

INTERNAL DOCUMENT

THE MCLAREN ARCHIVES |
PHOTOGRAPHY & STUDY HOUSE
PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA

FOUNDERS

BIANCA MCLAREN ESMOND
ATLANTA MOYE MCLAREN



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For much of the twentieth century, celebrity functioned through distance. Public figures were encountered through carefully constructed editorial imagery, magazines, campaigns, film, television, album artwork, publicity photography, and orchestrated appearances.

Photography acted as both gatekeeper and myth-maker.

Images were slower, more intentional, more selective, and more aspirational.

The rise of digital culture fundamentally altered this structure.

The emergence of constant visibility, social media, self-documentation, and algorithmic image circulation has dismantled much of the mystique that historically surrounded public figures.

The archive of Richard McLaren exists precisely at this threshold.

It captures a period before celebrity became flattened into perpetual accessibility.

This gives the archive historical significance beyond portraiture itself.

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Bianca McLaren Esmond &
Atlanta Moye McLaren

INTRODUCTION

The McLaren Archives is a privately funded cultural institution dedicated to preserving the photographic archives of Richard McLaren and the broader cultural moment his work represents.

The archive does not merely document individuals. It documents a twilight era in which public figures, celebrities, musicians, actors, supermodels, political figures, and cultural icons still existed within an atmosphere of distance, mystique, editorial construction, and aspirational image-making before the collapse of the traditional star system through digital culture and social media.

This archive belongs to the chapter of the twentieth-century image economy. It reflects a period in which photographs still carried authority, pacing, rarity, and narrative weight, contrived and imaginative. It is the handiwork of exceptional talent.

The archives exists to preserve photographs and to create an atmosphere, a rhythm of looking, and a visual culture as it disappears.

ABOUT RICHARD McLAREN

Richard McLaren was a British photographer whose career spanned nearly four decades and moved across celebrity portraiture, editorial photography, entertainment campaigns, commercial assignments, travel, sport, and global advertising.

He began working in photography as a teenager in London, starting at Scope Features, a photo print news agency connected to leading photographers in England. Through this early experience, McLaren assisted photographers on assignments across music, fashion, and advertising before becoming a freelance photographer in his own right.

Over the course of his career, McLaren photographed a wide range of public figures across entertainment, music, film, politics, and popular culture. Public profiles and interviews associate his work with figures including Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Tina Turner, Halle Berry, Gwyneth Paltrow, Pierce Brosnan, Jon Bon Jovi, Marc Anthony, Mariah Carey, Jennifer Lopez, Eva Mendes, Orlando Bloom, Patrick Swayze, Heath Ledger, Pamela Anderson, Rachel Weisz, and others.

McLaren's work sits within the closing era of traditional celebrity image-making: a period before social media collapsed the distance between public figures and audiences. During this time, celebrity still operated through editorial construction, controlled visibility, magazine culture, studio campaigns, press imagery, and the creation of public mystique.

His photographs are significant not only as portraits of recognizable figures, but as records of a visual system that has largely disappeared. They belong to the tail end of a period when stars still existed on a pedestal, when images were slower, rarer, more authored, and more carefully mediated.

McLaren's archive includes finished photographs, editorial images, campaign material, process work, contact sheets, alternative edits, and unseen fragments. These materials reveal the construction behind the final image: the lighting, pacing, framing, selection, and atmosphere that shaped public identity before the digital age.

The deeper significance lies in what his career witnessed: the end of a slower, more deliberate visual culture, and the transition into a world of constant image circulation.

Richard McLaren's work preserves a disappearing atmosphere of the star system before visibility became immediate, self-produced and highly manipulated.



PHOTOGRAPHY AS CONSTRUCTION

The archive reflects a period in which photography remained deeply connected to authorship and construction.

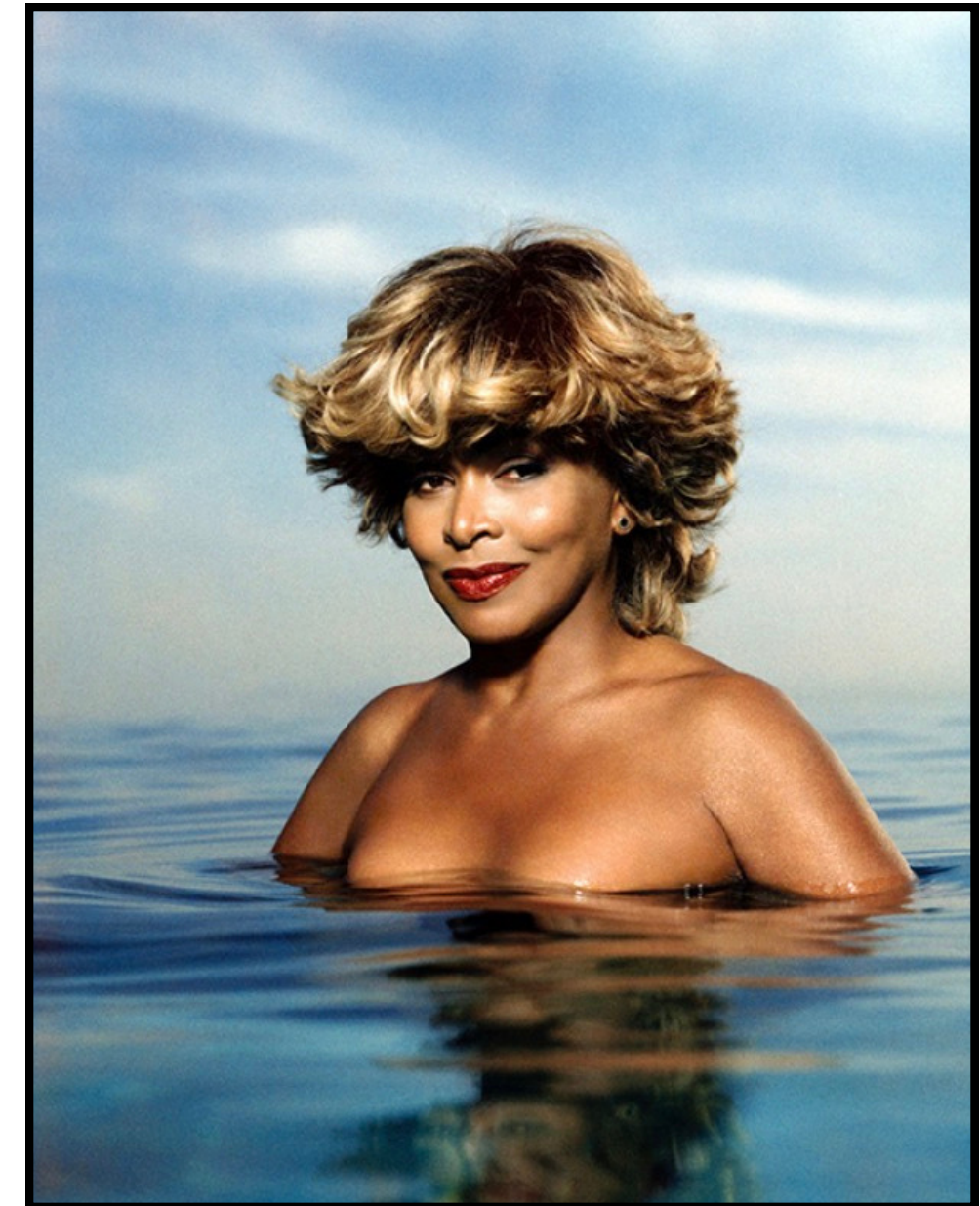
Photographs were not disposable content.

