

Duran Duran Rocks Site Title



Interview: Nick Egan

Nick Egan Duran Duran Art Director

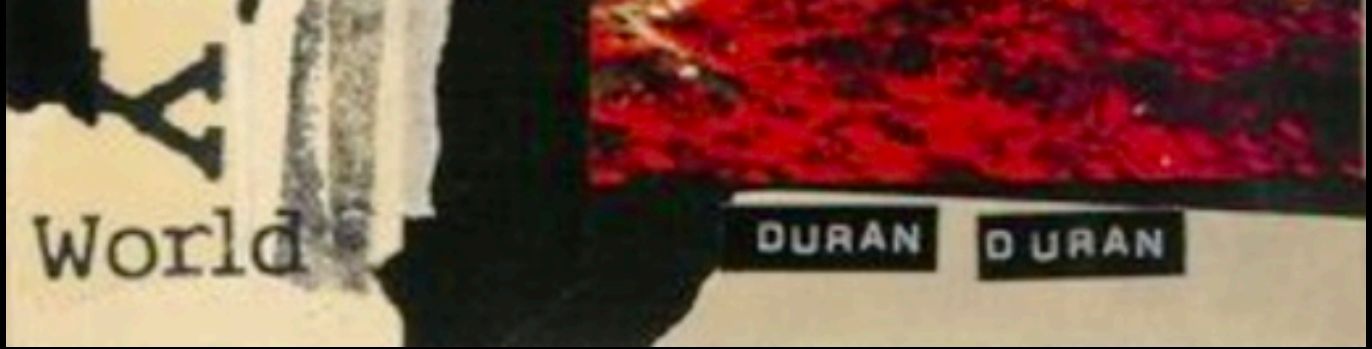


“The final say with any Duran video is always with the band” – Nick Egan

Nick Egan, synonymous with providing 80's legends Duran Duran a full makeover in 1993 by creating the branding and art for the band's combined great escape and incredible comeback *The Wedding Album*, very kindly agreed to take questions from DDRock's *John Archbell* on his highly successful career as an Art / Video Director.

Ordinary World Video





Ordinary World Artwork

Nick's illustrious path has led the way to working with some of the world's greatest Pop and Rock icons that include Oasis, INXS and of course our very own Duran Duran. Not only was he responsible for The Wedding Album artwork, he also raised the bar, directing the video promo's Ordinary World, White Lines, Perfect Day, Pressure Off and Last Night In The City.

Images of Huntington Gardens, Pasadena, California and visual concepts featured within this interview were provided by Nick Egan.

The questions put forward were from a combination of the Duran Duran Message Board and from Duran Duran Rocks Editor John Archbell.

Here we go then!

John Archbell: Who's idea was it, or what inspired the use of old-style label maker guns and the use of masking tape for the Wedding Album artwork?

Nick Egan: It started with the bands idea of using the old black and white photos from the old photo booths. They did it with a sense of irony knowing that they usually paid thousands of pounds for top photographers. In this instance the entire budget was 10 pounds. They could still afford the expensive photographers, but they wanted to do something completely different and everything led on from there, we decided let's make the whole thing very DIY, punk rock, use whatever was at hand. It was to test themselves more than anything by going back to their roots and seeing if they could still be influential.

JA: Have you been consulted for a Wedding Album reissue preserving your artwork theme? If so, are there plans for a box set or anything?

NE: No

JA: You have worked with literally the biggest names in music from the 1970s on. What is the difference between making videos with posh British bands like DD and aggro American rockers like Motley Crue and Rancid? How do you handle the transition from rock royalty such as Jagger to raucous upstarts like Oasis?

NE: There's no real cultural difference in respect of nationality, maybe the British bands tended to be a bit more 'arty' and the American bands liked performance as their main concept. It's a lot more to do with what type of band you work with but I find, ultimately, nearly all bands like to perform, because that's what they know and what they are comfortable with. Duran love performing in their videos with an edge to it, or with a twist. It's the same with Oasis, Rancid and Motley Crue, but none of those videos were just each band on a stage. Rancid was like a punk

fanzine, Oasis was in some weird environment like a Nicolas Roeg movie. Motley Crue was Clockwork Orange and Duran I've done various concepts, but always based around some kind of performance. One of their favourite videos of mine is 'White Lines' because of the out and out adrenalin punk, rock and roll style, all in black against white, the absolute classic look. Mark Romanek told me he used that video as an influence for his Michael and Janet Jackson video around the same time. It was also added to the permanent collection of BFI's new 'Music Video' section so it transcends the straight forward performance video and was added because it took performance to its absolute pinnacle, with cinematography and editing.

White Lines Video

JA: What was Eric Roinestad's role in the creation of The Wedding Album artwork?

NE: Eric was really important on that cover because I was busy. I was shooting the videos at the time and I really didn't have time to do the whole production and the graphics and so I kind of sketched it out how I wanted it to look and I came up with the label printer idea with bits of tape, the multi layering and stuff like that. He pretty much put it all together based on those things, you know. I gave him some pictures and we talked about it, but he actually did all of the production work on it so he was essential on that job.





Image: Pegasus Records

JA: I'd love to hear your thoughts when you first heard the The Wedding Album and how the songs/sounds/lyrics inspired the art direction? Did you get to hear it 'In Privacy'?

