



Standing

Sitting

Crouching

Kneeling

Reclining

Movement

Exaggerated

Bodywork

Head & Shoulders

Expressions

PHOTOGRAPHING WOMEN: 1,000 POSES



A PRACTICAL
SOURCEBOOK FOR
ASPIRING AND
PROFESSIONAL
PHOTOGRAPHERS



ELIOT SIEGEL





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WOMEN:
1,000 POSES**



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By Eliot Siegel

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Foreword

When I started taking photos of my friends in high school back in 1975 (pictures that were the seventies' equivalent to your average Facebook profile picture of today), I never thought for even a moment that as an adult I'd end up working as a professional fashion and portrait photographer. As I progressed through school, I started absorbing some of the theory that I was picking up in my photography classes, and then I caught the bug: a serious passion for photographing anything and everything.

Throughout my university years, I concentrated on becoming a full-time fine art photographer, shooting urban landscapes and edgy portraits of interesting people. It was then that a professor challenged me to combine my love of landscape and portraiture by trying my hand at fashion photography, my first commercial venture.

Remembering my first efforts, and photographing the pretty young women at university, one interesting question kept arising. When the young, inexperienced models were in front of my camera, they almost invariably asked the same thing: "What do you want me to do?" Even young professional models today still ask that same question.

Knowing what you want, as a serious yet inexperienced photographer, takes a fair amount of research. You should study all the magazines you'd love to work for and decide not only on the shooting style you'd like to adopt and make your own, but also how you want your models and subjects to respond to your cameras and concepts—how they should pose in the environments you create, both in the studio and on location.

With nearly 30 years in the business, I've worked for highly respected fashion magazines from New York to Milan, Paris, and London, and shot for clients such as Macy's and Bloomingdale's in the USA and Nokia, Reebok, Marks & Spencer, Selfridges, and many others throughout Europe. I've always hoped to achieve a higher level of trained visual integrity, not only for my studio and location compositions, or due to my dedication to beautiful lighting technique, but also to achieve a sense of intimate communication and understanding between my subjects and myself. Creating an instant relationship with models in fashion and sitters in my portrait work is the reason I continue to commit myself to this profession.

I've written this book as a handy reference guide to intelligent posing, and to celebrate the multitude of elegant, unusual, and even humorous poses that can be achieved by photographers and their models with just a bit of curiosity and investigation. I wanted to demonstrate that there is a pose for every garment, situation, and possibility under the sun.

I'd like to thank the many photographers I've researched from around the globe who kindly contributed to this effort, not only by supplying their own brands of brilliant photographic work on posing, but also with their insightful words capturing their own take on the concept of the pose.

Eliot Siegel



About This Book

This book is organized into two chapters. The first, Technical Know-How, is your professional guide to the process of photography, from start to finish. The second chapter, The Poses, is a comprehensive directory featuring over 1,000 poses for photographing women. Split into key categories, you'll be able to find a variety of poses to rework in your own shoots.

Chapter 1: Technical Know-How, pages 8–37



Helpful lists summarize main article, and share tips and tricks of the trade.

Professional photographers' work illustrates key points.

Chapter 2: The Poses, pages 38–315

Each main category is subdivided for ease of reference and the relevant considerations are discussed.

Photos by professionals are featured throughout, representing a variety of styles. The name of each photographer is given at the end of the caption written by Eliot.



Select images are discussed in more depth and are accompanied by lighting diagrams.

Professional photographers let you in on their secrets—how they work and how they achieve their own unique style.

