

MARTIN PARR

Introduction

Martin Parr is a chronicler of our age. In the face of the constantly growing flood of images released by the media, his photographs offer us the opportunity to see the world from his unique perspective.

At first glance, his photographs seem exaggerated or even grotesque. The motifs he chooses are strange, the colours are garish and the perspectives are unusual. Parr's term for the overwhelming power of published images is "propaganda". He counters this propaganda with his own chosen weapons: criticism, seduction and humour. As a result, his photographs are original and entertaining, accessible and understandable. But at the same time they show us in a penetrating way that we live, how we present ourselves to others, and what we value.

Leisure, consumption and communication are the concepts that this British photographer has been researching for several decades now on his worldwide travels. In the process, he examines national characteristics and international phenomena to find out how valid they are as symbols that will help future generations to understand our cultural peculiarities. Parr enables us to see things that have seemed familiar to us in a completely new way. In this way he creates his own image of society, which allows us to combine an analysis of the visible signs of globalisation with unusual visual experiences. In his photos, Parr juxtaposes specific images with universal ones without resolving the contradictions. Individual characteristics are accepted and eccentricities are treasured.

The themes Parr selects and his inimitable treatment of them set him apart as a photographer whose work involves the creation of extensive series. Part of his unusual strategy is to present and publish the same photos in the context of art photography, in exhibitions and in art books, as well as in the related fields of advertising and journalism. In this way, he transcends the traditional separation of the different types of photography. Thanks to this integrative approach, as well as his style and his choice of themes, he has long served as a model for the younger generation of photographers.

Martin Parr sensitises our subconscious – and once we've seen his photographs, we keep on discovering these images over and over again in our daily lives and recognising ourselves within them. The humour in these photographs makes us laugh at ourselves, with a sense of recognition and release.

Thomas Weski

Biography

Martin Parr was born in Epsom, Surrey, UK, in 1952. When he was a boy, his budding interest in the medium of photography was encouraged by his grandfather George Parr, himself a keen amateur photographer.

Martin Parr studied photography at Manchester Polytechnic, from 1970 to 1973.

Since that time, Martin Parr has worked on numerous photographic projects. He has developed an international reputation for his innovative imagery, his oblique approach to social documentary, and his input to photographic culture within the UK and abroad.

In 1994 he became a full member of Magnum Photographic Corporation.

Martin developed an interest in filmmaking, and has started to use his photography within different conventions, such as fashion and advertising.

In 2002 the Barbican Art Gallery and the National Media Museum initiated a large retrospective of Martin Parr's work. This show toured Europe for the next 5 years.

Martin Parr was Professor of Photography at The University of Wales Newport campus from 2004 to 2012.

Martin Parr was Guest Artistic Director for Rencontres D'Arles in 2004.

In 2006 Martin Parr was awarded the Erich Salomon Prize and the resulting Assorted Cocktail show opens at Photokina.

In 2008 Martin Parr was guest curator at New York Photo Festival, curating the New Typologies exhibition.

Parrworld opened at Haus de Kunst, Mucich, in 2008. The show exhibited Parr's own collection of objects, postcards, his personal photography collection of both British and International artists, photo books and finally his own photographs. The exhibition toured Europe for the following 2 years.

At PhotoEspana, 2008, Martin Parr wins the Baume et Mercier award in recognition of his professional career and contributions to contemporary photography.

Martin Parr curated the Brighton Photo Biennial that took place in October 2010.

In 2013, Martin was appointed visiting Professor of Photography at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland.

More recently Martin has been working on a 4-year project documenting the Black Country, an area of the English West Midlands, in conjunction with Multistory. Phaidon publishes the third volume of the highly influential History of the Photobook in Spring 2014 and Martin is also working on a book about the History of Chinese Photobooks to be published by Aperture in late 2014.

Martin Parr has published over 80 books of his own work and edited another 30.

