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Jubilee 2000 - after the Human Chain, London June 13 - Peter Marshall

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Jubilee 2000

Peter Marshall



I arrived at the Royal Festival Hall around 9.30am for a briefing from the J2000 Press Office and picked up the information available on the day's events. My brief for the morning was to cover the events and meeting in Trafalgar Square, where I was asked to be sure to photograph particular speakers close-up, including the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the afternoon when a human chain was being formed around the Thames I was to cover Blackfriars Bridge, where there was to be a strong presence from the black churches. Unfortunately I didn't have the one piece of equipment vital for a photographer today, a mobile phone, so the various numbers I was given were of little use! There were two other photographers working for the organisers, one team from a charity doing more or less live coverage for the J2000 web site using a Nikon Coolpix, as well as shooting for their own use, and a French woman shooting colour slide. I was largely shooting for black and white prints, though as usual I took some of it on colour neg; mostly using a Minolta CLE with 28, 40 and 90mm lenses.

Trafalgar Square was fine, except that nothing much was happening when I got there. I was able to take a few pictures of people collecting signatures for the petition and on the stalls there, as well as the final preparations that were slowly being made. Soon there were some African dancers - easy to photograph - and some street theatre that proved impossible, being too spread out for me to make any sense of.

Then came the usual hassle with the stewards, who had been instructed by the organisers to keep the press back behind the railings and not let them on the platform. Fortunately it wasn't too difficult to argue my way through as most of the people around had more sense, and I was able to get close enough to get on with the job. Trafalgar Square isn't the easiest place to photograph speakers, as the microphones are usually set up more or less on the edge of the plinth. For most of the people I managed to get reasonable pictures both from one side and also from the ground in front, although as the square filled it with people it began to become difficult to move from one position to the other. I was also able to take some better pictures of people waiting to speak and of the crowd's reaction.

Millennium Project Update

July 25th saw a general meeting of the photographers involved in **1999/2000: London Day by Day** at 1 Summerland Gardens to discuss 'where we are, where we are going and how to get there.'

Fifteen members out of the total of 40 brought snacks to share, taking time out on a Sunday afternoon. It is understandable that they also form part of the most committed group behind the project, continuing to show great enthusiasm and constructive ideas. This has turned out to be a very ambitious project, and all who have taken part are to be commended for their efforts.

The body of work continues to come together, and as of the end of June (most recently selected images) all dates have been covered except May 3rd. There was no news to report on exhibition space/ sponsors etc, however application has been made recently to The Millennium Festival **Awards for All** for monies for the showcase exhibition. Fingers crossed.

There has been unfortunately the expected withdrawal of some MP members due to various reasons, and of course that puts additional pressure on those staying with the project. If there are LIP members

The afternoon was more of a sham-ble. I really needed the mobile, because when I got to Blackfriars (having stopped for lunch) I found the plans had been changed and the chain was finishing at Waterloo Bridge instead. No one had any idea where the people I was supposed to be photographing would be, and I needed to get back somewhere fast in order to be able to photograph the climax of the day with the formation of the human chain. I decided I didn't have time to get to Westminster Bridge - which would have been my choice of position and ran for the South Bank, arriving very hot and out of breath but in time to get the pictures you see here.

Around 4pm I'd decided to call it a day and to miss the party as I'd promised to get the work in, so I went for the train home and after a quick meal started processing. As soon as the film was dry I contacted it and selected frames to scan and by the time I went to bed around 2am the images were on the web for them to see on Monday morning. Most of the actual use made of the pictures was from digital files on the web, although over the next couple of weeks I did make actual prints for those who wanted them.

who would care to join at this very late date, committed to taking images on odd days every week or so, please do come forward.

All in all, things are going well.

Watch this space.

