

**STREET LEVEL** PHOTOWORKS  
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN SCOTLAND



*The Castlemilk Lads (1963)*

# Oscar Marzaroli

A Street Level Photoworks Touring Exhibition



*Boys in High Heels, Gorbals (1963)*

**Oscar Marzaroli** is arguably Scotland's most notable documentary photographer. His photographs and films of Glasgow from the 1950s through to the 1980s captured a period of enormous change with images of people going about their lives in the city, at work and at leisure.

Some of his most well known images detail Glasgow's Gorbals community in the 1960s. He was a photographer of great ability who captured the nature of the city and people with sensitivity and empathy. Whilst many of Marzaroli's photographs of Glasgow are instantly recognisable, such as *The Castlemilk Lads* (1963) or *Golden Haired Lass* (1963), Marzaroli worked all over Scotland and further afield as a photographer and filmmaker. An extensive range of the subject matter is embraced in this exhibition.

In the 1980s, his work was brought to a new audience when the band Deacon Blue used his images of the city and its people on their record covers. The cover of their debut album, *Raintown*, was taken by Marzaroli and depicted a rainy day over Glasgow's west end with the Finnieston Crane in the background.

Through portraits and landscapes, Marzaroli captured Scotland during an exceptional time when city slums were being cleared to make way for new social housing. It is said his images perfectly encapsulate the atmosphere surrounding those fundamental shifts in society.



*Oscar Marzaroli (1960)*





*Sunset, Gorbals (1965)*

**Oscar Marzaroli** was born in Castiglione, La Spezia, Italy in 1933. He moved to Glasgow with his family in 1935 where they settled in Garnethill. Between 1955 and 1959 Marzaroli worked as a freelance photojournalist in Stockholm and London, and spent time touring Europe. Upon his return to Glasgow in 1959 he set up the photographic studio Studio 59 and married Anne Connelly, with whom he had three daughters – Marie Claire, Nicola and Lisa Jane.

In 1967 Marzaroli co-founded Ogam films with Mike Pavett and Allan & Martin Singleton. During the early 1970s Ogam films were commissioned by the Highlands and Islands Development Board to make over 69 high-quality short films relating to the changing face of life in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

In 1983 Marzaroli was a major contributor to the **Noise and Smoky Breath - An Illustrated Anthology of Glasgow Poems, 1900-83** published by the Third Eye Centre, which was followed by his solo show **One Man's World: Photographs 1955 – 84** at the Third Eye Centre in 1984.

A number of books have subsequently been published, including *Shades of Grey* (1989), *Shades of Scotland* (1989), *Glasgow's People* (1993) and *Waiting for the Magic* (2013).

His death on 26 August 1988, at the age of 55, left a huge body of work - more than 50,000 photographs taken by him have recently been donated to Glasgow Caledonian University in August 2019. Street Level has worked with the family and GCU in bringing the work to even wider public recognition.



*Oscar Marzaroli and Martin Singleton*



Looking South from Park Terrace, Glasgow (1960)

*Oscar's work is part of Scotland's social history. I got in touch with Oscar after I became fascinated with his work, and he ended up coming out with us and shooting some photographs for our first Deacon Blue album in different locations. I'd told him about the idea of Raintown and he called me one day to say there was a picture he thought suited it. It's the one of the sunshine coming through the clouds. We loved it and our music from that period has been linked to Oscar ever since.*

**Ricky Ross, speaking at the launch of the Oscar Marzaroli Collection at Glasgow Caledonian University.**



# People & Place

---



*Flower Seller at Copeland's Corner (1968)*



*Off to School, Hill Street (1959)*



*Paintings For Sale, Botanic Gardens (1958)*



*Toffee apples, Glasgow Green Carnival (1963)*



*Christmas, Central Station (1964)*



*River Kelvin near Kelvin Hall (1965)*



Contact Sheet (1963)