Selected Exhibitions

c = catalogue or associated publication

- 1974c Home Sweet Home, Impressions Gallery, York, United Kingdom
- 1976 Beauty Spots, Impressions Gallery, York, United Kingdom and tour
- 1978 This is Your Life, South Pennine Information Centre, Hebden Bridge, United Kingdom
- 1981 The Non-Conformists, Camerawork, London, United Kingdom
- 1982c Bad Weather, Photographer's Gallery, London, United Kingdom and tour
- 1984c A Fair Day, Orchard Gallery, Derry, Ireland and tour
- 1986c The Last Resort, Serpentine Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 1993c A Year in the Life of Chew Stoke, Chew Stoke Village Hall, United Kingdom
- 1993c Bored Couples, Gallery du Jour, Paris, France and subsequent tour
- 1993c Home and Abroad, Watershed Gallery, Bristol, United Kingdom and tour
- 1994c From A to B, 27 Welcome Break service stations, United Kingdom
- 1995c Small World, The Photographer's Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 1995 Home and Abroad, International Photography Meeting, Plovdiv, Bulgaria
- 1998c Ooh La La, National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, Bradford, United Kingdom
- 1999c Common Sense, Rocket Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2002c The Phone Show, Rocket Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2002c Retrospective, Martin Parr Photoworks 1971 - 2000, Barbican Art Gallery
- 2005c Life along the A8 Corridor, The Lighthouse, Glasgow, United Kingdom
- 2008 ParrWorld, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
- 2009 Planete Parr, Jeu De Paumme, Paris, France
- 2012c Souvenir, CCCB, Barcelona, Spain
- 2012c Life's a Beach, Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, France
- 2012c No Worries, part of Fotofreo, Western Australian Maritime Museum, Freemantle, Australia
- 2013 Martin Parr / Retrospective, Galerie Paris-Beijing, Brussels, 2013
- 2013c Only in England (The Non-Conformists) with Tony Ray-Jones, The Media Space, London, United Kingdom
- 2014c Martin Parr's Paris, MEP, Paris, France
- 2014 Life's a Beach and Machu Picchu, Lima Photo Biennial, Lima, Peru

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1971 Students of Manchester Polytechnic, Kendal Milne department store, Manchester, United Kingdom
- 1972 Butlins by the Sea (with Daniel Meadows), Impressions Gallery, York, United Kingdom
- 1973 Serpentine 73, Serpentine Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 1978c Art for Society, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 1986 British Contemporary Photography, Houston Foto Festival, USA
- 1989c Through the Looking Glass, British photography 1945-1989, Barbican Centre, London, United Kingdom
- 1989c The Art of Photography, Royal Academy, London, United Kingdom
- 1991c British Photography from the Thatcher Years, MOMA, New York, USA
- 1996 Who's Looking at the Family?, Barbican, London, United Kingdom
- 2003 Cruel & Tender, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom
- 2006c Click Double Click, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
- 2008c Street & Studio, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom
- 2008c No Such Thing As Society: Photography in Britain 1968-1987, Tullie House, Carlisle, United Kingdom
- 2008 No Such Thing As Society: Photography in Britain 1968-1987, Leeds City Art Gallery, Leeds, United Kingdom
- 2009c Georgian Spring, Uferallen, Berlin, Germany
- 2012c Glam! The Performance of Style, Tate Liverpool, United Kingdom
- 2014 Open For Business, National Media Museum, Bradford, United Kingdom
- 2014 Playgrounds, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain

Curated Exhibitions

- 1986 British Contemporary Photography, Houston Photo Festival, USA
- 1989c The Actual Boot, curated with Jack Stadiak, exhibition of British early photographic postcards. National Museum of Photography, Bradford, United Kingdom
- 1991c Hindsight, Retrospective of John Hinde studio, Curated with David Lee and Declan McGonagle, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland
- 1996 Young British Photography. Gallery du Jour, Paris, France
- 2002c Martin Parr's Postcards, including Butlins images by John Hinde. Arles, France
- 2002c Our true intent is all for your delight. The John Hinde Butlin's Photographs, The photographers Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2004c Arles Festival, France, Artistic direction by Martin Parr, 23 exhibitions and 3 evening shows.
- 2005 Keld Helmer-Petersen, Arles Festival, France
- 2006c Retrospective of David Goldblatt, Arles Festival, France
- 2007 Colour Before Colour. Early colour photography from Europe, Hasted Hunt Gallery, New York, USA
- 2008 New Typologies, New York Photo Festival, USA
- 2010c Brighton Photo Biennial, Brighton, United Kingdom
- 2011c From Here On, Arles Festival, France, curated with Clement Cheroux, Joan Fontcuberta, Erik Kessels and Joachim Schmid.
- 2012 Painted Photographs, Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, United Kingdom
- 2012 Richard Simpkin and Simone Lueck: Richard & Famous, Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, United Kingdom
- 2013c Only in England, The Media Space, London, United Kingdom

