

OPEN EYE GALLERY

OPEN EYE GALLERY ANNOUNCES PROGRAMME FOR AUTUMN/WINTER 2013 – 2014



TIM HETHERINGTON: YOU NEVER SEE THEM LIKE THIS
6 SEPTEMBER – 24 NOVEMBER 2013

ALVIN BALTROP AND GORDON MATTA-CLARK: THE PIERS FROM HERE
7 DECEMBER 2013 – 9 FEBRUARY 2014

www.openeye.org.uk

Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, one of the UK's leading photography spaces, sees the launch of two major new exhibitions this year, under the direction of new artistic Director **Lorenzo Fusi**.

Two years after his death, **Open Eye Gallery** pays tribute to the work of **Liverpool-born photojournalist Tim Hetherington** (1970 – 2011) in an exhibition of photography and film work, which takes place from **6 September – 24 November 2013**. The show is presented in collaboration with the Tim Hetherington Trust and Magnum Photos.

Drawing from the series of images published in his acclaimed book *Infidel* (Chris Boot Ltd, London 2010), which offers an intimate insight into the lives of American soldiers in conflict but beyond the action of war, almost 30 of Hetherington's genre-defying photographs will be reproduced in varying scale, including a number of billboard formats.

The centrepiece of the show will be the three-channel video installation entitled *Sleeping Soldiers*. The video, alongside the photographs, lingers on the apparent stillness and quietness that anticipates and follows combat. As a sense of waiting marks the passing of time, Hetherington asks what story is to be told, in journalistic terms, when there is no significant event to report on.

The exhibition's title, *You Never See Them Like This*, is a quote by Tim Hetherington talking to his creative collaborator Sebastian Junger (a journalist and his co-director on the Oscar-winning documentary film, *Restrepo*), describing the revelation he had looking at the sleeping soldiers: "They always look so tough... but when they're asleep they look like little boys. They look the way their mothers probably remember them."

Set against the unexpectedly beautiful landscape of the Korengal Valley, Afghanistan, Hetherington's still images follow the arrival, efforts and advancement of a US contingent in establishing an outpost

in this North Eastern part of Afghanistan. The work highlights the long-term nature of Hetherington's photographic projects, his interest in narrative, human connection and the close relationships he developed with his subjects.

As days of intense conflict are broken up by long periods of waiting, the photo-reporter explores how these soldiers cope with this emotionally draining existence. Looking at how they build up resilience, renegotiate their relations and manage their feelings, Hetherington ultimately documents the formation of a strong brotherhood consolidated over a period of one year, underpinned by themes including sexuality, alienation/isolation and the sense of loss and fear.

Alvin Baltrop and Gordon Matta-Clark: The Piers From Here

From **7 December 2013 – 9 February 2014**, **Open Eye Gallery** is proud to bring together, for the first time in the UK, the work of photographer **Alvin Baltrop** (1948 – 2004) and that of the 'anarchitect' **Gordon Matta-Clark** (1943 – 1978), whose pivotal role in the field of photography has been often overlooked.

The exhibition focuses on the area of the Piers in New York City during the mid 1970s, and speaks of the state of abandonment and dilapidation these underwent as a consequence of the oil crisis that reconfigured the geography of the city as well as the international market and trading system.

The New York piers act as a mirror or counterpart of the Liverpool's docklands. Historically linked via the transatlantic route that since Colonial times, connected Europe to the Americas, the Piers in New York and the docks in Liverpool experienced a similar process of transformation. Being unproductive and deserted, these were gradually reclaimed by an invisible population who used them for a variety of activities, spanning from gay cruising, drug-dealing and smuggling to prostitution, but also bringing together an underground community of visual artists, musicians, film-makers, performers and photographers.

Whilst Gordon Matta-Clark was pursuing the idea that art could act as a catalyst for urban regeneration and land re-appropriation, Baltrop investigated the life at the margins, mapping hedonistic displays of flesh, occasional sexual intercourse, corpses that could be mistaken for sleeping squatters (and vice versa) and other traces of humanity hidden amongst the interstices of society, notwithstanding the sense of freedom and liberation originating in the sexual revolution.

In 1975 **Gordon Matta-Clark** illegally entered and took over Pier 52, a huge corrugated iron structure, almost classic in its majesty and, to put it in Gordon's words, "completely overrun by the gays". There he created one of his famous 'cuts' entitled *Day's End*, a spectacular anti-monumental intervention brought to life by the rotation of the sun, that could enter the building thus reflecting in the water of Hudson River. As Matta-Clark was creating this architectural installation made of light, shadows and water, **Alvin Baltrop** kept documenting the activity of the only other occupants at the Piers. The encounter resulting from their different approaches is documented in this exhibition, that represents an occasion to look back at those years, reflecting on gentrification and regeneration across the ocean and at the simultaneous disappearance of the underground (sub)culture.

This exhibition is in collaboration with The Alvin Baltrop Trust and Third Streaming, New York and the Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark and David Zwirner, New York/London.

Editors Notes:

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Tim Hetherington Press Preview & Private View:

Press Preview: 12.30 – 3pm, Thursday 5 September

Private View: 6 – 9pm, Thursday 5 September

Alvin Baltrop & Gordon Matta-Clark Press Preview & Private View:

Press Preview: 12.30 – 3pm, Friday 6 December

Press Preview: 6 – 9pm, Friday 6 December

Gallery Opening Hours:

10.30am - 5.30pm

Tuesday to Sunday during exhibitions.

