What's this? Parisian bakery boys in their workman-like aprons, a bare-chested street vendor hawking cucumbers—each of them photographed by the great Irving Penn and featured in *Vogue*. The year is 1950, and Alexander Liberman, the magazine's revolutionary Art Director and an artist in his own right, is showing readers that *Vogue* could and should be something more than a mirror of upper-class elegance.

As Liberman explained to me 40 years later when I was writing his biography, he wanted to banish *Vogue's* traditional "visions of loveliness" and bring modern life to its pages. In Penn's top-floor studio on the Rue de Vaugirard, a stream of roughly dressed workmen mingled with high-fashion models preening in that season's new couture. Liberman had given Penn the concept, inspired by the pioneering photographer Eugène Atget's portraits of *les petits métiers* (small tradesmen) from half a century earlier. Penn counted on Liberman both to give him ideas and to choose the images that he considered the best. "I valued his choice more than mine," Penn told me. "He was always searching for something of mine that I didn't recognize. And I would sometimes fight him about it." Their collaboration, then in its early stages, was one of the unsung miracles in the history of art and fashion—and in breaking down the barriers that once existed between the two.

Oddly enough, Liberman never quite believed that photography or fashion could be art. But it's largely because of him that today's *Vogue* devotes so many of its pages to contemporary art and artists. His book *The Artist in His Studio,* a collection of the photographs that he began taking in 1948 of School of Paris masters—Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Léger, and many others—and their ateliers, became one of the great documents in modern art history. And who do you think encouraged him to publish them as a series in *Vogue*? The answer is Irving Penn. □

Meat Cute

As a little girl, CHLOE MALLE fell in love in Paris. The object of her affection? Steak frites, cooked *à point.*

PLAT
DU JOUR
Marcel Proust
Les intermittences du cœur

CATCHING UP KARLIE KLOSS (IN CHRISTIAN LACROIX HAUTE COUTURE) WITH FRENCH TENNIS STAR GAËL MONFILS (IN NIKE) AT THE BRASSERIE LIPP. PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTHUR ELGORT. *VOGUE*, 2009.

Some parents experience their proudest moment when their child utters her first word or takes her first step. For my mother and father, that moment was when I ate my first steak frites at Brasserie Lipp.

We lived nearby on the Rue de Seine, and my father, Louis Malle, was a regular at the Saint-Germain-des-Prés watering hole favored by the French cultural and political cognoscenti. The restaurant famously doesn't accept reservations and seats prospective diners entirely at the whim of the management, based on who the person is and how in favor he or she happens to be with the world at large (and the brasserie in particular) at the time.

As a child, I was blissfully unaware of this social hierarchy and failed to appreciate the fact that, upon arrival, we were consistently whisked into a corner banquette on the preferred first floor (the second floor, as regulars know, is Siberia—strictly for tourists). My father would order some gory variety of offal—kidneys or calves' liver, perhaps, cooked very rare—with a *ballon* of red wine, while my mother, the vegetarian, would order *une salade mixte* with Dijon dressing and a side of sliced Gruyère.

On one summer outing when I was four years old, my father ordered me *filet de boeuf.* He asked for it *à point*—medium-rare—so that the inside of the steak was the perfect hibiscus-pink, and when I dug the tines of my fork into the meat the juice pooled at the curve of my plate. When I finished the entire serving—frites included, naturally—with a kind of savage fervor, my napkin tucked into the collar of my Agnès B. snap-close cardigan, my father proudly christened me *"la petite carnivore."* My mother, meanwhile—who hadn't eaten beef in more than 20 years—looked on, equal parts amused and horrified. □