

LIPSERVICE

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INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPHY - SEPT 98



Girl with drying fish, Kannyakumari, India © 1977 Roberto Arendse. From the LIP Annual Exhibition, 1998

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'Violence' in Dieppe

Tony Mayne

Dieppe's 11th annual Mois de l'Image (March 23rd - April 19th), illustrated by over thirty photographers at eight different locations, used 'Violence' as its theme. The interpretations varied from strong social documentary approaches (photojournalism in Algeria and the Balkans) to more reflective pieces (Photoshop and empty factories).

German photographer, Thomas Dworzak, visited Azerbaijan and Tchetchenia over a four year period, covering the secessionist war against the USSR. Some of his work did cover burials and exhumed bodies, but a lot of it dwelt on the people in the street. It was the influence of the war on the culture that was his primary observation in this exhibition. The heavy black frames (reminiscent of condolence cards), in which these black and white images were presented, added emphasis to the feeling of 'life going on' for the survivors of this tragedy.

The strongest depictions of violence in a war zone were taken in Algeria by members of the New Press and SIPA agencies. The Algerian civil war/ revolution has gone largely unreported in Britain. The images at Dieppe Service Communication were powerful and moving, but left me feeling like an intruder into the personal trauma of the participants. They included grieving widows, the bodies of tortured children being reclaimed from the sewers into which they had been dumped, messages on the wall written in the blood of victims, refugees, and mass graves (all supported by statistics about the numbers of people killed in each village running into tens and hundreds). Looking at these images on gallery walls somehow seemed to sanitise the horrors depicted: I felt like someone who has just watched a public execution. I spoke to a photographer and an agency executive and they were as aware of these problems as of the dangers in the field.

If Dworzak's pictures in the Town Hall, taken of 'ordinary life', could be captioned 'Life goes on', the Algerian pictures could only be captioned 'Death goes on'.

At the Ecole Nationale de Musique, Eric Prinvaux also showed disorder in people's lives. In this case no war had taken place, but the people were surplus to, and unwanted by, society - the poor, the asylum seekers, the Other. One memorable pic-



Installation by Xavier Lucchesi at the Hôtel de ville



Orlan : l'art channel - at the Maison des jeunes et de la culture



ture - an African woman and her baby sitting in a room/ detention centre, surrounded by glass windows insulating her from the street life immediately outside - was a perfect metaphor for alienation.

The closed factories in Marie-Ellen and Nick Broszhenka's 'Histoires d'Usines' consisted of large monochrome interiors of abandoned factories, many works featuring hand colouring, tinting or selective toning. Wooden easels and frames (together with the packing boxes in which the work arrived at the Centre Jean Renoir used as part of the display) added to the feeling of stilled utility. This was, for me, some of the best work on view in Dieppe - static, thoughtful, majestic and balanced: not portraying direct violence, arguably illustrating 'after the violence'. As Media Students

['Burgin's Babes'] might say, 'This work was about Closure'.

The most personally upsetting work on display (the only one that sent me outside for the proverbial 'breath of fresh air') was that of Orlan. Extending her oeuvre as a performance artist, Orlan makes the body of her work the work on her body. The work on display at the Maison de Jeunes et de la Culture consisted of photographs of her early performances and some of her seven surgical operations. The centrepiece was a video installation of her most recent (and most disturbing) operation, when she had the kind of prosthetic bumps common in cosmetic surgery inserted under the skin of her face, plus what resemble nascent 'horns' at the temples. Her final appearance is further from conventional ideas of 'beauty' (both in the common and artistic senses) than her appearance before she embarked on her remarkable medical Odyssey. The theoretical justification for remodelling herself is perfectly consistent with current Art hypotheses, although few theoreticians would subject themselves to such drastic unetherised operations. This strange mixture of aesthetics and anaesthetics poses many interesting questions - such as 'Who is the Artist?', 'What is the work of Art?' and 'Who is the director of operations?'. The answer to these questions, and many more, could be 'Orlan'.

Another offering which altered the subject's faces (but less painfully) was Aziz and Cucher's 'Dystopia' - portraits with the eyes, nostrils and mouths removed by Photoshop techniques. Their initial impact was quite dramatic - seeing a face which became unreadable because the very areas that our attention singles out for closer inspec-

tion prove to be information-free zones. This was the only body of work where the artists were committing the violence - why remove eyes rather than warts, and mouths rather than wrinkles? Subsequent viewing (from Jenny Matthews' *Women in Conflict* exhibition) of the picture of Phong - a Vietnamese girl born without eyes as a result of America's Agent Orange 'gift' - whose face resembles Aziz and Cucher's work, has clouded my original appraisal.

A set of very large X-ray pieces, depicting two life-size people simulating combat and, finally, kissing and making up, was a particularly interesting piece of work. Each piece was constructed of up to 25 separate X-ray plates. Paris-based Xavier Lucchesi told me that he had attached the plates to a wall, posed his models, and then given an exposure to each tableau. For exhibition each set of transparencies were clipped together and the backgrounds were painted translucent red. The pieces worked as a set, and some details (such as a gun or a camera in someone's hand) provided fascinating X-rays - the hardness of the metal emphasising the vulnerability of the body. The Town Hall, with glass walls on either side, provided an excellent gallery for these huge transparencies.

The final venue, Les Tourelles, contained mixed work by twenty local and foreign photographers. The work varied from smashed motor cars to a boy using a toy gun as a brain-corrosive artifact to threaten his sister. Included this year were some of (LIP member) Carol Hudson's *Stilled Lives* pictures of birds which suffered violent deaths.

There is a *Mois de l'Image* every year from mid-March to mid-April, so if you missed this year's, do put it in your diary for 1999. A day return on the Lynx from Newhaven is quite cheap and you could see most of the exhibitions in a day.

The Unseen on Tuesday

Tuesday Talks at the Photographer's Gallery 1998

Tony Mayne

Three talks at the Photographer's Gallery over three months looked at photographic work which revealed the previously unseen - the smallest, fastest and farthest.

David Spears is a zoology graduate cum photographer, working mostly for television, who is at the cutting edge of microscopic photography, film, video and computer imaging. He produces very high quality optical- and electron- microscope work with digitised/ computerised colouring, frequently done frame by frame. His work was not only remarkable, but aesthetically pleasing. I found him to be as good as they come in his field, and an artist to boot.

He came over as a conscientious and charming man, and had obviously spent quite a lot of time preparing his talk, bringing showreels - some made especially for the evening lecture - and stills. He was remarkably frank about his methods of working and any budding microscopist attending would have had his £5 back in gold dust. The thrust of his talk was about working 'at the edge' - overcoming technical difficulties to produce quality, creative images.

Colin Osman, who (with his shock of white hair and beard) resembled a cross between an Old Testament Prophet and Captain Birdseye, and was the founder and former editor of *Creative Camera* (and *The Racing Pigeon*!), talked about early speed photography. His delivery was relaxed and knowledgeable, challenging some of the common assumptions about Muybridge and explaining that history has been unkind to Marey (since the *History of Photography* tends to have been written mostly by Americans).

He argued that Muybridge was something of a showman, giving lecture tours/lantern slide shows of his field trips to places as far apart as Alaska and Guatemala. Muybridge's movement photographs were originally commissioned by his patron, millionaire horse-fancier-financier, Leland Stanford: their purpose being to settle a bet as to whether a galloping horse's feet are all off the ground at any one time. This work was done in California. The strings/tripwires setting off the cameras (which I had assumed to be used in all his work) proved to be unsuccessful, and electric shutters were responsible for most of the work. The later work involving people (who were mostly unpaid students, and Muybridge was shrewd enough to use attractive young women) was done under the aegis of the University of Pennsylvania. Osman quoted the photographs of handicapped males, getting on and off a seat, being dropped by Muybridge from his lectures because they were not crowd-pleasers.

He said that Muybridge met Marey on a trip to Paris, and was extremely influenced by him. Marey was principally interested in photographing birds in flight and developed the gun camera for this purpose. He was not interested in 'showmanship' - he was the equivalent of an RSPB

enthusiast (like pigeon-fancier Colin Osman); Muybridge was more like P.T. Barnum. At the Chicago World Fair, Muybridge found himself upstaged by Edison's film camera and the game was up.

The evening was given an extra charge by the presence of Stephen Herbert, who was curating a newly-found collection of Muybridge's photographs and equipment at the Kingston-upon-Thames museum. Muybridge (born Edward Muggeridge at Kingston) retired to Kingston and stipulated that his work must stay there.

The thrust of Osman's talk was a shrewd reassessment of the known historical facts. One element of his assessment - its influence on art - resembled that of the final speaker. Marey did composite (overlapping) exposures of birds flying. Osman convincingly argued that the tradition of representing movement and time in a two-dimensional frame has continued down, via Duchamp's *Nude descending a staircase*, to David Hockney's 'joiners'.

Jeremy Millar, talking about space and lunar photography, concentrated on the influence of the NASA photographs on American Art. Unlike the other speakers he was not overly interested in the technical aspects of their production.

He argued that the NASA-speak about photography (and everything else) reads like Conceptual Art proposals. The journey to the moon led to the discovery of the Earth - some desert photography and its theoretical underpinning (e.g. by Lewis Baltz and the New Topographics Movement) echoed the lunar photographs -

especially the scientific and geological moon examples.

The three lectures were as good as any that I have been to, but I have to ask, Why were they so poorly attended? The first two only attracted only 15 punters each (half, I estimate, being students - members of neither L.I.P., the R.P.S. Contemporary Group, nor the Photographer's Gallery), and the final lecture only twice that number. A symposium *Is there a Crisis in Photographic Education?*, scheduled for March 8th, had to be cancelled because it could not even attract 15 people. None of the three evenings can have paid its way. This lack of interest in discussing photography does not augur well for the future of the appreciation of photography.

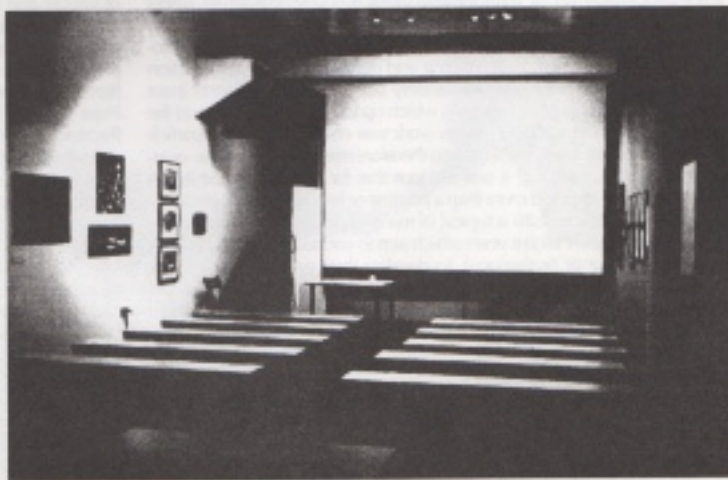
For the last two lectures, benches replaced chairs in the room. They resembled school 'forms' and actually felt the same (the lecturer became the headmaster) and revived all the memories of backache at school assemblies. The only people who had a good word for them were the people who had to clear up afterwards. The bench's sole virtue seems to be that they are quicker than the chairs for the staff to stack! A triumph of form over content.

