



FRONT ROW CENTER

ICONS OF ROCK, BLUES AND SOUL

TRAVELING EXHIBITION SERVICE



INTERNATIONAL
ARTS AND ARTISTS





**“THAT FEELING YOU
GET, THE POWER
BETWEEN THE BAND
AND THE AUDIENCE,
THERE’S SOMETHING
THERE THAT’S
CAPTIVATING.”**

- Larry Hulst

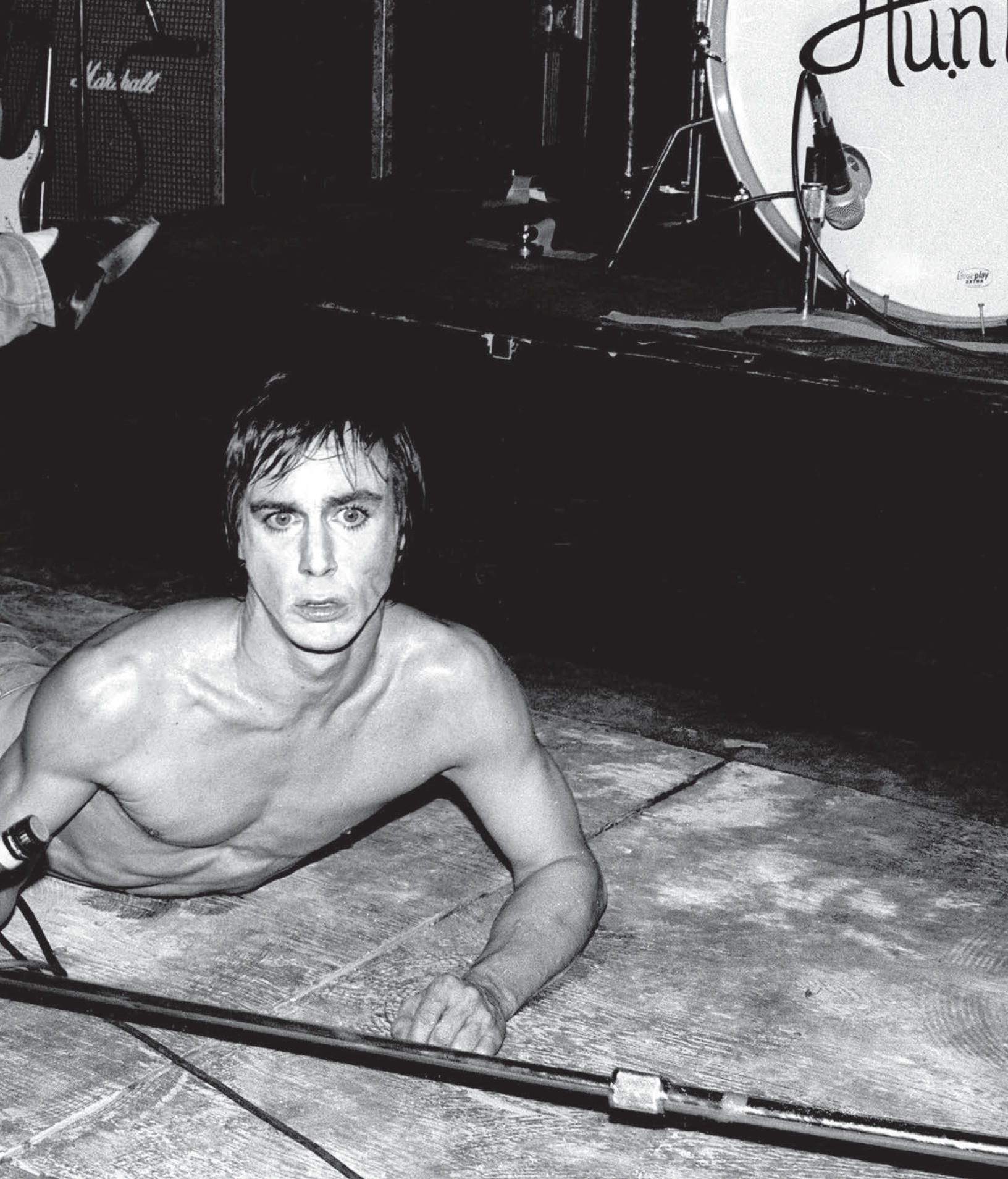
1. Larry Hulst, *Tom Petty and Bob Dylan at the Greek Theater*,
June 13, 1986, photograph, courtesy of the artist.

