All images © Jackie Nickerson.

Jackie Nickerson's latest photobook, *Field Test,* makes for uncomfortable viewing. Weeds are fastened against a wall with duct tape, subjects' heads are bound tight with cellophane, bodies are cocooned in tarpaulin. For the viewer, many of the images elicit a feeling of claustrophobia. For the American-born British photographer, the work is a meditation on how plastics inhabit the modern world – or rather, how they suffocate it.

"Plastic is a generic and ubiquitous material that may end up choking the planet, and in turn strangle us," says Nickerson. "I decided to make images of individuals with everyday materials that act as a metaphor for this asphyxia." She points to examples such as the huge floating rubbish dumps piling up in the Pacific Ocean: "It is deeply upsetting looking at how [plastic] is killing marine life. It is obscene. It has got to change."

However, this is more than just a tirade against plastic pollution. *Field Test* (published by Kerber Verlag) also highlights how indispensable the material has become to humanity – an issue brought into even sharper focus by Covid-19. Subjects' faces might be shrouded by industrial mesh, but they are also shielded by surgical masks beneath. Some wear protective gloves and hospital scrubs. There are even Polaroids of healthcare workers in full PPE.

The timeliness is not lost on Nickerson, but *Field Test* was conceived and shot long before the pandemic. In fact, she came up with the idea in 2014, when she travelled to Liberia to cover the Ebola outbreak for *Time* magazine. "I became very conscious of the processes and protocols around healthcare," she says. "PPE played a really important part in that."

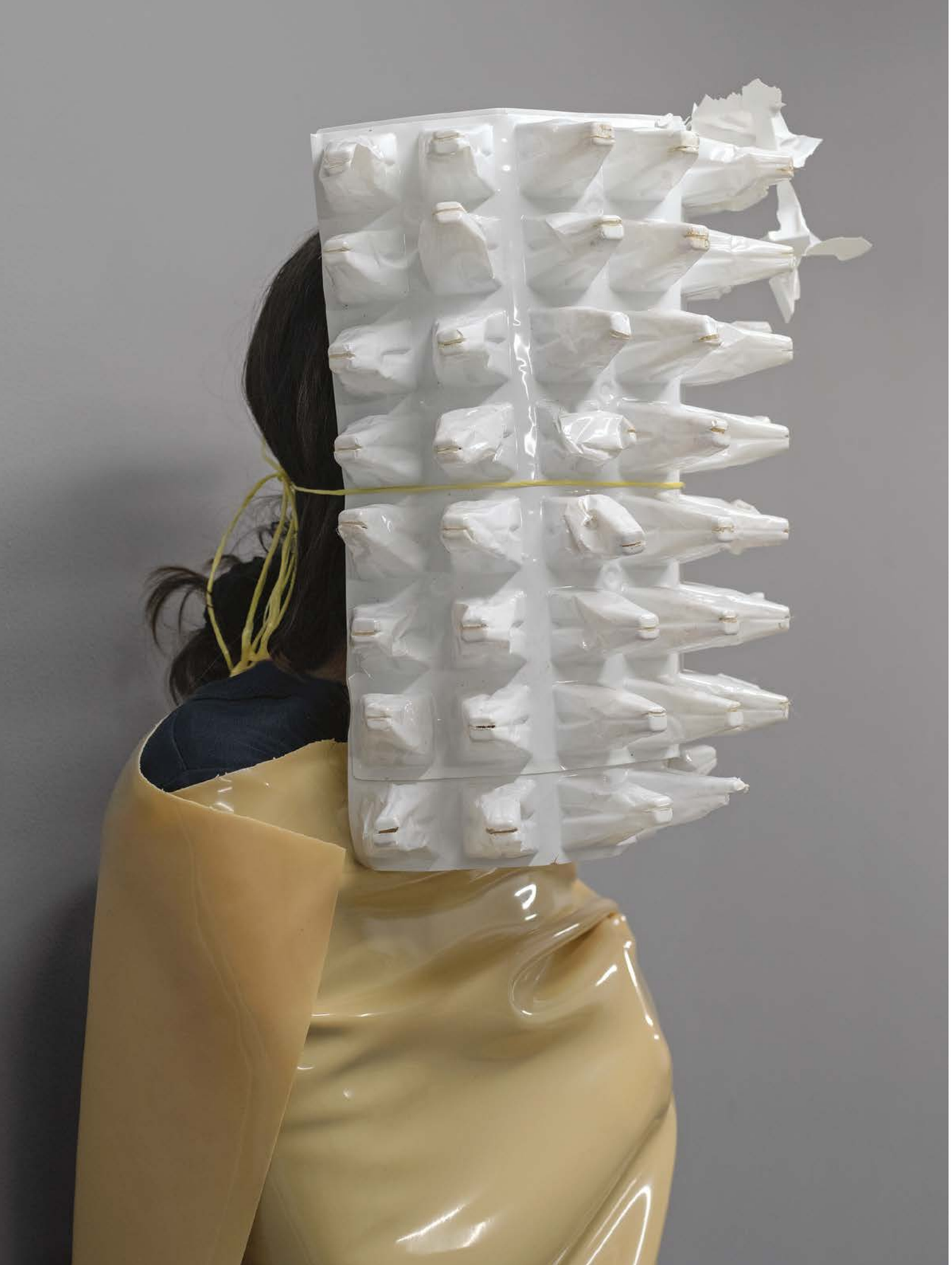
Nonetheless, she is keen to stress that she is not ambivalent when it comes to plastics. "I just like to address both sides," she says. "It runs through all of my work." *Terrain*, a 2013 series focusing on farming in sub-Saharan Africa, is made up of arresting and at times celebratory portraits of anonymous labourers, while simultaneously bringing up issues around food security and subsistence agriculture. *Faith*, completed in 2006, paints an austere yet intimate picture of Christian communities at a time when child sexual abuse charges against the Catholic Church were prevalent.

But where these projects focus on people, offering glimpses into their subjects' lives, *Field Test* does the opposite. In one image, a figure stands alone in a field, their face and top half concealed by a billowing sheet of black. "These are plastic materials that protect, but also obscure identity," she explains. "That lack of personal identity creates a kind of psychological stress."

It is an anxiety which, for Nickerson, appears to compound the existing worries about plastics and the environment. With this removal of individual qualities, the artist looks to broaden the scope of the work further still. "Are we looking at a person or an inanimate object?" she asks. "Do retailers, politicians and social media companies think of us as individuals or as commodities?" Arguably, the book implies, the answer is both – it just depends who's profiting. **BJP**

jackienickerson.com

Jackie Nickerson



Questa Non È Una Fotografia Di Moda

Come ibridi inquietanti, gli esseri umani protagonisti del nuovo libro di Jackie Nickerson sembrano fondersi con la plastica. Umorismo nero o denuncia ambientalista?

di Vince Aletti

Jackie Nickerson, "Shark", 2019, da "Field Test" (Kerber Verlag).

Jackie Nickerson ha attirato la nostra attenzione per la prima volta nel 2012, quando, messa da parte la sua carriera nelle redazioni di moda, aveva pubblicato *Farm* (Jonathan Cape), uno straordinario libro di fotografie scattate in Africa. I soggetti erano lavoratori dei campi in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambico e Sudafrica, uomini e donne con uno strato protettivo di tessuto e materiali industriali così incredibilmente ingegnoso da far pensare alle più eccentriche creazioni di Rei Kawakubo per Comme des Garçons. Non sorprende, quindi, che il libro sia diventato un vero e proprio cult per fashion designer e stylist, o che Nickerson, americana attualmente di base in Irlanda, sia poi tornata a lavorare per le riviste, con servizi di moda, ritratti, still life e foto di paesaggio. Quasi tutti questi soggetti sono presenti nel suo nuovo libro, *Field Test* (Kerber Verlag), nel quale l'idea dell'indumento protettivo è spinta in una direzione ancora più astratta e concettuale. Nonostante tutte le fotografie siano state scattate prima dell'attuale pandemia, guardandole è difficile non pensare a una versione estrema dei dispositivi di protezione personale che medici e infermieri sono stati costretti a indossare in questi ultimi mesi.

Nella conversazione che apre il libro, Nickerson sottolinea di aver iniziato a concepire questa serie nel 2014, quando il *Time* l'aveva inviata in Liberia a fotografare gli operatori sanitari che curavano l'Ebola. In qualità di persona preoccupata dall'impatto della plastica sull'ambiente, questa esperienza l'ha fatta riflettere sulla "funzionalità in tempi di crisi": «Mi sono resa conto di quanto la plastica sia preziosa, di come le barriere che crea possano salvare delle vite».

Ma se i prodotti in plastica sono essenziali per contrastare la diffusione di virus letali, a lungo termine costituiscono comunque un pericolo per la natura. E benché le fotografie di *Field Test* tengano in considerazione entrambi questi aspetti, la loro prospettiva è decisamente distopica e l'umorismo nero che le contraddistingue non cancella le gravissime preoccupazioni che implicano. «L'intera serie ha a che vedere con una sorta di trauma collettivo», afferma Nickerson. «L'idea è che tutto è connesso, che quello che mangiamo e il modo in cui produciamo il cibo è parte essenziale della vita. Quando modifichiamo la natura, modifichiamo la nostra realtà». La serie si basa in gran parte su un libro precedente, *Terrain* (TF, 2013), nel quale i braccianti agricoli africani erano ritratti carichi delle merci che trasportavano. Lì, fa notare Nickerson, le persone «appaiono mascherate dalle cose stesse che producono, così da creare una figura ibrida».

In *Field Test*, dove la natura è praticamente assente, questi ibridi risultano inquietantemente alieni. Le figure sono inguainate in reti di poliestere, mascherate con imballaggi di plastica e rivestite dalla testa ai piedi da teli cerati in polipropilene. Una di loro esplode in una nuvola bianca di imballo in polistirolo, simile a un respiro di ghiaccio. La donna nella fotografia qui sopra si ritrova legata con una corda di nylon rosa a un pesce di plastica gonfiabile, più immobilizzata che protetta. Al pari di una scultura vivente, somiglia a una delle divertenti collisioni tra umano e inanimato di Rachel Harrison o di Erwin Wurm. Ma la sensazione di pericolo che incombe su *Field Test* ne insidia l'umorismo, e lascia trapelare una eco angosciosa dell'incontro erotico nel film *Il mostro della laguna nera*.

TRADUZIONE DI ALICE GUARESCHI. FOTO © JACKIE NICKERSON. COURTESY DELL'ARTISTA E JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK.

Vince Aletti è critico fotografico e curatore. Vive e lavora a New York dal 1967. Collaboratore di "Aperture", "Artforum", "Apartamento" e "Photograph", è stato co-autore di "Avedon Fashion 1944-2000", edito da Harry N. Abrams nel 2009, e ha firmato "Issues: A History of Photography in Fashion Magazines", pubblicato da Phaidon nel 2019.

VOGUE

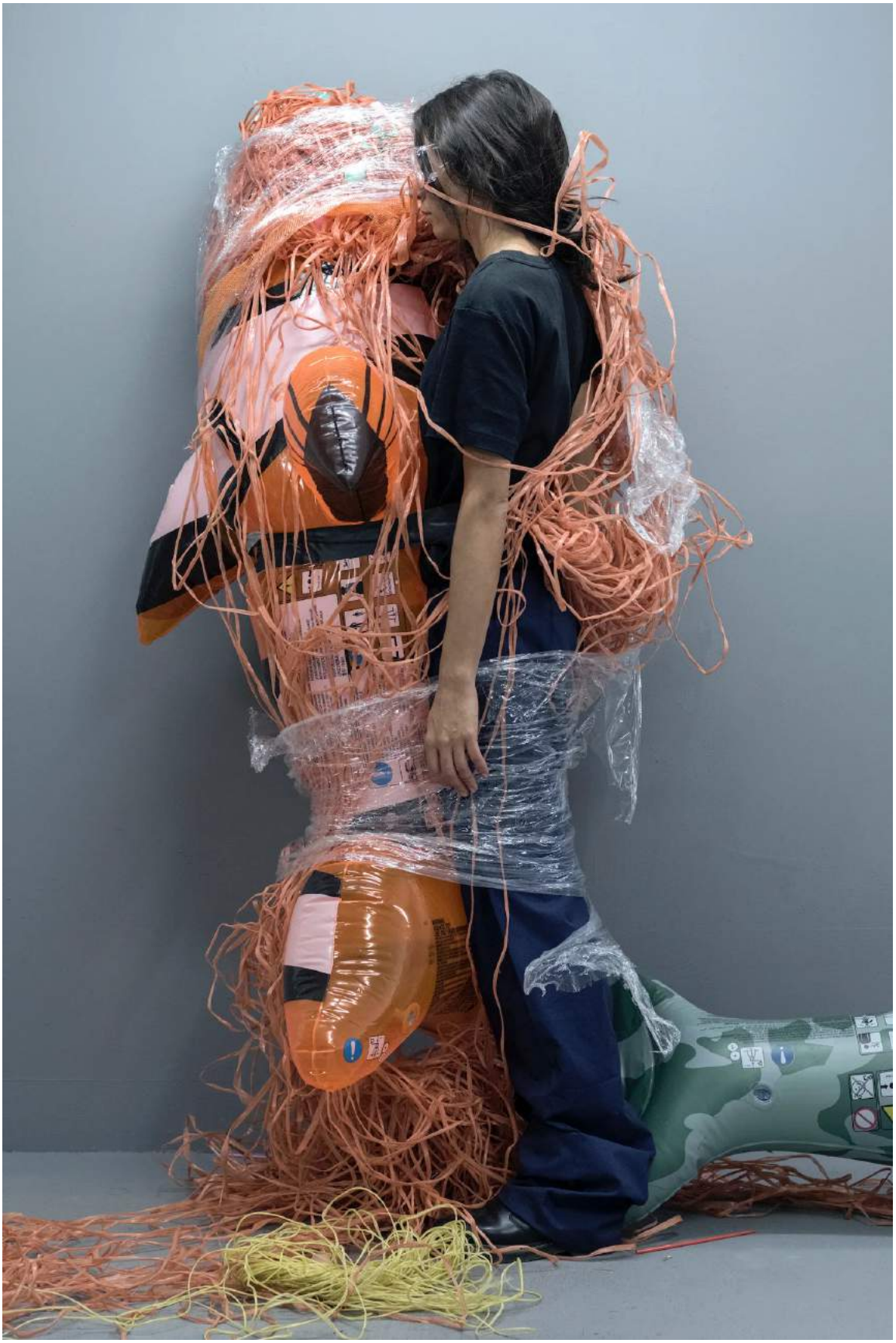
This Is Not a Fashion Photograph. Jackie Nickerson

DI VINCE ALETTI

14 DICEMBRE 2020

Like disquieting hybrids, the human beings in the new book by Jackie Nickerson seem to meld with plastic. Black humor or environmental exposé?

When Jackie Nickerson first came to our attention, in 2002, she had put aside a career in editorial fashion work and published an extraordinary book of photographs she'd made in Africa called *Farm* (Jonathan Cape). *Farm*'s subjects were field workers in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, and South Africa–men and women whose protective layering of fabric and industrial materials was so strikingly inventive that it recalled Rei Kawakubo's wildest creations for Comme des Garçons.



Jackie Nickerson, "Shark", 2019, from "Field Test" (Kerber Verlag).

No surprise, then, that the book became a cult favorite for fashion designers and stylists or that Nickerson, an American now based in Ireland, returned to magazine work in fashion, portraiture, still life, and landscape. Nearly all those subjects come together in her new book, *Field Test* (Kerber Verlag), which takes the idea of the protective garment in a more abstract and conceptual direction. Although all the photographs here were made before the COVID-19 pandemic, they can't help but suggest an extreme version of the personal protective equipment (PPE) hospital workers have wrapped themselves in these past many months.

In a conversation that opens the book, Nickerson remarks that she began thinking about this series in 2014, when *Time* magazine sent her to Liberia to photograph Ebola care workers. For someone concerned about the impact of plastics on the environment, that experience made Nickerson think about "functionality in a crisis": "I saw how valuable plastics were, how the barrier PPE created was lifesaving."

But if plastic products are essential to combating the spread of deadly viruses, they still pose long-term dangers to the natural world. Although the *Field Test* photographs take both these things into account, their view is decidedly dystopian and their black humor can't cancel out their dead-serious concern. "This whole series is about a kind of collective trauma," Nickerson says. "The idea that everything is connected, that what we eat and how we produce food is an essential part of life. When we change nature, we change our reality." To a great degree, the series builds upon another earlier book, *Terrain* (TF, 2013), in which African farm workers were overwhelmed by the goods they carried. There, Nickerson point out, people "appear camouflaged by their produce, creating a hybrid figure."

In *Field Test*, with nature all but absent, these hybrids are unsettlingly alien. Figures are sheathed in polyester mesh, masked in plastic trays, and suited up in head-to-toe laminated polypropylene tarps. One erupts in a white cloud of polystyrene packaging, like frozen breath. The woman in the picture above finds herself bound to inflatable plastic fish with pink nylon cord, more immobilized than

protected. As a living sculpture, she resembles one of Rachel Harrison or Erwin Wurm's comic collisions of the human and the inanimate. But the sense of threat that looms over *Field Test* undermines the humor here and suggests a nightmarish echo of the erotic encounter in *The Creature From the Black Lagoon*.

Galerie

December 1, 2020
By Michelle Sinclair Colman

Why Photographer Jackie Nickerson Is Having a Moment

After winning a pair of awards for her work featuring Lupita Nyong'o, the artist is riding high with a new book and upcoming exhibition with Jack Shainman

For *AnOther* magazine, Jackie Nickerson shot model Anok, who is wearing layered jersey vest tops by Rick Owens. Cotton shirt-dress by Jil Sander. Styling by Katie Shillingford.PHOTO: JACKIE NICKERSON.

Photographer Jackie Nickerson's luminescent *Vanity Fair* cover of Lupita Nyong'o just won two prestigious awards from the American Society of Magazine Editors, one for Best Fashion and Beauty Cover and the other for Readers' Choice.

The Boston-born photographer's impressive body of work spans editorial to fine art—and when those two worlds collide, the results are otherworldly. For the *VF* shoot, Nickerson's swoon-worthy photographs of the Academy Award winner are as high as high fashion can be yet are stunningly grounded in sincerity.

A self-portrait of the artist. PHOTO: JACKIE NICKERSON.

Nickerson and *VF* Creative Director Kira Pollack have worked together many times in the past, but the results of the *Vanity Fair* shoot with Nyong'o were celestial. "Jackie's work perfectly intersects at the crossroad between fine art and fashion, but the true heartbeat of her work is rooted in her background as a documentary photographer," Pollack tells *Galerie*. "Lupita's direct gaze and almost sculptural posture in the Valentino dress stand out from a vibrant and electric background. Working alongside stylist Samira Nasr, she created a modernist portrait that transcends into a sort of art installation. Her portrait is unforgettable, mesmerizing, and truly sublime."

The *Vanity Fair* cover of Lupita Nyong'o, shot by Jackie Nickerson. PHOTO: VANITY FAIR.

Jack Shainman, whose namesake art gallery has represented Nickerson since 2005, explained, "Jackie has an extraordinary eye and strikingly thoughtful sense of composition. While in many ways the figures are always the focal point, each element in her photographs serves a purpose. From her subtle use of color and scale to the depth of research regarding contexts and environments, all of this brings out a certain inimitable dignity from her sitters. She truly has an unparalleled ability to compose images that breathe life into her subjects; in many ways, they act as mirrors of our time."

Nickerson's work has always been driven by a higher purpose above and beyond simply capturing a beautiful image. In 1996 she began photographing Zimbabwean farmworkers to challenge the incorrect perception that they were simple and disempowered. The collection, titled "Farm," highlights the workers in the clothes they made.


Left: Featured in “Field Test,” *Wrapped* was inspired by a lack of personal space, “like when we’re on a crowded airplane or train. We are surrounded by people but actually separate.” PHOTO: JACKIE NICKERSON. Right: For *Chimera 2*, also part of “Field Test,” Nickerson layered screens to create a metaphor for “how things become obscured and suddenly, what we think of as being transparent isn’t transparent at all.” PHOTO: JACKIE NICKERSON.

In “Terrain,” Nickerson focused on such weighty subjects as the environment, production, and commodification. And her most recent series, “Field Test,” will be on display at Jack Shainman Gallery in 2021. (Dates are slated to be announced in February.) The show also shares a name with Nickerson’s recently published book by Kerber Verlag, in which she explores individuality versus hyper-connectivity, which seems even more timely than even she could have ever imagined.

Despite beginning work on “Field Test” in 2014, when *Time* magazine sent Nickerson to Liberia to cover the Ebola epidemic, the collection is uncannily perfect for the current climate. “These are materials that protect but also obscure identity,” Nickerson tells *Galerie.* “That lack of personal identity creates a kind of psychological stress. This got me thinking about the unseen things that we use every day, like the Internet. The timing of the book and COVID-19 was a fluke. But we had the SARS outbreak in 2003, and WHO have been warning us about a global pandemic for a while.”

The layers, materiality, and armored protection in “Field Test” evoke the feeling of the moment—living in a pandemic, protecting ourselves from the outside world, and literally hiding behind masks and technology.

For *AnOther* magazine, Nickerson shot model Anok in a wool corset by Maison Margiela. Woven viscose top and safari trench coat by Guess by Marciano. Tulle-wrapped cotton sweater by Y/Project. And tea-towel linen cropped trousers by JW Anderson. PHOTO: JACKIE NICKERSON.

“As an artist, Jackie is very ambitious and incredibly hard-working,” Shainman adds. “Her work is always developing and adapting, but it is above all her methodology and assiduous, personal immersion into her practice that qualifies her as an ever-evolving visionary. She is constantly in dialogue with her own surroundings and world at large through her camera lens, and her photographs are continually challenging viewers. They never stop asking difficult, yet important questions.”

As Nickerson grounds her work in her experiences and perspective, we can be very happy she continues to reach for new heights, questioning through her lens.

'Field Test' by Jackie Nickerson, 2020.

A Magazine Curated By presents an exclusive first look at Field Test, a new photographic study by the American-born British artist Jackie Nickerson. Published by Kerber Verlag, the 100-page tome contains an essay by Aidan Dunne. The below is an excerpt from the book's introduction, a Q&A with A Magazine Curated By Editor in Chief Dan Thawley.

Dan Thawley: The concept of a 'Field Test' has roots in medical science and particularly the testing for loss of vision. It could also relate to products being used for the first time in the environments they are destined for. With this in mind, what does the title Field Test mean to you?

Jackie Nickerson: For me, it's a medical reference — the eye test that involves looking into a large white dome where there are random flashing lights of various intensity and size. It's a test to check how much peripheral vision a person may have or have lost. The loss of vision is usually imperceptible on a-day to-day basis, so a field test is a scientific way of measuring how much we actually see as opposed to how much we think we see.

DT: This work sees a more active intervention in the spaces and the bodies of your subjects than in most of your work. With that comes a general feeling of disconnect and isolation. What is your personal relationship with isolation? Do these images reflect this, or are they a statement on the experience of others?

JN: Yes, it's personal — but it's also a universal theme: a creeping sense of isolation. It addresses new kinds of stress and commodification, the environment, speciesism, the waste, the pressure, the mandatory compliance, the lack of privacy. I guess you could say it has a universal identity, like a collective smothering. It's a kind of psychological snapshot or chronicle of a whole generation of our consciousness.

DT: Does the identity of your subjects hold any consequence in these images, seeing as their defining features are predominantly concealed? Were they chosen as blank canvases, or with diversity in mind?

JN: They are very specific blank canvases. The sitters were chosen because of their proportions, scale, and height. It was a rather brutal casting process: How long can someone stand still? Can they shut down and not project or perform? Are they claustrophobic? Can they relate to what I am creating? Do they have patience? Tolerance? I asked people who I knew.

DT: Whilst your work has often incorporated a curiosity in synthetic and natural materiality, Field Test sees a more implicit conversation with the human form and materials as barriers, masks, insulation and protection. How did you arrive at this conceit?

JN: I wanted to control the content, so I researched and chose all the components before putting them together. That meant stepping out of the actual world and into a 'made' world. I think part of that decision was about the photographic process — awareness of control, both of the sitter and the artist. But it also becomes a question of how much control we relinquish on a day-to-day basis, about how technology and commerce trains us to think in a certain way. Like a cause and effect of what we choose to have around us. Materiality plays a part here — it speaks of how what we use on a daily basis will have an effect on our psyche and even on our physical lives. So in a way, it's a natural progression from my book Terrain. I like to question how we choose to live, and what long-term effects those choices may have on us. It seems like nature works in an incremental way, so if you're not paying attention, things will have changed irrevocably and there will be nothing you can do about it. The choice of materials is very important.

