

TASK 2 - Illustrated Book Project Proposal Task

500 words, due 5pm Feb 12th, submitted via moodle.

Formatting: please use the headings below making use of the advice and resources provided.
References should be made using the Harvard format.



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Theme/Context

Provide a brief summary of the theme or subject you want your work to focus on. You might include details about the impact you hope to achieve, how the book format will help you connect with your audience, and what will make your work stand out. (300 – 500 words)

In previous projects I have briefly explored my childhood, particularly the significance of objects and how they hold emotional and personal value for me. For this photobook, I want to extend that investigation through image making and representation, focusing on how my childhood and teenage years have shaped the person I am today. As I approach turning twenty and entering a new decade of my life, I feel that this project comes at a moment of transition of leaving parts of my youth behind while trying to understand who I am becoming.

The past few months have been personally and academically challenging, marked by self doubt and the pressure to prove to myself that what I am doing is enough. This photobook will act as a visual reflection on this period, acknowledging vulnerability while also recognising growth. I want the work to become a representation of continuity, how the person I once was still exists within who I am now, and how experiences, habits and memories continue to influence my identity.

By placing myself directly within the imagery, I aim to explore questions of identity, confidence and self-perception. I am also interested in reintroducing text into my practice. I have previously experimented with site-specific writing and found the process rewarding and, in this project, I want to use text more intimately. Perhaps through handwritten notes or short affirmations that respond to the photographs. Words of affirmation are personally important to me and

incorporating them alongside the imagery could create an emotional dialogue between image and viewer, offering reassurance, reflection and honesty.

Visually, I am drawn to photographs that feel nostalgic and imperfect including grainy textures, soft lighting and a sense of quietness rather than polished look. I want the images to feel personal rather than professional, as if they are fragments of my memory. The book itself will aim to balance minimalism with warmth, avoiding overwhelming layouts while still allowing space for repetition, rhythm and subtle variation. I am particularly interested in simple photobooks that use consistent sequencing and restrained colour palettes to create a continuous flow.

In terms of format, I imagine the book as small and intimate, encouraging slow, careful viewing. By combining personal imagery, self-portraiture and text, this project will allow me to build upon themes I have previously explored of childhood and identity while pushing them further into a more reflective, mature and self-aware body of work that marks this turning point in my life.

Influence

Highlight the work of a photographer who currently inspires your work. Analyse an image of theirs and explain your interest in their work. Consider style, theme, context, practical technique. (300 – 500 words)

A photographer who inspires my current project is Chino Otsuka, particularly her series *Imagine Finding Me*. In this body of work, Otsuka digitally inserts her adult self into family photographs taken during her childhood, placing two versions of herself within the same frame. These surreal yet subtle images explore memory, time, identity and the way we reconstruct our past selves from the position of the present. Her work resonates closely with the themes I want to explore in the creation of my own photobook: childhood, self-reflection, transition and how earlier experiences continue to shape who we/ I have become.

One particularly poignant image from *Imagine Finding Me* which also appears on the cover of the photobook shows Otsuka standing on a beach beside her childhood self, both facing the camera while other figures move casually in the background. At first glance it resembles an ordinary family snapshot, but the quiet duplication becomes unsettling once noticed. Otsuka as a child stands stiffly in contrast to her adult self's more relaxed stance, subtly signalling the passage of time and emotional growth. Otsuka's careful blending of scale, lighting, colour and grain allows both figures to exist convincingly within the same moment, creating a seamless yet impossible encounter. Its placement on the book's cover makes the image especially powerful, as it immediately introduces the central themes of memory, identity and reflection across time, drawing the viewer into a personal and contemplative exploration of how the past continues to shape the present.



1975 and 2005, Kamakura, Japan

Thematically, Otsuka's work reflects on the distance between who we were and who we are now something that closely mirrors my own position as I approach a new stage of adulthood. Her images feel reflective rather than nostalgic in a sentimental way in my opinion. They acknowledge childhood as something complex and formative rather than purely innocent. This approach encourages me to think about how I can visually represent my own younger self, not only through objects or spaces from my past, but through self-portraiture and the re-enactment of memory.

Stylistically, the soft tones and domestic settings in *Imagine Finding Me* align with my interest in intimate, quiet imagery that feels personal and diary/scrapbook like. The work also connects to my desire for a photobook format, as the series unfolds gradually, allowing viewers to slowly recognise patterns and build meaning through sequencing. This sense of slow discovery is something I would like to replicate in my own book through restrained layouts and a consistent visual language.

Otsuka's practice demonstrates how photography can be used not only to document reality, but to question it, using the medium to explore identity, growth and self-perception across time. Her work encourages me to approach my project with honesty and experimentation, using myself as both subject and narrator while reflecting on how my childhood continues to exist within the person I am today.

References:

CHINO. "CHINO OTSUKA." CHINO OTSUKA, 2019, www.chino.co.uk/work/imagine-finding-me.

