

corinne's

Twenty-six-year-old Corinne Day is the model-turned-photographer who discovered the face that launched a thousand *The Face* magazines.

Photographs by Corinne Day Portrait by Anthony Gordon

Stylist Melanie Ward

Photographer Corinne Day

The face: model Kate Moss



new day

She and her team are about to conquer an America hungry for

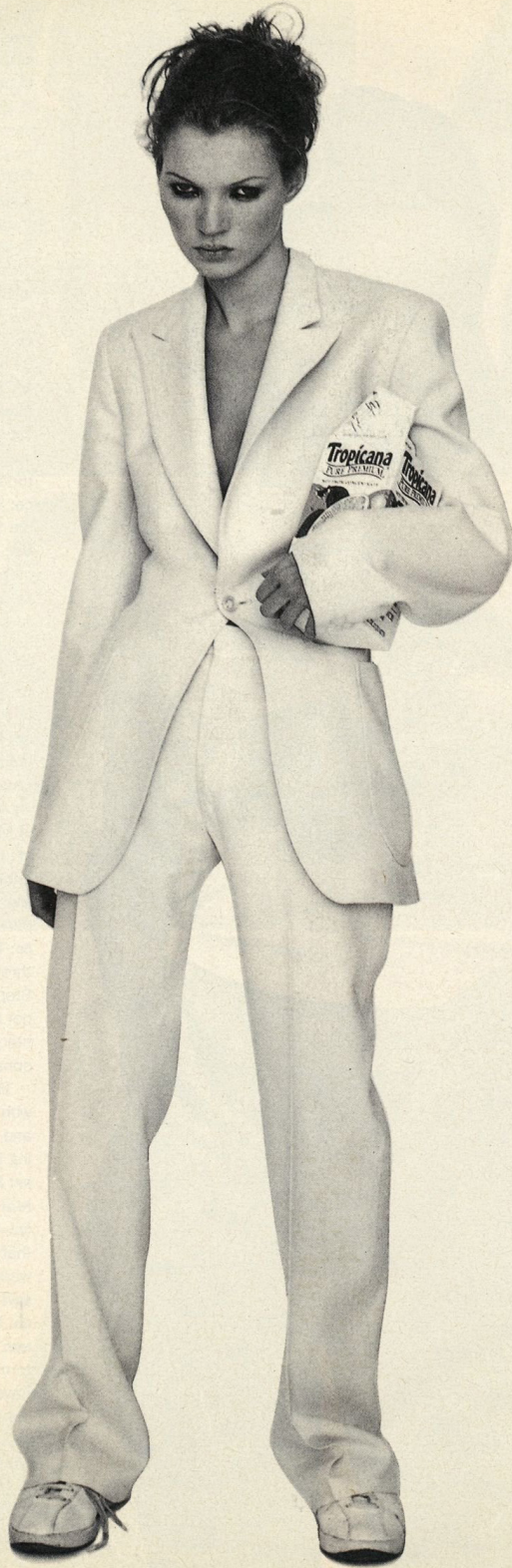
a new look

Rosemary Ferguson in a skirt by Helmut Lang.



