

A three-dimensional lenticular portrait of Karl Lagerfeld for ANOther Magazine and Chanel, 2015.



In 2015 Rob Munday was commissioned by Jefferson Hack and Dazed Media 's ANOther Magazine, to shoot and create a three-dimensional lenticular light sculpture portrait of Karl Lagerfeld for its 15th anniversary limited-edition cover. In accepting and conducting the commission Rob became one of a select group of photographers, including Nick Knight, Craig McDean, Collier Schorr, and Willy Vanderperre, to have been given commissioned to shoot a cover for one of the most recognised fashion magazines in the world. Not only did Rob Munday direct and shoot the portrait, but also hand-crafted all 500 lenticular portraits that were subsequently adhered to the cover.

This cover is thought to be the world's first 3D lenticular fashion magazine cover.

Rob also supplied large format lenticular portraits to Chanel and to Karl Lagerfeld himself, for his personal art collection.

Prior to the commission, Rob had famously shot and created a three-dimensional holographic and lenticular portrait of Her Majesty the Queen, and it was this that attracted the interest of Jefferson Hack, best known for founding the iconic fashion magazine company Dazed & Confused with photographer Rankin, and for having fathered a child with the supermodel Kate Moss!

1. The shoot.

The portrait shoot was conducted on Tuesday 8th December 2015 at Karl Lagerfeld's own photography studio within his bookshop known as La Librairie 7L, situated at 7, rue de Lille, Paris, just next to Le Musée du Louvre.



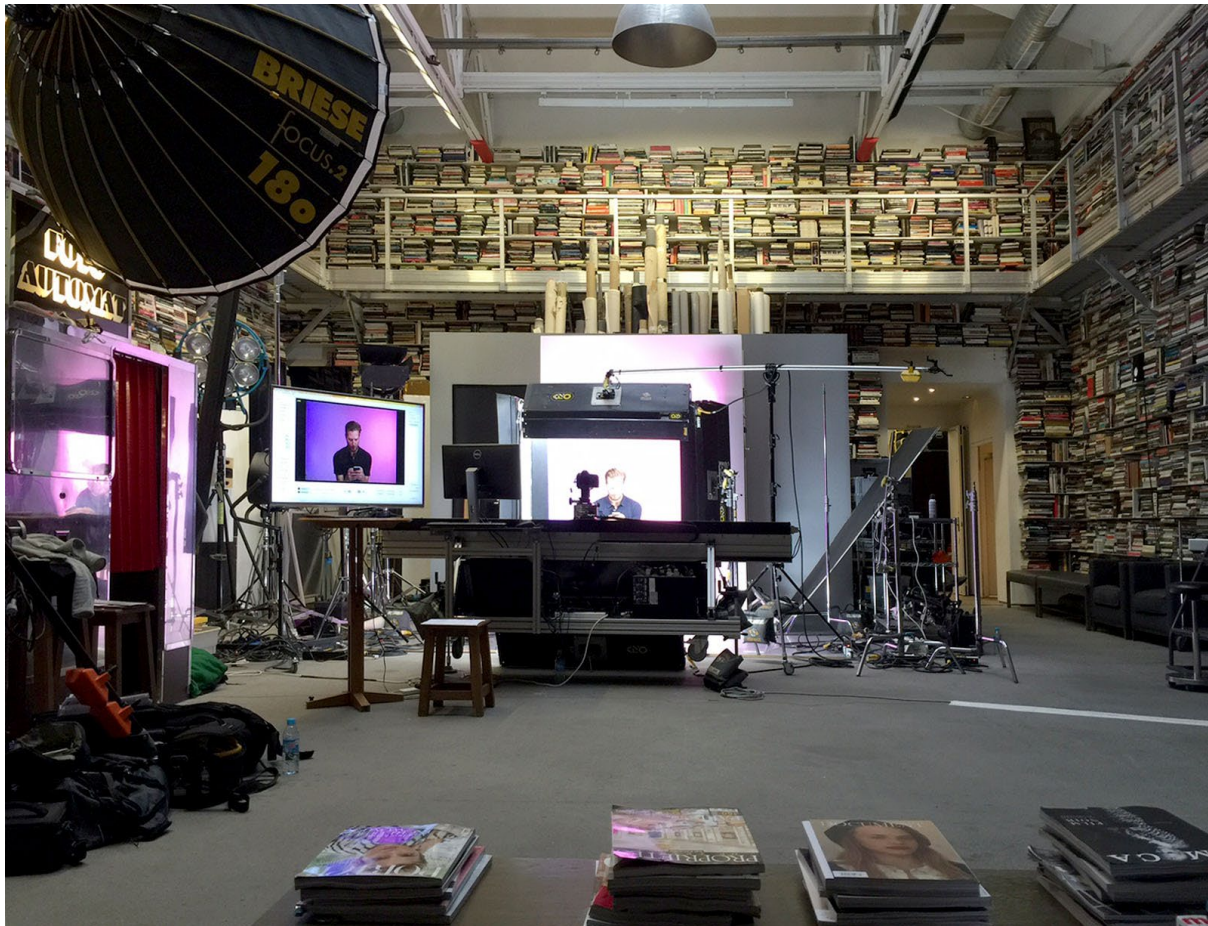
Rob, together with his agent Willy Camden, who also took responsibility for lighting together with the second lighting assistant XXXXXX, drove his proprietary 3D camera system, the VIP system (Video Images with Parallax), originally developed by him to shoot his portrait of Her Majesty the Queen in 2003/4, to Paris in a hired transit van the day before the shoot.

