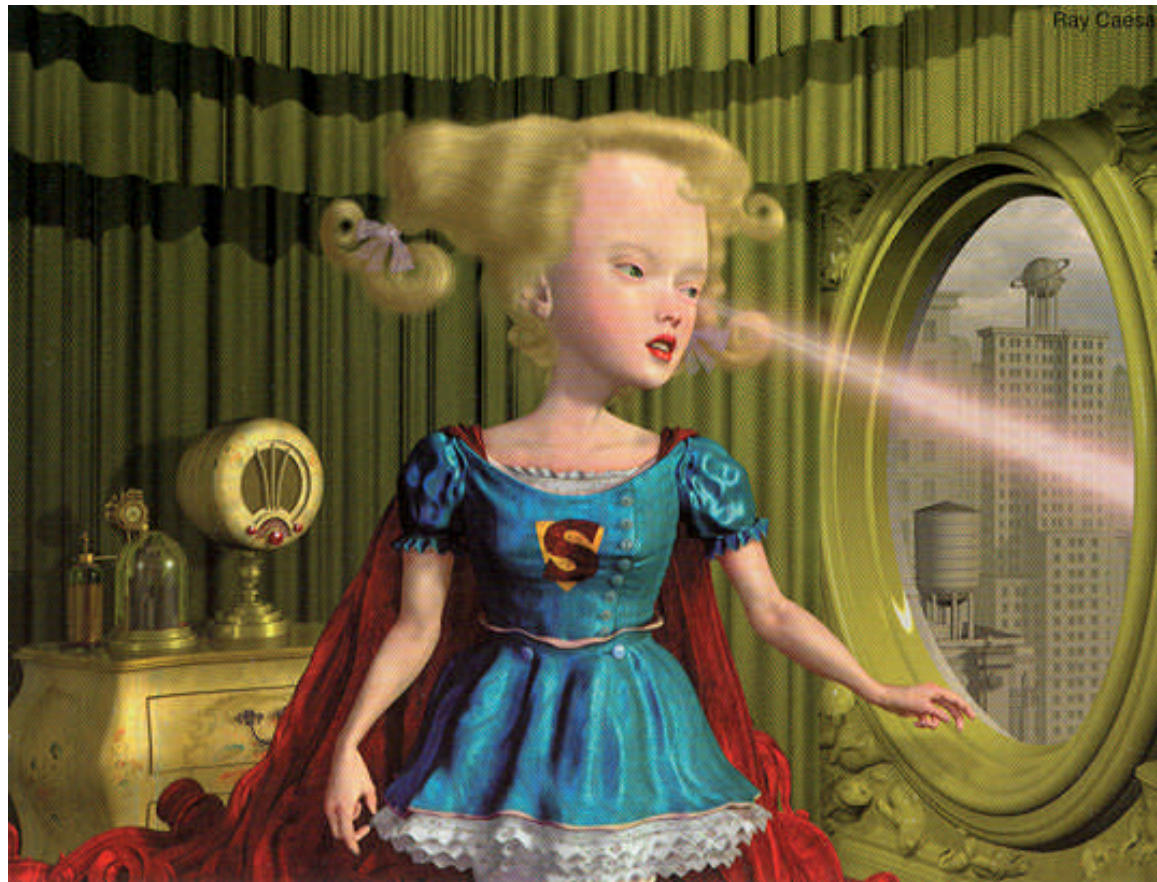


# Sheila



Sheila heard a strange squeaking noise from outside and instinctively glanced out the window. The squeaking instantly turned to shrieking as the powerful W rays her eyes emitted melted a dozen Mouseketeers who were touring the city. Great, just great, she thought. That made at least a hundred innocent people she'd incinerated in the two days since the bandages had come off. How long would it *be* before she could control her withering gaze? She'd posed that question just that morning to Dr. Bleiber, the St. Salmons Hospital surgeon who had performed the operation, but he hadn't had a satisfactory answer for her. And now, with fourth degree burns covering 95 percent of his body, he might *never* provide a satisfactory answer. Well, she hadn't *really* meant to look at him. She picked up her cup of tepid coffee and tried to heat it with a quick glimpse. The W rays briefly illuminated the liquid, but otherwise didn't affect it, and the coffee remained lukewarm. Funny, she thought, how selective the rays were. She looked at the clock on the wall – nothing; the pulsomatic zingalator on the bureau – likewise nothing; her red cape – and abruptly it burst into flames. *Nertz!* She ripped it from her dress and flung it into the bathtub, but in the process she carelessly peeked to see if there was any water in it. There was, and the tub immediately turned into a boiling cauldron. Well, this was getting to be intolerable! What on earth had St. Salmons *done* to her? Sheila had a good mind to go downstairs and give them what for! They'd locked her in her room, but a quick glance made an ash out of the door. Two guards had been posted outside, but they were smart enough to run away before she turned 'em to toast. But the top of the stairway was blocked by a defiant-looking figure in a colorful metal jumpsuit. *Asbestosman!* It looked like the confrontation she had long tried to avoid was at last at hand!