

Accessible Exhibition Wall Text and Labels

RetroBlakesberg: The Music Never Stopped

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Exhibition Text

RetroBlakesberg: The Music Never Stopped

RetroBlakesberg: The Music Never Stopped delves into the evolution of the Bay Area's vibrant music culture through the lens of photographer Jay Blakesberg. Featuring images shot on film between 1978 and 2008, the exhibition presents a captivating exploration of the deep connection between music and culture, and highlights the profound influence of the Bay Area on Blakesberg's forty-five years behind the lens. From electrifying live concert images to era-defining portraiture, each section of the exhibition is a testament to the transformative power of music and its ability to transcend generations.

Raised in a suburban Jewish family in New Jersey, Blakesberg followed his love of music to San Francisco, where he found an inspiring photography and music community and endless opportunities to capture musical icons on film. From the

portraits shot in his Clementina Street studio in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood and the breathtaking landscapes of the Marin Headlands to the hidden corners of North Beach and Potrero Hill, Blakesberg drew inspiration from the unique locations that surrounded him.

Organized into three sections, the exhibition begins with a look at Blakesberg's early years as a teen and rock 'n' roll fan, which inspired him to pick up a camera. He was soon swept up by the psychedelic swirl of the Grateful Dead and began his professional photography journey. In the live performance section, he documents some of the world's biggest music stars and most historic Bay Area venues, as well as long-lost San Francisco night clubs and punk bars. The final section further traces Blakesberg's career through the portraits he created of popular bands and musicians, including many of the San Francisco icons that he read about as a young boy in New Jersey who dreamt about one day coming to the Bay Area. This collection of images celebrates the rich tapestry of music and culture that Blakesberg documented on film, capturing the soul of a generation over three decades and the spirit of this unique city by the bay.

Scan the QR codes in the gallery to hear stories behind some of the images in the exhibition in the artists' own words.

Early Works

In the summer of 1977, Jay Blakesberg was introduced to the music of the Jerry Garcia Band in Asbury Park, New Jersey. Equipped with a 35mm camera and a 50mm lens, he and a friend captured two nearly-focused photos from their front-row seats and developed them in a friend's basement. The experience ignited Blakesberg's infatuation with music photography. During his teenage years, he immersed himself in parties, altered states, and most of all, great music from great bands. No adventure escaped his lens. Driven by the thrill of what Blakesberg calls "trial and error and occasional success!" he continued to capture fleeting moments of the artists who first inspired him to pick up a camera.

In the spring of 1978, after attending a concert by Jorma Kaukonen, the guitarist of Jefferson Airplane, Blakesberg captured a snapshot of Kaukonen's gold-toothed grin. This image became Blakesberg's first published work when he was sixteen years old. These formative experiences, among many others represented in this first section, marked the beginning of his forty-five-year career. Photography became his life's work, shaped by the pivotal moments he encountered in his youth that sparked his passion for capturing the essence of music and its vibrant culture.

To hear stories from his early years in Blakesberg's own words, scan the QR codes along this wall.

Artwork Labels: Early Works

1. *Maria, Upstate New York, September 1978*
2. *Tommy, Maria, and friend, Upstate New York, August 18, 1978*
3. *Tommy, Steve, Frank, and Chang, South Kortright, New York, spring 1978*
4. *South Kortright, New York, spring 1978*
5. *Stu, Clark, New Jersey, July 1978*
6. *Billy and Lozzy, Clark, New Jersey, June 1978*
7. *George, power hitter, Clark, New Jersey, 1978*
8. *Mary, Clark, New Jersey, 1979*
9. *Frenchy, Clark, New Jersey, 1979*

10. *Neil Young at Madison Square Garden, New York, New York, September 28, 1978*
11. *John Cipollina at the Lone Star Cafe, New York, New York, May 17, 1979*
12. *Bob Dylan at Madison Square Garden, New York, New York, September 29, 1978*
13. *Pete Townshend at the Capitol Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey, September 11, 1979*
14. *Jorma Kaukonen, New York, New York, May 20, 1978*
15. *Jane Fonda at No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
16. *Bob Weir and Brent Mydland at No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
17. *Brent Mydland at No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
18. *No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
19. *Jane Fonda at No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
20. *Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, and Graham Nash at No Nukes Rally, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1979*
21. *B.B. King, James Cotton, Muddy Waters, and Johnny Winter at Radio City Music Hall, New York, New York, June 29, 1979*
22. *Crosby, Stills & Nash at No Nukes Concert, Madison Square Garden, New York, New York, September 23, 1979*
23. *Willie Nelson at the Capitol Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey, April 1, 1979*

24. *Jay Blakesberg, Self Portrait, Clark, New Jersey, 1978*
25. *Jay Blakesberg, Self Portrait, Westfield, New Jersey, June 5, 1981*
26. *Jay and Bill Blakesberg, Westfield, New Jersey, June 6, 1981*
27. *Brother Tom, Tempe, Arizona, June 5, 1980*
28. *Liquid LSD, Olympia, Washington, 1984*
29. *Tony and Jana, Olympia, Washington, June 1982*
30. *Betsy and Kristin hitchhiking to the Rainbow Gathering, June 1982*
31. *Erin at the Jay Gets Out of Jail Party, Olympia, Washington, September 25, 1983*
32. *Easter Sunday, Olympia, Washington, 1984*
33. *Heliotroupe, Olympia, Washington, June 12, 1982*
34. *Karen, Sue, Deb, and Jana, Olympia, Washington, September 25, 1983*
35. *Diane at the Rainbow Gathering, Modoc National Forest, California, July 4, 1984*
36. *Kenny and Nels, Olympia, Washington, June 1982*
37. *Heliotroupe at the Jay Gets Out of Jail Party, Olympia, Washington, September 25, 1983*

Highlight: The Grateful Dead

“My passion for rock 'n' roll photography ignited when I photographed my first Grateful Dead concert at the Meadowlands in 1978, when I was just sixteen years old. I borrowed my father's camera and telephoto lenses, and the experience was transformative. It was the beginning of a lifelong adventure photographing the band. After getting the opportunity to capture the Grateful Dead again at a special "Deadheads Only" concert, the intensity of my dedication grew. These photographs, featuring both the band and the swirling hippies who followed them, along with the portraits I was able to take of band members like Bob Weir and Jerry Garcia years later, hold a special place in my heart. Explore some of my most memorable images from that legendary era and embark on a “Long Strange Trip” through this mesmerizing subculture.” —Jay Blakesberg

Artwork Labels: the Grateful Dead

38. *The Grateful Dead at Holleder Stadium, Rochester, New York, September 1, 1979*

