



'SMOKE & MIRRORS'

TABERNACLE GALLERY

35 Powis Square,
off Portobello Road,
London W11 2AY
T | 020 7221 9700

Mon | 9am - 10:30pm
Tues | 9am - 10:30pm
Wed | 9am - 10:30pm
Thu | 9am - 11pm
Fri | 9am - 11:30pm
Sat | 9am - 11:30pm
Sun | 9am - 10pm

Mon 13 - Sun 19 June 2022

Open Evening Fri 17 June 6-8pm

STEVE MEPSTED

PHOTOGRAPHS / VIDEO /
INSTALLATION / PROTEST

'Silent Walk' 2019 (Detail)

In the early hours of 14th June 2017, I began to receive text messages on my phone, there were reports of a fire near me. I made my way to the bathroom window but could not see any building – just a thick column of foul billowing smoke, shifting slowly side to side in the dark air. I went instead to the front room and opened the window. What I saw will stay with me forever: Grenfell Tower – three blocks down – seemed to have leapt forwards, alive burning and pungent – it felt like I could reach out my hand and touch it. The air was full of distant sirens and the chugging of helicopters. Everything had changed in a moment.

In the immediate and ongoing aftermath of that event, the dignified activism demonstrated by the local community has kept this issue in the public realm; alive where many would rather it were forgotten. People are (still) frustrated and angry that such a preventable tragedy could happen.

The tower now stands as a brutal symbol; wrapped in white plastic and starkly visible from all around the area, it waits along with the survivors, bereaved relatives, friends, and the wider community, for the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower inquiry. We are approaching the 5th Anniversary of the fire and it will likely be late in 2023 before the report from the 2nd phase of the inquiry is published. Five years have passed and no one has yet been held accountable. Over the past five years I have been participating in and making images of the aftermath including the activism shown by the community of which I am proud to be a part. The upcoming exhibition ‘Smoke & Mirrors’ at The Tabernacle Gallery is a show of photography, video and installation which arises from, and is about protest, commemoration, and a call for justice.

‘Smoke & Mirrors’ Steve Mepsted 2017 - 2022

www.stevemepsted.com



JUSTICE!