NE: I was invited to a playback of the album hosted by EMI at Olympic Studios in London. To be honest with playbacks it's hard to register the music as you are in the room with a lot of people. When I listen to an album I like to be by myself so I can absorb the music completely and repeatedly over the next week or two, by then I have a critical sense of what I like more than others. I do remember though, that on hearing 'Ordinary World' thinking this was going to be a hit.

JA: Do you prefer to make music videos which have a

concept, a story and a meaning? Or do you prefer producing music videos of just the band singing the song?

NE: I think it's both that are important. I mean, I have spent a lot of time in post-production messing around with the film covering it in bleach and everything. But the most important thing are the shots and the way you photograph it and how you photograph it and the look and the post kind of becomes something you do at a later point when you've got everything in your head and you've seen the rushes.

JA: Any stories to share from directing videos for Candlebox? In the States, they were considered a bubblegum version of the Seattle scene. However, videos such as 'Far Behind' broke them wide open in 93' and 94'. Was there a conscious decision to present the band in a way that challenged the perception of them as bandwagon jumpers? Any anecdotes from directing videos at the height of the grunge era?

NE: When I did the Candlebox video, it was really in the very early days of what was called Grunge. So, there were really only a couple of bands at that time who went under that specific label. Just like punk, it was more about the attitude than it was about the music. Anything coming out of Seattle at that point was considered Grunge by the media – Candlebox never claimed they were Grunge.

They happened to come out of the Seattle scene at the same time as Nirvana and Pearl Jam because they were rocky and had long hair, flannel shirts and jeans. At no time did the label or the band tell me they wanted to be 'Grunge'. They just weren't part of the inner circle of those handful of bands who were considered the

inner circle of those handful of bands who were considered the originals of that scene.

The video itself is one of my favourite videos because it really represented everything that had influenced me when I was younger – from Punk and my association with The Clash. They lived in a squat on Regent's Park which belonged to Terence Conrad and Sebastian, Terence's son worked for The Clash, designing and printing t shirts for them and gradually this Georgian style mansion on Regents Park started to get taken over by various friends and associates of the band but each with a role to play within The Clash organization, Mickey Foote the bands' sound man, Alex Michon who designed their clothes, Sebastian of course, who kept his Triumph Motorcycle on the top floor. Rodent, The Sex Pistols roadie, Baker, The Clash's roadie, various members of The Slits were all living there at one point along with other writers and artists.

The tatty elegance, the place in disrepair, the plumbing not working, gear, equipment, clothes and bodies strewn everywhere. I always loved that creative energy that emanated out of there, that was the basis of the 'Far Behind' video.

It was one of the first ever videos to include the Directors name on the credits and ended up being the most rotated video of that year on MTV.

JA: Similarly, your video for Alanis Morissette's "You Oughta Know" literally kicked off a 90s phenomenon in the States. Was there a conscious decision with that video to present her as an angst filled rocker and obliterate her past as a Canadian teen pop star?

NE: This question is always an interesting one to me because actually, I never had an idea for that video until I got out to Death

Valley. The reason being was my ex and mother of my first son Roman was given the temporary job as video commissioner at Maverick records and I didn't want anything to do with her.

So I kind of tried as hard as I could not to get the video. I wrote two paragraphs in pen on a piece of yellow lined legal paper that we will 'go to Death Valley and I will make the video and it will look good' or something as banal as that. It was the first time ever that my crew were asking me what the idea was and the truth is, I didn't actually have an idea.

I just knew we were going to go to Death Valley. I've never ever gone to a shoot without knowing what I was going to do. I knew Death Valley was a great backdrop so that was something of an idea. The idea finally dawned on the morning of the first day at the top of Zabriskie Point, the scene where Alanis is on the bench. I notice a friend of mine, Photographer Michelle Laurita, had this little suitcase with her holding some of her camera lenses and I thought that the idea Alanis is so determined in her lyric to confront the person who left her that nothing would stop her and in fact she had traipsed across the continent, unstoppable in her quest, like an Indy Terminator, across deserts and mountains to get there.

The so called 'who is Alanis?' idea that was tagged onto the video 'who is this mysterious woman' was not anything I had planned. We were shooting Super 8 with only available light and she was constantly moving her head to the point where it just didn't look flattering, so I purposely avoided any close ups that would reveal her bad skin.

JA: What happened with your feature film Red Light Runners? The proposed cast looked amazing.

NE: The movie Red Light Runners is a story unto itself and would take me several hours to go through all but essentially what happened was we, unbeknown of nearly all of us, didn't have the full financing – the Producers were all crooks and gangsters. They didn't know what they were doing, bluffing their way through the first weeks of shooting, not paying anyone. They didn't bother to bond the production and halfway through filming production rolled to a halt and I sat in an expensive Central London flat with only change in my pocket. So I decided to get on a plane and came back home which was just as well as things got worse and worse until it ended up in the hands of the receiver. It is sad that it never got made with such a great cast and the way London was portrayed.

JA: How much footage do you tend to shoot to get 4 mins material? I assume this differs in the digital era, but how much ends up on the cutting room floor?

