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creative camera

ROBERTO SALBITANI
FRANCOIS LE DIASCORN
MELISSA SHOOK



MELISSA SHOOK

Contents

Roberto Salbitani	4
François le Diascorn	12
Melissa Shook	20
Thirties'A Review by Colin Osman	26
Contributors	29
Books received	30
Gallery Guide	32

OPEN-EYE GALLERY

The Open Eye Gallery in Whitechapel, Liverpool publishes an interesting newsletter about their own gallery and also news of others. In the November issue there is a particularly interesting article on the photographs of Charles Frederick Inston, 1855-1917. One could only wish that there were more illustrations.

The Instone pictures were made from lantern slides, lent by the Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association. Peter Hagerty, in his editorial, laments the use of copy prints in the exhibition and continues to formulate a broad based attack on the use of copy prints. We must disagree. We accept that there are a few occasions when only the original print will do. The most obvious examples are of the early Pictorialists, where it is difficult to imagine the effects obtained by the original artists from copies. To exhibit these original prints requires extra security, extra insurance, and in many cases they can only be exhibited under low light conditions, which are as the originals would never have been shown. Indeed, many of these were exhibited in fancy frames and one has only to read early copies of *Photograms of the Year* to realise the importance given to frames and mounts. Today this is frequently neglected.

There is, however a place for sensitively reproduced facsimiles which can be widely shown and reach a far greater audience. While we accept there will be some loss of quality, it is nowhere near as great as the loss of not being able to see them at all.

Creative Camera tries with printing to get the best possible results, but obviously a number of pictures cannot be adequately reproduced by the printing process. Since the Daguerreotype was ousted, photography has been in the reproduction business through the negative/positive process. There has always been a dichotomy in the art galleries which yearn for the unique image in the photographic area, an area which deals in infinitely reproduced images. This dichotomy produces some of the real lunacies of photography. Felix Man is one of the most eminent photo-journalists of the 1930's. He is still active in photography, although not as involved as in the past. When he makes a print now, whether from a new negative or an old negative, it is made to archival standards. It represents his mature vision as well as its most enduring form and yet this is not what the dealers want. They want vintage prints and will pay far higher sums for those prints made in the 30's. Is this not lunacy?

If you look at other photo-journalists' vintage prints, many of the prints now being hawked around the galleries by dealers were recovered from some newspaper file, often improperly. Their tatty edges have been trimmed, their fixer stains removed, all evidence of haste to meet a deadline eliminated. Can it really be said that these vintage prints are superior to a contemporary considered print? Peter Hagerty will forgive me if I disagree with him, I hope, but only too often vintage pictures do not have the patina of age and they are not even finished works prepared by the photographers' hands. To compare copy prints to looking at reproductions of paintings in an exhibition is to falsify the issue, as painters do not work in the negative/positive process, as the photographic process suggests. There is of course a case to be made for original photographs in exhibitions, but only where the viewers will appreciate the difference between them and facsimiles; that is far less often than we like to think.

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creative camera

ANGUS McBEAN MARI MAHR DAVID BUCKLAND



ANGUS McBEAN. PAMELA STANLEY, ACTRESS 1948

THE
CAMBRIDGE
DARK
ROOM

67- Street
Cambridge
CB1 2LW

4 FEB 1980

Contents

Angus McBean	40
David Buckland	50
Mari Mahr	58
Contributors	64
Books received	67
Gallery Guide	69

FUTURE CHANGES

We are sorry to have to report that *Creative Camera Collection 6* has had to be postponed again. The reason being that some of the people to whom *Collection 5* and indeed all the Yearbooks were supplied at trade terms, have not yet paid. We have court actions in progress or pending in three other countries at present to try and recoup the money. It is all very depressing, but as a small firm we cannot afford to continue until the money is in the bank. We still propose to re-start as soon as we can but have in mind some changes which would give each Year Book a memorable identity. In the meantime the previous Year Books are still on sale and if you have not got them they are still extraordinarily good value.

