

See a different kind of Stanley Kubrick film

By BARBARA HOFFMAN



Future director Stanley Kubrick shot some 15,000 images for Look magazine before moving on.
Museum of the City of New York / SK Film Archive, LLC

Two decades before he tackled outer space, Stanley Kubrick explored New York City's parks, nightclubs and subways, his 35mm camera at the ready. The future "2001: A Space Odyssey" filmmaker was only 17 when he starting shooting for Look magazine, but even then it was clear: That gawky kid from the Bronx had a singular, somewhat sinister way of seeing the world.

"Through a Different Lens: Stanley Kubrick Photographs," which opened Thursday at the Museum of the City of New York, gives us more than 120 hints of the director Kubrick would become. Curators Sean Corcoran and Donald Albrecht sifted through about 15,000 images the young Kubrick shot for the biweekly magazine,

beginning in 1945, when he was a student at Taft High School. "He basically had the nerve to go up to Look's editors and show his work and sell it," Corcoran says of Kubrick, whose five years with the now-defunct magazine effectively functioned as his college of the arts.

His first published photo — of a dejected newsstand vendor flanked by papers announcing President Franklin Roosevelt's death — ran in April 1945. By October 1946, he was on staff, making \$50 a week. His colleagues formed what they called "The Bringing Up Stanley Club," part of which entailed getting Kubrick out of saddle shoes and into a jacket and tie. An early selfie catches him in the

mirror alongside a bikini-clad nightclub dancer named Rosemary Williams, his brooding dark looks suggesting a young Bela Lugosi. Like Diane Arbus, whose photographed twins he famously copied in “The Shining,” he embraced the grotesque. At a fashion shoot at Aqueduct Race Track, young Kubrick turned his camera on blind beggars and grizzled bettors. At a circus training camp, he focused on a tattooed man with nipple rings. Assigned to Columbia University, a post-WWII home for scientists, Kubrick caught one researcher in John Lennon-like round sunglasses beholding a bright cathode ray tube — the prototype for one of Peter Sellers’ “Dr. Strangelove” characters.

Not surprisingly, Look didn’t publish most of those photos, nor the ones he took of fighter Rocky Graziano in the nude.

Occasionally, Kubrick enlisted friends to get the images he wanted: That comely brunette snuggling against another passenger on the subway was his high school girlfriend, Toba Metz: the future (first) Mrs. Kubrick.

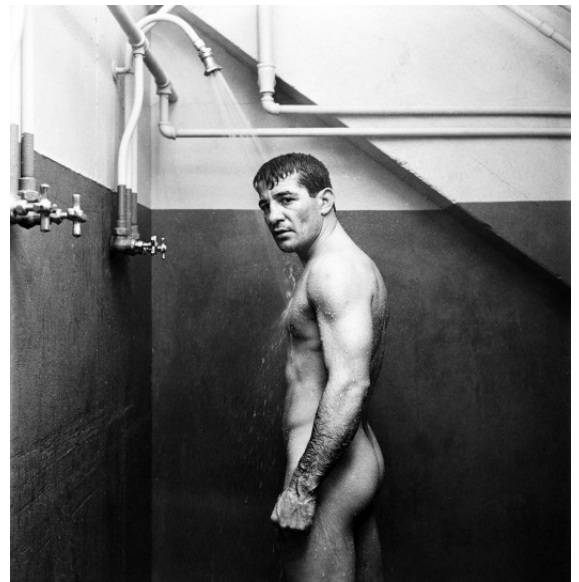
“This quiet, brown-eyed youngster ... dreams of the day when he can make documentary films,” Look’s editors wrote of their prodigy, who quit in August 1950, after shooting his first newsreel.

They had no idea that Kubrick, who died in 1999, would give us so much more than that.

“Through a Different Lens: Stanley Kubrick Photographs,”
on view through October at the Museum of the City of New York,
1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd Street; MCNY.org



A 1948 photo of a Columbia University scientist suggests “Dr. Strangelove.”
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Photos of Rocky Graziano in the nude never made it into the mag.
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Kubrick’s girlfriend, Toba Metz, posed for his “Life and Love on the New York City Subway” series.
Museum of the City of New York