

## Nic Madge Photography



I stood on the steps above the Damascus Gate, Old Jerusalem. A thousand personal images. So many people I wanted to photograph. Palestinian. Jewish. Bedouin. Arab. Israeli. European. But I was nineteen and did not have an adult camera.

I sat at a table in a pavement café deep in the souk of Marrakesh, my camera concealed. Veiled women. Men in flowing djellabas. But the photos were rubbish. The objects (for that, in reality, is how I viewed them) rushed by. They (rightly) guarded their own images. There was no consent. There was no contact. No relationship. It was wrong.

I interrogated my heroes. Kertesz, who taught me light and composition. Cartier-Bresson, who showed me culture and context. McCurry, who portrays beauty with great power. McCullin, stark and brutal. Hockney, who sees and records what I fail to see. And, above all, Nan Goldin who opened up her life, shared her tragedy and showed me how to photograph people.

I travelled. I saw. I listened. Magazines published my travel writing. I researched and wrote *English Roots: a family history*, published by Alan Sutton. And I photographed the people I met. I curated a permanent exhibition of my portraits *one world one view*, ascending the central circular staircase at Harrow Crown Court. The photographs reflected the diversity of the court users. It exhibited at the Jam Factory, Oxford. I published it as a book. One hundred photos of people from thirty countries, reflecting how much our species has in common. (And the exhibition and the book raised over £25,000 for charity.)

I was a human rights solicitor. I was a judge. I wrote legal text books. I published learned legal articles. The law was a framework and an intellectual challenge. But it was always the people, the clients, the witnesses, the criminal defendants who were vital.

In the heat and dust, I knelt down on the streets of Dhaka. I sat in mosques. I hung out with rickshaw drivers. I walked muddy lanes and river banks in

Sylhet. I talked with tea pickers and women in niqabs. Over one hundred street photographs. People in context, going about their everyday lives. *Faces of Bangladesh* was shown as a slide show in the BP Lecture Theatre at the British Museum. It exhibited for a month at the Swiss Cottage Gallery.

I walked through villages in the Omo Valley, in remote Southern Ethiopia. I sat in mud huts and under trees with a local guide and local people. They told me about their lives. And I took photographs. Striking photos, but the life stories were even more captivating.

The development of my practice has been individual, even isolated, in the sense that I have not been part of the wider photographic community. I have a vision as to where I want to take my practice, photographing Londoners in context, going about their lives. I want to share and collaborate. I want to be challenged. I want to question and be questioned. I want to explore new media. I want to experiment and to expand my thinking. So, I have now been accepted onto an M.A. in Photojournalism and Documentary Photography at the University of the Arts London (London College of Communication) starting in September 2018.

Part of my photographic portfolio appears at <http://nicmadge.co.uk/photos.php>

#### Details of Photographic Exhibitions

one world one view	Harrow Crown Court	from 2005 (permanent)
one world one view	The Jam Factory, Oxford	2006
Faces of Bangladesh	British Museum	2011
Faces of Bangladesh	Swiss Cottage Gallery	2012