

# Robert Blomfield: Edinburgh Street Photography – An Unseen Archive

The City Art Centre will showcase an exhibition of vintage street photography by Robert Blomfield. Running from November 24th through to March 17th 2019, the exhibition reveals part of a remarkable private archive of his stunning work.



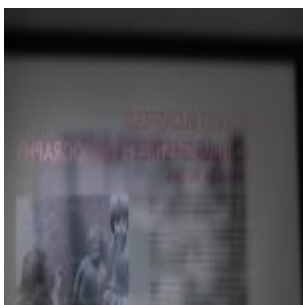
Blomfield practised street photography across the UK from the 1950s to the 1970s, beginning in Edinburgh. He had moved to the city to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh in 1956, when he was 18 years old. Whilst a student, Blomfield pursued his passion for photography and spent his free time

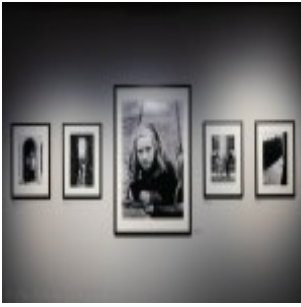
capturing life on the streets.

He adopted an unobtrusive fly-on-the-wall approach, seeking interesting or amusing scenes in the rapidly changing post-war period. An engaging manner and healthy disrespect for authority allowed him to get close to a myriad of subjects, taking photographs that are in turn tender, bold and humorous. Blomfield used a pair of Nikon F SLRs to shoot his images. and did his own developing and printing in a makeshift darkroom set up in his student digs.

A subsequent medical career meant his vast collection of striking images – which number in the thousands and carry echoes of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Vivian Maier – remained largely hidden, stored away in cardboard boxes. In 1999, a stroke forced him to retire from medicine and put down his camera, and ten years ago, his wife Jane started the huge task of cataloguing and digitising these photographs. After her passing Blomfield's three sons William, Edward and George, along with his brother Johnny, continued this labour of love.

The exhibition, **Robert Blomfield: Edinburgh Street Photography – An Unseen Archive**, displays a selection of around 60 black and white works from this remarkable private collection, revealing and documenting the dramatic shifts taking place in Edinburgh's urban landscape during the 1960s.





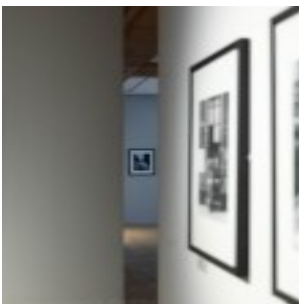
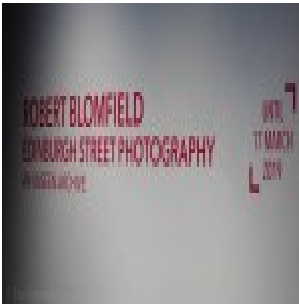
It includes candid portraits and group shots, children playing amongst crumbling tenements, public gatherings, student life and evolving architecture, offering a rare opportunity to reappraise our understanding of Scottish culture at that time. Staged in the year of his 80th birthday, this first large-scale display of his street-life scenes is also a chance for Blomfield to receive the recognition he rightly deserves.

Robert Blomfield commented: "After 50 years I'm thrilled to be able to share some of my pictures with the wider world. Edinburgh is a city that remains close to my heart, and the interaction of its residents with this most dramatic of urban stages provided me with endless inspiration as a young photographer. The exhibition represents a personal view of life on its streets during the 1960s."

Councillor Donald Wilson, Edinburgh's Culture and Communities Convener, said: "This exhibition of vintage street photography will strike a chord with anyone who grew up in 1960s Edinburgh and bring back so many memories.

"The exhibition will also appeal to the residents of this wonderful city today and to visitors, who will be able to draw comparisons between then and now, with some areas of Edinburgh having changed beyond recognition. The City Art Centre is the people of Edinburgh's gallery; the perfect place to showcase

Blomfield's stunning display."



The exhibition is a partnership with Robert Blomfield and Family. The show is accompanied by a documentary of Robert Blomfield and his work by cinematographer Stuart Edwards and a programme of events.

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24 November 2018 to 17 March 2019, City Art Centre, Admission Free