Simon Fudge 1904006
The Reading Festival – Visual Studies 2

The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World by G.G. Marquez

- Perplexing
- Barren landscape, dry, poor
- Symbolism; idealised image of a man, virile, voyeuristic looking by women
- Sexual undertones; imagined female desire
- Otherworldly; magical

- Unlikely scenario, a corpse isn’t beautiful, it would be rotting, so this story seems supernatural, mythical
- Maritime setting, in Mexico perhaps?
- Relocate to Swansea, different feel
- Poetic representation perhaps?
- Body not decomposed, create Pyramid
  re myth of Egyptian afterlife beliefs
- P 171 Wells re Voyeurism and
  photographic fetish
- Blakemore, J (1977) Fig 1

  Creates ethereal, magical images
  Maritime connection

John Blakemore (Primal surge collection) Fig 2

Richard Long

- Works in open air
- Symbolic (think about symbol, sculpture?)
- Creates ephemeral land sculpture, works with his hands and found objects; (Arte Povera), active..

  like in story, creates a changed, improved(?) environment (bigger doors, flowers, ect)
- Inspirational, non studio based, outdoors man and artist

- Despite lockdown, can still cycle to a destination, good to get out of the house

Long, R (1995)

Long, R. (1971)

- Arte Povera

  Boetti, A. (1969)

  Art can be simple, made with everyday objects

  I want to work and create on the beach and I feel I can convey a sense of this story with a camera and the still image

  I am inspired by these and other artists

Contact Sheets

DSCF3724

DSCF3831

DSCF3836

DSCF3848

DSCF3929

DSCF3952

Contact Sheet

DSCF4020

DSCF4058

DSCF4075

Caffenol processed film

- Contact Sheet
- Digitalisation problems, light and dark banding in sky, possible problem with light bed, film gloss or lens??
- Perhaps process problem?
- Light leaks in bellows?

Contact sheet

DSCF4096

DSCF4097

DSCF4098

- The Drowned Man seemed to affect the minds of those he came into contact with. He infused their imagination and attitudes but also caused physical changes in the appearance of the village
- The structure and dimensions of the buildings changed to accommodate this new entity that had entered their lives
- I visually investigate how the landscape of Swansea has changed over the years and what factors may have influenced this development. Differing styles, age and architecture against a maritime setting; re locating the story
- I admire the work of John Davies and I'm drawn to his ideas and practices
- My work can be seen at simonfudge.art.blog/2021/01/21/the-reading-festival/

- Also simonfudge.art.blog/2021/01/12/west-to-east-2/
- And simonfudge.art.blog/2021/01/12/west-to-east/
- Mention was working on urban landscapes anyway and realised that there is a connection
- Biggest reshaping was by the Luftwaffe. Link with Roald Dahl who was a RAF fighter pilot in WW 2

Bibliography

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- Godfrey, M. (2019). *Giving Time to Time, Aligiero Boetti at Tate Modern 1.* Available at https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-24-spring-2012/giving-time-time. [Accessed 22.1.21]
- Long, R. (2021) *Leaving the Stones*. *A five Day Walk with Dogs on Spitzbergen, Svalbad, Norway*. Available at http://www.richardlong.org/index.html. [Accessed 22.1.2021]
- Long, R. (2021) *Connemara sculpture*, Ireland. Available at http://www.richardlong.org/index.html. [Accessed 22.1.21]

The Lamb to the Slaughter by Roald Dahl

- Clever
- Absorbing
- Crafty
- Ironic
- Funny and dry

- There would need to be a narrative with something unexpected (Tales of the Unexpected) perhaps
- Suitable for Cinematographic approach or collaborative
- Set in min to late 20th century?
- Story about a murder of a husband and how the wife gets away with it. It’s about personal relationships, trust and domesticity disrupted by a violent act and cunning dishonesty
- Set in the home and a brief visit to the grocery shop
- Shocking act but at same time banal
- Could photograph squabbling animals whilst on a daily exercise period?
- I currently have little inclination to be around or photograph people

