



# David hurles

**David Randolph Hurles** (born September 12, 1944 in [Cincinnati](#) ) is a [gay pornographer](#) whose sole proprietorship, run from a private mailbox, was called Old Reliable Tape and Picture Company. His work, produced primarily in the 1970s and 1980s, falls into three categories: photographs, audiotapes, and videotapes. Hurles' models were typically ex-cons, con artists, homeless, and low-income people.

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## Early years

In the 1960s, Hurles appeared in movies and magazines, with the Guild Press, Washington DC, for whom he was also a photographer. <sup>[1]</sup> <sup>[2]</sup> : 59

In 1975, already filming in the [Super-8](#) format used by his mentor and old friend [Bob Mizer](#) of the [Athletic Model Guild](#) , he met and became a great friend of [Jack Fritscher](#) , editor of [Drummer](#) magazine , who described David as "my old man. friend and housemate ". <sup>[3]</sup> <sup>[4]</sup> The character Solly Blue in Fritscher's novel *Some Dance to Remember* has much in common with Hurles, <sup>[5]</sup> but although they share "coincidental archetypal adventures", Fritscher has denied that Blue is based on Hurles.

Hurles has written about San Francisco at the time: "Maybe you had to be there ... the '70s, San Francisco, the heyday and peak of gay sexual culture. It was a weird time; everything, it seemed, was perfect! So perfect, in fact, that those of us couldn't have imagined it could be otherwise!" <sup>[6]</sup> Jim Stewart describes his encounter with Hurles, the neighborhood they both lived in, and the birth of the Old Reliable name in the first chapter of *Folsom Street Blues* . <sup>[7]</sup>

His first published images appeared in *Drummer* , 21 (January 1978); <sup>[2]</sup> : 293 no other magazine would touch them. <sup>[2]</sup> : 59 He also shot many front and center pages of the Fritscher [zine](#) *Man2Man Quarterly* (1980-1982), <sup>[2]</sup> : 59 whose mailing address was San Francisco Hurles' apartment. <sup>[8]</sup> Subsequently, Hurles' photos have appeared in dozens of gay magazines. He soon moved to Los Angeles.

## Reliable old man

In 1990 Hurles published a catalog of his Old Reliable material, a guide to nearly five hundred men, and the hundreds of original Old Reliable videotapes, as well as the audiotapes and photos of the men (56 pp.) . <sup>[9]</sup> In 1995, a second volume was published, picking up where the first left off, also "a guide for nearly 500 men" (64 pp.). <sup>[10]</sup>

Models were recruited from ex-convicts and drug addicts. As admirer John Waters put it, "David likes psychopaths. Naked. Money-hungry drug addicts with big dicks. Rage-filled thieves without rubber bands. And, of course, convicts." <sup>[11]</sup> : 236 Many of them were dangerous - he wanted them to be, that was a key part of their appeal to him <sup>[12]</sup> But part of David's skill, which no one has duplicated since then, was being able to manage them so that they would act as instructed and not attack him. However, Hurles also said: "There have been several thousand models. When they are not in prison or very married, my practice has been to keep in touch with many of them, often for decades. They are my friends." <sup>[13]</sup> On another occasion he said that one of the hardest parts of his job was not getting sucked into the miserable lives of his models.

Although he did not make it public, Hurles' models were sometimes more mainstream homosexual pornographic actors. Scott O'Hara made a tape for him, as did Peter O'Brien. <sup>[14]</sup>

## Photographs

Hurles decided to downplay technical fireworks with his camera to focus on the emotional pyrotechnics of his models. <sup>[15]</sup> His models, picked up from the street or sent to him by referral, would come to his apartment, strip, and masturbate. Usually they were shot alone and with an erection; the amount paid depended on the "size of your penis and if you could put it in front of the camera". <sup>[16]</sup> : 112 They were distinguished by "attitude": straight, to their face, angry, disdainful of fags, dangerous, smoking cigars, pointing fingers, flexing biceps. "Rough trade is too



same a word, was John Carando's description. "Being robbed by his models, or having his equipment stolen, he saw as part of the cost of doing business. His photographs can be more easily consulted in two collections: *Speeding*, in black and white,<sup>[16]</sup> then in *Outcast* color,<sup>[18]</sup> and to a lesser extent in *The Big Penis Book*.<sup>[19]</sup>

Hurles printed his photographs in his own darkroom and fulfilled all requests single-handedly.

834 of Hurles' photos are reproduced on tribe.net.<sup>[20]</sup> A large number are posted on vintageoldreliable.blogspot.com and also on Yahoo! Grupo Viejo Reliable Caravan Park.<sup>[21]</sup> There are no permission statements posted with any of these photos, and David presumably does not receive compensation for the use of his images.

Images are used, with permission, as illustrations in two collections of Hurles Boyd McDonald's *Straight to Hell: The New York Review of Cocksucking Materials: Meat*<sup>[22]</sup> and *Skin*.<sup>[23]</sup><sup>[24]</sup> Hurles described McDonald as "the kindest person," who "really cheered me up."<sup>[24]</sup>

## Audio tapes (cassettes)

In addition to paying for modeling, Hurles paid many of his models to speak, while alone in a room with the door closed, on a common cassette recorder, usually about how they would like to mistreat gay men. In many cases he went on to record a second audiotape in which he sexually attended to the models. Behind the bravado and aggression of the models, sometimes disturbing connotations arise from the fact of his failure in life and his awareness of it. Also manifested, at times, their bewildered admiration, demasculinized by Hurles's enthusiasm for sex, for being the bottom, paying for fellatio, paying them to masturbate, buying their orgasms, which feel eerily good, even if they look straight. . Other models, however, they are not threatened at all; they like to exploit Hurles for money and sex, and "a hole is a hole". Some of the models were openly bisexual or gay, but David preferred straight models.

