

Enigmatic smiles were your specialty. You must have studied your expressions in the mirror every morning, and I don't mean while you were smoking and shaving that scratchy blue stubble off your cheeks ...

exactly 3,214 hits in 0.48 seconds, so you see, she's not always right. There you are on the lower part of my screen, with your neat, close-cropped salt-and-pepper beard, your gray teeth, and, wait, are those the same wire-rimmed glasses? Gosh. I guess they were expensive and high quality. That's incredible you have the same glasses. Parenthetically, your website is on screen three—it's not in the top twenty Google hits when I search. You might want to hire some SEO people. I know a couple in Madras—the real Madras, in India. We had snail-mail problems with them too, even though Madras, Oregon, is nowhere near Paris, Texas, and the letters were never returned stamped with French words meaning “unknown at this address.”

Why you opted to call your site www.jrandallpomquist.com I don't know and it's none of my business. Maybe people wanting to hire you know to look up your name, or somehow associate French movies with “Pomquist,” not that I know many people interested in French movies here in Omaha, or anywhere else for that matter. The Nouvelle Vague was a long time ago.

You've done pretty well for yourself, at least in terms of peer recognition. You may not be making those art films

or “*films d'auteur*” you used to get excited about. Doing documentaries on farm issues, and those TV commercials, isn't bad, is it? I'm trying to be charitable. Truth be told, I can't help wondering how you square the advertising campaigns with the spiel you give about “progressive social policy” and global warming and all that other fine stuff in those interviews? The *New York Times* called you a “lockstep intellectual,” it's in an article on screen four, whatever “lockstep intellectual” means. That petition you signed—it's on screen two and if I were you I'd do something to get your name off it. Why do you bother fussing with our little problems of democracy, if I may ask? I sure wouldn't dream of telling the French what to do. If they want to say “four times twenty nineteen” instead of “ninety-nine” and elect an oligarch mafioso, that's fine by me.

I can imagine you smiling enigmatically. Enigmatic smiles were your specialty. You must have studied your expressions in the mirror every morning, and I don't mean while you were smoking and shaving that scratchy blue stubble off your cheeks, your perfectly symmetrical cheeks. A “smirk” is what I would call your Mona Lisa smile. Why you were blessed with such good looks, and an ability with languages, and in bed, I don't know, given that you are, or were, such a heel. I've sworn off blasphemy, and I'm not kidding. It's easier than giving up milkshakes or fries. I'm joking of course, kind of, but you wouldn't get it, and you probably don't know what a modified Atkins is. Diets never worked for me anyway.

A lot of things have changed since you left the country. Judging by the bio sketch on your site, I suspect you might be aware of some of what's going on. You probably travel back to see your family in New York, or for work. I notice you made a documentary a couple of years ago called *Tracking the Elusive GM Soybean*. The French title definitely sounds better. Just think, you were nearby and didn't know how close you came to running into me under a grain elevator or in the dark corners of a silo. Corn is what we're really good at here in Nebraska, not soybeans, if you must know. Amazingly you and I probably agree about genetic manipulation, but for different reasons. I'll bet you're out of touch with your native country in other ways, nonetheless, and just as cynical as ever. You never called it cynicism. You called it “realism” and “irreverence.” Whatever. I am trying to smile, but I refuse to use

KIT EASTMAN

Paris in Love, 2014
Photo-intaglio print, 9 x 9 in image
on 15 x 11 in paper



COURTESY THE ARTIST