

# Off guard in The Hague

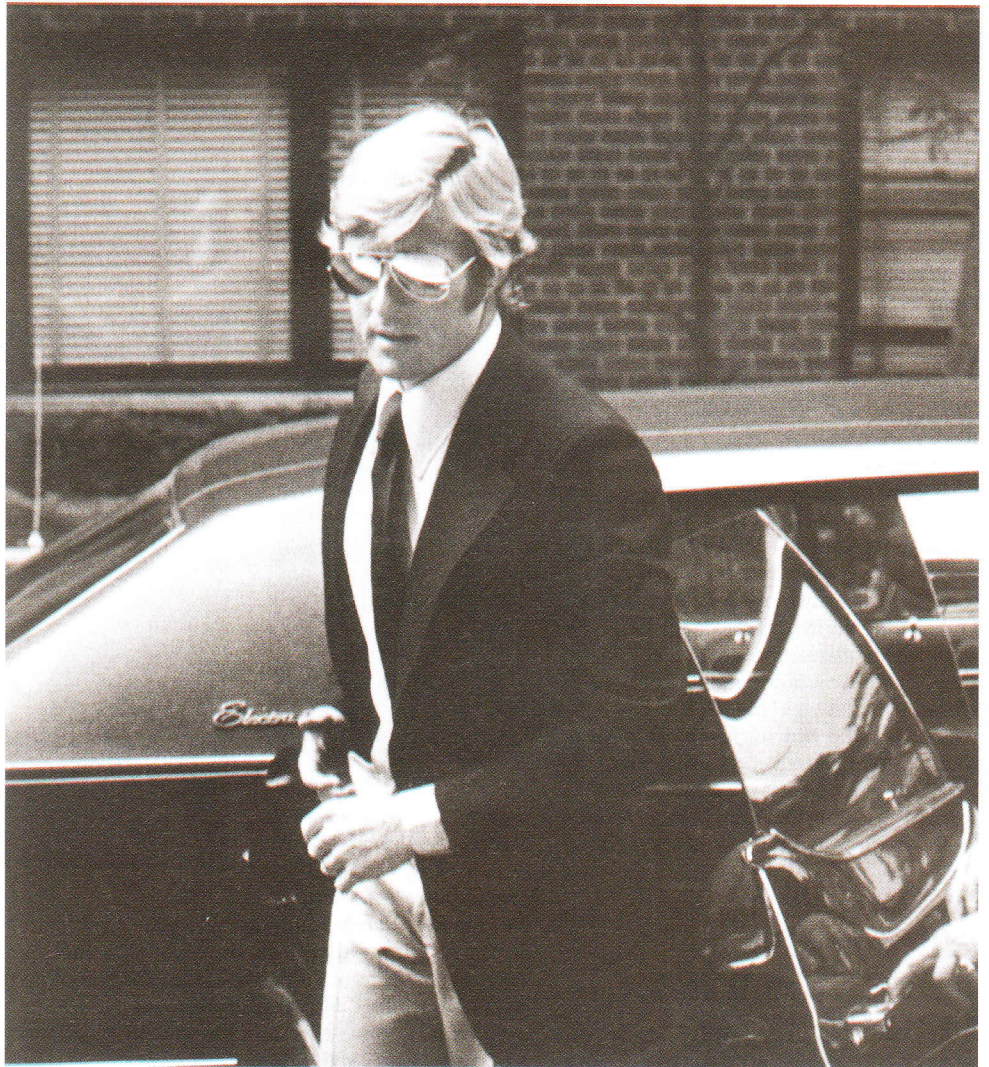
The work of another famed paparazzo, Ron Galella, was on show at The Hague recently but by special invitation only. Heather Tucker went along to this exclusive exhibition.

Love them or hate them, paparazzi have wide appeal. It's not an easy life, and impromptu shots of celebrities at their worst, or even best, moments always attract attention.

Law firm GMW Advocaten in The Hague wanted to bring a little bit of the action to their invited guests by offering something different to the usual 'meet and greet' networking events. It worked. The firm partnered with Amsterdam-based photo gallery Wouter van Leeuwen to host a private viewing of "Off Guard" - A paparazzo's shots of celebrity. The collection featured premium black and white vintage photos of the equally despised and loved American paparazzo, Ron Galella.

Galella, a native New Yorker, started his photography career in the Air Force before earning an arts degree in journalism in Los Angeles. His love of photographing well known people landed him in trouble on a number of occasions. One of the most famous events would have to be when Galella was sued by Jacqueline Onassis in 1972. The 26-day trial, which could have resulted in a \$120,000 fine and seven years in jail, resulted in Galella surrendering his rights to photograph Jackie O, Caroline and John forever - a promise he upheld even at her funeral.

In June of 1973, he found



Robert Redford, May 15, 1974 © Ron Galella, Courtesy Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam  
himself on the other side of Marlon Brando's fist, losing five



teeth, in Chinatown in New York City. Ironically, Brando was hospitalised the next day due to an infected right hand, which resulted in five scars on his knuckles. A year later, Galella confronted Brando at a press conference wearing a football helmet. This is one of his most famous photos of himself, and it was available to view at the event along with approximately 90 others.

The event provided an excellent opportunity to see both the

Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall, January 16, 1983 © Ron Galella, Courtesy Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam

venue and its lawyers in a different light and to take away some of the uncomfortable feelings usually associated with visiting a law firm!

The offices of GMW Advocaten were buzzing. The firm invited audiences from the Dutch and international communities to view the exhibition on three separate nights during September and October. With waiter service providing drinks and finger food and valet parking upon arrival, all that was needed were a few photographers with flashing cameras to make you feel like one of the VIPs featured in the shots.