Visual Diary

Harvey Shaw

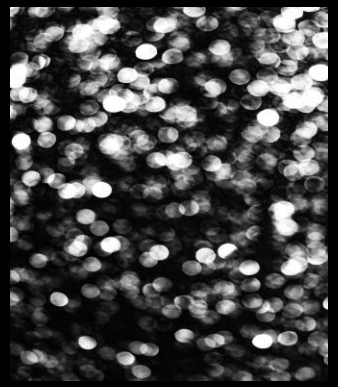
Introduction to my Visual Diary and about myself :

The intention of my visual diary is to show my progression and research and how my ideas and other existing works and media influence my own.

I will have some artists featured in my visual diary for the intended purpose of adding research or context to my work, and others that I respond to technically within my imagery.

Just to get a brief description of me and my work before hand, I have been taking photos for about 3 years, and over that time I have become attracted to shooting in monochrome and sometimes in higher contrast. I guess this is just a visual trait I have picked up and developed, and I feel like it always fits in with the principles of my work and the objective. I use it consistently throughout my work, but I am also exploring the use of colour when possible.

Rhossili



I like the juxtaposition in the image as we see the white and black horse's embrace contrast by leaning into one another. Similar or relating to the philosophy of balance, for example Yin and Yang.

The neutral grey background complements this well and I think I exposed the image to encapsulate that clearly enough.

Areas of the hair and detail of fur look effective. I don't think its fully noticeable but the white horse is in the face of the sun while the black horse is almost cast in the shadow. the dark horse splits the image with itself and the shade while the white horse splits the image with itself and the sky / light.

The framing of the shot is nice as we get a clear sense of space with the sky as well as enough space between the camera and the subject. The sides of the image are cropped no more past the horse's center back so we get a cinematic and sympathetic view on it almost.

I like the movement presented in this image and the way we see how direction and shape forms. This looks well in high contrast as it helps bring out the indifference between the still and kinetic sand that's shifting,

The Poetic Image:

My visual Diary covers the ideas and progression throughout my photography projects in Visual Studies 1 and 2.

The first topic I needed to produce work for was "the poetic image". This brief included choosing a poem, analyzing it, applying critical theory and using our depictions and concepts from the poem to produce images. These images could be of whatever our representations were of the written language. I chose a poem and focused on a specific paragraph. I broke it down and decided to shoot an image per line as the poem sparked my interest more in one paragraphs lines than any of the rest did. Here are the images I produced for that brief:

I like images like this that contain areas of empty space as it create's a place for interpretation and for the unknown. For example, I interpret the space at the top of the image as possibly space where the person lying down on the steps mentally was at the time.

To expand on that... the subject appears to be in contemplation as it is night-time and right next to the sea. is there a link between empty space within the image, profound intellection and the ?

I like to pick my favorite images normally however I like all the images and their reasoning behind being taken so here is one of the images which I produced. I am going to break it down visually and contextually and I will explain my feelings towards it correlating to the poem.

> You just want to keep moving, the energy contained
> Is spilling out and making trouble for you
> Nothing is the same

Initially reading the poem I compared the language to the feeling of being at discomfort or feeling stuck with something. Like you are not really getting anywhere throughout your efforts. I took an image of the shadows of some tops reflecting through a pane of glass. I feel like this links because I think being in a position where you are not seeing progress can really set someone back to the point of feeling at disability in a way. The first line describes immobility and the general feeling of not being in the places and situations you want to be. This is shown in my image literally with the shadows of the torsos in the image however I also feel it references the second line by describing the pieces of you that aren't there anymore. Pieces of your life, routine or personality that is missing or has been applied at another time.

Exhibition Review

Volcano gallery / theatre, Swansea, SA1 1LG.

My review is based on the work of Mariya Boryova, she is a multidisciplinary artist who explores the areas of female nature, motherhood, sacrifice and freedom. Her work includes the current conflict in Ukraine and she expresses her feelings and personal connections to it. She uses water color paint but only uses shades of grey and black. I feel like this faces away from the obviousness of Ukraine's issues and could be seen metaphorically by taking away its traditional colors that we have all obviously seen around us. Normally campaigns , protestors and charities will show the classic blue and yellow, however here we appreciate its complexity and individual nature on the issues that are foreign to us. seeing this art and understanding it to a closer degree has helped me learn a completely new way of valuing art and being aware of the artists influences. The use of not including color puts an emphasis on the shapes and objects in her pieces which all communicate to me similarly as a photo series would. We follow the brush strokes across, as it gradually projects and reveals a unique and important element of her culture and the emotional and physical output it's having on the history of her people. it feels as if each work shows us a familiar yet misunderstood shard of glass that comes from a fallen window pane. I really like the multiple piece works as I can imagine they communicate just as efficiently with viewers when it comes to understanding its meaning and feeling its effect, almost as if someone with no interest in its contextual and hidden meaning would be impacted the same way as someone looking into it and going out of their way to see all angles of it.

