The Age of Anti-Ageing
Stewart Home and Chris Dorley-Brown
curated by Clare Carolin

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Catalogue

A History of Looking

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> *Now once I feel myself observed by the lens everything changes: I constitute myself in the process of 'posing', I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself in advance into an image. This transformation is an active one: I feel that the Photograph creates my body or mortifies it …*[1]

On 2 December 1979, Julia Callan-Thompson, aged thirty-five, was found dead in the back basement flat she shared with her boyfriend at 104 Cambridge Gardens in London's Notting Hill. A post-mortem examination of her body erroneously attributed her demise to bronchopneumonia, a common symptom at death from overdose among the hard drug using community to which she had belonged for many years. Although Callan-Thompson was survived by a seventeen-year old son who, decades later would establish that she died from an accidental heroin overdose and not simply bronchopneumonia as recorded by the coroner, he was not made aware of her demise at the time. Kevin Llewellyn Callan had been born when Julia was eighteen and adopted at six weeks of age at which point his name was changed to Stewart Home and official documentation falsified by various interested parties to obfuscate his biological parentage. Julia's repeated efforts to contact the son she had never intended to part with were frustrated and there was no further contact between them during her lifetime. Julia's possessions, including a number of photographs, were cleared from the flat by her sister Margaret Mathias and returned to her relatives in Wales where they joined a collection of similar images. In these pictures Julia poses in the range of identities she assumed during her short, eventful life – besotted teenage mother, sophisticated beatnik, hostess, model, fashion designer, aspirant actress, socialite, pioneer of the hippie trail and explorer of alternative realities.

Having spent nearly two decades attempting to establish the real circumstances of his beginnings in life, Home acquired this collection of images after he traced and contacted his birth family in 2001. Not only do they provide a visual record of Julia's physiognomy, style of dress and mannerisms, but their degraded material condition simultaneously testifies to the itinerant and precarious lifestyle of their subject: a strangely misshapen black and white print showing Julia in a cocktail dress seated at a table in Churchill's nightclub from which the figure of a companion has been roughly cut out and on the back of which Julia has written the name of a famous film star who paid for her to sit and drink champagne with him on the night the picture was taken; a crumpled magazine page annotated with arrows and the words 'both me' pointing to two figures of Julia, kitted out in a minidress and flared trouser suit, standing jauntily on either side of a gigantic Max Factor lipstick case; a cover torn from an Indian women's fashion magazine showing Julia's heavily made up face multiplied vertically in a crude graphic representation of a photographic contact sheet; a professionally-mounted monochrome picture of Julia in a chignon and poloneck, shot in profile with a cigarette held to her lips and the address of a photographic studio in a Paris suburb stamped on the reverse; Julia advertising Nirlon Yarn 'means so much to so many', and Swinger Rainwear 'don't let the

rain dampen your spirits'; Julia posing as a body double for Ursula Andress in a bob, swimsuit and multiple strings of faux pearls promoting the 'exclusive new perfume and international new look' of Lux soap. Together they form an image portfolio of fashionable femininity reflecting then *Vogue* editor, Diana Vreeland's definition of the transcendent 'new idea of beauty' that defined the swinging sixties:

> You held your head high and were a beauty. If you had a bump on your nose it made no difference so long as you had a marvelous body and a good carriage. You knew how to water-ski, and how to take a jet plane in the morning, arrive anywhere and be anyone when you got off.[2]

The relaxation of social and aesthetic codes, alluded to here in the characteristically hyperbolic tones of the era's most influential doyenne of fashion, certainly contributed to the circumstances whereby Callan-Thompson, the eighth child of an Irish dockworker from Newport, South Wales, who had grown up with her ten siblings sleeping four to a bed, could mix freely with aristocrats, celebrities and leading figures of the international avant-garde of the day. That said, it would be remote from the truth to suggest that the social revolutions of the time were any more than superficially correlated with the operations of the fashion industry. Which, as testified by the collection inherited by Home, seemingly provided Julia with the closest approximation of a legitimate and autonomous professional identity she would achieve. Among these images, her extensive involvement with the world of fashion is illustrated not just by the many advertising campaigns and fashion spreads in which she is featured, but also in a professional-standard portfolio of fashion pictures shot in 1966 when Julia was twenty-two years old (Figs. 1-2). Decades after they were taken these images would provide the starting point for a series of portraits executed ten years apart through a collaboration between Home, a writer, artist and performer, and Chris Dorley-Brown, a photographer and film-maker. The first, entitled *Becoming (M)other*, dating from 2004 and the second, *The Age of Anti-Ageing*, realised a decade later in 2014. The peculiarity of the series is its transcendence of visual and artistic genre. It manages at once to be a performance portrait of both Callan-Thompson and Home, and of their respective eras, as well as a post-photographic manifesto setting out the future potentiality of the reproductive media through which the images are constituted.

Système de la mode

> *'Have you done modelling? Fashion stuff I mean. You've got it.'*[3]

It was during the sixties that the fashion industry entrenched a strategy of illustrating the defining issues of the day – in this instance, class mobility, civil rights and women's liberation – while simultaneously avoiding any risk of compromising the prerogative promotion of consumer culture that they might imply. The same year that Callan-Thompson posed for her modelling portfolio, for the first time in its history, the cover of British *Vogue* featured a black model, Donyale Luna. For a brief period between 1965 and 1968 Luna, an African-American hailing from a chaotic and impoverished background in Detroit, was one of the most celebrated faces of her time featuring in films by Fellini and Warhol and starring on the catwalks of Paris and Milan. But before the decade was out her stellar career had imploded.

Luna accused the industry of systemic and personalised racism; it retaliated by branding her 'unprofessional' and 'non-conformist'. Early in the same year and at approximately the same age as Callan-Thompson, she too became the casualty of an accidental heroin overdose.

Luna and Callan-Thompson had both come of age at a moment when the contingent exponential growth of mass media and consumer culture and the search for new markets resulted in fashion developing an insatiable appetite for novelty. Not just new faces, new locations and new styles but the very idea of newness personified by ever-younger models began to dominate the industry. Unfortunately the timing of Luna's *Vogue* cover meant that it fell just outside the remit of Roland Barthes' excoriating and meticulous dissection of the visual and verbal rhetoric of fashion which was published the same year. *Système de la Mode*, subsequently issued in English as *The Fashion System*, was in any case based mainly on the analysis of French women's fashion magazines produced in the preceding years. Nevertheless, despite the fact that fashion nominally reflected the specific cultural attitudes of different locations (for example US *Vogue* would not feature a black model on its cover until 1974) it was, by this time, already a well-established global language with an internationally transferable visual and verbal rhetoric which persists, largely unaltered, to this day. Barthes chilling summation of the function of the 'cover girl' within this system of representation thus holds equally true for any economy in which the global fashion industry was present:

> ... [the cover girl's] essential function is not aesthetic, it is not a question of delivering a 'beautiful' body subject to the canonic rules of plastic success, but a 'deformed' body with a view to achieving a certain formal generality i.e. a structure; it follows that the cover girl's body is no one's body, it is pure form.[4]

According to this rationale, any failure to conform to such structures of representation was an implicit threat to the illusion of 'natural order' produced through fashion rhetoric. With the Cold War at its height and many areas of the world in the throws of extricating themselves from colonial rule, global wealth was overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of affluent white Europeans and Americans, such that the purchasing power of black women was extremely weak compared to their white counterparts. And while the civil rights movement had over the course of the decade become gradually more visible, it was yet to have any concrete political effect. Coincidentally, the formation of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, also dates from 1966, an indication of widespread disillusionment with the ideology of non-violent protest. Luna's brief acceptance by the world of fashion must thus be seen as little more than a gesture of radical chic. In terms of her physique she conformed sufficiently to fashion's basic aesthetic requirements to be briefly accepted as a novelty (without novelty fashion would not be fashion), but in every other respect her image was completely at odds with that of the affluent majority. She could not be made over into Barthes' 'no-one', nor into an 'any-one', who, with her modest secretary's, nurse's or teacher's salary, could afford the clothes and accessories illustrated in fashion magazines of the day, or just as likely, have them bought for her by the much higher earning man in her life.

The same distorting processes of nascent globalisation and profit-focused conservatism that in 1966 allowed a woman of African descent to feature on the cover of British *Vogue* (though not again until 1987), and an Indian woman Reita Faria to become the first Asian to win the

Miss World crown, contributed equally to Callan-Thompson's success in gaining work as a model in India. Julia spent a total of about two years on the subcontinent, first arriving overland on the hippy trail via Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. At just under five and a half feet[5] she fell literally short of fashion's ideal attenuated silhouette and therefore failed to secure top jobs in Europe. In India, however, not only was there less competition from other Caucasians but the legacies of colonialism meant that Indian advertisers, editors and photographers remained in thrall to Western ideals. Thus in 1968 Julia featured in the first of three cover assignments for the colour magazine *Eve's Weekly*. This Mumbai-based publication which, two years earlier had been responsible for organising the annual national pageant that had set Faria on the path to victory at Miss World 1966, also featured Julia in a number of spreads where she appears in fashionably-styled garb, as well as her own designs. One such spread, dated 8 June 1968, contains the following character profile:

> Charming, vivacious and full of joie de vivre is Julia Callan-Thompson, who is on holiday in India and enjoying every bit of it. Julia is a versatile person, she has modelled extensively in Europe and has been designing clothes under the name of Marstan et Bonnie and has appeared in many films, the latest being *Casino Royale*. Having a natural flair for clothes she says, 'Indian fabrics are so rich and colourful with such a vast variety and if designed with a keen eye, have a wide scope on the European market.' Her message for the young fashion conscious is – 'You are a woman, don't forget it. In this adventuresome year, let's have a change, go armed with your own personal flair for fashions, your own ideas, and go alone.'[6]

Not only does this portrait conjure Julia as an independent trailblazing fashion innovator, while exaggerating her film extra work in productions including *Casino Royale*, in which she appears for a few seconds, it also resonates both with Vreeland's breathless cameo of the sixties 'beauty', and with Barthes' description of 'the woman signified by the rhetoric of fashion'. Both these fashionable feminine prototypes – Vreeland's, the invention of a complicit player in the fashion system, and Barthes', a characterisation drawn by one of its most lacerating critics – correspond with the stereotypes Julia enacted in the course of her work as a model, as well as the lifestyle and cultural interests that she favoured, in Bathes' words:

> imperatively feminine, absolutely young, endowed with a strong identity, and yet with a contradictory personality … she travels constantly, and each time she travels she goes to the South …; she stays only in mild climates, and likes everything all at once, from Pascal to cool jazz. In this *monster* we recognise the permanent compromise, which marks the relation between mass culture and its consumers.[7] (emphasis added)

Throughout the decade, Julia was at the leading edge of activities and tastes, which over the course of the remaining years of the millennium were to become defined trends in British consumer culture. Hedonistic trips to the Balearic Islands, long haul adventures to Asia, the attraction to French high culture, the taste for Afro-American musical idioms, recreational drug use. Ultimately they proved to be a set of predilections that were irreconcilable with the image of imperative femininity and youth demanded by the industry that celebrated them. For while the fearful and hideous monster of legend and horror fiction is generally a portent of some dreadful future occurrence, Barthes' application of this descriptive term

to the impeccable archetypes of women's fashion is not intended in this sense. Likewise, it would be unhelpful to interpret it in the context of his pupil, Julia Kristeva's influential concept of the 'abject', the visceral, messy and uncontrollable aspects of femaleness which according to Kristeva symbolise 'the mother' and were theorised in turn by Barbara Creed as the 'monstrous feminine'. Instead, the affective use of the image of a monster is intended here by Barthes to be interpreted benignly as an instructive warning or category error. Configured within the system of fashion to create the illusory appearance of naturalness the 'woman of fashion' is in fact a signifier of the monstrosity of the compromised and therefore compromising effects of consumer capitalism. At the same time she is an inadvertent *vanitas* figure, whose youthful beauty, celebrated over and above all other characteristics or features, contains the promise of its own demise. As Barthes elaborates:

> it is age which is important, not sex; on the one hand, the model's youth is constantly asserted, defended, we might say, because it is naturally threatened by time (whereas sex is a given), and it must constantly be recalled that youth is the standard for all measurements of age (still young, forever young): its fragility creates its prestige.[8]

Thus the mirage of the 'woman of fashion' warns not only of the socio-political distortions of the system of which she is an integral part, but also, sometimes quite literally, of the potentially catastrophic disfigurations of person and personality that such an aesthetic ideal demands and implies. Disfigurations which, through the regenerative cycles of consumerism, are themselves then transformed into fashionable styles: a demand for grotesquely high earnings, self-starvation, cosmetic surgery and substance abuse. This final example strikingly illustrated by the relatively short-lived nineties style of so-called 'heroin chic'. In other words, it follows that the real woman tasked with creating this mirage may, in the attempt to conform to the impossible pressures of representation demanded by the fashion system, develop correspondingly 'impossible' behaviours.