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Duckspool - digital image by Ahmo Tracy

Duckspool

Jennifer Hurstfield

Another Duckspool resident - photo by Petteri Kakkonen



I recently went on a photographic workshop at Duckspool in Somerset because I was feeling blocked, particularly with respect to approaching and photographing people. My involvement in London Independent Photography's Millennium Project meant that I was often out and about in London looking to shoot street scenes. But I was approaching people to ask their permission in such a defensive and awkward fashion that I made them suspicious and was getting a lot of refusals. Or I was hovering trying to be invisible and instead drawing attention to myself and ruining any possibility of a "spontaneous" scene.

So I was losing my confidence, and in my experience that is a good time to go on a workshop! I chose Homer Sykes' workshop because it was entitled "People in a Landscape" and because he is someone who has recorded the diversity of British life (including street life) with wit and subtlety over a 30 year career. A member of Network Photographers, he has recently produced a remarkable book of photographs capturing the mysterious landscapes of Celtic Britain. (Homer Sykes, *Celtic Britain*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997)

There are many wonderful aspects to Duckspool. The number of participants is usually small - although it deserves to be larger - so you get a lot of personal guidance. We were only four - plus two "residents" who sat in on our sessions when not working in the darkroom or the kitchen - but could hardly have been a more diverse group. A Finnish photographer based in England working for a national Finnish newspaper; a photographer whose work in Nepal among the Tibetan Buddhists had been published in many magazines and who had started experimenting with a digital camera; and a third participant for whom - as for me - photography is an amateur passion. What we shared was a commitment to overcoming our equally diverse blocks - whether it was inhibitions about moving from the bigger picture to more intimate images of people; staying with a story long enough to give it shape and depth; or finding a theme that went beyond a collection of isolated moments.

Over the three days Homer shared his knowledge and experience with us and in the afternoons we went "on location" trying out different approaches. The locations included the tiny well-named village of Watchet, the formal ornamental Hestercombe Gardens, and a car boot sale in a converted Buddhist monastery.

We all learned to be more patient, and make initially unpromising settings work for us. Using a 35mm camera, unlike a larger format camera, it is easy to move on quickly before a scene has revealed its possibilities and then look back and see you should have waited. In a place like Watchet not a lot is going on - but that doesn't mean nothing is, and we just had to work harder at finding images. I also tried approaching people more straightforwardly as if they had a right to know what I was doing but as if I didn't expect them to refuse. I only got one refusal. Back in London I now find people are more likely to say yes.

After this workshop, thanks in



Car boot - Jennifer Hurstfield

large part to Homer's critical guidance and ability to inspire, we each felt that in some way we could move on. We might still go home to struggle with our own particular difficulty but we had each gained some insight into how we could change and felt more focused and confident about the direction to take.

But all this is only part of the attraction of Duckspool. Peter Goldfield and his wife Sue have created a haven where, as one of our group said "you can immerse yourself completely in photography. There are images, books, and magazines and nothing else to think about". Peter enjoys provoking a debate (not just about photography) and so we sat round the table for hours after each delicious evening meal.

As if all that wasn't enough, on my weekend there were some mean guitar players, including Peter himself. So if you go to Duckspool, take your guitar. And if you haven't got a guitar, take your dancing shoes instead!

More pictures from Duckspool by Jennifer Hurstfield on back cover.