NE: I'd say you end up using between 5% and 10% of what you shoot, but most of that is retakes of the same shot.

JA: Do you have any Oasis anecdotes that you can share?

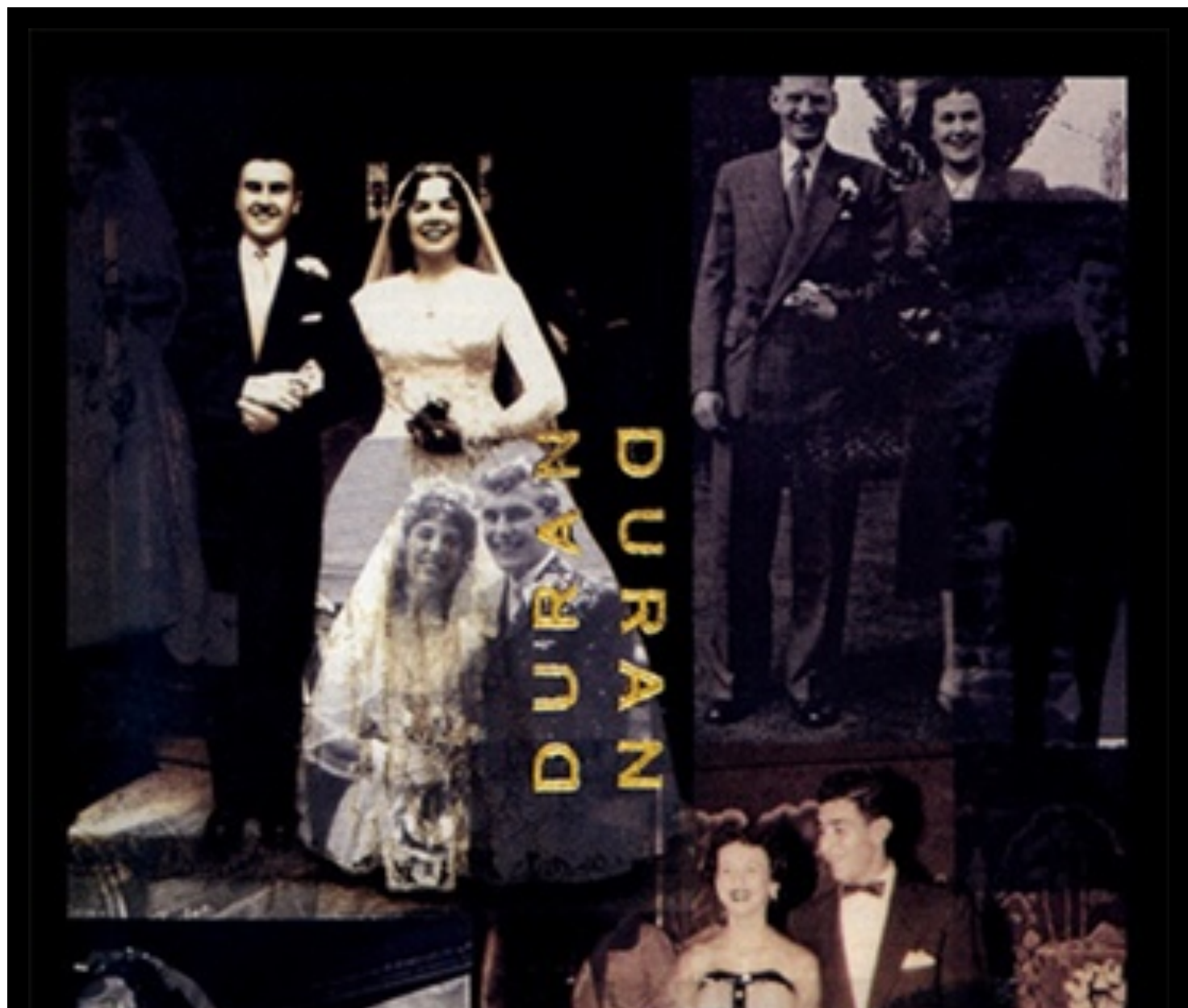
NE: Well, there's so many Oasis anecdotes it would take all day just to go through them – but one of the ones that stand out to me was when we were shooting in Death Valley for 'Who Feels Love' and we're in the middle of nowhere and we were staying at a place called *The Furnace Creek Inn*, which is a five star hotel in the centre of Death Valley. The restaurant has a very strict door policy that no jeans were allowed so the band arrive from a long trip, starving hungry and they got turned away by the Maître d' for wearing jeans, albeit \$150 jeans.

JA: You've worked with the band at pivotal moments in their career. The success of the wedding album was critical. Looking back, what pressure (if any) were you under and was this from band members or the label/management etc? Did it differ to working for other artists? Can this influence the end result (good or bad)?

NE: There's always pressure. The pressure is the same with any band but more so if you are friends with them, or you just like the band as you don't want to let them down. I didn't care about the record label so much, they always had another act to go to if this one failed. I have a very special relationship with Duran. We come from the same culture so our references are the same which makes it easy. The hard part, if there is one, is that John is one of my best friends, so I have to be very careful not to exploit that and vice versa. I treat them all exactly the same. If anything I deal with Nick more than anyone. I love Nick and I love his ideas and his energy for the medium even after all these years. I usually refer to him if I have any questions or if I want to try something different.

an Ordinary World...

