

**E**ric Hayes has been a photographer—or more accurately a photojournalist—most of his life. But his days as a music photographer were confined to one relatively short period in the 1960s, including a two-year adventure that took him halfway around the world from California to Canada to India, where he traveled with Ravi Shankar, and then by land across Asia to Europe, arriving in a still-swinging London in the summer of '68. There he dove into the heart of the music scene, photographing the Rolling Stones, the Who, Fairport Convention, Family, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, Joe Cocker, Gary Farr and many others.

Some of his best work was lost for many years, but recently it is being rediscovered, in part thanks to the recently-launched photo archive of Reelin' In The Years.

"I found out about Eric Hayes purely by accident," says Reelin' In The Years president David Peck. "With all the footage and photos I control the rights to, I try my best to figure out dates, locations and such. I was doing research on some photos of the Stones from 1979 when I found a reference to Eric taking photos at the same venue. When I saw his website my jaw hit the floor. I immediately cold-called him and we struck up a friendship and subsequent business relationship. I was surprised to discover that many people were not familiar with his work. I encouraged him to dig deeper into his vaults and subsequently he uncovered many photos he'd forgotten he'd taken. Some of his photos are true works of art, and in fact we are now offering fine art prints of some of his selected images."

I interviewed Eric by telephone in September and he shared some incredible stories of his sixties experiences, and afterwards unearthed some never-before-published photos to share with *Ugly Things* readers.

**E**ric Hayes' story begins on the edge of Okanagan Lake in the southern interior of British Columbia, Canada. "I grew up in Kelowna," explains Eric. "It's on Okanagan Lake, in the interior, about 300 miles inland. The lake is 75 miles long and a mile and a quarter wide, and Kelowna is the city at the center of that distance. It's very nice. It's hot in the summer and cold in the winter; a great place to grow up. My dad grew apples; he was an orchardist, had a big, big orchard actually. My grandfather came out from England in 1910 and got involved in fruit canning. The Okanagan was just opening up. It has a lot in common with Loch Ness, by the way, a long and skinny lake and has its own lake monster called Ogopogo, the native people there swore they saw this many times. We lived on the lake. My dad bought a quarter acre for \$4,000, which today would be worth millions. Nobody wanted lake property back then because the lake would flood at certain times of the year. They didn't have it under control with dams like they do now. So I grew up on a lake. We had a great time."

# Eric Hayes

## A Photographer's Journey through Time 1963-69

By Mike Stax



**ERIC HAYES, ca. 1969**

"One of the strongest memories I have of London's Marquee Club was the wall of graffiti left by countless musicians who'd played there. My photo of Jimmy Page on the back of Joe Cocker's first album, *A Little Help From My Friends*, was shot there and you can see it behind him. This one of myself is in a mirror." (Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)

Eric had a small Brownie camera as a child, but his interest in photography really began to blossom when he was in his early teens. "My neighbor was a retired stockbroker who took up photography as a hobby. He photographed all the neighborhood kids, and he set up a little studio in his garden shed. He would go down to the lake and bleach and tone his prints. He would take me into his darkroom and I got totally captivated by the magic of an image appearing on a piece of paper in a tray in the darkroom. So my dad built me a small darkroom in our basement and I got started."

Along with photography came a love of music. "I think I was more interested in music first," he says. "Music I think is what inspired me to be a photographer. My dad was interested in music. He used to subscribe to a mailing service and they would send him the hit parades on a sheet of paper once a week or so. We only had like one hour of pop music on our local station on Kelowna, but at night you'd go out to the A&W and on your car radio you could pick up radio stations that were hundreds or even thousands of miles away on AM radio, because it would 'skip.' Depending on the atmospheric conditions, the radio stations would bounce back down to earth and would go back and forth until they got to you. We would catch radio stations from San Francisco. So anyway, I became fascinated with the early rock 'n' roll. I was a big fan of Elvis in 1957 and everybody that came after him, Gene Pitney... And then the English crooners too, like Cliff Richard. Pretty schmaltzy stuff, but I loved it anyway. We had a record player that was dedicated to 45s and we had country swing records. So I guess my parents made me aware of music."

Eventually he began playing guitar. "My best friend, Don Doern, and I got hooked on folk music in high school and he showed me a few chords and a tune or two which we played a couple of times to entertain our parents—nothing serious; just a laugh, really. The Limelighters played at the local arena during that time—I went with my parents—and the Kingston Trio were on top of the charts with 'Tom Dooley,' so it looked easy enough to pick up a guitar and be a musician. Too bad I couldn't sing worth beans."

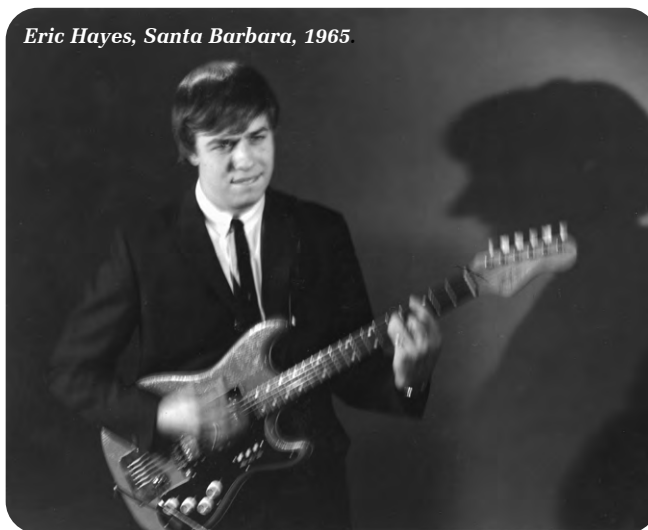
Another of Eric's childhood friends was Craig McCaw, who later became a member of the Poppy Family with Terry and Susan Jacks. In the early sixties McCaw had a band called the Shadracks and they became the subject of Eric's first rock 'n' roll photographs. "They sometimes played dances at The Aquatic, an old revered venue in Kelowna's City Park by Okanagan Lake. Amongst other things, the rowing club kept their sculls down below and there was a large dance floor up above where the Shadracks played."

