

In his essay *The Figurative Language of the Art Myth*, R. Cronk argues, “The fine artist is a con-artist. The first move in the art-making process is wrong. It is a lie and has to be.” In the wake of Marcel Duchamp, the trickster has become a major metaphor for the artist of this century, but the artist has always been a deceiver. The roots of art lie in artifice, conjuring and deception. Think of *trompe l’oeil*, meaning trick of the eye, which dates back to antiquity.

The trickster artist of this century is charged with a playful spirit. His works are slippery, elusive and difficult to pin down. It is only upon second glance that we realize the powerful protestations at hand. Cloaking critique in what looks like a hoax, the trickster artist prompts us to question what we hold as Truth. About Duchamp, Louise Norton famously said, “Is he serious or is he joking? Perhaps he is both!” Infused with irony, mixing enigma and spoof, the following images—artful, subversive and unapologetic in their unreality—serve sometimes to amuse and entertain, sometimes to deliberately deceive, and always to shake and rattle our preconceived notions. Against the banality of the everyday, we want to believe in the lie because, more often than not, the lie is more exciting and truthful than the so-called reality.

Perhaps the master forger in Orson Welles’ *F is for Fake* says it best: “Do you think I should confess? To what? Committing masterpieces?”

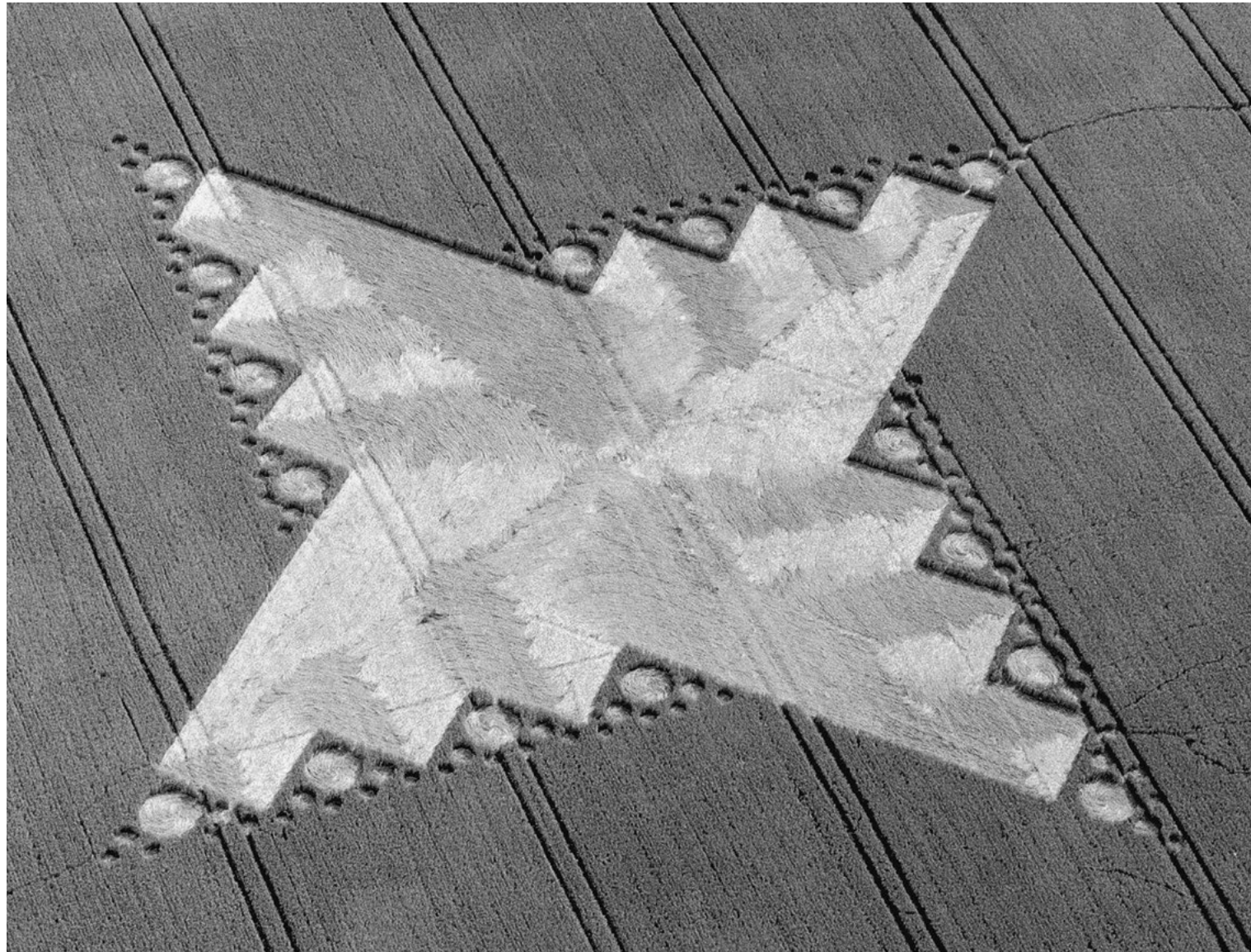
By Lisa Rovner

The Truthfulness of Lies



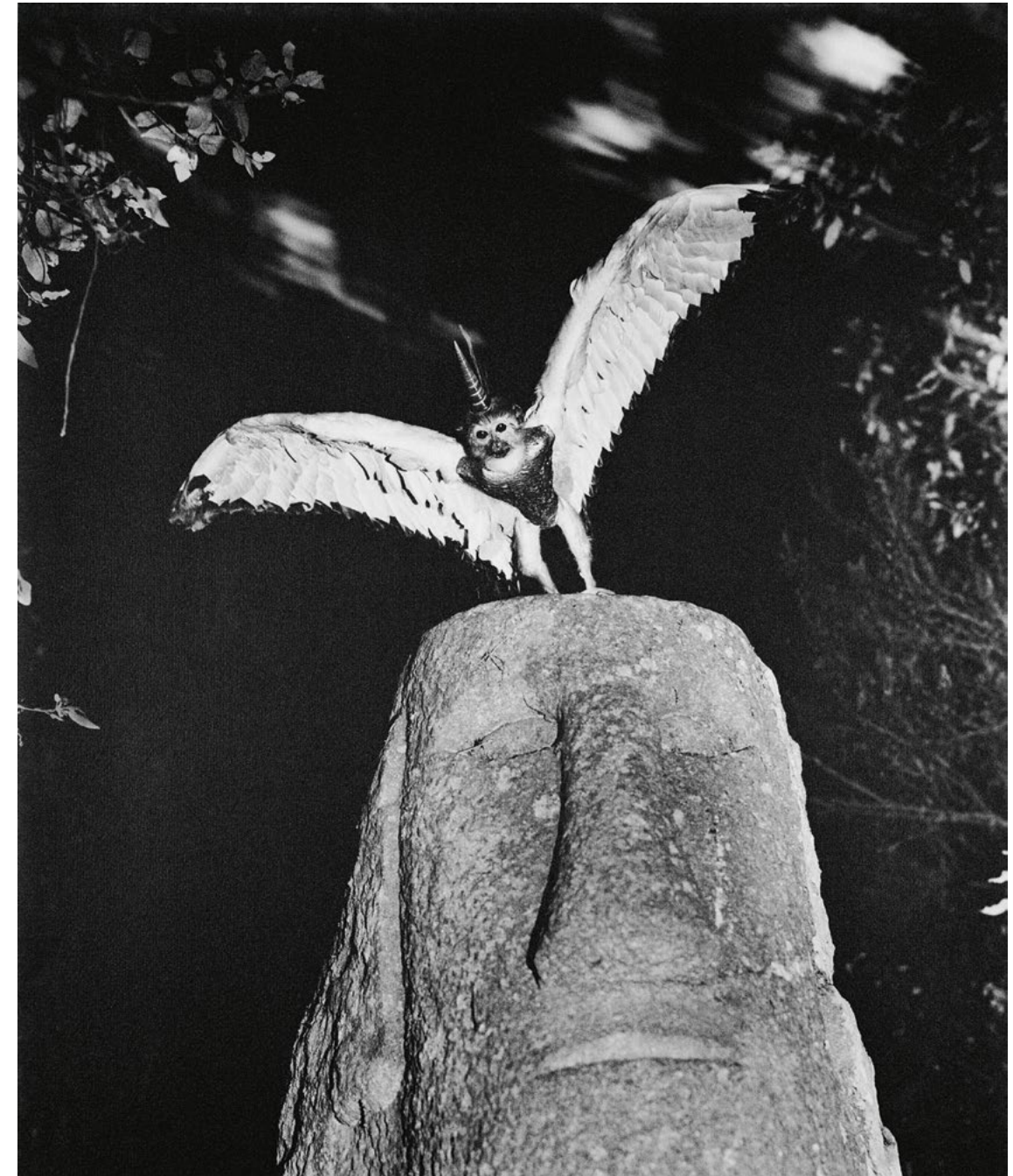
Eiffel Tower, Paris in 1997, colour print, courtesy of the artist

Referencing the use of one’s thumb or forefinger to gauge the relationship of distant objects, *Study of Perspective* is a series of images in which Ai Wei Wei flips the bird to icons of power. It speaks volumes about the artist’s perspective on authority, prompting us all to question our own unquestioned submission to the Establishment.



