

Visual enquiry 2

Saskia Bartlett

2112177

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Research around the photobook

History of the photobook

To understand the origins of the photobook, there needs to be an insight into how photography was viewed previously. In the early nineteenth century the first accessible prints of photographs were on glass and metal plates. One of the popular forms was the 'Daguerreotypes' a method of fixing a photograph onto a copperplate through a silver coating. Edwards (2020) summarises the process as more reliable than the earlier paper prints, which would fade due to light exposure, and while metal plates would tarnish over time with exposure to air, their life span could outlast with proper storage. This summary establishes how Daguerreotypes were an improvement from format of unfixed prints though advancements in chemical usage. However, while this format propelled photography viewing it remained a cumbersome and expensive process.

During this time Sir John F.W Herschel had developed a process known as cyanotype. Originally, he intended it to be used as a way of creating blueprints, through etching on glass and then laying it on top of this chemically constructed paper. The chemicals at the time were hyposulphite of soda and Herschel himself turned the process from blueprint record to photographs (MacGee, 2021). This outlines how the development of chemicals shifted very quickly from being a scientific usage to being something that could fix and show an object such as photographs. The cyanotype method was an innovative way of printing photography that was not bulky, time consuming and overall supported longevity in record.

The first photobook was formed in 1843 called *Photographs of British Algae* by Anna Atkins, using cyanotype. The cyanotype process was the first photographic technology that Atkins could properly represent botany and was formed into a book as an educational source, not as an artform. Fig.1 depicts the bacteria *Lyngbya Majuscula* printed on the cyanotype paper and just below is a written inscription of the name. The example shows the simplistic format Atkins curated to provide the first non-drawn representations of botany. Atkins turning this print process into a book format revolutionised the way photographs were perceived, as several prints could be combined in one location and became more accessible. In summary, this is essential information about how photo books were initially curated, more as a need to highlighting the need of an accurate recount of the world in a condensed manner.



Figure 1 *Lyngbya Majuscula*, Met Museum, 2024

In the early 20th century photo books became a documentation tool to present a collection of photographs under a topic to project the meaning further. An example of this is the photobook *Paris* by Moi-Ver published in 1931 which was a reportage on the life of Jewish individuals within Eastern Europe (Twicemodern, 2013). This body of work has become an essential photographic archive of how Jews lived in Germany pre-World War 2. The era that this book was published was on the cusp of the war and throughout narrates how Jews were living through brewing tension in Germany. Fig 2 shows an exemplary page from the book. Both pages have singular photographs, that are of streets in Germany and then a figure layered over in double exposure. The photographic technique speaks volumes to how Jews were represented during this time. They were considered as a problem and Moi-Ver photobook documented visually the level of hate to them. Overall, this demonstrates how photo books became a significant way of joining photographs beyond prints into a narrative format without words to have open communication on the topic at hand.



Figure 2 Paris Moir Ver, Made in wonder, 2016

Parallel in time, there was a significant introduction of the photo book being used more as an art form rather than just documentation process as seen in Walker Evans book *American Photographs*. This book comprises of portraits of people as well as urban/rural landscapes with its aim to narrate American life from the perspective of location and population. Mahoney (2013) reflects how the original book had careful consideration to the book cover, paper used within and sequences of the photographs to curate a photobook beyond the particle object. Evans's photo book was revolutionary into showing how photo books were not just a way to share a mere collection of photographs but a way to embody and enhance the viewing experience. Furthermore, this photobook demonstrated that there was more than just the practical



Figure 3 Evidence, Campany, 2022

displaying of photographs; the construction could also be used to carry forward the books topic enhancing interpretation and viewing experience.

Both the photobooks published in the thirties were significantly contrasting, one arguing it as a documentation form while the other argued it could be an artform. However still by the late 20th

century there was emphasis on photobooks being used for the purposes of truth and accurate depiction. Publication *Evidence* by Sultan and Mandel (fig.3) in 1977, highlighted the way photography was used as a truth cannon. The body of work consisted of archival evidence style photographs from a range of departments such as NASA, Stanford research institution and the US Navy. The foundation of the project was set on the idea that there is no linear form of photography that it cannot be rigidly labelled as an evidential form (Witt, 2017). This quote supports the idea that *Evidence* became a revolutionary project into opening minds that photo books did not just have to be a documentation form but that it could also be used within an art medium. In essence this publication while using evidential photographs explored the idea that it was more about the context that the book sat in that determined whether it was an art or documentation book. If the authors had stated that their book was solely intentional to provide an archival collection of evidential photographs, then this would be classed as a documentation photo book. However, given the context in which they utilise such photographs, it is possible to claim that it is a fictional art piece. In summary it highlights that context in modern photo books is essential as it has shifted into being more of a fluid art or documentation display tool.

In 2013 Bromberg and Chanarin published their photobook called *Holy Bible* which they conducted two editions of. Fig 4 highlights how archival documentary photographs, where laid on top of pages from a King James bible. The placements of the photographs linked to what each page in the bible discussed. It was supposed to be a documentation on the idea that God shows himself predominantly through catastrophe (O'Hagan, 2013). This quotation shows how Bromberg and Chanarin concentrated on the ideology of pain and hatred within Christianity claiming



Figure 4 *Holy Bible*, Mack books, 2013

that God was only present in the moment of suffering rather than in all moments. While this may be the intended theme behind the photo book, it might be argued that it represents how documentary photo books sometimes focus on pain and suffering to capture attention. In short, this photo book is significant to the history because it demonstrates how the meaning of a photo book could be interpreted differently by people from a range of cultural, religious, and social backgrounds. Therefore, *Holy Bible* highlights how the photo book is now essential in telling narratives which may be lost if the imagery were displayed in singular print form.

Another contemporary photographer Todd Hido works within the medium of displaying photographs in books. Hido was asked to elaborate on the role of photo books within his practise

to which he responded that it was a whole world to showing photographs, allowing for a more personal, quiet insight relationship to the photographers intentional meaning (Hotshoe, 2023). In this Hido, describes that photo books can become essential in the digital era, as hundreds and thousands of photographs are produced each day, and a photo book allows for a photographer to sit down the viewer to focus on the imagery before them and the meaning behind them. This explains how photobooks could become more as a passage of intentional viewing rather than a few second glance without much thought to the body of work.

To conclude the afore research has proven that photo books have grown, evolved, and shaped to the time in which they were released in. The research established that the form of a photobook was created as an essential tool to viewing photography, and that without it photographs were cumbersome and difficult to view. Additionally, the research established that the photobooks could become part of the debate of art versus documentation tool, but it outlined that if the context was established then there was no concern over such a dispute. Lastly it examined how photobooks could be taken into contemporary society and has outlined that even in the digital era it is going to remain as an essential communication tool on narratives, and a sacred way of engaging a more intentional consumption of photography.

Construction of a photobook

When designing a photo book there are several considerations need to happen before the final product can emerge. One of the first principles that need to be considered is whether an individual goes down the route of self-publishing or using a publisher. The benefits of self-publishing a photo book include total control over the project, guarantee that the book will be published, and all costs profits will remain with the photographer (Gallard.P, 2022). Gallard's article emphasises that self-publishing is a great tool for a photographer who would there work in a printed form at a significantly lower cost to a publishing company. A fundamental aspect highted is that publishing companies have a limited amount of publishing spaces within photography books, which poses a risk to a photographer endeavouring on the journey of photo book creation. In essence self-publishing reduces risks by guaranteeing that the book is realised at a more affordable cost to the photographer.

However, there are advantages to the using a publishing company, that could ensure the process runs smoother and has guaranteed sales at the end. Colberg. J (2017, pp 25-31) reflects that self-publishing allows for the photographer to have more control over the entire process. However, he argues that to distribute a large quantity of photo books to a high standard that the photographer may find it to be extremely time consuming and demanding process. He argues that a publisher acts as a second person in supporting the photographer to getting their book into reality and they can help with distribution, advertisement, sequencing, materials, and many other core components to a photobook. Here he is suggesting is that a publisher can help distribute responsibilities from the photographer, ensuring that the photo book is made to a high

standard with as little stress involved. In summary publishing companies can ensure that there are sales of the book and that is made to a standard that a consumer would want to purchase a lower stress level.

The theme, narrative, or context of a photo book it is essential in grabbing a spectator. Some photographers will shoot their photographs with the intention that they will end up producing a photo book. Other photographers may review their photographs after several years to see what reoccurring themes or messages emerge and how those motifs can be formed into a book. A purposed way of creating a photobook without the photographs already taken is the use of a storyboard (Scott. V 2023). She reflects that a photobook, like photography, has numerous creative avenues, and that deciding certain pre-established goals helps keep the project on course. Therefore, she argues that having the photographs curated or not is superfluous notion, but the crucial factor is having a well thought through direction before creating the book, which ensures its publication.

