

# Corinne lewis

***Seduced*** June 26 – July 9 2022

*'Seduction is like an invitation, an embellishment, a doorway that beckons the viewer into more subtle enjoyments and meditations.'* Bruce Metcalf

Corinne Lewis's exhibition works embody this notion both in imagery and painterly prowess. Speaking about her subject matter's inspiration, Corinne alludes to the book, *Seduction – a celebration of sensual style*. It chronologically explores the evolution of seductress raiment from 18th century courtesans through to modern-day manifestations. Mention is also made therein of how dress and 'accessory arts' have contributed to a female's ability to overcome the passive, objectified status conferred in a patriarchal realm.



The femme fatales gracing Corinne's current works reflect a contemporary milieu in their attire and settings. Lavish accoutrements extend the concept of seduction to a lust for expensive material objects. Featured in *The Man with the Golden Gun* painting is the interior of an Aston Martin. Although the picture's title references a James Bond film, it carries an implication of the seductive power that considerable wealth can wield.

Describing the scenario in *Seduced by Chanel*, Corinne imparts, "The model here is a good friend of mine. She loves designer labels, Chanel, Valentino – the works! When we did the shoot, I accessed her wardrobe and it was a girl's dream of sequins, frills, florals, chiffon, velvet and designer shoes. I was seduced. The idea of incorporating 'beautiful things' that our eyes can't resist developed from those contents." Corinne arranged the model's pose to suggest the woman is on a 'high' from dancing all night. Shoes still on, she has flopped upon her bed exhausted but happy. Pink fur wrap has been tossed across the pillow and handbag contents strewn.

Several of the exhibition's paintings have their subjects depicted within a Gold Coast Lounge Bar owned by a friend. The establishment's dimly lit interior provided the perfect sultry ambience. In the *Deep Crimson* work, a provocatively clad woman is ensconced in one of its studded leather booths. Dominating the image are lavish tiers of red tulle. Apart from the colour vibrancy, compositional factors ensure her 'bewitching' skirt is a focal point. The female's countenance has been cropped and her arms obscured behind shimmering crimson flounces and a tumble of blonde hair. An Italian stiletto-shod foot rests upon the floor, its pattern and apex leads the eye to another triangular shape delineating the seating's wooden base. Sensuously crossed legs confirm directional and seductive intent. Further visual directives are subtly conveyed in the hint of stocking seam that guides attention to the intricate black lace bodice. Curiously, its underwiring contours and placement of decorative motifs have the semblance of eyes regarding the beholder with 'come hither' allure.

A penchant for titling her paintings after those of films is evidenced in *Wings of Desire*. The 1987 movie bearing that name was a beautiful 'painterly-like' production of a love story set in Berlin. The film's hypnotic evocation of 'winged' desire resonated with Corinne's wish to capture such in her artworks. This huge painting again features the opulent Lounge Bar, its décor specifically designed to lure the patron into a vibe of hedonism. The model here is an actor, dancer and singer Corinne had serendipitously happened upon some time ago. Posing with elbow gracefully resting atop the bar, we follow her downward glance as she is about to turn around. The exquisite backless gown she wears is covered with sequins sparkling in the luminescence of the bar's front panels. Swathes of dark ostrich feathers brush the banded floor. Thence, much in the manner of the approaching admirer, our gaze travels up along the garment's train-folds to her voluptuous figure. The woman's demeanour and her splendid attire epitomise seduction. The wings of desire are aloft.

The finesse of Corinne's renditions is the result of an arduous process indeed! Following the conceptualisation of a theme, models are sourced and hired for photographic shoots in relevant settings. Borrowed gowns and Corinne's boxes of vintage clothing, fabrics and accessories are transported to each chosen venue along with studio lights. From the 'hundreds' of photographs, a few that evince a specific mood are edited as reference material for ensuing paintings. Contrary to some other realist artists, Corinne then hand-draws her imagery onto a linen surface using watercolour pencils. Forms and shapes are blocked in with acrylics that create a base for the subsequent layering of oil-painted details.

Corinne describes her works as decadent stage settings where glamorous attire and suggestive body language play the role of enticement. It is her aspiration to create paintings that evoke a sense of anticipation – that interval between initial desire and ultimate fulfilment. Inevitably, the viewer is seduced into "luxurious worlds of charm and expectations of delight."

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