

# HOTSHOE

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ANDY GOTTS' PORTRAITS FASHION - AMANDA CANNON

REVIEWS - BRONICA RF 645 + CANON DIGITALS + POLAROID

INTERVIEW - MICHAEL FRESCO RISING STAR - SKJALG EKELAND

PHOTOGRAPHY - FOR PROFESSIONALS BY PROFESSIONALS

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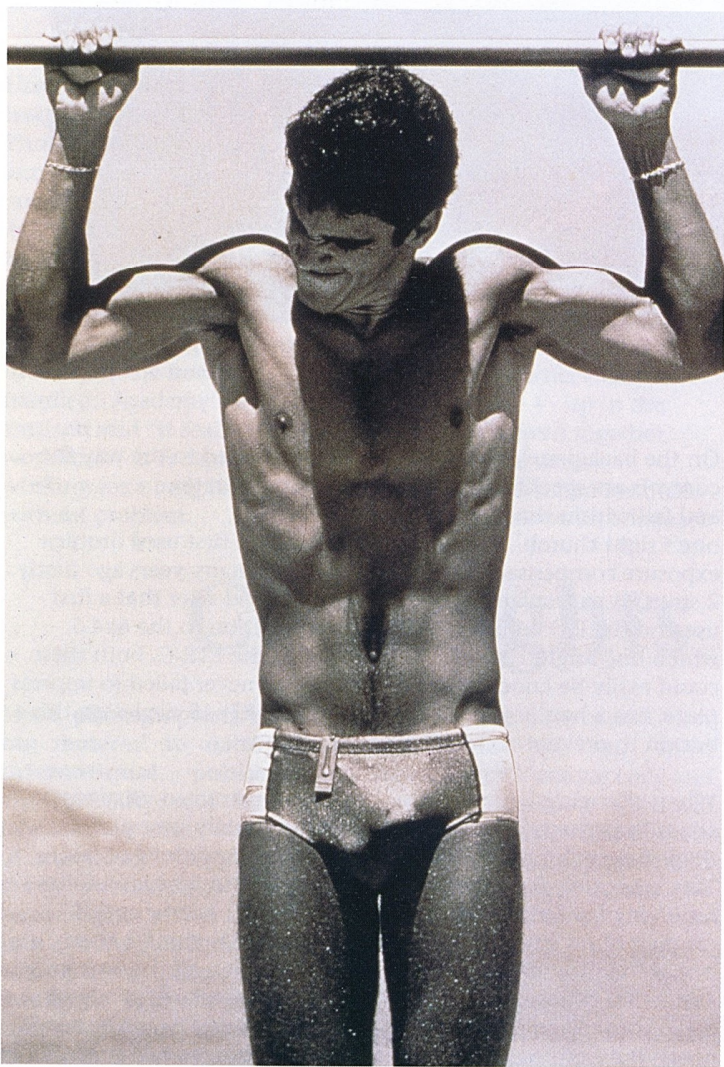


### Life's a Beach and then you Die

In 1992, Brazilian photographer, Alair Gomes was stabbed to death. The perpetrator of the crime has never been brought to justice, though many believe that the identity of the attacker lies within the huge number of photographs left by Gomes or within the vast collection of homo-erotic videos he possessed. Indeed, the only thing missing from his apartment when he was discovered, were a number of the aforesaid videos.

are in many cases, profoundly powerful, graphic black and white, which although obviously posed, are nevertheless, archetypal to the genre of athletic photography. The images of the young men exercising on the beach are at their best iconic.

One of the fascinating things about this photographer is that he left copious notes on how the picture should be displayed, etc in English, as he said that having taught himself English to help with his original career as a biochemist, he could think more clearly in



### Alair Gomes from the Rio bodybuilders portfolio

But what of the photographs? Setting aside the supposedly homo-erotic nature of the images (for in truth, the room at the Fondation Cartier that warns the public that those of a susceptible nature should not enter, merely houses a large selection of limp fallacies) they

that language. The display features many consecutive images which are mounted close together in long swathes along the walls. This makes each segment almost cinematographic and adds to the sense of drama.

