

London Independent Photography

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Memories



ALISON GOSPER MIKE WHELAN MANUEL VAZQUEZ JOHN LEVETT CAROLYN LEFLEY LAURA CUCH GIGI CIFALI
ANNE-MARIE GLASHEEN CAROLE EVANS HAMISH STEWART MARK DENTON ANDY SIMMONS TIM CRAGG ANNE CRABBE

London Independent Photography

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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, John Levett (*Still Portrait*, p8).

Back cover image, Andy J. Simmons (*Instant Memories*, p28).

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Introduction

Memories

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 titles chosen by each individual photographer in this issue capture the fragmentary and elusive nature of memory. *Years per hour* and *Instant Memories* are personal reflections on the temporal and ephemeral qualities of memories, while *Save As...* observes the public and collective phenomena of photographically documenting experiences, to store, archive and remember.

How and what do we remember, what does it tell us about ourselves, our past, our origins? This is what Anne-Marie Glasheen explores in her densely layered images in *Walking Backwards Through Fire*. John Levett does this in a very different way, re-assembling and re-photographing remaining traces in order to re-construct his own past, and Anne Crabbe literally re-creates images she has kept in her mind in *The Foreign Country*. Mark Denton attempts the opposite in *The Space Between Us*, a search for something tangible to comprehend the distance that has grown between him and friends in the past.

Memories are often attached to spaces, real or imagined - spaces that recall atmospheres, moments, situations or feelings. Evoked by a particular wallpaper pattern, faded colors, traces left in an otherwise empty room or the shadow of the window frame casts across the ceiling. Details that are connected to a sense of belonging and simultaneous estrangement, as in Carolyn Lefley's or Laura Cuch's photographs.

The private memories also meet the shared, collective, public memories in monumental edifices that we build in order to anchor them in the present. Hamish Stewart's work follows such public reminders and their stories: concrete reminders in order not to forget. Gigi Cifali presents a series of derelict swimming pools, spaces that in their lack of presence remind of a once bustling activity, spaces now resting in their grandiose but deteriorating emptiness. Carole Evans similarly points to the transformation such spaces undergo over time in her series *All the Rest is Silent*. The bandstands yet again depict what is missing: the sounds, the music, the meeting of people in public spaces.

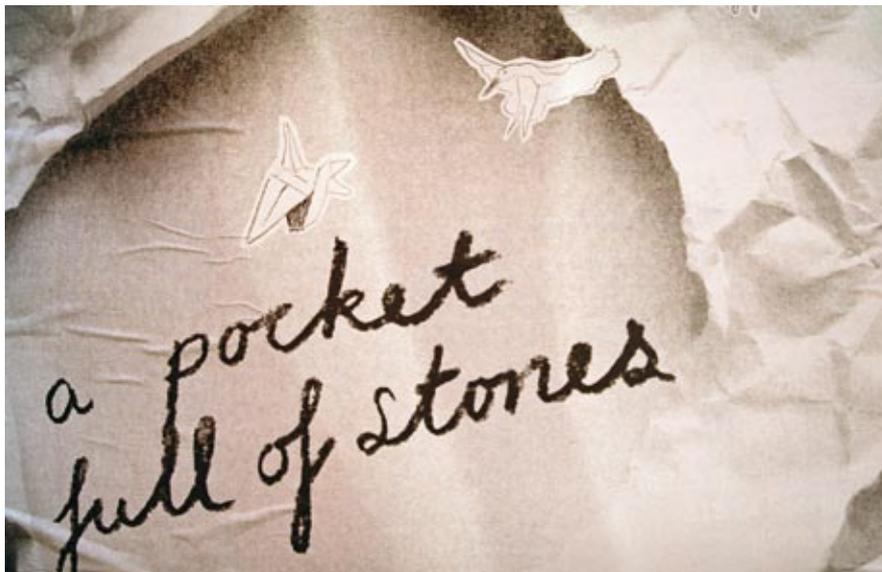
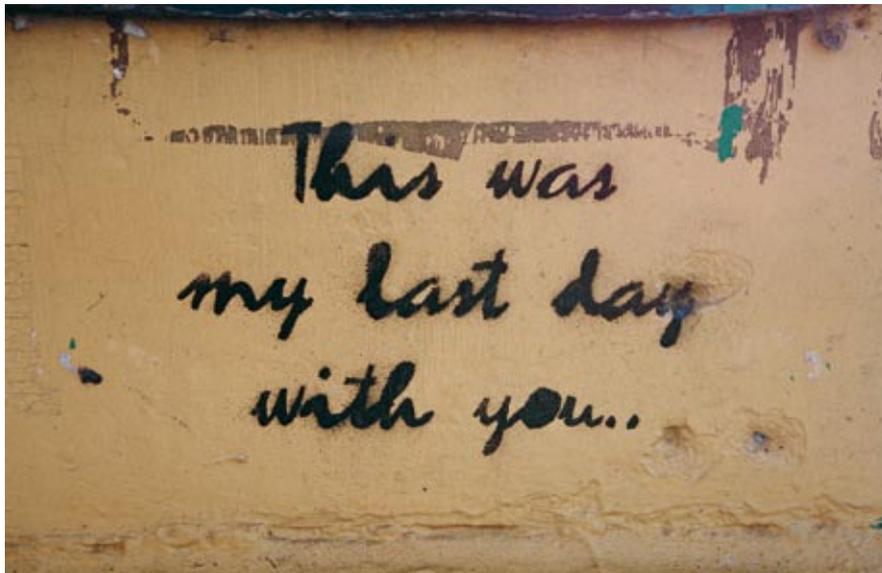
We welcome contributions throughout the year and look forward to hearing from you. For details on submission and future issues please refer to www.londonphotography.org.uk/LIPmagazine



A memory of Mrs E. Pat Pocknell, 2008

Love Letters

Alison Gosper



The city seemed resolved to my suffering, literally spelling it out as I walked the streets trying my best not to notice. Subconsciously drawn to fragments of text that mirrored the feelings of my broken heart, *Love Letters* playfully transforms the inscriptions of others into a personal memoir of love, loss and self-confession.



