

## Press release

### **Chris Killip: CLOSE DISTANCE**

September 18 – December 19, 2014

«I do not refer to any story; I only show what is taking place.»

Chris Killip was born in 1946 in Douglas on the Isle of Man. He left school at the age of 16. To be able to move to London he first earned his money as a beach photographer.

In October 1964 he was hired as the third assistant to the leading advertising photographer in London, Adrian Flowers. From 1966-1969 he worked as a freelance assistant for various photographers in London. In 1969, after seeing his first exhibition of photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, he decided to return to photograph on the Isle of Man.

In 1971 Lee Witkin, the New York gallery owner, commissioned him to produce a limited edition portfolio of the *Isle of Man series*. In 1972 he received a commission from *The Arts Council of Great Britain* to photograph Huddersfield and Bury St. Edmunds for the exhibition «Two Views - Two Cities». From 1973 onward Killip's photographs have been shown in numerous single exhibitions.

In 1975, he moved to live in Newcastle-upon-Tyne on a two-year fellowship as the *Northern Arts Photography Fellow*. In 1976 he was a founding member of the *Side Gallery* in Newcastle upon Tyne, where as its director and curator, he organized a multitude of photography exhibitions. With his long-term project entitled *In Flagrante*, which was publicized as a book in 1988, Killip achieved international recognition. He received the *Henri Cartier-Bresson Prize* for this in 1989.

Killip has been Professor of Photography at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, since 1991.

#### **On his works**

In the series of works, *In Flagrante*, which was created in northern England between 1975 and 1987, Killip shows the relationship of human beings to their worldly surroundings. The form of his picture stories moves between distance and closeness, between objective description and subjective opinion. He tries neither to explain the strange nor the incomprehensible, nor to garner compassion.

Killip's photographs were created on the Isle of Man, where he grew up, and in Ireland, where he accompanied pilgrims with his camera for ten years, but mainly in northern England. There he captured the socio-cultural transition caused by deindustrialization in his photographs.

Killip's works feature his high propensity for empathy. His photographs not only captivate his audience by their content, but also through their formal precision. Chris Killip observes what is happening.....in a subtle manner.

Chris Killip has influenced British photography from the 1970s up to this very day.

Contact person: Oliver T. Roehl, Director, [roehl@focus21.ch](mailto:roehl@focus21.ch)