When the photographer gets to the selection process there needs to be thought given to how all the photographs link together under multiple variables. Brant. A (2021, pp 4-5) states selecting photograph cannot be merely about the visual aesthetics but there needs to be a linking factor; such as time, a story, or the role that each photograph has to the overarching concept. In this he is stating that photographs cannot just be placed into a photo book because they have a common ground within the photography sector, that they need to have a link deeper than surface visual. For example, a photobook that only displays trees are not just that, that they wither are linked by a story line, time frame or geographical location. Brant is arguing that for a successful photobook there needs to be more than just the photographs to captivate a spectator into viewing it.

Once the overarching theme has been established in a photo book the photographer will need to consider if the book is going to include text or just have the photographs. Text could be as simple as including camera settings, and any equipment that went into the photographs construction. More complex text may come from the photographer explaining what each photograph was about, or an introduction to the section that the photographs would be situated in. Bassetti. J (2022) wrote 'one of the primary tasks in creating a creating a "photobook with words" is thinking about how words interact with images and how images interact with words'. Here he is establishing that photographers who want words in their photo books must define the communication that the images to the text, including how they both link back to the concept of the photo book. This is a reminder that a photobook with words is no less than one without words it is more about how the text could support the photographs in addressing the message being delivered in a photobook.

Similar decision-making comes around how the photographs are placed within a photo book such as positioning, and framing. In Momento's (2022) guide on designing a photobook it discusses how a photographer needs to make decisions about the sizing and symmetry the book

may need. They argued that as the photographs are the key component they need to be large and clear as well as respecting any other parameters that the photographer wishes to have. They also reflect that some photographers would like to have full bleed photographs where the imagery is taking up to the boundary of the book, while others want to frame their work in what is called white spacing. This spacing refers to having a border around the photograph which can enhance image the viewers' attention to the photograph as there is a clear boundary that the eyes can focus within allowing more attention to detail. This publication has helped to identify that the way the photograph is placed is fundamental in ensuring the message is provided clearly delivered in a photobook, as well as keeping aesthetically pleasing photographs situated in a book.

The research from the last two paragraphs has highlighted how the photographer needs to consider the way book is constructed. The first stage of this consideration is establishing the style of book, such as hardback, lay flat, paperback, accordion, zines and many more. The next stage is considering the size like A5, A6, B6, Square, landscape etc. In addition to awareness to paper weight and material is fundamental in the delivery of the book, which is dependent how the photograph looks on each of these types. Lastly there needs to be consideration on how the binding impacts the way the photobook comes together and is viewed. Hand binding techniques include Coptic stitching, French link, Japanese stab binding, to name some. A note may be added here that publishing companies have a range of techniques such as wire binding, saddle stitch, perfect binding, section sewn binding and stapling to construct books. Thus, establishing that while the photographer is making decisions about the photographs within the book, they need to establish the housing of the photographs and the way the book constructed and how that also links back thematically.

To draw an overall conclusion on this subsection creating a photo book is not just about the photographs. To create an effective, viewable book there needs to be lots of considerations at each stage. Every decision almost needs to be tied back to what the photographer is achieving and therefore the fundamental element is having a clear context, theme, or narrative to base the photo book back to. Without this the photo book cannot progress because the photographer cannot assess each decision against something. Ultimately the photobook is a creative endeavour of its own, and a site for photographs to be shared.

Impact on the project

The research conducted in this section has been fundamental in setting the foundation of the project and educated me on what I need to consider when making my photobook. Originally the photo book was established as a necessity to documenting and recording in a less cumbersome manner. In the history subsection it established that a photobook originated from Anna Atkins taking the chemical advancements and applying them in the book format to create a literal documentation of botany. This was essential for me finding out, as I have learnt that

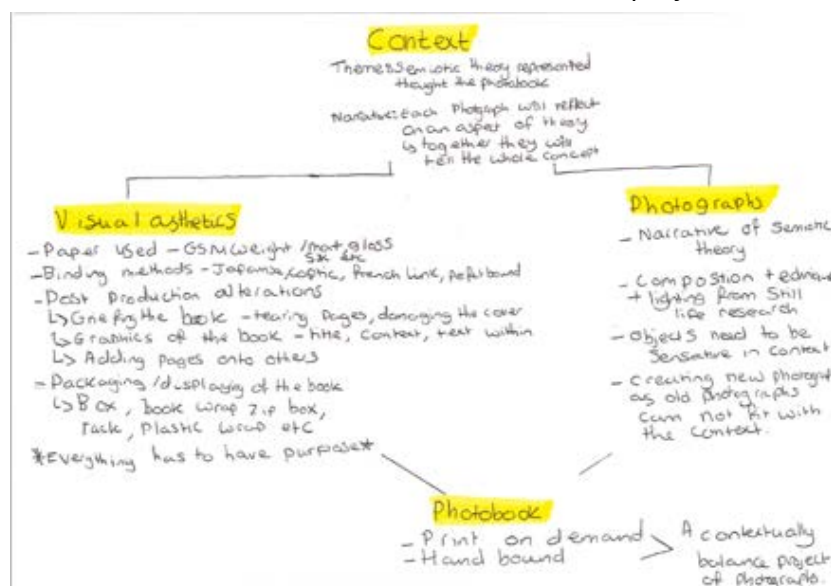
photo books were a way to enhance photography into a communitive element, and offered a revolutionary development in accurately recording the world as it was in a moment in time. I would like to apply this knowledge to my project by ensuring that my photo book really communicates to the spectator, rather than just being a carrier of photography, as this can be a way to respect the history of photobooks.

Additionally, it was outlined how in the 1930's photobooks began to explore the notion of being used as an art tool, as seen in Walker Evans book *American Photographs*. In this photobook there was consideration to how the paper, binding, photographing sequence and graphics all worked to deliver the context of the photobook. This offers how photobooks can be used both as a tool to document and communicate photography, but how it too can be a beautiful object. As an art based photographer, I try to create still life photographs that communicates a message but that also visually attracts the spectator to view it. This part in the research established that photobooks whilst being a practical entity could also be an art tool. Therefore, I would like to value and reflect in my project how in history considerations to materials and sequencing of the photographs transforms the photobook from a documentation method to a narrative filled art entity.

Investing the construction of the photobook, set realistic boundaries on what I could do for my own photobook. Brant. A (2021) is a huge influence on the direction of my project as he outlines how the context of the photobook is key and that every decision from photograph to binding needs to link very strongly back for a successfully photobook. Extending this point further Scott. V (2023) established that while the photographs are the key element of such book, it did not matter if photographer looked back on their projects and selected the photographs or if they created them specific for the photobook, but what mattered was that really conveyed the context. In both cases they highlight how the foundation of the photobook steams from having a clear direction which adds boundaries to the project as it could be a creatively overwhelming

process to which the photobook could lack clarity.

From the subsection on construction of the photobook, I created a direction map for my project respecting the principles outlined in that research, as seen on the left. In summation this will ensure my project has a satisfactory outcome that respects both the history and basic principles of photobook construction.



General photobook research

Silence- Alex Wesche



Figure 5 Silence (front cover), Wesche, 2023

Fig.5 is the front cover of the book, which was made with 1mm book board, with black paper wrapped around it and an area in the centre cut out to place the title image in (Wesche, 2023). The thick book board works as a protective shell for the pages within the book, but it's also providing those pages with something strong to rest on while the book is opened, allowing it to sit flat. The title being cut in add depth to the front cover, which draws the spectator in to view it more intricately.

The internal pages are constructed with Fotospeed Matt 240gsm paper, with the pages folded into sections with a hinge, which those were glued together (Wesche, 2023). This is vital information on how one could approach making a layflat book. Fig 6 shows an example page of the placement of photographs within the book. All pages had the photographs placed with white spacing, but some had two to a spread (Fig.6) or one photograph .

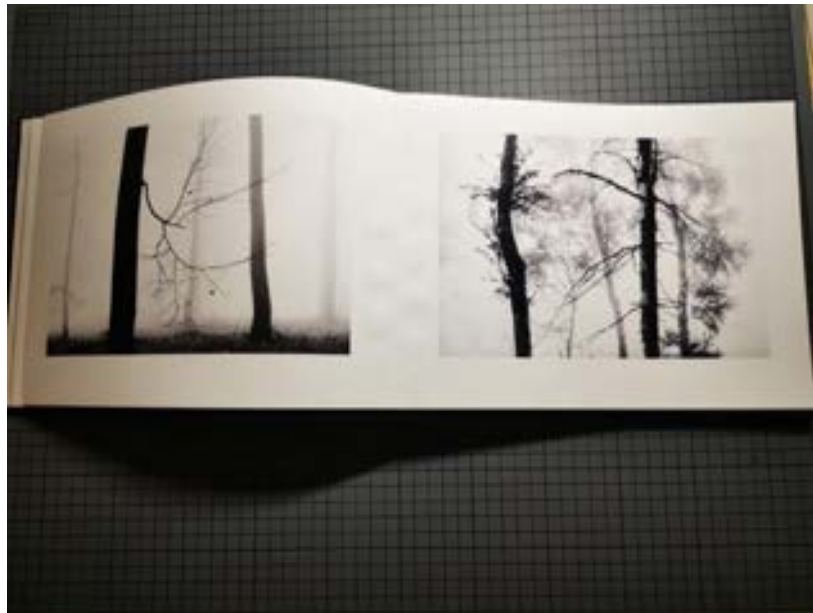


Figure 6 Silence (inside page example), Wesche, 2023

This photo book is essential in showing how one may approach creating a lay flat book. Wesche sharing the gsm of the paper is a reminder that when using liquid glue to bind, the paper will need to be thick enough to absorb it and avoid warping. Warping is detrimental to a layflat book because the tension prevents the pages resting level. *Silence* also emphasises how, if the photographs are uncomplicated in nature the placement on the page and binding methods should be kept to a minimum to bring attention to the photographs.

