

PRE-PRESS RELEASE

PAPARAZZI!

PHOTOGRAPHERS, STARS AND ARTISTS

26 FEBRUARY – 9 JUNE 2014



Jean Pigozzi, *Mick Jagger and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Hôtel du Cap, Antibes, France, 1990*
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1.

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

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26 FEBRUARY - 9 JUNE 2014
GALERIE 3

Centre Pompidou-Metz dedicates an unprecedented exhibition to the phenomenon and aesthetic of paparazzi photography through more than 600 works (photography, painting, video, sculpture, installation, etc.).

Covering fifty years of celebrities caught in the lens, Paparazzi! Photographers, stars and artists considers the paparazzo at work by examining the complex and fascinating ties that form between photographer and photographed, going on to reveal the paparazzi influence on fashion photography.

By associating some of the genre's leading names, including Ron Galella, Pascal Rostain and Bruno Mouron, Tazio Secchiaroli, with reflections on this modern-day myth by Richard Avedon, Raymond Depardon, William Klein, Gerhard Richter, Cindy Sherman and Andy Warhol, Paparazzi! Photographers, stars and artists sets out to define the paparazzi aesthetic.

A catalogue, jointly published by Centre Pompidou-Metz and Flammarion, accompanies the exhibition.

Curator:

Clément Chéroux, curator, Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, head of the photography department

Curatorial assistants:

Quentin Bajac, chief curator of photography, MoMA, New York
Sam Stourdzé, director, Musée de l'Élysée, Lausanne

2.

STRUCTURE OF THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition is divided into three parts: Photographers, Stars and Artists.

RED CARPET (INTRODUCTION)

The visitor steps into the exhibition space to be immediately confronted with paparazzi flashes from an installation by Malachi Farrell, titled *Interview (Paparazzi)*. Photographs showing a pack of paparazzi "hunting their prey" create a mise en abyme that plunges the visitor into a new role as a star, while giving them a taste of the pressure celebrities are under.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

A profession

The profession of paparazzo is more complex than it seems. Paparazzi must be ingenious, mounting what are often delicate, high-risk operations. They each have their tricks of the trade and tales to tell which together form the grand story of "paparazzism".

In a series of interviews with paparazzi, a presentation of their tools (including spy cameras, long lenses and disguises), photographs by Francis Apesteguy, Olivier Mirguet, Jessica Dimmock and Christophe Beauregard, and an excerpt from Raymond Depardon's *Reporters* film, this section goes behind-the-scenes of the paparazzi.

Myths

The figure of the paparazzo was invented by Federico Fellini in 1960. The name is a contraction of "pappataci" (mosquitoes) and "ragazzi" (ruffians). The paparazzo is portrayed as a post-modern anti-hero. Since *La Dolce Vita*, he has become one of the mythical figures of popular culture.

Excerpts from films by Dario Argento, Federico Fellini, Brian De Palma, Louis Malle and Andrzej Zulawski, from the 1930s to the present, reveal the public's perception of the paparazzo as a solitary figure, often down on his luck. Devoid of morals or scruples, and therefore hard to love, he is the double negative of the war correspondent.

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Excerpt from the catalogue: Aurore Fossard-De Almeida, "The on-screen paparazzo: construction of a contemporary myth"

The recurring figure of the paparazzo in fictional film, particularly since the late 1990s, shows not so much a heightened interest in the profession than the construction of a "contemporary myth" (Roland Barthes, Mythologies, in Complete Works II). The paparazzo is considered photography's poor relation, yet provides valuable inspiration for television and cinema. Whereas this same history of photography celebrates the war photographer, the paparazzo makes fiction that much more exciting. Subversive means – images are "stolen" –, mass circulation – the press – and a fascinating subject – celebrity – define the on-screen paparazzo. These same elements create narrative tension and have important visual implications for television and cinema fiction. The specificities of this hybrid photographic practice allow for the construction of a typical and, at the same time, complex character: fiction portrays a stereotype paparazzo by using the same recurrent characteristics but also enhances the character. As the paparazzo takes on an increasingly important role in the narrative, he develops new traits and becomes more nuanced.

[...]

