

Visual studies 2

Lily Evans-Morgan

Jeff Wall, *Mimic*, 1982



Jeff wall's photograph

Firstly, this photograph is in an urban settings, on the left is a road with cars and telephone lines on either side of the road. The road is flat until midway through the photo and it goes uphill. On the right it is a tall brown building which angles to the left.

In the foreground, there are 3 people. On the left there is a man dressed smartly in a white shirt and grey trousers with styled hair who appears to be Asian. On the right there is a couple, the man, dressed more casual in an orange t shirt and denim vest jacket, who appears to have messy hair, in contrast to the other man. In this photograph he is also pulling the corner of his eye to the side to rather mimic or insult the man walking past him. Holding his hand is a women dressed in red shorts and a white cropped top with a cover up jacket. Looking straight forward, squinting with the sun in her eyes, unaware of what her partner is doing (or unimpressed)

The composition of Jeff Wall's *Mimic* is carefully structured to appear like a spontaneous street photograph while actually being highly controlled. The image is organised horizontally, with the three main figures moving across the frame from left to right. This creates a natural sense of movement, as though the viewer has captured a passing moment on the street. The urban background of pavement, shop fronts and wall surfaces grounds the scene in an ordinary everyday setting, making the incident feel believable and immediate.

Furthermore, the most important compositional feature is the placement of the three figures. The white couple occupy the left and centre of the frame, while the Asian man is positioned to the right. This spacing creates tension because the figures are close enough to be connected by the gesture yet separated enough to show social distance. The racist gesture made by the man becomes the focal point, as his hand is raised between himself and the passerby. This small action is visually striking because it interrupts the otherwise normal body language of walking pedestrians. Moreover, Wall uses eye lines and body direction to guide the viewer. There is a use of diagonal lines which guide the viewers eyes up the pavement. Along with eyeline which directs the viewers' attention along the man's gaze, which then the white man turns his head toward the passerby, drawing attention to the interaction, while the woman beside him looks forward and appears detached. The Asian man continues walking, seemingly unaware or choosing not to react. These contrasting directions of gaze and movement create a subtle but powerful narrative within a single frame.

The context behind Jeff Wall's *Mimic* (1982) is rooted in the social and political climate of early 1980s urban Canada, particularly Vancouver, where Wall was working. The photograph responds to issues of racism, class tension, immigration, and everyday social behaviour within modern city life. During this period, many Western cities were experiencing cultural change through increased migration and shifting demographics, which also exposed underlying prejudice and xenophobia. Wall used the photograph to confront these uncomfortable realities rather than ignore them. *Mimic* was based on an incident Wall reportedly witnessed on a street in Vancouver, where a white man made a racist gesture by pulling back the corner of his eye toward an Asian passerby. Wall reconstructed this moment using actors and staged composition, turning a brief real-life encounter into a carefully controlled image. This context is important because it places the work between documentary and fiction. Although the scene appears like a spontaneous street photograph, it is actually deliberately created to examine how racism can exist in ordinary, everyday moments. The title *Mimic* adds another layer of context. It refers to imitation or copying, but in this case it also suggests mockery and dehumanisation. The racist gesture "mimics" East Asian facial features in a hostile way, revealing how stereotypes are performed through body language. Wall uses this single gesture to expose broader systems of prejudice embedded in society.

The photograph is also connected to developments in contemporary art photography during the late twentieth century. Wall was challenging the idea that photography had to be purely documentary or candid. By constructing scenes cinematically and presenting them in large-scale lightboxes, he elevated photography to the status of painting and conceptual art. This made *Mimic* both a social commentary and a formal artistic statement.

Feedback reflection

To further develop my engagement with literature skills, I will focus on strengthening my referencing and citation. Although there is clear evidence of research within my work, I need to ensure that all my sources are accurately cited and clearly integrated in my writing. Moving forward, I will include full references, relevant weblinks and where appropriate, consistently quote or paraphrase sources to acknowledge authorship. I also want to become more confident in analyzing how the authors position may influence the information they present, particularly when artists discuss their own work compared to external viewers. Overall, this area is developing well, but refining academic conventions will strengthen professionalism and credibility in my work, research, and writing.

My knowledge and understanding skills are a strong aspect of my practice. The feedback highlights my ability to connect composition, context and content, particularly within my Grandma ruby and me study. I aim to continue deepening this analytical approach by ensuring all references are clearly cited and by expanding my contextual awareness will allow me to extend experimentation in the next semester. I want to build on this and push my experimentation further while maintaining the depth of research already present.

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills	20	14
There is clear evidence of research both in the location of new artworks to study and in the development of context analysis. This is evident with occasional citation and website reference however it is important that you begin to make this research clear with accurate referencing. Quote sources when it is important that their viewpoint is heard and use a citation at the end of a paragraph where you have paraphrased more generalised information. Include the relevant weblink on the page. Not only does this show that you have sourced information, but it recognises who the author is and how that might affect the information. Consider how an artist discussing their own work might differ to a reviewer, for example.		
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills	20	16
Well done Lily, there is excellent attention to detail in the completion of all work expected. You make insightful interpretation of visual analysis and connect with the presented contexts. Your artwork study is thorough and while I would have liked to see clear referencing and seminar notes, the task is completed excellently. Your exhibition review is exemplary, reflecting keen attention to the format. Your excellent visual analysis skills and research of the works support an excellent review which takes in the breadth of work and viewpoints on show. You write convincingly and sensitively, considering all aspects of exhibition. Continue to review exhibitions in this way in your visual diary. Similarly, your project cycle work is excellent. You take time to review the weekly work and recognise how successful planning and evaluation will extend your studies. Continuing to use this process in the upcoming semester will see your project work grow, experiment by experiment.		
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills	20	17
Well done Lily, you have shown exemplary skills in analysis through your three tasks. In your artwork studies, you are perceptive in connecting content, composition and context, particularly noticeable in your Grandma Ruby and Me study. Clearly quote and reference authors who you can discuss debate and compound with your own writing. Your exhibition review as above is perceptive and insightful. You reflect well in the project cycle on areas for improvement and respond to critique with honesty and maturity, whether comments are positive or otherwise. What is clear is significant reflection on your studies which translates into an analytical and insightful approach. Well done.		
4. Practical Application Skills	20	14
Your artwork studies and exhibition review would benefit from further awareness of practical skill and technique, considering how the equipment used by the photographer contributes to the composition and in turn feel of the image. Consider the slow shutter speed of Goldie creating an ethereal rave ambiance, the shutter release cable and use of flash in Grandma Ruby and me and the use of ambient lighting and the impact on colour that using colour film has in Skinny Lift. Nonetheless, in your own work you show confidence in the discussion and selection of relevant equipment in planning, your usage of the equipment through your contact sheet and your editing in the darkroom. Continue to document your technical settings and decisions in this way as your next project develops.		
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice	20	15
Well done Lily, this submission is well presented, proofread and spellchecked to an excellent standard. All work is completed to an excellent standard and reflects a growing maturity in your visual analysis of photography and the documentation of your work. Continue to study artworks in this depth and document your project experiments with this detail. There are some issues with formatting which appear to arise from the file format. Please export to a PDF if using .odp to avoid this in the future as it required significant font resizing to make the work readable.		

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Cognitively and intellectually, I feel confident in my ability to reflect and respond to critique.

This feedback acknowledges my maturity in handling feedback and my perceptive connections between debate and visual diary work. To develop this further, I will continue to question my decisions more critically and ensure that reflection directly informs my practical outcomes. Strengthening the link between theory, experimentation and final outcomes will help my work feel more resolved and cohesive.

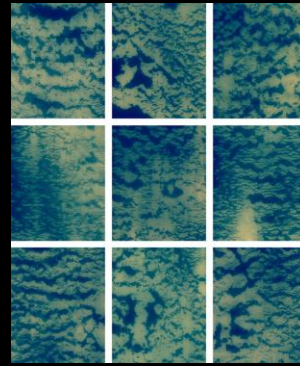
Practical application skills are an area where I need to build a greater technical awareness. I need to demonstrate clearer understanding of how equipment and technical decisions shape the final image. Moving forward, I will document my technical settings more consistently and evaluate why I make certain decisions, both during my shoot and in the darkroom. This will help me articulate not only what I create, but how and why I create it.

In terms of transferable and professional skills, I am pleased that my work is recognize as well presented and carefully proofread. However, I will ensure that technical formatting issues are resolved by exporting correctly.

Overall, this feedback shows strong progress across analysis and reflection, while highlighting specific areas for improvement in referencing and technical articulation. I am moving forward is to refine academic precision, deepen technical awareness and continue developing a confident and critically engaged visual diary.



Abstract
Confuse
Mystery



Alexander Mourant - *To Feel It's Touch*. 2019.

Cyanotype of dirt
Torn down buildings
Metaphor
Subtle memories



Contemporary
Open to interpretations

Baptiste Rabichon - *Blue screen of death*. 2022

Research Method – Object

Object can be- Nostalgic, metaphorical, historical.
Subject of an image or catalyst for exploration.

Stephen Gill – *A Series of Disappointments*. 2008



Betting slip
Magnifies little moments
Discarded

Difficult
Sensitive topic
Isolated

Leia Abril - *On Abortion*. 2016



Story Bright Attentive

William Eggleston – *untitled*. Circa 1983-86





Stephen Gill - Hackney Kisses. 2014

Repurposed wedding
photography

Pictorial history of an empty
chair
Shows connection

Erik Kessels – A Pictorial History of The Empty Chair.



Research Method – Image

Family photos, Archival imagery, passport snaps.
Imagery can be inspiration.



Arwed Messmer – RAF. No evidence – 2017.

Hunting and execution of RAF members.
Hidden information
Pieces together
Narrative

Facial recognition
Weaponized against us

Trevor Paglen, From Apple To Anomaly. 2020



From Stags, Hens and Bunnies (Dougie Wallace)

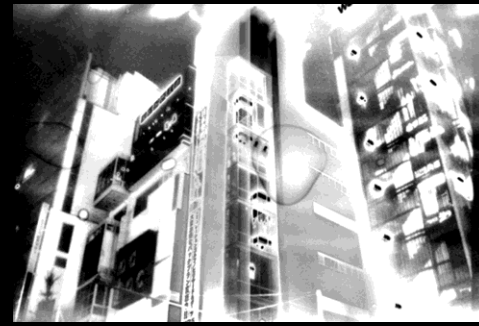


Street photography
Colourful
Looking through
windows

Saul Leiter, Taxi, New York 1957



City at night
Quiet urban spaces
Film process is messed
about
Breaks the chemistry
inversion



Anthony Cairns TYO2_080, 2016

Research Method- Excursion

Journey or destination?

**Require planning, offer spontaneity, disorientation, discover, forgotten location,
uncover destinations.**



Quiet from anything
moving
Buildings standing
before ripped down
Conceptual study of
a city

Shadows within frame
Retrospective
Constrictive
Close and personal
Creepy



Lee Friedlander Shadow—New York City 1966

Eugene Atget. Coin de la rue Valette et Panthéon, 5^e arrondissement, matinée de mars. 1925

Winner of the best restaurant at the
Observer Food Monthly Awards
2022 - Roots in York.
Photograph: Murdo MacLeod/The
Observer



Vadym (call sign Fish), 33, launches
two rockets near the front line as
Ukrainian forces shelled Russian-
controlled Dudchany.
Photograph: Ed Ram/The Observer



Research Method- Discussion

Discussion expands our viewpoint,
Discussion breaks the silence.

Discussion makes us listen.

Reconsider, redefine and bridges gaps.

TALK:LISTEN:LAUGH:QUESTION

Winners of the Observer Food
Monthly Awards 2022: Editor's
Award - Oda Mercedes and Alina
Trombadori, founders of
ACouldForDeuce, a charity which
supports Ukrainians after Russia's
invasion.

Photograph: PJH Harvey/The
Observer



Phillipe Halsman. Dali Atomicus. 1948



Psychoanalysis
The Male Gaze
Representation

Time
Essence



Cindy Sherman – Untitled Film Still #3 – 1977.

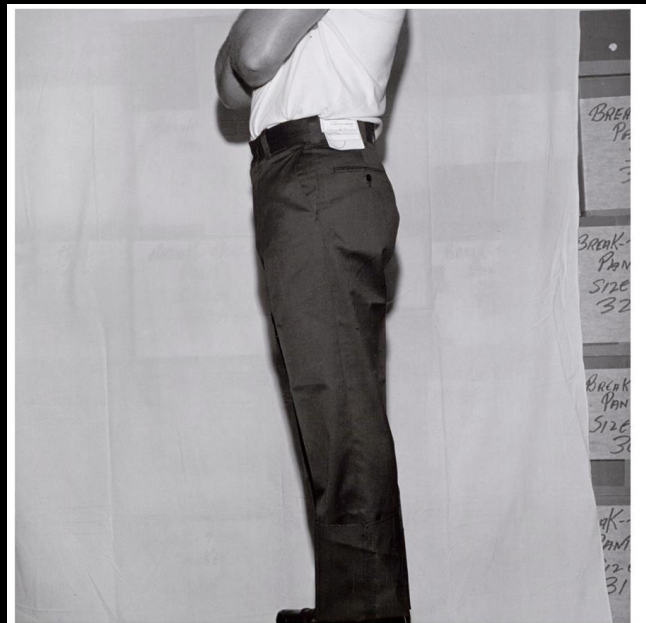
Hiroshi Sugimoto, Metropolitan Palace, Los Angeles.

Research Method- Theory

**Theory is an argument with reality.
A thought made physical.
The inside out.**

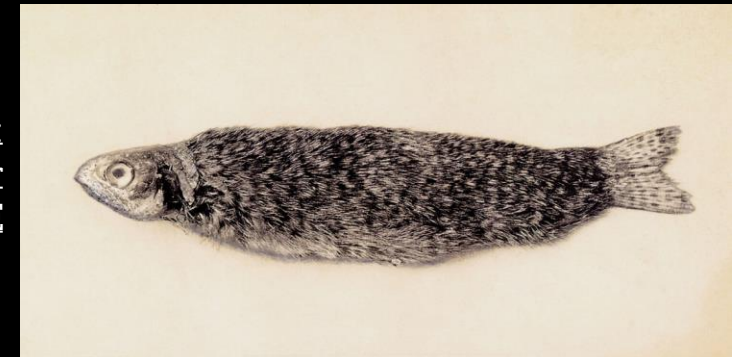
The wrong way done right. Or left.

“Reality does not exist by itself.
It’s an intellectual construction;
and photography is a tool to
negotiate our idea of reality.”



Proof
Veracity
Truth
Document

Absurd Fabrication:
Fictionalizing Photographer
Joan Fontcuberta | TIME



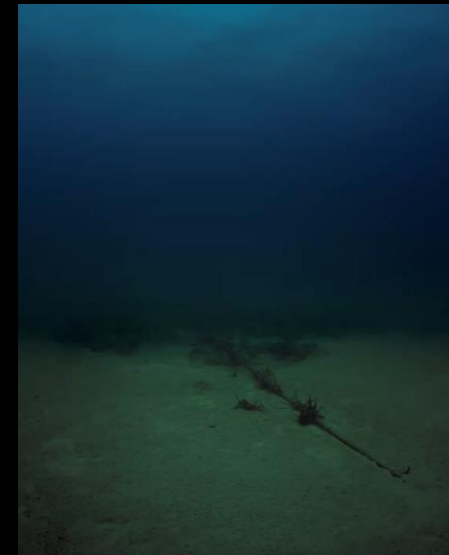
Joan Fontcuberta – Hairy Trout from Lake Clifford. 1984

Larry Sultan & Mike Mandel – Untitled from Evidence. 1975-77



Giulia Parlato. The Council of Egypt. 2022

Trevor Paglan, Bahamas Internet Cable System (BICS-1)
NSA/GCHQ-Tapped Undersea Cable Atlantic Ocean, 2015.



Research Method- Information

Information shapes our perception.

Information persuades and cajoles.

Information is written, heard, found and drawn.

Information proves or debunks

Information is power.

FACTS:FIGURES:
ANECDOTES:
DIAGRAMS



Mishka Henner, Slaughter, TX (2012)

Project cycle

Behind the scenes concert photography backstage, Chris Sidoruk, 2022.

Firstly, the image shows a close-up of a person's hands writing on sheets of paper with a thick marker. The hands appear aged, with visible veins and wrinkles, and there are rings and a bracelet being worn. The papers are handwritten setlists, with song titles written in bold marker and some words crossed out or adjusted. Multiple sheets are laid out on a textured surface, possibly an amplifier or table.

Furthermore, next to the papers is a lightly coloured, electric guitar, positioned horizontally, with its body, strings, pickups, and part of the neck clearly visible. The guitar has a smooth, glossy finish. In the background, there are hard equipment cases and metal latches, suggesting a backstage or preparation area.

Additionally, one of the strongest compositional elements is the use of leading lines., the neck of the guitar runs diagonally through the frame and naturally directs the viewer's eye toward the centre where the writing is happening. This creates a clear visual path across the image and makes the photograph feel captivating, holding the attention of the viewer as your eye moves across it.

There is also a strong sense of balance between the hands and the guitar, the hands occupy the left side while the guitar fills the right, creating a visual weight on both sides of the frame without it feeling symmetrical or static.

In addition , the depth of field plays an important role as well. The focus sits on the hands and the setlist, while the background elements like the equipment cases fall slightly out of focus. This helps separate the subject from the surroundings and keeps attention on the main action and gives the photograph a more subtle and thought-provoking quality.

The framing feels quite tight and intimate, with objects cropped at the edges, along with the strong vignette, this makes the viewer feel close to the scene, almost as if they are part of the moment. It also removes distractions and keeps everything concentrated within the space. Moreover, the stark contrast and enhanced texture in this piece makes it powerful and striking.

This photograph by Chris Sidoruk in 2022 captures a behind-the-scenes moment with the band Creamery Station as they finalise a setlist before a show.

The photograph focuses on a musician's hands drafting the night's performance order next to a Fender Stratocaster electric guitar, which is Jim Kader's, the guitarist for the band. Based on the visible text and Sidoruk's portfolio, the specific songs on the list include "C-Jam" which is likely a reference to C-Jam Blues and "Stage Fright" which is a song by the Band, which Creamery Station often covers.



Chris Sidoruk's photograph

Research method 1- Excursion

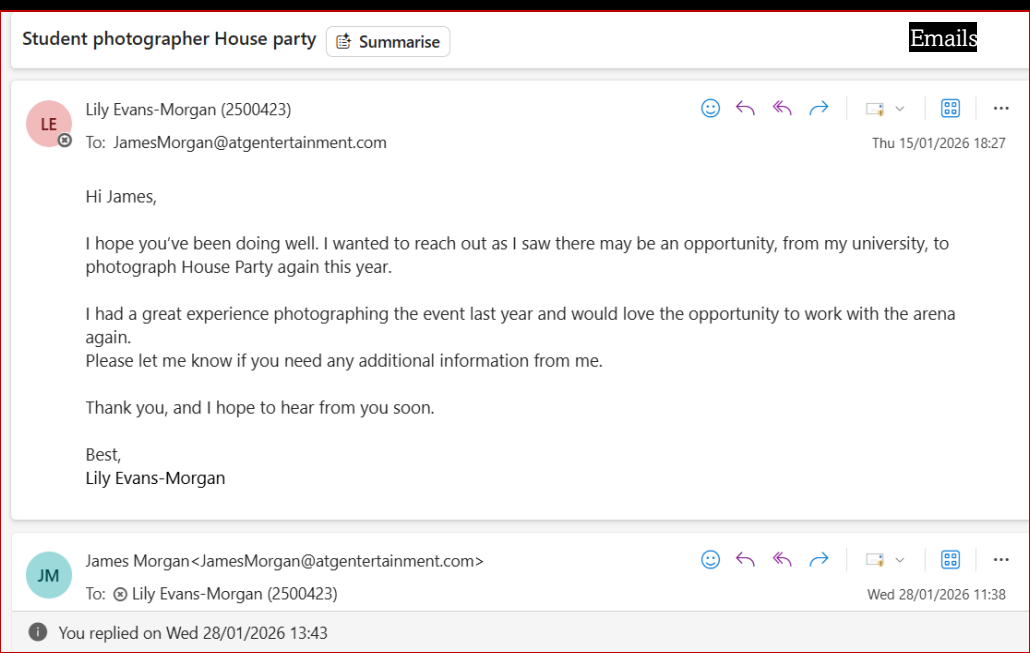
As a starting point for my project, I was given the opportunity to work with Swansea Arena in documenting their 'House Party' event which they collaborate with smaller venues in Swansea, showcasing emerging artist perform and raise money for the Music Venue Trust. I chose this as my starting point because it gives me a range of subjects to photograph and a fast-paced live environment. It also allows me to explore different areas of music photography, including performance, backstage, production and audience interaction.

My aim for this shoot is to document the event in a way that captured both the energy of the live performances and the work that is happening behind the scenes. I wanted to create a body of work that showed more than just the artists on stage, giving insight into the wider experience of the event. Moreover, shooting the bands in a more uique way.

This shoot took place over two days. The first day focused on production, including setup, preparation, and behind-the-scenes activity. Whilst the second day was the live concert itself, where I was present for the full day. Having access across both days gave me enough time to capture a wider narrative of the event, from preparation through to performance.

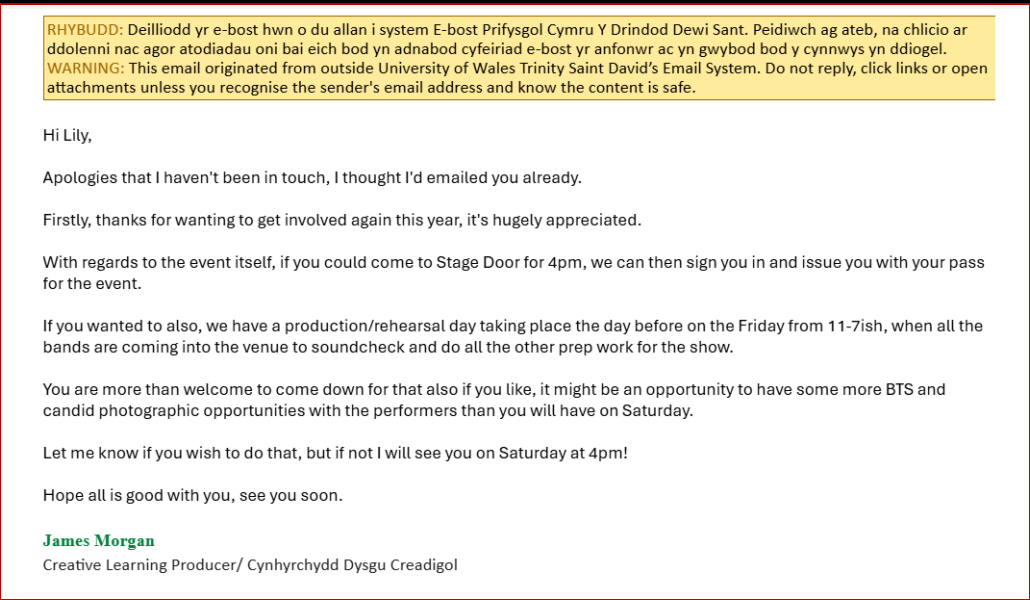
In regard to my kit, I had a chat with one of the technicians, Anne, in advice so I had the right an efficient kit, as I had only photographed concerts with a kit lens. She gave me the prime lens and a Zoom lens for the Canon EOS R5, As this would allow me to use a smaller aperture and capture immense detail from far away or in quick moving shots.





My research for this shoot was more focused on visual style and influences rather than the location itself. As I had visited and photographed at Swansea Arena before, I was already familiar with the layout, lighting conditions, and restrictions. This meant I could spend more time considering the type of images I wanted to create and how they would fit within my wider project. I was inspired by both Chris Sidoruk (1990) and Todd Owyong's (2009) range of composition and editing styles. Moreover, outside the studio in university was a past students work of the same event. Serena Killens work inspired a lot of my shots including composition and framing, Looking for the perfect shots.

In preparation for the shoot, I had a lot of conversation with James, the creative learning director at Swansea Arena to confirm schedules, access and what areas I could photograph. Alongside this the location is very safe and professionally managed, having been there for both enjoyment and professionalism it is an extremely comfortable environment.

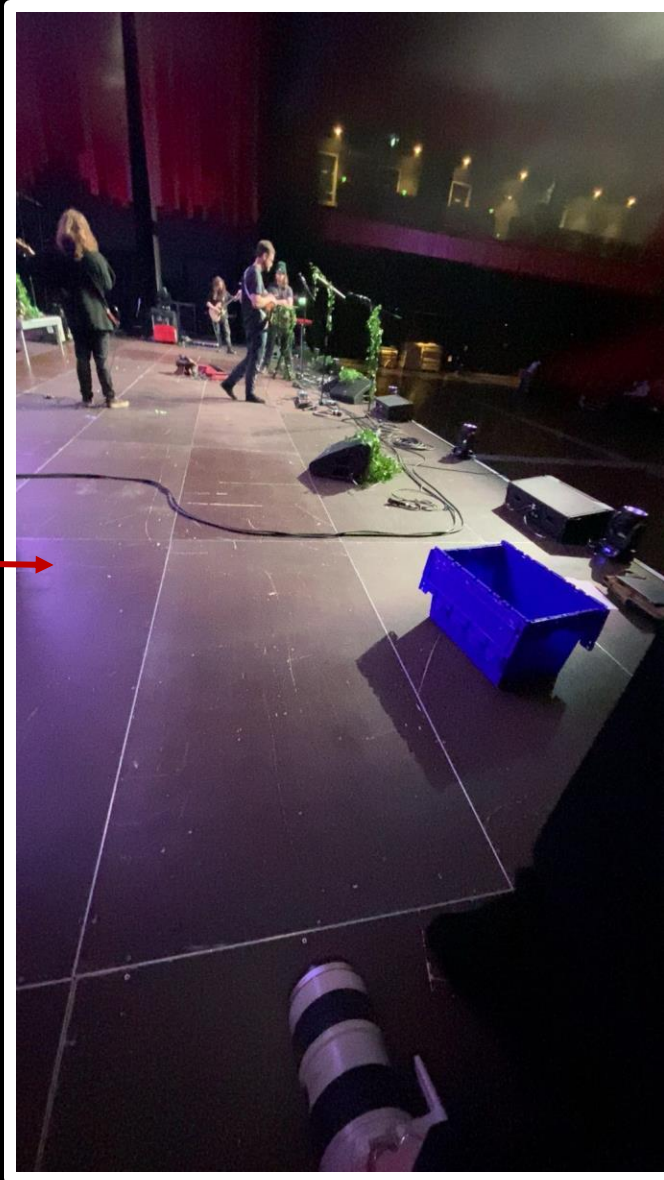


My initial plans for editing the production day was to keep the postproduction to a minimun, keeping the photographs rather natural and authentic whilst for the actual shoot day I was going to try and be precise with my shots and document the day in my own photography style. Finally, because I have had experience shooting in this venue before, I am confident in anticipating camera settings I would need in different areas of the venue.

