

for LONDON INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPHY

# FLIP



Published by

# London Independent Photography

fLIP



#30 TOPOGRAPHY, Spring 2015

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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](http://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.

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Annual Subscription: £24 UK / £29 Outside UK

Application details are online at

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The theme for the next issue is **NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Submissions are accepted online, for guidelines go to

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## Editor's note

**W**elcome to the TOPOGRAPHY issue of fLIP. Rarely has the announcement of a magazine theme caused such curiosity and confusion. TOPOGRAPHY is a much-used term in photography, but what does it actually mean? What images were we looking for?

In the process, we realised there are many interpretations of the concept; it can be described as the arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area, the detailed or precise description of a place – or even the graphic representation of the characteristic features of a place or region. At the core of all these definitions is the description of a surface, either natural or enhanced by human beings.

If you view the theme in this context, you quickly arrive at the eternal debate about the role of objectivity in photography. Is a photograph merely a representation of the surface or does it constitute an individual artistic viewpoint created by the judgement of the photographer? Stephen Shore, one of photography's most influential 'topographers' of the 20th century, expressed it thus: 'I tend to back off from critical stances that are judgemental... most judgements dismiss the complexities of reality.' So he is in the more 'objective camp.

In response to the theme, we've received many interesting visual interpretations. There are landscapes, cityscapes and architecture, but also interpretations of places and journeys, as well as communities. We hope to have distilled this diverse and inspiring range of submissions into an interesting and stimulating first issue of 2015.

You can see additional content and viewpoints relating to the theme on our website at: [www.london-photography/magazine](http://www.london-photography/magazine). As ever, your comments are welcome, as are your ideas for future issues of fLIP.

Best wishes,

Frank Orthbandt

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## Letter from London: Documenting the Shard

by Behzad Sharouz

**A**s an architect and architectural photographer, my interest is in documenting the construction of buildings and structures. In April 2010 I was on the Millennium Bridge on my way to Tate Modern when I saw that the demolition of Southwark Towers was under way; the building had been substantially reduced in height. Visible on the skyline, the central concrete core of a new building was rising in its place, a prominent sign 'SHARD', marking the commencement of the construction of a skyscraper over 300 metres high, designed by Renzo Piano.

This was destined to be the tallest building in the European Union, and I could see that at last the structure was rising into the sky. A building of this calibre built so close to the banks of the River Thames, and with its hi-tech structural design, was of great interest to me.

My first photo was taken on that spring morning of 2010, and since then I have documented the progress of the Shard from a single viewpoint on the Millennium Bridge, taking regular photos until its completion in 2013. From hundreds of photographs taken during these three years of construction



a series of thirteen was selected as part of an installation at the Shard.

Piano designed the Shard as a spire-like sculpture emerging from the River Thames. He was inspired by the railway lines next to the site, the London spires depicted by the 18th-century Venetian painter Canaletto, and the masts of sailing ships.

Piano's design met criticism from English Heritage, who claimed the building would be 'a shard of glass through the heart of historic London', giving the building its name, The Shard. Piano considered the slender, spire-like form of the tower a positive addition to the London skyline, recalling the church steeples featured in historic engravings of the city, and believed that its presence would be far more delicate than opponents of the project alleged.

He proposed a sophisticated use of glazing, with expressive façades of angled glass panes intended to reflect sunlight and the sky above, so that the appearance of the building would change according to the weather and seasons.

At a time when major European cities are racing to build higher than ever, and when the construction of skyscrapers is proving contentious, particularly in ecological and social terms, new problems are

'The Shard was designed as a spire-like sculpture emerging from the River Thames.'

emerging in the 'old' European metropolises concerning the impact of towers on the landscape. As a result, cities such as London have had to revise their policies regarding the regulation of the skyline in an attempt to respond to these controversies.

The Shard reminds us that the liveliness of the debate on towers in our capital city is, more generally, a sign of the economic, representational and political stakes of the skyline in contemporary metropolis. Building the city today also means designing and imagining the skyline.

# Analogue Landscape

by Ernst Schlogelhofer

In July 2014 I fulfilled a life long ambition to visit the Okavango Delta in Botswana. I agonized over what photographic kit I should take. As we were mostly travelling in a canoe, the luggage restrictions were limiting so I decided to only take my old Leica M3, a 90mm F2 lens and 25 rolls of Kodak Portra 400. Stepping back into an analogue world with no cables and no batteries suited the simple life I encountered in Botswana.

The pictures here were taken from a light aircraft on a flight from Maun to the Selinda airstrip, where we embarked on a canoe trip down the Selinda Spillway. I'd not planned to take aerial shots, but the colours and patterns were so attractive that I just went for it.

For most of the time the landscape is void of human intervention and it would have looked this way thousands of years ago; and then, quite suddenly, a road or an anti-wildfire corridor appears that cuts absurdly straight through the organic shapes of wildlife tracks and meandering waterways.

As the landscape changed below me and I pressed the shutter again and again, I didn't think much about the photos. I was only concerned with avoiding reflection in the windows of the plane, to get the shutter speed right, to avoid camera shake in the rattling Cessna and to get a good composition.

After my return home, when I had developed the photos, I started to look at them more closely and the tension between the organic shapes of nature and the brutally straight lines of the man-made features became a kind of allegory for human intervention, not only in Botswana, but also anywhere in the world.

I also began to think about electronic surveillance,

Google maps and global positioning systems and how they turn landscapes into distant and unreal spaces. Modern technology is mostly concerned with telling us where we are and how to get to a destination as fast as possible. We move through landscapes, as if they are only two-dimensional spaces, our eyes glued to the screen of mass produced end-user devices that know more about our movements and preferences than we do. Earphones are in place and we are driven inside of ourselves and get lost in a digital loneliness. I think that the minimal equipment helped me to connect with the epic landscapes of West Africa. The light hits the film, setting off a chemical process. I realise that I am nostalgic in this respect and I have done more analogue photography since.

I'm only partly happy with the results. I struggled with the vibration of the plane and the reflections in the window... ideally you would want to take these pictures from a balloon I guess.

Yes, there is lack of focus, but let's call it character. I like the colours and the easy harmony of the organic shapes that are formed by water, weather, animal tracks and vegetation. The resulting photos show a graphic texture, sometimes blurred, sometimes sparkling with light. I think that the abstract quality of these images suggests both being close and being far away; and that these images reflect recurring themes in many of my photographs.

I am interested in abstraction and in showing the similarities between patterns when you are very close or very far away. I think the slight alienation that comes from these abstractions make us look more closely and it might comfort us to find similarities between the distant and the nearby.



'The images show a graphic texture - sometimes blurred, sometimes sparkling with light.'



# Fortunes of War

by Steve Ferrier



**T**his series of photographs exploring the post-rural, came about from the dead-time while waiting for the car to be fixed. My car is fifteen years old now, that's over 100 in dog years. I can't get rid of it; I've invested too much emotion into it already... we've assimilated. It needs specialist fettling to keep it going, and that's what takes me to the Fortune of War.

I'd actually been taking the car there for a couple of years before I began to think of the place as a project, and it was only over time that certain scenes began to emerge and resonate.

The area itself is like many towns that mushroomed as part of the London overspill but what made it different was a roundabout called the Fortune of War - a landmark roundabout that is no longer a roundabout, named after a large landmark pub-cum-hotel that is also no longer there. It's not what it was. From a rural, stretch-your-legs, charabanc stop for seaside daytrips grew an urban town. During the sixties and seventies, the town doubled, then doubled again until the roundabout became too popular for its own good... too busy with haulage, too attractive for boy racers, it was closed-off, filled-in, un-roundabouted. As a photographer, I'm interested in the effects of the passage of time on a landscape, what a landscape in transition looks like and who the people are that live here and create that momentum. Without actually photographing anyone, I'm looking for signs of the individual pursuit: success and failure; portraits of the people, without the people.

I don't go out to photograph with a list, but I do have a weakness for certain scenes: odd trees and clipped gardens, small ambitions and ill-advised building projects, abandoned interests, boats (especially speedboats), flagpoles holding out for a different England and Warrior 4x4s in domestic

settings... with that look that suggests a pining for America. These scenes are mostly suburban and ideally, all under a milky-white, overcast sky.

I also like to look for a boundary. Every series needs an envelope to contain it and what I like most about this project is the way it feels like its gone full circle and is coming to an end. I'm not going to stop photographing the area but I've reached a point where I feel I've realised a full picture.

I'd been editing the pictures towards a photobook - a tabloid, newspaper-style photobook - and on my last trip before Christmas I changed direction, walked through a different estate, and out through a gap in the houses onto open fields along the footpaths of long-gone farm labourers and past plots of land offered cheap to post-war self-builders that are now being in-filled with clutches of cul-de-sacs. The resulting photographs gave the book an arc with the Fortune of War at the fulcrum; a point in an otherwise nondescript stretch of road around which had grown an urban island, and then had its point removed. Severed from its purpose, the roundabout remains. The utilities buried beneath are too expensive to remove it completely.

The Fortune of War pub was demolished in 2003 and redeveloped by Barratt Homes, though there's still somewhere for the traveller to stop - a McDonalds now sits across the road.

'I am interested in what a landscape in transition looks like.'



# Contours

by Tom Elkins

**F**or this series, I started off with one idea, which quickly evolved into something else, but my initial intention was to combine images of the human form with words. Using the body as a canvas, I wanted to illustrate the image with a caption that was literally imposed upon it.

After a few aborted attempts, I settled on the idea of projection, first using a clunky old OHP, which brought back memories of school lessons - and then a small digital projector connected to a computer. This didn't work quite as I had hoped, nor did the images appear quite as I'd seen them in my head. But it did transition into an idea that I think succeeded, removing the words and focusing on how the human body can be rendered simple, anonymous, abstract, but familiar.

The resulting series, *Contours*, has become an ongoing photographic project in which I consider the shape and texture of the human body. Created through projecting symmetrical grids onto the human form in darkness, the images challenge notions about identity. The subjects are anonymous, little more than a series of lines, but the unforgiving grid shows the topography of their body. Details emerge in the photographed lines; skin texture, hair, tattoos, the glint of the grid reflected in an eye - all hinting at the individual hidden in the abstract.

So far, over thirty people have contributed to the project, each with different body shapes and char-

'Symmetrical grids projected onto the human form in darkness challenge the notions about identity.'