Nick Egan





Wedding Album Duran Duran

JA: What is the origin of the Wedding Album artwork? What was your input? BTW, it remains their best album artwork outside of Rio.

NE: Thanks for the compliment. I can't take sole credit for the concept, a lot came from the band it was their idea to do photo booth photos and their idea to use their parents wedding photos on the cover. They kind of handed it to me and said see what you can come up with. The hardest part was making the wedding photos not look kitsch and that's tough. It took me a while to figure out an approach to that, that was not predictable. I'm a huge fan of American artist Robert Rauschenberg and I was flipping through one of his books one day and that's when it dawned on me, that collage, multi layered, mixed media style was a huge part of Pop Art in the 60's. That's what made it, it was perfect for it and it gave it another dimension that turned it into high art. It worked with the photo booth photos because Andy Warhol had done an entire book of black and white photo booth pics. It had to be black and white as it has its unique style, like polaroids do. They were gradually removing them from London at the time and I think there were only three or four booths left, so we were lucky to get them before they disappeared, but how poetic, that Duran Duran were among the last to use them.



JA: Any insight into the visual creative process with INXS? Specifically, Kick has some of the most iconic artwork of the 1980s. How much input did Hutchence and company have in the videos and art design?

NE: I didn't really know much about INXS in 1986. The first time I heard 'What You Need' I was living in New York and it struck me what a fantastic song it was – kind of rocky but you could dance to it, where up until this point there was really only pop like Culture Club and Howard Jones – a lot of synth-pop. 'What You Need' sounded different from everything else. It just stood out, a good friend of mine, Ali, said to me that she was a good friend of Michael (the lead singer) she said I should meet him because she thought we would get on really well. It just so happened they were playing at Madison Square Garden in a week or two. So, I went to the show I met Michael and we became really good friends. The same night, I convinced Michael he should have me design the next album cover – he thought that was a great idea. He told me they were just finishing off a new record and that I should come down to Sydney.

I started off by really looking at what they were and the perception of *who* they were. I noticed there was no real great profile of them outside of Australia. I couldn't really tell from the video or the album cover who Michael was – so my first thought was to make him an integral part of the design. I also realized it was a band (and a great band at that) so I couldn't just have him on the cover.

I wanted to make it very International. So you didn't know where they were from. Just that they were a stylish band, which is why I went for the white seamless background, which was very chic in the fashion magazines at the time and suited everything and I wanted to make the cover represent. Introducing Michael as Rock Star but as the front man to a great Rock'n'Roll band. I got Michael involved by co crediting him and myself for the concept, which was good because Chris Murphy (the manager) hated the cover when he saw it, but because I got Michael involved in it he couldn't get me to change it and Michael stuck by it.





A proud Nick Egan in his Punk Rock days, holding one of his first creations – The Clash, White Man in Hammersmith Palais 7" Vinyl.

White Lines

JA: The White Lines video reminds me of the Punk era, with some attitude. Was this 70's throwback intentional?

NE: Yes, a very stylized high fashion punk era. Stark, frenetic, sexy, rock n' roll video. This was recently inducted into the BFI Music Video

section's permanent collection as representing the best in music video performance by a band. When I sent the finished video out to everyone, the first call I received was from Yasmin who told me that she and Simon were blown away and had to sit down after they saw it for the first time – still one of the best compliments I've ever had. She said they were breathless and overcome with excitement, not just about the video, but the way the band looked, particularly Simon. For me, Nicholas Weyman-Harris' edit is what made this video so good. I wanted it to feel like the rush you get from taking cocaine – edgy, hyper, euphoric, unable to relax and I think that comes across from Nicholas' edit.

Footnote: The person who plays the John De Lorean character who jumps out of the window is my uncle Norman.

Perfect Day

JA: For the Perfect Day shoot, what was the idea of putting the band inside a big red room/box intercut with Apache helicopters and hippy art? Also the band revisit past glories with yet another video featuring their naked feet – what's the meaning behind that?

NE: The idea was to make the title of the song an ironic one. I use irony a lot in my videos. Where in Ordinary World, I wanted the images to be anything but ordinary, with Perfect Day the idea was that one person's perfect day, was someone else's worst day. This is going on all over the world as we speak, where there's joy somewhere there is despair somewhere else.

The box is meant to be a very stylish padded cell with the madness of the world happening outside. It wasn't meant to be a chocolate box, but I can see why people might think that. I have no idea why the band decided to go barefoot. It probably had something to do with the set and the art department telling anyone who stepped onto it, to remove their shoes, this wasn't directed at the band but I just think they didn't want to mess up the floor. I think it was John's suggestion.

JA: On the set of Perfect Day, was it exciting for you, as a director, to be filming nearly the whole of the classic DD line-up which made such early groundbreaking videos? It was fantastic to see the cameo of Roger.

