

# The power of pictures: photojournalism in the digital age

The Freedom Forum European Centre  
April 24, 2001



"We may understand through narrative, but we remember through photographs," writes American journalist David Rieff in an essay introducing Ron Haviv's new book, *Blood and Honey: A Balkan War Journal*.

We've seen the power of Rieff's observation in two memorable photographic exhibits that we've had the privilege of displaying recently at our European Centre near Marble Arch in London.

The first exhibit, "Images for Indochina," was organised by the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation, an ad hoc group of old Vietnam hands — including its founder, British photographer Tim Page, and Horst Faas of Associated Press, a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer.

The IMMF and its chairman John Sheppard, a long-time British television producer, came up with the idea of auctioning off photographs that would be donated by some of the world's best photographers to raise money to stage a series of photojournalism workshops in Saigon for young Vietnamese.

What Sheppard and his fellow trustees thought might produce about 80 contributions instead yielded photographs from a star-studded list of names, including Sebastiao Salgado, Eve Arnold, Susan Meiselas and James Nachtwey, as well as Faas and Page. The estates of Robert Capa, Larry Burrows and other great Vietnam-era photographers

such as Everette Dixie Reese also donated photographs. Thanks to Tim Page, the auction also received 15 images from the North Vietnam archives that had never before been seen outside of Hanoi.

The auction itself was a resounding success, with more than £41,000 (or \$60,000) raised to support the training programs in Vietnam.

To highlight the exhibit and the auction, we brought together a panel to discuss what the future holds for photojournalism: Horst Faas of Associated Press; Gary Knight of Newsweek magazine and also a trustee for IMMF; and Eamonn McCabe, The Guardian's award-winning photographer and for 12 years its picture editor.

I asked Horst Faas: Will there be an exhibit of this quality in 50 years time? Unlikely, he said, because "the pictures are being deleted."

No photo exhibit at the European Centre attracted as much press attention as did Ron Haviv's "Blood and Honey: A Balkan War Journal." And few who saw it stayed dry-eyed, especially those from the Balkans, who found his visual record of the conflicts a brutally painful reminder of the death and destruction that have taken place in their homeland.

The next stops for Haviv's exhibit: Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia.

*John Owen,  
Director, Freedom Forum European Center*

The power of pictures was edited by Kelly Haggart, with photographs by Matthew Isepp.  
Designed by Lylaani Dixon and co-ordinated by Duncan Furey, Hilda Hatz and Pranvera Shema.

# The power of pictures: photojournalism in the digital age

Moderator:

**John Owen**

*(Freedom Forum European Centre)*

Panel:

**Horst Faas**

*(Associated Press)*

**Eamonn McCabe**

*(The Guardian)*

**Gary Knight**

*(Freelancer)*



**Horst Faas**

*ASSOCIATED PRESS*

I'm sure the people who took the photos on these walls never thought they would hang in something like a

museum. But, as you see, photojournalism has become something for museums. Look at me: I'm almost a museum piece at AP - 68, although I'm still working. Most of these photos were taken by good colleagues of ours. Somebody at the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation had the idea that it was time to give something back to the Vietnamese photographers after we had photographed Vietnam for so long. The idea behind the auction is to help finance a workshop for Vietnamese photographers. When I visited Vietnam last year, I was amazed at how many good photographers there were there, just in the tradition of my days there. So we're not talking to novices in Vietnam, we're talking to a group of experienced hustlers. The press is very competitive and the paparazzi spirit very much alive in Vietnam. Where we can help is to tell them how to take advantage of the new technology without being damaged by it. It has become so easy to take a picture, to relay, store and work with a picture. And, in the process, it seems the photo editor is a profession that's past. Even the work of a press photographer is endangered because it has become so difficult to live decently on that.

**John Owen**

*FREEDOM FORUM EUROPEAN CENTRE*

Eamonn McCabe, who has won so many awards for The Guardian and, interestingly, was inside as a picture editor for 12 years before going back out as a photographer. And Gary Knight, whose pictures you've seen in Newsweek, images from Africa and the Balkans, has got some provocative ideas to put on the table tonight.



EAMONN McCABE, JOHN OWEN, HORST FAAS, GARY KNIGHT



**Eamonn McCabe**  
*THE GUARDIAN*

The big change we all have to live with is the computer. Looking at these wonderful pictures here —

whether you end up in sports or news or whatever — it's these images, this obsession with getting the truth out that got us going. There are many images here of Don McCullen's and Nick Ut's that are still the images that drive me on, even though I've moved on to other things.

What I worry about with the computer is that there are so many images flying around, and I wonder whether anybody is doing any decent editing. We get 2,000 images a day now. Here, you're looking at images from various campaigns, where the film would come back maybe a week later. By the time things got delivered, people could take a long time to do an edit for several pages — in Don McCullen's case, in *The Sunday Times* magazine.

Nowadays, pictures are flying in from almost any trouble spot. As picture editor, I found it very difficult to send photographers anywhere because the pictures arrive as soon as something happens. Is anybody going to go out and take these great pictures any more? AP and Reuters

have great photographers. The quality of pictures and speed of delivery is superb and for whatever trouble zone, there are seven or eight good-quality pictures on my desk by 7p.m. I just wonder where it's all going to go now and whether there's another way.