Ideas after exhibition review:

I think that after the exhibition review, I have taken more into account considering things such as context of work and artist statements and how they can be used to add more narrative or information regarding a project or body of work. It has also had me thinking about the presentation of work and if certain types of photography and art should be presented in certain ways. For example, because my subject is documentary based, if I was taking photos for a project that consisted of homeless people and life on the streets, would it be controversial or morally incorrect of me to exhibit such works in bougee, golden frames? This has had me considering how my own work could be presented in an exhibition or formal environment and how much of an impact the presentation layout has on the structure / constitution photos are created around.

The work has also had me consider the format and dimensions of work.

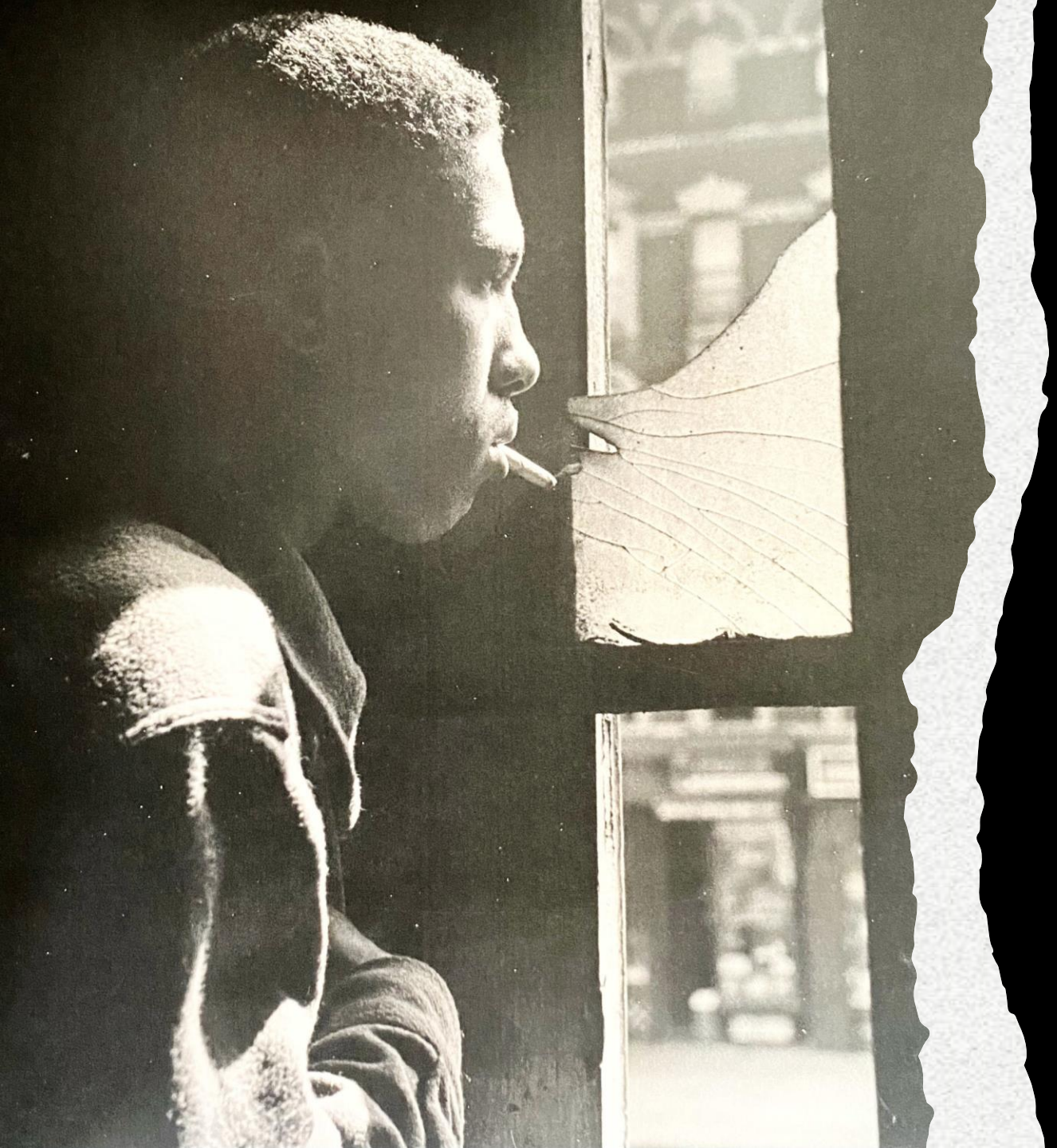
I feel like when in an exhibition looking at plentiful images or diverse spacing between images allows the opportunity to explore things such as narrative and we get more of a general coverage around the topic due the space. I think space between photos can possibly translate as the time or distance between images and it may force the viewer to look at the work in a larger perspective almost like a journey.

The opposite to this is to have work aligned symmetrically and evenly along the wall. Most of the time this is used and is used horizontally. This is good at giving the viewer / audience an even and pleasant viewing of the work. It Is safe at making all the works blend in and form a collective.

