



Above: Penny whistlers, 1954; below, covers of *Drum* magazine, left to right: High Ritz, February 1955; Sax player, May 1955; Dolly on the beach, July 1955. Right: Kids on staircase, taken in 2006.



things that were important socially, creatively and politically and yet no one took any notice. They had no way of expressing or communicating among each other in the way that most societies have; there was nothing, and I think that when someone came with a camera and asked them questions they were very happy about it.”

Jürgen has photographed Nelson Mandela across six decades, firstly in 1951 and most recently in 2006 when the political leader opened his exhibition documenting the 1952 Defiance Campaign, which first brought him to the fore. “It’s been wonderful to follow him all these years. As Mandela himself says, it’s been a long road.”

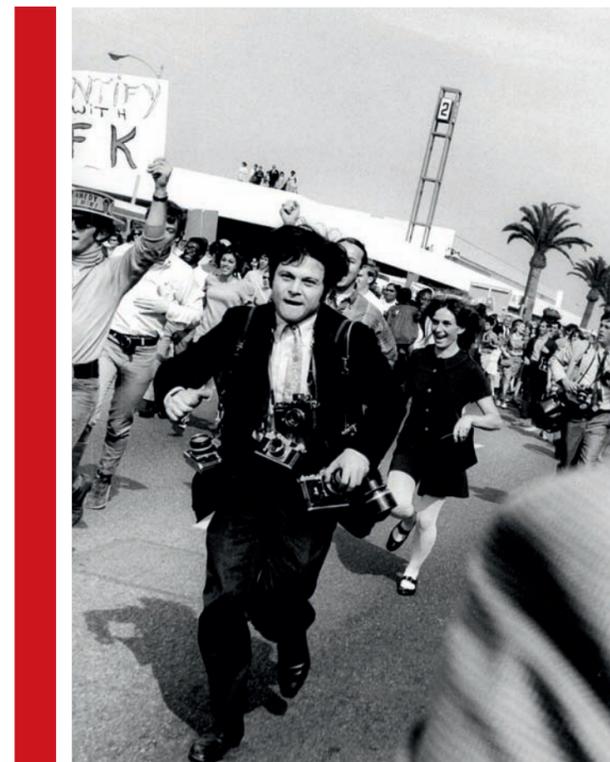
Leaving South Africa in 1964, Jürgen moved to London and lived there for 20 years, during which time he met his wife Claudia. He spotted her on a bench in a square in Primrose Hill while he was climbing over a wall to see a friend. “She had the most BBC of accents,” he explains, “and sounded very clever.” In London he taught at the Central School of Art and Design and continued to work as a freelance photojournalist for the left-wing political magazine *New Society* as well as the *Sunday Times*, *Telegraph* and *Observer Magazines*. “We had to do a lot of colour. It was the time when colour television was emerging, which took away a lot of advertising from the press. To pull back the ads the newspapers started the colour magazines and we had to shoot with 64 ASA Kodachrome film. It was very difficult to shoot with a slow film but they wanted high-quality colour so we had to run around with a box full of filters. It was quite a job but very interesting.” Although his work during this period has not been seen widely, it is these images that Jürgen is most proud of and he is preparing a book of lesser-known work from his London years.

The biography on his website contains an exhaustive – and exhausting – list of book titles and exhibitions spanning five continents and five decades. At nearly 80 he shows no signs of slowing down despite moving with Claudia to rural France three years ago, drawn by the lifestyle and cultural heritage. “I think France is the society most interested in the visual arts.” He describes how, when he was renovating his home, the plumber, mason and other workmen took an interest in his images. “They all got quite excited by my pictures so I invited them to my next exhibition and they all turned up with their families. There aren’t many societies where you’ll get your plumber coming to your exhibition but they all were tremendously interested. It’s a very visual society.”

The author of several books and 15 documentaries about South African culture and history, he agrees that his *Drum* work and the Mandela pictures are what he is best known for, although again he resolutely refuses to bask in any glory. “I think that one isn’t really that interested in being known. The only reason to be known is to make a living, so that people will buy your work. If you’re not known, people won’t buy your work.” He travels back to South Africa for exhibitions and workshops, and says the people are better off and feel freer now. Are young South Africans aware of his part in their country’s history? “To some degree they are,” he says. “But things are quickly forgotten. People don’t really learn from history.”

