

A F T E R

Sophie-Mai Pemberton



How Does the Photographic Image
Act as a Therapeutic Tool for
Trauma and Memory?

Sophie-Mai Pemberton

2005220

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

BA (Hons) Photography in the Arts,

University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea

14th December 2022

Word Count: 5,000

(This excludes Table of Content, List of Illustrations, and Bibliography).

Table of Content:

List of Illustrations	4
Abstract	6
Introduction	7
Chapter One: The Relationship between Memory and Trauma	
How Does Trauma Affect Memory?	10
Memory and Trauma: The Connection to the Studium and Punctum within the Photographic Image	14
Chapter Two: How have other elements of society engaged my photographic practice?	20
Chapter Three: Methodologies: The Relationship between the Photographic Narrative and Expression.	27
Conclusion	38
Reference List	40

List of Illustrations:

Figure 1: Liang, N (2020) *More than Cake: Unravelling the Mysteries of Proust's Madeleine*. [Moving-Image] Penguin Books. Available at: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2020/07/more-than-cake-unravelling-the-mysteries-of-proust-s-madeleine> (Accessed: 3 December 2022)

Figure 2: Hedges, N (1969) *Child at doorway of a Liverpool Multi Let*. [Photography] Families in the interior of slum housing. Nick Hedges Photography. Accessed: 15 November 2022. Available at: <http://www.nickhedgesphotography.co.uk/photo-gallery/slum-housing-and-poverty/families-and-the-interiors-of-slum-housing>

Figure 3: Thuman, D (2019) *Hidden Trauma*. [Photography] The EFT Clinic. Accessed: 2 December 2022. Available at: <https://theftclinic.com/eftblog/2019/1/5/hidden-trauma>

Figure 4: Stepp, K (2019) *Single Again... Fake Feelings*. [Photography] Georgia News Daily. Accessed: 2 December 2022. Available at: <https://georgianewsdaily.com/single-again-fake-feelings/>

Figure 5: Elisabeth (2020) *The Fragments of a Dysfunctional Family*. [Photography]

Beating Trauma. Accessed: 2 December 2022. Available at:

<https://beatingtrauma.com/2020/06/17/the-fragments-of-a-dysfunctional-family/>

Figure 6: Pemberton, S. (2022) *AFTER Page: Deconstructive Object*. [Photography]

Adobe Photoshop.

Figure 7: Pemberton, S. (2022) *Demons*. [Photography] AFTER. Swansea, Wales

Figure 8: Munch, E. (1893) *The Scream*. [Painting] National Gallery, Oslo. Accessed:

6 December 2022. Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-edvard-munch-expressed-anxiety-modern>

Figure 9: Pemberton, S. (2022) *Connected*. [Photography] AFTER. Penarth, Wales.

Figure 10: Pemberton, S. (2022) *Realism*. [Video] AFTER. Penarth, Wales.

(Video available on request)

Abstract.

This thesis explores personal trauma through the relationship between memory and photography. As the constructive element of my practice uses archival and contemporary image-making techniques to explore photography's potential to be a therapeutic tool, a fundamental process has become the form of expressionism, using the body to portray a narrative through the aspect of the format of self-portraiture. This thesis is written from an autobiographic perspective and will speak from the position of 'I'.

Keywords: Memory. Photography. Trauma. Healing. Punctum. Methodologies.

Introduction.

In order to establish an informed understanding of how a photographic image has evolved through the concept of a traumatic event, this allows the recollection of past and present memories, I intend to explore personal trauma through the relationship between memory and photography. My practice uses archival and contemporary image-making techniques to explore photography's potential as a therapeutic tool. This thesis is written from an autoethnographic perspective and will speak from the position of 'I'.

Chapter 1 will explore the relationship between memory and trauma through the psychological context of false memory, and the perception of a photographic image through a traumatic context. Through the dysfunctional narrative of the human brain, I aim to explore the psycholinguistics of fuzzy-trace theory which is analysed within Marcel Proust's seminal text *In Search of Lost Time* (1913) (2003), '*Petite Madeleine*' and the impact upon the sensory experiences through memory and taste.

Furthermore, the connection with Roland Barthes's seminal text *Camera Lucida* (1993) (1980) includes the photographic perspective of the *studium* and the *punctum*. The connection between this thesis is the context behind Barthes' intent for *Camera Lucida* (1993) (1980), an element of grief and a reflection of emotional healing he portrayed within that text.

Chapter 2 will explore multiple concepts within society, a movement within an individual's identity known as the 'masked self'. The association within my photographic practice disputes these elements, from Erving Goffman's *The Performed Self* (1956), to exploring the distinction between an individual's relationship within the family dynamic.

Throughout existence, you are nurtured with growth within a family environment, however, we are not fortunate with such certainties. An exploration within a collection of past and present memories have allowed an engagement within fundamental aesthetics which reflect on our personalities, and how this concept relates to the principles of the cycle between birth and pre-existence.

