

**40 YEARS OF
OPEN EYE GALLERY
1977-2017**

40 YEARS OF OPEN EYE GALLERY: 1977-2017

Founded in 1977, Open Eye Gallery is an independent photography gallery and registered charity.

We believe photography is for everyone and can be meaningful, informing our present and inspiring positive futures, which we reflect in our varied programme. We support established and emerging artists, developing practical, critical and professional skills among photography practitioners; we also offer training and development opportunities to people within our local community. Our permanent Archive contains photographs from the 1930s to the present day.

Over the past 40 years, Open Eye Gallery has exhibited some of the world's most inspiring and insightful photographers. We have championed the agency of photography as art, as social and historical document, and as integral to the cultural impact of music, fashion, architecture and many other disciplines.

In 2017, Open Eye Gallery will be celebrating our deep connection to place. Working in partnership, our main exhibitions explore the visual identity of the North; the City as a site for global exchange; the history and future of counter culture and the people & communities of our City Region.

Open Eye Gallery's success is down to the many people who have shaped and grown the organisation over the last 40 years. In this booklet (which accompanies a Wall Work designed by Thom Isom) we wish to pay homage to a much larger group of photographers, volunteers, partners, visitors and staff who have championed our work.

Open Eye Gallery's Research Curator, Dan Warner, has reached out to those who have shared in the Gallery's history and asked them to share some memories with us.

Open Eye Gallery, where I...

Share your experiences #OEG40

1970s

Open Eye Gallery, where I... set up the Gallery in an old pub. It was in a terrible state but it gave us an opportunity to expand. We set up darkrooms and aimed to get the community involved. - 1977

Colin Wilkinson, Founder of Open Eye Gallery

Open Eye Gallery, where I... attempted to create a sense of cultural identity through visual arts. It seemed like a dynamic way forward. - 1977

Colin Wilkinson, Founder of Open Eye Gallery

Open Eye Gallery, where I... used to go to the café all the time. It was lovely, wholesome food in the days before cappuccino machines! I worked in News From Nowhere about three doors down. We were close, we were really good friends. - 1977

Mandy, Visitor/Acquaintance

Open Eye Gallery, where I... go to be immersed in a world of amazing images. Always something new and interesting. - 1977

John Merrall, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... visited when young, just off Queens Square next to News From Nowhere. Inspired me then as it does now. - 1977

Mike James, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where... myself and the others from Big in Japan rehearsed in the basement of the Gallery - unknown to us as an overflow chamber for the Mersey. We barely escaped with our amps and guitars as the room submerged. - 1978

Ian Broudie, Visitor/Musician

Open Eye Gallery, where I... as a student at Nottingham, was part of the first exhibition - a group show, it felt as if I was part of the beginning of something. The Open Eye was the first step in bringing a specific photography gallery to Liverpool. - 1978

Liz Nicol, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was part of the first exhibition. Thinking back to the 1970s and 1980s, there were so few courses in photography and photobooks were in their infancy. You can just imagine how important the Gallery was to Liverpool. - 1978

Liz Nicol, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was dynamic. We were doing an exhibition a month. It wasn't madness - it was exciting. Opportunities came up and we took them. - 1978

Colin Wilkinson, Founder of Open Eye Gallery

Open Eye Gallery, where I... attended a photography course as part of a YTS as a 16-year-old. It was fascinating. I learnt to develop photos, plan pictures, use of shade technics. For a young lad from the Dingle who had never owned a camera it was so cool. I learnt things in that short time that have stayed with me, always. - 1979

Thomas Davies, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... knew I wanted to get involved as soon as I moved to Liverpool. They were all such nice people, and keen to get people involved. - 1979

Patrick Shanahan, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... held my very first group exhibition with other local photographers. That's when I made some very good friends - and we're still good friends to this day, 35 years later. - 1979

Patrick Shanahan, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... could meet like minded people. Through music, photography, film - there was a real buzz going on. It was the catalyst for everything as an outsider coming to the city. - 1979

