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THE ARCHIVES: Jessica Craig–Martin

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Air Kiss (Southampton 2009) © Jessica Craig-Martin

by Jessica Craig–Martin

As an event photographer who works for top publications like Vanity Fair and The New Yorker, Jessica Craig-Martin has carved out a distinct style and name. The events she covers for the high end glossies offer unlimited access to the world's most financially lubricated events. She has exhibited her work widely and is in the collections of The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The New Museum, New York, and The Guggenheim Museum, New York, and many other public and private collections worldwide. Craig-Martin describes her experiences and her work for Musée Magazine:

My real start when was when my party photos caught Anna Wintour's attention in 1997. She offered me a contract on the spot. I spent the following years on the jet-set party circuit capturing snaps of socialites and celebrities for Vogue. The job offered me a rare opportunity to create an anthropological study of high society at its most uninhibited. While working at these upscale events, I noted that the glib perfection of the jeunesse d'oree only represented a small fraction of the riches available to my lens. To the right and left of a great Vogue shot, I saw wonderful scenes unfolding. I saw aging stars weighed down by their jewels; I saw oysters wearing caviar... These were images I was compelled to record. Knowing that they were not right for Vogue, I kept them to myself. Over time I saw an interesting accumulation of images emerge, which I then exhibited in galleries. Magazines have to present a reassuring product. There was nothing I could identify as reassuring about these photos.



Camouflage (Southampton 2009) © Jessica Craig-Martin



Fashion Victim (Easthampton 2009) © Jessica Craig-Martin



Golden Showers (New York City 2000) © Jessica Craig-Martin

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The moments I try to extract evoke the rare, candid quality celebrity news consumers crave. However, they rarely show enough of any one person to offer recognition. I am not interested in specific identities or in skewering celebrities, which would be too facile and certainly not my intention. I am much more interested in examining what one might call the glorious malignancy of high end excess. Despite all the armor the wealthy gather in tangible forms, there is a poignancy to it in that luxury doesn't work. No one is safe, no matter the fortress they build. Seeing this exotic species close up, unretouched, one realizes that glamour is just a mirage - it evaporates as you approach. Rather than suffer this disillusion, why not just stay home? It is far more glamorous to stay home in your underwear eating Cheetos, while imagining a fabulous event.



Read the full article here...



If You Knew Suzy (St. Tropez 2003) © Jessica Craig-Martin



Fisted (Berlin 2007) © Jessica Craig-Martin





Air Conditioning (Dubai 2011) © Jessica Craig-Martin



Real Beauty (Cannes 2008) © Jessica Craig-Martin

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