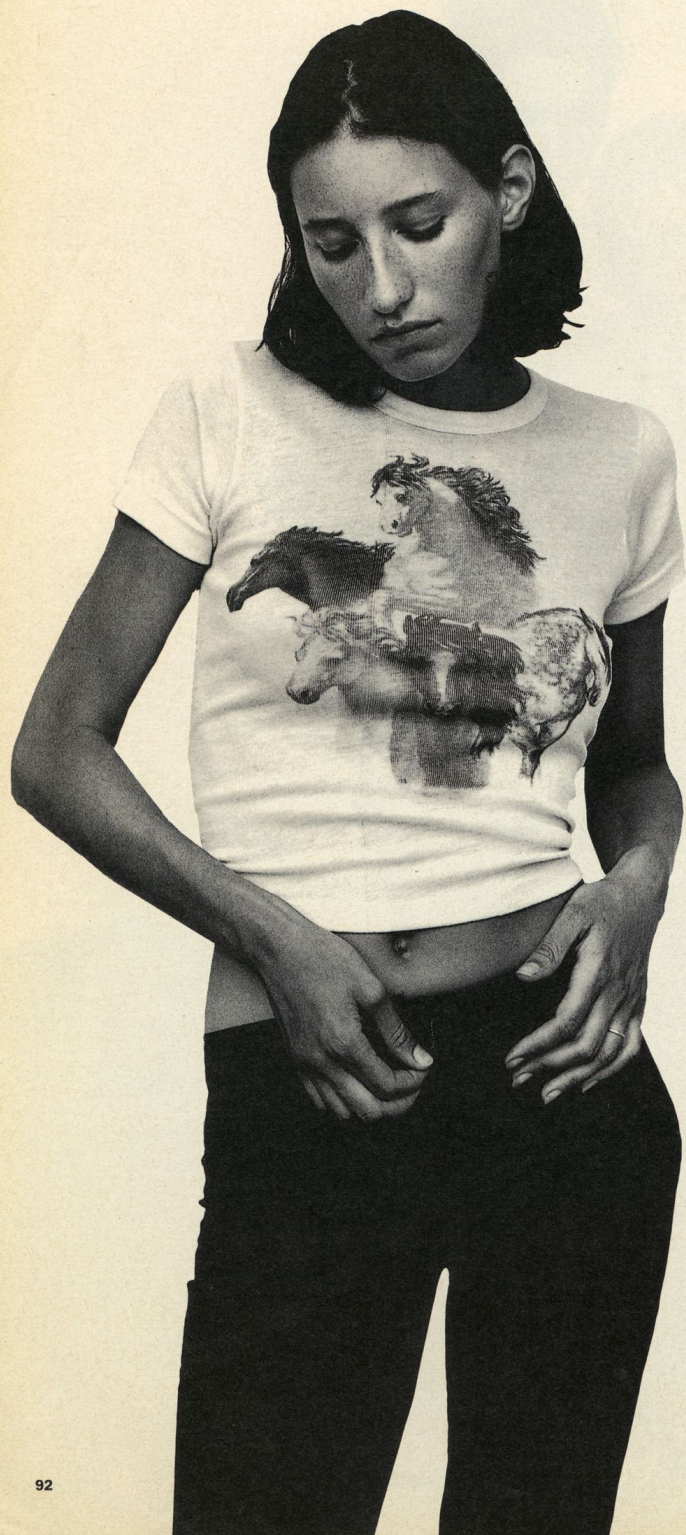
"Just because you've got a '60s top doesn't mean you have to put on a pair of platforms and false eyelashes." —Corinne Day

Kate Moss



PAGE 88: HAIR AND MAKEUP: DICK PAGE / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. STYLING: MELANIE WARD / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. MAKEUP: DICK PAGE / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. MODEL: ROSEMARY FERGUSON / ELITE PREMIER. PAGE 89: HAIR: EU-GENE / CAMILLA ARTHUR, LONDON. MAKEUP: DICK PAGE / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. STYLING: MELANIE WARD / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. MODEL: SARAH MURRAY / ELITE PREMIER. PAGE 91: HAIR: JAMES BROWN / BRINS AND HUCK. MAKEUP: DICK PAGE / DEBBIE WALTERS, LONDON. STYLING: CAMILLA ARTHUR, LONDON. MODEL: KATE MOSS / NEW WOMEN

Sarah Murray in pants by Helmut Lang.



RICHARD PANDISCIO: There is an atmosphere now in America, reflected in the last presidential election—an optimism that's decidedly anti-establishment. Do you think America's sudden interest in your work has anything to do with this? The influence of what you've all done can be seen on the runways, in fashion photographs, et cetera. What do you think it is that you've invented, with the new models and the new look you're working?

MELANIE WARD (STYLIST): I don't like to think that what we're doing is going to change the world, but the climate—the economic climate—and just life in general is very much reflected in what happens in fashion. And a recession means that you can be very creative. I know in London, particularly, during this recession people have been doing very creative and meaningful things. Because times are hard, we're doing very real things. I think a recession can bring a kind of glamour, where you just go completely over the top. But we've taken the opposite bent, and we're doing very down-to-earth things—fashion from the streets and from *real* people. I think the '90s are going to be about reality.

CORINNE DAY (PHOTOGRAPHER): It's a more honest time.

MW: Beauty doesn't have to be flawless. Beauty can come from—

cd: Character. And the new models you're seeing now are a contrast from all the supermodel glamour.

