

London Independent Photography

Summer/Autumn 2008. No.10. £4.00
Still Life/Wild Life



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About London Independent Photography

LIP is an informal forum for independent photographers that has been established for nearly 20 years, bringing together practitioners with different backgrounds and levels of expertise, who are interested in developing their skills and personal approach to photography.

LIP organises a programme of practical workshops, master classes and talks as well as various exhibitions throughout the year. It has satellite groups across London which meet regularly to discuss members' work. Our magazine is currently published three times a year and is free to members.

Join LIP

Annual Subscription: £20, concessions £16 (students and OAP).
Application details can be found on our website:
www.londonphotography.org.uk/joinLIP.php

Satellite Groups:

Small informal groups meet approximately once a month to discuss each other's work, plan exhibitions and just share ideas. The structure, content, times, dates, and frequency of the meetings are left to the individual groups to decide for themselves. Non-members as well as members are welcome.

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Front cover image, Adrian Capps (*The Swimmers*, p10).
Back cover image, Kelly Hill (*Sensitive Dependence*, p16).

Photographers Featured

5. **Richard Boll** Holding my Breath
6. **Odette England** Rush for Heaven
10. **Adrian Capps** The Swimmers
13. **Gary Alexander** WAIT: Interactions with Street Furniture
14. **Mike Whelan** PondLife (guest contributor)
15. **Anna Hillman** Plant Animals of London
16. **Kelly Hill** Sensitive Dependence
18. **Peter Coles** Domestic Blitz
19. **Francis Minien** Still Action
20. **Agata Cardoso** Living Without my Breasts
22. **Johnnie Tate** Pipe Dreams
24. **Martina Geccelli** Contents
26. **Tom Coulton** Tokyo Dreaming
28. **Nick Goold** Morning Rush
29. **Tony McAteer** Bouquets
30. **James Reid** Head to Head
32. **Michael Potts** Animal Wild Life
33. **Roger Hooper** Exposed: Endangered Wildlife (guest contributor)
34. **Laura Cuch** Poetics of the Material (guest contributor)
35. **Jonny Baker** A Mystical Quest
36. **Paul Hill** The Small Adventures

Introduction

Still Life / Wild Life Issue

Britt Hatzius, editor

London Independent Photography Magazine aims to present contemporary work by independent emerging and established fine art photographers. Our approach is guided by a wish to explore the motivations and philosophies behind the visual through a combination of text and images. In this way we hope to inform and inspire our readers with different concepts, approaches and ideas within photographic practice.

The theme for this issue was inspired by the fact that two such familiar but disassociated photographic practices, Still Life and Wildlife, each contain the word 'life'. In their juxtaposition these two terms have opened up to a range of very different, and often unusual, interpretations.



'Still life' in this issue is approached both metaphorically and literally. Some of the photographs induce a feeling of stillness, others thoughts on what we might consider a still life to be. Alongside runs the concept of 'wild - life', understood not only as wild animals or plants, but evoking similarly diverse associations.

Several pieces included address topics and issues regarding the fragile ecosystem that we as humans share with animals and plants. Some are presented with great urgency, others more playfully. From the intimate and minute detail to the bigger picture they offer individual perceptions of life.

I hope the range of work will encourage an attentive look at the world around us and a curious awareness of what life can be, both inside and outside, close by and at a distance.

LIP Extra, the section towards the end of the magazine, include further contributions from LIP members and information on LIP's activities and events – these pages have kindly been put together by founding members Virginia Khuri and Jeanine Billington.

All but three of the photographers included in this issue are members of LIP.

We welcome contributions throughout the year and look forward to hearing from you. For details on submission and future issues please refer to www.londonphotography.org.uk/LIPmagazine

Richard Boll

Holding my Breath



The Tsunami had struck the other side of Thailand from where I was based (the island of Koh Tao). When I took these photographs, I was doing a lot of salvage diving on the island of Koh Phi Phi that had been particularly badly hit.



Text by Laura Noble

Odette England Rush for Heaven

Odette England's imagery knits the familiar together with the often-overlooked momentary gasps of beauty that creep into everyday life. Her work is as subtle as the subjects she captures.

As the title of this series suggests, time passes far too quickly. In our haste to get by in the world we can miss the serenity of the form and function that our domestic lives contain. England's photographs give pause for thought in the least likely locations. Each image is tempered with clues to the past, present and future circumstances that these still lives project both literally and allegorically. A bed awaits another slumber, an iron awaits the next shirt, the bath its next occupant and a sink yet another batch of dirty dishes.

The history of the still life in art informs and educates us as to the period it was made, not only through the lives rendered but also through the execution of the image. It seems fitting that a relatively contemporary medium of photography should illustrate and capture this timeless tradition.

England utilises these traditions through careful use of light and composition without removing the spontaneity of the situation she captures. By blurring boundaries within each composition our viewing experience is both transient and focused. By leading our gaze back and forth between different depths of field our eyes dart around the picture to then be drawn to one pin-sharp area that requires longer viewing and indeed meditation. We can compare all of these elements to that of our own domestic scenery and perhaps pause to look at our own still life with a little more patience.

The satin sheen of an article of clothing draped over a bathtub shimmers like the fabric in a Rossetti painting, alongside the soft tones of the bathroom. This understated elegance is reminiscent of Morandi's palette with hues of cream and beige. In England's case, less is really more. The intimacies of the home provide a warmth and familiarity to these images. Composing each picture with verve England's closeness to her subjects enhances each element without omitting the reality of each scene. The anonymity of her locations and the people who reside there does much to increase the feeling of privacy not intrusion.