He believes that many young photography students these days are looking afar for subject matter. But why go to Asia and Africa when there’s just as much going on right in front of your eyes? He has just published a book about his village in Normandy, the culmination of a two-year project, a tribute to village life. “We’ve got a jazz club, there’s opera in the chateau, a big market nearby... Everybody is looked after, no matter what background they come from,” he almost sings. “Life is wonderful.”

www.jurgenschadeberg.com



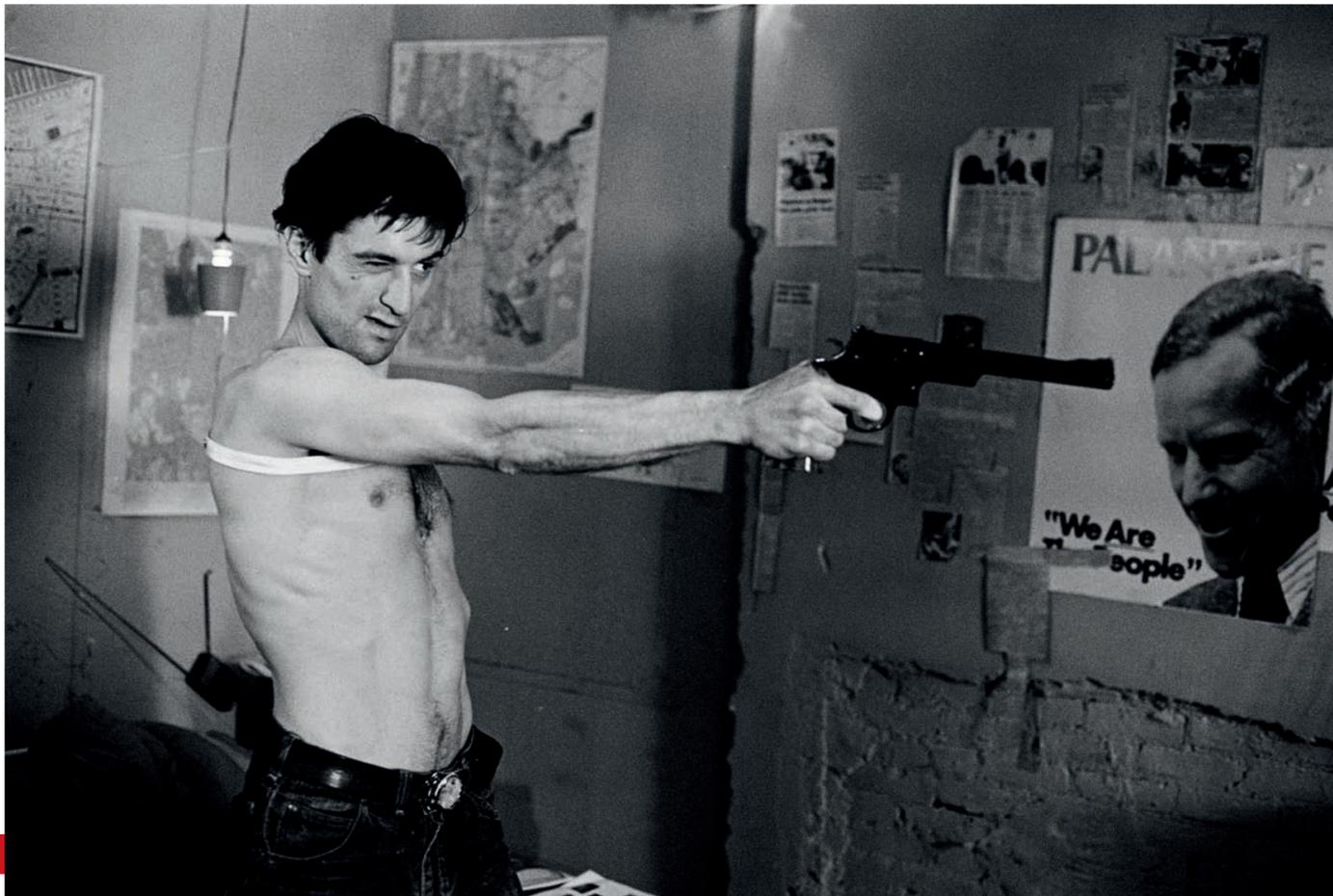
STEVE SCHAPIRO

Imagine you want to write a film script documenting the life of American photographer Steve Schapiro. You might start with the moments he spent in the motel room occupied by Martin Luther King shortly after the civil rights campaigner had been assassinated. You could begin on the film set of *The Godfather* while Schapiro was taking the now-iconic images of actor Marlon Brando, or perhaps the time he met US politician Robert Kennedy while following him on his 1968 presidential campaign trail.

You could in fact choose from many pivotal moments in American history during the past 50 years on which to hang your story. The softly-spoken, unassuming Schapiro was there, capturing every high and every low.

The dawn of the 1960s ushered in an era of new hope for America with the election of John F Kennedy as President. All across the country people felt they were on the way up. There was an eagerness to excel in all industries and a wave of positive action was coursing its way throughout the nation. Dark times, as always, were never far away, but in this time of creative genesis, no one could possibly predict the incredible acts of violence that would eventually cause the wave to crash and dissipate. The civil rights movement was gaining traction, scientific and industrial endeavours were booming, and the art world was at the start of an explosion that would make international stars of its foremost players.

All around the world people were hungry for news from this flourishing society. The demand for detailed information and enthralling images had never