In the final chapter, I intend to break down the main conceptual processes and methodologies within my photographic practice. The use of the '*punctum*' plays a vital role in the key developments of my practice, by way of personal traumatic experiences that dive into blocked memories which have been kept out of sight. These areas are explored through the conceptual creative outlet of photographic imagery.

This process allows the ability to explore the context of the truth to evolve within the development of, bookmaking, layout, and human experiences. Whilst simultaneously questioning the relationship between expressiveness and the photographic concept tool 'the body', by the utilisation of aspects of storytelling narrative to portray emotive photography.

Chapter One:

The Relationship between Memory and Trauma.

How does Trauma Affect Memory?

The understanding of false memory is the conceptual function where our brains piece together fragments of our memories that make sense and can therefore feel as though they were real. The realism of gist and verbatim memory was established in psycholinguistics. Verbatim memory is the surface form for the mental representation of the stimulus, for example, words, numbers, and photographs. Whereas, gist memory is the essential meaning, the ‘substance’ of symbolic mental representation of the stimulus that captures the meaning, not the stimulus itself (Thompson, 2014. P. 35). However, the theory of psycholinguistics did not consider the representations of gist and verbatim memory to be independent; the idea for its independence was introduced within what is known as the Fuzzy-Trace theory.

When memory fragments are recalled separately, they can sometimes be recombined within the alternative framework and thus create a false memory. An instant smell, sight, or touch can transport our senses to the past in that very glue between reality and memory. In Marcel Proust’s seminal text, *In Search of Lost Time* (1913) (2003), Proust discusses memory from his childhood and the ability to reminisce through sensations such as taste or smell.

His theory of the ‘*Petite Madeleine*’ describes an instant mouthful of tea and cake as an extraordinary pleasure that had invaded his memories through taste. This

connection with memory is invoked involuntarily when it has been forgotten, however, the same feeling occurs when it is long-buried and gradually brought to the surface of consciousness “this unknown state which brought with it no logical proof, but only the evidence of its felicity, its reality, and in whose presence the other states of consciousness faded away” (Proust, 2003, p. 48).



Fig 1: More than the Cake: Unravelling the Mysteries of Proust’s Madeleine.

Proust may have triggered a recollection of this memory through taste, however, there is the alternative question to smell, how has Proust no recollection of the aroma of the *Petite Madeleine*? Could we argue that the reason behind this is Proust's inability to identify where the sensation is coming from, despite the text's indication that the sensory impulse is through taste? I, however, must disagree with this contradiction claiming this theory is false due to a slight implication.

I can understand this theory as false due to Proust's immediate association with his taste, however, there is no mention of smell. Despite this opinion, it does not mean that another will agree. However, I will expand the understanding of taste and smell within the conceptual function known as memory, this has evolved significantly since the evolution of this theory was published.

Through an individual's body, we are not always aware of our senses, taste and olfaction provide a broad range of daily sensations within our ability to recollect a past memory as "the odor and taste signature of a particular food is not necessarily static and may include information shaped by dynamic processes included in learning and memory" (Miranda, 2012. p. 482).

Accordingly, all concepts of opinions depend on the experience one another has with the recollection of memories, as discussed, many readers believe the impossibility in Proust's theory of '*Petite Madeleine*' is scientifically incorrect due to the implication of discussion of taste not smell. The argument is that it is not possible to recollect a memory with a singular taste, I view this concept to be an

understanding of what we view to taste and smell as “occurring in similar chemosensory regions of the brain, including the anterior insula, frontal operculum, orbitofrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex” (Smith and Prescott, 2005, p. 349).

Therefore, in response to recollecting a traumatic memory the relation to this theory of our senses has a natural fear response to a significant extent within the impact on the brain, thus forming a natural response within the ability to encounter what is human development, “the smell, the taste, the sound of the song, which triggers the mind to unleash its ghosts” (Finney, 2020).

Thus, there is no importance to which aspect of our senses comes first, they all play a vital role in the matter of memory. Despite the basis of opinion, there is no sign of importance to which is of value the “integration across sensory modalities is reflected in the presence of multimodal neurons that receive converging sensory information” (Small and Prescott, 2005, p. 345), therefore, a relatively natural response to an instant memory triggered through a sense of pleasure is to be able to only implicate one of our senses, whether this is sight, touch, smell, or taste, each one plays a significant role within the appropriate situation.

Memory and Trauma: The Connection to the *Stadium* and *Punctum* within the Photographic Image.

In recollection within the aspect of false memory, we move forward within the association of the photographic image through the concept of trauma. Barthes's seminal text *Camera Lucida* explores photography's meaning from multiple perspectives. Barthes coins several terminologies to explore the photographic image including the '*Stadium*' and the '*Punctum*'.

