

Artist's Statement

My work explores the relationship between surrealism and portraiture. I attempt to use the outwardly absurd to show an inner reality of the subject. My influences are mainly surrealists such as Clarence Laughlin with his horror-struck portraiture and Martin Stranka with his dream like surrealism.

I love photography as a medium because I love to look at things through different perspectives and let other people see the world as I see it.

I have always been fascinated by the intricate details of life and how with a creative brain you can spin those details into something more than just a pretty picture. You can capture a story and personality along with it. There is seemingly no end to story telling in this manner, and that's why I love it.

My grandma got me my first camera at age ten which ended up kickstarting my passion for photography. Growing up in the countryside I've always loved nature and so my first photographic interest was depicting nature, especially animals and birds.

When I started my more formal studies, I started doing more of a studio style photography and also learning how to manipulate images in post processing to better express the narrative I was going for.

The focus on portraiture is a more recent development for me. I see my interests as having progressed from more formal composition and structure as a photograph to using these techniques to explore and express the humanity of the subject. Like the surrealists, I'm interested in how distortion of the outward environment can show what's happening inside of the subject.

Social Media Evaluation

Social media is for many artists, a very useful tool. For instance, social media can be used as a way of showcasing your work as well as to look at other artists artwork to take inspiration. I don't just use social media as an artist however, I also use it to communicate with my friends and post updates on my life.

My favourite social media is Instagram. It is popular and easy to use but also its image-based format is appropriate to display visual work. Saying that, Instagram also has some drawbacks. First of which is that the square format Instagram is known for, is not complimentary for a lot of digital artwork which is mostly rectangular based. This leads to a lot of people just making art for Instagram to look good displayed in a square. This isn't exactly a bad thing but for me it seems to take away the point of art which is to express yourself.

On Instagram you can also use a feature called highlights. Highlights are usually used for when you want to post something, but you don't want to clutter up your page with posts that do not fit the style or theme of your page. I use highlights to update people on what I'm working on, new up and coming exhibitions I'll be in and to post short films I have made. Viewers can also give feedback sent directly to the artist by liking and commenting on one of your highlights.

I have three accounts on Instagram, my first one *trash._._mammal* is my personal profile I use for corresponding with friends. My second is my photography account showcasing my work *olivers_imagery* and lastly my third is *the.spam_man* my alter ego used for comedic purposes as an inside joke with friends. All these accounts attract different followers because of the distinct subject matter with them all.

Another social media platform is Facebook. I tend not to use Facebook anymore except to promote exhibitions I'll be in. Though I do use Facebook messenger when speaking with friends and family.

Reddit is a forum website where people can post questions and people can answer, but you have to be aware of what you are searching for as the site attracts bigots and incels. I have a subreddit called r/PuddleAnimals with over 1500 followers. This page is used to post pictures of slouching animals presenting themselves as though they are puddles.

WhatsApp is a messaging service which is a great way to connect for group chats and to use for professional purposes such as discussions and interviews with clients and employers. It's easy to connect to family and friends if they are far away and it's easy to send large media files such as videos or big collections of photographs. At university when we organise group projects a WhatsApp group is normally set up to share ideas and resources as it's a good way to bring together large groups of people from within my course and within other courses. There are parts of WhatsApp I don't enjoy however, as when large media files are put on WhatsApp they are automatically downloaded onto your phones storage and you have to take the time to delete them all individually.

LinkedIn has a similar layout to Facebook, but it is more of a professional platform designed specifically for the business community. I haven't used it enough to understand it fully, but I do have a profile. www.linkedin.com/in/oliver-stewart42 I will probably use LinkedIn more in the future as my career as a photographer evolves.

Artrepreneur is a site designed for artists where you can showcase digital artwork and sell them. I currently have some of my work displayed on this site which is a good way to display my work however, this hasn't been very beneficial for me as I have sold nothing and I don't think there has been a lot of publicity for this website. Picfair is similar but with an option to have the piece of work framed and sold physically, although this is very overpriced. I am displaying a larger selection of my work on Picfair as I found this site originally and these sites will be useful for future work promotion.

Pinterest is a site where you can search for photographs and have them in a grid layout called boards. I specifically use it to showcase art that I have been inspired by

https://www.pinterest.co.uk/olivers_imagery/photos-that-inspire-me/. It's also very useful to search for inspiration as it categorises subjects.

LinkTree isn't technically a social media platform but it's a great tool if you want to keep on top of all your social media accounts. It allows you to upload the links to all your sites and then you just have to worry about sharing one link. You can also customise the aesthetics of the page so it's more presentable when people click the link.

Social media can actually be hard work as it takes a lot of time to keep on top of all your posts. So, there are only a few sites I can commit to. Once you start a social media and you start getting followers you need to keep them engaged by posting new content on a regular basis.



OLIVER STEWART

BA Photography Student

PROFILE

Highly motivated and hard-working photography student looking for photography related work.

CONTACT

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HOBBIES

Photography
Playing the guitar
Composing songs
Gaming
Cycling

EDUCATION

BA Photography in the Arts
Swansea College of Art
University of Wales Trinity St. David
September 2021 - Current

Learning camera and lighting techniques, manipulating photos using digital technology, learning dark room techniques, learning camera settings and how to use equipment.
For my first year I was a student representative for my class.

Foundation Art and Design
Swansea College of Art
University of Wales Trinity St. David
September 2020 – July 2021

I learnt foundational art and design practices including screen printing.

AS Photography
Llandovery College

September 2019 – July 2020
I gained an A grade in my AS Photography.
I was student representative for my year.

EXHIBITIONS

Swansea Open 2023
Glynn Vivian Gallery

28th January 2023 – 16th April 2023 (Currently ongoing)
I entered my work into the Swansea Open competition and had two pieces chosen and exhibited.

In our Intricate Image
Dylan Thomas Center

29th November 2022 – 2nd December 2022
Me and some of my class did an exhibition that explores literature and multimedia responses. I projected two short overlapping videos responding to a Dylan Thomas poem called "I have longed to move away".

Confronting the Present

Creative Bubble

10th May 2022 – 13th May 2022

This was an exhibition put on by my university as part of activism week. I created three portraits of differently abled people.

COP26

University of Wales Trinity St David – Dynevor Campus

N/A

I created a film to highlight the drastic changes of sea levels for COP26.

Likeness

Volcano Theatre

8th July 2021 – 20th July 2021

I entered 3 pieces of work into the Likeness competition held at the volcano theatre and won joint first prize in the under 25's section of the competition.

<https://volcanotheatre.wales/likeness/>

SKILLS

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Adobe Photoshop | • Setting Up Lighting |
| • Camera Raw | • Setting Up Cameras |
| • Adobe Bridge | • Graphic Design |
| • Photography: Digital, | • Developing Film |
| Analogue, Portrait, | • Videography |
| Surrealism, Studio, | • Adobe Premier Pro |
| Landscape | • Touch Typing |

CERTICATIONS/LICENCES

Certificate of Higher Education in Art and Design Foundation with Distinction

June 2021 – Present

This was awarded to me after I finished my foundation course at the University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD).

Digital Photography

September 2014 – Present