

Style



Oprah Winfrey with Tom Cruise in Colorado for Part 1 of a mostly sit-down interview.

TOM SHALES

Sofa, So Good: Tom Cruise's Mission: Oprah

"I never stop learning," Tom Cruise boasted proudly from his corner of the couch...

Since leaving about on Winfrey's studio furniture as he declared unyielding love for his TV...

Arriving at the movie star's mountaintop mansion near Telluride, Colo., Winfrey gazed at the postcard views and pushed, "I want to weep, it's so beautiful."

See SHALES, C7, Col. 1



Charles Guggenheim's political ads for Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 primary run were hugely influential in an evolving field.

Forty Years On, RFK Ad Maker Still Frames The Campaigns

By ANN HORNADAY Washington Post Staff Writer

It's a historic year in American politics, and during a pivotal Democratic primary in Indiana, a television ad shows the candidate speaking casually but forcefully within a scrum of farmers...

See GUGGENHEIM, C7, Col. 1

Window on the World

Exhibit

In New York, Replanting Darwin's Fertile Ground For Thought

By ADRIAN HIGGINS Washington Post Staff Writer



At the New York Botanical Garden, the view of his English garden that helped inspire and further Charles Darwin's work on plant reproduction and the evolution of species has been reproduced in patient detail.

NEW YORK Enter the New York Botanical Garden's Hunt Conservatory and you will see a pretty evocation of an English cottage garden...

It was in the garden that he cemented his theory of evolution. Through close observation and imaginative experiments, he looked long and hard into flowers, which is to say, the sex life of plants...

In his 20s, Darwin pondered the origin of species while on the five-year expedition of the H.M.S. Beagle. He collected fossils throughout South America, and in the Galapagos Islands discovered isolated species of finches...

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See EXHIBIT, C12, Col. 1

Nats Could Use Some Designated Sitters in Those Pricey Seats

By PAUL FARBI Washington Post Staff Writer

Down here, in the royal seats at Nationals Park, you're close enough to see the muscles flexing on slugger Wily Mo Peña's cordwood forearms...

The question has been kicked around ever since the Nationals opened their sparkling new ballpark on the Anacostia to a full house a little more than a month ago...

See SEATS, C2, Col. 1



The Presidential section behind the plate is largely empty, giving TV viewers the wrong impression about turnout.

'Shining Lives': Drama After a Tragic Afterglow

ARTS, C8 - ASK AMY, C3 - CAROLYN HAX, C4 - COMICS, C9-11 - CROSSWORD, C9 - ON THE GO, C12 - QUOTE-ACROSTIC, C10 - SUIDO/KU, C11 - TELEVISION, C6-7

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL A breeding ground of equine possibilities | C2 > NAMES & FACES Mariah Carey, Nick Cannon tie the knot | C3 STYLE ON THE GO Eero Saarinen, beyond Dulles Airport | C12



A Filmmaker's Primary Role In Political Ads

GUGGENHEIM, From C1

But the most compelling pieces featured Kennedy — always dressed in a suit and tie, with that famous unruly shock of hair and brooding eyes — by turns challenging and charming the farmers, factory workers, women and even young children that Guggenheim and his team had hastily assembled for a series of spots that were meant to look like off-the-cuff encounters.

To watch Guggenheim's ads four decades later, it's possible to see the creation, almost in real time, of the grammar of political advertising — the elements of style that are still evident today, at a time when emerging technologies and political passion are merging again to revolutionize political communications.

Filed with the lightweight cameras and sound equipment that were reinventing documentary cinema in the 1960s, the Kennedy ads are a curious blend of the staged and the spontaneous, the crude and the sophisticated. With minimal narration and a mesmerizing public figure at their center, the ads began from a crucial point in ancient political history, before the ascendancy of television, polls and focus groups, but poised on the very cusp of the media culture they would come to define.

The spots reflect the rushed, almost chaotic nature of a campaign that almost didn't happen. After an agonizing period of indecision, Kennedy finally announced his candidacy on March 16, after incumbent President Lyndon B. Johnson narrowly won the New Hampshire primary. By May 7, the date of the Indiana primary, Johnson had dropped out and Kennedy had challenged Eugene McCarthy to what would be a bitter (and tragically brief) battle for control of the Democratic Party.

