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Module: World Building

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Module code: ADAA5011

https://rhysmorg31.wixsite.com/rhysmorganphoto

https://www.instagram.com/rhysmorgan_photography/?hl=en-gb

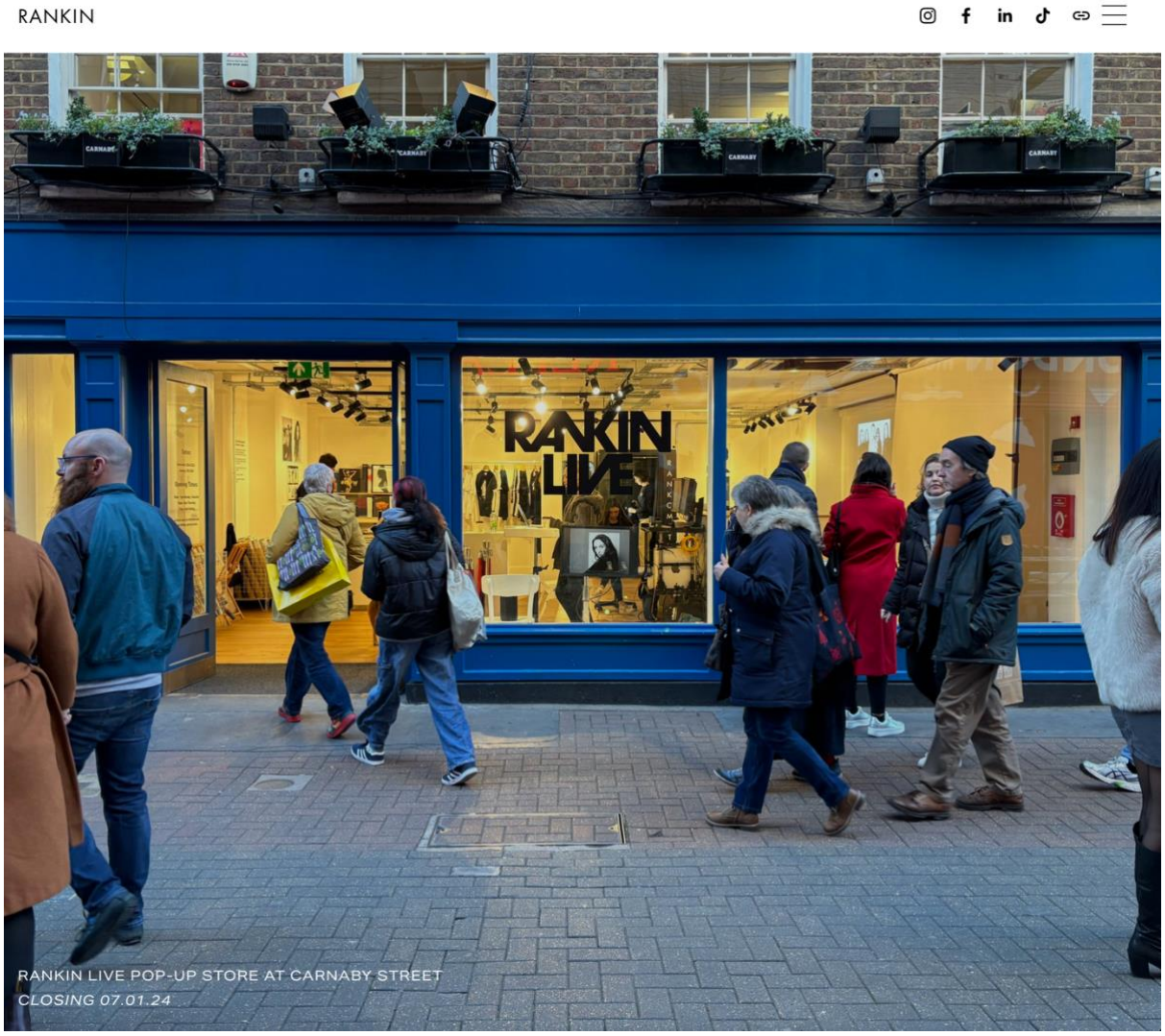
Research report

In this research report I will present the research I have made that has led me to creating an online presence. Firstly, to create an online presence I needed to understand what it meant, for this I turned to google in the hopes of finding an article explaining the importance of these platforms. Eventually I came across one written by Photography marketing pro (2022)[1] which gave me insight in how this day and age a social media / online presence is crucial as the popularity of these platforms is continuously growing. The article also includes a list of components that are necessary for a photographer to have a strong online presence, including a website, a portfolio, and the use of SEO. I'll study more about these articles and realise why they're important, so I'll be more equipped to create websites and develop social media accounts.

I'll have explored potential services that allow me either use templates or build a website from the ground up in order to accomplish this. Many services are available, however they require a subscription, such as webador, web.com, Ionos, and Squarespace. Nevertheless, there is a free website builder called Wix that will meet my needs as I don't want to pay to create a website right now. Maybe in the future, when I want to improve and grow my online presence, I'll pay for a subscription, but for now, I'll stick with my plan to use Wix.

