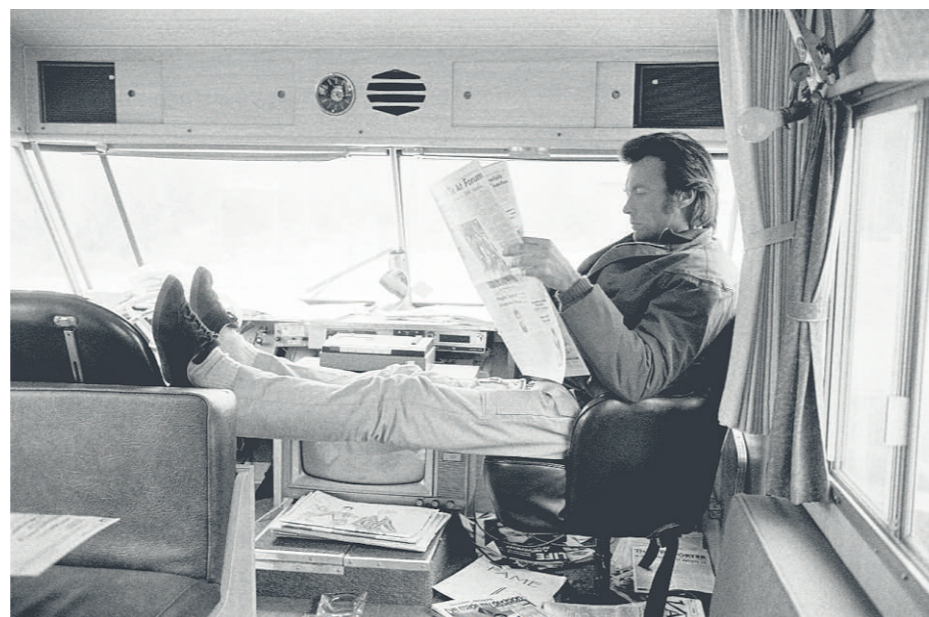
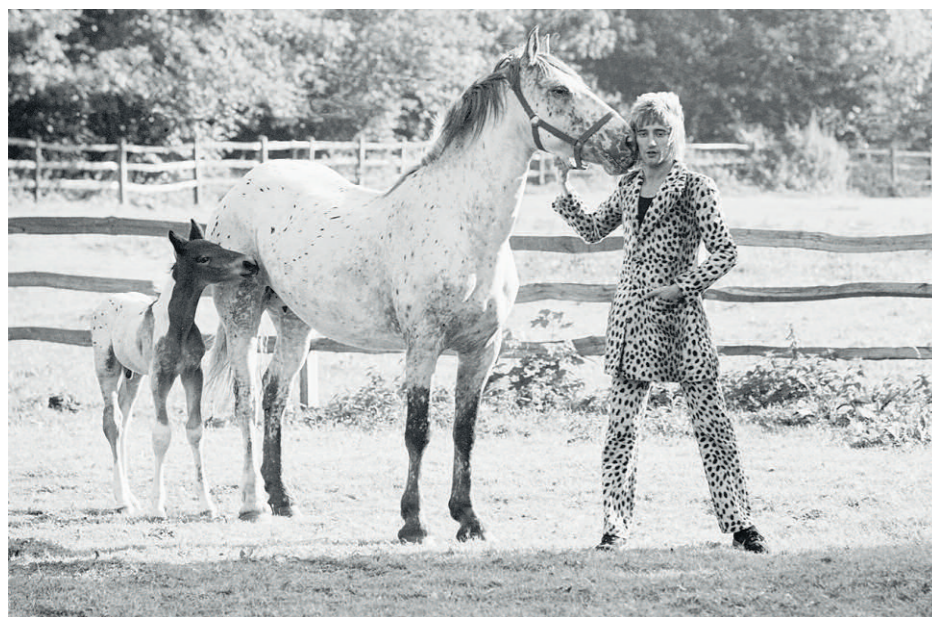


