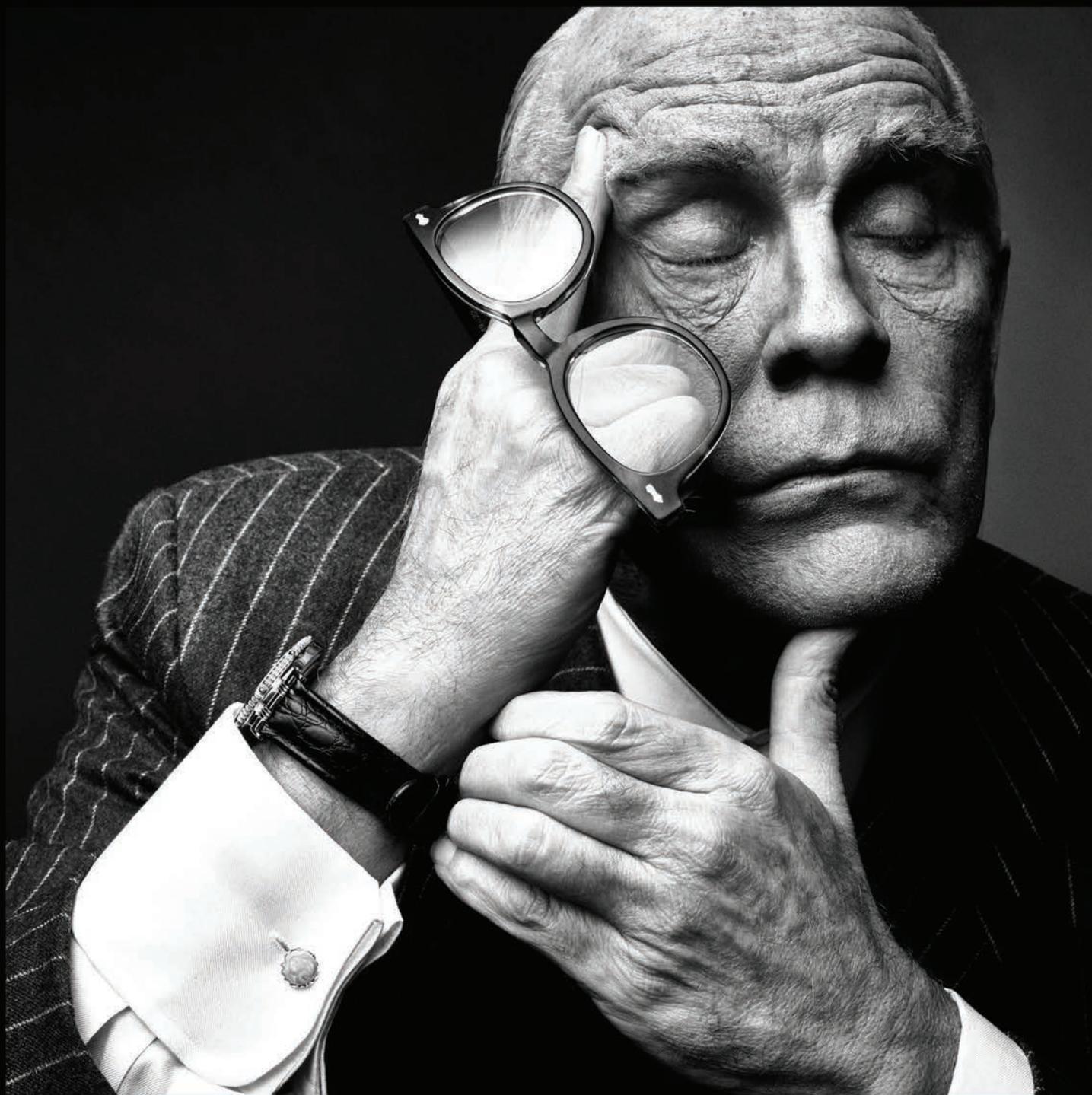


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Sandro Miller

Portrait Master and Emotional Story Teller

Also featuring works of Adam Ferguson, Antigone Kourakou, Dale Reid, Esperanza Kahle, Frank Peters, Inna Mosina, Leila Forés, Linda Hollinger, Margarita Mavromichalis, Margrieta Jeltema, Per Schorn, Robin Dahlberg, Saman Majd, and all winners of the 15th Julia Margaret Cameron Award