Forever Young

> *What fab new lipsticks! The shades are just groovy. They go, go, go with your kookiest outfits. And the prices are low, low, low! Choose from Max Factor's great young range of sweet young pinks: pink secret, pink velvet, sunset pink, pink diamond. Each in a divine gold and white case.*[9]

In *Popism*, Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett's retrospective account of the swinging decade in New York, the authors provide a chronology, which among other things, charts the transformations of sixties consumer culture's fetishisation of youth. Although the fifties saw the identification of the 'teenager' as a distinct group of purchasers, during the subsequent decade the fixation with youth and novelty became turbo-charged. More than simply a target-demographic of buyers, the characteristics of 'youth' were now cynically deployed through every area of western Europe's and America's burgeoning consumer culture with the aim of maximising economic growth. Advertisers and manufacturers recognised that because youth was both universally experienced and ephemeral, the quest for its preservation or recreation, implied unlimited marketing potential and profit. According to Warhol and Hackett, the first three years of the decade were spent warming up to the point in 1964 when the cold logic of this meta-marketing strategy took full hold and 'everything went young'.[10] Warhol's account

was based in part on first-hand observation of the advertising business and the fashion scene, but also experienced vicariously through his relationships with key figures on fashion's front line, in particular with so-called 'youthquaker', Edie Sedgwick who in 1964 had been designated 'Girl of the Year'. By 1966, Warhol was already writing of her supersession, his own sense of her realisation that she 'was not the new girl in town anymore'.[11] In the chronologies of *Popism*, Sedgwick thus becomes a personification of the vicissitudes of fashion: an individual who, like Callan-Thompson, briefly embodied the image of the decade.

As previously mentioned, 1966 was also the year in which Callan-Thompson created the portfolio of fashion photographs which provided the starting point for *Becoming (M)other* and *The Age of Anti-Ageing*. The pictures were shot by the semi-professional photographer Carla Hopkins,[12] mainly in the Westbourne Park Road studio of Ozzie Jones, a specialist in home interior and architectural features. The set of images inherited by Home comprises a mix of half-, three-quarter- and full-body shots in which Julia dons a range of outfits and assumes a variety of poses seemingly chosen to demonstrate her versatility as a model so that they could be used in the speculative search for modelling work. The professional execution of the portfolio is countered by a distinct air of informality, in part due to the inclusion of some outdoor shots taken in Arundel Gardens off Ladbroke Grove as well as some domestic interiors (probably Julia's Elgin Crescent flat or Carla's Blenheim Crescent residence), in part the result of their subject's appearance. Although Julia was just twenty-two, her attitudes and expressions suggest that she was already well-practiced in the performance of youth. As such, they convey a sense of knowing pretence, as if the sixties were already beginning to end.

In 2004, Home suggested to Chris Dorley-Brown that they reshoot the series digitally with Home imitating Julia's poses, then morph these pictures with the originals. This initial proposal resulted in *Becoming (M)other*. Home and Dorley-Brown first selected the shots that could most easily be replicated, in terms of the physical ease with which Home could assume Julia's positions and how convincingly Dorley-Brown could recreate the context and lighting of the originals. For this reason, only the more neutral indoor studio pictures were chosen for inclusion. A selection was made of the eight most successful shots from the reshoot (Figs. 3–4). Dorley-Brown then took the scanned images of the corresponding prints of Julia from 1966 (Figs. 1–2) and using the programme Fantamorph extracted equal amounts of visual information from each set of shots, combining them to create a series of uncannily anachronistic and androgynous composite portraits.

A decade later, in 2014, Home and Dorley-Brown reposed their 2004 restaged photographs (Figs. 5–6) and combined them with the images from 2004. In order to accentuate the discrepancy in time and place the poses were reversed right to left (Figs. 4–6) and then flipped digitally to match the originals before the morphing process. As the title makes clear, *Becoming (M)other* was an exercise in testing the extent to which one person can, though the image, constitute him/herself as another. The motivation for *The Age of Anti-Ageing* however was quite different. Aware of the effects that life extension science was having on twenty-first-century culture and consciousness, not to mention the health and beauty industries, and themselves now both over a half a century old (more than twice the age of Callan-Thompson in the original photographs), Home and Dorley-Brown treated this series speculatively as an experiment in the use of the digital image as a correlate of cosmetic surgery. In theory, the

resulting images should have depicted Home as he would have looked in 2009. Yet, despite the rationality and precision of the morphing technique, they portray a peculiar, timeless figure in whom the collapsed identities of mother and son are still apparent, even though the prints contain no actual trace whatsoever of the original pictures of Julia.

Dorley-Brown, who was tasked with stage-managing a forty-two- and then fifty-two-year-old man into the poses of a twenty-two-year-old woman has pointed to the fact that in Hopkins' pictures, Julia appears both 'very much of her time but also very contemporary'. This striking impression of belonging simultaneously to the past and the present is achieved through a variety of means. Julia's outfits which seem at first glance to comprise quintessentially sixties fabrics and silhouettes, on closer inspection, have a strong retro feel. Consisting of items of her own clothing in combination with garments and accessories loaned for the shoot, they represent the more wearable end of the scale of sixties style: a white, round-necked T-shirt teamed with oversize earrings; a simply-cut brocade cocktail dress worn with low-heeled open-toed sandals; flared trousers, with a halter-neck top and wig; a slash-necked, knee-length dress flecked with a micro print.