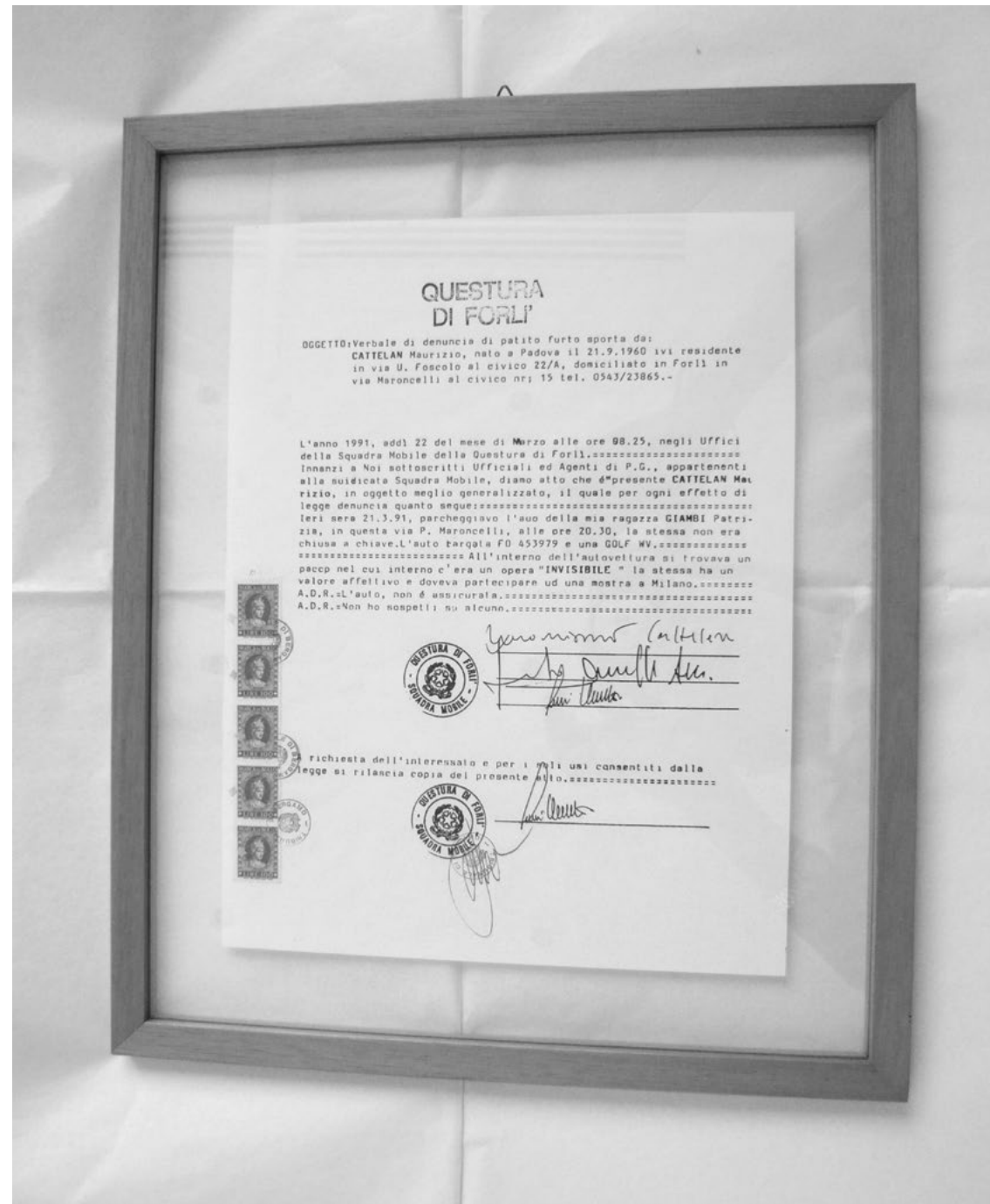
Photographer unknown

The crop circle phenomenon—geometric patterns compressed into fields—came into prominence in the late 1970s as they began appearing throughout the English countryside and in the media worldwide. Are they incredible designs created by intelligent alien beings? Or the work of trickster land artists? The Crescent Star remains an unsolved mystery of incredible beauty.



