, towards a recognition of models' capacity for creative agency that stands in contrast with the mysterious air associated with the muse. The muse typically only plays a passive part in the creative process as an object of interest. Women in the past were regarded as instruments to another person's creativity, in this sense. This is a testimony of how much nineteenth century thinking is still implicitly present, when one considers that even at the time there were various known men and women who took an active part in art making. Some of these women were artists, often only more recently recognised for their artistic prowess.³¹ Supposed muses can still communicate character traits, a state of mind, creative insight, and otherwise influence the artist. As such, it is a term that places women in a subordinate position of instrumentalisation which we must be wary of. This conceptual distinction of the muse does not constitute a 'type of pose', but rather represents a stereotypically construed role reserved for women within art making. That role exists over various media not limited to visual arts; poets, musicians, and others can all draw from this more stereotypical idea of a personal muse to produce their work.

The pose's limits can be encountered in its most diminished and outward forms. Most diminished is the pose when it is reduced to a very minimal physical presence, with little structuring of the body. An example of this is the subject of documentary photography, in which people talk about or are followed in their everyday lives. There is a very minimal amount of posing present. The documentary subject goes about their own

³¹ Examples of women who both modelled and pursued an artistic career are Berthe Morisot, Suzanne Valadon, Elizabeth Siddal. See, for instance: Madison Mainwearing, "Always the Model, Never the Artist," *The Paris Review*, July 24 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2019/07/24/always-the-model-never-the-artist/>.

business, but is also simultaneously performing this ‘business’ into the camera without necessarily hugely impacting their routine. A further step would be following an entirely oblivious subject with a camera. This is no longer a pose, because there is no structuring of the body by the person. Wholly unaware, she is not conscious that she is being registered, and therefore cannot intentionally present to a spectator. The oblivious subject can be visually moulded into an appearance that looks well-balanced and convincingly timed by the artist, adhering to the idea of posing effect. Posing effect relies on our traditions of artistic convention to make use of the communicative power of various poses. The uninformed viewer of such a photograph might mistakenly view such an arrangement as a pose that was held by the documentary subject. It is similar to the film still, in that the film still is stopped unexpectedly and taken from an acted-out, edited stream of other movements, scenes, and ideas that constitute the film. The momentary pause is not intentionally maintained for this specific instant way of viewing and is frozen into an imposed viewing which takes it out of its filmic context.

The other limit is an exceptionally well performed pose that stops being perceived as one, and is instead taken for a spontaneously occurring moment despite its high level configuration. This is especially the case when we think of certain public personae; at times it proves hard to assess whether a celebrity’s registered appearance is *in character* or actually demonstrates part of their private self. Interestingly, those poses potentially stop being perceived as one, which is intrinsically important for something to be considered a pose, namely the fact that it is registered.³² The parameters I touched upon range from no or very little artifice, to maximum artifice. Posing requires intentionality to stop it from becoming an uncontrolled movement.

The artwork’s subject might not be fully aware of how she is represented. This can differ from what she anticipated, resulting in a discrepancy between the subject’s intentional configuration and how her appearance actually comes across, to drawing the portrait of a dead subject (who is no longer alive and therefore incapable of intentionally striking a pose), or taking a photograph of a sleeping subject. The subject is guided: she is presented to a later audience, rather than being registered in an act of presenting. She is unaware of the particular gaze of the artist. The photograph of Krupp by Newman (Fig. 1) is one such example. Affluent German industrialist Krupp posed within a factory of his, which Newman, himself Jewish American and objecting to

³² I explore this tension in portraiture, between a viewer’s recognition of a pose and its implications about the expressed nature of a person, to understand how a pose or lack of pose influences notions of authenticity and representations of the self in chapter four: ‘Authenticity and Posing in Portraiture’.

Krupp's employment of Jewish slave labour in these factories during World War II, rendered more like an evil mastermind, or Satan in Hell, than wealthy and important industrialist in post-war German reconstruction. Krupp was posing, knew he was being photographed, and was aware of his surroundings, but it is doubtful that he fully understood how Newman was distorting his image - despite that Krupp was fully in charge of his own active posing. The body in said cases is structured by the artist-spectator who imposes a physical configuration on the subject. He takes over this conscious, body-structuring role with the aim of presenting to later spectators normally reserved for the *posing* subject: the effect of the pose originates from the artist.

1.2 What is a Pose?

Having emphasised these differing contexts of posing, it is worth characterising what we can understand under the concept of a pose. The term is in itself challenging: its meaning exists between the constraints of "to sit or stand in a particular effective position, esp. for a photograph, painting, etc." on one hand, and on the other hand, "*derog.* to behave or speak unnaturally in an effort to make people notice or admire one."³³ Incorporated within the origins of the word itself is indeed a derogatory distrust. The idea is that a pose is manipulated, therefore it is unnatural and possibly 'fake'. While certainly manipulated, configuring one's body need not be deceitful or self-involved. What the model's pose communicates is not necessarily false, since she regularly works within a professional setting that may not have much to do with her own intimate self. Additionally, there are a great many ways to accurately express oneself.

The pose is a bodily, intentional action that communicates something to a spectator. This communicative tool can indeed also be drawn on as posing effect when the artist renders such an effect onto a figure. Such an imposition can still leave room for the model to pose, for example in those cases where an artist very much guides the model into a posture. In the case of posing effect, the artist configures a person (or imagined figure) to look a particular way, without their knowledge or active holding of a pose. Think of, for example, deceased subjects or fictional characters.

When the model holds a particular physical form, she emphasises features of her body in a certain moment in time. This moment can be brief, but can also last for a longer duration. Implicit, then, is a concern to do with

³³ Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Harlow, England: Longman, 1978), s.v "pose" by Paul Procter, ed.: 847.

whether the model is indeed frozen. I discuss some of Paolo Spinicci's views in his article *Portraits: Some Phenomenological Remarks*, to clarify my position on posing in terms of its stillness.

To identify the qualities crucial to determining what makes a portrait, Spinicci discusses the nature of the pose in portraiture. One of his characterisations is that portraits portray still subjects: they are 'boring' because people must put down their daily activities for a moment of sitting still in order to be portrayed. The sitter then intentionally engages in a moment of *temporary inaction*. Essential is that the sitter takes a step back from 'cares and opportunities of life (...) to rise above the pressure of what impinges on him from the world'.³⁴ Spinicci is right to state that a pose is intentional: a decision is made to appear a certain way. Active bodily positioning occurs, and corresponds to the impulse of *how the subject wants to present herself*. It is worth noting that there is a crucial difference here between what the subject intends to present and how she goes about doing this. Two distinguishable levels of intentionality and control within the subject interconnect here: once to the mental image of what will be projected into the space, and secondly in the method of how the whole body physically strives to achieve this. The degree of success in physically articulating the appearance corresponds to levels of skill and bodily insight. Spinicci continues to ascribe a deep significance to the suspension of daily activities as a core quality of posing; the subject has to stop these activities in order to stage the behaviour most suitable to disclose her own nature. This is where there are reasons to doubt Spinicci's argument, which I will demonstrate via my identified characteristics of posing.

When one poses, one suspends daily activities - in the sense that the subject must take a moment to pose, as one would take a moment out of the day to cook or to write. The emphasis that Spinicci puts on this distancing altogether from worries and pressures to do with daily life, is doubtful. He takes the 'temporary inactivity' associated with the pose literally, and considers it wholly removed from any 'activity', isolated in one frozen position. Contrary to this, I propose that posing is *active*. This, because it requires a conscious, physical effort to present the body. While posing, one is confronted with the physical limits of the body, and the way in which muscles react to the physical effort in keeping up the pose. It is highly conscious and dynamic – even in the case of the life model's still pose. The life model's stillness is not passive, but enters an active and reflective focus that maintains this effort physically. The pose can also be visibly dynamic, in the cases of the photographic model

³⁴ Paolo Spinicci, "Portraits: Some Phenomenological Remarks," *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 1 (2009): 47-48.

and catwalk model when she motions through a mannerist series of gestures. Emphasising features of the body into a pose intensifies the model's awareness of her own inner physicality and bodily output.

According to Spinicci, the pose constrains a dual nature: it is the outcome of both a voluntary decision and the knowledge that we are limited to our body's features. He considers the pose a "narration of self", as it rests on this compromise between "what I am as a perceptual object and what I would like to appear".³⁵ This personal narration of self contradicts his assertion that the pose is removed from daily concerns. Here he argues for a personal expression.

In my view, the pose is not disconnected from life outside the posing session, since the model does not suddenly lose her connection to her own life and interests, whether intimate or professional. This, too, counts for the other parties involved, and the artwork they aim to produce. The artwork exists within a wider framework of conventions in art making, standing in relation to society instead of removed from it. The walls of an atelier do not keep out 'pressures' of reality. This intrusion of reality can occur in the form of personal insecurity; worries regarding the model's body, given that she is conscious of the reality of how she (thinks she) looks, and whether this matches with what she wants to present. There are also anxieties about how the artwork might be perceived. A second level of intrusion lies in how the representation of the pose is subjugated to a visual language and register. In this sense, there is no escaping life; not in the pose, nor in its representation. In addition, not all poses focus on 'disclosing' the model's own character: a pose need not be a revelation of self, and could, for instance, strive for a formally interesting physical formation, rather than unveiling something about a private self. The assumption that underlies the main issue within Spinicci's argument is that he accepts the pose as a fully still and removed phenomenon.

In the strictest sense, a pose is never completely static to begin with. Bodily processes rise to the surface regardless of durational factors. The body might sweat, the model breathes resulting in her chest raising continuously, muscles twitch if a pose proves too taxing to maintain, or intestines rumble. The life model's longer poses can be agonising, as described by model Gene Erasmus in Milwaukee: "First come the itches, then come the twitches, then comes the pain, and then you go numb."³⁶ Many of these factors cannot be controlled, and are externalised signs of a living body. The body positions itself in a form, a pose, but this pose is influenced

³⁵ Spinicci, "Portraits: Some Phenomenological Remarks," 49.

³⁶ Jill Berk Jiminez and Joanna Banham, *Dictionary of Artists' Models* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2.

by the body and its processes. These processes transgress past this idea of stillness to accepting certain degrees of movement that might interplay during the pose. It is tricky to expand this still understanding of the pose to forms of movement, as the risk exists of blurring the lines between a pose, and other performances such as acting or dancing, whereas I limit myself to the pose in a visual art context. Given that there are these bodily processes that break the idea of an entirely still body composition, this leads to the notion that a pose need not be confined to standing still, considering that for one, it already is not wholly still to begin with.

One variable is the model's physical fitness, which directly influences her stamina, flexibility, and strength to physically hold a pose. Timing influences the execution of the pose, which additionally determines what is physically reasonable for the model to maintain. For example, in the case of life drawing, a one-minute pose allows much greater physical liberty in the execution of this pose than maintaining the same position for five minutes, thirty minutes, one hour or more – and all will result in different positions. The shorter one-minute pose lets the life model choose a configuration that is very physically demanding, much more dynamic than the usual sitting or supine positions more suited to remain relatively comfortable across a longer period of posing. The aim of very brief poses for the artist or drawing group is to register the models' form in broad strokes with less focus on detail. Extended poses allow for a similarly more extensive observation; the artist who works from life can take more time to scrutinise the model's form and its relation to lighting, shade, or subtle twists and turns. Photographic poses are faster, taking fractions of a moment to be registered. The photographic model rapidly works through poses to such a degree that they transform into a prolonged movement with intervals, which becomes most visible when the fashion model performs on the catwalk in a rigorous series of poses.

A common exercise in life drawing that might be overlooked is a posing sequence. Instead of maintaining one pose for a certain time, the life model will progress from a starting point (or pose, if you will) that slowly progresses, through a series of gestures, into a final pose. The artist registers the forms he perceives and selects, as they occur through the progression. This slowed progression results in a deanimation of the living body.

Instead of embodying 'stillness', I have argued that the pose exists as an active, physical event. It highlights and emphasises aspects of the body regarding its form, its movement, and other idiosyncratic features within a restricted temporal sequence. Unlike the continuous fluid movement of acting or dancing, the pose exists as a temporal event where the subject specifically projects a particular pose or continuous posing. It needs to be understood, rather, like temporal, physical accents on and of the body, than a prolonged stillness. The model

actively maintains a particular physical form. To pose, then, is to physically structure the body in a space. This structuring has a particular communicative goal: I position myself in this manner, so that I can be viewed as such.

1.3 Categories of the Artistic Pose

Following the clarification of how I understand the notion of a pose as an active bodily configuration that aims to be registered, I will go on to identify three type-categories of poses within art making. These are the *guided* pose, the *self-improvised* pose, and the *collaborative* pose. These distinctions are built on the immediate relationship between creative agency and how this influences the making of the pose. I will argue that the model, the artist, or both, can be creative agents. The artist looks at the model's body and projects it into an artwork, in which it enters in a further dynamic of looking that incorporates the artwork viewer's gaze. This section is followed by 1.4 'Mannerism and Posing', which introduces a 'mannerist' qualifier to these three types, in order to identify those poses that achieve an exceptionally performed level of configuration.

The primary active sense could readily be considered sight, when we bear in mind the process of looking that the pose is (visually) immersed in as well as directing itself to. Sartre's work on the gaze proves useful, which, despite the negative inclination in his examples about objectification, need not lead to alienation or an affective experience of shame.

In casting the Look and visibility as constitutive features of reflective self-consciousness, Sartre highlights ... a concern around self-presentation and bodily visibility. (...) How the body is presented to others (present, imagined or absent) is fundamental for one's own conception of oneself.³⁷

Sartre considers the seen body a part of our reflective awareness and its structure, not optional or secondary to consciousness, and incorporates a social dimension to bodily invisibility. "The solitary embodied subject... is a social subject. (...) The notion that individual phenomenological experience of motility, action and perception in some sense precedes social relations and intersubjectivity is misguided."³⁸ Following from this, Sartre's important contribution is the idea that the worries regarding self-presentation and body management are not

³⁷ Luna Dolezal "Reconsidering the Look in Sartre's 'Being and Nothingness'," *Sartre Studies International* 18, No. 1 (2012): 24-25.

³⁸ Dolezal, "Reconsidering the Look," 25.

just features of experience, but in fact *constitute* that experience itself.³⁹ It is via this experience that I am interested in distinguishing creative agency.

Creatively most interesting are those poses that reserve greater agency for their model. The self-improvised and collaborative poses, often also poses with a mannerist quality, are the result of great expertise and insight in presence and this process of looking. Before moving on to these, I will first introduce the guided pose to highlight how the artist achieves such guidance of the model.

1.3.1 The Guided Pose

In the guided pose, the artist indeed guides the model and visible pose. The *imposed* pose belongs here. The result is a more passive, guided model who has a particular bodily configuration imposed on her. Such a passive arrangement of the pose can exist while being actively executed by the model, take, for instance, those contemporary models who work within tight constraints introduced by the artist. One example of this is (Fig. 2) Philip Pearlstein who was filmed by Jerry Whiteley in 1985, on how he draws his models. Pearlstein intensely directs the models into very specific poses and angles. This is so important to his practice that he marks down the models' exact positions on his atelier's floor with tape, to ensure that they truly remain in the exact same pose when they continue over multiple sessions.⁴⁰

Another example is that of the portrait sitter who may have an idea of the end result she wishes for, but not necessarily of how to achieve this. It is common for the artist to suggest or alter a pose, which the sitter actively maintains. This pose is active in its execution, but remains passive in its conception when it concerns the sitter who holds the pose. It is still a pose, because the sitter does indeed actively maintain a bodily configuration to be registered, but the sitter did not create this pose and can only physically mimic the arrangement of the artist. It is the artist here who conceived of the pose. A clientele that is guided by a portrait photographer or painter will readily experience this, since the professional artist has a grasp of what is conventionally flattering, for example, and of how to reconcile the commissioner's presentation with their commission expectations. Portrait artist Lorna May Wadsworth described precisely this in the *Portraiture &*

³⁹ Dolezal, "Reconsidering the Look," 25.

⁴⁰ Jerry Whiteley, "Philip Pearlstein Draws the Artist's Model," *YouTube*, uploaded July 12 2013 (Original Film: 1985, 27 min). Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl9DYVOIVwg>.

Medieval Imagination: An Artist in Conversation with Her Sitters panel.⁴¹ She expressed how “the portrait sitting starts as the sitter walks in...it is a whole process I embark upon.”⁴² So while the sitter is being hosted in the studio, offered a drink, casually chatted with, Wadsworth is already working on creating a connection and achieving the right atmosphere to guide them into a certain comfort with sitting. Wadsworth also remarked that it is very draining to paint someone who has difficulty sitting for a portrait. Truly shepherding someone requires a lot of energy from her as an artist, which, she found, takes away from her process.

The pose becomes a strategic tool that can be used to successfully communicate these ideas the sitter has in terms of how she wishes to present herself. This is not so much a result of the sitter’s creative agency because she remains passive; instead the resulting representation is directly related to the artist’s creative vision and ability to direct the subject. This ties in with the idea of *posing effect*; in some instances a subject may not be involved at all in both the execution and conception of something that looks like a pose. In such a situation, the artist has achieved an effect that relies on the conventions of posing, by employing timing and other manipulations to capture a person in a particular stance.

A good example of posing effect is the series by Peter Funch (Fig. 3). He compiled *42nd and Vanderbilt* from an odd amalgam of street photography that bridges anonymity into strange familiarity and portraiture. Across several years, he waited at the same times, in the same area, and photographed the same people on their morning commute. The result is a series of photographs in which he captures the same subject, over an undisclosed period of time, at the same spot, in usually the same pose and even clothes. Some are quite melancholy, others have aged or look increasingly troubled. This is a liminal example, given that it is not a straightforward imposition on a sitter in a studio, who is aware that this is happening. Peter Funch imposed his creative vision on these anonymous commuters, drew out particular features, and silently captured these into the poses we see.⁴³ A conflation can occur that confuses the *posed* model and the *posing* model. What I mean by this is that a model can wholly originate a pose, when she generates and maintains the pose. The model can also be perceived as

⁴¹ She was part of a panel discussion I attended, where she spoke about the process of portrait making with her sitters Rt Rev & Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams and Neil Gaiman. This was hosted by the Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies at the University of Kent on the 29th of October 2020.

⁴² Lorna May Wadsworth quoted in my notes taken from *Portraiture & Imagination: An Artist in Conversation with Her Sitters*, MEMS, University of Kent, 29th October 2020.

⁴³ See more examples: Peter Funch, “Between 8:30 AM and 9:30 AM, from 2007 to 2016, at the southern corner of 42nd Street and Vanderbilt Avenue in New York City,” *Artist’s Site*, 2016. Accessed July 7 2021. <http://www.peterfunch.com/works/42ndandvanderbilt/>.

originating a pose that was in fact *imposed* on her. This imposition still results in the display of a performed physical form for a delayed spectator, who is not in the know about the imposition. That kind of representation shows a posed model. The imposed pose is the result of an intentional pose-making force of influence that is external to the model's own intention. The imposition successfully navigates the model towards a particular presentation. The catalyser of the pose changes the model's input: the posing model becomes the posed model when the artist steers its conception away from the model, in favour of the artist's own generative input.

Other situations where the pose is guided are those where a professional model is subjected to a tight format and artist's vision, and not allowed to give any personal input. Oftentimes in the case of fashion models, they must act as a true 'mannequin' who understands the required kinds of poses, but has no say over dress, theme or how any of these are communicated. However, this does not mean that she is incapable of generating poses of her own in situations that are not as directed.

1.3.2 The Self-Improvised Pose

The self-improvised pose is not guided by the artist and instead is entirely generated by the model. The important differentiation between the three categories of poses can be detected when we compare skilful poses to less proficient posing. A passive pose might be conflated for posing effect, which is an issue that falls under the matter of posing expertise. The self-improvised pose is a consequence of posing expertise, particularly in a context that does not impose.

I consider some grounding theories about how skill can be considered via Matthew Kieran's argument in favour of creativity as a virtue.⁴⁴ This should be of help to differentiate between the self-improvised and collaborative poses, as well as why they are more valuable as the result of the model's agency.

In their recent work on the nature of skill, Stanley and Williamson state that "skills are a kind of disposition to know".⁴⁵ Following from this disposition, which connects skill to knowledge, it then leads to the idea that, "the manifestation of skill is a knowledge state, as well as an action".⁴⁶ These two manifestations of skill are

⁴⁴ In chapter two, 'Understanding Posing as a Skill', I will enter the discussion of skill and creativity much more in-depth to render an account of how creatively interesting poses function precisely, and what is required of the model ability-wise to achieve these.

⁴⁵ Jason Stanley and Timothy Williamson, "Skill," *Noûs* 51, No. 4 (2017): 715.

⁴⁶ Stanley and Williamson, "Skill," 716.

situation-specific: the acquisition of skill depends on a certain situation that calls for particular skill, including simulations, if not the actual event. A skilled action displays the agent's knowledge, and is guided by knowledge that manifests possession of skill during the relevant activity.⁴⁷ Aristotle distinguishes skill from virtue in the *Nichomachean Ethics*. He argues that virtue is exemplified by actually exercising the virtuous deed. Virtue is also always of a moral nature, whereas skill is not. Contrary to the importance of aiming to achieve virtue in order for the act to be considered virtuous, it is however possible to manifest skill even when one decides not to display it in a typical way. Stanley and Williamson offer the example that only a skilled sportsman can lose deliberately without it being apparent that he is doing this on purpose.⁴⁸

Like the skilled athlete, the skilled model maintains a disposition to the act of posing, which exhibits her knowledge of those things that are required to pose successfully. Posing, like other skilled actions, is improved by engaging in actual posing, and grows with experience. The more one poses, the more insight one gathers and the more skilled one becomes.

Within the phenomenon of poses, varying degrees of know-how result in corresponding levels of bodily expertise, related to the model's understanding of her body as well as the process in which she poses. This physical awareness can exist in multiple intensities. Examples of least-skilled poses may be found in commissioned portraits as mentioned in 'Guided Poses'. This unskilled sitter needs to rely on the artist's expertise and guidance to bring the pose to a fruitful end. The skilful pose physically demonstrates the model's expertise and is more anticipatory of the demands of the process in which she poses.

Traditionally, the most skilled form of posing would be found in the artist's model. Sitting for life drawing, sculpture, and painting classes, this type of model can be found to this day in academies as well as private ateliers. In the last century however, photographic models, such as fashion models and supermodels have taken a prominent spot in society.

The art academy model is a support for students to hone their knowledge about aspects of medium, the human body, light, and colour. These poses often adhere more to traditional poses, reminiscent of antique sculpture, or focus on singular body parts to enhance the students' anatomical insight. This kind of model displays solid skill, which often also means that she understands the students' and art tutor's needs and

⁴⁷ Stanley and Williamson, "Skill," 718.

⁴⁸ Stanley and Williamson, "Skill," 718.

accommodates this with the poses she enacts. This changes for the model who does not work in an educational setting. The extended freedom depends on the circumstances of creating a piece of art, rather than practicing the fundamentals of students' artistic skills. The art academy model improvises the poses and is skilled at performing these. She, however, remains in a context of education rather than art making, and cannot collaborate with the artist. The academy situation does not necessarily lend itself to professional art making, and due to its focus on education cannot offer the same bandwidth for creative autonomy on the part of the model. The contextual expectations of the academy model do not include the presentation of innovative posing, but rather focus on the development of their students and methods. For instance, the model for an anatomy class cannot suddenly start focusing on different body parts if the class is about understanding legs.

1.3.3 The Collaborative Pose

Following the discussion of skill and creative agency, the collaborative pose enters when there is greater artistic autonomy and the model can offer more input. The model works together with the artist to determine and achieve their artistic vision, yet a pose could still prove unsuitable for the ends of the session. It proves harder to draw clear divisions when there is mutual communication and experimenting occurring in the artistic process. The model of the collaborative pose establishes her own creative input and can implement this to varying degrees. She can be a valued collaborator of the artist who works together fruitfully, or in the highest degree, the model should be regarded an artist in her own right. The collaborative model forms a creative relationship of artistic collaboration and skill exchange with the artist or crew she works with.⁴⁹ It is in those mutually collaborative contexts where the model imbues the session with her own creativity, complementing the artist's creative goals, within which she achieves a great degree of artistic significance by contributing conceptually as well as physically.

Creative input makes a difference in considering posing skilled. Conceiving of *what* will be physically projected into the space, complemented by a sense of *how*, are the areas where the model can enter her own creativity. This higher level of expertise can be found in these individuals who shape their poses with creative

⁴⁹ I expand on artistic collaboration in section 1.2.3 'The Collaborative Pose'.

ingeniousness. In a sense, they take on an artist's role. No longer does the artist *impose* a pose. Instead, these creative models add artistic value of their own to the process and become collaborators.

Creative virtue also depends on judgement, talent, and opportunity (...) the extent to which an agent is intrinsically motivated is the degree to which she is excellent, (...) less susceptible to certain kinds of creative errors or temptations.⁵⁰

Part of what contributes to exemplary creative mastery is the person's motivation, which relies on values internal to the relevant domain, whilst also selecting her approach in line with these values. This is where virtue comes into the picture. It is that exemplary creative action which can be deemed admirable and praiseworthy when motivated intrinsically, as it arises from an "ingrained disposition of character".⁵¹ Such a level of outstanding creative insight and execution, is reflected in cases like the British supermodel Twiggy who helped shape the model industry with her androgynous physique and idiosyncratic poses. It also exists further in the past; nineteenth century celebrity male model Cadamour dominated Parisian academies and studios with his expertise. He was highly sought-after, unlike other impoverished models, Cadamour had the financial capacity to turn down artists, greatly influencing the model tropes of the time.⁵²

In 2008, model protests broke out in Paris, calling attention to the lack of official financial recognition as well as the abolishment of their tipping system, which came into being to help combat the precarity of their work. When a life model is ill and cannot work, there is no sick pay or other forms of leave to take, in addition to their poorly paid day-worker salaries. These protests and demonstrations continued until 2016. The protests desire not only financial recognition, but also draw attention to the fact that modelling is a valuable profession which requires skill and respect. The precarity of models is kept alive by the implicit belief that modelling is unskilled work. The appreciation of models has remained largely the same since the nineteenth century, and life models still face accusations to do with their character, such as having supposed loose morals. French model Florence Rivière compared photographic modelling to life modelling for a drawing group, further rejecting the judgement the public is quick to make between the model, the model's represented body in the artwork, and any assumed value or self-worth. This appeared in a series of short interviews in the French newspaper *Libération*:

⁵⁰ Matthew Kieran, "Creativity as a Virtue of Character," In *The Philosophy of Creativity: New Essays*, ed. By Elliot Paul and Scott Kaufman (Oxford University Press, 2014), 22.

⁵¹ Kieran, "Creativity as a Virtue of Character," 22.

⁵² Jimenez and Banham, *Dictionary of Artists' Models*, 97-99.

It's different with a photographer compared to a class of 30 students: they don't move, you don't either. With the photographer, you do. There is constant communication, it's an exchange of energy; you don't hold poses for 15 minutes and you have to know how to find the light, angles, to understand what the other wants. We don't look for the beautiful, or being pretty, we detach ourselves from our appearance. I remarked once, *'I look horrible but the photo is great.'* By playing with this, by posing for many different gazes, it desacralises the body: my image is not my person. It is not in the eyes of the photographer that one validates one's being or one's appearance. When I am nude, it is like a costume: nudity is another way of dressing the body.⁵³ (Translation mine)

1.4 Mannerism and Posing

Having touched on three categories of posing, consisting of the guided, self-improvised, and collaborative poses, I must add a final modifying qualifier that can be applied to any of the three categories poses. The mannerist qualifier is reserved for those poses that demonstrate exceptionally impressive degrees of artifice. This occurs, for instance, when a model moves beyond a representation of self, or the artist's guidance, but instead takes on the extra layer of 'posing as' someone else, or as displaying a mood that is not their own. Like the sportsman example by Stanley and Williamson, there exists a kind of pose that poses *as if* not posing, *as if* in another mental state, or *as if* possessing certain attributes not typically associated with her person. The model presents herself in the form of another figure, another character, while she remains herself underneath. An extension of *posing as if not posing* are indeed those poses *as someone*. Traditionally, this consists of more theatrical scenes where the model plays a form of dress-up, as a character, historical figure, someone who would be easily recognised.

The Countess Castiglioni is likely the first photographic model, and client, who heavily invested in the making and photographing of theatrical scenes and costumes, in which she was the centrepiece. See, for instance, *The Hermit of Passy* photograph taken by Pierre-Louis Pierson as part of the *Soeur Elise* series in which she poses as a hermit-nun, from 1863. (Fig. 4) Castiglioni transforms the pose into a 'pose-on-top-of-a-pose': she poses

⁵³ Emmanuèle Peyret, "La Nuit des Corps Vivants," *Libération*, April 28 2016. Accessed July 7 2021. http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2016/04/28/la-nuit-des-corps-vivants_1449230 Original: "C'est différent avec un photographe d'avec une classe de 30 élèves : eux ne bougent pas, vous non plus. Avec le photographe, si. Il y a une communication constante, c'est un échange d'énergie ; on n'a pas à tenir les poses quinze minutes et il faut savoir trouver la lumière, l'angle, comprendre ce que veut l'autre. On ne cherche pas le beau, on ne cherche pas à être jolie, on se détache de sa propre apparence. Parfois je me dis, *"je suis horrible mais la photo est géniale"*. A force d'en jouer, de poser pour tellement de regards différents, ça désacralise le corps : mon image n'est pas ma personne. Ce n'est pas dans le regard du photographe qu'on valide son être ou son image. Quand je suis nue, c'est comme une tenue : la nudité c'est une autre façon d'habiller son corps."

herself, posing as someone else – but remains very recognisably herself. This is also the case for famous artist Cindy Sherman, who built a whole oeuvre on posing as anonymous women, in a state of quiet distrust, alertness and visibly uncomfortable situations without clear cause, but in which the spectator very much takes up the point of view of a voyeur. (Fig. 5) Sherman's case is special in that she is simultaneously model and artist. She does not collaborate with an artist, but is the sole generator of the pose: in its conception, its execution as well as its registration, whilst remaining recognisably herself. She presents to us Cindy Sherman, the artist, who communicates something by posing as other unknown women.

When *posing as* remains undetected, perceived as simply 'posing', the pose becomes an impressive display of skill via the model's understanding of self-presentation, and her anticipation of the spectator's visual expectations to generate an impression of a naturally occurring event. The model is aware of being watched and directs her body in the spectator's line of sight. Among active poses are those poses where the model poses as if not posing, for instance in a state of absorption or distraction. The model is 'caught in the act', often meant to make the scene appear more spontaneously occurring instead of a heavily constructed image.⁵⁴ It is worth briefly noting a distinction between the pose in absorption, in distraction, and the viewer's inability to perceive a pose at all. The model need not necessarily pretend to be distracted for a pose not to be taken as posing. A pose that truly convinces the spectator that *this is who she is*, regardless of what she is physically constructing, is sufficient.

Another type of pose that is more subversive in the type of *posing as* takes the mannerism another step further by incorporating a particular state of mind or other qualities that are not necessarily related to the model. Especially in portraiture, the pose is more readily embedded with an aspiration to corporeally reflect or suggest certain qualities and emblems that might impact the viewer's perception of the sitter's character or political alignment. The differentiation is less clear between individual character and ideation, when the pose acts as a vehicle to transmit visual symbols with certain connotations that belong in a longer art historical trend. These kinds of poses transform the posed model into an icon, often with the help of identifiable objects, poses, or other references that exist in the society's visual repertoire. This is the case especially for publicly important

⁵⁴ See the discussion by Michael Fried on the relation between painter and beholder, and how ideas of presenting a figure 'in absorption' and 'in distraction' connect in *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (University of California Press, 1980).

people, such as politicians, religious leaders, or famous heads of corporations. Harry Berger Jr. describes this practice of assimilating particular qualities, which elevate the subject to an 'ikon' quite succinctly:

(...) painters and sitters produce effects of subjectivity by diverging from and alluding to an initial set of conventions for objectifying subjects, conventions that are 'mortiferous,' as Barthes puts it, death-bearing, because they turn sitters into ikons. (...) With the painter's help, sitters become living subjects by seeming either to resist objectivity or to fail to achieve it.⁵⁵

Among these are the many existing political portraits, or artworks such as Dürer's *Self-Portrait at the Age of Twenty-Eight*, in which he merges his own image with the iconographical schema of the Mundus Christi. (Fig. 6) More recently, one finds propaganda photographs like those created and published for political leader Vladimir Putin, who embodies stereotypical masculine qualities. With these stereotypes in mind, Putin takes great care to be depicted as having a tough stone-faced expression, muscular body, while he is completely absorbed in activities like hunting or swimming. (Fig. 7) Other times he is surrounded by status symbols like beautiful women or expensive cars. These are highly posed pictures, presented as if *this is simply how Putin is*, embodying ideals that he wishes to associate with himself as a leader of Russia and its culture.

Curiously, there existed a posing act that consistently remained highly popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which demonstrates a highly mannerist *posing as* in the context of art, rather than propagandistic portrayal. The appeal and practice of the *pose plastique* has been largely lost to our current society. This was a performance where one or more performers would appear on stage, seemingly nude though covered in fleshings, as 'living statues'. These performers took on the poses of classical statues, appealing to high art and beauty. Many were also met with critique and censorship, accused of tempting their audience to moral corruption. This is similar to the shaky status of female artist's models, often working-class women who were commonly associated with prostitution and loose morals.⁵⁶ For some performers of the *pose plastique* stardom could be attained, with its emphasis on bodily form and ingenuity in presenting classical poses. As opposed to pornographic images, which were widely available in more hidden establishments since the breakthrough of photography, pose plastique photographs could be bought publicly and existed as a lucrative business of their

⁵⁵ Harry Berger Jr. *Fictions of the Pose : Rembrandt against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford University Press, 2000), 111

⁵⁶ David Huxley, "Music Hall Art: La Milo, Nudity and the *Pose Plastique* 1905–1915," in *Early Popular Visual Culture* 11, no. 3 (2013): 218–220.

own. There was not quite the same level of overt pornographic intentions or shame attached to these. ‘La Milo’, also known as Pansy Montague, was the most famous and financially successful living statue. She used a paint specially made for her in Germany to resemble a marble statue, cleverly employing black velvet to select the relevant body parts in the case of statues such as the *Venus de Milo*, against painted backgrounds of garden landscapes, posing on top of a six-foot high pedestal.⁵⁷ (Fig. 8) Fascinatingly, a veil would cover her as she shifted between poses unseen, presenting the still pose only once this was finished for the audience. A stark contrast to La Milo’s success is the obscenity trial in 1918 that confronted Maud Allan after performing ‘Vision of Salome’. Combining the biblical story with a dancing female figure proved obscene, due to the act’s merging of sexuality and artifice of high culture. These performers’ moving bodies and sexuality proved offensive, unlike the more accepted tranquillity of the *pose plastiques*. La Milo’s success relied on her ability to pose as antique statues and represent their classical beauty ideals in the flesh, by presenting the female body in a previously unseen way in the public sphere. The public’s raging interest however only swelled, with a growing popularisation of health, sunbathing and beauty contests to the position the body has taken in fashion and media today.⁵⁸

Distinguishing between these various contexts, qualities and cases of poses clarifies the basic characteristic features of posing. To develop an aesthetic theory of the pose, it will prove most fruitful to focus on the poses employed within an artistic context. The guided, self-improvised and collaborative pose allow a fascinating interplay of creative and bodily autonomy, the artistic process, as well as how the pose communicates and is registered. What some of these features are, as well as their interrelations, I will explore in the following chapters, starting by developing a deeper understanding of the abilities involved in posing as a skilled activity that relies on the model’s creativity and imagination.

⁵⁷ Huxley, “Music Hall Art,” 222.

⁵⁸ Huxley, “Music Hall Art,” 235.

Chapter 2: Understanding Posing as a Skill

The previous chapter one identified key contexts and a typology of poses. Most remarkable, aesthetically, are those poses that retain greater creative contributions to art making. These are the self-improvised and collaborative poses. In this chapter two, I investigate what makes such poses so remarkable by looking into the role of skill in their creation. These cases, I will argue, are fascinating precisely because of the model's own ability to come up with artistically relevant poses. What, then, constitutes this ability upon which the successful conception and execution of these poses are dependent? Three questions come to mind when scrutinising how ability may interplay with modelling: What is required for the model to achieve such artistically stronger poses? How does she go about this? What does the model imagine when she invents her poses?

I trace the self-improvised and collaborative poses because these most consistently invite a display of expert and creative skill. Situations can be conceived of where a guided pose is highly skilled – for instance, a life class tutor might request a physically highly demanding pose which only a skilled and physically fit model can hold – but this would not necessarily constitute a creative achievement on the model's part, even though it is technically complex. While it is not inconceivable to then think up a situation where a model might pose subversively in a guided pose context, it is certainly a limiting and often hard to prove case – particularly since many guided poses very much constrain the model (or sitter) both creatively and physically. The self-improvised and collaborative poses as focus areas highlight the skilled and creative aspects of modelling more easily and clearly, aspects which can indeed come into play subversively within the guided pose. The model's physical knowhow would not change within a guided pose, rather a non-professional sitter's lack of skill or understanding might make a difference in this context. This is where chapter three on self-presentation and the unwilling subject, followed by chapter four's focus on portraiture, explore more of the guided pose. Chapter two is therefore less concerned with the guided pose, since it does not offer a different understanding to the discussion of posing as a skill comprising creative ability, most evident in the self-improvised and collaborative types of poses.

I first touch on ability and expert movement, then move into a discussion of creativity and imagination. I draw upon Berys Gaut's account of creativity, which is especially appropriate for the explanation of posing given its emphasis on the presence of skill and spontaneity. Imagination then functions as a vehicle for creativity.

Lastly, I introduce effortlessness as a marker of great skill, functioning as the culmination of such skill coming together with creativity and imagination in this process of posing. In an epilogue to this chapter, I point towards the special case of the photogenic model as a complex example of a peculiar kind of effortlessness.

2.1 Ability

The guided, self-improvised, and collaborative poses each reflect the model's level of creative independence. Studio work does not merely rely on the artist's imagination and creative prowess, it also makes use of the model's abilities. There can be a curiously collaborative character when model and artist work together. One such example is the mutual recognition and professional exchange between Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bündchen and photographer Mario Testino. Bündchen had largely been dismissed early on in her career. She did not receive many bookings until Testino encountered her at a casting and found great potential in her looks. This proved the start of a long-lasting collaboration across multiple projects. "There are girls that just know how to move to make clothes look good. You are so good at it," Testino says to Gisele Bündchen in a podcast for Mira Mira, 2017.⁵⁹

Beyond the collaborative, there are those situations in which a model takes full control of how she poses. Considering this, it is worth revising the way we understand the conception of artworks by taking into account this different source of creative agency in their production. An eccentric example to illustrate this is that of Isabelle Mège, a medical secretary in Paris. Since 1986, Mège has methodically contacted photographers whose work she admires, requesting that they use her within their art and expressing the wish to see herself from their point of view. All photographs depict her body to some degree. Joel-Peter Witkin photographed his famed *Nègre's Fetishist* in 1990 with Mège (Fig. 9), and describes how there is a desire within her body to create the image. "The photograph needs the sitter. And that is one of the best images I have ever made. I could not have made it with another person."⁶⁰ Mège takes great control over the process, unconventionally entering not merely into collaborations with artists of her choosing, but requiring that they photograph her in the way she emphasises. Mège, in other words, is a self-improvised model who invents and expresses, rather than

⁵⁹ Mario Testino, "On The Sofa With Gisele Bündchen," for Mira Mira, *Apple Podcast*, 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/on-the-sofa-with-gisele-b%C3%BCndchen/id1233755239?i=1000385131324>.

⁶⁰ Anne Heyward, "The Opposite of a Muse," *The New Yorker*, September 17 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-opposite-of-a-muse>.

functioning as a purely technical aid to the artist's ends, as is the case for guided poses. While the skilled model is indeed supportive in the artistic process (she does pose in function of the artwork-to-be), she differs in that she, in fact, determines the ends of the artwork to a great degree.

How does the collaborative or self-improvised model go about her modelling? She might have a repertoire of poses to fall back on; for instance, the fashion model will know which poses are more suitable for her appearance within the specific context of fashion she is working within, while still efficiently displaying dress. A catalogue model easily relies on a set of poses, given that such commercial work depends on showing clothes and products in a highly constrained manner to maximise sales and audience appeal. Advertising work must compel viewers to not only recognise branding, but ideally also buy into the brand's clothing and advertised lifestyle. Not all modelling can anticipate suitable poses ahead of time, however, particularly those occasions with a higher degree of experimental artistry such as fine art photography.

The ends of posing often remain unclear mid-art making. That creative process demands active invention, participation, and successful execution by the model. The artwork being created does not yet exist, and often may be worked towards via vague conceptual terms or prompts on the part of the artist, subject to experimentation. This ranges from undecided artistic goals, to allowing greater experimenting that is not narrowly delineated, or outright requiring the model to simply 'come up with something', to which the artist then responds. Such interactions leave it up to the model to expertly invent a suitable pose for the advancement of the creative process. What, then, does it take for the model to invent such a pose?

Recall the characterisation of posing that relies on intentionality and physical configuration. While this intentionality is physically manifest, since it results in a pose that is held, it can be anticipated prior to the model configuring her body. By rehearsing prior to the session, or in the middle of posing by considering the next pose she will change to, the model can envisage different factors at play to determine which pose to take on. The model anticipates both how the artist registers her and the creative brief or prompt. She imagines and subsequently configures the sort of pose the artist will deem successful. In the case of photography, this occurs via a concrete understanding of how she presents her body in relation to the medium's technical features such as lighting, angle, and the capabilities of the lens. The model evaluates herself and her pose, in connection to any existing creative prompts and the artwork to be.

The model evaluates herself via a reflective seeing and imagining, for instance by using a mirror, or by assessing past media in which she appears, or by mentalising how she might appear. This remains quite cerebral and vision-based, in the sense that the body in such a situation could only follow suit, as it were, to what the mind anticipates or registers visually. Philosophy of expert movement and dance, however, offers considerations that, when applied to models, means models can rely upon a more physical mode of knowing and assessing. The next section introduces such a notion of physical expertise, which feeds into the judgement of models and their ability to evaluate and conceive of poses *while they are posing*.

2.1.1 Dealing with Mind-Body Dualism

Mind-body dualism is now rarely defended, especially not by scholars who conduct body-oriented research. I will briefly sketch some of the key arguments against mind-body dualism, before continuing to deepen my argument by identifying how a degree of dualism still implicitly lingers in some accounts of dance theory. I introduce these because they theorise movement and the body in relation to art making. These are similar to modelling in some ways, and will enhance our understanding of the body knowledge involved in modelling.

I first briefly introduce some key thinkers who worked on embodiment. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's notion of the *embodied mind* proved highly influential. His sense of the 'lived body' structures both cognitive and practical activities. The lived body itself relates to the notion that our engagements with the world are permeated by the agent's intentionality. This lived body relies on *body schema*, which constitute a system of sensory-motor capacities that function without conscious awareness or any need for perceptual monitoring. More recently, Shaun Gallagher, a contemporary theorist of embodiment drawing upon phenomenology, philosophy of mind and neuroscience, has defended an account of embodiment in which the body is understood to be profoundly shaped by the physical and social situations that guide thought and action. There is also Richard Shusterman, founder of *Somaesthetics* which as a philosophical discipline is concerned with body philosophy, practice, and the enhancement of everyday life. Shusterman introduced *body consciousness* as an embodied type of consciousness that the living, sentient body externalises at the world. The ideas growing out of these initiatives increased philosophy's focus on the body, building on Merleau-Ponty's fundamental ideas about embodied minds.⁶¹

⁶¹ David Davies, "'I'll Be Your Mirror'? Embodied Agency, Dance, and Neuroscience," In *The Aesthetic Mind: Philosophy and Psychology*, by Schellekens, Elisabeth, and Peter Goldie, eds., (Oxford University Press, 2011), 348-349.

Increasingly, greater attention is being paid to the body as deeply embedded within our societal structure and experiences as humans. I am particularly interested in the idea of body consciousness and subscribing to a highly physical, integrated mode of engaging with ourselves and others in the world.

The body, then, is a multi-sensory organism that is knowledge-acquiring and expressive through its various senses. These senses assist in attending to external stimuli, but also aid us in attending to ourselves. Body experts, such as dancers or models, are highly attuned to their own physicality, and practice to enhance their physical knowledge, ability and self-assessment. Sondra Fraleigh and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone wrote influential pieces on how the body functions in the performing arts, where the execution of movement is the creative objective. Fraleigh highlights a duality in dance between the choreography that forms it, and the dancer who learns it. She views this duality as inevitably rising from “an objectification of the body in rehearsal and performance through creative experiment with, and critical observation of, the body in motion. A psychic distance from the body is necessitated in the dialectical creative processes of dance.”⁶² She describes a unity of self and body in action that can be identified when the dancer is absorbed in the moment of dancing, which she calls the ‘body-subject’.

The dancer here is not reflecting on herself or the action she undertakes: she lives in the current moment of dance as a “unity of self and body in action”. The complementary ‘body-object’ constitutes a mode of attending the body, which is an intentional act of reflection. Someone focuses upon her body by looking, for example, at her hand, which renders it the object of mental attention. Fraleigh emphasises that this does not imply a division of mind and body, instead ‘attention’ functions as a neutral term for beholding and attending bodies. Only the body-subject can be *lived* and is engendered through an ‘unreflective’ immersion in dance. This lived body-subject functions within a “prereflective wholistic state”, which the audience experiences directly through her “present-centred performance” that infectiously reaffirms the audience’s own presence.⁶³ The distinction Fraleigh makes between body-subject during the official performance, and body-object when practicing a choreography, is based on an immersion and loss of self that results from a prereflective mode of functioning versus focused self-evaluation during practice.

Despite emphasising that body-object and body-subject do not constitute a separation of mind and body, this dualism remains present more subversively in her separation of the two. Whereas objectification does not

⁶² Sondra Fraleigh, *Dance And Lived Body* (Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987), 13.

⁶³ Fraleigh, “Dance and the Lived Body,” 14-15.

have to be a morally objectionable thing, and I will argue for this at great length in the sixth chapter of this thesis, one can question the notion that self-evaluation should only be present in preparatory work. Even the learned performer who knows her choreography exceptionally well might become immersed in her performed movements, but this need not result in a loss of self – which is the position Barbara Montero takes in her work on expert movement, further illuminated in the next section 2.1.2 ‘Expert Movement and Bodily Immersion’. This position understands that when a dancer performs, she remains herself while she executes her movements. Following this, it is implausible to suppose that a lesser degree of self-attendance occurs when performing. Ultimately, Fraleigh’s distinction between body-object and body-subject does not help us to understand the performer as an integrated body and self in action, especially when the most prominent moments of performance result in a prereflective experience. This experience is still mediated, since the dancer is consciously performing in a particular manner, and is also not directly accessible to an audience who must still perceive and receive it in the many ways that people do.

The performer who rehearses (in front of a mirror, by recording herself, and repetition of movements) is represented in theories such as Fraleigh’s as instrumentalising the body, which still lets it occupy a secondary place to the mind – mind really being presented as the factor that understands the ‘correct’ movements, resulting in a body that limps behind, as it were, to understand these movements physically. Fraleigh’s distinction is not helpful when one wants to achieve an embodied theory of movement and aesthetic appreciation, because it limits itself to a finished choreography that can only be performed in a set way, artificially separating the objectification during rehearsal from the ‘real’ performance. It does so by making use of the more detached sense of vision accompanied by psychic distancing to master a series of movements. The performer does not suddenly achieve more or less psychic distance from her body when she performs officially, as Fraleigh insinuates with her focus on psychic distance during rehearsal. The performing lived body-subject, I argue, does continuously engage with her own body, the audience, and can focus in on herself to achieve the movements in the way she wants. There may be a more intensive focus on mastering movement while training, but this focus does not appear to be so different from the sustained self-awareness during a performance. One can imagine how the mastered choreography will be executed with more ease, because it has been studied and rendered familiar to the dancer.

A rich area of enquiry in neuroscience has been that of how unconscious processes guide our actions. The neural correlates of our consciousness, however, are “modulated by and...modulates sensory information and

its perception.”⁶⁴ Conscious perception is normally a lengthy process in comparison to other, for example unconscious, processes.⁶⁵ Reflexive movements, in comparison, occur much faster since they do not rely on conscious visual or other sensory control. Intriguingly, “dance movements in improvisation may include even faster responses, by following unconscious choices and decisions.”⁶⁶

There is an intriguing connection between how the body conducts complex actions such as a dance performance, and the way it relies on conscious control of the senses to achieve this. The body is a multisensory being which processes and integrates bodily signals in various cortices.⁶⁷ “Our experience of the body is not direct, but it is mediated by perceptual information; internal information,” such as, “interoception, the sense of the physiological condition of the body, proprioception, the sense of the position of the body/body segments; and vestibular input, the sense of motion of the body.” It is further “recalibrated through stored implicit and explicit body representation (body memory).”⁶⁸ Particularly of interest is that while there may be a signal that occurs in the cortices, which eventually instructs the limbs to move in particular ways, this simultaneously relies on perceptual information to do so, and may occur unconsciously. It is in this way that one can question Fraleigh’s proposed psychic distance, by understanding the body to function as an integrated whole. Moving on from this, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s work on how dancers think through movement will be of help to grasp this bodily integration.

Mind-body dualism can be navigated by recognising an additional mode of self-reflection that is conscious: a physical mode of experimenting and evaluating. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone analyses this experience from the dancer’s perspective in “Thinking in Movement”. She takes the example of improvisational dance as a unique instance where no choreography is reproduced, since the dance is continuously created in the moment. Unravelling this process of creating a dance on the spot leads to recognising a “nonseparation of thinking and doing,” which is rooted in the dancer’s own capacity to think in movement.⁶⁹ This means that “a particular

⁶⁴ Katia Savrami, “A Duet Between Science and Art: Neural Correlates of Dance Improvisation,” In *Research in Dance Education* 18, No. 3 (2017): 276.

⁶⁵ Libet (2004), discussed in Savrami, “A Duet Between Science and Art,” 277.

⁶⁶ Rolls (2014), discussed in Savrami, “A Duet Between Science and Art,” 277.

⁶⁷ These are the premotor, temporoparietal, posterior parietal, and extrastriate cortices, as found by Blanke, Olaf (2012) discussed in Giuseppe Riva, “The Neuroscience of Body Memory: From the Self Through the Space to the Others,” *Cortex* 104 (2017): 242.

⁶⁸ Blanke, Slater, & Serino (2015); Pazzaglia & Zantedeschi, (2016); Riva (2016b) discussed in Riva, “The Neuroscience of Body Memory,” 242.

⁶⁹ Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, “Thinking in Movement,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (1981): 399-400.

situation is unfolding as it is being created by a mindful body; a kinetic intelligence is (...) shaping and being shaped by the developing patterns surrounding it.”⁷⁰ As the dancer moves through the space, there is an ambiguity about her movements. One gesture spills over into the next; these gestures do not exist separately: thinking in movement is not a mere assemblage of gestures and movements following on each other, but rather a continuous “enfolding of all movement into a perpetually moving present.” The kinetic intelligence that Sheets-Johnstone speaks of is simultaneously responsible for creating the dance, as well as informing the dance itself.⁷¹ Sheets-Johnstone highlights a quality of improvisational dance that I recognise in modelling: the ability to create a coherent whole of movements by feeling and evaluating through the movements themselves.

Shifting the discussion to modelling highlights the significance of the typical absence of choreographed movement and its schooling. The standard in the industry therefore depends on the type of job one poses for. Most dominant will be the commercial industry. Especially fashion and catalogue photography maintain strict bodily standards. These restrictions are questioned increasingly, with France taking the lead by refusing underweight models, as prescribed in their amended health bill.⁷² The height, weight, and measurement standards reflect the industry belief that models need to be interchangeable. This eases the wearing of clothes that are all made to the same measurements, and which must hang off the body and move in a particular way on the runway. Overall, there is not one golden rule for modelling, nor a set of poses to master in the same way that a ballerina must perfect sets of standardised movements. The existing model schools usually focus on the fashion industry and are often questionable in terms of how successful their models really become.⁷³ Despite the narrow body standards of the commercial industry, modelling remains less regulated. Professional models who retain creative agency come up with poses themselves and are hired precisely for their ability to do so. Poses must change and adapt according to the situation and its artistic demands.

I propose that the act of posing can be a form of (self-)evaluation. When the model poses, she experiments in the moment to pinpoint the right pose. She achieves this physically, supported by her sense of proprioception,

⁷⁰ Sheets-Johnstone, “Thinking in Movement,” 404-405.

⁷¹ Sheets-Johnstone, “Thinking in Movement,” 405.

⁷² British Broadcasting Company, “France passes bill banning ‘excessively thin’ models’.” *BBC News Europe*, 18 December, 2015. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35130792>.

⁷³ Federal Trade Commission, “Look out for modelling scams,” *FTC Consumer Information*, s.d. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0071-look-out-modeling-scams#scams>. Since there is no regulation, fraudulent modelling schools can operate by preying on vulnerable or gullible people. There may be hidden fees involved, getting locked into working with particular photographers, and so on. Most harmful is the promise of a guaranteed career, and many models find themselves left alone, indebted, and without a network after their course ends.

by evaluating which bodily configuration works best in a given context. Posing relies on a continuous integrated feedback, that leads to the model searching and executing suitable poses through her body as a whole. These, in turn, highlight some of the problems with embodied theories that separate performance from rehearsal, with no distinction between choreographed movement which adheres to a quantifiable standard, compared to improvisation or non-standardised movements. If we accept that movement has the capacity to be a method of judgement, it matters less that in a training context the performer scrutinises herself more closely compared to during the actual performance. A psychic distance from the body (in rehearsal) is no longer necessary.

2.1.2 Expert Movement and Bodily Immersion

If movement and bodily positioning constitutes an integrated, physical mode of judgement and self-evaluation that people can employ to greater or lesser degree, then this capacity must be supported by ability. The main body concept that I will look into to make the case for the expert model's ability to think through movement is 'proprioception'. This contributes to the model's creativity and imagination which help render those artistically curious poses, to be explored in 2.2 'Creativity and Imagination'.

Thinking about modelling as a different form of unchoreographed, yet expert movement further lays bare how purely relying on dance theory is not enough to understand modelling, by features such as the focus on partitioning performance in an official performance and preparatory work. This excludes unchoreographed expert movement as a possibility.

To make further sense of the conscious nature of the model's physical expertise, I look into whether bodily immersion during expert movement results in a loss of self by delving into the work of Barbara Montero and David Velleman. I reassess the model's body and expert knowledge into a grounded being, in which there is no loss of self, taking the position that she remains a creative actor, who is intentionally in charge of the making and executing of the pose. The idea responsible for a significant part of this self-awareness amid expert movement is indeed proprioception. Proprioception is a non-visual sense that signposts bodily movement and position through "the receptors in our joints, tendons, muscles, skin, and ligaments."⁷⁴ Barbara Montero states that experts are present and immersed in their experience of movement, and that they are capable of this awareness

⁷⁴ Barbara Montero, *Thought in Action: Expertise and the Conscious Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 182.

precisely through their use of proprioception as a sense.⁷⁵ The experts experience themselves as moving via proprioception. They are consciously attending to themselves as they move, and experience a sensory awareness from the inside – which Montero considers a possible source of pleasure while experts engage in the movement. With her focus on a conscious immersion of self through proprioception as a sense in expert movement, she moves beyond views like David Velleman's. He argues that experts perform best when they achieve a "self-forgetful spontaneity", in which they are so engrossed in their exceptional actions that "self-concern is precisely what must be left behind if flow is to be attained."⁷⁶ This turns expert movement in a performance beyond technique, within which reflective capacity remains dormant, only returning when one errs.⁷⁷

Montero provides an account of expert movement grounded in proprioception. Crucial is the notion that the self remains present throughout expert movement and bodily immersion. Experts are present as they act, and capable of such awareness precisely through their use of proprioception as a sense.⁷⁸ They are especially skilled at attending to their bodies and experience a keen sensory interior awareness. She argues for a presence of self in the way that:

The self is present in such an experience not in the sense that you feel as if you are outside your own body and watching yourself from afar, but rather in the sense of being the locus of focus from the inside. This is not because you see yourself...performing them [actions] (though I suppose this may occasionally happen) but rather simply because you are experiencing them [actions].⁷⁹

Rather than losing oneself, such immersion vanquishes all other present worries and considerations, resulting in an on-going, absorbing attention to one's movement. This does not entail that the mind is absent, but rather intensely engaged by the action.

Criticisms of proprioception find that it is not clearly conscious experience, and that it is recessive compared to the other senses, considering one does not notice one's posture or particular movements unless a problem occurs, or one takes extra care to focus in on these bodily sensations.⁸⁰ Contrary to the criticisms, I

⁷⁵ Montero, *Thought in Action*, 188.

⁷⁶ David Velleman, "The Way of the Wanton," In *Practical Identity and Narrative Agency*, C. Mackenzie and K. Atkins (eds) (New York: Routledge), 187.

⁷⁷ Velleman, "The Way of the Wanton," 188.

⁷⁸ Montero, *Thought in Action*, 188.

⁷⁹ Montero, *Thought in Action*, 185.

⁸⁰ Gallagher 2003; O'Shaugnessy 1998.

take it that we perceive our bodies ‘from the inside’, as well as features of the world through our other senses, not just when there is an issue. Imagine what it would be like simply not having this sense? People with missing limbs report phantom sensations of that limb, while the BBC documentary *The Man Who Lost His Body* follows Ian Waterman who lost his proprioceptive sense after illness and reported feeling disoriented and as if he were floating.⁸¹ Body experts, like models, are in a position where they train this sense to enhance their skill and subsequent ability to pose. Modelling comes with an inner sensory awareness, involving a sense of self (it is *you* who experiences the movement or immersion), which can be consciously experienced and utilised as sensory feedback – especially by the expert. Furthermore, Montero proposes a ‘cognition-in-action principle’, elucidating that experts do not lose conscious control as they act:

For experts, when all is going well, optimal or near optimal performance frequently employs some of the following conscious mental processes: self-reflective thinking, planning, predicting, deliberation, attention to or monitoring of their actions, conceptualizing their actions, control, trying, effort, having a sense of the self, and acting for a reason. Moreover, such mental processes do not necessarily or even generally interfere with expert performance and should not generally be avoided by experts.⁸²

Montero then may be receptive to a multi-level account of artistic agency, in which expert performing can indeed involve a trained sense of knowing when the actions are ‘right’, while maintaining a high degree of attention. Ellen Fridland has argued for precisely such an account that leaves room for a high-level control of automated action. The intense practice required to achieve expert proficiency is important of course because it refines motor control, but also because this control must become automatic to a point – experts need “the cognitive resources to focus on pressing situational demands such as adjusting their goals and strategies”, and, “the more skilled an agent, the more ways in which she can interfere with her motor control.”⁸³ This kind of strategic, automatic attention and motor control is precisely what the expert model employs as she poses, responding to other creative actors, environmental factors, and offering her own creative input by means of her posing form. It is in this manner that the model responds not only to those present with whom she works, but

⁸¹ Chris Rawlence, *The Man Who Lost His Body*. BBC Horizon. Rosetta Pictures, producer Emma Crichton-Miller, camera Chris Morphet, 1998, 49 min.

⁸² Montero, *Thought in Action*, 38.

⁸³ Ellen Fridland, “They’ve Lost Control: Reflections on Skill,” *Synthese* 191, No. 12 (2014): 2748, 2749.

she can anticipate the aesthetic engagement of viewers with the final creative product, and strategise her poses accordingly.

Whilst Montero does propose an important revision of proprioception as a bodily sense, and the retention of self-awareness throughout bodily immersion, there are two features of her analysis which are doubtful. These are the importance of mirror-neurons to understanding her work, and her rejection of ‘spontaneous action’ as workable but typically undesirable to experts.

Spontaneous actions may be ‘good enough’ for some situations, Montero states, but experts do not usually settle for a standard that is only good enough, and it introduces the chance for occurrences that will be regretted later.⁸⁴ One missing feature in her account of expert movement and immersion is the presence of experimental artistic invention that goes beyond a standardised or choreographed expert movement. This is possibly due to the examples of dance (ballet), and at times professional sports, that she limits herself to. Montero focuses on a minutely organised and mastered choreography of movement, in which there are particular types of bodily actions that can only be executed in very precise ways. This too occurs within professional sports, which maintain standardised movements that can be executed accurately and improved with great skill. While the profession of dancers unmistakably allows for impressive manifestations of technique and artistic merit, it appears modelling adheres to a different category of bodily expertise.