Years per hour

Mike Whelan

Photography is often used to mirror reality and as a device to record the facts. This series is based on the idea that we photograph to remember. I wanted to challenge the restraints surrounding this and consider the memories that haven't been captured - the moments that have passed while all we're left with are vague recollections.

It's these experiences that change and mould us that have been the catalyst for *Years per Hour*.

Within each image I have used various techniques to deconstruct the information encountered and created ambiguous structures. I'm interested in the transitional period and the neutral time between memory flags. By applying this to a footprint, following a route of the houses that I have lived in as a reference point, each image in the series was shot travelling at the speed to match the age when this transition was made. It's at this point that new impressions are formed, leaving behind the vague memories from the previous chapter. The ethereal aesthetics lend a search for identity. Removing any details in the photograph evokes imagined thoughts for a representation of forgotten times, reflecting upon how we rarely remember the details in certain memories.

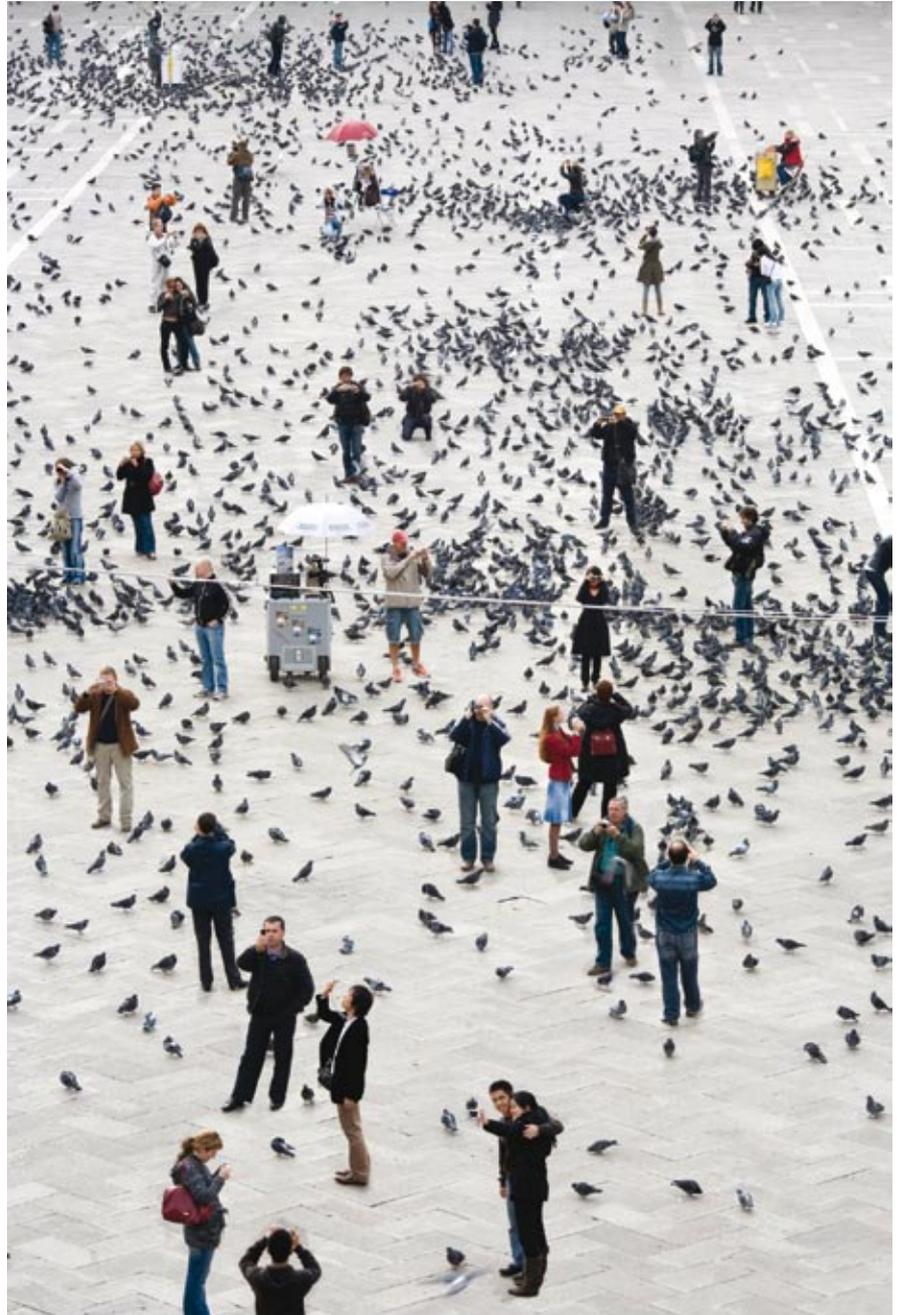


Save As...

Manuel Vazquez

“Today everything exists to end up in a photograph” Susan Sontag

Save As... is an ongoing project born from an interest in studying people's behaviour during the photographic ritual that we most notably encounter at major tourist destinations. Cameras are becoming ubiquitous: almost every tourist carries a point and shoot camera, mobile phones have tiny built-in cameras and surveillance cameras are almost everywhere. Accessing the world through small screens and storing our experiences as images has changed our behaviour towards the world, to the point of becoming photo-compulsive.



SAVE AS... PIAZZA SAN MARCOS I, 2008

Still Portrait

John Levett

When did you last see your father?

Sometime around March 1965 when I'd dropped out of the second of four universities I went to in the 60s and was signalling the end of the family dream. He turned up one morning in his *dix points Jaguar Mark*-something whilst I was slouched in front of whatever was slouched in front of in that year and demanded, demanded no less, to know what I was doing with my life. I never knew how to talk to this man and have some time-drenched memory of spluttering phrases in between *please...sorry...thankyou*, an English response to a mugging.

When did you last hear from your father?

It was more of a 'non-hearing from' at Christmas 1983 when I didn't get my Christmas bonus. Since birth he had sent me - Christmas and birthdays without burp - a £5 note (non-adjusted for inflation over thirty-nine years. What a cheapskate!). That year the note non-arrived and I guessed rightly that something was up. I wrote asking what was up. Death was what was up. This contained in a letter from his daughter also asking how did I know her father. I didn't reply. Fade to black.

