

BRINK



OCTOBER 2012

BARBORA & RADIM ŽUREK COREY ARNOLD DANIEL GORDON DEAN WEST
DESIREE PFEIFFER EMMA KISIEL JEAN-FRANÇOIS LEPAGE JILL GREENBERG



PHOTOGRAPHY

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PHOTOGRAPHY: BARBORA & RADIM ŽUREK | STYLING: COREY ARNOID | HAIR: DANIEL GORDON | MAKEUP: DEAN WEST

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FEATURING

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COREY ARNOLD

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BLINK MAGAZINE FEATURES THE LATEST EXHIBITIONS AND ARTISTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

JILL GREENBERG



You were born in Montreal, Canada and grew up in Detroit, United States. Then you graduated from Rhode Island School of Design, went to New York for starting your professional photography career. And now you are based in Los Angeles. How do you like living in LA?

Los Angeles is a great place to live with a family. I wanted to get out of NYC after 12 years. I wanted more culture and space. This is not to say that I would not have back to NYC at some point. I actually think it might be better to raise teenagers in NYC than LA, because of the strong

Since the age of 10, you have staged photographs and created characters using the mediums of drawing, painting, sculpture, film and photography. What drives you to create?

I have always just had images and ideas in my head wanting to come out. I have so many ideas. It's the ones that won't go away that I choose to pursue. I get inspiration from everywhere: my life, things I see and read.

Who are some of your favorite artists? My art influences are Francis Bacon, Hans Bellmer, surrealist of Det, fashion photography, Lash Goble, Ito Applebrook, Jerry Holzer, Jerry Seinfeld, Marlene Dumas, The Chapman Brothers. My inspiration also comes from music like UB40, Muse, Doves, LCD soundystem, Electric Light Orchestra, The Crystal Method, Grandaddy.

Obviously you have a specific style. How did you develop it?

I have many styles actually. I am working quite hard lately to show that I don't only do one thing. I have always worked with many approaches. A few times a style has caught on, and that can be a double-edged sword since you become associated with it and it limits assignment work. I was quite well known for a completely different look in the late 1980s (wide angle, colored gels) and worked hard to continue to evolve. One has to remain conscious in one's vision and yet evolve at the same time to continue to stay relevant as a working photographer. It's a fine line and it's a bit more complicated. But it's inevitable that the experience and ever increasing technical mastery affect my personal work, whether or not I want it to.

Does it bother you that people recall you as portraits of your strong signature style of the past?

Yes. It does bother me for people to think I only do one thing, since with so many people remembering it, it seems to have been cheapened and of course tastes, trends and what is in fashion changes. So it's dangerous to be put in a box.

The light mainly built your signature style. Tell me about the light you prefer.

I love all kinds of light. Hard, soft, direct, bounced. And in special combinations and ratios. I am always noticing light in the world around me and thinking of how

to simulate or recreate it.

What is it about crying scenes that appeals to you as a photographic subject for "Final Letter"?

I have been drawn to images of crying babies since I was in art school when I photographed my cousin crying on a swing and used the image for a poster for my DJ night at the school bar. I love the authentic, raw emotion.

Can you explain the title of the series? "Enraptured" is what the evangelical Christians in the US call the rapture.

According to their belief system, the heavens will open up and the believers will be sent to heaven, leaving their clothing and worldly possessions behind and the rest of humanity will perish.

I am curious about finding models for shoots.

They are my friend's kids, other families who go to school with my children, or I simply find them through modeling agencies or animal agencies. In fact I find it interesting that I really began my personal work in earnest once I moved to Los Angeles, where everyone and everything is available for a price.

How did the idea for "Glass Ceiling" series come about? Who are those people in photographs?

I was inspired by a shoot I was assigned. I am not sure it would have occurred to me to do an underwater series since

it's quite pretty and soft. But I loved the juxtaposition of the violence and awkwardness of the women's bodies.

The assignment was to do a fashion story on the USA Olympic synchronized swim team in various swimsuits and high heels. There was one frame I had captured when the swimmer came up for air and her head looked decapitated by a glass ceiling. I found a synchronized swim team in LA called the "Aqualines for the Glass Ceiling". I started them to bust around and not do the usual graceful poses they do in their performances. They brought their own shoes. And I also bought some cheap heels for them to wear when they perform. The stuff looked absurd and yet compelling so I loved it.

Have you ever been underwater shooting before? I am sure that it has not been easy. How did the shoot go?

I had shot underwater before one time for a job. For a Moby Album cover in 1994. We were both holding our breath. And I was shooting film so having to take the camera out of the underwater housing to change rolls. That was actually harder than shooting while scuba diving. But scuba diving while shooting was not easy. I seem to make my personal shoots very hard on myself, and very dangerous, and expensive too.

What equipment do you use?

I have been using PhaseOne since version 1 in 1990. I use all different kinds of cameras. Mamiya medium format for

film, Hasselblad for digital and for 35 mm. Canon.