Dazwischen- Stefan Gunnesch



*Figure 7 Dazwischen Stefan Gunnesch (packaging),
Halle Art University (2017)*



*Figure 8 Dazwischen Stefan Gunnesch (page example),
Halle Art University (2017)*



*Figure 9 Dazwischen Stefan Gunnesch (construction),
Halle Art University (2017)*

Dazwischen is a German photo book that explores the fragility of memory specifically on the forgotten elements of one's past life (Halle Art university 2017). The title translated to English means between. The construction of the book reflects this contextual information, since examining the book requires deconstruction akin to how one might view memories by looking between the vivid recollections to locate the more faded memories.

Fig.7 shows how the booklets are encased in a two part slip case, with one half providing the information of the project. In Fig.8 it shows how the booklets are constructed with different papers such as tracing and standard paper it also illustrates how the pages are printed using the same monochrome colour palette unfolded at various lengths. The project consists of 6 booklets that can be viewed as an entity of their own or as seen in fig. 9 they can all be stacked together, and in this viewing style it forms the title of the project (Striftungsbuchkunst, 2023). These figures together show the construction of the book and many viewing methods that could be undertaken.

Gunnesch's photobook influences my project by demonstrating that a photo book does not have to be one continuous body. In fact, a photo book could be numerous booklet or deconstructed components that when

combined does form a book. The use of different folding methods and paper types speaks a poetical message to his work but provides insight on how paper choices and folding methods are important in the books construction. Therefore, the focus of a photo book is on the context rather than construction and when I make my photo book, I need to ensure that every decision I make relates thematically to ensure its success.

Donkey Man and other stories- Jurgen Teller



Figure 10 Donkey man and other stories, moom, 2022

Teller's photo book is a collection of all his photographs from his time as a fashion photographer (Fig.10). Even though his book focuses on a collection of photographs, it still has that linking factor that a successful photobook needs to engage a spectator. Sidhu (2021) wrote 'Each series of photographs has a little story attached to it...', which reflects that each photo

specific moment in Teller's career. However, it also highlights how when looked like a whole entity all the shoots and photographs linked together to the overall umbrella context which is of his career. This establishes that photobooks don't need to be specifically about a narrative or a theme but that can be a way to reflect on the process and journey a photographer has gone throughout their career.

This photo book is a reminder that there does not need to be a fresh new complex narrative, or context for a successful photo book. In the first section of this visual diary, I write how Brant. A (2021) states that for a successful photo book there needs to be a solid link between all the photographs and the way , to which Teller's book applies this ideology in a new way by having the linking factor being of his career. As an outcome I may find success in looking back over my previous photo shoots and identifying reoccurring themes rather than developing a fresh new idea for a photo book.

Cosmic surgery- Alma Haser



Figure 11 Cosmic Surgery (additional materials), Haser, 2016

Cosmic surgery was originally hand constructed by Haser herself, but the second edition was printed by a by the publishing company Stanley James who specialise in curating art involved photobook. This shows how to create a body of work that's contextually speaks the photographer needs to have a high level of time that they need to put to it or to outsource for help in production.

The photobook sat within a larger box with a smaller one resting inside that contained a cassette, pill bottle, tea bag and the tissue (fig.11) . These were intentionally created as a medical recovery kit for post viewing, as a representation of how after going through surgery one is given a kit of to support their recovery. Fig.12 shows an example page of the photobook where the paper has been cut into ridges so when laid flat it pops up to obscure the face. The use of a pop-up approach to disfigure a face is seen throughout the books



Figure 12 Cosmic surgery (example page), 2016

photographs. This relates to the photo books concept of how individuals have just become these entities within photography and wanting to establish that there is more to portraiture photography than what is currently displayed. The level of dehumanisation of individuals in photography and photo books causes damage to the human collective self- image. This led to the concept of cosmic surgery, in which humans must perform surgery on the way they are represented in such forms to repair the broken image that is visible in contemporary society.

I selected cosmic surgery predominantly as it used an independent publisher to produce a second edition. This demonstrates how artistic and creative photo books do not have to be created just by individuals that a firm too can invest and support production. Additionally, I cosmic surgery because it reminds me that the way a photo book is packaged and presented is just as important as the photographs themselves. In some respects, the packaging could be more crucial as it is what the spectator will see first, therefore it must be eye-catching and engaging enough to encourage the individual to continue exploring the photo book.

Melancholy objects- Lenard Smith

Please note that none of the photographs in this part will have a figure to it, because this is my own copy of the book.

Melancholy objects is a photo book that combines sculpture and still life photography to create an intricate narrative that questions humans relationships with objects. Smith's photo book set out to draw on historical, contemporary, and personal situations to create a body of work that highlights the strangeness and importance that objects have within life Perimeter (2024). Thus, providing context for his photo book which aimed to demonstrate how everyday items become unusual when examined closely. This is like how creators are urged to produce bodies of work with significant meaning and cannot just simply create work for aesthetics, akin to the objects in his book cannot just be objects.



The photograph on the upper left is the front cover of the book, and the photograph on the upper right is the back cover of the book. An interesting feature about this photo book is that the title and the photographer's name is printed on the back leaving a sense of ambiguity on the front which immediately forces the spectator to pick up the book to find out what the book title is.

Another feature that juxtaposes the traditional way of doing photo books is having a wraparound cover on a paperback book. The wrap around paper also mimics the paperweight and texture that is used within the pages of the book which is almost like a newsprint quality.



Throughout the book the photograph is often laid on the right hand side page with a number on the left hand lower corner. However, two photographs in the book allayed as a double spread as seen in the upper left photograph. This creates a sudden jilting to the ordinary pattern and engages the spectator too think about why this has been done.

Thematically *Melancholy Objects* link to my project closely. The project achieves to employ minimalistic still life photography, to question reality, and my project set out to focus on deconstruction of reality through still life. I find it interesting to see how Smith created clinically clean photographs that we're not just on white backgrounds and how the coloured backgrounds did not prohibit the objects message. Additionally, the small details such as having only even numbers on the left hand side of the page, and the title on the back of the book causes immediate intrigue and interest before the viewer has investigated the photographs. Therefore, when I create my photobook, I must remember that the small changes have a big impact on the spectators engagements and that sometimes a grand obvious change may overpower the work.

Section evaluation

This section has been incredibly beneficial to understanding the types of photo books that other photographers have created. It highlights how there are no boundaries when making a photo book, but it also shows some very key principles that a photographer can stand by to create a successful book. Through visual research I have discovered that photo books can be a creative avenue, which contrasts my previous assumption that they were exclusively coffee table style books.

From all the examples I have established that each book uses small subtle changes that really emphasise the context that the book sits within. Similarly, they all ensure that everything that occurs externally from the photographs enhances and benefits them rather than strongly juxtaposes against them in a negative manner. Along these lines, the placement of the photographs is determined by either the image narration or the overall narrative. In essence if a photograph is about a quiet subject the image may be better being large and full bleed to really focus the eyes, whereas a busy image might be better sat within a boarder, to allow the eyes to adjust. When I create my photo book, I can see that I need to ensure that I am careful about the decisions I make and ensure that the way I have constructed my photo book speaks back to the theme, context, or narrative. Furthermore, when I create my book, I need to be careful about the photographs used and how they linked to each other, and how they are placed rather than placing them arbitrarily.

Some examples have established that paper weights and materials are key when constructing the book, as they too can speak back to the context that the book is trying to display. Moreover, the way the book is packaged and displayed is fundamental as this is what initially draws a spectator into wanting to look at a photobook. Therefore, I need to ensure that I create a book that stimulates intrigue without being too overbearing to ensure that my photographs can be seen. It may also be worth noting here that if I do decide to include text, I really need to ensure that it links to the photographs and enhances them otherwise it could be distracting and take away from the narrative. In conclusion this section has established that it's a photo book can be a powerful vessel in carrying photographs on any given theme, topic, or context.