NE: It didn't really cross my mind. I'm a professional, I'm there to do a job. If I thought about things like that I'd be a fan and not a Director. When I'm away from the set or if I see the video a few months later I may think things like that but I've been around celebrities all my life. Some are great some are not, whatever their achievements. The only celebrity I was really impressed with meeting was Tom Kenny, the guy who does the Spongebob Squarepants voice. His kids went to my kids School. I told him we were all fans and he answered in his Spongebob voice. I'll never forget it! I do remember Roger telling me After we shot 'Perfect Day' that his favorite Duran video is the one he's not in, 'Ordinary World'. I felt that was a great compliment and very Roger.

Below: Two images of the iconic scene where Duran Duran had their Beatlesesque, legendary moment with the Ordinary World video in 1993.





Bonsai Gardens, Hunstington, California

Duran Duran Ordinary World Video



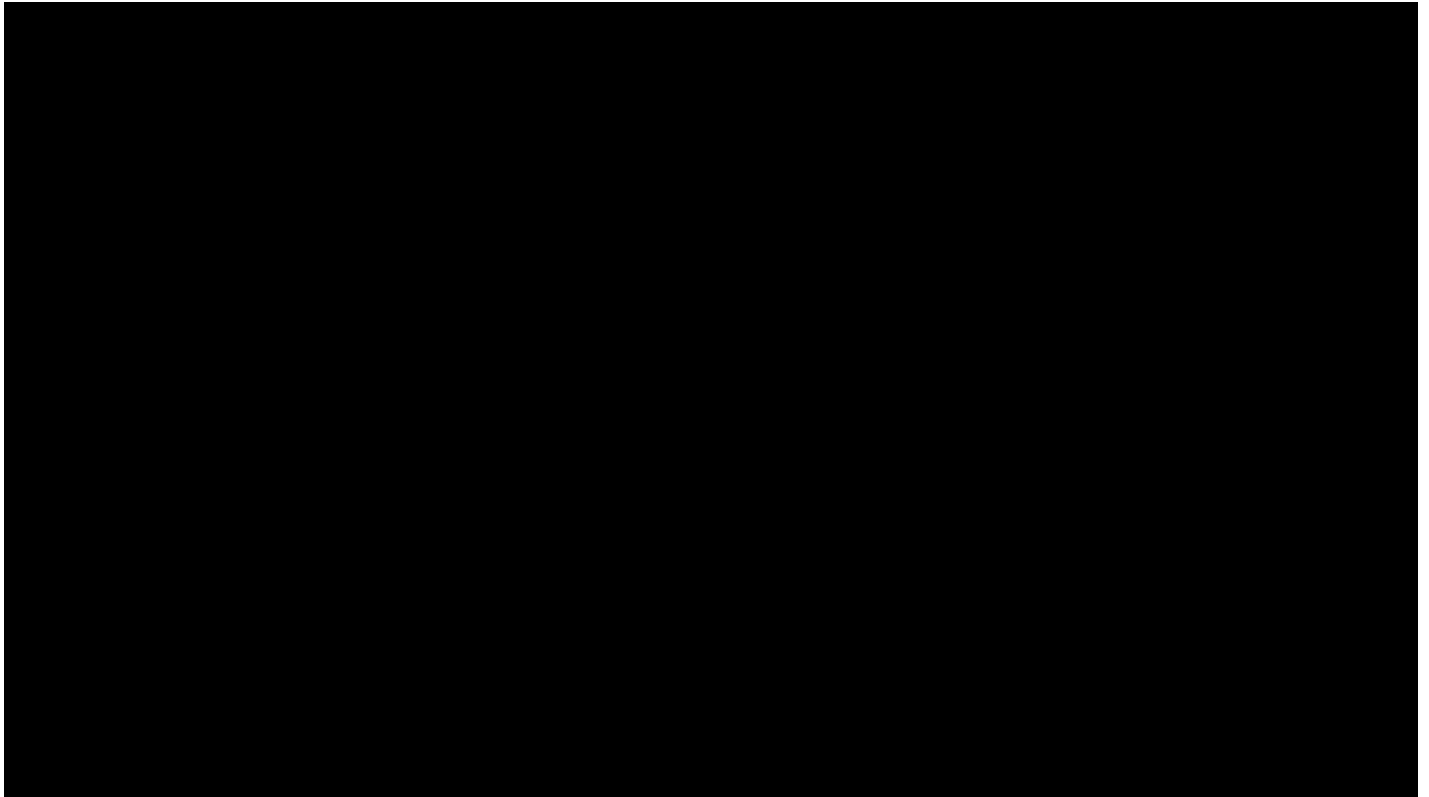
Iconic Scene: Duran Duran, Ordinary World Video

JA: When you directed Ordinary World did you go with your own ideas or did you consult the band for the background of it? Was it important to not deviate from its identity?

NE: I think they had spoken to every major director in the world. At this point I was more well known as an album cover designer. I think people couldn't see me as anything but that. However, to me it seemed like a logical transition. Siobhan Barron, who was my Executive Producer at Limelight Films agreed. She was also on friendly terms with the band and told them from day one *"There's only one director right for this, Nick Egan"*. They thought it was a good idea but they went on looking. At one point Paul Boyd was awarded the job. He was a direct rival of mine (now we are close friends. In fact he edited and shot some footage for 'All You Need Is Now') but mysteriously his company RSA, pulled out of the job, even though they had started to shoot – to this day Paul still doesn't know why.

