

for LONDON INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPHY

FLIP



£4

17 MOVEMENT

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London Independent Photography is a community organisation of photographers from different backgrounds and levels of expertise who wish to develop their individual approach to photography. The group was founded in 1987 as an informal gathering of like-minded photographers, and has since grown to over 600 members. Not-for-profit and run by member volunteers, LIP comes together to offer a programme of workshops and talks, and to produce an annual group exhibition. www.londonphotography.org.uk

The magazine for London Independent Photography is published three times per year with the aim to showcase members' work and to engage readers in a wider dialogue concerning diverse approaches to photography. It is funded entirely by annual membership fees, contains no advertising and is free to members.

Membership

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Application details are online at

www.londonphotography.org.uk/joinLIP

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The theme for the next issue is STREET LIFE

Submissions are accepted online, for guidelines go to

www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/submit

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Editor's note

When the theme of Movement was first set for this issue, it was very much inspired by the achievements of Eadweard Muybridge. He demonstrated with still cameras movement that had not previously been seen with human eyes, and in the process laid groundwork for society to understand rudimentary elements of physical motion. With two major retrospectives of his work showing at Tate Britain and Kingston Museum throughout winter, the timing seemed right for this theme.

Now that winter is upon us, it's clear that Movement is a more relevant theme than first thought. It's the season when we would often rather stay indoors huddled by heaters rather than set out for a spin of activity. This issue may just inspire us to be more active this winter, if not physically then perhaps at least to stretch ourselves mentally.

There is such a broad scope of perception on show in this issue. Some eyes see movement in stillness, in lines and patterns that occur naturally in our environment. Many photographers visualise a blur, a passage of time recorded in a single frame. Movement is persistent in our simple, everyday journeys or travel to unknown places. It's celebrated in dance and electric light, in echoes of colour or in the remote traces of our imagination.

On feature we have four diverse bodies of work: Laura El-Tantawy's intimate exploration of the heart of a crisis for farmers in India; Steven Richmond's journey inside the elusive Democratic Republic of North Korea; Simon Head's calculated involvement with fringe landscapes in Spain and Clare Park's poetic collaboration with a person with Parkinson's.

We have managed to encompass so many concepts of movement in this issue that a warning might be in order: some readers may experience dizzying sensations! I recommend you immerse yourself cover to cover and enjoy the rollercoaster ride.

Best wishes through this winter, and keep in mind that movement overcomes the cold,

Tiffany Jones

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Letter from the Westway

by Constantine Gras

Dearest Kazimierz,
My earliest memory is of you cradling me in your arms. I gesticulate to be raised up towards a talking object. No words necessary as you sweep me up above your head towards the transistor radio.

My first fumbling photographic experience is using your Bilora Bella roll film camera that you had used to capture family holidays and day trips.

I took many photos marking your passage into middle-age, retirement and concluding with those poignant images as you battled with cancer. But I want to remember you in your prime. You had that laconic physical grace, redolent of a classic film star; Gary Cooper was a favourite of yours. The camera just seems to love some people more than others.

At the moment, I have fallen out of love with the still camera and have turned my attention to moving pictures.



I've just completed a filmmaking project called *Flood Light*. This was a commission to create an artistic trail across North Kensington and to get people to connect with two interrelated built structures, the Grand Union Canal and Westway (A40). The canal was built and run by entrepreneurs and is an early example of private capitalism using shares and bonds. In the early 1800s it transported coal, powered industrialisation and brought workers and communities to what was then a rural part of outer London.

The Westway was part of a much larger Greater London Council plan (thankfully, never to materialise) for building motorway-standard roads across London as a solution to the problems caused by traffic congestion and predicted increases in car-ownership. The Westway Development Trust now manage the 23 acres of land under the Westway, developed for community benefit.

My 12-minute debut film ended up being a mixture of styles: documentary, poetic-meditation and dramatic-narrative. I hope it hangs together. Ostensibly, it's about how we look at, examine and interpret the past via historical archives; prints, legal documents, maps, books, films and photographs. As there was no script and I was improvising, there was

an almighty struggle to coalesce all the thoughts and feelings engendered during the sixth month research and film shoot.

Dad, the film is dedicated to your memory and begins with a sequence of shots showing your working tools: spirit level, hammer, plane and saw. It concludes with me examining your Aliens Order Registration booklet. You were one of approximately 150,000 Polish soldiers who decided not to return back to communist-controlled Poland after the second world war. The ID booklet charts your working career as a carpenter. Over the course of five years, your movements across London were rubber stamped by the police.

During this process, I discovered that your first employer in 1947 was John Laing & Sons who were the contractors behind the construction of the Westway.

I don't know why I have stopped taking creative photographs at this stage in my life. I hope it ends soon. I have that Bilora Bella in my collection of cameras and will put a roll of 120 film into it.

Love
Constantine

Food keeps body and soul together

by Astrid Schulz

I was in the middle of a career change, studying photography and entered a studio for the first time at London College of Communication in 2004. Confronted by having to come up with an idea for an ongoing project which would end up in the degree show, I wanted to challenge myself and have fun at the same time. So I booked myself into the studio as often as possible and photographed my friends, but with a little twist.

Bored with the available backdrop colours - black, white & grey - I asked for lighting gels from the film department next door. I knew about their effects because I previously worked as a costume designer for film and TV, where gels are used to create different moods. Soon I could create any background colour I wanted.

I wasn't sure where the food idea was coming from, and didn't even realize how much this project was linked to my previous career. It had been part of my job to study people around me and analyse their dress. Clothes say a lot about the wearer, and a trained eye can conclude what kind of personality or background or even profession a person might have. However, I did not want to give anything away about my sitters, which could be interpreted by their clothing, so I stripped them and only added the food. It still tells us something about them, but the message is kind of unexpected.

The title is inspired by my grandmother, who always claimed I was too thin. She wanted to encourage me to eat more, I suppose. 'Eat, everybody, food keeps body and soul together!' - it's what she used to say before every meal. But I owe her much more than that. She also inspired and supported my creativity when I was a child. She was a self-taught seamstress and was amazing at making fashionable garments for the whole family. The fact that I trained as a dressmaker and later went into fashion and costume is probably also strongly influenced by her. Sadly she died last year, so I decided to hold this exhibition in her memory to honour her involvement in so many areas of my life.

My fascination for 'change' from one character to another has always been with me. The use of food gave me a surprisingly humorous direction whilst achieving a transformation with my sitters. I just love the process of creating something from

nothing, starting from an idea and getting it all together, finally. It's magic when you see the result in camera.

The ideas came from various sources. At the beginning of the project I developed my own visual ideas and asked my friends to stand in for it. Then fellow students at LCC wanted to participate, so I asked them what they love eating and an idea was born out of the following conversation. In some cases I knew something about the sitter, so I thought about a way to express this with food. I know most people in the pictures personally, only two of them I met at parties and asked them spontaneously with a proposal.

Some 'costumes' were easier than others to create. The most complicated was the 'pudding hat'. My friend Phil announced his favourite food is pudding. I visualised a colourful shape on his head,

'The title is inspired by my grandmother - it's what she used to say before every meal'

influenced by my German heritage because this is the type of pudding I would have had as a child (from my grandmother). The mould and red jelly powder were ordered from Germany as I could not find it in the UK, and I tested the jelly about three times, adding a lot of extra gelatine each time to make it strong enough to stand on its own. Two 'hats' were made for shooting day, just in case... and, voila, the first one fell down quite rapidly as the heat of the sitter's head made the jelly melt! My poor friend sat quite motionless for the second attempt and we had to work really fast... But we got it!

In the meantime I used colour gels for other portraits without the food. I love colours around me and also like to add some humour to my work. It seems to me that we sometimes do not have enough of these two elements, especially during the grey dark winter months. I hope to brighten up your day a little - in order to keep body and soul together.



Mibila Mothers

by Mark Burton

I was invited to Mibila by my friend Jon Witt. Mibila is a village deep in rural Zambia, and Jon had teamed up with a Zambian Bishop to build a clinic there. Jon asked me to take photographs that would be used for fundraising.

I found it almost impossible to comprehend how poor the villagers were and how hard their life is. The villagers are subsistence farmers growing corn, ground nuts and bush bananas and live in rudimentary mud huts. I have a vivid memory of standing in the village, looking at my cameras and realising they were worth more than the whole village might earn in a decade.

The people in Mibila are incredibly generous. Families struggling to feed their own kids won't think twice about adopting orphans - and orphans are all too common with the prevalence of malaria and HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, I'm used to living in a relatively equal society, so I found Zambian women's situation difficult to accept. Men work hard, but the women work harder. Their contribution is taken for granted and their identity belongs to their husband. For example, Moses' wife will be referred to as 'the wife of Moses' and not 'Beatrice'.

I asked Jon why the clinic was built in Mibila and he said, 'because that's where Bishop Barry thinks it should be.' This is one of the things I liked about this project - it wasn't a solution parachuted in by a western agency, but the result of collaboration and on-the-ground knowledge. Barry's instincts were spot on - Mibila is a central hub for surrounding villages and the clinic now has over 5,000 registered patients.

Without Jon and Barry's vision Mibila would still be without any access to primary healthcare. Before the clinic was built infant mortality rates

were extremely high and medical emergencies, like a breach birth, were almost always a death sentence.

While there, I wanted to do more than take photojournalistic style images. I wanted to take photos that had something more personal about them, except I hadn't figured out what that was.

My moment of clarity came when I was up a tree, taking a group shot of the whole village standing outside of the clinic. I realised the most important people in front of me, despite what Zambian culture says, were the mothers. They were the backbone of their community and would benefit most from the clinic. It would care for them while they were pregnant, assist their births and then immunise their young children.

It would have been easy to depict these women as poor and vulnerable, but to me a more accurate portrait shows their strength and dignity. They weren't looking for a hand out but a fighting chance of raising their children to become adults.

After the group shot I asked the mothers with children to stay behind - which led to some chuntering by the men! The mothers formed a line and one-by-one I photographed them in the doorway to the clinic. Each mother stood, looked at me and then a few seconds later made way for the next. There was no direction, their expressions completely natural.

When I look back on these photos I don't feel any sense of ownership - these are their portraits not mine.

The portraits have had much more impact than I ever expected. After explaining my reasons behind taking these portraits Jon named his fledgling charity 'Dignity', and I've continued to visit Mibila and be involved with this work. Many of the villagers have become friends, and I've watched their newborns grow into healthy children. My friends and family have also become involved, and support the ongoing work of the clinic with generous donations. This grassroots primary health care project has also led on to education and clean-water projects in the area.

The portraits of Mibila's Mothers have been exhibited life-sized, and appear on fundraising flyers and websites. Each time I return to Mibila I take laminated copies of the previous year's photos so everyone has one. In Zambian towns, when people see a white person like me they ask for money. In Mibila, people ask me to take their photograph.

'I wanted to do more than take photojournalistic style images. I wanted to take photos that had something more personal about them'



Sand and water

by Caroline Fraser

I was drawn to the Outer Hebrides after seeing some photographs taken by Hugh Milsom in his book "Mood and Colour". I met him on a photography week in Northumberland, and find his work really beautiful. There was one image of Luskentyre, an expansive beach, which convinced me that I had to go there myself. The colours and softness of the light said it all.

I persuaded my husband to book a few days there in August 2009. Landing at Stornoway, we drove south through an alien landscape from Lewis to Harris. The road descends from a pass between the hills towards Luskentyre, and the view that stretched before us as we arrived at the wide tidal estuary brought tears to my eyes. I knew that I had come to the right place.

As we explored the beaches of Scarista, Seilebost and Luskentyre I was filled with emotion; constantly having the feeling that I had found heaven on earth. The white sand beaches, the colours in the sea and sky and the extraordinary patterns in the sand were unlike anything I had experienced before.

Driving around we met sheep on the roads and cows on the beach. We hiked up hills and across the island by the "coffin road" ; an old track for those on the rocky east coast of Harris, in the days before cars, to carry coffins to the west coast where there is soil to dig a grave. I grabbed photos as we explored, but often felt frustrated at the lack of time to stop and contemplate the landscape.