As regards the monthly there are problems there also and it will, as soon as we can get it organised, appear as 6 double issues per year instead of 12 single issues. There will be the same number of pages, slightly more content but our distribution costs will be greatly reduced. We are also proposing to increase the amount of written matter and by taking advantage of the change, make it possible for any reader who wants to comment on one issue, to get his comment in the following issue. The long time schedule for the illustrations will remain but certain text pages will go to the printers later so that not only will there be more text but it will be more up to date than in the past. The double number of pages of illustrations will in turn mean we will be able to offer considerably more scope both in thematic issues and in retrospectives.

We are also expanding our highly successful book department under Terry Rossiter and will at long last have a real book shop with real shelves and a real counter, as well as continuing the mail order side. It will, at the moment, only be open during normal office hours until we find that there is enough business to justify late night or Saturday opening. Those who visit will, in due course, be able to view the books in comfort, indeed luxury compared to the past.

In recent years the books had continued to creep over our tiny gallery until the gallery gave up. Now it will revert to its proper use of showing small scale experimental work or the work of students. At the moment exhibitions are run monthly. At the time of writing the photo-sculptures of Mike Roles were on show and a gratifying number of people have come specially to see them. The gallery will however, still be do-it-yourself. Those who wish to have their work exhibited show us samples and are then allocated a date but it is then up to them to frame and hang the pictures. Perhaps in the more distant future the gallery may move into a more commercial area but as it is now it seems to perform a useful function in its own particular, limited area. I should emphasise that the gallery has remained in use for one of its more interesting functions, and that has been to display pictures so that the Editors can study them over a period of time to decide what they really think of them!

The timetable for these events is governed by some of our non-photographic business interests because the old Creative Camera office is being taken over by a photo-typesetting subsidiary of ours and will hum with the sound of micro-processors and digital photo-printers. It may well be that we shall be able to use this floppy-disc technique to produce, if not picture books, at least word books relevant to photography. We are moving perilously close to crystal ball land. For hard reality refer back to the delay in *Collection 6*.

Starting this month we have a new member of staff, Warren Foster, who will be sorting out the subscriptions. If yours is not right please have patience, we are starting from square one and working our way through, checking and cross-checking so that eventually all will run smoothly and the problems of past years will not recur. All subscription queries, whether acknowledged or not will be dealt with in the course of the next month or so. This is of particular importance since we are discontinuing news stand distribution in the U.S.A. and it will be direct subscription to our offices in the future, other than normal commercial agencies. In the U.K. and Europe we will be turning increasingly to subscriptions, although we will still continue to supply galleries who order specific quantities.

Finally, as regards payment from abroad we hope to make this easier in the future through Europost-Giro under one of its many names. We will also take advantage of our Government's change of policy by opening overseas bank accounts in U.S.A. and Eire.

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J. Ross Baughmann Jean McMann Cecil Beaton Kathleen Foster



Jean McMann

Carved stones inside passage grave, Locmariauzer, France

Contents

Jean McMann	76
Cecil Beaton	80
An Appraisal, by Colin Ford	84
Kathleen Foster	86
J. Ross Baughmann	92
Contributors	98
News	98
Books received	102
Gallery guide	104

BOOK BURNING

One of the most spectacular scenes after the Nazi Party was elected to power in pre-war Germany was the book burning. The burning was not by the Gestapo but in fact by the students of universities who burnt those books which they felt were undesirable. They were, not surprisingly, by Jewish or Communist authors, although plenty of others were consigned to the fire, including pornography. How far this was a spontaneous action on the part of the students and how far it was formulated and organised by Party leaders is still open to question. However so, it spectacularly marked the end of German intellectual liberalism.

Among those whose books would have been burnt was Thomas Mann, the author famous throughout the West, and in Germany itself respected as few ever are. When he returned to Germany after the War he said (as quoted in *The Times*)

"It may be superstitious on my part, but I consider books that were printed in Germany between 1933 and 1945 to be less than worthless and I don't like to have them in my hands. A smell of blood and shame clings to them. They should have been pulped."

Pulping is, of course, ecologically sounder than burning but there seems to be little difference in the attitude of a mind which would pulp or burn worthless books.