Who was your father?

Rewind to August 1960. On my sixteenth birthday I arrived home drunk from some smutty south-London-somewhere-around-Woolwich low dive and asked my mother who my father was. I'll tell you on your twenty-first birthday. Good enough for me and went off to puke and collapse in a nearby bed.

Well? Who was your father then?

Fast forward to August 1965. On my twenty-first birthday I arrived home drunk from some smutty south-London-somewhere-around-Catford low dive and asked my mother who my father was. I had by then worked out who the scumbag was but I would have liked some back-story, a few names, dates and witnesses. What I got was a fiction, maybe practiced over years. She told it through tears. I never asked again.

And then...?

My mother died in 1979. Her archive of kept letters she destroyed before her final illness. She overlooked a few snaps.

So what?

Once both of my parents had snuffed it, I took some years awakening to the realization that I knew precious little about either of them. From a newspaper clipping I knew my father had taught in an east London college before the war. From him giving me a guided tour before treating me to an all-day breakfast at a greasy spoon near Victoria, I knew he had been a lecturer at the Imperial College. He turned up at *chez Levett* when he was summoned or had day release from his alternative family. Of my mother she and I never talked about her or my past. And she had a past. I recalled snaps in the family paper bag (never an album) of her in motorcycle gear amongst other

1930s greasers, perched on railings at various seaside promenades, flapping with other flappers, stories of ambulance-driving during the war and recollections of moving frequently from one temporary stopping-place to another.

As I grew up in London in the late 40s and early 50s we'd day trip from museum to art gallery to news cinema to boat ride to castle to marginal reaches of culture and learning. And everywhere we went we'd meet someone she knew.

And they all knew her by a different name: Dorothy, Mabel, Rose, May. And knew her from different places: working in a Lyon's Corner House, on a Kent farm, at school in Hoddesden, in a saddler's in Suffolk.

But it was as if I were listening to tales told by someone who had once known her and I never dug deeper. Rather, I came to an understanding that her life before my birth was one she preferred to be shelved; a pre-history, an Old Testament, the Dark Ages. Sometimes, towards the end of her life, remembrances surfaced, wanting a Bank Holiday outing to go motorcycle racing at the old Crystal Palace circuit, taking a bus ride to a village on the Weald, walking a back street in Deptford, threads but no leads. A few months before she died from breast cancer I found her one morning in bed crying. She said: "I'm being punished". Asking seemed an intrusion so I didn't. A life together without communicating, replicated in many families.

And then you noticed a mysterious stranger at the funeral?

No strangers, no cryptic letters, no parchments behind loose panels in the library. Only an uncle and an aunt, tight-lipped and blank. A few years later I proceeded to une saison d'enfer, emerging surprisingly intact and bushy-tailed. The item of what lives my parents led before me still gnawed.

In the confusion of changing trains in my life much of my evidence had been deliberately lost or deliberately destroyed. The newspaper clippings had gone, no photographs of my father (How oedipal darling!), other family members were absent, nothing of my grandparents. No album, no continuity, no context. Importantly, no idea of what it was that I wanted to know.

Why don't you let it go?

Identity, mate! Very last century but so am I.

I began by writing my own narrative, everything I could remember from birth until that evening I decided to ask no more, anything in my life that pointed backwards to before my birth. More questions. How many rented rooms, flats, relative's homes did we lodge in? Why did my grandmother come to live with us? Why did I have only one gran? Who was Auntie May and why wasn't she a 'proper' aunt? Why did we visit Aunt Florence in a secure hospital in Croydon twice a year?



Why did my Aunt Blanche take me every day to the boating lake in Kensington Gardens? Why did my mother never remarry? Why did she never meet with friends? Who was that masked man?

With everyone dead, I fashioned a back-story that was as creative as my mother's own, the 'family story' that should have been attached at birth. I studied the remaining snaps, identified locations, put remembered names to suitable faces, re-discovered a cousin, traced the marque and model of a car, contacted a once-neighbour.

I began exercises in reconstruction. Snapping the snaps. Sketching, colouring, painting, outlining portraits. Cutting, pasting, joining, reconfiguring. Making images that weren't taken. Inventing characters that should have been there. Making up memories. I speculated on who took the snaps, who wasn't in the picture, why did I never appear with anyone except my mother and the Burkinshaw's kids from next door, why no pictures from schools, parties, visits to uncles and aunts, why no birthday snaps blowing out the candles, Christmas, trips to Southend, why no rites of passage, our first cat, with the dog, first day at nursery?

Why no album?

I wondered about that too. Pierre Bourdieu writes about the family album "solemnizing and immortalizing the high points of family life". Was this a family life without any?

Then I stopped. Too much like hard work.

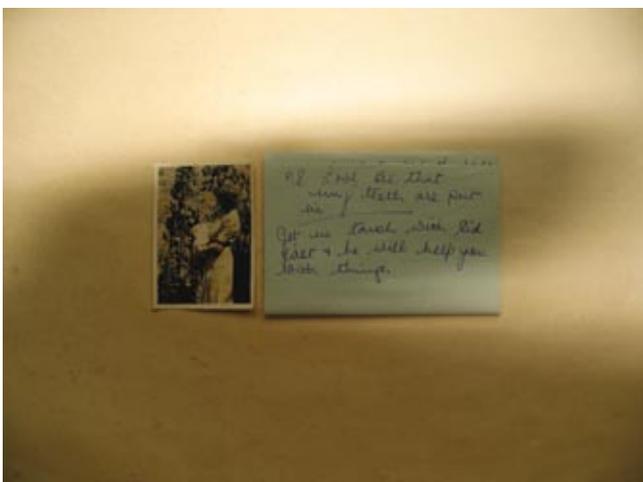
Then you started again?