Research connected to photography style and subject matter

Semiotics

For an individual to look and understand a photograph they need to breakdown the components, introducing the idea of semiotics. This is the concept that individuals internalise signs and symbols associated to their environment, and when viewing a photograph they are producing their own meaning. Saussure (2013, pp.13-20) discuss that when one visually looks at something the thoughts and feelings that are invoked are not arbitrary but are caused by signs and symbols from within society. He is arguing that humans are systematic and that they constantly regurgitate meaning from previously learnt information rather than an original idea. This relates to photography as it suggests that when individuals view a photograph, they are not eliciting arbitrary emotions but carefully pre-programmed responses from signs and signals within that culture they grew up in.

This notion of semiotics is extended in photography by the notion that a photograph is more than an aesthetically pleasing entity but rather can communicate to an individual beyond words. Barthes (1991, p.109) stated 'a photograph will be a kind of speech for us in the same way as a newspaper article'. This theory implies that photography is a language that we can all communicate since there are common signs and symbols that deliver a message. Overall, arguing that semiotics is important because an individual is using preconceived signs/symbols to have a conversation between the photographer and themselves on the photographic subject in the similar way an author and reader communicate.

Based on semiotics there could be an argument stating that signs and symbols go deeper than the conscious level. As an outcome, when individuals are viewing a photograph, they are drawing on information from the subconscious and unconscious making viewing photography beyond surface ideologies. Psychology acknowledges that photographs have the capacity to access the unconscious instinctual lobe within the brain, allowing individual to utilise the most important thoughts and experiences to interpretate and comprehend them (Morella, 2023). Her article establishes that a photograph well-constructed evokes an individual to utilise the conscious, subconscious, and unconscious aspects of the brain system to procure a meaning. This argument reinforces the concept that the photograph carries a conversation, and that what the photographer may have initially intended the image to mean may differ due to the spectators perception because of deep-rooted experiences.

To sum up semiotics has an important role in how individuals interact with photography, even if it is happening on a subconscious level. The research has established that photography is a communication tool between the spectator and the photographer. As a result, the photographer will curate a photograph that has a meaning to it, but due to the spectators own cultural, religious, and social influences that will cause them to see the photograph differently. Thus, establishing that photography is a conversation where something is addressed and through

the course of viewing other things are addressed, akin to the flow of a spoken conversation occurs. In essence photography causes a chain reaction of responses from the signs and symbols placed within a photograph.

Still life photography

To create a narrative filled still life photograph the objects should not be place and then photographed; instead, considerations to the composition, colour, and exposure should be employed. Still life photographs are created either in a staged or natural manner. Jacoby. J (2023) summarises that a created still life is where the photographer creates the scene, whereas a natural still life photograph is the scene photographed as it was found. His summation provides key information on the avenues that a photographer could take when making a still life photograph. In staged still life photography the photographer has complete control over everything from composition to objects to lighting, whereas natural still life photographs the photographer has less control. In essence the photographer needs to establish whether they can find a natural scene that tells the narrative or are wanting to lead the narrative of the photograph to produce the photograph.

Regardless of the direction that the photographs are produced in, it is argued that they must capture the spectator's attention and instruct them where to look. Taylor. K (2023) reflects that the goal of a photograph is to leave an impact on the viewer, and if the photograph lacks direction, then there is no message to take from it. This demonstrates that composition is an important element to consider while photographing still life. As a result, compositional theory becomes a crucial component for still life photography. The theory breaks down how the scene of a photograph should be set, such as the use of rules of third where everything is split into three, or the rule of odd where there are odd number of objects (Shrestha. S, n.d) . Compositional theory is more complex however this provides enough information to establish that small changes in construction can draw the eyes on a focal point. Overall composition is essential to ensuring viewer attention and allowing for aesthetically yet meaningful photograph to be manufactured.

While composition is important, there needs to be consideration to the scene that the photograph is situated within, if it is too busy it might take away from the photograph or if it is too simplistic it might not frame the photograph well. Hawkins.L (2016) explains how the background should be kept simple with natural colours, plain settings, and if it is more complex than it needs to reflect to the photographs subject. She is emphasising that the backdrop may rapidly become a focal point, or a distraction and that the photographer must pay close attention to the decision to guarantee that the items stay the subject matter. While plain colours and simplistic settings are key, there needs to be an extended focus on the finishing of the setting, such as ironed fabric to ensure its smooth and no obvious scuffs on plain surface. Thus,

establishing that the background can easily affect the photograph negatively and consideration in construction need to be focused to prevent it doing so.

Finally, will still life photography, the lighting inside a photograph influences how it is viewed and any meaning that may be derived from it. Lighting is created in two ways either natural lighting from something like a window, or an artificial light such as a studio light.

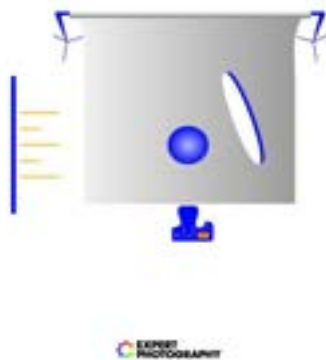


Figure 13 Classic food set, Minoia. A (2024)

Figure 14 shows how a studio light is used diagonally left pointing towards the scene and a reflector is on the right hand side bouncing that light back. His lighting idea in this is to use a controlled source to curate harsh lines and tones in the photograph. This style of lighting is great if the object has a lot of details that need to be shown, or if the photographer wants to create a dramatic photograph.

His demonstration of lighting versus the setup is crucial for understanding how lighting impacts a photograph particularly within still life photography. In this investigation. In summery the lighting in a photograph and character to an inanimate object. This allows for a more fluid portrayal of the message to the audience member resulting in an engaging and relevant photograph.

To draw conclusion still life at photography is not just about photographing inanimate objects, but that to create a photograph that captivities the audience there are key principles that can be applied. The major factor When creating is still life photograph is the composition that's the objects it's within as this is what initially draws the viewer to looking at the photograph. Secondary to this is the lighting as this is what portrays the emotion and message clearly to the audience member. Lastly basic considerations of the scene being naturally or staged constructed impact how the afore entitles will be applied to the photoshoot.

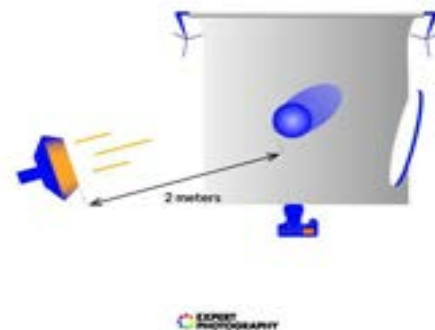


Figure 14 Complex still life scene, Minoia, (2024)

Links to the project

The research into the semiotic theory of understanding photography is critical to my project, as it the main focal point of the work. The research into semiotics establishes that for an individual to draw meaning from a photograph they need to deconstruct it. Therefore, I would like my photographs to have objects that are not quite whole, perfect, or joined together in a way they are not supposed to, to create a tangible breakdown of reality. Along the notion of deconstructing reality, I would like the photo book to specifically resemble this level of not quite within the construction to provide a textural experience to really enhance the message to the spectator.

In the research it was also established that to understand a photograph an individual had to use signs and symbols steaming from their religious, cultural, and social backgrounds to understand. Therefore, the object that I use for my photographs will need to consider the connotations that certain objects evoke. This is to ensure that I am curating a body of work that is sensitive and respectful, but still carries strong meanings that can be easily eye catching to get people reflecting on the work. Moreover, it was established that photography is a communication tool, to which I am leaving the narrative of the work open but keeping to a theme. This respects the basic principle that a photobook should have all elements link together but also allows to represent the conversational element that semiotic theory has.

The impact of the still life photography research on my project is as below:

Research	My project
Staged or natural still life photography	Will be using staged as I believe I will not be able to find enough natural still life photographs to fit to the theme.
Composition	1. Grouping- all objects in the centre of the frame 2. Rule of thirds- objects placed in each horizontal third of the photograph 3. Leading lines- using an object to draw the eyes onto another
Background/scene	Clinically clean white background, to allow for the eyes to focus solely on the objects.
Lighting	Using artificial lights such as soft box or LED for complete control over the lights. Most like a light on either side for balance.

My project

Rational

Through the medium of still life photography, the project aims to create a photobook that has an embodied viewing experience to the theme of semiotics. Furthermore, it will seek to engage the spectator to become an active participant rather than a passive viewer.

Aims

- Develop a photo book that respects the historical intentions of the medium
- Create a photobook that values the traditional principles of photobook construction
- Produce a book that visually and tactilely explores the theme of semiotics
- Utilising the basic principles of still life photography to create engaging and interactive photographs

Influential photographer- Jaap Vliegenthart

Matter less matter through the medium of still life photography, is a project that explores human interaction with objects. The project's aim was to highlight how attached individuals can become to inanimate objects never letting them go, but they sit collecting dust. Vliegenthart (2020) reflected that he wanted to get to the core of the objects, to understand the power they hold on individuals by stripping them back to their components and see if they could morph in a new manner through photography in their broken form. This demonstrates how he has a desire to understand the objects that people hold onto and exposes the fragility of those entities, with emphases of the emotional human behaviour around them. Therefore, this project seeks to understand how humans created these objects that hold such power over their emotions.