Photographs can puncture our sense of reality and history, the '*stadium*' indicates a social and cultural meaning extracted through the analysis of semiotics. Whereas, the '*punctum*' is the result of a subjective and unpredictable interaction between the viewer and the image. However, I would also distinguish the '*punctum*' intentional shock and literal traumatising within a photographic image, the wounds or disruption that define the true essence of the '*punctum*'. For example, I experience the photograph (Fig. 2) to be an initial attraction to a young shadow figure within the middle window panel.

I instantly feel a magnetic pull to this figure, a young child a boy or girl in distress in need of support, however, this is the ultimate version of reality. When I look at this photograph, the tendency to reveal a traumatic sense of feeling, we either look away or, turn our back on an experience thus creating a narrative of the past. "I

shall therefore call punctum; for punctum is also: sting, speck, cut, little hole – and also a cast of the dice,” (Barthes, 2000, p. 27), thus transforming the concept of trauma into a narrative portraying emotion and depth within society.



Fig 2: *Child at doorway of a Liverpool Multi Let.*

Families in the Interior of Slum Housing is a series of images taken to document the housing crisis within the late 60s and early 70s across various locations within the United Kingdom such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield, and Glasgow. This image portrays a three-panel outside door which documents the inside and external world of the participants within the image.

The context of the photograph can be broken into the complexities of the *studium* which displays an enigmatic environment of poverty, as the children in it are suffering, whereas the *punctum* can be one of the children within the light standing in the right window panel, a ghostly figure of the young child within the central window.

The children located in Liverpool portray a sense of entrapment, a door shut acts as a metaphor for her social situation. The mysterious child figure appears almost completely dark, I perceive that the child within the first window panel is left forgotten, seeking comfort, although, I notice whilst gazing that his/her eyes are looking in the direction of the other child. A strong statement, the boy/girl's figure is pushed into the background more like a spectator.

As I gaze upon the photograph it could be the wonders of imagination, I can see a third child within the window panel on the left side of the image. In association with this photographic image as the viewer, this experience reveals a reminiscence of personal trauma and an instant connection thus, using the implications of the

'studium' and the *'punctum'* to analyse (Fig. 2) from a relatively theoretical and cognitive perspective.

Memory is affected when we experience psychological trauma. The association with trauma examines those who bear witness to unbearable events, which can have an impact on the cognitive functions of the human brain. The meaning of 'trauma' has multiple iterations to the definition; Acute, which results within a single incident, Chronic, often repeated through abuse or domestic violence, and Complex, an exposure to multiple traumatic events often through an invasive and interpersonal nature. These elements are associated with the following psychosis of mental health such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

An individual's biological response to the stress of traumatic episodes is a source of multiple layers working consistently with the body's attention against a threatening home environment. This is explained through a psychological response known as 'fight or flight'. This response is triggered by the release of hormones that prepare the body to take charge, meaning stay and deal with the threat, to hide, or to run away for safety.

It can also be argued that the notion in association with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) when our physiological needs are satisfied, there is then a sub-conscious need for safety, these implications are often met throughout society, however, I feel that the sense of security as a child is the sole responsibility for which falls upon those from whom we learn? The answer is simple, our parents.



Fig 3: Hidden Trauma.

Chapter Two:

How Have Other Elements of Society Engaged my Photographic Practice?

In society, we are all individually carved by our social, political, and environmental upbringings. We are shaped into an image of our surroundings, from gender, religious belief, and socio-economic background. Through a personal constructive environment, there is often the implication that an individual is most likely to come through a successful career within a socially constructive environment. However, if I were to reverse this theory and focus specifically on the dysfunctional aspects of family relationships, not everyone is fortunate to have a loving bond between family members.

A family is one in which conflict and problematic events are common, despite being able to grow and nurture a bond by blood through the concept of understanding one another, I fail to grasp the ideal perception of parents' unconditional love. Attempting to understand a child's feelings can result in anger which transfers the mentality of guilt onto the child.

In some circumstances, parents "lack the ability to emotionally tune in to their kids" (Psychology Today, 2011), which can cause detachment between the parent and child relationship. However, psychologists and various mental health professionals have been able to address the common concerns associated with dysfunctional families at the source of helping their clients to overcome problematic issues regarding traumatic events. An individual may become isolated within the family dynamic due to self-image, an overload sensory impact due to criticisms in the form of bullying.

There is often the fundamental notion that within society, we as individuals, question the preservation of self-identity within the concept of ‘The Performed Self’ a theory developed by Erving Goffman (1959). It is said that as individuals we display a series of masks defining multiple personalities, (Fig 4) this is dependent on the current situation enacting a role to present ourselves within a formal matter. Through a performative constrictive basis, we stage every aspect of how we interact with one another.



Fig 4: Single Again... Fake Feelings.

As a result, Goffman defines a simplistic question within our characteristics, do we have a true self or are we endlessly performing? Perhaps, a serious aspect of our characteristics idealises from the psychological basis of mental health, expressing feelings of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem, as we become adults of dysfunctional families, we focus “on that moment resolves the atmosphere into a discrete emotional experience” (Brown, 2014. p. 333). An individual’s advantage to continue the cycle is through the development of a problematic perpetual dysfunctional environment, in this case where they seek solitude.

