

HOPE



PLATFORM

Issue Three:

Hope

At the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020, PLATFORM was handed over to a new team. The original publication displayed the creative talents of the Open Eye Gallery volunteers. We wanted to continue this vision whilst addressing the unusual times we found ourselves in. In such creatively challenging times, how could we not focus on the wonderful art produced?

Our aim for the previous issue of PLATFORM, titled 'The New Normal,' was to distil a challenging yet inventive time in history, whilst foregrounding the talents of our volunteers who still managed to create during the lockdown. At a time when the world was in flux, deciding to focus on the idea of 'normality' was a chance to make sense of a seemingly senseless world.

Now, with another lockdown underway, the 'new normal' has lasted far longer than anticipated. Whilst the world around us partially carries on – shops are still open, key workers still power on – those at home have adjusted to the familiar reality of a collective lockdown. Surely, we have always worn masks in large crowds? Was there a time we didn't stand in a socially-distanced queue? We can't quite remember...

Though sometimes it feels disheartening, as if this reality is the only reality, it will not last. For this reason, there is hope. Hope in the everyday. Hope in those carrying on, adjusting, creating. We have even found gratitude in every day: who we love, whom we admire, what we hold dear to us.

So, this edition of PLATFORM focuses on the theme of 'Hope.' As you read on, if you feel like listening to music, take a look at our 'PLATFORM Hope' playlist. You can find this [here](#) or by searching the playlist name on Spotify. We encourage you to think about what brings you hope in these times. Who knows, maybe we'll even put a smile on your face - If we're lucky.

