



Another Kind of Life

Photography on the Margins

Creative Learning Teacher Resource

GUILD
HALL
SCHOOL

Introduction

Another Kind of Life follows the lives of individuals and communities operating on the fringes of society from across the world. The exhibition reflects a more diverse, complex view of the world as captured and recorded by photographers. Driven by personal and political motivations, many of the photographers sought to provide an authentic representation of the disenfranchised communities with whom they spent months, years or even decades with, often working with them to construct their own identity through the camera lens.

Another Kind of Life explores photography's relationship with this compelling subject through the work of 20 exceptional image-makers, including Diane Arbus, Bruce Davidson, Paz Errázuriz, Casa Susanna, Larry Clark, Mary Ellen Mark, Boris Mikhailov, Daido Moriyama and Dayanita Singh. The show features communities of romantic rebels, outlaws, survivalists, the economically dispossessed and those who openly flout social convention, the works present the outsider as an agent of change.

Look closer

The exhibition touches on themes of countercultures, subcultures and minorities of all kinds and the show features the work of 20 photographers from the 1950s to the present day. Part of the Barbican's 2018 season *The Art of Change*, which reflects on the dialogue between art, society and politics, the exhibition directly – and at times poetically – addresses difficult questions about what it means to exist in the margins, the role artists have played in portraying subcultures and the complex intermingling between artistic and mainstream depictions of the outsider.

Plan your visit

Another Kind of Life includes some images that deal with challenging issues, therefore visits are recommended for pupils studying at Key Stage 4 or higher. Under-14s must be accompanied by an adult.

The exhibition contains two collections of work by Larry Clark and Jim Goldberg that have a 16+ parental advisory in place – these will be signposted and school tours will not include these works.

A pre-visit is recommended for teachers intending to bring students to the exhibition.

Another Kind of Life: Photography on the Margins
Barbican Art Gallery (Level 3), Barbican Centre
28 Feb 2018 – 27 May 2018 (School Exhibition Tours available from Mar 21)
Sat–Wed 10am–6pm (bank holiday Mon 12noon–6pm)
Thu–Fri 10am–10pm (bank holiday Fri 12noon–9pm)

A discounted group booking rate of £3 per student applies to all secondary and sixth form school groups of ten or more (up to age 19). Free exhibition tours are available. Please note, you will need to book **at least two weeks in advance** if you would like a free exhibition tour as part of your visit.

For bookings and enquiries please contact the school groups booking line:
Tel: 020 7382 7211 (Mon–Fri 10am–5pm) Email: groups@barbican.org.uk

Key questions

Collaboration

Can the subject of a photograph also act as a collaborator? In what ways do photographers include (or exclude) their subjects from the creative process? How can photographers use this medium in a socially-conscious/engaged way?

History of the photograph

In what ways has the digital age changed how we communicate and understand the lives of other people? Many of the photographs in the exhibition were commissioned by magazines or newspapers. How have photos been used to communicate information or political statements? - How do the photographs in the exhibition document 'another kind of life'?

The art of change

Can art be a tool for protest or social change? What messages and stories do photographs carry, and how can viewers better understand them? How can photography be used as a way to tell untold histories? In what ways do photographers embody the characteristics of artist, collaborator, documenter or provocateur? How does the way an image is displayed influence our understanding of the photographer's intention behind it?

Curriculum links

Art and Design

The exhibition explores how photography has been used as a medium to document the lives of individuals and communities. How can personal or political motivations be used as a starting point for making art? While the

photographic collections form the basis of the exhibition, design plays a role in how we interpret them, both as individual collections and across the exhibition. Consider how the cards and publications connected to the **Casa Susanna** collection add a layer of intention to how the photographs might be perceived or interpreted. What aspects of the exhibition have been designed? Consider the curator's intention in presenting these works in the gallery.

Many of the photographers sought to provide an authentic representation of people who were often part of disenfranchised communities and on the fringe. They worked closely with their subjects, approaching them with a humanity and empathy that was both empowering and inclusive. **Paz Errázuriz** and **Dayanita Singh** often spent months or even years within a given community. Take a look at their images. How do you think the photographer's relationship with the subject has impacted their style and storytelling? What effect does this have on the viewer?

Photography

Digital cameras and smartphones make it easy to use photography as a tool for communication, but throughout history analogue photography has been used in a variety of social and cultural contexts and for a range of purposes. Examine how photography has been used to document people's stories and communicate ideas, themes, subjects and feelings. How has photography worked as a medium to communicate these ideas across cultures and languages? Consider the historical context of these photographs and what they may have communicated in a pre-digital world?

Throughout the exhibition artists have used a diverse set of techniques, from portraiture to social documentary and vernacular street photography. Have a look at these different aesthetic strategies, how does it affect the message and story being told? What impact does this have on the viewer? Compare **Mary Ellen Mark's** collection with **Katy Grannan's** street portraits. Both are of people on the street but they look and feel quite different. How do these different styles and compositions impact the way the image is read? Why do you think the photographers have made these choices?

English – Written and Spoken English

We understand literacy as a process of understanding texts and words, but as individuals we also develop a visual literacy that helps us read images and situations. Just as words form a sentence and story, a singular image carries a different message to a series of images. How do images communicate ideas and inspire creativity in others? In what way do words and images interplay to create different levels of meaning? Consider how image and text are used within the exhibition, comparing the strengths and limitations of each form. Think about what stories the photographs tell. Respond to the exhibition using collaged text, poetry or spoken word.

An image can be a great starting point to generate short story ideas. Take a look at **Mary Ellen Mark's** photo series *Streetwise*. These images document an independent group of homeless young people trying to survive on the streets of Seattle. Ask students to pick one of the photographs and spend ten minutes doing some free writing. They can then choose one aspect or theme as a starting point for a short story. Try this activity with other collections such as the **Casa Susanna** collection or **Igor Palmin's** work.

Further Links

[About Another Kind of Life](#)
[Barbican Long Reads by CN Lester](#)
[Article on The Guardian's website about Casa Susanna](#)
[Youth Club Archive](#)
[Into the Outside Youth Project by Photoworks](#)

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning

This Teacher Resource was prepared by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning, which supports people of all ages and backgrounds to access and participate in world-class visual arts, music, theatre, dance, film and spoken word. We regularly work with schools and colleges to create unforgettable learning experiences that help to embed arts and creativity across the national curriculum.

For more information please contact: creative.learning@barbican.org.uk

Credit: Paz Errázuriz, Evelyn, La Palmera, Santiago, from the series *La Manzana de Adán* (Adam's Apple), 1983. Courtesy of the artist. © Paz Errázuriz.



The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre