

JAMES BARNOR

Ghana, 1929

Born in Ghana in 1929, James Barnor opened his renowned Ever Young studio in Accra, where he immortalized a nation at the moment of its independence. He was one of the first photojournalists to collaborate with *The Daily Graphic*, a newspaper published in Ghana by London's Daily Mirror Group.

In 1959, two years after Ghana's independence, Barnor moved to London to deepen his technical knowledge of the medium. He discovered colour photography at the Medway College of Art and his pictures were published on the front page of *Drum*, an important magazine founded in South Africa in 1951 and symbol of the anti-apartheid movement. He eloquently captured the spirit of Swinging London and the experiences of the African diaspora in the British capital.

In the late 1960s, he was recruited by Agfa-Gevaert and returned to Ghana to set up the country's first colour laboratory. He stayed there for the next twenty years, working in his new Studio X23 as a freelance photographer and for state agencies in Accra. Today, Barnor lives in the United Kingdom and devotes most of his time to his work, in a spirit of transmission.

Barnor's work has recently given rise to numerous exhibitions and publications, including a touring retrospective curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, shown at the Serpentine in London in 2021, MASI Lugano, Switzerland, in 2022 and the Detroit Institute of Art, MI, USA in 2023. *James Barnor: Stories, Pictures from the Archive (1947-1987)*, curated by Matthieu Humery, opened at LUMA Arles, France in 2022, and was marked by the launch of the James Barnor Prize, dedicated to African photographers. In October 2023, *James Barnor, Studio of Life* opened at FOMU Antwerp, in Belgium.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2023-24 James Barnor, Studio of Life, FOMU Antwerp, BE
2022 *James Barnor, Stories: Pictures from the Archive (1947-1987)*, LUMA Foundation, Arles, FR
Ever Young, Barakat Contemporary, Seoul, KR
2021 *James Barnor - The Roadmaker*, Galerie Clémentine de la Féronnière, Paris, FR
2021-23 *James Barnor, Accra/London - A Retrospective*, Serpentine North Gallery, London, UK
Museo d'Arte della Svizzera Italiana (MASI), Lugano, Switzerland (13.03.2022 - 31.07.2022)
Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), Detroit, MI, USA (28.05.2023 - 01.10.2023)
2021 *James Barnor: Ghanaian Modernist*, Bristol Photo Festival, City Museum of Bristol, UK
2019 *James Barnor - A retrospective*, Nubuke Foundation, Accra, GH
2019 *Paris-Londres, Music Migrations (1962-1989)*, (group exhibition) Musée de la Porte Dorée, Paris, FR
2017 *Ever Young*, Musée du quai Branly, Paris, FR
2017-22 *La Vie selon James Barnor/Life According to James Barnor - Touring exhibition*
11ème Rencontres de Bamako, Bamako, Mali.
Mupho, Musée de la Photographie, Saint Louis, Sénégal (2018); Gallery 1957, Accra, Ghana (2018);
IF Johannesburg, South Africa (2020); CCF Windhoek, Namibie (2021), AF Lusaka, Zambia (2022)
To be continued in AF Gaborone, Botswana; AF Durban; AF Port-Elizabeth; AF Potchefstroom;
2012 *Another London* (group exhibition), Tate Modern, London, UK
2010 *Ever Young: James Barnor* (Touring exhibition) Autograph ABP, Rivington Place, London, UK
W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, Boston, (MA) USA (2010)
South African National Gallery, Capetown (2012); Impressions Gallery, York, UK (2013);
Galerie Clémentine de la Féronnière, Paris (2015); BAND Gallery, Toronto, CA (2016)
2007 *Mr Barnor's Independence Diaries*, Black Cultural Archives, London, UK

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Bristol Museum, Bristol, UK
Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR
Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan, USA
FOMU, Antwerp, BE
LUMA Foundation, Arles, FR/Zürich, CH
MASI Lugano, Lugano, CH
MoMA, New York, USA
Musée du quai Branly, Paris, FR
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, MI, USA
National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
Portland Museum of Art, ME, USA
Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, (IL) USA
Tate, London, UK
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

MONOGRAPHIES

- 2023 James Barnor, Photopoche/Photofile,
Actes Sud/Thames & Hudson
2022 *James Barnor, Stories: Pictures from the
Archive (1947-1987)*, LUMA Foundation/
Maison CF/RRB Photobooks
2021 *James Barnor, Accra/London - A Retrospective*,
Koenig Books/Serpentine Galleries
2021 *The Roadmaker*, Maison CF/RRB Photobooks
2015 *Ever Young*, Autograph ABP/Clémentine de la
Féronnière

SELECTED PRINTED PRESS

- 2022 *James Barnor, du Ghana au Swinging London*,
Claire Guillot, Le Monde, 1er septembre 2022
2021 *Looking back: James Barnor reflects*, words by
Ekow Barnes, British Journal of Photography,
Issue 7903, summer 2021
2021 *A Solo Exhibition Celebrates Six Decades of
James Barnor's Photography in Ghana and
the United Kingdom*, Rianna Jade Parker,
Aperture #242, spring 2021
2021 *Something We Africans Got*, #11
2020 *A Life in Focus*, Katy Hessel, Vogue, June 2020
2017 *Le Portfolio - Jeune Afrique*, Roxana Azimi, M Le
Magazine du Monde, n°328, 30/12/2017

SELECTED ONLINE PRESS REVIEWS

- 2023 [*The Man who Pictured Ghana's Rise at Home
and Abroad*](#), Aruna d'Souza, The New York
Times, 30/06/2023
2021 [*Looking Good*](#), text by Oluremi C. Onabanjo,
SSENSE Magazine, Fall-Winter 2021
2021 [*James Barnor: Accra/London - A Retrospective
review - deft African innovator*](#), Sean O'Hagan,
The Guardian, 21/05/2021
2020 [*The Ever Young Photographer James Barnor*](#),
Léllé Demertzi, MoMA post