39. *Jerry Garcia at Holleder Stadium, Rochester, New York, September 1, 1979*

40. *Jerry Garcia at the Meadowlands, East Rutherford, New Jersey, September 2, 1978*

41. *The Grateful Dead at the Capitol Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey, November 24, 1978*

42. *Jerry Garcia at the Grateful Dead office, San Rafael, California, January 31, 1991*

43. *Bob Weir, Mill Valley, California, October 2, 1992*

44. *Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter at the Grateful Dead office, San Rafael, California, January 31, 1991*

45. *Jerry Garcia at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, October 4, 1987*

46. *Mickey Hart, Oakland, California, November 5, 1987*
47. *The Grateful Dead, Oakland, California, November 5, 1987*
48. *The Grateful Dead at Frost Amphitheater, Palo Alto, California, October 9, 1982*
49. *Jerry Garcia at Frost Amphitheater, Palo Alto, California, October 9, 1982*
50. *Jerry Garcia at The Warfield Theatre, San Francisco, California, October 13, 1980*
51. *Jerry Garcia at the West High School Auditorium, Anchorage, Alaska, June 20, 1980*
52. *Deadheads at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, June 22, 1986*
53. *Deadheads at the Lewiston Fairgrounds, Lewiston, Maine, September 6, 1980*
54. *Deadheads at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, June 22, 1986*
55. *Deadheads at The Warfield Theatre, San Francisco, California, September 25, 1980*
56. *Deadheads at the Lewiston Fairgrounds, Lewiston, Maine, September 6, 1980*
57. *Deadheads at the Lewiston Fairgrounds, Lewiston, Maine, September 6, 1980*
58. *Deadheads at Laguna Seca, Monterey, California, May 10, 1987*
59. *Deadheads, Chicago, Illinois, August 20, 1980*
60. *Jerry Garcia at the Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, California, December 31, 1979*

61. *The Grateful Dead at the Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, California*, December 26, 1979

62. *The Grateful Dead at the Stanley Theatre, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*, November 30, 1979

63. *Jerry Garcia at the Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, California*, December 28, 1979

64. *The Grateful Dead at the Oakland Auditorium, Oakland, California*, December 28, 1979

65. *The Warfield Theatre, San Francisco, California*, September 27, 1980

Live Performance

Over the past four decades, Blakesberg has photographed many magical musical moments. These images have produced a sociological record of bands at their most explosive points, along with the music scenes they inspired. Long before the age of social media and online documentation, Blakesberg became both an archivist and often a default promoter for the band and the venue through the images he created. It was important to him to be able to capture the musician's presence, the audience's reactions, and the environment to tell the story of each show. Grunge at the I-Beam, Blues at the Warfield, Funk at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, Rock 'n' Roll at the Shoreline Amphitheater, and every genre and venue in between have been chronicled by Blakesberg in an oeuvre that serves as a visual musical history.

To hear stories behind his live concert images in Blakesberg's own words, scan the QR codes along this wall.

Artwork Labels: Live Photography

1. *David Bowie at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, May 28, 1990*
2. *The Flaming Lips at Lollapalooza, Kansas City, Kansas, July 9, 1994*
3. *Nirvana at the Cow Palace, Daly City, California, December 31, 1993*
4. *Courtney Love at Lollapalooza, Gorge Amphitheatre, George, Washington, July 4, 1995*
5. *Aretha Franklin at the grand opening of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland, Ohio, September 2, 1995*
6. *Perry Farrell at Coachella, Indio, California, April 28, 2001*
7. *Linda Ronstadt at In Concert Against Aids, the Gift Center, San Francisco, California, May 29, 1989*
8. *Red Hot Chili Peppers at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 18, 1992*
9. *Fiona Apple at Bimbo's 365 Club, San Francisco, California, October 30, 1996*
10. *Bono at Justin Herman Plaza, San Francisco, California, November 11, 1987*
11. *X at the Moore Theatre, Seattle, Washington, June 27, 1987*
12. *Eddie Vedder at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 18, 1992*
13. *Foo Fighters at The Fillmore, San Francisco, California, July 26, 1995*

14. *Paul McCartney at the Bridge School Benefit, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, October 24, 2004*
15. *Sonic Youth at the Tibetan Freedom Concert, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, June 16, 1996*
16. *Neil Young and Elvis Costello at the Bridge School Benefit, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, October 26, 1990*
18. *Radiohead at Justin Herman Plaza, San Francisco, California, April 3, 1995*
17. *Crowd surfer at Live 105 BFD, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, June 14, 2002*
19. *Counting Crows at Bimbo's 365 Club, San Francisco, California, September 17, 1993*
20. *PJ Harvey at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, August 13, 1995*
21. *The Rolling Stones at Oakland Stadium, Oakland, California, November 14, 1997*
22. *Tom Petty at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, August 27, 2005*
23. *Patti Smith at the Tibetan Freedom Concert, Randall's Island, New York, June 7, 1997*
24. *Butthole Surfers at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, June 12, 1988*
25. *The Sugarcubes at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, August 16, 1998*

26. *Soundgarden at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, December 15, 1989*
27. *Mosh pit at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, April 4, 1988*
28. *Meat Puppets at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, January 25, 1988*
29. *Stage diver at the I-Beam, San Francisco, California, May 8, 1988*
30. *Emmylou Harris at Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, October 2, 2005*
32. *Sleater-Kinney in Dolores Park, San Francisco, California, June 4, 2000*
31. *Robert Smith at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, September 10, 1989*
33. *Dolly Parton at Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, October 2, 2005*
34. *Beastie Boys at the Tibetan Freedom Concert, RFK Stadium, Washington D.C., June 10, 1998*
35. *Paul Kantner at the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Summer of Love, Beach Chalet, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, October 12, 1997*
36. *Nine Inch Nails at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 26, 1991*
37. *Bob Dylan and Neil Young at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, June 10, 1988*

38. *Led Zeppelin at the Fortieth Anniversary of Atlantic Records, Madison Square Garden, New York, New York, May 14, 1988*
39. *Carlos Santana in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, June 1, 2003*
40. *Fugazi in Dolores Park, San Francisco, California, June 4, 2000*
41. *Beck in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, September 24, 2000*
42. *Prince at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco, California, April 11, 1993*
43. *TAD and Kurt Cobain at Rough Trade Records, San Francisco, California, February 1, 1990*
44. *Red Hot Chili Peppers at the Tibetan Freedom Concert, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, June 16, 1996*
45. *Soundgarden at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 18, 1992*

Portraits

When Blakesberg first set out as a freelance photographer in the late 1980s, he quickly realized the need to expand his professional expertise beyond live concert photography to advance his career and give him more creative control. Positioning himself to get regular work shooting magazine and album covers, Blakesberg soon developed a unique and personal style of portraiture through experimentation with studio lighting and the medium-format cameras that those jobs required. He discovered that diverse locations, innovative lighting setups, and the variety of lens, camera, and film choices available inspired his creativity and would come to define his work. Though self-taught,

his quick-paced, intuitive studio sessions resulted in engaging portraits of artists in defining moments of their careers while also affording Blakesberg the opportunity to photograph some of his life-long music idols.