Narrative Image

For my narrative image project, I wanted to go a more complex route as I immediately understood it had to show some story or recognizable evolution, but I think I focused more on documenting it and the story only made sense to me because I was there experiencing it and shooting it. I know I could have gone a more obvious route, but I still really like some of the images from this shoot and I now know I need to be more blatant and clearer when representing things that require time or change throughout the photo series.

Next time I would take an image of something like a flower decaying over a few days and shoot it over the period because I didn't focus on the task itself and I got carried away with the shoot and then realized and had to make the most of what I had in a sense of trying to piece a story out of it. I could have even just taken a photo of a piece of raw meat go to cooked in staged or intervals.



'Red Jackson' Gordon Parks

An evaluative study of the work 'Red Jackson'

The composition of the image is significant. Red Jackson stands in the foreground, looking directly out of the window, which acts as a barrier between the subject and the 'outside' persons.

The window divides the image into two parts, creating a sense of separation and confinement.

Parks utilizes strong contrasts, both visually and symbolically. Red Jackson's bright, determined expression contrasts sharply with the windows shattered class and the shadowed background.

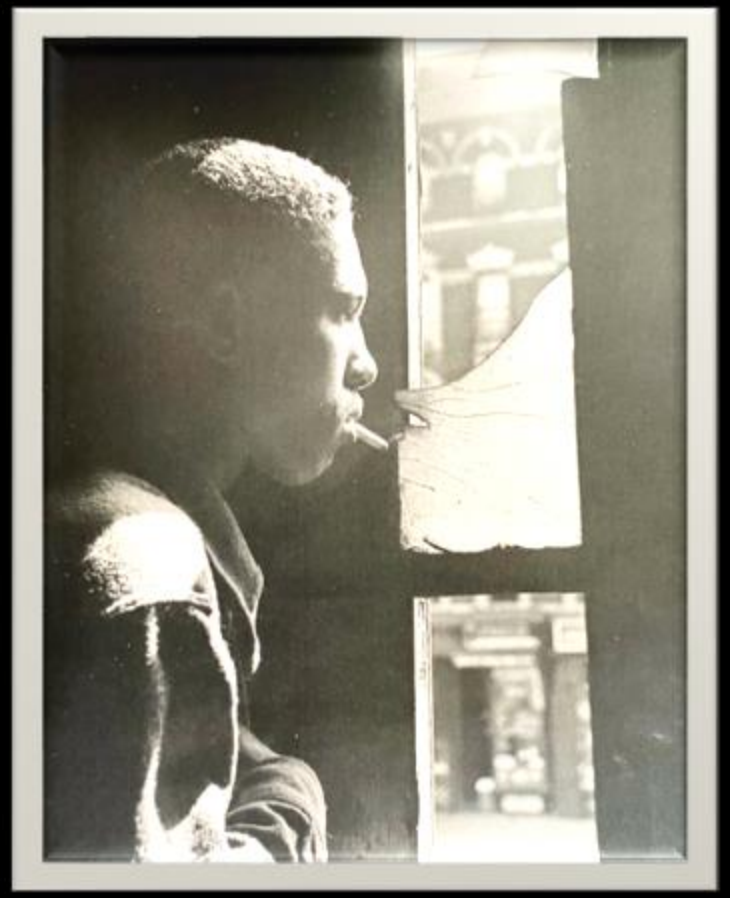
The texture of the glass and the surrounding environment provides depth and context to the image.

Considering the historical context of Parks' work is crucial. This image was captured during a time of significant racial segregation and social injustice in the United States.

The shattered window can be seen as a metaphor for the limitations faced by African Americans during that period, highlighting the societal divisions and inequalities.

The photograph captures the resilience and determination of Red Jackson, who gazes defiantly through the broken window. His gaze conveys a sense of strength and determination in the face of adversity.

The image can be interpreted as a commentary on racial segregation and the resilience of the human spirit. It challenges the viewer to confront the barriers imposed by society and reflects the struggle for equality.

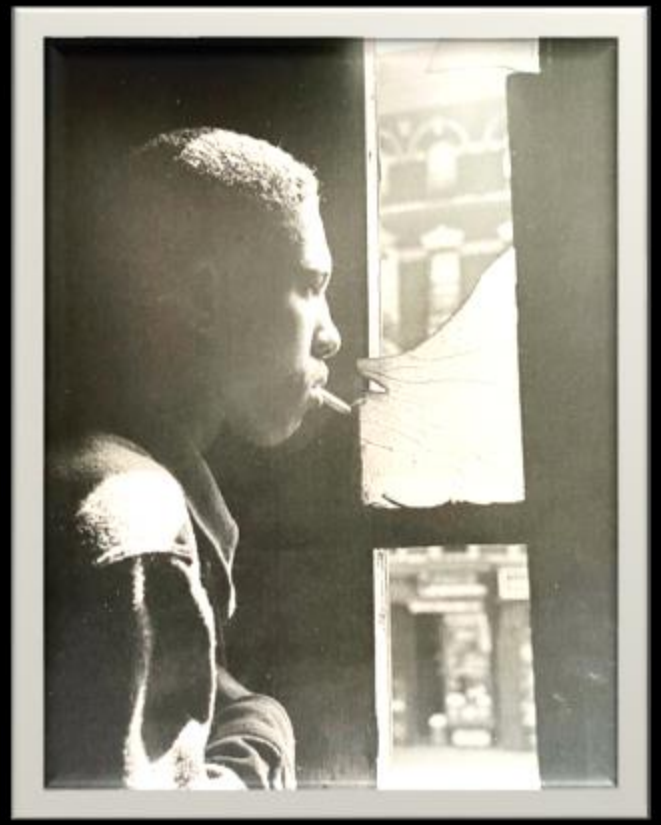


'Red Jackson' , Gordon parks, 1948

A conclusion from the study of work 'Red Jackson'