As soon as we returned to London, I knew that I had to go back. In April 2010 I returned alone to spend four days photographing on the beaches, trying to capture the essence of the place.

The sands are on the beaches and in the estuaries at low tide. The wind and waves mould them into ever changing patterns that alter daily, depending on the weather. As the tide goes out, the wet sand holds patterns that are thrown into relief with low light. Sometimes the wind blows drier surface sands into new formations.

On my second visit it was sunny almost every

day, which created some problems with capturing the sands in the harsh daylight. I spent some time experimenting with taking seascapes with long exposures and movement to overcome the problems with the bright light.

When I am in the landscape, alone with my camera, I feel more content than at any other time. When the conditions are right, I get into a frame of mind that enables me to feel the landscape. I spend the whole day in my walking boots and waterproof trousers, and am happiest when lying down or sitting on the sand experimenting with different viewpoints. I prefer working without my tripod, as I find it restricts spontaneity, but I always have it with me unless it is a very bright day.

'My main aim is to show the beauty in things that others might pass by without noticing'

If the images don't match what I intended in the taking, I don't feel that I have wasted my time, as the experience of being in the landscape and really knowing it stays with me forever.

If I could write poetry, that would be my ideal way to express my feelings for the place. I have never found a way to express myself adequately with words, so will have to allow my images to speak for me.

I have no idea what effect they have on others. I know that some people like them, but like all art, they are not to everyone's taste. My main aim is to show the beauty in things that others might pass by without noticing. When the images are printed on heavy textured paper, and framed, I feel they do justice to my feelings.





I'll die for you

by Laura El-Tantawy

*Hindu Scriptures say
a person who commits
suicide becomes part of
the spirit world, wandering
the earth until they would
have normally died*



I'll Die For You focuses on the issue of farmer suicides in India's rural communities. Over the last decade, more than 200,000 farmers have committed suicide in India. This is attributed to globalization, which has opened the market to foreign produce being sold cheaper than Indian-grown, as well as unpredictable weather patterns where too much or too little rain have made for a deadly harvest.

Attempting to make ends meet, farmers in this expanding economy are pushed into debt after seeking loans from government lending schemes or private money lenders. Loan money, usually charged at more than 30 percent interest, is used to install irrigation networks, buy fertilizers, seeds, pesticide and to hire labour to boost crop output. But persistent failing crops and diminishing prices have created a massive financial burden where farmers are unable to pay off the loans, leaving them with nothing short of an economic calamity.

They endure constant harassment on the hands of their lenders, in some cases physical torture, and are forced to sell-off their land or belongings to repay debts. The shame of not being able to provide for their family and stress of being unable to repay loans eventually culminates into suicide. Despite the alarming pattern of farmer suicides, the Indian government has so far failed to establish a dedicated program to help them.

The majority of the work I do stems from a personal connection with the subject matter. When I read that farmers were committing suicide in India, I immediately remembered my own grandfather, who was a farmer. I could not imagine the utter desperation of the people to have to take their own lives and I realised this is a story I have to tell.

This series is not intended as a literal story about the causes and impacts of the suicides. The essence is the connection between the people and the land. For farmers that connection is vital, like a love story where one cannot survive without the other. In this environment man and land are eventually indistinguishable - if one dies, the other is sure to follow.

The strong bond between man and land is illustrated through details of the landscape juxtaposed against skin textures. I also want to reflect on emotional loss given the human tragedy this issue entails, so I photographed the women left behind, mostly the widows whose husbands have committed suicide and the mothers who lost their sons.

I'll Die For You is a work in progress and soon I'll be returning to India to continue the work and also start working on a film.



'I could not imagine the utter desperation of the people to take their own lives and I realised this is a story I have to tell'



Kimology

Steven Richmond

The promotion of Kim Jong-Un to the ruling ranks of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea marks a significant political change in the world's first Communist family dynasty. Now the hermit kingdom of North Korea, member of the "Axis of Evil", looks set to prepare itself for a transfer of power. Few tourists venture there, but those who do have their movements strictly controlled by the state. **Mehrdad Azmin** talks to Steven Richmond, who recently visited the country.

You have travelled a lot, but why North Korea?

I guess it's that I hadn't been before. It had always been at the back of my mind. You hear on the news about North Korea and there's absolutely no reason why you can't go visit. There are few places in the world that you can't go to, it's just about investigating it. I booked a holiday there for a week. You sign up with a group run out of Beijing and they go about every four weeks, so you've got to get a flight to Beijing. I usually travel independently, so one of the weird things about this was being part of a tour. The only way you can go is with an organised tour group sponsored by the North Korean government, it's all very well managed.

Is there a vetting process?

There isn't one. You've got to sign up to not being a photographer or a journalist. I went with a journalist friend. A few years ago a Channel 4 documentary maker pretended to be a tourist and it got aired. The tour group was shut down as a consequence, so they're pretty paranoid. But it was a real mix of people, from middle-American housewives, to a 73 year old woman from Barnsley and her son, to goths and a French philosophy professor. One American guy, Chris, measured the hotel car park with a bit of string between his ankles on the first night, then ran a marathon around it on the second night. He just wanted to run a marathon in Pyongyang.

Did you do any research before going?

Yeah, I always read as much as I can about a country prior to going. I read *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader*, a biography of the Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il dynasty, by Bradley Martin. And *Nothing to Envy* by Barbara Demick is an excellent book. It said people are all starving and hungry, on like 400 grams of rice a day and meat twice a year, but what we were presented is not that at all. We ate like kings, had all the food we wanted with meat





every day, there was absolutely no limit. Certainly the people we were presented to didn't look hungry or tired, so what the book or independent sources revealed was very different from what we got to see.

Did you have any moments of doubt about what was presented to you?

Yes, lots of doubting moments I think. There was one scenario where we were taken to a park and there was a fun fair with kids playing. Earlier, from the bus window we witnessed weird things people were doing in the morning. You could see everybody out cutting grass with a pair of scissors. So you see all this and get an idea it's clearly not utopia. At the park, we walked through the amusements and there were people having picnics, being happy, using digital cameras, mobile phones, just enjoying them-

'When the bus took us through the countryside ... there's no technology, it's ox and cart'

selves. And then they get out this big 1980s ghetto blaster, and start to spontaneously dance! They're all just dancing, and one woman whispered to a few people in English asking them to "please smile more". So I kind of knew then, but other people thought no, no, this is for real they're just really happy. Later you find out that every group that goes sees the same people there, spontaneously dancing.

When we went on the underground, a bus drops you at the station and you see the train; it looks great, you get on and go one stop, get out and your bus is waiting at the exit. So they try and insulate you from, you know, normal people. Most of the time is spent in Pyongyang, and if North Korea's got something to show it will all be in their 'showcase' city. Only healthy, well-educated, and ideologically sound people live there. When the bus took us through the countryside, you could see there are some bicycles but no cars, no tractors, no machinery. There's no technology, it's ox and cart. So you do get to see reality when you travel around a bit.

Tell us about your minders

We had a briefing meeting in Beijing the day >

< before we left for Pyongyang. A person from the tour company was at pains to point out what the minders would be like, what pressures are on them as guides.

One of the first things we got told when we arrived was how to fold the newspaper properly - they didn't want any creases along a photograph of the Dear Leader. This was an important thing to get across to us that we really need to be careful folding the paper, because great offense would be caused. And if we were unsure how to fold it, just give them the paper and they would deal with it and give it back to you.

The minders were quite sweet in a way. One girl had mentioned she was keeping a diary, and the guides asked her every day, just a friendly "what did you write in your diary?" We were told that they've got a job to do, it's a good job and a lot better than most, but if we do anything wrong we won't get into trouble, they'll get in trouble.

'One of the first things we were told when we arrived was how to fold the newspaper properly – they didn't want any creases along a photograph of the Dear Leader'

So they didn't send anyone away from your group? I've heard stories about tourists being expelled because of disrespectful behaviour.

We were told by the tour company that if we would have problems bowing to the statues of the Great Leader, just not to come. They said someone had signed up in the past, then decided when they got to the mausoleum that they weren't going to put on their tie and they weren't going to bow. I think you know before you go that this is the way things are done.

It seems like you were on a tight tour schedule. How did you go about shooting on the move?

It's a pretty intense five days and you don't have

any real down time. You're up and bang, thing after thing is all organised with precision. The moment you arrive you'll find that every other foreigner in North Korea is there doing the same things as you. We weren't allowed to take any photographs from the bus. We were told to always ask permission to take photographs, but by the second day people in the group were going snap crazy, taking pictures of just anything. If they didn't want you to take photographs they wouldn't allow you in with your camera, like for instance when we went to the mausoleum, and if there's military people around photography is absolutely banned.

On the way out you've got to get the train across the bridge to China and there's a lot of customs, they go through people's digital cameras and delete stuff. Everybody was really prepared for this. We were told before we went and that it's likely to happen and sure enough it did happen. But everyone had their memory sticks tucked away and had all sorts of fake cards with a couple of nice pictures, so it wasn't really a surprise.

But you had film cameras, what did you do?

They didn't bother with me at all actually. They had a look in my bag and I had three cameras there. They went through some people and not others, at random. I did get asked by one of the guides why I had three cameras. They were very curious. I said I've got one for black and white, one for colour and one for big colour. The guide must have thought what a bizarre answer from a foreigner.

Was it difficult to photograph in a group?

Of course, that's a bit weird. The reality is everyone has a camera. I guess I was trying to capture things outside that whirlwind of immediate interest, so there was a lot that I didn't capture that others would have.

One thing that freaked everyone out was the guy that followed us around with a huge video camera mounted on his shoulder. We all had theories about how the footage would be used in propaganda, and at the end of the tour we were offered the chance to pay 40 Euros for the DVD he'd made.

Can you tell us about the mass games?

That was the first thing we did, straight from the airport basically. It's called the Grand Mass Gymnastics and Artistic Performance. There's like 100,000 people all co-ordinated and in the background you can see mosaic pictures. Those are kids with big



< books of coloured pages, which they leaf through to make the mosaics. Pretty amazing.

You have quite a lot of candid shots of people. How did they react?

There's two types of photographs that I took - the ones where people knew I was photographing and that's probably obvious, and photographs where people didn't see me photographing. A lot of those were taken outside from a window or from the train back to Beijing when we were unsupervised.

What kind of narrative do you think you've got, if any?

There's basically three sets of pictures, shot with 35mm black and white, colour Kodachrome and 6x7 colour. If you look at the kids on the stage, that was what was presented and I took a picture. It's an interesting image. Most of the pictures are about what was presented to us, which comes across because that's the reality for me as a tourist with a camera. But there were things that I knew would be more interesting.

There are a lot of images of the Great Leader and the Dear Leader in your photographs. You have a picture of a family taking a portrait in front of a painting of them.

Yeah, you can always tell a North Korean because only a North Korean has a badge of the Dear Leader which they all must wear. It's a little lapel badge with a picture and you can't get one if you're not North Korean. The Dear Leader is supposed to be close to your heart.

I've seen photos by other photographers that went to North Korea, and most have the same sequence of images from the same angles. There are these massive statues and landmarks that you don't get in the west. I was looking forward to seeing the same images from you, but haven't.

I do have them.

That's interesting. Today I was looking at photos on flickr from a guy who has been to North Korea three times and seems to have covered quite a lot. Yeah, Eric Lafforgue. He's a journalist. He's not painted anything too negative, many of his pictures look resplendent really, and he's painted almost a nice environment.

I'm surprised he still can go there. He's got candid pictures of people, unguarded. I would think that the authorities would have a problem with that





and would not let him back in.

If he paints a picture that looks 50% good and 50% not so good, they're probably content with that. People say North Korea is poor. It's true, but there are parts of India, the world's biggest democracy, that are impoverished. I think the point here is that it's a despotic regime, and nobody has freedom to do what they want. It's not the point that they're hungry and poor, which of course is bad, but that also happens in regimes we're less likely to criticise. So portraying people that are poor, I don't see that as necessarily an indictment on a country. I think what does indict the country are the things that you can portray, or get closer to portraying, like the totalitarianism and the cult of personality of their leaders, that kind of icon status imagery.

