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KISS OF FIRE:
A ROMANTIC VIEW
OF SADOMASOCHISM

by BARBARA NITKE
with introduction by A.D. Coleman

JUST RELEASED BY KEHRER VERLAG

NEW YORK, N.Y. OCTOBER 25, 2003 — *Kiss of Fire: A Romantic View of Sadomasochism*, photographed and written by Barbara Nitke with an introduction by A.D. Coleman, has just been released by Kehrer Verlag. (61 B/W photographs in duotone, 104 pages, \$40. Distributed by Consortium.)

A continuation of Barbara Nitke's documentation of issues of human sexual desire, *Kiss of Fire* is a respectful, humane look at sadomasochism as practiced between loving, trusting partners in committed relationships. It provides a non-exploitive insight into a practice an estimated 10% of Americans participate in with consensual partners.

In *Kiss of Fire*, Nitke writes of her experience exploring the sadomasochistic community and her increasing desire to photograph the lovers she saw. Unlike the fetish fashion books that dominate this niche, Nitke has captured the intense energy and passion of genuine sadomasochistic lovers. Her work is an insiders view into the issues of trust, intimacy and negotiation that makes these relationships possible.



SUSAN AND KELLY

Most SM participants consists of middle-class people – nurses, lawyers, computer experts, corporate managers – ranging in age from 21 to 80. ‘SM practitioners are ordinary people of all ages, representing all socio-economic levels of society,’ according to Susan Wright of the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom. “Nitke’s photography shows the beauty of sadomasochism and the love it takes to make the power exchange inherent to it work.”

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HORSE FARM

From the time Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs were used to help justify the defunding of the National Endowment of the Arts, there has been a question whether sadomasochism is a fit subject for art. A.D. Coleman addresses the issue eloquently in his introduction:

Within the present generation of photographers, a distinct cohort – more numerous by far than any preceding it – has undertaken the exploration of what I've come to call the "photo-erotic" – not just the

making of sexually provocative photographs, but the creation of images that explicitly observe our sexual lives, produced in collaboration with people willing to have their own sexual behaviors described, interpreted, and put on the public record by these photographers.

This represents a shift of no small proportions in cultural attitudes toward the representation of and discourse about human sexuality, a major leap forward in frankness about matters sexual and full disclosure of relevant particulars. At a time when varieties of sexual practice once considered marginal and taboo – gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, SM, B&D, and more – have moved from the periphery to the center, and from the closet into the open, the work of photographers like Barbara Nitke has helped bring the discussion of these sexual alternatives into the mainstream...

Barbara Nitke is a New York City artist who has been exploring issues of sexual relationship through photography since 1982. She is the current president of the Camera Club of New York (founded in 1884 by Alfred Stieglitz) and is on the faculty of the School of Visual Arts in New York. Her work has been the subject of one-woman exhibitions in New York, New Orleans, Baltimore, Provincetown, Philadelphia and in Europe. Nitke is a frequent lecturer on the topic of SM to both practitioners and the general public.

Nitke is currently a co-plaintiff with the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom in challenging John Ashcroft, Attorney General of the United States of America, and the federal Communications Decency Act (CDA) which regulates obscenity on the Internet. For more information: www.ncsfreedom.org.



Barbara Nitke

For publishable visuals and to arrange interviews with Barbara Nitke please contact Cultural Communications, 212-822-8511 or write@culturalglobal.com.
