

## The art photographer turns his lens on Morrissey's adoring fans.

29-year-old photographer Ryan McGinley has transcended the dangers of early success and evolved into a truly mature star of the international art scene. In 2002, he became the youngest artist to ever have a solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Here, he tells Dazed about his work photographing Morrissey concerts over the last three years and his upcoming exhibition, *Irregular Regulars*, at Team Gallery.

"The photographs are made from when the music starts, until the music ends. I start in the photographers pit between the stage and the barricade. I shoot the first three songs there. I'm always photographing the fans during that

time while the other photographers are shooting Morrissey – they look at me like I'm crazy. The fans in the first row are the hardcore ones. The ones who wait in line for close to a day (in all weather conditions) before the doors open so they can secure a spot in the front row. When the first song begins, I look for the fans who are most energetic or who have the 'Morrissey gaze'. People who are singing loud, crying, reaching out their hands as far as they can or who are just entranced by the music, like they are in another world.

After that, I go into the crowd and make my way back to the front through the sea of people. I like to go into the heart of the crowd where people go crazy. I love being pressed up against people on all sides, getting sweaty and feeling their body

heat. I'm always getting crushed while trying to shoot, struggling to focus my lens and load film. It's a lot of energy in one place and it's very difficult to make photos. That challenge is what's so fun though. I think it's one of my favorite ways to shoot. If you can make photos under those circumstances, you can make photos anywhere.

I always search for the fan who gives it their all. Freaking out, singing at the top of their lungs, arms up. Basically doing anything but paying attention to me shooting. I navigate through the crowd loading roll after roll. My pockets packed with film, singing along and shooting. Knowing the songs and knowing when to take photos during the high points and slow points. Shooting hundreds of arms extended in the air, reaching out to him during the climax of a song.

I have to pay very close attention to the light; the colours bathing specific fans and the crowd. Yellows, reds, greens, blues, oranges, pinks, and bright whites. I love the insanity and mayhem of the fans when Morrissey takes off his shirt and throws it into the audience. I'm in the mix when the fans act like animals, trying to get a piece of it. The crazy UK fans throwing cups of beer onstage. The emotional Mexican fans don't speak English but know all the lyrics. The skinheads, the rockabilly girls and boys. The determined ones who try to get onstage and struggle to touch his hand. Right after the show ends, walking around shooting the exhausted fans leaving the venue. Fans searching for their friends or just sweaty and satisfied. If I'm not on the floor, I'm running around the upper levels of the venue. Shooting from above. Shooting Morrissey onstage from every possible angle. Shooting the audience within the architecture of the different venues – small clubs, opera houses, concert halls, and arenas. Trying to capture every vantage point a fan could have attending a concert."

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Above: Untitled (Morrissey 19), 2006 Right: Untitled (Morrissey 17), 2006