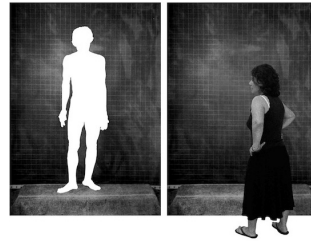


## PRESS RELEASE



A month of photography in  
Sunderland and North East England  
18 October - 16 November 2013

New commissions Irwan Ahmett & Tita Salina | Craig Ames | John Kippin | Sarah Pickering | Simon Roberts | Stuart Whipps

UK premieres Ulf Aminde | Natasha Caruana | Juliet Chenery-Robson | Nick Crowe & Ian Rawlinson | Julian Germain | Chris Harrison | Yee I-Lann | Tim Mitchell | Reynold Reynolds | *The (Post) Colonial Photo Studio* | Thiago Rocha Pitta

*The Social: Encountering Photography* is the first festival of international contemporary photography and lens-based media in north-east England, bringing together new commissions and UK premieres, with iconic bodies of work from leading international practitioners in museums, galleries and found spaces across the region.

*The Social* explores an array of global contemporary concerns, whilst simultaneously revealing the rapid changes that have taken place in photography and lens based media in recent decades. Archive images, found photographs, studio photography, portraiture, documentary, game and internet imagery, video and time-lapse photography investigate subjects ranging from post-colonialism and military conflict, to industrialization, consumerism and social ritual.

Major new commissions for *The Social* include **John Kippin's** large-scale photographic work *Ships That Pass* (2013), an installation for the windows of the National Glass Centre in Sunderland referencing 600 years of global shipbuilding on the River Wear.

**Stuart Whipps'** new video commission *Recorded Amendments: The Carboniferous Epoch* (2013) examines how the North East's three new towns – built during the optimism of post-war Britain - have become landscapes of either mass consumption or high unemployment in a single generation.

In a monumental new work at Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art (NGCA) and on billboards in Sunderland's main thoroughfares, **Simon Roberts** continues his explorations of past and contemporary English landscape, capturing Sunderland residents at leisure, including at former sites of heavy industry such as the Doxford Shipyard, now one of the country's highest indoor climbing walls.

**Tim Mitchell** presents the culmination of five years work in two series; *A Fish Out of Water* follows the 'unbuilding' of one of the largest moveable objects that mankind has ever manufactured – a 20,000 tonne military ship – in Liverpool Docks; *Clothing Recycled* for which Mitchell tracked the long process of clothing recycling, from a Yorkshire warehouse to recycling plants in India and then onward distribution as new blankets for rich and poor.

Ex-soldier and photographic artist **Craig Ames** presents two new projects addressing global conflict and military force in *Kill Zones* (2013), photographic prints of landscapes used for military simulation events whose participants go to great lengths to recreate the 'real' experience of conflict; and *Modern Warfare* (2013), a video projection in which veterans of the Afghanistan campaign complete realistic but virtual combat scenarios on the British army's training simulator whilst recounting their personal experiences of conflict.

A major survey of **Sarah Pickering** at Durham Art Gallery features both new and recent commissions, including *Celestial Objects*, commissioned by Locus+ and the North East Photography Network. Pickering has photographed a revolver being fired in total darkness, each exposure capturing the entirety of a gunshot from start to finish.

At the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art (NGCA) and Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens, *YOU ARE THE COMPANY IN WHICH YOU KEEP* reveals the anthropologically inspired work of over twenty photographers and artists using lens-based media to map out the social networks of the twenty and twenty-first centuries and beyond. UK premieres include **Natasha Caruana's** ongoing series *Fairytale for Sale* (2010-13) which presents images found on websites of women selling their wedding dresses, often with their eyes erased to protect their identities. **Nick Crowe & Ian Rawlinson's** video *The Opera* (2011) fuses YouTube footage of modern warfare with avatar soldiers lip-synching to a 'libretto' derived from US military phrasebooks given to troops prior to overseas deployment; and **Reynold Reynolds** video *The History of the Future* (1996), comprises fifty visions of the future from films of the last 80 years. UK premieres from other artists and photographers include **Ulf Aminde's** *Welcome Home* (2006), in which he asked customers in a Belgian IKEA to act out their best selves in several room sets in the store; **Thiago Rocha Pitta's** video of a burning ship, *Youth* (2007), **Julian German's** short video works, *Classroom Portraits* (2006-13); **Chris Harrison's** *I Belong Jarrow* (2012); and **Yee I-Lann's** *Malaysiana* (2002).

*YOU ARE THE COMPANY IN WHICH YOU KEEP* also includes **Martin Parr's** early *Beauty Spot* series, a gentle satire on the English obsession with 'the

countryside'; **Daniel Meadows** *The Shop on Greame St* (1972), his free photographic studio in Manchester where he asked passers by to present themselves as they would wish to be seen by the world; and **Paul Graham**'s ground-breaking early work on the high unemployment of the late 1970's and early 80's, *Beyond Caring*.

Also at NGCA, *The (Post) Colonial Photo Studio* takes a fresh look at the studio portraiture that developed during periods of colonial rule, juxtaposing historical archive material with contemporary photography by artists from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the UK.

On the façade of Sunderland's Old Fire Station building, is *Mimesis 3: Portraits of a Postmodern Illness* (2013) **Juliet-Chenery Robson**'s ongoing photographic exploration of the invisible illness ME, presented here as coolly formal but highly individualized portraits. **Irwan Ahmett** and **Tita Salina**'s new commission *Deleting History* invites Sunderland's residents to become unofficial tour guides, creating a collective photographic record documenting their experiences of Sunderland, and elsewhere, new photographic work on billboards, advertising screens, shop windows and hoardings by **David Bate**, **Harry Hall**, **Paul Knox**, **Melanie Manchot** and **Arabella Plouviez**. Sunderland Minster also hosts a programme of exhibitions, events and screenings throughout *The Social*.

