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Editorial

Dear Region Members

The Christmas lights have long been packed away, but dusk still comes rather early and this makes it difficult for people working full-time to go out and take pictures. And that's exactly what I thought I should do more often this year. I'm not one for New Year's resolutions. However, after many years of decidedly avoiding this, I've made three resolutions for 2019. Unfortunately, two of them are already out of the window. Of course I'm not telling you what they were. But I'll tell you about the third one, the one I'm really keen to see through until the end of the year – and, if I can help it, further into the future. It's swapping the confinement of four walls at work or at home for the outdoors, exploring the natural surroundings of the place where I live and work with the camera. Being curious again. Looking in a different way at what I think I know so well, with a different lens, from a different angle. Living near Snowdonia and the sea, an amazingly beautiful and varied landscape lies at my - and our - doorstep. Having said that, I must admit that I'm quite useless at landscape photography. My passion, and my

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Submissions:

We'd love to see your images and read your photography related stories.

Please send your text files in Windows or Mac format with ca. 300 – max. 1500 words, and your images as jpegs in sRGB colour mode to northwales@rps.org

more natural (although the term sounds funny in this context) surroundings is the built environment. With my main interests mainly in urban, architecture and street photography, I find myself longing after city life, dilapidated buildings next to monumental architecture, steel and glass tower blocks interspersed with old brickwork, the anonymity of metropolitan cities, and the cultural variety, combined with the pace of urban life.

Now, the closest places like this are a hundred miles from where I live. This makes it a necessity, but also an opportunity, for me to photographically focus more on my vicinity, and on subjects I'm less familiar with, thereby expanding my photographic repertoire, and generally pushing my boundaries. As yet another step into this direction, I joined the Landscape Special Interest Group. Being a member of several other SIGs, I came to recognize the tremendous value these groups offer. A wealth of information is passed on to the group members, and the newsletters, journals and magazines, in either electronic or printed forms, are of outstanding quality. The events organized by the SIGs are a great way of not only acquiring new knowledge but also to meet fellow photographers.

To sum it up, I'm full of energy for my photographic journey during this year. We'll see what comes of it...

On a similar note, and back to urbanity, I wonder how many photographers in our region have an interest in urban space, and if there would be a wish to meet up, discuss images,

and maybe even go out shooting together. This of course also applies to all other photographic disciplines and categories. Would it not be great to form networks of likeminded photographers in our region? One way to start this could be to attend one of our Show&Tell meetings, the first one this year being scheduled for early April (see region website and the event section in this newsletter).

This leads me on to our event calendar for 2019. In May we'll be treated to a coastal photography talk by award winning professional photographer Rachael Talibart. Later in the year, we have two outdoor events planned: a photographic walk on Mynydd Parys, and a strandline nature walk at Dinas Dinlle.

On our recent AGM, I talked about and expanded on some of the challenges our region faces. Being a small region in terms of membership numbers, spread out over a considerable geographic area, certainly poses problems regarding the organization and location of events, and a summary is presented in this newsletter.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter, and I wish you a great and successful 2019!

Sincerely

Rolf Kraehenbuehl
Regional Organizer
and Newsletter Editor



© Gareth Jenkins

RPS North Wales Region events



THE RPS
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

North Wales Region



1839 North Wales
Regional RPS Committee

Show & Tell Meeting

A photographers "Get together" event

A relaxed atmosphere to meet, discuss,
network and get inspired.

Agenda

- 13:00 – 13:15 Welcome and outline of meeting
- 13:15 – 14:15 Print session
- 14:15 – 14:45 Tea break and mini-fair
- 14:45 – 16:00 Digital session
- 16:00 – 16:30 Print competition
- 16:30 – 16:45 Member feedback and wrap-up

Bring along your work to show and discuss in an informal and relaxed atmosphere and receive constructive feedback if wanted. All photographic forms welcome PDIs, prints, AV, photobooks, mixed media etc.

Tea and biscuits included in the break so why not network and take advantage of our mini-fair so bring your items to sell.

Meeting closes with a mini print competition, judged by members of the Region Committee (three prints per delegate).

**7th April 2019 at Pensychnant Conservation Centre,
Sychnant Pass, Conwy. LL32 8BJ at 2pm**

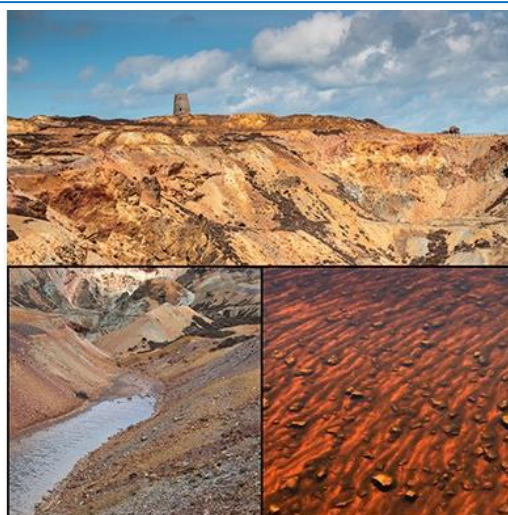
Bookings : <http://rps.org/regions-and-chapters/regions/north-wales>
Enquiries : Rolf Kraehenbuehl Acting Regional Organiser Email : northwales@rps.org

Mynydd Paris Photowalk

Sunday, 7th July 2019, 10:00 – 14:00 (ish)
Paris Mountain, Amlwch, Anglesey, LL68 9RE

A 2.4 mile/3.9km walk around Mynydd Parys (Parys Mountain) on Anglesey, which has been worked as a copper mine since the Bronze Age and during the 18th century was the largest copper mine in Europe. The huge, mainly hand-dug, Great Opencast mine is still an awesome sight, with the colourful ochreous soils (impregnated with copper, lead and sulphur and supporting little vegetation) creating a unique desert-like alien landscape which has been used a backdrop for a number of films and TV programmes.

The dramatic, stony landscape appears barren, but it supports a variety of wildlife, including birds such as skylark, meadow pipit and chough, and plants that are able to tolerate high concentrations of copper and zinc. There are plenty of photographic opportunities including landscape shots of the mine, multi-coloured spoil heaps, precipitation ponds, etc., architectural shots of the disused mine buildings and close-up and macro shots of the various rocks, ores and accumulated detritus.





North Wales Region



Where Land Meets Sea

A Talk About Coastal Photography by

Rachael Talibart



Black and White Photographer of the Year 2018
Classic View winner, Landscape Photographer of the Year 2017
Sunday Times Magazine's Award winner, Landscape Photographer of the Year 2016



Rachael is a former lawyer turned professional photographer specialising in coastal photography. Her Sirens portfolio of stormy seas has been critically acclaimed winning numerous awards and has been published globally.

Her work has been exhibited internationally and her limited edition prints appear in private collections in the UK and USA. She was described as one of 'the best outdoor photographers working in the UK today' by Outdoor Photography Magazine (June 2016) and she is a judge for the Outdoor Photographer of the Year contest.

