



THE RAEEL WORLD

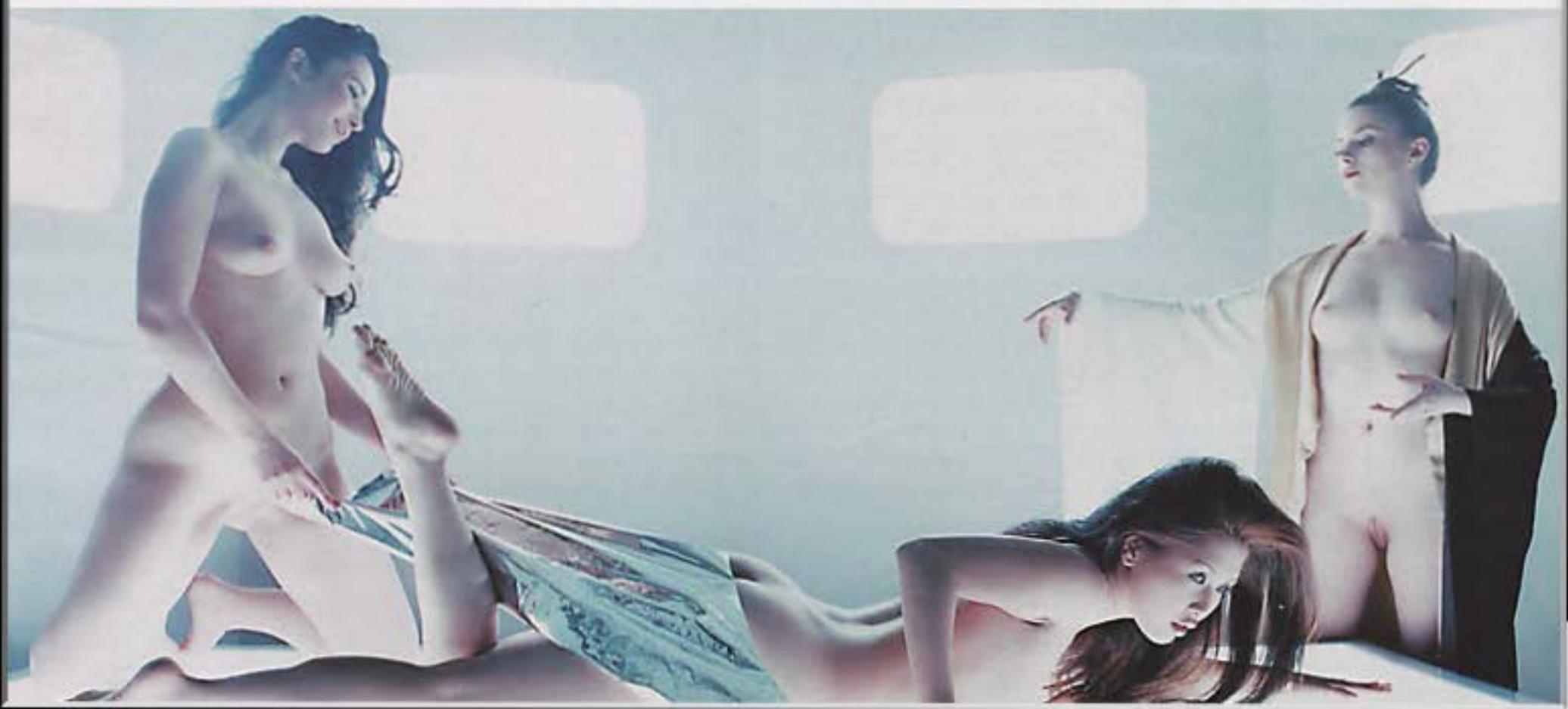
PREPARE FOR A CLOSE
ENCOUNTER OF THE NUDE KIND



Thirty-one years ago a French journalist and onetime race car driver by the name of Claude Vorilhon claimed he had been visited by an alien whose flying saucer had landed in the Puy-de-Lassolas volcano. The affable creature, who identified himself as Yahweh, an Eloha (from the singular of *elohim*, Hebrew for "those who came from the sky"), was described as being about four feet tall, with almond-shaped eyes, long black hair, a green suit and a short black beard—in other words, the spitting image of *Graffiti Bridge*-era Prince. During their hourlong meetings over six consecutive days, the Eloha explained to Vorilhon—who in his new capacity as prophet took the name Rael—that extraterrestrials adept at genetic engineering had created all life on earth. "Rael was invited in 1975 to go to their planet for 24 hours," says Sylvie Chabot, international publicist for the Raelian movement. "He had a foretaste of paradise—a place where there is no war, disease, work or violence, only love, pleasure, consciousness, creativity and eternal youth, thanks to human cloning." Dr. Brigitte Boisselier, a Raelian bishop, founded Clonaid in 1997 and announced the birth of the first cloned baby, Eve, during a news conference in December 2002. "Already 13 babies have been born through Clonaid's technology, and 20 more women are pregnant," claims Chabot. "The Elohim can re-create you as an adult in a couple of hours and download your information, memory and personality into the new cloned body. It is the secret of eternal life." Arnold Schwarzenegger's little-seen *Sixth Day* had a similar story line, but the Raelian women pictured here aren't big fans of science fiction myths. "I was never really into alien movies, but *The Fifth Element* is my favorite," says Shizue Kaneko, Rael's personal assistant. "It shows our future—beauty, technology and love." We say, "Bring it on!"