As a result of feeling manipulated or insecure a theoretical basis for this concept is known as The Dark Triad of Personality, which defines three negative traits of personality; Narcissism: Comes from the Greek myth of Narcissus, a hunter who fell in love with his reflection in a pool of water and drowned. Narcissistic people can be selfish, boastful, arrogant, lacking in empathy, and hypersensitive to criticism.

Machiavellianism: The word comes from the renowned 16th-century Italian politician and diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli. Traits associated with Machiavellism include duplicity, manipulation, self-interest, and a lack of both emotion and morality.

Finally, Psychopathy: It is important to note that within this distinction between psychopathic traits and being a psychopath, this is commonly held in association with criminal violence. This is commonly referred to as a personality trait associated with psychopathy including a lack of empathy or remorse, antisocial behaviour, and being manipulative and volatile.

These recollections differ from a past-life recall. In that past life, recalls are memories of precious lives on earth as humans. Where were you? Your soul, your spirit, before you were born? If the soul is immortal, did it have a 'life' before your birth? There is a continuity of self, that the 'same you' progresses through each of the three life stages, life before life, earth life, and life after death. According to Wagner (2018), the preborn soul often announces that he or she is ready to advance from premortal existence by being born into earth life.

20 years on, scientists have collected, and analysed research data that compares a spiritual phenomenon which has identified typical traits, characteristics, and types of PBEs also when to whom, and when they occur. Within "the relationship between family communication style in regard to the past traumatic experiences of parents and children's affection towards them" (Minullina, 2018, p. 67) we idolise the theoretical construction of self-preservation, this allows us to think about when it comes into play as we grow and develop our neurological functions.

To a child, a parent seems the most powerful being in the adult world, nevertheless, regarding a child's brain development he or she should feel loved. According to Maslow's theory *Hierarchy of Needs*, an individual's need for love is the third element on his pyramid showcasing a full spectrum of human psychological needs. Despite the concept of the pyramid moving within higher or lower levels of satisfaction, we are all capable of having the desire to move towards the level of self-actualisation.

The notion of being part of a family environment is essential to a child's sense of security where no harm will fall upon them as they develop an understanding of the fundamental aspects of society, elements of good and bad, "to give up false judgements would be to give up life, to deny life' (Nietzsche. 1998, 2008. p. 7). As this internal construction of human understanding is hidden within every detail from the words, we speak to the actions we undertake. Essentially, the need for solitude is a place to contemplate traces of recollection of those memories of birth, developing a sense of immortality, feeling that essence of comfort within the arms of another, and the craving for protection as affection continues to grow within us.



Fig 5: The Fragments of a Dysfunctional Family.

The familiar equation of double features “inherits doubling of trauma to itself would not only blur the line between origin and repetition but may indeed come to blur any final distinction between trauma and its symbolic “binding” (Comay, 2010, p. 93). Thus, it has a lasting effect on what we see, and hear, the horrific momentum, therefore, being able to capture the perfect photograph at the most precise moment.

This concept is explored within Susan Sontag’s seminal text *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) (2019), no redefinition can change such events outlined through a phantom’s absence. Whether we are physically or mentally conscious, the past cannot redefine the present “photographs that everyone recognizes are now a constituent part of what a society chooses to think about or declares that it has chosen to think about” (Sontag, 2019, p. 74).

This also indicates that displaying photographic imagery of traumatised makes the spectator experience empathy through an image of violence, questioning whether to feel pain or understand grief within a contextual environment. Therefore, what is projected within a past moment, may display historical content, however, also alternatively could potentially recognise the positive attributes of photography as a therapeutic tool.

Chapter Three:

Methodologies: The Relationship between the Photographic Narrative and Expression.

Opening wounds from a delicate source can be harmful to yourself,
although, it is how you treat the wound, time will heal it.

(Pemberton, 2022)

As a distinct object within a parameter of autism, I have a different perspective on how I see people and nature, the universe. Constructing a pressure point that brings an enormous weight within a lack of understanding, and depth of knowledge of the concept of interaction. I aim to explore the relationship between personal trauma and memory. As a result of experience beyond imagination, the space to breathe and process the dynamic of the event is instantly blocked and located in the back of the mind and memory.

I feel the atmosphere of space, a sanctuary to grasp the concept of time. Through a recollection of theoretical concepts, there is one which has played a vital element in the ability to reflect upon a photograph. As stated within the second construct of Chapter One, Barthes' knowledge of the '*Punctum*' has captured a perceived sense of identity within a traumatic photograph. I walk through this practice with self-permission to understand what I see. Through a unique and fundamental process, I view the '*punctum*' as a sense of grief which pierces through an element engaging within emotional boundaries.

