

Press

Portraits of the artists

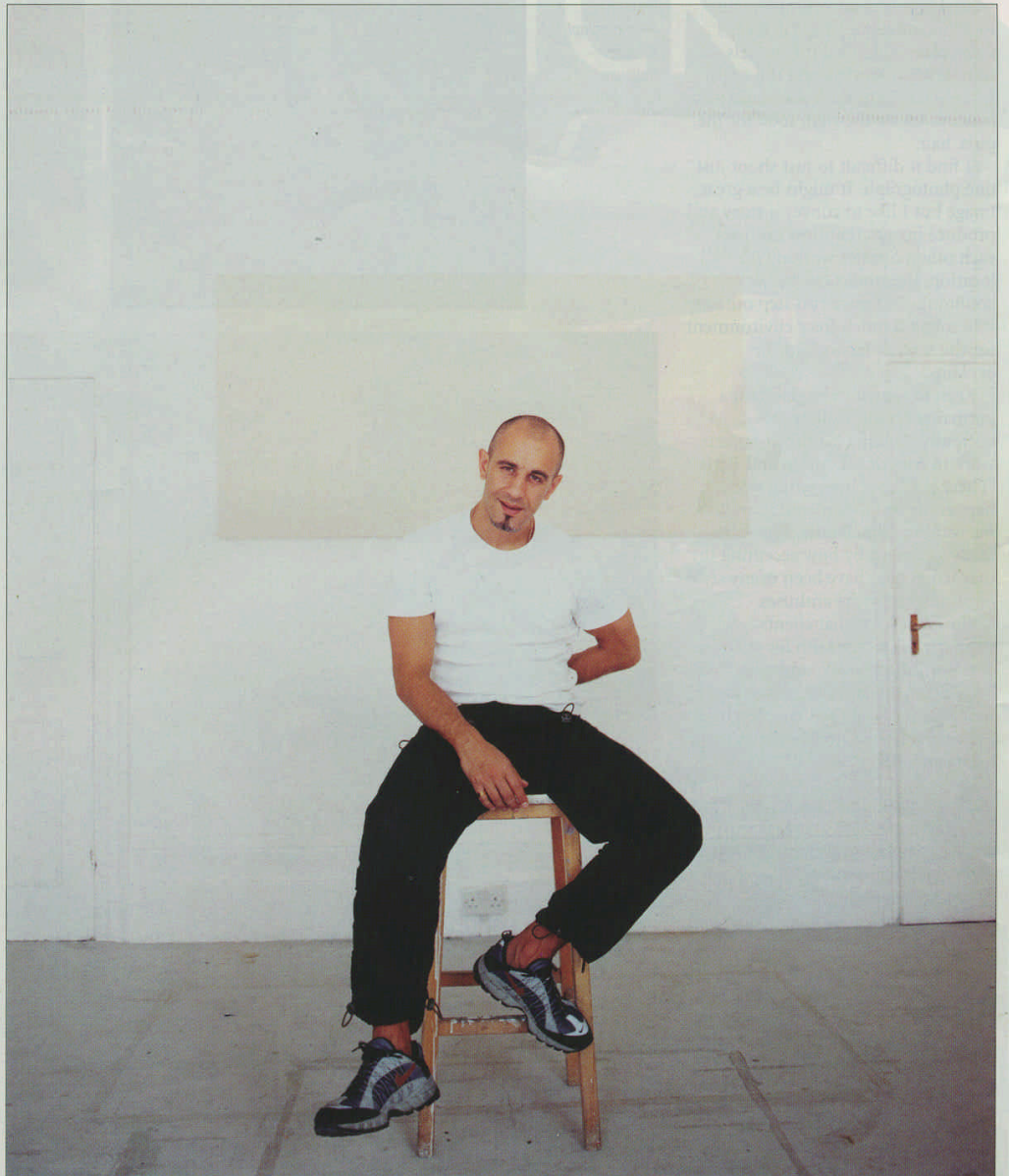
James Galloway recently took time out from his work as a fashion photographer to produce a series of portraits of up-and-coming artists. He talks to Dawn Sumner about the project

IN CONTRAST to the very public face of fashion, James Galloway has spent the last two years documenting the private world of up-and-coming artists in Europe and America. A graduate in sculpture and photography from the Institute of Art in Chicago, Galloway has always been curious about the environment in which artists work. 'They are generally very private people who like to show their work but are reluctant to reveal anything about themselves. When you step in to their studio you go in to their world and their realm of thought,' believes Galloway.

