

# AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHER



**Cover:** Photograph by François Lochon. Lochon started out as a picture researcher in 1974 in the library of Gamma, the Paris-based photo agency. After three years of looking at the photos of others he began shooting on his own. Assignments have taken him to China, India and Israel. On March 31 of this year he was in Iran, and photographed this young woman veiled in the traditional *chador* as she lined up to vote on the referendum for the Islamic Republic. Lochon, who is 26, was just made a partner in the agency.

## FEATURES

**History: Bern Schwartz 22**  
by Philippe Halsman.  
The great portraitist recalls his greatest student.

**Feature: Iran 36**  
Photographers under fire produce resonant images.



**Portfolio: Speed Graphics 54**  
by William Coupon.  
Getting ripped on "punk" photography.

**Photo Essay: Hopkins High 65**  
by Dave Hanson and Kay Zakariasen Caranicas.  
Two alumni go back for a 20-years-later look.

## DEPARTMENTS

**In Camera: 6**

**Exhibitions: 12**  
Max Yavno  
by Owen Edwards.  
It seems to be the randomness of this show that bothers Mr. Edwards.

**Books: The News About History 16**  
by Vicki Goldberg.  
A New York newspaper looked at the world through smog-covered glasses.

**Nudes: Robert Farber 32**  
The return of the nude as landscape. It's about time.

**Assignment: 52**  
Stars and Stripes.  
Stand at attention when you look at these.

**Latent Images: 64**  
Charis Wilson.  
A backward glance at a summer afternoon in the Sierras.



**Gallery: 70**  
David Buckland.  
Flowery pictures.

**By Request: Stand By To Repel Boarders. 72**  
If these guys are sailing into the sunset, then we're standing on the horizon.

**Monitor: Newspapers 74**



**Letter: From Iowa 76**  
by John Puffer.  
It's not completely flat out here.

**Tech Notes: 78**

**Letter: 80**  
From Amsterdam  
by Jacques Halber.  
People like photography here, but it still doesn't keep them from driving into the canals at night.

**Listings: Galleries 82**

**Book Bits: 84**

**Classified: 84**

**Inside Advertising: 86**  
Nunn Bush  
by Erla Zwingle.  
The shoe that made Milwaukee famous.

**Parting Shots: 88**

# Bern Schwartz

A Yankee photographer who became the toast of England.  
by Philippe Halsman

When Bern Schwartz turned 60, he decided to dedicate most of his energy to his favorite hobby—photography. He wanted to learn portrait photography as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. He started by learning its basics from the portrait photographer Anthony Di Gesu in 1944. But Bern had seen my work in magazines over the years and had made up his mind to become my disciple.

In December of 1975 I gave a talk on portraiture at the International Center of Photography in New York, and when I had finished, ICP's director Cornell Capa introduced me to one of the listeners who wanted to meet me. The listener turned out to be a Mr. Schwartz, a

