

# FROM ABBA TO ZAPPA

## 70s legendary rock stars photographed by Dutch photographer 'Gilbert' Gijsbert Hanekroot

16 February – 10 March 2019, Grand Opening: Friday 15 February, 6–9 pm  
**New Address!** Blue Lotus Gallery, 28 Pound Lane, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong  
+ Featuring a selection of 'Vinyl Hero' Paul Au's famous vinyl collection



David Bowie  
Ahoy, Amsterdam, 1976



John Lennon & Yoko Ono  
Selfridges, Oxford Street, London, 1971



Lou Reed  
Amsterdam, 1972

### Links and credits:

Please insert below links when publishing this story:

Link for online event: <https://www.bluelotus-gallery.com/new-events/fromabbatozappa>

Link for Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/239253516968994/>

Link to the book available: <https://www.bluelotus-gallery.com/shop/book-gijsbert-hanekroot-abba-to-zappa>

Optional Links:

Link to Artist's page on our website: <https://www.bluelotus-gallery.com/#/gilbert/>

Link to Artist's website: <http://gijsberthanekroot.com>

Link to images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ckl7gm062a1bgua/AADl5sZuDA0AsJzPV8r7u3qVa?dl=0>

Credit photos: Artist Name + Title + Place + Year, courtesy of Blue Lotus Gallery

The artist will be in Hong Kong and available by appointment for interviews between 14-18 Feb or over email/phone before or after above-mentioned dates.

For further inquiries please contact: Christina Jensen [christina@bluelotus-gallery.com](mailto:christina@bluelotus-gallery.com)  
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### SHORT VERSION:

Gijsbert Hanekroot, or 'Gilbert' as better known amongst the rock stars he photographed, will have his debut exhibition in Hong Kong at Blue Lotus Gallery, showing his grainy black and white photographs of 1970s rock legends in their prime including David Bowie, Mick Jagger, Patti Smith, Neil Young, BB King and other A-list artists who changed music forever. Gilbert gained intimate access to musical Gods we still worship today and amassed a visual rock-archive FROM ABBA TO ZAPPA. This rare opportunity to see a selection of Limited Edition and Vintage prints as well as related books will mark Blue Lotus Gallery's first major exhibition at their brand new venue on 28 Pound Lane, Sheung Wan.

*During concerts, I was always planning to take the best picture ever... Pretty ambitious, but I actually managed to do it a few times, especially during performances where the artists pushed themselves to the limit...If they played out of this world, I took pictures that were out of this world. I was exhausted after those kind of concerts. Concerts by Lou Reed, Neil Young, CCR and The Band. Nights I'll never forget, thats how thrilling they were.*

Gijsbert Hanekroot 2008 - in 'Abba...Zappa'

*Back then, the rock scene was not quite the well-oiled machine it is today. Things still had to be invented: light installations, sounds, promotion, organisation, crowd control. This also applied to music journalism. How do you capture music, describe it? And equally important, how do you photograph it?*

Gijsbert Hanekroot 2008 - in 'Abba...Zappa'

### EXTENDED VERSION

*"The seventies: hectic, exciting, creative, constantly reinventing itself, full of self-confidence, sometimes tiresome, but never for long. What I'm saying is nothing new. Many have said it before me in different words, but that doesn't make it any less true. I know, because I was there,"* are Gilbert's own words and his photographic rock-archive are a testament to his witnessing of this eventful period in music history.

Born in 1945, Gilbert grew up in Amsterdam. At the age of thirteen, he was given his first camera by his mother. To hone his skills he read every book he could find on the subject of photography. At sixteen he dropped out of school and soon after started an internship with Philip Mechanicus, a celebrated photographer principally known for his portraits of writers and stage photography. He learned how to shoot in imperfect light conditions and how to develop his prints in the dark room with in a grainy black and white style. "What makes me deeply satisfied is catching that one fragile fleeting moment where the right light meets a striking composition and a certain beauty that derives from realness. I liked to stay during the whole interview and photograph until the subject was bored of me. That's the moment that he or she would stop acting or posing, those often became the best pictures..." said Gilbert. In those days there was room for things to just 'happen' and experimentation was taking place across genres and industries, it was indeed encouraged to come-up with new ways of doing things and Gilbert believed that the journalists and photographers who were most ahead were those working with "a lack of inhibition, an openness that wasn't limited by marketing concepts and sales pitches."

Rock music was real, the performance itself was a tuning-in to a deeply primal human energumen. And you feel that when you look at his photographs. He had access to musicians under conditions that would be inconceivable today, being allowed to work for the entire duration of the concert, not only the first three songs, as is the case today.

Impressively, his first ever shot was taken in 1963 of the one and only John Coltrane in a tuxedo holding his tenor sax, waiting to play. By the seventies Gilbert was the most wanted rock photographer in Holland, often commissioned by the Dutch leading music magazine *Oor*. Those were the days of music, soon after Woodstock, the rock and pop scene literally exploded.