The next morning, Rob and his assistants arrived at La Librairie 7L, to set up for the shoot, and worked hard to erect the studio, and test the camera system and the lighting before Karl's arrival after lunch.



As with most high-end commercial and advertising shoots, the style of the portrait had already been determined by Chanel's creative director in New York, leaving less room for spontaneous creativity by the photographer.

A pink and mauve background had already been chosen prior to the shoot, and so Willy Camden and XXXXX busied themselves with obtaining just the right colour and gradation using lighting gels whilst Rob commissioned and tested his camera system.



As the morning progressed, test shots were emailed to the creative director in New York in real time. Word came back that the lighting, set up by Rob's agent and assistant Willy Camden, was not suitable for the portrait, and so Willy proceeded adapt it to the directors liking. When everybody was happy with the colour and lighting, and the camera systems was to a very large extent functional, it was time for lunch.

Karl has arranged for his personal chef to attend the shoot and to provide a fabulous lunch for the plethora of people which had arrived to watch the shoot, numbering over fifty, however Rob, with adrenaline to keep him going, took the opportunity to check every aspect of his camera system alone in the now calm of the studio. At least three times however Rob felt a tap on his shoulder and turned to be asked politely when he was also coming to lunch. On the third occasion he was told that unless he also came to lunch nobody else could start easting! It was apparently was a tradition that nobody else could eat until the photographer himself had started eating. Rob duly therefore obliged and went to lunch.

Soon after lunch, Karl arrived at clutching multiple jackets and items of jewellery and asked Rob to choose what he should wear for the portrait. Rob selected a metallic patterned jacket, which would provide interesting reflections in the final image, and a silver, or perhaps it was white gold, diamond encrusted tie pin that featured a photograph of Karl's beloved pet cat Choupette. Karl loved the idea of being immortalised with a picture of his favourite pet. Rob also chose the tie pin as he realised that the photograph of Choupette would ultimately lie on the image-plane of the 3D lenticular image, and thus be in sharpest focus.



It was at this point that Rob diplomatically asked Karl if he would like to direct his own portrait, as prior to the shoot, Rob had been told that Karl wanted it to be a 'self-portrait'. Karl of course was also an accomplished photographer. Karl's immediate response however, as Rob expected, was to decline, saying he had no idea how to shoot three-dimensional portraits, or use Rob's camera, and stated that he would very happy for it to be entirely Rob's portrait. Rob therefore proceeded on the basis that full creative credits would go to him for the work.

The rather full studio included directors from Chanel, Karls own entourage, Jefferson Hack, and a multitude of assistants and friends of Karl, all of whom stood to at the back of the studio to watch Rob conduct the shoot. This was a far cry from every other portrait shoot that Rob had conducted before, where, at most one 2-3 people had been present.

After Rob had chosen the attire, Karl went to the back of the room to, to a small changing room and bathroom, to dress and make himself up. Upon his return Rob directed him to stand in front of the camera, suggesting that he held the lapel of his jacket with his right hand to both show off his metallic gloves and to also provide greater three-dimensional depth and interest in the final portrait. Ensuring that he did not cover the diamond brooch, the centre piece of the portrait, with his hand, Rob conducted a series of test shots, showing each test portrait to Karl in 3D on his large 3D

television after each shot. Both Karl, Jefferson Hack and a host of others crowded around the TV and were amazed by the three-dimensional portraits.