Patrick Shanahan, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... found the perfect place to hide away on a winter's afternoon and peruse poetry books and polemics in a punk rock-defined atmosphere. - 1979

Eddie Cotton, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... as a young art lecturer, helped others. In those early days it changed the creative culture in Liverpool. It was open, accessible and the staff were amazing. They couldn't do enough for you. - 1979

Terry Duffy, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had to repaint the walls every few months because of the damp. The basement was constantly flooded. One year the whole Gallery got flooded. It was a dreadful old pub. - 1979

Peter Hagerty, Director (1978-81)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... wanted to encourage local photographers. I wasn't into propaganda and art isn't a wing of the social services.

To me they were artists. - 1979

Peter Hagerty, Director (1978-81)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had lessons in black and white film processing. I still remember the thrill of seeing my first print emerging from the developer tray. Great memories and very inspirational to be around. - 1979-81

Stephen Hart, Photographer

1980s

Open Eye Gallery, where I... found out that art can shock people. If you're not provoking people into thought, what are you doing? - 1980

Peter Hagerty, Director (1978-81)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... used to go to look at photography, listen to the duke box and drink tea at the age of 12. I thought this was the coolest place to hang out at that age! The gallery was in Whitechapel then and I never thought it would have such an influence on my life. - 1980

Samantha Brown, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery provided me with one of the first opportunities to show my work in the UK after studying photography in the USA. The staff were really helpful and encouraging. I have been following the exhibitions in the gallery ever since. - 1980

Susan Jahoda, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... spent my dinner hour's in the early 80's. Inspired me to see depth in things and buy a Pentax ME Super. Thanks. - 1980

Steve Leatt, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had my first of several exhibitions. The support of Peter Hagerty and then John McDonald was invaluable. The mix of work by international and North West based photographers was a constant stimulus. - 1980

Stephen McCoy, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where... my exhibition, photoconstructions, was deliberately damaged by what newspapers described as "*Hammer-wielding feminists*". Looking back, I can understand why it would have been controversial, though it probably wouldn't raise an eyebrow today. - 1980

Mike Roles, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... protested against an exhibition. Myself and other feminists sprayed shaving foam on some quite graphic images of women. - 1980

Mandy, Visitor/Acquaintance

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was supported to get my first grant. They gave me access to materials and through them I met people to photograph. - 1980

Patrick Shanahan, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... first heard John Davis speak about landscape and the necessity of avoiding shooting fish in barrels. - 1980

Tom Wood, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... first saw Graham Smith's '*Another Country*', wonderful black and white images, and the related Chris Killip's *Skinningrove* series curated by Neil Burgess, who went on from this to Magnum and NB Pictures. - 1980

Tom Wood, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... first saw colour photographs on the wall, curated ahead of the game by Peter Hagerty - Meyerowitz 10x8 contact prints and Martin Roberts's Agfacolor prints, one of which I bought. - 1980-81

Tom Wood, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... developed an interest in, and admiration for, expressive black & white photography. - 1980

Maureen Brampton, Coop member for Open Mouth Café located at Open Eye Whitechapel (1980-82)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... sold food and drink happily at Open Mouth cooperative to Pete Burns and Wayne Hussey who went on to form Dead or Alive. - 1981

Maureen Brampton, Coop member for Open Mouth Café located at Open Eye Whitechapel (1980-82)

Open Eye Gallery, where I...enjoyed mixing with Peter Haggerty and Colin Wilkinson as gallery Director/Chair. - 1981

Maureen Brampton, Coop member for Open Mouth Café located at Open Eye Whitechapel (1980-82)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... admired the photographs of Echo & the Bunneymen's album covers while serving coffee to Ian McCulloch. - 1981

Maureen Brampton, Coop member for Open Mouth Café located at Open Eye Whitechapel (1980-82)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... did 16 exhibitions a year for five years. We had no money whatsoever. It was a struggle, it was infuriating at times, but it was dramatic and it was exciting. - 1981

