Dressed to Suffer and Redeem

Staged Photography Featuring Biblical Narratives

In the spring of 1898, F. Holland Day set out to work on his "sacred stuff" (Clattenburg, 1975, p. 15) as he called it in a letter to Alfred Stieglitz. The idea was to do a photographic reconstruction of the life of Christ "beginning with the Annunciation and ending with the Ascension" (Diekmann, 2006, p. 115). In the summer of the same year, this major project started to take shape.

> *He left Boston with a whole troop of male and female models, accompanied by a wagon load of costumes, a wooden cross and other paraphernalia, for some secluded spot in the vicinity […] Out there he went at once to work, had a cross erected on top of a hill, built a sepulcher and prepared for a long stay. Then he began the rehearsing of his company and the sacred tragedy was played more than a hundred times on top of that hill while curious farmers with their entire families came from far and near to gaze at the strange spectacle. (Hartmann, 1978, p. 189)*

The whole project, which was obviously inspired by Day´s experience of the Oberammergau Passion Play in 1890, resulted in 250 photographs. Day assumed the role of the main protagonist in this biblical drama. His eccentric life style as an aesthete and his conception of himself as an outsider, willing to suffer for his aesthetic ideals, predestined him for this role.

At the same time, Day acted as the stage and art director of this enterprise, a double function that at times caused problems. Closer inspection of the photos of Jesus on the cross would reveal the carefully hidden camera delay timer in the hands of the redeemer. The whole series culminated in "The Seven Last Words of Christ." These images, featuring seven close-ups of Christ´s alias F. Holland Day´s tormented but noble face, were staged in his studio. In order to achieve the most tragic facial expression, Day worked with a mirror attached to his camera. Above the last and final photograph of the series the words "It is done" were mounted, which outraged some of his spectators as blatant blasphemy. (Fig. 1)

What later came to be known as the "Massachusetts Passion" was deeply rooted in a romantic re-enactment of the suffering of Christ. To play his part as well as possible and to really fit the role, Day lost weight and let his hair and beard grow long. Accordingly, the photographs show an emaciated main protagonist who could well pass as a Jesus figure. Speaking overall, the attempt to be as authentic as possible and to achieve utmost veracity extended to all matters. Clothing and footwear like sandals were taken into consideration. The wooden cross was produced by carpenters in Syria. Day insisted that the crown of thorns be made of real thorns to cut into his forehead. The "game of greatest naturalism" (Diekmann, 2006, p. 121), being played out was informed by what Diekmann calls "Genauigkeitsfetischismus" (2006, p. 121) or fetishism of precision. Attention to details and a strong tribute to art historical sources were intended to authenticate and legitimize this endeavor of a photographic reconstruction of biblical narratives.

Paradoxically, F. Holland Day´s adaptation of the Jesus story for the camera was less about an exploration of a photographically generated narrative than entirely about confirming and appropriating the codes of painting. In Day´s photographically enhanced *imitatio* of the life of Christ there was no room for photographic experiments because the medium itself was on trial at that time. In their attempts to establish photography as high art, Pictorialists like Day were trying to prove that the camera was not just a banal recording machine of everyday reality, but also capable of rendering a type of fictitious scenario like the passion of Christ. Speaking of pictorial codes, "The Entombment," one of the first photos of Day´s "Sacred Subjects" series, is strongly indebted to Pedro Sanchez´s version of the subject. Day, alias Jesus, assumed the same outstretched position on a kind of sarcophagus. The protagonist´s head was equally inscribed in a semicircular halo and the stigma was clearly visible and in the same place. In his entombment painting, Sanchez placed objects, mainly vessels, alongside the coffin. Day took up this mode of using objects to refer to what happened earlier. All these objects were placed carelessly on the ground. After the crucifixion of Jesus, they turned into disposable things. At the same time, they remained indispensable signifiers of the story being told. Day´s arrangement was solemn and focused on a few markers that were indisputably connected with the familiar narrative. The sponge, the sign from the cross, the loincloth were all in place and the final clue, namely the stigma, was perfectly accentuated against the dark space of the open tomb in the background. The dark square became a framing device for the open wound and a projection screen for everything else that was left open and defied representation. The platinum print gave the photograph a soft tone and seemed to remove it even more into a painterly realm. Only the grass in the foreground was strangely reminiscent of the camera´s predilection for mundane reality.