Perhaps more akin to improvisational dance, in which the dancer experiments and invents in the moment of the performance itself, I would argue that in posing, there is a great deal of searching for the ‘right’ poses that materialise throughout the posing session itself, in order to establish which would be suitable. One might draw the comparison to dancers in the process of creating a choreography, though I object to that since at least in the case of posing, a key feature is the instantaneous mode of inventing and expressing as an official artistic means, rather than purely preparatory means. The pose is also not the final ‘performance’ and sole art piece, given that it contributes to the conception of a later artwork, such as a photographic body of work or painting. It occupies more of a hybrid role in the art making process. On one hand, posing occupies a supportive role to the ends of art making. On the other hand, it retains a critical role of artistic agency and performing ability of the model – an ability that entails being able to adapt to the course of the posing session and any creative demands.

⁸⁴ Montero, *Thought in Action*, 188.

Posing is active, and certainly a form of movement in those contexts within which the model changes from pose to pose, to which end proprioception and expertise in relation to the body and its movement are central. However, this also remains the case for those still poses. In the previous chapter one, I have argued that there is an active effort to maintain a particular bodily configuration, which the model feels within herself, as well as her relation to (other bodies in) the space, and the artwork to be. Similar to dancers reporting that they can feel when a movement is 'right', so does the model feel into her poses by evaluating these proprioceptively. Part of what constitutes a successful pose is therefore proprioceptive knowledge that the model expertly employs.

Proprioception helps achieve an integrated imagination which incorporates factors external to the model (the artist's view of her, the future artwork, and the viewers who will behold the artwork), connecting these to the model's physicality and artistic invention. This brings me to Montero's reliance on neuroscientific studies of mirror-neurons to present an aesthetic account of audience members' experience when they spectate a dance performance. Proponents of this application of mirror-neurons argue that the observer of actions is provided with proprioceptive awareness through the activation of mirror-neurons. Watching the dancers perform, in other words, activates the audience's own mirror-neurons, which leads them to become much more actively involved in the performance. These mirror-neurons render the performance "a series of representations" within a third person's body, according to Montero. The audience, in a sense, physically experiences the movements the dancers display, and only through this are they able to experience the beauty of these movements as well as their aesthetic properties. There are reasons to question the accuracy of connecting mirror-neurons to proprioception, which David Davies does astutely. The studies on these were undertaken on macaque monkeys, rather than humans, and only indicate that particular parts of the brain demonstrated a flare of activity which mirrored the action they perceived, in the same areas as when the observer herself would undertake those actions. However, what this means is not clear, and it is more like an automatic process that occurs in the brain, rather than a sign of conscious behaviour or truly experiencing the perceived activity.⁸⁵

Including this consideration about the nature of the audience's experience of a movement seems less relevant at first sight perhaps, given that the pose's audience is either the immediate artist, or the viewer who beholds a represented pose in the artwork. A significant component of Montero's and Shusterman's body

⁸⁵ Davies, "Embodied Agency, Dance, and Neuroscience," 354.

aesthetics is focused on third person relating to the proprioceptive properties of their own or a performer's movements, through the activation of mirror-neurons. The tenuous connection between mirror-neurons and proprioceptive awareness weakens Montero and Shusterman's argument, since it is not necessary to justify proprioceptive awareness via mirror-neurons as a kind of third person beholding the performance.⁸⁶ Bringing the conversation back to posing, the model must imagine how she appears to both immediate and delayed spectators, and then relate this back to herself in the moment.

Posing comprises a creative spontaneity and artistic insight that is conceived in the moment. First, I will argue that spontaneity is crucial to posing, given that much of its execution relies on in-session experimenting to execute suitable poses in accordance with (potentially fluctuating) artistic goals. Mirror-neurons are not needed here to construct a theory of proprioceptive insight in one's own movement, or observed movement, just as it is not necessary that a viewer be a dancer herself in order to aesthetically appreciate the performance. There will be an extra layer of enjoyment and insight that viewers encounter if they do retain a deeper degree of knowledge and experience themselves. However, one does not need to experience an internal physical mirroring of the observed movement in order to enjoy or understand it. For instance, an art critic need not be an expert painter in order to evaluate paintings, though the added knowledge might allow the critic to enter an additional level of judgement and pleasure. A more intuitive solution is my notion of a creative imagination engendered by and through the body as an immersive whole, which I work towards in the next section.

2.2 Creativity and Imagination

When we consider the model to function as one unit of integrated senses that feed back information with regards to the inventing and performing of suitable poses without a loss of self, there is no priority for either mind or body. To account for the crucial role of experiment and artistic invention in the act of posing, I work towards the idea of the model as an imaginative posing-expert in this section. To achieve this, I rely predominantly on Berys Gaut's ideas with regards to creativity and skill, complemented by the work of Neil Van Leeuwen on imagination and action. I conclude by introducing a Dutch term, *uitbeelden*, to specify a particular notion of imagination as concretising something internal to a physical form.

⁸⁶ I will expand on the importance of imagination in this respect, in 2.2 'Creativity and Imagination'.

2.2.1 Creativity and Skill

In this subsection, I will draw upon Berys Gaut's account of the connection between creativity and spontaneity.⁸⁷

To build an understanding of the importance of spontaneity in creativity, and how we can understand it, Gaut first considers the relation between creativity and ignorance in what he coins the Ignorance Principle: "(IP) If someone is creative in producing some item, she cannot know in advance of being creative precisely both the end at which she is aiming and the means to achieve it."⁸⁸ His definition of 'creativity' requires a newness condition, so the item produced must be new to its creator at the time of her being creative. This is contrasted with 'fabricating', where someone does something uncreative. "If someone is fabricating some item, she *can* know in advance of fabricating it precisely both the end at which she is aiming and the means to achieve it."⁸⁹

Spontaneity, then, can be understood in several ways: for instance, in how something does not require the presence of an external factor (it just happens), or how something might occur independently of one's will, and lastly, when one does something spontaneously one cannot plan it in advance. It is this last sense that is important to creativity.⁹⁰ Gaut remarks that spontaneity has a final value, musing that if we lived in a fully predictable world, it looks like we would regret our inability to act spontaneously, and this regret would be rooted in the loss of something that has final value. Our attitude to improvisation in the arts also demonstrates how we value spontaneity as an end, which is where the highly improvised nature of posing comes in. Gaut neatly summarises how spontaneity and creativity interlink:

The value of spontaneity is conditional, instrumental and final, as is the value of creativity. And creativity involves a kind of spontaneity in producing things that are new and valuable of their kind. ...newness and value elements contribute to the value of creativity. Adding the agential, and in particular the spontaneous, aspect of creativity contributes a further element in showing how creativity inherits the value of spontaneity.⁹¹

In contrast to his earlier approach to creativity and skill is the idea that the presence of *flair* adds something special to otherwise ordinary instances of making a thing. His key claim is that flair involves a kind of skill. He

⁸⁷ Berys Gaut, "The Value of Creativity," In *Creativity and Philosophy*, ed. by Berys Gaut and Matthew Kieran. (Routledge, 2018), 133-137.

⁸⁸ Gaut, "The Value of Creativity," 134.

⁸⁹ Gaut, "The Value of Creativity," 135.

⁹⁰ Gaut, "The Value of Creativity," 135.

⁹¹ Gaut, "The Value of Creativity," 137.

voices these initial premises to avoid including those cases where something might be produced by a totally mechanical search procedure, or cases that are wholly accidentally made. He does note however, that there is a role for serendipity as “the skilful exploitation of chance, rather than chance alone producing something.”⁹² This role of chance and presence of flair fits the importance of spontaneity in expert movement: in performing a particular movement with spontaneity and flair, in which spontaneity is harnessed proficiently, the model achieves something very different and possibly creatively stronger compared to when she would simply execute a set of movements. Gaut does consider creativity to be compatible with goal-directedness. Namely, one can further refine the set goal and be creative in this way, or one can figure out particularly suited means to achieve the goal. His concept of creativity also allows for a more passive welling-up of inspiration, for example, and takes into account the aforementioned role of chance. Creativity is not necessarily bound to a rigid teleological origin, or any necessary condition of goal-directedness. Most crucially of interest to understanding the pose as a creative act is his inclusion of skill, which will help determine how some poses become more relevant.

Gaut introduces four markers of skill; it firstly is a special capacity in some area or activity that is not universally shared or possessed by everyone who engages in this activity. Second, skills are considered an accomplishment, which the close relation of meaning between the words ‘skilled’ and ‘accomplished’ also reveals. Third, one can practise skills, which leads us to the fourth and last marker: skills are learnt, rather than purely natural, abilities. Creative abilities fit in these markers of skill, not only because being creative is rooted in a domain that is special and considered an accomplishment, but also because being creative can be practised; “When one practices an activity in which one is creative, one can thereby practice the skills of creativity.”⁹³ This, too, works for posing. Not everyone has an innate ability to pose when confronted with a camera. We also tend to admire those people who can pose successfully, such as recognising the accomplishments of famous supermodels, or indeed in the case of calling a person photogenic which I will discuss in this chapter’s epilogue. Poses can be practised; there exist some model schools that train one to become a fashion model specifically, but also for those different kinds of poses – and anyone who didn’t attend such a school – models practice in front of the mirror or a video recorder to get a sense of how they are appearing, and the ways in which they can

⁹² Berys Gaut, “Creativity and Skill,” In *The Idea of Creativity*, eds. Michael Krausz; Dennis Dutton; Karen Bardsley. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 86.

⁹³ Gaut, “Creativity and Skill,” 95.

enhance their posing. Not to forget that the sheer act of posing itself in various posing sessions will also lead to further honing the model's own sense of posing, and dealing with artistic or bodily challenges. This also comprises the fourth marker, namely that one can learn to pose and present oneself, it's not a natural ability – but some people may indeed be naturally more at ease with posing. This is not to say that it remains something that can be improved by engaging with the creative act and becoming better acquainted with the relevant skills.

Creativity can indeed be learnt, for instance by practising a particular creative approach. In addition to connecting creativity with skill and subsequent learning, Gaut also involves the importance of particular attitudes and values. A person can have creative ability, but be terrible at exercising this skill because they do not dare to take the risks involved in being creative, for instance, because they might feel too shy to do so. He intertwines creativity with an attitude of courage here, and a form of play as well. The reason we value creative skills is, firstly, because “creative persons exhibit a kind of freedom, they are not bound by routines, but they can stand back from them, consider whether they are for the good, and act in a way that is goal-directed but not routinized”,⁹⁴ and secondly, because such a non-routinised activity results in taking a risk. Creative acts are not governed by routine, and therefore lack a pre-determined outcome or reliability in this sense, and so become inherently risky. This is why he insists that a key virtue of being creative is the person's courage that manifests throughout their creative activity, as they aim to achieve something valuable and are “knowingly prepared to take risks to achieve it”.⁹⁵ It is this freedom that is also connected to the mentioned play, free play for example can transform one procedure governed by particular routines into a different procedure - it allows for creativity to be exercised.

This, too, is very fitting for posing. The typology of poses I previously identified, and this chapter's first section relaying expert movement and bodily immersion, returns here. The difficulty of posing, and a key point for recognition, is the model's ability to adapt to the situation and artistic demands she is working in. Her posing is typically unchoreographed and relies on spontaneity. She must adapt continuously to the medium, and any sudden (artistic) variables. Richard Shusterman identifies this difficulty in his posing experience with photographer Yann Toma. He observes that “it is difficult to define... because its physical actions of positioning and posing are typically performed without a formal script or scenario that defines the *mise-en-scene* (...) and

⁹⁴ Gaut, “Creativity and Skill,” 101.

⁹⁵ Gaut, “Creativity and Skill,” 102.

instead allow the posings and probing sorties to be guided freely by the quality and direction of the experience that we shared and improvised together”.⁹⁶ The objective of the model is probing for the ‘right’ poses. One might object and say that this is no different to dancers in rehearsal, in which they engage in a process of experimenting and learning a particular choreography. However, posing uses this mode of invention and expression as official artistic means rather than for purely preparatory means. A key component of posing expertise is therefore the selection and inclusion of such spontaneous expert movements.⁹⁷

In line with Gaut’s idea of creativity, posing requires a goal-directed experimenting through which the model searches for the suitable poses. However, even if there is no clear goal for the kind of poses required, the session provides an opportunity to search and take risks especially because this search is unstable, due to the unknown goals (of the artwork) that the model is working towards. The sense of play that Gaut described is present, and forms a key component of posing. Much like letting your mind wander and seeing which ideas bubble up, posing is a very bodily reflection of a similar process. It is a conscious, courageous act of creativity that aims for the best approach by going through the (literal) motions. The model relies on features such as proprioception, her own bodily awareness, as well as her learnt insight about the medium, artist, and any other purpose that she poses for.

I have argued so far for the possibility of non-choreographed expert movement that is rooted in proprioception, without committing to a loss of self. This position necessitates the revaluation of some instances of choreographed movement to include improvisation. Rather than a risk to avoid or regret, such spontaneity may be incorporated by the expert model to come up with creatively innovative poses within an artistic context.

2.2.2 Imagination and Action

I have discussed how modelling as a creative act occurs unchoreographed to a great extent, and heavily relies on a number of skills. “So the kind of active creativity involved in trying out various ideas has imagination as its characteristic vehicle; and the vital property of imagination for this purpose is that it exhibits a kind of freedom:

⁹⁶ Richard Shusterman, “Photography as Performative Process,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 70 (2012): 250, 258.

⁹⁷ In chapter seven, ‘The Aesthetic Value of Modelling’, I will argue for the salient qualities of modelling as a hybrid art form.

an ability rationally to stand back from what we believe and consider the world in a different way.”⁹⁸ Carrying the initial creative act of posing, is the imagination which feeds the model’s experimenting. The model has mastered employing her proprioceptive awareness of how her body is internally, and how it relates to others and the space she is in externally. This approach changes per medium as well; one must pose differently to achieve commercial fashion photographs, which adheres to another set of standards compared to life modelling for a drawing group. A common feature of the artistically more interesting poses is that it proves to be down to the model herself how she moves through the space to invent and present poses. I propose that she does this through an integrated imagining that follows the idea of a holistic conceptual and physical reasoning. Not purely cerebral, nor visualising a representation, or doing something wholly spontaneously, and also not just a physical ‘feeling oneself’ in the space: the skilled model as an integrated unit of (sensory) faculties renders the information she identifies into a creatively relevant pose.

Neil Van Leeuwen’s work on imagination and action is useful here, since it engages closely with the body in relation to imaginings that inform actions. Some of his categories are better suited to frame my sense of a creative bodily imagining, as they look more closely at the contribution of imagination to the causation and constitution of actions. I focus on his *imagistic imagining* (or *mental imagery*), and *constructive imagining*, which constitute the first and third of his three categories. These imaginings involve representational structures that are very similar to actual perceptual information: *percepts*. Such representational structures can integrate with our perception and maintain the capacity to substitute percepts in order to guide bodily movements. This results in a causal relationship in their contribution, as well as the idea that the contents of imagery can “constitute otherwise identical bodily movements as distinct action types (...)”⁹⁹ This means that a particular movement or action can look the same in person, while still originating from different imaginings. Imaginings can function in place of actual percepts; we might act in conjunction with something we become visually aware of, but in fact truly seeing the thing is not the only way for us to take action. Mental imagery can take the place of the visual percept, and still result in instructing our movement or action. Especially of interest is his subdivision here of *imagery imitating action*. In imitating what we see, it allows visual percepts to influence one’s bodily movement,

⁹⁸ Gaut, “Creativity and Skill,” 102.

⁹⁹ Neil Van Leeuwen, “Thought in Action,” In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination*, Amy Kind (ed.) (Routledge, 2016), 296.

which sidesteps mediating beliefs and desires as a supposed required process. The game ‘Simon Says’ is one such example, in which the aim is that players must avoid, yet are easily tricked into, imitating actions despite verbal cues that warn them against doing so. This is where Van Leeuwen develops his idea that these kinds of actions are guided by the same structures that account for perception oriented action, and therefore also result in action. As such, imagistic imagining can replace perception as the structuring representation. This progresses much further in ‘constructive imagining’, where these representations are no longer bound by one’s perception of a nearby environment. Van Leeuwen refers to the nuclear disaster at Fukushima to clarify what he means by ‘constructive imagining’, following the tsunami of 2011 that hit Japan. Unusually, for a nuclear power plant, it was built next to the sea. Its backup generator was located in a basement below sea level, and therefore created a risk of flooding should the right conditions prevail. Van Leeuwen considers this a failure of imagination by the engineers who designed the plant’s structure. In this case, ‘imagination’ refers to a capacity for novel representations that are not generated by memory or by perceiving a surrounding environment. He identifies potential for imagination to fail, for cases like Fukushima in which someone did not have the capacity to recognise the possible states and subsequent appropriate actions, but should have, yet could not anticipate those due to a failure of imagination.¹⁰⁰

I draw on two things from Van Leeuwen’s work: firstly, there are actions that show as the same movement or appearance, but which originate differently in imagining, and secondly, rather than purely relying on the available perception of a surrounding environment, one can rely on different forms of mind to achieve appropriate imaginings. Posing relies on a combination of these. One feature that sounds quite obvious to point out, yet nonetheless sits at the root of a lot of possible worries with regards to identity and the perceived artificiality of posing, is that of course the model will look like herself when she poses – unless her appearance is somehow obscured, such as by clothes or make-up. The poses she creates can be the result of different imaginings unrelated to her own person, yet she will continuously maintain her own appearance throughout. This ambiguity can be confusing if one assumes that what is displayed is ‘really how she is’, for example. There is an overlap between her actual self, appearance, and the imaginings that inform a pose, which need not be directly related to her immediate environment or the posing session. Curiously, there can be multiple sources

¹⁰⁰ Van Leeuwen, “Thought in Action,” 289,295.

of perceptive information that a body identifies and incorporates in imagining. There is the visual, auditory, and haptic, for instance. If we accept that we do not have to rely on purely visual information, this opens up imagining to a physical capacity not only for expert movement, but also for bodily imagining.

This presents imagination as an even stronger carrier for creativity and lets us abandon this notion that in order to come up with a pose, a model is limited to detached senses in order to self-evaluate. The model can imagine what the artist registers and envisions artistically, as well as how viewers of the artwork may react. A crucial component to the model's creativity is her capacity for bodily imagining, informed by sensory knowledge, and moderated by her skill and risk-taking in the creative process. When the model finds the right balance, pinpointing a suitable pose for a given job, she proprioceptively feels within her body and relates it externally simultaneously. This does not require a purely mental imaging but is based in a sensory feeling her way through the poses in this particular session. It is a kind of bodily reasoning which is both intuitive and dependent on her skill as a posing-expert.

Imagination as a term remains quite vague, and in some ways remains too passive to explicate the action that results in a pose, following the exchange between imagination and creativity. To this end, I introduce the Dutch verb '*uitbeelden*' to illuminate how I view this mechanism of posing and how it works with imagination. Literally translated, *uitbeelden* means to picture something 'outside' or 'externally' (that is the '*uit*' part of the word). What it means is to make a concrete physical manifestation for a mental concept or image. There is a highly physical nuance to the verb, which can be rendered in the solid physical manifestation, an object, but also in the person's body who is doing the *uitbeelden*. '*Uitbeelding*', the noun derived from the verb, designates the art object that represents the artist's ideas which, for example, can be their expression of the concept of 'hope', or the wild gestures of a person who passionately communicates something to an audience. The point in introducing this is that posing, as I view it, is to physically externalise ('*uit*') a '*beeld*' with the model's own body. The nuance comprises a physical externalisation or gesturing of a *beeld*. In the Dutch language, the noun *beeld* means an 'image', real or imagined, but importantly can also mean a 'sculpture', or to word the nuance differently: a *form*. In this sense, *uitbeelden* is not mere self-expression of some inner feeling or emotion, it can also be a formal mannerist interest. Older meanings of the words closely correlate with altering or transforming an appearance. The pose, I mean to say, is an *uitbeelding* in the true sense: it is a physical rendering of an idea by way of creating a form, or by way of gesturing. It includes the nuance of the word *beeld* as *sculpture*, adding this

imagery of expulsing, solidifying, into a form. An inner formulation is given an appearance. This comprises the creative intricacy of the posing process, by relying on a bodily imagination that renders its physical searching into a concrete pose. The notion of *uitbeelding* offers a conceptual idea that comprises the posing process which relies on the exchange between creativity and imagination. It is the active construction of an idea by the sensory-motor, communicating body as an integrated whole, which is a process of inventing and concretising an actual outcome – the pose.

2.3 Effortlessness

2.3.1 Effortlessness as a Marker of Success

What is the outcome of these poses that are rendered by a successful combination of imagination and creativity? One result of a well-executed and highly suitable pose is that the model might look effortless doing so, by virtue of her creative expertise. It is important, then, to consider how these aesthetically more interesting poses are received in their success. Such poses, at times, can offer a sense of effortlessness and ease, contributing to the perceived lack of skill models have been understood to have.

Montero finds that effortlessness relates to three aspects of a work: the medium, representation, and process. This can also constitute a bodily movement. Rather than the Bergsonian view that only smooth, flowing, and predictable actions could result in an effortless action, Montero thinks along the lines of efficient movement. Effortlessness in dance is about the lack of superfluous muscle tensions. Underlying both notions, however, is the observation that effortlessness pinpoints the fact that something difficult is accomplished with ease. She identifies an objective, apparent, and intentional ease as three categories of effortlessness.¹⁰¹

Objective effortlessness occurs when one executes an action with actual ease, because it is a simple task to complete. Apparent ease is reserved for those actions that look effortless, but are the result of great training – take for examples athletes' performances. Intentional ease, then, takes place when a deliberate attempt is made to create the guise of ease, for instance when considering the sometimes-gruelling performances ballerinas execute while sustaining the illusion that they are floating across the stage. It is this guise that we are often most interested in. One difficulty is that in many art forms, supposedly, objective effortlessness is actually not

¹⁰¹ Montero, *Thought in Action*, 172.

appreciated, and negatively impacts one's impression of the piece as being too easy, or even uncared for. Central is the "guise of ease", a deliberate creation of supposed ease. Relevant to the perception of effortlessness is a "proprioceptive sympathy" as she coins it, and feeling awe upon witnessing such a reveal of the performer's superfluity of fitness. Effortless movements are therefore pleasurable and beautiful to watch.¹⁰²

Montero is right about the existence of effortlessness in various forms, as well as spectators' appreciation of the guise of ease. There are reasons to disagree, with her specification of a certain kind of beauty as pleasurable, and the focus on the performer's bodily fitness as sufficient to be awed and consider it pleasurable to watch. Contrary to this, it looks like there are not only different kinds of beauty, but importantly, different kinds of effortlessness that do not need to result in being in awe at the performer's physique, or feeling particularly sympathetic on a proprioceptive level. Applying this to posing, a fashion model can look effortlessly 'heroin-chic' in photographs due to her posing skill.¹⁰³ She likely displays a very thin frame, and the work by a make-up artist to apply the right cosmetics for that look. This is not about a superfluity of fitness, nor is it about a conventional beauty, or a proprioceptive sympathising with her pose. Her pose is interesting much like a dance performance might be, though of course it is static in the photograph. It does not seem necessary to identify the physicality we witness as spectators with our very own. What seems key is indeed the guise of ease, but this is the result of an overlap between the expression of something that is created, mapped onto something actual. She is likely not an actual heroin addict and is rather a skilled fashion model who displays a much darker, less fitness or health-based kind of beauty. Poses that look like they require a lot of effort might be perceived as painful or uncomfortable, and perhaps like they were not a good choice.

Crucial about posing as a skill is the ability to creatively merge these external factors of the posing session, with the bodily imagining that brings forth the pose that works with both the model and job. Considering this integration of creativity and imagination, some strange properties appear particularly in the case of photographic models. Closely connected to the photographic model's creation of a particular appearance – as if she were always like that appearance and only that – is indeed the importance of effortlessness or *sprezzatura*, as it was

¹⁰² Barbara Montero, "Aesthetic Effortlessness," In *Body Aesthetics*, ed. by Sherri Irvin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 182-190.

¹⁰³ 'Heroin-chic' is a type of 'look' that was popularised in fashion shoots of the nineties. At the forefront was Kate Moss. Models looked gaunt, very thin, had dark circles around their eyes, unkempt hair, and wore punk or other 'edgy' clothing.

coined by Baldassare Castiglione. Something is to be said for the guise of ease or overall effortlessness, which is so crucial in how it propagates a standard of expertise or is perceived as a more innate ‘natural flair’.

Questions remain that I cannot answer adequately here. How exactly does effortlessness relate to the attractiveness of the model? In an epilogue to this chapter, I work towards answering these questions by identifying and exploring a special case. This is the situation of the photogenic model. While this research requires further development, its current insights are still worth including because of how they demonstrate the breadth and complexity of this topic. As it stands, I will connect the photogenic to effortlessness, arguing that this is embedded in Walton’s ‘make-believe’.

2.3.2 Epilogue: The Photogenic

When we speak of the photogenic, we tend to mean a quality related to the photographic subject, rather than the photograph itself. It is this subject who manifests an exceptional appearance in the photograph. A close parallel can be drawn to the more Romantic idea of the picturesque; generally a landscape or architectural structure that begs to be captured due to its particular beauty, which is often rendered quite painterly or nostalgic. I focus on photographs of people, as these offer the most fruitful discussion of what it is about these images that mesmerises a spectator and warrants the label ‘photogenic’.

The following experience may sound familiar: it begins with spending a pleasant evening surrounded by friends at a dinner party. Throughout this evening, pictures are taken to commemorate the time spent together. However, upon viewing the pictures, a person might notice that in some photographs there is something very visually objectionable about herself. Whether there is an exceptionally strained facial expression, uncomfortable shoulders-up posture, eyes half closed, or more – the image really does not seem to match what she views in the mirror, nor how she thought she appears. Friends reassure her that this is not how she usually looks. Then there is that one friend who always appears delightfully well-put together in most pictures. What does “She is (not) very photogenic.” involve?

To begin to unpick what photogenic quality may or may not be, I need to point out a first distinction between conventional attractiveness and looking photogenic in a picture. It does not seem necessary for someone to have fortunate facial features or adhere to common beauty standards, in order for them to appear photogenic in an image. One example are those fashion models with uncommon facial features who are photogenic in

pictures, but might not be categorised as conventionally attractive in day to day life. Molly Bair (Fig. 10) is one such model: her distinct facial features consist of large protruding ears, deep set eyes, and an unusual facial bone structure. Equally, someone who may be considered conventionally attractive could consistently not look 'photogenic' in pictures. The initial premise I start from considers a threefold distinction that the photogenic relies on. These are the ways in which a person is judged to appear in a photograph. First, they look beautiful, likely different and better than they do in real life; second, they look neither better nor worse; third, they look worse in the photograph. People deemed photogenic do not just look like themselves in everyday life, this would fall under regular photographs, or even good photos without qualities best described as photogenic. When a photographic subject is judged to be photogenic, this judgement observes an enhanced appearance that calls for extra attention by virtue of its remarkable display – this picture is not like other photographs.

There is also a sense that this remarkable display of a person is not just a singular event, but has in fact manifested several times in photographs and therefore warrants recognition, hence the observation, "She is so photogenic!" It is trickier to determine how such photographic enhancements can be achieved, if we accept that it proves more complex than simply owning a conventionally attractive set of features. One question that I do not have space to develop, but would like to point at regardless, is whether an opposite of 'photogenic' exists. For those people whose images consistently turn out terribly, can we speak of anti-photogenic photographs, and what would these consist of? It appears to be more complex than merely making a judgement along the lines of "this photograph is ugly", which might as well mean, "this photograph makes this person look ugly," as opposed to judging the subject herself by "this person *is* ugly." It is worth wondering whether we would need to consider this a defect of the photographic subject herself, or of the picture.

Beyond the conventionally attractive, there exist various beauty norms. Following this idea of different beauty norms, it may be more accurate to state that there exist certain kinds of beauty that are best exposed in photographs. Particularly photogenic appear to be black and white photographs of old film stars or ancestors. The lack of colour, soft focus or harsh lines, brings out an at times otherworldly feeling with regards to these people's appearances. This is not to say that the photogenic does not exist in colour photographs, but merely that black and white photography creates a special, more distanced, environment that simultaneously enhances its subjects, and places them outside our everyday perception and experience. Perhaps it is the revealing of these forms of beauty that sustain the 'enhancement', by which I do not mean that the photograph automatically

presents an overall 'better version' of the photographic subject, instead I consider the enhancement to emphasise aspects of that person's appearance in a certain moment and manner that render her looking extraordinary.

There are two parts to the photogenic as a quality. One points at a quality of the subject, this is what viewers admire when they face such an image; *she* is photogenic. Secondly, some photographers prove particularly good at identifying and drawing out photogenic aspects of the subject.

A model will be well-acquainted with the technical elements, and knows which poses, angles, and so on, are required to present features of herself in flattering ways – she is a professional poser. Ideally, the conjunction of these skills (subject and photographer) comes together to create successful photogenic images. However, there are instances where one or all parties do not possess this technical skill. People who are no models, yet still photogenic, may have a deeper awareness of ways in which they can present themselves, especially given the dominance of social media and selfie culture. Beyond technical knowledge however, what seems crucial for the subject is their capacity to appear in front of the camera with ease. Putting aside her fears and anxieties when faced with a camera allows the subject to appear without cramping up and distorting her image.

The skilled photographer directs and adjusts the subject in order to achieve the desired photogenic image. Considering photogenic images of very young children, who do not know any technical aspects of being in front of a camera, it is the hand of the photographer who represents them in this manner. This is separate from the subject's own special photogenic quality. When the photographer fails to take the image, it does not matter how well the subject is able to pose – photogenic quality will be lost. One example of failure with a subject most would consider photogenic is singer and all-round entertainer Beyoncé. The unflattering photographs BuzzFeed took of her rapidly spread on the Internet (Fig. 11).¹⁰⁴ Beyoncé is a prime example of celebrity beauty, but was in the middle of performing and therefore not able to exercise her camera skill – the success of the photogenic images relied purely on the photographer, who failed to take them. Exemplifying the opposite, we can consider the fan-pictures taken of famous actors at a red carpet event. They may not employ the knowledge of a professional photograph, but the actor in question can still look photogenic due to their own ability to appear for the camera. The photogenic image freezes a moment of enhancement and effortlessness into a remarkable

¹⁰⁴ Michael Katz, "It's been 4 years since Beyonce's publicist tried to remove this 'unflattering' photo from the internet," SBNATION, February 5 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.sbnation.com/lookit/2017/2/5/14514466/beyonce-super-bowl-halftime-how-photos-lmao-never-forget>

representation that does not look forced. In addition to a presence of skill, one often needs a portion of luck to bring all the right elements together.

In photographing photogenic subjects, there are two sources of ability that interplay with luck. These are the subject's ability to appear with ease and the photographer's ability to draw out photogenic qualities by easing the subject; when both are present they allow for a more certain photogenic outcome. The absence of one or all of these can still result in a successful photogenic image, though this is then more dependent on luck.

Why are photogenic images so compelling, or even mesmerising? I suspect this is the case because they tiptoe between the boundaries of make-believe and the Real. Walton states that fictions, which consist of all forms of pictorial representation, should be taken as props in games of make-believe. These fictions are defined in terms of imagination; they are "representations which mandate imagining, and their contents (what is true in them) is what they mandate us to imagine."¹⁰⁵ Walton clarifies that pictures, including photography and moving pictures, function as such props, which induce the spectator to imagine seeing what the picture displays. Photographs are special since, Walton argues, they are transparent; they allow one to indirectly, but still actually, see what the photograph is of.¹⁰⁶ He clarifies in a response to Noël Carroll and Gregory Currie, whom he says misconstrued what he meant by considering photographs not only transparent, but visual aids, in their explanations allegedly excluding representation as a quality of photography. Walton corrects this and clarifies that photographs, including documentary photographs, do "induce imagining seeing and are representations (depictions, pictures), in addition to being transparent."¹⁰⁷

So, while Walton compares photography to visual aids such as binoculars or mirrors, this does not exclude it from being a prop in make-believe. The key difference between photographs and 'handmade pictures', is that the latter are not transparent. Nonetheless, photographs, as well as paintings, "result from human activity and reflect the picture maker's interests, beliefs, and so on."¹⁰⁸ A handmade picture "depends counterfactually on the scene because the beliefs of the painter depend counterfactually on it. The counterfactual dependence of a photograph on the photographed scene, by contrast, is independent of the photographer's beliefs."¹⁰⁹ This is

¹⁰⁵ Gregory Currie and Anna Ichino, "Imagination and Make-Believe," In *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 322.

¹⁰⁶ Kendall Walton, *Marvelous Images: On Values and the Arts* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 117.

¹⁰⁷ Walton, *Marvelous Images*, 126.

¹⁰⁸ Walton, *Marvelous Images*, 126.

¹⁰⁹ Walton, *Marvelous Images*, 127.

where the photogenic comes in, as a special example of photography's odd interplay between the factual photographed scene, the photogenic subject in this case, and the effects it achieves as a prop in make-believe. Walton points at something similar as a rich topic to research, which focuses on "the interactions between the depictive nature of photographs and their transparency, between their service as props in visual games of make-believe and their role as aids to vision."¹¹⁰ This is why photography is so suitable to produce these images of photogenic subjects, precisely because of its visually close relationship between the reality of the subject, the fabrication and magnification of an enhancement in the image, and the fact that it freezes this integrated impression in a long-lasting effortless resemblance. It takes its subject and shows her in a fashion in which we could not behold her in person. This is inherently un-real; it is a constructed photograph, an enhancement, mapped onto the real and recognisable appearance of the photogenic subject. The enhancement belongs to the make-believe of the photograph, which successfully transforms the subject into a form that integrates make-believe with their actual appearance. The effortlessness of this bleeding over of boundaries is what renders it truly extraordinary to look at.

It must be highlighted that currently 'photogenic' as a term is typically used in relation to portrait photography, social media posts, such as the highly directed and typically edited influencer posts on Instagram, or fashion photography. There is a dominant focus on facial features, given the ongoing contemporary interest in the character of these people who look so otherworldly. As the hashtag *#IWokeUpLikeThis* demonstrates, there is an interest in the 'real self' of these people who display themselves on social media. The interest in character, however, is not merely limited to an inner character; viewers are curious to see glimpses in the subject's physical appearance. It is in this manner that photogenic faces are so enchanting; they show a subject with a strange quality, which in turn also bears upon their inner character, and what this might be. This focus on faces, however, need not be a limit when we consider how photography outside of portraiture also demonstrates the enhancement of either other fragments, or the whole, of someone's appearance. It can accomplish this regardless of the subject's state of dress or undress, as long as there is a convincing enhancement due to the overlap of make-believe and Real.

¹¹⁰ Walton, *Marvelous Images*, 113.

A stunning example of make-believe bleeding over into the Real can be found in Richard Avedon's *In The American West* series (Fig. 12). He photographed people and their professions in the West, in a striking manner. I would argue that these photographs are photogenic, and display peculiar forms of beauty and enhancement of the subject. The subjects simultaneously look effortlessly themselves, solemnly staring back at the camera, which contributes to the sense of candidness. This was also picked up by the critic who was first to write on Avedon's pioneering body of work. Douglas Davis calls the work two-faced, because initially it was promoted as a documentary style exploration of the West, far removed from Avedon's high-fashion style that made him famous. Instead, Davis recognises that despite the initial candid impression the photographs communicate, they are deeply constructed and a testimony of Avedon's pursuit of "style, manner and effect."¹¹¹

A photogenic effect is at its most powerful in the photograph that highlights and preserves it. This is why there can be no photogenic traditional art. Any painting, sculpture, or drawing buries its subject too far under the artist's hand – this is the same problem that heavily edited photographs encounter. These kinds of pictures lose out on a photogenic effect. "Photogenicity" can be understood as a merging of the Real with a make-believe enhancement, and often a stroke of luck – it cannot be brought out purely through post-production, and unless it is very subtle would fail in its efforts. There is room to imagine instances in cinema in which we can suddenly be taken by the way in which an actor is shown. However, due to the imagery moving, such a moment of awe will always break when the next moment arrives.

The photogenic's compelling power is in this blurring of make-believe and the Real, which is also the key proponent of the mystification of photogenic images. Because the boundaries of fabrication and the Real are unclear, these images and enhancements might actually seem out of this world to a spectator. This can be confusing to both spectator and subject alike, if it remains unclear which features are fabrication and mapped onto the Real. It is in the most compelling photogenic images that this distinction proves the hardest to discern, which continues the mesmerising photogenic effect. This effect correlates with charisma: charismatic individuals have a mesmerising influence on those who witness them in person, and they do not need to be beautiful in the conventional sense. Political leaders like Bill Clinton or Nelson Mandela had such an effect attributed to them, which does not necessarily come across in their portraits. For example, Yousuf Karsh's portrait of American

¹¹¹ Terry Barrett, "Describing Photographs: What Do I See?" In *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images* (Routledge, 2000), 17.

president Bill Clinton (Fig. 13), whilst striking, does not look much different than other portraits of political leaders. The immediate charismatic effect described by audiences does not communicate through the portrait. However, one could say that these portraits are photogenic, and mesmerise in a different manner. Charisma does not necessarily appear in a picture. One picture that could be considered more charismatic is the famed portrait of Che Guevara, which has maintained an attraction to the point of rendering it iconic. Charisma is truly experienced in person, to feel the full effects. Perhaps the photogenic functions as a kind of photographic counterpart to charisma: it mesmerises and appeals to spectators.

There is a final phenomenon in which spectators are aware of the overlap of make-believe and the Real, yet still engage with it and try to emulate it. The hashtag #IWokeUpLikeThis on social media initially functioned as a testimony of showing who is underneath the layer of make-up and digital filters, presenting a peek behind the social mask which promises a franker display of self. In many instances, however, it becomes a parody, creating highly constructed images. Many of the selfies taken by social media users on sites such as Twitter and Instagram show particularly dignified bedheads for having just woken up. Other sites offer tips on how to present your best self for the hashtag, ranging from food and drink to consume, to quickly applying moisturiser for your skin to look dewy, and countless other ones. There is a curious discrepancy in people presenting a particular enhanced version of their appearance under the guise of unmanipulated representation. Most Internet users are aware that what they see is likely fabricated in some sense. Yet, what the persistence of these parodies reveal is the overall promise of, and interest in, manifesting a personal innate beauty: this is how well-put together she looks, and she has not even set one foot out of bed. This example shows the kind of confusion that this attempt at demystification intends to clarify. The blurring of boundaries between make-believe and the Real can cause the viewer to become confused over what it is they are viewing. In the case of many #IWokeUpLikeThis selfies, the subject propagates, and the viewer wonders, that the photograph shows the subject just as they are.

By recognising the nature of photogenic qualities as the result of a crossing over between make-believe and the Real, we can enhance our aesthetic experience of them as well. Rather than being caught in a more naïve belief of pure innate ability, it opens the way to valuing the photographic eye for identifying and enhancing its subjects, and one's ability to project ease and compelling, different norms of beauty in front of the camera.

Having discussed the involvement of skill and creativity, carried into innovative poses by the imagination through an integrated corporeal experience, I arrived at effortlessness as a marker of such skill. The photogenic

presents a special case as a mesmerising quality of the subject that is best revealed through photographs. While rudimentary, the discussion of the photogenic as a quality of the photographic subject is still helpful to draw out where effortlessness as a marker of the subject's skill, or effortlessness in the composition and presentation achieved in an image, could lead. Furthermore, it draws on some of the hard-to-pinpoint differences across traditional visual arts media and photography which become apparent, at times, when people explain why they might hesitate to pose, or why they judge a particular image as especially compelling. Some of those difficulties, such as awkwardness and unwillingness to pose, I will go on to explore in relation to photography's (perceived) proximity to the Real, and the role self-presentation plays altogether across media. This paves the way for the next chapter three to look into (self-)presentation and the kinds of hesitations one might encounter upon posing, and for chapter four to set apart portraiture and authenticity.

Chapter 3: (Self-)Presentation and the Unwilling Subject

This thesis has treated the context of poses in chapter one, contexts being the steering force behind the categories of poses that I typified, informed by the degree to which the model independently invents poses. Chapter two investigated the ability involved in the model's posing, and subsequently pinpoints the factors that lead to creatively successful poses. Missing so far is an analysis of attitudes one may feel towards posing, and its connection to the artwork that it appears in. This brings me to the reception of poses, and to which extent it influences what happens in the studio. 3.2 'Awkward Picture or Pose?' introduces 'awkwardness' as a case study to lay bare the worries with regards to the reception of one's pose and image, which concludes in 3.3 'The Unwilling Photographic Subject'.

To make sense of the relation to the self before getting to the two later sections, I first distinguish between two types of posing, 'presentational' posing and 'performative' posing respectively. Presentational posing will constitute a form of posing closely related to the self. Performative posing is less intimately involved with the self, instead, it knows a more performative character, which results in poses that go beyond expressions of self. Modelling, for example, will typically fall under performative posing. This will become more apparent by investigating the portrait sitter and contrasting this with a professional model. The former grounded in (self-)portraiture as an art genre, the latter pertaining to a different performative practice altogether. Following from this, I look into negative emotional responses to the picture itself, or the subject who poses, to further draw out a second distinction of 'immediate reception' and 'reflective reception'.

The focus on more negative aspects of posing by means of the unwilling subject lays bare barriers to posing, particularly those encountered by non-models. It exemplifies how performative posing is not concerned in the same manner that, for instance, Roland Barthes is worried about the 'mortiferous' power of the photograph – which I consider rather rooted in self-presentational posing concerns. Tracing these attitudes towards posing deepens an understanding of how models as experts navigate their poses and reception. This chapter three presents the first of two chapters that deal with the reception of posing and its connection to the self. Chapter four presents an exploration of portraiture as a special genre with a complex relationship to authenticity. Further tensions between the personal and professional will be touched upon in chapter six, by considering the impact

of recognising a broader humanity of the model in subverting situations of objectification, as well as the usage of performance personas by models in chapter seven.

3.1 Presentational and Performative Posing

Differentiating presentational from performative posing is a worthwhile ontological endeavour. While both forms are concerned with maintaining poses (they are still bodily configurations intended to be registered), I will demonstrate that they do encompass a subtly different, nuanced nature related to the performativity of the pose. For example, when posing for a photograph upon visiting a museum with friends, such a pose is typically intimately related to oneself. It is presentational in that the pose is an expression of self, closely tying in with who the person is, in this case situated within a private context of friendship. The nature of the distinction between the presentational and performative then lies in the performance of self. Performative posing is less concerned with what is ultimately an expression of who the subject is, which is presentational. Instead, it focuses on posing configurations beyond the subject as a private person. The terms are fluid in that they do allow access for those who cross that performative boundary. The manifestation of either presentational or performative posing is curiously not automatically connected to the skill, nor creative agency of the model. Its locus is the extent to which one performs other than oneself. Modelling as a profession typically relies on performative poses. Presentational poses then occur in situations that require a closer involvement of the self. For instance, a guided pose can be highly performative, or the model may imbue her poses with a presentational twist related to herself.

For example, one can imagine a skilled model posing for an intimate portrait of herself, which then becomes presentational posing. The series ‘*Portraits*’ by Joachim Mueller Ruchholtz does precisely such a thing. Müller-Ruchholtz photographed male models from the agency *Tomorrow Is Another Day* between 2016 and 2018. These portraits are taken during in-between moments, when the models are not working for brands the likes of Hugo Boss. They are particularly intimate and striking, showing young men like *Jakob*, *Paris*, 2017 (Fig. 14) “in between adolescence and adulthood”, within surroundings that do not indicate any of the luxury they face in their fashion industry working environment.¹¹² The photographer details how he got to concentrate on these

¹¹² Moore, Kumara Lucy, “Portraits by Joachim Mueller Ruchholtz,” *Palm Studios*, October 1 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://palmstudios.co.uk/product/portraits/>.

models as private and vulnerable people, encountering sides of them which are less visible in the throes of professional bookings and networking.¹¹³ The point here being that when those same skilled models work on a catalogue fashion shoot, they pose performatively to adhere to the catalogue's artistic vision as they model its clothes.

Catalogue modelling typically requires guided poses, since the brand agent and commissioner of the photographs desire very particular, determined types of poses and subsequent impressions that fit in the brand's vision. When a model actively engages in performing a particular character, or as the mannequin off whom clothes must hang in a particular way, this constitutes performative posing. The performative interest in these modelled poses is a mannerist one. It prioritises aspects such as form, for example, that are actively represented by the model, in which the private person is less crucial. This is not to say that a formal or aesthetic interest in presentational posing cannot exist, but rather its interest is the more intimate performance of self out of which the physical configuration arises.

Presentational and performative posing have been combined by artists, particularly to achieve transgressive portraits which challenge the boundaries of portraiture. One such example is Juergen Teller's photographs of celebrities. Teller is a prolific contemporary German photographer who is known for his fine art and fashion work, but also for how he famously photographs celebrity figures in ordinary looking poses, in often mundane locations. Recently, he photographed Jonathan Majors on the side of the road, posing seemingly clumsily for two photographs humorously both in front of a tree and on one of its branches (Fig. 15, 16). The photographs are technically well-executed, and it is clear that these actors, models, and other famed entertainers are used to performing, and as such pose performatively. There has been recent uproar about Teller's images of Majors by a public which has been thrown off by the photographs' apparent 'laziness' and uncomplicated look.¹¹⁴ A trained eye, however, will pick up how crafted the images are, and how Teller does select for these straightforward-looking images which are not *laissez-faire* at all. The tension arises between a confusion of the presentational and performative poses, and its reflective reception. The public expects a certain type of performative pose, but is

¹¹³ Amira Arasteh, "Joachim Mueller Ruchholtz: Intimate portraits of fashion week models relaxing off-duty," *Hero Magazine*, January 30 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://hero-magazine.com/article/142967/intimate-portraits-of-fashion-week-models-relaxing-off-duty>.

¹¹⁴ Film Updates (@TheFilmUpdates), "Jonathan Majors photographed by Juergen Teller for W Magazine," *Twitter*, February 24 2021. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://twitter.com/TheFilmUpdates/status/1364588243283492868>.

thrown off by poses that are unlike how celebrities would typically be expected to pose for a magazine. The clash lies in the supposed banal manner in which the celebrities pose, while not recognising the craft of the imagery, nor the way in which it rejects photographic norms when photographing high-profile celebrities.¹¹⁵

The image's reception takes place across two levels: the first is an 'immediate reception', the second constitutes a 'reflective reception'. Both of these engage in a feedback loop which informs both the judgement of the artwork, as well as the creative process preceding the artwork. Immediate reception constitutes, as the term indicates, an immediate experience and engagement with the model (or sitter) and her pose. The model scrutinises herself in this manner as she poses, and critically beholds herself. Within this immediate reception, artist (or crew) also take part when they register her pose. Within this dynamic of the immediate reception within art making, both parties have a chance to experiment and offer feedback on the pose and wider process within the studio. The model's independent contributions depend on whether her posing is guided, self-improvised, or collaborative. In all cases, however, the artist necessarily relies on the model to take up the physical configuration of the pose. Annie Leibovitz describes how one cannot always predict what will occur in shoots. It is a collaboration, between photographer and sitter, and at times she cannot get what she sees or wants. While there are goals she predetermines, she awaits for interesting moments to occur beyond the scope of her preparations. Leibovitz discusses the portrait she took of Cindy Sherman (Fig. 17), emphasising that it really was Sherman's idea which she as a photographer helped realise. It requires treating people as collaborators, particularly if they do have experience performing.¹¹⁶

The 'reflective reception' takes place after a cognitive process has occurred and one is in a position to regard and judge what one engages with. That which is judged then is a range of things. First is the artwork itself which is subject to perception and judgement in its own right. Of interest to this thesis, however, is how the pose remains visible or recognisable in the artwork. This leaves room for the audience to form a judgement not merely about any formal aesthetic qualities of the work, but also about the model represented within. The reflective reception of the model relates to her formal representation, but it need not stop here. Instead, it is

¹¹⁵ A further selection of Juergen Teller's images can be found with the gallery Lehmann Maupin: <https://www.lehmannmaupin.com/artists/juergen-teller>, last accessed June 27 2021.

¹¹⁶ S.n. (Artspace Editors), "FAQ: Legendary Photographer Annie Leibovitz Answers the Ten Questions Fans Ask her Most," *Artspace* Interview with Annie Leibovitz, January 17 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews/features/book-report/faq-legendary-photographer-annie-leibovitz-answers-the-ten-questions-fans-ask-her-most-55884>.

tempting for viewers, including the model, to reserve judgement about how the pose could be improved, what it represents, and what it potentially reflects about the model. The reaction to the pose changes according to artistic genre, because of its connection to artistic convention, and what it is perceived to communicate about the model as a person. So, for example, the reflective reception of a portrait will typically have a different focus in relation to its pose and sitter, compared to the reflective reception of a supermodel's fashion shoot with erotic undertones.

The presidential portrait of Barack Obama by Kehinde Wiley, 2018 (Fig. 18) fits in an ongoing tradition of state-leader portraits. It is in this context that it is judged and understood, within which Obama as the sitter and subject of this commissioned piece is united with his political figure and accomplishments. The portrait reflects the seated pose that started with George Washington. Obama also appears to be floating within foliage in a contemporary twist. It is a remarkably odd portrait, Ben Davis points out, not merely due to its intense contrasts that are less conventional for presidential portraits. He makes the case, in reflective reception, that the portrait does not reveal much psychology of Obama, and instead renders him an abstracted, stern-looking figure. Intriguingly, Davis muses that this abstraction might be necessary to reconcile the desirable image of Obama with some of the more brutal political decisions he executed which are less discussed, and less compatible with the idea of Obama as an approachable, down-to-earth man who made it to the top against all racial and class-related odds.¹¹⁷

Reflective reception is not mere passive absorption of information, but renders a critical judgement. This judgement can focus on three features. First is the artwork as an object of judgement. Second is the judgement by both artist (or crew) and model (or sitter) who contributed to the creation of the artwork. Third, when there is some degree of recognition or knowledge of her involvement, judgement can be extended about the model as a person or professional. This occurs, as mentioned, when a pose is visibly present in the artworks. This is contrary to those cases where the model is not recognised in the artwork, and therefore avoids scrutiny, at least on a visual basis. Scrutiny, however, is not limited to representation, and can still occur through archival knowledge or some other form of contextual information. It does so, for instance, by confronting the viewers with a history of the model, in which case the origin of the judgement changes. One example of how context

¹¹⁷ Ben Davis, "Here's the Bad News about Kehinde Wiley's Presidential Portrait of Barack Obama," *Artnet News*, February 13 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/barack-obama-portrait-kehinde-wiley-1222910>.

changes the judgement of a represented person are the self-described ‘anti-portraits’ by Annie Kevans. She focuses on alternative versions of the sitter’s history, and reminds us of the ongoing purposeful adjustment and preservation that idealised reputations are subjected to. Kevans first studies her sitters’ biographies and photographs to receive a sense of their personality and life, then paints from memory, and always without a sitter.¹¹⁸ She uses the public’s familiarity with portraiture to toy with their belief that what they see is a ‘true likeness’ of someone. Kevans’ portrait of Gabrielle Bonheur “Coco” Chanel was created for her series of Nazi Collaborators (Fig. 19). Chanel operated as a Nazi spy who had a code name, which is generally less associated with her persona.¹¹⁹ Kevans successfully puts these very well-known figures in a radically different light of association with biographical backing. The added knowledge changes the harsh lines in Chanel’s face; they compel to attribute more sinister features of her persona in the portrait.

Crucial about the interaction between immediate reception and reflective reception is that both artist and model can anticipate reflective reception, by assessing their own views, as well as viewers’ reactions to the artwork. This is how the connection between immediate reception and reflective reception constitutes a feedback loop, which mutually informs one another and generates artistic decisions in response.

3.2 Awkward Picture or Pose?

The photograph’s content can digress from what actually appeared in front of the camera when the photograph was taken, while still retaining a close connection to that reality. I term this ‘the visual’ which is not synonymous with documentary qualities but designates photography’s close connection to our visual reality. The visual constitutes a mix of what sitters, artists, and viewers know and think to be there in front of the camera. In its connection to our perceptual world, the visual is dependent on social convention. The way in which this interacts with the photograph is complex. I explore how awkwardness functions as a quality of the image, firstly, and as a quality of the pose, secondly, to draw out how the overlap between the factual and fabricated interact. I take awkwardness as an umbrella term for a range of negative responses, consisting of embarrassment, self-consciousness, and discomfort.

¹¹⁸ Annie Kevans, “Artist’s Site” Accessed July 7 2021, <http://www.anniekevans.com/about>.

¹¹⁹ Madeleine Morley, “The Fluid ‘Anti-Portraits’ of Artist Annie Kevans,” *AnOther Magazine*, July 18 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://www.anothermag.com/art-photography/8875/the-fluid-anti-portraits-of-artist-annie-kevans>.

3.2.1 What is Awkwardness?

Luke Purshouse's work on embarrassment helps to frame awkwardness, before developing how it presents a challenge to posing and portraits. Purshouse's main point is that "embarrassment involves a construal of oneself as involved in an interpersonal exposure to which one is averse."¹²⁰ Embarrassment presents as a *negative* emotion, he emphasises, since one can still voluntarily place oneself in a situation that one knows will cause embarrassment. There has to be an aversion to the situation, and the subject must view herself as participating in this interpersonal exposure. Moreover, someone can engage in behaviour others might consider embarrassing, without feeling embarrassed themselves. It is then "essentially about the *exposure* of one person to another," of the 'exposee' to the 'recipient'. Some of the features that one can feel exposed about are "physical body, mental states, dispositions of character, and actions." Such exposure and subsequent emotion can also occur upon obtaining information about another person.¹²¹

Purshouse lists three paradigm cases of embarrassment to reveal more about its intricacies. The first is that a person can feel embarrassed when confronted by criticism over something she did, without having to consider that criticism unjustified. Second, while being an averse feeling, embarrassment need not arise from negative situations only. One can feel embarrassed over positive evaluation of oneself. For example, a graduating student who is called forth to pick up an award in front of the whole congregation may feel embarrassed upon having her achievements so publicly exposed. The third situation is one where the embarrassed person does not regard herself as being externally appraised. Purshouse gives the example of someone entering a bus, discovering all the seats are taken, and feeling embarrassed over needing to stand – even though it is unlikely that any of the other passengers are really making any evaluations at all.¹²² Purshouse also allows for embarrassed witnesses, by characterising embarrassment as really coming into being between the subject and other people as the result of an event, rather than purely an action or feature of the subject.¹²³

While Purshouse offers helpful groundwork to understand embarrassment, there are reasons to challenge some of his views. What Purshouse highlights, rather than embarrassment, often appears to be self-consciousness. His second example of experiencing averse feelings of embarrassment in positive circumstances

¹²⁰ Luke Purshouse, "Embarrassment: A Philosophical Analysis," *Philosophy* 76, No. 4 (2001): 532.

¹²¹ Purshouse, "Embarrassment," 530-531.

¹²² Purshouse, "Embarrassment," 522-523.

¹²³ Purshouse, "Embarrassment," 526.

encounters some tension. If the graduating student believes she has earned the achievement, understands its significance, and also knows that others grasp how important it is, then this constitutes self-consciousness rather than true embarrassment. This remains the case for a shy person who wishes to avoid being the centre of attention. Receiving the award in itself does not constitute a negative experience in the way that embarrassment is a negative emotional reaction. Rather, she experiences a heightened self-consciousness. Someone might view a photograph of herself, for example, and dislike it – not because she is embarrassed, but because she feels self-conscious.

I opt for using ‘awkwardness’, instead of embarrassment, and to conceive of it as a term that designates an aversion to interpersonal exposure, under which emotional responses such as embarrassment, self-consciousness, and discomfort can be identified. Awkwardness can be applied in two modes of engagement with the image and its subject. Firstly, it can identify something within the content of the image itself, such as composition or the subject. Second, it can constitute a response, designating a range of emotional reactions which can occur prior to the image being made, during, and upon witnessing the result. Awkwardness can carry over into the pose in this manner, or even become a form of dislike. Both applications can affect the sitter. The sitter may feel highly self-conscious upon sitting for a portrait, and in this sense unwittingly influence how she presents herself, therefore distorting for instance what she herself and the artist aimed to do, resulting in a representation that digresses from what she would normally (wish to) present. The awkwardness that some might easily feel when being photographed, for instance, is rooted in a worry about the self being experienced as falling short of one’s own expectations, via a confrontation with how one ‘truly’ looks, or to fall short of the perceptions of others.

3.2.2 Awkward Case Studies

Two portraits of anonymous Dutch women provide an example of the kind of awkwardness that can be found in both pose and composition, taken by professional photographer Van Mechelen in the early seventies.¹²⁴ They are portrait photographs taken of regular people in a studio setting. I picked two initial portraits, identified by

¹²⁴ More portraits and other studio photography by Van Mechelen in Steenbergen, the Netherlands, can be found in Jan Paul Arends’ album collection on *Flickr*. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/found-photos/albums/72157610630056851>.

Jan Paul Arends as Ms. Plasmans (Fig. 20) and Ms. de Bruyn (Fig. 21). These portraits testify to an intention on the part of the sitters to provide an engaging, flattering portrait in which they present themselves. The sitters, as any commissioner, approached the photographer to have their portraits taken. Many of these portraits by Van Mechelen are more than mere headshots and do look like they are aiming to be playful in several instances. Van Mechelen directed the posing in many of his studio pictures, especially given that ordinary people are typically not very familiar with modelling. Ms. Plasmans leans forwards; resting one's face on a fist or open hand is quite a common pose that is meant to be engaging, easy-going, and when successful draws a spectator in. Her head is shifted; in some of her photographs she looks away from the camera to achieve more of an *absorption* or *distraction* effect. However, despite signalling what would normally be a successful strategy to achieve these communicative effects, in this case the pictures fail to achieve these. Many of them show quite a forced impression, and this is due to what I consider a resistance in the image, both internally and externally for viewers. What I mean by this is that one finds an internal resistance in both portraits of Ms. Plasmans and Ms. de Bruyn. Their poses are not very well-executed, or guided if the bad execution is due to the sitter's discomfort or inability to take on the desired pose. These women likely had an idea of how they wanted to appear in their portraits, and it would be up to the photographer to assess the right strategy, but then also to comfort and guide the sitters appropriately to achieve the portrait they are hoping to create and buy. Many of their facial expressions are visibly tense. Not all angles and framings that Van Mechelen chose work well either. More aspects that demonstrate this can be found in how Ms. de Bruyn sits on the arm-part of the armchair and turns back to face the camera. The combination of her supporting arm, leaning back slightly, and tense facial expression, all render the whole posture forced and visibly uncomfortable, which affects the overall quality of the image. These portraits do not give off a sense of effortlessness, instead they look highly uncomfortable.

The external resistance that we encounter when viewing these portraits informs an impression of what one might call 'cringeworthy' today. A viewer gets the impression that these sitters look tensed up, not at ease, and one could imagine that they likely would appear quite differently if you were to meet them in person. Simultaneously, what renders the pictures so additionally awkward is the thought that the sitters commissioned these portraits; they dressed up, and these photographs are intended to capture them in a flattering way as studio photographs aim to do. The pictures fail to achieve this, and the viewer encounters a startling mismatch between the image's intention and methods. There is a unity of failed communicative efforts and technical skills (or most

minimally, if we ignore technical flaws, the photographer failing to ease the sitters' discomfort). Following that initial mismatch between technical approach and communicative output, the impression of 'cringe' intensifies when one considers that these tense expressions and postures really did occur in person.

This is where I begin to draw out the beginnings of the worries that plague 'the unwilling photographic subject'.¹²⁵ One such concern is the worry, upon viewing or posing for what one anticipates will be an unflattering picture, that one *actually* appears in this perceived undesirable way in general, and not merely throughout the self-conscious photographic encounter. That kind of self-conscious worry is focused on the sitter. A response to the image itself can be found, for instance, in Quentin Matsys' *An Old Woman*, or *The Ugly Duchess*, 1513 (Fig. 22). This portrait shows a grotesque representation of an older woman who tries to seduce a suitor. The discomfort in this representation is not so much that if this portrait was informed by a model, the older lady would look precisely like this in person. Rather, the grotesque representation itself, in conjunction with the way in which she is posed as a temptress, present an uncomfortable viewing experience. Viewers pick up on the tension between the caricature of old age and its lack of qualities that temptresses are usually shown to have.

One might object to the example from the seventies and argue instead that the photographer lacks technical prowess or good interpersonal contact for a studio photographer. Any awkwardness is then attributed to technical error, or, for instance, to the clothes which look out-of-date to the modern eye. While the outdated fashion certainly adds to the perceived awkwardness, what these images nonetheless demonstrate is that in both the making of the image, and (carried over) in the picture itself, one can experience awkwardness. To this end, I introduce a more recent example to deepen the effects that a portrait can have on one's reputation. In this example, a pre-existing emotional response to the sitter is further justified by the image's reception.

Jeremy Selwyn took a photograph of Britain's Labour Party leader at the time, Ed Miliband, who was eating a bacon sandwich on the 21st of May 2014 (Fig. 23).¹²⁶ The picture took the media and Internet by storm that same year, and re-emerged when it was published again in *The Sun* the day before the 2015 general election. Selwyn details in a later interview with the BBC how he was part of a group of photographers invited by Miliband's press team that day. Miliband is not looking into the camera directly, and also does not appear to be

¹²⁵ I explore these worries more in-depth in the next section 3.3 'The Unwilling Photographic Subject'.