Gomes's entire archive was donated by his family to the National Library of Brazil and the Fondation Cartier pour Art Contemporain has brought this huge selection to Europe. After the show concludes at the Foundation's headquarters in Paris it is hoped that it will tour extensively.

### The Citibank Private Bank Photography Prize 2001

The prestigious Citibank photography prize has been won in previous years by photographers as diverse as Richard Billingham and Andreas Gursky, writes *Jean Wainwright*, while nominees in the last couple of years have included Yinka Shonibare and Tracey Moffat. This year Roni Horn (USA) Hellen van Meene (The Netherlands) Jem Southam (UK) Hannah Starkey (UK) and the winner Boris Mikhailov (The Ukraine)

ensured an exhibition that was varied and at times uneasy. Mikhailov presents works that are often uncomfortable, he pays his subjects, the Bomzhes, who live on the margins of society to pose and expose themselves. The hardships that they have endured revealing themselves in sores and deformities, his 'case histories'.....'the most recent casualties of the failed Soviet world experiment. These are works made with political intent to document and commentate. Mikhailov's comment that when he took the pictures he was ashamed and as an audience we are locked into the shame, seems apposite.

In contrast Hannah Starkey's photographs appear to be casual banal portraits of the overlooked and insignificant. Yet they are in fact constructs, meticulous scripted photographs of insignificant events



Boris Mikhailov Citibank prize winner from the series *Case History 1998*



recreated by Starkey's gaze. We are presented predominantly with the world of the adolescent, the transient and wasted moments, ennui and conspiracy, observed and meticulously photographed. Helen van Meene also selects adolescent girls as her subjects. Although the process is dispassionate there is a disturbing quality to these girls on the cusp of adulthood. Either striking attitudes of posing self consciously, the images express vulnerability, the adolescent in a transitional state.

Jem Southam's and Roni Horn's work is very different. Devoid of the figure Southam's tripartite series *The Shape of Time: Rockfalls, Rivermouths and Ponds*, made between 1994-2000 have a shifting interplay of natural and cultural descriptors in the land formations of England's South Coast. Each chosen site reveals how it is subject of inevitable and gradual change. Using a large format 10 x 8 camera Southam makes a number of visits to each site, his camera becoming a geologic tool.

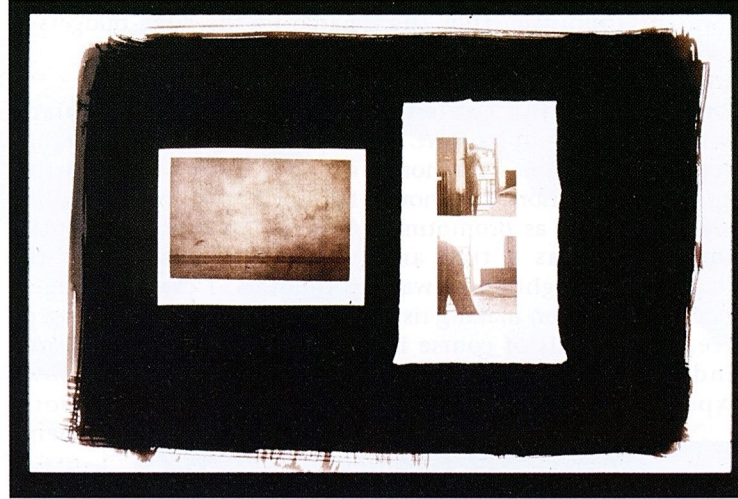
Roni Horn deals with landscape in quite a different way. Her series 'still water' grew out of an obsessive year researching the history of the Thames. She observed the rivers changing appearance, concerned with the rivers physical qualities rather than a romantic view. The photographs are accompanied by writings by the artist, a thought provoking narrative.

The Citibank prize is a valuable showcase, the exhibition encouraging debate on international photography.

