Art

Consumerism

Authorship

Just as medieval society was balanced on God and the Devil, so ours is balanced on consumption and its denunciation. Though at least around the Devil heresies and black magic sects could organize.

Our magic is white.

No heresy is possible any longer in a state of affluence. It is the prophylactic whiteness of a saturated society, a society with no history and no dizzying heights, a society with no myth other than itself.

Jean Baudrillard

Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*, [*La Société De Consommation,* Editions Denoël, 1970], London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998, p.196

White Magic on Black Friday

(The American Dream Dialectic)


330
DUU

Over fifty years ago, in 1964, a promising young artist and teacher unexpectedly abandoned his position at a prestigious girls' grammar school in Amersham to take up a job as a dustman.

This unconventional act made the pages of a national newspaper, and although he never explained the reason for his 'eccentric' behaviour, it was assumed that he was making a stand for the 'simple life'; foregoing a full-time teaching post in order to focus on his artistic practice, and eschewing the materialist culture that defined the swinging sixties.

Cooke-Amersham 3000.

Martin Simonds (centre) the grammar schoolteacher who became a dustman. His "colleagues" today on the dustcart are Edward Nebbett (50) left, and Idris Morris (53) extreme right.

Stephen Copley

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PHONE: AMERSHAM 3000

Cooke-Amersham 3000.

Martin Simonds (centre) the grammar schoolteacher who became a dustman. His "colleagues" today on the dustcart are Edward Nebbett (50) left, and Idris Morris (53) extreme right.

Stephen Cooke
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APRIL 1, 2004

Steve Copley: Midlands-based photographer with The Sun

By Press Gazette

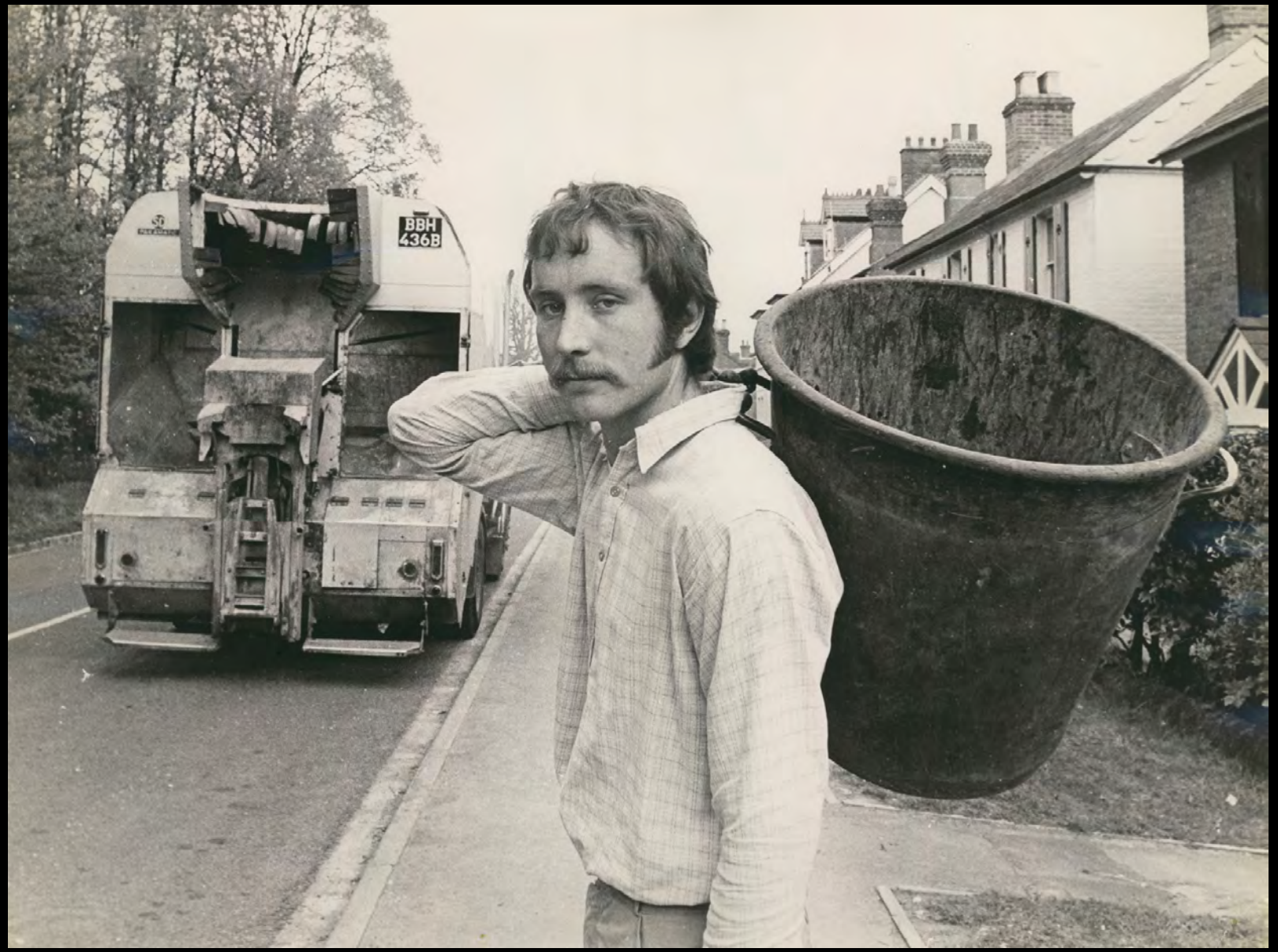
TWEET SHARE 0 REDDIT COMMENTS 0

Steve Copley, one of The Sun's longestserving photographers, has died after a long illness.

Over fifty years ago, in 1964, a promising young artist and teacher unexpectedly abandoned his position at a prestigious girls' grammar school in Amersham to take up a job as a dustman.

This unconventional act made the pages of a national newspaper, and although he never explained the reason for his 'eccentric' behaviour, it was assumed that he was making a stand for the 'simple life'; foregoing a full-time teaching post in order to focus on his artistic practice, and eschewing the materialist culture that defined the swinging sixties.


330
DUU


BBH
436B

Cooke-Amersham 3000.

A far cry from teaching at a girls' grammar school
Maxxxxx Sxxxxxs is now a dustman.



Even though he was practicing throughout the 1960's & 1970's, his painting style was situated in a traditional figurative approach, drawing on 19th Century influences of Realism and early Impressionism, such as Édouard Manet and Edgar Degas, rather than subsequent developments such as Abstract Expressionism and the emerging Pop Art Movement which challenged the traditions of fine art by including imagery from popular culture and consumerism, most often through the use of irony.



Richard Hamilton, *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* 1956



Édouard Manet *Un Bar aux Folies-Bergère*, 1882.
(Baudelaire: "the painter of modern life”)



Martin Simonds, 1989

A prolific artist, Gatsby practiced every day; painting, drawing, sculpting; and although his dustcart days did not last long and he returned to lecture part-time at various art schools during the 70s and 80s, he never relinquished his distain for consumption, and lived most of his life in relative parsimony.

He was a passionate reader and became a scholar of the works of American writer Jack London, having acquired a copy of *Call of the Wild* from the roadside on one of his early dustcart shifts. He quickly recognised that London's beliefs and values, dialectically divided between essential socialist principles and powerful individualist drives, were much like his own.



PUFFIN CLASSICS

JACK LONDON

The Call of the Wild

INTRODUCED BY MELVIN BURGESS

Both men, driven by a belief in universal social justice, yet inspired by Nietzschean philosophy, were exponents of a ‘Superman Socialism’, a ‘caricature of the contradictory aspirations’ of western society. Indeed, Franklin Walker, in his study of Jack London, suggests that this underlying dilemma ‘directly reflects that of the American Dream’

Harpham, Geoffrey, ‘Jack London and the tradition of superman socialism’, *American Studies,* vol.16: 1, Spring 1975, p. 33





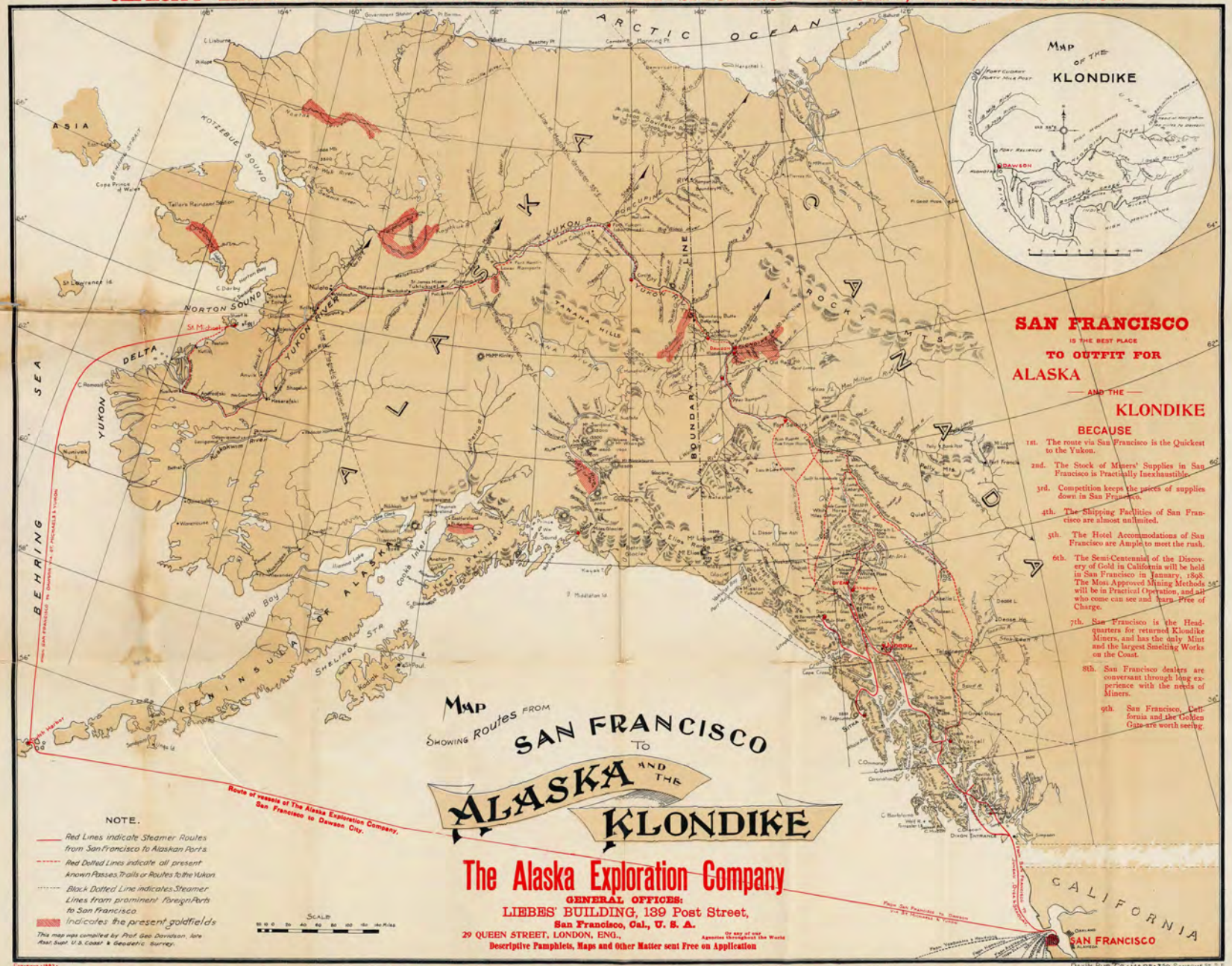
Jack London was born (John Griffith Chaney) in San Francisco in 1876, the illegitimate son of **Welsh spiritualist Flora Wellman** and (supposedly) the pioneering astrologer, William H. Chaney, who abandoned Flora when she refused to have an abortion. Soon after Jack's birth, Flora married John London and settled in Oakland.