FRONT ROW CENTER

The iconic photographs of Larry Hulst capture the freewheeling energy of live music and the enduring visual spectacle of rock's greatest performers. From Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix to David Bowie and Lauryn Hill, *Front Row Center: Icons of Rock, Blues and Soul* brings together over 70 images of legendary musicians and singers across three genres and generations. The exhibition charts Hulst's extraordinary path through the pulsing heart of the most exciting live music of the last century, showcasing a unique visual anthology of rock, blues, and soul music from 1970–1999. These images, which have been featured on album art and *Rolling Stone* spreads, convey Hulst's lifelong passion for the magnetism, immediacy, and unpredictability of live music. With photos that also document the unforgettable voices of funk, punk, and beyond, *Front Row Center* grants viewers an all-access pass to some of the most memorable performances in popular music history.

2. Larry Hulst, *Iggy Pop at the Old Waldorf*, November 27, 1979, photograph, courtesy of the artist.





THE ART OF ROCK PHOTOGRAPHY

A longtime fan of popular music, Larry Hulst came into his own as a sought-after photographer of live concerts in the late 1960s, when rock photography first emerged as a serious creative pursuit. A decade earlier, Roy DeCarava's intimate, unmediated portraits of jazz artists had set an inspiring benchmark for live music photography; in the years since, however, the genre had been dominated by lifeless publicity stills that utterly lacked the evocative flair or spontaneity that might have conveyed the unique energy of the new music. But with the founding of *Rolling Stone*

magazine in October 1967, a new frontier opened for the eventual legitimization of rock and roll photography. Staff photographers such as Annie Leibovitz and Baron Wolman brought an electrifying vigor and grace to their portraits of rock performers and other personalities, which helped define these new figures in the public imagination. At the same time, Jim Marshall, whom Hulst cites as a central influence, helped immortalize the San Francisco music scene with his arresting portraits of rock's up-and-coming groups, such as Jefferson Airplane and The Jimi Hendrix Experience.

PSYCHEDELIC ROCK

The 1960s are now seen as a watershed moment in the evolution and ascendancy of rock and roll—and the Bay Area, to which Hulst returned in 1969 following his service in the Navy, is legendary in the annals of that tumultuous decade as the epicenter of the countercultural revolution. (It is no coincidence that *Rolling Stone* was founded in San Francisco.) While the region had long been home to a vibrant music scene, the late 1960s saw a remarkable explosion of musical experimentation that drew imaginatively on various aspects of the counterculture. Eschewing the standard three-minute track, psychedelic rock bands—whose raga-like songs and lightshows sought to simulate the mind-altering effects of hallucinogens and other recreational drugs—played extended sets with state-of-the-art sound systems, elevating their concerts to uniquely elaborate (and frequently unstructured) multisensory experiences.

No individual embodied the virtuosic and expansive qualities of psychedelic rock more than **Jimi Hendrix**. As *Rolling Stone* senior editor David Fricke wrote, “Hendrix accelerated rock’s already dynamic rate of change in the late Sixties with his revolutionary synthesis of guitar violence [and] improvisational nerve.” Hendrix’s band, The Jimi Hendrix Experience, made its American debut at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967, where Hendrix famously lit his guitar on fire, as if in ritual sacrifice. Three years later, Hulst shot Hendrix outdoors at the Cal Expo State Fairgrounds in Sacramento; in this photo, Hendrix sports his signature flamboyant clothing, including a ruffled blouse, embroidered vest, and decorated bandana. Although suffering from severe glandular problems at the time, Hendrix appears engrossed in his performance, hollering freely along to the propulsive rhythms of his guitar. This would be Hendrix’s last show in the Bay Area, as his 1970 international tour was cut tragically short by his untimely death later that year.

