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Shot By Kern

Volume 1: The First Season (MVD)
By **Mike Delano**

Richard Kern photographs naked chicks, which is fantastic, especially when a video camera is running as well, but as this DVD reveals, there are also some great interviews that come out of those photo shoots. *Volume 1: The First Season* collects video of 20 photo shoots of girls from around the world. These videos have been posted and archived for years on Vice Magazine's website, but taken out of their original context and placed back to back for nearly three hours, lots of interesting things start to emerge from the thick haze of perky breasts.

A little history, in case you're wondering why you should care about the Vice photog who gets girls to do crazy stuff who's *not* named Terry Richardson: Kern was a superstar back in the '80s New York City scene, pushing the boundaries of sex and violence with his photos and short films. Working with punkers like Lydia Lunch and Henry Rollins (there's footage of his early work mixed in throughout the DVD), he established a bleak and unsettling body of work. *The Hardcore Collection*, a compilation of his short films, is as essential in some circles as *Reign in Blood* is in others. Kern's wife Martynka, who he photographs on *Volume 1*, was a superfan of his from an early age before the two got together, although she admits that some of her favorite parts of his videos were when he used to whip out his cock on film.

The DVD is a fascinating look into a photographer's process. Kern clearly has an overabundance of photo ideas bursting from his brain, and he puts the girls in all sorts of unique poses that create snapshots that are at times sexy, bizarre, creepy, beautiful or just intriguingly weird. The Q&As that an off-camera interviewer conducts with the models and Richard himself during the shoots are often just as interesting. The girls reveal their impetus for modeling nude (everything from needing the money to a deep love for Richard's technique) and Richard takes you behind his photographer's eye, detailing the commercial viability of puffy nipples or simply his fascination with untrimmed pubes. They're basically just normal conversations, but normal, honest conversations are so refreshingly opposite from the insipid soundbites that usually come from model interviews with talk show hosts or men's magazines that it sticks out as appealingly genuine. (www.mvdb2b.com)



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