**HERMAN LEONARD**

(1923, Allentown – 2010, Los Angeles)

He was born in March 6 in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Thanks to his brother Ira, Herman Leonard was introduced to photography and he started to take amateur photos. In 1942 he was forced to interrupt his studies at the university because of the war. He obtained his diploma in Photography at the Ohio University in 1947. Herman Leonard met the photographer Yousuf Karsh and he became his assistant. It was an unforgettable experience: his models was Einstein, Eisenhower, Truman, Hollywood stars. Karsh taught him how to communicate with his subjects and translate their character and personality into images. From him he also learnt the great importance of print quality.

In 1948 he came back in New York and he opened a studio of his own in Greenwich Village. He chose Charles Stewart, later to become a famous jazz photographer, as his assistant. He became Marlon Brando’s personal photographer while travelling in the east. After the contract is up, he stayed in India, fascinated by the orient. Also in ’56, in Paris he met Nicole Barclay, who wants him to be the official photographer for her record company.

Starting in 1960, he worked for fashion and current affairs magazines on jobs all over the world. He was Playboy’s European photographer for several years. In 1985 he published

the book “The eye of jazz”. In 1988 he exhibited his works in London for the first time. Since then he has had more than 85 exhibitions the world over. In 1995 Herman Leonard published the book “Jazz memories”, a personal diary of the start of his career, the ideal continuation of his first book of photographs. From 1997 until his death, he lived in New Orleans and worked on an important project for an archive about musicians and the history of music at the “Smithsonian Institute” in Washington. He died in Los Angeles in August 14, 2010