To hear stories behind his portraiture in Blakesberg's own words, scan the QR codes along this wall.

Artwork Labels: Portraits

1. *Soundgarden and Pearl Jam at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 18, 1992*
2. *Soundgarden at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, July 18, 1992*
3. *Boz Scaggs at Slim's, San Francisco, California, March 7, 1989*
4. *L7 at Lollapalooza, Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, August 28, 1994*
5. *James Brown at the opening of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland, Ohio, September 1, 1995*
6. *Jackie Greene, The Presidio, San Francisco, California, January 13, 2008*
7. *Björk at the Tibetan Freedom Concert, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, June 15, 1996*
8. *Dr. Dre, Los Angeles, California, May 8, 1996*
9. *Brian Wilson, San Francisco, California, December 4, 1990*

10. *Sinéad O'Connor at A Gathering of the Tribes, Pacific Amphitheatre, Costa Mesa, California, October 7, 1990*
11. *Neil Young, Woodside, California, October 30, 1991*
12. *Tracy Chapman, Oakland, California, March 14, 1998*
13. *Red Hot Chili Peppers at The Fillmore, San Francisco, California, September 16, 1989*
14. *John Mayer at the Masonic Auditorium, San Francisco, California, December 9, 2001*
15. *Talking Heads, San Francisco, California, April 27, 1999*
16. *Tom Petty at the Bay Area Music Awards, San Francisco, California, March 7, 1998*
17. *Jane's Addiction at Cal Expo, Sacramento, California, May 30, 1991*
18. *Red Hot Chili Peppers at the Moore Theatre, Seattle, Washington, June 27, 1987*
19. *The Replacements at the Gift Center, San Francisco, California, December 6, 1987*
20. *Snoop Dogg, Los Angeles, California, February 2, 1998*
21. *Jakob Dylan, Sunnyvale, California, June 9, 2005*
22. *John Lee Hooker and Keith Richards at Russian Hill Recording, San Francisco, California, April 11, 1991*

23. *Iggy Pop, San Francisco, California, June 28, 1990*
24. *B.B. King at the Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California, December 28, 2006*
25. *Widespread Panic, San Francisco, California, September 27, 1991*
26. *Siouxsie Sioux, San Francisco, California, March 26, 1990*
27. *John Lee Hooker, Redwood City, California, April 3, 1992*
28. *Black Crowes at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, June 18, 2006*
29. *Primus, Berkeley, California, September 17, 1991*
30. *Neil Young, Woodside, California, June 12, 1995*
31. *John Fogerty at the San Francisco Federal Courthouse, San Francisco, California, October 31, 1988*
32. *Gil Scott-Heron, Oakland, California, August 5, 1992*
33. *Michael Franti, San Francisco, California, August 10, 1993*
34. *Odetta at the Seva Benefit, Berkeley Community Theatre, Berkeley, California, May 15, 1998*
35. *Neville Brothers, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 9, 2004*
36. *Spinal Tap, Los Angeles, California, March 19, 1992*
37. *Dirty Dozen Brass Band, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 15, 1998*

38. *Les Claypool, Sonoma County, California, June 11, 2002*
39. *Tom Waits at Prairie Sun Recording Studio, Cotati, California, August 13, 1992*
40. *Tori Amos at Bimbo's 365 Club, San Francisco, California, May 9, 1992*
41. *E-40, Vallejo, California, March 5, 2002*
42. *George Clinton, Los Angeles, California, February 7, 1997*
43. *Erasure at the Gift Center, San Francisco, California, October 25, 1991*
44. *Me First and the Gimme Gimmes at Pier 30, San Francisco, California, December 29, 2000*
45. *Sammy Hagar, Marin Headlands, California, May 11, 1989*
46. *Phish at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, August 28, 1990*
47. *Jellyfish, San Francisco, California, August 28, 1990*
48. *Warren Haynes, Los Angeles, California, September 14, 2008*

Highlight: Blue Period

“Black-and-white film, color transparency, color negative, cross-processing, pushing film, fast film, slow film, and film color temperature all played a part in expanding my creative process. My "blue period" photos, which began in the mid-1990s and continued on and off for nine years, created an interesting and distinct body of work. These photos

retain their original appearance as captured by the camera, without any additional postproduction work to alter their blue tones. I utilized film that was color-balanced for indoor incandescent warm lighting but deliberately employed it in daylight-balanced environments, resulting in the intentional "blue" look. By deliberately choosing the "wrong film" for the light in the environment, I was able to achieve something unconventional and unique." —Jay Blakesberg

Artwork Labels: Blue Period

49. *David Byrne, San Francisco, California, August 29, 1997*

50. *Carlos Santana, San Rafael, California, March 17, 1999*

51. *Phish at Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, California, September 17, 1999*

52. *The Flaming Lips at The Fillmore, San Francisco, California, July 28, 1999*

53. *Linda Perry, San Francisco, California, April 9, 1996*

54. *Ramblin' Jack Elliot, Mill Valley, California, January 13, 1998*

55. *Alanis Morissette at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, June 7, 1996*

56. *The Offspring, Los Angeles, California, August 30, 1998*

57. *Ben Harper at the Greek Theatre, Berkeley, California, October 8, 1999*

58. *Dave Matthews at Berkeley Community Theatre, Berkeley, California, March 13, 1999*

59. *Ani DiFranco, Santa Rosa, California, April 13, 2000*

60. *Ice-T, Palo Alto, California*, June 8, 1991
61. *Radiohead at Slim's, San Francisco, California*, July 13, 1995
62. *Snoop Dogg, Los Angeles, California*, February 2, 1998
63. *Joni Mitchell at the St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, California*, September 4, 1998
64. *Green Day, San Francisco, California*, September 9, 1997
65. *Rancid, Los Angeles, California*, April 16, 1998
66. *Tom Waits, Sonoma County, California*, February 4, 1999
67. *Tom Waits, Cotati, California*, February 4, 1999
68. *Barenaked Ladies in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California*, March 15, 1998
69. *Jeff Tweedy, San Francisco, California*, December 30, 1998

