

Visionaire No. 28 : The Bible

Wolfgang Tillmans

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Wolfgang Tillmans : Visionaire No. 28 : The Bible before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Visionaire No. 28 : The Bible:

19 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Always IntriguingBy Tom RandCreated in 1991 from his one bedroom apartment, Stephen Gan turned a \$10 per issue labor of love into a \$150.00 per issue work of art. Amazingly, he still publishes Visionaire with as much intensity, creativity, and originality as the issue before and most importantly - his attention to detail is closer to a parent doting on his child, than a publisher overseeing a magazine. After all - Visionaire is Gan's brainchild. Now far removed from that one bedroom apartment and, at times, charging up to \$400.00 per issue, Gan and Visionaire have become a unique fashion-publishing dynasty. Top fashion/art/photo contributors such as Karl Lagerfeld, Mario Testino, Alexander McQueen and Nick Night - among many others - willingly submit their work to Visionaire without compensation. With thirty-two limited edition issues already published since 1991, not every one has been a winner; although Visionaire is original and creative in every respect, it still doesn't make each issue worthwhile or, worth \$150 - \$400. However, most are fascinating in their thematic approach and satisfying as a work of art. Because of the unavailability of past issues, a current review can only contain the more recent and obtainable issues of Visionaire. "Chic" (#22) is clearly the most impressive of late, due to a theme that encompasses one of the central components in fashion. This is a fashion lover's ultimate scrapbook. Edited by Mario Testino, the issue is brimming with fashion photographs, from current to classic. Combined with these images are swatches of material from famous designer houses. As if this wasn't enough, "Chic" also contains a white napkin with Paloma Picasso's lipstick print, an envelope containing a letter from Catherine Deneuve to Yves Saint Laurent,

and a tiny piece of fabric from the Versace dress Madonna wore to the opening of *Evita*. Toning down a bit for the next issue, "The Emperor's New Clothes" (#23) is lavishly packaged in a wooden box and contains forty 11x14 sepia-toned photographs by Karl Lagerfeld. The entire suite of nude photographs is wrapped in a satin bow. Lagerfeld's images are on par with any of today's great fashion photographs. That he is also one of the best and most well known clothing designers in the realm of current fashion, only confirms Lagerfeld as an endearing renaissance man.

"Movement" (#27), as the theme implies, extrapolates on the idea of motion by using clear pages that, when turned, conveys both movement and metamorphosis. "Woman" (#28) contains various artists' interpretations on the theme - however, several of the images need such deep-seated, subjective interpretation, that one wonders why they were ever included. "Woman" is clearly the least inventive of the recent issues. Encased in a Philippe Starck designed white, plastic, pillow-like casing, "The Bible" (#29) integrates chapters from the Old and New Testament with photographs and paintings. The book's size and weight is due in part to the thickness of its cardboard pages, which turn like a children's book but reveal intense, erotic, and oftentimes nightmarish images that parallel each of the Bible passages. With each new issue, *Visionaire* is designed to amaze and delight. After nine years, it is a credit to Stephen Gan's 'vision' that *Visionaire* continues to gain popularity. Like a haute couture gown, the exclusivity of *Visionaire* makes it all the more fashionable, rendering it another must-have accessory for the in-crowd.

2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A good collection of avant-garde Biblical images By J. Lizzi Comprised of some cool contemporary depictions of Biblical events, clever "Visionaire-esque" packaging and presentation, and a fine lineup of contributors, this book definitely has value as a collector's item. Yet, I'm torn. I really do like this book, but it could have offered so much more. "Visionaire #28: The Bible," contains 41 images (e.g., photos, paintings, graphics) pertaining to verses of the Bible, submitted by over 40 artistic contributors. Each image takes up the left and right side of the opened page, complemented by the Biblical chapter, verse and text; the title of the work; and credits for the artist, stylist, model, etc. The book looks like a big, white Bible with gold-edged, stiff, cardboard-like pages. I must say, there is good deal of striking imagery in here, especially "The Annunciation" (Gregory Crewdson), "No Room at the Inn" (Mary Ellen Mark), "Mother and Child" (Jean-Paul Goude), "Salome and John the Baptist" (Andres Serrano), and "The Ascension" (Raymond Meier). Other notables include works by Lagerfeld, Testino and Meisel. There are also several excellent paintings and computer-generated graphics. Given the magnitude and importance of the Bible, this book could easily contain twice as much art. Also, with over half the pages dedicated to the books of Genesis, Luke and Revelations, I feel a little shortchanged knowing how much Biblical history was left out. I truly believe there was a great deal more artistic "fun to be had" that *Visionaire* #28 passed up. Of the two *Visionaire* books I've studied, I like this one much better, even though packaging and collector's novelty weigh just as heavily (they shouldn't) as artistic merit. I may sound overly critical, but a 5-Star art/photo book has to have "wow factor" on almost every page. This is a good effort, but falls short of a top rating. [Note that I didn't mention the price]

1 of 7 people found the following review helpful. a fantastic art book By ERNESTO DAVILA when i bought this book, my first impression was a shock to me, because the Phillippe starck design is a wonderfull piece of art, i didn't seen the book yet. i consider very interesting and i enjoyed so much. the meisel's pictures are stunning and "mother and son" too. if you have enought money to buy it, do it now, because you'll have into your hands a fantastic art book for all your life.

Photographs by Nan Goldin, David LaChapelle. Edited by Mario Testino. Contributions by Stephanie Barron. Text by Wolfgang Tillmans.