¹²⁶ Joe Murphy, "Ed Miliband's battle with a bacon sandwich as he buys flowers for his wife at London Market," *Evening Standard*, May 21 2014. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/ed-miliband-tucks-into-a-bacon-sandwich-on-a-morning-trip-to-buy-flowers-for-his-wife-9407561.html>.

posing in an obvious sense. There had been much recent talk over the strict attitude of PR determining which pictures of politicians were allowed, with increasing opposition resulting in certain politicians being called ‘out of touch’ or artificial. Miliband allegedly insisted on first grabbing some food, then sat down within a couple of meters from the team of photographers he knew to be there, and ate his sandwich. Taking these factors into account, I reason that he is in fact posing, but in a diminished sense. Miliband knew the cameras were there to follow him throughout the day and sat with them. It just so happened that Selwyn took the picture at an awkward moment for the politician, who is taken off guard in the sense that he could never anticipate the image Selwyn captured. He was the object of much ridicule, and some argue it cost him his Prime Ministership.¹²⁷

Miliband looks how many people would look when photographed awkwardly mid-bite. The media narrative, however, took this as a prime example of how utterly unadapted, out of touch, ‘weird’, and incompetent he was. Toby Young, Tory party member, phrased the uproar created around this photograph quite succinctly as “the moment Ed’s weirdness went mainstream... Again, this was an instance of him trying to appear normal and getting it wrong.”¹²⁸ It lived to such an extent that in November 2014, Nigel Farage made it a point to gracefully eat a bacon sandwich in front of press accompanied by live commentary about the sandwich (Fig. 24).¹²⁹ In April 2015, David Cameron was photographed eating a hotdog with knife and fork (Fig. 25) – called out as highly over-staged by his press team in an attempt to avoid the mess that overwhelmed Miliband.¹³⁰ They succeeded, and the ridicule with regards to eating finger-food with cutlery proved not nearly as overwhelming and character-determining as Miliband’s unfortunate snapshot.

While one can call some of these displays tongue-in-cheek and humorous, such as Farage’s attempt, it nevertheless had perpetuating effects on the perception of Ed Miliband as a prospective Prime Minister. Miliband

¹²⁷ Hadley Freedman, “The G2 interview. Ed Miliband: ‘If I went on Strictly, I would make the bacon sandwich look elegant’,” *The Guardian*, July 3 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/jul/03/ed-miliband-if-i-went-on-strictly-it-would-make-the-bacon-sandwich-look-elegant>.

¹²⁸ Boyd Tonkin, “Is criticism of Ed Miliband a coded form of anti-Semitism?” *The Independent*, November 26 2014. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/is-the-criticism-of-ed-miliband-a-coded-form-of-anti-semitism-9885745.html>.

¹²⁹ S.n. “Nigel Farage pictured eating a bacon sandwich,” *ITV News*, October 2 2014. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.itv.com/news/2014-10-02/nigel-farage-pictured-eating-a-bacon-sandwich>.

¹³⁰ Jon Stone, “David Cameron eats hotdogs with a knife and fork,” *The Independent*, April 7 2015. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/david-cameron-eats-hotdogs-with-a-knife-and-fork-10159107.html>.

at the time tried to own the photograph by referring to the incident in jest, but also uttered phrases such as, "If you want a politician who thinks that a good photo is the most important thing, then do not vote for me."¹³¹

Miliband recreated a sleeker version of the bacon photograph in his appearance on *The Last Leg* hosted by Adam Hills, while sitting on a motorcycle, wearing a leather jacket and sunglasses, he performed a lip-sync to A-Ha's song *Take on Me*.¹³² This episode was filmed much later in 2017. The progression of this whole debacle suggests that no one could have really predicted that this one photograph would have such an effect, yet it did. However, if he were incredibly popular, this one-time photograph would be discounted as a mere slip-up, and likely just laughed off. The photograph is received as encapsulating all the, often little, things that people already disliked about him. His public and private persona were too damaged to overcome these reflections, and he lost the 2015 election despite his attempts to avert it. In one sense all of this is funny, including the later retake and lip-sync performance. It is telling, though, that even two years later it is dragged back up and put in a literal new jacket to attempt once more to gain control of the narrative – perhaps more successfully this time, as Miliband let go entirely, though in a safe manner, of the expected decorum. Within the confines of a talk show, and especially one such as *The Last Leg*, where others before him have also acted out of their public comfort zone, it offered a safer environment to rebuild his reputation and offer the public an impression of a genuine person who does not take himself too seriously.

I consider the Ed Miliband picture a strong, special case. This, because even though politicians publicly serve the country and maintain a public persona, the wider public and colleague politicians still very much judge them on perceived personal qualities. These personal qualities are then directly linked to their ability to lead a party or to create policies. They are skilled performers in a public speaking sense, and many will be proficient (or briefed well) at handling press moments in which they are photographed. Ultimately, what an audience is after, is some reveal of information related to the photographic subject as a person – within the persona of a politician. These two people are interconnected in the politician, since personal error can disrupt a career just as much as political error. This further demonstrates the measures taken in Cameron's case, or sheer tongue-

¹³¹ Ross Hawkins, "Ed Miliband: No More Photo Opportunities?" *BBC News*, July 25 2014. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-28492281>.

¹³² Sean Morrison, "Ed Miliband performs A-ha's pop hit Take on Me in extraordinary TV appearance," *The Evening Standard*, April 8 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/ed-miliband-performs-ahas-pop-hit-take-on-me-in-extraordinary-tv-appearance-a3510661.html>.

in-cheek triumph for Farage, following Miliband's public ridicule. It is reputation damaging when it goes badly and reflects back on the person in the role. I consider these photographs to be portraits. These people are aware that they are being photographed. They are posing and endeavour to offer a particular impression of themselves in a public role, while simultaneously being scrutinised as a private person as well. Photographers such as Selwyn are out to catch the (private) person in a potentially unguarded moment that can be used to confirm or debunk ideas propagated by the public or other politicians. This kind of picture is taken to reveal something unintended by the photographic subject.

It is much harder to think about an awkward painting, or drawing. Cartoons or caricature could be picked as one example, though any awkwardness here would be more connected to its formal features rather than an actual awkwardness of composition or pose. An example, possibly tricky since it will be hard for contemporary non-expert viewers to consider awkward, is the 1634 portrait of Maerten Soolmans by Rembrandt (Fig. 26). Harry Berger Jr. considers this "a pitiable absence of performance anxiety."¹³³ The portrait demonstrates a failed *sprezzatura*. At this time in the Low Countries it was not uncommon for commissioners to desire 'noble emulation'. This was quite complex to do successfully in a time of social and political tension, within which the new class of merchants endeavoured to establish itself. One method of noble emulation was to commission portraits that display the desired wealth and political positioning, before actually achieving these. Soolmans' portrait is full length, which adds to the pretensions of grandeur. David Smith describes how his display of "courtly pose and gesture seem as 'staged' as his fancy dress is 'showy', and the self-consciousness with which he gives his performance suggests that his ties to the social convention he is striving to emulate are themselves rather artificial. He could easily be accused of being a fraud."¹³⁴

Berger Jr. picks up on the 'embarrassment effect'; while these kinds of portraits did exist in a particular, limited circle of people with such aspirations, many Dutchmen "felt ambivalent about these courtly fashions and artful contrivances."¹³⁵ Berger Jr. includes Kenneth Clark's writing on this, stating that Rembrandt enjoyed painting elaborate dress, and when The Netherlands went through a period of Puritanism in the 1630s, Soolmans' extravagant shoes with embroidered flowers were ridiculed in a poem. In this portrait, Rembrandt

¹³³ Harry Berger Jr., "Ch. 11 The Posography of Embarrassment: Representational Strategies in a Decentralized Class Society," in *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford University Press, 2000), 278.

¹³⁴ David Smith, *Masks of Wedlock* quoted in Berger Jr., "The Posography of Embarrassment," 278.

¹³⁵ Berger Jr., "The Posography of Embarrassment," 278.

paints "...an embarrassment exquisitely conveyed by the arch iconic gesture in which an awkwardly poised hand and glove are memorialized by the graphic clarity of depiction."¹³⁶ What I propose from this is that it is possible for an awkward painted portrait to exist, but that this is very closely bound to social convention. Contemporary countrymen will have clearly noted Soolman's lavish style and desire to be ennobled. They would also pick up on his failure to embody the virtues associated with such a position, and the misplaced confidence in selling his pose. It is unclear to which extent this is Rembrandt's doing. The difficulty of pinpointing awkwardness in painted portraiture is its materiality and very present painter's hand. Given what we know of its reception, this painted portrait was saturated with awkwardness. Without the background knowledge of Dutch society and fashion, however, a twenty-first century viewer is unlikely to pick up on any of this awkwardness, and instead may consider it like any other frilly Dutch Golden Age portrait.

Awkwardness and its negative responses break effortlessness; such an impression can potentially cause a viewer to doubt the picture's veracity. By effortlessness here I do not mean that the sitter must appear attractive by common standards, nor carefree, but rather that the portrait becomes an effortless depiction of a particular appearance, character, or mood, for example. Any visible resistance to what we (think we should) see, such as an awkward grin and stiff pose when the sitter intends to look pleasantly sociable and inviting, causes friction that may lead to less successful portraiture. Taking this argument further, when a photograph does achieve such effortlessness it becomes simpler for a spectator to take it as the 'truth' – even if there was a tight construction process that came before the final picture. Such effortlessness then is also easily perceived as a natural, perhaps even spontaneous occurrence in the studio. The impression being that the sitter 'just is like this'.

Returning to painting for a moment, there is a much more direct realisation that the sitter's image is mediated: we observe the materiality of the work right in front of us through the markings with which the portrait has been painted on a canvas. There is a very visible barrier, which relieves the scrutiny for the painted portrait sitter that the photographic portrait sitter finds herself under. What may be perceived as awkward or embarrassing for the photographic sitter, would hardly be related as directly to the painted sitter. The reason for this is once more photography's very close relation to the physical reality of the sitter as she appeared in front of the camera. It subsequently reaches far deeper into aspects of the sitter's character, reputation, 'true'

¹³⁶ Berger Jr., "The Posography of Embarrassment," 279.

likeness, because it is so closely tied together with the sitter as she exists in the world. This reliance on the visual ties in with the case made for effortlessness in the previous chapter. Effortlessness and its perception are highly influenced by photography's close relation to the visual. The success of painted pieces is much more closely correlated with the painter's technical skill and the actual materiality of the medium, and we would not speak of effortlessness in the same manner. The artist's painterly skills are the creative force that constructs the successful portrait and makes it look effortless, within which we cannot say much about the sitter's effortless posing without archival or testimonial knowledge.

3.3 The Unwilling Photographic Subject

Cynthia Freeland has written compelling accounts of how portraits reveal their sitters' subjectivity. She identifies the success of great painters in terms of their observation skills and depiction of the smallest details related to the sitter, as well as "their psychological acuity and... ability to delve into the psyches".¹³⁷ Sitters often need to pose for long periods in painted portraiture. Freeland remarks that the painter can harness a "standard process" of interaction and acquaintance to help achieve a successful portrait. Photographers, or painters who work from photographs, have much more limited opportunities and lower chances of success.¹³⁸ What these limitations are precisely are not made very clear. In my understanding, she makes the point that sitters will not sit nearly as long for a photograph, given that they are taken in an instant. And secondly, the ability to delve into the sitter's psyche, facilitated by the long duration of poses, is much less present for photographers because photographs can be taken candidly and rapidly. One way to think about this is that as viewers, we really have no insight in what transpired in the studio during the painting or sculpting process. So, for instance, an uncomfortable sitter, or disagreements between artist and sitter, are much harder to detect in a painting. We would have to rely on archival evidence or some other form of testimony to be in the know of such disagreements. Whereas, in comparison, it is significantly easier to achieve an awkward photograph. In a more naïve sense, the cameras take pictures very rapidly, so one can rapidly compile a comprehensive series of badly taken photographs – as opposed to say, an unsuccessful series of painted oil-portraits. However, the 'harder time' Freeland mentions is not so

¹³⁷ Cynthia Freeland, "Portraits in Painting and Photography," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 135, No. 1 (2007): 107.

¹³⁸ Freeland, "Portraits in Painting and Photograph," 107.

much related to the artist's own technical skill in using the photographic medium. The difficulty is reconciling the visual with the sitter's sense of self, what she wishes to present, and how viewers conceive of her.

Let me present the following scenario to clarify, which is likely a scenario we have all witnessed at one point, or even experienced ourselves. One friend is an unwilling photographic subject who consents, yet feels uncomfortable about having her picture taken by her camera-fond friend. This tension is encountered all too easily in photographic portraiture, whether these are reluctant selfies, group pictures, holiday photographs, or being photographed at a work event. I am not considering instances that lack consent, like paparazzi images of celebrities or privately shared images between partners that are publicly leaked at a later stage.

There is a particular kind of hesitation that the unwilling, yet consenting, photographic subject experiences when photographed. One could immediately object that this is because she is not used to modelling, or not used to being in front of a camera otherwise. Modelling, however, presents a different situation, less to do with direct personal worries. This is where the distinction between presentational and performative posing returns more clearly. The discomfort is concerned with several ideas. The unwilling photographic subject distrusts that the picture will maintain her preferential views of herself, which by extension is a worry with regards to what people (including herself) could think when they see her representation. An awkward representation, for instance, confirms, or at the very least implies, that her self-presentation is not as she wishes.

There is also the discomfort of the act of posing itself, which relates to the reality of one's corporeality and navigating this, what one actually looks like, as well as how one presents to the camera. This kind of worry of the unwilling subject is related to image-control, and what this image relays about the subject herself. It does not stop here, however. She may recall past experiences, and how those have shown that she did not look the way she hoped in photographs. Furthermore, she may not understand the technical aspects of the camera, and how to appear in front of it. When one combines this lack of knowledge with an amateur photographer who is equally unaware of photography's technicalities, the result is an underwhelming picture not at all like how it was conceived of. It is in this way that we find such differences in presentational posing versus performative posing. The performative kind will typically arise out of the subject's skill, or implicit knowledge of technicalities. The presentational pose does not require this, and it is in this way that the unwilling photographic subject is not able to move past her hesitant presentational posing.

3.3.1 Barthes' Discomfort

This worry about whether the photograph shows a subject appropriately, or whether she looks worse in photographs (does the picture reveal a hard-to-accept truth?) is echoed in *Camera Lucida*. Roland Barthes' personal discomfort about being photographed is quite generally well-known and returns across his writings. When he talks the reader through the process of posing as he sees it, he states that he creates another body for himself, transforming himself into an image. It is not just the photograph that mortifies the subject, by turning him into an object and sense of a moment that, or a person who, *has-been*. He remarks that it is the "mortiferous layer of the pose" which embalms the photographic subject, ready to be made into object. Barthes' anxiety stems from an uncertainty over how he will be shown in the photograph, and the dependence on the photographer's 'gesture' in representing his image – resulting in what he calls a dissociation between identity and consciousness since the photograph shows the self as other. Especially portrait photography causes a sense of inauthenticity, he states; one imitates oneself, and feels a sense of imposture simultaneously. Barthes talks about posing in terms of "working upon his skin from within" and voices his preference for traditional visual arts because they allow him to "come out" on paper, "endowed with a noble expression", a kind of "delicate moral texture and not a mimicry".¹³⁹ Posing then becomes a form of image making in its own right. I understand his views on poses to be very similar to how a painter brushes over a canvas, or indeed much like the rays of light that touch an object's surface to be registered by a camera. He does embed posing intrinsically within photography:

what founds the nature of Photography is the pose. The physical duration of this pose is of little consequence; even in the interval of a millionth of a second...there still has been a pose, for the pose is not, here, the attitude of the target or even a technique of the *Operator*, but the term of an 'invention' of reading: looking at a photograph, I inevitably include in my scrutiny the thought of that instant, however brief, in which a real thing happened to be motionless in front of the eye. I project the present photograph's immobility upon the past shot, and it is this arrest which constitutes the pose.¹⁴⁰

There are grounds for disagreeing with Barthes on several points. The first is considering posing a kind of layer and 'arrest'. I contend that posing is more sculptural, and three-dimensional, rather than a surface that one applies from within. It is not a frozen moment of immobility, but a dynamic and (self-)presenting form. This is

¹³⁹ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Cape, 1982), 11-15.

¹⁴⁰ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 78.

different from an anticipated two-dimensional image. I have argued that posing and modelling can constitute a creative and visual strategy – which one can use with greater or lesser success. However, when it does not quite work out, for example due to such a far-reaching discomfort that the sitter just cannot relax in front of the camera, inefficient guidance from the artist, or other technical reasons as to why it fails – in those situations it does feed into, and ultimately realises, the anxiety of imposture or inauthenticity that Barthes identifies. He emboldens this idea by projecting the later photograph's immobility on what occurred while the picture was being taken. Once more he connects the worry about the representation in the photograph to the actual truth of how one might really look and be. It is not so much that the pose embalms the photographic subject, but rather that the photograph is an artefact of a person in a past moment, which enhances feelings that it *has-been*.

Barthes also makes a clear distinction between traditional visual arts and photography. He attributes higher moral and artistic qualities to the former, whereas photography is reduced to 'mimicry'. Beyond potential temporal differences, and differences in registering the pose, I have argued that the physical process via which poses occur is, save for differences in the speed of posing, otherwise very similar for traditional visual arts as well as photography.¹⁴¹ The main distinction lies in convention, the reception of the artworks, and how the model or sitter may be regarded in relation to this reception.¹⁴² A pose can be used to draw out playful qualities in the sitter, or to make her appear twisted, or as other than herself. Rather than mortifying, it is transformative and can help highlight particular features of the subject. Professional models are skilled at taking the later image of the artwork into account as they construct the pose themselves, which ordinary sitters might lack – though this is something which Barthes alludes to by calling posing a form of image-making. I can accept image-making, but consider it active and corporeal, rather than a 'mortiferous sheet'.¹⁴³ Barthes discusses photography as 'has-been', and its confusion of the Real and the Live:

...the photograph's immobility is somehow the result of a perverse confusion between two concepts: the Real and the Live: by attesting that the object has been real, the photograph surreptitiously induced belief that it is alive, because of that delusion which makes us attribute to Reality an absolutely superior, somehow eternal value; but by

¹⁴¹ A pose remains a particular bodily configuration that is maintained with the aim of communicating something to a spectator, regardless of medium.

¹⁴² Chapter four will explore portraiture as a genre that has a special relation to posing and authenticity, within which I compare painted and photographed portraiture.

¹⁴³ I will say more about posing as a hybrid art form in the final chapter seven of this thesis, where I will draw attention to its sculptural qualities.

shifting this reality to the past (“this-has-been”), the photograph suggests that it is already dead. Hence it would be better to say that Photography’s inimitable features (its *noeme*) is that someone has seen the referent (even if it is a matter of objects) *in flesh and blood*, or again *in person*. Photography, moreover, began, historically, as an art of the Person: of identity, of civil status, of what we might call, in all senses of the term, the body’s *formality*. Here again, from a phenomenological viewpoint, the cinema begins to differ from the Photograph; for the (fictional) cinema combines two poses: the actor’s “this-has-been” and the role’s...¹⁴⁴

While I value Barthes’ idea of *has-been* in relation to photography, and recognise the memorial value that photographs have, it is worth bringing up that more recent developments in digital photography make this mortiferous status less clear. With the prevalence of editing software and filters that can be applied while photographs are being taken, there is diminished certainty that the referent *has-been* precisely as we see her in the picture. We have reached a new stage with regards to the mortification of photography. Aided by the pose and amplified by editing, it builds an image that may be largely fantastical while related to how we view the Real that this referent looks to be based in, even if it is not physically existing in the Real. Increasingly, there need not be an actual subject, and at the very least the existing subject that the photograph represents need not share the same appearance as the final representation that we see. Barthes speaks of transformation, but ultimately this is a transformation of oneself into an impostor, and then into a deathly object. The crutch of his anxiety over being photographed is voiced in this worry about parodying, impostoring oneself, or being otherwise taken differently than one should like to think they are.

The worry about unsuccessful photographic portraits is related to the sitter and the portrait’s perceived success in demonstrating that its representation is truthful to the sitter. This is where the idea of the awkward portrait returns. Even an awkward photographic portrait could be a well-composed picture, and overall artistically sound, though spectators might still judge the sitter to appear awkwardly in some sense. The opposite would work as well: a portrait can be considered successful by spectators, and others indeed see no flaws or sign of awkwardness in the sitter, yet it is easy to imagine that the sitter may still feel awkward about how she is represented in the picture. The qualities that render an awkward painting awkward are traced back more readily to the artist who painted it, rather than any matters directly related to the sitter’s self-presenting. Such painted portraits could be considered technically flawed, while awkward photographic portraits insinuate a flaw in the

¹⁴⁴ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 80.

posing-process: viewers, due to the awkward photograph's connection to the visual, can easily assume that they witness a consequence of what transpired while the photograph was made. One might say that the photographer has failed to take any suitable pictures at the right time or failed to select the right picture. Simultaneously, there is the sense that it is the *sitter* who got caught off guard, who is unsure what facial expression to take, who therefore looks 'forced' – or awkward. A threefold awkwardness can be identified: first, awkwardness of response, the viewers response to what they see. Someone can find a photograph, or sitter, or both, awkward. Second, the sitter can feel awkward herself as she poses, and as she views the picture made of her. Third constitutes an awkwardness related to composition and formal qualities, which are the artist's responsibility.

The objection or embarrassment that viewers, or the sitter herself, may feel towards the disagreeable picture is reactionary to this visible 'proof' and idea that they are capable of looking so awkward. Subsequently, the worry is that this disagreeable photo is as much part of the actual repertoire of the sitter's own expressions and appearances. The awkward photographic portrait then supposedly is the visible result of a mismatch between sitter and artist (the photographer fails to meet the sitter's demands), or a discomfort of the sitter (this discomfort can span the moment of picture-taking, but can also be about the photograph itself).

Photographic portraiture can alter one's (perceived) presence far beyond what a proxy can accomplish as a solely mimetic device, given that it harbours the ability to effectively change people's opinions and impressions. It forges an intimate connection, and indeed not one where we could claim to intimately know the sitter if we do not actually. Nonetheless there remains a link between sitter and viewer which can result in feelings of embarrassment, or generally embarrassing situations.

I touched upon the photogenic as a special case in the previous chapter two's epilogue, which is so closely related to effortlessness. A further implication of this effortlessness is that there is a visual lack of resistance within and towards the created image, which shows an enhanced subject and brings out photogenic qualities particularly well-represented by photography. I hypothesised that there is a mapping over of make-believe, the enhancement of the subject, onto the Real, and that this may be what lends the photogenic its enthralling quality. One potential opposite could be an image that evokes friction within itself and towards its subject, or spectators. The 'un-photogenic' may be found in the direction of awkward photographs and poses. By this I do not mean a supposed ugliness (of the subject's overall looks or pose), nor badly composed photographs. It is easy to imagine intentionally awkward photographs, or photographs that subvert conventional expectations precisely by turning

them upside down or otherwise rejecting them. Yet, such examples avoid the resistance I am interested in among the elements of the picture. They can be very well constructed and remain internally coherent. Additionally, there are many ways in which typically abject subject matter or unconventional features are photographed in compelling or innovative ways.

The 'un-photogenic' then does not seem to be focused on merely a disagreeable subject matter, nor just technical deviations from the norm on the photographer's end. The 'un-photogenic' instead exists as an event of resistance caused by friction. This friction arises between, firstly, what the photograph is intended to communicate, and, secondly, the spectator's ability to pick up on this intention, and third, the realisation that what is constructed in the photograph fails to hit this intentional mark. There may be two areas of resistance; internal resistance among the formal elements of the picture that reveal their intent but fail to achieve it, and external resistance between any spectators and the artwork, as well as potentially between photographer and subject. The result is a truly awkward photograph.

Portraiture is a highly interpersonal affair. Further complementing its embeddedness in the visual by its ability to influence impressions of the sitter, it can create an event which results in embarrassment of a particular construal of oneself. This allows for photographs that viewers might consider embarrassing, but by which the sitter remains unconcerned. Vice versa, the friend who absolutely detests posing for a photograph might feel readily embarrassed about how she looks in the group picture, yet none of her other friends may see the aversion she points out about herself. Such aversion is tricky to navigate, and the interpersonal qualities of portraiture make it as complex as our relations with each other. One way to think about it is that the moment someone feels or looks like she is 'losing face', this constitutes an awkward photograph. Whereas, when that is not the case, the awkward pose or composition of the picture does not have to detract from her status or way of being. The next chapter four explores precisely how portraiture works together with the pose as a tool to create, or diminish, an authentic impression of the sitter.

Chapter 4: Authenticity and Posing in Portraiture¹⁴⁵

The anxiety people encounter with regards to posing and how they end up looking is well-founded, given the many ways in which pictures can go awry, as discussed in the case studies of the previous chapter. Posing maintains a significant influence over impressions of a person's portrait, more so than, say, determining whether the portrait shows a very naturalistic likeness. This returns on social media, wherein influencers relate to their followers and draw them in in a quasi-friend-like manner, relying on their visual online presence to do so. This chapter complements the previous, which investigated how presentational and performative posing functions, and how various images can be received with very real effects on the sitter's reality.

Especially when one considers how image and pose can render a person awkward or unlike themselves, the worry that posing is inconsistent with authentic portraits, or even obstructs them, becomes very real then. I explore portraiture as a special genre in this chapter, since it maintains such a complex connection to its sitters and questions of what it is about the sitters that it reveals.

I first discuss distinctions between painted and photographed portraits, and their relation to posing. Following this, I delve into how the pose interacts with authenticity by proposing what I call 'the truthful portrait' as a mode of engaging with, and representing, a sitter. There are a multitude of ways in which a person can be portrayed authentically, which need not emphasise resemblance – therefore a truthful portrait does not need to be *mimetic*. I take authenticity as a quality of successful portraiture, rather than just any portraiture, and connect this to Bernard Williams' notion of 'truthfulness'.

The sitter typically poses for the portrait, in a bodily, intentional act of (self)-presentation. Tension arises when we consider that some poses may present the sitter other than they are and could possibly be misleading, or outright deceitful, if what we see does not conform to how we think or know the sitter to be. There is a less actively deceitful side too, for example in how we find that a person's demeanour can change when they are photographed, and appear uncharacteristically awkward or somewhat false.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ The material in this chapter is forthcoming in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* later in 2021.

¹⁴⁶ Shusterman, "Photography as Performative Process," 246.

4.1 Painted and Photographed Portraiture

The distinction between presentational and performative posing is key to understanding how a sitter, or model, indeed do involve their own intimate self when they pose. Judgement occurs regardless of medium, though the medium does create a particular environment and set of qualities to judge within. Portraiture proves a rich area of study in terms of drawing out how the aforementioned distinctions interact. In this section I explore what the mediums of painting and photography contribute to the posing and understanding of portrait sitters.

We expect portraits to display individuals with a compelling genuineness, to reveal something about their subjectivity. Portraiture as a genre maintains revelatory aims of faithfulness to the subject and creative aims of artistic expression to this end.¹⁴⁷ Early renditions of European portraiture made use of symbols to construct an identity, for example in Hans Holbein's *The Ambassadors*, 1533. The focus later shifted to an interest in hinting at the sitter's inner life.¹⁴⁸ Some were also highly conventionalised, for instance the portraits of nobility which sometimes favoured idealised features. Enduring through the expansion of its functions, a feature of portraiture remains precisely its focus on the portrayal of sitters; attempting to grasp the whole or a part of the individual, particular features related to them, or even reflecting something about the artist herself as a person.

Posing-duration is a critical feature that determines portrait-sitting, not least because the feasibility of poses, and ultimate representation, depend on the sitter's physical and mental perseverance. Sitters, throughout the ages, have lamented long sitting times and have actively attempted to shorten them.¹⁴⁹ Portraitists can work from memory, or base their painting on preliminary sketches. Long sitting times for painted portraits would have occurred with breaks, and indeed at times, to the painter's discontent, the sitter might not at all be present in person.

I briefly return to the second part of Freeland's point about portrait painters and photographers, namely that photographers experience greater difficulty delving into their sitter's psyche, given how fast photographs

¹⁴⁷ Freeland, "Portraits in Painting and Photography," 95.

¹⁴⁸ Cynthia Freeland, *Portraits and Persons: a Philosophical Enquiry* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 89.

¹⁴⁹ Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits: European Painting in the 14th, 15th, and 16th Centuries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 178. Campbell describes how "A bored sitter obviously presents problems and not all portraitists were able to paint and at the same time to keep the sitters entertained. In 1494, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este informed his sister Isabella that it was only for the love of her that he would submit to the tedium of sitting... Isabella herself found the patience involved in staying still so much of an annoyance that she resolved in 1511 never again to make the sacrifice of sitting for her portrait. In 1516, she wrote that 'we no longer wish to endure that boredom of staying patient and sitting for our portrait.' Vasari was conscious of the 'melancholy' frequently found in portraits of abstracted sitters, and claimed that 'while Leonardo was painting Mona Lisa's portrait, he engaged people to play and sing, and jesters to keep her cheerful and remove that melancholy which painting usually gives to portraits.'"

are taken. While it is true that the mechanism of the camera grew capable of taking many pictures in mere seconds, this does not mean that the posing itself finishes in the blink of an eye. Photographers like Yousuf Karsh, for instance, are known to spend time with their sitters. While the selected photograph was technically taken in an instant, the work required to realise this image did not necessarily occur in an instant. Posing takes time, from adjusting technical details such as lighting or angle up to experimenting with different physical configurations for the sitter. Posing for photography is, additionally, not necessarily brief, since each individual pose may follow in quick succession, and includes trial and error. It is an active endeavour that requires time and precision to execute in a way that is preferable to the project these parties work towards. Part of the photographer's task is to guide the portrait sitter to the desired pose and perhaps mental state. Recall the model and sitter distinction, rooted in performative posing versus presentational posing. The sitter need not be a professional model in order to commission a portrait. The portraitist's successful guidance is then dependent on the photographer's ability to make the sitter comfortable, or to disarm them well enough to achieve an image that seems to show something about them. Much like the great painter, the great photographer is able to draw out features of the sitter in a compelling, subjectifying way to give some sense of how and who the sitter is.

One example of this is Edward Steichen's 1903 portrait of J. P. Morgan (Fig. 27), which came about on request of painter Fedor Encke to substitute for J. P. Morgan, who proved too busy to sit through portrait sessions. J. P. Morgan was willing to sit in front of Steichen's camera for all of three minutes. Steichen had prepared the set previously, using a janitor to adjust lighting. As the story goes, he took two photographs in those three minutes, the second one shot right after J. P. Morgan acclimatised and naturally adjusted to a more domineering pose that came to him. Steichen organised the lighting in the picture in such a fashion that the arm part of the chair looks like a knife. Though Steichen has spoken of guiding the sitter to bring forth a revelation of character, some critics have responded that he is merely toying with the public's perception of J.P. Morgan's cutthroat business style and prominent role in banking.¹⁵⁰ Both are fair readings, and precisely what should be expected from successful portraiture. Steichen displays a critical ability to disarm or guide the sitter in such a way that a compelling portrait is created, with the aid of both pose and composition. The fact that it appeals to

¹⁵⁰ Abigail Tucker, "J.P. Morgan as Cutthroat Capitalist," *Smithsonian Magazine*, January 2011. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/j-p-morgan-as-cutthroat-capitalist-74972230/>.

a wider public's perception of J. P. Morgan, who was after all a widely prosperous American tycoon, only renders the portrait more successful despite J. P. Morgan's own reservations.

The success in psyche-delving that Freeland voices is then not limited to or best expressed in painting, not least when we consider portrait painters' struggles with immensely bored sitters. Instead of relying on a display of inner life, it is rather a matter of the artist exploring who the sitter is as a person. This is a continuous battle between what the sitter thinks of themselves, what they want to project into the image, what the artist encounters, and (especially in the case of more publicly known people) they must take into account what viewers expect to see about the sitter. Portrait making involves "the expectations of three potentially different persons, artists, subject, and audience".¹⁵¹ Paul Guyer regards posing as something that sometimes needs to be "broken through" to get the desired result, particularly when we consider such tension in the collaboration. He enters the example of Yousuf Karsh's famed Churchill portrait to demonstrate the complexity and challenge of posing. Churchill was posed more defiantly by Karsh's snatching his cigar, in line with public expectation.¹⁵² Karsh's portraits embody the public perception of the sitter, not the person themselves.¹⁵³ The artist's ability to access the sitter is not greatly diminished in either painted or photographed portraits, since both mediums can achieve this in similar fashion. So, where do these mediums differ across portraiture as a genre? And what is the role of posing in this?

I first pause to consider self-portraits, to draw out a distinction worth noting between painted and photographed self-portraiture. Dawn Wilson commented about self-portraiture that "we would also be interested in finding out 'why the experience of posing for a photograph is different from posing for a painting'".¹⁵⁴ She draws this difference back to technical aspects of the medium, such as the use of a mirror, or relying on the automatism of the camera.

...Steichen presented himself in the typical pose associated with a painter's self-portrait, a pose that carries the preconception that he is viewing his appearance in a mirror. But I have argued that the difference between the pose of a painter and the pose of a photographer can be radically different in self-portraiture. Assume for the sake of

¹⁵¹ Paul Guyer, "Portraits, Persons, and Poses," In *Portraits and Philosophy*, ed. Hans Maes (Routledge, 2019), 57.

¹⁵² Guyer, "Portraits, Persons, and Poses," 56-57.

¹⁵³ I explore how posing enhances or obscures access to the sitter in portraiture at the end of this chapter.

¹⁵⁴ Dawn Wilson, "Facing the Camera: Self-Portraits of Photographers as Artists." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 70, No. 1 (2012): 57.

argument, but also because it seems plausible, that Steichen is posing for this self-portrait without a mirror. Although his props symbolically indicate that he is posing as a painter, it is far more important that he is in fact posing, or presenting himself, for his self-portrait as only a photographer can do – facing the camera in full awareness that he is harnessing the automatism of the photographic process. The artistic intentionality that seemed evident and compelling at the outset has not altered, and thus we should be in no doubt that this self-portrait is a representational work by an artistic agent, but we should also see in the work the distinctive intentionality of a photographic artist.¹⁵⁵

Wilson identifies a conflict between automatism and agency in photographic self-portraiture. She makes the case for realising that an account of photography should accommodate perspective of agents where they are involved in the creative process. She remarks that posing for photographs is radically different from posing for a painting. However, her discussion remains focused on the traditional use of a mirror as an intermediary visual device for self-representation, firstly. Secondly, she posits that the camera's automatic process resolves this issue for self-portraiture; the artist no longer needs to rely on a mirror to get a sense of their own appearance. There is no further exploration of what the actual differences in posing may be. I will draw these distinctions out further by challenging her notion of the mirror as visual device as sufficiently separating painted and photographic portraits.

For instance, in digital photography, photographers can very quickly get a sense of the taken photographs by visually going through the images on the little display screen of the camera. With analogue photography it is rather the case that photographers work more blindly and have less control over the process. They will only find out in post-production what their images may look like, which also depends on their developing process. Photographers initially do see an actual mirror image when they look through viewfinders, particularly those that do not include a prism which flips the image it shows. It is this mirrored image which the photographer in those instances relies on to assess how to compose and balance out the photograph they hope to take. In similar vein, this is also the case for those display screens in digital photography: there is an equal reliance on a "mirror image" (minus the 'flipping' of the image) to instantly engage in a selection process and potential pose-adjustments to work towards achieving the desired image. This is much like how Wilson treats traditional mirrors as a visual intermediary; the mirror takes a symbolic role as an object that perfectly replicates an appearance, while additionally, through a semi-mythical status, it creates a virtual double of a real object.

¹⁵⁵ Wilson, "Facing the Camera," 64-65.

She is right to argue that photography grants access to otherwise inaccessible or unexpected features of one's own appearance, and offers ways of viewing oneself in the case of self-portraiture that are less readily available to human vision. However, an actual comparison of posing gets lost in the technicalities of photography as a medium versus traditional visual arts. These technicalities are not as unlike each other as they first seem; they are both concerned with showing a direct appearance or image to aid the artist's selection process. The process of posing for both traditional arts and photography in general remains similar too. The model still moves through particular bodily configurations with the aim of communicating something to a spectator, regardless of whether she poses for a traditional visual medium or camera. The key difference is one of degree rather than kind, and can be found in the level of control and speed at which artworks are made and therefore poses adjusted. Digital photography exercises greater control over the construction of a pose and its representation. These can be minutely managed and compared to previous photographs taken in the same round. Poses do differ more strongly across these media in their reception, however. This has much to do with the strong relation of photographs to the visual, which has the potential to confuse viewers when it mismatches convention or expectations.

The main distinction between painted and photographed portraits is not their success rate in a purely technical or pose-duration related sense, but rather that photographic portraits must deal with a more intensified criterion. They constitute a particular faithful representation of the sitter in the moment that the photograph was taken. This expectation rises from the assumption that when we look at the photographic portrait, there is an undeniable connection to what transpired in the studio in front of the camera.¹⁵⁶ Viewers compare photographic portraits to their perceived actual situation, strictly judging them for how accurately they depict the sitter's actual physical appearance, or any other sign of emotion, character, or some kind of inner life at that time. Painted portraiture requires more space for stylistic liberty, unless we are speaking of hyper realistic portraits in which it proves difficult to pick out visual differences between those and photographic portraits. One way to distinguish between painted and photographed portraits is the thinking of where a viewer might attribute the flaws of a portrait. Recall the example of Soolman's unintentionally awkward portrait by Rembrandt (Fig. 26). The sitter's appearance is concealed in paint, as it were, and further removed from what

¹⁵⁶ See Kendall Walton's on transparency and mimesis, which I touched upon in chapter two, and will develop further in chapter seven.

it would be like to witness Soolmans in person. Photographic portraits, due to their close connection to the visual and our perception of our reality, are much more sternly judged in their relation to the sitter's reality. Any awkward sitter's features, angles, or moods may be rejected more intensely simply because we expect to see a direct connection to the actual sitter, and subsequently because they fail to meet expected conventions. This is what the contrarian oeuvre of Juergen Teller (Fig. 15) engages with, when he creates his images of celebrities in all sorts of awkward or banal poses, in mundane locations.

A significant difference between painting and photography is how each medium maintains its individual relation to temporality. Painted portraits have a more formal sense about them, creating an ennobling effect since the sitter is presented as extended in time, instead of a momentary appearance. Time is indexed to the sitter here. Photography, however, indexes the subject to time, due to its momentary nature and causal relationship to the sitter – a photographer must work actively to counteract the momentary in order to give a sense of longer lasting time.¹⁵⁷ It is harder to take into account what the sitter might have contributed, and indeed what transpired to achieve the painting.

In our distant European past, portraits functioned as a proxy for the face. Facial expression became separated from the body and instead was transferred onto a symbolic surface. Their resemblance is largely physiognomic, but always fictional – and it is here that the act of transference occurs, in other words what we call 'representation' today. Hans Belting points out a paradox, namely that the portrait reduces the face to a concept of itself because it turns it into a mask. He considers a face an open form, and a mask closed. When the portrait then takes over from the face, he proposes that this is not a performative kind of representation, but a mimetic representation. Such mimesis succeeds only when it conforms to societal conventions, and therefore intensifies the portrait's mask-like qualities. There is a further tension to be detected as well, between on one hand a private intention to show a 'real face', and a collective intention to display the 'face of a role'. It must be remarked that the face of a role often does not exist without first representing it through an individual face that has its own particular features.¹⁵⁸ Belting points out one of the tensions within portraiture, which is situated in the friction between the authenticity of the private subject in conjunction with any outward-facing roles. The

¹⁵⁷ Roger Scruton, "Photography and Representation." *Critical Inquiry* 7, No. 3 (1981): 586-587.

¹⁵⁸ Hans Belting, *Face and Mask: A Double History*. Tr. by Thomas S. Hansen and Abby J. Hansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 93, 99.

rest of this chapter will look into precisely this tension, and the role poses play to sway a portrait in authentic or inauthentic directions.

4.2 Portraiture and Authenticity

Portraiture can be distinguished in a broad and narrow sense. Broadly, it is pure likeness, and includes images such as passport photos and mugshots.¹⁵⁹ Narrowly, we value portraiture most when it goes beyond presenting a mere likeness, and instead says something about the wider person. This narrow sense is where portraiture's claim to authenticity resides. When encountering the portrait, we expect it is somehow rooted in the sitter we see – including, but not limited to, their physical likeness, a sense of character, objects relating to their life, or the display of a role and public persona. This does not have to be dishonest, since even public image is no more than the “socially visible face of a being who is presenting it as a target for social interaction.”¹⁶⁰

Authenticity's significance becomes apparent when we consider our general viewing experience of portraits: the spectator expects to see a compelling representation of the portrayed sitter. Collingwood characterised this as “an imaginative vision” of a sitter, more than just likeness, which is rendered by the great portraitist's impression of this person.¹⁶¹ Roland Barthes conceives of an ‘air’, addressed in his search for a picture of his mother in *Camera Lucida*, 1981, which involves a moral attitude, and a type of outlook that summarises the subject's personality. This helps to understand how portraits “‘show who someone is’ in the sense of describing for us what kind of person they are, rather than simply showing that the person is a queen, mother, horseman...or whatever.”¹⁶² Such an overall attitude can also be applied to the four dimensions of personhood in portraiture identified by Cynthia Freeland: the bodily (outer), reflective (inner), relational, and the moral.¹⁶³ One anticipates that in some ways the portrait matches what the spectator (imagines they) might experience during an actual encounter with the sitter. This evokes Kendall Walton's notion of the ‘picture world’ of an image, which viewers can imagine in various ways. Freeland uses this to demonstrate that we rely

¹⁵⁹ Some artists, such as Thomas Ruff, consciously pursue a mug-shot aesthetic in some of their fine art portraits.

¹⁶⁰ Velleman, David quoted in Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 103.

¹⁶¹ Robin G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford University Press, 1960 [1938]), 307-308.

¹⁶² Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 116.

¹⁶³ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 84, 116.

on the skilled artist's ability to render someone's pose and self-presentation to create a nuanced, subtle "imagined world of the portrait interaction."¹⁶⁴

It is worth considering how scholars have thought about the nature of portraiture, to make sense of what makes a good portrait. In 'What is a Portrait?' Hans Maes compares the accounts of portraiture put forward by Freeland and Paolo Spinicci. Freeland overall defines portraiture as "an image that presents a recognizably distinct individual who has emotional or conscious states, and who is able to participate in the creative process by posing".¹⁶⁵ Maes teases out that the insistence on physical likeness troubles the existence of portraits with a high degree of abstraction, in which there might not be a very visibly recognisable sitter present, or portraits that rely on objects that show us something about the sitter without showing the sitter themselves. He does not consider posing necessary, arguing that it is too restrictive and would mean that no portrait could be created from memory or an absent subject.¹⁶⁶ Maes' account of portraiture is a substantive concept. It allows portrait-relevant features to shift through time, while maintaining a continuity through their makers, who must have principal knowledge of the nature of portraiture that also matches the notion of portraiture by a group of prior portrait makers.¹⁶⁷ He draws attention to the overlap between artists like Rembrandt, Goya, and Dijkstra, who "share the idea of a portrait as representing Y, or a group of Y's, where Y is considered to possess selfhood and a capacity of self-presentation, in such a way that Y's looks, inner life, social standing, and/or public identity are revealed."¹⁶⁸

So, what makes a good portrait? Considering the manner in which features of portraiture persist, authenticity can be a part of the substantive concept of portraiture. It remains present in the creative context of portraitists to use or react against, such as the Avant-Garde and Modernist artists, and offers a framework that viewers use to engage with the representation of self. Authenticity has implications for both the act of making and viewing of portraits, and affects all parties involved. Rudolph Arnheim speaks of two distinguishable authenticities in photographic media. They either "do justice to the facts of reality", or express "the qualities of human experience by any means suitable to that purpose." He, rightfully, worries that those boundaries become

¹⁶⁴ Cynthia Freeland, "Moving Picture Portraits," In *Portraits and Philosophy*, ed. Hans Maes (New York: Routledge, 2019), 107-108.

¹⁶⁵ Hans Maes, "What is a Portrait?" *British Journal of Aesthetics* 55, No. 3 (2015): 284.

¹⁶⁶ Maes, "What is a Portrait?", 306-307.

¹⁶⁷ Maes, "What is a Portrait?", 315.

¹⁶⁸ Maes, "What is a Portrait?", 319.

muddled with the intensification of digital photography and editing.¹⁶⁹ Arnheim briefly remarks that for an image to be readable, it has to be organised in a manner that conveys the intended meaning, which comes remarkably close to Bernard Williams' notion of truthfulness that I apply to both traditional visual art and photography.¹⁷⁰

There is a much longer philosophical tradition that concerns itself with human nature and authenticity, reaching back to existentialist thinkers such as Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, and de Beauvoir. I cannot do justice to their explorations of authenticity here, as I am more concerned with advancing an account of authenticity in portraiture grounded in Williams' truthfulness. However, I will briefly consider the influence of Heidegger, it being his neologism *Eigentlichkeit* that motivated a now common use of the term 'authenticity', though a more literal understanding would be 'ownness' or 'ownedness'.¹⁷¹ The authentic person owns up to their actions and choices, and "is resolute in being true to her own judgement – she deploys her capacity to judge for herself – but her doing so is her being open to her concrete situation".¹⁷² Heidegger allows for authenticity as arising out of actions and decisions we engage in and stand up for, which constitutes a self that is in ongoing development.

Freeland discusses recent views on the social self, in particular Richard Brilliant's remarks that portraiture supports the construction of people's identities. Crucially, identity itself is a wholly social phenomenon existing around people's relations. It is a condition of our social existence that we present ourselves to others. This provides a challenge for portrait artists especially, since they are required to interpret both the person's physical appearance as well as their 'impersonation of a self'.¹⁷³ Freeland respecifies Brilliant's views, "people present a self to the outside world as part of *who they are*, in and of themselves". Research in evolutionary psychology supports this, like Michael Tomasello's work that reveals how a child's sense of self already develops in their very first year, understanding that she engages with another intentional agent when adults interact with her. Similarly, David Velleman argues that when we experience feelings of shame, these result in fact from an inappropriate public scrutiny of the private self. Velleman proposes that "the public self simply *is* the self."¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ Rudolph Arnheim, "The Two Authenticities of the Photographic Media," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 51, No. 4 (1993): 537, 540.

¹⁷⁰ Arnheim, "The Two Authenticities", 538.

¹⁷¹ Denis McManus, "On a Judgement of One's Own: Heideggerian Authenticity, Standpoints, and All Things Considered," *Mind* 128, No. 512 (2019): 1181.

¹⁷² McManus, "On a Judgement", 1201.

¹⁷³ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 100.

¹⁷⁴ David Velleman quoted in Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 102-103.

Beyond the relationships, experiences, social self-presentation, and aspects of life that we can engage in, one can wonder whether there is a true self within us.

The usefulness of Bernard Williams' concept 'of truthfulness' in relation to portraiture will be its applicability regardless of the theory of self, whether psychological, naturalistic, or social. Truthfulness as an application to the self, complemented by Freeland's dimensions of personhood in portraiture, should bring us to understanding how good portraiture achieves authentic portrayal. One worry with these dimensions of personhood is that it may be hard to determine when something is authentic, or when it is merely showing something inauthentically about a person in that dimension. A photographic portrait can be inauthentic regardless of its very precise likeness, if the sitter was implored to take on a posture that renders her uncomfortable and unlike herself, as Shusterman indicated. In contrast, an experimental mixed-media 'pasta shell on sugar paper' portrait could prove more accurate in portraying some of its sitter's characteristics and playful nature through the associative and formal qualities of the pasta.¹⁷⁵ While admittedly quite an eccentric example to make this point, I introduce the mixed media artist and illustrator Jim Taliana's *Self-Portrait in Pasta and Crackers* (Fig. 28), the last piece he made before his death in 2012. In a call to build a memory bench for his contributions to and presence in the community of Boothbay Harbor, Maine, USA, it is written that Taliana will be "remembered for as many things colorful and diverse as the assorted pasta, beans and popcorn kernels that make up his portrait. (...) what a sense of humor he had, and what a huge talent he had".¹⁷⁶ What matters is the truthfulness with which the piece is created, not likeness. Those who knew him have given testimony of his good-humoured nature, for which the pasta shapes are appropriate. Truthfulness therefore need not be *mimetic*.

Thinking of the different aspects of personhood that Freeland proposes, there is a multitude of ways in which a person can be conveyed physically, reflectively, relationally and morally. The way to determine whether what we see is an authentic aspect of that person, is indeed rooted in the truthfulness with which their image is presented. Otherwise it remains unclear when a particular creative method constitutes inauthentic flattery, for example, and when it is authentic portrayal.

¹⁷⁵ I am grateful for Dr. Graeme A. Forbes' striking suggestion.

¹⁷⁶ Ryan Leighton, "Memory Bench Proposed for Boothbay Harbor Artist," *Boothbay Register*, March 2 2013. Accessed July 7 2021, www.boothbayregister.com/node/9953.

Bernard Williams emphasises one's "commitment to truthfulness" as the underlying value of truth that consists of various states and activities associated with truth.¹⁷⁷ These are embedded in virtues as qualities of people that reveal themselves in wanting to know the truth, then finding out the truth, and finally communicating this truth to others. Most useful to apply to portraiture is his idea that it matters not how capable of truth these narratives supporting our society and understanding are, nor how necessary it is that they do this, but whether they can be truthful without being absolutely true. Williams' findings on the value of truthfulness offer a framework to deal with the selection and representational processes that lead to authentic portrayal. He relies on two fundamental virtues of truth: *accuracy* and *sincerity*. When someone is being truthful, they have made the best possible attempt to acquire true beliefs (accuracy), followed by the fact that what they explain reveals what they believe (sincerity).¹⁷⁸

Accuracy is versatile: many things can be accurate, yet still differ greatly among each other. For example, one can accurately describe what they did last weekend, or how to take an accurate measurement for a functioning dress pattern. Accuracy approximates something in our reality closely enough for it to correspond to that reality, in conjunction with a particular aim. What matters is a near enough approximation that is workable in function of the goal. Accuracy, as Williams uses it, is crucially *truth-acquiring*; its investigator must have the will to examine, and resist wishful thinking, self-deception, and fantasy, while maintaining a method that allows her to discover true beliefs.¹⁷⁹ Sincerity then ensures that the attempt for accuracy is communicated in a way that reveals this effort. Sincerity, importantly, is dependent on "sustaining and developing relations with others that involve different kinds and degrees of trust." Such an attitude allows its agent to assess their relations to other people, the structure of mutual respect, and a sense of oneself without self-deceit within these relations.¹⁸⁰

The idea of an investigative investment, and related ideas of investigative strategies, imply that inquiry will encounter obstacles... This is the basic reason why Accuracy can be properly treated as a *virtue*, and not simply as a disposition to pick up reliable information – just as Sincerity is a virtue, and not just a reliable disposition to express

¹⁷⁷ Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay in Genealogy* (Princeton University Press, 2002), 2.

¹⁷⁸ Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*, 6-7, 14.

¹⁷⁹ Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*, 127.

¹⁸⁰ Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*, 121.

inner informational states, because it operates in a space that is structured by motivations to conceal or dissimulate.¹⁸¹

Importantly, the truthful investigator will face both internal and external obstacles in her search. Internally, one must hone the skills and attitudes that resist self-deception and wishful thinking “in all its forms, from a gross need to believe the agreeable, to mere laziness in checking one’s investigations.” Externally, the world can be resistant to one’s will to investigate, and “beliefs are answerable to an order of things that lies beyond our own determination.”¹⁸²

This is precisely what good portraiture does: it accurately selects aspects related to the sitter, which are then represented in the portrait and communicated to viewers – allowing for the dimensions of personhood to be filled in truthfully. Vital, then, to understanding authenticity in portraiture is this realisation of the art genre’s connection to truthful portrayal. This is where we do not need to commit to whether the self is or is not constructed. Whatever it is, all one needs is a truthful attempt in relaying a self. The artist herself may be uncertain and not ascribe to a philosophy of self. Or artists (and sitters) might have differing notions of self altogether. What matters is the commitment to truthfulness. Our idea of authenticity then becomes an attitude in a process, and takes part in the process of truthful creation. This process has two components in which it relates to truthfulness. First, the good portrait artist seeks to be truthful, by making an accurate and sincere effort to portray someone – and this constitutes virtues that the artist has. Second is the work they create. The portrait carries over those virtuous qualities. The hope is that the artist gets the sitter to also be truthful. Recognising this enhances our aesthetic understanding of such pieces when we consider that portraiture’s qualities operate within a context of truthfulness, especially once it is applied to posing – which I explore more in-depth in the second section. It shines light on why those pieces that are masterfully truthful have such an appeal to viewers. Conversely, it clarifies what makes something inauthentic.

One might wonder how this can possibly be judged for sitters we do not know, or whether a portrait can be made of an absentee (whether dead, fictional, or never met face-to-face) sitter? This is where the importance of *trust* in truthfulness comes in. Breaking or disrespecting such trust has, of course, been the subject of many lamentations. Freeland argues that posing is simply part of how and who the sitter is, as well as the artist’s own

¹⁸¹ Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*, 124.

¹⁸² Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness*, 125.

professional approach, which might seem contradictory to the idea of conveying an inner core, “the person an artist depicts *is* the person as he or she has chosen to pose or appear.” Within the portrait, one finds a struggle between what the artist wishes to accomplish artistically, versus how the sitter desires to be seen, as well as anticipating what a later audience might think.¹⁸³ I refer once more to the portrait of Alfred Krupp by Newman (Fig. 2). The artist’s understanding of who the sitter really is can pull against the sitter’s own self-understanding. Sitter, artist and image then are not necessarily a harmonious unit, complicating how they interrelate.

We cannot truly know unless we have special access to the sitter. We can, however, rely on great portraitists’ bodies of work, and the many experiences we enjoy when engaging with their work. These experiences refine our sense of detecting when someone is being truthful. This works as it does in everyday life, where we similarly refine our ability to identify (dis)honesty, and at times can be fooled.

It is all the more important that we recognise the significance of trust for the artist to draw out particular features of her sitter when they do sit in person. Richard Avedon’s portrait series with Marilyn Monroe on May 6th 1957 resulted in an intriguing photograph: *Marilyn Monroe, Actress, New York* (Fig. 29). After her usual performance, he captured her sitting expressionless and quietly by herself. Avedon shows us a different Marilyn, with an inner life that her previous posing did not render visible. This exemplifies the importance of mutual trust, in terms of accessing something intimately related to the sitter. A relationship of trust also exists between the portrait and its viewer. As a viewer, we want to trust that what we see shows something authentic about its sitter, in any of the four dimensions of personhood. We trust that the artist has made an effort to communicate something truthful about the person, some or all of their likeness, character, relations, or a moral quality. An artist can do this based on archival material or literary accounts in the case of absentee or dead sitters, through conversation, and so on. There are different ways of portraying someone authentically; from truthfully rendering someone’s physical features via a photograph or description, to endeavours of portraying deeper notions of character, or abstracting sitters to enhance other associative qualities related to their person, to give some examples.

Among the personal obstacles to truthfulness are self-deception and wishful thinking. These feed into a concern about how others view us and whether we are esteemed correctly (or as we *want* to be). They impact

¹⁸³ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 115; Guyer, “Portraits, Persons, and Poses,” 56-57.

our experience and potential suspicion of portraits, both as sitter and viewer. One occurrence of inauthentic portraiture are heavily edited social media photographs by ‘influencers’ who amend their pictures to even out pores, tailor waists, and pronounce body parts like their chest and buttocks. What they show is how they wish they could be (seen). This is a fabricated display of appearance and character for flattery’s sake, which intentionally conceals the reality of the sitter. They are (self-)deceptive, and conceal their wish to be different from how they are, to lead a particular lifestyle that comes with all the associated features. Such images untruthfully represent the sitter as if this is how she really is.

One might wonder about pieces that forsake the self, considering artists like Andy Warhol and Cindy Sherman. Warhol relies on pre-fabricated images in which the self dissolves, and portrays celebrities who disintegrate the distinction between their private and public lives. Sherman masquerades herself to create estranged, voyeuristic images. There is still a concern for inner life in Sherman’s work, and ordinary people can usually separate private from public, without lacking selves.¹⁸⁴ They are part of portraiture in the wider sense. While they create great art, they are not examples of great portraiture and what we value about it in the narrow sense.

4.3 Posing, the Self, and Truthfulness

I sought to demonstrate that authenticity is an important quality of good portraiture, and that I understand it as truthfulness. This third section connects to a phenomenology of posing to help clarify how a pose can be advantageous to authenticity.

Freeland examines posing in two ways. In one sense posing requires self-awareness and an understanding of the creative process of portrait-making, “so that the resulting image can manifest their differing desires and attitudes about it.”¹⁸⁵ In the second sense, she also subscribes to human nature involving self-presentation, awareness, and an interest in how one is regarded by others.¹⁸⁶ Focusing on portraiture in the narrow sense, also benefits to then focus on posing within an artistic context. Some of its qualities present more strongly in those situations, and a different anxiety arises when confronted with posing and image making compared to self-

¹⁸⁴ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 288-289.

¹⁸⁵ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 17.

¹⁸⁶ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 104.

presentation in everyday life. Brilliant, Velleman, and Tomasello each make their case for an inevitably social self. A consequence of this is that it characterises posing as continuous self-presentation which humans undertake in their social lives.¹⁸⁷ Such self-presentation takes up a significant portion of our daily interactions with each other. Posing then cannot be unnatural, being an everyday feature of human life.

While the unposed allows a different access to the unaware sitter, it does not automatically render posed images less truthful. An uninterrupted awkward stiffening in front of the camera is a largely unmediated appearance when it concerns posing, but this is rather a momentary instance. As Arthur Danto succinctly puts it, “Catching people unawares does not automatically assure us that we have achieved the truth.”¹⁸⁸ A good artist puts the sitter at ease with themselves, and brings this out of them. The artist (implicitly) encourages honesty, and gains an impression of how they are. The best portraits are of those who are really you, not just how you would like to be. Freeland’s sense of how we are most authentically ourselves then becomes modified here, to a way of being that is in part drawn out by the artist. Even in terms of social presentation that we continuously perform, one can argue that we are not most authentically ourselves at a job interview, for example, trying to impress someone.

Paolo Spinicci discusses poses and their function in portraiture, which I have introduced at length in the first chapter of this thesis. I briefly summarise that he considers the pose as removed from daily life, as a moment of temporary inaction, and that it functions as a kind of narration of self. The removal from daily concerns I consider an error, and I have introduced a typology of poses which in themselves indicate that poses are not necessarily expressions of self. They can be, but they can also present a formal interest in appearance which is more mannerist.

Freeland’s argument against the narration of self in portraiture also counters Spinicci. Any perceived narrative would really be the interpretation of viewers who embed the portrait with a story, contrasting the construction of narratives in biographical films that help to create a story structure which records aims and actions. Even the exchange between filmmaker and subject are different, since the director creates “a characterization through narrative and constructing the person’s story.”¹⁸⁹ Michael Podro remarks three ways in

¹⁸⁷ This is a phenomenon explored in depth by Erving Goffman in *The Performance of Self in Everyday Life*, 1956.

¹⁸⁸ Danto, “The Naked Truth,” 302.

¹⁸⁹ Freeland, “Moving Picture Portraits,” 98, 102.

which a painting relates to the figure it represents, by having the artist rehearse scrutinising either the figure itself or the movement within the figure, or that the portrait itself is a way for the sitter to present herself in collaboration with the artist.¹⁹⁰ He points out that rehearsing, for example in a mirror, might help us become more aware of how we appear, actively anticipating others.¹⁹¹ Podro also subscribes to a social self, which expresses its attitudes and emotions in postures. His idea can be taken further, however, by thinking of posing not just as something that we all do with greater or lesser awareness, but instead as a skill that can be improved. Professional models are experts who mastered posing, with a unique body and interpretation of the artist's needs. They understand and refined posing and its processes.

Different from the continuous movement of acting or dancing, the pose acts as an event where the subject takes their body through a particular pose or series of poses, with the aim of being studied and registered to facilitate artmaking. In these degrees of gesturing, there is an active, ongoing commitment to presenting oneself. Some examples of movement and posing are the studies that Auguste Rodin made of a visiting troupe of Cambodian dancers in 1906-07 (Fig. 30), or more recently the *Motion Study* by London portrait artist Rosalie Watkins (Fig. 31).¹⁹²

Joe Klamar's portraits of the 2012 USA Olympic Team challenge the photography in which we usually see athletes (Fig. 32, 33). He does this by inverting the idea of in-action pictures with the notion of official, stately athletes' portraits, by asking athletes to *re-enact* their sport. They are posing as if they are performing, and Klamar's unconventional focus on lighting and composition brings out features (or even outfits) we do not typically see in athletes. Their poses simultaneously convey a sense of their sport, their trained bodies, and embed the pictures with a relatable humanity for the athletes.

