

Mick Jagger The Photobook

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Thames & Hudson

I stumbled across Mick's pics, some within these pages, whilst passing the National Portrait Gallery in central London where my attention was drawn to a small basement section showing a selection of the man, the legend, the icon and without the shadow of a doubt one of the most photogenic people on the planet. Is it the looks? Or is it the way he works it? Early manager Andrew Loog Oldham spotted Mick's other talent than musician straight away when he set eyes on him for the first time at the Richmond gig, like Sylvester the cat looking at Tweety. He also noted that everything of Mick's face is enlarged: the mouth & lips, the head & hair ...set on a slender body.

That was the '60s. Wind forward and '72 -'76 sees the Mickster strut the world's stage whilst becoming more familiar with lights, make-up, camera, action. Have a look at Hal Ashby's flick *Let's Spend The Night Together* and you'll get an idea how aware Mick is of cameras running & pictures being taken – the guy's a Rock 'N' Roll diva by then! But in the process an excellent professional showman building an impressive pictorial legacy as a result, even to the point that Mick doesn't always have to strike a pose, to bag a striking pose – an art also Keith Richards got pretty much down to a tee. So here it is: Mick Jagger The Photobook – a bold statement for starters, so what can we expect?

Taking into consideration that it's not a coffee table book or a tome of great cost at a very reasonable £14-99, it's not a bad job. Its less-than-A4 size allows an easy flick-through but does take away from the awe factor of some really impressive portraits, two of which actually donned by the front & back cover. Many of them you will have seen, often posed and previously having appeared in many a magazine of the day. And many a great picsmeister passes through these pages: Gered Mankowitz, Cecil Beaton, Terry O'Neill, Ethan Russell, Claude Gassian, Michael Putland, Ken Regan, Anton Corbijn.... Altogether they provide a very pleasant little stroll through the years of Mick Jagger photography with many a classic shot - maybe too many, too familiar.

Of course, a Mick Jagger photo book job can be as big as you want it to be but I guess this time around, it's too small (on size) and often too familiar-looking (on shots), too static (not enough 'live' shots) and too heavy on big name photographers as many a great Mick shot was taken by lesser-known snapsmen of the Rock photography world or lesser-known snaps by those famous photographers should have been included....in both cases this would have provide a much more interesting spread.

Even though Mick is considered a poser, one mustn't underestimate the one shot of the singer preferably 'live' or 'off guard' which just stirs the soul & captures the man at the moment. There are a couple here but I can think of quite a few more ...and they're not here. But on the other hand some of you may indeed well be pleasantly impressed by the French, Dutch, Belgian & German photographers' input and I guess the

general public will lap it all up in time for Christmas.

I like the little write-ups per photographer at the back to see where they're coming from but I don't understand the flitting around within each decade, not having the photos in chronological order. With so many posed photographs, I also enjoyed spotting the Mick who looks relaxed & at ease with the person behind the camera (it's in his eyes!). And on that subject, with some shots you just seem to yearn sometimes for wanting to see the full photo shoot, so maybe the 71 shots in the book altogether won't do in the end.....Can we have a part two please? - *Jaap Hoeksma*