

# departments

## THE VIEW FROM VENUS

### The Search for Lasting Beauty

BY LAURA CALLENBERG

**W**hat is your idea of beauty? What would you change about yourself if you could?

When I began my career with Christian Dior in Paris at age 19, my idea of beauty was what others thought about me. If people approved of me and wanted to book me for a modeling job, then I concluded that I must be pretty. My logic was that if I was successful and working then I must be beautiful.

Another way that I determined beauty was by association. I was working with some of the most beautiful women in the world who were appearing in the most popular magazines. Since they were my friends and peers, then I thought, surely I'm just as beautiful.

Another way I proved to myself that I was beautiful was by the men I attracted. Since I had lots of handsome, intelligent, successful men pursuing me, I knew I was beautiful. I was popular and had a lot of friends, too. And as my success grew and people recognized me it was very easy to get invited to all kinds of parties and go wherever I wanted. So I must be beautiful if I have all these friends and get to go to all these places.

As a result, I became a very self-centered person. Most of my time was spent on me and being concerned about myself. My entire life was focused on my weight, my hair, my clothing and my overall appearance and attractiveness.

I once was on a two month modeling job in Japan. Every day people were assigned to do everything for me, even to tie my shoes. When I got dressed there was someone to hold my dress and coat. They had three people to do one person's job. It all fed my self-centeredness and feeling of self-importance.

I also became a workaholic. I worked seven days a week because

I knew nothing was guaranteed. I could be out of work the next day. My looks could be gone anytime so I had to take every job. I would work in Germany during the day and then fly to Paris in the evening to work and then go back to Germany in the morning. I was afraid of losing it all and had to hold on to it at any cost. So I would take any and every job I could.

The result was that I became exhausted and sick. I fainted one day in the middle of a shoot and injured my knee. I was laid up in bed for the first time in my career. Not being able to work was the most frightening experience I'd ever had, because even if it was for only two weeks it meant I was missing all the *pre-a-porter* (fashion shows) that I'd just fitted for. I had to cancel fourteen shows. I was crushed.

But as I lay there I began to reflect on my life and question my values and ideas about beauty and what kind of person I had become within.

I realized that my views of beauty were inadequate. I knew, for example, that my looks were going to change. My covers and my "tear sheets" (my pictures that I tear out of magazines) became out of

date very quickly. I had worked so hard to get those photos in magazines and my agency wanted to take them out of my portfolio within six months because everything was out of style! I was constantly trying to keep up.

I also discovered that making a lot of money at a young age was great but I found that the responsibility of managing it was overwhelming. I had to worry about taxes and investments and saving. I felt that money was fun to strive for but, once I had plenty, it didn't really provide the lasting happiness I was searching for. It also made me question why people were really attracted to me. If I looked different or did something different or had less money would my boyfriend still love me for who I am? Or, is it all because of what I do for a living? Does he just want a model on his arm?

All these questions and doubts were hitting me when I was still at the peak of my career. I realized the shallowness of it all and began to feel very empty inside.

It occurred to me that I had been building my life on things that weren't secure. It was built on what the culture thought or my boyfriend thought and how much money I made and how popular I was. I realized I was building my life on sand.

I reflected back to a time in Indiana where I grew up when a significant event had taken place in my life. I had believed there was no need for God in my life. What was the point? My parents were in the midst of a divorce. Their faith wasn't helping them.

About this time I was invited to a concert. It was there that, in addition to the music, I heard a message that touched me. The musicians talked about a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. They described how God loved me unconditionally and that because of that he sent his only Son to die on the cross for my sins. Wow, I thought! An unconditional love relationship. I had no trouble admitting that I had done wrong things in my




life, that I hadn't measured up to what God wanted me to be. The musicians explained that I didn't have to earn God's favor. I could just receive God's gift of love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. So I invited Jesus to come into my life to begin a relationship with me.

As I sat there in my apartment I said to God, "Change me and show me what real beauty is."