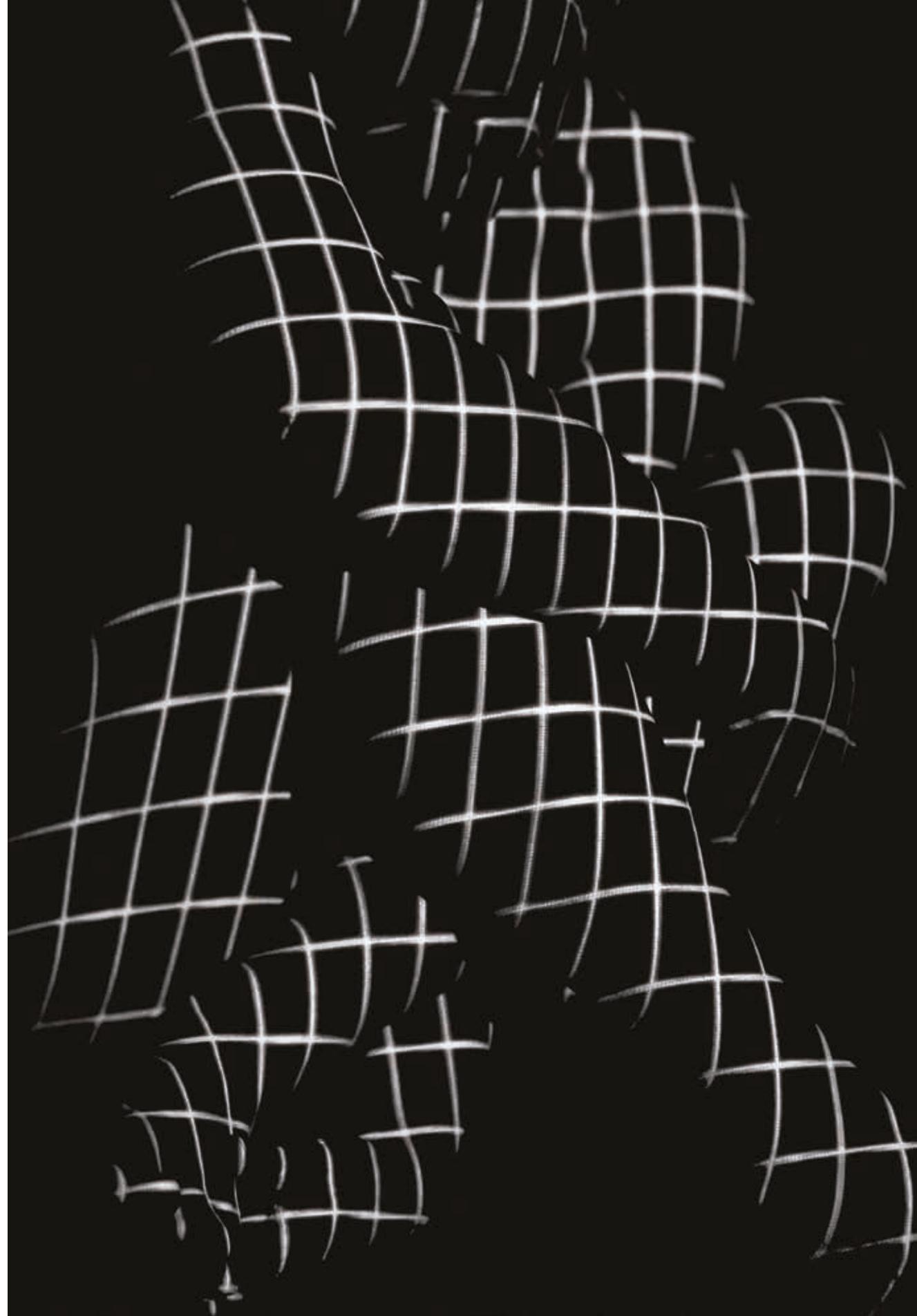
acters, and often with very specific reasons for participating. Some have viewed it as an opportunity to challenge themselves, safe in the darkness of the studio. Some have been attracted to the idea of having their form reduced so starkly; of being dehumanised, even though character is never truly eliminated from the images.

Some of the images I feel are the strongest arose from those who collaborated rather than just contributed; when both participant and photographer challenged each other and themselves by exploring different approaches to the relationship between body and mind. The resulting images remove so many of the aspects typically associated with identity, and confront what it means to have form.

As the series has developed, the process has evolved. The projected patterns have become simpler and fewer, until most recently reduced to a single line. I've learnt the importance of timing, and of the significant impact of subtle movement. For every line that falls in just the right position (catching reflected light in the eyes and bisecting the face straight down the middle) there have been another twenty where movement - mine or theirs - has rendered the image unusable.

I've utilised different equipment - such as projectors, lens with larger apertures, and yoga books to give prompts for poses. Each shoot gives me ideas for the next. When I started, I had a list of broad physical characteristics that I wanted to capture. The list contained such words as 'pregnant', 'bald', 'tattooed'. I've completed that list now, but still find inspiration as new people contribute.

The project is continuing. Each time I think I'm near a conclusion, but have arranged one last shoot, the participant will provide new ideas and opportunities for exploration. The simplification of each form can tell new and complex stories about identity, and I don't know that I will ever exhaust the appeal of wanting to explore what those stories can be.





## Landslag

by Mitch Karunaratne

**I**n February 2010 thousands of protestors took to the streets of Bolton to register their anger at the creation of a new memorial park... a park that would allow the family and friends of victims of road accidents to be memorialized with a newly planted tree - and a dedicated place to lay flowers, and to leave mementos and messages. On creation of the new Queen's Park, the council would begin to outlaw the placing of roadside memorials 30 days after the accident date.

Moving the memorial away from the scene of the accident to Queen's Park made no sense to grieving families. In order for them to both grieve and hold the focus of their grief for future anniversaries and special days, it had to be *the* place... the *right* place. Place supports our understanding of our position in a complex world. It roots us, and it gives meaning to our lives. Photographs, by their nature - a camera set

'It (place) tells me the important things. It steers me and keeps me going straight... It helps me to identify, to recognize and explain'  
Eudora Welty



up to look forwards at something - are of place. Capturing place through the making of photographs has enabled us to visualize place, to talk about and connect with it, and to reflect on our relationship with the physical world. In this time of international instability, of national fragility, environmental crises and border panics, the way our personal narratives play out in the world has become a matter of pressing significance. Place is back on the photographic map.

Through meaning and experience, place is a way of understanding the world around us. A sense of place is most significant as it's a focus for personal feelings. As Massey explains, 'Place, is created by people, both as individuals and as groups'<sup>2</sup>. This connection between places and people gives rise to the importance of place in shaping how we make sense of who we are. Sociologists, cultural geographers and anthropologists, amongst others, have argued that

place has been hugely influential to our collective identities. Identity, as Rutherford argues '...marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we live within'<sup>3</sup>. Identity is not a case of our lived experiences but also must embrace the wider context of social organization. Similarly Eyles explores the idea that '...the existence and importance of structures, mechanisms and forces beyond immediate observations must be accepted'<sup>4</sup> when understanding a sense of place. So although a sense of place may be a deeply personal experience, it is also subject to the wider social context, and therefore not entirely based on one individual's interpretations but rather on responses influenced by historical, social, cultural and economic circumstances in which individuals experience place.

How we experience place, how it seeps into our being, shapes our perceptions and contributes to how our identities are formed fascinates me, maybe >



'How we experience a place contributes to how our identities are formed.'

< because I come from a place that people have an opinion of, that has its own jokes, that has developed its own brand - the county of Essex. Exploring the importance of place in our cultural make-up, how place holds histories, tells tales and shapes socio-economic realities is central to my work. It is important to my practice to find ways to explore the notion of attachments we have to particular places, places that are rich in story and resonance, to respond to place, and working through its significance in the process of psychological, cultural and economic transformations.

In 2012 the results of a national survey in Iceland named the landscape as the number one thing that gave Icelandic people a feeling of being Icelandic; not the flag or the language, but the solid land beneath their feet. Iceland sits on a mid-Atlantic tectonic plate that is slowly being forced apart as new rock is pushed to the earth's surface, forcing the two plates further apart. This is in effect creating new land, making parts of Iceland continually under construction.

I had travelled to Iceland several times, drawn to the island culture and a sense of there being an easy and most respectful relationship between nature and culture. I felt a pull back to the westernmost country in Europe, back to the far north.

In 2013 I spent three months living and travelling around the villages to the east of Blondus, an area

once the centre of the herring industry, once very prosperous and now in the long process of redefining itself. It is the specificity of place that is crucial to my work. It is the specifics of a particular location embedded with a rich social knowledge that allows place to be pictured. Through the architecture and vernacular landscape I've worked to develop a complex understanding of the layers of meaning in these specific places.

*Landslag\* seeks to use these quiet, contemplative landscapes of Northern Iceland to explore the role place and history take in the shaping of our identities. Working slowly, over a prolonged period of time, I've looked to draw attention to the particularity of place, exposing the complications, the loves and the attachment we give to place. My work always centres on real places and seeks to allow the land to become the central storyteller. Since the 18th century European adventurers went north, Icelandic landscapes are often visualized and described as hugely impressive, wild and powerful - filled with geysers, sulphur pools, glaciers, volcanoes. This wasn't the story I wanted to tell. I travelled to seek a landscape that was deeply marked by history and meaning playing a vital part in creating both personal and social memory. I'm deeply grateful to the people who spent time walking through the landscape with me, telling me their stories of the land.*

\* In Scandinavian languages the word 'landscape' retains a historically rooted notion of belonging to a region or place that gets lost in the more purely scenic approach to landscape taken by British academics.

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- <sup>3</sup> Rutherford, Donald. *Leibniz and the Rational Order of Nature*. Cambridge University Press. 1997. p.19
- <sup>4</sup> Eyles, John. *Sense of Place, Health and Quality of Life*. Ashgate. 2008. p.4

# Inspired to Change: Walking the New York Highline

by Glenn Gowen



‘The High Line is a great example of how New York used to be. The whole structure was under threat from demolition until a local group had the vision to reopen the site as a communal park’



**W**hat type of photographer are you?” That was the question Paul Hill posed to all of us attending the *‘Hot or Cool’* workshop in January 2014. The answer came easily to some but

I was less certain. What was I trying to express with my photography? My photographs were technically competent. Some had been published. Some had won awards. And yet they appeared generic and disconnected. The workshop inspired me to rethink my approach to photography.

I studied the images of my favourite photographers and set myself the challenge of producing a collection of images that told a story. But where would I start?

For inspiration, I looked around me. Having lived and worked in London for over 20 years I had first hand experience of how a city constantly evolves; cities are not static and are never complete. I started to think about other cities that I loved and would want to visit. New York was one of those places, and had it also provided the backdrop to some of my favourite images. So I booked a trip!

This trip would provide me with a fantastic oppor-

tunity to try something new with my photography. I was keen to avoid the clichés and discover the traces of New York’s history hidden behind the skyscrapers... to capture images that revealed how the city once was. I arrived in New York in late March. The weather was cold, dry and bright, ideal conditions as I wanted to take the images ‘straight’ - ie, to attempt to capture reality, using limited equipment to produce natural looking images.

The High Line is a great example of how New York used to be. Originally built in the 1930s to remove trains from the streets of Manhattan, it had remained derelict since its closure in 1980. The whole structure was under threat from demolition until a local group had the vision to reopen the site as a communal park in 2009.

It’s difficult to think of the High Line without thinking of Joel Sternfeld’s photographs. Sternfeld had taken photographs of the High Line in all seasons and has a gift for seeing light and space and colour. His photographs conveyed the beauty of the High Line, where others might only see a derelict elevated railway track ripe for demolition. As he said in his book *Walking the High Line*, “This is a true time landscape, a railroad ruin. The abandoned place is

the place where seasonality resides.”

I started my walk along the High Line from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District. The first thing that hit me was the silence. New York is in one of the most bustling cities in the world, yet it felt as though I had walked into another place. It helped me to focus and take my time. Everywhere I looked I could see evidence of how the High Line used to be when Joel Sternfeld first began his project in the 1980s. I could see the original rail yards and tracks and tried to imagine the noise of the trains as they moved their cargo above the narrow streets of New York City. I could see the old warehouses, which stored the produce and manufactured goods that were transported along the High Line.

Documenting the things I had seen on my visit to the High Line was the first time in my photographic career that I felt that I was doing something for me. In the past I’d become obsessed with having the right equipment or capturing the obligatory sunrise or sunset. My experience at the High Line had changed me as a photographer. To quote Joel Meyerowitz, “It’s me asking myself: How interesting is this medium? And how interesting can I make it for me? And,

by the way, who the f\*\*k am I?”