*'The Castlemilk Lads' is possibly Marzaroli's best known photograph, shot on one of the sprawling peripheral housing estates thrown up rapidly in Glasgow during the 1950s. It speaks of a city altered by town planners beyond all recognition, and described by the writer William McIlvanney as 'the dispersal of the sense of community'. The extraordinary posture and expression of the two central figures encourage us to speculate about the boys' relationship to the ill-defined environment in which they now stand. As in Marzaroli images, the photograph both fixes a past moment and suggests an active and troubled history'*

**from A Companion Guide to Photography in the National Galleries of Scotland**



# Football

---



*Expectation, Celtic end, Cup Final, Hampden Park (1963)*



*Anderston Children Playing Football (1964)*



*Parading the European Cup, Celtic Park, Parkhead (1967)*



*Contact Sheet (1962)*

# The Gorbals

---



*Girls and Dog (1963)*



*The Old and the New, Gorbals 1968*



*Miracle of the Gorbals (1964)*



*Boy and Pram, Gorbals (1964)*



*Golden Haired Lass, Gorbals (1963)*



*Gorbals with southern Necropolis beyond (1964)*





Contact Sheet (1963)

*Social realism and aesthetic appeal do not necessarily clash; in the best photographs they should be in a state of productive tension, drawing the eye back to the picture again and again, making the viewer put questions to it even as he accepts and enjoys it... Marzaroli's realism is to place on record some of the changes of the 1960s in the older parts of Glasgow, especially in the Hutchesontown-Gorbals areas which was so central to the image and legend of the city as it was and which is now altered almost beyond recognition.*

**Edwin Morgan, from One Man's World (1984)**

# Industry & Protest

---



*Clyde Shipbuilding, John Brown's Yard (1966)*



*Interior fit-out, Clyde shipbuilding (1965)*



*Women at work in the Communal Wash-house ('The Steamie'), Townhead (1968)*



*Townhead Interchange during Construction (1968)*



*Mounted policeman, UCS protest march (1971)*



*Political Demonstrations, 'Must Glasgow Perish',  
Anti-Polaris march (1961)*





Contact Sheet (1961)

*Marzaroli built up a photographic archive of Scottish life that was unparalleled. For over twenty years he had scoured its landscape and observed its people; he had traced the changes in Glasgow through the desolation of the Gorbals to the Sixties optimism of the Red Road flats; portrayed the drama of the UCS work-in; recorded the Highlands and islands as they responded to the unexpected wealth new round off their shores; and, with all of that, had compiled a gallery in which the fisherman, artists, farmers, steelworkers, road makers, writers, miners, actors, oil rig builders, politicians, crofters, teachers and sculptors who were engaged in the whole story, all found a place.*

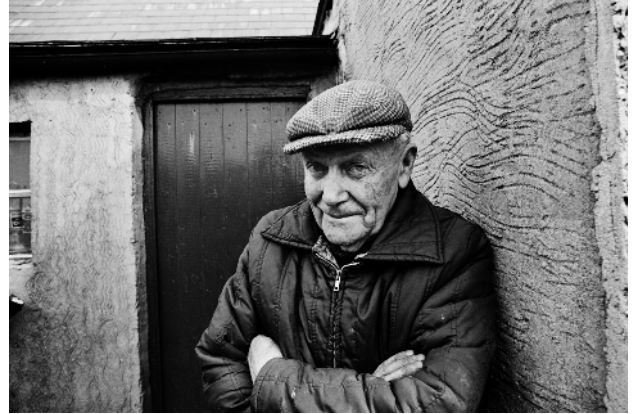
**James Grassie, from *Shades of Scotland* (1989)**

# Highlands & Islands

---



*Bob Fell Here, Lewis (1979)*



*Survivor from H.M. Yacht 'Iolaire' (which sank in Stornoway harbour on 1st January, 1919); Ness, Isle of Lewis (1979)*



