

Street Photography

What difference does colour make?

I think that colour opens up a new range of possibilities that probably wouldn't be suited to Black and White – for example three images by Nils Jorgensen.

Knightsbridge (<http://flakphoto.com/photo/nils-jorgensen-knightsbridge>) and Notting Hill (<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/262053272039976254/>) may have worked as photographs because of the surrealism of the lone shoes, but the vibrancy of the yellow in both photographs really adds to the scene. The viewer is drawn straight away to the colour of the scene and then to the juxtaposition of the shoes – these add to the surprise of the scene rather than it being the main focus.

In (Station) the incongruity of the dress of the man queuing for a ticket is heightened by the colour of the stripes in his poncho, and the fact that the stripes of the poncho reflect the blue of the barrier tape. In Black and White the scene would have been noticeable for the unusual dress sense and the repeated pattern of the stripes of the poncho and the barrier tape. Using colour adds the visual repetition of the blue of the poncho and the tape. Interestingly on his website Nils Jorgensen has separate sections for Colour and for Black and White (<http://www.nilsjorgensen.com/>).

Shift away from surrealism?

Whereas perhaps in Cartier-Bresson's time street photography was mainly restricted to a few western countries (I know Cartier-Bresson travelled extensively in India, but I believe the genre of street photography was mainly concentrated in the West) now the streets of countries across the world are open to Street Photography. For example George Georgiou was born and lives in London but has produced images from Turkey and Ukraine that seem to me to have a very different feel to many of those produced in Western cities – perhaps it is the different lifestyle or the bleakness of some of the surroundings. (<http://www.georgegeorgiou.net/gallery.php?ProjectID=148>).

But this does not mean that surreal images cannot be found in other countries, for example the work of Michael Wolf (who lives in Paris and Hong Kong) seems to me to have many elements of the surreal. (<http://photomichaelwolf.com/#asoue/27> and <http://photomichaelwolf.com/#asoue/11>).

Perhaps therefore street photography has added to its oeuvre those aspects that are simply a comment on everyday life that do not necessarily require a surreal element.

Irony on Britishness or American values

I think the photos of Maciej Dakowicz give a wry comment on the British way of life. At weekends he joined the hundreds of people who are attracted to the centre of Cardiff and turn it into a large alcohol-fuelled playground. (<http://www.maciejdakowicz.com/cardiff-after-dark/cardiff-after-dark-photos/>). 'Late Meal, Cardiff' shows a grotesque scene of people eating fast food, surrounded by

litter - to which they will probably contribute at the end of their meal –following their night of enjoyment. 'Pink Hat, Cardiff' speaks volumes about the British ways of enjoying a night out.

In 'The Season' Martin Parr comments on Britishness (<http://www.martinparr.com/recent-work/recent-5/>) and Jeff Mermelstein perhaps comments on the pace of life in American cities with his 'Run' series (<http://www.rickwesterfineart.com/jeff-mermelstein/run/>).