After about an hour, Rob decided that it was time had come to take the final shots. At this moment however Karl made it clear that he needed to quickly go back of the bathroom, Rob assumed for a toilet break. Karl then returned and, expecting nothing to have changed, Rob directed Karl to adopt the same position as before, sitting on a tall stool, but was suddenly taken aback to see that a layer of white powder had appeared all over Karl's face, on the rim of his glasses, on the bridge of his nose and above his mouth. Not wishing to embarrass Karl in front of fifty people, and not knowing what substance it was, Rob took one of Karl's assistants to one side and whispered that he was mysteriously covered in a white powder. Thankfully the assistant offered to wipe it off, and the final shoot commenced. The white powder turned out to be a product that Karl applied to his hair to make it extra white.



Rob successfully shot a further five final sequences, visualising each one in-between, before calling it a wrap.

At the end of the shoot Rob showed his large-format portraits of Queen Elizabeth II and Dr Edward Papenfuse to Karl Lagerfeld, Jefferson Hack, the directors of Chanel, and others.

Whilst packing up his camera system, Karl came over to Rob to privately thank him for the shoot and portrait, and asked if he liked the Queen! Rob replied 'of course, she's a wonderful woman', at which point Karl told Rob a quite surprising story about a visit by the Royal family, including the Queen and her sister Princess Margaret, to his French chateau some years previous. He told me that the Queen had been charming but he didn't care much for Princess Margaret as, during dinner, she had made a rather disparaging comment about the gifts of diamond jewellery that Karl had left in each of their places at the table, and then intentionally dropped her piece of diamond jewellery in her glass of champagne. I was quite surprised that Karl would tell me, a relative stranger such a personal story, but he was very friendly and personable with me.

After packing the equipment back into the transit van, and a second night at the Hôtel Vinci Due opposite La Librairie 7L, we set sail for home. It was whilst on the ferry travelling across the English Channel that I thought to check the images I had shot of Karl in Photoshop on my laptop. I was horrified to see that Karl's forehead was still covered in the white powder that he had applied to his hair during the shoot. In the heat of the moment, surrounded by fifty onlookers, and with the pressure of getting the shot done, I simply hadn't seen it. I was suddenly filled with dread that the powder may not be easy to remove at the retouching stage, especially given its proximity and Karl's hair, and this caused me several sleepless nights after my return to London.



2. Portrait creation

Upon returning to London, the first job was to choose one of the XX sequences that Rob had shot, and to retouch all fifty images. A London based company was chosen to conduct the retouching. Instructions from Karl Lagerfeld's office came thick and fast. Of crucial importance was to remove the remaining white 'hair' powder on Karl's forehead. Fortunately for Rob, the retouching company did a fantastic job of this. The reflections of any lights were removed from Karl's sunglasses and wrinkles and blemishes removed from his face. Then came the most difficult challenge of all. Karl Lagerfeld's office insisted that Karl's jaw line was reshaped and also that his right arm was made narrower. Now this is not so difficult in a single image, but to do this in all fifty stereoscopic images in a way that did not compromise the 3D/stereoscopic integrity of the portrait was a herculean task, and probably one that had never been attempted or achieved before.

Once the retouching had been completed, the next task was to remove all of the distortions that are found naturally in such parallax image sequences, such as keystone distortion, foreshortening, and scaling distortions. He also checked that the convergence point of every image was Choupette the cat.

Finally, the image sequence could be used to hand produce the 200 lenticular images needed for the front cover. These were made entirely by Rob Munday, working alone in his studio, which at this time was based in the Richmond Lodge at Twickenham Film Studios.

Once made, an adhesive backing was applied to the lenticular images and they were laser cut to the correct size for the magazine.

3. The Unveiling

A large-format 36 x 48 inch glass lenticular portrait was unveiled, and the anniversary magazine, complete with Rob Munday's lenticular portrait, was launched on the 8th March 2016 during Paris Fashion Week at a special celebration party in Chanel's haute couture salon and Coco Chanel's historic apartment in the centre of Paris.

Those present included Karl Lagerfeld, Princess Caroline of Monaco, Kendall Jenner, G-Dragon, Pharrell Williams, Bella Hadid, Gabriel-Kane Day-Lewis, Riccardo Tisci, Clare Waight Keller, and Rick Owens.



Top: Chanel's haute couture salon showing the unveiled large-format lenticular of Rob Munday's portrait of Karl Lagerfeld

Bottom left: Karl Lagerfeld with Princess Caroline of Monaco

Bottom centre: G-Dragon and Kendal Jenner

Bottom right: Pharrell Williams and Rob Munday

A second large-format backlit version of the portrait, this time a 3D mock-up of the magazine cover, was also displayed at the famous Collette's in Paris. Known to be Karl Lagerfeld's favourite book shop, this is where the magazines first went on sale.