Billingham, R. (2004)

A different vibe but Billingham’s work reveals the tensions and emotions of family life. There seems to be more of a middle class setting to Dahl’s story

Bibliography

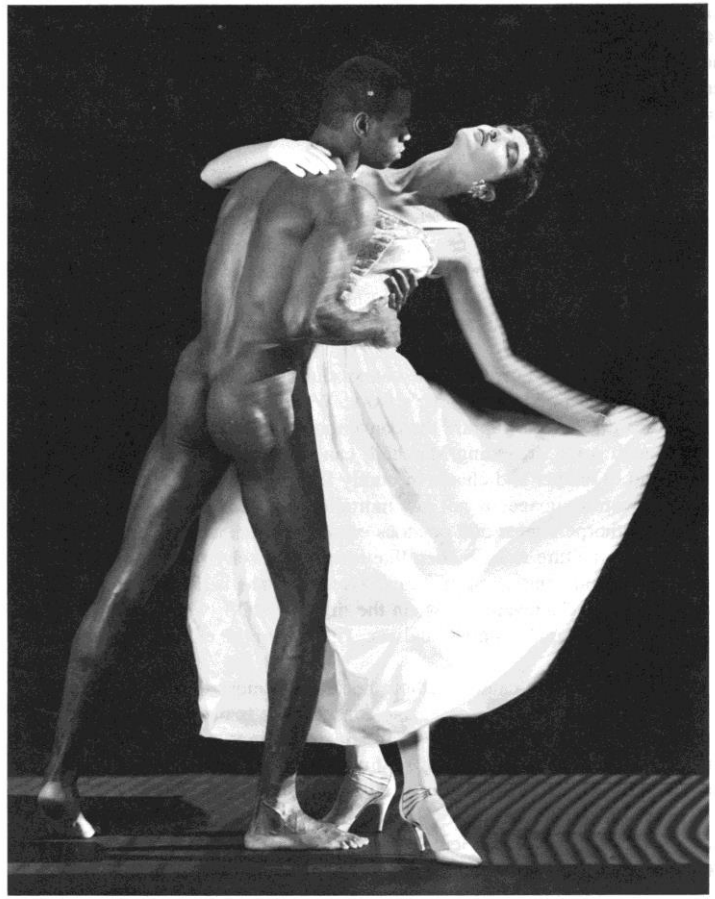
- Adams, T. (2016) *Richard Billingham: I just hated growing up in that tower block.* Available at https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/mar/13/richard-billingham-tower-block-white-dee-rays-a-laugh-liz. [Accessed 22.1.21]
- Cotton, C. (2004) *The Photograph as Contemporary Art. T*hames and Hudson, London

Happy Endings Margaret Atwood

- Intelligent symmetry
- Overlapping
- Disappointments
- Cynical
- Ironic

- No immediate connection for me in terms of an artistic response, would need to reverse engineer
- Consider human relationships and how to respond? Ex wife? Portrait?
- What ‘Art’ do I think about – A Connoisseurs approach versus a Contextualists? (Grundberg, A. (1990), p.168)
- Should my art mimic sculpture, painting and drawing, taking on the same aesthetic values ?
- Should my art be considered through a socio-political approach with no aesthetic considerations?
- Is it possible to just respond in a pure sense?

- Grundberg (p. 169) argues that Poststructuralist, Marxist theory considers that everything is political
- Is it really? Deserves interrogation
- Robert Mapplethorpe seems to manage to combine an aesthetic beauty with interesting political themes
- Grundberg argues that theorists such as Douglas Crimp and Carol Squirers claim that there is no originality in art and to claim any authorship would be false
- Moholy’s claims for his abstractionist art were mainly political (p160.)