They were carefully composed visual narratives.

Lighting, styling, pacing, atmosphere, editorial framing, sequencing, and print culture all contributed to the creation of public identity.

The process material within the archive — including contact sheets, alternative edits, unpublished frames, lighting studies, and production fragments — reveals the mechanics behind image-making during this era.

The archive therefore functions not only as a collection of photographs, but as evidence of how public mythology was visually manufactured.



Tina Turner, Villefranche - sur- Mer

INSTITUTIONAL POSITIONING

The McLaren Archive is structured as a privately supported cultural space operating independently from aggressive fundraising pressure or commercial dependency.

The institution combines:

- The preservation of the Richard McLaren archives
- A house-based cultural experience
- An educational and conversational programme
- A liminal extension through LMNL
- Long-term conservation and institutional standards

The project is conceived as a cultural environment that visitors and students return to repeatedly over time.



Nelson Mandela, Presidential Palace, Capetown, SA

THE ARCHIVE

The archives of Richard McLaren include portraiture, editorial commissions, process work, contact sheets, unpublished material, alternative edits, and production fragments accumulated across multiple decades.

The significance of the archive lies not solely in the individuals photographed, but in its documentation of the transformation of photography itself.

During this period, photography shifted from documentation into authorship and cultural construction. Images became central to identity, celebrity, influence, aspiration, and media circulation.

The archive therefore represents not only photographic works, but evidence of a larger cultural transition.

The process material within the archive is equally important. Contact sheets, variations, fragments, and working edits reveal the construction of images and the mechanics behind visual culture.



THE HOUSE

Set in the Pacific Palisades, California, USA, the McLaren Archives is conceived as a house rather than a museum. This distinction is essential to the project's identity.

The institution is not intended to function as a high-throughput exhibition venue. Instead, it operates as a place in which photography exists alongside hospitality, conversation, memory, reflection, and atmosphere.

Visitors are encouraged to remain within the space rather than pass through it quickly. Rooms unfold sequentially and atmospherically, creating continuity between image, architecture, sound, and lived experience.

The house includes: Exhibition rooms; Archive study areas, Gardens, Afternoon Tea spaces, Areas dedicated to process material and rotating archive installations. The architecture and interiors are intended to support stillness and intimacy rather than spectacle. Lived rather than staged. Atmosphere forms a central component of the institution. Photography is experienced not only visually, but spatially and emotionally.



Patrick Swayze, in situ

PROGRAMME

The programme of the McLaren Archives is in keeping with the personality of its namesake - curious, animated, irreverent and thoughtful.

Not designed around constant activation, commercial events, or aggressive public scheduling, its activities are conceived as cultural extensions of the house.

The house's rhythm is defined through community engagement including:

- Photography talks
- Small gatherings
- Artist conversations
- Accessible workshops
- Screenings
- Intimate salon-style evenings
- Study programming for students of art & photography



The Palisades Post

STRUCTURE

Exhibitions (3–4 per year, including emerging talent)

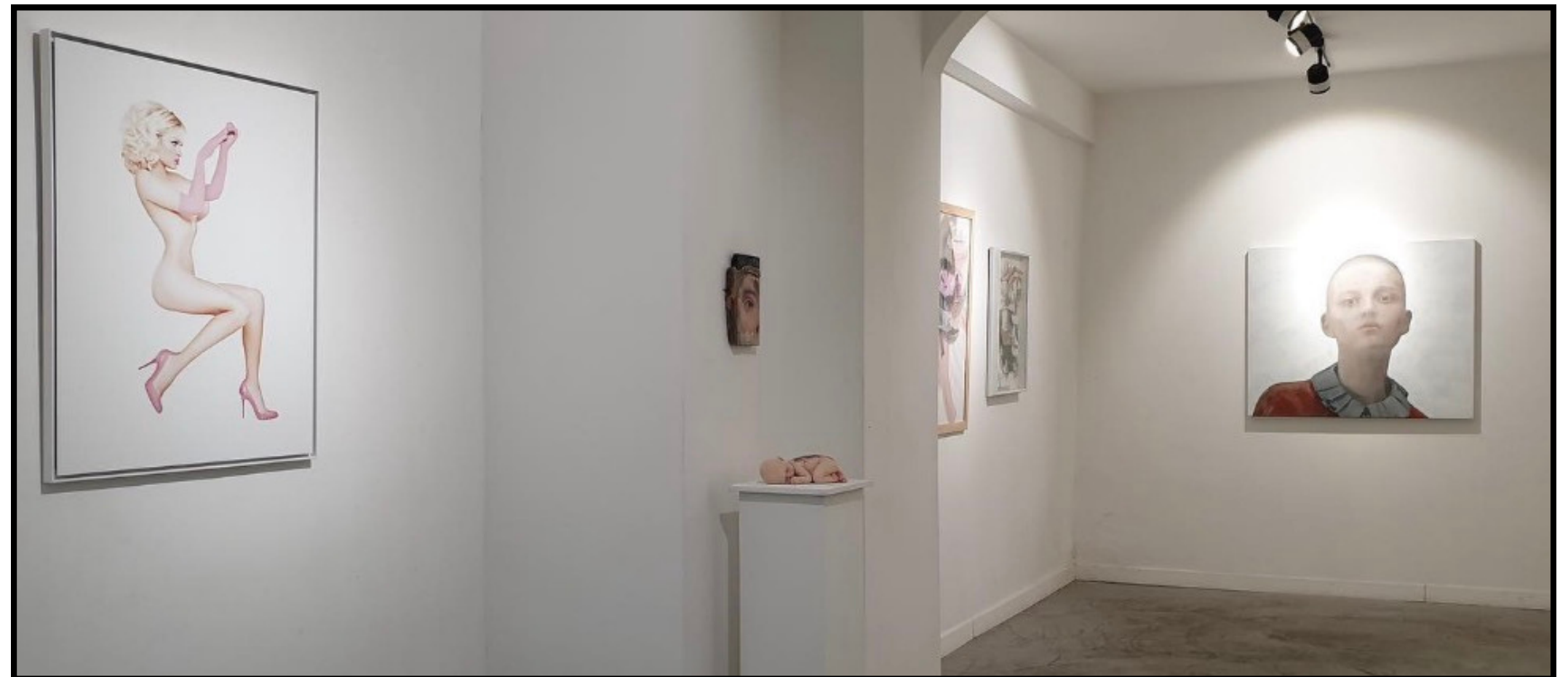
- “The Icons” (Pamela Anderson, Salma Hayek, Christina Aguilera etc.)
- “Portraits of Power” (incl. Nelson Mandela)
- Themed exhibitions

Events:

- Monthly salon dinners
- Artist talks
- Film screenings

Education:

- Beginner → advanced
- Fashion photography
- Lighting workshops
- Archive + storytelling



