

Visual Arts

Snapshot: 'Merrie Albion – Landscape Studies of a Small Island' by Simon Roberts

The latest exhibition, featuring photos taken during the past 10 years, focuses on events and places that define recent British history



'Eid al-Fitr Celebrations, Green St, Bristol' (2013) © Simon Roberts

Kitty Grady
JANUARY 12, 2018

As worshippers arrive to mark the end of Ramadan with Eid celebrations, this Bristol street offers a convivial scene of collective life. The mosque, formerly St Katherine's Church, was acquired by the city's Islamic community in 1968; in 2016 it was the target of anti-Islamic attacks.

A visual chronicler, Simon Roberts' scenes of public gatherings conflate traditional landscape painting with social documentary. His latest exhibition, featuring photos taken during the past 10 years, focuses on events and places that define recent British history, such as student protests, Grenfell Tower and Shoreham Air Show.

In his Brueghel-like compositions of congregation, carnival and revolt, Roberts resists simplistic notions of nationhood. His landscapes, woven with juxtapositions, tensions and ironies, show the fracture of contemporary society.

'Merrie Albion – Landscape Studies of a Small Island' is at [Flowers Gallery](#), London E2 from January 19 until March 10

Follow [@FTLifeArts](#) on Twitter to find out about our latest stories first. Subscribe to [FT Life](#) on YouTube for the latest FT Weekend videos