25. Robert Mapplethorpe, *Thomas & Dovanna,* 1986

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- Grundberg, A. (1990). *Crisis of the Real*. Aperture Foundation Inc, New York

Everyday Use by Alice Walker

- Set in the USA (again!; why is there such a focus on the culture and creative output from the United States of America?)
- Perhaps the 1970’s?
- Another tale of familial, inter personal relationships. Multi layered and well crafted. Mix of tragedy, observation and humour
- Main characters …..mother, and her relationship between her two daughters
- A story about domestic politics, how people change and how other peoples’ views and impressions of them might change
- The author has also created some other well known work such as The Colour Purple

Summary

- Tragic
- Vivid
- Poverty
- Layered
- Domestic

- Themes of the affectation of image and style, fashion, language and conflict. Also undertone of racial divide (look a white man in the eye..)
- Central conflict is about a quilt, a family heirloom and each daughter’s claim and desire for it
- The essay is beautifully told and it seems easy to imagine the scenes and the believe the dialogue
- It seems Dee wants the quilt for its ‘sign’ value, to display…perhaps a shallower reason than her sister’s who wants to continue the family tradition and would actually use the quilt in ‘Everyday Use’

- From a parent’s perspective it raises some uncomfortable reflections regarding favouritism and the effect of certain actions and words
- Lilli-Max Hager of the Guardian describes how Sophie Harris-Taylor investigates, photographs and documents relationships between sisters in her book Sisters
- Factors to consider in portraits might be the concept, expressions, settings, lighting, compositions, clothing, equipment, lenses…ect
- Portraits difficult to arrange currently unless close family member

Bibliography

Hager, L. (2017). Oh sister: sibling relationships – in pictures. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2017/nov/11/oh-sister-sibling-relationships-in-pictures. [Accessed on 25.1.21]