Yousuf Karsh's portraits embody the public perception of the sitter, not the person herself. Truthful portrayal is not a matter of battling the poses people take on, but rather understanding how to bring out the person truthfully to achieve an authentic result, for which the pose is used as a tool. Spinicci comes close to the idea that the pose can function as an artistic tool by suggesting that there need not be a present sitter. It can be

¹⁹⁰ Michael Podro, *Depiction* (Yale University Press, 1998), 93.

¹⁹¹ Podro, *Depiction*, 88-89.

¹⁹² This was exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists' Annual Exhibition in 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.mallgalleries.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/royal-society-british-artists-annual-exhibition-2016/motion-study>.

used in the studio itself, held by the sitter in the familiar meaning of what constitutes a pose. ‘Posing effect’, however, draws on our traditions of artistic convention to still rely on the communicative strengths of poses. This is not a pose in the familiar sense, but instead allows the artist to render a *posing effect* onto a figure.

Building on the commitment to truthfulness, this is how an artist can still portray, for example, a deceased person in a truthful manner despite lacking active input from the subject. This is done by accurately and sincerely portraying them with the available information they have, and a significant part of this is the pose that is applied in doing so. This can be applied to both deathbed and fictional portraits. The portrait can adhere in greater or lesser degree to the narrative and knowledge surrounding a person or character. One example is Daphne Todd’s *Last Portrait of My Mother*, 2009, which won the 2010 BP Portrait Award (Fig. 34). Todd stayed with her mother’s body to paint her portrait over three days. The undertakers were asked to prop her up in the way that she had been when Todd arrived at her hospital deathbed. Todd had discussed the portrait with her mother beforehand, who agreed to it, though Todd remarks that her mother didn’t enjoy her more ‘factual’ style of painting, and would not have liked this portrait either. Simultaneously, Todd received her permission, and took great care to convey the physical reality of her 100-year-old mother’s death.¹⁹³ Todd’s conversation with her still living mother render it authentic, cemented by her truthful and compassionate characterisation once her mother passed. It conforms to the second, purely visual, aspect of the ‘posed sitter’, to complement the first aspect of the ‘posing sitter’ in the studio. One should not underestimate the pose’s manifestation in artworks as pure posing effect. Oftentimes, we cannot be certain without explicit evidence to which degree a sitter did indeed sit for a portrait, and a posing effect – when executed truthfully – need not be dishonest about its sitter.

One stark difference, and difficulty, is that with less input from the sitter, the artist needs to take great care to truthfully convey something about the sitter, potentially leaving one to worry that the posing sitter is always of secondary importance. This need not be the case. The sitter is usually the commissioner and binds the artist to the artwork’s context and desired outcome. A second contextual reason is that the artist must be careful about creating something wholly incongruent if they want the portrait to be considered authentic, such as portraits of public figures or entertainers. This remains the case with satire or criticism. The portrait needs to be recognisably connected to the sitter’s reality. We find a greater influence of the sitter when we consider the

¹⁹³ Catherine Jackson, “Last Portrait of Mother,” *Bereavement Care* 30, No. 1 (2011): 48-49.

posing professional (for example the fashion or life model), who provides a strong template and guiding inspiration during the creative process and becomes an artistic collaborator.

This is where Annie Kevans' *Coco Chanel* (Fig. 19) returns as an example of how a truthful portrait can still be achieved even without a physical sitter, by truthfully engaging with the sitter in their context.¹⁹⁴ She calls these portraits 'anti-portraits' because of how the sitter never sat in front of her. I consider them authentic pieces, however, since they present a posed sitter (relying on posing effect) and put these famous figures in a radically different light with biographical backing, and in new portraits made based on her memories of various documents. I have argued previously that the added knowledge about Coco Chanel's Nazi past changes how we view her expression and persona as more sinister. Both pose and posing effect greatly influence the way in which a person is presented, and whether or not it is a truthful portrayal.

One might still be left to worry that posing can remain deceptive. How do we know when a pose is truthful, and not 'mere' posing? I will conclude my argument by demonstrating what some of these suspicions might be, and how posing can overcome them by being considered an artistic tool which supports the creation of an authentic portrait. Like testimony, our default is to think that we are getting truthfulness in a portrait, especially if we have access to other portraits of the sitter, and often no reason to doubt that truthfulness is at play.

Posing is performative, it is an act that intentionally presents its subject in a particular way. Calling someone a 'poser' in the English language indicates that someone is a pretender. This part of common vocabulary picks up on an artificial component: it identifies that what is made apparent is unlike what the person is normally like. The source of worry is not to do with poses that are explicitly obvious, such as dressing up as a comic book character for a party, or posing extravagantly for a photograph. The kind of poses that introduce tension are those that make a claim to truthfulness, 'this is how I really am', while what is shown is a construction, far removed from who and how the person really is. The crucial differing factor is this act of communicating an impression that is untruthful, yet still intended to be perceived as if truthful.

Joe Klamar's *Olympic Portraits* (Fig. 30, 31) illuminate the trickiness of reconciling expectations of authenticity on one hand, and the impact of posing on the other hand. As chief celebrity photographer during

¹⁹⁴ Madeleine, Morley, "The Fluid 'Anti-Portraits' of Artist Annie Kevans," *AnOther Magazine/Culture Talks*, July 18 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://www.anothermag.com/art-photography/8875/the-fluid-anti-portraits-of-artist-annie-kevans>.

the U.S. Olympic Committee's Media Summit in May 2012, Klamar received special access to photograph the American athletes.¹⁹⁵ Traditionally, these portraits incorporate the American flag, embodying not only physical sports ideals, but also promoting the nation's representation and pride at the Olympics.¹⁹⁶ ("Olympic Portraits" 2012) A good illustration is the *Sports Illustrated* cover of August 4th 1975 (Fig. 35), in which Tim Shaw, Olympic medal winner in both swimming and water polo, is featured as "swimming's new superstar". He responds to something off-camera, and poses casually flexing muscles, displaying his body in an idealised, sculpted form. Conversely, the way Klamar presents the athletes is by mimicking action shots that feel forced and often comedic, resulting in off-looking poses that very much oppose the expected Olympic standards. His portrait of Diana Lopez (Fig. 31) shows her not in taekwondo kit, but in regular sports clothes and heels as if she just walked into the room after training. She performs a high kick in heels backed by a visibly un-even white paper background. On a technical level, Klamar's lighting is intensely focused on muscularity and creates unexpected (Fig. 30), often awkward looking shadows —especially in athletes' faces, in addition to using unconventional framing. The visual ordinariness and even awkwardness of the portraits do not render them unposed: what you see is constructed and purposeful posing.

The transparency of Klamar's process offers a more intimate access to his sitters, and enhances their authentic portrayal due to his method of posing them in this way. They are re-enacting their sport and offer a very unusual view of themselves as regular people, who also happen to be Olympic athletes. However, it is precisely this lack of conformation to the standard visual repertoire of heroic ideals that disturbed some critics. The portraits have been called outrageous, 'shoddy', and an embarrassment for the United States.¹⁹⁷ Juxtaposing this with past athletic portraits, what critics of Klamar's work call 'authentic' is really the myth of the athlete as the living embodiment of exceptional human achievement and national virtue – exemplified in their poses. This case demonstrates that when considering authenticity, we need to be aware of rigid expectations that anticipate and search for an engrained standard.

¹⁹⁵ For examples of other portraits: see "Awesome or Awful: Joe Klamar's US Olympic Team Portraits," *Flavorwire*, July 26 2012. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://flavorwire.com/312726/awesome-or-awful-joe-klamars-us-olympic-team-portraits>.

¹⁹⁶ S.n. "Olympic Portraits" *POWERHOUSE Arena*, 2012. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://powerhousearena.com/newsletters/olympicportraits120723/>.

¹⁹⁷ Colleen, Curry. "Portraits of Olympic Athletes Called 'Insulting' for Bad Lighting, Unusual Angles," *abcNEWS*, July 5 2012. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/portraits-olympic-athletes-called-shoddy-embarrassment/story?id=16718148>.

The uncertainty over whether poses alter how we view people, or otherwise present something about someone that is inauthentic to the person, is remarked on by several scholars.¹⁹⁸ Freeland voices the basic worry quite well: “Perhaps what we now commonly accept as a persuasive portrait is due neither to the subject’s power of self-preservation nor the artist’s skills at emotional characterization, but to *tricks of props and poses*.”¹⁹⁹ The worry is that poses cultivate a diminished authenticity because they constitute something more like a persuasive rhetorical trick. To sit for a portrait is unlike how you would sit in any other context. Even if we recognise that we take up degrees of posing in our everyday lives, only rarely do we find ourselves in a position of portrait-making. This artificiality feeds into the suspicion that posing might hinder an authentic portrayal of a sitter by constructing a misleading representation, or, to take the thought further, because portrait sitting in itself is an unusual activity for most sitters – who may not behave ‘as they normally do’ when confronted with this situation. Underpinning the artificiality and inauthenticity concern is the idea that an unposed picture shows us more of a person than a posed picture. An intriguing example of both social self-presentation and posing are the later self-portraits by Lee Friedlander. Friedlander renders himself into an object, challenging the self-reflexive structure of self-portraiture, and declines to return his gaze to the camera. The camera is proxy for the photographer’s gaze, who in this case renders himself an object before that same camera. These self-portraits “*eclipse* all possible externality, by occupying the space of external vantage in advance”, and “*insist* on such externality, by forgoing perceptual control and determination of the image at the crucial moment.”²⁰⁰

The worry seems to be that the more one poses, the more one deviates from an authentic ‘ground-form’ of both body and character. The pose projects how it intends to be perceived by a real or an imagined audience. The relationship between body, pose, perceiver and the state of authenticity is more complex than a certain reduction to insincerity, or intentionally misleading spectators. There are multiple ways to consider the self and its expressions. For example:

¹⁹⁸ Alessandra Bruni Lopez y Rojo, “Modeling as an Older Woman: Exploitation or Subversion?” *Age, Culture, Humanities* 2 (2015): 301; Guyer, “Portraits, Persons, and Poses,” 57; Patricia Soley-Beltran, “Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity,” *Tripodos* 18 (2006): 38-39.

¹⁹⁹ Freeland, “Portraits in Painting and Photography,” 107, emphasis mine.

²⁰⁰ Diarmuid Costello, “Without Shame? Lee Friedlander’s Late Self-Portraits,” In *Portraits and Philosophy*, ed. Hans Maes (New York: Routledge, 2019), 177, 186-187.

- 1) who I am 3) who I would like to be
- 2) who I think I am 4) who/how I would like others to think I am

I work through these considerations of the self in terms of gradation of self-judgement and idealisation. 1) aspires to a truthful position and contains a sense of objectivity. 3) includes the desire for certain qualities to be associated with one's identity, this is an ideal self which is factual in its desire, no longer pure judgement. 4) pertains to an ideal self subjected to judgement, as well as 2) which risks self-deception in addition to judgement. The inauthentic social media selfies invert these categories. They deceptively pass off at least 3) and 4) as 1), and potentially engage in self-deception if they come to think of their fabrications as who they think they are. They fall into the trap of wishful thinking and deceit that obscure truthfulness. Portraits 'posing as' someone could be positioned between this more factual and judged ideal self. All points seem sincere in their purpose, whether true or not, for example an insecure person posing as overly confident can still be taken as sincerely expressing their desire to be confident when they are not. So where does inauthenticity emerge? We end in a precarious position where any approach plays out as all possibly representing something authentic, even when one misleads or fails what one aspires to.

I argue that a truthful pose can be achieved when the pose identifies accurate features of the sitter in any of the dimensions of personhood, and communicates these sincerely in its arrangement. Only those demonstrations of personhood will constitute a truthful account, and we avoid the muddling in which any sort of expression risks seeming authentic. A sitter may not know how to bring out their humorous nature if they stiffen, feeling ill-equipped to hold themselves in front of the camera. It takes the right guidance from a great artist to help bring out these qualities. I do not count this as particularly insincere, since it is still an extension of the person. The commitment to accurately represent nuanced aspects of a sitter through a truthful rendering of the pose and portrait results in an authentic portrayal and viewing experience. Taking the artistic achievement into consideration, presenting these qualities in a suitable way only strengthens the later portrait that viewers behold. The pose in other words is an artistic tool that brings out precisely those authentic features.

Good portraiture engages with its sitter's authenticity. This becomes even more apparent in the many artistic deviations and innovations that push its boundaries. Annie Kevans and Joe Klamar are two such artists,

who challenge how we access and understand sitters by interrogating what may constitute an authentic portrait. I approached the friction within portraiture between posing and its reliance on authenticity with Williams' concept of truthfulness as a virtuous attitude and versatile application to the self, and by introducing a phenomenology of posing with two posing aspects that are at work. The portrait is the result of a struggle between potentially differing expectations, and among these there can be attempts at truthfulness. There is the idea, rooted in our language, that seeing is knowing.²⁰¹ As spectators, we do assume that when we see this sitter in the portrait, we visually access their person in some sense to gain an impression of who they are. Instead of being construed as misleading or inferior to unposed pictures in terms of its claim to authenticity, the pose is an artistic method that helps to convey something about the sitter. Via an attitude of truthfulness, it becomes an authentic portrait.

²⁰¹ Freeland, *Portraits and Persons*, 84.

Chapter 5: Nudity, Voyeurism, and Realities of the Posing Body

My endeavours so far to develop an aesthetics of posing have led to the introduction of categories of the guided, self-improvised, and collaborative poses. I then proposed an account of posing as a skilled activity and source of creative innovation on the part of the model. Chapter three differentiated between presentational and performative posing, and highlighted the difficulties one encounters with portrayals of self. Chapter four identified how authentic representations can still be achieved, particularly within portraiture, by relying on truthfulness as a virtue and attitude. Largely untouched is the notion that modelling comes with its own context of precarity and ethical issues. This thesis will therefore approach moral considerations of posing, spread across two clusters of topics treated in this fifth chapter, 'Nudity, Voyeurism, and Realities of the Posing Body' and chapter six, 'The Relationship Between Objectification and Posing'.²⁰²

First and foremost, I offer a rudimentary, broad-brush historical account of Western attitudes towards nudity, with a particular focus on the long nineteenth century due to the manner within which some still-existing concepts with regards to nudity and the genre of the Nude do arise from this period. This moves into a discussion of the Naked and the Nude, a distinction which, I will argue, is still present within art practice today. This chapter looks at nude modelling, within which issues in relation to voyeurism and realities of the body come to a head. The life model typically poses nude within the life class, and nudity, or implied nudity, constitutes its very own genre within both fine art and commercial photography. I will briefly touch on some notions related to gender and race with regards to the posing body, but largely focus on a generalised account of how the context of modelling deals with problems like voyeurism, bodily functions and intimacy, and subsequent body shame and assumptions about the naked body. This discussion concludes by considering the positive lessons that we can learn from the nude posing body.

I will not make statements about the perception of nudity in other cultures, nor differences among nations, but will consider broadly Western European views on the naked body, given that the modelling I discuss throughout this thesis is also based on that same context of art making, modelling, and commercialising. My

²⁰² Chapter six will build on chapter five by expanding on the close relationship between modelling and objectification. It traces the interactions between modelling and various modes of objectification, developing case studies throughout to determine whether there is scope for morally neutral forms of objectification, in addition to its harmful effects.

analysis is therefore limited in scope, though hopefully it can serve as a stepping stone towards a more global perspective on this topic.

5.1 Nude Bodies in Art

5.1.1 Historical Prelude of Attitudes toward Nudity

Contemporary Western society maintains particular attitudes towards nudity, the state of dress of a person in (especially) public situations, and how this all should be reacted to. Social mechanisms inform one about communally appropriate displays of one's body, such as by active shaming, or otherwise being confronted with the appropriate requirements in a context. When we consider nudity, we must also touch upon 'shame' as a concept. While it may be acceptable for a family to dress down to bathing suits and shorts at the beach, they will likely gather their clothes and put them back on, or wrap themselves in a towel, upon leaving the beach. Even where nudity is allowed, for example in designated areas at nudist beaches, the public must maintain very clear boundaries between acceptable nudity and those instances when (or rather, *where*) it becomes inappropriate.

European attitudes to nudity can be plausibly traced to, or at least are reflected in, the Old Testament myth of Adam and Eve who discover their nakedness when they eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil. This nakedness shamed them. Danto points out the incredible phenomenology of perception in Genesis I: "when their 'eyes were opened,' the disobedient pair saw nothing they had not always seen, including one another's naked bodies. But for the first time they saw themselves *as* naked, and hence as in a condition that called for hiding." Danto briefly wonders about the wrongness of nakedness, and the lack of philosophical treatment of this body state. The point he arrives at is that "the contrast with their prior state would be the same, even had Eve and Adam, in finding that they were naked, suddenly felt proud of their bodies. So that instead of making aprons out of leaves and hiding from God, they might have twisted flowers in their pubes".²⁰³

The body has long been considered profane and corruptible, in turn corrupting humans' *ratio* and *mores*. Man's *ratio* and *mores* are not physical entities, but instead provide the tools for humanity to approach God's own

²⁰³ Arthur Danto, "The Naked Truth," In *Aesthetics and Ethics: Essays at the Intersection*, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Cambridge. University Press, 1998), 303.

transcendence and divine insights. Nudity in the past has been shown in a variety of ways, and of course changing geographically. Early Christianity found nudity troublesome due to a combination of factors. Pagan idols and gods, all regularly naked, called forth diabolical associations and devils who cunningly assumed the shapes of beautiful human beings. This new attitude to the body harboured the surviving Platonic idea that “spiritual things were degraded by taking corporeal shape,” which became amalgamated with Christian morals and resulted in overall denunciations of sensual pleasures, as well as an overall condemnation of women as sensual beings. The body in this Christian dogma is stripped of its image of bodily beauty in Early Medieval art. No longer divine perfection, instead the body becomes the locus of humiliation and shame.²⁰⁴ “While the Greek nude began with the heroic body proudly displaying itself in the *palaestra*, the Christian Nude began with the huddled body cowering in the consciousness of sin.”²⁰⁵ What followed is a degradation of the body led by Christian morality, which only served to increase the body’s erotic impact.²⁰⁶

The Middle Ages found that the human body’s divine element could only be expressed through geometry. It is chronicled by Cennino Cennini how Gothic artists could not draw the Nude from nature, since this would instead constitute an idea which their philosophy of form could not justify – unlike drawing from live animals, whose measurements they did not need to learn.²⁰⁷ The Greek inheritance of physical beauty demonstrates itself in how the ongoing intention has been not to imitate, but to perfect what we see, since not one body is entirely perfect. Aristotle stated that “Art completes what nature cannot bring to a finish. The artist gives us knowledge of nature’s unrealised ends.” This idea further implanted itself through Pliny’s story of Zeuxis, who painted an *Aphrodite*, reconstructed from the best parts of five women rather than one, which was re-established in the Italian Renaissance by Leon Battista Alberti’s *Della Pittura*.²⁰⁸

This rudimentary historical overview then jumps to the nineteenth century, given that many of our attitudes to the nude as a genre today still derive from concepts that came to being in this period. One such idea is really our contemporary notion of the ‘muse’ as typically a female instrument for the male artist’s creative

²⁰⁴ Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), 308-309.

²⁰⁵ Clark, *The Nude*, 311.

²⁰⁶ Clark, *The Nude*, 321.

²⁰⁷ Clark, *The Nude*, 11-12.

²⁰⁸ Clark, *The Nude*, 12-13.

genius. It is in the nineteenth century that the female nude drastically increases in number, along with reinvigorated body anxieties for both genders, which still linger in our consciousness to this day.

Prior to starting my discussion of the Naked and the Nude, it is worth clarifying why I do rely on Clark's historical account prior to criticising these concepts that he introduces. The primary driver is that while there are philosophical reasons to disagree with his conceptualisation of the distinction between what he considers Naked and Nude, Clark's art historical work on the nude as an art genre is still an important piece of writing and, in my understanding, the first comprehensive overview of the nude in the twentieth century. I have relied on this overview to introduce brief highlights about the complexity and progression of the genre of the nude in Western art, particularly due to his treatment of the importance of religious, social, public and artistic life.

Within this overview of the genre of the nude, there are however also embedded stereotypes in the connections that Clark forges between beauty, gender and representation in his terms of the Naked and the Nude. Exploring and, indeed, using these throughout this chapter is a decision made since, in practice, art models *still* are using these terms within the studio to describe their work, and relay their thoughts and emotions about modelling. Therefore, I chose to hold on to the terms to highlight where these stereotypes remain implicit in the models' accounts, as interviewed by Sarah Phillips, while also addressing criticisms. It is my hope that I can illuminate the importance and continuing weight of this history and terminology to nude modelling, and women especially, while also maintaining a critical lens even in those areas where models and artists might stumble over those same assumptions Clark made.

Lynda Nead has worked on "questions of identity, agency, sexuality, gender, and class to explore how women narrated their sexual lives...and negotiated the power of philanthropic institutions" in Victorian Britain.²⁰⁹ She also wrote the first major critique of Kenneth Clark's seminal book in *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (1992). I will highlight her key arguments against some of Clark's implicit bias, and John Berger's bias following Clark. She makes the case that both prominent scholars have not managed to adequately scrutinise the implicit dynamics present in the Naked and the Nude.

Nead's feminist counterweight publication in the early nineties treats the female Nude itself, and challenges many of Clark's implicitly biased views. Clark often discusses the Nude's aesthetic achievements in a binary

²⁰⁹ Lynda Nead, "Fallen Women and Foundlings: Rethinking Victorian Sexuality," *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (2016): 177.

opposition with the Naked, echoing the mind and body classification.²¹⁰ Nead specifically questions Clark's embedded values: namely, presenting the Nude as "a category of art which is concerned with stylistic procedure and form and a category of obscenity which has to do with excess and lack of boundaries."²¹¹ John Berger, too, only succeeds in inverting the terms of the naked and the nude. He presupposes private relationships in the small selection of exceptions to the tradition of the female nude, arguing that love transforms the nude into a naked woman, which "prevents the male spectator, the outsider, from turning the female figure into a voyeuristic spectacle." Berger then leaves Clark's implications of the Nude as somehow elevated and freer intact.²¹² Nead clarifies various views that are taken for granted, and proposes a feminist historical framework for the female Nude, at that point in the nineties there only having been isolated historical studies.

The female Nude responds to male desires and is largely constructed by an overwhelmingly male canon of artists. Nead remarks that within the Nude as "the fountain-head of artistic expression", much writing automatically assumes the artist to be male, and the scrutinised body to be a woman's.²¹³ The life class, within this eroticised mythology surrounding male artist and female model, for a long time did define masculinity and artistic identity. For instance, Brassai's photograph of Matisse next to a female model is one of many pictures that use the naked female model as an exemplifier of the artist's authority (Fig. 36). The point is not to be concerned with naturalism, but to reaffirm the male artist as the basis of artistic creation. Moreover, many publications reproduce this sexual myth where the female model is the male artist's mistress. This fantasy also perpetuated itself in artistic manuals. Many of these guide the 'student' in drawing the female model, often via sexualising language.²¹⁴ The treatment of the immorality of the nude implicates a discrepancy between the artist who produces the great work of art, relying on the woman who inspires creation, much like a muse. This muse, however, is typically understood more akin to a sex worker, and condemned for her own immoral nudity without many consequences for the artist's own reputation. The genre of the Nude insidiously preserves and validates these harmful attitudes in what we consider high art, and in fact not only eroticises but also aestheticises

²¹⁰ Lynda Nead, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), 14.

²¹¹ Nead, *The Female Nude*, 21.

²¹² Nead, *The Female Nude*, 15.

²¹³ Nead, *The Female Nude*, 43.

²¹⁴ Nead, *The Female Nude*, 49-50. Nead remarks on p. 51 that these handbooks are of ambiguous cultural status, at once objective artistic criteria as also projecting sexual dynamics. She exemplifies this by retelling how some were catalogued at the British Library; many belong to the category of the 'indecent', and could not merely be lent out. The worry being that they would incite "masturbatory action rather than contemplative reading."

inequality. While such works do “offer beautiful and profound truths about the human condition,” they “actively promote women’s subordination to men. Art’s venerated status invests this message of male superiority and female inferiority with special authority, making it an especially effective way of promoting sex inequality.”²¹⁵

To conclude this section briefly, both Lynda Nead and Anne Eaton are right to address the immorality of the nude and its treatment, which typically affects women as its overwhelmingly presented subject. Nead presents a counterweight to Clark with women in mind, and also shows how a writer like Berger, in some ways, remains stuck in hard-to-shake assumptions about the Nude. I recognise, however, that a more radical account would push further on the Naked and the Nude as categories of art, with perhaps an eye for introducing new terminology to come alongside new thinking. This is not the kind of investigation I will present, rather, I will explore the challenges of these terms in their active usage within artistic practice. It is my hope that further research into modelling might find alternatives to move away from these binary categories. Perhaps this might be accompanied by a cultural shift within art practice.

5.1.2 A Brief Detour to the Male Nude

Art has perpetuated representations of idealised masculinity, in addition to the highly problematised female Nude. In this section, I will pause to consider the male Nude and its complex dynamics within the art academy, including reflection on narrow body standards and idealising notions of masculinity. This is by way of working towards the point that our contemporary society in some ways is still quite indebted to some of these ideas that came to a head in the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century male Nude is, similarly to the female Nude, made by and for a predominantly male audience. Just like there exist character ‘types’ for women (the young virgin, the mother, the crone, the seductress), there are also designated types for men (the boy, virulent young man, the hero, the old man). Nineteenth century men dealt with deep-seated worries related to male identity and intersubjectivity, and how these surfaced across class boundaries; they also encountered anxieties surrounding a male spectator looking at

²¹⁵ Anne W. Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?” A Feminist Perspective on Art and Pornography,” In *Art and Pornography: Philosophical Essays*, ed. by Maes, Hans, and Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 308.

a “potentially sexualised male object of visual pleasure”.²¹⁶ In addition to the male spectator, worrisome too was the ‘forbidden gaze’ of the female spectator focused on male nudes.²¹⁷

The sports craze that surged in the late nineteenth century promoted health and sports ideals as represented by the athletic and well-performing body. This new body culture “aimed to stem the physical degeneration of the working classes, and also to reverse middle-class man’s decline into decadence and effeminism.”²¹⁸ Not stopping at this, sports and body-building are thought to be connected to growing anxiety surrounding homosexuality. They were also manifestations of the need for new spaces beyond the military, for men to experience de-eroticised male nudity and engage in legitimate bodily contact.²¹⁹

A connection can be drawn to our own current visual culture, specifically the role of commercial modelling in advertising, and social media influencers more recently. Once more, there is a reinvigorated presence of idealised bodies, not necessarily nude, though often covered or implied nude. Narrow body standards are detrimental to both men and women in how they shape ideas of self-presentation. Perhaps less (visibly) class dominated as it was in the nineteenth century, an idealised masculinity still comes with a particular type of body shame and perceived appropriate sexualisation. The male gaze turned on itself is one that judges its own male body for what it should look like and the qualities it should embody within narrow standards of masculinity, which many male bodies, of course, do not embody since they are ordinary and varied bodies, not ideations.

The *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris was an all-male academy which only allowed the study of male bodies within its life class for much of the nineteenth century. Female models presented a range of issues for the male students, as being too distracting and potentially inspiring immoral desires. The Academy in this sense was a space for male artists who would draw public male models, whereas the domestic setting of a studio would prove more appropriate for female models. The actual employment of women at the Academy would be confined to clothed exercises, or indeed after casts made of antique sculptures.²²⁰ The rationale for not using nude female models was supported by assumed physiological differences, in addition to moral hesitations when

²¹⁶ Anthea Callen, “Doubles and Desire: Anatomies of Masculinity in the Later Nineteenth Century,” *Art History*, 26 (2003): 669.

²¹⁷ Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 669.

²¹⁸ Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 689.

²¹⁹ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (Yale University Press, 1999), 187-188.

²²⁰ Martin Postle and William Vaughan, *The Artist's Model from Etty to Spencer* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1999), 55.

it came to viewing a bared female body – particularly by a male audience. Muscles, important to art students who were learning about representing the human body, were argued to be much more sharply defined in a fit male body, compared to the soft (idealised) female body – especially not the curvy body that was fashionable at the time. Muscle development was admired in men, but rather associated with manual labour or gymnastic work in women, both considered altogether unfeminine. The selected male models were chosen for their displays of manliness and musculature, necessarily cultivated via the physically demanding nature of their jobs. Typically, they were labourers or soldiers.²²¹ Despite their lower-class background, they were no ‘ordinary’ types of men with ordinary bodies, but displayed idealised muscular physiques.

The male nude proved to be difficult to navigate. Especially once naturalist approaches became more widespread, it only proved harder to find ways to appropriately objectify the male nude with minimal moral distress. Anthea Callen argues that the classicising academism helped “distance the gaze from desire,” but that objectification of the male body was best attained by exploiting the class difference between professional middle-class viewers who looked upon a working-class body.²²² Female models were, at times, regarded to have loose morals and be more akin to prostitutes, stemming from the thought that no virtuous woman would be happy to show her naked body to whoever would offer money. Similar presumptions were made about the psychological state and moral esteem of those working class men who would model. Callen refers to Stevenson’s *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, as a literary example of how male class differences were understood, especially in relation to male hysteria. Hysterical men, as observed by Charcot in the special ward at hospital *La Salpêtrière*, were called “timid and fearful men” whose gaze, unlike the virile male, “is neither lively nor piercing, but rather soft, poetic, and languorous. Coquettish and eccentric, they prefer ribbons and scarves to hard manual labour.”²²³ Working-class men were not merely considered to be closer to ‘the primitive’ by criminal anthropology of the time; these men were also regarded to be more feminine, in fact, because of their less complete repression of baser instincts and emotions compared to middle- and upper-class men. Similar to the female models, these male models also encountered suspicions in relation to their class background with associated worries about their moral upstanding and role in sexual deviancy.

²²¹ Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 680.

²²² Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 680.

²²³ Charcot as quoted in Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 684

The paradox of this nineteenth century history of the male nude is that “the admired manly physique seen as the privilege of the working classes (as opposed to the sedentary bourgeois) contained what was deemed to be an infantilised or feminised personality.”²²⁴ While these virile nude figures were greatly admired and represented in the genre as a strong Hercules, for instance, the working class men whose bodies modelled for such pieces were paradoxically considered more primitive and emotionally infantile by the bourgeois male artists who would portray them. Simultaneously, there is also the described anxiety with regards to being looked at by a homosexual gaze, or female gaze.

This brings me to the next section, 5.2 ‘Nude Modelling’, which first explores the context of voyeurism within a setting of art making, instead of how it relates to the artworks themselves. The second part of this section then explores which mechanisms are in place to counteract the voyeuristic gaze in modelling. This is no simple feat, given that the profession is entirely rooted in a dynamic of looking and being looked at, and becomes even more invasive in the case of nude modelling. Both men and women encounter a range of anxieties related to the body itself, its functions, and sexuality, which will be explored in the third section, ‘Reckoning with the Realities of Bodies in Art Making’.

5.2 Nude Modelling

5.2.1 Voyeurism and Shame

Modelling is a profession that is rooted in the act of looking and being looked at. While models present their poses to be registered, this registration can occur in ways the model may end up feeling uncomfortable or left in the dark about. The concept of ‘voyeurism’ is an extensive one, for the sake of keeping this discussion focused, I will employ Elisabeth Schellekens’ moral considerations about the use of voyeurism in artworks. I then make the connection back to voyeurism in art making that involves (nude) models.

Voyeurism as a concept relies on the thought that something is not merely being watched, but that this is accompanied by a thrill over the fact that one should *not* be watching. The transgression of voyeurism is that it ignores the watched person’s desires.²²⁵ Schellekens distinguishes four conditions for artworks to be voyeuristic.

²²⁴ Callen, “Doubles and Desire,” 684.

²²⁵ Elisabeth Schellekens, “Taking a Moral Perspective: On Voyeurism in Art,” In *Art and Pornography: Philosophical Essays*, ed. by Hans Maes, and Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 310.

Firstly, they show an intimate moment, act, or behaviour. The represented person, secondly, has not consented to being observed in a particular manner, or at all. Third, such works contain an “asymmetrical relation between viewer and viewed insofar as it assumes a lack of perceptual reciprocity.”²²⁶ Fourth and last, the voyeuristic work instils a thrill in that it shows something that in some ways we should not be seeing.²²⁷ This thrill indicates the inappropriate viewing part, namely, there is an enjoyment about “invading that other person’s privacy,” which “suggests that we take pleasure, precisely in behaving improperly.”²²⁸ Key about modern objections to voyeurism in a setting of art, but also non-artistic and non-fictional situations, is that a connection is forged to satiate one’s own pleasure, which the other person has no wish to participate in, at least to some degree.²²⁹ Schellekens proposes voyeurism in art to be a moral concept, in that viewers are doing or imagining doing inappropriate watching which would be condemned by others if they knew.²³⁰

While focused on predominantly voyeuristic artworks, Schellekens’ points can and should be considered within a context of art making. This is no regular non-artistic context. It is non-fiction, in that real people are engaging with a model by drawing or photographing her. The model also knows that she is being watched, and agrees to pose according to particular conditions. These conditions can include nude modelling, as this chapter is tracing. The context of art making, within which looking at the nude posing body of the model is expected, presents a complex situation. One could argue that the mode of looking and posing the model does is directly related to the artwork – meaning that, if the artwork were to be intended to be a voyeuristic one, the model will pose in a manner to feed into such a representation. This is no true voyeurism in the non-fictional sense, since the model has consented to be regarded and treated in this manner. Watching her is not non-consensual in this occasion. It becomes complex, however, when we consider those instances within which a model does pose, but is perhaps not aware of how she is being watched in a different manner than she has consented to. The model is also only consenting to being watched as such while she is posing, meaning that the act of undressing

²²⁶ Schellekens, “On Voyeurism in Art,” 315-316.

²²⁷ Schellekens, “On Voyeurism in Art,” 316.

²²⁸ Schellekens, “On Voyeurism in Art,” 317.

²²⁹ Schellekens, “On Voyeurism in Art,” 318.

²³⁰ Schellekens, “On Voyeurism in Art,” 322. While not central to my use of her insights, Schellekens importantly argues that voyeuristic art, however, can hold a mirror to us, by letting us take up both the voyeuristic viewer and external spectator point of view, which invites us to consider our responses to art, as well as how these are linked to our moral belief systems. Voyeuristic art accomplishes this by way of pushing the limits of our moral codes.

prior to posing is not part of the deal. Sneaking a peek at the model as she undresses privately, then, would constitute a voyeuristic act.

The section following this will treat the mechanisms in place throughout the posing session that can mitigate these unwelcome voyeuristic acts. I will now identify how looking at the model's nude poses can shift from consensual artistic watching to voyeuristic indulging, and what its effects are on the model who is subjected to the voyeuristic gaze.

Max Scheler presents an example, in his discussion of shame, of the art model who has worked with a painter over a long period of time. When she is confronted with his unexpected sexual desire for her, she realises that he is no longer viewing her as a model, but as a sexual object, and suddenly feels ashamed even though he has looked at her and painted her across many years.²³¹ Scheler's example has been discussed by both Bernard Williams and Gabriele Taylor. Whereas Taylor treats the model's shame as an emotion of self-protection, Williams, however, points out that:

It is rather the change in the situation introduces the relevant kind of unprotectedness or loss of power: this in itself is constituted by an actual gaze, which is of a special, sexually interested, kind. She had previously been clothed in her role as a model; that has been taken from her, and she is left truly exposed, to a desiring eye.²³²

The painter transgresses the boundaries of the model by sexualising her as a subject, rather than, paradoxically, treating her as a model-object which would be professionally appropriate within the permission of looking engendered by the modelling session. Instead, the painter projects his own personal feelings of desire on the model, and she realises that she has in no way consented to how he has been watching her since those desires grew. She need not be undressed to be exposed, in this instance, since the invasion of her subjecthood is a view-based sexualising one. Williams calls it a loss of power, which is not dependent on the viewer who causes it – the viewer may not consider it a loss of power, and in the case of the male gaze may even consider that she is privileged to be on the receiving end of such attentions. The power that is lost I understand as the voyeuristic transgression that Schellekens theorises. This transgresses against the model as art object by improperly leering

²³¹ Max Scheler, "Über Scham und Schamgefühl," In Maria Scheler, *Schriften aus dem Nachlaß*, Band 1: Gesammelte Werke 10: Zur Esthetik Und Erkenntnislehre (Bern: Francke, 1957), 79.

²³² Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 221.

at her as a private person while she is not in the know, and unreceptive to such advances. By not considering the model-as-art-object as precisely that, a special artistic object with this particular posing function, the risk is that an inappropriate objectification of the model as a private subject disrupts the making-good of the posing session which invites looking and objectification within consented and determined parameters.²³³ There is a difference, then, between the model consenting to a particular mode of being looked at within the setting of producing a voyeuristic artwork, which may be voyeuristic and erotic in nature, for instance, versus the transgressing gaze within that same context which takes advantage of her.

Laura Mulvey's now famous and widely used term, 'the male gaze', does designate a normative, sexually objectifying mode of looking. When the male gaze inhabits a work, it invites spectators to look at the represented woman as a sex object primarily. Anne Eaton observes that this is not a claim about how men respond to these works altogether, but more that it is a mode of looking appropriate for someone in a masculine social role, which is usually also heterosexual. The Nude is meant to be viewed by women too, though, in that it is a cultural entity that instructs women how to view themselves in line with masculine interests. "By representing inertness, passivity, violability, and lack of autonomy *as* sexually attractive characteristics in females, the nude eroticizes objectification and subordination."²³⁴ Important, then, to bear in mind is the conceptual difference between on one hand having "a representation *of* sexual objectification" and "a sexually *objectifying* representation." In the latter case we find the male gaze embedded, but not necessarily in the former. Works engaging with sexual objectification and the male gaze do not necessarily support it. Eaton refers to Artemisia Gentileschi's *Susanna and the Elders*, 1610, which represents the story of Susanna who is being sexually objectified by the Elders (Fig. 37). However, Artemisia does not endorse the male gaze within the piece, as such the work is not a sexually objectifying painting, despite representing a scene that certainly deals with these themes.²³⁵ Similarly, then, within the posing session – whether life modelling or photographic modelling – the model can work together with the artist towards a representation of sexual objectification, without having been sexually objectified herself by the artist while she was posing.

²³³ Within the model, I identify a paradox of objectification of the model as art object versus the model as private subject. I will develop this idea in chapter six; there, I distinguish between a harmful ('mere') objectification and what I propose as 'aesthetic' objectification: a morally neutral or even beneficial mode of objectification, used as a tool within the specific context of art making that considers the broader humanity of those involved while still being objectifying.

²³⁴ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?" 293-294.

²³⁵ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?" 296.

Upon the transgression's discovery, the model is faced with a multitude of emotions and reactions, the primary one discussed in the literature being shame in relation to nakedness. Williams works through this notion of shame in relation to the naked representation of a person: "In the case of literal nakedness, the viewer must, to occasion shame, be taken by the subject to have actually seen the subject naked."²³⁶ This leads one to wonder about the naked representation of a subject. One can imagine that all one needs to feel shame is a likeness (or naturalistic representation) of nakedness rather than actual in-person nakedness. So, to exemplify, a person may still feel deep shame upon having a naked portrait of herself shown to her parents-in-law, despite not actually having appeared naked to them in-person. Imagine, however, a life-sized photograph; even if it were taken by Richard Avedon, it is hard to imagine that the artistic merit of the photograph would really change much about the feelings of shame and private exposition towards the in-laws.

This constitutes another factor that renders the relation between modelling and voyeurism so complex. Voyeurism and self-conscious feelings are not merely confined to the studio, nor to a state of total undress – they can extend to the artwork within which the model appears. Arthur Danto makes an excellent point:

In painting the model as model, artists painted women working, where nakedness was the condition of the labor. That was not, of course, 'natural,' in the nudist sense of the term. But neither was it an assault on the woman's dignity, unless modeling itself was, given that she understood that in posing she very likely would be shown. And indeed, other than as models, there was no 'natural' circumstance under which people would encounter nakedness in the regular course of life – except in the intimacy of the bedroom.²³⁷

The treatment of the model's representation is significant in its own right. This is also what Emily Ratajkowski reacted against when she spoke out about her treatment, and the resulting images, by photographer Jonathan Leder. He took a series of erotic images within a dubious context where Ratajkowski was a young and inexperienced model. She modelled for him in various states of undress while inebriated, after he served her alcoholic drinks throughout the evening. It was many years later when Leder exhibited the pictures and published several books containing highly intimate *Polaroids* of her, which Ratajkowski claims to not have signed

²³⁶ Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 221.

²³⁷ Danto, "The Naked Truth," 306.

any contracts or publication agreements for.²³⁸ While Ratajkowski might have agreed at the time to pose in such a manner, though this one can doubt given her state of inebriation and the pressure to perform for a well-respected photographer as an early career model, she claims not to have agreed to how those images would be used, and who would get to see these images. Certainly, she asked him to cease his use of those images, though to no avail. What follows is an intricate dynamic between her bared and eroticised body, the situation within which these images were taken, and the limited consent she gave in terms of their later distribution. The result is a mass-voyeurism which audiences participated in, and, if we follow this thought to its end, within which masses could view and buy Leder's intimate images of an early-career Ratajkowski who is now an established supermodel. Leder himself, and buyers of his books, indulge a voyeuristic curiosity about this young supermodel-to-be's body in a state that was not intended whatsoever for them to see.

Ratajkowski expresses her anger at Leder, but also hopes to reach viewers by publicising her discomfort. Viewers of images are responsible for their own mode of viewing. Particularly because one can objectify the represented subject, even though the piece itself may not be objectifying. Moreover, when an image *is* objectifying, one must take responsibility for one's mode of viewing and to which extent one takes the represented qualities as *actual* qualities of the person.²³⁹

Danto makes further valid points about morality in relation to pride and shame in a context of represented nakedness: "As far as showing a subject naked, the morality of that is altogether a matter of how the subject feels about himself as seen that way. (...) Pride and shame... define the morality of the situation once the objections to generic nakedness have been removed – if they have been removed."²⁴⁰ It is the moral stance of those involved in modelling, complemented by the viewers' responsibility in how they treat the image, that influence the right- or wrongness of the representation of figures. Danto is particularly interested in "the rights of individuals over how they appear", in terms of how the person identifies herself and how she wishes to be seen. Ultimately, his notion comes from a concern about photographic images. This concern exists in two

²³⁸ Emily Ratajkowski, "Buying Myself Back: When does a model own her own image?" *The CUT*, September 15 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.thecut.com/article/emily-ratajkowski-owning-my-image-essay.html?utm_medium=s1&utm_campaign=nym&utm_source=tw.

²³⁹ I will develop this thought in connection to the next chapter's discussion of Martha Nussbaum's modes of objectification, Kathleen Stock's views on *mind-insensitive seeing-as*, and Anne Eaton's work on visual mechanisms of objectification in nude women's representations.

²⁴⁰ Danto, "The Naked Truth," 308.

parts, firstly, “there is no immediate assurance that a photographic image coincides with a look, just because there are differences between the speed with which visual images register and the speed with which photographic images do,” and, “it is unclear that what the ‘candid camera’ shot shows and what the inadvertently glimpsed mirror image shows are on the same level, both being visually true.” Secondly, “the photographer asserts her authority to show the subject as she sees the subject, rather than the way the subject sees herself.” Danto regards both of his worries as violations of the right to control one’s own appearance, with consent canonically existing in endorsing an image as one’s own.²⁴¹ So how can models retain the right to their own appearances? The next subsection, ‘Dealing with Voyeurism’, investigates the mechanisms in place that are intended to control and avoid voyeurism.

5.2.2 Dealing with Voyeurism

The nude model must negotiate prevalent tensions between her being considered an object of voyeurism, ‘merely’ naked, or naked within the consented parameters of art making. My hope is that by illuminating the profession, a greater understanding can be achieved of the process of posing which can also provide a more normalised and positive experience of the subjectified naked body.²⁴² The tension between the Naked and the Nude does not remain confined to the artwork and its content or reception. As Nead suggested, it has engendered centuries of influence on societal thinking that prove difficult to change, including how women regard themselves and their bodies. Because it remains prevalent within discussions about the making of art, I do continue to use the terms of Naked and Nude, though with the caveat that I do not subscribe to the implicit ideologies as they were perpetuated by Clark and Berger. It is difficult to separate from art making when, for instance in Sarah Phillips’ interviews with life models, a distinction is continuously made between high art and low art, by indicating what legitimises acceptable nakedness (namely, the context of high art), and worries with regards to ‘mere’ nakedness.

This interaction between Naked-Nude and model-artist is deeply embedded and guarded against within the structural progression of a life class or nude photography shoot. Nude models especially must tread the line

²⁴¹ Danto, “The Naked Truth,” 293.

²⁴² 5.3.4 ‘Positive Lessons of Nude Modelling’ looks towards the positive impact nude modelling could have on the self-esteem and perception of nude bodies. This could be introduced in one instance via life drawing classes in schools for non-Art A-Level students, offering a positive counterweight to the naked bodies shown in pornography and erotic imagery.

between potentially being turned into a Nude by the artist in the resulting artwork, while also very much presenting their own Naked, individual body with their expert posing skill. So how does one avoid voyeurism in a special setting of art making within which looking at a bare body is not only acceptable, but expected?

Typically, the model undresses within a designated space. This may constitute a mere screen to block any views, at the very least a specific area for the model to leave her clothes and belongings, or a separate space altogether. The model walks into the space as a subject, but proceeds to take on the role of model who will become the object of interest for the life class. As such, the transition between private and public, between personal and professional, is mitigated by 'the changing room moment'. When the model undresses, she takes off her own personal clothes, and re-emerges as 'Model'. She might wear a chamber robe or towel to cover herself until she poses, but this too is not a necessity. The presence of this changing room moment in many contexts of posing lays bare this more widely felt, but perhaps not explicitly mentioned, notion of transgression if the model is watched when she undresses, which becomes an invasion of her privacy. This is quite a curious interaction, given that mere minutes later it is appropriate and not necessarily personally invasive to look when she poses nude. The model, when she enters and changes before posing officially, might be considered 'naked'. She is still a wholly private person, engaging in an act of undressing otherwise reserved for the privacy of a home or the presence of intimate partners. This is no different for photographic models, and the key difference in terms of commercial modelling is that the model, overall, has very little privacy given the crew of people continuously surrounding her to create and touch up her appearance. The commercial model has to brace for being touched and surrounded by various people whom she may not know.²⁴³

Sarah Phillips, who interviewed a collection of life models in Portland, received similar reports from models who spoke about the importance of transitioning from clothed to unclothed, and the implications of that. 'Karen' tells her:

It's like you can be okay naked, but taking off your clothes in front of somebody is a private matter. It seems really ironic, I know. I used to change in a closet, put a robe on and then come out and take the robe off. So being naked in front of somebody is not quite as personal as taking off your clothes. 'Cause when you're taking off your clothes, you're actually a person. But when you're up there, if you're already naked, I mean it's a performance, you're already in a performance spirit. But taking off your

²⁴³ Mears, *Pricing Beauty*, 88.

clothes is not performance. That's practical, and that's personal, and not a lot of art models like for other people to see them undressing.²⁴⁴

It is correct to state that the model does not pose while she is undressing prior to working. Models, of course, can make use of a whole range of props to aid their poses, such as furniture, clothing, make-up, accessories, or particular themes to act out. If, for instance, the dressing gown constitutes a prop for the model's intentional posing, it renders her act of undressing a performative act that is separated from the very private removal of clothes. The performative act of undressing constitutes the Nude. It does not threaten the model as a Naked subject in the way that watching her undress privately is, since this would be unperformed, non-consensual, and would constitute an act of voyeurism. Semi-nakedness in that situation is not used for the making of art, instead watching it constitutes a transgression of private boundaries.

Phillips remarks that undressing is a common practice in medical situations too, where the patient gets the chance to undress separately. Marcia Pointon has rightfully emphasised the similarities between the examination of the female body in both nineteenth century medical and artistic practice.

The lecture room in the medical school was constructed in ways similar to the Life Class in the academy and art students received lectures on anatomy as did medical students. The same kinds of exclusions founded on gender operated in both institutions; women were excluded from the Life Class (and thus from the higher echelons of professionalism) and were debarred from becoming doctors.²⁴⁵

Models, like medical patients, wear 'transitional attire' after undressing, such as a chamber robe or a towel, which they remove when they are ready to pose. They will put this back on during breaks, to cover their bodies. Phillips takes it as minimising the construal of an erotic act. Some models do undress visibly in front of those within the studio. Here, they report taking care to turn away from those present and undress very quickly, making it a fast and private action without dubious intent.²⁴⁶ Phillips' interviewees also report hiding their underwear as they undress, considering it something highly intimate which they do not want to display.

²⁴⁴ Sarah Phillips, *Modeling Life: Art Models Speak About Nudity, Sexuality, and the Creative Process* (State University New York Press, 2006), 50.

²⁴⁵ Marcia Pointon, *Naked Authority: The Body in Western Painting 1830-1908* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 12.

²⁴⁶ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 50-51.

Curiously, their anecdotal reports echo the findings of Henslin and Biggs' research into the behaviours of women undressing for gynaecological exams.²⁴⁷

Many studios and life rooms do not have a separate changing room or screen that separates them from the artist(s). Models might resort to changing in the bathroom facilities of the building, or, commonly, use a designated chair to leave their belongings. One can scrutinise Phillips' treatment of the models' experience of undressing in the studio, however.²⁴⁸ Her approach, in my understanding, automatically presumes a sexualising nature to the act of undressing, which certainly can be sexualised in some situations, while taking posing naked as not sexual. This seems rather a matter of performance and consent. Upon disentangling what the models are reacting against – and what Phillips is picking up on – one finds that they object to a voyeuristic transgression. The models did not agree to be seen in this manner; when they undress behind a screen prior to posing they are not performing, nor consenting.

It is curious that the life models Phillips interviewed go to painstaking lengths to void their nude body from any erotic interests or pleasures whatsoever, even while posing, continuously referencing art as a higher purpose, pure, or as something passionate yet devoid of anything sexual:

Despite pervasive images of models as temptresses and seductresses, contemporary life models deny that their work is overtly sexual. Many assured me that they do not engage artists in sexual intercourse, foreplay, or flirtation. They considered any suggestion that modeling might involve sex not only disrespectful, but also hopelessly pedestrian. According to them, only unenlightened thinkers would confuse the naked (sexual) with the nude (nonsexual).²⁴⁹

This is where the models perpetuate the bias contained within the Naked versus the Nude, expressed as a distinction between carnal 'pedestrian' ignorance versus the more enlightened minds who understand high art to be nonsexual. This distinction of Naked and Nude is maintained later, too, when Phillips discusses the types of poses that the models report to favour:

²⁴⁷ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 52; James Henslin and Mae Biggs, "Dramaturgical Desexualization: The Sociology of the Vaginal Examination," In *Studies in the Sociology of Sex*, ed. James Henslin (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971): 152.

²⁴⁸ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 50.

²⁴⁹ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 37.

the poses favored by male models are more active while female poses are more passive. Active poses include what models describe as 'heroic' stances, 'working' stances, or 'athletic' movements or gestures. Passive poses...are assumed by sitting or reclining and exude a languid air. Male poses appear to challenge the gaze, and female poses welcome or attract the gaze.²⁵⁰

Phillips does not challenge or scrutinise any of these expressions that buy into the Naked and the Nude. While it is the case that physiologically, men and women have different muscle and fat distributions which contribute to different poses, and idiosyncratic variations in terms of fitness or features like one's centre of gravity will further influence the kinds of poses one can uphold. Recognising these physiological varieties does not require one to subscribe directly to the ideological ideas implicit in Clark's treatment of the Nude. The models keep up this distinction when they denounce all sexuality, using it as a method to protect themselves from unwanted voyeuristic and objectifying gazes. Treating the body as transcending base erotic pleasure, purely present to function for high art purposes, unwittingly denies sexuality as a normal part of humanity, misunderstands the very real trouble with unwelcome transgressions, versus, for instance, posing intentionally sensually. Not merely a denial of sexuality, it recalls a more traditional mode of engagement reminiscent of aesthetic disinterestedness, giving preference to the rational and the purely formal that is stripped of carnal interest.

I take the models' statements as expressions of their wish to avoid being treated inappropriately or becoming the object of a voyeur's attentions. They should not be regarded in a way that endeavours to eroticise their work and bodies if this was not agreed prior to working. However, the move to declare eroticisation inappropriate and removed from art is an error, which traps their bodies once more within the tensions that rise from the distinction of Naked and the Nude. The Nude requires the body to be transcendental, excluding those bodies that do not conform to narrow ideals, while ascribing a morally charged tone onto the body that is stripped of its reality. It could lead to the erroneous belief that they feel they *need* to render their bodies a kind of icon, without acknowledging that eroticisation, sexual arousal, and attraction can constitute significant parts of someone's subjectivity, which could equally be part of professional modelling as just another piece of the model's 'posing-repertoire'. Some artists create erotic art, and the models who assist consent to pose erotically within those contexts of production. This anxiety demonstrates the tensions that do remain present

²⁵⁰ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 78.

within these contexts, between appropriate looking and voyeurism, between Naked and Nude, between low and high art, between the erotic and the pornographic. It takes the discussion to the realities of bodies within this situation of art making, and the corresponding anxieties related to presenting a body to be looked at.

5.3 Reckoning with the Realities of Bodies in a Context of Art Making

Beyond briefly sketching attitudes towards the nude, and pausing at both the male and female nude, I have largely avoided pointing towards any clear gender-based differences in my treatment of poses, nor have I explicitly touched on any minorities' experiences within the studio, such as people of colour or LGBTQ people's experiences. My reasoning for this is that the fundamentals of modelling remain the same across the various groups that a model might belong to. Posing is still characterised as a bodily configuration that the model maintains with the aim of being registered, which takes part in a complex process of looking. It is within the treatment of the model, her body, and her representation that there can be significantly divergent experiences and social interactions relating to the model's identity, ethnicity, self-expression and representation. It would render this project a different project, concerned with representation.

Instead, I propose an aesthetics of posing that can function as a supportive basis for these rich further avenues in which research can continue to be done. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge some of the differences that *do* relate to the mentioned characteristics, particularly because of their unique interactions with nakedness and voyeurism. This is by no means a comprehensive account, but rather points towards further research, offering some considerations about these key differences immediately relevant to nudity and modelling.

The previous section treated voyeurism, which is an action pursued by someone who is not the model herself, and how the model deals with this act. This current section explores the reality of bodies, and the manner in which models themselves face varying degrees of bodily anxiety when they are posing. First, it is important to highlight the ongoing difficulty within the Western modelling world to include ethnic bodies, or to even collect data on precisely what the current situation is and how this compares to what came before. This moves into a larger discussion about bodily functions and anxieties, as well as the sexualisation of the body. I conclude, then, by demonstrating how modelling could be a force of body positivity by inviting viewers to witness a wide variety of models who actively consent to be looked at, whose bodies are grounded in reality.

5.3.1 The Exclusion of Ethnic Bodies in Fashion

A complex discussion with regards to bodies is situated within attitudes towards race. Our majority White society has a history of White supremacy, and engendered standards of beauty, for instance, which are racialised White. These have perpetuated negative effects on other-perceptions and self-perceptions of beauty in women of colour.²⁵¹ What follows from this is that “judgements of bodily and facial attractiveness get tied up with judgements about other aspects of the embodied person, resulting in a wide range of differential treatment.”²⁵² Sherri Irvin illuminates that to judge someone to be unattractive is not merely judging them to be of a certain race or gender, but rather to judge them to be of a certain race or gender accompanied by a negative bias about this race or gender.²⁵³ This is where posing becomes complicated, since posing lies at the basis of many of the forms of pictorial objectification that Anne Eaton elucidates in her essay *What Is Wrong With The (Female) Nude?*, which chapter six will treat in-depth in relation to objectification.

The fashion industry favours Western features in their models, even in the few supermodels of colour, who tend to exhibit similarly Western-looking features. Elizabeth St. Philip’s short documentary, *The Colour of Beauty*, 2010, explores racism within the fashion industry, and follows Renee Thompson, a black model who aspires to become a supermodel in New York. It documents how blackness may be less attractive to designers, casting directors, and consumers. Shockingly, several people refer to black models’ beauty as needing to be “like white girls dipped in chocolate.”²⁵⁴ This is in line with findings that indicate how black supermodels, over the last decades, have strategically emphasised or diminished their racial characteristics to improve their marketability. Elizabeth Wissinger remarks that “unless they are expressly highlighting their exoticism, black models seeking success in the mainstream feel that industry-wide aesthetic standards are more easily achieved by white models.”²⁵⁵ Pieces like the documentary, but also models and consumers, have demanded attention to race in recent years for both editorial and commercial modelling within the advertising industry. This demand

²⁵¹ Sherri Irvin, “Resisting Body Oppression: An Aesthetic Approach,” *Feminist Philosophy Quarterly* 3, No. 4 (2017): 4.

²⁵² Irvin, “Resisting Body Oppression,” 3.

²⁵³ Irvin, “Resisting Body Oppression,” 7.

²⁵⁴ Elizabeth St. Philip, *The Colour of Beauty*. 17 min, 2010. View documentary on the National Film Board of Canada, Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.nfb.ca/film/colour_of_beauty/.

²⁵⁵ Elizabeth Wissinger, “Managing the Semiotics of Skin Tone: Race and Aesthetic Labor in the Fashion Modeling Industry,” *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 33, No. 1 (2012): 137.

has extended from popular media to the art historical canon, too. The recent, groundbreaking exhibition, *Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today*, was shown both in The Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University (October 2018 – February 2019), and at Musée d’Orsay in Paris (March – July 2019). This exhibition showed “changing modes of representation of the black figure as central to the development of modern art.”²⁵⁶ Of interest to this thesis is that it highlighted the interactions between models and artists, and where possible attempted to name the represented black subjects based on archival evidence. The New York exhibition was largely focused on the black female figure, in particular zooming in on ‘Laure’, who modelled the maid for Manet’s *Olympia*, 1863. (Fig. 38) Musée d’Orsay’s exhibition attended more broadly to the black figure in art.

It is hard to put any numbers on fine art modelling, especially life modelling. There is slightly more data within commercial and editorial modelling, particularly because it involves large brands within the public eye. Regardless, there is still very scarce quantitative data listing how black models are employed versus white models. For instance, in the 2007 New York fashion week, a third of the shows did not include any models of colour. The following year, 18% of runway spots did go to black models. Later, in 2010, this dropped to 16% again for the Autumn runways.²⁵⁷ Wissinger highlights the dominance of a “white gaze” and “corporate gaze” that influence the decisions about aesthetic labour and who is represented. She argues that aesthetics are no fix-all, and can instead “serve to continue and deepen the very kinds of stereotypes many in the industry profess an interest in breaking.”²⁵⁸

Models’ experiences will differ in the interpersonal treatment of their bodies, the (dis)regard of their creative input, and, most of all, in the reception of the images made of them, which in return influence studio interactions, job allocations, and economic destitution. These minorities are already vulnerable groups within a Western and White dominated capitalist society and cultural world. Their vulnerability opens them up for far reaching problems of objectification, exploitation, and other maltreatment that becomes even more pertinent. The exoticising tendencies we find in fashion is not acceptance nor a whole-hearted recognition of the person as

²⁵⁶ S.n. “Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today – Le Modèle Noir, De Géricault à Matisse,” October 24, 2018 – February 10, 2019 at *Wallach Art Gallery* (New York); March 26 – July 14, 2019 at *Musée d’Orsay* (Paris). Accessed July 7 2021, <https://wallach.columbia.edu/exhibitions/posing-modernity-black-model-manet-and-matisse-today-le-mod%C3%A8le-noir-de-g%C3%A9ricault-%C3%A0-matisse>.

²⁵⁷ Wissinger, “Managing the Semiotics of Skin Tone,” 129.

²⁵⁸ Wissinger, “Managing the Semiotics of Skin Tone,” 140.

a subject. There is much work to be done still, to better understand the effects of imagery on the regard and presence of minorities in our visual repertoire. Thorough research in both a qualitative and quantitative capacity that compares the presence of certain poses, held by which types of models, in conjunction with contextualising which models are represented where and to which degree, would be a very worthwhile undertaking to grasp how minorities and ethnicities are visually considered, if at all. One important avenue for future research is to assess how we can open up this process. I have argued for posing as a tool of authenticity in chapter four, which can continue to serve as a tool also in this case: to embody fair treatment and representation, and as an aid to identify and diminish harmful interactions within art and its making.

5.3.2 Body Shame and Shaming Bodies

The act of voyeurism is often followed by a feeling of shame on the part of the watched person. This is treated by the artworks engaging with themes of voyeurism via their content or by placing the viewer in the voyeur's shoes. In this section I will explore shame as an idea in relation to the body. In 5.3.3, 'Bodily Functions and Intimacy', this moves into a more localised set of worries about how the undressed body renders intimate bodily functions uncomfortably visible, why this is uncomfortable, and the curious connection to sexualisation.

