



PRESS RELEASE
4 February 2019

DON McCULLIN

5 February – 6 May 2019

Tate Britain, Level 2 Galleries

Supported by the Don McCullin Exhibition Supporters Circle and Tate Patrons

Open daily 10.00 – 18.00

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Tate Britain presents a major retrospective of the legendary British photographer Sir Don McCullin. Renowned as one of Britain's greatest living photographers, McCullin has captured images of conflict from around the world including Vietnam, Northern Ireland, Lebanon and Biafra. Often taken at great personal risk, these unforgettable photographs will be shown alongside McCullin's work in documentary photography, his travel assignments and his long term engagement with landscape and still life. With over 250 photographs, all printed by the artist himself in his own darkroom, this exhibition is a unique opportunity to see the scope and achievements of McCullin's career.

Don McCullin began taking photographs in the 1950s, documenting his surroundings and local community in his native Finsbury Park, London. In 1958 his photograph *The Gvnors*, a portrait of a notorious local gang, was published in *The Observer*, launching his career as a photojournalist. Working first for *The Observer* and then *The Sunday Times Magazine*, McCullin went on to capture major conflicts around the world from Vietnam and the Congo to Cyprus and Beirut. The exhibition includes some of McCullin's most iconic photographs including *Shell-shocked US Marine*, *The Battle of Hue 1968*, *Starving Twenty Four Year Old Mother with Child*, *Biafra 1968* and *Northern Ireland*, *The Bogside*, *Londonderry 1971*. Alongside McCullin's hand-printed silver gelatin prints, the exhibition also includes the photographer's magazine spreads, contact sheets, his helmet and the Nikon camera which took a bullet for him in Cambodia.

While McCullin has been best known as a photojournalist and war correspondent, he has also consistently engaged in documentary photography in Britain, depicting scenes of poverty and working class life in London's East End and the north of England. From the homeless and disenfranchised population of Whitechapel in the 1970s to the industrial landscapes of Bradford, Liverpool and Durham, McCullin has exposed changing social conditions in the UK. These works are shown alongside other photographs taken around the country, including character studies of people at the seaside and at Ascot.

McCullin has also been influenced by the meditative landscapes of the British countryside, particularly Somerset, where he has lived for the past 30 years. Still lifes and landscapes became a focus for McCullin from the 1980s onwards. He immersed himself in the huge panoramas within walking distance of his home while his still lifes, taken mostly in his kitchen, are an exploration of light, texture and composition.

McCullin's most recent photographs for his ongoing project 'Southern Frontiers' connects the two key strands of his work: conflict and landscape. For years, McCullin has been documenting the physical remains of the Roman Empire in the north African and Levantine landscapes, including the ancient site of Palmyra. He returned to Syria last year to document the deliberate destruction and demolitions undertaken by the so called Islamic State. The exhibition ends with these powerful works including *The theatre on the Roman city of Palmyra, partly destroyed by Islamic State fighters 2017*.

Don McCullin is curated by Simon Baker, Director of The Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris, with Shoair Mavlian, Director of Photoworks, assisted by Aïcha Mehrez, Assistant Curator of Contemporary British Art, Tate Britain. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue and a programme of talks and events in the gallery.

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RELATED EVENTS

In Conversation: Don McCullin and Lionel Barber

21 February 2019, 18.30 – 20.00

Don McCullin will discuss his remarkable career with Lionel Barber, editor of the *Financial Times* and Chair of Tate. There will also be a chance for audience questions and contributions.

Study Day: Ethics and Images

9 March 2019, 12.00 – 18.00

This day-long series of discussions and activities explores the complex ethical questions related to photography and other forms of contemporary image-making. The event includes a visit to the exhibition *Don McCullin*, analysis of leading theorists, and presentations by guest speakers.

BSL Tour: Don McCullin

16 March 2019, 11.00 – 13.00

Join guide Deepy Chana for a British Sign Language tour of the exhibition.

Audio Description Tour: Don McCullin

18 March 2019, 11.00 – 12.30

Blind and partially sighted visitors are invited to join an Audio Described tour of the exhibition.

Curator's Talk: Don McCullin

Monday 1 April, 18.30-19.30. Private view: 19.30-20.30

Clore Auditorium, plus exhibition

Talk by curator Aicha Mehrez followed by private view.

Exhibition Tour: Don McCullin: Reading Images

Friday 12 April, 18.30-20.30

In the exhibition

Exhibition tour led by Sam McGuire (Interpretation) & Christopher Griffin (Research). Focus on relationship between DM's photos and the texts that have accompanied them.

In Conversation: Vietnam: Images of a Nation

Thursday 26 April, 18.30-20.00

Clore Auditorium

£12, Concessions £8

Join art historian Mignon Nixon in conversation with artists Sung Tieu and Jacqueline Hoang Nguyen as they discuss how notions of Vietnam been shaped by images of conflict.