Was this a badly conceived set of lectures for the Contemporary Group, the Photographer's gallery and L.I.P.? Was it perceived by absentees as too technical? I understand that it was advertised in the main R.P.S. journal, so the more technical sections in the R.P.S. must have seen it advertised without attending in numbers. I feel particularly sorry for Janet Hall, the organiser. You could not have asked for a more diverse set of speakers or better content, yet this bold experiment is unlikely to be repeated. Thank you to all concerned, and at least one of your audience appreciated your efforts.

Tony's picture below shows the new seating set out for use.

Book now at the Photographers' Gallery (0171 831 1772) for the forthcoming talks by Stevie Bezenecet (*Photography, Performance and Narration* - 27 Oct), John Stathatos (*The Territories of the Medium* - 3 Nov) and Richard Cork (*An Art Critic's view of Photography Today* - 8 Dec). A separate even not to be missed is the talk by Judy Dater on her work over the past 30 years. Further details of all events are in the programme leaflet sent earlier.

PM



BRENTFORD

An Exhibition of Photographs by the 1:20 Group

Janet Hall

To commemorate the recent successful re-structuring of St Paul's Church, Brentford, which allows it to accommodate a community centre, Brentford Parish Resources Committee commissioned a comprehensive photographic portrait of the area and invited the photography group, '1:20', to undertake the project. Rose Harding, Parish Administrator, was the driving force behind the venture and was keen to promote the churches converted nave for use as an exhibition space. She wrote in her introduction to the catalogue:

'This project seeks to capture some of the spirit and the diversity of the people of Brentford, its architecture and landscape. The photographers have recorded and interpreted not only many of the activities which have taken place throughout the community over the year but also some of the more intimate spaces which are not readily apparent to the casual passerby. Each photographer was given the opportunity to interpret Brentford in his or her own way and the resulting exhibition reveals a variety of interpretations and styles.'

The resulting exhibition which ran from 1 - 31 May, was comprised of 162 prints and took up much of the wall space in the community area, the church and the meeting room, as well as utilising both sides of several screens. All the prints were mounted in the same size frames and were all for sale at the same prices, £40 for framed prints and £30 for unframed prints.

The group's name refers to its make-up - one exhibition: twenty photographers. Twenty photographers therefore took part in the project which came to fruition over a period of one year allowing a full coverage of Brentford in all seasons. Most of the participants were invited to become involved by the group's founder, the photography teacher Randall Webb, and had at one time or another been pupils of his. However, the fact that the photographers had worked under the tutelage of one person in no way gave the exhibition a bland uniformity. Indeed it was the variety of styles and photographic treatments which gave the exhibition much of its appeal. The majority of the work was made up of traditionally treated black and white prints although different toning techniques had provided visual variety. Further variety was provided in some instances by the use of infra-red film, photo-emulsion coated paper, photo-etching and digital imaging. The selection and hanging processes was deliberately democratic. Each participant submitted a selection of images from which up to 10 were chosen, and the selection process ensured that some work was chosen from each participant's submission. No-one's work was therefore rejected outright. The overall standard was high and it was obvious that for most of the exhibitors photography represented more than a pastime or hobby, and was probably more of an obsession. 1:20 is typical of many photographic groups which have sprung up over recent years which aim to encourage photographers, whether amateur or professional, to develop their own direction in the company of like-minded people. A group of such photographers would therefore work in very individual ways, and when asked to work within the constraints presented by a project such as this, might have felt restricted. But the town and environs of Brentford offered a rich variety of subject matter and each exhibitor was able to find a satisfactory outlet for his or her photographic métier. Of course involvement in such a project also has advantages allowing photographers access to areas which might otherwise have been out of bounds, as a quote from the parish magazine, 'The Grapevine', pointed out. 'We have worked very hard to gain access to some of the lesser-known

locations and hidden parts of the town...for example the interior of St Mary's Convent in The Butts.'

Three principal areas were identified for documentation. 'Aspects of the community as it currently exists before change takes place', 'hidden views of Brentford', and 'a record of a year in the life of people who live, work and play in Brentford.' Within this brief the scope for 'people' pictures was generous and all aspects were enthusiastically tackled by the exhibitors who captured subjects from a new-born baby to the very elderly in a wide diversity of situations and activities.

I was particularly impressed with Nancye Gault's community photographs which had been executed with much sensitivity and skill, producing warm-toned black and white prints which beautifully complimented the subject matter. In this exhibition no section of the public escaped the photographers' lenses. The Duke of Northumberland was photographed in Great Hall at Syon House, as was Henry the boat dweller aboard his vessel moored in Brentford Canal. I particularly liked the groups of children at play. Maria de Fatima Campos's photographs taken in the gymnasium at the Green Dragon Infants School, and Richard Davis's Brentford School girls at basketball practice and boys on the pitch of the Brentford Football Club, were full of vitality and movement, capturing extremely well the uninhibited abandon of young children. Some photographers had found abstractions in the everyday world. Diana Pope's enigmatic image of the reflections of a loading shed was striking for the simplicity of its composition, as was an altogether different image by her which had caught a tambourine playing member of the Bibleway Pentecostal Church starkly silhouetted against a window. I was also caught by Jocelyn Horsfall's ultra close-up pictures of cactus sections which threw into relief the strong designs made up of bold patterns and shapes on which she was concentrating. Of course architecture featured heavily in the exhibition. This was portrayed wittily in a pair

of pictures by Franco Chen - one entitled *The Windmill*, and the other in *Windmill Road* - neither of them showing any sign of proximity to a windmill. The traditional and modern were contrasted by Philippe Cohat in two of his pictures - a view of the M4 Flyover and Beaufort House in The Butts. Quentin Ball had photographed a variety of architectural subjects using infra-red film which imparts a characteristic ethereal glow to the images produced. This technique is not universally successful, but for Quentin's subjects, which included a series of photo-

graphs of Gunnersbury Park, it had worked extremely well.

