



**Terry O'Neill**  
(British, 1938 - 2019)

## Biography

Terry O'Neill was born and raised in London and began his career working in a photographic unit for British Airways in the late 1950s. He photographed a sleeping figure at Heathrow Airport who happened to be Britain's Home Secretary, spurring his subsequent employment at a tabloid in 1959. His first job was photographing Sir Laurence Olivier and he was soon a successful freelancer chronicling the emerging faces of film, fashion, and music that would go on to define the Swinging Sixties. By 1965 he was being commissioned by the biggest magazines and newspapers in the world.

His work has appeared on the covers and in *Life*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *Vanity Fair* and he has created iconic movie posters, album covers, and fashion images for designers. His photograph of Faye Dunaway the morning after she won her Best Actress Oscar in 1977 is considered one of the most iconic Hollywood images of all time, while his image of Brigitte Bardot smoking is perhaps the best known image of her. O'Neill is the recipient of numerous awards, and in 2011 he was awarded the Royal Photographic Society's Centenary Medal. Terry O'Neill's exquisite and candid portraits of the celebrities and culture of the 1960s and 1970s helped to define the era and preserve it for the future. His photographs display his knack for capturing his subjects candidly or in unconventional settings stemming from his ability to fade into the background and exercise discretion.

His incisive photojournalism of creative and political luminaries, oftentimes in their most unguarded and early moments, has included Brigitte Bardot, The Beatles, Audrey Hepburn, David Bowie, the Rolling Stones, Nelson Mandela, and many others. Helping to define backstage reportage, O'Neill worked closely with Frank Sinatra for over 30 years being granted privileged access to the legend, was with the Beatles and Rolling Stones in 1963, and covered The Who, Chuck Berry, and Eric Clapton early in their music careers. His other subjects include political figures such as Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela, contemporary icons such as Amy Winehouse and Nicole Kidman, many members of the British royal family, as well as every James Bond from Sean Connery to Daniel Craig.

Over his six decade career, O'Neill has formed close bonds with many of his subjects, evidenced by the intimate, snapshot-style nature of his iconic photographs. As he advises, "You must like the people, that's the key to any job. It comes through in the pictures: that's the difference between a good picture and a bad picture." With such an illustrious careers, O'Neill says, "I look back on my life and I can't believe I did all those things."

Terry O'Neill passed away in November 2019, but his legacy lives on.

*NOS Article Terry O'Neill*

## Honours and Awards

2019

Appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2019 Birthday Honours for services to photography

2011

Royal Photographic Society's Centenary Medal

2004

Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society

## Selected Collections

National Portrait Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom  
The Getty Museum, Los Angeles, USA  
The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland, USA  
The Arts Council Collection, United Kingdom  
The Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA  
The Elton John Photography Collection  
The British Film Institute (BFI), London, United Kingdom  
The Royal Photographic Society, Bath, United Kingdom  
The Al Thani Collection, Qatar

## Selected Exhibitions

2023

*Famous by Terry O'Neill*, curated by Feiko Koster, Fotomuseum aan het Vrijthof, Maastricht, The Netherlands

2022

*Terry O'Neill: Stars*, Fotografiska, Stockholm, Sweden

2019

*Pop and Music Icons*, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France  
*Icons of Style: A Century of Fashion Photography*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA  
*Hollywood Icons*, Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Turin, Italy  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Stars and Icons*, Leica Gallery, Frankfurt, Germany

2018

*Solo: Terry O'Neill: All About Bowie*, Iconic Images Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
*Stars and the City*, Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Legends*, Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia  
*Don't You Forget About Me*, The Lowry, Salford Quays, United Kingdom  
*50 Years of Icons: Hollywood in Pictures*, Hollywood Museum, Los Angeles, USA

2017

*Modern Masters*, SmithDavidson Gallery, Miami, USA  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: The Legends*, Morrison Hotel Gallery, New York, USA  
*Hollywood Icons*, Mouche Gallery, Beverly Hills, USA