SANDRO MILLER

Portrait Master and Emotional Storyteller



© Sandro Miller by Marc Hauser

As a young teen, Sandro Miller embraced the idea of making photographic portraits after seeing the portrait imagery of Irving Penn. He began photographing in Chicago at the age of sixteen and has since devoted his thirty-plus-years career to creating expressive images.

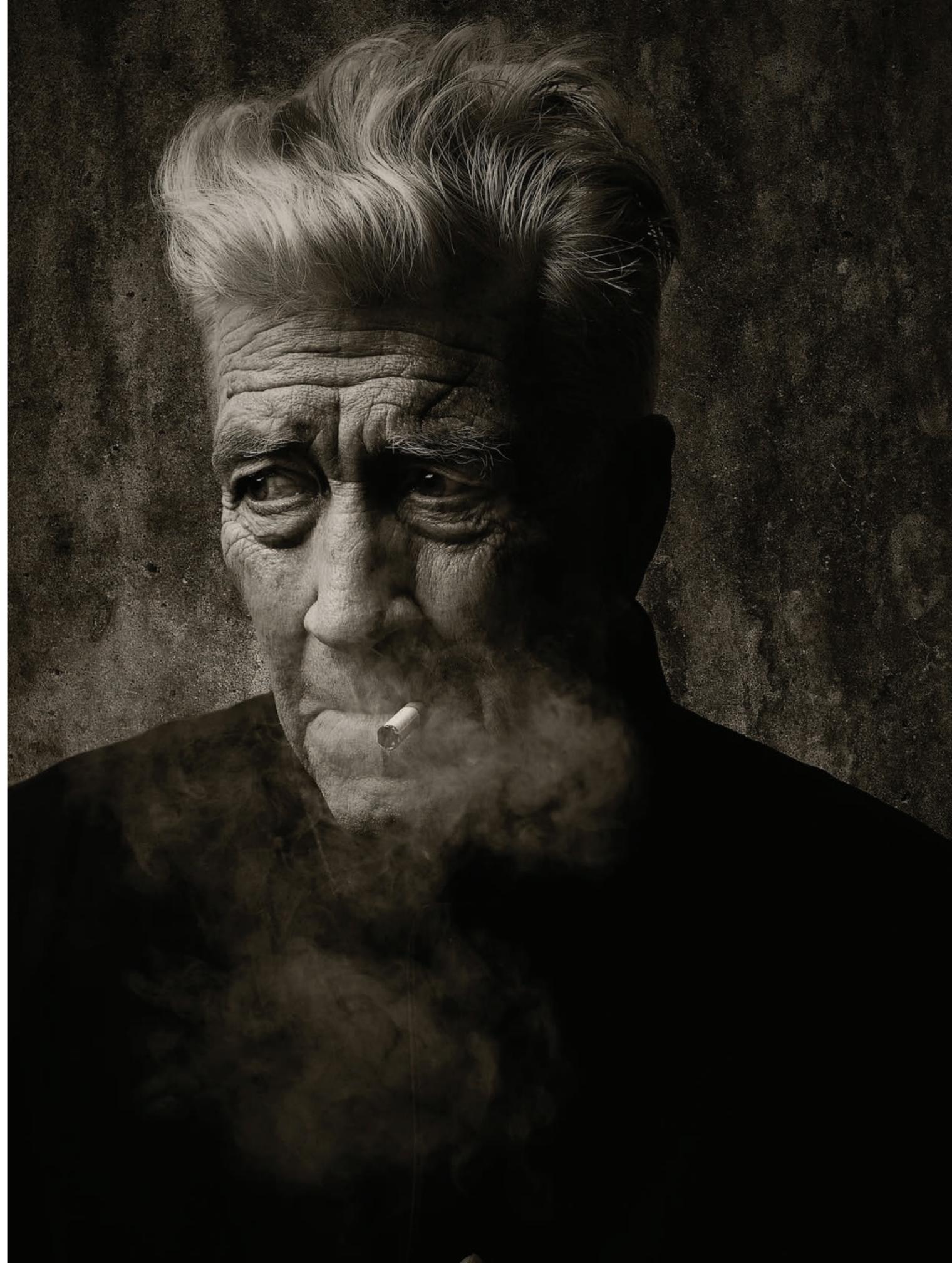
With numerous award-winning commercial campaigns to his credit, Sandro is one of today's most respected commercial and fine art photographers. He has photographed many national advertising campaigns for a long alphabetical list of clients including: Adidas, Allstate Insurance, American Express, Anheuser-Busch, BMW, Champion, Coca-Cola, Dove, Gatorade, Honda, Milk, Microsoft, Miller/Coors, Motorola, Nike, Nikon, Pepsi, Pony, UPS and the US Army.

