

the Shot

IRELANDS PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINE

no.7



the Shot

Welcome to issue 7 of the Shot

Editors: John McAleer | Karl Clarke
Cover photo: Kirsty Mitchell

Welcome to the seventh publication of the Shot magazine. We have an exciting array of photographers featured in this issue, which is one of our biggest issues yet. We have photographers from Ireland, the UK, the Ukraine and Taiwan. First up is the work from Patrick Hogan with his photographic narrative entitled 'Solitary, Half Mad'. After Patrick we have the Dublin based photographer Bob Dixon who has spent several years capturing life and the changes within Ballymun, Dublin.

Following Bob we have the spellbinding work of Kirsty Mitchell who is a self-taught fine art photographer from Surrey in the UK. Kirsty's featured photography is a powerful memorial to her mother. She went on to create this captivating series of images entitled 'Wonderland'. Next up we have Mariya Ustymenko, a photographer originally from the Ukraine and now based in Essex in the UK. Mariya's series of photos explores the traditional representation of femininity as a notion confined by domestic space.

Last up we have the Taipei based photographer Ricor. He describes his photography as a pursuit to capture true emotions and fragile moments. His photography displays a dream-like quality. We have an interview with top Irish and International photographer Barry McCall, he has been working for 20 years in the business and

Featuring
Patrick Hogan
Bob Dixon
Kirsty Mitchell
Mariya Ustymenko
Ricor
& Interview with Barry McCall

has photographed some of the biggest names in film and fashion. The Shot caught up with him to discuss his book entitled; 'PHO20GRAPHY', which he created in aid of the ISPC. We discuss his influences, we talk about what advice he can offer to young photographers as well as what's next for Barry McCall.

We have recently launched our Daily Shot newsletter which gives our subscribers a round-up of all the week's daily shots, as well as event and exhibition news.

The Shot is branching out, soon our website is going to be available in Italian and Spanish.

We are fast approaching a year in business, it's our Birthday at the end of June. So far we have had an amazing response and we would like to thank each and every contributor and all our followers. Your support has been phenomenal!

If you are interested in submitting any work to us for either the Daily Shot or if you want to feature a series of your work in the magazine, please email us at : daily@thshot.ie and info@theshot.ie

Thanks again for your continued support and if you have any feedback, please feel free to email us.



High Noon
Elaine Snowden



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Patrick Hogan

www.patrickhogan.ie

Solitary, Half Mad.

About a year ago, I moved from an urban area to live in an isolated part of rural Ireland. I went there to be alone and to make new work.

Without any concept in mind, I began to take pictures of my surroundings. I found myself drawn to places where others had lived on their own, away from community and society. I found abandoned homes in the mountains, photographing rooms where people had lived and died on their own. I documented these interiors largely as I found them, often experiencing a reality in contradiction to romantic ideals of solitude and escapism.

The resulting, open-ended series combines documentary images with carefully planned pictures, blending reality with fiction to present a psychological story of poverty and reclusiveness often at odds with literary and romanticised ideals regarding solitude.

Through this series, I hope to encourage contemplation about both the human desire and the human ability to be alone and outside the reach of modern society.









Bob Dixon

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www.bobdixonphotography.com

Bob Dixon is a Dublin based photographer who has been documenting life as he sees it for over a decade now. Whilst Bob has firmly established himself as a highly respected music photographer throughout Ireland, he has never limited himself by specializing in one specific genre of photography.

“This collection encompasses a small excerpt from a project I’ve been photographing since 2004 in Ballymun, Dublin. These buildings were constructed in 1966 to re-house people from the tenement housing in Dublin city. The seven fifteen story “towers” were named after the signatories as it was the 50th anniversary of the 1916 rising. These buildings were to signify new hope and emphasise how far we had come as a nation however only one of these towers remain standing today as a result of poor foresight and even poorer planning.

Despite its reputation, my experience of Ballymun and its people is that of a positive, artistic and highly inspiring community whereby “everybody knows everybody”. I was encouraged by friends who live in Ballymun to observe the regeneration piece by piece and I felt drawn to document the changing canvas of this area.

The regeneration of Ballymun has been sporadic in its demolition. Some buildings were blown up within seconds whereas others were slowly taken down using

a claw-like device that pulled away at the building, revealing the individual flats inside and exposing dozens of different coloured wallpapers and with that, the lives that lived beyond the hard exterior. The skyline was changing every day and I felt the urgency to capture these decisive moments.