Neil Burgess, Director (1981-1986)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... explored photograph and politics. The gallery was where the bus stops are now opposite St Johns precinct. - 1981

Thomas Carroll, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was part of the *Bootle Art in Action* exhibition. It was a rough area and they were giving kids something to do. At the end of the day we couldn't afford a camera. - 1981

Jeff James, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... went to see my photograph as part of the *Bootle Art in Action* show. The Gallery was a bit tatty, but with a bit of white paint and pictures on the wall, who's looking at the cracks? - 1981

Jeff James, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was part of *Bootle Art in Action* exhibition. I was proud of it. I went to the opening night and then back a few times with my mates.

We thought we were gonna be David Bailey.

I thought I was the dog's bollocks. – 1981

Jeff James, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given my first exhibition. They really took me under their wing to be honest. I was only 22 at the time and it encouraged me to do more. – 1981

John Stoddart, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given my first exhibition. They were showing world-class photography – Avedon and Klein – so that put the bar up for me without knowing it. – 1981

John Stoddart, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was pleased to see my touring exhibition *'Bomb Disposal'* in a venue that was never afraid to show politically charged and socially relevant work. It was a breath of fresh air as a gallery at a time when there were too few serious spaces dedicated to photography outside London. – 1983

Edward Barber, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was in a bar one night only to be asked if I was the photographer showing at the Open Eye. *"Yes, why?"* I asked.

"It's just been petrol bombed." – 1983

John Stoddart, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had the privilege to be offered to show my personal works of the Yorkshire site of Brimham Rocks by Neil Burgess at this very valued gallery. It is a wonderful gallery offering many artists the chance to exhibit talent.

May you have many more years for you to do that. – 1983

John Curno, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... hung John Irving with John Osborne and Julie Walters alongside Margaret Atwood. George Melly and Adrian Henri arrived with gusto to the private view, just in time for Militant's collection for striking miners. – 1984

Michael Birt, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was finding my direction and technique. I am grateful to Neil Burgess, the experience helped me understand the process of exhibiting and dealing with youthful vulnerability. – 1984

Michael Birt, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where... my exhibition led to my first book and an exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery and the Photographer's Gallery a little time later.

Open Eye Gallery is an essential part of photography and I wish it well for the future. – 1984

Michael Birt, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given my first ever commission for which I am forever grateful. I think I would have given up photography if it hadn't of been for the evening classes with Derek at Open Eye. – 1984

Caroline Penn, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... can recall my first steps in photography, the start of my artistic practice. I used the darkroom above the Whitechapel gallery in 1984, before I became a photography student on the Wirral and WSCAD. The gallery was a centre for documentary photography at the time. – 1984

Chris Shaw, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... met documentary photographer Bert Hardy. Its one of my best memories of Open Eye. – 1985

Samantha Brown, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... worked with some of the best British photographers of the time, and of the present. We showed people like Martin Parr, Tom Wood, Chris Killip, John Davies, John Stoddart. They all emerged to national prominence, and I was massively proud of that. Liverpool should be too. – 1985

Neil Burgess, Director (1981-1986)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... took part in a group commission organised by Cornerhouse, Bluecoat and Open Eye for an exhibition called *Connections*. I made connections between Manchester and Liverpool by following the Mersey all the way to Pier Head. Many of the places are unrecognisable today. – 1985

John Davies, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited in *The Last Resort* with Martin Parr. Alex Laing had set up the Untitled gallery in Sheffield and he selected my images, mixing formats, styles and sizes. - 1985

Tom Wood, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited *The Last Resort* with Tom Wood. The Gallery was a nice place to go. It was what you might call shabby chic, but it worked and functioned well and the show got a good response. - 1985

Martin Parr, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had the privilege of exhibiting the work from my second book. This was a time when a small group of colour photographers, myself included, were trying to re-define documentary practice in Britain. Open Eye was at the epicentre of this important movement as they were the very first gallery to exhibit Martin Parr's *The Last Resort*. Many people don't realise that this was originally a joint exhibition with Tom Wood. Both were then living and working in Wallasey & photographing New Brighton together. I was at the opening and still have the poster! - 1986