Highlight: Clementina Street

“In 1993, anticipating the arrival of my first child, I realized that my primary photography space—the spare bedroom in our small Glen Park home—would soon be transformed into a nursery. When baby Sam Blakesberg arrived in January 1994, I relocated my photography operation to 754 Clementina Street, a vibrant block nestled between 8th and 9th and Howard and Folsom streets that was bustling with photographers and industry professionals. Before long, the sight of limousines and musicians became commonplace along Clementina. Embracing various cameras, lenses, and film, I utilized the area as my personal creative playground, capturing bands using fisheye lenses and

vibrantly-colored backgrounds illuminated by studio lighting. This experimental phase marked the birth of a fresh style in studio portraiture for me. After eight fruitful years at 754, I relocated across the street to 745 Clementina Street, where I continued photographing bands and undertaking commercial projects. The space benefited from north-facing light, creating a "daylight studio" ambiance, while an outdoor patio expanded the creative possibilities within the building's confines. This single location granted me the ability to achieve multiple distinct looks, enhancing my artistic versatility." —Jay Blakesberg

Artwork Labels: Clementina Street

70. *Mother Hips, San Francisco, California, November 9, 1994*

71. *George Clinton, San Francisco, California, March 9, 1996*

72. *E-40, San Francisco, California, June 9, 1998*

73. *Joe Satriani, San Francisco, California, February 9, 2000*

74. *Joey Cape, San Francisco, California, November 13, 2002*

75. *Jello Biafra, San Francisco, California, July 19, 1994*

76. *David Byrne, San Francisco, California, August 29, 1997*

77. *Alanis Morissette, San Francisco, California, July 16, 1995*

78. *Rob Wasserman, San Francisco, California, April 15, 1994*

79. *Trey Anastasio, San Francisco, California, May 27, 1994*

80. *Weezer, San Francisco, California, November 2, 1996*
81. *Isaac Hayes, San Francisco, California, April 21, 1995*
82. *Kronos Quartet, San Francisco, California, March 17, 2000*
83. *Les Claypool and the Holy Mackerel, San Francisco, California, August 8, 1996*
84. *The Donnas, San Francisco, California, September 17, 2002*
85. *Doobie Brothers, San Francisco, California, March 1, 2003*
86. *Sheryl Crow, San Francisco, California, March 23, 1994*
87. *Green Day, San Francisco, California, September 9, 1997*
88. *Third Eye Blind, San Francisco, California, November 3, 1999*

Highlight: Psychedelic Icons

“Growing up in 1970s suburban New Jersey felt colorless until psychedelics transformed my world. The connection between LSD, the Summer of Love, and the icons of the 1960s—Ken Kesey, Timothy Leary, and Augustus Owsley Stanley III—became clear. Photographing these legends on film became my mission. While I managed to photograph Kesey and Leary at counterculture events, my true desire was to capture them in formal portraits. Owsley proved more elusive due to his aversion to photographers and his past legal troubles, and few images of him existed. However, my persistence paid off in the 1990s when I successfully photographed all three. These portraits embody the spirit of their psychedelic legacies and represent a personal triumph in my photography journey.” —Jay Blakesberg

Artwork Labels: Psychedelic Icons

89. *Santana, San Rafael, California, February 7, 1991*
90. *Wavy Gravy at the Twentieth Anniversary of the Summer of Love, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, September 12, 1987*
91. *Jerry Garcia, Mill Valley, California, September 23, 1993*
92. *Owsley Stanley III at the Grateful Dead Headquarters, Novato, California, June 3, 1999*
93. *Ken Kesey at Fort Mason, San Francisco, California, April 1, 1995*
94. *Dr. Timothy Leary, San Francisco, California, June 28, 1991*
95. *Jefferson Airplane at The Fillmore, San Francisco, California, March 4, 1988*
96. *Bob Weir, Bill Graham, and Jerry Garcia at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland, California, January 23, 1988*
97. *Poster artists Wes Wilson, Alton Kelley, Stanley Mouse, Victor Moscoso, and Rick Griffin at Psychedelic Shop, San Francisco, California, March 17, 1989*
98. *Paul Kantner, San Francisco, California, October 27, 1994*
99. *Bob Weir, Mill Valley, California, March 6, 1991*
100. *Jorma Kaukonen, San Francisco, California, April 7, 1994*
101. *Mickey Hart, Sonoma County, California, November 12, 1998*

102. *Grace Slick at Art Rock, San Francisco, California*, November 16, 2000

103. *Phil Lesh, San Francisco, California*, December 19, 2004

104. *Mountain Girl at The Fillmore, San Francisco, California*, April 28, 1997

105. *Allen Ginsberg, San Francisco, California*, September 15, 1994

Transcripts: Stories Behind the Photographs

Jorma Kaukonen

In May of 1978, as I was ending my junior year of high school, we went and saw Jorma Kaukonen, the original guitar player from the band the Jefferson Airplane, and later Hot Tuna, at the Capitol Theater in Passaic, New Jersey.

We were huge Jefferson Airplane fans, huge Hot Tuna fans, and Jorma was a hero for us. I went to the show with my friend Lozzy, who was two years older than us. Lozzy drove a small Volkswagen Karmann Ghia, which barely fit two people.

My friend Nicki Catsanis and I sat in the back seat while Lozzy and another one of his friends sat in the front seat. We did not have driver's licenses. After the show was over, Lozzy said we were gonna wait by the side door and try and get Jorma's autograph. Jorma came out, got into a limousine quickly, and left for New York City.

We followed his limousine and when Jorma got out at a Midtown delicatessen for some late-night food, we followed him in and I asked him for a photograph. The photograph on the wall here is the photograph that he gave me, with this big, giant smile. I took that photograph and I sent it along with a letter to the editor of *Relix* magazine.

Relix was a magazine that I read cover to cover every time a new issue came out. It was a magazine that talked about the music of San Francisco, the Grateful Dead, the Jefferson Airplane, all the bands and all the experiences that I was interested in.

They published that letter in the August of 1978 issue, and at sixteen years old, I was a published, in-print photographer.

That moment that I got published in print when I was sixteen years old was pretty monumental. Today, we get published every thirty seconds on social media, but back then, being published in print in a magazine that meant so much to you was perhaps one of those early sparks that I needed to set me on my journey as a photographer.

No Nukes Rally

Another pivotal moment in my career came in May of 1979. I was four weeks away from graduating from high school. I convinced my mother to let me drive down to Virginia and Baltimore, Maryland to see two Grateful Dead concerts. After the Hampton, Virginia show we got into a car accident in the parking lot, and we pushed our car into a parking spot and hitchhiked to Baltimore.