As part of the process of persuading his subjects to sit for him, Galloway visited each artist to talk over his ideas; this was also an opportunity to study the light available at the location. 'Artists don't really understand the need for lots of lights, so I often work with available light. I use a lot of long exposures and some of my images are not pin-sharp, but I am not too bothered by that.' Unlike the faster speeds used in his fashion work, Galloway tends to use f/8 at 1/250s for his artist portraits. 'I did a shoot with a fashion designer in her studio, and a rack of clothes ready for a fashion show were the perfect back-drop. All the colours were there, and the shot seemed to lend itself well to a long exposure.'

Making a decision about what to leave in the frame is usually straightforward for Galloway. 'What sometimes looks mundane to the human eye often turns out to be more interesting in the picture. Although the opposite of that is that you can walk in to a studio where there so much going on that the subject can get lost in the room. In that kind of situation I find myself moving things around to get the right mood for the image,' he explains.

There is usually what Galloway calls a 'warm-up period' with each



↑ Artist Christos. Photograph © James Galloway.

sitter, where he will spend 15 minutes shooting Polaroids and just chatting before starting the shoot. Often his subjects are captured looking straight at the camera which is the style that Galloway favours the most. 'You should see the contact sheets it doesn't start out that way. There are quite a lot of images where the subject is looking away. It is nice to feel a connection with people and when they look at the camera it is the

best way to do that.'

Galloway has recently expanded his project to incorporate talented new directors. 'Meeting people who make movies is an opportunity to find out what makes them tick. Sadly a lot is about who you know but I am lucky that I have got connections with a few people who work in the film industry.'

Although his accent is American, Galloway grew up in England and

only went to the USA at the age of 18 to study the arts. 'My visa allowed me to stay for a year after I graduated. I walked out of college and straight in to a job earning \$800 a day producing images for a catalogue in Chicago. There are far more opportunities to do well in America, and I think because it is a newer country it is more accepting of photography as an art form,' he suggests.

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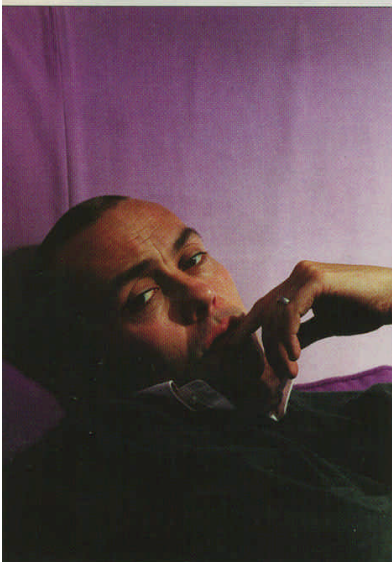
Galloway's fashion photography has always been influenced by his English roots, and is almost always story-based. 'I guess you could say I have spent my time selling Englishness to the Americans,' he smiles. For a recent commission he took his influence from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. 'All the models were English looking and the stylist referenced life in the 14th century in order to create the right look for the girls' hair.

'I find it difficult to just shoot just one photograph. It might be a great image but I like to convey a story and produce images that flow on from each other. I prefer working on location; the studio can be very confining, and once you step outside it becomes a much freer environment for the models to work in,' he explains.

Keen to return to England on a permanent basis, Galloway is currently dividing his time between work in America, London and Paris. 'There is a lot of interesting work happening in London and it makes me want to come home. I have been really surprised by how accepting the magazines here have been of my style of photography,' he enthuses. Galloway reports that clients regularly ask to see both his fashion and portraiture work, and with such a versatile collection he is sure to make his mark in the UK when he eventually returns to his native homeland. **BJP**

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→ Painter Jean-Marc Delanegra.
→ Film-maker Brian Frye.
→ Painter Sabrina Rowan Hamilton.
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↑ Film-maker Marcus Adams.