How much are Post Production and Retouching important to your work?

I have been drawing and painting since I was a child, actually taking pictures since I was 9. I love working on the images, changing colors, subtly altering, painting over digitally. Some images have so much retouching that if you subtract the image I could be a painting. Some are barely touched. It depends on what mood I am in (for my personal work). But in general most of the time it's achieved with lighting. You can't fix bad lighting with Photoshop.

You frequently cross the art, commercial and editorial. What was the most difficult period in your life, and how did you deal with it?

It seems like you are leading me to mention the time when I got some intense criticism for making political cartoons out of the tubular from an assignment. That time was, professionally, quite hard on me. We were also building a house which was somewhat out of control in terms of budget, and the global financial crisis also hit. Somehow we survived, finished the house, and are thriving.

What does Photography mean to you?

I always loved it as a way of making pictures quickly. I come from a background of drawing, painting and sculpture. And when I really started getting into it more seriously in high

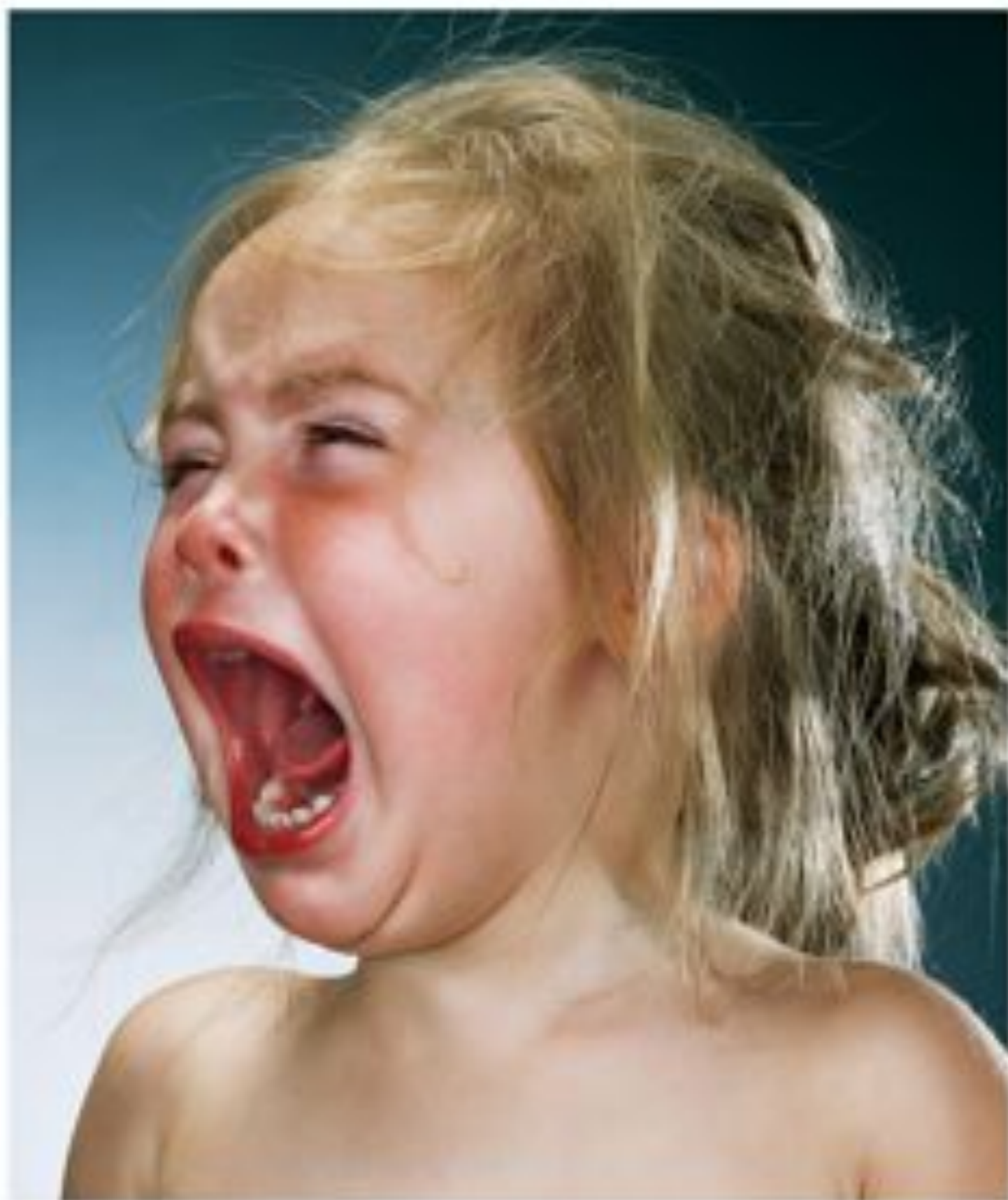
school, it seemed faster. But I spend writing, planning and setting up what I shoot, and then digitally painting over it, that sometimes I wonder if it would make more sense to go back to painting. Since the technology can limit the image, the process is much more difficult when you are also capturing a horse running that simply painting a horse. Trying to have motion and get everything in focus. I just spent the day printing for my NYO exhibition which coincides with the book release. I had to put more work into the images since they are going to be printed very large. I wanted the horse images to look as perfect as paintings. But it is hard to pull off. I remember the horse wrangler said, "Did you bring the wrong camera?" since I was shooting with a medium format studio camera, a Hasselblad which is not the fastest to focus and chase running horses.

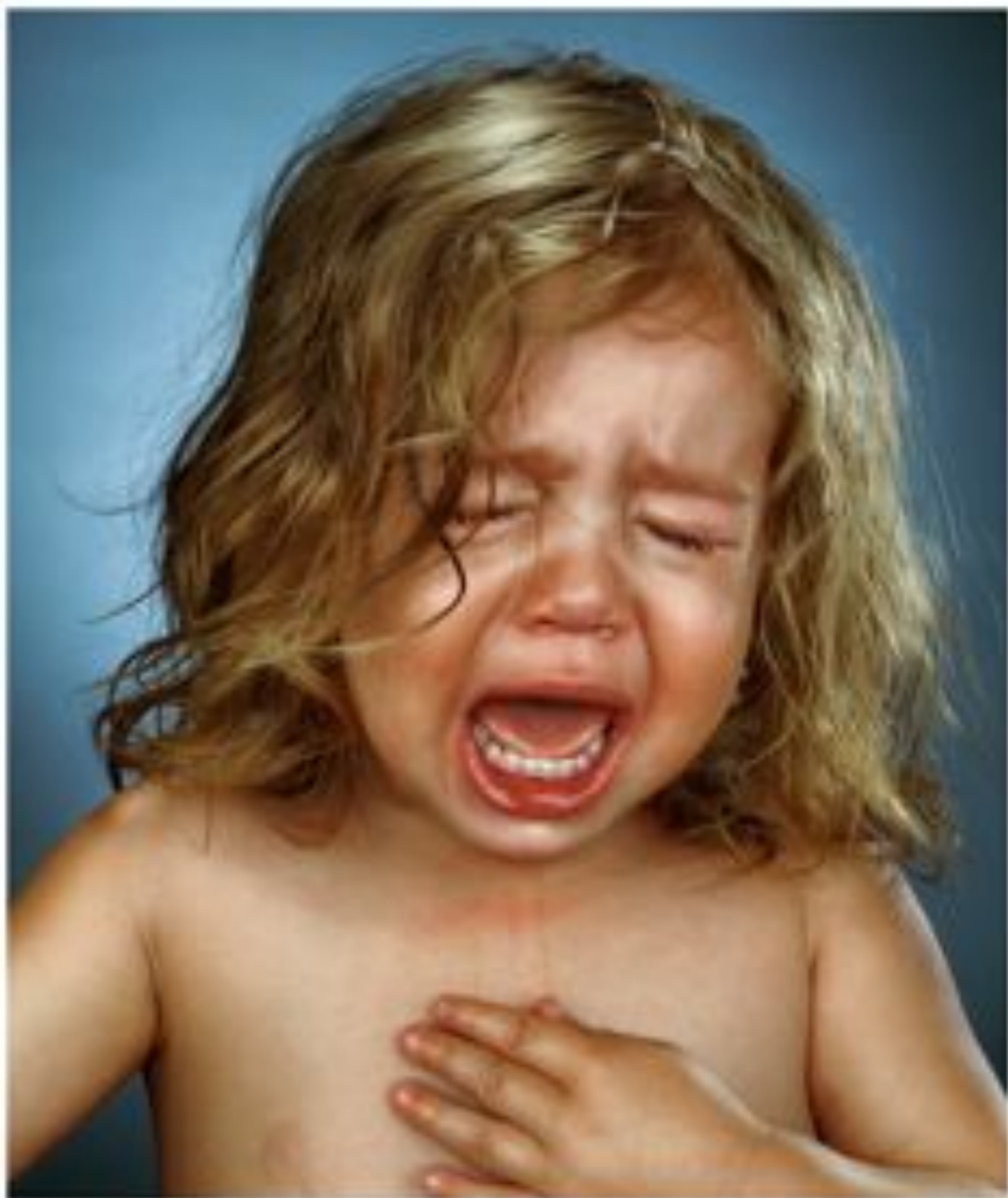
What is the best advice you get as an artist? I suppose for commercial work, "Do the work you want to get assigned to do."

You have held lots of exhibition in many places. What are you working on now and what's next?

I have a bunch of ideas for new work. But I am focusing on printing for my exhibitions of "Horse" and the political work I am doing for the election cycle.



















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