After looking at every director, who was anything at the time, the band realized that Siobhan was right and they asked me.

With 'Ordinary World' it was pretty much my idea. Nick had one stipulation, which was, he wanted his friend Dean Chamberlain to contribute. Dean had directed Arcadia's 'Missing', which was a stunning video, luckily I knew Dean really well as he and I had worked together before, so I asked Dean to direct all the animated flowers for the projection screen for the night shoot at Huntington Gardens.



I rarely go with a literal interpretation of a song. I listen to the music first without paying attention to the lyrics, that gives me the tempo I think the video needs. I let images come into my head without any preconception from the lyrics, just based on instinct, how it makes me feel, what it is about the song that inspires me. I write down keywords like a particular color might jump to mind, cultural images, art, photographs or a movie.

I end up with a list of things that are not connected but feel they suit the mood of the song. Next I look at the song's title and key lyrics and how I could interpret them. And see if anything corresponds with

my original notes. It's also a way to see if you're on the same wavelength as the band. I then look to see if anything visually from the album package could fit. I looked at the title 'Ordinary World' as being ironic as it is anything but an ordinary world, especially a wedding. Things started to fall into place. This wedding would feel like a dream as if we were in the head of the bride reflecting about her new future. I thought the setting should compliment this idea, beautiful, almost heavenly, again, like a dream.

One of my cinematic heroes was *Federico Fellini* and the term 'Felliniesque' became synonymous with certain music videos. I remembered his film 'Juliette of the Spirits' and used it as a reference. Fellini's films always had a dreamlike and surreal quality.



Cactus Garden, Huntington, California

“I knew I had something special”

Huntington Gardens in Pasadena, California was the perfect location with its Japanese and Chinese gardens, a beautiful Rose garden and a Cactus Garden that looks like another planet. I added a strange out of place bunch of characters who were walking along the garden paths. The band is omnipresent around the bride, either on the projection screen or passing by her.

The band was only available for one day so I shot them in a stark heavenly setting, infinite white first, we had to get that footage edited then prepped for projection, which took a week. After shooting on a stage in Pasadena we went to Huntington Gardens to film the band members key moments and then our actress and extras.

Once the performance only cut was complete, we went back to Huntington Gardens a week later to set up the projection screens for a night shoot. We brought the lead girl back and a couple of extras from the previous Huntington Gardens shoot, to walk among the giant screens.

I remember we were just about to wrap and suddenly there was a massive downpour. Within minutes everywhere was in 4 or 5 inches of water, creating huge puddles and streams where our screens were set up, covering electrical cables that had thousands of volts running through them. As soon as we wrapped, everybody grabbed equipment and helped the crew get out of there, a pretty dramatic finale to what turned out to be a magical shoot.

I knew I had something special but I also realized it meant nothing until I figured out what kind of edit was needed. My editor, the brilliant Don Wilson, had started editing with the footage we had shot a week before. I trusted Don as he'd never let me down, however when I went to see his first rough cut it wasn't anything like I imagined. I wasn't even sure what it was I wanted. Don was always brilliant and he never took offence if I didn't like something.

Usually with an edit, I would sit with the editor for a day and together we'd come up with a plan, then I'd leave the editor to finish a rough cut based on our discussion. In this instant I didn't get to do that as I was in the middle of prepping for the night shoot, so Don didn't get any direction from me. So it wasn't his fault. He insisted that I sit with him and go through the dailies and build from there. A lot of the conversation was about mapping everything out and prioritising but an equal amount of the conversation was philosophical, the emotion and feeling.

That is where a great editor finds his inspiration and angle, his job is part editor part psycho analyst, getting into a director's head, abstract stuff really. Anyone else would have wondered what the fuck I was going on about. He finally said *"I've got it, give me a couple of days and come back and I know you'll be pleased."* So I did, a little anxious I have to admit. Sometimes just when you feel you've got things right, you try and put the pieces together and it doesn't seem to work. Luckily it's not something that happens often but when it does you panic a little, especially as this was one of the biggest projects I'd had.

I knew so much was resting on me as everyone was counting on the success of the single. People kept telling me "this video has to be right", (like I didn't know that). This was when MTV were God, if they didn't like something it could end an artist's career. I just remember

sitting there wondering what I was going to do if it wasn't right. Every artist has self doubt , but I felt the burden of responsibility heavy on my shoulders when I went to see the cut. As soon as I saw the first 30 seconds, I got that buzz you get, partly with relief but you feel self vindicated as it totally lived up to my original expectations.

The only difference between the cut I originally presented and the final cut was, I had originally had a band playing at the wedding on a bandstand in the Gardens. They were meant to be Duran Duran in the future. Ironically the band we cast then were in their late 50's, the very age the Duran are now, but they felt it was too confusing and weren't keen on it, so I had to lose those shots.

Now the rest as they say is history and the song and the video went through the roof, MTV put the video in heavy rotation and Duran were back where they belonged. That video took me into the A list of music video directors.



Huntington Gardens in California



Bride on the path



Huntington Gardens, California



The Bride & Simon Le Bon



Huntington Gardens, California



Huntington Gardens, California





The Bride at the bridge



Nick Rhodes with The Bride



Flower, Ordinary World Video

JA: With music videos, does it take longer to set up the shots and record the footage, or do you spend more time manipulating the footage with effects in post production?