Gordon Parks' "Red Jackson" is a powerful and thought-provoking image that encapsulates the themes of resilience, determination, and social barriers faced by African Americans in a segregated society.

The composition, context, and meaning of the image contribute to its significance in documentary photography and social commentary.



'Red Jackson' , Gordon parks, 1948

'Red Jackson Fighting with gang member' Gordon Parks

An evaluative study of the works 'Red Jackson fighting with gang member'

The composition captures a tense moment of physical altercation between Red Jackson and another boy. Their bodies are entangled in a struggle, occupying the center of the image.

The surrounding environment of the Harlem streets forms the backdrop, portraying a raw and urban setting.

image's stark contrasts between light and shadow draw attention to the intense emotions and physical engagement between the two boys.

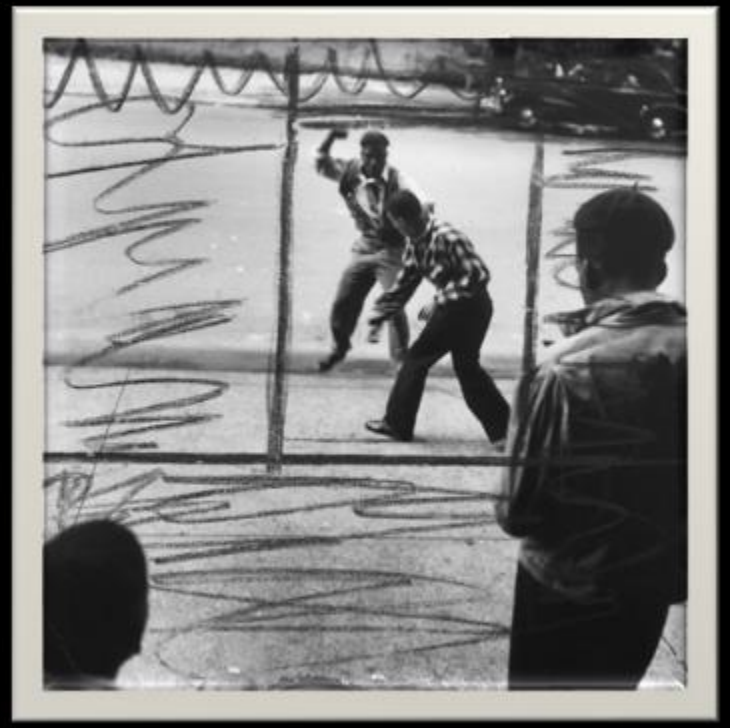
The composition emphasizes the dynamic movement of the struggle, depicting the action in a frozen yet charged moment.

The photograph was taken during a time of social unrest and economic challenges in Harlem, reflecting the realities of inner-city life and the struggles faced by African American communities.

It contextualizes the complexities of growing up in an environment marked by poverty, social tensions, and sometimes violence, offering a glimpse into the challenges faced by the youth in Harlem.

The image captures a raw and visceral moment of conflict, potentially symbolizing larger social issues such as frustration, aggression, or territorial disputes within the community.

It may also highlight the vulnerability of youth growing up in challenging environments and the consequences of societal pressures and circumstances.



'Red Jackson fighting with gang member' , Gordon parks, 1948

A conclusion from the study of work 'Red Jackson fighting with gang member'

Gordon Parks' photograph "Red Jackson fighting with a gang member. Harlem. 1948." is a striking portrayal that encapsulates the tension, struggle, and harsh realities faced by African American youth in Harlem during that era.

It serves as a powerful social commentary on the challenges and conflicts experienced within urban communities, offering a glimpse into the complexities of life in a marginalized society.

'Red Jackson fighting with gang member' , Gordon parks, 1948

35MM film scans

35MM Prints Review:

In this shoot I used a roll of 35mm, 400 iso, black and white film shot on a Pentax ME Super. This was one of my first times shooting and developing film so I took some simpler images to get the hang of the camera and using it manually. This made it a bit harder so I only had a few outcomes that I feel worked.

I like the Image on the left because it's a very nice example of an image that's taken by me very subtly and just with the simple intention of taking a photo of a robin before the opportunity is gone. I am happy this photo developed and came out successfully. The depth in this image is effective and the target focus (being the bird) is almost introduced in a way by the wall and the effect is has on how the image is translated and read. The way the light lies just off to the left travels and sits on the wall in the darker bottom right portion of the image persuades the viewer to follow it where the bird gets and is in focus. What I also enjoy about the image is its promiscuousness. the subtlety of the robin is recognized through the shape of its environment, how the natural light effects it and how the use of the cameras focus suggests the photographer's intention.