Jack grew up in relative poverty and throughout his restless teenage years he rode trains with hobos, became an oyster pirate, shovelled coal and worked on a sealing ship in the Pacific, before briefly returning to education.

In 1897, aged twenty-one, he headed off to the Klondike, north of Alaska - in search of gold. Although he did not literally strike gold, his 18-month experience of the Gold Rush was certainly where he found his literary voice.

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PUFFIN CLASSICS

JACK LONDON

White Fang

INTRODUCED BY RICHARD ADAMS



JACK LONDON

THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS

æ
arcadia ebook

The People of the Abyss - Jack London

First-hand account about life in the East End of London in 1902. In an attempt to understand the lives of the working-class of this deprived area of London, the author lived in Whitechapel for several weeks, staying in workhouses or sleeping on the streets. The slum conditions he experienced and wrote about were the same as those endured by an estimated 500,000 of the contemporary London poor.


Die Lage
der
arbeitenden Klasse
in
England.
Nach eigner Anschauung und authentischen Quellen
von
Friedrich Engels.
Leipzig.
1845.

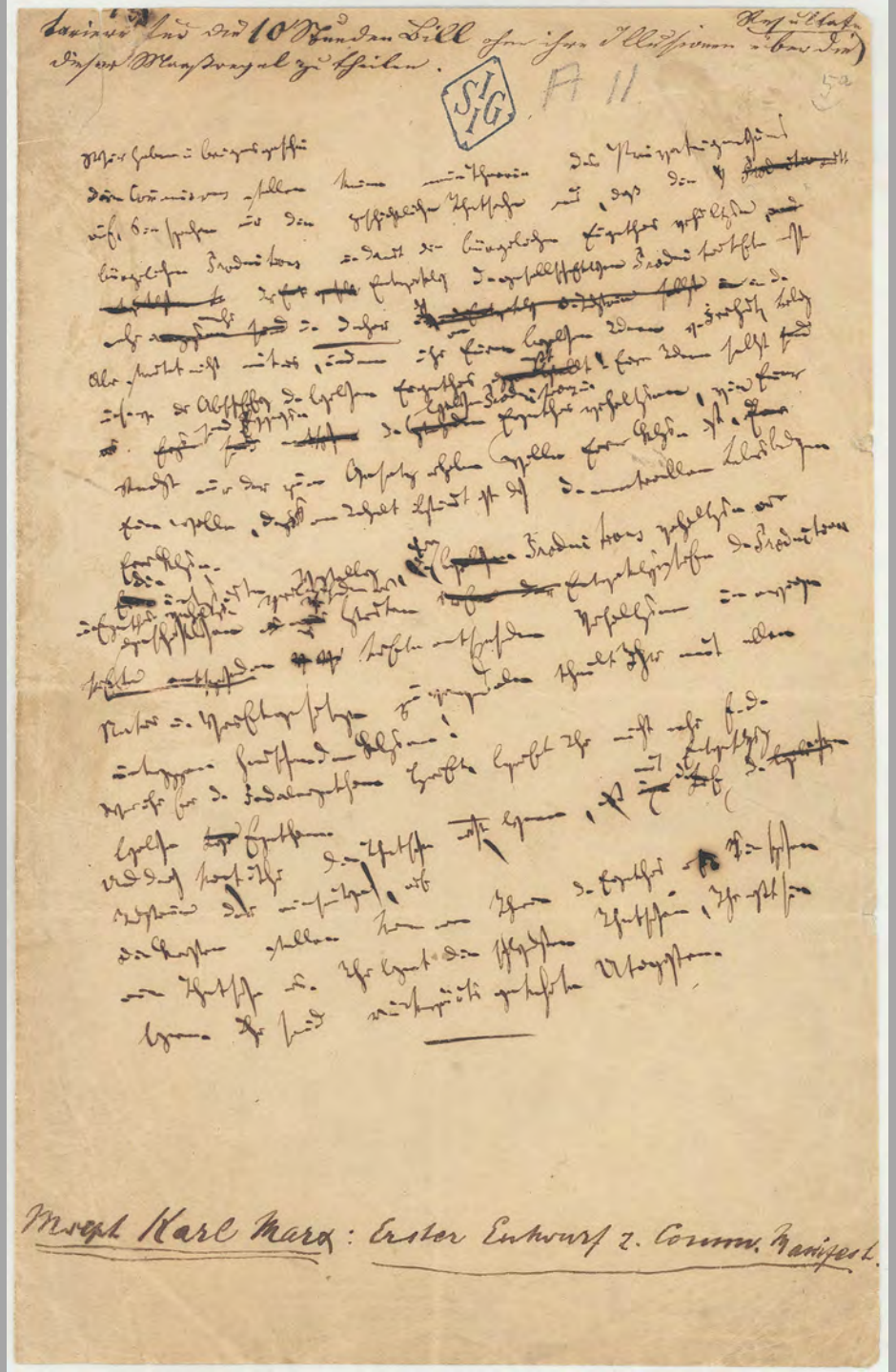
Previous famous accounts of slum conditions in Victorian England include

The Condition of the Working Class in England (1845)

Friedrich Engels, written during his 1842-44 stay in Manchester

This book directly influenced the subsequent publication in 1948 of *The Communist Manifesto*, co-authored by Karl Marx.

Where Marx & Engels saw PRODUCTION as the driver of a capitalist society, Baudrillard (& Debord & the Situationists) saw CONSUMERISM & consumption as more important, as the ‘ideological genesis of needs’ precedes the production of goods to meet those needs



The only surviving page from the first draft of the *Communist Manifesto*, handwritten by Karl Marx



Dorset Street, Spitalfields photographed in 1902. Photograph first published in Jack London, *The People of the Abyss*, Macmillan, New York, 1903

Dorset Street in Spitalfields was by repute "the worst street in London" and the scene of Jack the Ripper’s final brutal murder of Mary Jane Kelly by on 9 November 1888.

By a remarkable coincidence, my grandfather happened to be born in the same year as London’s visit, 1902, upstairs at a public house named ’The Hare’ at 180 Brick Lane, Spitalfields.

Certificate of Registry of Birth.

1902 **Birth** in the Registration District of BETHNAL GREEN, in the Sub-District of BETHNAL GREEN—SOUTH-WEST, in the COUNTY OF LONDON.

No.	When and where Born.	Name (if any).	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Baptismal Name, if added after Registration of Birth.
206	Fifth November 1902 180, Brick Lane	Richard Howard	Boy	Richard Howard Gane	Ada Gane late Taylor formerly Alford	Timber Salesman	R. Howard Gane Father 180, Brick-Lane Bethnal Green	Eleventh December 1902	J. WILLIAMS, Registrar.	

