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THE TRUTH ABOUT **MARKUS KLINKO+INDRANI**

- Their New Bravo Reality Show
- Working With Naomi Campbell
- Overcoming Career Challenges

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Markus Klinko and Indrani shot this striking image (as well as those on the following two pages) of supermodel Naomi Campbell exclusively for *American Photo* as part of their upcoming Bravo reality TV series. Their set was the parking lot behind a London studio. Stylist G.K. Reid created the superhero look the photographers wanted by dressing Campbell in fashions by Gareth Pugh, Thierry Mugler and Alejandro Ingledo, among other designers.

TWO FOR THE SHOW

How photographer Markus Klinko and art director Indrani collaborated their way to a hot new Bravo network reality series — including an episode in which they shoot supermodel Naomi Campbell for the cover of *American Photo* **BY LINDSAY SAKRAIDA**



the look of a superhero. The idea was to play up her personal strength. "She's a strong woman," says Indrani. "People criticize her because she has expressed that strength in certain ways in the past." Indrani is referring to Campbell's habitual appearances in gossip columns. "You read all this stuff about her and none of it happened," says Klinko. "Whatever people say about her, she didn't come to our shoot as a celebrity; she came to it as a model. And she modeled and was very cooperative." Indrani is quick to point out, however, that Campbell had some "strong opinions" about her wardrobe. "I must have missed that," Klinko admits.

The Bravo show isn't the only big news from Klinko and Indrani. In late August 2009, Klinko, for Markus Klinko Photography Inc., and Indrani, for Double Exposure Studios LLC, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from All Points Capital Corporation. (See sidebar on the next page for details.)

These latest events in their shared story — the reality show and the financial troubles — tell us something about Klinko and Indrani, but a holistic look at their career paints a fuller picture.

Klinko and Indrani are living proof of the mutability of talent. As unfair as it might seem, people who do one thing very well often do another with equal aplomb. Indeed, both of them started professional life at the top of their respective fields before making their mark in the world of photography.

Rewind to the early 1990s, when Swiss-born Klinko was a world-renowned concert harpist based in New York City. Despite a recording contract that most classical musicians would die for, Klinko decided in 1994 to give up the harp and take up photography — something he loved but knew little about. Ignoring predictions that he would regret the decision, Klinko sold all his harps and used the money to buy photography equipment. Two weeks later, he got a job taking test shots for a modeling agency. That's when he met Indrani.

Indrani's one-word moniker points to her success as a working model. A devoted amateur photographer in her own right, Indrani would often strike up shoptalk with the people photographing her. That's how she and Klinko made a connection that has endured for 15 years. "Indrani showed up," Klinko likes to say, "and she never left."

The two began a relationship, both romantic and professional, and they discovered their alloyed style while shooting editorial assign-

ments for smaller, indie fashion magazines. They soon signed on with Randal Walker Management in Paris and inked a commercial contract with a small L'Oréal brand to shoot a cosmetics ad campaign.

Their career gained serious momentum in 2000 when the photographers created an editorial portfolio for the *The London Sunday Times*. Shortly after that, they were approached by supermodel Iman, who wanted them to shoot a book cover, and her husband, David Bowie, who wanted cover art for his album *Heathen*. Today, Klinko and Indrani call Iman and Bowie their creative godmother and godfather.

"What was really exciting was that each of them had been following our work for awhile," says Indrani. "And they came to us and said, 'We love what you're doing, but we want you to do something completely different.' We learned from those early mentors to push ourselves to do things we hadn't done or seen before," says Indrani.

In addition to good mentoring, Klinko and Indrani's brilliant career owes much to their well-tuned partnership, which in recent years is purely professional. Klinko handles the camera while Indrani acts as the art director for all their shoots, though they collaborate in every aspect of the process. Indrani is also in charge of postproduction, an important part of their work. Early years saw the duo (now handled by Opus Reps) pushing digital capabilities to the limit, often putting their subjects in fantastical, computer-generated settings. "We're always fascinated with the line between fantasy and reality," Indrani explains, "and how our subjects themselves are able to walk it. Celebrities exist in fantasy worlds for most people, and we find that world very interesting."

