

# Aesthetica

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Issue 91  
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## BEYOND BORDERLANDS

Shirin Neshat explores turbulent and politically charged histories

## RADICAL TRANSFORMATION

Black fashion photographers stand up for more diverse media representation

## BREAKING NEW GROUND

Celebrating the pioneering career of Arizona architect Judith Chafee

## GROWING AWARENESS

Edward Burtynsky investigates the Anthropocene from above





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## 2 Appearance Apparatus

FERNANDO BAYONA

Fernando Bayona's latest exhibition, curated by Almanaque Fotográfica's founder, Arturo Delgado, is a charged series of staged photographs centring on themes of love, sex, religion, relationships and society. Inspired by Pedro Calderón de la Barca's 1655 play, *El gran teatro del mundo* (*The Great World's Theatre*), Bayona's show includes historical and religious references throughout. All the world's a stage, as well as the players in it. Though, in this presentation, they are misunderstood and deeply complex.

In one piece, titled *The Life of the Other*, scenes of homosexual male prostitution explore a multitude of emotions, as well as the economic standing of a lesser-known and underrepresented world. Tenderness and vulnerability mix with themes of violence and aggression. The series captures a sense of fragility that the artist experienced through a range of personal stories and intimate interviews.

Photographs from the series *Circus Christi* consider the figure of Jesus living in contemporary society, tinged with sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. The series includes a provocative version of The Last Supper, and explores the themes of morality and temptation through a surprising lens, and a mix of denim, white T-shirts and skin-on-skin.

Other works offer reinterpretations of classical texts, like Dante's *Divine Comedy* in *The Fencing Class* – a work addressing guilt and salvation. Another series, *Out of the Blue*, features scenes from a California motel. The viewer is encouraged to imagine scenarios through contrasting colour play, light and shadow. Throughout the exhibition, Bayona's meticulous conceptualisation, framing, lighting and technique showcase human nature in a range of perspectives, layering religious, political and social themes in a way that is both unexpected yet undoubtedly intriguing.

Words  
Marie Salcido

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Almanaque Fotográfica  
5 September - 26 October

[almanaquefotografica.com](http://almanaquefotografica.com)

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