However, the presence felt within these works of the people who used these places and objects is still evident, as they leave their mark in each space through these used objects. We can imagine someone squeezing out a sponge before placing it carefully on the sink in order to keep it dry. As these things are used over and over again the suggestion of circular time is evident. Repetition is suggested purely and simply. The numerous creases on cotton sheets show the many imprints left by the person who slept there. There is a beauty in this monotony, which is surprisingly comforting. Perhaps by stopping to look back at the things we leave behind every day could slow us down enough to appreciate the quiet beauty our lives create.

Laura Noble is an artist, curator, writer and photographic consultant.





Adrian Capps The Swimmers



On Christmas Day in 2007

It doesn't take much to get us to raid the dressing-up box. Even on a freezing Christmas morning, there were plenty of participants more than willing to leave their stockings at home and don some unusual attire: you only have to scratch the surface to see that whoever feels they should belong also longs to be different.



Gary Alexander

WAIT: Interactions with Street Furniture



The urban street is probably the last place most people would associate with stillness, but at certain places “the sidewalk becomes a stage on which the pulsating activity of the metropolis comes to a standstill for a brief moment” (*Wait for Walk*, Florian Böhm, Published: Hatje Catz 2007).

The most explicit place of stillness is where it is demanded of you: the bright yellow WAIT box with its chunky round button. Watching some of those boxes intently, I found people pressing the button then continue walking on the same side of the road, as if their pressing of the button instigated some kind of decision-making process. There are others who press the button in passing,

only as a kind of backup plan, in case they can't hurry across and have to indeed wait before crossing. Small children are often keen to be involved. I wonder if the joy of button pressing (as if in a science museum) is coupled with a feeling of control, in a city that rarely favors its pedestrians. There are all manners of interactions with the button: from gentle prods, repeated tapping to long and unnecessarily firm presses.

Besides the button there is the box. I have seen pedestrians use it as a resting place for their own bodies as well as various types of waste. Drinking cans and bottles are often seen alongside remains of apples and banana skins. It's as if placing them higher from the ground somehow excuses the littering.

In employing a variety of tactics to capture these frames, stillness is often useful when waiting for the picture to come together. As a street photographer, the pavement, the road and the crossing are all part of my studio. And in the end, although people are nothing like fruit or flowers (the cliché of a painter's still life), when it comes to my observation and contemplation, I do see them as still figures, surrounded by the bustling street life.

Mike Whelan Pondlife



During recent trips to Denmark I became aware of the declining water levels in ponds. The potential dangers are catastrophic to the immediate environment, both in terms of wildlife and the human cost. The importance of ponds to sustain those that use it is often overlooked. During a prolonged period of drought, farmers will often turn to nature to protect their livelihood. Ponds provide this safety net.

I always attempt to consider my environment whilst photographing it; both in terms of my perspective as a photographer and yet remaining conscious of the real threat posed by our ever-changing world. Although this problem may not be unique to Denmark, I felt a particular affinity to such a lunar, mysterious landscape. I often find myself humbled by the emotional effect a beautiful or unfamiliar landscape has on me the first time it reveals itself. At the same time though, there remains this sobering reminder of the negative impact we as human beings have on the environment.

Anna Hillman Plant Animals of London



Clockwise from top left: frog, bird and fish skeleton



Kelly Hill

Sensitive Dependence



Sensitive dependence is a series of images that explore our relationship with the natural world as though through the eyes of a child. It is a body of work that looks at the fragility of the world around us, a child's affinity with nature and concerns I have with environmental damage and the legacy we are leaving our children.

For My Daughter

By Glyn Maxwell

If I call this poem that, I have as new
A pattern of three words to learn as you
Have everything. The day you get the gist
Of what is becoming you'll have missed
The point you were. Then you'll have reached the stage
You stay at, insofar as every age
In writing is a step along a shelf
Where words are stowed and weather like a self.
The height is dizzy but it stays the same
And the ladder gets there when you make a name
Of something I keep calling you. That date
We won't forget to celebrate,
Like rain we needed after a long spell
Of what was blissful but incredible

*Glyn Maxwell's forthcoming book, **Hide Now**, will be published in October 2008, simultaneously in UK (Picador) and US (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), and his play, **Liberty**, premieres at the Globe Theatre in August 2008, followed by a UK tour. For further information for Glyn Maxwell, please contact info@steinplays.com*



Peter Coles Domestic Blitz



The impromptu still lives in my intimate, home environment: amongst the chaos and clobber of infancy, there exists something new, tender, absurd, happy, personal, and charged with my own love for these small people, slowly revealing who they are.

Francis Minien Still Action



Agata Cardoso

Living Without my Breasts



My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer three years ago and, as soon as she was told, underwent a full mastectomy. She had decided that she would rather live without her breasts and survive, than live with them and die. Although two of my aunts had previously had breast cancer, I had never thought that cancer would affect myself or my closest family. Supporting my mother through breast cancer, I realised that cancer doesn't mean death, as I had previously thought.

Many of us are not confronted with images of women without breasts. The fact that one in nine women in the UK are affected by breast cancer means there must be someone who has experienced cancer, in the immediate or extended family of most people. I feel that exposure to such images would encourage younger women to be more aware of their bodies.

I used personal ads in local shops, libraries and community centers to find women in the UK who had suffered from breast cancer. I received a considerable amount of interest and the resulting twelve portraits show a relationship of acceptance and trust between the subject and myself. I photographed each of the women in their own surroundings, reflected in their natural and confident appearance.