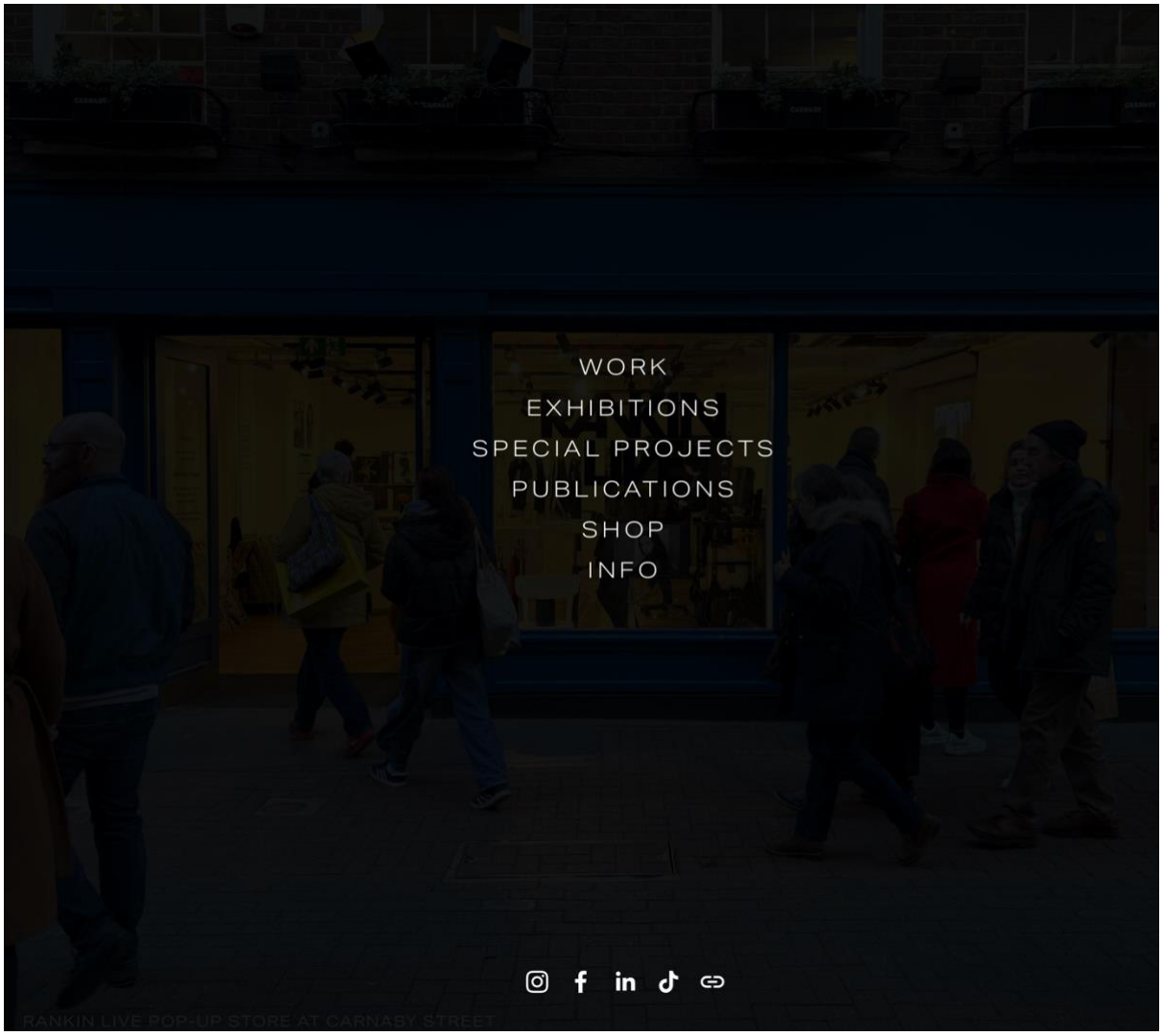
[1] Photography marketing pro, 2022, Medium. Availible at: https://medium.com/@rphilo.uga/maximizing-your-online-presence-5-marketing-tips-for-photographers-12ba1739ff5f accessed at December 27th 2023

Before I begin my process of creating my website, I need to first find some inspiration and examples of a successful website and functional website.