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For him the stand-out element is the hand gestures between the subjects. The image hasn't gained that much attention, but to Schapiro it captures a feeling of that period and of that lifestyle. It expresses what those people were about and has very little to do with his presence as a photographer.

“With Henri Cartier-Bresson there's as strong an identification of him in the image as there is of the subject. You can say that's a Cartier-Bresson picture

Above: Sammy Davis Jr and Judy Garland, New York, 1961; above top: Andy Warhol, Edie Sedgwick and entourage, New York, 1965; right: Ray Charles, New Jersey, 1966. Opposite page: Robert De Niro in *Taxi Driver*.

been greater. Magazines existed that would regularly dedicate page after page to well-researched photo-essays from hard-working photographers. One such journal was *LIFE* magazine, which hired Schapiro for the first time in 1961. The faith they placed in this young and passionate photojournalist from New York marked the start of a working relationship that would not end until the magazine's closure as a weekly 11 years later.

“For any photographer in their teens, the ideal job was working for *LIFE* magazine. This was the highest point on the mountain. It meant I could do stories of poverty, stories of great wealth, stories of people well-known and stories of people unknown. The variety of situations you might encounter meant you would meet a thousand people in one year from all walks of life.”

Schapiro had prepared himself for this opportunity. During the 1950s and early 1960s he assisted other photographers and shot his own photo-essays. One of these was a story in 1961 about migrant workers in Arkansas. Another was a 1960 story on drug addiction in East Harlem. He covered things that he felt would make great pictures, but also were things he cared about.

This strategy worked. The images formed a strong portfolio and proved his determination to document life as he saw it. For his story on migrant workers in Arkansas, he was given a *New York Times Magazine* cover and for the first time the camps where the workers lived received electricity.

