
BRINK

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BRINK

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Foreword

Brink is a collection of emerging photographers and artists who have risen to the challenges of a sophisticated collective publication. Part showcase, part statement, this book offers various responses to the objectives of the Photographic Art programme at The University of Wales, Newport, whilst also clearly offering a coherent and curated overview. The participants were proactive in their choice of images and the way in which these are displayed across the pages to best effect. The layout of their work reflects a diversity of approaches and strategies inherent within contemporary photographic practice.

The Photographic Art programme has been conceived by a desire to develop an undergraduate experience that concerns itself with images that originate from a position somewhere between traditional fine art practice and a more stoic documentary position – both perspectives that Newport has been historically synonymous with.

It would be true to say that this 'middle ground' is a loose definition of the area occupied by contemporary photographic practice and it is this territory, particularly, that the programme endeavours to engage with.

Trans-disciplinary in nature, the programme and its cohort concern themselves with photography 'now' and strive to produce outcomes relevant to the medium as it currently defines itself.

The programme is nothing if not eclectic, genuinely allowing its students an opportunity to develop their own visual language within this wider context.

Central to this publication is a portion of a transcript from a collective discussion held recently at the University that concerned itself with positioning a definition of contemporary practice within a national, international and institutional context. What resulted is both stimulating and of value.

Additionally there is an illuminating text by Professor Mark Durden, which defines further these notions and acts as a fitting afterword for the publication itself.

Geraint Cunnick
The University of Wales, Newport, May 2008



Sam Mason
Human Behaviour









Lauren Jury
Left: Untitled 1

Right: Untitled 2









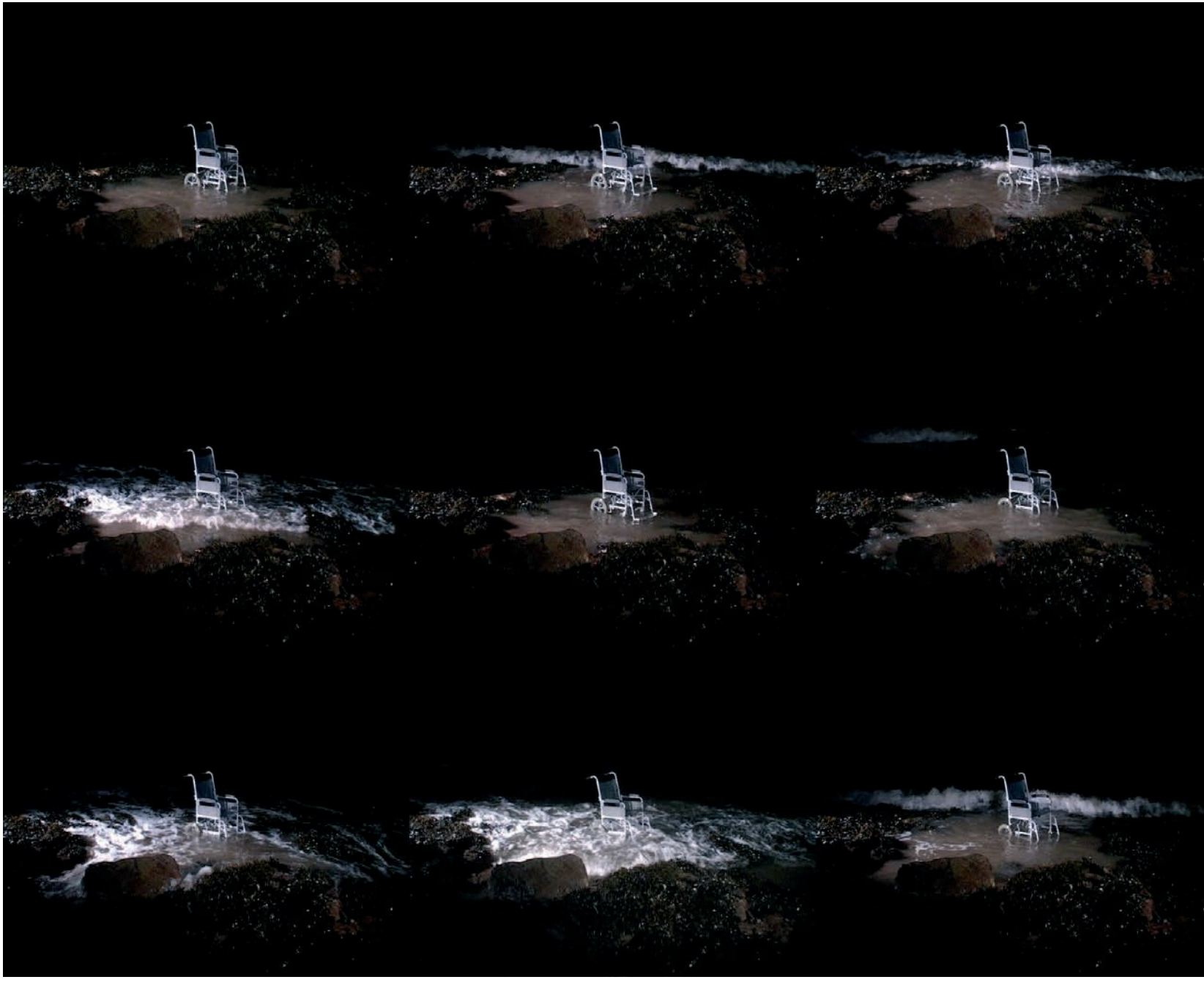
Top left: Untitled 3
Middle left: Untitled 4
Bottom right: Untitled 5



Right: Untitled 6



Oliver Atwell
Untitled (Body)
Digital video, colour, sound, 10 mins



Untitled (Wheelchair)
Digital video, colour, sound, 10 mins



Untitled (Balloons)
Digital video, colour, sound, 10 mins



Untitled (Shirt)
Digital video, colour, sound, 10 mins

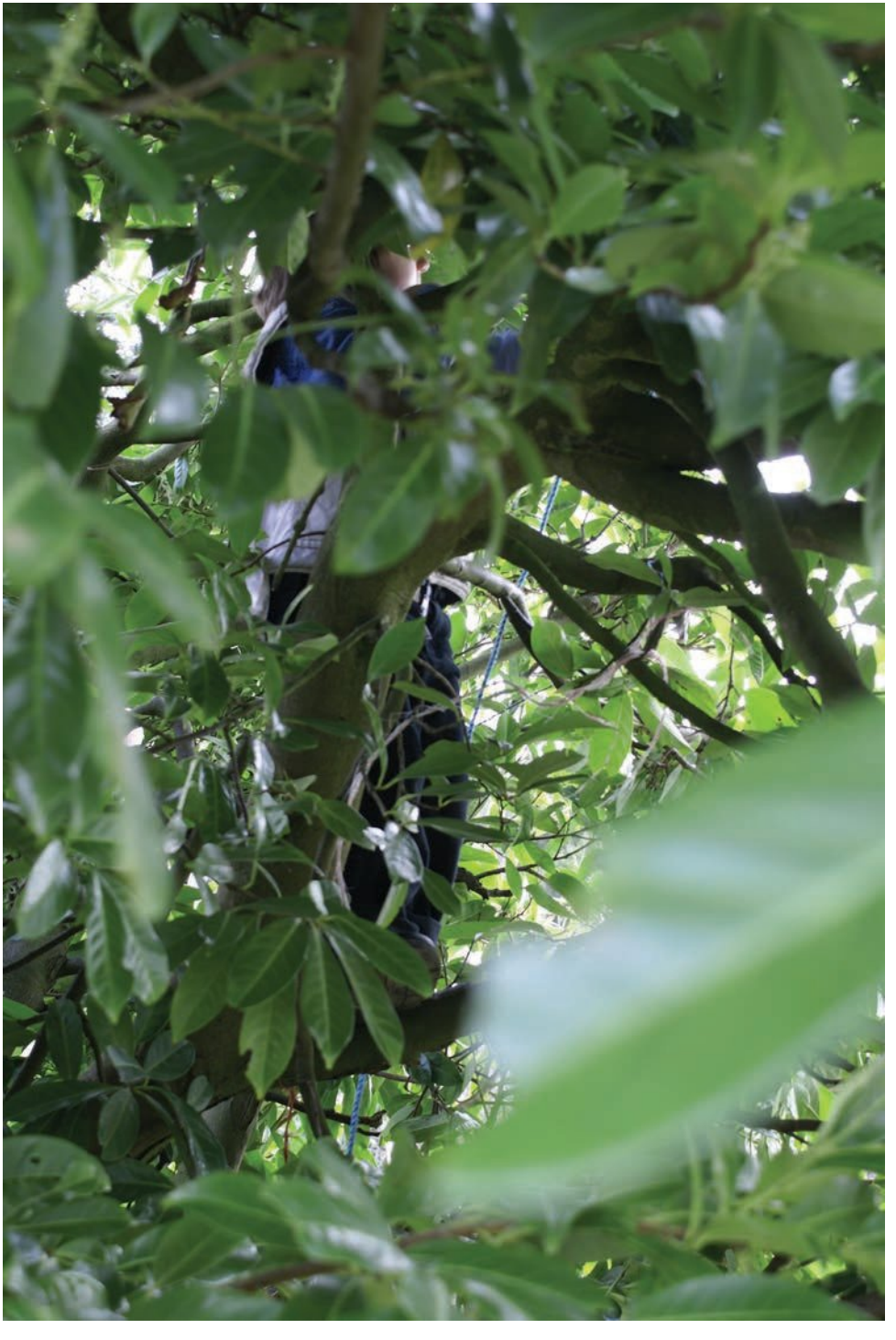




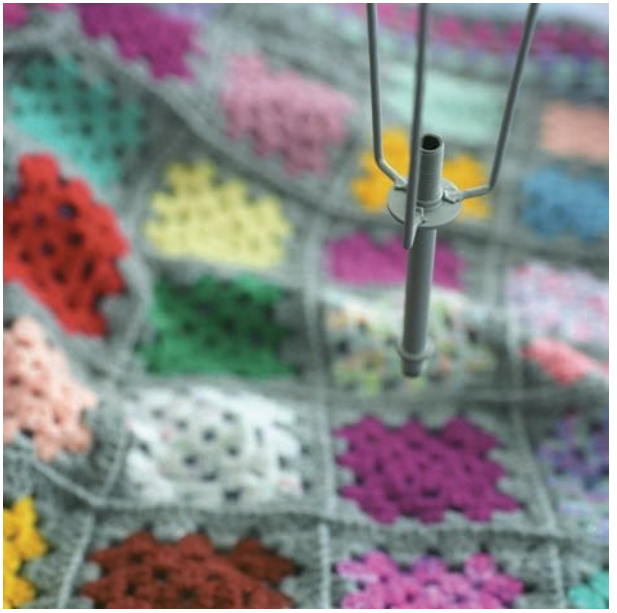
Holly Wilson
Left: Untitled 1
Right: Untitled 2



Untitled 3



Untitled 4

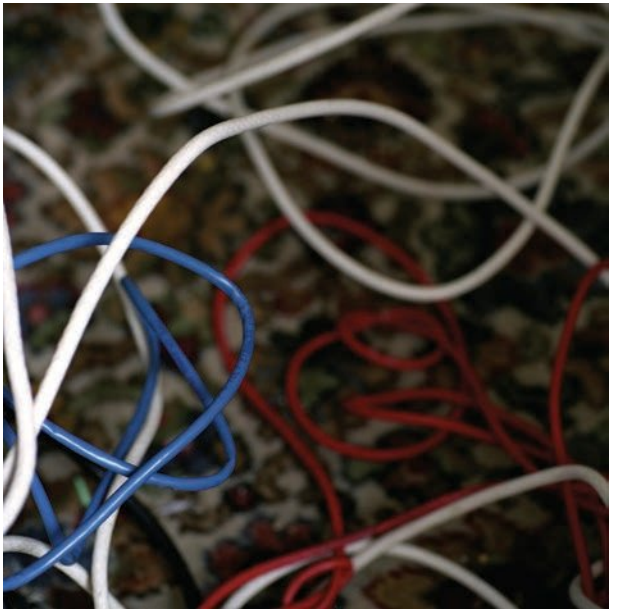


Kirsty Donaldson
Makeshift Tightrope



Twenty-Four Inches







Shay Evans
Left: Untitled 1

Right: Untitled 2





Left: Untitled 3

Right: Untitled 4





Gemma Gaskins
Coffee Cups



Custard Tart



Stilton







Tessa Goodfellow
Transition







Jasmine Ebede



Biffa


LA PHOTOGRAPHIE





ST. CLEMENT'S FAMILY CENTRE



Miele



NO PARKING



TILES
TILES
TILES
Top-Up Your Mobile Here
Stratfield Brake Sports Ground
FREE PARKING



"In the heat of the investigative pursuit, the shortest distance between two points is not necessarily a straight line"

D. COOPER,

Over the hill means entering the blackout. Walking a treacherous path past anonymous abandoned look-outs encompassed by dense forestry not allocating a single glimpse of what could be lurking inside the constructions mere yards from the path.

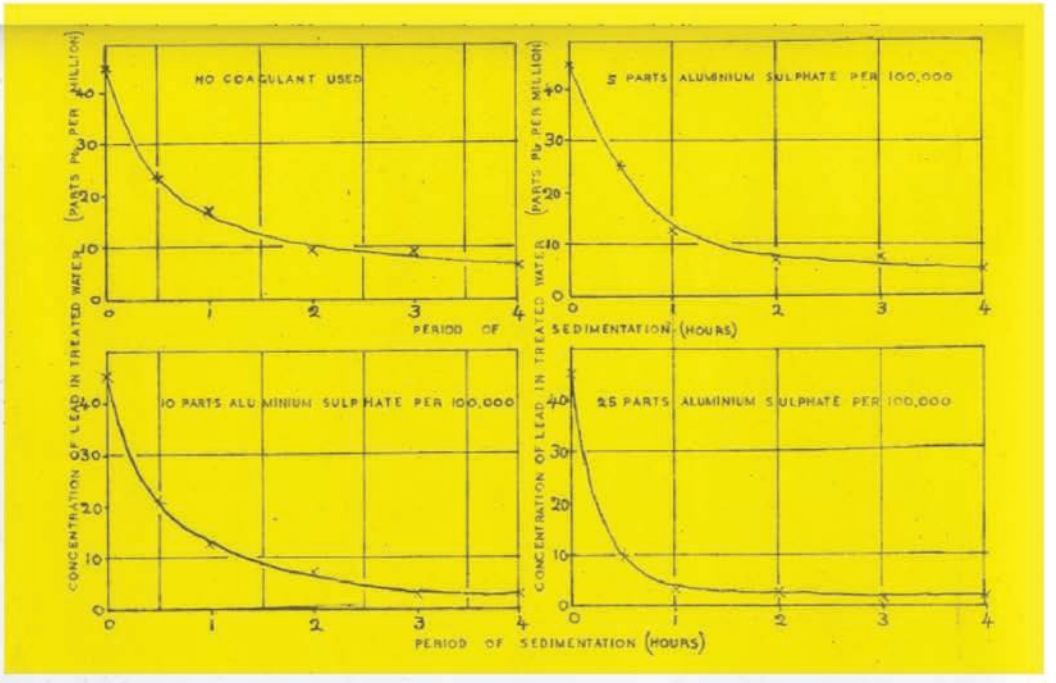
Far away means easy. A straight line with a dip in the middle and one right turn. A comfortably wide road lined with rows of identical houses interspersed with a shop, a pub, and about six bus stops. Even though it's night, the residential glow allows the ability to count each piece of chewing gum hurried past on the pavement floor. Two hundred and sixty three on the last count. But this comfort comes at a price, clean shoes and an extra thirty minutes on my journey.

How many kids do you see with clean shoes? I take the first right off the top of the industrial estate and I walk between the four boulders that separate the estate from the glimmering clay like surface that somehow once constituted a road. Immediately I become an inch or two shorter, my shoes are sunk and I am a kid again. My feet now seem eternally bound to the earth I once exuberantly trounced from one adventure to the next.

Eternity temporarily expires and I experience a moment of lucid weightlessness before the magnetic surface beneath me takes its hold again. It must've been the rain this afternoon. I start walking quicker, lighter, the blistering winds shepherd me. I don't care about falling now. I shall be filthy if I do, but the clay will take it's grasp and hold me within its arms before assisting my efforts with its lubricated face, sending me an extra five metres without taking a step. Sometimes I think the ground is alive, our affinity ensures a seamless passage. At the top of the hill my image gets swallowed by the arch of the trees and I see the slight outline of the lookout to my right. Underneath the roof there's a small rectangle where the blackness has been swallowed up by the window looking into the building. It's a colourless image I've never seen before, one that I can't resist. For a short time, the fear preceding a decision ensures that the ground temporarily regains it's magnetic charge, before I am willed forward by a gust of wind that I allow to fill my lungs. I take the first step and feel nothing except the demand to know what lays beyond the darkness.

Ben Absalom & Sam Bardsley
Extracts from the book '8x's'







Workers' Travel Permit.