It is not possible to comment here all the work in the exhibition, but I think Robynne Limoge's contribution calls for a mention. I was particularly struck by her studies of St Mary's Convent in the Butts. The subdued mood of these photographs was particularly apt and captured beautifully with a direct vision and a sure-footed sincerity, the stillness at the heart of the environment.

By the time it closed the exhibition had managed to attract 1,700 visitors and 70 prints had been sold. Much of this success was due to the efforts of Brentford Parish administrative team which had managed to obtain a great deal of press coverage, plus a substantial amount of sponsorship from local businesses. As a result the public's interest was engaged and the production of high quality posters and a very comprehensive A4 size catalogue was made possible.

LIP SERVICE SEPT 98



Nancy Gaulé

Pride & Push

London Pride 1993-7

Peter Marshall

Exhibition of black and white photos by Peter Marshall, Museum of London, June/July 1998

It came, it fell and a few people noticed. My third (or fourth) one-person show with some 25 prints from five years of Pride* marches in London, on show in the museum foyer. For anyone who missed it, here are a few. You can see more on the web, both on my own site (<http://www.spelthorne.ac.uk/pm/>) and on Fixing Shadows (link from my site.)

Why do I photograph Pride? First because I think it an interesting social phenomenon and one that should be recorded. Then because it is fun. But also because of a certain questioning of my own attitudes that arises and a dissonance between my own more orthodox feelings and viewpoint and those of the participants. Pride is an easy event to photograph in some ways - and there are many pictures that are just too easy to take. Deliberately I don't avoid these completely as they are a part of the event, but try to go further both in these and with the other pictures.

* Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Trans-gender, Trans-sexual Pride is a bit of a mouthful and I have probably got it wrong yet again.

PUSH Magazine

Also in July, I was the featured artist in the Push artist spotlight on Push Magazine — the world's first bi-weekly (currently monthly) international PDF-based Internet magazine — which describes itself as 'a tongue-in-cheek look at how popular culture and the media intersect on the Internet from a media-friendly, yet slightly cynical, perspective.' Here the emphasis was on the London buildings from his website, the picture used being of the later Hoover building from Western Avenue, Perivale. Push is at www.push-mag.com and the magazine is available by free subscription only.





When you think of London, images of Big Ben, Piccadilly Circus, or Ginger Spice inevitably enter your mind. Indeed, most photographic collections of London concentrate on the well-known tourist attractions, the icons. This month's featured artist's site sets out to show the entire range of buildings in London, from the exceptional to the typical - thereby showing another side of the English city; one the world seldom sees

Push Magazine July 1998



It seemed a good idea when I first suggested it.

A day out taking pictures led by someone familiar with a particular area who might show you the parts that otherwise might not be seen. Then a meeting later to compare the different treatments people had made of the material.

So I ended up leading the first of what is intended as a series of such events. The pin stuck into London landed in one (perhaps the oldest) of its three cities, Southwark.

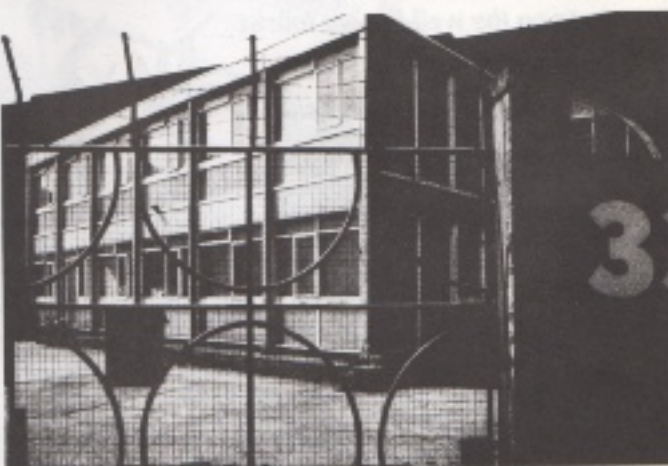
Five of us eventually found our way to Blackfriars on a May Sunday (some earlier than others) and we crossed the bridge. I won't reveal who managed to get lost, but eventually we were together at least in body. In mind we wandered different routes, following layers of history or graffiti, formal elements or psychogeography, Pisanelli and Dickens, chasing illusion and allusion and old men through the liberty.

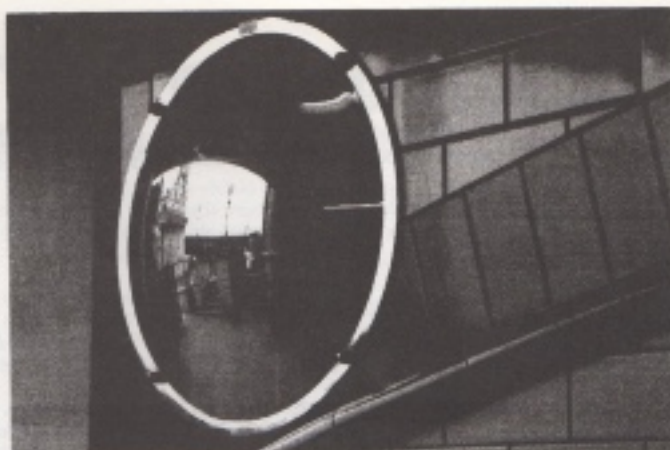
Slowly. The weather was kind. All Hallows churchyard offered rest. Whole sectors of route were abandoned. Warehouses, theatres, beer-gardens, docks, cathedrals, markets, brothels all went unvisited and stories untold.