Was I happy with the results? In short, yes. I wished I had taken more images of the High Line but it helped to shape the photographs I took over the next few days in New York. I started the project with the aim of documenting the history of New York. The High Line was the perfect place to begin. However, my project changed as I spent more time in the city. I decided to document everything; from my hotel room and the huge salt beef sandwich I ate in Katz’s Delicatessen to the newspapers I read and the streets I walked along.

When I got back to London I reviewed all of the images I had taken. For the first time my photographs told a story; in this case the story of my time in New York. It was these images of ordinary day-to-day life that reminded me of where I had been and how I had felt.

I am now in the process of publishing my first photography book of the images that I took. This book is for me. I hope others find the images as interesting as I do. But if they do not, that’s fine. For me the project has been a satisfying experience.



'The first thing that hit me was the silence - New York is one of the most bustling cities in the world, yet it felt as though I had walked into a different place.'





## In Focus: Jon Tonks

*Interview by Frank Orthbandt*

'It's lots of little stories that give you an insight into the community'

For his project *Empire*, British documentary photographer Jon Tonks travelled to four faraway outposts remaining of the British Empire, once important strategic outposts in the historic imperialistic project. The four distant islands Tonks visited – Ascension Island, Tristan da Cunha, St. Helena, and the Falklands – were once used as intelligence and military hubs in the empire project, and are now almost forgotten territories.

This lack of awareness was the motivation for Tonks to travel the sizable distances and the focus of his work lies on exploring the community and an environment shaped by isolation, rather than historic or political commentary. By mixing topographic landscapes with environmental portraits, the images play with familiar symbolism and are reflective of Jon's curiosity and sense of humour, creating a snapshot of these often forgotten about places.

His resulting book, *Empire*, published by Dewi Lewis, was one of the most successful British photobooks of last year. It is now in its second edition (and was reviewed by Laura Noble for a previous issue of this magazine).

fLIP talks to Jon about his motivation for this work, the long process of its realisation, and its reception - as well as future projects. >



< Good afternoon, Jon - and many thanks for taking the time to talk to us...

No problem at all, I appreciate your interest in the work.

**And apologies in advance if some of my questions will be already familiar to you. You have talked quite a bit about your Empire project. At least you are well rehearsed answering questions on it...**

(Laughs) Yes, well it all depends in which direction we take it!

**Let's just start at the beginning, with the background for the project. What was the inspiration and motivation behind the series and how did you find the topic? Is it true that it started as part of your university coursework?**

Yeah, it was part of my Masters' Degree in Photojournalism & Documentary Photography at the London College of Communication. I was keen to create a body of work that maintained a sense of 'Britishness' to it, with a little humour attached. The simple notion of there being a series of remote islands that remain part of Great Britain, brimming with history, I found fascinating - but I was particularly interested in Ascension Island, which is where I started.

**And then it obviously developed from there?**

I decided to go to the island for a month to explore community life. I used my previous experience and methodology of working as a photographer for a local newspaper in Birmingham, piecing together lots of small stories to give an insight into the community and illustrate my version of Ascension over the course of a month.



**Nice choice of location for a university project. Did you manage to squeeze a holiday into it as well?**

(Laughs) It's funny you say that. Obviously it's an amazing place, mid-Atlantic and sub-tropical, but there was always quite a lot of pressure that I'd put myself under. I'd invested time and money and I wanted to come away with a strong body of work. With each island I visited I was always working right up until the last day, when either the boat would be leaving, or I had to catch a flight. The only chance I had to relax properly was on the Falkland Islands when I managed to run out of film. I had two days left and physically couldn't take any more pictures, which actually made for a nice change!

**Did you do lots of preparation before travelling, such as studying the history of the places, or did you just take it all in as you arrived? >**

'I try not to take anything too seriously, and I always hoped to strike a balance between it being a documentary project, and the work having a sense of humour...'



< I'd not done a huge amount of preparation. I had done fairly basic research on Ascension Island's history, and discovered a few stories and facts that I wanted to explore further, but I was going in fairly blindly, not knowing what I wanted to bring back from it. They have a local paper - albeit 20 sheets of photocopy stapled together - but I found it a good resource. I found that being on the island and talking to people face-to-face was far more valuable, and it set a precedent that led on through the rest of the project.

**It is probably easier to arrive with an open mind, rather than having a preconceived idea of how the images are supposed to look.**

Yeah, I arrived on Ascension with some ideas in my head of what to expect, but as soon as you get there everything changes.

**So that initial journey was the start of your project, but then ultimately it took some time to complete. How long have you been working on it?**

It started in August 2007 and then I finished in May 2013, so six years in total.

I had been making book dummies of the work since studying for my MA, making different edits for each island. By the end of 2012, when I thought the project was complete, I'd made a loose edit of about 70 images per island, but ultimately it needed to be down to around 20. Around this time I was surprised to receive an email from Martin Parr, saying he wanted to hear more about the project and the journey I had been on. We sat together a few times, drinking tea and making edits of the work to bringing the selections down to a manageable number. Dewi Lewis, who published the book, was also an incredible help at this point, and between us we reached a point of selecting about 25 images for each island - apart from St Helena, for which I had only 16. I'd only



spent eight days on St Helena, compared to a month on each of the others and it was frustratingly obvious that it was a weak link. Straight away Martin suggested I 'just go back and shoot more', which is somewhat easier said than done, however, before I knew it I was flying to Cape Town to board the RMS St Helena again. Another five days at sea and I was back out there. Looking back it was well worth it, turning the weakest chapter of the book into what I would consider the strongest.

**So no pressure during the second visit to bring back good images...**

By this stage any new work was a bonus. It was also an opportunity to learn from all my mistakes along the way, so from that perspective it was a bit of a second chance, if you like. There were things that I photographed too quickly the first time and didn't have time to properly explore. I revisited a number of them, and was able to think about it in a better and more relaxed way. It's interesting how much this shows, and how much you develop as a photographer over a few years.

**So with your second trip you turned it around?**

It was purely down to time. Having the opportunity for a few more weeks on St Helena made a huge difference. I imagine the book would be stronger with more time on every island, but there was only so far my budget would stretch!

**You've mentioned Martin Parr and Dewi Lewis helping in the editing process. First of all, how did they become involved in the project and what have you learned from them? How was this experience?**

My connection with Dewi stemmed from the AOP Awards in 2012 when I had an image shortlisted and exhibited. Dewi was on the panel and selected my



picture as his 'judge's choice', which funnily enough ended up on the cover of the book. With Martin, as I said before, an email appeared in my inbox one day. I asked him how he came across the project but he couldn't remember. I've been incredibly grateful to have the chance to lean on their experience within the industry, and it's helped me make informed decisions over the last couple of years that I wouldn't have otherwise been able to do.

**Let's talk about the perception of the work, which was obviously very positive... it was an instant success. It is now printed in its second edition.**

Yes the first 1000 copies sold out within three months, and in the second edition we printed 1250 copies.

**So what is your explanation as to why it hit such a nerve? Do you think it has something to do with the current debate around 'Britishness', and British identity, values and its role in Europe and the World? How do you see your work in that context? Or do you actually see it at all in this context?**

I try not to take anything too seriously, and I always hoped to strike a balance between it being a documentary project, and the work having a sense of humour. Interestingly, it has proved popular in France, for instance. I think they see a few ironies, plus the Napoleonic history of St Helena has a certain resonance.

**I agree. Some of your images work with instantly recognisable symbolisms, but in an altered context. Symbols such as the Union Jack, and images of the Queen, are presented in a very unusual setting compared to the one that we're familiar with.**

Yes, indeed. I guess people enjoy the familiarity. The edit has been about picking up on things that are familiar despite being so far away. I really have no



idea why the book became popular. I talked about it with Dewi and we couldn't really work it out. It just seemed to pick up a momentum.

**I find it quite interesting that many of the contemporary British photographers focus on intrinsically British topics. We have mentioned Martin Parr, and also Dench and Roberts... Why do you think there is such a focus on British topics?**

(Pauses) I don't have a very good answer to this to be honest: the curiosity behind our own identity and history perhaps? I guess ultimately the projects I choose just need to deal with topics I find inspiring and interesting. >

'It is interesting how much you develop as a photographer over a few years.'

'I enjoy portraiture work because of the interaction, it's more sociable, but at the same time there was no preference for portraits or landscapes.'



Perhaps what you experience in your own environment and surroundings shapes the interest and inspiration. You effectively use two distinct styles of image in the book. One could say one style - the landscapes - is topographic and the other style is the directed environmental portrait. From your perspective and reflection on the project, which is easier for you and which do you prefer? If you look back at all the images you brought back is it skewed more towards landscape, or towards portraits?

I don't think either is particularly easier than the other. I enjoy the portraiture work because of the interaction. It's more sociable, and it's more fun, but at the same time there was no preference for portrait over landscape, either when editing for the book or when creating the work. I did find the portraits helped me to structure the work, and to quantify what I've achieved. I found this more tangible when evaluating the progress of the project.

**So it was quite a methodological way of working... having a list in your head of what to work on?**

It was for my own sanity more than anything. There is no right or wrong, and no solid answer to any of it. Looking back at the many notebooks I went through it's quite entertaining to revisit my thought processes at the time.

**You obviously seem to prefer the square format, not only in this series, but also in the other work displayed on your website. Any particular reason why?**

I've always had a fondness for square format. I think that has quite a lot to do with my design background. I didn't really think about photography until I was 24; my BA degree was in product design. Perhaps I find the symmetry that is encouraged by square format quite nice. I chose this format when I did my first trip to Ascension Island, and I wanted to maintain the continuity throughout the book, so I carried on using it.

**And you always shoot on film? I mean particularly with the amount of travel involved with the Empire project, you could have had it easier using digital?**

There were a number of reasons for shooting film. Medium format slows me down and makes me think about what I am doing. There's also the threat that after sitting on a ship for seven days you might find some electronic error on your digital camera. I felt my Hasselblad would be reliable and simple to fix. It's also a good talking point with your subjects; you're taking their picture face-to-face, rather than from behind a lens.

**What are your future plans? Are you seeing an increase in commissions for editorial and commercial work, or do you spend most of your time on personal projects?**

It's really mixed. Currently I am in the middle of new personal work, something I'm shooting in the South Pacific.



**Again travelling...**

Yeah, well I always think that whatever happens, at least I've had a good trip. It's a great excuse to see somewhere new, even if it doesn't work out. The project I'm shooting is something I've been interested in for years, looking into the South Pacific cultures - and into the origins of a few quite unique religions.

**Interesting. A slightly different topic, but with similarities to your previous work...**

There are similarities in as much as I am working again on small islands. There is the similarity of stories flourishing in isolation. I find it all quite enchanting.

**And in the meantime, will there be further exhibitions in 2015 showing the Empire series?**

Yes, we just finished the show at the Midland Arts

Centre in Birmingham, where it was up for three months. It's going to be shown at Ffotogallery Cardiff, which will open in early June. After that it goes across to Impressions in Bradford.

