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Programme – BA Documentary Photography & Visual Activism

Module – Developing a unique voice

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Module Evaluation

To inform my portfolio direction I researched other photographers who walk coastlines, remove plastic pollutants and document their detritus journey. John Darwell is inspiring, his work previously sparked my visual presentation Dunes, he walks a large coastline documenting at varying time periods and compares these. My portfolio is based on coastal pollution and detritus, manmade and environmental impacts. Other research artists that influenced my work are Andy Hughes, Mandy Barker and Chris Packham as their work contrasts, Packham animal endangerment and coastal decline versus Barker producing amazing designs out of plastic recycling. Hughes has piqued my interest as he photographs single items rubbish either in their found location or studio, he also manipulates the plastic to make interesting shapes.

I developed my initial ideas based on whether the global COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive effect on the local community and pride in the wonderful location they live nearby. I chose to explore the Hughes influence and document the plastic in the landscape.

I intended for the final outcomes to show a combination of litter and storm damage, but the amount of litter was shocking, so this is what I focussed on. Some images were taken as a walking tour, to experiment with whether this created unusual angles, but the best images were taken using a tripod as stable base. To improve the final outcomes, I would like to take these items to the studio and create studio images with lighting and combine the items into a design like Barker does or strategically place like Hughes. I also think this could be improved by experimenting further with distance and closeup shots or taking a video walking the journey to support how short of stretch these items were found. I am drawn to film photography so I would experiment with the media, I think the series could be broken into key areas, food and drink packaging, toys, baby, storm, this would give a good contrast and balance and a series of 4 to 5 images per area of the collection. I intended for my images to spark an emotive response which I think they will do. They are well balanced and good overall composition and draw the eye in closer and I imagine viewers will react differently depending on whether you are someone who drops litter or not.

To present these images, I tried various editing techniques, black and white, overlaying the image over the map of the area, out of focus, in focus, ultimately I prefer to present them in a simplistic form without manipulation as this is true to how I found the environment. The spotlight is on the unnatural items within the natural environment as the backdrop. I chose to select a range of portrait and landscape images. These images express my idea that the throwaway plastics problem has not improved during the pandemic.

I am overall happy with my final outcome of my project, I am content with the shading and tone and the clarity of the main point of the images. I could improve the images by taking images using a trigger and maybe create a slide show of the actual route to support the exhibit.. I am pleased with the way the project has developed and that these images can be interpreted by the viewer based on their emotions and relationship mindset.



Andy Hughes



Kyle Branigan



Andy Hughes



Kyle Branigan



Chris Packham



John Darwell



Kyle Branigan

Word Count – 558

Bibliography

Reading lists/References

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