### Joy Gregory Traces

Joy Gregory's show at the Zelda Cheatle Gallery narrates its own history, as it interrogates the medium of photography, referencing the various techniques initiated during the nineteenth and twentieth century. Her 'Handbag' series examines power and privilege during apartheid in Johannesburg. The handbags, symbols of

femininity, the owners privileged, are fashioned in materials from raffia to beads and were rescued from thrift stores by Gregory. The bags placed directly onto light sensitive paper are transposed



Joy Gregory, "Lost Histories" Kallitype print

and presented as large salt prints, each one unique. Gregory wished to make work that was 'not obvious and politically overt, but had a quiet and seductive nature... physical and instinctive work rather than analytical'. Her curiosity about the discarded charged 'objects' result in work where the shadowy impression of the handbag is lodged in the memory, resonating against an abstract painterly background, and producing the 'trace'.

'Lost Histories' continue with narrative fragments. These unique Kallitype prints are again gently political works about cultural connections. The juxtaposition of shadowy figures, landscapes and interiors, in black and white diptych and triptych, presented against a hand rendered brushed on background, allow the viewer to construct the lost histories themselves, to question and ponder.

In complete contrast photographically are Gregory's portraits made in response to the Amberly Panels in the Pallant House collection, portraits of powerful women commissioned in the 1520's to dissuade King Henry not to divorce Catherine of Aragon. Gregory's 'Queens' are reinvented for the twentieth century. Semiramus, the wife of

King Nimbus, who created the hanging gardens of Babylon and allegedly killed her lovers after nights of lust or Hatsephut the ruler of Egypt, are friend and associates transformed by regal attire. The

text underneath is translated from middle English, an updating of the tradition of the illuminated manuscript.

The diversity of the work could be distracting, the difference in printing and photographic techniques, with contrasts between colour, sepia and black and white; however the tracing of history is the unifying factor in a body of work that hints at deeper narratives capturing the imagination.

### Settings and Players

Settings and Players at White Cube 2 was an ambitious exhibition. Spanning four decades and with sixteen diverse photographers, the premise was to show the theatrical construction of the vanguard of American photographers, as well as to illustrate the tendency of contemporary photographers to 'make' rather than 'take' photographs. Setting out to trace routes in the development of photographic practice, the 'directorial' mode and the metaphors of daily life, what the show articulated was a visual photographic feast where 'old friends' mingled with new acquaintances providing delightful juxtapositions. Robert Adams beautifully focused gelatin silver prints shot in either full

sunlight or overcast weather, to level the tones, reinforced his maxim of art being an attempt 'by fond attention to the world, to find redeeming metaphor in it'. Colorado Springs Colorado 1968' and 'Kitchen sink, Tract House, Longmont Colorado 1973' with their pristine focussed black and white contrasts were a delight. Diane Arbus 'Two Girls in Matching Bathing Suits. (Coney Island New York 1967) or 'Puerto Rican women with a beauty mark (NYC 1965) illustrated her unerring vision of noticing the flaw 'that reality, if scrutinised closely enough is really fantastic'.

William Eggleston, Cindy Sherman and Nan Goldin, although very different in their methods complimented each other. Eggleston's comment that the final image 'when it works, is of course close to some original idea, which is often something out of a dream' seemingly apposite. Justine Kurland animated the space with her panoramic landscapes, exuding light and space, while Anna Gaskell provided a sense of menace and the surreal. Her 'Sunday Drive' 2000 continuing her repeated interest in the traumatic and erotic. Collier Schorr's seductive images such as 'In the Garden (Karin in Grass) 1995 added a sexual frisson. Larry Sultan's images, hide interrogation of the hundreds of hours spent in the pursuit of elusive 'yet simple pleasures that take place within melodramatic and pathetic constitutions of domestic life' also become surreal, yet somehow familiar. The enduring impression was a show that delighted with its variety, from Tim Davis to Philip-Lorca DiCorcia, Jeff Wall to Stephen Shore. 'Settings and Players' constructed the scenarios and let the viewers imagination do the rest.