These portraits are about reaching for the essence of life and recognizing that many of us only do this when we are confronted with our own mortality. We take our bodies for granted, abusing them without realising that our bodies are indeed weak and fragile and prone to disease.

These women's breasts no longer serve as sexual fantasies, being either amputated, reduced, or covered in scars as a result of surgery. Despite their visual disability, these women stand by the body they live in and with. These women are defiant. They are figures of strength, hope and incredible courage.



Johnnie Tate Pipe Dreams



Offering the audience empty sites of spectacle, invites a contemplation of the absence, the sport itself and the marks it creates within our environment.

Originally I saw these football pitches as places in the aftermath of an event. As I photographed the sites in the morning, when they were most likely to be empty, I realised that a more suitable description would be 'sites in limbo', places waiting to be used. In this sense they are similar to Laura Braun's photographs of lidos, she states:

"These aren't neglected sites. Instead they are in a kind of limbo – in the space between static and movement." (Braun, 2006, p.14)

The aftermath suggests abandonment and dereliction, ideas that are not true for my subject. I hence deliberately avoided goal posts in very bad condition. The absence is accentuated by the overcast skies and cold topographic colours produced by the time of day, constant checking of skies and weather forecasts, the choice of film, a tripod, large format camera and the style of printing.

To me, these photographs evoke a sense of nostalgia, remembering cold, wet and muddy football pitches that one was forced to play on as a school child. Choosing amateur pitches, not large stadiums, emphasises a certain romantic view of the game. The dreams of celebrity and success, standing out from the crowd and avoiding anonymity are all present in this amateurish grass-rootedness. In this context, my goalposts could stand for the positive use of urban and suburban landscapes.

They could also be seen as 'anonymous sculptures,' similar to that of Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographic typologies of industrial structures. By photographing them, their form is separated from their function. As a series, they become subject to comparison, emphasising similarities or differences, but without offering obvious or immediate narratives.

The posts also reference an iconic object in art, the frame. By capturing them at head height the viewer can see through the goalposts into the surrounding landscape, acting in the same way as a frame that creates a border around a picture.

Part of what I feel works well about the images is the mundane, everyday English backdrops. There is something very British about amateur football, perhaps due to our supposed invention of the game.

"The study of sport is intrinsically interesting because it is such a pervasive part of life in contemporary society. No other institution except perhaps religion, commands the same mystique, nostalgia, romantic idealism, and cultural attachment as sport. Sport combines the frivolous with the serious; and the ideological with the structural [...] Sport may be viewed as a microcosm of society". (Delaney, 2003,p.7)

Delaney, T. (ed.) (2003). *Sport and Deviant Behavior. Philosophy Now*. No.41. May/June.

Naik, D (2006). *Lidos: an Interview with Laura Braun. London Independent Photography*. No.5, Autumn/Winter. p.14.



Martina Geccelli

Contents: Old Appliances

Space is defined by its limitations, its physical outlines and that which lies in between. Within, objects are arranged, standing in particular relation to each other. Through their proximity, I explore the relationships that inform our meaning-making and the different definitions that we have for the things that surround us in everyday life.



Tom Coulton Tokyo Dreaming



Train travel forms a large part of the modern urban lifestyle and Tokyo boasts one of the biggest metropolitan rail networks in the World. To live there means to admire its punctuality while enduring the crowds and the crush. In a world where more people are starting to live in urban centers compared to rural areas, the experience of the commute will increasingly become a universal experience.

We often see images coming out of Japan depicting commuters packed in trains or station staff pushing on more passengers to already heaving carriages, which in all truthfulness has to be experienced to believe. With my pictures I tried to focus on the experience of the individual traveler, to humanize this aspect of life in Tokyo that often feels so inhuman.



The concept of endurance (我慢 *gaman*) is firmly embedded in the Japanese psyche and some of the individuals in these pictures seem to be rigorously exercising this cultural trait. Each individual commuter appears to have their own way of coping with the journey, some looking meditative, while others seem overtly distressed and all face out of the carriage longing for an escape.

They stare out at the outside world passing by, taking in their last glimpse of daylight before the train enters the dark tunnel. They are seemingly deep in thought, dreaming or possibly anaesthetised to the daily struggle of riding Tokyo's overcrowded trains. Momentarily, they detach mentally from their surroundings, escaping the grim realities of this unavoidable and monotonous aspect of modern living.

Nick Goold
Morning Rush



Tony McAteer
Bouquets



In this work I approach photography as an empirical system that provides sensitive and subtle inscriptions of a world only partially visible to us. The workings of photography itself emphasises this partiality of view. In dealing with photography I am always aware of our images as a glimpse, a part, an extraction.

The Bouquets project engages with these aspects of photography. I start with a particular type of observation (I shoot traditional Still Life images) and then remove their main focal point. The remaining subtly detailed, perforated images are linked and pieced together into new photographs. Moving from a traditional romantic view of nature (the Still Life) to the puzzle-like aesthetic of the final images appropriately reflects our current relationship to nature and the multi-layered approach to its representation.

James Reid Head to Head



“The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which”
George Orwell, *Animal Farm*



Michael Potts Animal Wild Life



Roger Hooper Exposed: Endangered Wildlife



Like many of us, I grew up learning about wildlife watching the early BBC documentaries like *Zoo Quest*. They introduced me to spectacular species, from all corners of the world. I dreamt of one day having the opportunity of seeing some of these incredible sights first hand. All these years later, I have finally realised my dream, having been fortunate enough to photograph most of the endangered species in their natural habitat, including the polar bear, the Asian rhino, the giant panda, the tiger and the orangutan.