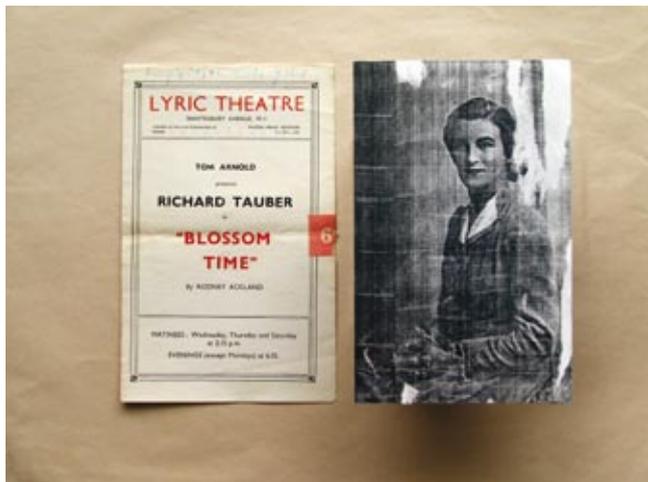
So predictable.

I regained contact with a cousin. There had been 'issues' between us but, nevertheless, we reconnected. We talked about our respective, relatively disconnected, lives. She gave me some background to mine, the speculation in my wider family on who my father might have been, the holidays I had forgotten and which I had been sent on to aunts, uncles and cousins, the itinerary of my early years and who I'd lodged with, the rôles my mother had played in the family and in the 'family imagination'. I was shown what was left of the family archive, introduced in remembrance to members I'd never met, events, years, weddings, seaside towns, back gardens, garden parties.

So now you're healed?

More like I came to appreciate the obvious. There was never 'an other' in the photographs. Mum took pics of me, I took pics of mum. There was no mum and friend, mum and Monica the hairdresser from next door, mum and gran, mum and the Burkinshaws. It was an hermetic partnership. Everyone who might have enriched both our lives was excluded and, not having an alternative world view, I grew up accepting the ruling mode of living.





I began to look beyond the frames of the pictures and question who might have been in them. I tried to recall friends who came to tea, someone I went to Sunday School with, played football with, went to Saturday morning pictures with, school even. Nobody. All the pictures that could have been taken but weren't because nobody was allowed in. Not in my mother's life, nor in mine. I recalled men who called regularly at the corner shop my mum ran; never bought anything, just stopped and chatted, left and then stopped calling. I recalled nights in with gran and the radio, failed to recall nights out with anyone else. No framed begetters and begottens, the still living and long dead on the sideboard or mantelpiece. Photographs that had survived showed a passage from life with others to life with no others. Apart from me. At some point my mother abandoned the outside world in all its communality, at some time she abandoned it on my behalf too.

Is there an end to all this?

In the sense of swapping one life for another, clearly not. In the sense of changing the narrative, of swapping one family history for another, it's something to do during a spare decade. So I rewrote my early life and created a post-memory, recalled half-facts, created fictions, made up family romances, re-shot the pictures, under glare, in shadow, through reflection, formally and casually, in new frames and blu-tacked onto a mirror. I created a biography of us all, gave myself a 'before me, after me'.



So... just what is it that makes today's family memories so different, so appealing?

'The family photograph as fiction, manipulation, erasure, possession, abandonment. Explain and discuss.' No need. I discovered Family Frames by Marianne Hirsch and through her the fiction of Jamaica Kincaid and Lucy, Sue Miller and Family Pictures, Meatyard's The Family Album of Lucybelle Crater, Jo Spence's Putting Myself in the Picture, Valerie Walkerdine's essays Dreams from an Ordinary Childhood and Behind the Painted Smile.



Photography as therapy. There was more to this than met the eye. My parents created falsehoods for themselves, for their separate families. As I grew up, I'd added a patchwork of accommodating half-truths, stories and myths. Having passed through a variety of therapies I know that investing oneself with a revisionist history to accommodate disorder and inconveniences is both universal and customary. Manipulating photographs and creating a more appropriate opacity to accompany my freshly-scripted guesswork was equally allowable. What emerged made sense to me: a family of two and a multiplicity of denials, non-responsibility and, inevitably, the parallel tracks of her adult life and mine.

I'd arrived at where I'd started. My mother's falsified story of my 'father' (or father) effectively falsified whatever else she told me. In playing with those fictions and elaborating them I was recognizing them for what they were: convenient fabrications. In leaving them as a dislocated past and a recovered story, I acknowledged and accepted the persistence of lost possibilities, some things could have happened but didn't. Making sense of why is some sort of accomplishment.



Belonging

Carolyn Lefley

Text by Peter Smith, 2007

“Whenever space is a value – there is no greater value than intimacy – it has magnifying properties.” Gaston Bachelard

A bed is a functional object and a commonplace prop in the arts and yet as a symbolic form it often carries deeper meaning. As a poetic device it might suggest the domestic and prosaic reality of the everyday. The bed may also be the site for speculation on the depth of life and the transforming and ecstatic experience of sex, birth, and death. And the bedroom is of course a place to dream. The photographic representation of the most intimate space such as a bedroom is always potentially transgressive. It represents an ‘invasion’ of privacy and disruption of spatial boundaries. The bedroom may offer sanctuary but when it becomes a visual spectacle it plays on contradictory concerns about the reclusive comforts of the personal and anxieties about the camera’s alien presence.

Carolyn Lefley’s work is about photographic memory and the domestic environment. Her work has an intimate mode of address that focuses on the average suburban house and the decorative and spatial effects that make it a ‘home’. This work consists of photographs of an abandoned doll’s house. One of its most significant effects is to produce a disorientating feeling of things being out of scale. The photographic enlargement restores to the miniature a human scale, and yet something is not right. Dim artificial lighting produces a nocturnal effect and suggests feelings of estrangement. The bold and over-size wallpaper pattern compound the unsettling experience of this uncanny space. These pictures evoke memories of childhood and suburban gloom. These rooms become a potential site for the ‘unhomely’ disruptions that occur in the darkest fairy tales. It is work inspired by a poetics of space in which the internal model of thought and feeling is mapped on to an external architectural model at the centre of which is the bedroom.

Peter Smith is Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader for MA Photography, Thames Valley University, London. Carolyn Lefley is a photographic artist based in London www.carolynlefeley.co.uk





The Best Place in the World

Laura Cuch



This is the flat where I grew up. It's 135 m². At the time when I was little it felt huge and fascinating. I believed it was the best place in the world, just as I believed my parents were the best too.