RP: Talk to me about that. Until fairly recently hardly anybody even knew models' names. Now we know who they're dating, where they're eating.

cd: I think that came from America.

MW: Yeah, it has. It might be because of a lack of glamorous movie stars today. What we've got is role-playing at being a '50s starlet.

cd: So now we've got Linda Evangelista as Sophia Loren. We've got Claudia Schiffer as Brigitte Bardot.

MW: Or this whole hippie thing—which, frankly, we're not into. We're not inspired by things that are retro for retro's sake.

cd: You have to take things from the past and make them into the present. Just because you've got a '60s top doesn't mean you have to put on a pair of platforms and false eyelashes. It's time for a change. The new generation of models, the girls we're using because we love the way they are, are just themselves, and that is in complete contrast with what we've been used to seeing lately.

RP: In your photography, Corinne, how do you keep it simple?

cd: Basically, the casting is the most crucial thing. Once you have a nice person you're working with . . . When I met Sarah [Murray], she was working in a chips shop. Kate [Moss] was a schoolgirl. I found Rose [Ferguson] in McDonald's.

RP: It sounds like a lot of girls are getting discovered there. A friend of mine calls them McModels. [laughter]

MW: See, we always start with the model. We think that's the most important thing.

cd: That's what I've been trying to explain to the magazines here. They look through your work, and they say, "We want you to shoot so-and-so"—Stephanie Seymour or Linda Evangelista or Christy Turlington. But that's not how I work. I like to find a girl and make a story about *her*. It's not a story about a flowery dress; it's about a girl. It's a story about her personality.

Basically, you have five statements you want to make—you start with the model, and then you have the photography, the fashion, the hair, and the makeup. Of course, at the end of the day, the reason you're taking the picture in the first place is because it's a fashion picture.

RP: So you mean the channel to take a new fashion picture is through real personality.

cd: And that's the most important thing to keep in mind—personality, and that you are taking a picture to say something new in fashion. That's what we're trying to do. It's hard work.

MW: It's funny, because we like the end result of our work to look very—
cd: Snapshot.

MW: Very documentary. I think that's the way photography is going. I mean, to me, even a snapshot can be a fashion photograph. It doesn't always have to be so studied and workshopped.

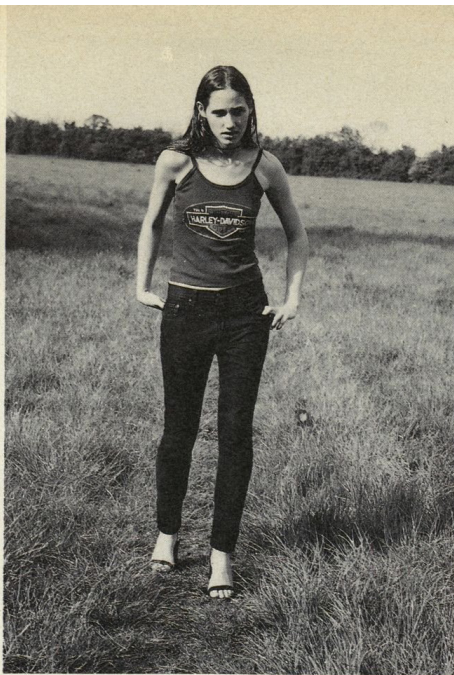
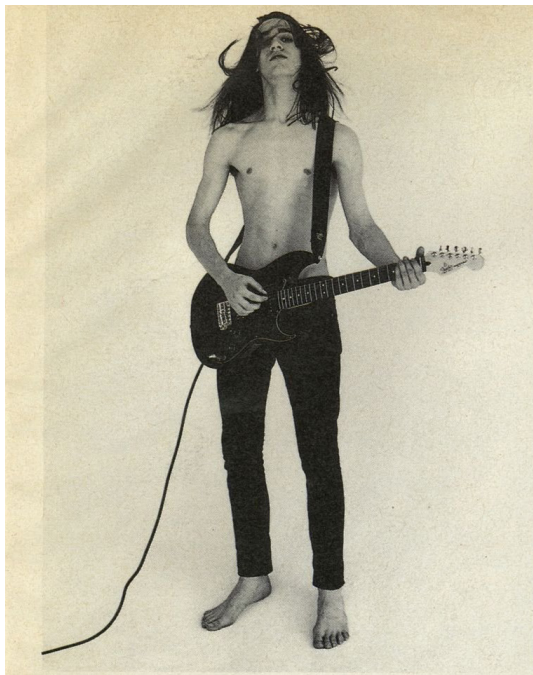
cd: The hardest thing is catching something that really is spontaneous and real.