Paul Rees, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... showed a set of pictures taken of weddings in different cultures. It was then one of a handful of British photographic galleries with a national reputation. Like so many other emerging photographers of that era I benefitted greatly from the exposure that offered me.- 1987

Tim Smith, Photographer

1990s

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was inspired by exhibiting my first solo show, '*A Prime Passage*'. It was an Open Eye Touring Exhibition. The support and encouragement provided invaluable experience, as it played an integral part in my development as an artist. - 1993

Georgina Ravenscroft, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where... as an art history student my eyes were opened to the possibilities of the then-newly emerging video, digital and photographic art. It set me on a career path I couldn't have imagined at the time. Thanks, Open Eye, and happy birthday. - 1993-95

Susi Stubbs, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given an opportunity through the "*Exposures Commission*" to meet so many other truly inspirational photographers and encouraged to carve out my career in this field. This commission led to me to form strong links with ethnic members of the community and it led to showing some similar work at the Williamson Art Gallery in Birkenhead and St James Palace London for the "*Roots of the Future*" Exhibition. - 1994

Samantha Brown, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... celebrated News from Nowhere's 20th birthday with a series of author events that the Gallery kindly let us use their exhibition space for. - 1994

Mandy, Visitor/Acquaintance

Open Eye Gallery, where... in temporary office space in the Holmes Building (before the gallery re-launch in Wood Street, November 1996), I discovered a number of tea chests containing hundreds of prints (not documented, archivally stored or valued), which subsequently became the Archive/Collection. - 1995

Paul Mellor, Director (1995-2004)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given such fab support, funding a sense of belief in my work. The whole team knew I was kinda new to the exhibition world and fully supported the trip. Happy memories of the show - Great gallery. - 1996

Steven Tynan, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... discovered photography was what I'd do for the rest of my life. Having a voice that people want to hear is a rare privilege. - 1999

Simon Norfolk, Photographer

2000s

Open Eye Gallery, where I... have some of my favourite pictures amongst the archive, safe and sound here in good hands. - 2000

Ewan Spencer, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... got my first full-time job as trainee programme assistant. A significant occasion, because my Chinese parents always supported my madness for the arts, but never knew how. - 2000

Debbie Chan, Member of Staff (2000-03)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... set off for Liverpool for the first time in my life, with my partner Paul and my son Severin. He'd arrived in this world just four days earlier. I went to set up the installation '*Closing\Close By*' with my collaborator Michael Curran. Severin spent the days wrapped in a pea-green scarf in a cardboard box on the desk. - 2000

Imogen Stidworthy, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... walked the route between our hotel and the Open Eye via Ropewalks. It was like walking through a minefield that weekend, in our post-birth bubble, amid the wild revellers and scenes of debauchery. It was a wonderful introduction to the Gallery which, for a long time, even before the Tate, had been the main art reference I had for the city - and to Liverpool, which I moved to a year later quite unexpectedly, and has become my home. - 2000

Imogen Stidworthy, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given the opportunity to exhibit my work alongside Bill Brandt and Jeff Winch less than a year after I graduated. I learnt so much during that show and also during my time as a volunteer. The professionalism, attention to detail, and all of the experience that I gained in that year I continue to pass onto my students today. Thank you Open Eye Gallery, here's to another 40 years. - 2001

Robert Meighen, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was on board with some great people. The exhibitions committee were brave and fun. My favourite was probably Elvis & Presley - two great international photographers who didn't want to leave Liverpool...but that's another story. - 2001

Mike Edwards, Previous Board Member

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given the thumbs up to co-curate my first contemporary exhibition about British Chinese Culture called *Ten Thousand Li* featuring artists Dinu Li, Yuen-Yi Lo, Yeu-Lai Mo and Pamela So. - 2002

