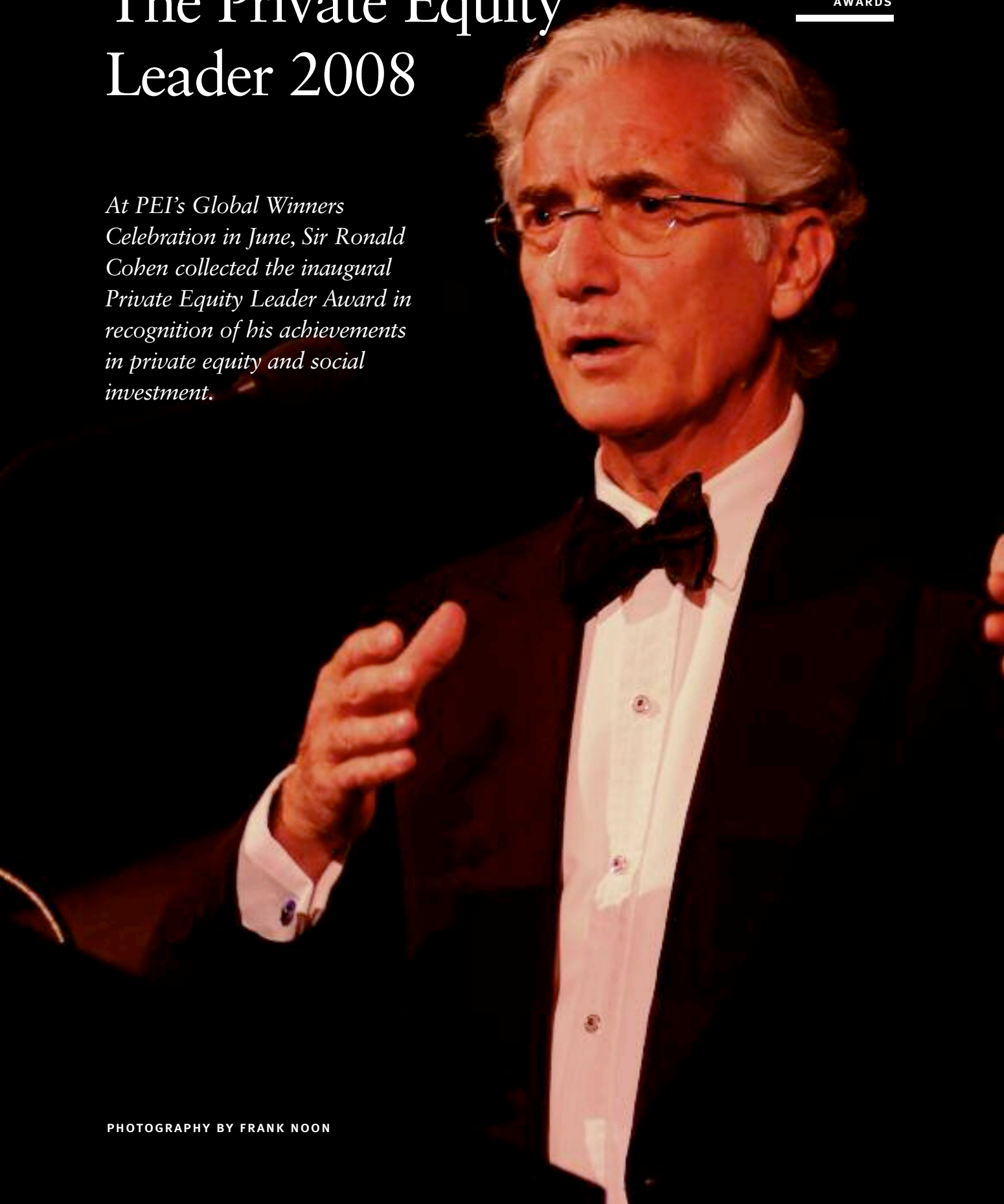


The Private Equity Leader 2008

AWARDS

At PEI's Global Winners Celebration in June, Sir Ronald Cohen collected the inaugural Private Equity Leader Award in recognition of his achievements in private equity and social investment.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK NOON



Full house at the Natural History Museum

In June, 300 industry professionals from around the world spent a memorable evening at London's Natural History Museum for *PEI's* first ever Global Winners Celebration, a summer party for the Private Equity International Awards.

As you would expect at a global celebration, the make-up of the audience was genuinely international. To give you flavour: among those present were India's leading private equity firm ICICI Ventures from Mumbai; Australian giants Pacific Equity Partners from Sydney; Middle Eastern pioneers Abraaj Capital from Dubai; and Canadian heavy-weight Teachers' Private Capital from Toronto. It was a night of great entertainment, networking, good food and fundraising for an important cause. Guests heard John Micklethwait, editor-in-chief of *The Economist*, speak about the global economy and the US presidential race. PEI Charity Partners I, a charity fund raised in support of Down Syndrome Education International and Sparkles, two charities focused on helping young people with Down Syndrome, garnered more than £110,000 (see next page).

It was also a night for Sir Ronald Cohen. The founding partner and former chairman of Apax Partners came to collect *PEI's* inaugural Private Equity Leader Award, a new award we created to recognise the achievements of private equity professionals with exceptional leadership skills.

Every year, we will give the Private Equity Leader Award to someone who has helped the global private equity industry move into the position of influence and responsibility it now occupies, and who through the work they do today continue to lead their peers by example. Inevitably, the successful candidates will be people with big ideas who use a blend of intellect, conviction and force of personality to make them happen.

In Sir Ronald, the Private Equity Leader Award has an

inaugural recipient who captures perfectly what the award stands for, and who sets a great benchmark for future winners.

At Apax, first of all, he founded and for many years ran one of Europe's leading private equity investment groups, a firm with billions of Euros under management and an ever-larger global footprint.

In addition to growing the business, he was also instrumental in creating some much needed financial market infrastructure around it. In the 1990s, he was a driver behind the creation of Easdaq, the pan-European technology exchange. He also worked closely with the industry associations, EVCA and BVCA, during formative periods of the industry's development.

Before he left his firm in 2004, Sir Ronald helped conceive and implement a text book succession plan, which in an industry still grappling with the difficulties inherent in succession, set an important precedent for how it can be done, and how it can be done well.

Today, he remains a figure of influence in business and politics in Europe and the Middle East. As a financier, he concentrates on pioneering work in the field of social investment: Sir Ronald is chairman of Bridges Ventures, a private equity firm investing in Britain's poorest areas, and of The Portland Trust, which focuses on economic development in Palestine to help boost stability in the Middle East.

This current work is important not only for the communities that benefit from it; it also matters to private equity in that it demonstrates to the industry how its skill set can be applied laterally, to fields outside its core business. It's private equity leadership work all over again, and yet another reason for honouring Sir Ronald as *PEI's* first ever Private Equity Leader. ■



Visionary: John Micklethwait, The Economist



Winning smiles: Kathleen Bacon and George Anson of HarbourVest Partners



Sir Ronald Cohen with admirers