

## Jo Spence | Photographer: Works from the archive

**Hire Fee**  
£2,000

**Space Required**  
54 linear metres (adaptable)

**Exhibition Contents**  
The '70s: 8 prints - 20" x 27" (average)  
The '80s: 14 prints - 24" x 36" (average)  
The '90s: 15 prints - 30" x 40" (average).  
Display case with contents: original books  
and magazines.  
6 display portfolios.

**Installation**  
Velcro and mirror plated.  
Free standing display case.

**Transport**  
onward transport is the responsibility of the hirer.

**Education**  
A number of talks and workshops can be arranged  
in conjunction with Street Level.



Jo Spence (1934-1992) was a Photographer, Writer, Teacher and Workshop Organiser. She pioneered a range of photographic practices from work on self-image and the family Album to the uses of photography as a therapeutic and political tool. Her book *Putting Myself in the Picture* (Camden Press 1986) inspired and empowered a whole generation of women photographers. Her unique contribution to photography was documented in the seminal publication *Cultural Sniping: The Art of Transgression* (Routledge, 1995). She believed that everyday life is the fundamental source of all meaningful art - photography is a tool that can be used by everyone in any situation for self-knowledge, personal growth and above all for Social Criticism.

Jo Spence's engagement with a range of photographic genres, from documentary to photo-therapy is captured in this exhibition organised by Street Level and Terry Dennett, curator of the Jo Spence Memorial Archive.

"...Works from the Archive" includes a partial selection (10) from her early high street studio work in the mid-70's where she specialised in weddings, portraiture (including a rare contact print of her contemporary Susan Sontag), actors' portfolios and legal work. Ten works from the mid-80's (works from the mid-80s) represent her critically acknowledged work on self-image, class and health in collaboration with a number of people including her last partner, the late David Roberts.

In 1990, she was diagnosed as having chronic lymphatic leukaemia and at this time, in collaboration with Terry Dennett, embarked on what was to be her last photographic work: *The Final Project*, an exploration of life and death based upon the attitudes of different cultures to death. The exhibition includes 15 newly presented and framed prints in this series which illustrate her allegorical approach using 'substitute selves' in the form of dolls, toy skeletons and masks combined with 'photo-fantasy', a method of projecting images onto existing photographs and of sandwiching two slides together. This magical realism, whilst crude in its approach, produced some poignant and lyrical artwork which predates the layering commonly used in digital imaging today.

Documentation from the many collectives she helped establish - Photography Workshop, Half Moon, Camerawork magazine, the Hackney Flashers and the Polysnappers are also available, plus a number of publications and posters which frame her socially engaged practice.

A minigraph publication with a commissioned essay by Adele Patrick accompanies the exhibition.

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