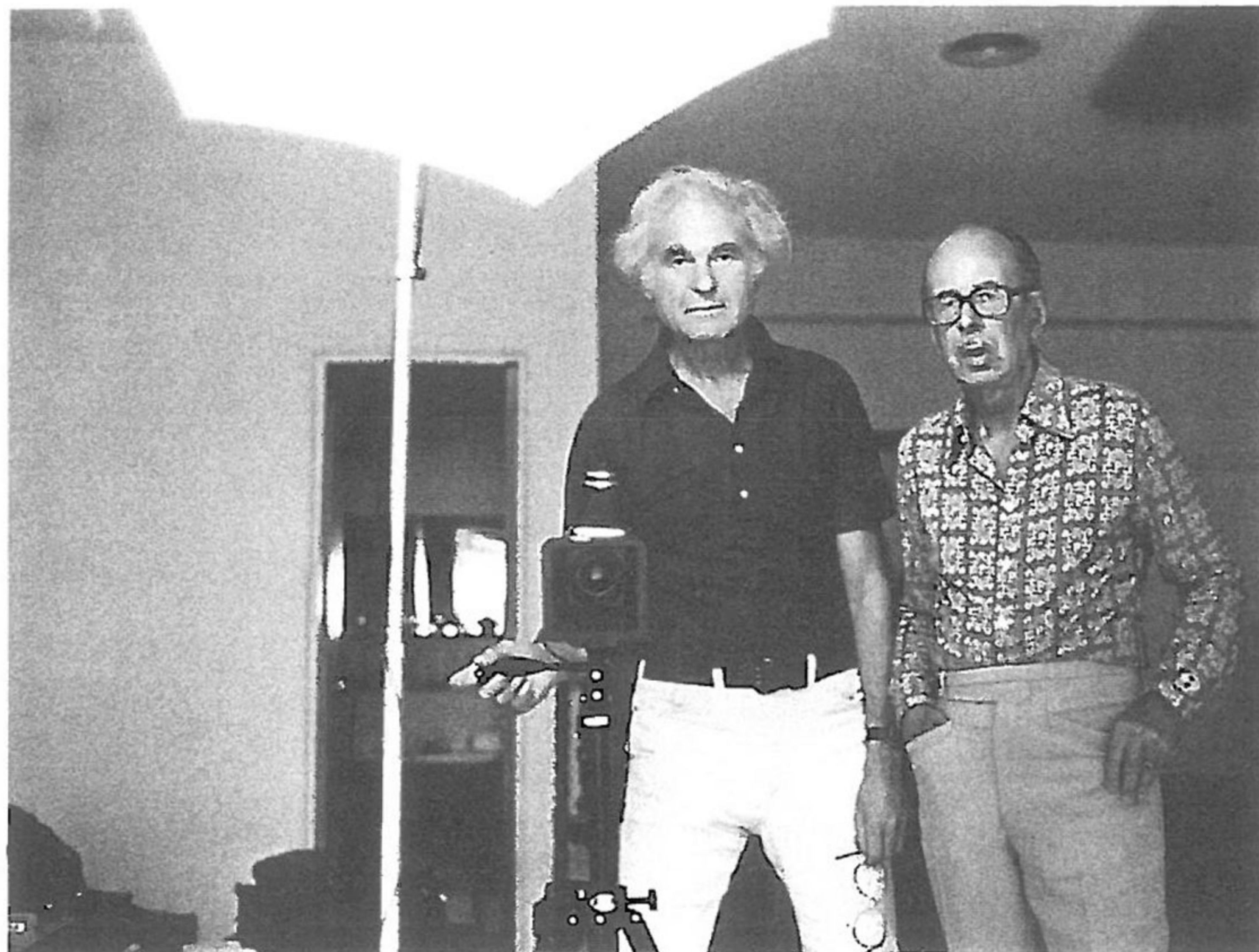
tall (6' 3½"), slender, handsome businessman from California who looked younger than his 60 years and who moved with the grace of a born athlete.

He invited Cornell and me and our wives to supper at his New York apartment in the Hotel Pierre. A few days later Mr. Schwartz phoned me. He had tickets for a ballet performance: Nureyev was to dance, and Mr. Schwartz invited my wife, Yvonne, and me to dinner and the theater. Well, Nureyev was indisposed but Mr. Schwartz was in great form. Before we parted he rather timidly asked me whether I would consider giving him a lesson in photography. I had taught photographic seminars to large groups of students; however, by choice I

had never had a single private student. But how could I say no to this friendly and kind person?

Soon after this first series of lessons Bern and his wife Ronny went to England and Israel, where Bern made a number of excellent portraits. To everyone he photographed he gave a large, framed color portrait as a present. After returning to his home in La Jolla, California, Schwartz wrote me, inviting Yvonne and me to visit and continue his lessons. Two first-class air tickets were enclosed. We accepted the invitation and were installed in the Schwartzes' guest apartment. But Bern and Ronny were not satisfied to make us merely comfortable. They wanted to make us happy. They knew that we liked to bicycle in Central Park, so two rented bicycles were put at our disposal. Their constant efforts to make us as happy as possible so endeared our hosts to us that very soon Bern and Ronny became not only our students but also very dear friends.