**John Owen**

You said you can't even see all these images that are flying by?

**Eamonn McCabe**

Two thousand pictures take a lot of editing. What happens in newspapers is that everybody sees these images as they come in; everybody has got a screen on their desk. The great days of photo-editing used to be taking a picture, hiding it all day and delivering it at 8 p.m. when everybody was desperate and would say, "Great! Look, we've got the front page." Now my job is keeping bad pictures out of the paper. It's a subtle but big difference to me, to say, "Okay, you want to see this picture on the front page, but what about the one I've got?" Sometimes when the picture is already on the page, it's very difficult to get it out. To be fair, I think *The Guardian* has got a good record of using strong photographs from trouble zones. But who is going to do the editing over the next five to 10 years?

## THE POWER OF PICTURES



**Gary Knight**  
*FREELANCER*

This is the reality of the market in which we're trying to work. The challenge for us is identifying the

market in which we can work, and positioning ourselves in that marketplace. The reality is that we cannot work in the way that we have been doing and cannot have the same expectations. I think that will mean that many photographers simply won't be working, and those that do will face some difficult choices. Maybe you'll have a small number of photographers working for one or two clients, maybe photographers working on book projects. You'll see a lot of photographers working for Reuters, AP, AFP, and now you can add Getty and Corbis. But I don't think there will be as much room for the freelance photographer to pick up assignments. In the past two to three years, it's become more and more difficult.

**What I think is in danger is the news photographer. When I started, I wanted to be a news photographer, a journalist. I had no idea how to take pictures for advertising or weddings. Today it seems that a man who makes his living taking pictures can't earn his money from news photography — it just doesn't pay enough**

### Horst Faas

What I think is in danger is the news photographer. When I started, I wanted to be a news photographer, a journalist. I had no idea how to take pictures for advertising or weddings. Today it seems that a man who makes his living taking pictures can't earn his money from news photography — it just doesn't pay enough. No newspaper pays enough for a young photographer to live halfway decently. Most are prepared to slum it and are happy with the odd credit and enough money to pay for gasoline. But what a life — no prospects. I started in 1951 with Keystone, and I've seen a whole range of professions disappear: the messengers, index-card writers. There's no dark room and, from the editorial side, the caption writers are gone.

### Eamonn McCabe

We can all moan, but we have to adapt. What photojournalists have to do now is find other ways to get their work published, whether it's in books or short films. We've just launched a new magazine, and people say: "What's the point of that? It's all about pots and pans and travel." But the same criticism was levelled at The Sunday Times and, for a little while, The Guardian won't maybe run some of the more hard-hitting things it has been running for the past couple of years. But in two or three weeks time it will run a hard-hitting essay, and we'll get back to that. But it's about working from within and being sure that people will want to look at [a serious photo essay], but it's not as easy to place as it was before.

Paul Graham, the documentary photographer, said that we have to find another way, and quite what that way is, I'd be interested to hear. But we can't keep going to trouble spots and taking these hard-hitting images, and expect magazines and newspapers to run six pages of them. We've been doing it for 50 years and I don't think we're going to carry on doing it. That's not me as Guardian management [talking]; that's me trying to sell these stories. So many people say: "Give me £1,000 and I'll go and spend time with a family in Kosovo and show you what life is like." But to be honest it's such a hard thing to sell. We've seen those families from every trouble zone all around the world, from Africa and the Middle East, and you've got to find another way of selling it, to interest people like me.

### Gary Knight

We have to be a lot more creative and responsible for the way we manage our business. Maybe this is where people will think I'm being contentious, but I do think that over the years photojournalists have really abrogated their responsibility for the distribution, representation, valuing and archiving of their material. Certainly in my case, and that of some of my colleagues, we've been represented by agencies over the years that take 30-60 per cent of our income. That's a lot of money, and it's impossible to survive on the net income. Now, with computers and scanners, it's possible to manage our affairs in a much better way.

I don't think we're victims of Corbis and Getty. I don't like to demonise them, as many do. I think we are responsible for this situation. If you can manage your own affairs, then you can release a lot of money that other people have been living off, and that money will allow you to travel and work.

I used to get assignments with Newsweek that were a couple of weeks long. Now they're several days long. I try to put assignments back to back, go off and shoot whatever it is they want me to shoot, then stay wherever it is I've chosen to go. Then I'll produce the things I really care about, and try and market them myself afterwards. We've really got to be smart about this, and put our business heads on

### Robert Wallis *FREELANCER*

Eamonn, you said you've been looking at these stories for 15 years, and you can't keep doing them. But I'm wondering whether the public has made this decision or whether it's an editorial decision in conjunction with advertisers who are not completely aware of what stories the public are interested in or what would still have an impact. There's another generation now, and just because Don McCullen was doing this 20 years ago doesn't mean a new generation won't want to see this style of work.

**Maybe this is where people will think I'm being contentious, but I do think that over the years photojournalists have really abrogated their responsibility for the distribution, representation, valuing and archiving of their material**

### Eamonn McCabe

The Guardian on a daily basis will run these kinds of stories. I've never shirked away from that, even if it's Saturday morning. There's a feeling on Fleet Street that you don't want to run anything too hard then because people are going to have an extra cup of coffee and stay in bed and they don't want to see anything from Kosovo or wherever. We will never have any trouble with that in the newspaper — that's what The Guardian believes. What I was talking about was the photo essay that goes in the magazine. Although they won't admit it, the magazines have a policy of only running one hard-hitting story a month. There's a feeling that there's an appetite for one gruesome story a month. It's a sad indictment, but it's still 12 a year for The Guardian.

