VISUAL DIARY 2

Fugitive Testimonies Image

For the Fugitive Testimonies module, we were given an image as inspiration to create a new series of photographic work. This was my photograph and my initial reaction to the image was I believed it was peaceful and possibly nostalgic. I think it's more of a positive image however it has a monochrome and vintage style. This monochrome style eliminates colour and focuses on tonality, contrast, texture, and composition. This style of photograph can evoke a timeless, classic aesthetic and can highlight certain elements in a scene more dramatically than colour images. Proven in this image, the woman is highlighted since she's wearing dark trousers with lighter tones around her, the silhouette of the trees is also highlighted due to the monochrome style.

I think this photo was likely taken by a family member or friend of the subject. I don't think the photo was meant to capture any specific emotion, but I do find it to be very calming and peaceful. This is the kind of atmosphere I would like to recreate in my images, using similar techniques. Photographing nature and the outdoors is soothing for us, and it would be easy to include in my work. Although the woman is alone in the photograph, she doesn't seem troubled by it, and her being alone isn't immediately apparent unless you focus on it in my opinion.

I think this photo was taken in the 1980s because of the woman's outfit, which matches the fashion of that era. This was around the time when black and white cameras were becoming less common. The image features a woman sitting on the ground with her body angled to the left, gazing at a large mountain in the background. The sky is clear, and seems to be light blue, and there are numerous trees surrounding the women. The photo is taken from a low angle, providing depth, the foreground appears more blurred.

Content Sheet

For my image, I aim to evoke the same sense of peace as the image I was given. To achieve this, I plan to position a subject alone in a peaceful setting. However, I will need to be mindful not to unintentionally convey a sense of loneliness. I've always thought the beach was a very peaceful place. I'm sure plenty of people would agree with this, it's a common opinion. I've decided I want my image to take place at the beach, I've taken photos at the beach before for my lonely image task but I have not incorporated the sea into it and the appropriate amount of lens flare.

I believe the beach can be a peaceful place for numerous reasons. It offers natural beauty, stunning views of the ocean, the sky, and sometimes nearby natural landscapes. This can create a calming and serene environment. Sometimes we're not aware but we hear what we see in photographs and had the beach you can hear the gentle sound of waves rolling onto the shore, it can provide a soothing, meditative atmosphere that helps people relax and ease their minds. The beach is big enough to provide a vast, open space where people can move freely, take walks, or rest without feeling crowded. I would like to include the rocks from the sea as well.

I've chosen to take my photos at Limeslade Bay because it offers a beautiful view, especially when the sun reflects off the sea at certain times. The area is rich with rocks that are washed over by the sea, creating calming and picturesque scenes. This setting provides many opportunities to capture various angles and perspectives. I love this area, as it naturally creates a calming atmosphere that's hard to resist. It's easy to find tranquillity here.

Convey peacefulness

To convey peacefulness in an image, I plan to utilize key elements such as soft lighting, natural beauty, stillness, and expansive space. Gentle, natural light, such as sunrise or sunset, will create a serene atmosphere. Soft, muted colors like pastels or earth tones, specifically blues, greens, and light yellows will evoke a sense of calmness. I will incorporate shots from nature, featuring calm waters, gentle waves, or quiet forests to capture the tranquility of the setting. Additionally, scenes with minimal movement, such as a serene body of water or a peaceful landscape, will emphasize the overall sense of peace and stillness.

I wanted my subject to wear the colour black for a contrast effect because I want him to have a lot of sun behind him for the soft light I also want him to stand out. The inspired image I was given had a monochrome effect, this helps tone stand out and contrast was more striking. I'm doing a similar idea but with colour so I would like my subject to wear black and white so he would stand out from the warm colours behind him in the sky or beach.

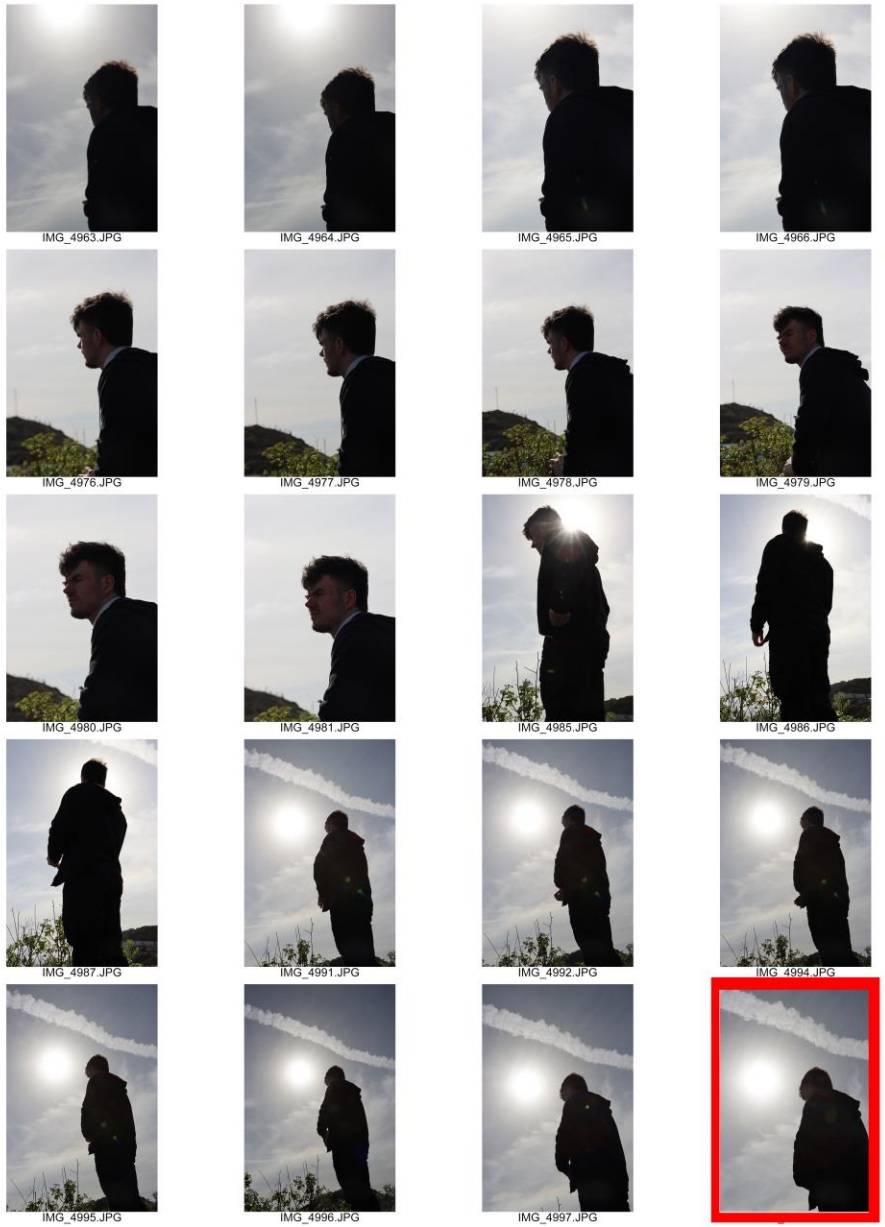
I'm opting for a black and white palette for my subject's clothing, planning for him to wear black and white shoes, a black hoodie, and a white T-shirt. This color scheme aligns with the overall look I want to achieve.

