

Foreword

On the wall in front of you are two boudoir images, side by side. Both prints are beautifully rendered, of the same paper quality, and the same vibrant ink color. Both images were photographed in the same location, in the same wardrobe, and of the same magnificent female subject. The only difference between the two images is the photographers who took them.

You look at the first image and it delights your eye. This award-winning photographer did everything right in the image. Its composition, its lighting, its posing are all flawless. Yet still, there is a sterile, inarticulate void that prevents you from feeling a connection. You can't explain it. You gaze, admiring its technical quality, but have an overall sense of indifference. You are simply looking at a woman.

Your eyes turn to the second image and your heart starts to flutter. Your throat tightens and you're triggered by a wave of emotions flavored as passionate, vulnerable, and even a bit nostalgic. You are able to see its technical merit, sure, but the inexplicable emotion of it has burned this image in your memory. You are looking at every feeling you've ever felt about love, sensuality, and feminism.

This is impact. Being impactful has very little to do with technical know-how and everything to do with emotional intelligence. It's impact that separates good boudoir photographers from the profoundly sensual artists. As photographers, we all want to create impact. But do we truly know how? We are part and parcel of an ever-growing industry machine that feeds our technical and business prowess in an almost overwhelmingly abundant fashion.

But there's a gap. When the studio lights stop flashing; the credit card stops swiping; the Facebook threads stop multiplying; we are left sitting face to face with an enormous responsibility. It's a woman who is entrusting her entire sensual sacred being in your hands. She doesn't know how to ask it, but she is begging you, with trust as her currency, for that almighty impact. Who in our industry is equipped to teach us that? Enter Susan Pizarro-Eckert.

Technically, Susan and I met at a technical lighting workshop. She saw me on the street entering the building and introduced herself. "I know your name, but I actually feel like I know you. Where have we met?" I asked. Unable to make sense of this familiarity, we both went inside. Within an hour, I looked across the room and saw Susan. We were both kicking off our shoes, shooting barefoot, getting in real close to talk to the model. We both wanted to strip away "the model", in exchange for her story. We both wanted take it a bit deeper than the beauty dish. Because for both of us, that is how the picture would be completed.

Still puzzled by how familiar her face was, I suddenly realized we had crossed paths a decade before. During our Corporate days at the same company (Susan a human resources executive, me an advertising executive), we somehow managed to transact. Back then, we were just two business people distinctively managing the art of human emotions in a dizzying corporate world. Again, ten years later we found ourselves intuitively managing the art of human emotions in our work . . . but taking it further with a visual manifestation.

When Susan called me and shared that she was writing a book, it made complete sense. With a razor-sharp mind conjoined with an artist's heart, she provides us with a clinical understanding of the female psyche and its translation to visual imagery. She offers us a cultivated glimpse into social psychology, previously inaccessible to an industry like ours. She goes beyond the "here's what works in my boudoir photography" to a refreshingly disciplined "here's how and why this can work on boudoir photography." I was enamored by every page, not just as reinforcements of what I thought I understood about my clients, but as clinically proven insights as she merges the realms of human behavior, organizational effectiveness and art. Susan's work, backed by over ten years as a an Ivy League organizational psychologist, teaches us that impact is not something that can be bought or injected into one's images, but rather uncovered.

It is my profound joy to be enlightened by a sage educator that truly understands other human beings. In sharing this consideration, she enables us to uncover the hidden emotional impact in the work we do, through empathy and self-realization. As you turn the pages of this guide, you'll discover along the way how abundantly your impact awaits you in the walls of your mind—and on the walls of your clients.

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