148

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Emily Paterson
Biophilia 1





Biophilia 3



Biophilia 4

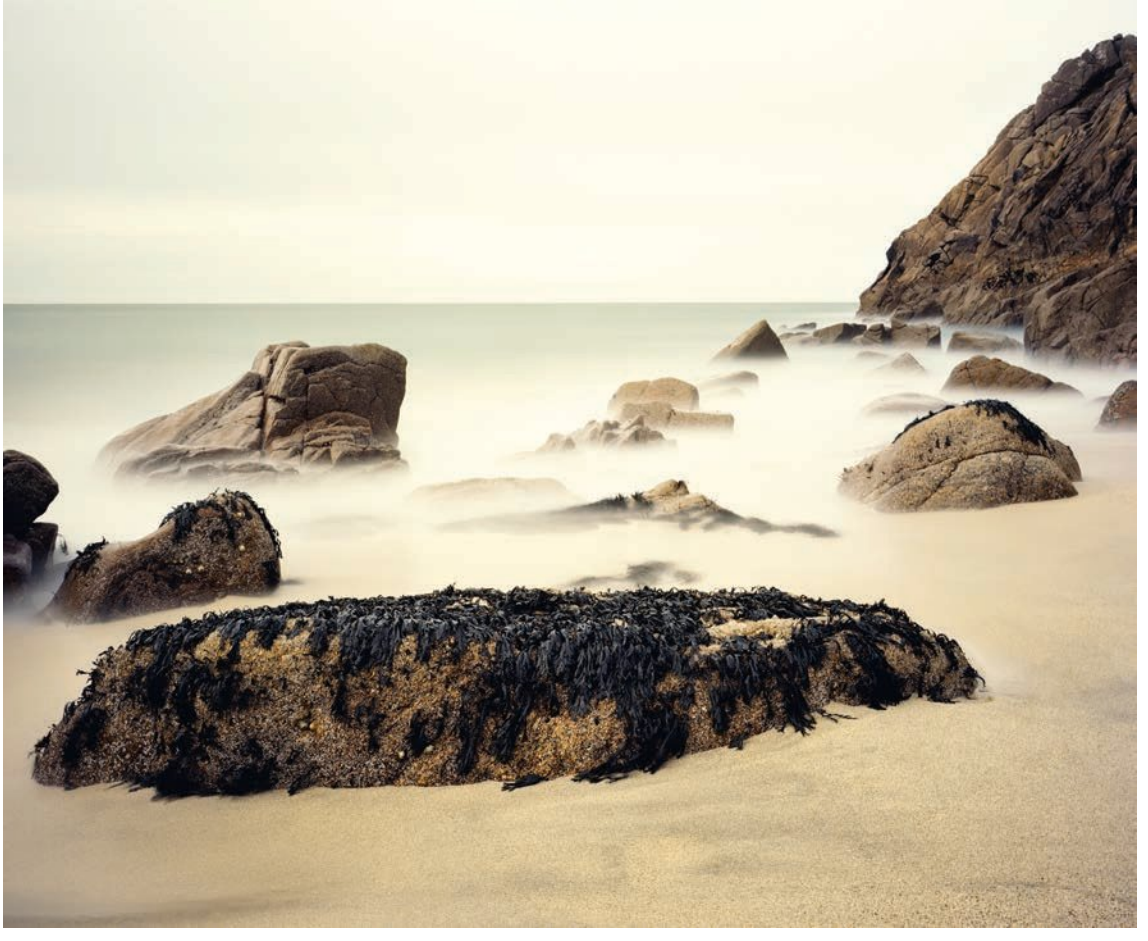


Carly Seller
Left: male, seventy-six

Right: male, thirty







Left: male, fifty

Right: male, four



Clemmie Robinson
Left: Babcia's House #1



Right: Babcia's House #2



Left: Babcia's House #3



Right: Babcia's House #4



Jessica Thompson
‘Rapt in nameless reverie’























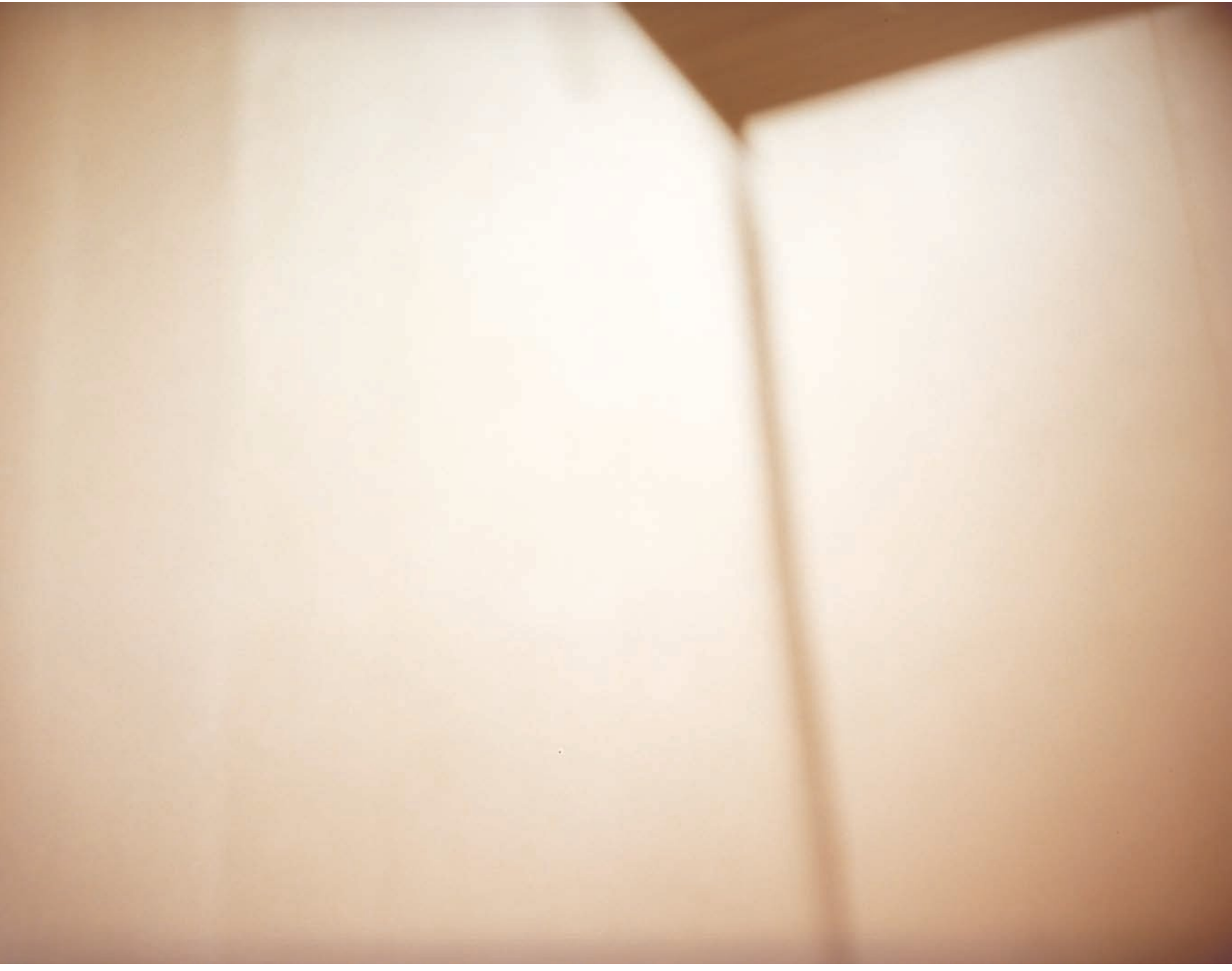

Myra Eagles
Tarot



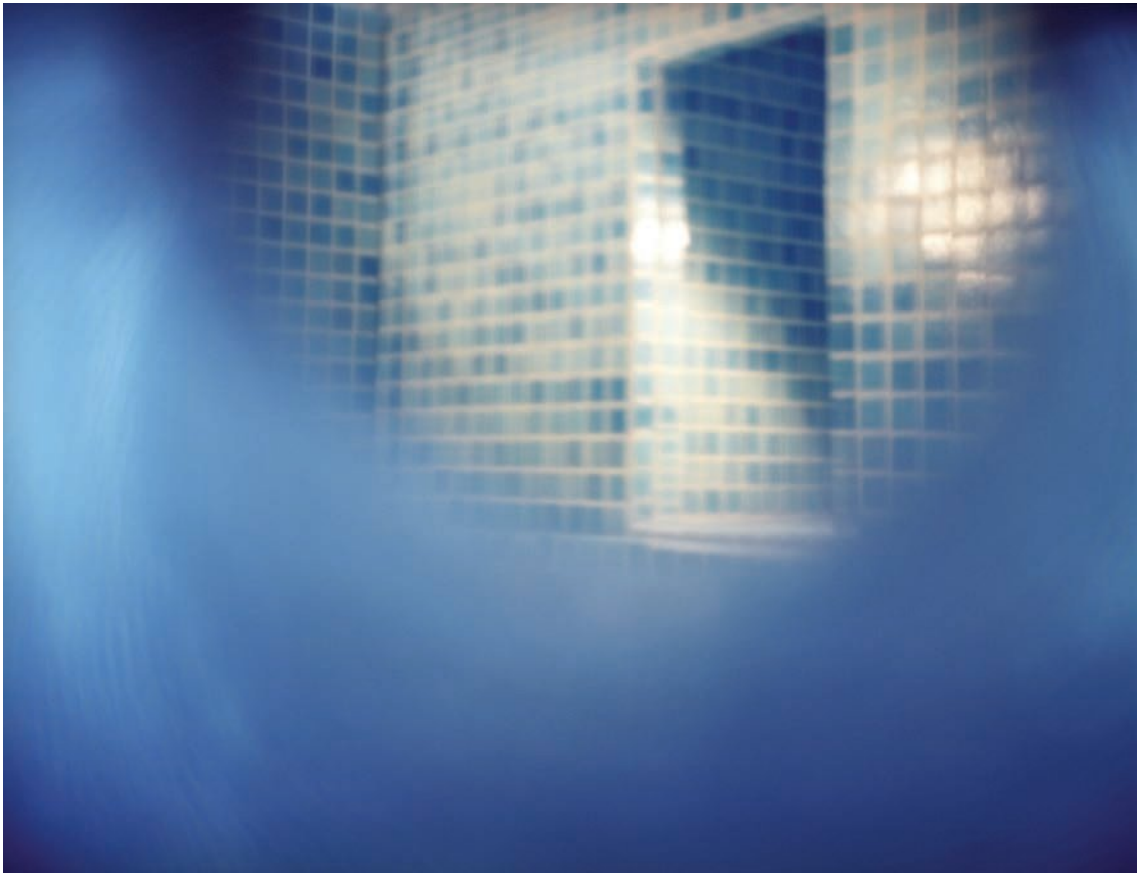




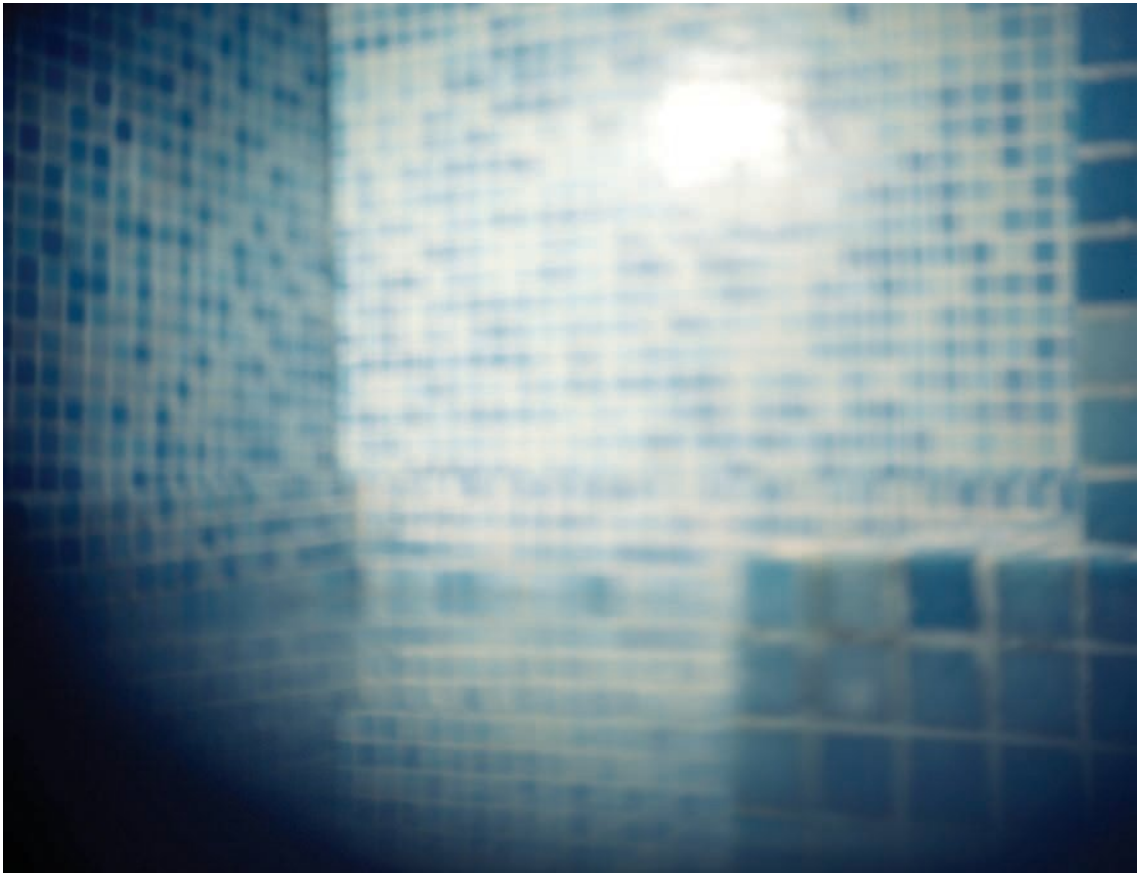
Jack Briggs-Miller
2005 - 2007 IV



2005 - 2007 XII



1990 - 1995 III



1990 - 1995 VII



Louise Collier
Clawdd House - Untitled 1



Untitled 2



Untitled 3



Untitled 4



I just tried not to think about it, just tried to listen to the music.

Jessica Oliver
Digital video



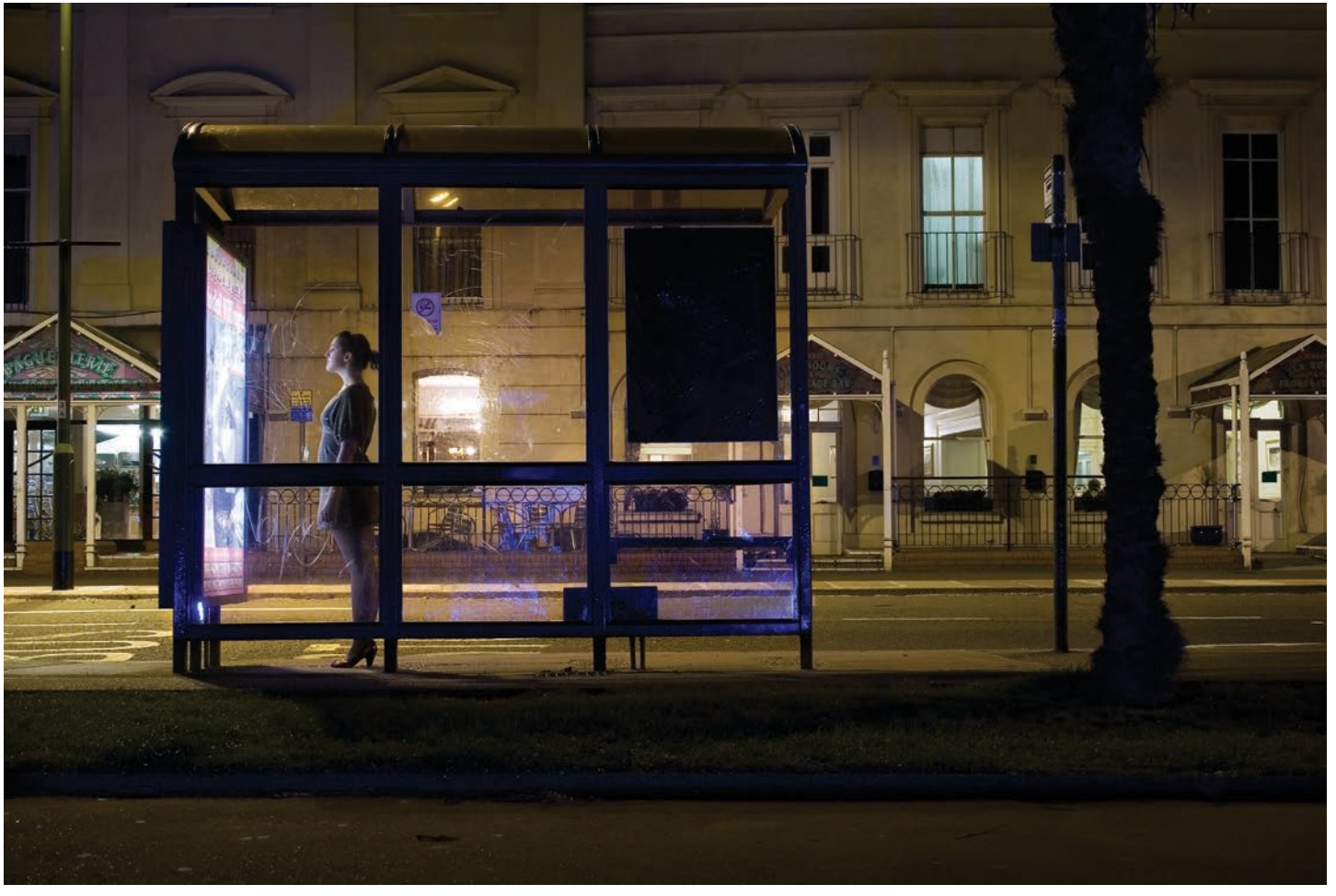
I hated the way that he looked at me.



I don’t watch him; I just watch myself because I don't like looking at his face.



I think I needed to do it.