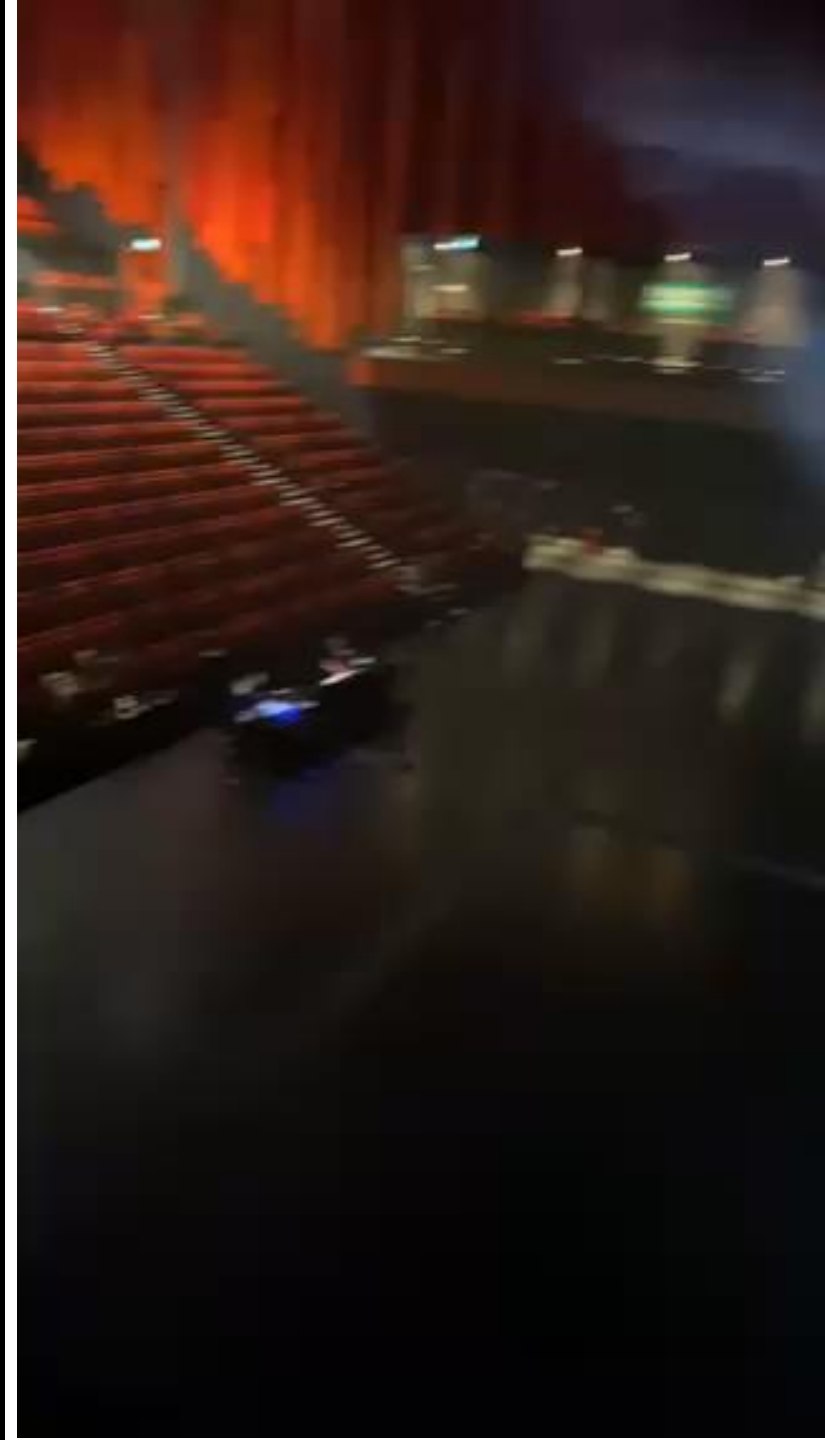
Venue space



Main stage



Second stage



Contact print 1- Production Day

Landscape format

Portrait format

Use of zoom lens

Use of depth of field (Deep)

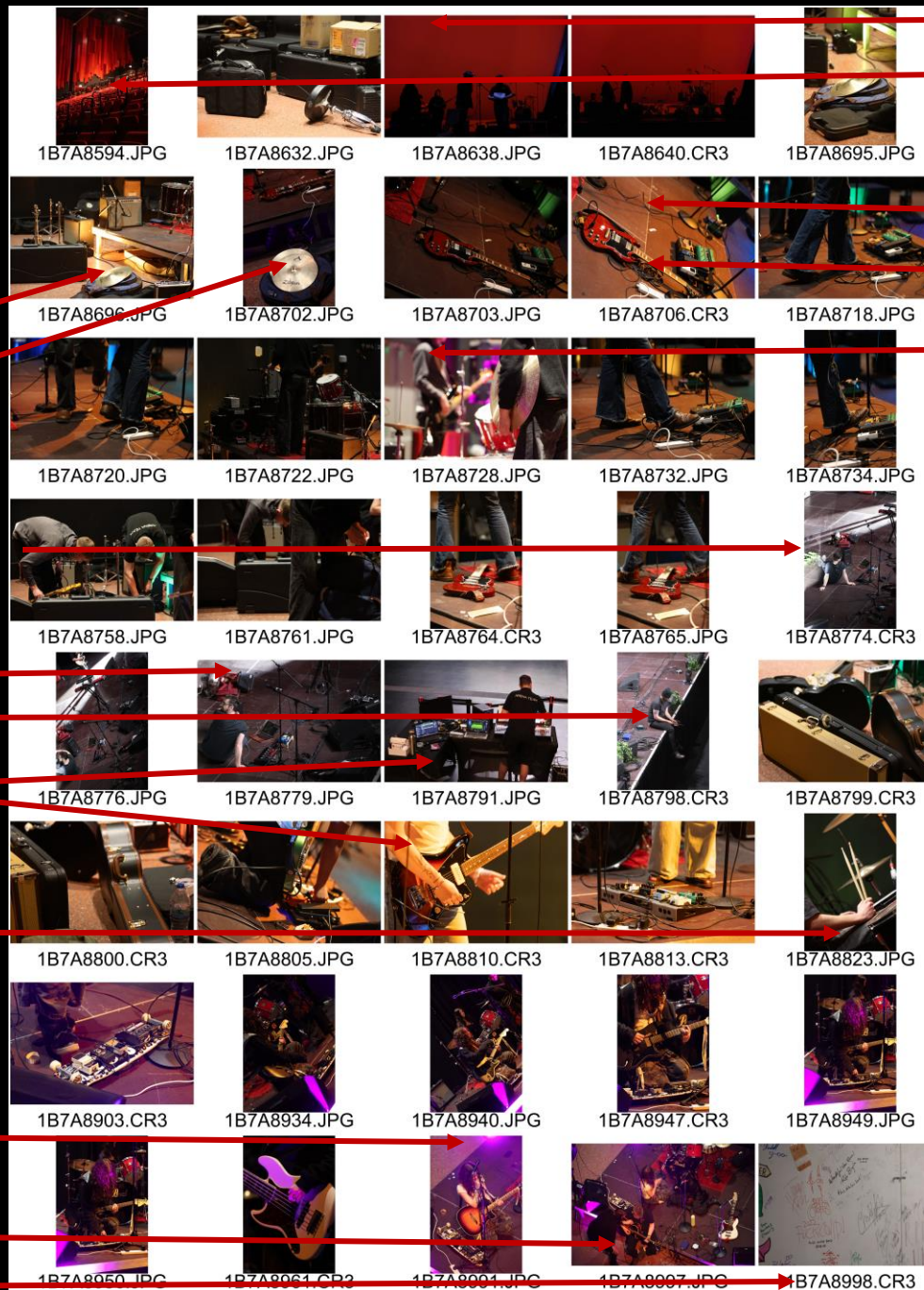
Leading lines

Contrast of tones (warmer and colder)

Canon EOS R5, Focal length- 200mm, Aperture- $f/2.8$, Shutter speed- $1/160s$ and ISO- 4000

Canon EOS R5, Focal length- 90mm, Aperture- $f/2.8$, Shutter speed- $1/125s$ and ISO- 1250

Overhead shot/
composition
Backstage



Under exposed Eye- level view (composition)
Above viewpoint

Inspired by Chris Sidoruk
Correctly exposed

Use of depth of field (shallow)

Artificial lighting used throughout.
Creates different atmosphere
throughout.

Constant use of props throughout-
instruments and production equipment
Different models and subjects
throughout. Capturing in a documentary
style

On this page I decided to show display
all my photographs onto a contact
sheet. As its easier to understand and
see the overall concept of the shoot as
real time. I used a DSLR camera to take
these photographs which presents the
behind the scenes of the day before I
big concert, the production and time
that goes into it.



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1B7A8707.CR3



1B7A8732.CR3



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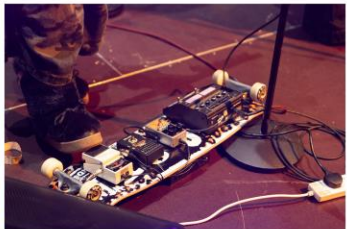


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Selected series for post-production



1B7A8813.CR3



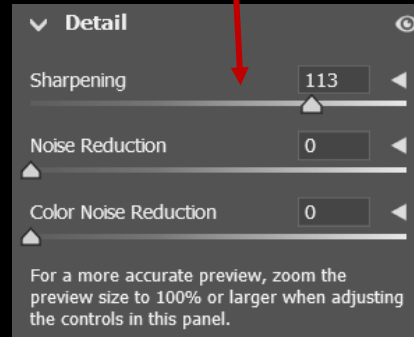
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1B7A8998.CR3

Edit from production day

Final edit



Firstly, I chose this photograph due to the composition and how it also portrays my subject matter. I also think this piece has the potential to be an appealing, striking photograph.

In post-production, I decided to use Adobe Photoshop as I know

my way round it better than any other editing site. I started by putting this piece into 'camera raw filter' so I can see the differences I am making along the way, also everything I want to use is in this tool. I increased the exposure to $+0.48$ to lighten the overall photo. I then decreased the highlights to -53 so that the highlights wouldn't become too overexposed when I lifted the exposure. Furthermore, I then increased the shadows to $+46$ to bring out some details in the darker areas.

Moving away from the lighting, I decided to alter the textures and effects in the photograph, I increased the texture to $+19$ and sharpen to $+113$. By increasing both of these it has allowed this photograph to become stronger and displays more of the details within the piece.

I decided to keep the post-production to a minimum as the original photograph is strong itself, I wanted to refine some aspects and keep it authentic



Further edits:



For these edits, I decided to edit them inspired by Chris Sidoruk, in his work in post-production, he has strong use of vignette and bold details/texture which I incorporates in the appropriate photographs.

The use of deep tonal value throughout, along with the intense details and texture has made these photographs strong, bold, and raw.



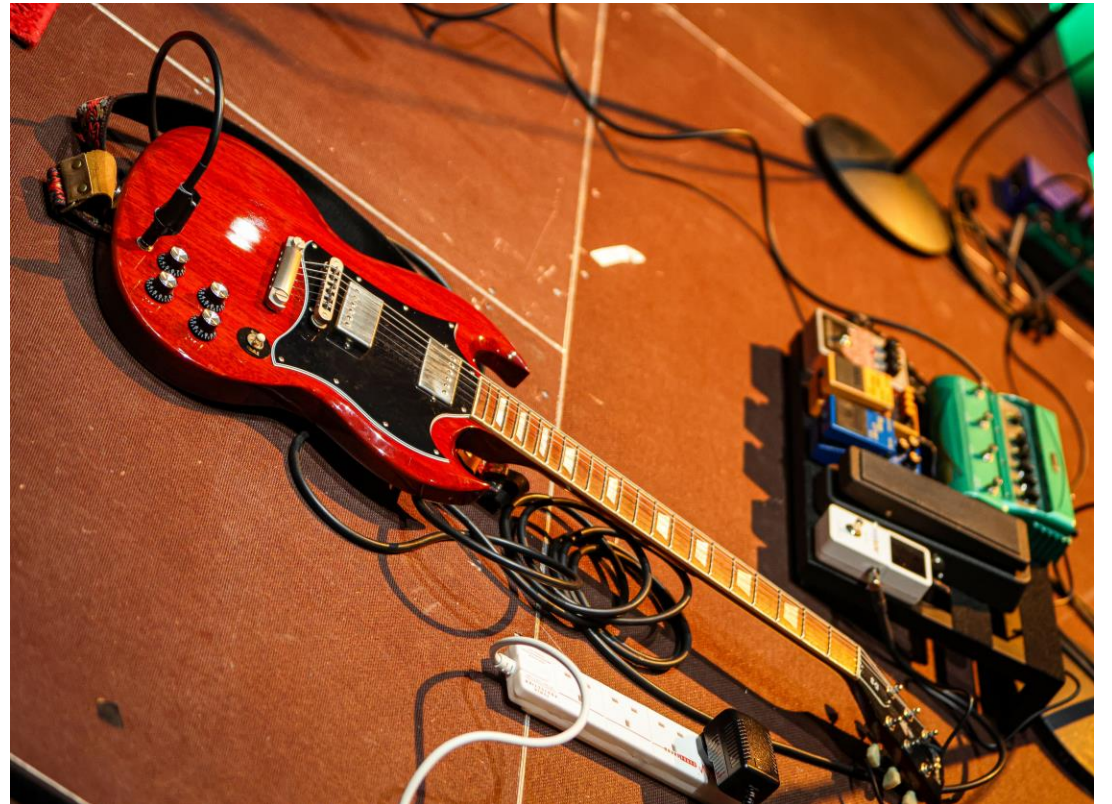
These two photographs show case the scale of knowledge and talent goes into production of concerts through the number of wires and equipment.



The photograph above captured a moment in sound check. The use of depth of field highlights the subject and guides the viewer's eye.



For these different edits, I was more inspired by Todd Owyong's use of colour and saturation in his pieces. The bold reds with the strong blacks in the two pieces makes them powerful and atmospheric. The photograph below I was inspired by Sidoruk and capturing the guitar and production in a unique way.



Todd Owyong research

I have chosen Todd Owyong as my influence for this shoot because of the style of photography he does and how he can capture the essence and emotion of a person on stage.

He uses the coloured concert, head moving lighting as an advantage to furthermore elevate the intense and raw atmosphere. The photographs are eye-catching and full of sharp and bold detail. I have also chosen him as my photographer due to his post-production process of enhances the vibrant colours more. Overall, his work is intimate, captivating and striking.



Plain White T's, Todd Owyong, 2009

Firstly, this image shows a person performing on stage, holding a microphone in his left hand and singing. Their head is tilted back, and their mouth is open as if mid-note. They are wearing a black leather jacket and dark jeans. One hand is raised slightly, while the other grips the microphone attached to a stand. The body language feels very dynamic and powerful. Suggesting a key high-energy moment in the performance.

