

Karl de Haan is a professional photographer with a studio in Johannesburg, earning his bread and butter (and lots of jam, we hear!) by taking advertising photographs and often satisfying his artistic urge by breaking out into photographic books of exceptional imagination and quality. He has an extraordinary studio and if you call there just be careful not to trip over an enormous model of a human leg and foot near the entrance.

Son of a Dutch hairdresser and an Austrian mother, Karl was born in Indonesia 45 years ago, but, when the Japanese threatened Indonesia before the last war the family moved to Holland where Karl gained his BA in Fine Arts at Amsterdam University. He wanted to be an artist but went into advertising because it paid more, but soon had the urge to see the world so came to Africa, arriving in South Africa in 1953 where he worked in advertising and display, then touring Rhodesia extensively between 1966 and 1968.

In 1969 Karl went to the United States for eighteen months, where he worked on displays and also did a great deal of table-top photography. But Africa pulled and he returned to South

THIS MONTH KARL DE HAAN



Africa to become a photographer in an advertising agency, also working on a freelance basis for the *South African Vogue*, *Tatler*, and doing the first fashion assignment for *Fair Lady* when it commenced publication 10 years ago. Around that time Karl deeply involved himself in fashion photography and set some new trends.

In 1965 he started his own studio in Johannesburg, then one in Brussels in 1969 — but Africa called again and Karl re-settled in Johannesburg a year later to set up a studio where he has worked ever since.

Karl de Haan is the only South African photographer to have had pictures published in *Photographis* — the annual featuring the world's best advertising photographs, and much of his work has been published in numerous European and Japanese publications, among them *Camera*, *Playboy*, and the Playboy annual *Eve Today*. In addition, his pictures have been shown in exhibitions in Johannesburg and Tokyo.

It was in 1970 that he published a book called *Sunday Sue*, taken in Southern Africa and about a girl in moods of uninhibited freedom, but this was banned in South Africa. A second book, completely different and entitled *African Orpheus* has been published in Japan where pictures from it were exhibited in the Pentax Gallery in Tokyo, but it won't be for sale in this country! A third book on Arabian horses (taken in the Cape) is being published early next year in Switzerland.

Pictures from all three books appear in this portfolio, and Karl is working on yet another book featuring his pictures which have appeared in the books *Private Postcards*, issues of *Playboy*, and the annual *Eve Today*.

Karl plans an exhibition of pictures from *African Orpheus* in Johannesburg's Gallery 101 next February and incidentally, says he's known as the oldest teenager in the local world of professional photography!

He uses Asahi Pentax cameras for most of his advertising and magazine photography, the Hasselblad system for most of his colour work, and Nikons for photojournalism.

Portfolio

a series on South African
photographers and their work