Content Sheet

Here are the images I captured, I think I achieved my goal of capturing a peaceful image and I'm very satisfied with how they turned out. I believe they captured everything I aimed for: lots of sun, soft light, a tranquil atmosphere and openness. I was able to capture a serene and peaceful photograph that conveys a sense of calm and relaxation.

Looking at the contact sheet, I noticed that I kept taking the same shot repeatedly with very little variation. The images all seemed quite cloudy, and I'm not sure why I took so many, and I ended up not using any of them. Maybe I could have tried a wider range of angles.

However, I really appreciate the photos where the subject is lying on the rocks and looking upwards. The sky appears very luminous, and the subject seems content to be soaking up the sun. Seems very much at peace which is the goal.



Content Sheet

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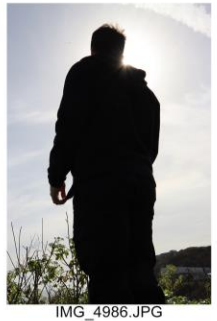
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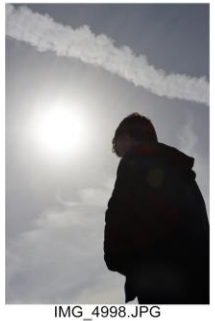
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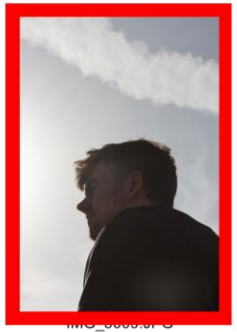

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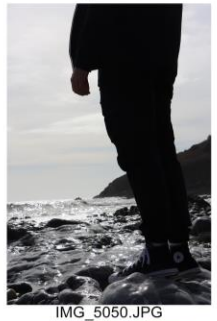
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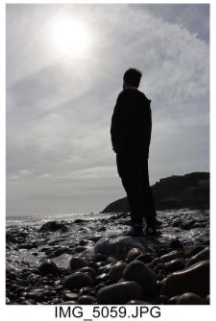
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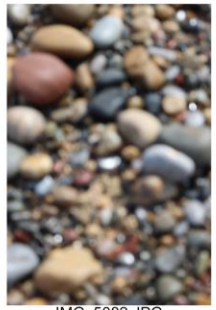
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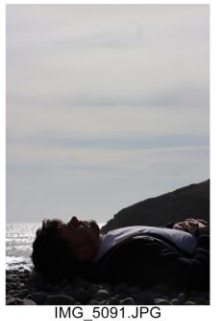

IMG_5091.JPG

These highlighted photos are my favourites, as they best convey a sense of peacefulness. If I were to shoot again, I would experiment with different angles to provide more variety to choose from. Nevertheless, I captured some images that I am very satisfied with.

Monochrome Experiment:

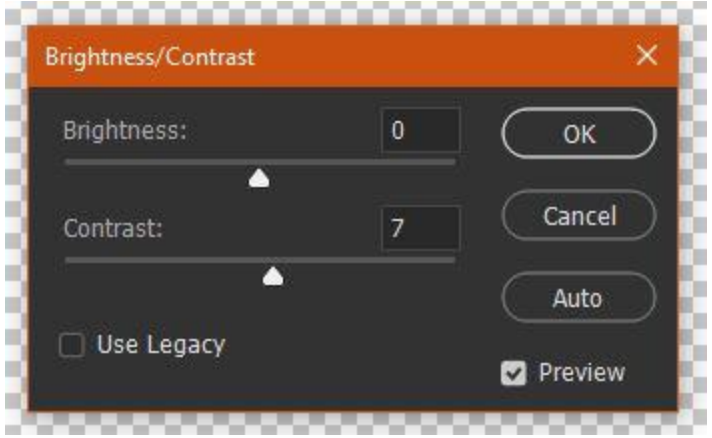
STOCK

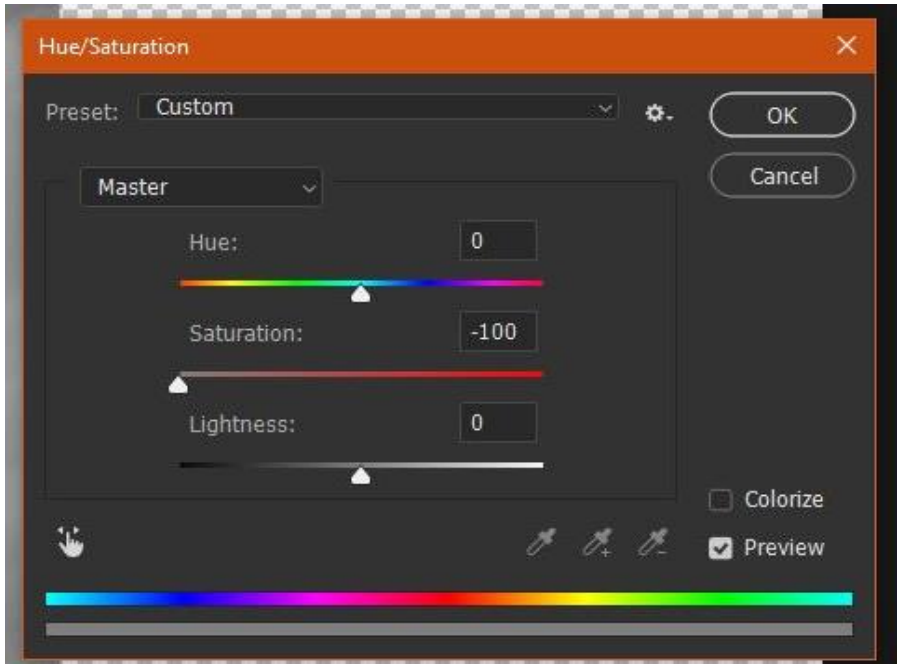
EDITED

Monochrome Experiment:

Given that the image that inspired my photograph had a monochrome effect, I chose to experiment with incorporating this style into my own work. Although I initially considered including soft colours, I thought it would be interesting to test how the monochrome effect might influence my work. To achieve this, I lowered the saturation and subtly increased the contrast to enhance the monochrome appearance.