Koart Gallery, Noto, Italy

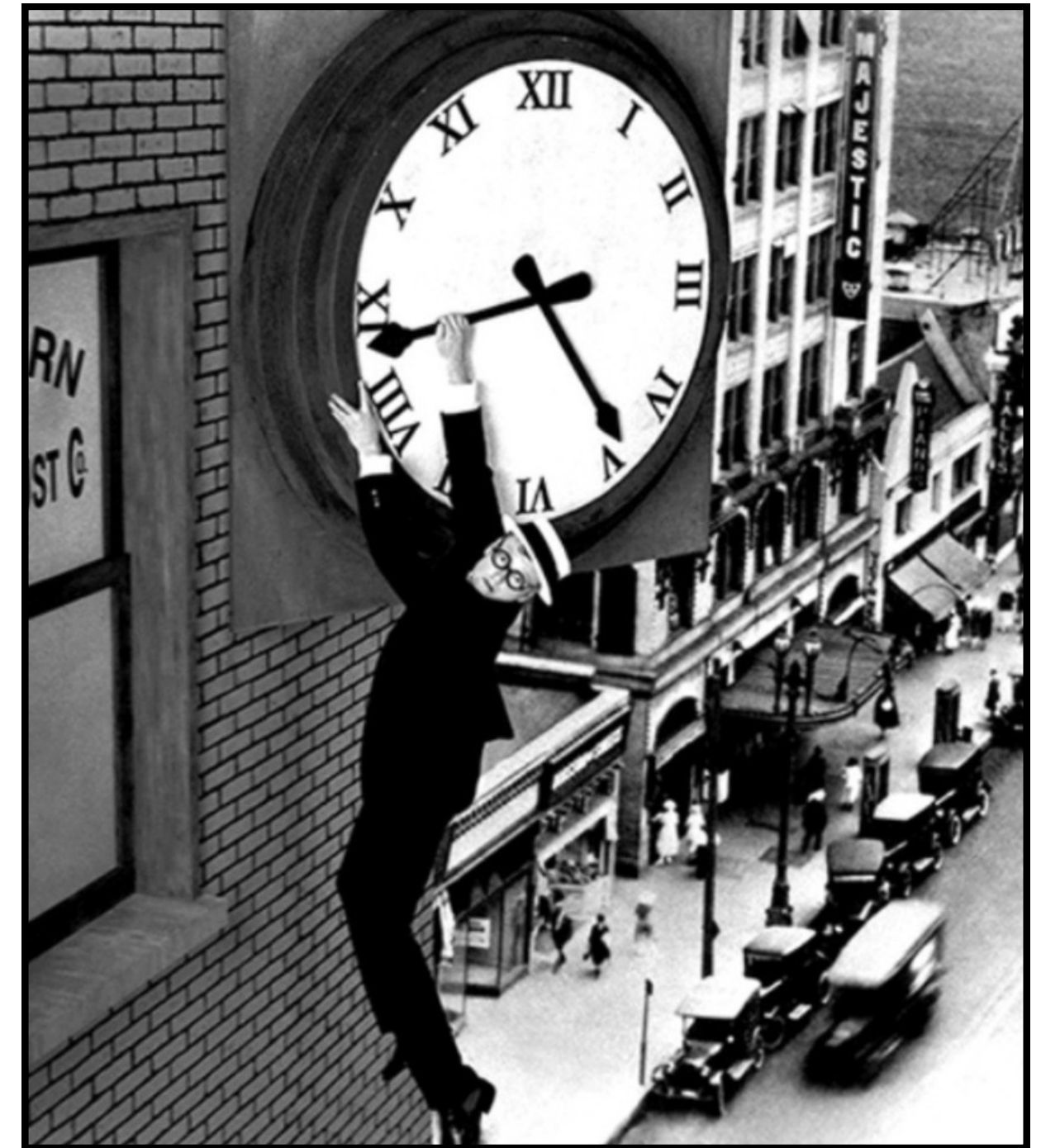
The archive remains under family stewardship, ensuring continuity of vision and integrity of the work.

The institution operates under a governance structure that includes both family representation and external expertise.

The Board of Directors provides oversight across cultural, financial, and operational dimensions, while day-to-day management is led by an appointed Executive Director and professional team. This structure ensures that the institution remains both grounded in its origin and aligned with best practices in cultural governance.

Annual reporting, advisory councils, and codified succession protections prevent mission drift or deaccession pressure.

GOVERNANCE



Conan O'Brien, NYC,

OPENING EXHIBITION

Constructing Image: The Archive of Richard McLaren
The opening exhibition introduces the archive not as retrospective nostalgia, but as a framework through which the evolution of image-making can be examined and understood.

The exhibition combines portraiture, editorial photography, contact sheets, process material, and unpublished fragments in order to explore the construction of identity, visibility, and influence across contemporary media culture.

The exhibition is organized into thematic sections including:

- The Rise of the Image
- Portraiture & Identity
- Editorial Construction
- Contact Sheets & Process
- The Unseen Archive

The exhibition prioritizes atmosphere and sequence over density, allowing visitors to move gradually through the archive.



Halle Berry, in situ

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality forms part of the lived identity of the institution.

Afternoon tea is integrated into the daily rhythm of the house, reflecting Richard McLaren's distinctly British sensibility.

The offering is impeccable and witty, around a tightly curated menu.

A signature bread pudding associated with Richard McLaren becomes part of the recurring identity of the institution and provides a point of familiarity and return.

The hospitality programme is not conceived as a restaurant operation, but as an extension of atmosphere and memory.



HighTea, Dorchester style

5-YEAR FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

CAPEX

Category	Estimate
Property / lease / partnership	\$5M – \$12M (depends on Caruso structure)
Build-out (gallery + classrooms + gardens)	\$4M – \$6M
Archive preparation & framing	\$1.5M
Furniture + tea salon	\$500K
Total CAPEX	\$11M – \$20M



James Goldstein, Sheats-Goldstein Residence

ANNUAL OPERATING YEAR ONE BASELINE

Category	Annual
Staff (director, curator, ops, education)	\$1.2M
Programming	\$400K
Marketing / PR	\$300K
Maintenance	\$300K
Total OPEX	\$2.2M