11th May 2019 at Craig-y-Don Community Centre, Llandudno, LL30 1TE at 2pm

Price : RPS Members : £10 : Non-Members £14

Bookings : <http://rps.org/regions-and-chapters/regions/north-wales>

Enquiries : Rolf Kraehenbuehl Acting Regional Organiser **Email** : northwales@rps.org

Other photography events in North Wales:

North Wales Photographic Association (NWPA):

NWPA Annual Battle
Craig-y-Don Community Centre,
Llandudno
6th April, 14:00
http://nwpa.co.uk/Calendar_2019.htm

North Wales Photographic Association (NWPA):

Awards for Photographic Merit
Coleg Llandrillo,
Rhos on Sea
27th / 28th April, 10:00 – 16:45
http://nwpa.co.uk/Calendar_2019.htm

North Wales Photographic Association (NWPA):

NWPA Exhibition Selection
Craig-y-Don Community Centre,
Llandudno
4th May
http://nwpa.co.uk/Calendar_2019.htm

North Wales Photographic Association (NWPA):

NWPA PDI Challenge
Craig-y-Don Community Centre,
Llandudno
16th November, 14:00
http://nwpa.co.uk/Calendar_2019.htm

North Wales Monochrome Print Group:

Meetings
Capel Curig Community Centre,
12th May, 14th July, 8th September,
17th November, 14:00 – 16:30
<http://www.northwalesmonochrome.co.uk/>

RPS Education Department:

Landscape Workshop
Nant Ffrancon, Bethesda
1st – 2nd June, 10:00 – 17:00
<http://rps.org/events/2019/june/01/a-sense-of-place-010619>

Event in the RPS South Wales Region

A day with Antony Penrose, Curator of the Lee Miller Archives
Talbot Green Community Centre,
Pontyclun
21st July, 10:30 – 16:00
<http://rps.org/events/2019/july/21/a-day-with-antony-penrose-curator-of-the-lee-miller-archives>

Event in the RPS Central Region

Workshop: Plant and Garden Photography
Stockton Bury Gardens, Leominster
23rd August, 10:30 – 16:00
<http://rps.org/events/2019/august/23/plant-and-garden-photography-230819>

Events in the RPS North West Region

Travel Group Spring Board 2019
The Lowry, Salford Quays
Manchester
13th April, 09:45 – 16:00
<http://rps.org/events/2019/april/13/travel-group-springboard-2019>

Workshop: Liverpool Architecture
Photography
Liverpool
22nd June, 10:00 – 16:30
<http://rps.org/events/2019/june/22/liverpool-architecture-photography-workshop-220619>

Workshop: Exhibition Quality Digital
Printing
Liverpool
16th November, 10:00 – 16:30
<http://rps.org/events/2019/november/16/exhibition-quality-digital-printing-161119>



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Meet the Region Committee



Richard Glynne Jones ARPS AIPF AWPf, Region Secretary

Photographing Butterflies in North Wales – An Annual Obsession



Many cultures relate butterflies to the human soul. In ancient Greece, thanks to Aristotle, the word for butterfly is "psyche" which means "soul". Certain Roman coins used the butterfly as the symbol of the soul. The Aztecs associated the morning star with the butterfly, which represents the soul of the dead. A form of the Russian language refers to butterflies as "dushichka" which is derived from "dusha", which means "soul". In Andalusian Spain an heir must throw unmixed wine over the ashes of the

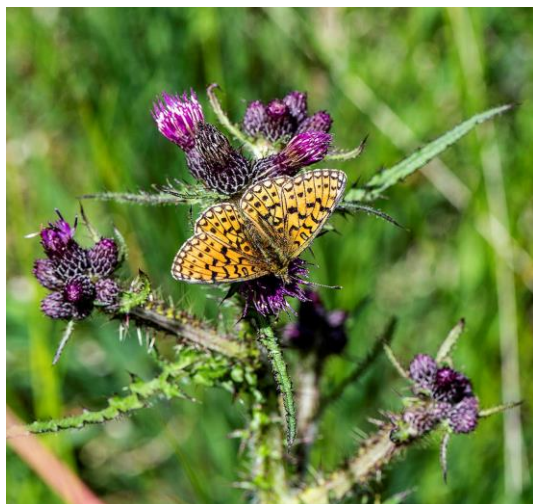
deceased as a toast to the butterfly that will escape with the soul. The most famous classical myth associated with butterflies is of course that of Psyche and Eros. The romantic and cultural links between butterflies and the human soul appear to have been with us for centuries. These links appear in diverse cultures and are world-wide. People view and have viewed butterflies as important. However, the plight of butterflies in the UK is a cause of great concern.



Butterflies are highly sensitive indicators of the health of our environment playing crucial roles in the food chain as well as being pollinators of plants. Butterflies and moths have been recognised by the Government as indicators of biodiversity. Their fragility makes them quick to react to change so their struggle to survive is a serious warning about our environment. Habitats have been destroyed on a massive scale, and now patterns of climate and weather are shifting unpredictably in response to pollution of the atmosphere. But the disappearance of these beautiful creatures is more serious than just a loss of colour in the countryside.

The UK has 59 species of butterflies and two regular migrants. Five species of butterfly have become extinct in the last 150 years. The State of the UK's Butterflies Report 2015 found that 76% of the UK's resident butterflies declined in abundance, occurrence or both, over the last four decades.

The Big Butterfly Count is a nationwide survey aimed at helping us assess the health of our environment. It was launched in 2010, and it has rapidly become the biggest survey of butterflies in the world. Over 60,000 people took part in 2017, submitting 62,500 counts of butterflies, and day-flying moths from across the UK. The survey is run by the charity Butterfly Conservation, with more information available on the website <https://www.bigbutterflycount.org/about>.



This important project has just recommenced in late July 2018 for a three-week period. The survey will help to assess the current plight of our butterflies, and hopefully contribute to establishing what needs to be done to preserve this precious part of our natural environment.

As Sir David Attenborough, the president of the charity Butterfly Conservation, recently said: "Spending time with nature offers us all precious breathing space away from the stresses and strains of modern life, it enables us to experience joy and wonder, to slow down and to appreciate the wildlife that lives side by side with us."



With this in mind, and for the last four years during the period April to September, I have packed away my wide-angle lenses. I have reverted to my macro lens travelling the North Wales landscape capturing these tiny encapsulations of pure beauty. To photograph butterflies you need to understand their individual life cycles, their personal habitats, and how they fly and when. The complexities multiply when you also add the larval feed and nectaring plants. I consider that to successfully photograph butterflies, you must try to understand the science. Of course, this becomes an interesting challenge for someone who is not a scientist. Thus, each butterfly season you learn more, and hope that you become more successful in not only taking photographs but also more knowledgeable about UK lepidoptera.

