

London: Portrait Of A City

By: Ralph Greco

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London: Portrait of a City
By Reuel Golden
(Taschen)

Following up their truly spectacular read on a major city dear to my heart, their *New York: Portrait Of A City* (see my review [here](#)), Taschen offers another Reuel Golden cityscape, *London: Portrait Of A City*. With captions penned by the always succinct Barry Miles, the five chapters here span specific decades: 1837-1901 "The Monster City," 1902-1938 "Modern Times," 1939-1959-as you'd expect-"Consequences of The War," "The Party and the Morning After," and 1960 to early 80s and 1982-to Present "Day New Perspectives." As always with a Taschen book there is lots of information, delivered in three languages, but it is the photographs that

make these beautiful big tomes special.

There's lots of buildings, some squalor, and [arresting pictures](#) of the early underground and a filled-to-the-rafters Haymarket Theatre in The Monster City section; it's not hard to feel this amazing city on-the-run and rise in Modern Times as we see cars taking over and there's a great color [photo](#) of the iconic "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese," an establishment I have actually been to!

Sleeping Londoners litter a tube station, there's devastation but also business as usual with a woman stepping over rubble to mail a letter and a barber painting his sign, in the post-war 3rd section but that infamous round Coke sign in Piccadilly Circus, [shots](#) of The Beatles and The Stones, and that [sexy](#) infamous [picture](#) of Christine Keeler sparks the swinging London scene in "The Party and the Morning After" (I especially love the candid [shot](#) of Stanley Kubrick at [work](#) on a *Clockwork Orange* included here).

The last section opens with a startling inside/outside shot of the Great Court circular reading room of the British Museum and flows into modern London, not the very most interesting section of the book I'm afraid, but one that does complete the history of this wonderful hardcover.