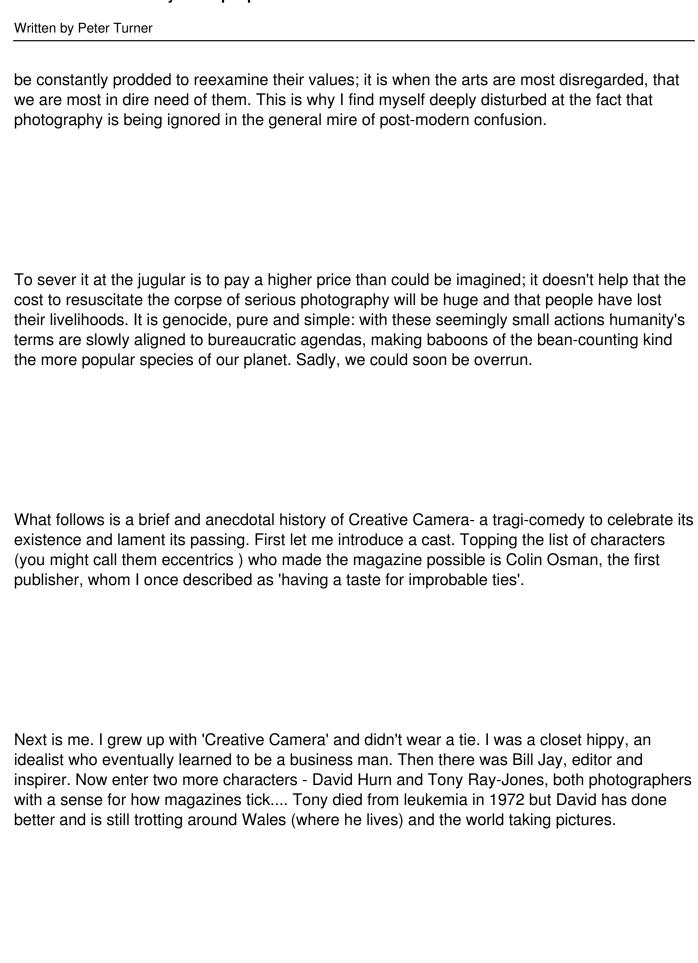


During its first decade the title spoke for a new generation of photographers who yearned for an alternative to outmoded 'club' photography. Afterwards, the magazine specialized in showcasing innovative forms of photography and publishing critical and informative articles about the camera image in a broad cultural context.

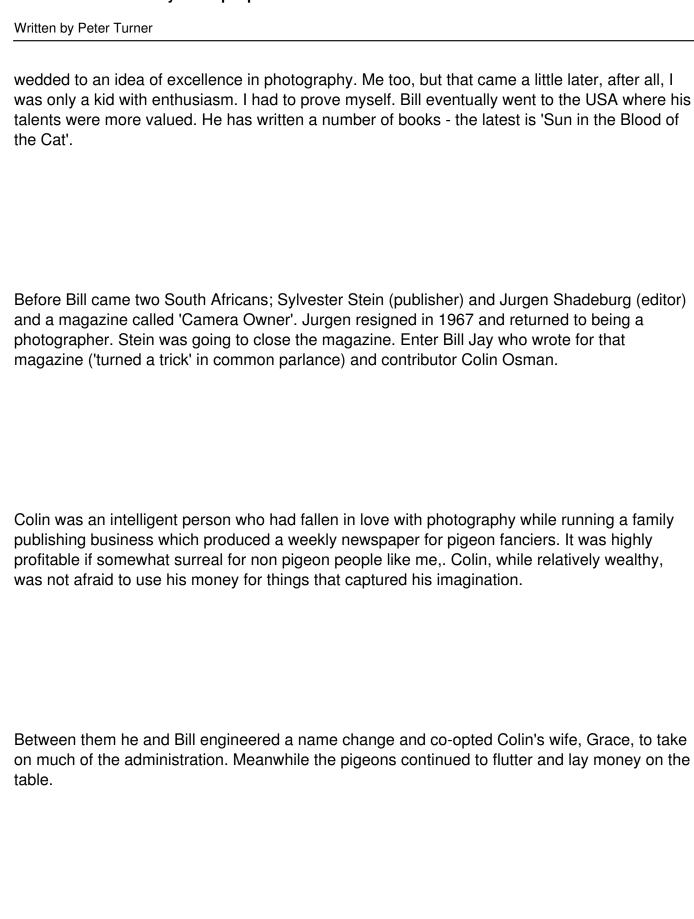
Based in London, it had a world-wide circulation and over 30 years the magazine became a byword for quality in photography. The price for its fierce independence, however, was sacrifices by everyone involved, and over-reliance on financial assistance from the Arts Council of England.



