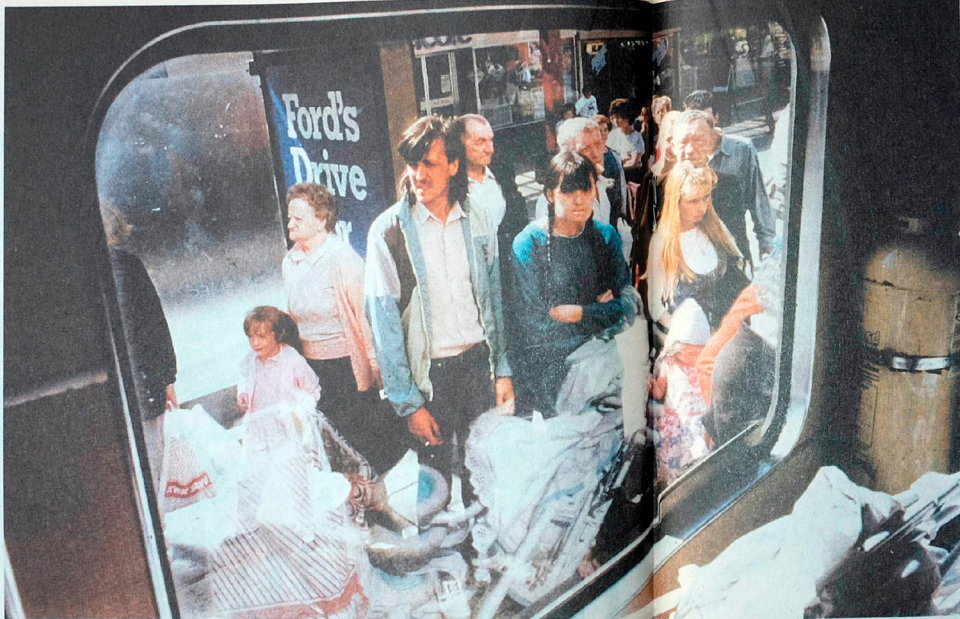


SHORTLIST

This week's essential music, clubs, film, books, theatre, art, style and multimedia



STRAND SHOPPING CENTRE, BOOTLE, MERSEYSIDE, 1989



ABOVE: LONDON ROAD, CITY CENTRE, 1994. BELOW: LONDON ROAD, CITY CENTRE, 1991



ABOVE: UNTITLED, 1983. BELOW: BETWEEN WALLASEY AND BIRKENHEAD, 1979



ABOVE: OLD SWAN, 1988. BELOW: EAST PRESCOTT ROAD, DOVECOFT, 1986



LODGE LANE, TOKTETH, 1988



ABOVE: KNOTTY ASH, 1989
BELOW: BETWEEN BIRKENHEAD AND WALLASEY, 1991



SNAP SHOT On the buses

It started out as something to do on the back of the bus to pass time on the way to work and turned into an epic 20-year obsession. Travelling from Wallasey into Liverpool city centre, photographer Tom Wood got into the habit of taking pictures from the bus window. He started taking four-hour journeys to no destination in particular and supported his habit with part-time teaching. In the process he amassed an archive of around 100,000 pictures.

His journey through the streets of inner-city Liverpool has been put together in an exhibition called *All Zones Off Peak*. On the first page of the accompanying book is the black-and-white bus-pass picture of a fresh-faced Wood in his 20s. Turn to the last page and the image has changed – he is now 47. As well as a document of a city, the winding bus route has been a journey through his own life.

Although he's Irish-born, Wood has lived in Liverpool for over 20 years. Originally a portrait photographer his early work focuses on the faces of the city. Most are caught unawares, going about their daily rituals – shopping, waiting and travelling – all at the mercy of the city-centre bus service. The images are downbeat, unromantic and, at times, bleak. As the years progress the work evolves. Colour succeeds black and white, Liverpool's background infrastructure becomes more important and images become abstract as Wood layers the pictures with reflections of faces in the bus windows. "Most city centres are pretty much the same and people's faces aren't that revealing, but get them out of the centre and onto their home turf and they start to look more themselves," he says. "Then I started noticing the backgrounds and used a wider angle lens so background became more important – and in the end the subject."

Wood's first book, *Looking For Love*, focused on Liverpool bars and nightclubs. Currently he's working on a project capturing the daytrippers in the arcades at the Wirral's New Brighton. It's been 10 years in the making and spans generations. "There's an energy from the place and its people that informs all my work. I don't know what it is but it's like no where else. It's unbelievable."

● August 28-October 4 at the Piper Gallery, Museum Of Modern Art, 30 Pembroke Street, Oxford OX1 1PL (01865 722733). Tue-Sun 11am-6pm, (Thurs 11am-9pm), £1.50-£2.50.

STORY: LENA CORNER