DT: The materials implicated in your images span a wide variety of agricultural, medical, and industrial usages — they evoke the codes of safety equipment and uniforms, transport and waste disposal, food packaging and even the studio tools of photography itself. What was the process involved with selecting these intermediary materials – functional mediums that serve mostly as protective and insulating barriers — and applying them to the human body as decoration and artifice?

JN: I am obsessed by certain materials. Plastic is one of them. I like to take mundane, everyday domestic items and put them in a different context. It's not for decoration — I'm asking questions. I've always been obsessed by supermarkets. The cheaper the better. I remember when I was about 14 years old and taking the labels off all the food tins in the house and putting them on my bedroom wall. I've no idea why. I just thought they were interesting.I began thinking about this series in 2014 when Time magazine sent me to Liberia to cover the Ebola care workers. The trip made me think about a lot of things. For this, specifically, it made me think about distancing, the duality of plastics and about human interaction. Functionality in a crisis. I saw how valuable plastics were, how the barrier PPE created was lifesaving and enabled doctors, nurses and carers to work. I will always remember one of the doctors disrobing after leaving the Ebola ward. It was a careful ritual. A meticulous choreography of purpose and safety. First this comes off, then we roll this piece over this piece, then we pull from the top down etc. Each person did their own clean up. It reduced the risk. And I looked at the PPE, that fragile yet essential thin layer of plastic that enabled health care workers to do their job. I witnessed how communal effort can unite but disease can isolate. The lack of facial recognition, the inability of family members to visit, the isolation wards, the loneliness in death. Learning to live in another man-made, made for purpose world. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, this has become more universal than ever.

DT: Less portraiture and more sculpture, the human body becomes a canvas for these other objects and layers that cover and distort the people. For you, what is the importance of revealing human features as opposed to suggesting them, exposing them or distorting them?

JN: I suppose there's a difference between identity and character. Do we need to see the features of a person in order to identify them? Or is a suggestion enough? I think on a very basic level our brains are programmed to try to work out if we are looking at a person or an inanimate object. Do retailers, online shops, insurance companies, politicians, corporations and social media companies think of us as individuals — as their fellow citizens? Or do they think of us as consumers? As commodities? That's a question. Capitalism works because the bottom line is about profit and loss and individuals are irrelevant. Data research attempts to use all of us to target how we all spend our money. So, how are we dealing with the new reality of being invisible? Now we are beginning to understand how things work and how we are being commodified through systems of big data and the invisible consumer.

AnOther

Jackie Nickerson's New Book Examines the Trauma of Modern Living

Field Test is artist Jackie Nickerson's latest publication, which explores the hidden forces that are changing us

OCTOBER 29, 2020
TEXT Ted Stansfield
LEAD IMAGE Jackie Nickerson, Hybrid, 2019

Jackie Nickerson is one of the most profound image- and film-makers working today. Deeply meditative, the American-born British artist's work examines what it is like – physically and psychologically – to work within specific environments. *Farm* (2005) and *Terrain* (2013) explore farm labour, the relationship between the land (in Southern and East Africa) and the people who work upon it, while *Faith* (2007) and *Ten Miles Round* (2009) look at similar relationships but in Ireland – the religious and rural communities that can be found there, respectively.

While these series examine heady subjects such as identity – who we are, how we change the world around us and how, in turn, it changes us – they also embody extraordinarily beautiful portraits and landscapes, too. Nickerson's latest book, ***Field Test*** (published by Kerber), is no exception. Featuring powerful and at times perplexing photographs, which actually feel more like sculptures than portraits, the publication explores the collective trauma of modern living; how the things that are unseen change us. Things, says Nickerson, like "globalisation, technology and medicine, commercialisation, mass production, environmental pollution, migration, digitisation, fake news and pandemics". Things that feel all too familiar, all too … traumatic.

Here, Nickerson tells us more about this book and its themes, and what she feels is the power of photo books.

Ted Stansfield: Please could you introduce *Field Test* to us?

Jackie Nickerson: Yes. It's a series of constructed images about the collective trauma of modern living. In a way, it's about the mundane things and hidden forces in your life, which you don't have any knowledge or control over.

TS: Could you describe the process of creating it?

JN: It started in 2014 when *Time* magazine sent me to Liberia to cover the Ebola epidemic. I became very aware of the processes and paraphernalia around healthcare. The materials that protect, but also obscure identity and the psychological effects of not being recognisable. This got me thinking about the unseen things that we use everyday. Like the internet.

TS: What are some of the themes you explore?

JN: Mostly it's about the psychological effects of things that are not overt – and how we are being changed by them – globalisation, technology and medicine, commercialisation, mass production, environmental pollution, migration, digitisation, fake news and pandemics.

I sometimes feel like the technological practices in our everyday lives – the digital processes that we all use – are changing the way our brains work. And there's very little room to opt out of this.

Jackie Nickerson, Pink Head, 2019

TS: Some of these themes feel especially pertinent to this time we're living in – the age of coronavirus – but you created the book before the pandemic. How do you feel about this?

JN: Yes, well, I suppose the World Health Organisation has been talking about the danger of a worldwide pandemic for a while now, so it's not really surprising. When I saw the Ebola outbreak it became real for me. I suppose the timing is just a fluke but there have been other recent outbreaks – like Sars.

TS: How does *Field Test* relate to your previous publications, *Farm*, *Terrain*, *Faith* and *Ten Miles Round*?

JN: I have an interest in cause and effect. How things to a certain degree work within the law of nature. We are not isolated – there is an inevitable cohesion as we all live together on this planet. So this idea of how we are human, and how we interact with our environment is what I'm interested in.

TS: I'm interested in what motivates you, in terms of your artistic practice.

JN: I think most artists will tell you that – the ideas, the drive – it's just there. I see things and I see how diverse things can perhaps work together. It's my job to investigate that and ask those questions. I love what I do.

Jackie Nickerson, Chimera II, 2019

TS: In a recent interview for AnOther, Tyler Mitchell said photo books are "even more important than a show, which seems to be the marker of success" (for photographers). Do you agree? What do you feel is the power of photo books?

JN: Yes. I think both are important but a book lasts forever and it's an artifact you can keep. Francis Bacon said that he thought his paintings worked better in a series. Sometimes the narrative is a really important part of the work and a series illustrates an idea better than a single image. So books are a great way of achieving this. But that said,

it's always great to see work produced as an actual photograph and see it hanging on a wall.

TS: Do you buy them yourself? Do you have a favourite?

JN: I buy lots of books about photography, design, architecture and sculpture. I recently bought a brilliant Dieter Rams design book. You can clearly see how his work from the 1950s has influenced industrial design today.

TS: Another thing I'm interested to know: how does it feel to create something that then becomes a rare and valuable commodity and a special and treasured possession (to someone like me!)?

JN: [Laughs.] Thank you! I hope I can produce work that some people might want to look at.

Field Test by Jackie Nickerson is published by Kerber.

Jackie Nickerson, Cloud, 2019

FASHIONOTOGRAPHY

Keira Knightley covers The Sunday Times Style December 23rd, 2018 by Jackie Nickerson

Published on 27/12/2018 — in Cover — by Maximilian

British actress Keira Knightley is styled by Verity Parker in refined, modern-architecture luxe separates captured by photographer Jackie Nickerson for the cover story of The Sunday Times Style's December 23rd, 2018 issue.
Hair: Sam McKnight
Make-up: Georgina Gayle

A New Kind of Practical Femininity: Moncler x Simone Rocha

As Moncler's epic Genius project launches, Jackie Nickerson and Agata Belcen celebrate a new world where beauty meets function

OCTOBER 04, 2018

PHOTOGRAPHY Jackie Nickerson STYLING Agata Belcen TEXT Sophie Bew

An ever-evolving initiative, **Moncler Genius** manifests today in two purpose-built temporary stores in New York and Tokyo (as well as across 50 pop-ups, boutiques and concessions around the world) and brings together a total of eight innovative collaborations. Working with designers from Pierpaolo Piccioli to Craig Green, Noir Kei Ninomiya, Hiroshi Fujiwara and labels like Palm Angels, the 1950s-founded heritage outerwear brand carves itself a path in hitherto untraversed territory. "For Moncler this marks a new strategy," explains Remo Ruffini, the label's chairman and CEO, "as well as a new way of working to constantly talking with the consumer, in the era that we live, the digital one." Here, we celebrate 4 Moncler Simone Rocha – a marriage of the Irish designer's twisted romanticism and the protective power of Moncler's technology.

Taking the label's classic down fabric, Rocha remoulds the label's trademark parkas, puffas and mountain boots with her sculptural approach to volume, ruffles and overblown silhouette. "Originally I was inspired by the concept of the mountain," Rocha explains. This in turn led the designer to the Victorian mountain climbers of the 19th century and saw enchanting shapes – billowing sleeves, full skirts – wrought in techy fabrics, laden with her signature embellishments. Working with Moncler's experts, Rocha fused practicality with her playful aesthetic.

"I've long been intrigued by Rocha's sophisticated and hyper-feminine aesthetic," Ruffini explains of the project. "The 4 Moncler Simone Rocha collection is so strong yet feminine. Rocha brought her mastery of airy fabrics, such as organza and cloqué, to their ultra light construction." Find these confections in Moncler stores between now and the end of 2018.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Agata Belcen

Hair: Cyndia Harvey at Streeters. Make-up: Niamh Quinn at LGA Management. Model: Xie Chaoyu at Premier Models. Casting: Noah Shelley at AM Casting. Photographic Assistant: Andrew Moore. Styling Assistants: Chloe Grace Press and Abigail Adler. Special thanks to The Owl.

This story originally featured in the Autumn/Winter 2018 issue of AnOther Magazine, which is on sale internationally now.

4 Moncler Simone Rocha is available to buy now, from Moncler.

Kim Kardashian-West as the Pioneer Woman for CR13

She of the net-breaking nude selfie reveals a newfound modesty. This is KKW as she's never been seen before

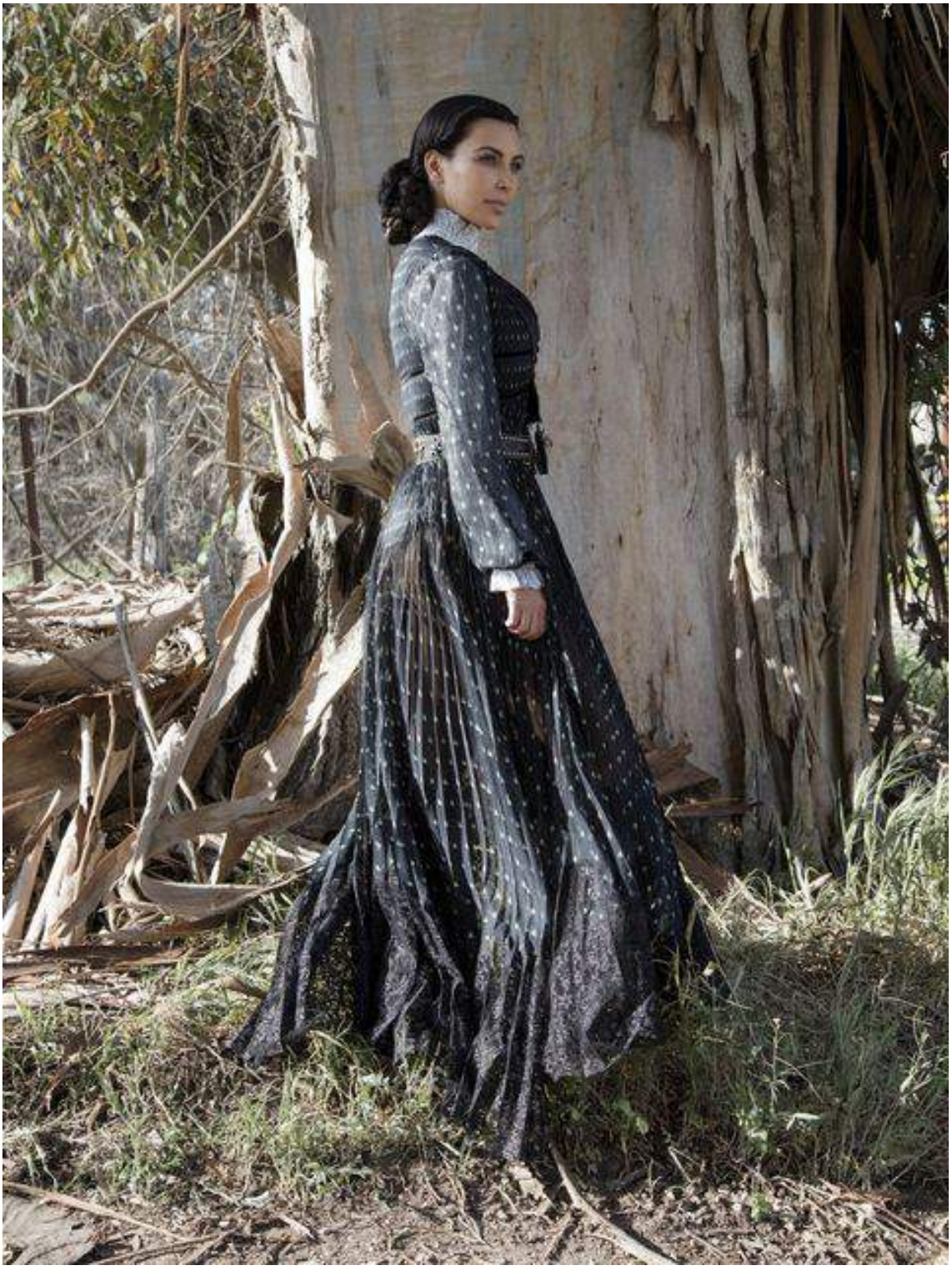
By Kim Kardashian West as told to Devin Schiro Aug 31, 2018

Kim Kardashian West wears dress Calvin Klein 205W39NYC

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

Seeing a covered-up version of Kim Kardashian-West, a pop culture icon who isn't afraid to bare it all, is perhaps more shocking than seeing a nearly nude picture of her. In a shoot lensed by Jackie Nickerson (as well as in a short film for *CR Fashion Book*'s 13th issue), KKW unearths her inner modesty and speaks more on her superstitions and beliefs. Read on to find out what spirits, signs, or supernatural symbols stand out to her the most.

When I do a shoot, I love to see the photographer’s version of me. I’m not this diva who shows up on set and has all these demands of specific angles and glam and how I want to look. I like doing things that aren’t me or aren’t the way that people typically see me, and I love to see that version too. This was my easiest shoot because I didn’t have to suck it in. I was just myself and it was more about attitude instead of showing off my body, which was different and refreshing. I think people don’t really see me as dressing so modest. What’s funny is that, though I obviously am very comfortable not being modest, my soul inside is kind of modest. My closest friends know that about me.



Dress Coach 1941, Top Loveshackfancy

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

Dress balenciaga

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

Dress andreas kronthaler for vivienne westwood

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

I can be superstitious at times, like before going on an airplane. My family and I always step onto the plane with the right foot first. Another superstition is that whenever we hear an ambulance, we always touch our hair. I also say a prayer that the person will be okay. I'm big on prayer and superstition together.

dress andreas kronthaler for vivienne westwood

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

dress the row, top loveshackfancy

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

I believe there are signs from the spirit world all around us. When my dad was sick with cancer, we were lying out by his pool and I said, “If you die, you have to come back in the form of a bird.” We were driving on the freeway right before his funeral and this huge flock of birds flew over the 101.

Everyone stopped because it was so crazy looking. I was like, “There you are.”

clothing max mara

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

dress valentino, apron helen uffner vintage clothing

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

Kanye and I always reference birds. We seem to see a lot of black crows. I saw one on set today. I wish I had had my phone to take a picture because yesterday Kanye took a picture of the two black crows that are always at our house and always together. We always say that they are our parents hanging

out together at our house.

dress calvin klein 205w39nyc

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

jacket and dress andreas kronthaler for vivienne westwood

Jackie Nickerson / CR Fashion Book

PHOTOGRAPHS JACKIE NICKERSON
FASHION CARINE ROITFELD
MAKEUP MARIO DEDIVANOVIC
HAIR AKKI
SET DESIGN ROBERT DORAN
PRODUCTION TOMMY ROMERSA FOR JOY ASBURY PRODUCTIONS
CASTING EVELIEN JOOS

The New York Times Style Magazine

Viggo Mortensen, the Unlikely Leading Man

The accomplished actor has made his career by defining himself as everything a movie star isn't.

Viggo Mortensen, photographed in New York City on July 28, 2018.

Photograph by Jackie Nickerson. Styled by Jason Rider

By Thessaly La Force

Oct. 15, 2018

IN THE INFORMAL taxonomy of Hollywood's leading men, there are several obvious types. There is Brad Pitt: too lean and too chiseled to ignore, rangy and funny but emotionally aloof. He doesn't understand you, but then again, as with all beautiful people, you don't need him to. There is the spiritual descendant of Jack Nicholson, Leonardo DiCaprio, that boyish, Peter Pan type who still happens, however incongruously, to be in possession of an old soul. There's Matthew McConaughey and Keanu Reeves — dreaming, or maybe just out to lunch. There are the jerks: Ben Affleck, Tobey Maguire. The preppies: Jude Law, Christian Bale. The guys who can make you laugh, even when you're annoyed at them: Will Smith, George Clooney. There's the men you'd want to carry you from a burning building, flames licking at their heels: Denzel Washington, Bruce Willis. The meat and potatoes: solid and reliable, like Matt Damon and Russell Crowe.

See all six of the 2018 Greats issue cover stories here.

And then there's Viggo Mortensen. A man who can — at his very best — assume a certain density on the screen, who is somehow able to project a sense of vast interiority with just the flicker of his eyes or the nod of his chin. His face is strangely feline in its geometry, heart shaped, the sharp lines of his cheekbones framing his blue eyes. Even when he is covered in dirt or sweat or blood (or sometimes all three), he's still in possession of a dignity that few other actors can rival. He has played everything from a traveling shirt salesman (1999's "A Walk on the Moon") to a forest-bathing libertarian (2016's "Captain Fantastic") to Sigmund Freud (2011's "A Dangerous Method") to a reckless con man (2014's "The Two Faces of January") to a Navy SEAL (1997's "G.I. Jane"). He is perfectly comfortable being naked ("Captain Fantastic," 2007's "Eastern Promises"), his characters perform oral sex as if breathing air (1998's "A Perfect Murder," "A Walk on the Moon," 2005's "A History of Violence") — and yet he can easily kill his foes with his bare hands ("The Two Faces of January," "A History of Violence"), with a sword while riding a horse (2001-3's "The Lord of the Rings"), point blank with a gun ("A History of Violence," 2009's "The Road," 2008's "Appaloosa") and God knows how else.

Traditional male movie stars are now, despite both their abundance and popularity, something of an anachronism. For better or worse, Hollywood has defined toxic masculinity more aptly than most other industries. Women today expect men on-screen not to be the stuff dreams are made of: We want vulnerability and communication and responsibility and all the uncertainty in between. I watched "The Bachelor" for the first time while writing this piece and realized with dismay how America's obsession with love had long ago departed narrative film for reality television. It's just not practical to make out with a man who has a gun tucked in his tuxedo or to quit your job (that comes with health care) for Jerry Maguire. Movies may be an escape from the drudgery of our lives, sure, but sweeping a woman off her proverbial feet isn't that straightforward anymore.

Canali coat, $6,500, (212) 752-3131. **Giorgio Armani** pants, $1,495, armani.com. Mortensen's own T-shirt. Photograph by Jackie Nickerson. Styled by Jason Rider

Mortensen, though, is different. He is Hollywood's most appealing man probably because he is Hollywood's least threatening man. He is paternal but not patronizing; he possesses strength without aggression. Even in his most violent scenes, the tension builds but Mortensen rarely acts on it until necessary — like a judo master, he seems able to take another's energy and flip it to his advantage. You desire him, but he doesn't set out to seduce. He is one of the few actors for whom the female gaze has been possible (the shock of seeing a naked man on the screen only exists

because it is still so rare). The women in his movies are drawn to him as if there's a hidden stillness that they need to reach, like finding a pond in the middle of a forest. So much of masculinity on film feels like watching a gift you don't want being unwrapped. But Mortensen's operates on another plane. There's a moment in "A Walk on the Moon" when Diane Lane's character, Pearl, climbs into Mortensen's van knowing well enough she doesn't want to buy a blouse. What she wants is him. What could have come across as lascivious or amoral doesn't; Pearl's married, and Mortensen, as Walker Jerome, surrenders to her desire. She sighs and she moans and it's so satisfying to watch, in part because as we do, we understand that the frustration that has defined Pearl's life has finally disappeared.

It wasn't until Mortensen, then 40, was cast as Aragorn in the director Peter Jackson's interpretation of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy that he became an international star. Famously, the role was offered to him after filming had already begun — Jackson, for whatever reason, changed his mind about the actor he originally cast — but luck strikes when she chooses, and the role helped form the foundation on which Mortensen's best characters are built. As Aragorn, Mortensen plays the hidden heir to the last kingdom of men, whose duty it is to help the hobbits on their quest to destroy the ring of evil. He is a hero who understands the burden of destiny, and did so with courage, valor and humility.

After this performance, the director David Cronenberg cast Mortensen in two masterpieces: "A History of Violence" and "Eastern Promises." In "A History of Violence," Mortensen plays Tom Stall, a man who buries his criminal past to begin a new, more simple life but runs into trouble again; in "Eastern Promises," he is a supposed Russian criminal who survives all manners of brutality, saves an infant, eliminates a sinister mob boss and still doesn't seem at all interested in sleeping with sweet Naomi Watts. Both performances are marked by that same sense of dignity, a calmness in the face of danger. Before, Mortensen seemed to be cast more for his stunning looks — a sexy felon, for example, who happens to have a successful contemporary-art career and who sleeps with Gwyneth Paltrow ("A Perfect Murder") — but his characters were similar in what they lacked. He was never the reason the center held. Mortensen could enter or exit the narrative without much consequence. But these three roles unlocked his true gift: They showed how the actor is capable of carrying the moral weight of a story. He can be the uncomplicated hero, yes, like Aragorn, but he is also able to convey, as in "A History of Violence," the ambiguity of fighting for justice amid the chaos of life. That Mortensen's character is capable of murder (in the name of self-defense) and deception (for the sake of protecting his family) doesn't detract from what he makes us understand about ourselves — that we are all, to some degree, faced with difficult choices, and that only an unwavering sense of duty to those we love makes it possible to distinguish wrong from right. We like Mortensen because he shows us how to be.

IN REAL LIFE, Mortensen has the same quiet ease that he conveys so well on the screen. We sit across from each other at a Spanish tapas bar in New York City's Chelsea neighborhood, chosen by my editor as our meeting spot purely because Mortensen lives part of the year in Madrid with his longtime partner, the Spanish actress Ariadna Gil. He is wearing jeans and a black T-shirt reading "I Stand With Standing Rock" in support of the resistance against the oil pipeline, completed last year, that risked polluting North and South Dakota's Standing Rock Sioux reservation's primary water supply. On his flip phone, he makes a quick personal call. His hair is a flinty silver, closely cropped. His mien is reminiscent of the American West, his skin weathered by the sun like a '40s-era cowboy. At 59, a certain arresting majesty remains. A waitress walks past him twice, staring unapologetically. He explains to me that he was drawn to acting because of the storytelling, but as he later writes in an email, "I also found a need to address a growing curiosity about what exactly the skill or trick was that allowed certain performances to occasionally move me to tears, laughter, and even, at times, to a profound questioning of my place in the world."

Mortensen has had a peripatetic life. Born in the United States, his family moved to Latin America when he was a boy, eventually settling in Argentina, where his father managed farms and cattle ranches. Upon his parents' divorce when he was 11, he moved to upstate New York with his mother. He lived in Denmark after graduating college and before he began acting. As he orders, he pronounces the items the way one would in Spain — *boquerones en vinagre*, he says, *ensalada de alcachofa*. Later, I check: He speaks four languages fluently (French and Danish as well as English and Spanish).

We are here to discuss "Green Book," his newest film, out this November, two years after his critically acclaimed performance in "Captain Fantastic," the story of a family raised outside of our late-stage capitalist society, which garnered him his second Academy Award nomination for best actor (the first was for "Eastern Promises"). Directed by Peter Farrelly, "Green Book" is based on a true story of a lifelong friendship formed on a road trip in 1962 through the American South between the jazz pianist Don Shirley and his hired driver, Tony Vallelonga, or as he was called, Tony Lip. Mahershala Ali plays the educated and elegant Shirley against Mortensen's Lip, who is brash and unrefined. Over time, the trip — Shirley's trio is touring the South — forces each man to reveal a less expected side of himself. Lip is more principled than his privilege as a white man in society might let you assume; Shirley is more vulnerable and nurturing than his pride lets on. It's a clash of culture, personality, class and race, but it is also, more winningly, a portrayal of male friendship, a topic more commonly found in Judd Apatow and buddy cop films.