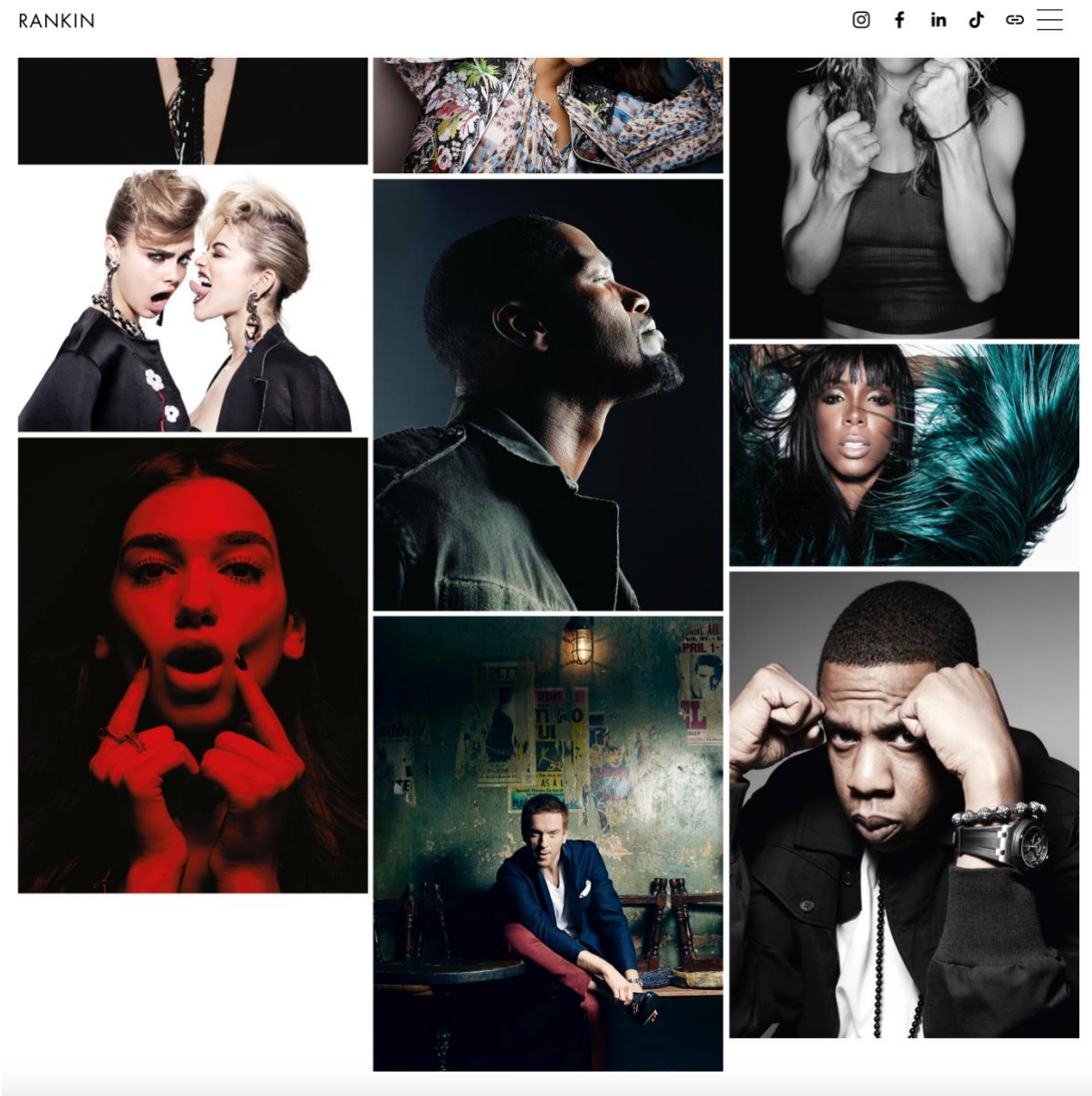


I will start by looking at a successful artist, Rankin[2] is a very successful artist and commercial photographer but his understanding of how to produce visual pleasing and striking images has led him to become of high demand in the world of commission. Given that it is the first thing users see and could be the last if not done well, the landing page is one of the most underappreciated sections of a website. Rankin has made it into my choices due to the discreet photo that greets as you reach the home page. It immediately captivates the audience in observing content. The viewer is also given a glimpse into the types of work and subjects that Rankin covers through this.

[2] Rankin (2021), Rankin Available at: https://www.rankinphoto.co.uk/ , Accessed at: December 28th 2023



This is Rankin’s portal, this is a prime example of simplicity over complexity. He gives access to the essential needs being: Work, Exhibitions, Special Projects, Publications, Shop and info. This does not over crowd or fill the borders of the website to the point it is too much, it sits centre and neat with the ability to even highlight Rankins socials with small icons at the bottom of the page making this design appealing and easy.



This is Rankin’s display of images on the “Works” page, although Rankin’s website is professional and well-made, I will point out that personally I think the design doesn’t fit my aim for displaying my work. I believe that the layout of the images shown above in a collage are not enough for people to engage with as there is too much going on at once which is why I would prefer a more interactive and alternative approach to this. Upon viewing the website sections for Rankin's exhibition and shop. Both sections are extremely well-made; exhibition is arranged and collaged in small tiles to fit nicely in the frames, while the shop layout takes a similar approach in that it is designed to encourage viewer interaction by allowing them to drag and scroll through content in smaller sections. Dividing the website and giving it a more polished appearance makes these two sections helpful. Even if my website won't have a shop feature just yet, I still need to take notes and pay attention to the features and other ways that this website Functions.

RANKIN

BIOGRAPHY

Rankin is a British photographer, publisher, and film director. Alongside being head of the eponymous agency RANKIN, which hosts an 80+ strong team that puts strategy, creative and production all under one roof.

Through RANKIN, he is best known for work that is on the cultural cusp and leading future trends: producing rule-breaking campaigns for brands such as Rolls Royce, Unilever, L'Oreal and Samsonite; creating wide reaching projects for charities including Women's Aid and Macmillan; and shooting music videos for the likes of Miley Cyrus, Rita Ora and Kelis.

As a photographer Rankin's portfolio ranges from portraiture to documentary. He has shot The Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Kate Moss, Kendall Jenner and The Queen to name only a few.

