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"CINEMA IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FRAUD IN THE WORLD." JEAN-LUC GODARD #EPIC

The lights go down and there is a momentary hush as we wait in anticipation for the flickering of the projector and the drum roll of the opening credits. For 120 years the motion picture has worked its magic on audiences around the world; from laughter to tears, romance to fear, no other medium has quite the same power to move and excite. It envelopes us in sound and vision and, for a couple of hours, we are transported to another place, even another time, where we get to experience the lives of others.

Welcome to Schön!'s 19th issue, which celebrates cinema in all its diverse forms. Our cover star Isabeli Fontana smoulders as a femme fatale in Last Words. She is joined on our pages by top models Ashley Smith in American Beauty and Codie Young in Secretary. We follow the epic adventures of Eugen Bauder in Great Journey to Eternity, while River Viiperi and Constanza Saravia live the high life in Casino Royale, showcasing the latest collections from Hugo Boss.

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Mischa Barton tells us why she loves horror movies in A Kind of Homecoming, Carmen Electra celebrates the iconic actresses of the 1960s in And God Created Woman, singer Karin Park takes us on a sci-fi odyssey and we learn The Importance of Being Rossy de Palma from the iconic Spanish screen siren.

Behind the scenes, we speak to some of the most talented professionals in the industry, from BAFTA winning costume designer Jacqueline Durran (Atonement, Anna Karenina) to talented young director Justin Kurzel (Snowtown). From set designers, to special effects to stunt men, we salute them all.

So, turn off your telephone, tuck into your popcorn and join us for a cinematic feast. Whether you have a penchant for the paranormal, a weakness for westerns or a soft spot for superheroes, we have something for you.

And... Action!

RAOUL KEIL editor -IN-CHIEF



Valerie Steele photographed by Aaron Cobbett

A VERY INTELLECTUAL FASHION SCHON! SPEAKS TO VALERIE STEELE, THE WOMAN MAKING IT FASHIONABLE TO BE CLEVER.

'FASHION'S BRAINIEST WOMAN', 'FASHION PROFESSOR' AND 'HIGH HEELED HISTORIAN' ARE JUST SOME OF THE TITLES BESTOWED UPON VALERIE STEELE. THE CURATOR AND DIRECTOR AT THE FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM IN NEW YORK. SCHÖN! DELVES INTO THE INQUISITIVE MIND THAT HAS EARNED STEELE A SPOT ON THE NEW YORK DAILY'S LIST OF 'FASHION'S 50 MOST POWERFUL'.

Mention her inclusion in the list of fashion's most powerful and Steele is quick to dismiss it as journalistic trivia. But then surely there is always a soupcon of truth behind the media hype? Thinking about her own impact she says, "I was one of the first people who started what you might call the modern scholarly study of fashion as a legitimate field."

Merging academia and fashion has no doubt been a struggle, but Steele's

dedication has reduced the gap and lessened the parochial resistance. Referring to herself as 'intellectually adventurous', she has endlessly battled to put fashion on the academic radar. "There was a lot of fear for a long time that if you studied fashion seriously it was a drag, you were destroying the magic around it," she says, "but I think that's a totally unwarranted fear. It's like people have studied sex but they continue to be ever interested in sex. In fact I think the more you know about something the more interesting it is." Getting an insight into the working of Steele's mind is an opportunity to learn about the relevance of fashion and the fact that it is a very clever subject. Her front row perspective is a far cry from the average editor tweeting the latest trends. Her fashion radar works something more like "what is this designer's place and impact in the history of fashion?"

In the past 10 years Steele has curated more than 20 shows, each one showcasing the increasing demand for the fashion exhibition. She has written a number of books and has been the editor-in-chief of a threevolume encyclopaedia of clothing and fashion. When you think of Steele working on a project it's easy to assume that much of her study is immersed in the past. However, she is quick to assure that this is not the case: "I wouldn't say I was immersed in the past. What I'm trying to do all of the time is trace connections between themes in the past and the present. At the museum we certainly collect historic fashion, we buy from auction houses and dealers but we spend a lot more of our limited budget buying contemporary fashion."

When asked about fashion design right now and whether she thinks designers simply revamp past trends, Steele's views are refreshing. "I don't think designers are too much inspired by the past," she says. "There is plenty of room for new fashion. Fashion is like a music form; you can't create new music without an awareness of the music that has gone before."

One of Steele's most popular shows. Gothic: Dark Glamour, which opened in 2008, was hugely influential and marked a poignant resurfacing of gothic trends in and outside of the fashion industry. Steele explains that

she is always observing the 'subtle range of cycles and influences', and so the gothic show came up because at the time she had observed that it had been about 10 years since there had been a big gothic moment in fashion. "I started to feel like this is time for this to come back around." she says. "People had done shows on gothic themes in art but nobody had ever really done it on fashion. So I worked on it for two-and-a-half years and when the show opened there was a renewal of interest in gothic themes, not just in fashion but in movies and there were vampires all over the place!"

To have that kind of influence is surely why Steele has entered the realm of fashion's most powerful, and her next exhibition, *Queer Style: From* the Closet to the Catwalk will no doubt cement this position. It is with great surprise that Steele tells us that there has been no exhibition on queer style, and only one book on gay men's fashion. It is this very gap that is driving Steele, and it becomes very clear how important this particular show is to her. "We are hoping to draw attention to the fact that if you love fashion you ought to recognise that gay people have had an enormous impact, even in periods when most gay people had to be in the closet and face tremendous homophobia," she explains. "It's very important to remind people how this community has been so creative and fashion forward."

Drawing upon both the idealising aesthetic and the disruptive nature of queer style the exhibition will be testament to fashion as a medium through which one can challenge and inspire. Steele is hoping to include some pieces from the Lee Bowery estate, a person she says was "very transgressive but who had an amazing influence...Look at the latest Comme des Garçon collection, and also McQueen and Gaga and so many other people who have been inspired by Lee Bowery." Also featured in Queer Style will be pieces from the archive of Marlene Dietrich, a woman hugely influential in helping lesbian and bisexual women wear trousers openly, shocking look in the 1930s.

The rise of the fashion exhibition, partly at the hands of Steele and her work at the FIT, has no doubt brought a whole new audience to embrace the historic importance of fashion. The enormous popularity of her magazine Fashion Theory has allowed people across the world to openly theorise and express their views on fashion from any angle.

"For most people fashion is more of a visual phenomenon, in particular the exhibition of actual objects. Whether it's on living models walking down the runway or on mannequins in a museum, it's more accessible to most people than writing about it," explains Steele. "I really try hard to write in a way that will be accessible to people who love fashion and I try not to sound too scholarly, but at the same time I try to be saying something that could be interesting to people at a variety of different levels of knowledge."

There is little doubt that Steele has made the study of fashion hugely glamorous. Her power has been and continues to be in making the study of fashion appealing to all. It's hard to believe that Steele didn't have a normal academic background: in fact she dropped out of school at 15. She tells us that recently someone asked a friend of hers "Do you know whatever happened to that girl Valerie?" When she replied saving "She got a PHD at Yale", the girl laughed in response and said "No seriously, do you know what happened to her?" Well, we think Valerie should be the one laughing now.

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