

John Drysdale

John Drysdale studied photography in the late 1940s at Guildford School of Art. At the time, Guildford enjoyed an international reputation as a centre of excellence in photography under the groundbreaking influence of Ifor Thomas and John's contemporaries included Jane Bown. John graduated First Class and went on to join the staff of Vogue Studios in London where he undertook commissions in advertising, celebrity and architectural photography (and gained access to supplies of colour film – a rare commodity in the post war period). As well as *Vogue*, John's work appeared in *Picture Post*, *House and Garden*, *Life*, *Everybody's* and numerous other magazines.



Early in his career, John worked with many distinguished photographers, including Norman Parkinson, Anthony Denney and Cecil Beaton. He assisted Beaton on Coronation Day in 1953 photographing the Queen and the royal families of Europe at Buckingham Palace. Other subjects for John's lens have ranged from Winston Churchill to Louis Armstrong and from the Beatles to Bertrand Russell, Henry Moore, Agatha Christie, Alexander Fleming, Edward Heath, Harold Macmillan, Margot Fonteyn, Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, David Low, Graham Green and Benjamin Britten.

John later branched out on his own as a freelance photographer and photojournalist working all over the world. An early success was winning First Prize in the 1955 "British Press Pictures of the Year" for a picture story on children at play – some of the photographs in this exhibition are from that set. This was followed by numerous prizes over the years, including more First Prizes in the "British Press Pictures of the Year" during the 50s, 60s and 70s, an award from the prestigious World Press Photo in the Netherlands and even a prize from the Soviet authorities in Moscow.

In addition to mainstream commercial and advertising work, John has developed an international reputation for his photographs, many of them humorous, of children and animals (wild and domestic) in unusual real life situations. In recent years, collections of John's work have appeared in books in Germany, Japan, the UK and the USA. He has featured in one-man exhibitions in Berlin and Vienna, with a larger exhibition of 150 photographs displayed in four galleries in the Palfy Palace in Vienna.

In addition to his photographic work, John has lectured extensively on technical aspects of photography and was at one time a part-time lecturer at the London College of Printing and an external examiner at Guildford. John appeared recently on TV talking about photographing the 1953 Coronation.

John lives and works in London although his photographs are published all over the world in books, magazines and newspapers, as well as calendars, cards and posters. Many are featured on his website at www.johndrysdale.com.