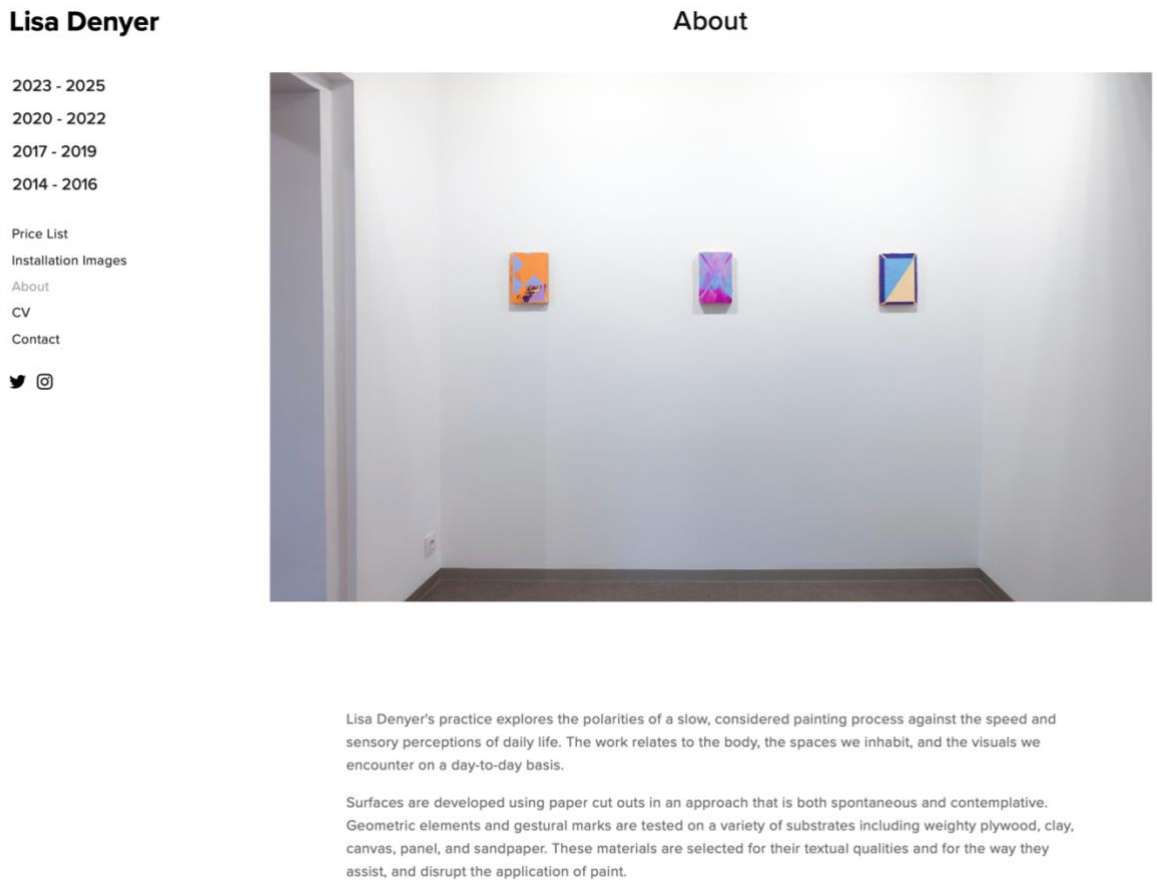
As a publisher, Rankin co-founded the seminal magazine Dazed & Confused with Jefferson Hack in 1991, and has since published the likes of AnOther and AnOther Man, alongside over 40 books and the biannual fashion and culture print and digital platform, Hunger.

His photography has been published everywhere from his own publications to Elle, Vogue, Esquire, GQ, Rolling Stone, and Wonderland, and exhibited in galleries globally, including MoMA, New York, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Rankin lives in London with his wife, Tuuli, and their dogs.

This is Rankin's info page it contains a biography and artist statement that summarises his experience through his work and who he has collaborated with and so on. I will have to include a piece of information in my website that falls under a biography and artist statement, however I cannot compare or contrast my experience with someone like Rankin as he is a successful professional photographer, and his work and experience is going to be completely different to mine. The arrangement and structure of his statement is as follows, there are five lines of text, each of which is between 30 - 60 words, so it doesn't seem like much. Additionally, the paragraphs are spaced out across the screen to provide room for an image of Rankin. As a result, viewers are able to connect the image with the statement, which strengthens their appreciation of the photographer.

One more artist I have come to like is Lisa Denyer[3] as she also has relevance to my work as she has created a painting titled cave[4] (2014) this was created with the intention to replicate both visual and emotional feeling of a cave. That same desire was present in my project, so instantly I was curious on how Lisa conducted work, so visited her website and looked at her artist statement.