Gradually I found out more about Bern. The death of his father had forced him to abandon Lehigh College at the age of 18 and go to New York to seek his fortune. One of Bern's first jobs was as a shoe salesman. This was the beginning



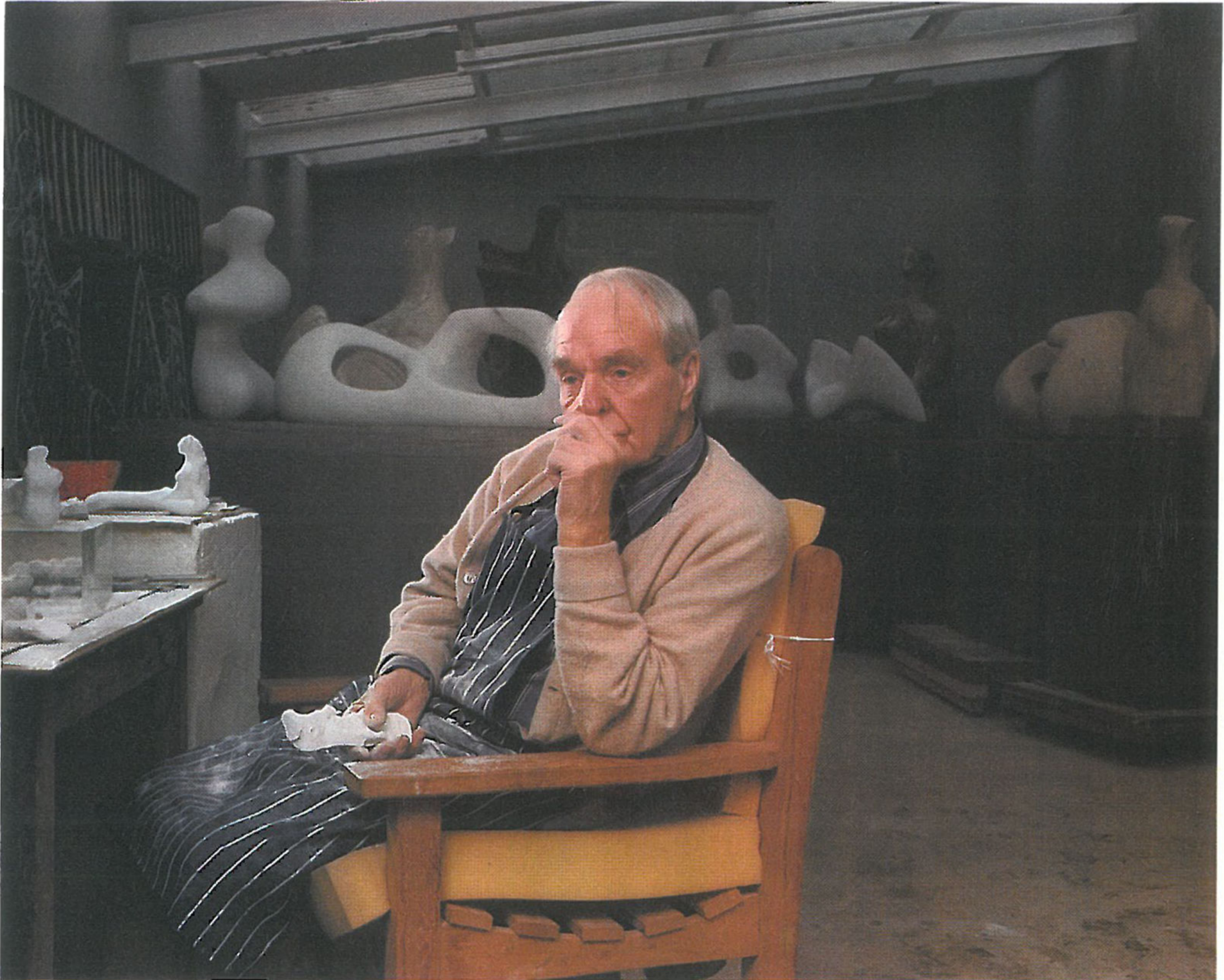
*(At left) For three years Halsman (right) periodically gave private instruction to Schwartz, the businessman-turned-portraitist. He became Halsman's most gifted protégé.*