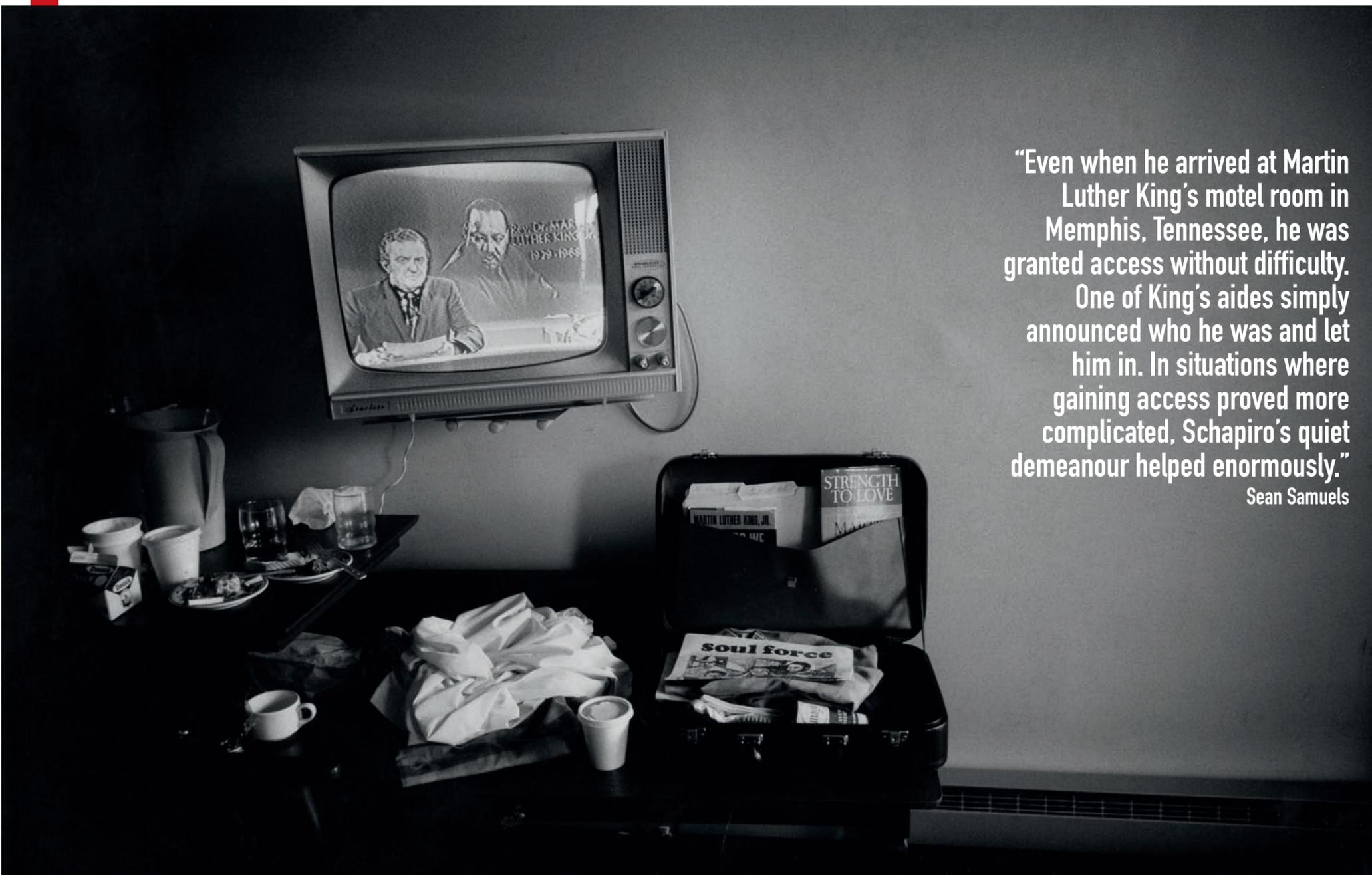
“I was trying to show the diversity of America, the rich and poor, the diversity of cultures and, as much as I could, the spirit of what America was going through. I remember taking a class under W Eugene Smith; there were seven of us, all of equal talent, none of us was a genius but only two became successful. What we had over the others was a strong drive that this was what we wanted to do. When I grew up it was the golden age of photojournalism and you could always find some way to cover things you cared about.”

Every photographer strives to find a unique point of view. When Schapiro creates a photo-essay he is looking for an opening picture, something that is going to describe and reveal what the story is about. Once he has this backbone he then looks to find the different aspects of the subject or the event that will complete the bigger picture, but without preconceptions of what he wants to find. He watches what happens before him, looking out for the special moments; emotional elements he believes make for iconic images, although he admits there isn't a formula.