Sadly, if the world continues as it is, with global warming, massive deforestation and the pressures of human encroachment, then future generations will not be as fortunate as I have been. Many of these species will no longer survive in their natural habitat and the only place to see such magnificent creatures will be in captivity.

Roger Hooper works in association with WWF (World Wildlife Fund). For more details on the publication of his work, visit www.hoopersgallery.co.uk

Laura Cuch

Poetics of the Material

Japan, 2007



Jonny Baker

A Mystical Quest



“Sometimes I think the people who are saddest are those who have lost or become numb to the sensation of wonder” Douglas Coupland in *Life After God*.

Ricky films a carrier bag floating in the wind in front of a garage door for fifteen minutes, in the film *American Beauty*. He whispers ‘there is so much beauty in the world – I can’t take it in’. He films everything. For him the camera seems to enable him to look or see more closely, to pay attention, to see beauty where others might see rubbish. The mystics call this awareness. In this sense photography is mystical. At the recent annual LIP lecture, Paul Hill described photography as learning how to see. He also shared his own never waning interest and excitement in taking ‘small adventures’ locally with the camera.

This photograph was taken in Gunnersbury Park in Ealing, on one of my own small adventures close to where I live. The combination of morning sunlight, frost and mist is almost electric. It has an incredible energy to it. I find myself, on a morning like this, wanting to catch moments that will never be repeated, moments that, paradoxically, I see being both wild and still. There’s a wild rush of adrenaline and excitement. Then, in the moment of beauty, I almost hold my breath, lost in wonder at the stillness. Maybe it’s being in the fast paced city of London that makes these fleeting still moments so renewing.

Text by Peter Jennings

Paul Hill

The Small Adventures

In his talk *Don't Go There*, Paul Hill showed he had gone there – with thought, tenacity and courage. Realising over thirty years ago that personal photography was the most important thing that he could do, he set a template for many independent photographers globally.

Hill kicked off the talk with a mention of Janet Hall who had warned him about advertising his workshops on a TV travel programme: 'you might get the wrong sort of people.'

LIP members were out in force to hear Hill talk about his personal approach to photography: 'viewed as unusual in the 1970's because it had no commercial application and couldn't support text.'

Born in Ludlow, Shropshire, he worked as a journalist until he met his wife, Angela, a photo-journalist. Impressed by her work, he switched from typewriter to camera, working for various newspapers including the Guardian and Observer, eventually becoming disenchanted with journalism feeling it had become 'entertainment,' and 'Murdoxed.'

Wanting to examine the world from within himself rather than be fettered by the demands of the press, he moved into teaching as Head of Trent-Nottingham Polytechnic in 1972. Stimulated by an art environment he started to put pictures together in a different way with: 'a sense of play.'

He found 'small adventures' all around him and 'extraordinary images in the ordinary.' He showed a picture, taken in Austria – a sinister figure of a man dressed in black surrounded by pure white snow. In another we see only the legs of his daughter sitting on the edge of a cliff in Matlock – an strong image of vulnerability.

At this time, Hill felt 'pilloried' in his teaching role, but by creating personal images he held a mirror up to himself. This led him to create in 1976 what was to become one of the major photographic achievements in this country – The Photographers' Place – two stone cottages at Bradbourne, deep in Rural Derbyshire – one for family the other serving as a lecture room/ living accommodation for participants.

The Photographer's Place workshops hosted major photographers: Paul Caponigro, Ralph Gibson, Raymond Moore, Fay Godwin to name a few. All showed their own work, critiqued participants work and answered all their questions. It was an experience both rewarding and energising which the writer of this article counts himself lucky to have had!



Hill was awarded the MBE in 1994 for his contribution to British photography. From creating personal images involving his family, Hill turned to photographing the Peak District landscape. Mid tones of grey are apparent – something Minor White had pointed out in his work. Hill created an exhibition and book project *White Peak/Dark Peak*. The book used single images and diptyches, the latter he found: 'a bit trendy,' but made his own to show how certain landscape views dramatically changed due to the season. A personal odyssey, with some text, the book has become a topographic and photographic masterwork.

He became Course Leader of the MA photography at de Montfort University, Leicester. Influenced by his more academic and conceptual surroundings, Hill's next series was a comment on how we view pets. A lightweight conceptual package and Hill's first foray into colour, 'Pets Don't Buy Things' contained a series of dog chews photographed on a light-box; – a visual 'diary' of the family Border terrier Spadger and a photograph of a cat with KILLER printed on the photograph. This picture controversially appeared on the front page of the Derbyshire Evening Telegraph – an irony, for Hill, as an ex-press photographer, to see one of his 'art' photographs in the local paper.

Sadly Angela Hill died from cancer in 2006. Hill turned to photography to cope with and explain his grief: "death comes within your corridor, when it affects you it is difficult to know just how you will manage."



He managed by producing a series of still life, close up and abstract images lying between past and future states of being. Still in the process of creation, *Corridor of Uncertainty* hovers around the question of personal photography becoming insular. Hopefully when *Corridors* is complete it will transcend the personal for a more universal statement.

Hill rounded off by saying that ideas are presented to us as words but visual culture has a strong effect on us: 'we do not spend enough time looking at the world.' Considering the audience, this was preaching to the converted but probably helped to refresh a few jaded muses.