I moved in when I was born and, after 29 years, much of the original furniture is still the same: the orange 70's style kitchen, the dark and varnished wooden floors, my bedroom's old furniture, walls lined with cork and floors with carpet.

My brother and I came to dislike this place. At times it really felt suffocating: there was never fresh air and no light either. The heat in the summer would bring cockroach plagues and the central heating in winter would dry everything out. We started calling it 'the cave'. A cave that still contains our most obscure memories.

Since my parents separated 12 years ago, each member of the family has lived in this flat at different times, in almost all possible combinations. My Father still uses it as a dormitory during weekdays. He doesn't want to make any improvements, since he will soon be moving out.

I took this series of images between 2005 and 2008. It was a way for me to question what I originally learnt to be normality, an attempt to change my relationship with this place. I have tried to picture it with an external look, a foreign gaze, in order to overcome my close attachment to it. I shot these images with a lantern, as if I was a burglar, using hints to trace the layers of my past, creating an archaeology of my own memory.





Absence Of Water

Gigi Cifali

In the Thirties, UK's baths and outdoor pools were at the peak of their popularity. Gradually tastes and necessities have changed, resulting in a drop in attendance, leaving pools uneconomical to run. Many fell into decay and many were demolished. Only a handful of pools remain today as a symbol of a bygone era.

*Without hard work
from this site I imagine movement in other dimensions
I feel coolness and roundness of nude bodies
touching themselves in the frank gesture of the game
I feel the sun, the water, the voices, the dive
I do not feel the time
hiding in the small wave
that is broken off the face of the curly-haired child
crying surprise and already wrapped
in the embrace of her mother's outstretched arm
I feel the fluidity of the water
melting with the excited screams of the adolescents
the fulfilled faces of the men afloat
the sensual stroke of the swimmer
the light speeches of warm summer
I myself, feel the need to take a swim!
Now I turn around and I try to reveal in the city this ancestral aquifer's feeling
(I would love you to give me a swimming pool!)*



VICTORIA BATHS, MANCHESTER, dimensions 120 ft x 35 ft, max depth 6 ft,
max attendances per day 100 people, 15% re-opening,
opened 1903 - closed 1993



BOURNVILLE LANE BATHS, BIRMINGHAM, dimensions 72 ft x 35 ft, max depth 6 ft 7 inches,
max attendances per day 140 people, 3% re-opening, opened 1910, closed 1988



SOHO MARSHALL POOL, LONDON, dimensions 70 ft x 30 ft, max depth 7 ft 6 inches,
max attendance per day 130 people, 25 % re-opening, opened 1931 - closed 1997



MOSELEY BATHS, BIRMINGHAM, dimensions 68 ft x 36 ft, max depth 5 ft 7 inches,
max attendances per day 120 people, 10% re-opening, opened 1907 - closed 2004

Walking Backwards Through Fire

Anne-Marie Glasheen

Interview by Tiffany Jones

TJ: How much of your own memory is made up of unconscious or surrealist imagination?

AMG: Reality is never what it seems. We came to England in the early fifties. I was teased at school because I had a funny name, accent and clothes and only spoke French. As the only Catholic in the school, I was told I was on the path to hell! My parents thought I was happy. My sister and I spent a lot of time 'let's-pretending'. We had no furniture for a year. I remember the versatility of orange boxes. It was still a time of rationing. I missed my grandmother and the food that was available. The teachers thought I was happy. At school I made up stories about myself in an endeavour to make friends.

TJ: When writing in the voices of fictional women, do you feel they are a part of you, and how do you relate to them?

AMG: My grandmother's sister Charlotte disappeared in Russia at the time of the Revolution. We know she had a daughter. Did she survive or not? I imagine she did, that she had a daughter who had a daughter... and who, like the rest of us, are affected by what happens beyond ourselves. I spent years as a literary translator. When you translate a book, you become the author; inhabit his or her creative psyche, move between characters with the ease of someone with multiple personalities. It's the same when you create your own characters; they are part of me, I am part of them. I know their lives, I know how they feel. I have put bits of myself and some memories into each of the women – the memory of giving birth and the hope of giving my children a better life than the one I had.

TJ: Which comes first in your vision, the writing or the imagery, and how do they thread together?

AMG: In this case, and more often than not, the writing comes first, but sometimes it's the imagery and I think a shift to the latter is taking place. I'm often asked if I translate myself into French or vice versa. I don't unless I have to. For me, when I write in French, whatever I'm writing about is from the French part of my psyche and has to be expressed in that language. The same goes for English. What I love about the imagery is that it encapsulates, expresses, and reflects without any dependence on language as such. It connects on a level where there are no words; where I don't need to wrestle with words - hence the shift. And when the imagery becomes very surreal or abstract, it can hide the reality you don't always want to have staring you or others in the face.

TJ: These images you have created invoke a sense of apparitions, it's as though a history is released from the trees.

AMG: There are trees that are very old, and if they could talk, what tales they would tell of events they have witnessed. And what if trees could absorb and store our energies, our memories? Even a forest

fire does not completely consume the trees it engulfs. Something remains. This is about a family dispersed in the wake of various catastrophes – it is about uprooting and replanting and grafting.

TJ: What does the idea of belonging mean to you?

AMG: I was in Ireland in October and met people who could trace their ancestors back to the year dot. I envy people who have a sense of belonging. On the plus side, however, belonging in no particular country but in several countries has given me an edge, a restlessness, a hunger to search for myself beyond wherever I happen to be. I am very nomadic – physically and mentally.

TJ: You say the nearer you got to turning 60, you felt an urgency to develop the creative activities begun in your teens – poetry and photography. Could you explain how that urgency manifested itself in you, and what your memories are of your early creative work?

AMG: My husband died when my children were 5, 7 & 8 and until after I turned 50 I worked full-time and never had the time to satisfy my creative urges. My father died when he was 61 and I always worried that I would too, so, feeling that time was running out, my creative needs became more of an urgency.