The young kids that picked us up were also Deadheads going to the show in Baltimore, of course. And on the way we heard on the radio about a giant “no nukes rally” that was gonna happen in Washington D.C. the day after the Baltimore, Maryland concert.

We all went to the giant no nukes rally on the front steps of the Capitol where 65,000 people attended. We immediately went our separate ways and agreed that we would meet back at the car at the end of the event. I made my way up front and I could see on stage the actress and activist Jane Fonda speaking. Down front there was a throng of photographers, most likely from the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*—all the publications of the day—photographing her from the other side of a

small wooden picket fence, and I knew that I wanted to be there with those photographers. A moment later, I looked on the ground and I found a press pass.

I put it on, and within a few minutes I was actually onstage taking photographs of Jane Fonda. Shortly thereafter, musicians like Jackson Brown, Graham Nash, Joni Mitchell, all played on stage with me onstage photographing them. That was my first *Almost Famous* moment, and I was still seventeen years old.

Bob Dylan and Neil Young

Two other notable photographs in this collection here are Bob Dylan and Neil Young. Both of those photos were taken at Madison Square Garden in September 1978. I had just started my senior year of high school, I was about three weeks in, and I convinced my mother that I should go see two concerts, two nights in a row.

It was a Friday and Saturday night, so it wasn't that much of a stretch, but these were important musicians to me and my development as a music fan. I love the lyrics of Bob Dylan. I love the lyrics of Neil Young. And these artists sang the songs that informed our lives, informed our lifestyles. And it was the songs of Bob Dylan particularly that first made me wonder if there was a grander adventure to be had in life and made me think that maybe someday I could get out of New Jersey and I could go on one of those grand adventures.

BT and LSD

At the end of March 1980, the Grateful Dead played three shows at the Capitol Theater in Passaic, New Jersey: March 30, 31, and April 1. While I was at those shows, I met a guy named BT, pictured on this wall here. BT was from San Francisco and was an LSD manufacturer. He made his own blotter LSD by taking crystal LSD and turning it into a liquid form and letting it absorb into blotter paper.

At the beginning of one of those shows at the Capitol Theater, BT asked me if I wanted a dose. He handed me a half a sheet of LSD, which was fifty hits. I then proceeded to tear it up and hand it out to all of my friends. Later that evening, BT said to me, "Hey man, if you want, when I get back to San Francisco next week, I'd be happy to overnight you a couple thousand hits of LSD, and you can sell them to your friends in high school and become part of my LSD underground distribution network." I thought that was the greatest thing that I'd ever heard, so I gave him my parents' home address in Westfield, New Jersey, and immediately BT started sending me thousands of hits of LSD, which I then was selling to my friends from high school, and we psychedelized Union County, New Jersey over the next year. The photograph above BT is a picture of a bottle of liquid LSD in my freezer, in my college household in Olympia, Washington, most likely in 1984.

The Rainbow Gathering

Back in the early eighties, one of the most important destinations for me and my friends, was we wanted to get to the Rainbow Gathering. This was the ultimate hippie experience that happened every year in a national park somewhere in the United States. Thousands and thousands of hippies from everywhere in the country would gather on national park forest land and have a weeklong experience of living on the land, cooking, communing together, dancing, singing, and having these experiences. They were also quite psychedelic for me and my friends. The color photograph is from the 1984 Rainbow Gathering in Modoc National Forest in California. It's a picture of a lifelong friend named Diane who lives in Olympia, Washington, oddly enough, and was taken on the Fourth of July as we overlooked the sun coming up over the mountain range.

Jay's Get Out of Jail Party

On April 10, 1981, I was arrested for possession of LSD with intent to distribute. BT had overnighted me a few thousand hits of his ganja red blotter acid, shown here as part of the ephemera from my prison experience.

I was released from prison five weeks early because I had applied to the Evergreen State College, and I convinced the New York State Parole Board to let me attend the fall semester. Part of that might have been due to the fact that I had friends whose parents had done political work with the president of the New Jersey State Parole Board. So I had an inside connection to reach a gentleman named Christopher Dietz, who was the president of the New Jersey State Parole Board. He listened to my appeal, and did release me from prison five weeks early so that I could attend the fall semester at the Evergreen State College.

When I immediately returned to Olympia, Washington, the day after, all of my friends threw me a party at one of our friends' houses called Yogurt Farm, which had an old barn in the backyard. We set up the band Heliotroupe, which was a psychedelic jam band just a little bit before their time, and it was "Jay's get out of jail party." Fall semester of school started the next day.

The Grateful Dead, a Golden Ticket, and Aquarian Weekly

Here we have four photographs of the Grateful Dead. These are pretty important photographs to me for a number of reasons. The color photograph of Jerry Garcia with the yellow guitar, which is called Wolf, a very famous guitar, was taken at the Meadowlands, a giant stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey on September 2, 1978.

That was the first time I ever photographed the Grateful Dead, and again, my dad loaned me his camera. Knowing that I was going to a stadium, he loaned me his

camera with several telephoto lenses so that I could get closer-up photographs of the Grateful Dead. I was sixteen years old.

The black-and-white photo of Bob Weir, Donna Jean Godchaux, and Jerry Garcia was taken on November 24, 1978. I brought my own camera, my Yashica, that my dad had bought me for my seventeenth birthday, which was coming up, and by that time had my own telephoto lens. I was still sixteen years old, a week away from turning seventeen, and they played a special concert at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, New Jersey.

In order to get tickets for that concert, you had to mail away a letter to a special Deadheads only address, and if your letter was chosen, you were given a golden ticket if you had a seat on the floor in the orchestra section, or a silver foil ticket if you were in the balcony section. I got a golden ticket and I like to call that my Willy Wonka Golden Ticket.

The other two photos, one of Jerry Garcia and one of Bob Weir, Phil Lesh, and Bill Kreutzmann, was taken on September 1, 1979, almost one year after I photographed the Grateful Dead for the first time.

Those are also important photographs for me because it was the first time I was ever published in print and paid money. Both of these photographs ended up in the *Aquarian Weekly*, which was a free weekly newspaper in New Jersey that talked about the entertainment and music scene in New Jersey for over fifty years.

I was seventeen years old, but I was published and I was paid money, and I was on my way.

Early San Francisco and the I-Beam

When I moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1986 full-time after graduating from the Evergreen State College, I knew I wanted to take photographs of bands. I didn't know how to do that. So I basically found any free concert that was happening in the Bay Area and went and photographed it. You didn't need a press credential, you could bring your camera; and what I also quickly learned is that you could bring your camera to most nightclubs without having a photo credential.