These things go in eras, and they will get used again. It's up to you people who are committed to keep going out there, even though you're not getting paid from month to month. There are ways of doing it. And it's not to bring in an establishing picture and put five pictures around it of another family in trouble or another series of morgues. I hate myself for saying it, but I think Paul Graham was right: You have to find the look, whatever that look is. You've got to remember we're competing with TV far more now than Horst's generation in Vietnam, because nobody could see the images until weeks later. But while we're here, there will have been three or four news broadcasts that will show the latest trouble from wherever it is — so why would we show it again on Saturday?

### Robert Wallis

Who is determining the look — the advertisers or the public?

### Eamonn McCabe

The advertisers aren't determining what's going in. They might be determining that it's once a month, but you have to say that once a month isn't bad going if you're going to get one hard-hitting story. Picture editors like Horst and myself are fading away. There aren't picture editors as there used to be: They're now art directors who choose the way the whole thing looks. There's a very good art director at The Guardian called Mark Porter, and I know his heart is in the right place but he's got his issues. He has got to put up against a double-page spread of a Porsche or a pair of shoes or whatever — but I know there is commitment to running it. I just think that you can't keep turning up with the same stuff that we've been looking at for the past 10 years.

### Robert Wallis

I wonder if the picture editors are a bit jaded because that's what you do every day, but the public still has an appetite for the right subject matter?

### Eamonn McCabe

Now there are new people choosing pictures. I did it for 12 years and now it's someone else's turn. I'm not saying that I got fatigued by it, but I couldn't sell it the way I could 13 years ago. Nobody should do these jobs for more than about five years because inevitably you see things over and over again, and it's healthy that someone else takes over. And I don't think that coming up with the same stuff as five years ago will get in.

## THE POWER OF PICTURES

### John Owen

We've all been reading about how Corbis has moved all these images to a former steel mine in Pennsylvania. There are something like 225,000 images, which is less than 2 per cent of the whole collection. There are only two people digitising in this massive cavern, scanning in these images. Dirck Halstead writing in *The Digital Journalist* is worried because he used to work for UPI and now is writing a book and he won't be able to get access to his images because they're underground and haven't been digitised yet. Gary, you don't seem to be concerned about this.

### Gary Knight

It's not that I'm not concerned; it's just that I'm not surprised. This has been going on for years: People buy things, they collect them, and squirrel them away. I don't condone it. It's foolish and I don't think Corbis should be doing it. But I think there are greater issues for photojournalists to be addressing right now than what is happening to photos that we gave away the copyright to 30, 40, 50 years ago. That's a much more important point for me: If you're going to give away your copyright then, frankly, what do you expect? This comes back to the question of us managing our affairs correctly, being responsible for what will be our pensions, our livelihoods. Maintain your own copyright. Be aware of who's using your images. So it's not that I approve of what Corbis has done, but it doesn't surprise me and I won't dwell on it. It's not a huge issue for me.

### Horst Faas

Corbis and Getty call themselves agencies but they don't generate anything, they don't send people out to cover news. They took the cream of the best for themselves, the archives, and they want to market them as they think best. And as they think best is not approved of by those that are interested in the history of photography. I sent that clipping to a friend of mine who is running the *Requiem* exhibition at the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY, and when she got it, she said she was nearly in tears. She said how can you study a photo without touching it and turning it around in your hands?

As far as copyrights go, you said we should defend ourselves. Some of the Sygma photographers took the right step — they do not give their material to Corbis. Tim Page sold his photos to Corbis but at least he got some

money for it. What bothers me most is that we've got two big players who rake it all in, all those lovely photo histories, and deal with it on their terms only — digitising. Digitising is fine, to get access, but the original should remain available to the public. They say they're doing it so that the pictures will be available in 500 years — that's a long time. George Eastman House told me they have the best photography from the 19th century, and if you want to go there, you can visit and they put gloves on you and you can touch all these photos of the greats from the early days of photography.

### Eamonn McCabe

As somebody who uses 10 to 12 images a day from Corbis, you have to say that they have put together all this material. We do reasonable deals with them but the captioning is appalling; they don't know where anything is. It seems to me that they haven't done things very well. I work in newspapers where you have to turn, say, 20 subjects around very quickly, and Corbis is a godsend because you can type in "drugs" or "cars" or whatever, and the images are there. Now what deals have been done down the line, I can't really concern myself with because somebody somewhere must have signed their rights away.

I don't feel happy that there are only two big players in this, but maybe the individual with all the technology can do something. There's a young guy out in Kosovo called Andrew Testa who's a one-man band and does a lot of stuff for us. He has a method of emailing and he gets his pictures through all the time. I'm paying him reasonable money, and it's as if he's working in Hampstead or Highgate. He phones up and says: "I've got a picture of this event (the blown-up bus or whatever) and it'll be through in 30 minutes." So maybe this is a way.

