

NORTH: FASHIONING IDENTITY EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

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This publication accompanies the exhibition North: Fashioning Identity, at Somerset House, 8 November 2017 – 4 February 2018.

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Above and next, JASON EVANS *Untitled*, c.1995-2001 — Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield





PETER SAVILLE FACT 1, 1978 — Manchester
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Peter Saville Opportunity and Ambition

As told to Lou Stoppard

Smaller cities afford a broader understanding of the socio-cultural spectrum. If that awareness comes at a formative age, it tends to remain with you even if your own life circumstances may change, if you relocate to a capital city for instance. You're aware of a far wider spectrum of life when you are not so deeply embedded into a large metropolitan area, as you tend to see people from a broader spectrum of income. You have an awareness of people who work on the land, on in manufacturing and distribution services, or in more city-rooted professions — you see a cross section of life as part of your everyday experience. In the 20 minutes it used to take me to drive from home to the city centre of Manchester, I went from countryside, to affluent residential, to deprivation, to commercial fringe, to go out beyond the M27. It would be a commute from Reading to the West End.

Coming from a smaller city itself doesn't make you more creative but it makes you more aware of the cross section of social culture. That can be empowering — a keener, more ambitious sensibility is required. The ambition required for the perceived challenge is higher. There is a complacency amongst young people who are already at the epicentre of what is happening, whereas those who are on a journey to that place have a greater perception of the challenge ahead of them. You know that you will have to really work hard and raise your game in order to be accepted or gain any degree of recognition. It is the reverse of what children of privilege have, namely a sense of entitlement. Those brought up at the very heart of things can take it for granted. Those from the outside don't.

That's why individuals coming from outside sometimes have a meteoric rise — they come prepared to take on a challenge rather than presuming it will come to them. When you are born outside you know you will have to go to it. But if you are born and brought up in Chelsea you expect it to come to you. Malcolm Garrett and I talked about it often. How did two boys from



Photograph by [unreadable]



Photograph by [unreadable]



DAVID SIMS styling Thom Murphy, from *This is the One Called Heaven*
Arena Homme+, Spring/Summer 2012 — Liverpool

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