I intend to master the unique fundamental aspect of book format; I view this aspect as an alternative method beyond the surface of production. I can say within the short time I have been experimenting with various methodologies I have developed a unique construction of expressionism using archival and contemporary images (Fig 6) to construct a dynamic language.

As time punctures our ability to associate with history, the connection between an individual and location sets limitations within the socially constructive surroundings. This narrative of personal aesthetics has an engagement through various cultural and psychological advances, to find a creative source of uncovering the truth behind trauma that has ruptured the lens within ways of seeing.

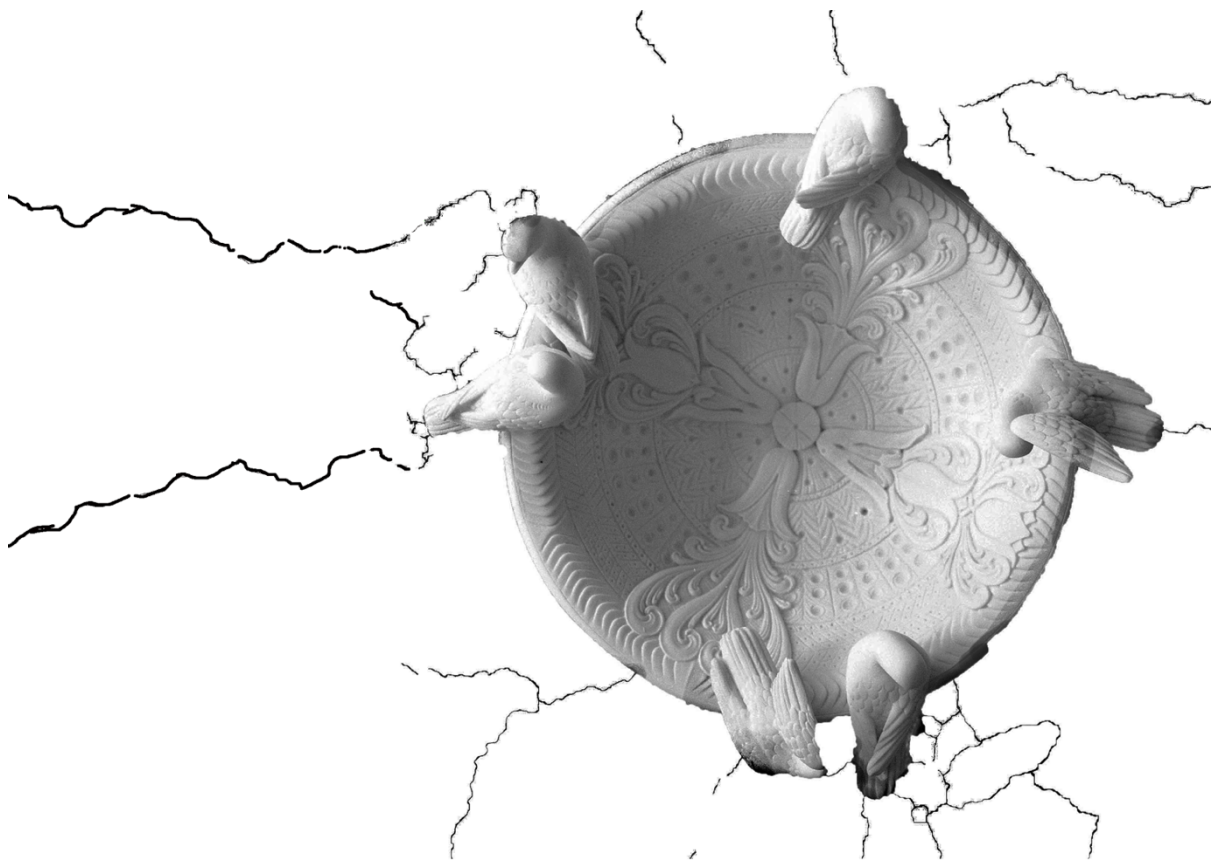


Fig 6: AFTER Page: Deconstructive Object.

As the spectator gazing upon an entire reflection of self-healing therapy, I play a significant role in the process. To begin narrowing down the complexities of emotive language on paper, one needs to deconstruct the memoir of self-reflective healing. A therapeutic journal is a practiced method of stress release used to analyse the emotional awareness surrounding us.

Dr James Pennebaker (1993) states the importance of keeping a record of every daily or psychological matter to “letting go and talking about these experiences” (p.164). This is an expressive protocol utilizing improvements in both physical and psychological health. Despite the ability, we would usually formulate these matters into words, however, how would you register these thoughts and feelings with a photographic image? Does the question remain as to whether it is possible to create a photographic image that inhabits you? Perhaps, the context of a narrative is a way of self-description and considers the possibilities in which a mirror reflection shows every movement you express.



Fig 7: Demons.

Through the eye of the lens, you construct a performance piece of expressionism, within a symbolic space between thought and impulse, thus producing a formulation of effect within the image. The conception of language is understood no more than the actual existence of a photographic image. This signifies traces left within words, heard, or seen through visual elements of expressionism creating a vital therapeutic tool within artistry.

