

PHOTO LONDON

SOMERSET HOUSE
21-24 MAY 2015

BENEATH THE SURFACE: A PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION PRESENTED BY THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM,
PHOTO LONDON AND SOMERSET HOUSE

21 MAY – 24 AUGUST 2015
EMBANKMENT GALLERIES EAST, SOMERSET HOUSE

EXCLUSIVE TO PHOTO LONDON TICKET HOLDERS BETWEEN 21 – 24 MAY, £6/5 THEREAFTER THROUGH 24
AUGUST

AN EXHIBITION OF RARELY-DISPLAYED AND UNSEEN WORKS FROM THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM'S
PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION COMMISSIONED TO DEBUT AS PART OF PHOTO LONDON AT SOMERSET
HOUSE

MARCH 2015: Somerset House will host *Beneath the Surface*, a new exhibition commissioned by Photo London that will open concurrently with the fair and continue until 24 August 2015. In keeping with the breadth of photographic works represented at Photo London, *Beneath the Surface* will reflect the international scope and historical depth of the V&A's preeminent collection of photographs.

"With our inaugural edition we wanted to make a really strong statement about photography and, in particular, collecting photography in London. As the V&A has one of the world's great collections of photographs, what better way to do that than to commission the museum to create an exhibition of rarely seen works from its collection - some of which date back to the very dawn of the medium. Through the many wonderful works that it will present, this exhibition will bring a significant international audience to Photo London."

MICHAEL BENSON, CO-DIRECTOR, PHOTO LONDON

"Somerset House frequently collaborates with artists, curators and other cultural centres so it's fantastic to create something in tandem with Photo London and the V&A, another major London institution, for the first time. Photography is a strand of our cultural programme which we've really developed over the past few years and we've invited some of the world's greatest photographers and subjects to exhibit, so we are delighted to now feature one of the most significant collections here. Martin Barnes has thought about our special location in selecting the works for Somerset House and curated a fascinating showcase of life in London by the water, in both its most historical and conceptual sense. It's particularly compelling to have some of the earliest works from the collection on the site where Sir John Herschel supposedly defined the term photography in 1839. We felt it was too special to have only open for a few days so will keep the show on through the summer."

JONATHAN REEKIE, DIRECTOR OF SOMERSET HOUSE TRUST

This exhibition of some 200 works reflects the Embankment Galleries' riverfront location in one of London's most ancient quarters, focussing on images of water, the topography of the city and the people within it. Depictions of water - implying depths beneath the surface - provide a metaphor for the richness of the V&A's collection, and the exhibition will also include photographs of the museum itself. Selected from a collection that date back to 1852, *Beneath the Surface* comprises unseen or rarely-displayed photographs chosen by Martin Barnes, the museum's Senior Curator of Photographs.

Beneath the Surface will include works by the earliest practitioners in the field, including nineteenth-century masters William Strudwick, Victor Prout and Charles Thurston Thompson; great observers of twentieth-century life such as Thurston Hopkins, John Gay and Brassai; contemporary and fine art photography by Susan Derges, Nigel Shafran, Sinje Dillenkofer, Stephen Gill and Naoya Hatakeyama, and photographic works by practitioners better known in other media, such as graphic designer Robert Brownjohn and installation artists Ackroyd & Harvey.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Beneath The Surface is a Photo London commission, and will be accessible with a Photo London ticket for the duration of the fair. After the fair, tickets for the exhibition can be purchased through Somerset House from 27 March at www.somersehouse.org.uk/visual-arts/beneath-the-surface
Embankment Galleries East, 21 - 24 May 2015

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

PREVIEW DAY (BY INVITATION ONLY)

Wednesday 20 May 2015
11am - 9.30pm

PUBLIC DAYS

21 - 22 May
12pm - 7.30pm

23 - 24 May
12pm - 6pm
Somerset House
Strand, London WC2R 1LA

TICKET PRICES

Adult Day Ticket (over 17): £20
Child (4 - 16): £14
Concession: £17
Family Ticket (2 Adults, 2 Kids): £52
Sat and Sun Entry: £29
Groups 10+: £18.20 each

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ABOUT THE CURATOR:

Martin Barnes joined the V&A in 1995 and previously worked for the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Since 1997 he has worked on the Photographs Gallery at the V&A which draws exhibitions from the museum's collection. He has also curated numerous UK and international touring shows, including *Aspects of Architecture; Where Are We?: Questions of Landscape* and *Something That I'll Never Really See: Contemporary Photography from the V&A*. He was the curator of the V&A exhibitions *Diane Arbus Revelations* (2005-6); *Twilight: Photography in the Magic Hour* (2006); *Shadow Catchers: Camera-less Photography* (2010) and co-curator of *Figures and Fictions: Contemporary South African Photography* (2011). He is currently working towards exhibitions of early photographs of India and Burma by Linnaeus Tripe and a major retrospective of Paul Strand. His publications include *Benjamin Brecknell Turner: Rural England through a Victorian Lens*, (V&A Publications, 2001); *Illumine: Photographs by Garry Fabian Miller - A Retrospective* (Merrell, 2005) *Twilight: Photography in the Magic Hour* (V&A / Merrell, 2006); *Shadow Catchers: Camera-less Photography* (V&A / Merrell, 2010) and *Horst: Patterns from Nature* (V&A / Merrell, 2014). He was presented with the Royal Photographic Society J Dudley Johnston Award in 2013 in recognition of 'major achievements in the field of photographic criticism and the history of photography, awarded for sustained excellence over a period of time.'

ABOUT PHOTO LONDON:

The inaugural edition of Photo London will take place in May 2015. As London's first international photography fair, it aims to harness the passionate, growing audience for photography in the city and nurture a new generation of collectors. Photo London is produced by the consultancy and curatorial organisation Candlestar, known for their work with Condé Nast and the Prix Pictet photography award and touring exhibition. Photo London's public programme is supported by the LUMA Foundation.

ABOUT VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM:

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance, with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art and design available to all and inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 5000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform. The V&A was the first museum to collect and exhibit photography as an art form and is now home to the UK's national collection of the art of photography. With over 500,000 photographs in the collection it is one of the largest and most important in the world.

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE:

A unique part of the London cultural scene, Somerset House is an historic building where surprising and original work comes to life.

From its 18th century origins, Somerset House has been a centre for debate and discussion - an intellectual powerhouse for the nation. Somerset House is today a key cultural destination in London in which to experience a broad range of artistic activity, engage with artists, designers and makers and be a part of a major creative forum – an environment that is relaxed, welcoming to all and inspirational to visit while providing a stimulating workplace for the cultural and creative industries.

Since its opening in 2000, Somerset House has built up a distinctive outdoor public programme including Skate, concerts, an open-air film season and a diverse range of temporary exhibitions throughout the site focusing on contemporary culture, with an extensive learning programme attached.

It is now the home of London Fashion Week in February and September each year and probably the biggest community of creative organisations in London including the The Courtauld Gallery and Institute of Art, King's College London Cultural Institute and over 100 other creative businesses.

We currently attract approximately 2.5 million visitors every year.