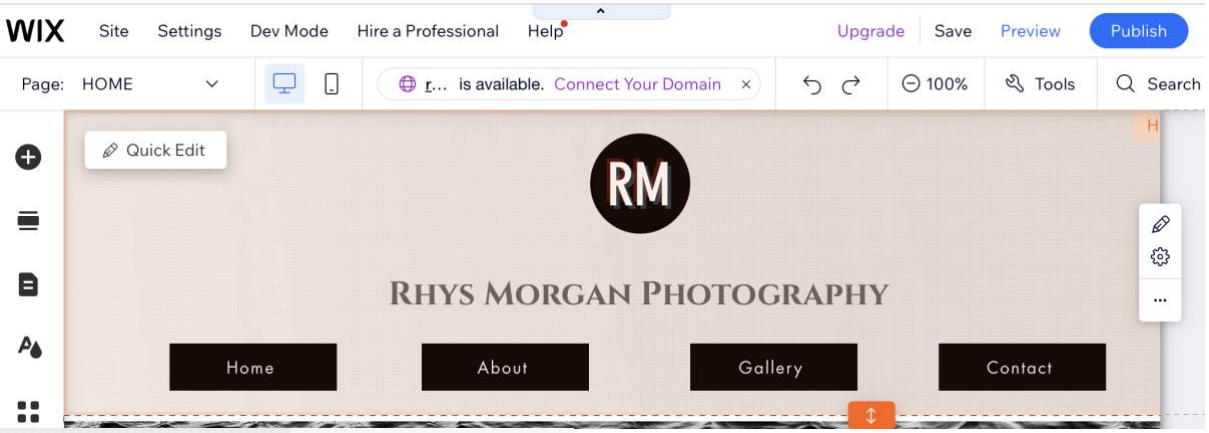
The interesting thing is her work ethic has similarities to mine which helps again due to her having a functional website I can take notes on. Her artist statement is very much written using international art English, Lisa's statement goes further in describing her methods of working as well as the relation she has to the work, even adding the word "us" implying that her work does not fit entirely the confides of personal motives. However one thing I noticed is that she lacks an image of herself which led me to question whether she does not want to appear in an online space.

Also her work is divided into years on the left allowing a quick and simple way of displaying work, this gives space for socials and other content such as cv, contact page, about and

[3] Denyer, Lisa (2016). Lisa Denyer available at: http://lisa-denyer.squarespace.com/ accessed at January 1st 2024

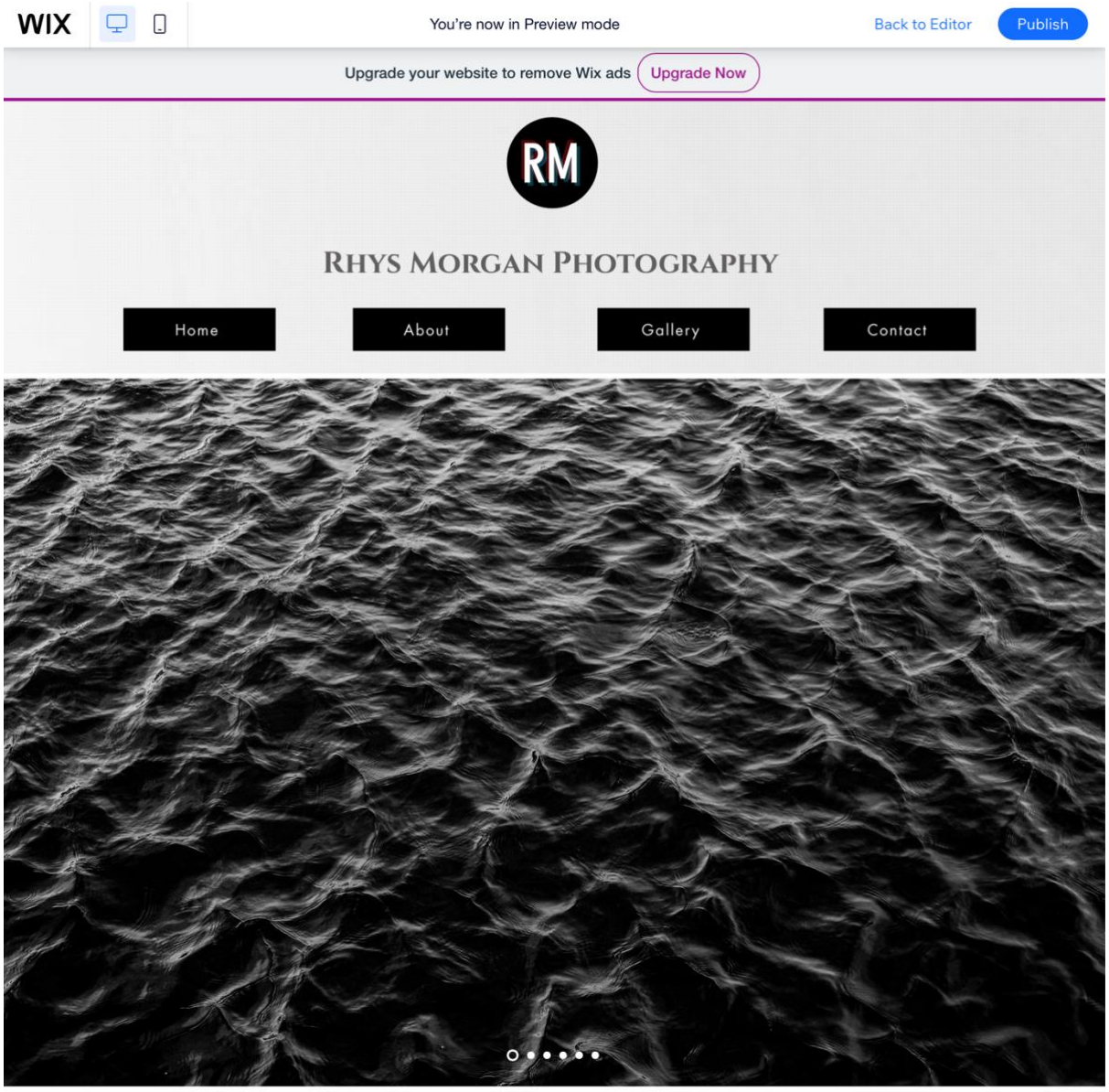
[4] Lisa, Denyer, Priseman Seabrook Collection: 21st Century British Painting. Accessed on January 1st 2024

installations. Which are all positioned neatly underneath the titled years above. The website does not have too much going on neither does it become complicated while navigating each section. As for the images it is a simple scrolling interactive slideshow which is another example after looking at these websites that less is more.

