

ROCKET

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30/11/12 - 9/2/13 *press release*

Martin Parr

time off



Fifteen years ago Jonathan Stephenson / Rocket presented the first commercial London gallery exhibition of photographs by **Martin Parr**. Now Rocket presents its ninth exhibition by the internationally renowned British photographer.

Titled *Time Off*, the group of six large photographs date from within the last decade and feature countries from Asia and Europe. They are almost 'painterly' and picturesque in their intent. This commanding set of images confirm Parr's development as an artist and as a social commentator, observing both comic and poignant scenes.

In five of the photographs clusters of individuals are preoccupied with appreciating the world around them. No one is totally relaxed; whether or not they are aware of the camera capturing their interactions. There is a restless search for achievements, or reflections, that are just out of reach. Purchasing a tourist souvenir will not offer comfort here.

*When his first book of colour photographs, **The Last Resort**, was published in 1986, his detractors accused him of exaggeration and patronisation, claiming that he portrayed the New Brighton seaside town as a kind of working-class hell of junk food, ugly people and litter-strewn streets... Time changes everything and, today, **The Last Resort** is considered an important document, unflinching in its gaze and heightened in its atmosphere, but neither cynical nor exploitative.*

Parr's vision has deepened and widened since 1986, while somehow staying essentially the same. His signature is as recognisable as any in the contemporary art world. In Europe, he is viewed with a mixture of fascination and admiration, as a kind of archetypal Englishman, despite the fact that his Englishness is of the wilfully old-fashioned socks-with-sandals variety. At home, he continues to divide opinion like few other photographers.

Sean O'Hagan, *The Guardian*, 2012

Martin Parr (UK, b1952) has been represented by Rocket since 1997 and is a full member of Magnum Photos. From 2008-10 the ParrWorld exhibition appeared at Haus der Kunst, Munich; Jeu de Paume, Paris; and The Baltic, Gateshead. In 2012 he has had major institutional solo shows in Finland, Australia, USA, The Netherlands, Spain and Greece.

Photographs by Martin Parr are held in numerous public collections including Tate Gallery, London; the Arts Council of Great Britain; V&A, London; Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Los Angeles County Museum; Australian National Gallery, Canberra, Australia.

*Rocket gallery is open Tues to Fri 10-6 / Sat 12-6 – preview 6-9 on Thursday 29 November with the artist present
For images please contact Rocket on 020 7729 7594 or rocket1@btinternet.com martinparr.co.uk*