

# METRO PICTURES

Alm, David. "In Her New Work, Cindy Sherman Confronts The Pain, Loneliness, And Strength Of An Aging Woman," *Forbes.com* (May 6, 2016).

## Forbes



*Cindy Sherman, Untitled, 2016 (Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures)*

A solo exhibition of Cindy Sherman's latest photographs opened at Metro Pictures in New York last night, ending four years of speculation over what the artist's next works might look like. They did not disappoint.

In 16 life-size, full-color portraits, all produced this year, Sherman adopts the personae of famous women from the Golden Age of cinema, no longer young but striking the poses of sexy screen sirens: Greta Garbo, Gloria Swanson and possibly Lillian Gish.

It's hard to say who they are exactly: The avatars are not identified, and were it not for their distinctly 1920s fashions, you might think that, in some of the works, Sherman was channeling women closer to her own age — i.e. getting on in years, but still alive: Shirley MacLain, Lily Tomlin, even Carol Kane.

It doesn't really matter who they are; the effect is the same: to confront you with the reality of age in a culture obsessed with agelessness.

Each work is a dye sublimation printed directly onto metal, eliminating the need for glass protection and giving them an immediacy and sheen that has the paradoxical effect of bringing their subjects to life while simultaneously flattening them into a hyper-stylized netherworld.

Sherman, who came to prominence in the art world 40 years ago with a series of 69 black-and-white "Untitled Film Stills," in which she posed as various Hollywood tropes — the damsel in distress, the smartly dressed secretary — has described the new work as not autobiographical, per se, but still very much about where she is in life now.

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But they are also of a piece with her previous work, deftly balancing tragedy with a kind of defiance and unmistakable strength. From her earliest photographs on, Sherman has explored what it means to be a woman in American society, what it means to be famous, what it means to be a spectacle.

Now 62, she has decades of personal experience as well. These new photographs represent such a vantage point, as well as years of therapy, as she told the New York Times last month, and “coming to terms with health issues and getting older.”

“I relate so much to these women,” she said in the same interview. “They look like they’ve been through a lot, and they’re survivors. And you can see some of the pain in there, but they’re looking forward and moving on.”



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The exhibition will be up until June 11th, the same date that a retrospective of Sherman's career, "Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life," opens at the new Broad museum of contemporary art in Los Angeles.

It's worth the trip to see the work in person. Because while Sherman is not, strictly speaking, the women she portrays, each of these women is most certainly Cindy Sherman.



*Cindy Sherman, installation view, 2016, Metro Pictures, New York (Photo: Genevieve Hanson)*