



Jewish Museum of Australia announces *HELMUT: In Focus* – celebrating the extraordinary life of one of the most influential and provocative fashion photographers of all time.

29 April 2022 – 29 January 2023

In news that will exhilarate Melbourne fashion, photography and visual arts audiences alike, the **Jewish Museum of Australia: Gandel Centre of Judaica**, in collaboration with PHOTO 2022 International Festival of Photography and the Helmut Newton Foundation, is set to present ***HELMUT: In Focus*** – a definitive exploration of the work and life of visionary German-born photographer, Helmut Newton.

Launching in April 2022, the milestone exhibition will showcase an expansive collection of the trailblazing image maker's most recognisable and quintessential works – the same daring and often controversial images that revolutionised the fashion world and established Helmut Newton as one of the most sought-after photographers of the 20th century.

HELMUT: In Focus will also delve into Newton's early career, shining a light on his Jewish roots and early life in Berlin; charting his post-war life and work in Melbourne; and sharing details of his

relationship with his Australian-born wife, the acclaimed actress, artist and photographer June Newton, who worked under the pseudonym, Alice Springs.

“We are so excited to be bringing *HELMUT: In Focus*, to the Jewish Museum of Australia,” said **Jewish Museum of Australia Senior Curator and Collections Manager, Eleni Papavasileiou**, “Helmut Newton was unstoppable, hardworking and determined to succeed. His fantasy and voyeuristic worlds were the work of a highly driven and resilient man who left an incredible artistic legacy. He teased, provoked, shocked and raised uncomfortable questions; but where did it all stem from?”

Papavasileiou continues: “We are thrilled with the opportunity to present a major collection of Newton’s photography, work that spans much of his international career, and to explore his Jewish upbringing and the significant role that Australia and post-war Melbourne played in his life’s story.”

Through a fascinating collection of letters, diary entries and photographs, *HELMUT: In Focus* traces Newton’s early years in Berlin, his flight from Germany at the outbreak of World War II, and his eventual internment at Tatura in regional Victoria as an enemy alien – weaving a remarkable story of reinvention and determination.

Newton’s adult life would be shaped by a driving ambition to become a famous photographer, and a desire to create new worlds – both through his visual storytelling and in his personal life. With little money and no connections, Newton opened a photography studio on the top floor of a building in Melbourne’s Flinders Lane in 1946 and set about building a career as a photographer in fashion, social and theatre circles. Through this period, Newton forged a lasting bond with Melbourne (and with Australia, more broadly), which is explored in never-before-seen detail in the exhibition.

Newton left Melbourne for Paris in 1961, and as his international career took off, his sexually charged photographs would come to see him dubbed the ‘King of Kink’ and evolve into one of the most influential and, at times, controversial photographers in the history of the medium.

Polarising, surprising, loved and loathed, Newton’s photographs would push boundaries and challenge norms surrounding the depiction of women and feminine power – not only in fashion but in photography, visual art, film and culture, more broadly. Across his decades-long career, Newton photographed names including Grace Jones, Claudia Schiffer, Isabella Rossellini, Charlotte Rampling, and even Margaret Thatcher, with his work appearing in leading international fashion magazines from *Vanity Fair* to *Vogue*, including more than 60 covers for *Vogue Italia* alone.

Together with his most iconic works, and a trove of personal artefacts and letters from the Helmut Newton Foundation, *HELMUT: In Focus* will illuminate Newton’s personal story through original research undertaken by the museum’s curatorial team. The result, *HELMUT: In Focus* promises to offer audiences the most complete picture of this ground-breaking provocateur’s life ever exhibited in Australia.

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