*"We call ourselves 'the rats'," says paparazzo Pascal Rostain. Like the nickname the photographers themselves have chosen, the paparazzo is portrayed on-screen as a crawling insect, a bloodthirsty animal. Described as "creatures" in *The Philadelphia Story* (George Cukor, 1940), "vermin" in *The Public Eye* (Howard Franklin, 1992) and "parasites" in *Paparazzi* (Paul Abascal, 2004), they are shown crawling on all fours in *The Picture Snatcher* (Lloyd Bacon, 1933) or raking through dustbins in *Paparazzi* (Alain Berbérian, 1998) and *Paparazzi* (Paul Abascal, 2004). Asked about his work, paparazzo Francis Apesteguy replies, "when I put on my jeans and sneakers, put my long lens in my backpack, I go into raptor mode. I also have my jackal mode, which doesn't sound so good but I still like it. 'Jackal' has a ring to it, plus a jackal's cunning. It sneaks around, stops at nothing. It's gross, has no scruples. It's really the best comparison." His animality makes the paparazzo an instinctive character. He leaps when least expected, takes away the biggest chunk of his prey and leaves it, outraged or annihilated, far behind. Just as rats scuttle beneath the pavements of those who orchestrate our society, the paparazzo character creeps through the dregs of the media and culture industries, as seen on screen.*

STARS

Under scrutiny

Paparazzo is a male-dominated profession. Its targets, on the other hand, are almost always epitomes of womanhood. This section considers the case of eight women – Brigitte Bardot, Paris Hilton, Jackie Kennedy-Onassis, Stéphanie de Monaco, Britney Spears, Diana Spencer and Elizabeth Taylor – to show how the style and stakes of paparazzi photography have changed over half a century.

The other side

Celebrities are not just helpless victims. When they spot the paparazzi, they can choose to play along with them and allow themselves to be photographed or not, in which case their reactions can range from a polite refusal to physical aggression. They can also be a willing accomplice, going as far as to invent their own way of escaping the star system and its constraints. This section presents celebrities' different reactions to the camera through a series of shots by the twentieth century's greatest paparazzi – Daniel Angeli, Francis Apesteguy, Ron Galella, Marcello Geppetti, Bruno Mouron and Pascal Rostain, Erich Salomon, Tazio Secchiaroli, Sébastien Valiela and Weegee.

Excerpt from the catalogue: Nathalie Heinich, "Paparazzi, traders in visibility"

Paparazzi photos are no longer simply the candid shots of matinee idols with which they began in the 1910s. They are visual intrusions into famous people's privacy. Subject and author stand on opposing sides of the infinitely fluctuating border between public and private life, in an endless battle for image control. In Salman Rushdie's words, "the public figure is happy to be photographed only when she or he is prepared for it, "on guard," one might say. The paparazzo looks only for the unguarded moment. The battle is for control, for a form of power." (Salman Rushdie, Diana's Crash in Diana Crash, Marc Augé et al., Paris, Descartes et Cie, 1998). It is this question of control which allows the paparazzo to disregard the right to privacy and instead insist on the duplicity of stars who will go to any lengths to get publicity when they need it, then are determined to control it once they have it: "When they go into show business, they enter into a deal with the devil [...] and the way I see it, I am the devil's helper" says one paparazzo (quoted by Jake Halpern in Fame Junkies. The Hidden Truths behind America's Favorite Addiction, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2007).

ARTISTS

Forms of appropriation

The paparazzi photo has a recognisable aesthetic, a result of the conditions in which it is taken. These are on-the-spot, improvised images, with all the consequences this has on their composition: the long lens for distance shots, or the flash for close-ups, flatten the image. Celebrities shielding themselves behind their hand has become the symbol of media aggression. Since the 1960s, the paparazzi aesthetic has inspired numerous artists in Pop Art, post-Modernism and more contemporary movements, from Richard Hamilton to Paul McCarthy, including Valerio Adami, Barbara Probst or Gerhard Richter.

Excerpt from the catalogue: Marion Varinot and Nicolas Maubert, "Paparazzi in the eyes of the law – what rights when photographing private lives?"

While paparazzi could be given a similar status to press photographers, the majority of judges refuse to acknowledge them as the creators of original work and in doing so deny them the protection of copyright, often in irrevocable terms. [...]