In North Wales, I understand that there are 37 butterfly species. Since I commenced seriously to photograph butterflies, I have realised that butterflies do not come to you. They are not like the bird population with farming practices and climate ensuring that locating many of the 37 species is a challenge. Careful research and planning are necessary involving peak flight periods, weather conditions and travel arrangements.

If you walk in a country lane, or a woodland tract, you may meet certain species of butterfly, for example the Comma (*Polygonia c-album* – Adain garpiog) or Orange tip (*Anthocaris cardamines* – Boneddiges y wig). However, in the case of several species, it is necessary to travel to a specific and special habitat. When on location, patience rewards. You also need at this point to introduce the specific knowledge relating to a species. For example, the Marsh Fritillary (*Eurodryas aurinia* – Britheg y gors) is increasingly rare. This butterfly looks like a miniature stained glass window. At a site near Dolgellau, I waited 3 hours to capture the image at the bottom right of this page. Over the years, you needed to consult site records, the conditions that enabled the butterfly to fly. Fritillaries tend to like warm conditions, and this particular fritillary suffers fluctuations in populations.

Certain butterflies suffer due to predation by parasitic hymenoptera. It is understood that the Painted Lady migrates annually from Morocco to reduce such depredations. Populations of Holly Blue fluctuate in cycles on account of wasp numbers. The Silver-studded blue enjoys a symbiotic relationship with ants with the hatched caterpillars spending pre-pupation in the nest of the ants. A photographic highlight is the emergence of the butterfly on the Great Orme as an important and locally abundant subspecies *Plebejus argus* ssp. *caernensis*, which is only to be found on the Great Orme. From the photographic perspective, locating the butterfly is hardly a challenge as they can exist in beautiful blue clouds. The problem can lie with their small size. During adverse weather, and at night, they suspend themselves obligingly and in large numbers from grass stalks.



At this point, I should introduce a technical note. I use a digital SLR with a large sensor enabling me to capture great detail. As mentioned, I revert to a 105mm macro lens, and often use flash to freeze movement. I tend to prefer a small aperture to ensure that the habitat is represented. Sometimes I like to blur the background with the butterfly, and its perch sharply in focus. I always seek to include a nectar plant, or if lucky a complementary background. More often than not I use a monopod and macro rig with flash to facilitate my mobility on what is often a challenging environment. I print my own butterfly images, and have completely reverted to a square format paper. The butterfly is the sole subject, and can be centrally placed framed by the subsidiary perch plant or other background. It is important to get the image as sharp a possible.

With large sensor SLR it is important to avoid over-sharpening, which is often enhanced by the cellular construction of each individual butterfly. These creatures can be small, for example, a Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi* – *Brithribin gwrydd*) can be as small as the nail on your little finger. Capture is often a real challenge, and patiently you need to rely on a perch or nectar plant. In the case of the Green Hairstreak, they exist in small colonies. The males challenge each other in spiralling aerial dog fight. Fatigued they eventually perch atop a bush or small tree for up to 10 seconds. You wait for this moment, and realise that they always perch with their wings closed. This is fortunate as the green cells of the wings are revealed in their glory. My next challenge is to be understanding photo-stacking, and the best software that will assist me in this process.



The study and photographing of butterflies has taken me to diverse habitats and landscapes in North Wales. My photographic strengths lie elsewhere. The challenges presented by butterflies exposes weaknesses in my photographic knowledge. This insecurity is a creative force which returns annually as I seek the best possible image of each butterfly. I have realised that this is a lifelong project.

Further information and reading:

Database: North Wales Lepidoptera www.trawsgoed.com

Butterfly Conservation Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP North Wales has a branch.

Identification of the Butterflies of North Wales and Northern England. Published by Saith Ffynnon Wildlife Plants and Butterfly Conservation North Wales Branch. www.7wells.co.uk

Collins Butterfly Guide: The Most Complete Field Guide to the Butterflies of Britain and Europe. Britain's Butterflies: A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Britain and Ireland, Fully Revised and Updated Third Edition (WILDGuides)

Butterflies of Britain & Ireland. By Jeremy Thomas and illustrations by Richard Lewington

Records of butterfly numbers and locations, supported by images, are vital. Whilst we all recognise the intrinsic and incredible beauty of butterflies, we also all need to understand the current threat to their existence. Their annual life cycle, involving continual rebirth has important spiritual connotations, and without our butterflies their would be a significant void in the landscape and environment of North Wales.

Text and Images: Richard Glynne Jones



Featured Article

Mud, glorious mud - by Paul Kay FRPS



Since I graduated with an Honours Degree in Photographic Science I sort of got waylaid and ended up as a specialist temperate underwater photographer with an expertise in marine fish - not intended but life has its twists and turns. My Fellowship was the first digitally printed (in Mochdre) panel presented in the nature category and was of underwater subjects. Although I am probably regarded as a specialist I do actually shoot topsides extensively too and in a variety of genres. Anyway to introduce myself to regional members I decided to present a series of images on underwater mud!