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F. Holland Day, *The Seven Last Words of Christ*
1898, Platinum Print

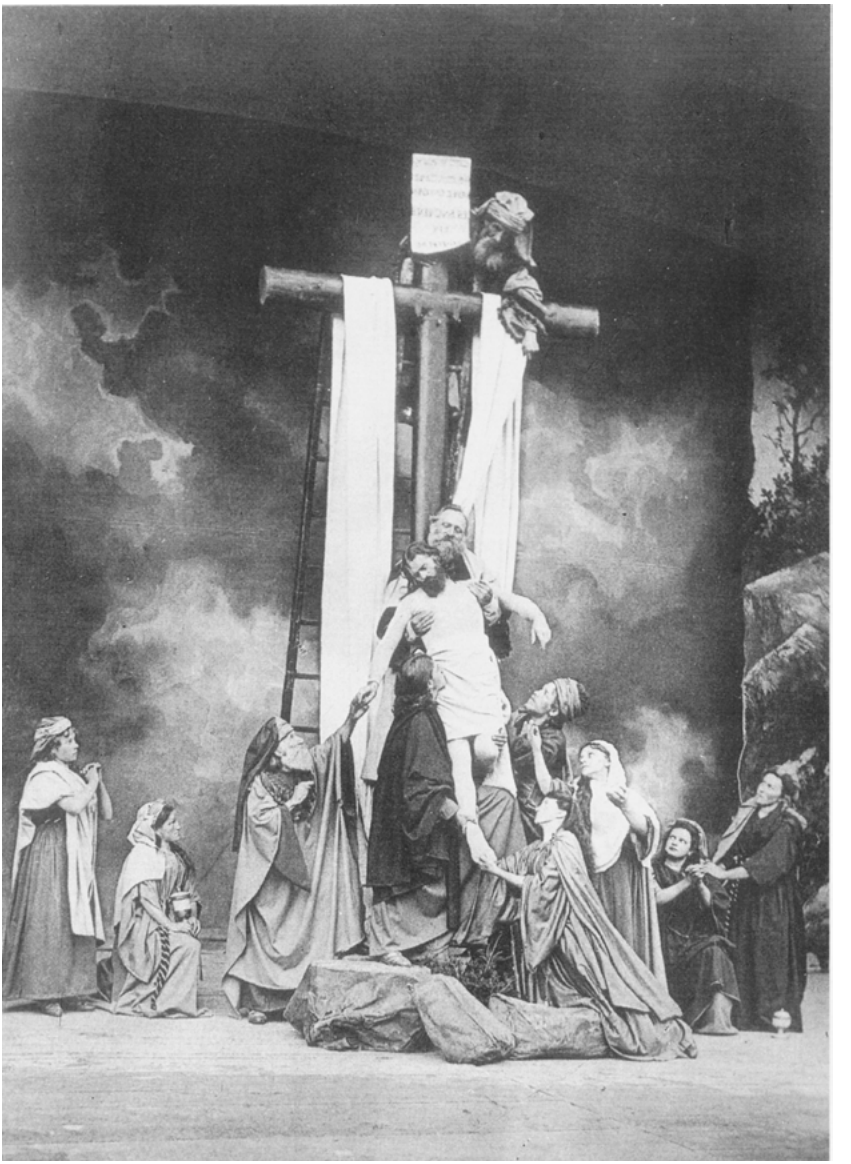
Lejaren à Hiller

From the 1900s on, the American illustrator and photographer Lejaren à Hiller (born John Arthur Hiller) turned his attention to dramatically staged photographic scenarios. Twelve years after F. Holland Day´s "Massachusetts Passion," he staged his "Deposition from the Cross" for the camera. (Fig. 2) The photograph depicts a group of people engaged in taking Christ down from the cross. The huge canvas in the background behind the cross evokes the apocalyptic circumstances connected with Christ´s death. The group of figures is well arranged in a triangular composition. The gestures are highly expressive and Hiller´s crew obviously makes an effort to convey the gravity of the situation. All the gazes are directed towards the main protagonist, confirming his central role. Everyone seems to be properly dressed for the occasion and even the stones at the bottom of the cross are clad in some kind of cloth to cover their naked nature. The actor representing Christ is well chosen, but, for some reason, G.B. Shaw´s trenchant commentary on 19th century staged photography comes to mind:

