

The Journal of

LONDON

independent

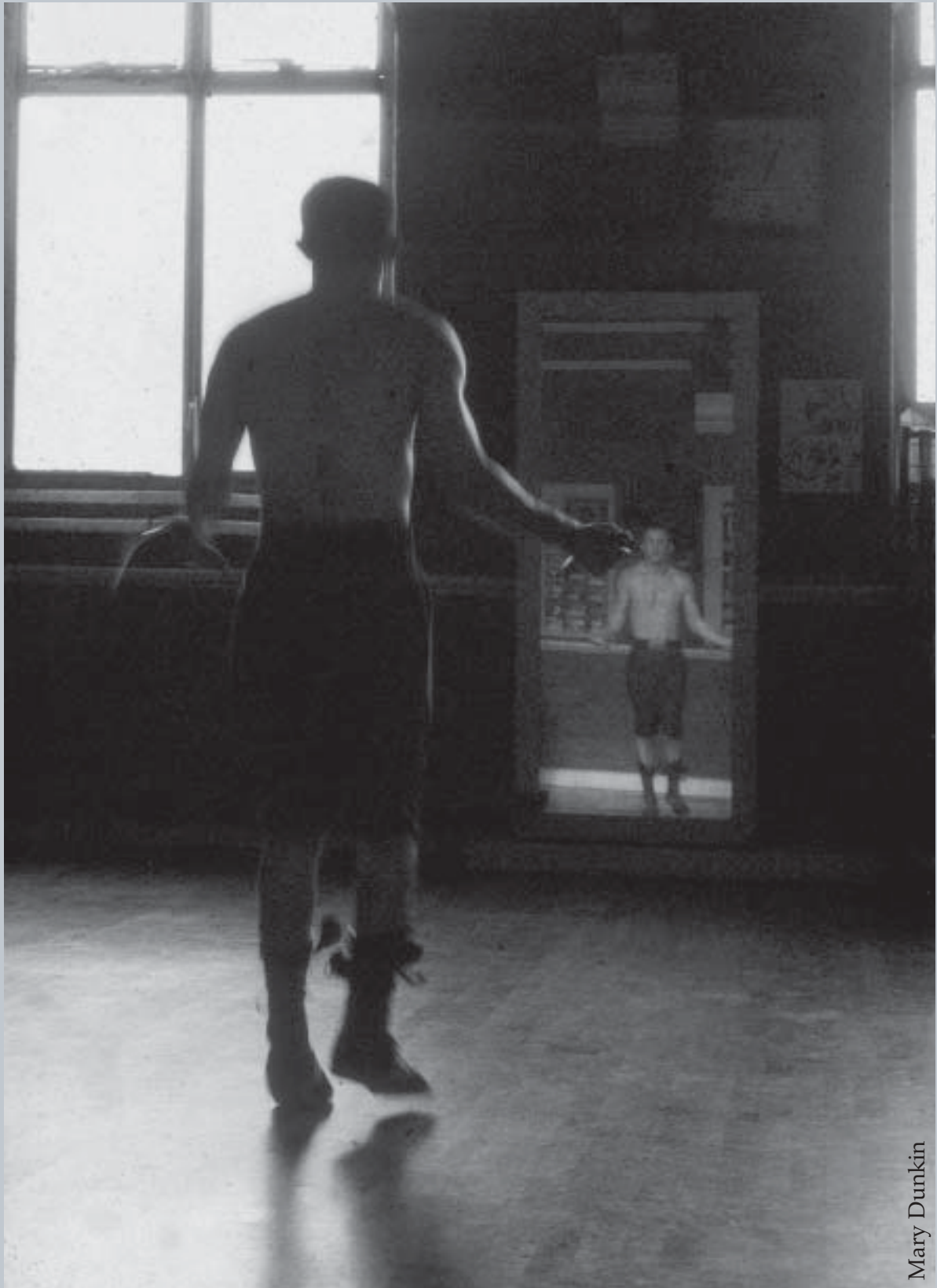
Winter

2002/3

£2.50

Photography

www.londonphotography.org.uk



Mary Dunkin

Contents

From the Exhibitions' Organiser <i>Avril R. Harris</i>	4
Words from the Chair <i>Quentin Ball</i>	4
The LIP 14th Annual Exhibition <i>Untitled</i>	5
The Photographers' Gallery Bookshop Christmas Choice <i>Laura Noble and Sarah Fordham</i>	6
Boxers <i>Mary Dunkin</i>	8
Hiroshi Sugimoto: The Architecture of Time <i>Michael Calvert</i>	11
QTip: Coloured Tongs <i>Quentin Ball</i>	11
New York Reflections <i>Lucy O'Meara</i>	12
Three Chapters <i>Michael Calvert</i>	14
Boris Mikhailov <i>Matthew Rake</i>	16
Views of <i>Untitled</i> <i>Peter Jennings and Ken Huscroft</i>	19
The Photograph as an <i>aide-memoire</i> <i>Richard Sadler</i>	20
Photo Events	22
Personal Ads	24

Copy date: Please send copy and photos for inclusion in the Winter Journal to Jennifer or Virginia BEFORE 13 February 2002

Co-editors:

Jennifer Hurstfield Tel: 020 7359 0713 jennih@waitrose.com <i>Articles and news items</i>	Avril Harris Tel: 020 8366 4068 avril_r_harris@lineone.net <i>Advertising and Exhibitions</i>
Virginia Khuri Tel: 020 7370 7501 vkhuri@aol.com <i>Articles and news items</i>	Tony Wallis Tel: 020 8960 1549 twallis@waitrose.com <i>Layout, Design and Listings</i>

Jeanine Billington
Tel: 020 8995 0455
Distribution

Webmaster: Gary Alexander
Tel: 020 8693 5888. email: gary@gaspweb.co.uk

Cover Photo: Mary Dunkin

Printers: Leighton Printing Company. Tel: 020 7607 3335



Untitled Jeanine Billington



Boxers Mary Dunkin



New York Lucy O'Meara



The Goons Richard Sadler

*Don't forget to visit the great LIP website
www.londonphotography.org.uk*

Editorial

There are two vital elements in the practice of personal photography: enthusiasm and inspiration. LIP's programme of events exists to encourage these as does this Journal. We also see the Journal as a way of promoting communication between you and your planning committee. Who are you, reader? And what do you think? What inspires your enthusiasm? We would like to know! We are waiting for you to share your reactions, and they need not be expressed in long essays; a Letter to the Editor will do. The minute we have one, an opinion column will be born.

