



FAMILY.

**South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue's
Black History Month Exhibition**



**South Yorkshire
FIRE & RESCUE**



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WHAT IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH?

Black History Month has been marked in the UK for more than 30 years. It takes place during the month of October.

It happens because so often in the past, the contributions made by black people to the community were ignored or played down. This is because black people weren't treated the same way as other people because of the colour of their skin.

Black History Month aims to address this unfairness, by celebrating the achievements and contributions of the black community to British life over the years.

WHAT'S IT GOT TO DO WITH THE FIRE SERVICE?

Black people have served within the UK fire and rescue service for many years.

However, black and minority ethnic people continue to be underrepresented within the fire service- both in South Yorkshire and across the country. In fact, just 4% of firefighters are of BAME origin.

To be the very best at what we do as a public service, we think we need to become truly representative of the communities we serve- not just in terms of race and ethnicity, but other things like gender and sexuality as well.

Part of achieving this is about celebrating the contribution of a diverse range of people to our work, in the hope it inspires others to consider a role in the fire and rescue service. This exhibition is part of that.

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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition features photographs of members of South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue who each serve local people in different ways.

The portraits feature an incredibly diverse range of people in more ways than meets the eye- from operational firefighters to support staff, from serving to retired employees, from long serving staff to newer starters.



Black History Month Exhibition

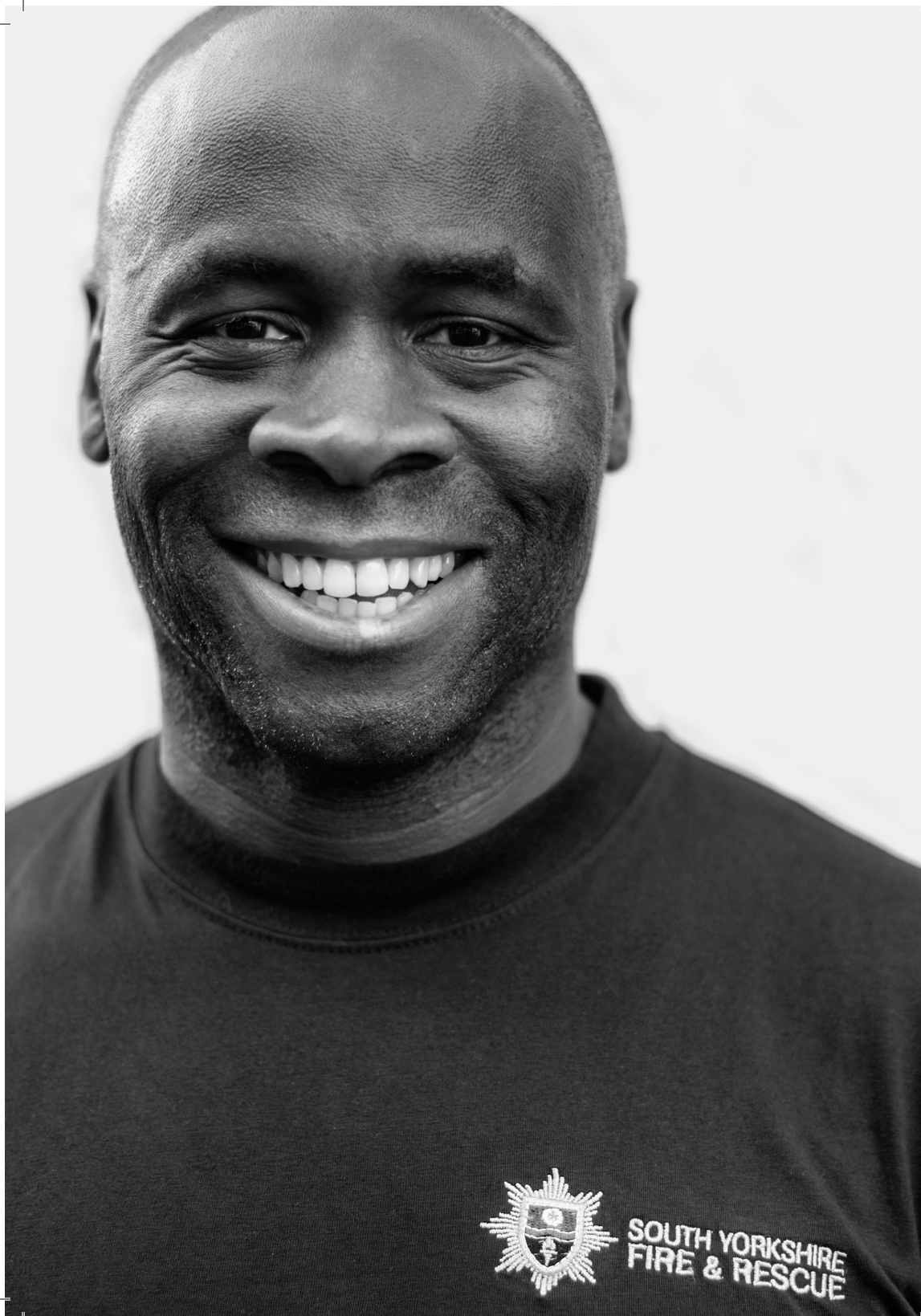
ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