Jon Pitman
Prequel







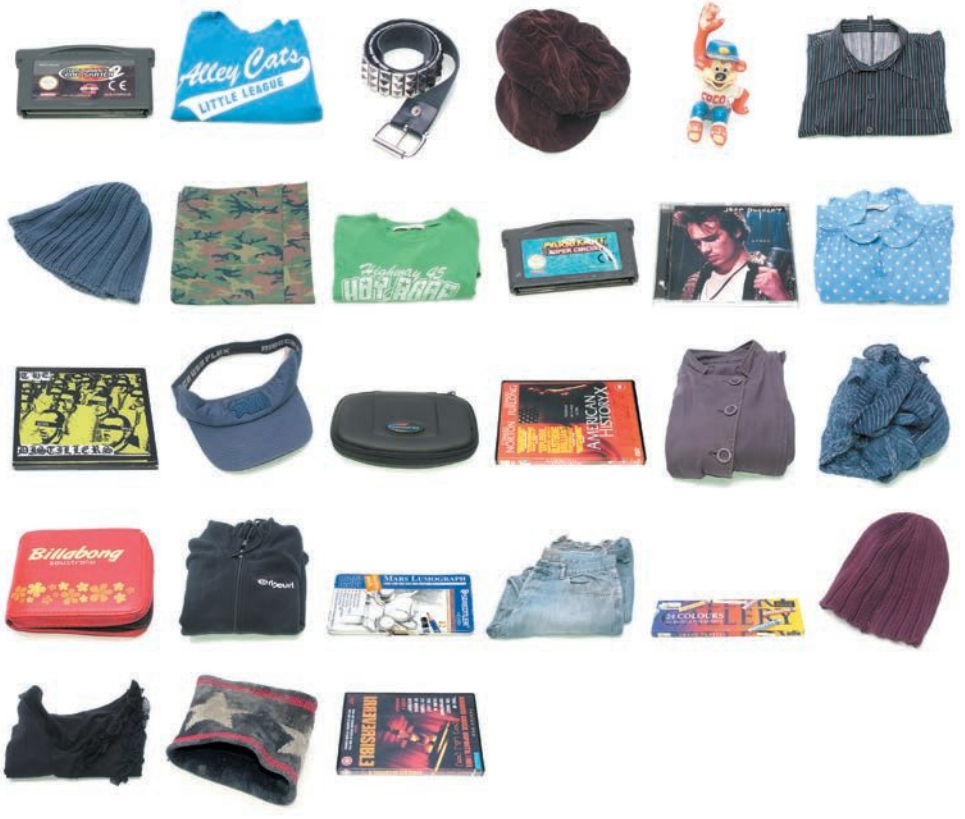


Carolanne Butler









Things that belong to my sister

Jo Winney





Things I bought as gifts and never gave



Things I borrowed and never returned



Things that are broken

Talk

This discussion was recorded in order to become a contextual text for this publication. The event was hosted in the University of Wales, Newport, on the 24th April 2008 with a panel of contributors.

The essay presented here is an edited version of a longer discussion that examined a broad range of issues addressing the role of photographic students work within the heritage of this institution.

Geraint Cunnick: To begin with it would be worth examining the relationship of contemporary photographic practice as we now see it to a context or locale. Perhaps it would be fitting that this might be within the nation of Wales.

This might raise the question of a notion of 'Welshness' and the relationship not only to the rest of the UK but also internationally as well.

For example within this Photographic Art degree programme we promote both a sense of looking at what is happening externally and also ask students to look internally, bringing their own elements of self-reflection. We ask them to consider how they see the world but also how their environment influences and forms part of their responses.

Does that mean then that we contribute or create somewhat of a photographic heritage? Is this contemporary practice driven by any notion of 'Welshness' or nationality? Perhaps is it much more in keeping with or a reflection of trends generally?

Peter Finnemore: I think that Welsh consciousness within art and photography is sort of marginalised. Why do artists have to go to London, New York, Newport, university, wherever, to make art? Part of my work is about validating marginalised cultures, environments as being worthy of being made into art and given a voice.

Chris Coppock: This is interesting because I think that there is quite a long, linear history of social documentation of Wales and Welsh identity embodied within particular kinds of industrial movements. I think what Peter is talking about is a kind of psychological space which is less about trying to be definitive in terms of describing how Wales is a country and more about trying to talk about one's place of marginalisation within colonial history.

If you were to look at the orthodox historical view of how Wales has evolved I think you'd find a lot of contemporary artists would say actually that doesn't fit very comfortably with how they perceive this country. I think that's a big problem, interestingly Newport's fascinating for me, it's only very recently that I've heard the college talk about addressing its location, i.e. being part of Wales and not straddling the border with England. I would argue that this place has operated, predomintantly as a British institution that just happens to be in Wales. I think that locational politics is something that has been somewhat missing from the dialogue within this institution.

GC: Newport has always had that odd relationship with both sides of the border I guess. What about the idea of marginalisation within your own community, that's quite interesting isn't it?

PF: I think images can help with this as well, in a way the Newport Survey[1] with David Hurn and Ron McCormack and people. This helped to define a certain type of identity, give a Welsh identity to Newport which is multi-cultural, post-industrial sort of place. In a way you could say photography through its archiving helps to cement a shared identity of a culture in a city.

1. The Newport Survey: *The Newport Survey Photographic Collection is a collection of black and white photographic images taken by documentary photography students which document the then town of Newport in the 1980s. These photographs formed the basis of a series of 8 publications on various themes relating to the town, also called Newport Survey. Details of the 2,200 images are available on the library catalogue and the photographs are reference only. In addition we also have a small photographic collection of historical costumes.*

Helen Sear: As a visitor from England in 1984 when I first came over to Wales, I found it a very positive place for me to be working, because I was able to escape, as it were, some of the constraints which I perceived to do with notions of Englishness and to look at them from another country and perspective.

Ben Absalom: In terms of the history, the Valleys Project[2] I think there's been a shift maybe over the past twenty years in how Wales has become recorded from this sort of notion of it being a marginalized or an exotic. In some ways, there's a lot more awareness of what's going on generally.

So you had people who came into Wales to record it, I think the photographs that come from that era are traditionally quite reportage based and maybe, not dismal, it's the wrong word, but they don't show Wales as really a beautiful place.

PF: Maybe they're telling the truth then, maybe it really is a dismal place.

BA: It might be truthful, but I think there's a certain consensus of how they were going to portray it, and that's very much lodged in the history that's come since. I think over the past few years Wales is now starting to be photographed, predominantly in a way that is coming from Wales and Welsh artists. I think that allows people like me, to be able to use a broader language to address not necessarily the country, but in the context of the country to address everything else with, and that's where the course [Photographic Art] fits now in the country, that there is a new language developing with which we address our environments. It's a good position to be in at the moment.

Why do artists have to go to London, New York, Newport, university, wherever, to make art?

Alicia Miller: I wonder if I might take the discussion back a step, because in a funny way I feel quite anxious entering into a discussion which is described as about the 'Welshness' of this programme, and to negotiate what that might mean.

I think it's much more fruitful to look at the impact

2. **The Valleys Project.** *Ffotogallery originally established the Valleys Project in 1984, as a unique undertaking to document what has to be one of the most beautiful yet industrialized landscapes of Northern Europe. During the five years of the project to 1990, it has drawn together the work of photographers resident in Wales and from further afield, to create a contemporary visual record and social commentary encompassing a broad geographical spread of the South Wales Valleys.*

Discussion Group

Chair:

Geraint Cunnick,
Programme Leader of BA (hons) Photographic Art programme and acting Head of Newport School of Art, Media and Design: Department of Art and Photography

Contributors:

Chris Coppock,
Director of Ffotogallery, Cardiff.

Alicia Miller,
Project Manager, Bristol Visual Arts Consortium.

Peter Finnemore,
Photographer and artist. Currently Postgraduate Welsh Language Teaching Fellow, The University of Wales, Newport.

Helen Sear,
Senior Research Fellow and Reader in Photography and Fine Art Practice, The University of Wales, Newport.

Ben Absalom and Sam Mason, Final year students, BA (hons) Photographic Art.

Audience contributors:

Ronnie Close, Peter Bobby, Magail Nougarede, Paul Reas,
Senior Lecturers: Art and Photography, The University of Wales, Newport,

Matt White,
Artist and Visiting Tutor: Art and Photography, The University of Wales, Newport.

Jasmine Ebede, Lauren Jury, Jessica Thompson, Jenny Peel and Emily Paterson,
Final Year Students BA (Hons) Photographic Art and transcription team.

of the context in which an artist works and that has to do with the physical characteristics of that place, the history of it, how that history then impacts on the contemporary culture, it's a multifaceted context.

To me, the minute it begins to be described in national terms, I come up against issues.

Who owns that nationality?

CC: I don't think it's about Welshness, which is a very loaded term I think it's about operating within the constituency that you actually find yourself in. I think it is important to nuance the difference between Welshness, and talking about being located in the place of Wales, I think they are two very distinct things.

AM: But my point is that I think the sense of place discussion is where this should be located. One of my first projects in Bristol was the British Art Show, and taking that on I had to think about what does British art mean?

And that it was about a sense of place, about the context in which one works and how that impacts upon production, and I think that's exactly where the dialogue needs to be located.

CC: I think the problem is that we're operating in a time of apolitical internationalism within contemporary art. Take for instance the Artes Mundi exhibition at the National Museum [Cardiff] which represents art made by people from different countries across the world, apparently talking about the human condition. But actually, I would argue it's reflective of a homogenised kind of art you can identify at most biennales. The fact that some of the work is made by Nigerians or made by Portuguese people with a specific vernacular, is lost in an environment which is based around a particular set of cultural values emanating from a London-centric, a New York-centric art world.

I think the danger is that international exposure can encourage artists to lose sight of what it is they are doing in the place where they actually make their art.

HS: But as students, they might only be here for a period of three years, so it's quite a tall order for them to come into a course, and ask them to be instantly located and be considering this whilst making work. It might actually constrict the sort of work that they might want to pursue.

CC: That's a very valid point. I think though, if you work in a particular place, the nuances of that place must have some cultural impact. If an educational institution operates in a particular environment then I think it makes sense for the student body to reflect on those nuances, not in a deterministic way, but just in recognition of the concept of 'difference' in an increasingly homogenised world.

PF: Also to re-address what Chris was saying about issues of dislocation, I think this discussion is actually a bit of a hangover from the 1970s and modernism, because modernism tried to deny a distinct place, uniform bodies of art, which denies any localness, national identity and so on, and this did affect art schools in the 1970s.

CC: But its interesting because that's a double-edged sword, I came through modernism and actually the intellectual rigor that goes with modernism certainly isn't carried through in post-modernist thinking and I think that's the sad thing.

As a visitor from England in 1984 when I first came over to Wales, I found it a very positive place for me to be working, because I was able to escape.

AM: One of the issues with many high level established artists is that they often have studios in various different locales. In the era of globalisation, we are quick to homogenise.

Rirkrit Tiravanija is a good example of someone who has studios in three different cities across the world and is itinerant.

GC: From an educational point of view one of the seemingly eternal, most popular subjects is 'place' or 'landscape'. We see this desire from students to somehow integrate into environment. Is it something driven by a position in terms of your own autobiography?

Sam Mason: Moving towards the work within the publication, I think our place within Wales is notable within a lot of peoples work and sometimes not so obviously, quite elusive.

I feel being in Wales the relationship between man and nature is a lot stronger than anywhere that I've been for a long time. I think that comes through a lot of the work and taken from a personal level I don't think that I would have produced the work that I have if I hadn't been in Wales. I think that would be the same case for a lot of people that are in the book.

BA: I think in terms of negotiating the identity of a place, the last few years has seen a seismic shift in the way the media operates and the photograph is no longer a tool of topology that it once was. This sense of place now is maybe not such a demographic element to photography but much more inverted.

People are finding themselves in this multilayered culture and world where there're more levels of negotiation to work through before you find your work at the end of it, your art. I think that's a lot to do with the conditions which we've been brought up in however people are not necessarily trying to find a place and self, place and self are interrelated.

I think the problem is that we're operating in a time of apolitical internationalism within contemporary art.

HS: I think also something that hasn't been mentioned is the impact of the huge number of students who are currently enrolled on photographic courses, not only in Wales, but in the whole of the U.K. How does that impact on ones practice?

Magali Nougarede: I think there might be an issue with this because we have to deal with so many students they have less time to think, they have less tutorial time, they have less time to actually develop their practice. I think there's much more use of 'formulas', 'art formulas', for students.

We maybe give them the answers because there isn't really the time to let that student think for themselves and that's a bit unfortunate for this generation.

I go back to the time where I studied and you studied [Helen Sear], our work was probably more clumsy but it was more individual and I'm not speaking specifically for any of you here, who are all clearly very good students. I think it's time that we can't afford to give you, unfortunately that may impact on the work tends to look fairly generic.

AM: I do think it's the professionalisation of being an artist that has happened with the rise of MA programmes in the last twenty-five or thirty years. It's feeding this but it's this emphasis on needing to come out fully formed, you have a chance to hit the market in a rising tide and make a lot of money.

BA: This has obviously got to be a reason why so many people are turning to photography instead of other traditional art mediums or non-art mediums, to try and make a way for themselves. I think it is to do with the situation of culture on a broader basis at the moment that more people are turning to photography to look at things because it's a reflective medium but also an introspective medium.

I think this is only going to grow because the institutes are taking lots of money off the students and they're having a whale of a time doing it and that's good and proper but that's in a way only going to be a negative cycle of things of how we are able to think and look. That it puts each student in a bit of a sticky situation in terms of possibility, the voices do become slightly institutionalised because you're there to

appease the powers. I think that a lot of work is now becoming similar because of this but also the practice of art and language and talking about it is so fruitful. Maybe there just needs to be a regeneration of what's talked about and how we look, looking upon our looking needs to be readdressed and then maybe that can come from the infrastructure of the institution and come outwards.

It's either that the language has become stagnant or that we're in a real transitory period where nobody is really sure how to deal with what we're doing.

I feel being in Wales the relationship between man and nature is a lot stronger than anywhere that I've been for a long time.

Paul Reas: The issue is about their [students] relation to Wales though, that's what we're talking about here isn't it? It's true that whilst they're here, by definition they work in Wales and they have an interest in aspects of Welsh life but the big question is how many of them actually sustain that interrogation of Wales?

CC: I think the only way that you would get people to stay here is if they feel that there is an infrastructure or that there's a set of values which they empathise with and also has an economy that enables them to professionalise what they do. Of course the problem is we are living in a small island where most of the economy is centered around the South-East and we can't get away from that but also, we know that's never going to be replicated here in Wales.

HS: I think in some ways the Welsh Arts Council could have been more confident in their support of individual artists and I think that's a really major issue if you can't get the same opportunities as you can over the border.

But on a positive note, I think there is a younger generation of artists coming out and setting things up in Wales, I think particularly of an ex-student of mine, Anthony Shapland and G39. This was originally an artist –led project which is now in it's tenth year. There is a much more positive atmosphere on the ground and at the grassroots things are beginning to happen and I am very happy to see that and I think that it just has to be sustained.

Try and get out of this whole thing about comparing oneself to London because I think its something that Scotland has avoided, its more confident.

CC: I think the problem is acute in Wales and Helen flagged up the Arts Council, who in real terms, have dismantled all their specialist art form directorships and committees. As a result, they have no expertise now, in any structured way, advising on visual art, dance, drama or any of the other artforms.

GC: it's ironic that the three cities of Wales are currently undergoing unprecedented regeneration. Yet there does not seem to be a defined strategy for any significant art establishment or institution.

PF: I'm interested in expanding territories as well, talk about Welshness, why does it have to be narrowed down to a box of stereotypes, why can't we expand it? I think I mentioned it in one of my talks here as well; there was a letter from the Western Mail saying if you flattened Wales out it would be the same size as the United States. That's quite an interesting idea, how you could magically stretch your own boundaries, pushing, stretching out continuously.

CC: In this post-modern culture we're living in I don't think there's any agreed universal values within art criticism. Clement Greenberg and people with modernist values no longer command the critical airways and you now have very eclectic art criticism where there's no benchmarked way of working.

You can argue that's really good because its

actually opened up all sorts of debates and practices, but its also meant that any practice –almost anything – is acceptable provided you've got the right systems in place to market and promote that stuff. In effect there's no one out there telling you that the art is good, bad or indifferent

HS: But one mustn't underestimate the people who are making the work that they have their own benchmarks.

CC: Where do those come from?

HS: They read, they see, they live in the world, they experience, they make judgements.

CC: You don't create your own benchmarks.

HS: Yes you do create your own benchmarks!

MN: I can only celebrate the fact that all those doyens of modern culture have gone because most of them were men.

CC: Okay. Fair point.

MN: It doesn't mean there isn't a critical discourse going on, to bring it back to photography.

HS: I think the boundaries are more insidious now. They come from within the institutions in terms of the way courses are structured and the move towards constant assessment points shifts the emphasis towards marks rather than knowledge and experience.

There are also funding bodies that have very specific political agendas. I think those are the kinds of things that have to be questioned.

BA: Do you think that we're being sort of directed to please a market or an art world which contains a large proportion of people who are not practicing artists, in terms of giving them a role within the process of art?

So if you make a body of work, you're forced to write an artist's statement so other people can read that and put their reading upon it.

There's a chain that formulates, are we conditioned to allow these things to occur rather than have an individual expressive voice?

There was a letter from the Western Mail saying if you flattened Wales out it would be the same size as the United States.

HS: I think there's a pressure for everybody to come to a similar stage at the same time, when individuals simply don't develop like that people actually arrive at things at different points in their life. Some people do the best work they might ever do at college; some people might not do the best work until they're 60. There are very different trajectories.

Similarly, the way that work is received in the world can happen at different times in your life. I think there's just the challenge not to be disheartened if things aren't necessarily coming into place during the time of your degree course. It certainly didn't for me. They're only just falling into place now! In a way, that's a positive thing.