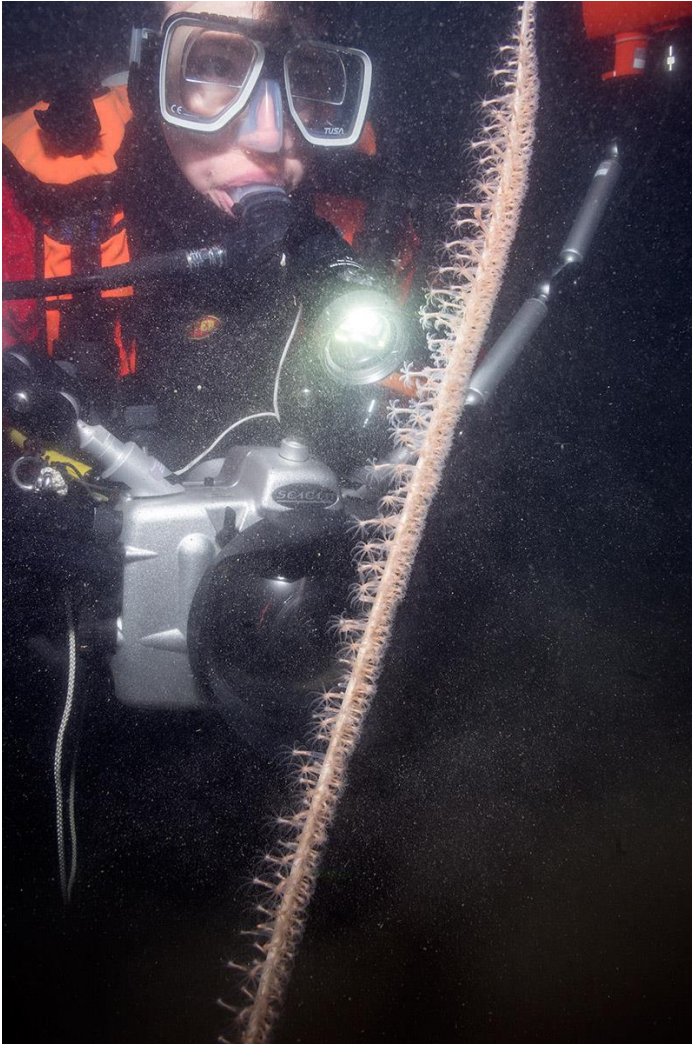


Okay perhaps it isn't the most photogenic of subjects in itself, but mud is actually quite fascinating. If you think that mud is a tricky thing to photograph and to come up with something interesting then you need to do as I do and visit it underwater. Whilst it is still not without its challenges such as poor visibility, low light levels and the wearing of cumbersome equipment, as compensation it is actually full of the most extraordinary creatures. And mud is not just mud underwater, because it varies. Depending on its specific characteristics - the fineness of the sediments of which it is composed, its ability to be dug into, whether it is soft or hard and numerous others - the animals that live in it vary too. So it is a rich hunting ground for the underwater natural history photographer. Some species found in mud are sessile - that is to say they cannot move - but others can. Whatever you find, one problem remains the same, the difficulty of trying not to disturb it as all types of mud seem to be able to produce clouds of fine, stirred up sediment which quickly reduces the often already poor underwater visibility to almost nothing, and which then make photography near impossible.



Surprisingly, one of the UK's largest and most impressive anemones, the Fireworks Anemone lives in mud. Scottish Sea Loch mud in fact is its preferred habitat. It is a beautiful animal up to 30cm or so tall and has a huge spray of long, sometimes striped, tentacles surrounding shorter, central and often colourful ones around its mouth. These anemones are not particularly common and have suffered from habitat loss due to the use of mobile fishing gear on their habitats so are now a rather special sight to see. As you glide through the gloom they appear as rather magical, majestic objects in an alien and exceedingly drab habitat.





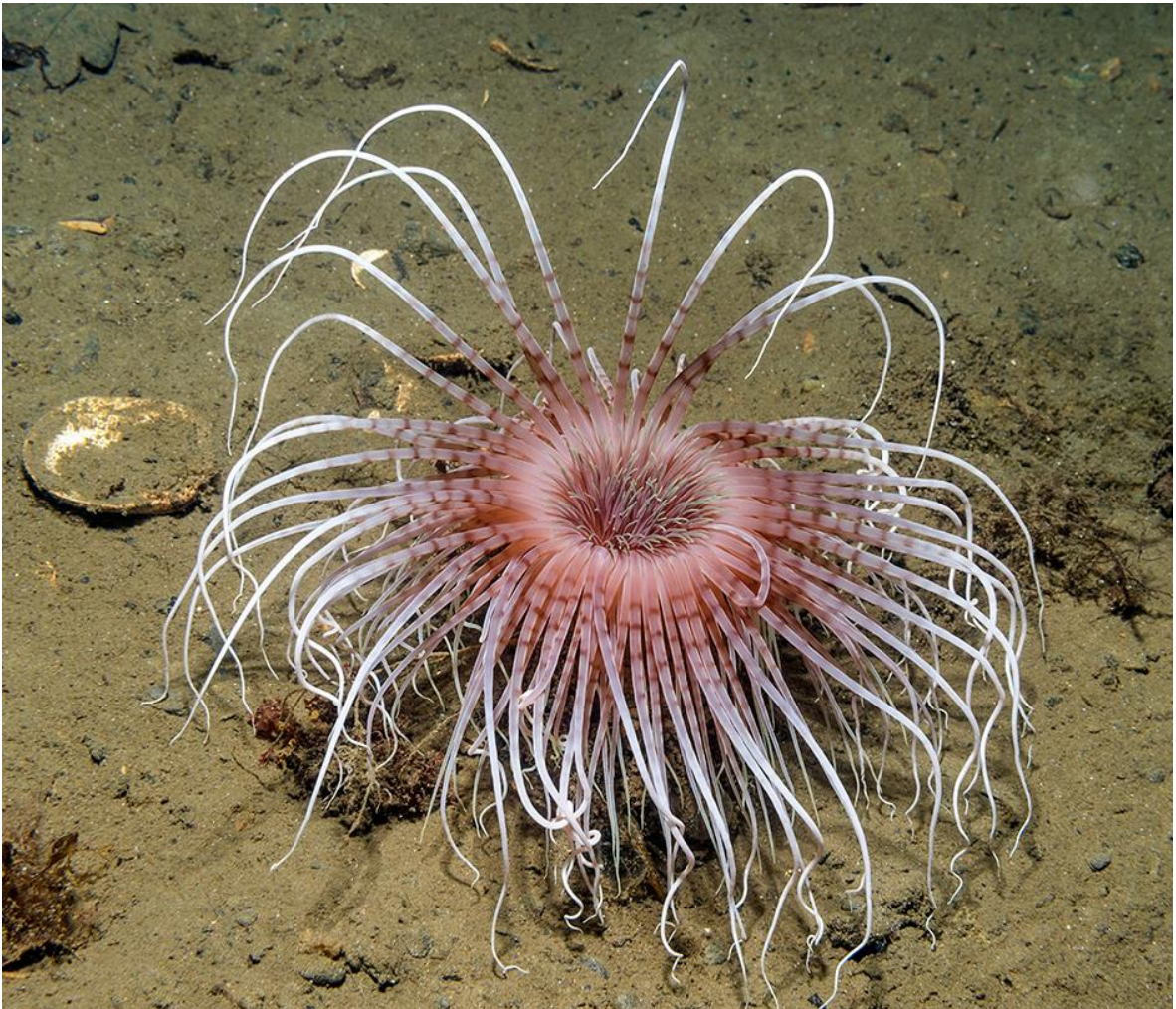
Some mud is stable, by which I mean it is solid enough to burrow into. And in this mud the poor old scampi lives. Poor because it is so tasty and so is remorselessly harvested often using towed gear which messes up the seabed. When seen in their own environment, scampi are inquisitive but wary animals which will often emerge cautiously from their burrows to see what the noisy, air belching visitor is all about. Sometime Mud Runner Crabs live in burrows in the mud too. These crabs are unmistakable with their incredibly long eye stalks and distinctive body shape. They can be seen off the South Llyn although they do not appear to be common here. An unfamiliar to most starfish can sometimes be seen on mud too. The rather flat and spread out Goose Foot Starfish allows mud to settle onto it and obscure its orange/red and white body, hence it is often very difficult to spot.



Why this animal occasionally extends an arm upwards remains a mystery, perhaps 'feeling' for the water current?

Another mud specialist usually found in Scottish Sea lochs are Sea Pens. Three species live in UK waters and one of these can actually be found in Holyhead Harbour, which is a man made version of a Scottish sea loch. The longest of the sea pens is the Tall Sea Pen which can exceed a meter in height. A close view reveals the intricate detail of these animals which seems somewhat incongruous with their bland surroundings.

Which all goes to prove that you can find the most extraordinary subject matter in the least likely places I suppose.