The alternative view is perhaps summed up by one of the greatest English authors, John Milton who, in *Areopagitica*, argued the case that in the world of books the triumph of right thinking, of right ideas, of truth, would inevitably lead to their victory over evil. He was opposed to censorship because he did not see it as necessary in the long term view. Perhaps we should add that he believed in God and saw the struggle as God's will being worked out.

Some years later another very great writer, this time, Voltaire, spoke also against censorship, saying that although he did not agree with certain views he would defend to the death his opponents' rights to say them. It is a point of view which might be viewed rather cynically in this age when for example the French State Television Services is one of the most controlled in the world. Voltaire was not really successful in convincing the French Government any more than Milton was in convincing the English one. The book burning movement in Nazi Germany, if not Government organised, was certainly Government backed and we wonder whether in Germany today there is not strong support for book burning or at least book pulping.

Robin Smythe of *The Times* has written at length on the current controversy now raging in the German colour supplement *Die Zeit*. The Literary Director of this magazine is Fritz Raddatz, a refugee from Communist East Germany who declared that there was no such thing as a non-political work of art, that to write even the smallest poem was a political act and that anyone who did not recognise it was simply a Philistine. Clearly books written between 1933 and 1945 he would have seen, like Thomas Mann, as less than worthless, although as far as I know he does not actually advocate pulping or burning them.

There are many even in Germany who will see in the totality of this claim, an authoritarian view reminiscent of fascism in all its myriad forms. One can recall the Russian Revolution when the cultural commissars were barely stopped from destroying all painting and sculpture produced in pre-revolutionary years. This is echoed by similar young German art revolutionaries only a few years ago who wanted to destroy all but contemporary art on the grounds that early art was politically contaminated.

It is not necessary to go into details of the arguments still raging in Germany. Was Beethoven's choral symphony diminished by being conducted by Furtwangler during the Nazi period? Is a Shostakovich string quartet diminished by being written under Stalinism and are there degrees of fascism so that a work of art produced during the Nixon regime or under the wartime Churchill were less worthy than those produced in less authoritarian times. The fatal flaw of the Thomas Mann arguments seems to be a totality of the claim, for he says they should *all* be pulped.

If great art has any meaning at all it is surely that great art can survive in any political climate and indeed, if one is to obtain an indication of greatness it is exactly this ability to survive under varying political climates.

Photography, by its very nature is the most difficult of art forms to characterise. Obviously what a photographer takes and what a picture editor uses in a photo-journalistic story is a specifically political act. Nowhere is this more dramatically illustrated as the sacking of Tom Hopkinson from *Picture Post* because he would not voluntarily withdraw pictures that were critical of American behaviour in Korea. Apart from such specific examples, to regard the simplest poem or indeed every snapshot as a political act seems to us an overstatement, except in the sense that people are conditioned by the political climate of the times. The nature of great art and great photographs, is to transcend these times.

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Simon Marsden Josef Sudek Susan Eve Jahoda Philippe Monnet



*Simon Marsden
Danganbrack Tower, Quin, Co Clare, S. Ireland*

Contents

Simon Marsden	112
Susan Eve Jahoda	120
Josef Sudek	126
Sudek by Charles Sawyer	133
Contributors	135
Gallery Guide	135
Philippe Monnet	138
Books Received	140

FUTURE PLANS

Our readers are probably as tired as we are about the problems we have to continue to survive and while we have cried wolf before, the wolf has always been not far from the door. Our present problems arise from a number of factors, one is the collapse in America of Yearbook and subscription sales, partly the result of the New York dock strike of two years ago. Secondly is the fact that our old printers gave up gravure work and we soon discovered the realities of the cost of high quality printing for short runs.

If we are to continue we have got to find another 7,000 subscribers and we need the help of you, the reader. If you do not want to help us write and tell us why — we certainly seem to have gone wrong somewhere in producing a commercially viable magazine.

If you *do* want to help us you could do this in two ways — the first of which is relatively painless. This is to become a subscriber yourself, and furthermore to get another reader to become a subscriber. If every reader got a second reader that would solve many of our problems. Of course if you got our magazine regularly from your newsagent, and this would only apply in the U.K., we do not want you to cancel it from him but if you are only an occasional reader please become a regular one and subscribe.

