

OBSERVATIONS

People... Places... Events...



ONE TO WATCH

Gillian Hyland Photographer, 32

The Irish photographer started her career in 2013, after 10 years working as a stylist and set designer. Her tableaux depict characters staged into fictional scenes inspired by poetry, with a film noir quality. She was shortlisted for the 2014 Young Masters Art Prize – her work is on show in London until December – and she was awarded two silver medals at the Prix de la Photographie Paris this year. “People seem to get really drawn into my photographs because they can relate to them,” she says.

FILM

The critic makes the big screen

By KALEEM AFTAB

Roger Ebert was that rare creature, a film critic recognisable around the world. His omnipresence came largely through his collaboration with rival Chicago critic Gene Siskel on a number of TV film shows between 1975 to 1999. At their height, they made two thumbs up a sign of movie excellence. Sadly, both were struck down in their prime, Siskel died in 1999 aged 53 having suffered a brain tumour, while Ebert was 70 when he died last year after an 11-year-battle with thyroid cancer.

Before his death, Ebert and his wife Chaz allowed Steve James, di-

rector of *Hoop Dreams*, to make a documentary on the critic and his struggle with cancer that saw him lose his ability to speak and also have surgery that drastically reshaped his jawline. *Life Itself* is a fascinating portrait of the newspaperman, from his youthful exuberance in the bars of Chicago, through his days in Alcohol Anonymous and his love/hate relationship with Siskel.

Yet it’s also an intimate portrayal of the film critic falling in love and marrying at 50, and his decision not to let his illness dictate his life. To the end he was writing blogs, and developing his digital presence.

The film touches upon the interracial marriage with African-American Chaz. It was James’s work on basketball film *Hoop Dreams* that persuaded the Eberts that he was the right choice to direct the film.

“We are not the Kardashians,” says Chaz.

James says: “[What] was really intriguing to me was the relationship between he and Chaz. I’ve done a



The reel thing: Roger Ebert at work in 1983
KEVIN HORAN

lot of films that deal with race and class over the years, and it is a particular obsession of mine, and I was struck going in and it was further underscored by witnessing it, that there is this extraordinary relationship where race was not an issue.” However, Chaz disputed this picture

of total harmony when we met. She said race cropped up twice in their marriage. Once was over her refusal to visit South Africa, where Roger went to grad school, until the end of apartheid, and which he understood. The other, bigger, battle was over the OJ Simpson trial result.

“It was the only time in our marriage we looked at each other and wondered, ‘how can you say this?’” recalls Chaz. “I said: ‘Oh my God, this is the first time in history that a black man has been able to get some sort of justice in this system’; and Roger said: ‘How can you say this? This man killed her.’

I said: ‘Roger, when you have 400 years of history and you are bought over here as a slave and in 1968 our marriage would have been outlawed, this result means something different to African Americans to what it means to you as a white man.’”

And they say how you react to movies is subjective...

‘Life Itself’ is out on 14 November

VISUAL ARTS

Bacon’s back in Monaco

By CHARLOTTE CRIPPS

A Francis Bacon Foundation has just opened in Monaco – Prince Albert was in attendance at the launch. Bacon lived and worked in Monaco from 1946 to the early 1950s – he returned to the region for the rest of his life – but little is known about Bacon’s Monégasque period. Now this is all about to change with the launch of the private, non-profit foundation, established by property developer Majid Boustany, a resident in Monaco for more than 20 years, who is passionate about the artist.

It is now open to scholars and art historians throughout the year and to the general public, by appointment, from March 2015.