I had a Brownie camera when I was quite young and loved recording the people and places I encountered as a child travelling around Europe every summer. Then later I used to pour all my teenage and student angst onto paper. I carried on recording the events of my life in one or other of these ways, but not on a regular basis. Then when I was 56, I started looking after my granddaughter and had to abandon the literary translation work. I used to take her for walks in Nunhead Cemetery – a truly inspirational spot. And suddenly I was writing again and photographing in a very different way from before. And the more I do, the more I have to do!

TJ: What significance do you think exists in relationships between mothers and daughters, and what gets passed on in terms of memories?

AMG: Traditionally, women are communicators, the family storytellers; they are the custodians who hoard the letters and photographs, who record, remember and pass on the family mythology. Less so, these days, maybe – the distractions are greater. But don't we all want to know where we came from and therefore who we are? I can't imagine that all too human trait – curiosity – dying out. If not a mother, then there is always an aunt, a great-aunt, a grandmother with a tale or two to tell.

Anne-Marie Glasheen has just published a debut collection of poetry 'Lines in the Sand', available from Bradshaw Books, Cork, Ireland. www.glasheen.co.uk



Maria-Antoinette's great-great-granddaughter



Maria-Antoinette

VIII Epilogue

who are you Poet
who steals our voices
who walks backwards through the fire
of our inner landscapes
to know who you are

understand that
past political cataclysms
strife
crimes against humanity
and family misfortunes
have brought you here
to where you are

and understand that
only in the present
can you know
who you are



Prologue-Marie-Agathe

All the Rest is Silent

Carole Evans



While all photographs are mementoes, some act as a trigger for a nostalgic memory, one we have not lived ourselves but have read about, or have heard about from elderly relatives. I feel that there is an aspect of this in my series, *All the rest is silent*, which also explores the idea that there is subjectivity latent in the built environment. As Neil Leach points out, Walter Benjamin's writings on mimesis "suggest a capacity to read oneself into the environment, and to see oneself reflected in that environment."¹ Despite their inanimate and constructed nature, built structures can have an emotive resonance, even (or especially) when human subjects are absent from the depicted scene. I would like to suggest that *All the rest is silent* uses this emotive resonance in the form of nostalgia; bandstands are often overlooked in their natural environment and yet their image means so much to British people.

I started this project because, as I was cycling around London, I was amazed at how many bandstands there are; from the small patch of grass used for dog walking to inner city squares and large



parks. Never did I see them used for the purpose they were built; most were entering disrepair, some were being refurbished. I wanted to photograph them as a document of historical structures, while also bringing them back to the public eye. I discovered that their designs are inspired by Eastern architecture, and were adapted and introduced to British parks during Queen Victoria's reign to provide free music and entertainment. The idea was to keep the inhabitants of the slums amused, thus improving the comportment of the lower classes. Unfortunately, now they are often sites of truancy, vandalism and petty crime. Their refurbishment, then, is not really in order to rekindle the free performances (people mostly pay large amounts of money nowadays to hear live music in parks); instead, they serve as a kind of monument to a bygone era.

¹LEACH, N., 2000. *Walter Benjamin, Mimesis and the Dreamworld of Photography*. In Borden, I., *Intersections: Architectural Histories and Critical Theories*. London: Routledge, pp. 27–38.



Memories of the Displaced

Hamish Stewart



Miodowa Street Jewish Cemetery Krakow Poland

The genesis of this project arose out of my first visits to Poland in 2005 and the stark differences I discovered between the Polish Catholic cemeteries and the state of the Jewish cemeteries in Krakow.

It was not just the overgrown, cracked and broken tombstones - but also the years of death on many of the tombstones in the Miodowa Street cemetery. Then there is the absence of the detritus of visits by family members to the graves - clearly evident in other Polish cemeteries. It is this last visual clue that reminds us that in less than six years a rich and varied Jewish culture, which had existed for 600 years, was eradicated.

The statistics of those who were displaced seem beyond imagination - yet they involve countless individual lives and histories. The 'Stolpersteine' (Stumble Stones) project by the German artist Günter Demnig, is just one small step to assimilate this enormity into individual personal details. 'Stumble Stones' are small brass plaques lodged in the pavement next to the homes of those deported. Each plaque indicates the name, year of birth, date of deportation, and eventual destination of each individual. Sometimes whole clusters of these stones can be found where entire apartment blocks were evacuated of their inhabitants.

In the Polish city of Bydgoszcz at Fordon a memorial marks the site of the Dolina Śmierci (valley of death) where 5,000 to 6,000 local residents were murdered in 1939. The panels on the memorial, which list just name and profession, reflect the lists compiled before the war, which sought to eradicate the doctors, lawyers and priests of a generation.

These physical memories remind us that within the grand historical narrative lie the stories of ordinary people and everyday lives.



Naunynstrasse Berlin; Siegfried & Edith Robinski

The Space Between Us

Mark Denton



Philip (2008)

The space between us began as an exploration into photography's ability to produce what Sabine Kriebel called 'a melancholy poetics – traces of things and places that-have-been, a capturing of time lost...' (Kriebel, 2007) By consciously revisiting the past - in the form of friends, lovers and people I was once close to but who had fallen out of my life with the passing of time - I hoped to be able to grasp something of the nature of memory.

These portraits are at once so familiar, so intimate, so connected to me and yet, with the passing of the years, so distant, so alien, so shockingly unfamiliar, so hard to read. These photographs give form, shape, detail to my memories of these people, they fill in and flesh



Nadine (2008)

out what had become little more than a trace, an imagining made dim and indistinct by time. In this sense when I view them they are shocking, disconcerting to me. Too vivid, they drown out my fragile and faded desaturated memories of these people with their lucidity and detail.

Whereas much has been made of photography's ability to freeze moments for eternity, to capture a slice of the past and preserve it, here photography is being used in reverse, to update a past memory, to 'fill-in' the hazy and faded details with a new and shockingly up-to-date specificity. Here, the photograph is less a *momento mori* than an intimation of an afterlife; a vivid assertion of the hereafter, of



Maria (2008)

the constant possibility of rebirth. It is perhaps this that is finally so unsettling to me when I gaze at the images.

