

## INVITATION TO OUR PRESS CONFERENCE

On Thursday, 17 February 2022, 11am

### ***Facing Britain***

*British documentary photography from the 1960s to the present*

20 Feb 2022–01 May 2022

Opening: Sunday, 20 Feb 2022, 11:30am

Queen Elizabeth's platinum jubilee, parties in 10 Downing Street, Prince Andrew's abuse scandal, Brexit and Megxit: Great Britain is dominating the headlines. From mainland Europe, the rest of the continent looks with both admiration and worry to a country that has cut ties with the European Union after almost fifty years of membership.

But how do the Brits see their country? The exhibition *Facing Britain* paints a picture of the United Kingdom from the perspective of 44 British photographers – a picture that stays away from clichés and motifs disseminated by the mass media. Featuring around 250 works from 1963–2020, it presents the first overview of British documentary photography. The time period encompasses the UK's membership of the EU and its predecessor as well as Brexit. In addition to works by internationally acclaimed artists such as Martin Parr, the exhibition will spotlight long forgotten and only recently rediscovered positions such as those by John Myers, Tish Murtha and Peter Mitchell. The 1970s and 1980s will form a focal point. It was during these decades that artistic documentary photography grew in significance.

The photographers have aimed their gaze at people's everyday lives, their habits, their surroundings, their pleasures and moments of relaxation; but they also depict social conflicts and political unrest. The pictures document the decline of the Midlands, a region dominated by coal mines and the steel industry, as well as the Thatcher era with the Falklands War and the current divisive upheaval that is Brexit. Questions about gender and migration are reflected particularly strongly in the pictures taken by the younger photographers.

In addition to pictures of urban landscapes and scenes of everyday life, portraits are one of the central threads of the exhibition. From children to teenagers and old people, these pictures convey much of the charm, eccentricity and humour as well as the much-cited relaxed nature of the residents of the British Isles. The often-moving photographs all communicate deep affection and humanity as well as love of country.

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Participating Artists:

Mike Abrahams, Meredith Andrews, James Barnor, Rob Bremner, Rachel Louise Brown, John Bulmer, Tessa Bunney, Robert Darch, John Davies, Anna Fox, Ken Grant, Judy Greenway, Mohamed Hassan, David Hurn, Sirkka-Liisa Konttinen, Kalpesh Lathigra, Barry Lewis, Markéta Luskacová, Kirsty Mackay, Fran May, Stephen McCoy, Niall McDiarmid, Daniel Meadows, Roy Mehta, Sandra Mickiewicz, Margaret Mitchell, Peter Mitchell, Tish Murtha, John Myers, Kevin O'Farrell, Martin Parr, Mark Pinder, Ryan Prince, Kavi Pujara, Tony Ray-Jones, Paul Reas, Simon Roberts, Michelle Sank, Syd Shelton, Dave Sinclair, Homer Sykes, Alys Tomlinson, Jon Tonks, Tom Wood.

The exhibition curated by Ralph Goertz was previously on display in Museum Goch and Kunsthalle Darmstadt. After its stint in Goslar it will go on display at the Museum of Photography in Krakow, Poland.

A catalogue has been published to accompany the exhibition. It contains texts by Graham Harrison and Ralph Goertz, Eng./Ger., R. Goertz (ed.), Verlag der Buchhandlung W. u. F. König, Cologne, 220 pages, paperback, €29.90 (regular retail price €34)

In co-operation with IKS Düsseldorf



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