I'm sure he will 'go there' again. Hill emphasised that he has no style, only one defined by the project in hand. It is, he admitted, ingrained in him to pick up a camera. So what next, Paul?

Personal Places, an exhibition by Paul Hill, will be held at Derby Museum and Art Gallery from 6th September until 26th October, 2008. A DVD on Paul's work, produced by Anthony Hopewell, will accompany the show and be available for sale.



Photobook

Text by Laura Noble,
Photographers' Gallery Bookshop.

All prices are correct at time of going to press.

Rob Carter

Travelling Still

£35 / LIP members £31.50

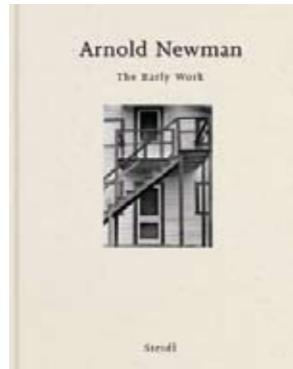


With the themes in this issue of LIP I felt that Rob Carter's new book *Travelling Still* is a wonderful combination of both still-life and wild life in a somewhat abstracted sense. This abstraction is both literal and virtual as his delightful photographs display, moving stationary vistas which awaken the senses through their vibrant intensity. With the use of a revolving camera, Carter stretches and transforms scenery into a painterly impression directly onto transparency within the camera. Avoiding the temptation to do this digitally Carter's work remains organic. Each landscape blends from one colour to the next, resulting in sumptuous palettes that can be viewed at a glance abstractly or with a more careful eye to pick out the origins of the location depicted. With a brief descriptive title accompanying each work, some locations reveal themselves easily whereas other re-affirm the notions they present. Carter's paradoxical work both controls and retains each environment within its own wildness in the square parameters of each frame. Not unlike Rothko paintings they can be meditated upon over and over again. With 140 fantastic images on beautifully spot-varnished pages the book is a work of art in itself.

Arnold Newman

The Early Work

£40 / LIP members £36



Calling all those who favour beautifully considered simplicity in black and white, BUY THIS BOOK! Rarely does a body of work inform us to such a degree on the importance of composition. Newman's work is reminiscent of the great Walker Evans, from both a figurative and observational point of view. His interest in signage and the exteriors of buildings display crisp imagery full of textural detail. Like Aaron Siskind, he focuses his composition through linear layers, arranged and cropped to turn the everyday into beautiful abstracted forms. Pictures of a clapboard house are collaged, adding a third dimension to the 2D image, pushing and pulling the depth of field to glorious effect. Empty frames are arranged in a seemingly random way, yet reveal the sophistication of a Klein painting coupled with the sensibilities of a Raushenberg.

His portraits of the black community in West Palm Beach, Florida are touching yet eminently respectful. Although his subjects' lives are hard, Newman is careful to display their strength of character rather than their situation with equal dexterity.

The printing is divine and the scale of the book holds them beautifully. I would not be surprised if this went out of print very quickly and deservedly so.

Erwin Olaf

£35 / £31.50



Erwin Olaf's work inhabits a twilight world often tempered with an unnerving stillness as his subjects appear frozen in time before the shutter clicks, as if it is recording the strangeness rather than driving it. This is perhaps as the photographs within this book are all taken on the sets for his films (selected edited versions, several of which are on a CD which comes with the book) but work beautifully as tableaux for his models. With a 1950's aura the photographs have sombre tones of olive greens, browns and warm yellows.

Each sitter has a look of loneliness as they stare outward, downward, away and directly at the camera. In *Grace*, 2007, from the series *Grief* an old woman stands in a room furnished with period furniture neatly and carefully arranged – the pride of a dutiful housewife perhaps – face in her hands as if sobbing. Her immaculate dress and bouffant hair infer the importance of keeping up appearances during a difficult time. However, the glass of sherry on a windowsill tells another story. Olaf's ability to construct multiple narratives within each scene takes the eyes around each space to observe details within. I implore you to admire beauty of his aesthetic and suggest that you linger on the elements within each image at leisure.

LIP Extra

By now you will have noticed the extra pages we have included in this and the last issue of the magazine. They have been created especially and specifically for you to air your views, express your concerns and communicate your news. Anything which may not fit with the specific theme of each issue will find space here. This will allow free expression from any LIP member while keeping the portfolio pages guided by our editor's artistic goals.

For this to work, we need your input. We would like you to supply us with your ideas, comments on and reactions to exhibitions, books, images – in other words, your words, few or many, but not exceeding 400. So please send us an

outline of your ideas and suggestions. Also, remember that the magazine is printed only three times a year, so in order to keep the content relevant for longer, we ask you to look forwards to the upcoming three/four months rather than just review recent events. If you know of an exhibition due to open in September, say, it would be better to mention it in the Summer issue of the magazine rather than in the Autumn/Winter issue so people can go and see it rather than read about what they have missed!

Email your proposals to both Jeanine Billington and Virginia Khuri at secretary@londonphotography.org.uk
We look forward to hearing from you!

LIP AGM

Do you usually find that AGM's are boring? If so then you have never attended a LIP AGM! There is always a lively exchange of ideas for the future of LIP and it is a good opportunity to get more involved in the planning of activities and events.

After two years under Brian Keane's leadership, during which the LIP magazine and website have been coordinated and given a contemporary new look, Brian has stepped down as Chair. This year we will be electing a new Chair so this is a particularly important AGM. In addition we will be asking for ideas for the celebration of LIP's 21st anniversary in conjunction with the Photographers Gallery. And if that isn't enough, you can bring along spare photographic books to sell, and buy some for your collection. So please come along and GET INVOLVED!