**Good luck with all that. Looking forward to seeing the exhibitions and the new work. Many thanks for talking to us, Jon.**

*Empire, now in its second edition has been published by Dewi Lewis ([www.dewilewis.com](http://www.dewilewis.com)) and the Cardiff exhibition is at Ffotogallery from 6 June - 18 July, 2015. You can see more images of the project as well as further work at [www.jontonks.co.uk](http://www.jontonks.co.uk).*

*All image copyrights with Jon Tonks.*

# The photograph that inspired me

by Jim Stephenson

## *The Nylon Stocking Test, Pontypool, 1957, Maurice Broomfield*

What photograph inspired you? It's a difficult question to answer. Over the past few weeks, in preparing to write down my answer, I've been going through old photobooks and prints to try and remember which photographs excited me in the first place. It has been a fantastic exercise returning to bodies of work I haven't looked at in years, pouring over slightly dusty books and frantically searching the internet for half-forgotten names of photographers and bodies of work.

In addition, a Christmas trip to visit my family in the home where I grew up, staying in my old bedroom (long since tastefully redecorated as a spare room) reminded me how ubiquitous photographs have been in my life. In that spirit, it's probably worth mentioning that the first photographs to inspire me were probably the photos of space and astronauts; then all the photos of footballers that were Blu-Tacked to my walls - replaced in my mid-to-late teens with those of musicians and bands. So, inspiration came from NASA, from posters of Kenny Dalglish - and subsequently Pulp, Joy Division and Blondie. However, since I don't have the credits for any of these images, I'm turning to the work of the first photographer whose work I really spent time with, whose work I wanted to see more of, the work of Maurice Broomfield.

After leaving school at 15, Broomfield worked as a lathe operator in a Rolls-Royce factory - the sort of setting that he would later go on to transform from workplace to stage-set in his photography. The particular image I've chosen is one of his most famous, and one of his most surreal, *The Nylon Stocking Test, Pontypool* (1957). This is the image that showed me it was possible that I could photograph what I loved, and still make it look beautiful.

Engineering, industry and architecture have always been my passion (having a civil engineer father who worked from home made sure of that), and so I'm drawn to these types of images. Images that depict manufacturing fascinate me and there are few people who did it with such artistry and prowess as Broomfield. The *Nylon Stocking Test* image appears

as though it's been cut straight out of one of those great British noir films of the 1950's, all dramatic lighting and plunging deep blacks. Not to mention the dismembered mannequin's leg dominating the foreground, the white coated lab man in the distance and the pod-like spools of nylon in the middle. This is classic Broomfield, exercising all the technique and exacting attention to detail he was known for. Having photographed on factory floors myself, I can only imagine the confidence he must have had in his own technique. Broomfield's subjects are there to do a job, factories and labs are busy and often dangerous places to be and yet this photographer comes in and insists all the lights are turned off. Plunged into darkness, he rebuilt the scene, moving things around and adding light in to highlight particular areas to create this wonderfully cinematic, heavy contrast photograph of a man doing what he likely did every day for most of his life. A lot of photographers talk about making the mundane look beautiful, but surely not like this.

As with most of his work, this image was shot on commission. Broomfield travelled the world for various manufacturers and newspapers documenting people at work. For six years in the 50s, he had an image published every week in the *Financial Times* and the quantity of images in his archive is astounding. To maintain that level of quality, and work at such a rate, is deeply, deeply inspiring.

As Don McCullin said of Broomfield's work "... there is a graphic beauty, a still glamour to his compositions. I rate the images, especially the black and white, for this reason and for the fascinating subject matter, recording an England that no longer exists".

To view the image go to: [tinyurl.com/pgs2oz5](http://tinyurl.com/pgs2oz5)

how we see

topography





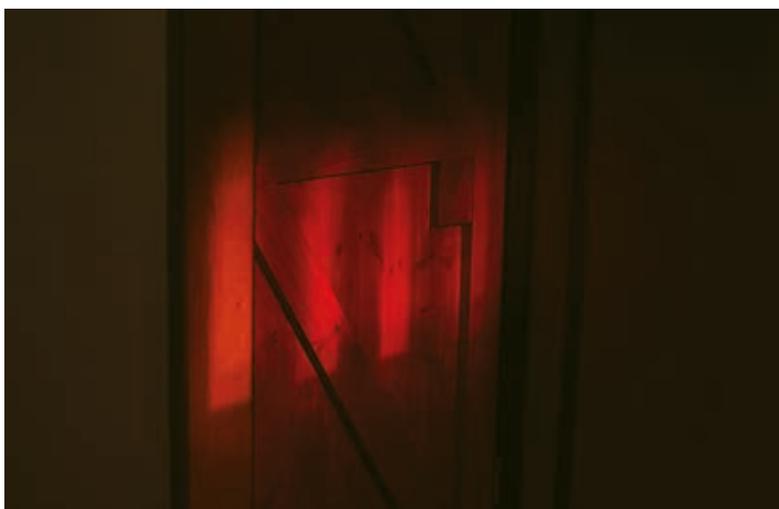
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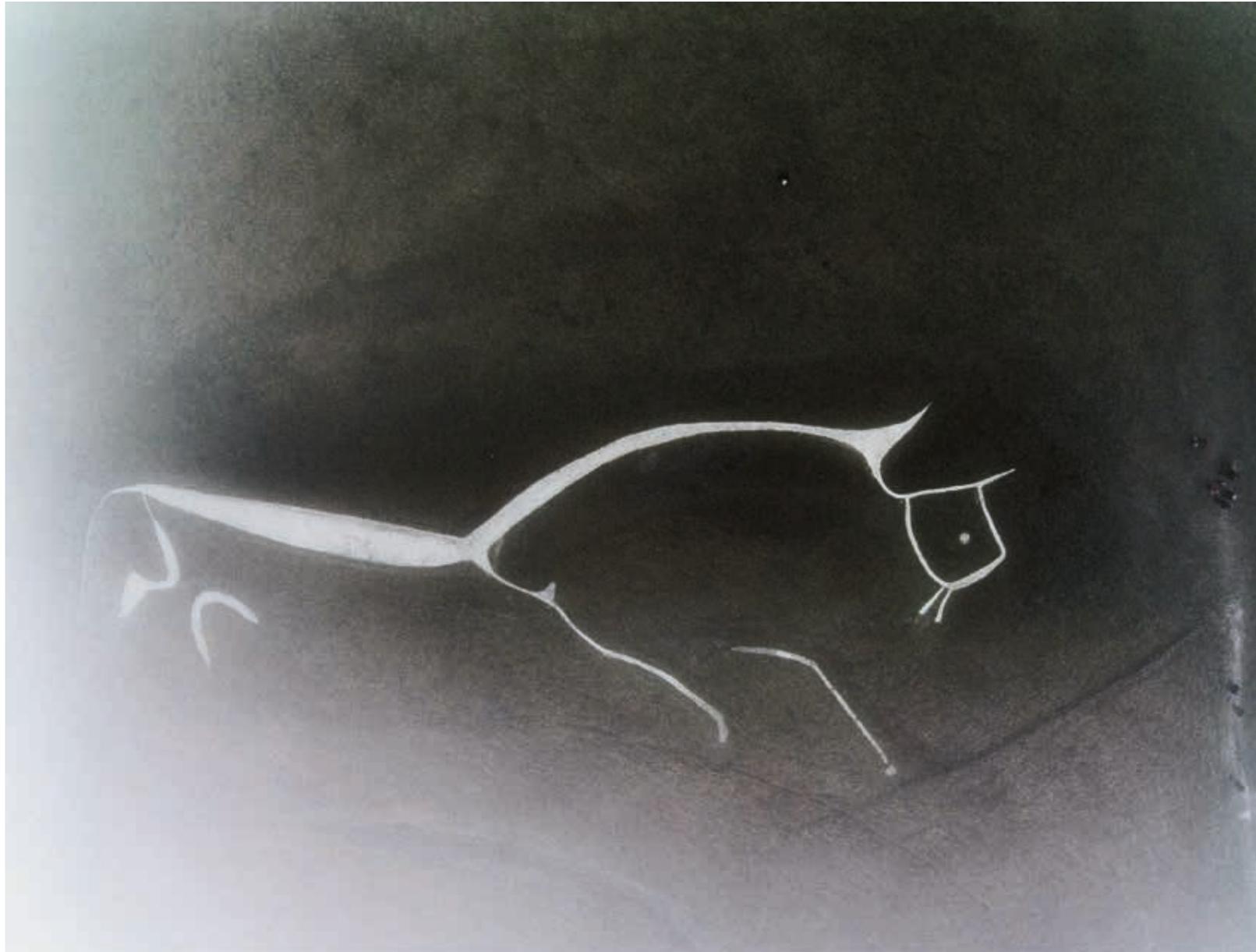
2 - Pakkawat Tangolm



3-5 Ingrid Newton







11 - Laura Arrieta

12 - Craig Humphreys

13 - John Chappelow



14 - Laura Arrieta

15 - Craig Humphreys

16 - Laura Arrieta



17-19 Andy Preston



20 - Brigitte Flock



21 - Crispian Wilson  
22 - Brigitte Flock  
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30 -31 Chris Moxey

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32-34 Adrian Capps

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## 1 Theme Cover **Withit Chanthamarit** *Transplantation, 2014*

Ever since I can remember, there have been numerous political protests that led to the occupation of the capital city, Bangkok. At times, the nature of these events seemed so distant and difficult to understand - however, over the last 10 years, my curiosity has grown and I began to question the ever-repeating sequence of the event. Pictures of the protestors occupying and residing in public parks, roads, bridges and government premises, military bunkers standing by the corner of buildings, the uprooting, the garbage and pieces of debris scattered on the streets are becoming ever so familiar, so much so that I can't help but think that these pictures will soon become an everyday occurrence in the upcoming decades of the political transition.

## 2 – **Pakkawat Tangholm** *Untitled, from Palette of Bangkok Suburbia*

**3-5 Ingrid Newton** *Untitled, from the Swanscombe Project*. Swanscombe Marsh, an area on the periphery of London bordering the Thames, is a topography on the brink of extinction. Plans for a giant theme park are about to be implemented and will sweep away the existing landscape. At times windswept and wild, at other times peaceful and undisturbed, the mood of the marsh changes with the light, weather and seasons. My photographs, taken over the course of a year, show its wide open spaces and big skies as well as its quiet, melancholy beauty and traces of human activity. Although documentary in appearance, the images also serve as a record of my personal response to this marginal and threatened landscape. The work was undertaken as part of the Swanscombe Project, organised by the Crossing Lines Group - a collaboration between LIP members and the Centre for Urban and Community Research at Goldsmiths, University of London.

**6-10 Celine Marchbank** *Untitled, The Wye 2013*. I was commissioned by the Hereford Photography Festival to produce a locally based project. I wanted to look at Hereford's waterway the River Wye. It starts in the Welsh hills, and snakes across England along the border, down to the Severn estuary. I travelled the length of it over a space of six months, mostly by foot in the wettest summer on record. I discovered the river was not as much a hub of activity as I had first imagined. I spent many lonely days walking along the riverbank; just me, my camera and a backpack for company.