Though some photographers have made their mark humanizing larger-than-life personalities, Klinko and Indrani bolster the glamour, mystery and awe inspired by celebrity culture. "We're not trying to bring things down to earth," says Klinko. "I think we're looking for something in between fantasy and reality." **AP**



IN THE BAG

THE GEAR BEHIND MARKUS KLINKO & INDRANI'S COVER SHOOT FOR *AMERICAN PHOTO*

- A **Mamiya RZ67 Pro IID** 6x7cm medium-format SLR with a Mamiya 65mm f/4 wide-angle lens
- A **Leaf Aptus-II 10** digital back for the Mamiya, which produces 56-megapixel images for 16-bit file sizes of up to 345MB
- Two 3,200 watt-second **Broncolor Scoro** power packs; flash heads were fitted with the **Broncolor Pulso-Footer**, a Fresnel-type housing producing broad, stage-style lighting
- A **Broncolor Para 330 FB**, a parabolic reflector with a diameter of nearly 10 feet, used to light the fence Campbell is leaning against from behind so that beams pour through its cracks
- Last but not least, Klinko's **customized two-handed grip** for the camera (see page 43), with handles shaped specifically for his hands and trimmed in exotic tropical materials

his coming winter, two of photography's biggest talents will be spending as much time in front of the camera as they do behind it. Markus Klinko and Indrani — the most famous two-some in fashion and celebrity photography — will give television viewers an inside look at their sometimes tempestuous and highly prolific working relationship in a new Bravo network reality series, tentatively titled *Double Exposure*.

Consider these photos of Naomi Campbell a sneak peek. Production hasn't wrapped yet, but the word is that an episode might be devoted to their session with Campbell.

"We had this great studio booked in London, but we decided to do the entire shoot in the tiny parking lot behind it," says Indrani, who functions both as creative director and postproduction specialist. "I wanted a look that was a little gritty and raw, and I found some amazing surfaces there, like gates with a wonderful sheen and a wooden fence we were able to light from behind to make the cracks glow."

Though the location gave the duo the atmosphere they were looking for, it presented particular challenges — mainly drivers hoping to use the parking lot for its intended purpose. "There were a lot of comical incidents with people trying to park," Klinko recalls. "And we were like, 'Don't you realize this is Naomi Campbell and that we're not going to move her just because you want to park your car?'"

The photographers used costumes and staging to give Campbell

THE SCOOP: MONEY TROUBLES

Photography at the level practiced by Klinko and Indrani is big business, and it's common practice for a business to carry debt in order to operate. But ultimately, the duo's debt became a burden they could no longer manage. This summer, Klinko and Indrani filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from their creditor, All Points Capital Corporation. Here's the back story:

