



## MASKED BALL PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION LAUNCHES

By Emma Foster, Community Newswire

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A photography exhibition featuring portraits of people in a variety of masks, from animal heads to cheese slices, launches on Thursday.

The Masked Ball exhibition features the work of three photographers: Laura Hensser, James Reid and Stuart Southwell, and will run until April 5 at the Viewfinder Gallery, Greenwich.

Laura takes self-portraits, wearing mundane objects that aim to represent her memories.

In one photo, cupcakes are stuck to her head and in another, cheese slices are pushed into every crevice of her face, to form a mask that resembles latex.

Stuart takes portraits of three generations, dressed for a variety of roles, from a general to a doctor, but wearing distorted, disturbing masks.

He aims to explore the way in which people are shaped by others around them, adopting or rejecting hobbies, careers, and ideals.

Stuart believes that, in contemporary western society, people are unable to accept their "true selves" but instead choose to constantly recraft their physical appearance to suit any given situation.

James aims to present a departure from the norm of masked balls, photographing people wearing formal clothing and animal heads - from oversize, colourful chicken heads to comic horse heads.

His series was shot in big brand boutique stores in Paris. He aims to explore whether buying branded clothing offers the chance to escape identification and to take on different personas.

James said: "Masked Ball brings together the exciting work of three different artists, creating an intriguing veneer through their imagery, which I believe makes you think - and think hard at that!"

Viewfinder curator Louise Forrester added: "Although each photographer is using masks in portraiture, the results in each series is markedly different.

"Some unsettling, some funny, there is something here for everyone."

To accompany the exhibition a pop-up photo booth will be brought to Viewfinder on March 27 and March 28 (12-4pm) and members of the public will be able to take their own self-portrait, either masked or unmasked, in the booth.

Photographs taken will be printed out on the spot for the sitters to take home and included in a slideshow of images projected in the gallery all weekend.

The Viewfinder Photography Gallery showcases the work of emerging and established photographers. The gallery is at Linear House, Peyton Place, London SE10 8RS. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm and on weekends from noon to 4pm. Admission is free. For more information visit [www.viewfinder.org.uk](http://www.viewfinder.org.uk).