

We Come One Press Pack

Series Description

Through the medium of photography and sound recording, We Come One captures the collaborative, harmonious group-energy that develops within England's folkloric events - theorised as 'collective effervescence' by French proto-sociologist Émile Durkheim.

Set in a post-lockdown, cost-of-living crisis England, these free folkloric events are attracting record breaking crowds celebrating togetherness during a period defined by social isolation, political discord and international alienation.

Conducting short interviews with those in attendance and photographing the magic that happens when large groups of people gather for a common cause, We Come One highlights the importance of England's folkloric heritage as a conduit for human connectedness, belonging, community and collective escapism.

A quote from me

"The most popular answer people gave to my questions referred to the event as a source of unity and as a means of bringing people together. Less important it seemed, was the historical or traditional aspects of the event. In my opinion we have an inherent need to feel like we belong to a wider community, and that has become increasingly apparent since lockdown. I think we are seeking more human coalescence. People want to experience something special together, be transported to another place and let their hair down with others whom they identify with".

Exhibition Description

We Come One is an exhibition by photographer and sound artist Dominic Markes, presenting the sights and sounds of folkloric events that he has attended since May 2022.

Atmospheric and often detailed shots will be displayed alongside portraits of those in attendance, as well as an audio montage made up of recordings of the events' aural idiosyncrasies and the answers people gave to two questions: "why are you here?" and "why is this important to you?".

There will be no series description, image captions or any categorisation of any sort. All photographs and sounds will be presented together to form 'a new and unseen world of wonder and magic, where folkloric characters rule'.

Exhibition Details

Dominic Markes' *We Come One* exhibition is at Four Corners Gallery in Bethnal Green from the 29th of March to the 1st of April 2023. Dr Oliver Peterson Gilbert is the Project Consultant and Curatorial Advisor.

The Moment It Clicked

Before I attended my first folkloric event in May 2022, I knew nothing of England's rich folkloric heritage. I had also spent recent years demoting my country's history to being solely colonial, imperialist and arrogant. For this reason I shunned my identity as a white Englishman and grew less and less proud of who I was and what I represented.

Things changed (thankfully) at Hasting's Jack In The Green festival. I saw people dressing up in foliage, dancing around the Jack, cheering when the sun rose over the horizon, and wishing the spirit of summer on fellow attendees. It was an incredibly revelatory and grounding experience for me. It seemed that for the entire weekend we accepted that there are higher beings than us - such as nature - that we must respect and worship. The arrogance that I had associated with my white heritage seemed to have gone, and in its place, a humbleness I hadn't ever known us to have. From that point, I knew that this was the project for me - I simply *had* to discover more and delve deeper into England's rich tapestry of folkloric heritage.