

SHAPED BY WAR: EXCLUSIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH DON McCULLIN



www.bj-online.com

MARCH 2000

Volume 67 Issue No 1774

British Journal of

PHOTOGRAPHY

A Different Take

The world's longest-running photography magazine, established 1854

cover price £6.99

New Look
High Quality
Monthly



DOUBLE AGENTS

COLLECTIVE THINKING

Meet the photographers who have teamed up to share inspiration and resources

31 AGENDA FAREWELL TO E6 FILM? 23 PROJECTS CARL DE KEYZER'S COASTAL LANDSCAPES 50 PORTFOLIO ERWIN OLAF 68 PROFILE DISPATCHES FROM STEIDLVILLE 72 TECHNOLOGY CANON EOS 1D MK IV TEST 83 INTELLIGENCE ON-DEMAND PHOTOBOOKS 98 ENDFRAME BRIAN GRIFFIN

Report: Olympus, Panasonic, Ricoh & Sigma - small cameras with smart features » Dennis Gilbert's architecture assignment in Algiers » Canon & Sigma lenses tested » Photobop plug-ins reviewed » We ♥ magazines that ♥ photography » Multimedia

Photographs
© Reed+Rader.

Together we are stronger

Two heads are better than one when it comes to problem solving and thinking up new ideas. But, when you pair up as a duo or a collective, who presses the shutter? We speak to five photographic teams about how they work together.

INTERVIEWS BY
JULIAN LASS
& DIANE SMYTH

From the Cohen Brothers to Jake and Dinos Chapman, collaborative work is increasingly popular in the creative industries, and photography is no exception. Photographers, sometimes with retouchers and production specialists, are partnering up in pairs – or more – to create art, advertising and documentary work, and sharing the money they earn between them.

Why? For a variety of reasons, not least because they find it more productive for sharing ideas, pooling resources and solving problems. But, fundamentally, it's because they don't believe any photographer ever works entirely alone, and they have merely formalised their relationships. "There's a mythology of the photographer/author/artist which I reject," says Adam Broomberg, of celebrated duo Broomberg and Chanarin. "Photography's so full of those kinds of biographies of the 'genius photographer', the lone predator with the sharply tuned eye and amazing sense of timing. It's very male, athletic, macho and sexy. You've got to distance yourself from all that."

"People tend to think of photography as the act of pushing the button, but of course there's much more to it than that," adds Pedro Aguilar, of Diver Aguilar. "People are getting away from the 19th century idea of the artist alone in the world, away from everything else, and becoming more open to other people and what they can offer."

Technology and online communications has precipitated this trend. From crowd sourcing to online communities, people have got used to working together more openly than ever before, and so collaboration is part of a wider cultural shift. The collective, once thought buried among the faded idealism of the 1970s and 1980s, has been reappropriated and reborn.



Reed+Rader

Pamela Reed and Matthew Rader are probably as close as it's possible to be – a couple since 2002, they live together and work together, and they do both in the same live/work space. They even speak to me together by phone from New York, finishing each others' sentences and occasionally talking at the same time. "We're in the same room 24 hours a day," they laugh. "There's no line in our heads between Pamela and Matt and Reed+Rader, and no divide between our personal and work lives. Even our friends are people we work with."

The pair met at the Art Institute in Philadelphia, where Reed originally studied web design and Rader interiors. Both decided to transfer to photography, and they started working together "from literally the first photographs we took. Before we were Reed+Rader, we were always together," says Reed. "Even when we were working on separate projects, the other one was always there," adds Rader. "It just came very naturally." A year in, they formalised the partnership and started carving out a name for themselves at the cutting edge of fashion photography. That status was confirmed when they were asked to shoot for *Pop* magazine, but their non-photographic backgrounds ensure they are pushing the boundaries online too, using stop-motion, video, moving illustrations and, most recently, 3D. "Pamela is a better stylist and knows the web stuff better," says Rader. "I have a better hold on Flash and 3D. But because we're together all the time we can always work things out."

The pair started out shooting large format, and would literally get under the curtain together behind the kit. In the past year they've moved

to digital capture, and they now use one camera and look at the results on screen. They discuss ideas together openly on set and argue "all the time" – which can be tricky if there are other people around, but never a big problem, says Rader.

"One has to pitch ideas to the other, and the other always has the power of veto," he adds. "But in general, I'd say we like the same things and want the same things. We've been working together for five or six years, so often find we have the same idea at the same time now."

"There are days when we are shooting when I don't have to say anything to him, and vice versa," says Reed. "A model might walk out and I don't like the hair, and I'll look at him and know he's thinking the same thing. It's great there are two of us – it's two pairs of hands. We never have to hire assistants."

On set Reed gives the appearance of being in control – they jokingly call her "The Boss Man" for her tendency to speak up. But behind the scenes Rader is equally vocal, and has earned the nickname "Dream Killer" for his tendency to think through the practicalities of an idea and work out if it's actually achievable. "I'm probably the more logical one – we'll come up with the idea, then I'll be the one to say 'We can do it like this, we can't do this', and so on," he laughs. "But Pamela's definitely more vocal on the shoot."

Nevertheless, they say, everything they do is completely intertwined, and they can't envisage splitting up their lives, let alone their ideas. "The work is really a collaboration – we can't separate the ideas out into mine or Matt's," says Reed. "I've never even thought about not working together. It seems unimaginable at this point."

www.reedandrader.com