### The Photography Show 2001, New York

For three days two floors of the New York Hilton Hotel heaved with people searching for a rare print or a bargain vintage. *writes Eugenie Dolberg* Each of



the 85 contributing galleries were allocated a booth in which they showed a wonderful range of photographs from the best of 19th Century vintage prints to cutting edge work.

The general feeling from both the galleries and the visitors appeared very positive with the largest turnout ever. The collectors and curators were in high spirits, making the most of the networking, buying and sales opportunities. Meanwhile the general public rummaged through piles of less expensive prints to find a classic for their dining room wall. This year saw a serious increase in buyers from new web based galleries,

yet.

As a young photographer myself, I cannot say I shared the general opinion of the curators and collectors. Although the quality of photography was exceptional, I was disappointed that the majority of work was pre 1950. A minority of galleries showed some outstanding contemporary photographs but I would have liked to see a more equal representation. The show advertised itself as promoting photography as a fine art however I thought there was too much focus on making risk free money. This of course is understandable and to be expected, the real money is

photographers more seriously, with prices that reflect their more serious attitude, photography as an art will continue to suffer. The environment has changed, art photographers are having to compete in a highly commercial industry dominated by the large budgets of fashion and advertising.

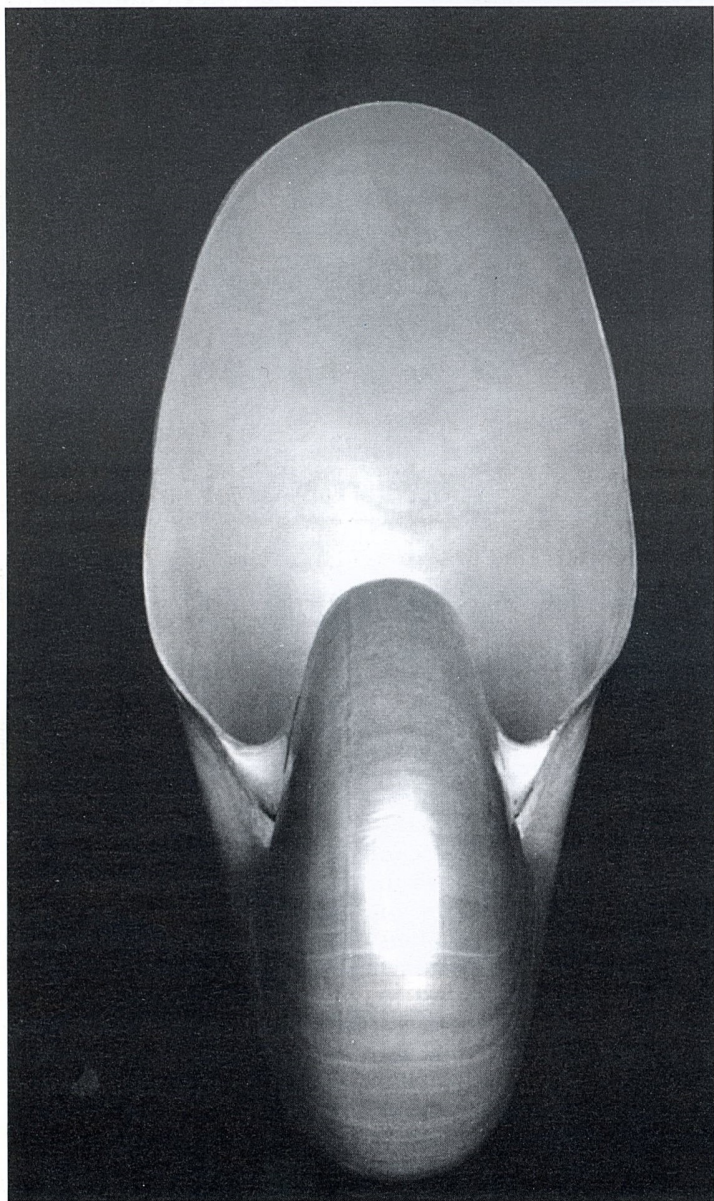
I was not particularly impressed by the presentation of the show, with prints fetching up to half a million dollars, I expected a better effort to be made by the promoters. I cannot imagine Monet's Water Lilies hung on grey felted conference boards, as found in out of town "health and safety at work" exhibitions, let alone being

organising and sponsoring the event, profess to be "dedicated to creating and maintaining high standards in the business of exhibiting, buying and selling photographs as art" not simply as marketable goods.

