

THE PHOTOS THEY LOATHED

Buried, forgotten for 40 years, openly loathed at the time by its commissioner, Michael Bennett's 1979 photographic journey through North Wales has been rescued, restored and is now available for the first time as a book.

Images from the locally-disdained project were rediscovered and included in *Seaside Photographed*, The Turner Contemporary's first-ever photo exhibition. Currently on a UK tour after its 2019 showing in Margate, Kent, *Seaside Photographed* re-opened on 2nd December 2020 at The John Hansard Gallery, Southampton. (Until 23 Jan 2021)

Mournful of a lost world, always ironic, *Pier Closing Time* was a bitter-sweet portrait of Welsh seaside resorts in and out of season.

The original film negatives have been restored, digitised and re-mastered. *Pier Closing Time* documents North Wales' coastal resorts in an extraordinary, austere observation spanning two seasons of 1979.

Pier Closing Time is available from Cow On The Roof Press
<https://cowontheroofpress.com/product/pier-closing-time/>
(020 3411 3601 sales@cowontheroofpress.com)

★★★★★ “Michael Bennett's black and white photographs from the late 1970s ... show seascapes from Llandudno to St Leonards as melancholy and austere in every season, homing in on the weather-beaten faces of solitary workers – the signalman, the kiosk girl, the caretaker lugging the barrier to a pier in dark rain at closing time. They are starkly poignant laments.”

Laura Cumming, The Observer, May 2019

“Utterly uncompromising” *Val Williams & Karen Shepherdson, Seaside Photographed, 2019*

Michael Bennett is a photographer & illustrator, and has worked for *The Times*, *The Independent*, *The Sunday Times*, *The BBC*, *The Financial Times*, *BBC World Service*, *New Society* and *The New Statesman*. He had a long association with the satirical magazine *Private Eye*.

The [Victoria & Albert Museum](#) and [The National Portrait Gallery](#) have collections of Michael Bennett's work.

Notes for Editors: A signed and numbered limited first edition, *Pier Closing Time* was published 5 November 2020 by Cow On The Roof Press, Deal, Kent. Contacts: 020 3411 3601 & 07710 171323

Press resources: <https://cowontheroofpress.com/media-resources/>

Images from the project are included in *Seaside Photographed*, at the John Hansard Gallery, University of Southampton, open 2 December 2020 until 23 January 2021. Free admission.

(<https://jhg.art> 023 8059 2158 info@jhg.art)

In 2021, **Seaside Photographed** tours to:
Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange: 13 Feb – 5 June 2021
The Grundy, Blackpool: 27 June – 5 September 2021