The 2008 LIP AGM will be held on Tues 28 October, 7-9 pm. Rudolph Steiner House, 35 Park Rd, Westminster, London NW1. Nearest Tube: Baker Street

Sic transit gloria studii

Text by David Malarkey

Before LIP existed, life for the 'independent' photographer was punctuated by rare treats, visiting Paul Hill's Place, to discover that there were like-minded people after all. The first tentative LIP meetings were in pubs close to the Photographers' Gallery, none of them even slightly quiet or private and it was a joy to discover somewhere within walking distance of the tube (the new Waitrose was not yet built) and ring the bottom bell. (The instructions always said 'marked Khuri' but it has never been legible). The magic lock clicks open and inside, a welcome, a welcome cup of tea and some welcome old friends. Usually there was the promise of new friends too. 'And have you brought any work'?

Always, we delayed seeing the work for a little gossip, abusing some part of the RPS, discussing an exhibition, passing on the occasional tip, for we didn't actually despise technique and finally clearing the table. It was a relief to find how generous people could be with what you were trying to do, always humbling to see how excellent and original was the work of the other people there, always a delight to share jokes and always too soon to face the journey home. Change is life, I suppose, and an institution as old as LIP is passing. Without it, we might have limped along in the back rooms of unsuitable pubs and LIP might not even be here. As this will embarrass her greatly, let's embarrass her just a bit more and say 'Thank you Virginia Khuri'.

Workshops

LIP Workshops

Booking essential for all workshops.

LIP Workshops: The Camera Club, 16 Bowden Street, Kennington SE11 4DS. £25 (members), £20 (Concessions) £30 (non-members). Please contact Julie Long julielong@talktalk.net or 07726 881 334.

Tim Daly: Creative Digital Printing Workshop

Sat 13 September, 10.30am-5.30pm

Tim Daly is a well known writer on digital photography and digital printing. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Photography at the University of Chester and an Ilford/Harmen Masterclass leader. Tim's latest book *Creating Exhibition-Quality Digital Prints* was published by Argentum in February 2008. His workshop will teach you how to prepare, preview and produce hand-crafted digital prints. Tim has a unique teaching approach – you will be using fineprinting papers and software skills developed from traditional darkroom techniques. Bring your own files (over 10MB). www.timdaly.com

Simon Roberts: Worldwide

Sat 11 October, 10.30am-5.30pm

Simon Roberts's photojournalism has been published internationally. His awards include the Ian Parry Scholarship (1998), and Getty Images Photojournalism Award (2006). For his latest book *Motherland*, Simon travelled throughout Russia between July 2004 and August 2005, creating one of the most extensive photographic accounts of that vast country by a Westerner.

Simon's workshop will involve a slideshow presentation mapping his award-winning work as a photographer from editorial commissions to his book, *Motherland*. Following the presentation Simon will be available for portfolio reviews. Please edit your work into a series of approximately ten images. www.simoncroberts.com

Ray Spence: Traditional Processes Digitally

Sat 15 November, 10.30am-5.30pm

For thirty years, Ray has specialised in Fine Art Monochrome printing and alternative printing processes. Since 1988 he has worked digitally combining new and traditional technologies. A Fellow of the RPS, his work is in many private collections as well as The RPS Permanent Collection. His most recent book is *Black and White Photography in the Digital Age*. This workshop looks at producing digital images in the style of traditional photographic processes including cyanotype, liquid emulsion and Polaroid. Participants will use a flatbed scanner to create new work. Ray will bring a range of fine art digital paper for you to buy so you can print your own images. No experience necessary but basic Photoshop recommended. www.rayspence.co.uk

Weird and Wonderful: Lomography

Thurs 14 August, 6.30pm

Photographers Gallery, Great Newport Street, London WC2.

If you're tired of the high tech, digital, pixel peeping approach to photography then maybe Lomography is what you need. Wikipedia says "Lomography emphasizes casual, snapshot photography. Characteristics such as over-saturated colors, off-kilter exposure, blurring, "happy accidents," and alternative film processing are often considered part of the "Lomographic Technique." Users are encouraged to take a lighthearted approach to their photography, and use these techniques to document everyday life, as the Lomo LC-A's small size, simple controls, and ability to shoot in low light encourages candid photography, photo reportage, and photo vérité." www.photonet.org.uk

Independent Photography in the Southeast (IPSE) Workshops

A Day of History and Research by Roger Taylor

Sat, 4 October 10.30am-4pm at the Rawson Institute, Bolney

Roger will trace the way in which his career gradually evolved as a photographic historian, touching on the processes and pitfalls of research and explaining his recent experiences with the Metropolitan Museum of Art curating an exhibition and writing the catalogue. In 1967 Roger began teaching at Sheffield City Polytechnic. There he developed one of the first undergraduate fine art programmes in the UK. In 1985 he became a curator at the newly established National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford. Since 1996 he has been working on various research projects, among them photography exhibitions of Lewis Carroll and Roger Fenton. He most recently curated an exhibition on the culture of the British calotype and an impressive accompanying book. The exhibition was at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York last autumn, and has now moved to Paris. To book: jillstaples@macdream.net or 01444 881 891

Autumn weekend at Micklepage with Karen Knorr

Sat 8th to Sun 9th May

Karen Knorr's work explores many areas from the traditional to the realm of fantasy, but with humour and strong narrative composition, using imposing backgrounds of stately homes and museums. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is in many collections. She is also an experienced teacher. Karen is setting us an optional project, but will look at any of your own work you chose to bring. See www.karenknorr.com, or Portfolio magazines numbers 25 & 42. Cost £100 members, £110 non-members.