Curiously, not one of the pictures depicts Julia in the extremely short shift dresses in which she was frequently attired for commercial assignments in the succeeding years. This iconic minidress, often combined with knee-high boots and either bare legs or flesh-coloured fishnet tights, first emerged on Parisian catwalks in the earlier years of the decade. However, by 1966, it was such a clearly defined trend in English mod fashion, and so inextricably linked with the image of swinging London that the American artist Claes Oldenburg, visiting the city that year, drew up a scheme for a 'monument to the mini skirt' entitled *London Knees* to be constructed beside the Thames at Victoria Embankment. Oldenburg's statement about the scheme links fluctuating skirt lengths with the tidal swells of the river and Londoners' rising and descending moods. While he makes no explicit reference to drugs, it is hard to imagine that the uppers and downers which were a prominent feature of the capital's popular youth culture, were not also on Oldenburg's mind. Oldenburg's monument, which shows not the skirt itself but the area of leg from just below the knee up to the mid-thigh that was exposed when the garment was worn with boots, is conceived from an unmistakably male perspective. Considering the work in retrospect the artist wrote: 'It is difficult now to imagine how revolutionary this paradoxical combination of masculine voyeurism and feminine liberation seemed in its time'.[13] However Oldenburg is here merely reproducing the rhetoric of the fashion system that linked the freedom of movement supposedly enabled by the garment with the social autonomy that its 'liberated' young wearers were supposedly enjoying. In reality, a person attired in a mini skirt must choose between a severely restricted, almost stylised range of movement, or the risk of exposure, a dilemma which came far closer to symbolising the real choices available to this generation of women: restrict oneself to traditional roles while performing a caricature of liberated femininity or depart from convention and invite danger. Given that Oldenburg's reflections were written with the hindsight of more than twenty years during which the women's liberation movement gained increasing agency, it is telling that the fraudulent potency of this fashion rhetoric still sticks.

Edie Sedgwick may have had the miniskirt and its more extreme variants in mind when she observed: 'fashion as a whole is a farce, completely. The people behind it are perverted, the

styles are created by freaked-out people, just natural weirdos. I know this because I worked with all those people while I was modelling.'[14] The observation is made in *Ciao Manhattan*, the biopic that retrospectively documents Sedgwick's life lived at the intersection of fashion, high society, popular culture and the avant-garde at a time when they were imploding into one another. The visual and chronological structure of the film, which alternates black and white sequences from the early sixties with colour film shot towards the end of the decade provides an additional insight into the seeming contemporaneity of Hopkins' photographs of Callan-Thompson, shot and printed in high contrast monochrome. In the absence of era-defining greens, pinks or oranges, the images share a timeless modernity with depictions of Factory-era Sedgwick and her circle. Walker Evans, who largely avoided colour during his career, proposed that it was 'a vulgar distraction' from the subject of a photograph, and it is true that the parts of *Ciao Manhattan* depicting the decade as it turns into the seventies, with swirling floral prints, saturated hues and intense, golden west-coast light, look far more dated than those which precede them.

Another way the original pictures of Callan-Thompson convey the impression of being both historical and current is through the demeanour, stance and facial expressions of their subject. Julia had studied modelling at Lucie Clayton College, a fashion, modelling and charm academy, which, during the sixties, enjoyed a high profile, counting some of the era's iconic figures, such as Jean Shrimpton, among its alumni. At Lucie Clayton, Julia would have been taught how to apply makeup, how to move, sit and strike poses which, in a horribly patronising phrase of the time, 'made the most of her assets'. In short, how to master all the prerequisite moves essential to the self-conscious performance of youthful femininity. Indeed, for the most part, the physical postures she assumes in these pictures appear to be carefully studied replications of similar attitudes found in fashion and advertising of the time, which, in their characteristic combination of edginess and demure elegance belong clearly in the decade's 'museum of gesture'.[15]

That said, the most striking thing about these pictures is Julia's facial expression. While the physical poses speak of knowing self-consciousness, a body designed and constituted elsewhere and then reconfigured for the camera, the gaze is completely frank. Not the startled, wide-eyed, open lipped, fuck-me mask popularised as Twiggy's signature look, nor the swooning, aristocratic demeanour of Veruschka von Lehndorff, which by a quirk of global image communication, or perhaps assisted by heat and opiates, Julia assumes in the fashion spreads shot a couple of years later in India. Rather, through this assured projection of herself in Hopkins' pictures, one gets the strong impression of looking, not at a commercially, or professionally oriented photographic exercise, but at a series of portraits. Although the gaze depicted is static and non-evolving, the pictures suggest an interaction between photographer and subject that has more in common with a Warhol screen test than a David Bailey fashion shoot.

Although there is nothing to suggest that Hopkins and Callan-Thompson were anything other than social acquaintances, it is worth considering that at the time it would have been highly unusual for a woman to be photographing another woman for a fashion assignment. Like most other professions, fashion photography was still an almost exclusively male preserve. Moreover, during the sixties, it became an arena in and through which the social

inequality between men and women, alluded to by both Oldenburg and Sedgwick, was manifestly acted out. *Blow-Up*, Michelangelo Antonioni's cult depiction of swinging London which also dates from 1966, presents one of the most celebrated fictional versions of this relationship in the characters of the photographer Thomas and the women he photographs. Based principally on Bailey, and to a lesser extent on the documentarist and war photographer Don McCullin, who supplied the actual photographs used in the film, Thomas treats his female subjects with candid objectifying distain. As though 'female liberation' had merely granted him a license to dispense with outmoded social etiquette. The actor David Hemmings' vivid performance of Thomas is a perfect illustration of Antonioni's intended style of characterisation. As the director explained in an interview:

> I want my characters to suggest the background in themselves, even when it is not visible. I want them to be so powerfully realised that we cannot imagine them apart from their physical and social context even when we see them in empty space.[16]

The description could equally be applied to Callan-Thompson who, in Hopkins' pictures, powerfully conjures the context of their execution despite the fact that she is posing against a roll of white photographer's paper with minimal era-defining props. It is partly because the way Julia projects herself makes the pictures seem so unequivocally of the sixties that the temporal convolution of their combination with the more current images of Home is so startling.