Ritva Raitalo

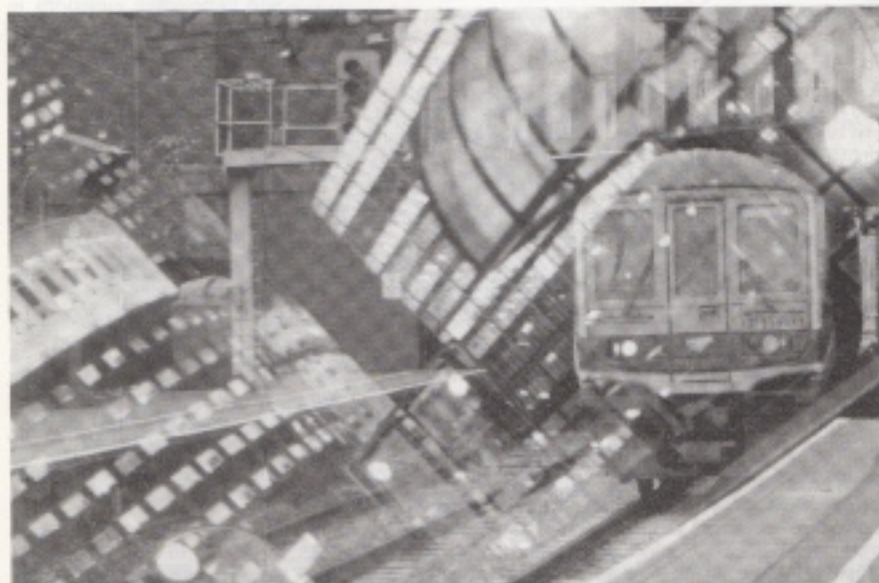


"Dream holiday" - 99



"Looks dangerous" - 99

All works - originals in colour. You can see them in colour on the LipService website, <http://www.spelthorne.ac.uk/pm/lip/> along with another set of four pictures by Ritva.



"Rails & windows" - 99



"Out of the Blue" - 99

The Death of Photojournalism

Dateline: 07/26/99

Peter Marshall

A few days ago I went to an opening at a gallery in South London (the kind of area where taxis refuse to take you late at night.) In the two rooms at **Photofusion** were a good crowd of people actually circulating and looking at pictures rather than the normal gallery chatter. On the walls stacked three or four high print after print, many unframed in hangers, the work of one of the UK's best and most prolific photojournalists. Brian Harris started work as a messenger boy in Fleet St, then the home of all English national newspapers, at the age of 16. He worked his way up to become a press photographer, working for local papers before eventually becoming a staff photographer for possibly the world's best known daily paper, *The Times*.

In 1986, Harris was invited to join the new daily, *The Independent*, as its first photographer. One aim of this paper was to reject the typical newspaper contrived pictures and photocalls and to publish the honest and powerful photojournalism, and Harris was certainly the man for the job. Over the next 13 years he specialized in the political scene, covering 3 UK national elections, 3 US Presidential campaigns and 4 French elections. He photographed the Berlin Wall the night it fell, the changes in Eastern Europe, wars and famines, as well as more local issues such as the erosion of the UK coast in Yorkshire and human interest stories, including a fine essay on Catholic pilgrims in Spain. Included in the show were examples of some of the sheets from the paper with perhaps five or six of his pictures used to illustrate a story, including some at - for a newspaper - a dramatically large size.

In January this year, Harris contributed an article to the UK magazine for professional photographers, *The British Journal of Photography*, in which he expressed his concerns about the future of photography in the newspapers. Many UK papers now have no photographers on the staff, using agency pictures or employing freelancers. He urged editors and newspaper owners to think again and consider the contribution that photographers can make to the identity and success of the paper.

Within two weeks of publication of the article, Harris's concern took on a more personal aspect when, after 13 years of highly successful work (several World Press Foundation commendations, Nikon and Kodak awards etc.) he was fired. Of course there is still work for a photographer of his calibre - since then he has worked for a number of papers as a freelance, but what has been lost is that relationship between newspaper, photographer and readers which enabled him to produce and publish such a fine and extensive body of work over the years.

Once responsible for editing photographs for *The Independent*, Colin Jacobson now edits *Reportage*, the 'international magazine of photojournalism', where he is able to present photojournalism at its best, and lay it out effectively without the constraints of a daily paper. This is a large magazine, with a double page spread that can (and at times does) accommodate a 12x16" print. The reproduction is of high quality and the blacks are some of the deepest imaginable. The latest issue features 'Drug Hunting in Ireland', the life of steel-workers in

Hungary, the New York music club scene, living with autistic children and radioactive emissions in Russia, all combining powerful and exciting photography with sympathetic and well-written text, as well as a discussion of the last two controversial winners of the *World Press Photo Contest*. Although staff give their time unpaid (and contributors receive only a fairly nominal fee) while attempting to get the magazine established, it is perhaps the most professional of photographic magazines in its presentation (not surprising considering the background of its staff.) Professional enough to gain second prize in the 1999 USA *Pictures of the Year Award for 'Magazines - Best Use of Pictures'*, behind *US News and World Report* but ahead of the *National Geographic*.

