

Overall, my project for 'Fugitive Testimonies' has been an emotional personal exploration of my childhood memories through the sentimentality of objects from the early years of my childhood. By using photography and video I wanted to capture the emotional weight that my objects hold, from cherished belongings to distant memories.



*My Found Photograph*

From being given my found photograph, I started to think about the themes of childhood, innocence and memory. The concept of the project then developed into a personal exploration of re-discovering photographs taken throughout my childhood and objects that I have kept as sentimental belongings from this period also. I started to hang my childhood possessions on my washing line capturing the symbolic meaning of their passing through time and the fragility of nostalgia. The line itself became a kind of timeline, a way to display memory in physical form. I hung items from my early years such as my baby blanket, my childhood bunny, my ballet slippers, a keyring which contains a photograph of my brother and I, a medal from a ballet competition, a floral corsage gifted to me on my end of primary school celebration and my primary school fleece.

I chose to illuminate my objects by using Elinchrom flash lighting to create dark, dramatic shadows, hoping to highlight the contrast between the warmth of nostalgia and the distant memory of time passing. In most of the images, the flash gave the objects a sense of isolation in the sense of evoking memory and reminiscence. But getting the shadows to frame correctly and in the way that I was envisioning was surprisingly challenging. The larger objects created bold dramatic shadows which were easier to capture, yet the smaller objects were more of a challenge, leaving some images in my portfolio without a shadow, just photographed with bright lighting hung on the line. This is something from this project that I would want to try and achieve differently in future, experimenting more with angles for the smaller objects, to gain that shadow to have a similar look compared to the rest of the images in the portfolio. Including the photographs of myself from my childhood including the objects photographed on the washing line alongside one another helped evoke memory and reminiscence.

The multimedia element, which documents me taking each item down from the line, added another layer to the project. This slow and deliberate process became symbolic, a quiet goodbye to each fragment of my childhood. The shadows in the video are very present and I feel that the shadow of myself further adds to the concept of emotional memory. The music in the video is a cover of 'Slipping Through My Fingers' by ABBA. The reasoning behind using this is because in the 2008 film *Mamma Mia!*, there is a scene in which a mother and daughter are preparing for the daughter's wedding and the song overplays in this scene in which it uses metaphorical language to express how fast childhood goes. Since I was young, I always felt a connection to this scene and when coming up with the concept for my multimedia outcome, I felt that having this song playing over me taking down the objects symbolised the passing of time through my childhood and having an emotional goodbye to this period of my life.

Creating this project has forced me to confront the tenderness and fleetingness of childhood memory. Through the archival photographs, objects, shadows, and the act of removal, I have tried to express the 'bittersweet' mixture of holding on and letting go. It has been a technically and emotionally demanding process, but ultimately a rewarding one.