



Peyman Naderi

Dark Portrait
Photography

and Works by
André Carrara
Andrea Modica
Cihan Bektas
Emmanuelle Bousquet
Gavin Smart
Isabel Muñoz
Jai Thakur
Jorg Karg
Kathryn Mussallem
Larry Louie
Michael Robinson Chávez
and
Phil Bekker



Emmanuelle Bousquet

Through the Looking-Glass: An Ode to Femininity

Emmanuelle Bousquet was born in 1979 Nîmes, in the South of France. Heir to a legacy of couturiers, the influence of fashion and art was naturally upon her from a very young age. Having expressed a strong interest in photography, her grandmother fuelled this passion with the gift of a tiny, red Kodak camera for her tenth birthday. Her first snapshots were self-portraits, copying model poses and dressed in her mother's oversized wardrobe.

As a teenager, Emmanuelle Bousquet approached photography in a less playful and more existential manner. At this fragile, adolescent period, her parents' painful divorce and her father's ensuing abandonment left a profound mark on the young photographer.

She then decided to photograph those closest and dearest to her: her mother, her sister, and herself. The result was her first series of photographs, produced in black and white, showing the three women together. Subsequently, Emmanuelle decided it was better to use her own body as the material of her work, just as a painter uses his own paint. Through self-portraiture, she passed through the looking-glass.

This is the result of research that is as much aesthetic as it is existential, the worldview of an artist seen through the prism of her own reflection.

All images © Emmanuelle Bousquet

In 2004, Emmanuelle met photographer Antoine d'Agata, who suggested that she totally immersed herself in self-portraiture, completely and in a more direct, refined way. "Being my own model allows me to control each photograph, to become one with it. This doesn't mean showing off or glorifying myself, but rather it's about finding a way to express what I'm made of, my body being my mind's instrument." A timeless style was born; from that moment, the raw, underlying truth that emerges from Emmanuelle's images was given life. Taking refuge in places of comfort for several weeks thereafter, she produced her first true series of self-portraits, entitled *Troubles*. This series is a reflection on a time when the artist confronted her past traumas. Strengthened from the inside out, after ten years of sufferance, her work on femininity developed, as seen through the evolution of her body. The result is a more aesthetic, symbolic concept, and a *mise en scène* that has become the essential mark of her photographic style.

Illusion, Emmanuelle's second series of photographic self-portraits, is composed of painterly, timeless, mystical images. In this series, she uses the autobiographical tool as a means to speak about femininity. A sensitive, complex, and mysterious human being, who lives under the illusion, the distorted sensation, of having freed her femininity, in a world where appearances rein sovereign.





In 2012, a new chapter begins, with Emmanuelle's third series, *Whispers*. Herein, the artist relives her adolescence via young models, selected by well-defined criteria; the artist leaves behind self-portraiture in order to live vicariously through these stand-ins. Young girls imagined into a mysterious, fairy-tale garden. *Whispers* is part of a larger work on femininity. This work expresses the difficulties experienced during this extreme yet eminent transformation, becoming oneself, a woman, with all that it entails, its secrets, its silences, when a young girl's body becomes, perhaps a bit too quickly, a bit too soon, that of a woman.

In her newest series, *The Day After*, the young girls from the *Whispers* series become young women. The bodies are stripped bare and bathed in a more diaphanous light. The woman within her is born; she has come into full contact with the world. This is the result of research that is as much aesthetic as it is existential, the worldview of an artist seen through the prism of her own reflection.

Stigmaté, 2017-2018

Scars, burns, tattoos, mutilations, scarification, or Rorschach inkblots tests... Polaroid chemical accidents brand Emmanuelle as if fermenting her spirit. Obtained through breaks, bends, bites, tears, Emmanuelle creates controlled accidents

through obsessed precision, so that these stains mark her body, complete it, extend it, draw it.

Born in the fashion world, stripping herself bare, is for Emmanuelle an essential act to rid herself of all possible interferences that could cloud her inner emotions. Emmanuelle uses the chemical interventions on the Polaroid to form a second skin, her second skin, a skin that tells her story, her life's story.

Herein lies a poetic suffering but also a desire to aestheticize femininity in a soft and sensual way.

Statue, 2015-2016

Modern man lives only on his own surface, an existence devoid of deeper meaning. He is in a state of anxiety, losing his grounding and values. He lives in fear, fear that the other finds his weaknesses and shortcomings. He erases what society would reproach him, his sensitivity and emotions. He creates a shell for himself and hardens himself in contact with others in order, he believes, to appear stronger. His heart fossilizes slowly, then his body melts into a matrix of stone.

In this series *Statue*, Emmanuelle chose the self-portrait to drive her closer to her emotions, to describe a solitary being who splits into two parts, one that society has made cold and insensitive, the other who fights and still resists to maintain his humanity and warmth. A duality, half statue, half human.





All images on this spread: Statue, 2015-2016



“Being my own model allows me to control each photograph, to become one with it.”

Exhibition *Elles! Pour l'amour des femmes* at the Galerie Daltra

Recently settled in its new space at the heart of the village of Megève, the Galerie Daltra features a sample of art pieces from photography to street art. Its founder Jeanne-Hortense Rousseau is firmly dedicated to contemporary art and aims to highlight the work of artists displaying techniques, skills and wide horizons. Her second winter exhibit called *Elles! Pour l'amour des femmes* is a tribute to womanhood through the lens of three photographers: Spanish photographer Isabel Muñoz, expert in the process of platinotype which gives incredible contrasts and a unique texture to her pictures; internationally renowned fashion photographer André Carrara, showcasing women in all their diversity; and Emmanuelle Bousquet, who uses her photographs as a means to speak about how complex femininity is. galerie-daltra.com