I began a separate photo documentary entitled ‘Running to a Standstill’ in which I strived to show the people behind the infamous towers- a stark contrast to the drug problems and deviant behaviour to which they owed their reputation. Some of these images are included here.

Flying into Dublin Airport, you always knew you were home when you saw the seven towers shadowing the city. Although this may no longer ring true, it’s this constant change of landscape that keeps me inspired to continue documenting life...”











Kirsty Mitchell

www.kirstymitchellphotography.com

My Name is Kirsty Mitchell and I'm a self-taught fine art photographer based in the UK Surrey countryside. I first picked up a camera in 2007 and it has since changed the entire course of my life. The body of work I am most known for is a series called 'Wonderland' which I have chosen as my selection for this feature.

'Wonderland' began in July 2009, as a small summer project in memory of my mother Maureen who I lost to cancer 7 months before. She was an English teacher who spent a lifetime inspiring myself, and generations of children with her captivating stories and plays. She was my best friend, and so escapism through my camera quickly became the only way to deal with the reality of my loss.

Nothing prepared me for the enormous personal journey that followed, as the project spiralled into a 3-year adventure, leading me to leave my 10-year career as a fashion designer, to commit my future to producing the book and exhibition of the series. The project has been created out of nothing, and is the result of relentless hard work, in which almost everything within the frame has been made or designed by myself with the help of the hair and make-up artist Elbie Van Eeden and the occasional kindness of friends. There are no large support teams, designers or stylists involved, and nothing has been commissioned. The characters and their worlds are the blurred hybrids of the stories and book illustrations from my childhood memories with my

mother. Nothing is a direct recreation of a particular tale, and the title 'Wonderland,' was purely to express a girl's escapism through the pages of her book – something that echoed my personal situation in real life.

Despite initial impressions, my work is not the result of multiple digital composites and Photoshop special effects. It is for this reason that my work sits between the lines of traditional photography and digital artistry as all the elements including their locations and colours are real, made by hand, and true scale. The pictures are polished with retouching, and in a few exceptions I add small manipulations to suggest a sense of magic, but that is all. My focus is to create 'fantasy for real' using anything from smoke bombs glued to umbrellas, to painting trees and making giantesses out of models balancing in 8ft dresses. I push myself to create whatever is necessary to bring the illusions to life, and then document the process in my online 'Diary'

The support for the project from around the world has been overwhelming and at times deeply moving. I never imagined anyone to understand the emotion I felt behind the camera, yet I continue to receive letters from people from all walks of life who feel connected with its sentiment and find beauty with the frame. The series is now in its final stages with its completion planned for the end of the summer 2012. There are currently 60 pieces in the collection.

