

STORYHOUSE

Storyhouse to host Amnesty International UK and Magnum Photos exhibition to show refugee crises since the Second World War.

Exhibition of powerful photographs of past and present refugee crises will be at Storyhouse in Chester between Monday 19 – Sunday 25 June.

Vietnam, Chechnya, Bosnia, Iraq and Syria all feature in the exhibition as part of Amnesty's ***I Welcome*** campaign.

Taking place during Refugee Week between Monday 19 – Sunday 25 June, the exhibition will explore the experiences of those uprooted by conflict and persecution over 70 years since the Second World War. From 1940s Greece to Syria today, the 30 striking pictures from Magnum photographers show the reasons why people are forced to flee, the challenges they face on their journeys to safety and what happens when they make it.

The exhibition is part of Amnesty's ***I Welcome*** campaign, calling on the UK to share responsibility in responding to the refugee crisis, including by providing safe and legal routes for refugees to find sanctuary here. The campaign also highlights the many acts of welcome and solidarity towards refugees from local communities across the country.

Magnum was founded in 1947 by photographers Robert Capa, David 'Chim' Seymour, Henri Cartier-Bresson and George Rodger, who had all covered the Second World War. It will be celebrating its 70th anniversary next year.

Displayed throughout Storyhouse, the earliest photographs in the exhibition are David 'Chim' Seymour's images of child refugees in Greece in 1946, juxtaposed with Chien-Chi Chang's photograph of a mountain of lifejackets abandoned in Lesbos taken just earlier this year. Others include Philip Jones Griffiths' 1968 image of a child running from a bombing raid in Vietnam, Thomas Dworzak's Chechen refugee children playing in the snow in neighbouring Ingushetia in 1999, and Lorenzo Meloni's recent image of a Syrian family in front of the rubble which used to be their home.

Tom Davies, Campaign Manager at Amnesty International UK, said:

"Photography can be a powerful way of telling a story and these photos remind us that people have been fleeing conflict and persecution throughout history."

An audio guide voiced by Juliet Stevenson is available online at [amnesty.org.uk/audioguide](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/audioguide)

To find out more visit [Storyhouse.com](https://www.storyhouse.com)

In brief:

What: I Welcome: An Amnesty International and Magnum Photos exhibition of photographs of refugee crises past and present

When: Monday June 19 – Sunday June 25

Where: Storyhouse, Chester

Background:

Amnesty has accused world leaders of the richest countries, including the UK, of a failure of leadership on the refugee crisis. The UK's response had seen only 2,898 Syrians resettled here by June, the most recent figures available, from a total of five million refugees from that country. Worldwide, conflict and persecution have forced over 21 million people flee across borders, yet the response of many countries, including some of the richest, has been to effectively raise the drawbridge and do what they can to keep some of the world's most vulnerable people out. With fewer safe and legal routes to safety, refugees are having to take ever more dangerous journeys, which pushes them further into the hands of smugglers.

Historical examples:

In 1937 when the Basque government asked the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to take in child refugees to protect them from Franco's bombs, he refused, until a popular campaign forced him into a U-turn and 4,000 unaccompanied children sailed from Bilbao to Southampton and were then supported by local communities across the country. Meanwhile, despite a backlash from some parts of the media, many Jewish refugees who came to the UK in the 1930s and 1940s say how welcomed they felt. In 1956, the UK agreed to welcome 20,000 refugees from the Soviet occupation of Hungary over the course of just a few months as part of a ground-breaking international resettlement operation, and there are also reports of British people collecting supplies and driving them 1000 miles across Europe for refugees in camps on Hungary's borders.