Despite the affection of human expression the implications of the psychological concept that 'autism' is a reflection within the aspect of self-preservation, there is no right or wrong. I have developed a greater understanding since receiving a diagnosis, more specifically how my childhood was different. An insight into brain development and the ability to interact with others as a sensory experience which is "estimated to occur in as many as 90% of autistic individuals and to affect every sensory modality: taste, touch, audition, smell and vision" (Robertson and Baron-Cohen, 2017, p. 671).

Consciousness constructs the power of allowing the individual to understand the body through the concept of photographic communication an "aesthetic expression confers on what expresses an existence in itself" (Ponty, 1945, p. 212).

Expressionism has evolved significantly since the rise of its artistic revolution in the twentieth century, (Fig 7) is a metaphorical element constructed as a cultural response through creativity which characterises the basis of conceptual and theoretical performances.

To portray what cannot be put into words is said that the analogy behind the 'representation' of the characteristics is 'body', 'psyche' 'self', and 'sexuality'. This offers a natural movement through the concept of expressive self-portraiture, expressionism is focused on the emotional response of the artist to the real world within an existence of art such as Vincent Van Gogh (1889), and Edvard Munch (1984).

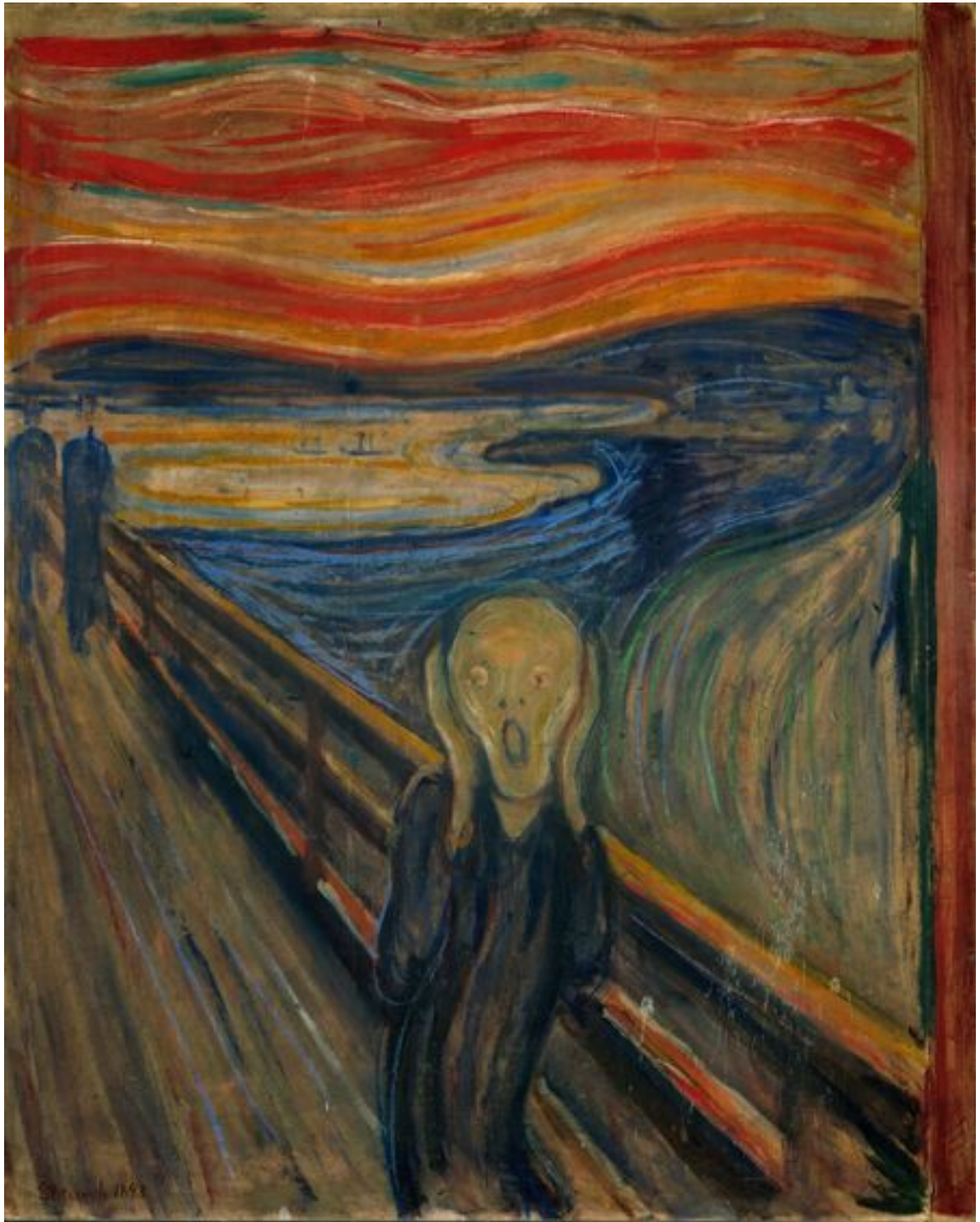


Fig 8: The Scream

This painting (Fig. 8) reveals an intensifying fulfilment of what expressionism should be, I felt struck by the eyes of anxiety, and the body language within his movement through the use of colour. This contextualises every stroke of a brush including the warmth within tones of the sky, and the coldness through water particles, however, the '*punctum*' within this piece is the expression on his face.