The title is borrowed from life as well. “The Negro Motorist Green Book” was originally a New York metropolitan area travel guide first published in 1937 by a Harlem mailman named Victor H. Green in a practical attempt to help fellow African-Americans traveling by automobile, which was — could one afford it — preferable to segregated public transportation. The Jim Crow South was undeniably dangerous, but African-American travelers faced widespread discrimination almost everywhere in North America — from the embarrassment of being refused service at gas stations, motels and restaurants to far more perilous situations, such as being arrested at night in “sundown towns,” which enforced a ban on African-Americans by nightfall. The guide, updated annually, eventually covered much of North America; it ceased publication only in 1966, two years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Mortensen and Ali met in early 2017, before the Academy Awards (Ali would go on to win best supporting actor that year for “Moonlight”), and immediately connected, finding themselves deep in conversation amid the bustle of a cocktail party. Both walked away hoping to find a way to work together. “It honestly was just like having an extraordinary dance partner,” Ali told me of his experience filming “Green Book” with Mortensen.

Still, Mortensen, whose mother was American and whose father was Danish, admits that though he loved the script, he had to be convinced by Farrelly. “He told me he didn’t want it to be related to the movies of that subgenre of Italian-American family stories,” Mortensen says. He put on weight for the role (“I became as fat as a tick,” he wrote me later) and spent time with the family of the real Tony Lip, especially with Lip’s son, Nick Vallelonga, who co-wrote the script with Farrelly and Brian Hayes Currie. “I was like, ‘What were his favorite things to do?’” Mortensen says. “Nick was like, ‘He loved everything! He could dance with two women at the same time; he’d swim in the Hudson River; he never lost when he was playing cards. There was nothing he could do that he wasn’t good at!’ So then I asked, ‘What was his favorite?’ ‘Eating and smoking.’ ‘Eating and smoking. At the same time?’ ‘Sometimes!’”

The more he began to tell me about Lip, and about spending time with Lip’s family — of his day spent trekking up to a neighborhood in the Bronx that was once almost entirely Italian-American, or of making Lip’s family members laugh or cry after he had captured what was quintessentially Tony — he transformed before me. There, a spread of tapas between us, Mortensen’s shoulders hunched forward. His hands suddenly gestured in a different way than before. He spoke in a broad, New York accent. In that moment, I knew it was Mortensen, but I *believed* he was Tony or Nick or Tony’s brother. Later, as I played back my recording, trying to find whatever magic I remembered existing so that I could get it on the page, it wasn’t the same. That, I realized, is what they call acting.

ALL HOLLYWOOD CELEBRITIES have a real-life counterpart to their on-screen persona. It's part of the mythmaking and artifice of movie stars. And we enjoy glimpsing the spoils of their success — the Malibu palaces, the glittering company they keep — as much as we relish discovering that the distance dividing us from them is not so great. If, at one moment, they are captured in high-definition for the screen, then they are also delivered to us by harried paparazzi shots, red-carpet pictures and social media. Mortensen's life, as much as it is publicly shared, is something of an outlier to the cliché. He is thoroughly uninterested in playing the game of status and vanity. Or, as Mortensen said in an interview with a small Idaho newspaper last year: "What people might generally regard as typical 'Hollywood' behavior (seeking maximum attention and hobnobbing with movie people at all times), I am not really drawn to that." That he didn't achieve fame until his early 40s helps. His first wife is Exene Cervenka, the lead singer of the punk band X; the two have a son, Henry, who is now 30, and at one point ditched Los Angeles for a life together out in Sandpoint, Idaho. Mortensen told me that he spent the night before we met riding the subway to the Bronx, to the New York Botanical Garden. He ended up talking to a middle-aged Mexican man, a contractor, on his way home from the job. Surely, I asked, the guy knew who you were? Mortensen shakes his head, "No, I don't think so."

He's a regular guy — except he's not. There's something about Mortensen that is difficult to describe, because who he is, paradoxically, is almost entirely about what he *isn't*. The empty charm and insecure braggadocio often present in his peers are unsettlingly, though wonderfully, absent in him. He is, in such a superficial medium, able to transmit the feeling of a soul. In "Captain Fantastic," there's a moment where Mortensen, who plays Ben, the father of the family, must tell his children they won't be returning home to the woods. The children are incredulous; they believe they can still persuade their father to change his mind. But Ben has decided. Mortensen's body hardly moves: One eyebrow lifts, pulling the rest of his face up to acknowledge that what he has said is final. Then he remains impassively still — calm but resigned. As he speaks in a tumbled monologue, you can see more than you can hear the accumulation of events that have led Ben here, various emotions briefly flickering across his face. It's scenes like this, so fleeting and yet so profound, that still make Mortensen a bit of a mystery to me.

We continue to correspond over the next few weeks. He checks in with me to see if I have more questions. This, it seems, is also who he is: thorough, a perfectionist. He has gone to Toronto to scout locations for a movie he's planning to direct. He tells me he's returned to a script he began writing back in the '90s, before his career took off. He is a writer, too — he runs a small publishing house called Perceval Press with Michele Perez and Henry in Santa Monica, Calif., founded in 2002 with the money he made from "The Lord of the Rings." Over the years, he has released his own music and published several books of his own poetry, photography and paintings, as well as the work of others.

I'm curious to see his thoughts in writing. I wonder if he thinks about the effect his masculinity has had on his audience. I had asked him about this in person — we agreed that so many of his characters are as much a kind of father figure as they are an archetypal hero — but felt I was inexact. So I try again. When I ask how he would define masculinity and how, exactly, he performs it, he replies:

> All of these terms seem a bit vague to me. "Maleness," "masculinity" and "femininity" are words that we might think we understand perfectly well but seem, on closer examination, to be fertile ground for misunderstandings and mistaken assumptions. How is masculinity expected to be performed, you ask, and what is an unexpected way in which it might be performed? I'm not sure about that either. I do not think of my feelings — what drives me to desire, to fear, to dislike, to nurture, to destroy, and so on — as being feminine or masculine. My feelings are strong, medium or mild. I am a man with alternately mild, medium or strong feelings.

He is resistant to categorization, can see himself only as a range of intensity in feeling. I continue to watch and rewatch his movies. I'm struck by how quiet and precise his movements can be within the frame. Some actors become stiff when they try to emote. But his motionlessness is graced with intention. When I ask him about this, he becomes philosophical:

> Everything begins with stillness, with silence. Movies are light and time. Before the movie begins, there is darkness and nothing is happening. When the movie starts, the clock starts, and we see. And, unless it is a silent movie, we hear. From then on, it is all give and take with the initial stillness, the initial darkness, and nothing can ever be entirely unseen, unnoticed or immobile. Trusting that, letting yourself breathe and move in unison with the tension between "nothing is" and "anything could be," allows you to communicate whatever you can imagine communicating, whether you appear to be still or are moving as fast as you can. (I apologize if this or other answers to your questions might sound labored or overly philosophical. I'm just trying to give you my honest first impressions and responses at this very moment as I take in what you've asked.)

This was Mortensen the artist — meditative, a little elegiac, but honest, unafraid to take everything too seriously. He has an old-fashioned sincerity, an echo of what you see in his movies — lacking in irony but brimming with nuance. On the page, he's a little more weighty than on the screen. These aspects of him I understood.

Still, I wondered what he was like when the tape recorder was off, when the story wasn't being written. I ask Ali, who tells me an anecdote from their time shooting "Green Book" in New Orleans. That morning, Ali says, Mortensen had decided to walk to set. "I see this little black thing wrapped in his jacket. He walks in the trailer, I'm sitting in the makeup chair, and I'm like, 'Oh, you got a cat.' And he's like, 'No, it's a crow.' And so

everyone's looking, like, 'What the heck is Viggo doing with a crow?' And he's like, 'Yeah, the crow is not well.' Shortly thereafter, he goes back to his trailer. He gets out of his regular shirt, because he needs to be in a tank top to get his makeup done, and he walks back in with the crow, and I see he's got a tattoo on his arm. And I go, 'Viggo, what kind of bird is that on your arm?' And he goes, 'Oh, it's a crow.'" Ali let out a warm laugh. "I turned to his makeup artist, who says, 'Oh he does this all the time, he's always finding crows.' But, like, they just sort of come to him. This crow was on the ground, and it wasn't well. It literally died the next day. He tried to get it to some kind of vet — it didn't make it — but he's got this thing about him that is a little otherworldly. He's this guy with a crow tattoo who attracts crows."

At top: **Jil Sander** jacket, $1,340, jilsander.com. **Michael Kors** T-shirt, $98, michaelkors.com. **Giorgio Armani** pants. Mortensen's own sneakers.

Hair by Didier Malige. Grooming by Fara Homidi at Frank Reps using Tom Ford Beauty. Set by Kadu Lennox at Frank Reps.

Production: Prodn. Tailor: Carol Ai. Digital tech: Jarrod Turner. Photographer's assistants: Stefano Ortega and Kevin Vast. Hair assistant: Erin Herschleb. Makeup assistant: Megan Kelly. Stylist's assistants: Rayner Reyes and Jamie Ortega. Set Assistants: Jade Sorensen, Paul Anthony Smith and Olivia Barnum

Thessaly La Force is the features director of T Magazine.

AnOther Magazine

Changing Landscapes: The New Horizons of S/S18

Glimpse the future as Jackie Nickerson and Katie Shillingford capture the season's collections in Morocco

– May 2, 2018 –

Photography Jackie Nickerson **Styling** Katie Shillingford **Text** Jack Moss

Lead image: Anok is wearing layered jersey vest tops by Rick Owens. Cotton shirt-dress by Jil Sander - *Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford*

New horizons, changing landscapes – in Morocco, Katie Shillingford and Jackie Nickerson look towards the future with an assemblage of forward-thinking pieces from the **Spring/Summer 2018** collections. "The landscape in that part of Morocco is so diverse and raw," Nickerson tells AnOther. "There are so many different kinds of terrain in a small area so we were spoilt for choice. It had a kind of seasonless vibe. We had a major sandstorm on one of our shoot days – it's tricky because it's hard to work in, but it also gives the light another kind of quality."

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Cotton crop top with ruff led pockets and viscose-jacquard dress by Carven. Washed cotton shorts with letter-stamp pockets by Loewe. Ergonomic sports socks by Falke. And leather hiking sandals by Rick Owens. Right: Panelled floral tunic by Marni. Stylist's own hooded dress by Adidas. And technical fabric drawstring bucket hat by Charlotte Knowles.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Pleated wool apron dress by Chopova Lowena. Short-sleeved cotton shirt-dress, checked cotton shirt, pleated lace skirt, checked silk trousers and vintage-check cap by Burberry. Right: Ruffled silk and lace dress by Redemption. Silk-organza shredded baseball top by ASAI. Patchwork zip-front trousers by Marques'Almeida. Crocheted balaclava by Christian Stone. Knitted socks by Glenmuir Birkdale from SockShop. And trainers (customised by Larissa von Planta) by Vic Matié.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Wool corset by Maison Margiela. Woven viscose top and safari trench coat by Guess by Marciano. Tulle-wrapped cotton sweater by Y/Project. And tea-towel linen cropped trousers by JW Anderson. Right: Frayed denim patchwork dungareedress and trousers by Tolu Coker. Printed leather jacket and printed ruff led skirt by Ralph Lauren Collection.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Pom-pom dress with knitted fringing by Calvin Klein 205W39NYC. Right: Techno cotton poplin jacket by Valentino. Hand-painted denim jacket and jeans by MSGM. Silk scarf by Valentino Garavani. Knitted socks by Glenmuir Birkdale from SockShop. And customised ASICS trainers by Andreas Kronthaler for Vivienne Westwood.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Quilted Melchior waistcoat with fringing by Andreas Kronthaler for Vivienne Westwood. Sweatshirt with multi-buckled leather sleeves and long lace and tulle skirt by DSquared2. And checked cotton shirt by Balenciaga. Right: Trompe l'oeil parka and sleeveless denim jacket by Balenciaga. Denim jacket and shirt (layered underneath) by AG Jeans. And stylist's own towelling scarf.

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Left: Devoré dress and leather purse-belts by Salvatore Ferragamo. Nylon leotard jacket by Chopova Lowena. Right: Printed and embellished off-the-shoulder blouse, silk dress and trainers by Louis Vuitton. Alphaskin longsleeved T-shirt (worn underneath) by Adidas. And alpaca socks from SockShop.

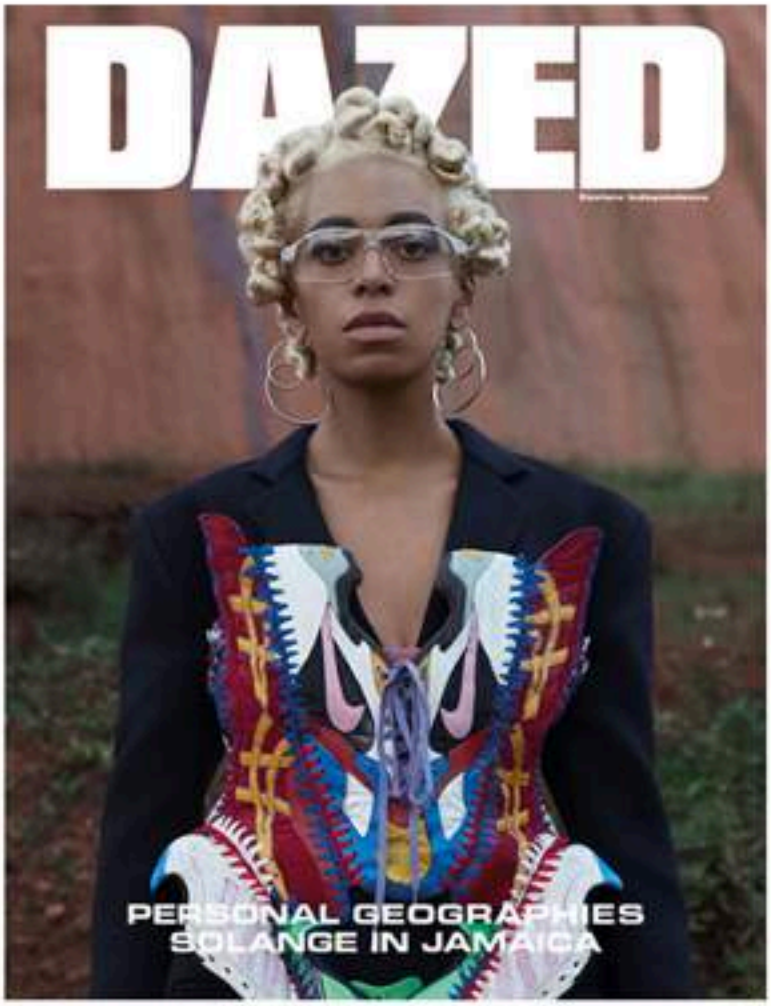
Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford

Above: Mohair floral coat and organdy dress by Miu Miu.

Hair: Alex Brownsell at Streeters using Kérastase. Model: Anok Yai at Next NY. Casting: Noah Shelley at AM Casting. Styling assistant: Molly Shillingford.

This story originally featured in the Spring/Summer 2018 issue of AnOther Magazine, which is on sale now.

HIGHSNOBIETY



Dazed / Jackie Nickerson

Solange Covers 'Dazed's New Spring/Summer Issue

By Jonathan Sawyer in Music · 2 days ago · 77 Shares · 0 Comments

Solange has been tapped to cover the new Spring/Summer 2018 issue of *Dazed*. The 31-year-old singer-songwriter was in turn recently captured by photographer Jackie Nickerson while in Jamaica.

Solange is currently recording her new album in the Caribbean island country, as she took some time to pay tribute to her spiritual home by writing a poetic love letter to Jamaica. You can look forward to the piece landing in *Dazed*'s SS18 issue, which arrives Thursday, April 19.

Earlier this year we saw Solange starring alongside Kanye West in Helmut Lang's Exactitudes campaign.

AnOther Magazine

The Fashion Duo Taking Inspiration From the Power Women of 1960s Sci-Fi

Twin sisters and Central Saint Martins alumni Laura and Deanna Fanning are creating clothes for women with something to say

– May 10, 2018 –

Text Jack Moss

Lead image: Anok is wearing patchwork knitted top by Laura Deanna Fanning - *Photography by Jackie Nickerson, Styling by Katie Shillingford*

If fashion were to have a scent, then for Laura and Deanna Fanning – the twin sisters who presented their Central Saint Martins MA collection under a single moniker, **Laura Deanna Fanning** – it might well be that of petrol fumes.

That was the smell in the air when they first encountered fashion in the pages of Italian *Vogue* as children in Australia, sat on stacks of the magazine in their mother's aunt's garage. The images inside were often torn out, and drawn on – an attempt by their aunt to translate the designs, those of Claude Montana, or Azzedine Alaïa, into dresses she could make on her sewing machine at home. Now, in their London studio, part of a renovated ex-chocolate factory in Wood Green, they liken this process to their own moodboards, where, alongside swatches and sketches, fashion photographs from the 1970s and 80s are scrawled with emphatic directions in marker pen.

ART

Jackie Nickerson: In and Out of Africa

The globetrotting photographer and artist seeks to capture humanity at all angles.

BY SARAH KHAN
PORTRAIT BY BRAD TORCHIA

November 30, 2016

Can a portrait provoke conversation about identity, politics, and the human condition?

That's what photographer Jackie Nickerson achieves in her work, such as her acclaimed 2013 exhibition "Terrain," which was a collection of understated yet searing images depicting workers on farms across eastern and southern Africa. There, laborers and their labor are inextricably intertwined, with faces concealed by plastic crates, figures swathed in tarp, and a man seemingly becoming one with the mound of tobacco leaves piled high atop his head. "I see this guy Oscar walking along the road in front of me," Nickerson recalls. "He's carrying a huge bunch of tobacco leaves. It obscures his head and shoulders, and he becomes a hybrid of himself and the work he does every day." She's trying to show that labor comes with a price, and that the price is human.

Nickerson's eclectic body of work is a study in nuanced approaches. From her first foray into documentary-style photography, with a powerful book of photographs called *Farm*, taken over three years across southern Africa in the late '90s, to her high-concept fashion spreads for Marni, Louis Vuitton, and Hermès, she brings a singular sensibility to her art. Magazine editors have taken note. In 2014, Nickerson became the first woman to shoot the cover of *Time*'s Person of the Year issue in its 87-year history, with her moving portraits of Ebola workers in Liberia.

"What initially struck me about Jackie's work is her distinctive use of color and light; there's something almost painterly about her photographs," says New York City gallerist Jack Shainman, who represents her work worldwide. "The staying power is that the content is always socially invested, and the tremendous care and respect she shares with her subjects comes through in the images."

That unmistakable visual voice is evident in Nickerson's fashion photography, too, and makes her a sought-after talent with brands seeking a fine-arts aesthetic for their campaigns. "I think when people come to me, they're not just interested in fashion," she says. "I've done some really interesting collaborations with people because they get my work. I don't look at fashion photography—I look at art. That's where my inspiration lies."

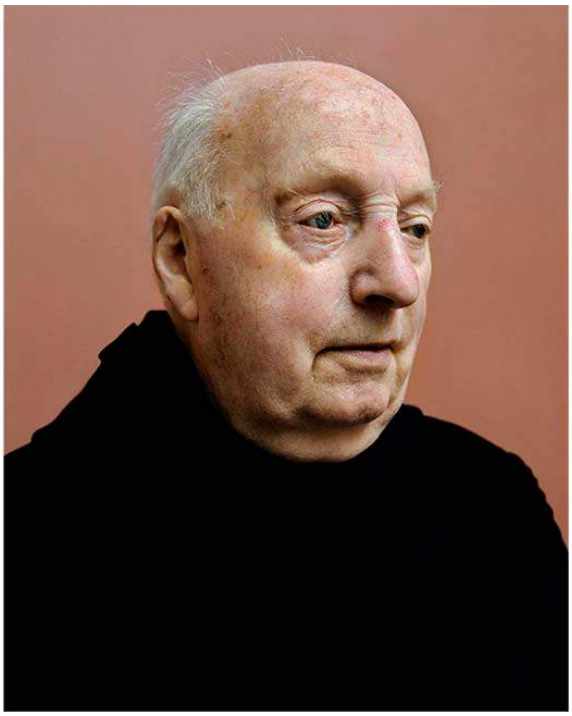
In terms of collaborations, none was more unexpected than the time Kanye West came knocking. While she's reticent to speak much about the two zines that she shot for his Yeezy line with Adidas, she thinks highly of her fellow artist. "I love working with him," she says. "He's also asking so many questions, about all kinds of things in life and society and art and politics and what's going on." According to Nickerson, they're asking the same questions.

BACK TO LIST PREVIOUS NEXT

It's hard to pin the peripatetic photographer down. She was born in Boston, spent much of her life in London, and has a house in Ireland—though she spends most of her time in Los Angeles, New York, or somewhere in Africa, where she first arrived on a whim in 1989 and has kept returning, often for years at a time. Indeed, when I reach her by phone she pulls over to the side of a road in Zambia, where she'd come to visit friends but stayed to work on a new project.

Africa is, after all, where Nickerson rediscovered herself as a photographer, and her connection to the continent remains strong. At first, she settled in Zimbabwe and had given up photography, having decided to change course and do something completely different. "But as an artist, you can't escape it," she says. "It always pulls you back."

When she did get pulled back, she was determined to showcase different faces of the diverse continent in images that go far beyond what's typically disseminated in the West. "From the 1970s there was a vision of Africa as a sort of failed continent, it was really made by the NGOs who were trying to raise money. A lot of the photography they produced was incredibly negative," she says. "When I was in Zimbabwe I didn't see any of that. So I tried to take the Western perspective, the pan-African thing, and create something else, images that for me were like a new reality."



The result of this photographic journey has been a commitment to artwork that inspires a conversation. "If you put a photograph in a gallery, all the power stays with the

audience, and they think what they want to," she says. "Once you put your work out there, you can't control what people think about it, what questions they bring to. And when you're dealing with the real world and real people, you have to find a way to address some of those questions."

If projects like *Terrain, Farm,* and *Faith*—the latter of which delves into the traditionally private realm of the Catholic church in Ireland—are any testament, Nickerson is constantly seeking out new ways to do just that. And now that her work is regularly exhibited everywhere from France to Qatar to Poland to New York, that conversation is decidedly global.

(Photos: Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York)

The Boston Globe

GALLERIES

Foiling expectations: Roundabout portraits, magical auras, and meditation objects

By Cate McQuaid | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT MARCH 15, 2016

Last fall, Jackie Nickerson mounted an exhibition at the National Gallery of Ireland in which she paired her photographs of farm workers in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa with portraits from the museum's collection.

Imagine the contrast! Bygone aristocrats decked out in their finest, paired with African laborers; the juxtaposition immediately raises the specter of colonialism — European white privilege and African toil.

JACKIE NICKERSON

Jackie Nickerson's photograph "Clemence" is on display at Samson.

Nickerson challenges portraiture's grand tradition of puffing up the mighty, and not simply because of her subjects. She approaches portraiture in a distinctly roundabout way, foiling some of its expected goals. Her photographs, taken for her book "Terrain," which examines African agriculture with keen detail, are up now at Samson.

She photographs laborers in situ, with their faces often obscured by bushels, crates, and hay. We see “Clemence” from behind, wearing red and black athletic clothes, his head lost beneath the tremendous umbrella of leaves he holds up. “Ruth” stands near, or in, upturned earth, facing away from us, with a sack of yams on her head.

By avoiding her subjects’ faces, Nickerson sidesteps old tropes associated with American and European photography of Africans — ethnographic portraits and images that play to Western fantasies of exotic Africa — and instead focuses on the sweat and yield of 70 percent of Africa’s work force.

The viewer takes in these images first as portraits, but with no eyes to meet, the interaction changes. The tools and crops, the clothing and the context, even the oddly abstract compositions, carry as much weight as the people.

Nickerson plays with traditional notions of landscape, as well. “Propagation Shed,” a close-up of a plastic wall, lacks the serene spaciousness of most landscapes. Plants grow on either side of it — crisp, dark silhouettes in front, and hazy shadows behind. But of course, this *is* the African landscape, cultivating 25 percent of the continent’s gross domestic product.

