

# HELMUT NEWTON FOUNDATION

## SAVE THE DATE

### Alice Springs. Front Row

Duration: 7 July – 17 August 2025

Reception: Thursday, 10 July 2025, 12 – 3 pm (by invitation only)

Location: Galerie Huit Arles, 8 rue de la Calade, 13200 Arles



(L to R) Alice Springs, André Leon Talley, Villa La Vigie, France 1989 | Alice Springs, Christian Lacroix and wife Françoise Rosenthiel, Paris 1987 | Alice Springs, Pat Cleveland, Paris 1970s; all photos: copyright Helmut Newton Foundation

For the first time, photographs by Alice Springs will be presented in summer 2025 during the Rencontres d'Arles, the legendary photo festival in the south of France. Julia de Bierre founded the non-commercial institution Galerie Huit Arles there in 2007 and has since hosted a wide range of photographers each year during the Rencontres, with around 80 exhibitions to date. Her close friend June Newton, who worked under the name Alice Springs, had been scheduled to show work at the gallery in 2009, but the plan was never realized. Now, in cooperation with the Helmut Newton Foundation, which also manages the Alice Springs estate, the exhibition *Front Row* will feature nearly 50 portraits of leading figures from the international art and fashion scenes.

The list of those who sat for her reads like a who's who of the cultural, creative and intellectual elite on both sides of the Atlantic – including Claude Chabrol, Christopher Lambert, Jacques-Henri Lartigue, Sebastião Salgado, Anna Mahler, Christopher Isherwood, Bruce Chatwin, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Azzedine Alaïa, Vivienne Westwood, Robert Mapplethorpe, André Leon Talley, Yves Saint Laurent, Diana Vreeland, Wim Wenders, William Burroughs, Agnès Varda, Michel Foucault, Karl Lagerfeld, and Andrée Putman.

June Newton began working under the pseudonym Alice Springs in 1970. She exhibited alongside Helmut Newton several times, most notably in their joint photo project *Us and Them*. Like her husband, she worked across three genres – portrait, nude, and fashion/advertising photography – though with different sensibilities. Her portraits in particular remain striking for their emotional intensity and unvarnished authenticity. In these character studies, she managed to convey not only a person's appearance, but their aura. The images continue to resonate today with a blend of empathy and curiosity about her contemporaries. The wordless dialogue that shaped these extraordinary portraits seems to have been grounded in a kind of kindred spirit.

June Newton's career as Alice Springs began in 1970 in Paris, when Helmut Newton came down with the flu. Standing in for him, she asked for a quick tutorial on the camera and light meter, then photographed an advertising image for the French cigarette brand Gitanes. The resulting portrait of a smoking model marked the start of a new path for the trained stage actor, who had been unable to find work in France due to the language barrier.

Although many of those she photographed came from the cultural jet set, Alice Springs made no distinction between social classes as a matter of principle. Alongside portraits of prominent actors, directors, and writers, she also photographed anonymous punks in Los Angeles – reflecting her broad interest in people from bourgeois to bohemian. Her focus was almost always on the face, often framed tightly as a bust or three-quarter view, typically without props. Shot quickly and spontaneously using simple camera equipment, the images reveal vanity or self-assurance, openness or restraint. They become visual commentaries – interpretations that grant each individual a distinct presence. Time and again, she added unexpected dimensions to familiar public images while avoiding cliché. Her deep understanding of acting may have helped her look both at and beyond the surface of human expression.

From 1977 onward, Alice Springs's black-and-white portraits were regularly published in the French magazine *Egoïste*, with several appearing on the cover. She also received editorial commissions from *Elle*, *Stern*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Marie Claire* – many of which remain relatively unknown today. Her final commercial shoot was a series of color photographs for a Gillette razor campaign in 2004, taken just days after her husband's sudden death in Los Angeles. Helmut Newton had originally been booked for the assignment, and Alice Springs stepped in to take it on in his place. Few photographs followed, making the Gillette series the closing chapter of a photographic career that had begun with a similar substitution in Paris more than three decades earlier.

A small selection of portraits that Alice Springs and Helmut Newton took of each other rounds out the exhibition. In this way, the circle closes multiple times, as the life and work of June and Helmut Newton were deeply intertwined – neither fully imaginable without the other.

For questions and press material please contact:

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