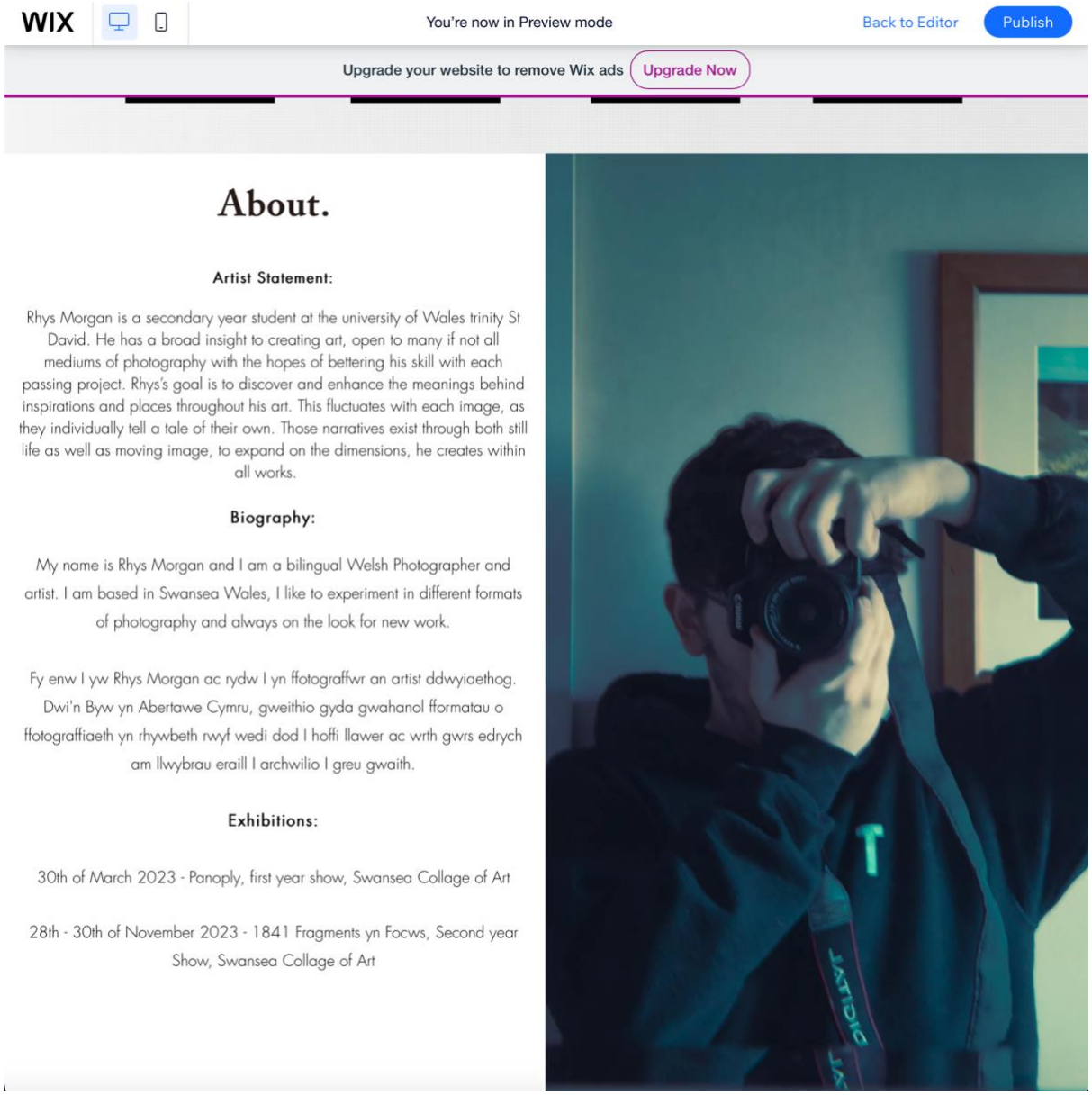


My goal for the website is to combine elements of the websites I looked at and while I was designing my home page, I had the choice of using a template, so I chose one that seemed simplistic and functional. This was because I did not want anything complicated that would be hard for me to rearrange, this was also because as discussed before overcrowding or too little content can ruin a websites ability to showcase an artist also can do the opposite of grabbing the attention of an audience. The header of my home page must be as simple as can be while still maintaining a professional look to it, I wanted to use buttons located on the header to grant easy access to each location of the site instead of a side bar as I feel it would take away from the style I'm going for. But that is not all as I needed to title the page, without a title I do not present myself, as seen Lisa Denyer and Rankin have both presented themselves with titles but there are small and located to the side.