A few short videos screening downstairs have the same precision as the photos, but here Nickerson spotlights the choreography of farm work: the repeated gesture of a man with a scythe-like rake, or hands moving masses of bright green beans. Worker and farm are part and parcel in Nickerson’s art; portrait and landscape are one.

Airy heights to watery depths

Cheryl Ann Thomas’s big, crumpling, airy, light-on-their-feet ceramics on view at Gallery NAGA spring from a long, arduous process. First, she builds a large vessel, 3or 4 feet high, by laying one spaghetti-thin strand of porcelain

clay over the next. She makes it top-heavy, so that when she fires it, the vessel slumps. She'll fashion two or three of these, then fit one on top of the next like puzzle pieces, and put the whole thing in the kiln to fix it.

From a distance, her works look like piles of laundry or stacks of old linen baskets, but up close, they're almost animate, as they scrunch, stretch, and twist, inviting you to peer in and through. In "Curl," one pale green-gray form snakes between two coal-gray ones, a thread of blue activating their rippling surfaces. It looks as if it's about to take flight.

Weather is a magical aura in Julia Von Metzsch Ramos's paintings, also at NAGA. This young painter continues to experiment, using seascapes as a foundation, and occasionally, in her push toward the fantastical, she falls flat. "Steaming Ocean" looks unconvincingly surrounded by white flame.

But in "Shark's Mouth in Winter," she makes clever use of an absorbent ground. The blues and turquoises of the luscious, silken water seep into the canvas, while the spiky, dotty froth of a wave hitting rock sits on top. We expect to experience space in a landscape in the tried-and-true way, across the horizon line, but Von Metszch Ramos pings us from depth to surface here, there, and everywhere, and appears to be having great fun doing it.

Spatial ambiguity

Katharina Chapuis's paintings at Alpha Gallery's new space in the SoWa district have no imagery. They're more meditation object than picture. They certainly are objects: Chapuis builds up the edges of her paintings so that they have a stony texture and plenty of heft.

Then, within them, she drops into sheer atmosphere: color at the edges, lightening (in her larger paintings) to near white in the center. Earth and air.

There's an uncanny sense of space here. On one hand, we might be gazing into a tunnel of light, toward something imperceptible. On the other, we seem to stand at the brink of a thick fog, through which light disperses, a mist we could almost reach out and touch.

Tone is the essential variable from one painting to the next: mossy green, midnight blue, peach. I was drawn to the last, the warm, inviting "Untitled (SQ-OR16)," orange and rosy pink around the edges, with breaths of yellow as we move inward.

Chapuis uses the same techniques and format in her smaller paintings, but they intensify in tone toward the center. "Untitled (#189)" looks like an ember, glowing red at its core. The whiter paintings, with their spatial ambiguity, have more mystery.

JACKIE NICKERSON

At: Samson, 450 Harrison Ave., through March 26. 617-357-7177, www.samsonprojects.com

CHERYL ANN THOMAS: Out of My Hands

JULIA VON METZSCH RAMOS:Evaporating Landscapes

At: Gallery NAGA, 67 Newbury St., through March 26. 617-267-9060, www.gallerynaga.com

At: Alpha Gallery, 460 Harrison Ave., through March 30. 617-536-4465, www.alphagallery.com

Cate McQuaid can be reached at catemcquaid@gmail.com. Follow her on Twitter @cmcq.

Vellam, Nadia. "Photos That Bridge the Gap Between Humans and Nature," *The New York Times T Style Magazine*. 25 August 2016. Online.

Photos That Bridge the Gap Between Humans and Nature

August 25, 2016

Jackie Nickerson's "Terrain" series challenges the distinction between portraiture and landscape photography, staging creative interactions between people, objects and nature. By blocking her subjects' faces, and some of their bodies, with foreign matter — some natural, some manmade — Nickerson creates statuesque, half-human creatures in picturesque landscapes. These hybrids raise the question: How are we affecting our environment and how is it affecting us? Here, "Lovemore," 2013. — NADIA VELLAM

ARTICLE

JACKIE NICKERSON
09-01-2015

Jackie Nickerson's first body of work, FARM, was made over a three-year period in rural locations all over southern Africa. It concentrates on how individual identity is made through improvisation. In 2007 SteidlMACK published 'Faith' with a French edition under the title 'Fides'. Her most recent work, Terrain, revisits eastern and southern Africa and focuses on labor and how the exertions of labor leave psychic and material traces on people and the environment.

Her work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, Salzburg; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; Mudam Musee d'Art Moderne, Luxembourg; Galleria d'Arte dell'Istituto Portoghesi, Rome; National Portrait Gallery, London; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas; Santa Barbara Museum of Art; Sunderland Museum; Harn Museum, Gainesville; Vatican Museums, Rome; Hereford Museum, UK; Abdijdmuseum Ten Duinen, Belgium; Benaki Museum, Athens. Her work is held in many collections including MoMA, NY; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas; Pier 24, San Francisco; Vatican Museums, Rome; Martin Z. Margulies Collection, Miami; Rubell Collection, Miami; Santa Barbara Museum of Art; Progressive Art Collection, Cleveland; National Gallery of Ireland.

Q: Do you remember the first photo you ever took in which you knew you wanted to be a photographer?

A: I was given a camera when I was about 13 and I went out and took a photo of a tree. And that was it. I had an immediate connection. I think about imagery all the time. It's an integral part of my everyday life.

Q: You were a fashion photographer for 14 years working with publications like Elle, Vogue and Vanity Fair. What was that experience like? Why did you give it up?

A: Working in commercial photography was great training – how to overcome problems, how to choose the right equipment for the right job, working with clients. And of course, learning how to define your own style. I developed a very pared down kind of image that concentrated on detail. In 1997 I went to live in Zimbabwe and that changed everything.

Q: You have said you went to Africa in 1997 and it changed your life. Can you elaborate?

A: Yes, I moved there in 1997. I'm from an urban background, where I've lived in confined spaces and environments made up of concrete. For me, space has always been a precious commodity. So living in rural Africa gave me a feeling of space and freedom and a different perspective on life. I exchanged an indoor life for an outdoor life.

Q: You have photographed religious orders of Ireland and farm workers of Africa, just to name a few of your many projects. How do you determine your next project?

A: It's really determined by whatever happens in my own life. All my work is a direct result of my own personal life experience.

Q: Congratulations on shooting the cover of TIME magazine's 2014 Person of the Year, the Ebola Fighters. You are the first woman in the 87 year history of Time magazine to shoot the Person of the Year cover. What was that experience like?

A: When I landed at the airport in Monrovia, and there were dozens of health care workers at the airport who escorted the passengers from the plane. They took my temperature, asked me a number of medical questions then instructed me in the various healthcare protocols I needed to comply with. I suddenly realised this was a very serious situation. I was inspired by the people who I met, like Dr. Jerry Brown who appears on the TIME magazine Person of the Year cover. He operated the most successful Ebola Treatment Unit in Monrovia with no backing from any NGOs. He was an obstetrician but he chose to keep his hospital open to treat Ebola patients. He is an incredibly brave man. I met many Liberian health care workers whose self-sacrifice was unbelievable. I was just lucky to be there to capture it.

Q: You left fashion photography to focus on fine art photography. However, recently you shot the Kanye West adidas lookbook and Marni's FW 2015-16 campaign. Why the return to fashion? Do you see yourself doing more fashion photography in the future?

A: Working as an artist and working on fine art projects has become an inseparable part of me. However, I have to say that, on a practical level, I love the challenge of working on short-term projects that have a specific end-use. We're talking about two totally different applications of photography so although you're using the same medium you need to use an entirely different approach. In fashion you have an end use and you're collaborating with a team of people to create this. In fine art you're working on your own and trying to ask questions.

Q: Why do think Kanye West commissioned you? What was it like working with him?

A: What I love about working with Kanye is that he's also asking questions.

"THE POWER OF AN IMAGE IS A CONSTANT."

Q: When you were shooting Marni's first-ever advertising campaign for an individual collection, you sought to "capture the essence of a woman of substance, knowing and independent." How do you capture that?

A: Good question! I wanted to create images that not only show the beautiful clothes but that have a strong idea or concept because ultimately I'm creating an atmosphere that tries to convey what Marni is about. So there's elegance but also a bit of havoc thrown in. I think its always better if, when we look at a photograph, that we see the person first. So the person is wearing the clothes instead of the clothes owning the person.

Q: With the rise of cell phone cameras and social media capturing every moment everywhere, do you think the role of the photographer has changed?

A: I think photography has always been, and will continue to be, an important catalyst for change (photographers such as Robert Capa and Dorothea Lange). The power of an image is a constant. However, I think social media has changed the way information is disseminated and interpreted. Information becomes part of a mesh or network without direct lines of communication. It's perhaps the start of a kind of swarm or artificial intelligence.

Q: What is your process before a shoot? How much time is put into knowing your subjects before you photograph them?

A: It really depends on where I'm shooting and what opportunities I have in that location. The key is trying to find a visual language that illustrates what I feel, what I observe and experience. Also getting access isn't always easy. It's an arduous process. People are wary about your intentions, about what it is you want to communicate. It can take up to a year to research a project before even a single photograph is made. But when I do start to shoot, I like to spend as much time as possible in any given place. I would visit the same place several times so I would get to know people a little bit. My first visit is usually a series of conversations where I take family snaps – of their kids, their siblings and send them prints. I would explain the concept, what I'm trying to do. Everyone's got a different opinion. But nearly everyone is usually open to working with me.

Photo Credits: Copyright Jackie Nickerson. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Art & Photography / In Pictures

Jackie Nickerson: Life Through A Lens

– September 1, 2015 –

Ahead of a spectacular new exhibition, the Anglo-American photographer reflects upon her pivotal works and creative practice

Jackie Nickerson, Grandmother, 1998 *© Jackie Nickerson*

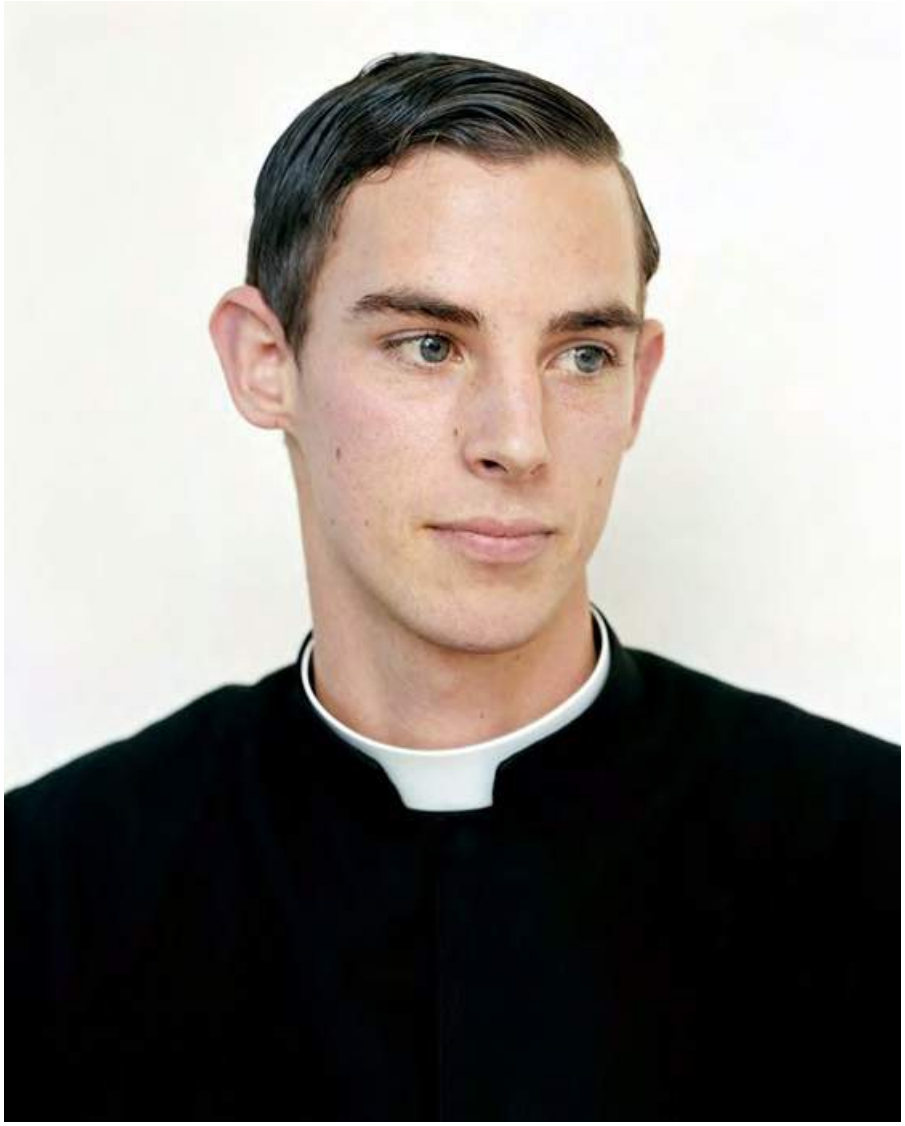
Text Natalie Rigg

In July this year, the storied Italian house of Marni unveiled its inaugural Autumn/Winter 2015-16 editorial campaign. Poignant and atypically elegant, the series presented Dutch supermodel Marte Mei Van Haaster in a number of defiant, virtually faceless poses – horizontally outstretched over a deep-blue carpet, clad in a belted column dress and snakeskin boots, or insubordinately leaning against a half-suspended oak table: all angular elbows and long, lithe limbs – inviting the viewer to consider the emotional and physical presence of the subject, before the beautiful clothing she's pictured wearing.

"I love the Marni sensibility and the experimental or subversive way Consuelo [Castiglioni] approaches design," revealed Boston-born photographer **Jackie Nickerson**, who was tapped by Castiglioni to lens the project. In fact, the story is an exception for Nickerson, who averted her gaze from the world of high fashion in 1996, after a short vacation to Zimbabwe ignited a new fire of inspiration, and subsequently evolved into a three-year expedition. Camera in tow, she navigated the dry rural terrain of sub-Saharan Africa, taking beautifully composed, compassionate portraits of agricultural workers in their workplaces to highlight her concerns about sustainability, human rights and food security.

The pictures formed her first highly acclaimed tome, FARM, published in 2002, and additionally established a graceful and distinguished new take on photojournalism in Africa. Since then, Nickerson has continued to pique the world's attention with her distinctive and powerful imagery – from her astonishing 2014 portraits of Ebola fighters in Liberia to the muted and tranquil documentation of the Catholic religious orders of Ireland in 2008. Though she's currently working from Korea, AnOther had the pleasure of speaking with Nickerson about her diverse body of work and upcoming exhibition, Uniform, at the National Gallery of Ireland.

Jackie Nickerson, Annah, 2013 *© Jackie Nickerson*



Jackie Nickerson, Brother Michael II 2006 *© Jackie Nickerson*

Please describe your photographic practice...
"I'm specifically interested in identity and how we are all affected by our environment and in our shared social and psychological experiences. The relationship between being and appearance. To explore mundane moments that exist in everyday life. What I try to do is to see what is actually in front of me, and make photographs of what it is I'm actually looking at."

Jackie Nickerson, Ruth, 2012 *© Jackie Nickerson*

Jackie Nickerson, Washing Eucharist vessels, 2006 *© Jackie Nickerson*

Jackie Nickerson, Gift, 2013 *© Jackie Nickerson*

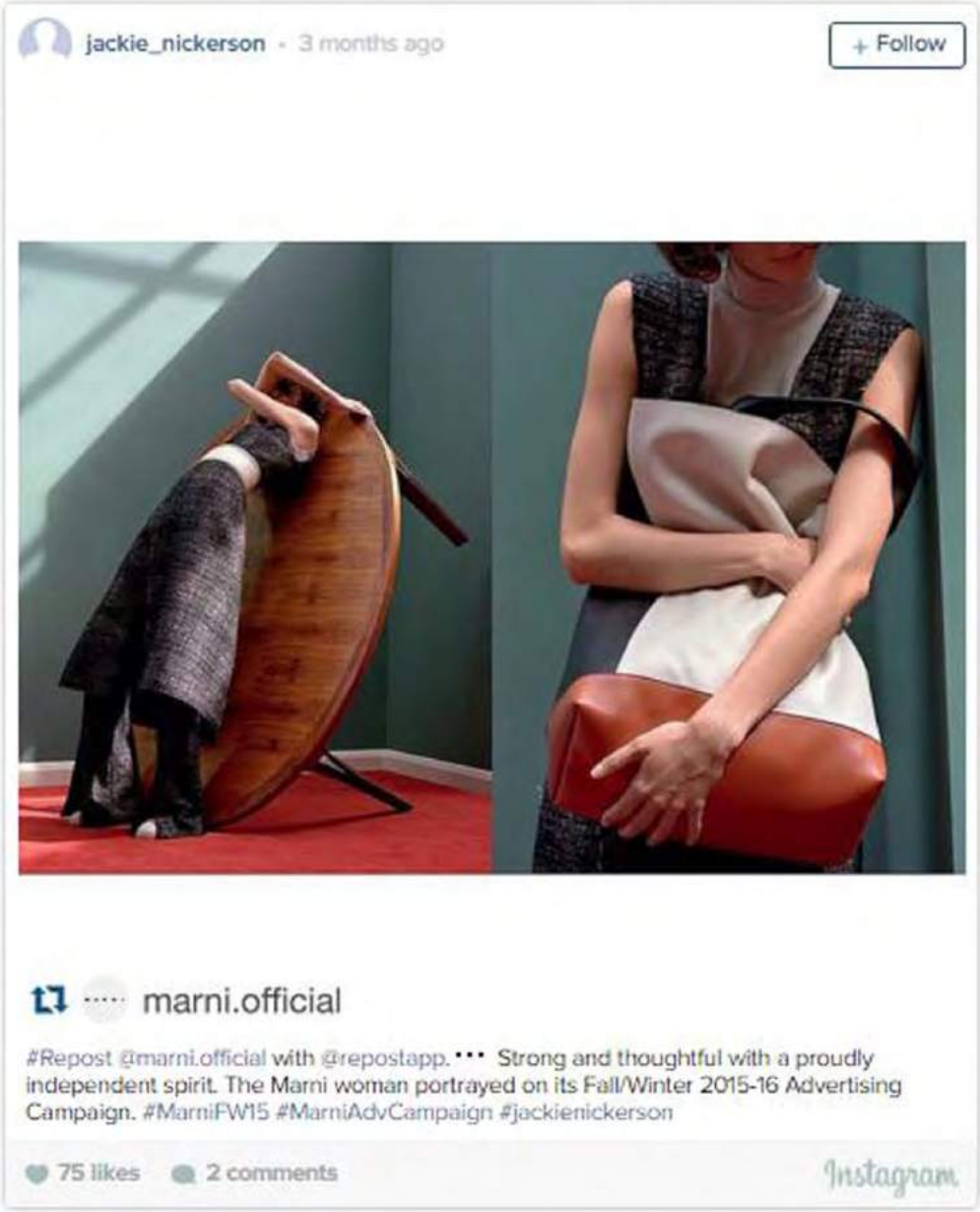
What inspires and motivates your work...
"It's really determined by what happens in my own life. All of my work is a direct result of my own personal life experience. So, every series I work on starts out as a personal happening. Human rights are also highly important to me."

jackie_nickerson · 3 months ago

+ Follow

I shot the first ever Marni campaign #MarniAdvCampaign I had such a great time! Thank you Consuelo Castiglioni

75 likes 11 comments Instagram

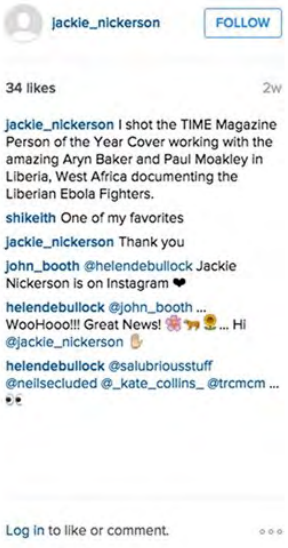


Talk us through the concept behind the delightful new Marni campaign [above]...

"I wanted to create images that not only show the beautiful clothes but that have a strong idea or concept because ultimately I'm creating an atmosphere that tries to convey what Marni is about. So there's elegance, but also a little disruption thrown in. I think that it is always better if, when we look at a photograph, that we see the person first. So that the person is wearing the clothes instead of the clothes owning the person. I was so lucky to work with the brilliant Consuelo Castiglioni and Lucinda Chambers on the project."

Jackie Nickerson, Erina, 2000 *© Jackie Nickerson*

Jackie Nickerson, Monica, 1997 *© Jackie Nickerson*

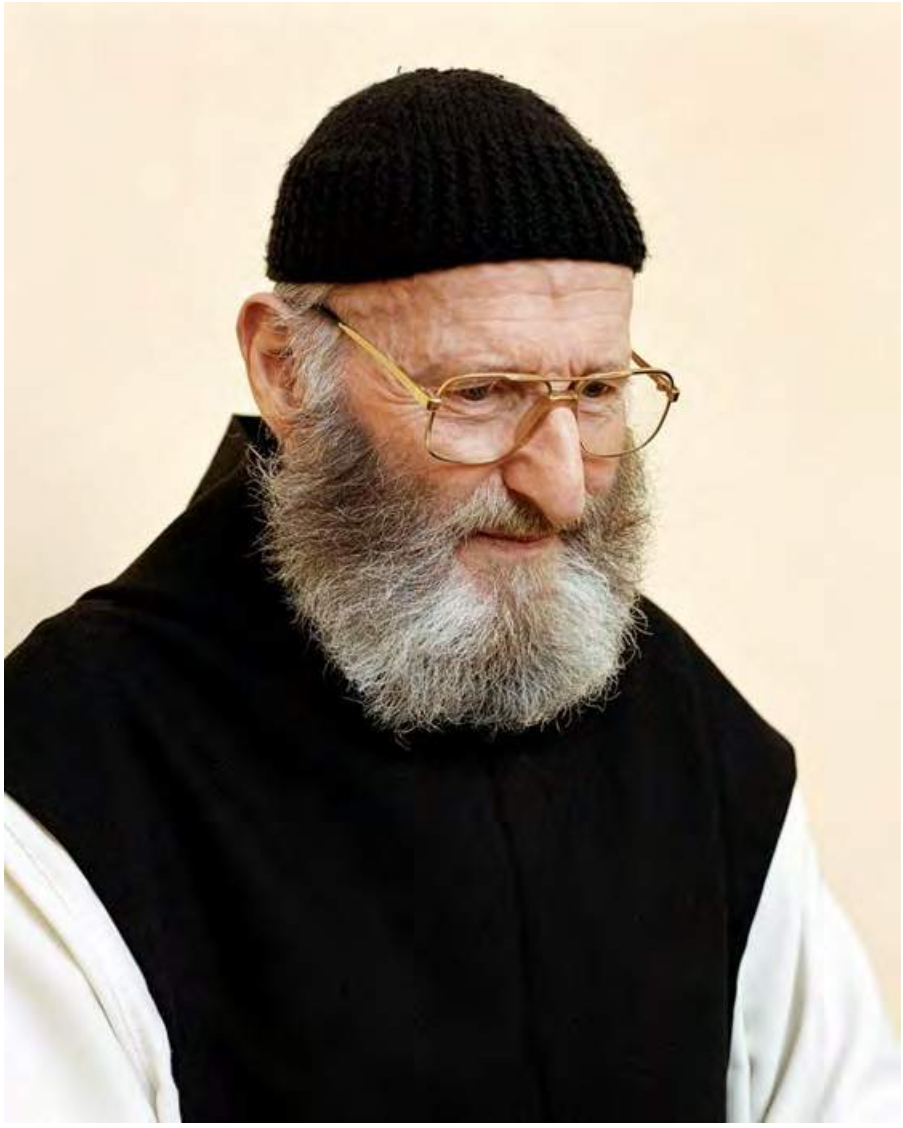


© Jackie Nickerson

Your career highlights to date and why?

"I would have to say shooting Dr. Jerry Brown for the Person of the Year cover for TIME magazine in 2014. Surprisingly, I was the first woman ever in the 87-year history of TIME magazine to shoot the Person of the Year cover. I went to Liberia to photograph the Ebola outbreak, working with two amazing colleagues, Aryn Baker and Paul Moakley.