By the time he was ready to leave high school, Eric knew that photography was his true calling. "I'm a naturally curious person," he explains, "interested in science and space travel and all those things. So my parents said, 'Well, what do you want to do?' I said, 'Maybe a career in photography would be a good idea.' So I came here to Victoria, where I live now, for one year, and stayed in a rented room in a house with a family, and the idea was that



### The Shadracks, ca. 1963

"Craig McCaw (second from left) is a year older than me and I took guitar lessons from him when I was in high school. He was later in the Poppy Family. I took the photo of the band sitting on top of their station wagon and trailer while working a summer job as photographer for the Kelowna Daily Courier. The man standing with the microphone is John Tanner, disc jockey with the local radio station CKOV, 630 on your AM dial." (Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)



Eric Hayes, Santa Barbara, 1965

I would go for a bachelor of fine arts. Brooks Institute of Santa Barbara was willing to have me as a student, but in their BFA program they required one year of university, certain courses, so I came to Victoria to take that. I did use to do really well in school, but once I got to university I didn't have the parental whip [laughs] and kind of got a little more lax. But I managed to make it through and then went off to California for three years."

After taking one year of Fine Arts at the University of Victoria, he headed to the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California, where he spent the next three years. Arriving in Southern California in late 1964 was something of a culture shock. "I was a small town Canadian boy landing in California in the

mid-sixties," remembers Eric. "Everything was breaking loose: drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll."

Rock 'n' roll came first. Between photography classes at the Brooks Institute he found time to play with several garage bands. "I joined a band called the Ravens," he remembers, "a bunch of guys a little older than me. I was a willing volunteer to play rhythm guitar. They would sneak off during our rehearsals and smoke pot in the back room of their house, without telling me because they didn't think that I would approve or something. And then I had my own band for a while. It was called the House of Stuart. Crazily enough, I found out what the Stuart clan tartan was and we wore ties—like respectable people did when they played in bands in those days—and so our ties were the Stuart tartan. [laughs] We

Friday, Oct. 15, 1965.

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were just covering the tunes of the day, like 'Satisfaction.' Somebody made me a fuzz tone so I played lead on that. Also, because of the Byrds, somebody had modified a regular guitar to make a 12-string out of it and I played that. We did all that sort of stuff and it was a lot of fun. One of the guys in the band came up with a song and we made a garage demo and took it down to Hollywood to the Capitol Records building to see if anybody was interested, but... no. [laughs] I wasn't a very good musician. My musicality would never have got me in the studio with the Rolling Stones, but my photography certainly did."

Hayes considered all of his experiences in California to be a part of his education and his growth as a person. His family did not necessarily agree. "My dad remortgaged our house to send me to school in California, and he often said it was the worst mistake he ever made. There are some parents you can never please no matter what you do. But he missed the point. The point of higher education or post-high school education is *education*—not just learning a *thing* but to learn a lot about *life*, and I certainly got educated going to California in the mid-sixties."

It was a ninety-minute drive south from Santa Barbara to the Sunset Strip—where the action was. "I used my photo skills to modify my driver's license so it made me a year older—because we couldn't play music in places that had liquor licenses if we were under 21. Cruising Sunset Strip was a lot of fun, and drinking white rum and Coke in the car while we were doing it, and then going into some of the clubs. They were absolutely packed, so you had to squeeze past everybody's body to move around. It was something else. I went to Shelley's Manne Hole one time by myself just to hear some jazz, and then there was the club the Byrds played at."

On January 5, 1966 he went to the Hullabaloo to see one of his favorite bands, the Yardbirds—and brought his camera along with him. "I took pictures," he recounts. "I have a couple of shots from back in the crowd. They went into these long adlib interludes in the songs where Jeff Beck would get the feedback going on his guitar and they would just build on it and build it up into something, and then bring it back down into the song again. It was really good. Jeff Beck played through a little Vox amp that then fed into a bigger one, and the little one would do the feedback. He'd touch his guitar to it and would start to take off. It was mind-blowing! I'd never ever heard anything like those long jazz-like free progressions."

In August the Yardbirds returned to California, and on August 27 played at the Earl Warren Showgrounds in Santa Barbara. A few days earlier Jeff Beck had collapsed, allegedly due to tonsillitis, and was recovering in Los Angeles with the help of his new girlfriend Mary Hughes, so the Yardbirds played as a quartet, with Jimmy Page stepping up as lead guitarist. On this occasion, Eric was right next to the stage and was able to take a series of evocative color photos of the four-piece band in full flight.

"They were on a little riser, maybe three feet high at the most," he remembers. "Earl



### Barry McGuire and Gene Clark, March 11, 1966

"On March 11, 1966, I was in a music store in Hollywood when I spotted Barry McGuire and Gene Clark of The Byrds buying a harmonica holder and some other gear and took this shot. Those were the days where you could take a record into a booth to listen to it before deciding whether or not to buy it." (Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)



### The Association, 1966

"Santa Barbara Senior High School, 'Home of the Dons,' was a venue for the Association in September or October of 1966. My Ektachrome slides from the performance have OCT 66 on them, stamped by the Kodak lab."