The first thing that God showed me was the danger of vanity, which is defined as the "over concern for one's appearance." I had struggled with that for a long time. In America, \$20 billion is spent annually on cosmetics; \$300 million on cosmetic surgery; \$33 billion on dietary products. This illustrates how much time and money we spend on our appearance. Vanity is not beautiful.

Related to that was my habit of comparing myself with the looks of other women. I've had to learn to be secure in who and what I am and how God has made me, knowing that He loves me no matter what I look like or how I act.

Insecurity is not beautiful either. It makes it difficult to have and be a friend. And you put a lot of expectations on others to compliment you and make you feel good.

What is beauty? It's what's found inside, what's in your heart. Humility is beautiful, although it's not popular in my business. Security and self-esteem is beautiful. And knowing God personally brings beauty, because knowing He loves you and accepts you unconditionally brings security and self-esteem to our lives. That enables you to be free to accept and love yourself and your shortcomings. And realizing that God has a plan for your life brings a lot of security. It did for me. I hope it will for you! 

*Laura Callenberg is a New York City fashion model. She has modeled in 22 countries and has appeared on the covers of numerous magazines, including Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan and Brio. She has authored a book, Beauty from the Inside Out and is married to Jeff Callenberg, who is also a professional model.*

## THE BYTE SITE

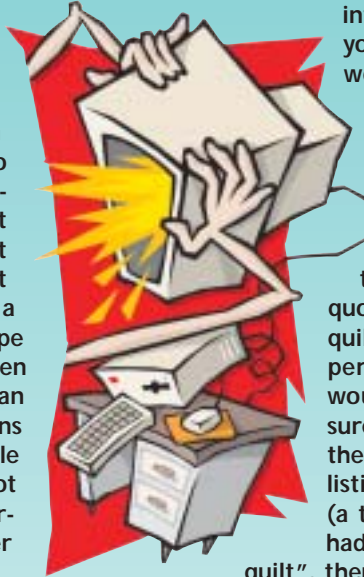
# Find It Fast In The Cyberpages

BY DEBBY KRATOVIK


I both love and hate the internet. I love it for the wealth of information available at any time and in great enough detail to satisfy even my deepest thirst. I hate it though when I can't find what I want fast enough! When I pick a Web search engine, type in my query and then click on "Search" I can be presented with tens of thousands of possible matches. Of course, not all search engines operate the same or deliver the same matches.

For years I used Alta Vista to go "fetch" my requests. I wasn't always very successful until I learned that using quotation marks around my word or words would restrict my search. So, instead of typing in PowerBook 540c (in my hunt to purchase a Mac PowerBook), I typed in "PowerBook 540c." I also found that putting a space between "Power" and "Book" yielded a lot of things I wasn't interested in. Remember, the internet is very case sensitive (spaces, periods, capital letters, etc in the wrong place will yield superfluous information). Other major search engines operate the same way with the quotations trick.

You can improve the efficiency of your search and narrow your matches with Boolean operators (special keywords which tell the engine to give you replies that fall



into the parameters you've set with keywords such as "AND" or "OR" or "NOT" or "NEAR" (always in capital letters). At the Yahoo site I typed in (without quotes) "Kratovik AND quilt" to see if my own personal web pages would surface. They sure did, as well as all the other web pages listing links to my site (a total of 14). But if I had typed in "Kratovik quilt", then only those pages with those two words appearing TOGETHER would come up (in this case, three pages).

Many search engine sites are filled with advertising banners due to blatantly selling placement in their rankings. Wading through them can be a challenge. Metatags (invisible code on web pages) mean different things to different search engines. Some web page creators abuse that code and can confuse your search with meaningless and unwanted results. Learning to use the "Advanced Search" section of the search engine will yield more specific results in fewer sites. My advice: become an expert using one search engine that you like. Learn the advanced techniques, pay close attention to the helpful tips offered, and practice! 

*Debby Kratovik is a free-lance writer with Priority Associates.*