RP: But there must be moments when you're up (more Day page 111)

STYLING: AMI BOWEN/VSAGES STYLE; L.A. MODEL: SARAH MURRAY/ELITE PREMIER, LONDON FOR FASHION DETAILS; SEE PAGE 110

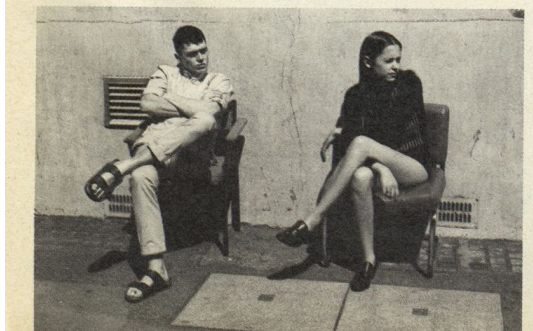
Interview by Richard Pandiscio

Artist & Print



"I like to find a girl and make a story about her." —Corinne Day

A portfolio by Corinne Day. Styled by Melanie Ward.



more day . . .

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against a wall and you have to make certain things happen.

mw: I remember being out in a field once with Rosemary, and it was really raining, and we thought we'd have to call off the shoot. I saw a bird, and I said to Rosemary, "Oh, God, look at that," and she looked up—and we just got the best pictures. Sometimes I find, at the end of the day, if a girl is really tired, you will get brilliant pictures. Or if a girl is really pissed off—

cd: Like Kate. The best pictures I've taken of Kate have been—

mw: When she was really pissed off with us.

cd: Sometimes Kate will just look at me and say, "I'm not doing any more. Why don't we all go now?" And I'll say, "Kate, you're working. Shut up." We'll have a little fight, and she'll say, "Oh, O.K." And we get the best pictures, then.

When a girl has been modeling for a long time, she becomes tainted by the industry and very conscious of her arms, her legs, the way she sits, the way she is. When she's rarely been in front of a camera before, she'll sit and pick her nails, she'll itch her arms, she'll fidget. That's when you get something that's really beautiful, really natural. That's why I like to work with girls who have little modeling experience—because they're likely to be more themselves.

rp: So you do work with a little formula.

cd: But it's not really a formula. It's a way you know of getting certain reactions from people. We're not witches. *[both laugh]*

rp: You began working with Kate when she was fifteen. What was the first thing you noticed about her that drew you to her?

cd: Her beauty, her personality. I could see her looking like a woman. I just saw this potential in her, a diversity in her look.

mw: I can remember meeting her mom. Corinne and I went around to her mom's house after our first shoot with Kate—we were doing test photos—and Kate's mom said to us, "Why are you all wasting your time? Are you getting paid for this?"

cd: Kate had a part-time job in a news agency.

mw: "Why do you keep going to the beach just to shoot photos?" Corinne and I believed in Kate so much.

cd: I said to her mom, "Kate is going to be a very, very famous model."

mw: I can remember another incident when we first started with Kate—I asked a friend of mine what she thought of the pictures we had taken of Kate, and my friend said, "I think you've made a really pretty girl look really plain." She obviously didn't understand where we were coming from.

rp: There was a time when the "natural" look was briefly in vogue. But, in fact, the look was achieved by spending thousands of dollars on makeup, hair, clothes, photographers—to make people look natural. But I think the public was too smart to buy into that, and it lost its credibility. Are you giving "natural" a second chance?

cd: That was kind of a California natural.

mw: Which for me is so unnatural.

cd: It was quite posed, as well. It was all, like, wet hair over the face, looking sexy on the beach. I remember having those kinds of pictures taken of me when I was modeling. That look came from people imitating Bruce Weber, didn't it? When ev-

eryone tried to do *him*, very artificially. I see my fashion as reportage. I don't think of it as fashion.

mw: It's funny. In London they haven't really accepted what we're doing—except for *The Face* and *ID*, no one has paid us any attention. Because it's so close to home, I don't think people can digest it. But far away, in Paris and New York, people are looking at it, thinking, Wow, it's a different view, and they can digest it better.