Figure 15 Olympia SM5 Typewriter 1962,
Vliegenthart, 2020

Fig 15 is of the smashed typewriter from the series of photographs. It is a top down photograph with a main light on the right of the frame and a secondary light or reflector to the left, creating depth to the photograph. The main damage impact is focused on the paper feeder at the very top of the typewriter and on the key compartment in the centre. Lastly fragments of the typewriter has been splayed out from around the main body, adding context of the breaking. Each photograph was constructed similarly; the smashed object photographed top down, with side lighting and particles fanning out.

Matter less matter is classed as vintage with the dates of older technological objects represents the human

invention timeline, speaking to the concept that individuals hold onto these entities for many years, often beyond their abilities to function. Vilegenthart expresses that he was intentional about every action he undertook by stating 'the lighting I used shows the depth of the objects and gives a dynamic feel...' Cade. D (2021). This expresses that while he was destructing the objects to understand them, he wanted to explore how they could exist post destruction, to which providing a light source that would give them depth establishes how they keep on living beyond the human touch. In summery Vilegenthart used still life photography principles to explore the impact humans have through there invention, interaction, and destruction, and explored how things will go on excising way after an individual's mark.

I am fascinated by how uncomfortable these photographs initially me feel at first glance, which draws me to pay closer attention. However, the more I look at them the more I find a sense of poetical peace, like I am watching a life unfold from beginning, to end and beyond. This level of an emotional roller coaster is what particularly influences my project, prompting me to think about how I could draw the spectator in initially using emotion. Moreover, Vilegenthart's work is inspirational about how one could approach taking a photograph that tells a singular narrative, but when the other photographs in the series are viewed next to it, they all link to tell a bigger narrative. Lastly his work influences my project by showing how it is human instinct to want to breakdown, deconstruct and rearrange an object, to understand its power, akin to the semiotic analysis.

Influential photographer- Krista Van der Niet

Contemporary Dutch photographer Krista Van der Niet explores how opposing objects can interact with each other to create visually aesthetic yet meaningful photographs. While the photograph is the end mission, she likes the process of problem solving and play that goes int creating her works, particularly seeing how textures, objects, and colours all feed into the projects narrative (Nauphal. L, n.d). This is a reflection that she has a meaning to each photograph, but that is simply a loose starting point, that when creating still life photographs, they need to be comfortable in the creative process allowing it in the moment to form the photograph. Van der Nie's photography is often lined with chance even though there are intentional messages that she is trying to convey.

Furthermore, she reflected that she was inspired by everything, she would see or view something that would give her a message, and she would take it back to the studio and try to recreate that meaning through different objects (Nauphal. L, n.d). This reflects that her photography is motivated by taking motifs out of their original context and creating it against new objects , almost making a conversation through her photography. In summery she explores the world around her, taking what may seem ordinary to the naked observation, and turning them into extortionary thought provoking photography.

Fig.16 at first glance looks like a broom, with 2 glasses of evenly filled water. However, upon closer inspection it is the base bristles of a broom, with a rolling pin acting as the handle. The broom is placed at a 45° angle, and it sits on a grey in mass in the lower third of the image, with a dark brown occupying the upper two side. Van Der Niet uses the composition techniques grouping and rule of thirds to create an image that is striking and eye catching to draw the spectator in. Moreover, compositional methods allow her to create a very neat and very well balanced photograph which could link back to balance curated with the water glasses. The small changes like handle being different and the angling of the broom causes the individual to think about her decisions and the intentions behind photographs. The lighting used within her work is likely two strong studio lights on either side to create the balanced shadow on either side of the broom. Overall, this is an example of one of her photographs in which she carefully constructs all elements together, from the items to the background and lighting set against the meaning she is working too.



Figure 16 Bezem Krista Van Der Niet, 2024

Van Der Niet's still life photographs have this level of peaceful balance to them which constantly links them together despite their individual meanings. This level of poetical quite is inspiring, to which I would like to seek in my photobook. While all my photographs will demonstrate destruction or oddness, if I could link them together with this peace then it might help make a cohesive and effective narrative. Additionally, her work shows how objects of contrasting nature can be brought together to form a new entity or meaning. I am particularly inspired by her compositional techniques which feature multiple methods in one photograph, which shows that if the frame needs it more can help convey the message. Ultimately her approach to still life photography is one of more contemporary form, which reflects to me to be loose when working, to have a clear direction but allow for the shoot to form naturally through little control on the day to get the most effect message for the photograph.

In-depth photobook research- Insula Daniel Regan



As part of my exploration into understanding how human behaviour, emotions and challenging subjects could be sensitively displayed in a photobook, I conducted an interview with photographer Daniel Regan. For context Regan is a U.K based photographer who specialises in creative health through visual art, with a focus on complex conversations around health and wellbeing (Regan, 2024). Conducting this primary research has assisted me in seeing how tough conversations can be held through the medium of photography successfully.

The focus of my interview (see left) was on his project *Insula* (2013) which was about his own journey through mental health, in a time, particularly among males, were not openly discussed. Through the interview I found out that he curated this book for his Master's degree, to convey his photographs because he felt other mediums would not convey the personal narrative as well. This was insightful, as a student working on projects it feels like the work will not go further than university, however for Regan it was the starting point of his career and still today is an important photobook that discusses mental health. It is also worth mentioning that Hido (Hottshoe, 2023), also

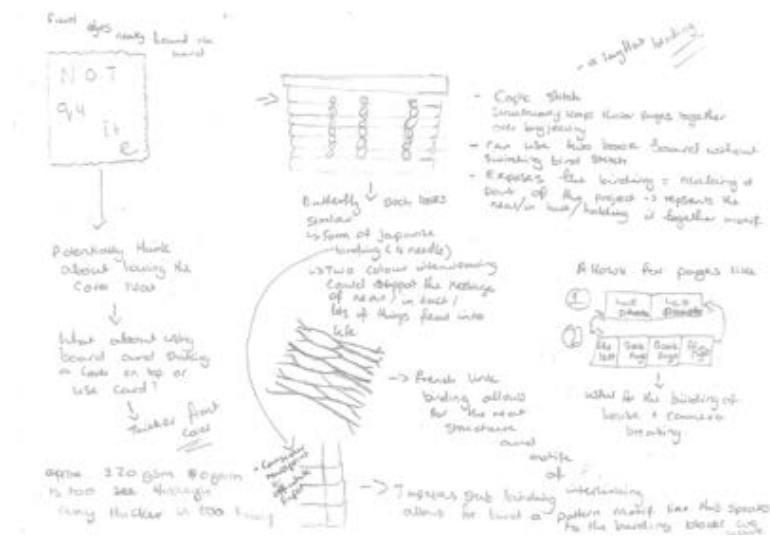
discussed that the photobook offers a personal communication between viewer and photographer that cannot be reproduced in another form of photography display (refer to history of photobook subsection). Therefore, when developing my project, I must consider such impacts that a photobook has, when I come to photographing and combing all imagery to ensure I can really curate a personal communication between my work and the spectator, which could really display the theme of semiotic theory further.

In the interview he discussed that curating the fifty copies in a A4 perfect bound manner, was down to the fact it was more affordable. However, his first editions (copies of two) were curated hand bound, contextually saying that while what he was going through what was considered sad and difficult, it shouldn't take away from how beautiful his life was. Hearing this emphasises that the way the photo book is constructed is important to the contextual narrative that goes on, which is something I need to consider for my own project. Yet it is also a reminder that sometimes a photo book is so important that compromises on the construction quality may be required but still does not take away from the value of the book. Similarly, he discusses the meaning behind the title, about it being the part of the brain that controls self-regulation and yet it also means island. This shows how important even the title is in communicating the context of the book to the viewer and is part of the first stage in getting the viewer to interact and discuss the book. Therefore, when I'm considering my project, I must ensure that the title I choose really adds to the project to ensure that I am drawing the spectator in to see the photographs.

In conclusion this interview has really helped me to establish how I can construct a photo book around difficult or confusing subject matters on a level that feels more approachable to individuals. That the photo book in essence is a carrier to my meaning and I need to really lean into it as tool just like I do with photography to ensure that I can really convey cohesively the theory of semiotics. Regan's project is a poetical, personal insight into an individual's life, this notion I would like to try and emulate, as my photographs range in objects and could be viewed as just still life photographs and by employing this technique it should prevent this. Overall, this interview has given me strong direction and boundaries that I can take away and apply it to my own photobook.

Initial concept

Construction plan



The above photograph is a graphic I created to demonstrate the path my project will be curated from being hand curated. The primary intention of the project is to have the book mostly made to a neat standard, but to have some element that is 'damaged' through the book being neatly bound with the edges torn. From drawing the graphic, I decided that I wanted the cover to be made with book board that was not torn in the same way, to add a juxtaposition between the external well composed nature and the damaged hidden inside. I also reflect that I am thinking of using no heavier than 120 gsm and no lower than 80gsm as the thicker the paper is the more difficult it is to construct and use a book, and if lower in weight issues such as tearing.