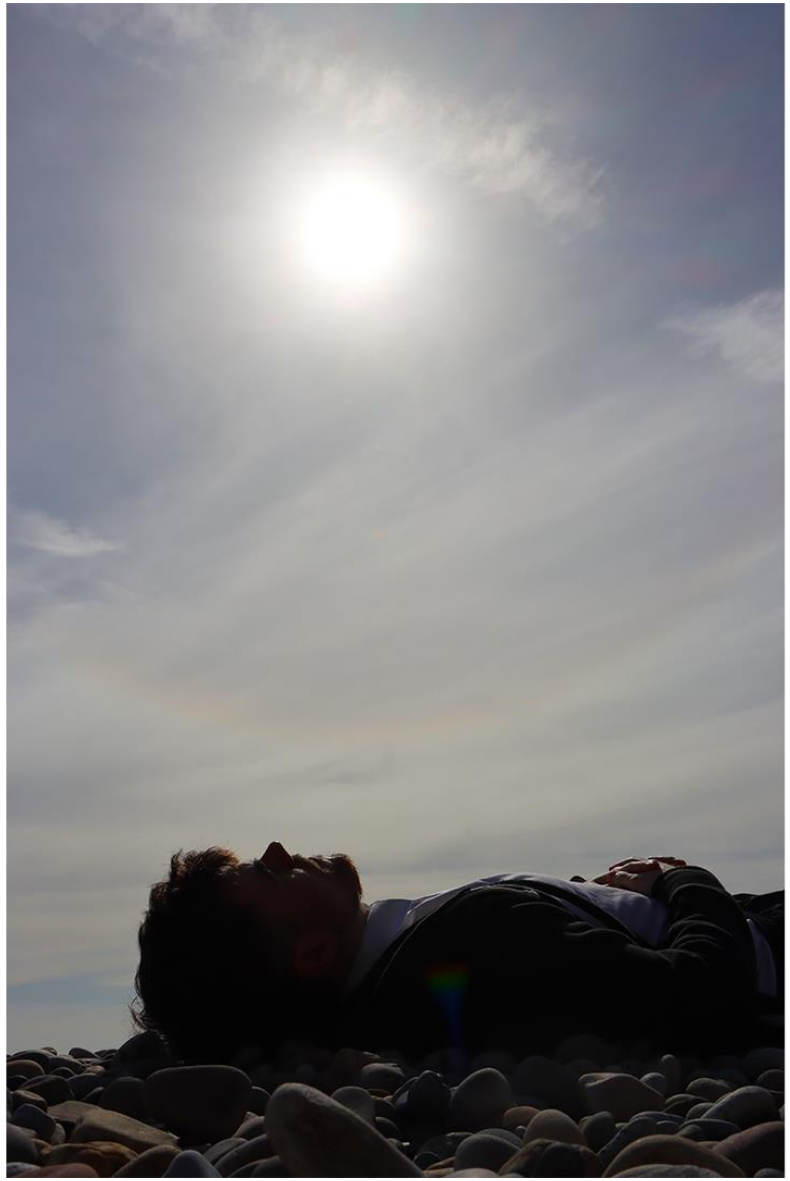
I appreciate the monochrome effect on my images, but I believe I could enhance the sense of peacefulness by introducing warmer colours. This particular image offers an opportunity to draw from the rich hues in the sky, which could add depth and tranquillity to the scene.





Softer colour Experiment:

STOCK

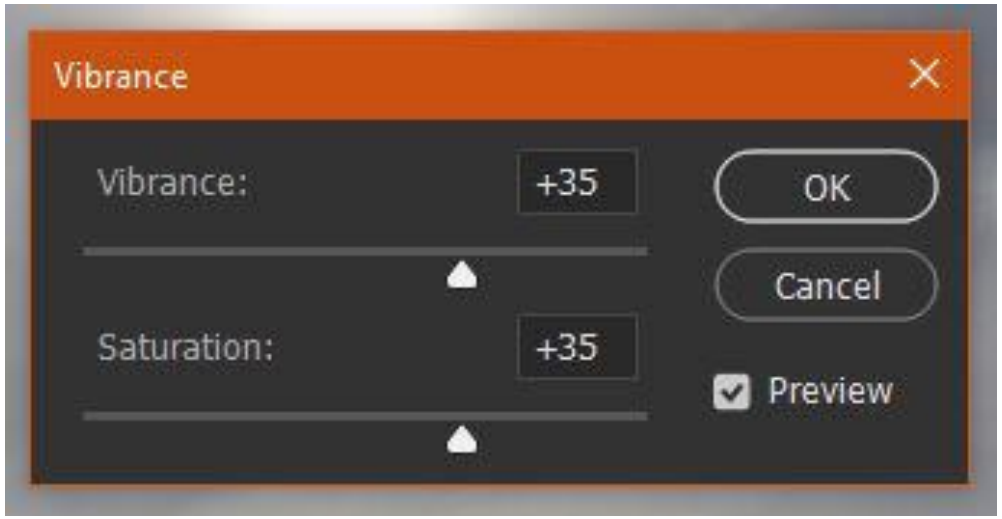


EDITED

Softer colour Experiment:

Since I wasn't satisfied with the monochrome effect, I chose to introduce more warm colours by boosting the vibrance and saturation by +35. This turned out to be a great decision. Experimenting with the monochrome was very beneficial, it's something I can use down the line.

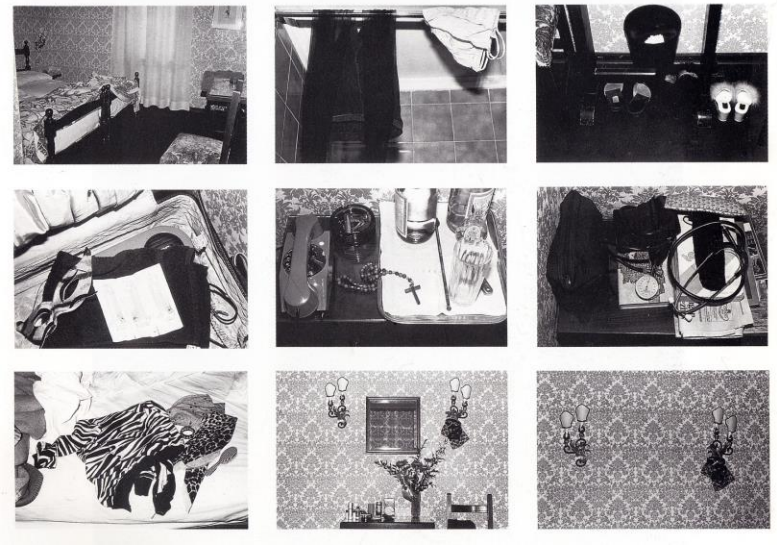
Even though the adjustments to the sky were subtle, I can always refine them further. This experience demonstrates how even the smallest details can significantly improve an image and is motivating me to give equal attention to editing as I do to photography and conceptualization.



Research Method – Object

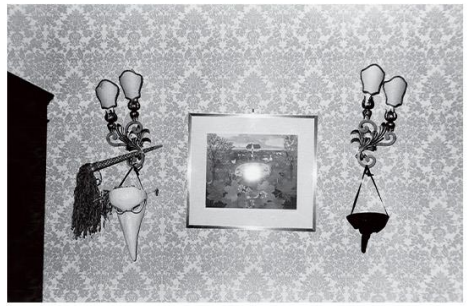
Objects captivate, represent, weigh us down, remind us and have a feel.

Sophie Calle, a French photographer, worked as a hotel maid in Venice in February 1981. While cleaning rooms, she took photos of the guests' belongings, like wallets, postcards, and clothes. She didn't touch anything locked unless the key was left with it. In an interview with the L.A. Times, Calle said she examined guests' personal items to glimpse into their lives through details. Her work sparked debate about ethics, with some viewing it as an invasion of privacy and others seeing it as a blend of art and life, leading to discussions on the boundaries of art.



Review: In 1982, an artist snooped on hotel guests. Decades later, it’s a mesmerizing book (2021) Los Angeles Times. Available at: https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/books/story/2021-12-23/in-1982-a-conceptual-artist-masqueraded-as-hotel-maid-decades-later-its-a-gorgeous-book
(Accessed: 11 February 2024).