> *Take the case of the ordinary academician. He gets hold of a pretty model, he puts a dress on her, and he paints her as well as he can, and calls her "Juliet", and puts a nice verse from Shakespeare underneath, and puts the picture in a Gallery. It is admired beyond measure. The photographer finds the same pretty girl; he dresses her up and photographs her, and calls her "Juliet", but somehow it is no good – it is still Miss Wilkins, the model. (Shaw, 1909)*

For Hiller, who later on regularly arranged the annual costume balls of the "New York Society of Illustrators," the quite obvious discrepancy between "Jesus" and the acting model was certainly less disquieting than for Shaw. Staging dramatic scenarios for the camera represented a challenging task for him and as the director of such endeavors he took full charge. People should be moved and entertained by these photographs created in the tradition of the tableaux vivantes. With his background in advertising and his position as an eminent photographic illustrator, he approached his subject in a different manner than Holland F. Day. Hiller´s version of an "artful passion play" (Saunders, 2009) was rooted in popular culture, role playing and theatrical conceptions of the grand narrative prevailing at the time.

When Helmut Gernsheim refers to the "Deposition from the Cross" as "an extraordinary aberration of taste" (1962, p. 134), he argues from a modernist perspective and ties his judgment to modernist aesthetic standards and matters of taste. For him, Hiller´s photograph is poor and unconvincing. From a postmodern, decon-



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Lejaren à Hiller, *Deposition from the Cross*
ca. 1910

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Adi Nes, *Untitled*
1995, Chromogenic Print, Dimensions Variable

structivist point of view, though, Lejaren à Hiller´s staged photograph is a highly intriguing image. All kinds of pictorial slips reveal the constructed nature of the picture. There is a lot of drapery which covers up bodies and various inconsistencies. Some of the seams and sutures are clearly visible. The white drapery that falls down from the cross simultaneously conceals and reveals the structural engineering intended to give stability to the cross and the fabricated biblical narrative alike. In this respect, the most fascinating detail is the delicate white line running down the right edge of the painted canvas backdrop. This line is a borderline in that it signifies the limits of a reality construct and obstructs the credibility of the scene. It puts the scenario in quotation marks and points to the artificiality of the endeavor.

Contemporary Appropriations of Biblical Motifs and Narratives

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, deconstructivist traits may have happened unintentionally, as in the case of the `borderline´ in the photo by Hiller. But, this "supplemental" reflective structure was not programmatic yet. For the contemporary Israeli photographer Adi Nes, postmodern appropriation strategies are common practice. In his image "untitled, 1995" from his "Soldiers" series, he arranged a scenario that explicitly refers to Christian themes. There are two young soldiers in a barren type of environment, one of them obviously a victim of the war. The soldier nestling the body of his dead comrade in his arms surprisingly holds a makeup brush in his left hand. An open paint box suggests cosmetic improvements going on and indicates the painted nature of the stigmata. In an intimate scenario, the earnest-looking paramedic in full rig-out seems to be preparing his fallen comrade for a photo opportunity. In the manner of a make-up artist, he is about to add the final polish to a body meant to feature in the media as a victimized soldier. (Fig. 3)

But there are additional layers of a reception of Adi Nes´work. He is an artist known for his clear agenda concerning Israeli male identity and gay identity in particular. "My staged photographs are oversized and often recall well-known scenes from Art History and Western Civilization combined with personal experiences based on my life as a gay youth growing up in a small town on the periphery of Israeli society"(Nes, 2008). In regard to this statement, his image of staged masculinity takes on an additional meaning. As a representation of a tender and caring masculinity, it stands in strong contrast to the belligerent and aggressive pictures of empowered manhood which, according to Nes, frequently appear in the Israeli media. The passivity of the scene is striking, the caring gesture of holding a dead comrade on one´s lap and treating him with utensils tied to femininity is telling. On a less explicit level, the image also refers to the homoeroticism informing many of the religious images.