On Haight Street, there was a nightclub called the I-Beam. They mostly presented alternative rock music in the early eighties. By the time I discovered the I-Beam, which was in late 1987, they were only doing live concerts on Monday nights.

I connected with the talent buyer at the I-Beam, a woman named Cathy Cohn, and I presented her with an idea to become the house photographer. Now, back then, there was no social media, so there really was no need for photographs, but I think that she realized a document of what she was creating at the I-Beam would be important as a historical record. So here you see photographs of the Meat Puppets, Chris Cornell from Soundgarden stage diving, the Butthole Surfers with a long exposure shot with a flash on camera.

And one of the things about all of these particular photographs is that they all are shot as live performance photographs with flash-on camera, which really today is not something you would normally do, but in the eighties it was a look, it was a style, it was something that happened regularly in small clubs that had poor stage lighting, and there was really no other way to photograph these bands.

A Backstage Pass to Led Zeppelin

The photograph you're seeing of Led Zeppelin here was taken on May 14, 1988. The local radio station KFOG, which was the premier classic rock station in San Francisco,

had a contest where you could mail in a postcard to potentially win a trip to New York City to go to the fortieth anniversary of Atlantic Records.

I mailed two postcards to the radio station that I handmade out of photographs that I had taken. They chose one of my postcards and they sent me on my way to Madison Square Garden. Performing at that concert were the Blues Brothers, Aretha Franklin, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Foreigner, Sam Moore. And of course, the big headliner was the reunion of Led Zeppelin.

It featured Robert Plant, Jimmy Page, John Paul Jones, and original drummer, John Bonham's son, Jason Bonham, on drums. It was officially billed as a Led Zeppelin concert. It was a short set. And when I went to the concert in New York, I brought a credential that I had, which was a plastic laminated pass from an event that I photographed in college in Olympia, Washington.

It was actually a laminate pass for the women's Olympic marathon trials, which was the first time that women would be able to run a marathon in the Olympics. And my boss was hired to photograph and document that race, and I did it along with him.

I took that fake backstage pass and used it to get right up to the front of the stage while Led Zeppelin was playing, as well as getting backstage and into the press area. Back then, a piece of plastic around your neck on a lanyard and a camera could get you almost anywhere.

The Blue Period

When I shot with film, it was not uncommon for me to do a quick photoshoot with an artist where you maybe had thirty minutes where I shot black-and-white film, color film, color negative film, color transparency film, 35 millimeter, two and a quarter square with my Hasselblad, four by five, half frame. We had all of these tools available to us, as well

as all of these film emulsions, color film, black-and-white film, fast speed film that was grainy, slow speed film.

And they made a film that was called tungsten film, which was balanced to indoor incandescent lighting. So essentially it had a lot of blue in the film, so if you were shooting in a room, let's say under a bare lightbulb, it would add a lot of blue to the photograph, counteracting all of the yellow that was in that incandescent light bulb, giving you a neutral, daylight-balanced exposure.

I quickly learned that if you shot tungsten blue film, either using daylight-balanced lighting or outdoors in the shade, you got this natural, cool blue look. So, all of these photographs taken here in the blue section are straight out of the camera. There's no Photoshop involved to create this look, this is how they came out of the camera. And depending on what the natural color temperature was, you got a different look. So, if you look at the portrait of Tom Waits versus the one of Alanis Morissette, there's different levels of blue that you would get based on really what the light was.

Again, it was sort of almost a happy accident. You knew what you were doing. You knew how to expose the film. But the results were not always known until I got the film back and looked at it and made the prints.

Portraits and John Fogerty

By the late 1980s, my work was being published regularly in print magazines, and it was obvious to me that if I wanted to be successful on a business level that I would need to start shooting portraits. So I started to experiment. Some of my early portrait work was very, very simple and it was flash-on camera. Here's a portrait of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the band the Replacements, both taken just by me bringing the band together backstage before they went onstage and shooting with a flash-on camera. Some of my first portraits that I did with actual real lighting were for Jodi Peckman at

Rolling Stone magazine. There's one of John Fogerty from Creedence Clearwater Revival taken in the front lobby of the Federal Courthouse in San Francisco. Jodi hired me to do a quick snapshot of John Fogerty leaving the courthouse because he was being sued for writing songs that sounded like himself, because he no longer owned his own publishing.

But instead I brought a small off-camera studio strobe light, set it up in the lobby, got a chair, and when Fogerty walked out of the courtroom, I sat him down and did a quick portrait, surprising Jodi at *Rolling Stone* magazine. She then started giving me actual portrait assignments.

Sammy Hagar

Another portrait Jodi Peckman asked me to shoot would be one of Sammy Hagar for an issue they were doing on what to do in the Bay Area in the summer. We agreed that I should shoot Sammy Hagar from Van Halen in front of the Golden Gate Bridge, so he came down with one of his Red Rocker mountain bikes. He had a bike store in Sausalito at the time. And I brought a studio strobe light that was battery powered, and I did a portrait of him jumping in front of his bicycle in front of the Golden Gate Bridge.

BAM Magazine

In the fall of 1989, with a number of tear sheets under my belt from both *Rolling Stone* magazine, *Guitar Player* magazine, *Musician* magazine, cover of *West* magazine, which was the *San Jose Mercury News* Sunday supplement magazine, I walked into the offices of *BAM* magazine in the East Bay in Oakland and met with Keith Moore and Steve Stolder, the editor and assistant editor of *BAM* magazine.

And I convinced them that I should be shooting covers for them. It didn't take long for Steve Stolder to call me and assign me to shoot the band Camper Van Beethoven, a Bay Area alt-rock band who had a hit song called "Take the Skinheads Bowling," and had just gotten signed to Virgin Records. And I went down to Santa Cruz, set up a backdrop, and shot them on their property where they lived, and that was my first cover of *BAM* magazine.

I went on to shoot fifty-nine covers for *BAM* magazine over the next number of years. A few of the covers that I shot for *BAM* magazine included Iggy Pop, Jellyfish, Alanis Morissette, Cheryl Crow, Primus, just to name a few.

George Clinton

The photograph of George Clinton with all the computer monitors was actually an ad campaign for a company that made computer memory, hence all of the computer monitors. This was shot down in the studio in Los Angeles. We had a connection to George Clinton through an old friend of mine who worked at KFOG radio, and she acted as sort of his chaperone and got him to the studio. And I hired a Hollywood set builder to come in and build this set for me with all these computer monitors, and George Clinton rolled in and we had this custom suit made out of Mylar holographic material and it was just one of those magical moments that can never be recreated.