**11, 14 & 16 Laura Arrieta** *from the series, Wixarika Dessert (El Camino, 14, La montaña Sagrada)*

**13 John Chappelow** *Fog in the Vale*

**12 & 15 Craig Humphreys** *Frozen Field*. Just outside Dundee in a field near there is a small village called Kirkton of Kingoldrum, the frosty dawn gave way to the sunlight which skimmed over the hills in the opposite valley melting the frosted surface in layers gradually turning the surface from whitish blues to light greens

**17-19 Andy Preston** *Brentford #1 (2012), Shoreham #2 (2014), Bethnal Green #1 (2012)*

**20 & 22 Brigitte Flock** *Myrdal*, Norway, from the Flâm Railway

**21 Crispian Wilson** *Snow, Water and Soil*, La Brevieres, French Alps

**23 Hamish Stewart** *Highgate Wood*. An elevated view is a Londoner's commuter-centric view of the city... the fleeting moments that pass by as we travel to somewhere else. It's a personal perspective on the urban landscape, defined by my view from the windows of the London bus. The ideal vantage point is from the top deck. It's a disconnected yet intimate view. What I see is dictated by a variety of constraints, whether the random flow of traffic and the weather, or where I end up sitting. The viewpoint from the top deck is like a scroll unraveling - a series of continuous illustrations as the bus lurches and sways toward its destination.

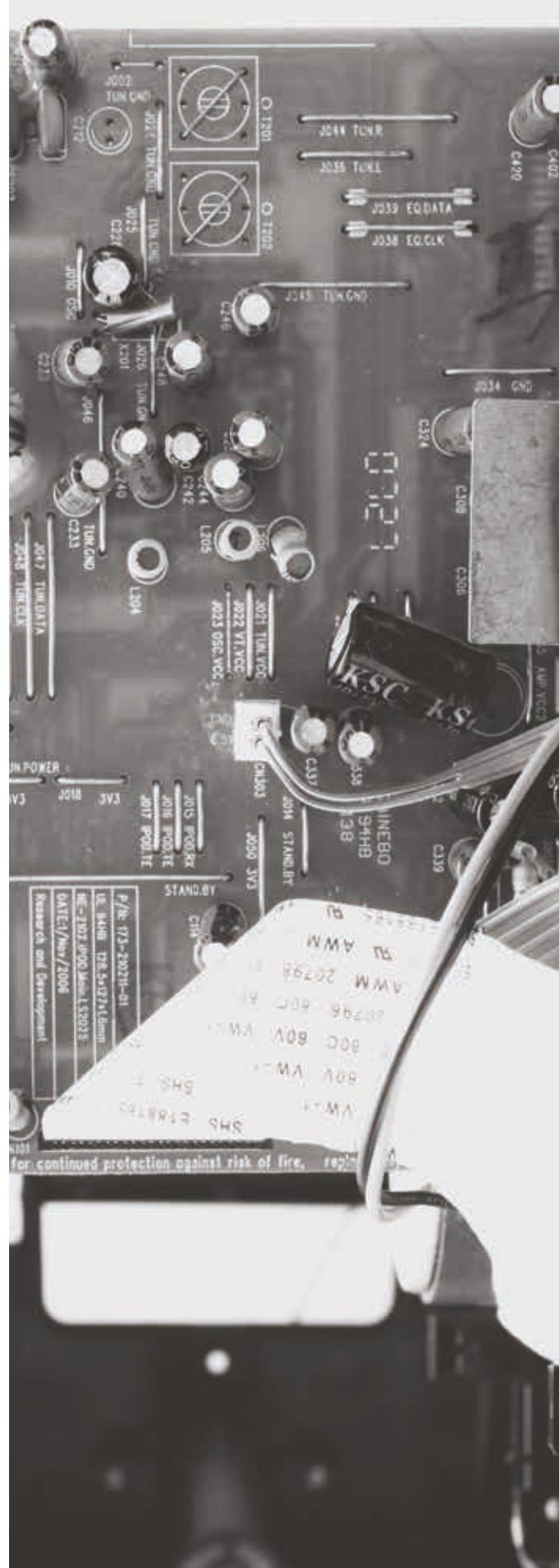
**24-28 Sara Wallach** *Untitled, from the series What Lives Here Now* made in 2013-14 with 4x5 film and a view camera. A full artist's statement can be found on the photographer's website.

**29 H loise Bergman** *Bellavista Housing Development*, located in Klampenborg, just north of Copenhagen. Designed by Arne Jacobsen, it is a fine example of Bauhaus Architecture, and was completed in 1934. Image commissioned by Time Out for the Copenhagen Guide (see also *Exposure* article in the *Backflip* of this issue).

**30 & 31 Chris Moxey** *Untitled, from the series: Little Boxes: An Anthology of Houses*

**32-34 Adrian Capps** *USA Untitled & The Capital Ring Walk with The Collective*

The theme for the next issue is **NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
[www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/submit](http://www.londonphotography.org.uk/magazine/submit)



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## EXPOSURE



## Exploring Topography: Photographing a City Guidebook

by H elo ise Bergman

**M**y father was an architect and town planner who worked on the Barbican. Growing up around his work informed my spatial awareness. Living in New Zealand and needing to choose between art or design school, I remember Dad saying, "Design is problem solving, art is communication. You're seventeen, what have you got to say? Choose design!" Studying textile design at a Bauhaus-inspired institution developed my interest in how people respond to form and design - but working with large and medium format cameras and long hours in the darkroom totally put me off photography! It wasn't until I

took off to Thailand with a friend, who used her cheap, snappy camera to capture Bangkok life, that I felt inspired again. Ditching my 'big boy' camera, I bought something simple with an auto setting - and a big bag of 35mm film. That was the inauspicious beginning of what would eventually become my career. A Time Out city guidebook is a round-up of the best that city has to offer; not only the well-worn tourist track but the hot tips a cool, local friend would give you. You might begin your day at dawn with a shot from a cathedral tower 400 steps up - followed by visits to a museum, a boutique, a Michelin-starred restaurant - and end up around 4am at the city's

hottest gay bar. Then you head back to your hotel and download your CF cards. It's not for the faint hearted! There's no 9-5! The book's print date is set in advance, with no room for manoeuvre. The picture editor, based in London, would give you a letter of introduction and a picture list of 120 locations and their addresses, plus six day trip destinations outside the city. As a freelancer, you're only as good as your last job, so the pressure is always on. For a London guide, you might share half the work with another photographer whose style matches your own, but for a foreign city guide you're on your own. My first step is to go through the list, numbering and mark-

'People are often key to a great image as their interaction with a space brings it to life.'

ing each of the 120 locations on a map, then analyze the best time to shoot them. Apart from the venue's purpose and schedule, the most important factor is the light. The 'golden hour' is often my saviour, but you can't flip through a book and have every building's exterior bathed in gold. Sparkling white snow looks heavenly on a clear day at a cemetery, but quickly loses its ambient appeal as grey slush on the streets.

Interiors can be challenging, too. Occasionally, unusual lighting has me reaching for corrective gels as I work out how to counterbalance it. Again, it's about utilizing the ambient light: reflecting, bouncing and only occasionally using flash. The next step is to ascertain how to get to them. As few of the jobs are in English-speaking countries and a car is rarely viable, this always involves baptism by fire on local transport - and a lot of walking. In 90% of the locations, you have to be as unobtrusive as possible, so my kit is carefully chosen - all fitting into a backpack, with a lightweight tripod on the side. People are often the key to a great image, as their interaction with a space brings it to life. I like to watch the ebb and flow of people, their shapes, shadows and reflections, always seeking that magic moment. I've come to know and love each city in unexpected ways during my



six-week assignments. Being a professional guidebook photographer is a job many people dream of. It's amazing, but it's also hard work.

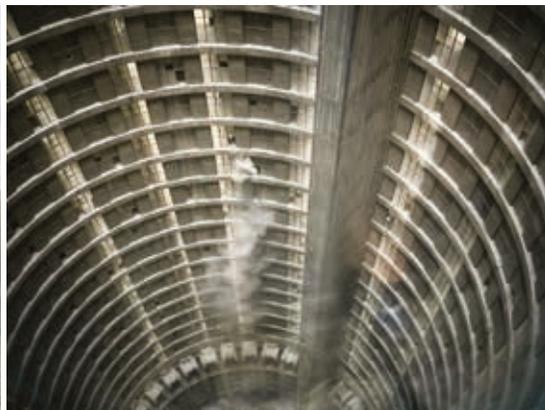
I feel very privileged to have spent almost twenty years doing something I love so much.



EXPOSURE



From 'Ponte City' © Subotzky & Waterhouse, courtesy Goodman Gallery



Untitled I © Subotzky & Waterhouse, courtesy Goodman Gallery

## African Photography

by Frank Orthbandt

With African Photography featuring prominently in London over the summer and as it continues to build its profile on the international stage, fLIP talked to South African based gallery, Stevenson.

**A**frican photographers feature prominently in the 2015 Deutsche Boerse Photography Prize. Finalists include South African photographers Mikhael Subotzky and Zanele Muholi, as well as Viviane Sassen, a Dutch photographer raised in Kenya and using African themes for her personal work. It appears that Africa, with its inequalities and slowly-developing political and social change, offers inspiration for visual interpretation. Subotzky is nominated (together with Patrick Waterhouse) for his series *Ponte City*, which documents life in a Johannesburg high-rise apartment block, constructed as luxury living space under the apartheid regime, but subsequently falling into disrepair and becoming a hub for crime and drugs. Muholi, nominated for her portrait series *Faces and Phases, 2006-2014*, considers herself as a 'visual activist' with her images rooted in the LGBT rights movement in post-apartheid South Af-

rica. Sassen, who has been widely exhibited in the UK, was short-listed for her exhibition *Umbra*, in which she surrounded her abstract photography from the continent with drawings, light installations and poetry. At the forefront of this increasing exposure of African photography is Cape Town and Johannesburg based gallery Stevenson, which has its headquarters in the up and coming industrial area of Woodstock, Cape Town. It represents two of this year's finalists - Sassen and Muholi - and previous finalist Pieter Hugo, who has since been published and widely exhibited. Predominantly active in the fine art market, over the past few years the gallery has very successfully increased its involvement with photography. Their Woodstock printroom is a treasure chest of both young and established photography with a clear African focus. According to Raphaëlle Jehan, Photographic Curator at the gallery, the visibility of African photography abroad is an evolving process, and

'African Photography is becoming more visible abroad - it's a slow and evolving process'

there continues to be interest from the international art scene. Stevenson continues to research new artists, through the various opportunities that are available like schools, festivals, exhibitions etc. "Photography from Africa is no different to anywhere else, in that there are certain themes across the spectrum which are dominant. The artists that we work with are exceptional for their unique vision", says Raphaëlle. Once they discover an artist, the gallery will become involved in nurturing and mentoring his/her progress. This includes assisting in editing of new work and actively and carefully managing the artist's exposure and their exhibition schedules. Such a close relationship between the gallery and its

artist appears to be increasingly rare in the developed art world and may be one of the reasons why Stevenson's success and profile in the photography world is growing steadily.

