

**THE PICTURE LIBRARY
25 JUN – 26 SEPT 2021**

The Photographers' Gallery, in collaboration with The Guardian Foundation, presents *The Picture Library*, an exhibition of more than 200 images drawn from the legendary Guardian picture library, exploring photojournalism across the 20th Century.

Offering a rare glimpse into the Guardian archive, *The Picture Library* brings together unique working press prints as well as contact sheets, editing notes and other newspaper ephemera, illuminating the behind-the-scenes workings of a traditional picture desk and charting the development of photojournalism. The exhibition also provides a startling insight into many of the major cultural and political preoccupations which have played out in the UK in recent years – race, gender, feminism, nationalism, immigration, post-colonialism, globalisation and the climate crisis – offering a unique opportunity to consider the role photojournalism plays within a rapidly changing society and how images can be mobilised in the service of a free and, in the case of the Guardian, liberal press.

Taking place in the year The Guardian celebrates its 200th anniversary and The Photographers' Gallery its 50th, *The Picture Library* delves into the extensive Guardian archive to present rarely seen vintage treasures, agency wire photos and classic examples of the work of numerous Guardian staff 'snappers'. The broad range of photographs on display attest to the Guardian's liberal stance, everything from gay rights marches, riots, demonstrations, strikes, political rallies and social deprivation.

The Manchester Guardian published its first photograph in 1905 (a half-tone of the Angel Stone in Manchester Cathedral) and the first staff photographer, Walter Doughty, was appointed three years later alongside the formation of a dedicated picture library. The appetite for, and prominence of, photography in the newspaper increased in the 1960s, with the introduction of feature-spreads and colour supplements – enabled by the ubiquity of the 35mm camera.

While some of the images on display in the exhibition were taken by celebrated photographers, for example Cecil Beaton and Yousuf Karsh, the exhibition mirrors the non-hierarchical nature of the library itself,

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which filed images according to 'subject' and 'personality', with images once deemed significant or newsworthy presented alongside the obscure, the unfamiliar and the strange.

The endless annotations on these working images - captions, bylines, rights' holder, cropping instructions, date of each publication, and sometimes even the article itself - shed light on the complex relationship between image and text. Detached from their original context, these photographs can now be appreciated as complex historical artefacts in their own right.

The Picture Library is conceived and co-curated by The Guardian Archive's founder, Luke Dodd with TPG's Senior Curator Karen McQuaid. Luke Dodd established The Guardian Archive in 2002 and has published several books on the work of Jane Bown, the legendary Observer photographer. In 2016, he curated *Easter Rising 1916: Sean Sexton Collection* at The Photographers' Gallery.

A newly commissioned framing essay by Nesrine Malik, Guardian columnist and author of *'We Need New Stories: Challenging the Toxic Myths Behind Our Age of Discontent'*, will accompany the exhibition, alongside a dedicated programme of talks and events.

The Picture Library opens alongside the *Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2021*, an exhibition of the four shortlisted artists nominated for the 2021 prize: Poulomi Basu, Alejandro Cartagena, Cao Fei and Zineb Sedira.

-ENDS-

Press Contacts

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Notes for Editors

The Photographers' Gallery: 50 Years

2021 marks the 50th anniversary of The Photographers' Gallery. Founded in 1971 by Sue Davies, OBE, as the UK's first public gallery dedicated to the photographic medium, TPG has over the last five decades played a pivotal role in championing photography's position as a leading artistic and cultural form as well as providing an invaluable centre for the exhibition and support of photographers and photography from across the globe.

Over the course of 2021, the Gallery is staging a special series of exhibitions and events to mark this significant anniversary; reflecting on its legacy and impact over the last five decades and looking towards the future of photography in a rapidly changing world.

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, Sebastiano 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 21st 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

Visitor Information

(As of 20 May, please check website for latest opening information)

Mon - Wed 10.00 - 18.00

Thu - Fri 10.00 - 20.00

Sat 10.00 - 19.00

Sun 11.00 - 18.00

Social media

Instagram: @thephotographersgallery

Twitter: @TPGallery

Facebook: @ThePhotographersGalleryLDN

**The
Guardian**

**THE
PHOTOGRAPHERS'
GALLERY**



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