Sandro has a working relationship with the camera giant Nikon and is responsible for introducing their latest technology to the professional photographic world.

For the past few years, in juried competitions within the industry, Sandro has been voted one of the top 200 advertising photographers in the world, and has been honored with multiple awards, including the Lucie Foundation's International Photographer of the Year award, in 2014 and 2015.

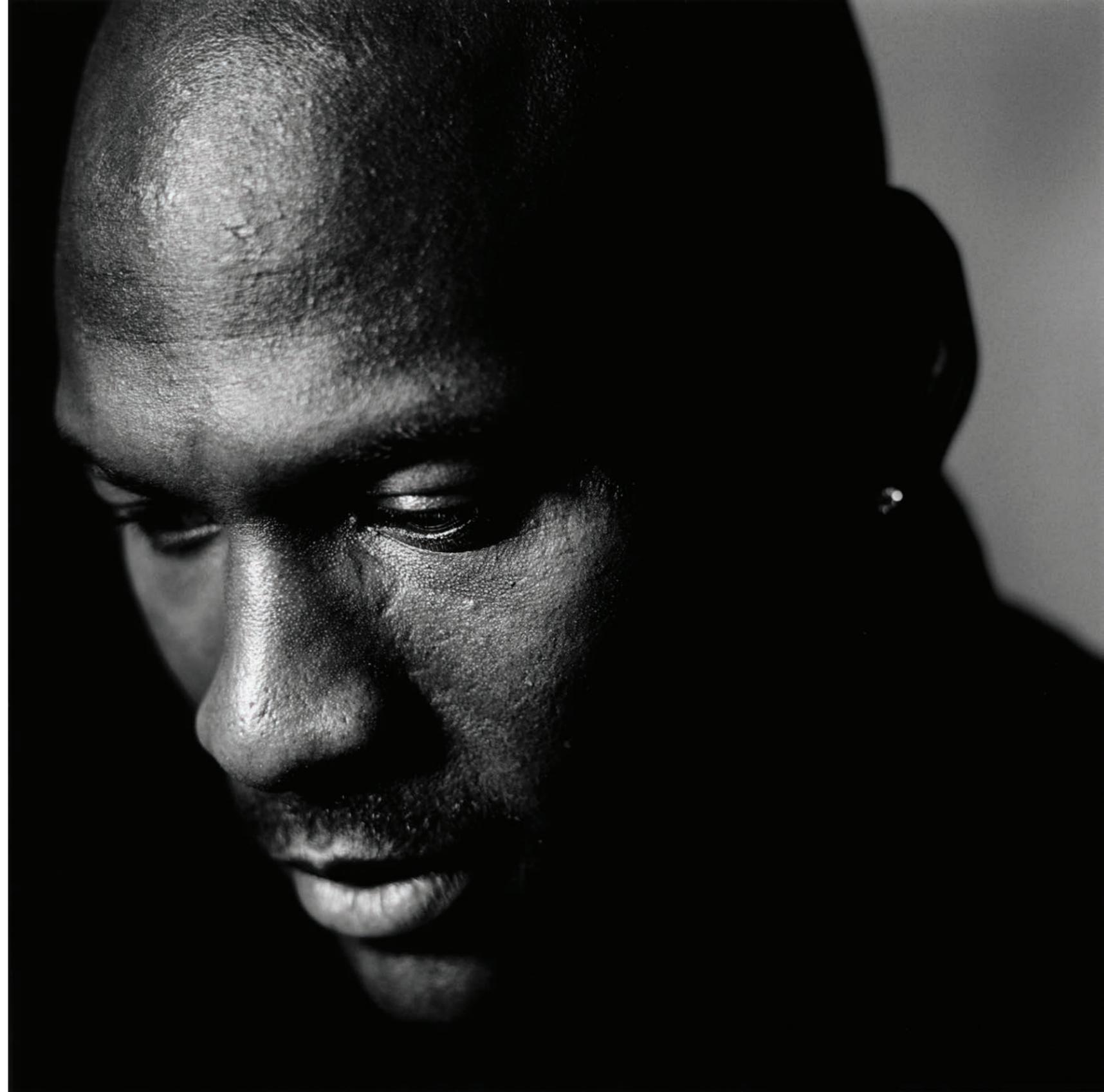
All images © Sandro Miller , Courtesy Gallery FIFTY ONE, Antwerp