*THE SOCIAL: ENCOUNTERING PHOTOGRAPHY* is presented by the North East Photography Network in partnership with the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art and funded by Arts Council England through Grants for the Arts, National Lottery.

**For further information please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on [janettescottartspr@gmail.com](mailto:janettescottartspr@gmail.com) or +44(0)7966 486156.**

**In Janette Scott's absence (12 August – 5 September) contact the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art - Alistair Robinson on [alistair.robinson@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.robinson@sunderland.gov.uk) or 0191 561 8478 / 07867 808535, or the Northern Centre of Photography – Amanda Ritson on [amanda.ritson@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:amanda.ritson@sunderland.ac.uk) or 0191 515 3095 or Carol McKay on [carol.mckay@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:carol.mckay@sunderland.ac.uk) or 0191 515 3545 / 07545 810328.**

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

***THE SOCIAL*, 28 September – 23 November 2013, Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art,**

**Fawcett Street, Sunderland SR1 1RE [www.ngca.co.uk](http://www.ngca.co.uk)**

*You Are the Company in Which You Keep*: Craig Ames, Ulf Aminde, Haley Austin, Natasha Caruana, Nick Crowe & Ian Rawlinson, Melanie Friend, Gilbert & George, Paul Graham, Nigel Henderson, Jeremy Hutchinson, Bob Jardine, James O Jenkins, Linder, Daniel Meadows, Gustav Metzger, Tim Mitchell, Martin Parr, Reynold Reynolds, Simon Roberts, Thiago Rocha Pitta, Jo Spence, John Stezaker, Homer Sykes and Stuart Whipps.

*The (Post) Colonial Photo Studio*: Adytama Pranada (Indonesia), Risang Yuwono (Indonesia), Helen Marshall (UK), Dow Wasiksiri (Thailand), Yee I-Lann (Malaysia). Curated by Alex Supartono (Indonesia / UK).

**THE SOCIAL, 18 October 2013 –23 February 2014, Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens,  
Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR1 1PP. [www.twmuseums.org.uk/sunderland.html](http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/sunderland.html)  
*You Are the Company in Which You Keep*: Julian Germain, Yee I-Lann and Chris Harrison**

Other artists/photographers participating in *The Social* are listed below.

### **THE SOCIAL, artists and venues in Sunderland, Durham, Newcastle and Washington**

#### **Sunderland**

National Glass Centre: **John Kippin**, *Ships That Pass*, 18 October 2013 – 27 November 2013, Liberty Way, Sunderland, SR6 0GL [www.nationalglasscentre.com](http://www.nationalglasscentre.com)

The Bridges, **Simon Roberts**, Market Square, Sunderland, SR1 3DR: Simon Roberts, 18 October – 17 November 2013

The Old Fire Station: **Juliet Chenery-Robson**, 18 October – 16 November 2013, Dun Cow Street, Sunderland. Daylight viewing recommended.

Design Centre Gallery: Mimeses North Photography Collective, 28 October – 6 December 2013, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR1 3SD

Holy Trinity Church: **Damien Wootten** - East Sunderland Photographic Residency, 18 October – 8 November 2013, Church Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2BB

Priestman Gallery, University of Sunderland: **Shahidul Alam**, 18 October – 16 November 2013, First floor, Priestman Building, Green Terrace, Sunderland, SR1 3PZ

thePlace: THE SOCIAL video programme and installation, 18 October – 16 November 2013, Ground floor, Athaeneum Street, Sunderland, SR1

Sunderland Minster: THE SOCIAL slide-shows, exhibitions and screenings, 18 October – 16 November, High Street West, Sunderland SR1 3ET

#### **Durham**

Durham Art Gallery: **Sarah Pickering / Louise Taylor**, 17 October – 17 November. Aykley Heads, Durham, DH1 5TU.

<http://county.durham.gov.uk/sites/dli/Pages/ArtGalleryHomepage.aspx>

#### **Washington**

Arts Centre Washington: **Michele Allen**, 14 October – 4 January 2014. Biddick Lane, Fatfield, Washington, NE38 8AB. [www.artscentrewashington.co.uk](http://www.artscentrewashington.co.uk)

#### **Newcastle**

The NewBridge Project/PH Space: *Treasure Hunters*, 18 October – 16 November 2013. 18 New Bridge Street West, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AW.

[www.thenewbridgeproject.com](http://www.thenewbridgeproject.com)

Side Gallery: new commissioned works, 18<sup>th</sup> October – 16<sup>th</sup> November. 5-9 Side, Newcastle, NE1 3JE. [www.amber-online.com/sections/side-gallery](http://www.amber-online.com/sections/side-gallery)

#### **NORTH EAST PHOTOGRAPHY NETWORK**

The North East Photography Network was established in 2009 to create a network of people involved in high quality, critically engaged photographic practice in North East England. As well as supporting emerging photographers they aim to create opportunities for established photographers to produce, discuss and disseminate the highest quality photographic work so as to further a dynamic and innovative photographic culture in the region. The NEPN is an initiative of and is hosted by the Northern Centre of Photography at the University of Sunderland. [www.northeastphoto.net](http://www.northeastphoto.net)

#### **NORTHERN GALLERY FOR CONTEMPORARY ART**

Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art presents changing exhibitions of new work by artists from around the world, bringing new art to new audiences. It offers opportunities to emerging and established artists to present work at critical points in their careers and gives audiences the chance to see the stars of tomorrow today. [www.ngca.co.uk](http://www.ngca.co.uk)



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