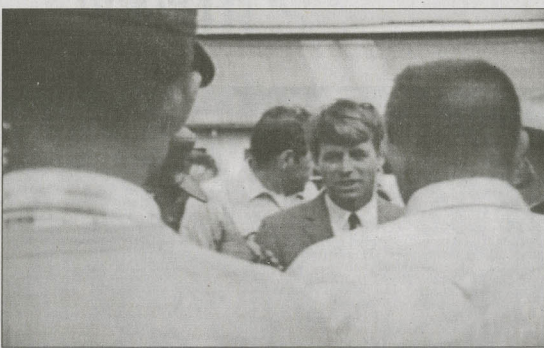
The day after Kennedy announced his candidacy, recalls former press secretary Frank Mankiewicz, "Steve Smith, his brother-in-law (and campaign manager), came around and threw a handful of those little tiny tin pieces that say 'Kennedy' and go over your lapel on the desk. And that was the campaign."

little tiny tin pieces that say "Kennedy" and go over your lapel on the desk. And that was the campaign." Guggenheim, who had perfected the art of the half-hour biographical film in campaigns for Adlai Stevenson, former California governor Pat Brown, Kennedy and others, left for Indiana shortly thereafter.

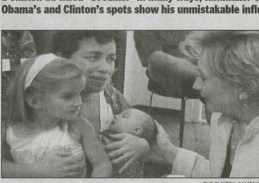
"We said, 'We want him with ordinary folks,'" Mankiewicz recalls of the minimal directions Guggenheim received. Although Kennedy was routinely greeted by adoring crowds wherever he went, in Indiana he faced not only McCarthy's popularity on college campuses and Humphrey surrogate Roger Branigan's support of the state party machine, but Indiana voters, described by Kennedy adviser (and native Hoosier) John Barlow Martin as "phlegmatic, skeptical [and] hard to move."

Using one camera (sometimes two), Guggenheim made sure to capture multiple angles on the candidate as he extemporized on everything from urban violence to the poverty in Appalachia, and also the accidental expressions of reactions of his interlocutors. One can sense a group of diffident Indiana farmers being disarmed while, as a cow moos in the background, Kennedy cracks through a series of reactions of his interlocutors. One can sense a group of diffident Indiana farmers being disarmed while, as a cow moos in the background, Kennedy cracks through a series of reactions of his interlocutors.

Notwithstanding such liberties, Guggenheim's commercials were hugely influential within an industry



Clockwise from top: A TV spot for Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 primary run, an Obama campaign video called 'Hoops,' and filmmaker Charles Guggenheim's ads.



THE KENNEDY CAMPAIGN



THE OBAMA CAMPAIGN

eign adult and welfare reform in a firm, even confrontational tone that today would be unheard-of. "I've seen children here in the United States starving," he says at one point. "Young children, starving to death."

The resulting ads — which range in length from 30 and 60 seconds to five minutes — provide fascinating records, not only of Kennedy's astonishingly frank political rhetoric, but of his evocative emotional connection with voters. They also prove that even in the days we look back on with nostalgia for their purity, lies could be crossed: The ad featuring children, presumably at school in Indiana, was filmed on a Saturday morning in Northwest Washington, and features a young John Harwood (who now covers politics for the New York Times and CNBC), whose father, Richard, was covering the race for The Washington Post.

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that was still defining itself. "Charlie's still cut out to the character of candidates," says Richard Parker, a biographer of Kennedy contemporary John Kennedy Galbraith. He notes that in some quarters Kennedy was still considered his brother's enforcer, the tough former attorney general who had authorized wiretaps of Martin Luther King Jr., had vacillated on his opposition to the Vietnam War and who, in the opinion of many Democrats, had let McCarthy do his dirty work before jumping into the race.

