



With pit-bull/golden retriever Gator by her side, Frank took her self-portrait on the banks of Lake Hennessey, near her family's winery in St. Helena.

# WHO'S THAT GIRL?

CLAIBORNE SWANSON FRANK POINTS HER CAMERA AT HER TIGHT-KNIT (AND WELL-DRESSED) CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

BY KELSEY MCKINNON  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY CLAIBORNE SWANSON FRANK

Not every young photographer can say she's had a multi-city exhibition tour or signed a book deal within her first year behind the lens, but, then again, not just anyone has the preternatural talents of Claiborne Swanson Frank. Following a two-year stint at *Vogue* (including one as Anna Wintour's assistant) and an elaborate Napa Valley wedding to James Frank, the 30-year-old Bay Area native picked up her Nikon D90 and began to document the "women in my world." What developed was her first exhibition called "Indigo Light," a portrait series of artistically shot "it" girls, styled in their own clothes, at locations with sentimental gravitas. "My mother always called me an indigo child," says Frank. "I want my work to show the individual spirit of each of these women, too." After the final viewing of "Indigo Light" at Neiman Marcus in San Francisco, Frank will dedicate the summer to work on her first title for Assouline—a greater body of portrait work on American women, out next spring.



## Rachel Lewis

29, GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PAINTER,  
SOUTHAMPTON, NY

"I originally shot Rachel in Bolinas, but it wasn't right. I asked her to come out to Southampton, where we often vacation with my husband's family, for a reshoot. Everything clicked; she was still a California beach girl but it wasn't so literal," says Frank of her childhood friend. Lewis, wearing a Missoni dress, resides in S.F. and is, officially, a graphic designer for Adobe—unofficially, an impassioned painter.



## Alexandra Fritz

31, PR CONSULTANT,  
NEW YORK, NY

"Azie and I met on the first day of confirmation class at St. Dominic's church in S.F., wearing our Sunday best," Frank remembers. Here, in a squared leather Akris dress, Fritz is right at home amid the Basquiat prints and modern trappings in her downtown apartment.



## Carolyn Corley Burgess

33, PHOTOGRAPHER,  
ST. HELENA, CA

"Carolyn was a nationally-ranked rider until she was 17, and I've always had that aristocratic vision of her. I recalled this abandoned stable down the street from my parents' house and knew it was the perfect place to go with her," says Frank of the statuesque Napa native. Burgess, a respected landscape photographer, mother and self-described aspiring gourmet, is pictured here with her old championship saddle.



## Jessi Adele

29, SINGER/SONGWRITER,  
ST. HELENA, CA

"Jessi has been my best friend since I was 13. I've spent years dressing her up and shooting her. This time, we decided on the old MGM mansion in Napa, which, to me, completely embodies Jessi's ethereal, bohemian spirit," says Frank. The blonde songstress, who now calls Portland home, strums a vintage banjo on one of the home's restored French day beds.