As usual there is much to respond to in this issue both written and visual, all supplied by LIP members old and new, but let us also hear from the rest of you! There is a thoughtful essay on the Russian photographer Boris Mikhailov by Matthew Rake, and a perceptive review of the Hiroshige Sugimoto exhibition at the Edinburgh Festival. There are photographic extracts from larger bodies of work: of New York City by Lucy O'Meara, of boxers by Mary Dunkin, of three photo-essays by Michael Calvert,

You will also find enclosures with this issue; the minutes of the AGM and a questionnaire. It was disappointing that not more than 30 of our membership of 200 came to the AGM, especially as Gary Alexander, our webmaster, was there to explain our new website. (www.londonphotography.org.uk). Do visit it! We hope you will take time to fill in the questionnaire, as it will help the committee plan future events that meet your interests.

We wish you a happy holiday season and look forward to hearing from you in the New Year.

*Virginia Khuri
Jennifer Hurstfield*

Member's Exhibition

Irish Memories

Photographs by Lucy O'Meara

An exhibition of past and present photographs of local Irish people revealing their memories.

*The Lighthouse, 111-117
Lancaster Road, W11*

Friday 13 December -
until Christmas

Mon - Frid 9am - 9pm

Sat 10am - 5pm

Sunday closed

Call Lucy on 020 7792 2282
for more details

Stop Press

New Satellite Group in South London

Sam Tanner invites all LIP Members that live in the south of London (within travelling distance of Croydon) to participate in regular photography meetings at his home.

*Please phone or email Sam
for more information.
Telephone 020 8689 8688.
tanner@tannerb57.fsnet.co.uk*

Is this magazine your first introduction to London Independent Photography? Do you want to show your work to other photographers? Are you interested in looking at and discussing photography? Are you searching for new directions in your photography?

To join LIP

Complete this form and send with a cheque for £16 (£10 for students/OAPs/UB40) to cover a year's subscription to:
Janet Hall, 27 Hawkfield Court, Woodlands Grove, Isleworth, TW7 6NU (Tel: 020 8847 5989)

NAME:

ADDRESS:POSTCODE.....

TELEPHONE:..... email

I wish to join LIP and enclose a cheque for £..... payable to London Independent Photography

Signed.....date.....

From the Exhibitions' Organiser

I would like to thank everyone who submitted prints and I am sorry that they could not all be accepted. We received around 500 and we could only hang 140 images plus the retrospective for Jim Barron. The standard was very high and Paul Trevor and Martin Barnes had a hard days work selecting those which would be hung.

The venue is superb and the public who passed through while we were hanging the exhibition expressed enormous interest. The Private View was well attended and it was a great pleasure to meet Helen Barron who had so kindly allowed us to use Jim's prints. We also have to thank Silverprint and Martin Reed who offered to mount and frame his images. It was a very kind and generous offer.

PLEASE NOTE. The larger prints, which are going to Kendal, DO NOT need to be down sized. The representative who came from the gallery at Kendal saw the images at the Private View and is confident that they can be hung satisfactorily.

On the following page is a list of all the photographers whose pictures were selected and without their effort, and those whose pictures were not selected there would have been no exhibition. Please do not be discouraged if your pictures were not shown. Selectors are subject to their own preferences and next year could be your year.

Avril R. Harris

Words from the Chair

The LIP new year is off to a good start. The AGM was attended by 30+ including several new members who brought good ideas forward. The Minutes of the AGM are enclosed with this issue of the Journal. May I welcome the new committee members and a special thanks for those who have served in the past year.

The first two weeks of November saw our 14th Annual Exhibition at Cotton's Atrium on the South Bank, the biggest annual exhibition ever! I hope all were able to visit and see the diverse talents that are what give LIP its 'Independent' platform. If you were unable to attend at Cotton's the entire exhibition goes to Smethwick Photographic Society from 13th to 27th January, and a selection then moves on to Old Brewery Art Centre, Kendal from 16th May until 29th June 2003. Special thanks to Avril Harris as Exhibitions Organiser for making this happen. Also, thanks to all who managed to secure the works for the retrospective of our cherished member, the late Jim Barron.

Many of the exhibition images are now on the LIP website at www.londonphotography.org.uk. This site has a plethora of images, info and even a 'chat room'. I recently needed the development time for Ilford 400 delta in HC 110 and there it was! A very special thanks to Gary Alexander for his creative and technical skills.

Our workshops and lectures continue, being organised by Janet Hall; thank you Janet.

Through all this the Journal continues apace and for this we owe a great deal to the time and energy supplied by Ginny, Jenny, Jeannine, Tony and Avril. Thank you.

With the growing membership, and the dedication of the volunteers that do so much, the future for LIP is looking bright. If anyone feels that they can spend time contributing to LIP please contact me.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for a new year that is everything you want it to be photographically.