"The whole point of Guggenheim doing those ads was to break through that narrative," Parker suggests. "This is the campaign that makes Bobby Kennedy and in some sense, Guggenheim is capturing the formation of the man as it happens." For his part, Guggenheim would go on to win three Oscars for documentaries on a range of subjects; in 2007 his son Davis won another one for "An Inconvenient Truth." The film starred Al Gore, whose father had

hired Charles to make ads for his 1970 Senate campaign.)

Forty years later, in the first high-stakes Indiana primary since Kennedy's run, the ads that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are running bear Guggenheim's unmistakable, if distorted, influence. In a spot called "Dreams," for example, Clinton can be seen walking through a field with a farmer, then with a mother and her young daughter, then in a factory. But unlike Guggenheim's ads featuring similar settings, "Dreams" doesn't document what Clinton said in those situations, or her interaction with her audience. Rather, in a form of symbolic shorthand, the producers reduce what in 1968 were surprisingly revealing and substantive scenes to a series of shots, meticulously meaning-free. Mis-scene has become montage in a political media culture that has become increasingly fragmented, market-researched and overmanaged. (It's hard to believe, but our polling was

almost nonexistent," Mankiewicz recalls of Indiana in 1968.)

Obama's Indiana ad "Inspiring" hews to the same formula, packaging still images of the candidate meeting with "ordinary people," kids and blue-collar workers as part of a bland mix of archival images, talking-head testimonials and on-screen graphics. His newest ad, "Pennies," is yet another generic response to yet another generic attack ad from Clinton.

But if the Obama campaign, like Clinton's, has created its share of banal elaborations on Guggenheim's seminal work, it also suggests a return to and reinvention of some of the filmmaker's cardinal elements. The "Yes We Can" video made by musician WILL.i.am that went viral in February not only marks a return to spontaneity after years of carefully manipulated political communications, but also demonstrated the same kind of emotional impact a candidate can have on his followers that Guggenheim captured in Indiana 40 years ago. (It also resuscitated the art of political advertising.)

And there are signs that technology might be bringing the art of political communications full circle. In an era when the idea of watching a half-hour biography or a five-minute ad seems impossibly quaint, the Web is making it possible for voters to see and hear the candidates in full. As of this writing, YouTube has registered more than 4 million hits on Obama's "A More Perfect Union" speech in Philadelphia on March 18. It lasts 37 minutes 10 seconds, presumably more than a few viewers have taken the time to watch it all the way through. Forty years after Charles Guggenheim created the language of political advertising, it's being reinvented, again with the aid of an unusually charismatic candidate and new, nimble technology. The radical twist is that this time, the messengers and media-makers are likely to be the voters themselves.

1 WATCH WASHINGTONPOST.COM Watch a selection of ads made for Robert Kennedy by Oscar-winner Charles Guggenheim at washingtonpost.com/style.

TOM SHALES

Tom & Oprah, Reunited on the Couch

SHALES, From C1

She hugged Katie and Tom in the mudroom — where a pair of personalized moccasins awaited Winfrey's arrival — and then got a tour of the woody house from Cruise, Holmes quickly making herself scarce. She and Cruise had made a point of holding hands, however, while on-camera together.

When Cruise showed Winfrey a collection of his movie scripts handed down to her in leather, Winfrey exclaimed, "This is the coolest thing!" When he showed Winfrey his daughter Suri's miniature office, Winfrey shouted, "Oh, my God" and "Oh, that is perfect, Tom." Thrilled to pieces by the family kitchen, Winfrey said, "Oh, I love a great kitchen!" and "It's so normal! It's so kitchen-like!"

The tour eventually over, Tom & Oprah took to the couch for questions about Cruise's behavior, starting with what Winfrey solemnly called "the sofa incident" of 2005.

"I was like, 'Wow, what was that?'" Winfrey recalled. "You could take it back," she asked Cruise, "would you still jump on the sofa?"

Cruise said, "It was a moment and it was real" and "I just felt that way... That was just how I felt."

"So apparently the answer is yes. Cruise tried teasing Winfrey: 'You were egging me on,' he said. 'You were egging me on... You were egging me on.'"

Finally he said that what he was feeling that day was hard to put into words, though that seems true of almost every feeling he has. "I can't even articulate it," he said. "It's something I just can't articulate."