Photojournalism really started in the 1920's in middle Europe, a product of new camera technology, particularly the 35mm Leica, advances in typography, design and layout from such 'laboratories' as the Bauhaus and publishers who saw the market for a new type of photographically illustrated magazine particularly in a growing mass market, for whom telling the story in pictures was in part a compensation for a relatively low level of literacy. These new ideas spread rapidly, not least as many of those involved had to flee as Hitler rose to power. Editors such as Stefan Lorant and photographers including Kurt Hutton and Felix Mann settled in the UK where *Picture Post* and *Illustrated* became high circulation, while others such as Andreas Feininger, Alfred Eisenstadt, Robert Capa and Andre Kertesz settled in the USA. *Life* was set up in 1936 loosely (excuse the pun) following the European model, although it remained in many aspects staunchly American. The

young Eugene W Smith hit the scene as one of the first Americans to take up the new smaller and more flexible cameras and make it his own, becoming the first and greatest exponent of the photo-essay. War in Spain and then world-wide drove the market for photo-journalism; when it finished photographers wondered what to do. Hungarian-born Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson from France, George Rodger from the UK and 'Chim' - David Seymour from Poland, came together to form the greatest of all photographic agencies, Magnum in part to create work by setting up projects, but also to fight for the rights of photographers and to market their talents.

Since then, things have changed. Few of the illustrated magazines have survived, killed by competition with television both as a source of information for the readers and as a market for the advertising that was needed to fund the publications. Those that remain are usually more interested in the trivialities of celebrities rather than news. Increasingly to make a living photojournalists have to work for company reports and advertising and less for editorial. As Tom Picton wrote: 'Twenty years ago Philip Jones Griffiths, a Magnum photographer, said: 'There are no great issues which are treated seriously by picture journalism today... the whole idea is to trivialise everything to make it as colourful as possible in order to get the advertising. Now you say to an editor: "I'm going to Bangkok," and all he says is "Could you bring me back some temple bells?"'

The decisive shift now is however to digital. Why pay a photographer when you can give your reporter a digital camera? Why send a photographer across the world to take pictures when you can contact someone already there and they can send you digital images by satellite or Internet within minutes? If photojournalists are going to

survive they need to come to terms with the new technology and use it not only to make and deliver their work, but also to publicise it. At the moment few working professionals seem to have fully grasped this challenge - but more on this next week.

This article first appeared on my site on About.com:

<http://photography.about.com/>

where I am now the 'photography guide' contributing a weekly column, answering queries and setting up a comprehensive guide to photography on the web. (There is also an 'Amateur Photography' area with its own guide.) The original article contains roughly 20 hyperlinks to other web sites (for example to show pictures by most of the photographers mentioned.) So far I have written about Ansel Adams, Atget, Bailey, Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Stieglitz, Strand and a few other things.

News

Sam Celebrates

Congratulations to Sam Tanner for winning the top prize of £5000 in the First Direct/Independent on Sunday black and white photography competition. Taken for the Church Urban Fund, you can view his picture and the other winners and runner-up at:

<http://www.first-direct.co.uk>

Sam is talking about his recent work on the Jewish Community in East London at Roldolf Steiner House at 7.00 23 Sept.

Pub Crawl

Virginia suggests that members might be interested in looking at pubs that regularly show photography on their walls, including the Portobello Gold and the Masons Arms in Battersea.

New Work

2-10 Unframed, mounted prints for selection for the LIP show **New Work** at The Chocolate Factory should be submitted to 19 Lexham Cdn, WB on 9 Sept with the £5 fee.