**Gemma Jones**, the British actress who starred as Louisa Trotter in the popular PBS television series, "The Duchess of Duke Street."





He unconsciously  
approached his sitters  
as a peer.



**Lord C.P. Snow** (at left), author, scientist, cricketer and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Technology, shown in his study.

**Henry Moore** (above) the sculptor, lost in thought in one of his studios.

of a business career which was an uninterrupted string of successes. I will mention only its high points. At age 23 he founded his own company manufacturing advertising displays. Then in 1940 he switched to making radar equipment. At the end of World War II he founded a world-wide trading company, Pilot International. In 1954 he acquired

the Patchogue Plymouth Company and patented a synthetic tufted carpet backing which revolutionized the carpet industry. Five years later he sold the firm to Standard Oil Company. Meanwhile he acquired the Sherman Clay Company, which became the largest retail chain selling keyboard musical instruments.

One of the difficulties of teaching photography is the danger of overpowering the individual style of the student and making him an imitator of his instructor's style. Aware of this, I gave Bern the tools but let him use them in his own way. I taught Bern lighting, camera angles and all the photographic techniques

that I had learned by experimenting and experience in almost 50 years as a photographer.

I never had a more enthusiastic or dedicated student. My lessons were of three kinds. (1) They were practical. Bern would photograph his friends in my presence. (2) They were critical, and Bern never resented even the harshest critique of his work. (3) They were theoretical. Bern was very methodical. He would listen to my explanations and then repeat them in his own words into a tape recorder. The tape was transcribed the next day and added to previous transcriptions. I remember how often

