BENDER

Jack Winbow

BENDER

'A photograph is not only an image, an interpretation of the real ; it i also a trace, something directly stencilled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask.'
-Susan Sontag, Photography Unlimited

Androgyny and gynandromorphic approaches to fashion, aesthetic and personality are new and almost alien subjects to the mainstream. For me, personally, androgyny within self expression is a new concept and ideology I am starting to scratch the surface of. However, the characteristics of androgynous dressing have been in the background of almost every major art movement, a continuous underlying community of people that oppose the restrictive gender structures that infect every aspect of our society. From the marketing strategy of different gendered products such as health and beauty items that are painted grey and black to exude 'masculine traits' and are targeted towards men juxtaposed against the bright colours of beauty products that are advertised towards women. Gender roles and expectation are ingrained within everything we do. Only recently has the world of make-up been open to the men and other unorthodox identities within gender, even though men have been wearing make-up for centuries most evidently in Ancient Egypt where men wearing makeup was not frowned upon.

Gender non-conforming people have been in every aspect of history. One of the most debated and controversial evidences of this is in Leonardo Da Vinci's 'The Last Supper' in which the identity of one of the many characters seated to the right of Jesus Christ has been argued for centuries. The figure painted to the right of Christ's arm does not contain any obvious signifiers of masculine traits. With no beard and hair that reaches their shoulders as well as an expression that can be read as feminine, it seems that one of Christ's disciples (which were all men) does not follow the standard rules of gender. Therefore, the question arises of the identity of this figure. Are they one of Jesus Christ's disciples St John or are they Mary Magdalene ? While Mary Magdalene was not named in any of the four gospels and has not historically been placed at the last supper, the inclusion of this enigmatic character raises questions. For me, this is one of the earliest instances of a non-binary person represented within art. The irony of a non-binary person in one of the most famous christian historical events is not lost, an institution that has consistently denied and endangered the lives of queer people has a queer person sat closest to Christ themself. This is just one of many examples of non-binary queer people within art history.

Furthermore, another instance if not the first instance of a non-binary character comes from Hermaphroditus, the son of Hermes and Aphrodite and one of many winged love-gods as well as one of art histories first idillic depictions of women. However Hermaphroditus was gender assigned male at birth. One of the first depictions of the perfect female body stems from a non-binary person. While the ideology of the perfect woman is a harmful one, it's interesting that the idea of female beauty comes from someone who can present as both male and female. The Sleeping Hermaphroditus sculpted by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and housed in the Louvre depicts the androgynous character lying in rest and is yet another example of the existence of non-binary people within art history.

The purpose of this book is to document the gender non-conforming people closest to me, exploring through photographs their own relationship with the gender they were assigned at birth and how they bend the rules that restrict them. Taking inspiration from iconic figures ranging from Jordan Mooney to Hermaphroditus, this book focuses on individuality and an individuals personal approach to their own aesthetic including fashion, personality and appearance. Photographed in the timeless monochromatic lens, these individuals are shown breaking the binary while being captured within the binary of black and white. As we are introduced to new characters, we celebrate the 'difference' that has for so long been shunned. With a platform to express themselves without judgement or serious repercussion ; their courage, uniqueness, nerve and talent is allowed to shine. The hope for this book is to be a catalyst for many more, as someone who has struggled with placing themselves within the spectrum of gender I aim for this book to help others find their own identity.