Dorley-Brown's use of still and moving photography to investigate temporal transmutations of human and urban subjects significantly predates his collaborative work with Home. In the early nineties he began an exercise in photographic time travel which involved shooting urban scenes in the London Borough of Hackney. Over the course of the next two decades he would return to the same locations, recreating the same composition and photographing them again. In 2013, this ongoing project was published as *Continuum*, an e-book with an interactive app, which enabled the images to fade into one another thereby illustrating the materialisation of the gap between past and present. A similar structure of chronological division is used in his film *66/99* of 1999. For this work, Dorley-Brown returned, thirty-three years on, to a key location used in the making of *Blow-Up*: the bland surroundings of suburban Maryon Park, distinctive among London parks precisely because of its total lack of distinguishing features. Here, he remade one of the film's pivotal sequences shot for shot but without script or actors. The original work and the remake are presented on adjacent split screens. On one screen Thomas surreptitiously follows, photographs and is then confronted by Jane: 'You can't just go around photographing people. This is a public place. People have a right to be left in peace!'[17] While the other shows Maryon Park in a normal summer day in 1999, entirely recognisable, if slightly overgrown, and largely deserted but for the presence of a few unglamorous individuals going about their business and, like the original subjects of Antonioni's film, apparently oblivious of the photographer's presence.

In 2004, *66/99* and *Becoming (M)other* were shown together at T 1+2, an independent contemporary art space in London in an exhibition of the same name. Also included in this exhibition was Home's 41-minute movie *The Eclipse and Reemergence of the Oedipus Complex*. This film cuts images of Callan-Thompson, working as a fashion model and club hostess during

the sixties, against an at times deliberately dissociated soundtrack that uses stories about her to explore the limits of documentary cinema. The film, which was made using iMovie combines the low-tech feel of a family album with narrative complexity which, in Home's words, attempts 'to draw out the ways in which the avant-garde Lettrist cinema of the early fifties in France was commercialised in the later work of Godard, Marker and Resnais.'[18] *The Eclipse and Re-emergence of the Oedipus Complex* and *Becoming (M)other* are companion pieces. Not only are they contemporaneous, but both works take as their starting point images of Callan-Thompson from the collection which Home acquired in very particular circumstances two decades after her death. Crucially, both works are produced through the combination of analogue visuals from the sixties with digital materials and technologies typical of image production at the turn of the millennium.[19]

The reconciliation of past and present through technology is just one among several rapprochements of seeming opposites present in both *Becoming (M)other* and *The Age of Anti-Ageing*. Others are: the combination of monochrome and colour photography, old and young (relatively speaking), male and female. It is important to note that the seamlessness with which these effects are achieved results from the accuracy of the visual aggregations enabled by morphing which brings features in each picture to coincide exactly half way between their respective locations in each source image. Thus, in the reshoots of 2004 and 2014, Home is dressed in a mixture of contemporary sports- and casual wear: trainers, jeans, T-shirts and so on. In some pictures he is bare-chested which, in one image from the 2004 series, produces the illusion that he is wearing a flesh-coloured brocade dress, or, as in a surrealist painting, that his skin has taken on the pattern, texture and draped contours of the fabric. In another image, the seventies retro graphic on the T-shirt worn by Home in the 2004 shoot dominates the image to such an extent that it appears that Julia, who, in the original source image, was dressed in a similarly cut but plain, unprinted T-shirt, is now wearing a twenty-first century garment (Fig. 3). Unlike overlay and cross-fade which mimic the analogue mechanics of double exposure, these visual effects of temporal simultaneity, not to mention the uncanny precision with which Home and Callan-Thompson inhabit each other's faces and bodies, can only be achieved through digital distortion.

November Evening

> *Thus the life of someone whose existence has somewhat preceded our own encloses in its particularity the very tension of History. It's division. History is hysterical: it is constituted only if we consider it, only if we look at it – and in order to look at it we must be excluded from it.*[20]

During the autumn that preceded Callan-Thompson's death, Barthes was finalising the manuscript of *Camera Lucida*. The publisher, Gallimard, in partnership with the journal *Cahiers du Cinema*, had collaboratively commissioned him to contribute a short book to a series on cinema, but he chose instead to write exclusively about still images. Barthes had lived for most of his life with his mother Henriette and after she died (in her eighties of natural causes) he had begun the text in an attempt to explain the unique personal significance to him of a picture of her as a child taken in 1898 in a winter garden. Although this image is described and discussed at length, it is not reproduced in *Camera Lucida*. As such it becomes the vanishing point of the text and of its author's grief. Barthes says that he does not reproduce

the picture because it would have no meaning for anyone else, 'it is only for me' – a statement which has led to speculation that it is in fact a non-existent, idealised image: an absent absence.

Real or imagined, the winter garden photo is a demonstration of the fact that, for Barthes, it was the ubiquity of still, not of moving images, and above all images of human subjects, that had effected the real game-change in modern consciousness. He believed this change demanded a deep and sustained investigation into the cognitive and social impact of photography. In the strongly subjective first person voice that dominates *Camera Lucida* – distinguishing it from the pseudo-scientific precision and of his earlier 'semiotic' works such as *The Fashion System* – he demands: 'I want a History of Looking'. Whether or not Barthes intended *Camera Lucida* to deliver this 'wanted' history in any objective sense is unclear. Among the oddities and interests of his reflection on the relationship between mortality and representation is the fact that it can be read both as a theory and a history of the medium. The book includes twenty-four photographs, mostly by canonical figures, ordered non-chronologically. And although the selection exemplifies the medium's then established genres of still life, documentary, street photography and avant-garde photography, with just a couple of exceptions all the images are portraits, or at least pictures of people. Combined with personal anecdotes of the author's interactions with the medium, both as its subject (posing for the photographer) and as a viewer or 'consumer' of photographic images, they are used to illustrate the various points in his discussion of photography's peculiarities: its faithful replication of what it sees; its simultaneous articulation of past, present and future; its capacity for endless reproduction and shape shifting; the infinite number of its products; and its seemingly insoluble historiographic challenge.

In the final sections of the book, Barthes describes sorting through boxes of photographs in the hope of 'finding' his mother and it is in his account of this task conducted 'one November evening shortly after her death' that he comes closest to actually illustrating what an individualised 'History of Looking' might be.