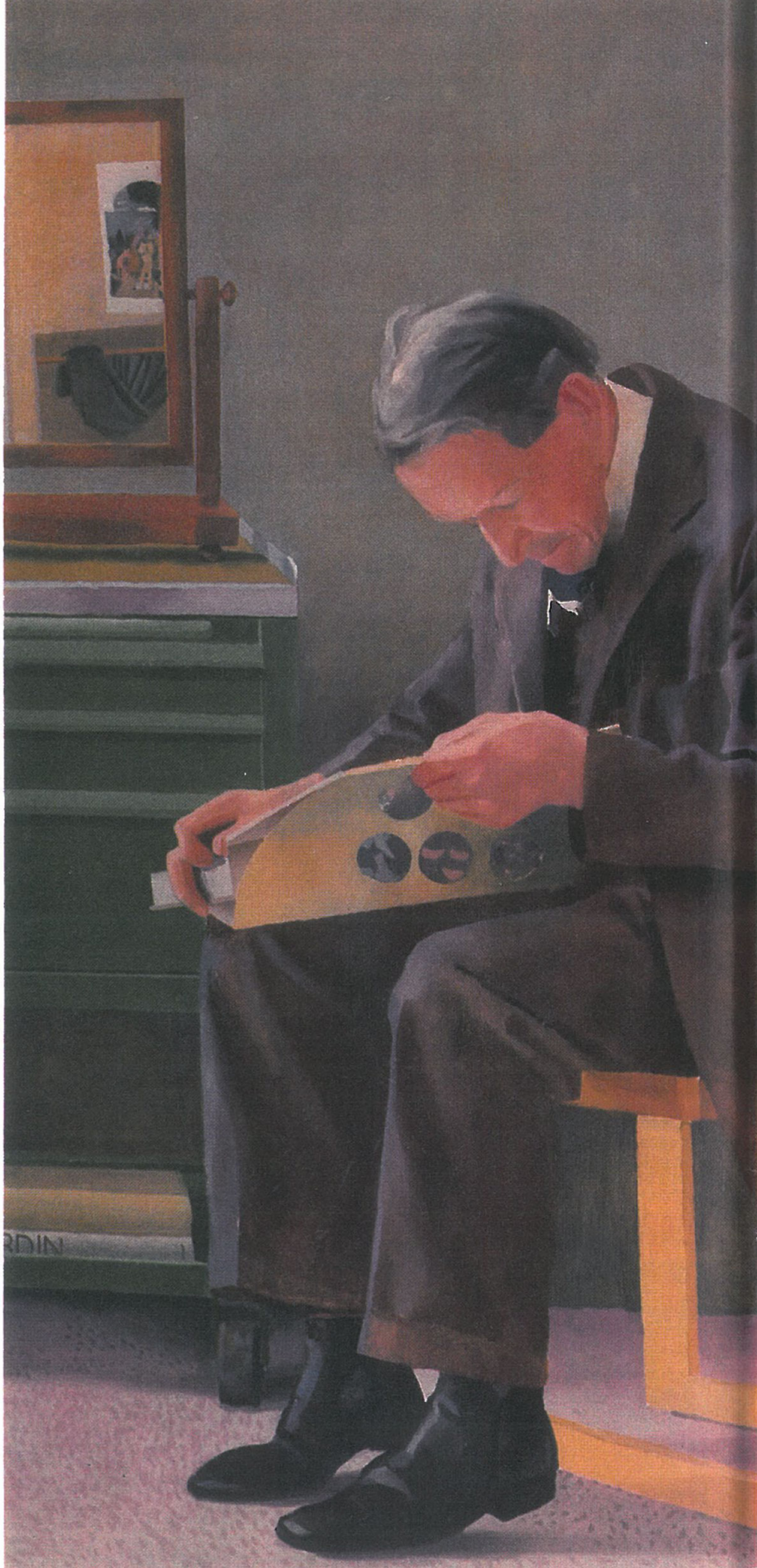
Bern would exclaim: "I cannot wait till I try out what I just learned!"

His equipment consisted of strobes with modeling lights. He used from one to four lights. He carried them in a specially built suitcase. He packed, unpacked, set up and repacked this equipment with speed and dexterity. His favorite camera was a motor-driven Hasselblad and he used 24-frame magazines. Bern's method was to set the Hasselblad on tripod and walk up and down the room, talking to his subject and releasing the shutter with a 12-foot extension cord. Often he would go through several magazines in several minutes. This, of course, produced a great amount of negatives and contact proofs, which had to be numbered and catalogued, and of enlargements which had to be selected, ordered, cropped and framed. Bern had a great gift for delegating parts of his work. He also had the rare luck to be married to Ronny, an extremely bright, vivacious and attractive blonde with a remarkable talent for organization. Last year at a reception in Bern's honor at Covent Garden Opera House, Bern described his marriage: "It is a great partnership. We have always done things together in photography and in business all our lives."

How is it possible that in just a few years Bern succeeded in photographing such a bevy of celebrities? In Israel it was relatively easy. Bern first became friendly with Teddy Kollek, Jerusalem's fabulous mayor who has a weakness for photographers. Bern photographed the  
*(continued on p. 30)*

---

**David Hockney**, artist and stage designer, surrounded by his paintings in his studio. To his right is a portrait of his father, behind him is a self portrait. When Schwartz saw it, he asked if the artist might still have the same shirt; it was then dug out of his closet for the sitting. Although it was not as natty as the artist might have liked, it suited the photographer's purpose and unified what would have been a complex composition.











**Harold Wilson** (at left), politician and former Prime Minister.

**Alistair Cooke** (top left), journalist and TV commentator.

**Lady Diana Cooper** (bottom left).

Because of the high cost of heating oil she spent much of her time in bed, so Schwartz photographed her there with her constant companion, "Doggie."