“The thing that is most important when developing a talent is to realise that everyone is unique. You have to find the pluses to make a great picture and the best way to do that is to study photographers to develop your own style, your own point of view. I don't know what makes an iconic image. There are some that just register with you and they stay with you. The image for the film *Midnight Cowboy* is one a lot of people relate to and is considered one of the best motion picture images. I don't really know why. It's a subtlety as to what makes a good picture. It's a question of what people react to. There's a resonance but you don't always know why.”

One of the hardest jobs for a photographer is the editing process. Get it right and work will pour in. Get it wrong and your efforts may never see the light of day again. Quite often the images photographers are proud of are a world away from what sells and it takes great skill and humility to go forward with images that are commercial over creative. The now-famous image Schapiro took of the motel room used by Martin Luther King prior to his assassination in 1968 is an example of work he feels doesn't warrant the attention it has gained. It was the best image he took of the moment, but isn't one he picked at the time. There's another picture in his book *American Edge* which he is particularly proud of, showing people at a debutantes' ball in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1963.

STEVE SCHAPIRO



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Sean Samuels

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Often Schapiro worked with a reporter, which enabled him to develop further his unobtrusive approach. He was set free to search for moments that revealed what he saw in terms of situations or people’s lives, moments that could produce images where emotion, design and information came together.

“You became a fly on the wall because the reporter was doing all the talking. I have found it’s best not to talk to your subject, because if you do you’re going to get someone that’s not into themselves, they are into the conversation with an open mouth most of the time looking directly at you, which is not what you want. So the quieter you can be, the better you are. You want to capture someone in the moment they react to a situation or how they really are, exemplifying something you find to be uniquely them, the thing that makes you suddenly interested in them. It’s the something that draws you back to the photograph. Everyone has a sense of charisma and sometimes the better picture shows you don’t really understand them.”

Whether covering a hot, sunny day on Coney Island in New York in 1959 or documenting the mental decline of Robert De Niro’s character on the film set of *Taxi Driver* in 1975, Schapiro’s use of light is as subtle as the man himself. To minimise intrusion and maintain the atmosphere of the occasions he covered, Schapiro often used bounce flash. He found this technique gave good lighting, whether shooting black and white or colour, even when the latter required a change in the way he saw subjects.

“A black-and-white picture to me conveys emotion in a very strong way because you are dealing with black against white or white against black and you concentrate on the expression. There’s no distraction from colours. A colour picture can convey emotion, but it will do it in a very different way and the viewer will see different things. The focal point can change. You have to work in a way that colour adds to the experience rather than takes away from it. I learnt how to shoot in colour by doing a cover shot for *Look* magazine of the actress Candice Bergen. I started playing with filters and used one by accident to produce an image that blew all the other covers off the newsstand. Now we have digital, everything has changed again because it is so easy for someone to shoot with a digital camera and then change the image to black and white afterwards. This endangers black-and-white photography, without the technical skill required, it may disappear.”

There is also no room for this type of work anymore. It is almost impossible for a young photographer to show black-and-white documentary work today, the opportunities don’t exist. When Schapiro started, if he had a good idea, he could find a magazine that would feature it and pay enough to cover expenses.

“That’s more difficult today. We’ve lost our two major picture magazines in the United States, and while *Time* and *Newsweek* will do longer stories, they focus on poverty, politics or war and will use a well-known photographer, somebody they work closely with. On *LIFE* and *Look* magazines a lot of the photo-essays were about people from that time period. If you look back at those magazines you get a sense of life from then, but in the future when you look back at today’s magazines, all you’re going to get a sense of is poverty, politics or war. Where previously magazines wanted several images to tell the story, today they are looking for the one picture that conveys information and if it has design and emotion that’s a plus.”