NE: I've never thought about it before. It's hard to compare because you may have two shoot days between 12 and 16 hours a day. The post schedule could be two weeks but 8 hour days or less. I suppose you end up spending more time in post just because you have to get a cut approved by each band member, management and 2 or 3 people at the label.

The final say with any Duran video is always with the band and that can be a struggle because they are never in the same country and if Nick says black, John will say white. There are moments I think we're never going to get it done like with 'Last Night In The City' that probably took six weeks to finish as everybody's notes were completely different. In those moments, because I know the band so well, I'll make a decision if the rest have not come to an agreement but I always have to back it up

with a good reason.

That doesn't happen a lot, so when it does the band tend to trust me. I could write a book about all the changes and re-cuts I've had to make in the past. The video that got the quickest approval with hardly any changes was 'White Lines'.



Pressure...

“It’s the only video I’ve ever made that looks exactly how I saw it in my head.”

Pressure Off Barbie Doll Figures After Show Party

Wildlife at One: Nick Egan and Pressure Off Editor Einar Snorri

“I bought some action figures online and created a kind of reality, where, if I stood the action figures together I could determine how the set up would be. You needed to create a map of some kind so when editing you always knew where the other members would be standing in relation to each other, otherwise it would have been chaotic with no reference points.”

JA: What was the idea behind the slow motion black and white, jumping in the Pressure Off video? How important was it to include Nile Rodgers? Were you trying to capitalise on his success as a producer and keep him with the Duran Duran brand?

NE: It was Nick’s idea to use the photographs of Philippe Halsman who moved from France to the USA in the 1940’s.

In 1951 Halsman was commissioned by [NBC](#) to photograph various popular comedians of the time including [Milton Berle](#), [Sid Caesar](#), [Groucho Marx](#), and [Bob Hope](#). While photographing the comedians

doing their acts, he captured many of the comedians in mid-air, which went on to inspire many later jump pictures of celebrities including the [Ford family](#), [The Duke and Duchess of Windsor](#), [Marilyn Monroe](#), [María Félix](#) and [Richard Nixon](#).

Halsman commented, "When you ask a person to jump, his attention is mostly directed toward the act of jumping and the mask falls so that the real person appears." The photographer developed a philosophy of jump photography, which he called jumpology.

Pressure Off Jump

Instead of stills and celebrities, I decided I wanted people who could be seen as the type of people who would go and see Duran live, which is a stylish cross section of mainly girls and everyone from 21 to 65. It amazes me that after all these years together they seem to add younger fans after each record. The sons and daughters of the original Duranies.

Pressure Off Visual Concept

I shot all the performers and cast as individuals, never as a group, on a high speed camera at 1000fps which is super slow motion almost making the image look still. The funny thing was, one of Nick's references was my INXS 'Kick' album cover, which is self explanatory when you see the two together. I showed the Snorri Brothers INXS cover and told them that was how I wanted the video to look. I bought some action figures online and created a kind of reality,

where, if I stood the action figures together and figure out how the set up would be. You needed to create a map of some kind so when editing you always knew where the other members would be standing in relation to each other, otherwise it would have been chaotic with no reference points.

I'd go as far as saying that Pressure Off is my best ever video, because it ended up looking just how I saw it in my head.

Pressure Off Visual Concept

Janelle Monae Filming Pressure Off

JA: Do you think you accomplished your expectations for Last Night in the City? Was it finished the way you wanted it? I ask because your trade mark appears to be slo-mo studio work that doesn't deviate from the artist. Do you think an added audience adds too much 'noise' to what you're attempting to achieve? Or does it add to the ambience and excitement of a live occasion? You have put in ink that you weren't entirely happy with the result – what were the constraints?

Not sure if I want to get into this subject too much but the simplified version is this.

NE: An Icelandic businessman was in the process of setting up a superfan network – a bit like the one this interview is for, but turbo charged with exclusively made films and all kinds of special membership perks. They came to me through the Snorri Bros, who

are also from Iceland. They had edited and shot some graphic inserts on 'Pressure Off'.

The three of us were going to supply content, at least initially – the idea was that the fans would eventually create content themselves. Myself and the Snorris were going to create a template. I had suggested Duran, which they loved, so I approached Wendy Laister, the band's manager.

(Now let me digress for a second. Wendy is not just a great manager in the sense of what a great manager should be, meaning she really goes out to bat for Duran, she's also a wonderful human being, I'm not sure if the band fully comprehends how important she has been to their continued success. When I was shooting Pressure Off, Warner Bros Records were hedging on their commitment to pay for the video. They eventually paid most of it but I went to London worrying who was footing the Bill. Wendy stepped in and threw her support behind me so I could put my attention on the video. She had never produced a music video before but you would have never guessed that – she did everything from negotiating the crews fees, getting equipment sorted out. She even took care of ordering everyone's meals and she still had Duran to take care of.)

So I went to Wendy with this superfan platform idea and she agreed as long as the band didn't have to pay, which was agreed to by the Icelandics.