All of the photographs which make up this exhibition have been taken by Orestes S Rix.

As well as working in the fire service's finance team, Orestes is a photographer specialising in creative portraits, stunning landscapes and unusual interiors.

He lives and works in Sheffield and his work has previously featured in fine art photography exhibitions in Sheffield.

To see more of his work, visit www.facebook.com/OSRphotography/



RICHARD.

I'm a firefighter at Parkway fire station in Sheffield, having first joined the service in 1996. I had wanted to be a firefighter from the age of 11. It's a great honour to serve people in the local community.

I was born at Nether Edge Hospital in Sheffield. My parents came to England from Jamaica in the 1960s.

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MERYAN.

I joined South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue as a firefighter in 2018, having looked online how to apply. I registered my interest and went to a 'have a go day'. I then applied when the process was open and was lucky enough to be successful.

My father's side of the family is Jamaican and my mother's side is Scottish. I have been brought up with strong links to my culture and to always remember my roots.





HELEN.

I'm an administrator within the service's technical services team. This is an important function, because it oversees the operational equipment which firefighters use at emergency incidents. I joined the team in 2006, having first got a job with the service in 1998 as part of the corporate administration team.

I consider myself Black British, but my family roots are from Barbados in the West Indies. My parents came to Sheffield in the mid-1950s to start a new life and gain employment.