First, Diarmuid Costello offers a helpful overview of the main positions on shame within moral philosophy, which remains an area without much consensus – to such an extent that one may wonder whether a singular concept could really be achieved. The debates quarrel over the possible autonomy or heteronomy of shame, whether it could constitute a push to moral self-improvement, or whether it is, instead, more of a destructive force and mode of self-punishment.²⁵⁹ Costello looks into four strands of thought with regards to shame. These consist of:

the idea that shame is very often triggered by some form of 'perceptual objectification'; the related question as to whether shame is at root an autonomous or an heteronomous emotion; and, most abstractly, the thought that shame depends on a dynamic structural relation whereby human beings conceive of themselves

²⁵⁹ Diarmuid Costello, "Without Shame? Lee Friendlander's Late Self-Portraits," In *Portraits and Philosophy*, ed. by Hans Maes (New York: Routledge, 2019): 179. See 179-183 for Costello's discussion of the work by Krista K. Thomason, Alba Montes Sánchez, Jean-Paul Sartre, Dan Zahavi, Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, Fabrice Teroni, and Gabriele Taylor.

‘from the inside’ as subjects, yet are nonetheless aware that they show up ‘from the outside’ as objects of one another’s attention.²⁶⁰

The accounts share a common concern about the relation between internal and external perspective, namely: “one’s unself-conscious or pre-reflective (first person) immersion in one’s projects versus a mediated version of the same that goes via one’s (third person) sense of how these show up for others.”²⁶¹ This account is particularly of interest to being watched within the context of producing an artwork, such as the situation of the model.

Shame, here, connects to a transgression and notion of visibility: one has been seen or perceived in a compromising or non-consensual manner. Shame as a word is etymologically and historically close to the body and nakedness, particularly the desire to conceal one’s nakedness. In English, the word derives from a pre-Teutonic word that means ‘to cover’, in which ‘covering oneself’ constitutes the natural expression of shame. While shame in these cases is so complementary with visibility, it can also constitute an emotion of self-devaluation rising out of an internal assessment. The self is subjected to an internalised ‘other’ who upholds a standard of judgement and values. Of use here is Luna Dolezal’s notion of shame, which she explains as a social emotion, regardless of whether internal or external. Dolezal connects it to the standards of the internalised other. It rises from interactions between bodies and becomes an intercorporeal emotion.²⁶² I attend to her account because of the close relation that she draws to the body, which I am interested in in light of modelling.

Body shame constitutes a special branch of shame, and while shame can express itself physically through the body, signalling itself via blushing, sweating, and shaking, much shame is also *about* the body. Stephen Pattison notes that body shame is especially powerful, since the body is the immediately observable part of ourselves, as well as the seat of personhood. This is where troubling rejections of personhood find place, for example in the dismissal of disabled bodies, or the invisibility of homeless people.²⁶³ Body shame is the result of a bodily confrontation with physical aspects like body management, appearance, and bodily functions. The subject may find her body unattractive, or wishes not to conform to a social expectation of what is conventional. Less obvious aspects of body presentation also concern themselves with behaviour or comportment. Dolezal distinguishes between two types of body shame: first, ‘acute body shame’, and secondly, ‘chronic body

²⁶⁰ Costello, “Without Shame?”, 179.

²⁶¹ Costello, “Without Shame?”, 183.

²⁶² Luna Dolezal, “Shame and Philosophy,” In *The Body and Shame : Phenomenology, Feminism, and the Socially Shaped Body* (London: Lexington Books, 2015), 4.

²⁶³ Stephen Pattison, *Saving Face: Enfacement, Shame, Theology* (Ashgate, 2003), 62.

shame’.²⁶⁴ Acute body shame is linked to behavioural aspects of the body, like movement and comportment, relating to self-presentation and body management. It arises acutely when one’s self-presentation falters or falls short of a particular social expectation, for instance. However, Dolezal clarifies that it reaches beyond merely feeling self-conscious, and actually constitutes an important factor in “skill-acquisition, self-presentation, and the formation of corporeal schema, (...) broader issues of social control and bodily order.”²⁶⁵ ‘Chronic’ body shame, however, is an ongoing shame of permanent aspects of one’s appearance like weight, height, skin colour, abledness, or worries caused by stigma, for example over scars. It concerns itself with appearance, but also includes body functions and the control over them.²⁶⁶ The focus sits on shame in relation to bodies, both acutely and chronically, in ourselves and in relation to others. Many of the expressed worries by models as such are related to their bodily functions, the vulnerability that comes with nakedness, and voyeurism – not wishing to be seen in a particular way they did not agree to. The idea of body shame is a generally applicable one, which we all might relate to in various degrees as we go about our daily lives.

There are many opportunities for shame in self-presentation, ranging from people posing for photographs, or introducing oneself to new acquaintances. As discussed in chapter three, the experience of self-presentation can be deeply uncomfortable. It enters modelling in various ways, which can be easier to determine in contexts of nudity, but also remains pertinent in clothed occasions of modelling. Commercial modelling is highly present in the public eye. The continuous self-presentation of these models is widely seen and held to particular social expectations. Assumptions are easily shaped, with regards to their moral character or indeed body; for instance, models might be believed to be deeply confident people who are wholly at ease with themselves, or, more negatively, they might be taken as over-indulging in public attention, for example. These are the next stop in a long iconographic tradition that depicts women as self-obsessed and vain, and possibly as soliciting sex. These canonical nudes represent vain women as turning their gaze onto themselves via a mirror, often peeking directly at the viewer of the artwork. One famous instance of this is Diego Velazquez’ *Venus at Her Mirror*, 1644. Conversely, the United Kingdom-based male models whom Joanne Entwistle interviewed went to great lengths to ensure that they were not perceived as taking ‘too much’ interest in their appearance. They were particularly

²⁶⁴ Dolezal, “Shame and Philosophy,” 4-7.

²⁶⁵ Dolezal, “Shame and Philosophy,” 10.

²⁶⁶ Dolezal, “Shame and Philosophy,” 12.

keen to avoid appearing “like they love themselves”. Model ‘Gary’ was especially critical of any public signs of narcissism and described himself as “a bit of a poser”. Many disliked gyms on the grounds that gym-goers pose in the mirror and are allegedly too self-obsessed in public. While acceptable within the privacy of one’s home, several models expressed a strong aversion to displaying this in public.²⁶⁷

Curiously, the distinction between private and public returns in relation to shame, too. Entwistle considered the aversion to private and public posing odd. In my understanding, however, it fits well within the account of navigating being subject and object in relation to the complex gendered standards of body idealisation and shame. The models’ comments indicate worries of manifesting personal moral flaws of vanity and narcissism. In line with observations of the female Nude and its ideations, it was frequently noted by the male models and bookers that female models were much more arrogant, vain, and self-obsessed. Entwistle’s male interviewees endeavoured to remove themselves from these perceived feminine flaws, while working in a profession that is female-dominated. The ‘laddish’ attitude Entwistle encountered could be one of three things. Firstly, she gathered it may be a moral performance to avoid appearing vain or feminine at the interview, secondly, it may simply be part of their performance of masculinity which denies the overt feminine qualities of the job, and third, it could be due to a strong denial of the actual attention and time they spent cultivating and maintaining a particular body state and look.²⁶⁸

The laddish attitude and three possible explanations argued by Entwistle can each be linked to shame, in particular body shame. The worry is that these men should work to achieve the kind of body required to model and become lost in a vanity associated with women, especially within the tradition of the Nude. It is important to consider that the male gaze is powerful, also towards men. The male gaze’s subject is weakened and remains at the mercy of its scrutiny. One can wonder whether these male models are resisting being subjected to such a power relationship, to being objectified, and subsequently find themselves in a subordinated position which they try to circumvent in their denial of bodily care and attention to beauty.

5.3.3 Bodily Functions and Intimacy

²⁶⁷ Joanne Entwistle, “From Catwalk to Catalog: Male Fashion Models, Masculinity, and Identity,” In *Cultural Bodies: Ethnography and Theory*, eds. H. Thomas and J. Ahmed (London: Blackwell, 2004), 62.

²⁶⁸ Entwistle, “From Catwalk to Catalog,” 63.

The model's naked, posing body cannot easily be altered or manipulated while she models; what you see is what you see. Within this discussion of the reality of bodies in a context of art making, an area that may easily be overlooked is that of bodily functions. When modelling nude, a model is quickly confronted with the reality of her body's needs which may announce themselves shortly prior to modelling, or occur during. As such, it is considered good practice to shower and ensure the body is cleaned prior to posing. Bodily functions enter in a plethora of ways, and are also the locus of various implications and worries expressed by models.

Not all bodily functions can be controlled; mortifying at times, they can be accompanied by a deeper concern. Namely, do these externalised functions betray a very interior state of being? Male models, for instance, must deal with the possibility that they could get an erection while they model, especially in the nude. Whereas a female model has no control over whether she does or does not menstruate as she works, models report using tampons and hiding the strings in order to look no different externally. She can, in effect, hide this part of her biological functioning. Conversely, many erections can be of similar nature, and constitute a bodily occurrence which the male model does not necessarily control. Erections need not be a consequence of sexual arousal on the male model's part. This potentiality for arousal, however, and subsequently accusations of exhibitionism or ulterior sexualising motives, are where the anxiety is located for this body function.

Phillips reports that "getting an erection while modelling is considered to be very unprofessional." However, the models she interviews cannot quite explain why it is so taboo, especially considering that it is something bodies are known to do without stimulus, be it physical or mental. The male models reported embarrassment over their bodily state and expressed that it might render the artist uncomfortable. Some described themselves as entirely unable to maintain an erection while posing, both the fear of erections and physical exertion demanding too much attention. Yet, male models also report various techniques to prevent erections from occurring, ranging from shifting their focus to a mundane feature of the studio or pose, to inflicting pain upon themselves, either physically or by thinking about upsetting events.²⁶⁹ Phillips compares the male model's worry about the possibility of erections to female models' worries about menstruation.²⁷⁰ It is a curious comparison worth briefly objecting to, since it lays bare a presumption about the male and female body.

²⁶⁹ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 61-62.

²⁷⁰ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 63.

The focus on genitals as a locus of anxiety and unwanted sexuality does not render these bodily processes the same. The male's erection can be understood as his manifested sexual arousal, while a woman's menses is by no means involved in female sexual arousal. What they may share, however, is experiences of shame when they occur. A physiologically more similar response women experience is that of nipples growing erect. The female models were not particularly perturbed by this, however, since that physiological response can be attributed to room temperature.

What the models are experiencing is a body-focused shame and embarrassment related to their nakedness, which renders visible a variety of bodily states. Developing the thought of the erection's worrisome potentiality for arousal and self-gratifying interest, it does not merely constitute a worry about sexual arousal. The male erection provides a sexualising threat to the context of art making that has been taken as a transcendental occasion, void of carnal interest in the way that the Nude perpetuates its complex relationship to idealised form.

These expressions of worry do not stop at the model's own body. Particularly when it concerns nude modelling, many of the models interviewed by Phillips reported broken relationships due to ongoing jealousy, growing out of a notion that can only consider the naked body as deeply intimate. This intimate display is reserved for a similarly intimate partner – not a whole drawing group.²⁷¹ A parallel can be drawn here from fine art modelling to commercial modelling, and the idea of social media figures who put themselves on display. I consider these expressions of hurt and jealousy to be misunderstandings about the perception of modelling as a legitimate artistic job that can entail being nude in front of 'strangers'.

While this hurt may also apply to commercial modelling, it does not appear to function in the same way when we consider high profile shoots, or indeed the social media influencers who pose in various states of undress. Both fine art and commercial models are ultimately 'nude in front of strangers', either in-person or via their representation. It is not clear whether this is a matter of agency (the influencer looks to be more in charge of their own image), or cultural prestige in that they might achieve a far-reaching following. It is often not very well-communicated how influencer images are achieved professionally with the help of a crew, which is very different from how they may be framed as being impromptu selfies taken on holiday. The nature of celebrity may neutralise some of the expressions of worry by elevating the influencer to a more untouchable, idealised

²⁷¹ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 81.

platform – in-keeping with the Nude. The celebrity can display a pride in showing her body, in-keeping with ideals, and manifest a desire to be looked at. This very publicly visible display of the undressed body has also been an unspoken rite of passage for many rising supermodels. Typically, girls barely of age (or not quite), take part in a ‘risqué’ shoot. At seventeen years of age, Kate Moss modelled for her first topless Calvin Klein shoot (Fig. 39), with photographer Mario Sorrenti who she was in a relationship with at the time. Moss describes a blurring of boundaries between their working and personal relationship. She reveals that the eventual iconic photograph took ten days for them to achieve.²⁷² Fine art models outside the realm of editorial jobs are typically not as well-known, and avoid some of those pressures of celebrity. As discussed in Entwistle’s work on cultural value and commercial modelling; certain kinds of model jobs contribute to an elevated social status. Shame and nudity do not work in the same way for these cases that remain in the public eye, an eye which feels entitled to consuming the images and famed person’s represented body.

A further example of how shame and nudity work differently for well-known models is #Selfieswap by Kate Moss and Cara Delevingne on *Instagram* in 2015, taken with the help of photographer Mert Alas (Fig. 40). While called #Selfieswap, the pictures are not technically selfies. Moss and Delevingne claim to take a public stance on nudity, eroticisation, voyeurism and ownership of images. They purportedly aim to subvert the photographer-model interaction with these photographs.²⁷³ It is doubtful whether they manage to accomplish this successfully; they still maintain the same bodily ideals that come with being celebrities who conform to narrow standards of beauty, and therefore cannot stop perpetuating those same standards of the Nude. One could concede, however, that these images are taken on their own terms, and posted on their own terms, and it is in this sense that they retain greater ownership over the production and distribution of their images.

5.3.4 Positive Lessons of Nude Modelling

Having discussed an array of worries both within and outside the model’s control with regards to her nude body on display, I conclude this chapter by presenting a more positive outlook on the nude model body. What can

²⁷² Emma Akbareian, “Kate Moss on the Naked Calvin Klein Shoot and the Obsession that Ended Her Relationship,” *The Independent*, January 16 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/news/kate-moss-naked-calvin-klein-shoot-and-obsession-ended-her-relationship-10282494.html>.

²⁷³ Julie Kosin, “Kate Moss and Cara Delevingne Take Risqué Photos of Each Other,” *Harper’s Bazaar*, September 24 2015. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/models/news/a12302/kate-moss-cara-delevingne-sexy-instagram/>.

we learn from nude modelling, and how could it contribute to encouraging an open and positive approach to many different kinds of bodies?

Modelling as a profession is based in self-presentation. This comes with a self-consciousness about how one appears, and the ways in which this appearance can be mediated from job to job. Especially self-involved are those commercial models, given how they heavily rely on conforming to particular body and character standards to suit the brands they work for. Fine art modelling allows more leeway in terms of types of bodies since they cover a broader range of creative interests. The discussion so far has remained limited to mentioning shame as a social modifier in public contexts. Curiously, the notions of shame discussed in literature on the concept does not typically take into regard the model's unusual type of nudity – the main example appears to be Max Scheler's. The social situations in which nudity, or a degree thereof, is typically encountered is moderated by prescribed rules for its presence, for example at the nudist beach, in night clubs, or in the intimacy between people. There are different standards of acceptable nakedness and exposure, with their own consequent reactions of shame. People do not typically encounter other naked bodies except within their own intimate moments, or in special designated zones like a nudist beach. These are also separate from how and where people engage with erotic popular media, or pornographic imagery. However, for both the nudist beach as well as those people presented in erotic or pornographic imagery, any onlookers typically do not receive an explicit invitation to look. Nude modelling presents a rare occasion within which it is acceptable to view another human body, belonging to a model who is entirely aware of this and is, in fact, inviting the viewer to observe her.

Anne Noble-Partridge²⁷⁴ campaigned for introducing life drawing more widely in schools, beyond offering it to A-Level Art students.²⁷⁵ She argues that the experience of the life class can inform them about “anatomy, science, sexual health, body positivity, age”, and that students, as an indirect result of experiencing and observing life models, can be informed about how they may experience and view themselves and others' bodies. She proposes that it provides a counterpart to the sexualised bodies of porn stars, which often conform to narrow standards that perpetuate harmful and unrealistic ideas about sexual intimacy and the way bodies look.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Anne Noble-Partridge is the Director of London Drawing, she spoke about this topic for the BBC Radio 4 Program on the 9th of January 2020.

²⁷⁵ A-Level students within the UK are typically 16 to 18 years of age and comprise the final two years of education prior to any higher education.

²⁷⁶ London Drawing, “Anne Noble-Partridge Interview BBC Radio 4 PM Program,” *Vimeo*, BBC 4 Interview on January 9 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://vimeo.com/385973380>.

Young people are definitely affected by what they see. It might be that the life model is the first human being that they see completely nude. The experience of that in a life room, rather than on the internet, is a much safer place for this to happen. (...) When you are faced with someone who is giving you that permission to look, there is a certain sort of respect that is intrinsically there.²⁷⁷

A day later, a breakfast television magazine tweeted a poll on the 10th January 2020.²⁷⁸ It stated: “Campaigners have called for nude art classes in schools to improve body image issues caused by social media. Would you be comfortable with your child taking part in life drawing classes?” The final result knows 10,277 votes, a grand majority of 76.5% voting ‘No’. While this source must be taken with a grain of salt, for instance the show’s audience may be a particular demographic, maintain particular views, and on top of this one can also wonder which selection of the audience engages on Twitter. Additionally, the magazine framed the question highly ambiguously with an intent to outrage and generate online engagement. The responses do demonstrate that people’s hesitations with regards to exposing their children to nude models is often rooted in shame. This shame is related to the notion of minors being confronted with nakedness, bodies, and by extension their own bodies and sexuality potentially. There are also safeguarding worries, for instance the fear that the model may actually be an exhibitionist or have sexualising motives.

There are many reasons to be favourable towards carefully introducing A-level students to life classes. It improves and actively exercises their visual literacy, which also gives way to reflecting about various types of bodies, of different genders, ages, and proportions, in order to normalise the unique bodies of others and of themselves. The argument that minors are too young to see these is weak, in that elsewhere our society is largely fine with entertainment and advertisements bombarding people across many ages with often explicit and erotically laden imagery. Take, for instance, lingerie and perfume adverts, or erotic and violent scenes in films and series. Children encounter these images, in public, when they watch television at home, as well as online. As a society, we are not providing a clear alternative to counter the idealised and edited bodies that we see; at least, not in a visual sense. Normalising different bodies within a context of art making gives that nude body a different set of purposes. We can focus on the model who takes on a pose, the point of which is to look at it and

²⁷⁷ London Drawing, “Anne Noble-Partridge Interview BBC Radio 4 PM Program.”

²⁷⁸ This show was *Good Morning Britain*.

register it. Treating the unique nude body as not an inherently erotic body, but certainly a body that *can* be erotic on its own terms, is important to learn to engage with nakedness, shame, sexuality, and ultimately to understand ourselves and others better.

I have argued that attitudes about the Naked and Nude are still deeply embedded within artistic practice, and that models do experience a variety of anxieties with regards to issues of voyeurism, sexualisation, and bodily functions. This exploration led to the mechanisms in place intended to minimise the occasions for voyeurism, such as ‘the changing room moment’. The discussion then traced the reality of bodies in this context of art making, the special connection that nakedness does still hold to shame, and how the model’s naked body can be engaged with positively, for instance in a context of normalising and inviting an audience to look within the setting of a life class.

This brings me to delve into objectification in the following sixth chapter, where I will explore how objectification is deeply intertwined with modelling as a profession. There, I will identify the ways in which it is harmful, neutral, and how it could also be beneficial within the strict parameters of modelling. This then leads to a line of inquiry within which modelling may be able to subvert some of objectification’s harmful effects.

Chapter 6: The Relationship Between Objectification and Posing

Objectification is typically taken as the harmful treatment of a subject as an object. In this sixth chapter, I propose that objectification is a core quality of modelling. This poses a problem, which is concerned with how modelling could still constitute a neutral or benign practice if it is indeed inescapably objectifying. To this end, I will defend the hypothesis that objectification functions as a fundamental quality of posing. I distinguish between ‘mere’ and ‘aesthetic’ objectification, the former being the harmful form of objectification, and the latter a morally neutral feature of the art making process. I propose that ‘aesthetic’ objectification need not be objectionable, but can be morally neutral or benign and conducive to the ends of art making. Developing our understanding of this special form of objectification within modelling will further enrich how we consider the mechanisms of objectification, its participants, and its different effects on both art practice and resulting artworks.

To make my case that modelling need not be morally objectionable as a result of its objectifying nature, I will focus on the modes of objectification identified by Martha Nussbaum, Rae Langton, and Kathleen Stock. Via this route, I argue that certain modes of objectification do ensure appropriate treatment of and qualitative interactions with the model’s dual object and subject nature. Especially of interest are the pictorial mechanisms of objectification identified by Anne Eaton, which allow artworks to engender objectification within the wider genre of the Nude. Objectification indeed becomes trickier to navigate when we take into consideration (implied) nude modelling, which I touched upon in the previous chapter five. I employ Eaton’s categories because models occupy an odd role within art making. On one hand they can be treated in a particular way in person, but on the other hand they are also closely involved in the making of artworks; as such, their representations end up in artworks which may have mechanisms of their own.

To argue towards ‘aesthetic’ objectification in connection to the right situations within modelling, I first explore the concept of objectification, and discuss more closely the different ways of objectifying a person as proposed by Martha Nussbaum. This is followed by a discussion of the deep relationship modelling as a practice has to objectification. The last section presents an in-depth application of the pictorial modes of objectification as introduced by Anne Eaton. My claim is that this pictorial objectification feeds back into the studio and influences the act of image-making and modelling, which can similarly affect those people involved in both the

production and viewing of art. That discussion points out how the different forms of pictorial objectification can interact with the model in the studio and impact her potentially negatively, but that, in fact, poses can also be employed to subvert the objectionable effects of these categories.

6.1 What is Objectification?

As Kathleen Stock concisely puts it, “Objectification, broadly speaking, involves relating to other people as if they were objects.”²⁷⁹ Colloquially, objectification may generally be taken as a morally harmful thing which is often related to treating a person in a manner of sexual objectification.

There are two scholarly accounts that narrow the definition of objectification to one that is concerned with sexual objectification, in particular. Sandra Bartky emphasises sexual objectification as a woman’s sexual parts or functions being treated instrumentally and as separate from her overall personality, or as if they are representative of the whole of the woman.²⁸⁰ Another account is Catherine MacKinnon’s, which frames sexual objectification within a gender theory that identifies gender according to social hierarchy, in which one group is more powerful than the other. Objectification here is taken as sexual in two ways: women’s social role is to be subordinated for men’s sexual (and other) interests (the social role of men being to instrumentalise women to fulfil their needs), firstly, and, secondly, both men and women eroticise this inequality between masculine dominance and feminine submission.²⁸¹ Sally Haslanger expands MacKinnon’s account to argue that when sexual objectification is construed entirely in terms of social roles of gender, women’s very nature is believed to be sexually subordinate, which in turn fails to acknowledge that it is social construction which enforces this dynamic.²⁸²

The more general approach to objectification by Nussbaum, Langton and Stock favours the notion that there are differing contexts of objectification, which are not necessarily bound to eroticising autonomy-

²⁷⁹ Kathleen Stock, “Sexual Objectification, Objectifying Images, and ‘Mind-Insensitive Seeing-As’,” In *Evaluative Perception*, ed. Anna Bergqvist and Robert Cowan (Oxford University Press, 2018), 295.

²⁸⁰ Sandra Bartky, “On Psychological Oppression,” In *Feminist Theory: A Philosophical Anthology*, eds. A. Cudd and R. Andreason (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 108.

²⁸¹ Catherine MacKinnon, “Sexuality, Pornography, and Method: Pleasure under Patriarchy,” *Ethics*, Vol. 99, No. 2 (1989a): 327.

²⁸² Sally Haslanger, *Resisting Reality: Social Construction and Social Critique* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 67.

violation. A broader idea nuances how some contexts may produce morally neutral or benign forms of objectification, in the right situation, which then will result in the ‘aesthetic’ objectification of the model.

Of course, many objectifying situations remain harmful, particularly since its victims tend to be in an already vulnerable position, for example in instances of sexism or racism.²⁸³ I take modelling as inescapably objectifying because it occurs within a layered process of looking, which utilises the model in art making. An exchange happens between her contribution and what the artist needs from her. One could assume that some degree of instrumentalisation always occurs. This can be twofold: not only can the model be instrumentalised by an artist, but particular models can make use of an artist with the aim of bettering their portfolio or perceived social status, as one example.²⁸⁴

Martha Nussbaum understands objectification as a ‘cluster-term’, in which a plurality of ways to treat a person as an object contribute. She identified seven modes of objectification which I will discuss in-depth in the next section 6.2 ‘Nussbaum’s Types of Objectification’: instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership, and denial of subjectivity. These present no sufficient conditions of objectification, but rather function as features that are present, often simultaneously, when treating as a thing someone who is not a thing.²⁸⁵ She concedes to Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin’s work the central view that “...the instrumental treatment of human beings, the treatment of human beings as tools for the purposes of another, is always morally problematic; if it does not take place in a larger context of regard for humanity.”²⁸⁶ Importantly, sexual objectification in particular is taken broadly by Nussbaum, and as such she allows for morally neutral or even positive cases of objectification, for instance within the parameters of a consensual intimate relationship. It is this wider context that takes into account the humanity of the people involved that will feed into my account of ‘aesthetic’ objectification as creating a situation within which the

²⁸³ Stock, “Sexual Objectification,” 297.

²⁸⁴ Furthermore, one can wonder whether there exists an additional pictorial component to exploitative treatment, given that the model’s work typically results in an image. I will not engage in a discussion of economic exploitation throughout this chapter, particularly because great scholarship does already exist in connection to fashion modelling and the advertising industry. Several sociological, ethnographic studies have delved into the economic precarity and tensions of ‘aesthetic’ labour in a Western Capitalist society. Many of these scholars have also, for instance, conducted interviews with fashion models, at times having worked as models themselves either prior to or during their research. I think of the work by Joanne Entwistle, Ashley Mears, and Elizabeth Wissinger. Mears modelled as a teenager and did so again to be part of the inner workings of the modelling industry for her ethnographic research. Other who have conducted autoethnographic work are Patricia Soley-Beltran and Alessandra Bruni Lopez y Royo.

²⁸⁵ Martha Nussbaum, “Objectification,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 24, No. 4 (1995): p. 257-258.

²⁸⁶ Nussbaum, “Objectification,” 289.

humanity of the models and those involved is regarded, while still engaging in objectifying behaviour and picture making. Rae Langton builds on Nussbaum's concepts by introducing three additional notions of reduction to body or body parts, reduction to appearance, and treating someone as silent or unable to communicate.²⁸⁷ These will also prove particularly useful for modelling, given that modelling relies precisely on a reduction to body and appearance in many instances. I will probe the situation of modelling according to Langton's three notions in 6.2.8 'Rae Langton's Additions', as well as recalling them throughout the discussions of case studies in 6.4 'Can Modelling Subvert the Harmful Effects of Pictorial Objectification?'

Kathleen Stock follows the accounts of Nussbaum and Langton, and is similarly interested in a broader construal of objectification that includes occasions beyond those that are sexualised or eroticised. A broader idea of objectification nuances how the right contexts may produce "morally benign forms".²⁸⁸ Stock considers 'mind-suppressing images' to be images that diminish any outward signs of the subject's mental life and individuality; they impose a particular way of seeing the subject.²⁸⁹ Her account focuses on *perceiving* a subject objectifyingly, instead of *treating* a subject objectifyingly. As such, it can be morally neutral by considering the mind of the subject, and Stock proposes that her *seeing-as* is causal to the treatment mode of objectification termed by the aforementioned scholars. This notion of 'mind-insensitive seeing-as' will prove helpful in conjunction with Eaton's pictorial objectification throughout this chapter. Given the model's complex relationship with on one hand her in-person treatment on the side of art practice, and on the other hand her perceived representation within the resulting artwork, it is important to cover both the objectifying treatment *and* perception of a subject.

The model is a subject who performs her poses as an artistic form, a kind of object, reserved for and scrutinised within the context of art making. She is employed as an instrumental artistic tool within the creative process, which is one instance where objectification becomes a quality of modelling. It is here where Nussbaum's remark about a wider context of humanity can be applied to indicate a situation of objectification which need not necessarily be harmful. The context of art making can indeed potentially avoid harm if it recognises the wider subjectivity of the human beings involved, even if in the throes of art making various features of objectification are relied upon.

²⁸⁷ Rae Langton, *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 228-229.

²⁸⁸ Stock, "Sexual Objectification," 295-297.

²⁸⁹ Stock, "Sexual Objectification," 301.

To further clarify the connection between modelling and objectification, recall the characterisation of posing as *a particular bodily configuration that one maintains with the aim of being registered*. Both parts of this characterisation can be linked to objectification. The first part indicates how the model takes on a particular form. In order to do this, she must consider her presence in the space, and the ways in which she configures her body in response to her artistic task — whether that is modelling for a drawing group, fashion shoot, or yet another situation. The model must scrutinise herself to render a form that is aesthetically relevant. It is in this manner that she objectifies herself, by considering how to present her appearance to be registered. The second part of the characterisation covers that a particular bodily form needs to be registered, in order for it to be a pose. This too refers to the objectifying nature of posing, since posing occurs within a process of looking and in this sense appeals to several of the features of objectification, such as instrumentalisation to achieve the form, and certainly reduction to appearance or body and body parts. This is so when the model poses for other people to look, and remains the case when she is alone, for instance when she practices poses in a mirror within the privacy of her home.

The pose is constructed in and through a process of looking; and as such always incorporates the gazes of those who will view it. All these spectators, including the model herself, individually and collectively engage in the same process of looking which considers the model precisely that, a ‘model’ form. She is an exemplary figure who aids the making of art precisely because she presents a physical form that is of artistic interest. This is where the appreciated skill and professional behaviour of models is recognised, as body-experts who masterfully present their bodies. I take objectification to be inescapable because it is present in the scrutiny that the pose is subjected to in person, the treatment of the model by those present as an instrument to their artistic ends, as well as the possible objectification of the artwork’s represented pose. While I am conscious that this statement is on the paradoxical side, I will demonstrate throughout this chapter that it is more plausible and widespread than it may sound initially.

Take, for instance, the use of objectification in more widely known practices such as the training of dancers and sportspeople. In these contexts, we find many situations in which a person is actively desubjected to emphasise or scrutinise their form. Objectification can be a helpful tool to abstract the subject in order to assess features like the efficient execution of movements. It is useful to understand the body rather as a form and object, envisioning how to draw out the desired qualities for the tasks it set out to perform, like rehearsing a

choreography, or practicing a left hook. Sports coaches, for example, make use of mirrors or video to improve their athletes' somaesthetic awareness of how they perform particular movements and postures, to enhance their performance. There exists a link between athletes experiencing and understanding the proprioceptive sensations that endure in certain postures, which they learn to associate with the corresponding visual forms.²⁹⁰ Similarly, so too can models rely on their own skill to innovate a wider range of poses within the parameters of the profession, rather than being held back by any personal worries that may impede these. A model who may be body shy in her own personal life may not encounter the same shyness when she is modelling in a studio, and instead employs her skill to come up with interesting poses. Degrees of objectification are not uncommon in these areas of physical performance, and they are not necessarily harmful there. Particularly because they rely on features such as instrumentalisation, reduction to body and body parts, and fungibility (treating someone as interchangeable). Consider the comparison between athlete bodies and what constitutes the ideal physique for a particular sport. Of course, features such as violability are not useful to sports performance, and prove to be harmful to the sporting subject.

In recent years there has been an increasing number of performers both within the entertainment and sports industry who made allegations of sexual harassment and assault. A sports example is the USA gymnastics sex abuse scandal centred on national team doctor Larry Nassar, who sexually abused over 150 minors, complaints about which were covered up by the US Olympic Committee. This led to Nassar only pleading guilty in 2017 and 2018 to a variety of charges dating back to offences that were ongoing since the nineties. The 2020 documentary (*Athlete A*) explores the unfolding of this scandal.²⁹¹ An entertainment industry example is film producer Harvey Weinstein, who was sentenced to 23 years in jail in 2020 for rape and sexual assault of multiple actresses and models. He is known to have kept his victims silent; as far back as in a 2005 interview, singer Courtney Love warned women against Weinstein, and found herself subsequently blacklisted by Hollywood

²⁹⁰ John Toner and Aidan Moran, "Enhancing Performance Proficiency at the Expert Level: Considering the Role of 'Somaesthetic Awareness'," *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 16, No. 1 (2015): 113.

²⁹¹ Hadley Freeman, "How was Larry Nassar able to abuse so many gymnasts for so long?" *The Guardian*, January 26 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2018/jan/26/larry-nassar-abuse-gymnasts-scandal-culture>.

talent agency Creative Artists Agency,²⁹² a high-profile entertainment and sports agency that represents A-list actors, writers, directors and athletes.²⁹³

Features of objectification such as violability are deeply harmful, and it is difficult to imagine situations where it would somehow not be morally objectionable to treat another human being as something that can be broken into or transgressed against in such a manner. One can wonder whether the complex relationship between sports coaches and athletes, or indeed between producers and artists, which maintains some degree of objectification for those reasons of enhancement that I mentioned, can slip into more insidious and harmful features of objectification, such as eroticisation and eventually violability. Another crucial similarity in these situations is that there is an immense power imbalance. Often a younger and more vulnerable person is coached by a mentor or person with a much higher seniority, with financial and sector authority, who can make or break a career, or indeed influence others to maintain silence – as is the case with Courtney Love’s blacklisting. An example from the model world are the allegations against photographer Terry Richardson. Over the years, many models, including supermodel Coco Rocha, have spoken out accusing him of sexual coercion and rape during photoshoots. His investigation by the *New York Police Department* started in 2017, but as of yet does not seem to have been concluded. He has previously been sued by models such as Gabriela Johansson in 2005 for “fraud, misappropriation, invasion of privacy, breach of contract, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.” Allegedly, he also pressured her “to pose naked.”²⁹⁴ While inconclusive for the time being, it demonstrates how the power of a famed photographer can be used in a coercive and sexually abusive manner.

As these various examples indicate, some features of objectification cannot feasibly result in a morally neutral or good consequence. ‘Denial of autonomy’ and ‘denial of subjectivity’ in Nussbaum’s collection are

²⁹² S.n. “Harvey Weinstein jailed for 23 years in rape trial,” *BBC, US & Canada*, March 12 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-51840532>; Maya Oppenheim, “Courtney Love warned young female actors about Harvey Weinstein in 2005,” *The Independent*, October 16 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/courtney-love-harvey-weinstein-2005-clip-a8001551.html>.

²⁹³ Barney Gimbel, “A Hollywood agency with star power,” *Fortune Magazine*, October 4 2007. Accessed July 7 2021, https://archive.fortune.com/2007/09/28/magazines/fortune/hollywood_agent.fortune/index.htm. Clients of CAA include J.J. Abrams, Johnny Depp, Beyoncé, Meryl Streep, AC/DC, David Beckham, Simon Cowell, David Letterman, and many more. This linked list of renowned celebrities offers a sense of this company’s enormous influence, whose clients proved surprisingly difficult to find grouped together elsewhere. All names are linked to news sources announcing their partnering with CAA. I am referencing this Wikipedia article since it links to individual news articles detailing these various celebrities’ involvement with CAA. Accessed July 7 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Creative_Artists_Agency_clients#cite_note-1.

²⁹⁴ Harriet Sim, “The Disturbing List of Sexual Assault and Harassment Allegations Against Terry Richardson,” *Marie Claire*, October 17 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.marieclaire.com.au/terry-richardson-every-sexual-harassment-and-assault-allegation?fbclid=IwAR2lzApu25HuYGTkaLO4_GwAlQ5t_7AZzcn6gxs9FWLy0p5pXhNqJWcKY-A.

especially difficult to navigate, and often cannot reasonably be used to the benefit of the model, certainly not in a way that maintains attention for the subjects within the overarching context. It is only those features of objectification that provide a means of (self-)assessment to ensure the betterment of the undertaken practice, fitting the context of considering the humanity of the subjects involved, that I take as morally neutral or even benign. There needs to be a level of regard for the people involved, which requires recognising their capacity to self-determine and experience individual feelings. Throughout, I will indicate which types of objectification cannot be neutral or benign, and therefore remain harmful.

6.2 Nussbaum's Types of Objectification

Martha Nussbaum differentiated seven distinctive ways in which a person can be treated as an object in her 1995 article "Objectification". I start with Nussbaum, and will work my way towards Rae Langton's additions. In doing so, I will demonstrate that objectification exists in different degrees and situations, some of which might be helpful to the creative process of posing.

6.2.1 Instrumentality

Instrumentality means to treat a person as a tool or means to achieve a certain purpose. A model is always instrumental to the artistic process; she has a clearly delineated use and expertise that she contributes: posing. This instrumentality can be achieved through a fair agreement about the work required, necessary steps taken to ensure the model's wishes are considered, and awarded appropriate pay. In such a case, while she is still instrumentalised for the artist's purposes, the instrumentalisation ensures that they can work together creatively in order to achieve the desired artistic outcome. This kind of use is at its strongest for the guided poses that I discussed in chapter one. A portrait sitter, or a catalogue model, are both heavily directed to maintain certain poses to make the most of the artistic possibilities that the executive artist envisions. A wider consideration of the model brings subjectivity into this context. While the model is certainly instrumentalised to accomplish the artist's artistic goals, her subjectivity has been considered via, for instance, the steps taken pre-modelling. One such example is Yousuf Karsh who would subtly direct his portrait sitters and make them comfortable, to achieve the compelling portraits that he himself envisioned. (Fig. 13) Another example are life models who are treated

appropriately by the drawing group or academy they work for; they receive the agreed pay, there are breaks, the tutor ensures they do not overheat or freeze while posing, and many other considerations that take the subject into account. This subject is still instrumentalised as a model to aid the drawing group's practice, but is ultimately only instrumentalised in the context of art making, leaving their personal requirements intact.

Instrumentalisation becomes objectionable when it spirals into the upsetting accounts of abuse. Given the lack of union support and regulation, models typically have to deal with precarious contracts and insecure work (if any contract exists at all). The unique set of problems a model faces, as someone who is both a subject and object within the context of art making, can easily fester due to her lack of legal protection. These issues are of the social, interpersonal kind that affect her interactions, social status, and the way her body is regarded. Instrumentalising the model, without considering her wider needs as a subject with particular values and requirements, results in a harmful, often exploitative use of the model. This can take the form of an instrumentalisation of her creative ideas, her body, and the poses she creates, without due credit or consideration. These easily occur together with other forms of objectification, such as 'denial of autonomy', 'ownership', and Langton's 'reduction to body' and 'silencing' that I will go on to discuss near the end of this section. There is an increasing number of voices calling out across the different kinds of modelling in newspapers, blogs, video streaming sites, requesting better recognition for models, their creative contributions, and safer, better protected working conditions in the form of a union and (fairer) contracts.

A concrete example of exploitative instrumentalisation is the (now) public opposition of Kaori, a Japanese fine art model, to the treatment of erotic photographer Nobuyoshi Araki (Fig. 41). She was a long term model of his, and reports various forms of maltreatment. These comprise multiple features of objectification, at the heart of which lies a relentless instrumentalisation by Araki to create and publish the kinds of erotic pictures he himself was interested in, regardless of what she felt comfortable doing. The claims I focus on are that Araki pressured her into maintaining poses and erotic actions with which she felt uncomfortable, never offered her a professional contract, did not inform her when or how pictures were published or displayed, and often did not pay her for her services: "He treated me like an object. (...) For him, a muse means someone who doesn't speak or have any of her own opinions and just keeps obeying his orders."²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ Rich Motoko, "When an Erotic Photographer's Muse Becomes His Critic," *The New York Times*, May 5 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/05/world/asia/nobuyoshi-araki-photographer-model.html>.

6.2.2 Denial of Autonomy

The next mode of objectification is ‘denial of autonomy’, which means to treat someone as if they lack autonomy and self-determination. This type of objectification will ultimately always be harmful, precisely because it infringes upon a model’s autonomy. There is no satisfying way to turn around such an infringement in the wider context of humanity previously discussed, nor any sense in which it would be helpful or neutral to modelling. To take Kaori again as an example: her personal wishes for privacy and unwillingness to do certain kinds of erotic shoots were entirely bypassed by Araki. As such, she found herself in a vulnerable and exploitative situation. Some of these objections will return in the next category of ‘inertness’, which shares some qualities with ‘denial of autonomy’ in terms of how the person is treated.

6.2.3 Inertness

Inertness encompasses the ways in which someone is treated as lacking agency or activity. It is also an objectionable form of objectification that is difficult to overcome because it wholly disregards the humanity of the person. Inertness functions curiously when applied to poses, however. First, it should be remarked that there is a long iconographic history, as Eaton points out in *What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?*, that depicts (nude) women especially as inert. Their inertia is achieved via the pose in which they are represented, most famously in the tradition of the sleeping Venus. These poses especially do not occur to the same extent for male nude figures.²⁹⁶ Sleeping Venuses, across the centuries, are depicted nude, with an arm above their heads, providing more (visual) access to their bodies. They are asleep, unconscious of who may be watching. Giorgione’s Venus’ leftover hand covers her erogenous zone – or possibly even implies masturbation (Fig. 42).

Secondly, many poses are stereotypically lengthy in duration. As seen in the first chapter, posing has been understood as akin to freezing or as an absence of action.²⁹⁷ I have counter-argued throughout this thesis why I consider modelling dynamic and active. What I can concede, however, is that when a life model maintains an hour-long pose, keeping her vision fixed on a particular spot on the wall in the room to ensure that she does not drop her physical configuration, it may happen that those present start speaking about her or considering her as if she retreated entirely within herself, or as if she is not consciously present at all. This constitutes mind-

²⁹⁶ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 289, 298.

²⁹⁷ Spinicci, “Portraits: Some Phenomenological Remarks,” 47-49.

insensitive seeing-as which assumes the model to be an inert thing without thoughts, which does not listen nor actively engage in any conversation and work. This occurs for fashion models just as well; the fashion model may be handled by a whole crew of team members who physically touch her and talk about her as if she were not there. Additionally, a majority of fashion models do not manage themselves, and are therefore not in charge of the jobs they book – these are booked by their agency.²⁹⁸ The danger here is that their own decision-making capacities are overruled by their agent's wider vision.

6.2.4 Fungibility

The following category is that of fungibility, which captures how people can be treated as objects, and not only this, but as interchangeable with other objects of the same or other types. In the world of high fashion and catalogue modelling, models tend to conform to very similar measurements and bodily proportions. They must often maintain blank expressions, which decreases the individualisation of their features, and subsequently diminishes their subjecthood, while heightening the focus on, for example, the clothes they are wearing. It complicates matters especially in the case of commercial modelling, where the models are actively recruited and posed to sell a mass-produced item. Runway models, commercial advertising models, and body part models are required to adhere to especially strict body, gait, and posing standards because they are intended to be used interchangeably. The editorial model has a chance of relying on unique features. Runway models, however, need to fit the very same outfits in the only (extremely small) sizes in which they have been made, and as such the rationale is that they must be unavoidably interchangeable. This is also expressed in a model's possible hesitation to resist when she feels pressured into doing particular things, the fear being that she is treated as highly replaceable for other models who conform to the standards and can do the same, if not a better, job.

This form of fungibility is morally objectionable since it contributes to the model's vulnerability to exploitative use. While much of the commercial industry is indeed built on interchangeability, there are, luckily, counterexamples and an increasing resistance to these strict standards. Supermodels do stand for their own individual face and brand, and many artists prefer a specific model to work with over another. When one wants

²⁹⁸ Soley-Beltran, "Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity," 36.

to hire Cindy Crawford, one cannot hire someone else since they would not have the same appearance, skill, or reputation.

Increasingly, the industry has been forced to change. These restrictions are increasingly questioned, with, as discussed in chapter two, particularly France revising its requirements for acceptable height and weight standards.²⁹⁹ Despite the standards of the fashion industry, modelling as a practice is less clearly standardised, partially due to the lack of schooling.³⁰⁰ Subsequently, there is a lack of clear posing standards that a model can strive for. This is held alive by the myth of “the look” in the fashion industry. Furthermore, the precarity of model jobs, both within commercial modelling as in fine art modelling, means that it is hard to make it a full-time professional endeavour, firstly, and secondly, it is typically not officially regulated either.

6.2.5 Violability

Violability occurs when a person’s right to bodily integrity is not recognised or respected, or is even taken as acceptable to violate or otherwise break into because they are being treated like a thing. Within modelling there is a degree of violability that comes with the job, which can be navigated carefully if all parties are clear on what is expected and what they are comfortable with. This, however, slips easily – particularly in the fashion industry. *Vogue’s* YouTube channel released a video titled “10 Models Explain the Dangerous Power Dynamics in the Modeling Industry”³⁰¹, in which we hear Drake Burnette stating how it is inherently uncomfortable to model because “multiple people are touching your face and body, all day long.” A whole team works continuously throughout a shoot to create the desired appearance and subsequent image. Even expected interventions, like the ones that Drake Burnette describes, can be difficult to withstand and end up being highly inconsiderate to the model. There are also more extreme cases of harassment, as described by Patricia Van Der Vliet. At the beginning of her career she shot with a famous photographer for an upcoming exhibition, encouraged by her

²⁹⁹ British Broadcasting Company, “France Passes Bill Banning ‘Excessively Thin’ Models,” *BBC News Europe*, December 18 2015. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35130792>.

³⁰⁰ Federal Trade Commission. “Look out for modelling scams,” *FTC Consumer Information*, s.d. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0071-look-out-modeling-scams#scams>.

2021. Since there is little regulation, fraudulent modelling schools can operate by preying on vulnerable or gullible people. There may be hidden fees involved, getting locked into working with particular photographers, and so on. Most harmful is the promise of a guaranteed career, and many models find themselves left alone and without a network after their course ends.

³⁰¹ Vogue, “10 Models Explain the Dangerous Power Dynamics in the Modeling Industry,” *YouTube*, April 16 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7e9C-VX6GfE&t=>

agent. He sexually harassed her in his personal apartment where the shoot took place, though she managed to escape the situation as it was happening. Afterwards, he booked her on a big three-day shoot including nights on an island, which she professionally could not decline. Her agent responded that he was “known to do that with girls” when she complained.³⁰² This type of objectification is wholly morally reprehensible, and in fact further spirals into predatory situations that create victims like Patricia Van Der Vliet.

These are not the dynamics inherent to the overinvolvement of make-up and wardrobe specialists, but rather constitute a power-dynamic in which someone in a position of authority, like a renowned photographer, treats the model as violable. This is condoned by the other person in power, namely her agent who books her on jobs and not only fails to protect her, but knowingly sends her into dangerous situations for the alleged improvement of her career.

A slight nuance to the make-up and wardrobe situation, in which the model’s privacy and integrity is also less respected, is that it can be accomplished without necessarily harbouring malicious intent. The aim is to advance the shoot, which the model may agree to in an informed sense, despite not enjoying these moments. This does not render it good but may constitute a more morally neutral form of objectification if its wider context is one that does consider the humanity of the people involved, for instance by informed communication, consent, and respecting that the model finds it unpleasant by minimising the imposition.

6.2.6 Ownership

Treating someone as property that may be bought, sold, traded, given away, or acquired would fall under the category of ownership. The most crucial thing to consider in terms of ownership is not the posing itself, but instead the fact that models do not own their images. Whether working in a fine art or commercial context, models must navigate the challenging reality that they embody a particular appearance which is relied on to

³⁰² Vogue, “10 Models Explain.” Transcription mine: “It was in the beginning of my career, and this famous photographer – we’re shooting a series of photos for his upcoming exhibition, and my agent thought it would be good to get in with him. I went to his apartment, and in the beginning it was actually totally fine; the pictures looked amazing. However, at some point he asked me if it was OK if we moved it to the bedroom. Which, still, being naïve I didn’t think too much of until he was on top of me with a camera and his hand stroked my breast, and all of a sudden it dawned on me that I had to get away. I made up some silly excuse that I had castings afterwards, and then half ran out. After that he booked me on a three day shooting, overnighing [sic], at Shelter Island, and it was a big job so I could not say no – and he would just give me a different call time than the rest of the crew, and when I would show up it was only him alone in the room. It was like dodging bullets for three days in a row. Of course, I told my agent about what happened, and they told me ‘Yeah, he’s known to do that with girls.’”

create an image. It is here that the lack of recognition for their creative contribution hits the hardest. While we more easily recognise the celebrity status held by supermodels, this is much diminished for ‘regular’ models, ranging from life models, to catalogue, body part models, and alternative models. Even renowned models, however, find themselves in harrowing situations where their images are not used as initially proposed. Recall the case of supermodel Emily Ratajowski who wrote extensively about the notion of “buying her image back”, and particularly her battle with photographer Jonathan Leder whom, she claims, coerced her as an early-career model to take nude images, which many years later he profited from by exhibiting and publishing various books after she had established her modelling career. She claims he forged her release signature, and that she never consented to publishing those nude images.³⁰³

It is curious how the ideas of ownership, and subsequent connection, between a model’s poses and the resulting image is not as strongly acknowledged as it could be. A comparison can be made to other arts technicians. Technicians will assist the artist in creating their work, sometimes to the extent that the artist is the conceptual originator of the piece, which is then wholly produced by the technicians. In some cases the model functions as more of a technician who assists the artist, particularly when there is less space for her to implement her own views. Contrary to technicians, models are typically represented within the artwork itself, and so they are at least implicitly recognised and present, even if we do not acknowledge the precise nature of their contribution.

Throughout art history, knowledge of models remained reserved for a chosen few who were involved in art making. Even if we do know their names, very little else was written down or preserved about the nature of their involvement. It would be remarkable to reach a point in the visual arts where credit is given duly. This could be done similarly to filmmaking, music, or even the writing of scientific papers, where all those who contributed are acknowledged in their relevant role within the process. In small ways, this is in fact slowly beginning to happen. Photographic models such as Ratajowski are speaking up about their involvement and (lack of) consent. Dominic Blake, London life model and artist, described in his series of lectures *Are Life Models Artists?*³⁰⁴ in galleries in London that he negotiated a percentage of the sale of an artwork if he contributed

³⁰³ Emily Ratajowski, “Buying Myself Back: When does a model own her own image?” *The CUT*, September 15 2020. Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.thecut.com/article/emily-ratajowski-owning-my-image-essay.html?utm_medium=s1&utm_campaign=nym&utm_source=tw.

³⁰⁴ These took place at Mall Galleries and The National Gallery between August and November 2019.

significantly to the making of it, agreed with the artist prior to their collaboration. This is one approach that can mitigate the problem of ownership. The ownership of models does not stop with the use of their bodies, or the agent's control over their bookings, but indeed extends to ownership over their creative ideas and poses. The approach that Dominic Blake has taken on could be one way for expert models to be acknowledged and share in the success of those works in which they are very closely involved.

Ownership also relates to the economic exploitation of models and the images they contribute to, which they often do not receive much credit for. This is especially rampant in our neo-liberal economy, particularly present in the precarious structure of commercial modelling. The agents retain significant power over the course commercial model careers will take. Models are treated as the agency's property and investment, who expect a return on their investment.

This is less the case with fine art models, perhaps because on average there is less money involved, and the industry is not nearly the same size and structure as the fashion industry. While also precarious, life models are typically recommended by word of mouth, and as such heavily rely on inner networks and reputation.

Ownership can also out itself in curious manners that are more positive, and demonstrate the value of the model's input. In some situations, models and artists may choose to work together exclusively for the duration of their collaboration. Michael Gross included this comical paragraph about how photographers Richard Avedon and Irving Penn would refrain from using each other's models while they were still actively working with them. It suggests that one can find a symbiotic relationship between a great artist and great model, who commit to exploring the artistic work they can generate in their dynamic, by refraining from impeding others' work in progress and protecting their own creative collaborations:

"In that period, we could maintain a close working relationship with our models," Avedon wrote in *Portfolio*, a brief-lived graphic arts quarterly Brodovitch designed in 1950. He and Penn "rarely encroached" on each other's turf, Avedon added, "so that when Penn was working with Dorian Leigh for *Vogue*, I wouldn't use her: there are no photographs of Jean Patchett or Lisa Fonssagrives by me and none of Dovima by Penn." Avedon later compared his relationship with his models to that of a choreographer with his ballerinas. Sometimes the closeness turned comic. "Suzy Parker used to go through the top drawer of my desk, spying for messages, seeing if I was using anyone else," the photographer revealed. "I knew that she did that, and I would leave chicken wings in the drawer for her. She loved chicken wings."³⁰⁵

³⁰⁵ Michael Gross, *Model: The Ugly Business of Beautiful Women* (New York: W. Morrow, 1995), 107.

6.2.7 Denial of Subjectivity

Nussbaum's 'denial of subjectivity' denotes that any experiences and feelings belonging to the subject are not considered, or even outright dismissed. Denial of subjectivity can be helpful or detrimental to the model, depending on its context. When the model poses it stops mattering as much how she truly feels about herself, in one sense. Imagine that a model feels insecure about a feature of her body within her own intimate relationships; this negative feeling about herself may not be visible or feature at all in her modelling. She may be fine with modelling in the nude, simply because her lack of self-confidence in private situations is not relevant professionally. So these feelings need not impact her posing, and she may not want to be approached about her intimate worries in a professional capacity in the first place. That professional distance can work in a freeing manner: the model's own private feelings are less important, and she might feel professionally uninhibited to perform in ways she would otherwise feel uncomfortable about privately. A weaker form of denying subjectivity such as this can be morally neutral, or even helpful to the process. Weaker since, of course, the subject is still considered implicitly by not dismissing those feelings that would be important to take into account in a professional context – like the model's professional boundaries in terms of posing, and the meeting of other requirements that would get her to pose comfortably. For instance, a model might be comfortable performing more erotic poses for an artist with whom she has a strong working relationship, but this does not necessarily hold for artists with whom she is less familiar.

Denial of subjectivity becomes objectionable when a model's humanity is disregarded, for instance by ignoring her discomfort. Fashion model 'Cristina' describes that she:

felt intimately involved in my job since my own emotions were reflected in my body and its movement when performing. In contrast, I felt strong limitations were being placed on the expression of my private self, since I had to adjust to the publicly established canons, which felt to me like a prison. It felt as if I was in a school for young ladies being trained to be the courtesan.³⁰⁶

Comparatively, denial of subjectivity can possibly work neutrally or in a benign manner if it is implemented in such a manner that there is still a general sense of the model's subjectivity, but for the ends of her modelling she can feel uninhibited by any private dealings in favour of modelling. Of course, any fundamental private worries and demands cannot be outright discarded. Much in the way that a lecturer may be shy in her everyday life, and

³⁰⁶ Soley-Beltran, "Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity," 39.

perhaps even greatly dislike speaking in front of groups, casting those private dislikes of public speaking aside means that she can perform in front of an auditorium and deliver a great lecture that communicates her research efficiently. Conversely, if she were to give into shyness-induced anxiety, this could greatly inhibit her performance and the subsequent presentation of her ideas. It is in this manner that a model may pose in ways that she would not feel comfortable posing in front of her friends while giving in to private worries, for instance, whereas professional circumstances offer the chance to delve into modelling in ways she otherwise would not.

6.2.8 Rae Langton's Additions

These features of objectification by Nussbaum are further expanded on by Rae Langton. In addition to Nussbaum's modes, Langton speaks of reduction to body, reduction to appearance, and silencing. I will treat these together since they behave in a particularly similar way when it comes to posing. Modelling is entirely dependent on the model's body and appearance, which, as an objectifying practice, renders it highly intertwined with these categories that Langton introduces. It is to this end that I introduce these briefly here, after which I will refer to them throughout the case studies that I bring up in the remaining sections of the chapter.

'Reduction to body' is to identify someone with their body or body parts. 'Reduction to appearance' is to treat someone primarily according to how she appears to the senses. Then 'silencing' is to treat someone as silent and lacking the capacity to speak. Modelling is a physical practice that is necessarily highly appearance-oriented. The body is very much thought of (by the model, artist and crew) as a set of shapes, textures, light patterns that can be configured into a particular form – these make up the pose. Models also tend to be silent while they pose, either working with minimal feedback, or listening to and engaging with directions.

'Aesthetic' objectification comes about in those situations that appropriately scrutinise the model in terms of her body within the limits of what is professionally acceptable. Her use lies in her expertise of operating the appearance of her body, or its parts. Modelling as a profession requires reduction to body and appearance, since it is the model's body that is scrutinised and configured to achieve an image. These types of reduction become aesthetic objectification as modes of (self-)evaluation, through which both model and artist can work efficiently.

Focusing on their appearance and body help to acknowledge the body work models accomplish, and gives them due credit and treatment. These reductions to body and appearance become harmful, however, when the model is reduced in a manner she is uncomfortable with or has not consented to. Especially in combination with

silencing, a harmful situation can arise where the model is taken as not having the capacity to communicate or even incapable of objecting to the way her body is used.

6.3 Objectifying the Model

Modelling intersects with many forms of objectification, yet this does not mean that it must be morally objectionable at all times, given that it can still involve a regard for the model's broader humanity which renders it an aesthetic objectification. My typology of guided, self-improvised, and collaborative poses discussed in chapter one introduced different degrees of creative agency in modelling. The highly agential model ensures a greater degree of subjectivity via her creative contributions, which are subjectifying in that they demand her personal expertise. In tension with this, is the fact that the more creative model is typically especially skilled at modelling performative poses, which are further removed from presentational poses more closely related to the self, as has been touched upon at length in chapter three. Here we encounter the dynamic between a subject who models, and the (self-)scrutiny of her poses that constitute objectifying modes of treatment and perception.

The model's wider range of posing is enabled by a base level of comfort engendered by objectification in a benign sense of aesthetic objectification. She is unconstrained by a total subjectification, which can end in an inability to remove one from one's private self and miss out on formally interesting poses. It is important not to allow disruptive personal notions to negatively affect her professionalism. For instance, feeling frustrated after having a bad conversation with a friend should preferably not result in an underwhelming performance, ideally a model can pose freely from such personal constraints. There are, of course, limits to this. These are typically included in the agreement between model and artist with regards to the kind of modelling that she will be doing, ranging from physical comforts such as ensuring there is water, food, heaters or fans present – to the kinds of poses that she agrees to perform. These conditions take the model's broader humanity into account, and can be respected while still aesthetically objectifying the model.

While a professional model is well-versed in not letting private distractions impact her performance, it remains vital that her values and needs are considered.³⁰⁷ I refer, once more, to Nussbaum's remark of a wider

³⁰⁷ These range from being informed of precisely what is expected so that she can prepare adequately, to having all the equipment ready, ensuring finer details are present like a heater if the room is cold, regular breaks, agreeing to her boundaries (not pushing her to do a nude shoot when she has declined posing in the nude), for instance.

context of humanity, within which objectification can occur without being morally harmful. One common issue in photographic practice, receiving ongoing discussion in model groups and online forums, is how to treat nudity.³⁰⁸ The model may express discomfort with nude shoots, yet express a willingness to participate in implied nude shoots. While this should be respected, there is much uncertainty over what implied nudity really entails. Is the model comfortable being entirely nude for the photographer or crew, and simply represented as implied nude in the resulting pictures? Does she want to avoid being in the nude on set altogether? These questions do not require insidious, immoral intentions from those present on set to be tricky to navigate. Stories of unwarranted lewd behaviour are sadly rife in the model community.³⁰⁹ It is then no longer a question about the precise details of the nudity involved, but becomes a matter of pressuring models to pose in ways they are uncomfortable with, or may not have agreed to, made worse by a precarious mode of working.

The precarious and objectified nature of models is typically discussed with regards to commercial modelling. Ashley Mears distinguishes between the model being an instrument or an object along the notion that an instrument *does* work whereas an object is worked *upon*; concluding from this that the model is more like an object rather than an instrument.³¹⁰ Firstly, instrumentalisation, which constitutes a feature of objectification, is to use a person rather like a tool to achieve an end. The person already is treated like an object in this case, which renders the second part of her distinction moot. Mears is really highlighting two sides of objectification; being used to achieve particular ends on one hand, and being treated as passive or inert, therefore worked upon, on the other hand. Secondly, Mears is erroneously placing the model among the objects rather than the instruments, they do something even if they have something done to them. The model can indeed literally be worked upon by present parties (for instance, by make-up artists), or instrumentalised for the artist's artistic goals. It is important, however, is that she instrumentalises her own body. In effect she is both instrument and self-scrutinising art object.³¹¹ It is via the model's self-scrutiny and instrumentalisation, I argue, that the model steps out of the passive mode of 'being worked upon', to instead take up an agential role.

³⁰⁸ See: Amy Bebbington, "The Ultimate Guide for Nude Models," *UK Models*, August 31 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.ukmodels.co.uk/blog/ultimate-guide-nude-models/>.