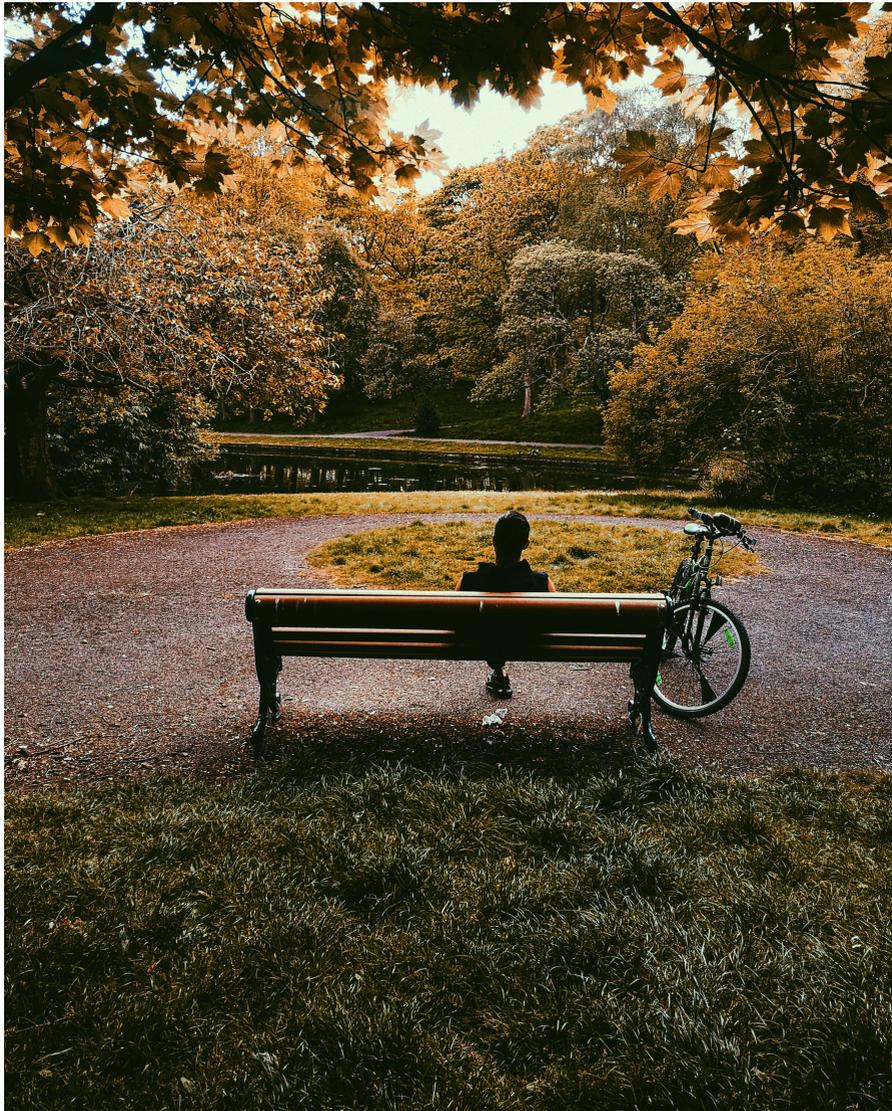
Cover image by Sam Batley

Page one image by Hellen Songa

 @oeg_platform



Hellen Songa



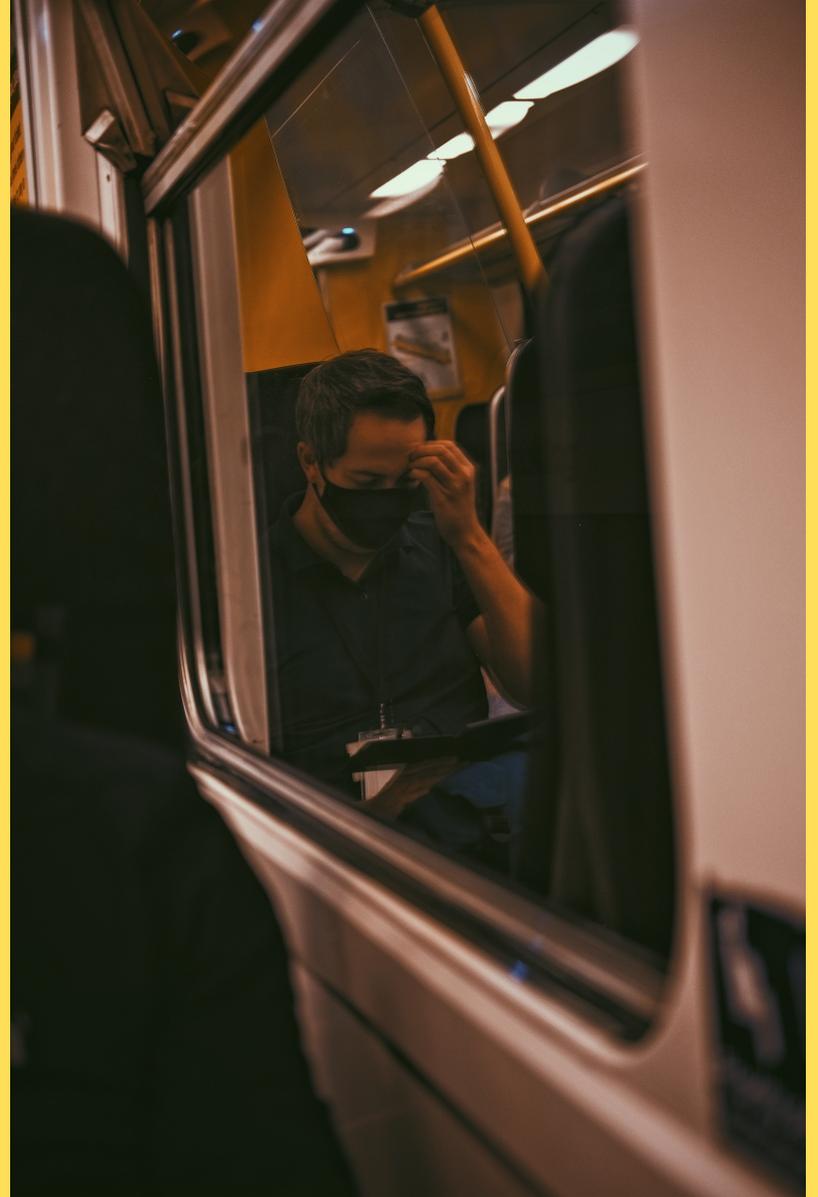
The anarchist in me wants to say that I do not have a particular style. I like to go wherever my body and camera take me, which makes my art quite turbulent. But, ironically, I'm currently drawn to the quietness of sepia tones. Although this may well, I suppose the juxtaposition balances my radical free spirit when I present what I have created.



I am still fairly new to practising photography "seriously," whatever that may suggest. Photography has always been a hobby until last year when I began to consider photography, and photojournalism, as a serious prospect. I am self-taught, practising in the beautifully quirky city of Liverpool. That is, until I am able to broaden my horizons by converting a van and travelling, pursuing new opportunities such as animal photojournalism.

Project name: Wonderment

Project information: My eyes and mind are always allured by people, patterns and the peculiarities of what is a typical twenty-four hour time period. Imagination and creativity are available to us everywhere. This concept gives me hope; the realisation that as long as anything and everything is looked at with curiosity and wonder, each day can be greeted differently.



Asha Mavericks

 @ashamaversphoto

Asha Mavericks is a female photographer from Liverpool. Her work consists of elements from the natural and the man-made world focusing on the shapes and the patterns that occur within.



