

# Urban Encounters

## The Image of Public Space

Tate Britain, Auditorium  
Saturday 6 October 2012, 10.00-18.00

How does urban photography engage with and shape our understanding of public space? Join photographers, artists, architects and academics for a one-day symposium exploring how the theories and practices of urban space inform and shape our relationship to image-making. Contributors will engage with the idea of the public realm through a range of photographic practices and visual methodologies, the poetics and politics of architectural space, and contested sites of memory and memorialisation.

*This event is part of UrbanPhotoFest and is organised in partnership with the Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR), Goldsmiths, University of London; Birkbeck College; and Kingston University.*

- 10.30 Welcome and Introduction by **Nora Razian** and **Paul Halliday**
- 10.40 **Victor Burgin** Keynote  
This keynote discusses the changing nature of the camera in its encounter with the city under the circumstances of digital technologies.
- 11.20-12.50 I. *Rethinking the Public Realm*
- 11.20 **Paul Halliday** *Rethinking Street Photography*  
This paper reflects on how critical urbanism contributes towards an understanding of diverse street photography practices within an expanded notion of what constitutes the public arena for such spaces. It is concerned with how a political sociology of visual practice might be applied to an ideological set that are often portrayed as 'observational', 'detached' and 'natural'. Halliday's position towards British street photography has shifted over the last five years as he has observed a movement that has often replaced political engagement and comment with the drive to create a 'documentary credibility' for commercially based photographers. The paper argues that such practices have encouraged a systemic editing-out of critical voices, and produced a sub-genre within sub-set of urban photography that urgently needs to re-evaluate and rediscover both its roots and routes.
- 11.40 **Melanie Manchot** *Dancing in the Streets*  
Working with photography, film and video, Melanie Manchot explores portraiture as a performative and participatory practice. Her projects often propose constructed events or situations in public spaces exploring connections and tensions between our individual and collective identities. This paper focuses on recent projects to discuss ideas on how cameras, both still and moving, can become the organizing principle within a given situation or constructed scenario. Questions of choreography and control in relation to chance and the incidental will be discussed in the context of the continually changing parameters of public space and our engagement within that. Manchot's most recent work *Dance (All Night, Paris)*, 2012 will be screened as part of the presentation.

- 12.00 **Caroline Knowles** *Some Thoughts on the Public*  
This talk is a rumination on what 'the public' means in contemporary city life and the challenges this poses in understanding the complexities of cities today. Exploring conceptions of 'the urban' and urban 'surface' this talk will interrogate understandings of public and private space and the shifting boundaries between them. It will explore related notions of visibility and invisibility: the ways in which cities reveal and conceal urban life. It will draw on Caroline's research on the periurban edges of Beijing with photographer Zhang Lijie which considers the ways in which urban landscapes are shaped by different kinds of migration.
- 12.20 Panel discussion chaired by **Paul Goodwin**
- 12.50 Lunch Break  
Action **When Water Meets Air**, held outside the Clore entrance
- 13.50-15.30 II. *The Poetics and Politics of Architectural Space*
- 13.50 **Diego Ferrari** *Photography as Mapping*  
Architecture, urbanism and embodiment are addressed through a collaborative approach, using photography as a tool to investigate urban public space. The talk will ask how photography challenges the ambivalent line between public and private space, and in turn social codes of authority, consumption, and the public mechanism of daily life in the city. From these realms we construct our personal meaning of place, where the spatial ambiguity created between the personal and social is a fertile platform from which to examine the values embedded in public space. The rational and the emotional are turned inside out as we respond to spaces where public and private realms are forced together.
- 14.10 **Bridget Smith** *The Architecture of My Thinking*  
This paper discusses Bridget Smith's practice and its relationship to the poetics and politics of architectural space. She works within the documentary genre but she photographs places of fantasy and escapism. She is interested in the places where people go to seek refuge from the outside world: to escape boredom, to be diverted, transported, absorbed – places to lose oneself, where pretence and reality are often confused. Smith's photographs have documented the construction of fantasy and the architecture of entertainment. Her photographs and videos address our struggle to feel connected: within society, the landscape and the wider universe, pointing to the gap between one's imagination and reality and the interplay between the two. The work flits between objectivity and subjectivity, the real and the fake.
- 14.30 **Mark Pimlott** *Places and Pictures of Places*  
The Paper describes Mark Pimlott's photographs and public spaces; and the environment to which his work is addressed: one produced, in part, by the 200-year long American territorialisation of the continental interior, and reproduced worldwide in its contemporary counterpart, the 'continuous' interior. In the colonisation of apparently limitless frontiers that ensued, the other was annihilated and land decimated in order to serve self-realisation. The territory was transformed into an interior: a total environment figured with repeated arrangements and artefacts, signs and symbols that circumscribe the lives of its inhabitants. Spaces where people met, or were aware of themselves and others as a public, tended to be interiors subject to the projections of private interests, or interstitial spaces, such as the street, that somehow escaped them.
- 14.50 Panel discussion chaired by **Alison Rooke**
- 15.30 Tea Break

