

FOREWORD
DAN SAUL PILGRIM

Some twenty years ago, the terms 'speciality coffee'¹ and 'barista training' were barely used and their concepts misunderstood. The SCAE (Speciality Coffee Association of Europe) was formed in 1998 and initiated the WBC (World Barista Championships) two years later. Around the same time, as coffee brands began to emerge — the likes of SEATTLE COFFEE COMPANY (now STARBUCKS), CAFFÈ NERO and COFFEE REPUBLIC — so too did the integrality of barista training. Prior to the WBC, the coffee shop and the competition (the latter with its technical focus towards making drinks) were mutually exclusive.

There is an inherent link to be drawn between the landscapes of coffee and in particular the north of England, ones that go unheard or at least undervalued. We only need look at previous winners of the WBC: MATT SMITH of COFFEE REVOLUTION, Sheffield, ranked 5th in the second semi-final, and SIMON ROBERTSON of Leoni, Malton, ranked 20th overall in the first and third year of the competition, respectively. Even the ubiquitous JAMES HOFFMAN, the first winner from the south of England in 2006, received his training from COOPER'S (headed by DAVID COOPER and JOHN SKINNER) who started the first barista training company in Huddersfield. (It cannot go ignored that La Spaziale, maker of espresso machines, has its UK base in Chesterfield either.)

Brands and also latte art (pioneered by the flat white) aided in making coffee contemporary. In 2002, MONMOUTH, London, was arguably the first coffee shop in the country to use single origin² espresso, but TINDERBOX, Manchester, was not far behind either. In fact, the first few coffee shops influenced by the 'third wave'³ include COFFEE REVOLUTION of Sheffield and OPPOSITE (Victoria Quarter) in Leeds. It should come as no surprise that LOU HENRY, founder of OPPOSITE was a finalist herself in WBC ten years ago.

Speciality coffee was (and still is) only a minor part of the industry

but the growth was starting to be felt. In 2010, NORTH TEA POWER opened in Manchester. The following year DAVE OLEJNIK who had previously worked for LOU HENRY at OPPOSITE and DARK WOODS, Huddersfield, opened LAYNES in Leeds. Not long after, JON PERRY opened TAMPER in Sheffield and then in 2013 opened a second (Sellers Wheel) that showed a desire to evolve the coffee shop into a space that entertains not only great coffee but great food and alcohol as well. It was but three years ago that coffee shops of the modern day started to diversify and blurred the lines of what it means to be one.

It is this break in uniformity which makes part of the reason why this book should be seen to be produced. All photographs contained were taken between October 29, 2015 and April 4, 2016 across seven cities (and one town) in the north of England. The twenty-three spaces are ordered by geography (beginning from the north-west in Liverpool and finishing on the north-east coast in Hull) and are by no means a comprehensive or exhaustive list, or even the *crème de la crème*, but a cross-section, largely fuelled by a desire to document both the functional and visual variety while the distinguished lines are still visible.

On that personal level, you will find twelve essays that expand on and explore themes relating to coffee and the north that, I believe for both authors and their texts, have found a rare and organic home in the context of the publication. From one person's telling of the psychostimulant effects of coffee to another's nostalgic recalling of a particular space and the surrounding social experiences, each essay is unique but distinctive of the north and one or more of the chosen places. My own narrative was made clear during the mission statement for the funding of this project and would be wasted here.⁴

Coffee shops are by no means new phenomena but their 'shape' and purpose is dictated by their present users. Simply, coffee shops are

a place created for people by people to either start, break from or finish their day, with the promise of great food and drink, in the company of others or in solitude. When we think about the north of England, we should think about coffee shops and their contribution towards defining these cities we live in and how they often help to reinvent neighbourhoods and relations. This is yet another testament for the diversification of coffee, its people and its culture.

As this book suggests, the drink is only part of it. This is **COFFEE SHOP: NORTH**, a book that serves to document, explore and showcase the independent coffee scene in north England.

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1 First used in 1974 by ERNA KNUTSEN in an issue of *Tea & Coffee Trade Journal* to describe beans of the best flavour which are produced in special microclimates.

2 Coffee grown within a single known geographic origin. Sometimes this is a single farm, or a specific collection of beans from a single country.

3 A movement to produce high-quality coffee and consider coffee as an artisanal foodstuff, like wine, rather than a commodity.

4 Kickstarter campaign took place September 1 – October 1, 2015. [kickstarter.com/projects/1400488045/coffee-shop-north](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1400488045/coffee-shop-north)