rp: So tell me more about this view. Give me some examples of styling you like.

mw: I love it when people wear things for functional reasons. In London, you'll see the most beautiful Indian woman wearing the most exquisite silk sari, and she's got on a pair of trainers or boots, just for functional reasons—to go shopping in the rain.

cd: In Borneo we saw little girls dressed in party dresses and flip-flops. Everything's out of context.

mw: Things that might be described as a mistake by a fashion editor are really inspiring to me. Like the way people wear things that just move them, or they mismatch their clothes.

cd: And it *does* come from America. I mean, if you go out to Texas, you've got oil tycoons in their pin-stripes and cowboy hats and cowboy boots.

rp: Corinne, having been a model and having known what it feels like to be a model—mushed and molded and strapped into clothes to create images—do you feel that experience has affected the way you take pictures?

cd: Professionally, I can't even remember my modeling career. To me it was just a blast—travel and money.

rp: Did you ever feel, while you were modeling, Why don't they let me take this picture?

cd: I do remember this famous photographer from Italian *Harper's Bazaar* who couldn't get the lighting right during this one shoot I was modeling for. I've never been very technical-minded, but I could *feel* the lighting, so I told him how to adjust his equipment just by the way the light felt. I think so often you have to go by instinct. You also have to be very sensitive in the world. When I'm working with girls, I want them to feel good about themselves. That's really important, to relax.

rp: I sense that this is really about to be your moment. But you've been at it for a while.

cd: Melanie and I have been doing this for two years. It just takes two years for it to catch on. But initially there was a lot of resistance.

rp: And how did you deal with it?

cd: When you feel something strongly enough, you can't help doing it anyway. You can't but express something that naturally comes from you. So you just keep persevering and persevering, knowing in your heart what you're doing is good. I mean, there has been many a time when I thought, My God, I'm so poor and fed up. I'm going to get a normal job and be a normal person. Your family is on you all the time. But if you're determined enough, it does pay off in the end. Someone is going to recognize you somewhere.

rp: Say the day arrives when every magazine is full of Corinne Day-like pictures. How are you going to feel about that, and what are you going to do?

cd: Well, we'll be doing something different by then. *[laughs]* It's flattering that a lot of people are starting to shoot and style in a very similar way to

ours, but we've already moved on. You can't be stuck in a rut.

mw: Actually, I'm worried about the picture you had us take of ourselves for this article. Do you really think people want to see what we look like?

cd: Don't worry, Melanie, I've got a great retoucher. We'll be as skinny and glamorous as Kate, by the time my retoucher is finished with us. *[laughter]* ■

more mirren . . .

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czarist army, to make an arms deal with the British government. Being a blinkered military man, he was unaware that the Russian Revolution was about to take place. And my Russian aunt, Auntie Olga, married the East End gangster. She was a chorus girl.

js: Do you feel Russian at all?

hm: Only when I'm in Russia. People come up and ask me for directions.

js: In movies these days, how much space is there for actorly creativity? Or do actors—perhaps like writers—get a bit mangled?

hm: Once a film gets into production, the actors sometimes begin to have more input than a writer does. Writers can get very angry when an actor says, "I don't know, I don't feel very comfortable with this line." Sometimes, though, you're working with a writer for whom that is simply not apt—like Harold Pinter. He writes so precisely, you can't improvise dialogue. It's written like a piece of music: either you decide to play that piece of music or you don't.

js: American styles of screen acting often seem radically different from British styles.