'They all wear identical clothes like what was worn in 1950s Communist China. They looked scared of us'



They have actually preserved the Great Leader

Yes but other countries have done that too. One of the most shocking things we experienced was on the day they took us to the mausoleum. The building is immaculately clean and well presented, they must clean it with toothbrushes every night.

There's a mile of conveyor belts that you stand on in these long corridors, and in the other direction all these North Koreans are coming past you. It was like a big stare-off, where they're looking at us and we're looking at them. They all wear identical clothes like what was worn in 1950s Communist China. They looked scared of us, because they've been told a lot of stuff about foreigners and there's propaganda everywhere.

When we got off the conveyor belt, we were told to line up in fours like an army platoon. All the North Koreans are perfectly at ease with this, they're lined in fours, and us independent travellers are just all over the place. We're getting into lines, all really complicated and "we need one more person up here", it's just ridiculous. Then we march and go through all this security. You're not allowed any metal, so >

< even glasses have to be removed.

Then they take us four at a time into a gigantic hall, absolutely enormous. At the end there's a huge statue of the Great Leader all lit up, and they play this kind of Star Trek music, it's crazy. The four of us walk up to the statue, and we bow. And that's it, you're led to the next room where they're blowing air onto you and then into the mausoleum. There he is, lying in state in a glass box, you bow at the front, bow at the sides and you bow again. Then you get taken to see pictures of the Great Leader with all the other 'great' leaders he has met, like Fidel Castro, Erich Honecker, Nicolae Ceausescu, Saddam Hussein. Apparently they don't know Ceausescu is dead.

There is also the gift museum where you can't take photographs

It's another one extremely well-kept and you've got to take off all metals. It's gifts presented to the

'We crossed the border from North Korea into China, and it felt like entering America – the land of the free'

Great Leader and Dear Leader, lots of rooms full of gifts. They've got an LED board to say there's like 243,000 gifts that have been presented and counting. A lot of poor North Koreans have a look around and this is how they believe that their leaders are great, based on the number of gifts that they've received. The section showing the gifts from the UK had a few old trinkets and a plate from the National Union of Miners.

Did you get a chance to speak with any North Koreans?

No because they wouldn't speak English. Westerners, particularly Americans, are made out to be demonic figures. The propaganda is pretty intense. We were in the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum, which was built in the 1950s, and it's not really changed at all. One of the guides at the museum, dressed in an army uniform, was asked by a guy in our group if she had any relatives that were killed in the Korean war, and she said yes and





started crying a bit. She said that it was Americans that killed them and, pure pause, "I really hate Americans." Our tour guide jumped in and said "Korean people love people of all countries."

Did you try to, not escape but just get away from the tour at any point?

Yeah, but I didn't realise at the time I was escaping, I didn't know the hotel was the perimeter. We were in the hotel and just went to walk out the door into the car park, and people came running over asking "where would you like to go?" We said we're just going outside, but they said "oh tomorrow we're going to be doing this and this".

But you know what it's like, once you arrive in a foreign country the weirdness is gone. Like everywhere I've travelled I think it will be kind of crazy, but once you're there it's just reality, it's a lot less scary than you might think it would be. The guides are really there to make sure you enjoy it, have a good time and observe their "customs". It was searing heat but the bus was air conditioned, the hotel was quite nice, there was a bar with all the foreigners sitting around. Our main hotel in Pyongyang was nicknamed Alcatraz because it's on an island.

What was your group like to hang out with, because you're stuck with them and you are used to travelling independently?

After a couple of days it was a group of people who had something in common with each other and another group of people who were just idiots really.

Friend: Which group were you in?

Ha, well it was an eclectic group. There was an American paramedic and a fireman. Everybody was suspicious by the end that my journalist friend and I were up to something. [Laughs] But everyone had come for a similar reason, it's just an unusual, interesting place to go and no one had a particular narrative for being there.

So what did you take away from the trip?

Has my impression of North Korea changed after being there? No. All you read in the papers, it's pretty much right. I had a great time. On the way back we crossed the border from North Korea into China, and it felt like entering America – the land of the free. The Chinese guards looked like professional, enlightened, liberal people, compared. You numb to it but you realise it is just like another world. There was a big cheer when we went across the border. Everybody cheered.





testimonio

Cataluña, Aragon, Basqueland

by Simon Head

Two years have passed since Spain found me, and the project *testimonio* took a hold on my life. In 2008/09 I had been involved in a collaborative art exhibition and discovered alternative ways of working which quickly evolved into the structural image making that *testimonio* relies upon. I say Spain found me but the truth lies somewhere between the timing of the 'structure/film/structure' work that came out of the collaboration and my wanting to push the idea to find out how big a

structure I could work with. My destiny in Spain is entirely fortuitous.

A small 15th century chapel built on the edge of a village named Eroles hidden away in the province of Cataluña, became the first structure to seduce me into this new work. I found a front view and exposed the negative - took copious notes of the measurements from camera to subject, and subject position in the ground glass of my view camera - then moved to a side view of the chapel. I had previously noted the apparent slight movement made during the self motion aspect in this work, and during the much larger movement made when seeking a second view of the subject I felt the effect of environmental motion, when everything moves in relation to everything else. By concentrating my eye on the subject during the movement, this spatial effect became magnified and through ninety degrees around the





chapel it further impressed on me it's physical form. I subsequently placed two Fuji/Polaroid's I had taken of the chapel in respective order and the genie was out - the relationship between self and environmental motion appeared to be duplicated when looking at this rough photographic information placed in an isometric composition.

I was quite excited. Frankly I was hooked, and started out as Don Quixote would say 'leaping over the hedge before coming to the stile'. Time and understanding have galvanised testimonio - people I have met during these journeys tell me all manner of things including one man in Canfranc Estación in Aragon, who said that my obsession with measurement was evident in my work and that this was the measurement of a life, actually the measurement of my own life. Such truth from a total stranger is a powerful thing.

This project has gradually spread across the Spanish Pyrenees cutting the Iberian peninsula off from the rest of Europe like Jose Saramago's stone raft. I made a note earlier this year on the progress of testimonio:

Questions asked through a lens attract unexpected answers - one view for another perhaps. Often the structure I am photographing, and they are nearly always structures, looks back at me because normally it would not attract enough attention to be photographed. These structures are located on the edges of communities where I believe they also exist along the edges of collective memories. Through the camera I feel the space between the subject and myself alternate - between distance to and silence from - both are physical but silence encourages questions.

These days people rarely find their way into >





< my compositions, they will talk to me whilst I am working - a broken silence and a welcome collaboration - but within the image they remain absent. Sometimes a stranger will make a detour in order to tell me a story. "This was an important building," they might say, "it belonged to the village behind you, there was fighting and many died here." The message and the messenger become entwined with the work - I will take a photograph from which we both can never escape.

Initially, on being told about this "important building," I thought that I was in danger of being shot if I stayed much longer - my Spanish is not so hot - and I realised two things. Feeling comfortable along the edges of these communities was not just where my subjects of a past peasant lifestyle and morality existed, but this peripheral position was

also where my own cultural differences naturally gravitated.

I like to think these isometric photographs are a visual testimonio in themselves, but the issues raised by the project as a whole when discussing memories through the images with the people from communities I have worked and traveled in, produces yet another dimension to the work which is one of shared experience and collective actions in their memories which in turn can produce a deep narrative to the project. Don Quixote also said, "it is not the hand but the understanding of a man that may be said to write". *testimonio* is forever moving and will in time become a book along with several short structural films.

A 100pp book of the testimonio project is now available at www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1681544





Breaking Form

Buz and Parkinson's

by Clare Park

This unique collaboration has developed over the past eighteen years between Buz Williams PWP, his wife Debbie Green and myself. The result is a narrative photographic study of Buz living with Parkinson's.

Theatrically choreographed poses speak of arrested momentum, falling as a given, being supported. They speak of strength and of weakness, of mobility and stillness, and of so often being stuck and frozen in place. Buz's body closes in, becoming introverted and claustrophobic trapped within itself, and the face inexpressive as the possibility >



MAY I HAVE THE NEXT DANCE?

"...and his daughter kept rhythm while he danced with his wife. They danced, wary of the future." - Buz



TRAMPOLINE "Each of us, the fish and I, has a body that is lightweight, but like the salmon's instinct, I possess strength of will and mind that compels/propels me continually and metaphorically upstream..." - Debbie

< of movement is withdrawn.

This suggests control when the opposite is true, for instance when medication floods the body and dyskinesia propels Buz wildly around the space, accompanied by shuffling and bumping and crashing and ending in the inevitable lean, trip and topple over. His movements are involuntary, uncontrollable, and often excessive, fast without focus. He lurches



'Theatrically choreographed poses speak of arrested momentum, falling as a given, being supported'



All photographs by Clare Park

and spins and flails, head and feet go in opposite directions not necessarily at the same speed. "But this is not flying," says Buz, "it's not even falling with style."

Debbie is a teacher of movement for actors. She has danced and moved all her life yet it is her husband's physicality, which has nothing to do with acting, which dominates her life. She says, "Parkin-

FROM REAL TO SACRED "The intimacy and tenderness of this portrait, enhanced by the details specific to Parkinson's, hopefully extend outwards to remind people of the universality of our human condition." - Clare

This image won the Royal Photographic Society's 153rd International Print Exhibition gold medal 2010

Previous page:

UNATTACHED STRINGS "...a simple concept like a chair instead of being just a seat to sit-on, more often would trip him up; stumbling and biting his ankles or his brain." - Buz



FAMILY CIRCLE "His dreams and fantasies were scaled down so that his hopes would not soar in his skull. This would only make him try harder/go faster." - Buz

son's is part of our family life. We travel with its inexorable but unpredictable progression incidentally, as well as at times in its thrall, but we are compelled onwards by it. The pictures illuminate something of Buz that I do not see on a daily basis, his inimitable style, athleticism, creative determination and perception and his idiosyncratic humour and slant on life."

The photograph that inspired me

by Peter Marshall

You won't find the picture that came to my mind when asked to write this on the Internet or in photography books. I can't find it myself, though I know it will be somewhere, probably in an old shoebox in the loft.* I was 13 when brother Jim, 13 years older than me and working as an accountant for Ranks (they imported Pentax SLRs and came up with the famous slogan 'Just Hold A Pentax', but his camera was a cheaper 120 folder) wolfed his breakfast and stood in a corner of our cramped living room with his camera and newly acquired bulb flash. He got Dad to move from his post at the breadboard on the end of the table and made us all stop eating to take a picture.

Jim, who died young a few years later, was never a great photographer and it isn't a great picture, but it did have a great impact on me. There we still sit around the crowded table, beans permanently congealed on toast, my mother in her flowered apron holding Inky, my sister looking down at her scrambled egg (she wouldn't eat beans) and a sliver of my middle brother. It was the first colour photo I'd seen of myself, and the first taken using flash, both newfangled in the 1950s, but it wasn't this that made the picture an inspiration for me. As well as capturing those slices of toast, Jim had also captured a slice of real life rather than the fictions we were accustomed to see in the papers and magazines. This is something that has remained important in all my photography.

We three boys shared a bedroom, a single bed - mine - pushed up against the double almost completely filling the space along with a chest of drawers, a small wardrobe and table where middle brother did his homework (it often involved intensive study of an impressive collection of Brigitte Bardot pictures, slid rapidly into the drawer when anyone entered.) There was just room for two small bookshelves that held Jim's books.

On one of these was Eric de Maré's 1957 Penguin 'Photography'. I spent a lot of time perusing its picture section, 64 pages with almost a hundred largely well-chosen small scale images. (Next to it was Simone de Beauvoir's 'The Second Sex', which disappointingly failed to live up to the promise its title held for a 13 year old boy.) Among them are three each by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Bill Brandt, Edward Weston and Bert Hardy and a few too many by de

'There we sit around the crowded table, beans permanently congealed on toast, my mother in her flowered apron holding Inky, my sister looking down at her scrambled egg and a sliver of my middle brother'

Maré himself. I could well have chosen Brandt's 'Coal Searcher', H C-B's 'Picnic on the Banks of the Marne', Hardy's 'Blackpool' or the Weston landscape or nude to write about for this series - and I've written about all elsewhere. 'Photography' is in many respects out of date now, but there remains a great deal of interest in the book - perhaps rather more than in some volumes now on every college course reading list.