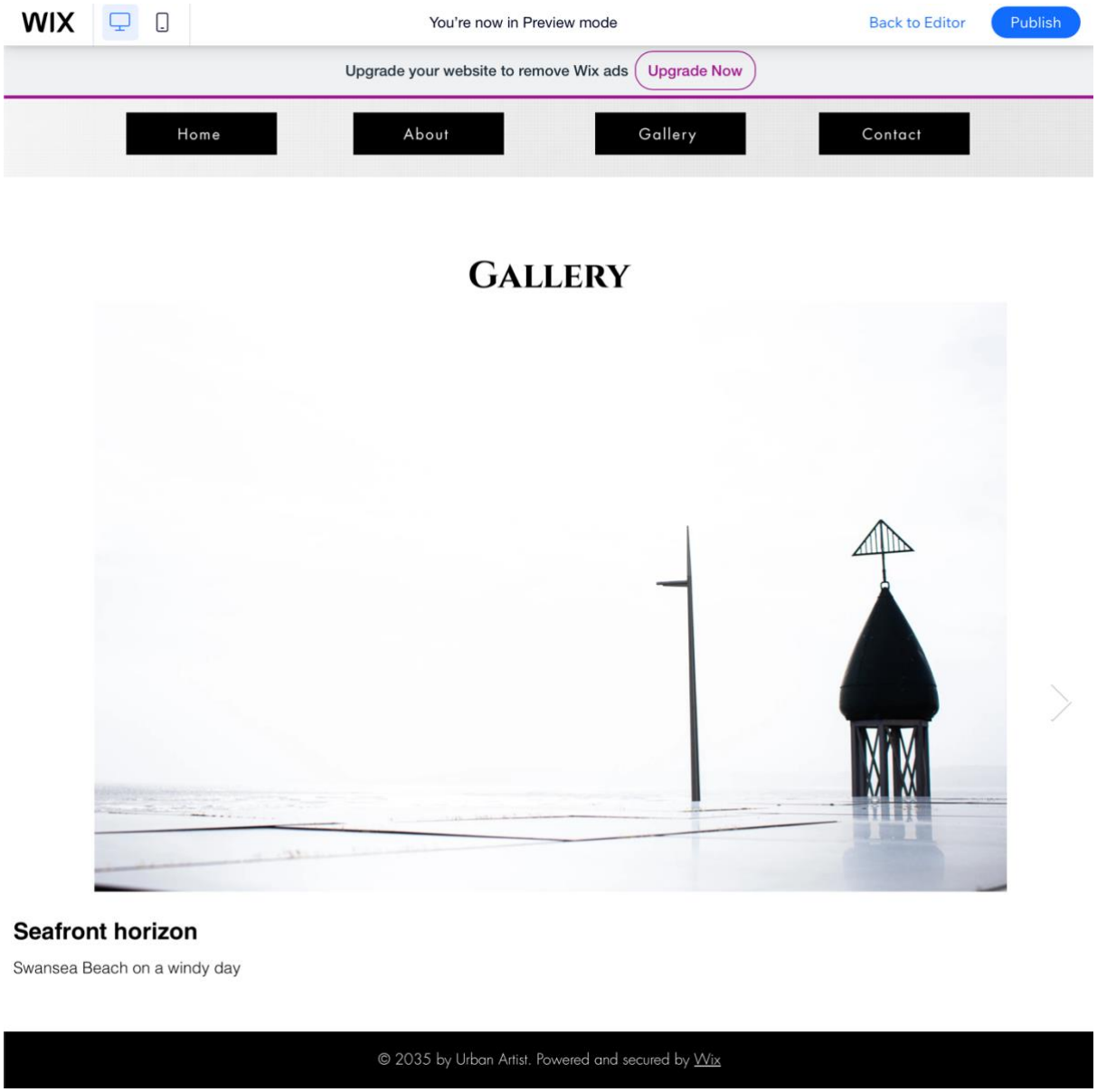
As I am a student in photography and starting out with a new website, I had to make myself known, so I have my title centred in the header with a clear broad font (Cinzel) with a size of 30 to highlight this. To finalize the header I need a logo and this was a hard task as I did not know what I could possibly use for my logo but eventually I came up with two ideas that were not outlandish or extravagant, as seen above I had the choice of using logo 1 or 2 and I came close to using logo 2 but the first one looked better with the colour contrast of the page.