To Stand and Stare in Trafalgar Square

Text by Jeanine Billington

Sometimes photography is a lonely pursuit, so it is good when the opportunity arises to work with other photographers.

On a bright and frosty Sunday morning in February members of Ealing, Greenwich, Queens Park and North London Satellite Groups met in Trafalgar Square. Over coffees and croissants in the National Gallery cafe, Julie Long handed us a poem, *Leisure* by William Henry Davies, which ends with the famous lines 'A poor life this is if, full of care / We have no time to stand and stare'.

Our first task was to transpose the essence of this verse to Trafalgar Square and for each of us to produce three images. Our second task was to rewrite the poem with a contemporary theme linked to the location. Twenty one of us stepped into the bright sun of this cold winter morning and stretched the meaning of this ode in all directions. After a couple of hours over hot soups and lots of chatter in the crypt of St. Martin in the Field we parted, having agreed to reassemble three weeks later.

On the said day, we each brought a set of prints. The approach reflected a spirit of diversity which is the hallmark of LIP. Ray Higginbottom (see right) used the quality of the bright morning light to concentrate on the shadows created by visitors to the piazza. Jonny Baker focused on the contrasting textures of seated single figures against the granite, this isolation of the figure and the hard surface of the granite brought out the vulnerability of humanity. It reminded me of Gormley's sculptures.

Fewer completed the second task of adapting the poem, but Quentin Ball gave a very moving interpretation as well as choosing an interesting camera angle, by looking up for the details on top of buildings, creating a delicate lace work effect against the sky.

All in all, if photography gives us a license to look, then standing and staring is even better, especially when the resulting images may be shared by like-minded company.



Exhibitions

20th Annual Exhibition Text by John Stead

This is the 21st year of LIP’s existence and the 20th year that an annual exhibition has been held. The entry criteria are similar to previous years: you must be an member of LIP and the work must not have been exhibited with LIP before but apart from this you are free to express yourself as you wish (please see the entry form for a complete list of entry criteria & guidance). The selectors would tend to favour a series of prints above a single photograph but this is the only guidance in terms of style that we give.

To celebrate this 20th year of the exhibition and 21st year of LIP we will also be producing a book featuring at least one photograph from each of the members successful in having prints accepted to this years exhibition. This book will be available online to buy during the exhibition (more details will be provided nearer the time).

The space that we have to exhibit our prints is limited to about 125 prints, in previous years the number of prints submitted averages around 390 so the standard is always very high, for those who do succeed in having prints displayed it is a very rewarding experience, for those who are unlucky not to have any prints accepted there is always the knowledge that selection is a very subjective process and so please do not be disheartened, do come to the exhibition and see if you agree with the choice of our selectors.

As exhibition organisers we go to great lengths to make sure that the selection process is fair and impartial. To ensure this is the case we ask established members of the photographic community who are not part of LIP to make the selection, this is done in a manner so that at no point does any selector know whose prints they are viewing.

The rest of the work in putting together the exhibition is from volunteers and we are very grateful for all those who are able to give up time to assist. A call will be made for volunteers in October.

We will be putting a list of frequently asked questions relating to the exhibition on the LIP website. We are also very conscious that for some members this may be your first exhibition, so please do feel free to ask for guidance and assistance in printing, mounting and framing etc.

Here is a brief introduction to our two selectors that we are fortunate to have working with us this year:

Clare Grafik is a curator at the Photographers’ Gallery London where she has been working since 2003. She has curated many exhibitions and is a frequent contributor to magazines. As the Gallery prepares to embark on its move from Great Newport Street into Soho, she is currently working with the art historian Helen James on a book *The History of the Photographers’ Gallery*.

Paul Hill MBE has been a major influence on contemporary British photography. He has a long association with LIP, and recently gave the Janet Hall Lecture. His work has been widely exhibited here and abroad. Since 1995 he runs the MA course at De Montfort University, Leicester. He also is the author of *White Peak/Dark Peak* (1990) now out of print, *Approaching Photography* (2004) and co-author of *Dialogue with Photography* (2005)

Lastly we would like to wish all members the best of luck and hope to see you all for a glass of wine at the private viewing on the 19th October.

As many of you will by now know this is to be Avril’s last time running the LIP Annual Exhibition. This is a post that Avril has held single handedly for many years, which is no small task given the amount

of work involved. With her energy, good humor, great organisational and amazing personal skills she has made the exhibition something that all of us at LIP can be proud of. When I decided to get involved with LIP to assist with the exhibition Avril was one of the first people that I met, she has really helped to show me that LIP is not just a great philosophy and creative entity but also contains many, many very talented and friendly photographers, people who can inspire and help you to develop. So Avril, both personally and on behalf of the LIP members, I would like to thank you for all your hard work and wish you all the best in the future.

On Your Doorstep

Photographs of Ealing and Hounslow by members of the Ealing Satellite Group
1 August - 26 September, 11am-4pm
Gunnesbury Park Museum, Gunnesbury Park, Pope Lane, London W3 8LQ

The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition

‘The acknowledgement of photography at the RA summer show is very new, and this year two of our members, Eddie Bowman and Bill Jackson, have had work accepted in this fierce competition. It again shows the talents and quality of photography amongst LIP members. The exhibition closes on 17 August; see it if you can. Meanwhile we have asked Eddie and Bill to reveal something about their experience and images.