2016

*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Stardust*, The Leica Gallery, Los Angeles, USA  
*Legends of Rock*, Morrison Hotel Gallery, New York, USA  
*Fame: Celebrating Hollywood's Iconic Stars*, The Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland  
*50 Years of Iconic Images*, Neuehouse, Los Angeles, USA  
*Capturing the Celebrity*, National Museum Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom

2015

*Bowie is...*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia  
*Celebrity: The Photographers*, International Center of Photography, New York, USA  
*The Power of the Portrait*, Royal West of England Academy, Bristol, United Kingdom  
*Mick Rock vs. Terry O'Neill: Shooting Stars*, Proud Galleries, London, United Kingdom  
*Rock Icons*, La Photographie Galerie, Brussels, Belgium  
*Real to Reel: A Century of Celebrity*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, United Kingdom  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Iconic Images of Hollywood*, Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Turin, Italy

2014

*Solo: Terry O'Neill's Rock & Roll Opus*, San Francisco Art Exchange, San Francisco, USA  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: It Girls and Boys*, The Fine Art Society, Edinburgh, Scotland  
*Music & Photography*, Foam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
*Celebrity Culture*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria  
*The Glamour of Italian Fashion 1945-2014*, Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London, United Kingdom  
*Elvis at the O2*, O2 Arena, London, United Kingdom

2013

*Celebrity Culture*, Les Rencontres d'Arles, Arles, France  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Fashion and Glamour*, The Design Museum, London, United Kingdom

2012

*The 60s: A Decade of Change*, Photographers' Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
*Who Shot Rock & Roll: A Photographic History, 1955 to the Present*,  
The Annenberg Space for Photography, Los Angeles, USA  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Celebrity Portraits*, National Museum Cardiff, Wales,  
United Kingdom

2011

*50 Years of British Style and Culture*, Design Museum, London, United Kingdom  
*British Stars and Style*, Louvre, Paris, France

2010

*Who Shot Rock & Roll*, The Annenberg Space for Photography, Los Angeles,  
USA  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: The Faces of the Stars*, Getty Images Gallery, London,  
United Kingdom  
*White Women, Sleepless Nights, Big Nudes*, Helmut Newton Foundation, Berlin,  
Germany  
*Celebrity Portraits*, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA  
*The Photographic Sensibility*, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA

2009

*Chairman of the Board, Knight of the Realm: Photographs of Frank Sinatra and  
Sir Elton John*, San Francisco Art Exchange, San Francisco, USA  
*A Retrospective*, Getty Image Gallery, the Village, Westfield London, London,  
United Kingdom  
*Beatles to Bowie: The 60s Exposed*, National Portrait Gallery, London,  
United Kingdom  
*Solo: Terry O'Neill: Icons of the 60s*, Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A),  
London, United Kingdom

2007

*Kings and Queens: Photographs by Terry O'Neill*, San Francisco Art Exchange,  
San Francisco, USA  
*The Grace Kelly Years*, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco  
*Rock 'n' Roll 39-59*, Cité de la Musique, Paris, France

2005

*Photographs by Terry O'Neill*, San Francisco Art Exchange, San Francisco, USA

2003/04

*Terry O'Neill: Celebrity*, National Portrait Gallery, London, United Kingdom

## Books

2019

*Bowie by O'Neill: The definitive collection with unseen images*  
*Elton John by Terry O'Neill: The definitive portrait, with unseen images*  
*Always Audrey: Six Iconic Photographers. One Legendary Star*

2018

*Led Zeppelin Live : 1975–1977*  
*Terry O'Neill: Rare & Unseen*

2017

*When Ziggy Played The Marquee*

2016

*Breaking Stones 1963–1965: A Band on the Brink of Superstardom*  
*Terry O'Neill: Every Picture Tells a Story*

2015

*Two Days That Rocked the World: Elton John Live at Dodger Stadium*

2014

*Terry O'Neill's Rock 'n' Roll Album*

2013

*Terry O'Neill*

2012

*All About Bond*

2008

*Eltonography: Sir Elton John a Life in Pictures*

2007

*Sinatra: Frank and Friendly- A Unique Photographic Memoir of a Legend*

2003

*Celebrity*

1985

*Legends*