3. Larry Hulst, *Jimi Hendrix at the Golden Bear Raceway, Cal Expo*, April 26, 1970, photograph, courtesy of the artist.



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4. Larry Hulst, *Janis Joplin at the Fillmore West*, 1970, photograph, courtesy of the artist.
 5. Larry Hulst, *Talking Heads at the University of California Coffeehouse*, December 2, 1977, photograph, courtesy of the artist.



THE SAN FRANCISCO SCENE

The rock scene in San Francisco arguably would not have flourished quite as it did without the guiding presence of Bill Graham, a San Francisco band and venue promoter. A gifted and prescient tastemaker, Graham took quick advantage of the seismic shift in musical trends and styles to stage elaborate concerts that drew large crowds and sold out fast. (Hulst recalls a riot outside Graham's Winterland Ballroom when tickets ran out for a 10 Years After concert.) Graham quickly came to dominate the live music scene in San Francisco, hosting Hendrix many times, along with local groups such as The Grateful Dead and

Santana. Many of Hulst's images were shot at Bill Graham productions, including his searing portrait of **Janis Joplin** at Graham's Fillmore West venue. Joplin's impish allure and raucous performance style are on full display: eyes closed, her long hair flowing weightlessly behind her, she grips the microphone close to her mouth as if in an ecstatic trance, utterly absorbed in the act of singing. Like Hendrix, Joplin died in 1970 at the age of 27—Hulst snapped his memorable photo of this one-of-a-kind talent at one of her last performances in her adopted home of San Francisco.



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NEW WAVE

A seasoned veteran of San Francisco's most popular music venues, Hulst also frequented smaller locales in the Bay Area known for more avant-garde, genre-bending acts. During the 1970s and '80s, the University of California, Davis, epitomized these small but adventurous venues, luring an extraordinary who's-who of new wave and punk bands to its unassuming campus coffeehouse. This is where Hulst photographed **Talking Heads** in action, only two months after their acclaimed first studio album, *Talking Heads: 77*, was

unleashed, but before David Byrne began wearing his iconic oversized suits—perhaps as a result, the eccentric frontman appears uncharacteristically dressed down, in a black t-shirt and jeans. Despite their casual clothes and the room's decidedly spartan decor, the band's vitality positively radiates off the image, conveying the irrepressible energy that defined their live performances. Hulst recalls that he stayed for *both* their shows that night (for two dollars), despite being completely unfamiliar with their signature sound—a style "he learned to love."



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THE BLUES

Hulst's passion for seeking out new or little-seen bands, as well as those that defined popular genres, informs an astonishingly diverse catalogue of subjects, images, and musical styles. His fascination with the blues, for instance, has yielded some of his most evocative images, from out-of-the-way blues shows and festivals to such masters of the genre as **Freddie King**, **Stevie Ray Vaughan**, **Muddy Waters**, **Bo Diddley**, and **John Lee Hooker** (whom Hulst met after a show).

Hulst also photographed **B.B. King** several times, as King continued to perform up to 300 nights a year late into his long, illustrious career. Known as "the King of Blues," King brought the genre to world prominence and is revered as one of the most influential guitarists of any genre, numbering among his many admirers Carlos Santana, Eric Clapton, U2, and Lenny Kravitz. In a photo from 1988, Hulst immortalizes a mid-concert moment of reflection by the blues legend; fingertips pressed to his forehead, his signature ebony Gibson guitar ("Lucille") hanging at his side, King seems to turn inward, summoning inspiration before he carries on.

FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC

Hulst's love of music has buoyed him through more than five decades of the (often demanding) rigors of shooting concerts from the audience. One of the more recent images in the exhibition shows **Lauryn Hill** during her *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* tour. Recorded after Hill's departure from the Fugees, the album garnered glowing notices for its deft blending of musical genres and for Hill's lyrical prowess. As she asserted in a 1999 *Rolling Stone* interview, "[I wanted to] write songs that had the integrity of reggae and the knock of hip-hop and the instrumentation of classic soul." The album debuted at number one on the Billboard 200 chart and earned Hill five Grammy Awards. During the album tour, Hill improvised extensively, challenging the audience to embrace her musical virtuosity beyond the recorded track, much like the great rock and soul artists of the 1960s and '70s. Hulst's image, taken in Denver, highlights this connection, as well as the emotional depth and vulnerability of Hill's expressive delivery—a quality that continues to resonate with listeners to this day.

Larry Hulst has always said that his passion for music predated any thought of professional aspiration. The images he has shot and printed for over fifty years are a tribute to this love, and have served as his most meaningful souvenirs: singular memories for him to share with his fellow fans. Perhaps as a result of this volcanic love—and of his intimate knowledge of the raw energy of the live concert—Hulst's best photographs are still, decades later, enormously expressive and dynamic, putting to shame the mass-produced souvenirs sold at arenas. By shooting thousands of concerts for over five decades, Hulst has chronicled a defining chapter of our cultural history, a silent but electrifying evocation of musical eras and personalities whose like we may never see again. *Front Row Center* draws viewers into his incomparable musical odyssey with vivid photographs that, in Hulst's own words, "capture the truth, joy, and energy contained within a moment."

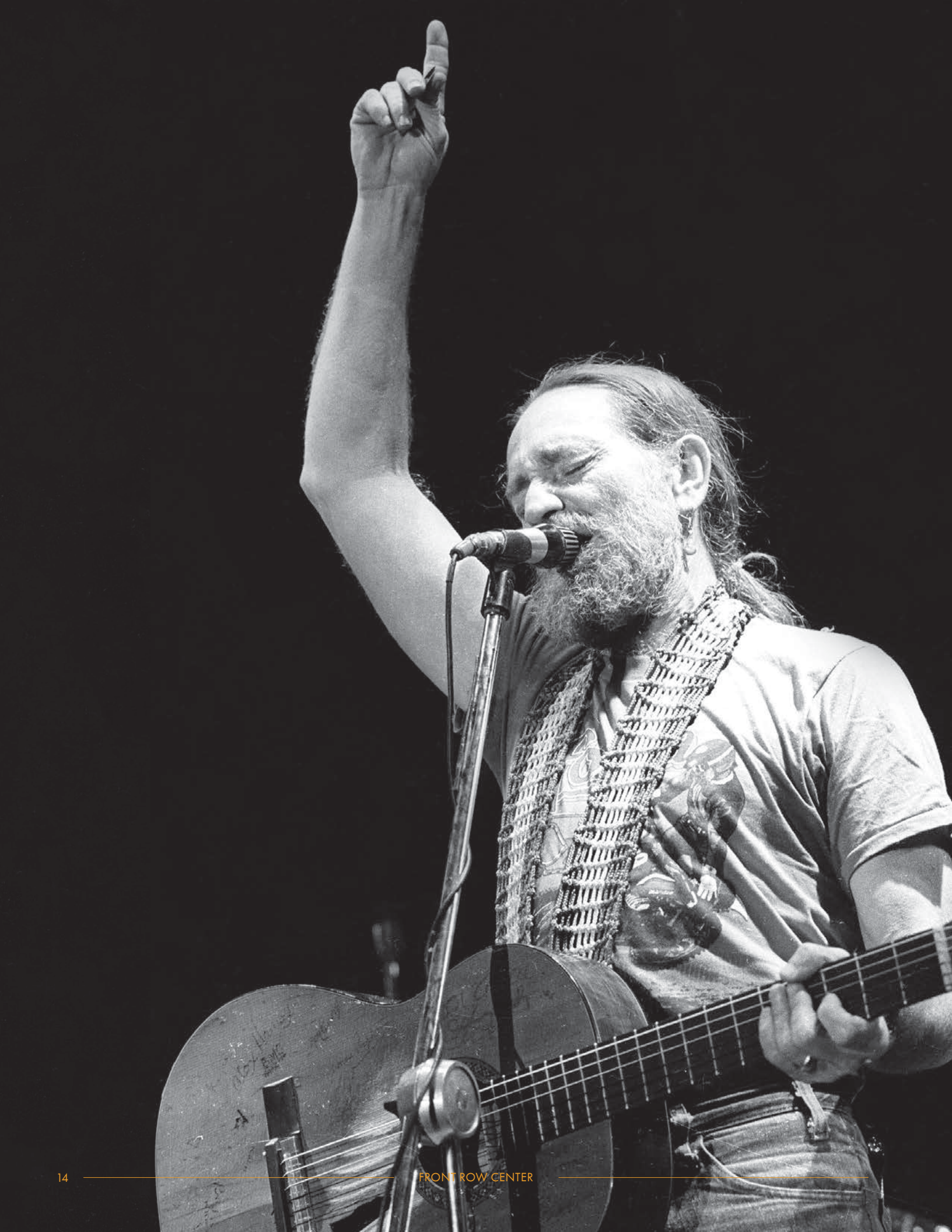
6. Larry Hulst, *B. B. King at the Red Lion Inn*, June 5, 1988, photograph, courtesy of the artist.