MN: So hopefully, as tutors, we're well aware of this problem. Yes, we try to prepare you for the environment you'll find yourselves in when you graduate, but we'll also try to make you aware of these issues and try not to channel you.

Ronnie Close: I think there's a responsibility on students as well to take ownership over the process they are involved in. There isn't a generic model for a perfect art course, nor should there be.



Katherine Perrett
Silentium









(the missed moment)

Kyle Bentley



(the illusion of the photograph)

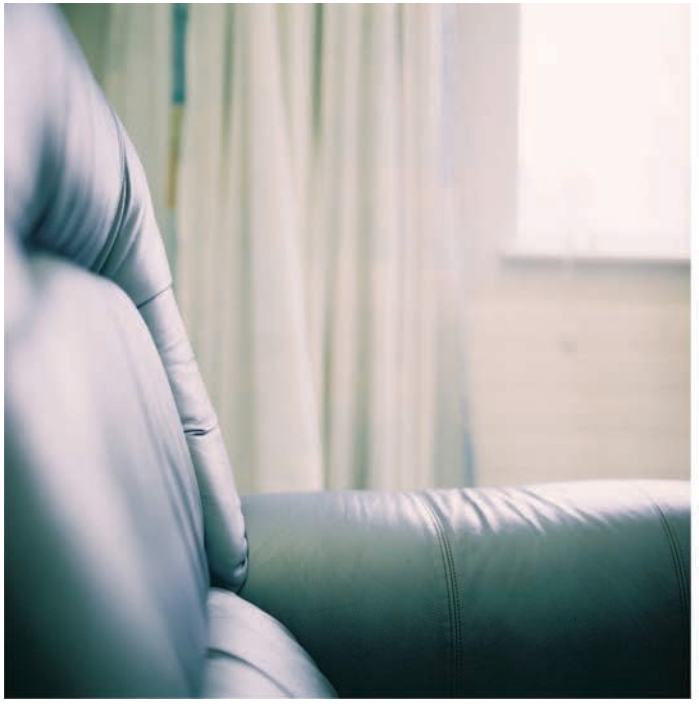


(tree)



(for people who wish to sit at my table)