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Mariya Ustymenko

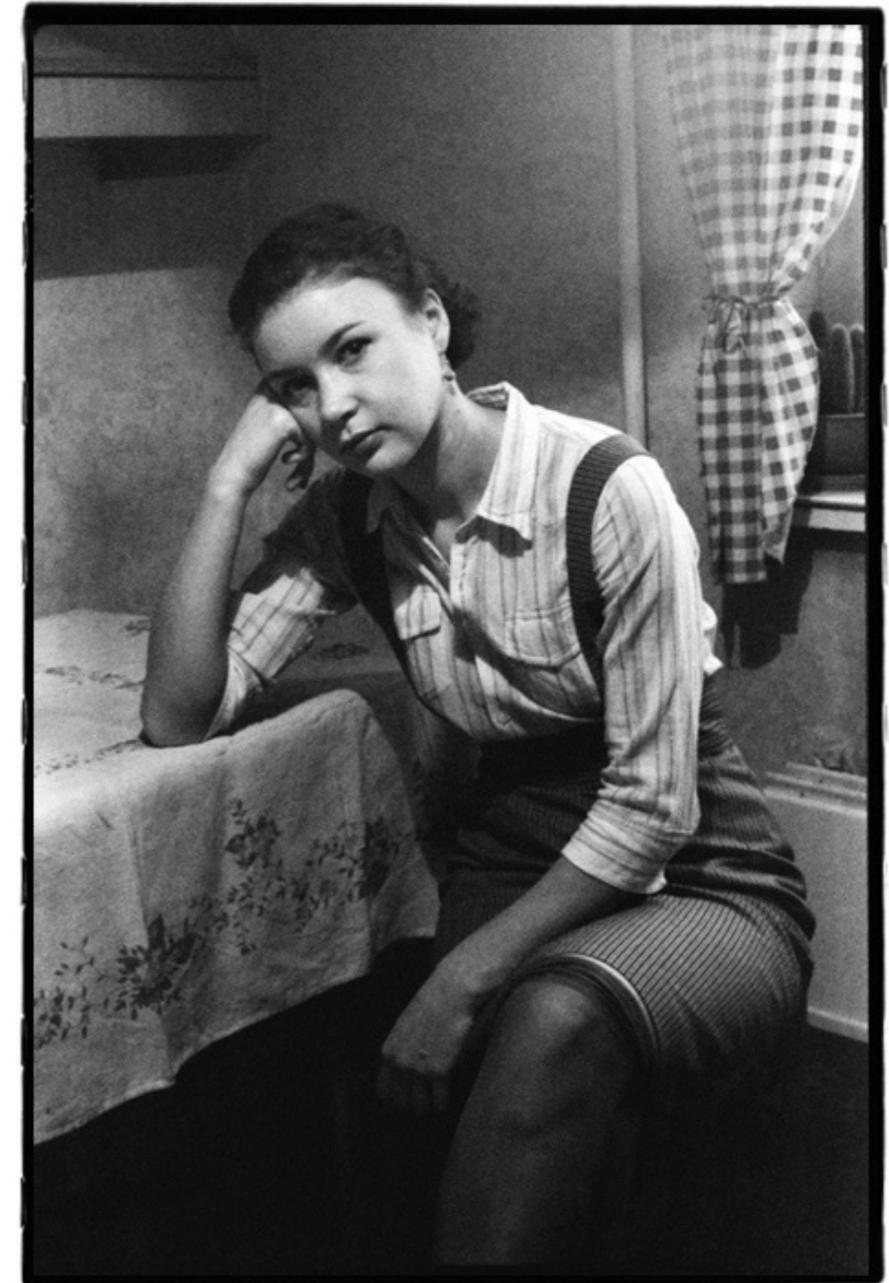
www.photoprojection.blogspot.com

Mariya Ustymenko is a Ukrainian born photographer and visual artist based in St. Osyth, Essex, United Kingdom. Her artistic work, which started in the genre of insider-photography, has undergone major changes in the recent years after her move to the English rural sea-side area. This relocation has prompted the artist to explore new media of artistic expression as well as review her previous position of the anonymous observer, taking her work on a more personal path of story-telling. The artist believes that if a picture is worth a thousand words, it is the placement of such an image that can potentially create an endless variety of stories and take its viewers on multiple journeys of discovery, directed only by an individual perception.

Private Places as a series explores traditional representation of femininity as the notion confined by domestic space. The set comprises of traditionally processed film-based photographs which blur the line between fantasy and reality. I started to develop this series last year, when I was working on a site-specific commission for a theatre gallery, aiming to produce work in response to Arthur Miller's play "A View from the Bridge." Drawing from the 1950s Hollywood iconography, I have made an attempt to create a show relating to the story of the play's protagonist, whose unrecognized emotions, triggered by the everyday domestic encounters with the subject of his forbidden desire, drive the play to its dramatic final.

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While working on the set, however, I have realized that for me as an artist, coming from a cultural background in which emancipation in the sphere of work has brought little changes in the way women roles are viewed by the representatives of both genders, the set appears to playfully illustrate, as well as subvert, the portrayal of such archetypes as 'angel in the house,' 'Daddy's little girl,' 'mad woman,' and 'femme fatale,' that still appear to prevail in the media discourse of contemporary advertising.









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Ricor

www.inverselive.com

Ricor is a 23 year old freelance photographer based in Taipei, Taiwan. Strictly shooting film, Ricor takes every chance he gets to incorporate his surroundings and simple lighting to produce portrait photos that are surreal and timeless with a dreamy vintage mood. He captures fragile moments, true emotions, and some of the most intimate inner feelings with a faded touch that veils his work with a magical feel that keeps lingering after you look away.

Recently, he is preparing his first photography book which includes photos he took in Europe last winter.









Barry McCall PHO20GRAPHY

Interview by Karl Clarke

Barry McCall is one of the world's top fashion and portrait photographers, over the past 20 years he has built success upon success, his work is admired worldwide. Barry pushes the limits in respect to what can be achieved standing behind a lens. He has photographed some of the world's top personalities from fashion and film. The Shot recently caught up with Barry to gain an insight in to his book entitled Pho20graphy which he has created in aid of the ISPCC.