Quentin Ball



Mesa Arch - Quentin Ball

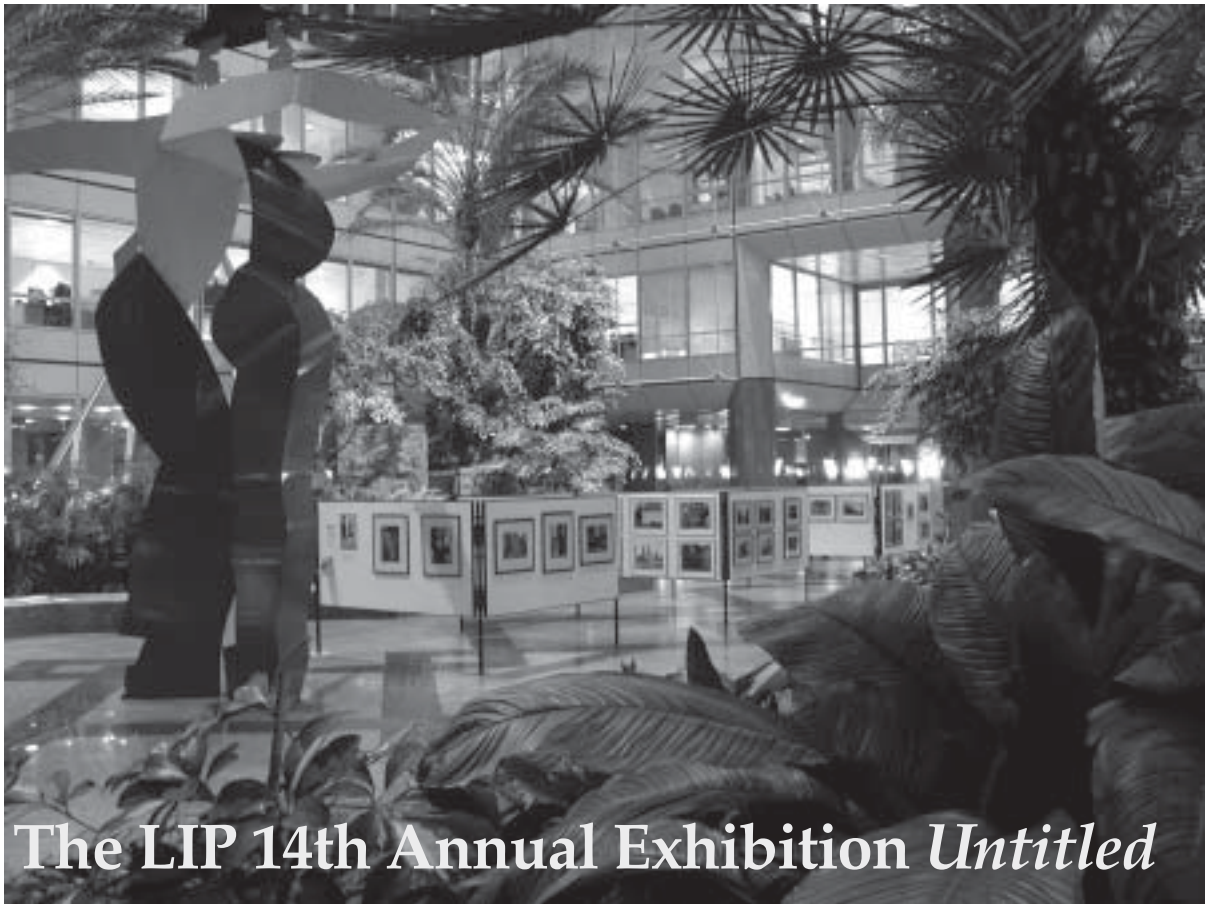
Seeking to enhance your landscape portfolio?

American Southwest Tour

8 - 23 March 2003

***Current itinerary:* Monument Valley, Arches NP, Coyote Buttes, Antelope, Bryce, Grand and Zion Canyons and Capitol Reef NP.**

This is your opportunity to spend two weeks in March 2003 absorbed in the awesome and dramatic landscape of the American Southwest, led by Quentin Ball, ARPS. Total cost approximately £1500 (includes airfares, all 4WD transport, lodging, food, experienced guide). Your only concern is what kind of camera and film to use! Group is limited to a maximum of six people. Interested? Contact Quentin on 020 8444 5505 or quentinball@aol.com



Ken Huscroft F.R.P.S.

The LIP 14th Annual Exhibition *Untitled*

The 14th LIP Annual Exhibition *Untitled* took place in the Cotton's Atrium, Cotton Centre, Tooley Street, between the 5 - 17 November. Even whilst the exhibition was being hung the public were streaming in, showing great interest. It is impossible to estimate the total number of visitors to the show, but throughout the two weeks there were always people browsing,

mostly passers by that were attracted into the Atrium. 140 prints from 49 members were selected from around 500 images submitted. The Private View on the Tuesday was attended by at least 200 people, with many well known photographers amongst them. We are very fortunate in being promised the Atrium as a venue for our next, the 15th, Annual Exhibition.

The Photographers:

Alan Forgan	Lucy Cohen
Alan Mynett	Malcolm Mackenzie
Angela Inglis	Maria de Fatima
Anne Crabbe	Campos
Avril R. Harris	Mary Dunkin
Barrie Nathan	Michael Bradley
Batool Showgi	Michelle Sank
Belinda J. Painter	Nancy Gault
Bianca Kadic	Nick Blackburn
Birgit Dalum	Peter Marshall
Bunshri Chandaria	Quentin Ball
Claire Keating-Bowman	R. Tobin
Clare Glenister	Roberto Leone
Dennis Toff	Sam Tanner
Edward Bowman	Sarah Lotzof
Eva Terrell	Simon de Trey-White
Gary Alexander	Stefanie Kappel
Gordon Raisin	Susan Bradley
Harold Berger	Tony Mayne
Hatsumi Dybdahl	Tony Wallis
Jill Staples	Townley Cooke
Karen Frock	Vicki Smith
Len Salem	Virginia Khuri
Leyla Hassan	William Bishop
Linda J. Fountain	Yoke Matze

Congratulations to all of them!

There is a good selection of images from the Exhibition posted on the LIP website

www.londonphotography.org.uk



Janet Hall and Quentin Ball in conversation - Gordon Raisin

The Photographers' Gallery Bookshop Christmas Choice

Laura Noble and Sarah Fordham present the pick of recently published books. LIP members receive a 10% discount on these. You need to show your LIP membership card when purchasing.



THE FARM - Jackie Nickerson

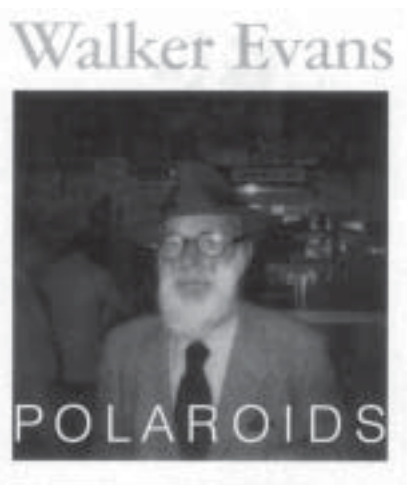
Jonathan Cape. £35 (LIP Members: £31.50)

The overriding impact of Jackie Nickerson's book *The Farm* is in her choice of muted colour. This collection of portraiture and landscape in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa averts the expected warm colours we associate with hot countries in favour of bleached green and blue tones. Nickerson pastiches the fashion industry in order to critique trends, such as those exemplified by the *Shanty Town Chic* dreamt up by Vogue and Elle magazine, to celebrate the true strength of proud farming communities in rural areas. Her roadside portraits display a deep and tender respect for their subjects' ingenuity despite hardship. The images are characterized by a directness of gaze, as the subjects stand firm and stare straight into the lens. The wear and tear of clothing, knotted, pinned and tied to form garments have an visual elegance. Through beauty and art, Jackie Nickerson truly pushes to break down the barriers of the African stereotype, and does so with convincing assurance. (LN)

AFGHANISTAN - Simon Norfolk

£25 (LIP Members: £22.50)