*The Scarista Bull, Isle of Harris (1979)*

*Look at the photographs and you will find humour, sensitivity, drama and perhaps even scenes that fondly stir long forgotten corners of your memory. But above all these, you will find Scotland's family... That was Oscar Marzaroli's inspiration. For thirty years he searched every corner of the country, from the Out Skerries on their lonely guard station off the Shetlands to the huddled closes of Glasgow and the rolling spaces of the Borders, capturing and recording the land and its people in every mood... Sensitive as he was to the past, Marzaroli's real interest was the future. Everywhere he went, children were never long absent from his lens. His studies of innocence abroad in Glasgow's streets are an eloquent and touching statement of his indestructible optimism, thirst for understanding younger spirits.*

**James Grassie, from *Shades of Scotland* (1989)**

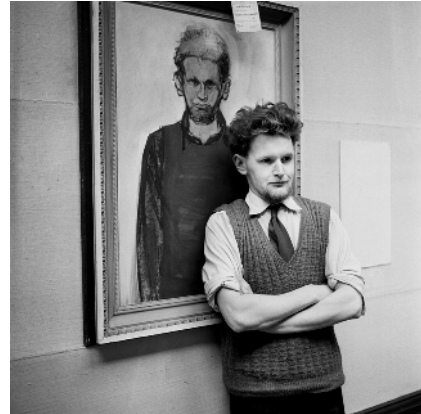


# Personalities

---



*Bill Forsyth and Clare Grogan during filming of  
Comfort and Joy, Glasgow (1983)*



*Alasdair Gray (1959)*



*Joan Eardly at her Townhead studio (1962)*



*Ian Hamilton Finlay (1968)*



*'The Steamie' at Govan Steamie, Wildcat Stage Production,  
Mayfest (1987)*



*George Wyllie and 'The Straw Locomotive,'  
Mayfest (1987)*

# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---





# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---



# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---



# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---





# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---



# STREET LEVEL PHOTOWORKS

---





*Funeral Party awaiting Hearse (1963)*

## HIRE FEE

£4,000 (For full show, UK only)

## SPACE REQUIRED

55 linear metres of exhibition wall space  
Exhibition can be edited in consultation with Street Level Photoworks

## EXHIBITION CONTENTS

- 85x Framed black and white archival pigment prints (Sizes varying from 64x64cm, 54x43cm, and 33x43cm)
- 2x Archival pigment prints mounted on dibond, 1x 59x59cm and 1x 157x59cm
- Optional - 5x Enlarged contact sheets on vinyl (Dimensions variable)
- Optional - 2x Digital files for Billboard paste ups - as seen in documentation (Dimensions variable)
- Copies of exhibition brochure featuring an essay by Peter Ross (these are free)
- Postcard packs featuring 12 images of works in the exhibition available Sale or Return at 30% commission to hiring venue (RRP £5) or purchase outright with 40% discount.
- Exhibition catalogue available Sale or Return at 30% commission to hiring venue (6 copies provided for promotional purposes or purchase outright with 40% discount.). Retail at £15 & includes interview with Marzaroli from 1986 by Jennie Renton.





*Colville's Ore Terminal from Hutchesontown Flats (1964)*

- Text panel and caption information supplied for venue to use in their own templates. Text panels can be supplied up by Street Level Photoworks if required.

## DISPLAY CASE CONTENTS

- Copies of exhibition catalogues / monographs and 7" / 12" vinyl record covers
- Various newspaper cuttings from 1984 onwards and exhibition related ephemera (facsimile copies only)
- Mounted family archive photographs (facsimile copies only)

## INSTALLATION

All frames supplied with mirror plates

## TRANSPORT

One way transport (UK only)

## EDUCATION

Hiring venues can adapt their own learning templates and practice accordingly. A short video presentation on the work featuring narration by Oscar's daughter is available as an interpretation and educational resource, which venues can share with teachers, colleges and community groups, as well as sharing the online link on any appropriate exhibition website page and social media. Hiring venues should provide their own AV equipment.