**Angela Rippon** (top right), BBC-TV

newsreader in a classic Halsman jump pose.

**Henry Kissinger** (bottom right), political scientist, former Secretary of State and TV political commentator.

# I never had a more dedicated, enthusiastic student.

(continued from p. 26)

mayor and, through Kollek's recommendations, Prime Minister Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, a witty group of three Arab sheiks, and many others.

In England Bern had previously photographed a personal friend, Maurice Edelman, a member of Parliament, who passed away soon afterwards. His widow treasured this portrait because she felt that Bern had captured the very essence of her beloved husband. Thanks to her recommendations Bern came to photograph other prominent politicians. Soon his reputation snowballed and he began to photograph the top personalities of England. Many of his sitters also became his friends. Among others, he photographed Earl Mountbatten, the famous Lord Admiral of the Fleet and the last British Viceroy of India. Earl Mountbatten became so fond of Bern that he convinced Prince Charles, the Duke of Marlborough, the exiled King of Greece and others to pose for Bern.

One contact led to another, and as always his pleased sitters received a handsomely framed portrait of their favorite pose as a gift. Bern began to photograph some of England's greatest actors and dancers, political figures, artists and writers, such as Lord C.P. Snow, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Prime Ministers Wilson and Callaghan. On the strength of these portraits Bern was invited to the Vatican to photograph Pope Paul VI. It turned out to be the very last portrait of the Pope. This extraordinary collection of portraits of celebrities led to an exhibition in a London art gallery. The opening of the exhibit was a social event. It had more celebrities per square foot than any other affair in London that season. This success led to the publication of a book of Bern's color portraits. Ronny herself spent several weeks at the printer supervising the printing of the book.

Another unusual aspect of Bern as a photographer was that he did not charge for his sittings. However, when a

subject wanted to order more copies (as when the former King of Greece ordered 5,000 8x10 color prints) or when Lord Rothschild wanted to use Bern's portrait on the dust jacket of his own book, Bern charged a very high fee to be donated to the Queen's Silver Jubilee Fund.

The question may arise, could anyone who had as much money to invest in his photographic career have achieved as much success as Bern? If photography were only a technique, the answer would be yes. But photography long ago proved itself an art. In portrait photography, because of the interaction between model and artist, the entire personality of the artist is involved. Artists working in any other media have the luxury of working strictly within their imagination. More is required of a photographer with a living subject before him: his depths as a human being, his psychological approach, his sense of beauty. In addition, Bern brought to his photography a very special attitude. Because of his success in business, he unconsciously approached even the most formidable of his sitters as a peer. His sitters were very soon aware that behind the personal charm of their photographer was a man of substance and achievement. He was never spoiled by his success, however. Often when he and Ronny would open the mail over the breakfast table he would look up from the pile of invitations, commissions and personal correspondence that had arrived and ask, "Do you suppose they know I'm just a little country boy from Allentown?"

The main reason for Bern's success was that his portraits looked so lifelike and natural. He did not impose his own personality upon his subjects. Nor were there any tense or self-conscious expressions; since Bern sometimes shot as many as 100 frames, the subjects had time to get used to the shooting and lose self-consciousness. Henry Moore, for instance, forgot that he was being photographed and Bern got an unusually intimate portrait of the great sculptor lost in thought.

A photographer cannot capture somebody's character without also capturing the reflection of his own influence on the subject. For example, if a photographer bores his subject, he will get a bored expression; if he antagonizes the sitter, he will get an unpleasant one. Bern was not interested in shock value. What interested him was trying to elicit a natural spontaneous gesture and expression. His friendly and well-informed conversation as he walked around the room with his long cable release disarmed and relaxed the most inhibited sitter.

