

Rock & roll royalties

A FREELANCE photographer and NUJ member with “a bit of an entrepreneurial streak... entrepreneurial in a punk ‘start a fanzine’ sort of way,” Jill Furmanovsky is “inundated with work now in my mid-sixties.” Jill, who spoke at September’s LFB meeting founded agency www.rockarchive.com, 20 years old next year.

Back “when there was a music press” Jill worked for *Sounds*, *NME* and *Melody Maker*. She and her colleagues were influenced by the Magnum photo agency and by Don McCullin, who “taught me photojournalism when I was at Central [School of Art]”. Jill and her colleagues “couldn’t do wars – we don’t have the temperament for it. We went onto the frontline of rock and roll instead... In those days we were the worst paid photographers... we didn’t even get a fee”. They were paid by the square inch for each published photo.

Jill, with “only a two-week training course” behind her, was “up against freelance photographers trained on local papers”. She “worked with bands like Pink Floyd in the 1970s; this young band called The Police; this crazy woman called Chrissie Hynde who became The Pretenders; and in the 1990s these hooligans



Jill Furmanovsky – Photo: Hazel Dunlop

called Oasis.” Initially fuelled by “just the enthusiasm, the passion and the willingness, and enough to pay your expenses,” Jill was pleasantly surprised to “wake up one day and find that you’re well paid and things have actually worked out.”

Badly paid they may have been to start with, but many rock photographers of the 1970s and 1980s kept their copyright. Now “I make my money from royalties,” says Jill, “I get wine and dined by the Victoria and Albert museum” for their “exhibitions like the Pink Floyd one” there – that’s “bigger than the Bowie one”.

About 50 photographers contribute to Rockarchive. “All we do is licence a few rock images – only

rock images” by the great rock photographers. Rockarchive’s products include sales of limited-edition art prints from the rock and roll years, with a range of prices from £150 to £2200 and more.

What about photographing today’s music acts? Jill says “no one wants to buy a picture of them, not for over £100. We do our best to encourage new stuff to come in, but we can’t sell it”.

She hopes Rockarchive will “last long enough” to absorb whatever “spark of creativity” will allow it to “monetise grime.” Meanwhile, she advises “having faith that the passion and integrity will come right.”

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Copywriting – how’s that work, then?

SPEAKING at September’s LFB meeting, copywriter Jackie Berry opened with, “Hands up if you think it’s harder to get money as a journalist... hands up if you think journalism and your skills are under-rated.” Jackie was appearing along with freelance photographer Jill Furmanovsky, founder of www.rockarchive.com – see above.

Jackie runs a course on copywriting for freelance journalists. She reported one of its participants as saying that it should be called “How to make money as a journalist and not get treated like shit.” Skills “that journalists can naturally transfer” into copywriting include writing slogans (or headlines as we journalists call them) and “writing to a deadline, to a budget, to a brief,” but copywriters are paid and treated better, ac-

cording to Jackie. Giving us a taste of her journalism.co.uk copywriting course, Jackie explained some of the steps in the “standard copywriting formula”. Your copy needs to attract, probably in order, Attention, Interest, Desire, Conviction and Action.

Her talk started with a “commercial break” for some people Jackie works with, LoveHeyMic, who sell Bluetooth mikes that clip with a magnet on to your clothing. This allowed Jackie to do the commentary for a short promotional video for the product while being filmed using two smartphones from the other end of the room “with no wires”.

This in turn allowed Jackie to demonstrate the standard copywriting formula with a practical example:

First comes getting **Attention** (using “pattern disruptors” – sud-

denly someone comes out of the audience with a phone on a tripod and starts filming her) then

Interest (getting people’s interest: “It’s a Bluetooth mike – what’s a Bluetooth mike...?”); then

Desire – persuading people why they need it;

Conviction (adding credibility to the marketing claims – “a new product developed by professional speakers”); and finally

Action – in this case getting people to take a photo of the web address for LoveHeyMic’s, so they can find out more.

Jackie asked journalists at the meeting to form pairs to write a headline in five minutes – to promote “The Big One”, a massive chisel-tipped felt pen imported from

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LFB meetings:

13 November

What’s happening to women’s magazines?

11 December

Seasonal social –
NOTE this is in our
new venue

See back page &
@NUJ_LFB