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“The painter constructs, the photographer discloses,” Susan Sontag famously asserted in her book *On Photography*. But with the rise of image manipulation software, the photographer no longer only discloses, he also constructs. Compelling and convincing, Fontcuberta’s archive of freak animals is an investigation into photography’s authority and our inclination to believe what we see. In this case, art is a lie that tells the truth.



Police report of stolen invisible artwork. Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery

This work features the official police report denouncing the theft of an invisible artwork from Cattelan's car.



Chromogenic photograph, 34 x 34 inches, © The Bruce High Quality Foundation, courtesy the Foundation and Vito Schnabel, New York

The Bruce High Quality Foundation, a group of anonymous artists, uses performances and pranks to critique the art world. For their ongoing Public Sculpture Tackles series, several Bruces wearing pads and helmets literally tackled, football-style, high-end public art around the city, including Robert Indiana's *Love* pictured here above, in an attempt to knock the monumental sculptures off their pedestals.



Photographer unknown. Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts

The ultimate trickster of the modernist era was Erik Weisz, known to the world as Harry Houdini. "There's an analogy between artists and magicians," says curator Dara Solomon. "They're both creating illusions."



Ongoing with appearances in the Baltic Sea Region of Gdansk and Sopot (2008); Southeast Region of Brazil and Rio de Janeiro (2010) and the Mojave Desert (2013), courtesy of the artist

One evening, an unidentified flying object designed by artist Peter Coffin hovered over Rio de Janeiro. While the UFO in the photos taken by first hand witnesses is real, the grainy, blurry documentation would lead anyone to doubt its reality.

Kate Moss

Gamine model whose celebrity and long career survived the excesses of a rock and roll lifestyle

KATE MOSS, the model who has died aged 33, was the most celebrated and iconic beauty of her time, possessed of a poised glamour which she translated into lasting fame and a considerable fortune.

Though she rarely spoke out publicly, Moss was able to break free from the limited confines of her profession as a mannequin. She seemed to embody a fairy tale of escape that appealed both to men and, perhaps especially, to women: the suburban travel agent's daughter with uncommon looks who is plucked from obscurity and transformed into a princess.

By the prevailing conventions of fashion, her success was unlikely: at 5 feet 7 inches she was small for her profession, with a girl-next-door demeanour and wide, high cheekbones that gave her face a slight Asiatic cast.

She came to prominence at the beginning of the 1990s, as the excesses of the previous decade were retreating before a new mood of individuality and realism. At just 17 she personified a new ideal in the fashion industry - the 'waif' - and a movement that came to be known, perhaps unfairly, as 'heroin chic'.

Her slim physique was in contrast to the heightened glamour of the Amazonian 'supermodels' who preceded her and whose ranks she soon joined. What set her apart from the handful of other women in her position was a magnetism that seemed to emanate not from her looks but from her personality.

Her allure lay in a combination of reticence and recklessness. To an audience of fans ranging in age from 14 to 40, she acted as a screen onto which fantasies of desire and rebellion could be safely projected. Her astute understanding of the power of remaining silent, even when the attention of the world's press was most intensely focused on her, only amplified the effect. An object of desire, she made others feel included and desirable.

This made her an advertising agent's dream, and her career was distinguished by a consistency and longevity almost unheard of in the modeling industry. From the early 1990s onwards she appeared on the covers of hundreds of magazines; she posed for the cover of British *Vogue* a record 22 times.

Professionally diligent, Moss never acquired the reputation for being bad tempered or difficult that dogged so many in her profession. She could be flighty but she was rarely unfriendly; friends said that even at the height of her fame she never mislaid the humility that was the basis of her appeal.

Celebrity brought its own pressures, and at the turn of the century the London social set in which she moved became notorious for its fast-living lifestyle. Even into her thirties, she seemed to have a resilience to



Moss (1992) photographed by Mario Sorrenti: redefined modern ideas of beauty

the drugs that claimed at least the careers of many of her friends. On more than one occasion she checked herself into rehab for 'exhaustion.'

In 2005 she was photographed in a recording studio with her boyfriend Pete Doherty, singer of the pop group Babyshambles, enjoying what appeared to be cocaine. The grainy photograph, taken with a mobile phone, made its way to the *Daily Mirror* newspaper in London, who published it alongside denunciations of the model's morally depraved influence on the country's youth. Two months earlier Moss had won a libel suit against the *Mirror*'s sister paper the *Sunday Mirror* for 'falsely claiming' that she slipped into a coma after consuming cocaine.

In the media frenzy that ensued, H&M and Burberry, two of Moss's most significant accounts, cancelled her contracts. It was widely assumed that 'Cocaine Kate' was now unemployable and that her career was over.

