

# Press Release



## A Exhibition Of 'Roaming Human Projection' Celebrating Life On The Street By A New Generation Of Documentary Photographers

A group of London-based photographers is staging an open-air exhibition to demonstrate against the increasing restrictions being placed on British street photographers. But instead of protesting, the group will be projecting...

The thirty-strong group of photographers, known collectively as 'So Shoot Me', are staging the event I ❤️ Street Photo. This unique evening of 'roaming human projection' will celebrate new street photography, and express their serious concerns about the survival of British street photography in the face of ever-increasing government controls, including the Information Commissioner's Office new guidelines and Lord Mandelson's controversial Digital Economy Bill.

From twilight on the evening of Thursday, April 8, the 'So Shoot Me' members will begin popping up in busy spots all over London with their human light show. The impromptu I ❤️ Street Photo exhibitions will be projected onto a screen of handheld white boards, and show the best of new British street photography, out in the streets where it was made.

Celebrating all that is beautiful, thought-provoking and spontaneous about street photography, I ❤️ Street Photo carries the message that misdirected fears about terror, privacy and child protection could spell the end for the whole genre.

The 'So Shoot Me' photographers are staging the event to object to new guidelines being issued by the Information Commissioner's Office under section 51 of the Data Protection Act 1998. The regulations will all but ban professional photographers from working in public places, with the stipulation that a photographer must ask the permission of all people who appear in their photographs to avoid illegally possessing 'personal data'.

'So Shoot Me' member, Celine Marchbank, said: "Despite the CCTV and camera-phone obsessed world that we live in, the government will require photographers to gain permission from every single person that might appear in any shot."

"These regulations are misdirected and pointless – they tar all photographers with the brush of terrorist, pedophile or paparazzi, and infringe on our basic freedom of information and the right to take pictures in public places."

"Many of us have been stopped and searched by the police under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, sometimes simply for carrying a professional-looking camera in a public place. This level of government censorship is a worrying trend, and one that we want to stand up and speak against."

Following the high profile cases of police misuse of section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, in which photographers and tourists have been prevented from photographing in public places, 'So Shoot Me' aim to illustrate that street photography is an important document of the world in which we live, and not a crime.

John Easterby, former Director of Archives at the London office of Magnum Photos, and Lecturer in Photojournalism and Documentary Photography at the London College of Communication, said:

"A society without street photography is a society that ceases to look at itself. The visual database we all carry in our memories is, in part, made up of photographs of 'life' by generations of photographers from the very first day of its birth onwards."

*“If we stop feeding this precious unofficial visual archive, all we are left with are the cold impersonal images generated by CCTV. Imagine the illustrated history books on Great Britain that our children’s children will read...”*

*“This exhibition celebrates life on the street by a new generation of documentary photographers who are more than capable of engaging with issues of personal privacy with dignity, sensitivity, and morality, without need for clumsy, misguided state intervention.”*

Also on the ‘So Shoot Me’ photographers’ agenda is the controversial and widely-criticised Digital Economy Bill – legislation that the government claims will equip Britain’s creative industries for the ‘digital age’, but which amongst other things will strip photographers of much of their copyright.

Lord Mandelson’s Bill, which is being unashamedly rushed through parliament before the general election to avoid proper debate, includes Clause 42, which introduces Section 116B to the Copyright Act. The clause gives the Secretary of State the authority to transfer copyright from one person to another, without the owner’s consent.

If the Bill becomes law, it will become allowable for works labelled as ‘orphaned’ – meaning that their original owner cannot be instantly traced – to be copied and used, even for commercial gain, as long as a licensing fee is paid to a specially established government agency

The government claims that photographers would then be able to reclaim the fee from the agency, if they discover their work has been used, however photographers fear that they may simply lose control over the copyright of their own work.

It was Henri Cartier Bresson, seen by many as ‘father of street photography’, who once said: *“We photographers deal in things which are continually vanishing, and when they have vanished there is no contrivance on earth can make them come back again.”*

It seems that he wasn’t wrong – photographer’s rights are vanishing, and once gone, they may never come back.

**I ♥ Street Photo will take place from 7.30pm on Thursday, April 8 at locations around London, including Trafalgar Square, Leicester Square and Hoxton Square.**

**The event will also run 7.30pm-2am at The Book Club, 100 Leonard Street, near Old Street.**

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## Notes to Editor

I ♥ Street Photo is a one-night guerilla exhibition of street photography, which will be projected onto groups of people holding large white boards to act as a canvas. The projections will show street photography taken by the group ‘So Shoot Me’ within the UK.

The event will start at 7.30pm on the evening of Thursday, April 8 and travel to locations around London including Trafalgar Square, Leicester Square and Hoxton Square, also running simultaneously at The Book Club at 100 Leonard Street, where members of ‘So Shoot Me’ will be available to talk to the press.

Details of the Information Commissioner’s Office guidelines can be found at [www.ico-consult.limehouse.co.uk](http://www.ico-consult.limehouse.co.uk).

Details of the Digital Economy Bill can be found at [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk), and information about the widespread objections across many sectors of industry at [www.38degrees.org.uk](http://www.38degrees.org.uk).

The 30-strong ‘So Shoot Me’ collective are MA Photojournalism & Documentary Photography students from the London College of Communication, University of the Arts.

The postgraduate programme has been running in various forms for over two decades. Its remarkable international reputation is measured by an exceptional track record of achievement and a truly multi-national intake of students. Alumni have gone on to win major international awards, including World Press Photo Awards nine times.

Alumni work is represented by leading agencies including Magnum, VII, Panos and Getty Images and exhibited at venues ranging from the Houston Fotofest in Texas, Tate Britain and the Courtauld Institute in London to the Metropolitan Museum of Photography in Tokyo.

For more information and sample images, please contact:

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