

HUXLEY-PARLOUR

3-5 Swallow Street, London, W1B 4DE / gallery@huxleyparlour.com

An Ideal for Living: Photographing Class,
Culture and Identity in Modern Britain

27 July - 17 September 2016

Bill Brandt	Charlie Phillips
Martin Parr	Jo Spence
Henri Cartier-Bresson	Syd Shelton
Bruce Davidson	Derek Ridgers
Frank Habicht	Richard Billingham
Neil Libbert	Peter Dench
Philip Jones Griffiths	Tony Ray Jones
Jürgen Schadeberg	Chris Steele-Perkins
E.O. Hoppé	James Morris
Anna Fox Colin Jones	Raymond Depardon
Elliott Erwitt	Thurston Hopkins
Chris Killip	George Rodgers
John Bulmer	



No Loss of Face, Earl's Court, London, c. 1960

An exhibition of photographs about class, custom and identity in modern Britain, An Ideal for Living brings together over twenty of the most eminent photographers to have documented British society from the 1920s to now. A timely consideration of what it means to be British at a point when Britain's place in the world is being questioned, the exhibition will show the many ways in which the British population defines its identity.

Photographs by Bill Brandt and E.O. Hoppé will show the idiosyncrasies of the British class structure in the interwar period, with images of miners, maids and gentlemen in their homes, on the streets and at work whilst Henri Cartier-Bresson's humorous documentation of the crowds during the coronation of King George VI in 1937 takes a sardonic look at a moment of national celebration.

The exhibition will continue to show the shifts in class and group identity in the post-

war period, when life came to be defined by fashion, leisure pursuits and 'modern' living. The libertarian attitudes of the time are displayed in the fashion, design and political activism of the decade as Frank Habicht's images show the spirit of the 1960s and the mantra of 'free love'. John Bulmer provides a very different look at the decade in his photographs of working class communities in the north of England whilst Charlie Phillips' photographs are a pertinent insight into the integration of black communities into British towns and cities. Bruce Davidson's photographs of nannies in Hyde Park and mining communities in Wales seek to show the continuation of British tradition in modern times.

The political unrest of the 1970s is highlighted in Syd Shelton's images of the 1977 Battle of Lewisham, and Phillip Jones Griffiths' powerful photograph of a young soldier's face shrouded by a police shield evokes the human cost of the political turmoil during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Questions of racial identity are addressed in photographs including Neil Libbert's reportage of the 1981 Brixton Riots. Raymond Depardon's raw, cinematic images of Glasgow taken in 1980 radiate with humour despite the bleak surroundings whilst the incisive photographs of Martin Parr and Peter Dench cast a wry eye over the customs of the British summertime. Famous images from Richard Billingham's hard-hitting series Ray's A Laugh address social issues of poverty and alcoholism.

The demarcation of group identity through youth culture will also be a major theme in the exhibition, with photographs by Derek Ridgers showing skinheads during the 1980s and images by Jürgen Schadeberg's showing euphoric, unruly students at a May Ball in Cambridge.

The more recent work of Anna Fox and James Morris considers matters of social identity in contemporary Britain with photographs of the modern British environment, in the countryside and city.

Curator, Flora La Thangue says: 'The expansive historical scope and variety of styles amongst the photographers represented in An Ideal for Living underlies a constant preoccupation with what defines British identity. The exhibition has been curated with the breadth of cultural identities within modern Britain in mind, but also reveals historical and geographical patterns emerging through the photographs.'

For more information and images please contact
Thea Gregory: 0207 434 4319 / thea@huxleyparlour.com

Website: www.huxleyparlour.com

Facebook: [@huxleyparlour](https://www.facebook.com/huxleyparlour)

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