

GAVLAK

Leah Ollman, "Bunny Yeager, a glamour girl and glamour photographer in one", *Los Angeles Times*,
August 21, 2015

Los Angeles Times

Bunny Yeager, a glamour girl and glamour photographer in one



A self-portrait by Bunny Yeager at Gavlak Gallery. (Jeff McLane / Gavlak Gallery)

Sandwiched between the performative, gender-blurring self-portraiture of Claude Cahun in the 1920s and the glossary of female roles enacted in Cindy Sherman's self-starring Film Stills of the late '70s, is the work of Bunny Yeager.

The cover of her 1964 book, "How I Photograph Myself," shows Yeager in a red-hot leotard, perched alluringly on a tall stool. One rhinestone sandal has been kicked off so she can manipulate the shutter release of the tripod-mounted camera beside her with her toe. The picture is -- as she herself described her work -- "clean, wholesome cheesecake." And Yeager is both baker and baked.

GAVLAK

A marketing marvel, a cultural curiosity, Yeager (1929-2014) was a woman who took control of her own objectification -- not, it seems, to rebel against it but instead to revel in it, and profit from it.

After winning a spate of beauty contests, she learned the art and craft of photographing glamour girls like herself. One of her pictures from a 1954 photo shoot with Bettie Page became a Playboy centerfold, launching her career behind the camera.

A sampling of pictures of Page and others is included in Yeager's fascinating show at Gavlak, anchored by a large selection of her self-portraits. She presents herself as sexy and fresh, a playful, quintessentially midcentury package of innocence and experience.

In the most intriguing and distinctive of the pictures, she also comes across as highly competent: both performer and director, she poses before a mirror and a camera, or sits at the typewriter. Yeager published 30 instructional photo books, many of which can be leafed through at the gallery.

They're as interesting as the photographs for what they reveal about Yeager's perspective on her work, and the many perceptual chasms (regarding glamour, sexuality and more) between then and now.

Her concern, for instance, that she might be looked upon "as rather peculiar and quite possibly conceited" for making pictures of herself rings rather quaint in this selfie-saturated moment.