Even as twenty four years of war have taken their toll on the landscape of Afghanistan, it still retains a tragic beauty. In this new book, Simon Norfolk has achieved the visual balance required to represent both these elements without favouring one over the other. The resulting photographs display a terrifying aesthetic synthesis of wonder and horror. These opposites both batter and seduce our senses in equal measure; from the pock-marked ruins of buildings against a backdrop of celestial skies to the rusting, skeletal remains of a single track from a Taliban tank that lies lifeless in the dirt like the spine of a long dead, scavenged animal, beginning to fade, indistinguishable, into the surroundings and becoming another part of the landscape. Despite the comprehensive captions covering each image and a chronology of Afghan history, the dichotomy of Fine Art Photojournalism may still become an issue for some. However, by picturing the place and not cheapening the victims to iconic status, he holds our gaze for long enough to draw our attention to greater issues. (LN)



POLAROIDS - Walker Evans

Scalo. £27.50 (LIP Members: £24.75)

In 1969, Walker Evans wrote that colour tends to corrupt photography and absolute colour corrupts absolutely. Fortunately for us, however, in his later life Evans became an advocate of the colour medium. Using an SX-70 polaroid camera, lovingly referred to as his 'toy', he took the series of photographs which have been beautifully compiled in this inspirational book.

The presentation of the work – with one image to a page, set within a large white border – effectively preserves their intimacy and detail. Subject matter synonymous with Evans – from street signs (some in situ, others acquired by Evans and his students) to dilapidated buildings and portraiture— do not disappoint in this medium.

Evans' delicacy of composition and uncanny ability to capture the magical in the everyday give us a glimpse into our own world as much as his. (LN)



OUTSKIRTS - Todd Hido

NZ. £60 (LIP Members: £54)

Imagine you are an alien who has landed on earth in the middle of the night in an American suburb. Now open a copy of Todd Hido's latest book, *Outskirts*. Far away from urban chaos, but not quite in the wilderness, there are very few clues as to the whereabouts of these pictures. There are no distinguishing landmarks, street or place names to separate one location from another, conforming to the true suburban tradition, where individuality is not an option. Hido's nightscapes form an unexpectedly disquieting and dramatic experience from a seemingly mundane subject. Without becoming too clichéd, we enter the realms of film noir in surreal full colour. Despite the augur of menace, this collection of houses, cars, trees and telegraph poles exude an unmistakable beauty. The inanimate objects which form the subject of these images become almost living entities and turn the tables on our expectations. The sheer size of the book (the print dimensions are the same as the originals : 20x24 inches) furthers its impact and is absolutely worth every penny. (LN)

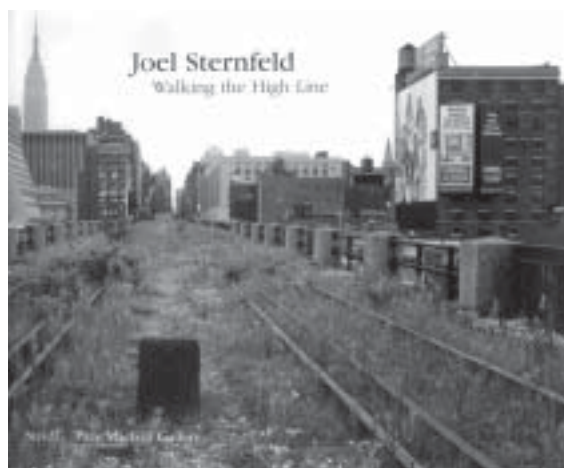
WALKING THE HIGH LINE - Joel Sternfeld

Steidl. £20 (LIP Members: £18)

For a year, Joel Sternfeld explored the derelict high rise railroad – once used for freight – which runs from Thirty-Forth Street to Gansevoort Street in New York, stretching over a mile and third of track. Out of use for twenty years, this overgrown viaduct is known as the 'High Line'. Now considered a natural jewel in the city, the High Line has sparked a debate of ownership between the West Side group 'Friends of the High Line', who want to turn this unused space into a public promenade, and the City Officials who do not.

There are no stations, yet other signs of life sprout up through the tracks as nature merges with the manmade amidst the urban jungle. Sternfeld captures the High Lines romantic seasonal nuances with an almost Proust like intensity. The warm, soft tones of the grasses, weeds, flowers and even a single tiny Christmas tree – replete with fairy lights – juxtaposed against the hard edges of the buildings either side, reminding us of the importance and the delicacy of the rare green space within the city.

Sternfeld's work renews our eyes to a forgotten corner of a city we thought we already knew. (LN)



These book reviews are written by freelance writers and lecturers Laura Noble and Sarah Fordham, who also staff The Photographers' Gallery bookshop in central London. Many more reviews can be found on the Photographers' Gallery website, www.photonet.org.uk