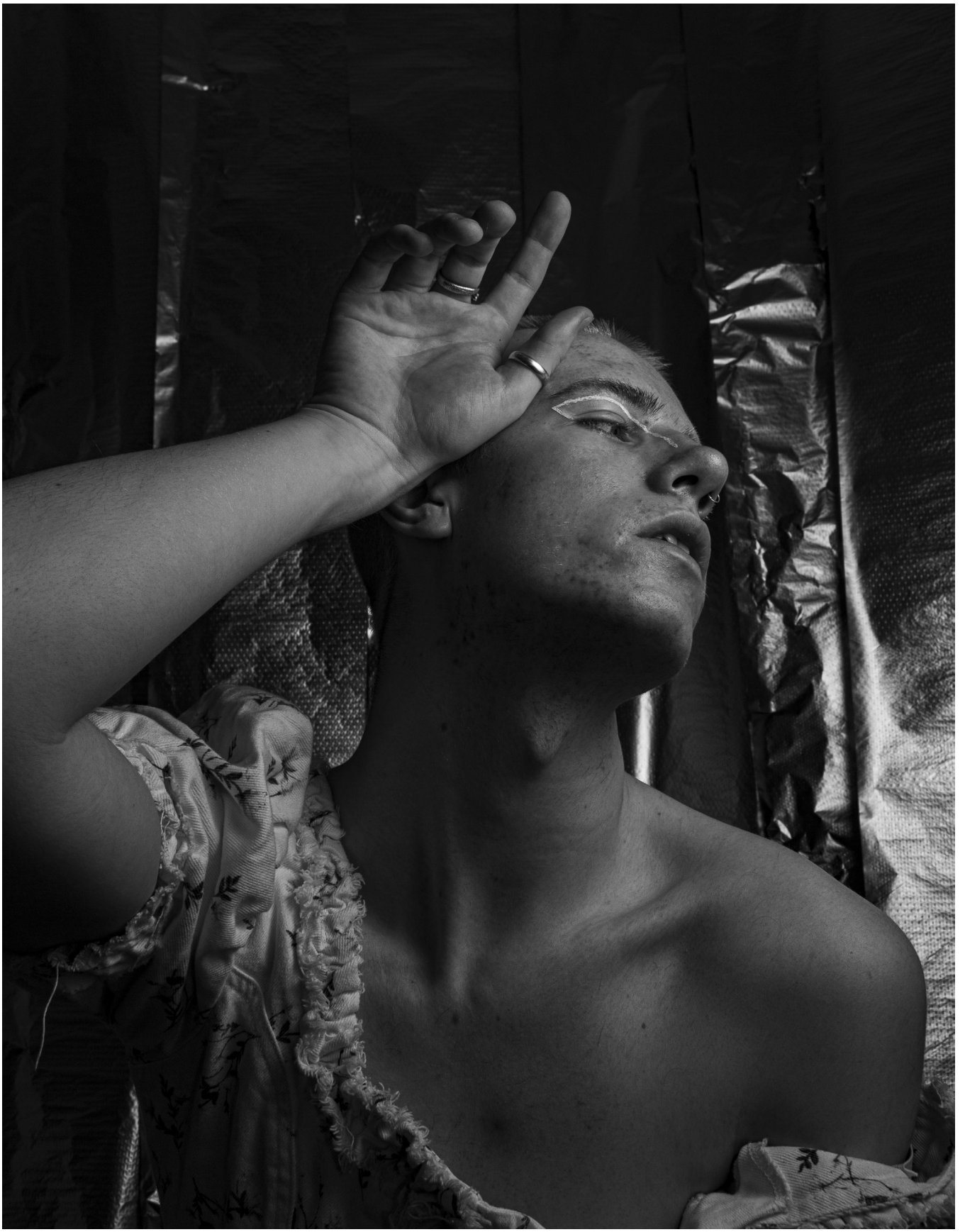





KTC
Vegetable
COOKING OIL
VEGETABILISK OLJA • PFLANZENÖL • KASVISÖLJY
VEGETABILISK OLIE • HUILE DE VÉGÉTALE
LONGER LIFE FRYING OIL
www.ktc-edibles.com