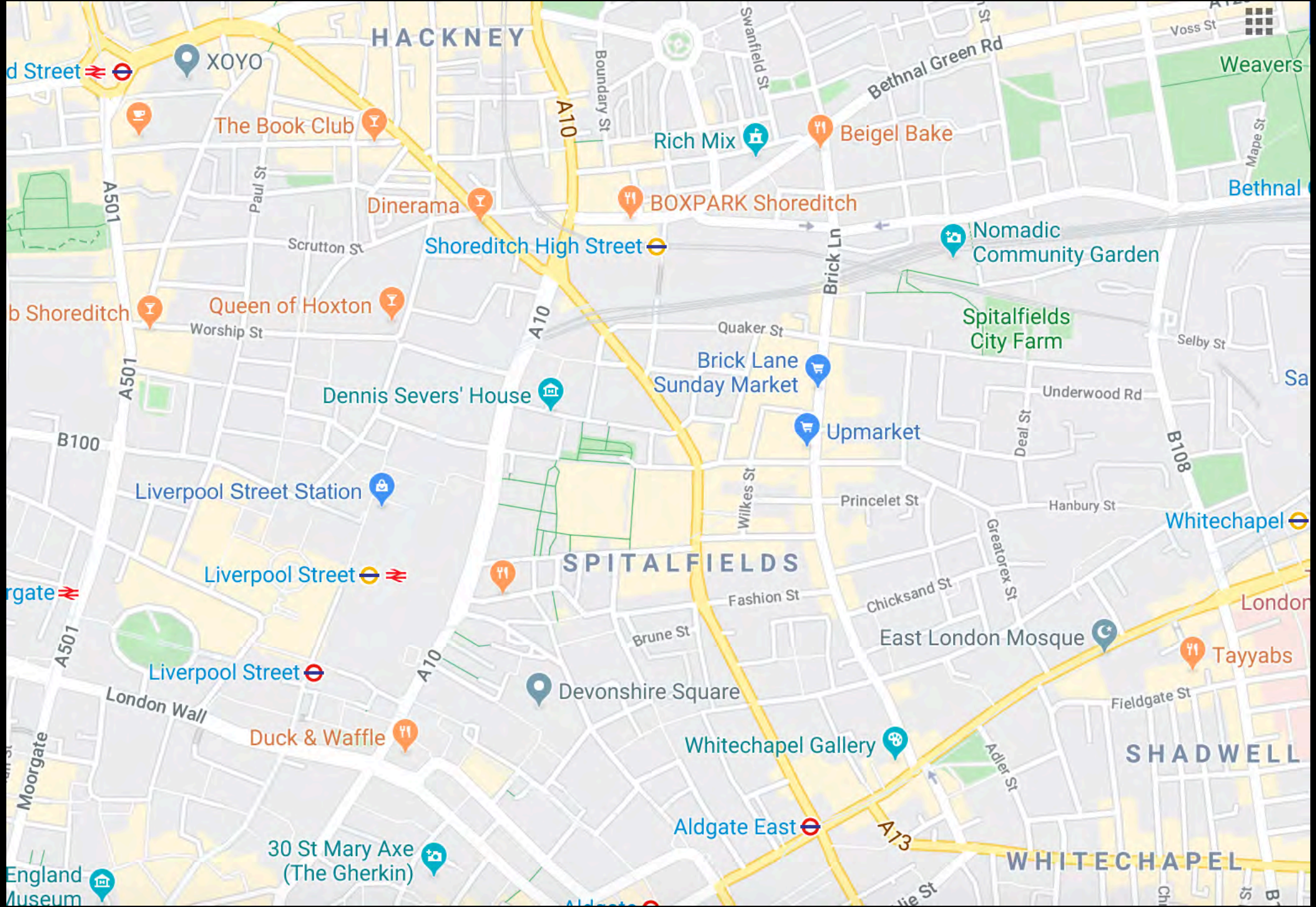
I, JOHN WILLIAMS, Registrar of Births and Deaths for the Sub-District of BETHNAL GREEN—SOUTH-WEST, in the County of London, do hereby certify that this is a **True Copy** of the Entry No. 206 in the **Register Book of Births** for the said Sub-District, and that such Register Book is now legally in my custody.

Witness my hand this 11th day of December 1902

J. Williams
REGISTRAR.

The Fee for this Certificate is 2s. 7d. at time of Registration, and 3s. 7d. afterwards.

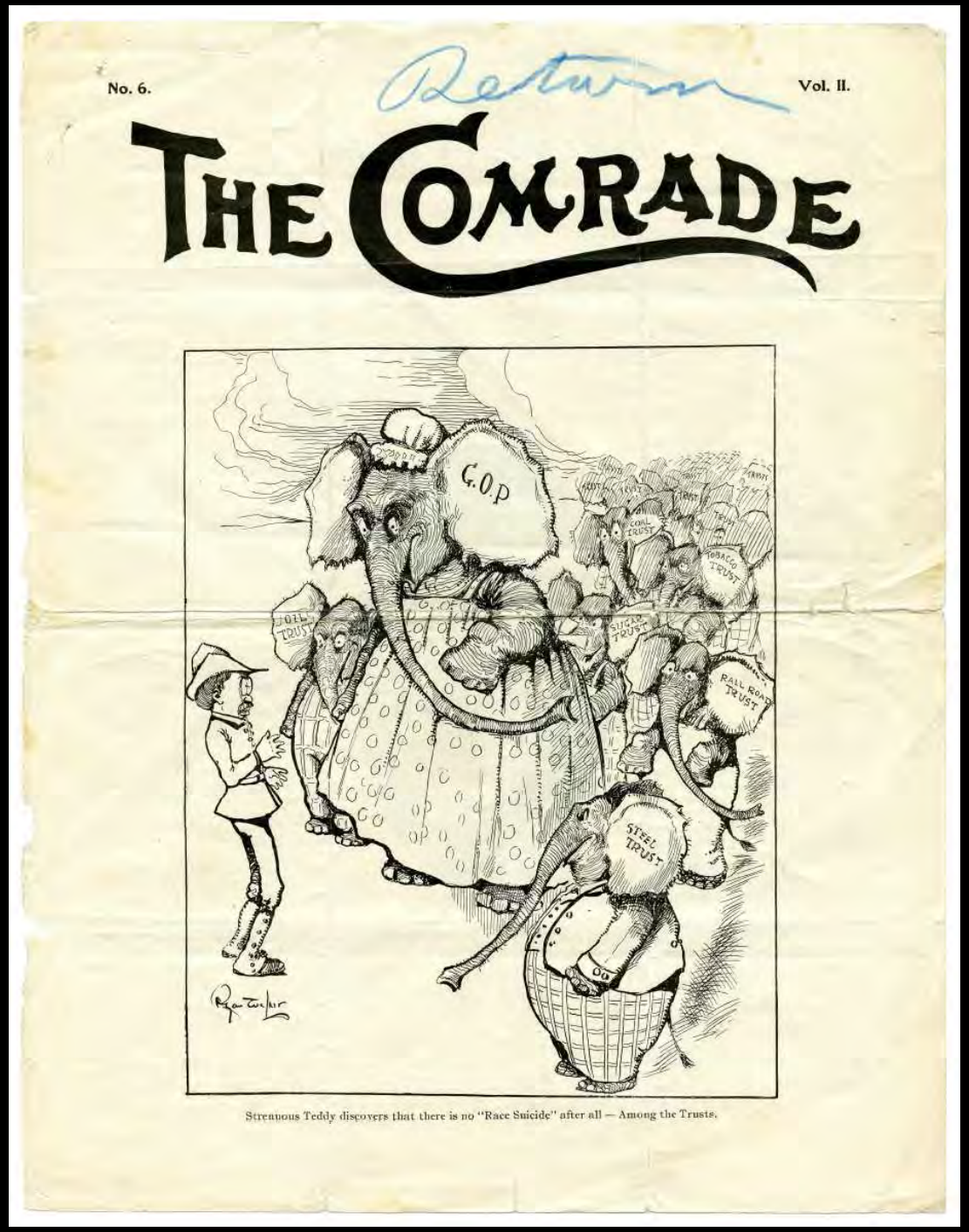
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Brick Lane Sunday Market
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Brune St
Liverpool Street
Devonshire Square
London Wall
Fieldgate St
Duck & Waffle
Whitechapel Gallery
Moorgate
Adler St
SHADWELL
Aldgate East
A13
30 St Mary Axe (The Gherkin)
WHITECHAPEL



Now a material shop, from the 1850s until the late 1920’s there was a pub called THE HARE at 180 Brick Lane

Communist Pamphlet,
Published & distributed
in London, March 1903



Jack London
1216 Telegraph Ave.
Oakland, Cal.

Return

THE COMRADE.

How I Became a Socialist.

By Jack London.

Author of "A Daughter of the Snows" Etc.



IT is quite fair to say that I became a Socialist in a fashion somewhat similar to the way in which the Teutonic pagans became Christians—it was hammered into me. Not only was I not looking for Socialism at the time of my conversion, but I was fighting it. I was very young and callow, did not know much of anything, and though I had never even heard of a school called "Individualism," I sang the pæan of the strong with all my heart.

This was because I was strong myself. By strong I mean that I had good health and hard muscles, both of which possessions are easily accounted for. I had lived my childhood on California ranches, my boyhood hustling newspapers on the streets of a healthy Western city, and my youth on the ozone-laden waters of San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. I loved life in the open, and I toiled in the open, at the hardest kinds of work. Learning no trade, but drifting along from job to job, I looked on the world and called it good, every bit of it. Let me repeat, this optimism was because I was healthy and strong, bothered with neither aches nor weaknesses, never turned down by the boss because I did not look fit, able always to get a job at shoveling coal, sailorizing, or manual labor of some sort.



Jack London.

And because of all this, exulting in my young life, able to hold my own at work or fight, I was a rampant individualist. It was very natural. I was a winner. Wherefore I called the game, as I saw it played, or thought I saw it played, a very popular game for MEN. To be a MAN was to write man in large capitals on my heart. To adventure like a man, and fight like a man, and do a man's work (even for a boy's pay)—these were things that reached right in and gripped hold of me as no other thing could. And I looked ahead into long vistas of a hazy and interminable future, into which, playing what I conceived to be MAN'S game, I should continue to travel with unfailing health, without accidents, and with muscles ever vigorous. As I say, this future was interminable. I could only see myself raging through life without end like one of Nietzsche's *blond beasts*, lustfully roving and conquering by sheer superiority and strength.

As for the unfortunates, the sick, and ailing, and old, and maimed, I must confess I hardly thought of them at all, save that I vaguely felt that they, barring accidents, could be as good as I if they wanted to real hard, and could work just as well. Accidents? Well, they represented FATE, also spelled out in capitals, and there was no getting around FATE. Napoleon had had an accident at Waterloo, but that did not dampen my desire to be another and later Napoleon. Further, the optimism bred of a stomach which could digest scrap iron and a body which flourished on hardships did not permit me to consider accidents as even remotely related to my glorious personality.