I'm interested in the multiple and contradictory functions photography serves. Perhaps most obviously it is an agent of sentiment – it's the pictures of our loved ones as they grow up, it's Barthes' meditations on a photograph of his mother in *Camera Lucida* - a universal repository of familial memory (those precious 'Kodak moments')... yet at the same time it acts as a force of renewal and emancipation, cutting an image adrift from its personal and emotional moorings, stripping it of its original connotations (my connotations) and giving the subject a new existence of its own. As soon as they come into



Andrew (2008)

being the subjects in these pictures are cut free from my memories, my emotional entanglements with them and they embark on a new trajectory all their own.

These images, depicted with so much detail, with so much clarity and frozen in time for our scrupulous inspection are at once deeply familiar and utterly alien to me. Photography always conceals even as it purports to reveal.

Kriebel, Sabine 'Photography Theory' (2007) ed. James Elkins, Routledge: London, p.20

Instant Memories

Andy J. Simmons



This page clockwise from top left:
Flight 2008, Santa Monica Pier and
Brenda, Santa Monica, CA.





Top: My back garden

Left: Real Madrid v Arsenal

Still Life

Tim Cragg



Whether it be loved ones, family, friends or strangers, we focus the lens on capturing the essence of the subject's life. After death, the photograph we have of them, transforms into a reminder, a reminder that this person is looking back at us. Most of those photographs ignite a memory of when the person was alive, taking us back to the moment when the picture was taken. In this case, the moment the picture was taken is when they have already left. What remains is not so much a moment to be remembered, but an entire life, resting in eternal silence of countless memories to become alive, over and over again.



The Foreign Country

Anne Crabbe

“The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.” L.P.Hartley ‘The Go-Between’

The ‘Foreign Country’ series is my attempt to recreate some of the pictures that are in my mind, those that are there so vividly with the memories of smell, taste and sound. Perhaps they are part of a composite self-portrait? My two granddaughters entered into the make-believe with vigour and sweetness. Will this venture be part of the web of memories making up their own ‘Foreign Country’?



“Sally Hewitt did it!”

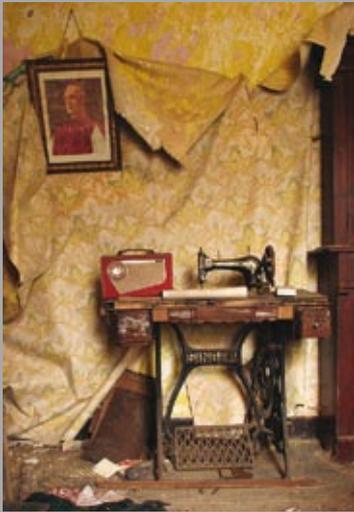


Hanging the washing, she sang “Down Mexico Way”



“Play with me!”

Exhibition Previews



Photofusion

23 January to 6 March 2009
Private View Thursday 22 January 2009, 18.30 – 21.00

David Creedon
Ghosts of the Faithful Departed

Between 2005 and 2007 Irish photographer David Creedon photographed derelict houses all over Ireland, untouched since their owners were forced, through poverty, to leave the country in search of work during the mass emigration that took place predominantly in the 1950s. Creedon describes his experience to that of a forensic scientist, examining objects and letters to get a background and understanding of the lives of the people who once lived there. Photographed in available light with a slow shutter speed at different times of the day, these abandoned interiors and the treasures inside that once formed part of the fixtures and fittings of their owners lives, are brought out of the shadows to reveal a part of Irish history that had been left to the ravishes of time.

For more details please refer to www.photofusion.org

PHOTOFUSION
17a Electric Lane
London SW9 8LA
T: 020 7738 5774

Tues to Sat 10.00 – 18.00
(viewing on Thursday evening after 18.00 by appointment)
Free entry



Viewfinder

22 November 2008 to 4 January 2009

Natalia Skobeeva
Peculiar Processes

Peculiar Processes, a series of works by Natalia Skobeeva, rails against the 'picture-perfect' attitudes of the digital age. The intricate statues of Easter Island are photographed with Polaroid instant film, expired film and film of London that has been buried in coffee to reveal unpredictable results. Other projects include models photographed in cyanotype, a 19th century printing process that gives a cyan-blue tint. Viewfinder director and curator Louise Forrester is delighted to present Natalia Skobeeva's first solo show.

The exhibition catalogue includes a poem by Steve Gross, an interview with the photographer, and a critical essay by Tim Clark. Handcovered catalogues from other exhibitions are available at the gallery. The gallery is interested in hearing from any LIP members wanting to write for future exhibition catalogues.

9 January to 8 February 2009: Open Salon 2009 exhibition. Anyone can enter a photograph. For more details refer to www.viewfinder.org.uk.

Viewfinder Photography Gallery
Linear House, Peyton Place, off Royal Hill,
Greenwich, London SE10 8RS
t: 020 8858 8351
Mon to Fri 9.00 - 17.00, Sat and Sun, 12-4pm
Free entry

Photobooks Recommendations

Written by Laura Noble, The Photographers' Gallery Bookshop

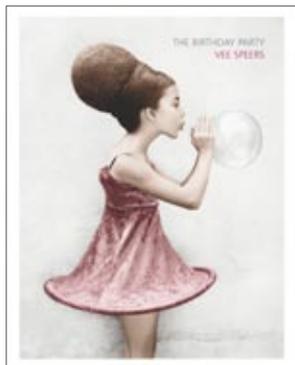
Please note all prices are correct at time of going to press.

Vee Speers

The Birthday Party

Publisher: Dewi Lewis

Price: £30 / LIP members price £27



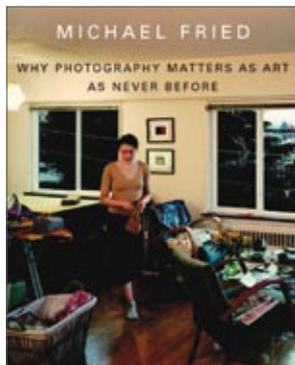
'The Birthday Party' explores the fantasy world between child and adulthood, dressing up and acting out. The project was initiated at Speers daughters' eighth birthday party, observing the children's behaviour as they played together. Dressing up may seem like a way for children to 'pretend' to be someone else, but on closer inspection she could see that they actually believe that they are the characters whose persona they act out. Her images were taken in black and white then coloured, giving the tonal range and palette an illustrative feel, fitting for the fairytale world in which her sitters inhabit. They wear costumes that have underlying darker tones of narrative. A boy stands confidently wearing a soldier's helmet and combat trousers brandishing a large replica gun and hand-guns tucked into his waistband and pockets. By showing an exaggerated display of weaponry Speers touches upon the more serious side of war where real child soldiers use real guns on real people. The confusion that invariably comes to all children as they grow up in a world full of contradictions threads its way through her work, which is visually exquisite but by no means purely decorative. All in all this is a fascinating book.