Debbie Chan, Member of Staff (2000-03)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was commissioned to be part of a group exhibition. It was the first meaningful exhibition I had participated in, partly due to the quality of work I had produced, but also for the enthusiasm of audiences visiting to see the works. The commission itself was very exciting, as the director and curator at the time trusted me to do whatever I wanted. To this day, there are still people I have never met before who have discovered the work on the internet, and have subsequently emailed me to discuss the metaphors behind the work. - 2002

Dinu Li, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... took part in a group show '*Ten Thousand Li - Chinese Infusion in Contemporary British Culture*'. The show was indeed exciting and was subsequently touring in another five galleries. While I took this first opportunity to share some creative work concerning nüshu, women's script, I had been doing practice-based research in this area for quite some years. I am delighted that Open Eye was once a springboard to my path in art creation.

Happy birthday! - 2002

Yuen-yi Lo, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where... the exhibition '*Ground Zero*' by Joel Meyerowitz had it's UK launch attended by the US Ambassador William Farrish, The US Cultural Attaché and NYC Fire Department personnel and LOTS of heavily armed Secret Service/Special Branch! A very surreal evening. - 2002

Paul Mellor, Director (1995-2004)

Open Eye Gallery, where... the event to celebrate the 25th anniversary (held at The Palm House) featured an auction of prints donated by previous exhibitors including John Stoddart (Martin Scorsese) and a complete set of AO prints of 'Afghanistan' from Simon Norfolk which raised thousands for the gallery education programme'. - 2002

Paul Mellor, Director (1995-2004)

Open Eye Gallery, where... for a time, I still believed in the power of images to change perceptions, through the work of the, then unknown, photographer Simon Norfolk. - 2002

Paul Mellor, Director (1995-2004)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... showed my most complex photographic project ever - all about Liverpool. - 2002

Jan Svenungsson, Artist

Open Eye Gallery... which enabled me to really get to know Liverpool, on a retinal level. - 2002

Jan Svenungsson, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had some crazy experiences walking between the gallery and Hotel Adelphi on a Saturday night. - 2002

Jan Svenungsson, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... experienced such a high level of trust in my ability to do what I said I could do. - 2002

Jan Svenungsson, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was commissioned to do my work on Liverpool, in support of its bid to be Culture Capital, which it became. - 2002

Jan Svenungsson, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... a virtually unknown photographer, was invited to exhibit in 2002 by the Director who had seen my published work at that time purely by chance! - 2002

Moyra Peralta, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I was warmly invited to exhibit work - in direct contrast to a London gallery adjuring me to cease what I was doing and to photograph something else! - 2003

Moyra Peralta, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had my one-man exhibition *Shanghai Odyssey*. What a great space, what great artist/gallery co-operation, what a pleasure to work with you all. What a great crowd. - 2003

Homer Sykes, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where... my key memories are still vivid. I stayed at the Adelphi while installing the show and loved its faded glory. Each day I walked to the gallery and fiddled about installing screens and projectors, with much help of course. The street Open Eye was on changed fast. At night it is a big bar and nightclub area. Somehow Art frequent pretentiousness falls away at the Open Eye, lots of people drift in and give it a go. One day I gave a guided tour to a very diverse crowd; it seemed to go down well but all the participants very much had their own point of view. They had a very free unrestrained approach. - 2004

George Barber, Video Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited one of my first solo exhibitions - *Night Porter* - twenty years after I was a student using the darkrooms. The buildings have changed but the Open Eye continues to influence photographic practice and education in Liverpool and the world. - 2004

Chris Shaw, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was lucky enough to exhibit my project on Mexican soap operas, *The Factory of Dreams*. I'm honoured to have played a small part in the rich history of the Gallery. - 2005

Stefan Ruiz, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... dreamt of one day being able to show my work! - 2005

Tabitha Jussa, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... met John Davies - internationally renowned photographer, my mentor and now friend. I ended up becoming his darkroom and on-location assistant and drum scanner apprentice - all because I went to a talk John gave at Open Eye. - 2006