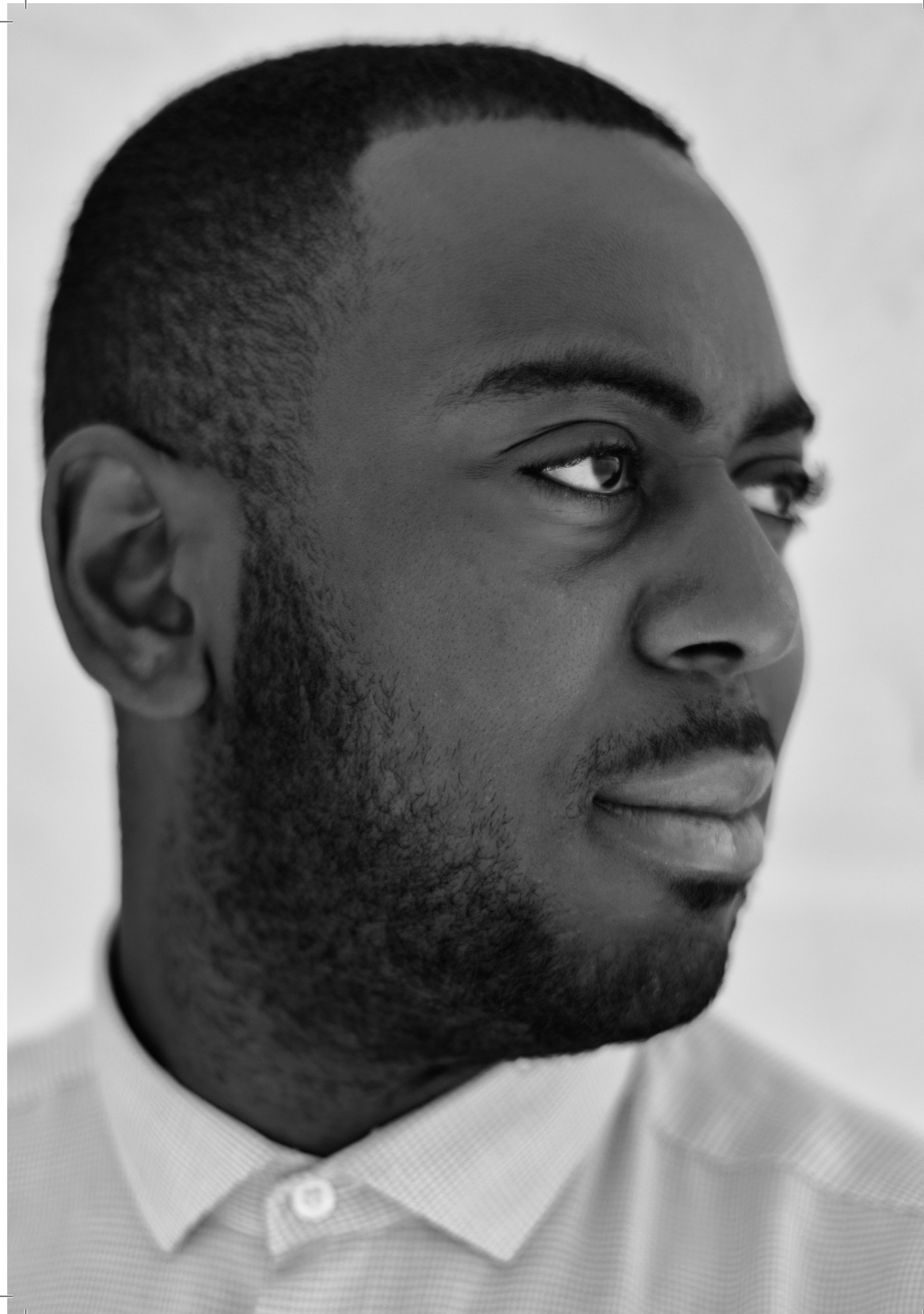
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LINTON.

Joining the fire service was a lifelong ambition of mine. On 18 Feb 1992 I was completing an assignment for my course at Sheffield Polytechnic University and needed to take a break. I picked up the Sheffield Gazette newspaper and there was an advertisement for recruitment to the fire service. I decided to apply there and then and I was successful.

I am a firefighter and each day there is something to look forward to. This job is fulfilling because you can save lives, but there are also times that it is ultimately physically, mentally and emotionally tiring.





HENRY.

I joined the fire service only recently as a Human Resources Administrator, via a recruitment agency.

My parents are originally from Accra in Ghana and I come from a religious background.

Both of my grandmothers are considered queens in Ghana, so you could say I am descended from Royalty!

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NEIL.

I've worked for the fire service for 21 years- studying for a Business & Administration NVQ and working as a recruitment clerk. Two years later I moved to fleet management, maintaining the records and logistics for all fire service vehicles. After a restructure, I then moved into ICT, where I have been promoted to the post of ICT Technician. This means I service all the computers used across the organisation.

I grew up in Burngreave, Sheffield. My grandad came over from Jamaica during the Windrush era and settled in the city, working as a drayman. My dad worked in the transport industry, while my mum followed her family tradition as a nurse at Weston Park Hospital.





GEMMA.

I am an e-learning coordinator, meaning I oversee the online training which helps to keep our staff competent and safe in their roles. Since joining the fire service, I've found it to be one of the best employers I have worked with.

I am proudly of Jamaican descent and owe my family everything I have achieved.

I am a strong advocate of women's BAME and disability rights, care about my community and am passionate about accessibility to learning.

