

galerie

SIT DOWN

4, rue Sainte-Anastase
75003 Paris
tél. + 33 (0)1 42 78 08 07
info@sitdown.fr
www.sitdown.fr

Press Release

Anarchy in the United Kingdom

Photographs by **Yan MORVAN**

September 15 to October 18 2019



Anarchy in the UK series ©Yan Morvan courtesy galerie Sit Down

In connection with the publication of Yan Morvan's new photobook, *Years of Iron, London 1979-1981* (Serious Publishing), Sit Down Gallery presents *Anarchy in the United Kingdom*, an exhibition of a selection of prints whose negatives have been forgotten in a box named "England" since the eighties.

These images are a precious and essential testimony of an era that remained in the collective memory as the golden age of British countercultures.

When Yan Morvan first travels to England in the late seventies, the events there defy understanding. The country, labelled the "sick man of Europe" in business circles, is having trouble recovering from the oil crisis that hit four years earlier. High inflation, rising unemployment, gigantic deficit, frozen wages, endless strikes – the ten post-industrial plagues of Egypt seem to be descending upon the island once known as "the empire on which the sun never sets".

When the Labour government is reduced to appealing to the IMF to avoid total collapse, the British nation, accustomed to military, economic or sports success and aware of its advantageous position in History, suffers a major humiliation. The economic slump, unprecedented since WWII, lands Margaret Thatcher in power in May 1979. Her political programme is brutal. The "cure" imposed by her government over the next few months further cripples the country. Activity falls by 10 %, unemployment doubles, industrial sectors collapse and hundreds of thousands of families plunge into precarity without welfare, savagely cut by the Iron Lady's ultraliberal policies.

November of that same year, Yan Morvan crosses the Channel expecting to find the doom and gloom of a country adrift. Instead, he discovers a crazy carnival. London evokes "a dystopic wonderland" with Mohican punks, nazified skinheads, two-tone rude boys, hooligans on the war path and mods astride scooters in the style of their glorious elders. Before the photographer lies an open-air theatre with actors straight out of Orange Mechanic and a grotesque, millenarian-style atmosphere suggestive of Jérôme Bosch. The streets are loud with flocks of noisy, unemployed youths set on responding to despair with vitality, preferring pain over boredom. Yan doesn't speak the language but he and England already have something in common: both are searching for a second wind.

... Excluded from a system incapable of incorporating them, British youths throw themselves into the void to the hard, angry beat of rock 'n' roll. Everything had started three years before, with Punk music. Imagine Johnny Rotten as the Pied Piper screaming "no future", a glint of insanity in his eyes. Running behind him: thousands of teenagers who knew they were the non-recyclable garbage of an economic model operating in a vacuum. Many of them formed bands, summoning in the age of "do-it-yourself ". The peak of resourcefulness and independence yielded an abundant production of records loudly rejecting the world as it stood. An entire generation felt deprived of a future and for the first time in history, music was the medium cementing these kids' frustration.

... As one England jealously protects its traditions and plans to recycle its glorious past forever, the other England, in the clutches of a momentous recession, attempts to find its raison d'être.

Francis Dordor

BIOGRAPHY

Yan Morvan is a French photographer, born in Paris in 1954. He lives and works in Paris. His photographs have been acquired by many photographic collections in France (FNAC collections, CNAP, Army Museum ...) and abroad (Minneapolis Art Center, Walker Art Center, Moscow Multimedia Art Museum ...). He currently works on a project called "The French" with the support of the Ministry of Culture.

He has worked for a long time as a war photographer, travelling around the world to cover many conflicts of the second half of the 20th Century, an area in which he is recognized as one of the greatest specialists of his generation.

His war reports earned him a mention for the Robert Capa Award, for his work in Lebanon in 1983, two World Press Photo awards in 1984, and numerous awards from American journalism schools.

Yan Morvan has collaborated with leading international newspapers and there are numerous publications about his work.