He released more than four hundred of these verbal sexual abuse tapes.<sup>[11]:221</sup> He "has always felt that his audiotapes were his best achievement".<sup>[25]</sup> Bijou Video has released five CDs of selected recordings.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Video tapes

With the advent of home video recording equipment around 1980, David began creating videotapes, eventually releasing more than three hundred. Most were alone, but some were boxing or wrestling between two of their models.<sup>[27]</sup> Four volumes of "The Best of Old Reliable", plus Tape 43 (Five Days with Phil) and 51 (I, Rick), are available on Ray Dragon Video.<sup>[28]</sup> The same two, plus four additional DVDs transferred from Old Reliable tapes, are available on Bijou Video: 32 (Hairy Guys), 38 (Arkansas Luggage), 56 (Basic Black # 5), and 82 (Boxing 1)<sup>[29]</sup> Others are available as video on demand at Bijou Video; In addition to the ones we just mentioned, these are 25 (Perfect Me), 47 (Men Worth Watching), 49 (Sizzling Solos), 154 (Innocence Explains Nothing), 211 (Ace Is The Place), 269 (Just As They Are ), and 277 (Some old friends).<sup>[30]</sup> The first page of a 2004 Bijou catalog has been archived, listing 326 VHS tapes and cassettes that are no longer available.<sup>[citation required]</sup> Another previous catalog has been archived at the Wayback Machine.<sup>[31]</sup> Some of his videos are available (2018) at <http://raydragonvideo.com>.

## Writing

Hurles has published three well-written and thoughtful reviews of gay books on Amazon: Fritscher's 1990 edition of *Some Dance to Remember*,<sup>[32]</sup> John Rechy's *City of Night's* 1994 edition,<sup>[33]</sup> and Gay porn star Scott O'Hara's *Autopornography: A Memory of Life on Lust Lane* (1994).<sup>[3.4]</sup>

Hurles and Fritscher co-authored an interview with "Scott Smith," an ex-con from Soledad prison.<sup>[35]</sup>

Hurles wrote an introduction: "A Thousand Light Years Ago: *Drummer*", to *Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer, Volume 1. A Memoir of Sex, Art, Lounge, Pop Culture Warfare, and Gay History from Drummer Magazine*.<sup>[36]</sup>

Hurles' memoirs, written in 1992 as *No Necessary Title: Some Notes, Comments, and Observations*, have not been published.<sup>[37]</sup>

From 1999 to 2005, Hurles added items to a revealing "Wish List" on amazon.com<sup>[38]</sup><sup>[39]</sup>

## Years later

A "wrestling accident" in 1990 caused the gradual loss of sight in one eye, a disaster for one photographer.<sup>[11]:219</sup> Shortly thereafter, the advent of Internet pornography destroyed most of the market for Hurles' material, at the same time that AIDS (and drugs) killed many potential models and models.<sup>[11]:226</sup> "I know where a lot of them [my models] are. Six feet under."<sup>[11]:224</sup> His business closed, and he lived on welfare and food stamps. In 2008 he suffered a massive stroke and today "is the most popular resident of a state-funded nursing home in East Hollywood."<sup>[40]</sup> He is aware and can communicate. Photos of him from 2009 to 2011 can be found on his Facebook page.<sup>[41]</sup>

## Influence

John Waters declared himself influenced by Hurles and dedicated part of a chapter of his *Role Models to him*, stating that "The wonderful, beautiful and terrifying life of David Hurles has been an inspiration to my inner filth for years." According to him, "David Hurles's photographs forever marked the ability of some homosexual men to be attracted to other average homosexuals. Without these pioneering Old Reliable photographs, homoeroticism in the art world could not have existed. Robert Mapplethorpe was a queer. Mr. Hurles is the real thing."<sup>[42]</sup> With Dian Hanson, John Waters curated a David Hurles photo exhibition, "Outsider Porn: The Photos of David Hurles," at the Marianne Boesky Gallery



SEX POSITIVE FEMINIST JOSIE BRIGHT HAS ALSO DECLARED HERSELF A FAN OF HURLES.

His friend Dian Hanson, who manages his financial affairs and the Old Reliable archive, described him as a "smart, funny, mild-mannered guy who studied his models in the same way that I had studied my readers every year I worked. making men's magazines. David is a true intellectual, a psychological hobbyist, and even more interesting as a person than a photographer. He says that we are "nice", and that seems the best description of the way we immediately clicked, sharing the Taste for men and in exploring the complexities of human psychology and sexual attraction. " [46]

## Archive footage

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California, has VHS videotapes of a nine-part interview conducted from August 18 to December 29, 1998, and 6 compact audio tapes of what appears to be a Four-part interview conducted on January 12, 1999. The collection also contains two compilation CD-ROMs, copyright 1998, of Old Reliable photographs: "As Seen from the Rear ... the Butt CD!" and "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar!" The interviews were conducted by Pat Allen, with the assistance of Bill Wyman. [47]

## See also

- Boyd McDonald (pornographer)

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