The Neville Brothers

The Neville Brothers photograph was shot down in New Orleans for their final record. It was the last record the Neville Brothers ever made. They're New Orleans royalty, and I got the opportunity to work with all of the different brothers in different projects, including shooting several solo Aaron Neville CD packages.

But this photograph of the Neville Brothers, taken in front of the church on the street where they all grew up, was really important and meaningful to me.

Warren Haynes

Over the years, I've gotten to photograph Warren Haynes many times. He's played with the Allman Brothers, members of the Grateful Dead, his own band Government Mule, and we've become friends over the years. This particular portrait was shot down in Los Angeles on September 14, 2008, and it is the last time that I ever used film to photograph somebody. At that point, clients were demanding quick turnaround, digital photography. The technology was not completely there yet. When I first started shooting digital, I didn't like the way that it looked. And so I was mostly shooting jobs on film and then scanning my prints and/or transparencies and delivering the jobs digitally, and over time that shifted; the digital cameras were starting to get a little bit better. They weren't quite there. But most of that particular job that I shot of his band, Government Mule, and portraits that I did of Warren were shot with a digital Nikon camera. And I did a couple of rolls of the band and solo portraits of Warren with my Hasselblad, and those turned out to be my very, very last photographs ever shot on film.

Type 55 Polaroid

The portraits here that you see of Chris Robinson and Rich Robinson of the band The Black Crowes, Jacob Dillon, and John Lee Hooker are all shot on a 4x5 camera. That's a camera with a tripod and a cloth over your head, and it's a very slow-moving device to be using to do a portrait of an artist that typically is giving you anywhere from fifteen to thirty minutes to do a photograph.

Also, what is notable about these three photographs is they're all shot on a film called type 55 Polaroid. It was a black-and-white Polaroid film that actually gave you a negative as well, so that you can make a print from that negative or later on scan from that negative and make prints from those scans.

It was a beautiful film that is no longer made, very fine grain, very slow film. And it required a lot of patience and people standing very still with very shallow depth of field. But this is an example of thinking outside the box and using tools that might not normally be considered for portraits in a rock and roll setting.

Soundgarden and Pearl Jam

Soundgarden and Pearl Jam backstage at Lollapalooza in 1992. I had become friends with Soundgarden because my college roommate was their sound man in the late eighties and was good friends with them. So they were comfortable around me and my camera. At Lollapalooza in 1992, which I was shooting for Jodi Peckman at *Rolling Stone*, she had asked me to get a photograph of a couple of band members from Soundgarden who were already exploding in the alternative rock scene, and this new up and coming band called Pearl Jam. Pearl Jam was one of the baby bands on the bill that day; maybe they were second or third on the bill. So I went to the publicists that were onsite and mentioned that I had an assignment from *Rolling Stone* to get a shot of any members of Pearl Jam and Soundgarden together. They put their heads together, they asked the band who wanted to be in the photo, and both bands offered to be in the photograph. We went into Pearl Jam's dressing room. They sat down on the couch. They more or less ignored me and I shot a roll, roll and a half of film. I had a flash-off camera and also shot some with my flash-on camera. And when Chris Cornell sadly died a number of years ago, when I posted this on social media, it had almost a million views on Facebook. These were important figures in our pop culture landscape. They remain important today. The music that they've created is incredibly important, and this has become a very, very special photograph for me in my career.

John Mayer

John Mayer, photographed on December 9, 2001 at the Masonic Auditorium here in San Francisco. John Mayer and I had a mutual friend named Leah Simon, who was a music industry friend. Leah told me I should go and say hi to her friend John, so I barged into his dressing room, found him lying on the floor watching a DVD on a portable Sony DVD Watchman, said a couple hellos, introduced myself, and asked him to take a quick photograph.

This is the photograph that I got that day. I think I took three frames of him backstage before shooting him on stage that night. This was a KFOG Christmas concert, and I was the KFOG photographer after my experience of photographing Led Zeppelin in New York City. In 1988, I became the KFOG photographer for almost the next twenty-five years.

I didn't see John Mayer for about seven years and I ran into him at the Bridge School benefit down at Shoreline. And I introduced myself again and told him I was friends with Leah Simon. And he goes, "Oh yeah, I remember you. You're the guy that took that photograph of me wearing the really ugly jeans at the Masonic in San Francisco about seven or eight years ago."

And I was like, "Whoa, how did you remember that?" That photograph had shown up in a couple of different magazines. John was a rising star, so people were using that photograph. And I just thought it was a very, very funny comment. I asked John if I could do a quick backstage portrait of him at the Bridge School, which I did.

And then I didn't see John again for almost another seven or eight years, where all of a sudden he showed up at Terrapin Crossroads, Phil Lesh's nightclub here in the Bay Area, to play with Phil Lesh. And I, again, I went backstage and I introduced myself.

Thanks to the Ugly Jeans, John and I have gone on to work together for over twenty years now.

Magazine Covers and Alt Rock

In the late 80s, when I was shooting bands at the I-Beam and other small clubs, I was also photographing the Grateful Dead. And the Grateful Dead and this alternative emerging music of bands like Soundgarden and Jane's Addiction and Nine Inch Nails really were like oil and vinegar. They just did not mix.

And so, I couldn't say to a music fan, "Oh yeah, next week I'm going to go shoot three Grateful Dead concerts at the Greek Theatre in Berkeley" while photographing a punk rock band at the I-Beam on a Monday night. It just didn't jive. But in reality, both of those spaces were my world. Even though I was still actively shooting the Grateful Dead in the late eighties and was re-inspired by what was going on in the Grateful Dead scene, I recognized very early that the magazines and newspapers were more interested in an emerging alternative rock scene that was happening, and those were the bands that I was trying to shoot, such as the Sugar Cubes, the Butthole Surfers, Soundgarden, Fugazi, the band X, later bands like Pearl Jam, Radiohead, the Foo Fighters, Sleater Kinney, Sonic Youth, Stone Temple Pilots. The alternative music of the day is what the magazines were interested in. Most magazines didn't really care that much about the Grateful Dead until the Grateful Dead did "Touch of Grey" in 1987 and had a top 10 MTV hit.

Yom Kippur and Passover in Jail

In April of 1981, I was arrested for possession of LSD with intent to distribute. After a lengthy process of going through the court system and losing an appeal, I was convicted and sentenced to five years in state prison. That prison sentence actually turned into twelve months, where I could get three months off for good behavior.