PUBLICATIONS

1970s

- With Maurice Lemoine, *Le Cuir et le Baston*, Editions Ailleurs 1976

1990s

- *Le Photojournalisme*, Contrejour, 1994
- With Patrick Frilet, *Photojournalisme, Le Guide*, CFD, 1995
- With Jean-Marc Barbieux, *Mondosex*, Contrejour, 1995

2000s

- With Jean-Marc Barbieux, *Gang*, Editions Marval, 2000
Photographic quest that began in 1972 with a report on the Hells Angels and continues in 2016 with *Gangs Story*
- *Photojournalisme*, CFPJ, Victoires Editions, 2000
- With Jean-Marc Barbieux and Sylvie Huet, *BodMod*, Marval, 2003
- *Photojournalisme*, Victoires Editions, 2008

2010s

- With Kizo, *Gangs Story*, The Book Factory, 2012
- *Champs de bataille*, Éditions Photosynthèses, 2015. A monumental photographic report on the battlefields where the great decisive battles of all times and countries took place.
- *Blousons noirs*, The Book Factory, 2016
- With Pierre Mikailoff, *Race with the Devil*, Editions Serious Publishing, 2018
- *Bobby Sands, Belfast Mai 1981*, The Book Factory, 2018
- *Liban*, Éditions Photosynthèses, 2019
- *Les années de fer*, Editions Serious Publishing, 2019.

PRESS VISUAL MATERIAL (on request)



Anarchy in the UK series. Culture Ska vs culture very British, 1979
Cibachrome print, dimensions 38 x 55 cm, 2019
©Yan Morvan courtesy galerie Sit Down



Anarchy in the UK series. Punk à la mode, 1981
Cibachrome print, dimensions 55 x 38 cm, 2019
©Yan Morvan courtesy galerie Sit Down



Anarchy in the UK series. Groupe de musique Punk, Les No Problem, 1979
Cibachrome print, dimensions 38 x 55 cm, 2019
©Yan Morvan courtesy galerie Sit Down



Anarchy in the UK series, Mods in London, No Photo ! 1979
Cibachrome print, dimensions 38 x 55 cm, 2019
©Yan Morvan courtesy galerie Sit Down

About galerie SIT DOWN

Established in Le Marais area in Paris, close to the Picasso Museum, SIT DOWN gallery was founded by Françoise Bornstein in 2005.

Since 2013 the gallery has been entirely devoted to contemporary photography.

The gallery aims to showcase young emerging photographers (Aurore BAGARRY, Florian RUIZ, Charles XELOT...) and support renowned international photographers such as Tom WOOD, Yan MORVAN, Robert McCABE and Sacha.

SIT DOWN gallery is represented on the international scene by participating in major photography fairs such as, PARIS PHOTO, LONDON PHOTO, UNSEEN, The Photography Show presented by AIPAD in New York,.

Sit Down gallery is a member of Le Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art.

REPRESENTED ARTISTS:

Anne France Abillon
Aurore Bagarry
Jean-François Bauret
Gilles Coulon
Jean-Gabriel Lopez
Marie Maurel de Maillé
Sandra Mehl
Robert McCabe
Yan Morvan
Salvatore Puglia
Myriam Richard
Florian Ruiz
Silvi Simon
Chantal Stoman
Sacha Van Dorssen
Laure Vasconi
Tom Wood
Charles Xelot

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Anarchy in the United Kingdom

Photographs by **Yan MORVAN**

September 15 > October 18 2019

Opening and book signing on Sunday September 15 (3-7 pm)

galerie Sit Down
4 rue Sainte-Anastase - 75003 Paris
Tel : +33 (0)1 42 78 08 07
e-mail : info@sitdown.fr -
www.sitdown.fr
By appointment

Press visual material upon request

Press contact : galerie SIT DOWN

Tél : +33 (0)6 64 12 06 96 – email : info@sitdown.fr