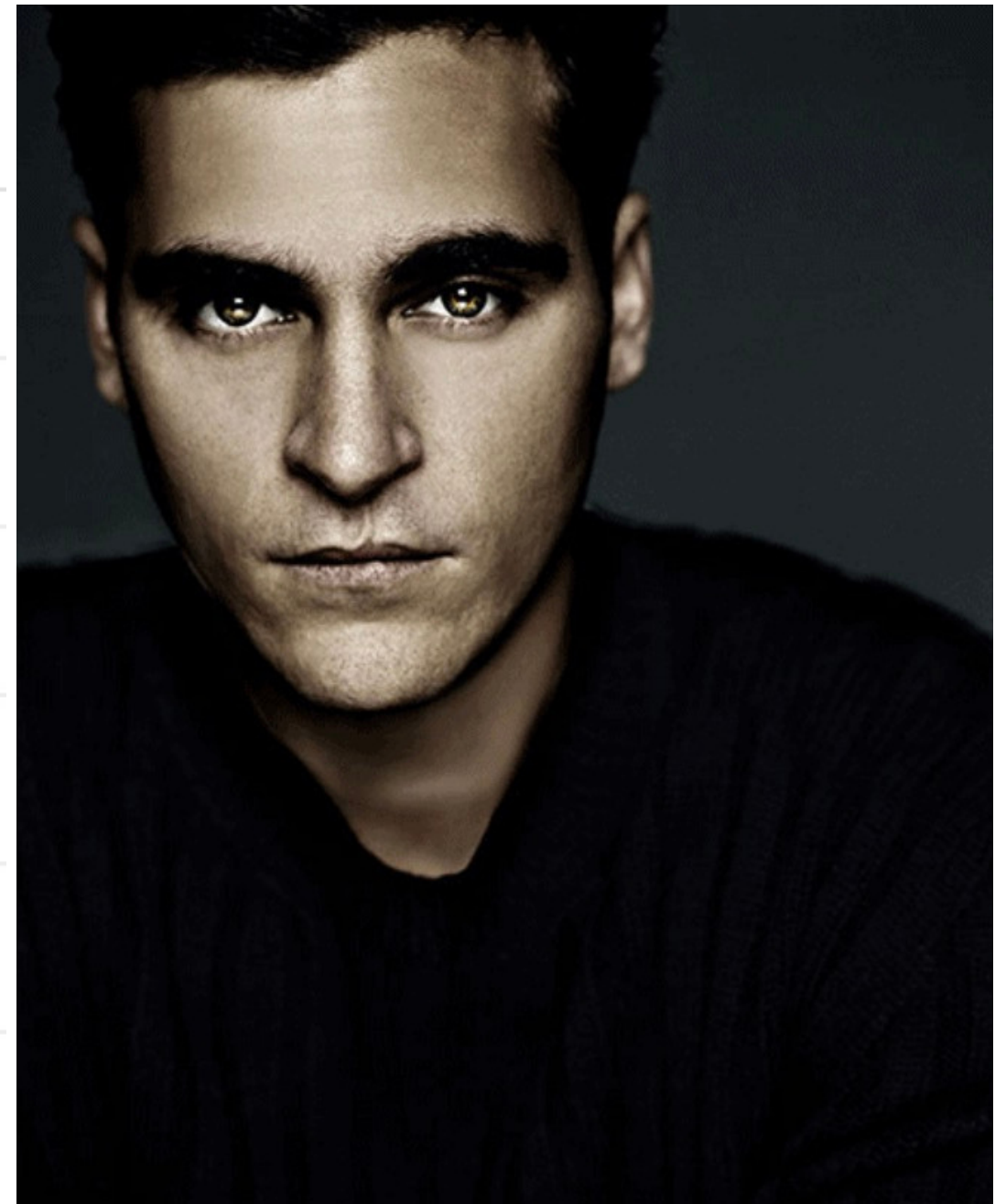


Lucy Lui, Hollywood

REVENUE POENTIAL

YEAR TWO STABILIZED

Source	Annual
Courses & workshops	\$1.2M
Events & rentals	\$600K
Tea + hospitality	\$400K
Sponsorships	\$800K
Patron memberships	\$1M
Total Revenue	\$4M



Joaquin Phoenix, NYC

PHASES

PHASES

Phase I — Acquisition & Foundation

Establish the institutional structure, secure the property, commission architectural development, and begin archive preparation including cataloguing, conservation planning, framing, and storage systems.

Phase II — Build-Out & Installation

Complete architectural interiors, exhibition spaces, gardens, archive study areas, climate control systems, security infrastructure, and hospitality spaces while preparing the inaugural exhibition.

Phase III — Opening Programme

Launch McLaren Photography & Archive with the inaugural exhibition, Constructing Image: The Archive of Richard McLaren, alongside a restrained programme of talks, gatherings, and afternoon tea within the house.

Phase IV — Continuity & Expansion

Develop the long-term cultural rhythm of the institution through rotating archive installations, educational conversations, LMNL integration, conservation stewardship, and selective institutional collaborations.



LMNL

THE DIGITAL TWIN

LMNL is a digital twin model that operates as an extension of the McLaren Archives existing alongside the physical house, as a parallel digital space for the archive.

It allows images to exist beyond the constraints of location as an ongoing fundraising initiative.

In this way, the institution operates across two environments: the house, which is physical and lived, and LMNL, which is intangible and continuous.

LMNL provides a way to remain connected to the archive without requiring physical presence.