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7. Larry Hulst, *Lauryn Hill at the Mammoth Event Center*, February 27, 1999, photograph, courtesy of the artist.



LARRY HULST

Born in 1946 in San Diego, California, Larry Hulst is a longtime participant and chronicler of the concert scene. His collection of nearly three thousand black-and-white negatives has helped immortalize the live acts of influential musicians over five momentous decades of rock history.

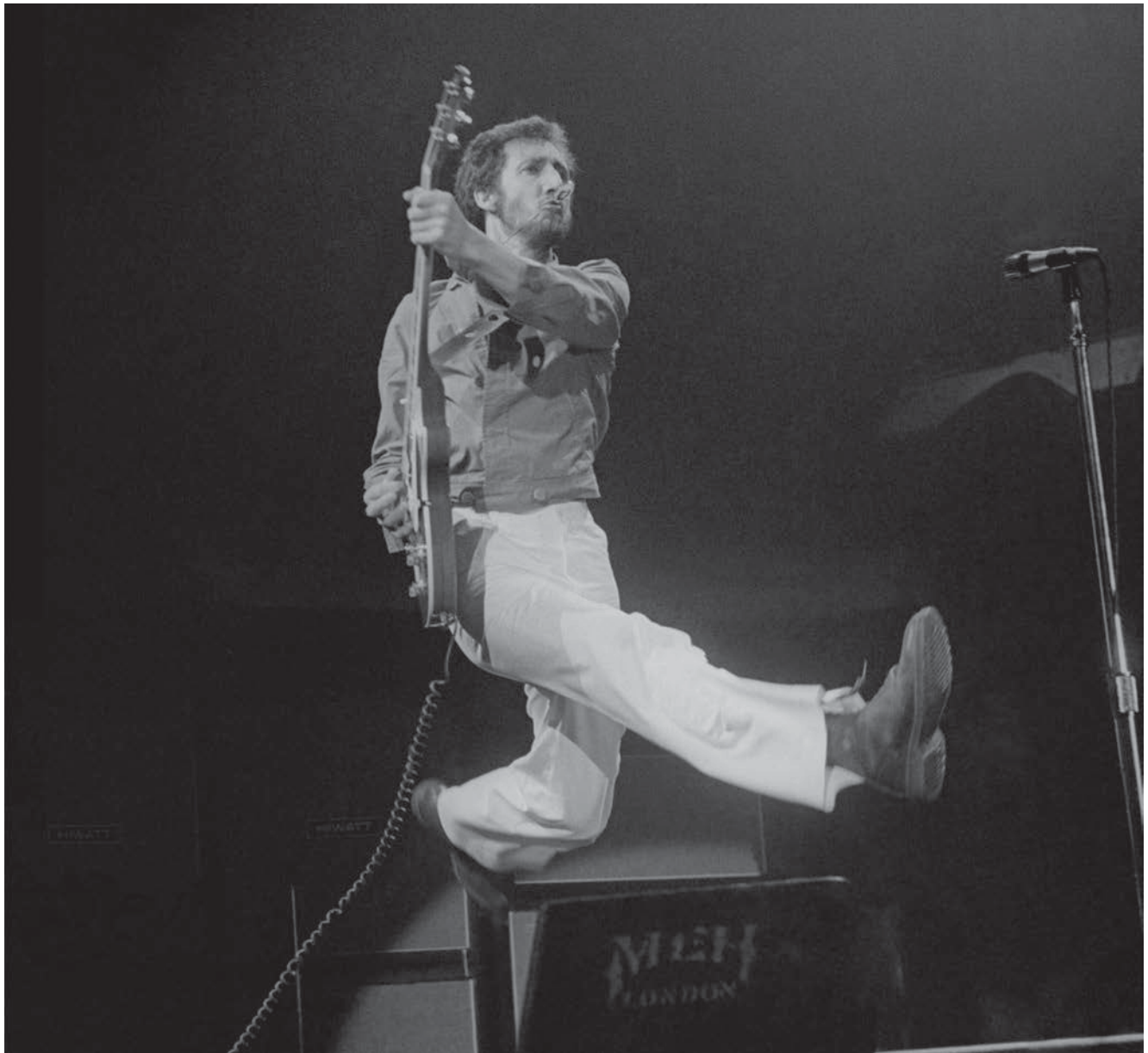
His photography career began in 1969, when the former Navy corpsman returned home to Sacramento after a tour of duty in Vietnam.