The background is filled with strong orange and yellow stage lighting, creating a bright glow behind the performer. The lighting casts highlights on the jacket and face. The microphone stand is visible in front of them, extending vertically through the frame.

Moreover, the composition is strongly centred around the performer, who becomes the clear focal point through both placement, lighting and depth of field. The figure is positioned slightly off-centre, which makes the image feel more dynamic rather than static. The microphone stand creates a vertical line through the frame, while the angle of the performer's body and raised arm adds diagonal movement, giving the image a sense of energy and flow. Furthermore, the lighting plays a key compositional role. The bright orange and yellow light behind the performer creates a strong, saturated contrast against the darker foreground, making the figure stand out in a very striking and radiant way. This backlighting almost creates a halo effect, drawing immediate attention and making the image feel captivating.

There is also a sense of movement and tension in the pose. The head tilted back and the open posture make the composition feel powerful and slightly visceral, as if capturing the peak of a performance. The tight framing keeps the viewer focused entirely on the performer, removing distractions and making the moment feel more intimate.

In addition, for this photograph, taken by Todd Owyong in 2009 of the band Plain White T's during a live performance. Knowing this adds important context, as the photograph is not just a generic performance but part of a documented tour. The band, known for songs like Hey There Delilah, were at this time transitioning from large arena shows to more intimate tour settings.

Additionally, this context helps explain the lighting and atmosphere in the image. The performance was described as having dimmer, more intimate lighting with strong backlighting and haze, rather than large-scale stage production. This directly links to the warm, glowing light seen behind the performer in the photograph, making the image feel more personal rather than grand or distant.

For this shot he ended up shooting wide open with the Nikon *50mm f/1.4* on the D3 for the majority of the allotted time of the first three songs, with very occasionally switching to the Nikon *85mm f/1.4* on the D700

The context of the photographer is also important. Owyong is a professional music photographer who documents live performances, meaning the image is intended as part of a wider visual record of concerts rather than a single standalone artwork. This gives the image a documentary quality, capturing a real moment in time within a specific music scene.

Finally, from a viewer's perspective, knowing this background shifts the meaning. Without context, the image could simply be seen as someone singing under dramatic lighting. With context, it becomes a representation of a specific band, a specific tour, and a particular moment in live music culture in 2009. This adds depth, making the image feel more resonant, evocative, and impactful, as it connects to real events and experiences rather than just visual appearance.



Todd Owyong's photograph

Selected series

CANON EOS R5. Focal length- 70mm,
Aperture $f/2.8$, Shutter speed $1/160$
secs and ISO 6400

Frozen, decisive moment to shoot.

Artificial lighting used throughout.
Creates different atmosphere
throughout.

Constant use of props throughout-
instruments and equipment
Different models and subjects
throughout. Capturing in a
documentary style

On this page I decided to show
display all my photographs (to edit)
onto a contact sheet. As its
easier to understand and compare the
before and afters.

I used a DSLR camera to take these
photographs which presents main
concert and the different angles and
composition of it.

Under exposed
Crowd viewpoint

Object focus
Portrait format

Intimate composition

Correctly exposed

Passion and emotion creating
certain striking atmosphere

Subject/model focus

Texture
Curtain view point

Shallow depth of field

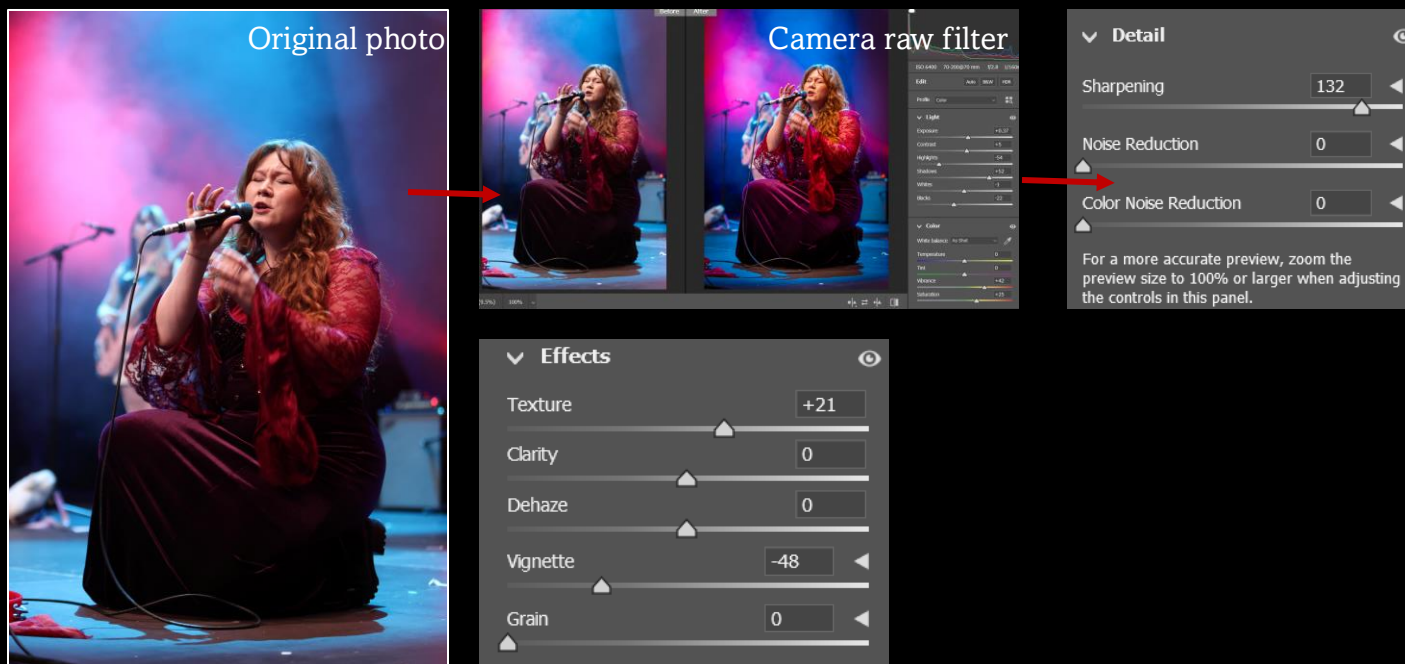
Use of lighting, highlights and
shadows

Looking down composition

Landscape format
Wide scale

Negative space





For this piece, I chose it because of the vibrancy in the colours, along with how they compliment her dress and hair. Moreover, the emotion and atmosphere this piece portrays could be amplified by some adjustments in the lighting to display a certain mood or atmosphere.

Firstly, I started with 'camera raw filter' to do some needed adjustments, such as increasing the exposure slightly to $+0.37$, which heightens the overall photograph. I then focused on balancing the lighting and details by increasing the shadows to $+52$ and reducing the highlights to -54 . To give some range in the tones as well I decided to decrease the blacks to -22 and increase the contrast to $+5$.

Additionally, I increased the vibrancy in this piece by increasing the saturation to $+25$ and the vibrance to $+42$, this gave the photograph a radiant look.

Moreover, to focus on making the photograph striking I focused on the effects and detail of the piece. I increased the texture to $+21$ and sharpening the piece to $+132$, this made the photograph increasingly sharp and pronounced. Finally, I decreased the vignette to -48 which subtly draws the subject to the front and the viewers' attention to the subject.





Original photo

I chose this photograph because of the ideas and energy I had envisioned. I wanted to try a new style of editing and this model being apart of an all girl punk band I thought my vision would work.

Editing process

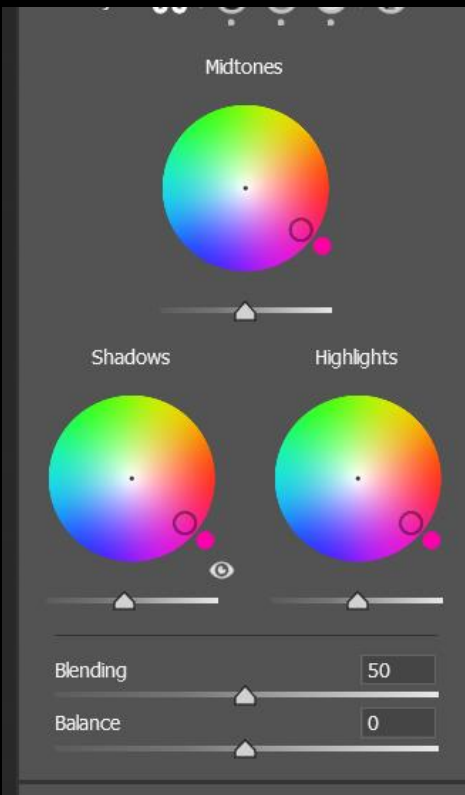


1. I started by cropping this photograph, turning the photograph more clockwise so that it would zoom in more to model (bringing her to the foreground) but that it is also an unique way than a perfect straight composition.

2. Secondly, I put this piece into camera raw filter where I would do all the alterations. I put this piece into monochrome to start with the editing. I then continued by increasing the exposure to $+1.05$ and shadows to $+10$ so that the overall photograph would be lighter and some details in the darker areas would be revealed, Moreover I decreased the highlights to -15 so that areas that were too overexposed due to increasing the exposure were recovered.

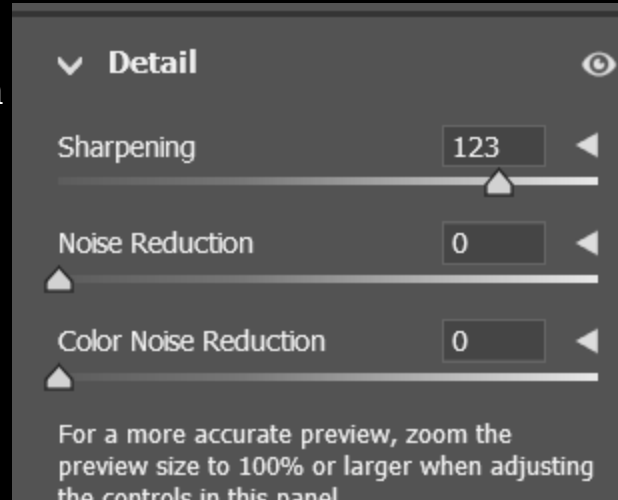
3. In addition, to match my style of editing for this piece, I decided to be excessive with the tonal value. I increased the contrast to $+48$, blacks- -35 . That created a deeper piece that appeared intense and dramatic.



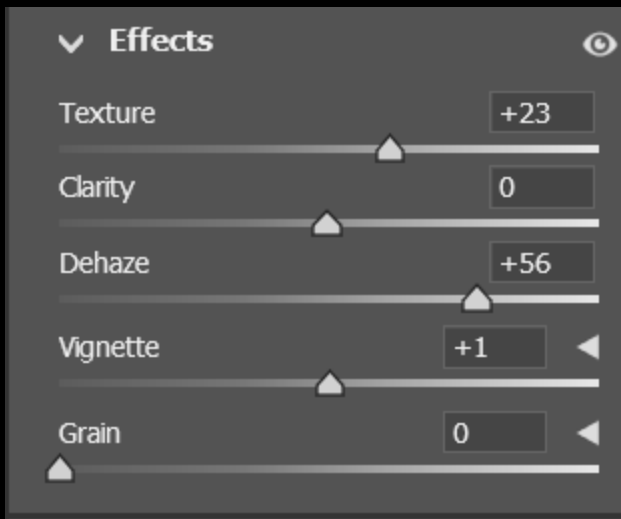


4. As this band is an all-girl punk band, and looking at their instagram, socials ect. I decided that pink suited the band the best, so I decided to push the tones towards pink. Which created this powerful vibrant piece of work.

5. Furthermore, I increased the sharpen aspect to +123 which heightens definition and making images look crisper and reversing the natural softness of RAW captures



6. Moreover, I decided to increase the texture to +23 which enhanced the details and created further depth. Finally, I increased the dehaze to +56 which reduces haze, enhances contrast, and deepens saturation. Overall, I think this piece and the end product came out successful. It was I envisioned and I want to try and continue with this editing style in the future.



Further final edits

Refer to contact
sheet for before
shots.









Comparing my work to Todd Owyong

Firstly, Both images focus on performers using body language and gesture to create a strong visual impact. In each photograph, the raised hand becomes an important focal point, helping to direct the viewer's eye and suggest movement. Both also use warm orange and red lighting, which creates intensity and links the subjects to the energy of a live stage environment.

Another similarity is that neither image relies heavily on background detail. The backgrounds are kept simple and dark or plain, allowing full attention to stay on the performer. In both photographs, the subject is clearly the centre of attention, showing how portraiture can communicate personality and stage presence through pose, lighting, and expression. However, they communicate different ideas. The left image (Owyong, 2024) feels polished, dramatic and carefully constructed, while my image feels more natural and personal. Even though both use warm lighting and strong gestures, the mood and intention behind them are very different.



Composition

In addition, Owyong's photograph uses a tight composition, with the performer taking up most of the frame. This immediately draws attention to her pose and body language. The raised arm creates a strong diagonal line, adding movement and confidence. There is little empty space, so the image feels bold and direct.

In my image, I used a looser composition with a lot of negative space above the performer. This helps emphasise the raised hand and makes the subject feel smaller within the environment. Instead of dominating the frame through pose, the performer stands out through expression and gesture. I think this gives the image a more natural and live feel.

Lighting

Lighting is one of the biggest differences between the two photographs. Owyong's (2024) image uses strong, even lighting with a bright orange background. The performer is clearly separated from the background, making the image look clean and professional.

My image uses stage lighting in a less controlled way. The light falls unevenly across the subject, creating shadows and contrast. I like how this adds atmosphere and reflects the reality of a live music setting. It feels less perfect, but more honest.

Colour and Editing

Owyoung's photograph uses intense orange and red tones throughout the whole frame, which gives it a very striking look. The editing seems smooth and polished, likely with retouching to keep the image sharp and clean.

In my image, the warm colours are still important, but they feel rougher and more textured. The visible grain and darker tones create a vintage feel which reflected the bands performance and energy.