Julie Cahill
Hiding in Plain Sight

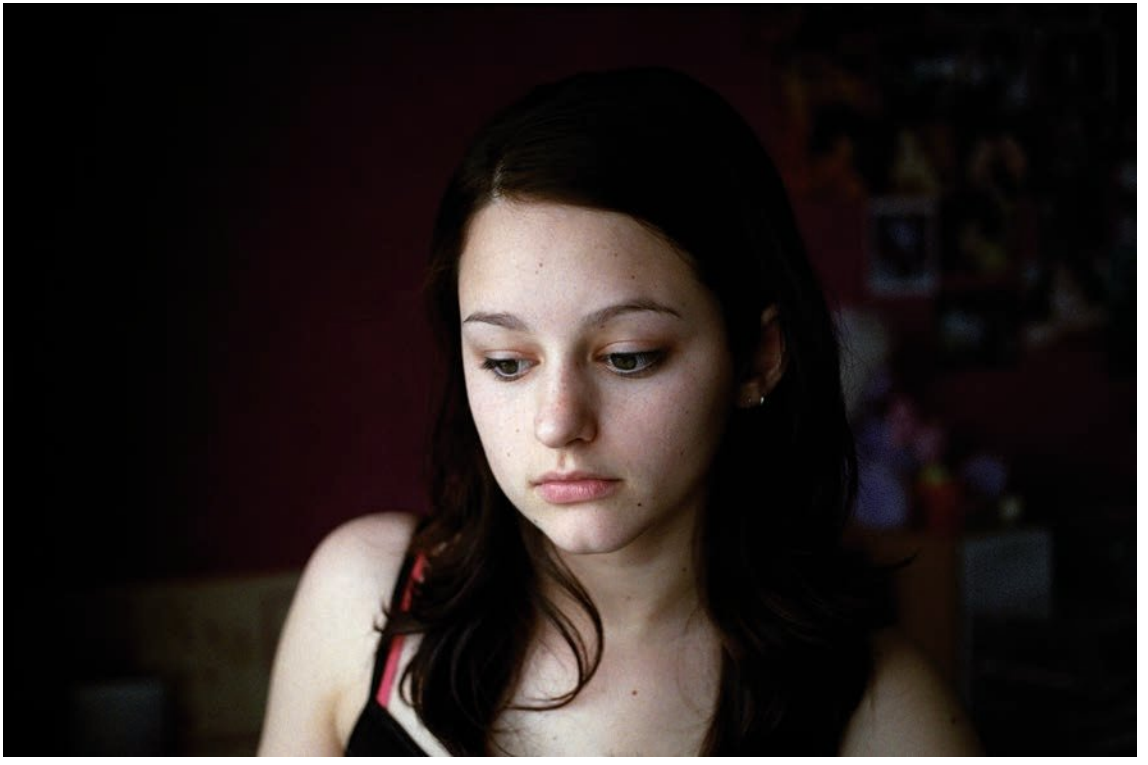




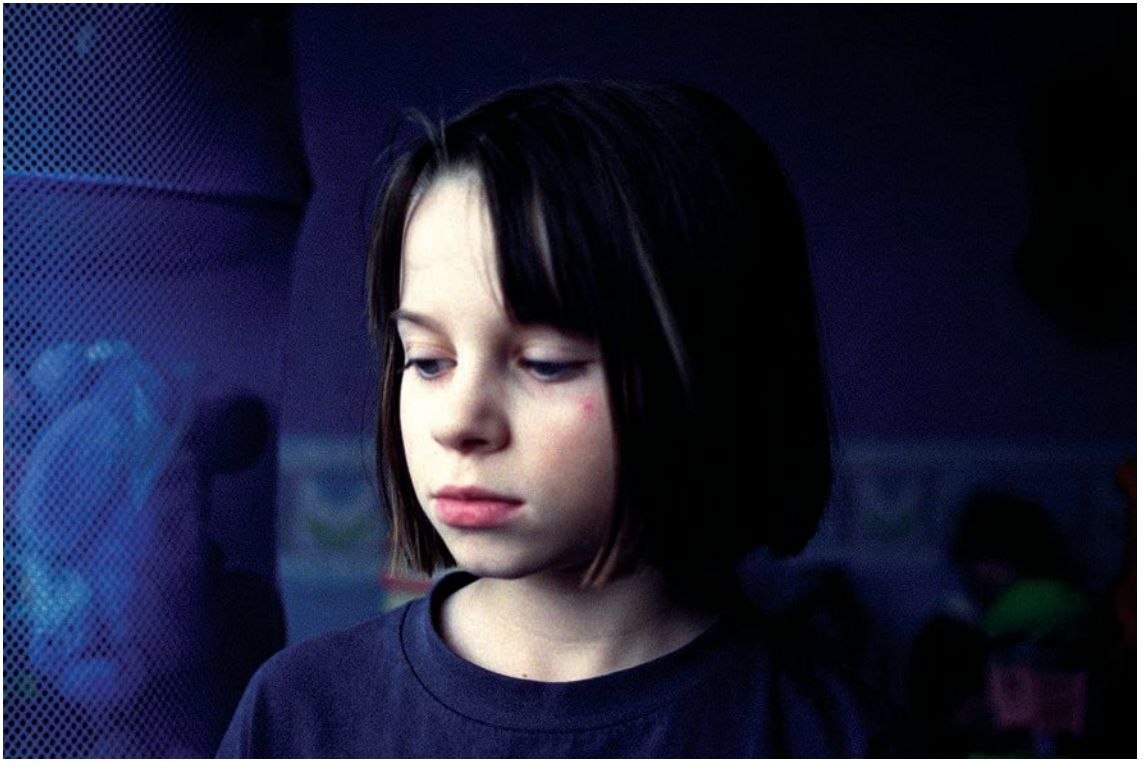




Laura Power
Mere Mortal









Rory Geraghty
Mortification





Love of Thy Enemy



Hope



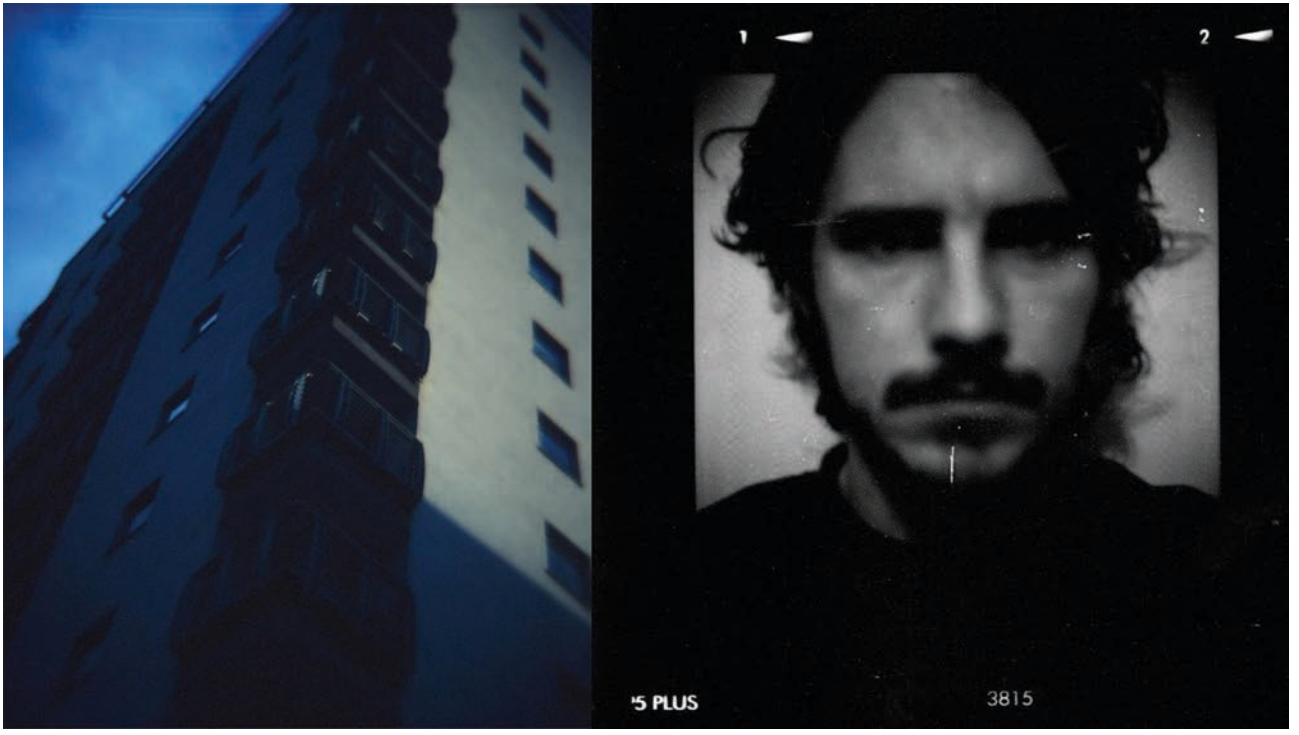
Paul Appleby
And then I did nothing

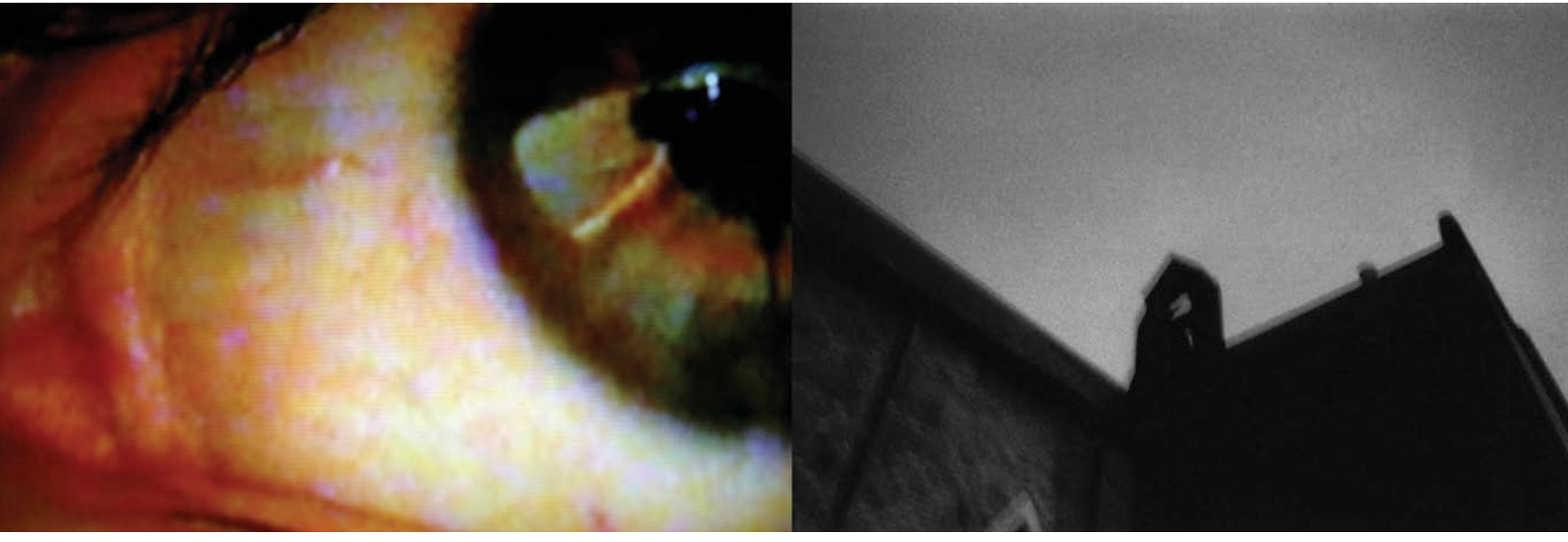









1
2
5 PLUS
3815





Claire Clifton Coles
Rook Di Goo
Kitchen



Darkness



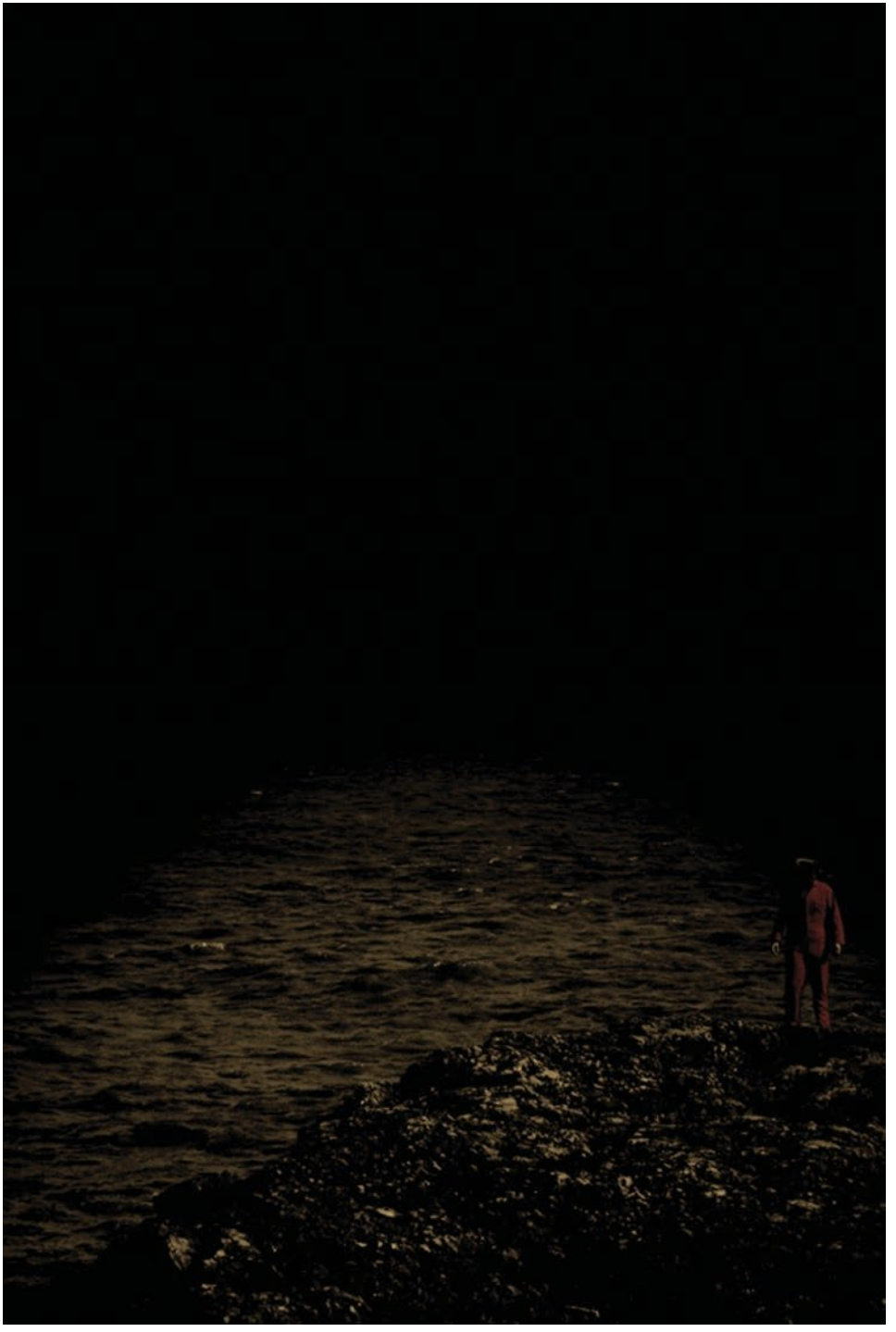
Window



Cellar



Emily Carr
Prisoner of Conscience

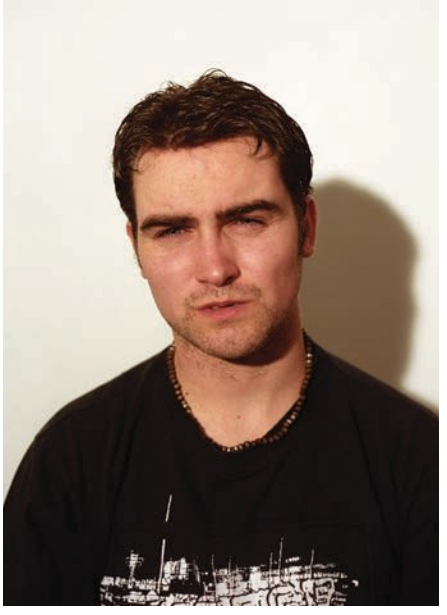








Miles Bavin
Future Proof





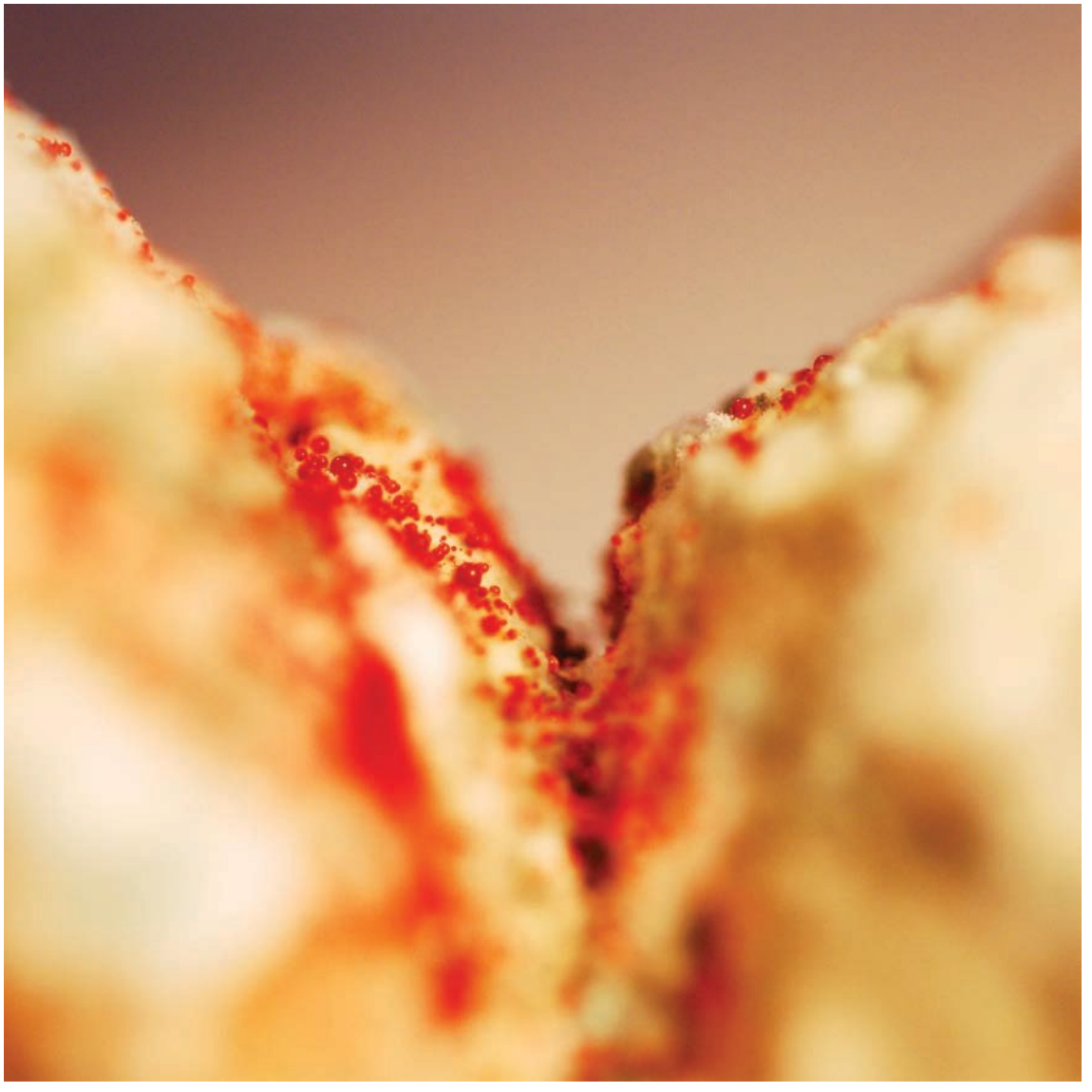






Georgina Street
A Matter of Abstraction







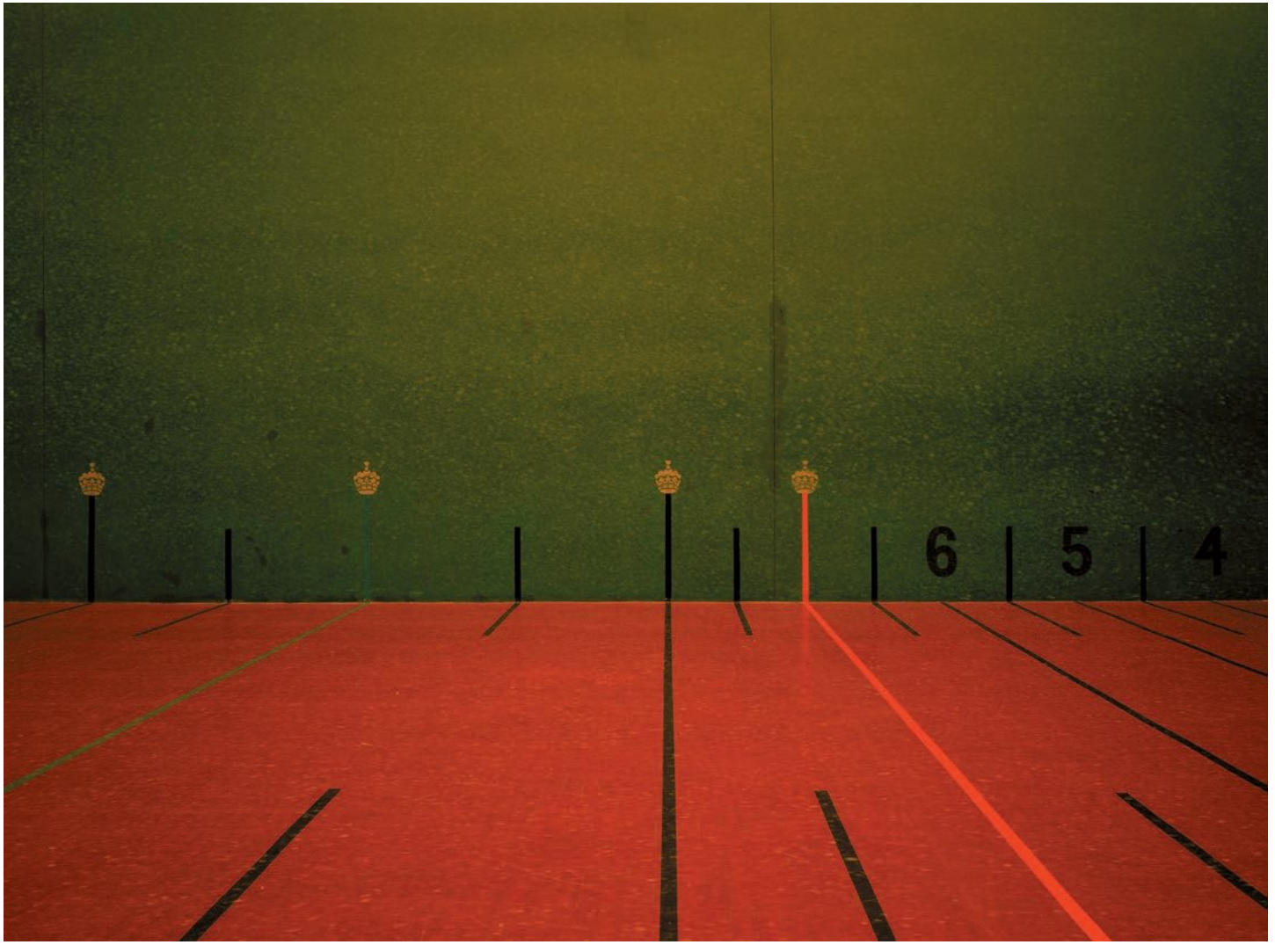


Colleen Ford-Ellis
110

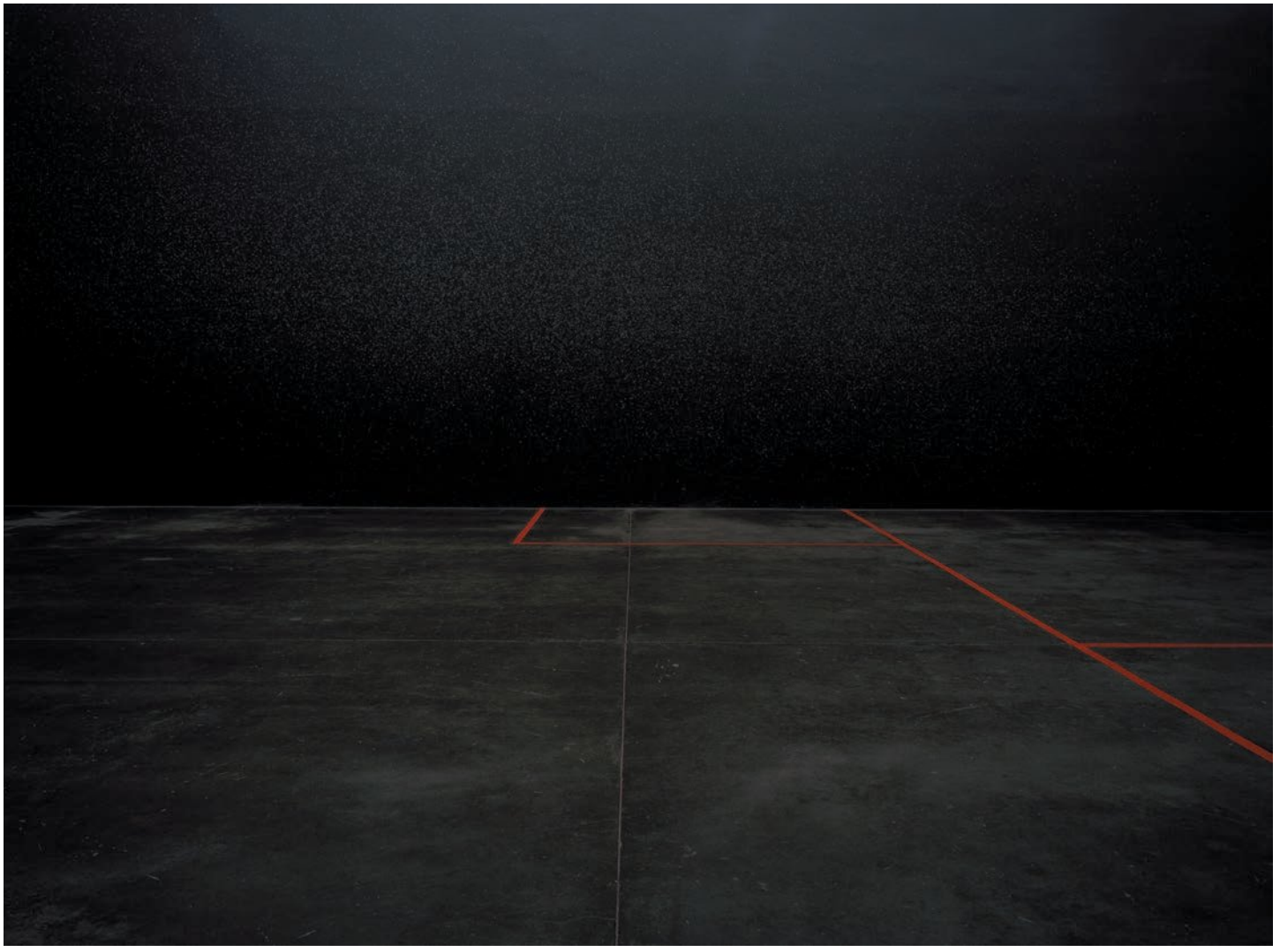








Elliott Wilcox
Real Tennis



Rackets



Squash

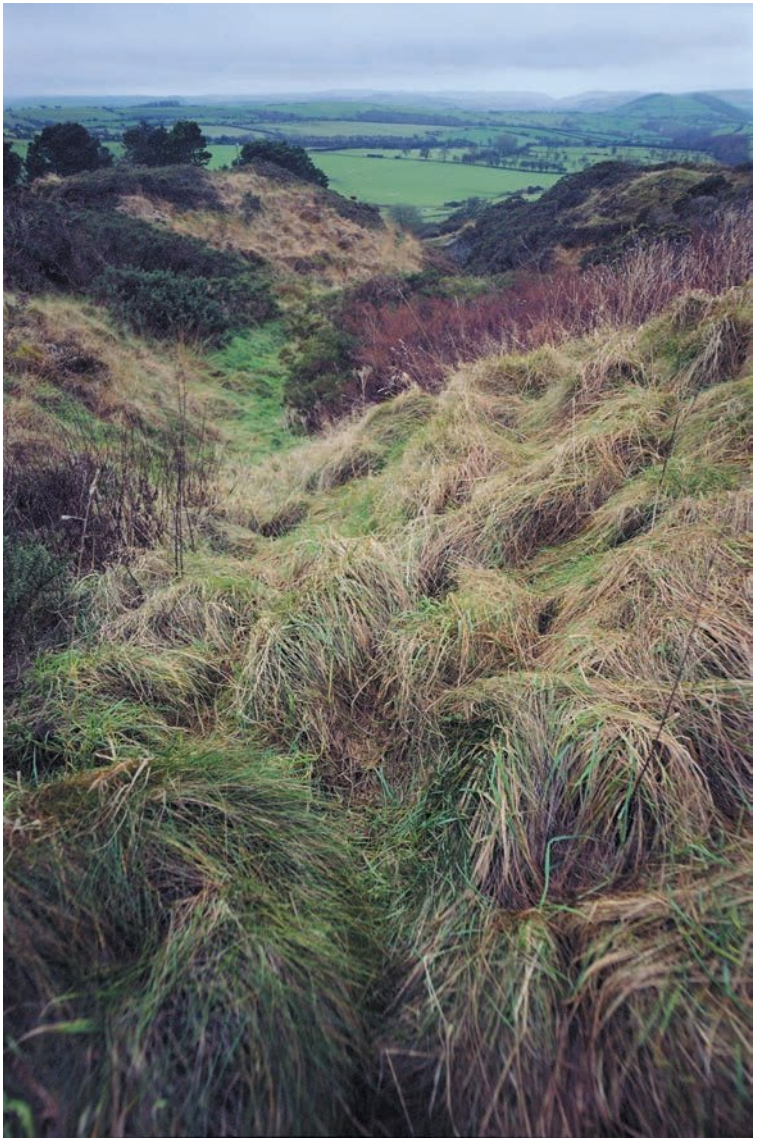




Abigail Evans
Vista Avarice









Samuel Wheeler
Muk Yum
Chung Jik





In Nah

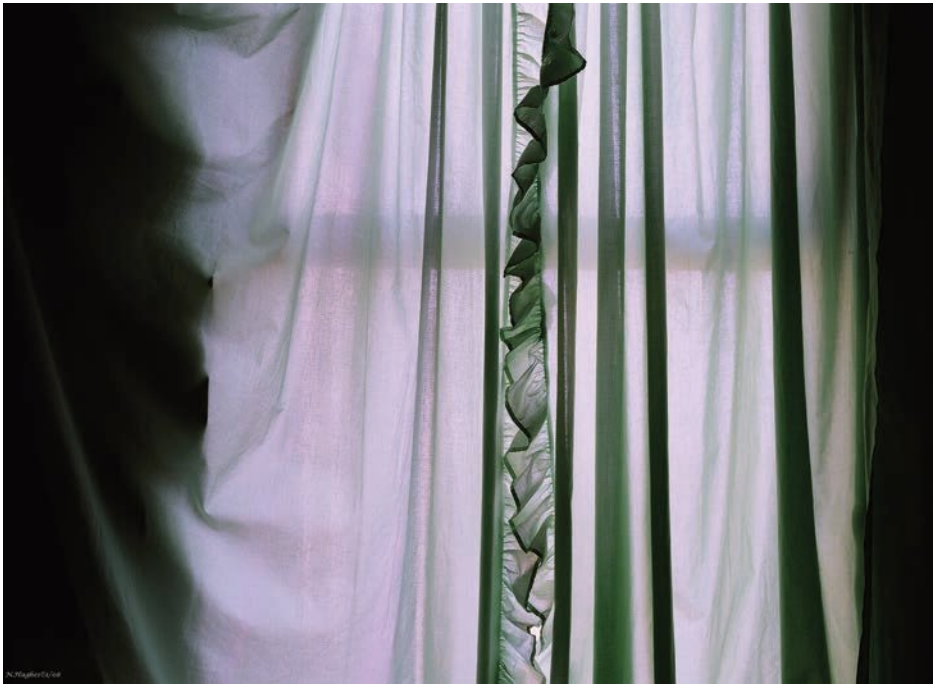


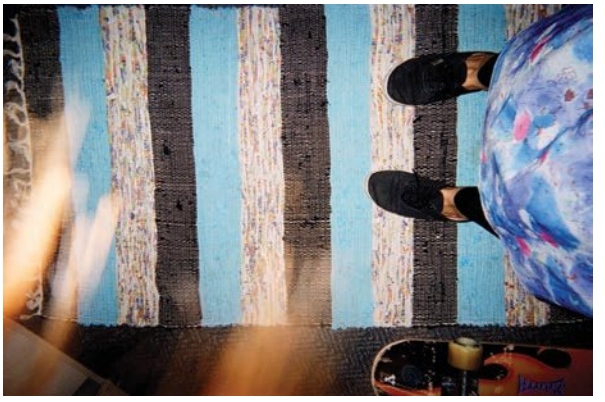
Yong Gi

















Nicolas Hughes

Extract from How I Med Freddie Hotspur by Alfred Ernest

Whilst we waited, they talked of Time. The third man of the trio didn't seem to be from round here. Strangely, the other two held him in high esteem, listened to intently, occasionally nodding their heads In agreement. This puzzled me at first, they were such hypocrites, but as he spoke I began to understand. He'd been somewhere, seen something.