Boxers

Mary Dunkin



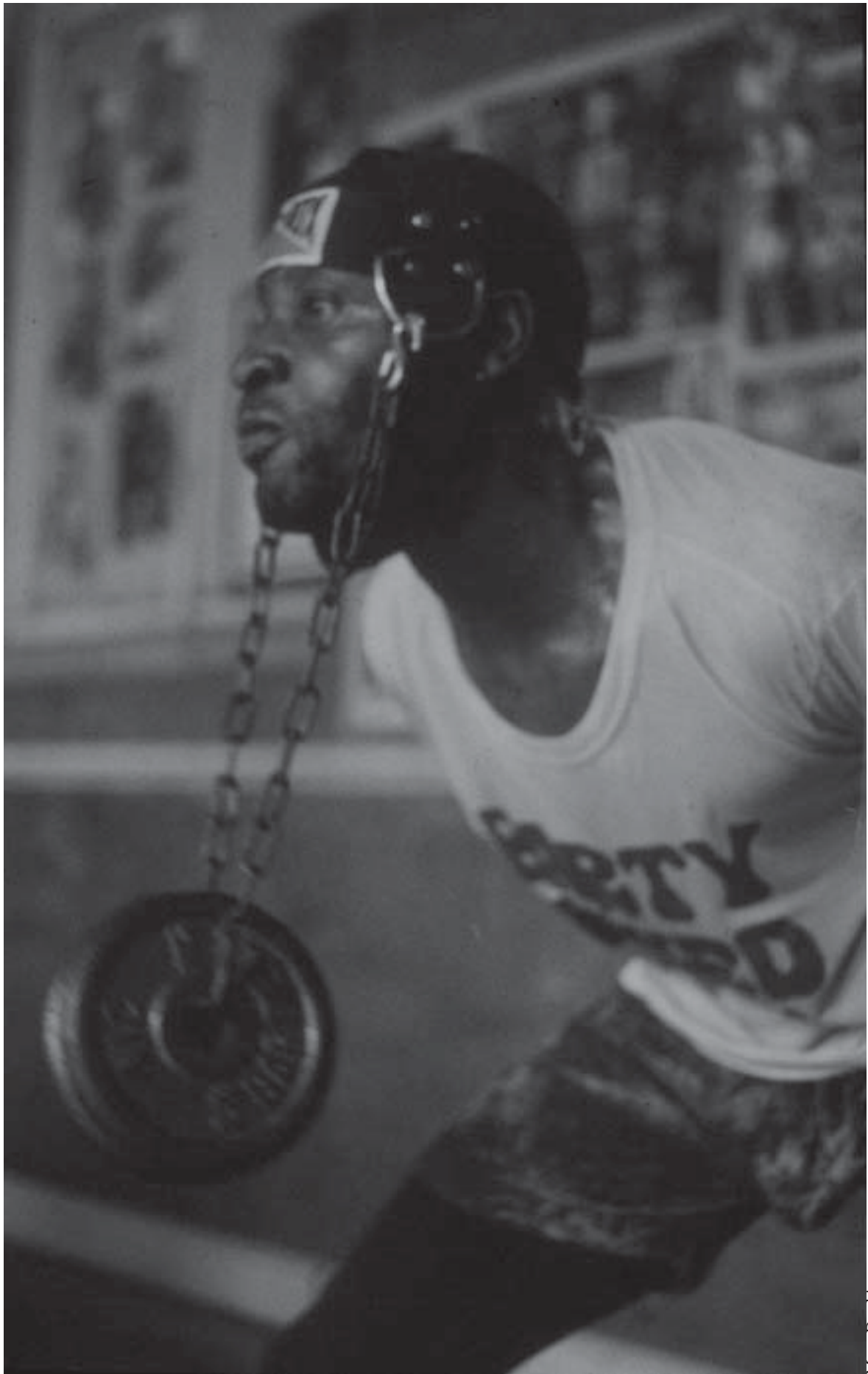
Mary Dunkin

The boxing series is a personal project that I completed when I was at the London College of Printing in the mid nineties. It was exhibited in a group show at the Association of Photographers Gallery last October but has not been previously published. I wanted to photograph people in an environment that was totally different from any that I knew about. I'd always been interested in boxing and I found an amateur boxing training gym in London and turned up one evening and asked Akai, the man who ran it, if I could come and take some photographs. He was extremely enthusiastic and so for several months I would turn up once or twice a week. My aim was that the boxers would get used to me and wouldn't take any notice of me, which is what happened

The boxers train hard for three minutes at one particular discipline (maybe skipping or sparring), and then a bell rings and they change to something else. Some of them asked for photographs of themselves which I was happy to give. I would take a separate photograph in a pose that they chose. I just loved being in this extraordinary space that hadn't changed for years and gave no clue that we were in the 1990's. I felt very privileged being a fly on the wall observing their private intensity. I also photographed some of their fights at the ringside when they were competing, but for me as a photographer the hours that I spent in the gym observing them in their private world was what I was interested in. I took the photographs on a manual Nikon in natural light. I still like them although they are very different from the style of my editorial work.



Mary Dunkin



Mary Dunkin



Mary Dunkin



Mary Dunkin

Mary was a graphic designer, author and picture researcher before she embarked on photography. She studied photography at the London College of Printing and the University of Westminster. She enjoys working in series where she comes up with an idea and then photographs and interviews the subjects - from teenagers in an inner city comprehensive to 100 year old women. Her work has been published in The Telegraph Magazine, The Independent Review and The Independent on Saturday Magazine. Many of her portraits have been published in The Sunday Times Magazine over the past eighteen months. She also undertakes private portrait commissions. Mary can be contacted on 020 8969 8043

Hiroshi Sugimoto: The Architecture of Time

Michael Calvert

A major exhibition by Japanese photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto was at the Fruitmarket and Stills Galleries in Edinburgh during the Festival, having been first shown at the Kunsthaus Bregenz last year. The exhibition contained work from three photographic series: *Architecture*, *Seascapes* and *Pinetrees*.

Architecture, the most recent body of work, was shown for the first time in the UK. The twenty-one images use landmark modernist architecture as a point of reference, in a similar way that the series *Theatres* used cinemas, but in this new series the camera is intentionally defocused. At first the eye automatically moves over the prints, trying to find some point of definition within, to translate the differences in tone into three-dimensional shape, before relaxing and accepting conditions as they are. Sugimoto says he is tracing the buildings back to the architects' original vision and indeed it is only when we stop trying to 'see' the building behind the image that some understanding of his intentions becomes possible. By denying involvement in surface detail we are forced to look for an answer elsewhere.

Sugimoto's minimalist *Seascapes* are well known; they have been the artist's main subject over the last 22 years and were first published as *Time Exposed* in 1991. The frame equally divides air and water, the



Bass Strait, Table Cape Hiroshi Sugimoto

image is uniformly sharp all the way to the horizon, even when the horizon is obscured. In series, the eye focuses on the minimal variations between the images; the set becomes a sequence of differences. Over at the Stills Gallery, a handful of monumental *Seascapes*, mostly from the mid-90s, contrasted day and night, clarity and obscurity. However, it was a night seascape, *Bass Strait, Table Cape* [from 1997] that stole the show. In 1997 Sugimoto began to intentionally defocus his camera: "I set up the position of the film and lens of my camera so that the focal point is twice the point of infinity. Of course, this is very technical and impossible, but I can set my camera this way and it becomes an ideal only the camera can see, so the result is that nothing is sharp" [H.S. 1997]

Whatever the mystical logic behind the technical facts, the unexpected sensuality of this image invoked an emotional response, demonstrated by several comments in the visitor's book. We seem to have an innate ability to create internally a narrative for even

the most abstract of images. If photography is about "looking outside to look inside" – to quote Robert Frank – then this image provides a clear transmission of some felt sense. It is ironic, of course, to think of the camera as capable of "seeing", but here it has done its work of recording whatever is out there as perfectly as always. But there is evidently more going on out there than meets the eye.

The ambitious images presented here - not forgetting the two spectral *Pinetree* landscapes that were used in the Noh performance at the Kunsthaus Bregenz - take Sugimoto's work into uncharted and resonant spaces. London has clearly missed out, although the superbly printed catalogue is still available from the Fruitmarket Gallery [see link below].