"Ecce Homo" – Exposing and Framing the Subject

Bramly & Rheims created three versions of the Ecce Homo theme. In the two versions I would like to deal with, the main clues of the religious subject are clearly referenced. Every viewer raised in a Christian tradition can claim expertise of the motif. "Ecce Homo II" shows the characteristic close-up of a half-length portrait of the humiliated Jesus with his crown of thorns and all the traces of violence on his body. In this state, the Roman Proconsul Pontius Pilatus allegedly presented him to the hostile crowd. "Ecce Homo" or "Behold the Man" implies an imperative to look at this man and consider his further destiny. As the title has it, any "Ecce Homo" figure is mercilessly exposed to the gaze of the others. (Fig. 4)

In Bramly & Rheims´ remake of the topic, "Jesus" is rendered fully present with an almost sculptural quality to his body. This particular "Ecce Homo" seems to be perfectly familiar with the mechanisms of ensuring visibility. His professional performance, the way he offers his body for view as well as relies on his visual appeal, makes him arguably a (fashion) model. With his heavy makeup, he is obviously stylized as a dramatic persona. Streams of "blood" run down his face and over his whole upper body. There are signs of maltreatment and his tantalizers obviously left traces of their dirty or blood-stained hands on his body. On closer inspection though, one realizes that the imprints of these hands on this body can also be read as tender explorations of the muscular male body or materializations of the libidinal gazes scanning the body of the male protagonist in this story. Bramly & Rheims´ "Ecce Homo" is reminiscent of the scopic regime of the fashion industry, but also makes one think of the homoerotic appropriation of such religious imagery.

With Bramly & Rheims´ "Ecce Homo I" image, the deviation from the well-introduced version of the motif is even more striking. There is no truth to the "original" as in Holland F. Day´s "Massachusetts Passion." The deliberately different enactment of the theme seems to call for an equally open type of reading. The image, also a close-up of a single figure, depicts a person whose body is smeared with a dark, oily substance. The main signifier, the crown of thorns, consists of metal parts alluding to industrial work. With "Ecce Homo I," Bramly & Rheims do not just pay tribute to a tradition in painting, but also attest to a certain photographic legacy. (Fig. 5)

In my view, the image can be legitimately brought in connection with Richard Avedon´s photo series "In the American West" and specifically with his representation of miners in Colorado. Their bodies are also smeared with coal dust. In Avedon´s photographs they feature as dark and dirty men of sorrow, transfigured by their jobs below ground and shaped by the hardship of their daily life. "In the

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Serge Bramly & Bettina Rheims, *I.N.R.I. Series* (1997 – 98), *Ecce Homo II*

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Serge Bramly & Bettina Rheims, *I.N.R.I. Series* (1997 – 98), *Ecce Homo I*

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Raymond Voinquel, *Christ in Cross, Essay for the Devine Tragedy*, 1949

7

Andres Serrano, *Early Works (Pietà)*, 1985

Image Courtesy of the Artist

American West," initiated and commissioned by the Amon Carter Museum in Texas, provides haunting and disconcerting images of an under-represented population of America. Avedon portrayed drifters, oil field workers, waitresses, factory workers etc., none of them resembling the prim frontier families of common depictions. Avedon presented his protagonists as stigmatized by the dirt and coal dust growing on their skins, and monumentalized them by photographing them against a white background. Some of these miners, as for instance James Story or Hansel Nicholas Burum, seem to assume poses known from art historical renditions of biblical figures. Bramly & Rheims´ "Ecce Homo I" turns Jesus into an underdog who willfully exposes his body carrying all the marks of alienating working conditions.

The Piétà Motif

As Nissan N. Perez points out in his dissertation "Picturing Faith. Christian Representation in Photography" (2012), the Piétà theme is the second most frequent motif when it comes to photographic reenactments of biblical themes. From the wide range of Piétà representations, Raymond Voinquel´s photograph from 1949 seems to aim at an iconographically "true" version of the motif. (Fig. 6)

Voinquel started out as a fashion photographer and later became one of the most accomplished film still photographers of the golden age of French film. As such, he collaborated with Jean Cocteau, Max Ophuls, Sacha Guitry and others. His image "Christ in Cross, Essays for the Divine Tragedy" was part of a series of photographic tableaux in preparation for Abel Gance´s film "La Divine Tragedie (1947 – 52)." The film was never realized, but Voinquel´s photographs give an impression of how Gance would have approached his subject. Voinquel´s tentative film still seems to be closely modeled on the Pietà of Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, an oil painting of the mid-15th century attributed to Enguerrand Quarton. The photograph presents the core group of the grieving mother and her dead son. As in Quarton´s painting, the body of Christ assumes an elegantly curved line with his arm falling to the right side. This perfect line of beauty, innocence and grace described by Jesus´ body calls to mind the highly controversial and provocative Piétà appropriation of the contemporary American photo artist Andres Serrano. His "Pieta" from 1985 features a fish, one of the earliest symbols of Christ, in the arms of an unconventionally depicted Virgin Mary. It is the curvy form of the fish that ultimately resonates with a particular art historical tradition and links the image with the Pietà motif. (Fig. 7)