Such decisions come down hard on sports photographers and paparazzi as they refuse to acknowledge any original quality to their work, citing criteria whose contours are relatively unclear. Can a photographer really be said to have a "purely passive approach" when he carefully focuses his lens from the hide-out he has chosen not only because it is out of the subject's view, but also for the background and light in the subsequent photo? Has he not portrayed the subject by painstakingly choosing an angle for his shot, selecting one or other lens, and setting exposure time? Does the subject's fleeting appearance imply a lack of originality in the work? Would the judge take the same attitude towards a wildlife photographer who, after hours of waiting, has captured on camera a hummingbird drinking nectar from a flower? Not so sure.

[...]

The paparazzo will doubtless never see his photographs celebrated as original creations, whereas an artist inspired by the "paparazzi aesthetic" (blurring, subjects visibly opposed to having their photo taken, etc.) benefits from copyright protection. This is true not only for artists who claim to have snatched a candid shot, when in reality their images have been carefully staged (something Helmut Newton did in his time), but also for genuinely unsolicited images. In 1999, Magnum photographer Luc Delahaye published *L'Autre*, a compilation of 90 portraits of anonymous commuters, taken without their consent. The Tribunal de Grande Instance de Paris considered the book to be "undeniably an artwork in view of the originality of the author's premise, a photographer who uses his art as a means of observing society, [...] the manner in which he has conveyed the subjects' expression, and the quality of the images due, among other factors, to how the subjects are framed and how the photographs capture the look in their eyes." (Tribunal de Grande Instance de Paris, 2 June 2004, M. Bensalah v. L. Delahaye, Magnum, Éditions Phaidon Presse Limited and SA Mk2). In other words, when a "bona fide" artist plays the paparazzo, judges will consider his to be an intellectual work and will grant him the protection of copyright. Such differential treatment appears to be nothing more than a reflection of the paparazzo's poor image. The majority of people – which includes the readers of gossip magazines! – see the paparazzi as robbing others of their image and privacy.

Through the paparazzo's lens

Fascinated by the image hunters' approach, numerous artists and fashion photographers since the 1960s have stepped into their shoes for one or other project. Photographers such as Richard Avedon, William Klein and Terry Richardson were first to get under the paparazzo's skin for a series of shots. Many artists, including the American Gary Lee Boas, English artist Alison Jackson, and G.R.A.M., an Austrian collective, have also collected stars in the same

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way paparazzi do. Since the 1980s, women artists such as Malin Arnesson, Kathrin Günter and Cindy Sherman have questioned the artist's celebrity status.

Excerpt from the catalogue: Quentin Bajac, "Migrations and appropriations – Artists and the paparazzi aesthetic"

In 1997, Princess Diana's fatal accident focused unprecedented attention on the paparazzi. The paparazzo became that extreme figure, part cynical "shit-stirrer", part anti-establishment hero, both stigmatised and admired for his character and beyond-the-law production. At the dawn of a new century, when the Internet was redefining deeply the boundaries between the private and public spheres, a new generation, most of them born in the 1970s and 80s, set about appropriating this language while questioning this relationship, our relationship, with this type of image. Olivier Mirguet and his *mise en abyme* of the paparazzi phenomenon, which proceeds as much from documentary as art; Viktoria Binshtok using paparazzi flashbulbs to explore the limits between abstraction and figuration; Kathrin Günter, paparazzo of her own private life, playing on the unlikely alliance of the introverted practice of self-portraiture and media voyeurism; Alison Jackson whose impossible images question photographic truth and our (unhealthy) appetite as spectators, each contributes in different directions to this phenomenon: so much in fact that it now appears tamed, while its photographic language, once marginal, is now commonplace. "Are we all paparazzi?" asked the Getty Center at a panel discussion in 2012. At a time when American companies rent out the services of fake paparazzi (and fake fans and fake bodyguards) so that we can play star for a day – proving Andy Warhol right – we're tempted to add, are we all celebrities?

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NEWSSTAND (CONCLUSION)

Celebrity magazines satisfy the demand of a media industry which has its own rhetoric and its own, unmistakable page layout. Through works by Jonathan Horowitz, Armin Linke, Paul McCarthy and Andy Warhol, this last section raises the question of how paparazzi photos reach their audience.

Curated and produced by Centre Pompidou-Metz, Paparazzi! Photographers, stars and artists will be shown at Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt from 27 June to 12 October 2014.

3.