Right page: David Smoking, from the series *David Lynch*, 2018

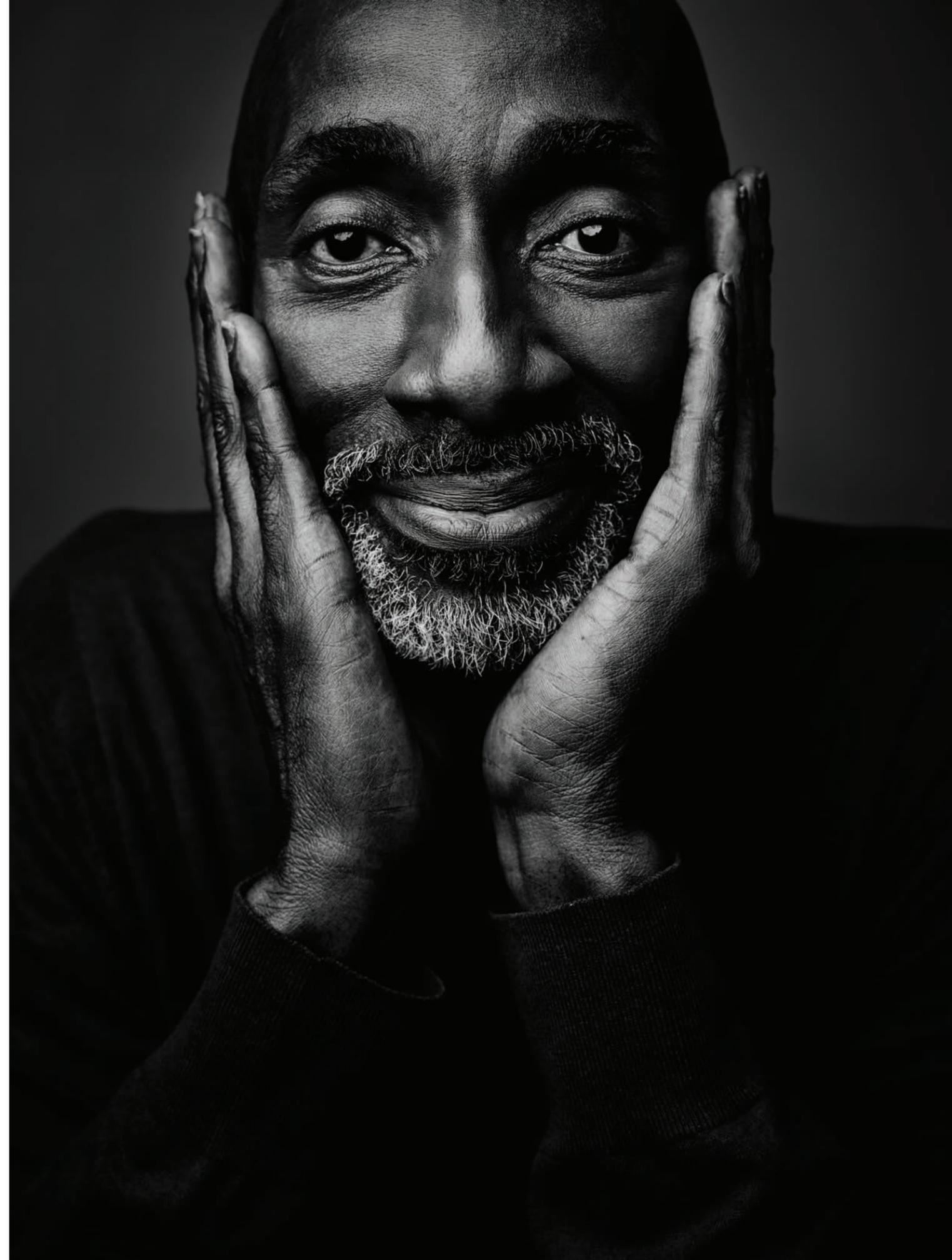


My work in the last five years has changed much more to message-based imagery. I have had a wonderful career in the commercial world which has helped me to raise a family, put my children through wonderful schools and has provided me with a lifestyle that I have truly enjoyed. With the career I have had, I have always felt the responsibility to create personal work, the work that was done for my soul, my perspective, and my mind. Curiosity was usually the driving force behind my ideas. When I wanted to learn more about a culture, I would divulge myself deeply into a subject and learn as much as I possibly could about it. I would then dedicate myself photographically and document the subject passionately. In the last 5 years, I have discovered how powerful of a voice photography has and I have dedicated my work towards subject such a racial and political injustices and police

injustices towards Afro Americans. We live in a world that is not fair to so many. With my photography, I have found a voice to help. So much of my work revolves around emotion. I have always been attracted to the feelings that people carry in their hearts. I came from a single parent home, raised by my mother and I was the oldest child. Our father was killed in an automobile accident when I was four years old. My mother truly struggled with the loss of her husband, the father of her three children. The haunting scream that came from her when she was told my father had been in an accident and didn't make it will be with me forever. I believe it was during this moment in my life that emotions became such an important part of my work. I often receive assignments and get hired to bring out emotions in people, to make them cry, laugh, feel pain or victory.



Right page: I can't accept not trying, from the series *The Michael Jordan Project*, 1994
Following spread, left: Roddis, from the series *Mt. Sinai Hospital*, 2016
Following spread, right: Roddis, from the series *Mt. Sinai Hospital*, 2016