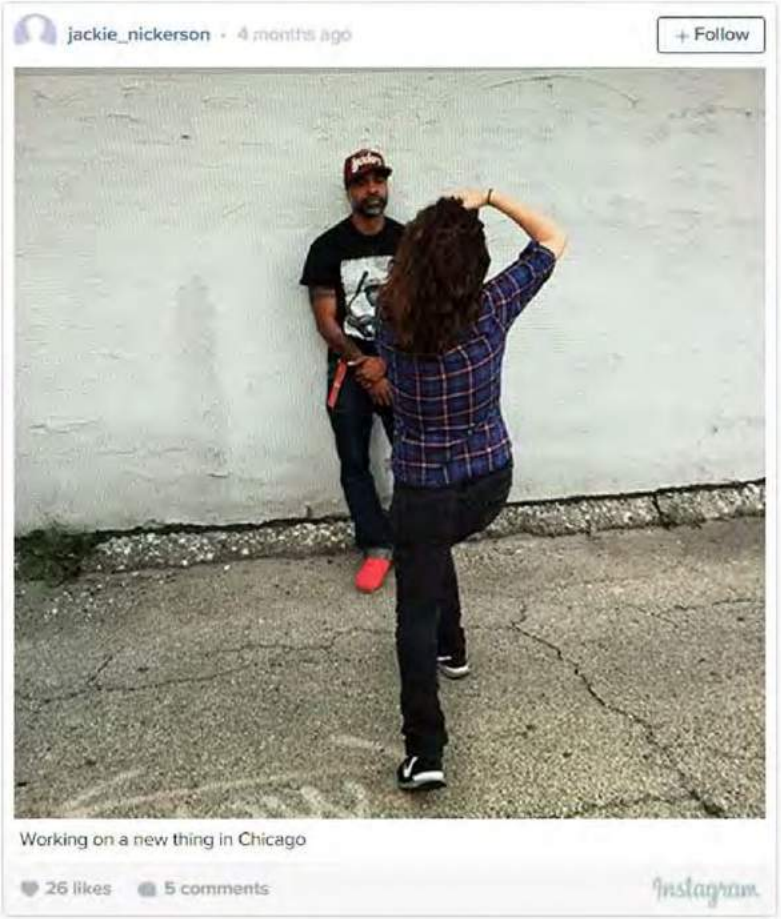
Also, getting my first book published was a benchmark and changed everything for me. FARM was published in 2002. It concentrates on how individual identity is made through improvisation. I heard it became an inspiration for fashion designers and was referenced so much at London's Central Saint Martins School of Art and Design that they actually banned it. I think it's fantastic that farm labourers can inspire art and design!"



Jackie Nickerson, Father Celestine, 2006 *© Jackie Nickerson*

Jackie Nickerson, Bryan #2, 2013 *© Jackie Nickerson*

The subject you would most like to photograph, but haven't yet...
"I have a long list, although I don't always get the opportunity to shoot the things I'd like to. The problem is that until I start the research I don't know if something is going to work so my time is always very precious."



What's in the pipeline for the next 12 months?
"Well, I'm working on a new project in America that will be published next year [Ed's note: readers, see a sneak peek from Nickerson's Instagram feed above]. And additionally, I have an exhibition opening at Ireland's National Gallery on the 8th October. Aidan Dunne in the Irish Times actually wrote 'Jackie Nickerson's Uniform, co-curated with Brendan Rooney, juxtaposes her superb portraits of agricultural workers in several southern African countries, published in her book Terrain, with paintings from the gallery collection. The show prompts us to question the way we identify and place individuals'."

Jackie Nickerson's 'Uniform' runs at The National Gallery of Ireland from October 8, 2015.

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PROFESSIONS

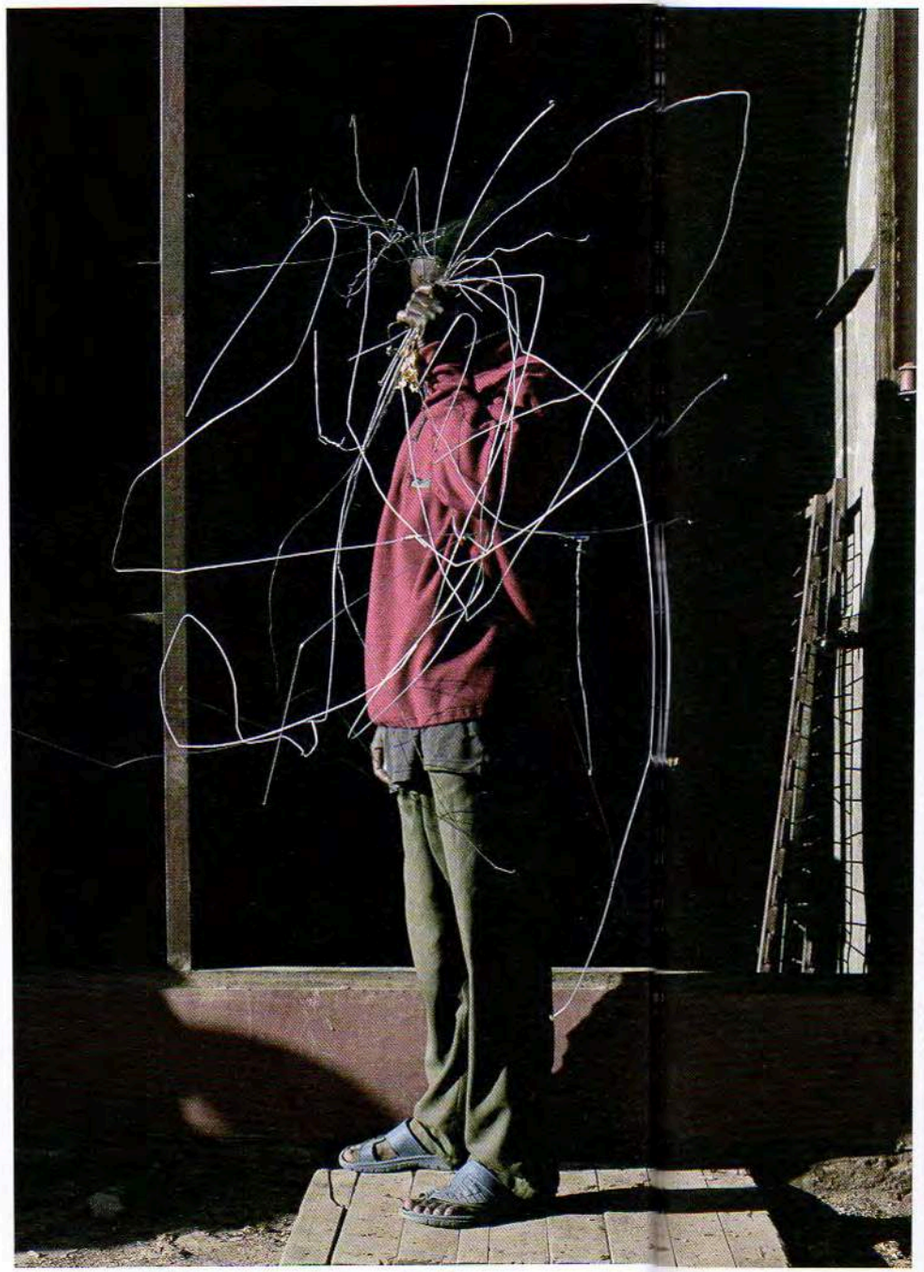
Terrain

Jackie Nickerson (1960, USA), building on an earlier series that she made on African farms, created powerful staged portraits of farm workers in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Kenya. She pushed the scale of her works to larger-than-life, so the subjects assume monumental proportions, transcending portraiture.

Despite the fact that these photographs undeniably address the issues of food production and labour, Terrain is not exactly what you'd expect from a photo essay on agri-business. Obscured by the crops, sacks, and rubber tubes that they carry, the figures become armatures, sculptural and almost symbolic. They may disappear behind their burdens, but the labourers that Nickerson shows are not anonymous.

Jackie Nickerson intentionally masks the individuals' faces in order to arrive at a higher awareness of their plight. With the problems of our world becoming more complex and progressively difficult to visualize, 'curve ball' social documentary portraits are slowly marking a genre in their own right. Terrain is a striking example of these photographic attempts to balance between the thought-provoking and the aesthetically pleasing.

jackienickerson.com



The New York Times

ART IN REVIEW

Jackie Nickerson: 'Terrain'

By MARTHA SCHWENDENER

Published: January 24, 2014

Jack Shainman

513 West 20th Street, Chelsea

Through Feb. 15

Jackie Nickerson works in a traditional social documentary format, not too dissimilar from Walker Evans or Dorothea Lange, only updated for the current millennium with large-scale color prints. However, in "Terrain," she upsets one of documentary's central tenants, what the scholar Ariella Azoulay calls the "social contract" of photography: the bond created when we gaze into the face of someone in a photograph and feel obligated to fight for social change.

Ms. Nickerson does this by photographing farm workers in southern and eastern Africa holding the materials and tools of their trades in front of them. Tobacco or banana leaves or plastic crates obscure their faces and bodies. Vestiges of identity linger in titles like "Catherine," "David," or "James" and local details like printed fabrics or plastic sandals.

Social documentary is customarily criticized for evoking pity or voyeuristic fascination. In the catalog accompanying the show, a worker whom Ms. Nickerson asked to photograph asks her, in return, "For whose pleasure?" By obscuring faces and identities, Ms. Nickerson avoids some of these complications, although the subjects end up looking like sculptures or low-tech robots — a bit like Eduardo Paolozzi's humanoid "Robot" sculptures from the 1950s.

The photographs still ripple with politics, particularly around the issues of food production, agribusiness and labor. It's just that they are marked with a next-generation awareness of the pitfalls of photographing people. Where the liberal humanism of earlier social documentary used people as its "universal" currency, "Terrain" puts plants and work implements in the foreground. In this sense, you might call Ms. Nickerson's work post-human social documentary.

A version of this review appears in print on January 24, 2014, on page C29 of the New York edition with the headline: Jackie Nickerson: 'Terrain'.

Schwendener, Martha. "Art in Review: Jackie Nickerson: 'Terrain'" (exhibition review). *The New York Times*, 24 January 2014: C29.

THE NEW YORKER

Feb. 3, 2014

Galleries—Chelsea

Jackie Nickerson, "Oscar" (2012)/Courtesy Jack Shainman

JACKIE NICKERSON
Shainman

Powerful color photographs of farm workers in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Kenya build on an earlier series that Nickerson made on African farms. This time, she's pushed her scale to larger-than-life size so the subjects assume the proportions of monuments and the works transcend portraiture. Obscured by the crops, sacks, and rubber tubes that they carry, the figures become armatures, sculptural and almost symbolic. They may disappear behind their burdens, but the laborers in Nickerson's show are not anonymous: she pointedly titles her pictures—"David," "Catherine," "Cephias"—after their subjects. Through Feb. 15.

"Galleries—Chelsea: Jackie Nickerson" (Jack Shainman Gallery exhibition review). *The New Yorker*, 3 February 2014: 8. Illustrated in *The New Yorker*, 10 February 2014.

The Visual Artists' News Sheet

VISUAL ARTISTS IRELAND

ISSUE 2 March – April 2014
Published by **Visual Artists Ireland** Ealaíontóirí Radharcacha Éire

Jackie Nickerson
'Terrain'
16 January 2014 – 15 February 2014
Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

Jackie Nickerson *Propagation Shed*, 2013 digital c-print 68 x 85 inches (Edition of 2 + AP) 38 1/2 x 48 inches (Edition of 3 + AP)
Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

JACKIE Nickerson reveals a compassionate tenderness and gravitas for her subjects while taking photographs of the land and the people in sub-Saharan Africa. In Nickerson's photographs, seemingly conventional art-historical tropes like portrait and landscape photography are merged to illustrate the cause and effect of working the land on both people and the environment. For her recent Jack Shainman Gallery exhibition, entitled 'Terrain', Nickerson travelled to Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia and South Africa to document agricultural workers, who constitute 70% of the workforce in Africa.[1] Nickerson's photographs blend figure and ground, transforming her subjects into sculptures in the landscape through a process of obstruction.

By blocking the facial features in her portraits, Nickerson highlights the physical presence of figures on the land, depicting how the bodies of the labourers become 'sculpted' through the repetitive actions of their work. Nickerson's formal approach offers an account of the land and those who work and survive off it, rather than neutralising the content of her images.

Beneath magnificent skies, Nickerson scrutinises shapes, distils details and produces vivid, large-scale photographs that reveal the great dignity of her subjects. The labourers (photographed individually) hide their face by holding up objects, utilitarian tools like plastic crates and metal cabling, or the 'fruits' of their labour such as banana and tobacco leaves that are stacked, coiled, balanced or held. By honing her eye on both the produce and the producers, Nickerson highlights the relationship between the two: people and place inextricably tied together.

Nickerson arrived at this approach of concealing the subject by chance. One afternoon, Nickerson saw a worker called Oscar harvesting tobacco leaves – clipping the large leaves from the bush and then transferring them to an elongated metal rod and slotting them into a series of slats. This process dries the leaves without moisture building up between them, but also 'obscures' the worker as he accumulates his harvest. It was this chance occurrence that alerted Nickerson to the potential of composing other images this way.

Oscar arrested Nickerson's attention. She simply asked him to stop and photographed him beneath the leaves that hung down and obstructed his face. Titled *Oscar* (2012), the work acknowledges the figure hidden in the photograph. Subsequent works similarly take the first name of the figure as a title, while some image titles borrow from locations used by the subjects, such as the photograph titled, *Propagation Shed* (2013).

Nickerson's works are grounded in a profound inquiry into the act of looking and being looked at. To this end, she notes that the problem with objectivity in photography is that the photographer always gets in the way. Significantly, Nickerson has indicated that she would like to make herself invisible while she is working.[2] She goes to great lengths to achieve this: travelling on her own and carrying her medium-format camera in a woven basket to minimise its presence. Acknowledging that her photographs come from and are directed at a "Western global North perspective", Nickerson is motivated to investigate her viewpoint and question how she interprets visual appearances. Nickerson tries to eliminate herself in the work; when her subject picks up a plastic crate to obscure his face, he no longer sees the photographer or the camera. There is of course a performative aspect to this work: the photographer is both participant and observer. Nickerson is standing in the same landscape as the subject while she does her work – her labour is also inextricably connected to the terrain.

Nickerson wants to do more than simply photograph the labourers; she wants to merge with them as an invisible presence, knit into the scene like the woven basket where she conceals her camera, to capture what is in plain sight. Through a collaborative working relationship, Nickerson participates in a form of immersive journalism, reportage similar to Walker Evans's tactics in his great, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. In contemporary photography it is important how, not just what is photographed. This shifts the reception of the work. Nickerson speaks about the humanity in her subjects. Through her own working methodology she emphasises the humanity she finds.

Nickerson now carries a copy of the Oscar image with her on other projects, showing his image to others for emulation – a form of collaboration that recognises the potential of the labourer within the landscape. The individual photographs within 'Terrain' are not so much static records but evidence of Nickerson's process of seeing.

Kathleen Madden is an art historian living in New York City, who teaches at Sotheby's Institute and Barnard College, Columbia University and is currently editing the 'Performa 13' book, due for publication in 2014.

Note

1. Statistic cited in gallery press materials for the exhibition
2. Author interview with the artist

TIME LightBox From the photo editors of TIME

January 2014 | By Miles Little

PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE NICKERSON—JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK

Why doesn't Nickerson follow the traditional path of "concerned" documentary photography, identifying individuals affected by an issue, and showing the particular details of their lives? Indeed, she rarely shows us any human faces in this project at all, and she totally erases important distinctions of nationality and culture within her diverse assortment of subjects. In effect, she hopes to reveal by concealing; she informs by holding back. —Myles Little

Jackie Nickerson's *Terrain* is on view January 16 - February 15, 2014 at Jack Shainman Gallery in New York. Read more about her portraits of Africa's laborers on LightBox.

Little, Myles. *Time Magazine*, January 2014. Online. <http://timelightbox.tumblr.com/post/74093463241/photograph-by-jackie-nickerson-jack-shainman>

THE NEW YORK TIMES STYLE MAGAZINE

On View | A Photographer's Artful Images of African Agriculture

CULTURE | By ERICA BELLMAN | JANUARY 17, 2014, 5:45 PM

Jackie Nickerson's "Oscar." *Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery*

Bellman, Erica. "On View : A Photographer's Artful Images of African Agriculture." *The New York Times Style Magazine*, 17 January 2014. Online. <http://tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/17/on-view-a-photographers-artful-images-of-african-agriculture/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&module=BlogPost-Title&version=Blog%20Main&contentCollection=On%20View &action=Click&pgtype=Blogs&region=Body&_r=1>

"Imasiku" Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery

"James" Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery

In 1997, Jackie Nickerson set out for a farm in Zimbabwe to visit a friend, intending to stay for just a few weeks. But the landscapes, people and agricultural practices of sub-Saharan Africa captivated her, so she ended up staying for four years. At the beginning of her time in Africa, the former fashion photographer documented the rural scenes around the southern part of the continent. The more she traveled, the more her portfolio of alluring portraits and landscapes grew, photographs which she eventually compiled into "Farm," her first body of work outside of fashion, which was released as a book in 2002.

Nickerson's sequel to that series, "Terrain," was created in the past two years, over the course of more than 15 visits to Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Now on view at Jack Shainman Gallery in New York, the larger-than-life-size photographs illustrate the process by which crops are cultivated and transformed into consumer products.

The inspiration for the project came during one of Nickerson's habitual walks through the fields in Africa (she currently splits her time between that continent and Ireland). "I would go around in the early morning, around 7 a.m., and I would talk to people in the fields," she explained. "One day, I saw a man carrying a big barrel of tobacco, and it was more of a cinematic moment, and he became this sculptural figure." This moment was the starting point for "Terrain," a set of

Bellman, Erica. "On View : A Photographer's Artful Images of African Agriculture." *The New York Times Style Magazine*, 17 January 2014. Online. <http://tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/17/on-view-a-photographers-artful-images-of-african-agriculture/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&module=BlogPost-Title&version=Blog%20Main&contentCollection=On%20View &action=Click&pgtype=Blogs&region=Body&_r=1>

sparse, visually arresting images in which the organic and synthetic materials associated with agricultural labor — heaps of just-harvested bananas, packing crates, sheaths of burlap and tattered banana leaves — conceal each subject's face. The resulting geometric figures are poignant depictions of commercial food production at its very source.

Nickerson emphasizes that "Terrain" is the result of an ongoing collaboration with the people whose livelihood she depicts in her work. "I would visit certain locations and show the people what I was working on," she remembers. "I would ask them, 'Is there something in your daily life that might look something like this?' I suppose I became more of a director, and these people became my collaborators."

Nickerson's photographs will dispel any city-dweller's romantic notions of farming. "There's an ideal, pastoral image of the countryside many people associate with food production," Nickerson says. "The reality is that farming has become so intensive and yield is very important, and the use of artificial materials has become critical. What I'm presenting is a hybrid environment, one that's not 'Nature' but is still natural."

"Makanyara" Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery

"Sililo" Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery

Terrain is on view through Feb. 15 at Jack Shainman Gallery, 513 W. 20th Street, N.Y.; jackshainman.com.

Bellman, Erica. "On View : A Photographer's Artful Images of African Agriculture." *The New York Times Style Magazine*, 17 January 2014. Online. <http://tmagazine.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/17/on-view-a-photographers-artful-images-of-african-agriculture/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&module=BlogPost-Title&version=Blog%20Main&contentCollection=On%20View &action=Click&pgtype=Blogs&region=Body&_r=1>

SPECTRUM

December 19, 2014

Five Questions with Jackie Nickerson

December 19, 2014 (http://spectrumphoto.co.uk/five-questions-with-jackie-nickerson) Kayung Lai

This week our Five Questions are with the talented Jackie Nickerson. Her images featuring the Ebola frontline fighters are featured on the cover of this year's TIME's magazine Person of the Year. Her first body of work, Farm, was made over a three-year period in rural locations all over southern Africa and explores how individual identity is made through improvisation. Her most recent series, Terrain, Nickerson explores the roles in which workers play in the production and commodification of agricultural goods. Her work has been exhibited extensively and she is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York.

Describe your photographic practice?

I work mainly in fine art photography. I think it's reasonable to say that portraiture is central to my practice although I like to put people in context with their environment. I see the camera as a way for me to connect with the world. My work is a result of my own personal experiences.

What drew you to making work in Africa?

I lived in Zimbabwe for a number of years in the 1990s so it was a part of my life. I loved the country but felt constrained by the nature of the post-colonial social life there, which meant that I wasn't meeting any indigenous Zimbabweans. I started to walk around the farm where I lived, using photography as a way to approach and talk to people. I'm from an urban background, where I've lived in confined spaces and environments made up of concrete. For me, space has always been a precious commodity. So living in rural Africa gave me a feeling of space and freedom and a different perspective on life.

We recently saw your images on the front cover of the TIME magazine for your portraits of the Ebola fighters, can you explain how you became involved in this project?

I've never worked for TIME magazine before so it was a surprise when they contacted me. When they called, it was Thursday night and I was in Paris working on another assignment. By Monday I was in Liberia. It all happened so fast. I didn't have a moment's hesitation about doing the job – I knew it was a really important story and I felt honoured to have been given the opportunity to make photographs of these very courageous people.

How did you find the change from working in analogue to working digitally?

I've always preferred working with film but digital has a lot going for it. I don't know why but for me, some images work better with film and some work better with digital. I didn't find the transition too difficult. I'm happy to use both. I find digital very helpful in the field – you can show people the kind of photograph you're making and put them at ease and it's also good to know that you've actually got the image you're looking for. I think digital has been great for the scope it gives the photographer in post-production.

What's next for Jackie Nickerson?

I’m working on two new books and I have a number of exhibitions coming up next year.

(http://spectrumphoto.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Elina-1-2013.jpg)

Elina #1, Terrain, Jackie Nickerson, 2013

(http://spectrumphoto.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Brother-Michael-2005.jpg)

Brother Michael, Faith, Jackie Nickerson, 2005

DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Salome Karwah

An Ebola survivor, 26, she lost both her parents to the disease and now counsels patients in Liberia

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Foday Gallah

Nicknamed the "Miracle Man" by his neighbors, the Ebola survivor, 37, supervises an ambulance team in Monrovia

DOUBLE ISSUE

DEC. 22 / DEC. 29, 2014

PERSON OF THE YEAR

TIME

THE EBOLA FIGHTERS

Ella Watson-Stryker

The 34-year-old American health educator for Doctors Without Borders has been helping fight Ebola in West Africa since March

jan 16*th*

STATUESQUE

In 2002, when **Jackie Nickerson** published *Farm*, a book of portraits and landscapes from Africa, she'd put a career as a fashion photographer behind her. But fashion wasn't done with her: As soon as stylists and designers saw the inventiveness of the layered outfits worn by the field workers in her pictures (think grassroots Comme des Garçons), the book became a cult favorite. **"Terrain,"** her latest body of work, on view at Jack Shainman Gallery in New York from January 16 through February 15, 2014, finds her back on similar turf, but this time her human subjects appear utterly overwhelmed by the burden of their labor. All but invisible beneath bundles of wire, plastic sheeting, or banana leaves, the figures become sculptural supports (*above, from left*, 2013's *Elina #1* and *Innocent*). For Nickerson, the series is about issues—the environment, the value of labor—that aren't confined to Africa. VINCE ALETTI

AnOther

Jackie Nickerson's Terrain

Conversations with leading cultural figures
— November 19, 2013 —

Jackie Nickerson, Clemence, 2012 © *Jackie Nickerson*

Photographer Jackie Nickerson talks Africa, agriculture and political motivation as her new book and accompanying exhibition are launched

Photographer **Jackie Nickerson** strikes a perfect balance between the thought provoking and the aesthetically pleasing, her works skillfully composed, harmoniously hued explorations of identity and environment. In her first book, the much acclaimed Farm, Nickerson examined agricultural life in Africa through a series of landscape shots and engaging, “straight up” portraits of farm labourers. Since then, the photographer has turned her lens to religious communities (in her beautifully austere series Faith) as well as to the dapper Brazzaville “Sapeurs” of The Congo for her series Sapeur. Now, however, Nickerson has come full circle, returning to both Africa and agriculture – but more broadly and with a more theoretical slant – for her latest book and accompanying exhibition, both entitled Terrain.

As in Farm, Nickerson presents landscapes alongside portraiture but unlike those of her first project, Terrain's labourers remain anonymous, each worker's face disguised by the tools or materials of their trade – from plastic crates and sheeting to jagged banana leaves. "This more sculptural structure, where the identity of the person becomes intertwined with what they are growing, is a kind of metaphor for the process of labour, and how we can’t escape the physical and psychological effects of what we engage with," Nickerson explains. The images are hugely powerful, shying away from usual methods of photojournalism and instead employing a reduced but mesmerising artistic language to raise key questions surrounding the issues of crop specialisation, subsistence farming and food security. Here, the day before the exhibition opens at London's Brancolini Grimaldi gallery, we chat to Nickerson to discover more about the project as well as her inspirations and motivations.