I hope I have made it clear that I was proud to be one of Nature's strong-armed noblemen. The dignity of labor was to me the most impressive thing in the world. Without having read Carlyle, or Kipling, I formulated a gospel of work which put theirs in the shade. Work was everything. It was sanctification and salvation. The pride I took in a hard day's work well done would be inconceivable to you. It is almost inconceivable to me as I look back upon it. I was as faithful a wage slave as ever capitalist exploited. To shirk or malinger on the man who paid me my wages was a sin, first, against myself, and second, against him. I considered it a crime second only to treason and just about as bad.

In short, my joyous individualism was dominated by the orthodox bourgeois ethics. I read the bourgeois papers, listened to the bourgeois preachers, and shouted at the sonorous platitudes of the bourgeois politicians. And I doubt not, if other events had not changed my career, that I should have evolved into a professional strike-breaker (one of President Eliot's American heroes), and had my head and my earning power irrevocably smashed by a club in the hands of some militant trades-unionist.

Just about this time, returning from a seven months' voyage before the mast, and just turned eighteen, I took it into my head to go tramping. On rods and blind baggages I fought my way from the open West, where men bucked big and the job hunted the man, to the congested labor centers of the East, where men were small potatoes and hunted the job for all they were worth. And on this new *blond-beast* adventure I found myself looking upon life from a new and totally different angle. I had dropped down from the proletariat into what sociologists love to call the "submerged tenth," and I was startled to discover the way in which that submerged tenth was recruited.

I found there all sorts of men, many of whom had once been as good as myself and just as *blond-beastly;* sailormen, soldier-men, labor-men, all wrenched and distorted and twisted out of shape by toil and hardship and accident, and cast adrift by their masters like so many old horses. I battered on the drag and slammed back gates with them, or shivered with them in box cars and city parks, listening the while to life histories which began under auspices as fair as mine, with digestions and bodies equal to and better than mine, and which ended there before my eyes in the shambles at the bottom of the Social Pit.

And as I listened my brain began to work. The woman of the streets and the man of the gutter drew very close to me. I saw the picture of the Social Pit as vividly as though it were a concrete thing, and at the bottom of the Pit I saw them, myself above them, not far, and hanging on to the slippery

The London Residences of Karl Marx.

By John Spargo.

Photographs by T. Jefferson.



28 Dean Street, where "The Eighteenth Brumaire" was written.

IN those wonderfully tender and all too scanty "Memoirs" * of Marx, Liebknecht tells of "A Voyage of Discovery" which he made in 1896. With him went Eleanor, the brilliant but ill-fated daughter of Marx, and the man whose name she bore; the erratic genius whose vagaries so sadly blighted her bright and hopeful life—Edward B. Aveling. The object of this "Voyage" through London's busy streets was to discover, if possible, the three respective houses in which Marx had lived with his family: houses perfectly well known to Liebknecht in the days when he was a fellow-exile with Marx. It is well that the "voyage" ended satisfactorily, and that beyond all possible chances of mistake Liebknecht was able to identify the first London residence of the Marx family (the first, save only for a brief lodging in Camberwell), which Engels and "Lenchen"—Helene Demuth—that faithful friend and assistant of whom all the members of the Marx family spoke with such reverent love—had failed to find.

It was, I have reason to suppose, the intention of Liebknecht and Mrs. Eleanor Marx-Aveling to have photographs of this and the two later residences made. At least, so Dr. Aveling told me soon afterward. But, apparently, the intention was never carried out by them. All three have died since then: Eleanor—broken in spirit, by her own hand; Aveling—who shall say that *his* death was not of his own desire and choice?—and Liebknecht, the veteran in the fight, the strong, brave leader, who bore all the burdens of life without flinching, and met death squarely in the thick of the fight.

Perhaps I am sentimental, and the Socialist movement leaves small room to indulge such sentiment, but it seemed to me that, with the identification complete, the opportunity of making and preserving a photographic record of these houses where the illustrious Marx made his home should be grasped ere they are swept away or the means of identifying them are lost once more. So, with Liebknecht's identification, and the co-operation of a mutual friend who satisfied himself that nothing had been changed in any way since 1896, and that, therefore, there could be no confusion, I obtained the assistance of a good London comrade, who is a photographer, to that end.

After having had some trouble in their lodgings in Camberwell, the landlord being insolvent, and the creditors having seized their furniture, the Marx family stayed for awhile in a family hotel, and then moved, in June, 1850, to No. 28 Dean Street, off Oxford Street, Soho. Liebknecht has refuted the one-time common lie about Marx: that he lived in luxurious



46 (Formerly No. 9) Grafton Terrace, where "Value, Price and Profit", "Mr. Vogt", "Capital" etc. were written.

* "Karl Marx: Biographical Memoirs", by Wilhelm Liebknecht, 1901

To celebrate his 60th birthday, Gatsby planned a pilgrimage to the Klondike, retracing London's footsteps over 100 years before.

Unfortunately, Gatsby died quite suddenly and unexpectedly the day before he was due to leave, on Friday 29th November 2002, although his body wasn't discovered until his 60th birthday, Monday 1st December, three days later.

In an ironic twist of fate, Gatsby's death occurred on the very day that, annually, America chooses to celebrate its materialism and fiercely encourages consumption - ***Black Friday*****.**


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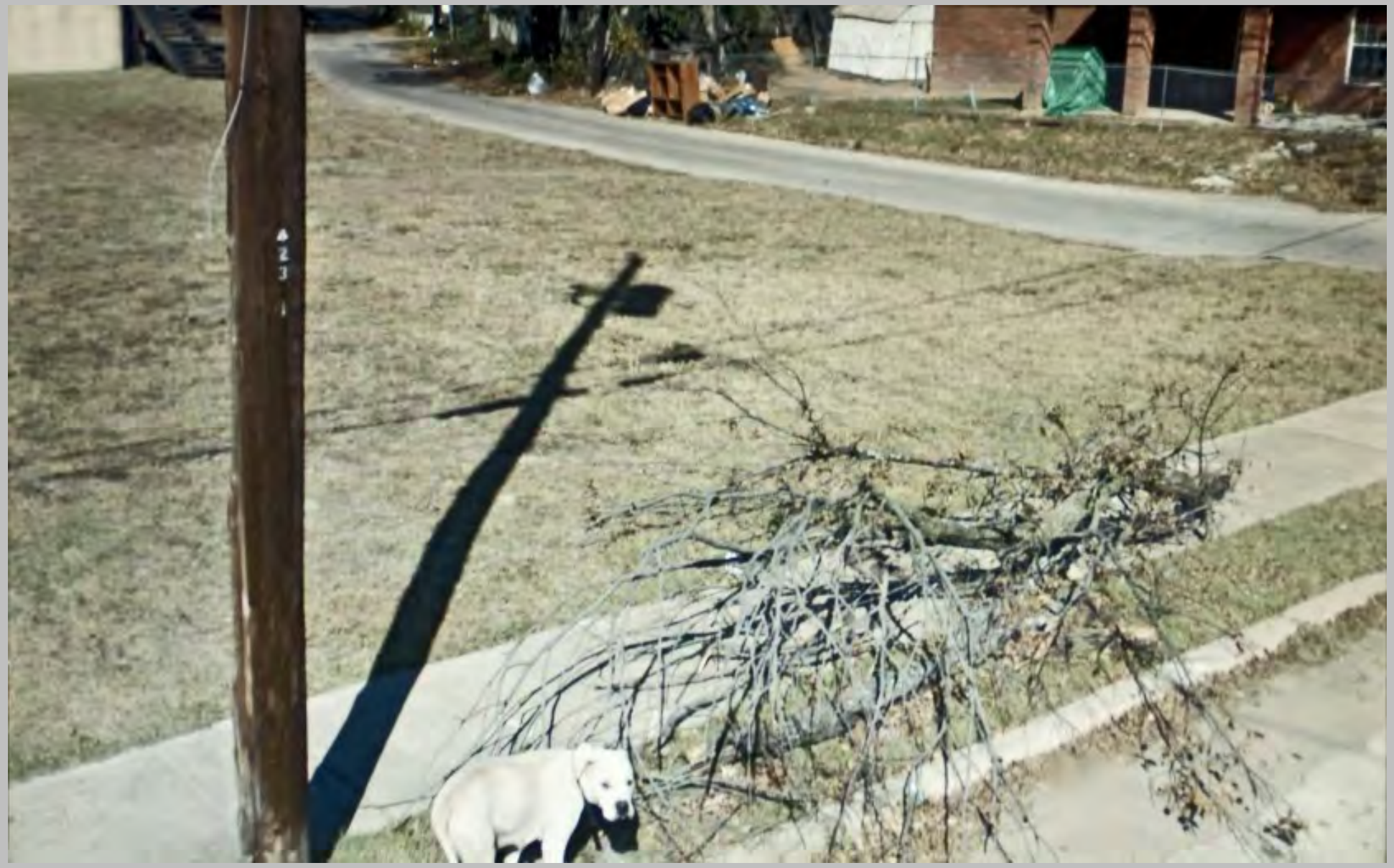

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Google Street View has been available since 2007, and since 2010 many artists or post-photographers have been creating work through their engagement with this open-access imagery.

