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# David Gordon - Fishing the Minch

23rd July - 15th August 2021

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As a young photographer, **David Gordon** boarded the 'Fiery Cross', a fishing boat based in Stornoway on the Western Isles. With skipper Donald MacDonald and his crew, he journeyed to the Minch - the strait of water between the Outer Hebrides and mainland Scotland as the crew trawled for their catch.

The Fishing the Minch photographs were uniquely exhibited in what at the time was described as "the first flyposted exhibition in the country" by the Half Moon Photography Workshop in the East End of London in 1980.

Today, almost forty years later, the entire edit of these historic images has been rediscovered, scanned and printed. They show the wider industry and daily life in Stornoway during the late 1970s and early 80s.

This is a fascinating glimpse into a world of work and play that has now all but disappeared. Shot in a classic 35mm black and white documentary style, Gordon's narrative takes the viewer from the rough seas of the Atlantic back to the photographer's boyhood town. In the Young's factory women hand peel prawns; in the Rolf Olsen's processing plant, fish is frozen and salted. On a Friday night, the chip shop is full. In a bar, a drunk sleeps off his whisky at closing time.

The next morning a solitary rabbit is the only life on a solemn, grey, Presbyterian Sunday morning before the churchgoers gather in the thin afternoon light.

These tender, quiet images are a portal back to a lost past, yet in their simplicity they echo a rhythm that is timeless and entirely recognisable.

This exhibition was produced by **Street Level Photoworks** and is part of **Everything Flows**, a specially curated coastal exhibition trail programmed by Street Level Photoworks in partnership with regional venues and supported by EventScotland as part of the Year of Coasts and Waters 20/21.