Bramly & Rheims – Negotiating Motherhood

In comparison with Abel Gance´s visualization of the divine tragedy, which should obviously be based on reenactments of art historical images familiar to the French public, Bramly & Rheims followed an entirely different artistic concept. In their "I.N.R.I." (Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum) series created in 1997/98, they explicitly wanted to provide an update of the stories of the Gospel and translate these narratives into the visual language of the 21st century. In terms of intertextuality, their reception works on both a literary and a pictorial level. The "I.N.R.I." project was grounded in extensive research. "Bettina Rheims and Serge Bramly began by visiting museums and churches, by reading and re-reading the Scriptures and related literature, and by talking to theologians and priests (Bettina RHEIMS & Serge BRAMLY: I.N.R.I, 2000)." After consulting all these sources, they developed a rough storyboard and created a file card for each scene or tableau. On the cards they indicated which symbolic aspects had to be taken into account and which outfits or accessories were indispensable for the staging of the particular scenes. The different protagonists and scenarios should be identifiable and recognizable; at the same time, the actualization of the story should be given priority and artistic innovation take precedence over sanctioned modes of representation. The resulting images caused a considerable scandal in France and spurred a debate about blasphemous religious imagery. In the following, I would like to prove that with some of these photographic reenactments of the holy story, Bramly & Rheims indeed managed to invest enduring stories with a sense of actuality. For this discussion I chose "Piétà" and "The Temptation of Jesus," both from 1997.

Bramly & Rheims´ "Piétà" deviates widely from any common pictorial solution, but still, what is it that makes the motif instantly recognizable? It is the combination of the two figures and the crown of thorns, but even more, it is the limp body of the stuffed doll that signals a "dead Jesus" figure. It is the lifelessness of the body that falls into a familiar position with its right arm hanging down and the particular curved shape that the deceased body assumes, which ring all the bells and resonates with our pictorial archives. By these self-evident features the viewer gets assured of his/her pictorial expertise and can comfortably identify the motif. On the other hand, the Jesus figure is a bigger-than-life-size stuffed doll, a carelessly fabricated artifact, a mannequin radically striped of any beautifying layers. This abstraction of a human figure is dirty, worn out, mere material matter and strongly contradicts the traditional, pleasingly arranged corpse of Christ. In Bramly & Rheims´ interpretation, death and its devastating and disintegrating power is fully acknowledged. (Fig. 8)

The Virgin Mary, the other essential figure in this composition, is represented by a young girl. She seems strangely disconnected from the giant corpse that besieges her and apparently has not come to terms with the maternal attribute of femaleness. She looks directly at the viewer, but her facial expression does not mimic the traditional despair of the suffering mother. It is more the juvenile, lost generation gaze that appears on her face and that turns her into a young girl burdened with something dead, with a huge weight clinging to her. She is not mothering this body and it is quite obvious that she has never enjoyed any maternal pleasures with this carelessly put together doll. Instead, she presents the viewer with an object signifying a potential miss-investment of emotions and hopes. Suffering takes on a new meaning. The rag doll turns into an emanation of societal pressure. It becomes the embodiment of a haunting yet highly ambivalent desire for motherhood, overpowering and alienating at the same time. Bramly & Rheims seem to invert the classical Piétà relationship. In the traditional setting, the Virgin Mary assists in the drama of the death of the redeemer and the scandal of his death clearly exceeds her personal feelings of loss and despair. Bramly & Rheims´ updated version zooms in on the young female. They twist the motif in a way that enables them to broach the issues of motherhood, conflict and grief in a new way.