The arts have always needed patrons - not because they lack worth, but because people must



Although different in temperament they both gave Bill Jay ideas and support. And both were



Creative Camera was effectively subsidized by a bunch of birds. Colin was and remains a most remarkable person who put his money where his mind was. He embodies my idea of a grand socialist. Given the incongruity of the circumstances, (I mean, can you imagine hanging out

with a bunch of pigeon fanciers who were more deranged than any photographer?), my years working with Colin were memorable. He was more like a father than an employer.

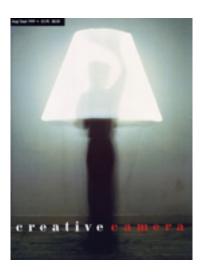
Photography has had few better friends, other than photographers, who are necessarily self obsessed. Colin's ideas were to put those obsessions into broader circulation - because he thought them to be worthwhile. He used photography to explain himself to himself and others too.



I went to 'CC' with a genuine sense of respect. At the time it was one of four magazines with international circulations that tried to address the notion of 'photography as art'. Or, as we put it, 'photography as a medium of personal expression'. The others were 'Camera' from Switzerland, 'Aperture' from the United States and 'Camera Mainichi' from Japan.







But we were not selling enough copies of 'CC'. This is a common tale in photographic publishing when it is done without compromise. Some of the necessary expenses, like typesetting and printing were partly covered through book selling. For a while 'CC' had the best stock of photographic books in town.

But one day in 1986 Colin phoned and invited me to lunch. He told me that he was going to close the magazine - even with its Arts Council grant he could no longer provide a personal subsidy. I protested. Not about the lunch you understand but about the concept of losing an important and long lasting contribution to visual culture.

We hatched a plan to keep the magazine alive and I became editor and publisher. I sorted out the finances, found new premises and hired Eileen, an art history graduate from Sussex who

Written	by	Peter	Turner
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had worked for Colin. Eileen was magnificent. As I would pace up and down our tiny office juggling too many balls she would make sage remarks of a kind I needed 'Come on Pete, you're not Superman'.

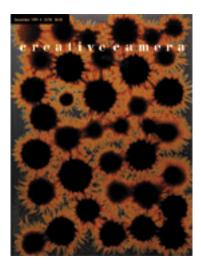
I thought I was, but ( Dept of True Confessions) I was wrong. So we got along with reviving the magazine, keeping it visual and literate but backing away from the pomp of art history. There was a formula to that kind of writing which I found irritating. And I was trying to make the kind of magazine I would want to read. Meanwhile the Arts Council was going through its own changes, trying to balance the voices of a multicultural society with those of Thatcher's Britain - 'survival of the fittest and Devil take the hindmost'. I was given a few raps over the knuckles for being obstinate and Euro-centric, but I had rescued the magazine and was able to manage its finances.

