

Circle of Latitude

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Presented by Latitude Photographers:

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lat·i·tude [lat-i-tood, -tyood]

1. Geography. a. the angular distance north or south from the equator of a point on the earth's surface, measured on the meridian of the point. b. a place or region as marked by this distance. 2. Freedom from narrow restrictions; freedom of action, opinion 3. Photography. The ability of an emulsion to record the brightness values of a subject in their true proportion to one another, expressed as the ratio of the amount of brightness in the darkest possible value to the amount of brightness in the brightest: a latitude of 1 to 128.

Latitude is a group of international, emerging photographers who are recent alumni from the London College of Communications' MA Photography course. The group has developed out of a cooperative response to debates within contemporary photography. Defined by experimental enquiry, it is concerned with personal aesthetics and artistic intentions. The ethos of Latitude is to incorporate differences in approach while retaining the feel of a group response. Their inaugural exhibition is one that will showcase this ethos.

Circles of Latitude is concerned with physical and psychological relationships within the contemporary urban environment. In light of the current globalisation process, some believe that spaces lose their distinctiveness and significance; others insist that place persists as a constituent element of social life and historical change. The process of place making in contemporary cities is still relevant today and complex. As the social organisation of space is changing, the concept of place should be rethought and move towards understanding of it as the location of sets of intersecting social relations and activities in time. This exhibition attempts to further this re-conceptualisation. The exhibition encompasses works that use photography to map, record, measure, chart and quantify as the participating artists explore three facets of this theme: physical geography, freedom from restriction, the latitude to exercise will and, in terms specific to photography, exposure latitude.

In terms of geography, latitude is a position north or south of the equator, measured from 0° to 90°. Thanks to Google Earth, any point in the world can be instantly located, visualised and reduced to a number. A click transforms the coloured mass of a continent into the rooftop of a single house; within seconds, the absolutely generic can become the absolutely specific – and vice versa. Several photographers in the exhibition examine the very notion of place, whether in terms of physical space or personal psycho-geography.

Others take the opportunity to explore latitude in the sense of freedom from narrow restrictions: freedom of action and opinion. Some works display a consciousness of an inherent paradox: the word describes room for maneuver *within* a set restrictions – freedom is invariably relative rather than total, with the possibility of trespass or transgression ever-present.

The artists exploring the third aspect of the theme of latitude – exposure latitude – are concerned with the extent to which a light-sensitive material can be over- or underexposed and still achieve a result that is deemed worthy of attention. Since the acceptability of the result is dependent on both personal aesthetics and artistic intentions, the measurement of exposure latitude is by definition subjective.