> *It's like being on train, man… the train is your vehicle, your body… you are your consciousness… in a carriage, looking out of a window… at endless successive images… Horizons expand and contract… But you can't get off the tracks. Other passengers drift In and out of your carriage… Some are apt to linger… a little. The direction of travel is obscured to you… you can't see what's ahead… but you have paid your fair and you are on that train until the end of the line.*

> *Yeah it's a fucking shit rollercoaster, that's right! Yapped the barking man. I dunt remember much. He continued, I dunt fink bout the future much… I don't think, I hope… and I'll tell you summin for nuttin… always burn the bridges that you build and then you can but hope that bad memories dunt follow you… and once you are across the river… walk away and… never turn back.*

At some point amongst this mans barks and growls, Freddie had returned with his friend. He had joined our group and stood quietly listening as the sandbank man laid down his laws of time. It was apparent that the Sandbank Man disagreed with what the other two had proposed but no one pointed this out. I assumed that each had given his speech so many times, to so many strangers that could only hear what they believed in others explanations. They heard different words pertaining to the same or synchronous meanings. Language was their security blanket, a system of interchangeable signs structured so that whilst sounds changed, meaning remained the same. As I thought this, the Sandbank Man had proceeded to give his polemic and was just beginning to build to his conclusion.

> *It's just one constant revolution. Time Is an Isolated power that existed separated from its producers and consumers. It won't stop eternally returning. Like running on the spot, away from something that never gets any closer. Whilst around you, landscape moves in a particular direction. A direction and therefore a meaning … Or like being strapped to a wheel that just keeps on rolling, a bondage to rebirth… Or even just as we are, standing here spinning, subject to cycles of days and nights… the changing of the moon… The succession of seasons as we revolve around the sun… So many synchronous revolutions… It's enough to make you dizzy.*

GREAT YARMOUTH
Mercury

THE WORLD EXPLAINED IN EXPLETIVES...

Will Norfolk See Another

SUNRISE



THE OLD RISING SUN

... ITS FUCKING PRIMAL!

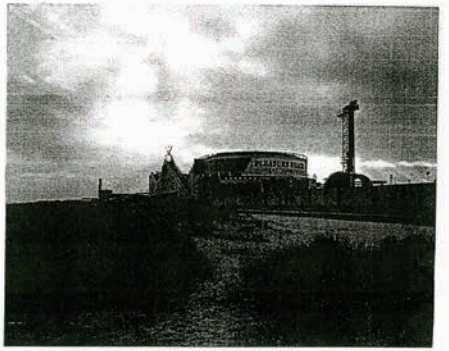


THE TALK OF THE TOWN


NEVER
TURN
BACK

GREAT YARMOUTH
Mercury

ALL ABOARD! COMING SOON!



FuckingShitROLLERCOASTER



THE OLD RISING SUN

TRUE LOVE IS
REVOLUTIONARY PRAXIS
OR IT IS NOTHING

THE TALK OF THE TOWN



Karen Skeats
Eight

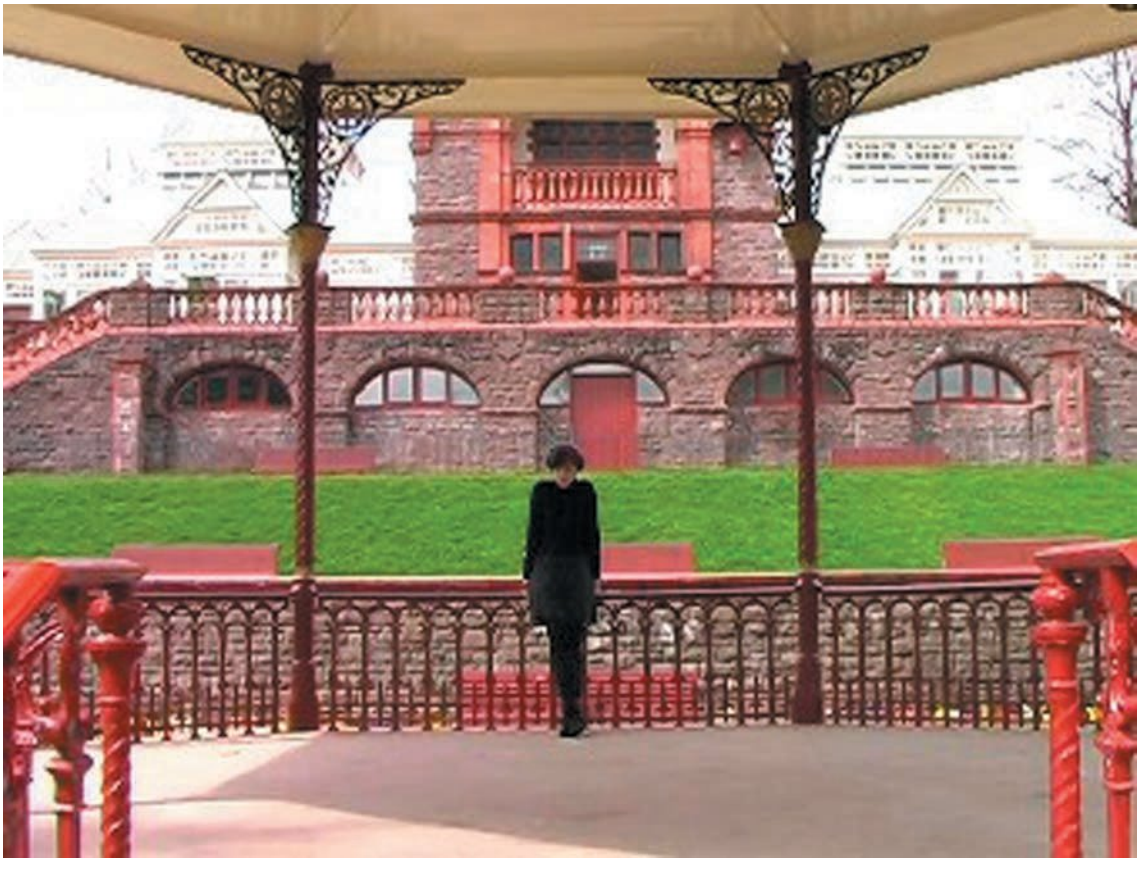

Future



Fifty-Six



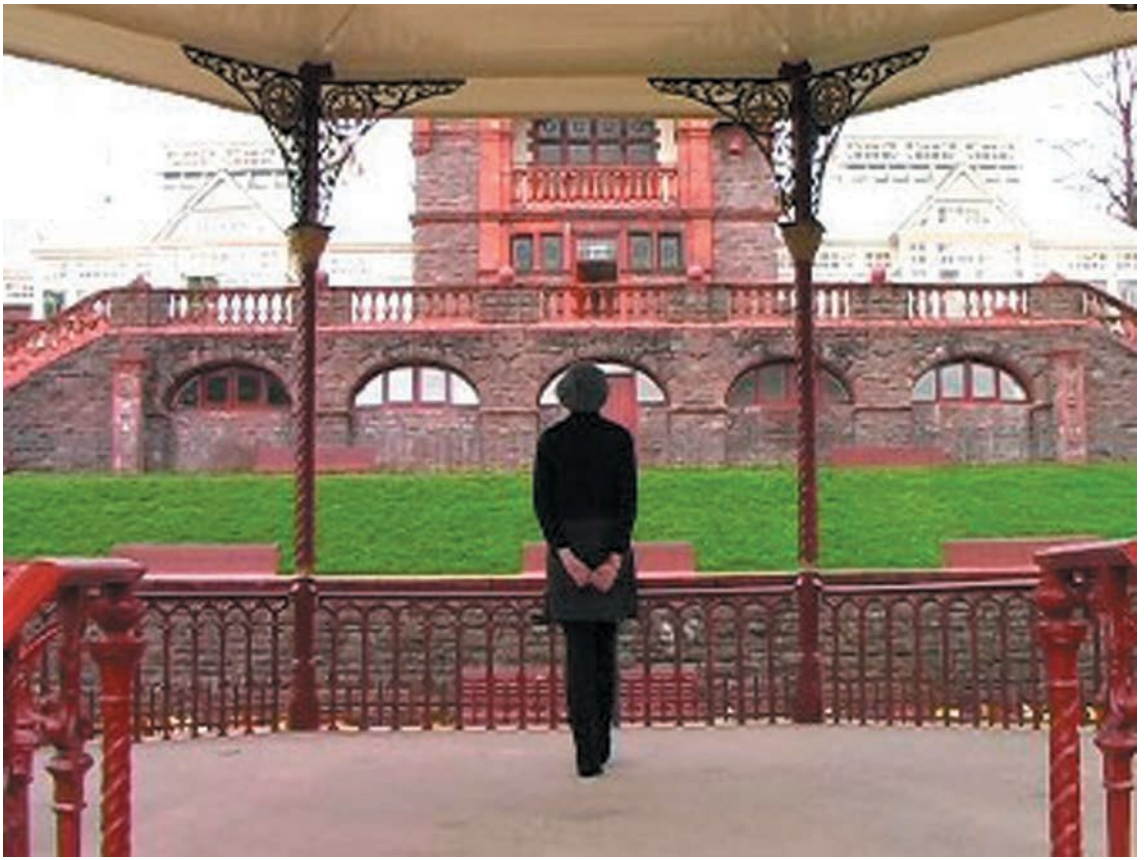
Fifty-Nine



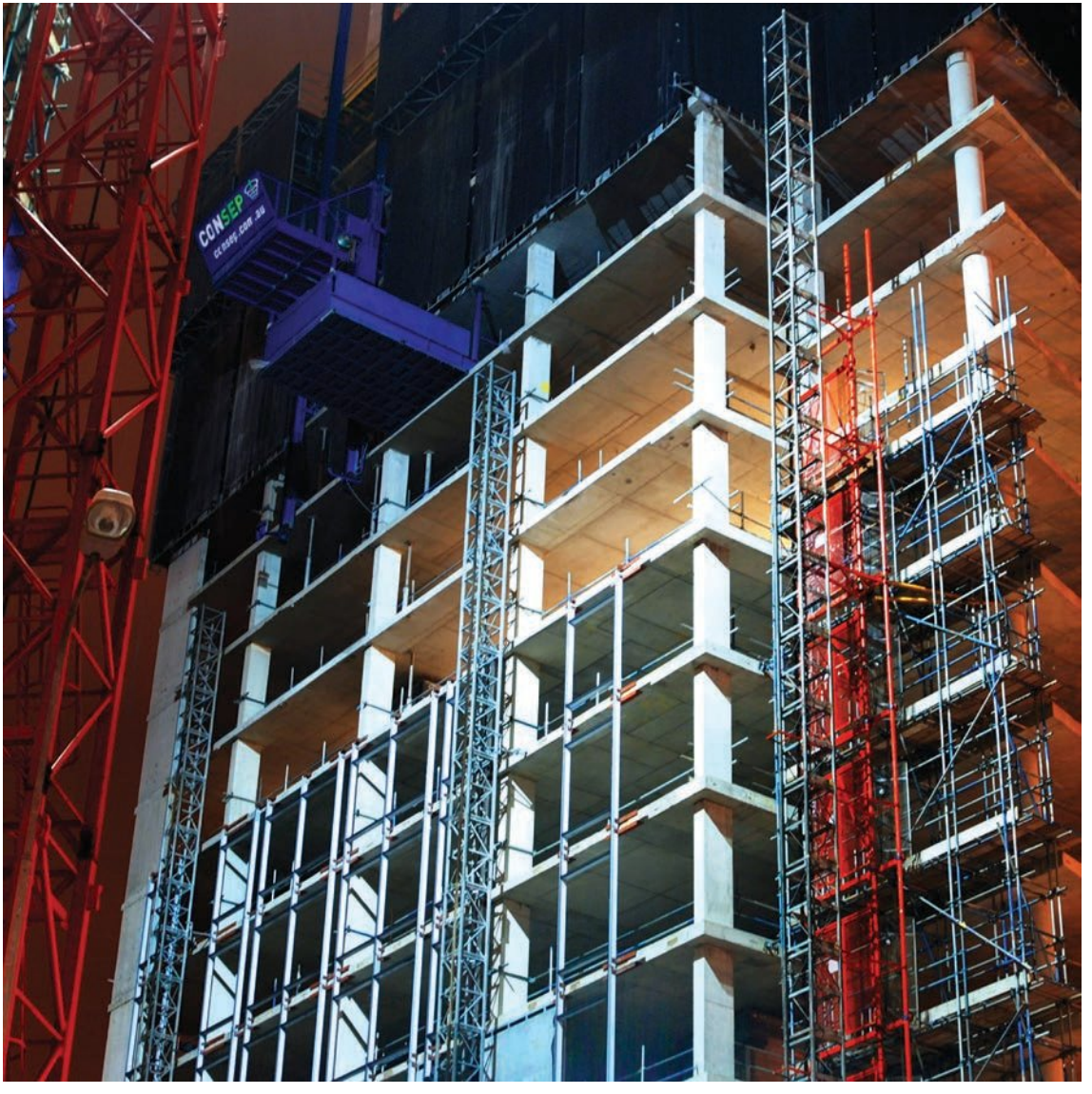
Hannah Breslin
It began with a frolic
Digital video











Craig Brannon
Left: CF10 1AH
Right: CF10 2FE



Left: CF10 2FA

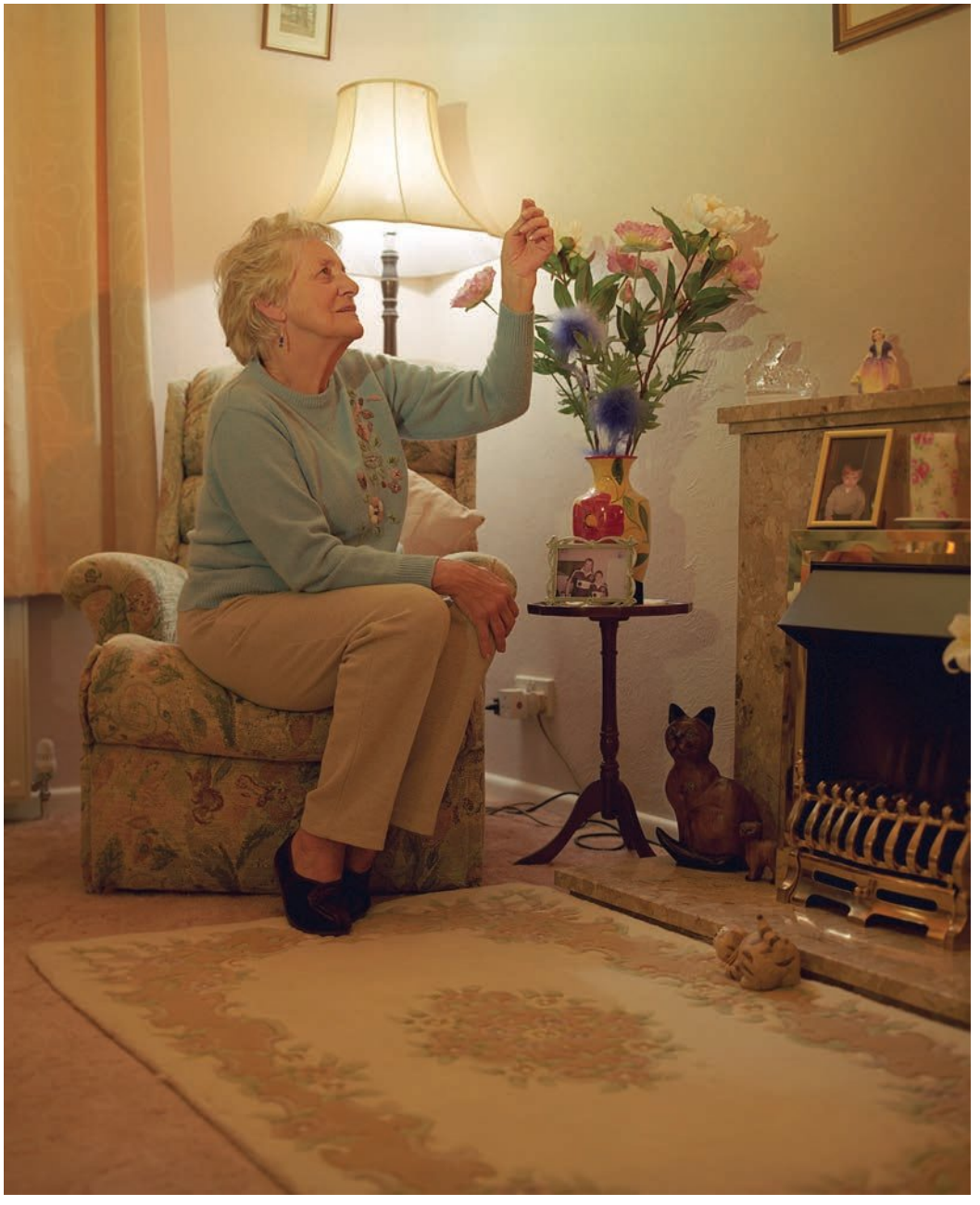
Right: CF10... (in progress)





Tom Sparey
Murdered to Death









Jennifer Peel
Untitled



Untitled



Untitled



Untitled





Georgina Kloss
Left: 1966

Right: Pigeon





Left: Conversation

Right: Coch

Artists

Pages 6-9, Sam Mason

Human Behaviour stems from an idealist fantasy where all creatures unite on a global level, I'm fully aware that this fantasy is naïve at best; never the less the body of work has been created within my own idealistic universe. This universe transcends reality, a reality where the notion of superiority does not exist; a mountain holds the same intrinsic value as a grasshopper, as does a human and a bird.