(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)



### Jules Alexander of the Association, July 1966

"This was taken at his home in Hollywood. Those slide mounts are dated July 1966. I don't remember how I came to be invited to his home, but you can see that he was happy to proudly display the band's first album." (Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)

**The Yardbirds, Hullabaloo Club, Hollywood. January 5, 1966**

*L to R: Chris Dreja, Paul Samwell-Smith, Keith Relf, Jim McCarty, Jeff Beck.*

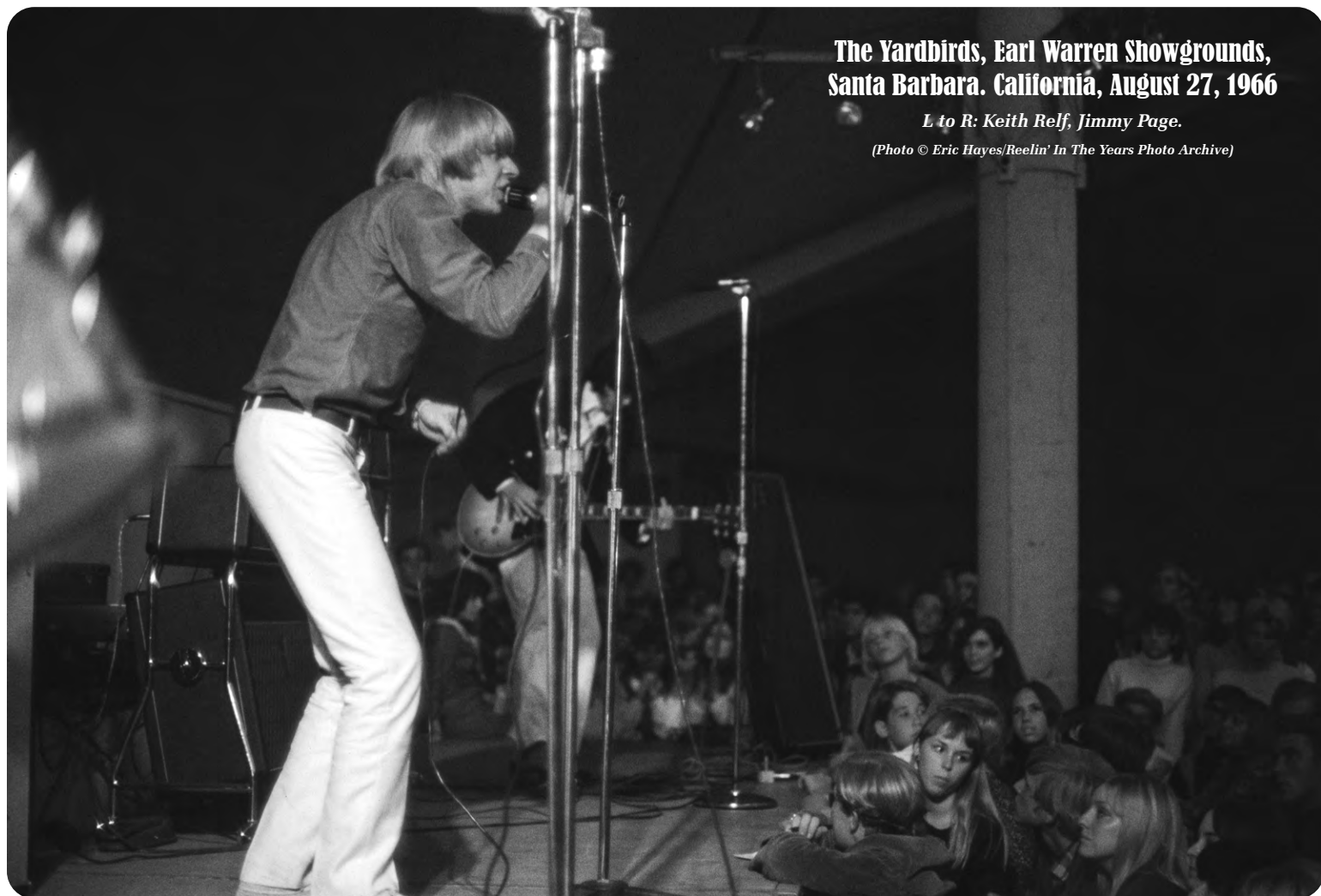
*(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)*



**The Yardbirds, Earl Warren Showgrounds, Santa Barbara. California, August 27, 1966**

*L to R: Keith Relf, Jimmy Page.*

*(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)*



Warren Showgrounds is a round building, and the pictures I took there were all color slides. Also playing at the Earl Warren Showgrounds was a band called the English Sound Project [ESP]. You can see the name on the bass drum. Anyway, we were all gaga about Jimmy Page because he had this purple velour jacket with this big white shirt underneath and the sleeves projecting. We thought that was cool, to be dressed like this English country gentleman. It was kind of a dandy look. The rest of the Yardbirds were in like t-shirts and jeans, but Jimmy Page really stood out."

These amazing photos lay unseen and unpublished for many decades, until Eric got a call from someone at Genesis Publications, looking for photos of Jimmy Page. "I had a picture of Jimmy Page on the back of Joe Cocker's first album called *With A Little Help From My Friends*," explains Eric. "Denny Cordell, the producer of the album, was real smart and got all these well-known names to back up Joe Cocker for his first album so it would give him credibility immediately, and that may have been very helpful in it being a success. So on the back I have two shots, one of Steve Winwood and one of Jimmy Page. The one of Jimmy Page was taken backstage at the Marquee Club, I think, because the wall behind him is all autographed and there's drawings and cartoons on it. Anyway, I got a call from Genesis Publications about ten years ago asking if they could use that picture because Jimmy Page was going to do a book about his life. I said, 'Well, unfortunately I don't have those negatives anymore or a print, but I do have a bunch of shots of him from 1966 in Santa Barbara when he was on tour with the Yardbirds.' And they said, 'Oh! Really! Let's have a look at them.' So I digitized them and sent them over. They showed them to Jimmy and he was over the moon. There were nine shots that I sent and he wanted all of them in the book."