Citing Jim Marshall, Ansel Adams, and Lynn Goldsmith among his influences, Hulst is fueled both by his respect for his musical heroes and by his dedication to perfecting his photographic eye. The hallmark of Hulst's work is his authentic ability to evoke the raw energy and emotion of the concert experience. The only prop he has ever needed was the stage. "I never wanted to go backstage," Hulst states. "I want to be where the action is. After all, the 'show' is projected out onto the audience. I want to be in the audience."

While building his anthology of iconic rock imagery, Hulst honed his craft as a US government photographer. For twenty-seven years, Hulst's lens caught military activities by day, and rock stars by night. His work covered the gamut of Defense Department activities at two Air Force bases, as well as the US Air Force Academy. He retired from his civil service job in 2010, settling in Colorado Springs, Colorado, with his wife of more than forty years, Laura.

Hulst's first concert photos chronicled an energetic show by The Who in 1967, at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. Since then, his concert photography has graced the pages of *Guitar Player*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Time* magazines, as well as several biographies and numerous books. His photos have been selected for album art for Led Zeppelin, Eric Clapton, and Bruce Springsteen, and one of his images of Jimi Hendrix was used to adorn the terminal walls of Los Angeles International Airport. His professional network includes working relationships with Getty Images and Rock Paper Photo. Larry Hulst remains a mainstay at concerts and live music events.

8. Larry Hulst, *Willie Nelson at the Oakland Coliseum*, July 14, 1979, photograph, courtesy of the artist.



FRONT Larry Hulst, *Janis Joplin at the Fillmore West, 1970*, photograph, courtesy of the artist.

BACK Larry Hulst, *Pete Townshend with The Who at Winterland Ballroom, March 27, 1976*, photograph, courtesy of the artist.

EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

Number of Works

Over 70 photographs

Requirements

Limited security; 300-400 linear feet

Participation Fee

Please inquire

Shipping

IA&A makes all arrangements; exhibitors pay outgoing shipping costs within the contiguous US

Booking Period

12 weeks

Tour

January 2021 – January 2024

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