

Contemporary North Members' Showcase

Contemporary North

(Part of the RPS Contemporary Group)

Members' Showcase

provides a platform for contributors to our monthly meetings to display the work they have shared.

Contributors have curated their own images and provided the accompanying text making this a collaborative group venture.

14th October — Meeting via Zoom

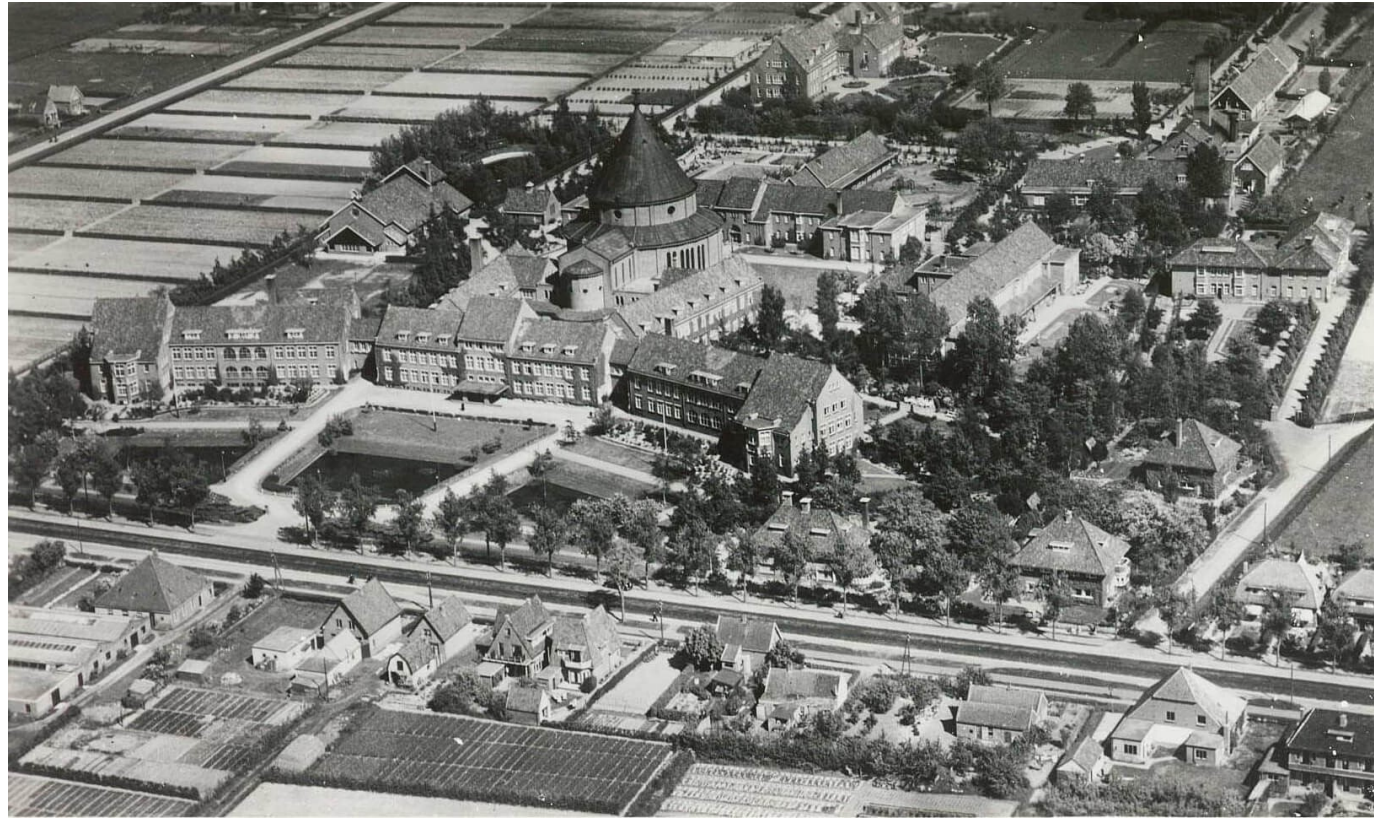
Chaired by Patricia Ruddle

Contributors:

