



IT'S INCREDIBLE HOW OPEN PEOPLE WERE FOR TISH

I'd been dabbling in photography in Poland, shooting the 1990s grunge scene, but nothing serious. For me, photography is connected to the Buddhist philosophy of living in the present moment. I don't like nostalgia. But I think I also take photographs out of fear of losing something – the people, the places. It's always at the back of my mind, somewhere, thinking that I'll never meet that person again in the same circumstances.

I DISCOVERED TISH MURTHA'S work when I was a photography student at Northumbria University. The first project I saw of hers was *Youth Unemployment* (1981), shot in Newcastle in the 1970s. I loved the way she built a whole world around a single issue. It wasn't monothematic; it was young people on the streets, queuing for the job centre, but also at home. She was documenting the place and the times. It's incredible how open people were for Tish; she photographed people like they were her friends [many

Above: *The Daily Weeding*, 2020-21, by Ryńiewicz. Below: *Edward Kido*, 1978, by Murtha



sitters were in fact family members]; you can see the level of trust in the work. I love that about her images. It's similar to my own way of working.

Tish was excluded from the Amber Film & Photography Collective, which was founded in 1968 and whose members included well-known documentary photographers such as Chris Killip. She was excluded in part because she was working class and because she was a woman. She wasn't recognised in her lifetime and died in poverty. It's great that she's been rediscovered now, thanks to her daughter Ella, but it's sad she never got to see it.

Tish, like me, worked in series. I see single images as words but I prefer sentences. A single image can be taken out of context. I love the way that all Tish's photographs were somewhat posed, even the street shots. Whether

it's a picture of Janet Armstrong, a young woman whom Tish photographed holding a shoe brush, or one of the lads sitting on the brick wall, they all feel a bit directed. There's also a lot of emotion in her work. I think she's more like a portraitist than a documentary or reportage photographer, even when she's taking a photo of kids jumping out of a window.

I wanted to create a dialogue with Tish for this show of our images at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art. Her work was made more than 40 years ago; I'm making work now. Although mine is very different we both photograph our community in Newcastle with a kind of honesty. I'm trying to show the spirit of the time; the social demographics of Newcastle now.

Tish's work gives an honest view of what Britain was – and what it still is. Some of the buildings have been flattened but there's still poverty. People are still struggling in Newcastle. Her work is much more known and appreciated here than it was five years ago. When the documentary *Tish* came out in 2023, the cinema was full. Geordies are fantastic people – people say that a Geordie friend is a friend for life, and it's true. I love the art scene here; my studio is in a building that used to be the council housing department offices but now houses 100 artists. Newcastle is small enough that it's easy to navigate, and people are in less of a rush and more spontaneous than in bigger cities. I suppose that's why I stay – I like to be ad hoc in life and in photography.

I photograph people and places to preserve them for myself, first. I want people to be comfortable in their own bodies in front of my camera – that's a success for me as a photographer and a humanist. And I think Tish was a humanist too. ■HTSI
Tish Murtha & Kuba Ryńiewicz: Close to Home, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, 4 July to 4 April 2027, baltic.art

SNAP TO IT

Four standout photography shows.
By Victoria Woodcock



LES RENCONTRES D'ARLES

The 57th edition of the Festival brings to light overlooked artists such as Paul Kodjo, who captured the '70s nightlife of the Ivory Coast, and contemporary stars. Ayana V Jackson's show includes her reimaginings of historical figures such as Mary Fields, the first Black woman employed as a Star Route postwoman in the US. 6 July to 4 October, rencontres-arles.com

FRANCESCA WOODMAN:
LATELY I FIND A SLIVER OF MIRROR
IS SIMPLY TO SLICE AN EYELID

When the photographer lived in Rome in 1977-78, she became a regular at Libreria Maldoror. The influence of the surrealist *Wunderkammer* is manifest here, with nearly 50 dreamlike images featuring Woodman alongside significant objects: shells, eggs, broken mirrors. At *Gagosian, Rome, until 31 July, gagosian.com*



JACQUES HENRI LARTIGUE: LIFE IN COLOUR

The French photographer once said: "I have never taken a picture for any other reason than that at that moment it made me happy to do so." The result is a sunny snapshot of high society at play, on beaches and racetracks. This show focuses on his lesser-seen colour photographs – one third of his 120,000-piece archive, which he donated to the French government in 1979. At *MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, 20 June to 4 Oct, mkgallery.org*

JOEL MEYEROWITZ: SELECT WORKS,
1962-2019

Twenty-five works span six decades in Joel Meyerowitz's fourth solo show at this Mayfair gallery. At its core is a collection of his celebrated New York street scenes that pioneered colour photography in the '60s and '70s, such as *Young Dancer*, *Empire State Series* (1978) and *Camel Coats* (1975). At *Huxley Parlour, London, until 11 July, huxleyparlour.com* ■HTSI

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CULTURE

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