

A History of the East End

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Photographer Chris Dorley Brown has been documenting London's East End all his working life.



Alie Street. Photo: Chris Dorley Brown

A History of the East End by French publisher Nouveau Palais is the photographer's first monograph and provides a retrospective of the photographer's career to date.

Chris Dorley Brown is a self-taught British documentary photographer. His creative education was born in East London in the late 1970s, against a backdrop of highly polarized political conflict and change.

The photographs presented in this monograph were taken between 1984 and 2023.

The book takes us on journey through the many boroughs of the East End, like taking a stroll through the decades and spaces. Starting on the banks of the Thames, we discover the vernacular architecture of the 1980s; their demolition a few years later; followed by the contemporary architecture that has replaced it. We follow the transformations brought about by construction for the 2012 Olympic Games and how it transformed an entire area of Hackney. There are the deserted streets of the City during lockdown; ending on the banks of the Thames, almost at its mouth.



Ratcliff. Photo: Chris Dorley Brown

A series of essays and texts are included in the book, within these Dorley Brown recounts his career with a certain ease and skillful style of writing. His depictions of the East End are witty and highly visual, drawing on the sights, sounds, cultural pinpoints of the area, touching on gentrification, social history as well as personal recollections including one in which he is treated for eye problems by Bashar al-Assad.

This format of the book allows the reader to enjoy the photographs, whilst unfolding the history of the East End. It is also, and above all, a depiction of how capitalism and development took on new forms as it spread through the area.



The book will be in bookstores in September and it can be ordered [here](#).

Chris set up his own photographic practice in 1984 concentrating on documenting East London. In a series of residencies and commissions focusing on social housing, workplaces, hospitals and architecture. He has established a substantial archive of images that are re-purposed and re-contextualised for distribution via web, film, exhibition and publication.

*Project partners have included the BBC, Museum of London, Homerton Hospital, the Wellcome Collection and various London Borough archives. He often works with re-energising existing archival material as part of creating new works. Recent publications include photo books *The Longest Way Round* (Overlap, 2015), *Drivers in the 1980s* (Hoxton Mini-Press, 2015), *The Corners* (Hoxton Mini-Press, 2018) and *The East End in Colour: The Photography of David Granick* (Hoxton Mini-Press, 2018).*

He lives and works in East London.

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