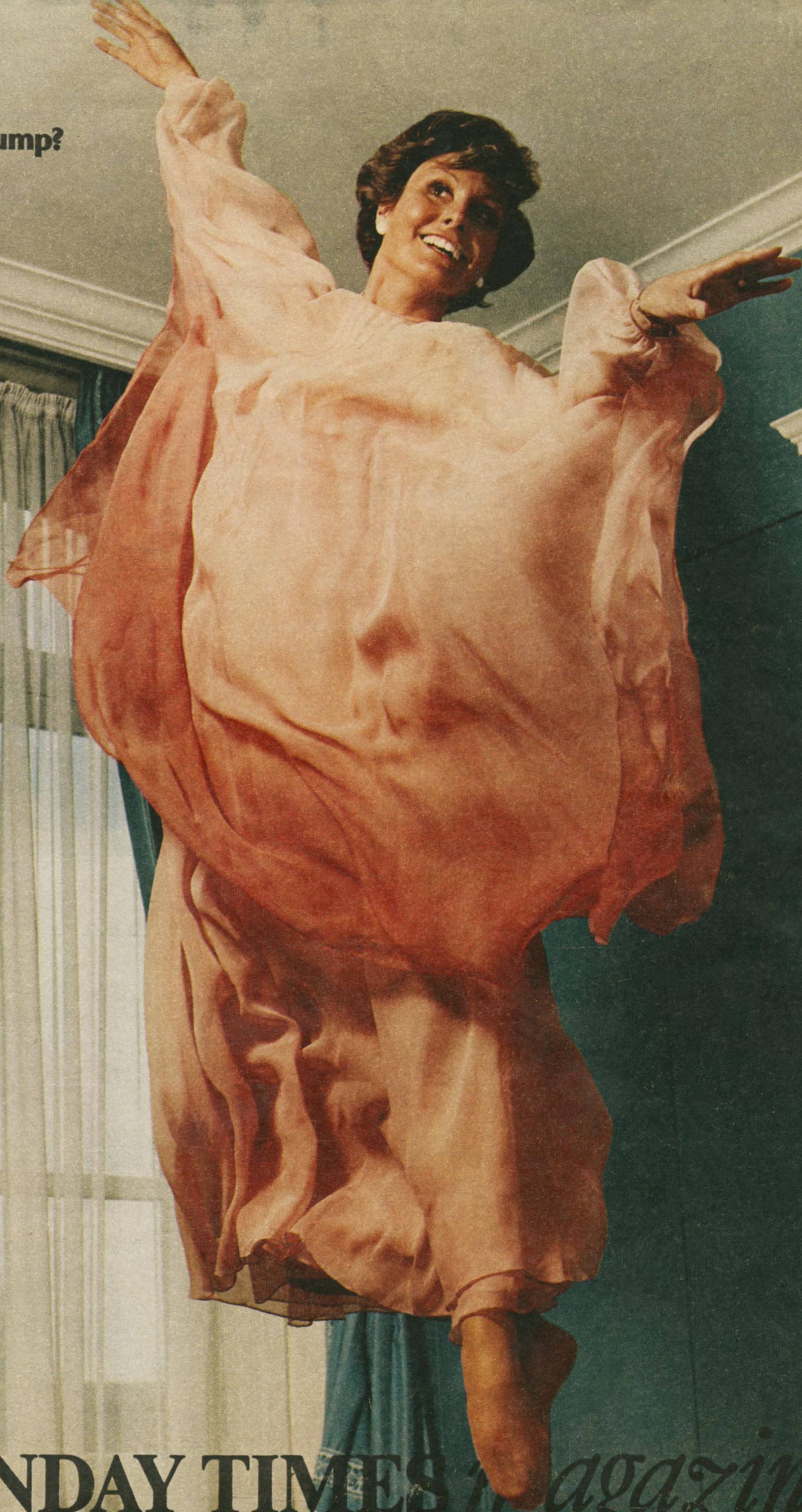


Q: Who made Angela jump?

A: Bern Schwartz

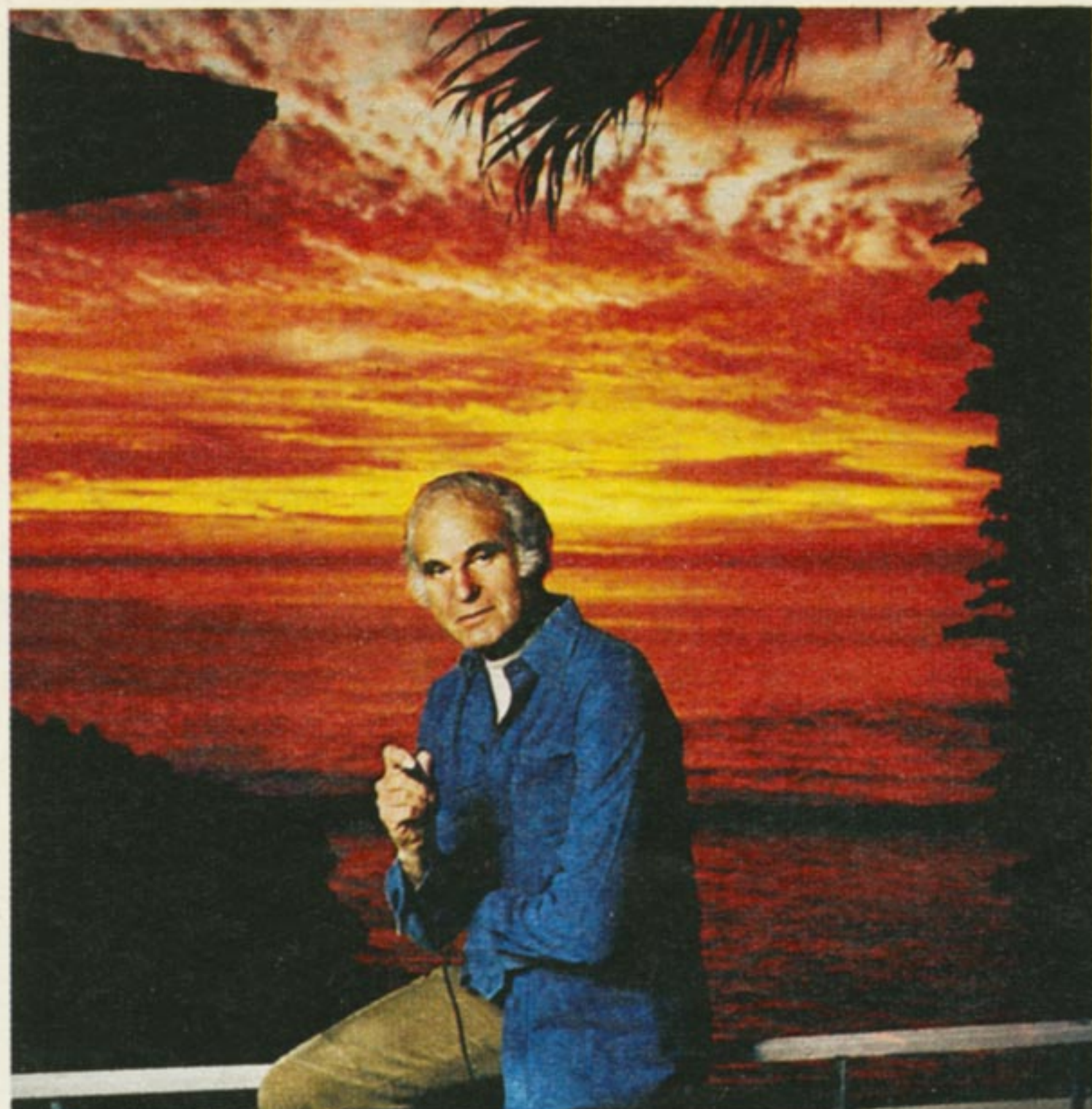
Q: Who..?

see page 90



THE SUNDAY TIMES *magazine*

OCTOBER 3, 1977



Flattery will get you faces

Bern Schwartz (above, self-portrait), an American businessman in his sixties, has come into photography late in life, yet he has persuaded almost every famous British personality to sit for him. On page 94 *Ian Jack* meets the man who believes in making his subjects look their colourful best



90 Margaret Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition



David Hockney, painter, with one of his canvases





Jack Jones, trade union leader



92 Zandra Rhodes, designer



Lester Piggott, jockey



Lady Diana Cooper, socialite and beauty



Mr Gordon Richardson, governor of the Bank of England

Bern Schwartz flew into London from California this year, hired an expensive suite at the Berkeley Hotel for four months, and then started to hunt famous people with his camera. He did not catch them unawares on pavements, however, or view them through country thickets with a telephoto lens; Mr Schwartz is too polite for that kind of thing. Instead he sent them samples of his previous portraits of other famous people and asked them, graciously, if they would like to pose for him.

Most agreed. Mr Schwartz charges no fees and, well, his pictures do make the best of one. On Tuesday the fruits of his labour here are revealed at an exhibition in Colnaghi's gallery, London. Nearly 100 portraits depict the leaders of

Britain's social, political and cultural establishment in colours which can only be described as glowing. Prince Charles, Jim Callaghan and David Hockney will be on the walls and looking good, in the company of Dame Margot Fonteyn, Tony Benn, John Curry, Lords Clark, Hailsham and Butler, Sir Alfred Ayer, Jack Jones, Sir Osbert Lancaster. In fact Mr Schwartz seems to have photographed everyone with a claim to be anyone – good going for an American visitor to English society, who started the business of serious photography only five years ago.

Mr Schwartz wears pressed grey flannels, brushed grey hair, black shoes and black blazer. He is 63. And he is dedicated to Beauty. "Why make people look ugly? I like a picture which pleases me and

pleases my sitter. I don't feel I'm being dishonest, I just wouldn't want to take an ugly picture."

Every face has its good points, he says. "Take Lord Goodman. What interested me was the intelligence, the sensitivity of the eyes and not the man's bulk." Thus it is that Mr Schwartz's picture of Lord Goodman contrives to show him as a man without chins – they have disappeared in the shadow of the jowl because Lord Goodman's face has been lit from above.

Mr Schwartz bought his first camera, a Kodak folding job for 12 dollars, when he was a boy in Pennsylvania. But it was only in his late fifties, after he had made a lot of money from his chain of music stores and other business interests, that he began to take photography seriously.

Not that Mr Schwartz now despises the world of business. Business taught him his most valuable lesson: "the need to relate." Relating plays a big part in his photographic technique.

"Before I meet my subject I prepare to relate. I read up about them, I find out about their careers, their hobbies, their interests." Then he goes along, meets his subject and arranges the lighting (carefully). Then he sets up his Hasselblad on a tripod and starts taking pictures. But Mr Schwartz is not behind the camera, he is avidly relating to his subject some distance away and pressing the shutter button via a long cable.

He related so well to newscaster Angela Rippon that she was soon jumping up and down to demonstrate her passion for ballet, proving, perhaps, that the BBC's gain was Covent Garden's loss (see cover).

"Is there anyone I have ever failed to relate to? Truthfully, I can say No."

What, not one of his subjects he felt even a faint dislike for? "Look," he said, in his soft but sincere tone, "salesmanship was a major part of my business career. I started selling in the Depression. I've never allowed myself *the luxury* of disliking people."●



Lord Goodman, former chairman, Arts Council