Southwark - a LIP walk

W H & H Le May, Hop Factors at 67 Borough High St (HOP 1945-6 in those days when telephone numbers had character) was the final station of my pilgrimage before rushing into the full-blast industrial-strength heritage of George Yard, National Trust, the Westminster Morris and warm beer.

Thanks to Len, Tony, Nancye and Glenda for accompanying me. Quentin Ball leads our next one - on 4 Oct in Highgate and Hampstead - don't miss it. Contact Janet Hall to book now (0181 8475989).





Pictures - clockwise from top left - by Tony Mayne, Len Salem, Peter Marshall, TM, FM, TM. Centre Nancye Gault.

'THE JOURNEY'

'A Hindu Celebration of Death and the Continuity of Life'

Yoke Matze

The Grange Museum in Neasden, Brent presented an exhibition of photographs by Yoke Matze in July on a project she had been working on for two years with Chandu and Hansa Tailor of the Indian Hindu Service of New South Gate and two families. The families involved allowed her unconditional permission to photograph the various events which involved great sadness but also celebrated life and the continuity of life.

As Yoke puts it in her statement:

Through exploring the meaning of Hindu death ceremonies I hope to create an awareness of the boundaries between the Eastern and Western traditions. I will focus on Hindu Rituals with their spiritual dimension which reaches beyond the concept of death as the end.

Hindus believe that when a person dies, it is the body alone that dies. The life-force within the body, the Soul, is pure eternal energy and continues to exist. The Soul leaves the body at the moment of death and begins a journey which completes in re-entry into the body of a baby to be born. The re-entry is called reincarnation. A new cycle begins.

The exhibition is an attempt to share this personal experience. This work is at the same time is a personal journey in which I address my own sense of loss.

My own cultural heritage is based on contemporary Christian foundations. I am expanding my consciousness with ideas which are not necessarily against the Christian way of death but represent an opening up of awareness to different levels of denial and acceptance.



Yoke Matze - original in colour

Carol Hudson

The Space Between

The text on each side of the image may not be visible in reproduction - it reads:
All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Socrates is mortal. Carol's work in this show is based on logical forms and was a digital and photographic investigation into validity and truth.

It is the space between the idea and the image
that seems most full of possibility.
Here lies romance and a thousand reflections of desire;
Here belief hovers and dreams randomly entwine;
Here my intentions unravel
In threads of paraphrastic light



Traces of thought and traces of light leave pools of descriptive knowledge, a second hand acquaintance that we accept as truth

Carol's work was on show at the Quaker Gallery, St Martin's Lane in July.

Sarah Thelwall

Forthcoming show - Sarah Thelwall,
12 Oct - 27 Nov 1998, International
House Danan Gallery, 1-4 Yarmouth
Place (just off Piccadilly)

"...lovely, resonant work. An intimate and contemporary look at the innate lyricism of the garden"
Keith Carter

Sarah has been a member of LIP for the last four years and whilst she has exhibited in the LIP exhibition for three out of four of these this will be the first time Sarah has had a solo exhibition of her work in London.

Sarah's exhibition is the result of two years work which started with a garden in Derbyshire. Joseph Campbell's comment that 'Accidents can frequently become main plots' could have been made about this project. It started out just playing with some spare colour

film early one morning and has become an ongoing exploration of the garden and the way in which it's depiction can become a portrait of the gardener.

The first level on which you see these images is that of images of gardens and tracing the line that divides the organised and nurtured from the chaotic and overgrown. You then see that the interest lies not in the pristine, manicured areas which are the garden and gardener on show but in the character behind the mask. As this project has grown a number of other gardens have become involved and you can see Sarah asking questions with her photographs which seek to understand the gardener and define what is important to them not by photographing the important features but by depicting the unimportant and the left behind.

As this work has developed the images have become more obscured and abstract. From the direct images with detail and a long focal plane to images where the focal plane is shorter and occupies a smaller part of the image. These images explore how little needs to be said directly to the viewer and how much can be implied or left purely for the viewer to superimpose their own meaning on. This particular lack of direct message is also, in part, a reflection of the influence of abstract artists such as Bridget Riley, Mondrian and Anish Kapoor.

Sarah's exhibition has been sponsored by Quicksilver (digital and photographic imaging services, sponsors of the photographic printing) and ADE (marketing communications agency, sponsors of the design and printing of the invitations). If you would like more information on the exhibition, Sarah's other work or the sponsors she can be contacted on 0181-255-1309.

Duckspool

Peter Marshall

Readers who have yet to make it to Duckspool are missing one of the more rewarding and intensive experiences available to the photographer. The chance to work with one of many well-known photographers (including John Blakemore, Mark Power, Martin Parr, Homer Sykes, Fay Godwin, John Davies, John Goto from this country and distinguished visitors such as Judy Dater, Susan Meiselas and Charles Harbutt) as well as the other keen and often very talented photographers who are your fellow travellers.

Your only difficulty is in choosing which workshop to attend. Probably the best advice is to read the workshop descriptions very carefully and to talk to as many people who have already. The best-known photographers are not always the best teachers so you may get better value from some of the less familiar names. One workshop I'd recommend from personal experience - and I know has changed some people's lives radically - is Charles Harbutt's. (Peter Goldfield went to it at the Photographers' Place and decided to sell up his business and found Duckspool!) One of the first photo books I bought was Harbutt's *Travelog* published by MIT in 1973.

