

Gopnik, Blake, *Get Thee To ...*, The Daily Beast, August 14, 2013

NUNSENSE

Get Thee To ...

about 3 hours ago by *Blake Gopnik*



(Courtesy Fitzroy Gallery, NY)

The Daily Pic: To capture cloistered life, Michelle Elzay dresses her photos alike.

In 2002, Michelle Elzay began photographing the Benedictine nuns of the Saint Marie Du Maumont convent, in the Charente in France. These are four of the 51 portraits that came out of the project, recently seen at Fitzroy Gallery in New York. I admit that I reliably swoon over photographic inventories and grids, the way someone else might fall for watercolor sunsets or oil paintings of pears. That makes me wary of going all griddy yet again. But in Elzay's case, her subjects seem to deserve and demand a Becher-ite study of sameness-with-a-difference: These nuns are all about trying to sublimate the self to a larger system and order, but never perfectly succeeding.