Camera Systems: Nikon vs Canon

Moreover, Owyoung's image was shot on Nikon, which is often known for sharp detail and strong dynamic range. This suits the crisp and controlled look of the photograph.

My image was shot on Canon (although I usually shoot on NIKON), I think this works well for portraits and live music photography. That said, the final result is shaped more by lighting, timing, and editing than by the camera brand itself.

Mood and Representation

Furthermore, Owyoung's photo presents the performer almost like an icon. The pose, styling, and lighting make her look powerful and glamorous. It feels designed to promote an image of the artist.

My photograph feels more about the moment itself. The performer looks relaxed and immersed in the performance, and the raised hand suggests connection with the audience. Rather than building a perfect image, it captures personality and atmosphere.

Reflection of both days and evaluation

For this shoot, I achieved my aim of creating a body of work that showed more than just the artists on stage, instead giving insight into the wider experience of the event. I also wanted to photograph the bands in a more unique and visually engaging way. On the first day, I decided to focus on the equipment and production side of the venue, which I captured through two different visual approaches, split between colour images and striking black and white photographs. However, throughout the day my focus naturally began to shift towards photographing the artists during soundcheck, as many of these moments looked as though they were part of a live performance. On the second day, I shot in a very different way due to having access to my zoom lens, allowing me to capture more overhead shots that felt distinctive, dynamic and captivating.

Overall, I think my planning was adequate, although it could have been stronger. I should have prepared more carefully in terms of equipment, particularly regarding battery life and storage. However, my previous experience in gig photography, alongside familiarity with the venue, allowed me to react quickly, move confidently within the space, and capture key moments effectively. This prior knowledge helped compensate for areas where planning was weaker.

Both shoots went well overall, and I was able to capture many moments while documenting the event as fully as possible. However, I did face several challenges throughout the process. On the first day, I assumed that the camera I had been given in store would be fully charged, but it was not. As a result, I had to repeatedly charge the battery, shoot what I could, and then return to charge it again, which disrupted the flow of the shoot. I learned from this on the second day and fully charged the camera beforehand, although I was not given an additional battery, so I still had to be careful with my shooting time. Even with this preparation, the camera eventually died with no place available to recharge it. Thankfully, my sister was also there and allowed me to use her Nikon D3500, which is the camera I usually use. This meant I did not need to adapt to unfamiliar equipment and could quickly continue photographing the remainder of the concert, including some of my stronger images from later in the night. In addition to this, my 128GB SD card became full, meaning that between sets I had to keep deleting photographs to create space. While frustrating, this also forced me to become more selective and precise with the shots I chose to take as the evening progressed. Furthermore, only having the zoom lens available for most of the night meant I struggled to capture full-body images in the pit, which is usually how I prefer to shoot. This required me to adapt my style and compose images differently.

From reviewing my contact sheet, I believe my final image selection successfully supports my original aim while also demonstrating the variety within my practice and how dynamically I can work in changing environments. The images show a range of perspectives, moments and approaches rather than repeating the same style. I am also confident that my edits are of a good quality. Through my experience using Camera Raw Filter, I was able to create the outcomes I originally envisioned. In addition, this project allowed me to develop a new style of editing, particularly through experimenting with contrast, monochrome tones and atmosphere.

As a result of this project, my next steps are to continue working more authentically and to further develop my artist research. I would like to deepen my understanding of documentary and music photographers whose work connects with my own interests, while continuing to refine my shooting style and visual identity.



New shoot artist research

- Charles Peterson- Black-and-white shots of the Seattle underground and grunge scene (Sub Pop, DIY venues), often with wide-angle, messy, high-energy framing.
- Pennie Smith- London-based photographer specializing in black-and-white rock photography, capturing raw stage and crowd moments from punk/rock gigs (e.g., The Clash, The Jam).
- Jim Saah – Punk scene photographer whose extended body of work from the 1980s-90s (Fugazi, Talking Heads, etc.) is full of up-close, high-contrast live shots that encapsulate crowd energy and chaos.
- Shari Denson – Manchester-area photographer who shot many indie and grassroots music gigs, often her early work embraced a DIY, black & white feel.

Nirvana, 1990, Charles Peterson.



Charles Peterson's photograph

Firstly, this photograph shows a crowded room full of people at what looks like a live gig or concert. Everyone is packed tightly together, with faces and bodies overlapping. In the top left, a person is flying through the air above the crowd, likely jumping from the stage or being carried by the audience. This immediately draws attention because it breaks away from the dense mass below.

Moreover, the people underneath are looking up, reaching out, shouting, or moving against each other. Some faces are clear, others disappear into the crowd. On the right side, figures are blurred, which makes it seem like they are dancing or pushing around quickly. In addition, the background is dark and full of more people, making the room feel busy and enclosed.

Overall, it shows a loud, energetic moment where the whole crowd is moving together, with one person suspended above them.

The composition is dense, dynamic, and immediate. The frame is tightly packed with bodies, faces, and gestures, creating a raw and visceral sense of physical closeness. There is little empty space, so the image feels compressed and intense, as though the energy of the room is pushing outward beyond the frame.

Additionally, the most striking compositional feature is the airborne figure in the upper left. Suspended diagonally above the audience, this body cuts across the scene and becomes the focal point. Its elevated position contrasts with the tightly grouped crowd below, creating tension between freedom and confinement, movement and mass. This diagonal line adds a dynamic sense of momentum, making the moment feel sudden and unstable.

Below, the crowd forms a chaotic texture of overlapping heads, arms, and expressions. Rather than leading the eye in a calm or orderly way, the composition forces the viewer to scan across multiple points of action.

In addition, the slightly blurred figures on the right side intensify the sense of motion. This blur makes the image feel spontaneous and unfiltered, almost documentary in style. It suggests that the moment is too fast and energetic to be fully contained. The darker background causes the foreground figures to stand forward, increasing the visual impact and keeping attention on the crowd's physical presence. Moreover, this piece is a high contrast, stark photograph including deep texture and boldness.

The context of this photograph is deeply tied to the underground music scene of the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly the rise of grunge in Seattle and the emergence of Nirvana. Knowing that the image was made by Charles Peterson, a photographer closely connected to that scene, immediately adds meaning. Moreover, he was not an outsider documenting events from a detached perspective, but someone immersed within the culture, photographing from inside the crowd and sharing the same spaces as the musicians and audience. This gives the image an authentic and raw quality, making it feel less like staged observation and more like lived experience.

The photograph gains further significance through its association with Nirvana before they became globally famous. Rather than presenting the polished image of celebrity culture, it captures a time when performances were intimate, chaotic, and rooted in local community spaces. Stage diving, crowd movement, and physical closeness were part of the culture, symbolising rebellion, release, and rejection of mainstream commercial performance. Because of this, the image becomes more than a concert photograph, it is symbolic of youth identity, anti-establishment attitudes, and a generation seeking emotional honesty.

In addition, the use of film is also important to its context. The grain, blur, contrast, and imperfect motion all contribute to a visceral and evocative atmosphere. These qualities suggest immediacy and truth, as though the moment has been seized rather than manufactured. Film photography often carries a nostalgic and resonant feeling for contemporary viewers, especially when connected to subcultures that valued authenticity over perfection. The lack of digital sharpness or controlled lighting enhances the sense that this is a fleeting real moment rather than a constructed media image.

Besides this, historically, the photograph documents a cultural shift. Grunge emerged during a period of disillusionment among young people, reacting against the excess and glamour of mainstream 1980s culture. Images such as this therefore feel poignant and thought-provoking because they preserve the spirit of resistance, freedom, and emotional intensity that defined the era. Additionally, the crowded room, physical contact, and disorderly energy reflect a social environment where music became communal experience rather than passive entertainment.

Moreover, the presentation also changes interpretation. Seen in a newspaper feature such as *The Guardian* (Guardian 2024), the image is framed as part of music and photographic history, encouraging reflection on its legacy. Displayed in a gallery or magazine, it may be viewed more formally for composition, texture, and documentary value. For viewers today, especially those distant from that era, the photograph can appear haunting or melancholic, representing a vanished moment of analogue culture and pre-digital youth expression.

Overall, context transforms the image from a simple scene of people at a gig into a powerful historical document. It records not only what happened in front of the camera, but the values, emotions, and atmosphere of a specific time and place. Without this context, it might simply seem chaotic; with it, the photograph becomes captivating, complex, and culturally resonant.



Contact sheet of selected series

Artificial lighting used throughout.
Creates different atmosphere throughout.

Constant use of props throughout-
instruments and equipment
Different models and subjects
throughout. Capturing in a
documentary style

On this page I decided to show
display all my photographs (to edit)
onto a contact sheet. As its
easier to understand and compare the
before and afters.
I used a DSLR camera to take these
photographs which presents main
concert and the different angles and
composition of it. Being more inspired
by the grunge scene photography in
the 90s.

CANON EOS R5. Focal
length- *95mm*, Aperture
f/3.2, Shutter speed *1/200*
secs and ISO *4000*

Portrait format

Eye view level

Correctly exposed
Wide scale

Frozen, decisive moment to shoot

Looking up composition

Intimate composition

Texture

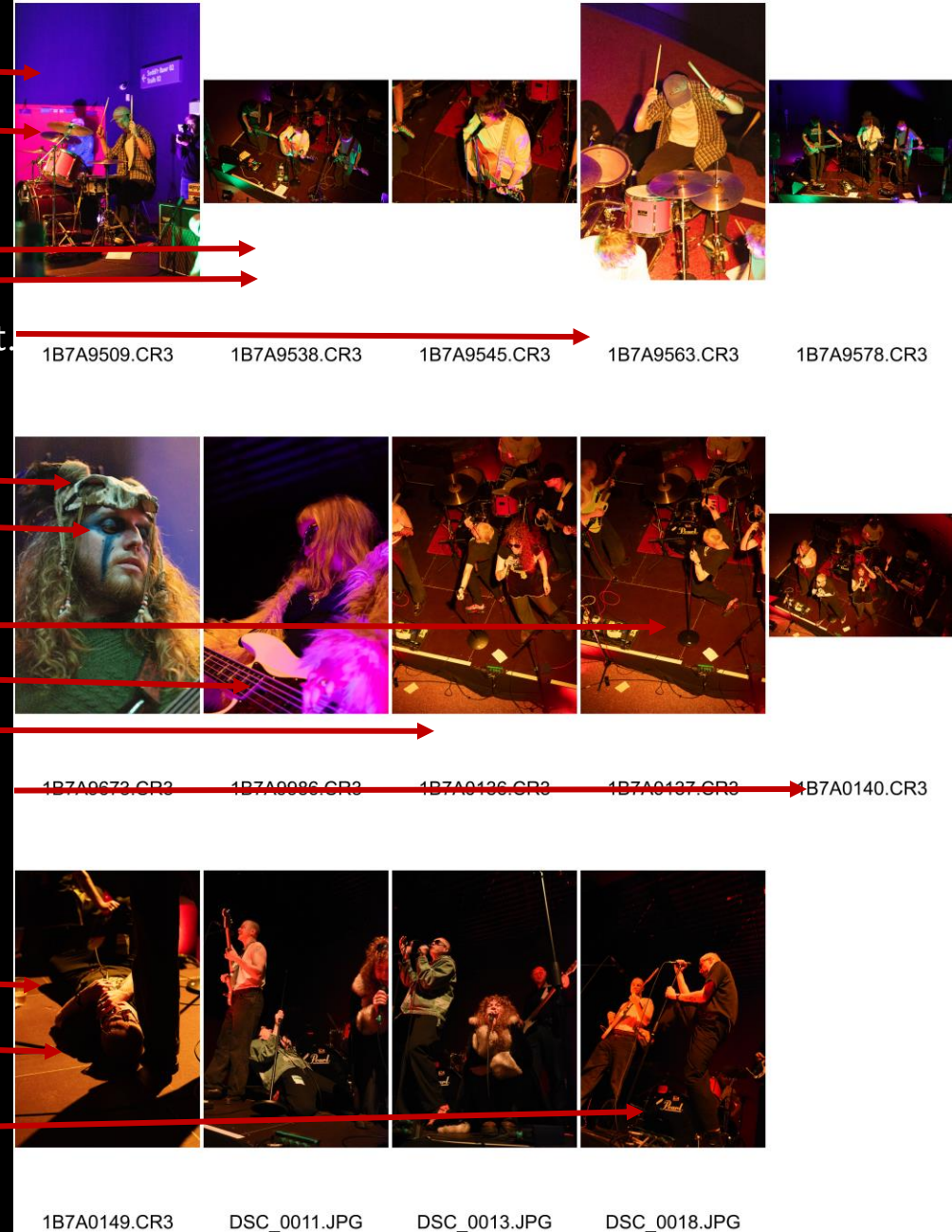
Looking down composition

Landscape format

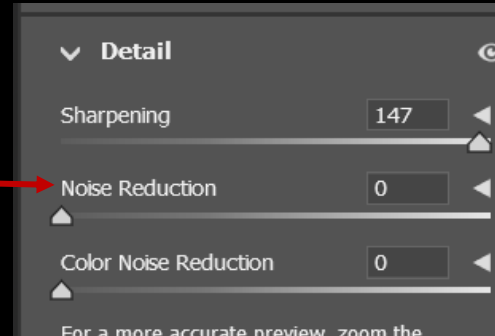
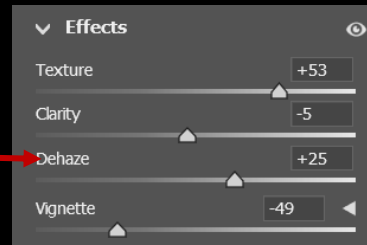
Shallow depth of field

