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PLANET YORKSHIRE

PETER MITCHELL

16 SEPTEMBER TO 3 DECEMBER 2016

An early pioneer of colour documentary photography in the 1970s, Peter Mitchell's name is often omitted from the history of photography in the UK. *Planet Yorkshire* is the first survey show by Mitchell, bringing together works spanning more than forty years. The exhibition sheds light on his crucial career and impact on contemporary photography.

With his ever-curious, watchful and distinctive eye, Mitchell has photographed Leeds (his adopted home town) and throughout Yorkshire. He has observed the county's people and captured both urban and rural landscapes. His images document the passing of time, recording a cycle of demolition, decay, renewal and redemption.

The works presented span the early 1970s to the present day, from the twenty-year story of *Francis Gavan's Ghost Train* to an ongoing series recording the neglect and graffiti of his home's postcode. Many images on display have never been seen before, and new photographs have been made especially for this exhibition. Mitchell says, 'I hope the show reveals the unexpected and slightly spiritual aspects to my work.'

As a keen collector, objects from Mitchell's personal archive are included, such as wooden letters rescued from buildings that were being demolished in the 1970s. Also on display are items from the groundbreaking exhibition *A New Refutation of the Viking 4 Space Mission* staged at Impressions Gallery in York in 1979. This was the first show of colour work by a British photographer to be held at a photographic gallery in the UK, and had a huge influence on a generation of photographers.

To find out more, pick up an exhibition guide, browse the reading table, or come to our free Artist Talk on Saturday 15 October at 3pm. You can also buy Peter's recent publications *Some Thing Means Everything to Somebody* (2015) and *Memento Mori* (2016) published by RRB Photobooks.

An Impressions Gallery touring exhibition, curated by Kerry Harker and Anne McNeill.

Peter Mitchell (born 1943, Manchester) lives and works in Leeds. Originally trained as a draughtsman in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in Whitehall, Mitchell left to study at Hornsey College of Art, London in 1968. He moved to Leeds in 1972 where he set up as a fine art silkscreen printmaker and took a job as a driver for Sunco, enabling him to photograph the city on his rounds, capturing images of the factories and small shop owners, formally arranged and seen from a high vantage point atop a stepladder.

His first exhibition was *An Impression of the Yorkshire City of Leeds* at the Education Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery, in 1975. He went on to achieve high acclaim with his first solo exhibition in a photography gallery, the landmark *A New Refutation of the Viking 4 Space Mission*, at Impressions Gallery in 1979. Other exhibitions include *Memento Mori* at Leeds City Art Gallery (1990) and *Strangely Familiar* at PSL, Leeds (2008). Group shows featuring Mitchell include *How We Are: Photographing Britain* at Tate Britain (2007), *Colour Before Colour*, curated by Martin Parr for Hasted Hunt Gallery, New York (2007) as well a recent restaging of *A New Refutation of the Viking 4 Space Mission* this summer at the internationally renowned *Recontres d'Arles* photography festival in the south of France.

www.strangelyfamiliar.co.uk

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