

Morrison Hotel Gallery



By Helen Marketti

Photos of rock stars past and present find their way on magazine covers, liner notes, album covers, web sites and documentaries. Gracing the walls at the three Morrison Hotel Galleries in New York City are rock and roll's movers, shakers and image-makers. There is emotion and a story behind each photo. The Morrison Hotel



Rick Edwards

Gallery was founded in 2001 by former record company executive and producer Peter Blachley, music photographer Henry Diltz and independent record storeowner Rich Horowitz. The idea for the gallery was to have a place where fine art music photography can be displayed, admired and appreciated. Rick Edwards, the Web Director can mainly be found at the Soho Loft location of the Morrison Hotel Gallery in New York City. The Loft is quite spacious with hard wood floors, large

windows for natural light and plenty of wall space for rock and roll's hit makers to be displayed in remarkable photos.

"I had older brothers who listened to Elvis, the Big Bopper and stuff like that. I was encountering their music and they were pretty cool about letting me tag along," remembers Rick. "The split came later when I was a senior in high school. That's when I decided I wanted to be in a band, which was a pretty typical thing to do back then. We were playing school dances and things like that. We

went through an image change, too. We went from looking like The Rascals to more like Vanilla Fudge. I graduated in 1967 and went to a junior college where I was majoring in trying to stay out of Vietnam.

Then we also became interested in God's own green herb."

"I was a musician from then until about 1984. I was tired of it all at that point. There were no record deals and I guess you could contribute it to bad management," said Rick. "Then I became

"Ranger Rick" for 16 years at Ft.

Vancouver Park in Washington. I was working with a living history site, which wasn't that far away from the music business because the living history was still a form of entertainment. I started running



(L to R) Nick Zinner (Yeah, Yeah, Yeah), Autumn de Wilde and Patrick Kestler

into people I had known in the music business."

Rick always had an interest in photography. He was the photographer for his high school yearbook. While looking through



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some items at the Visitors Center at Ft. Vancouver, Rick came across an old Nikon camera. "It was in a box

with some extra lenses and I asked if

I could clean it up and use it. Then I was able to start taking photos of the park.



(L to R) Dean Holtermann, Mick Rick and Dave Stewart (Dave Stewart of The Eurythmics)

Eventually a new camera was purchased for me. Some of the photos I took are used for postcards at the park," he said.

So, how did Rick end up in New York City after being a park ranger? "My girlfriend and I have been together since 1971. We've been

through everything together," explains Rick. "We had been to New York City a couple of

times on vacations. Returning from a New York trip, we just looked at one another and decided to move there. That was about ten years ago. I

decided I wanted to be a photographer so I left my job at the park."

Once settled in New York City, Rick was able to secure a position at the American Museum of Natural History. "I worked in the Department of Paleontology under a five

year grant to digitize the paleontology collection," recalls Rick. "I spent five years photographing the dinosaur collection and putting it up on the internet. I

remember photographing rib fragments of an allosaurus for months. (Laughs) It was boring and I was alone a lot but still I liked it because I had free reign to do what I wanted. It was cool to spend time in the attics of the museum.

Eventually the grant money ran out and I needed to find something else."

Rick stumbled upon the Morrison Hotel Gallery by chance. "I walked by the gallery in Soho one day and wondered what it was all about so I walked in. Peter Blachley, the owner was there and we began talking. I met Henry Diltz later on," said

Rick. "I began taking photos of the gallery events. I was asked if I wanted a job and then I started working in sales. Not long after that, Peter asked me to do the web site. I guess now you could say I am the official photographer for the gallery. It's a lot of fun. It's unbelievable for me because I have met so many great photographers. Henry Diltz took the first album cover shot for Crosby, Stills and Nash.

Bob Gruen took the photos of John Lennon wearing the white shirt that says New York. Jim Marshall has released a photography book, titled Trust, and trust is the only way you can get close to people. It's all about having access."

Rick shares a favorite quote he heard

from Henry Diltz, "Sometimes the most important photograph is the one you don't take." Rick explains, "Because you were in the moment with the artist and you didn't take advantage of the person, now they know they can trust you because you didn't intrude."

Trust, rapport, access and professionalism are what Rick believes in when photographing artists and events. "The most amazing shots are the intimate shots where they are being human, being real people. They may be looking right at the camera or asleep on a chair after a concert. I

don't pose people for photographs because then I would be telling them what to do instead of letting them be who they are."

He continues, "Most concerts let photographers in the front of the stage area for the first three songs. That's usually when a band is still laid back. It's better to get photos during the last three songs instead, to really get a band promoted. Only allowing photographers in one spot means all of them are going to have the same kind of shots.

Then I think, "Does the world really need one more photo of this?" It's the private moments that make great photographs."

Photograph exhibits are planned about a year in advance, which depends on the availability of the photographer, artist and so on. "Morrison Hotel Gallery is an amazing place with what we do and who we represent," said Rick. "We feel we are the

cornerstone for music photography."

When asked what he thinks makes a great rock and roll photograph and why people are interested in the shots Rick said, "Rock and Roll photos can

relate to a special moment in someone's life. When people were listening to vinyl, they looked at the album cover or read the liner notes while the record was playing. That's what made the connection. You don't have to explain art to people. They get it."

For more cool information about the Morrison Hotel Gallery, please visit: www.morrisonhotellibrary.com



Patti Boyd (Patti Boyd gets ready for her interview w/Anthony Mason of CBS Sunday Morning)



Henry Diltz (Henry Diltz is posing w/one of his favorite Woodstock shots.)

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