So we got along by fair means and a great deal of support from the photographic community, most particularly from those who felt disenfranchised. We got other kinds of help too - volunteer workers, free accountancy, financial advice and a great deal of hand-holding.. Image-makers, writers, typesetters, printers all came to the aid of the party. We had a great group of Trustees too who shared in my enthusiasm. I thank all of them, not by name but they know who they are. The Arts Council got a bargain. But like their counterparts in other countries they looked a gift horse in the mouth and didn't like the teeth.

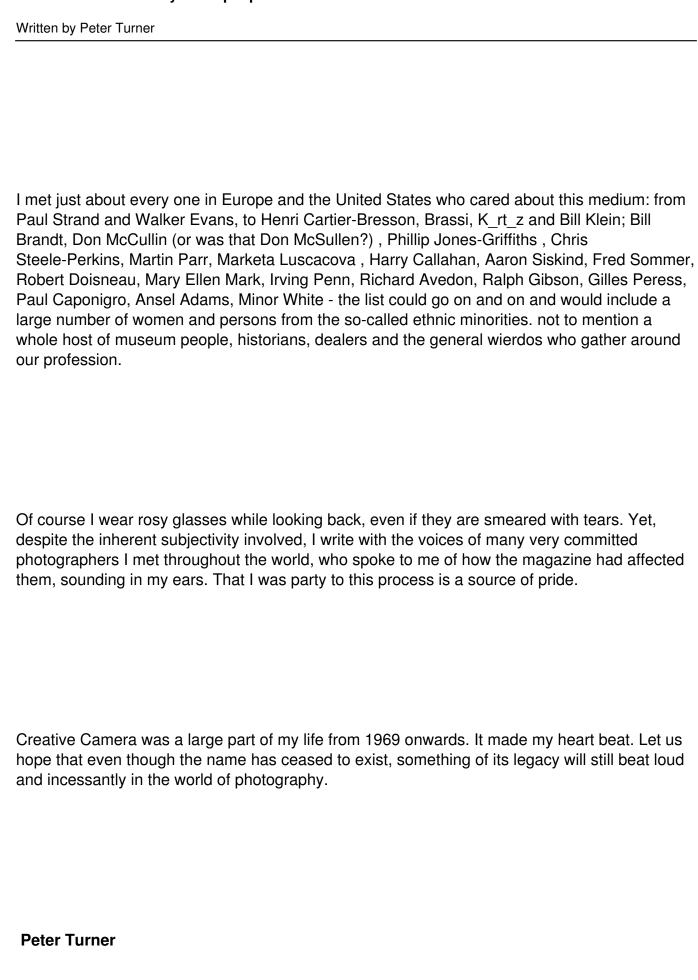
David Brittain is another very important member of our cast. Just like Bill Jay and myself he had been to art school (Glasgow School of Art) and worked as a journalist for a photographic magazine. I liked his style and got him to contribute to 'CC'. It lead to a job working with me - David had a finger on a pulse that I was beginning to lose under the pressure of keeping our little boat afloat and we got on well, probably because we were both quietly mad but knew the disciplines of magazine making. His input allowed me to spend more time on the administration side - boring but necessary. It became a symbiotic partnership.

When I left the magazine for the second time (1991) I put it in David's hands because I knew he understood its spirit. I feel proud for him and what he did. Just like me he had to deal with shit hitting the fan yet still managed to pull off a thoroughly contemporary magazine. Major effort and minor money is what happens in the art world.

Then, about a year ago, my intuition was telling me that something was up; for a little and under-capitalized publication to have ridden the waves of financial change and the vicissitudes of arts fashion for more than 30 years is a testament to tenacity, but it also worried me that it needed loads of dosh and a sense of readership with an editorial responsibility. We lived in times with altered parameters, money talked much louder than it used to and original voices and visions are harder to find. Unfortunately, I was prove right, and I now find myself writing these words, saying good-bye to Creative Camera.



In retrospect, I find my years with Creative Camera were the most rewarding; my involvement with the magazine from 1969-78 and again from 1986-91 became a succession of personally defining moments.



Vritten by Peter Turner							
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