Research Method – Object



Object

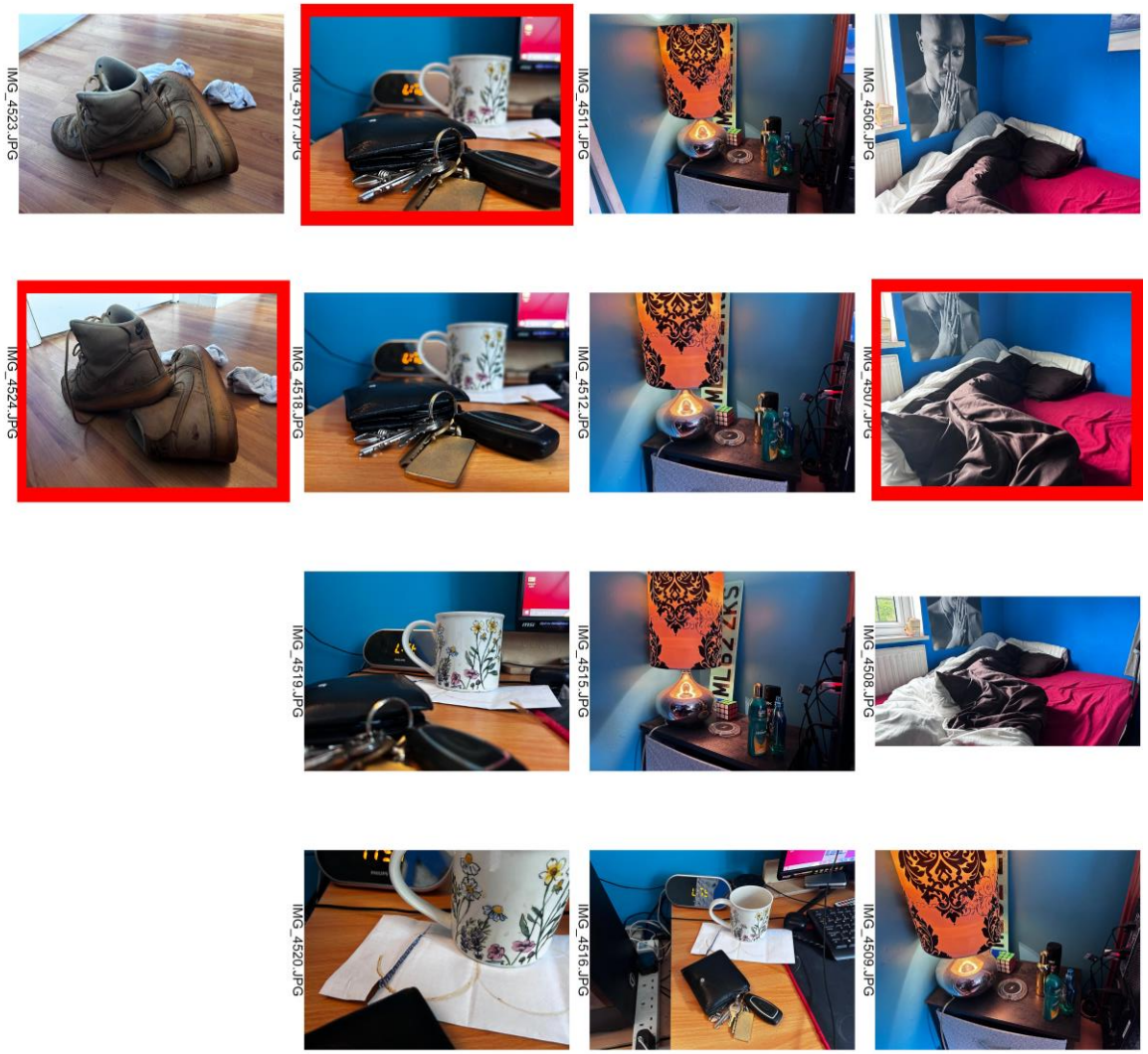
Sophie Calle Inspired Contact Sheets

I am captivated by Sophie Calle's work. It's not just her images that intrigue me, but also her unique thought process and her full immersion into the worlds she photographs. I want to adopt this style to enhance my skills. Copying other work is a smart idea for creatives, as it allows for self-reflection and comparison with other artists. I plan to photograph my own room, capturing its everyday appearance, aiming to appear as authentic as possible. To reinforce this sense of genuineness, I will use my phone to take these pictures, enhancing the perception of authenticity. Since I'm shooting indoors, I don't need to worry about the weather or time of day. This should be easy and straightforward since the location is just a meter from where I wake up.

Contact Sheet Results

These are the results, I'm pleased with the framing of all the images, I think it's ideal for my goal of emulating Sophie Calle's work. Since she typically focuses on one item close up.

I think the image's colours could be tweaked in Photoshop, the images seem too overly lively as if they've been edited already. They haven't. Perhaps this is due to me using an iPhone to shoot. These images are too colourful and don't come across as raw as I desired. Everything looks more colourful in the image than in real life. However, this is something that can be altered in Photoshop.



Before and After

The raw colours that were captured were too vibrant . I was unsatisfied with this because the saturation was too high. To create a more realistic and similar style to Sophie Calle I pulled the colour out of the images to create a monochrome effect, here the results. The black and white combination pulls out the smaller details from the image.

Taking colour out of a photograph often makes it more interesting and mysterious. Without colour, the focus shifts to textures, contrasts, and shapes, highlighting the subject's essence and emotional depth. This black-and-white approach can create a timeless, dramatic effect, drawing the viewer in and encouraging a deeper, more personal connection with the image. Here are the results of that. I'm pleased with how they turned out. The process of these images didn't require a lot of thought, everything seemed natural and that's the beauty of this idea Sophie Calle's hotel room photographs. We can learn a lot about someone by taking a glance at their room. What's on their keyrings, what types of colours do they like to wear, is their room messy?

Exhibition Review

For my exhibition review, I'm examining a piece by a student from the University. All five images share the common element of featuring a main subject, but each is set in a different location, ranging from a beach to a forest. The colours are somewhat muted, giving them a vintage filter appearance, which complements the idea of the vintage TV edited over the subjects' heads. The screens are in black and white.

Initially, I interpreted these images as relating to self-esteem and perceptions of both how people view us and how we want to be viewed because of the old-fashioned TV edited over the subject's head. However, after further research, I found that these images address how the media used to portray LGBT individuals, reflecting an old-fashioned mindset. The artist conveyed this by editing an old-fashioned TV over the subjects' heads, with black and white screens and partially grainy images.

This approach effectively critiques media narratives. I find this art piece to be a clever and well thought out concept. Its relevance and clarity make the intended message about self-perception and media portrayal immediately apparent. Although I didn't initially understand the connection between the background/location of the photographs and the theme, I later learned that the creator chose these locations because they are where the subjects feel most comfortable.

