

GCSE Photography

Unit Two — Street Photography.

In 2011, the Museum of London created an exhibition of street photography, tracing its history from 1860 to 2010. "The exhibition provides an interesting insight into how London street photography has developed since 1860. Each photographer has, in their own way, captured something of the character of this amazing city."

And that quote from the curator of the exhibition sums up the enduring importance of Street Photography as a way of recording and interpreting the world around us in a unique way.

So, street photography is theme in photography that features subjects in candid situations in public places, often without them being aware that they are the subject of a photograph. Subjects are framed and lit in ways that often isolate them in the street, often at a point of great visual interest.



The Street Photographer often seeks to convey a message about the context of the photograph, and as such pays great attention to the timing of his/her photographic exposure.

Street photography is often produced in high contrast, black and white images which help focus the viewers attention on the desired elements within the scene.

As was pointed out in the 2011 exhibition, although the digital age has brought about a huge expansion in the ability of take photographers, at the same time people are more and more reluctant to engage in street photography due to perceived dangers, either to their personal safety, or the thought that their photography will be misinterpreted in some way.

On the day that I visited the Street Photography Exhibition, I encountered two boys about 10 years old who were skateboarding in the street. One, seeing me coming, called out to me, 'Oi mister. Want to see something funny?' 'OK, then.' I replied, 'As long as it's not you two mugging someone.'

One boy produced his phone and showed me a series of videos of his friend repeatedly falling off his skateboard trying to do a trick. It was indeed, very funny. Leaving them laughing in the street, I had to reflect on the question, 'If I had been filming that scene over and over again, who would have thought it was funny?'

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London Street Photography

18 February – 4 September 2011

A few of the images from the exhibition.



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Henri Cartier-Bresson

"He gave them his gaze.

Henri Cartier-Bresson gave his gaze to those he photographed, to those whose image he captured. He took their pictures, both in the modern photographic sense and in the sense of extracting their image from them: in both cases, there is the sense of something coming to light, something being drawn out into the open and so unravelling the enigma of the visible." Agnes Sire, *An Inner Silence: The Portraits of Henri Cartier-Bresson*.

Cartier-Bresson is undoubtedly the best known of the Street Photographers. Using a 35mm Leica camera, he he rightly regarded as the father of modern photojournalism.

Cartier-Bresson became know for the term, 'the decisive moment', the perfect timing of the photograph. "Photography is not like painting," Cartier-Bresson told the *Washington Post* in 1957. "There is a creative fraction of a second when you are taking a picture. Your eye must see a composition or an expression that life itself offers you, and you must know with intuition when to click the camera. That is the moment the photographer is creative," he said. "Oop! The Moment! Once you miss it, it is gone forever."

Cartier-Bresson, unlike many street photographers was not afraid to engage with the subject of his photography. Subjects can often be seen staring straight down the lens at the viewer in a way that creates an extra intimacy with the subject.

He was also a great believer in composing the photograph in the viewfinder of his Leica. Many of his images are printed with the sprocket holes of the film clearly showing, with no possibility for cropping the image in the darkroom.



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www.gcsephotography.co.uk

Henri Cartier-Bresson



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www. gcsephotography.co.uk

<http://www.streetseen.org.uk/>

STREETSEEN

street photographers in north wales

Streetseen is a new site featuring the work of Roy Barry and Graham Kidd. Roy currently uses an Olympus EP1 with a 17mm 'pancake lens' as it is discreet and non-threatening. It also benefits from 'face recognition' which makes focussing more precise when not looking at the screen on the back of the camera.



In these shots, Roy provides a very candid approach to Street Photography.



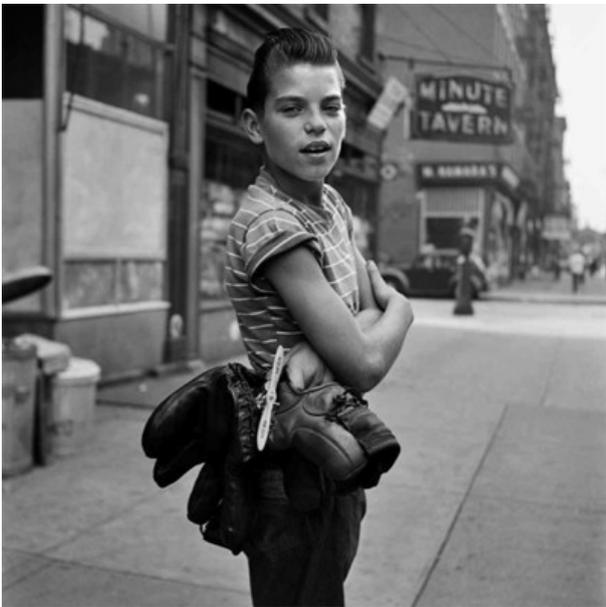
Many thanks to Roy Barry for the generous permission to use his images.

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The unseen photographs of Vivien Maier

In 2007, a Chicago real estate agent and historical hobbyist, John Maloof purchased a box of never-seen, never-developed film negatives of an unknown 'amateur' photographer for \$380 at his local auction house . When he started to have the thousands of negatives processed and printed he found a treasure-trove of some of the best street photography—never seen!



Maier