The book, *Jimmy Page: The Anthology* was published in a deluxe signed edition in 2010, and then in 2014 as a mass market edition. It is scheduled to be published again later this year.

"When I took those photos he was 22 and on tour—imagine when you're 22, you're on top of the world, the world's your oyster, you're on tour in America, and how exciting is that? And I was 21 and starting my career, and I took these pictures, and it wasn't until like 43 years or whatever that he got to see them. So we were both there together—we had a lot in common in a way—and after all that time he got to see them. I was just a kid following my passion for music and photography. What I was told by Genesis was that the reason Jimmy was over the moon was because the kind of road shots that they got from amateurs or even professionals were generally black & white and shot with a flash, and didn't have a natural feel. I've always been a fan, since starting photography, of using available light so all my pictures at the Earl Warren Showgrounds were shot using the lighting that was there."

In 2017 or 2018 Page's people got in contact again to license the photos for us in the packaging of the *Yardbirds 68* release (reviewed in UT#47). "They used my photos on a page in that. They made an orange collage and drew



## The Yardbirds, Santa Barbara. August 27, 1966

(Photos © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)





### Backstage at the Hollywood Bowl. August 4, 1967.

L to R: Alla Rakha, Ali Akbar Khan, George Harrison, Ravi Shankar, Bismillah Khan.

(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)

some lines; put a ziggy-zaggy around Jimmy's head. So that's twice I've sold those pictures."

On August 4, 1967, Ravi Shankar played his Festival of Indian Music concert at the Hollywood Bowl, along with other renowned Indian musicians, including Ali Akbar Khan. It was rumored that George Harrison was going to attend so Eric grabbed his camera and headed for Hollywood. "The day of the concert I drove to Los Angeles in mid-afternoon, straight to the Bowl, and, security not being like it is these days, I was able to hang around as a photographer until concert time," he remembers. "But there was no sign of the Beatle. When the music started I was out front taking pictures from the edge of the stage. Just before the intermission I felt a burly hand on my shoulder and a man with a thick British accent said, 'Mr Harrison would like you to come back stage during the intermission and get some pictures of him with the Indian musicians.' It seems hard to imagine today that there wasn't a mob of paparazzi lurking in the shadows, but evidently, at the time, I was the only person there with a camera. So that's how I ended up in a dressing room at the Hollywood Bowl with George Harrison and his wife Pattie Boyd, along with Ravi Shankar, tabla player Allah Rakha, shehnai player Besmilla Kahn, sarod virtuoso Ali Akbar Khan, and other accomplished classical East Indian musicians."

Eric also met Shankar's manager Jay K Hoffman, who requested that he send him a set of prints. This meeting would prove to be consequential.

By the time of the concert, Hayes, like many young people, had become interested in Eastern mysticism as well as Indian music. He'd begun to lose interest in his classes at the Brooks Institute, and felt the urge to travel and observe and document what was going on in the world.

"I've always had a fascination with *National Geographic* and with *Life* magazine," he says. "The kind of photography that *Life* magazine promoted was often gritty, black & white, people living and dying on the streets—real photojournalism. That was my passion. I learned a lot about how to shoot and develop and print black & white in the first couple of years at Brooks, but then it moved into color—not that I minded color, but it got into advertising, and studio photography, shooting formal portraits, and that really wasn't my interest. I was getting frustrated. I had dropped in and out of photo school a couple of times. There were these old mansions there in Montecito: Brooks Institute was on one hill and on another hill was the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. It was a think tank, and they had a lunch time session where some of the biggest names in the world came by to talk. It was funded by the Ford Foundation. They had Dr Linus Pauling come there, the guy who promoted Vitamin C, and James Pike, who was a minister [a contro-

versial bishop who dived into the paranormal. He was the inspiration for Philip K Dick's book *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*]. Joan Baez even came and spoke to them, and I got to talk to her on my own one time. She said she'd never get on another motorcycle with Bob Dylan—because this was not long after he'd had his accident. Also the district attorney of New Orleans, Jim Garrison, who was very outspoken about the Kennedy assassination; he said that he fully expected that he would be the next to go if he spoke out too much.

"So they had these lunchtime meetings with all these guys and I was allowed to photograph while they were mingling or while they were speaking, and I got to say hi to some of them afterwards. I have all those negatives. So I worked in the mailroom there and I did these lunchtime photo sessions, and then I bopped in and out of photo school. But eventually I wanted to leave school and see the world, so I went to the dean's office and said, 'I'm going to drop out. I'm going to go.' He said, 'You can't do that.' I said, 'Oh yes, I can.' Pretty defiant, I guess, or maybe just speaking my mind honestly. It wasn't like a great motion picture moment, but it was a defining moment for me. So I quit and sold all my rock 'n' roll gear and came back to Canada for Christmas 1967."

Back in Kawlona he had another defining moment when he met the woman who would eventually become his wife. "I got back to Kawlona and a friend invited me to a party," he remembers. "He knew this girl who was having a Boxing Day party so he took me along to her place. She said later that when I walked into her rec room during this party, the crowd parted. [laughs] I told her, 'I'm going to India to get enlightened' or whatever. She had a ticket with a girlfriend of hers to go to England together, but she decided she'd rather go with me, and so we cashed in her ticket. So I met her on December 26th and around a month later we left from Vancouver. We bought one-way tickets to Bombay."

This was the beginning of an unforgettable two-year adventure for the two of them. "We stopped in Hawaii for a week," recounts Eric, "and then we arrived in Tokyo with only our backpacks and a copy of the *I Ching*. We ran into a young Japanese guy—Misoshi I think was his name—on the train into Tokyo from the airport; we didn't know where we were going. He wanted to practice English on us so we told him what we were doing and he



Eric in California, 1967.



