

Hervé Gloaguen

Hervé Gloaguen was born in 1937 in Rennes (Ille-et-Vilaine). A Breton childhood, a Catholic upbringing, a mediocre school career: he struggles with the constraints of a conservative education. As a teenager, the discovery of jazz gives him the breath of freedom he needs.

In 1958, he enrolls at the École technique de photographie et de cinématographie (ETPC), the forerunner of the École Louis-Lumière, where he learns photography. He hangs out with amateur jazz musicians and debutant actors, with whom he takes his first photographs. In 1960 he is assigned for two years to the photography laboratory of the Armed Forces Film Service (SCA) at Fort d'Ivry (Val-de-Marne), where he meets Christian Hirou, a future renowned television cameraman, who introduces him to reportage.

Returning to civilian life in 1962, he is recommended by director Chris Marker (1921-2012) to the influential post-war illustrated magazine "Réalités". Photographer Gilles Ehrmann (1928-2005) hires him as an assistant, and he approaches the world of professional photojournalism. Gilles Ehrmann is also a master of aesthetics and philosophy: for a while, as a keen student, Hervé Gloaguen listens, observes, and photographs, and in 1964 he obtains his first press pass.

He is sent by "Réalités" to England, Ireland, and the United States. In New York, he photographs the artistic and anti-establishment avant-garde: John Cage (1912-1992), Merce Cunningham (1919-2009), and Andy Warhol (1928-1987). Back in Paris, he conceives the idea of an exploration of contemporary art: together with Anne Tronche (1938-2015), a young and experienced critic, he undertakes a series on the artistic movements of the 1960s and 1970s, that results in the book *L'Art actuel en France* and in an exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 1973.

In 1972, Gloaguen is a co-founder of Viva agency with Claude Dityvon, Martine Franck, François Hers, Richard Kalvar, Jean Lattes, and Guy Le Querrec. These tough photographers aim to have better control over their work, to address issues in depth, and, in short, to be free. In this stimulating environment, Gloaguen participates in the collective project "Families in France" and realises many reportages, often working in colour, unlike most of his colleagues: the miners' strike in England (1972), the situation in Poland (1973), the Carnation revolution in Portugal (1974), the fall of Saigon in Vietnam (1975), the elections in Italy (1976), the first free elections in Spain (1977). During the "Viva years", in 1975, he also embarks on the photographic essay *Rome by Night*, in colour and without flash, developed until 1995.

In 1982, Viva shuts down; Hervé Gloaguen joins the Rapho agency, and devotes himself to more focused reportages. In 1987, working as a reporter for UNICEF in Nigeria, he is struck by a small community of nomadic women saved from the terrible drought of 1984 thanks to local and

international aids. These women, born into a pastoral world, have learned to sew and to grow vegetables as means of living. Their story is tragic, but their extraordinary beauty inspires the portrait series *Honey and Bronze, Nomadic Women in Niger* presented at the Rencontres d'Arles in July 1989 and later at the Crédit Foncier de France. From 1990, he is permitted as a photographer on the Air Solidarité raid, which raises funds and materials for village associations in Burkina Faso. In this context he produces over thirty reportages in Africa, with the aim of engraving in his images and in conscience the continent's beauty and hardship. Hervé Gloaguen also dedicates himself to the issue of refugees: in 1986, he produces a complete series for the association "France terre d'asile", and afterwards the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees commissions him reportages on the five continents.