My idea was based around the up and coming tour. I was to go on the road with the band and film exclusive behind the scenes footage, on the plane, in the limos, the hotel rooms, backstage etc. I was also going to shoot a segment about each town the tour went to, find the best clothing store, club, points of interest.

We also wanted to find 4 or 5 hardcore fans in each of the cities and have them be our guide to these places of interest and hear their stories relating to their love of Duran. We came up with the idea of it being a Radio Show where the fans from each city would host that segment but I needed something to link them all together.

So I thought a radio DJ would be a great idea, introducing each city like it was a record they were about to play. One of my favourite films was a cult classic from the late 1970's 'The Warriors'. It's about fictional New York street gangs coming together to make a truce and stop the violence. Sirius, the 'main man' is responsible for calling this truce and is a larger than life character who stands up to address the crowd with his philosophy. At the end of each statement is his rallying cry "CAN YOU DIG IT!?" To which the crowd responds 'YESSSS!!!' Suddenly you hear a gunshot and Sirius is assassinated by someone in the crowd.

The assassin turns to the Warriors from Coney Island and points to the Warriors and shouts "THE WARRIORS DID IT! THEY SHOT SIRUS" Everything descends into chaos as the police show up and all the gangs disperse off back to their territory but now they all want revenge on the Warriors for killing Sirius (even though they didn't). They have to get back to Coney Island from the Bronx without being executed. To cut a long story short a girl DJ on the local radio is sending coded messages between playing songs as to where the Warriors are and urges others to take care of them before they get back to Coney Island (see [The Warriors](#) link below) You'll see the inspiration at the beginning of 'Last Night In The City'.

Filming of Pressure Off

JA: Looking back, what's your favourite work to date and why?

NE: Of Duran Duran? I'd have to say Pressure Off, to me it's perfect, it's the only video I've ever made that looks exactly how I saw it in my head. I also love how everyone looks in the video and the fact that it looks like they are all playing together, when in fact there is never more than one person in any shot. The band I shot in London and Nile and Janelle I shot in LA. I give a lot of credit to Simon for making that work. I told him to imagine where John and Nick were as well as where Janelle and Nile were. In the beginning we put 'C' stands in where each person was meant to be so his eyeline would always be consistent to where we placed each person. After one go with the stands he said he didn't need them anymore. It's unbelievable how he makes it look like he and Janelle are in the same room. He never missed a mark.

Roger Taylor and Nick Egan on the set of Pressure Off Video

Footnote: My children Ava and Dashiell are in the video. My daughter Ava came to London with me for the shoot (she was 11 then). Most kids who come to sets, their parents are either the performers or the directors and want to be treated like VIP's. Not Ava, she wanted to work, so Simon said, when he took his jacket off and threw it, that he needed someone special to catch it and he asked her if she would do it.

Ava with Simon Le Bon

She took that responsibility so seriously and was so focused. The atmosphere on the set was really great, probably the best of any video I've done – I think a lot of that was due to Ava's presence. They went out of their way to make her welcome, as did Wendy (Laister – Band Manager). It dawned on me that, besides Roger, the Duran Duran guys all have daughters and they are all great dads. I think that also comes across in the video as they all looked like they were having a good time with their performance. It had a sense of fun, there are a lot of smiles in that video.

Ava with Simon Le Bon

Dashiell Egan Jumping Pressure Off

Pressure Off Visual Concept

Hugs for Ava!

Wrapping the interview up...

Nick continues: I went to Brooklyn, Montreal and Atlanta and got some incredible footage. Wendy needed a video so I told her I'd get her the video and use it as a promotion for the fan site, so the band didn't have to pay for it. The Icelanders were going to pay for the video as part of their budget. I started to get suspicious when the backers didn't want to pay for my DP's airline ticket – they didn't

want to pay for mine either.

When we got to NYC and had a meeting they were trying to get me to use their secretary as a camera assistant. They seemed clueless about the film business – they cancelled equipment we had ordered, telling us we didn't need it. The day after the band played the Barclays Centre in Brooklyn, the main investor had flown back to Iceland. They had not contributed a penny to the production whereas Wendy and I had. I figured they would sort it out eventually but it put a strain on my relationship with the Snorri Bros because they introduced me to him. After a week or two I started to call him and send emails and he never responded once and still hasn't.

He ran away like a baby because it was too big for him, too many people, he was out of his depth and in between all of this I was supposed to be editing the video but that started to go on and on for almost two months. Eventually I let the Snorri Bros deal with it. It left a bad taste in my mouth and at the time it affected how I felt about the video because it reminded me of what happened. Actually

in reality I love the video but it took me a while. To this day I have never heard back from this guy, I can't even remember his name.

So that about wraps up our interview with Nick Egan! On a personal note, The Wedding Album remains a very special moment of Duran Duran's history for me and to be able to put these questions forward on behalf of myself and members of The Duran Duran Message Board is very humbling and means the absolute world! So thankyou Nick.

To finish on a high, Nick sent me an image of a gift that MTV presented to him – a homage to the infamed video still where Duran Duran have their Beatles moment on Ordinary World, in recognition when it made MTV's Pop Up Video playlist.

Extraordinary.





A gift from MTV to Nick Egan Pop Up Video



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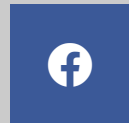
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