



AUDREY, UNGUARDED

At home, in love, at work: A new book on the woman who created a unique style emulated the world over reveals rarely seen photos of the iconic actress at ease *By MERLE GINSBERG*

IN 1953, THE SAME YEAR 24-YEAR-OLD AUDREY HEPBURN WON OVER the world — and won an Oscar — for her flighty princess in *Roman Holiday*, Paramount photographer Bob Willoughby began a pictorial relationship with her that would span 14 years and six movies. The shots, collected in Taschen's *Bob Willoughby, Audrey Hepburn* (April 5, \$69.99), capture the star in such a personal way as to illustrate how much more iconic she could be when just being herself.

Of course, Brussels-born Audrey Kathleen Ruston had no idea at the time that she would conjure a new movie-star mold, far from the bombshell ideal personified by Monroe and Loren — a more refined, fragile beauty that would later be reflected by Jean Seberg, Mia Farrow, Carey Mulligan and Michelle Williams. The actress had created a brand-new “type”; whimsy and wonder defined her, not womanly curves.

Willoughby's son Christopher recalls how his father was sent by Paramount in 1953 to shoot “another starlet” doing the studio rounds. He walked in on Audrey having publicity stills taken and was “bowled over.” Willoughby shot her throughout *Green Mansions* (1959), directed by her husband of 14 years, Mel Ferrer, and most known for co-starring Pippin the deer. There are various photos of Audrey in very un-Audrey poses: yawning in a flannel nightgown; half-asleep but fully dressed; in pigtails and no makeup. Seeing so many faces of one of the world's most famous women that we were previously unfamiliar with is revelatory.



1. In 1961, *Children's Hour* co-star James Garner looked on appreciatively as Hepburn played with Sean Hepburn Ferrer, her son with first husband Mel Ferrer. **2.** Audrey and Pippin went grocery shopping at Gelson's supermarket in Beverly Hills in 1959. **3.** The star in earrings and an evening gown at her Paramount publicity stills session in 1953; Ellen Mirjnick, the costume designer on Hepburn's last film, 1989's *Always*, calls her “the original's original.”



But while eschewing glam at home, Hepburn understood what was required as film's foremost fashion ingenue. She asked couturier Hubert de Givenchy to wardrobe *Sabrina*, launching the world's most famous star-designer collaboration, which came to fruition in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). One can credit Hepburn with the popularization of "the LBD" — the little black dress — elevating it to a staple of every woman's wardrobe.

Hepburn's gift was grace, the innate knowledge of how to make elegance appear everyday. "Her style was glamorous and terribly new, because it was hers alone," says costume designer Ellen Mirojnick, who worked with Hepburn on her last film, Steven Spielberg's *Always*. "I think Jackie O. really got it from her. Audrey became a brand. Now she'd have a perfume, a clothing line, jewelry and sunglasses. But she'd let other people create it, because she'd think it was terribly egotistical!"

To revisit how timeless her sense of style is, three of her most stylish films, 1954's *Sabrina*, 1957's *Funny Face* and a new restoration of 1967's *Two for the Road*, will be part of the TCM Classic Film Festival's "Style in the Movies," which will take place April 12 to 15 in Hollywood.

Willoughby's book ends with photos from Stanley Donen's *Two for the Road*. Hepburn's look in it sums up her own fashion journey, from pigtailed girl to eyelinered Givenchy icon. But *Road* was a move away from the gamine. Over the next two decades, Hepburn made only five feature films: *Wait Until Dark*, *Robin and Marian*, *Bloodline*, *They All Laughed* and *Always*, which were not consistent with her earlier image. "She was disenchanted with acting by the time we did *They All Laughed* [1981]," its director Peter Bogdanovich recalls. "She'd been taking care of her children when they were young and didn't want to work." Her son Sean Ferrer was born in 1960, and her second son Luca Dotti in 1970 (with psychiatrist husband Andrea Dotti). "She was a very sensitive, vulnerable person. I always wondered how such a person could ever get in front of a camera."

With much trepidation, as it turns out — which Hepburn hid. "She preferred a quiet life," says Mirojnick. "She was actually really shy. When doing a final fitting on *Always*, she told me she was always terrified to go before the camera. Before public appearances, she'd have an anxiety attack. She was a goddess — but unlike Monroe, Audrey was both iconic and touchable. I think the real Audrey was most like her character in *Funny Face*."

One of the few Hepburn films that didn't charm her audience was 1987's



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1. Garner and Hepburn clowned around on the set of 1961's *The Children's Hour*, the serious lesbian-themed film based on Lillian Hellman's 1934 play.
 2. Ferrer and Hepburn at home in front of the fireplace as their Yorkshire terrier, Mr. Famous, caught a snooze on the sofa. "We went over to her house," says Peter Bogdanovich, who directed her in *They All Laughed*, "and she cooked some cheese risotto. She made the best cheese risotto I've ever had."
 3. Hepburn with Gladys Cooper on *My Fair Lady*, after her transformation from street urchin to posh lady by Professor Henry Higgins was complete.
 4. With co-star Tony Perkins on *Green Mansions* in 1959, Hepburn felt more relaxed about the love scenes — because her husband Ferrer was directing.
 5. Hepburn and Mr. Famous. Young recalls asking her whether she traveled with her dogs everywhere, to which she replied: "Absolutely. The only time I turn into a movie star is when they won't let me bring my dog on a plane."
 6. While shooting 1964's *My Fair Lady*, Hepburn cycled between wardrobe and set — "Eliza," of course, was Eliza Doolittle.

TV movie *Love Among Thieves*, which director Roger Young chalks up to the fact that the comedic thief she portrayed in the heist movie wasn't as elegant as the actress. "It was kind of over-the-top comedic. The character was chased by a car or a bad guy — it wasn't a good fit. The audience didn't want Audrey to be anything but the elegant, wonderful Audrey whom they still loved. She was a star in life," says Young. "If she had never been on film, she still would have been a star. There was something magical about her. But there was not a happy ending. The movie was not good. I will always feel terrible we let Audrey down."

Willoughby's book is a gift to those rabid Audrey lovers. "She couldn't help but show you her soul," notes Mirojnick. "She was both very fragile and very strong, good at letting you in while keeping the world at bay."

Hepburn delighted the world with her outward style — but it was her inward charm that was her real beauty. Luckily, she was intimate with Willoughby's camera. Since her death at 63 from a rare form of abdominal cancer on Jan. 20, 1993, it is as close a portrait as we will ever get. **TZR**