16.00-17.30 III. *Memory, Memorialization and Contested Spaces of Conflict*

16.00 **Karen Wells** *On Vernacular Memorialisation of Violent Death in the City*

This paper, on vernacular memorialisation of violent death in the city, argues that the possibility of a political response to violent death is opened up by practices of what Wells calls 'melancholic memorialisation' that are foreclosed by the eventual production of a highly stylised permanent image. The final version of the memorialising practices deployed to grieve these losses interrupt the circuits of witnessing and testimony that began with the rough designs that circulated in the first days after their deaths. However whilst, in one sense, these memorials have laid matters to rest, the very continuation of their inscription in public space means that the matter does not quite end there. These are not after all graveyards but the spaces of everyday life.

16.20 **Gil Pasternak** *Scabbed Pictures: On the Familial Birth of National Postmemories*

This paper focuses on the presentation of family photographs in Israeli news reports on politically-motivated violent attacks related to the Israel-Palestinian struggle. Having realised that an all too explicit coverage of attacks might damage the morale of the Israelis, in 1997, Israeli dailies virtually agreed to refrain from publishing photographs of corpses and expressions of panic. Instead, the Israeli printed media turned to family photographs as the only indisputable means to represent the dead. Studying primary visual sources and interviews with some of the leading picture editors and photographers in the mainstream Israeli printed media, Pasternak explores the impact such family photographs have upon the "Israeli" socio-political imagination, as well as on Israeli-Jewish history and national postmemory.

16.40 **Stephen J Morgan** *My Memory/Our Past*

As a child, family photographs were important to Stephen J Morgan. The family constantly looked at their albums and he realised early on that his memories related to the different collections of photographs they had pressed into them. Morgan's clearest memories corresponded with those albums. As a photographer he drew on those memories to help create his work. The time that they spent as a family involved with those photographs created an oral history that together became a memory, the memory being the product. For his work, the memory and oral history is the starting point and the photographs the product. He has come full circle. However, once the work exists it is no longer about his memories and that his past and ultimately his imagination is about a collective memory, a collective past.

17.00 Panel discussion chaired by **Darren Newbury**

17.30 Q&A chaired by **Paul Halliday**

## Programme

In order of appearance

**Nora Razian** is Curator of Adult Programmes at Tate.

**Victor Burgin** is Professor Emeritus of History of Consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz. His theory books include *Parallel Texts* (2011), *The Remembered Film* (2004), *In/Different Spaces* (1996), *The End of Art Theory* (1986) and *Thinking Photography* (1982). The most recent book on his visual work is *Components of a Practice* (2008); the next one, *Projective*, will be published by Black Dog next year.

**Paul Halliday** is a photographer, film-maker and urbanist who originally trained in photojournalism and fine art film. Paul's main focus is on urban and fine-art photography, film ethnography, materialities and narratives of city life. He is the course leader of the international MA in Photography and Urban Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London, convener of the International Urban Photography Summer School, alongside his other commitments within the field.

**Melanie Manchot's** work has been exhibited internationally with recent solo shows at The Whitechapel Gallery (2009 and 2010) London, Goff and Rosenthal, New York (2007) and Galerie m, Bochum, Germany (2011 and 2007). Manchot has participated in numerous biennales, most recently in the 52nd La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (2007), Thessaloniki Biennale and Istanbul Biennale (both 2009).

**Caroline Knowles** is Professor of Sociology and former director of the Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR) at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is known for her work with artists and photographers exploring the intersections between art and sociology, and is currently working on the biography of a pair of flip-flop sandals 'From Oil to Garbage' with artist Michael Tan. Her publications include *Hong Kong: Migrant Lives, Landscapes and Journeys* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

**Paul Goodwin** is a curator and urban theorist. From 2008 to 2012 he was a curator at Tate Britain. His current research and curatorial work engages questions of migration, globalisation, public sculpture, and the production of alternative urban architectures. He is Curatorial Director of the 3D Foundation Sculpture Park and Residency Programme in Verbier, Switzerland and Associate Director at SUUM Global Curatorial Office in London. He currently teaches on MA at Chelsea College of Art and Design.

**Diego Ferrari** is an artist and photographer. He studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths and received an MA in Art & Architecture at Kent University. His work explores individuals' subjective engagement within public space, urbanism, and architecture. He has received commissions from RSA Art for Architecture amongst other international residencies and exhibitions. He teaches at Metropolis (Barcelona), Kingston University and Central Saint Martins.