Tabitha Jussa, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was commissioned to produce portraits of Women who worked on the docks. I worked with an oral archivist and it was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and work with women of all ages - each with fascinating histories. The exhibition and accompanying published book *The Water's Edge* were really successful outcomes to the project. - 2006

Michelle Sank, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... held a very important exhibition for me. I discovered Liverpool in mutation and this glorified gallery of photolegend. After the Open Eye Gallery, my work on North Korea went all over the world. - 2007

Philippe Chancel, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had my group show *'Bound'* in 2007 with incredible artists; highlighting modern slavery through contemporary art, and linking with the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade - a piece of history. - 2007

Rachel Wilberforce, Visual Artist & Curator

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had the chance to take a part in the *Cities On The Edge* project curated by John Davies. It was very challenging show and a very good memory. - 2008

Philippe Conti, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery is a great venue for exploring the crossover between photography and visual arts. I enjoyed working with practitioners as diverse as Susan Meiselas, Anne Collier and Carlos Garaicoa. - 2008

Monica Laiscea, Exhibitions Curator 2006-08

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had my first international photography commission. - 2008

Ali Taptik, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery... the first UK institution to house my prints in their collection. - 2008

Ali Taptik, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... worked with Trustees and Staff to plan the move from Wood Street to Mann Island and to achieve the dream of the transformation of Open Eye. - 2008

Dave Roscoe, Board Member (2003-2012)

2010s

Open Eye Gallery, where I... learned the importance of invested practitioners from the early outset of a new organisation is the most radical driving force. It's inspired our whole model at BOM (Birmingham Open Media). - 2010

Karen Newman, Curator (2010-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... remember the team working round the clock and through the night to open on time. There was a passion and commitment for the organisation that money can't buy. - 2010

Karen Newman, Curator (2010-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I...remember helping Richard Mosse gatecrash the Venice Biennale openings in 2011, only to see him return 2 years later representing his country with work

Open Eye Gallery helped develop. - 2011

Karen Newman, Curator (2010-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... felt privileged to exhibit. Open Eye Gallery has evolved into a critical international venue, while remaining connected to the local photographic and cultural community of Liverpool. - 2011

Mitch Epstein, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... felt immense pride to be told that the design had captured the spirit of the Gallery and continued to provoke and engage the people of the city. - 2011

Tim Riley, Architect (Mann Island Gallery)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited my work alongside North West and Shanghai based artists. To show alongside established practitioners and travel to Shanghai was amazing! New work produced and confidence gained. - 2012

Tabitha Jussa, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... met my hero Martin Parr who's been a huge influence on the way I look at the world around me.

We had a chat about what we have in common - we're a similar age, born in the South East, studied in Manchester in the early 70's, lived in Hebden Bridge, make and collect photographs and are passionate about art and photography.

That's where the similarities end! - 2012

Peter Mearns, Board Member (2016-Present)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... flew over from Sydney to attend the opening night of my show, *Richard & Famous*. The Gallery treated me like long lost family, and the people of Liverpool were exceptional, warm, funny, friendly and generous. - 2012

Richard Simpkin, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had one of the best weeks of my life. My show was curated by Martin Parr, one of the great masters of photography. My time in Liverpool was amazing. - 2012

Richard Simpkin, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... fell in love with Liverpool and where I took part in my very first international Biennial. As a young artist, it was just all so thrilling to be part of Liverpool Biennial - meeting wonderful artists and curators from around the world. - 2012

Sinta Tantra, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... worked on UK premiers with Susan Meiselas, David Goldblatt, Yto Barrada, Alec Soth, Helen van Meene, Philippe Chancel, Donovan Wylie, Anne Collier, John Stezaker, Pieter Hugo, Mishka Henner, Richard Mosse and Eva Stenram. - 2013

Partick Henry, Director (2004-2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... worked in a truly independent environment, bursting with energy, ideas and creativity.- 2013

Beatrice Boatto, Communications & Marketing Coordinator (2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... discovered some artists I had never heard of before and deepened my knowledge of photography and how to exhibit it. - 2013

