

ICA

Press release: 1 June 2016

Alasdair McLellan & Lev Tanju: The Palace
8–24 July 2016
ICA Theatre
Preview: 7 July



Olly Todd, 2009 © Alasdair McLellan

This July, the ICA will be presenting a collection of imagery by renowned **photographer Alasdair McLellan** of the Palace Skateboards' team. The show will include for the first time unseen and archival images including Palace's extended family, the London skate gang, The Palace Wayward Boys Choir (PWBC). A specially created video installation from **Palace founder, Lev Tanju**, will also accompany McLellan's images.

McLellan has been recording the scene around Tanju since Palace's launch in 2009. His pictures present a fascinating insight into the history of Palace and the characters orbiting the beloved brutalist home of skateboarding on London's Southbank. With an idiosyncratically British edge, Tanju's anarchic videography and McLellan's tender portraits come together to provide a dynamic picture of London and skateboarding. The show is a celebration of the deep camaraderie found amongst skaters at the Southbank. It is a testament to friendship, non-conformity and a do-it-yourself attitude. A full survey of McLellan's work with Palace and the PWBC will be published by IDEA this summer.

Palace Skateboards' roots lie in a brand designed by and for the skateboarding scene, with everything produced and distributed by the same people who want to wear it and ride their decks. Channelling this ethos, Palace's first exhibition with McLellan is taking place alongside a wider ICA focus on young creatives in July. **Young ICA** will enable young people to devise and deliver programmes for themselves and others, working in collaboration with artists, practitioners and professionals to share their knowledge and experiences in order to respond and contribute to culture on their own terms.

A full survey of McLellan's work with Palace and the PWBC will be published by IDEA this summer.

Alasdair McLellan, commented: *"When I think about skateboarding pictures I always used to think about America, and then I met Lev and PWBC and they all looked really good, and it was very British, and they all dressed more like they were going to a football match than skating in Waterloo. The fact that they were aged 15 to 30, and it looked like they could be in Fagin's gang; it was like something out of a Dickens novel. I liked that the names they all had sounded like they're out of Brighton Rock too; Nugget, Blondey, Edson, Snowy. Most brands don't have a history like theirs, born out of hanging out on the Southbank. The exhibition at the ICA and The Palace book are a very honest and charming document of what this is all about."*

Alasdair McLellan is a celebrated British photographer. His career has seen extensive fashion campaign work and editorial for the global fashion press. McLellan's imagery is renowned for its sensitive approach to portraiture, and consistently feels personal, emotional and fluid regardless of his subject, whether this may be a celebrity, landscape, model, builder or simply a young lad on the high street. His first book *Ultimate Clothing Company* was published in 2013 and documented modern British masculinity. McLellan's portrait of Adele features on the cover of her internationally acclaimed album, *25*. Most recently, *Ceremony* was published in 2016, a book collecting his portraits of the British Army's ceremonial guards.

"I hope people see this as a nice little story documenting everything that was going on with Southbank, the skaters, Palace, PWBC," explains Lev Tanju, founder of Palace Skateboards, "Alasdair was always interested in all of the crew, and also everything that went on outside of the actual skating. It's a really personal thing and great memories of a time that was wicked for all of us."

Lev Tanju is the founder of Palace Skateboards, a company which launched in 2009 with a collection of t-shirts and skateboard decks. Tanju has since brought together a team of the UK's best skateboarders, illustrators and designers to establish Palace beyond its origins as a skate label into a modern sportswear icon; its symbolic tri-logo (a refresh of the impossible Penrose triangle) is now globally recognised. Their skate videos also ushered in a new aesthetic, directed by Tanju, his approach to documenting skateboarding was to use mobile phones and the low-res granularity of VHS tape; a throwback to the iconic videos of his youth and now emblematic of Palace.

-END-

More information about Young ICA can be found [here](#)

For further press information and images, please contact:

Victoria Heald | Press Manager ICA | victoria.heald@ica.org.uk | +44 (0)20 7766 1407

Listings information:

Alasdair McLellan & Lev Tanju: The Palace

8–24 July 2016

ICA Theatre

Preview: 7 July

Gallery opening hours: Tues–Sun 11am– 6pm, except Thurs, 11am–9pm. Closed Mon.

The ICA is a membership organisation with Day Membership set at just £1 to visit exhibitions during gallery opening hours. No Day Membership is charged on Tuesdays.

Full Annual Membership available from £30

Students and under-26s can join Annual Membership from £10

Further information on Annual and Day Membership can be found [here](#).

ica.org.uk | Twitter [@ICALondon](#) | [facebook.com/icalondon](https://www.facebook.com/icalondon) | Instagram [@icalondon](#)

Book online ica.org.uk | Call Box Office +44 (0)20 7930 3647 | Textphone +44 (0)20 7839 0737

Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London, SW1Y 5AH

Editor's notes**About the ICA**

Founded in 1946, the ICA seeks to embrace the urgency surrounding contemporary art and culture. Continually looking forward, the ICA lays claim to an extraordinary legacy, being home to the Independent Group, as well as playing a pivotal role in the development of Pop Art, Op Art and Brutalist Architecture. It charted the course of Punk, Performance, Independent Cinema and Young British Art, while showcasing numerous international artists, from Yoko Ono to Gerhard Richter. The ICA has always supported interdisciplinary practice, encouraging artists to experiment and explore unresolved ideas. Comprising film screenings, exhibitions, talks and events, the ICA Programme can be experienced at our base on The Mall, via our website and social media, or as 'Off-Site' projects at alternative venues, nationally and internationally. The ICA has a longstanding fascination with the evolution of Pop culture in our mass digital age. ica.org.uk

The ICA is a registered charity no. 236848



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**