IMAGES



Jennifer Lopez at home in Miami



The Grammy queen Chaka Khan



Mariah Carey, Pier 59 Studios NYC



Paulina Rubio, Smashbox LA



Thalia, NYC



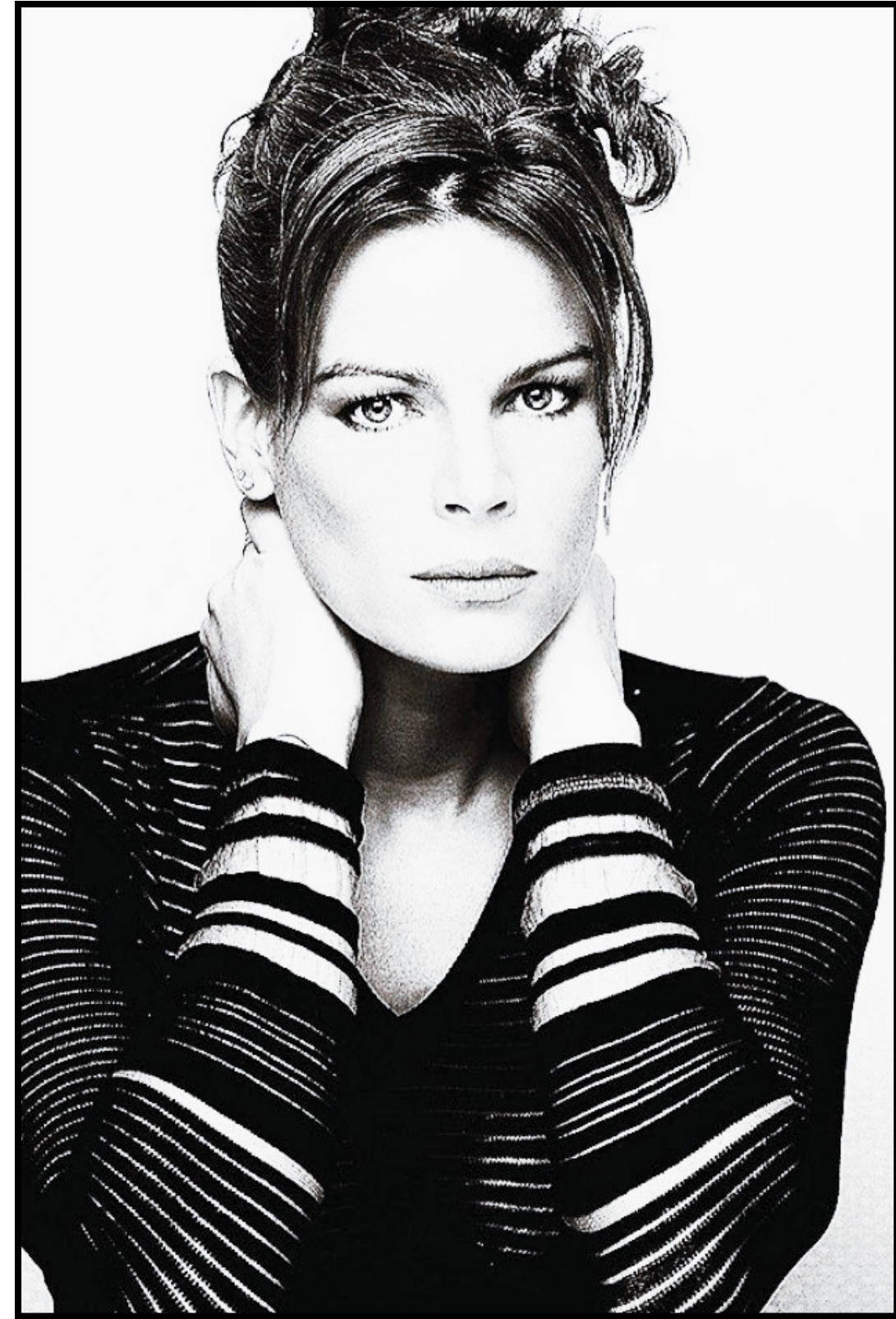
Kylie Minogue, London



Sara O'Hara, County Cork, Ireland



Rachel Hunter, Beverly Hills