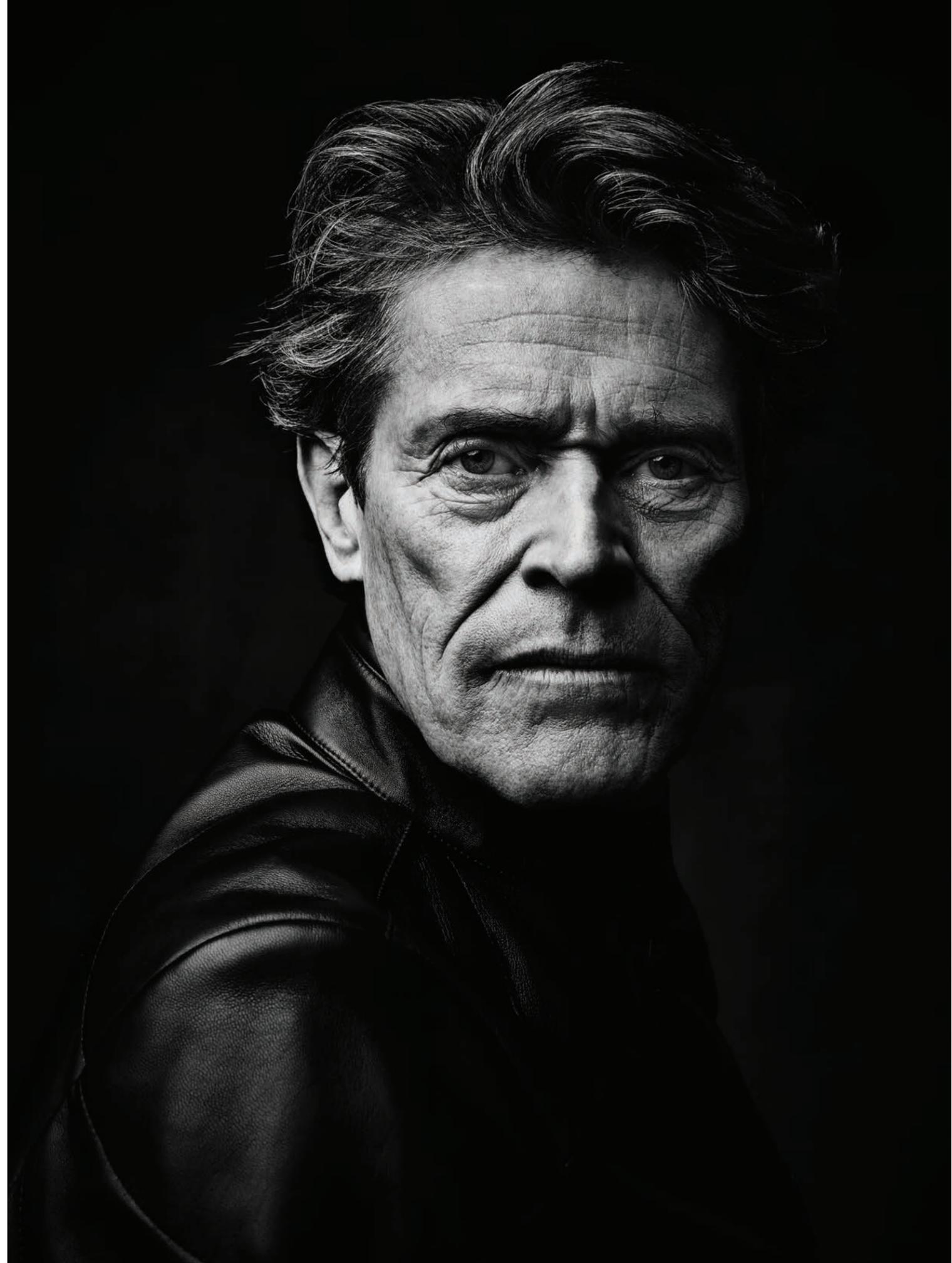


This work has crossed over to the artwork I create today. When you yourself have felt so much emotion in your life and it becomes a part of you, you are then very comfortable going there with your sitters. I am really more of a director than a photographer on set. I spend as much time as I can with my subjects before I have a sitting with them. I show a tremendous amount of respect and love to them. It is about making that person feel comfortable with you. On set, I speak with a very soft, engaging voice. I often touch their hand, their shoulder and even their face. The armour that people carry with them seems to just fade away and it is then that I can reach their souls and get the emotion I am looking for. I call it the “little secret”. A moment that I capture from my sitter that will leave the viewer of the image wanting more and wondering what was going on in the sitter’s mind when I snapped the shutter. If I haven’t given the viewer something to think about, then I haven’t done my job.