> I could read my own nonexistence in the clothes that my mother had worn before I remember her … Here around 1913 is my mother dressed up – hat with a feather, gloves, delicate linen at the wrists and throat … caught in a History (of tastes, fashions, fabrics).[20]

Barthes moves back in time with the image of his mother, sorting through box after box of pictures, finding only photographs which he sees as 'merely analogical, provoking only her identity, not her truth'. Eventually, he finds what he has been looking for. The winter garden photograph in which he recognises 'in this little girl's image the kindness which had formed her being immediately and forever.'[22]

In a total contrast with the circumstances of the relationship between Home and Callan-Thompson, Barthes had throughout his life been extremely close to his mother. He cared for her during her final months ('forgetting that I had ever written anything'), grieved profoundly after her death and survived her by only three years, dying in 1980, the same year that *Camera Lucida* appeared for the first time in English. The book's proposal that a picture creates a falseness in the illusion of 'what is', where 'what was' would be a more accurate

description follows from the logic of this claustrophobic relationship and the palpable sense of loss that the author was experiencing at the time he wrote it. His photographic quest thus presupposes the existence of an image that catches the 'air' of the personal quality his mother possessed, in other words the emotional truth of their relationship, which he now most misses. In the journal entry that recounts the discovery of the winter garden photo, he simply notes: 'Je pleure.' Suppose, however, that Barthes had never known his mother. In this scenario, the discovery of her childhood portrait, or indeed any other picture of her, would produce a different effect of recognition. It would imply an utterly different history of looking.

Heautoscopy

> *I want a History of Looking. For the Photograph is the advent of myself as other: a cunning dissociation of consciousness from identity. Even odder: it was before Photography that men had the most to say about the vision of the double. Heautoscopy was compared with an hallucinosis; for centuries it was a great mythic theme.*[23]

Since its publication, *Camera Lucida* has come to be widely acknowledged as one of photography's canonical texts, inspiring several decades worth of artistic and critical responses. Among its many points of fascination is that, while it is overwhelmingly a reflection on photography's relationship to mortality, it simultaneously conjures the death of the medium itself. Although commercially produced digital cameras did not appear until the late eighties, and then took at least another decade to become the industry standard, Eastman Kodak had in fact developed the first prototype digital camera in 1975, just a year before the demise of Henriette Barthes. And while it is unlikely that Barthes was aware of either the invention, or its future significance to the schemes of representation which he had dedicated most of his life to studying, *Camera Lucida* is nevertheless haunted with a sense of the historical specificity of the image imprinted with light on a fragile emulsion.

As previously mentioned, the pictures which accompany the text chart the transformations of the medium beginning with 'the first photograph', Niepce's heliograph, *The Dinner Table* of 1823, and include examples of virtually every other technological iteration of the medium through its history, the most recent being Daniel Boudinet's Polaroid image simply entitled *Polaroid* of 1979. Although Polaroid film uses chemical reagents, like digital cameras, Polaroids are instant images, producing a new relationship between viewer, photographer and subject. Such a narrative of the demise and transmutation of the medium itself implies a re-opening of the scope of a 'history of looking' to epic proportions: How did we look before photography was invented? How will we look after its supersession? Has this process already begun?

The reference to heautoscopy, the visual delusion whereby one sees oneself at a distance, is not developed in *Camera Lucida* beyond the mention quoted above. Contemporary psychiatry and neurology attribute such reduplicative hallucinations to symptoms of schizophrenia, epilepsy and migraine, or to other interferences or damage to the brain's temporal processing capacities. Yet, as Barthes points out, it is in pre-photographic folkloric, mythical and religious concepts that accounts of doppelgängers, spirit-doubles and 'out of body experiences' proliferate.

Among the many unaccounted-for effects that the invention of photography had on human consciousness, the disappearance of the doppelgänger, or at least its relegation to clinical literature and horror fiction, has a number of possible rational explanations. First, the same processes of mechanisation and industrialisation which led to photography becoming virtually ubiquitous from the nineteenth century onwards also contributed to the widespread adoption of materials such as sheet glass and cheap, large-scale colour printing. This meant that a mechanically reproduced image would have been just one among many reflections, or approximations of the self encountered as part of everyday day life in the modern urban metropolis. Second, as has been well documented, researched and theorised, very soon after its invention, the state recognised and began to exploit photography's potential as a medium of proof and control. Once photography was available and affordable it gave huge impetus to state-implemented strategies of identity management. In other words, the state's use of the medium radically reduced the means through which an individual (for example a person on the run from the law) might assume an alternative identity. At the same time, the industrialised image economies that had been responsible for the invention and early dissemination of photography extended the logic of surveillance into other areas of social regulation, even where actual visual recording was not implemented. In a fully operational surveillance society, the machinery of identity control and documentation would tend to reduce the likelihood of encountering an unknown person with whom one shared a physiognomy because that person was in fact a blood relation, a living breathing doppelgänger. By the same logic, in a pre-modern society the possibility of unwittingly murdering your father at the city gates and then marrying your own mother was perhaps not entirely far-fetched.

Home recalls that one of the strangest effects of acquiring the collection of images of his mother, including the series by Hopkins, was the sense of having "seen this person before" followed by the rapid realisation that this could not be explained simply in terms of their physiognomic resemblance to one another. In a heautoscopic convolution made possible by photography Home had in fact previously encountered the image of Callan-Thompson in a number of films documenting key events of the sixties counter-culture which she had attended: director James Wadawam's biopic of Scottish poet and junkie Alexander Trocchi *Cain's Film*, 1969, which includes footage of the event *State of Revolt* at the Arts Lab in Covent Garden in which Julia can be seen in four separate audience shots sitting in the front row and taking notes on her knee; in the audience at *The Fourteen Hour Technicolour Dream*, a concert held at the Alexandra Palace in 1967, documented by a number of film makers including Peter Whitehead's film *Tonite Let's All Make Love in London*, 1967, this time evidently wasted and blowing bubbles in a tie-dyed T-shirt and circular Lennon-style sunglasses.

The circumstances of Home's encounters with the photographs of his mother (never mind the actual person) could not be more different from those of Roland Barthes' interactions with Henriette and her photographs. While the lives of these two women depicted in the images followed completely divergent trajectories, the first a fashionable countercultural pioneer living a life conducted through and at the service of spectacle; the second a provincial bourgeois housewife whose conformity created a perfect literal image of restraint, they are comparable in the extent to which they illustrate photography's complicity in the performance of femininity. In this sense, Home and Dorley-Brown's reworking of Callan-

Thompson's fashion portfolio belongs to a tradition of photographic self-portraiture which, starting with Umrao Singh Sher Gil, Claude Cahun and Ana Mendieta, and continuing in the work of artists such as Cindy Sherman, Samuel Fosso, Nicki Lee and Gian Cruz, tests and exposes the limits of gender-defined identity as a masquerade. At the same time, Home's literal inhabitation of the image of his mother completely upsets the very modernist notions of image creation in which this tendency is rooted. *Becoming (M)other* and *The Age of Anti-Ageing* use the latest photographic technology to create a morphology which implies the infinite projection of the future while simultaneously hurtling much further back in time than 1966, to an age when the most real images of the self resided in mythology and the supernatural. As Home says of the series: 'The aim was not to make a picture. It was more shamanic. I just wanted to get close to my mother.'