Princess Stephanie of Monaco



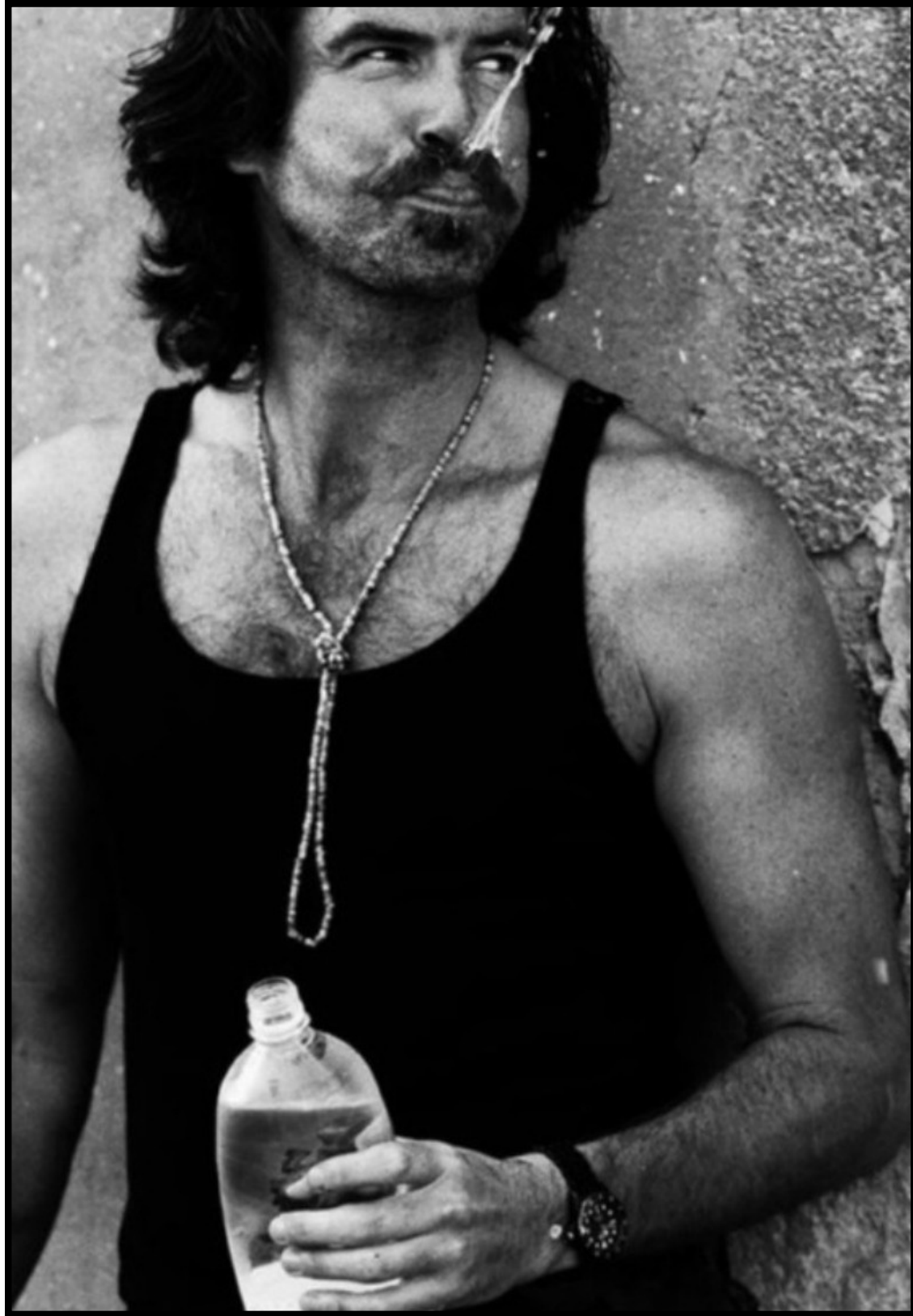
Sharon Stone, Malibu



Matt Dillon, Maliibu



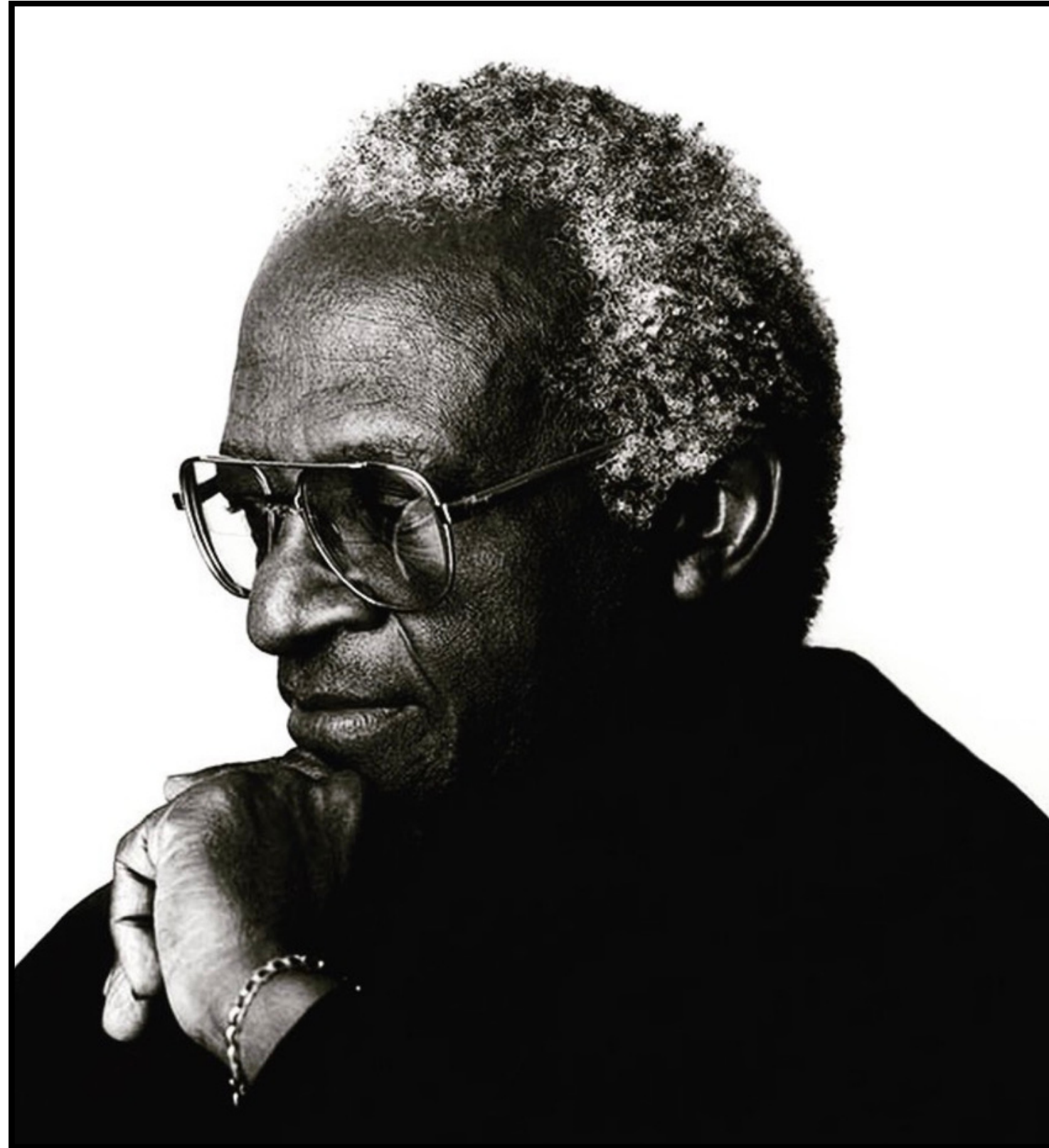
Jenny McCarthy, Hollywood



Pierce Brosnan, Croatia



Toby Keith , Oklahoma City



Desmond Tutu, Capetown, South Africa