Stage Sets That Matter

Concerning the background of the "Piétà," Bramly & Rheims chose to depict a very unusual setting with no precedent in classical art history. They placed the two figures in a space reminiscent of a garage, factory hall or attic. The slightly unfocused background with its dramatic play of light and shadow is bathed in blue light with light streaming in through the invisible window openings on the left side of the room. The uniform blue color tone of the space creates the impression of a sad and secluded area and adds to the feeling of the two figures being trapped in there. In this connection, Nissan N. Perez´ remark about background information in photographically appropriated biblical stories is particularly interesting.

> *One of the characteristics of religious photography in general, and a feature that differentiates it greatly from other arts, especially painting, is the unconditional focus on the person acting as Christ, while the background is generally diffuse. In this respect, photography is closer to the New Testament, wherein the sacred texts `…contain hardly any detailed descriptions of outward appearances, either people or landscape´. (Perez, 2012, p. 202)*

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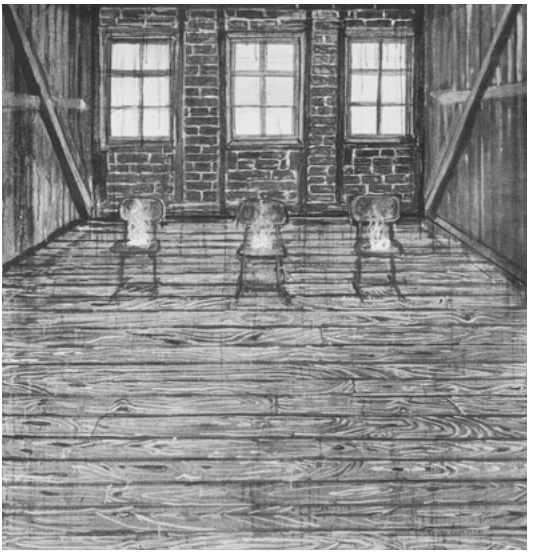
Serge Bramly & Bettina Rheims, *I.N.R.I. Series* (1997 – 98), *Piétà*

In one of his interviews, Serge Bramly (1999) comments on the limitations of photographic storytelling because he believes an equal focus on foreground and background is not possible. Unlike in painting, there is no equal rendering of details and certain areas of the picture will always be given dominance over others. Still, the highly reduced background of Bramly & Rheims´ "Piétà" opens up an interesting range of allusions, associations, and meta-narratives. To me, the dimly lit "Piétà" space with its mysterious blue tones and the strong perspectival order clearly reference Anselm Kiefer´s attic paintings from the early 1970s. In his work "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (1973), Kiefer gives an unorthodox and also very controversial rendering of the holy trinity. (Fig. 9)

The whole scene happens in an attic comparable to the space in which Bramly & Rheims placed their "Piétà". There is nothing else to be seen other than three chairs with flames which, miraculously, do not consume the wooden surrounding. The stage is set: the attic is filled with the spiritual energy of the invisible protagonists whose existence has to be conjured up by the viewer. Kiefer´s highly charged scenarios of the 1970s refer to religious narratives, but also to the grand stories of German history and culture. In Kiefer´s conception, attics are storage areas, spaces of repressed history or of stories awaiting their revision and reformulation. Here, things can temporarily go undercover in order to one day re-emerge and acquire new importance and form. As already mentioned, Bramly & Rheims did a lot of research for their joint project. Their choice of an attic-like setting for the piétà motif may well indicate a conceptual move. In light of the above-mentioned Kiefer reference, their "Piétà" would already be provided with a meta-commentary on how the reception of collective stories works. Our picture archives are sites of latent meaning. The protagonists, the narratives are all there and just need to be activated by a trigger. That can be flames, ordinary stools, or a carelessly manufactured puppet that assumes the right position.

"Protect Me from What I Want"

"The Temptation of Jesus" by Bramly & Rheims is, without doubt, a most fascinating, but also most puzzling re-writing of a scene from the New Testament. The work is arranged as a triptych with all the action going on in the middle part. Again, the main scene takes place in an attic-like space. The illuminated pink window generates an atmosphere of erotic expectations and desires. Jesus is immediately recognizable. He is shown from behind. The light falls onto his right shoulder and reveals a devil tattoo there. Another tattoo at the end of his back is partly covered by his loose trousers, a fashionable adaptation of a full length loin cloth. The trousers in combination with the muscular body, the particular hair



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Anselm Kiefer, *Father, Son, Holy Ghost*
1973, Oil on Canvas, 165cm x 156cm