Schapiro sees a number of reasons for *LIFE*’s closure as a weekly in 1972. First and foremost was the expansion of television, a much more immediate



**Above: Martin Luther King’s motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, hours after he was assassinated, 1968.
Left: Homage, *The Godfather* (Marlon Brando).**

before you start to look at the elements of the people in it. You may not be seeing as much of the people as of what he was doing in terms of creating a decisive moment to make it a memorable image. You feel he was responsible for that. My pictures don’t necessarily have that quality; you have a strong sense of the people and the emotion, but not of me. I think something my pictures have is a sense of the people without the obvious intrusion of the photographer or the sense of the photographer being there. You are participating in the subjects’ lives rather than being the photographer shooting their lives.”

STEVE SCHAPIRO

LIFE magazine was held in high regard in its time and working for it meant Schapiro was readily granted access to events and always treated well wherever he went. A lot of the pictures in *American Edge* evolved from assignments or were shots from the streets. Even when he arrived at Martin Luther King’s motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, he was granted access without difficulty. One of King’s aides simply announced who he was and let him in. In situations where gaining access proved more complicated, Schapiro’s quiet demeanour helped enormously.

“I always say you’re the boss, not the camera, and that it’s important you try not to intrude on a situation. I find it is important to be relaxed and not to focus on equipment, because this forces people to focus on you. People like to be photographed unless they feel you are making fun of them or are going to do

ICONS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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Steve Schapiro

form of communication favoured by the public. Towards the end Schapiro found that the hard work of photographers which had made the magazine a success contributed, ironically, to its downfall. The team might spend six months preparing an essay, but in the week of publication, newspapers would get wind of the story and then the radio was talking about it. Next it was on television and by the time the magazine came out, it was old news.

“I remember working on Bobby Kennedy’s campaign. Initially the magazine reporters and photographers were in the car right behind the lead vehicle, but gradually we were pushed back to make way for the television cameras and crews. You had this gradual change in the way to communicate and the advertisers favoured television much more than the magazines.”

He believes *LIFE* magazine also became successful covering events such as war when it was still something new visually for the public. W Eugene Smith’s pictures of combat in the South Pacific during the Second World War became an emotional experience for readers around the globe who were not used to photographers getting so close to the action. The wars that followed increasingly became televised and photographers were not encouraged to produce ever-improving work.

“I also don’t think the magazines handled themselves well. I felt the picture editor at *LIFE* was almost always telling you that what you did was really good. If I had been the editor I would have said to the photographers, ‘you’ve done a good job, but I think you can do better.’ Certainly there were stories I did that I thought were okay, but I was told they were terrific. So if you have someone like that – not inspiring photographers to really go out and do better than they’ve done before, to find the pluses that make a picture better – that’s not a good situation.”

In the rush to try to cover everything more quickly and comprehensively, the flow that was present in photo-essays made by W Eugene Smith or Cartier-Bresson was lost. In 1963, Schapiro was one of 13 photographers sent to cover the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom at which Martin Luther King gave his legendary speech, “I Have a Dream”. The images were looked at by six picture editors, which led to a selection that didn’t necessarily work together to convey the mood he felt. If one photographer had been allowed to concentrate on the story they would have worked hard to figure out the ups and downs of the event and been better placed to create a single coherent essay packed with emotion. The decline in advertising also meant the magazine could no longer sustain lengthy photo-essays. It couldn’t pay for the editorial pages.



Schapiro got *LIFE* to agree a story with the writer James Baldwin, who had published an essay in the *New Yorker* magazine about the black experience in America, which later formed the basis of a book, *The Fire Next Time*. “We travelled together for six weeks from Harlem to North Carolina to Mississippi to New Orleans and I photographed a lot in that time period. The pictures turned out terrific and were laid out for 12 pages, but this was unrealistic. The magazine wasn’t getting the same amount of advertising and so the pictures were edited down and the impact was reduced.”

The world was changing. It was falling in love with celebrity and sensing a rising demand for Hollywood portraits. Schapiro left *LIFE* magazine shortly before its end and moved to Los Angeles where he began shooting for *People* magazine and for the major film studios as a special photographer. He shot the first cover for *People* and about 50 followed, but it was an entirely different kind of journalism. For *LIFE* he had been able to spend three or four days to months covering a story, enabling him to find the important moments and situations that were going to make good pictures. With *People* he had perhaps two hours, and every 15 minutes the subjects were changing their clothes to make it seem as if the story had run over a much longer period. On films he was brought in to take advertising and publicity shots. Occasionally he was able to work 10 or 12 weeks on a film, and during one period it felt as if this work was very similar to the documentary stories he had been doing before.