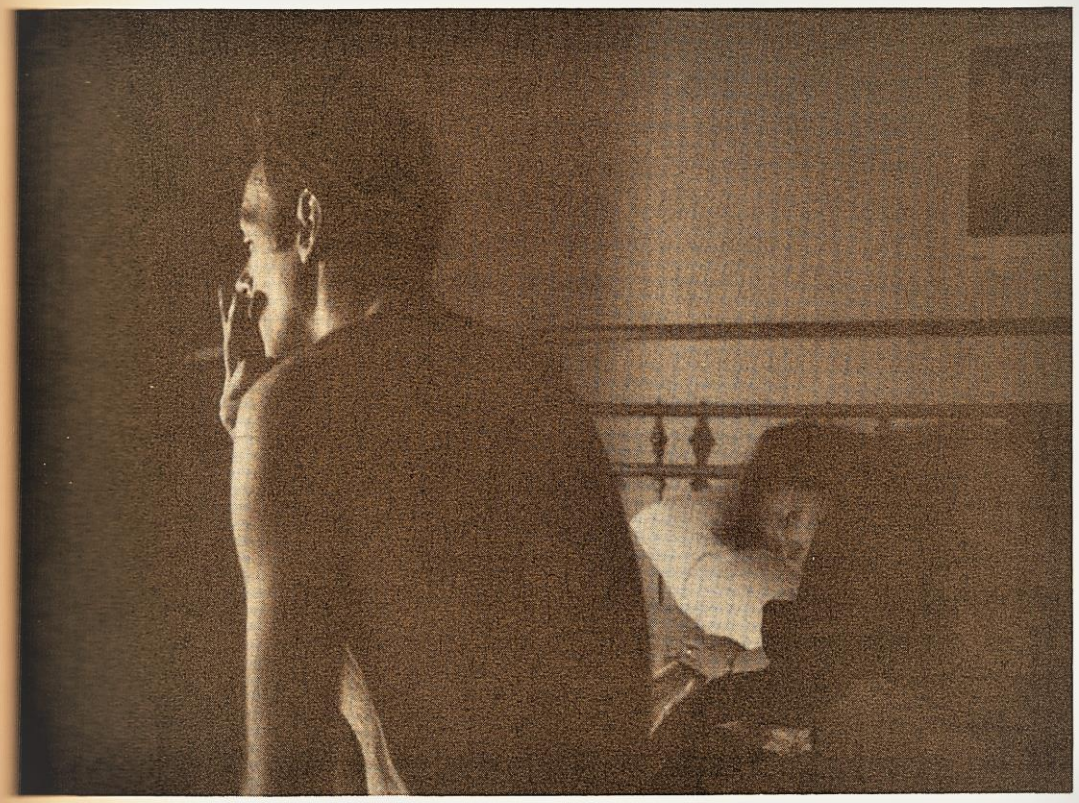
Cat Person by Kristen Roupenian

- Relationships
- Dating
- Consent
- Poignant
- Millennial

- Complexity of dating
- Millennial era, texts on mobile phones (also internet, Tinder ect..)
- New form of sexual conduct never before experienced in history…or just a change of form?
- Ending a relationship by text..
- Told from female perspective
- Reveals how women's fears of potential male violence pervade thoughts and behaviour
- Awkward, cross purposes and misunderstandings, so life like
- Closely observed

Nan Golding – context, point of reference

- The Ballard of Sexual Dependency springs to mind as a contextual reference point
- Grundberg (p98) talks about women's dependency on men and the complexity and difficulties around sexual politics when discussing Goldin
- Current difficulties of considering intimate photographic representations, as a collaborative approach …lockdown, the law, dangers of infection…contrast with the behaviours described in Cat Person…how quickly things change…
- Issues of consent and exploitation



Nan Goldin, *Nan and Brian in Bed,* New York City, 1983

Lisa May Post

50. **Liza May Post**, *Shadow*, 1996.

- Lisa May Post’s image conveys the awkwardness and intertwined nature of human relationships, dating situations and sexual encounters
- Cotton, C. (2004, p.58) describes how a Tableau photographic approach can create dramatic and manipulated scenes conveying a narrative…ambiguous or otherwise perhaps…

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- Cotton, C. (2004). *The Photograph as Contemporary Art.* Thames & Hudson, London

