



W South Beach
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Industry Insiders: Danny Clinch, Rock Star Photog

By Anam Mansuri

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Danny Clinch's images of rock stars, his travels, his life, and everyday events will adorn the walls of the new **W South Beach** opening in May 2009. An excitable Clinch talks about these new opportunities, his style of work, and the photos he's about to unveil at the new W.

What's your job description?

I photograph musicians for the most part. That's how I make my living, and I do some advertising work. I did the John Varvatos campaigns, which I'm really proud of. I also do a lot of album covers and album packaging and publicity. It's a great gig—I can be as creative as I want because there aren't really any rules working with musicians. I like to photograph on location or go to a situation or atmosphere and photograph. I make concert films and documentaries and a couple of music videos here and there.

What are you working on now?

John Varvatos' wife has always been a curator of art, and we were talking about this project that she was working on at the W. She wanted to see more of my personal work, like images of records and trapezes and surfboards and things that were more personal and not necessarily musician-oriented. They wanted to use my art work for the entire hotel. Then we started to go through more of my work, and they decided that in the rooms ... they would stick with more abstract images that were not about the subject, but more about the photograph. They also decided to use my large photographs on the landings of the elevator. Each floor will have just one large photograph. For that, we tried to pick things that were really portrait-oriented.

Are you happy about joining forces with the W?

Yes. I think that it's all about publicity and promoting yourself in the sense that it's like a gallery show. **Art Basel** in Miami has become an institution down there. There are people from all over the world who show up and will be staying at the W during that time. I made some photography books around 10 years ago, with old photos of mine, and they've offered to put these books in the hotel as well. It's an opportunity to promote myself. To really boil it down, it's a great opportunity for me to showcase my work somewhere where there are people who can afford to buy gallery prints.

Are these books available anywhere else?

You can get them at the Morrison Hotel gallery and at John Varvatos stores. These books are pretty cool for music fans. I did the second book around the concerts the Beastie Boys put on for Free Tibet. I photographed everything around those shows.

Is this the first time you are showing your work outside of rock stars?

In the gallery shows that I've had, I would display images that might not be of a celebrity. It might be their hand or the back of their head or something where it was not quite so obvious. This was my first real opportunity to get people to recognize my personal photographs. It will open my work up to people who maybe aren't big music fans. Although I can't imagine someone not being a big music fan—because that's my life. There are people who don't really pay it much mind, so it's an opportunity to tap into another market.

Where are your favorite places?

If you ever go to Nashville, go to the downtown strip there. Around lower Broadway. There are a couple places, first is **Tootsies Orchid Lounge**. People like Hank Williams and George Jones and all those old country guys would walk from the **Ryman Auditorium** across the alley. There's also **Roberts** and **The Bluegrass Inn**.