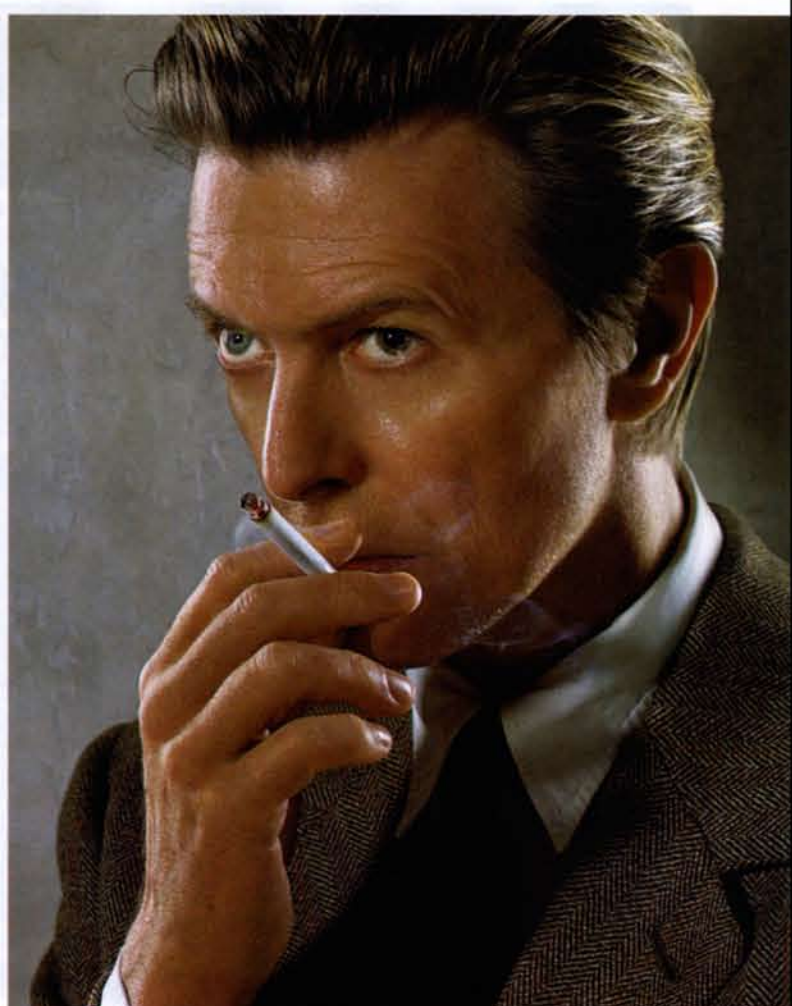
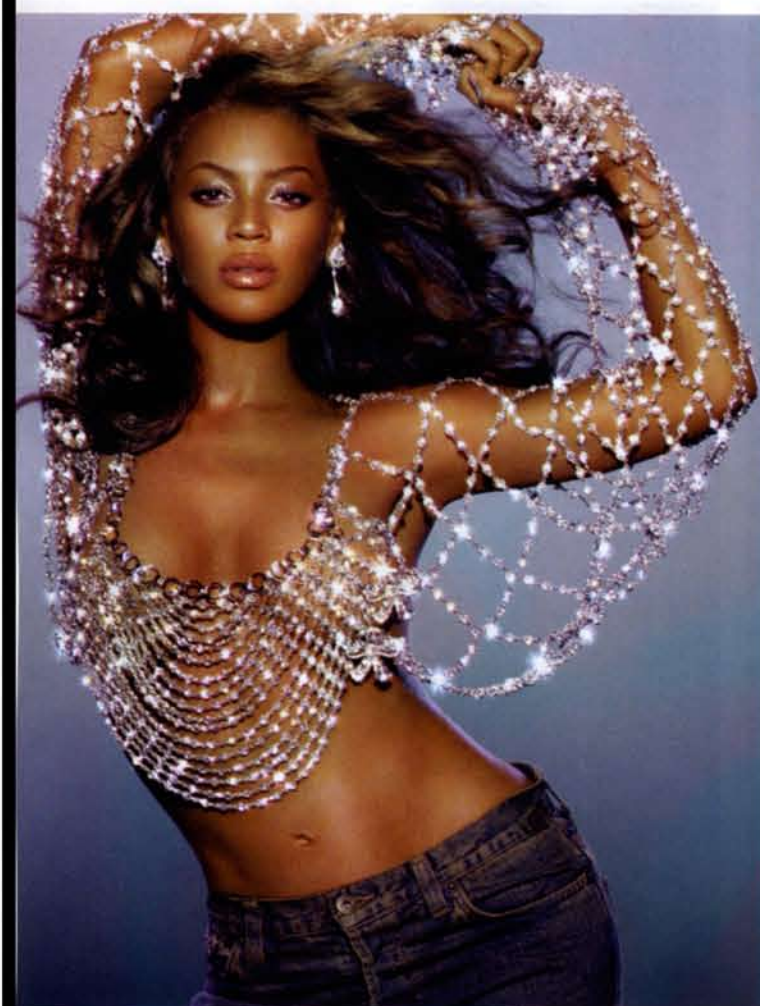
- APCC pursued Klinko's company, Markus Klinko Photography Inc., Cyborg Imaging Corporation and Klinko himself for unpaid debt in July 2007, claiming Klinko had failed to make payments due. In May 2008, judgment was extended against the three in the amount of \$335,060.71, with added interest.
- By the beginning of 2009, Klinko still had not paid the debt. Klinko allegedly testified that none of the defendants had assets sufficient to satisfy judgment. In response, APCC filed another lawsuit, this time including Indrani and her fledgling company Double Exposure Studios LLC. APCC claimed in this second filing that Double Exposure was created as an alter-ego company with the sole purpose of hiding MKP's assets by effectively replacing its operations and absorbing its clientele and work.
- APCC thus asked for the court to consider MKP, Cyborg, Indrani and Double Exposure each as "alter egos" of each other's companies, which would make them jointly responsible for the judgment and interest.
- Meanwhile, Klinko, for Markus Klinko Photography Inc., and Indrani, for Double Exposure Studios LLC, filed for bankruptcy protection. Double Exposure estimated liabilities of \$100,000 to \$500,000, while MKP estimated \$1 million to \$10 million. Both are estimated to have assets of less than \$50,000.
- Despite these troubles, Klinko has reportedly stated on his Facebook page that "our attention remains on our photography and on continuing to organize our finances."



©MARKUS KLINKO & INDRANI (3)

“It’s important to analyze who you’re trying to reach with the image.” — Markus Klinko

A portrait of **Mary J. Blige** (opposite) exemplifies the glossy look of Klinko and Indrani’s glamour, as does the now-iconic photo of a crystalline **Beyoncé Knowles** (below left). The image was used for the cover of Beyoncé Knowles’s first solo album, the multiplatinum *Dangerously in Love*. No bling was needed for the duo’s portrait of **David Bowie** (below), in which eyes make the man.



THE LIFE AND CAREER OF KLINKO & INDRANI

1989

In Toronto, Indrani buys her first professional camera, a 35mm Nikon F5, and shoots photographs for herself while traveling the world as a model.

1990

Klinko signs a recording deal with major label EMI in Paris as a solo classical harpist.

1993

Indrani creates the Shakti Empowerment Education foundation to establish schools, women’s literacy classes, vocational education and village microfinancing in her native India.