Three of the most celebrated or controversial projects made by artists are Doug Rickard's *A New American Picture* (2012), Michael Wolf's *A Series of Unfortunate Events* (2011) and Mishka Henner's *No Mans Land* (2011)



Doug Rickard, A *New American Picture* 2012



Doug Rickard



Doug Rickard



Doug Rickard



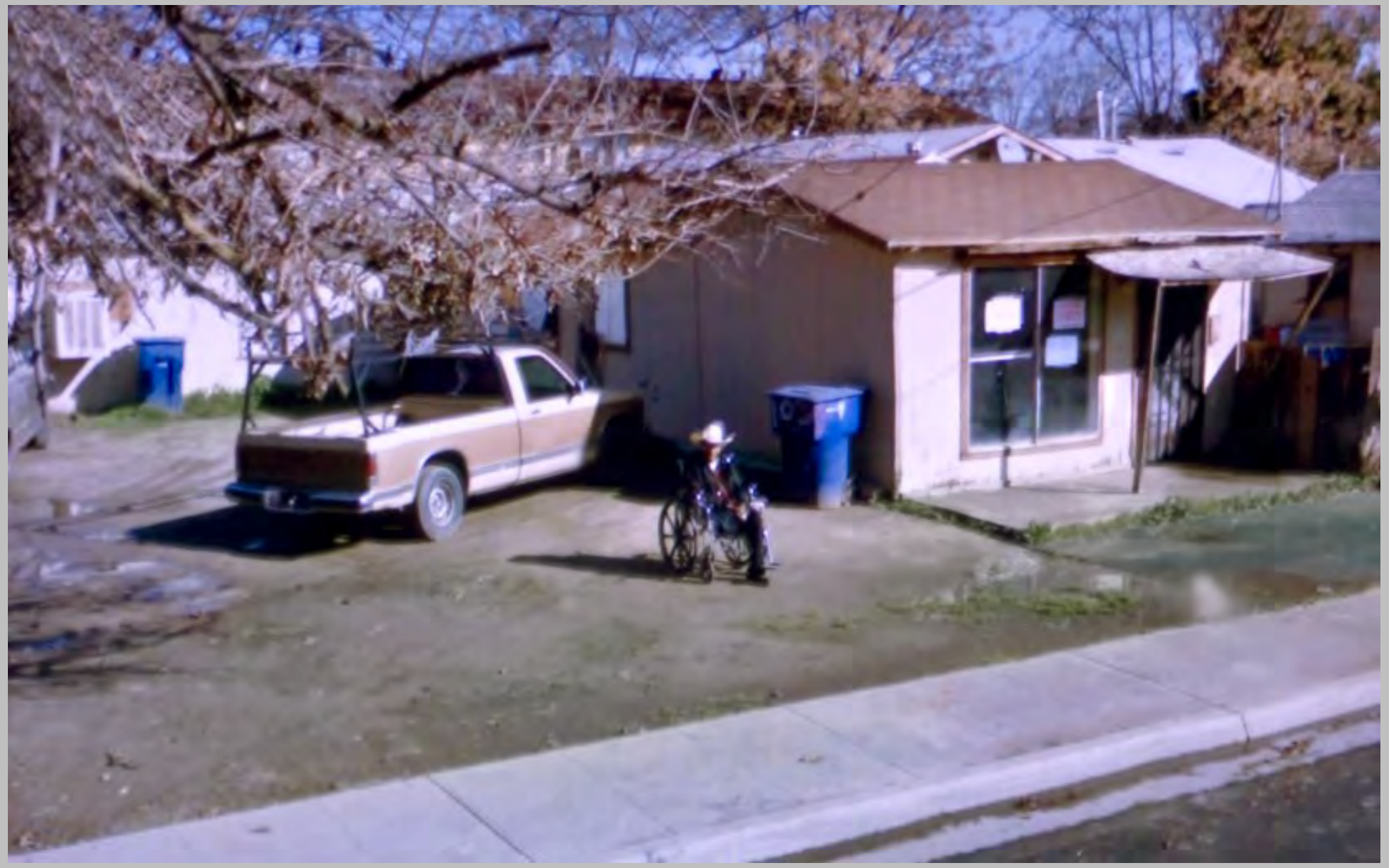
Doug Rickard



Doug Rickard



Doug Rickard



Doug Rickard



Michael Wolf - *A Series of Unfortunate Events* 2011



Michael Wolf



Michael Wolf



Michael Wolf



Michael Wolf



Mishka Henner – *No Mans Land* 2011



Mishka Henner



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11'-6"






PALACE GRAND THEATRE


Dawson Curling Club
1042




GREEN






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MEMORIAL CHAPEL


KLONDIKE MOTORS
GAS
4 LESS




Marys Rooms


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TREMBLAY'S STORE
STOP





Experimenting with light leeks & film kinks to suggest a spectral presence



white magic on black friday

The Death of the Author

1967 essay by Roland Barthes

Traditionally the biographical details of an author (their age, gender, political positioning etc...) would have been considered important in providing an explanation for a text.

The Death of the Author argues against a method of reading that relies upon knowledge of the author's/artist's identity.

Barthes proposes the author as a tyrannical figure insistent upon an almost quasi-theological reading.

This proverbial author-God appears to articulate a hegemonic attitude toward artistic authorship.

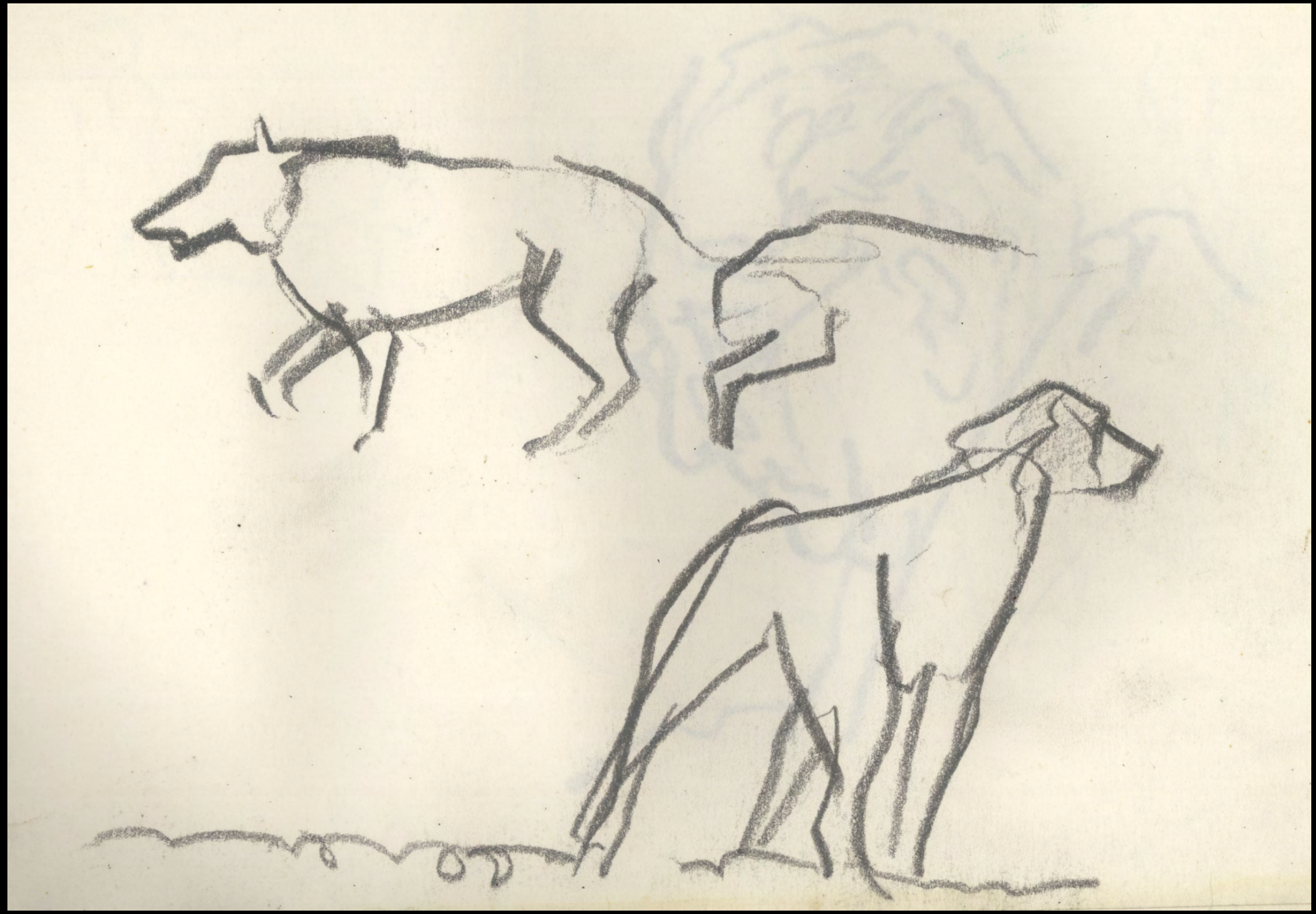
The traditional figure of the author/artist, when believed in, is regarded as an expressive, individual voice, an author-God, and is commonly considered to be an originator of meaning.

