



## Photographer focuses on the life surrounding the story

BY ELIZABETH HANLY

Special to The Herald

David Hume Kennerly's awards are too numerous to list.

A Pulitzer Prize winner, a former White House photographer and the first photographer to become a con-

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'Cliffhanger,' from David Hume Kennerly's 'Photo du Jour' book, shows the Bushes and the Cheneys awaiting election results.

tributing editor at Newsweek, Kennerly has seen his work grace more than 35 covers of Time and Newsweek.

Now comes another achievement of note: Kennerly has been chosen to headline the Palm Beach Photographic Centre's annual FOTOfusion event Tuesday through Saturday at sites around downtown Delray Beach. FOTOfusion brings together professional journalists, fine art photographers, digital artists, technology providers, photographic agencies and the pic-

ture editors of some of the country's most prestigious magazines for a five-day series of seminars, workshops and master classes.

Kennerly will speak as part of the master lecture series at 1 p.m. Wednesday, then lead a seminar Friday and a panel discussion Saturday. In addition, selections from Kennerly's upcoming book, *Photo du Jour*, will be featured through Feb. 23 at the Photographic Centre's gallery.

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# Photographer's work brings life to stories

PHOTOS FROM 3M

In 2000, along with his regular gig covering the presidential campaigns, Kennerly decided to take on the turn of the century by finding at least one photograph every day which chronicled that in some way.

He came back with what Howard Fineman, Newsweek's chief political correspondent, describes as "shots of a country tangled up in its own contradictions, as full of possibility and energy as ever, yet somber and distracted, as if waiting for some momentous moment. And now that that moment has come, thanks to Kennerly, we have a vivid benchmark against which to compare what we were with what we became."

Typically, Kennerly talks of his work in much more understated terms.

"I like what I've done," he says, making special note of the humor in some of the shots. "I've spent a lot of my life having to focus exclusively on the story at hand. In *Photo du Jour*, I was able to include more of the texture of life around it."

The work is vintage Kennerly. Here, as in his magazine covers, the shots are lyrical, intimate, surprisingly cinematic and much closer to poetry than what we may be accustomed to calling journalism. Selections from *Photo du Jour* will travel to Washington's Smithsonian Institute in October and all 550 photos in the collection will be published by the University of Texas Press.

## VIETNAM INFLUENCE

As with so many of his generation, Kennerly, 54, was lured into photojournalism by the drama of the images he saw coming out of Vietnam. He eventually went to Vietnam himself, winning a Pulitzer for feature photography in 1972 at

## IF YOU GO

FOTOfusion 2002, an international festival of photography and visual imaging, opens Wednesday and runs through Saturday at several locations in downtown Delray Beach. The five-day event, organized by the Palm Beach Photographic Centre, gathers internationally known photojournalists, fine arts photographers, digital artists and others for a series of seminars, workshops and other events. Information: 561-276-9797 or [www.fotofusion.org](http://www.fotofusion.org).

age 25.

Kennerly covered the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, the anti-war demonstrations, Watergate and Nixon's resignation, the last POWs at the Hanoi Hilton and Henry Kissinger's tumultuous time as Secretary of State.

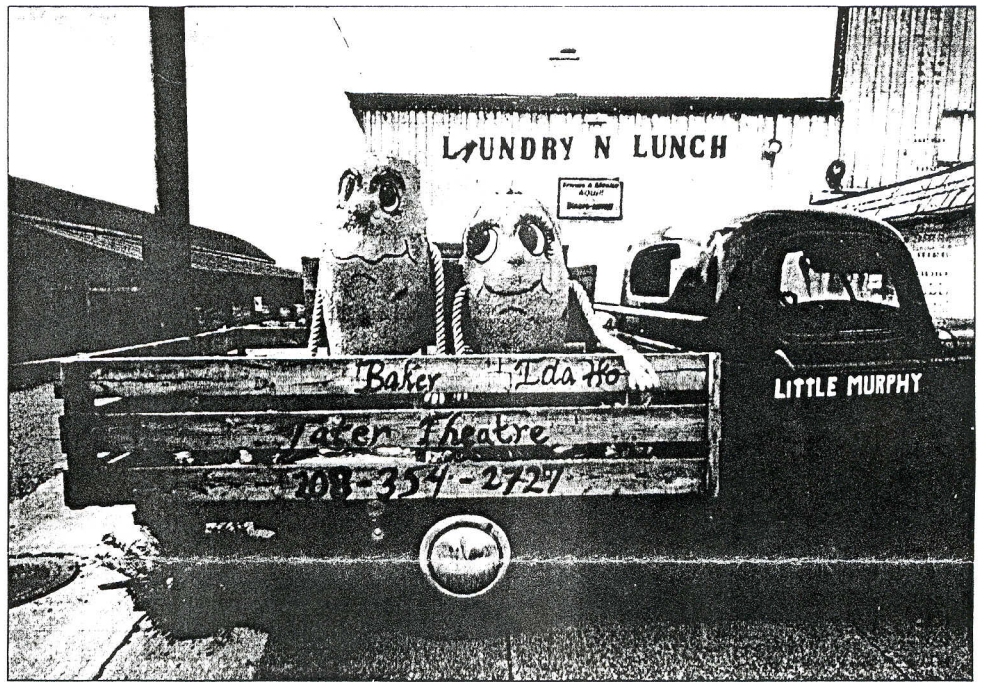
Kennerly on a shoot has been described by colleagues as being like a panther with a martini: convivial and deadly.

"I have seen him waiting like a big cat in a tree for the right moment, the right shot," Fineman says. "He waits and waits... and waits."

There are a number of people, Newsweek editor Maynard Parker included, who say that they can tell a Kennerly photo anywhere.

"People say that I have a distinctive style," Kennerly says. "I don't know. I've been doing what I do for so long, covering so many big occasions and important historical events, that maybe I'm just emerging as the Zelig of my group."

Kennerly was the official



PHOTOS BY DAVID HUME KENNERLY

A truck with potato characters, above, and a scene from the Republican National Convention, below, are from the book that details David Hume Kennerly's trail of covering the 2000 presidential campaign.

White House photographer during the Ford administration, then left to photograph Anwar Sadat's trip to Israel, the Reagan-Gorbachev detente, North Korea and Jonestown.

"I love history," Kennerly says. "And I love showing people things they wouldn't normally see. I think that's part of the attraction of the job for me. To show them places they are never going to go, at least not with any luck."

"Whether it's behind the scenes in the Oval Office or somewhere in the jungles of Vietnam, I think people have the right to know these things."

Which is not to say has let his work — or his awards — go to his head.

"I take what I do seriously, but I don't take myself all that



seriously," he says. "Actually, I like to compare myself to political cartoonists, the guys who look at the world and sort of let the air out of it. I think a bit of an arched eyebrow should be part of the job description for photojournalists. Invisibility, too."

That's not always so easy.

## STAYING INVISIBLE

"When I was in the White House with President Ford, I was there working with him all the time and when senators and visiting dignitaries would come into the room, Ford was such a nice guy that he'd always introduce me," the photographer says. "I had to train him not to do that early on."

"Actually, invisibility is one thing I'm good at. I think it's an

intuitive thing, having a feeling for what's going on in the room and how to stay out of the vibe. What I had to do is get pictures without any feeling of my presence in them."

And when you've photographed just about every important political figure of the past 35 years, it's hard to settle on the one subject that proved most intimidating.

Just the question causes Kennerly to pause and mentally review the list of subjects.

"Actually that might have been Michael Richards from *Seinfeld*," he says finally. "I got to do this thing covering the last *Seinfeld* episode. I loved Kramer. I think everybody loved Kramer. But I discovered Michael Richards isn't like Kramer at all. He's actually a

very shy, very professional actor.

"And yes, he was perhaps the most intimidating because he worked with such intensity, preparing every single gesture. I wanted to capture all that feeling."

A few years back, Kennerly took leave from photojournalism to study directing at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles, where he produced several films for NBC, including the Emmy-nominated *The Taking of Flight 847*.

"I'm glad I did that," Kennerly says. "If for no other reason than to underscore the fact that my day job is really the one I love."

Elizabeth Hanly is a freelance writer based in South Florida.