

FRANK SKINNER
+
on good suits and snubbing
the Pope **PAGE 12**

THE BIG ISSUE

£2

SCOTLAND

EVERY MONDAY



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**CLASSIC
TED HUGHES
AUDIOBOOKS
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→
**'HAVE WE
LEARNED
NOTHING
FROM IRAQ?'**

**Brendan O'Neill
on Libyan
intervention
PAGE 19**

HARRY HILL

"I tried to get out of doing Comic Relief... but I can't!"

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Front

'I found people who cared about my situation'

DEREK CONNOLLY
BIG ISSUE VENDOR
PAGE 46



A hand up, not a hand out



THE BIG ISSUE SCOTLAND

A HAND UP, NOT A HAND OUT
READ ALL ABOUT IT...

THE BIG ISSUE was set up in 1991 to give homeless people a chance to make an income. Vendors are homeless, ex-homeless or may be vulnerably housed. We recognise that for many homeless people being housed is only the first stage of getting off the streets. Therefore, if a rehoused vendor needs to continue selling The Big Issue, we allow them to do so.

Vendors buy the magazine for £1 and sell it for £2, making £1 profit on each copy.

All vendors receive training, sign a code of conduct, and can be identified by badges with photos. If you are approached by anyone requesting donations for The Big Issue please do not give. We do not collect money on the streets. If you have any complaints about vendor behaviour, ring 0141 553 0924.

All Big Issue vendors wear an ID badge with a number. It helps to quote the number if making a complaint or paying a compliment. TBIS is a company limited by guarantee. The founding editor is A John Bird.

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BRENDAN O'NEILL

turns up the heat on the Forget Iraq Brigade over Libya

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£31,761 - £35,340
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Scots youngsters' incredible photos reveal the truth about life on the edge

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WAITING
EXHIBITION OF PHOTO ESSAYS

'Some of the photos are beautiful. Some are shocking'

Young Glaswegians affected by homelessness document their lives in a unique new photo exhibition called *Waiting*.

Matt Coyle has a sneak preview

SOLITARY HIGH-RISES and abandoned houses, eerily deserted football pitches and even a majestic blue sky – each picture, no matter how simple, carries a compellingly poignant story. They are part of a groundbreaking photo-exhibition by 11 Scottish young people affected by homelessness, which is about to go on tour, as part of a unique project by charities Fairbridge and PhotoVoice to raise awareness of youth homelessness and erase the stigma which surrounds it.

After a residential team-building trip, the youngsters met for six weeks with renowned photographers Brian Sweeney and Christina Kernohan to travel across Glasgow taking pictures and creating remarkable photo essays about their lives. Many had never used a camera before in their lives, yet left top photographers and students at Glasgow School of Art awestruck with their simple, yet powerful, visual tales.

"Telling our stories through pictures rather than writing or speaking was quite special because seeing an image has a lot more impact than a page of writing," says Gemma Cochrane, 16, one of the young

photographers. "Some of the photographs we took were beautiful and some shocking. I think we did a great job because a lot of us had barely even touched a camera before the project."

Gemma, from the Knightswood area in Glasgow, is one of four siblings raised by her mother after her father left home due to drug addiction. Gemma started drinking and stopped going to school which led to constant arguments with her mother. She left home over a year ago and moved from hostel to hostel for 15 months before finding permanent accommodation. All the young people on the project are from similar backgrounds to Gemma. Some even found themselves on the streets.

"The thing that hit me hardest was seeing so many empty houses and empty flats, perfectly good furniture left in the street," Gemma tells *The Big Issue*. "It left me quite angry and frustrated. There are so many people whose lives would be changed by a new flat or even a new couch. I tried to portray that through the pictures I took."

She describes the experience of presenting their work to students and lecturers at Glasgow School of Art as "quite amazing".





1. Looking up

Picture by Kerry McCauley
'I wish I was on that plane.'

"I think they were shocked, not just by how good a lot of the photography was but the stories behind the pictures too," she says. "At first they probably thought we were just mad teenagers, but they were really impressed. I think that was one of the highlights for me."

"To have people who have been doing it for years compliment us and be so taken aback by our work meant a lot. They really had a lot to say which we were all surprised about, in a good way."

She adds: "I think that's really what the whole exhibition is about, getting shocked or surprised reactions from people because a lot of the stories in the pictures are quite shocking."

Award-winning photographer Brian Sweeney, who has worked for some of the world's leading lifestyle magazines, record companies and agencies, says the photographs are remarkable and the stories behind them moving.

'At first they probably thought we were just mad teenagers, but they were really impressed with the pictures. That was the highlight.'

"These youngsters are incredible, and we have seen a real transformation in many of them," he says. "They have learned how to take photographs, but more importantly their self-confidence and motivation has grown."

"Some of the youngsters had a very strong grasp on the concept of taking pictures and were great at capturing fantastic images. Others were great at telling engrossing and powerful stories through their images. The whole experience opened up a new world to a lot of the young people. Some of them hadn't been more than 100 or so yards from where they live so it was a real eye-opener when they saw new places, sometimes only 300 or 400 yards from where they lived."

"The work they put in and progress they have made as people, as well as photographers is amazing. I can't wait to see the exhibition and am very proud of all of them," he adds. ▶

WAITING

EXHIBITION OF PHOTO ESSAYS

2. Headless bushman

Picture by Docherty

3. Baby doll

Picture by Kerry McCauley

4. Scar

Picture by Kerry McCauley

'I was being chased by someone with a baseball bat because of someone else's fight. I jumped down a grass bank to get away and my leg snapped. Nothing got done about it because nobody wanted to give a statement to the police.'

5. Couch

Picture by Kerry McCauley

'That couch could have gone to someone who needed it.'

6. No title

Picture by Kerry McCauley

'The white line is like life. It goes through stages then it ends'

7. Knightswood

Picture by Dimples

'It looks like a nice place to stay, but it's not. It's really rough and a lot of bad things happen. I used to take part in most things that happened, but I'm proud to say I don't anymore. The people in those houses get terrorised all the time. Their cars and windows are always getting smashed.'



The exhibition will show at 19 venues across Scotland from March 18 to May 8. For further information, see www.photovoice.org/uk