The well-known art historian Lord Kenneth Clark wrote in his critique of Bern's book: "Bern Schwartz's photographs portray the English society of the 1970's as vividly as Mrs. Cameron portrayed the society of the 1960's . . . The historians of England in the 1970's will find these photographs an invaluable guide to the intellectual life of the time; and meanwhile we can enjoy them as wholly admirable examples of the art of photography."

All in all I worked with Bern only three years. Every time we left La Jolla I had the feeling that I had exhausted all that I could teach Bern, and each time I suggested that he stop taking my lessons. But every year I would get a letter containing air tickets and a request to continue. And to my surprise, the photographic problems that came up proved that there were always new fields to discover and that photography, like any art, is bottomless.

Every fall the Schwartzes left for London. They stayed at the Berkeley Hotel but they also rented a flat where they could give small parties. Bern's portraits hung on the wall and there was a room which he could use as a studio. They worked hard. Bern did research on the people he was going to photograph. He often went to the library to read about his future subjects. Ronny was busy sending film to the lab for processing, ordering prints, writing invitations or thank-you notes, and keeping track of the appointments.

Photography had opened a new life to them, and they loved it. Instead of leading an ordinary American workaday life, they had a life in which every day brought a new surprise. They associated with the top personalities of England's elite. During the last three years their life had become a chain of new adventures and photographic triumphs. Yvonne and I were immensely happy with Bern's success. I was very proud of my talented disciple and vicariously enjoyed his achievements. The Schwartzes felt all this and they kept constantly in touch with us. Sometimes the telephone would ring and it would be Bern in London, calling to discuss a photographic problem with me. More often, Bern and

---

**Bern Schwartz**, a double-exposed self portrait made by masking one side of the lens and then the other.

Ronny wanted to let us know that Menuhin was using Bern's portrait on his new record cover, or that Margaret Thatcher, leader of the Conservative Party, had selected Bern's portrait as her official campaign picture, or that they had just been informed that Kissinger planned to use Bern's portrait of him on the jacket of the book he was writing.

On November 14, 1978, we received a long letter from Ronny telling us that a private portrait sitting with the new Pope John Paul II had been arranged. At the bottom of the last page was a handwritten P.S.: "We just received an invitation to Buckingham Palace." It seemed to Yvonne and me that the path of Bern's success was steadily mounting and that limitless possibilities lay ahead of him.

But in the evening of the same day we got a telephone call from London. It was Ronny. "Bern is very ill and we are return-

ing to La Jolla." "I hope it is not anything serious," I said. The answer was, "He has cancer of the liver and the doctors give him only a few weeks to live."

I cannot describe the impression that this news made on us. I remember Bern's belief that all problems in life have a solution. But there was no solution for someone who was dying of cancer. Or was there? After a few days Ronny called from La Jolla. "Don't take it too hard," she said. "Bern and I have discussed the situation and we have come to the conclusion that Bern got out of life everything that he was after. He is at peace with himself. We have decided to be as stoic and cheerful as possible."

Bern's family gathered around him, his sons Michael and Eric and his daughter Tilda, who was engaged to be married in March. But the wedding was advanced so that Bern could give the bride away. Although he was being fed intravenously, Bern stayed active, putting his affairs in order, taking care of the charities he was interested in, and joking with his nurses. When we talked with him on the phone he tried to cheer us up: "Everything is fine. I feel quite well."

On December 28, Ronny read him the newspaper clippings she had just received from England. In a review of his book the *Edinburgh Evening News* wrote, "Bern Schwartz is one of the greatest photographers in the world." The review in the *World Times* concluded, "Schwartz's uncanny ability to capture the essence of a life makes him one of the most significant photographers alive."

But two days later Bern was alive no more. The *New York Times* obituary column stated that the portrait photographer Bern Schwartz died at the age of 64. But the unusual fact was that, as a portrait photographer, Bern was only four years old. ■

---

*Philippe Halsman is having a major exhibition of his portraits thru July 15 at the International Center of Photography called "Philippe Halsman, Sights and Insights: A Retrospective."*