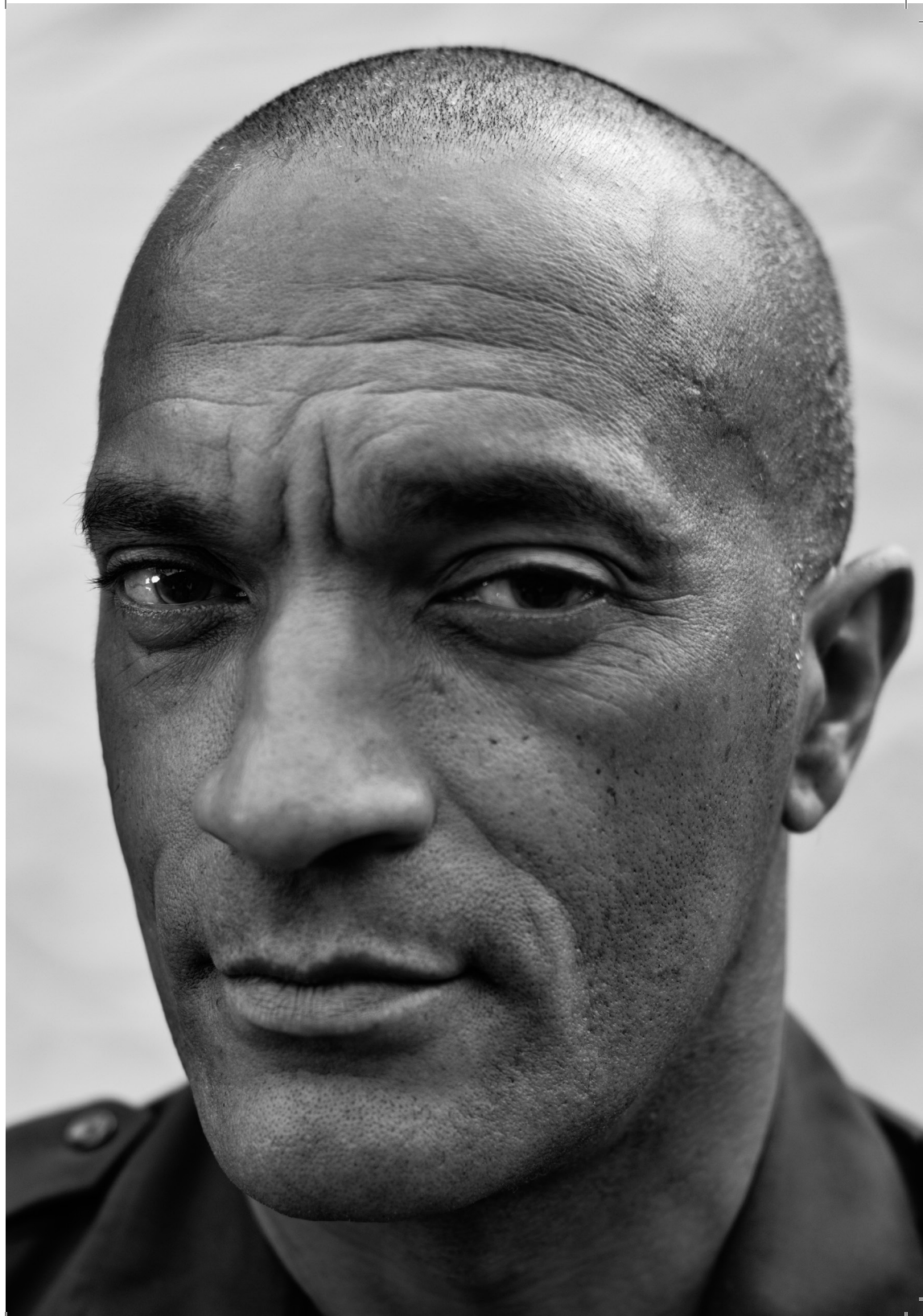
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KEVIN.

I am a firefighter, currently serving at Parkway fire station in Sheffield.

I joined the fire service in 1998, having been a Royal Marine for 10 years. Before that, I was a hairdresser, winning junior hair stylist of the year in 1987.

My dad was Jamaican and my mother was of English, Scottish and Irish descent.





AAYON.

I'm a firefighter on blue watch at Central fire station in Sheffield.

I've always wanted to help people and one day I got invited to South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue's 'have a go day', having registered my interest in recruitment on the fire service website.

Once I tried it I knew this was what I wanted to do and I've never looked back.