AGM

The LIP Annual General Meeting will take place at the Drill Hall, Chertsey St WC1 on Sat 25 Sept at 2pm. Followed by a digital imaging demonstration.

Nominations (or volunteers) for posts should be sent to Janet Hall. I would particularly welcome someone else to be Editor of LipService!

IPSE Members on Show

John Holloway, **Traces**, Barbican House Museum, The Castle, Lewes to 3 Oct
Scarlett James - **nude work - In Out of the Darkness**, Rye Art Gallery, to 5 Oct
Jill Staples, **Pond**, at Pendle Art Gallery until 17 Sept.

Local Groups

Most meet roughly monthly in people's homes, sometimes the same evening each month. LIP members or prospective members are welcome to attend any of these meetings - ring the organiser to find out details.

Currently there are groups in:

E Dulwich
Yoke Matze 0181 693-8107
Harrow
Alison Williams 0181 427-0268
Twickenham
Jim Barron 0181 892-9044
Muswell Hill
Quentin Ball 0181 444-5505

but if anyone else would like to start a group (or join LIP) please contact Janet Hall 0181 847 5989

A day with Addie Elliott ... what next?

Sarah Thelwall

For those who've forgotten, never knew or are otherwise unfamiliar with the name, Addie is the gallery manager at the Special Photographer's Company (SPC), a gallery, agency and photo library based in Notting Hill.

As Addie explained the gallery is a commercial space that shows and sells the work of approximately 50 photographers. The agency and library represent a greater number of photographers. The photo library specialises in 'fine art' (as opposed to 'stock') photography whose buyers range widely from interior designers to ad agencies.

So why did 13 LIP and contemporary group members want to meet her one sunny day? More to the point, what did we learn and what will we (well I!) do with my new found knowledge of the synergy between commercial and 'fine art' photography.

The morning was Addie's chance to sell us the concept of the SPC. The SPC is a gallery I visit periodically (ie whenever I'm in the area) but it happens that I've only seen shows which were a combination of two or more of SO's, American, famous people or the music industry and frankly I'd come to think that this was all they did - misconception number one blown out of the water. As I've mentioned they represent a wide variety of photographers though they do have a history, and hence some bias, towards the music industry, jazz in particular.

The agency, as you might expect, links up photographers with work - this wasn't a major discussion point as the focus for the day was the library.

The afternoon was spend looking at portfolios of work and discussing how each photographer's style could be applied to the commercial environment and what next steps to take to move into it.

Addie had a number of general points relating to how to approach photo-libraries:

- ◆ Do your homework first - get a copy of BAPLA (British Association of Picture Libraries & Agencies, 0171-713-1780) and see which libraries are most likely to overlap with your work, perhaps get a copy of their catalogue and call them to discuss showing your work to them
- ◆ Where possible drop your portfolio in to a library, it'll get looked at much more quickly (within a week usually with the SPC) than if you send it (which could take a couple of months).
- ◆ You may only want to put older work/finished projects into the library as seeing new work outside of your series/project might be disruptive

Beyond this we each had a specific discussion about our own portfolio. So what did I learn?

- ◆ Not everything that I do is likely to have commercial appeal - the more esoteric images are likely to be offputting. Make things easy for people when showing your work, show the most easily approachable pieces first. The approachability is very important when isolating a single image and putting it in a context other than the one you intended it for.
- ◆ Your portfolio is an introduction. If a library likes it they'll ask to see more. Take care not to overwhelm people with vast quantities the first time you show your work. If a library likes it they'll ask to see more.
- ◆ There is a critical mass of images you need to reach - the more images you have the more likely it is that a library is going to be interested. Also it spreads out your chances. It will depend on the library but in the case of the SPC they don't take anyone into their library unless the photographer has a minimum of 20 images that they wish to include. All the libraries have different contracts but with the SPC once you've paid your joining

fee (£200) the number of images included in the library is limited only by how many the SPC want to take additional to the minimum 20. Therefore it's worth going back and showing newer work.

