

Jamie Doward ~ Shelter And The Slums: Capturing Bleak Britain 50 Years Ago



A mother takes her baby inside her condemned tenement block Gorbals 1970. Photograph: Nick Hedges for Shelter

From 1968 to 1972, photographer Nick Hedges toured the country for Shelter. His work galvanised politicians – and now the charity wants to find out what happened to those he portrayed.

At first glance they seem to be the survivors of a besieged city. Standing in front of decrepit buildings that tower over streets absent of cars, they cut abject figures. Children in ragged clothes play on wasteland; a mother and her teenage daughter huddle in their home, a cellar lit by just one light bulb; a father in a dank living room festooned with broken furniture holds his toddler son close to his chest.

But these people have not been bombed into submission. They are not experiencing the horrors of the second world war. They are living in Britain in the swinging 60s, an era that the then prime minister, Harold Wilson, famously promised would deliver material improvements for all, thanks to the “white heat of technology”.

They are the inhabitants of Britain’s slums whose desperate plight, captured by the photographer, Nick Hedges, for the housing charity Shelter, helped alert the

public to the woeful living conditions many people were enduring in the country's neglected inner cities.

Read more: <http://www.theguardian.com/homeless-shelter-charity?>

Fountain Hughes ~ Voices From The Days Of Slavery

Fountain Hughes (age 101 at the time of this interview) recalls his younger years when he and his family lived as slaves as well as some good advice on how to spend money.

Breyten Breytenbach ~ Die Koei In Die Bos



Foto: Litnet - <http://www.litnet.co.za/>

Oppedra aan Jan Rabie, Neville Alexander, Ingrid Jonker, Sheila Cussons en Piet Philander, om uiteenlopende redes, maar met ewe veel erkentlikheid

Dames en here (en ek weet nie eintlik wie om uit te sonder of spesiaal toe te spreek nie - is ons is dan nie almal gelyk hier nie?)

'n Tydjie gelede skryf 'n goeie vriendin vir my, toe sy verneem dat ek hierdie ding moet doen vanaand: "Die mismoedigheid wat oor mens toesak oor die taalstorie by US (en die ander kampusse). Dit voel vir my of jy nou weer die lyk van Afrikaans gaan afdra van die berg (soos met die vertelling waarmee jy destyds jou toespraak by die Sestiger-somerskool begin het), maar hierdie keer sonder hoop op nuwe lewe. Hoe om so 'n toespraak te konstrueer moet 'n groot uitdaging wees. Skuldbelydenis? Teikenskiets? Met 'n haelgeweer lostrek? De donder in wees? Skel? Pleit? Weer die argumente vir moedertaalonderrig op die tafel sit? Met 'n nuwe perspektief kom? Is laasgenoemde enigsins moontlik? Ai, ek dink aan jou. En daar gaan baie ore wees wat na jou luister ..."

Ek wil vir die liewe vriendin sê dit gaan 'n bietjie van alles moet wees, dat die bobbejaan weer die berg gaan probeer klim, dat baie ore moedswillig verkeerd hoor, ook alreeds omdat my gedagtes krom getrek het met die jare. (Ek voel sommer klaar jammer vir myself oor die onbegonne taak, maar gaan so wragtag nie huil en kla net om die Stellenbosse boys te vermaak nie!)

Daarby het ek 'n skimmelappeltjie te skil met Stellenbosch-universiteit as versinnebeelding van parogiale Afrikaanse eienskappe - hardvogtigheid en skynheiligheid. Dat dit, in my boek, by uitstek nog altyd die teelaarde was vir allerlei gewasse van gediensdigtheid teenoor die heersers van die oomblik. En dan nogal dikwels, uit hoofde van 'n selfbelangrike geleerdheid waar daar in feite net omgesien word na eie aansien en status, arrogant ook met 'n moralistiese opgeblasendheid. So asof politieke korrektheid hier as wiel ontwerp is ...

Lees verder: <http://www.litnet.co.za/die-koei-in-die-bos/>

Lasse

Wamsler,

Sune

Gudmundsson & Sven Johannesen

~ Drowning Megacities ~

Aljazeera



The world is getting warmer, the rain is growing heavier and the oceans are rising. At the same time, the world's rural inhabitants are migrating to its cities on a massive scale.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the part of the world most affected by the dual pressure of climate change and the rapid, uncontrolled transformation of its cities into megacities.

The extreme speed and scale of urbanisation has swallowed up many former peasants, incorporating them into the vast slums of sprawling megacities.

In these unplanned, hostile urban environments, where infrastructure is at a minimum, they are exposed to the dangers posed by rising seas and heavy rains - forces that wreak havoc and cause deaths every year.

But, from Lagos in the west to Dar es Salaam in the east, slum-dwellers, the middle class, and the elite alike are fighting back against the waters.

This is a visit to the front line of their battle: to Africa's drowning megacities.

Go to: http://interactive.aljazeera.com/drowning_megacities/