Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Scott Glenn

Elisa Leonelli · Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023

I had a wonderful experience meeting Scott Glenn in the summer of 1983, when I asked him to do a photo layout before the release of *The Right Stuff,* directed by Philip Kaufman from the 1979 book by Thomas Wolfe, and he graciously accepted. He posed for me in Santa Monica and Venice in front of murals and on the beach, then we sat in a café on the Boardwalk and I interviewed him.



I spoke with Glenn again in 1987, after he starred in a movie shot in Italy, *Man on Fire*, and did a long interview in 1991 about *Silence of the Lambs*, directed by Jonathan Demme from the 1988 novel by Thomas Harris, starring Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster.

As I always do, I asked him about a wide range of issues, personal and political, and he answered honestly and extensively.

He explained why in 1979 he moved to Ketchum, Idaho with his wife and daughters, and still managed to have a career in Hollywood movies. How he had scarlet fever as a child, was bed-ridden for a year at the age of 9. Left with weakened bones in his leg, he limped for 5 years, so he

swore that he would never be that weak again, became an athlete and strenuous physical exercise was a daily necessity for him.



He confessed that his ambition was always to be a writer, a poet, his whole romantic idea was to become a soldier of fortune, write a great epic poem by the time he was 33 years old, then probably die. His great hero growing up was Lord Byron.

Way back then, 40 years ago, Glenn addressed a subject that has become of concern again lately, since the Russians occupied the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station in Ukraine in March 2022 and the movie *Oppenheimer* by Christopher Nolan was released this July.

“I feel very strongly that nuclear energy in any form, peaceful or military, is a tool that the human race is not mature enough to handle, a Pandora’s box that I would like to see closed for another thousand years, until we figure out how to get rid of war, hunger, human suffering.”

“It’s the greatest threat to the survival of the world. It’s not only wrong but incredibly stupid to get energy from a process that creates the most toxic poisonous substance we have ever come in contact with, Plutonium, and we have no idea how to get rid of it. Basically it’s an expensive and inefficient way of boiling water. So that’s a concern that I have, simply because I have children and I want them to have some kind of future.”



Ocean Park mural by Jane Golden, 1976

I remember Scott Glenn’s many other outstanding performances, as the rebel rodeo rider in *Urban Cowboy* (1980) with John Travolta ans Debra Winger, a coach in *Personal Best* (1982) directed by Robert Towne with Mariel Hemingway, a cowboy in the western *Silverado* (1985) by Lawrence Kasdan with Kevin Kline and Kevin Costner, a martial arts expert in *The Challenge* (1982) by John Frankenheimer with Toshiro Mifune, the other man in *The River* (1984) by Mark Rydell with Sissy Spacek and Mel Gibson, the friend of Holly Hunter in *Miss Firecracker* (1989) by Thomas Schlamme, the submarine commander in *The Hunt For Red October* (1990) with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin, a firefighter in *Backdraft* (1991) by Ron Howard with Kurt Russell, the director of the CIA in *The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007) by Paul Greengrass with Matt Damon and *The Bourne*

Legacy (2012) by Tony Gilroy with Jeremy Renner, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in *W.* (2008) by Oliver Stone with Josh Brolin, Diane Lane's father in *Secretariat* (2010).



Glenn is still working today in his 80s. You can see him in *The Hill* playing Red Murff, the MLB (Major League Baseball) scout who discovered Ricky Hill, a physically handicapped player from Texas. The pastor father of the athlete is played by Dennis Quaid, Glenn's costar in *The Right Stuff*.

Click on words underlined in orange for additional info.

All photos (c) Elisa Leonelli 1983

This entry was posted on Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023 at 7:19 pm and is filed under Film
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.