On the subject of photos being tactile, it's strange now that you choose a photo on screen, edit on screen and send it to the print sites, and nobody touches it. For a picture to come in as a signal and go out as a signal seems strange. The first person that touches it is the reader. Wearing my picture editor's hat, I'm a buyer of photography, and if somebody sets themselves up as agents with millions of images, I'd be mad not to tap into it. AP and Reuters have got themselves together and are so much better than they used to be. The quality is brilliant. It's a buyer's market, and it's just what we choose, compared to *The Telegraph* or *Independent* or whatever.



**Susan Glen**  
*INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY*

The Corbis issue completely terrifies me. They've got 10 million images with only 200,000 scanned in, and

what really frightens me is that we're going to have a severely edited history of the world. It's a huge loss for everyone to think that this stuff is going into a mine. And the people making the editing decisions before putting this stuff online aren't taking history into account. They're taking into account that this picture can be used in 20 different ways. I'm hoping we'll do a piece about it, because I really love embarrassing Corbis. I've had run-ins with them before. About three years ago we were doing something about the Tiananmen Square massacre. I had about two weeks to get the Turnley brothers' pictures, and I couldn't get hold of them — and the Turnleys are highly publicised members of Corbis. I brought this up [at the annual international photo festival] in Perpignon and really embarrassed Corbis. I was surrounded by at least 12 people trying to do damage limitation. I said: "You people are doing a better job than the Chinese government. You're preventing these images from being seen again."

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**Eamonn McCabe**

You could also say the digital age is doing the same for people taking pictures in Hyde Park. We used to send people out to take pictures of the troops preparing for a tattoo in Hyde Park and have the film for 20 or 30 years. Now photographers download their best two, and all the rest are wiped. You're right — how can anyone make these decisions for us all when we all have different concerns? What I used to do was get negatives out from five years ago and find a picture on the end of a roll of film that means more than it did then. Nobody's doing that now. Who's looking long enough at the material?

**Susan Glen**

Corbis is letting go 69 members of staff. The picture business is labour-intensive. They must change their minds — they must have more than two people.

**Gary Knight**

What worries me is not about the historical archive, but the production of news. I now see fewer and fewer of my colleagues on the road. This means that we've got an increasingly limited version of the world. Our visual history is becoming finely focused, and if we only have a few agencies able to provide pictures of Tiananmen Square, then that's very worrying. It's a huge issue that we all need to address, and it scares me the most.

**Horst Faas**

Photography as we have known it for the past 50 years is dead. It has become like etching — a hobby. We are in the digital age, and none of us even us at AP have found a solution for what to do with all these photos. Wipe them and forget about them. Or encourage photographers to draw up CDs and then hope that in 15 years we get them back — like the famous [Monica] Lewinsky picture. Getty and Corbis are conducting a cultural revolution and destroying the past. They're not producing any news photos. They're not agencies, they're archives, and they have bought in their stock, like you buy an art collection. But these photos are disappearing and that's a shame.

**Chris Peterson**

*BLOOMBERG*

Surely the issue facing photography is the issue facing news and information generally. We've got 24-hour access to everything, and there's so much information flooding in. If you take the business I'm in — financial journalism — it's extraordinary the amount of information flooding in. Eamonn said at the beginning that he thought the picture editor was a dying breed — picture editor, art director, call it what you will, though personally I don't like the term art director. But surely these guys are the gatekeepers. Somebody has to make an informed choice. All the newspapers run 24-hour Web sites, and we're flooded with the stuff. I was surprised to see the CNN pictures coming back from Guam when the U.S. airmen landed. The pictures seemed to have been done with a hand-held camera down an Internet link. That's worrying news for TV but encouraging news for people transmitting good images.

## THE POWER OF PICTURES

### Eamonn McCabe

What I mean when I say the picture editor's job has gone is that now I'm a picture grabber. I grab the pictures off the Internet. If a scientist from Kentucky University develops a new treatment for cancer, it would take me two days with the old technology to get an example of his work. Now I can take down his name and university, look it up on the Web, download his pictures and put them on the front page of The Guardian. It's not just pictures, it's images — an image of cancer cells or whatever it may be. The change is incredible. The biggest problem is that often it's one picture, and all the others are left behind. This is what Corbis is going to find, that they've got the images but not the depth.

### Gary Knight

Eamonn mentioned Andrew Testa a minute ago. In terms of how you work, Andrew isn't doing anything new, but what he has done is he has gone to Kosovo, he has learned the language, and he has had his pictures all over The Guardian and The New York Times. He's doing really well. He has taken himself to the story — he's committed to the place. He has got his computer, his mobile phone, he gets the job done and goes to the Internet cafe and sends it out. And that's the way to work. If you're going to wait in London for Eamonn to send you away, then even for £1,000, it's still only enough for some air fare and some film. But there are ways of making this work and making it work well. You're never going to make it unless you're committed and the same goes for most businesses. Choose your location, get specific, really commit. There are huge markets out there — Germany, Denmark, Spain. There are newspapers in Denmark that will run two pages of your pictures from wherever it is in the world you want to go. So get out there, find your clients. It's not easy but they do exist, and you can do it.

### Eamonn McCabe

Fifteen years ago Jeremy Nichol spotted that Russia was going to fall apart. He was working for The Independent, getting four pictures a week, and was happy. But he spotted that Russia was going to go before any of the politicians did and he went out there. Now if anybody wants anything from Moscow, they go to him — he's expensive, but he's good. You have to admire people spotting these things.