Prison was a unique experience, one that I highly do not recommend to anybody. But as a nineteen, twenty-year-old kid, you're very resilient, and we were always looking for ways to subvert the paradigm of what was happening there.

One of the things that I did with the one other Jew that I knew in the prison, a guy named Wayne Weininger, was we requested special privileges to celebrate Yom Kippur and Passover that same year. When we asked permission to celebrate Passover, it turned out that the Rabbinical College of America was just twenty miles away from where I was in prison. We wrote them a letter. They brought us a couple of care packages that were filled with gefilte fish, Manischewitz grape juice, matzah, some Haggadahs, and they gave us a classroom where we got to sit and put peanut butter on our matzah, read the Haggadah, and celebrate Passover while everybody was wondering exactly what we were doing.

When I wrote a letter to the chief deputy of the prison also asking for special privileges for Yom Kippur, they were granted, and you can see that in this letter in the ephemera case here in this section of the exhibit.

Tom Waits

In 1999, I was asked by *LA Weekly* to do a portrait session with the legendary artist Tom Waits. He lives up in Sonoma County and I met him at a recording studio in Cotati, California, right near Sebastopol, where he had recorded his previous records. It was a recording studio, but it was also an active chicken farm. There were chickens running around and barbed wire fences and claw-foot bathtubs and old barns and abandoned motorcycles. And so I went up to the studio thinking this would be a great place to shoot Tom. I showed him some of my locations and we did a handful of photographs. I did get him to sit down and do a four by five portrait, which is the blue one in the blue section, sitting behind an old tin shack. He didn't really like the location so he said, "I have an idea. I saw this car, it's just two minutes down the road. Let's just drive down there and see what we get. But first, I have to change into my Italian suit." So he put on a black blazer and some black pants, and Tom and I jumped into his old Chevy Suburban and started heading down towards Petaluma.

Now, he was telling me it was just a couple of minutes away, but in fact, we were driving all the way to Petaluma, which was almost thirty minutes. My assistant and Tom's publicist were following us in a rental car behind me and Tom. I left all of my lighting gear, and I had five or six cameras around my neck.

When we arrived at the house, I could see up a long driveway that there was an abandoned car on the other side of a cow fence, which was essentially a barbed wire fence. Tom told me he didn't know whose car that was or whose house it was.

So I knocked on the door and got no answer. We started walking up the long driveway when a little old lady came out of the house with a winter coat on and a chiffon scarf around her head, tied under her chin, and at the top of her lungs, she said, "Can I help you?" I said, "Yes, I wanted to know if I could take photographs of my friend Tom next to the car at the end of the driveway."

And she said, in a very loud voice, "It's got no wheels!" So I realized that maybe she was very hard of hearing and couldn't really hear what I was saying. I said, "No, no, no. We just want to take some photos." I pointed to the cameras around my neck and she says, "It hasn't driven since my husband died in 1970!"

And I said, "No," I took out a piece of paper and I said, "We just want to take some photographs, I'll give you twenty-five dollars." And she said, "It's okay. Take your pictures, but it's got no wheels!" So we ran up the driveway, we jumped over the fence, and at this point, Tom went into full character mode. He pretended to be a used car salesman and he was selling me the car. He sat at the front of the car with his face next to the grill and made some funny faces and said, "Get a picture of me next to the grill of the car because it looks like my face." So we shot a bunch of film really quickly.

Before Tom got up and said, "I got to go," he jumped over the barbed wire fence. I chased him with an old Polaroid camera and I just started taking pictures and pulling

them out and dropping them on the ground. Those Polaroid shots were taken with type 55 film, so it gave us a negative. He got in his Suburban car and he just drove away.

My assistant and I, and the publicists, all looked at each other wondering what just happened. It was an incredible day and the photographs are unbelievable. All the sample photographs and proof sheets with the different cameras that are in this glass case here, as well as the two half frame shots on the blue wall, are all taken from that one photoshoot on February 4, 1999 in Petaluma, California.

Radiohead

In 1993 I did my first photo shoot with Radiohead. It was a portrait taken at the Phoenix Hotel in San Francisco for *Us* magazine, which was a sister publication to *Rolling Stone* magazine. In 1995, April, they played a free concert for radio station Live 105 in Justin Herman Plaza in downtown San Francisco.

They were just beginning to promote their new record, *The Bends*, which is my favorite Radiohead record. I photographed that concert for Live 105 and came away with some incredible live photographs from that day. You can see one of them in the live concert section of this exhibit.

A few months later, Radiohead was back in San Francisco to play at Slim's on 11th Street in the South of Market neighborhood, just a few blocks from my studio. I got assigned by Jodi Peckman at *Rolling Stone* to do another portrait of Radiohead at this point. I set them up in the alleyway behind Slim's, and we spent about a half an hour doing portraits in black and white, in color, 35mm, 2 1/4, and 4x5. The photograph that you're seeing here, in the Blue Period section, was taken with a 4x5 camera, and you can see how the camera front lens element was intentionally shifted, so that the photograph is in focus across their faces and slowly drifts out of focus as it goes down towards their feet.

That was a deliberate creative decision made by me to come up with something different. The combination of the blue film, four by five camera, and the lens tilt shift. After the shoot was over, I asked the band if they wanted to come back to my studio on Clementina Street, which was just two blocks away, and look at the live photographs that I had taken in Justin Herman Plaza just a few months earlier.

They all thought that was a great idea, and the six of us just walked down Folsom Street over to Clementina and checked out these photos. Thinking about that today, it's pretty mind-boggling, because Radiohead are one of the biggest bands in the world. And an opportunity to go and look at some really great photography of themselves was enticing enough for them to walk down Folsom Street to my studio and check out what I have.

Allen Ginsberg

Allen Ginsberg is one of those cultural icons that I always wanted to photograph. We were all aware of the poem "Howl," and Allen, who I expected to be a very, very loud, vociferous Jewish man, ended up being a very quiet, calm individual when he came to my studio on Clementina Street on September 15, 1994, which also happened to be Yom Kippur. I was doing a small assignment for *BAM* magazine and just needed a simple black-and-white portrait in my studio. After I started shooting Allen for about fifteen minutes, I looked at him and I said, Allen, you realize that today is Yom Kippur, and we probably shouldn't be working.

He looked at me and said, "I can take care of that." He proceeded to mumble a Buddhist chant, and then looked up at me and said, "I think we're okay now in a Buddhist Jewish kind of way." After the shoot was over, when we were waiting out in front of my studio on Clementina Street for his ride to come pick him up, he took out his 35mm camera and did a couple of portraits of me.

Somewhere in the Allen Ginsberg archives are a couple of photographs of Jay Blakesberg.