“The studios wanted six or eight pages of coverage in magazines. The idea was people would not be seeing an advert per se, but news. This was better for the success of the film than putting a poster in front of their eyes. I was asked to work because I could get six pages in *Time*, *Newsweek*, or the *Saturday Evening Post* as well as all different kinds of things in Europe. As a special photographer I was publicising the film and handling my own work. On *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Chinatown*, I shot the pictures, then placed them in magazines.”

As a respected photojournalist Schapiro stood a better chance of getting coverage because magazines didn’t trust the studios to give them exclusive pictures or even the best ones. They had more faith in their photographers to

STEVE SCHAPIRO



**Above: Under the boardwalk, Coney Island, New York, 1959.
Opposite page: Coney Island beach, 1959.**

provide this service. However, as even Schapiro found out, not even this reputation guaranteed immunity from studio duplicity.

“I remember I had a problem on *The Godfather*. I was excited to work with Marlon Brando; through my connections with the magazines and the exposure this would give the studios, I was made welcome on the set and covered most of the important moments. It was one of the few films where I was able to get *LIFE* magazine to guarantee a cover, but then at the last minute Paramount Studios gave images, some of them my own pictures, to *Newsweek* magazine to come out at the same time. So I was double-crossed by the studio. A photographer is always in the middle.”

During this period the pace of life was much more akin to that of today’s professional photographers. Schapiro was extremely busy and would frequently fly across the States to work. Gone were the days of studying a subject at length and getting to know every nuance. He was often shooting several films at the same time, completing stories for magazines and taking advertising shots. Indeed he still produces so much work, it is hard to know how he ever sleeps.

In the past few years alone he has worked on a new portraits book, and collaborated twice with director Michael Mann, on the film *Public Enemies* and on a pilot show for the HBO cable TV network called *Luck*, starring Dustin Hoffman and Nick Nolte. He has also worked with the singers Barbra Streisand and David Bowie on album cover art.

Schapiro still finds time to do his personal work (claiming still to be developing his photographic style) and to organise exhibitions in galleries across the world. His introduction to galleries was through his friend Jim Marshall, the recently deceased music photographer. They had known each other since 1967 and became friends during the flower power era in the Haight-Ashbury area of San Francisco. Marshall worked through Fahey/Klein Gallery in Los Angeles, and at a party after one of his openings in 1998,

Marshall insisted gallery owner David Fahey look at Schapiro’s pictures. Fahey was less than enthusiastic at first and it took three phone calls before he finally invited Schapiro to his gallery with a portfolio, but at the end of the hour and a half they had spent together, Schapiro had a private show and a book deal for *American Edge*.

“Now I am working on books, primarily because that seems like a way to still have a flow of pictures that work together. Doing a book becomes exactly the same experience I had working for *LIFE*, which is putting together something that has continuity so you can follow the story just from the pictures.”

Over the years Schapiro’s work has featured in and on the covers of many magazines, including *LIFE*, *Look*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vanity Fair*, *Sports Illustrated*, *People* and *Paris Match*. He has worked on more than 200 motion pictures. Two major books of his documentary work have been made and his stills from countless film sets continue to be published, most recently from that of *Taxi Driver*.

If I were to choose a scene to start the film of Schapiro’s life, it would be the moments he spent photographing teenagers enjoying life on the beach at Coney Island. It is a gentle and happy time, and looking at these images offers a wonderful insight into the era. I am caught up so much in the spirit of the work, the colours, the tones and the players within the scenes, that my picture of the young, quiet, perhaps shy photographer making these images quickly fades away. Perhaps this is not the best way to introduce your lead character in a story, but then I remember this is what the images are supposed to do. This is the intention of the photographer and I think to myself, for a man who was never there, Steve Schapiro has witnessed a hell of a lot. **PF**

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