The butterfly stitch is a form of Japanese stab binding, utilising two colours, which feeds into the narrative of multiple threads to leading into one narrative. This concept builds into the book conceptually by highlighting that meaning can be drawn from all sources for everyone. The other Japanese binding I chose to look at was a four hole method, which reflects tangibly the idea of what is on the outside is not always the same as the inside. Coptic stitch is very similar to these ideas and when using thicker paper and a book board it may be a better stitch to use, as it is constructed in a way that each signature of the book is linked back to the thread, curating a stronger binding. I did consider using a French link, as it feeds into afore themes, however it is a complicated stitch that needs a lot of signatures for it too look good, therefore I decided against it.

Throughout the book I will have the images single to one page to allow for the viewer to focus on the intentional message in each. However, I want to have island pages scattered throughout to add a textural jilt to the uniformity but also enhances engagement within the book but allows for a series of images to be used to tell the meaning. In summery have narrowed it down to three binding options, and I will need to make dummies to see which works. In relation to this, there needs to be consideration to different paper weights and materials, as some of the binding possibilities will not work with certain papers due to issues of tearing.

Reflecting on photobook dummy one



To start the unit off we were tasked to curate a book dummy in the first week, the images and topic were not important, the goal was just to get used to making a photobook. However, I learned a lot about building a photobook in this, so I will include it because it influenced the development of the project.

On the left hand side is the front cover of the photobook. I produced this dummy at an A4 size, which I could see was too large in booklet form, for my project. I used 70gsm standard printing paper, so will allow consideration that the floppiness of the book may be a result of this. However, it feels too big and cumbersome to look at. In summery I will only use A4 if I use a newsprint paper as this could fit the context well together.

InDesign does not have spell checker, so in addition to someone proofreading I would benefit writing a draft text in another software and then copying it in. This adds time to the whole process, but after this dummy I think I will not be using text on volume. In the context of the work being produced for my book project, there is a level of ambiguity, so the book would benefit from having the photographs on display without any text to lead the interpretation of meaning. In addition, I learnt that the booklet needs to be a multiple of four, as when curated it is two spreads to a leaf of paper, and then there's another on the back. Therefore, when curating my book, I must remember this to avoid having to make rushed edits to the book. I am thinking that my book will be not more than twenty four folded pages and should be okay. The other note to this is if I needed to make an A5 booklet then I would use a leaf of A4 as once it is folded it would curate the desired length. The good thing about InDesign is if I wanted a custom size, I could format the page to the in the document but would have to ensure I figured the scaling out for when folding the booklet. Further notes linked to printing, I need to export it as a Postscript PDF file, selecting it to pages, flipping along the long edge. This ensures that some pages are upside down so when folded it will make them go the right way round in viewing as well. Finally, if I was to request a printer or publishing company to print this, I would need to include the booklet type, for example 2-up saddle, as it is easier to embed this knowledge in the printable, than post setting it.

On the right is a photograph of the inside of the photobook. If I was to include text, the simplistic style of photograph and then text works well. As standalone photographs having them take up most of the page is the best for allowing the mind to focus on each photograph. It may be worth trying to experiment with the page orientation to see if one is better than the other. The photographs in the



dummy have some lining to them when printed. I discovered that this was not a file error but black toner running low in the printer I used. So, when printing my final book, I would benefit from checking them before printing.

Some notes on the binding can also be ascertained from the sample photograph. I needed to use thinner thread because of the gsm used. However, something I had not considered was the friction of the pages being opened and closed could wear on the thread causing the fraying. At this moment that is okay, but for longevity the need for paper that can handle the heaviness of waxed thread is the best, something like 100gsm would work. The waxed thread has a layer of beeswax or soy typically, and acts as a friction barrier as once it is worn off the thread some would have naturally coated the pages, preventing the fraying. Along that note of not using waxed thread, then having it thicker is important as it would not fray when worn down. Last reflections on the physical construction I used the saddle stitch to construct the book but did a stitch every two inches. For the number of papers, I used this was needed and added to the overall messy construction. In future I would be better off doing it every six inches for the lower number of pages and shortening the span the higher the number of pages.

Change in construction

From the first book dummy I learned a lot about the book construction and as a result see flaws in my initial idea. The fundamental issue lies within the number of pages the book will have, as the final project will have no more than thirty photographs, that will translate to no more than thirty pages. This is based off every shoot concept working out exactly as planned. Binding methods such as the Coptic stitch rely on signatures (three to four pages sandwiched together), so if I do not meet a higher quantity of photographs then these methods may not form correctly. Similarly, InDesign works in multiples of four to curate a booklet, so I would need to ensure the

number of pages would meet that requirement. The overall best solution to these issues is the Japanese stab binding methods as they use single leaf pages, and therefore keep original conceptual meanings but bind neatly. Another loose leaf binding method is perfect binding, a technique that uses glue to bond the pages which works well for a small batch of papers. This is a method that could be a backup plan if I was binding by hand, but it does not have the same level of contextual meaning as the others have. A last solution to this could be to use a saddle stitch method if I wanted to have the pages fold over like a traditional book, but I still would have issues to the printing format and risk losing conceptual meanings.



Upon reflection I have formulated another construction plan, as seen in the above graphic, but this highlights how I could use print on demand to my advantage. The idea would be to have a pristine hardback book, that I would then grief the pages through tearing the edges. I could then carry forward the idea of island pages allowing for the extension of panels to curate the longer narratives that some shoots rely on. I do reflect that the island pages may present challenges of adding them in once getting the book. Solutions to this is to use free book printing services to test a range of ways to add in them in post-production such as stitching, gluing, or clamping them in place. In addition, I could ensure that I left time to make these adjustments by sending the book off to print sooner which if I made errors then I would have some time to reprint. However, this does propose a stress factor of ensuring I meet the deadline, so the first solution of using free book printing allow me to reduce pressure on myself of getting the right method first time round on the book I want to submit.

In addition, I could package the whole thing neatly into a book wrap box, which adds a level of tension, by carrying forward the neat expectation but what they see is completely

different a book wrap box likewise gives the impression that it could rip away neatly yet it frequently tears in fragments which alludes to the photographic body of work theme or things not being quite as they should be. In summary my project wants to create a photo book that conveys the message of the photographs in its construction, and therefore I believe that this change of construction could be the best way forward and allows me to curate a reproduceable book.

I have explored some print on demand publishers when I made these adjustment changes which are as follows:

Prodigi



Figure 17 Hardcover Photo book, Prodigi, 2024

This service offers photo books in 170 GSM silk paper in sizes square, A4 and A5 in the orientation portrait or landscape. The book is hardback, with a matte laminated cover and with 24 to 300 pages. Production time is five working days.

While the service is streamlined and very self-explanatory, it is very restrictive for my needs. The

fundamental issue is that the GSM paper is low, which would make a flimsier book, and the service does not allow me to select matte paper, which I feel would be preferable for the contextual components of the work. However, the sizing, orientation, and hardback offering are exactly what I need for my project. The turnaround speed time of production is quite good and would be with me in a week after sending it to them for printing. In summary this service is not one I will go for as a first option, but it would be a possible back up one, if I simply just needed to get a book made for hand in due to poor time management or irreparable postproduction editing damage.

Mixam



Figure 18 Photo book printing, Mixam, 2024

Mixam's books come in a range of sizes such as A4, A5, A6, novel and custom, in orientations of portrait and landscape. An interesting feature is its ability to be printed in colour, or if the imagery was just black and white in grey scale, which would create a more

affordable cost. Paper type is gloss or silk, and weights range from 90 GSM all the way to 200 GSM. Another interesting feature of this printing service is it offers two types of binding, an adhesive casebound or a sewn bound, but the minimum number of pages for hard back is twenty eight. The cover is offered in gloss Matt animation and the end pages of the book can be any colour that you choose, and they even offer a dust jacket. The turnaround time is two weeks.

Overall, this service gives a very in depth step by step process of building the book ensuring that you get what you really want. The issue with this service is that it does not allow me to have that matte paper, but the GSM weights are a lot more fluid as well as even having control over the type of binding which massively effects the way the book opened. Issue stem from how many pages baseline it needs, and the turnaround time, however if I stay on top of my shoots and photograph to a high standard and ensure that all concepts are perfect then these issues shouldn't be too concerning. A key feature that stands out is the ability to make a custom size dimension which benefits my work by allowing to make a book that fits well into the hands of a spectator. In essence this service is ideal as there is some much control over the way the final project came out. I would have to compromise on the paper but out of the options silk would be better as it would not be coated allowing a closer resemblance to matt.