The second step we would not have taken on our own; it was suggested by one of our regular friends, to start a re-launch fighting fund. We want contributions in cash or saleable prints, (gold bars etc will also be accepted) so that when we relaunch in September we stand a chance of getting to a number of new readers. We hope by then to have solved all our own problems. We have a new subscription manager and everything should soon be running smoothly to our, and our readers, satisfaction. The building work which was supposed to have finished in November is still not finished at the time of writing but hopefully all this will be sorted out as well. We even expect the new bookshop to be open.

The relaunch will be with our September/October double issue but in order to try and make sure we get it right we are going to have two double issues prior to this. The plans for the relaunch as a bi-monthly are partly to save printing and other costs but also because we feel it will give us better opportunity for presenting material, as features can become much more comprehensive. In addition to that, there will be more space for essays and written contributions and discussion topics. In some respects therefore there will be considerable changes in *Creative Camera* — in other respects there will be very little change.

One of the great advantages of going bi-monthly is that we shall be able to print letters to the Editor or comments on various pictures as soon as they are received and there will not be a long waiting period as in the past. We have hesitated in the past about written material because although there is a lot of it about not all of it is equally good. Now we are able to extend an invitation for those with something serious to say about photography to write to us.

In some respects the new policy means we will be getting more involved in the day to day business of photography and curiously enough the bi-monthly move will increase our opportunities for doing so. Another item which will also increase our opportunities is that we intend to pay much more attention to what is happening in all parts of the U.K. which perhaps we have rather neglected. Our forthcoming issue will deal with the Impressions Gallery, York, and some of the photographers they have specialised in. The following issue will deal with the great Salford spectacular, Salford '80. This is just for starters. If the relaunch is a success then there is hope for a future Yearbook and perhaps even other publications.

So subscribe now — get a friend or more than one friend to subscribe and send us a donation for The Relaunch Fighting Fund. We have come too far to turn back now.

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Contents

Essay. David Mellor	148
Paul Tanqueray	149
Peter Rose Pulham	152
Cecil Beaton	156
Angus McBean	158
John Havinden	160
Essay, Ian Jeffrey	166
Herbert Ponting	168
Edwin Smith	169
Humphrey Spender*	171
Ian Macdonald	172
Nigel Inglis	176
Martin Parr	182
Thomas Watson*	188
E. O. Hoppé	192
Martin Roberts	194
Charles Colquhoun	196
Peter Mitchell	199
Contributors	200
Impressions facts & figures	202
Books Received	203
Gallery Guide	204

Establishing Connections

This, the first bi-monthly issue of *Creative Camera* has been devoted to showing some of the photographs which have been shown at Impressions Gallery of Photography during the last nine years. *Creative Camera*, during the eleven years in which it has been published has brought to the attention of the public the work of many photographers whose achievements might otherwise have remained unknown. IMPRESSIONS, through the medium of exhibitions, has performed the same function, attempting both to remedy the effects of neglect by a small scale restructuring of the history of post-victorian British photography, and also to bring to the attention of the general public the work of young British photographers. We hope that this issue of *Creative Camera* will reflect some of the Gallery's efforts in both of these directions.

The photographers who have been chosen to represent IMPRESSIONS in this issue are only a few of those whose work has been shown at the Gallery. All the photographs come from exhibitions which IMPRESSIONS has originated, and are drawn from those exhibitions which represent, in their way, the interests, preoccupations and tastes of those who work and who have worked at IMPRESSIONS.

Two of the earlier exhibitions represented here, '*Cecil Beaton's Photographs*' and '*Herbert Ponting*' were the work of Andrew Sproston, one of the two founder members of IMPRESSIONS whose untimely death in 1977 deprived the Gallery and photography in general, of one of its most determined spirits. The later exhibitions are sometimes the result of commissioned research, sometimes the manifestation of prolonged detective work by members of the Gallery's own staff, and often, of the collaboration between photographers and the Gallery.

