

NEAL PRESTON

EXHILARATED AND EXHAUSTED



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"Shooting live music performances is something few photographers do really well. I just happened to discover one day that I was pretty good at it."



“Neal has made a magnificent career, and more importantly a life out of the passion that lives in every frame he shoots. The artists themselves have always sparked not just to his enormous skills but to his personality. Within minutes, it seems, his subjects feel Neal’s deep knowledge of the music, his grand sense of humor and his love of every cable, and every crew member that makes a tour come alive.” - Cameron Crowe

Neal Preston is one of the most prolific and highly regarded rock photographers of all time. **EXHILARATED AND EXHAUSTED** is a complete retrospective of an incredible career spanning almost 50 years. Produced in collaboration with Neal, with unrestricted access to his legendary archive – considered one of music’s most extensive and significant photography collections. A who’s who of rock royalty, this stunning book of over 300 photographs is a breathtaking visual feast and fascinating memoir.

Neal is the true insider and his images are brought alive by his outrageous insights into life as a rock and roll photographer. Glimpses of life backstage, stressful deadlines, a 47-year-case of permanent jetlag, live performances, post-performance highs and lows, photo shoots gone awry and outtakes – many photos which have never been seen before – are accompanied by incredible personal accounts of touring with giants of rock and roll, Led Zeppelin, The Who and Queen. Racing from gig to gig, losing police escorts; sleazy motels, groupies, egos, frighteningly high alcohol and drug intake levels, hours spent travelling, never-ending offers of sex and drugs in return for backstage passes. “Rock tours were fertile breeding grounds from which many a party would sprout. Call it blowing off steam, having a little fun, or taking a little break, it’s all the same. I had my share, and more. But there was still work to do.”

Legendary levels of indulgence and averaging at most two hours sleep a night gave way to tensions, too, as Neal reflects: “There’s more drama on one Rolling Stones tour than in a dozen Martin Scorsese films.” Neal’s storytelling is as hilarious as his photography is brilliant. Outrageous situations and defining moments captured forever; when a white dove landed on Robert Plant’s hand at the end of “Stairway to Heaven”, a rock star smoking crack in Neal’s car during a national magazine shoot, flying in on the red-eye from New York to photograph Wham! in London, and back that same night to shoot Bruce Springsteen for the front cover of *TIME*. Neal recalls the time he received a call from Tom Petty, and within a couple of hours found himself on a “small job” with Tom, George Harrison, Bob Dylan, Jeff Lynne and Roy Orbison. Two months later Orbison died and a photo from that shoot became the *Traveling Wilburys*’ album cover.





“They’re snapshots of what is most elusive: truth and fun and for that one moment, on that one night, the thrill of belonging.”

Neal has made some incredible friendships along the way with artists, managers and crews. His friendship with Stevie Nicks began from a shoot on the rooftop of her Venice condo at sunset. “I always compare a photo shoot to a dance – I lead, the subject follows, and together we tango.”

What started as a boyhood hobby has resulted in an outstanding career that continues today. Neal Preston has made a huge contribution to music photography; he has shot countless album covers and covered thousands of assignments for *Rolling Stone*, *Newsweek*, *TIME* and *People*, with whom he has enjoyed a 30-year association. In addition to extensively photographing Led Zeppelin, The Who, The Rolling Stones, Fleetwood Mac and Springsteen, his incredible portfolio includes images of Michael Jackson, Bob Marley, Marvin Gaye, Madonna, Billy Joel and David Bowie. In 1985 Neal was an official photographer for Live Aid at Wembley. Almost 100 of Preston’s photographs are on exhibit at the Forum in Inglewood, CA, and he has held major exhibitions in Los Angeles, New York, Las Vegas, Frankfurt, Zurich, Stockholm and London, where his work is also in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery.

Neal’s photographs vibrate with a palpable intensity. As close friend, Cameron Crowe, observes in his foreword: “These images live on. You can feel the music, the audience, the desperate need to find a place in the world, all of it in these photos because they were curated by the guy who felt it all when he pressed the button on the camera.”

NEAL PRESTON: EXHILARATED AND EXHAUSTED is a collection of some of the most brilliant music photography ever made, alongside unbelievable stories. This extraordinary volume is the definitive archive of the greatest living rock and roll photographer, published by Reel Art Press on 6 November 2017.

“Photography has been everything to me; a blessing beyond my wildest hopes and dreams. My job has given me a life that has been exhilarating and exhausting.”

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NEAL PRESTON IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

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