

Cindy Sherman Biography

Cindy Sherman was born in Glen Ridge, New Jersey 1954. She was the youngest of 5 children and became interested in visual arts at Buffalo State College where she began painting. She would express herself through this form of art but found she couldn't portray her ideas in an original way so took up photography. She failed a required photography class as a freshman but repeated the course where she was introduced to contemporary art. Cindy Sherman has gained international recognition as an influential artist.

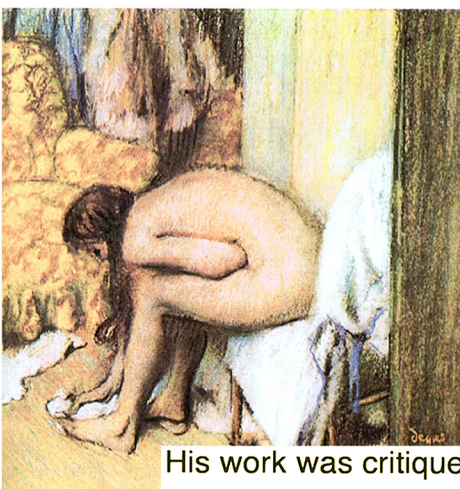


Untitled film still #21 was one of the earlier photographs Cindy Sherman took for the series 'Untitled film stills'. A film still is a photograph taken on or off the set of a movie or television program during production.

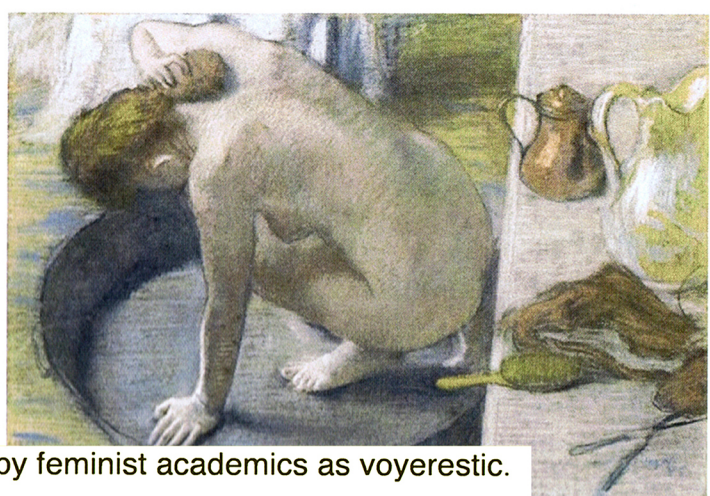
In this photograph, Sherman is playing the part of a young woman alone in the big city. She has been centered to the right of the image. By angling the camera slightly up towards the character, not only does it look as if she is a powerful female, but we can get a better idea of the setting. The anxious expression leaves the viewer curious, and we wonder what she is fearing, or for me, I can relate to the feeling in a new city when by yourself.

There is often a distraction between the camera and model. (door frame, curtain, part of a wall). This creates a distance between the viewer and the model, and makes you more aware of its voyeuristic nature, looking through the space. The female character seems unaware of your presence. (Undressing, dressing, looking at herself in the mirror ect) In a state of semi attire, underwear, towel, or night gown.

These works have often been compared to the works of Edgar Degas (who photographed female characters, ballerinas, bathers in the late 1800s.) All though he was a painter, he used photography as a recording and drawing tool.



His work was critiqued in the 1970s by feminist academics as voyeuristic.



The similarities are that there is often a distraction or an object between you and the character which separates the viewer. You feel as if you are looking in. Both use the female form as the main character. Often looking into an intimate space, bedroom, or dressing room where they are doing something personal like bathing, dressing. The differences are that Sherman uses her own body therefore she has ultimate control of the situation and uses strong characters by angling the camera at a low angle. Degas uses other female models and is often looking down on them.

Gregory Crewdson Body Of Work

Gregory Crewdson's 'Twilight' series began in 1998 and were completed in 2002. Twilight consists of 40 photographs created as elaborately staged, large scale tableaux that explore the relationship between the domestic and the fantasy between the North American landscape and the topology of the imagination. The images are very detailed and Crewdson has used extremely vivid colours to create an unpleasantly unnatural effect.

Gregory Crewdson Biography

Gregory Crewdson was born in Brooklyn, New York 1962. His first experience of photography at the age of 10, was a Diane Arbus retrospective at the Museum of Modern art in New York. In 1985 he received a B.A from the state university of New York where he studied photography. He graduated with an M.F.A in photography portraits of residents of the area around Massachusetts where his family had a cabin.



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Cindy Sherman 'Untitled film still #4'
Cindy Sherman creates a film set and like Crewdson imitates films. In this series she pose in different roles and settings from a typical film noir.



Tracy Moffatt
She uses staged images based in a studio. Similar cinematic and filmic techniques to Crewdson.



'Ophelia.' A fictional character from Shakespeare's play Hamlet who drowned herself singing.

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Nic Nicosia 'Violence' 1986
Staged photographs. They both deal with a wide range of themes that affect society.

This is from the series 'Twilight.' The meaning behind it is domestic, and the difference from natural to super natural. Twilight is the time in the evening where daylight changes to darkness. It is a place no one wants to be as there is a state of unknown. Looking at this image it raises many questions, why is there a lady floating? Is she dead? Has there been a flood?

The composition and shapes of this photograph lead our eyes directly towards the main subject who is slightly centered to the bottom end. It is made up of triangular and rectangle shapes which are all around the outside of the body.

The colours consist of bland, dull and pastel colours. The brightest colour is on the characters white dress, it looks very bright compared to the other white colours in the image and almost looks like it is glowing against her pale white skin.

The lighting is very un real and creepy. Twilight is meant to be set at night yet there is light coming through the windows from outside. There are two lamps switched on in this photo which in a flood you would expect to have switched off. There is no sight of cable plugs above the water.

Gregory Crewdson uses strange characters to show a mix of fact and fantasy, props, cinematic lighting and natural events to design a disturbing atmosphere that viewers like myself question.