Above, from left: Rael, leader of the Raelian movement, poses in front of a replica of the UFO that paid him a visit in 1973 atop a volcano in southern France; his followers refer to Rael as His Holiness; a model of the proposed Raelian embassy. Opposite page: Shizue Kaneko, Rael's personal assistant, is a key player in the Raelian revolution.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEN NISHINO



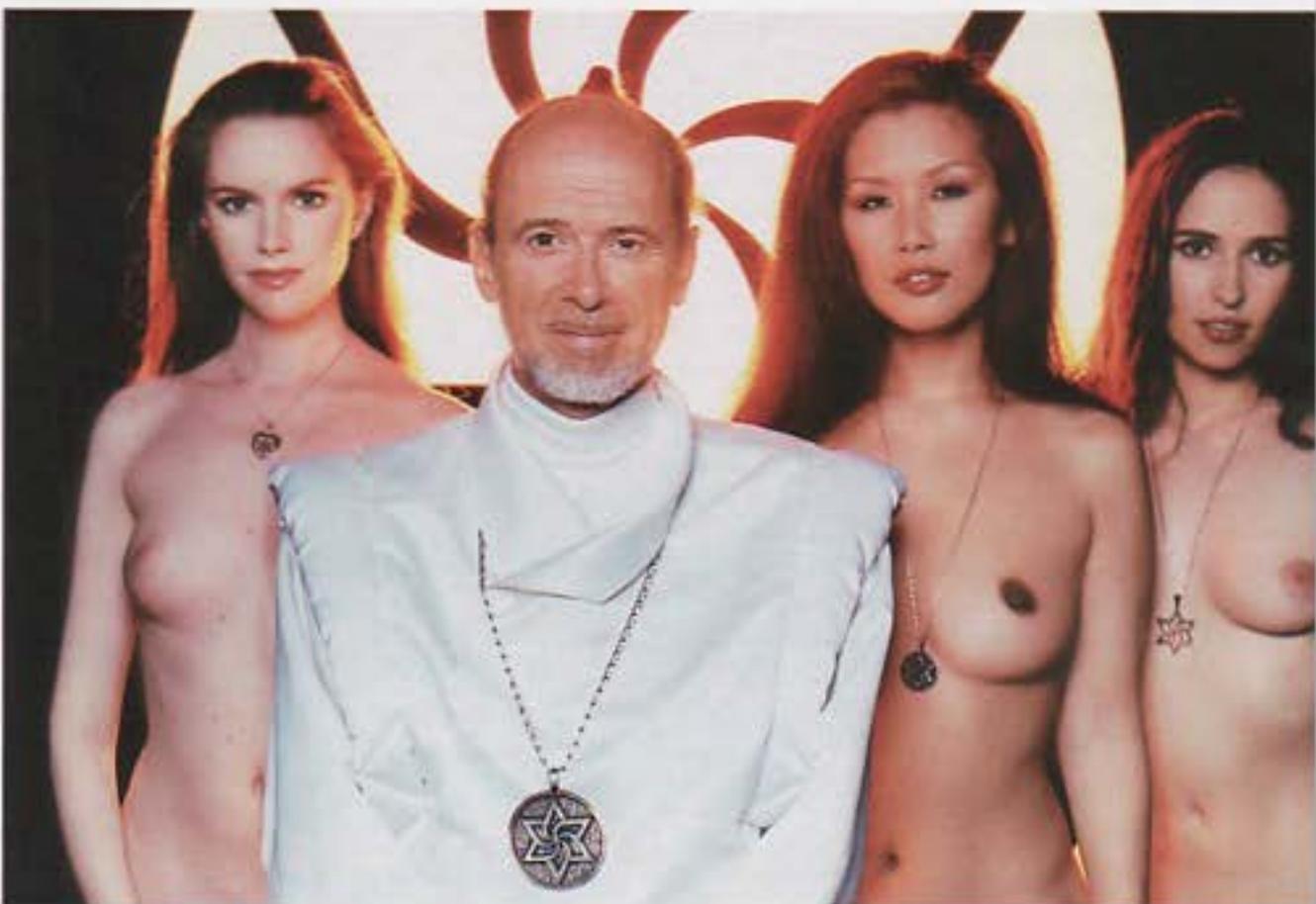
The Raelian movement claims approximately 60,000 members in 90 countries. The ultimate goal of the hedonistic religion is to build an embassy in Jerusalem for the Elohim's return, a proposal the Israeli government has shot down seven times already. We asked Raelian Marina Balibrera, Dr. Boisselier's daughter, how she responds to people who call the Raelian movement a cult. "I ask them first if they are members of a Jewish or Christian cult," she says. "The word cult comes from the Latin word cultus, which means showing respect to something higher. I have no problem if they use the word in a respectful way, but cult is usually a way of showing disdain for a religious minority." Spend a little time with Marina or other Raelian women and you'll quickly realize you're dealing with an uninhibited, sexually liberated bunch. "Sensual meditation is a technique of relaxation that helps you connect to the infinite that surrounds us," says Marina. "Be careful—you may end up getting an orgasm from the strawberry you're eating! Sexuality is the best way to work directly on our biological computer: the brain. Some Raelians choose to be single—masturbation is very healthy—some like exclusivity with their partner, and some are butterflies. I have to confess that I am easily charmed when a man is curious about my philosophy."