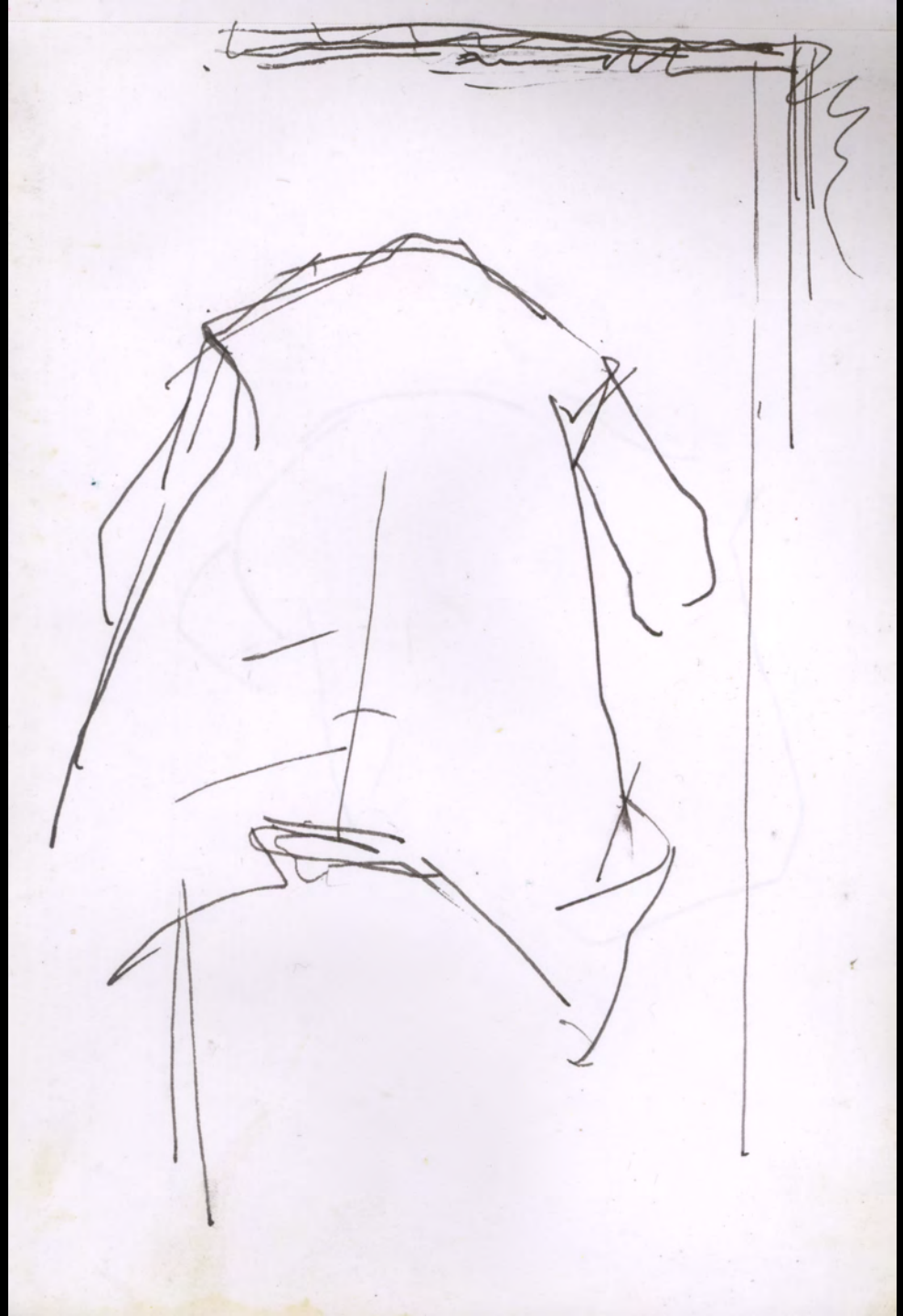
In *The Death of the Author* Barthes suggests that assigning a text an author is to impose a single meaning on that work and thus limit its potential.

Searching through Gatsby's old sketchbooks for depictions which allude to, or suggest, the possibility that they may have been made in The Klondike.



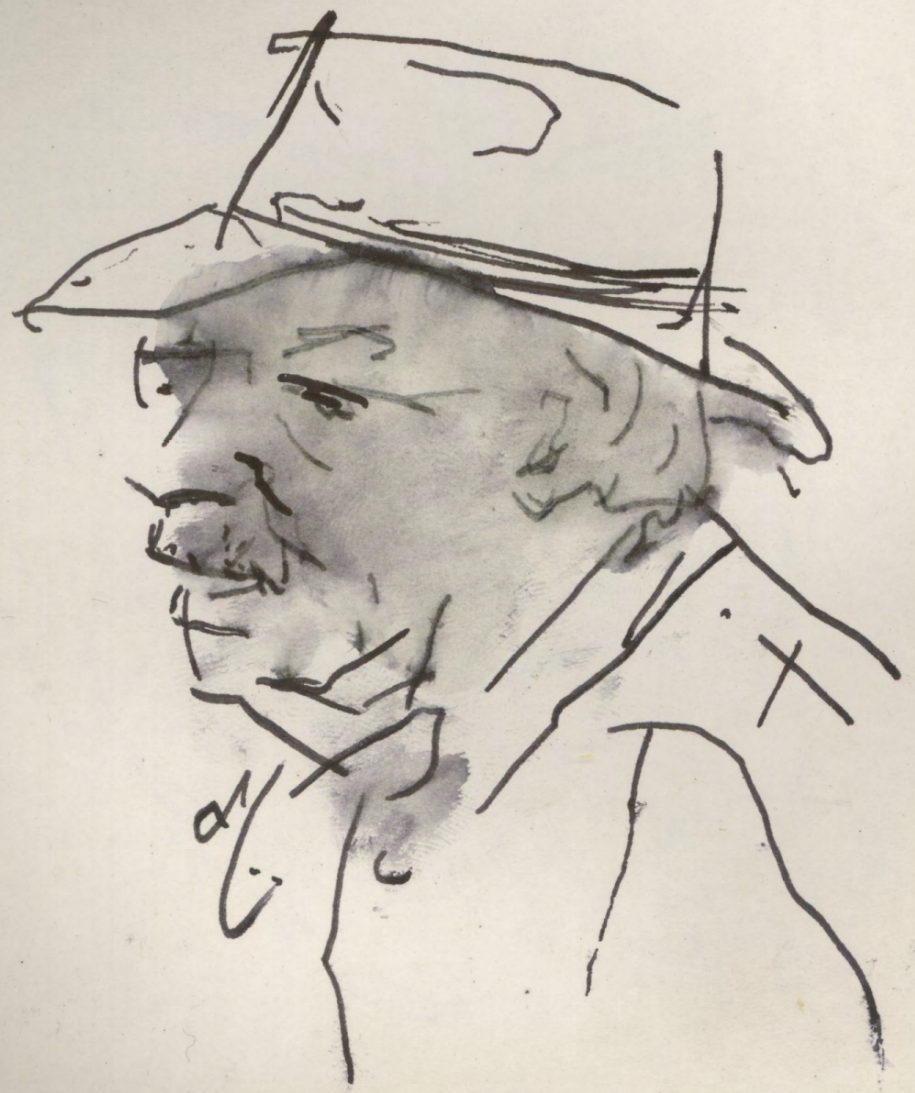














Combining original medium-format black & white photographs made in Swansea, with Gatsby’s sketches & the Google Street View pictures from The Klondike in order to create a document of Gatsby’s magical pilgrimage.

White Magic on Black Friday

(The American Dream Dialectic)