³⁰⁹ Olivia Fleming, "Models Share Stories of Sexual Assault in the Fashion Industry," *Harper's Bazaar*, December 19 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a12817440/models-sexual-assault-stories-fashion-industry/>.

³¹⁰ Mears, *Pricing Beauty*, 90.

³¹¹ See my discussion in the previous chapter on how the model is rendered a kind of art object when she poses.

Treating the model professionally means to treat her as a model while she poses, that is to say as a kind of art object. Doing so takes into account the boundaries between her private person and professional modelling, and the consented mode of engagement within the session. This ranges from not interfering (or only agreed interference) with the object's form, leaving the model in charge of how she moves, or not to bring in inappropriate and other invasive attitudes and behaviours that are irrelevant and undiscussed within the art making project. Aesthetic objectification in this sense allows artist and model to focus on the task at hand: modelling, in the most suitable way for those involved and the artwork. Richard Avedon poignantly phrases the importance of professionalism, while maintaining quite a close personal relationship:

“You can’t fuck and photograph at the same time,” Avedon told writer Anthony Haden-Guest in 1993. “Taking fashion pictures of models is not a matter of arousal. It’s hard work.” Asked for recollections of models he’s worked with, Avedon demurs. “I have no thoughts about models,” he says. “I have no interest in models. I’ve great friends who were models – Suzy, Dorian, Penelope Tree, Anjelica Huston, China Machado, and now Stephanie Seymour – but these are interesting, feeling women, with good hearts, minds, and, only coincidentally, good bodies. I’d be interested in them no matter what they looked like.”³¹²

Harmful, or mere, objectification occurs when the model is inappropriately treated on both counts of being a subject and object. The model as art object belongs to the model as professional subject, and it is this relation that must be acknowledged properly. What we see in the many allegations of sexual harassment is that models are treated as an objectified subject to whom the artist feels entitled. This entails a twofold entitlement to the model who is incorrectly regarded as an intimate subject, and the instrumental entitlement to the model as furthering one’s own art practice. Rampant in mere objectification is the lack of recognition or respect for bodily integrity and skill, which is why it is frowned upon for an artist to physically position a model in place. These boundaries are regrettably transgressed at times in acts of mere objectification that can be mutually engendered. For instance, both male and female commercial models have reported flirting to win over bookers and clients for desirable jobs. Similarly, Entwistle remarks that the grand majority of interviewed models reported unwanted sexual advances, which they appeared to have accepted as an occupational hazard.³¹³ There is also a

³¹² Gross, *Model: The Ugly Business of Beautiful Women*, 110.

³¹³ Entwistle, “From Catwalk to Catalogue,” 70-71.

component of models succumbing to the pressure of particular body ideals, and subsequently harmful features of objectification. One fashion model 'Cristina' states, "to an extent, you become your own image (...) one gets reduced to an image. And for the profession, to a surface. One unavoidably becomes egocentric. One permanently looks at one's navel."³¹⁴ Another is Kate Moss, who mused on exposure and fragility along the lines of, "The more visible I become the more invisible I feel."³¹⁵ Moss is picking up on what I understand to be effects caused by mere objectification, which broadly disregard her humanity despite being so visually present.

I consider aesthetic objectification to have a capacity to challenge art making. Artist and model must exhibit an understanding of these mechanisms, and then figure out how to use or subvert them. I will discuss this in detail in section 6.4, by drawing out across various case studies how posing might be used to employ or subvert those mechanisms. To give a first instance of how objectification might work in different ways across artworks that share similar features of distortion either in perspective, form, or by a thick materiality of the medium, I introduce the following discussion of Bill Brandt, André Kertész, and Lucian Freud's represented models. First, on Brandt's distorted nudes and the self-scrutiny of the represented model in the artwork:

There also seems to be no room for the photographing subject here – no place for what we have been calling the "male gaze." In certain of the *Distortions*, the female model seems to be gazing at herself... It is she who would seem to be the possessor of the gaze, her eyes that seem to travel from her own distended face and shoulders and chest to her breasts and belly and thighs. She mirrors herself and in so doing stretches and diminishes and alters *herself* – it is after all the mirror and her position in relationship to the mirror that alter the look of her body, and *not* the controlling outside gaze of the photographer and his camera (which merely wait upon, and in turn reflect, hers and the mirror's reflexive reordering of each other's surfaces).³¹⁶

Brandt displays bodies and body parts in unfamiliar ways (Fig. 43). They are tactile, often abstracted shapes that objectify their represented bodies by foregrounding erogenous zones, reducing a body to its parts or appearance, and distorting that appearance. These distortions introduce a distance between the photographic subject, photographer, and viewer of the photograph. One might assume that in foregrounding erogenous zones and body parts, this work constitutes mere objectification. However, the distortions in the photograph,

³¹⁴ Fressange 2002:115 referenced in Soley-Beltran, "Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity," 39.

³¹⁵ Mackay 1995:3 referenced in Soley-Beltran, "Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity," 39.

³¹⁶ Carol Armstrong, "The Reflexive and the Possessive View: Thoughts on Kertesz, Brandt, and the Photographic Nude," *Representations*, No. 25 (1989): 65-66.

and self-reflexivity, subverts this as an act of aesthetic objectification that is self-aware. The female body enters a different dynamic, other than that of the male gaze or artist's gaze. Many of the pictures are not purely voyeuristic or morally objectionable in that respect. They are highly tactile and magnify composed body parts that begin resembling organic shape without clear gender.

Conversely, André Kertész' distorted nudes are highly sexually objectified compared to Brandt's alien, abstracted shapes. Kertész employs a similar approach of distortion, however many of his nudes remain recognisably female (Fig. 44). His figures are fleshy and distorted with a keen focus on their sex-based body parts, which are further enhanced by their poses that remain visible. The sexualising focus is accomplished by stretching out breasts, elongating legs, and emphasising recognisably female curves. Kertész is not only aware in his perpetuation of the sexualisation of the female body, but further articulates this in his rendition of the iconographic tradition popularised in the nineteenth century. He, similar to many other pieces in this tradition, created a self-portrait with himself as an authoritative male artist with an objectified and unnamed female model, quite literally dividing her into erogenous zones and body parts (Fig. 45). Brandt's photographs, in contrast to Kertész' mere objectification, largely shred his figures' poses away into alien-looking landscapes that are not morally objectionable on the same grounds.

A further example of fleshiness are Lucian Freud's nudes. His figures are extraordinarily textured. While they show recognisable representations of his models, something else also happens. They are not regular bodies, and certainly do not look like any other body after Freud's treatment (Fig. 46). Intriguing is how he manages to offer a sense of subjectivity, namely, these are models with very distinct bodies that we see, and it is those bodies that render them unique. Simultaneously, Freud also objectifies his models quite deeply in his treatment, by means of his thick paint markings, of their bodily proportions, tonality, and the sheer volume he embeds in their representation. While the bodies are irregular, one can question whether he truly avoids more typical objectification mechanisms, particularly as his nudes are so dressed in his paint and gaze. Because of Freud's guiding artistic hand in terms of how he wants to position and represent the model, it can be doubted to which extent these paintings are as empowering for the models given how overpowering Freud's vision is. Particularly not in comparison with Helmut Newton's work, which I will go on to discuss in the next section, whose figures often defy gender roles, are especially strong women, and typically challenge the viewer's gaze.

Comparatively, Brandt's abstracted pictures are often neither female or male, and instead invite a tactile gaze of wonder and exploration of objectified bodies that are stripped of many identifying features.

Objectification works differently in these three examples of interactions with the represented model by Brandt, Kertész and Freud. Each, in their own way, demonstrates how objectification constitutes a complex set of features that can be employed to create challenging pieces of art, some of which are more objectionable than others. In this third section, I discussed the ways in which modelling is always objectifying, and the manner in which aesthetic objectification may come into the picture, concluding with a brief comparative discussion of three artists renditions of objectifying distortions of models' representations.

6.4 Can Modelling Subvert the Harmful Effects of Pictorial Objectification?

This brings me to a systematic discussion of Anne Eaton's pictorial types of objectification found in artworks. I present various case studies to demonstrate the way in which these mechanisms can, in fact, feed back into the modelling as it occurs in the studio, particularly because the model helps to create the artworks that will engender those mechanisms and can become caught up into them. Importantly, I will demonstrate how these modes may or may not be subverted by means of posing. Posing, then, benefits greatly from aesthetic objectification which spurs on creative challenges and rejections to various forms of mere objectification.

Eaton argued that artworks belonging to the genre of the female nude are especially objectifying to the person or group of people represented. A person can be treated as an object, through objectifying attitudes and behaviours. So too can art objectify the people it represents. Eaton introduces nine mechanisms embedded in the iconography of the nude which objectify a typically female body, often simultaneously. These are: 'visual metaphor', 'eroticisation of violation', 'foregrounding of erogenous zones', 'division into sexual parts', 'generic body', 'eroticisation of passivity, powerlessness, and lack of autonomy', 'diegetic surveillance or self-surveillance', 'gratuitous nudity', and 'passive poses of availability and surrender'.³¹⁷ Eaton does highlight throughout her piece how certain types of poses are "peculiar to female nudes".³¹⁸ She makes the point, too, that Artemisia Gentilisci's *Susanna and the Elders* (Fig. 37) avoids the standard idealisation of contemporaneous nudes

³¹⁷ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?", 287-292.

³¹⁸ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?", 298. Eaton explicitly discusses these in her analyses of 'foregrounding of erogenous zones', 'generic body', 'gratuitous nudity', and 'passive poses of availability and surrender'.

by employing a contorted pose that is highly dynamic, the *figura serpentinata*. This “energetic spiral pose” was “typically reserved for male figures”. While Artemisia’s Susanna is still sexually objectified by the Elders within the painting, the picture accomplishes this without sexually objectifying Susanna, which can be attributed to this energetic pose.³¹⁹ In this sense, the painting engages with an objectification that is part of its narrative content, but without externally objectifying effects applied to the figure of Susanna herself. Artemisia applied a different ‘posing effect’³²⁰ to this genre, which subverted the usual mechanisms of sexual objectification. Eaton’s nine mechanisms can pave the way to expanding this point much further, and looking into the use of poses as a tool to further affect these mechanisms both within artworks, in their reception and wider societal effects, as in the studios that create them.

I will therefore relate these mechanisms to modelling, to bring out how objectification relies on both poses and posing effect. Poses can be employed as tools that arrange figures, that help construct the diegetic world of the work, and which subsequently may achieve a physical configuration which diminishes subjectivity, to render an impression of passivity and accessibility. Eaton’s pictorial mechanisms of objectification are not limited to the surface of the artwork. They influence the work in the studio, if we consider that the model can be steered to adopt the register of this visual language. It is in the studio, I argue, that the pose can subvert objectifying effects.

Eaton’s mechanisms are built upon Nussbaum’s modes of objectification. Throughout my discussion of her pictorial types, I will briefly highlight which of Nussbaum’s features return. I will also distinguish between discussing the artwork itself and the studio process. I will not attempt to justify harmful mechanisms such as the ‘eroticisation of violation, or ‘eroticisation of passivity, powerlessness, and lack of autonomy’, as I do not believe that these could be morally neutral within the artworks. The larger point here is that an artwork with such harmful mechanisms of ‘mere’ objectification may not have been created in a manner that was similarly harmfully objectifying to the model. So, for instance, a model might pose in a manner that conforms to an eroticisation of violation in the resulting image, which she may have felt individually wholly comfortable

³¹⁹ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 296.

³²⁰ I have expanded on what I consider to be ‘posing effect’ in the first and fourth chapters, namely a visual tool used by the artist to manipulate specific impressions of the represented body. Posing effect is separate from what I have characterised as a pose: they are not intentional bodily configurations with the aim of being registered that a person holds. They are instead visual effects that rely on an iconographic tradition, which the artist can implement without the use of a model.

performing in the studio through a considered aesthetic objectification. The key difference is that she performs, she may not *actually* be in a jeopardised position at the mercy of a predatory other.

One can object that while the individuals involved in this preceding process are unharmed, the prevalence of these images across many centuries have caused a wider social damage.³²¹ The women within this genre of the Nude are overwhelmingly represented by a canon of male artists. Women occupy the spot of “raw material out of which men forge masterpieces” in this genre, not as creative contributors or artists in their own right. This is echoed in the eroticised myths surrounding male artists and female models.³²² For this reason, however, I argue that it is important to pay more attention to the way in which artworks are created. It is especially important to pinpoint how female models (and artists) regard their own contributions, particularly for those pieces that visually do take part in these traditions of objectification. Doing so allows us to reassess the use and treatment of models and their poses as tools within this process, which subsequently feeds back into the making of art and its wider effect, and possible damage, within society.

I depart from Eaton in that I have found reasons to believe that these pictorial mechanisms can be subverted, and may in fact be morally neutral or even benign depending on the context. While the pose is represented in the artwork, a great difference lies in the process that precedes it. It is within this art making process that subversion can be achieved by the parties involved. Eroticisation of violence, passivity and powerlessness, and lack of autonomy will remain objectionable in that an immense amount of work would need to be done by artist and model to undermine those highly problematic mechanisms. This would constitute an artistic project worth pursuing.

An important distinction, then, throughout my treatment of these pictorial mechanisms is the real-life posing (modelling) done in the studio, versus the represented posing effect in the artwork. While the artwork may show a morally harmful objectifying pose, the model who took on this pose may have done so within a context that did consider her subjectivity, and without harming her own person as such. Despite this, the resulting artwork can still perpetuate harmful objectifying attitudes which continue to be passed down to its viewers, resulting in further damage to others more broadly within our society. It is key to consider how these effects can be subverted, inside and outside of the studio, which begins with understanding how both situations

³²¹ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 301.

³²² Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 305.

are interlinked. My, perhaps idealising, hope is that by challenging these mechanisms, a similar societal effect may be achieved by spreading more positive, critical and exploratory inclinations within viewers of such pieces.

6.4.1 Visual Metaphor

Eaton explains that visual metaphor constitutes a juxtaposition between a person and an inert thing through a comparison of visual similarity and proximity. The inert thing is often a consumable object or means to an end.³²³ This is especially common for commercial photography, in which a woman is more easily likened to a (mass-produced) object to enhance sales. Two fine art model examples of this are Szymon Brodziak, *The Lamp*, 2008 (Fig. 47) and Grete Stern's *Dream No. 1: Electrical Appliances for the Home*, 1949 (Fig. 48). In Brodziak's image, the woman is nude and her form correlates to the shape of a lamp. The lampshade covers the model's head, which further detracts from any individualising features. She is presented as inert furniture. We encounter Nussbaum's denial of subjectivity, inertness, and fungibility, and Langton's reduction to body parts within this visual metaphor.

Grete Stern's image, however, engages more subversively with objectification. The woman, for starters, is dressed and constitutes the base of a lamp, which is turned on by a man's hand. The picture both contains a kind of tongue-in-cheek humour, while also presenting a metaphor for female sexuality and the objectification of women. Stern mused on the context and aspirations of working-class women, and visually gave a voice to "the hidden repressions expressed in women's dreams," imploring her artworks' viewers to oppose prescribed gender roles in mid-twentieth century Argentinian society.³²⁴ The woman's pose is reminiscent of Ancient Greek caryatids, the carved women who offer support to a building instead of a column. It looks, in fact, particularly similar to the subdivision of *canephora* ('basket-bearer') caryatids that represent the unmarried women who brought sacred offerings to the temple, as the honorary lead of a religious procession.³²⁵ Her pose evokes the notion, as she holds up the structure, of women being the backbone of the household. It is via the use of the pose in conjunction with the woman being likened to the visual metaphor for a lamp, a *canephora* who

³²³ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?", 287.

³²⁴ MoMa, "Grete Stern, *Dream No. 1: Electrical Appliances for the Home*, 1949," online catalogue entry. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/142787>.

³²⁵ Arthur Smith, *Catalogue of Sculpture in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities of the British Museum* (Outlook Verlag, 2020): 177.

carries the weight that working class women do, and being “turned on”, that Stern manages to subversively critique not only objectification, but also the situation of working class women by incorporating this objectifying mechanism.

Comparing a person (or parts of a person) to an inert object, however, can also be used in a less harmful way. Take, for instance, more humorous pieces that reveal something about their subject. Belgium-based Bulgarian painter Tanya Atanasova created *The Banana Boy*, 2018 (Fig. 49). This piece belongs to her series *You My Dear*, where she represents close friends in portraits. She evokes their friendship and psyche, often employing tongue-in-cheek humour. The subject is Jens Geerts, a Belgian media figure, journalist, and advocate of LGBTQ rights and representation. The proximity between male genitals and the banana, which Jens holds as if he were about to peel it while maintaining intense eye-contact off-centre, humorously invokes a phallic shape that nods to masturbation and (homo)sexual relations in a disarming way. This would be less successful if the piece were not already sexually charged. Jens’ pose is inviting and sultry, in particular because of how he is positioned on the sofa and the way in which some of his chest is bared. The addition of the banana increases that sexually charged atmosphere by rendering it over the top, which then enters the territory of the humorous. There is no denial of Jens’ subjectivity here, while still likening his genitals to a banana.

6.4.2 Eroticisation of Violation

This addresses sexualised depictions of the physical violation of women, especially instances of rape or physical destruction.³²⁶ This remains morally objectionable, unless there is a serious active attempt to subvert this mode of depiction. The act of looking can be related to consumption, not only in the way that the viewer consumes the image, but also by becoming an onlooker and consumer of a scene which eroticises the violation of a represented person. We find here Nussbaum’s violability, denial of subjectivity, instrumentality, and denial of autonomy.

One strategy to combat this, is for the spectator is to recognise what such artworks are accomplishing in terms of their objectification. Kathleen Stock’s notion of ‘mind-insensitive seeing-as’ may offer one strategy to make sense of how we can perceive such pieces, and to appreciate subsequent artistic projects that resist the

³²⁶ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 288.

violation. Stock discusses what she calls mind-suppressing images as pictures that diminish any outward signs of the subject's mental life and individuality; they demand a particular way of seeing the subject.³²⁷ Two of her notions are related to *seeing-as-a-body*, which "involves seeing a person in a way which prioritises their body whilst de-emphasising attention from their inner mental life," and *seeing-as-duplicates*, which sees a person "in relation to others, as a member of a series, with a resulting decrease in attention to mental individuality."³²⁸ *Mind-insensitive seeing-as* knows a psychological factor, namely, that such a kind of seeing-as is encouraged by objectifying images in the media, which results in objectifying practices. Importantly, Stock highlights "particular attentional and cognitive habits towards members of objectified groups, which in turn contribute to further pernicious differences in treatment."³²⁹ Recognising the mind-suppressing qualities of these images, in addition to their unsettling violation, helps to resist being caught up in the picture's eroticised treatment of a woman's physical violation.

The 2015 photograph taken by award-winning photojournalist Souvid Datta in the red-light district of Kolkata, India (Fig. 50) resulted in *mind-insensitive seeing-as* engendered by many different people, across two years between the photograph being taken in 2015 and the eventual scandal in 2017.³³⁰ Datta found a sixteen-year old child prostitute, whom he photographed while she is being raped by a customer. The picture is taken from a top-down point of view above the bed in which the girl is being raped by a man. His naked backside faces the camera, and one cannot see much of the girl except her face, since she stares up and looks directly into the camera, and some of her legs are visible around the man. Despite being a squalid room, many of the colours are bright reds and greens. Datta, in other words, aestheticised his image of this minor being raped and violated. The photograph looks almost like a film-still because of its top-down framing, the direct eye-contact with the child, the colour palette used, and the positioning of the bodies. The scandal of this image does not end here, however. As a photojournalist, Datta claimed to be 'documenting sex-work' and captioned the picture as such:

³²⁷ Stock, "Sexual Objectification," 295-296.

³²⁸ Stock, "Sexual Objectification," 296-297.

³²⁹ Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?", 297.

³³⁰ While included in the List of Figures so that one can find the image and discussion in the thesis, I will not include the actual image in the Figures Appendix. It is highly graphic in that it documents and aestheticises the rape of a child, while transgressing even further by leaving her face and therefore identity recognisable. The situation surrounding this child and the photograph is extremely violent and exploitative. Not only was she photographed, but for a further two years no one objected to its inclusion in any of the organisations' competitions, which Datta entered and won. I witnessed this scandal unfold online in 2017. Due to this, I have seen the original photograph shared on social media. I will describe the features that contribute to my argument and believe this is sufficient to make my points.

“[Name Censored], 16, with a drunken client. Men visiting Sonagachi often drink heavily or use narcotics with sex-workers, noticeably increasing their chances of women’s abuse and mistreatment.”³³¹

It is noteworthy that Datta entered various competitions with this image without much initial pushback. It was, for instance, part of his winning portfolio (including more identifiable images of the same child) for the 2015 *Getty Images Grants for Editorial Photography*, earning Datta \$10,000 in award money, and the 2016 *Visura Photojournalism Grant Award*, where he was awarded \$5000.³³² This singular photograph was used by *LensCulture* in 2017, with the original caption, to promote an award in association with *Magnum Photos*, where Datta had previously won two separate prizes. After backlash, *LensCulture* eventually took the promotion down and issued apologies. Datta claimed to have used model releases and that the models were fully aware of his intentions.³³³ Whether this is true or not does not matter, since it is illegal to photograph children in situations of extreme violence, which falls under India’s ‘Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act’.³³⁴ Furthermore, it is perverse to call her a model and suggest due diligence was done, when she is an extremely exploited and violated child whom he not only photographed in the middle of such acts, but also kept identifiable. In effect, with his supposed model releases he argued that she was a ‘mature’ child who gave informed consent to his intentions to photograph her and enter the competitions he did with this series. No organisers questioned this.³³⁵

This case contains several instances of *mind-insensitive seeing-as*, first by the photographer as he took the image motivated by an economic self-interest without consideration for the child, whom he could have tried to help. Second, by the people who accepted this image in their competitions and especially those at *LensCulture* who used it as promotional material. This photograph eroticised the sixteen-year old’s rape and displayed it under the guise of photojournalism and a humanitarian interest. Rather than merely documenting, it aestheticises sexual violence done to a vulnerable child who lives in deprived and exploitative conditions. This child is further exploited by Souvid Datta, who aimed and initially succeeded in advancing his career by using her face and situation. It was local activist Shreya Bhat who helped bring attention to the fact that Datta

³³¹ Benjamin Chesterton, “LensCulture and the Commodification of Rape,” *DuckRabbit*, April 30 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.duckrabbit.info/blog/2017/04/lensculture-commodification-rape>.

³³² *Time* estimates that Datta won \$30,000 in cash prizes between 2015 and 2017. See: Olivier Laurent, “Shaken Photojournalism Industry Questions Itself After Souvid Datta Scandal,” *Time*, May 9 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://time.com/4772234/souvid-datta-question/>.

³³³ Laurent, “Shaken Photojournalism Industry Questions Itself After Souvid Datta Scandal.”

³³⁴ Section 13 of The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2079?locale=en>.

³³⁵ Laurent, “Shaken Photojournalism Industry Questions Itself After Souvid Datta Scandal.”

photographed something extremely violent and illegal, after reading the photograph's caption upon being circulated as promotional material on social media.³³⁶

A second, more transformative strategy can be employed in art making. This is where poses are utilised to subvert the usual poses of violation that pervade art history.³³⁷ *Three Weeks in May* by artist Suzanne Lacy is a three-week feminist performance that took place in May 1977. Lacy devised this as the first of her series of large-scale performances on violence against women, which set the tone for her later pieces and co-authored works. I refer to the installation, *She Who Would Fly* (Fig. 51), which explored the sexual violation of women in conjunction with public persuasion. The third instalment of this installation heavily relied on poses. For one evening, spectators could enter the gallery and were first confronted with a winged lamb-carcass suspended as if in flight. The walls surrounding the lamb were covered with maps, upon which personal experiences and locations of rape were written. The spectators eventually notice that they themselves are being watched. Lacy positioned four women “perched above the door, nude, their bodies stained bright red and staring intently down.” They are metaphors for a woman’s split consciousness that departs from her body as it is being raped, and remind the spectators that they are voyeurs of the very real pain of others.³³⁸ The poses in *She Who Would Fly* contribute to how the piece subverts the eroticisation of violation of women. In the context of the room, which lists women’s stories and locations of their rape, the four perching women pose in uncomfortable positions, reminiscent of mythological creatures like harpies. Their direct eye-contact creates a situation where women are actively looking back at spectators, instead of continuously being looked at, which often continues even in those artworks that address their violation. There is a sense in which the women look down on spectators, literally and figuratively, and take a position of moral high ground. By implementing eye-contact, red dye, nudity, and tense poses, they challenge the eroticisation of violation of bodies by using and transforming features often seen in works that employ this mode of depiction.

³³⁶ Laurent, “Shaken Photojournalism Industry Questions Itself After Souvid Datta Scandal.”

³³⁷ Diane Wolfthal wrote the seminal book, *Images of Rape: The “Heroic” Tradition and Its Alternatives* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), which discusses the portrayal of rape in Western art from the twelfth through the seventeenth centuries. “Heroic” rape and other depictions of violations of women occurred in themes and characters that many artists depicted, of which the *Rape of the Sabine Women*, the character of Lucretia who commits suicide as the only viable option after being raped, and *Susanna and the Elders* present only a fraction of these.

³³⁸ Suzanne Lacy, “Three Weeks in May (1977),” *Suzanne Lacy* artist’s site, s.d. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.suzannelacy.com/three-weeks-in-may>.

6.4.3 Foregrounding of Erogenous Zones

The figure is posed to render “breasts, pubis, and/or buttocks the focus”, often diminishing or removing any signs of subjectivity.³³⁹ The pose is highly central in this mode of objectification. Helmut Newton’s *Self Portrait with Wife and Models*, 1981 (Fig. 52) presents a special case, where all erogenous zones of the model are displayed in a mirror, yet the objectification, which is certainly present, can be argued to be neutral at the very least.

The models themselves do not appear to show many subjectifying features. Helmut Newton presents a special case, as Rosetta Brookes puts it: “Newton manipulates existing stereotypes; their alienness is accentuated, and yet they are almost archetypes in their sexual dramas. (...) To recognize an image as a constraint, as a violation or repression of femininity, is to glimpse the demise of a stereotype going out of circulation.”³⁴⁰ His models are a type, “presented with the cold distance of a fleshy automaton, an extension of the technology which manipulates her and converts her into an object.”³⁴¹ Newton mastered the dynamics of the fashion world. Fashion is general and typical, but also restricted and individual, positioning itself between the consumer public and the elite created in the photographs’ utopia.³⁴² While using alien looking, distant models that are entirely malleable according to the kind of stereotype they are fit in, he also often ascribes a domineering sexual dynamic to them, regularly positioning them in scenes that turn roles and status around. For instance, the women regularly take on roles we would associate with men. One photograph shows a woman in a sheer black bathing suit thrusting her pelvis forward and flashing the onlookers much like a male exhibitionist would.³⁴³ The stereotyped poses often have a frozen quality, as if a movie-still taken from a wider narrative.³⁴⁴

Newton’s images often look unreal, as does this self-portrait too. He empowers women by reversing their roles, while drawing attention to the fantastical effects of objectification. This self-portrait chops the women up into pure appearance and body parts. Curiously, his own face is hidden behind the camera. We do see the face of his wife, June, who is also known as Alice Springs in her own photographic work. The self-portrait, then, is a complex image that lays bare the intimate connection between Newton and his wife and artist-colleague, as

³³⁹ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 288.

³⁴⁰ Rosetta Brookes, “Fashion Photography: The double-page spread: Helmut Newton, Guy Bourdin & Deborah Turbeville,” in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Malcolm Barnard (Routledge: London, 2017), 522.

³⁴¹ Brookes, “Fashion Photography,” 521.

³⁴² Brookes, “Fashion Photography,” 521.

³⁴³ Valerie Steele, “Erotic Allure,” *Aperture*, No. 122 (Winter 1991): 81.

³⁴⁴ Brookes, “Fashion Photography,” 522.

well as the type of models with whom Newton built his career. Furthermore, he is highly aware of the typical conventions within which artists represented themselves with their models. His choice to wear a trench-coat enters a self-aware and humorous element; by adopting the look of a stereotypical ‘creep’ or ‘flasher’, Newton shows a deep awareness of his own gaze and relation to the models within these art historical and societal conventions. A small detail is that the door of his studio is open, and we can look into the streets of Paris behind him. It evokes a sense that there is nothing to cover or hide, and all those involved can come and go, and carry on with their days, as usual. There is a further voyeuristic sense too, as in that anyone walking past may look in and see this scene unfolding.

Newton’s self-portrait, and many of his other works, demonstrate how objectifying visual mechanisms can be employed to create challenging photographs that lay bare those objectifying dynamics at work. The posing effect of his images at first sight may look like any other objectifying image, but they are in fact highly critical and self-aware. Also in the studio, models have reported respectful and enjoyable working relationships with Newton.³⁴⁵ The highly objectifying images he achieved were by no means accomplished by treating the models in a harmfully objectifying manner. Newton’s work is created within Nussbaum’s indicated wider context of humanity that acknowledges subjectivity.

Foregrounding erogenous zones is commonly used in commercial photography, in which models pose to invite a focus on selected key areas of their bodies. It is less relevant whether they are in a state of undress. Clothes are often used to allude to the shapes of the body that wears them. Critical experiments by artists and models alike can foreground erogenous zones while interrogating the mechanism itself. Feminist photographer Armen Susan Ordjanian accomplishes this in her 1981 self-portrait (Fig. 53). Via the self-reflexivity allowed by the self-portrait, Ordjanian turns the camera to herself and photographs her own bare legs and pubis. Her pubic area is covered by a mirror that reflects her face and makes eye-contact with the viewer, reintroducing individualising features that return subjectivity to her representation.

³⁴⁵ Sylvia Gobbel and Linda Morand revisited some of their high-profile shoots with Newton. See s.n., “He Felt I was a Strong Woman: Two of Helmut Newton’s Muses on what it was like to Work with the Notorious Fashion Photographer,” *Artnet Gallery Network*, August 7 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://news.artnet.com/partner-content/helmut-newton-linda-morand-sylvia-gobbel>.

6.4.4 Division into Sexual Parts

Dividing a person into sexual parts constitutes an extreme version of foregrounding their erogenous zones. This is an extreme take on the previous ‘foregrounding of erogenous zones’ and follows closely on the examples mentioned in the last section.³⁴⁶ Commercial modelling visually hacks its models into sexualised body parts with the aim of selling a product. This is different, however, from body-part modelling, which is not necessarily focused on erogenous zones, but rather any kind of body part. The moral harm of objectification via division into sexual parts is not a conducive mechanism to modelling. One way in which it could possibly be combatted, as shown with previous examples, is by inverting the existing visual tradition by on one hand employing it, but, for instance, laying bare its inner workings so as to highlight the objectification that it accomplishes. One such example is the self-portrait by Helmut Newton (Fig. 52) within which he does divide his models into sexual parts, but also lays bare his professional relationship with them, his collegial and intimate relationship with his wife, and his interrogation of artist and model studio pictures and mythologising.

6.4.5 Generic Body

The genre of the nude constitutes a type, rather than a nude unique figure. She is usually one of many sexually available bodies, lacking a unique personality, identity, or really any distinct qualities.³⁴⁷ I have argued in chapters one and two how fashion modelling, and the broader commercial modelling industry, require generic and standardised bodies. These models are treated as fungible, often as inert, as a prop owned by the agent or brand, their subjectivity and autonomy can be denied, and they are certainly instrumentalised to achieve the aims of the commercial job they are booked on. This constitutes harmful ‘mere’ objectification. Supermodels and celebrity women may escape some of these features; they are less fungible, and may be considered more in that their personal branding and expertise are respected and considered. However, even they do not always manage to move away from being put in generic roles, dress, and situations.

Coco Mademoiselle, directed by Joe Wright for CHANEL, stars Keira Knightly as a famous model, alongside Alberto Ammann who takes the role of photographer (Fig. 54). They participate in a shoot and end up becoming

³⁴⁶ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 289.

³⁴⁷ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 289.

romantically involved, as the myth dictates, after which she leaves suddenly.³⁴⁸ The theme of this perfume commercial is Keira Knightly who sells a seductive lifestyle by embodying an alluring character and lifestyle that is all somehow embedded in the perfume. She escapes at the end, presumably indicating that she is in control and sets boundaries. This commercial does not successfully manage to get away from the many modes of objectification it displays; generic body, poses of passivity, and foregrounding of erogenous zones. The commercial instrumentalises Keira Knightley's sex appeal to sell a product. It fails in that it is merely objectifying without subversion, it relies on the usual objectifying imagery to communicate a narrow idea of female seductiveness.

Another example is *J'Adore – The Film* by director Romain Gavras (Fig. 55), for Christian Dior, which stars Charlize Theron. The description of the video lists “An extraordinary universe. An ode to women, all women, stronger together as one.”³⁴⁹ Charlize Theron sits with her eyes closed in a golden swimming pool, opaque waters covering her up to her shoulders. She is surrounded by women who wear similar clothes and show the same types of bodies, sizes, expressions, and overall appearances. They all pose in quite standard poses, reminiscent of the art historical tradition of bathers and odalisques. Many also have their eyes closed, and all maintain very foregrounding poses. In the end they walk together, led by Charlize Theron, in only minimally different golden gowns. This is a prime example of the use of generic bodies, once more fungibility, inertness (given how they take on passive poses of surrender), and consequently, denial of subjectivity. Charlize Theron is the only recognisable person, and this is because she is a celebrity.

Importantly, the pose can be used to return individualising features to the generic body. This can be seen in the advertisement directed by Spike Jonze starring Margaret Qualley, for KENZO World (Fig. 56).³⁵⁰ Qualley is a budding actress who used to be a ballerina and has been a runway model. She initially looks like one would expect generic models to look: she is tall, has a slender figure, wears a gown and make-up. In this advert, we see her in the role of an actress leaving the scene of an award show, a shot focusing on her face displays emotions of boredom and also upset. This close-up is the first cue that it is not a regular advert, given that her sadness is

³⁴⁸ CHANEL, “Coco Mademoiselle: The Film with Keira Knightly – CHANEL Fragrance,” directed by Joe Wright, *YouTube*, March 8 2011. Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRV-2_Ul-kk.

³⁴⁹ Sephora Romania, “J’adore – The film with Charlize Theron,” directed by Romain Gavras for Christian Dior, *YouTube*, November 2 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://youtu.be/ovg965vHyeU>.

³⁵⁰ Sephora Brazil, “KENZO World – The new fragrance with Margaret Qualley,” directed by Spike Jonze for KENZO World. *YouTube*, August 28 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoMqyniiEkk>.

not typically used in similar adverts which are intended to draw in an audience and sell a product, they are usually sultry or exoticising. Electronic music is the second cue that indicates this is not a regular perfume ad. Instead of favouring sultry seductiveness, as was the case for the Dior and CHANEL commercials, we hear vigorous throaty rapping. Qualley twitches in a highly animated fashion. She unfolds into a jerky series of movements that combine contemporary dance, classical ballet and many of her own moves that she performed in her audition with Jonze. She looks possessed at times, via her frenzied jerking around, teeth baring and tongue sticking out. She also incorporates different modes of voguing, with interludes of runway walking. There are also various sequences with mirrors that show her appearance from various perspectives, and in one moment offers a full surrounding view. Importantly, it incorporates many forms of modelling and poses throughout the whole piece. These are achieved by the catwalk moments, but also features such as holding poses, or lighting flickering and subsequently creating frame-like poses. Various poses embed an initially generic body with character and emotion, to such a degree that it becomes impossible to see her as merely objectified. The advert accomplishes an aesthetic objectification which has incorporated her own input as a body expert by means of her own moves, but also by subverting mechanisms such as generic body in its use of poses and setting.

6.4.6 Eroticisation of Passivity, Powerlessness, and Lack of Autonomy

The genre of the Nude eroticises passivity, powerlessness and a lack of autonomy across many of its iconographic themes, but especially so in (mythological) narratives like ‘nymph and satyr’, ‘sleeping Venus’, ‘Susanna and the Elders’, ‘bathers’, and many more.³⁵¹ These are deeply embedded both within art historical as well as contemporary images of women. The commercial industry itself also creates an odd situation of passivity, powerlessness and lack of autonomy behind the scenes, in the production of images. Ashley Mears details how consumers of fashion and beauty products cannot see what kind of work results in the ideal images they view. Those commercial models maintain disciplinary techniques to streamline their bodies according to narrow standards. She calls modelling:

the professionalization of gender performance... The instability of femininity and the vagaries of the market create a ruthless disciplining process. Models are subjected to surveillance, infantilization, and uncertain

³⁵¹ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 290.

judging criteria. (...) As objects of a dialectical gaze, models are located under the spotlight and the microscope, in the spectacle and under surveillance.³⁵²

Within the industry, models are often kept passive, powerless, and lacking the ability to direct where they take their careers—save for a chosen few who depend on a combination of luck, circumstance, and the right networks to get to those coveted places of high-profile work and pay. The models find themselves at the whims of a callous industry which is ready to interchange them at any given point. Their powerlessness is eroticised even in casting moments: the model is forced to try and find her way through these moments of judgement, where she is treated as fungible, inert and infantilised, both in her appearance, and in terms of literally lying about her age to continue to be seen as young and therefore more desirable to clients. Female models, especially, age out of their careers fast. As it stands, the interest in working with youthful models also means these are adults working with minors or early adults who may lack the life experience, insight, or confidence to stand up for themselves when they are mistreated. Increasingly, however, models are speaking up and creating spaces where they can expose these harmful objectifying practices of the industry, and focus instead on empowering themselves and their colleagues. One example of this is the initiative *All Woman Project* started by models Charli Howard and Clémentine Desseaux, which campaigns for diverse representation and models reclaiming agency over their own non-standard bodies.³⁵³

Moving beyond the harmful practices of the modelling industry, or the pervasive iconography of the Nude, is Carrie Mae Weems's series of photographs within which she investigates themes of passivity. *Not Manet's Type*, 1997, (Fig. 57) probes into the role of the female model in relation to the famed male artist.³⁵⁴ Weems photographed herself in a mirror, taking on poses typically associated with the role of an eroticised, passive model who faces the artist's gaze. She turns her own gaze in on itself, however, and never makes eye-contact through the mirror - as some of the other examples have done. Weems engages in an aesthetic objectification to accomplish this; inviting a gaze to look at her, as well as being highly self-reflexive. The poses

³⁵² Ashley Mears, "Discipline of the Catwalk: Gender, Power and Uncertainty in Fashion Modeling," *Ethnography* 9, No. 4 (2008): 452.

³⁵³ Janelle Okwodu, "Meet the Models Calling for a Body Diversity Revolution in Fashion," *Vogue*, August 30 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.vogue.com/article/all-woman-project-body-diversity-in-fashion>.

³⁵⁴ "Not Manet", *Carrie Mae Weems Artist Site*, s.d. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://carriemaeweems.net/galleries/not-manet.html>.

she employs are of the register that would typically be associated with passivity, powerlessness, and lack of autonomy, but she manages to remove herself from the tradition. As described in the accompanying text to the photographs, Weems questions the exchange between model and artist. Via her poses and framings of these self-portraits, she performs being a model in the artist-model mythology, while distancing herself from that perpetuated myth relies on passivity, powerlessness and denial of autonomy.

6.4.7 Diegetic Surveillance or Self-Surveillance

The unclothed female is the object of someone's gaze in the artwork's diegetic content, making her function instrumental to the viewer's erotic visual gratification. The unclothed female is "often also the object of her own gaze, demonstrating her internalisation of 'the male gaze'." John Berger has pointed out that the artworks which display such dynamics tend to morally condemn women for their sexual objectification.³⁵⁵ Commercial models maintain a high degree of self-surveillance, particularly since much of the imagery created of them incorporates the model as the diegetic object of a typically male gaze which judges them along narrow standards of beauty and in relation to the selling of a product. Considering objectionable practices of objectification in model castings, these models are also treated as *needing* to be instrumental to any onlookers' erotic visual gratification. Not merely limited to the diegetic world of the image, surveillance and self-surveillance can exist within the environment of image making, too. Mears describes how a large casting studio asked models to change into bathing suits and individually dance under a spotlight while being recorded. Each girl was watched by the casting director, an unidentified man, and a male model. The girls had been "stripped down, exposed as objects for inspection by anonymous gazers, models work in what resembles, at times, a panoptic regime."³⁵⁶

Contrary to these examples, and returning to the artwork itself, Cindy Sherman is renowned for exploring precisely this kind of diegetic surveillance, voyeurism and a strange alienation of the self in her self-portraits, titled 'Untitled Film Stills'. The anonymous women she portrays are caught in the moment, aware that they are being watched, and express a profound discomfort. In a separate image to this series, *Untitled #193*, Sherman explores the relationship between portrait painter and sitter in an eighteenth century setting, where she

³⁵⁵ John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (1972), quoted in Eaton, "What's Wrong with the (Female) Nude?", 290.

³⁵⁶ Mears, "Discipline of the Catwalk," 437.

embodies “an older Madame de Pompadour” (Fig. 58). It is a highly constructed, self-aware, and humorous piece touching on art historical discourse of class, taste, and gender.³⁵⁷ Sherman takes on a typical pose of portraits of women, in which the woman eroticises and presents herself for a male viewer. The artifice is heightened by the fake, shiny pair of breasts she wears to show a deep cleavage, and the unnaturally large feet that one might first not notice in the image. Sherman has mastered performing poses as many different kinds of women and interrogating those dynamics by re-creating them with a wry sensibility. As such, she presents an excellent example of making use of the mechanisms of self-surveillance by implementing poses in conjunction with props to create a total appearance that is at once self-aware, and induces further self-awareness in the viewer who is confronted with her gaze.

6.4.8 Gratuitous Nudity

Eaton discusses this in two modes, firstly there are narrative circumstances in the picture that do not call for nudity, and so the nude functions as sexual eye candy. Secondly, despite narrative support for the figure’s state of undress, it only barely disguises the actual interest of these pictures, which is to offer a titillating view of an unclothed female body.³⁵⁸ This too is highly present within modelling, both commercial and fine art. It is also why the life models interviewed by Sarah Phillips were keen to emphasise that nothing erotic was occurring as they were modelling, and in fact often presented a desexualised state of modelling.³⁵⁹ In terms of commercial modelling, as has been discussed at length throughout the chapters, is the extent to which models’ bodies are displayed in varying degrees of nudity to add sex appeal and aid the selling of a product. This practice has also been used by the body positive movement on social media, which has endeavoured to reclaim some of these practices – not only to present a variety of bodies, but also to present nudity in manners that aim to combine empowerment and eroticisation. It can be argued, however, that they accomplish merely another mode of fetishising bodies to accept these bodies. Particularly considering how some of the mechanisms bound up in

³⁵⁷ S.n. “Cindy Sherman: Untitled #193,” *The Broad*. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.thebroad.org/art/cindy-sherman/untitled-193>.

³⁵⁸ Eaton details the habit of using mythological figures, rather than ‘real women’, to allow such a total display of a female body purely for the spectator’s own erotic viewing pleasure. This was known to artists and patrons, already in the 15th and 16th centuries when the mythological nude was revived. It persisted through to the nineteenth century. “the mythological veneer hardly explains the writhing poses of utter surrender and availability. Although Venus was just born, you might say that she comes into the world ready for immediate use.” in Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 291.

³⁵⁹ Phillips, *Modeling Life*, 37.

gratuitous body are modes of objectification like denial of subjectivity, reduction to appearance or body and body parts.

Contrarily, Sherri Irvin and Sheila Lintott made their case for the appreciation of sexiness in others, in a respectful manner, as both an aesthetic and ethical practice, and as a form of political resistance against narrow and oppressive conventions of sexiness.³⁶⁰ This is in line with Nussbaum's argument for considering the wider humanity of a person and situation, allowing for a mutually informed objectification that is consensual. Irvin and Lintott highlight, too, that if such attention at any point becomes unwanted, it should dwindle with respect for the subject. As such, it may still be an objectifying gaze, but one that pays broader attention to the subjectivity of the people involved. Gratuitous nudity, in this manner, can become a playful mode of engagement with various bodies as sexy, and this is certainly something that is propagated by models and figures on social media who aim to spread body positivity. Two examples of women who have engaged with their own unique bodies and life stories are Ericka Hart and Kayla Logan. Ericka Hart is both a sex educator and breast cancer survivor, who regularly posts herself on social media in varying degrees of nudity to normalise her double mastectomy (Fig. 59).³⁶¹ Kayla Logan focuses on posting clothed and unclothed imagery, to normalise and celebrate showing fat bodies in various states of dress (Fig. 60).³⁶² Important for both Hart and Logan is that they are in control of their social media, and carefully curate the media and text they upload. While they may use poses that invite objectification, or modes such as gratuitous body in pictured settings, these are overruled and subverted by both their intention in the making of their images, and, most crucially, their presented bodies which prove so very different from images that barely manage to justify nudity. It functions, rather, as an honest type of eye-candy. Conversely, had these images been made with bodies conforming to narrow fashion standards in similar poses, it seems unlikely that they would be able to subvert mechanisms such as gratuitous body in the same manner. As it stands, they demand attention not only for their unique bodies, but also for those objectifying mechanisms and narrow standards for represented bodies we are used to seeing within our society.

³⁶⁰ Sheila Lintott and Sherri Irvin, "Sex Objects and Sexy Subjects: A Feminist Reclamation of Sexiness," In *Body Aesthetics*, ed. Sherri Irvin (Oxford University Press, 2011), 316.

³⁶¹ See interview with Ericka Hart by Jacy Topps, "Afropunk Black Girl Magic: The Face of Breast Cancer Awareness," *Posture Magazine*, September 19 2016. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://posturemag.com/online/afropunk-black-girl-magic-the-face-of-breast-cancer-awareness>.

³⁶² Kayla Logan (@kaylaloganblog), *Instagram*, January 14 2021. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CKCFvrvFclV/>.

6.4.9 Passive Poses of Availability and Surrender

As Eaton writes, “The classic pose for the female nude is (a) recumbent, (b) frontal (so that pubic and breasts are in full view), and (c) often with one arm raised above head. The pose is passive, unprotected, vulnerable, and suggests sexual availability.”³⁶³ Both as posing effect and actual pose, this kind of physical positioning will accomplish these impressions of availability and surrender. Carrie Mae Weems’ last photograph in her series *Not Monet’s Type* (Fig. 57), takes on such a recumbent pose – but has the rest of the serial images, and the accompanying text, to offer insight in her performance. The passive pose invites a typically male gaze, and plays on features such as ownership, violability, instrumentalisation, and denial of subjectivity and autonomy. Beyond the artwork itself, and the making of art, responsibility must also be taken the artwork’s spectators. Weems’ photographs may be similarly sexually objectified by a *mind-insensitively seeing* viewer – even though she is resisting this. It is via the use of objectifying images that objectification finds ground. Stock’s psychological factor is highly present here, in terms of the objectifying practices that come to exist out of images that encourage a certain mode of *seeing-as*. It is in this way that taking on passive poses may not accomplish a clear resistance to harmful objectification, if the present viewer is not open to viewing them mind-sensitively and recognising the objectification as neutrally inclined. Carrie Mae Weems’ pictures can then be mistakenly understood to be yet another sexually objectifying set of images of women, in line with a long tradition. While her images are highly performed and objectifying, she achieves a challenging representation that is aesthetically objectifying. It is the viewer’s responsibility to engage with these works within the broader context of images of artists’ models, and how Weems is not merely creating ‘more of the same’, but in fact interrogating and reflecting on existing assumptions and mythologies of the model.

With this last image I conclude this chapter. Not only is there a responsibility on the end of artists to create artworks that challenge mechanisms of ‘mere’ objectification, given the manner in which they legitimise objectifying attitudes and treatments of people. There is also a responsibility on the part of the viewer who engages with these images, and the extent to which they are conscious of viewing images mind-insensitively or not. I have aimed to demonstrate how modelling is very tightly interwoven with objectification, both in its practice as well as the images in which it results. Making use of Nussbaum’s broader notion of objectification as

³⁶³ Eaton, “What’s Wrong with the (Female) Nude?”, 291-292.

allowing for instances that take into account the broader humanity of those involved, I have argued that ‘aesthetic objectification’ can provide a professionally appropriate context for models to be appreciated for their skill and creative input. Furthermore, building upon Eaton’s visual modes of objectification, I discussed how models must be wary of these mechanisms seeping back into their studio work. There is also a positive outlook via the use of poses and expertise: I hoped to show that these mechanisms can provide a challenge to art making, and result in innovative pieces that look to not only subvert these mechanisms, but instil an understanding and awareness about the complex issues of objectification in the viewers of these artworks. I have shown how models’ unique bodies are a factor in subverting objectification, particularly when these fall outside of the typical types of bodies expected in a given context of modelling, like the fashion industry. Not stopping at bodies, however, models’ understanding and expression of poses mean that they can understand and engage with objectifying poses - for instance by incorporating a twist or actively resisting wholly objectifying instructions. Particularly in more collaborative situations with artists, models’ input as posing experts can challenge and present inventive solutions to objectifying effects.

Chapter 7: The Aesthetic Value of Modelling

In this seventh chapter, I explore how modelling can stand as its own creative practice in connection with other artistic media. These consist of painting, sculpting, photography and various forms of performance. A variety of topics have been touched upon in this thesis, to make the case for modelling as a skilled activity with differing functions and degrees of agency it can claim in collaboration. In this final chapter I build upon arguments constructed throughout the thesis to identify qualities salient to modelling and its aesthetic appreciation, how the parties involved can participate in this experience, and, finally, to make the case for the aesthetic value of modelling as an artistic practice. I aim to do so by first arguing for modelling as a hybrid art form with performance-like qualities. This is followed by a discussion of style and improvisation. The second section looks into aesthetic appreciation and the complex relationship modelling holds to twofoldness, as well as those senses most crucial to the appreciation of modelling. The third section touches upon the importance of performance personas and the manner within which the model informs the *make-believe* of the images she works towards.

7.1 Modelling and Performance

7.1.1 Modelling as a Hybrid Art

To make the case for modelling as a hybrid art form, it is helpful to consider how other forms of art, or the notion of art making in itself, has been considered rather like performance. David Davies theorised about artworks as performance, unconstrained to literal performance pieces. For theatre and dance, he characterises the shared understandings that constitute performance and its vehicular medium as including “bodily movements, while the artistic medium will include a distinctive vocabulary for characterizing those movements and various conventions for representing or expressing particular mental states of the performer through bodily movements so characterized.”³⁶⁴ One’s focus when appreciating a work is located in three senses. First, one focuses on the aim of the performance, a specification of a thing which motivates the performance to be made. Second is the thing whose accomplished specification marks a temporal boundary of the performance of that work. Third, and

³⁶⁴ David Davies, *Art as Performance* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 61.

most significant, is that the performance is “construed as a doing which achieves something determinate.”³⁶⁵ The audience cares about aspects of an art historical context that stimulate the artist’s manipulations of a vehicular medium, but is also interested in the creative product.³⁶⁶ In this manner, Davies allows for different interpretations of the same piece as being a disagreement about what the artist achieved after going through a specific series of “motivated manipulations”.³⁶⁷ To make this consonant with the cases explored in this chapter, a crucial part of what Davies considers to be the artist’s labours would constitute the model’s role in helping to achieve a particular focus.

The vehicular medium for those artistic situations that require a model is the combination of the model’s body and form in collaboration with the artist. The artistic medium then consists of those conventions that determine poses and the model’s (self-)presentation.

While artworks can be considered performances in their own right according to Davies, I will insist on not automatically rendering the images of models performative merely because of the labouring of the artist and model involved. Having discussed the various levels of body expertise that models take on, such as a keenly developed bodily awareness, proprioception, sense of style, and improvisation, it stands to reason that modelling should be considered performative in itself. Beyond being performative, however, I insist that the profession of modelling has also changed over time, in a way that renders it more readily recognisable as an art form –not merely a prop to be used by a Titian.

Jerrold Levinson has written about hybrid art forms, and specifies that hybridisation is not a matter of merely recombining pre-existing materials, but in fact merging artistic categories and their antecedents.³⁶⁸ Hybrid status is then a historical thing, in virtue of an art form’s development out of art forms that came before.³⁶⁹ Levinson distinguishes different types of hybrids, of which his transformational type is most applicable to modelling. Such a hybrid “is not *halfway* between A and B; it is basically A transformed in a B-ish direction.”³⁷⁰

³⁶⁵ Davies, *Art as Performance*, 151.

³⁶⁶ Davies, *Art as Performance*, 151. He characterises that “This work, as performance, is the particular performance through which *this* focus of appreciation is specified. This is why the product of the artist’s labors, while not itself the work, is still the *focus* of our appreciative interest in the work. It is the manipulation of the vehicular medium in the interest of specifying *this* focus that we appreciate.”

³⁶⁷ Davies, *Art as Performance*, 155.

³⁶⁸ Jerrold Levinson, “Hybrid Art Forms,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 18, No. 4 (1984): 984, 11.

³⁶⁹ Levinson, “Hybrid Art Forms,” 6.

³⁷⁰ Levinson, “Hybrid Art Forms,” 10.

Some defining feature of one or both of the arts is somehow challenged, for instance resulting in a kinetic sculpture no longer being stationary as sculpture usually is.³⁷¹

Considering the historical progression of modelling, it is largely in the last two centuries that it became recognised as a profession, and split into different types of models in the traditional arts, such as the distinction between casual versus professional models, and private versus public models who worked for artist's ateliers and fine art academies respectively.³⁷² A new type of model was born with the rise of photography, mass production and mass media in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The democratising power of the camera meant that suddenly all could be artists and models, which required professional models to distinguish themselves from the masses and photographs that would replace their live practice.³⁷³ Going back as far as the nineteenth century, Parisian model Cadamour was famed within Parisian artists' networks for his innovative poses, to such a degree that he had the capacity to turn down artists if the job did not suit him.³⁷⁴ With the rise of supermodels in the twentieth century, we arrive at a point where individual models create a brand for themselves. Models increasingly transgress the boundaries between acting and other forms of performance, consider, for instance, the many models and actors who have actually taken on these various careers, like Tilda Swinton and Cara Delevingne in recent years. Especially supermodels present public personas and will model within the persona and qualities that we know.³⁷⁵ Furthermore, they take on props, such as clothing, make-up, and other styling, to create a whole appearance and impression which ends up close to what an actor might perform on stage.

A great degree of control can be exercised over the model's appearance by selecting make-up, clothing, poses, lighting, composition, and post-production editing. These features are related to form, and, as is the case with those social media images, are not always clearly visible to spectators in terms of their degree of influence over the image. Viewers know that models for advertisements are selling a product, yet these advertisements do still depend upon a suspension of disbelief – much like theatre.³⁷⁶ This suspension of disbelief does not necessarily take place within the studio, but is rather part of the overall effects of the model's contributions to the artwork.

³⁷¹ Levinson, "Hybrid Art Forms," 10.

³⁷² Susan Waller, *The Invention of the Model* (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2006), 24-25.

³⁷³ Marie Lathers, *Bodies of Art: French Literary Realism and the Artist's Model* (University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 237-238.

³⁷⁴ Waller, *The Invention of the Model*, 24-25. See also the entry on Cadamour in Jiminez and Banham, "Dictionary of Artists' Models," 97-99.

³⁷⁵ I will expand on this in the final section of this chapter, 7.3 'Informing the Artwork'.

³⁷⁶ Tom Stern, *Philosophy and Theatre: an Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2014), 64. Stern expands on the importance of suspending disbelief in the context of theatre.

James Hamilton argues that art forms like music or dance have no implication that an audience would be present, while theatre requires a present or implied audience. While no audience is present in rehearsals for narrative performance or improvisation, he remarks that once a routine is established actors become aware of spectators' positions and adapt their material to render it accessible.³⁷⁷ There are reasons to disagree with Hamilton, as I will show in the following understanding of how both dance and modelling *are* very audience oriented after all. The physical aspect is strongly present between model and artist instead, rather than model and audience – as would be the case with performers in theatre.³⁷⁸ There is indeed less of a direct physical connection between model and audience, compared to theatre for instance, but this connection is not lost. Modelling also cannot merely be classified as a kind of rehearsal in the way that actors rehearse for a play, since the model's every pose can feature as a final artwork, and they are witnessed in person regardless. More akin to improvisation, the physicality of the model is most important in the connection between herself and the artist as spectator while they collaborate. Here we find the distinction between the 'artist-spectator' and 'artwork-spectator' who engage with the model and her representation in different ways and at different times.

Sue Spaid introduced the two-step Presentation and Reception Model, in which she emphasises the importance of audience appreciation (reception) as the point at which "performance completion" occurs, arguing that any individual artist's or curator's interpretation of a piece need not be final.³⁷⁹ Artworks tend to outlive the artists who made them, and she makes the point that curators who engage in executive decisions on the presentation of artworks in, for instance, exhibitions, "perform the artwork" along with their interpretation, to a receptive audience.³⁸⁰ This (forgotten) importance of reception is very much the case when we consider models, too, whose performance does not merely stop after they have informed the resulting image. These images 'live', as it were, received and interpreted by various audiences, which the model anticipates as she presents herself. Her initial performance is for those immediately present, which likely results in an image, but it does not end there – it ends when this image is then displayed and received.

³⁷⁷ James R. Hamilton, "What Do Actors Do?" In *Ethical Encounters: Boundaries of Theatre, Performance and Philosophy*, eds. Meyer-Dinkgräfe, Daniel and Watt, Daniel. (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 7.

³⁷⁸ Hamilton, "What do Actors Do?", 14.

³⁷⁹ Sue Spaid, "To Be Performed," *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 11 (2019): 715.

³⁸⁰ Spaid, "To Be Performed," 720.

7.1.2 Style and Improvisation

The discussion of modelling as a hybrid art form with performance qualities then calls into question which particular qualities, also identifiable in performance, are present within modelling. I will go on to show that style and improvisation are key to understanding modelling as a performative artistic practice.

Aili Bresnahan discusses philosophical work on improvisation in the arts, and the various disagreements about this ephemeral mode of art making. She elucidates that it “highlights creativity, immediacy, innovation, and spontaneity as part of its product and activity, although an artist’s ability to create these effects may be highly skilled and trained.”³⁸¹ Improvisation also alters the aesthetic value and mode of appreciation of its products and events. Particularly close to modelling is the account of rehearsal improvisation in theatre and film, it being the case that film improvisation will result in a recording that is replayed for an audience.³⁸² Modelling does, still, occupy an odd dual role in that the model does perform for the immediate artist and crew present, as well as anticipating the delayed viewers of the artwork. In this manner, modelling constitutes both an immediate and delayed mode of appreciation in line with practices such as dance and film respectively.

To be ‘in the moment’ and thinking on-the-fly in the way that improvisation requires entails that an artist summon all the skills, training, and resources that he or she can muster. Shortcuts, half-hearted efforts, and ‘faking it’ will cause the improvisation to fail in its intent. The artist will lose the audience, and the artwork or performance will not ring true. In addition, a good-making feature of improvisation is that it provides the audience with a sense of an ‘anticipatory phase’ that is ‘loaded with expectancy’ for what comes next (see Alperson 1998, Clemente, Sterritt).³⁸³

A salient quality of modelling is precisely this ability, to pose in the moment and respond to artistic cues as and when she models. Her creative ability and professionalism feed into these similarly good-making features of modelling and render her, firstly, an art object to be regarded by those immediately present, and secondly, they inform the creative product she appears in.

The expression of her movements can indeed be independent of the model’s own feelings, but it is no stretch to claim that there are body shapes, temperaments, and artistic inclinations that render models more

³⁸¹ Aili Bresnahan, “Improvisation in the Arts,” *Philosophy Compass* 10, No. 9 (2015): 580.

³⁸² Bresnahan, “Improvisation in the Arts,” 576.

³⁸³ Bresnahan, “Improvisation in the Arts,” 179.

well-suited to taking on particular poses and jobs. Scholarship on style in dance has indicated two modes of expression of spatial imagination; ‘style₁’ is a general choice, ‘style₂’ is a personal choice of manner of execution. The general understanding of style constitutes characteristic movements as they relate to more general ideals, which are no ends in themselves – but serve audience effect.³⁸⁴ The more personal approach to style constitutes its own “characteristic articulation of a more general spatial vocabulary. Style₂ thus supervenes on and implements personally style₁.” Style₂ relates to the:

significant correlation between the dancer’s temperament or personality and the movement idiom he prefers to adopt, where adoption of an idiom consists of the individual articulation of a general set of restrictions. Spatial vocabularies...are best construed as determinations of spatial imagination. In one sense they free the dancer to move. They also limit the exercise of spatial imagination.³⁸⁵

Style formulates the link between “the dancer and the dance as perceived”, in which lies the connection to modelling as a highly performative, artistic practice. Modelling shares a similar problem, namely, that “the process of creation is in part an element of the work as it reaches the beholder.”³⁸⁶

Commercial and fine art models are divided along those lines precisely because of the type of modelling work they do. Depending on whether the job is a life model job for an anatomy class, or a highly lucrative cosmetic products campaign, there is a general context of style within which the models operate, and may or may not add a personal touch in the execution of their poses. For these reasons, modelling sits closely to other modes of performance such as improvisation, in particular, as well as types of performance art like dance, theatre or film acting.