Eddie Bowman tells us “ Last year, I noticed that one small annexe of the R.A. show was given over to photography. Looking at the images on show, I thought that my images might be within the range of the possible. I had a negative of an image taken in Mojave, California. This image was part of a series taken in this really derelict town in the pouring rain. I spent a day scanning the negative with a really high-grade machine. The resultant file was printed as a photographic image. I did not rate my

chances too high. I just sent in that one piece (you are only allowed two) because I realised that with five thousand artists sending in some ten thousand works, statistics were not on my side. I only heard at the last minute. It appears that all the works go through a series of selections. The final selection is then hung; but not if they cannot be fitted in on the wall. So you can go all the way to the church and still miss the wedding”.

Bill Jackson writes, “Each year I have meant to submit to the RA and this year I actually did it. I had almost forgotten about it. So it was a complete surprise to me to get a letter of accepting one of the two I submitted. The work is from a continuing series on paper and by coincidence the same picture is in my one man show in Ireland and was the image used on the publicity poster for the 19th LIP Annual Exhibition last year. I went along to the Varnishing Day and was about to leave and was grabbed by a BBC film crew and interviewed about my submission. I was in Ireland on the 12th June putting up my show, when it was broadcasted on a Culture Show special. I only knew I was on when I had several texts that night saying people had seen me on the telly. One of the most positive things to come out of it was an old friend, the film score composer Paul Foss, who I had not seen for over 25 years sent me an email congratulating me and we are now about to renew our friendship after such a long time. As I said in the interview “I was dead chuffed”.

The Independent Image IPSE's 2008 Exhibition

Several members of LIP are also members of IPSE. In the summer of 2007 they had their work shown in the IPSE exhibition at the Independent Photographers Gallery in Battle. This exhibition, curated by Mick Williamson, is to be shown again at the Hastings Conquest Hospital and The Eastbourne Hospital under the auspices of ‘Arts in Healthcare’. At the Hastings Conquest Hospital from Mon 1st September to Sun 16th November, and the Eastbourne District Hospital from Wed 3rd September to Sun 16th November 2008. All LIP members are invited to the private view on Sat 6th September, from 2.00 to 4.00pm.

Nearly Nothing

Exploring the aesthetics of ambiguity



Nearly Nothing presents photographs so still they are almost empty. LIP member Kelly Hill, featured in this issue, is participating, and LIP member James Reid has contributed a catalogue entry. *Nearly Nothing* aims to rekindle the historic debate as to whether photographers can be considered image makers rather than purely documenters, and further questions how much information we need to read an image. These photographers use the camera to create innovative, poetic images rather than simply to record: photographing scenes where there is no immediately obvious subject matter; what is not quite there; or the outright invisible.

12 July to 17 August.
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat-Sun 12-4pm.

Viewfinder Photography Gallery
Linear House, Peyton Place, off Royal Hill,
Greenwich, London SE10 8RS

Not Performing follows *Nearly Nothing*, exploring the blurred boundaries between the performed and the natural.

The exhibition features two LIP members.
29 August to 28 September.

Adams, The Museum Set Text by Quentin Ball

Recently, I visited the Ansel Adams exhibition at Modern Art Oxford. This show consisted of images that Adams himself had selected during the last years of his life as the finest examples of the quality and range of his artistic achievement and life’s work. These 80-odd images were the works for which he wanted to be remembered, and were intended for exhibition as *The Museum Set*. All the classics were there – *Golden Gate*, *Before the Bridge*, *Moonrise over rnandez*, *Half Dome*, and many more.

Earlier in the year I had suggested to LIP that it was a ‘must see’ – I also said it brought ‘tears to my eyes’. Why is this? What is it about his Adams’ prints that affect me in this way? Through these many years I always have an Adams calendar hanging in my kitchen, and it will be the only black and white image there; I have also gathered many of his classic writings.

Adams is still certainly a titan in his field with his depth and commitment. His images of the awe-inspiring grandeur of the American landscape are close to my heart, for this region on earth is where I feel most at home with my tripod, and it has been since 1990 the backdrop for my own work. It was not until then that I finally found *the* image I had been searching for in 15 years of wandering in the desert – the image of *The Great Sand Dunes* in Colorado set me on a path which I still follow.

In May this year I was in Wyoming, visiting the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Parks and I *knew* what the Snake River overlook was going to present me because I am so familiar with the Adams image. Indeed very little seems to have changed since Adams photographed *The Tetons and the Snake River* (c1942), except the trees now seem to get in the way somewhat! We had arrived before dawn; it was bitterly cold, but the sky was mainly clear, and we did not have long to wait till the sun started kissing the Tetons – a memorable start to a day, I used the camera and film that I wanted to use, but was not very happy with the outcome. I was not trying in any way to create an image like Adams’.

Could the answer to Adams’ spell on me be that when I see his images they remind me of the time I stood in awe at the same landscape and his image brings back my own recollection? The answer must be ‘no’ because I have not been to Hernandez or some other Adams locations. The answer, I now believe, is in the detail. I am shortsighted, literally, which means without my glasses I can see detail three inches in front of my eyes, and I can get so close to his print, and climb into it, and there is no grain, no sense that it is a photograph, but a moment in time saved forever.

Ansel Adams *The Museum Set* is on tour and will be showing at The New Art Gallery Walsall, West Midlands until 31 August.



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