Link - <http://www.fruitmarket.co.uk/exhibitions1.html>

Q Tip

Coloured Tongs

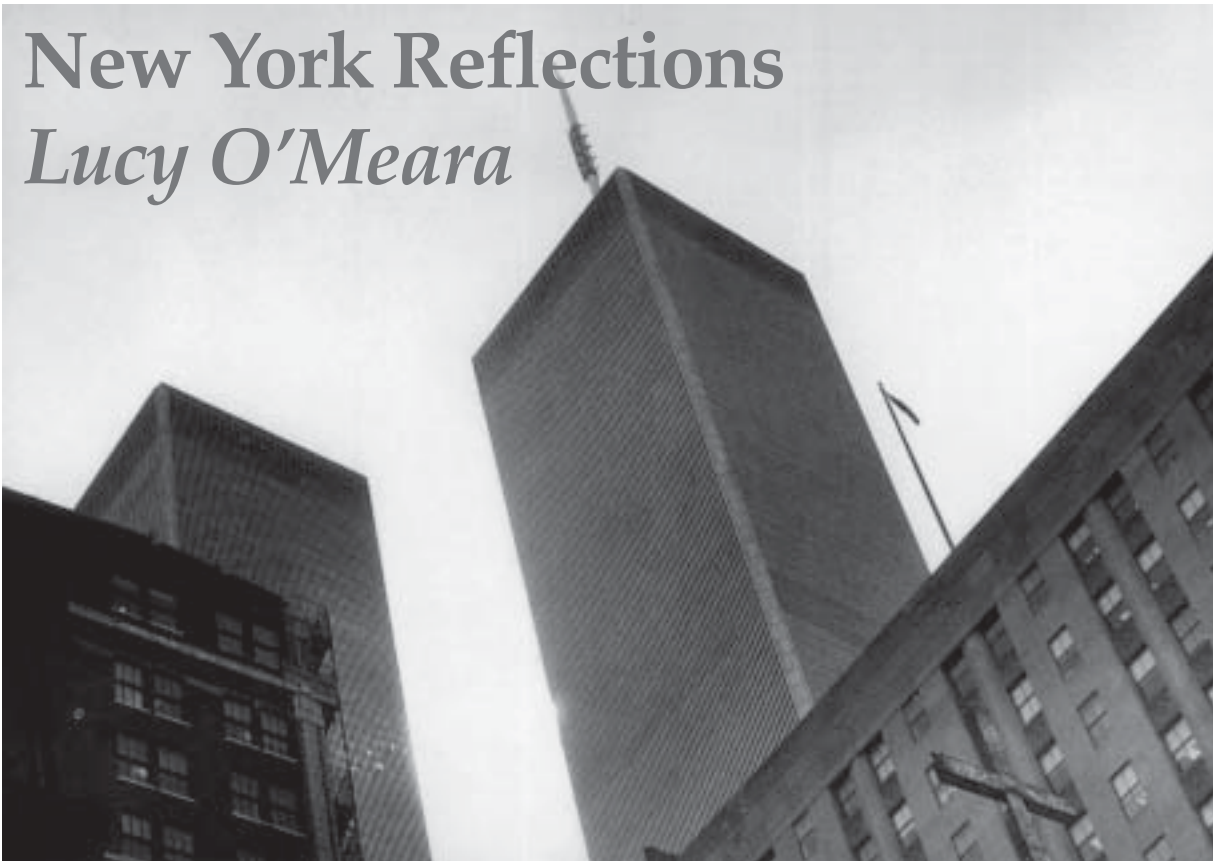
Working in the darkroom to create the finished print can sometimes be a negative experience (no pun intended), when due to chemical contamination one ends up with stains on the print.

To eliminate contamination it is important to always use the same equipment with the same chemical (washing thoroughly never gets the equipment back to a virgin state).

The major source of contamination comes from tongs. To prevent this, match tongs with its chemical. Sets of tongs often come with different coloured rubber heads i.e. red, white and blue. You can use this patriotic sequence and match up to developer/stop/fix, so next time you visit the darkroom, there will be no question as to which set of tongs go in which tray.

New York Reflections

Lucy O'Meara



Lucy O'Meara

It was always one of my dreams to go to New York since I was young, and finally got there in April 2001. I've always been interested in architecture and I found the skyscrapers and buildings breathtaking. I went to New York with a view to having an exhibition but didn't have a definite plan as to the content. I just wanted to capture some of the vibrancy and different aspects of the city.

There was a real energy and soul which I loved. Who could have foreseen what would happen a few months later, that the skyline would be changed forever and so many lives would be lost. When printing the black and white images the twin towers seemed to appear in the background of so many of them and it's still hard to believe that they're now gone. On the positive side though the tragedy brought about an almost rebirth of the city in the way communities were united in their grief and their desire to help.

I walked around bringing my camera everywhere with me, often two, one with black and white film and one with colour, and took pictures of anything that appealed to me. I found it very easy to find inspiration, it is such a photogenic city. The pictures were mainly taken around Soho, the Financial District and Lexington Avenue. Some people seemed to find the twin towers pictures very moving, the one with the cross in particular though I hadn't even noticed the church in the foreground when taking it (image above)



Lucy O'Meara



Lucy O'Meara



Lucy O'Meara

Three Chapters



San Francisco, October 1996



London 1998



San Francisco, October 1996

FAMISHED

The card with 'FAMISHED' written on it was held by a beggar in San Francisco in October 1996. He wanted money to buy food, but I saw another interpretation of that word. I was also famished, in ways other than physical hunger, and thus began these pictures, this search for understanding.

Michael Calvert



Berlin, May 2000



Berlin, May 2001



Berlin, May 2001

NOTES ON ARCHITECTURE

Most of these pictures were taken along the strip of land on which the Berlin Wall once stood. I was making notes, improvising, recording the new structures that were emerging from that former ideological fault-line. My focus was on the fusion of the unintentional, the ad-hoc, the unattributable, the temporary.



Lincolnshire, October 1998



Kent, November 1998



Powys, August 1999

DANGER AREAS

These pictures were made in military training areas, which are marked as 'Danger Area' on the 1:250000 Ordnance survey map. The verbal warning provided an inner narrative to the scene I saw in the viewfinder. I was interested in making landscapes that were more concerned with the state of mind looking out than with external facts.

Please see the website for a further selection of images from Berlin: www.red4.demon.co.uk

Copies of the CD-Rom, containing a programme of 45 pictures and compatible with recent Windows and Mac operating systems, are available from Michael Calvert [price £10]. Contact him direct at msc@red4.demon.co.uk



**How I learned to love
the photography of
Boris Mikhailov**
Matthew Rake

Boris Mikhailov

Untitled, from Luriki, Kharkov, Ukraine, late 1960's

I first became aware of Boris Mikhailov when I saw his publicity photos for his show at the Photographers' Gallery in April 2000. They included a naked man with a grossly misshapen penis and a woman whose stomach protrudes in an odd angular way. My first thought on seeing the latter was of Tom and Jerry - just after someone's swallowed an iron. Why were these people deformed? What were they doing naked? Why did some of them seem so happy?