Moss said little about her troublesome romantic situation, and less about her appetite for drugs. The scandal only added to

the public's fascination with her. The fashion industry, recognizing that there was no replacement, soon re-adopted their favourite model with renewed enthusiasm. In the year following publication of the pictures, Moss's annual earnings were said to have risen to £11 million.

Kate Moss was born in Croydon, Surrey, on January 16 1974 and educated locally at Riddlesdown High School. She described herself as 'the girl that all the boys used to be friends with, not the girl the boys fancied.' She had a sense of mischief, and spent her schooldays 'going to friends' houses and stealing their mum's liquor'.

Her father was a travel agent and her mother a bartender; they divorced when Kate was 13. The following year, returning from a holiday with her father and brother, she was spotted waiting in a standby queue at Kennedy airport in New York by Sarah Doukas, the founder of the then-fledgling Storm modeling agency.

Doukas chatted to the teenager during the flight, suggesting she come and be photographed at the agency. Moss took up the offer, and for the next two years was

photographed for teenage magazines. But it wasn't until she met the photographer Corinne Day, who was casting a job for *The Face* magazine, that her career began to gain momentum, thanks to a series of photographs taken in drab London locations such as underground stations and bus stops.

Day's pictures of Moss were radically different from the fashion photography that preceded them: subtly melancholy and slyly humorous, they displayed a mixture of innocence and provocation which was in step with the mood of the times. Moss's first magazine cover was for *The Face*, an image shot by the photographer Mark Lebon.

Soon after, Moss met Mario Sorrenti, a model and aspiring photographer, and the pair traveled together to New York to live with his family. Her breakthrough job came when she was photographed for a Calvin Klein advertising campaign with the rap artist Marley Marl, both models appearing topless in Calvin Klein men's underwear.

Klein suggested that Sorrenti take photographs of Moss for a campaign promoting a new perfume he was about to launch, to be named Obsession. Sorrenti's images showed the model nude or topless, accompanied by a voice-over quietly intoning the words 'I love you, Kate'.

Both campaigns immediately sparked controversy. Her physique and obvious youth touched a nerve among contributors to women's magazines, who saw the images as promoting anorexia among young girls. The word 'waif' began to appear alongside Moss's name, and she was regularly - and erroneously - described as suffering from an eating disorder.

This early brush with controversy only increased her appeal, a pattern that would repeat itself throughout her career. Over the next decade she led fashion, her choice of looks unerringly prescient and usually worn with an apparently natural casualness. Her face became ubiquitous on billboards and in the pages of magazines around the world.

As she approached her thirties Moss began to resemble less the best-known models of the past than female rock and roll icons of the 1960s and 1970s. She found close friends and mentors in the singer Marianne Faithfull and the actress Anita Pallenberg, women who had endured turbulent times and bore the lines on their faces to prove it, but who survived with dignity and glamour intact. The fact that Moss neither sang nor acted was beside the point, her style itself was her talent.

Moss made forays into acting, appearing as herself in several episodes of the British comedy series *French and Saunders* in 1996, as well as in films such as Isaac Mizrahi's *Unzipped* (1995), *Carwalk* (1996) and *Original Copies* (1999).

She won numerous style awards and in 1996 received the VH1 Model of the Year Award. She appeared in several music videos, including those made for Johnny Cash's 'Delia's Gone' and Primal Scream's 'Kowalski.' For the director Sophia Coppola she performed around a nightclub pole, for Lucian Freud, Britain's foremost portrait painter, she posed naked and pregnant.

Moss is likely to be remembered for more than just fascinating looks; she was a cypher of her times. But for all the pictures printed of her and the words written in tribute to her, she never made the mistake of trying to explain herself, and thus the image she projected managed to retain the innocence and humour of a south London schoolgirl.

She was romantically linked with a succession of men, among them the Hollywood actor Johnny Depp, of whom it was often said that he was the love of her life. Her troubled relationship with Pete Doherty was reported to have culminated with an exchange of vows in 2007.

Kate Moss had a daughter, in 2002, with the magazine editor Jefferson Hack.

C-print, 133.99 x 93.98 cm, courtesy of the artist

McEwen explained it all in *Interview Magazine* when he said, "I'm interested in that brief second when you aren't sure whether Bill Clinton [or, in this case, Kate Moss] is alive or dead. I only need that moment in order to disorient them [the viewer] enough to sneak through to some other part of the brain—to achieve that split second of turning the world upside down."



C-type print on Dibond, 75 x 112 cm, courtesy of the artist and Ronchini Gallery

With his indoor cloud, Amsterdam-based artist Smilde has created an installation close to magic. What looks like a Photoshop manipulation is in fact a "real" cloud.