**Sharon and Eric in Japan, 1968.**

**Above right: At the Sikh temple in Calcutta.**



**Ravi Shankar  
Yehudi Menuhin  
George Harrison  
in a film by Howard Worth  
released by Contemporary Films  
now at the Paris Palladium Cinema**

said his family had a place we could stay in a little village just outside of Tokyo. So he took us there and we stayed there for about a month, I think. It had sliding rice paper walls and an indoor outhouse, if you know what I mean, and a low table with a heating element under it that you curled your legs under with some kind of blanket over top. It was a whole new way of living going to Japan. Wow!"

While in Japan, he took the opportunity to pick up some new photography equipment. "I went to the camera stores in downtown Tokyo because I'm a gearhead, too; I love all the lenses and stuff. So I got the idea that I'd call up Nikon and tell them that I was a photographer from Canada and would they mind showing me their assembly plant. And they were only too happy to do that. They told me which train to take and they had a car waiting for us, like we were big shots or something, and they took us to the Nikon plant, and we had a tour. You'd never be able to do that today unless you worked for a company that had credentials! So I bought a bunch of gear. I got two Nikon bodies and about three or four lenses and a camera called a Wide-lux, in which the lens moved during exposure and it took a 140 degree view. So I have some great wide photos. That was great to shoot the Stones' Hyde Park concert with and get the whole crowd in."

Meanwhile those photos he'd taken of Ravi Shankar and the other musicians at the Hollywood Bowl suddenly bore unexpected fruit. "We used to go to the American Express office, as everyone did in those days, to get mail, and there was a telegram from Jay K Hoffman, Ravi Shankar's manager in New York, saying that they were making a film about India and he liked the photography I'd done of George and the musicians at the Hollywood Bowl. He said would I like to meet up with them in Calcutta. So we did."

Arriving in India was another eye-opener. "We got there two days ahead of the crew, and we had nowhere to stay and no money," he remembers. "We were told that if you were ever in a situation like that in India to go to a Sikh temple and they'll put you up. So we did. We went across the Hooghly Bridge, which is over the Ganges River. This is a bridge where people spend their entire lives: homeless people are born there and live there and die there on this bridge. So we go to bad side of the bridge, I guess, to the Sikh temple and they gave us a place to stay. All we had was our sleeping bags. We had no money for food so we wandered around Calcutta for two or three days without any food, but at least we had a place to crash. And then we met up with the film crew at a big fancy hotel in Calcutta, and they fed us and put us up."

They spent the next six weeks travelling around India with Ravi Shankar, his musicians, and a film crew. Eric shot many of the still photographs used in the movie, directed by Harry Worth and preliminarily titled *Messenger Out of the East*. It was eventually released in 1971 as *Raga*. Some of his photos were also used in Ravi Shankar's autobiography *My Music, My Life*.

"There were a lot of WTFs on that trip!" remembers Eric. "For this film we had Ravi playing sitar overlooking the Ganges River at sunrise. There were all-night concerts with have thousands of people sitting on mats listening to endless Indian musicians. It seemed like they went from dusk to dawn. Then we were in Benares, possibly the holiest city in India,

where humble pilgrims about to die arrive with just enough money for the firewood needed cremate their bodies on the river bank. Ravi took the film crew and a couple of musicians out on an Indian barge with an upper deck, for an evening cruise past the burning ghats. He gave us some Bhang, a milky cannabis-based drink, and we all got a little buzzed on it. The musicians played for us as we sailed down the river. In the twilight we could see the fires where people were being cremated. A remarkable sight. I was still just this kid from Kelowna.

"Ravi took us to villages where there were students of his," he continues. "These are villages where you'll see water buffalo and banana trees—a real rural Indian lifestyle. The first day we got there we had a very nice meal at somebody's fancy place. We all sat on the floor and ate food off banana leaves with our fingers. He took us to meet his guru [Alauddin Khan], the man he had studied music with his whole life; the man who forced him to play until his fingers were bleeding. This old guy was 102 or something at the time, and had assembled a little orchestra for the film crew to film, and also to honor Ravi Shankar for coming back because he was certainly a Class A student of this guy. It's all at nighttime out behind the house



**Above: Shankar and his musical guru  
Alauddin Khan listening to the musicians of  
Allahabad.**





*Above: Ravi Shankar festival program with one of Eric's photos.*

*Right: Along the Hippie Train: Sharon poses with tribesmen in Warizistan. Bottom right: Pakistani Gold Seal hashish.*



in the garden with this little orchestra of maybe twenty musicians. At one point somebody plays a wrong note or something and the old guru guy takes this cane and starts beating him on the back or on the head. [laughs] I remember that pretty clearly! The thing about the guru-disciple style of learning is that you have to be completely obedient to your master. There's no 'oh, I don't feel like practicing today!' It's a style that we have pretty much lost here, I guess. Super disciplined, and whether it's good or whether it's bad I have no idea. I guess if you don't like it you run away from it. Maybe Ravi addressed that in some of his writings, I don't know. But anyway he was certainly one of the finest musicians the world has ever produced. It's not easy, Indian music. It's not 4/4 and it's not the pentatonic scale."

After the film wrapped, Eric and Sharon got themselves a small apartment in Bombay and kicked back for a while. They got married at the Christian Registry Office in Bombay where their witnesses were a couple from England, Jeremy and Carol, who'd driven all the way to India in a short-wheelbase Land Rover. "They had just, on a lark, said, 'Hey, let's drive to India,' which you could do then easily," remembers Eric. They were planning to sell the Land Rover and fly home, but Eric had another idea. "My parents, when we told them we'd got married, sent us a thousand dollars, so we said, 'Well, we'll pay for gas, petrol, if you want to turn around and drive back to England and take us with you.'"