### Unidentified

I've been in news agency photography a long time, and that's what people used to do. You'd go to Saigon, and there

were people living the story — they knew the place and the people. There was none of this, "Oh, we're going to jet somebody out. It's going to take him 12 hours to get there and then he's got to get settled in and find his way around." Is it still like that, Horst?

**Newspapers are failing to recognise that photographers are intelligent and innovative people, and so what we've got to do is instead of chasing news, we've got to be interpretive**

### Horst Faas

No, it isn't, because of costs. A freelancer can go and live in Kosovo relatively cheaply. We are not sending people out for a lengthy time because we need them elsewhere. It's almost grotesque at CNN, how people travel — every week another continent, another story. If you are a freelancer, you have that option. I recently met the foreign editor of Time magazine photography, and he said they would never send people to a trouble spot that is too far away from New York or London. We get it for free from AP and Reuters and AFP, but if someone who lives there is intelligent and outsmarts the agencies and offers it to us, then we will take it. When you find your niche, dig in and stay with it.

### Gary Knight

That's what I did 15 years ago, and it was possible to fly all over the world and stay in big five-star hotels all over the planet, but those days are long gone. But if you are committed, you can make it work. I left my agency in January, and by mid-January I was in Croatia in a morgue surrounded by 5,000 corpses and I thought it would make an interesting picture for The New York Times magazine. So I scanned the picture, e-mailed it on a very slow modem and three weeks later there's a double page in the magazine. Now I wouldn't have thought about doing that two years ago because I had an agent and I would have waited for the film to come back, which would have been weeks. Not everything you do is going to make it into The New York Times, but now it is very easy to reach broad markets and sell your work.



## Tim Hetherington

### FREELANCER

Advising any freelancer to go and follow news is ridiculous. Andrew Testa has done it. AP and Reuters people have developed into very good journalists, and they have people all over the world and those are the people that clean up. What they don't do is go off every day and wire it. Newspapers are failing to recognise that photographers are intelligent and innovative people, and so what we've got to do is instead of chasing news, we've got to be interpretive. We've got to go to Kosovo when it's all over and find stories that you can't tell in newspapers because of the deadlines. Gary, I know you produced your book *Evidence*, and I'm sure that that's closer to your heart than a lot of your other assignments.

## Gary Knight

Over the years, we've done ourselves a disservice. I don't think we have made the most of what we've had. It's easy to hide behind an agent as the interface between me and the magazine. I relay my ideas to my agent, he goes to the picture editor of the magazine, who then goes to the editor. That is not the wise way to sell your work. You phone the editor and you articulate your story. Remove all the filters between you and the person who's going to be buying your images. I don't think it's surprising that newspapers and magazines don't respect the integrity and intelligence of photographers. We have to be much more assertive and take responsibility for what we produce. It's important enough to go and shoot, so it's important enough to sell properly.

## Horst Faas

My experience from meeting young photojournalists is that none of them are good businessmen. And, secondly, nobody realises what trouble they can get into by going to trouble spots and getting sick and injured. We have a policy of not giving assignments to people who live out there because if they get in harm's way, who's paying for it? Because of the journalistic casualties over the years, we're very careful. My advice is: Don't go to the trouble spots. Go to the Midlands or Glasgow or somewhere where there's no shooting. It showed during the foot-and-mouth crisis that there are a lot of great photos out there. One was the picture of that sheep — the right photo on the right day, Easter — and whoever shot that picture had a good eye and was not in Kosovo or a shooting area.

## Susan Glen

I'd like to pick up on what Gary was saying about the intelligence of photographers. It's quite ironic, because Tim Hetherington came to see us this afternoon, and we were very struck by the intelligent presentation of his story. Direct contact is important because you do develop relationships over the years. But being more pragmatic, I think people should take the tool of the computer and find out about the markets that are there — and, believe me, they are there. Attend the international picture conferences, where you can meet other photographers and picture editors. In France and Germany they have far more interest in broad travel-based stories. In Korea there's a wonderful magazine that will run 12-page spreads. There are a lot of really good photo festivals — use your computer to find out about those.

## Eamonn McCabe

Can I ask Tim Hetherington how he thinks he can change things to grab the visual attention of someone like me?

## Tim Hetherington

We've been experimenting in new ways with stills. The computer screen allows photography to be viewed in a different way and that requires a different way of shooting and editing. There are opportunities out there, and in 10-15 years there will be different outlets.

## Gary Knight

Tim is absolutely right. There are loads of ways of thinking about your photography. The traditional news media is simply one string to your bow. I started designing layouts, and I send them to *Newsweek* and they ran one two weeks ago. So think about narratives. Think about ways in which you can put them together. Think in terms of video and learn the new computer programs, and you will learn to think differently.

## John Owen

Eamonn, what have you taken from your time as a picture editor?

## Eamonn McCabe

Before I went inside, as you've called it, I was competing with other photographers. Now I'm doing portraits and that's one of the few things you can do one-to-one, and I'm really enjoying it. I do feel for the guys who go to these huge press calls. Being a photographer as part of the pack is very

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tricky. I've got seven photographers, and why send them anywhere where Reuters or the other agencies are? That's a sad indictment, that we're all taking the same picture.

