

Press Release – 2 February 2016

THE RHUBARB TRIANGLE & OTHER STORIES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN PARR



THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD ANNOUNCES A NEW COMMISSION AND FIRST MAJOR
UK SURVEY EXHIBITION FOR 14 YEARS FOR BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER MARTIN PARR

- PART OF THE GALLERY'S 5TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN 2016



THE RHUBARB TRIANGLE & OTHER STORIES: PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN PARR
4 FEBRUARY – 12 JUNE 2016

Exhibition Press Preview: Wednesday 3 February 2016

The Hepworth Wakefield is delighted to announce a new commission and major survey exhibition by British photographer Martin Parr, as part of the gallery's fifth anniversary celebrations, which take place in 2016.

The Rhubarb Triangle & Other Stories opens to the public on 4 February 2016 until 12 June 2016. The exhibition will be the largest Martin Parr exhibition in the UK since his Barbican retrospective in 2002, comprising almost 400 photographs that span the past 40 years.

A comprehensive overview of Parr's work will be on display, from early Yorkshire-based black and white photographs of rural communities to his recent international examinations of consumerism. Drawing on the

implicit themes of labour and leisure present in the new Rhubarb Triangle commission, the exhibition brings together photographs from multiple series and commissions to address contemporary global networks of industry and consumption. Key series to be exhibited include: *The Non-Conformists*, 1975-80; *The Last Resort*, 1983-85; *The Cost of Living*, 1989; *Autoportrait*, (ongoing), 1991-2012 and *Common Sense*, 1995-99.

The Rhubarb Triangle new commission lies at the heart of the exhibition and comprises a series of photographs taken over the last 12 months in an area of countryside known as 'The Rhubarb Triangle' between Wakefield, Morley and Rothwell in West Yorkshire, which is famous for producing early-forced rhubarb. Parr's photographs capture all aspects of the rhubarb business, from the back-breaking work of moving the rhubarb from field to shed, the freezing cold and exhausting labour of picking the vegetable by candlelight (or occasionally by head-torch).

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield said:

"As a long standing admirer of Martin Parr's work it's wonderful to be able to realise this exhibition as part of The Hepworth Wakefield's fifth anniversary celebrations. I'm especially delighted that this new compendium of powerful and memorable images by Martin, which explores Yorkshire's fascinating 'Rhubarb Triangle', will not only be on display in the heartland of this quintessential British food but that 10 works from this new commission will enter Wakefield's art collection. This will also be a superb opportunity to see major work from all points in Martin's extraordinary career."

He added:

"Inspiring generations young and old is a crucial part of what we do at The Hepworth Wakefield and I am so pleased that Martin Parr will also be judging our first Schools' Photography Competition, open 3 to 18 year olds, from early years through to college students. The winning photographs will go on display in the gallery and, who knows, we could be helping to inspire a future world-renowned photographer."

The exhibition presents a chronological overview of Parr's iconic series of works. The *Non-Conformists* and the *Calderdale* series, taken at the beginning of his career, reflect his experiences of living in and growing up in Yorkshire. After graduating from Manchester Polytechnic, Parr moved to Hebden Bridge in West Yorkshire where he embarked upon a project with his future partner Susie recording the disappearing communities around this small town. Parr was already familiar with Yorkshire from his early life, his paternal grandparents George and Florrie lived in Calverley in Leeds and he spent childhood holidays in the county, visiting Scarborough, Brimham Rocks and Bradford.

The Rhubarb Triangle & Other Stories will also include his acclaimed series *The Last Resort*, documenting the leisure time of the working class in the seaside town of New Brighton which contributed towards the transformation of documentary photography in Britain. We will also show Parr's subsequent project, *The Cost of Living*, a photographic essay portraying the new middle classes of 1980s England at home, at parties and meetings, shopping, and going about their everyday life. His investigation of cultural identity, aspiration and image is further addressed in the *Autoportrait* series, within which Parr presents himself as subject of studio portraits around the world. His increasing international work, photographing around the world for commissions or his own projects on themes such as tourism and beaches, is drawn together in two groups, *Work and Leisure*, to present the labour that produces the objects, food and environments that we consume, and the results of that often, ironically, uneasy experience of leisure time.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication on The Rhubarb Triangle featuring an essay by Martin's partner, Susie Parr.

The Martin Parr Pop-Up Studio' at The Hepworth Wakefield on Saturday 20 February 2016 has now sold out, attracting overseas bookings from Milan, Nice and Paris. This is only the second time this type of event has been staged in the UK, following on from similar 'Pop-Up Studios' in London, Paris and New York.