Research Method - Image

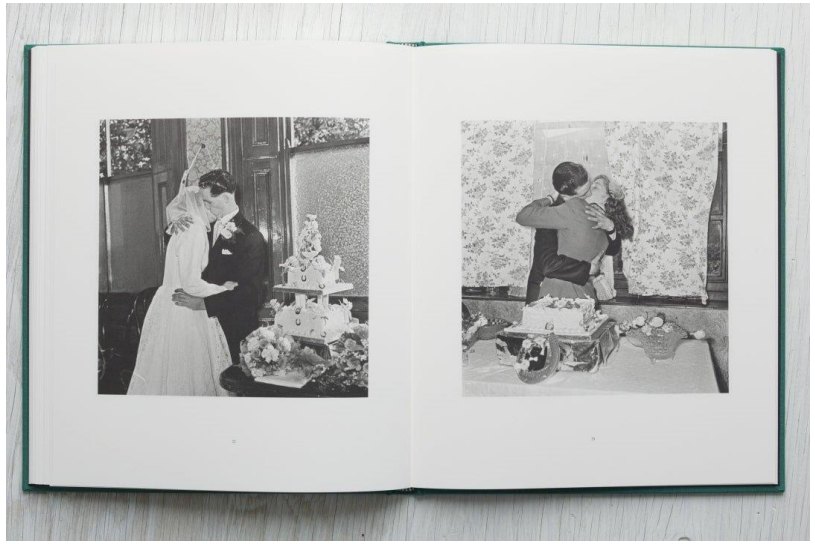
Images can remind us of past experiences by evoking memories and emotions. They can be relatable when they reflect our own experiences, emotions, or cultural background, making us feel understood and connected to the depicted scene or subject. They can fool us through manipulation or by presenting things out of context, leading to false perceptions. Despite this, images connect us by transcending language barriers, allowing us to share and understand experiences globally.

Images can evoke powerful emotions by capturing moments of significant sentimental value. For instance, a photograph from a birthday party can instantly bring you back to that joyous event. It might depict you surrounded by loved ones, with a cake, balloons, and smiling faces.

Image

Image Content Sheet

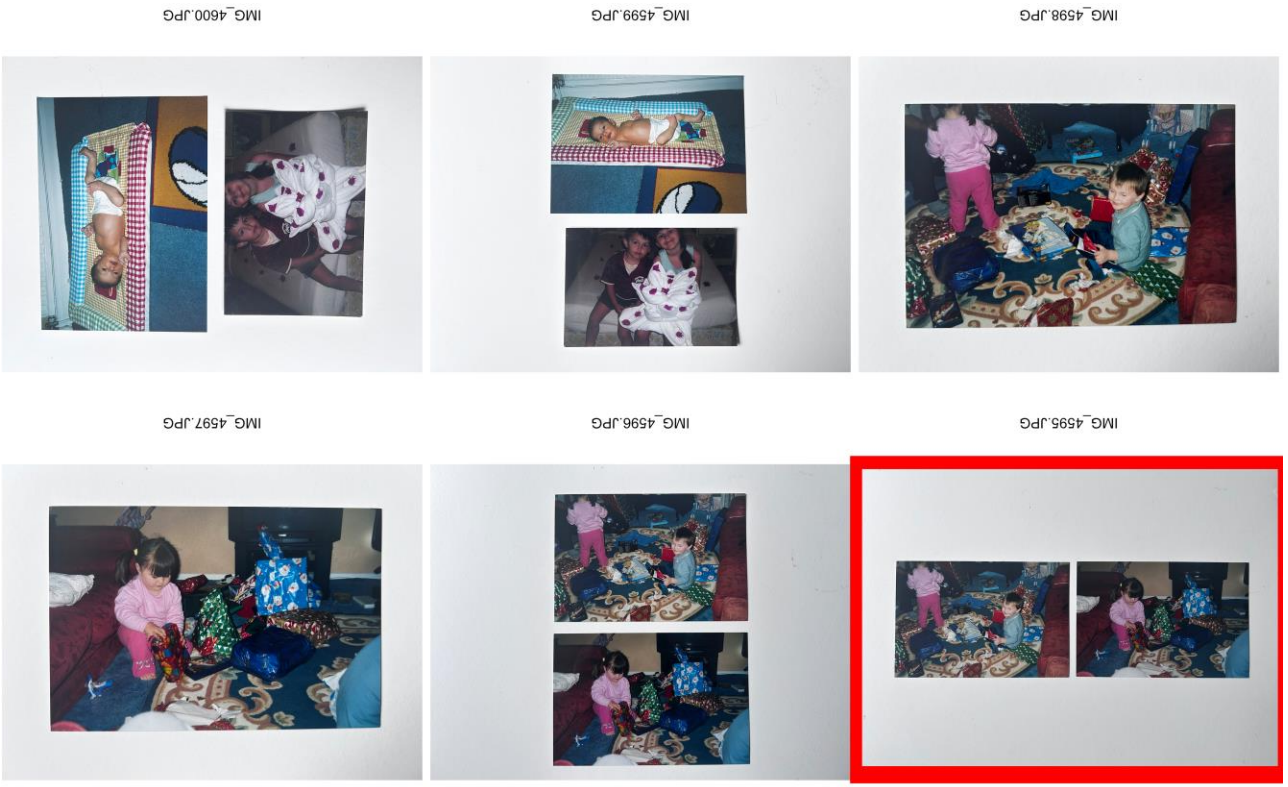
Images can remind us of past experiences by evoking memories and emotions. A Pictorial History of The Empty Chair by Erik Kessels and Hackney by Kisses Stephen Gill are great examples of this. I thought it'd be a good idea to create my own with my own past experiences, I'm currently 21 years old, that's 21 birthdays, Christmases, prom when I was 16, school year photos, etc. These are moments I could use. I thought it'd be a good idea to photograph photos that are dear to me.



Content Sheet

I'll choose photos that have sentimental value such as a birthday Christmas or a significant day that holds meaning. I'll place the images against a white background, this could be a table or white tiles with no texture. I would need natural lighting, I don't want glare or any shine from the photos since the photographs are resin-coated.

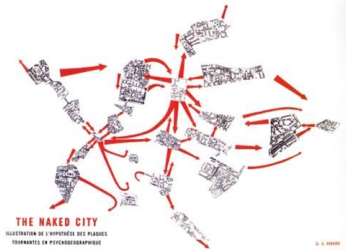
I believe I did a good job emulating the work that inspired me. I also prevented any shine from the images by using natural light effectively. The highlighted image is my preferred photo, the images are relevant to the topic, and they are lined up neatly.



Research Method – Excursion
(WALK, LOST, COMPASS, DISCOVER)

Excursion in photography refers to intentionally going out to discover and capture images in various locations. It involves exploring new places, environments, and perspectives to create compelling photographs. Excursions provide photographers with fresh inspiration, unique subject matter, and opportunities to experiment with different techniques. They can lead to the creation of powerful visual stories and artistic expressions. Through excursions, photographers can push boundaries, expand their vision, and grow creatively by immersing themselves in the world around them. Ultimately, excursions in photography serve as a means to connect with the world, express personal perspectives, and hone one's craft.

Discussion & Excursion



Research Method – Excursion Shoot

Since "excursion" in photography involves venturing out to discover and capture images in various locations, I thought it would be a quirky and fun idea to bring an everyday household object to an unexpected place of exploration. I aim to make it as eye-catching and memorable as possible. This concept has potential, but it can also fall flat, imagine bringing a kettle to the park; that would be dull and underwhelming. To make it truly striking and memorable, I need to combine two things that don't typically go together, creating an immediate sense of interest and intrigue.