"I think it’s my job to ask questions, sometimes difficult questions and ask people to think about how they might address these"

When did you first visit Africa? What is it about the continent that draws you back to it – physically and in terms of subject matter?

My first visit to Africa was in 1997. I went for 2 weeks and ended up staying for four years. I’m from an urban background, where I’ve lived in confined spaces and environments made up of concrete. Space is a precious commodity. So my first visit to Africa was liberating – it gave me a feeling of space and freedom. There were places that were completely natural, un-manicured, feral, volatile. I found it intensely interesting. And of course, the subject matter – us in the landscape, followed on from this.

What were the key inspirations behind Terrain?

I'm inspired by all kinds of things – not only images, but writers, sculptors and painters. It can be a political or intellectual issue that interests me. Then I have to work out how to make images that put these points of interest across. I think that’s why this series of photographs is more conceptual than my previous work.

What interests you in particular about the relationship between people and their working environments?

I've always been interested in cause and effect and this theory informs all my work. I'm specifically interested in how we are all affected by our environment – whether it has a big impact or just a miniscule impact, short term or long term. And I want to observe those markers, those signals. I've usually concentrated on sub groups of people working within a specific environment.

Jackie Nickerson, James, 2013 & James #2, 2013 © *Jackie Nickerson*

What do you hope viewers will take away from Terrain?

I think it's my job to ask questions, sometimes difficult questions and ask people to think about how they might address these questions. I hope I've done this with these pictures.

Despite the fact that the images in Terrain depict a very industrious and laborious way of life, they are beautifully shot and very aesthetically pleasing. Is beauty something that you consciously try to achieve in your work?

When I began to take the pictures I realised that I needed to create a visual language that put across the farmers and farm workers as individuals and as modern people. I wanted the viewer to be challenged to look at Africa in a different way and also for the images to have an aesthetic, a beauty. Actually, the images are very much a recreation of moments in everyday life – it's naturally beautiful.

Would you describe your work as politically motivated?

Yes, very much so. Human rights are a big motivation for me. There are all kinds of issues that motivate me in my work – global warming, water resources, sustainable development, labor issues and other

important problems. It might seem strange to address these issues with these images but for me, it's really not.

Do you have a favourite memory from your time spent in Africa shooting Terrain?

I wish I could single one experience out, but there are always so many. I guess the thing I enjoyed most was the collaborative process of working with the guys on the farms I visited. We had a lot of laughs and I learned a lot.

Terrain opens at Brancolini Grimaldi tomorrow and runs until December 21. The book is available now.
Text by Daisy Woodward

Daisy Woodward is the AnOthermag.com social media and editorial assistant.

ANOTHER AFRICA

Jackie Nickerson | Our Daily Bread

Written by Kyle Tregurtha on Nov 01, 2013 in Art & Culture, Photography

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While getting ready to speak with Jackie Nickerson about *'Terrain'* my main interests were the aesthetic and sculptural qualities of the compilation, with some inquiries orbiting the place labourers hold in national psyche.

In the flurry of our exchange, protracted over three countries and two continents, I found our confab returning to the process and production of food, and how it is that one of the problems facing African agriculture is the adoption of Western methods of production.

© Jackie Nickerson. Terrain, *Oscar, 2012.* Courtesy of the artist.

Tregurtha, Kyle. "Jackie Nickerson – Our Daily Bread." *Another Africa*, 1 November 2013. Online. <http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread>

Compositionally '*Terrain*' is very striking. As the press release for the upcoming book launch reads; "Terrain is about us in the landscape, how we change the world we inhabit at every moment of our being human, and how, for the better and for worse, the world that we make, in turn, changes who we are."

There's a manipulation in *'Terrain'* of Nickerson's figures, sculpting her subjects on the terrain into amalgamations of the whole process of food production. At first glance we notice their beauty, then, perhaps secondarily, their relationship to the place they're in, hopefully landing on the idea of man-in-nature.

In this series the cultivated land of Africa rolls ripely behind the subjects (which seem to become objects) of Nickerson's images; "I think Africa is bracketed by two exaggerated images: urban squalor and rural wildness. I am trying to disrupt this commonplace assumption, and make images that might make us think about the value of labour and give an insight into the people who are growing our food."

© Jackie Nickerson. Terrain, *Makanyara, 2013*. Courtesy of the artist.

Tregurtha, Kyle. "Jackie Nickerson – Our Daily Bread." *Another Africa*, 1 November 2013. Online. <http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread>

When first introduced to '*Terrain*' I couldn't escape the obscured visual of these whopping heaps, bundles, and sheafs moving from earth to market with the worker, positioned underneath these piles, as a fulcrum. Mechanized men moving masses for the benefit of the majority. USSR style state-sanctioned propaganda, which created iconography out of the land labourer to support long term production goals, flitted before my mind's eye as I tried to interpret the question Nickerson was posing.

In the psyche of the developed world, man's disconnect from nature is a phenomena that Nickerson is hovering over. In a very broad examination into the materials and process of food production, which obscure the individual, Nickerson creates photographs particularly pertinent to the developed north and the USA right now, and poses the same question to countries like Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia, in which these photographs were taken, as they further mechanize their food production. We are at a point in our existence when what we put into the microwave or have delivered, shares no connection to a thought about from where it came, or who laboured to grow and harvest it. That's a statement on globalisation; the post-industrial experience is inching toward ubiquity.

Is this absence of humanity in our daily food not disconcerting? It was in Nickerson's case, indeed it seeded the project. She tells me 'in fact, they [labourers] are somewhat hidden and forgotten… are an unseen part of rural life – agriculture is highly mechanized so even if you're traveling around the countryside, it's unusual to see people working on the land. This is partly why I made this work in parts of Africa. I began to see something of this when I was living in Zimbabwe.'

It is this direct intersection with the landscape that informed our conversations, and through our tête-à-tête that her sensitivity toward food, the environment and the future of both were revealed. Nickerson's firsthand experience in the SADC as flaneur and thoughtful documenter is, at heart, an experience of the strung-out reverberations of decolonization and sanctioned neocolonialism. Land rights and the auctioning of these, usage and the power that comes with owning land, and the role the end user plays in this cycle, have imprinted on Jackie. The precipitous entry of the continent and its players at the juncture of commerce and agriculture is something she is impassioned about on a local and global scale.

Trying to make sense of these issues is not a particularly easy thing. However, these questions should be asked even if we don't have conclusive answers. If these photographs can get under the skin, they have the ability to shake a person's self-world relationship.

TERRAIN will be exhibited in London at Brancolini Grimaldi (Nov. 19 – Dec 31) and at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York (Jan. 16 – Feb. 20. 2014). The book published by TF Editores will be released in November 2013.

About : Jackie Nickerson (b. Boston, USA, 1960) makes photographs that examine identity, and the physical and psychological effects of working within specific environments. Her work is held in many important private and public collections and has been exhibited in venues which include the Santa Barbara Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art, Salzburg; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; National Portrait Gallery, London and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. Her new book 'Terrain' will be published in November 2013 through TF Editores. She is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York and Brancolini Grimaldi in London.

Tregurtha, Kyle. "Jackie Nickerson – Our Daily Bread." *Another Africa*, 1 November 2013. Online. <http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=jackie-nickerson-our-daily-bread>

ANOTHER AFRICA

Jackie Nickerson | Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming

Written by Missla Libsekal on Nov 22, 2013 in Art & Culture, Featured, Photography

Soft muted colours, abstraction, sculptural configurations, farm equipment as quasi readymades. Not exactly what you'd expect from a photo essay on agribusiness and that is exactly the point. *Terrain* is meant to be atypical.

© Jackie Nickerson. Left: *Oscar, 2012*. Right: Makanyara, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery.

A meeting of two worlds, of art and photo documentation, this latest series by Jackie Nickerson intentionally masks the individual but will that stratagem unmask the issues? While social documentary historically brings faces to the fore, Nickerson's faceless sculptures intend to disrupt. In an age where shock value still commands, this delicate gambit undertakes to make a case that not all serious issues need to shock us to attention. Take a deeper look at *Terrain*, with insights from the photographer in our recent article Jackie Nickerson | Our Daily Bread.

> "Terrain is very visually specific and concentrates on a particular kind of representation. The lack of personal identity in the photographs is a very deliberate question mark. I want to challenge the viewer to ask, 'what is this about?' We're becoming deaf to political messages like global warming, sustainable development and labor issues because of crisis fatigue. I believe that we have an indelible link to the earth but we've begun to undervalue it—even forget about it." –*Jackie Nickerson*

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Cephias, 2013

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Innocent, 2013

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Patricia, 2012

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Wander, 2013

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Arthur #, 2012

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Orbert, 2012

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

Lovemore, 2013.

Libsekal, Missla. "Jackie Nickerson – Terrain, An Atypical View on Farming." *Another Africa,* 22 November 2013. Online. < http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/jackie-nickerson-terrain-an-atypical-view-on-farming>

TIME LightBox From the photo editors of TIME

Monday, October 28, 2013 | By Myles Little

Hiding Africa: Jackie Nickerson's Portraits of Laborers

Wander, 2003, courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery

Boston-born, London-based Jackie Nickerson is perhaps best known to photography aficionados for *Faith* (SteidlMACK, 2007), her quietly beautiful study of Catholic religious orders in Ireland. Her latest book, *Terrain*, comes from an entirely different direction, both geographically and thematically. Shot in a half-dozen countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, the work in *Terrain* reveals — or rather, disguises — farm workers in surprising new ways.

Nickerson came to this work via a circuitous route. After spending the first 15 years of her career shooting fashion for high-profile clients like *Interview* and *Vogue*, she was simply burned out.

"You're wasting your life," she recalls thinking to herself. "If you want to do photography, you've got to rethink this whole thing."

In 1997, a friend invited her on a trip to Zimbabwe for a few weeks. She stayed for four years.

Little, Myles. "Hiding Africa: Jackie Nickerson's Portraits of Laborers." *Time Magazine*, 28 October 2013. Online. <http://lightbox.time.com/2013/10/28/hiding-africa-jackie-nickersons-portraits-of-laborers/#1>

"I bought a small flatbed truck and started to travel all around the country and then went to South Africa, Malawi and Mozambique. I took pictures of everything." She was hooked, and has been back to Africa many times since.

While Terrain may recall images of laborers by photographers such as August Sander and Irving Penn, Nickerson is after something different. By showing farm workers with the tools and products of their labor, she wants to draw our attention to "our connection to the land, the importance of labor, how we grow things, and our environment. We've got to think of ways to make food that's sustainable," she argues. "There are green alternatives where people can feed their families and make a good living."

Furthermore, Nickerson thinks it's empowering to show her subjects engaged in labor. All too often, she argues, the media define people in the developing world by their poverty, rather than by their contributions—the actions they take every day to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads.

These are admirable goals. So why doesn't Nickerson follow the traditional path of "concerned" documentary photography, identifying individuals affected by an issue, and showing the particular details of their lives? Indeed, she rarely shows us any human faces in this project at all, and she totally erases important distinctions of nationality and culture within her diverse assortment of subjects. In effect, she hopes to reveal by concealing; she informs by holding back.

She knows she may be in for criticism from some people for this strategy of concealment, but asserts that we have "become deaf to political messages like global warming, water resources, sustainable development, labor issues and other important problems, because of crisis fatigue. The lack of personal identity in the photographs is a deliberate question mark. Something that wasn't literal but a little ambiguous, because I believe it's a more effective way to challenge the viewer to ask, What is this about?"

Her decision to hide her subjects' faces also serves to underscore the power-dynamic inherent in virtually all forms of portraiture.

"As a photographer, you're in a powerful position," Nickerson says. "You're the 'taker' and you have a sitter who is 'giving' the image to you. You've got to somehow give the power back, you've got to even things up, so that everyone can walk away from the situation and feel good about it."

Having her subjects playfully obscure their identities, Nickerson willingly cedes some of her own power — with the paradoxical result that both the photographer and her subjects emerge richer, aesthetically, by the trade-off.

Jackie Nickerson *is a photographer based in London. Her book* Terrain *(TF Editores) comes out in November 2013, and Jack Shainman Gallery will exhibit the work in January 2014.*

Myles Little *is an associate photo editor at TIME.*

Little, Myles. "Hiding Africa: Jackie Nickerson's Portraits of Laborers." *Time Magazine*, 28 October 2013. Online.
<http://lightbox.time.com/2013/10/28/hiding-africa-jackie-nickersons-portraits-of-laborers/#1>

modern farmer

‘We Become Part of What We Grow’: Photographing Ag in Africa

By Jake Swearingen on November 11, 2013
Photography by Jackie Nickerson

Swearingen, Jake. “We Become Part of What We Grow: Photographing Ag in Africa.” *Modern Farmer*, 11 November 2013. Online. < http://modernfarmer.com/2013/11/become-part-grow-photographing-ag-africa/>

Jackie Nickerson, a London-based photographer with three decades of experience shooting, has done work for *W*, the New York Times, *Vogue* and more. Her latest project: a sweeping but surprising look at farming in southern and eastern Africa called "Terrain." The book, a semi-follow up to her 2002 book "Farm," shows farmers at work in carefully composed shots (often obscuring their faces) that investigate, as Nickerson puts it, " the fundamental relationship we have with growing things."

We talked to Nickerson about her work, her message, and how she explained her project her subjects.

Modern Farmer: What made you want to start shooting this series?

Jackie Nickerson: In 1997 I was out visiting a friend whose brother owned a farm in Zimbabwe. I'm from a very urban background — I've always lived in cities, pretty much — and so when I went out and had this prolonged period of time on a farm, it opened my eyes to a whole other world. That was the beginning of my interest in farming and how we produce food.

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MF: What was your process for shooting this series of photos? How did that work in the fields?

JN: Well, you know, it's difficult. I'm white and I'm going to to Africa, where most of the indigenous people there are black. So there are some issues there because of the end of colonialism, and especially with Europeans — or "global northern people" let's say — going into Africa and trying to define Africa instead of letting Africans define their own countries and their own continent. So, that is always a problem.

But from where I'm coming from, it's not about ethnicity at all. It's more about the problem of how we choose to grow food, and the political problems that we're all facing — not only Africa — about how we make a sustainable environment and make good food.

And it's also about labor and human rights issues. Coming from Europe, most of the food here is very, very commercial and mechanized and there's not a lot connection to labor on the land. So if you really want to investigate the primeval relationship we have with growing things, you have to go somewhere where it's labor intensive, and that place is Africa.

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MF: So where were these photographs primarily shot?

JN: Kenya, Tanzinia, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa were the main places.

MF: What was your interaction like when you approached these farmers and explained what your photo project was?
JN: Getting access was difficult for various reasons. There were security issues in some places. There were also issues with going in because of unions and various political issues, especially where you're going in with people in a working environment. Recently there's been a lot of documentaries where people go in and highlight risks and lack of worker protection — people who don't wear masks when they're spraying, not having suitable protective clothing, stuff like that.

But that's not where I'm coming from at all. There's a place for that, but what I'm really interested in is the fundamental relationship we have with growing things and how important it is to understand and respect that. Eventually I did get access to places, and I have to say, once you go in there and you talk to people and explain what you're doing — I mean, they look at you, like "Who is this crazy lady?" But then people also get really into it.

Of course I do pictures for the guys that I'm working with of them and their kids, but I've gotten a really positive response from Africans, because they're like, "This is a completely different way of looking at this," and it's something they can relate to.

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MF: In the photographs you often don't see the farmers faces at all. What was behind that decision?

JN: Well, in whole series, there's 70 images, but there was only a very specific type of image that was released to the press. In the book there's seven or eight full-figure, more classic portraits, where they look straight on at you and you can see stuff like how important their hands are to them. But, yeah, not showing their faces was about this idea when you're doing physical labor, even gardening, when you're doing heavy, repetitive labor, it's gets into your body, into your psyche. It becomes part of your physicality and physiognomy. You become one with whatever you're doing. So this is trying to be a kind of metaphor for that. That we become part of what we create, we become a part of what we grow, on all kinds of non-practical levels. That's the basis behind all growing.

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MF: Did the farmers themselves have issues with being photographed when you wouldn't see their faces?

JN: No, they didn't really. One of the issues, as someone coming in from the outside, is that there's always a negotiation with portraiture. You go in, you're there with your camera, and people want to have their picture taken.

But it's also much more complicated than that. There's a perception that as a white person you're going in there and you're empowered and the people whose picture you're taking, they'll just agree to anything you want to do. But it's not like that when you're in the field and in those environments. People are asking all kinds of questions. What are you doing this for? How are we gonna look? Are you political? Are you a journalist? Are you working for the government? There's all kinds of negotiations going on.

I do explain my project to everybody, and I do take nice pictures of people, nice classic portraits, and I send the farmers those pictures. I try to explain to people that I want put this message across, and do something more creative.

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MF: How do you explain that message to farmers?

JN: You show them pictures. You have to understand, you're standing in a field in the middle of Zambia, and you're talking to guys who speak two or three languages. I only speak one. [laughs] Everyone has access to the Internet, everyone has mobile phones, everyone is much more image aware than you would ever think these days. So believe me it's not difficult.

I was in Kenya, in some big tea estates, and some of the guys who were picking tea were university graduates. One guy had his M.A. in engineering, but couldn't get a job and had to come back to the family home and was picking tea. There's a lack of opportunity in many parts of Africa where kids are very well-educated and they end up in a rural environment. Seventy percent of Africa is employed by the agricultural sector. It's a huge, huge, huge swath of the population, so you get all kinds of people.

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feature shoot

Photos of Living Sculptures Juxtapose African Farm Workers and Native Plants and Vegetables

by CAROLYN RAUCH *on OCTOBER 24, 2013*

Long familiar with the cultures and relationships of southern Africa, photographer Jackie Nickerson examines the juxtaposition of man and earth in her newest series *Terrain*. Inspired by environmental questions about our connection with land that surrounds us, Nickerson uses the human form to create sculptures from her subjects. Although she officially started shooting in 2012, Nickerson began the process a year earlier, allowing the images themselves to move the project forward without having a predetermined idea in mind. We recently spoke with her about the series.

Where did you find your subjects?

"In 1997 I was living in Harare, Zimbabwe and began work on my first series, *FARM*, which focused on individual identity through improvisation. That series featured farmers and farm workers all over southern

Rauch, Carolyn. "Photos of Living Sculptures Juxtapose African Farm Workers and Native Plants and Vegetables." *Feature Shoot*, 24 October 2013. Online. <http://w ww.featureshoot.com/2013/10/photos-of-living-sculptures-juxtapose-african-farm-workers-and-native-plants-and-vegetables/>

Africa. As a starting point, I went back to a few places I had been before. I asked if they wanted to work with me, and I was invited to go to Kenya and other countries to continue my work there.

"Contact with the person I'm photographing is always on a one-on-one basis. Everyone is different—some people like having their picture taken, other people don't. It's a personal choice. I always work without any management present, as I don't want my subject to feel any coercion."

What are the subjects doing?

"They are photographed where they work. The crops include a vast variety of different foods. The subjects can be reaping, weeding, planting—anything that needs doing. This is the starting point. I stop, have a chat, and explain what I am doing. I ask them to suggest real scenarios in their place of work. Most of the images are spontaneous and come about by hanging out and waiting and watching for the right moment.

"*Terrain* is very visually specific and concentrates on a particular kind of representation. The lack of personal identity in the photographs is a very deliberate question mark. I want to challenge the viewer to ask, 'what is this about?' We're becoming deaf to political messages like global warming, sustainable development and labor issues because of crisis fatigue. I believe that we have an indelible link to the earth but we've begun to undervalue it—even forget about it."

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Terrain is soon to be published as a book by TF Editores in November 2013. Her solo exhibition will run from November 19th to December 31st at Brancolini Grimaldi, London.

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photography + microgrants fototazo

3.11.2013

Project Release: Jackie Nickerson, "TERRAIN"

fototazo publishes new photography projects, providing an early look at images from selected artists. Today's Project Release is from Jackie Nickerson.

Nickerson makes photographs that examine the essential nature of people and their relationship to the natural world through personal identity, and the physical and psychological condition of living and working within a specific environment.

Her first body of work, *FARM*, was made over a three-year period in rural locations all over southern Africa. It concentrates on how individual identity is made through improvisation. This was published by Jonathan Cape in September 2002 and was followed by a German edition entitled 'Leben Mit Der Erde' published by Frederking and Thaler (2002) and a French edition, 'Une Autre Afrique' published by Flammarion (2002).

Her most recent work revisits eastern and southern Africa and focuses on labor and how the exertions of labor leave psychic and material traces in people and the environment. The work comprises of a number of series including *TERRAIN*, *Jaggery*, *Lime* and *Field 22*.

Jackie Nickerson was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1960. Her work has been exhibited internationally including at the Museum of Modern Art, Salzburg; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; National Portrait Gallery, London; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; and the Hereford Museum, UK.

Her work is held in many collections including the Museum of Modern Art, NY; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Vatican Museums, Rome; and the National Gallery of Ireland.

In 2008 she was the winner of the AIB prize and has been short listed for the Deutscher Fotobuchpreis award (2008) and the John Kobal Prize (2003). In 2007 she was selected to be part of Le Mois de la Photo in Paris showing at the Centre Culturel Irlandais. She is the recipient of a Culture Ireland award and three Visual Art Bursaries from the Irish Arts Council.

She is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York and Brancolini Grimaldi in London.

A text on the work follows the images.

Fotozano, 11 March 2013. <http://www.fototazo.com/2013/03/project-release-jackie-nickerson-terrain.html>

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People and landscapes in TERRAIN intertwine and co-exist at that moment which is central to the moil of the human race – the cultivation of crops and the turning of raw materials into something made.

Gazing steadily at the point at which one element meets another, TERRAIN asks us to think about these imprints left by the material processes of work as the evidence of our presence on the earth, and to think about how contemporary human beings, living in a western urban environment, can relate to the metaphysics of the labor which enables our lives.

In a time when environmental politics thinks too simplistically about the effect that humans have on nature, TERRAIN nudges us towards a deeper understanding of the lived spaces of human activity. Here hands and plants, limbs and fabric, bodies and soil hold close to one another. Visually, the easy sense that there is nature and that there is humanity, and that the two are separate, ceases to exist. In TERRAIN people are, in the fullest sense of that archaic adjective, 'terrene', of the earth.

Text provided by Jackie Nickerson.

Fotozano, 11 March 2013. <http://www.fototazo.com/2013/03/project-release-jackie-nickerson-terrain.html>

Jackie Nickerson's 1997 portrait of a Zimbabwean farm worker, at Shainman.

which a virtuous woman's resolve is weakened by elaborate gardens and impeccable home décor—is paired with images panning the modern interior of a nineteen-twenties Rudolph Schindler house in Los Angeles. Like a "Liaisons Dangereuses" for the *Wallpaper* set, Burgin's video begs the question for contemporary-design mavens: what might a Koolhaas or Gehry do for you? Through May 28. (Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. 212-462-2668.)

JIM CAMPBELL

These light boxes, built from L.E.D. panels, Plexiglas (sometimes mounted with photos), and artist-designed electronics, look a bit like out-of-focus flat-screen television sets, though the comparison doesn't do the craft behind them justice. Campbell trained in math and electrical engineering at M.I.T. and applies that technical know-how to studies of waves and ghostly city scenes. He usually sticks with black-and-white, which makes them seem melancholic, and adds further notes of glumness or poetry by toying with the speed. The images are a little underwhelming, but still intriguing, and are very impressive as constructions. Through May 14. (Wolkowitz, 601 W. 26th St. 212-243-8830.)

JASPER JOHNS

Thirty-eight paintings, drawings, and prints made since 1996, all part of the artist's "Catenary" series. Through June 25. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 212-243-0200.)

GERALD LAING

American consumerism and militarism were most memorably linked in James Rosenquist's epic "F-111" (1964-65). Here, the British painter-sculptor Laing tries his hand at a new version for the post-9/11 era. The notorious Abu Ghraib photographs serve as fodder, seen through the filter of iconic Pop style, as evinced by Lichtenstein, Warhol, and Rosenquist himself. The exclamation "Look Mickey, I've hooked a big one!!" floats over a private holding a prisoner on a leash. "Catechism" places the famous hooded figure on Brillo boxes in a composition that echoes El Greco. As political paintings go, these aren't the subtlest; the glibness of the sixties Pop idiom mixed with torture photos just doesn't reach the sublime and scary grandeur of "F-111." Through May 28. (Spike, 547 W. 20th St. 212-627-4100.)