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Serge Bramly & Bettina Rheims, *I.N.R.I. Series* (1997 – 98), *The Temptation of Jesus*

style and a glimpse of the profile make him immediately identifiable as the main protagonist in this temptation plot. The confrontational setting is another important marker that directs the reception of the narrative displayed. According to the Gospel, Jesus´ temptation by the devil went on over a period of 40 days. During this time, the devil appeared several times, made his offers, and was turned down by Jesus. With the classical pictorial solution, the two figures are presented in an exclusive, yet irreconcilable relationship. Bramly & Rheims´ photograph takes up that setting. As the tempted figure, Jesus is shown in a position of defense. To ward off the ladies, he is holding a chair in front of his lower body. The temptresses are two young women, playful and crazy in the middle part, but monumentalized and enigmatic in the two side panels of the photographic triptych. (Fig. 10)

In the side panels they are staged along the lines of the dangerous, castrating femme fatale of the fin-de-siècle. As the images are cropped, the ladies literally outgrow the picture frame and correspondingly, the threat of erotic appeal they pose to the viewer seems overpowering. Gustav Klimt´s "Judith I" painting (1901) comes to mind, or his famous red- haired females that test and challenge the male viewer of the late 19th and early 20th century. In terms of their appearance and outfit, the two women are introduced as opposites that complement each other. In that sense, the two of them together represent the whole specter of femininity and are the perfect equivalent of "all the kingdoms of the world" promised to Jesus by the devil. The differentiation between them happens via sensual data and color codes. The stern and iconic rendering of the two women in the side panels seems to foster a classification by type. The two options are about the dark girl versus the fair-haired one, the Asian or European model, pink versus yellow, or soft and alluring, versus provocative and defiant. The side panels of the triptych represent two temperaments and two female types from the mail-order catalogue of male desire. The painted red dot on the dark haired lady´s chest, though, speaks another language. Since Claude Cahun´s pictorial investigations into a possible third gender beyond the traditional male/female distinction, the painted nipple has been an alarming and disconcerting sign of gender role negotiations. The question is, is the person signed by such a marker in fact a woman or is she just acting as such, presenting the environment with deceiving indicators of femaleness?

In the middle panel and main scene of action everything is different. The two ladies have left their static pose behind and fully engage in the temptation and seduction of the Jesus figure. They turn into wild girls, unrestricted in their desires or by gender roles. For their satisfaction they obviously do not necessarily need the male figure whom they challenge. They have each other and are willing to test new ground. In Bramly & Rheims´ version of the biblical temptation, Jesus seems to be the addressee of an invitation he cannot handle. He dreads it

because the rules of the proposed game are deeply confusing and unclear. As a male figure, modeled on heterosexual norms, he is simply not up to the game played by the two temptresses. Bramly & Rheims´ pictorial strategy forces the viewers to position themselves in this temptation scenario and cope with questions of sexual identity. In the middle panel, the gaze of the beholder is directed towards the two females and their frivolous interaction. As a kind of repoussoir and mediating figure, "Jesus" lures the viewers in and makes them adopt his viewpoint and position. Consequently, they are torn between their fascination with the erotic game of the young women and the resistance residing in the body of the figure of identification. As everything is left undecided, the scenario seems to call for a type of negotiation which extends beyond the picture frame.

Concluding Remarks

All the presented photographic reenactments are informed by a desire for the missing original. Some of the photographers mentioned try to do justice to the motif by fully confirming to preexisting codes; others, like Bramly & Rheims or Serrano, bend and twist the subject, risking controversy and rejection. In order to buy into the biblical story depicted, the viewer has to be hooked by strong, recognizable features. As long as these indispensable and indisputable traits are there, deviations are identifiable and possible. Those features beyond doubt will ultimately authorize the changes to the story. The desire for the "correct" version is based on the wish to reconnect with the missing original. As we all know, in this state of imaginary identification, we go for the whole and want ultimate satisfaction. Bramly & Rheims trade the comfort and appeal of the classical version for sensational images of an unprecedented kind. In the images presented, they provide the viewer with pictorial evidence and still open up a perspective on pressing issues of the present time.

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Serge Bramly & Bettina Rheims, *I.N.R.I. Series* (1997 – 98), *The Temptation of Jesus (detail)*