When I eventually went to the exhibition with a friend, I still had difficulty looking at the images. My friend simply couldn't understand how they could end up on gallery walls. They weren't even very well composed. There were other Mikhailov photos, lots of other photos, but we didn't stay long. It was sunny outside. We wandered across Charing Cross Road to a café and sat watching the beautiful people walk by. It was a Saturday, and it felt like the first day of

summer. We walked up to a packed Soho Square. For the first time in 2000, people were stripping off, enjoying the sun. But what were those people doing naked in the snow of a Ukrainian winter?

By the time I got to the Photographers' Gallery again, the exhibition was over - *The Man in the Crowd: The Uneasy Streets of Garry Winogrand* had replaced it. I was on more familiar ground here. Winogrand took pictures of strangers on the street - and he captured them in tension-filled compositions. They were great images - the eye was pulled this way and that. And the images were of a piece. My friend would have loved them.

Six months later, the shortlist for the Citibank Photography Prize came to the Photographers' Gallery and there was Mikhailov again. I had learnt more about his photos and his practice. The publicity photos I had seen were from a

series was called *Case History* and Mikhailov had paid his subjects to pose, often naked. (Shedding clothes in subzero temperatures? At the behest of the photographer! A bizarre parody of fashion photography?)

If you can stay with *Case History*, however, what comes through is: the homeless as people, as well as victims. Like the people in the photos on pub pinboards, they laugh and fall about in pleasure. The homeless shown at ease is perhaps particularly uneasy. But they also holler and fall about in pain. It is a fuller and more complicated vision of homeless people than usual. A smashed-up face smiles at us.

Mikhailov's payment is undoubtedly morally questionable. I read in *The Observer* recently that the new video nasties involve paying homeless people to fight or have their teeth pulled with pliers. Mikhailov's payment, however,

has perhaps enabled him to produce a fuller, more frank record of the homeless of Ukraine.

I began to think of the beggars that appear in Winogrand's photos. Winogrand doesn't seem to acknowledge them as anything other than a component part of the composition (I can hear the LIP pictorial purists saying: that's just as it should be). In one photo outside the American Legion convention in Dallas, a legless man looks helpless and questioning at Winogrand. Winogrand looks back at him as the focal point of a composition. Winogrand's beggars disturb me because they remind me of how I - and society - often treat people in need.

My growing fascination with Mikhailov led me to splash out £4.99 on the *Phaidon 55* on Boris. You will have seen these pocket-sized books in a prime position in the photography section of big bookshops (somewhat ambitiously, Phaidon declare, 'Just as Penguin found a new market for fiction in the 1930s, so at the start of a new century, Phaidon 55s, accessible to everyone, will reach a new, visually aware contemporary audience'.)*

The beauty of the book is that it puts *Case History* series in the context of the rest of his kaleidoscopic output. It has an informative introduction and captions explaining photos from (most of) his other series. Like Winogrand, Mikhailov has been a prolific photographer. Unlike



Boris Mikhailov

Untitled from *Case History*, Kharkov, Ukraine, 1997-8.

Winogrand, his artistic ambitions have wandered far and wide - Gilda Williams, in her introduction, calls it 'schizophrenic stylistic unevenness'. In part, this is resourcefulness in the face of a repressive society. Mikhailov lost his job as an engineer in the 1960s after the KGB found out he had taken photos of his wife nude. For the next four decades, his vision of Ukraine has questioned and subverted the government's.

In doing so, he switches easily from a conceptual approach to a more conventional one. In the *Luriki* series (1971-85), he colours (and creases) found photos. It seems to be a parody of the old Soviet practice of airbrushing photos for political ends. Or perhaps it's a parody of the way we sentimentalise family photos. Or perhaps it's a celebration of the latter. In another series, *Salt Lake*, he takes a straight approach, showing holidays in hell (at exactly the same time Martin Parr

created his *New Brighton* photos). To use a political metaphor, Mikhailov is a democratic pluralist.

One black mark for the Phaidon book, however, is the omission of the 1978 series *Dance* (this is published in its entirety by *Scalo/Hasselblad Centre*). In this series, Mikhailov doesn't question the government or convention or anything. It is simply a beautiful depiction of shirt-sleeved old folk at an open-air, summer dance. It is as reassuring as *Case History* is disturbing. Has Phaidon (in Soviet fashion) censored this series because it doesn't fit in with the official Mikhailov-as-subversive history? Or is there a more prosaic picture rights problem? No matter, my next Phaidon 55 purchase has been *Shomei Tomatsu*, another photographer whose photos seem to be all over the place. If they bring out a Winogrand volume, though, I might just pass.

*The Photographers' Gallery Bookshop stocks the complete set [Ed.]

www.linhofstudio.com

BERGGER

- ▶ Pyro pre-treated
- ▶ Contact 2 contact printing paper
- ▶ VCB Style The NEW Etalure?
- ▶ Ecco Additives Italian additives.
- ▶ Cot 320 for Alternative Printing Processes
- ▶ Samplepacks Bergger Variable or Graded
- ▶ BPF & BRP 200 Silver rich film - all sizes
- ▶ BPF 18 Film for exposure by contact or projection
- ▶ Prestige Fine Art pleksun print from the enlarger
- ▶ Contact Printing Frames A4 or 12 inch

Image House 204 Leigh Road
Leigh on Sea Essex SK9 1BS

Linhof, Hensel, Lotos, Gandolfi, Schneider, Rodenstock, Tenba

LYSON
The Digital Ink Company

- ▶ Fotonic Inks for archival colour
- ▶ Small Gamut a palette of controllable tones
- ▶ Lyson Media Ideal for all Lyson led systems
- ▶ Neutral Quad Black extended tonal range

SMALL GAMUT NOW AVAILABLE FOR EPSON 1290 SERIES

Please phone for our comprehensive catalogue.

Tel: +44(0)1702 716116
email: info@linhofstudio.co.uk
Fax: +44(0)1702 716662

Two Views of *Untitled*

Peter Jennings and Ken Huscroft present here two views of the LIP 14th Annual exhibition, Untitled. Peter is a long standing member of LIP, with a number of years of Committee work behind him. Ken is the Vice President of the prestigious Smethwick Photographic Society, the venue hosting the exhibition in January 2003.

