



cura.

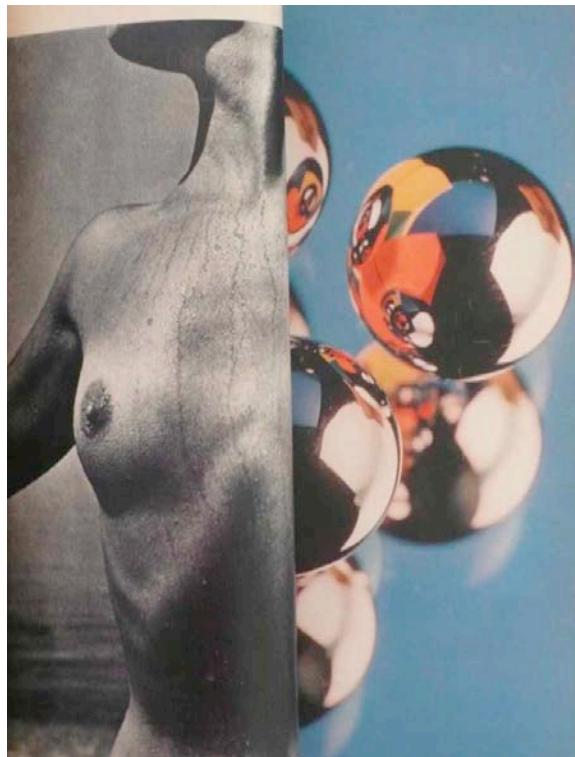
A PROJECT BY
MARTIN SOTO CLIMENT
WORDS BY
CHRIS SHARP

In order to create this series of images, Martin Soto Climent applied the same method and working ethic that he applies to all his constructions: provisionality. Which is to say that whatever material or object (e.g. a shoe, pantyhose or magazine) the artist uses, it must be able to revert to its original, unharmed status, as if it were but a performer in a provisional configuration. Nothing is permanently and irreversibly transformed. Just temporarily bent and twisted to engender the illusion of transformation.

The same goes for this series of images. Examined closely, you will see that what might seem to be a cut or a fold is rather a juxtaposition of quasi-cylindrical images pressed up against the face of a scanner and conjoined as such only for an instant. That which ensures that the page on which the image finds itself will be restored fully intact to its place in the no less fully intact magazine. This method has a disorienting effect of making it seem as if the image were partially fleeing from the surface of reproduction like some kind of materialistic one-point perspective. What is interesting about this is the materiality and physicality with which such a procedure invests the image as if it, the image, were this palpable and verifiable thing, even an object of sorts, with all the connotations of anachronism that such an object-like status might imply.

It is of course no mere accident that these briefly manipulated images hail from old photographic magazines from the 1950s and 1960s, a time when images were still images, having just barely entered the twilight of their wholesome innocence and having not yet become the complex, multi-layered machinations that structuralism has trained us to perceive them as. Thus if these juxtaposed images, with their naked bodies of women, exaggerated facial expressions and their kitschy formalism, are liable to strike us as strangely naive, more than a touch treacly, and fascinating, it is because they refer to a halcyon time, when images could still be trusted, believed, and embraced as objective representations of a collectively shared reality. Indeed, they refer to a time before images were definitively deprived of their claim to truth, their finality and therefore corporality as objects. That their invalidation as credible documents and innocent depictions should be accompanied by their gradual dematerialization and digital incorporeality seems as logical it is inevitable to us now, despite such an apparent coincidence.

All that said, if Soto Climent's recuperation and manual manipulation of the photos in these magazines seem tinged with a certain nostalgia, the complexity and the stakes of that nostalgia should not be underestimated. For the so-called corporality of the images cannot be divorced from the bodies portrayed in the ad-hoc collages (strictly speaking, these are not collages – which comes from the French noun col, glue, the verb of which is coller, to glue together – for, as already stated, the sources from which they issue are provisionally transformed, becoming permanent only in digital reproduction). Paradoxically enough, the fractured and collated bodies and faces portrayed herein arguably speak as much to a nostalgia for the unified self – when there was still the Victorian vestiges of a unified self to fracture – as they do to a nostalgia for the body. A body, which, like Soto Climent's images, despite being depicted and therefore manipulated, could be restored afterward fully intact to its whole physical self.





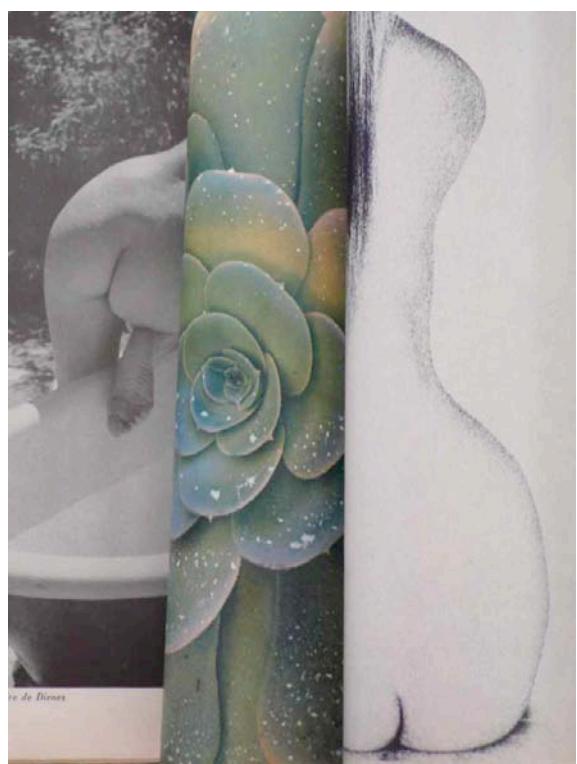
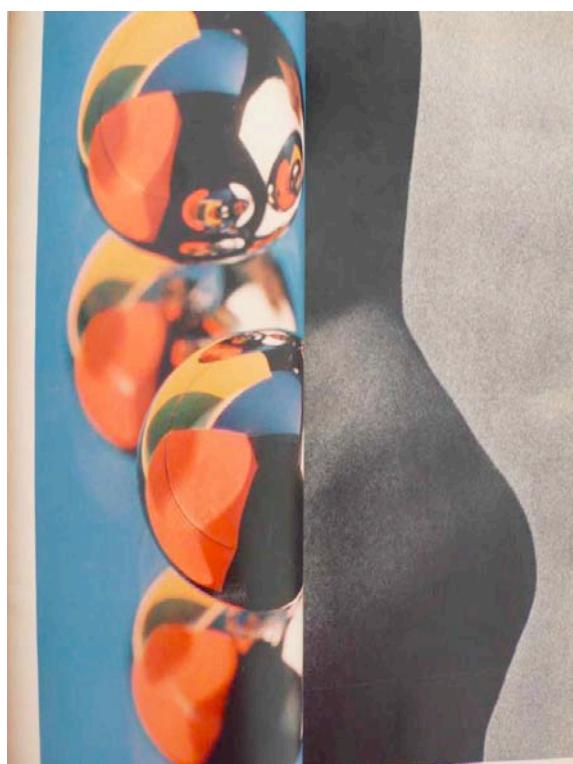
KURT COHEN, LAS VEGAS by Steedman



Jean-Marie Boucic (France)



Baker at 1/200 of a second with
comes achieves memorable "fun" photo of stage
over in several national exhibitions



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