Sequences



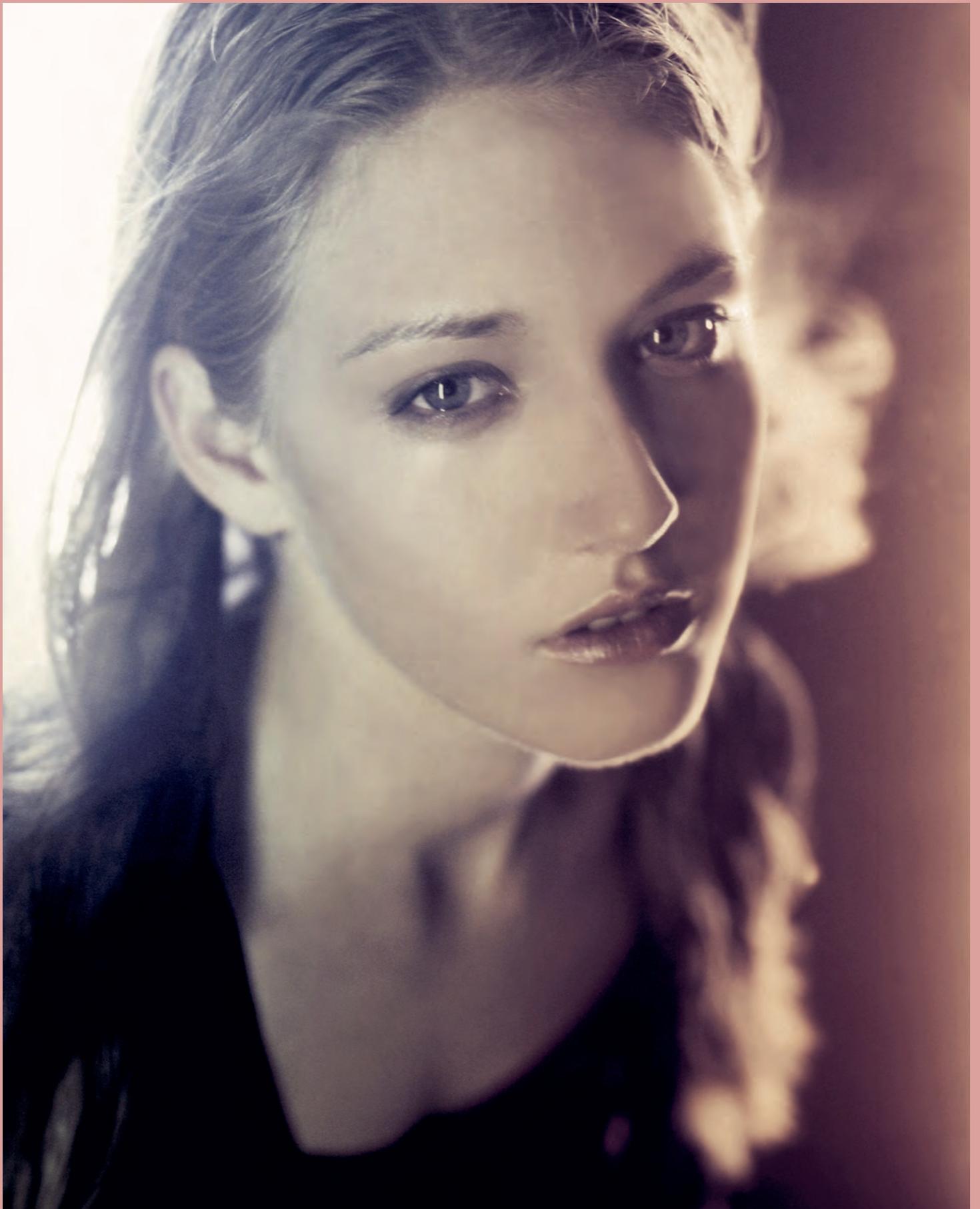
Eliot explains his photo selections from real-life shoot sequences taken for a variety of clients.

Individual frames are analyzed and compared.

The sequence appears in full so you can see the shoot process, and what works and what doesn't.

Photographer Profiles



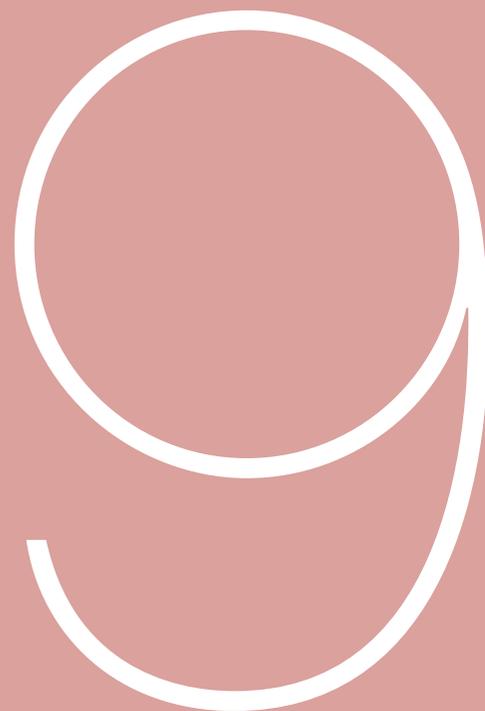


Head & Shoulders

Head and shoulders—or beauty—photography represents an enormous slice of both the advertising and editorial markets worldwide. Posing for and photographing these shots is more difficult than it might appear. Lighting setup is crucial, and the model must have great self-awareness and self-confidence to be able to pull off the concept, the ability to create and sustain a mood, and the sensitivity to provide the emotion. This section explores the three most general categories of head and shoulders poses: front angle, side angle, and reclining.

