

Roslynd Piggott Portrait Series/ Bronwyn Kidd in collaboration with Roslynd Piggott

In fashion photography there is a deliberate collaboration between the photographer and the model within a created space and in a window of time. Contact is usually quick; there isn't time to personally get to know the model unless you've worked together before. The model usually presents as a character that the photographer records with the purpose of selling a product. My role as the photographer is in directing the layering of a concept, set or location choice, lighting, hair, make up, and fashion direction, choice of camera and lens, lens height and angle, film stock and or digital, that all come together in a dance with the model.

Within these variables I seek a sweet point with the model that lies between the created, and the candid, with the intention of creating a classic image.

In portraiture photography, I want to resolve both archival and collaborative dimensions, to draw out a character but discover an historical value in deeper understanding of the subject through means drawn from the breadth of my own practice.

In this important collaboration with artist Roslynd Piggott I wanted to merge the real and the imagined through my particular photographic vision and history. I perceive in Roslynd's work a subtly and translucency supported by her innate depth and strength of character, which I wanted to convey poetically as breathing through the layers of art, life, and beauty in a considered, biographical portrait.

I met Roslynd Piggott at fashion events through mutual friend and collaborator Susan Dimasi, director of fashion house MATERIALBYPRODUCT. Admiring Roslynd's practice and drawn to her love of fashion I asked Susan for a more formal introduction with the ambition of working together on a portrait, and from January 2021, Roslynd and I began an ongoing conversation. In the spirit of collaboration we both understood the importance of spending hours together. The process was a departure from making commissioned portraits which are usually done under pressure of time.

Meeting Ros at her studio I was impressed with the calm and beauty enveloping, like a dome of tranquility, her life and practice, in which everything is carefully chosen, everything adored; white, pastel, translucent. We talked of objects, fashion, photography, art, later refining these elements. In emails during Melbourne's Covid lockdowns we settled on a formal portrait that might convey a conception of her life and practice with authenticity. Roslynd's work has a long association with flowers and she has a particular love of orchids; in her home/studio is an orchid room. We approached Melbourne florists Flowers Vassette to create an impressive orchid corsage to be a symbol of creation and an extension of her clothing and form. With Vassette we discussed which orchids would work best for such a look and scale, and decided on Phalaenopsis and Oncidium orchids as they are suitably filmic and elegant.

On the shoot day, a hot January morning, a beautiful corsage arrived at Roslynd studio. It was very large - as requested, and very delicate, with a well concealed wire structure at the back that would allow us to rest it on Roslynd's shoulder. It was soon apparent that a prop like this would influence her movement, and though it emphasised her creative aspect we needed to balance that with its real and very dominant presence.

It would be Ros's engagement or disengagement with the prop, and her attention to the lens through her gaze and pose, and my engagement with Ros through the lens, that would make it believable and authentic. That would involve, from that point, my crafting the intricacies of photography until the final print would strike a balance between tangible and imagined.

Simultaneous with this portrait journey with Ros, I was creating a body of work for exhibition that revisited my technical development in photography, begun in 1984 when the medium was still analog and I worked with a myriad of primarily post WW2 cameras, film stocks and printing techniques. In 2004 the commercial market demanded a shift to digital and my film cameras and post production support system became obsolete.

In making this new body of work it was important for me to revisit this photographic technical history. I resurrected my Rolleiflex 6008 camera with which I had forged my career in London over 1992 to 2004. As it had been almost unused for 20 years, the resurrection of the camera took some time and rediscovering analog film, processing and printing was almost like starting again, and supplies were limited. After experimentation, a Polaroid a 110A Land Camera converted to take 5x4 sheet film became the combination that felt right as it was a 1980's camera, of my era. I felt strongly that to revisit my past in order to create something new was important, I also felt that it was important to embrace what I had learnt in the past 20 years in the transition to digital and find a way to merge the two.

Preparing for a shoot with Roslynd I packed my Rolleiflex, the Polaroid 110A camera and my Hasselblad H2 kit with Phase digital back, and we shot on each of those formats. The film and digital files were processed and an edit presented to Roslynd. I knew that to work with each format and image would lead to the most authentic result.

In chain with my work on the *Through Her Breath* series I continued experiments in printing Roslynd's portrait through another collaboration; with printer Sandy Barnard of Sandy Prints, Sydney, we considered how each frame might convey an understanding of Roslynd. Choosing appropriate papers, enlarger and print / border size, we discovered that flipping the negative would make it more engaging, much like a reflection in a mirror [*Roslynd Piggott No.3 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.5 2022*].