Collections

Arts Council of Great Britain
Union Bank of Finland, Helsinki
Museum for Fotokunst, Odense, Denmark
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom
George Eastman House, Rochester, USA
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France
Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA
Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
Calderdale Council, Halifax, United Kingdom
Getty Museum, Malibu, USA
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, United Kingdom
Kodak, France
Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany
Seagrams Collection, New York, USA
Museum of Modern Art, Tampere, Finland
British Council, London, United Kingdom
Irish Arts Council, Ireland
Australian National Gallery, Australia
Paris Audiovisual, France
Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany
Yokohama Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, USA
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom
National Centre for Contemporary Arts, Moscow
National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires
Archive of Modern Conflict, London, United Kingdom
The Public, West Bromwich, United Kingdom
Gemeentemuseum, Helmond, The Netherlands
Irish Museum of Modern Art, Ireland
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, USA
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA
Minneapolis Institute of Arts, USA
Guernsey Museums, The Channel Islands

Prizes and Awards

- 1986 3rd Prize European Photography Awards.
- 1995 Wilkins Photography Prize.
- 2003 Photo Espana book prize for " Martin Parr, by Val Williams."
- 2005 Honorary FRPS. Royal Photographic Society.
- 2006 Eric Solomon Award for Photojournalism, Photokina.
- 2006 Moscow House of Photography, International photography prize.
- 2006 Honorary Masters degree, University of Creative Arts, Farnham.
- 2007 Krasna Kraus book prize for "Photobook, A History, Vol 1&2" with Gerry Badger.
- 2008 Photo Espania Award for Photographic achievement.
- 2008 Japanese Photographic Society, International Award for contribution towards promoting Japanese photographic book publishing.
- 2008 Centenary Award, Royal Photographic Society.
- 2008 Honorary Degree, Manchester Metropolitan University.
- 2008 Photo Espania lifetime achievement prize

Film and TV by Martin Parr

- 1992 Home and Abroad (30 minute AV for Arles Festival)
- 1998 Princess's People (72 minutes) Mosaic Films for BBC2. Martin Parr was one of 12 filmmakers who contributed to this survey of the funeral of Princess Diana
- 1999 Vyvian's Hotel (30 minutes) Mosaic Films for BBC 2
- 1999 Martin Parr's Moving Pictures. UK Shorts 12 x 2-minute films produced by Mosaic Films for BBC 2. Mosaic Films Contact: colin@mosaicfilms.com
- 2002 London, Pet Shop Boys video, Mosaic Films for Parlapone
- 2006 It's Nice Up North with John Shuttleworth. A spoof documentary by John Shuttleworth with camera work and filming by Martin Parr. (79 minutes). www.shuttleworths.co.uk
- 2011 Teddy Grays, For Goodness Sake. A documentary about the Teddy Gray's sweet factory in the Black Country. Commissioned by Multistory (20 minutes)
- 2013 Mark goes to Mongolia. This film follows Black Country pigeon auctioneer, breeder and entrepreneur Mark Evans to Baotou in Inner Mongolia Commissioned by Multistory. (43 minutes)
- 2013 Tudor Crystal. A film about this glass blowing company. Commissioned by Multistory. (32 minutes).
- 2014 Turkey and Tinsel. Martin joins a coach trip from Walsall to Weston Super Mare. Commissioned by Multistory. (45 minutes).

Film and TV about Martin Parr

- 1986 Point of Sale (Late Review, BBC2)
- 1996 Martin Parr and the ladies of the valley. Try Again production for BBC Wales (40 minutes). A film about Martin's first try at making his own films. Directed by Michael Darlow
- 1997 November The Pier Food Art (ITV)
- 1998 Mariella Frostrup's Brunch. Channel 4
- 1998 Ooh la la (ADT for Channel 4)
- 1999 Desperately seeking Shiny. (Gauntlet Pictures for HTV) 30 minute film about Martin Parr
- 1999 Arena 100 for UK Arena (BBC cable): Last Resort by Tim Marlow
- 1999 Happy Days Media Towns, Tokyo CDRom. Survey of Parr's recent work, available from Media Towns
- 2002 Contacts Martin Parr (Arte France) KS Visions Director Francoise Marie and Jean-Pierre Krief
- 2003 The Magic Moment. Film by Hank Onrust for VPRO, Netherlands, (60 mins)
- 2003 The World of Martin Parr BBC1. Film Rebecca Frayn , (45 minutes)
- 2003 Tate Shots. Part of the Tate's series about art at the Tate and beyond.
- 2004 Radio Libre, France Culture. By Natacha Wolinski, to co-incide with Rencontres D'Arles. (120 minutes).
- 2006 Agenda - Essay for Magnum In Motion.
- 2007 L'Art et la Maniere. Martin Parr, Film by Luc Quelin, Arte, (26 mins)
- 2007 The Genius of Photography. Consultant and participant. BBC 4
- 2008 Picture This. Judge. Channel 4.
- 2010 Art of the Sea. A BBC 4 documentary on the response of artists to the British sea.
- 2011 No Worries. David Dare Parker follows Martin while shooting his commission for Fotofreo.
- 2012 Think of Finland. Parr working on a commission about Finland.
- 2012 Hot Spots, One Production Place
- 2013 Instant Parr. Documenting the unique photobook event Parr held in Tokyo.
- 2013 The Last Workshop. Martin held a final workshop before retiring from these events. By Magnum Photos.