Using the medium of photography allows me to build this platform for this universe. The photographic performances are based on the similarities within behaviour of two species, humans and birds, behaviour that originates from survival, feeding, procreating and parenthood, encouraging a harmony between humans and animals.

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Pages 10-13, Lauren Elizabeth Jury

Ddyfodiad: This World is Not My Home

The 'stranger' unites 'here' and 'there'. If she stays, she may come to belong and reciprocate, or may remain detached and disinterested. Pg 42-The Lure of the Local: Sense of Place in a Multicentered Society, Lucy R.Lippard.

This body of work is a visual response to the human condition, in particular the psychological affects of loss as well as exploring notions of displacement. I have been inspired by the writings of Yi-Fu Tuan and his theories on how our sense of 'place' is detached from merely a 'space' and this emotional bond between us and the land can form part of our personal, cultural and artistic identity. The landscapes are deliberately ambiguous, non-descript and at times bleak, which enable them to become void of any sense of time or familiarity; instead they act as a backdrop tinged with human emotion, in which the viewer can project their own feelings upon. The figure echoes a sense of dislocation, dwarfed by the surrounding environment. As a result, the images form a complex knot of experience, memory and emotion that tries to question the importance of belonging in a multi-centered society and how returning to a place that helped shape and develop our personalities after a period of time impacts on who we are at present and who we will become. The person who has left is not the same person returning: home has moved on without them and they are nothing more than an outsider in a place that doesn't recognise them anymore.

LaurenEJury@googlemail.com

Pages 14-17, Oliver Atwell

'The Present of Things Past is Memory' offers the opportunity to survey the representation of time and space within time-based-media, through the creation of four ten minute looped videos within selected locations, taking place in both interior and exterior environments. Each one is shot in one take with the camera set in a fixed position, drawing attention to the subtle movements of the surrounding environments and transforming each video into a conscious, live photograph. Each video represents an extended, almost boundless, moment. Through a single frame they project a lost story and display the remains of a moment long since past. The imagery present within these fractional narratives, as well as the video medium itself, conjures a strange sense of the infinite, of a moment that has slipped from the temporal chain to exist outside of our habitual perception of time.

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Pages 18-21, Holly Wilson

The Tree Captives

These images depict children involved in a game of hide and seek. On one level they portray a number of individual children engaged in a familiar childhood game. However, these seemingly innocent photographs touch us on a variety of darker, more adult themes as we begin to question the cameras position and role within these scenarios and subsequently the nature of the child's need to hide. The title suggests tension in the work, which wavers between the playful and the darker side of childhood, consequently opening the work up to a number of readings. Our eyes are drawn to the children's partially obscured facial expressions, which only add to our confusion. This tension that exists within the photographs brings wider tensions within photography itself to the surface – that of the multiple reading.

holly_wilson@btconnect.com

Pages 22-25, Kirsty Donaldson

Within our habitat we are encompassed by a wealth of 'things'. These 'things', once owned as a matter of necessity, are now collected in an attempt to ease day-to-day formalities. Due to their seemingly banal appearance these functional objects, when placed within our habitat, merge into the background of our vision. That which we do register is selected unconsciously; recognised solely for its function its shape and form is disregarded. This perceptual ignorance has led us to overlook the aesthetics of the quotidian and the sculptural compositions created by its placement within domestic arrangements. Through a method of exploration within the domestic space, observational time is invested into the unnoticed, which in turn awakens its otherwise dormant aesthetical value. Placed within the photographic frame these configurations are extracted from their familiar environment; the tightly composed images obtain and demonstrate the photographic potential contained within the everyday.

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Pages 26-29, Shay Evans

Confinement n.

1. the state of being confined

2. the period of childbirth

"Following complications during childbirth, my Uncle developed a mental handicap, resulting in him being confined within a mental institution for many years. No longer institutionalised, Michael chooses to express his feelings through the lens yet the notion of confinement and isolation is still evidently present in Michael's memory, and also his photographs."

Being influenced by these compelling photographs, the artist has chosen to construct a series of images within an abandoned mental institution. Slowly falling into ruin, the building now stands alone and unwanted, left to decay by society. In an attempt to express similar feelings to that of Michael's, the artist's images, (like her Uncle's) flirt with the temptations of what is outside and beyond the confinement of the institution. The long exposures suggest the passage of time, creating viewless windows that give no relief. Acting as a barrier, separating isolation from freedom, the light within these spaces can either allure or frighten the observer, yet still offering no means of genuine escape.

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Pages 30-33, Gemma Gaskins

'You should've put your gloves over the side of the door like mine then that wouldn't have happened'

Jill and David have been married for fifty-five years this year, and despite many upheavals and unexpected disasters they continue to repeat their day-to-day

routines, no matter what their surroundings may be.

This fascinating adherence to routine has moulded them together indefinitely. Even today, in their home, Garden House, where they've lived for many years and brought up three beautiful girls, they continue to grow together. It's as if they've transformed into one person, leaving us with an almost mirror image.

Taken through the eyes of a grandchild, these images encapsulate Jill and David's day-to-day routine and love for one another, juxtaposed with the disruption of life-altering and exigent scenarios.

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Pages 34-37, Tessa Goodfellow

Transition

My project is an exploration of how Newport is transformed from a mass of grey buildings and forms in the day, with a mundane, dull personality; to a landscape of alluring lights and intricate structures at night.

Although this sublime lighting emits a theatrical aesthetic pleasure, there is also a slight unease, to a point where you may wonder why this urban landscape has become so appealing. I am confronting the cities reputation by presenting the viewer with a potential encounter with in the tableaux, portraying a degree of social anxiety that all cities are linked to, but also using the artificial lighting to emit aesthetic pleasure.

I wander the streets at night, a flanuer. When walking round at night I feel motivated by the ambience of the street lights; their light contrasting with the cool of night casts a liminal spell over the city, one which I too enter under nightfall.

Pages 38-41, Jasmine Ebede

I've a plastic Olympus point and shoot camera. Fixed focus. It has a flash, though I don't have any batteries in it at the moment, and haven't had for months. I got the camera from eBay and it cost me £4.50 plus £1.50 postage. It was boxed, brand new, it was. £6 is pretty good for a camera.

I bought it a long time ago, but found it when I was packing up all my things to come back to Oxford for the summer. There was already a roll of film it it.

The camera has had a lot of rolls of film put through it in the last year, and is regularly dropped on the floor and knocked into things. There used to be a piece of green electrical tape over the battery compartment, keeping the batteries from falling out. Now there is no tape because there have been no batteries since the last pair exploded.

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ifihadthemoneyidfollowspring.co.uk

Pages 42-45, Ben Absalom & Sam Bardsley

8x's

The works presented are fragments from a book that investigates photography's capacity to create a unified record of place existing within time.

The photograph has developed an understanding that should allow it to simultaneously transpose the pictorial reading inherited from painting – the beautifying of the object, and the topographical function it acquired through it's initial introduction as a seemingly objective medium – the true representation of the object.

However, instead of a harmonious photographic space in which the viewer uses the subjective and other to create an essential reading of place, there is unease when photography is proposed as a document of a place in time, place isn't an object when it changes with time.

To deal with this dissimilation, the project uses a landscape of both personal and ubiquitous relevance to explore how we have developed our understanding of the photograph through a paradox congenital in its relationship to place. And how through new approaches towards the construction of the photographic space these oppositional renderings can be unified. The examples in this book represent three strands of the resultant pursuit: the subjective, the other, and the reactionary process that ensues through these fragments of experience.

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Pages 46-49, Emily Paterson

Biophilia

In order to understand my deep-rooted childhood connection with the New Forest and other natural environments, I have explored the notion of biophilia. The term used by entomologist Edward Wilson, describes an instinctive bond between human being's and other living things - the psychological connections we subconsciously seek with the rest of life. These deep affiliations we have with nature are rooted in our biology, as we evolved as creatures deeply entangled with the intricacies of nature.

Upon entering a natural environment, I allow myself to become 'another', forgetting a previous dislike for being photographed and becoming entranced by my surroundings, developing the instinctive natural bond. Adopting an essence of play, I act out a sequence of movements that are scattered and fluid, resulting in the physical interactions between my surroundings and myself that strengthen this connection.

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Pages 50-53, Carly Seller

By documenting the locations of recent incidents of drowning that have occurred around the Cornish coast, this work examines the conflicting relationship between the horrific and the romantic. Aesthetic appreciation is key to our formation of emotional attachments towards places, yet aesthetic pleasure can only ever be fleeting. Places that have a history of human tragedy can become compelling in ways that move beyond aesthetic appreciation. These timed exposures, which relate to the exposure of a body to water when drowning, allow for brief moments of contemplation. The ethereal quality created in the images hints at the often-noted moment of euphoria experienced by victims before death, creating tension by representing these powerful, dangerous seas as dream-like surfaces.

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Pages 54-57, Clemmie Robinson

Babcia's House

Babcia's House

Babcia died on the 13th February 2006. Her five children didn't know what to do with her house so it lay dormant for two years.

I started taking photographs just before Babcia's eldest daughter bought the house; acquired not to live in, but as a keepsake. To begin with, every shot was a memento, impulsive and emotional, but as my Aunt's possessions crept. into the house the memories began to fade into the background. The photographs became technical and I stopped looking for Babcia within them, she was pushed to the back of cupboards and hidden in wardrobes. I realised the sadness surrounding the house was not in Babcia's passing, but in her house not taking part in the same natural cycle; her food was left to rot, and her clothes left to mould and brown. There can be no blame, it is just family politics.

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Pages 58-61, Jessica Thompson

Rapt in nameless reverie

Captured between stillness and movement a figure stands alone, waiting. In silence she contemplates her idealised landscape, an expression of unnamed desires for escape and freedom through contact with a natural environment.

Her posture and immobility draw the viewer into partaking of her dreams, whatever they might be. She entices the viewer into joining in her contemplation of the beauty and tranquillity of her surroundings, expressing an underlying sense of longing. Utilising a confusion between photographic and filmic modes of representation, these 'moving pictures' deny the fulfilment of their implied narrative, whilst still alluding to the passage of time.

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Pages 62-65, Myra Eagles

Tarot

The only un-numbered card in the Tarot deck is The Fool. He is both the lowest and the highest in the hierarchy of Tarot characters. It is The Fool's journey that is laid out in the form of the other 21 picture Tarot cards. Starting with the lowest ranked, The Magician and ending with The World, the purpose of The Fool's journey is to accept his past, gain wisdom and understanding and finish where he began.

In this photographic interpretation of Tarot, I am The Fool embarking on my journey through the cards. I am present in each card, moving within the image, sometimes a shadow, sometimes a light. I hope to gain a deeper understanding of the Tarot and the archetypes of human behaviour that the cards represent and that we are all experiencing on our own personal journeys.

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Pages 66-69, Jack Briggs-Miller

Imprints

The memories of places from our childhood and the locations that surround us as we grow up, all, after a time, begin to distort and fade. Within dreams and through our memories these locations sometimes reemerge, but in a different form. They will never completely fade, there will always be a slight imprint on our minds, but they can never be fully re-visited, the memories never recaptured.

This work is an attempt to trigger these memories, not of the specific events that happened there, but the places themselves. By constructing sets which are combinations of locations from both the recent and more distant past, fictitious spaces that echo times gone by are given a physical existence, allowing for the spaces to be re-explored.

The imperfections in the sets, scales that don't quite match and elements out of place reflect the distortion within dreams and memory. They are just shells, incomplete and absent of human presence, but the familiar aspects breathe life into the rooms, re-sparking the fading memories.

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Pages 70-73, Louise Collier

Clawdd House

Fear is a journey that carries one into a sense of distress which plays on the human imagination and conjures childish qualities of allowing the mind to create stories that don't necessarily exist. The inability to stop this process only carries the body into an inner darkness that cannot be easily returned from.

Clawdd House was originally built as a family home at the beginning of the twentieth century. Following the death of the son, Cecil Lyne in 1979 it was bought by a large corporation who have seemingly abandoned it. Clawdd now sits derelict with its history long forgotten.

Working within Clawdd House has enabled me to push my boundaries in the apprehension of the unknown and communicate to the viewer this sense of irrational fear, which one creates in his or her imagination. A space such as Clawdd enhances this paranoia by its abandonment and destruction.

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Pages 74-77, Jessica Oliver

John Berger proposes that women are already established as objects to be looked at and describes men as 'possessing the gaze': 'Men look at women: Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women, but also the relation of women to themselves.'

When men look, either as a spectator or as a character within a narrative the gaze is considered to be male. Subsequently, when the gaze is male it is being directed at women, they become the object of the gaze. Therefore, 'the gaze' is considered to be male whenever women are objectified or presented as an erotic object for the pleasure of men.

The artist explores the concepts of objectification and voyeurism within the world of exotic dancing. The work is an attempt to investigate the symbiotic relationship between a dancer and an observer and to explore the power relations involved. The artist does this by objectifying and presenting herself as an object for the male viewer, therefore constructing herself as an object for the consumption of the 'male gaze'.

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Pages 78-81, Jon Pitman

Prequel

This work references true murder cases which date back to the 1980's. The images are interrelated by the fact the crimes committed have remained unsolved to this day. Each image in the series exposes a snapshot of the final moments previous to the tragic event. Any information regarding the way in which the stories play out - after the scene is initially set - has been suppressed from the viewer.

The interpretation results wholly from the viewer's own imagination; a challenge to search for clues in an otherwise typical situation. Each scene encourages an in-depth scrutiny of both the setting and the individuals personal perception, looking for a functioning explanation to be ascribed to each episode.

With the knowledge of the subject matter dictating the perception of the work, the imagery achieves a further level. Each illustration is separated from the mundane, eliciting an interest in the dichotomy of the conventional and the dramatic.

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Pages 82-85, Carolanne Butler

The Fat Of The Land

'The Fat Of The Land' is a series of prints made to show the effect that the industrialisation of meat production is having on the environment. With approximately 900 million animals slaughtered each year in Britain alone, it's easy to see what a significant role the meat industry plays within our society today.

My work isn't made to shock or disgust; it's not made to protest ideas of animal cruelty or the slaughtering of livestock; it's a look into the political issues raised by the industrialisation of meat. The images are high contrast black and white photographs. I photographed the meat in this way to remove the recognisable colours of the flesh; by doing this I've left only the textural quality of the meat as a point of recognition, thereby forcing the audience to look closer in order to understand what they are seeing.

Photographing the meat as a landscape creates a link between the meat and the land, by creating these images I want the audience to think about the meat they consume daily without a thought.

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Pages 86-89, Jo Winney

This photographic inventory systematically examines not only the volume and diversity of the commodities we accumulate, but the attachments we have to these objects. Through photographic classification, the significance we attach to our possessions is reconsidered in what is an examination of every single item I own.

The process of individually photographing each one of the 1,986 objects I possess is a method of reflection. This catalog serves as an archival record, a memoir formed by a mosaic of objects, but most significantly as a tool to offer contemplation on what the objects we surround ourselves with actually mean to us and how they clearly point to a specific moment in our lives.

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Pages 96-99, Katherine Perrett

Silentium *(silence, stillness, quiet, repose, obscurity.)*

Set in an urban Community garden, whose physical presence has all but been eliminated from view, the images refer to a space that is implied rather than exposed, where unwanted plants have grown up between the garden boundaries and the protective surface of the polytunnel. The images seem to depict

a perpetual descent into the winter months as the foliage of the Buddleia davidii slowly withdraw over the season from the almost invisible fog-like surface of the polytunnel. The images look out from the garden, beyond the boundary and through the surface that clouds the view. The invasive, unwanted Buddleia davidii peers through the murk, forcing itself into the frame revealing the unobserved remarkable that surrounds us.

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Pages 100-103, Kyle Bentley

This body of work derives from a process that conceptually started with a visual exploration of my own interactions/interventions with objects and spaces within my immediate environment.

Through reading writings on photographic theory such as Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida and Susan Sontag's, On photography the work continued to evolve and began to visually explore the ideas that were suggested in these texts. This working process has lead up to the accumulation of a number of different ideas, both based in photographic theory and of my own observations and interventions that have individually been realised through either a single image, a piece of text or a short film.

The individual works themselves are there to be used as a starting point, a visual source for the viewer to contemplate the idea that is suggested to them through the use of a title.

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Pages 104-107, Julie Cahill

Isolation that is necessary may not be wanted but isolation that is self-imposed can be a way of self-preservation. If you cannot see the world that you are excluded from you can almost believe that it is not there.

The photographer has endured a traumatic medical experience of a bone marrow transplant which involved physical isolation and later self-imposed isolation. The trauma was not just on my physical being but also on the psychological self. As a way of coping I withdrew from the world around me and tried to deal with the ordeal alone because it would cause the people she loved less pain. In a world that had become so uncertain I retreated to thr sanctuary of s church to be alone, safe and most importantly to relax and just be.