Use of lighting, highlights and shadows

Subject/model focus



Edit



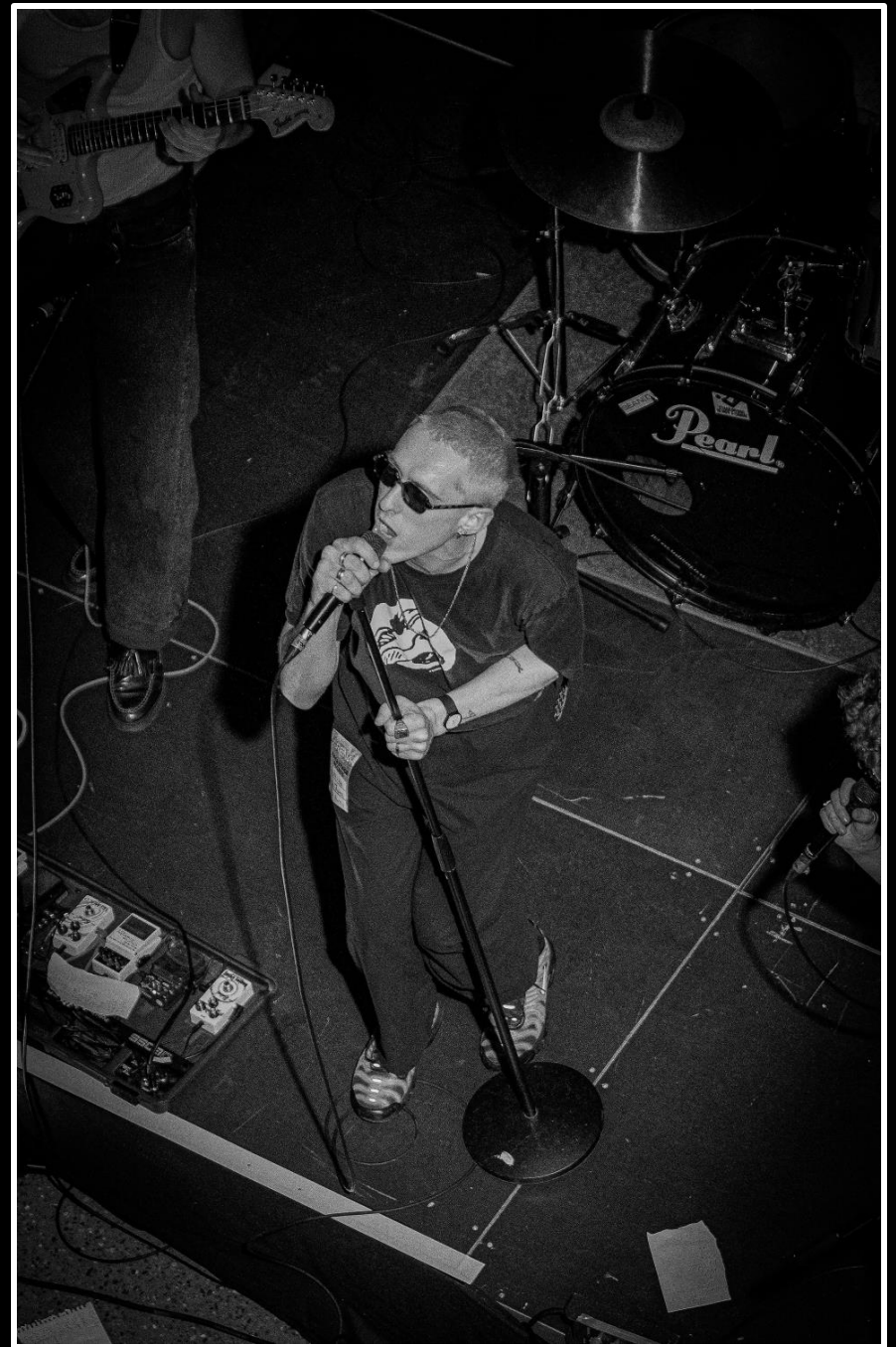
For this edit, I started by cropping the piece right down to just include the singer, as I wanted him to be the focal point. I then went into 'camera raw filter' to make some adjustments to fit the aesthetic and atmosphere I want to achieve. I first started by putting this piece into black and white, but I decided to use the filter 'B&W 03' which created this more grunge and darker feel to the photograph. Moreover, I then decreased the exposure to -0.65 , highlights to -63 , whites to -58 as putting this photography initially into black and white, it was overblown and way too overexposed. Furthermore, I then increase the shadows to $+100$ and the contrast to $+16$ which added depth, drama, and dimension to the piece. To then finalise the photograph and match the style of Peterson (1990/1991) I increased the texture to $+53$, dehaze to $+25$ and sharpened this piece to $+147$ which enhances image quality by sharpening fine details and reducing atmospheric haze, making photos appear sharper, cleaner, and more high-contrast, also I increased the grain to $+89$ to add another layer for the 'aesthetics'. Finally, to guides the viewers eye and narrow the photograph I decreased the vignette to -49



Before



After



Further examples







Compare and contrast

Shared Visual Language

Both images exist within a similar visual language rooted in black-and-white music photography. By stripping away color has placed full emphasis on contrast, texture, and atmosphere, allowing the viewer to focus on the physicality of performance rather than distraction. In both photographs, the subject is actively playing an instrument. There is also a strong sense of proximity, the viewer feels close to the performer, almost within the same space with both of them being shot in the crowd. Moreover, the texture plays an important role in both works, in my image through the fur coat, hair, and visible grain, and in Charles Peterson's image (1991) through motion blur, lighting, and the rawness of the environment.

Energy and Atmosphere

Despite these similarities, the overall energy of the two images differs significantly. My photograph feels controlled and composed, almost like a stylised portrait taken during a



performance. The subject appears self-contained, with a strong sense of presence and intention. In contrast, Peterson's image is chaotic and energetic. His work, closely associated with the Grunge scene, embraces imperfection and spontaneity. The movement of the guitarist, combined with the unstable framing, creates a sense of immediacy, as if the image was captured in the middle of a loud, fast, and unpredictable moment.

Composition and Framing

Furthermore, the compositions further highlight this contrast. My image uses a more deliberate and minimal approach, with the subject isolated against a dark background. Negative space is used effectively, and the diagonal line of the bass guitar helps guide the viewer's eye across the frame. The cropping is intentional and balanced, reinforcing the sense of control. Whilst Peterson's composition, on the other hand, is dense and layered. The frame includes multiple elements, microphone stand, stage lights, background figures, which creates depth but also visual noise. The slightly tilted angle adds tension and contributes to the feeling of instability, making the viewer feel embedded in the crowd rather than observing from a distance.

Movement and Stillness

Another key difference lies in how movement is represented. In my photograph, the subject is relatively sharp, with movement implied rather than explicitly shown. This gives the image a quieter, more reflective quality, closer to portraiture. Peterson's photograph captures motion directly through blur, particularly in the musician's hands and body. This blur conveys speed, sound, and physical energy, making the image feel almost audible. It reflects a documentary approach, where capturing the feeling of the moment is more important than technical precision.

Lighting and Tone

Additionally, lighting also plays a crucial role in shaping each image. My photograph uses more controlled exposure, with strong contrast but clear detail retained in the subject. The background falls into near-total darkness, which isolates the figure and enhances their presence. However, In Peterson's image, the lighting is harsher and less controlled, likely coming from stage lights. Bright highlights and camera light sources create a more chaotic tonal range. This contributes to the raw and unfiltered aesthetic that defines much of his work.

Digital vs Film Aesthetic

The difference in medium, DSLR versus film, is particularly noticeable in the texture of the images. My photograph, although grainy, has a more uniform and controlled noise pattern typical of digital sensors and enhanced in post-production. Edges appear sharper, and details are more defined. In contrast, Peterson's film image has an organic grain structure that interacts with the light, especially in brighter areas. This creates a softer, more unpredictable texture that feels embedded in the image itself rather than added. The film quality reinforces the authenticity and rawness of the moment.

Conclusion

Overall, while both images share a common foundation in black-and-white music photography, they diverge in purpose and execution. My photograph leans towards control, clarity, and stylisation, creating a strong, almost iconic image of a performer. Peterson's work prioritises energy, movement, and authenticity, capturing the unpredictability of live music. Together, they demonstrate how similar subject matter can be approached in fundamentally different ways depending on intent, medium, and stylistic choices.

Reflect and evaluate

Firstly, I think these edits are successful because they show a clear style, direction and improvement in my project. Using black and white has worked well, as it creates a raw, atmospheric and documentary feel across all of the images. Whilst removing colour allows the viewer to focus more on expression, movement, lighting and contrast rather than distractions from stage colours. I wanted the images to feel honest and authentic, similar to classic gig photography, and I think the monochrome filters helps achieve this. The grain and darker tones also create a nostalgic and resonant mood, which adds to the overall atmosphere.

I think the quality of my edits is strong overall because I have used contrast effectively to draw attention to important areas such as faces, instruments and gestures. In particular, the photographs of the vocalist stand out because the bright highlights separate the subject from the darker background, making them visually striking and impactful. Moreover, I have also experimented with shadows to create tension and drama and through editing these images, I have learned more about tonal balance, how contrast changes mood, and how black and white can unify a series of photographs.

My outcomes show that I have developed new skills in both photography and editing. I used overhead angles and unusual viewpoints, which makes the images feel more dynamic and immersive than standard eye-level shots. I also captured movement in moments such as the drummer mid-action and the singer performing on the floor, which shows improvement in timing and observation. These images achieve my aim of documenting live music in a candid and intimate way, showing both the energy of performance and the atmosphere of the venue.

If I were to improve these outcomes, I would refine some of the tonal range because a few shadow areas are very dark and lose detail. Although this adds mood, I think balancing this more carefully could make the images stronger. In future, I plan to continue exploring black and white documentary photography because it suits my subject matter well. I also want to start shooting on film, as this would help create an even more authentic and raw aesthetic while encouraging me



Research method 2- Image/ excursion

The aim of this shoot was to capture the essence of a live concert from within the crowd. I wanted the images to reflect what it actually feels like to attend a gig, being surrounded by people, immersed in the music, and experiencing the atmosphere in real time. This included capturing a range of moments, from the live performance itself to the crowd and post-gig environment. Although this was not initially a planned photoshoot, I brought a disposable camera to document personal memories while attending the concert with my boyfriend and his brother. While at the event, I recognised the opportunity to develop this into a more intentional body of work, particularly by drawing on the visual style of Charles Peterson and the 1990s grunge scene.

The event will take place in the evening, with doors opening at approximately 6:15 PM and the headline act beginning around 9:15 PM. This provided a shooting window of several hours, allowing for a variety of images to be captured across different stages of the concert, including pre-performance atmosphere, the main set, and the aftermath. Although the timing was not pre-planned in a structured way, the duration of the event allowed enough flexibility to experiment with different types of shots and moments.

The only equipment used was a disposable film camera. This decision was partly circumstantial, as it was originally brought for casual documentation rather than a formal shoot. However, it became a key strength of the project. The limitations of the camera, fixed settings, built-in flash, and ISO 800 film will encourage a more instinctive and reactive approach to shooting. This aligns with the raw and unpolished aesthetic associated with grunge photography, where technical perfection is less important than capturing the energy of the moment.

Although the shoot itself was spontaneous, it was informed by prior knowledge of music photography, particularly the work of Charles Peterson (1990). His documentation of the 1990s grunge scene influenced my approach, especially in terms of embracing imperfection, motion, and intimacy within the crowd. The venue, Utilita Arena Cardiff, also played a role in shaping the images, as indoor arena lighting and crowd density created conditions similar to those seen in archival grunge photography.

As this was not a pre-arranged shoot, there was minimal formal correspondence involved. There was no direct communication with performers or event organisers regarding photography. However, this lack of planning contributed to the authenticity of the images, as everything was captured organically without staging, direction, or interference. The only informal collaboration was with the people I attended the concert with, who were part of the shared experience being documented.

The shoot took place within the crowd at Utilita Arena Cardiff. Being in a busy concert environment presented challenges, including limited mobility, low lighting, and the physical intensity of the crowd. However, these factors also contributed to the atmosphere I aimed to capture. From a safety perspective, I remained aware of my surroundings and positioned myself in a way that allowed me to shoot while still being part of the audience experience.

Using a disposable film camera significantly influenced the post-production process. As the images were shot on film, they naturally contained grain, contrast, and imperfections associated with analogue photography. This reduced the need for heavy editing, as the desired aesthetic was already present in the negatives. This approach supports authenticity, avoiding the need to artificially replicate a film look through digital manipulation.

Due to the nature of the disposable camera, control over exposure settings was extremely limited. The camera used ISO 800 film, which is suitable for low-light environments such as concerts, and included a built-in flash. Aperture and shutter speed were fixed, meaning that I had to rely on instinct and timing rather than technical adjustment. This lack of control encouraged a more spontaneous shooting style, aligning with the unpredictability of live music photography and reinforcing the raw, documentary feel of the final images.

Digital contact print

Artificial lighting used throughout. Creates different atmosphere throughout. Both used in camera flash and surrounding lights. With a 4-10 feet flash range.

Constant use of props throughout-instruments and equipment

Different models and subjects throughout. Capturing in a documentary style but also casual and capturing memories.

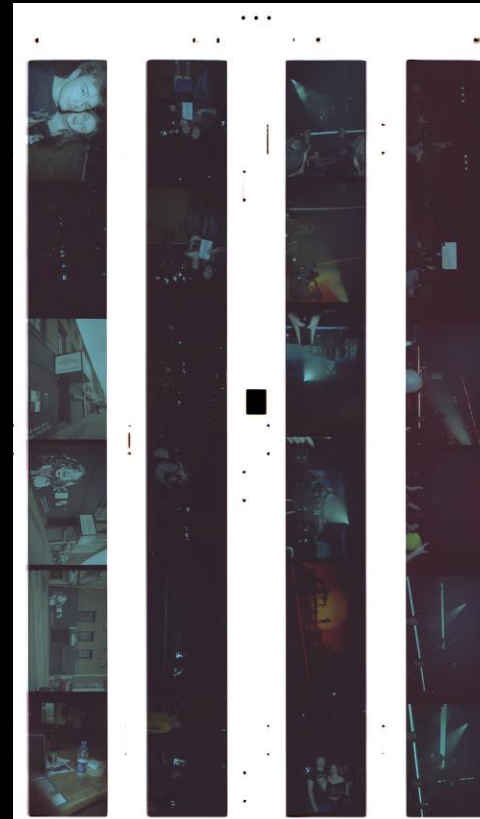
Unplanned compositions throughout, as I was in a rough crowd and being pushed about, which added a certain rawness and atmosphere to the piece.