Since 1986, Peter and Sue Goldfield have opened the doors of their rural Somerset home to photographers with some 25 workshops this year - and you really are made to feel at home. The accommodation in shared rooms is comfortable and the food was even better than when I last visited some five years ago, which takes some doing. However possibly not every workshop will have a meal cooked by a visiting French chef and enjoy one of the best pub meals I've had, but the Goldfield standard is in any case a hard one to beat. I'm told the darkroom is much improved, although I didn't use it, with developing and contact printing being done expertly by the artist in residence (thanks again Julia!), leaving us more time to talk photography and take pictures (we photographed Sidmouth, then in the throes of its annual Folk Festival - reducing the average age on its streets by a factor of at least three - which climaxed with a torchlit procession to the sea. Some people also made use of Peter's expertise in the digital darkroom, with interesting results. My only regret was

having to leave Duckspool at the end of the workshop (worse, a little before the end, as I had a train to catch) as there was so much more I would have liked to have done and said. And the food!

This year's workshop season continues to the end of October, and it would be worth contacting Duckspool to find out if there are any places left. And of course to ask for next year's brochure to be sent when it is available - and study the details it gives of each





Sidmouth

People, Place and Events - pictures taken on a recent Duckspool workshop with Leonard Freed by Peter Marshall



of the workshops. Given what they offer the courses seem very reasonably priced - and this year there were very generous discounts for early booking. There were also discounts for block bookings (3 or more people or workshops - so why not go together with some other LIP members) and even for electronic bookings. Various organisations (regional Arts Councils, TEC, Investors in People) may have training grants available if you ask them - my college part-funded my first visit - and there are a small number of bursaries available.

Web site : <http://www.duckspool.com>

e-mail : Goldfinger@Duckspool.com , for Peter,
Sue@Duckspool.com , for Sue and bursary enquiries,

Tel: 01823 451305

Fax: 01823 451325

Nick Barker

Is Art Beneath You?

Art of Space, Art of Suspension (x2) and Art of Flight are four works which were submitted (of which one will be chosen) for an exhibition of work on the canvas of some of the deckchairs in Hyde Park/Kensington Gdns.

The images and text were produced at a workshop set up by Alice Evans at the Serpentine Gallery and run by Michael Peel. Work was produced by a variety of means including collage, photography, paint-



ing, drawing, computer manipulation and the extensive use of a photocopier courtesy of Canon.

The screen printing of the chosen images will be carried out by K2.

The exhibition opened on August 9th on the Serpentine Gallery lawn.

Birdwoman

Birdwoman was recently shown at the Vital Art 1998 exhibition at the Atlantis Gallery in Brick Lane. The huge space above the Artists' material store housed the work of approximately 75 artists. The emphasis was obviously on variety rather than coherence; there was a lot of work to enjoy and something to suit most tastes. Photography and digital work was relegated to a smaller part of the space, but by the end of the second private view (one for friends and family and one for potential purchasers etc) there were sales of both including a large scale digital work.

The exhibition was presented by London Arthouse and Workplace Art.



Birdwoman - original in colour - Nick Barker

Martin Figura

THIS MAN'S ARMY

Watershed Bristol until 4 Oct
Focal Point, Southend, Oct 10 -
Nov 21st (artist talk Nov 14th,
12.00 - please check with
gallery)

Peter Marshall

While at Duckspool I went to the opening of Martin's show at Watershed in Bristol. Martin joined the Royal Army Pay Corps on leaving school at the age of 15, and after an initial slow start to his career rose to the rank of Major, retiring last year at the age of 40.

During his last few years of service he photographed his fellow soldiers, using his privileged access to stage and photograph a unique body of work. To improve his photography he used his army training grant to attend a number of workshops at Duckspool, one of which led Dewi Lewis to offer to publish his work as a book *THIS MAN'S ARMY*, published for the start of this show.

In his statement Martin says that he is 'by nature untidy and disorganised and was always bemused by the very ordered nature of the Army and its need to formalise. The images seemed to draw a line round my adult life and after making them I was ready to leave.' His pictures clearly show this formalised order in their careful arrangement of people and objects - often with a high degree of symmetry - in the square frame (his own square-bashing - though some are cropped to rectangular or even panoramic format.) Their arrangement seems as carefully drilled as any parade and they are referred to by rank rather than names.

So arranged are they that, together with the steep perspective of the wide angle lens used on the Mamiya 6 that results in a strong impression of a theatre stage or even that some of the slightly more distant (and thus smaller imaged) people are in fact waxworks or dummies, resulting in a curious and powerful play on reality and image. One picture where this is at its strongest shows three men in a snooker room. Centrally at the top of the picture are three trophy lion's heads on the wall. Below the middle one stands a man holding a cue. The two figures slightly further from the camera - one to each side - appear formal and wooden despite the situation - even the games must be played with due regard to the regulations.

Probably my favourite image from the show departs somewhat from this symmetry but is still totally suffused by the relations of rank. It shows a Regimental Sergeant Major with his family in their living quarters. A child, almost the only natural looking person in the show, gazes at the photographer from the left of picture. In the next vertical quarter stands the RSM, apparently ordered to be relaxed at his open wardrobe, adjusting his tie, reflected in the next vertical quarter (the idea of symmetry but not its exact expression). At right, in a curiously stiff pose which becomes almost a parody of standing to attention is his wife, arms to the sides, shoulders forced back, her stiffness and symmetry echoed and exaggerated by a bold Y-shaped yoke on her dress. She appears to be attempting - not entirely successfully - to hide

the hand wash basin behind her as if it is somehow unsuitable to appear in a photograph.

Words as always fail but may I hope begin to express some of what I saw in Martin's work. It is certainly worth going to the exhibition to see for yourself. The work is well printed, but was rather crowded on the walls of Watershed (also on show is Fortunes of War, by black French photographer Eric Pascal Lesdema). Possibly a tighter editing would have benefited. There are two pieces of text, one by Billy Bragg on life as a soldier, and a useful afterword by Liz Wells. The book - with more pictures - seems to me to work better, but the prints do have a detail, clarity and presence not quite available in reproduction, good though it is.