We have attempted, in this issue of *Creative Camera*, to concern ourselves with celebration rather than propaganda; we have not discussed policies, but have rather hoped that these, if they exist at all, will become evident through the pages of this journal. Given the scope of so many pages, which will be read by so many people, there is a temptation to try to make the definitive statement about the position of photography in Britain today. Given the idea of a Gallery subsidised by the State, it is equally a temptation to berate those who administer the funds for their seeming lack of largesse. We hope that we have not succumbed to either of these temptations.

Some of the photographs which appear in this issue are a taste of exhibitions to come, and we hope, that by including these this is some affirmation of faith that IMPRESSIONS, and indeed all of the galleries, which during the last ten years have devoted their walls entirely to photography, will continue, and, given encouragement, grow and prosper.

This issue of *Creative Camera* was edited by Judy Goldhill and Val Williams. Thanks are given to those who provided photographs and who gave their permission for them to be published, in particular, we would like to thank: David Mellor, Terence Pepper, Ken Baird and Ian Jeffrey, for their help and advice.

V.W.

NEXT ISSUE
JULY/AUGUST

SALFORD '80

ANDRE KERTESZ, RUSSELL LEE,
CHARLES HARBUTT, JAMES MUDD,
SAMUEL COLUTHURST & PHOTOGRAPHS
FROM THE MANCHESTER & SALFORD
ARCHIVES.

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CREATIVE CAMERA



ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ, WINDOW 1961

SALFORD 80

SALFORD 80

CONTENTS

The Future of Creative camera	216
Manchester: The Industrial Background to Photography	217
Frith Series	219
James Mudd	223
Samuel Coulthurst; an outline by Sandra Martin	227
Samuel Coulthurst	228
Harold Riley	238
André Kertész, a talk by Colin Ford	242
André Kertész	243
Russell Lee	246
Charles Harbutt	254
Eugene Atget	258
Manchester Studies Archive	260
Contributors	267
Exhibitions at Salford 80	268
Gallery Guide	270
Books Received	272

SALFORD '80 marks a new departure in the scale and presentation of photography exhibitions in the UK. Salford, situated in the old industrial heartlands of North West England, is an unexpected venue for such an ambitious project. Here, such an exhibition has been realised by the enthusiastic co-operation of many local and international bodies.

From the photography being exhibited at Salford, *Creative Camera* has drawn together a body of material to form a special edition, which concentrates mostly upon work that has been unpublished before now.

We have represented a range of photographers who have pictured Manchester and Salford over the last century. This special edition features the work of Samuel Laurence Coulthurst, whose photography has recently been reconsidered; the urban topography found in the Frith Series and that of James Mudd.

During the production of this issue, research has questioned the authorship of photographs originally attributed to James Mudd. Nevertheless, we are showing these pictures as significant photographs, possessing an intrinsic merit.

Continuing the theme of photography in the locality (one of the stressed components of Salford 80) into the Twentieth Century, we are also showing examples of work collected by the *Manchester Studies Archive*, as well as the photographs of Harold Riley.

The exhibition is international in its scope. Both André Kertész and Russell Lee are being honoured for their contribution to photography by the Chancellor of Salford University, H.R.H. Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh K.G. Further, the local company Norwest Holst Ltd., has acquired the entire André Kertész collection and *Creative Camera* has gathered four hitherto unknown images by him, for reproduction here.

A selection of Russell Lee's *Pie Town* photographs provide an opportunity to examine, for the first time since their original publication in the early 1940's, an exemplary documentary set depicting a small American community: while a more contemporary look at the American scene is revealed in the portfolio of Mexican photographs, *Progreso*, by Charles Harbutt.

Salford intends this exhibition to be the first in a series that will take place every four years.

J.G. &D.M.

Creative Camera would like to thank Helena Srakočić, Harold Riley, Sandra Martin, Harry Milligan, Mike Luft, David Mellor, Audrey Linkman, David Russell, Caroline Waihurst and Michael Hallett for their help with this issue.

A single asterisk (*) in the index or near a photograph indicates that the negative was made by the named photographer, but the print was not made under his direct control. A double asterisk (**) indicates that a duplicate negative and a print made from this have been used. Their presence or absence should not be taken as any guarantee of authenticity.

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