

OPEN EYE GALLERY



Shanghai Restaurant, Nelson Street, Liverpool © Bert Hardy, May 1942

Ebb and Flow: A Visual Chronicle of the Changes within Liverpool's Chinatown

EXHIBITION PERIOD: 17 May – 22 June 2014

PRIVATE VIEW: 16 May 2014

www.openeye.org.uk

Ebb and Flow is an audio, visual survey of the history and changes that have taken place within the oldest Chinese community in Europe, curated by **Jill Carruthers**.

Drawing from the rich selection of photographic prints preserved in the **Open Eye Gallery Archive**, the show looks at the physical and architectural transformations of Liverpool's Chinatown, as well as documenting the establishment and development of the local Chinese community.

Included in the show are works by **Bert Hardy** who photographed the Chinese seamen that came to the city from Shanghai on the Blue Funnel Shipping Company vessels in 1940s. He recorded their lives, living conditions and recreation as well as Liverpool at the time.

Four decades on and the Chinese community was well established in a new area of Liverpool, relocated to Nelson Street, after the May Blitz during WWII. British photographer **Martin Parr** documented Chinatown in the 80's, exploring the restaurants, hair salons, Chinese supermarkets and community centers that were popular at the time.

Alongside these historical images, this exhibition also includes two contemporary works exploring the Chinatown that Liverpool is home to now.

Liverpool based artist duo John Campbell & Moira Kenny, **The Sound Agents**, have been funded by Heritage Lottery Fund to record *Liverpool Chinatown Oral History*, creating an audio visual digital archive of interviews, personal documents and photographs.

UK based photographer **Jamie Lau** has been commissioned to create a new body of work, looking at the Chinese community as it is now. Lau will visually explore the notion of being isolated in a city full of people, where human interaction may only happen on a base level, passing each other in the street, in shops and restaurants, like ships in the night.

Editors Notes:

For further press information, interviews and image requests, please contact Charlotte on 0151 2366768 / charlotte@openeye.org.uk

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Gallery Opening Hours:

10.30am - 5.30pm

Tuesday to Sunday during exhibitions.

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

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 on to 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 Jill Carruthers, Exhibition Coordinator, Open Eye Gallery:

Jill has been working for Open Eye Gallery for a year and this is the first exhibition she has curated since her move. Prior to her current position, Jill was Assistant Curator of QUAD, Derby and worked on the 2011 and 2013 reiterations of FORMAT International Photography Festival, Derby. Jill was Programme Assistant for East Street Arts, Leeds and has also worked with the V&A as freelance Exhibition Coordinator.

Image credit/caption:

Shanghai Restaurant, Nelson Street, Liverpool © Bert Hardy, May 1942

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