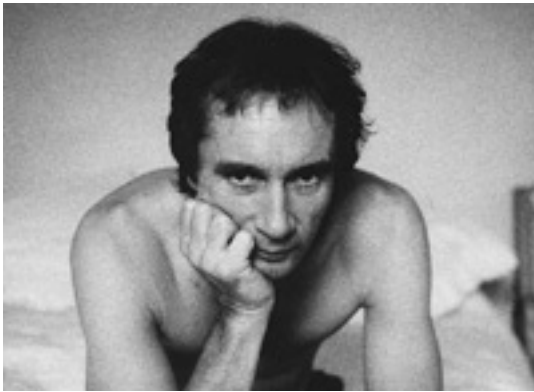


Fashion Photographer Bob Carlos Clarke dies at 56.



Bob Carlos Clarke, born in County Cork, Ireland in 1950, ended his life by running in front of train at a level crossing near Barnes in London around half past eleven last Saturday morning. I'd travelled up to London on the very train only two hours earlier. The police say that "the incident was not being treated as suspicious." It was a sad end to the career of a talented photographer who lived with his second wife and teenage daughter a few miles away in Chelsea, having sold his studio in nearby Battersea last year.

He'd sometimes joked that he had made more from selling property than from photography.

Carlos Clarke came to England as a schoolboy in 1964, attending Wellington College, a well known and expensive "public school" before going on to study art and design at the West Sussex College of Art. There he picked up a camera so he could ask a girl he fancied to pose for him - and a few years later she became his wife, although their marriage did not last.

After a degree-level course at the London College of Printing and finally gained an MA in Photography at London's Royal College of Art, then the only postgraduate photography course in the UK, in 1975. **While a student he began taking pictures of the fetish scene, which was to become an important aspect of his work. Carlos Clarke said of his photography "It's not a job, it's an addiction,"** and for him it was very much an addiction to women and to sexual fantasies. He often used an analogy between sex and photography, suggesting that a good portrait session was a similar activity to making love to the sitter. Typical was also the advice he gave to those wanting to take up nude photography: "Do it to get laid; but get a real job."

Much of Carlos Clarke's work was on a sexually charged edge between eroticism and pornography, pursuing his own fascinations through images of sometimes oddly rubber-clad young women and other oddities. **Some of the same energy (though fortunately at least generally rubber-free) spread into his portraits of celebrities including Liz Hurley, Jerry Hall, Rachel Weisz, Keith Richards, Marco Pierre White and Vinnie Jones as well as his advertising work for clients including Levi's, Smirnoff, Volkswagen, Pirelli, Wallis fashions and many more.**

Bob Carlos Clarke (1950-2006)

Written by Peter Marshall



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