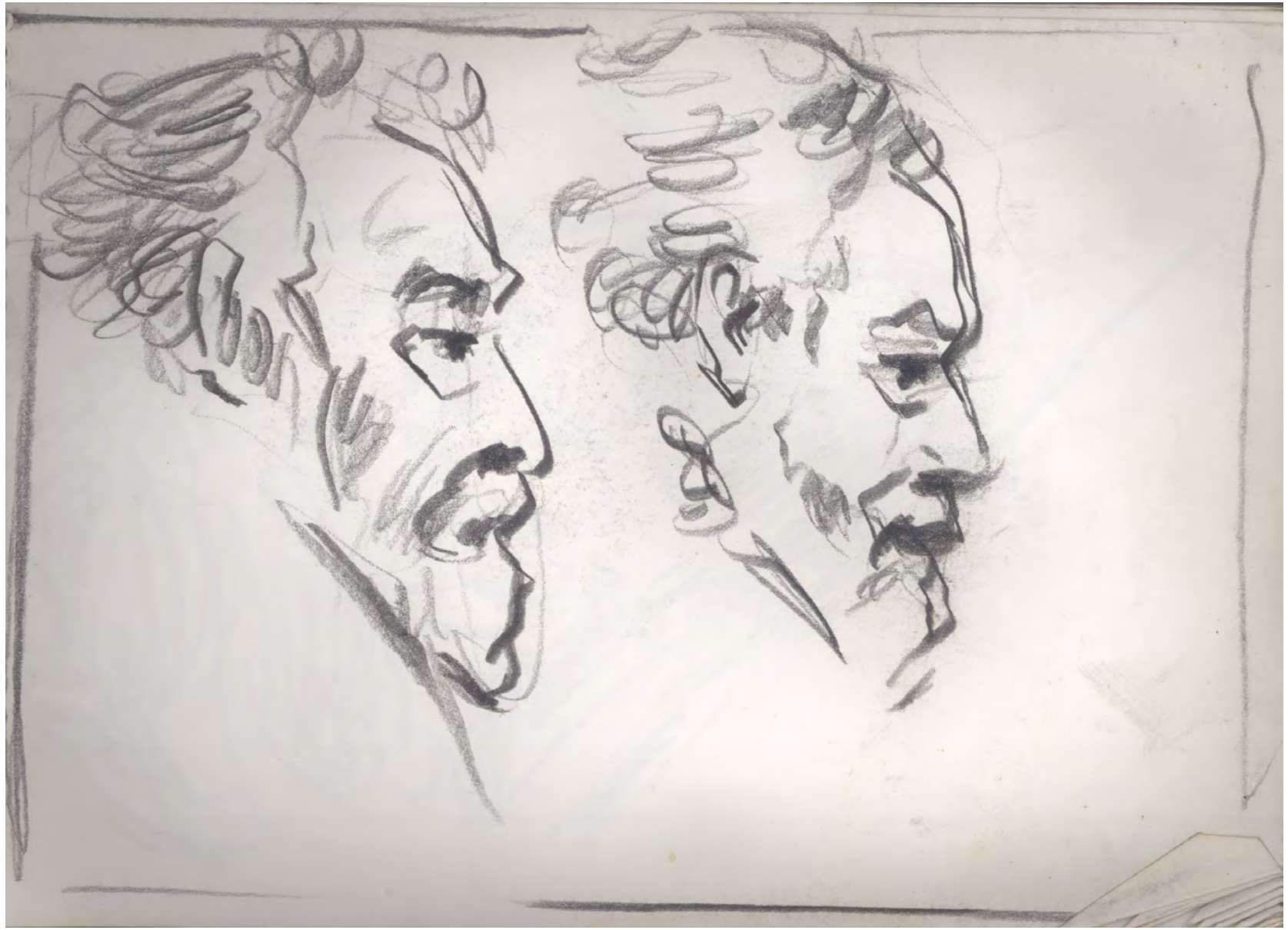










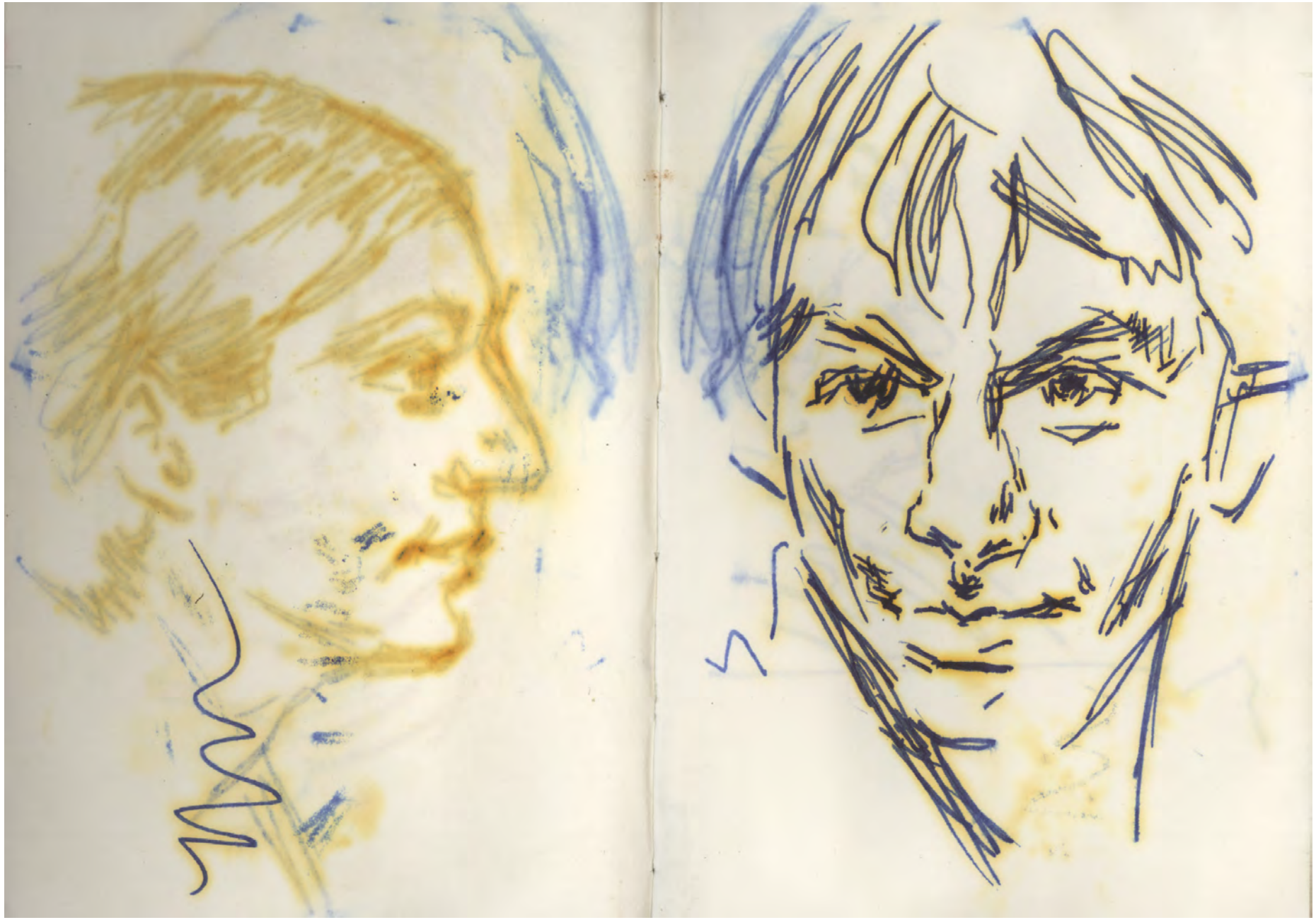



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Keep cl
STOP








THE COMRADE
How I Became a Socialist.
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11'-6"