You have recently published a book in aid of the ISPCC that contains beautiful pictures of international names such as Colin Farrell, Liam Neeson and Saoirse Ronan, can you tell us about this book?

Yeah it's a recent publication, it was coming up to my 20 years in business and I wanted to mark it initially with a series of about 12 – 14 shots of various people I've met. Whether they be rockstars, film actors or directors. I just wanted to take portraits of these various people and show them in a different light, turn the usual image of how you see them on it's head. The idea was perhaps to have

12 or so images reproduced in one of my favorite Irish glossies like Tatler, Image or The Gloss.

When I started planning out my wish list, the list started to grow and grow. A good friend of mine, Dylan Bradshaw, was involved in the initial stages. By the time both of us sat down and went through the full list together, it was getting close to 100 people and I still wanted to photograph more. At that stage, to set the cogs in motion we approached a producer to see would they be interested in taking on the huge job of organising the schedules to shoot all these people. The producer was Caroline Downey-Desmond and we had a meeting with her in late 2009. As soon as I told her what I wanted to do, she said; 'right, I'm on board'. When chatting to her I also mentioned that whatever we make from this book that I really wanted 100% of the proceeds to go to charity. One of my favorite charities happened to be the ISPCC which Caroline is seriously involved in anyway. It all came together really well and I think within one month she came back to me and handed me my diary for the rest of that year.

© Barry McCall



I knew where I was in July, on a roof top in L.A. and then in August in an apartment with Liam Neeson, I mean you knew your dates, it was almost like a rock 'n' roll tour, I knew exactly what was to be done, so we shot for a year. We had old and new personalities and then we spent a couple of months editing some of my older fashion work from the last 20 years, along with all the new personalities that I had photographed to make something that would also interest younger generations of Irish people. This book is over 350 pages and shows you all the various movers and shakers, people, the stars who we're very fond of, and heroes of mine.

You have mentioned before that you come from a creative background, your Mother was a highly skilled seamstress and exerted a great influence on the direction of your career in photography. From a local and international perspective what other major influences did you have?

I was a child of the 80's, so that was actually the birth of MTV, when you think about it, we were hit by visuals left, right and centre. It was the first time you had an immediate hit of your pop and rock 'n' roll heroes. You were seeing them every day, what they wore, the fashion they had was much more tangible I suppose with the arrival of MTV, you could really get your hands on it. I also think that it was in the blood as my mother was a seamstress, I used to sit beside her as a kid and watch her make all these fantastic clothes.

When I was 15 my brother bought a camera after seeing a TV show one night. Both of us started playing around with his camera. I started accompanying him on various little jobs that he was doing, he was part of camera club and that's when I found an outlet and I found that I could actually be creative at something and I really really enjoy it. I mean the whole fun of looking through the viewfinder and seeing an image and the fact that you can actually capture that image, it really really appealed to me.

I was strongly influenced by Helmut Newton, lots of you guys would be familiar with his work, Peter Lindbergh, Richard Avedon absolutely, and Paolo Roversi. They are all classic photographers, you very rarely see me going for hip photographers. I mean some of these images when you look at them 5 years after they have been taken, you can look at them and go wow there's nothing to really date that, but when you look at the actual photography itself, the way it's composed, the way it's lit, it's classic, it's not throw away, I love photographers that can do that. They are the reason why I went in to the business in the first place.

One of the main images that pushed me along was actually a picture of my Mum and Dad, it was a picture taken on the first day of their honeymoon. They are looking out of their hotel room. I think it was either Blackpool or the Isle of Man and the two of them are looking out a window. A photographer in the apartment next door

looked across and took a snap of them. It was a black and white and he posted it to them. As soon as I saw it... when I started searching through my Mum and Dad's photo collection I was saying to myself; how the hell was that taken? The two of them looked like movie stars, the two of them looked amazing and this raised my curiosity as to say; how is that created? is it that difficult? how can it be achieved?

What advice can you give to young aspiring photographers who are keen to break into the world of fashion and portrait photography?

Right, a few things, I would say do a certain amount of college, I would highly recommend a year long portfolio course, not only does it help you learn but it also gives you a year out where you can step back and see if this business is really for you. Step back, do some creative work, try everything before you say right that is my niche, that is my channel. During that year keep an eye on your home market, keep an eye on all the magazines and the various blog sites and find out whose photography you like the best, find out who you are leaning towards.

