

DMITRI KASTERINE

by Helen Trompeteler

Assistant Curator of Photographs

BELOW

Samuel Beckett, 1965

RECENT ACQUISITION

© Dmitri Kasterine

AFTER THE WINE TRADE, working as a Lloyd's broker, racing cars, selling cars and flying aeroplanes to Australia, Dmitri Kasterine's career as a photographer started in 1961, when his work began appearing in Jocelyn Stevens's *Queen*, a magazine that helped set the visual agenda of the 1960s. Born in 1932, Dmitri was the son of Nicolas Kasterine, a White Russian army officer who had settled in London in 1922, and who had married a British wife, Katherine White, in 1927. In 1964 he began a long association with film director Stanley Kubrick, shooting stills on his film *Dr Strangelove*. He worked on Kubrick's two later era-defining films *A Clockwork Orange* (1968) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1971).

One of Kasterine's most famous sittings was with Samuel Beckett in 1965, at a rehearsal for *Beginning to End*, a one-man show for actor Jack MacGowran, devised by Beckett for the BBC arts programme *Monitor*. The photographer's memories of an afternoon spent with Beckett hint at a different character from the notoriously camera-shy playwright often represented in personal accounts: 'Beckett observed acutely, never taking his eyes off the actor or director, but said very little. When they broke for lunch we went to a local pub where Beckett drank Guinness and played bar billiards. He beat everybody.'

The photograph of Beckett was one of twenty new portraits acquired by the National Portrait Gallery in 2009. In the 1970s and 1980s



Kasterine was commissioned to take portraits for a variety of magazines, among them *The Daily Telegraph Magazine* (including his 1966 portfolio on the progressive school Dartington Hall), *Harpers & Queen* (including a 1982 portfolio of women gallery-owners in the field of contemporary art), and various portraits and reportage published in *The Times*, *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *Interview*, and *The New York Times*.

Other important photographs on display which the National Portrait Gallery acquired in 2009 include his portrait of Beryl Bainbridge (1972), and his 1974 portraits of Al Alvarez and David Hockney. The latter was

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Portraits: Photographs
by Dmitri Kasterine**

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Room 33

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photographed in Paris, at the time of his major exhibition at the Louvre, and in the year that Jack Hazan's film documentary *A Bigger Splash* was first shown. His double portrait of Kingsley and Martin Amis (1975) has frequently been reproduced, most recently in Martin Amis's autobiography *Experience: A Memoir* (2000). His photographs of the late 1970s and early 1980s include Roald Dahl (1976), Francis Bacon (1978), David Niven (1979), and portraits taken on location of Robert Graves at home in Majorca (1980), Lawrence Durrell at home in Provence (1976), and Muriel Spark (1978) outside the Tuscan farmhouse where she lived with the artist and sculptor Penelope Jardine.

In 1986, Dmitri Kasterine left Britain to move to the United States, which he had first visited on an assignment to photograph Mick Jagger in LA for *Radio Times*. In addition to his remarkable professional career, Kasterine has produced important personal photographic surveys. *England and the English* (1981) showed both the beauty of the English countryside and captured those private individuals whose mood, expression or activity caught his imagination during his travels. He is currently working on a book project documenting the experiences of residents living in the overlooked city of Newburgh, New York; and his series of portraits of Brooklyn residents are currently published on his online journal www.kasterine.blogspot.com. More information on Dmitri Kasterine's work can be found on his website www.kasterine.com.

BELOW FROM LEFT

Lawrence George Durrell,
1974

Roald Dahl, 1976
RECENT ACQUISITIONS
Both © Dmitri Kasterine

BOTTOM

**John Boynton ('J.B.')
Priestley,** 1975

RECENT ACQUISITION
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