NICOLA LÓPEZ

Like illustrations from a dystopian graphic novel, López's twisting cut-paper sculptures and layered drawings show dream cities chockablock with unhealthy mechanisms like oil derricks, nuclear plants, and power towers. Highways wind through seething construction, while fighter jets—individually cut out and affixed to the wall—stream off like flocks of birds. The paper is overlapped and slightly translucent, the palette tending toward metallic blue, beige, and black. It's a complex, overloaded, and strangely elegant world. Through May 14. (Golden, 539 W. 23rd St. 212-727-8304.)

JACKIE NICKERSON

Nickerson's recent portraits of nuns, priests, and other Irish clergy have a clammy, almost creepy specificity that's entirely absent from her earlier pictures of black plantation workers in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. In those sun-bleached photos, her solitary subjects pose in the green fields where they work, some stoic, others evincing the serene hauteur of fashion models. And no wonder: their wrapped, layered, and extravagantly tattered outfits are as inventive as any avant-garde Japanese deconstructionist's. Clearly, Nickerson is interested in more than idiosyncratic flair here, but sometimes style trumps content. Through May 21. (Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 212-645-1701.)

RICHARD PRINCE

New and old works spanning the last twenty-five years, including joke and cartoon paintings, photographs, and sculpture. Through June 18. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 212-206-9300.)

FRANCES STARK

Stark's new show of sculpturally collaged works on paper, mostly white but splashed with plumage-like color, explore a vanishing pink-collar world. In the artist's own prose, her motifs include "the verging-on-reprehensibly-banal comic strip personality Cathy, some rather elegant chrysanthemums (if I don't say so myself), something akin to in-boxes, a couple of peacocks, and some soft secretaries." Exactly. Encompassing the aesthetics of both damask-covered escritoires and beige cubicles, Stark's creations ponder ideas of efficiency and organization, paper-pushing and reverie. Through May 14. (CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-229-2766.)

"L.A."

Certain threads run through these works by forty-eight L.A.-based artists, from the hybrid Pop-minimalist sculptures of Jason Meadows and Shirley Tse to the Futurist-kitsch painting of Adam Ross, Tam Van Tran, and Sharon Ellis. Newcomers like the Photo-Realist Christoph Schmidberger and the abject Expressionist Brian Calvin are showcased alongside L.A. veterans like Liz Larner and Tim Hawkinson. The work's generally sunny demeanor stands in stark contrast to the gloomy, craft-spun, fairy-tale escapism endemic among young East Coast artists, and where figurative art is well represented in P.S. 1's "Greater New York," abstraction abounds here. Through May 27. (Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. 212-243-3159.)

Short List

DANIEL BOZHKOV: Kreps, 516A W. 20th St. 212-741-8849. Through May 14. **JERRY DANTZIC:** Foley, 547 W. 27th St. 212-244-9081. Through May 21. **DAMIEN HIRST:** Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. 212-741-1111. Through May 21. **GUY RICHARDS SMIT:** Roebling Hall, 606 W. 26th St. 212-929-8180. Through May 14. **AMY WILSON:** Bellwether, 134 Tenth Ave. 212-929-5959. Through May 21.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

The spring season continues. ♦ May 11 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Tarantella," "Tālā Gaisma," and "Musagète." ♦ May 12 at 8 (an all-Balanchine program): "Harlequinade" and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." ♦ May 13 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Double Aria," "Broken Promise," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Glass Pieces." ♦ May 14 at 2 (an all-Balanchine program): "Allegro Brillante" and "Harlequinade." ♦ May 14 at 8: "An American in Paris," "Broken Promise," "Distant Cries," "Tarantella," and "Musagète." ♦ May 15 at 3: "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3" and "Musagète." ♦ May 17 at 7:30: "The Four Temperaments," "Polyphonia," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570. Through June 26.)

MOMIX

For twenty-five years, Moses Pendleton's fertile imagination has turned out Cirque du Soleil-style spectacles for sexy dancers who can stretch like rubber bands. In the first of three weeks at the Joyce in this anniversary season, the troupe reprises its 2001 hit "Opus Cactus," an ode to the desert and its creatures. Whether conjuring up a Gila monster, a patch of tumbleweed, or a sunflower, Pendleton uses light, costumes, props, and, above all, bodies, to jaw-dropping effect. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. May 10-13 at 8, May 14 at 2 and 8, and May 15 at 2 and 7:30. Through May 29.)

Numéro

90

Renaissance

par Jonathan Wingfield

Lors d'un voyage en Afrique, la photographe Jackie Nickerson a découvert un peuple fier et digne dont elle a capturé la beauté dans une série de portraits contemporains.

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"Je ne photographie pas une pauvreté. Ces gens sont dignes. J'ai vu les femmes acheter des tissus au marché et, croyez-moi, elles sont aussi exigeantes que nous."

"Tout au long de ma carrière, j'ai dû respecter les consignes des autres. En photographiant ces sublimes Africains, j'ai enfin pu travailler comme je l'entendais." Après quatorze ans de campagnes publicitaires et malgré une jolie renommée et un gros compte en banque, Jackie Nickerson, photographe anglo-américaine, se sentait frustrée artistiquement. Quand l'un de ses amis tombe malade, elle décide de le raccompagner dans sa famille au Zimbabwe. Séduite par le pays, elle s'installe dans une ferme isolée pour se ressourcer. Ce n'est qu'un an plus tard qu'elle ressort son appareil : *"Je ne cherchais pas à faire un reportage sur mon séjour*, explique-t-elle. *Je me trouvais simplement en compagnie de personnes magnifiques qui avaient vraiment envie de se faire photographier. Je n'ai pas eu besoin de les diriger car ils avaient tous une véritable présence et une grande confiance en eux."*

Contrairement à l'Afrique immortalisée par Seydou Keïta ou Malick Sidibé, celle de Nickerson est résolument contemporaine. Comme dans le travail de Diane Arbus, on devine la vision, différente, de "l'étranger". En partageant le quotidien de ses modèles, Nickerson comprend rapidement qu'elle vit aux côtés d'une communauté fière de son patrimoine et de son statut. *"Il serait facile de tirer de fausses conclusions de mon travail. Je ne photographie pas une pauvreté. Ces gens sont dignes. S'ils portent des vêtements rapiécés, c'est tout simplement parce qu'ils travaillent la terre. J'ai vu ces femmes acheter des tissus au marché et, croyez-moi, elles sont tout aussi exigeantes et coquettes que nous."*

Nickerson passe deux ans et demi au Zimbabwe et dans les pays avoisinants avant de revenir en Europe, où elle montre la totalité de son œuvre africaine à la galeriste Marion de Beaupré. *"Ce qui transparaît dans les photographies africaines de Jackie, c'est l'honnêteté avec laquelle elle traite ses modèles*, explique celle-ci. *Elle ne cherche pas à capturer la pauvreté ou le tiers-monde. Il s'agit plutôt d'une collection de photographies fraîches et contemporaines d'un très beau peuple… Le genre de visages que les directeurs artistiques rêvent de trouver pour leurs campagnes de pub."*

Pas étonnant donc que ces images à la fois authentiques et rafraîchissantes (publiées dans un livre intitulé *Une Autre Afrique*) aient séduit Marithé et François Girbaud ou Shiseido, qui ont convaincu Nickerson de revenir à la photographie commerciale. *"J'avais juré de ne plus jamais faire de publicité, mais, grâce à* Une Autre Afrique, *les clients me laissent aujourd'hui carte blanche. On me traite désormais comme une photographe, et non plus comme une machine."*

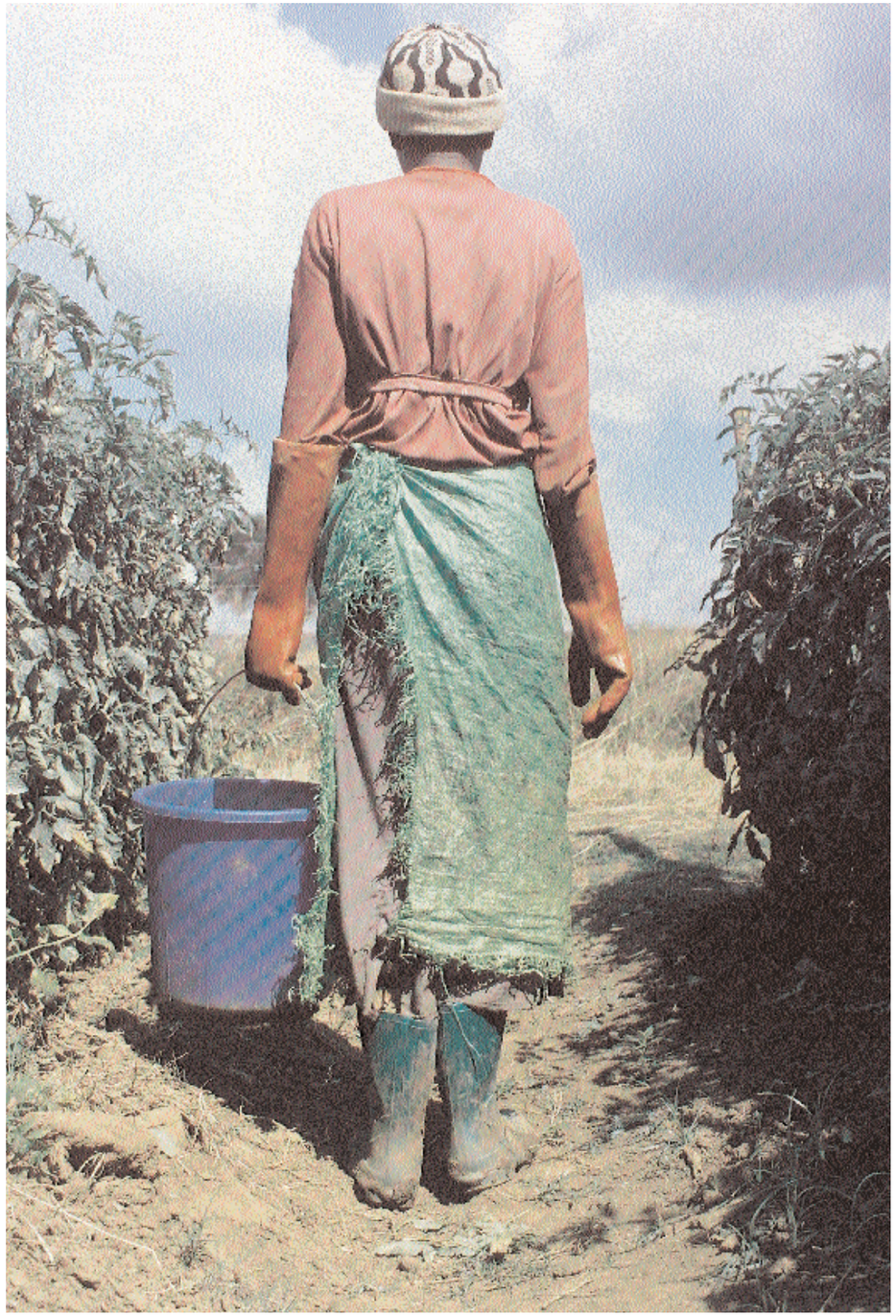
Jackie Nickerson, Galerie 213, 213, boulevard Raspail, Paris XIVe. Tél. 01 43 22 83 23. Du 13 septembre au 18 octobre.
Une Autre Afrique. Ed. Flammarion, 144 pages. 65 euros.

JACKIE NICKERSON

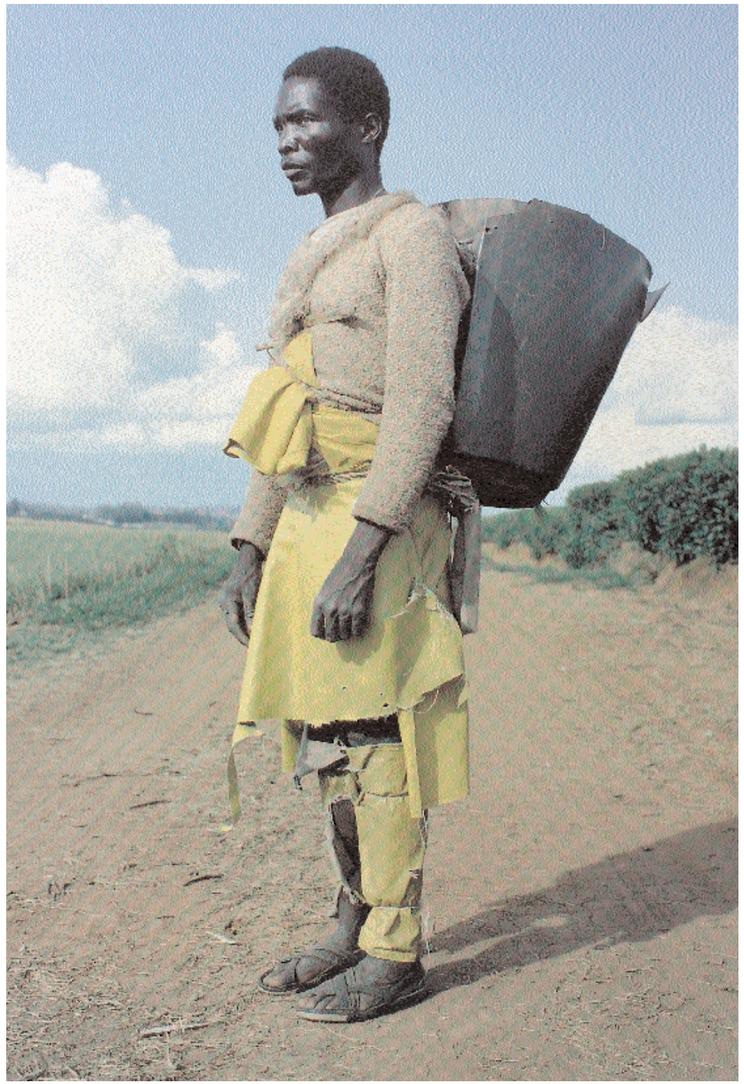
EIN AFRIKA GANZ STILL

Die Fotografin Jackie Nickerson hat zwei Jahre in Simbabwe gelebt und afrikanische Landarbeiter portraitiert, deren Gesichter sich wie Romane öffnen, die noch zu schreiben sind.
Die Fotografin Jackie Nickerson hat zwei Jahre in Simbabwe gelebt und afrikanische Landarbeiter portraitiert, deren Gesichter sich wie Romane öffnen, die noch zu schreiben sind.

TEXT **SIMONE BERGMANN**|



DIE VERGANGENHEIT IST GRAU, DOCH DIE ZUKUNFT IST ORAN
Orange wie Arsen Savadovs Kanarienvogel Shakespeare, mit dem der Fotokünstler, geboren 1962, über die Revolution Zwiesprache hält (oben). Schon lange vor dem politischen Umsturz setzte sich der Sohn armenischer Eltern mit den sozialen Gegensätzen seines Landes auseinander. Xenia Guilitsky (rechts) ist eine Generation jünger, sie gehört zur REP-Gruppe und studiert noch an der Kiewer Kunstakademie, im Haar trägt sie einen orangen Blumenkranz. Rechte Seite: Performancekünstler Ilya Chichkan bei seiner Aktion an der Metrostation am Maidan



Sein Name ist Cassius, er hat weißen Staub im Gesicht und arbeitet in Simbabwe in einer Maismühle. Ihr Name ist Enoch Friday und sie ist Teepflückerin in Malawi. Auf 94 Bildtafeln hat die Fotografin Jakkie Nickerson afrikanische Landarbeiter abgelichtet, die Gesichter haben, die sich wie Romane öffnen, die noch geschrieben werden müssen. Und so sehen die Anfänge von Geschichten aus, die noch erzählt werden wollen. Scheinbar ausgediente Worte wie Würde und Stolz, Demut und Stärke stellen sich ein. Worte sind das, die in einer globalen Welt kaum noch ausgesprochen werden dürfen.

Als die Fotografin Jackie Nickerson vor fünf Jahren sich ins Flugzeug setzte, um mit einer kranken Freundin in ihre Heimat nach Simbabwe zu reisen, ahnte sie noch nicht, dass dieser Besuch ihr ganzes Leben umkrempeln würde.„Wenn man in einer Krise steckt“, sagt die Fotografin, die heute mit ihrem Mann in Irland lebt, „ will man das nicht wahrhaben. Als Modefotografin war ich 16 Jahre lang super erfolgreich gewesen, dieser Erfolg hatte mein Bankkonto um viele Dollars bereichert, aber auch ein Gefühl der inneren Leere hinterlassen und ich hatte so etwas wie ein burn-out Symptom. Ich war fertig mit der Modewelt und wollte meinen Beruf an den Nagel hängen.“

Doch dann kam alles anders. Die Amerikanerin Nickerson, die sowohl in New York als auch in London lebt, blieb in Simbabwe und zog für zwei Jahre zu Freunden auf eine Farm. „Es war die beste Entscheidung meines Lebens,“

DIE ZEITEN SIND HART, DOCH DIE SEHNSUCHT IST STÄRKER

Yuri Solomko steht auf einem Hügel und hält eine seiner Landkarten in den Himmel über Kiew (links). Darauf projiziert der Künstler verfremdete, komisch-traurige Figuren: Frauenkörper, Fotomodelle, Gesichter mit blinden Augen, surreale Träume einer Welt – wie auf seiner Arbeit «Bagdad3» (rechte Seite).

NUR FLIEGEN IST SCHÖNER
Sonntags ist Flugtag. Dann geht Michael mit seinem Ford Escort mit den Flügeltüren ans Tuning-Treffen. Die dicken Sohlen seiner Turnschuhe benutzt er, um harte Landungen abzubremsenum harte Landungen abzu

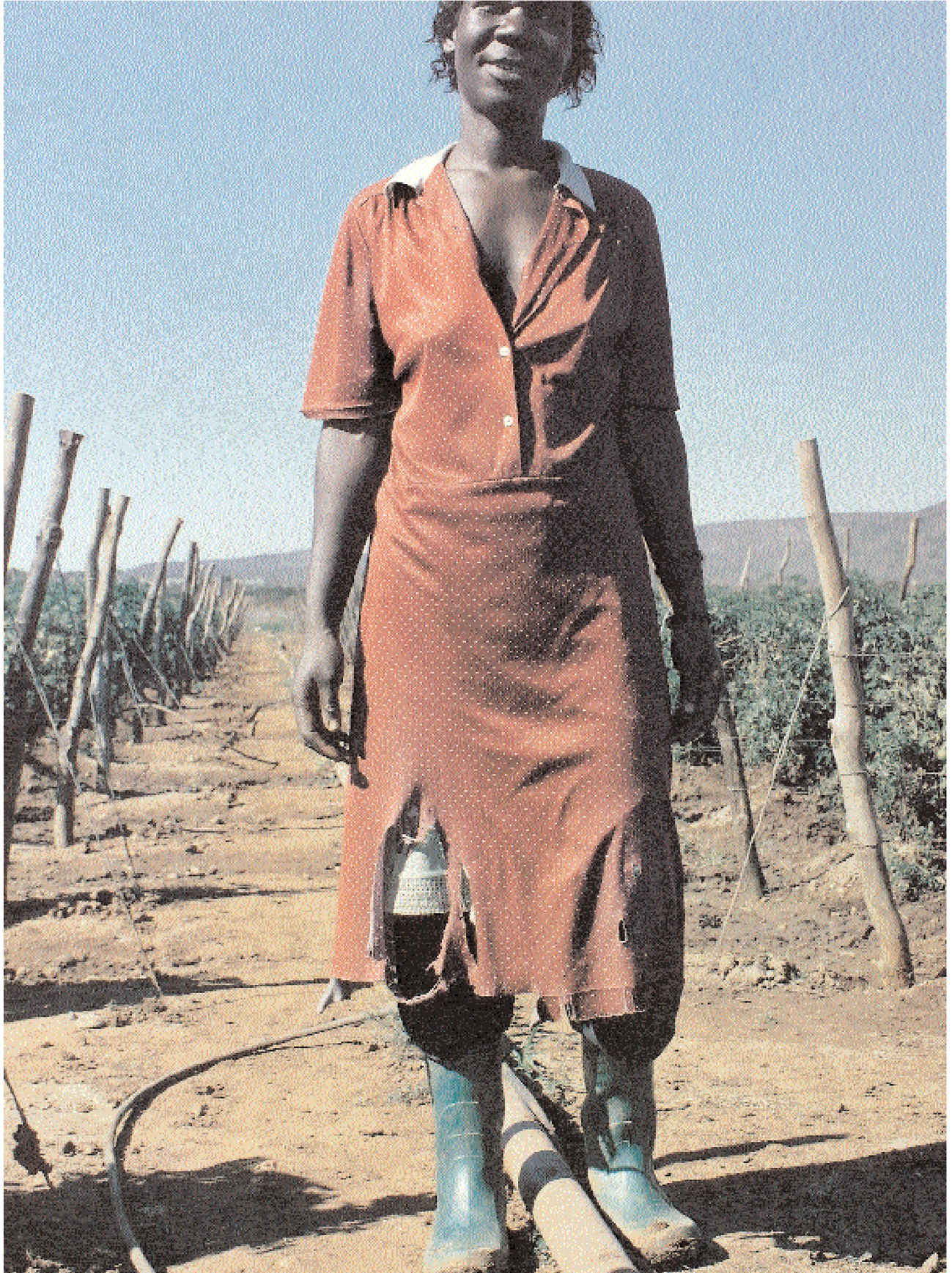
sagt die 44Jährige, „Modemagazine und TV-Shows sind dort noch unbekannt, aber trotzdem wissen die Leute Bescheid, ihr politisches System ist korrupt und ihren Lebensunterhalt verdienen sie sich mit der Feldarbeit auf den umliegenden Farmen oder großen Plantagen.“ Zunächst beobachtete sie nur und war beeindruckt von der Sorgfalt mit der sich ihre afrikanischen Freunde jeden Morgen einkleideten und wie stolz und selbstbewusst sie sich auf den Weg zu den umliegenden Pflanzungen machten. Schon sehr bald begann sie die Kamera wieder hervor zu holen und Portraits von ihren Freunden auf den Feldern machte. Sie setzte diese Arbeit fort und kaufte sich einen Pritschenwagen und bereiste das Landesinnere von Mozambique, von Malawi und besuchte die Townships in Südafrika.
Nickerson's Fotos sind zwar dokumentarisch, aber ihre visuelle Sprache hat nichts mit einer konventionellen Dokumentation zu tun. Wie schwarze Skulpturen aus Ebenholz posieren ihre Protagonisten auf dem Stück Erde, dass sie gerade bearbeiten. Sie schauen ernsthaft und selbstbewusst in die Kamera. Es sind Blicke, die nicht darauf aus sind, um jeden Preis gefallen zu wollen und Körper, die nichts anderes wollen als in der Gegenwart zu leben. Hart und krass fällt die Mittagssonne vom Himmel und bleicht die Farben der Bilder wie Stoffe aus, die zu lange in der Sonne gelegen haben. Das gibt den Fotos eine nostalgische Note.

Aber Nickerson will kein verklärendes Abbild der Wirklichkeit liefern. In vielen Still-lifes zeigt sie Gegenstände des afrikanischen Alltags, die so erbärmlich abgenutzt aussehen, dass sie in keine von uns geläufige ästhetische Kategorie zu passen scheinen. Auch die Landschaften, die sie meistens in schwarz-weiß fotografiert hat, zeigen eine ungeschönte Realität. Viel Geröll auf den Straßen, ärmliche Hütten, magere Baumgruppen und doch gibt es diesen freien Blick auf einen unendlichen Horizont, der atemberaubend ist.
Aber der Höhepunkt ihres Bildbandes (Afrika bei Frederking & Thaler/ une autre afrique bei Flammarion / Farm bei Jonathan Cape) bilden jene Bilder, die nur Ausschnitte und Details von Gesten und Haltung zeigen. Von Lucia zum Beispiel sieht man nur einen rosafarbenen Rock, aus dessen Saum die Spitze eines hellblauen Unterrocks hervorblitzt, von Marianna sieht man nur die Beine, die knietief im Schlamm stecken und Paul, der Teegärtner aus Malawi, hat sich kunstvoll gelbe Plastikfetzen um die Taille geschlungen. „ Nichts wird weggeworfen“, bemerkte Nickerson, “ auch der kleinste Fetzen, egal ob es ein Stück Sakkleinen oder nur Plastikfolie ist, wird aufbewahrt und als Kleidungsstück verwendet oder mit Dingen kombiniert, die sie auf Second-Hand-Märkten erworben haben.“ Schönheit & Funktionalität, Armut & Eleganz sind für die Fotografin Kategorien, die sich nicht widersprechen. Billigstoffe wie Acryl oder Plastik verwandeln sich unter ihrem Blick in kostbare Materialien und eine bereits verrostete Sicherheitsnadel wird zu einem wertvollen Schatz.
Doch trotz dieser exzellent fotografierten Details sind es immer wieder die Gesichter,
die uns auf geheimnisvolle Weise berühren. In ihnen spiegelt sich ein existentielles Ur-Vertrauen wieder, das man in der westlichen Welt vergeblich sucht. Wie Urgesteine aus einer versunkenen Zeit, wehen uns ihre Gesichter an und lösen ein Gefühl der Ruhe und Geborgenheit aus.
Nie wieder, sagt Jackie Nickerson, habe sie Menschen getroffen, die so wenig Angst vor dem Leben gehabt hätten wie sie. “ Kein Wunder also, dass Jackie Nickerson's Bilder auf dem Kunstmarkt inzwischen eine heiß begehrte Ware für Sammler sind.