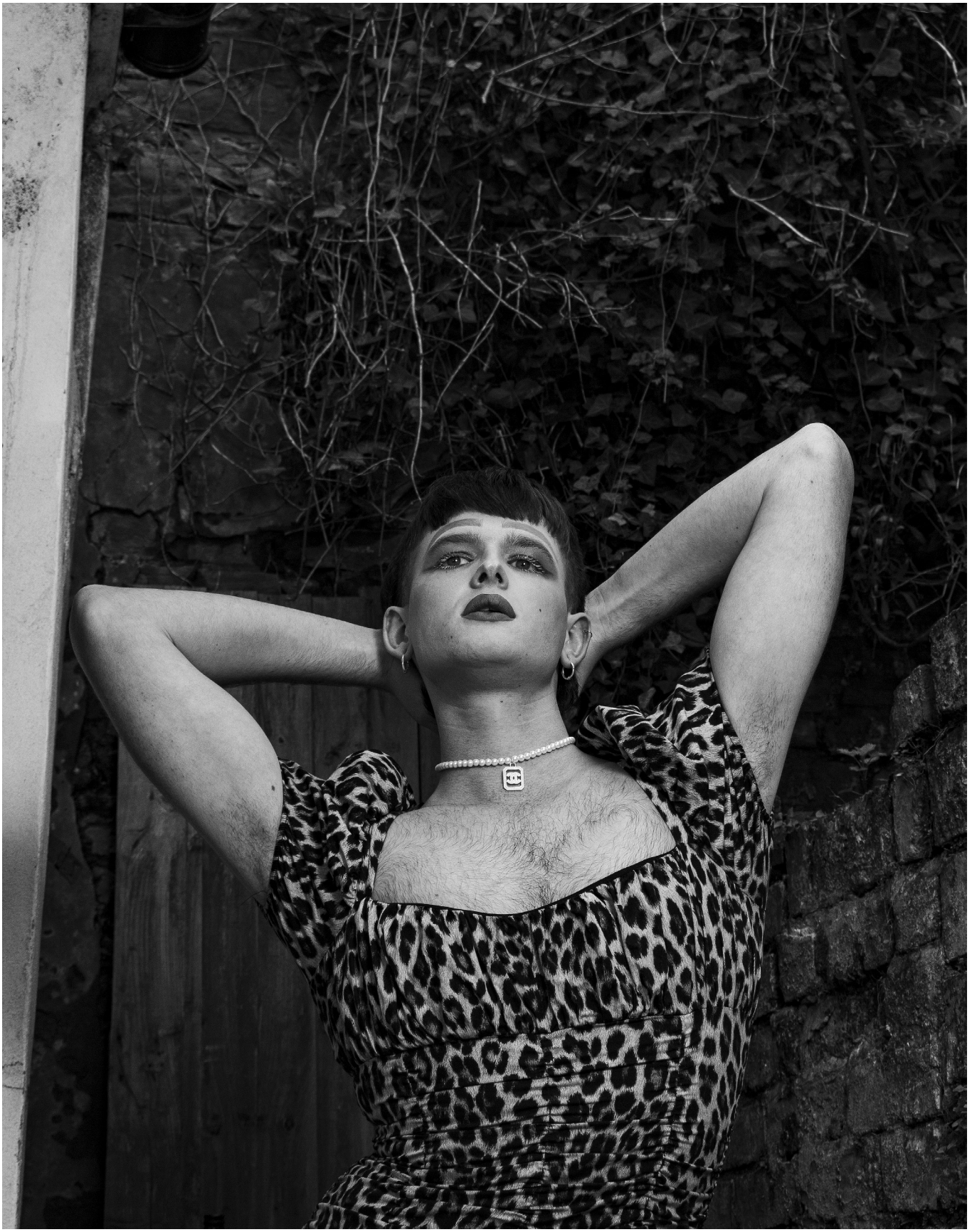









COOKING OIL
LONGER LIFE FRYING OIL
www.klc-edibles.com





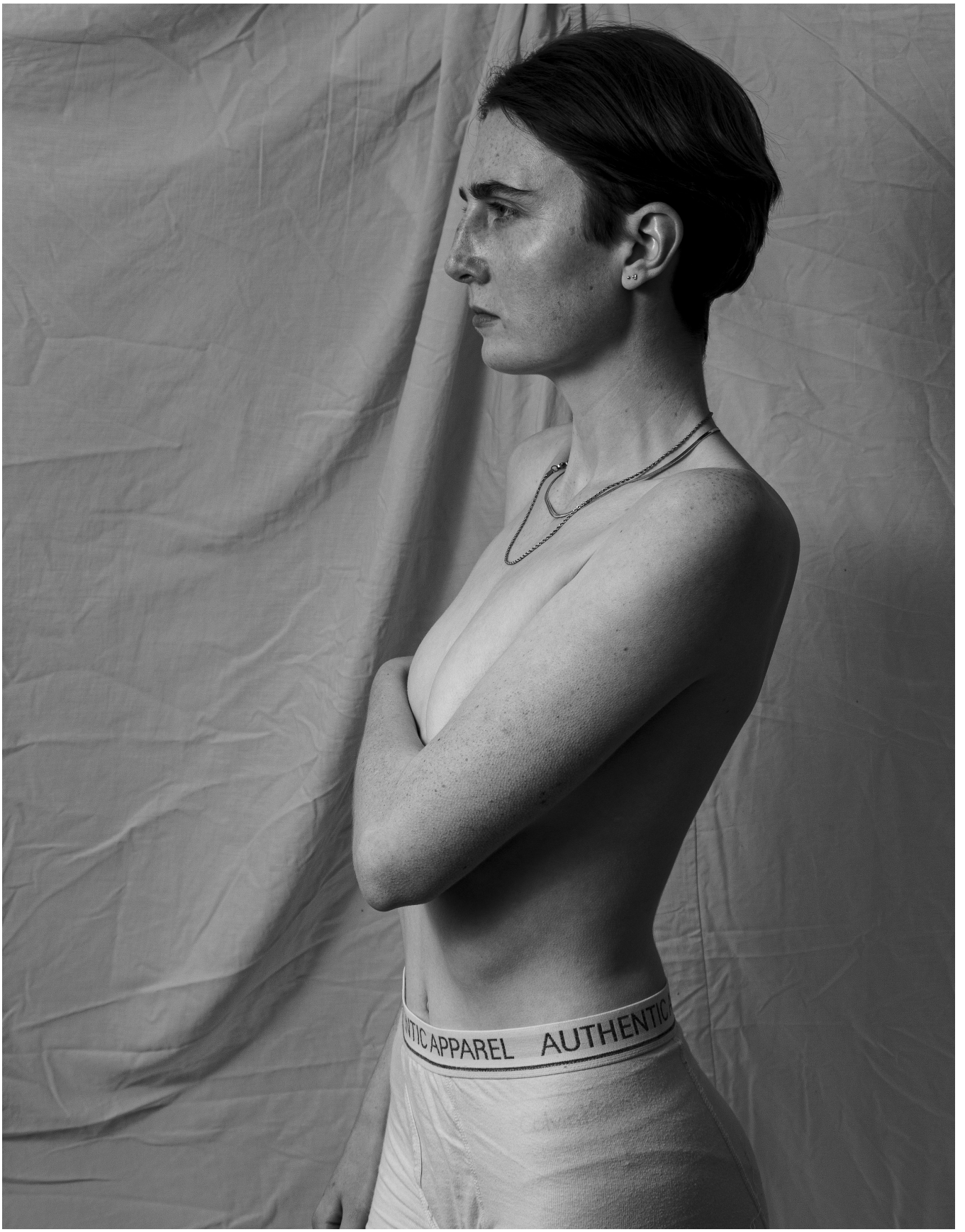



AUTHENTIC








AUTHENTIC


TENTIC APPA