I am influenced by so many different forms

of art, from other photographers to sculpture to painting, to poetry to children’s drawings. If you keep your heart and eyes open, inspiration is everywhere. We just need to be open to seeing and hearing.

My greatest photography influences have always been Irving Penn. Others include Albert Watson, Annie Leibovitz, August Sanders, Karsh and Avedon. I admire and am influenced by paintings of the great painters such as Kerry James Marshall, Lucien Freud and Francis Bacon. I also spend much time researching and discovering the great master painters of the classical era such as Caravaggio, Rubens, Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael and Donatello. I spend as much time as I can in museums and galleries, always investigating the new and the old. I am a seeker of knowledge and art has so much to give to me. For myself, there is not a better place to learn and be influenced than from within the walls of the great museums of our world. It is there that I so often walk out with a new idea for my work.



Right page: Willem Dafoe for New York Magazine, from the series *America's Greatest Actors*, 2018



People so often ask how much of my work is done in postproduction. I come from the old school of trying to do as much in camera correctly and not depending on the computer to put my images together. I myself know nothing about retouching or software's that allow me to manipulate my images. I am not saying I don't retouch my images but I have zero interest in sitting in front of a computer manipulating them. I do have people that do this with my imagery to whom I give direction in what I am looking for. I never let someone else put their touches to my images without my approval. I am again so much more of a director than a computer operator. I learned photography in the 70's and 80's when we didn't have computers to make our images. This sense of making a photograph with first an idea then my camera, lights and composition was all I ever needed to make my messages come to print. I am by no means condemning the use of software's and computers to create imagery I just chose the path of least involvement of a computer. This also goes for gear. I am not a gearhead, nor do I need the newest, greatest camera out there to make great imagery. It's so much more than the equipment, it's the thought process, the idea, the execution and the directing all coming together to make a great image. When shooting, I usually will be using my Nikons which I am an ambassador for or will turn to my Hasselblad's and Leica's when I am looking to do my portraits with a medium format camera. Regarding lights, I usually will use strobe but again I will often bring in continuous lights when needed. I think people get too caught up in having the newest, largest files, most expensive equipment. They forget that the great photographers of our time, the photographers that created everything that we are redoing or have been influenced by, were doing it all with so much less than what we have available to us today.

I think it is important to research and re discover our masters of the past to find inspirations, ideas and influences for our work. Ideas come from the heart. Some I think of while in bed dreaming, others come from seeing other works of art in museums, magazines, books, films, songs and reading. Some I act on very quickly, others I write down in journals I keep and will refer to them another time. I have great confidence when I shoot, and I usually pull from natural instincts I have on what will make a great photograph. Other times, I will pull from my research and apply what I have either in my journals or influences I have seen in other works of art. It is all a feeling that comes from the heart and the soul. I don't overthink things and I never drift far off from my style and my look. I know what works for me and I know how to achieve