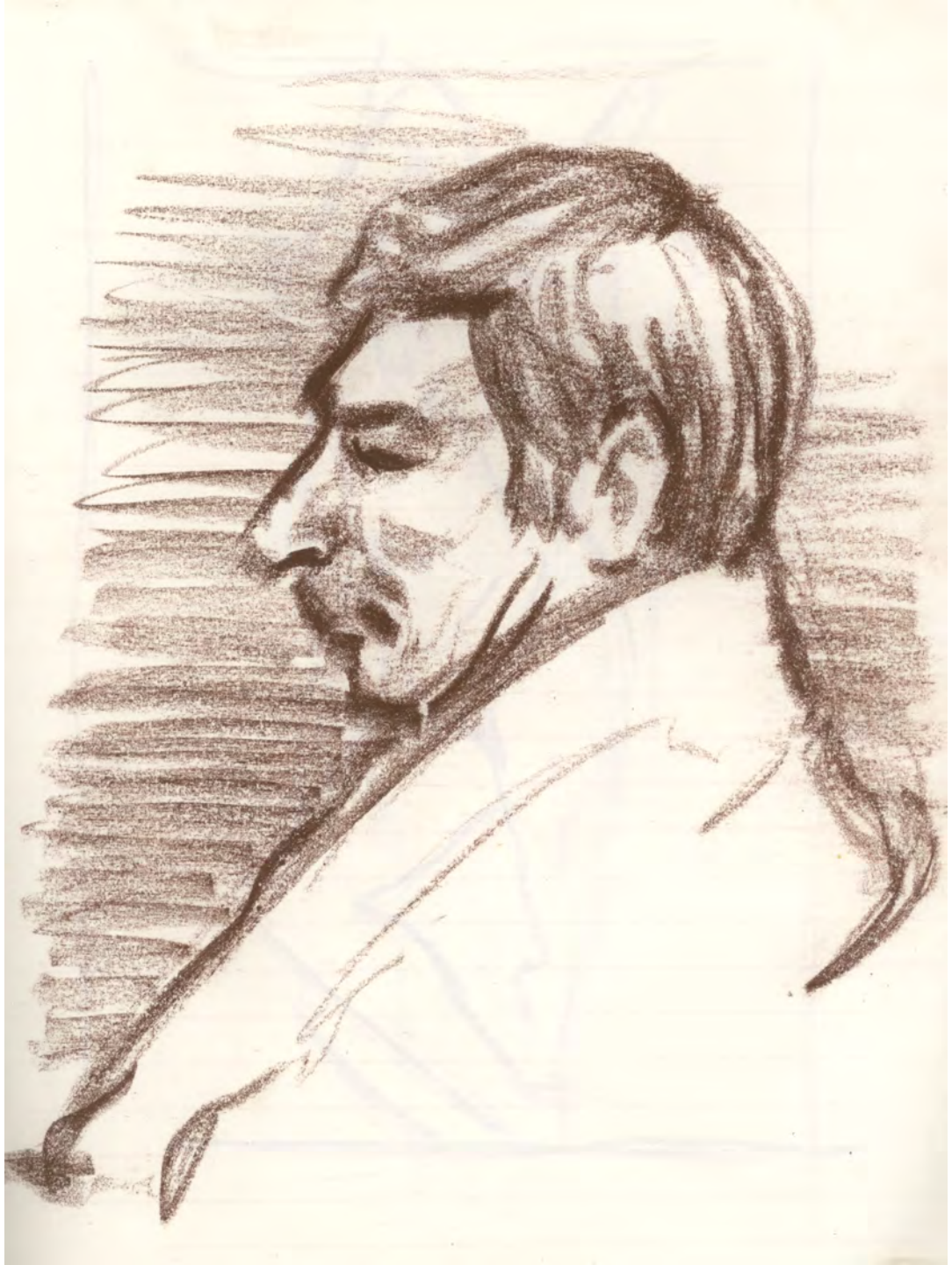

Dawson Curling Club
1642

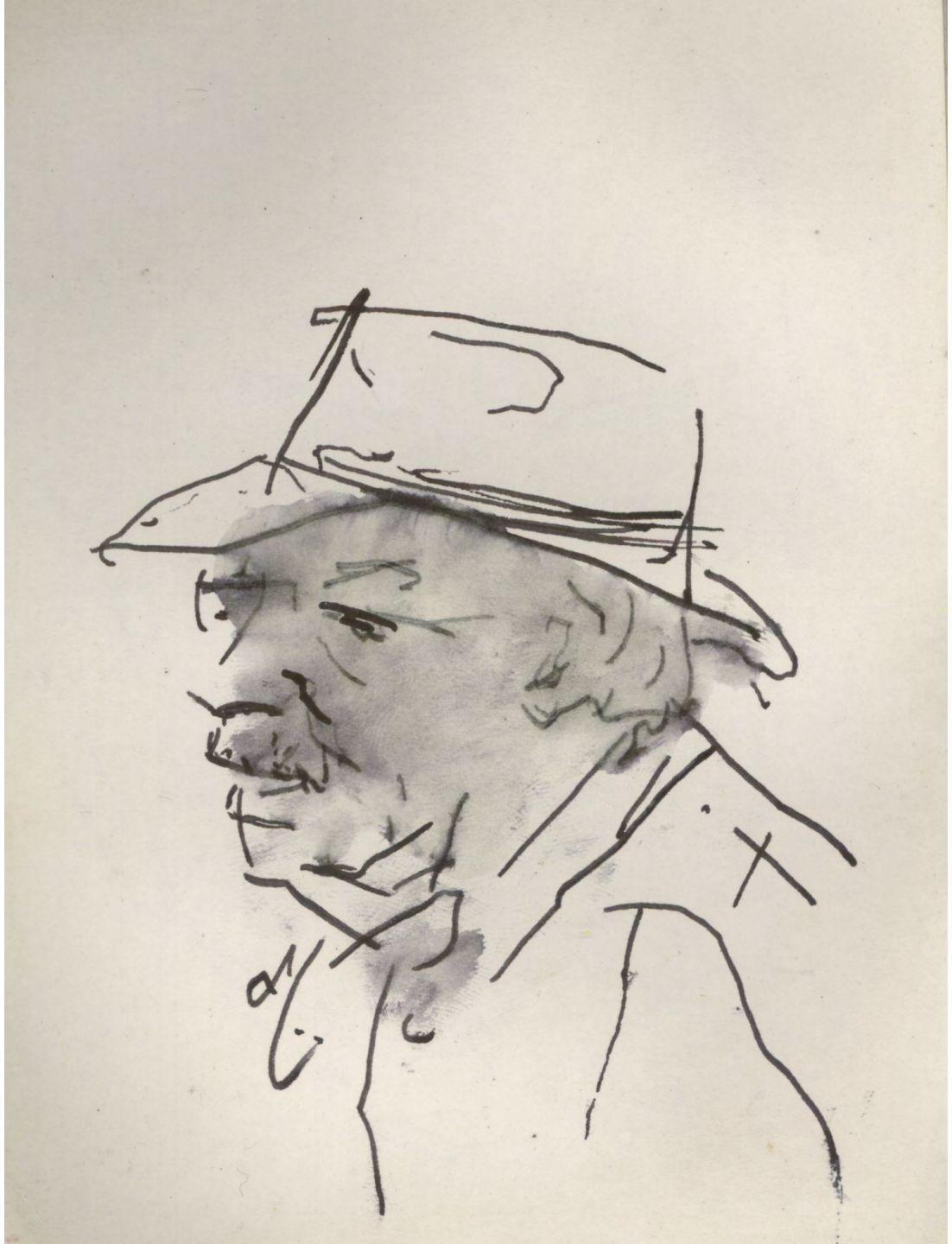





















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DIFFUSION 2015

Following the success of Cardiff's First International Festival of Photography in 2013, October sees the welcome return of 'Diffusion', the biennial month long photography festival started by Ffotogallery.



Above: Hamish Gane's 'Klondike 2', part of the 'Towards America - Home Sweet Home' show displaying in the Capitol Shopping Centre during the Festival.

Images from fifty photographers are included in the programme for Diffusion 2015, exhibiting in more than twenty venues spread across the city. For those who know their photography, established names such as Martin Parr and David Hurn will be showing work alongside emerging talent such as Clementine Schneidemann. Clementine's images entitled 'I Called Her Lisa Marie' extends the Elvis legend beyond the well trodden iconography of Memphis to the impersonators on our side of the Atlantic. The work is captured at the annual Elvis convention, held at Porthcawl Pavilion, South Wales.

With over twenty separate exhibitions, the festival uses contemporary art spaces - Chapter Arts Centre, G39, CardiffMADE, and Ffotogallery's Turner House in Penarth among them - and commandeered 'found spaces'. Displays will occupy disused commercial buildings such as the former National Express ticket office, a cinema and bowling complex, and Cory's buildings in Butetown, a large derelict complex once used by coal merchants.

Cardiff Bay forms Diffusion's geographical epicentre, with the largest concentration of displays located here allowing festival goers to 'photo-hop' conveniently from one show to the next. There will be exhibitions in the Norwegian Church, Bay Art, Butetown History & Art Centre and Third Floor Gallery, the Wales Millennium Centre, and even in the Senedd.

The festival programme is impressive, featuring a huge lineup of international as well as Wales based photographers. Not only does the festival unabashedly celebrate the power of photography as a medium, it also brings to Cardiff a number of new commissions and premieres from both sides of the Atlantic. A feather or two in Cardiff's cultural cap for sure.

This year's festival is united under the title of 'Looking for America' - with differing aspects of 'The American Dream' being explored within this theme. Several exhibitions have a transatlantic element and explore the Welsh connection with the States. Recent graduate and emerging talent Jack Latham's exhibition 'A Pink Flamingo' depicts the Oregon Trail - a migration that is both geographical and metaphorical - becoming indelibly associated with the birth of modern America. In travelling this route into the Wild West, Latham's photographs capture the bleak landscape settled by the early Pioneers in the hope of greener pastures.

Another body of work which takes a pivotal moment in 19th century American History as its subject matter, namely the Civil War, is Peter Evans' exhibition 'Seeing the Elephant'. Showing at Roath's CardiffMADE gallery, his series of photographs document an American Civil War Re-enactment Camp in the UK. Taking the little known historical fact that over ten thousand Brits fought alongside Yankees and Confederates, Evans took it upon himself camp out 150 years later, and live the history 'authentically' under canvas. He did so with the Southern Skirmish Association, the oldest society outside of the United States to re-enact the American Civil War. Wearing clothes of the period Evans immersed himself in the experience, photographing everything from the skirmishes they fought, to the breakfasts they ate. Being high colour, rather than black and white prints, his series of photographs take the idea of documentary reportage to another level. The line between fiction and reality is blurred through an eerie sense of time travel where the historical appears as contemporary.

Evans said of his experience of living as a Civil war soldier that he "became excited by the notion of trying to photograph a straight candid vision of the past, a sort of heightened reality where they unconsciously looked as if they really were of that time, living that moment, in camp-grounds buried deep within the far off fields and forests of 1860's America".

Perhaps by way of balance, the work of several American photographers is being included as part of the festival. Three important contemporary American photographers - Jeff Brouws, Todd Hido and Will Steacy - are exhibiting a show of night photography entitled 'And Now It's Dark', at Ffotogallery's Turner House in Penarth. Jeff Brouws' images of modern day Americana capture America's franchised landscapes of strip malls, homogenised housing tracts and fast food chains, whilst Todd Hido's \Excerpts from Silver Meadows', explores what he calls "the dark unravelling of the American dream", focusing on the elusive shift from dusk to darkness and the ways in which human behaviour changes as the light fades.

Other festival highlights include the opportunity to see a fascinating and rare archive of images alongside the predominantly contemporary work on show. Veteran photographer Arthur Tress' images capture San Francisco street life in one particular year - 1964. The archive is a time capsule of images from civil rights parades to impromptu street portraits that is being exhibited in Stadium Plaza.

Thankfully the exhibitions are scheduled with some consideration to its audience - they're staggered through the whole of October, so there is no excuse not to see everything on show... or to grab the opportunity to meet the photographers in person, many of whom will be in Cardiff to discuss their work and take part in a Portfolio Review at the Wales Millennium Centre on 29 October, followed by an International Symposium at Chapter Arts Centre on the 30 October.

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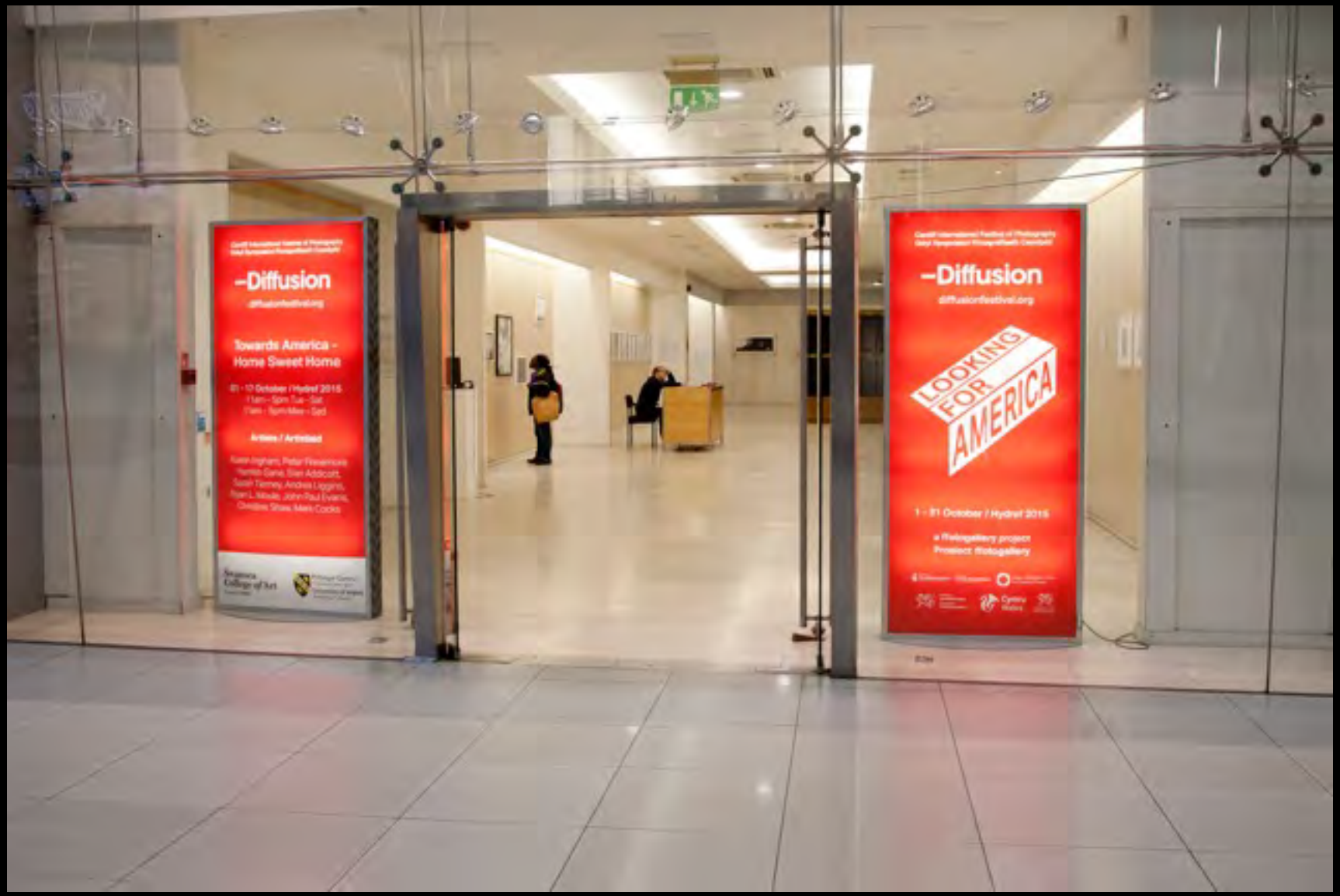
— Christabel Gingell

Cardiff International Festival of Photography
Gŵyl Ryngwladol Ffotograffiaeth Caerdydd

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Towards America -
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LOOKING
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