*The Deutsche Boerse Photography Prize winner is announced on May 28; the exhibition with works of the four finalists is shown at The Photographer's Gallery, from to April 17 - June 7. Viviane Sassen's exhibition Piken Slee will be at the ICA until 12 April.*

*For a full list of photographers represented by Stevenson and examples of their work, please visit [www.stevenson.info](http://www.stevenson.info).*



From 'Faces & Phases' © Muholi, courtesy Stevenson



From 'Faces & Phases' © Muholi, courtesy Stevenson

MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS

**13 at Lauderdale House.** In the lovely setting of Waterlow Park, this is the inaugural exhibition of a new group formed of a liberal sprinkling of LIP members and previous Lauderdale House exhibitors! The work on display will feature a diverse range of themes and styles. *13 to 24 May at Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, Highgate Hill, London N6 5HG*



©Rob Padberg



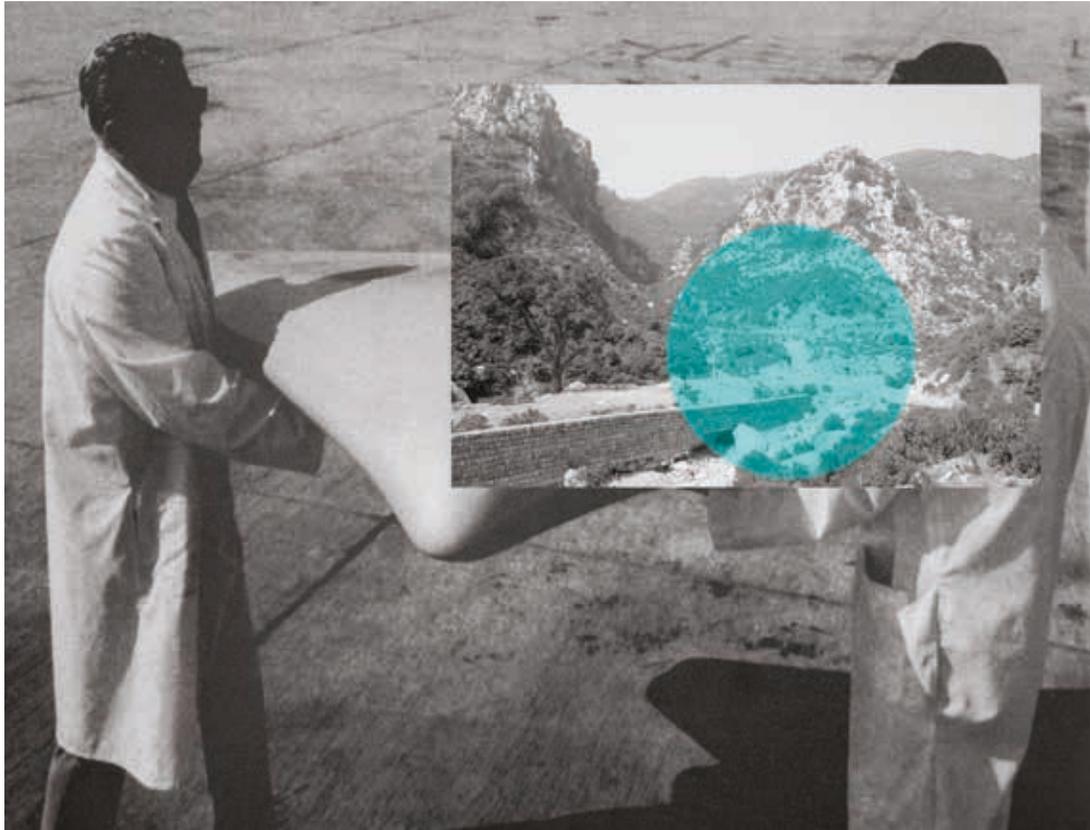
©Duncan Unsworth

**Christiane Zschommler in Light Works.** Contemporary Photography brings together leading international photographers whose work particularly focuses on the effects of light. Reflected light is central to many of the artists on show, such as Christiane Zschommler, whose rippling patterns of light and shade on water showcase the beauty of natural light. *Until 19 April, Mottisfont National Trust, near Romsey, Hampshire, Mottisfont SO51 0LP*

## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

## Exhibition Preview: FORMAT Festival, Derby

by Ray Rapkerg



Mapping the Territory © Lisa Barnard

In recent years, the Format Festival in Derby has become one of the UK's leading photography festivals. It sounds exactly the sort of thing to appeal to LIP members, and considering that Derby is just 90mins by train from London St Pancras, it has got to be worth a visit. This year's theme, Evidence, has by all accounts resulted in some intriguing submissions. LIP member Ray Rapkerg spoke to Format's Artistic Director Louise Clements.

**What was the reaction to this year's theme of Evidence?**

Quite amazing! This year's open call has been a record breaker, with over 1000 submissions from 50 countries. The theme has clearly inspired people, probably because it is such a current and topical theme - images being used and misused for social and political ends, modern conflict waged through images, social media and citizen journalists, and many other wonderfully surprising interpretations of the theme.

**When I downloaded the festival guide I couldn't believe how much is happening. For-**

**mat must be one of the world's most action-packed photo festivals. How would you recommend someone makes the most of their visit?**

I think someone would enjoy coming up, looking around the exhibitions, staying the night, joining one of the informal visits to the micro breweries, then the next day going to several of the 23 venues around the city. Everyone is welcome at the launch events on the evening of 12th March. There will be a lot happening on the 13th to 15th of March, with talks, tours and events all day and evening... then exhibitions

'This year's open call has been a record breaker with over 1000 submission from 50 countries.'

and events continue for 4 weeks after that. On April 10th there is the closing conference.

**Are there any particular photographers showing at Format that you'd like to draw to our attention?**

The exhibition at QUAD is definitely one not to be missed. We'll be showing Evidence, the 1977 project by Larry Sultan and Mike Mandell. Simon Menner is showing images from the Stasi archives, including instructional photos advising spies on how to disguise themselves. Regine Petersen is showing the effect on families of meteorites hitting their homes.

**Format sounds certain to be a fascinating festival. Thank you for giving FLIP readers the inside info!**

*Format takes place from March 13 -April 12 at various locations around Derby; including the QUAD cultural centre as venue for the main exhibition 'Evidence' [www.formatfestival.com](http://www.formatfestival.com)*

**Photo London.** The first edition of Photo London at Somerset House will feature an innovative public programme together with a photography Fair, featuring many leading international galleries selected by a distinguished curatorial panel. The galleries selected will cover the spectrum of photographic practice – from vintage to contemporary – and those taking part will be encouraged to show new work by established artists and to showcase emerging talent. 21 - 24 May 2015 at Somerset House, Embankment Galleries, Strand, London WC2R 1LA

**Italian Modernist Photography.**

This selection of work by four key photographers represents some of the

most innovative movements in Italian photography, from the late 1930s to the early 1960s. *Until 26 April at Level 4: Room 3, Tate Modern, Bankside London SE1*

**PoorMan's Picture Gallery: Victorian Art and Stereoscopic Photography.**

These ingenious but inexpensive but inexpensive stereograph pictures were a nineteenth century craze, circulating world-wide in tens of thousands and more. Celebrated canvases of the age, such as Henry Wallis's Chatterton and William Powell Frith's Derby Day, were recreated in real depth. This display brings twelve of Tate's Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite works face



© Ori Gerscht

## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

to face with a rare collection of their three-dimensional doubles assembled by Brian May. *Until 1 November at Tate Britain, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG*

**David Batchelor: Monochrome Archive, 1997-2015.** For nearly 20 years British artist David Batchelor has been photographing his series of *Found Monochromes* – white rectangles and squares encountered on walks through cities from London to São Paulo. While he started looking at how abstraction is embedded in the urban fabric, the series has grown into a far more personal project: a psycho-geographical map of each city he visits. *Until 3 May at Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX*

**Snowdon: A Life in View.** This display celebrates a major gift of photographs from Lord Snowdon to the Gallery in 2013, and coincides with a new monograph published by Rizzoli. *Until 21 June at The National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London, WC2H 0HE*



©Snowdon - Vogue

**Edmund Clark: The Mountains of Majeed.** The Mountains of Majeed is a reflection on the end of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan through photography, found imagery and Taliban poetry. Edmund Clark examines the experience of the vast majority of military personnel and contractors who have serviced Enduring Freedom without ever engaging the enemy. He distils their war down to a concise series of photographs of the two views they have of Afghanistan: what they see



© Karen Knorr & Olivier Richon

of the country over the walls or through the wire of their bases, and what they see of pictorial representations within the enclaves that they never leave. *Until 4 April at Flowers East, 82 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DP*

**Ishiuchi Miyako: Frida.** *Frida* is the first photographic documentation ever published of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo's wardrobe and belongings. Following Kahlo's death in 1954 her husband Diego Riviera began placing her personal effects into the bathroom of their house in Mexico City, which later became the Museo Frida Kahlo. He gave instructions that this room should remain sealed until fifteen years after his death and it in fact remained unopened until 2002 when the museum decided to organise and catalogue the

contents. Ishiuchi Miyako was invited to photograph these artefacts, over 300 unseen relics of Kahlo's life. *13 May - 12 July at Michael Hoppen, 3 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TD*



©Miyako

**SELPh.** SELPh is a community photography project, now in its fourth year, offering people with recent experi-

ence of mental illness an opportunity to take photographs and use them to reflect on their experiences in a group setting. *27 March - 3 April at Photofusion, 17A Electric Lane, London SW9 8LA*

**We Could Be Heroes.** The inaugural exhibition in the newly expanded Print Sales Gallery includes work by a group of master photographers who photographed the development of youth culture and the bittersweet rights of passage towards adulthood over the last century. Featuring Bruce Davidson, Bert Hardy, Chris Steele Perkins, Anders Petersen, Karen Knorr and Olivier Richon, Al Vandenberg and others. *Until 12 April at The Photographers Gallery, 16-18 Ramillies Street, London W1F 7LW*

**Anima and The Widest Prairies** is the first UK solo exhibition by Dutch artist Charlotte Dumas. It features her first moving image work *Anima* (2012), a contemplative video capturing the caisson burial horses of Arlington National Cemetery in the United States as they slowly drift in and out of sleep in their stables. Also on display are selected photographs from her latest series *The Widest Prairies* (2013) made while tracking wild horses in Nevada. *Until 6 April at The Photographers Gallery, 16-18 Ramillies Street, London W1F 7LW*

**Revelations: Experiments in Photography.** The influence of early scientific photography on modern and contemporary art is to be revealed in a British exhibition for the first time at Media Space. *Until 13 September at Media Space, The Science Museum, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2DD*

**Staying Power: Photographs of Black British Experience 1950s-1990s.** A display of over 50 recently acquired photographs that explore the experiences of black people in Britain in the latter half of the 20th century, enhanced by excerpts from oral histories gathered by Black Cultural Archives. *Until 24 May at the V&A, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL - and until 30 June at The Black Cultural Archives, Windrush Square, Brixton SW2 1EF*



© Henry Wessel

**Henry Wessel: Incidents.** From parking lots and highways to suburban houses and hotel lobbies, these technically sophisticated photographs depict America's social landscape. Described by Wessel as a 'work without words', *Incidents* is a portfolio of 27 photographs recently acquired by Tate, depicting ordinary moments in the everyday lives of strangers. *Until 12 April at Level 2, Room 11, Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TG*

**Domingo Milella.** Domingo's solo exhibition at Grimaldi Gavin features recent images of important ancient sites in Turkey shown alongside *Index*, a sequence of 30 photographs providing an overview to the themes and subjects of Milella's work over the past ten years. This exhibition coincides with the launch of the artist's first monograph, published by Steidl. *Until 25 April at Grimaldi Gavin, 27 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4DW*



© Domingo Miella

**The Syngenta Photography Award Exhibition: Scarcity-Waste.** Now in its second edition, this award is an international competition which aims to stimulate dialogue and raise awareness of significant global challenges through photography. This exhibition will highlight some of the most thought-provoking and powerful responses to the 'Scarcity-Waste' theme – one of humankind's greatest challenges. The photographers not only illustrate the theme in striking and ambitious ways, but have also taken on the role of courageous advocates, showing deep concern for our environment. *March 11 - April 10 at Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA*

**Inland: Photographs by Maria/Rosario Montero.** Rosario explores the notion of landscape in relation to the territory and its inhabitants. Trying to understand from the representation of landscape; the interaction, negotiation and dialogues that occur between people, places and things. *Until 19th April at cueB Gallery, 325 Brockley Road, London SE4 2QZ*

## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

## Exhibition Review: Human Rights, Human Wrongs

by Ingrid Newton

**H**uman Rights, Human Wrongs currently showing at the Photographers' Gallery is a hard-hitting, and ultimately very sobering look at the story of human rights in the second half of the twentieth century - a catalogue of wars, demonstrations, uprisings, famine, political struggle and violence. Taking the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a starting point, and in particular Article 6 which states 'Everybody has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law', it is curated by Mark Sealy, director of Autograph ABP, using photographs from the archive of the Black Star agency, an organisation founded in 1935 by three German Jews who fled Nazi persecution. Key events from the American Civil Rights movement are depicted alongside African independence struggles, the Vietnam War, uprisings in Central America, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, student riots worldwide, the Biafran famine, together with a number of portraits of Nobel Peace Prize winners.