### John Levy *FREELANCER*

You just asked, why send another photographer? Because they could take a different picture. We've been talking about the commitment of photographers, but what about the commitment of the editors? The photographers we're talking about here are committed to a story, and they immerse themselves in it. They always bring back something particular to them. How is it that you're happy to say that every editor is going to have the same picture?

### Eamonn McCabe

I'm not saying that I'm happy, but that's what's happening here. Paul Hackett, who took the picture of that gang coming out of court punching the air — best picture by a mile — but we all had people there. So you get to think: Paul Hackett will be there and he'll get stuff back because he's backed by Reuters — so you can see why it's so difficult.

### Dennis Griffiths *CHAIRMAN, LONDON PRESS CLUB*

When I was production director of The Daily Express 30 years ago, we had 178 photographers — and you've got seven covering London?

### Eamonn McCabe

It's seven more than a lot of other papers have got. But it's a buyer's market. We get 2,000 pictures without asking anybody for pictures. When I was working as a photographer, I used to take pictures of a fire in London and run into The Standard or The Express and offer them the pictures and somebody would say, "We'll take those two frames." But nobody comes in any more — it all comes in electronically. So I could run a paper without any photographers at all.

### Horst Faas

I sense here that the big difference is between the daily newspapers and the many magazines. The big retailers, Reuters and AP, aren't really concerned with the magazines. Their obligation is to the big newspapers; they're only concerned with their subscribers. The small magazines may

call the photo library and get something, but there are no photo sales people any more, so if you don't ask you won't see it — which is actually quite good for freelancers. They should stay away from the big events that the big agencies are covering, otherwise we are competing against each other.

### Wilma Goudappel *FREELANCER*

Eamonn, you're the picture editor, so even if there are 2,000 images coming through, I thought you had the final decision.

### Eamonn McCabe

You do have the final decision and the final argument and the cause to go to the editor and say this is the best picture. You also have 20 other people that see them and so other opinions get formed very quickly. In the old days, people never saw the pictures, and the hardest battle is with people who have preconceived ideas.

### David Constiwine *CNN*

You let slip earlier on that you have to think of your audience. That smacks to me of compromise.

### Eamonn McCabe

You always think of your audience. It's something we all do.

### David Constiwine

The audience above the story?

### Eamonn McCabe

I'd like to think that we're all digging the same way. But no one newspaper should ever hold the same view [as another paper] — that would be boring. I always think about who buys The Guardian, who I'm trying to reach and what we're trying to say. But I always try to put the best picture in every story.

### David Constiwine

I've been an avid consumer of photojournalism. I work in an industry where anchors are being encouraged to be amateur VT editors, and we've already heard that photojournalists are being asked to be amateur

businessmen. We've got all this cross-fertilization of skills — or lack of skills — and all the new technology and mediums. But I have to say that what I'm seeing as a consumer is not markedly different from what Don McCullen and Horst Faas were doing in Vietnam.

### Eamonn McCabe

You say we're keeping those standards. I think that's more than we could hope for. I don't think it's as good as that. What we're all into now is illustrating something. If you look at most newspapers now, it's not news generally but themes, and you have pictures to illustrate these themes.

### Susan Glen

I'd like to say something about the role of picture editors. Eamonn has had a unique position in the industry, whereby his authority is acknowledged by his colleagues. When we converted to computers at The Independent, all the staff were given training on all the different facilities, which included proofing pictures on the page. It alarmed me because I realised that sub-editors could put pictures in off the wires. Different section editors do their own pages, and you have situations where people who have no experience are selecting images, and often you can see that.

### Robert Wallis

You're talking about the merging of skills, but what about the merging of media? Time-Warner, AOL-CNN is the biggest example, and how that impacts on the integrity of photography. In their big concept, photography is only a very small part.

### Gary Knight

There's no question that the photojournalism that's being produced today is as good as it was in Horst's time. The digital revolution has a lot of benefits. It obviously brings in questions of media convergence, but in terms of quality of photos produced, I would argue that it's as strong today as it has ever been — possibly stronger. It's possible to reach new markets and manage our own lives — not that that should distract us from photography. But it should make us more responsible and creative, so that we see the process of taking a photo and getting it published through to the end, and not let agents get in the way. There are things to worry about, but we should start taking initiative.

### Horst Faas

The quality of today's photography is exceptional. These great photos today get lost because they don't fall into the search criteria. We haven't figured out how to deal with the flood of pictures. When we could touch a photo and put it away, that was still photography. What we have today is something new, and we have to grapple with that. That's what makes the job more interesting. There's also the coming together of TV and stills, and it's not certain whether a photographer should turn on his video or take stills. Certainly at AP, management would like that to happen because it would cut down salaries at APTN. I personally wouldn't like it, but we'll have to deal with it when it comes. I worry about whether there will be an exhibition like this in 50 years. I think not, because pictures are being deleted.

## These great photos today get lost because they don't fall into the search criteria. We haven't figured out how to deal with the flood of pictures

### Unidentified

There's nothing to stop you printing off a hard copy.

### Horst Faas

Can you imagine an editor giving me a budget to print out a hard copy of every picture I like? It costs £1.50 a copy — that would end up being a large budget.