INDICATIVE LIST

ADAMI Valerio
ANGELI Daniel
APESTEGUY Francis
ARGENTO Dario
ARNESSON Malin
ASCANI Massimo
AVEDON Richard
BANIER François-Marie
BARON Julian
BEAUREGARD Christophe
BETTMANN Otto Ludwig
BINSCHTOK Viktoria
BOAS Gary Lee
BRANIMIC Kvartuc
BURLLOT Jack
CALLE Sophie
CANDE Daniel
CARDINALE Stéphane
CICCONI Umberto
DANZ Pascal
DEMAND Thomas
DEPARDON Raymond
DESPOTOVIC Dusko
DIMMOCK Jessica
DUSSAULX Romain
ELTERMAN Brad
ESCH Thierry
FARRELL Malachi
FELLINI Federico
GALELLA Ron
GARNER Philippe
GARRITTANO Settimio
GEPETTI Marcello
GINFRAY Michel
GINIÈS Michel
G.R.A.M. (Günther Holler-Schuster, Ronald
Walter, Armin Ranner, Martin Behr)
GRAPPASONNI Fratelli
GÜNTER Kathrin
HAMILTON Richard
HARRING Keith
HATAMI Sharock
HERNANDEZ Jonathan
HOROWITZ Jonathan
ISHAM Wayne
JACKSON Alison
KAHRS Johannes
KER Jean
KLEIN William
KRUGER Barbara
LALANDE Benjamin
LESEMANN Christian
LINKE Armin
LUBOMIRSKI Alex
LUDIN Ulf
MARTIN Xavier
MC CARTHY Paul
MEKAS Jonas
MIRGUET Olivier
MORIN Patrick
MOURON Bruno
PALECEK Jérémiah
PALMA (DE) Brian
PEDRIALI Dino
PENDZICH Erik
PERRIN Frank
PIGOZZI Jean
PRIESTER Max
PROBST Barbara
RICHARDSON Terry
RICHTER Gerhard
ROSS Alicia
ROSTAIN Pascal
SALOMON Erich
SANTOS Jaclyn
SECCHIAROLI Tazio
SHERMAN Cindy
SICCOLI Patrick
SMEAL Jim
TICKNER Liam
TURK Gavin
UT Nick
VOX Maximilien
WEEGEE
WHAROL Andy
WILCKE Willy
WYLER William
YOUNG Richard
ZULAWSKI Andrej

4.

PHOTO CONTEST

Centre Pompidou–Metz is organising a photo contest to coincide with the exhibition.

It will launch on 26 February at wipplay.com and on the Centre Pompidou–Metz Facebook page.

WIPPLAY invites amateur and professional photographers to take part in photo contests and challenges through a social media platform which is based around cultural events, community initiatives and art trends. WIPPLAY is all at once a simple photo contest which contributes to reveal anonymous talent, a platform where people with a shared passion for images can meet, a track game or a game of speed. It invites users to show their photos online, out in the open, or in galleries, and benefit from the opinion of leading image professionals.

5.

VISUALS FOR THE PRESS

Visuals from the exhibition can be downloaded at:
[www.centrepompidou-metz.fr / phototheque](http://www.centrepompidou-metz.fr/phototheque).

User name: presse
Password: Pomp1d57

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Michel Giniès, *Robert Redford and Costa Gavras ambushed by photographers as they leave Lapérouse restaurant, Paris, September 1976*
© Michel Giniès Collection



Pierluigi Agency, *Photographers waiting for Anita Ekberg disembarking a plane*
(original print from *La Dolce Vita*)
© Michel Giniès Collection
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STARS

Daniel Angeli, *Liz Taylor*
30 x 20 cm
© Daniel Angeli



Ron Galella, *Jackie O. and Ron*, New York, 1971
30 x 20 cm
© Ron Galella / A. Galerie



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Jean Pigozzi, *Mick Jagger and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Hôtel du Cap, Antibes, France, 1990*
© Jean Pigozzi



ARTISTS

Julian Baron, *C.E.N.S.U.R.A. España 2011*
© Julian Baron



Alison Jackson, *Bush with Rubik's Cube*
© Alison Jackson



William Klein, *Antonia + yellow cab, Vogue fashion shoot, New York, 1962*
© William Klein



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still, 1980*
Black and white photograph, 31,4 x 40,3 cm
Exhibition print [MP# 54]
Courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures



7. PRESS CONTACTS

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