

# GAVLAK

Chris Nordlinger, Los Angeles Magazine “See the Iconic Self-Portraits of the Woman Who Made Bettie Page Famous,” July 24, 2015



## See the Iconic Self-Portraits of the Woman Who Made Bettie Page Famous

A retrospective of pin-up photographer Bunny Yeager's work opens Saturday, July 25  
at Hollywood's Gavlak Gallery  
**by Chris Nordlinger**



Bunny Yeager, *Self Portrait in Polka Dot Bikini with Rolleicord Camera*, 1963, Hand-painted fiber print

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When nude photographer Eleanor “Bunny” Yeager discovered Bettie Page in 1954, it was because Page, then an aspiring actress, was hoping to catch some attention in more legitimate pin-up publications (including a recent arrival called Playboy). With some direction from Hugh Hefner, a 25-year-old Yeager snapped the iconic photo of Page wearing nothing but a Santa hat—the image that appeared on the centerfold in Playboy’s January 1955 issue. In the click of a camera shutter, she had transformed Page into an international pin-up star and established herself as an accomplished photographer.

Beginning Saturday, July 25, Yeager’s work—including hand-painted photographs of Page, a variety of self-portraits, and behind-the-scenes shots from years of photo

shoots—will be featured at Hollywood’s Gavlak Gallery in an exhibition titled “How I Photograph Myself.”

The display will explore the subversive nature of Yeager’s work as she sought to make a name for herself as both a model and a photographer. It was that purposeful duplicity which helped her to distinguish herself from her peers—she was actively challenging the era-specific presumption that men were photographers and women were models. In doing so, she became one of the more pioneering lens women of her day.

Having dedicated her life to photography and modeling, not to mention publishing 30 books on the subject (one of which shares a name with the Gavlak exhibition), Yeager had an influence on a generation of artist-photographers including Diane Arbus and Cindy Sherman. Arbus even went as far to call her “The world’s greatest pin-up photographer.”

Gavlak 1034 N Highland Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038) will host an opening reception for How I Photograph Myself on July 25 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The show runs through August 29

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(All photos by Bunny Yeager. Clockwise: *Bunny in Handmade Dress (after Daisy Mae from Li'l Abner)*, 1953, Silver gelatin print. *Bunny in Handmade Negligee (after Jean Harlow)*, 1963, Silver gelatin print. *Bunny in Black Lace with Exposure Meter*, 1955, Silver gelatin print. *Bunny Yeager in Black Lace with Her Rolleiflex Camera*, 1955, Silver gelatin print.)

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