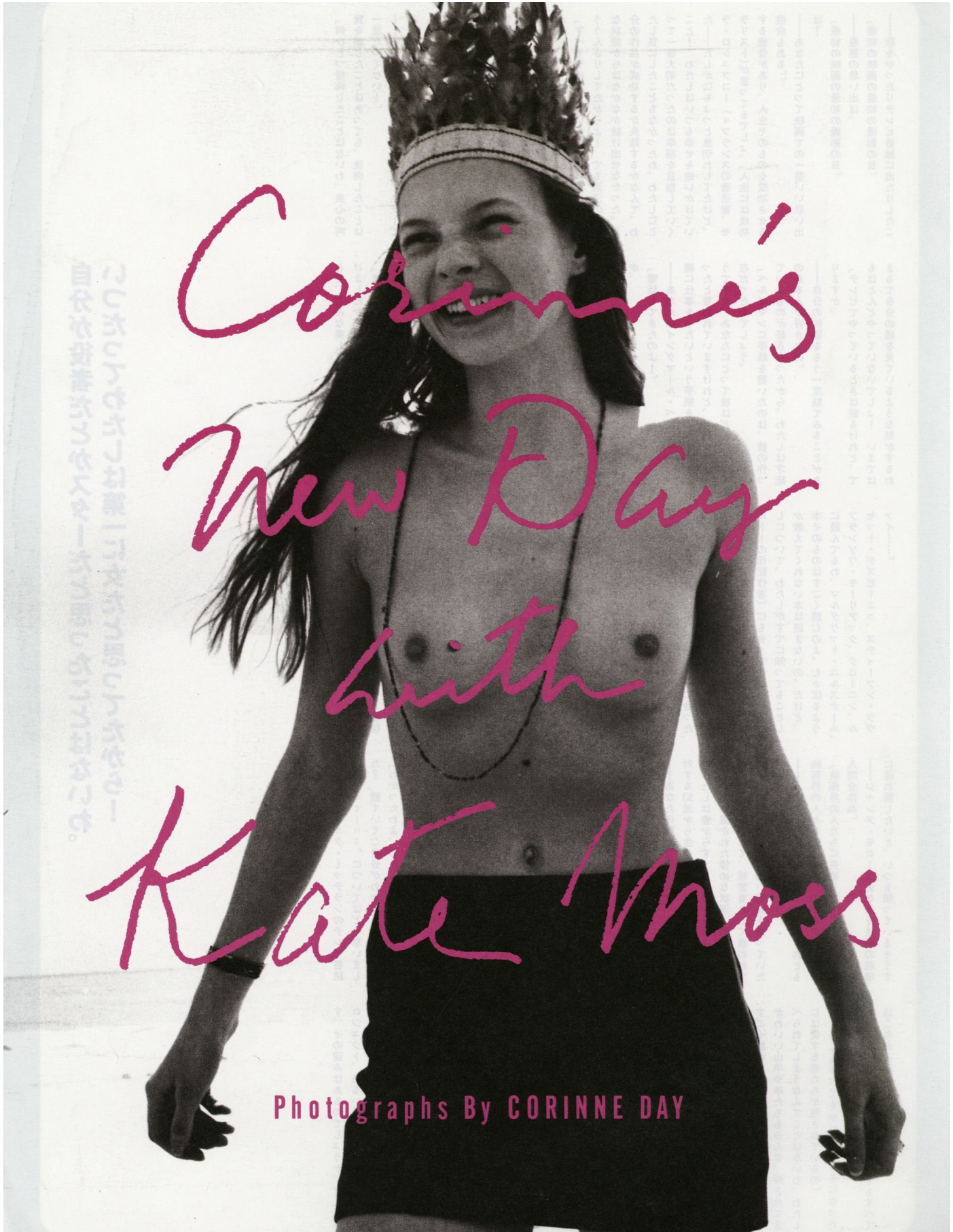
hm: I think the big difference is that English actors feel vaguely apologetic for being there at all. American actors know that the most important thing is to get one take out of fifty that is great, and they'll go to any lengths to get it. The English are used to working within consistently small, low-budget things, and think, I mustn't waste their time.

js: What are your views on directors, in general?

hm: They've got to be good craftsmen—and often they're not, which is really difficult to deal with. Directors always used to be like the police to me—the enemy, the people to tell me what to do when I didn't want to do it. But I've lived with one for a while now, and I guess I can put myself more in their position. You shouldn't be too sympathetic to them.

js: How much is acting to do with technique, and how much with intuition?

hm: My great teacher about acting was Francis Bacon, the painter. There's this book of interviews with him, and he talks about technique and accident, or intuition. You have to go through this long, painful process of learning technique to be able to recognize a "good accident" or a "bad accident." Ill-informed intuition's boring, actually. Very technically informed intuition is fantastic—it's what great art is. So really old painters or writers or actors are brilliant, because they've finally reached the point when they can let go of all technique. And young actors or young writers who try to pretend that technique doesn't matter have got their heads up their arses, basically. ■



Corinne's
New Day
with
Kate Moss

Photographs By CORINNE DAY