Having read all the books in the Junior library I was allowed to graduate up the impressive stairs of the Victorian building (now a shopping centre) to the Adult section. There, when the librarian's back was turned I could slip down the Amateur Photographer (it wasn't thought suitable for children) and retreat to a table hidden by bookshelves to read it - or at least look or leer at the pictures - from cover to cover. Later at school the library provided Photography Magazine, then under the editorship of Norman Hall.

So although it wasn't until a dozen years after that breakfast picture that I had the money and time to start making my own pictures I was already beginning my education in photography, a continuing project.

** After writing this, I asked Linda and half an hour later she had located it. Now online at <http://is.gd/fA0h9>*



how we see
movement



1 - Debbie Green

2 - Hal Calamvokis





3 - Pete Webster

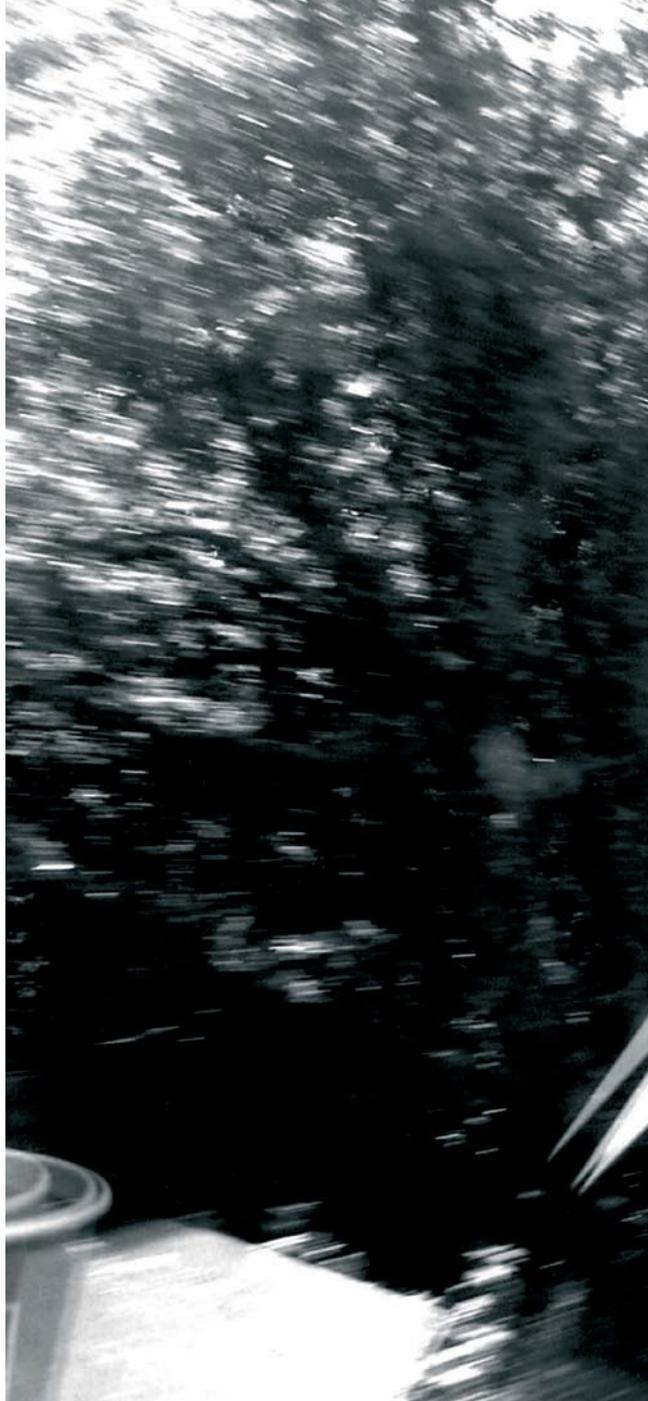








5 & 6 - Tom Hurley



Previous page: 4 - Rich Bunce



7 - Amelia Anderson



8 - Lucie Varekova



9 - Lucie Varekova

10 - Popi Tsoukatou





11 - Mehrdad Azmin

12 - Ida Pap





13 - Mark Burton

14 - Nick Scammell





15 - Amelia Anderson

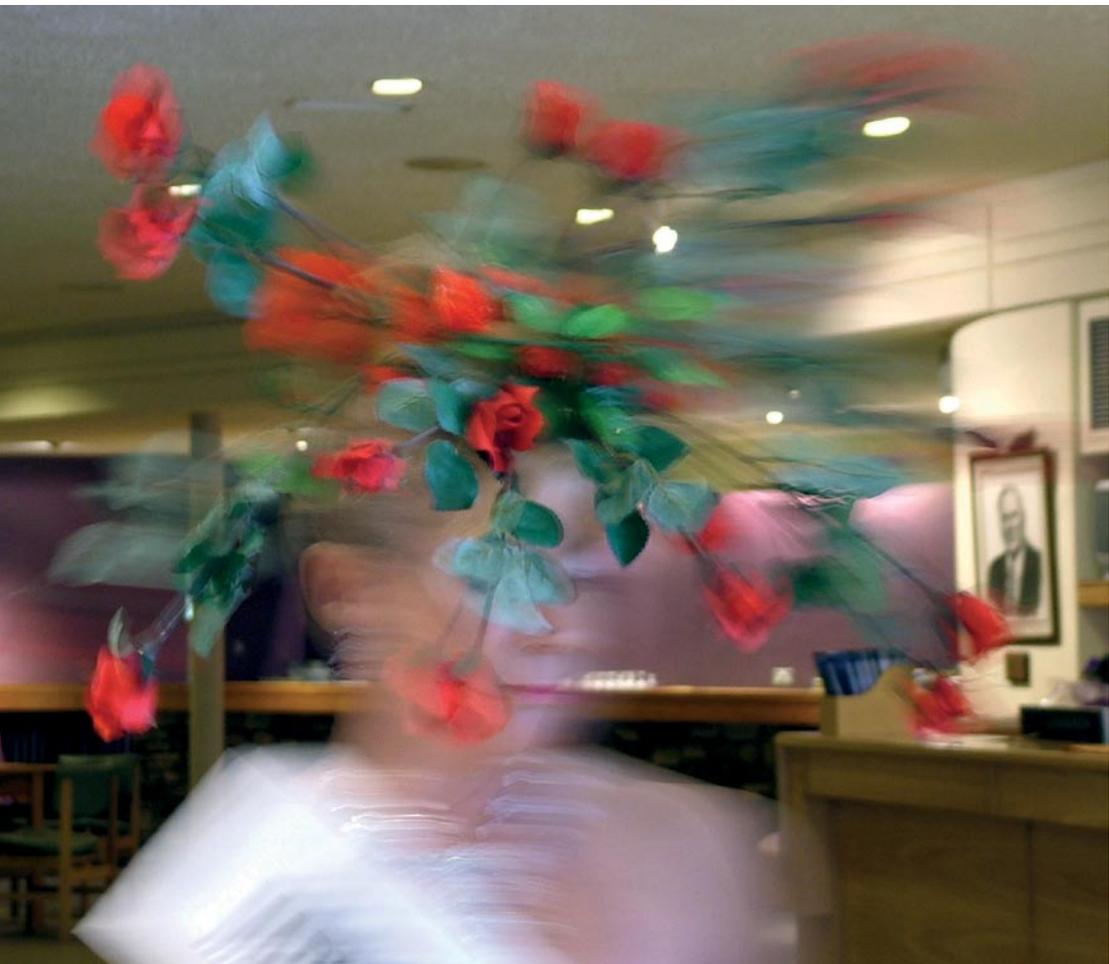
16 - Jonathan Goldberg





17 - Alicia Clarke

18 - Anne-Marie Glasheen



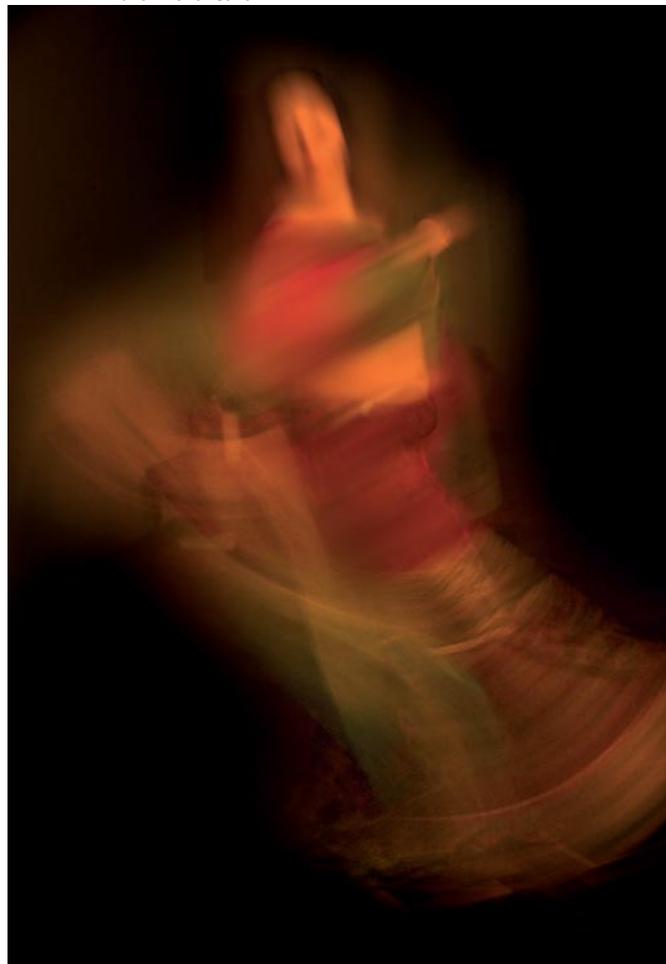


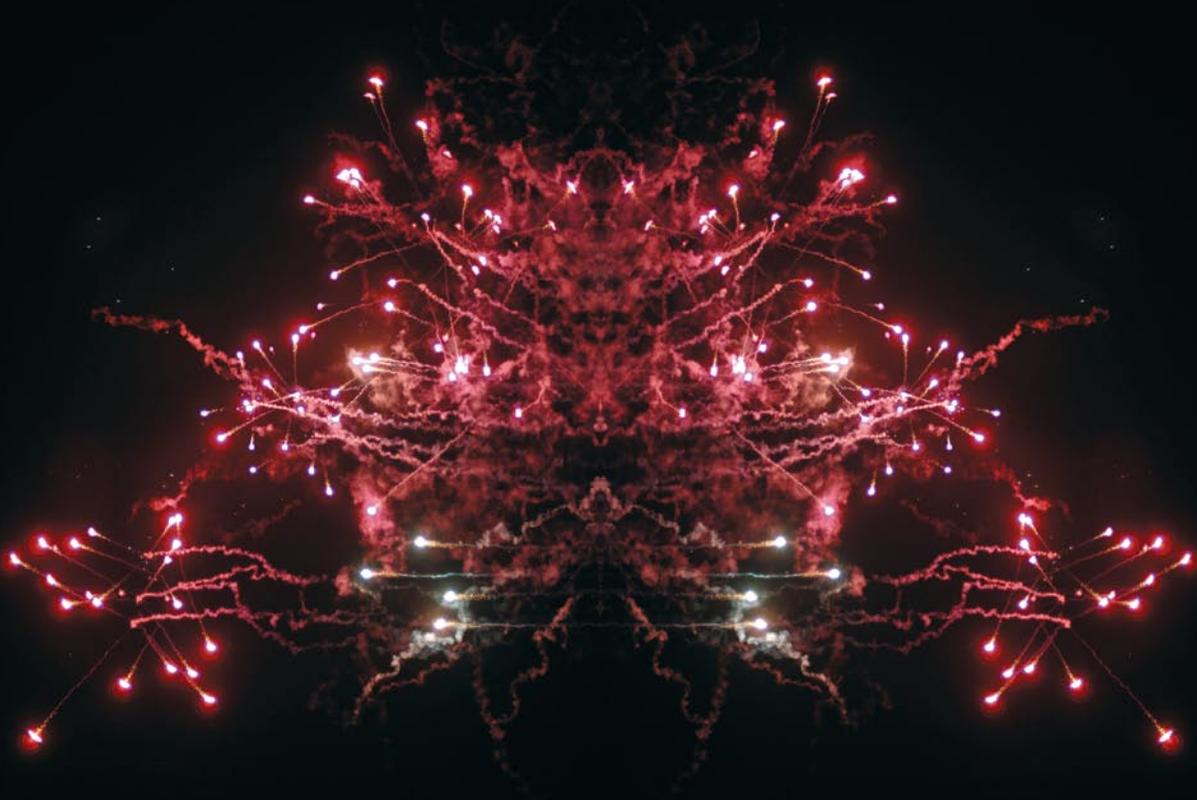
19 - Stefanie Reichelt

20 - Michael Whittington



21 - Bunshri Chandaria





22 - Stephen Brockerton

23 - Holly Revell





26 - Holly Revell



24 & 25 - Mark Adams



27 - Georgina Craig-Harvey





28 - Susanne Hakuba



30, 31 & 32 - Alicia Clarke



29 - Jenny Burrows









34 - Anita Strasser



35 - Anne-Marie Glasheen



36 - Marcus Papa

37 - Popi Tsoukatou





38 - Marko Beslac

Index

Theme Cover - Lucie Varekova *Male underwear*

1 - Debbie Green *Mass Movement* - *I feel the plasticity and the sensuality of the trees - I can conjure through the lens the feeling of contact and sense of energy...*

2 - Hal Calamvokis *Jo Wilfred Tsonga returns to Andy Murray (Mens Quarterfinals Wimbledon 2010)*

3 - Pete Webster *Images from the series 'Looking up'*

4 - Rich Bunce *This body of work investigates the movements of people as they pass through an observed space, recording the choices they make, their engagement with the space and others who occupy it.*

5 & 6 - Tom Hurley *from the series Lift Portraits, photographs made in the lift of Balfour Tower, a 24 floor tower block in East London.*

7 - Amelia Anderson *Journey*

8 - Lucie Varekova *"Dominic"*

9 - Lucie Varekova *"The Grey Jumper"*

10 - Popi Tsoukatou *Objects in motion - I have tried to move beyond the limitation of the camera to render images of time flowing through my images through motion blur. I want to reveal the movement and rhythm of life, the fleeting details and mysteries unfolding in common places.*

11 - Mehrdad Azmin *On the bus from Tehran to Qazvin. I photograph, she spots me.*

12 - Ida Pap *Ghost in the night*

13 - Mark Burton *Pennsylvania #1 - from the photofilm Train Across America, online at <http://bit.ly/d5q6N3>*

14 - Nick Scammell *Ghost Fishing - Movement is something that still photography can only ever infer, yet at the same time it can show us what we cannot see with our own eyes*

15 - Amelia Anderson *Inside*

16 - Jonathan Goldberg *from a recent series inspired by a big blank space in my mum's living room wall, coupled by a blooming garden, in which she takes great pride.*

17 - Alicia Clarke *Interegnum 5*

18 - Anne-Marie Glasheen *Rose of Tralee*

19 - Stefanie Reichelt *Nepal, from the series 'Passing Places'. A photograph can capture social layers and connections which are not explicitly revealed, I always seek this type of mystery. I have tried to show the dynamic motion and instability of fleeting moments.*

20 - Michael Whittington *Shapeshifter 2 - Exploring the gap in perception between the camera lens and the human eye.*

21 - Bunshri Chandaria *I am a breast cancer survivor and it was my photographic creativity that helped me heal during my cancer journey when I felt completely drained. It was only when I picked up my camera again that I experienced heightened energy levels. I began to photograph movement, which to me signified life. Now, I felt excited and alive again!*

22 - Stephen Brockerton *Rorschach Fireblot*

23 - Holly Revell *Yoga-dog - Light Painting Booth - I saw the potential for light painting as a live event as it is quite theatrical, and have taken a booth to a variety of art and club events this year.*

The live light painting booth offers to participants to be painted with light sources in a dark room over a long exposure, resulting in a sumptuous time based image. I set to work on painting them in the dark, their bodies appearing and disappearing under my spells of light. The emphasis is on the making of the picture and there is often space for a passive audience as well as those participating, which adds to the excitement of the process.

24 & 25 - Mark Adams *Smoke - Originally inspired by the childhood memory of seeing Victorian photographs of ghosts and of seances where ectoplasm would appear from a medium's mouth. I didn't realise they were staged at the time and wanted to create something that appeared equally unworldly and ethereal and the movement of smoke seemed perfect.*

26 - Holly Revell *15 Minute Factory, see also 23*

27 - Georgina Craig-Harvey *A ballet dancer moves ever so slightly whilst on the tip of her toes.*

28 - Susanne Hakuba *Expressions of dance - I am fascinated by the expressive quality of contemporary dance. Capturing a particular moment from a flow of movements in photographs shifts the focus of a dance routine, simplifying it to just a few very brief moments.*

29 - Jenny Burrows *Wedding dress - I took these self portraits using movement to mask my identify, wanting instead to capture a everyman figure.*

30, 31 & 32 - Alicia Clarke

Top & Right - Audrey Doklan

Bottom - Marie-Louise Molbach & Ramon Diaz

33 - Nigel Jarvis *Afon*

34 - Anita Strasser *Synthesis of Voice and Movement - work in progress performance*

35 - Anne-Marie Glasheen *Tightrope Dancers*

36 - Marcus Papa *Zoom*

37 - Popi Tsoukatou *Objects in motion, see 10*

38 - Marko Beslac *Moving Free - My work represents my inner state as well as how I see the world around me. Photography for me is a valve through which I can share my happiness, love, anger, sadness and frustration. My photographs are a part of me, and my feelings at the moment of creation, as well as at the time of image processing because a large part of the creation process is spent in post-production. There are many souls on this planet, and my wish is to reach to them.*

The theme for the next issue is STREET LIFE
www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/submit



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TURNING POINT

Taker or maker: which are you?

by Nick Scammell

The shutter clicks, but did you just make that picture, or take it? Is there a difference?