Most of the photographers are not household names, but the images they portray are familiar from newsreels and newspapers of the time, and there are a few famous photographs, such as a gun-toting Patty Hearst, a Biafran child with outstretched hand - and civil rights campaigners such as Martin Luther King.

The photographs themselves are all black and white, working press prints complete with marks and creases. The curator has opted not to display the work in strict chronological or geographical order but instead to juxtapose images from struggles in different parts of the world; a picture of the Chicago riots sits next to one of a conflict in Mozambique, student demonstrations in Paris are shown alongside similar protests in Mexico and Berkeley, California.

The effect serves to emphasise the common experiences and shared grievances worldwide. Dotted throughout the exhibition are a number of small series - police dogs being set on the Birmingham marchers, a Vietnam War chaplain ministering to American soldiers - showing the viewer that the decisive moment and the iconic image are only a small part of the whole.

One of the stated aims of the curator is to encourage people to consider the role of the photojournalist and Western media organisations and the fact that most of these events are mediated through the eyes of an outsider within 'a very particular tradition of Eurocentric concerns'.

Does the representation of repeated images of conflict and suffering dehumanise or objectify the people depicted? Does the audience become desensitised over time? What is the cultural meaning assigned to these photographs? These are important questions which the exhibition raises and upon which the viewer is encouraged to reflect.

The densely packed exhibition on two floors is full of shocking, graphic images of suffering and grief, racism and oppression, the casualties and aftermath of war, social unrest and instances of brutality, and at times is rather an overwhelming experience.

But the fact that events such as those depicted in the photographs are still happening all over the world is a compelling reason to visit this important exhibition.

Until April 6 at The Photographers' Gallery, 16-18 Ramillies St, London W1F 7LW



Leopoldville, 1960 © R. Lebeck, Ryerson Image Centre



Birmingham, 1963 © Ch. Moore, Black Star Collection

## MEMBERS' BOOKS

### MAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Dr Mike Simmons

Bloomsbury Publishing  
Paperbag £23.99

Reviewed by Ingrid Newton



**A**mongst the work featured in this new book are examples of photographic projects by several LIP members.

The clue to the book's identity is in the title; this is a book about 'making' photographs, and about using photography in a structured and organised way to explore ideas in depth, as opposed to the more casual approach of just 'taking' photographs. With the emphasis throughout on developing your own personal perspective, it covers such topics as identifying and understanding your subject, generating ideas, cultivating a visual vocabulary, research, inspiration and influence.

Each chapter is subdivided into sections that explore the creative process from start to finish, using the work of both renowned photographers and former students of the MA course (many of whom have since become very successful in their individual fields) to illustrate ideas and working methods.

The reader is encouraged to think critically about the way images are read and understood, and each chapter includes both case studies and practical exercises to aid the process. At the end of the book is a useful chapter on presenting your work to an audience, using social media, developing an online gallery - or planning and staging an exhibition.

*Making Photographs* would be a first-class introduction to the understanding of the creative process, both for students of photography and photographers in general who wish to develop a

more coherent and personal approach to their work.

Dr Mike Simmons is programme leader for the MA Photography course at De Montfort University.

The book includes work by LIP members Brigitt Angst, Mandy Barker, Zoe Childerley, Andy Greaves, Mo Greig and Ingrid Newton.

'The reader is encouraged to think critically about the way images are read and understood... it would be a first-class introduction to the understanding of the creative process in photography'

## WORKSHOPS

### Alternative Printing Processes

**Series 1: Salt Printing** with Paul Ellis. The Salt Print, a Fox Talbot invention, is one of the very earliest methods of making a photograph. Participants will learn, step by step, the process of making a Salt Print. All paper and chemicals are supplied. Participants will need to bring a selection of images on a memory stick from which we make the digital negatives. £115, including materials - 8 Places. Sat Apr 18 10.30 - 5.30 at Photofusion

### Photobook Series 1: Simple structures for Handmade Photobooks

with Clare Bryan. This will be a hands-on workshop in which Clare will teach how to make three different folded structures: a three-hole stitch structure with a wrap-around cover and variations on the structure; stab bindings; a variation of hidden stitching and a blizzard book. Participants will make the structures and have templates to take away for developing their own photobooks. £40, including materials - 15 places. Sat 11 July, 10.00 - 4.30 at St James Church 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

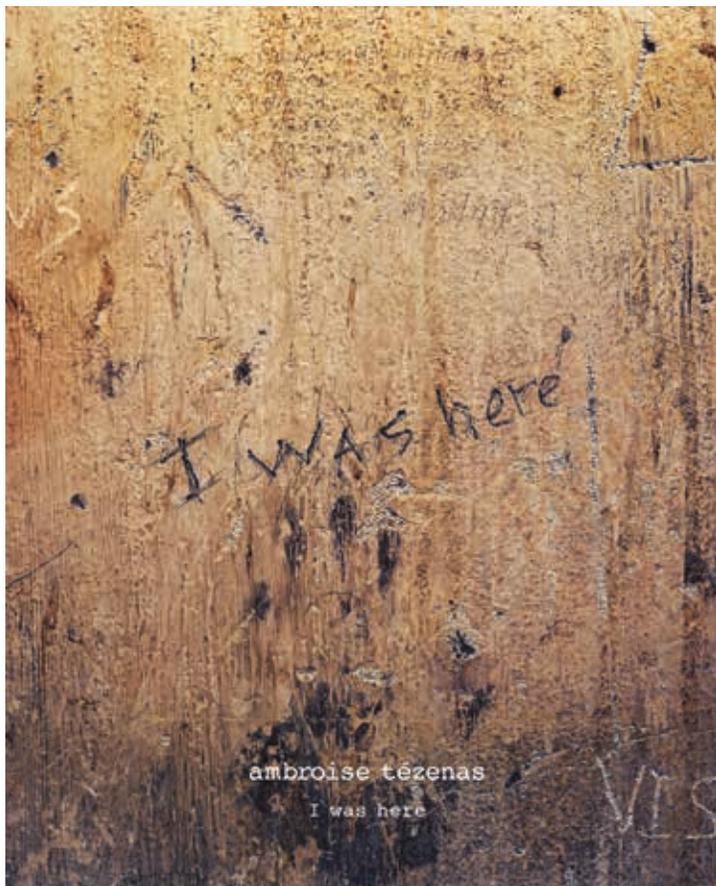
### Photobook Series 2: Multi-sectioned stitched Handmade Photobooks

with Clare Bryan. In this one-day workshop you will make two multi-sectioned non-adhesive books. Clare will show examples and talk through the methods of pagination and planning involved in multi-section books. £40, including materials. Sat 25 July 10.00 - 4.30 at St James Church 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

**Concerning Photography.** The Contemporary Group of the RPS are holding their sixth annual weekend event featuring seven speakers, including Paul Reas, one of the most significant colour documentary photographers in Britain in the 1980s. The event is open to all. £135. May 16 - 17 at Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WB. Further details and booking: <http://tinyurl.com/lmchbxf9>

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

BY LAURA NOBLE



**I Was Here**  
Ambroise Tézénas  
£35  
Dewi Lewis Publishing

Surveying the landscape of past horrors, Ambroise Tézénas explores 'dark tourism' across the world. Using texts from the locations themselves, brochures, websites and other publicity material with no rewrites or corrections of grammar or spelling, Tézénas' introductory texts and captions reveal the atmosphere and intentions of these strange sites.

His images pose more questions than answers as to why these sites have become tourist attractions. One gets the impression that 'being there' is the draw for

most; feeling the reverberations of the dire inhumanity and disaster still contained in the fabric of the buildings, landscapes and objects left behind. This palpable experience strays from our usual virtual realities of history via the media and perhaps our desensitization to the horrors of the past. Tézénas pictures work with the strange dichotomy of the pros and cons of these sites of death as tourist attractions. On the one hand we grasp the importance that these histories should be remembered, but on the other hand turning them into theme parks complete with a gift shop at the end does leave a feeling of unease. Once places of academic interest, these morbid markers of crime, genocide, natu-

'The images work with the strange dichotomy of the pros and cons of these sites of deaths as tourist attractions'

ral and man-made disasters, now have a mainstream appeal, with many representing events or locations in living memory.

I was aware of many of these places and surprised by others. The JFK Assassination Trail takes visitors from the alleged site where Lee Harvey Oswald fired his deadly shots, to the house where he lived at the time. However, the military prison Karostas Cietums in Latvia boasts that it is 'considered even more impressive than the Alcatraz in the USA.

More than 150 people have been shot here.' This chilling fact, coupled with the option to stay overnight in a cell for the full experience proves that there is something for everyone. Our continued fascination with death and disaster harnessed in this book through words and pictures may remain secondary to going to the places themselves, but certainly well worth a visit.



**T: A Typography of T-Shirts**  
Susan Barnett  
£25  
Dewi Lewis Publishing

When I discovered that the theme of this issue was topography I just couldn't resist pushing the pun-laden envelope somewhat to include Susan Barnett's fascinating new book, *T: A Typography of T-Shirts*. Over five years, photographs taken in cities and tourist spots across Europe and the USA, record the back of people's T-shirts and form a kind of topographic survey on this popular item of clothing, revealing much more than a selection of designs. The final edit of over 200 images tells us much about the way in which the humble T-shirt can speak volumes. Ever since t-shirts have been worn as outer garments, they've been used to declare one's identity, religion, politics, pop culture, opinions and affiliations, to name but a few.

By seeing her subjects from the back we can only imagine their faces and what type of person they are from the clues on display. This guessing game becomes sec-

ondary to the designs, which really steal the limelight.

These garments can be interpreted in any number of ways. Slogans vary from 'NO MEANS NO' to 'poor ugly happy' - whilst a man with a baby on his shoulders advertises a paintball venue with 'I SHOOT PEOPLE'.

Irony is in abundance with knowingly kitsch and naff illusory images, like the back of a woman in a bikini worn by a man, or wolves howling at the moon. New and old music is prevalent, with Elvis, The Doors and Metallica still making an appearance. Opposing sensibilities are often displayed proudly in loud garish colours, with many containing statements or quotes giving us a slice of society today. I would like to see this study done every five years to see what lingers and what changes. Perhaps we would be wise to pay attention to T-shirt design as a barometer of things to come.



**Resort 2**  
Anna Fox  
£38  
Schilt Publishing

Armed with one assistant, medium and large format cameras and a portable flash Anna Fox photographed and participated in the adult weekend breaks at Butlins Bognor Regis Holiday Camp

between 2009 and 2011. These confidently named 'Big Weekends' are all part of the regeneration of the arguably outdated holiday camp experience, ironically focusing on their traditions to some extent to attract a new clientele diametrically opposed to its usual family-oriented visitors.