Fig. 1
Carla Hopkins, *Julia Callan-Thompson Fashion Picture (Flares)*, 1966
black and white photograph

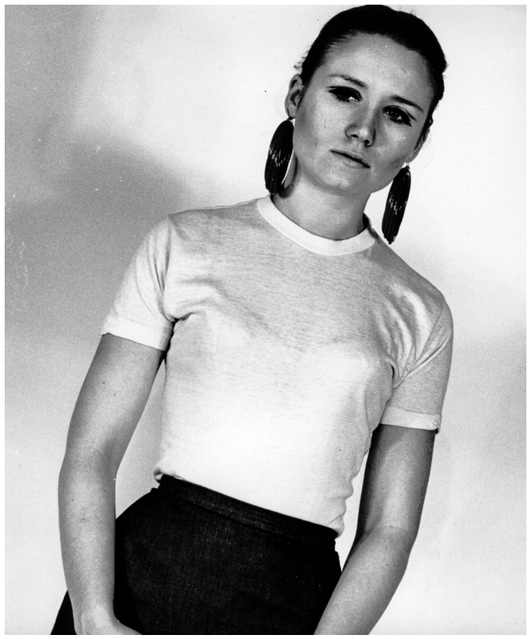

Fig. 2
Carla Hopkins, *Julia Callan-Thompson Fashion Picture (T-Shirt)*, 1966
black and white photograph

Fig. 3
Chris Dorley-Brown, *Stewart Home posing as Julia Callan Thompson (T-Shirt)*, 2004
digital colour photograph

Fig. 4
Chris Dorley-Brown, *Stewart Home posing as Julia Callan Thompson (Flares)*, 2004
digital colour photograph

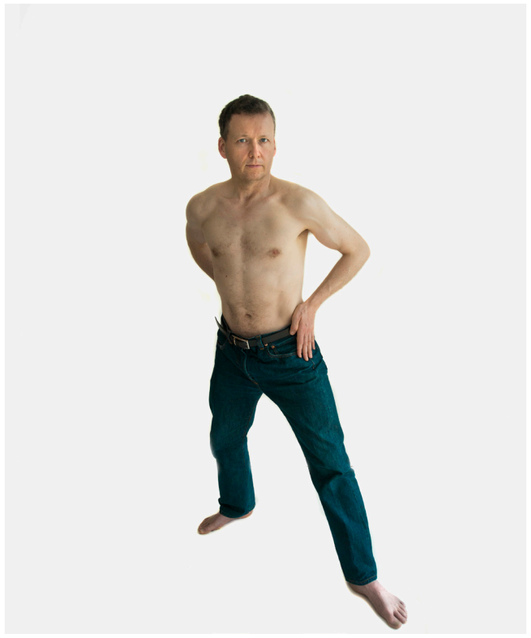

Fig. 5
Chris Dorley-Brown, *Stewart Home posing as Julia Callan Thompson (Flares)*, 2014
digital colour photograph

Fig. 6
Chris Dorley-Brown, *Stewart Home posing as Julia Callan Thompson (T-Shirt)*, 2014
digital colour photograph

Notes

1 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, Fontana Paperbacks, London, 1984, p.10
2 Eleanor Dwight, 'The Divine Mrs. V', *New York Magazine*, http://nymag.com/nymetro/shopping/fashion/features/n—7930/index1.html (last accessed 5 November, 2014)
3 David Hemmings (Thomas) in *Blow-Up*, Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
4 Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1985, p.259
5 The hand-written information on the blank sides of the photographic prints Julia circulated to potential employers include: 'Lucy (sic) Claytons Agency, Julia Callan-Thompson, hair honey blonde, eyes blue, Height 5'5" & a half, bust 32, waist 21, hips 33, Length of leg 35", dress size 8, shoe size 5.' On the back of another photograph, Julia gives her agency as Bayers International. A photo from a much later session is stamped 'Copyright Lintas Ltd', and this was almost certainly taken in Mumbai circa 1968, since it is from a shoot to promote Lux soap and Julia appeared in an Indian advertisement for this beauty product. The coroner in Julia's autopsy records her height as half an inch shorter than she gave it as a model. [Note from Stewart Home]
6 *Eve's Weekly*, Mumbai, June 8, 1968
7 Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, op cit. p.260
8 Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, op cit. p.258
9 Max Factor Makeup advertisement featuring Julia Callan-Thompson, 1968
10 Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *Popism: The Warhol Sixties*, Penguin Books, London, 2007, 87. The full quote reads: 'Everything went young in 1964. The kids were throwing out all the preppy outfits and dress-up clothes that made them look like their mothers and fathers, and suddenly everything was reversed – the mothers and fathers were trying to look like their kids. Even at art openings the bright coloured short dresses were stealing the show away.'
11 Ibid. Warhol and Hackett, p.184
12 In 1966, when the pictures were taken, Hopkins was unmarried and would have been using her birth name, Keberle.
13 Oldenburg, Claes, *Multiples in Retrospect: 1964–1990*, Rizzoli, New York, 1991, p. 58
14 Edie Sedgwick, *Ciao Manhattan*, John Palmer and David Weisman, 1972
15 For an elaboration of this idea see Sabel Gavaldon, *Un museu del gest / A Museum of Gesture* http://lacapella.bcn.cat/en/exposicions/anteriors/2014 (last accessed 5 November 2014)
16 Michelangelo Antonioni, *The Architecture of Vision: Writings and Interviews on Cinema*, University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 142
17 Vanessa Redgrave (Jane) in Michelangelo Antonioni, *Blow-Up*, 1966
18 'Notes on Four Stewart Home Anti-Films', http://www.stewarthomesociety.org/art/film.htm (last accessed November 5, 2014)
19 While the morphed portraits produced from the early eighties onwards by the American artist Nancy Burson are among Dorley-Brown's key references, his own work inhabits this technology with an ease that such earlier examples lack.
20 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, op cit. p. 65
21 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, op cit. p.64
22 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, op cit. p.69
23 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, op cit, p.13