High-ambience headshot

A wonderfully ambient image shot in a room with strong sunlight coming from at least one or two windows, behind or to the side of the model. Use a long fluorescent light bank (daylight-corrected) or a softbox camera left or right for your main light, but keep the power low enough that the backlights are more powerful than the front light. This lighting ratio will give the background of the image its “blown-out” quality. This photo is shot from above, encouraging the model to raise her face and catch the front light. (David Leslie Anthony)



WARWICK STEIN

An Irish-born photographer based in the UK, Warwick specializes in fashion, beauty, and hair, and has also taken stills for film and TV. He is inspired by fashion, film, and works of photography legends from the 1950s to the present day.

The methods and techniques I use and follow are not typically textbook. I like to experiment with color, shading, and lighting. By working closely with clients and understanding their needs, the results seem to translate perfectly and are above and beyond expectations. I try to get inside my clients' head to realize and visualize their end goal. I was lucky enough to be asked in 2003 to attend Paris Fashion Week and shoot for Yahya al Bishri, a designer to the late HRH Princess Diana and the Saudi Royal Family. In 2009 I was asked to work with Sebastian Professional, a brand of Wella, to shoot the Sebastian "Cult Team" 2010 hairstyles for a special feature in *Runway* magazine Fall/Winter 2010. The success of this led to me being asked to join the Session Expert course in London, Manchester, and Scotland, which was led by Dom Capel, UK Creative Style Artist for Sebastian Professional. In 2011 I was asked to shoot collections for the British Hairdressing Awards, Leanna Sutherland, and John L. Morrison.

Camera used:

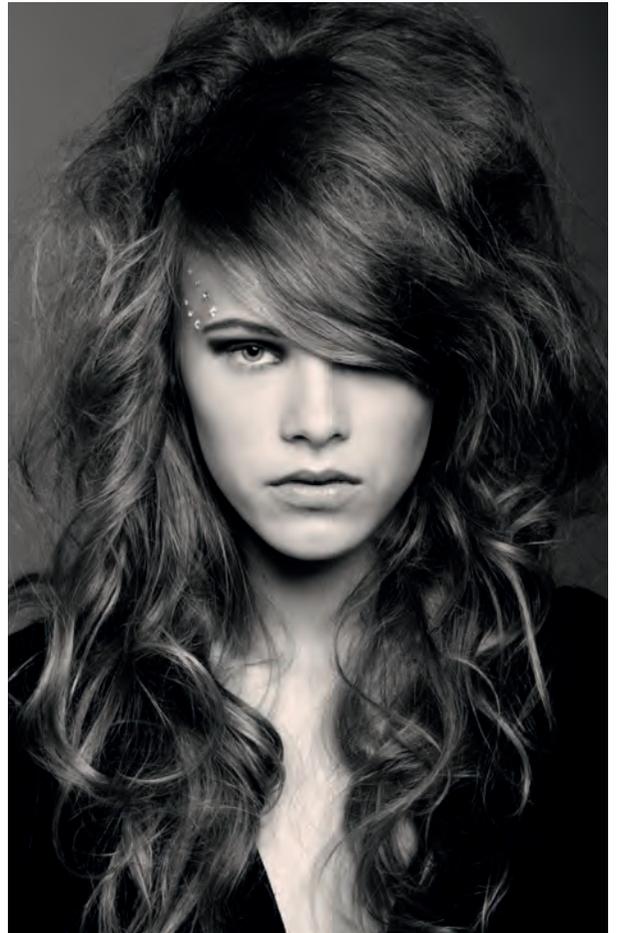
Hasselblad and Canon

Lighting used:

Bowens

Never be without:

80mm f2.8 lens



This elegant picture speaks for itself: a soft, dressy look with an inviting mix of sexy (one eye obscured by sweeping fringe) and renaissance (the cascading curls); a bit of now with a twist of retro. The soft lighting used complements and highlights the soft curls of the hair. The image was published in *Runway* magazine Fall/Winter 2010. [Sebastian Professional Cult Team 2010]



This precision haircut could be taken only from this angle to accentuate the sharpness of the overall look and great geometric shape. The simplicity of the pose could have been taken straight from the Vidal Sassoon cutting manual. The heavy contrast that complements the model's skin adds to the style of the picture. [Colin McAndrew Hair Collection 2011]

“CAPTURE AN IMAGE SPONTANEOUSLY WHILE CONNECTING NATURAL BEAUTY, INNER EMOTION, AND THE ELEGANCE OF THE MODEL”



