



Finding “Bluetown”: Queen Elizabeth’s face superimposed on London’s map.

“Bluetown”

It’s hard to say *what* or *where* “Bluetown” is, where it begins and where it ends. It is even harder to say *when* it takes place. One thing we know for sure - there are several aspects in common between “Bluetown” and the city of London. “Bluetown” is, therefore, a kind of “second order” city, an imaginary place made of fragments of a previously existing reality. The colours, shapes and atmospheres of “Bluetown” are those of a well worn *tableau vivant*, one that has been unconsciously sculpted by previous generations of citizens. And it wouldn’t be abusive to say that, at least occasionally, we all have been visitors of “Bluetown”.

But how can one find “Bluetown”? The answer to this question is neither simple nor easy to find because no one has ever tried to map it before. To help solve this question, Guimarães employed an unlikely method that mixes randomness with cartographic objectivity: he started by superimposing an outline of Queen Elizabeth’s face on the map of London. He then plotted a number of evenly spaced points that served as a grid of geographic coordinates, which he then used to identify the checkpoints of his photographic survey. By visiting and photographing a detail present around each one of these locations, Guimarães created a puzzle that could be read, according to him, as “the dream of London about itself, a celebration of the beauty of its own alienation and loneliness”. The choice of Queen Elizabeth’s face is a symbolism for “Englishness”, a necessary condition to approach the geography of “Bluetown”. Despite being a view aesthetically forged by Guimarães’ own interests in the plastic qualities of colour, geometry and space, the “other” space depicted by “Bluetown” constitutes, *de facto*, the psychological geography of the photographer’s own otherness in relation to the city of London.

Pedro Guimaraes is a professional freelance photographer based in the UK and in Portugal, working mostly on editorial subjects. His works have been widely exhibited in Portugal, Spain and France. Some highlights include Descubrimientos PhotoEspaña 2008, Creative Lab UNICER Lisbon 2007, Rencontres d'Arles 2003 (FNAC award).

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Samples from exhibition:



Location #57, "Detective Agency", Brighton Road, Surbiton.



Location #44, "Old Mercedes Benz", Priory Road, Richmond.



Location #23, "Two Coca Colas", Waltham Abbey



Location #6, "Café", Kimberley Avenue, Southwark.