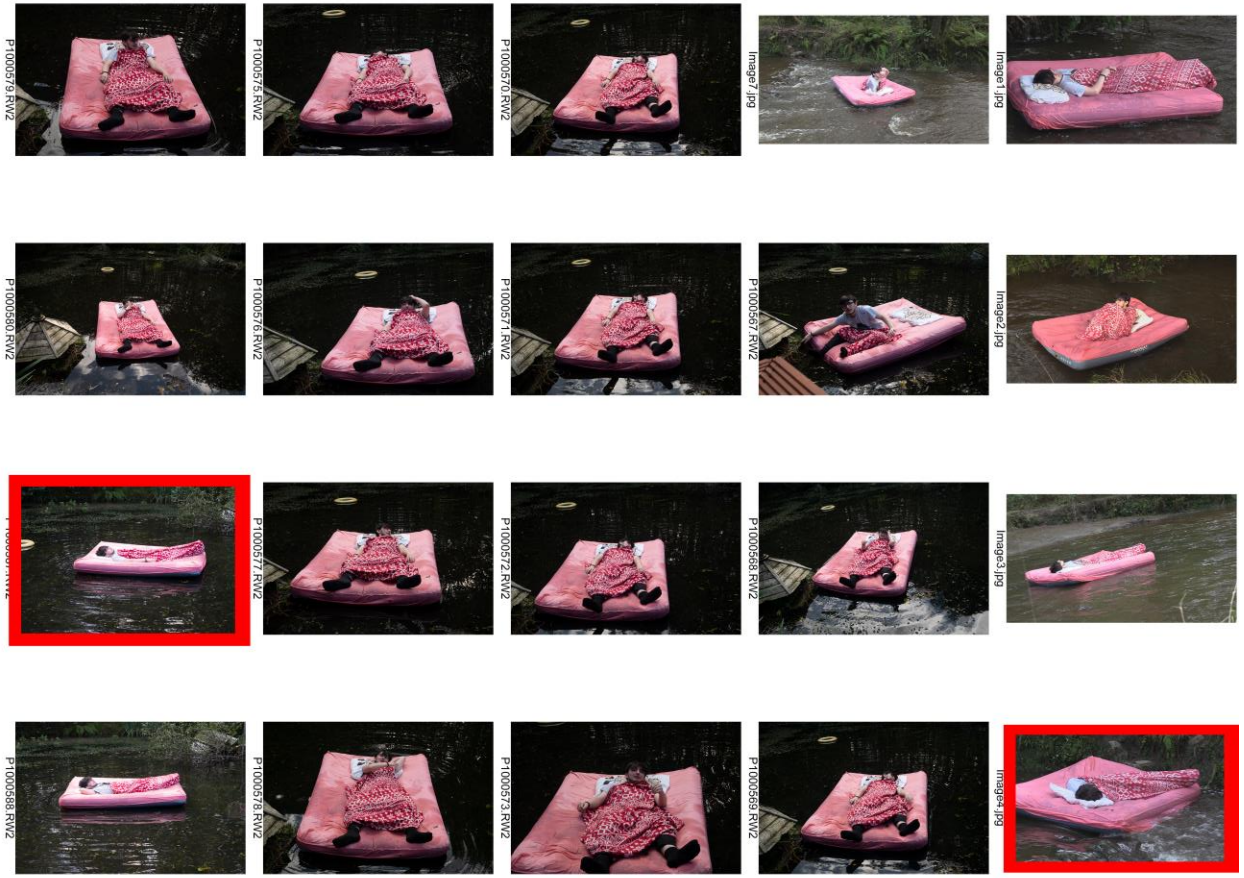
After brainstorming, I decided that using an inflatable bed in a lake would be an amazing idea. It's unique, exciting, and memorable. I can have someone sit on the bed and unwind as if they were at home. To complement the effect, I want the subject to wear comfortable clothing that makes them feel like they are literally at home.

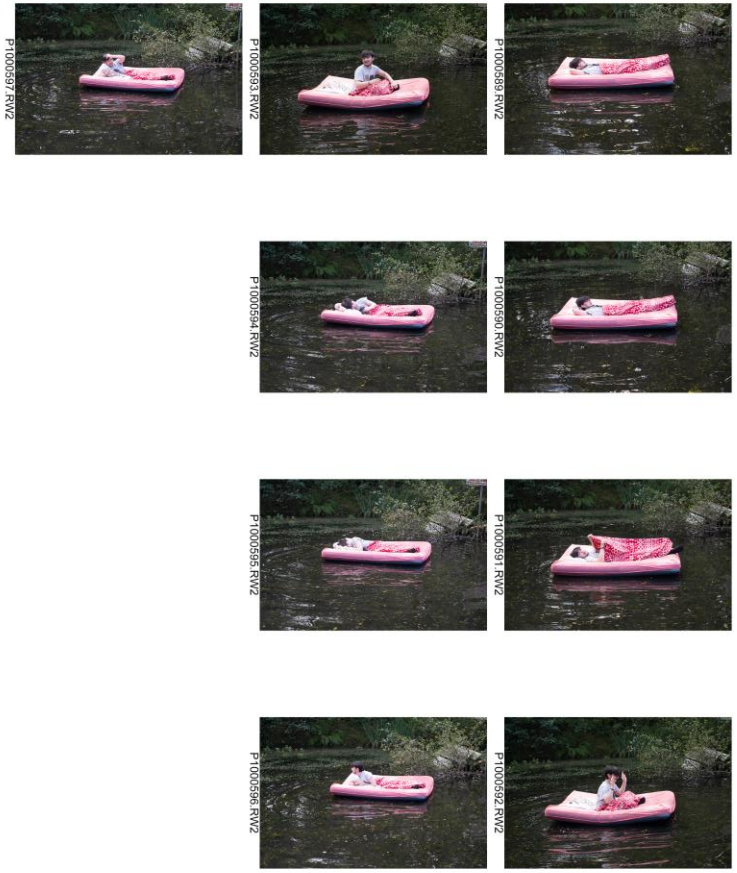
Planning

For this shot I will be using a Lumix G100 with the kit, it's compact, and handy for moving around a lake. I don't want anything with a zoom lens, the kit lens I'm using with be work spot-on for what shot I desire.

For location, I didn't have to look too far since I live near a lake in Tircoed. It's usually a quiet area, which is great for anyone who wants to take photographs there. I've checked the weather for the next couple of days when I will be shooting, the weather will be cloudy and partially sunny.

Contact Sheets





Evaluation

These are my preferred images from the shoot, and I'm pleased with how they turned out. I like both of them equally. The subject looks as if he's asleep, relaxing in bed like he's at home. I believe I've successfully combined an everyday household item with an unexpected location. However, I think they could benefit from some editing.

In the top photo, the bed appears overexposed, but I can fix this in Photoshop. I noticed this issue while taking the photos and adjusted the camera settings accordingly, which is why the bottom photo looks duller, with darker greens and less colour. Both images need some attention in Photoshop: the bottom one needs increased saturation to match the first image, and the top one needs the bed to be less overexposed. Despite these issues, I am happy with both images.

Responding to an artist quote

“But we had no intention of trying to catch people dealing or using drugs secretively. We were going to play it up front, head-on. We weren’t going to hide people’s faces.”

Eugene Richards photographs the reality of drug use, and he mentions that he ‘had no intention of trying to catch people dealing or using drugs secretively. We were going to play it up front, head on. We weren’t going to hide peoples face’ (Richards, 2015)

Eugene Richards' approach of capturing the raw, unfiltered reality of drug use and its impact on individuals is both courageous and ethical. By choosing to confront the issue head-on rather than sensationalizing it or hiding the identities of those involved, Richards allows for a more honest and empathetic portrayal of his subjects. This direct and transparent approach can help break down stigmas, humanize the people affected by drug use, and create a more profound understanding of the complexities surrounding the issue. Ultimately, by showcasing the faces and stories of those impacted, Richards' work has the power to evoke empathy, compassion, and potentially drive positive social change surrounding drug addiction.

