

Aneta BARTOS

Photography CRAIG McDEAN Styling KARL TEMPLER

WITH A NEW SEXUALLY CHARGED PROJECT THAT CAPTURES A COLLECTION OF NEW YORK CITY ART-WORLD MEN IN ACTS OF *LA PETITE MORT*, THE ARTIST EXAMINES THE GRAY LINES BETWEEN INTIMACY, VOYEURISM, AND EXHIBITIONISM



When fashion-turned-act-photographer Aneta Bartos first emigrated from her native Poland to Brooklyn's Canarsie neighborhood at the age of 16, she didn't know a word of English. But that didn't stop her from enrolling in a high-school photography class. "I found it very soothing because I didn't have to speak," says Bartos.

Now 33, the Manhattan-based Bartos has used that early training to eye-opening ends, producing intimate, darkly romantic images of often nude, sometimes self-pleasuring waifs in startling positions. Probably the most provocative of Bartos's works to date is a series of prints shown last November in an exhibition called "4 Sale" at New York's 8 Bond Studio. Bartos's eight grainy, dimly lit Polaroids feature herself and three other young Eastern European female artists posing nude in what appears to be a seedy, sepia-toned motel room, where the subjects are played suggestively, either alone or in pairs. The images are highly erotic, of course, but also aggressive in their brutal voyeuristic gratification.

Bartos's next project, "Boys," takes off where "4 Sale" ended, featuring an array of male artists, art directors, and galleries, including her boyfriend, an abstract photographer, caught in equally intimate moments. "4 Sale" was about empowering the female perspective," says Bartos. "I finally felt without any restrictions and boundaries, and then I was like, 'Oh, god, this feels so great. What can I do to go further? I should use men!'"

"I started by approaching my now boyfriend," remembers Bartos. "He drank half a bottle of vodka. I had him conscious for about five minutes, but I got the shot." Bartos plans to capture 12 subjects for this next series, which she hopes to show this fall. "It's shocking," she says. "But there's a bigger purpose to it, and I try not to listen so much to other people. Sometimes ignoring is a good thing." —ASHLEY WADSWORTH

ANETA BARTOS IN NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 2011. ALL CLOTHING: VALERIE TPO BARTOS; STYLING: HEADSOUTH; HAIR: LARONIA; ART + COMMERCE; MAKEUP: MARK GARRAGHILL; GROOMING: JEANETTE; DEBORAH; LIP: PHAN; FRESH; ART + COMMERCE; STYLING: DEBORAH; STYLING ASSISTANT: BELMONTAIN; RETOUCHING: ALICIA; STUDIO: NEW YORK; SPECIAL THANKS: MILK STUDIOS; FASHION: DEYALIA PAGE 111

*See more of ANETA BARTOS on redsterne.com