- Grundberg, A. (1990). *Crisis of the Real.* Aperture Foundation Inc, New York

The Company of Wolves by Angela Carter

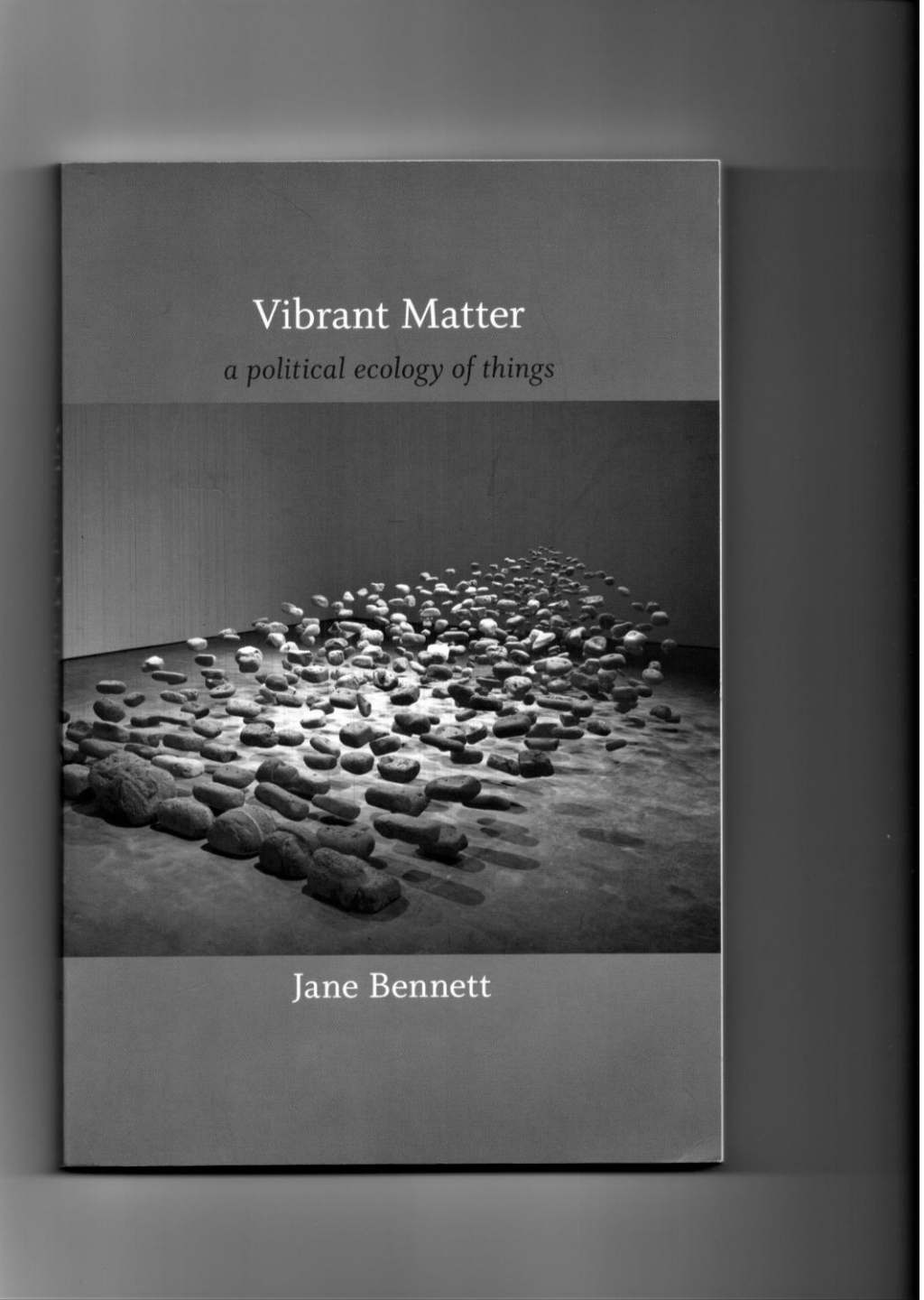
- A werewolf tale, supernatural, set in a forest
- Based on ‘Little Red Roding Hood’ fairy tale/myth
- My least favourite short story of the list
- It didn't resonate with me, even after more analysis and research
- Hard to dispel my disbelief in this type of fable, yet I can understand how these beliefs develop
- I did find Francis Ford Coppola’s 1992 film Bram Stoker’s Dracula very engrossing and entertaining and so I can enjoy the supernatural; but the bar is high for me

- Fairy Tale
- Supernatural
- Forest
- Mythical
- Unconvincing (for me)

- In Wells (2004 p.211), she makes reference to Stuart Hall's essay 'Encoding/Decoding'. It is argued that meaning is transferred from the creator to the viewer by a mix of signs and symbols that are dependent on several variables. Transfer depends on the extent to which the two parties have a shared cultural lived experience
- Perhaps I have too little in common with Carter
- Suitable for a cinematographic interpretation perhaps
- If I were to seek to respond to this story, I might try to follow the approach of John Blakemore (p.8). He describes how he will begin with a period of meditative contemplation in order to feel a connection with his subject
- As the story takes place in a forest I would take myself to such a place, become familiar with it and to listen to the location

- Blakemore (p.8) talks about the inspiration and influence of Paul Nash when Nash describes the '….unreality or rather this reality of another aspect of the accepted world, this mystery of clarity that is at once so elusive and so positive'
- Materiality is important to me, the film process, the pace of practice, the textures of subjects and materials and their inter connectivity (material vibrancy – intimate and complex relationships (Bennet, J. 2010)
- It is losing oneself in the creative process that is so appealing, the creation equally important as the photographic result
- Ironically perhaps it is the wolf who should fear humans more as it is us who kill them in far greater numbers. They are part of the disappearing natural world that we destroy and I am keen to spend time in what remains and to commune with it and celebrate it
- Below, image from Blakemore's 'Metamorphoses' series. Apt for the metamorphoses of a man to a wolf. Material and its change…chemistry, alchemy… do we need the supernatural for 'awe'?

- Inside cover of Bennett’s book



- Cover - Installation - Parker. C, 1992.