Held every six weeks in a resort usually populated by families, these 'adult-only themed weekends' encourage people to party hard for two days and three nights. In this very British institution, fancy dress combined with a raucous atmosphere is paramount, as people leave their working week behind, don exotic outfits and take to the 'stage' provided by the camp and its grounds. Often musically themed by era or embracing generically enticing titles such as 'Hot Summer Party', these weekends aim to attract nostalgic partygoers who relive or experience the era vicariously in the contained safety of the camp. Although not

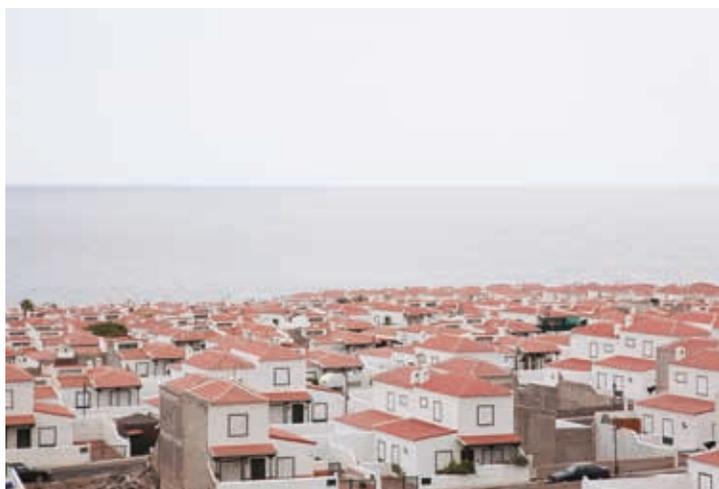
an authentic reconstruction by any means, this a collective experience to be celebrated in all its kitsch glory, and the more over the top the better.

What is fascinating about this work is that with notably contemporary exceptions - such as multiple Amy Winehouses or a man wearing only a Borat-style mankini - these photographs could easily pass as having been taken twenty or more years ago. The men in drag, women in beehives, superhero costumes and schoolgirl uniforms depicted by Fox reveal how little Butlins' themes have altered since its creation in the 1930s. Dressing up has always been part and parcel of the Butlins' experience, whether it is the Redcoats or the entertainment provided by both staff and guests alike. Anna Fox's work is as timeless as her subjects, celebrating the British as only a British photographer can, with verve and unashamed pride. Buy both Resort 1 and Resort 2 for the full British package.

# Turning Point

## A Series of Incidents and Opportunities

Simona Rota: 'Home is Where it Hurts' (Title Stolen from a Song by Camille)



From the series 'Instant Village I: Spawl in Paris' by Simona Rota

While writing this piece, I am also preparing a photography journey for what should be the last part of my series *Instant Village: Gran Canaria*. Being an emigrant, this trip is the closest to the fiction of returning to a home. Between 2004 and 2009 I lived in the Canary Islands, which is the stage for this series and the first place I tried to settle when I came to Spain. Within a year after having left the Canaries it was already impossible to ignore the drama of the bursting housing bubble – and from a personal point of view, I found that by getting away from the place, I was able to gain perspective on it. When I first started to photograph in Tenerife people would ask what was I into and I would answer jokingly: 'erring/strolling among errors'. Actually, I never had the feeling of erring in relation to the ideas and atmo-

sphere I intended to communicate with *Instant Village*. I owe this clarity to the place shown in this photograph: a sprawl, along the coastline, not far from Santa Cruz de Tenerife. I photographed it just as I started the series. Looking at it from above it seemed like a suffocating agglomeration - the result of the promiscuous reproduction of a banal cubicle. The juxtaposition of this urban playground against the horizon and the sea felt simultaneously familiar and surreal - like a nightmare. That place hurt. Seeing and photographing it gave me a direction to this work that continued to shape the entire series. I went back to the Canaries over the years to expand the survey of 'errors'. Due to an almost exclusive economic dependence on tourism, the islands have been subject to increasing development pressure from the early 1960s up to the recent bursting of the housing bubble. Land is the most pre-

'That place hurts. Seeing and photographing it gave me a direction to this work that continued to shape the entire series.'

vious resource of an island and those urban practises whose sole purpose seems to be immediate profit, have generated a corrosive topography of banality. *Instant Village*, like many of the holiday or housing complexes described, was formed in phases. *Instant Village I* was developed in Tenerife between 2010 and 2011, *Instant Village II* in Fuerteventura in 2013 - and *Instant Village III* in Gran Canaria should complete the trilogy of those islands that suffered the most from the urbanism performed in the seven islands.

*Simona Rota, born 1979 in Romania, lives and works in Madrid/Spain. Her 'Ostalgia' photobook was awarded 'Best National Photobook' at PHotoEspagna 2014. To see more images from the ongoing 'Instant Villages' project shot on the Canary Islands, please visit www.simonarota.es.*

# Contributors

**Laura Arrieta** studied Graphic Design at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Contributing her design work, she has moved into photography, fashion and art. Her style is a mixture of the visual influence of living and travelling in London and other European cities combined with her Mexican background. [www.laurarrieta.com](http://www.laurarrieta.com)

**Héloïse Bergman** is a freelance documentary photographer currently based in London. After more than twelve years photographing travel features and Time Out Guides all over the world, she has recently completed an MA in photography and is working on several long-term collaborative social documentary projects. [www.heloisebergman.com](http://www.heloisebergman.com)

**Adrian Capps** is a London-based photographer and freelance graphic designer.

**Withit Chanthamarit** Born and lives in Bangkok, Thailand, Withit explores his country and its culture with a camera and his personal sensibility. Though not formally schooled in photography, he attended a workshop at Angkor Photo Festival in 2012 and his works have been exhibited in local galleries and International festival. [cargocollective.com/withit](http://cargocollective.com/withit)

**John Chappelow** enjoys making pictures. [www.lximages.co.uk](http://www.lximages.co.uk)

**Tom Elkins** is a photographer living and working in London. He is also CEO of the charity PhotoVoice, which works across the world using participatory photography to help communities represent themselves. His work can be seen at [www.threepactices.com](http://www.threepactices.com) / [www.photovoice.org](http://www.photovoice.org)

**Steve Ferrier** is a freelance graphic designer and photographer. He creates brandmarks and visual identities for the big and the small, and photographs social landscapes. [stuconflo.tumblr.com](http://stuconflo.tumblr.com)

**Brigitte Flock** is an active member of Ealing London Photography and her main interests are urban, industrial and rural landscapes.

**Glenn Gowen** is a serious amateur photographer based in Surrey with a passion for capturing urban, coastal and rural landscapes. Twitter: @Clintshire

**Craig Humphreys** is a self-taught photographer who began at the deep end, as a wedding photographer. In his exploration of street photography he likes to find new ways to juxtapose people and urban environments. He also loves to find ways of giving greater emphasis to texture and contrast in landscape photography.

**Mitch Karunaratne** seeks to find, in the traces written in the landscape, how places hold stories, create belonging, regional and national identities. She received her MA in Photography from the University of Brighton in 2012. She has exhibited widely, both in the UK and abroad. [www.mitchkarunaratne.co.uk](http://www.mitchkarunaratne.co.uk)

**Celine Marchbank** is a documentary photographer specialising in British based stories, fascinated by the small everyday details of life. Based in London, she spends her time doing personal documentary projects, commercial and editorial work, exhibits regularly, and lectures in documentary photography.

**Chris Moxey** likes to photograph abandoned places, busy streets and houses with faces. [www.chrismoxey.net](http://www.chrismoxey.net)

**Ingrid Newton** uses her camera to define and shape a personal, intuitive response to the world around her. Her particular interest lies in photographing the urban landscape, creating fresh perspectives on the everyday and the overlooked. She graduated with distinction from the MA Photography course at de Montfort University in 2010. [www.ingridnewton.co.uk](http://www.ingridnewton.co.uk)

**Laura Noble** is the Director of L A Noble Gallery in London. She is an artist, lecturer and author of *The Art of Collecting Photography*. [www.lauraanoble.com](http://www.lauraanoble.com)

**Andy Preston** is a photographer in West London specialising in landscape work: urban landscapes, natural landscapes and psychological landscapes. [www.andypreston.org](http://www.andypreston.org)

**Ray Rapkerg** has been involved in photography for over four decades, since the age of six, when his father gave him a Box Brownie camera. His most recent project involved photographing London Fashion Week with an antique wooden 8x10" camera.

**Simona Rota** was born in Romania in 1979 and studied Political Sciences in Bucharest and Barcelona and Photography in Madrid. Commissioned by the Museum of Architecture in Vienna, she carried out a photographic documentation of modern architecture in the former Soviet republics (2010-2012), which was the origin of her series *Ostalgia*. Simona has exhibited widely and published two books. <http://www.simonarota.es>

**Ernst Schlogelhofer** was born in Vienna. He now divides his time between London and Vienna. Ernst is currently doing an MA in Photography at the LCC in London. You can see further examples of his work on his website. [www.albumen-gallery.com](http://www.albumen-gallery.com)

**Behzad Sharouz** is an architect and architectural photographer, whose primary interest is placed in documenting the construction of buildings and structures. He maintains that photography appears as a powerful medium for architecture in terms of its ability to create exact visual records of the buildings. This exactness of the photographic image introduces architectural photography as a tool of visual documentation. [www.facebook.com/StudioBez](http://www.facebook.com/StudioBez)

**Jim Stephenson** is the founder of the Miniclick Photography Talks. Since 2010, Miniclick have been putting on free, accessible photography and film-making events with a remit to explore different ways of looking at imagery and a focus on stories and ideas. In addition to his work with Miniclick, Jim is also an architectural photographer and film maker. [www.clickclickjim.com](http://www.clickclickjim.com) / [www.miniclick.co.uk](http://www.miniclick.co.uk)

**Hamish Stewart** is a London based photographer who explores how the urban landscape shapes and influences our experience of the city [www.le-flaneur.co.uk](http://www.le-flaneur.co.uk)

**Benjamin Szabo** is a Hungarian born British photographer specialising in portrait and fashion photography. He is based in London and has exhibited in Notting Hill in the summer of 2014. He works for fashion websites and on self-initiated projects. [www.benjaminszabophotography.com](http://www.benjaminszabophotography.com)

**Pakkawat Tanghom** was born on June 5, 1989 in Bangkok, Thailand. He's now working on a project about Bangkok Suburbia, where he's lived for almost 25 years - and has started on a road trip to photograph new topographics on the eastern coast of Thailand. <http://cargocollective.com/pakkawatanghom/>

**Sara Sofia Wallach** is a graduate of the Bard College photography department and currently lives in London, earning a Master's degree at Goldsmiths. Her preferred method for photography is large format film, and her conceptual interests lie in messes and remnants, signifying a present form of lives past. [sara-wallach.squarespace.com/](http://sara-wallach.squarespace.com/)

**Mandy Williams** is a visual artist working with photography, sound and video. [www.mandywilliams.com](http://www.mandywilliams.com)

**Crispian Wilson** is a London based photographer, specialising in travel and landscape photography. He is interested in using photography to 'interview' places, people and things, telling a story and expressing a feeling or mood through a picture. He is currently working on themes around conflict. [www.crispianwilsonphotography.com](http://www.crispianwilsonphotography.com)

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