

Contact: Umbrage Editions
515 Canal Street #4
New York, NY 10013
T: (212) 965-0197 x3# F: (212) 965-0276
press@umbragebooks.com

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LEONARD NIMOY EXPOSES *SHEKHINA* IN BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

INSPIRING AND CONTROVERSIAL MIX OF SPIRITUALITY, SENSUALITY AND DESIRE

NIMOY IN NEW YORK APRIL 12, 2003 FOR *SHEKHINA* BOOK SIGNING -
K&M CAMERA, TRIBECA - 385 BROADWAY - 6:30 - 8:30 PM



New York, New York - *Shekhina*, Leonard Nimoy's, first monograph, is an extensive and eerily beautiful photographic study of the female form. The book reveals Nimoy's intrigue with scriptural mythology and ancient spirituality. *Shekhina* combines Nimoy's sensual photographs with Donald Kuspit's provocative narrative in 96 pages of haunting intensity.

Shekhina has inspired contentious debate and controversy from coast to coast, literally. From Seattle to Atlanta, scheduled appearances have been cancelled and shows have been threatened with early closure because Nimoy has dared to explore that space where femininity, sexuality, and religion meet.

According to the Kabbalah, evil came into the world once God became separate from the "Shekhina," the deity's feminine counterpart. The Shekhina came to be understood as a crucial element of both divine and human spirit, symbolizing the creativity and wisdom without which no being

is complete. Renowned actor Leonard Nimoy has turned to photography as a means of inquiry into the mysteries of the Shekhina. In his introductory text, Nimoy explains the influence Shekhina has had on the work: "**I have imagined her as ubiquitous, watchful and often in motion. This work is my quest for insight, the exploration of my own spirituality, and, as such, has been a deeply moving and expanding process.**"

(more)

Donald Kuspit describes Nimoy's subject as **"the transmutation of sexual desire into spiritual aspiration, that is, the problem of sublimating sexual attraction into ideal beauty."** In Kuspit's provocative text, Nimoy's fascination with the female body involves an element of temptation as well as transcendence: **"In Nimoy's ingenious photographs the covered figure symbolizes transcendental truth, while the uncovered figure evokes profane desire. The most intriguing photographs are perhaps those in which the figure is half clothed, half naked, conveying the conflict of spirituality and desire that I think is at the core of Nimoy's art. It is Nimoy's ability to convey woman's many-sidedness—Shekhina and succubus at once, that makes his photographs profound."**

Lawrence Weschler, the author of *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder*, states: **"At the age of eight, as the elders of his temple gathered, shrouded, in a circle, their hands extended outward and spread in a V (thumb and two fingers to one side, other two fingers to the other), little Leonard Nimoy's father warned him not to peek. The Shekhina, female emanation of God, was said to be entering the temple, a sight too overwhelming for average humans to endure. Little Leonard peeked, of course. And the magic of that moment, he says, stayed with him. There is something at once transgressive and celebratory, erotic and divine, in the after-images that that long-ago furtive glance came to engender. And now, Elder Leonard enjoins us, too, to peek, live long and prosper."**

BOOK SPECS	10 x 10"	\$39.95 US/ \$62 CAD/ 30UK
Hardcover with jacket	96 pages	October 2002
ISBN: 1-884167-16-0	55 duo-tone images	

LEONARD NIMOY was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1931. After his feature film debut in 1951, he pursued his acting career on the big screen as well as on stage and television. However, it was Nimoy's portrayal of the character Spock in the science fiction series "Star Trek" that earned him both iconic status as well as three Emmy nominations. Aside from his numerous credits as an actor and director, Nimoy is also a successful recording artist and author, having published two autobiographies and several volumes of poetry, two of which also feature his photographs. He has pursued an interest in photography since his teens, and studied at UCLA with Robert Heineken in the early 1970s. He recently finished an appointment as artist in residence at the American Academy in Rome. Nimoy is represented by Bonni Benrubi Gallery in New York and Louis Stern Fine Art in Los Angeles.

DONALD KUSPIT is an art critic and a professor of art history and philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. An author of numerous articles, exhibition reviews, and catalog essays, Kuspit has written more than twenty books, including *Redeeming Art: Critical Reveries*, and *Idiosyncratic Identities: Artists at the End of the Avant-Garde*.