On this page I decided to show display all my photographs onto a contact sheet. As its easier to understand and compare the before and afters.

I used a Kodak colour disposable film camera (800 speed film) to take these photographs which presents main concert. Being more inspired by the grunge scene photography in the 90s and the authenticity of it.

Different formats throughout (portrait and landscape) with many different compositions and framing. The spontaneity of the photographs also adds to the work.

Includes crowd shots, performer shots, casual friend photographs, after the concert finished and a Swansea venue.



Diptych

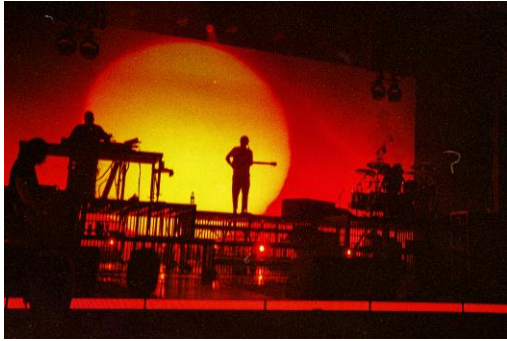


Firstly, in post-production I focused on enhancing what I already had, including the details and grain in the piece. I initially shot on colour film, but in order to deepen contrast and texture, I decided putting it into black and white was the best decision. Throughout editing this piece in camera raw filter, I focused on brightening the photograph and enhancing the atmosphere.

In this piece what I think is successful is how the film grain and slight imperfections run consistently across both images, it ties them together and reinforces that raw, present feeling. Even though this was originally shot on colour film, I think converting it in Adobe Photoshop works really well. The black and white feels intentional rather than forced, it pulls everything together and emphasises the grain, contrast, and lighting. The grain still feels true, not overly digital, which keeps that film authenticity. The blown highlights from the stage lights and slight loss of detail in darker areas actually add to the atmosphere instead of feeling like mistakes. Overall I think it makes the piece feel poignant, raw and striking.

Moreover, I think another successful aspect is how the diptych works as a pair rather than two separate images. The left side feels wider and more observational, with the stage acting as a distant focal point and the crowd leading your eye forward. On the right, it becomes more personal and immediate, with that one figure lifted above the crowd becoming the main focus. There's a nice shift from general to specific, which makes the viewer move across the images naturally.

Furthermore, converting from colour to black and white makes it feel less like a casual memory and more like a deliberate piece of work. It pushes it closer to that raw, documentary feel associated with live music photography. The left image captures the collective energy of the crowd, while the right feels more chaotic and individual. Together, they feel like two sides of the same experience, like being part of something bigger, but also noticing small, intense moments within it.



Compare and contrast

Similarities

Both images capture more than just a performer on stage. They show the atmosphere of a live music event and the connection between the crowd and the artist. In both photographs, the audience plays a significant role, which helps communicate the energy of the space rather than focusing only on one person.

They are also both shot on film, which gives each image a raw and honest feel. Without colour (in this comparison), the viewer notices contrast, movement, expressions, and texture more clearly. The grain and imperfections in both images also add character and suit the live music setting.

Composition

Charles Peterson's image on top is much busier and more intense. The frame is packed with people, and there is movement happening everywhere. The stage diver in the top left immediately grabs attention and gives the image a strong focal point. Because every part of the frame is full, it feels chaotic and exciting.

My diptych on the right is more open and spaced out. Using two frames lets me show different parts of the same moment. In the first image, the stage and performer are small in the distance, which shows the scale of the venue and crowd. In the second image, the person lifted above the audience becomes the focus. Compared to Peterson's image, there is more darkness and negative space, which makes it feel calmer and gives the viewer more time to look around the scene.



Technical Aspects (Film / Cameras)

In addition, both images benefit from being shot on film. The grain, contrast, and slight imperfections help create atmosphere and make the photographs feel physical and real. Film suits live music because it handles bright lights and dark shadows in a way that feels natural. Furthermore, Peterson's image looks sharper and more direct, using flash or stronger lighting. This helps freeze the stage diver while still keeping detail in the crowd. It adds to the sense of impact and makes the moment feel sudden and explosive. My diptych feels softer and more observational. As it was shot on a disposable camera, it relies more on the available light in the venue as the flash on the camera is minimal, which creates deeper shadows and blur in places. I liked keeping that because it reflects how the night felt. The scratches and grain also became part of the final look rather than something to hide.

Perspective and Distance

Moreover, a big difference is where the photographer is positioned. Peterson feels right inside the crowd, very close to the action. The viewer feels involved, almost like they are standing underneath the diver. My images are taken from farther back, from within the audience. Because of that, they feel more about the shared experience of being there. The crowd becomes just as important as the performer.

Mood and Atmosphere

Peterson's photograph feels aggressive, loud, and full of adrenaline. It captures one extreme moment and all the energy around it. My diptych feels more reflective. There is still movement and excitement, but it is less about one explosive second and more about the overall feeling of the event. I wanted it to feel immersive, like remembering the night afterwards.

Use of the Diptych Format

Using a diptych was an important choice in my work. Instead of relying on one single image, I used two frames to tell more of the story. One frame shows the performer and wider venue, while the second focuses on the crowd interaction. Together they give a broader sense of the night.

Conclusion

Both images successfully capture live music culture through film, movement, and crowd energy. Peterson's image is stronger in immediacy and chaos, while my diptych is stronger in atmosphere and storytelling. His photograph places the viewer in the middle of the action, while mine invites the viewer to take in the whole experience.

Evaluation

Although this was not initially intended as a formal shoot, I brought a disposable camera to document personal memories while attending the concert with my boyfriend and his brother. During the event, I recognised the potential to develop this into a more considered body of work, particularly by drawing on the visual language of Charles Peterson and the raw aesthetic associated with the 1990s grunge scene. In this sense, the project evolved organically, aligning authenticity with a more critical photographic approach. Overall, I believe I achieved my aim, as the images communicate immediacy, immersion, and the physicality of the live music experience.

Furthermore, given that this was not a pre-planned shoot, the level of preparation was limited. However, in retrospect, the lack of rigid planning contributed positively to the outcome. It allowed for spontaneity and authenticity, which are central to the project's intent. Rather than overthinking composition or technical perfection, I was able to respond instinctively to the environment. If I were to approach this project again, I would still aim to preserve this sense of immediacy, but I would consider practical improvements, such as choosing equipment better suited to low-light and high-movement environments. Additionally, I would think more carefully about positioning within the crowd to balance safety with photographic opportunity.

The shoot was physically challenging due to the intensity of the crowd, particularly as this was a Deftones concert. The environment was unpredictable, with constant movement and pressure from the surrounding audience. As a result, I was often unable to use the viewfinder and instead had to shoot instinctively, holding the camera above my head and capturing images without full visual control. Despite these limitations, this method arguably strengthened the work. The lack of precision contributed to the raw, unfiltered quality of the images, reinforcing the sense of immersion and chaos associated with live music events. While technically imperfect, the photographs reflect the physical reality of being in the crowd. If anything, I would not change this approach significantly, as it aligns closely with my conceptual aim.

The final selection of images is consistent with my initial aims and influences. Drawing on the work of Charles Peterson, particularly his documentation of the grunge scene, I prioritised images that conveyed movement, intensity, and atmosphere rather than clarity or traditional composition. The chosen photographs reflect a coherent aesthetic, emphasising crowd interaction, blurred motion, and the physical closeness of the environment. This reinforces the authenticity of the experience and ensures that the work communicates effectively as a series rather than as isolated images.

In the darkroom, it was my first time developing colour film so I was quite nervous, but I actually enjoyed the process, it went smoothly and I thought it was easier than black and white developing due to the semi-automatic developing chamber. Moreover, in post-production, I chose to convert the images to black and white. This decision was informed by both aesthetic and conceptual considerations as removing the colour allowed me to emphasise tonal contrast, texture, and light, while also referencing the visual style of 1990s grunge photography. This process enhanced the cohesion of the series and directed attention to the emotional and atmospheric qualities of the images. Through editing, I developed a stronger understanding of how tonal value can shape the mood and narrative of photographic work. If I were to refine this further, I would experiment more with contrast levels and possibly explore selective use of colour to compare different visual outcomes.

The outcomes demonstrate a development in both technical and conceptual skills. I have gained confidence in shooting under challenging conditions and learned to embrace unpredictability as part of the creative process. The project also shows an increased awareness of how context, influence, and editing contribute to the meaning of an image. Overall, the work achieves its aims by presenting an honest and immersive representation of a live concert experience. However, there is room for improvement in terms of technical control and consistency.

Moving forward, I plan to continue exploring themes of authenticity and lived experience within photography. I am particularly interested in experimenting further with colour versus black and white editing to understand how each approach affects the mood and interpretation of images. Additionally, I would like to revisit this subject with more intentional planning while still maintaining the spontaneity that made this project successful. This could include experimenting with different film types or camera techniques to push the aesthetic further. Ultimately, this project has highlighted the value of working intuitively and responding to real environments, and I intend to build on this



Research method 3- Image/ Excursion

The aim of this shoot is to photograph four bands performing at Bunkhouse, continuing to develop my established visual style from previous work. I want to build on the aesthetic I created during a past house party event, particularly as I am photographing the same band again alongside three new ones. This gives me the opportunity to maintain consistency in my style while also refining it in a live music setting. The focus is on capturing energy, interaction, and atmosphere in a way that feels natural and recognisable to my previous work.

Moreover, the shoot takes place across the duration of the event, covering multiple performances in one evening. This allows me to capture a range of moments, from early sets with a smaller crowd to later performances where the energy is likely to build. Having photographed similar events before, I am aware of how quickly moments can change, so I plan to work continuously throughout the night to ensure I capture a variety of images. Time management is important, particularly when moving between bands and adjusting to different lighting conditions.



This shoot is primarily informed by my own previous work, especially the house party event where I developed a style I want to revisit and strengthen. Photographing the same band again allows me to build on an existing visual narrative, while the addition of three other bands introduces variation. Rather than external influences, this project is more self, focusing on consistency, progression, and refining an already established approach.

Additionally, I use a Canon R6 for this shoot, as it is efficient in low-light environments and suitable for fast-paced situations like live music. This is my first time using this camera in this specific venue, so part of the process involves adapting to how it performs in this environment. Its capabilities allow for flexibility in capturing both movement and detail.

The shoot takes place at Bunkhouse, a venue I am already familiar with. Having photographed there multiple times, I understand the layout, lighting conditions, and general environment. This familiarity makes it a safe and manageable location to work in, allowing me to focus more on the creative aspects rather than navigating the space.

In addition, I plan to edit the images in a similar style to my previous work, maintaining visual consistency across projects. This includes using similar tones, contrast, and overall treatment to create a cohesive body of work. By doing this, I can strengthen my personal style and ensure the images sit well alongside my earlier photographs.

Finally, I am able to anticipate my settings due to my prior experience shooting in this venue. I have a general understanding of the lighting conditions and how to balance shutter speed, aperture, and ISO in a live music environment. However, as I have not previously used the Canon R6 in this space, there is still an element of adjustment and experimentation. This allows room for learning while still working within a familiar setup.



Selected series

CANON EOS R6. Focal length- 22mm, Aperture $f/4.5$, Shutter speed $1/200$ secs and ISO 16000

Artificial lighting used throughout.
Creates different atmosphere throughout.

Constant use of props throughout-
instruments and equipment
Different models and subjects
throughout. Capturing in a
documentary and interesting style

On this page I decided to show
display all my photographs (to edit)
onto a contact sheet. As its
easier to understand and compare the
before and afters.

I used a DSLR camera to take these
photographs which presents main
concert and the different angles and
composition of it.

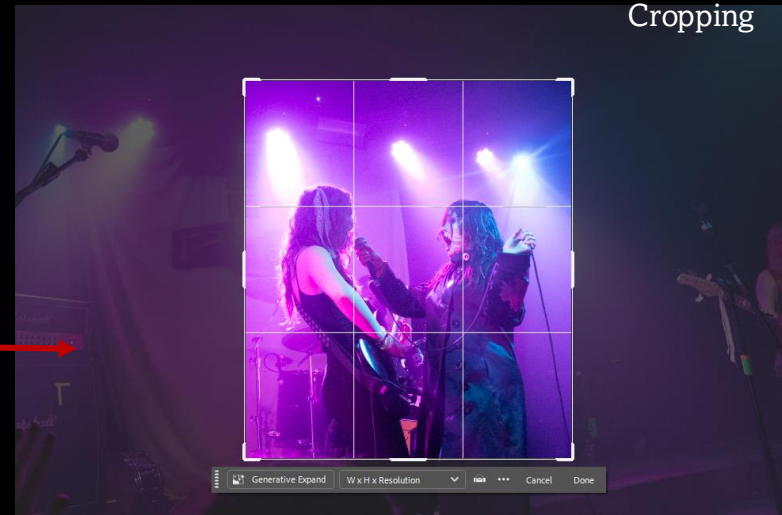


Edit

Firstly, I chose this photograph due to the connection and feminity of the piece. A lot of my work in the music industry, especially around the punk/ metal genre is dominated by men. So, I think this piece is beautiful in portraying overcoming the stereotypical perception of the punk genre.