Since they think their bodies are from out of this world, Raelian women have healthier self-images than most. "I love my body, which our creators, the Elohim, gave us in their image," says Shizue. "This is the only religion that teaches that nudity and sexuality are pure and beautiful." Sophie Deniverville, Rael's wife and partner for 13 years, feels sorry for those who have hang-ups about nudity. "I have only compassion for them, as they surely have sad lives full of guilt," she says. "Political and religious leaders want everybody to think the world is as puritanical as before, but a vast majority of people are very open-minded. By creating this magazine, Hugh Hefner helped society evolve toward more sexual freedom." Marina is producing a documentary on embryonic stem cells and likes to create conceptual performance-art videos in her spare time. "The Raelian philosophy doesn't want everybody to be the same but encourages you to get in touch with who you always wanted to be and reprogram yourself to your own taste," Marina says. "We take pride in being nonconformists. We not only respect differences but love and encourage them. Lately I've been developing subversion, refinement and humor. Do you want to play?"

Opposite page: Like all Raelians, Marina Balibrera (top left) believes the secrets of immortality can be unlocked through stem cell research and cloning. Shizue Kaneko (top right and bottom) offers her body for closer examination.



Clockwise from below: Raelians Sophie Deniverville, Rael, Shizue Kaneko and Marina Balibrera; "Raelian angels" march for International Women's Day in Los Angeles; the RMX2010, the embryonic cloning machine developed by Clonaid that supposedly produced the world's first cloned baby; Shizue and Marina kiss; Raelians demonstrate against the Catholic Church in Montreal.





Raelians say the Elohim want to help create a paradise on earth and will return as soon as we construct an embassy to welcome their space-ships. The extraterrestrials supposedly hail from a planet in our galaxy, and Rael is their ambassador.

See more Raelian women at cyber.playboy.com.