So, after a short side trip to Goa, that's what they did. "A short-wheelbase Land Rover looks like a Jeep," he continues, "it's not a large vehicle. We all had all our crap in the back, piled up in such a way that two people could sit in the front and two could lie in the back, kind of like a bed. It took us thirty days, about 10,000 miles, and we'd pull off the road and we'd sleep on the side of the road. I remember one place, Afghanistan or somewhere, waking up in the morning and here was this little shepherd boy with his herd of water buffalo, bringing them down to this creek to bathe in the morning."

There were several interesting stops along the way. "On their way out to India, Jeremy and Carol had stopped at this tribal area in Pakistan, and he wanted to show us this place. So he took us there. They made hashish there. There were rooms stacked with these bricks of what they called Pakistani Gold Seal. The locals took great pleasure in unrolling a cigarette, take the tobacco out, mix it with some hashish and put it back into the cigarette paper and give it to me to smoke. I have a picture of my wife Sharon with one of their automatic weapons over her shoulder. The tribesmen had bullet belts around them, like banditos. We went into an inner courtyard and here were a whole bunch of kids about 12, 14 years old sitting around with vices filing revolvers and making weapons. I'd never seen anything like that. Later I found out this was a tribal area called Waziristan, where the Taliban come from."

Their 10,000 mile trek down the Hippie Trail took them through some dangerous terri-

tory like this, but, as Eric remembers, they never felt any real anxiety. "I don't think you could drive from Bombay to London now through all those countries like we did. We were living under the shadow of 'The Bomb,' as they say, the threat of nuclear war during the Cold War, but on the ground it seemed safer than it is now."

Eventually they made it through Asia and into Europe. "After we crossed over the Bosphorus from Turkey to Greece, we just drove straight, like 24 hours, right through Europe 'til we got the ferry from Calais to Dover, and ended up in England. They were pretty tough on us [at Customs] because we were grubby, as you might imagine. We were the last ferry of the night, like midnight or something, and in the customs shed they hauled everything out of the Land Rover. They found a couple of film cans where I had some hash and tobacco, and they said, 'You know, this isn't allowed here,' and I said, 'Oh... yeah, of course, but we were smoking it where it was and just forgot to dump it. Sorry!' [laughs]" The hash was confiscated with no repercussions.



*Bombay wedding, 1968.*



*Ugly Things*

They arrived in London in the summer of 1968. “It was swinging London,” remembers Eric. “Carnaby Street was happening and ‘Sunny South Kensington’ and Donovan and all that. I’d been in California in the mid-sixties and seen the be-ins, and gone to the Avalon Ballroom and seen the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane—the California scene—and now all of a sudden I’m in the middle of the London scene. It was just too good to be true.”

They got themselves a place to live in London, and before long Eric was making a reasonable income selling photos to the music papers and shooting photos for album covers. “That was the thing, trying to make a living as a photographer, either shoot album covers or shoot photos for publicity or have them published in newspapers or magazines. It’s hard work as a freelancer, making a go of it. I ran into trouble with Kodak at one point because I was writing checks to buy film and didn’t have enough money in my account. I wasn’t keeping good enough records. Everything was happening too fast. There wasn’t enough cash flow.”

Hayes was on hand to take pictures at the Rolling Stones Rock & Roll Circus in December 1968 including terrific shots of John Lennon and the Who. Some of the other artists he photographed while in the UK included Joe Cocker (at Apple Studios, with George Harrison teaching him “Something”), John Mayall, the Nice, the Who onstage at the Roundhouse, the Jimi Hendrix Experience rehearsing and playing at the Royal Albert Hall in February 1969, and Janis Joplin at the same venue a few months later.

Hayes worked in a photojournalistic style that made his photos from this period especially evocative of their time and place. “David Bailey made a career of photographing movie stars and other celebrities in England at the same time or maybe slightly before,” he reflects. “He’d take them into his studio, and, like Annie Leibovitz, he had this vision of how this person should be posed. I didn’t. I never felt that I had the right or the audacity to tell my



**Fairport Convention. 100 Club, London, December 12, 1968.**

(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)

subject what he or she should be doing, so my approach was more to let them be themselves and then capture it like a photojournalist. So I've always been a photojournalist.”

That approach, he explains, requires not only a good eye but also the ability to recognize the expressive moment—or what pioneering photojournalist Henri Cartier-Bresson called “the decisive moment”—an instant before it arrives. “Anticipation is an important part,” he explains, “like being ready when the picture happens or realizing that it could happen within your frame and being ready and focused and correctly exposed. But that’s just part of it.”

A group Hayes photographed on several occasions was Fairport Convention. “I like to think that as a Canadian, my gentle nature and

the folkie ways of Fairport were a good match,” he says. “We took a liking to each other and I spent a lot of time with them in the studio and at gigs.” After developing a friendship with the band, Island Records assigned him to shoot the cover of their third album, *Unhalfbricking*. What is now probably the band’s best-loved album cover showed Sandy Denny’s parents in front of their garden gate in Wimbledon, with the band, visible through the fence, drinking tea on the lawn behind them.

“I thought being an English folk band, having tea on the lawn would be a nice way to go,” says Eric. “So it worked out rather well. Somebody once asked me, ‘How did you get each band member’s head in a different open square of the fence?’ I said, ‘Oh! I hadn’t noticed that.’ It was just pure chance—each person is in a different open square. I love that. And you can see the Wimbledon church behind, and the tennis courts are probably behind that a little bit. After we finished the shoot, Sandy Denny’s mother made supper for us all, and that’s on the back side of the album. When it was released in the States, they changed the cover. They didn’t get it. It was too obtuse or whatever.”



