



The Importance of Elsewhere: Philip Larkin's Photographs

Richard Bradford

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Philip Larkin was a keen amateur photographer and through his life he made images of the people, places and things that meant most to him. Publishing ahead of the thirtieth anniversary of the poet's death in December 2015, *The Importance of Elsewhere* gathers the best of Larkin's photographic work, divided into short thematic chapters arranged in chronological order.

Written by Richard Bradford, the acclaimed author of the Larkin biography *First Boredom, Then Fear*, the book shows how Larkin, as an individual, as a writer and indeed as a photographer, developed an acute sensitivity to all aspects of the world around him, from his love of open uninhabited landscapes and empty churches to his mixed feelings about crowds. There are also fascinating portraits of those people who were closest to Larkin, including his lovers, his mother and his literary peers.

Authorised by the Larkin Estate, the book beautifully reproduces around 150 images from over 1,500 held by the Larkin archive at Hull: the great majority have never previously been seen in print. A substantial foreword by Mark Haworth-Booth, formerly curator of photography at the V&A and a poet in his own right, explores what it meant to be a serious amateur photographer of Larkin's generation.

Larkin was a talented photographer and the archive is effectively his illustrated life. Together with Larkin's literary works and his letters, these images make up the third, so far unseen, constituent of the material upon which our future perceptions of him will be based.

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