# Martin Parr’s new exhibition captures the enduring spirit of Bristol Pride



Martin Parr, the acclaimed photographer renowned for his candid portrayals of British life, has unveiled a new exhibition centred on Bristol Pride—a vibrant celebration that he has documented for several years. Transforming his long-standing attendance into an artistic homage, this showcase at the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery encapsulates the joy, colour, and spirit of the LGBTQ+ community during one of the UK’s largest Pride events.

Parr's connection to Bristol Pride dates back to the 1980s, but it is only in recent years that he has dedicated himself to capturing the essence of the event. Reflecting on his experience, Parr remarked, “When I am home in Bristol, I should rest,” a sentiment that he now recognises as a missed opportunity. With a renewed commitment to documenting the city he calls home, he noted, “About five years ago, I said: ‘I must shoot Bristol.’ I had been missing out. How stupid can you be?” His work showcases the rich tapestry of expressions, from participants decked in rainbow hues to striking placards that convey powerful messages about identity and acceptance.

Daryn Carter, director of Bristol Pride, expressed his enthusiasm for the exhibition during its preview, highlighting the emotional resonance of Parr's work. “It’s amazing when you come around the corner and see them,” Carter said, captivated by the vivid colours and the celebration encapsulated in each frame. He pointed out the importance of inclusivity within the event, particularly at a time when the LGBTQ+ community faces increasing challenges. One poignant image that resonated with Carter depicts a child on someone's shoulders holding a Bristol Pride flag, symbolising hope and the future for the community.

Carter also drew attention to another powerful photograph featuring a placard stating, “Trans. Here in 1969. Here in 2019. Here always.” This thought-provoking image serves as a reminder that the struggles and presence of trans individuals are not recent phenomena but part of a longstanding history. “A lot of people think that trans and the gender debate is something that’s new or it’s just the current thing,” Carter explained. “But actually it’s not. You know, trans people have always existed.”

Throughout his career, Parr has developed a reputation for capturing candid moments that reflect the humanity behind public spectacles. An image of a drag queen, deeply engrossed in their phone with a can of Blackthorn cider nestled in their arm, exemplifies this signature style, blending humour with a snapshot of everyday life amid the backdrop of celebration. This knack for authenticity and relatability is a hallmark of Parr’s work, and it has become especially significant at events like Bristol Pride, which celebrate diversity and expression in the face of adversity.

As Parr promotes his exhibition this week, his journey from casual observer to passionate chronicler of Bristol's Pride events underscores a broader narrative about the importance of visibility and representation in the arts. His work not only documents local history but also contributes to the ongoing conversation about inclusivity within the LGBTQ+ community, reminding us that events like Bristol Pride are not merely festivals; they are vital affirmations of identity and acceptance in society.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[3]](https://www.bristol247.com/culture/art/exclusive-pride-images-from-martin-parr-bristol-pride-day-2019/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[5]](https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/events/carnival-pop-up/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light), [[3]](https://www.bristol247.com/culture/art/exclusive-pride-images-from-martin-parr-bristol-pride-day-2019/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/09/so-much-joy-show-brings-martin-parrs-low-key-visits-to-bristol-pride-to-light> - Martin Parr, renowned for his candid photographs of British life, has focused his latest exhibition on Bristol Pride, capturing the event's vibrant atmosphere. Parr has been attending Bristol Pride since the 1980s, photographing participants in rainbow colours and engaging placards. The exhibition is showcased at the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, with Parr set to promote the show this week. Daryn Carter, director of Bristol Pride, expressed excitement over the exhibition, highlighting the joy and celebration it brings to the community.
3. <https://www.bristol247.com/culture/art/exclusive-pride-images-from-martin-parr-bristol-pride-day-2019/> - In 2019, Martin Parr provided exclusive photographs of Bristol Pride Day, capturing the parade and festival on The Downs. These images document the inclusivity and unpredictability of one of the UK's largest Pride events. The photographs were featured on Bristol24/7, showcasing the vibrant celebrations of the LGBTQ+ community in Bristol. ([bristol247.com](https://www.bristol247.com/culture/art/exclusive-pride-images-from-martin-parr-bristol-pride-day-2019/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/product/martin-parr-studio-tour-bristol-gallery-weekend-2025/> - In March 2025, during the Bristol Gallery Weekend, Martin Parr led a studio tour, offering insights into his photographic process and showcasing his extensive photobook collection. The event was organised by the Martin Parr Foundation, providing attendees with a behind-the-scenes look at Parr's work and creative environment. ([martinparrfoundation.org](https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/product/martin-parr-studio-tour-bristol-gallery-weekend-2025/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/events/carnival-pop-up/> - In July 2019, the Martin Parr Foundation collaborated with Arnolfini and St Pauls Carnival to host 'Carnival Pop Up,' a pop-up studio and exhibition. Photographers, including Martin Parr, Matt Stuart, and Lua Ribeira, captured the festivities of St Pauls Carnival, with the resulting images exhibited at Arnolfini. The event allowed the public to engage with the photographic process and celebrate Bristol's African-Caribbean communities. ([martinparrfoundation.org](https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/events/carnival-pop-up/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.mutualart.com/Gallery/Martin-Parr-Foundation/A06525F5F90DE2A8/Articles> - The Martin Parr Foundation's 2023 exhibition featured 'A Year in the Life of Chew Stoke Village' by Martin Parr. This exhibition showcased Parr's exploration of rural life in the UK, highlighting his ability to capture the essence of everyday life through his distinctive photographic style. ([mutualart.com](https://www.mutualart.com/Gallery/Martin-Parr-Foundation/A06525F5F90DE2A8/Articles?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.rocketgallery.com/martinparr> - In June 2023, Rocket Gallery in London hosted 'Martin Parr | Sports & Spectatorship,' a solo exhibition by Martin Parr. The exhibition, running until March 2024, explored the relationship between sports and their spectators, featuring black and white photographs from the 1970s and iconic colour photographs from the last four decades. ([rocketgallery.com](https://www.rocketgallery.com/martinparr?utm_source=openai))