Beatrice Boatto, Communications & Marketing Coordinator (2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... learnt what supporting emerging artists means and how important it can be for the whole community to see local talent endorsed. - 2013

Beatrice Boatto, Communications & Marketing Coordinator (2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... saw some amazing exhibitions - which you could probably only find in internationally renowned institutions - come to life thanks to excellent team working and brilliant, daring curation. - 2013

Beatrice Boatto, Communications & Marketing Coordinator (2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... felt more than an employee, but a true professional among other young professionals whose passion for their jobs was contagious. - 2013

Beatrice Boatto, Communications & Marketing Coordinator (2013)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... understood that contemporary artists take great delight in upsetting amateur and professional photographers by breaking the rules and conventions of traditional "good photography." - 2013

Lorenzo Fusi, Director (2013-15)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... held my exhibition '*Drape*' in 2013. I really enjoyed working with Open Eye Gallery - installing my work on two different shades of grey wall was a great curatorial decision and it remains the best installation of these works to date. - 2013

Eva Stenram, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... truly realised how art can move people. Seeing a man reduced to shuddering sobs after visiting Tim Hetherington's *You Never See Them Like This* will stay with me forever. - 2013

Jill Carruthers, Exhibitions Coordinator (2013-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... pushed myself out of my comfort zone, led talks and debates, organised events for hundreds of people and gave portfolio reviews to international photographers. - 2014

Jill Carruthers, Exhibitions Coordinator (2013-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... would often find myself at the top of a scissor lift at 8pm the night before an exhibition opening adjusting the lights. Every member of my family has played a vital role in helping get an exhibition ready. - 2014

Jill Carruthers, Exhibitions Coordinator (2013-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... met some of the most inspirational staff, artists and volunteers I've ever worked with. I continue to be surprised and in awe of many of their achievements. - 2014

Jill Carruthers, Exhibitions Coordinator (2013-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... wore many hats; from marketing designer to fundraiser. No job, including fixing toilet seats, was too small. - 2014

Jill Carruthers, Exhibitions Coordinator (2013-14)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... approached storytelling and self-publishing. It was so intense and revolutionary for my practice. I've never minded before to be able to make a reportage and I made it! - 2014

Andrea Abbatangelo, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... started my current series of work: RDLDN Project RadioLondon (projectradiolondon.org). - 2014

Andrea Abbatangelo, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was commissioned to create a photographic series around Liverpool's Chinatown. I spent most of my time shooting from the shadows or from obscure places, waiting for people to walk into frame. - 2014

Jamie Lau, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... didn't need to hang the show as the gallery installed everything. The prints were displayed perfectly. It was a revelation as this was the first time I'd ever been in a show where I didn't have to install myself. - 2014

Jamie Lau, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had the opportunity to confirm that photography can be much more than images. - 2014

Ira Lombardia, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... realised that photography is today the most accessible, immediate and effective tool for transnational storytelling. - 2014

Lorenzo Fusi, Director (2013-15)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... had the opportunity to experience the importance and power of the pointing or returning a gaze, and fully understand the difference between viewing and seeing.

Lorenzo Fusi, Director (2013-15)

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given my first proper (paid) exhibition. I had just graduated from my MA, and it was an honour to be a part of. - 2015

Billy Macrae, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... gave my first public lecture about my work. I was amazed to see people turning up to hear me talk. It was a fantastic experience. - 2015

Billy Macrae, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... felt like I was taken seriously as a creative practitioner. - 2015

Billy Macrae, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was amazed to be selected for an exhibition alongside some very distinguished photographers. - 2015

Billy Macrae, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was treated respectfully and patiently by staff at the gallery. - 2015

Billy Macrae, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... got to show and see my work with fresh eyes, because of the production support and the wonderful space for exhibiting. - 2015

Louis Quail, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... got to feel the warmth of an interconnected community: fellow artists, the gallery and its staff and the people of Liverpool. - 2015

Louis Quail, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... got a sense that my work was respected. - 2015