### Half Century

Isle of Wight's Dimbola lodge played host to a new show by Jane Bown last month. Entitled "Half Century" it chronicles 50 years as an *Observer* photographer and, it shows Bown's early news photo's as well as her famous portraits.

Sponsored by Olympus, the exhibits fill the contemporary section of the house with some beautifully printed Black and



Edward Weston, Nautilus Shell

although the conventional galleries didn't appear threatened by their presence as

still in safe, older vintage work but until more galleries take the risk of presenting new



Jane Bown, OBE at Dimbola Lodge

crammed next to a canvas of a tortured torso by Francis Bacon or having disorganised piles of Andy Warhol prints man-handled by the general public under nothing but tatty plastic. The trestle display tables craftily disguised with synthetic, frilly table cloths that went out with equally untasteful poodle skirts did not do the show any favours.

If photography is to be seen in the same light as other art mediums the largest photography show of the year should do everything it can to improve photography's profile. After all, the Association of International Photography Art Dealers, responsible for

White images. This writer had the pleasure of accompanying Jane Bown and another *Observer* photographer, Nobby Clarke, on the trip to the opening and discussions and observations about the state of the photographic world were to say the least fascinating.

A great show and if is still showing at Dimbola Lodge, or if it tours, one that all are advised to see.

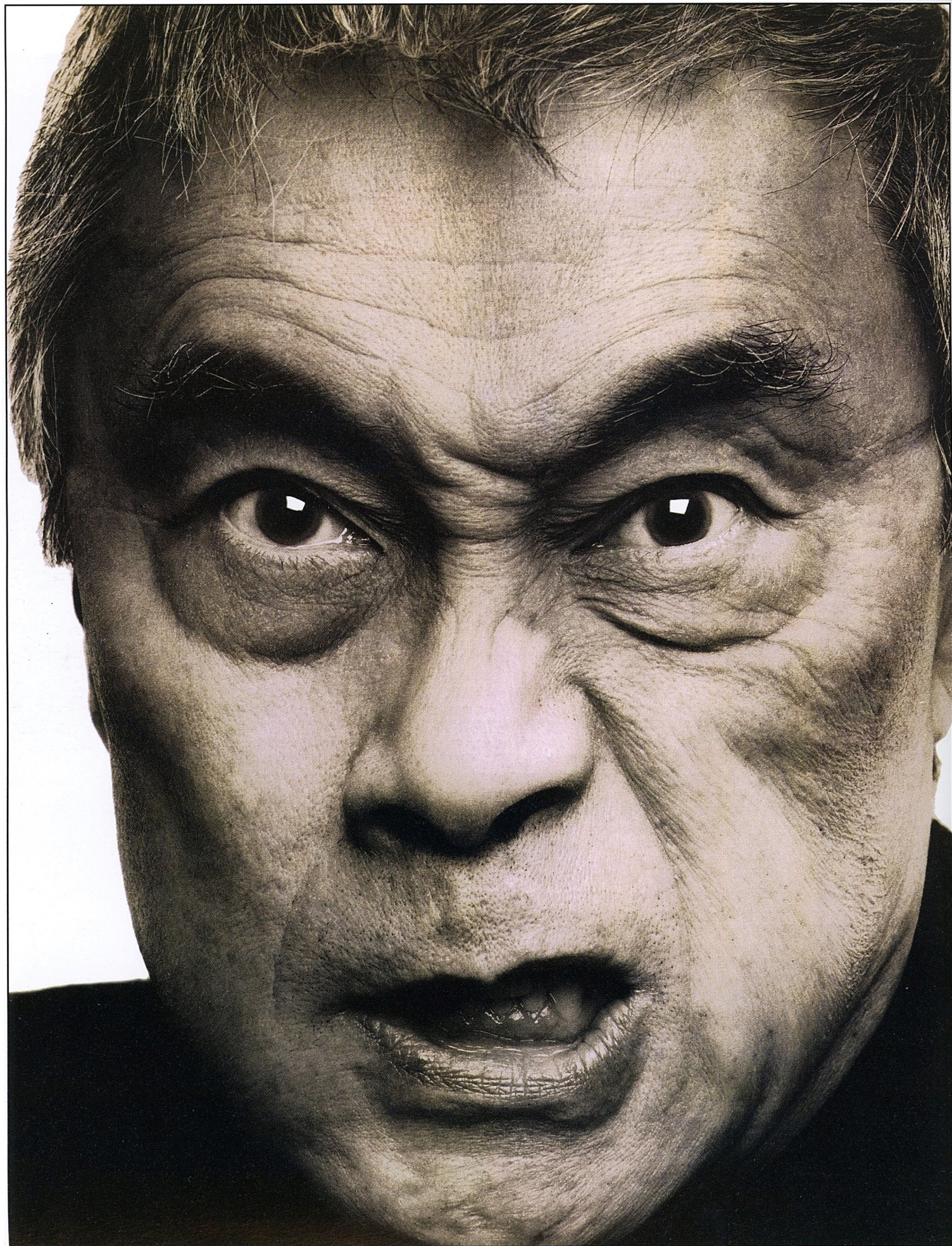




Cilla by Jane Bown from her exhibition "Half Century"



# Celebrity Squares





Events occur in all our lives. Many times these make little or no difference; sometimes they change us. Three years ago an event happened in Andy Gotts' life that sadly was of the latter sort.

However, this spurred him to want to do something for Diabetes Research. He launched on a project to try and raise money with an exhibition and a book. This involved him photographing as many celebs as he could find.

Like many such projects it took on a life of its own and has grown and grown. The effect has been of one star passing him on to another as they all vie to help with this very good cause. Gotts has a simple yet powerful

style working with a Mamiya RB67 and shooting on Kodak Tri-X for the male portraits and Ilford FP4 for the women.

He hopes to print the final results for his exhibition on an Epson Large format printer possibly using Lyson consumables.

Some of these images have been seen before in print; some are new. However, we at *HSi* felt that they should be given a wider showing as we support the charitable cause that these images have been shot for.