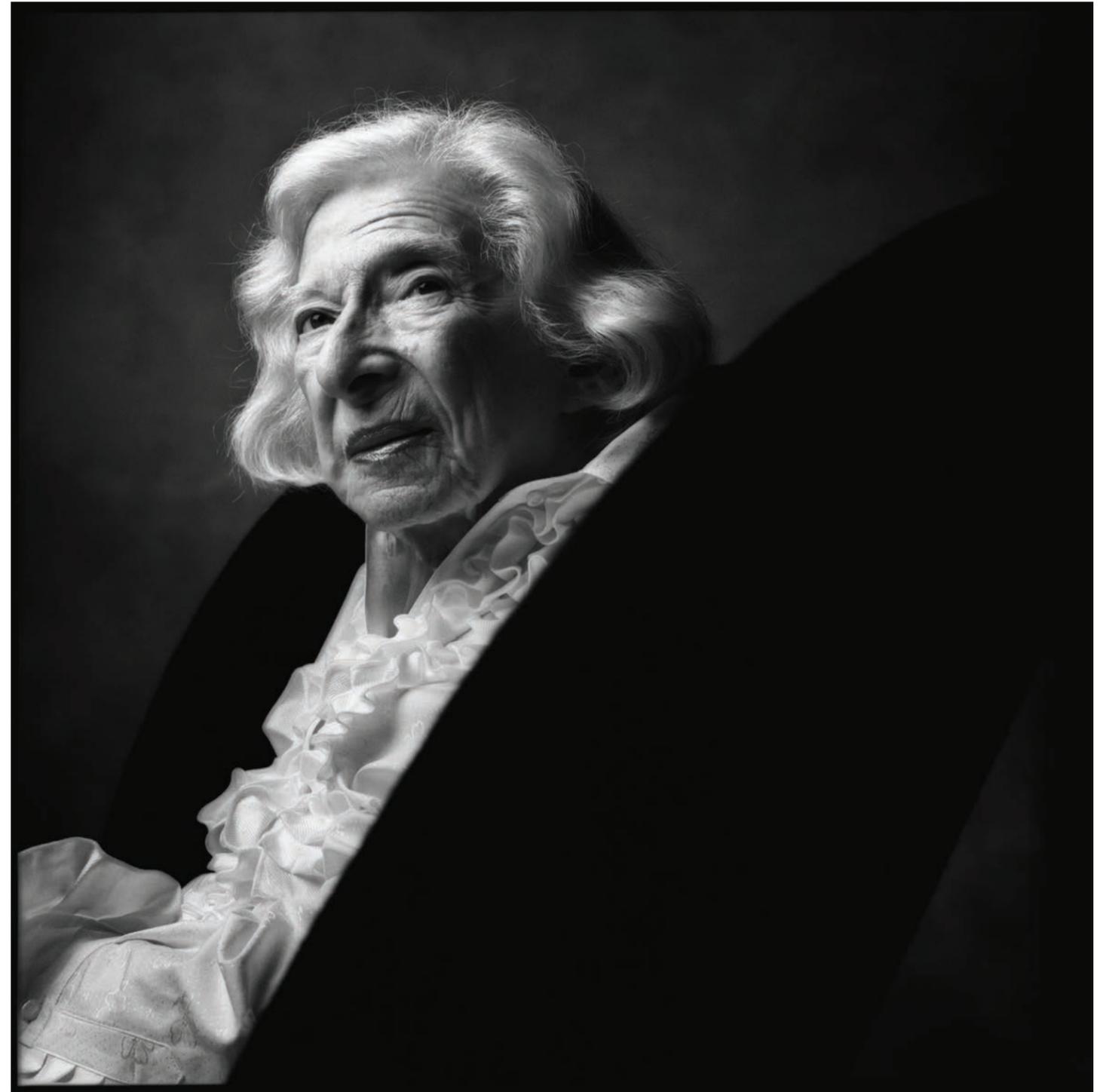
a great portrait with my knowledge and what I believe in. No gimmicks, no mirrors no bullshit just my mind, my idea and a very little bit of equipment. I can shoot my work anywhere and I am comfortable shooting in my studio or on location. The greatest thing that comes with age is confidence and knowledge. I have been doing what I love for so long that it feels like an extension of my mind and body. I love to just go with the flow. Currently, I am working on many projects but the one I am most excited about is an "Anti-Trump Get Out to Vote" campaign. Hopefully, you will all see it and together we can change the world to be a better place for all of us no matter our color, race, gender, or part of the world we live in.

Love always wins.

"I have been doing what I love for so long that it feels like an extension of my mind and body".



Right page: Irving Penn, Truman Capote, New York (1965), from the series *Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich, Homage to Photographic Masters*, 2017



Left page: Diane Arbus, Identical Twins, Roselle, New Jersey (1967), from the series *Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich, Homage to Photographic Masters*, 2014
Above: Unknown, 2000-2004