Winfrey brought up other denigrations: Cruise has perpetrated in recent years, like offering unsolicited medical and psychiatric opinions on the "Today" show about postpartum depression to Brooke Shields and advising her to follow the dictates of Scientology, to which Cruise subscribes.

"What happened to that at that interview?" asked Winfrey, who then offered up a potential excuse. "Had you had enough sleep?" Said Cruise: "I was pressed. Oh, my God — I was pressed on behalf of his church. Cruise said, 'I'm not trying to tell anyone how they should lead their life,' adding that Scientologists don't do that because 'we're here to help.'"

But Cruise's troubles continued. The paparazzi who stalked the actor night and day were becoming more brazen, as rumors circulated that the Cruises were about to begin a family. Poor Tom, said Winfrey: "It was really like being hunted like a dog."

She said the rumors "spun into something unimaginable," and "Cruise imaginatively added, 'Unimaginable, really.'"

After someone at a doctor's office leaked the results of his wife's pregnancy test to "the media," Cruise decided to set up a better defense. He brought a sonogram machine and a doctor into the house. An unauthorized biography of Cruise, Winfrey said, implied that little Suri wasn't even really Cruise's child, while mean old gossip-mongers made such nasty cracks as comparing the newborn child to "Rosemary's Baby." Even nastier wisecrackers spread rumors that the baby was "deformed."

managed to flash his somewhat nightmarish grin no matter how discomfoting the memories.

Stranger, though, Winfrey didn't really grill Cruise on the biggest crisis of all: Fed up with Cruise's cuckoo behavior, Viacom CEO Summer Redstone, well-known crotchety billionaire, "fired" Cruise by ending the relationship between the actor's production company and Paramount Pictures, one of Viacom's media properties.

"His recent conduct has not been acceptable to Paramount," Redstone said — apparently with a straight face, though coming up with a definition of Conduct Unbecoming a Movie Star would be the next trick of the week. Winfrey didn't mention this, nor the fact that public displeasure with Cruise's obstinacious resulted in a lower box office take than expected for "Mission: Impossible III," Cruise's latest action thriller.

Said Redstone of his own wife's attitude toward Cruise: "Paula, like women everywhere, had come to hate him." Cruise, meanwhile, didn't mention Redstone or Paramount during the interview. He was seen earlier this year having lunch with Redstone in the Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel, sparking rumors of a reconciliation — and perhaps of a "Mission Impossible: IV."

Maybe Winfrey got into this kind of thing during the second part of what is auspiciously billed as "The Tom Cruise Interview." Part 1 was really devoted more to personal, warm, cute-puppy stuff — as when the subject turned to Suri, who was off somewhere sleeping.

"Let's talk about that baby girl of yours," said Winfrey. "She really is just magic," said Cruise.

"Magical is a great way to explain it. Winfrey said a little later. But Cruise had another way: "There are moments of real joy. Yeah, joy. She's just [pause] joy," he said, searching for the right word. He told a long story about dressing up as Santa Claus one Christmas and appearing at the front door. When he got to the punch line, he sounded like any other proud papa anywhere in the world: "And Suri looks at me and she says, 'No, Dah-Dah!'" Cruise said, exploding in laughter.

He thought that was easily the cutest, funniest, sweetest little old thing in the world, or so it appeared.

Earlier, Winfrey had announced an urgent need to "poo" as a way of breaking for a commercial. Near the end of the hour, she struck a bare foot into the camera lens to demonstrate how "comfortable" she felt even though, she told Cruise, "I swear, driving" he felt even better.

"Start, start, start," she said, as you saying you were just all a flutter about confronting Tom Cruise again? Give me a break. Better yet, give me \$20 million; you'll never miss it.

When last seen, Winfrey was zooming off into snowy woods on the back of Cruise's snowmobile, the actor handing the driving. "You've gotten to live your dream," said Cruise earlier. "You've gotten to live your dream." Looking again at the vastness of the vista, she mistyped up and turned to Cruise. "I wish for you the peace that this mountain can bring," Winfrey said. "I wish this for you. I really do." She seemed to be waiting for a heavenly choir to sing the words she'd just spoken, but none showed up.

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