Louis Quail, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... showed when I was 40 (1988) and again when I was 70 (2015). We have grown up together. - 2015

Richard Ross, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where... they are open to give young people a chance. Where do you begin when you're at the start of your art career? Open Eye is a good listener and never afraid to take a chance on starting artists! - 2015

Ted Onk, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was taken seriously. Open Eye treats every artist young and old, famous or not with the same respect. With this they built a steady base for equal conversation and interaction. - 2016

Ted Onk, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... sobbed in the loos, touched by Matthew Finn's gentle images of his mum ageing. Scared for when my mum loses her independence. - 2016

Sophie Colligan, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... found a life, a new life, a life that will open shut doors. - 2016

John Culvin, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... come to see some interesting photography. - 2016

David Evans, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... first tackled photography as an interstitial realm, an interlude, between art and non-art, between past and present, between reality and fiction, between documentary and fine-art. - 2016

Edgar Martins, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... made a significant transition in my creative trajectory, signalling my growing inclination towards a broader, more hybrid perspective of the practice of photography and the experience of images. - 2016

Edgar Martins, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... found a novel cure for a hangover by spending one Sunday afternoon discussing death at Edgar Martin's exhibition. - 2016

Rob Baker, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... learned that photography can be sculpture and sculpture can be photography. - 2016

Nicola Dale, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... saw how productive and pro-active collaboration can be. - 2016

Stephen Illes, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited my first book made in collaboration with a group of young inspiring artists.

Thom Isom, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was encouraged to experiment, play and challenge audiences.

Thom Isom, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given the opportunity to work alongside an exceptional group of great artists and photographers and be able to realise a body of work '*I Used to Think You Were Normal*' into its first complete physical form. - 2016

Sam Hutchinson, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was hugely impressed by the work of the children from SLICE workshop programme after helping them to produce a series of images created and manipulated in the gallery. - 2016

Sam Hutchinson, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was honoured to represent the Gallery as their Photographer in Residence, giving me a space to feel comfortable and be productive. - 2016

Phoebe Kiely, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was built a darkroom, allowing me to print for countless hours from which hundreds of prints emerged, giving me an immense sense of purpose. - 2016

Phoebe Kiely, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was given my first exhibition. I was given a voice throughout. I grew more as an artist during that exhibition than I ever had before. - 2016

Phoebe Kiely, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... gained valuable experiences, knowing my work was hanging in the same gallery as notable artists has given me encouragement beyond words. - 2016

Phoebe Kiely, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... evolved, each day of my residency new work emerged, every minute of my time there gave me immense joy. I am so thankful for the experience. - 2016

Phoebe Kiely, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... go to see some of the best contemporary photographs. I was amazed by the work of Tereza Zelenkova. - 2016

John Merrall, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... test my intellectual mind on art and culture. - 2016

Tiegan Shaw, Visitor

Open Eye Gallery, where I... was honoured to show my project. The place where Open Eye is now is historically, locally and politically important for our time. It was the destination of all political actions and marches, from school students to dockers. - 2016

Koki Tanaka, Artist

Open Eye Gallery, where I... poured soup on the floor of the philharmonic, scaled a mountain with studio lights, involved Merseyside Police - all to reflect the stories of my collaborators living with dementia. - 2016

Tadhg Devlin, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... exhibited in the 1980 group show and in '*Flowers and Gardens*' (1984) '*Last Resort*' (1985) all in the original gallery in Whitechapel. Rainhill pictures in Bold Street (1989), '*All Zones Off Peak*' in Wood Street (1999), and Pier Head images due to be show in 2018. - 2016

Tom Wood, Photographer

Open Eye Gallery, where I... have the privilege of working in an era when billions of people are using photography to curate and share their lives and when the expertise of photographers can make real difference to communities.

Sarah Fisher, Director (2015-Present)

Open Eye Gallery, where I...
Share your experiences #OEG40

OPEN EYE GALLERY

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Opening Times:
Tuesday - Sunday
10am - 5pm

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