The absorption of performative qualities occurred in life modelling too, particularly in the last century. Quentin Crisp is a well-known queer British model who was famed for his highly performative invented poses which he brought to ateliers (Fig. 61). He has been described as the ‘author’ of his space, and his spatial possession

³⁸⁴ Mary Sirridge and Adina Armelagos, “The In’s and Out’s of Dance: Expression as an Aspect of Style,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36, No. 1 (1977): 19.

³⁸⁵ Sirridge and Armelagos, “The In’s and Out’s of Dance,” 20.

³⁸⁶ Sirridge and Armelagos, “The In’s and Out’s of Dance,” 23.

of a room considered as a kind of ‘anatomical perspective’ that he conceives of and performs.³⁸⁷ More recently, Dominic Blake has spoken at *The National Gallery* and was interviewed by *The Guardian*, about his work as a full-time life model and, importantly, has questioned whether life models, in some cases, may be considered artists.³⁸⁸ At the time of writing, he considers himself an artist. Blake is specifically asked by drawing groups and professional artists because he brings highly performed geometric and contorted poses. In his talk, he touched upon how he opened the conversation with some independent artists, to acknowledge his collaborative significance in the conception of an artwork. As such, he has negotiated a percentage of the sale of their collaborated artworks, if they do happen to sell, rather than the one-off payment life models typically receive. He is eloquent about how he creates and prepares them and has previously called them sketches that he draws in space with his body, at times in response to existing art works, such as Kandinsky’s *Composition VIII*, 1923 (Fig. 62).³⁸⁹ These practices transformed modelling into a ‘performance-ish’ direction, echoing Levinson’s characterisation. Rooted in a rich history, these contexts have changed how we understand modelling within the arts, steering us to recognise how the practice has transformed by absorbing qualities from other performing arts like acting, film, and performance.

7.1.3 Picturesque and Sculpturesque

Following these notions about modelling as a hybrid art, of which important performance qualities are those of style and improvisation, I now look towards a special quality of modelling in how, as a practice, it is centred around requiring that the model finds a pose that demands to be captured. The *picturesque* and *sculpturesque* offer two perspectives about this notion that I will go on to explain.

Walter John Hipple describes the picturesque as pertaining to scenes in nature, and imitations of such scenes on canvas or in words. The chosen scenes are “eminently suitable for pictorial representation,” and afford

³⁸⁷ Mark Armstrong, “The Quentin Kind: Visual Narrative and The Naked Civil Servant,” *PhD Thesis*, University of Northumbria (2012), 112-113.

³⁸⁸ Tim Jonze, “I love staring at one spot for six hours! Life models on the secrets of disrobing,” *The Guardian*, August 14 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/aug/14/life-models-on-the-secrets-of-disrobing>.

³⁸⁹ Lisa Takahashi, “Life Model Dominic Blake on the other side of the canvas,” Interview with Dominic Blake for *Jackson’s Art*, July 10 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.jacksonsart.com/blog/2018/07/10/dominic-blake-life-model-side-canvas/>.

well-composed pictures that are suitably varied and of harmonised form, colours, and lights.³⁹⁰ While the picturesque has a longstanding association with landscape and gardening, it was also applied to literature and other art forms. For instance, it could designate an obvious metaphor and literary style, the ‘picturesque’ in this sense was commonly employed in discussions about rhetoric and poetry, to describe poetic sensibilities.³⁹¹

Since the picturesque is not limited to natural outdoor scenery, it offers a variety of notions applicable to modelling. I refrain from delving into the particularities that writers of the time argued for. Central is that the picturesque pinpoints a number of qualities in a scene, which are especially well-suited to being pictorially represented. As a concept, this leans closely to models’ searching for ‘the look’, since this look presents hard to identify sought-after qualities. A landscape, of course, cannot make an active contribution to the image taken of it. It is curious that there is something unintentional in the picturesque. It cannot present itself or arrange itself, any arrangement that occurs takes place in its mediated registration by the artist.³⁹² The picturesque comes in when we consider the example of portrait sitters, and the distinction between production and reception within aesthetic experience that I will expand on in the next section. The inexperienced model can still engage in an aesthetic experience when she is being directed to pose. During her involvement in the production end of the artwork and its aesthetic experience, her own experience might be more of a receptive one, and closer to that of spectatorship if she is guided by the artist.

Those involved do actively work towards producing an artwork, the end-result of which remains unstable throughout much of the creative process. In the spirit of the picturesque, the artist visually stumbles upon a particular arrangement of the model that is well-suited to being captured. This presents an important feature of modelling. Modelling is dynamic and fluid, with, for instance, the artist moving around the model to find the right point of view for the artwork they are producing. There are differing degrees of creative agency that models can take on, and those models who enter a truly collaborative relationship with the artist will also actively aid to find this right perspective – which I will view in light of the sculpturesque.

³⁹⁰ Walter John Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, & the Picturesque in Eighteenth Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957), 186.

³⁹¹ Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, & the Picturesque*, 186, 223.

³⁹² This is much like the idea of the photogenic that I introduced at in the Epilogue of chapter two. The photogenic subject is a person whose qualities are hard to pinpoint, yet palpable, and best brought out by the photograph.

Parallel to the picturesque are the discussions about sculpture in the eighteenth century. The *sculpturesque* was taken analogously to the picturesque as a style of beauty which depends on associational beauty and symmetry (or rather, proportion) which appeals especially to those who have profound knowledge of classical sculpture and its features.³⁹³ Hipple points out that contemporary debates focused on “The beautiful, sublime, and picturesque being feelings raised up in the mind from impressions and associated ideas, it was natural that the mind as perceiving rather than creating should have been the focus of discussion.”³⁹⁴ The sculpturesque constitutes more of an imagined, tactile occasion. One might assume that the tactile is highly diminished, since artists do not typically touch their models.

There are cases that do not strictly adhere to the tactile of the sculpturesque, which I will understand as examples of the quasi-sculpturesque. Those who practice mime, for instance, rely entirely on bodily form and minutely controlled movement to communicate comedic sketches, expressions, and storylines. Miming is a limit case that sits between acting and posing – though it is performative altogether, without relying on verbal communication. Mimes evoke a sense of touch and volume by positioning themselves within a space to conjure up the impression of invisible objects which they move around and interact with.

An example from the contemporary artworld is the series of *One Minute Sculptures* by Erwin Wurm (Fig. 63). These serial photographs document the artist’s instructions for each individual performance. The photographs therefore function as merely an “enduring record”. Wurm takes images of an array of anonymous participants, performers, artists, and curators who engage “in unconventional and sometimes physically challenging interactions with everyday objects such as clothing, buckets, balls, doorframes, bicycles and perishable goods. The resulting compositions feature unusual contortions – held for a minute – and illogical still-lives that are both humorous and provocative.”³⁹⁵ Wurm explores an odd relation not just between human and object, but investigates posing. The people who feature are not necessarily performers, though some are. Throughout the piece they must hold difficult positions with objects for one minute. A photograph documents this strange still-life result. We might think of these as quasi-sculptures, because they have lost the deeply sculptural quality of remaining static and present within a space. Instead, they only exist as photographs and

³⁹³ Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, & the Picturesque*, 265.

³⁹⁴ Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, & the Picturesque*, 309.

³⁹⁵ Tate, “Erwin Wurm, *One Minute Sculptures*, 1997,” *Tate Catalogue Entry*, s.d. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wurm-one-minute-sculptures-p82013>.

have adopted an ephemeral and temporal quality not typically associated with sculpture. The models in Wurm's pieces are more like sitters who adopt a pose, often introducing an object that cannot remain in its present state in person. The yellow bucket carefully balancing on the sitter's head is bound to fall off in person, and cannot keep existing in the position we see it in. The photographs help to bring out some of the oddity and tension within these performances as they were occurring. They also ultimately deny the photographs a proper art status in their own right – Wurm considers the event itself the sole artwork: a one-minute sculpture.

7.2 Appreciating Modelling

Having looked at the performance qualities that modelling has incorporated; how does one appreciate modelling? I will look into Noël Carroll's content-oriented account of aesthetic appreciation with a focus on appreciation in terms of reception as well as production of art. This is followed by a discussion of twofoldness, as presented by Wollheim and built upon by Bence Nanay, within which I point out how modelling, too, must deal with a curious twofoldness in relation to the images it contributes to. Lastly, I touch upon various salient senses that come into the picture when appreciating modelling, as a model or as someone witnessing the modelling, for which I make use of Carolyn Korsmeyer's thoughts on aesthetic senses.

7.2.1 Aesthetic Appreciation

The following discussion will not aim to define what constitutes aesthetic experience, nor will it commit to a formal theory of aesthetic experience. Instead, a freer concept of aesthetic appreciation proves enough to make sense of the experiences engendered by modelling itself, and those artworks in which models were involved. Noël Carroll's work on a content-oriented approach to aesthetic experience teases out how we could be thinking differently about aesthetic experience, its relation to art and to the artists who produce these artworks. Reception is central to the aesthetic experience that is grounded in spectatorship. I follow Carroll's work in that production deserves a place here, too, which is perhaps more readily accepted in the case of the sole artist who creates his work. I distinguish those qualities most important to modelling by looking into the aesthetic engagement of different parties in modelling and tracing their reliance on various senses. Understanding the

many positions of models within the art-making process enhances our grasp of how their contributions influence viewers' subsequent engagement with selected images of their work.

The topic of life models is touched upon in the 2020 BBC documentary *Titian – Behind Closed Doors*, in which the point is raised that we will likely never know precisely who Titian used as models, nor how. In response to this point, Art Historian Charles Hope voices an assumption often left implicit, namely: “We don’t know, is the answer. And I don’t think anybody will. And I don’t think it should particularly change our views about pictures either. What people do in the privacy of their own studios is their affair.”³⁹⁶ It is true that the immediate problem facing the identification of art models and their precise interactions with artists is the lack of archival evidence. These engagements were typically not recorded or have perished over time. The models themselves were usually working class and did not have the same access to creating a personal archive in the way that middle- and upper-class people did. Nonetheless, a handful of famed models do keep returning to the forefront in recent years. The issue of archival evidence does not render exploring this topic moot, as the whole of this thesis has worked to demonstrate and will further delineate by discussing salient aesthetic features of modelling that render it a distinct artistic practice and object of aesthetic appreciation. Another objection to Hope’s view is that if we are so concerned with how and why an artist approaches her practice and medium in the way that she does, then clearly it is important to understand what occurs in the studio.

Michael Baxandall made this point about understanding artworks as artist-designed answers to particular problems, who have come to address them in particular circumstances. This understanding focuses on both the meaning of a picture via its conceptualisation and on the many relations in which it has come to exist.³⁹⁷ Key to the artist’s intention upon creating an image is her critical relation to previous imagery and the cultural circumstances that envelop her as a social being who continuously re-formulates picture making.³⁹⁸ The information we collect about an artist’s practice inform our analyses of their images, not least exemplified by discussions on intentionality and the meaning of artworks. We should therefore be interested in the model when

³⁹⁶ British Broadcasting Company. “Titian – Behind Closed Doors,” directed by Matthew Hill to accompany *The National Gallery* exhibition ‘Titian – Love, Desire, Death’ March 16 – June 14 2020, 57 min, April 4 2020. Transcription mine, quote taken 36:14 minutes into the documentary.

³⁹⁷ Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (Yale University Press, 1987), 15.

³⁹⁸ Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*, 72-73.

she takes part in art making. Looking into the aesthetic appreciation of modelling will help realise a deeper understanding and revaluation of the role of models in the production and reception of art.

Aesthetic appreciation is a distinct experience that stands apart from other types of appreciating; appreciating a film is different from feeling gratification upon completing a planned task. Aesthetic experience however need not be limited to the artworks that we find in museums or galleries. Research on everyday aesthetics indicates that occasions like savouring food and drink³⁹⁹, or enjoying sports⁴⁰⁰, offer opportunities for aesthetic experience beyond the traditional tastes which might inform such an experience of art objects in the more formal theories. Aesthetic appreciation requires a particular engagement of both thought and imagination to appropriately appreciate features of the object of our attention. This kind of experience is a conscious experience; one knows when one is having it, since it requires attention and engagement.

The standard idea of aesthetic experience is that one contemplates an object for its own sake. In the historical rendition of this characterisation it is accompanied by a disinterested attention. Noël Carroll traces this history back to the Enlightenment thinkers, who responded to a changing society with new attitudes to art and its appreciation. He distinguishes two functions. The first is an intellectual or philosophical function concerned with (re)defining membership in the 'Modern System of the Arts' hierarchy. Separating the arts from what previously would have been considered artistry too, like agriculture, rhetoric, or engineering, promotes the value of art (which really pertains to the category of 'Fine Art') as separate from other human engagements. Therefore, an aesthetic experience could not have an inherent connection to ulterior purposes or practices in the way that engineering does. This constituted a revisionist account, since previously art was largely considered in terms of its educational, moralist, religious, or political aims. The new aesthetic theory, according to Carroll, distorted the original function of many significant artworks.

Social pressure is the second reason for a reimagined aesthetic experience. The eighteenth-century's changing society reckoned with its new art market and the Bourgeoisie, who popularised practices of connoisseurship and art consumption. Art, paradoxically, became more of a commodity that engendered

³⁹⁹ Emily Brady, "Sniffing and Savoring: The Aesthetics of Smells and Tastes," In *The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, eds. Andrew Light and Jordan M. Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005): 177-19; Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Cornell University Press, 1999).

⁴⁰⁰ Wolfgang Welsch, "Sport – Viewed Aesthetically, and Even as Art?" *Filozofski Vestnik* 20, No. 2 (1999): 213-236.

disinterested pleasure as the play of one's imaginative powers.⁴⁰¹ Carroll's exposition of eighteenth century aesthetic experience clarifies how some of its concepts are still present in contemporary Anglophone philosophy. He argues that the standard characterisation of aesthetic experience is uninformative and not very operationalisable. Part of the problem is that valuing something for its own sake is largely a negative notion: it only really prescribes what you should *not* be doing, namely, valuing aesthetic experience instrumentally. In Carroll's view, it does not clarify what one certainly should be doing, or how one could study subjects who are amid an aesthetic experience. Furthermore, it does not reflect what typically happens in the art world.⁴⁰² One could counterargue that one must have an understanding of what it is one appreciates, in order to have a sense of what its relevant features are, and which features can be left aside. Carroll's point is that people can inform others about taste, and how they should have an aesthetic experience with specified artworks. So, they can communicate to others that the appropriate focus, the content, of their experience should be towards the artwork's formal structures, aesthetic properties, anthropomorphic or expressive qualities. The subject of aesthetic experience can be guided in terms of what the content of that experience should be, in accordance with the relevant norms.⁴⁰³ Following these observations, Carroll proposes a content-oriented characterisation of aesthetic experience as a more informative approach than the standard characterisation:

...instead of identifying aesthetic experiences with those valued necessarily for their own sake, it is far more enlightening to maintain that an experience is an aesthetic one if it involves informed attention to the formal, expressive or otherwise aesthetic properties of the artwork in ways that are consistent with the norms and strategies of detection prescribed for that type of work by its conventions, genre, and tradition. An experience of an artwork, in other words, is aesthetic if the content of the experience is aesthetic – a matter of formal, expressive, or otherwise aesthetic properties and relations – and if that content is negotiated in the appropriate or correct manner.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰¹ Noël Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience, Art, and Artists," In *Aesthetic Experience*, eds. Richard Shusterman and Adele Tomlin (Routledge, 2010): 148-153.

⁴⁰² Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience, Art, and Artists," 163. Carroll exemplifies this by referencing the art critic who engages with a work of art not out of interest for the artwork itself, but because they know they can write a successful and well-received article based on the piece. According to the standard characterisation, this would not constitute an aesthetic experience given the instrumentalising motive of the critic. In the content-oriented approach of Carroll, this critic would still be able to appropriately attend to the salient aesthetic features of the work and engage in an aesthetic experience, regardless of the ulterior motives.

⁴⁰³ Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience, Art, and Artists," 157-159.

⁴⁰⁴ Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience, Art, and Artists," 159.

The traditional characterisation of aesthetic experience as rooted in a spectatorship model offers one mode to contemplate modelling. Via the notions of disinterested pleasure and enjoying something for its own sake, it assumes that the subject who undergoes the aesthetic experience is an onlooker, for example a reader, viewer, or listener, instead of an artist. Aesthetic experience is taken as an experience for leisured, listening audiences, and therefore focuses more on engaging with artworks in terms of reception, rather than production.⁴⁰⁵

Modelling can benefit from Carroll's content-oriented reading. It fits neatly in this notion of performers who attend to the aesthetic properties of their artistic activities, including while they generate them. Particularly of interest is how aesthetic experience manifests in both a receptive experience (spectatorship), and in a more active experience (production).

Three parties each engage in their differing aesthetic experiences of modelling. These are largely analogous with the parties I identified within the process of looking for posing. First, the model can regard herself and aesthetically appreciate the modelling she is performing first-hand. Second, the artist watches and registers her modelling, and as such engages in an aesthetic experience. The model renders herself an art object when she poses, which can be enjoyed as a three-dimensional form, or as a series of gestures resulting in the pose, for example. Third are those delayed viewers of various representations of models – though these are less crucial in this account of aesthetic experience of modelling as it occurs, and are more important in considering how both artwork and model incorporate the viewers' gaze.

The main difference between the model regarding herself and the artist, versus spectators of the creative product, is this: an alternate type of experience takes place for the first two; they engage in an aesthetic experience via their mode of art production. The audience member of a catwalk is a contemplative onlooker in the more traditionally receptive sense; she watches the model on the runway and appreciate features like her gait, form, expressions, and the way she carries clothes. Model and artist attend to the aesthetic properties that result from their practice. Their role is different from that of a spectator who engages with the finished artwork, or a spectator watching a runway model walk, since both model and artist are engaging in the modelling via a productive art-creating mode of engagement. They both assume a spectator role interchangeably throughout their practice as they engage in more standard contemplation– in addition to the model's physical mode of

⁴⁰⁵ Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience, Art, and Artists," 153.

attending that I have touched upon in chapter two. Throughout the creative process, they will need to analyse and adjust features like lighting, details within the pose, walking around the space, and many more to achieve the artistic product they are aiming for. As a creative activity, model and artist experiment and reflect. This is an intentional activity, which I will further explore when I investigate twofoldness in the next section. The ends as such are internal to the creative activity, as is their engagement with aesthetic experience as the entities who produce it.

Carroll distinguishes two modes of attending aesthetic experience. One is production-oriented, the other is receptive spectatorship. His distinction of production versus spectatorship is helpful, but I am inclined to shift to viewing this distinction along the lines of 'creative' and 'responsive' aesthetic appreciation, both two approaches to appreciating the same object of interest. Within this creative aesthetic appreciation exists the unique opportunity to enjoy an aesthetic experience in the process of creation, complemented by the opportunity to create an aesthetic experience for the viewer of the artwork. It may be tempting to treat production as an elevated form of appreciation, given the artists and models' unique insight within their own process. Instead, rethinking it as two sides of a very similarly oriented appreciation interconnects these two modes better.

Aesthetic appreciation can pertain to a broad range of things. Artist and model can certainly engage more cognitively with their creative process as they are working towards an artwork. Simultaneously, the spectator of the resulting artwork surely can reflect deeply on what she is experiencing. The subject who engages in aesthetic appreciation becomes engrossed within this experience, which can vary in concentration or duration. One thinks and feels about what one experiences and assesses the object in a multitude of manners, for instance an emotional assessment, an intellectualising one, or a different somatic experience.

Both model and artist must anticipate spectatorship, since they collaborate to embed their creative product with features that invite a particular aesthetic appreciation. To this end, the next section investigates twofoldness and how this relates to modelling. This enables us to arrive at the point that artist and model can be appreciative of features that are not part of the future artwork and subsequent aesthetic experience of the artwork's viewer which they are constructing together.

7.2.2 Twofoldness

Richard Wollheim's work on twofoldness focuses on the perception of pictorial representation, arguing that the act of 'seeing-in' is a special instance of visual experience. Being simultaneously aware of the represented object, as well as the medium of representation, renders that experience 'twofold'. This provides a necessary condition for seeing-in. Jerrold Levinson and Bence Nanay argue that Wollheim conflates two different notions of twofoldness. The first sense Nanay considers necessary for seeing something in a picture, the second is necessary for the aesthetic appreciation of a picture. He summarises sense (1) as "Twofoldness of the experience of a painting means that one is visually aware of the (two-dimensional) surface and the (three-dimensional) represented object simultaneously."⁴⁰⁶ Sense (2) is not concerned with simultaneous visual awareness of two separate entities (the surface and the represented object), but looks at two aspects of the same experience: that which is represented and the way that it is represented. Nanay characterises this sense (2) as "Twofoldness of the experience of a painting means that one attends to (takes notice of, consciously focuses on) the represented object and the way it is represented simultaneously."⁴⁰⁷

Nanay remarks that Wollheim refers interchangeably to these two ways of seeing-in. However, Nanay posits that they are not the exact same, and should be distinguished to improve our understanding of what is occurring. The first way in which they differ is in their interaction with objects of perception. Properties of the surface (like cracks in a canvas) are not part of the 'how' of representations, yet being visually aware of them is part of being visually aware of the surface. Brushstrokes, however, are part of the manner in which an object is represented and "supervenes on the properties of the surface, but it is not itself a property of the surface."⁴⁰⁸ The second distinction is made in terms of the attitude of the subject:

Twofoldness in sense (1) requires simultaneous *visual awareness* between the surface and the object, whereas twofoldness in sense (2) requires a much more complex psychological attitude...it requires that one *attend* to (take notice of, consciously focus on) the represented object and the way it is represented simultaneously.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ Bence Nanay, "Is Twofoldness Necessary for Representational Seeing?" *British Journal of Aesthetics* 45, No. 3 (2005): 250.

⁴⁰⁷ Nanay, "Is Twofoldness Necessary for Representational Seeing?", 256.

⁴⁰⁸ Nanay, "Is Twofoldness Necessary for Representational Seeing?", 251

⁴⁰⁹ Nanay, "Is Twofoldness Necessary for Representational Seeing?", 256.

This means that it is possible to have a twofold visual experience in sense (2) without having an experience in sense (1), as examples of *trompe l'oeils* show. Levinson and Lopes also observe that at the very least one can see something in a picture without appreciating it aesthetically.⁴¹⁰

One could object here that modelling is a performative, temporal practice which occurs in-person, whereas conversely, these interpretations of twofoldness are concerned with pictorial representation. Modelling should be considered as deeply intertwined with pictorial representation, since models typically work towards the production of an image. Modelling constitutes a unique kind of performance, which performs within and contributes to another work, rather than merely being documented. It should be remarked that within performance art, the performance constitutes the artwork. Therefore, it is not a given that the documentation of the event stands alone as an independent artwork. The performance's documentation rather allows us to access it past its end. Contrary to this, the images that both fine art and commercial models pose for tend to be the focus, rather than their posing. There remains, of course, a documentary element in the sense that often the model's appearance remains recognisably represented in their images. These images are also, at times, reappropriated at a later stage as documentary pieces, for instance in retrospectives of the model's career.

Twofoldness and pictorial representation are relevant given how modelling plays a crucial part in the eventual artworks within which we can experience seeing-in. I make use of Nanay's adaptation of sense (2) to consider how our aesthetic experience of these images is informed. Model and artist strive to figure out what the eventual representation will be, and how this can be achieved in their collaboration. The 'how' part entails the modelling, any directions of the artist, and the way the artist ends up incorporating the poses into the image. Both model and artist are not only visually aware, but they are also consciously attending how the model will be represented. In other words, they engage in aesthetic appreciation via a more complex psychological state and mode of attending as sense (2) entails.

Indispensable to this creative mode of appreciation is that both parties reflect on and experiment with how the model could look, and how this could be achieved. Take for instance a photoshoot, where the model moves through various poses, the photographer might tell her to "Look fierce!" and she will aim to respond appropriately. It is not merely engaging with the model as object, but actively searching for what model and

⁴¹⁰ Nanay, "Is Twofoldness Necessary for Representational Seeing?", 256.

subsequent artwork could become. In its performance, modelling crucially connects to the pictorial twofoldness via its appreciative interpretation. There are two objects of appreciative experience when looking at an image: first, the model's performance, and second, how her performance interlinks with what the artist registers. These are interwoven in the creative act, which informs the artwork to be. This builds on the notion of the model as an art object. The model remains herself, as a (private) subject with a distinct appearance and skillset, while she is also regarded as an art object of many creative possibilities. This twofoldness of performance then lies in regarding the model with an eye for her potential representation, the anticipation of which is inextricably linked to the resulting image and pictorial twofoldness.

The performance of the model and the final artwork can be separated as distinct objects of appreciation. The basic notion of twofoldness, namely regarding two aspects of a single experience which are distinguishable yet inseparable, then applies to modelling and its relation to the image. The performed modelling and constructed image are not two separate experiences that alternate; they occur simultaneously and inform one another.

The act of modelling is deeply self-reflective and anticipatory, which is in line with the twofoldness just discussed. The nature of modelling requires an ongoing self-assessment of her appearance and poses. Linked to this self-reflection is a profound awareness of others. The next subsection will treat the senses involved in the appreciation of modelling.

7.2.3 The Senses

Chapter two discussed experienced models, largely drawing attention to skill and features like proprioception and looking. The senses are usually considered from a spectator's point of reference. I have argued that the perspective of those involved in creative production is also of utmost importance to ameliorate our understanding of the artworks we engage with. The aim then is to demonstrate how modelling invites various modes of sensory engagement.

Carolyn Korsmeyer discusses why the traditional senses of sight and hearing were considered superior and more distant (compared to the bodily senses of touch and taste) in epistemic, moral, and aesthetic ways.⁴¹¹ Many senses that were considered purely physical pleasure and interest have traditionally been considered inferior to

⁴¹¹ Carolyn Korsmeyer, "A Tour of the Senses," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 59, No. 4 (2019): 359.

more elevated, distant senses. The supposed aesthetic senses, however, allowed for the making of normative judgements and disinterested pleasure.⁴¹² One thought that still persists in modern philosophy “is that sensations direct attention to the state of the sensing body, in so doing making them so subjective that they resist standards for normative comparison.”⁴¹³ Korsmeyer counters this by arguing that it is false that bodily senses guide attention towards ourselves more than on external objects, since they are additionally focused on what is out there in the world. Touch, for example, is used to “check objective material reality,” and coordinates with vision to do so. Arguably, developing the ability to see is inextricably linked to one’s ability to touch. Touch feels and distinguishes between tactile properties such as pain, warmth, chill, pressure, tracing the shape it is touching and helping to grasp a sense of its volume.⁴¹⁴ Most interesting about Korsmeyer’s account is the question of whether (and to which extent) these more bodily senses can provide aesthetic insight, “a felt apprehension of meaning and significance comparable to appreciative responses to a line of poetry, an image, a passage of music.”⁴¹⁵ More research needs to be done on the significance of various bodily senses and their role in the aesthetic appreciation within a context of artistic production.

The term “eye-candy” offers one instance of how vision is typically used to relate to fashion models. The artist will rely on sight as a primary sense. To grasp the volumes and physicality of the model within a space, she will additionally need to rely on (imagined) touch. Models themselves employ senses such as touch, proprioception and kinesthesia to aid the instrumentalisation and placement of their bodies. This sensory knowledge constitutes the model’s understanding of her poses in relation to the space in which she models and the artist with whom she works. Her self-assessment and sensory understanding is comparable to the various degrees of expertise one can cultivate looking at artworks. The expert model has the background and sensory understanding to enter a profounder appreciation of modelling, compared to an incidental portrait sitter.

In line with the multi-modal experience of the senses that Korsmeyer highlights in scholarship,⁴¹⁶ the expert model makes use of a wider kinesthesia, relying on touch, proprioception and self-reflection, to construct her poses and collaborate with the artist. Working as and with a model therefore taps into many of the senses we

⁴¹² Korsmeyer, “A Tour of the Senses,” 359-360.

⁴¹³ Korsmeyer, “A Tour of the Senses,” 360.

⁴¹⁴ Korsmeyer, “A Tour of the Senses,” 360.

⁴¹⁵ Korsmeyer, “A Tour of the Senses,” 361.

⁴¹⁶ Casey O’Callaghan (2008, 332); Vivian Sobchack (2004, 60); Bence Nanay (2012, 355) quoted in Korsmeyer, “A Tour of the Senses,” 367.

employ; sight is clearly involved, and so is hearing in that there may be verbal communication, music in the studio, and the experience of hearing the artist work with a particular medium – such as the scratching of pencil on paper, or the clicking of a camera. Other instances of modelling might happen in mostly total silence, leaving the model to focus wholly on herself.⁴¹⁷

In the multi-modal experience of modelling, her poses can be considered as a form of kinetic sculpture, particularly when we bear in mind the active body, shifting poses, and changing volumes within the studio. Poses are voluminous, proportional forms within the studio space, which can move, change, and interact with the artist. This is not purely reserved for the model herself; it is precisely how an artist will access and scrutinise the model. The model employs touch and kinesthesia to make sense of the studio space and how she positions herself in relation to the artist and the artwork they are creating. For instance, the photographer's judgement about when and how to shoot, how to develop the images, and how to present them to a later public are all doused in an appreciation of the kinesthetic, sculptural properties of modelling. In this sense, one could consider modelling a multimedia effort. Different artistic media can be understood and valued through a multitude of senses. Appreciating an object entails, in one sense, that we take it in visually. This is the case as well for the model's appearance, there is a visual component in how she poses, and the way in which the artist engages with this visual knowledge.

Sculpture should not be left aside in an appreciative understanding of modelling, if we take and apply the notion of the sculptural as guidance for key qualities of modelling that are part of its focus, attention, feeling, and subsequent judgement. Part of the experience of sculpture is sustained through, of course, viewing the sculpture, and, since sculpture is three-dimensional, being present in the space with the sculpture. Free-standing sculptures can be walked around and invite to be viewed from all their sides. Similar to freestanding sculpture, the model also presents her form as a spatial volume which can be viewed from all sides. Even when we consider other forms of sculpture, for instance reliefs, or pieces intended to be viewed from a clearly designated perspective⁴¹⁸, this too works for those modes of modelling that respond to similar demands. One such instance is the commercial model who poses for a frontal shot, in order to neutrally display the clothes she wears. The

⁴¹⁷ In the previous chapter on objectification, this can more negatively constitute the model being taken as inert, sometimes even spoken about as if she were not there.

⁴¹⁸ Hopkins, Robert. "Painting, Sculpture, Sight, and Touch," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 44, No. 2 (2004): 163.

model must consider her position in relation to that which registers her, knowing that she can rotate herself, or the artist might rotate around her to achieve a particular image.

Touch comes into play in how sculpture presents different textures and materials, which renders an (imagined) tactile experience of what a texture like smoothness or roughness would feel like. As such, touch contributes to our understanding. The model similarly functions as a three-dimensional art object in the space, which the artist beholds and responds to. Kinesthesia is involved for both artist and model to make sense of her present body. Under kinesthesia, a range of bodily perceptions fall. Kinesthesia tends to be understood as belonging to wider somaesthesia, which is “the sensory system of conscious bodily perception associated with skin senses, proprioception, and perception of the internal organs.”⁴¹⁹ Kinesthesia then:

allows us to feel the position and movements of our limbs and body...The sensation of movement is provided by the interplay of cutaneous and deeper internal receptors. (...) perceiving one's own movements is different from perceiving someone else's. ...sympathetic communication through body movement is what makes the appreciation of dance possible.⁴²⁰

Curiously, viewers of dance or moving images can experience kinesthesia without needing to be in motion themselves, due to sympathetic communication. Kinesthesia is not a purely somaesthetic sense, but also allows “a form of corporeal communication”. That phenomenon has been used in eurhythmics, the approach to rhythmic education invented by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze which was influential in avant-garde dance and theatre.⁴²¹ Modelling relies on such kinesthesia in a multitude of ways, given the importance of creating and assessing poses. Aesthetic appreciation of modelling is rooted in these many senses, ranging from vision, to touch and proprioception, each of which feeds into the engrossment, the contemplation, and self-reflection that model and artist engage in.

Modelling is as performative as those performing arts that rely on kinesthesia, like dance and theatre, informed by multi-modal experience and self-reflection. It relies on a range of sculptural qualities that are best grasped through the kinesthetic sensory system. Given that this experience is then translated into an artwork

⁴¹⁹ Boucher, Marc. “Kinesthetic Synesthesia: Experiencing Dance in Multimedia Scenographies,” *Contemporary Aesthetics* 2, No. 1 (2004): 7.

⁴²⁰ Boucher, “Kinesthetic Synesthesia,” 7-8

⁴²¹ Boucher, “Kinesthetic Synesthesia,” 8.

that will retain some form of appreciation, it is not too dissimilar from multimedia dance performances with projected images. Rather than coming together as a full artwork, as is the case for “kinetic synaesthetic artworks”⁴²², modelling does advance the production of an artwork. What occurs in the studio is not the main event, though nor is the artwork the only event.

In the model’s treatment of her body, its proportions, volumes, and relation to other objects within the studio, while considering the artistic imagery that she is working towards, she can be considered a kind of kinetic sculpture. This relates to twofoldness in how an interconnection arises between model and artist, and subsequent artwork and its viewer. Instead of communicating in merely one direction, the anticipation of the artwork’s reception results in mutual exchange. We find performative twofoldness in the model’s performative experimenting and self-instrumentalising, which generates a distinct aesthetic appreciation that relies on a multitude of senses, as described. As a hybrid artistic practice, modelling can take a greater or lesser role in collaboration with existing artistic media. It should nonetheless be appreciated on its own terms, via the senses it appeals to.

7.3 Informing the Artwork

7.3.1 Make-Believe and the Model’s Persona

Via her representation, the model connects with the artwork viewers’ own responsive appreciation. Kendall Walton treats representation in-depth in *Mimesis as Make-Believe*. Initially, Walton distinguishes between mere ‘matching’ and representation. Matching “is *complete* correspondence between a representation and something in the world.”⁴²³ A picture or a story match a person if it resembles how that person is, for instance by being visually identical. A work can represent without matching, however, or match something that it does not represent. In the former’s case, representing without matching constitutes misrepresentation.⁴²⁴ The latter can be exemplified by considering that the portrait of one half of a twin matches its sitter perfectly well, but it would also be matching that sitter’s twin without representing the twin brother. Crucially, Walton states that:

⁴²² Kinetic synaesthesia “refers to visual and proprioceptive interconnections, and to how visually perceived movement vectors can be experienced as kinesthesia. ...it integrates in a perceptual synthesis or gestalt the tangible movements of the dance and the virtual movements of an image.” Quote from Boucher, “Kinesthetic Synesthesia,” 9.

⁴²³ Kendall Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts* (Harvard University Press, 1990), 108.

⁴²⁴ Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, 108.

To have something for an object is to generate fictional truths about it, to prescribe imaginings about it. Objects thus have a special role in the games of make-believe that are to be played with representations. What a representation matches has no such role, unless it happens to be an object also.”⁴²⁵

Especially of interest in light of modelling is not merely the artist’s intentions, but whether certain objects to be represented can guide the artist’s hand – one of which could be the model. Walton further argues that:

for something to be an object of a representation it must have a causal role in the production of the work; it must in one way or another figure in the process whereby the representation came about, either by entering into the intentions with which the work was produced or in some more ‘mechanical’ manner.”⁴²⁶

Contrarily, a causal link is not necessary for matching, then. The link between the artwork’s object of representation and the process via which this is achieved is central to the model, who collaborates on her own representation. The difficulty about modelling is that the model’s appearance corresponds to what we see in the pose. Apart from features like heavy makeup, prosthetics, or other significant alterations and edits, models are typically recognisable regardless of how and what they perform. Walton, however, moves away from such causality between the reality of the object (mere matching), and the fictional truths generated about it. While he is right about many instances of representation, there are reasons to disagree with his rejection of causality when we consider models. Models constitute a more complex case when it concerns representation, and who the object of an artwork is. First, I must reckon with Walton’s reasoning that:

We must not overemphasize the causal relation that obtains between paintings and photographs done from life and the life they are done from. Fra Filippo Lippi used a local nun, Lucrezia Buti, as a model for his *Madonna della Cintola*. She posed for the picture just as many a nobleman has posed for his portrait. Yet *Madonna della Cintola* is not in the same sense a portrait of Lucrezia. She is not its object; rather the biblical Mary is. The imaginings prescribed are about Mary, not about Lucrezia. Authors sometimes model characters on people with whom they are familiar, or fictional events on actual ones. But this does not make the models objects of the authors’ works; no fictional truths *about them* need be generated.”⁴²⁷

⁴²⁵ Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, 109.

⁴²⁶ Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, 111.

⁴²⁷ Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, 112.

In Walton's example Lippi painted a fiction of Mary (Fig. 64). According to the fiction, the object of interest is Mary as a biblical figure. The situation is less clear-cut than Walton makes it out to be. It is right to distinguish the categories of object about which fictional truths are generated, and the life from which they are created. However, these categories can collapse upon themselves in two ways. The first way depends on recognising the embeddedness of the person in certain artworks, despite maintaining a fiction. In such cases, the private person heavily informs the represented fiction that is built around something which is not a purely fictional truth. Instead, the fiction is, as it were, scaffolded onto a real model or sitter – much like Lippi's nun who stood in for Mary, and is arguably a well-suited choice given her religious background. The second way is about the viewer's interest in an artwork; whether this is a fictional interest or a private interest will impact the qualities that are attended to in the piece. I will clarify these two senses by introducing examples to show that fictional truth is not so readily separable from the object that the fiction is modelled on.

Exhibitions and scholarly discussions include artworks which represent the person of interest, regardless of whether they posed performatively as the god Neptune or posed presentationally as their own private self. This is the case with Agnolo Bronzino's *Portrait of Andrea Doria as Neptune*, 1545-6 (Fig. 65), whose sitter was an admiral of the Republic of Genoa. Rather than treating the object of the piece as purely a fiction about Neptune, we recognise it as a portrait of Andrea Doria posing as the god who rules the oceans, understanding that Doria was a famed naval commander. The god is typically depicted as an older man with curly hair and a beard. Doria is represented with a mythologised masculine strength and power, even subtly hinting at his genitals by the low hanging drape.

There are many more examples like this in the mythological themes that permeate Western art. The taboos about female nudity and its relation to idealised, mythological figures were discussed at length in chapter four. A further component to these mythological pieces is the collapse of reality and fiction, with the object of the image being both the sitter, the real person from which the image was created, and the represented fiction. Another instance of this is Peter Paul Rubens' *Venus in Furs*, also known as *Hélène Fourment in a Fur Wrap* (Fig. 66). Rubens used his young wife as a model for this piece which is not merely a personal portrait of Hélène as the others are (they include representations of her with their children, or wearing her wedding dress). It shows Hélène dressed as a fictional character, mirroring the existing iconography of the classical Venus Pudica sculptures, particularly the pose exemplified in the *Medici Venus* (Fig. 67). Other famous pieces that create

tension between an existing iconographic tradition and a represented contemporary person, are the much later nineteenth century pieces *Olympia* (Fig. 38) and *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* by Manet (Fig. 68). Contributing to the shock of its contemporary public was the clear identity of Victorine Meurent, Manet's model who is a painter herself. Both pieces juxtaposed her with tensions surrounding prostitution and loose morals. These examples are more than mere matching, informing the fiction through their person.

Modelling can be compared to the use of personas in the performing arts, to pinpoint other instances where a person and their performance are difficult to disentangle. Consider artists like Cindy Sherman or Francesca Woodman, who each maintained complex relationships with the performative. Sherman continues to build a famous oeuvre on posing as fictional others. Sherman is well-known for her *Untitled Film Stills* series, in which she disguises and presents herself as various women, creating images that display the women in states of discomfort, engaging with themes of voyeurism, alienation, and unstable identities. Sherman makes use of highly performative modelling, and presents herself as artist and character at once, merging qualities of film acting with self-portraiture, and challenging both. Comparatively, Woodman typically featured herself or female models (Fig. 69), the sitter's identity is not always clearly discernible to the viewer. Her photographs have been described as "too mysterious to be reduced to a caption."⁴²⁸ Woodman grapples with themes such as tableaux arrangements, representation, but also visibility and self-revelation. In some ways, her images are reminiscent of nineteenth century tableaux and spirit photographs.

Wesley Cray theorised about performance personas, which are highly applicable to models. A persona is *transparent* when the audience can perceive the private individual, explicitly or implicitly making inferences about the performer "from facts and observations about the persona, and vice versa."⁴²⁹ One cannot make inferences about the performer qua private individual, for instance if she portrays a fictional character "through an act of 'aesthetically-controlled embodied imaginative transformation'".⁴³⁰ Opaque personas are often adopted outside the performance during stage banter or interviews, for instance. Cray considers this opaque persona a *performance* persona, more closely related to acting. Crucially, "knowledge of whether a performance persona is transparent or opaque informs us about which facts we are to *screen off* or *allow in* – perhaps even *project* – when

⁴²⁸ Arthur Lubow, "Francesca Woodman Materializes," *The Threepenny Review*, No. 132 (2013): 21.

⁴²⁹ Wesley D. Cray, "Transparent and Opaque Performance Personas," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 77, No. 2 (2019): 184.

⁴³⁰ Zamir 2014, 12, quoted in Cray, "Transparent and Opaque Performance Personas," 184.

engaging aesthetically with the singer's performances."⁴³¹ This will only be *indirectly* relevant to aesthetic evaluation in the case of transparent performance personas, to the extent that facts about the persona matter for the attempted communication. People tend to signal that they have adopted an opaque persona, inviting the audience to consider why they chose to do so, with those features, in this context.⁴³²

Performers like Cary Grant seemingly only ever act 'as themselves', wherever they appear. Modelling straddles the boundaries of what constitutes posing, acting, and performing more broadly. Models, too, exist as private individuals who do creative work that has the potential to become highly public. A multitude of personas can be taken on as required for their creative work. This includes opaque personas, for instance that of the supermodel who lives a fast-paced life of luxury in the public eye, which she keeps up outside of her shoots. The supermodel operates her brand within the rationale of opaque personas, even if she temporarily poses differently for individual projects, she eventually falls back on the opaque persona rather than her private self.

Especially fashion models are continuously assessed in terms of their body and personality, even though models are advised to 'just be yourself'. 'Yourself' is conditional, it must be outgoing and confident, perform the right emotions at will, and a multitude of other requirements that are all performed "with extraordinary effort, perceived as natural and carefree."⁴³³ The performance persona is made believable⁴³⁴; she is who bookers work with, and she is what keeps an audience curious about the model's life is, and to which extent her private person can be perceived. Betty Brosmer, also known as Betty Weider, was the highest paid pin-up model in the fifties, predominantly known for having an incredibly tiny waist (Fig. 70). Her career was immensely lucrative, throughout which she retained a great degree of control over her imagery and writings. Brosmer owned the rights to her photographs, and received a percentage of publications. She also refused to do any nude shoots, and maintained this throughout her modelling career. She eventually transitioned from pin-up model to a fitness model, and co-founded the first American health and fitness magazine for women, SHAPE.⁴³⁵ A curious, more contemporary, example of performance personas overlapping with the private person is the practice of theatre and film stills, which render portraits of actors used by agencies to respond to role calls. These portraits

⁴³¹ Cray, "Transparent and Opaque Performance Personas," 186.

⁴³² Cray, "Transparent and Opaque Performance Personas," 187-188.

⁴³³ Mears, *Pricing Beauty*, 114. Mears also remarks on p.12 that her most successful interviewees were those models who switched between personalities and appearances most fluently, even within the same day.

⁴³⁴ This is where effortlessness as a marker of skill returns, as discussed in chapter two.

⁴³⁵ See Weider's site. Accessed July 7 2021, www.bettyweider.com.

simultaneously show the actors as professionals, yet also strangely model them into a type of character or performer. In this sense, the portrait is meant to show that they are able to perform broadly enough to fit into either specific types, or many different roles.

Viewers may judge there to be a discrepancy between the performed persona, the private person, and for instance narrow body standards. One such example is that of plus size models in the commercial industry. Haute couture brands typically employ a token plus size model with an hourglass figure, who does not tend to exceed a UK size 12 or 14. It is still a stretch for different body types and sizes to be viewed as innovative models who are equally meaningfully cast (as models who do conform to those narrow body standards are) in intentionally designed clothes for their size.⁴³⁶

Posing stands at the heart of these created personas; it functions as the expressive tool that models can employ to create their appearance and embed it with purposeful character. It is up to contextual and biographical knowledge for viewers to assess how this relates to the model as a private individual. Some models may be more open about this than others. One striking case is that of photographer Sasha O, who created a series of conceptual self-portraits that straddle the boundaries between fashion, humour, and surreal influences (Fig. 71). Sasha O is surprisingly careful about what she reveals of herself. It is hard to disentangle her person from her performance, she does not disclose much about her artistic influences, nor any other personal interests.⁴³⁷ Her dual role as both photographer and model renders her images especially intriguing, since she employs various odd edits and attributes to present herself.

7.3.2 Why it Matters Who Poses

Fiction and reality are more intertwined in modelling and representations of people than one might assume following Walton's views. Whereas it is understandable why Walton gives preference to the pure fiction, the use of unique models who maintain particular skills and personas shows that often, this fiction is scaffolded upon a suited person who helps create and inform this fiction. The added knowledge of *who* posed for an image

⁴³⁶ Gianni Russo. "Ever Notice How Even Plus Size Models Have The Same Bodytype?" *Instyle / New York Fashion Week*, September 10 2019. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.instyle.com/awards-events/fashion-week/new-york-fashion-week/plus-size-models>.

⁴³⁷ Reem, "Interview with Sasha O," *Blogspot*, July 20 2014. Accessed July 7 2021, <http://reemwrites.blogspot.com/2014/07/photographer-sasha-o-interview.html>

contributes an additional layer of complexity to our understanding of artworks, which is not merely adding contextual knowledge, but information about the choices for the image's content, markings, and make-believe.

Modelling maintains a special relationship with twofoldness and the subsequent interactions between representations and prescribed imaginings. While supermodels may represent a fictional character or mannerist interest in form, for instance, we also recognise them as professional models who can take on a persona.

One might object that supermodels constitute a rare outlier case of models, and that this does not hold for the majority of models. There need not be a fictional truth generated about the model's persona or private self specifically in the make-believe of the image, for her to inform the fiction that *is* presented. It is her job to embed herself within the kind of posing that is required of her. If this entails presenting a grungy character with corresponding clothes and make-up for an alternative photoshoot, the fiction of that representation is still rooted in the model's features and expert posing. She is a mannequin upon whom the fiction is dressed, as it were.

One area where it becomes apparent how the added knowledge alters our viewing experience and understanding of images is the recent interest in naming pieces that were previously conceived of as mere types. One example is the 2019 exhibition *Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today*, which was shown in Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and at Wallach Art Gallery in New York, led by Denise Murrell who based it on her doctoral thesis for Columbia University. This exhibition explores the Black figure as central within modern art, "the models' interactions with and influences on painters, sculptors and photographers are highlighted through archival photographs, correspondence and films."⁴³⁸ Where archival findings allow, the curators chose to alter the titles to the models' names where these were known, rather than referring to pieces by the titles they were granted over time. Another instance of this is the portrait of a young girl by Simon Maris from 1906 (Fig. 72), titled *Indian Type* and *Negress* earlier in time. She was recently discovered to be the young girl Isabella, after researchers sifted through photographs and mentions in the artist's archive. The Rijksmuseum now titled it *Isabella*.⁴³⁹ In the case of *Isabella*, the previous titles added a typological dimension that presented her as a misattributed and racialised type, rather than an individual who informed this piece.

⁴³⁸ S.n. "Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet and Matisse to Today – Le Modèle Noir, De Géricault à Matisse," October 24, 2018 – February 10, 2019 at *Wallach Art Gallery* (New York); March 26 – July 14, 2019 at *Musée d'Orsay* (Paris). Accessed July 7 2021, <https://wallach.columbia.edu/exhibitions/posing-modernity-black-model-manet-and-matisse-today-le-mod%C3%A8le-noir-de-g%C3%A9ricault-%C3%A0-matisse>.

⁴³⁹ Rijksmuseum, "*Isabella*, Simon Maris, ca. 1906." Accessed July 7 2021, <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.9468>.

The model is not another inert, raw material for the artist to use and include in the artwork. Instead, she contributes actively to the creative act and lends her appearance to render an artwork. It greatly matters who sat for which piece, and who contributed appearance and artistic insights to which representation, since it changes the artwork that spectators end up engaging with and appreciating aesthetically.

In this final chapter, I have traced the ways in which modelling can be considered a hybrid art form, in terms of how it takes on qualities of performance. Models perform in front of widely varied live audiences, resulting in a creative product. Modelling demands scholarly attention and aesthetic appreciation for its unique set of qualities and entanglement with other visual media. The salient performative qualities are those of style and improvisation. In this manner, modelling can be understood as a practice deserving of aesthetic appreciation. It connects to a complex relationship with twofoldness and various senses that feed into its appreciation by both model and artist, via a mode of creative aesthetic appreciation, as well as responsive mode of appreciating. While modelling does exist as a supporting practice to other artistic media, like photography or the traditional visual arts, it should be considered for its own professional and aesthetic qualities which it lends to other artistic media. Furthermore, not limited to requiring expertise in physical performance, highly skilled models will cultivate a profound understanding of the art forms they collaborate with. Engaging with models in the forms we encounter them in ameliorates our understanding of the role posing plays within art making and aesthetic appreciation.

Conclusion

The Aesthetics of Posing presents an art philosophical account of modelling within the visual arts, both traditional and photographic. It addresses an underestimated and underexplored area within aesthetics that should, hopefully, serve as groundwork for future research into the artistic practice of models and their bearing on artworks. Throughout this thesis, I have shown that modelling demands scholarly attention for the surprising ways that it proves highly relevant, to this day, within the making of art and its subsequent impact on our understanding of artworks. Furthermore, it intersects with and offers unique insights on ongoing discussions in contemporary aesthetics. At the heart of this thesis sits the thought that posing is a skilled artistic practice that should be aesthetically appreciated on its own terms. The findings of this thesis are the following.

I have characterised a pose as a physical configuration that one maintains with the aim of being registered. I understand poses to be highly active and dynamic, rather than instances of true stillness. Throughout this work, I speak of both ‘posing’ and ‘modelling’, posing being the activity overall – this exists inside an artistic context as well as outside, and can (often) take on more personal elements. I think of modelling as constituting the profession of models, rendering a typically highly performative type of posing informed by their expertise. Distinguishing a context of art making from a public context of posing, three types of poses can be identified that are dependent on the agential input of the model in terms of the conception of the pose. These are the guided, the self-improvised, and the collaborative pose. These three poses are applicable to the main contexts of posing within art making that I identified, namely, that of the life model, the photographic model, and the portrait sitter. A further clarification is how commercial modelling relates to fine art modelling, to designate the impact of the economy of the advertising industry particularly on the photographic model’s poses that she performs for catalogue jobs. The fine art poses are less constrained in that they do not have to be narrowly contained with a brand’s vision to the same degree, and leave greater freedom both in terms of body standards and the kinds of poses a model can perform. Lastly, I identify a ‘mannerist’ quality to the three types of poses to indicate those poses that demonstrate great artifice and performance, regardless of whether they are guided, self-improvised, or collaborated.

Building upon these types and contexts of poses, I made the case that models expertly rely on proprioceptive awareness and skill which they employ to execute their poses. I argued that modelling is both

skilled and creative work, which models can train and improve upon. The model's creative work is reliant upon a physical mode of invention which also feeds into the role imagination plays. Furthermore, I indicate effortlessness as a marker of highly mannered poses which the model executes successfully via her expertise. This is applied to an epilogue where I present my case for the photogenic qualities of a photographic subject as relying on effortlessness and a bleeding over of make-believe and reality within a picture.

Considering how the model's self is relevant to her posing, this thesis argued for presentational versus performative posing, modelling typically constituting performative posing. This is contrasted with the situation of a portrait sitter, who will usually pose presentationally informed by a sense of self. Furthermore, there is the notion that models' poses are immediately received by those physically present, but that their poses are also considered in a delayed sense, namely, when represented in the artwork. The model must anticipate all these various gazes when she models and exhibit a deep grasp of the artistic media and artists with which she collaborates. I propose that this constitutes a feedback loop, between model, artist, artwork-to-be, and the viewers of that artwork. I furthermore traced the ways in which a person may feel uncomfortable about posing, and why they may be an unwilling subject – exemplified with the case studies on awkwardness and awkward images, by examining the influence of poses in what renders these images undesirable.

Portraiture presents a special genre in relation to posing, because of its traditional relation to various characterisations of a private person or public figure. I argue that the pose is, in fact, an artistic tool that can enhance or diminish the authentic representation of a person. As a tool, it can be used by the sitter or model, but an artist can also entirely rely on what I call posing effect. The artist draws upon an iconographic tradition that informs these poses, and uses pure effect to communicate particular ideas about the represented figures. I connect authenticity and posing to truthfulness, as a virtue which carries over into the treatment of sitter, pose, and the artwork, to ensure a truthful display that is created with the help of the pose.

Nude modelling constitutes a broad category of modelling that is commonly practised within art academies, life drawing groups, and fine art photography. I have argued how modelling sessions safeguard via the mechanism of the 'changing room moment', and how concepts related to the Naked and the Nude are still present in contemporary thinking within art practice. I relate these to shame and worries about bodily functions that are laid bare when modelling nude, as well as concerns about sexualisation. An important point here is that nude modelling can provide a safe environment within art making that gives the nude body a purpose and agency,

in how it invites viewers to observe it on its own terms. As such, nude modelling has the power to normalise a wide array of bodies of all ages and sizes in a society wherein many naked bodies are typically viewed in popular entertainment and pornographic content – both of which typically conform to narrow body standards and ideas about sexuality.

A key insight is that I consider modelling to be inescapably objectifying, because of the way it is situated in various gazes, including the model's own self-scrutiny. While paradoxical, I argue that aesthetic objectification can aid the progression of art making by considering the model an art object, appropriate to the context she works in. Aesthetic objectification still recognises the wider humanity of the model, and as such avoids the harms of 'mere' objectification. I have demonstrated in chapter six that the pose, indeed as an artistic tool, can also be used to challenge some of the objectifying mechanisms that are present within artworks.

The final set of considerations are related to modelling as a hybrid art form, which takes on qualities of performance. Not only can posing be highly performative, it also heavily relies on notions of style and improvisation in its conception. Modelling typically exists in a mode of continual experimenting, for which the model improvises to respond to various cues and anticipated reactions as and when she poses. Crucial about modelling as an artistic practice is that the model comes up with poses that draw attention and beg to be captured, for which I draw a connection to two older concepts of the *picturesque* and the *sculpturesque*. The appreciation of poses occurs not only in the artist who witnesses her directly, but can also be appreciated by the model herself – both engage in a creative aesthetic appreciation that relies on senses such as kinesthesia, touch, and vision. Like other performers, the model can take on a persona within which she works and presents herself. The model can help create the make-believe part of the artwork via her expertise, appearance, and the manner in which that she informs the artwork. Modelling, then, warrants greater attention as to how it is executed and the manner in which it connects with other artists, media, and the artworks they contribute to.

These areas of inquiry open up existing debates within aesthetics, such as those of portraiture, make-believe, expert movement, and twofoldness, to name some. Continuing the research into the role of models within art making will, in turn, contribute to these discussions, as well as building an aesthetic scholarship on modelling. This thesis is necessarily limited. What it has aimed to accomplish is provide a coherent account of modelling and why it is important to consider in aesthetics, reasoning that modelling is deeply entangled with

other artistic practices and indeed art philosophical areas of discussion. Further research needs to take place to continue building a more complete framework of the aesthetics of posing.

Modelling is highly precarious work, to this day. The ethnographic accounts by Joanne Entwistle, Elizabeth Wissinger and Ashley Mears have discussed this economic precarity with regards to the fashion and advertising industry. The recent attention for models' low pay, lack of job security (or any support like sick pay or leave), indicates that as the creative industry gradually looks inwards about how it treats its freelance workers, models are also beginning to speak up and openly challenge how they are treated. Continuing to grow the body of evidence for modelling as both skilled *and* creative work that significantly impacts the artworks they model for, will increase pressure on the notion that these workers need to be remunerated by more appropriate standards.

Other areas of study are on the relation between modelling and gender, race, and disability. While this thesis has touched upon some matters of gender, particularly in the discussions of nude modelling and objectification, it is by no means a comprehensive account. Gender has, in some ways, been discussed predominantly research on the Nude, such as the work by Kenneth Clark, John Berger and Lynda Nead. There are also other art historical accounts that present localised discussions of life models, such as Frances Borzello, Susan Waller, Martin Postle, William Vaughan, Marcia Pointon, and Marie Lathers. These accounts are necessarily historical; there is certainly a case to be made for an art philosophical treatment of gender with regards to modelling and art making.

The truly neglected areas are on modelling by people of colour and disabled people. This is where a highly promising line of enquiry lies, particularly with regards to tracing (and comparing) the manner in which they have been employed in art making. One fruitful area would be a combination of qualitative and quantitative research into whether certain poses and modes of representation that return for people of colour and disabled people, which challenges they encounter, and what could be done to combat these challenges.

The Aesthetics of Posing steered me into surprising directions and ideas. It is my hope that future researchers may also find the value of modelling a promising area which, as models do, stretches into many others.

Figures Appendix

Fig. 1 Arnold Newman, *Alfred Krupp, Essen, Germany*, 1963, 46.36 x 33.18 cm, Gelatin Silver Print.

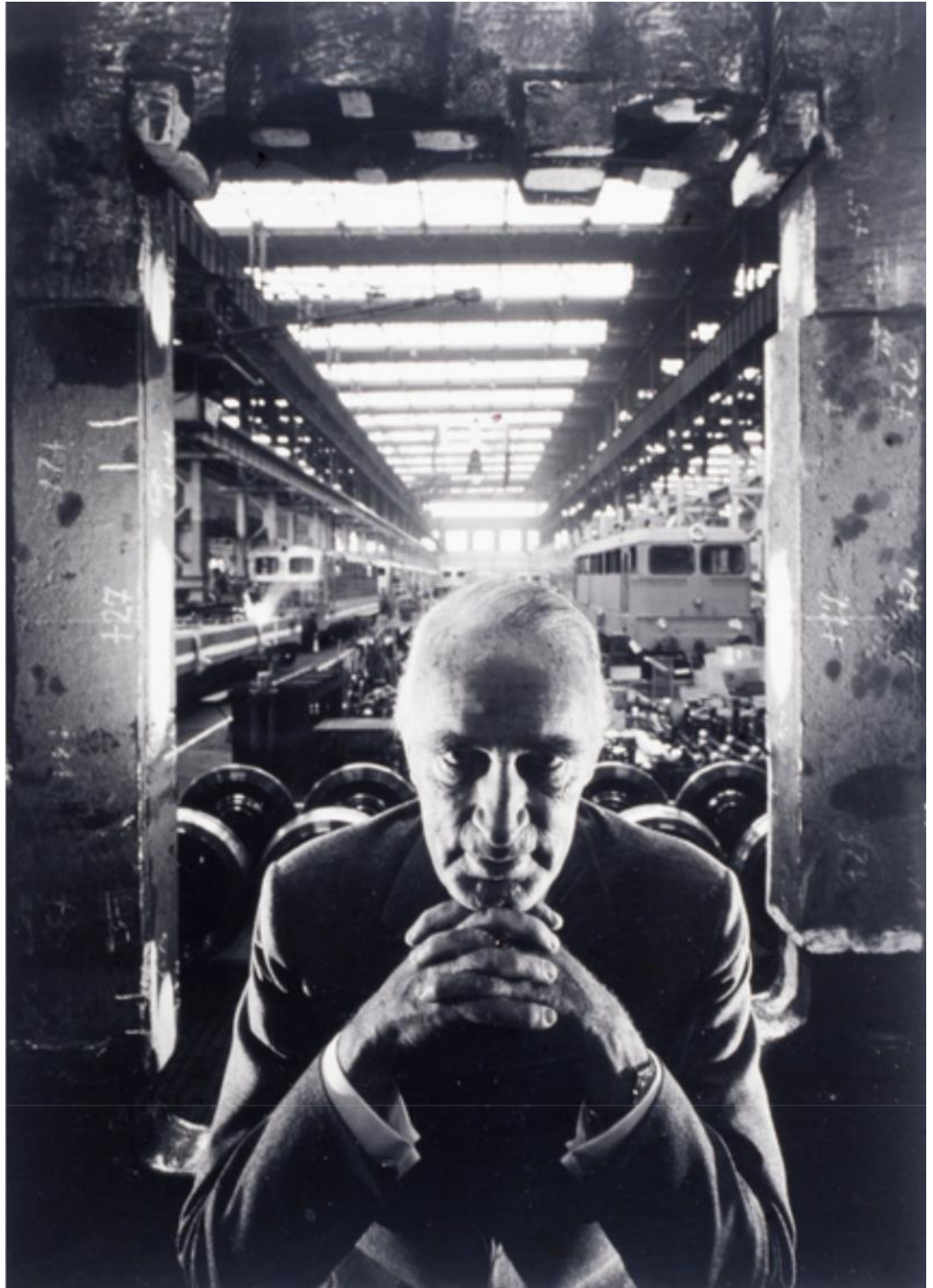


Fig. 2 Stills from *Philip Pearlstein Draws the Artist's Model*, directed by Jerry Whiteley in 1985, 27 min. See YouTube, July 12 2013. Accessed July 7 2021. <https://youtu.be/gl9DYVOIVwg>

Still: 4:12 min.