- 1) Andre Bergmans
- 2) Andrew Fitzgibbon
- 3) Donata Rogozik
- 4) Mike Rooke
- 5) Michel Claverie



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The Institute and the Room of Recovery Stories
By André Bergmans
Photography for Everyone

André Bergmans

The Room of Recovery Stories

Heiloo is a small town/village in North-Holland (Netherlands). Between 1928 and 1940 the **Fathers of the Congregation of the Brothers of Our Lady of Lourdes** founded a mental health institute on a large but swampy estate in the village. It was a closed, self supporting institute that took ten years to build and accommodated 650 male (Catholic) patients. There were fences and canals around it and the institute had its own farms, greenhouses, workshops, kitchen, shoemakers, dentists and doctors and even a football club and a gym.

Life was monastic for the patients, as the ultimate goal of the brothers was to save their souls. So work, prayer, treatment and leisure were strictly planned at regular hours. Quite a few of the patients were institutionalised for the rest of their lives so they also had their own cemetery.

The fathers were very ambitious as they wanted to establish the best psychiatric institute in the country and they were seriously competing with other establishments. The latest treatments and therapies known at the time, were tested and applied; the good and the bad.

No effort was spared but the institute was separated and isolated from society. The patients could not get out and the people from the village avoided entering the premises. The institute and the patients were stigmatized.

However our ideas about mental illness and treatment changed.

A dominant idea developed that a big group of patients can best be helped by bringing them back into society or bring society to them. A process of two way integration started to open up the institute and integrate therapeutic activities with village life. This process took years if not decades.

Today there are 300 clients on the premises, quite a few in 'closed' departments. Some live in the village. On the other hand the church has been converted into a concert hall, and now many of the health care facilities for the village are on the premises of the institute. There are restaurants, four museums, clubs, galleries, and a tourist information bureau. The main building is partly converted into a business centre and there are many workshops providing therapeutic activities for the patients.

Still stigma and prejudice towards mental diseases is hard to fight against. Anything we do in the Verhalenkamer (Room of Recovery Stories) should contribute to a positive influence on our view and understanding of mental diseases and fight against stigma. We also do this by means of photography using both exhibitions and workshops.

The Room of Recovery Stories

The main objective of the Buitenkans (The Opportunity) as a charity and within that charity the Verhalenkamer (Room of Recovery Stories) is to de-stigmatise mental diseases and increase our understanding of them.

We do this using a wide range of activities, involving clients of the institute and non clients alike:

- Locate four museums on the premises, including the Room of Recovery Stories.
- Run a yearly art festival on the premises including outsider art.
- Run an art gallery and lunch room called the 'The Trough' in the old pig stable.
- Run kitchen gardens with school children.
- Organise guided tours for groups.
- Organise photo contests and other workshops for clients and non-clients.
- Organise book presentations on mental disease and recovery.
- Facilitate the induction programme for new police officers.

And much more.....



The Room of Recovery Stories: Museum of psychiatry



The Room of Recovery Stories: Timeline of psychiatric development as a science



The Room of Recovery Stories: Meeting table and reading table



The Room of Recovery Stories: a collection 700 all too crazy books and writers



The Room of Recovery Stories: The video cabinet of recovery stories so we can listen to what clients have to say.



The Room of Recovery Stories: Gift shop with products made by the clients



The Room of Recovery Stories: The art gallery



The Room of Recovery Stories: The art gallery



The Room of Recovery Stories: Outdoor exposition of photographic work by young clients



The Room of Recovery Stories:
Lina Selg's graduation work: Faces in the Water, on mental illness and systematic disregard.



