

Personal Philosophies – Visual research document

https://josefchladek.com/book/martin_parr_gerry_badger_-_the_photobook_-_a_history_volume_iii - history photobook by Martin Parr and Gerry Badger

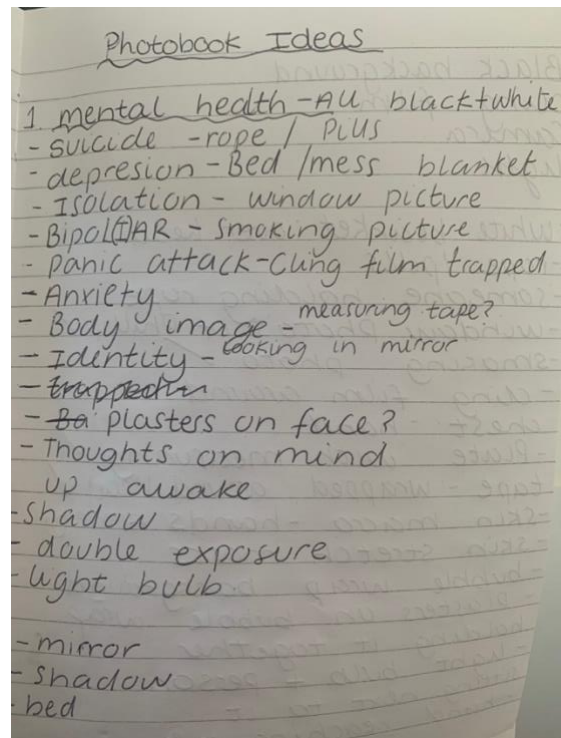
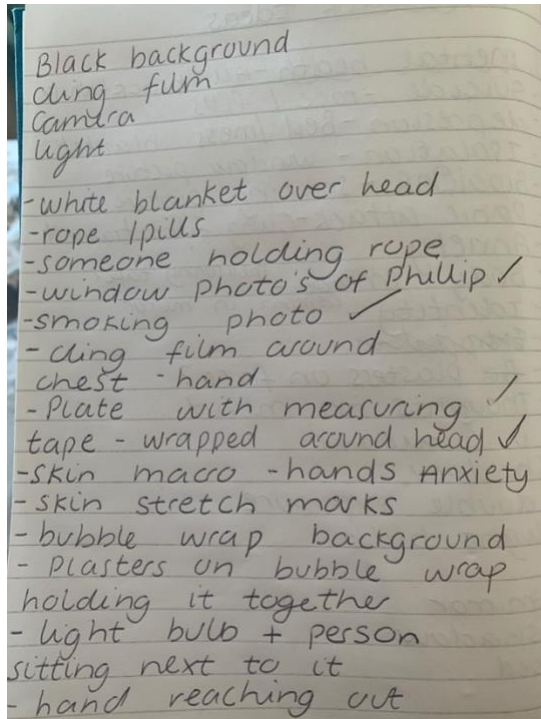
Originally, I had planned for my photobook to be a continuation from the previous project “Visual Enquiry” which was representing the history of Maesteg. Due to lockdown, I ended up back in Maesteg, so this seemed the perfect idea to venture the place that I’ve spent the majority of my life in and undiscovering historic events and facts that happened here. A main reason that I never stuck to this idea was because through lockdown my mental health began declining which led me to not leaving the house as my anxiety even prevented me from going for a walk.

Mental health has been a big part of my life as I have experienced many struggles within mental health. When I was 9, I was first introduced to Mental illnesses through developing an eating disorder that effected a big chunk of my life, recovering was a long journey that took over 8 years of on and off struggles. Throughout that I also struggled with depressive episodes and anxiety disorder, which is something that I still experience to this day. Now I am a big advocate for mental health as it’s something that everyone can experience and is very important to always talk about as it brings awareness to topics that might seem too taboo to mention. That was the beginning thoughts and reasoning behind my photobook ‘Oblivion’ which was created to bring awareness to Mental Health from the perspective of my own and experiences faced within my family together or individually. My uncle Philip was also a big inspiration behind this photobook as he has Bipolar Disorder and recently is recovering from a mental breakdown which has been harder to go through especially due to isolation within the pandemic as he lives alone and receives help from my family and I.

The name ‘Oblivion’ was chosen for this project as it means “the state of being unaware or unconscious of what is happening around one.” Which seemed fitting as i feel many people are unaware of certain aspects of mental health and don’t want to acknowledge that it is happening around them.

(<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/oblivion>)

Ideas



Research and Inspiration

<https://www.priorygroup.com/blog/does-mental-health-affect-and-impinge-on-family-relationships> - This was an eye-opening website which mentions how mental health can affect relationships, more specifically with families and the impact that it can have on an individual or family dynamic.

“more than 80% of patients agreed that their mental health conditions had had a detrimental effect on their family.”

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/>

The next thing I did was to look at some photobooks that related to Mental health that would inspire me on how to set out the photobook and to see what stood out to me. The first one that I came across was a zine on a website called Behance which is a place where artists can showcase and discover creative work. This zine was by an artist called Khushi Kshirsagar who is from India and was created to break the stigma around Mental illnesses and to highlight certain aspects of different Mental Disorders. The layout works and compliments the next photo really well, it is a satisfying piece to view which is something I aim to achieve. The text also is placed around the photos and doesn't take the attention away from the photo in fact it adds a sense to interpret what the meaning behind the photo is.

(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/93473477/Mental-Health-A-photo-zine>)

The next photo book that I came across was 'Insula' by Daniel Regan. This photo book documents his decade long struggle with chronic mental health conditions. Through this book the personal elements stand out and the images are extremely strong though personally the layout isn't my favourite, but it is an incredible photo book to view and is truly an eye-opening conceptual piece of work.

(<https://artofcreativephotography.com/photography-book-reviews/photography-book-insula/>)

Through this project I was also able to experiment with self -portraits which is something that I've never really felt confident in doing before. This was to show my experience within mental health and to make the photobook more personal to me. I also attempted to try some slow shutter photos which is also something that I've always been too scared to try so this video by Marc Klaus that came across helped me become more confident to experiment with slow shutter and using myself as the model. I think self-portraits are something that take time to perfect and will be something to experiment with further.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cMrN9hGv5w>