What I would suggest is to start emailing photographers you like, not in the manner of a stalker, but in a nice way, try and introduce yourself, learn about the photographers you are writing to. The one biggest turn off that I have is when someone sends me a letter and they don't know what I do. It's not me being overly proud or snobbish, but why o' why would you send a letter looking to work for a particular photographer if you don't know what they do. I would say do your homework on that, find out the photographers that you like the best. Study them and learn about their work and then actually approach them. Email them and offer your services. If you land a position in a photographers studio, you will be expected to be proactive, you have been offered the position to work, you should use your initiative.

I would also say never work for free, maybe it's okay if you work as a second assistant with a very well established photographer, where you can get priceless experience from it, but never offer your services full time for free to anybody. After all that, find out the person you like the best, approach them and eventually you will work up

through the ranks where you become their first assistant. Stay with them for a year or 2, then you'll know if you really want to go out on your own. You'll have a yearning to do that or if you just want to become a freelance assistant that works for various photographers. Find out what works for you.

Would you say there are particular types of personalities that are more suited to this profession, from your experience what works best?

Be true to yourself for a start, I see it as a very personal thing, as when I'm sitting one to one with a fashion model or with an actor and I want to be myself. It's not that I want them to like me, but I want to be myself with them and see how they react to me. What happens with me... it could be a fashion shoot, it could be a portrait, I actually go and introduce myself to the talent while they are getting their hair and make-up done or when they arrive in to our studio. Then I'll let them relax and give them room and just say hello. If it just so happens that a conversation is struck up, then great, but by the time they are in front of my camera lens they are under no stress whatsoever.

'when I'm sitting one to one with a fashion model or with an actor and I want to be myself'

I'm a believer on not going on long lenses with people. If you ever see me work, I'm actually pretty close to the subject. You very rarely see me go over a 105mm lens, and I go right down to a 40mm lens. I'm in that close to people, that in itself, for someone to allow you in to that space they have to be very relaxed with you. While doing shoots I can be really upbeat, but when I'm taking a persons picture I like to pull back and let them get to their comfort level and then we start playing around. Then I can see where I can push or where I can't, and you know something cool might happen from that. I don't bark orders, that doesn't work for me. So I would say be true to yourself and be as honest as possible.



© Barry McCall



Don't let the gear or equipment get in the way of you or your subject. That camera should be an extension of your eye. You should know it inside out, you shouldn't be worried about exposures or anything when you're taking a shot. That should be either pre-done, if you're the kind of person who is only starting off and you need to cross check things, do that all before they arrive in. Make sure you are happy with everything.

Can you tell us about your approach to photographing a particular subject, for example the photo of Imelda May featured in your book was a spontaneous shoot, do you let the subject set the scene or is it normally a clearly defined shoot?

With Imelda there's a certain feel in the way she styles herself. I had this image in my mind before she came in, I'm a big fan of Vargas the painter who used to do all the pin-up girls from the 30's and 40's. As soon as I see Imelda I see a cross between a Vargas girl and Betty Page. With Imelda I wanted to photograph her in that kind of environment which is a very pale and high key. If the subject is sitting in a chair, that chair is so pale you can only see the outline of it. I wanted a chair that was almost like a champagne glass in shape, so it was actually giving her something that she could model in to. You would give someone like Imelda a certain amount of direction, but she's such a creative person, she'll say; I know what you're at, I can do that and then the big smile appears. Everything came together nicely.

After 20 years in the business can you give us an insight in to some of the challenges you faced and how you overcame them as well as personal milestones in your career?

The one thing I would say, I launched my career around 1990 – 1991 and it's going back to that point I was chatting to you earlier about what's hip in photography. You can be in demand for a year or so. The hard bit is being the person who is still in the business a year later, and still there four years later. Then to actually have a situation whereby if a job comes in to an advertising agency that your name is still included in the mix to quote for the job. That is the difficulty, so you're constantly trying to keep your work fresh and up to date. This is what you want people to see, but still using your own style. To be able to do that all the time, that's a true sign of somebody who is good at what they do.