Her work is inspired by the book 'Faces in the water' by Janet Frame. The work was created in close co-operation with young clients. It reports their frustration about the long waiting times and being misunderstood by the Dutch mental health care system. Portraits, moody atmospheric images and written comments and interviews. The exposition in the gallery was accompanied by an outdoor exposition. Magazines and newspapers are available in English.

<https://linaselg.com/Projects>

faces in the water. no.2

DEAR GGZ

I'm angry

that I needed you

did you ever
seen how the help
I needed because of the
way the system works

I had a phone call.
And they asked me questions like
"Hey, do you ever feel suicidal?"
I said, every human...
So like, yes, I definitely have some suicidal
thoughts.
And then I had to wait for...
And then I finally had the...
And I was like, yes, sure.
And they, well, I can't really...
And it wasn't good.
So quite they had to...
And I was like, you know what, I...
And I was like, you know what, I...
And she asked me some questions and then she was like,
"I don't feel like it's the worst."
I don't feel like you're really struggling with it."

TRY HARDER







The Room of Recovery Stories: 'Marked by life' by the mental health care organization Level.

This exposition already featured in the Amsterdam FAOM museum. Young clients and their caregivers reveal in photography and poetry the moving stories behind their tattoos.


<https://getekendoorhetleven.nl/tatoeages-amsterdam/>



The Room of Recovery Stories: 'Overwinnen' (To Overcome).

After a serious biking accident in 2015 Femke Oepts was partly paralyzed and a long process of therapy and recovery started. Arriving at the medical rehabilitation centre she was shocked by all the people in wheelchairs with missing arms and legs or paralysed. Her first thought was to get out as her mindset was: "I do not belong here". Gradually she understood and appreciated the fighting spirit of the other patients. The will to survive, recover and win in the end. Physical recovery but also mental recovery. She decided to create a 'stage' for them and put them in the spotlight using interviews and photography. Telling their stories is a support for them but also support for many others in similar situations.

<https://overwinnenboek.nl/>



OVERWINNEN
KRACHTIGE LEVEN IN EEN HULSTOEL

Frankie Charles heeft... (text is too small to read accurately)

© Simple
2015

'Crazy' plans for 2024

- Book/exhibition/video on 'Madness in World Literature'
- The remarkable recovery story of the poet Willem Kloos
- Outsider Art based on the theme 'Failure!?' (and beyond)
- The origin of creative therapy with a discussion on art, including photography, as a therapeutic tool.
- Many other young photographers just graduated on themes that match our mission.
- ...
- Any ideas / examples from your side are most welcome. Inspire us!

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Andrew Fitzgibbon
ARPS BA (Hons)

10 minutes with

RPS Contemporary Group North

14 October 2023



Life in 5 images



Born Bristol ... brother often inflicted pain



Followed girl from Bath to Hull ... one of many poor youthful life choices



Wanted to be a rockstar
but it didn't work out ...





Instead, I had a travelling job for many years. Then ...

