



NEW RELEASE 2025

Frederik Rüegger *I Am a Stranger in This Country*

Texts by Gerry Badger, Carl Blanckley, Frederik Rüegger

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Living Culture: In the Footsteps of the Travellers

The Irish and English Travellers often feel like "strangers in their own country" – a sentiment that the emerging photographer Frederik Rüegger experienced throughout his immersion in the Traveller community. In his first publication, *I Am a Stranger in This Country*, he documents their unique culture and way of life.

Over the course of two years, Rüegger traveled to the few places and events where the Traveller community can still keep their traditions and customs alive — the horse fairs. Their community has been subject of discrimination and social marginalization for a long time. Lately, Brexit has further worsened their societal standing and led to a general increase in prejudice against anything perceived as "different."

In recent years, the spread of misinformation and hate against the communities on social media has grown significantly. The political situation has intensified as well: some local authorities have prevented Travellers from continuing to use common land they have traditionally inhabited. The current political climate thus poses a serious threat to the freedom of this community.

From the text by **Frederik Rüegger**:

Mein Anliegen ist es, eine intime und authentische Darstellung der Traveller-Gemeinschaften zu liefern und Momente festzuhalten, die sowohl die Schönheit ihrer Kultur als auch die Herausforderungen aufzeigen, denen sie sich stellen müssen.

From the text by **Gerry Badger**:

His vibrant, complex images capture all the excitement and social interaction in the country towns where Travellers traditionally

meet—to display and trade horses—but also to engage in a wide range of cultural activities, including selling other goods and making music together. [...] He was inspired, as a boxing enthusiast, by the fact that heavyweight Tyson Fury is a Roma—created a wish to document a whole way of life that is under threat from both changes in contemporary society and prejudice in a post-Brexit nationalist Britain.

Frederik Rüegger, born in 1993 in Worms, Germany, spent several years working as a model in New York, where his photographic work increasingly took on a documentary approach. He now lives and works in Berlin.

His project *I Am a Stranger in This Country* was created as part of his graduation thesis at the Ostkreuz School of Photography. The photo series has received high recognition worldwide and was a finalist for the Taylor Wessing Photo Portrait Prize and the Sony World Photography Awards, both in 2024.

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