

HELMUT NEWTON FOUNDATION

P R E S S R E L E A S E

ALICE SPRINGS. RETROSPECTIVE

Through 21 January 2024



Princess Caroline of Monaco with her son Andrea and Karl Lagerfeld, La Vigie, Monaco 1986, © Helmut Newton Foundation (left)
Alice Springs, Self-portrait with Sirpa Lane, Paris 1970s, © Helmut Newton Foundation (right)

The exhibition *ALICE SPRINGS. RETROSPECTIVE* opened at the **Helmut Newton Foundation** in Berlin on **2 June 2023**. In celebration of the 100th birthday of **June Newton aka Alice Springs**, over **200 photographs** will be displayed throughout the entire exhibition space of the foundation.

While major Alice Springs exhibitions were already hosted at HNF in 2010 and 2016, many of the photographs in this new retrospective have never been seen by the public. Extensive research into the foundation's archives, particularly the holdings recently transferred to Berlin from the Newtons' apartment in Monaco, has provided new insight into the work of Alice Springs. Now, some of these spectacular results will be shown for the first time as vintage or exhibition prints.

June Newton started working in 1970 as a professional photographer under the name Alice Springs, focusing mainly on portraiture. It all started with a case of the flu: when Helmut Newton fell ill in 1970, his wife June came to the rescue. He explained to her how to use his camera and light meter, and she took his place in shooting the advertising image for the French cigarette brand Gitanes in Paris. This portrait of a model smoking launched the new career of the former Australian stage actor, who had little chance of acting in France due to the language barrier. In the wake of that initial success, José Alvarez, then running an ad agency in Paris, arranged commissions for her to shoot ads for pharmaceutical products. Later, as head of the publishing house Editions du Regard, Alvarez published the first book of portraits by Alice Springs in 1983. Alice Springs shot many portraits from the mid-seventies onward. Her images are full of empathy, conveying her characteristic blend of curiosity and understanding for the individuals she encountered over the years. In her portraits of fellow photographers – including Richard Avedon, Brassai, Ralph Gibson, Sheila Metzner, and Robert Mapplethorpe – and celebrities such as Nicole Kidman, Isabelle Adjani, Vivienne Westwood, Liam Neeson, and Claude Chabrol, Alice Springs succeeded in capturing not only the appearance of her subjects but also their aura.

Although most of the people she portrayed were part of the cultural jet set, Alice Springs was not concerned about her subjects' social status. Her lens often zeros in on the human face, shown tightly cropped with the head and shoulders or as a three-quarter-length portrait. Her subjects look curiously, openly, and directly into her 35 mm camera. Studio shots are rare in her oeuvre; most of her portraits took place in public spaces or inside or outside her protagonists' homes, mainly using natural light only. We encounter the entire spectrum of responses in these images: from proud poses to natural self-confidence and shy glances. Commissioned by magazines or created on her own initiative, the portraits become visual commentaries, interpretations of the sitter. At the same time, Alice Springs let the individuality of each of her subjects shine through. In doing so, she added a new and unexpected dimension to the familiar face, making it as cliché-free as possible. Her understanding of acting may have contributed to her ability to confront the human facade and look behind it simultaneously.



Alice Springs, Sirpa Lane, Paris 1972, copyright Helmut Newton Foundation

Equally fascinating are her portraits of her husband, which she often took during his own photo shoots. Together with Helmut Newton's pictures of his wife and select self-portraits, they round out this comprehensive review of works. In a sense, these intimate images are an extension of the earlier joint exhibition, *Us and Them*. A curated excerpt from the couple's legendary collaborative project and other mutual portraits are displayed in the rear exhibition space. The exhibition therefore comes full circle on various levels: the life and work of Helmut and June Newton were connected in the most diverse ways, and now they meet again in Berlin.

Complementing the series, *Us and Them* with works by Helmut Newton and Alice Springs is Helmut Newton's *Private Property Suites I-III*. On view in the foundation's project space on the ground floor of the Museum of Photography, this series features 45 black & white vintage prints produced between 1972 and 1983, including numerous iconic motifs from the genres of nudes, portraiture, and fashion.

On the occasion of the retrospective, the revised version of the book "Helmut Newton & Alice Springs. Us and Them" was published in August 2023 by TASCHEN. Helmut Newton, June Newton, Matthias Harder, Hardcover, 14 x 19,5 cm (5.5 x 7.7. in.), 192 pages, US\$ 20 | €15 | £ 15, ISBN 978-3-8365-9691-6 (English, French, German)

For questions and press material, please contact:

Helmut Newton Foundation

Museum of Photography
Dr. Matthias Harder
Jebensstrasse 2, 10623 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 318 648 56
www.helmutnewton.com
info@helmut-newton-foundation.org

Press contact

Nadine Dinter PR
Fasanenstrasse 70, 10719 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 398 87 411
Mobile: +49 (0) 151 123 70 951
presse@nadine-dinter.de
press@helmut-newton-foundation.org