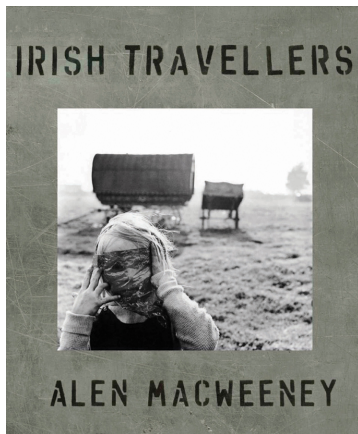


# *Irish Travellers Tinkers No More*

Alen MacWeeney

**Photographer Alen MacWeeney publishes the first book to capture the faces, music and tales of Ireland's legendary Travellers.**



“Without meaning to, MacWeeney became one of the foremost amateur anthropologists of Traveller culture.”

-*Smithsonian*, July 2007

“The pictures he took there have the intensity and poignancy of rediscovered love letters.”

-*The New Yorker*, September 2007

“Alen MacWeeney’s photographs stand comparison with Edward Curtis’s masterly recuperation of the American Indian, and I can think of no higher praise than that.”

- **John Banville, 2005 Man Booker prizewinner for *The Sea***

They are a subject of Yeats’s poetry. They are said to have forged the nails for Christ’s crucifixion, and been cursed by God to wander the world until Judgment Day. Once called Tinkers and now known by their preferred designation of Travellers. Distrustful of “settled” people, endangered by restrictions on their movements, subject for centuries to rumor and legend, they have long defied understanding.

They are the Travellers, Ireland’s indigenous nomads.

In *Irish Travellers, Tinkers No More* (paperback published by Andrew Ward Fine Art Photographs, CA.) renowned portraitist Alen MacWeeney explores deeply these Celtic rovers whose way of life is now on the verge of extinction.

Intending to take a single image of a Traveller for a 1965 photo essay on Yeats, over the next six years MacWeeney immersed himself in this hidden society on the move. After countless days and nights taking pictures and recording the songs and folklore that give meaning to their itinerant existence, the result is a breathtaking revelation of these mysterious, gypsy-like phantoms immemorially haunting the Irish landscape.

The photographs – of dirty faces aged before their time, children playing in rubble, impromptu shanty towns on the roadside, and musicians playing the soundtrack to a vanishing life – are rich in feeling, history, and the heightened awareness that comes from sheer survival. Bleak, tender, heroic, the pictures are rich with MacWeeney’s signature ability to use light, subject matter, and unflinching honesty to raise a photograph to the level of universal metaphor.

With the accompanying music download recorded by the photographer nearly fifty years ago, and Traveller stories transcribed for this book by Irish folklore scholar Bairbre Ni Fhloinn, *Irish Travellers, Tinkers No More* is an anthropological tour de force – authoritative, groundbreaking, and beautiful. MacWeeney’s penetrating style leads us ultimately not only to an understanding of who these people are, but a discovery of the Traveller in all of us.

Currently part of the permanent collections of MoMA, the Met, the Art Institute of Chicago, and many others in the U.S. and Europe, and the subject of a 2000 BBC / RTE feature-length documentary Alen MacWeeney’s Traveller series is presented for the first time in a paperback reprint of the celebrated 2007 hardback edition.

Alen MacWeeney’s photographs have appeared in magazines such as *Esquire*, *GQ*, the *New York Times Magazine* and the *New Yorker*. His books include *Irish Walls*, *Bloomsbury Reflections*, and *The Home of the Surrealists*.

Published By Andrew Ward Fine Art Photographs, Los Angeles, California & distributed in Ireland & UK by Thames & Hudson

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