

Welcome to my fourth [bi-monthly newsletter](#), an arts bulletin of exhibitions and issues that might interest you. Feel free to email me any feedback on photos@nikigorick.com

Photography seems to be on a roll at the moment in London, with two major exhibitions opening at the National Portrait Gallery and the South Bank's Hayward. At first glance, history, nationality and even gender separate the featured artists [Annie Liebovitz](#) and [Alexander Rodchenko](#), yet for me, both highlight how photographers struggle to balance personal, artistic aims with the realities of their working environment.

'Vanity Fair Portraits' - icons of our time

At the [National Portrait Gallery's](#) seductive, blockbuster of a show, celebrity is the subject matter and as the magazine's chief photographer since its re-launch in 1983, [Annie Liebovitz](#) excels. Famous for highly-staged, attention-grabbing portraits, she's somehow balanced innovation and creative quality against extreme commercial demands. In the fascinating documentary film '[A life through a lens](#)' showing at the [ICA](#), she says that the cover images have to sell the magazine and "I might as well be doing advertising", yet she's still successfully pushing out the boundaries after 25 years and as Tina Brown, Vanity Fair's editor, says "she cares" — and it shows.



Madonna for Vanity Fair magazine by Annie Liebovitz.



'Pioneer with a trumpet' by Alexander Rodchenko

'Reflections' update

Over recent weeks, I've been adding to a series of photographs focusing on the overlapping of people, time and place in London. Exploring this theme has allowed me to re-examine several contrasting areas of the city including the Thames river-walks, the City itself and around the Law Courts. With a working title of 'reflections', these cutting edge images should form an exhibition in the Autumn.

Revolution in photography

The [Hayward Gallery's Alexander Rodchenko](#) exhibition is well worth a look, revealing how his this hugely influential figure of the 20th century avant-garde created a new documentary photographic style of dynamic design after the Bolshevik revolution. Soon denounced under Stalin as a 'petty-bourgeois formalist', Rodchenko's career never recovered. His later images of dream-like circus acts show a sad curtailment of his freedom to photograph by the State; no longer allowed to create "pictures that are so true to life that they are life it-



'Timelines' by Niki Gorick

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