

## **Martin Parr 'Working Men's Clubs'**

### **Earlswood Working Men's Club**

**Thursday 11 February 2010 – 14 March 2010**

#### **PRIVATE VIEW Thursday 11 February 2010**

**from 7-9pm, At Earlswood Working Men's Club –**

**160 Greenway Rd, Rumney, Cardiff, South Glamorgan, Wales CF3 3PN.**

Martin Parr's '*Working Men's Clubs*' is one of four photography commissions from '*Imaging the City*', a collaborative project between Safle and the University of Wales, Newport (UWN), conceived by Russell Roberts and Emma Price and funded by St David's Partnership.

Parr is an eminent UK photographer who has been working with Safle in Cardiff and the South Wales Valleys to produce this new body of work. Earlswood Working Men's Club was chosen by the artist as the first exhibition venue, his idea was to use unconventional gallery space so that viewers can experience club life first-hand.

The tradition of Working Men's Clubs has long held a fascination for Parr. Over the past six months, he has visited many of the Welsh clubs in pursuit of photographing the 'Saturday night out'. Parr's anthology of collective identity, social gatherings and civic behaviour is inseparable from his representations, for it is both the subject and the product of the signifying practices, discourses and images in which Parr's photographs deliver on cue the culture of place.

*"It's the dancing that I really like. Regardless of age, when those familiar numbers are played, up we all get, shaking our bodies and waving our arms, singing along. Our mutual pop history is part of our DNA. Often bands bring their own lighting to dramatise the stage show. With whirling colours and flashing lights, the heady combination of four generations dancing together was, for me, the highlight of this project."*

*Martin Parr*

*"Parr has captured the essence of the Working Men's Clubs as cultural institutions in delivering the 'Saturday night out'. Parr through his series of colour photographs of club life with its large dance floors, affordable beer and live music has revealed some of the distinctive qualities of the eclectic evenings of entertainment and unabashed enjoyment"*

*Emma Price*

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **'Imaging the City'**

'Imaging the City' is a collaborative project between Safle and the University of Wales, Newport (UWN) and funded by the St David's Partnership.

Each of the four commissioned artists - Martin Parr, Paul Shambroom, Sarah Pickering and Dan Holdsworth - have identified, through a period of site specific research a proposal for their individual commission under the curatorial direction of Russell Roberts and Emma Price.

The aim of each commission is to facilitate a non-prescriptive, artistic exploration into the changing facades of Cardiff City Centre, focusing particularly on the users of the city centre and its wider social and cultural implications. The existing iconography of the City does not reflect this dramatic change in the urban landscape and it is our intention, through the commissioning process, to establish a series of narratives reflecting on new spatial and visual dynamics of the City, impacting on everyday experience but independent of regeneration schemes.

### **Artist: Martin Parr**

Parr studied photography at Manchester Polytechnic from 1970 to 1973. To support his career as a freelance photographer, he took on various teaching assignments between 1975 and the early 1990s. At the beginning of the 1980s, his work aimed to mirror the lifestyle of ordinary British people, reflecting the social decline and distress of the working class during the era of Margaret Thatcher. He earned an international reputation for his oblique approach to social documentary, and for innovative imagery. In 1994, he became a member of Magnum after much heated debate over his provocative photographic style.

In 2002 Phaidon published the monograph Martin Parr. A large retrospective of Parr's work was initiated by the Barbican Art Gallery in London, and has since been shown in the Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris and the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg.

Parr was appointed Professor of Photography in 2004 at the University of Wales, and was Guest Artistic Director for Rencontres d'Arles in the same year. In recent years, he has developed an interest in filmmaking, and has started to use his photography in different contexts, such as fashion and advertising.

Martin Parr is represented by the Magnum Photo Agency.

### **Co-Curator: Russell Roberts**

Russell Roberts is a curator and writer. Born in Cosford, Shropshire.

From 1998-2006 he was Head of Photography at the National Museum of Photography, Film & Television (National Media Museum), where he is now Honorary Fellow in Photography. Among the projects he worked on were: Luc Delahaye's Histories (2004), Hans van der Meer's The Other Side of Football (2005), Julian Germaine's Portraits (2005), The Old Order and The New: P.H. Emerson and Photography 1885 – 1895 (2006), and a retrospective of Elliot Erwitt (2006). He was the founding editor of the Museum's magazine Archive and developed links with a number of institutions to support critical engagement with the Collection through conferences, symposia and publishing.

As a curator, he has worked on projects for festivals and venues such as Arles, Photoespana and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Nederlands Fotomuseum, Tate Britain, Moderna Museet and the Finnish Museum of Photography amongst others. Between 2003 and 2006: he was an advisor to Arts Council England; Research Associate at the Pitt Rivers Museum Research Centre at the University of Oxford; Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Wales, Newport; project director for the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council subject specialist network for photography; consultant to the National Galleries of Scotland and The Photographers' Gallery; and Chair of the Committee for the Jerwood Photography Prize.

### **Co-Curator: Emma M Price**

Emma is public art commissioner and national advisor to the Arts Council of Wales. Born in Aberdare, Mid Glamorgan.

Emma gained her BA (Hons), Design: Photography from Staffordshire University in 1999 followed by a Postgraduate Diploma Design Management in 2003. Emma is a senior project manager for Safle. She is responsible for developing strategies and managing public art commissions within the UK. Emma joined Safle after a previous career as a fine art photographer and as an Art and Design Lecturer, Glamorgan Centre of Art and Design Technology and previously as a Learning Support Officer at Staffordshire University. Emma has been curating and commissioning site-specific artwork project for the past 6 year is developing programmes of creative projects through the management and implementation of commissions with local and international artists for public and private sector clients.

### **Exhibition Venue: Earlswood Working Men's Club**

Earlswood is one of Cardiff's long-established WMCs and is a model of cooperative ownership. It is one of only a few working men's clubs that still retain strong political and community support - local volunteers complete the paperwork, organise fundraising and continue to offer live music, bingo and a true community space hosting weddings, birthday parties and wakes. The club's membership fees and entertainment profits make it financially independent, and also able to put some money back into the community. Despite inevitable economic troubles due to the expansion of high street pub chains, the clubs remains popular today.

## Project Sponsor: St David's Partnership

'St David's 2' is a joint development between Land Securities, and Capital Shopping Centres. Together, as St David's Partnership, they have spearheaded a landmark £675 million, 967,500 sq ft (89,891 sq m) development in the heart of Cardiff. St David's Partnership appointed Safle as consultants and project managers, as part of a £1.5m public art investment. Other projects include; integrated, site specific work throughout the internal and external areas of the development and the Arcades Project, an artist-led investigation into Cardiff's historic Victorian and Edwardian Arcades and the new St David's 2 Arcade, as well as *'Imaging the City'*, an engagement of four international photographers to develop a portfolio of work based around the city, its architecture and its residents.

For more information, visit [www.stdavidscardiff.com](http://www.stdavidscardiff.com)

## Commissioning Agency: Safle

Safle's mission is to promote, advocate, develop and implement art in the urban and rural public realm, throughout Wales and internationally. Safle commissions outstanding national and international artists to create both permanent artworks and temporary interventions. Through our many programmes and methods of working we strive to enliven and public spaces. Safle works in collaboration with artists, architects, residents, communities, public authorities and the private sector responding to the increasing demand for innovative contemporary art in public spaces.

For further information and press, images please contact Emma Maria Price, Senior Project Manager or Sam Perry, Marketing Officer

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