Blurb

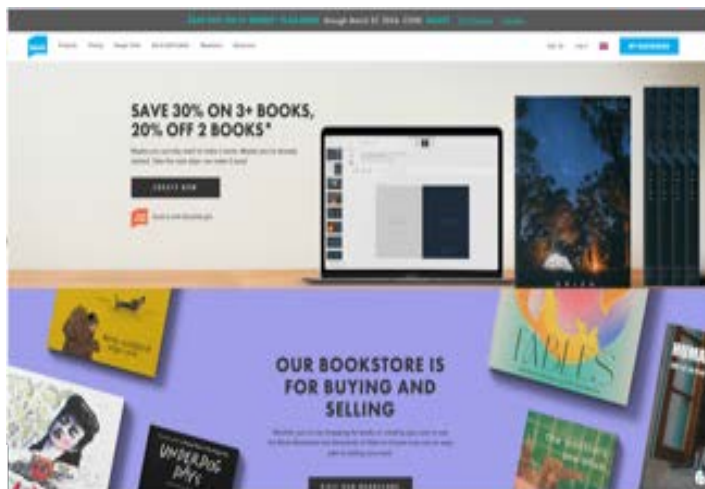


Figure 19 Photobook, Blurb, 2024

The photo books offered come in sixes such as small/ large square and standard size in portrait/ landscape. The paper types would be matte, glossy, silk and allows for a wraparound image for the front cover. The GSM weights range from 120 GSM to about 400gsm allowing versatile quality. An additional note is the minimum pages is twenty. The cover could come with an image printed directly onto the front and back cover in an image wrap style and offers

a dust wrap jacket too. The feature that is nice is that it offers you to publish your photo book on their website so that you had a platform to sell on digitally. The time of production is dependent on the choices made but is no longer than three weeks.

Burb is an expert in the field of print on demand book publication. I particularly like the offering of matte paper, and the versatile weight in GSM paper. The cover options namely being able to use a dust jacket may add to my project by being able to add to juxtaposition of a well-polished book that is not quite as it should be. A key feature is this service offers a minimum of 20 pages to start off allowing me to have less pressure on getting lots of shoots perfect or to create more under them to meet the requirement. While this service is the best in the field, at

this stage of photo book publishing it's not the best for me. The service is very streamlined to a professional standard, and as a result it leaves me with a lot of restrictions that other services can offer me. If I was to make a photo book that I wanted to be completely professional and then be able to have a place to publish it blurb is my best option and one that I will consider for future projects.

Throughout this writing I have established that using print on demand services is ideally the best option to take this photobook concept that I have to the highest standard. It allows me to contextually convey my message in a way that could enhance book. I have realised through my in depth research on photo books that there are a lot more restrictions that come with using such services and I will have to make compromises to produce a book. While I acknowledge, that certain photo book websites are better than others they all stand in their own league being useful dependent on ones needs. Ultimately at this time, I will be considering moving my project forward using Mixam as it allows me the most control with the least compromises.

Photoshoot one- Starburst

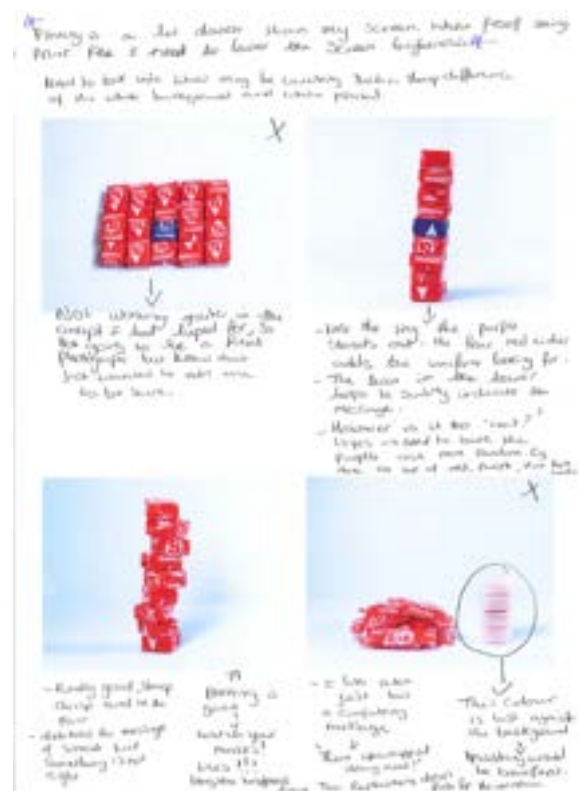


Photoshoot one was intended to convey how individuals are constantly building upon past experiences and development is not linear. Though during the shoot, I decided to experiment with the layout of the sweets to ensure the message could be conveyed clearly and aesthetically. The above contact sheets are the photographs that I captured during the shoot, and I annotated the ones I thought were worth editing, thus saving time editing time. I initially thought of having a



warm light, however as seen in the contact sheet it came out yellow and as a result made the photographic quality low. However, the cool tone photographs turned out bluer even when printed. The left hand photograph shows an example of how the photograph looks on screen. It shows up with a slight grey tinge but overall merges into the background of the white page. This is supposed to be the intention, however as seen in the edited contact sheet on the upper right they come out more of a blue when printed.

On the right hand side is the contact sheet of the photographs that I edited, and my process into selecting the photograph that worked best for the concept. When the starburst was laid out neatly on the table it changed the concept from the building idea and did not make sense. An original idea was to have one be a different colour and that reflects how life is ever evolving and changing. The unwrapping of the paper again changed the idea more to the concept that underneath the surface that we present there is a lot more to ourselves. Additionally, when the starbursts were unwrapped the colour of them was lost against the background, this made the photograph feel incomplete and not delivering to the message. Therefore, the staggered effect leant into the idea that humans build on from past experiences and that growth is not always effective or stable and really conveyed the message.

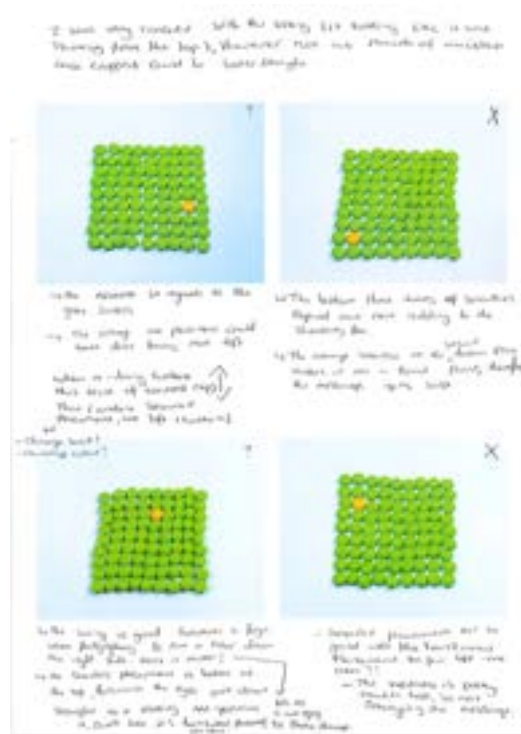


Photoshoot two- Neat smarties



The concept for photoshoot two was to convey the photographic voice needing things orderly and the departure of status was from the single one orange in the amongst of them, creating the visual discomfort of its presences. In addition, the use of the colour green was to symbolise growth and new beginnings, and this is not conveyed to the audience thus over complicating the original idea. The concept did not work as planned, as it was very difficult to line the smarties up neatly, even while using a ruler to assist. Does it matter that they are not perfectly neat? Not necessarily because it can add context to the colour randomly changing, stating that the change has disrupted the usual way of perceiving making that change more pronounced. I think that this concept change works and could fit in better with the overall book.

The contact sheet on the upper left was all the photographs that I decided to edit. I had ruled out the orange smartie being in any first or second column as it looks too accidentally placed, as if it had dropped in or been pushed there. The placement of both the left top and bottom photographs are good in conveying the message of it impeding the orderly. It may be worth merging the placements together (taking each row the orange sweet is laid in and copying it). However, I need to be careful not to make it a mirroring neat line placement as this can throw the message out by being too neat and intentional. I was concerned about a titling effect from the angle of the camera but once edited to the 4:5 ratio it was not a big issue. Would a different sweet work? No, the oval size is intentional to be drawing the eyes into its uniform nature and if I went bigger the only other option is a skittle and I would need to edit all the 's' that are on them, being time consuming. Overall, this shoot looks a lot better post edit than initially thought.



Photoshoot three- Odd can



The objective behind this photo shoot was to depict the sense of being out of place in a situation. This was successfully conveyed both in the original idea of having a can that completely looked different to the others in frame, and the experimental idea of have all three cans but one be slightly different. The above contact sheets shows my process into gathering the photos that I would edit. The contact sheet determined that I needed three of each specific kind of shots before making a final decision on the theme and photograph direction. Overall, it emerged that when they were all neatly lined together the juxtaposition required to focus the spectator on the theme, in contrast to when they were scattered because it appeared to be disorganised and curated issues that were not intended.