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- Blakemore, J. (1977). *British Image 3.* Gordon Frazer, London
- Parker, C. (1992). Neither From Nor Towards. Arts Council Collection, Southbank, London (From Bennett's cover)
- Wells, L. (2004). Photography: *A Critical Introduction.* Routledge, Oxford

The Year of Spaghetti by Haruki Murakami

- 1970's remember spaghetti being a 'new', exotic food
- Lonely
- Obsessional
- Hiding
- Descriptive

- Cinematographic
- Poetic
- Story of a young man taking refuge inside his home, hiding from the world
- Obsessed with making various dishes of spaghetti
- He imagines contact with people but evades it
- A woman calls seeking information and he avoids and evades the encounter by using the making of spaghetti as an excuse
- A metaphor of spaghetti as an excuse for the self imposed isolation
- Autism, rituals, consistency, evade social interaction
- Resonates with lockdown

- I am questioned how I might photograph
- I also ask and reflect on **why** I want to create a photograph?
- To engage in the act of creativity, to learn new things, to be educated, to explore, to enthuse, to share, to live in the moment, be observant, to engage in a sense of awe
- The psychological health benefits of a sense of awe (Ethan Kross), the escape from negative thought, a brighter day..Cooke, R. (2021)
- I think about loneliness and social isolation often, particularly for my son who has challenges and is autistic. He seeks isolation but also wishes he could make friends

Lettinski, L
(2004, p.132)

- I might seek inspiration from L. L.
- Her compositions suggest a narrative, symbolise an era, a setting, a situation, a person’s relationship with the world
- I might look to creative a narrative of loneliness and a meal of spaghetti on the kitchen table. I think a boiling pot of spaghetti might be interesting to photograph, the steam, the movement in the water, a lone hand stirring perhaps…
- The remnants on a plate, utensils, composition, style, lighting…

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- Cooke, R. (2021). *Why your most Important relationship is with your inner voice.* Available at https://www.theguardian.com/science/2021/jan/16/inner-voice-self-criticism-psychologist-ethan-kross-chatter-voice-head. [Accessed 30.1.21]
- Cotton, C. (2004, p.132). *The Photograph as Contemporary Art.* Thames and Hudson, London

Paper Menagerie by Ken Liu

- Sad
- Family
- Mail-order
- Slavery
- Escape

- A poignant story with a surprising end
- A mythical element as the paper tiger seems to be given life, (a trick of the mind)
- A metaphor for the power of the imagination, a child's imagination
- Layered with close and resonant human emotions…love for family
- My mother is 93 and I am still discovering more and more about her life and I worry that she may go before more is revealed
- The mother in this story was exploited in a number of ways but also seems to have found some contentment in life
- Wells (p.158) talks about the work of Velerie Walkerdine, and the issues of a sexual gaze, exploitation (also by Calle ?), child abuse and family discord
- Perhaps I might seek to explore those issues photographically

3.18 Valerie Walkerdine as the Bluebell Fairy

Sophie Calle ‘Pas pu saisir la mort’

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSq8iAYmnbE

I reflect on Calle’s amazing work when considering how I might react photographically to this story. She attempts to capture the moment of her mother’s death

I would consider photographing my mother (she is in isolation and lockdown currently)

I would want to capture something of her personality

Bibliography

- Fetabaronen (2007). *Sophie Calle – "Pas pu saisir la mort" Venice 2007-2.* Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSq8iAYmnbE. [Accessed 29.01.21]
- Wells, L. (2004). *Photography: A Critical Introduction.* Routledge, London

Final analysis

- My final images are shown at https://simonfudge.art.blog/2021/01/21/the-reading-festival/

I decided to focus on Marquez's tale, The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World. It wasn't the short story that I enjoyed the most but it did suggest to me some interesting avenues of expression, particularly within the constraints of the current lockdown situation. I feel strongly that I want to get out from the house and into nature and the outdoor environment.

It seemed to me that there was an obvious maritime connection as the man had been washed in from the sea, into this small coastal village.