Could the frequency with which we use the verb 'take' rather than 'make' tell us something profound about how we conceive of photography in our digital-majority age? Perhaps the way we describe that act of creation says more about our attitude toward our photographs than we imagine. While the difference may seem trifling, when we look closely at the associations both words carry, diverging paths of meaning emerge.

'Make' connotes manufacture, creation, process and invention and was used principally in the early years of photography when photographers would typically expose, process and print their own work, completely controlling the production of their images; works which were then considered to be a product, rather than art.

We can see in 'make' the suggestion of craft or artistry, of chance denied by a slow, careful assembly of constituent parts into a total composition, the transformation of something into another. Yet in doing so, we make only an image of a thing, not the thing itself.

Considering the verb 'take', we have a word loaded with meanings; suggestive of removal, possession and even theft. In other contexts, when we take something we buy or consume it, we accept it as true, copy it, use it, interpret or measure it, assume control of it, cheat or swindle it. It is our personal impression of something. The films we watch

are composed of multiple takes. How many of these terms could we apply to our photography?

From a historical perspective, the increased convenience offered by smaller models and cheaper processing enabled the widespread adoption of the camera as the primary recorder of family life by the mid-20th Century. This heralded a popular transition to the more possessive 'take' and, due to its impulsive use, the swiftly pejorative 'snap'. Though both of these words remain in use today, the embedding of cameras in mobile phones and laptops has seen the rise of yet more aggressive and commanding words such as 'capture' or 'grab'.

On these differences, the thought of visual theorist Susan Sontag in her book *On Photography*, offers conflicting perspectives. She asserts: "With still photographs the image is also an object, lightweight, cheap to produce, easy to carry about, accumulate, store." This concept seems



Navajo Woman and Infant, Ansel Adams

'Make' connotes manufacture, creation, process and invention ... 'take' is suggestive of removal, possession and even theft

to support the idea of making, except with digital technology an image is rendered as transferable code which may never become a physical object, existing only as a stored file.

Sontag also states: "Photographs really are experience captured," which leads us back to taking, along with: "To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed", and "Photographed images do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality." Conversely, she writes, "Photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings and drawings are", leading us back once again to notions of making.

Can this fluidity be overcome by listening to photographers? For some the reality is plain. "You don't take a photograph, you make it," Ansel Adams stated. Similar ideas of authorship through constructive making came from Richard Avedon: "I do not believe that something reports itself in a photograph. It is redrawn; it is something I am saying." And Garry Winogrand, "A photograph must be more interesting than the thing photographed." In each case, we see the expectation that the photographer must add to or influence reality, which cannot speak for itself.

By contrast, Henri Cartier-Bresson drew a distinction between "those who take photographs arranged beforehand" and "those who go out to discover the image and seize it." Having identified himself as a firm taker he said, "I prowled the streets all day... determined to 'trap' life. Above all, I craved to seize the whole essence, in the confines of one single photograph." He also said, "Photography is an immediate reaction," in which "the creative act lasts but a brief moment, a lightning instant of give-and-take."

So perhaps it is the case that some photographers are makers while others are takers - makers creating conditions, and takers

searching for them. The inherent slowness of making could mean greater control is possible than when taking, where serendipity and accident play freer. Does this suggest that making requires a more rigorous, creative eye, or simply a primacy of the conscious, directing mind over the unconscious? Does taking then involve a postponement of seeing? Does it require a more immediate instinct, the spontaneous reaction of a documentary, street or vernacular photographer?

The final question must be: are these methods mutually exclusive or could they be two different ways of working that one might move between – two states of vision?

Paul Graham outlines a possible synthesis in his presentation *The Unreasonable Apple*: “you form the meaningless world into photographs, then form those photographs into a meaningful world.” Wherein we find the practices of taking and making fused, of images ‘taken’ from the world and then ‘made’ through judicious editing into sequences or stories greater than their sum, enriching the world from which they came.

What is the list in your head?

Taking cues from Alec Soth for new ways of working

by Tiffany Jones

A spate of controversy arose recently over the commissioning of American photographer Alec Soth to produce work for the Brighton Biennial (curated by Martin Parr). Debate erupted when it was announced that Alec didn’t actually deliver a series of photographs inspired by Brighton as he was meant to do – his seven year old daughter Carmen did the work instead.



Carmen's list for Brighton Picture Hunt. Photo: Tiffany Jones

But how could you argue with a little girl? The primary complaint was that British taxpayers had presumably funded a major art exhibition by someone who a) is not British, and b) barely has hands big enough to hold a digital SLR camera. Soth said he was prevented by immigration officials from working in the UK when he arrived without a visa. So the Magnum photographer let little Carmen have a go at photographing Brighton from her 4-foot high perspective, and when the Biennial exhibition launched, “Brighton Picture Hunt by Alec and Carmen Soth” was hung in a room painted pink.

The picture hunt began with Carmen and her dad wandering the streets of Brighton, while she photographed random things that she liked (dogs, especially). After a few days she grew either bored or tired, so dad helped her draw up a list of things she liked and really wanted to photograph.

Soth often utilises lists in his process of finding things to photograph. During the making of his book *Niagara* he taped a list to his steering wheel and drove around looking for things like hotel pools or a missing dog to shoot. On his *Little Brown Mushroom Blog* he says, “A trick I use to find pictures

is to create a list of things I’m curious about then go and beat the bushes. Even if I don’t find what I’m looking for, it gets me out the door and moving around in the world.”