Arts & Books



Candid camera: (this page, clockwise from above): Audrey Hepburn on the set of 'Two for the Road' (1967); Raquel Welch on the cross, 20th Century Fox Studios, (1970); Clint Eastwood on the set of 'Joe Kidd', Tucson, Arizona (1972); Rod Stewart at home in Windsor (1971); Tom Jones visiting his birthplace, Pontypridd, South Wales (1974). Far right, from top: Terry O'Neill; Faye Dunaway at the Beverly Hills Hotel, Los Angeles (1977) TERRY O'NEILL; SHAUN CURRY/AFP/GETTY



The East End boy who shot the stars

Terry O'Neill's portraits epitomise the swinging Sixties and stylish Seventies. Ahead of a new exhibition, he tells **Charlotte Cripps** the tales behind his favourite photographs

I swore I'd never fall for an actress. She was the exception, years later. I broke the rule there," Terry O'Neill is reminiscing about his ex-wife Faye Dunaway. His portrait of the American actress, taken in 1977, years before they were married, is one of his favourite photographs and will go on show alongside other gems in an exhibition in London next week. Dunaway is pictured sitting poolside at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles, the morning after she won an Academy Award for her role in *Network*, surrounded by newspapers, with her Oscar on the table. "I set the shot up the night before in case she won an Oscar. I love the detail in the picture", says O'Neill, 73, who is eating a cooked breakfast in a café near his studio in South Audley Street, London. "I wanted the *LA Times* headline, about her co-star Peter Finch, who won his Oscar posthumously, in the shot."

In another photograph, Frank Sinatra is flanked by bodyguards on Miami Beach in 1968. O'Neill had exclusive access to the star for 30 years, thanks to Ava Gardner, with whom O'Neill was friends until she died in 1990. She wrote a letter to her then ex-husband Sinatra which gave O'Neill the green light to shoot him. "They'd split-up by then but it was obvious they were still in love with one another," recalls O'Neill. "I walked on to the set of *Lady in Cement* in Miami and Sinatra was reading the letter. I wish I'd known what it said," he says. "I could see why Sinatra was potty about Ava Gardner. She wasn't a femme fatale. She was just a shy little girl from North Carolina who loved walking around barefoot. But she was chased by men all over the world."

In another snap, Audrey Hepburn poses in a pool in 1967, despite the fact that she "hated water", according to O'Neill. It was taken on the set of *Two for the Road* with Albert Finney, with whom she was rumoured to be having an affair. In another of O'Neill's favourite shots, Clint Eastwood relaxes and reads a newspaper in his trailer in Tucson, Arizona, in 1972, while filming the western *Joe Kidd*.

These days O'Neill, who was born in the East End of London, has A-list stars queuing up to be photographed by him, but they remain disappointed. As a rule he photographs only his friends - most recently Eric Clapton for his new album and Michael Caine for his book cover - though occasionally he'll take photographs of other subjects that interest him. He enjoyed shadowing Nelson Mandela for a week in 2008, when the South African leader visited Britain as part of his 90-year birthday celebrations.

"In my heyday I photographed Paul Newman, Robert Mitchum, John Wayne, Richard Burton - all the greats - but today the stars don't hold a candle to them." Taking photographs of actresses bores him, he admits, because "they all look the same with those Botox



injections". "I'd never retouch a photo anyway," he says. "It's all so controlled now. The PRs have ruined the intimacy my work thrived on." O'Neill fell into photography quite by accident, which makes his story even more remarkable. He wanted to train as a jazz drummer in New York, so he applied to be an air steward with British Airways as a means of getting to the US. He ended up as a trainee in the company's technical photographic unit at Heathrow airport. As part of his apprenticeship he attended art school and began photographing people in the arrival and departure lounges for his coursework.

In 1959, he happened to snap the Home Secretary Rab Butler sleeping at the airport. The photograph ended up on the front page of the *Sunday Dispatch* and the editor offered him a part-time job as their airport photographer.

His refreshingly honest and intimate style soon became all the rage and he began photographing up-and-coming stars including the

Beatles and the Rolling Stones. "I used to hang out at the Ad Lib Club in London during the 1960s with the Beatles and the Stones. At the time I was higher up the pecking order than they were, as I used to get all their photos in the newspapers. We used to laugh at the thought of Mick Jagger singing at 40. 'What jobs are we going to have when this is all over?' we'd say."