### John Sheppard

DH's take on the picture was that there were many photographers taking pictures but because we're living in this digital age, all their stuff would have been deleted. So the moral of this is once the agencies have taken what they want, keep the rest, because you never know: One picture might tell a story that is a message for the future.

### Eamonn McCabe

Being that we're in the age of the personality, I hope photojournalists find a way of getting into The Guardian every week and not just once a month. And if we could see that in 10 years time, I'd be really pleased.

# Photojournalism exhibit documents ten years of Balkan atrocities

By Julie Tomlin

**A**n exhibition of photographs documenting 10 years of atrocities in the Balkans has gone on display at The Freedom Forum's European Center. The work of Ron Haviv, an American 35-year-old photojournalist who went to the Balkans in 1991 just as Slovenia declared its independence, the photographs chronicle the conflicts that erupted in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo throughout the following decade. The pictures have been put together in a book called *Blood and Honey: A Balkan War Journal*.

Among the photos is one of the most abiding images of the Balkan wars — a photograph of a Serb militiaman kicking a dying Muslim woman in the head.

Haviv took that picture in 1992, a year after he had been prevented from photographing an execution by soldiers who twice put a gun to his head as he raised his camera.

"There was nothing I could have done to stop those first executions, so I decided that there was no point me being there unless I could document what was going on and that if I got into that situation again I would try my best to document it," said Haviv.

He believes that the most striking image in the collection is a photograph he took of a family photograph discovered in the ruins of the home of a family of Bosnian Muslims. The photo was taken on a family holiday, before they were forced to flee Sarajevo. Later, when the daughter returned she found everything of their home was gone, except for the photo — but with all of their faces scratched out. "It showed how strong the hatred had become," Haviv said.

The opening of the *Blood and Honey* exhibition took place on May 24, the anniversary of the deaths of Reuters journalist Kurt Schork and APTN cameraman Miguel Gil Moreno in an ambush in Sierra Leone last year.

To mark the occasion, a letter was read from Anthony Lloyd, a journalist from The Times in London, who was injured in a car crash in Sierra Leone where he had gone to piece together the circumstances of Schork's death. The accident happened when the car's tire blew on a road between Freetown and Makenin, killing Allieu Kamarah, an interpreter and guide.

**The photo was taken on a family holiday, before they were forced to flee Sarajevo. Later, when the daughter returned she found everything of their home was gone, except for the photo — but with all of their faces scratched out. "It showed how strong the hatred had become," Haviv said**

Presenting a selection of his photographs, with a soundtrack of music and news reports, Haviv explained how he and the few other journalists who worked in the Balkans had at first thought their work would have instant impact in their home countries.

"We all went there because we wanted an immediate reaction. We thought there would be some pictures on TV, or wherever, and there would be a political reaction and boom-boom, someone would do something to change things," he said. "But it didn't happen that way."

THE POWER OF PICTURES

Clockwise from right:

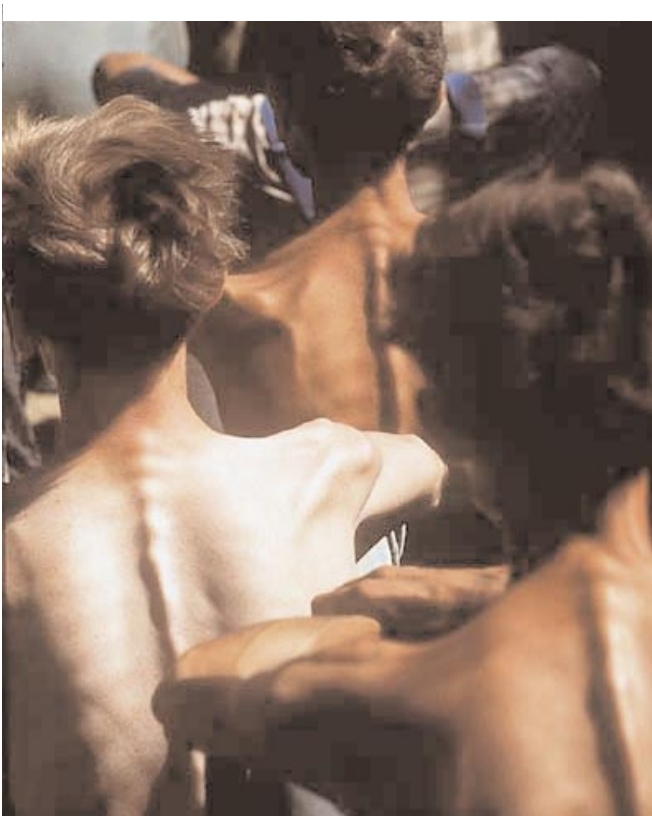
A child cries at his father's funeral. Croatia 1991

A Serbian paramilitary commando with the bodies of just executed Muslim civilians during the first battle in Bosnia. Billjenia 1992

Muslim woman, cleansed from Serb territory, arrives in a village cleansed of Serbs. Bihac Region 1995

Muslim and Croatian prisoners of war. Manjaca 1992

Family of Bosnian Muslims with thir faces scratched out



Photographs: Blood and Honey, A Balkan War Journal, by Ron Haviv, [www.bloodandhoney.com](http://www.bloodandhoney.com)

## THE POWER OF PICTURES

Haviv described his experiences this way:

"The pictures we saw in 1991 and 1992 didn't cause any reaction and by 1994 we felt we had failed. They were taken as news photographs and I had thought they would influence opinion of the moment. But for the most part they failed and then in 1995 we were seeing the same images again and covering a story no one cared about.