Eugene Richards: ‘Cocaine True, Cocaine Blue’ (1995)

ASX, E. @ (2015). *An Interview with Eugene Richards: ‘Cocaine True, Cocaine Blue’ (1995)*. [online] AMERICAN SUBURB X. Available at: https://americansuburbx.com/2015/08/an-interview-with-eugene-richards-cocaine-true-cocaine-blue-1995.html. (Accessed: 13th July 2024).

Artist Research: Dorothea Lange

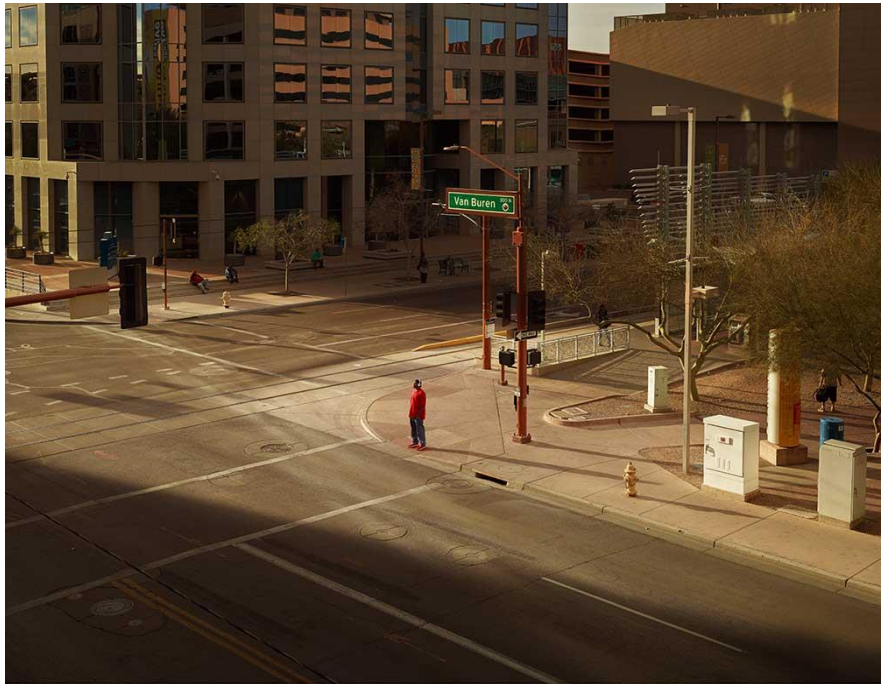
Dorothea Lange was an influential American documentary photographer and photojournalist. She is best known for her powerful photographs looking into the struggles and conditions faced by Americans during the Great Depression, such as her iconic image "Migrant Mother.”

Lange's work not only captured the struggles of the era but also served as a movement for social change, highlighting the need for government help and bringing attention to the marginalized communities. Her empathetic and compassionate approach to photography continues to inspire and resonate with audiences today.

Artist Research: Oli Kellett

Oli Kellett is a British photographer known for his distinctive take on street and urban photography. He excels in capturing everyday moments in a cinematic fashion, focusing on the shapes and lines of cityscapes. Kellett uses light and shadow to create compelling images, often featuring individuals set against expansive, open environments. His photography highlights the connection between people and their surroundings, providing a fresh view of urban life.

I'm glad I researched Kellet, I'm a fan of his work I enjoy this style and I think it relates to the images I took. However, sometimes his images do appear to be lonely but on the other hand, I also think they look very peaceful because these areas should be crowded and overwhelmed with people. Many people experience anxiety in crowded places, but Kellett's work brings a sense of peace by showing these areas with fewer people. His approach creates a calm atmosphere, making me sometimes wish the world looked more like his photos. Regarding the colour, his images are very saturated lots of warm colours I think this pulls away from the loneliness emotion. His images remind me of when you're walking around in public with earphones on, you're less distracted about the people around. You feel calmer, you're almost in your own world.

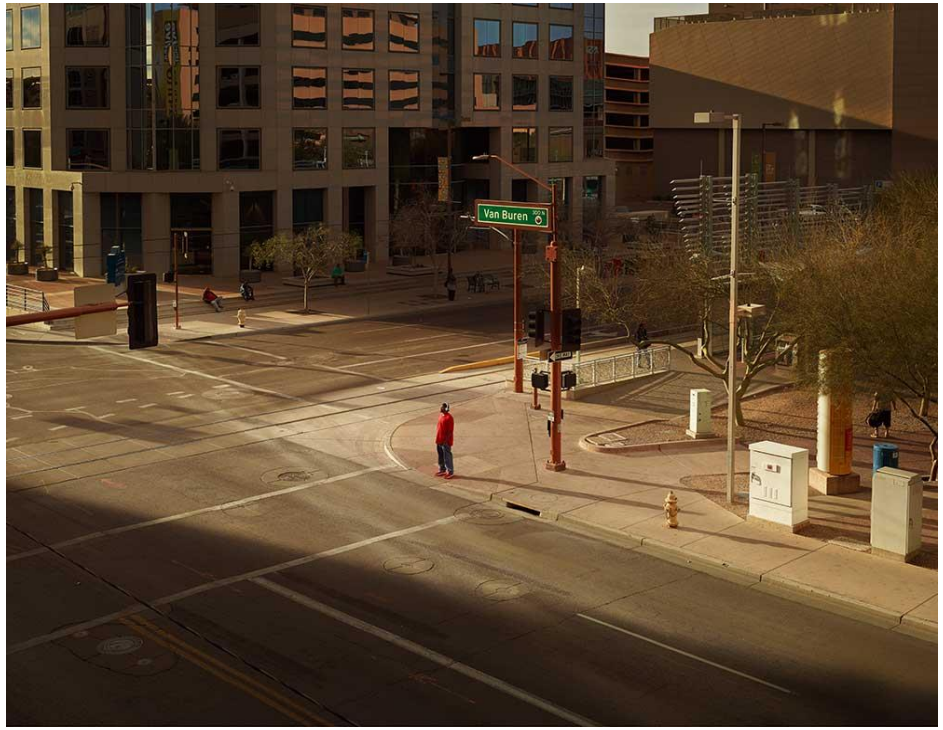


Oli Kellett Biography Available at: https://hackelbury.co.uk/artists/34-oli-kellett/biography/ (Accessed: 13th July 2024).

OLI KELLETT: CROSS ROAD BLUES (VAN BUREN WAY, PHOENIX), 2017

I came across a piece called Cross Road Blues by Oli Kellett. The first thing you notice about this image is the use of warm cream colours, which create a very calm environment. The scene is set in Phoenix, Arizona. Based on the angle, it seems to be taken from a building window. The composition includes a cream stone building with very reflective windows.

A man stands at the corner by the traffic lights, wearing a red T-shirt and blue jeans, and if you look closely, he's wearing headphones. He seems lonely in an otherwise empty environment, which feels peaceful. It should be a busy area but it’s the opposite. This mirrors how I feel when listening to music in public, I feel like I'm in my own world, hearing only what I want. I think this is very relatable considering how many people you see in public wearing earphones going about their day. Perhaps this is what the creator intended to portray: how music can transport you away from the noise of the world.