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We diffused images in printing, and tested a range of colour filtrations. For the colour images we printed from the upright enlarger, projecting the negative on to the wall, so that optics and scale exerted their effects on the image. All became a technical extension of the collaboration in shooting, and led to a considered portrait of Roslynd. In developing a series of images I decided to repeat print one image [*Roslynd Piggott No.3 2022*] as digital, true to its 'native capture' [*Roslynd Piggott No.4 2022*] and it was printed by Dr Les Walkling. The two versions of the same image (originally a digital image) communicate the influence of materials on the final outcome; the digital print being the familiar convention in modern photography; while the analogue print feels more 'created'. This was a revelation as I look back to what influenced me when starting out in photography, and what materials and techniques themselves offer. The black and white images reprise my perception of how classic fashion and portraiture is best presented; as a silver gelatin print on fibre paper, and selenium toned, the image revealed with either a key line or the full rebate floating within a white border. [*Roslynd Piggott No.6 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.7 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.8 2022*] all at size 515mm x 612mm.

On first meeting Roslynd I wanted to achieve a sense of the translucent and the opaque, the classic and the modern through association with haute couture fashion. That could have been a liability, but I am convinced that bringing this from my own history is a means of creating an informed portrait of the artist and the person I have come to know. Fashion was a bridge. Roslynd has a deep love and admiration for fashion design and materiality. Her wardrobe is extensive and enviable, and from it she chose to wear the perforated white shirt with blouson sleeve by Martin Grant Spring/ Summer 2022 [*Roslynd Piggott No.1 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.2 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.5 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.6 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.7 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.8 2022*]. Martin Grant is a long time friend of Roslynd and she is a long time collector of the designer.

The shirt became a counterpoint to the orchid corsage, so that delicacy and strength dances between costume and fashion. White trousers by JW Anderson for Uniqlo 2021 form a relaxed silhouette against which the white shirt by Comme des Garçons, 2015 [*Roslynd Piggott No.3 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.4 2022*] provides simplicity like a toile; an honest canvas on which to ground the corsage of orchids to elaborate the subject's creativity with an appropriately baroque and exotic organic flourish.

Bronwyn Kidd

2024

Roslynd Piggott Portrait Series 2022/2023

Perforated white shirt with blouson sleeve by Martin Grant Spring Summer 2022, white trousers by JW Anderson for Uniqlo 2021 - Roslynd Piggott No.1 2022 , Roslynd Piggott No.2 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.5 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.6 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.7 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.8 2022

White shirt by Comme des Garçons, 2015, white trousers by JW Anderson for Uniqlo 2021 - Roslynd Piggott No.3 2022, Roslynd Piggott No.4 2022

Phalaenopsis orchids and Oncidium orchids corsage:
Flowers Vasette

Hair and Make Up:
Benadette Fisers

Retouching:
Visual Thing

Film Processing and Analogue Printing:
Sandy Barnard, Sandy Prints

Digital Printing:
Dr Les Walkling

www.bronwynkidd.com



Roslynd Piggott No.1 2022

Printed 2023

C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper

Image: 67cm x 68.2cm

Paper: 76cm x 91cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.4 2022

Printed 2023

Digital print on Epson Ultrachrome Pro

Image: 61cm x 78.2cm, Paper: 81cm x 98.2cm

Digital print on Canson Baryta Prestige

Image: 41cm x 52.5cm, Paper: 61cm x 72.2cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.2 2022

Printed 2023

C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper

Image: 57.3cm x 75.9cm

Paper: 106cm x 76.2cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.5 2022

Printed 2023

C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper

Image: 45.5cm x 77cm

Paper: 76cm x 100.5cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.3 2022

Printed 2023

C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper

Image: 63.4cm x 81cm

Paper: 102.5cm x 76cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.6 2022

Printed 2023

Silver Gelatin print

Iford Brilliant White gloss Fibre Paper

Selenium Toned

Image: 45cm x 44.3cm

Paper: 51.5cm x 61cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.8 2022

Printed 2023

Silver Gelatin print

Iford Brilliant White gloss Fibre Paper

Selenium Toned

Image: 42.5cm x 55.5cm

Paper: 51.5cm x 61.2cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed



Roslynd Piggott No.7 2022

Printed 2023

Silver Gelatin print

Iford Brilliant White gloss Fibre Paper

Selenium Toned

Image: 45cm x 44.3cm

Paper: 51.5cm x 61.2cm

edition of 8 + 2 AP

\$5,000 unframed