Our Region

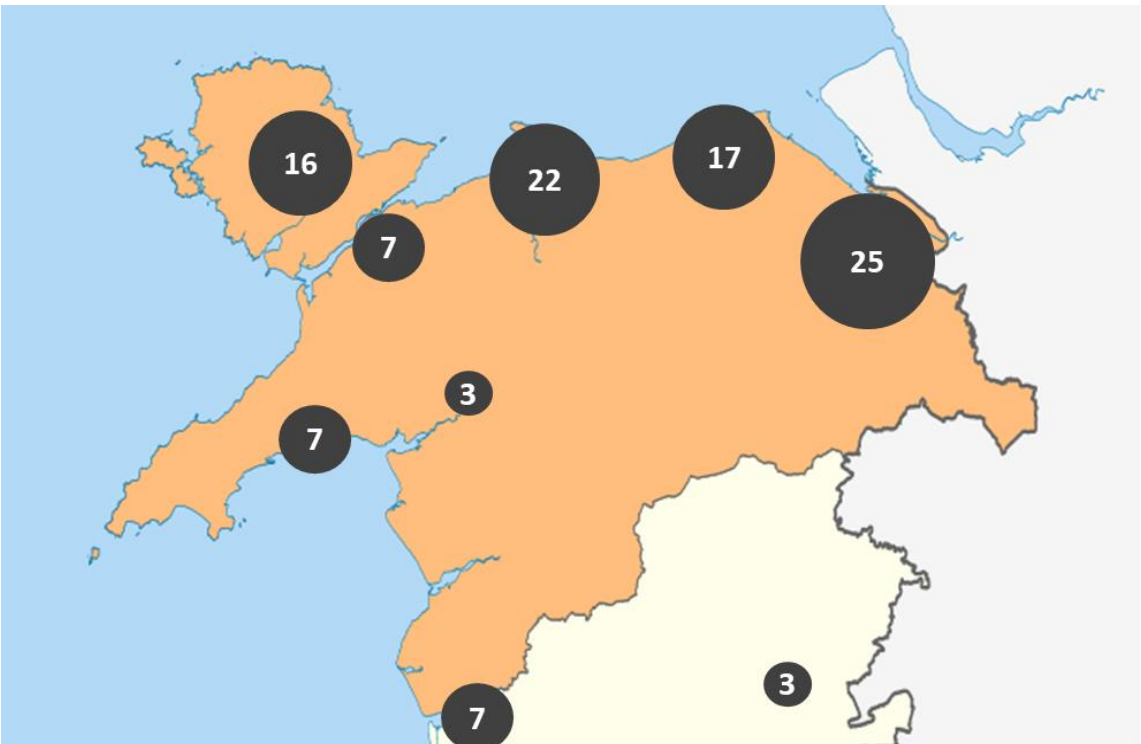
The North Wales Region of the RPS faces a major challenge. With just over 100 members we are the smallest UK region. It is worth noting that the total UK membership of the RPS approximates 10'000 (as of October 2018). Our regional members are dispersed over a wide geographical area which extends from the tip of the Llyn Peninsula in the West to Wrexham in the East, and from Holyhead in the North to Aberystwyth in the South. There is no obvious centre with any cluster of members.

Whilst approximately eighty percent of our members live either along or close to the A55 corridor, no matter where on this route an RPS event is held, many participants would need to travel a fair distance. For an event held in Craig-y-Don / Llandudno, delegates living within the proximity of the A55 experience journey times of up to an hour by car to reach the venue. Staging an event in either Holyhead in the North or Wrexham in the East, could result in a journey time of up to two hours.

The situation is even worse for members living on the Llyn Peninsula, and even more

so for our members living in Southern Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Mid-Wales.

This situation makes it not only difficult for members to attend events, but also has financial implications for the region. Venue hire, speaker fees, travel costs and accommodation for the speakers quickly add up. Even smaller events would require around fifty attendees to ensure that the event would break even financially. For larger events with key-note speakers, the audience would need to comprise at least one hundred people to avert a financial loss for the region. Holding lectures and workshops in rural and peripheral regions, for example in Abersoch, Amlwch or Blaenau Ffestiniog, would almost certainly compromise us financially. Although there might be a possibility of applying to RPS Headquarters to subsidise an event (the application has to be made and approved of prior to the event), it would still cast a shadow on the region if a high-profile speaker finds herself or himself standing in front of an audience of only twelve people.



Membership distribution in the RPS North Wales Region (as of October 2018)

When hosting a nationwide known speaker (they don't come cheap!) we would need to consider holding the event closer to the Welsh-English border. This allows us to market the event to two of our three neighbouring regions, the Central and the North West Region, in order to increase the number of attendees. The Glyndwr University in Wrexham certainly provides suitable venues with adequate infrastructure and accessibility for mobility impaired participants.

The North Wales Regional Committee has considered all these concerns and limiting factors. Also, we do listen to our members, and take their opinions on board. At our last AGM, a suggestion was made from one of our members, that it would be good to choose one venue as a 'home' for the region. The member considered the Community Centre in Craig-y-Don an excellent candidate.

Indeed, this venue seems to provide a good compromise for our membership. The A55 does offer a good transport corridor, and there is also reasonable public transport. In addition, Llandudno is well located in North Wales to take advantage from the trunk road network connecting to Gwynedd and Mid Wales. The Craig-y-Don Community Centre offers very good facilities which include good capacity theater-style seating, small meeting rooms if required, a projection screen, and a public address system. Importantly, there is excellent access for those members with impaired mobility.

Based on all these considerations, the Committee is of the opinion that the best two venues for holding our principal lectures and talks in the future are the Craig-y-Don Community Centre (preferred option), and for specific occasions the Glyndwr University in Wrexham. – *Rolf Kraehenbuehl*



© Rolf Kraehenbuehl

Exhibitions, near and far

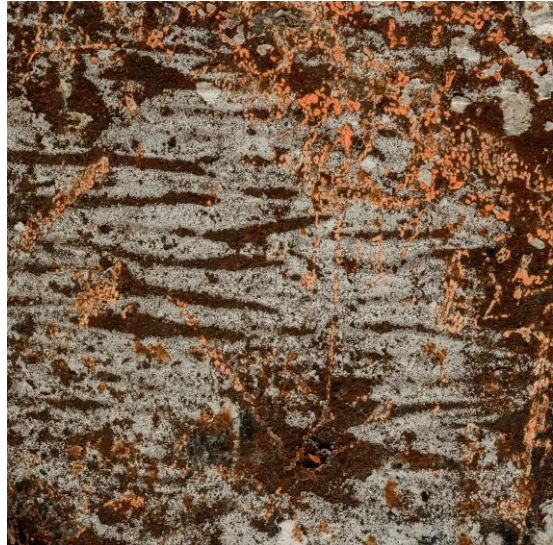
Martin Parr: Return to Manchester

Manchester: Manchester Art Gallery

Until 22nd April 2019

This exhibition showcases Martin Parr's work in and around Manchester over the course of almost fifty years. A large section of the exhibition presents Parr's probably lesser known early documentary work in black and white from the 70s and 80s. The other part is dedicated to his colour photographs of the people of Greater Manchester, from 1986 up to now.