4. Further copies

After some weeks, Karl Lagerfeld commissioned a third copy from Rob Munday for his private art collection,



Side notes:

In fact, the shoot almost didn't happen, at least in the way that had been planned. On the night of our arrival in Paris, the day before the shoot, Rob had parked the hired transit van in an underground car park. Upon entering the car park, the concrete ceiling of the entrance tunnel seemed rather low, almost touching the roof of the van. Early next morning, Rob and the team arrived to find that it was impossible to drive the van out of through the exit tunnel, without hitting the ceiling and becoming wedged in the tunnel. Fortunately for all concerned a helpful carpark attendant managed to hold up the long line of early morning traffic now entering the car park so that Rob could leave via the entrance tunnel through which he had initially arrived. It was a tense moment.

Karl was extremely friendly, and interested in the process,

Technical process:

1. A 'parallax image sequence' each consisting of 50 digital images was shot of Karl Lagerfeld through an angle of 29 degrees using a high-resolution Canon 5D Mark II digital stills camera and a specialised motion control system called the VIP system, originally developed by Rob Munday to record his portrait of Her Majesty the Queen.
2. This sequence of images was then digitally manipulated using a computer and specialised software to remove all the distortions inherent in 'parallax image sequences'. Such image correction is necessary to provide a stereoscopically accurate 3D image which is easy to view, does not swing as the viewer moves and looks proportionally correct in all three dimensions. This correction software was written especially by Rob Munday and is a new innovation in the creation of this kind of 3D lenticular image.
3. The corrected image sequence was then 'interlaced' to produce one single image that amalgamates all 50 frames.
4. This single image was then digitally printed using a specially modified Océ LightJet printer onto Fujitrans Crystal Archive photographic paper at high resolution. The resultant photographic print is also called a digitally produced 'chromogenic' print.
5. Chromogenic prints were then laminated, using optically clear adhesive, to the back of PETG lenticular lens arrays in perfect register. The print and lens have to be registered with respect to each other to an accuracy of at least 1/3000th inch (1/120th mm) over the entire area.
6. The final lenticular prints were then laminated with an adhesive backing and adhered to the front covers of the magazine.

Once the beauty retouching had been completed the sequence was then further processed by Rob which included cropping, and contrast and colour adjustments to tailor the images for the lenticular process. Most importantly however Rob used his proprietary distortion removal technique and software, that he had originally developed and used for the first time to enhance his portrait of the Her Majesty the Queen, to remove the three separate distortions present in parallax image sequences, which results in a much more realistic and dimensionally correct final three-dimensional image.



To visualise the resultant portrait in three-dimensions, and prior to overlaying the text and adding a three-dimensional image of the bottle of perfume itself, which was needed for the final work, Rob then created and produced several three-dimensional lenticular artist's and printer's proofs. Also, at this time, a large format 3' x 4' lenticular light sculpture of Angelina Jolie was printed by Jake Purches of Lenticular Europe in the UK, and shown to both Angelina and Bernard Arnoult, Chairman of LVMH. Both loved the portrait and gave their go ahead for the final creative process. This very special glass lenticular portrait, signed by Rob Munday, was gifted to Angelina.

The final step of the process, conducted in January 2017, was for Rob to shoot and create a three-dimensional image of the Mon Guerlain perfume bottle, this time at a studio in the UK. Once again, the image sequence was first retouched in the USA, and then returned to Rob. Again, Rob processed the images, removing distortions etc. He also created a three-dimensional image sequence of the Mon Guerlain logo, again using his custom written software.

Finally, he composited and combined all three of the three-dimensional elements, the portrait, the bottle and the logo, together to create the final large format three-dimensional lenticular work.

The image sequence was then sent to various commercial lenticular printers for mass reproduction including All Things Lenticular Inc., USA, and Midwest Lenticular, USA. Some twenty-eight large format copies were produced and shown in leading stores around the world for the launch of the perfume.

Two years later, it came as a complete surprise to Rob that Guerlain had chosen Rob's portrait in 2D form, above those shot by Tom Munro, and this time in colour, to launch another new fragrance - Mon Guerlain Floral. The portrait was used for general advertising, point of sale displays and for magazines adverts, such as for Vogue Magazine.

Rob Munday is likely to have been the only artist-photographer ever to have had their work chosen and used for two separate campaigns, in both black and white and colour, and in both 2D and 3D forms.