The image on the right is of a gated entrance within a stone wall. What I like about this image is how the light plays on the stairs and on the bars of the door. I think this image is widely open to interpretation and I think if I was a viewer of this image, I would feel a sense of the unknown and the unexplored. The wall being the known and what is in sight and behind the door being the unpredictable / unseen. I also think the fact we can see camera movement / use of a longer exposure in the image adds to the sense of surrealism and the dream like nature that blur or haze can translate in images.

Developing film and making prints

- **Darkroom or Light-Tight Space:** Ensure you have a light-proof environment to handle the film. Light exposure can ruin the undeveloped film, so work in total darkness or use a light-proof changing bag or room.
- **Equipment and Chemicals:** Gather all necessary supplies, including a developing tank, reels, developer solution, stop bath, fixer, thermometer, measuring cups, and a timer.
- **Follow Instructions or tips provided in dark room :** Adhere strictly to the manufacturer's instructions for both the film and chemicals being used. Deviations can result in poorly developed or damaged film.
- **Temperature Control:** Maintain the correct temperature for the chemicals and the developing process. Temperature fluctuations can affect the quality of the developed images.
- **Development Time:** Keep track of the development time precisely. Over or under-developing can impact the contrast and overall quality of the images. To make sure this isn't a problem I make a contact sheet with multiple timed exposures, so I know the correct amount of time to expose the photography paper enough to maximize my negatives potential.
- **Agitation Technique:** Agitate the developing tank regularly during the development process to ensure even and consistent results.
- **Stop Bath and Fixer Timing:** Use the stop bath and fixer for the recommended time to halt development and fix the image. I have personally come to realize this firsthand as I did this step incorrectly and gave small spots my film a rubbery texture that blurs the negative when it comes to scanning or enlarging. Proper timing is crucial to prevent over-processing or insufficient fixing.
- **Rinsing and Washing:** Thoroughly rinse the film after fixing to remove residual chemicals. Inadequate rinsing can cause staining or deterioration over time.
- **Drying Procedures:** Hang the film vertically in a dust-free environment to air dry. Avoid touching the surface of the film to prevent smudges or scratches.
- **Handling with Care:** Handle the film delicately throughout the process to avoid physical damage. Use clean tools and handle the film only by its edges such as the air blowing tool we have been shown. This item blows a small but powerful stream of air that removes any durst from a negatives surface allowing for a cleaner scan.
- **Quality Control:** Inspect the developed film for any irregularities, spots, or damage. Take notes on any issues encountered during the development process for future improvements as doing this has covered up a lot of confusing steps in the process or at least made me more confident in using the equipment and having a successful outcome.
- **Archival Storage:** Store the developed film properly to protect it from environmental factors such as light, moisture, and dust. Having a sleeve or pot / tub to put your negatives in works well for me.

I really enjoy shooting film especially black and white, but I am also curious to explore color film. Through my own experiences with developing negatives and utilizing them afterwards I have found more comfort in the whole process but did not present any film images for my brief submissions and tasks because I had not found that reliable ground of using film cameras and having enough comfort on faith in the images and outcome being what I had in mind. I did successfully print 1 35mm and 1 medium format reel which I have made prints for. I would also want to become more confident in using film and its development process for future projects as I see a lot of potential in making it work alongside my style of shooting.

mischievous image:

- In My last feedback session, I was told to try and introduce some color shots over just sticking to monochrome and I thought it would be a good idea to change up my preferred style of work and explore introducing color in ways I like.
- Out of the three shoots I enjoyed the mischievous image the most as it was a different style of shooting that involved repetition and setting up my image before taking it. Normally I take more spontaneous imagery but with this brief because I wasn't as technically equipped, I had to approach this topic with limited options, and I had already planned to approach it a certain way however I had issues with my computer and editing the photos to a certain standard and reliability. This initial problem led me to think of ways to solve the problem or change my idea and I ended up doing a completely different type of shooting than what I originally planned but it came out very effective and I enjoyed shooting in a new and exciting way that is more foreign to me. I was influenced by Sherrie Levine and her work on ancient and cultural masks. I wanted to combine this idea with my own workstyle and involvement, so I placed a WW2 gas mask around different locations and shot at it from different angles and angles of interpretation. It was nice focusing on just one object to manipulate in different ways and work back and forth between the environment, object and camera.
- I found this method of shooting fascinating as I was very conscious about the positioning, location and obviousness of the mask but it also has a sloppy and careless nature as it is being represented in the outdoors which gave it a nice even blend of casual shooting with studio elements when looking for angles and composition of how I use the mask in the natural environment.