Sam Batley

 @sambatley



In these times it is easy to be blinded by the dread that lingers overhead. The big picture fails for grim viewing. Spending too much time in a negative mindset, contemplating these huge things leaves me lightheaded, feeling helpless. But I accept the situation and go about my life to the best of my ability.



Underneath our existential mire is reality. The day-to-day. The bit we live in. We still exist alongside Covid-19. Life will go on. But at the same time, daily victories are happening, and this is what I hold dear. Ultimately, this is what makes me hopeful. I'm hopeful of the men I live with and the community I am in. Hope is a feeling that has always been foreign to me, but I can now hold it in my grasp.

Photographing recovery, I see fathers and sons reconcile with love; men facing each day as it comes, to the best of their abilities, smashing through barriers which masculinity put up. The ones we've been brought up within. Saying "I'm not feeling too good lad." There is strength in vulnerability. Accountability and responsibility. I'm hopeful for the lives these men will go on to lead, leaving their old ones behind them. One day at a time.

Samantha Cain

Casey Logue



I took this photograph on my friend's film camera on Bonfire Night 2018 at the Liverpool Docks. I only took one picture and had no idea if I would get "the shot" until many weeks later after the film was developed. At the time of the photograph, I was a part of the heaving crowds of family and friends all gathering to share this spectacle. As everyone gazed upwards towards the fireworks, I looked down. I saw bright faces all smiling at each other; strangers bustling past, apologising for bumping into each other; people's hands intertwined;

children on their parent's shoulders hoping for a better view. I remember in that moment, as the lights of the fireworks bounced off the Merseyside river, feeling an overwhelming sense of joy and warmth.

I think during these uncertain and unstable times, not knowing what the future holds is a common feeling. But those fireworks will return. Until then, we can wait for our own "film" to develop so that one day we are able to look back and think of those who helped us through it.

 @samantharose.cain

something hopeful

you can't help but fall to old thoughts
the time your mum made you flapjack on your birthday
you didn't want cake because it was fattening
(she didn't tell you the flapjack had more sugar)
slipping between those half-strung memories
stepping out into the winter sun, blinking in its cold light
hiding from your dad so you can jump out and scare him
cleaning dust off the skirting boards
cutting your sister's hair with plastic scissors
noticing one day that it's getting lighter in the mornings
the crunch beneath your feet turns to warm sand between
your toes
the soft rippling of the sea
then a creeping: hopeful, of old thoughts left behind
and something different gained

 @kc.logue

Maria Halton

When thinking about hope, what comes to mind is change. As the world is so uncertain at the moment, one of the constants I have found is the changing season. With each season, it brings new hope. Each of the images depicted below represents a different season, and with it, highlights the everyday beauty and hope. With this, I aim to highlight that with every new day, there is hope. After all, we live with change constantly, why not be hopeful?



David Hiney

Hope for a Sustainable Future

As a post-industrial nation, we have many acres of land which are not suitable or economically viable for redevelopment, these include old factory sites and waterways. Some of these have been repurposed as nature reserves and parkland. These images document one such site, Kirklees Ironworks in Wigan. Plants are growing out on what was once a slag heap, the industrial waste is now being re-absorbed into the landscape. Nature is, slowly, reclaiming 'Back is own'.

These photographs have come from a project that fits within a larger ongoing portfolio of projects which investigate the environment in which we live and look at wasted resources and discarding unwanted items in our landscape.





Nompumelelo

Ncube

Fashion Week can be wholesome, contrary to some of the stereotypes. The people you meet and the spaces you are in make you feel both inspired and encouraged. My last in-person fashion week was in June 2019 and it was SS21. I have hope that the return of fashion week for SS22 will be in-person as well, and that it will be sweeter and more exciting because the British Fashion Council decided to combine both men's and women's London Fashion Week. For me, and other creatives, this means more styles to document and more like-minded people to connect with.





One thing which the pandemic has illustrated for the fashion industry, is the environmental impracticalities of having so many runway shows and collections. Alongside this, there has been a heightened level of inclusivity when digitising the shows, so that the experience is online.

This meant that both fashion enthusiasts and ordinary people can bask in the beauty of fashion week too. Though it is sad that fashion week is currently digital, we can still celebrate the positive changes brought about by the industry.

Thank you!



We wanted to quickly pop on here to say thank you for reading PLATFORM and we really appreciate everyone that submitted to this issue.

If you would like to get involved with the next publication, or simply feel like a chat, email us at platform@openeye.org.uk, or alternatively, find us on Instagram at [oeg_platform](https://www.instagram.com/oeg_platform).

We look forward to hearing from you!

Platform Team x

James Thomas Abbott
Sam Batley
Samantha Cain
Maria Halton
David Hiney