Now Soth has instigated a group of his photographer followers to make lists too, as part of a series of assignments he started on flickr. Assignment #1 challenged participants to photograph a number of items from the same list he used while photographing *Sleeping By the Mississippi*, with extra kudos for incorporating multiple subjects in a single image. The project is connected to a comprehensive exhibition of his work to date, entitled *From Here To There*, at the Walker Art Center in his home state of Minnesota.

The list assignment had a strong response, but Assignment #2 has created a snowball effect of inspired storytelling through photography. The idea is essentially a process of taking your image making ‘from here to there’, with the next image connected to the last in some way. The brief was: “1) Find and photograph a stranger; 2) Ask the stranger to show you something; 3) Based on what they show you, make another picture, or series of pictures.”

If you think about combin- >

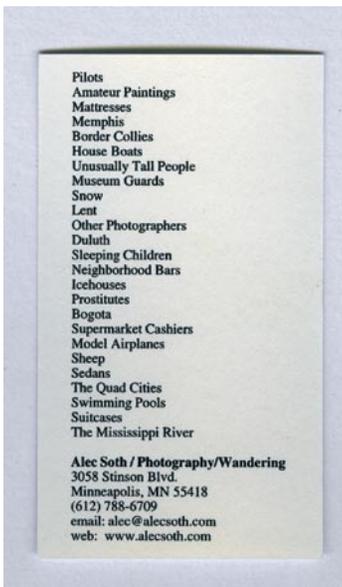
ARTICLES

< ing list-making with photographing from here to there, you have a simple recipe for creating imaginative and personal series-based work. Just switch things up a bit from Soth's assignment, starting with your own stream of consciousness list, then crafting ways to create a trail of pictures. What do you want to shoot and how will one picture lead to the next?

Making lists lets your thoughts and ideas out, and can be a catalyst for opening up new subjects and projects that interest you. Even if your way of working involves reaction rather than staging photographs, having a list in your head might keep you ready to create a clearer visual response of intensified significance to you as a photographer.

The stuff in your brain affects how you see and ultimately the images you create. If you need a push out the door this winter, try putting a your list to paper and see where it leads you.

See Alec Soth's "From Here To There" project on flickr: <http://bit.ly/9k4sWb>



Soth's business card from 2002. He says the list explains his photographic practice. Photo: Alec Soth

EXPOSURE



Photo: Suzanne Harrison, her favourite from a masterclass with Martin Parr

Shoot like a fly

by Suzanne Harrison

In early summer, LIP sent out an email looking for keen photographers to undertake a masterclass with a pro for a new Channel Five programme. The show, called 'How to Take Stunning Pictures' had Martin Parr billed to take part. I've never harboured ambitions to be on TV, but thought it could be a great experience if I happened to be selected. So why not apply?

After a phone call with the associate producer, I went for a screen test at the production offices in Shoreditch. I spoke about my own photographs on camera

and realised how difficult it is to explain your pictures to other people. Lacking confidence in my photography, I was unable to articulate exactly what appealed to me visually about certain situations.

Happily, a few weeks later I was selected to appear in the programme - with each show covering a different type of photography, I would participate in the Travel episode with Martin Parr. The first day's shooting was with presenter Suzi Perry from The Gadget Show and the other participant Robin Coleman, a friendly and likable Brightonian who I got on with immediately.

The following week we met with the crew in a cafe in Hove. Our director jokingly said to feign surprise as Martin Parr



Suzanne during filming in Brighton, with Martin Parr & Robin Coleman.

Photo courtesy Channel 5

‘As I got used to being trailed by a camera crew, it imbued me with a new confidence and I started asking people if I could make their portraits’

was revealed as our masterclass host, and as I flexed my acting skills, proclaiming a particularly dramatic “Oh my gosh, it’s Martin Parr!”, who should appear? Yes, a slightly embarrassing start. I hadn’t been nervous about meeting Martin as I’d perceived him as an avuncular type rather than a scary hotshot photographer. He was clearly a TV pro, and extremely adept at providing slick soundbites.

Martin reviewed a few photographs Robin and I had brought, then set the first challenge. At Brighton seafront we were to ‘shoot like a fly’ and produce interesting new angles and compositions on everyday details. At the sea, we watched while Martin swooped and looped his camera around, engaging the locals with

his characteristic confidence. Then it was our turn.

There’s nothing like being followed by a film crew to make you feel a bit of an idiot. My usual style of candid photography (which involves lots of surreptitious shooting from the hip) was suddenly the focus of Brighton as people stopped, stared, and asked what we were doing. Again I had the tough challenge of explaining on camera what I was looking for and why I was taking certain pictures. Adding to the pressure, we had been presented with a new camera from the show’s sponsor which we had to quickly get to grips with and use throughout filming.

Martin demonstrated basic tips for producing candid, still life and portrait shots - none new

to me, but the programme aims to cover very basic concepts. As I got used to being trailed by a camera crew, it imbued me with a new confidence and I started asking people if I could make their portraits. The rides at the end of Brighton Pier proved to be classic Parr territory, and he told us such places are great to shoot because people are distracted by watching the action.

Our main challenge was then set: to produce a series of photographs that depicted our experience of Brighton the next day - including a portrait, still life and candids. Panic set in as I wondered how to do this in the half day allocated for filming, and my fears were not allayed by Martin’s final joking words to me: “Don’t f*uk it up”.

I walked back to the hotel exhausted and confused. While processing what had been a rather surreal day, I also had to consider producing my series with very limited knowledge of Brighton. Robin knew of a cafe frequented by drag queens in The Laines, and would focus on telling the stories of a selection of its customers - a great idea that left me desperately seeking my own inspiration. I decided to return to the pier for my assignment and focus on capturing the tourist experience. After all, I too was a tourist.

The next afternoon I chanced upon the Dolphin Derby. The game drew my eye with its rainbow colours and marine-themed stuffed animals, and was one of few amusements that actually had customers! It proved the most successful spot of the day, drawing a wonderfully diverse crowd from young children to the elderly, with a burly football fan its most dedicated player. I made a final set of pictures including a portrait of the guy running the stall, and feeling confident I had produced enough images to present an edit to Martin, we wrapped the shoot.

The next day was our final presentation and I had just a brief thirty minutes with the images >

EXPOSURE

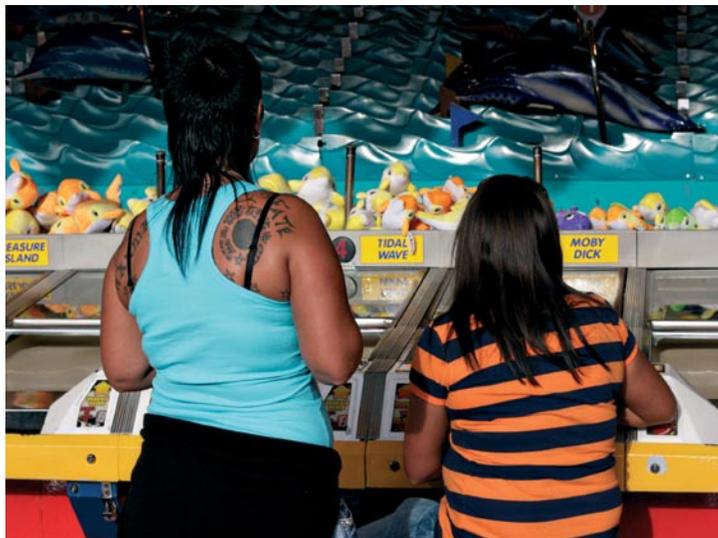


Photo: Suzanne Harrison, Martin Parr's choice

< to do a final edit before filming began. As our edits were shown on a large flatscreen TV, Martin briefly commented on each photograph, no doubt tempering his real views to keep things encouraging and TV-friendly. He seemed to agree that my decision to stick to one spot had proved fruitful and was very positive overall. Robin had produced a series of portraits in *The Laines*, including one of local eccentric 'Spyske' with his pet rat on his shoulder.

In the studio were two large pictures with fabric draped over them - Martin's favourites from his own review of our work. He unveiled them one-by-one and explained his reasoning behind each choice. Robin's was an excellent portrait of a man working in a clothes shop, while mine was of the backs of two women standing at the Dolphin Derby. It was great to see such a large print of my work, but unlike Robin, I hadn't included Martin's choice in my own edit. Given his earlier emphasis on loose composition, I was surprised Martin had selected quite a 'straight' shot. I had used a different image of the same women, that focussed on an interesting shoulder tattoo and a stuffed dolphin peeking out from

between crossed arms.

Shooting the programme seems so long ago and I can't quite picture what it will look like on TV. The run-up to broadcast is actually more nerve-racking than the shooting process. The series opener was met with rather lukewarm reviews, the consensus seems to be that thirty minutes is too short a time to cover such a complex subject.

My feelings about taking part may change after I see my episode but I can't help feeling extremely lucky to have experienced such a rare opportunity. While I didn't learn much in terms of rules or technical tips, I came away with a heightened confidence in my instincts.

As Mr Parr himself once said: "When I first started learning how to take photographs, you had to spend the first six months figuring out what an f-stop was. Now you just go and take pictures." And that's exactly what the show aims to encourage people to do.

Suzanne's episode of 'How to Take Stunning Pictures' aired 19 Oct on Five. The episode can be seen online at <http://bit.ly/dx1lZT> and her final series 'Dolphin Derby' at www.suzanneharrisonphoto.com

WORKSHOPS & TALKS

**Constructed Realities:
Seminar with Nick Cobb &
Graeme Webb** Sat, 19 February 2011

This seminar begins with a presentation that tracks both artists' journeys from painting, landscape and still life photography to the area of constructed imagery. Nick and Graeme will discuss their artistic processes of developing concepts and building 3D miniature dioramas for making 2D photographic images, the motivations and philosophies behind their images and their technical approaches to photography. There will also be discussion on the history of the genre and some of its practitioners.

Nick Cobb is an artist and educator who moved from abstract painting 6 years ago to concentrate on building and photographing miniature dioramas or 'micro worlds'. He has built up a body of work which includes scale replicas of office parks, shopping centre car parks and fast food restaurants. Each project ends its life as a series of narrative images culminating in a photobook. His recent work has been influenced by the late novels of J.G. Ballard.

Graeme Webb works in video post-production and was introduced to the miniature diorama genre by exposure to stop motion animation. His work is highly personal and revolves around childhood memories, fantasies and relationships. His meticulously detailed images play with elements of scale, texture and lighting and the never ending cycle of nature modifying man's achievements. His influences include the filmmakers Stephen, Timothy Quay and Jiri Barta.

LIP offers an ongoing programme of workshops and talks. For current details of upcoming events and to register go to www.londonphotography.org.uk/LIPevents

New Satellite Groups

Small informal groups of LIP photographers meet regularly to share work and discuss photographic interests. Three newly-formed groups started meeting in October: Kingston upon Thames, Putney and a new group for Central London. For contact details see inside cover, or find out more about these and other satellite groups at www.londonphotography.org.uk/satellites

EXHIBITIONS

LIP 22nd Annual a success in Strand Gallery

Our 22nd Annual ran from 19-30 October at Strand Gallery, an exciting new venue for us close to Charing Cross station in the center of London. In all, 588 prints were submitted by members this year, the most ever. Selectors Lucinda Chua (Proud Galleries) and Paul Ellis (Photofusion) chose 106 prints from 61 photographers. The show was curated by Carole Hudson, Carole Evans and Brigitte Flock.

The exhibition would not be possible without members who generously offered their assistance with hanging, print delivery & takedown, staffing the gallery and the private view night itself. The private view on the evening of the 19th had an incredible turnout and the response was very positive. The exhibition was widely featured in the press which helped to ensure a good many people visiting, viewing the members' work and learning about LIP.

Thank you very much to all those who participated in making it one of our best Annual Exhibitions to date.

John Stead

LIP Exhibition Organiser

exhibitions@londonphotography.org.uk

from Mark Burton:

This year I took part in the 22nd Annual Exhibition, the highlight of the year. LIP is a fantastic non-profit organisation that is successful because members give their time and skills to make things happen.