For my work in "the mischievous image" I plan on doing a shoot that has been influenced by the styles of 2 artists. The first artist is Zoe Leonard and the work I am focusing on is "Gathering In Analogue" which documents objects and items. I saw this body of work and decided to take inspiration from the artist but for what I want to do differently rather than similarly. I think what works well in this project is the repetition of the every-day items and how seeing so many examples at once and intentionally almost feels like the objects are united and it has a less forceful and more expansive impact on the viewer. Here is an example of the work:

I think that In this work I would like to focus more so On the use of objects in imagery and how they Can represent certain ideologies or feelings. Zoe uses lots of examples of objects in the same Variety however I want to try using a single object as a focus point in my work.

The other artist I would like to reference and take inspiration from is **Takashi Kijima. Takashi's Work doesn't focus a lot on the landscape and use of free space however I want to use this Work as an influence. I would like to portray the objects in a natural and open environment, but I am also open to exploration.**

I would be glad in saying that I aim for my work to be an abstract view on the representations of the human condition and social implications represented through objects and the environment.

Contact Sheets:

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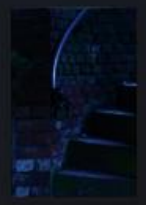
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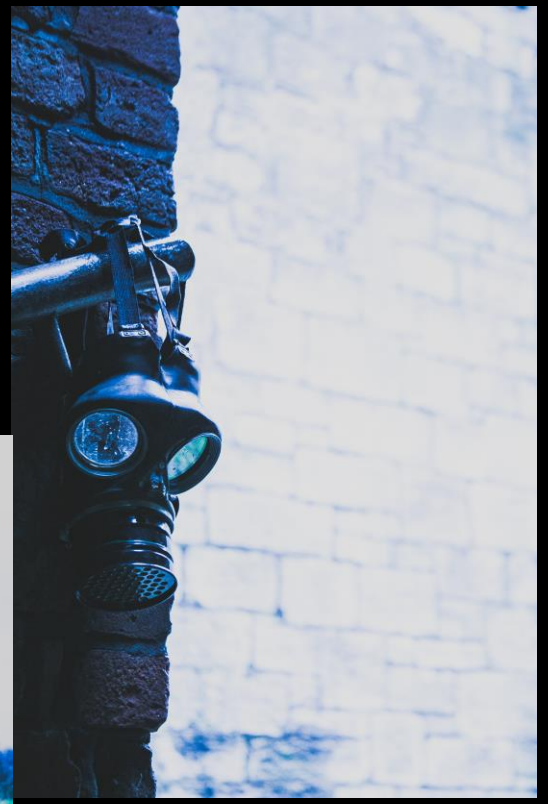
Mischievous image outcomes:



Mischievous Image Review:

I think in this project the stronger images or ones that carry / depict my intentions best are these ones. In my project and the brief being "the mischievous image" I wanted to capture isolation through objects in almost empty or random natural environments. I feel like viewers may translate the mask as somewhere a human face should be which suggests a person is in the images. I like this idea and concept however the work provides no context or explanation so the interpretation of the images could even resemble something more narrative driven such as the gas mask being a symbol or item of someone who may be taking off the mask at different spots and these are the shots of it each time its' not being worn. In a summary I have explored how the objects within imagery, which in this case is a gas mask, can be metaphorical.

In the Image above I think that it works very well due to the mask being in a nice position off to the top right and drooping down with the background being more baron. I think the use of cold tones works well in these images and I feel it replaces my need for making it black and white as it gives similar effects from the pale tones of color that we see.

I like the image to the left due to it being semi submerged in water. It reflects stronger senses of carelessness or being engulfed / surrounded by something.

The image to my right works well because of how motion is represented and still imagery, making the environment in the image look more of an engaging and dominant presence within the

The image above is a bit different from the others as we see it in front of a background that is not landscapes and nature. I think this gives off a more industrial vibe. I don't think this is a bad thing and I think it works very well because the light is split more even and symmetrically.

Daido Moriyama

Daido Moriyama is a Japanese photographer whose work I really like the visual aspects of... Moriyama's black and white prints are an exceptionally good example of a photographer who can shoot his surroundings and convey his interpretations of the society and culture around him.

I think that even though Moriyama's images are sometimes a bit difficult to translate and read upon initial inspection I think the culture and candid perspectives are interesting to view under such visual distortion. I feel like the images are a strong form of documentary photography all whilst having an artistic flair to accompany it. I personally put Moriyama in my top 5 photographers alongside Larry Clark who also shoots in a similar gritty way.

The image on the far right really sticks with me as the use of high contrast almost gives the image a posterized effect as we see the clarity and detail behind textures and exaggerative shadows.

gig photography:

Gig Photography Review:

In this shoot I think what worked out best for me was taking photos from angles where it was nicely lit of affected by the lights. I think this was important as I could have taken 10x more photos that were not very well lit and were overcast with shadow. I think gig photography is usually straight forward but the main thing I find hard more than anything is pushing past people to get a photo where the performer moves again so you have to be pushing around or walking in front of people just trying to enjoy the music.

I do like gig photography however as it is a good example of how different paths of art and creativity can collaborate and work conjunctively. It is also an instance of photography where you can be shooting in an environment that is quite pleasant and casual compared to other formal practices. I would be interested to try some more gig photography with film or perhaps in color.