It is almost as if the painting itself is brought with a sense of purpose to portray a message meaning as much as we are unique, anxiety is an emotion we cannot understand. The distressed figure within the painting is surrounded by colours showcasing the warmth and depth within a sense of constructed feeling.

Through the process of storytelling, utilizing the body to portray a narrative of personal trauma has been a challenge beyond perception, especially through the photographic technique of 'long exposure'. This creates an element of the trace within the condition of memory recollection as "photography's capacity to record reality becomes suspect, the product never more than a shadow of that reality, and subject to the complementary narrative of memory in its interpretation" (Rau, 2006, p. 315).

The concept of expression depicts a stimulation along a sense of trajectory which then is subject to the phantom-like state of the brain. I deconstruct the surroundings which play a vital role in creating the ideal situation for self-portraiture using long exposure "a common derivation from another meaning of 'true' which is not expressed in the concept of truth as correspondence" (Heidegger, 2013, p. 3).

A consistent source of lighting harnesses an element of beauty and meaning showcasing the possibilities through a photographic lens.

However, I see a form of expression beyond our imagination, in a period where the formalization of pushing boundaries was being introduced within the evolutionary establishment. Through the utilization of texture and colour to produce a piece that represents emotion, or mental health within a post-modern constructive era “all the essential moments having a role in the remarkable fact that these human beings, however peculiar their situation may be, have the unhidden, or, as we inappropriately say, the true, before them” (Heidegger, 2013, p. 25).



Fig 9: Connected.

Despite the element of healing and storytelling becoming a significant feature through the universal language known as the truth, I seek to understand the abstract meaning within past trauma and how a bond with your sibling can justify all aspects of healing within a single installation. Within a setting, Penarth Pier (Fig. 9) is a place where culture and history portray momentum for us in both emotional and

persistent periods. The sequence portrays an element of family, a Brother and Sister utilizing memory through a single moment of reflection.

Through this outcome, the purpose of expression has brought an aspect of healing (Fig 10). This media abstract has struck a '*punctum*' through a trace of the significance within the slow movement of body language, for them both a mutual understanding of childhood trauma and a new era within universal time. Despite the construction of a photograph this reflection was portrayed through media format, I view this as a reflection upon a momentum of healing which contemplates the that provides contemplation within an existence.

Conclusion.

In conclusion throughout this thesis, I have engaged with three chapters each that justify an extensive formulation of a subject, to contemplate the methodologies within my photographic practice, however, the construction is primarily based on how trauma is not visible in all photographic elements, and how the '*punctum*' is brought to the surface of a photograph through an unseen eye.

This development has brought sufficient evidence of the relationship between memory and trauma associated through the conceptual and the fuzzy-trace theory in relation to Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (1913) (2003), '*Petite Madeleine*' is the association through a range of senses such as taste and smell. This has the conceptual assumption of the progressive element of the traumatic image, and how it is analysed through the personal experiences of childhood memories.

Through the exploration of multiple concepts within society, a movement within an individual's identity has exemplified the meaning within the existence known as the 'masked self'. Thus, in association with a family environment, not all are fortunate with the contemplations of love and safety dispute the fundamental aspects of my photographic practice, and the distinction between an individual's relationship within the family dynamic. Through existence, you are nurtured with growth within a family environment, however, we are not fortunate with such certainties.

An exploration within a collection of past and present memories have allowed an engagement within a fundamental aesthetic of our personalities, and how this concept relates to the principles of the cycle between birth and pre-existence. The constructive basis of the '*punctum*' creates a solid foundation within the context of the photographic image, however, when we evaluate the boundaries of trauma, we discover that the '*punctum*' is not visible within all aspects of photography.

Despite the relationship between memory and trauma being a vital element throughout the basis of productivity, it took a while to realise the key underlying theoretical paradigm of the '*punctum*' and its influence within different aspects of the photographer's toolkit such as layout, book development, composition, and spatial considerations.

This investigative process has produced a methodological influence of making and engaging with the '*punctum*', which has given a constructive meaning with elements of semiotics behind the production of photographic imagery. The reality within the parameters of a dysfunctional family may reflect on the perception of a sentimental subject matter, however, it does not indicate the personality of an individual. A reflection of a photographer's autistic lens has brought clarification through the '*punctum*' being a hidden aspect brought to the surface of consciousness, the ability to recollect memories of a traumatic event corresponds with the existence of photographic healing.