1994

Klinko wins the Grand Prix du Disque for his recording *Markus Klinko: Solistes de l’Orchestre de l’Opera de Paris Bastille*.

1994

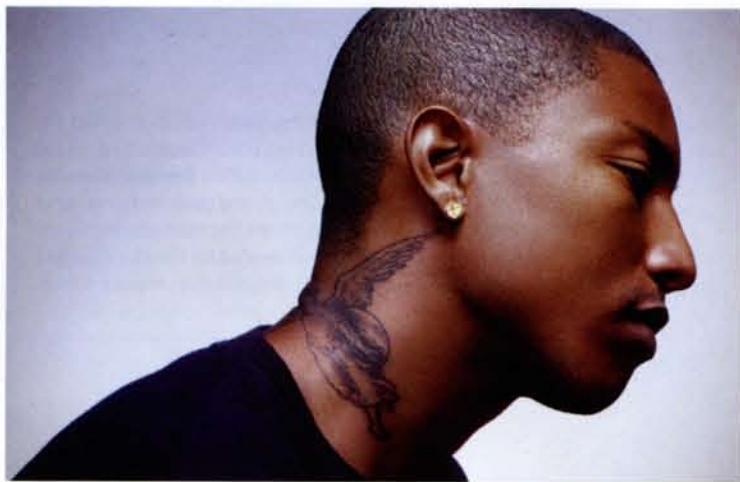
Klinko ends his music career, selling all his harps and using the money to buy camera and lighting equipment. He practices shooting with a mannequin in his bedroom and does his first live test with model Padma Lakshmi. Klinko meets Indrani at a test shoot he is doing for a modeling agency, and Indrani soon becomes his art director and girlfriend.

1994

Klinko and Indrani move to Miami for three months to do their first major location shoots for a local fashion magazine, working without assistants.

1995

Indrani models for *French Vogue*, *Glamour* and other fashion magazines while in Paris, and she and Klinko have their first serious photo editorial and advertising experiences, publishing work in *Femme*, *Scene*, *Spirit* and *Photographie* magazines. They also begin experimenting with digital postproduction, and Indrani assumes the role of retouching director.



It's important to understand who you're trying to reach with the image — Mark Klinko



© MARKUS KLINKO & INDRANI (4)

“We’re fascinated by how our subjects are able to walk the line between fantasy and reality.” — Indrani

Body art was the straightforward focus in Klinko and Indrani’s portrait of hip-hop artist and producer **Pharrell Williams** (opposite, top), while elaborate shots of musicians **Kelis** and **Janet Jackson** (opposite), and actors **Will Smith** and **Jada Pinkett Smith** (below) highlight the duo’s flair for drama. The image of singer Kelis (of “Milkshake” fame) was largely enhanced in post-production, with Indrani digitally adding the vibrant cityscape.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF KLINKO & INDRANI

1996

Indrani attends Princeton University but continues to work full time with Klinko, who lives in New York City. Wanting more control over postproduction, Indrani quickly masters the technology and becomes the duo’s lead digital artist.

2000

The photographers meet fashion editor Isabella Blow, who commissions them to do their first cover, for *The London Sunday Times*. They also do a regular feature in *British GQ* called Pinup 2000, for which they shoot nudes of famous women such as Molly Sims and Lil’ Kim; they also begin to work on worldwide advertising campaigns for clients such as diamond.com.

2001

Indrani graduates magna cum laude from Princeton with a B.A. in Anthropology. Iman asks the couple to shoot the cover for *I Am Iman*, a book of images, essays and interviews surrounding the supermodel’s career. They also shoot the cover for David Bowie’s album *Heathen*, their first use of black and white.

2003

The duo photographs the cover for Beyoncé’s first solo album, *Dangerously in Love*. They begin a relationship with L’Oreal Paris, going on to shoot dozens of their campaigns.

2005

Klinko and Indrani shoot the cover of Mariah Carey’s comeback album, *The Emancipation of Mimi*. Demand for their celebrity portraiture continues to grow.

2009

Klinko and Indrani have their first major exhibition, *Icons*, opening at the Pacific Design Center during the Month of Photography Los Angeles. Production begins on their Bravo network television show.

2009

Klinko, for Markus Klinko Photography Inc., and Indrani, for Double Exposure Studios LLC, file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from their creditor, All Points Capital Corporation.



"I started listening more and more to Indrani for one simple reason: She's always right." — Markus Klinko

©MARKUS KLINKO & INDRANI (3); LEFT: STYLING BY G.K. REID

Klinko and Indrani recently shot a provocative ad for Hello Kitty (opposite) with the always-controversial **Lady Gaga**. The photo's tongue-in-cheek wit owes much to styling: playful makeup and hair with a strategically placed kitten purse. Other strong-willed subjects have included singers **Mariah Carey** (above left) and **Britney Spears** (above right).