Experimentation and technical studies:

Recently I purchased a polarizing filter with a filter mount. I had the idea of trying some long exposures in the day to try and capture movement. I looked at some works and how camera or subject sway / movement can affect image's in a positive way in photography. I decided to involve the landscape more and have the movement of subjects be less obvious.

I think this shoot helped me pick up on the technical elements of long exposures and after taking these images I started thinking of more instances where I could target movement to capture long exposures of. I think a plan I have a head of this is to shoot cars on roads at night so i can take a long exposure and se the trails from the cars that have moved and passed as the shot is taken.

I think that some of the photo's work while others are lacking in context and intention. I do think some of them are visually appealing however the use of long exposure isn't obvious in some photos however it was harder due to me focusing not just on a single object's movement but the landscape and environment also.

I think that the image on the left works really well in trying to show a cool, serious tone while the 2 dogs running away add a comical or contrast to the image.

The image on the right I think is under-exposed and cropped incorrectly. The original is landscape and the sense of scale in the image makes the ship seem lost or distinctly different from its outer counterparts.

My Exhibition ideas:

For my exhibition I am thinking of doing a documentary project about drug use in the UK and in Swansea. I will be taking inspiration from artists such as Larry Clark, Daido Moriyama and Warren Richardson. I want to look at documenting the people who use drugs, the evidence left behind of past use and places it is referenced. I want to look specifically at cannabis use in the UK and how its use is so prominent despite it being illegal. Cannabis is a very popular drug in the UK and despite it being illegal consumers of the drug go to great lengths just to be able to get a smoke. In my project I want to cover the diverse realities and aspects behind smoking and the experiences they have with it. I think it may seem random covering such a subject however I think it makes great documentary work, it has potential to create and sell a narrative and I think drugs are an important thing to be aware about in today's generation.

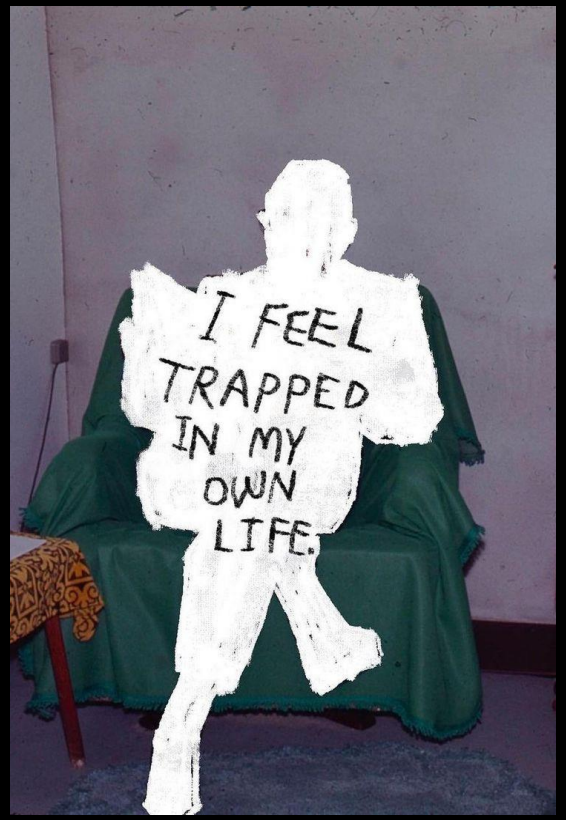
I think there is a lot of good and bad information about drugs on different platforms and a lot of positive and negative opinions about them. Essentially it is a topic that will never be settled for debate and people are always going to have their own say on things but documenting drug use from a candid and non-opinionated perspective can allow discussion for open interpretation and ideologies.

I think in this project I want to be able to explore the personalities who use cannabis and the reasons for doing so. At first, I thought about including text within my photography to incorporate a quote or slang. How I visualize this idea / body of work is to that of Geloy Concepcion's...In my shoot for the poetic image I mentioned about how some of my images have a lot of empty space, this could be useful when adding text to images and putting some information in that isn't there already.

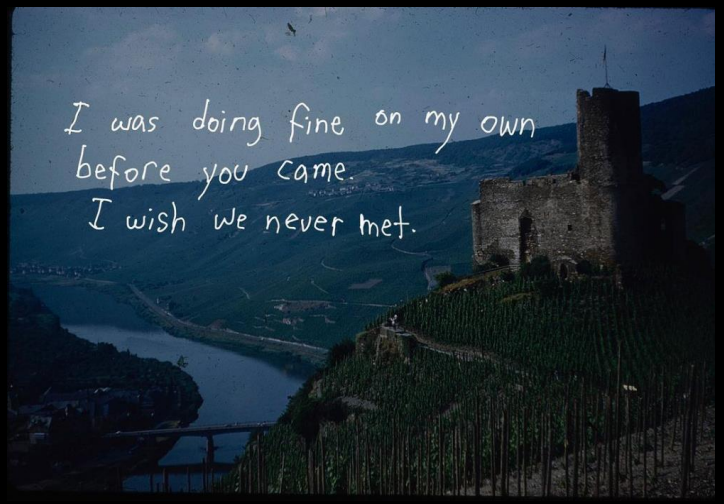
Geloy Concepcion - Artist Research:

