

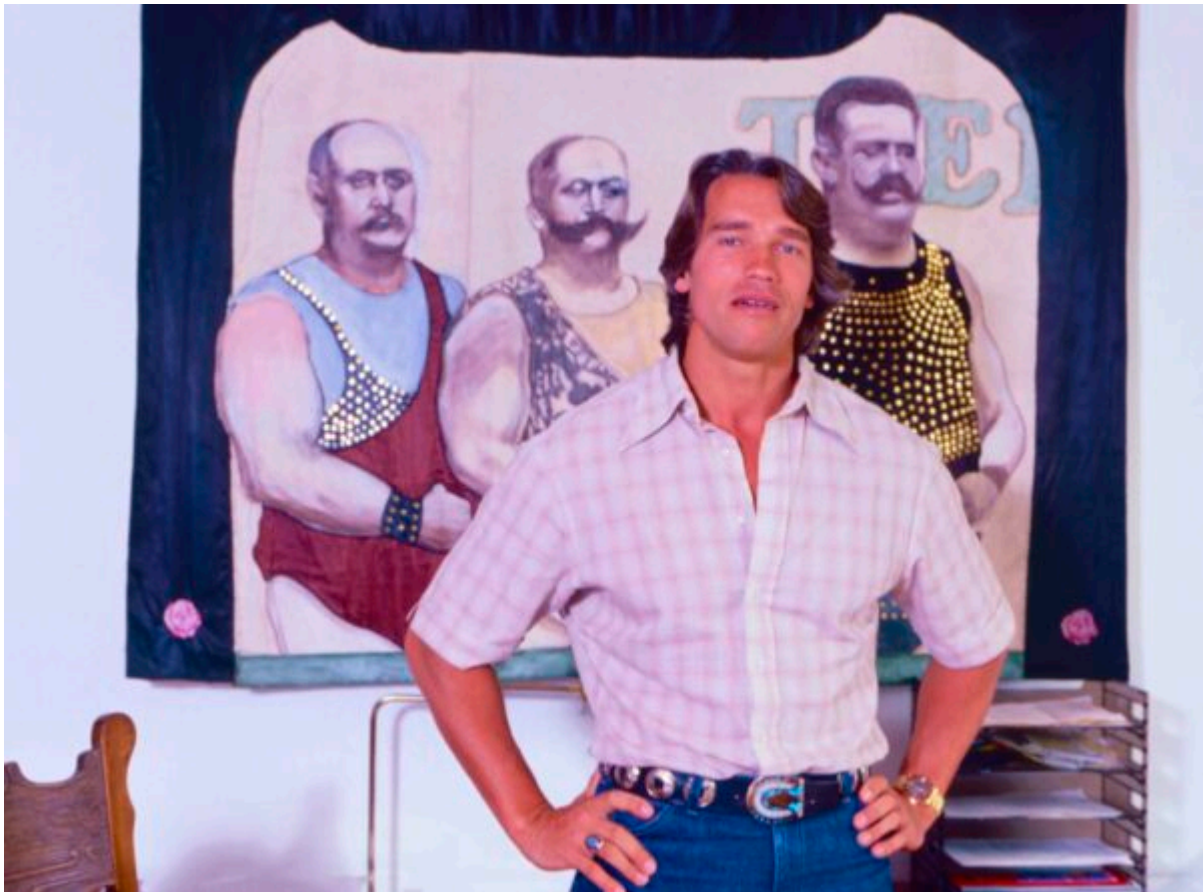
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Arnold and Me