*HSi*

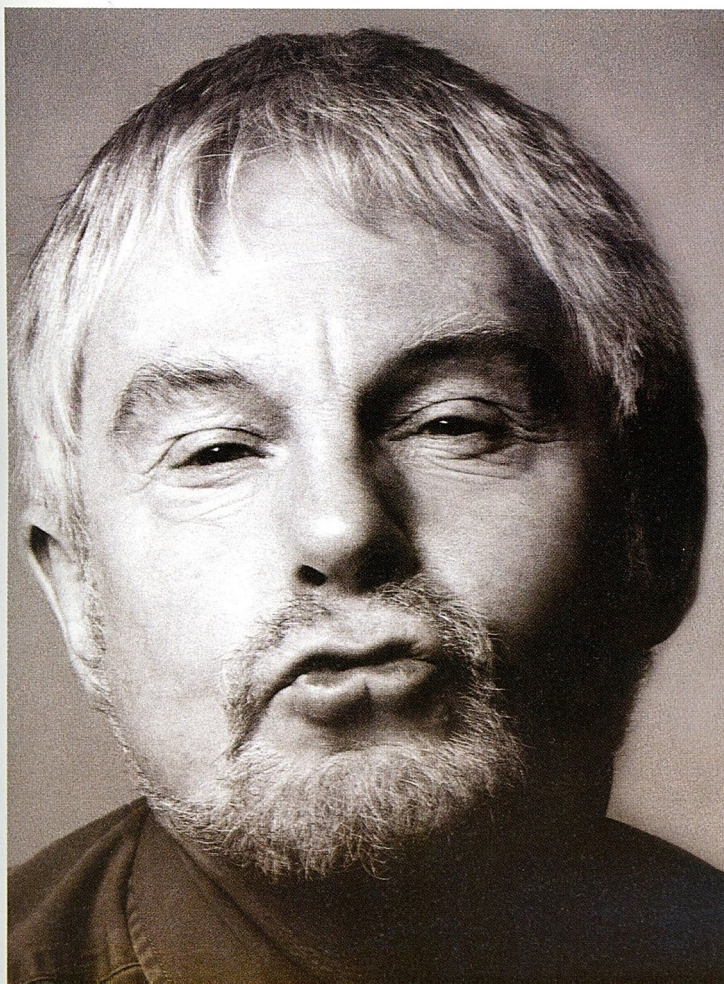
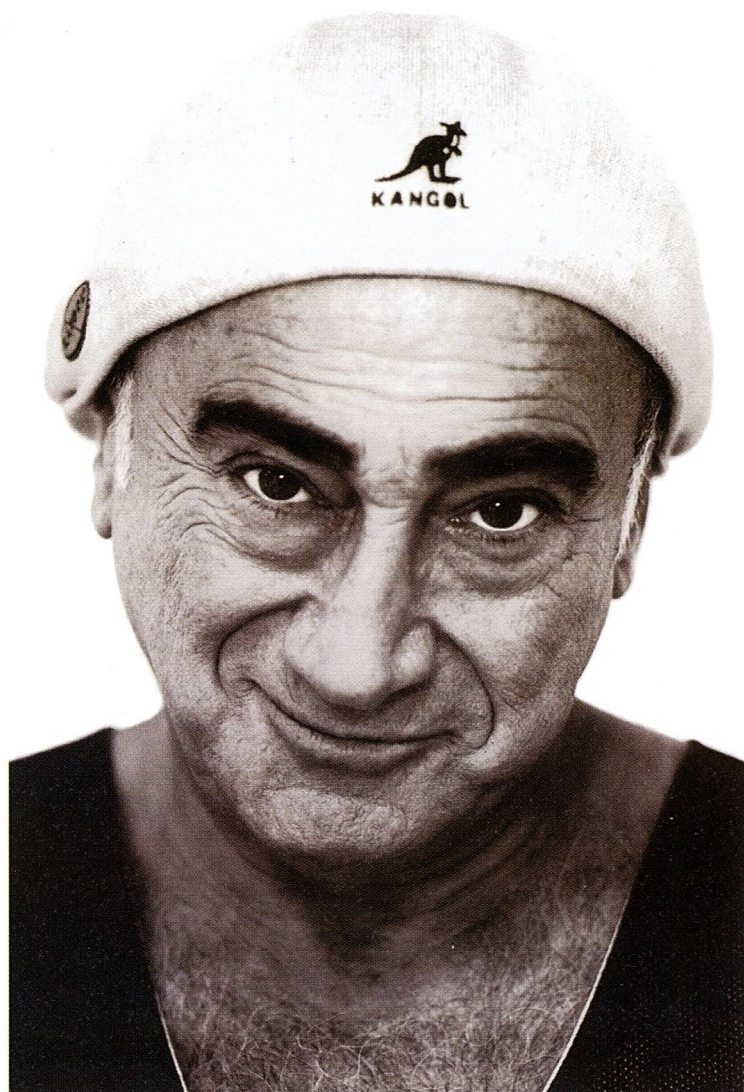
Pictures show: Previous page Burt Kwouk

This page: Lionel Bart and Derek Jacobi

Centre spread shows Richard Briers

Page 22 has (clockwise): Saffron Burroughs, Jeremy Irons, Richard Harris and Kenneth Branagh.

The cover is Kirk Douglas All © Andy Gotts



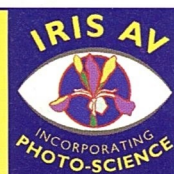
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