Salma Hayek, at home



Gwenyth Paltrow, Beverly Hills



Van Halen, Hollywood Bowl



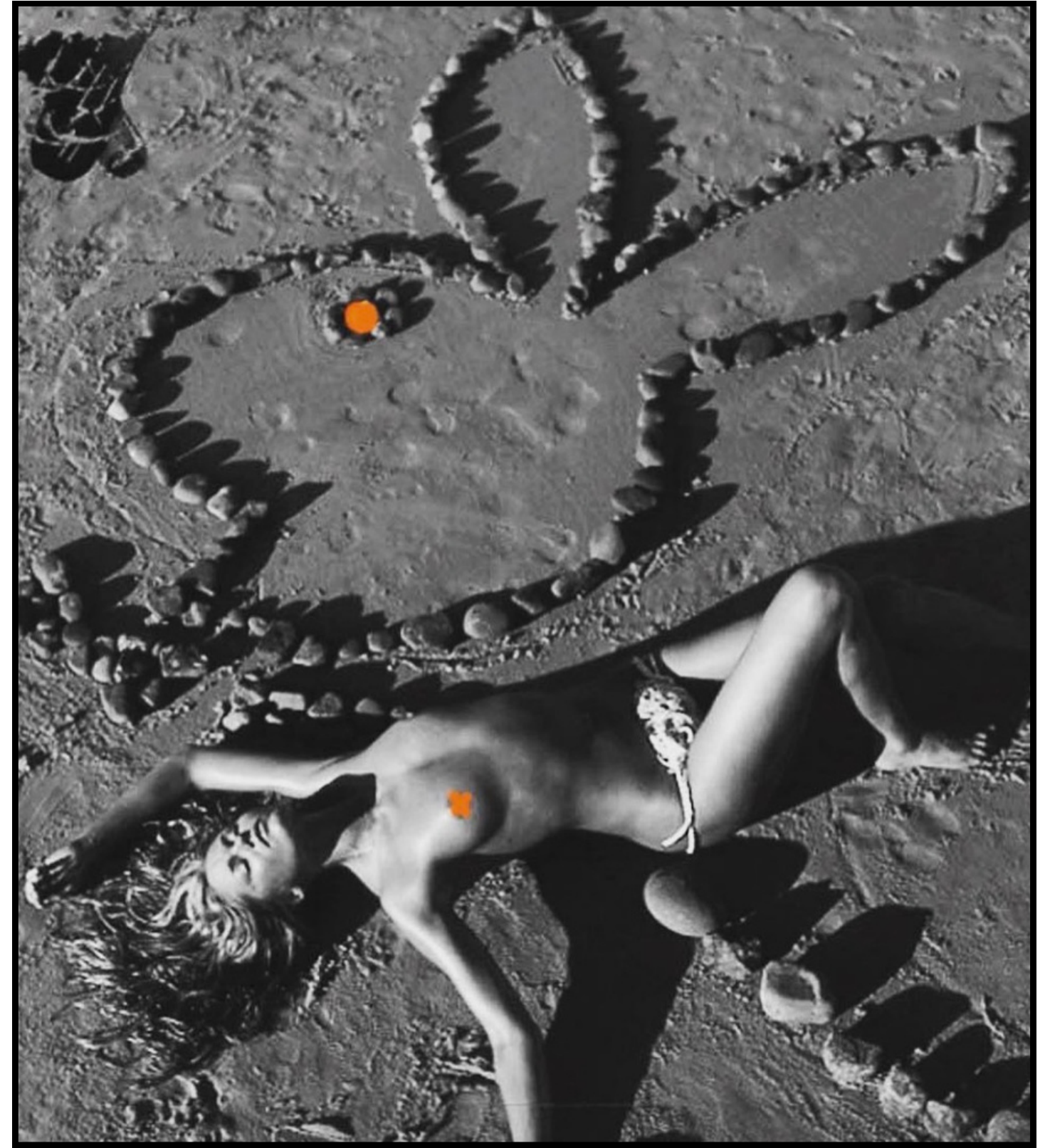
Halle Berry, Die Another Day



Belinda Carlisle, Phuket, Thailand



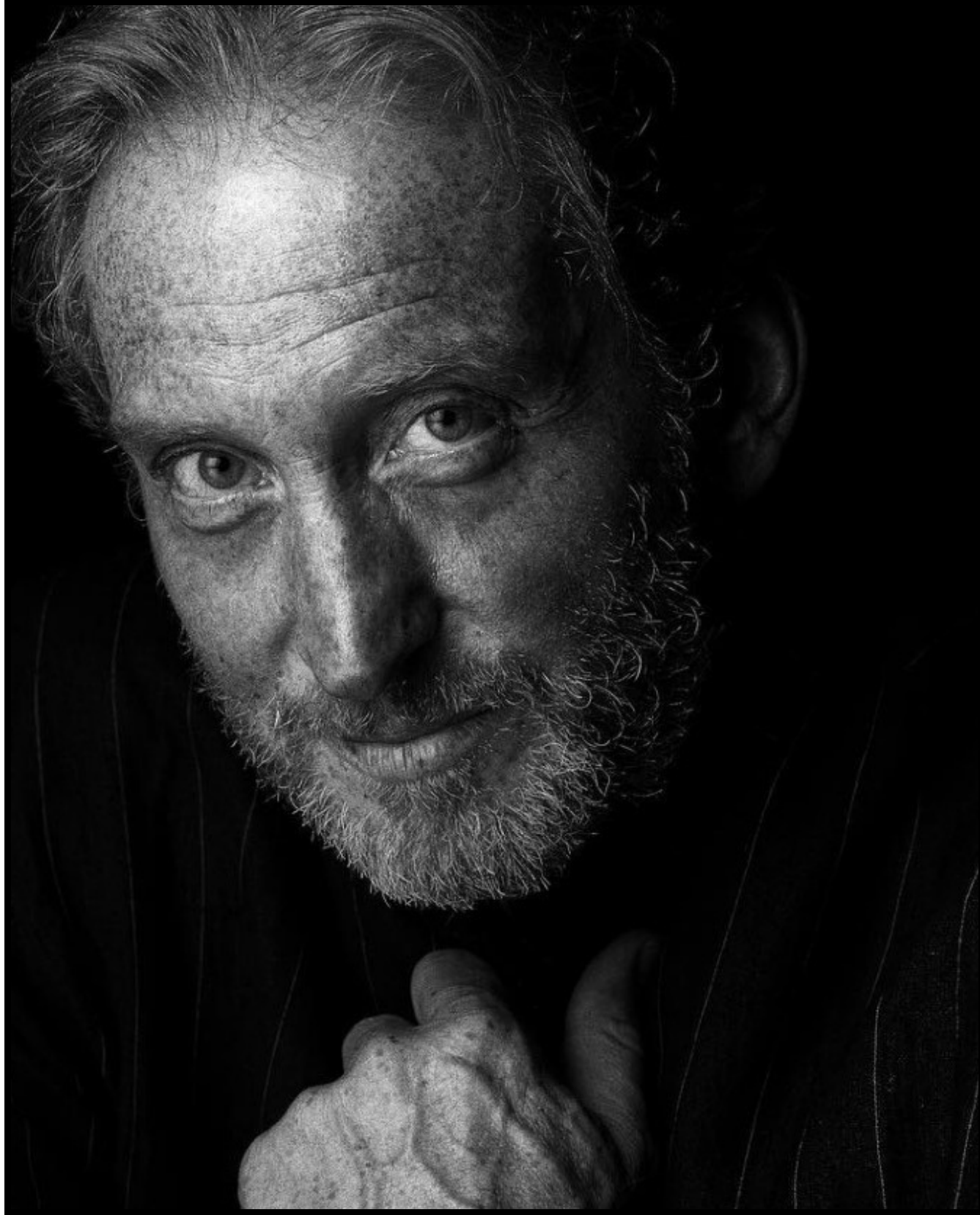
Anna Nicole Smith meets her doppelgänger



