

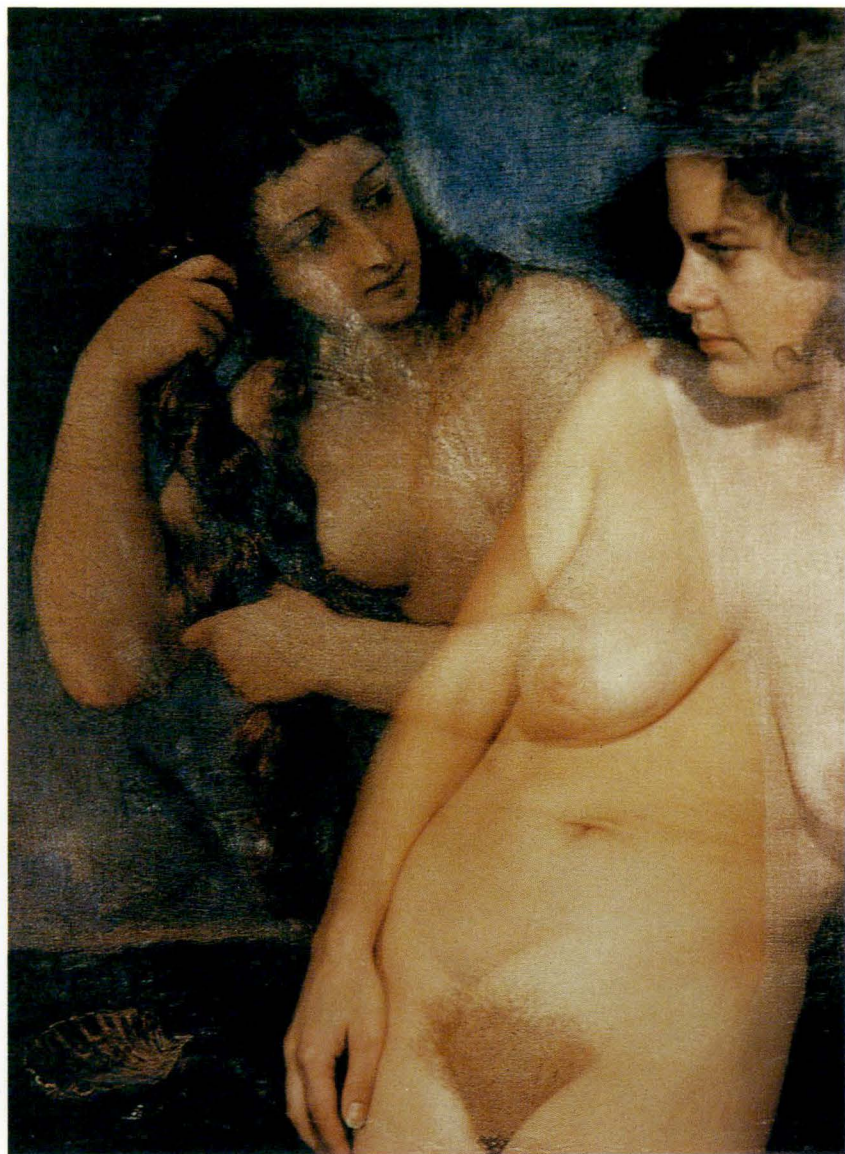
SKAI FOWLER

As I walk to the model's stand I take in the atmosphere of the classroom, more physically than with thought. I try to assess the attitudes of the students and instructor. I step onto the platform, circling, I search for the spot where I will stand to hold my first pose. With unconscious and accustomed actions I disrobe, unveiling I simultaneously retreat inward and propel outward a sense of presence. This state is a "caught in the middle" feeling which causes something of an out of the body sensation. Shielding my nudity. I sense the invisible threads of scrutinizing thoughts, pushing and pulling my body with brush, charcoal and clay: seduced into line, texture and form. Yet I remain seemingly untouched and untouchable, my silence contributing to this process of art-making. An artist's model, a cultural stripper.

In 1975 I did my first nude modeling job. At the time I was 18 and convinced that the only real reason nudes were used was to lure students to art schools. I'm now 34, still modeling and still convinced....



Skai Fowler, *Female Nude*, photograph



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