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Zine

While researching for the zine project I noticed that the zines I liked the most were based around a single concept illustrated in a series of photographs or drawings that were united by a specific style and subject. I wanted to create a zine based on my relationship with nature because it is my main subject. I decided to use my recent drawings of small natural objects, which would be suitable material. They included drawings of the objects such as seashells, pine cones, and pieces of driftwood which I collected during my walks in the wood or on beaches. These places have a spiritual meaning for me and the objects help me to connect to them.



Figure 1. The first version of a zine in A3, Riso printing in 2 colours

In my first attempt I made a folding up zine from a single A3 sheet of paper with some drawings printed using the Riso technique (Figure 1). The visual design worked well but I felt that the concept lacked depth and it reminded me of a children book, which was not my intention. I also wanted to incorporate some text.



Figure 2. The folded zine of the first version. The imagery consists of both sea and forest related drawings.

I turned to InDesign and created another zine consisting of 12 pages, initially using the same imagery. I wanted it to be a booklet and found that using three A4 pieces of paper to make 12 A5 pages worked the best. It allowed enough space for both images and text and was neither too big nor too small. It was more convenient to play with the picture sizes and position on a page with the software.

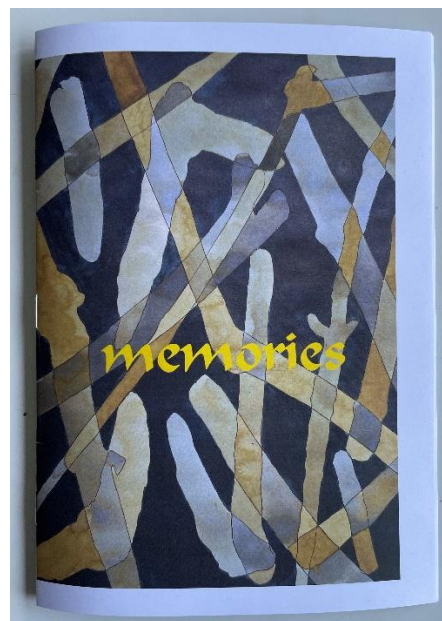


Figure 3. The front page of the booklet type 'Memories' zine. The drawing used for the cover depicts driftwood.

I prepared images from my drawings in Adobe Photoshop and positioned them in InDesign. I had not previously used InDesign, but with the help of a workshop and some online tutorials, I was eventually able to create a design that I was happy with.

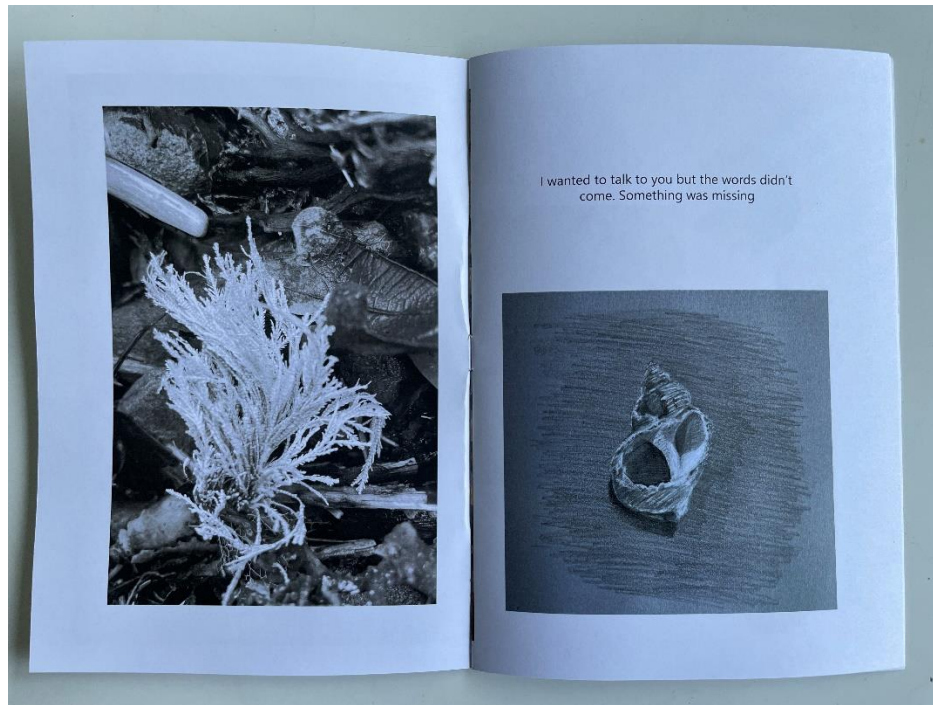


Figure 4. Pages 2 and 3 from the Memories zine. The empty shell represents a sense loss/death.