Still: 5:00 min.



Fig. 3 Peter Funch, *Untitled, Between 8:30 Am and 9:30 Am, At the Southern Corner of 42nd Street And Vanderbilt Avenue in New York City Series*, 2007-2016, 20 x 25 cm.



Fig. 4 Pierre-Louis Pierson, *The Hermit of Passy – Soeur Elize Series*, 1863, Enlargement of original 26.8 cm x 20.7 cm, Albumen Silver Print from Glass Negative.



Fig. 5 Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #21*, 1987, 19.1 x 24.1 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 6 Albrecht Dürer, *Self Portrait at Twenty-Eight*, 1500, 67.1 x 48.9 cm, oil on panel.



Fig. 7 Alexei Druzhinin / Getty Images, *Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin rides a horse during his vacation outside the town of Kyzyl in Southern Siberia, August 3 2009.*



Fig. 8 Magazine spreads of La Milo, 1907, British Library. Taken from David Huxley, "Music Hall Art," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 11, No. 3 (2013): 218-236.



Fig. 9 Joel-Peter Witkin, *Nègre's Fetishist*, Paris, 1990, image: 25.2 x 32.1 cm, sheet: 60.4 x 45.3 cm, Photogravure.



Fig. 10 Mario Testino, *Molly Bair for Out of Order Magazine*, Spring/Summer 2016.



Fig. 11 Ezra Shaw / Getty Images, *Beyoncé Performing at the Super Bowl Halftime Show, 2013.*



Fig. 12 Richard Avedon, *Boyd Fortin, Thirteen Year Old Rattlesnake Skinner, Sweetwater, Texas, March 10 1979*, 142.88 x 114.3 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 13 Yousuf Karsh, *Bill Clinton*, 1993, 49.53 x 39.1 cm, gelatin silver print.

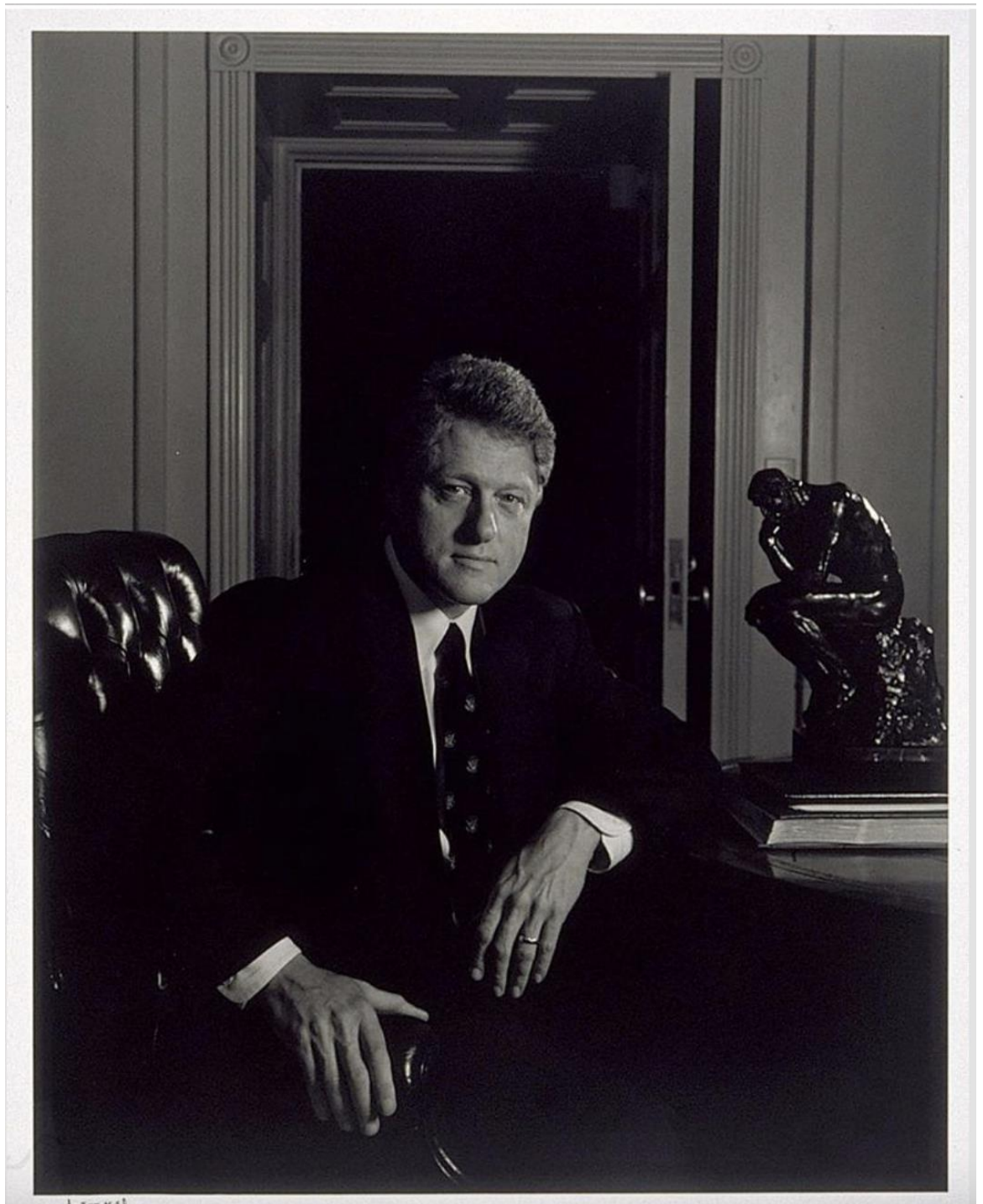


Fig. 14 Joachim Mueller Ruchholtz, *Jakob, Paris, Portraits* series, 2017.



Fig. 15 Juergen Teller, *Jonathan Majors for W Magazine*, 2021.



Fig. 16 Juergen Teller, *Jonathan Majors for W Magazine*, 2021.



Fig. 17 Annie Leibovitz, *Cindy Sherman*, 1992, 19.7 x 46 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 18 Kehinde Wiley, *President Barack Obama*, 2018, 234.3 x 167.2 cm, Oil on canvas.



Fig. 19 Annie Kevans, *Coco Chanel (Collaborators)*, 2010, 50.8 x 38.1 cm, Oil on paper.



Fig. 20 Van Mechelen, *Ms. Plasmans, Steenberghe*, ca. 1970.



Fig. 21 Van Mechelen, *Ms. de Bruyn*, *Steenbergen*, August 1970.



Fig. 22 Quentin Matsys, *The Ugly Duchess (A Grotesque Old Woman)*, 1513, 64.2 x 45.5 cm, oil on oak panel.

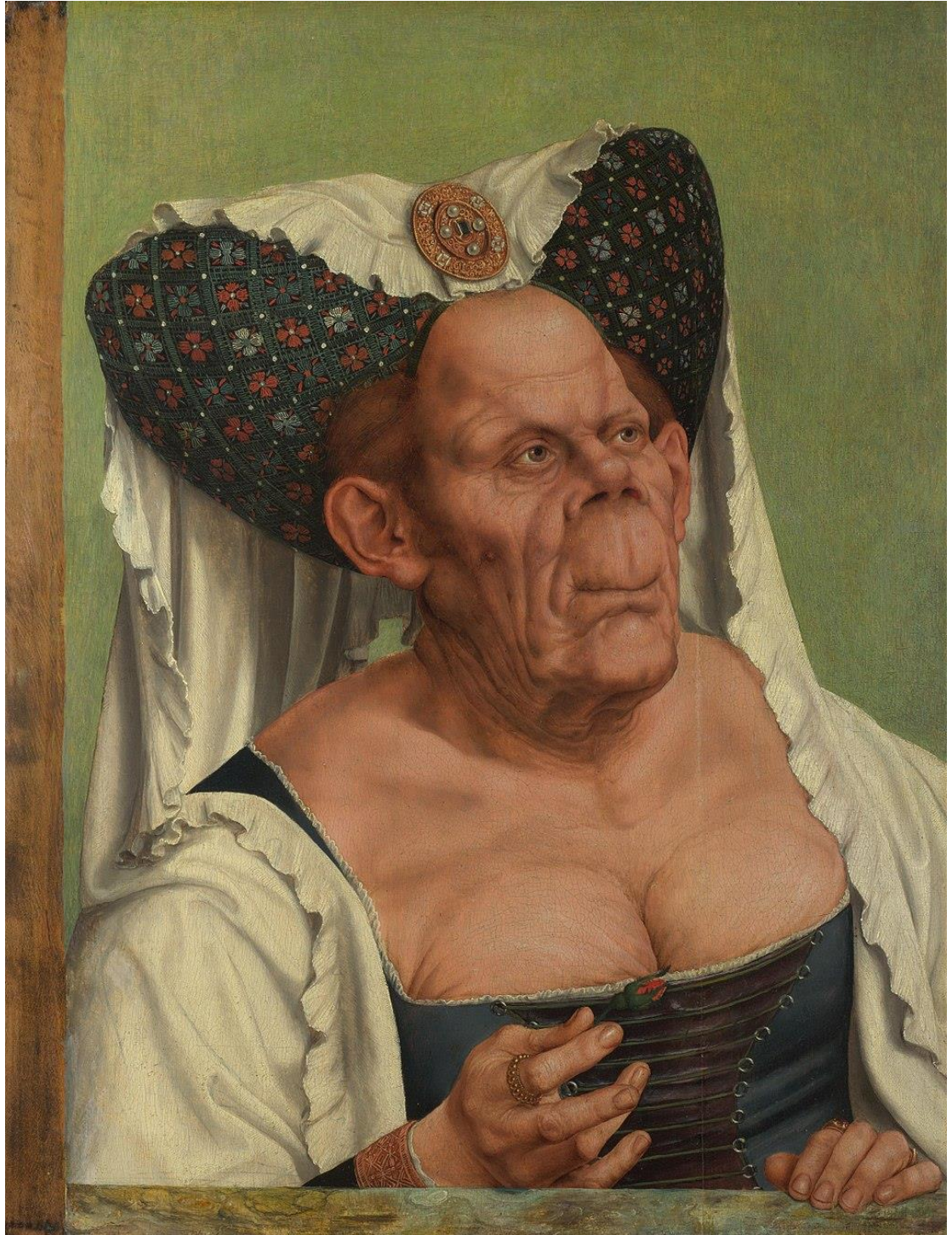


Fig. 23 Jeremy Selwyn, *Labour Leader Ed Miliband Eats a Bacon Roll*, May 21 2014.



Fig. 24 Peter Byrne / PA Wire, *Nigel Farage pictured tucking into a bacon sandwich during a visit to the Heywood and Middleton constituency, October 2 2014.*



Fig. 25 Kirsty Wigglesworth / AP Press Association Images, *Prime Minister David Cameron eats hotdog with knife and fork*, April 6 2015.



Fig. 26 Rembrandt van Rijn, *Maerten Soolmans*, 1634, 207.5 x 132 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 27 Edward J. Steichen, *J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq.*, 1903, 51.6 x 41.1 cm, bichromate over platinum print.

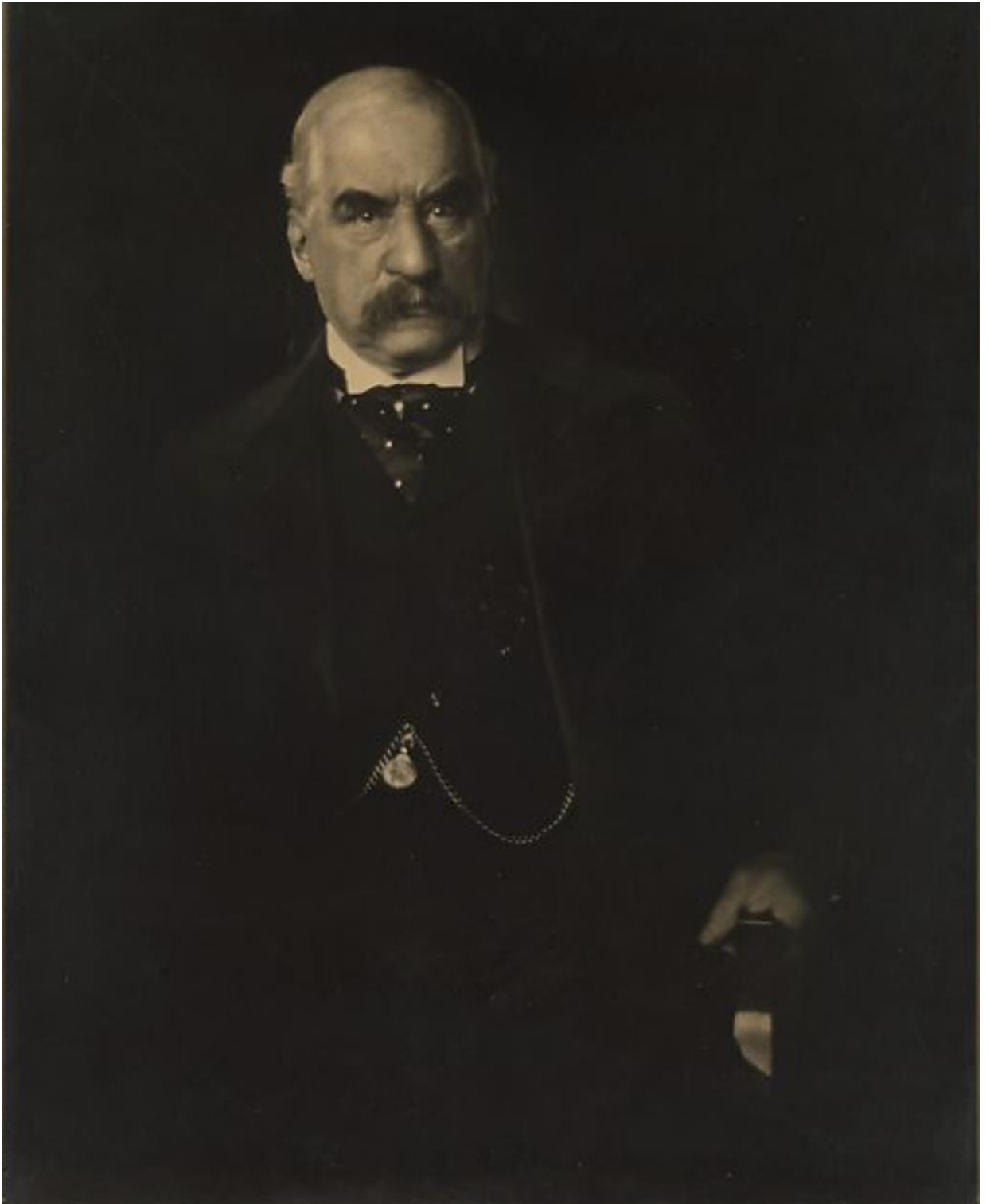


Fig. 28 Jim Taliana, *Self-Portrait in Pasta and Crackers*, ca. 2012, multimedia.

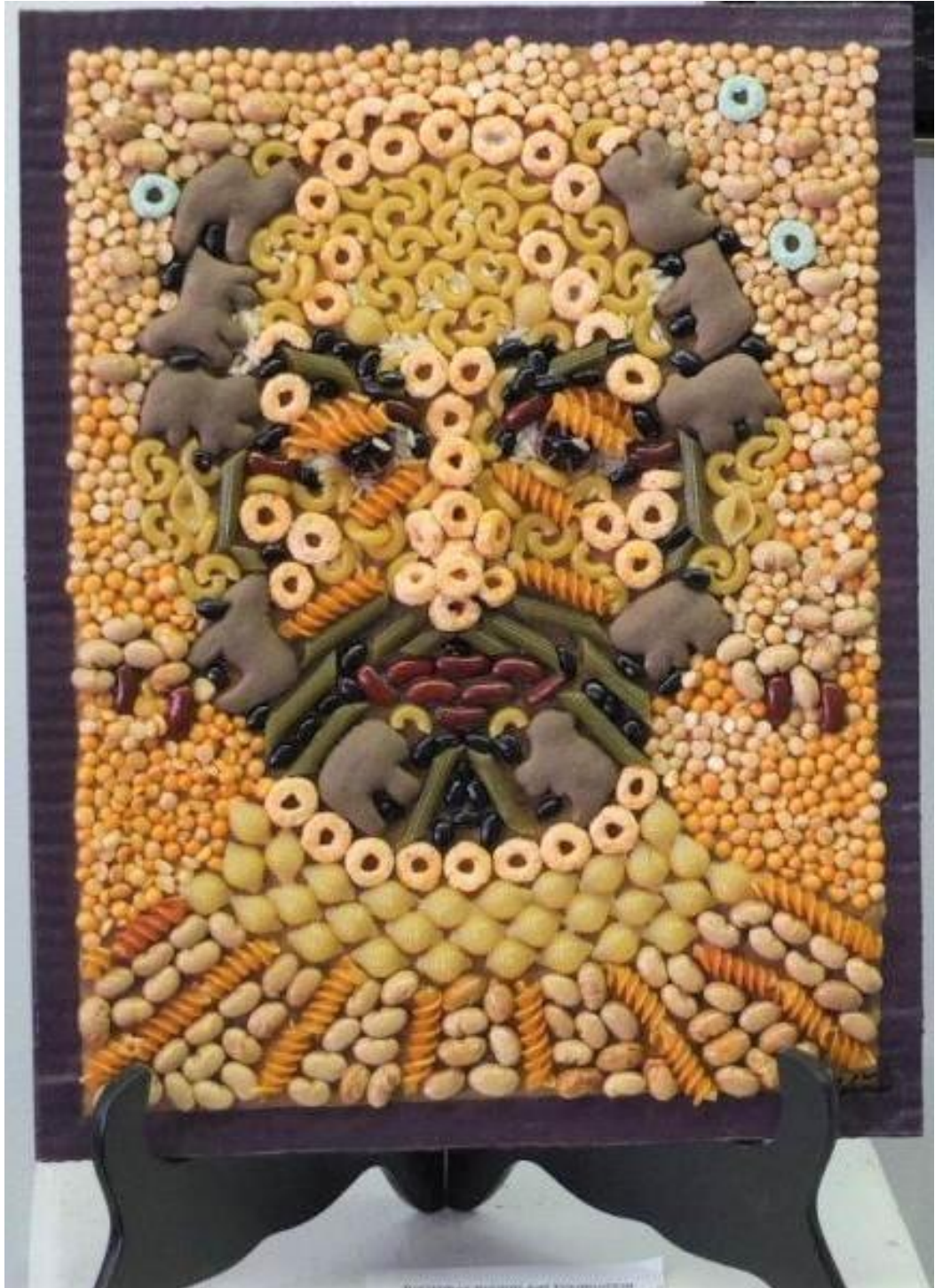


Fig. 29 Richard Avedon, *Marilyn Monroe, Actress, New York*, 1957, 20.2 x 19.8 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 30 Auguste Rodin, *Cambodian Dancer with Two Versions of the Left Hand at Right*, 1906, 30.6 x 20.4 cm, graphite, brown and black ink, watercolour, gouache, and black pencil highlights on vellum.

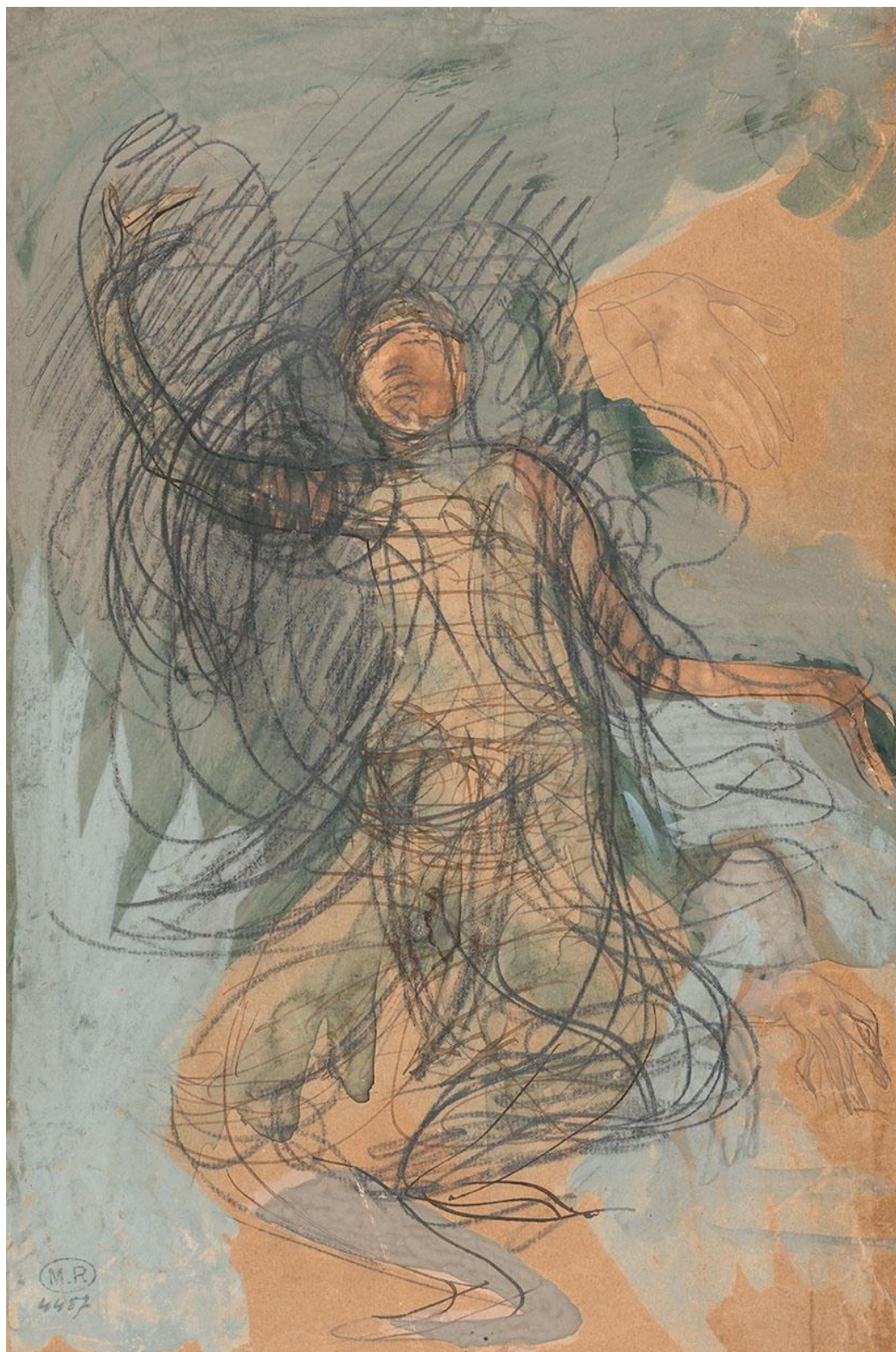


Fig. 31 Rosalie Watkins, *Motion Study*, 2016, 40 x 90 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 32 Joe Klamar, *Rebecca Bross of the US Gymnastics Olympic Team*, May 14 2012.



Fig. 33 Joe Klamar, *Diana Lopez of the US Taekwondo Olympic Team*, May 14 2012.



Fig. 34 Daphne Todd, *Last Portrait of My Mother*, 2009, 65 x 92 cm, oil on wooden panels.



Fig. 35 Neil Leifer, *Tim Shaw*, August 4 1975, *Sports Illustrated* Magazine Cover.

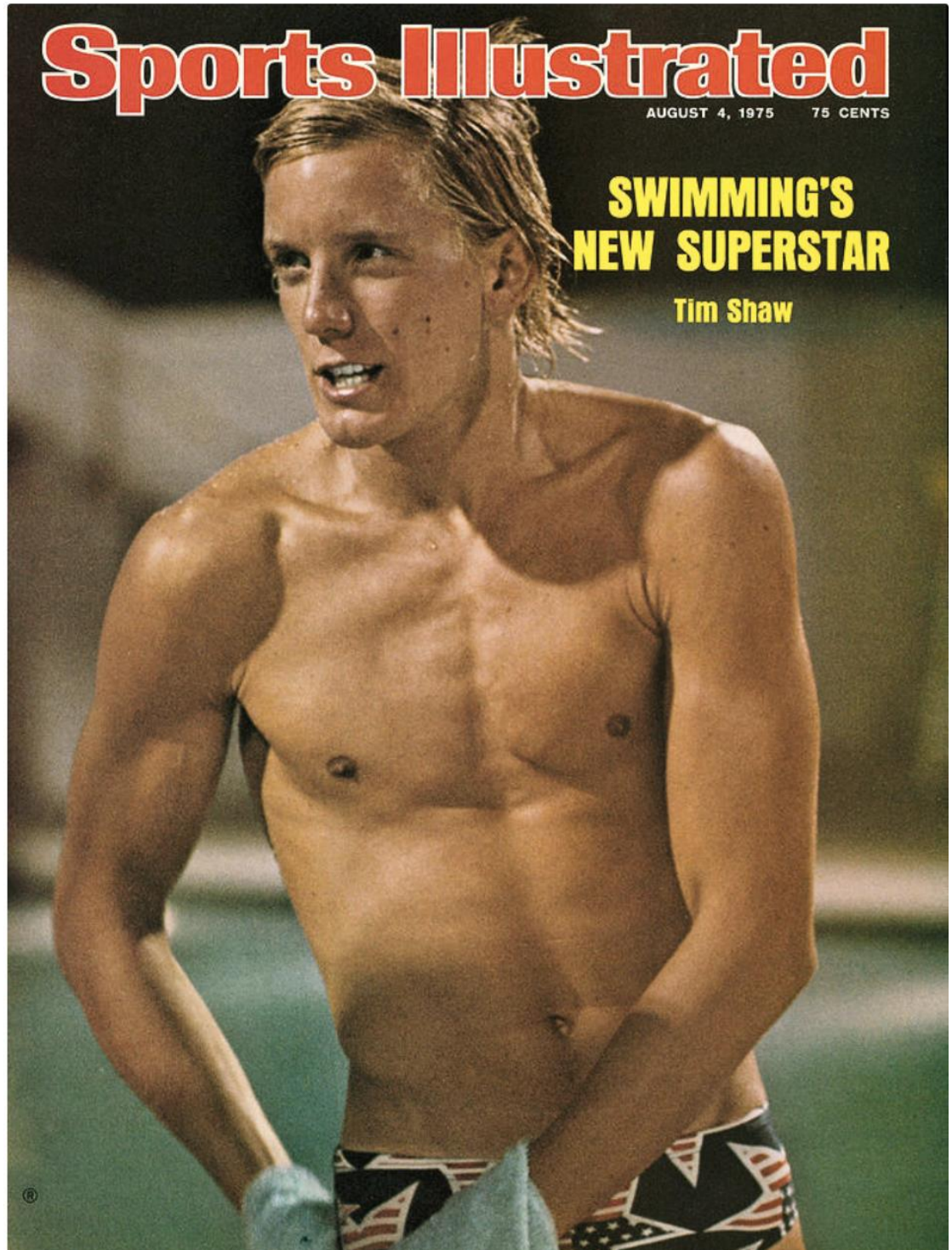


Fig. 36 Brassäi, *Matisse and Model*, 1939, 25.4 x 21.9, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 37 Artemisia Gentileschi, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1610, 170 x 119 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 38 Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863, 130 x 190 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 39 Mario Sorrenti, *Kate Moss for Calvin Klein Obsession Campaign*, 1993, 65.4 x 54 cm, archival pigment print.



Fig. 40 Mert Alas (@Mertalas), *Super Cara & Super Kate*, September 23 2015, Instagram.

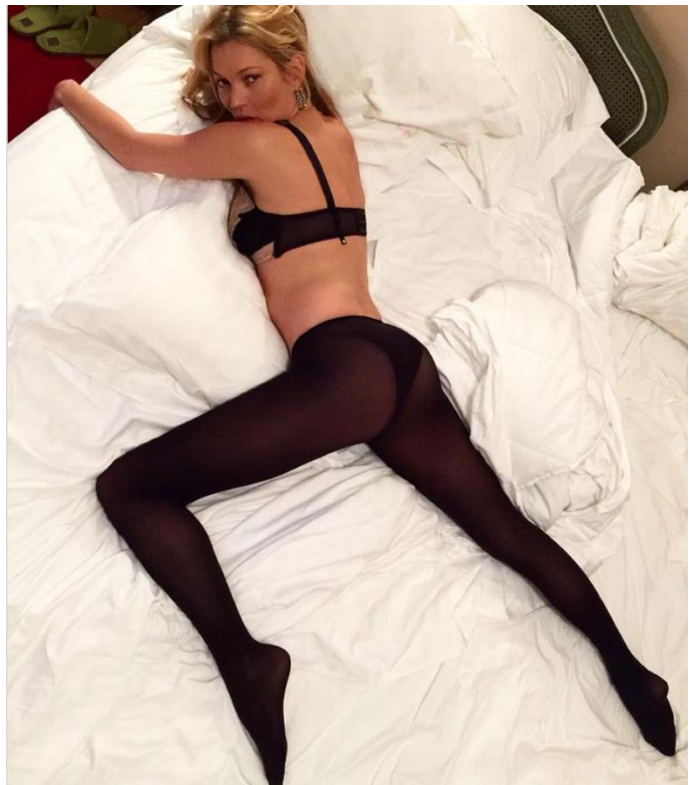


Fig. 41 Nobuyoshi Araki, *Kaori*, 2004, 33.3 x 25.4 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 42 Giorgione, *Sleeping Venus*, 1508-1510, 175 x 108.5 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 43 Bill Brandt, *Untitled*, 1953, 34.4 x 28.9 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 44 André Kertész, *Distortion #63*, 1933, 33.6 x 24.3 cm, gelatin silver print.

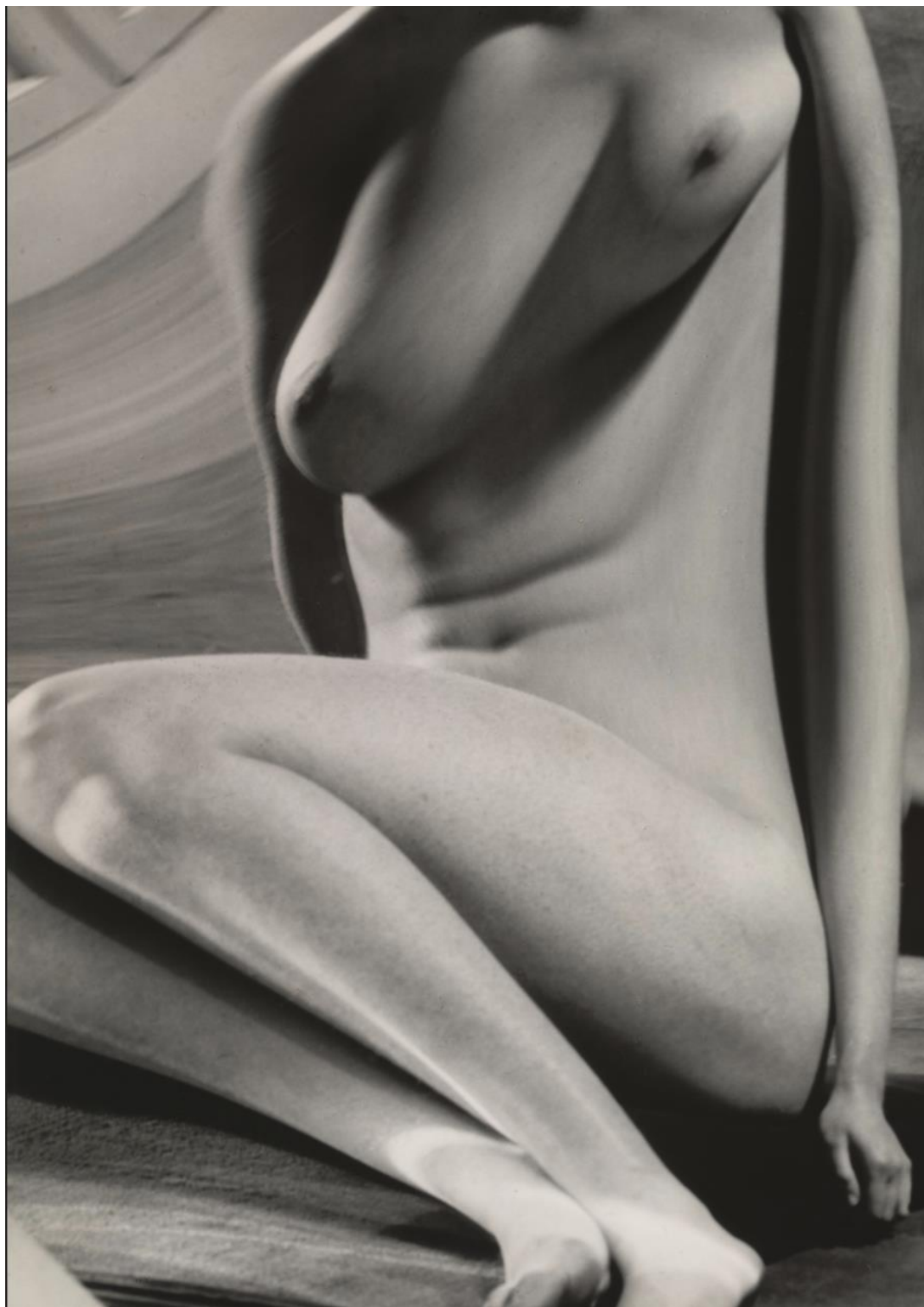


Fig. 45 André Kertész, *Distortion #91(cropped version)*, 1933, 18.41 x 24.8 cm, gelatin silver print.

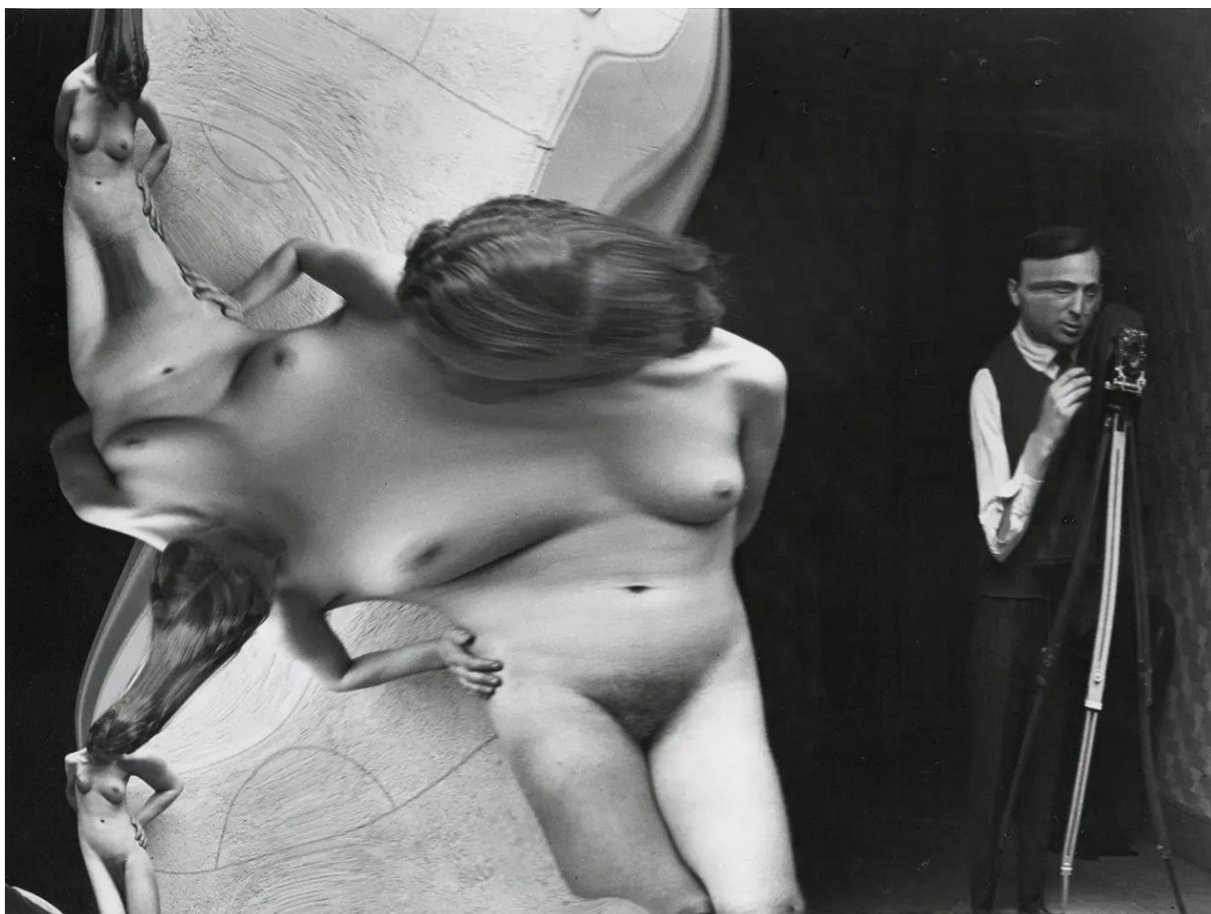


Fig. 46 Lucian Freud, *Flora with Blue Toenails*, 2000-1, oil on canvas.



Fig. 47 Szymon Brodziak, *The Lamp*, *Noti Series*, 2008, 85 x 70 cm, archival fine art inkjet print on Canson Infinity Platine fibre rag 310 gsm.



Fig. 48 Grete Stern, *Dream No. 1: Electrical Appliances for the Home*, 1949, 26.6 x 22.9 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 49 Tanya Atanasova, *The Banana Boy*, 2018, 140 x 100 cm, oil on linen.



Fig. 50 Souvid Datta, *[Name Censored]*, 16, with a drunken client. Men visiting Sonagachi often drink heavily or use narcotics with sex-workers, noticeably increasing their chances of women's abuse and mistreatment, 2015.

This image is discussed in 6.4.2 'Eroticisation of Violation', p. 156.

I will not include the actual image because it is highly graphic in that it documents and aestheticises the rape of a child, while transgressing even further by leaving her face and therefore identity recognisable. The situation surrounding this child and the photograph is extremely violent and exploitative.

Fig. 51 Suzanne Lacy, *She Who Would Fly*, *Three Weeks in May* Performance Series, Los Angeles, California, 1977.



Fig. 52 Helmut Newton, *Self Portrait with Wife and Models*, 1980, 118.1 x 121 cm, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 53 Armen Susan Ordjanian, *Self Portrait*, 1981.

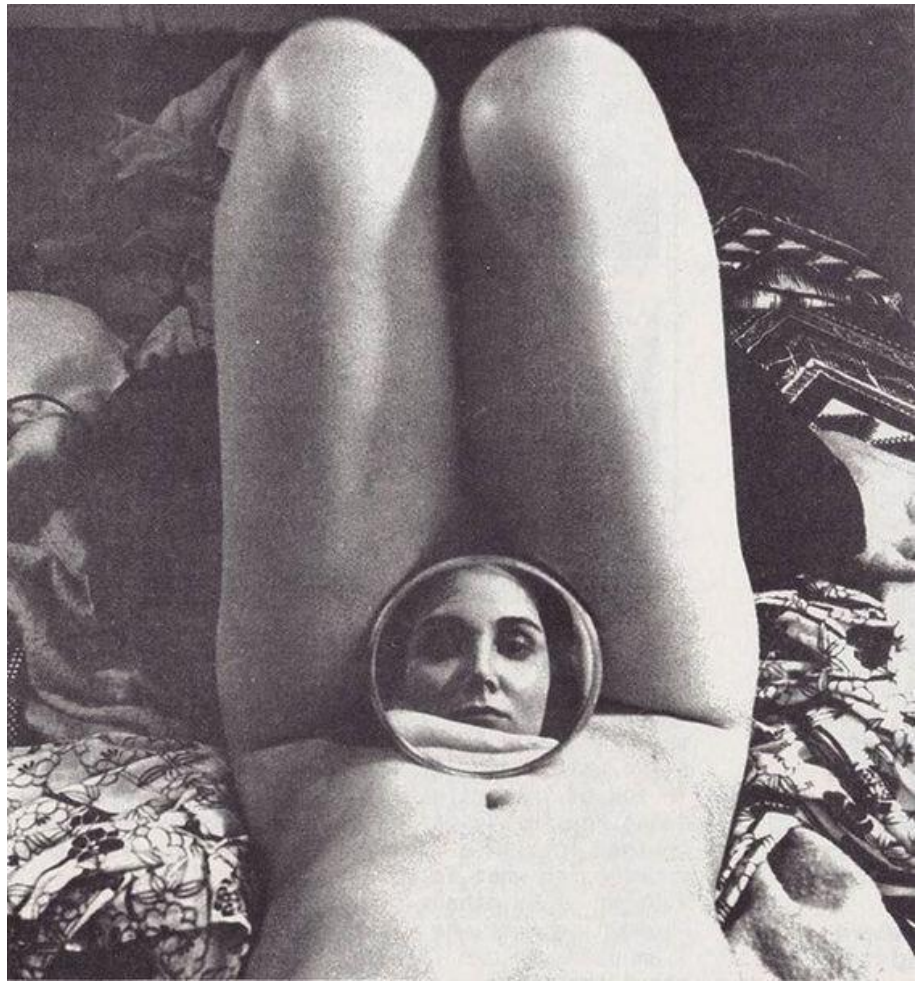


Fig. 54 CHANEL, *Coco Mademoiselle: The Film with Keira Knightly* – CHANEL Fragrance, directed by Joe Wright, YouTube, March 8 2011. Accessed July 7 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRV-2_Ukk.

Still: 1:39 min



Still: 2:40 min



Still: 3:06 min



Fig. 55 Sephora Romania, *J'adore – The Film with Charlize Theron*, directed by Romain Gavras for Christian Dior, YouTube, November 2 2018. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://youtu.be/ovg965vHyeU>.

Still: 0:09 min



Still: 0:22 min



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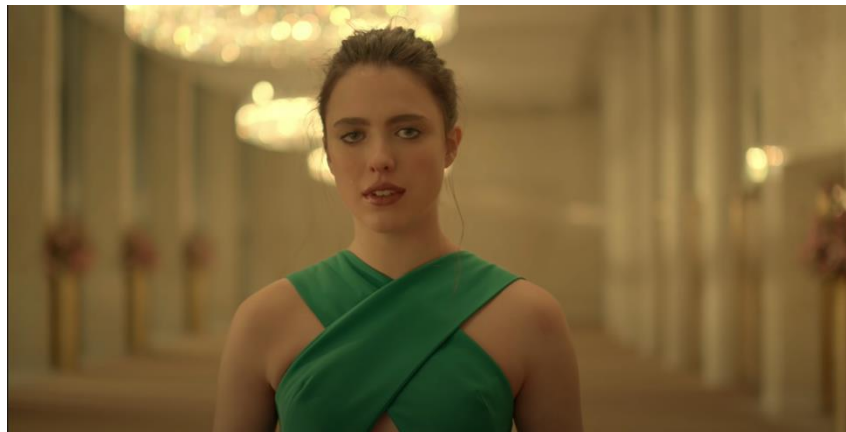


Fig. 56 Sephora Brazil, *KENZO World – The New Fragrance with Margaret Qualley*, directed by Spike Jonze for KENZO World. YouTube, August 28 2017. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoMqvniiEkk>.

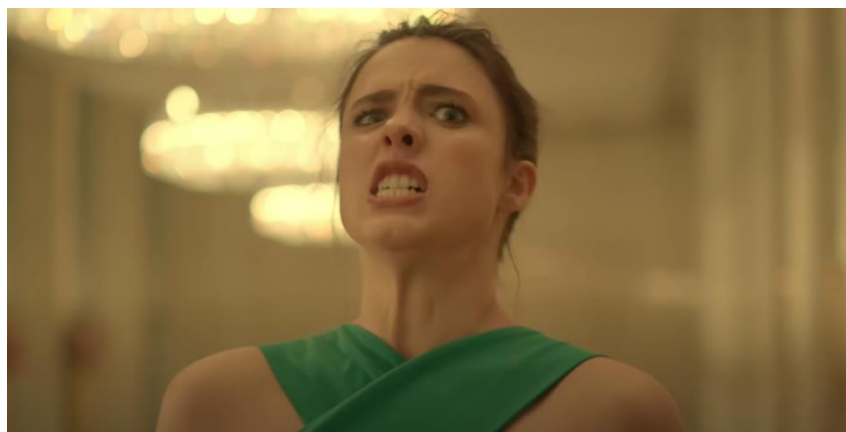
Still: 0:20 min



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Still: 1:36 min



Still: 1:54 min



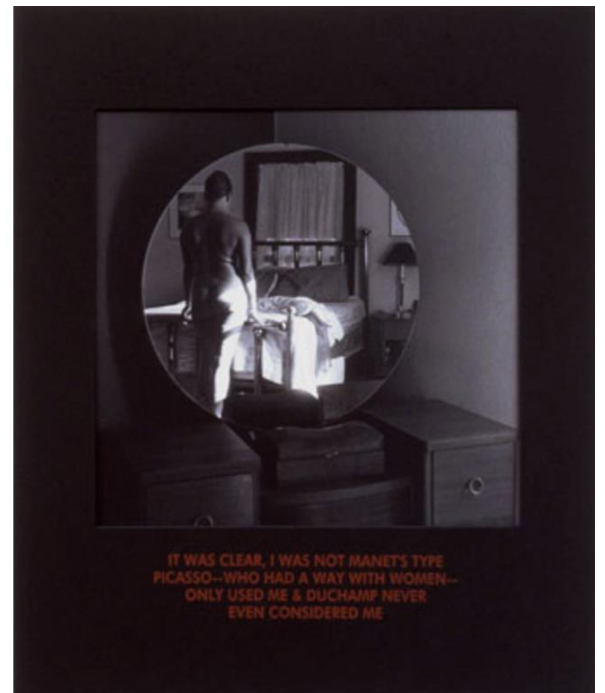
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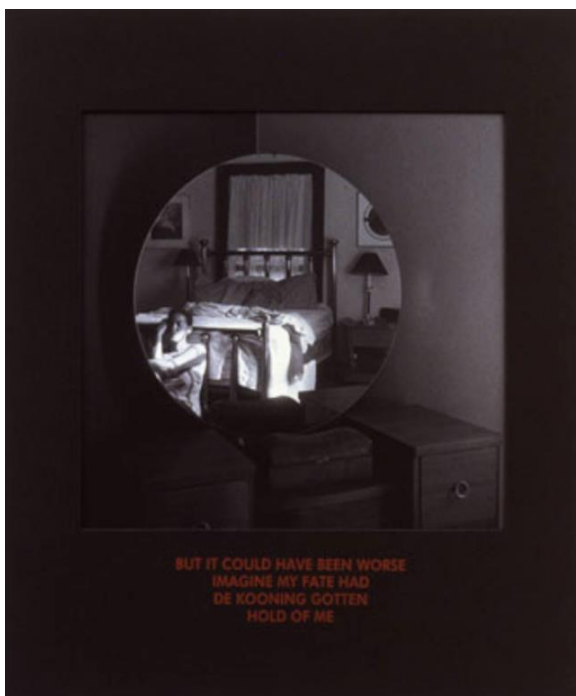
Fig. 57 Carrie Mae Weems, *Not Manet's Type*, 1997, 62.9 x 52.7 x 4.1 cm, gelatin silver prints with text.



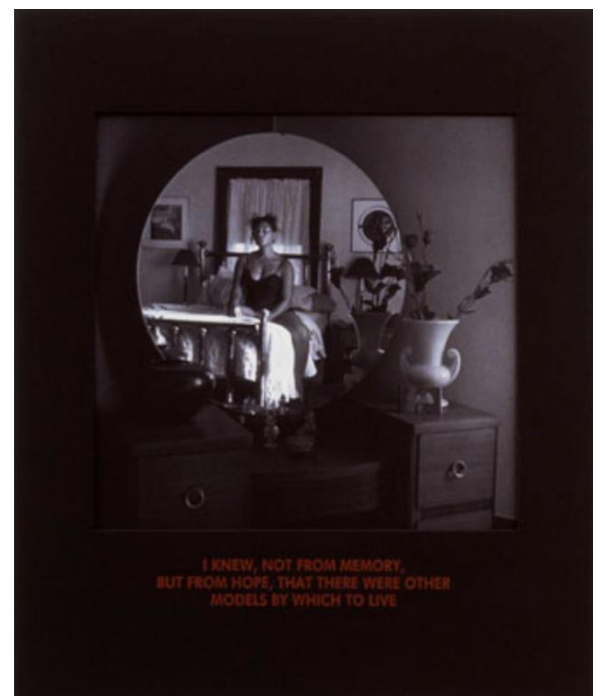
STANDING ON SHAKEY GROUND
I POSED MYSELF FOR CRITICAL STUDY
BUT WAS NO LONGER CERTAIN
OF THE QUESTIONS TO ASK



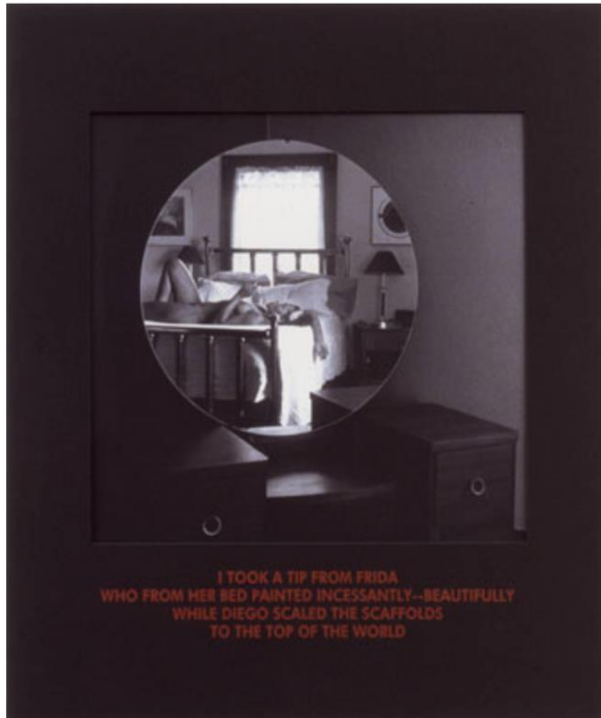
IT WAS CLEAR, I WAS NOT MANET'S TYPE
PICASSO - WHO HAD A WAY WITH WOMEN -
ONLY USED ME & DUCHAMP NEVER
EVEN CONSIDERED ME



BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE
IMAGINE MY FATE HAD
DE KOONING GOTTEN
HOLD OF ME



I KNEW, NOT FROM MEMORY,
BUT FROM HOPE, THAT THERE WERE OTHER
MODELS BY WHICH TO LIVE



I TOOK A TIP FROM FRIDA
WHO FROM HER BED PAINTED INCESSANTLY - BEAUTIFULLY
WHILE DIEGO SCALED THE SCAFFOLDS
TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

I TOOK A TIP FROM FRIDA
WHO FROM HER BED PAINTED INCESSANTLY - BEAUTIFULLY
WHILE DIEGO SCALED THE SCAFFOLDS
TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

Fig. 58 Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #193*, 1989, 124.14 x 106.52 cm, chromogenic colour print.



Fig. 59 Eric LaCour, *Ericka Hart* for *Posture Magazine*, September 19 2016.



Fig. 60 Kayla Logan (@kaylaloganblog), *Instagram*, January 14 2021. Accessed July 7 2021, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CKCFvrvFclV/>.



Fig. 61 Barbara Morris, *Quentin Crisp*, 1939, 23.5 x 35.4 cm, pen and ink.



Fig. 62 Derek Ogbourne, *Dominic Blake in a Two-Minute Pose Inspired by Kandinsky's Composition VIII*, Hampstead School of Art, 2017.



Fig. 63 Erwin Wurm, *Untitled*, *One Minute Sculptures Series*, 1997, 45 x 30 cm, c-print on paper.



Fig. 64 Fra Filippo Lippi, *Madonna della Cintola*, 1455-1465, 191 x 187 cm, tempera on wood.



Fig. 65 Agnolo di Cosimo Bronzino, *Portrait of Andrea Doria as Neptune*, 1545-6, 149 x 199.5 cm, oil on canvas.

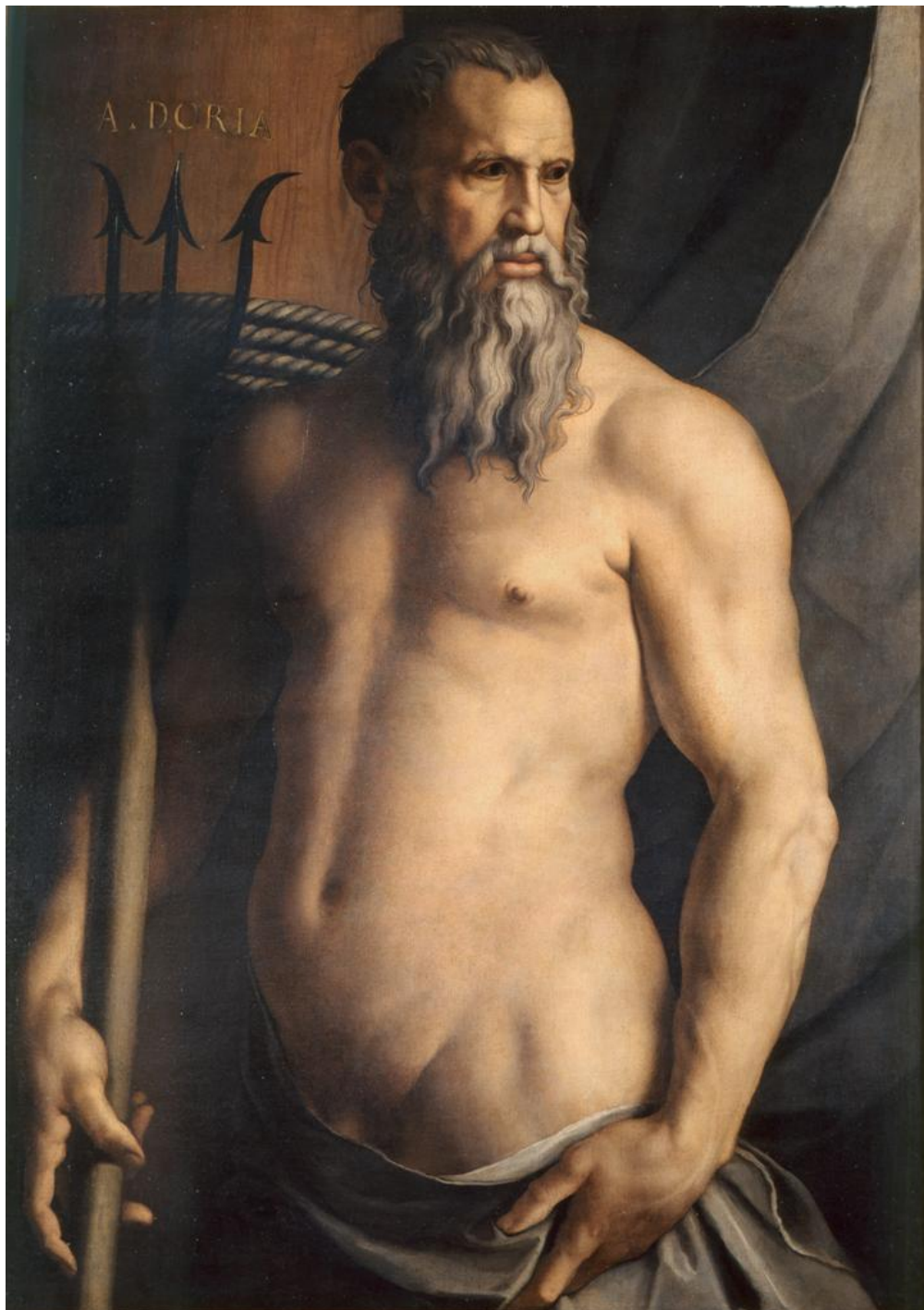


Fig. 66 Peter Paul Rubens, *Hélène Fourment in a Fur Robe*, 1636-8, 176 x 83 cm, oil on canvas.

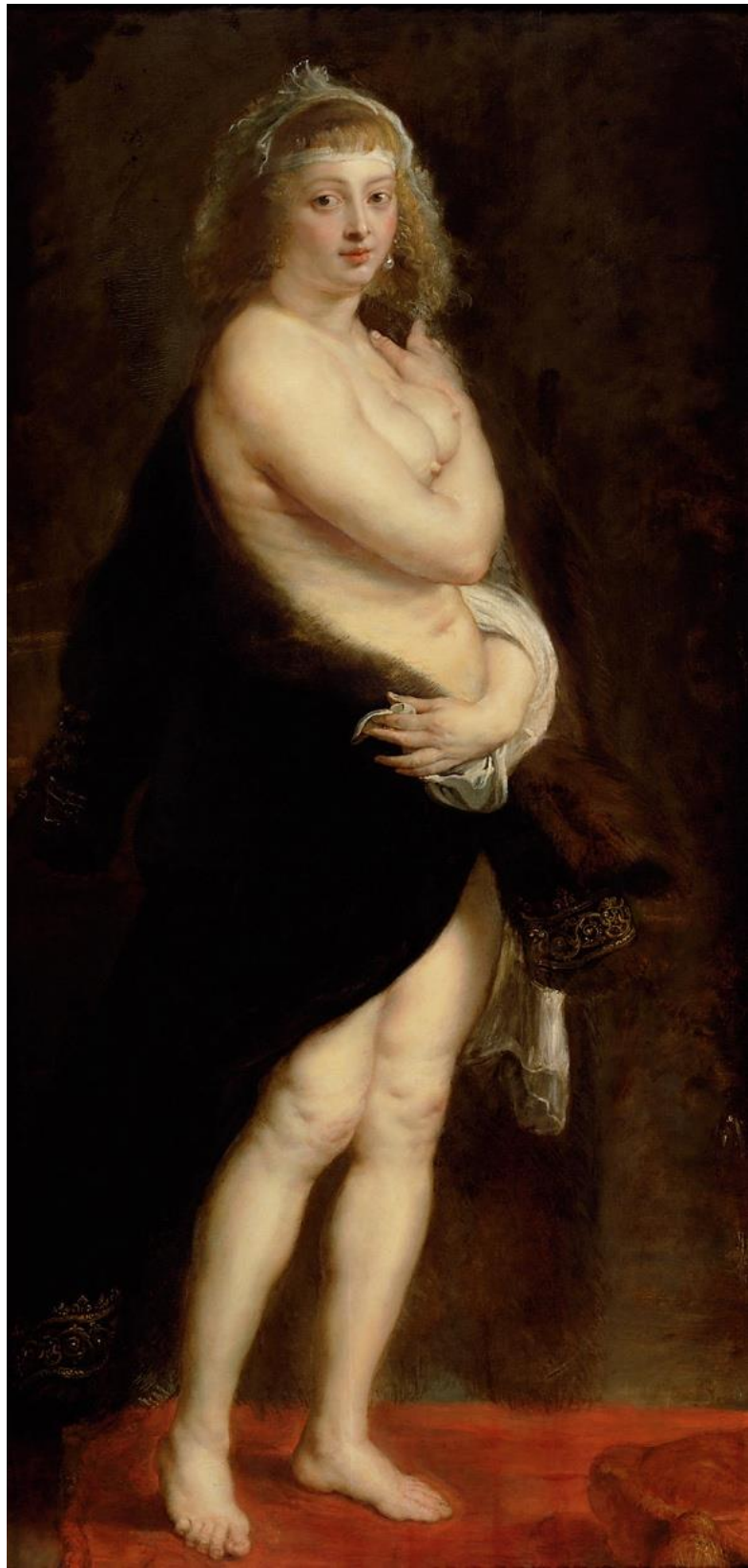


Fig. 67 Uffizi Gallery, *Medici Venus*, Late 2nd Century B.C. – Early 1st Century B.C, 153 cm (height), Parian marble, lychnite variant.



Fig. 68 Edouard Manet, *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, 1863, 208 x 264.5 cm, oil on canvas.



Fig. 69 Francesca Woodman, *Untitled*, Antella, Italy, 1977-8.



Fig. 70 S.n., Betty Brosmer for *Figure Magazine* Vol. 11, Cover Illustration, 1955.



Fig. 71 Sasha O, *Untitled*, 365 Self-Portraits Project, 2014.



Fig. 72 Simon Maris, *Isabella*, 1906, 41 x 29 cm, oil on canvas.



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