<http://manchesterartgallery.org/exhibitions-and-events/exhibition/martin-parr/>



Diane Arbus in the Beginning

London: Hayward Gallery / Southbank Centre

13th February – 6th May

This exhibition focuses on the early portrait work of Diane Arbus. Over a hundred photographs are on display, many of which are from the Diane Arbus Archive and have never before been shown in Europe.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/exhibitions/hayward-gallery-art/diane-arbus-beginning#>



Martin Parr: Only Human

London: National Portrait Gallery

7th March – 27th May

This exhibition brings together some of Parr's best known photographs with a number of works never exhibited before. The displays includes portraits of people from around the world, with a special focus on Parr's wry observations of Britishness, explored through a series of projects that investigate British identity today.

<https://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/exhibitions/2019/only-human-photographs-by-martin-parr/>



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Exhibitions, near and far

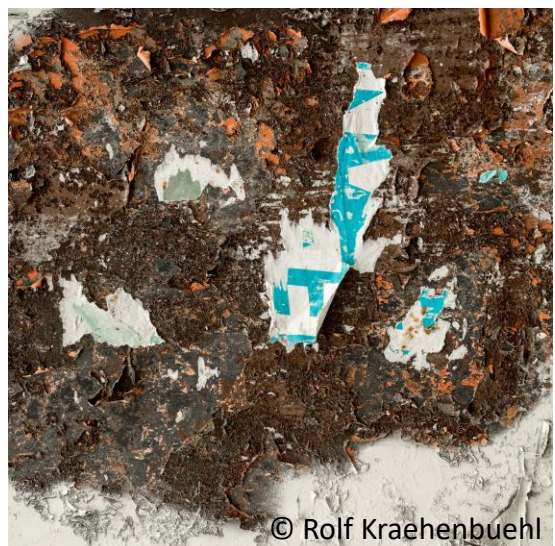
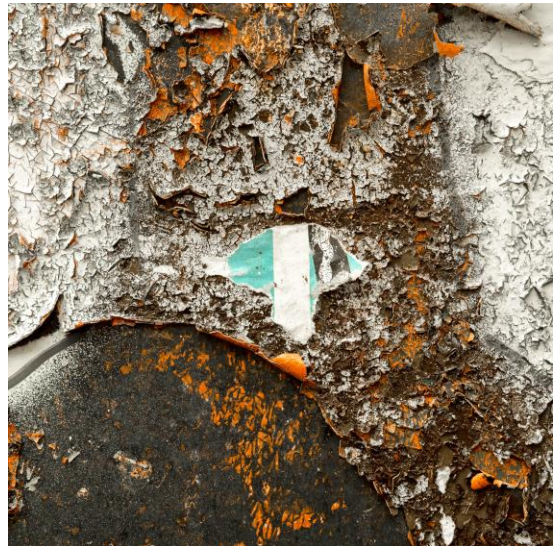
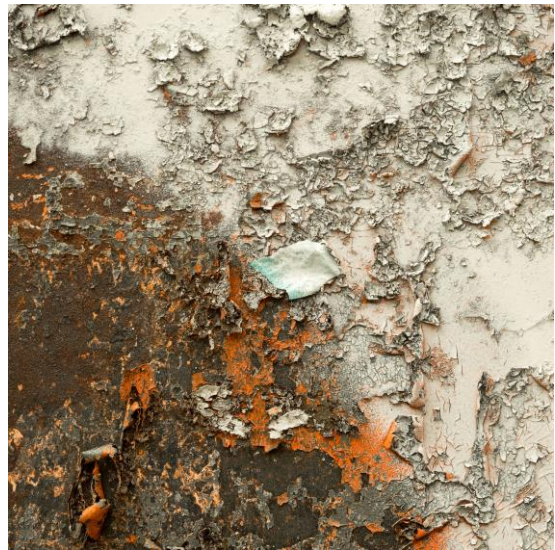
Akram Zaatari: *The Script*

Oxford: [Modern Art Oxford](#)

23rd March – 12th May

Zaatari's new work, *The Script* (2018), focuses on his interest in people's attitudes while filming or photographing themselves. Zaatari identifies recurring attitudes, fashions and forms of behaviour in front of the camera and how individuals choose to associate themselves with a social class, technology, modern values, or sometimes-dominant ideologies. The exhibition at Modern Art Oxford will include further film and photographic works by Zaatari alongside this new commission.

<https://www.modernartoxford.org.uk/event/the-script/>



© Rolf Kraehenbuehl

Don McCullin

London: [Tate Britain](#)

5th February – 6th May

Tate Britain presents a comprehensive retrospective of the legendary British photographer Don McCullin. This exhibition showcases some of the most impactful photographs captured over the last 60 years. It includes many of his iconic war photographs – including images from Vietnam, Northern Ireland and more recently Syria. But it also focuses on the work he did at home in England, recording scenes of poverty and working class life in London's East End and the industrial north, as well as meditative landscapes of his beloved Somerset, where he lives. With over 250 photographs, all printed by McCullin himself in his own darkroom, this exhibition will be a unique opportunity to appreciate the scope and achievements of his entire career.

<https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/don-mccullin>

Exhibitions, near and far

Markéta Luskačová

London: [Tate Britain](#)

Until 14th April 2019

This exhibition displays the black and white documentary work by Czech-born and London resident Markéta Luskačová. The photographs shown have been taken over a period of almost thirty years, and are part of several different projects, including portraying the remote Sumiac community in the Low Tatra mountains, documenting British life by the sea side in North East England or on the streets and markets in Spitalfield.



Rotimi Fane-Kayode

London: [Tate Modern](#)

Part of the *Intimacy, Activism and AIDS display*.

A display of strong, aesthetic and captivating photographs from the series *Abiku (Born to Die, 1988)* by the founding chair of the Association of Black Photographers (now known as Autograph ABP).



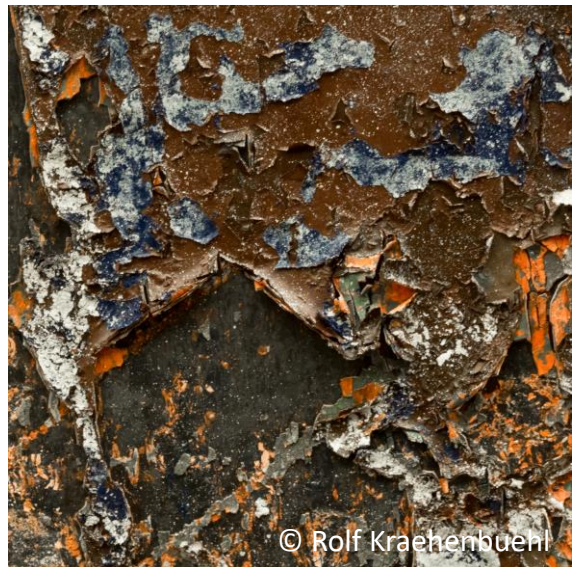
Don McCullin: Proximity

London: [Hamiltons Gallery](#)

30th January – 27th April

On display are a selection of rare vintage silver gelatine prints from 1957 – 1982. While war photographs feature strongly, the collection also shows photographs documenting British life in London.

