Dying Swans and Dragged Up Dames: text alternative

This document provides a text alternative for the photo collection ‘Dying Swans and Dragged Up Dames’ by Helen Newall and Mark Edward. The intention is to provide a description of the images for people with vision impairments. This has been prepared by library staff who have no personal experience or knowledge of conducting the research.

The collection is comprised of 16 JPG photographs, each with their own title. A description for each is below.

# 1/16: BLANK-CANVAS

A man stands with his body pointed towards the camera but he looks off to the left. This is a three-quarters length shot, cropped around the knee level. The image is shot in black and white with two vertical lines visible to the left and right of the frame, as if the photograph has been folded.

The man is white, of heavy build and has no hair. He is wearing a vest, but due to the concentration of white light it isn’t clear what else he is wearing. He stands up straight but with a relaxed posture, his hands together in front of his waist. The expression on his face suggests he is waiting for something to happen or someone to arrive.

# 2/16: ANGINA-PAVLOVA

The man is now in full body shot, and the black and white picture is clearer, in sharp focus. The man wears a white ballerina’s outfit, including tights, ballet shoes, a feathered tiara, a brooch on his chest and a frilled, glittery dress which expands left and right towards the edges of the frame.

The man is standing on his tip toes but has a relaxed expression, his head leaning to the left with his eyes closed. He crosses his arms in an x shape, with the fingers of his right hand pointed straight and away from his face.

3/16: DYING SWAN  
Wearing the same outfit as in the previous photo and still shot in black and white, the man is now positioned on the floor, his leg stretched out and his torso folded over. His foot is pointing straight, away from his body and his arm rests alongside it. His eyes are closed and his expression relaxed.

# 4/16: NIJINSKY ROSES

The same man is replicated three times, in a triptych-like shot, wearing a reddish costume. The background of the image is black, with a whitish nebulous cloud-like effect in the centre of the shot’s background. The man has slightly different poses in each of the three images.

In the first he is looking to the viewer’s left, with his arm (on viewer’s left) raised in an arc above his head, his other arm (on the viewer’s right) is curved in a downwards position. He is looking slightly downwards and to the viewer’s left. One leg is directly in front of the other.

In the second he is looking to the viewer’s right, with his arm (on viewer’s left) raised in a similar arc above his head, his other arm (on the viewer’s right) is curved in a position level with his chest. He is looking to the viewer’s right. One leg is crossed in front of the other. (Close to, but not the same as, what is termed ‘fourth position’ in Ballet).

In the third he is looking to the viewer’s left, with his arm (on viewer’s left) raised in a similar arc above his head, his other arm (on the viewer’s right) is also in an arched position. He is looking to the viewer’s left. One leg is directly in front of the other. (What is termed ‘fifth position’ in Ballet).

# 5/16 NIJINSKY

A black and white close-up shot (head and shoulders) of a white middle-aged man with visible stubble. He is wearing a white ruffled ballet costume.

# 6/16 NIJINKSY'S COW

A full colour shot of a white middle-aged man, wearing a black and white costume with a similar pattern of markings to a Frisian cow. He also has what looks like a cow’s halter and cow bells round his neck. He is looking upwards; his lower arms and hands are at right angles to his body.

# 7/16 ISADORA

A black and white shot of a white middle-aged man, wearing a long flowing dress, a wig and a headband. His arms are raised above his head and he holds a cloak or some other long piece of material flowing behind him. He is stand on long leg the other is raised up behind him. He is looking to the viewer’s right.

# 8/16 RUDOLF-NEARENUV-S

A black and white shot of a white middle-aged man, wearing footless ballet tights and ballet shoes. He is bare-chested and has a wig. His arms are in (what is close, but not the same) as fifth position in ballet, that is in an arch above his head. His legs are close to the Arabesque position, however, the leg raised behind him is slightly bent at the knee. He is looking to the viewer’s right.

# 9/16 NEARENUV LEAP

A black and white shot of the same man in the same footless Ballet tights but he has bare feet. Again, he is bare-chested. His arms are raised in wide arch above his head. His legs are together, and he is close to the on-point position, however, he appears to be in the air mid jump. He is looking to the viewer’s left, and slightly downwards.

# 10/16 THE FIRED BIRD

A colour shot of a middle-aged white man with makeup on in a red and gold tutu, and a red feathery headdress. He is sitting on the floor with his legs outwards and behind him. He is looking slightly of-centre towards the camera.

# 11/16 MARTHA-STRETCH

A colour shot of a middle-aged white man in a purple robe. He is sitting down with his knees wide apart, and his hands held together at right angles to his body to the viewer’s right.

# 12/16 MOIRA-POINTE

A colour shot of a slim middle-aged white man in a red wig and make up. He is wearing a long white ballet skirt and white leotard, white ballet tights and red ballet shoes. His legs are in the Arabesque position, his arm (on the viewer’s right) is held upwards, his arm (on the viewer’s left) is held downward.

# 13/16 MOIRA'S ANGST

A close-up, colour shot of a middle-aged white man in make-up. The shot is a focused just on his face. He is wearing a red wig, has visible perspiration on his brow and is holding his hands to his head.

# 14/16 RED SHOES

A close-up, colour shot of someone's feet, they are wearing white ballet tights and red ballet shoes. One foot is flat (to the viewer’s right) the foot on the viewer’s left has the toes pointed downward.

# 15/16 LOUISE LEAP

A colour shot of a middle-aged white man jumping, with both feet raised and in the air. He is wearing a wig, a white Ballet skirt, walking boots, he is bare-chested. His arms are lifting the Ballet skirt upwards.

# 16/16 LOUISE-S

A colour shot of the same man in the same skirt, walking boots and wig leaning backwards. He is standing on his toes and his arms are thrown backwards and upwards.