Book Form

Referencing the session PowerPoint on Moodle (or another relevant source), discuss at least one book that has influenced you. Explore its visual and aesthetic qualities, social or historical context, impact, or practical methods relevant to your theme. You may also evaluate its overall effectiveness. (300 – 500 words)

One photobook that has influenced the way I think about sequencing, personal narrative and the intimate potential of the photobook format is Larry Sultan's *Pictures From Home*. Though not strictly about childhood alone, Sultan's book uses his own family archives and portraits of his parents at home to construct a deeply personal visual memoir about domestic life, memory and the passage of time. The way Sultan places images in dialogue mixing formal portraits with casual snapshots creates a rhythm that feels both reflective and honest, allowing the viewer to witness emotional layers unfold page by page. I am particularly drawn to how the photographs are clearly representative of a specific time period, through clothing, interiors, colour palettes and photographic style, which anchors the work in lived experience rather than abstraction. This temporal specificity is something I hope to replicate in my own photobook, where the images will collectively depict a distinct moment in my life and share a consistent nostalgic aesthetic. Like Sultan's work, I want my book to feel grounded in personal history while using visual repetition and atmosphere to evoke memory, transition, and emotional continuity, inviting the viewer into an intimate and introspective experience

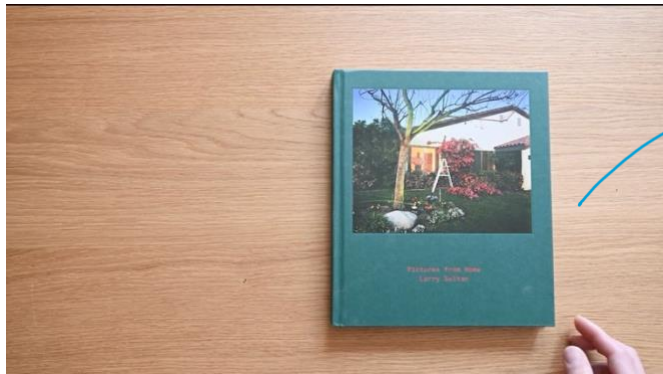
Colour plays a vital role in the aesthetic quality of this book, Sultan has chosen to use images that are all bright colours. These colours recur throughout the book, creating a nostalgic atmosphere and visual continuity even as locations and subjects change. This consistency is something I aim to emulate in my own photobook, where I hope the images will collectively suggest a particular period of my life through palette, texture and photographic quality.

Sequencing plays a crucial role in Sultan's book. The flow alternates between single images on a spread, paired portraits and multi-image grids, allowing the narrative to shift in pace without becoming visually disjointed. Quiet domestic scenes are followed by more expansive outdoor photographs or clusters of smaller images, encouraging the reader to move between intimacy and distance. Despite these variations, the spreads complement one another through recurring subjects, colour harmony and restrained design, ensuring the book feels unified rather than fragmented. This flexible but controlled approach to sequencing is relevant to my project, as I want to experiment with rhythm while maintaining a consistent emotional tone.

The use of text in *Pictures From Home* is another key influence. Sultan includes short written passages that appear almost 'diary like', offering reflections on memory, family dynamics and time. The typography is simple and unobtrusive, leaving space for the images to be shown to their potential while text gently guides interpretation. This balance between word and image is something I want to incorporate into my own book, particularly through affirmations or personal statements that respond to the photographs without overpowering them.

Thematically, the book centres on family, ageing, domesticity and the passage of time, subjects that closely align with my interest in childhood, identity and transition into adulthood. Sultan's layout reinforces these themes through the use of white space, balanced margins, and a book size that feels personal and tactile, encouraging the viewer to hold it closely and take their time. Rather than aiming for spectacle, the form invites slow, thoughtful looking, appealing to an audience interested in reflection and quiet observation rather than quick skim.

Overall, *Pictures From Home* is effective because it combines emotional honesty with disciplined design. Its bright colour palette, thoughtful sequencing, restrained text and intimate scale create a cohesive visual narrative that feels personal yet universally relatable. These qualities strongly inform how I hope to shape my own photobook using repetition, tone and quiet design choices to construct a reflective exploration of memory, identity and becoming.



→ Book cover & text - colours compliment one another.

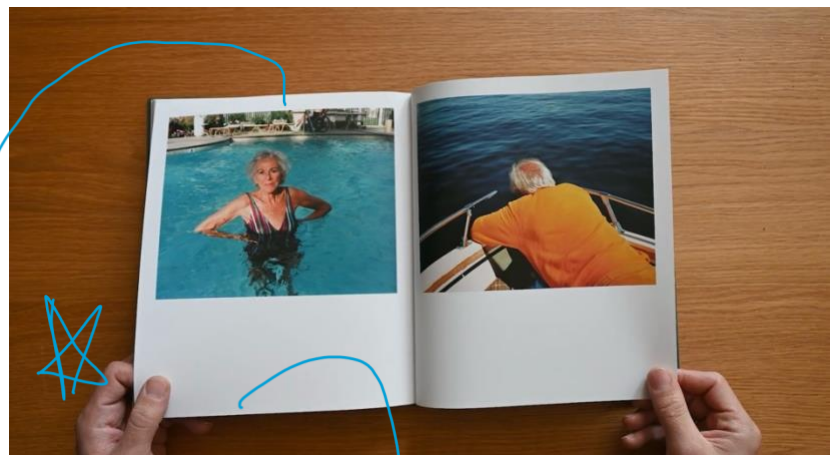
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→ Simple text
that does not
disrupt work.

Colors
compliment -
considered
image
placement



→ Different
ways
of sequencing
but works
well
together

connection. ↙



→ Move text heavy but still remains relevant



★ I like the green & pink contrast

→ Back of cover - unsure of image on back?