Original photo



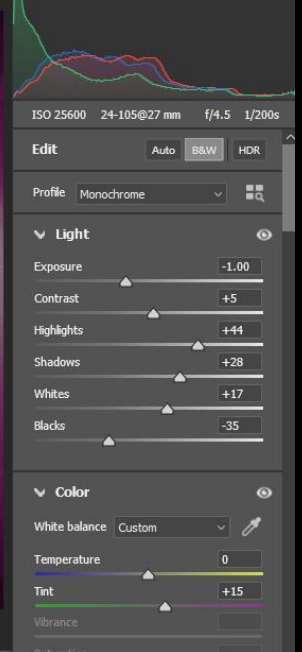
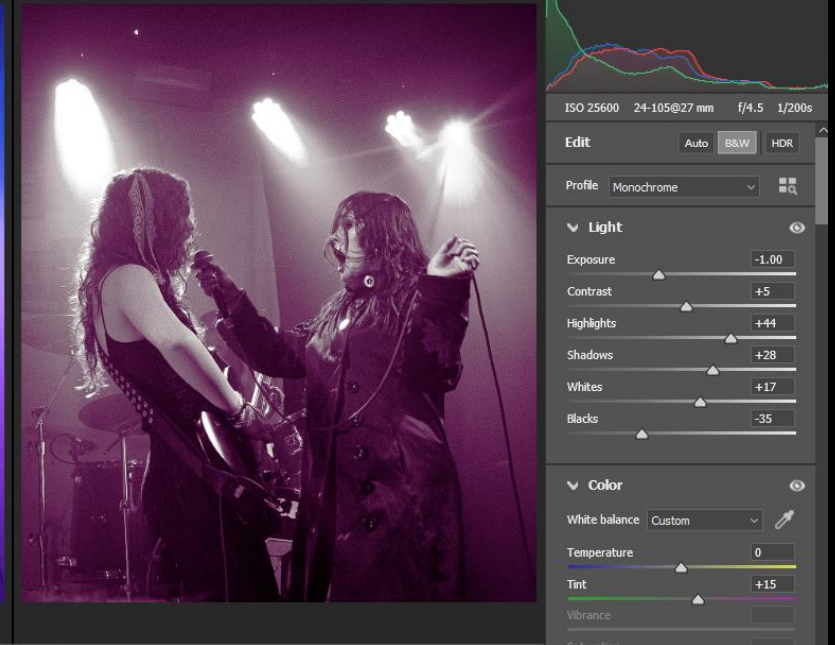
Cropping

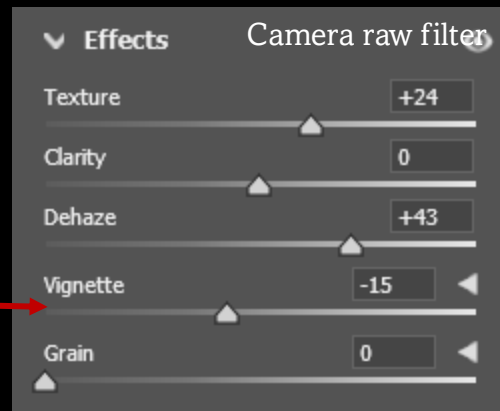
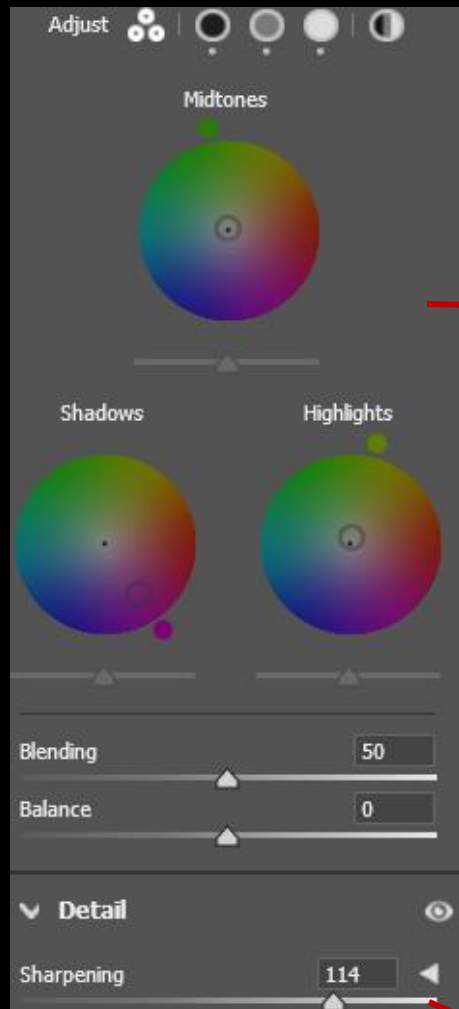
1. I started by cropping this piece into a similar 5x5 format, so that the focus is solely on the duo. Furthermore, cutting out the head at the bottom of the piece changes the depth perception of the piece and puts the duo in the foreground.

2. I then put this piece into 'camera raw filter' to make some adjustments. I wanted to slightly recreate my past photo of SOLD FOR PARTS from the first research method. I started by putting the piece into black and white. I decreased the exposure to -1.00 as the lights are too overblown. I then focused on the contrast and tones of the piece, this included increasing the highlights to $+44$, shadows to $+28$, whites to $+17$ and blacks decreased to -35 , which has given the piece a strong, radiant striking look.



Camera raw filter





3. For this piece, I decided to make the shadows a pink tone, to match the bands aesthetic, I decided to keep the highlights and midtones within the black and white filter.

4. Moreover, I then focused on the details within the piece, but increasing the texture to +24 and sharpening the piece to +114 enhanced depth, realism and pushes it into a starker position. I then increased the dehaze to +43 which removed some spill coming from the overhead lights, along with increasing some contrast. Furthermore, I decreased the vignette to -15 which pushed the darkness around the edges, pushing the viewers' attention to the duo in the middle.

5. Finally, I used the 'spot healing tool' to remove some red spots from the overhead lighting.



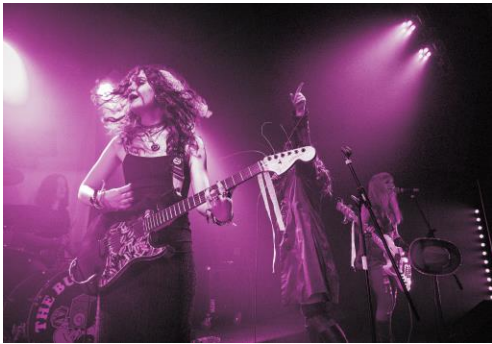
Before



After











Evaluation

Overall, I believe I planned effectively for this shoot, particularly in terms of equipment and stylistic direction. Having previous experience photographing a similar event allowed me to approach this with greater confidence and awareness. One key decision was switching from a zoom lens to a prime lens, as I wanted to prioritise full-body compositions, which are central to my style. This decision improved the clarity and intentionality of my framing, even though it required more physical movement.

However, there were still practical issues that could have been avoided. My SD card filled up during the shoot due to my camera being set to RAW+JPEG, which significantly reduced the number of images I could take. In future, I would either adjust this setting depending on the context or ensure I bring additional storage. This highlights the importance of technical preparation, even when the creative direction is clear.

The shoot itself was successful and ran smoothly. Despite the venue being full, I was able to move freely through the crowd, which allowed me to experiment with different angles and compositions. This mobility was essential in capturing a range of perspectives, from close-up interactions to wider, full-body shots of the performers. I felt more confident in my approach compared to previous shoots, particularly in anticipating moments and reacting quickly. I was able to capture a variety of strong images that reflect both the individuality of each band and the shared atmosphere of the event. Additionally, I brought a disposable camera to complement the digital work, which I plan to develop. This will add another layer to the project, potentially introducing a more raw and unpredictable aesthetic. If I were to improve anything, I would focus on being more selective while shooting, rather than capturing a large volume of images. This would help refine my decision-making process in real time.

Moreover, my final selection to edit reflects my aims and shows a clear progression in my work. I focused on images with strong composition, effective depth of field, and solid technical execution. From this foundation, I was then able to use editing to enhance the overall aesthetic and create a more cohesive series. The selection prioritises images that convey energy and connection, both between performers and within the space. This ensures that the series works not only visually but also conceptually, supporting consistency with my previous work while showing development.

Furthermore, In post-production, I focused on developing my editing skills further, particularly in adjusting white balance and experimenting with colour (slide 58). I explored the use of single or dominant colour tones within images to create a specific atmosphere, helping to unify the series and enhance its emotional impact. This approach was influenced by my previous house party work, but I have begun to push it further by being more intentional with colour grading. Through this process, I have gained a better understanding of how editing can shape the mood and identity of an image, rather than simply correcting it. Moving forward, I would like to refine this approach by experimenting more with consistency across the series and exploring how subtle variations in colour can affect interpretation.

The outcomes demonstrate clear development in both technical ability and artistic direction. I have improved my understanding of composition, lens choice, and working within a live environment. Additionally, I have begun to establish a more recognisable visual identity through my editing style. The project successfully achieves its aims, as it builds on my previous work while introducing new refinements. However, there is still room to improve in terms of technical preparation and consistency across the final series.

As a result of this shoot, I plan to continue developing my visual style within live music photography. I want to further explore the balance between documentation and artistic interpretation, particularly through editing and colour. In future projects, I will ensure better technical preparation, including managing storage and camera settings more effectively. I am also interested in incorporating the disposable camera images into my work, as this could introduce a contrasting aesthetic that enhances the overall project. Ultimately, I aim to continue refining my approach so that my work becomes increasingly consistent, intentional, and recognisable.

Exhibition Review



Exhibition review

What Lies Beneath the Act of Seeing.

There is something quietly disarming about *Sighting*, Penny Hallas' exhibition at Elysium Gallery. At first glance, it appears almost archival, as orderly, restrained, but this calm surface quickly gives way to something more unsettled. Hallas constructs a world where landscape, memory, and classification intersect, often uneasily. The exhibition, as outlined in its introduction, explores the act of "sighting" as both observation and claim, to see something is also to frame, record, and possess it. This duality runs throughout the show, suggesting that documentation is never neutral but instead layered with power, omission, and subjectivity.

Moreover, the work is both poignant and quietly powerful. It does not overwhelm the viewer with spectacle but instead draws attention through accumulation and detail. There is a sense that Hallas is offering not just images, but systems of seeing, questioning how landscapes, histories, and even identities are constructed and catalogued. In this way, the exhibition feels less like a presentation of objects and more like an unfolding investigation.

Artwork 1- *Our Picturesque Landscape Myriorama*, 2023, Penny Hallas.

At the centre of this exhibition is this piece *Our Picturesque Landscape myriorama* (*Myriorama Ein Trim Darrinduney*), 2023. Charcoal, graphite, pencil, ink, black chalk on paper, which guides the viewers purposefully through the exhibition, this piece was placed intentionally to split the exhibition up and place non existing pathways through her work. This expansive series unfolds across a sequence of tall, folding panels, each presenting a monochrome landscape that seems at once familiar and estranged. Industrial structures rise beside rural architecture, ruins sit alongside looming machinery. The imagery is fragmented yet continuous, suggesting a landscape that is constantly shifting as physically, historically, and politically.

Furthermore, Hallas' use of charcoal and graphite lends the work a smoky, almost unstable quality. The marks are expressive but controlled, allowing forms to emerge and dissolve simultaneously. There is a persistent tension between detail and ambiguity, the buildings are recognisable, yet they seem to hover in a kind of temporal dislocation. The myriorama format which is traditionally a children's game allowing interchangeable scenes becomes significant here. By reworking this structure, Hallas invites the viewer to imagine the landscape as endlessly rearrangeable, shaped by narrative and perspective rather than fixed reality.

In addition, this being installed along a curved wall, the panels guide the viewer physically through the work, echoing the act of surveying or traversing land. The scale encourages immersion, yet the segmentation interrupts any seamless reading. This presentation reinforces the idea that landscapes are constructed through fragments, histories layered upon one another, often in conflict.

Additionally, contextually, the work appears to engage with ideas of colonial mapping and industrial transformation. The juxtaposition of pastoral and industrial imagery suggests a critique of how land is reshaped and redefined through economic and political forces. The title's reference to "picturesque" hints at historical conventions of landscape representation, where beauty often masked exploitation or control. Hallas subverts this tradition, exposing the instability beneath the image.



Artwork 2: A Private Land (Residents Preswywyt, Tir Ddirfand), 2023, Penny Hallas
Pen and acrylic ink on photo paper, mounted on manilla folders with redacted info

In contrast to the sweeping landscapes of the myriorama, this work adopts a more intimate, archival form. A grid of coloured manilla folders fills the wall, each bearing a small portrait drawing and partially obscured text. The aesthetic recalls filing systems, bureaucratic records, or institutional archives which are spaces where information is stored, categorised, and often controlled. Furthermore, the portraits, rendered in pen and ink, are delicate and observational, yet their placement within this rigid structure alters their meaning. They become entries, files, data points, individuals reduced to records. The redacted text is particularly striking. It's blacked-out sections disrupt readability, drawing attention to absence as much as presence. What is hidden becomes as significant as what is revealed.

Moreover, Hallas' use of colour, the muted yellows, browns, greens all adds a subtle variation within the grid, preventing the work from becoming monotonous while still maintaining its systematic feel. The repetition creates rhythm, but also a sense of quiet unease. There is an implication that these are incomplete stories, controlled narratives, or histories deliberately obscured.

Additionally, the presentation reinforces this reading. Installed flat against the wall in a strict grid, the work mimics institutional display methods, encouraging the viewer to scan rather than linger. Yet, upon closer inspection, the individuality of each portrait resists this reduction. This tension between system and subject is central to the work's impact.

In a broader context, the piece engages with themes of surveillance, ownership, and documentation. The title, *A Private Land*, suggests exclusion and control, while the archival format evokes legal or governmental systems that define who belongs and who does not. Hallas appears to question the authority of such systems, revealing their inherent biases and omissions.



Conclusion

Sighting is a quietly compelling exhibition that rewards careful attention. Hallas does not offer easy interpretation, instead, she constructs layered works that unfold gradually, inviting reflection on how we see, record, and understand the world. Her use of traditional drawing techniques, combined with conceptual frameworks of archiving and mapping, creates a practice that feels both grounded and critically engaged.

What lingers most is the sense of instability of landscapes that shift, records that conceal, and images that refuse to settle into certainty. There is no single narrative here, only fragments that the viewer must piece together. In this way, the exhibition mirrors its own subject, the act of sighting as something partial, subjective, and deeply contingent.

Ultimately, Hallas' work is both thoughtful and resonant. It challenges the authority of images and systems alike, suggesting that what we see is never the whole story. *Sighting* leaves the viewer with a heightened awareness of absence as much as presence, a reminder that every act of looking is also an act of interpretation.



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