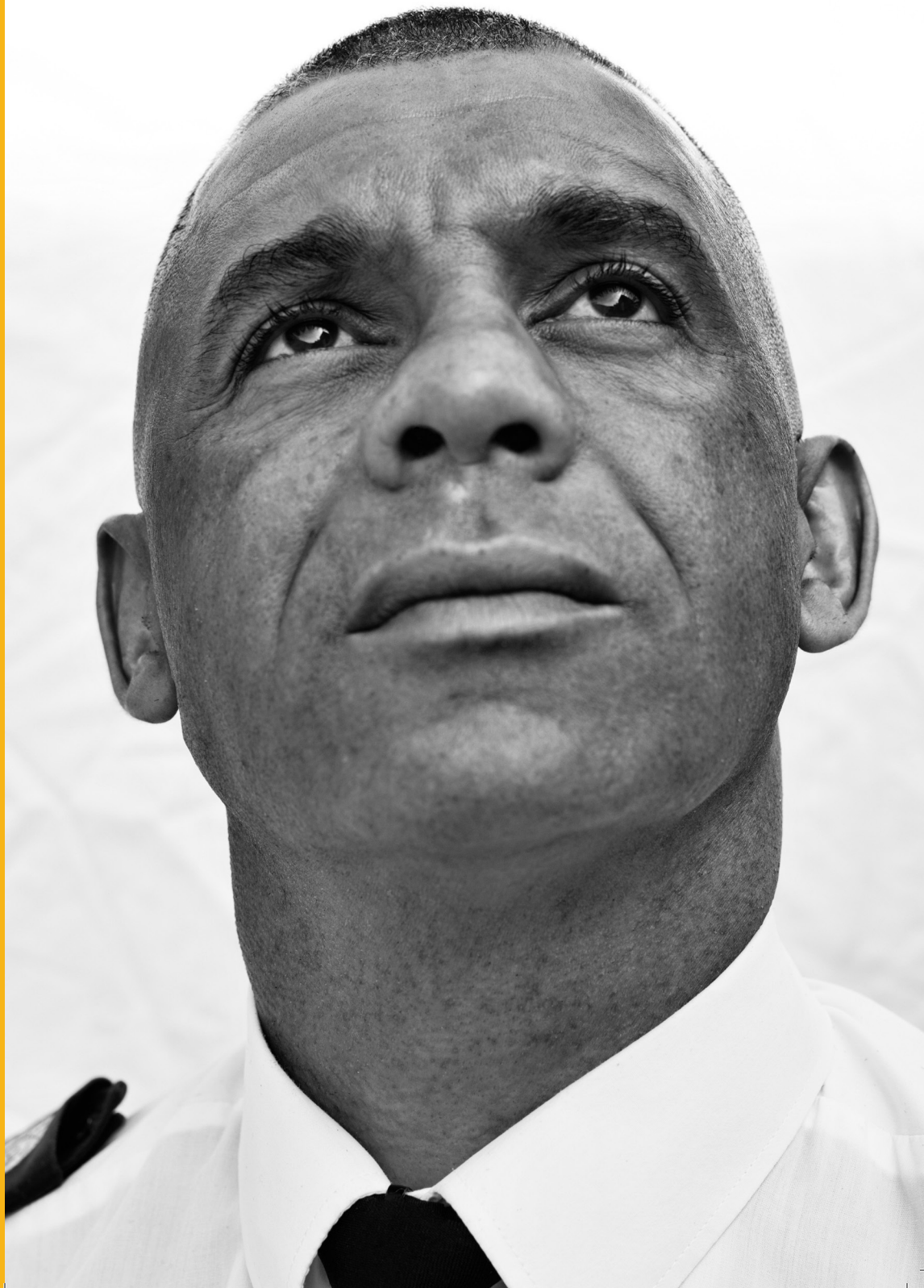
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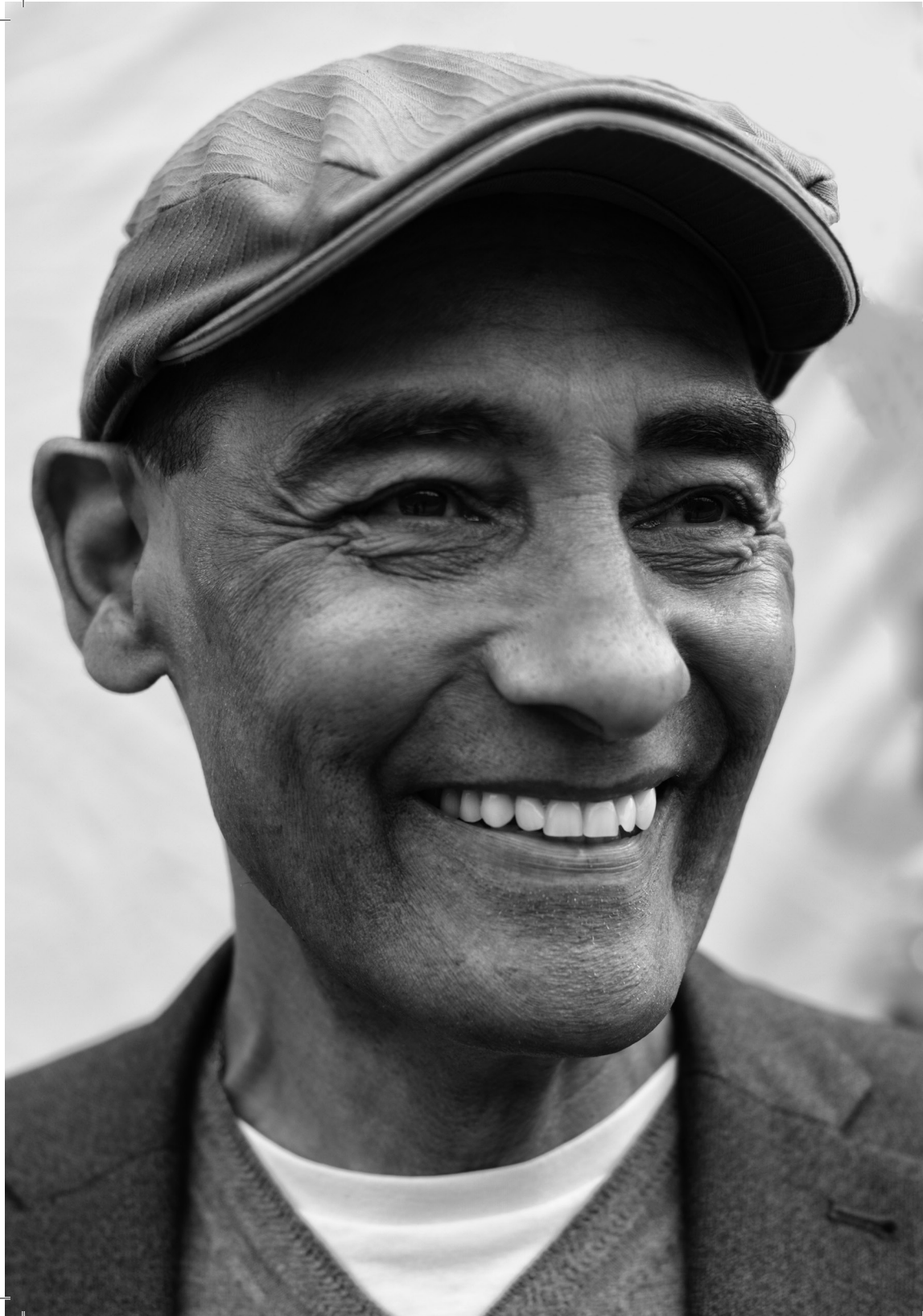
DELROY.

I was looking for a job as a designer after spending some time away from the print industry, working in construction. I saw an advert for firefighters in the job centre and decided to give it a try. It took around six years and three applications before I was successfully appointed on a trainee course.

Twenty three years later, I am station manager at Elm Lane fire station in Sheffield.

My father came to the UK in the early 1960s from Jamaica and served three years National Service in the British Army, where he achieved the rank of Corporal. My Jamaican heritage comes from Browns Town, St Anns in Jamaica.





STEVE.

I joined the fire service in 1978, rising to the rank of Station Manager before retiring in December 2005.

I'd previously worked in Germany and served in the Royal Air Force before joining the service.

My dad was Nigerian and my mother French.

JOIN THE FIRE SERVICE

If you are enthusiastic about serving your local community, and working together as part of a positive team, then a career in the fire and rescue service could be for you.

To register your interest, visit www.syfire.gov.uk.



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