I'm going through my portfolio of images/series, looking at the volume of work, looking at the breadth and trying to judge whether I think I've reached that critical mass to show to libraries. If I were going to a specialist library (eg one that concentrated on gardens) then there may be sufficient. However I want a little more breadth than that so I'm holding fire until some of my more recent projects have a bit more volume. I've set myself a deadline of the end of the year to review my progress, to have evaluated the possible libraries that may be interested (looked at their brochures etc) and to have my images in a viewer friendly format - probably a single 10x8 box, each image in a Secol (see Silverprint catalogue) sleeve and a maximum of 20 images (though I may subfit a few sheets of transparencies as well). In addition I want to be able to talk about the images and the bodies of work more clearly - more for general conversation so that if people ask I can provide a more concise answer as to where the work has been and is going.

It was a challenging day, it's like standing on a cliff and not quite being able to see what's at the bottom. Worth coming back with binoculars and having a closer look though, even if you decide not to leap off.

Sarah Thelwall is taking part in a show with *Gina Glover* and another photographer based around the theme of *Gardens at the University of Reading* from Oct 4 - Nov 5 this year

Self Portrait

Lee Friedlander

Distributed Art Publishers Inc/
Fraenkel Gallery, San
Francisco

Price \$35.00
ISBN 1-881616-96-7

Pbk, 10x9.5", 96pp 49 duotones

Lee Friedlander has been recognised as an important and influential photographer since the 1970's with exhibitions at leading galleries and museums world-wide. The first edition of this book, published in 1970 by Haywire Press, is a long unavailable classic, and the publication of this second edition will be greeted by many.

Friedlander, working with a 35mm Leica rangefinder camera in the 1960's, invented (with others, notably Gary Winogrand) a new genre in photography which he tentatively called 'the social landscape'. His photographs were largely taken on the city streets and interiors and involved the interaction of people and their environment and also their incorporation into it. *Self Portrait* defined this genre and set an agenda for a generation of photographers.

Previously the paradigm for photography on the street had derived from photojournalists in general and Henri Cartier-Bresson and Robert Frank in particular. Cartier-Bresson's photographer was the invisible man catching his subjects unseen; with Frank we got a more personal record of his reactions to the scenes he encountered in his stream of consciousness trip across America. Friedlander took his insights a step further, making his presence explicit in each of the pictures in this work.

Self Portrait is not what you might expect from the title; only one or

two of the forty-nine pictures show anything approaching a formal portrait of the artist, and certainly none are taken in a studio. Friedlander used a number of strategies to include himself in the images; in some we see his reflection in the mirror of a hotel room or van; a shop window reflects both his image, eye to camera, and the scene behind him. He angles the camera down to include his feet, or turns it back on himself from arms-length and even occasionally seems to make use of a self-timer. Often his presence is a shadow - of his head on the back of a woman in the street or curiously truncated on a chair in a shop window where it joins the reflection of his feet.

Friedlander makes great use of the 'mistakes' of photography, such as the inclusion of his own shadow, or 'false attachment' in which objects can be joined - in one a triumphant statuette exults from the top of his shadow head. All of the pictures in the book are clever and some are extremely witty. Some of them made me pick up a camera and rush out and try some similar things when I first saw them in the seventies, which was perhaps the best way to realise what a good photographer Friedlander was.

If you don't know his early work, you will find this exciting - and will come back and thumb through it again frequently. If you know it and didn't buy the first edition you will already have decided you must have this one. Thanks to Richard Benson who made the duotones it is excellently reproduced and one bonus over the first edition is an afterword by John Szarkowski who is as to the point and articulate as ever. Highly recommended.

Peter Marshall

(Review for www.borders.com, an internet bookshop offering worthwhile savings on most volumes.)



Watchet - Jennifer Hurstfield



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