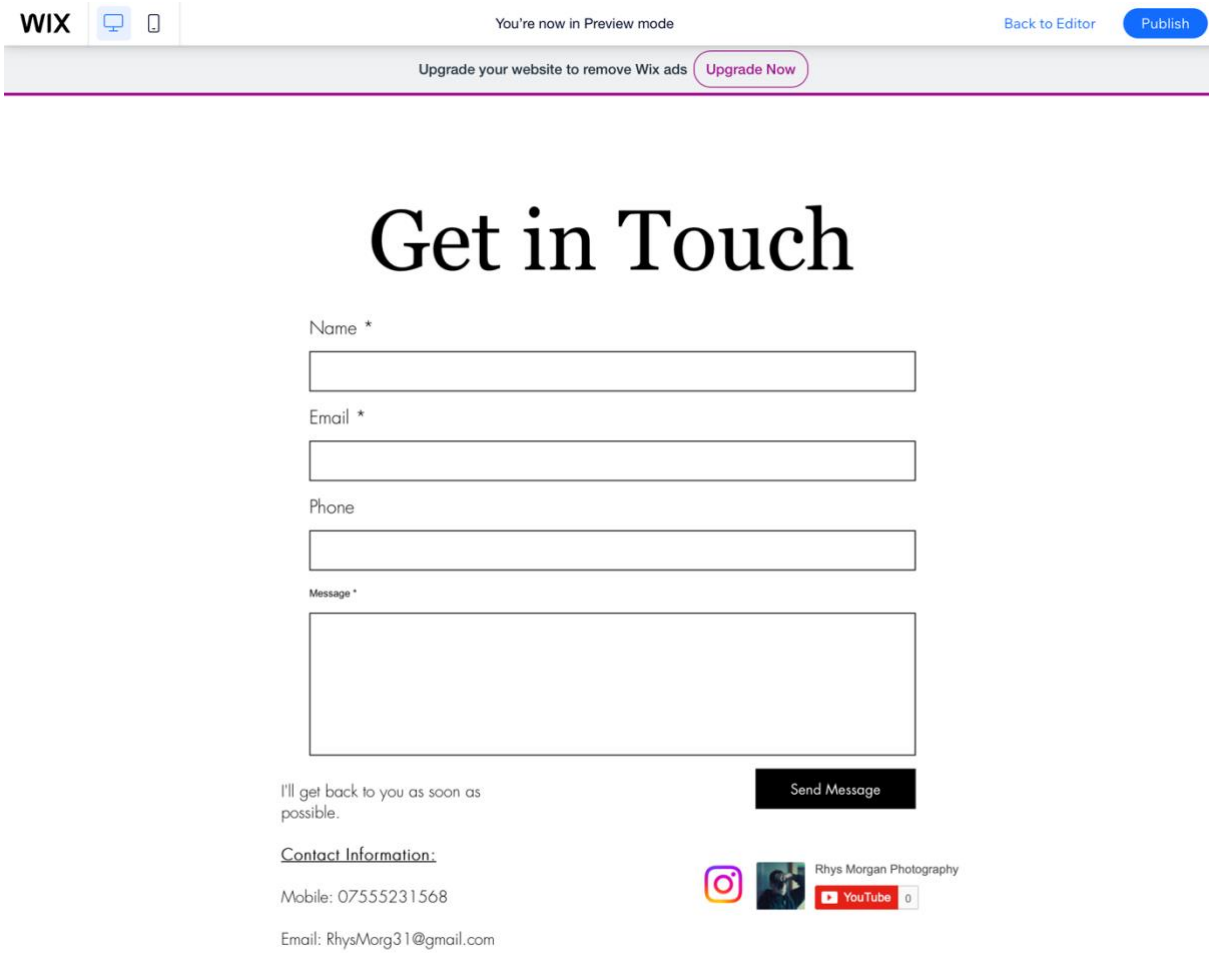
Colour is a big factor in making this website work and for this I chose 3 main colours: Grey, Black and white the reason for this is each one works well together but also when displaying images, it does not draw away attention from said work and allows the images to fit nicely with clear focus. Finalizing the home page was simple I needed to create an amalgamation of what was used in both website's I analysed, and that is a slideshow that fills the page's borders highlighting the many different projects I have worked on. So, I searched through each of my projects on my documents for the best images of them all and I selected 6 to present on my home page. Next, I had to use link the button for home page with the landing page, after that was done, I opened blank pages and linked each one to the allocated button for example about, gallery and contact.



After this was completed, I started working on my About page. This was imperative I get it right as I needed to ensure my artists statement was of good quality and not boring, biography was also another factor that had to be added alongside my exhibition history which they all had to be clear and concise in their layout and structure, I used fonts (Futura) and (Futura light) – size 15. Supporting these elements of text is an image of me with my face covered by my camera, much like Rankins with an element of secrecy, as I am present in the image, but I am hiding my face with the camera.



My next task was to create an online gallery space that listed images that I have worked on those included descriptions, by far the most important thing about this section was to make it engaging and interactive, this is due to my research many images felt cluttered with Rankins website where as Lisa Denyer's slideshow felt like people could take their time and view those images and that to me will make them be appreciated more. To do this I wanted a similar structure to the home page but instead of auto scroll the viewer would have to use the arrow button to scroll through the collection. I double checked that the gallery's functionality didn't underplay any of my work, then I moved on to the last section the contact page.



The importance of a contact page is to allow those who view your work and like it to view and keep up with what you are posting or sharing amongst the public, for instance if viewers want to see more they can follow Instagram etc.. And then they will be kept in the loop of what work is up to date or what is within the works. For this last task I wanted to continue the theme of simplicity and for that again I used a template to minimalize clutter around the page, as well as this I went one step further and stating my email address and both socials YouTube and Instagram. The reason for this is I want to extend my social media, and not be limited to just a website my online presence does will not be narrowed down to one asset.

An online presence is more than a series of networks used to display and market an artist's skill/work it's a portal to your extended media that brings it all together in one place. I am pleased how my website has turned out, and with my regular updates on Instagram they both compliment them equally and having another space where people can view my work is the first step to making myself seen as a young photographer.