

Eva Mueller: Photographer

Eva Mueller, born and raised in Germany, moved to New York more than a decade ago. She had trained and worked as an art director and graphic designer, but made the transition to photographer soon after the move. Her eclectic work includes beauty, fashion, music, and fine art. Within the past five years she has made London her second home; the vibrant music scene there is receptive to an adventurous photographer like Mueller.

Mueller brings the full weight of her previous studies and experience in the visual arts to her photography. Her images reveal a designer's sensitivity to concept and composition. Also, her work incorporates a variety of cultural influences from her native Germany, including Bauhaus, expressionism, and Weimar-era visual sensibility.

Her body of work reveals a savvy cross-fertilization between music, fashion, and art photography, and the realms of commerce and experimentation. All of her images percolate with an unconventional quality that is distinct and visually arresting in any context.

Mueller's *Projections* series showcases the strongest qualities of her work. In these pictures, naked bodies in motion or in distinct poses have other images, symbols, or textures superimposed upon them. This concept, in which the body is used as a canvass (or screen), lends itself to some stunning images: a face projected onto a back; a crouching body entwined with the image of a distorted skyscraper; the texture of a leaf or cracked marble superimposed onto a muscular back; ones and zeroes—the binary code—projected onto a body striking a limber dancer's pose.

The *Projections* images stem from Mueller's fascination with the human body, especially the body in motion and as a repository of nature and industry. The images in this series, like those in all of her work, are characterized by their minimalist composition, dark humor, muted but potent glamour, and fantastical conceits. The pictures often have an unusual twist, a visual trick or striking detail that naturally elicits a double take.

Another series, *Body Patterns*, consists of steadily multiplying arrangements of intertwined bodies. In these highly conceptual images, with their geometric/op-art character, Mueller makes explicit use of her design background.

The *Portraits* series expands Mueller's interest in the human form. These pictures feature men and women posed with simple props and costumes, such as a large metal ring draped around a torso, masks, and a wrestler's outfit. Some of the subjects are painted with simple patterns, akin to tribal markings. Wastrels, gamins, demons, and the like populate this series of freakish beings. The women are often short-haired, gaunt, and disturbingly intense with their dark-rimmed eyes; they resemble silent movie stars or fashion plates from the twenties and thirties. The photographs in this series, with their unmistakably staged quality, depict characters that could be seen as externalized personae, representing aspects of the subjects' psyches.

Artist Statement: Amanda Mortimer

Amanda Mortimer is a realist photographer and world traveler who is continuing her lifelong quest for the perfect shot. Often she finds it in the middle of the desert, in the deepest woods, even in those scenic, well-trod places that attracts “shutterbugs” of a lesser caliber. Even there, she has demonstrated a knack for locating the fresh, new angle. That’s just what she does, fulfilling the artist’s role: to show us the world in a different light, to create truth and beauty more pleasing to the eye than nature or the built world can muster on their own.

Amanda’s photos, produced as digital c-prints, draw primarily from nature, European cities, and obscure corners of America for their subject matter. Her titles are usually straightforward descriptions of what’s in the picture, like “Art Deco Building,” “Montmartre,” and “Barn Wall.” Providing only basic information in this way underscores the documentary aspect of her work. Its presentation and fundamental style is designed to allow the audience the full benefits and pleasures of supplying its own interpretations/associations.

Amanda’s work naturally expresses different aspects of her self, and photography has served as a bridge between the opposing sides of her contradictory nature.

“I’m very logical, a trait usually not associated with the creative artist. But I love the technical side of photography, which fulfills the logical me, while composition and selecting which subjects to shoot satisfies the creative me.”

When sizing up a shot, Amanda assesses all the converging elements. “It’s like an expanded version of instinct; because you’re doing the work in your mind. Really, it’s the ability to think the same way as the camera . . . I can usually see the finished photo in my mind before I even look through the viewfinder.

Among her favorite subjects are doorways and walls, because of their textures and repetitive patterns. For Amanda, such common objects, along with the more artful, grandiose European varieties, exemplify the power of photography to highlight rich associations and intricacies, and reveal the underlying beauty of supposedly mundane things.

Amanda has a strong background in drawing and painting, but her love of photography began with a borrowed camera and a fifth grade field trip to Washington, D.C.

“Light, contrasts, shadows and reflections have always been the focus for me, even when I was painting and drawing,” says Amanda. “I think that underlying interest ultimately steered me towards becoming a photographer.”

Amanda’s family moved around a lot when she was young, which implanted in her the seeds of wanderlust. She’s still traveling; always ready to visit a new place, and with camera in hand, ever eager to share her vision of the world’s beauty.



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