

Here is New York – A Democracy of Photographs.  
Conceived and organized by  
Alice Rose George, Gilles Peress, Michael Shulan, Charles Traub.  
Scalo 2002.

If a picture can paint a thousand words no review could do justice to this extraordinary book. Here is New York contains about a thousand photographs taken on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and in its immediate aftermath and exhibited in New York between September 25<sup>th</sup> and December 24<sup>th</sup>. All the photos were for sale and the proceeds went towards a fund for the children of the victims of militant Islamic terrorism's greatest atrocity to date.

The photos were taken by amateur and professional alike, the quality varies but the message is uniformly powerful. There are all the photos that one might expect – the Twin Towers before the attack, during, and afterwards. The emergency services in action; the escapees from the buildings. But there are others too – observers of the scene, faces of witnesses as the planes crashed, dust clouds, dust covered survivors the only part of whose faces are clean the areas round their eyes washed by tears; there are images of the missing, messages of grief, anger, pain and vengeance, and those of hope, peace and reconciliation.

Some of the images – one in particular – are profoundly shocking, all are haunting, and some are unforgettable. For me the principal example of the latter is of a young woman in jeans and a shirt with long auburn hair peering out from the jagged gash made in one of the buildings by its airborne attacker: who was she? Did she jump? Was she rescued?

No one who looks through this book as I have will find it less than an emotional experience; no one who studies the pictures more than once will fail to see something new each time, no one who sees the images it contains will fail to remember some of them.

Here is New York is many things: a witness, a testimony, a memorial. It deserves to be seen by everyone for whom September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 will always be the day on which the world was changed forever.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh