

David lachapelle

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David LaChapelle is a modernist artist who delves into the realms of pop culture for inspiration. His work simultaneously incorporates famous singers/actors while also paying strict attention to modern day stresses and cultural investments such as plastic surgery, nudes in different poses, and the media as art. While he also pokes fun at some issues, his vast array of artistic abilities is a commentary on modern life through media projections and images of the self.

Both alluring in capacity and garish at times in its rendering his photographs are world-renowned for their truth telling and gruesome honest replications as Design Boom states, " Lachapelle is one of photography's brightest stars, bringing high intensity, larger than life images to the pages of magazines worldwide (as i-D, arena, the New York time magazine, rolling stones, vogue, the face, the London Sunday times and vanity fair)." (Design Boom)

The landscape of Chapelle's photographs while incorporating computer graphics are also a homage to the fantastical (as Cindy Sherman gave her film stills and later her horrendous fairy tale renderings) as well as the every day living of people. With the incorporation of celebrities in his photographs, Chapelle gives his viewing audience a look into a story, not just a shot in time.

While the landscape may be fantastical, it can also be defined as psychological in context as some of the celebrities are given props or outfits in which to transform the entire photograph into the mind-set of Chapelle as Design Boom, "...initially distinguished by his campy fixation with white-trash culture, Lachapelle is also known for his groundbreaking use of computer manipulation and futuristic fashion shoots and for placing Hollywood
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celebrities-- from Madonna, Uma Thurman, Elton John to Drew Barrymore to the X-files' David Duchovny -- in wildly imaginative and often compromising erotically charged settings.

LaChapelle's monstrosities are that breed of gaunt, blemishless human built and enslaved by heavy makeup, lighting and the glorifying voodoo of photographic attention, e. g. , models, transsexuals and ... Leonardo di Caprio. It is a prophecy of even scurvier spiritual illness yet to come from our media-centric society, in the not-so-distant future. " (Design Boom) LaChapelle is delivering to the audience their own fixation on celebrity. The media is saturated with images of high fashion, unaffordable homes and lifestyles and LaChapelle is emphasizing that to the maximum degree.

The depiction of celebrities is the play on the idea of voyeurism; the media is a camera lens and LaChapelle is using his camera to stare back. LaChapelle creates an illusionary world that captures surrealism in every way. His symbols of the celebrity are what make the photographs captivating however. It is with celebrities, that the media world is best pictured, and the world's obsession with Hollywood is seen on newsstands everywhere in abundance.

LaChapelle's style and color composition mirror the magazines, but the pictures are completely different as Design Boom states, " David LaChapelle is a photographer who tends to create his own visionary world, rather than reproduce what's visible in the world, a photography style that can be compared to no one. David LaChapelle has evolved his photography into an idiosyncratic and highly personal combination of reportage and surrealism. " (Design Boom 2001).

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Often times very sexual, Chapelle's symbols are based almost entirely on the media frenzied world. His photographs of women in controversial poses with nudes glowering after them is symbolic of how women are treated on magazine covers as Design Boom states of Lachapelle, In the last years he also created music videos: the station promo he directed for MTV, which recast a scene from the tragi-camp classic 'whatever happened to baby jane with an aging courtney love and madonna; the 'natural blues' video for moby.

Recipient of the 1997 international center of photography's infinity award and the 1996 VH1 fashion award for photographer of the year, Lachapelle creates images that are cultural cues as well as advertising campaigns for such prestigious accounts as Estee Lauder, prescriptives, volvo, levis, diesel jeans. His first book 'lachapelle land,' was published by callaway editions / simon & shuster in November 1996. In 1999 followed his second book 'hotel lachapelle'. (Design Boom) Lachapelle presents men as baseless sex objects.

His sense of the marketing eye on nudity is impeccable, and the rendering of both women and men as objects is extreme but intelligent because he places them among many other symbolic objects such as fruit (which already has an underlying connotation of sex), and the camera's angle glorifies this position but the background and costumes give the viewer a sense of voyeurism that is the true symbol of each piece. He gives the viewer the ordinary as well as the extraordinary and forces the audience to see how unusual the arcane figures of sex and nudity can become, especially juxtaposed with objects.