

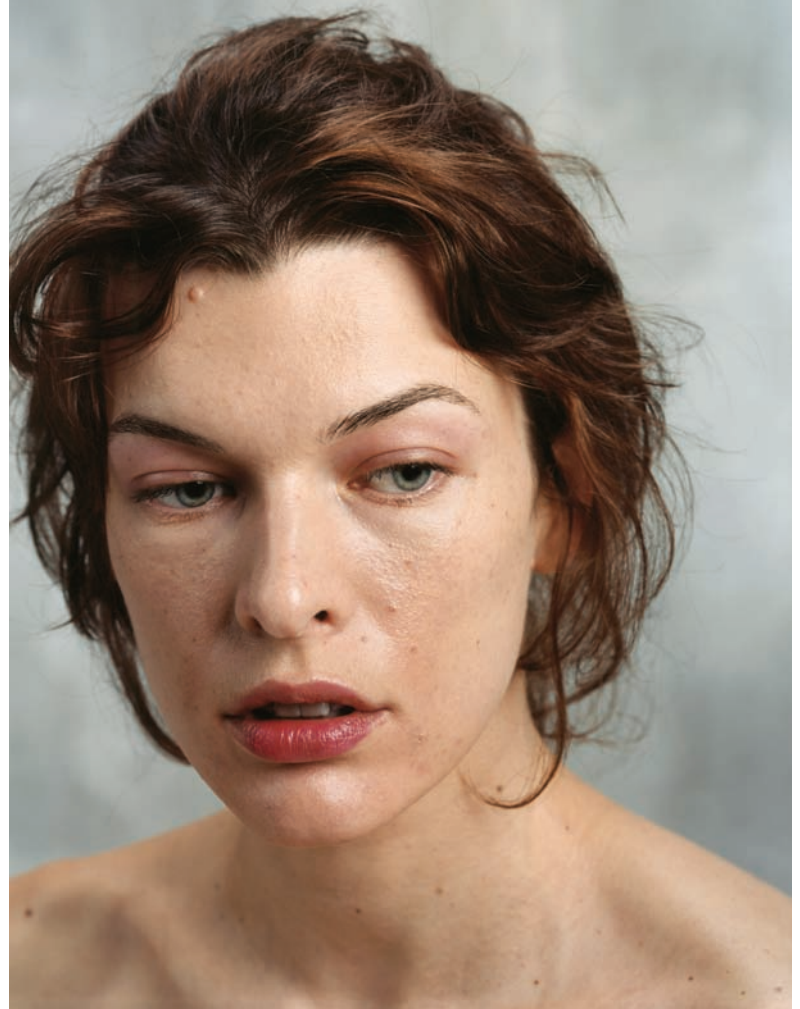
She's Come Undone

The latest incarnation of the Patti Smith, straggly-hair, no-makeup makeup look. (See: Bettina Rheims.)

Maybe the world is sick of women who try too hard, be it on the red carpet or on “Jersey Shore.” A new slacker-beauty standard seems to be emerging, perhaps best exemplified in the quirky photography of Bettina Rheims, the Annie Leibovitz of France. Rheims’s work ranges from the official portrait of former President Jacques Chirac to a new \$2,000 Taschen erotic art book, “Rose C’est Paris,” but her vision of femininity is especially on display in the 2007 mistresspiece “Heroines.” Her women are haute without a shard of glacial, natural without falling off the cliff toward grunge, beautiful but profoundly undone.

“I’m not attracted to perfection,” Rheims says. Hence the choppy anime hair, the makeup that looks like it might have been applied the night before, the attitude suspended between brash and breakable. “The women you see in magazines are so powerful, so flawless, so retouched,” she says. Rheims is more interested in capturing the nuanced moment when a woman with strength “can let go and be fragile, and not be reproved.” The photographer’s own style icon is Patti Smith; in fact, she keeps Robert Mapplethorpe’s photo of the rebel rocker in a place of honor in her studio. You can see the look on Smith herself once again these days, as well as on various younger countesses of coolness, including the actress Lou Doillon and her half-sister Charlotte Gainsbourg, the models Tati Cotliar and Kate Moss, the stylist Camille Bidault-Waddington and Sting’s musician daughter, Coco Sumner. It also surfaced on the runways, at Marc Jacobs, Proenza Schouler, Burberry Prorsum and Alexander Wang.

The eggbeater hair is probably the most crucial signifier that the wearer has better things to do than primp for you. (It has already



You make me feel like... Milla Jovovich, a natural woman, from Bettina Rheims’s “Heroines.”

trickled down to the jailhouse vixens in the Lady Gaga-Beyoncé video, “Telephone.”) The hair has a couple of nonnegotiable elements, according to another Patti Smith fan, the hairstylist Guido Palau, who channeled it for the fall collections at Jacobs and Wang. The hair is supposed to look not so much unkempt, much less *verklempt*, as “effortless.” It also needs to be layered, with no blunt ends. It is matte, not shiny, and above all it’s deliberately bed-headed. Work it with a combination of thickening spray, surf spray and dry shampoo or talcum powder to rough up the texture, he suggests. Then “let it dry naturally — or go to bed with hair that’s slightly damp and see what you wake up with.” **LINDSY VAN GELDER**



1. The undone-beauty poster girl Patti Smith, circa 1976. **2.** Ruffled chic at Marc Jacobs, fall 2010. **3.** Shiny hair? Out. Try powdering it instead. **4.** Proenza Schouler’s spring awakening. **5.** Up-all-night glamour at Alexander Wang.