The concept of the zine evolved in the process of gathering and editing images for the project. Curating a set of cohesive imagery that tells a story from a number of different drawings helped me to see and define the underlying concept of the memories of a friend. I felt that it was more appropriate to base the concept on the actual imagery, rather than creating new images in an attempt to better illustrate an idea. The latter approach would have resulted in a too-literal, comic-type story, which I wanted to avoid. Instead, I wanted the concept to be a bit ambiguous, as stated in my favorite quote from John Berger (John Berger *Berger on Drawing*, Cork 2005 p.80):

Art cannot be used to explain the mysterious. What art does is to make it easier to notice. Art uncovers the mysterious. And when noticed and uncovered, it becomes more mysterious.

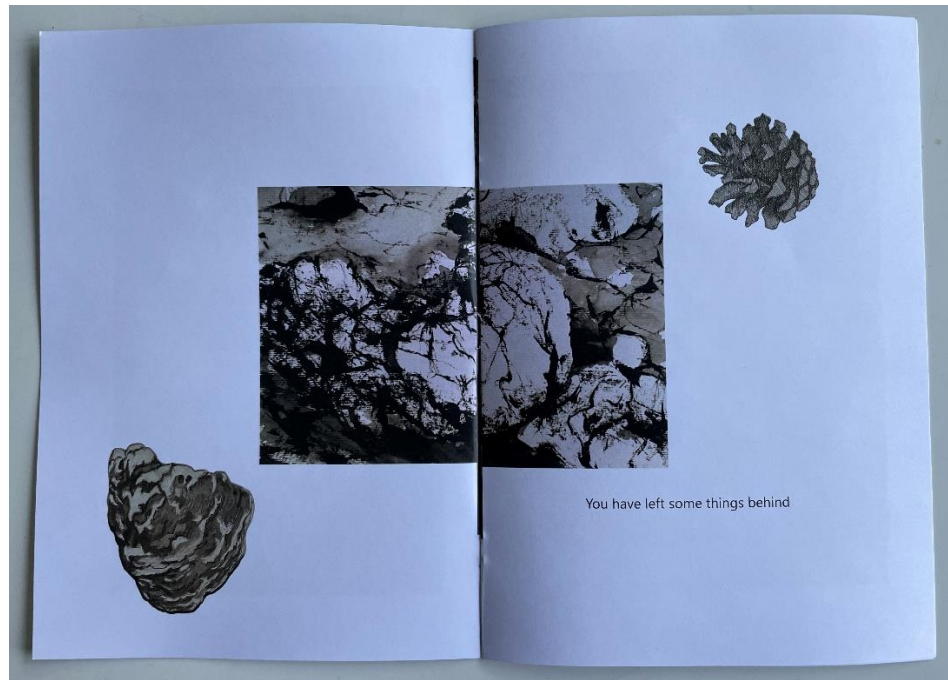


Figure 5. Pages 4-5 from the Memories zine

I analysed what it was that the objects I had drawn meant to me. The essential elements were nature, beauty, memory and a sense of something being lost. These elements also could have been united in a story about my memories of a relationship with someone special in my past, a person who either gone or has passed away.

For me, the zine was as much about my relationship with nature, with the special places in the forest and on the beaches, as it was about memories of a person. Therefore, while the text suggested a story about a relationship, the imagery was mainly based on natural objects, including my drawings of rocks, shells, driftwood, and my photos of beach surfaces. A broken seashell or a feather can signify a memory of the beloved but lost person or their absence, but they also represent beautiful animals.



Figure 6. Pages 6-7 from the Memories zine. The images represent different seasons and therefore, the time passing by.

Eventually I decided not to use my drawings of birds, as it made the story too vague or leading in the wrong direction. I focused on imagery that related to the sea and removed most of the forest-related drawings, such as of bark or mushrooms. I kept just a couple of pinecones drawings, as they are also objects that can be found on a beach.

I am happy with the final version of the zine. I enjoyed working on the project and will make more zines in the future to promote my art.

List of Figures

Figure 1. The first version of a zine in A3, Riso printing in 2 colours

Figure 2. The folded zine of the first version

Figure 3. The front page of the booklet type Memories zine

Figure 4. Pages 2 and 3 from the Memories zine

Figure 5. Pages 4-5 from the Memories zine

Figure 6. Pages 6-7 from the Memories zine

Bibliography

Berger, J. (2005) *Berger on Drawing*. Cork: Occasional Press, p.80

Berger, J. (2008) *Ways of seeing*. London: Penguin