I didn’t want to try to recreate the atmosphere and feeling of a dry, desert location. Rather, I wanted to relocate my interpretation squarely in modern Swansea.

We don’t know how this man had died. Perhaps he had been thrown overboard in a storm or become tangled up in his fishing gear. He bore no obvious signs of injury to give us any clue.

My first image is taken at the start of a storm. I had timed my visit so that I could be there during the strongest tidal flow out of the bay. I was hoping in that location to catch the ebbing tide passing over the Mixon Shoals against the westerly winds. There are often some spectacular ‘standing horses’ to be seen. Unfortunately the tide wasn’t big enough that day or perhaps the wind not strong enough.

I had hoped to capture the power, awe and otherness of the ocean but the necessary conditions were not present.

I noticed the WW2 gun emplacement on Mumbles lighthouse rock and I thought about how it looks out to sea, like a sentinel, in preparation for oncoming danger and invaders. I also noticed that the wind was picking up which might indicate a storm. We see the steel works chimneys and the smoke emanating from them and this reinforced to me the relocation of the tale.

The story is clearly mystical as surely no corpse is likely to be handsome having been washed in from the sea. The body had been immersed for some time as there was lots of marine growth on him and yet the only smell it gave off was one of the sea.

There are other supernatural elements; for example his huge stature and the suggestion that he continued to grow in size.

Echoing this mystical theme I sought inspiration from the artist John Blakemore. Many of his pictures seem to possess an ‘otherworldliness’ to them. I was also keen to explore some long exposure techniques but made easier by the use of a digital camera. I felt underprepared to try using film for long exposure but now after the digital experience I feel a little more confident to experiment with film.

The women of the village are clearly drawn to this naked man who is described as the best built and most virile man they had ever seen. They become scornful towards their less manly partners and the sexual desire of the women towards the drowned man is obvious.

Wells (2004, p.170) talks about the Freudian term ‘scopophilia’ which refers to the sexual or erotic pleasure that someone gets from gazing at the body of another person. She describes how this raises some problematic concerns over the practice of photography, voyeurism, fetishism and the exercise of power. The connections with pornography seem clear.

She adds that Sontag (1979, 11-14) suggests that problematic voyeurism is implicated when the subjects might lack agency. Sontag cites situations involving disability, colonised people and spectacle.

I think there are links here with Calle’s and Goldin’s work shown above and I am trying to formulate my own views on agency and informed consent.

I wonder how the men of the village might have felt in the presence of this adored and unfeasibly virile and masculine presence and the effect he may have had on their partners.

I wanted to symbolise this desire and I drew inspiration from the artist Richard Long. I greatly admire his work and his working practices. He seems to immerse himself into nature on long and solitary walks; avoiding distraction. I imagine that he enters a zone of intense and clear concentration. John Blakemore also echoes this approach

It seems to me that the act of creativity can be deeply absorbing and I enjoy trying to attain a state of consciousness in which time seems to alter and the rest of the world fades away.

I wanted to symbolise the sexual union of a man and a woman and I enjoyed creating my small, ephemeral sculpture on the beach. It was a pleasure to be laying on the sand in the sun lost in my child like activity.

The fact that the drowned man’s body did not seem to be decaying made me think of Egyptian pyramids. The next day I wanted to create another small sculpture on the rocks but this time use a film camera. Again, building the structure was an immense pleasure. Both sculptures were in the intertidal zone and would only exist for a short time. I thought about how our lives are perhaps transient and then we disappear.

The drowned man made a deep and lasting impression, not only upon the village people but also on the structures of the buildings which were altered and made wider, bigger and stronger so that Esteban could return and not bump himself.

I thought how the buildings of Swansea had changed during my lifetime and also that of my mother’s lifetime. It seems that there has been constant change. The most dramatic alterations to the city came in 1941, not from the sea but from the air in the form of Hitler’s Luftwaffe. I wonder what might be the cause of the next great change in the people and the fabric of our city.

Bibliography

Wells, L. (2004). *Photography: A Critical Introduction.* Routledge, London.