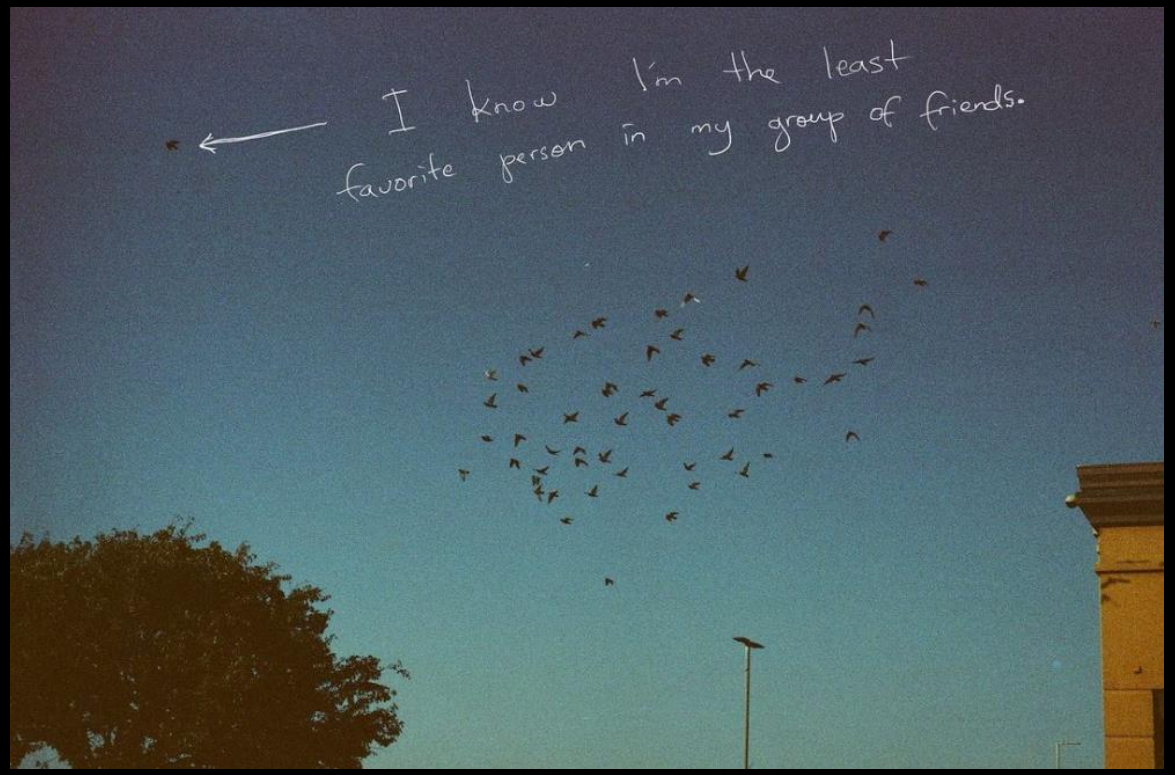
https://www.instagram.com/geloyconcepcion/?hl=en

The photographer / visual artist Geloy Concepcion is a photographer who combines forms of documentary portraiture and landscapes with text. The text included within his images is taken from his subjects and overlayed on top of the photograph. I am not sure if this process is done digitally or if it involves fine art and drawing. The messages within his art often reflect the things people have wanted to leave comments about their feelings and opinions on. These topics people choose to comment on all vary, and some are represented in a much more specific setting. What I mean by this is a portion of the context and intention behind images and quotes are obvious while others take a bit more reflection and critical thinking to comprehend. I like this as it creates space between the artist and the subjects and it's nice to view artwork. I feel like the project represents elements of escapism and the relationship between artist and subject creates a safe space for this kind of work to exist. I think what works well, regarding this method of work is how both the image and text can be diverse and unique. The use of text accompanies the image's very well in both the landscapes and portraits. I like the use of space in the landscapes as the space almost represents the relatability people may feel while the minimization of space in the portraits gives the effect of it feeling more direct and personal.



My favorite piece of work from this slide is the bottom right image of the birds. I think the artist works well at trying to encapsulate the meaning of the words before taking the image and it must be hard trying to represent peoples struggles or issues in an appealing and interesting documentary style manor.





Shoot 1:

This shoot was taken on 35mm Film and I have both created prints and scanned in the negatives for this.
As mentioned, I want to get more comfortable with shooting film and being confident in my outcomes. For this shoot I took some photos of someone called Oskar who is from Pensylvania. In my project I want to explore and study the reasoning behind people's drug use and what backgrounds people come from that may influence that. For example Oskar comes from a place where cannabis is legal and he smoked it daily at home. Now he is studying in Swansea, a place where it is illegal to possess, purchase and consume cannabis. He has already picked up this routine / habit of using cannabis throughout the day. This means his perception of drug use is different from others and because his environment was different he also had to change and fit into the demographic of generalised criminals who are UK cannabis users.

Chantz

Shoot 2:

A series of smoking...

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