This Man's Army is certainly a class act, but it is difficult to see how Martin can follow it, so enmeshed was its staging in his army life and rank. As he also says in his statement 'I made the photographs between 1992 and 1996 and in them I recognise my former and present self in many of the people I have photographed.... The images seemed to draw a line around my adult life and after making them I was ready to leave.... I made the work, not as a polemic or as an exercise in public relations for the Army, but to try and explain to myself what it was that I was part of. As such it reflects my pre-occupations and interpretation of that experience.'

It will be interesting to see what Martin's future is and what he makes of it through his photography.

News

LIP Annual Exhibition 1998

Hardly news, but LIP had another successful annual show, this year at a new venue in Mayfair, the International House Danan Gallery. There were favourable comments and a picture in both the British Journal of Photography (including the fine picture by Roberto Arendse on the cover of this issue) and Amateur Photographer as well as mentions in print elsewhere.

As always the work was varied in subject and approach, but overall the quality seemed very high, and the show certainly made a favourable impression on a number of people I talked to.

Unfortunately the review commissioned for this magazine has not materialised - together with another piece promised. So there is more work in this issue by the editor than I would have liked!

Jim Barron on show

One of the stars of the LIP annual show with a superb portrait of a man holding a dog, Jim was offered his own show at the gallery on the basis of this work. Several of his prints were on show in the Foyer of the Photographers' Gallery in May, and he was the runner-up in the one of the major photo competitions (Samaritans - I think for the second year running) with a picture of a saxophone player and his dog entertaining on a Soho pavement.

Responses to the Visual World

From 7-21 June work by Virginia Khuri, Jill Staples, Rosemary Cockayne, Willima Bishop and Gunnel Rosengard was on show at the Gallery, Town Hall, Bampton, Oxfordshire.

The Invisible Man/Lies, damn lies and photographs

Proof of the editor's incorporeality was provided recently by one of the local free rags. The sheet which is heavily dependent on advertising from Heathrow carried a report of a meeting of our local town society with a front page picture of the near empty hall and headline about lack of interest and apathy at a meeting about various developments, including Heathrow's proposed T5.

The seat I occupied throughout this meeting was empty. In fairness I should report that there were also perhaps almost 50 other people missing from the section of audience shown at what was in fact a fairly well-attended and at times lively meeting. Taking your photo sufficiently long before the start can make a hall look empty!

Contributions to LipService

If you've had a show or been in one or have one coming up and there is nothing about it in LipService then it probably means you haven't told the editor! Please send a picture with your press release, statement or comments etc. Prints (b/w or colour) should be between postcard and A4 size; 35mm slides are fine. If you want pictures returned it helps a lot to enclose either a sae or a stamped label.

If you'd like to share your thoughts on anything photographic - perhaps review a book or show or photographic event of any kind - send them to LipService. Don't worry if you think you can't write, everybody can - though some do need more editorial help than others when it comes to punctuation! It helps if text is typed (or computer printout), and if you can, send the file on a floppy as well - it saves time. PC or Mac format.

Share your pictures with LIP members - preferably with a little text explaining what you are doing. LipService is your magazine. If you don't send, it won't get printed.

Send work to: Peter Marshall, 31 Budebury Rd, Staines, Middx, TW18 2AZ. Deadline for the November issue: Oct 17.

Scanner Problems

Readers will hopefully have noticed some improvement already in the standard of reproduction of photographs in LipService over recent issues. Having upgraded the printer, the main loss in quality now appears in the final reproduction from the half toned master copy. The improved quality of the master print has also meant that problems - dark and light lines - caused by the scanner are more visible; this should also have been upgraded for the next issue.

Following the AGM we did investigate the possibility of using a higher quality printing process, but the cost was prohibitive. We are still considering a special issue as a part of the Millenium Project as well as a CD-ROM.

One way to see the pictures rather better is of course to read the online version at <http://www.spelthorne.ac.uk/pmv/lip/> this generally appears at about the same time as the print version and often contains some extra pictures. The new scanner will allow work submitted in colour print form to be shown in colour on the web site - but still only in black and white in print.

Shows to see

Sarah's Gardens

Sarah Thelwall has a show of her colour pictures of gardens at the International House Danan Gallery, 1-4 Yarmouth Place (just off Piccadilly) from 12 Oct - 27 Nov 1998. (This is the same venue as our 1998 annual show earlier in the year.) More details on p13.

IPSE

The IPSE annual show is enjoying a three month run at the Worthing Museum and Art Gallery (until 24th of October) so why not pick up that bucket and spade and head south for sunny Worthing? Closed Sundays, otherwise 10-6.

IPSE continue their usual meetings - at Windmill House, Bolney (Jill Staples 01444 881891) and Inner Light at St John's Vicarage Purbrook, nr Portsmouth (Robin Courts 01705 262307) - both meet on 30 Sept, 28 Oct & 25 Nov. Inner Light have the special treat of a Virginia Khuri workshop on 19 Sep.