Martin Parr In Conversation takes place at The Hepworth Wakefield on Friday 26 February, 6.30-8.30pm. A unique opportunity to hear Martin Parr discuss his long career as a photographer with Anne McNeill, Director of Impressions Gallery in Bradford on the occasion his exhibition, *The Rhubarb Triangle and Other Stories: Photographs by Martin Parr* at The Hepworth Wakefield. Tickets are £8 (£6.40 concessions, £6 members £4 students), book by calling 01924 294360 or email hello@hepworthwakefield.org

ENDS

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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IMAGE REQUESTS:

High resolution images are available from the Media Centre: www.hepworthwakefield.org/press
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For further assistance with images or credits contact:

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EXHIBITION FACTS:

Press Preview: 3 February 2016
Title: The Rhubarb Triangle & Other Stories: Photographs by Martin Parr
Dates: 4 February – 12 June 2016
Address: The Hepworth Wakefield, Gallery Walk, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 5AW
Telephone: +44 (0)1924 247360
Admission: Free
Website: www.hepworthwakefield.org
Email: hello@hepworthwakefield.org

Opening Hours: 10am - 5pm Tuesday – Sunday
10am - 9pm Third Thursday of the month
Closed Mondays (except local school holidays and bank holidays)

Travel: By Train: the nearest stations are Wakefield Westgate and Kirkgate
By Car: the gallery is situated off the A61, with nearby links to the M1 motorway. A pay & display visitor car park is located on Thornes Lane, WF1 5QJ, with free blue

badge car parking on site

By Bus: the gallery is situated on main bus routes and the FreeCityBus route (Mon-Sat, 9.30am-3pm)

By Bicycle: bicycle racks are located by our main entrance

By Air: the nearest airport is LeedsBradford

Polite Request: The gallery should be cited in full, as The Hepworth Wakefield

Twitter: @HepworthGallery

Facebook: TheHepworthWakefield

Instagram: HepworthWakefield

NOTES TO EDITORS:

THE RHUBARB TRIANGLE

'The Rhubarb Triangle' is a 9-square-mile triangle in West Yorkshire, situated between Wakefield, Morley and Rothwell which has become famous for producing early forced rhubarb, whereby the rhubarb is traditionally picked by candlelight. A native food of Siberia, rhubarb has flourished in West Yorkshire due to perfect conditions of early frosts and the local resource of 'shoddy', a waste product from the textile mills that once flourished here.

During earlier half of the 20th century, at its peak the rhubarb industry covered an area of about 30 square miles, with West Yorkshire producing 90% of the world's winter forced rhubarb. In February 2010, Yorkshire Forced Rhubarb was awarded Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status by the European Commission's Protected Food Name scheme after being recommended by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

While the number of producers has declined sharply in recently years, Yorkshire rhubarb has become widely celebrated. Wakefield celebrates its rhubarb industry with the annual *Festival of Food, Drink and Rhubarb* held in Wakefield city centre every February (Friday 19 – Sunday 21 February 2016). This weekend celebration features tours of the Rhubarb sheds, food demonstrations, music and plentiful rhubarb products.

MARTIN PARR

Martin Parr was born in Epsom, Surrey, UK, in 1952. When he was a boy, his budding interest in the medium of photography was encouraged by his grandfather George Parr, himself a keen amateur photographer. Martin Parr studied photography at Manchester Polytechnic, from 1970 to 1973.

Since that time, Martin Parr has worked on numerous photographic projects. He has developed an international reputation for his innovative imagery, his oblique approach to social documentary, and his input to photographic culture within the UK and abroad.

In 1994 he became a full member of Magnum Photographic Corporation. Martin developed an interest in filmmaking, and has started to use his photography within different conventions, such as fashion and advertising. In 2002 the Barbican Art Gallery and the National Media Museum initiated a large retrospective of Martin Parr's work. This show toured Europe for the next 5 years.

Martin Parr was Professor of Photography at The University of Wales Newport campus from 2004 to 2012. Martin Parr was Guest Artistic Director for Rencontres D'Arles in 2004. In 2006 Martin Parr was awarded the Erich Salomon Prize and the resulting Assorted Cocktail show opens at Photokina. In 2008 Martin Parr was guest curator at New York Photo Festival, curating the New Typologies exhibition.

Parrworld opened at Haus de Kunst, Munich, in 2008. The show exhibited Parr's own collection of objects, postcards, his personal photography collection of both British and International artists, photo books and finally his own photographs. The exhibition toured Europe for the following 2 years. At PhotoEspaña, 2008, Martin Parr wins the Baume et Mercier award in recognition of his professional career and contributions to contemporary photography.

Martin Parr curated the Brighton Photo Biennial that took place in October 2010. In 2013, Martin was appointed visiting Professor of Photography at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. In Spring 2015 Aperture published The Chinese Photobook, a book about the history of Chinese photo books that Martin worked on for the past few years.

Martin is currently working on his two shows for February 2016 at The Hepworth Wakefield and an exhibition at the Guildhall in London. Martin Parr has published over 80 books of his own work and edited another 30.

SCHOOLS PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

As part of The Hepworth Wakefield's fifth anniversary celebrations, the gallery is launching its first schools photography competition to be judged by Martin Parr. The competition will be open to schools across the Wakefield district for pupils from Early Years (EYFS) through to Year 13 to enter. The gallery is hosting a launch event for the Schools Competition on Tuesday 29 September, 4pm-6.45pm. For details contact Becky Harlow, Schools Coordinator: beckyharlow@hepworthwakefield.org/01924 247374

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

The gallery is at the heart of Wakefield's regeneration. Designed by the internationally acclaimed practice, David Chipperfield Architects, it is funded by Wakefield Council and Arts Council England and an increasing number of charitable trusts, private individuals, Patrons and Members.

The gallery which opened on 21 May 2011, has welcomed 1.4 million visitors to date and celebrates its fifth anniversary in 2016.

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