The Falling Man by Richard Drew

"The Falling Man" photograph is an iconic and haunting image from the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States. Captured by photojournalist Richard Drew, the photo shows a man falling from one of the upper floors of the World Trade Center's North Tower. The image freezes a tragic, deeply personal moment in the midst of a significant historical event. The man's identity remains uncertain, though there has been speculation. The photograph elicits a wide range of emotional reactions, as some see it as a poignant symbol of the human cost of the attacks, while others find it too distressing. Published in newspapers the day after the attacks, the image had a profound impact and has been the subject of discussions about taste and decency in photojournalism. "The Falling Man" is a reminder of the devastating choices some people faced on that day, underscoring the desperation and fear of those trapped in the towers. The photo has inspired essays, debates, and a documentary film exploring its complex meanings and implications.

When the photograph was published, it sparked controversy. While some saw it as a powerful representation of the fear and desperation endured during the attacks, others felt it was too graphic and invaded the victim's privacy, making it one of the most unsettling images due to its authenticity. This was the man's final moment alive. His decision to jump is heartbreaking, reflecting his distress and perceived lack of options for survival inside the building.

Analyzing The Falling Man (2001), Jena McGarey. Available at: https://scalar.chapman.edu/scalar/ah-331-history-of-photography-spring-2021-compendium/jena-mcgarey-one-image-five-minutes (Accessed: 13th July 2024).

Visual Diary 1 Feedback & Reflection

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills	20	9
You have used the text given to you in the poetic image and referenced the artist statement in your exhibition review. It is important in the upcoming semester that you practice researching and responding to sources. These include: photographers talking about their own practice, others reviewing/discussing their work as well as notable galleries/institutions writing about them. This process will dramatically increase the range of work you understand and can analyse as well as broadening your knowledge of the ways in which contemporary photography works. Quoting these sources and responding will encourage you to discuss image-making processes and the intentions of photography with confidence, rather than subjective assumptions. We will practice this in semester two. You must practice in-text citations and bibliography writing using the Harvard method.		
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills	20	12
Your Gregory Crewdson image analysis shows very good perception of a variety of the key concepts in visual analysis. You have benefitted from the exercise in session and paid good attention to the image. I'd like to see further research of the image-maker's intentions, through research of the body of work to expand on your understanding of the work. Slide 6 is a good example of your attempts at visual analysis here Corey, I'm really pleased with the progress shown here. You connect the colours, composition, scale with your intentions and edit the work to accentuate these. You use emotive language to discuss the work, showing connection with it. You have found idea generation difficult- in the upcoming semester, research methods will aide this process. What is imperative is that you begin making work quickly, planning to re-shoot before completing a study – this will allow your analysis and evaluation to impact your initial ideas, pushing your project further.		
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills	20	12
There is a very good attempt at reflecting and evaluating your work here Corey, using newly acquired skills. Your mischievous planning is a very good attempt at discussing your ideas – you can improve this by incorporating more influence form other practitioners. Get used to looking for photography that relates to your work – for example here, further study of Crewdson's lighting might have influenced the way you shoot, or studying a photographer like Phillipe Halsman might have pushed the surreal quality of the shoot. Its good to see you analysing chosen images individually, discussing them visually and in terms of particular intended consequences. I would like to see further evaluation which encompasses the set of images as a whole and sees each shoot as development. As an example, there are some good compositions and consistent lighting. Re-shooting this could have repeated these successes while considering areas for improvement – costume, location, subject. Plan to shoot multiple times in future projects to progress ideas.		

1: I acknowledge that in the first semester, my work was lacking in references and quotes from the creator of the work. I realized this too late, but I believe incorporating those elements will enhance the quality of my work and provide an opportunity to earn more marks. Expanding my research process will undoubtedly enhance my understanding and analysis of contemporary photography. It will also help me gain insight into different image-making processes and photographic intentions, allowing me to engage more confidently in discussions about these topics.

2. I feel as if many aspects of my work can be improved. Perhaps better time management will improve every aspect. I understand the importance of starting the creative process quickly and planning to re shoot before completing a study. I will apply these suggestions in the upcoming semester and look forward to learning more about research methods to support my creative process. I enjoyed the work I carried out on slide 6, I like linking different aspects together to creative emotion. I'm glad you acknowledged my connection with the work through my use of emotive language and careful focus on elements like colours, composition, and scale.

3. I understand the importance of drawing influence from other creators, and I will make it a point to seek out photographers and artists whose work relates to mine.

I recognize the significance of re-shooting to build on strong compositions and consistent lighting, while also focusing on elements like costume, location, and subject. Planning multiple shoots for future projects will allow me to fine-tune and expand my ideas.

Visual Diary 1 Feedback & Reflection

4. Practical Application Skills	20	11
You have shown a very good application of a somewhat limited range of skills. By this I mean that you have demonstrated you can use your camera well on three occasions, however this is a very small amount of practical work in the time, and limited to one way of working. You have sourced good locations – off camera flash would have allowed greater control over the lighting. I recommend challenging yourself to use new equipment. First ion your list given the way you shoot is location lighting equipment – secondly try a medium format with colour film. I guarantee you will love the rendition of colour. Please show more of your editing process, as well as showing the before and after, please screenshot your efforts in photoshop. As well as showing off your practical skills, you can quickly make multiple edits of the same imagery – for example, your image on slide 6 with a much closer crop, or in black and white would be different. Using your practical skills like this in combination with your reflective skills will show you the multiple ways any one image can work, demonstrating application of your skills. You have started using contact sheets to good effect; however I would like to see more analysis of individual images before you make your selection. Aim to discuss technical settings, issues, compositional elements and alternative sets. Aim to shoot once a week, try to work your through as much kit as possible in stores and pick up experimental ideas as you go.		
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice	20	12
Your content is well written and organised logically. For a module as in depth as this, I would have liked to have seen more study of photographers/photography, more idea generation and certainly far more practical experimentation. Nonetheless, you have responded well to our tutorial and you have clearly picked up a lot of new skills in documenting your process cycle, analysing and reflecting. It is clear that you have practiced your technique and that you are benefitting from a good cohort. I look forward to seeing you repeat your successes in this module with more in-depth study in semester two. Well done Corey.		

4. I'm glad to know that using my existing skills has been successful, even though they are somewhat restricted. I value your suggestions for broadening my use of equipment and techniques. I'll push myself to integrate new equipment, beginning with the location lighting gear you suggested. I'm also eager to experiment with medium-format colour film, which promises to expand my understanding of colour representation. I recognize the value of sharing more details of my editing process, including the before-and-after stages of my work, by providing screenshots of my Photoshop work, I can highlight my practical abilities and experiment with different edits of the same image. I plan to explore various ways to manipulate my images, such as cropping and converting to black and white, to demonstrate my versatility and range.

5. I don't feel fulfilled with my work in the first visual diary. It's not an encouraging feeling however it encourages me to work harder on the next visual diary. I believe I could have improved my time management, and reshot certain shots. In semester 2 I will include more in-depth research into other photographs/artists. How they influence my work, how I take inspiration and more in-depth planning and research. I look forward to applying the constructive feedback to my work and continuing to grow as a photographer.