



Old school photographer advises student snappers to take art to another dimension

Charlie Phillips questions selfies and champions black and white film

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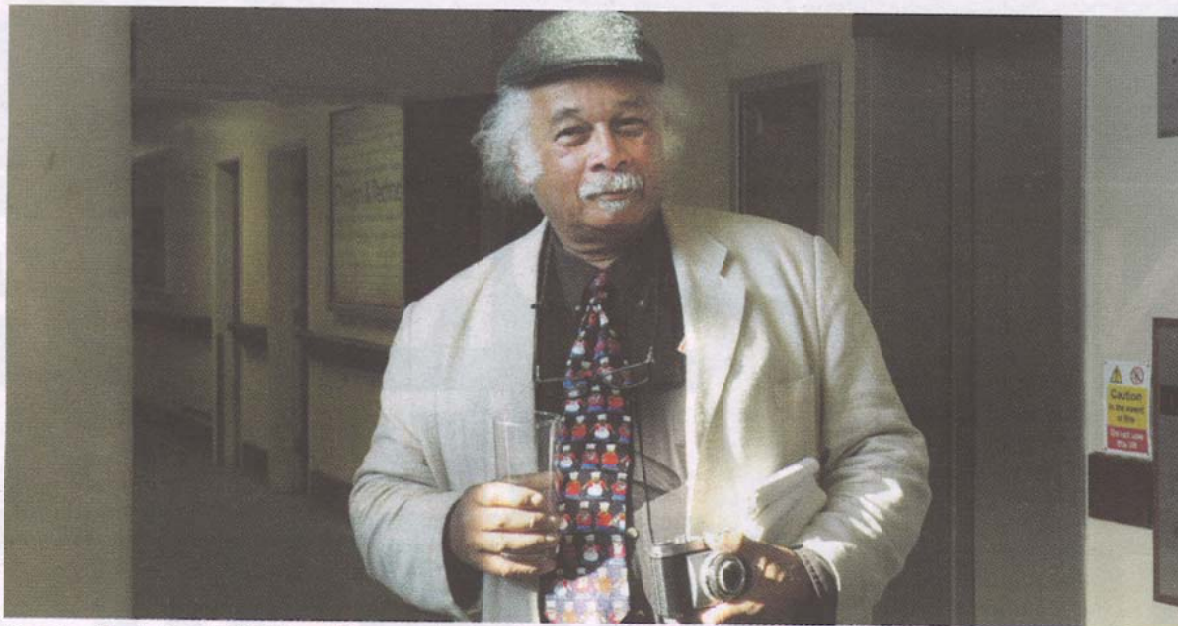
A celebrated London photographer told students at a Bethnal Green secondary school to take their art to "another dimension" during an exhibition of his work at a pop-up gallery.

Charlie Phillips, who is famous for his portraits of urban life in London over the last 50 years, last week addressed GCSE and A-Level photography pupils at Morpeth School's pop-up Portman Gallery.

Born in Jamaica in 1944, Mr Phillips moved to Notting Hill with his family in 1956 and began taking photos of neighbours and friends, mostly in the Caribbean community.

Given a Brownie

At the age of 11, he was given a Kodak Brownie camera by an American serviceman, developing pictures in the bath at home after his parents had



Back to school: Charlie Phillips talks to pupils about his photography career. Photograph: Morpeth School

gone to bed.

"I bought a book from Boots on how to take photos and learnt from my mistakes," Mr Phillips told the Morpeth pupils.

As he developed his skills he became known for his photographs of the African-Caribbean immigrant community in Notting Hill, using black and white film to capture the everyday life of the 'Windrush Generation'.

He is also known for his portraits of

celebrities including Muhammad Ali, Omar Sharif and Jimi Hendrix, with his work appearing in magazines from *Vogue* to *Harper's Bazaar*.

Some of his most iconic shots have been acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Last month *Time Out* named one of Mr Phillips's photos as one of the top 40 photos of London of all time.

The 1967 photo shows a young mixed-race couple at home in Notting Hill at a time when such couples would

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get "louts shouting 'nigger lover' from the windows of their cars as they



Photograph: Morpeth School

passed," Mr Phillips told *Time Out*.

Mr Phillips offered his advice to the budding photographers, saying: "If you want to take it further, take what you do to another dimension, be more creative, more artistic."

Admitting that he is "part of the old school", Mr Phillips promoted the use of black and white film over the "sometimes overdone" colour alternative and expressed his hesitance at accepting 'selfies' as art.

"It's early days and we have to see how long the trend lasts, but I'm not convinced it's an art form yet," he said.

Mr Phillip's work was displayed as part of the *Colliding Worlds* exhibition at Portman Gallery.

The exhibition explored the ability to express emotion and empathy through the medium of film and photography.