Publications

Books By Martin

- Bad Weather, A Zwemmer Ltd, London, 1982.
- Calderdale Photographs, Calderdale Museums Service, UK, 1984.
- Prescot now and then, Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley Leisure Services Department, UK, 1984.
- A Fair Day, Promenade Press, Wallasey, 1984.
- The Last Resort, Promenade Press, Wallasey, 1986.
- The Cost of Living: Cornerhouse Publications, Manchester, 1989.
- One-Day Trip: Editions de la différence, France, 1989.
- Signs of the Times, Cornerhouse Publications, Manchester, 1992.
- Bored Couples, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 1993.
- Home and Abroad, Jonathan Cape, London, 1993 .
- From A to B: BBC Books, London, 1994.
- Small World, Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 1995.
- Quel Monde! (first French version of Small World), Marval, France, 1995.
- British Food, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 1995/1998.
- Japanese Endormis, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 1998.
- The Last Resort, Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 1998/2002.
- Common Sense, Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 1999.
- Sguardi Gardesoni, Edizioni Chartra, Milan, 1999.
- Flowers, Munkedals, Sweden, 1999.
- Benidorm, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, 1999.
- Autoportrait, Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 2000.
- Flowers, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 2000.
- Think of England, Phaidon Press Limited, 2000.
- Martin Parr by Val Williams: Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2002/2003.
- The Phone Book: Rocket Gallery, London, 2002.
- The Phone Book: 20:21, Essen, 2002.
- 7 Communist Still Lives: Nazraeli Press, USA, 2003.
- Signes Des Temps: Textuel, Paris, 2004.
- Think of England (second edition), Phaidon Press Limited, 2004/2005/2006/2007.
- 7 Colonial Still Lives: Nazraeli Press, USA, 2005.
- Martin Parr, vu par, Edition Point de vues, France, 2005.
- Road Trip: Martin Parr and Friends, Sony Ericsson, 2005.
- I Grandi Fotografi Magnum Photos: Martin Parr, Hachette Fascicoli, 2005.
- Mexico: Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2006.

Parrjektif: Mavi Jeans, Istanbul, 2006.

Tutta Roma: Contrasto, Rome, 2006.

Parking Spaces: Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2007.

Small World 2007: Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 2007.

Martin Parr: Witness Number Three, Joy of Giving Something Inc, New York, 2007.

Les grands photographes de MAGNUM PHOTOS: Martin Parr, Hachette, Paris, 2007.

Phaidon 55: Martin Parr, Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 2007.

Martin Parr, 1971-2000 (Retrospective), 2007

Correspondencia, AFA Editions, Chile, 2008.

Petite Planete (revised French version of Small World), Hoelbeke, France, 2008.

Everybody Dance Now: editions2twice, New York, 2009.

Playas, Chris Boot Ltd, London & Editorial RM, Mexico, 2009.

Luxury, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2009.

The Last Resort, Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2009.

Joachim Schmid Is Martin Parr, Martin Parr is Joachim Schmid, Schmid/Blurb, 2009.

Assorted Cocktail, Casal Solleric de Palma, Majorca, 2009.

Martin Parr in India, 1984-2009. PHOTOink, New Delhi, 2010.

The Real World, Kaunas Photography Gallery, Lithuania, 2010.

Parr by Parr, Editions Textuel (French Version), Paris, 2010.

Parr by Parr, Schilt Publishing (English Version), Amsterdam, 2010.

A Book of Kings, Third Millennium Information Ltd, London, 2010.

Six by Six (set 1): Machu Picchu, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2010.

One Day : 10 Photographers, Kehrer Verlag, 2010.

Assorted Cocktail, DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague, 2011.

Japan, Super Labo, Japan, 2011.

Urban Outfitter, Summer Preview 2011, Urban Outfitters, 2011.

Parr by Parr, Tree Media Content (Russian Version), Russia, 2012.

Parr by Parr (Italian Version), Contrasto, 2012

7 Cups of Tea, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2012.

No Worries, T&G Publishing, Australia, 2012.

Up and Down Peachtree, Contrasto, Italy, 2012.

Souvenir, Exhibition Catalogue, CCCB, Barcelona, 2012.

Life's a Beach, Aperture Foundation, New York & Xavier Barral, Paris, 2012.

Life's a Beach (beach bag version), Aperture, 2013

The Non-Conformists, Aperture, 2013

Martin Parr by Sandra S Phillips, Phaidon Press, 2013

Martin Parr by Val Williams (updated Retrospective), Phaidon Press, London, 2014

Grand Paris, Xavier Barral, Paris, France, 2014

Newspapers and Zines by Martin

Partytime, Basler Magazin, 1997
SternSpezial Fotografie: Martin Parr, Hamburg, 2004.
A8: John McAslan + Partners, London, 2005.
Fashion Magazine, Magnum Photos, Paris, 2005.
Rebirth, Stiletto, 2007
LUX: Luxembourg et Grande Region, Luxembourg, 2007
Fashion Newspaper: Magnum Photos, 2007.
Dubai, The Third Line Gallery, Duabi, 2008.
Guardian Cities Project, The Guardian, UK, 2008.
The Art Newspaper, Frieze Art Fair Special, 2008
The Goutte d'Or, L'Institut des Cultures d'Islam, Paris, 2011.
Bristol and West, M Shed, Bristol, 2011.
St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol City Council, Bristol, 2011.
Reporters Without Borders, France, Paris, 2012
Du/Think of Switzerland, 2013
Black Country Women, Multistory, 2013

Artist Books by Martin

Home Sweet Home: Self Published, 1974.
Benidorm: Self Published, 1997.
West Bay, The Rocket Press, Oxfordshire, 1997.
Boring Oregon Photographs: Self-Published, 2000.
Cherry Blossom Time in Tokyo: Eyestorm.com, London, 2001.
Souvenir du Maroc, Self Published, 2001.
Stars and Stripes (New York), Self Published, 2001.
Cruise Memories, Self Published, 2002.
Knokke: Frank Bordas, Paris, 2002.
Love Cube: GUN, Sweden, 2007.
Chinese Wedding Album, Self Published, 2010.
From Tintypes to Teatowels, Rose Gallery, 2011.
Aperture Remix, Aperture, 2012
Instant Parr, Goliga, 2013

Books Edited by Martin

'The Actual Boot': A H Jolly Ltd, Northampton, in association with The National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, 1986.

London 1958-1950: Sergio Larrain, (Edited by Martin Parr and Agnes Sire, Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 1998.

Boring Postcards, Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 1999.

Boring Postcards USA, Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 1999.

Langweilige Postkarten (Boring Postcards Germany), Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 2001.

From our House to your House: Dewi Lewis Publishing, Heaton Moor, 2002.

Our True Intent Is All for Your Delight, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2002.

Bliss: Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2003.

Saddam Hussein Watches, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2004

Lodz Ghetto Album, Chris Boot, London, 2004.

The Photobook: A History Vol. 1 (Edited by Martin Parr & Gerry Badger), Phaidon Press Ltd, London, 2004.

Ed Van der Elsken, My Amsterdam, Der Verbeelding Publishing, Amsterdam, 2005.

David Goldblatt Photographs, Contrasto, Rome, 2006.

The Photobook: A History Vol. 2 (Edited by Martin Parr & Gerry Badger), Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2006.

Darkroom, Michel Campeau: Nazraeli Press, USA, 2007.

Half awake and half asleep in the water, Asako Narahashi, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2007.

Objects, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2008.

Postcards, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2008.

Bureaucratics, Jan Banning, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2008.

School, Raimond Wouda, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2009.

Archivo, Young Photographers Foundation in cooperation with the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam, 2009.

Retratos Pintados, collection of Titus Riedl, Nazraeli Press, USA, 2010.

Grimaces of a Weary Village, Rimaldas Viksraitis, White Space Gallery, London, 2010.

Brighton Photo Biennial 2010, BPB, Brighton, 2010.

Las postales de las familias Garcia Lorca y De los Rios, Caja Madrid, 2010.

Martin Parr's Best Books of the Decade, Photolreland, Dublin, 2011.

La Creciente, Alejandro Chaskielberg Nazraeli Press, USA, 2011.

The Protest Box, Steidl, Germany, 2011.

Our True Intent Is All For Your Delight, Chris Boot Ltd, London, 2011.

The Latin American Photobook, Aperture Oundation, New York, 2011.

C Photo, New Latin Look, Ivorypress, 2012.

Strangely Familiar, Peter Mitchell, 2013.

The Photobook: A History Vol. 3 (Edited by Martin Parr & Gerry Badger), Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2014.