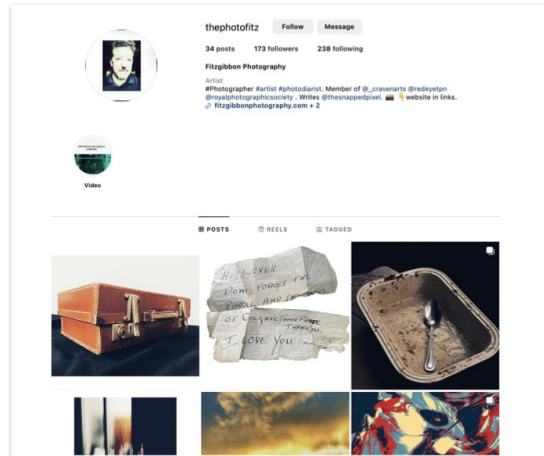


Now - farm, cook, ferment,
photograph



GIBBON
TOGRAPHY

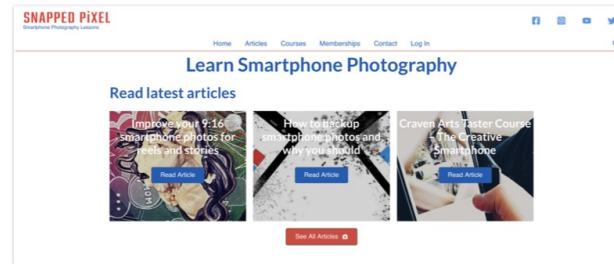
Connecting



Instagram: @thephotofitz



www.fitzgibbonphotography.com



www.snappedpixel.co.uk

FITZGIBBON
PHOTOGRAPHY



RPS Yorkshire online

Website: <https://rps.org/regions/yorkshire/>



Flickr group: www.flickr.com/groups/rps-yorkshire/



OFF COMED
UNS
WELCOME

On Facebook ...



FITZGIBBON
PHOTOGRAPHY

Donata Rogozik

Photography has always been a part of my life because we had many amateur photographers in my family. I guess I was under 10 years old when I got my first camera. It was a compact with a film, and I spent my pocket money on developing the photographs, many of them nicely overexposed.

Nowadays I use a Nikon DSLR, a compact Fujifilm camera and the smartphones. To develop skills and explore the ideas for my photography I have recently joined Windsor Photographic Society and the RPS.

Why do I take photographs? To share my experiences with family and friends as we live in different countries and travel abroad for work or pleasure. Every country is somehow different, but people have a lot in common at the same time.



Sofia



Prague

Budapest

I come from the Southern Poland, and I have been travelling through Central Eastern Europe quite extensively. The rich cultural heritage and the everyday life of the region are the inspiration for my photography.





Bucharest



The memories of the past, human condition and the sense of identity are of interest to me. But I also like when the world gives me a wink by creating the unexpected compositions.





Runneymede



Box Hill, Surrey



I live in Windsor which gives me lots of opportunities to explore the greenery of Britain and the vicinity of the river Thames.
My contrariness makes me sometimes see them from the different angle.



Mike Rooke

Reshaping a City



Imagine being given the job of re-shaping a city – or even part of it. Re-shaping it around existing features such as Lambeth Palace, Battersea Power Station, MI6 and the Victorian structure that is the existing rail network feeding Waterloo station in the south of London.

You might think that the best place to start would be on the drawing board
..... The Plan.



What we see in October 2023 is that much work has taken place and continues to this day. The dozens of cranes atop every high building that have been decorating the skyline for some time, are now disappearing, but the Vauxhall area of south London is still one huge building site.





Occasionally, original buildings such as a Victorian brick-built terrace of Victorian houses manage to stand out amongst the 21st century skyscrapers but the overall impression is a jumble of architectural styles competing for our attention.



The one immovable object at the heart of the project is the mainline railway that threads its way between the modern structures, almost touching the window-sills of the new apartments.





The project is still unfinished so perhaps too early to pass judgement.

I will return when it is done to try to create a photographic celebration of what has been achieved.

Michel Claverie

A Day at the Museum

“You can take the street photographer out of the street, but you can’t take the street out of the street photographer.” This is a moderately bad pun I just put together for the purpose of writing a few words for the newsletter of the RPS Contemporary North group. I thank its members and the other RPS group I have shown these pictures to, for liking them and even finding the titles funny. What more can you ask for?

I guess we all try to find a welcoming space for our pictures. For me, that place is not the classical camera club competitions, where these pictures were the source of much consternation for a judge. I never knew, when I picked up my camera again a few years ago, that organised photography was not a solitary pleasure to share with like-minded people.

Anyway, here are three pictures I like. But don’t ask me if the people in the pictures minded that I took them, because the answer – as also reported by my friend David R. – is “I have no idea; I never asked them.”



“Did he use up his nine lives?” - Royal Academy 2023 Summer Exhibition, London



"Am I toast as well?" - Royal Academy 2023 Summer Exhibition, London



“Not all fun and games in the Dogs Room!” - Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2023