**Sharon and Eric outside their home at 65 Mount Park Road in Ealing, 1969.**



One of his most interesting and memorable sessions was with the Rolling Stones at Olympic Studios in early 1969 during sessions for the *Let It Bleed* album. "I'd been in London for a number of months and was having good success going to clubs and listening to music I liked and taking pictures and offering them up and being received in a positive fashion," he says. "I remember thinking at one point, well there's one band that I would love to see in the studio and photograph them on my own, and that's the Rolling Stones. So I went to their business office, and the young fellow that was there, I guess he couldn't have been more than 26 or 28 or something, he said, 'Well, you've come here at the right time because we're looking for some new photographs and the Stones are going to be in the studio all week. Why don't you come along?' So I said, 'I will.' So I went for two nights in a row to Olympic Studios."

Eric no longer has any notes on the exact dates he spent with the Stones. However, based on the known facts, his photos must have been taken at the album's first sessions in February 1969. Brian Jones was absent from the sessions from March onwards as he was in and out of the Priory Nursing Home. However, he was present when Eric was there. The sessions for *Let It Bleed* began on February 10, and the first songs they worked on were "You Got the Silver," "Let it Bleed," and "Midnight Rambler." Both Brian and Mick can be seen playing harmonica in different photos, although the harp part on "Midnight Rambler" would ultimately be played by Mick Jagger.

Eric confirms that Brian was not in the best of shape. "What I remember is him sitting on the studio floor with his guitar and I'm next to him taking pictures. He's trying to tune his guitar, and he asks me to play an E on the piano, and I did, and he's trying to find that note on his guitar, and he was not able to do it. He couldn't tune his guitar. Later, up in the control room, I asked, 'What's going on here?' And they said, 'Well, he thinks he's playing along with the band, but we've got him turned off.' He was wasted, but he wasn't belligerent or anything, and he wasn't like that all of the time—look at some of the pictures, he looks fine. But he was struggling."

The other band members, on the other hand, were completely focused and working with practiced efficiency. "I kind of assumed, based on the myth of who the Rolling Stones were, that they'd all be stoned—like when Ken Kesey and the guys in California all took acid and went into a recording studio to make music. I just thought it would be kind of disorganized. But it turned out not at all like that. That was so far from the truth. They were incredibly down to business, and I attribute that to Mick and Keith—both of them. I was really impressed. They went there to work and get work done, and they did it. They started around nine o'clock at night, as I recall, and took a break at two in the morning when a big English roast beef and Yorkshire pudding supper was served. Somebody catered it and brought it in. And then they went back to work until six in the morning. I didn't stay after supper. I just stayed for the first four or five hours."

What Eric remembers most clearly was the





atmosphere of pure creativity. “There was a vibe,” he says, “a music vibe so strong that I slipped into a neighboring studio and there was a harpsichord there, and I remember sitting down and just feeling that I was playing like music that was coming through me from an inspired source. I was totally transported into somewhere else. So my experience with the Stones was extremely positive. They were not the bad boys that I expected. And of course you can see that today. Look how many bands have crashed and burned because of too much drugs or lack of commitment. So good for them.”

A few months later, some of the photos were published in one of the British newspapers. “I got a call from the *Evening Standard*,” remembers Eric. “They were doing a feature on the Rolling Stones and they asked if I had some pictures. I said, ‘Yeah, I’ve just been in the studio with the Stones,’ and they said, ‘Oh, we’d like to have a look at your pictures.’ I sent along the negatives because I was in a rush and had other things to do and couldn’t make prints for them, so I just said, ‘Here, print what you want, pay me later.’ And I never got those negatives back.”

For many years the photos were thought to be lost forever. “I only had one print, which is that one black & white of Brian Jones, he’s got a harmonica in his hand. All the color shots of the Stones only surfaced just recently. I shot black & white and color of almost everything. I brought the color back with me to Canada, and left most of the black & white in England with a friend to help market it for me, and that’s why I don’t have that anymore. The guy got sick and my stuff got tossed out on the street. So the Rolling Stones were putting on a worldwide exhibition called ‘Exhibitionism’ a couple of years ago, and the Rolling Stones’ archive had forty or more color slides of mine. They all had my initials on them, EH. And they asked me permission to use them in the exhibition. I went, ‘Wow! I don’t even remember these!’ What I must’ve done was turn them over to them; maybe that was part of the deal. Apparently I kept the copyright. I said, ‘Please pay me and you can have the rights to use these in this traveling show, but I’d like to have high res scans of all of the pictures.’ So they sent me those color ones of the Stones in the studio.”

A few months later, in July 1969, Brian Jones died in his swimming pool at Cotchford Farm in Sussex. On June 5, 1969, the Stones paid tribute to him at an already-scheduled free concert in Hyde Park. Eric was in attendance with his camera, and shot some terrific photos not only of the Stones, but also Family and some of the other acts that performed that day.

“That was amazing,” he remembers, “all those people. There were lots of others, like Donovan was there, Peter Green, and a bunch of other musicians people came out to see. My wife and I had been down in Portugal visiting a friend of hers in Albufeira on the Algarve and we had arranged our trip so we could be back in London in time for that concert because we didn’t want to miss it, it was a biggie. I have pictures of me during it, shooting it. I was watching the History Channel on the greatest rock & roll bands of the world or something and they’re panning around in front of the stage at



## The Rolling Stones. Olympic Studios, London, February 1969.

(Photos © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)

“In the studio with a handful of people you can’t really fade into the background. But they were good at ignoring me while they got to work ... They were incredibly down to business, and I attribute that to Mick and Keith—both of them. I was really impressed. They went there to work and get some work done, and they did it. They started around nine o’clock at night, as I recall, and took a break at two in the morning when a big English roast beef and Yorkshire pudding supper was served. Somebody catered it and brought it in. And then they went back to work until six in the morning. I didn’t stay after supper. I just stayed for the first four or five hours.”



**The Rolling Stones. Hyde Park, London, July 5, 1969.**

(Photo © Eric Hayes/Reelin' In The Years Photo Archive)



**Eric Hayes (at right with camera) at the Hyde Park concert.**

that concert, and I went, 'Wait a minute! That's me!' Since then I've found a couple of others in books with me in the crowd."

The following month he attended the Isle of Wight Festival where he shot photos of Bob Dylan, the Who, Joe Cocker and Richie Havens. A few months later, though, Eric and Sharon decided to return home. "Eventually I got tired of the pop scene and I got bummed out about people," he remembers. "Gary Farr was a good friend. I spent a lot of time with him, traveling and photographing. He was a super nice guy and I thought he was an excellent singer and songwriter. They spent a lot of time in the studio recording him and doing a good job, and they put out a nice album. I did his album cover too—it's just two shades of brown, my pictures front and back [*Take Something With You*. Marmalade, 1969]. But they would spend all that money and then not publicize it or market it, while other groups who were not such good musicians would be the favorites of the management or the label and they'd get all the big push and their success would be assured. I felt that it was unfair. But that was just me being naive, I suppose. So I was pretty much bummed out by the music business, and at the same time I was missing the green forests and the deep blue skies and the waterfalls and the mountains of BC. We just thought it was time to get back to where we came from.

"We left in December of '69," he continues. "Rather than flying to Toronto or Montreal or Vancouver, we decided to see Canada on our way home, so Sharon and I flew to Newfoundland and then took the train across Canada. We got looked at a lot, hitchhiking in Newfoundland. She had a maxi coat—we'd just come from the English pop scene and here we are in Newfoundland. Newfoundland's like a lobster, fisheries, out-in-the-boonies kind of a place. We were out of place there. Eventually we got back home and I got a job within a month at a sawmill sweeping up underneath the gang saw."

But Hayes continued to pursue photography, and eventually began a career as a respected photojournalist, which continues to this day. "I gave up on the music business," he

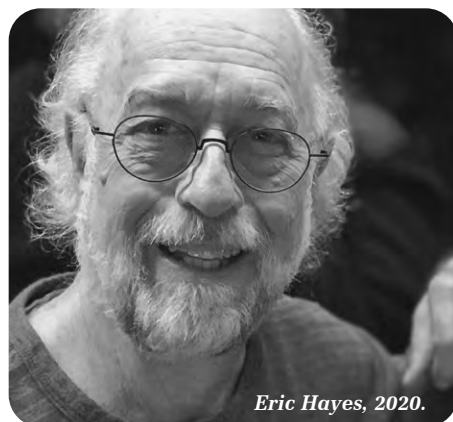
says, "but not on my photography. I dropped out of the music business and the stars-y scene for a while, and had children, had babies, and did the back-to-the-land thing, had goats and chickens, and built a log house. Then that marriage fell apart, and I said, 'OK, gonna get back into photography,' and went to Toronto. I had this vision that people would be very receptive to me. I actually saw people opening their doors to me, and sure enough, within three weeks of arriving in Toronto, I was earning my living as a photographer again. I did a lot of work for the *Toronto Star*, and I did a lot of freelance work for *Maclean's*. So I guess I was meant to be a photographer."

Reflecting on his extraordinary journey through the 1960s, he says, "When you're young, when you're in those formative years, you have some intense times that are the most intense of your entire life. You come back from your adventures, you get married, have kids, get a mortgage, work at a job—for the next fifty years or whatever—but those couple of years when you were young and having your mind blown by the experiences you were witnessing, those are the ones that you end up talking about for your entire life.

"I was very fortunate to be in the right places at the right time," he continues. "Herman Wouk wrote a book called *The Winds of War*, in which all his family happen to be in different places when World War II is breaking out, so

you're seeing that through their eyes. I felt like that. I was in California in the mid-sixties when everything was happening—music, acid... It was a cultural revolution and it was a fluke that I happened to be there. I wanted to go to India, and that was a mind opener, and then I ended up in England just at the tail end of the Swinging London phase and Carnaby Street and all that, so I got to see this cultural phenomenon first hand. I've always said that photography is a ticket into other people's lives and culture. A lot of people don't get the opportunity to go there. Yet as a photographer—or a journalist too, a writer—you're allowed to be curious and nosy, and poke your face in where other people wouldn't go. George Hunter was a Canadian photographer who was 25 years older than me—I traveled a lot with him—and he said to be a good photographer you have to have brass balls, which means you can't be too afraid to go forward into the unknown."

Today Hayes lives a quieter life in Victoria, Canada, but his journey continues. "The journey continues until I croak, because I enjoy photography today as much as I ever did. I love the magic of photography; that you can freeze a moment. There's a part of me that's afraid of letting go and by photographing everything that's happening, I'm trying to hang on a little bit. That may be a neurotic thing that I haven't addressed. You could talk to the women who've lived with me, they would say, 'You have to put the damn camera away sometimes.' And I do sometimes, but there are other times where it's really fun. Look what you can do today: you can take fabulous pictures on a very inexpensive camera. I can make big prints that are 12 x 18 inches right here in the house. I used to have an even bigger printer when I lived in Nova Scotia. They're all color, they're super sharp and crisp, and I can make adjustments on the computer to bring out any detail that's missing in the shadows or take it down if it's over-exposed in the highlights or if light's hitting the side of somebody's face or whatever. So I have this tremendous capability of making fabulous pictures, and the magic of being able to do that is just like it was at the beginning in the dark room as a kid. It just excites me no end. I'm still a kid playing with making images." •



**Eric Hayes, 2020.**