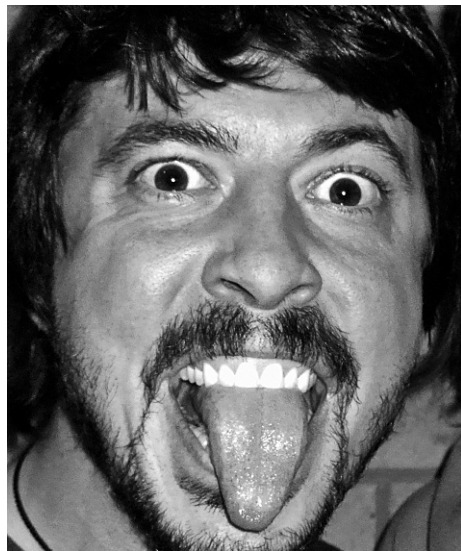
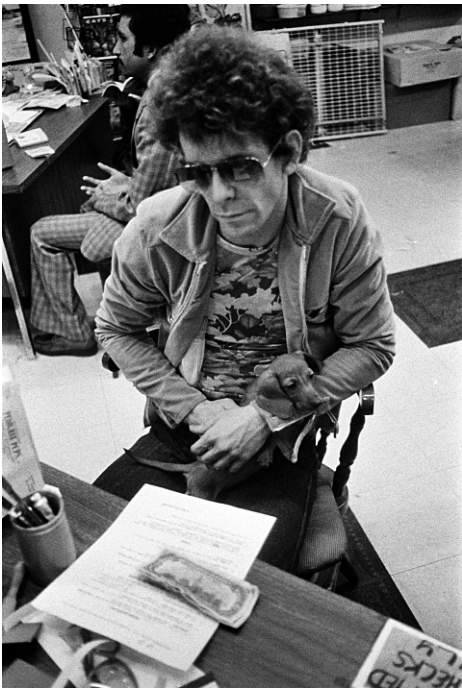
There is a library of rare items – paintbrushes from his studios in London and Paris, postcards he wrote from Monaco, a library of more than 800 reference books, and one of the best archives of photographs of Bacon in the world.

“Bacon began to concentrate on painting the human form in Monaco – a crucial step that would lead him to become one of the greatest figurative British post war artists,” says Boustany. “He also started work on his famous *Pope* series here.”

In 1946, Bacon sold *Painting* (1946) to an art dealer for £200 and with the proceeds he moved to Monaco, with his lover and nanny.

“He was a notorious gambler and on one occasion, after losing a lot of money in the casino, and not being able to buy new canvasses, he started painting on the unprimed side of his canvasses. He remained painting on that side for the rest of his life.”

The Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, Monaco
(mbartfoundation.com)



BOOKS

A walk on the wild side from Iggy to Ziggy

By NICK DUERDEN

Often referred to as “the man who shot the Seventies”, rock photographer Mick Rock has a new book out this month. Entitled *Exposed*, it’s a greatest hits of some of his most iconic work: Lou Reed’s *Transformer*, Ziggy Stardust, the 1974 *Queen II* album cover, alongside some previously unseen shots of Ziggy Marley, Ray Davies, Dave Grohl (above left), Iggy Pop (top left), and Marianne Faithfull (top right).

He admits that his link with that decade can be limiting. “I’m not some corpse suddenly resurrected, you know? I’m still alive! Still working!”

Of the unseen images, his favourite invariably involve artists from that era. “Well, everybody is obsessed with the Seventies these days, aren’t they? Bowie, Iggy, Debbie Harry, Marianne Faithfull.”

He first shot a youthful Iggy Pop 42 years ago, but his previously unseen 2007 image is redolent of a man still very much in possession of his original raw power. “And I love the pictures of my old friend, Lou.”

Reed (above right) was famously grumpy but not, Rock insists, with him. “We got on great. The only time he got mad at me was when I missed his wedding in 1980. He had cleaned up by then, but I was getting deeper into a certain chemical...”

Rock used to prepare for photoshoots by taking LSD and performing yoga. These days, the 65-year-old indulges only in the latter. “No more chemicals, just yoga, a bit of meditation and a cup of coffee. The moment I pick up the camera, I still get excited. Always do.”

‘Mick Rock Exposed’ is published by Palazzo, £16.99

CULTURAL LIFE

Susan Boyle Singer



BOOKS

I’m a fan of anything written by Piers Morgan. I enjoy his books and what he thinks. I was also recently given a joke book about the menopause. We’ve been reading snippets of it on the tour bus... It’s highly amusing and oh so true.

FILMS

I’ve been watching *The Alamo* after performing in San Antonio and getting to visit the Alamo site. It was a humbling place to be, especially reading the etchings on the wall. I bought the movie in the gift shop. I like old movies.

TELEVISION

I like all TV, but my absolute favourite at the moment is *Modern Family*. I just think it’s brilliant and just when you think it couldn’t get any better – it does.

MUSIC

Is it cheeky to say my new album, *Hope?* I have an eclectic taste in music and like everything across the decades. I like jazz and blues, but equally love a bit of Pharrell – his song “Happy” was fantastic. You can’t help but be happy listening to it.

VISUAL ARTS

In Atlanta I went to the Martin Luther King Museum, which was fascinating. He was such a brilliant man, no words can do him justice. It was stomach churning to realise segregation was still going on when I was a teenager.

‘There’s Something About Susan’ will be released digitally and on DVD on 17 November; Susan Boyle’s new album, ‘Hope’, is out on 24 November

Interview by Alice Jones

THE LUVVIES

BY BIRCH