<https://www.hamiltonsgallery.com/exhibitions/124/overview/>



Exhibition Reviews

Martin Parr - Return to Manchester

Magnum Photographer Martin Parr is probably most known through his extensive documentary work portraying the British, their uniqueness, their habits and their idiosyncracies, photographed at close range, sometimes even with flash, and in strong and vivid colours. However, Martin Parr, who studied photography in Manchester, set out with black and white film. The exhibition shows examples of his early documentary photographs in and around Manchester, starting from 1970, when he was a student, and reaching into the early 80s. Parr photographed ordinary people going about their every-day lives, be it at work or in their spare time in pubs, on the street and generally in places where people could meet. Of special interest is his, in my opinion outstanding, work about the residents of Prestwich Mental Hospital, a three-months project carried out in 1972. It beautifully

portrays the personalities of the people living there in an affectionate and warm-hearted way.

Another part of the exhibition is dedicated to a project he has done with fellow photographer Daniel Medows. The two photographed the residents of the terraced houses in June Street, a street and its houses which were soon to be demolished. The couples and families posed in the front rooms of their houses, seated on sofas, surrounded by their fireplaces, TVs, ornaments and pictures on the walls. The square format prints are a testimony to family life in Salford in the early 70s. Moving on to the 80s, Parr did a project on Yate's Wine Lodges, documenting every branch of this oldest pub chain in the UK. The exhibition shows unposed photographs taken in Yate's branches in and around Manchester and in Liverpool.



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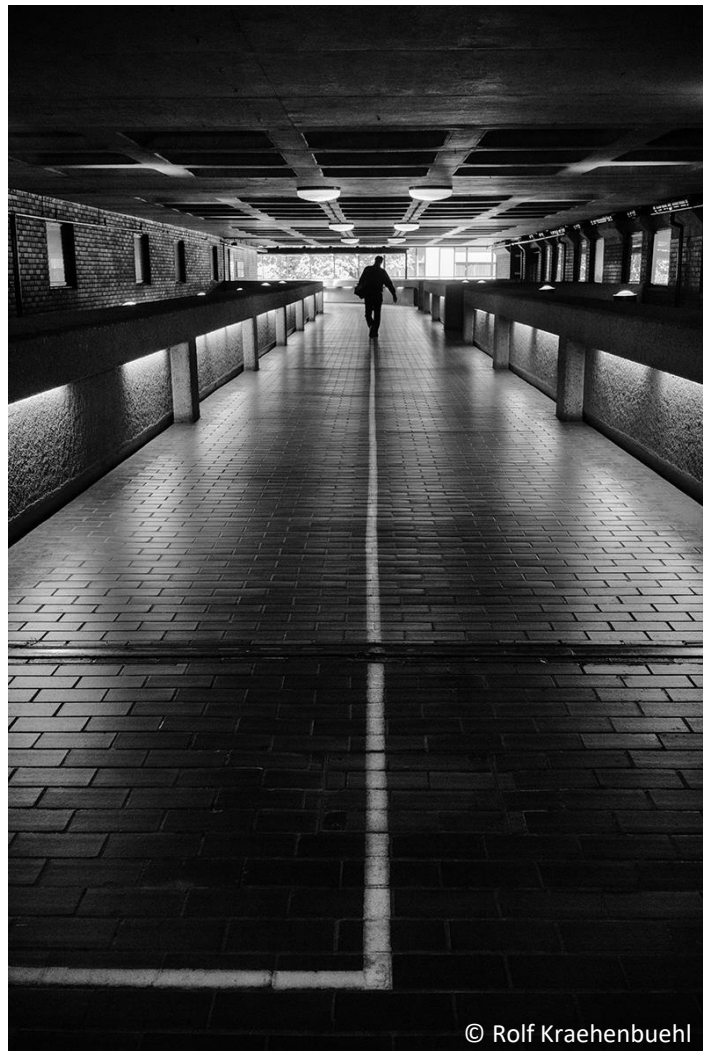
In 1986, now working in colour, Parr created a series commissioned by the Documentary Photography Archive about shopping habits in Salford, and how they changed over time. His pictures contrast the traditional, smaller shops, where the shopkeepers and customers knew each other, with the more anonymous supermarkets.

Fast-forward to 2008, and Martin Parr, who has left Manchester years ago, was commissioned by the Guardian to produce photo-essays on ten British Cities, returned to Manchester, to meet and photograph people on the streets in various locations in and around the city.

Ten years later, he was commissioned by the Manchester Art Gallery to capture Manchester and its inhabitants. The pictures, taken at work places, in cafes, in markets, in a mosque and on residential

streets, are displayed in various sizes, from a collection of ca. 250 smaller prints displayed close together, to large prints placed prominently on the walls. In my opinion, a major change in his photographic approach can be seen: although some images still show the unmistakable hallmarks of his earlier style with multilayered images with a strong and prominent foreground and differential focus, most images are now more encompassing environmental portraits, with more depth of field in the image, and often taken from a head-on, frontal view point.

The exhibition offers a fascinating journey through Martin Parr's documentary photographic work over almost 50 years, exemplified through pictures taken in the City of Manchester and in the Greater Manchester area. – *Rolf Kraehenbuehl*