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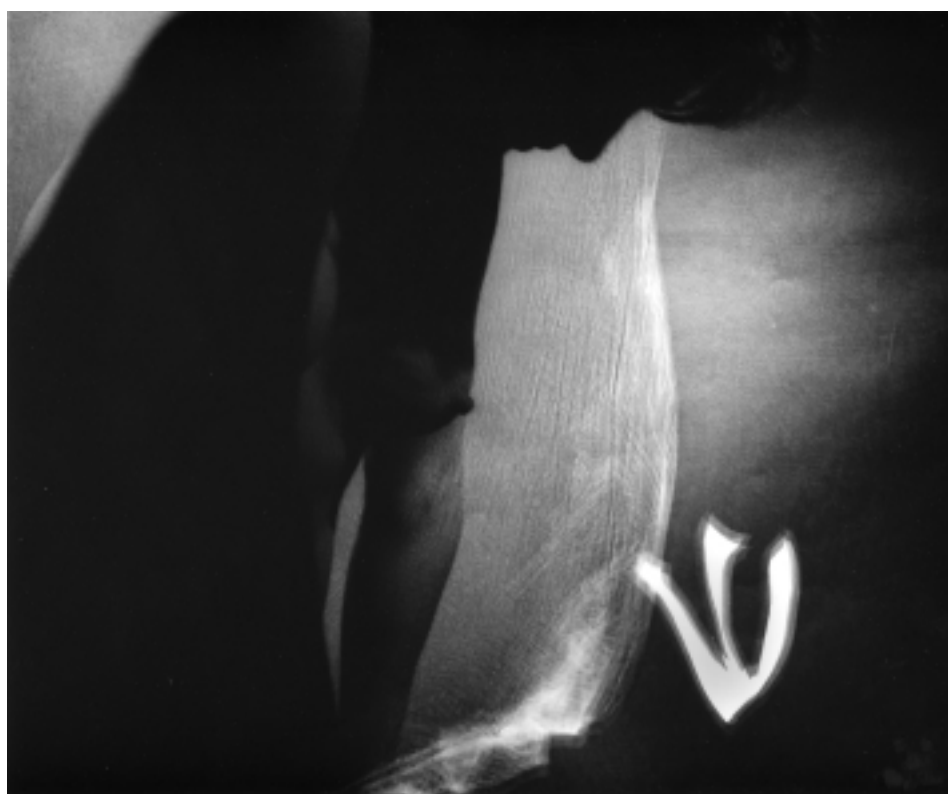
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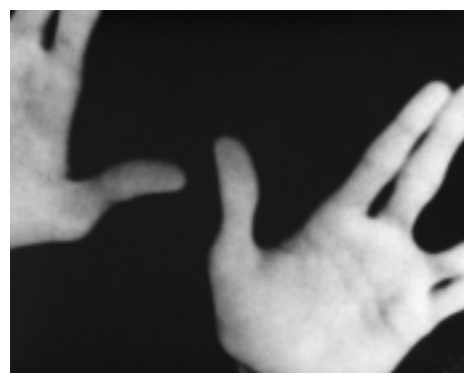
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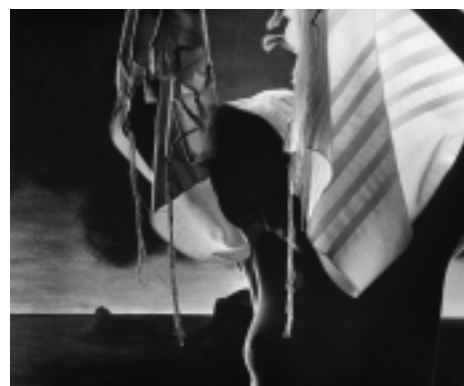


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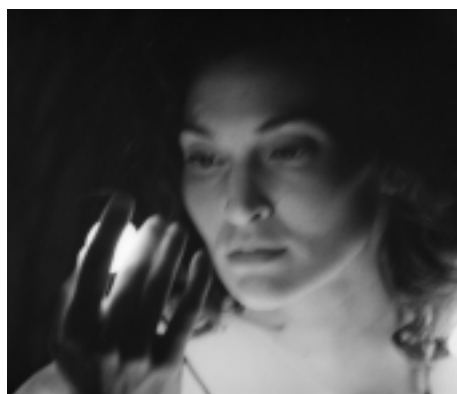


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