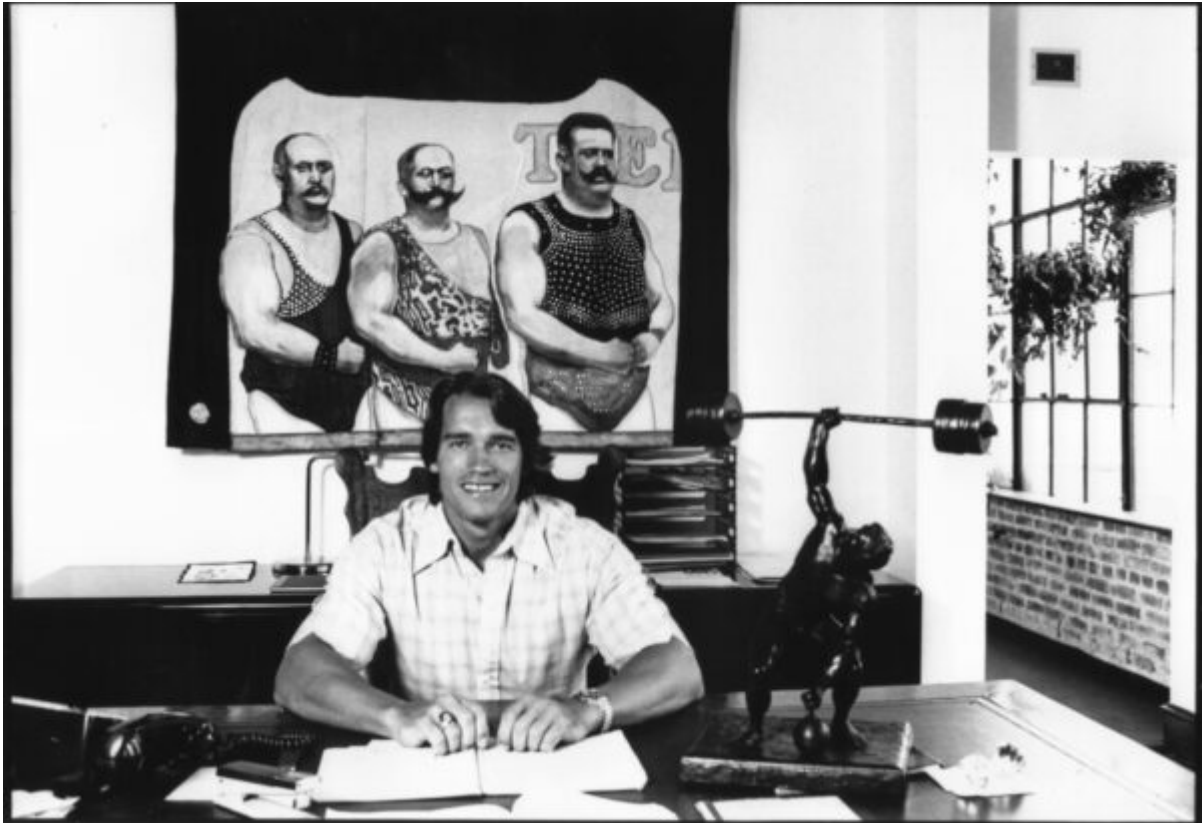
Elisa Leonelli · Sunday, July 2nd, 2023

It was quite interesting for me to watch *Arnold*, the three part documentary about Arnold Schwarzenegger airing on Netflix as of June 7. I was pleasantly surprised to see that they used some photos I took of him in 1979, on assignment for the *Los Angeles Times*.



Arnold Schwarzenegger 1979. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

So I went back to trace the history of my numerous encounters with the Austrian bodybuilder, movie star and California Governor.



Arnold Schwarzenegger 1979. Print by Elisa Leonelli

The first time was when I photographed Arnold in Santa Monica in his office, his condo apartment and at Gold's Gym. I had to shoot in black and white because newspapers did not publish color in those days, but I did take a few color slides. I made 8×10 prints of 12 frames from the B&W negatives and this is the one the *LA Times* chose to publish on June 22, 1979.



Arnold Schwarzenegger 1979. Print by Elisa Leonelli

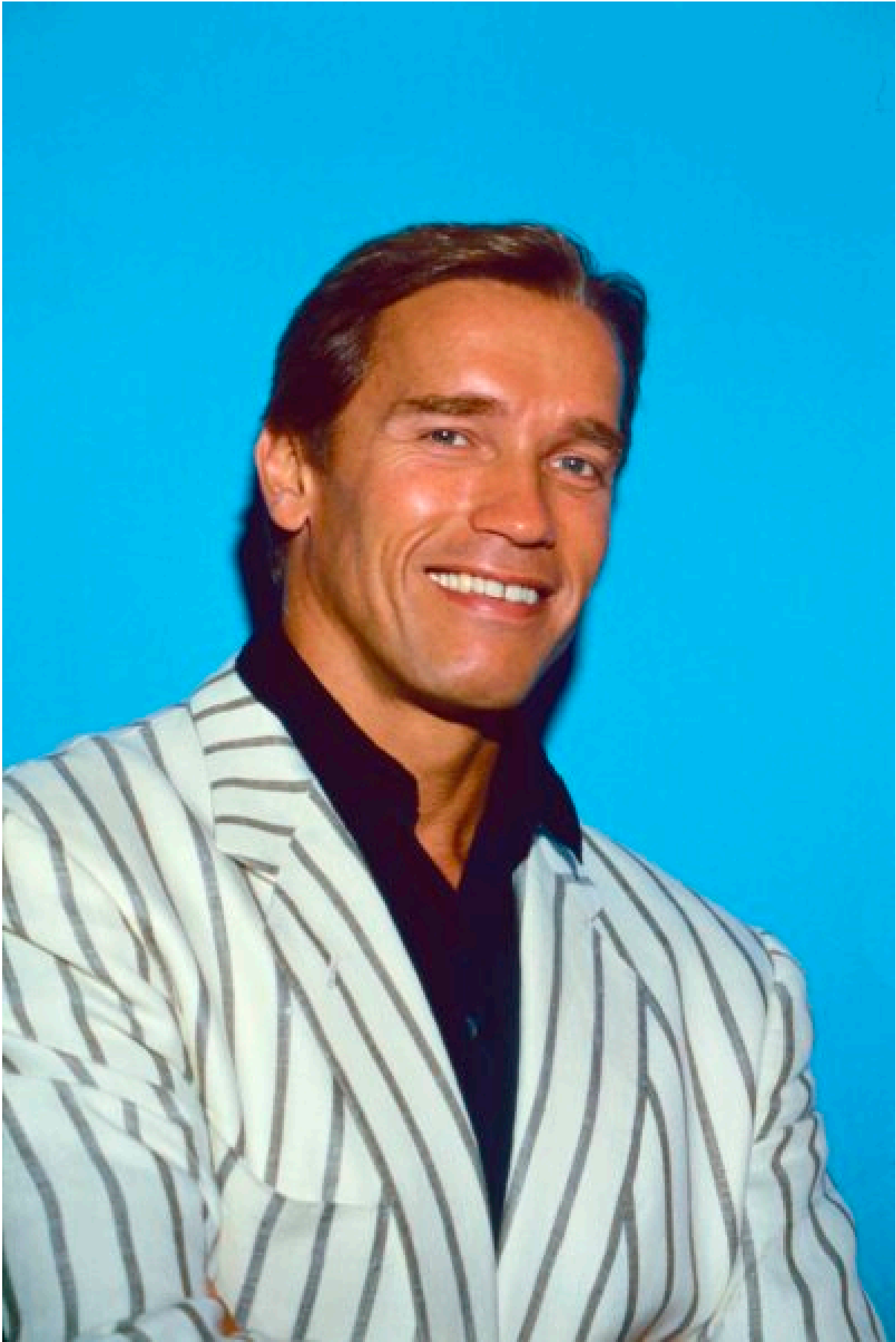
In 1978 I had photographed Arnold's best friend, Italian bodybuilder [Franco Columbu](#).

In 1983 I was covering the carnival in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and ran into Arnold at a costume ball. He gladly posed for my camera as an Indian warrior.



Arnold Schwarzenegger (c) Elisa Leonelli 1983

I photographed Arnold after interviews in 1987 and 1988. I posed next to him in 1996 and 1999 for the official HFPA photographers.



Arnold Schwarzenegger (c) 1987 Elisa Leonelli

I wrote several articles about Arnold and his movies for the publications that I represented in Hollywood. A 1990 profile in *Marie Claire Italy*. A 1989 interview in the Italian newsweekly *Epoca* about *Twins* with my photo of Arnold with Danny De Vito.