Past, Present, all correct - But

There is an adage about music that as long as the intro and the outro are strong, what happens in the middle doesn't matter. With photography, however . . .

When I viewed the LIP Annual exhibition, under the vast atrium of the Cotton Centre, I became aware of an intro, an outro and a grey area in between. Not that the work in-between was grey, but it seemed to be have been polarised. The intro - forging a link through to a strong, identifiable and exciting new wave in LIP, the outro - was a collection of eleven prints by the late James Barron.

Showcasing Jim's work was a nice tribute from LIP. His street photography - although created relatively recently - was in the Picture Post tradition of humorous, perceptive, compassionate photojournalism. Jim and his less famous look-alike, Paul Strand (both, I think, wore woolly hats) stayed around the patch they photographed in carrying that empathy through to their work. I found that same empathy in some important contemporary work in the exhibition by Stefanie Kappel and Michelle Sank. These, along with other talents, formed the bright, new work that made the outro.

In Kappel's six prints, *The Mother as Producer* - shown en bloc - the relationship between mother and family achieved maximum effect in an Ibsenian drama; Sank's colour shots of adolescents *The Emerging Self* were contemporary street theatre highlighting the awkwardness of puberty. This awareness of self through photographing others radiated out to include Gary Alexander's colour street photography and a witty collection of three small

images of a freezer dump, *Urban defreeze, Fish Island E15* by Lucy Cohen. So there - for the time being - was the outro.

So much for a beginning and conclusion of the exhibition, which would be fine if what happened in-between did not matter. But the middle, without form, contained some jewels with miscellaneous themes and variations, new work without limits - almost unstructured and titled(?) under the title *Untitled*?? There were sorcerers: Yoke Matze with dark images - reminiscent, but moving on from the Derby/Trent School and Nancy Gault with bewitching windows images. Charmer Tony Mayne amused with affectionate portraits of LIP members at work.

There were also, as expected, manipulators in both senses: those who had new ways with images and those who manipulated in the digital sense. Where digital manipulation became questionable or obvious - as in Len Salem's series *Not far From Where I Live* and Dennis Toff's *Le Touquet in Winter* - it suggests that perhaps the medium is manipulating them. Sam Tanner and Peter Marshall, two LIP stalwarts, showed competent street photography but Peter Marshall's images lost impact in muddy digital printing. There were those whose work chose to be just illustrative, often straying towards painting and graphic arts: Jill Staples' drawing-like flowers; Leyla Hassan's enigmatic, triangular screenprint-like *Inner Space* images and Claire Keating-Bowman's portraits *Illusions* - this with more than a whiff of Bacon.

However, the success of an exhibition must depend on three things: location, location and location. Here the Atrium scores; the public - less discriminatory about theme, cohesion or concept - cannot ignore the work; they are already in the gallery, not outside

the plate glass window wondering if it is for them. The virtue of the Atrium is that it is a very open exhibition, and accessible. LIP must be praised for finding the venue and setting up the whole; it has moved into new territory. It is fertile soil and should yield a good harvest.

Peter Jennings

Dear Avril

Thank you for inviting me to the opening of your LIP Exhibition *Untitled 2002*

I thought that the exhibition was held in a marvellous location, which added to the overall excellence of the photographers work. The variety of work displayed by the exhibitors was an indication of the quality and range of interests that your members have. The problem I have found with single images is that, if you are not very careful in the hanging of the exhibition, it will become rather bitty but I think you handled this very well by grouping like subjects together. I think that a few panels of work from some of your members would increase the visual impact of your exhibition, as it would allow individual members to express themselves more explicitly.

As Vice President of Smethwick P.S. I am looking forward to seeing your exhibition in our clubrooms and I am sure that our members and visitors will enjoy it as much as I did.

Thank you once again
Regards
Ken Huscroft F.R.P.S.

Peter's critique raises a number of points that will be discussed by the Exhibitions Committee before the next 'Annual'. Please join in the discussion by making your views public, either by contacting any of the Committee or writing to the Editors for publication in the Journal. The question of the best method of selection of images for future annual exhibitions appears to be the most interesting problem, so if you have ideas on this, or any other views, let us know.



Richard Sadler

Harry with Peter in the background chat to a guest.

The photograph as an aide-mémoire

Richard Sadler

The shorter Oxford dictionary tells us that an "aide-mémoire" is a book or document serving as an aid to the memory; it goes on to say, in diplomats' terms it is a memorandum. Should we read then, photograph, in addition to book? Of course, for from the Daguerreotype to the present day the photograph has fulfilled that function, though the image, like words can also be manipulated to suit romantic ideals, serve political propoganda or simply tell the truth of the moment, or an economical version of it. It is evidence, and by the very nature of its production a document of a real moment in time. In our quest for the art of the medium we forget the strength of the photograph in this its primary role, linked, as it is, to a time and

reality seen through the impartial camera. So, what are the memories within these images of a party at the Umbrella Club for the Arts in Coventry in the 1950s?

The image above reminds of parties enjoyed, friends, lost, forgotten, dead, rich or famous, and a personal past of, lost or gained hopes and aspirations. The Umbrella Club is a piece of history long overtaken by a City rebuilt and continually trying to keep up with the times. It is the image with two bespectacled gentlemen (they must be gentlemen look at their overcoats, it was still clothes rationing then) talking to another whose back only is visible. Then it all comes flooding back, it is Mr Harry Secombe and Mr Peter Sellars, and in that party crowd image the man in a "deerstalker" must be Mr Spike Milligan. In spite of the formality of the times for us they were the "Goons".

The occasion was the first time when our heroes, appeared on stage to delight us with their wit and wisdom. It was a flop of course, though not for us, due in

the main to having a public that enjoyed them, till then, only via the radio The theatre too at that time was controlled, not on1y by the management, but the Lord Chamberlain. All theatre performances had to be approved by him and any deviations from the script, at each performance, recorded and forwarded to his office. The anarchic humour and wit of our heroes, to whom the art of the ad lib was fundamental, suffered from this bureaucratic machinery; they had in truth been "sent to Coventry". We, the members of the Umbrella Club, would have none of that, they would come to our party to celebrate that which we would create together with them, a future of peace, prosperity and fun! The top image (p. 21) sums up that evening, as obligingly they put up an umbrella, embraced the girls and assumed a pose that would remind us of their personalities, wit and wisdom that changed, though no one realised it at the time, English humour for ever. Here's to Sir Harry, and Peter, who died some years previously, and to Spike, who died this year.



Richard Sadler

The Goons in Coventry



Richard Sadler

Harry checks out a "hot dog"