**Bridget Smith** is an artist who works with still and moving image. She studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths, University of London. Publications include, *Society* (Steidl/Mack and GPA, 2007), documenting London clubs and societies over a ten year period. Smith's photographs are in numerous collections including Arts Council England, Government Art Collection and the V&A. She is represented by Frith Street Gallery and is currently Senior Lecturer in Photography at Kingston University.

**Mark Pimlott** is an artist, architectural designer and writer. He makes places, interiors, installations and photographs. *World*, a public space in central London, was completed this year. He is the author of *Without and within: essays on territory and the interior* (2007); and *In passing: Mark Pimlott photographs* (2010). He is Assistant professor of Architectural Design/Interior at Delft Technical University, where he teaches and conducts research on the very large, extensive interior.

**Alison Rooke** is co-director of the Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths, University of London. Her teaching and research is concerned with the dynamics of participation and citizenship in the city. Rooke's work lies at the overlap of visual sociology and experimental methods. She works with a range of organisations and institutions developing critical and collaborative approaches to research and evaluation. Past projects include *Sci:identity*, *Skills Exchange* and *Extending Creative Practice*.

**Darren Newbury** is Professor of Photography at Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, Birmingham City University. His books include *Defiant Images: Photography and Apartheid South Africa* (University of South Africa Press, 2009) and *People Apart: 1950s Cape Town Revisited. Photographs by Bryan Heseltine* (Black Dog Publishing, 2012). He has been editor of the international journal *Visual Studies* since 2003.

**Karen Wells** is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography, Environment and Development Studies at Birkbeck College. She is the author of *Childhood in a Global Perspective* (Polity, 2009) and has published widely on visual representation of children and youth, particularly in relation to violence, and on the impacts of global structures and flows on children and young people.

**Dr Gil Pasternak** is Senior Lecturer in Photography and Photography Course Leader at the University of Huddersfield. His research focuses on the participation of professional, vernacular and fine art photography in the solidification and subversion of state and society relations. He co-published the book *Visual Conflicts: On the Formation of Political Memory in the History of Art and Visual Cultures* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011).

**Stephen J Morgan** (b.1970, Birmingham, UK) His first solo exhibition was at The Wapping Project (London). He has recently showed at Photon (Slovenia) and Wapping Project Bankside, with a new solo show there early 2013. He has worked on commissions with the Birmingham Central Library Archive. Recent publications include *Collecting Contemporary Photography* by Jocelyn Phillips (Thames & Hudson, 2012).

## The Photography & Photobook Now

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium  
Saturday 24 November 2012, 14.00 – 16.00  
£15, concessions available



Anouk Kruithof, *Enclosed Content Chatting Away In The Colour Invisibility*  
© Anouk Kruithof 2009

Recent shifts in photographic practices along with a growth in self-publishing platforms have seen the photobook increasingly explored as a site of experimentation, production and distribution for photographers. This panel brings together influential publishers and photographers who are pushing the boundaries of the photobook and its relationship to photographic practice. These are Aron Morel of Morel Books, Bruno Ceschel of Self Publish and Be Happy, and artist Anouk Kruithof. The panel is chaired by Simon Baker, Curator, Photography and International Art at Tate.

This event is related to the exhibition William Klein + Daido Moriyama.

**EVALUATION**



**EVENT: Urban Encounters: The Image of Public Space**  
**DATE: Saturday, 6 October 2012**

We look forward to your impressions and comments, which will help us improve our work.

<b>1 - Have you been to Tate Britain before?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
<b>2 - Have you attended an event/course at Tate Britain before?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
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<b>4 - How did you find out about this event/course?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Tate guide <input type="checkbox"/> Tate e-bulletin <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) <input type="checkbox"/> Tate website <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please tell us _____						
<b>5 - Information about this event, in the guide or on the website, was clear and adequate.</b>  <b>5a – If you disagreed, how do you feel this information could have been made clearer?</b>	Agree ←————→ Disagree <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>					

<b>6 - I had an enjoyable learning experience.</b>	Agree ←————→ Disagree <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>					
<b>7 - I felt engaged with the event.</b>	Agree ←————→ Disagree <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>					
<b>8 - The event was good value.</b>	Agree ←————→ Disagree <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>					
<b>9 - How would you rate the overall quality of the event?</b>	Excellent ←————→ Poor <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> </tr> </table>					

**10 – Based on your areas of interest, what events would you like to see at Tate Britain in the future?**

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**11 - Any other comments?**

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**Thank you for your time.**

Please enter your e-mail address if you would like Tate Britain and Tate Modern to contact you about future events or to take part in our monthly raffle.

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*Thank you,  
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