

WONDERLAND

STEP INTO THE VISIONARY WORLD OF KIRSTY MITCHELL

BEST SHOTS

HOW I CAPTURED
THE JET SET BY
TERRY O'NEILL

OPINION

WHY WE SHOULD
ALL BE USING
INSTAGRAM

THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

THE JOURNAL

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STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

This month at Fenton House, Nigel Tooby FRPS examines homelessness



Tooby says his artworks 'provoke deeper thought and discussion around the subject of homelessness'

This month at Fenton House, Nigel Tooby FRPS presents his project *Eye Spy*. Made over a total of nine months for homeless charity Simon on the Streets (SotS), with which Tooby was artist in residence, *Eye Spy* presents images from the perspective of some of SotS's service users who, as well as being homeless, often suffer other social problems, including drug and alcohol issues.

Tooby set out to present work that was hard-hitting and at times distressing, avoiding the usual cliché of men in doorways by forcing viewers to see the world through the eyes of the homeless individual, placing the viewer in the role of the SotS service user.

Tooby also sets out to go beyond the confines of two-dimensional photographic artwork, venturing into the realm of sculpture to help him



Far left: End of Beginning
 Left: One of Tooby's sculptural works
 Above:
 I was normal once

explore ideas of rehabilitation and social rejection. Photography, however, remains a central part of that process.

Could you tell us how long you took to complete this project?

The first 18 pieces were made between February and September 2014 and the final work, *Jamie Ross*, was produced between July and August 2015.

What inspired you to create these works?

I was approached by the charity to participate in the project, but I quickly realised that I had little understanding of the subject. After a great deal of research, I recognised the absolute value in supporting the essential work that they do by telling a story of



homelessness in a unique way, thereby raising money for the cause and helping publicise the organisation.

I wanted to do the subject matter real justice and decided to create a series of images that could take the audience into the lives of homeless people. Creating artworks, I was able to provoke deeper thought and discussion around the subject, which was incredibly rewarding.

What do you hope the audience will get from the exhibition?

Three things: an alternative to the norm which will encourage people to think differently about photography as art; an appreciation of contemporary work by a member of the Society's Contemporary Special Interest Group; and the shocking truth about homelessness which – contrary to the opinions of rather too many – is rarely a life choice.

When I was researching the work I was shocked to learn of the things that homeless people often have to endure. I need to show those aspects to other people. It is a sad reflection of our society, that people can be abandoned and ignored on our streets – the streets of the fifth richest country on earth.