This collection as a whole was based on stars, constellations, and space. Using a lower angle when composing this shot allowed this image to feature the precision cut around the fringe and ear. I asked the model to look away from the camera, to allow the haircut to be the focal point rather than the model. Her pose portrays authority, which transcends into the haircut. (“Orion” Hair Collection by stylists J. L. Morrison and Carolyn Russell)



These shots were inspired by the late Alexander McQueen’s collection of Fall/Winter 2009. The poses and look I chose for the models convey women of strength and power. Shooting downward in the image left captures the sharpness and angles of the model’s face, giving the shot more power and drawing the viewer’s attention to the fiery red hair. The softer image below required the model to face the lens, to show the fringe as well as the beautiful triangular plait, which is reflected in the angle of the elbow to provide symmetry. When shooting images of this nature, it requires skill to achieve the correct balance between the hairlines and the model’s pose. (Leanna Sutherland Hair Collection 2011)



HEAD & SHOULDERS

Front

Framing with hands

Beautifully direct, the eyes “speak” to the viewer, while the model’s hands form a natural frame around her face. The makeup is impeccable, with the lipstick in particular remarkably accurate, which is important when they are such a focal point. (David Leslie Anthony)



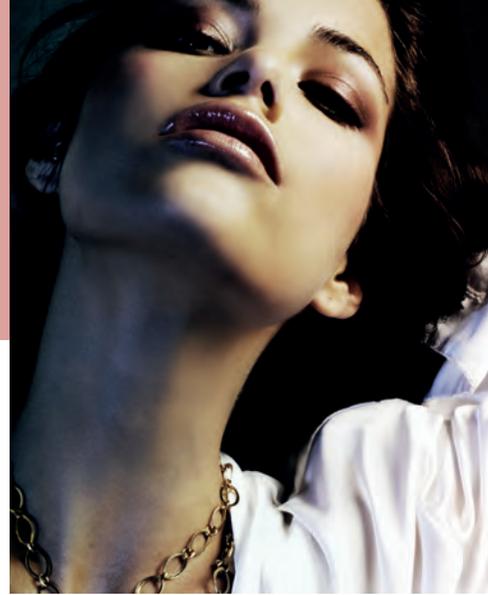
Drifting away

This image is gentle in its approach; the model’s eyes are closed softly as if she is deep in thought, while the hands form a delicate pedestal for a face that is literally aglow. Try desaturating the color while adding contrast to achieve a similar look. (Nicola Gaughan)



Shooting from the front makes up the biggest portion of the head-and-shoulders genre. Advertisers most often want models to be direct and make eye contact to catch the attention of the public (and their purchasing power). In terms of physical requirements, immaculately manicured hands and the ability to make varied, interesting gestures with them are essential.

The success of great head and shoulders work is also dependent on the artistry and technical proficiency of the hair and makeup team, and, of course, the digital retouching.



Extended neck

Tilting the face up and shooting from a low angle is a great way to show an elegant neck. Re-create this light by using one flash at far camera right. Place the light, then have the model twist and turn her face to find just the right spot. Note the triangle of light on the shadow side of the face. (David Leslie Anthony)

**Big hair**

Shot in black and white for maximum graphic appeal, this image would make many a hair-product company smile. Shoot this look with one light on the model, high enough to create deep shadows that knock out her eyes, and no reflection. Use a single graduated light on the background. [David Leslie Anthony]



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Golden girl

The mood here is made provocative by the styling of the hair and makeup: full red lips and romantically curled hair with sweeping fringe, and large precious-stone pendant. The golden tones add alluring warmth. [Amy Dunn]

**Captivating gaze**

The gentle movement of the hair and the raised hand frame this model's expressive beauty. Models need to be actresses, helping you convey various messages to the viewer. The casting is the time to find out whether a particular model has the aptitude to be more than just a pretty face. [David Leslie Anthony]

Engaging confidence

Here the look invites the viewer into the model's confidence. Use a table and adjustable posing stool so the model can put her elbows down at just the right height for her size. [Crystalfoto]





HEAD & SHOULDERS

Side

Much of beauty advertising and editorial magazine photography is shot from the side. Many fashion magazine covers are shot from this angle as well, because full frontal doesn't always highlight the most attractive angles of a particular woman's face. While front-on beauty often flattens the facial structures, side-on beauty brings out more of the angles of the facial structure, such as the nose and jawline.

Taking a head and shoulders shot from a side angle provides ample opportunity for playing with the model's profile, choosing the outline of her face and emphasizing details such as eyelashes, cheekbones, nose, lips, and hairstyle.

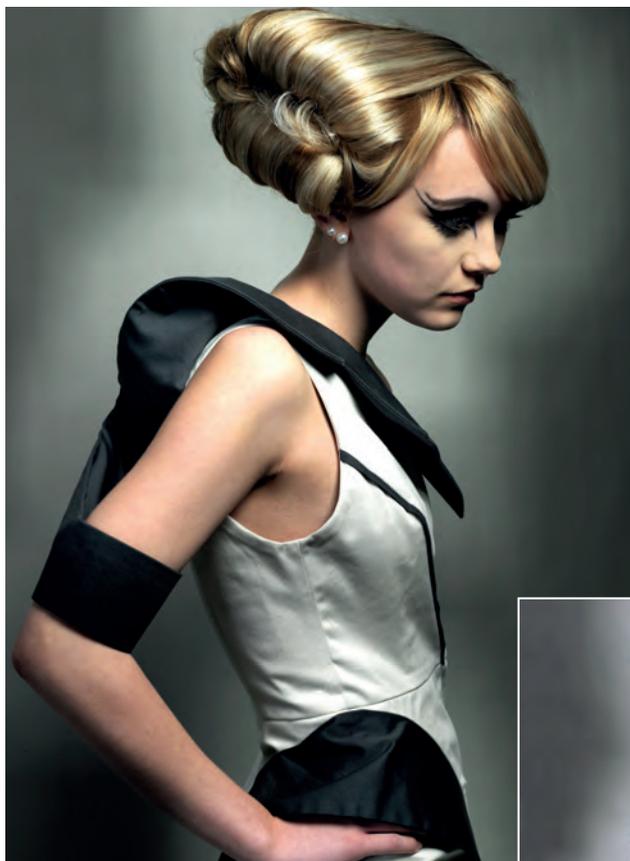
Intellectual beauty

Highly arched eyebrows, swept-back hair, prominent cheekbones, unflinching gaze, and long neck all combine to create an air of sophistication. If you need this kind of look, check that your model can perform at casting stage. (Amy Dunn)



Prominent shoulder

The tilt of the model's face along with the turn of her shoulder indicate a touch of condescension. The light can be matched by using a direct flash or tungsten head, with a flag or two placed to hold back segments of light from the body and face. (Amy Dunn)

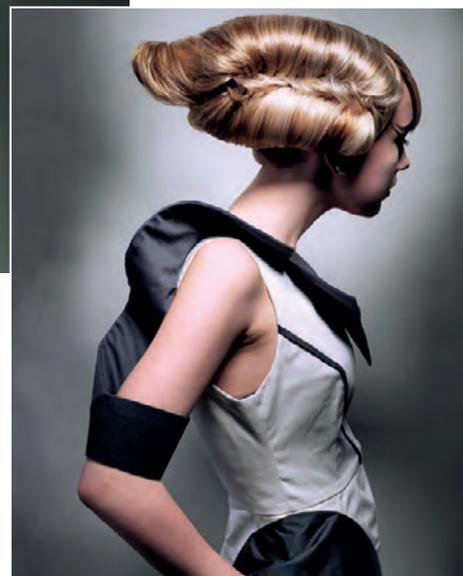


Super coiffe, optical spot

Using a dark gray background, keep the model well away from the paper, and create different shapes of light using a focusing optical spot attachment for flash/strobe lighting. The precision lighting helps portray the elaborate hairstyle beautifully. (Warwick Stein)

Turning away

It's amazing how much the turn of a head and face can affect a photo. Even though the body remains the same, the pose goes from merely thoughtful to a much more remote sense of emotional detachment. This shot is all about the hair. (Warwick Stein)





Knowing look

This model is shot from a low angle, giving her the visual upper hand. The camera position succeeds in elongating her neck (note the dramatic lighting), and the eyes are looking down at the viewer for that penetrating, all-knowing look. (Nikolai D)



Portraiture

The classic styling of this image, along with the beautiful fire-red head of hair on the model and her elegant pose, work together to create an alluring, vintage style of portrait. (Hannah Radley-Bennett)



Distinctive class

The combination of flawless haughty face upturned to the side and the model's gloved hand leaves the viewer with a sense of wealth and timeless elegance. Like the "Knowing look" photo above this one, shooting from below reinforces the superiority of the subject. Note also the strong lines in the background, which draw us in further to the model in the center of everything. (David Leslie Anthony)



Over-the-shoulder glance

This pose is given extra impact by the beauty of the extreme side lighting, dramatically illuminating the model and leaving a triangle of light on her shadow-side cheekbone. Her hand grasping her arm adds to the sense of tension created by her direct gaze. (Yulia Gorbachenko)

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- p.312bl Jenna Harpaul, Shoot Me Models, UK
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