"And again in 1998 we were seeing those same pictures, but for some reason they were the straw that broke the camel's back and finally it seemed the politicians got fed up with seeing the same images again and again. The Kosovars benefited from the deaths of people in the three previous wars."

**"Slowly I came to realize that my pictures were taking on another life, that they exist as evidence and as an accusation, of those who had the power to do something and didn't, of John Major, Tony Blair and George Bush"**

Haviv, who majored in journalism at New York University, got his break in photojournalism when, in Panama covering Manuel Noriega's bid for re-election in 1989, he captured on film a Panamanian official being knifed and beaten.

Now a contract photographer for Newsweek, Haviv, has more recently been in Macedonia, chronicling a further chapter in the region. Haviv has photographed from all sides of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, amassing a collection that includes a Muslim pleading for his life before being carried off and thrown from a third-floor window, and images of Bosnian prisoners in Serbian camps.

"Slowly I came to realize that my pictures were taking on another life, that they exist as evidence and as an accusation, of those who had the power to do something and didn't, of John Major, Tony Blair and George Bush," he said, referring to the former and current British prime ministers and the former U.S. president.

Asked if the things he had witnessed had damaged him in any way, Haviv said, "We are all who we are today based on our experiences. This is who I am today. It's like anything that someone goes through."

Haviv was on a Serbian death list, captured by Serb militiamen, charged with being a spy, interrogated, imprisoned and beaten during his 10 years in the Balkans. "I'm always afraid, from the moment my plane lands until the moment I'm taking off again," he said.

But despite the threats to his own life and witnessing an endless stream of atrocities against others, he said he had never thought of giving up. "It's always been the opposite. Some people are overwhelmed and stop working because they think they can't handle it. But with me it was a case of being angry and wanting to go out and document more."

The exhibition will be in London until June 1 and then will be taken to Croatia and Kosovo before being moved permanently to Sarajevo.

"I am very realistic about the impact that photographs can have on people," said Haviv. "People have their lives, and Bosnia [or] Rwanda is not the pre-eminent occupying force in their lives. I don't expect them to understand everything. I hope there would be a reaction when they see a photo — to have a reaction, to think about it, ask about it, maybe speak to a politician. But I don't expect people to take to the streets. I hope they play a role in the dissemination of information."

It was mentioned at the opening that the Children's Movement for Creative Education, a U.S. group that teaches racial awareness through art, is planning to develop a curriculum teaching children in Yugoslavia the value of a multiethnic society:

"I see it as just one small payback," said Haviv. "As I grew as a photographer I knew I should continue to work because I knew they would teach people, that at some point they would teach a new generation the errors of their elders."

Julie Tomlin is a writer for Press Gazette, a British weekly trade magazine for journalists.

THE POWER OF PICTURES



Clockwise from right:

Yugoslavian Federal Troops after victory, Belgrade Highway, 1991

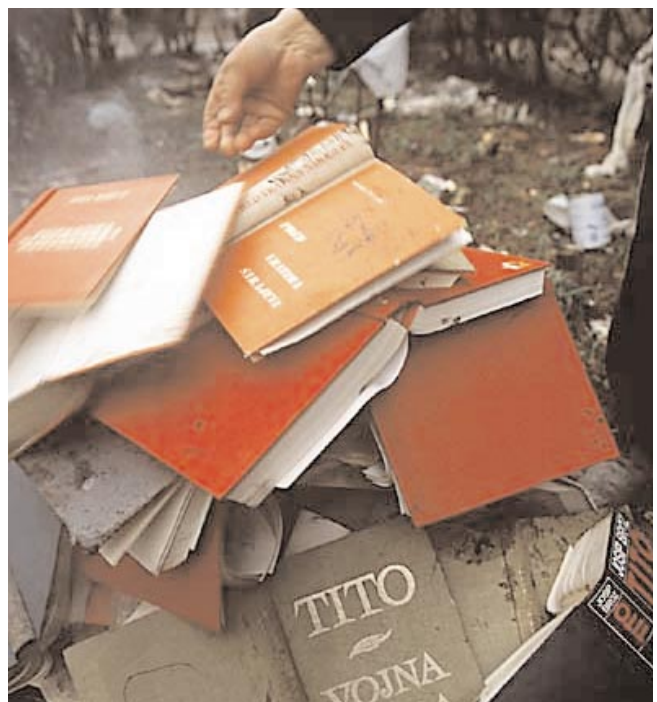
Serbian paramilitary leader Arkan and his Tiger unit, Croatia 1991

United States forces arrive in Bosnia, Bosnia 1995

Kids from Srebrenica at a United Nations camp, Tuzla 1995



THE POWER OF PICTURES



Clockwise from top right

A Bosnian woman grieves at her husband's grave. Bihac 1995

A Serb woman burns all her socialist literature out of frustration. Sarajevo 1996

A survivor from Srebrenica cries out against the inaction of the United Nations. Tuzla 1995

Kids play in Sarajevo. Bosnia 1995

Sarajevo woman runs past sniper barricade on the way from work. Bosnia 1993