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Behringer-Crawford featuring ‘Clothes Encounter’ photograph exhibit by Melvin Grier starting Sept. 28

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As a photographer for the Cincinnati Post for 33 years, Melvin Grier traveled the world shooting award-winning photos of news events, sports and famous personalities. What many people don't realize is that he has a secret love for fashion photography.

Cincinnati's style scene during the 1980s and 1990s is the subject of *Clothes Encounter*, a retrospective of Grier's personal fashion photos, some never before shown publicly.

The exhibit, part of FotoFocus Biennial 2018, will be on display at Behringer-Crawford Museum in Covington from September 28 to November 4. It is included in the cost of museum admission and free to FotoFocus Passport holders and BCM members.



Grier's interest in fashion was spurred by magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*.

"I started looking at the photos, then at the photographers — David Bailey, Richard Avedon, Helmut Newton."

Inspired by these icons, he worked with Post reporter Mary Linn White to create fashion layouts, often in unconventional locations, like the roof of Union Terminal or the middle of Cincinnati's Fourth Street.

"It was a simple process. We never had an art director, thank God. We never asked permission to shoot somewhere – we just did it."

The opportunity to create a photo, versus taking a photo, is the reason Grier loves fashion. “It’s not like shooting a baseball game or a fire, where you take it as it comes. With fashion, you can control what you want to show to the public.”



Grier’s photos have won 10 awards from the Society for Professional Journalists, as well as accolades from Cincinnati Magazine and numerous press associations. His work has appeared in dozens of exhibits and, in 2004, he was named artist in residence at the Taft Museum. He also serves on the FotoFocus board.

An opening reception for *Clothes Encounter*, free to the public, will take place from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, September 28. On Thursday, October 18, Grier will discuss his career and photographs at a Brown Bag Luncheon at the museum from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the BCM Education Center. Attendees should bring their own lunches; drinks and desserts will be provided. Cost is \$3 for BCM members; \$10 for future BCM members. Reservations recommended by calling (859) 491-4003.

Support for this FotoFocus Biennial 2018 exhibition was provided by FotoFocus.

Now in its fourth iteration, the 2018 FotoFocus Biennial encompasses more than 90 projects at museums and galleries across Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton and Columbus and features more than 200 artists, curators and educators – the largest of its kind in America.

The theme of the 2018 Biennial is *Open Archive*, emphasizing the centrality of photography and lens-based art to modernism, and examining our fundamental need to preserve photographs and to tell stories through their collection, organization and interpretation.