SCHWARZENEGGER

Repubblicano d'acciaio, sotto Reagan era il simbolo del Paese che mostra i muscoli. Ma ora con Bush si è trasformato: è diventato attor brillante. Una scelta professionale o un segno dell'America che cambia?

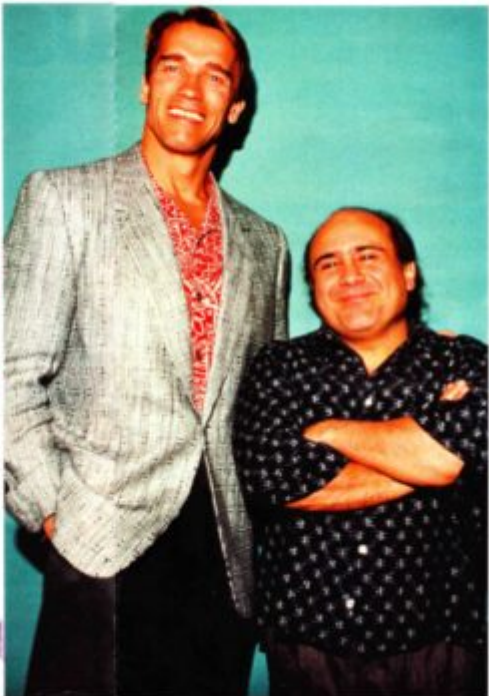
CONAN IL COMICO

DI SILVIA LORENZELLI

La più grande star della sua età, Arnold Schwarzenegger ha avuto la sera di giovedì 13 gennaio, quando quaranta milioni di telespettatori, coinvolti nella diretta della Cia del Washington Convention Center, l'hanno visto dare la risposta al suo presidente George Bush e l'America sentire girare intorno a sé la ruota dei repubblicani, oltre che a quello che ha fatto il cinema, un'immagine di un uomo che ha fatto il cinema e che è tornato a fare il cinema.



Arnold Schwarzenegger al gala di Washington del 13 gennaio, con a fianco del noto presentatore americano il comico Conan O'Brien.



È vero che, oltre al cinema, lui è impegnato in molte altre attività. È un uomo che, nel campo di battaglia del suo lavoro di attore internazionale, si muove con classe. Un uomo che, nel campo di battaglia del suo lavoro di attore internazionale, si muove con classe. Un uomo che, nel campo di battaglia del suo lavoro di attore internazionale, si muove con classe. Un uomo che, nel campo di battaglia del suo lavoro di attore internazionale, si muove con classe. Un uomo che, nel campo di battaglia del suo lavoro di attore internazionale, si muove con classe.

Click on links to see this 1991 cover story in the Italian film monthly *CIAK* for *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*. Also in *CIAK*, a 1991 interview about *Kindergarten Cop*, a 1994 article about *True Lies* with quotes by Arnold and director James Cameron.

A career interview published by the Spanish movie magazine *Cinemanía* in December 1999. Interviews in the Italian weekly *Gioia*, in 1996, also in 1997 on *Batman & Robin*, in 2003 about *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*.

Interviews in *Donna Moderna*, in 1996 about *Eraser*, in 1999 about *End of Days*.

My last interview with Arnold was published by the Italian bimonthly *Voilà* in June 2022. Added in a box were quotes from his March 17 video posted on social media asking Russian President Vladimir Putin to stop the war he started in Ukraine. [Watch it here](#).



Arnold Schwarzenegger, Elisa Leonelli (c) HFPA 1996

On June 28, I watched the livestreaming of Arnold Schwarzenegger interviewed at the [Academy Museum](#) about the [Taschen book *ARNOLD*](#), with photographs by Richard Avedon, Annie Leibovitz, Robert Mapplethorpe, Herb Ritts, Francesco Scavullo, Andy Warhol.

I always liked Arnold, despite the fact that he's a Republican. He's funny and smart, he is my same age, and he's a foreigner from a European country who made it in America. I encourage you to watch the documentary and see him talk about the successes and failures of his amazing life.

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