I began photographing spaces that held enormous significance from this time in hospital and the church. I want the images to represent the mindset, the psychological and the physical journey I have taken.

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Pages 108-111, Laura Michelle Power

Mere Mortal

'Mere Mortal' refers to us as being nothing more than destined to die. The term is suggestive that we cannot comprehend anything more or understand why, when considering the meaning of existence. The subjects having no specific religious beliefs seem to have a common discomfort with death. Vague in their understanding of mortality, they are accepting but also dismissive and confusion lingers on that word: mortal.

The work explores this by focusing on the human condition, the way we cope with the fragility of life and how we often respond by being ignorant of it. Inspired and curious about living with an awareness of death, the constructed work allows the audience an intimate moment of shared sadness and uncertainty towards this ambiguous subject; and asks why this is something that we all possess but will not talk about.

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Pages 112-115, Rory Geraghty

"Chiaroscuro" began as a photographic series referencing the Christian depictions of the 'stations of the cross' however as the collection matured it transcended its original incarnation becoming more secular - removed from the confines of esoteric religious dogma.

Etymologically Chiaroscuro can also be translated as clear and obscure and thus the series undercurrent of Christian themes takes on greater resonance. The clear being the transition from a static state through frenzied motion, whilst the obscure transfigures from incarceration, metamorphosing through suffering towards an ethereal spiritual entity, be that a refugees plight or a more corporal metaphor of a body struggling with disease. The figure's face is deliberately shrouded throughout the series so that he becomes a motif... an everyman... a pilgrim walking his path.

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Pages 116-119, Paul Appleby

"Montage is a collision that gives rise to an idea" Sergei Eisenstein

"And then I did nothing" is a photographic poem. The use of language and the aesthetic construction of the verse are as equally as important to the work as its descriptive and communicative value. The Japanese Haiku, two single lines to articulate a meaning that is not described in the words themselves. This was my model for the structure of my work.

The poem is a consideration of the words of Jim Morrison and "The American Prayer". Words that echo and crackle in the dust of an old twelve inch; "Have you been borne yet and are you alive". An unanswerable question but the wondering itself brings into focus our perception of this being. This is not just the ecstasy of sex or the agony of the slow impending death but the existence of the everyday. The plastic bottles, the stone statues, the supermarket deaths, the empty shops, the creatures in the sunlight, these all lead us, point us, to our own existence.

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Pages 120-123, Claire Clifton Coles

Rook Di Goo takes a look into fairy tales, not as we saw them as children, but through adult eyes and with an adult's level of understanding. Although there are hundreds of different fairy tales and many versions of each, we can see that they are all based on a few common themes and share similar morality and symbolism. Rook Di Goo chooses to look at these themes as a whole. We see a series of constructed images, which hint at ideas of loss, of innocence, Oedipal complexes, youth and beauty, oppression, puberty, death, sibling rivalry, and jealousy.

While each photograph could be a scene from a familiar tale, none is a depiction of a specific story; the images show an ambiguous all-encompassing fairy tale. On closer inspection we perceive the subtle meanings, which can be interpreted from them, revealing the disturbing undercurrents of our childhood fantasies.

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Pages 124-127, Emily Carr

Prisoner Of Conscience

After 9/11 there was a noticeable feeling of worldwide fear and anger. One part of America's moves of retaliation or protection was to open a detention centre in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This became a place with a history of using both violent and sexual torture methods.

There were many contentious views and feelings regarding this prison. Protests against the prison took place all over the world on a weekly basis. In London protests were held outside the US Embassy, with many hundreds of people attending. But who were these protestors and what were their motives? Did they really believe in their statements, or did the protests become a social scene in themselves? Did they merely become a reliable place to feel comradeship and gain a sense of purpose?

This projects looks specifically at these people and questions their motives and their place within today's society.

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Pages 128-131, Miles Bavin

What am I going to do after university? How am I going to prepare myself for the realities of the real world? What am I going to be? These are questions that under graduates may not wish to ask themselves but in this body of work they are questions that the depicted students are expected to answer.

The students in the work are all related through the photographer and all face graduation this summer. They were interviewed with questions about any fears they might have about life without the safety net of an education system, due to the personal anxieties of the photographer.

Being photographed as they considered and responded to these questions is designed to illustrate depth to the character through a more genuine portrait.

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Pages 132-135, Georgina Street

A Matter of Abstraction

Vision is a highly subjective mediation of the physical world around us. The nature of perception can reveal how the brain organises and interprets sensory stimulation into visual patterns and derive meaning from the world.

This complex process can easily be an illusion or distortion of reality. Optical or visual illusion is characterized by visually perceived images that are deceptive or misleading. Perception begins with senses in the mind, which lead us to generate reasonable concepts representing the world and images around us.

The key element of my work is that perception and scale can be deceived through the lens of a camera. Macro abstractions begin to reinvent themselves, morphing into a surreal and dreamlike fantasy, portraying a world of unfolding bizarre images. A variety of cultivated moulds were the chosen subject matter to generate this imagery.

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Pages 136-139, Colleen Ford-Ellis

Base

Often hidden, there is intrigue in the idea of a militarised space. From outside there is the question - what happens in there? Given the privilege of access, a child-like excitement of discovery emerges - a determination to go around the next corner, through the next door. The journey slows, spaces begin to feel familiar, discovery gives way to reflection. Sensing the unease of recurrent emptiness, albeit punctuated by the threatening malevolence of presence, layered histories emerge from the surfaces of today. Events known, but not experienced, enter the consciousness and are subtly connected through the fusion of space and human experience.

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Pages 140-143, Elliott Wilcox

This work examines representations of the enclosed spaces of sports courts. In photographing the empty courts, absent of the fast paced action we are so familiar with, these environments reveal themselves in a new light. The camera shows details that the viewer can see closely, revealing many subtleties that usually go unnoticed. The vivid stains, ball marks, blood and scratches force the viewer to focus on these details rather than just the court.

The courts have one single use – a ball game, with all their complicated rules and regulations. These normally sub-conscious spaces become alive. Much like a gallery space is missed to the artwork, the space of these courts is missed to the sport. These large format images are slow and deliberate. The non-judgemental image creates an experience to explore, a path to revealing the unnoticed and exposing the unexposed, consequently romanticising these environments.

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Pages 144-147, Abigail Evans

Vista Avarice

The subtle disquiet surrounding the images of 'Vista Avarice' presents an ironic understanding of the landscapes portrayed. These locations have been spoilt; sullied by mankind in its search for valuable materials, fulfilling the human desire for the riches of nature. Yet they remain beautiful and unique.

As time passes by, these lands, remote and quiet, no longer disturbed by harmful human activity, are gradually returned to nature's care. Over time the land slowly recovers, evolving as the visible evidence of the pollution fades, and as the legacy of the industry that used to exist, gradually subsides. Even in these lands, once heavily contaminated, the beauty of nature prevails.

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Pages 148-151, Samuel Wheeler

Samuel Wheeler has combined his knowledge of martial arts with the use of staged photography to create scenes which explore certain dualities. Martial art is by its nature contradictory, it is a passive and defensive art which is created through the use of aggressive techniques. Many outside of the world of martial arts view it as aggressive or rough, when in reality the opposite is true, it is calm and peaceful.

The images have dualities of their own which mirror the defensive/aggressive nature of martial arts, the partially obscured figure in the scenes seems uninvited, and it is possible that the other characters are unaware of his presence. This suggests that the figure is an aggressor making the martial artist appear imposing and threatening. However the protective side of martial arts challenges this reading, the possibility arises that the figure could be a guardian of the character in the images.

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Pages 152-155, Nicolas Hughes

Illuminant

This work challenges our notion of a truly creative act based upon the relationship between space and creative perception. The interior of our own intimate personal environment has often been depicted as a space in which the creative mind can thrive with inspiration.

The window allows the light from the sun to illuminate this space, much like a plants growth depends on the relationship it has with the sun, the source of all life, creativity will flourish if exposure is decent and will shrivel if exposure is poor. One facet of the work engages in an exploration between the relationship that is inherent in light and the intimate personal environment.

In reaction to the notion of light governing creativity, a number of Individuals were asked to be creative in a space that to them is alien but to the artist is highly personal and visually familiar. The bedroom space was devoid of natural light in an attempt to stem the creative flow. The two bodies of work come together to help to articulate our creative interpretation of a space.

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Pages 156-159, Frederick Duffield

The Good Life

Frederick Duffield came from Great Yarmouth to Wales to learn the ancient art of the bards. Needing to find new ways to tell a story, he learnt how to spin yarns, weaving twines and strands consisting of photographs, print, propaganda and a shed, together into a fragmented tale that alludes to: the necessity of creation; the world and its revolutions; self-sufficiency and its impossibility; rhythms of life; and a bondage to rebirth.

In other practices, Freddie makes art for an age of reproduction; using various means: photography, text, photocopiers, vernacular imagery and the exhibition as medium, he aims to create a structure that enables him to become self sufficient of culture and be free to live the good life.

Pages 160-163, Karen Skeats

Pseudo Stories

'Pseudo Stories' addresses the issues of snapshot photography alongside the viewing process. Family snapshots of birthdays become iconic once on display in the album. Enclosed within the frame of the camera, figures are positioned alongside objects expected to be seen at a birthday celebration. Loaded with the connotations of a birthday, we can assume that the images in this series portray actual events. The viewer is intended to interact with these as they would any birthday snapshot; initially believing that they depict reality. However, the series requires the gaze to be held for longer, in order to reveal that these are in fact, staged birthdays. The camera is placed so as to open up the scene and invite the viewer to become part of the space. Through the frame of the camera, this work reveals and questions the familial pose and encourages further thinking about the façade of family life as on display in the album.

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Pages 164-167, Hannah Breslin

It all began with a frolic

'It all began with a frolic' is a Video/Performance piece, which concentrates on the connections between a body, the language it uses to communicate and the environment that surrounds it. The piece is shown on one screen, divided into three parts. Each segment of the screen shows a mannerism that belongs to the performer, this mannerism has been carefully considered and in the act of performing was used to accentuate its intrinsic characteristics to see more clearly how it reacts with the space around it. It is through the act of concentration on the subtlety of the movement that we can learn to read what our bodies have to say and how they use the space around them to say it.

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Pages 168-171, Craig Brannon

The transformation of the city from day to night creates a dramatic atmosphere and significantly transforms our relationship to the buildings and spaces that make up the fabric of our cities.

Construction sites observed during the day can be an eyesore and a nuisance to the public causing delays, disruption and pollution from dust and noise. As night approaches, these vast spaces are often brightly illuminated. The skeletal shell of these structures is intensified by the ever-changing lights on the steel framework, drawing the viewer into the rich colours and sheer scale of these now beautiful buildings in their raw state, highlighted against the dark night sky.

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Pages 172-175, Tom Sparey

Murdered to Death

'Murdered to Death' explores the amateur dramatics of suburban theatre, and the documentation of their domestic environment through staged performances that are selected from the play. The photographs portrayed, draws traditions and conventions of staged theatre role-play. The subjects display choreographed poses from the script Murdered to Death; a spoof performance set in a country manor house in the 1930s, with an assembled cast of characters that create side-splitting antics, which follow the mysterious death of the house's owner.

The theatrical portraits analyse the vernacular aesthetic of the homeowner and suburban styles of domestic living. As the over theatrical performance of the characters role is represented through their facial expression and subject placement. The actors are extracted out of the theatre stage and placed within there own home. This creates a façade and over exaggerated tableau vivant image of their character's performance within the play, whilst glimpsing into their own suburban life style. The images represent an eerie outlook through the subject placement creating an abnormal setting within the actor's domestic space. On stage the performers expressions seem natural, compared to the juxtaposition of the characters domestic life styles that are intertwined with the performance of their role. Merging theatrical expression with there own domestic environment creates discomfort and abnormal expressions of the amateur dramatic society.

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Pages 176-179, Jennifer Peel

In the derelict and abandoned spaces of our present society, we have the contemporary ruin. The monumental and historical ruin is replaced with sites of neglect and decay: empty spaces that disband the picturesque monuments and substitute them with disintegrating places of sociological collapse. These are places where time is suspended, where the ruin has fallen from active time to allow past, present and future to converge into one. Ruins and photography both preserve for posterity. Through the process of fixing them on photographic paper we create an illusion of reclaiming them from further decay and dissolution. With their fragmented traces of times now past, we are invited to create our own narratives, the ruin acts as a dialogue between an incomplete reality and the imagination of the spectator. Indeed sometimes, the things we do not know are more fascinating than the things we do.

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Pages 180-183, Georgina Kloss

I am Rhondda

With the decline of industry in the Rhondda Valleys (1960's), much of the population was forced out of employment. In trying to deal with these life-changing circumstances, and the new lack of affluence or outside interest in the area, a solid communal front was formed amongst the local communities. The land, however, is often seemingly disregarded by these people and simply viewed as a commodity.

Finding myself in this Welsh environment, my initial feelings were of unexpected displacement, a sensation of not belonging to my immediate surroundings. This series considers the outsider in relation to this divergent environment and culture. Creating interventions and improvised acts to reveal a distant identity, a notion of not being entirely worthy of such a bleak and dull sight, to explore the historical formation of the Rhondda Valleys. Contained within a square the figure is forced into a confined, enclosed space. Such a regular shape becomes an irregular self-portrait, in which my sense of self seems hidden or dominated. When we see a land as a community, which you don't belong in, we become a hostage. Deformed in a deformed landscape.

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Photography and the New Pictorial

Mark Durden, May 2008

Art photography today is best seen to be characterised by its openness. The strictures and prohibitions of theory-driven practices in the 1980s, the anxieties over what one could and could not do with a camera, are long past, and so are the anxieties over technology. The digital age has not meant the death of photography, far from it. The digital has led to a greater circulation and immediacy of image capture and distribution. And at the same time it has ushered in a revival of older forms of photographic production, display and distribution— slower, more archaic and traditional practices and forms persist. The screen has yet to replace the book as a central form through which to situate and view art photography today.

It is very much a new vitality, energy— and, to a certain extent, innocence— that has come to characterise photography now: one very open to the pictorial and affective capacities of the medium, a photography tied to the lifeworld, the pulse and animation of being in the world. Take Paul Graham's extraordinary A Shimmer of Possibility— a boxed collection of books, 167 colour photographs sequenced and organised within twelve individual volumes. The pictures are caught up with the naïve thrill at the pictorial possibilities of things in the world. Graham gives us little observed epiphanies from American life, like the rich floral patterning of a tattooed arm as it reaches out from a car to collect fast food at a drive-in, the textured surface of the bonnet of a battered car— the image of which is seen to be enough to warrant a volume in itself— a sequence showing a black male figure mowing grass and the transformation of the scene by the sudden downpour of a shower of rain, sunsets, animal hairs on a sweatshirt, grubby jackets, the unappetising display of food and commodities in small dime stores. All loosen and pull against the overriding documentary impulse and legibility of the volumes— collectively his latest pictures mark out the social and racial divisions of our contemporary Apartheid America. This was the more explicit theme of his previous publication, American Night, a book that used the very light and dark binary of the photographic process as an allegory of the contemporary social divide. The recent photography owes to literature, according to Graham, taking its inspiration and point of reference from Anton Chekhov's short stories, where certain events and things were simply described in detail, descriptions that elevated and enriched what was (for Chekhov) the familiar and everyday.

Alec Soth's metaphorical photography echoes the lyricism that marks Graham's recent multi-volumed publication. The large format pictures that make up Soth's book Niagara, 2006, have as their subject love, passionate and romantic love. The sublime landscape setting of the Falls serves as an exposure of the tawdriness of the human affairs of the heart. The tacky love motels with their heart-shaped red baths and towels folded into kissing swans, the bitterness and sadness symbolised by the single whisky glass, the pawned rings, all establish an iconography of love that is then played out against the mesmerising void and beauty of the Falls, and also played out against the physical display of couples' naked bodies. This is very much a project about limitation and the incommensurable— the gulf between these physical bodies, their naked and fleshy presence rawly detailed by the camera lens, and the terror, splendour and magnificence of Niagara Falls. Soth also introduces us to the excessive language of lovers, photographing pages of their intimate letters and giving them the same visual weight and import (in the book) as his views of the Falls. The love letters' language— florid, over the top, romantic— might be seen to begin to approach the sublimity of the Falls. Yet the handwriting, the crossings out, the spelling, the grammar, brings us up against less idealised, more human and limiting realities.

Soth's pictures are marked by an enchantment and hypersensitivity to things in the world, a mirror of the condition of the lover perhaps. But at the same time this state of awe and enrapture before things is undercut by the cruelty of irony and the sharpness of the lens, particularly in its rendition of flesh. Graham very often sequences his pictures, clusters of images track small events and fleeting encounters, but also set up divisions. While we become conscious of the different economies and social relations in our viewing of the volumes that makes up this work, what is different is that Graham makes palpable and sensuous the more familiar documentary subject matter. The detail of hands holding a large white Styrofoam cup that opens and closes one volume, for example, alludes to begging, but avoids the emotional pleading of the humanist documentary tradition. One begins to sense Graham's viewpoint in the portrait of a woman at her mail box, from a series showing the big houses of a tree-lined estate— eyes closed she is caught at a point of haughty indifference to us and the world Graham makes present. Class-marked judgements of taste are also part of our relation to Soth's book, for all the abstraction and universality of love, signs here betray and mark out a certain economic group. But such documentary legibility is not central. This is the important difference with this new work and the exciting shift it signals, with photography now much more open to the medium's lyrical, pictorial and emotive potentialities— despite its propensity to the cool, detached and deadpan— and a sense of the importance of the elliptical and open against the fixity of the illustrational and polemical.

BRINK

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