BÜCHERLISTE:
Jackie Nickerson,
AFRIKA – Leben mit der Erde ;
Frederking & Thaler
Jackie Nickerson, FARM;
Jonathan Cape, London
Jackie Nickerson,
UNE AUTRE AFRIQUE,
Flammarion, Paris

Galeristen:
GALERIE 213
Marion de Beaupré
58, rue Cahrlot
75003 Paris
www.galerie213.com

Jack Shainman Gallery
New York City USA
www.Jackshainman.com



Faces of African farming

Nickerson spent two-and-a-half years travelling through Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe photographing the people of the small towns and corporate plantations

Farm

by Jackie Nickerson
Jonathan Cape, pp141, hb, £35

Considering that people have been farming in Africa for over 200,000 years, one would imagine that even an accomplished American photographer would be hard pushed to find an original perspective on this ancient ritual. Jackie Nickerson however, has risen to meet the challenge with a collection of photographs that capture the spirit of Africa's present-day farming with an incisive sharpness that challenges our previous conceptions, elevating the human face of agriculture above the landscape of the farm itself. The farm-workers that stare into the camera lens are strikingly individual, each face preserved in implicit detail; but Nickerson's skill is in turning a set of separate portraits into a comprehensive picture of a whole continent. Just as Eleanor Roosevelt insisted that the American photographer Walker Evans' work on Alabama farm-workers "showed us contemporary America", so Nickerson's images from Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa convey a powerful sense of how farming in Africa works today. This may seem an unlikely project for a photographer who has been based in New York for ten years, but fortunately Nickerson's experience in the fashion industry has helped open her eyes to the natural elegance of the African men and women she has photographed, each of whom stands poised between ancient farming traditions and modern day life.

by Helen Warrell

THE NEW YORKER

March 31, 2010

On and Off the Walls: A First Look at Pier 24

Posted by *Whitney Johnson*

In six short years, Andrew Pilara has amassed over two thousand photographic works—from a Diane Arbus print, the first in his collection, to a grotesque Marilyn Minter video—and transformed a dilapidated pier beneath the Bay Bridge in San Francisco into one of the largest spaces for photography in the United States. Each work is installed without any caption information, so looking becomes an exercise in recognition and speculation, and ultimately conversation.

And that's just what occurred on a Saturday evening earlier this month, as thirty or so photographers, curators, picture editors, and professors of photography roamed the galleries: "Is that Pieter Hugo or Viviane Sassen?," one asked. (It was actually Jackie Nickerson.) Allan Sekula or Vera Lutter? (Vera Lutter it was.) In some galleries, the scale of the collection —all fifty-two of Lee Friedlander's "Little Screens"; all of "The Animals" by Garry Winogrand—overwhelmed the discussion. And though the view across the San Francisco Bay distracted the crowd momentarily, it was the work that held our attention.

Pier 24 is scheduled to open to the public later this spring. Get a first look here, with selected commentary by director Christopher McCall.

- 
Several galleries reflect themes, such as the social and topographical impact of industrialization, that run through the collection. "Cedric, Farm Worker, Malawi" is part of the "Farm" series by Jackie Nickerson, "a young artist who we are watching."

The New York Times

ART & DESIGN

Museum and Gallery Listings

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

Published: November 2, 2007

Galleries: Chelsea

★ **JACKIE NICKERSON: 'FAITH'** This British artist's last show was of photographs of farmers in Africa; for this one she spent two years visiting Irish monasteries and convents, making portraits of their inhabitants and of institutional interiors as quiet as still lifes. The whole show is about stillness and interiority, but also about living an intensely active life in a way the world has lost track of. Jack Shainman Gallery, 513 West 20th Street, (212) 645-1701, jackshainman.com, through Nov. 10. (Cotter)

ANOTHER AFRICA

This is Not Fashion

Written by Another Africa on Apr 29, 2010 in Art & Culture, Fashion, Photography

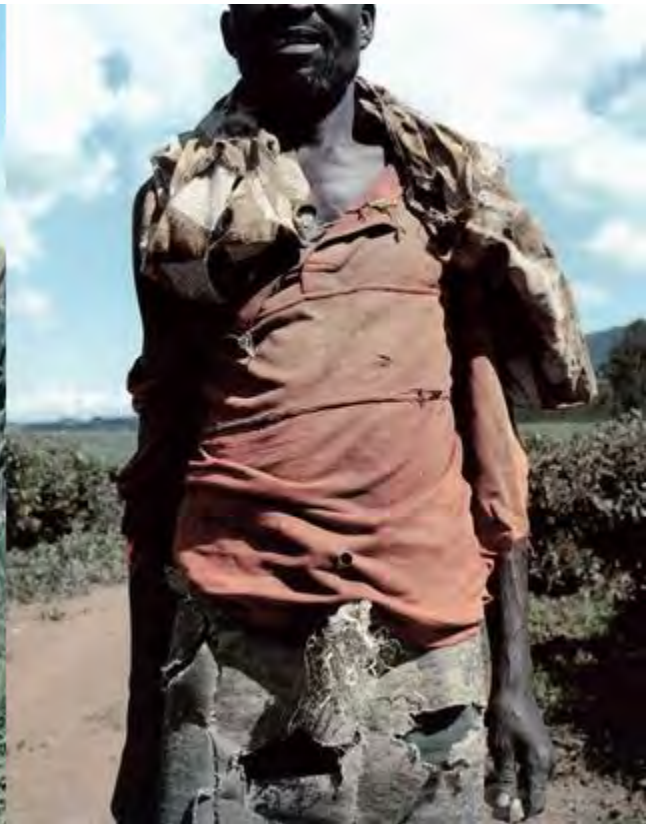
Farm, a photographic series by ***Jackie Nickerson*** produced during a three year sojourn in Southern Africa that began in 1997. The portrait and landscape photographic series documents the lives of migrant farm workers throughout South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

Despite the hard physical toil and environment faced by the farm workers, Nickerson found herself quite impressed by these workers sense of freedom and happiness. She was inspired to document her experience, bringing to light their air of dignity as well as their unique sensibilities towards clothing.

Through her attention to detail, a skill honed as a fashion photographer, we too are able to enjoy this refreshing vision. Both form and function happily co-exist in a world where one can freely mix patterns, textures and style without any reference to media currency.

"This is Not Fashion." *Another Africa*, 29 April 2010. Online. <http://www.anotherafrica.net/art-culture/this-is-not-fashion>


The series was published under the title, Farm by Jonathan Cape in 2002. It is available through UK online retailer **WHSmith**.

STORIES OF THE &YE

Claustra

Text by Walter Guadagnini

Photography by Jackie Nickerson

Pages 73, 82-83
Cloaks.
Mellifont Abbey, Collon, Co. Louth, 2005.
Detail and whole.

Page 75
Sister Joseph.
Poor Clare Monastery, Nun's Island, Galway, 2005.

Pages 76-77
Green Room.
Perpetual Adoration Sisters, Perpetual Adoration Convent, Wexford, 2005.

Page 78
Brother Michael.
Legionaries of Christ, Foxrock, Dublin, 2006.

Page 79
Brother Alejandro.
Legionaries of Christ, Foxrock, Dublin, 2006.

The *Faith* Cycle by Jackie Nickerson
Walter Guadagnini

The more complex and problematical the definition of individual and group identity becomes in contemporary society, the more closely photography seems to focus upon the portrait – a genre which was of course indissolubly linked to the history and language of this medium right from the start. Scientific and technological progress, anthropological and sociological thinking, all seem to home in on the face, no longer as the mirror of the soul, of the social condition of the individual, but as the opportunity par excellence to investigate the relationship between man and the world – and between the photographer and his subject – through the filter of a mechanism which, in its turn, has been transformed from a mirror into a manipulator of reality.
Two recent well-documented volumes have analyzed the history and topicality of the photographic portrait with striking originality, both emphasizing the current tendency towards the "fabrication" of the portrait, the "staging" of the face, with inevitable references to a loss of identity, to the relationship between public and private image, and to its manipulation through "face-lifting", subjects which run parallel – and this is certainly no noincidence – to the manipulating of images demanded by the mechanisms of mass communication, made possible by technical developments in photography and the growing complexity of the photographic image. In their different ways, both *The Theatre of the Face*, by Max Kozloff, and *Face. The New Photographic Portrait*, by William Ewing (both authors have been concentrating their attentions on this theme for quite some time)[1] confirm the degree to which contemporary portraiture is rooted in a sort of paradoxical elaboration of two concepts, namely fidelity to and recreation of the real, themselves intrinsic to the history of the genre, with all the anthropological and psychological implications they contain. Both volumes, furthermore, seem to concur that it is virtually impossible nowadays to link such faces to their surroundings except through an overt "staging" of these faces, and of these surroundings, along the lines of the inspired and pioneering series of *Film Stills* by Cindy Sherman. If the face is linked to the surroundings, both will be answering to a principle of falsification, of artificiality; if it is presented in close up, on the other hand, detached from the context, it will speak of pure individuality (as in the famous cases of Thomas Ruff and Rineke Dijkstra), so objective and present in space as to take flight from the moment to enter a dimension devoid of all historical sense of time.
There is no denying that a tendency of this kind is currently in evidence, indeed that it has been predominant over the last two decades; it is equally true, however, that in recent years, together with the new golden

age of social documentation, the theme of what was once defined as the "environmental portrait", to use the well-known formula applied to the photography of Arnold Newman over half a century ago, is once more occupying an important place on the international photographic scene, as exemplified, among others, by the work of Jitka Hanzlová, certain series by Adam Broomberg and Olvier Chanarin, the work of Alex Soth (especially *Sleeping by the Mississipi* and *Niagara*) and *Faith*, by Jackie Nickerson, from which a large selection is presented in these pages.

It is clear, when looking at the images of these authors, that the premise on which they are based is the pinpointing of some place, that is, of some setting, or "surroundings", at once relatively restricted but at the same time strongly characterized, marked by powerful pointers to identity, not as yet obliterated or irreparably weakened by the forces of globalization: we see as much in the little village in the Czech Republic portrayed by Hanzlová in *Rokytnik*, in the rural America portrayed by Soth, and above all in the convents and their inhabitants photographed by Jackie Nickerson. It should however be stressed that in none of these cases can we really talk of documentary photography, in either the historical or contemporary meaning of the term; rather, what we have here bears the mark of this new development, the "golden age" referred to above, characterized also, and perhaps most importantly, by a mixture of languages, and by the shift in the very role of the photographer in the cultural landscape (here we might note that both Broomberg and Chanarin, and Soth and Nickerson, work as professional photographers, while also exhibiting their work in galleries showing contemporary art: engaged, that is, in a twofold activity which would have been unthinkable even few years ago, with all that follows also in terms of linguistic strategies and attitudes to communication).

In this connection, asked whether she regarded herself as a documentary photographer, Jackie Nickerson herself replied that she did not, "although I do have an interest in social documentation. I'm interested in who we are and how we live. But it's not a day in the life of the clergy of Ireland. I'm trying to put across what the spiritual reality for them is".[2] This, then, is a spiritual reality, as observed over some sixty religious places in Ireland; yet the resulting work does not claim to be an investigation into the religious phenomenon in a country in whose history religion has played a fundamental role, in both the distant and the recent past; rather, it aims to show real people who have opted for a life which is in some ways extreme – that of enclosure, for example – people whose individuality is often set aside, thrust into second place in relation to the reading of the work in question. Nickerson is not trying to give a voice to those who are voiceless, that is not her aim, nor is she seeking to formulate a

Above
Brother Jonathan.
Legionaries of Christ, Foxrock, Dublin, 2006.

Page 80
Sister Dominic.
Perpetual Adoration Convent, Wexford, 2005.

Pages 84-85
Washing Eucharist Vessels.
Poor Clare Monastery, Belfast, 2006.

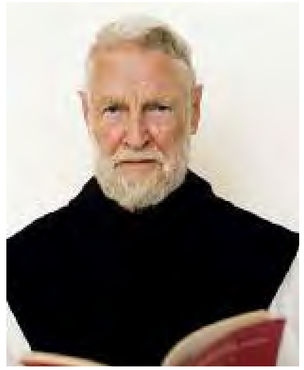
judgement on religion, or the religious: Nickerson takes a close look at the inhabitants of a very particular place in order to understand – through their faces, and their surroundings – what it means, today, to live cut off from the outside world, what it means to agree to live in accordance with rules imposed from outside, in conditions in which the only concern is that of the soul, one's own and those of others, while everything that is part of normal daily life, of the affairs and patterns shared by almost all of the rest of the human race, is left, quite literally, "outside the door". *Faith* is also concerned with looking at "the other"; it is a work born of the desire to relate to people who are different from ourselves, though not in terms of race or social standing, as is often the case in such undertakings. Here the "other" is very close to Nickerson, who lives in Ireland, although she was born in England, and who, though she is not a Catholic, is well-versed in the Catholic religion: thus here we have a confrontation with an otherness which is all the more radical in that it is born of cultural bases which are largely shared, but which have led to profoundly different choices.
In order to execute her project, Nickerson naturally had to win the trust of those involved; above all, she had to devise a visual strategy which would enable the faces, and places, to reflect both intentions and reality, however partially. "Of course, most of the work is done in advance, in the research, in the conversations, in the time I spend working in and around their environments – taking the picture is just the last thing that happens." Clearly, such an approach engenders the sense of trust, of intimacy, which emerges so strongly from these photographs in the faces of the nuns and priests: the sense of having shared a living space, even if over a relatively short period of time. For this reason – and not as a result of any misguided pretence of spontaneity – the people whose faces are being photographed are visibly aware of the fact, yet they are not "posing", they feel no obligation to provide an image of themselves. There is something private about these photographs, proof of a special relationship between the photographer and her subject, though both know that this relationship is destined to become public, to circulate in a society from which these subjects have chosen voluntarily to withdraw.
The close-ups have all been photographed against a neutral background, characterized only by the different colours of the walls against which the faces stand out – soft, nuanced colours, which make their own important contribution to the overall mood of calm and contemplation which enamates from the whole series, intensified by the choice of lighting, which is artificial but diffuse, with no attempt at dramatization, or distortion, either physiological or psychological. These alternate with two other typologies: one of the surroundings, and one of the figures in those surroundings,

Above
Sister Anne.
Community, Delgany, Wicklow, 2005.

Page 86
Aga.
St. Joseph's Monastery, Loughrea, Galway, 2005.

Pages 88-89
Covered Furniture.
Infirmary, Monastery of the Incarnation, Hampton, Dublin, 2005.

The *Faith* Cycle by Jackie Nickerson



Above
Father Andrew.
Cistercians, Mellifont Abbey, Collon, Louth, 2005.

Page 91
Sister Imelda.
Poor Clare Monastery, Nun's Island, Galway, 2005.

Pages 92-93
Brother Denis.
Headmaster, Glenstal Abbey School, Murroe, Limerick, 2005.

so as to give an overall idea of the faces, bodies, spaces and objects in question, that is, of everything which serves to define their inward and outward space, but always subtly timeless.
The photographs of the surroundings are crucial to the whole enterprise: photographs of interiors which take on a metaphysical dimension, long corridors, filled with natural light rendering each object starkly present, yet also engulfing it out in a visual unity which is almost unreal: well-ordered rooms for which the word "monastic" instantly comes to mind, lit by windows which let in light and nothing else, no hint of the world outside; a sequence of garments and cooking implements and chairs which become as many abstract compositions, of consummate refinement in terms of colour and composition. In these photographs, everyday life becomes something truly spiritual, without losing anything of the quiddity of place or physicality: we no longer know whether these places, and objects, are awaiting the arrival of the inhabitants of the convent/monastery, or of some supernatural presence.
In this sense at least, Nickerson's visual strategy is clear: she is fully aware of the implications of an empty space, lit in a certain way, with the objects within it, too, arranged in a certain way, so as to make up an image which conveys that sense of time suspended which gives these photographs an antiquated feel, reminiscent at once of the great painting of the past, of the pictorial "metaphysics" of de Chirico and of Atget's photographs of Parisian interiors. Here, a mental attitude becomes a stylistic hallmark, serving to define a place and the spirit which pervades it, sensed at its most fulfilled when these places are inhabited by people intent on the everyday activities which punctuate the lives of such institutions, from housework to prayer, from reading to eating: an ordinary aspect of an extraordinary existence, whose normality is confirmed by the presence of telephones, computers and television sets visible in some of these images, though without any sense of irony, or surprise, since in point of fact, thanks to the light, they too are made an intrinsic part of the mood which emanates from the faces and spaces of this present-day *sacra rappresentazione* (mystery play).
The artist herself is perfectly aware of both this sense of modernity, and of a connection with the past, as we see from her use of colour and the way the objects are arranged, often reminiscent of older portraiture. Indeed, she herself has commented on the relationship between art and religion in the contemporary world: "... as far as imagery is concerned, nothing has moved on since the seventeenth century. So this is a great challenge. Do you think I could do something here that isn't kitschy? Do you think I could do something that could maybe one day hang in a room with all that great art? Is it possible, not just for me, but is it possible for photography to do that? In previous religious art, there would

be pictures of saints and Jesus and the Holy Family, but I think that using real people and originary people who have a religious life is far more relevant today. Because it's all become a lot more personal, our relationship to religion". This demanding, indeed courageous idea is the key not only to Nickerson's research: it is also the arena where photography measures itself against the other forms of artistic expression bequeathed to us by the past, and indeed of art as a whole, in its relation to the great themes of humanity down the ages, among which that of religion undoubtedly plays a role of the first importance.

(Translation from Italian by Judith Landry)

Jackie Nickerson
Jackie Nickerson has lived and worked in Paris, Tokyo, London and New York, and currently lives in rural Ireland. She has an international reputation for photographing people and their environments. In 2002, she published *Farm*, a book of portraits of farm workers taken across southern Africa. Her work is represented in many important collections, such as the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Santa Monica Museum and the Margulies Collection in Miami. In 2008 she was awarded the prestigious AIB Prize.

Walter Guadagnini
Walter Guadagnini was born in Cavalese (Trento) in 1961. He has been professor of the History of Art at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Bologna since 1992. From 1995 to 2005 he was director of the Galleria Civica at Modena. From 1995 to 2003, together with Filippo Maggia, he curated the international event *Modena per la fotografia*. Chairman, since 2004, of the Purchasing Commission for contemporary art of Unicredit Banca, he has curated exhibitions in Italy and abroad. His publications include: *Henri Matisse - La vita e l'opera* (1993); *Fotografia* (2000); the complete edition of the works of Domenico Gnoli, *Scritti* (2005); *Mario De Biasi - People* (2005); and *Mimmo Jodice - Light* (2006).

Above
Sister Irene.
Sister of Mary Immacolate and St. Philomena, Mount Tabor Hermitage, Westport, Mayo, 2005.

Page 95
Sister Patrice.
Poor Clare Community, St. Damien's Ballsbridge, Dublin, 2005.

[1] M. Kozloff, *The Theatre of the Face. Portrait Photography since 1900*, Phaidon, London 2007; W. Ewing, *Face. The New Photographic Portrait*, Thames & Hudson, London 2006.
[2] This and the following quotations of Jackie Nickerson are taken from "Jackie Nickerson in Conversation with Vince Aletti", in *Jackie Nickerson. Faith*, SteidlMACK, Göttingen 2007.

Review Essays

Jackie Nickerson's 'Faith'

In a convent or monastery, prayer and contemplation are magnified by ritual, so much so that the sense of a spiritual presence within the buildings becomes pervasive, and this most potently takes the form of light. Photography, itself founded on light, is an art form that saturates the world of objects and people in that medium.

The source of light in a painting is usually traceable to a source or an area, and from there the structure and geometry of the painting is illuminated in ways that we are accustomed to read as being a blend of inner and outer light, always establishing for us a ratio between the physical and the spiritual worlds. In these photographs, that painterly inheritance is palpable, but in them the intimacy between the technology of the camera and the use of light is especially strong. The blaze of light through a window, the gloss of polish on a floor, the echo of light down a corridor, the pressure of light within a face, all bespeak the spirituality and discipline which together create the beauty of silence and community we witness here.

A statue, a saucepan, a table or a chair are not merely dead objects; they are mute, but alive. The photographs create silence as a dimension, although they also allow for conversation and cheerfulness. These are communities steeped in an interiority which they have discovered is not their own but something wider and deeper than themselves of which they are a part. The purity of line in these shots — verticals, horizontals, deepening perspectives — indicates a certain completeness, a spiritual integrity that belongs to and is part of the goal as well as the effect of the monastic spirit. Yet too there is the implication of the historical time of these institutions. The iconography has that unmistakable combination of catholic revivalism and kitsch of the nineteenth century, of the Virgin and the Sacred Heart, the anti-secular devotions of that era that stand out here like insignia of time in a world otherwise concerned to register its timeless dailiness. We are looking here at an eternal present and at a historical past. Jackie Nickerson's achievement is to embed one within the other with such gentle skill that their contrast with one another produces little more than an eddy of conflict that perhaps deepens their meditative calm.

'Faith' is the result of three years photographing the interior and exterior spaces of religious communities throughout Ireland. Nickerson had uncommon access to the private worlds of the religious in their places of work and prayer. The series was exhibited in the Paul Kane Gallery, Dublin in 2006 and is currently (spring 2007) on display in Jack Shainman Gallery, New York. Now based in County Louth, Nickerson's other recent work includes 'Farm' based on several years spent travelling around Southern Africa, photographing farm labourers and their environment.

O SILÊNCIO DA ESCOLHA

No plano da criação, Cocky Eek revisita alguns delírios clássicos de artistas com vontade

por Silas Martí / fotos Michelle Thompson

No plano da criação, Cocky Eek revisita alguns delírios clássicos de artistas com vontade

e não desse tão certo, seria exagerado dizer que Cocky Eek foi longe demais com suas leituras de Italo Calvino e delírios de leveza. Essa artista holandesa investe pesado para fazer o mais leve possível: transformar tudo em substância etérea. Tenta dar a sensação de ar ao movimento, à vestimenta e à arquitetura, um pouco como vislumbrava o escritor italiano em suas *Seis Propostas para o Próximo Milênio*.

No livro, Calvino relembra como o destrambelhado cavaleiro dom Quixote, cria do espanhol Miguel de Cervantes, sai voando, catapultado pelo espaço, ao enganchar sua lança na pá de um moinho de vento. Também se deslumbra com o fato de o maquinário pesado da indústria moderna obedecer ao movimento inefável de bits de informação processados no silêncio enigmático de circuitos eletrônicos.

Eek, em seu laboratório-ateliê em Amsterdam, do mesmo modo pesa as contradições entre bruto e brando. Usa a tecnologia têxtil, fibras arrojadas e estruturas infláveis que se alimentam da alma invisível dos avanços científicos. É uma inteligência pulverizada em pontos de sustentação, equilíbrios movediços que dão cara mesmo de ar a toda a empreitada. Acostumada a voar, Eek dissolve a fronteira entre real e surreal, que se desmancha em esculturas efêmeras pelo céu.

Foram pelo menos cinco voos documentados até agora. Ela veste um vestido-manto com 16 metros de comprimento e se amarra a seis pipas gigantes, tudo branco, como manda o figurino de quem habita o firmamento. Um caminhão, pequeno, para não destoar da composição, desliza em terra na velocidade necessária para que os papagaios alcem voo levando junto a artista e seu vestido, que deixa um enorme rastro no céu.

Do ponto de vista da moda, embora ela tenha estudado a disciplina, seu vestido não é grande coisa. Mas vale que seja diáfano, gigantesco, escultórico para causar o efeito desejado. Em vídeos de seu processo de trabalho postados na internet, ela aparece enfiando as mãos no tecido para testar sua elasticidade. É quase