Closed on Mondays (except bank holidays) and during exhibition changeovers.

About Tim Hetherington:

Tim Hetherington photographed the experience of war from the perspective of the individual, mostly in West Africa and the Middle East. His film *Restrepo* (2010), which he co-directed with Sebastian Junger about a platoon of soldiers in Afghanistan, was awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for an Academy Award in 2011 for Best Documentary Feature.

Through his photographs, writing and films, Hetherington offered new ways to look at and think about human suffering. Born in 1970 in Liverpool, he studied literature at Oxford University, and Photojournalism at Cardiff University. A member of the London based Network Photographers agency and later working with Panos Pictures, his photography archive is posthumously represented by Magnum.

In 2007 Tim published his first book of photography documenting the civil war in Liberia: *Liberia Bit by Bit: Long Story Retold* (Umbrage Editions). He later published a book of his photographs from *Restrepo* entitled *Infidel* (Chris Boot Ltd, London 2010), which was exhibited with Foto8 in London and New York.

On April 20, 2011 while covering the conflict in Libya, Tim Hetherington and fellow photographer Chris Hondros were killed by Libyan forces in a mortar attack on the besieged city of Misrata.

About Alvin Baltrop:

Photographer and artist, Alvin Baltrop (1948 – 2004) was born in the Bronx, NY and lived and worked for most of his life in New York City. From 1975 to 1986, Baltrop photographed the Piers along the Hudson River. Built in the mid-1800s for maritime and industrial use, these wood and metal sheds had fallen into disuse by the 1960s as shipping needs migrated to New Jersey. While he worked in the West Village, Baltrop captured a full range of human activity. He documented the groups of people that created casual meeting places and semi-permanent homes, and photographed individuals with whom he developed close relationships. Set against the waterfront's deteriorating grid, Baltrop's images portray a space at the city's margins. The Piers were a place where sex radicals, artists and

everyday people came together, sometimes because they had no other options and at other times because it was exactly where they wanted to be.

About Gordon Matta-Clark:

Gordon Matta-Clark (1943 – 1978) was an American sculptor, filmmaker, photographer and draughtsman. The son of painter Roberto Matta, he studied architecture in Ithaca, NY, at Cornell University (1962–8), where he mostly mixed with artists compelled and frustrated by the limitations imposed by modernist architecture. There he met Robert Smithson, whose interests in land art and the theory of entropy (concerned with dissipating energy) were a significant influence on him. On completion of his studies he moved to New York and became a well-known figure among artists in SoHo. He is best known for a series of 'building cuts' (1972–8) in which he carved sections out of old buildings, treating them (in the manner of modern sculptures) as spatial compositions. Member of a collective of practitioners who, operating under the loose term *Anarchitecture*, believed in art and architecture as a means for social change, Matta-Clark pierced and sliced buildings documenting the transformations in films and photographs subsequently exhibited in galleries. These were often presented alongside fragments of the buildings themselves. One of his most celebrated works, *Splitting* (1974), consisted of a vertical cut through an old frame house in Englewood, NJ. He also produced an enormous and diverse body of drawings, some simply sketches for projects, others finished works in themselves.

About Open Eye Gallery:

Founded in 1977 Open Eye Gallery is an independent not-for-profit photography gallery based in Liverpool. One of the UK's leading photography spaces, Open Eye is the only gallery dedicated to photography and related media in the North West of England. Open Eye has consistently championed photography as an art form that is relevant to everyone. It promotes the practice, enjoyment and understanding of photography by creating challenging and entertaining opportunities to experience and appreciate distinctive, innovative photographs.

As well as presenting a programme of international, high-quality exhibitions Open Eye houses a permanent Archive containing photographs dating from the 1930s to the present day.

In November 2011 Open Eye re-launched in a brand new purpose-built home in one of the city's most prestigious and prominent new developments on the Liverpool Waterfront. The gallery opens onto a large covered public square and is split over two floors. Open Eye Gallery hosts an international programme of cutting edge exhibitions showcased all year round, including periodic exhibitions reflecting on the gallery's Archive. Open Eye also commissions Wall Works - large-scale graphic art installations for the external facade of the gallery. The gallery's position at the heart of the regenerated Waterfront – next to the Museum of Liverpool and a stone's throw from Tate Liverpool and Albert Dock – cements its commitment to the city and its vibrant cultural life.

About Lorenzo Fusi, Director, Open Eye Gallery:

Lorenzo moved to Liverpool in 2009, when he was appointed as the International Curator of the Liverpool Biennial. He curated the 2010 and 2012 reiterations of the biennial exhibition. During this time, he became first involved with Open Eye Gallery as a result of the institutional collaborations and cultural partnerships that characterise the UK biennial from its inception. Prior to this appointment, Lorenzo was Chief Curator at Palazzo delle Papesse and s.m.s contemporanea (Siena, Italy). Lorenzo took his post of Artistic Director at Open Eye Gallery in Spring 2013.

Images credits:

(left) Alvin Baltrop, *Pier 52* (Gordon Matta-Clark's "Day's End", *building cuts with two people*), from *The Piers* series, 1975-1986 © The Alvin Baltrop Trust represented by Third Streaming, New York; (right) Tim Hetherington, *Korengal Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan, April 2008*, © Tim Hetherington / Magnum Photos.

Partners:

Tim Hetherington: You Never See Them Like This is supported by the Mayor of Liverpool.



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