

Press Release

MRB

Lottie Davies Recreates Multimedia Project in Book Form with New Monograph, Quinn



Publication date: 5 June 2021

Published and distributed: Mutton Row

Price: £45/£160

[editions 1-50 available in an exclusive presentation box with handmade case and signed prints, editions 51-500 available without box and prints. All signed]

Order from: www.muttonrow.co.uk

Pages: 160

Format: Hardback

ISBN: 978-1-5272-8664-1

Language: English

Since 2014, British photographer, artist, and writer, Lottie Davies has worked extensively on the series Quinn - an intricately researched and documented large-scale multimedia project that extends far beyond the gallery walls and which will now be published as a monograph that, through its unique design, will act as a portable handheld version of the exhibition experience.

Quinn recounts the eponymous fictional story of a young man, William Henry Quinn, who, in post-Second World War Britain, walks from the south-west of England to the far north of Scotland, in what becomes an epic and symbolic journey. It is a meditation on grief, loss, loneliness, the human search for meaning, and the possibility of redemption through time and landscape, pertinent across the ages.

Davies has consciously created in this series a multi-dimensional view of the titular figure and his story by using moving-image works and large format photographs, 'personal' ephemera, text, and installations created to be viewed and read side-by-side, much like simultaneously reading a novel, visiting the theatre, and going to the cinema. The viewer can use these visual clues as a way of untangling as much or as little of the narrative as they desire.

Davies cleverly translates this experiential process from the gallery space onto the pages of the monograph.

The physical sensation of Quinn's movement is emulated visually through the numerous foldout pages throughout the publication, and different sections are highlighted through varying paper stock. Most notable is the carefully conceived production of Quinn's diary, printed on opaque fine paper itself directly inspired by the small annotated diary Davies' grandfather wrote while deployed in Normandy during WWII. As Quinn travels on his odyssey it is revealed to be both a physical and metaphorical journey mediated by the British landscape, a geography that is both changed and unchanged since the 1940s. The ancient byways along which he has travelled remain as they were then, and yet with the immutability of change and the unremitting nature of time passing, lives and memories change and fade. While viewing the monograph, the reader metaphorically and sensorially walks alongside Quinn, and if they choose, can listen to an online recording of Samuel J Weir narrating the diary while turning the pages - continuing to blur the boundaries of the real and the imagined.

While fictional, Davies has created Quinn in response to the real experiences of young men and women post-trauma, both in the early twentieth century and now. The life changes imposed on each generation by conflict and global socio-economic collapse, as well as personal tragedy, produces a constant stream of people left untethered in the world, often literally travelling in any way they can, to find a new home, a new purpose and to rebuild their place in the world. In learning his story, the reader may come to understand more about their own search for existential meaning and purpose in life. Although Davies initiated work on Quinn in 2014, clear comparisons to the Covid-19 pandemic can be seen in Quinn's own mourning for his previous life, demonstrating one more way in which Davies' series transcends time and place.

Davies' work is concerned with stories and personal histories, employing a deliberate reworking of visual vocabularies with the intention of evoking a sense of recognition and narrative. Quinn acts as a natural and significant continuation of Davies' work. The publication of this monograph provides an additional new way to experience the work, independently from both the gallery space and the online environment in which we find ourselves all too often.

Notes to Editors

About Lottie Davies

Photographer, artist and writer, Lottie Davies was born in Guildford, UK, in 1971. After a degree in philosophy at St Andrews University, Scotland, she moved back to England to pursue a career in photography and is currently based in London and Cornwall.

Davies' photography has been published in numerous newspapers, glossy magazines, books as well as advertising. She has won recognition in numerous awards, including the Association of Photographers' Awards, the International Color Awards, and the Schweppes Photographic Portrait Awards. Her work has garnered international acclaim with the image Quints, which won First Prize at the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Awards 2008 at the National Portrait Gallery in London, with Viola As Twins, which won the Photographic Art Award, Arte Laguna Prize in Venice in 2011, with her series Memories and Nightmares which won the Young Masters Art Prize in 2012, and her collaboration on Dreams of Your Life with Hide & Seek/Film 4.0 which was BAFTA-nominated in 2012. Quinn premiered in March 2019 at FORMAT International Photography Festival in Derby, and continued to the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, at the start of 2020.

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