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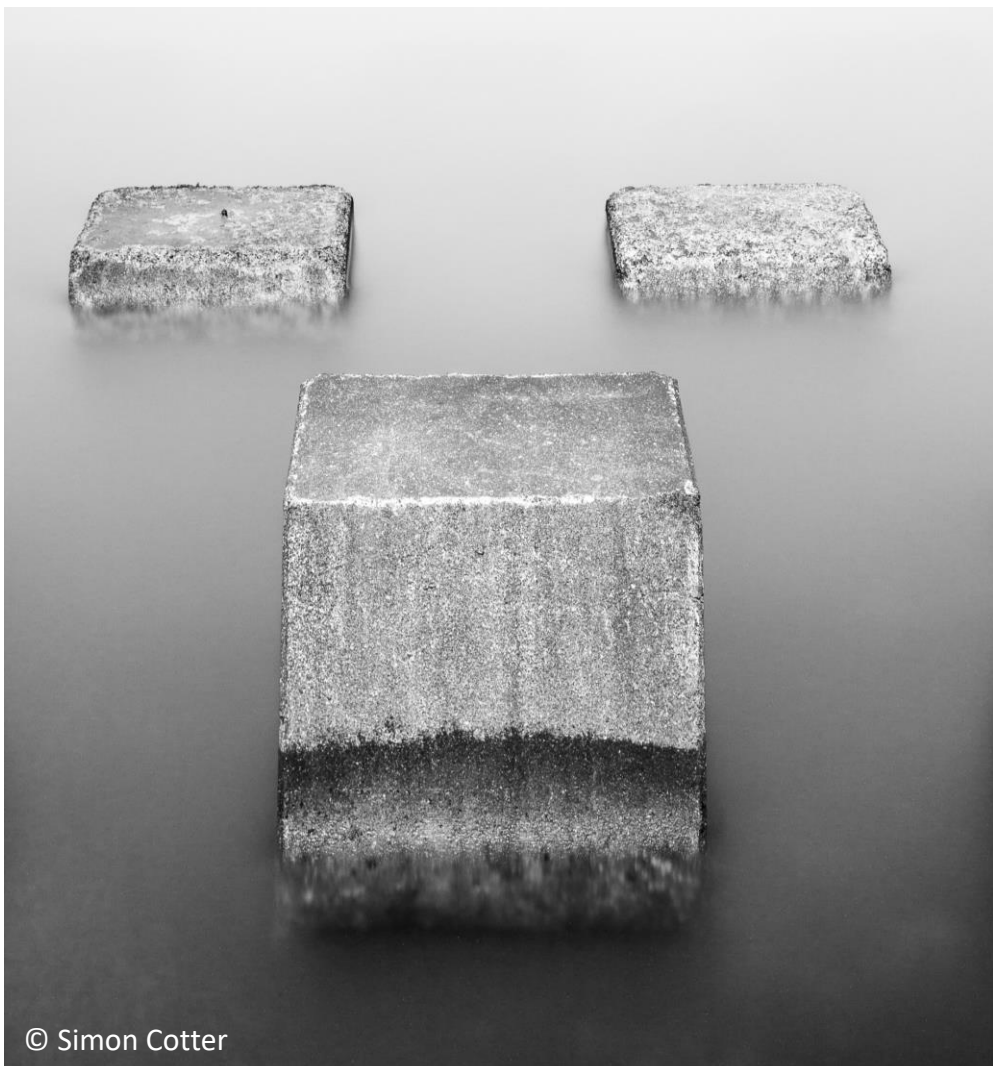
Markéta Luskačová

This exhibition shows Czech-born Luskačová's black and white work taken over a period of almost thirty years. She gained international recognition with her project "Pilgrims", carried out from 1964 to 1971. Overlapping with this series, she worked on a study of the remote Sumiac community in the Low Tatra mountains (1967-1974, "Sumiac, The Mountain Village"). The farmers in these isolated villages lived their lives as their forefathers did, quite untouched by the communist government and the enforced changes in agriculture including collectivisation. These pictures are captivating environmental portraits of individuals with strong beliefs

in a traditional way of life and a sense of community.

In 1975 Luskačová came to live in England. In the late 70s she documented British Life by the Seaside in the North East of England. Her pictures are infused with empathy for the subjects and a sense of humour - many of these images made me smile. Over almost twenty years, from 1974-1990 she photographed in the streets and markets in Spitalfield in London, not only photographing the people who sold goods there, but also documenting change with people and buildings being pushed away by corporate developers, a sad testimony of an era gone by.

- Rolf Kraehenbuehl



© Simon Cotter

Don McCullin

The exhibition starts off with McCullin's early work, with images he took where he grew up in North London.

In 1961 he travelled to Berlin on his own accord without assignment (and payment) by a newspaper to document the construction of the wall and every-day life under occupation. This project gained him a permanent contract with the newspaper 'Observer', which subsequently sent him to Cyprus in 1964 to photograph the civil war. This was his first assignment in a conflict zone, and the resulting pictures document war and death.

Many more assignments in countries torn apart by war followed. McCullin worked in the Republic of Congo after the assassination of the Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. Journalists were banned, so McCullin disguised as a combatant. In Biafra he documented the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Nigerian Civil War, and fortunately his and other photographers' pictures raised public awareness for the conflict. During the battle of Hue in Vietnam, he took some of his most known pictures, amongst others the photo of a shell shocked marine. Again, his pictures drew attention to the war and inspired the anti-war movement. In the Cambodian civil war, he was wounded by a mortar shell; the soldier in front of him took most of the hit and died shortly after.

McCullin also photographed in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, in the Bangladesh War of Independence, in the Libanese Civil War and in Iraq, where he documented the Kurdish Exodus after the Gulf War.

Back at home in London, he documented another 'war': poverty in Britain, impoverished communities, and people at the edge of society.

Don McCullin said "There are social wars that are worthwhile. I don't want to encourage people to think photography is only necessary through the tragedy of war." From the late 60s to early 80s, he photographed homeless people in Aldgate and Whitechapel. He believed that these people were forced to live on the streets because of the closure of unprofitable psychiatric institutions. McCullin always felt a strong empathy with his subjects.

The exhibition prompts the viewer to ask and reflect on questions about the necessity, the effectiveness and the ethics of photojournalism in wars and disaster areas. The photographers witness all the tragedies, but are unable to interfere, and can only hope that their pictures draw the attention of people around the world and effect change. On a related note: recently visiting an exhibition on documentary photography in the Dutch Photography Museum in Rotterdam, I learnt about the photojournalist Kevin Carter. While documenting the famine in Sudan in 1993, Carter took an image of a starving child who was being eyed by a vulture waiting on the ground only a few meters away from the child. Carter chased the vulture away, and it later transpired that the child had been taken care of by a UN food aid station. The picture sparked a debate about Kevin Carter's role as a photographer (and the role of photojournalists in general). Don McCullin says: "I feel guilty about the people I photograph. It's true, I do. Why should I be celebrated at the cost of other people's suffering and lives? I don't sit comfortably with laurels on my head." Working with Christian Aid, documenting the HIV pandemic in Africa in 2000, McCullin adds:

“I want to create a voice for the people in those pictures. I want the voice to seduce people into actually hanging on a bit longer when they look at them, so they go away not with an intimidating memory but with a conscious obligation.”

Photojournalists not only work under circumstances which may endanger their lives, but also carry all the memories of what they witness. Haunted by memories of pain and death, Kevin Carter committed suicide at the age of 33.

Don McCullin escapes the war memories by photographing still lives and landscapes, a selection of which is also on display in the exhibition. He says: “So, there is guilt in every direction: guilt because I don’t practice religion, guilt because I was able to walk away while this man was dying of

starvation or being murdered by another man with a gun. And that I am tired of guilt, tired of saying to myself: ‘I didn’t kill that man on that photograph, I didn’t starve that child.’ That’s why I want to photograph landscapes and flowers. I am sentencing myself to peace.”

Both his still lives and landscapes are imbued with a somber atmosphere, and he says about his landscapes: “I do tend to turn my landscapes into battlegrounds. They almost come out looking like the First World War image of the Somme and Flanders [...] I can’t explain why I must turn everything into a somber dark image.”

- *Rolf Kraehenbuehl*

Note: the quotations in this review have been taken from texts displayed in the exhibition.



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