***We were catapulted from one (music) world to another. You could say that it was Abba one day and Zappa the next. We saw The Eagles in London, Paul McCartney in south of France, Bob Dylan in New York and the Stones in Hamburg. We visited London every two months. It was the most natural thing in the world back then, and looking back now, it was a fantastic time.***

Gijsbert Hanekroot 2008 - in 'Abba...Zappa'

People would spend hours in record shops browsing vinyl to find their favourite records which in turn determined your lifestyle and fashion, even your politics and religion - music was **everything**. Attending concerts was an act of spirituality and Gilbert documented well-known figures as they transitioned from mere musicians to status of Gods, for example he recalls, "one of the more important shots I did is in 1973 of Neil Young with his band *The Crazy Horse* at the venue *The Rainbow Theatre* in London. It became the cover of his *Tonight is The Night*, released in 1975 which according to some is his best record to date."

***My ultimate favourite artist of all time was David Bowie. In 1971 I was in Air Studio, London, to shoot Roxy Music. During a break I went to the canteen where I bumped into David Bowie for the first time. He was by himself working on the lyrics of a song. He looked up and asked me my opinion about one particular line he was working on. I thought it was rather peculiar he asked a simple guy like me. I still regret not photographing him at that time but it was such a private moment and photographing him somehow seemed not appropriate. He was recording Ziggy Stardust, released a few months later. I did meet him five more times where I did get the chance to photograph him on and behind stage. He was something special, a true artist.***

Gijsbert Hanekroot 2008 - in 'Abba...Zappa'

Anton Corbijn, a well known fellow rock photographer started as an intern at Gilbert's studio. "I passed him my knowledge on how to photograph and dark room techniques. I'm happy to have somehow contributed to his career although it was obvious to me that he had the ambition and determination to succeed. After 15 years I decided to throw in the towel and concentrate on other adventures instead." Corbijn continued, took over at *Oor Magazine* and soon after moved to London where he broke through in the 80's and made it as an internationally-known photographer. Finally Gilbert is receiving the recognition he deserves as the first Dutch rock photographer, his work speaking for itself as it so clearly tells the story of his achievement.

Ten years ago Gilbert began to digitise his archives, this led to the publication of 'Abba..Zappa | Seventies Rock Photography' (Veenman, 2008) and consequent exhibitions in Paris, London, Moscow, Tokyo and Amsterdam. Today Gijsbert 'Gilbert' Hanekroot works mainly as a documentary and street photographer.

Sarah Greene, Director of Blue Lotus Gallery has always had a good eye for discovering or re-discovering talent that has slipped under the radar or is waiting to be found. Greene is responsible for Fan Ho's revival in Hong Kong through various exhibitions in collaboration with AO Vertical and Sothebys and has served as the backbone for emerging talent like Romain JL, Tugo Cheng, Marcel Heijnen and most currently Wing Shya. With this exhibition, FROM ABBA TO ZAPPA, Blue Lotus Gallery is breaking its mould by showing a non-Hong Kong themed project. Comment from Sarah Greene, Director of Blue Lotus Gallery: "Hong Kong will still be the most recurring theme in our program but sometimes its just fun to explore new territories. Our emotional attachment to music has no boundaries. Artist like David Bowie and Mick Jagger are admired and loved by young and old in Hong Kong and beyond. I was attracted to the rawness and realness of Gilbert's images. They reflect one of the most epic times in music history portrayed with honesty and realness. Discovering Hanekroot's work is like finding a little rare gem in a mountain of dust."

**ABOUT PAUL AU aka HONG KONG'S 'VINYL HERO'**

The FROM ABBA TO ZAPPA exhibition will feature a selection of vinyl for sale from Hong Kong self proclaimed 'Vinyl Hero' - Paul Au's collection normally found in his well known Sham Shui Po Shop 'Vinyl Hero' As a youth in Saigon's Chinatown of the 1960s and '70s, Paul Au was greatly affected by American "hippie" culture and Rock and Roll. He was smuggled into Hong Kong in 1974 to escape the South Vietnamese military draft. At first living in rooftop squats, he started to trade used vinyl records on the streets of Sham Shui Po, and finally established an underground reputation for his eclectic blend and unending supply of recorded music. "Paul's Records [the book about Paul Au by Andrew S. Guthrie] is a gift to Hong Kong and to anyone who wants to know more about the unique worlds that thrive in its crowded spaces." – Greg Girard, author of City of Darkness: Life In Kowloon Walled City

**ABOUT BLUE LOTUS GALLERY**

Blue Lotus Gallery, established in 2007, is a photography gallery with a strong focus on exploring Hong Kong culture and identity. The gallery offers an exquisite selection of books, limited edition and vintage prints on old and new Hong Kong by respected master photographers and emerging contemporary artists. Blue Lotus represents Fan Ho and his estate exclusively worldwide and is the sole agent worldwide of Wing Shya. The gallery has also been instrumental to debuting artist's careers such as KC Kwan, Romain Jacquet-Lagrèze and Tugo Cheng who the gallery represents exclusively. The gallery is located in a quaint historical pocket on 28 Pound Lane, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong.

Blue Lotus Gallery rocks and never ceases to surprise. Its certainly worthwhile checking out this throw back to the good old days in music while discovering their brand new gallery spot.