O'Neill fast became one of the most published photographers of the 1960s and 1970s. "The first year I didn't know what I was doing. I was photographing everybody from Jean Shrimpton. It's only looking back that I see how incredible it is that I became the unofficial recorder of the people who made the 1960s happen."

Now O'Neill is focusing on exhibitions of his work; he's trying to break into China and has shows lined up all over the world, including one in Moscow next year. This current exhibition of photographs at London's The Little Black Gallery, in Chelsea, is a welcome trip down memory lane.

A 1963 photograph of Marianne Faithfull wearing a black basque transformed the wholesome country girl, showing her in a new, glamorous light, while Tom Jones is photographed in Pontypridd in 1974, standing outside the house in which he was born, with his brand new Rolls Royce in the background. "I wanted to capture the sense of the 'local boy made good'." Elsewhere, Raquel Welch hangs on a cross wearing the fur bikini from her film *One Million Years BC*. "She said to me, 'Wearing that bloody fur bikini in the film crucified me.' I thought, 'What a great shot that would be, to put her on a cross.'"

Other photographs include David Bowie sitting next to a giant dog standing on its hind legs, for a publicity shot for his *Diamond Dogs* album cover, and Rod Stewart wearing a leopard-skin suit that matches the piebald horses he's posing with at his home in Old Windsor in 1971. Elsewhere, the image of Brigitte Bardot as a cowgirl on the set of *The Legend of French King* in 1971, comes from the same roll of film as his infamous shot of her with a cigar, which hangs permanently in the National Portrait Gallery.

The photographer's only regret is that he didn't keep all his negatives safe. "I've got an incredible archive but there is an incredible amount of stuff missing. I've got no idea where it's gone. I'd love to have the photographs I took of President Kennedy." That said, O'Neill doesn't have his own photographs hanging on the walls of his Battersea home. "I'm sick to death of looking at them all day - I need a break when I get home."

Terry O'Neill: Guys & Dolls, The Little Black Gallery, London SW10 (The little black gallery.com) 1 September to 30 October

The Wednesday Book

Apocalyptic tales for a hi-tech age



THINGS WE DIDN'T SEE COMING
By Steven Amsterdam
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The critical and commercial success of *The Road* casts a long shadow over the fiction that follows it - not so much in Cormac McCarthy's technical or emotional accomplishments, but in its vision of a post-apocalyptic America. Setting any story in a similar terrain cannot help but invite comparisons with those blasted landscapes. And while Steven Amsterdam's *Things We Didn't See Coming* is in places original, insightful and bleakly romantic, it cannot quite escape the spectre of such a celebrated precursor.

A novel in stories, *Things We Didn't See Coming* takes the arresting premise that the fears and paranoia around Y2K were, in fact, realised. In the opening story, the narrator describes the move from the city to the country, his father's predictions of apocalypse indulged by his family rather than believed. The familial tensions are wonderfully teased out, the menace of the gathering storm subtly implied, a moment of moral panic deftly judged.

In understated prose, Amsterdam traces the narrator's life from his teens to his forties, through the wastelands of a world suddenly deranged and despoiled. From the rain-lashed countryside, where wild animals and nature itself are mortal enemies, to the barricaded cities where black-market dealing and scavenging keep the citizens alive, we see a man drift physically and ethically: part survivalist, part moralist. It makes for an engaging, occasionally infuriating character - attuned to both raw beauty and spiritual ugliness.

Among these stories there are clear stand-outs. "The Theft That Got Me Here" is a tautly written tale of escape, marital love and homecoming; "Dry Land", in which a drunk mother and her 17-year-old daughter reach a harrowing crossroads, is tender, brutal, and unnerving; while "Predisposed" features a teenager who is treated as a god but is full of bile and bemusement. These stories deal with the facts of living even though the world outside seems to be dying. Yet there are too many others that don't quite convince, and Amsterdam's talent for voice and telling detail feels somewhat thrown away on sketchy political plots and pointless ménages-à-trois. Still, there is much here that points to a bright future, suggesting that Cormac McCarthy no longer has exclusive rights on this territory.

STUART EVERS



Review the week's big film

Salt

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