I've been a member for two years and have got so much out of belonging, so I wanted to do my

part by helping to hang the show. When I arrived the selected work had already been arranged and measured for hanging.

All afternoon 15 of us worked at hanging prints. The following evening I returned to see the same space, packed full of people looking at the work. The range of the show was impressive with portraits, landscapes, street and Fine Art photography all represented.

One of the things I like most about LIP is the diverse collection of photographers that are members. Some are well established professionals, some renowned artists and there are many highly talented amateurs who produce very professional work.

The annual show is a great example of how the group works. External selectors are invited to choose the exhibition prints, and don't know who has made the work until after. This means the show is about the work itself, and not past histories.



From Lucinda Chua & Paul Ellis, selectors:

Whilst it would be something of a cliché to say that selecting this London Independent Photography exhibition was difficult, having viewed over 580 entries of such high caliber, this cliché can be seen a tribute to LIP's incredible standard.

It wasn't simply the quantity of images that made the selection process difficult but rather the diversity of content. From the spectacular to the vernacular, subjects varied and work processes differed and the overwhelming majority of entries had to be discussed, argued over and viewed several times.

With the omnipresence of photographs it is increasingly difficult for photographers to take or make an image that stands out – yet so many of the submitted images did just that. From a decomposing corn kernel to a child throwing a stone into the sea, the images selected, were the ones that stood out in our memory.

The 22nd Annual Exhibition catalogue is available to view and order at blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1690136

Left: Photo by Mark Mitchell

Below: LIP 22nd Annual Exhibition private view 19 October at Strand Gallery



EXHIBITIONS

Lisa Holden

by Mary Pelletier

Photographs by Lisa Holden may confuse at first glance – most likely because they are not simply photographs. In fact, her work escapes definition of any single media. The closest label, one that Holden has used herself, is that of ‘digital photowork.’ Part photograph, part painting, and part haunting familiarity, each of these ingredients make up a veritable layer cake of imagery that is worth taking the time to uncover.

A British-born artist now based in Amsterdam, Holden’s career, much like the trend of her current work, has been one of expansion and addition. Originally trained as a painter, she also worked with video and performance before beginning to experiment with self-portraiture by way of still photography. Questions of identity and notions of the self pervaded the early close-ups of her own face, owing primarily to the unanswered question of heritage brought about by her adoption. Early images were heavily pixelated and often concerned with concepts of gender and feelings of belonging, with Holden donning guises that confused any sense of her true personal identity.

In more recent work, however, Holden has traded her early, jagged digital aesthetic for one that is more ethereal. While the images created are still clearly compiled digitally, her use of colour is softer, the figures are more sensual, and the landscapes (or dreamscapes) in which they are placed are reminiscent of Pre-Raphaelite paintings, or the Symbolist work of Gustav Klimt.

The use of the self continues to remain important, however, as she looks to reconcile a personal identity, which she sees as ever-

changing, with engrained concepts of society and cultural heritage.

But Holden’s use of layering works twofold: her themes overlap just as the image surface is wrought with a strange depth. Taking original photographic imagery, either in the form of photographs or video stills, she transforms the surface with paint, coats with varnish, and otherwise stretches, adds, and subtracts visual information as she sees fit. The end result is re-photographed, which is then printed on a grand scale, allowing the viewer to become lost in the depth created despite the flat photographic nature of the final print. Embracing digital technology while remaining dedicated to more traditional artistic modes and histories, it is clear that Holden has ambitiously been exploring territory for which a firm establishment has yet to be determined.

Holden insists that she has not focused on a personal identity – a mission that proves challenging to accomplish when the subject uses the self as a primary model. But it is her multiple guises, her use of layers, both physical and digital, as well as the obvious nod to cultural and artistic traditions that convince viewers these are not images driven by a narcissistic desire. Instead, we are faced with a sort of universal narrative – by using familiar themes and combining them with the ever-changing aspects of digital technology, Holden has left room for the viewer to relate it to their own unpredictable lives.

An exhibition of Lisa Holden’s most recent work, I Won’t Be Your Mirror, runs until 8 January 2011 at Diemar/Noble Photography, London. See www.diemarnoble.com for details



'Twilight' 2009 by Lisa Holden courtesy of Diemar/Noble

SELECTED EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS



Photography, London

Robert Bergman Portraits

The first European show of American photographer Robert Bergman's colour portraits; fleeting moments with strangers that capture depth of personal emotion, lived experience and spiritual states. *Until 27 Nov at Michael Hoppen Gallery, 3 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TD*

Any Day Now: David Bowie

– **The London Years** An insider's view into the early years through to the height of his success in 1974. *Until 5 Dec at Proud Camden, Chalk Farm Road, London NW1 8AH*

The Election Project 2010,

Simon Roberts An enduring photographic response to the 2010 UK General Election, commissioned for the Parliamentary Art Collection. *Public access by free guided tours Mon & Fri, see bit.ly/dv1m3T for details. Until 13 Dec at Portcullis House, Westminster SW1A 2JH.*

Walid Raad: Miraculous

Beginnings The largest survey to date of work by one of the most important artists from the Middle East. Raad playfully considers the effects of conflict on body, mind and art itself. Works include *Let's be honest the weather helped & Sweet Talk: Commissions*, his exploration of the changing face of Beirut over the last 20 years. *Until 2 Jan at Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX*

Photofusion Annual Members' Photography Show 2010

The 2nd members' exhibition, which reflects different genres, approaches and interests from photographers within the membership. Open to annual members to submit, 14 photographers were selected and show prints from a recently completed series or project in development. *3 Dec - 28 Jan at Photofusion, 17A Electric Lane, London SW9 8LA*

Astronomy Photographer of the Year

An exhibition of photographs selected from public submissions, showcasing incredible images of the sky, solar system and deep space. *Until 27 Feb at Royal Observatory, Greenwich SE10 9NF*

A History of Camera-less Photography

Exploring the camera-less image from its discovery in the 1850s to now, showcasing work by key figures in the history of photography including Anna Atkins, Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy. Associated exhibition 'Shadow Catchers', £5 in The Porter Gallery. *Until 27 Mar at V&A, Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL*

From Back Home

The result of a 7-year collaboration from Swedish photographers Anders Petersen and JH Engström, photographs from Värmland, where they spent their formative years. They created an award winning book of this work, and this exhibition will be the first and only showing in the UK. *Until 27 March at the National Media Museum, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1NQ*

Fay Godwin: Land Revisited

Known as one of Britain's greatest landscape photographers. A selection from her 1985 exhibition and accompanying book, *Land*. *Until 27 March, at the National Media Museum, Bradford*

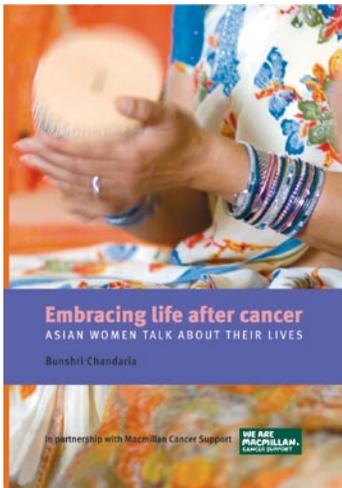
London Street Photography A

major exhibition showcasing a collection of London street photographs from 1860 to present, demonstrating how street photography has evolved and the ways it helps us to understand the dynamism and energy of the capital. *18 Feb - Sep 2011 at Museum of London, 150 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN*

*Invocation by Adam Fuss, 1992*

Courtesy V&A Images / Shadow Catchers

MEMBERS' BOOKS



Embracing life after cancer

by Bunshri Chandaria
 36pp published 2010 by Envisage
 Books in partnership with Macmillan
 Cancer Support
www.bunshri.com
 Available at bit.ly/9weXem

Reactions to a life-changing cancer diagnoses are highly individual and personal. There is fear, anger, shame, the feeling of an end to life as it was known before and then painful treatment and therapy. But there is also the inability to express and share feelings with loved ones and concern over the effects of the illness on them.

Bunshri Chandaria's publication *Embracing life after cancer* illustrates these difficult periods in the lives of seven Asian women, aged between their twenties and seventies. They tell of their fight to overcome cancer and the profound changes the illness has for their physical wellbeing and their emotional life. This booklet is published in collaboration with Macmillan Cancer Support, promoting awareness and support offered to affected women in various self-help initiatives.

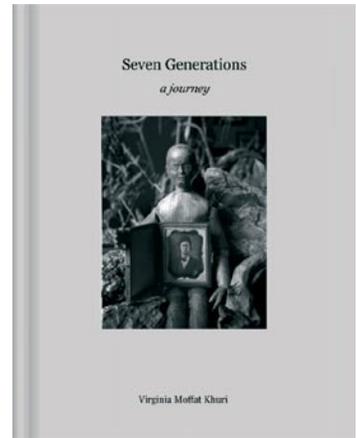
The individual stories deal with issues in an Asian-specific context; feelings of displace-

ment and loneliness, not necessarily solely associated with the illness, in a situation of emotional turmoil.

This work is motivated by personal experience. Diagnosed herself with cancer in 2006, Bunshri experienced the fate described by many women in the book: the initial shock of diagnosis, the raw emotions during treatment and therapy, and the difficulties for family and people close to her in dealing with a situation where a strong core member of the family is suddenly suffering and weak.

Her book is not solely about photography, though the stories and photographs are a direct result of her illness. She rediscovered her earlier interest in photography as part of her healing process, readdressing priorities and goals in her personal embrace of life after cancer. And she discovered how her approach to images had changed - now favouring colour over black and white, capturing motion and working with depth of field - this serves as symbol of her renewed courage and changed outlook on life. Her images therefore perfectly complement the stories of profound turmoil, but also strength, hope and courage in dealing with the life during and after cancer.

'Her images perfectly complement the stories of profound turmoil, but also strength, hope and courage'



Seven Generations

by Virginia Khuri
 100pp 8x10in, self-published
 Available at www.blurb.com/book-store/detail/1605819

In this project Virginia Khuri has illustrated the history of her own family looking back seven generations. She introduces us to her ancestors, tracing her family roots from early 19th century Americans with English roots, to Middle Eastern influences and European experiences. The motivation and prime audience of the book are her grandchildren, all born in the new Millennium and forming the seventh generation.

In this multi-layered work, photography is only one component, however it is the starting point of the narrative in form of old family portraits. Rather than directly utilising these historic images, often staged with suppressed individuality and identity as was customary in the photography of the time, Virginia has carefully arranged these pictures, integrating them into individual black and white still life compositions, supported by objects describing the period or character of each ancestor. In tune with presenting the family history to her grandchildren, the pictures and stories are presented

by a wooden puppet, guiding through this journey of time.

These stories are told in verse form, framed by Walt Whitman quotes and linking personal fate as they accumulate to family identity. Life stories are placed against their socio-economic context and we learn about the family's American roots in the south of the emerging USA, involvements in historic situations such as the Civil War or the move into the 'wild west', as well as the introduction of Lebanese culture and profound British influences on the family in recent years.

The title of the book relates to a Native American proverb, 'in every deliberation in life we must consider its importance and effect on the next seven generations', a wise advise for the grandchildren. Not purely a photography book, but a work that convinces through highest standards in intellectual approach, content and production.

Out of my Head

by Bill Jackson

80pp 8x10in, self-published (Blurb)
Available at www.blurb.com/book-store/detail/512181

Known to many of us, not least through his participation in the annual LIP exhibitions or his recent Showcase interview, Bill Jackson's book *Out of my Head* (also available in a signed limited edition) could be considered somewhat of a bargain as it effectively contains three distinct series, loosely connected by the themes of scenery and landscape.

Core series in the book are the *Nighthawks* and *Hampstead Heath* pictures, which show places and situations photographed during the hours of darkness or changing light conditions at dawn. These images work with colour, atmosphere and carefully crafted composition, with little room for coincidental interferences. Bill



describes his outside work as an extension of his studio work and therefore involves meticulous planning to the process of photographing outdoors. The results resemble classic paintings and display a high degree of concentration and patience, working with the location, light and exposure, pushing technical limits seemingly with ease.

