

## ROGER MAYNE 3 MARCH - 11 JUNE 2017

8 December 2016

The Photographers' Gallery presents the first major London exhibition of Roger Mayne's (1929 - 2014) work since 1999.

Roger Mayne is best known for his seminal and pioneering body of work on community life in London's Southam Street in the 1950s and early 60s. Mayne's humanistic approach to his subjects has influenced subsequent generations of photographers and made a significant contribution to post-war British photography.

Self-taught, Mayne counted among his influences Cartier Bresson, Paul Strand (whom he met in Paris) W. Eugene Smith and most notably photographer Hugo van Wadenoyen, who would prove to be an influential mentor throughout his formative years. Moving to London in 1954, Mayne began working for clients including the Observer, Sunday Times, Vogue, Pelican Books and BBC TV. He mixed with diverse artistic circles, corresponding and conversing with a wide range of painters, sculptors, architects, and playwrights. His approach to photography and engagement with the critical discourses of the day were greatly enlivened by these relationships.

It was, however, his admiration for the St Ives scene of Terry Frost, Roger Hilton and Patrick Heron that would have an enduring impact on his life and work, encouraging Mayne to experiment with large photographic prints, mounting methods and installation based exhibitions at a time when there was little or no precedent for this within photography. These methods, alongside his considered and vocal debates on the topic helped to shift photography in Britain from a technical and commercial practice and position it within the wider arts.

In addition to his depictions of Southam Street, the exhibition also features some of Mayne's less well known work from outside the Capital. These include images from his young adulthood in Leeds (early 50s) where Mayne first developed his photographic interests. His early pictures of street life around the city chart his gradual move from pictorialism towards his characteristic realist style.

Between 1961 - 65 Mayne visited the newly developed estate of Park Hill in Sheffield for a variety of commissioned work. The high-rises may seem far from the decay and haphazard life of Southam Street that had previously inspired him, nevertheless, his photographs of the residents conveyed similar empathy and nuance observed in daily social interactions and children at play. In addition to his human subjects Mayne's images were also concerned with the urban environment, capturing the sharp angles, shades and abstract forms of the buildings.

At the Raleigh Cycles in Nottingham (1964), Mayne embraced the dynamic setting and low lighting of the factory to produce a series of dignified portraits of the workers in his distinctive black and white tonality. Restaged for the first time since 1964 is Mayne's pioneering installation *The British at Leisure*. Commissioned by architect Theo Crosby for the Milan Triennale it features 310 colour images projected on five screens to a commissioned jazz score by Johnny Scott.

The Photographers' Gallery  
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Also included in the exhibition are further examples of Mayne's interest in photographic and graphic layouts including magazine spreads, book covers, and photography and poetry books. A selection of Mayne's correspondence testify to his early critically engagement with arguments concerning the contemporary appreciation of photography as an art form and further cement Mayne's significance in the history of British Photography.

The exhibition is co-curated by Anna Douglas and Karen McQuaid and in collaboration with Katkin Tremayne, Roger Mayne's daughter.

#### **Notes for Editors**

##### **The Photographers' Gallery**

The Photographers' Gallery opened in 1971 in Great Newport Street, London, as the UK's first independent gallery devoted to photography. It was the first public gallery in the UK to exhibit many key names in international photography, including Juergen Teller, Robert Capa, Sebastião Salgado and Andreas Gursky. The Gallery has also been instrumental in establishing contemporary British photographers, including Martin Parr and Corinne Day. In 2009, the Gallery moved to 16 – 18 Ramillies Street in Soho, the first stage in its plan to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century home for photography. Following an eighteen months long redevelopment project, the Gallery reopened to the public in 2012. The success of The Photographers' Gallery over the past four decades has helped to establish photography as a recognised art form, introducing new audiences to photography and championing its place at the heart of visual culture.

[www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk](http://www.thephotographersgallery.org.uk)

#### **Visitor Information**

Opening times: Mon – Sat, 10:00 - 18:00; Thu, 10:00 - 20:00; Sun, 11:00 - 18:00

Admission: free until noon (Mon - Sun) and then £4 / £2.5 concessions

Address: 16-18 Ramillies Street, London W1F 7LW

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# THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALJERY

PRESS IMAGES

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**Image 1**  
Roger Manye  
*Boy playing conkers, Addison Place (N. Kensington), 1957*  
© The Roger Mayne Archive  
Courtesv of Bernard Ouaritch Ltd.



**Image 2**  
Roger Mayne  
*Park Hill Estate, Sheffield, 1961*  
© Roger Mayne / Mary Evans Picture Library  
Courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library



**Image 3**  
Roger Mayne  
*Raleigh bicycle factory, Nottingham, 1964*  
© Roger Mayne / Mary Evans Picture Library  
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**Image 4**  
Roger Mayne  
*Two boys in Southam Street, London, 1956*  
© Roger Mayne / Mary Evans Picture Library  
Courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library



**Image 5**  
Roger Mayne  
*Girls dressed up for a 'teenage night' at a Sheffield Club,*  
1961  
© Roger Mayne / Mary Evans Picture Library  
Courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library



**Image 6**  
Roger Mayne  
*Men and boys in Southam Street, London, 1959*  
© Roger Mayne / Mary Evans Picture Library  
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