Michael Fried

Why Photography Matters as Never Before as Art

Publisher: Yale University Press

Price: £30 / LIP members price £27



The place that photography holds within the art world is now well established and rightly so. Fried discusses the phenomena of the meteoric rise of photography as art from the 1970's onwards, focussing on key artists of the canon. He starts the book by discussing the seminal work of Hiroshi Sugimoto, Cindy Sherman and Jeff Wall in both subjective and conceptual terms and how the artist considers their audiences' response to the work and the development of 'art' photography. This book delves into the many facets of life that photography - unlike any other art form - has explored and engaged its audience to the present-day. As a truly democratic medium, photography illustrates everything from the ordinary to the sublime and everything in between. Fried's essays interweave the philosophy of ideas through the comparative analysis of themes, which re-occur throughout the history of the medium. This is not a book to browse. This is a book which will provoke, ignite debate and provide insights into this wonderful medium.

Paul Fusco

RFK Funeral Train

Publisher: Aperture

Price: £27.50 / LIP members price £24.75



With the recent US elections, nostalgia for a time when the last hope for America's political future seemed to be cut short with the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy.

These photographs taken by Fusco from the funeral train that took Bobby Kennedy's body across America to Washington capture a nation in mourning as they stand by the tracks and pay tribute to him. The pain felt by the onlookers is acute as men, women and children pay their respects. Some salute, others cry, hands rest on hearts and some point cameras back at Fusco's lens recording their own view of the train as it passes by. This witness to such a historical event is so unique in its approach. The immediacy of these unforgettable photographs is partly due to the blurring in the images as the train moves on by recording a sense of time passing also. Picking out the faces you can't help but try to imagine their thoughts. The sheer humanity in Fusco's photographs places this work in the 'classic.'

This new hardback edition includes additional photographs and an essay by Vicki Goldberg.

VARIOUS

Vanishing Landscapes

Publisher: Francis Lincoln Limited

Price: £35 / LIP members price £31.50



With a role call of the worlds best contemporary photographers' 'Vanishing Landscapes' is a great anthology drawing attention to the issues of climate change and the ecological problems that face the planet in the years to come.

The book is broken down into four elements, Water, Ice, Plants and Land. In Water Hiroshi Sugimoto's seminal seascapes evoke the beauty and poetry of the ocean through their zen-like simplicity. Elger Esser's paintily imagery is reminiscent of JMW Turner. His Beg er Lan, France, 2006 has a palette akin to Turners Norham Castle, Sunrise, circa 1845 which is breathtakingly beautiful. The striking turquoise blue of Olaf Otto Becker's images in Greenland display the damage created by encroaching industry on the ice fiords. Tiny figures in Walter Niedermayr's photographs give a sense of scale and patterning to his work. The sheer horror of deforestation is brutally felt in Robert Adam's contribution to this book.

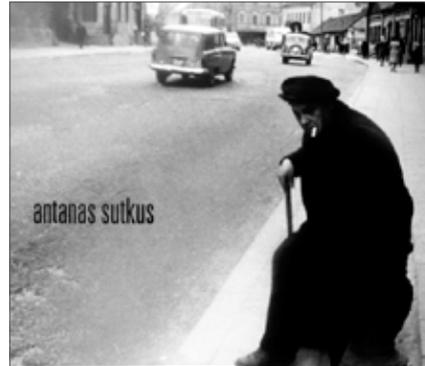
This book is not only full of beautiful photographs; it is a record of our planet skilfully rendered by each artist within it delivering a powerful message, as all good art should.

Antanas Sutkus

Antanas Sutkus

Publisher: White Space Gallery

Price: £20 / LIP members price £18



From an archive of 700,000 photographs, taken between 1956 and 1989, Antanas Sutkus' images of everyday life in Communist Lithuania are nothing short of remarkable. This leading Lithuanian photographer exhibited at the White Space Gallery in London is relatively unknown in the UK. His work demands an immediate response, not least for their humanity and honesty. With the passing of time, capturing moments of the everyday seems more valued than ever. We all have a tendency to photograph specific events in our lives. It is easy to recall such occasions, but the moments which are harder to recall accurately are the quiet mundane moments of daily life. When seemingly banal subjects are revisited years later they deliver the essence of a time and place with such greater clarity as to make one ponder why the staples of family life are not recorded more frequently on the days in between birthdays and holidays.

Sutkus' work does just this, accurately depicting the highs and lows of life in a Communist country with such sensitivity and instant connection to his subjects. This book is a truly insightful monograph not to be missed.

Sarah Moon

1,2,3,4,5

Publisher: Thames & Husdon

Price: £95 / LIP members price £85.50



For those of you who have never bought a Sarah Moon book, I can definitely recommend this one. The 5 book boxed set (also with a 95 minute DVD film titled Mississippi 1) contains the entire oeuvre of Sarah Moon's work from fantasy, fashion, landscape, portraiture to still life. Moon's award winning fashion photography delivered new possibilities to the genre, unsurprisingly perhaps, as Moon herself was once a model. There is fearlessness to her work, which permeates beyond the two dimensional to the darker side of life. Blurring the boundaries of her subjects through deeply contrasting imagery, movement and sophistication come together to create ominous unforgettable imagery.

The commentary on her work by an array of prestigious writers such as Robert Delpire, Dominique Eddé, Alain Fleischer, Magali Jauffret and Ilona Suschitsky offer insights to Moon herself, whom - like her photographs - holds a somewhat mysterious aura in the photographic canon. Photography, she admits is the world in which she escapes to, away from reality



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