Milestones... wow, I think the book is a huge milestone actually, to get all that together, it's 20 years of my life. Obviously I've been a busy bunny and to see it all brought together in one big publication, it was great. I used to buy books in my early 20's, like Herb Britts and Matthew Rolston, books like Big Pictures and I used to look at them and go, how is this achieved? In regards the book it's probably the first book of it's kind to be produced by an Irish photographer. It's a great portfolio piece, people are always surprised when they look through it and they



say; 'no you're kidding me'. and I say; 'no that's my book', so it's something I'm very proud of. Since producing the book the direction of my work has changed as far as portraits go. I wouldn't have been shooting that many portraits, of course I get a few during the year, but that book forced me in to a kind of photography that I actually like. One of the artists who featured in it came up to me and said; 'truly your are a portrait photographer who happens to like taking fashion pictures', I was thinking that's a different angle on it, I'll accept it, on looking back I got into it.

Has there been any memorable moments from any of the photography shoots that you had?

With Stephen Rea, the actual shoot was finished with Stephen, and I had packed up the car and I was on my way out. He was just saying goodbye at the front door, and he put his hand over his face and said; 'see you later Barry'. I almost lunged at him and held his hand in position and held the door as if to say don't move, I ran back to the car, took everything back out of the car, all my gear, assistants, the whole lot, went back up, reset and photographed what I saw when he was saying goodbye to me. Then there's Jedward, that shot wasn't taken too long after they had gained success in the X-Factor, their career was launched and for us to actually get their hair down in the image, because they were going absolutely



© Barry McCall

mental in the dressing room [laughs]. As soon as they saw a rough image on screen, they actually got into it. That was fun!

All the people that we photographed are great, that's the reason why they are so successful! They were just very very giving with their time! Liam Neeson was in his apartment and when we arrived there we sat him in a window, the light wasn't quite right and I didn't want to put artificial lighting on him at all. We just chatted away and I could actually see the light changing. I didn't want direct sunlight, so I had to talk to him for a little while, not actually delaying, but just shooting the breeze. Then eventually the light came good and then we had the shots done in a couple of seconds, we knew we had it, but that was lovely, he such a cool guy.

What is next for Barry McCall?

I'm just after finishing off another book, it's been two years, it's been bonkers, I just did a book for Patrick Guilbaud's restaurant here in Dublin. After we finished the photography book I happened to meet up with Patrick and he said to me; 'I really like your book and it just so happens next year is my 30th year in business, would you be interested in photographing food?' I told him that I have worked with food before but not Michelin star. We agreed to work together. I think it was late in December or January. We went in at about 8 o'clock in the morning and set up a mini studio in the restaurant and started photographing the food with chefs. Gullaume Lebrun and Ciaran Glennon, they are just brilliant chefs. We had a lot of fun!

For example the book has also a mixture of reportage photography from the kitchens and there's some portraits of people who either love the restaurant or characters who supply the restaurant. That book went on sale a few months ago and I think it has already sold 1,500 copies, which is pretty good, the book contains over 250 pages, so a lot of work has gone in to it. I'm still working with the ISPCC, we're also doing work with the ISPCA, we're working with lots of animals all this year. It's a project that's also close to my heart, so we're working on that. Commercially speaking, still working away, I've worked on a couple of campaigns that are going to emerge in

the next little while. We have been busy shooting a lot of fashion as well, so hopefully it keeps on going like that. I do have an agent in the US now, so I see myself traveling a little bit more to the States, with a bit of luck.

I will always remain based here, I don't want to ever leave Ireland, I love it. But I'd love to start doing work further a field, a few portrait commissions here and there would be great. In the future who knows maybe working towards another book that showcases the next 20 years of my photography.

It would be great to include the people who you just missed out on the first time.

To be honest with you, if we wanted to do anything like this again we do have that book to go ahead of us. So if there's a particular artist that I would love to work with, a copy of that book can be sent out, so we can say listen this is the last thing we did. To honest it's probably a door opener because they probably feel a bit safer in your hands.

Who are the dream people you would love to include in another book?

I always laugh when people ask me, I would love to do a photo shoot with Kylie. I would love to photograph Cate Blanchett, Brad Pitt, Johnny Depp, George Clooney, I would love to work with any one of them guys, yeah the sky's the limit, anyone from Hollywood. I would love to have a go at shooting them.



© Barry McCall

Barry McCall's book Pho20graphy can be purchased in Brown Thomas or direct online through the ISPCC's facebook page:
www.facebook.com/ISPCCChildline

Barry McCall Studio:
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www.barrymccallphotographer.com

Exhibition: Pho20graphy by Barry McCall runs at The Copper House Gallery until Monday 11th June 2012.

For further information please contact Orla Martin;
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www.thecopperhousegallery.wordpress.com





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