

JEREMY DELLER BATTLE OF ORGREAVE

2001-



The memory of labor clashes in working-class neighborhoods often lives on in family folklore and community history. But the 1984 National Union of Mineworkers' strike in South Yorkshire's Orgreave still felt palpable and present to residents of this small village seventeen years later as they gathered for a re-enactment organized by British artist Jeremy Deller. Commissioned by the London-based arts organization Artangel and public television broadcaster Channel 4, Deller enlisted historical re-enactment expert Howard Giles to orchestrate the filmed production. One third of the more than 800 participants were former miners and police officers, many of whom had been involved in the original strike.

Once again, the miners gathered at the local coking plant, then marched to a nearby field when the police arrived. Deller and Giles took pains to match the intensity of the '84 strike, which erupt-

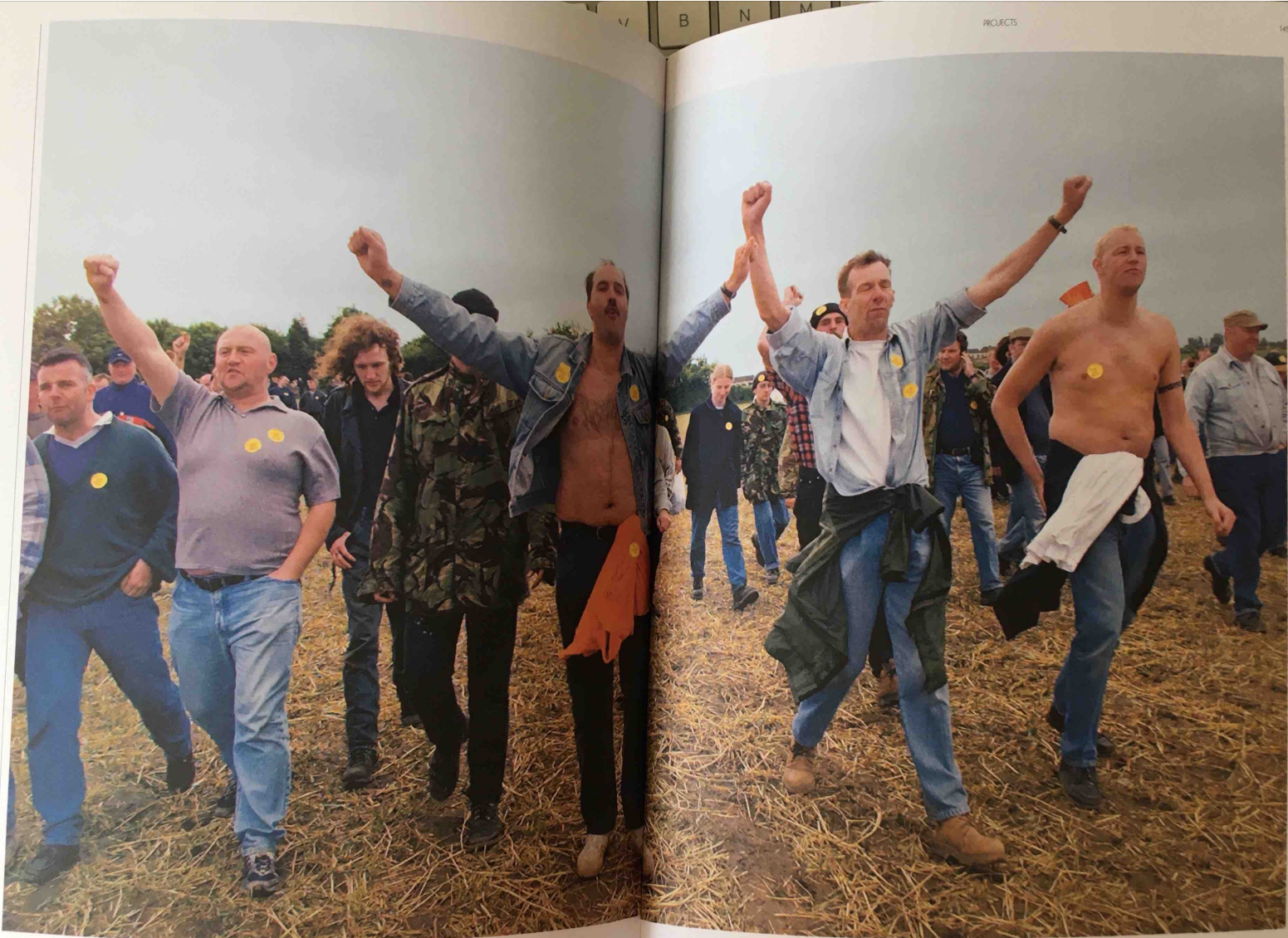
ed into violence, particularly on the part of law enforcement. In preparation for the re-enactment, the artist spent months researching the strike—pouring over court testimonies, oral accounts, contemporary newspaper reports and film footage—in order to reconstruct events as accurately as possible.

London-based Deller acts as curator, producer, and director in his projects, which revolve around his engagement with perceptions and memories. In 2009, he organized *It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq*, a collaborative commission of Creative Time, the New Museum and 3M, that culminated in a cross-country road trip and series of conversations about the Iraq War at public sites. In tow was the ultimate conversation starter: a car destroyed in a bombing on Al-Mutanabbi Street, Baghdad in March 2007.

Above: More than 800 people—many of them former miners and police—participated in Deller's re-enactment of 1984's Battle of Orgreave (Photograph by Martin Jenkinson, Courtesy Artangel).



Above: Re-enactors play the role of strikers dodging an unprovoked charge from the mounted police (Photograph by Martin Jenkinson. Courtesy: [unclear])



Above: Strikers from the re-enactment sport yellow badges that identify them as members of the National Union of Mineworkers. (Photograph by Martin Jenkinson, Courtesy Artangel)