Pond

Jill Staples' exhibition Pond will be on show at the Hereford City Art Gallery as a part of the Hereford Photography Festival from 12 Sep until 10 Oct. No doubt copies of her splendid book 'Pond' a still available for sale (Jill Staples 01444 881891)

Urban Landscapes

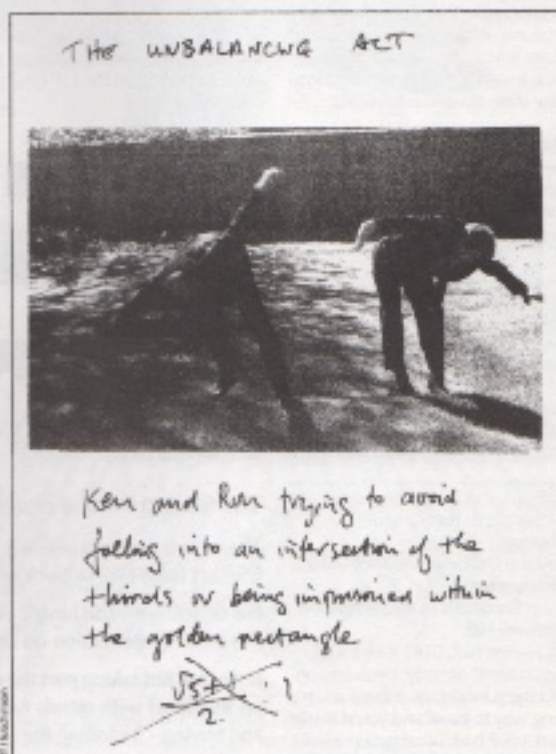
Islington Arts Factory
2 Parkhurst Rd, N7
Photographs by Rosa Bardot and Josep Esclusa, 18 Sep-23 Oct.
(Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 2-5.30pm)

Bardot & Esclusa's eerie photoworks show the city as if viewed by post-cataclysm archaeologists in a thousand years time. Through strange distortions and dreamy cityscapes buildings populate their own city in a surreal fascination that ultimately tells of humanity's desire for power and control. Rosa Bardot and Josep Esclusa founded Photo Works in 1996 to develop "a photographic style far away from today's commercial pressures". Their work deals with issues of urbanisation and the changing influence this has on our lives. At the end of the millennium, much of

Millenium Update

Roughly 40 photographers have signed up for the Millenium project - rather more than the average number submitting work to LIP annual shows. Each of us involved will be required to submit images for roughly 20 days during the year - the extra dates will be circulated to those taking part after the draw on Sept 5.

Discussions with the Museum of London have resulted in our exhibition proposal being put to their exhibition committee. The foyer is about to be completely redesigned and they will have a large area of wall space to fill which would be ideal for the show.



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Local Groups

Michael Crawford-Hick writes:

The South East London satellite group of the LIP has now met twice at Yoke Matze's house. Yoke has taken valuable time off from her MA studies to host these two events for which we thank her for her hospitality. Both meetings have been very successful and at least 4 members have attended each time. We all brought some personal work so that we could discuss each other's style and to "break the ice" on these new meetings.

As a result of these meetings Michael Crawford-Hick and Sandra Hunter arranged a trip out together to take photographs of the Docklands area over the May bank holiday. Did you know that there is a lot of construction going on in the Docklands area apart from the "Dome"? I didn't and most of the cranes got in the way of the few photographs that we took, but like true professionals we go round these little things. We are now planning a night trip to central London to take shots of various locations.

We would welcome any new members who can get to the Dulwich/Sydenham area of London. The next meeting will be held on the 7th September (7.30pm) at Yoke Matze's House. All are welcome.

From September we hope to meet at least every two months preferably more frequently, but this will be decided at the September meeting.

For further details contact Yoke Matze, 11 Thomcombe Road, E. Dulwich, SE22 Tel: 0181 693 8107

Other local group meetings are taking place regularly in:

Harrow

(Alison Williams, 0181 427-0268).

Twickenham

(Jim Barron, 0181 892 9044) and

Muswell Hill

(Quentin Ball, 0181 444-5505).

If you aren't already involved contact them for details. If these seem a long way to travel and you'd like to start your own local group please contact Janet Hall (0181 847 5989).

Diary

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|----------------|--|
| 5 Sept | Millenium - date allocations : Quentin Ball's home, 7pm |
| 17 Sept | LIP Central Meetings : Rudolf Steiner House 7pm |
| 25-26 Sept | Residential Weekend : Paul Hill Micklepage 9.30am |
| 4 Oct | Highgate to Hampstead Photo Walk : Quentin Ball 10am |
| 6 Oct | Judy Dater PG, 7pm |
| 10 Oct | AGM& Blu-tack Show : The Drill Hall 2pm |
| 11 Oct | Observances : Garry Fabian Miller: PG, 12 noon |
| 15 Oct | LIP Central Meetings : Rudolf Steiner House 7pm |
| 17 Oct | Deadline for November LipService contributions |
| 25 Oct | Computing and Photography : Edward Bowman : PG, 11am |
| 25 Oct | Millenium Group meeting (time and place to be fixed) |
| 27 Oct | Photography, Performance and Narration: Stevie Bezenenet : PG, 7pm |
| 31 Oct - 1 Nov | Coating with Liquid Light : Melanie Manchot : Brunel University, 10.00 |
| 3 Nov | The Territories of the Medium : John Stathatos : PG, 7pm |
| 7 Nov | IPSE event at Micklepage : Ian Jeffrey |
| 12 Nov | LIP Central Meetings : Rudolf Steiner House 7pm |
| 14 Nov | London Contemporary Photography Fair:
The Strand Palace Hotel |
| 8 Dec | An Art Critic's View of Photography Today : Richard Cork, PG, 7pm |

See the current program leaflet (and Millenium Project Newsletter for those involved) for details of all events and how to book for all events other than the LIP Central Meetings, Millenium meetings and AGM/Blutak.

London Contemporary Photography Fair

The Strand Palace Hotel - Sat 14 Nov

There are still places left on the LIP stall for this event. Contact Janet Hall to book your place (0181 847 5989) *urgently!*

For only £5 you can have 3 prints on the stall for the Saturday of this event (commission on sales is only 10%).

If you are not taking part the event is still worth attending (£2.50 on the door) with stands full of photographs worth looking at - and buying - including the LIP stall!