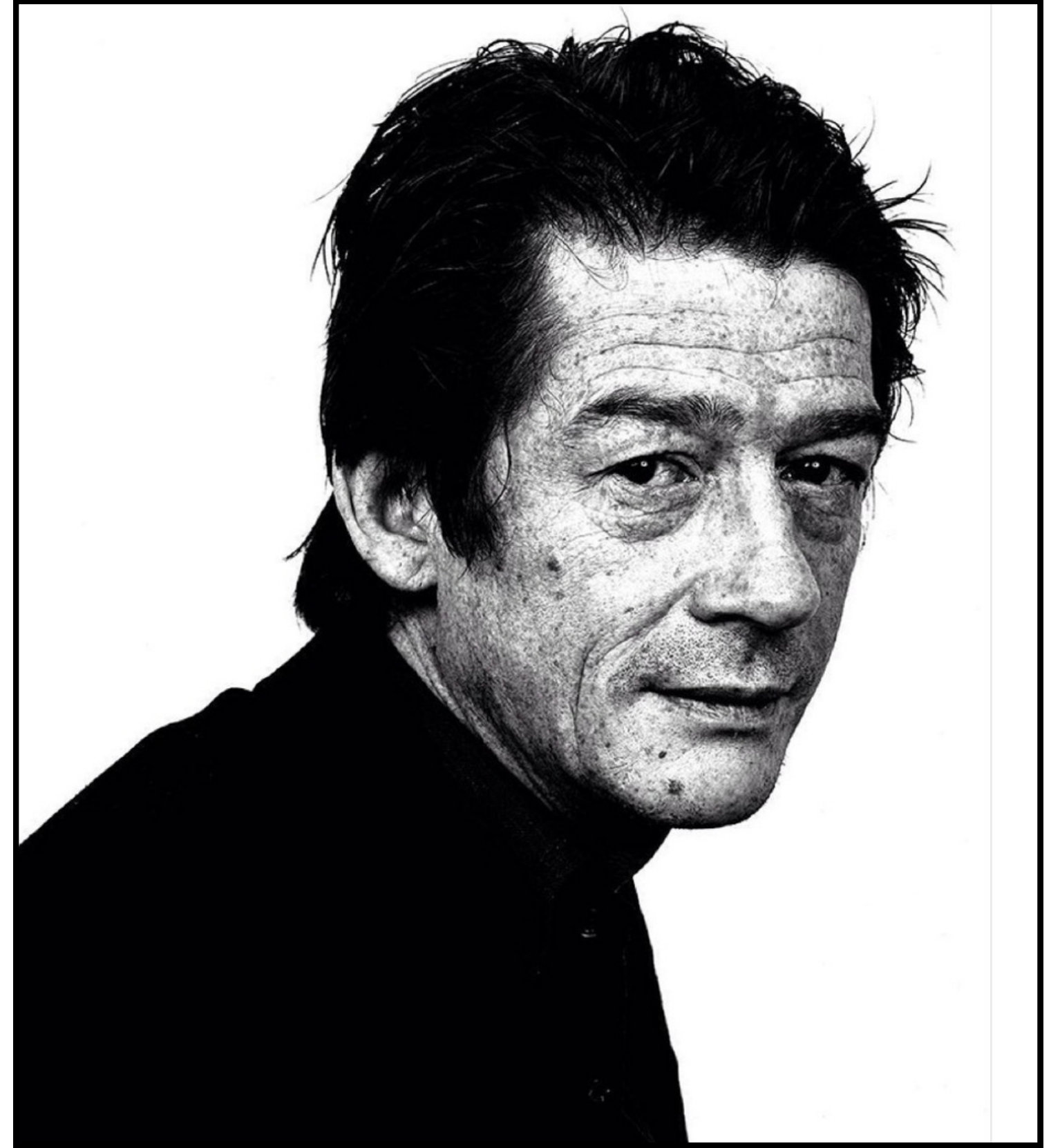
Lara Croft on the beach in Mexico



Joaquin Phoenix , Pier 59, NYC



Charles Dance, London



John Hurt, Mount Kenya



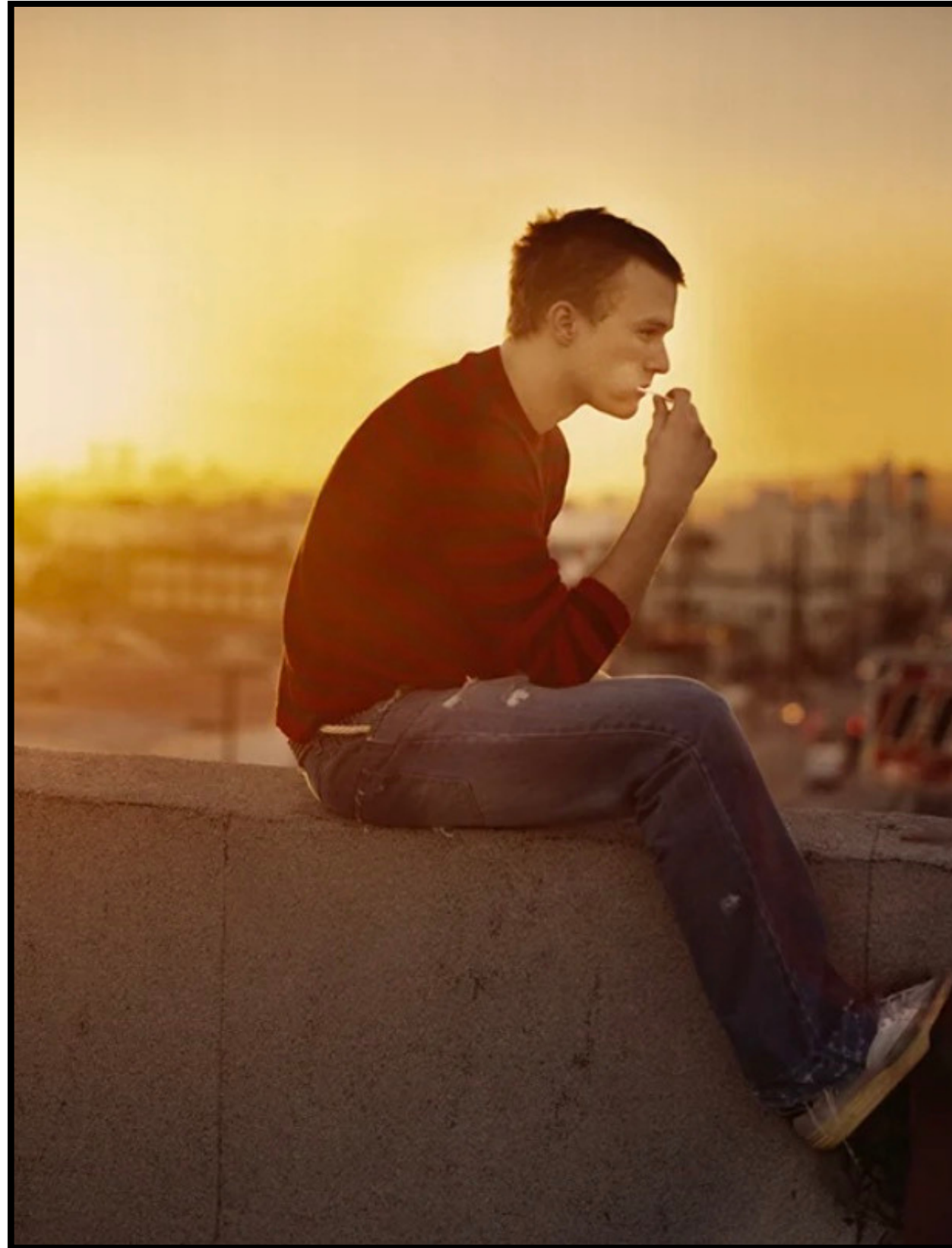
Marc Anthony, Miami



Toby Keith, Backstage



Ray Liotta, Cecil Hotel



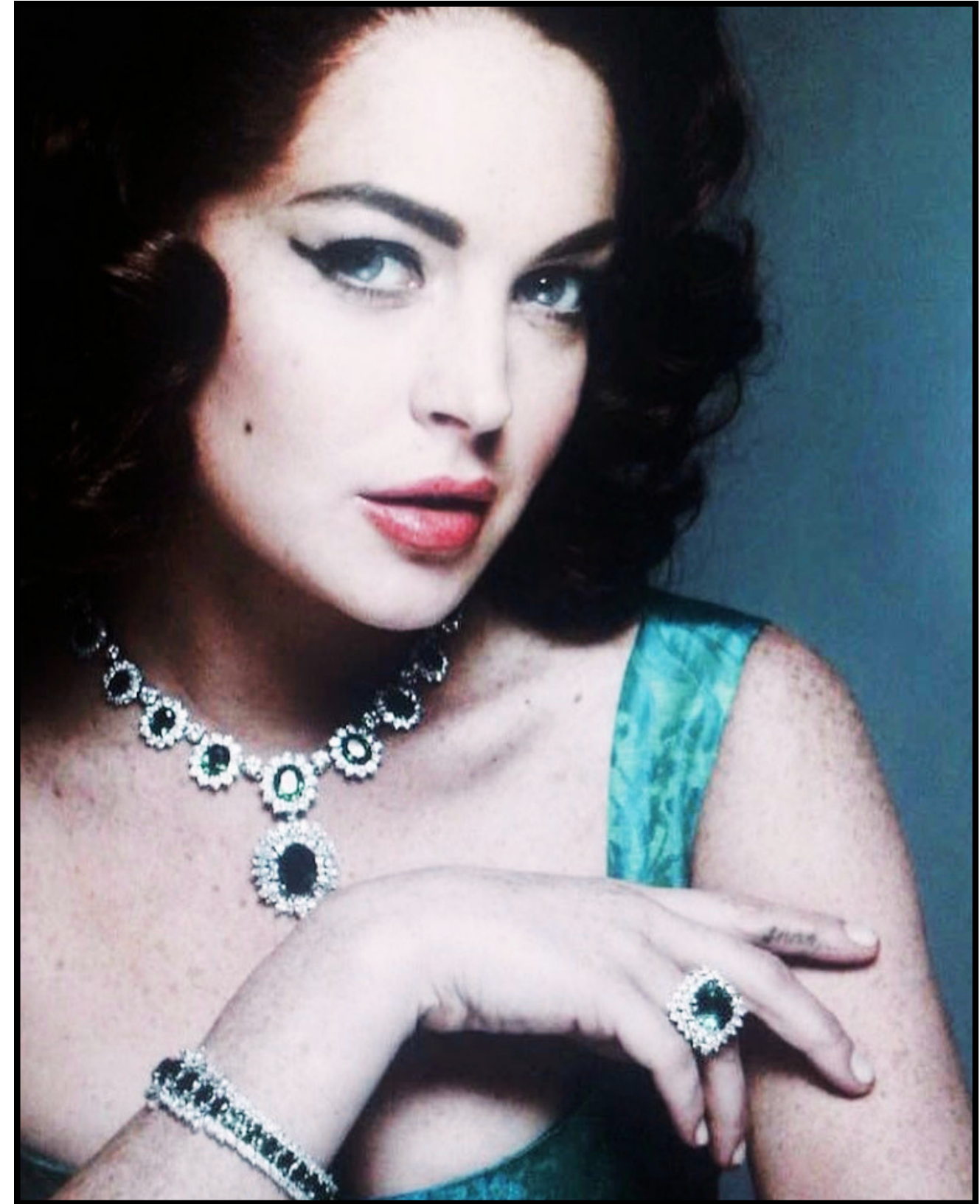
Heath Ledger, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel



Jon Bon Jovi & Valeria Mazza for Versacei



Brooke Shields, Los Angeles



Lindsay Lohan, Dick & Liz



Eva Mendes, Los Angeles



Andy MacDowell, Montegridolfo Estate



Patrick Swayze, Los Angeles



Monica Bellucci for GQ



Pamela Anderson for GQ



Mickey Rourke, 5th Street Gym



Bill Harney, Katherine Gorge, NT, Australia



McLaren Exhibition W Hotel, Hollywood



RICHARD McLAREN
01.01.1958 - 03.04.2023

THE McLAREN ARCHIVES

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