The images in these two series demonstrate a deep understanding of light and colour, however there is the danger that technical detail takes over from the content of individual pictures and that specific meaning and intention becomes unclear. In the absence of some tighter editing, both series have the feel of studies about them.

The third series in this book, *Suffolk Landmarks*, is presented in a contrastingly different tone: here Bill shows bridges, silos, houses, observation towers and other easily overlooked landmarks of Suffolk, in black and white, neutral light and with a more objective approach. In these images, Bill – deliberately – references the works of Bernd and Hilla Becher, co-founders of the Düsseldorf

School and its conceptual vision since the late 1960s, and shows that he also remains in full command of a distinct visual language despite the pared down approach compared to the earlier series.

Individual viewpoints and technical ability are at the core of this book, which I can only recommend.

'The results resemble classic paintings and display a high degree of concentration and patience'

MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS

Numerous exhibitions end in November, many part of Photo-month 10, see LIP Calendar for details

**Anne Clements:
Don't Pass Me By**

Anonymous passers-by and urban structures come together for a fleeting moment to represent an era, questioning our own permanence as much as that of the built environment that surrounds us. *Until 26 Nov at The Jerusalem Tavern, 55 Britton Street, London EC1M 5UG*

Clare Park in 'Open Here'

Clare is showing three large scale pieces at the Hereford Photography Festival. The festival and fringe occupies over 40 venues this year. *Until 27 Nov at The Courtyard Centre for the Arts, Edgar Street, Hereford HR4 9JR*

Alicia Clarke & Kelly Hill in Final Show, MA Photography at LCC

An opportunity to have first view of new projects by emerging photographers whose work pushes at the boundaries of the medium. Alicia's project concerns gender performance, that it is fluid and constantly moves between 'male' and 'female'. *23-29 Nov at London College of Communication, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6SB*

Lucie Varekova: Cornwall

Cornwall through the eyes of Lucie Varekova. *Until 30 Nov at Chorak, 229 Muswell Hill Broadway, London N10 1DE*

Dennis Toff: Jewish Credo

A photographic essay illustrating some beliefs & practices of Judaism. *Until 30 Nov at Spiro Ark, 24-26 Enford Street, London W1H 1DW*

**Aniela Perriam & Anne Crabbe:
The Stuff of Dreams**

A joint exhibition by two members of the Ruislip LIP satellite group. Both series are colour prints of reconstructed scenes incorporating old and saved clothes, evoking strong memories of childhood and youth. The two found that they were both approaching the same idea with their photography but in very different ways. *Until 8 Dec at The Cha Cha Cha Cafe, 3 Cassiobury Park, Watford WD16 7HY*

Peter Moseley: Volte-face

A series of portraits where anonymous subjects invite participation, a need to construct biographies and purpose. In a real sense these are our stories, not theirs. *Until 10 Dec at Gallery 1885, 16 Bowden Street, London SE11 4DS*

**Cinnamon Heathcote-Drury:
Spice of Eden**

Indian spices and vegetables displayed as monumental archaic forms. Seen in conjunction with enigmatic portraits that celebrate genetic difference, without defining specific cultural identity. *Until 8 Jan at The Cinnamon Kitchen & Anise Bar, 9 Devonshire Square, London EC2M 4WY*

**Bill Jackson in Taylor Wessing
Portrait Prize**

An important platform for portrait photographers including amateurs, students and professionals. Around 2,500 photographers submitted more than 6,700 prints. The exhibition of 60 works includes four prize-winners and a portrait by LIP member Bill Jackson. *£2, until 20 Feb at NPG, St Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE*

For ongoing exhibition listings see www.londonphotography.org.uk/exhibitions and our calendar www.londonphotography.org.uk/calendar



Anne Crabbe & Aniela Perriam: *The Stuff of Dreams*

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



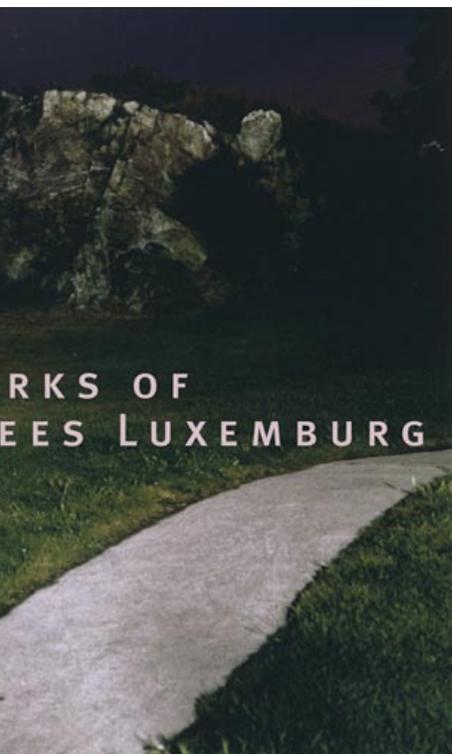
Commonsensual: The works of Rut Blees Luxemburg

black dog publishing
blackdogonline.com
£29.95

The nocturnal wanderings of Rut Blees Luxemburg have not till now held as much fascination for me, as in my ignorance I was only familiar with 'London: A Modern Project'.

This book is in fact a revelation, opening up my eyes to the abstract depth and versatility of her work. There is however one stylistic connection that has not changed when thinking of her signifying aesthetic – that of the colour yellow – which permeates her compositions time and time again.

Her use of the colour is wielded with such confidence that I am intrigued as to what draws her to it. Yellow is often associated with happiness, sunshine,

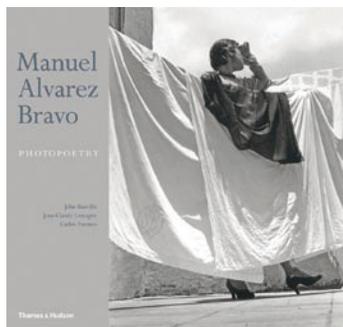


daffodils, buttercups and the like. (However, yellow is known as a colour that can induce depression and is never used on hospital walls for this reason.)

In Rut Bles Luxemburg's hands it is the colour of the night, watchful and wary, it illuminates the city streets but gives no comfort. Her observations seem to say, "proceed with caution", "tread carefully" as if something or someone may emerge from the shadows at any moment.

My advice, is to march right in and seize this book with both hands, you may be surprised too.

'Yellow is the colour of the night, watchful and wary ... it gives no comfort'



Manuel Alvarez Bravo

by John Barville, Jean-Claude Lemagny & Carlos Fuentes
Thames and Hudson
www.thamesandhudson.com
£42

It is hard to emphasise the importance of the photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo's contribu-

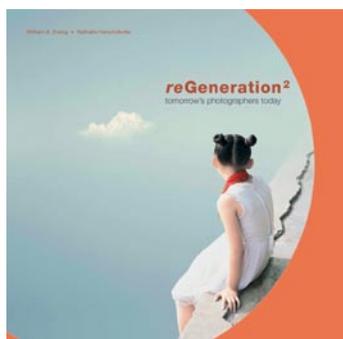
tion to the photographic canon without a long account of the many images he took during his long life. Instead I urge you to buy this book.

It has been years since a comprehensive retrospective publication on his photography has been published and this is one of the best I have seen.

His work touches upon all aspects of the genre including still life, portraiture, surrealism, landscape, the nude, abstraction and symbolism, the list is endless.

Bravo's imagery becomes more complex on repeated viewing and like fine wine only seems to improve with age.

Three short essays, which are beautifully written, punctuate the book and the quality of the reproductions are outstanding. If you own only one book on Bravo, this is a fine place to start.



re Generation 2

by William A Ewing & Nathalie Herschdorfer
Thames and Hudson
www.thamesandhudson.com
£19.95

With over 200 illustrations 're Generation 2' presents a diverse array of emerging talent from 30 countries. 120 of the world's top photography schools submitted 700 candidates. Those whom were chosen by the curators at the Musée de Elysée are presented in this book.

This showcase of talent is

a wonderful insight into the breadth of work being created by artists throughout the world. There is something for everyone here in every possible genre of the medium. With a brief coherent synopsis discussing each photographic artist the book is accessible and not overtly 'wordy'. There is no need for excessive exposition.

When picking up this book I looked through it numerous times before reading a word, just to absorb the vast variety of what was on display amongst its pages.

As this is a book of emerging talent the price is very reasonable too and beautifully designed with crisp clear layouts, allowing the work to shine. The highlights for me include Geoffrey H. Short's beautiful explosive yet poetic and paintilly Towards Another Big Bang Theory series, Kristoffer Axen's Sea At Night series is extraordinary and Liu Xiaofang lyrical dreamlike visions are romantic yet troubling.

But don't take my word for it; see for yourself.

Turning Point

A series of incidents and opportunities



A Mile from Zhang Jiang High Technology Park, Shanghai

by Hin Chua

The closest person I ever had to a mentor was a photographer who came straight from the old school. He arrived in New York with nothing but an ancient Nikon and ran in the company of luminaries like Koudelka, Salgado and Cartier-Bresson.

His exacting approach to composition required each component of the frame to contribute to the overall image. No redundant elements were tolerated and despite my anguished pleas, 'failed' images were brutally culled during our reviews. He explained that such passengers served no purpose but to reveal the compromises the photographer had allowed himself to make and were fundamentally an indication of weakness.

Despite my initial reservations, this philosophy ultimately appealed to my precise nature. I had started out by photographing people candidly, trying to impose

a sense of order to human chaos by incorporating more and more duelling elements into the picture. I began to juggle, balancing people in mid-flight, coordinating a curious dance of strangers. Here was an exhilarating adventure: learning to sense the edges of a crowd as it coalesced and dispersed before me, relying upon instinct, persistence and blind luck, reveling in the wonderful simplicity and complexity of it all.

But after a few years, it gradually became frustrating, repetitive and most distressingly of all, futile. What was the point of the compositional games I was playing? What was I trying to say, why was I even doing any of this? I was left with too many questions and too few satisfactory answers.

I tried to shake things up and made different types of pictures to separate myself from the past. I meandered aimlessly for months before I made this photograph, far from home and completely out of my comfort zone.

'I just had to appreciate that the quiescent tableau was as significant to me as the decisive moment'

In hindsight, the answer was blindingly obvious. There was nothing preventing me from still making complex, precisely-arranged compositions. I just had to appreciate that the quiescent tableau was as significant to me as the decisive moment.

With this realisation, I finally broke free from the frenetic pace of my photographic youth. I could focus on what I was trying to say and how to go about saying it, as opposed to constantly reacting to situations beyond my control. Now I was able to work on my own terms.

None of this experience was particularly revelatory, other than that it being uniquely personal. As photographers, we all must come to some kind of private accommodation, rationalisation or delusion that justifies the cost of our efforts. A few years ago on a cold winter's morning in the outskirts of Shanghai, I just happened to stumble across mine.

Contributors

Alicia Clarke is a London-based dance and portrait photographer with a background in performance. She is fascinated by the paradox inherent in attempting to communicate movement in a still image, and working with the notion of the body as a cultural site. www.aliciaclarke.com

Amelia Anderson About eight years ago my father lent me his 35mm camera. I was impressed and surprised by the camera's ability to capture life as it happened. Photography has been my passion ever since. www.aaphotography.co.uk

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Holly Revell I am interested in presenting photography as a live, current, present thing, rather than as a document of the past. I am seeking arty/club events to take my booth - 'DARKROOM' in order to continue its development. www.hollyrevell.co.uk

Ida Pap is a self-taught photographer, her work is inspired by the urban environment and abandonment. She moved from Budapest to London to explore the mostly ignored beauty of the city. www.ideoda.com

Jenny Burrows' photographic agenda is to make images both beautiful and thought provoking, capturing the fleeting moment and those details we don't usually see. www.jennyburrows.co.uk

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Lucie Varekova "An image is that which represents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time." Ezra Pound, 1915 - I believe my images evoke that. www.lucievarekova.com

Marcus Papa studied photography at Westminster College, and loves to create great pictures. He is always looking for something completely different, be it a landscape scene, still life or portrait. www.olivemarcus.com

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