

This colour image by Jean-Baptiste Mondino for the cover of Prince's 1988 'Lovesexy' album is a montage combining close up flower photography with a nude portrait of the artist, who sits on the unfolding petals of a white lily, leaning back against pillowy blooms of pale purple.

Prince poses facing to the left, with the nearer knee bent up, hiding his crotch, and the fingers of his right hand spread across his chest. It's a teasing parody of a modest gesture of concealment which actually frames his nipple in the angle between thumb and first finger. He's in his late twenties, slim, with smooth light brown skin. Warm shadows outline his back and thigh. He has a line of chest hair running down to his navel, emphasised by a narrow metal pendant on a chain. His black Afro hair forms a soft cloud pushed back from his face and falling behind his shoulder. Lilac and purple iris petals frame his head.

Prince's gaze is lifted up and off to the left with a soft, thoughtful expression. The background of lilies and iris evoke the post-war religious iconography which Mondino cites as a source of inspiration. One final detail adds to the sense of transgression: on the left, sprouting from the centre of an enormous white lily, a single stamen curves in towards Prince's body, the dark red tip on its green stem impossibly, joyously phallic.