Exhibitions

The series *Becoming (M)other* was first exhibited in Stewart Home and Chris Dorley-Brown: *Becoming (M)other* at T1/2 Artspace, London, December 2004–January 2005. It was shown as part of an untitled series of Stewart Home actions, interventions and screenings at Catalyst Arts, Belfast, November–December 2005; in *Hallucination Generation: High Modernism in a Tripped Out World*, a group show curated by Stewart Home of art works related to his mother, at Arnolfini, Bristol, April–May 2006; in *Again a Time Machine*, a Stewart Home retrospective at White Columns, New York, October–November 2011 and at Space Studios, London, April–May 2012; in *Tilt*, a Stewart Home solo show at Building F, London, November 2013; in Stewart Home and Chris Dorley-Brown: *The Age of Anti-Ageing* at The Function Room, London, October–November 2014, alongside the series of the same title; as part of the 31st Biennial of Graphic Arts at Moderna Galerija, Ljubiljana, August–December 2015.

Related Works

Stewart Home: *The Eclipse and Re-Emergence of the Oedipus Complex*, 41 mins, 2004
(view at *http://www.ubu.com/film/home_eclipse.html*)
Stewart Home: *Tainted Love* (London: Virgin Books, 2005)

Collections

The Arts Council of England Collection acquired *Becoming (M)other* and *The Eclipse and Re-Emergence of the Oedipus Complex* in 2014.

Editions

Each set of 8 photographs is available in a limited edition of 5 copies published by the artists.
Enquiries: *office@vargas.org.uk*

Works in the exhibition

1 ***Becoming (M)other***, 2004
set of 8 photographs, pigment giclée prints, each 584 × 690 mm
In 1966 Carla Hopkins took a series of fashion photographs of Julia Callan-Thompson, a club hostess who was hoping to become a model and movie actress. Julia landed a bit of film extra work and did press ads for products such as Max Factor lipstick but was soon devoting herself to a full time exploration of alternative realities in the company of such luminaries as Alex Trocchi, William Burroughs and Marianne Faithfull. In 2004, Julia's son Stewart Home was photographed by Chris Dorley-Brown imitating the poses from his mother's 1966 modelling portfolio. A selection of the two sets of photographs were then morphed together to create a composite image of Julia at the age of twenty-two and her son Stewart aged 42.

2 ***The Age of Anti-Ageing***, 2014
set of 8 photographs, pigment giclée prints, each 584 × 690 mm
In 2004 Stewart Home was photographed by Chris Dorley Brown imitating poses from photographs in his mother's 1966 modelling portfolio. More recently, after noticing books with titles such as *The Green Pharmacy: Anti-Ageing Prescriptions* and *The Anti-Ageing Beauty Bible* lying around in the flats of friends, Stewart Home and Chris Dorley Brown decided to repose their 2004 restaged photographs a decade on. The photographs from 2004 and 2014 were then morphed together. Rationally the result should have been Stewart Home as he would have looked in 2009, but instead of this the morphs conjure up a timeless Stewart Home. Anti-ageing books and products have become big business among the baby boomer generation, but photographic manipulation makes them superfluous. In a culture obsessed with the aesthetic rather than the fitness results of exercise, anti-ageing is more effectively achieved via digital manipulation than beauty products!

3 ***Market Forces: Or Why Despite My Money-Grabbing Change In Career Trajectory It Is Impossible For Me To Sell Out To The Institution of Art by "Stewart Home"***, 2014
booklet, 24pp, 148 × 210 mm

1 ***Becoming (M)other*** , 2004

2 ***The Age of Anti-Ageing***, 2014

1 ***Becoming (M)other*** , 2004

2 ***The Age of Anti-Ageing***, 2014

1 ***Becoming (M)other*** , 2004

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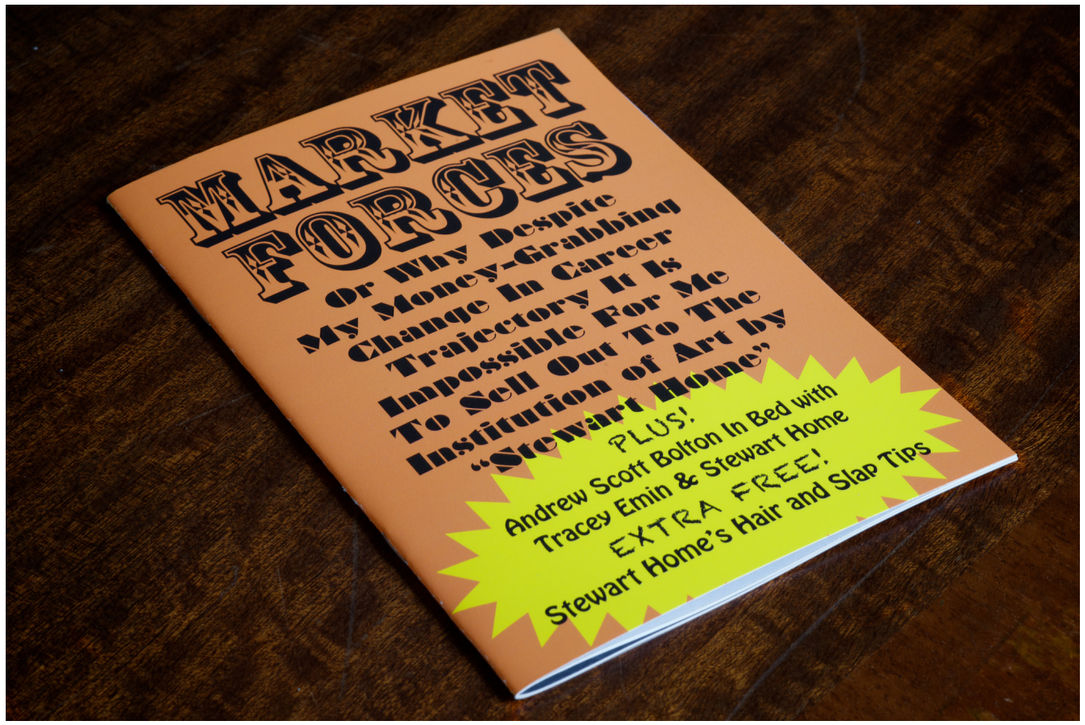
2 ***The Age of Anti-Ageing***, 2014



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