Reference List:

Bibliography

Journals/Articles.

Brown, S. (2014) Vital Memories: Movements in and between Affects, Ethics and Self. *Memory Studies*, 7(3), p. 333.

Comay, R. (2019) Impressions: Proust, Photography, Trauma. *Discourse*, 31 (1), p. 93.

Minullina, A. F. (2018) Psychological Trauma of Children of Dysfunctional Families. *The European Proceedings of Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 45 (1), p. 67.

Miranda, M. (2012) Taste and Odor Recognition Memory: The Emotional Flavor of Life. *Reviews in the Neurosciences*. 23 (5-6).

Pennebaker, J. (1997) Writing about Emotional Experiences as a Therapeutic Process. *Psychological Science*. 8 (3). P. 164.

Rau, P. (2006) Beyond Punctum and Studium: Trauma and Photography in Rachel Seiffert's the Dark Room. *Journal of European Studies*. 36 (3), p. 315.

Small, D.M., Prescott, J. (2005) Odor/Taste Integration and the Perception of Flavor. *Experimental Brain Research*. 166. p. 345, 349.

Robertson, C., Baron-Cohen, S. (2017) Sensory Perception in Autism. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*. 18. P. 671.

Books.

Barthes, R. (1993) (1980) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. London: Vintage Books.

Heidegger, M. (1988) (2013) *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*. London: Bloomsbury.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945) (2013) *The Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge.

Mellos, D. (2014) *A Psychoanalytic Exploration into the Memory and Aesthetics of Everyday Life: Photographs, Recollections, and Encounters with Loss*. New York: City University of New York Graduate Centre.

Nietzsche, F. (1998) (2008) *Beyond Good and Evil*. London: Capstone.

Proust, M. (1913) (2003) *In Search of Lost Time: Volume 1: The Way by Swann's*. London: Penguin Books.

Sontag, S. (2003) (2019) *Regarding the Pain of Others*. 3rd ed. London: Penguin Books.

Websites.

Cherry, K. (2022) What is the Fight or Flight Response? *Very Well Mind*. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-fight-or-flight-response-2795194> (Accessed: 5 November 2022)

Early Connections (2022) Trauma Informed Care. *Missouri's Early Care & Education Connections*. Available at: <https://earlyconnections.mo.gov/professionals/trauma-informed-care> (Accessed: 5 November 2022)

Emerald Works Limited (2022) Understanding the Dark Triad. *Mind Tools*. Available at: <https://www.mindtools.com/au5148p/understanding-the-dark-triad> (Accessed: 27 November 2022).

Finney, C. (2020) More than Cake: Unravelling the Mysteries of Proust's Madeleine. *Penguin Books*. Available at: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2020/07/more-than-cake-unravelling-the-mysteries-of-proust-s-madeleine> (Accessed: 3 December 2022)

Frothingham, M. (2022) Dark Triad Personality Traits. *Simply Psychology*. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/dark-triad-personality.html> (Accessed: 25 November 2022).

King University Online (2017) Defining the traits of Dysfunctional Families. *King University*. Available at: <https://online.king.edu/news/dysfunctional-families/> (Accessed: 24 November 2022).

McLeod, Dr. S. (2007) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. *Simply Psychology*. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> (Accessed: 9 November 2022).

Massey, A. (2018) How can a Dysfunctional Family affect a Child? *Alexandra Massey*. Available at: <https://www.alexandramassey.co.uk/post/how-can-a-dysfunctional-family-affect-a-child#:~:text=A%20dysfunctional%20family%20is%20a,own%20problems%2C%20insecurities%20and%20traumas>. (Accessed: 24 November 2022).

McBride, K. (2011) The Narcissistic Family Tree. *Psychology Today*. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-legacy-distorted-love/201105/the-narcissistic-family-tree#:~:text=Narcissistic%20parents%20lack%20the%20ability,Lack%20of%20Effective%20Communication> (Accessed: 26 November 2022).

Thompson, V.A. (2014) What Intuitions Are...and Are Not. *Psychology in Learning and Motivation*. vol. 60. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/B9780128000908000020> (Accessed: 27 October 2022).

Wagner, J. (2021) The Real Self and The False Self. *The Enneagram Spectrum of Personality Styles*. Available at: <http://enneagramspectrum.com/1545/the-real-self-and-the-false-self-psychological-and-spiritual-perspectives/> (Accessed: 15 November 2022).

Wagner, S. (2018) Life Before Birth. *Live About*. Available at: <https://www.liveabout.com/life-before-birth-2594548> (Accessed: 15 November 2022).

Wolfe, S. (2018) What is Expressionism Art? [online] *Artland Magazine*. Available at: <https://magazine.artland.com/art-movement-expressionism/> (Accessed: 4 December 2022).

Videos.

BBC Radio 4. (2015) *Erving Goffman and the Performed Self*. [video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Z0XS-QLDWM> (Accessed: 25 October 2022).