The contact sheet on the left hand side establishes the original concept about having a very visible different can. While the very neat spacing between the cans works, it is overly organised which hinders the theme. While I want to create slow viewing of images, I am aware that people

could just flick past this in a book format without paying attention to the message but rather apocating the ascetics. In the second selected photograph I think that the cans off in a group together really helps convey the message well, but the crop line makes the image look a bit cluttered. The red can upside down create intrigue into the message and supports that neatness seen in first photograph, ultimately really conveying the message of not fitting in or knowing how to get involved.

On the right hand side is the more subtle approach to the concept. The first photograph fails because the can in the front diverts the viewers' attention away from the background confusing the theme intended. The second photograph tidy does not relate to the topic raising the question of what is being represented in the photograph. If I had chosen a slightly tighter spacing it might have fixed these issues. Therefore, the images the best the cans make up the logo word and they act as a group and the can off to the side is not involved in this process making it look like it's on its own.

In summary the photograph with the red can upside down is the most accurate representation of the notion being conveyed. There are some lighting concerns with all green cans and that has caused some distractions that are unintentional. As a result, the more obvious version with the red can is likely the best in conveying what needs to be said thematically.



The cans being together shows the group makes for a good example. The can in the middle is upside down, the photograph is cluttered showing the message of not being happy. The can in the middle is upside down.



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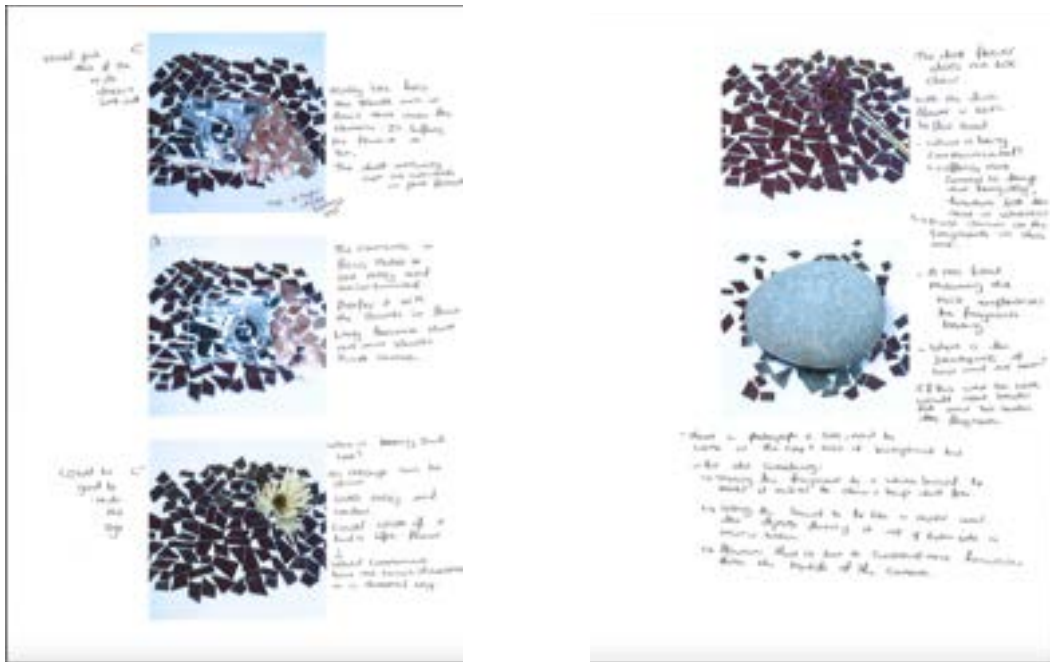
Photoshoot four- Mirror shards



The mirror shoot was supposed to be a loose representation of the mirror and window theory. This is the notion that a mirror reflects to the individual what they wish to see, however a window accurately frames a time and place (Szarkowski, 1978, p.22). His theory was to provide an analogy of how there is a burden of representation in photography and discounting it because of the context is misplaced, arguing that photography is parallel where it can coexist as fact or fiction. This notion really struck out to me about how mirrors can reflect a fragmented reality and I wanted to produce a photoshoot that visually represented this. I was successful in providing this notion, however as the contact sheets on the left hand side represents, I had to go through multiple photographs to obtain them.

In the first contact sheet the focus was mainly on the placement of the fragments of mirrors. I initially had the backboard up but that caused reflection in the fragments whiting out one half of them. However as seen in the second contact sheet I manage to successfully to get the number of fragments right allowing the framing to be right in post-production and therefore there was an emphasise the positioning of the camera (see below contact sheets too). I think I could have done with switching my focus to manual a lot sooner than I did because the autofocus didn't have pinpoint area and a lot of the photographs duplicated as I was just trying to the image right.

The last contact sheet just displays how I used flowers and a rock to see if that could change the narrative or extend my narrative. It changed the narrative, to a more literal breaking or decay message and I cannot see how they worked to my original concept. Throughout the contact sheets I was able to whittle down too five key photographs that I wanted to edit.



The above two contact sheets are all the photographs that I had edited. On the left hand side are the two camera photographs, the top one is where the mirror is in focus, and the one underneath is the camera in focus. Upon reflection I think that the camera in focus makes it look messy and uncoordinated thus the shard's being in focus makes it a lot more cohesive. When shooting I was concerned about the dust on the shards however when the photographs were in post-production the dust was not very visible. I did clean the shards, but because of how small they were it was tough to keep up with the dust. Therefore, by gluing them to a white background board it would help to clean them as a unit. Lastly I need to revise cropping because the shard go to close to the edge making it look like it does not fit in frame.

Out of the two photographs of the flowers I think the lighter coloured flower works better against the mirror shards. However, in both I can reflect that the message seems unclear and really asks what the theme in the photograph is. A meaning could be that it is a representation of how life feels after death or break-up when one loses someone important to them, they kind of look back into the mirror and a questioning who are they beyond them. The rock smashing is far too literal and shows how the mirror may have come to be broken but that it doesn't really convey a reflection. This ultimately leaves a questioning of the message and how it conveys context.

Overall, the narrative is changed too much with the flower and rock, and the best photographs derived from the reflection of the camera. Essentially there is no point in over complicating or trying to find a new meaning as the original concept is suffice enough. The camera shot with the shards in focus is the photograph I would choose when placing into the book as this conveys the narrative clearly and does not leave any visual misrepresentations or distractions.

Photoshoot five- Glass and fruit

The idea of this photograph was to reflect on distorted realities, and that the perspective of 'I' will always be biased. The visual inspiration came from photographer Suzanne Sarroff and her body of work called Perspectives. Fig.20 is of one photograph in this series of work, a plain grey background, glasses ranging in size, shape and water levels warping the view of the avocado behind them. All the photographs are constructed in such a manner, yet the colour background, object, and glasses change creating a visual narrative and intrigue while exploring the idea of ever changing perspectives and situations. This body of work was intended to focus on seeing things from different angles, under a different light or through a new lens to find beauty in all situations



Figure 20 Perspectives, Sarroff. S, 2024



regardless of their background or difficulties (Cowie. A). This reflects that the project was about looking at situations from a new direction, regardless of how challenging or easy it was.

This notion of creating a simplistic photograph yet complex in idea is inspiring. The construction of warping fruit or flowers with glasses in front thematically fits with the shoot concept of internal narratives distorting the real scenario. For my project I would like to use a similar set up with glasses and fruit on a simplistic background, but to extend the idea by trying to capture some emotion such as happiness or sadness. If I am successful, then the photograph would include the narrative that a humans own perspective is biased predominately because of emotions cause reactions to situations that distort the reality.



On the left (and upper) are the contact sheets from the shoot, which overall was unsuccessful. I had used a single pear as my object and maybe I could have benefited from the use of multiple like Saroff. Ultimately the pear was too small, which resulted in the glasses overpowering it, making the photograph look cluttered and messy. When it was the taller and narrower it worked well to make a less cluttered photograph. Likewise, if the glass was placed closer to the camera it picked up on the shape causing interesting morphs in the glass. A times the glass would not have the pear reflected showing off the white background making it seem like it had disappeared. This effect was interesting and could fit in with the overall theme of semiotics; a photograph is a conversation to be had rather than the photograph

feeding the narrative.

Additionally, I was unable to convey emotion in the photographs. This then made them look more like I was copy Saroff rather than building on her concept. Emotion could have been captured through changing the light which could have created a more dramatic element to the photograph. If I had used more stylistic or vintage glasses it could have evoked the feeling of time which can give off an emotional reaction of longing. Maybe I could have explored how different fruits evoked different emotional responses, or how the colour of the fruit could have evoked such responses.

The principle of this shoot was using Saroff's photographs and build an extension of her narrative but instead the shoot seems to be an ineffective copy. As the shoot stands it does not fit in with the concept of the photobook and I have addressed areas of development and research to get a better photograph. A last consideration for this shoot is that if I let go of trying to create a emotion, I could experiment with using different types of objects such as reading glasses, mirrors or transparent entitles on the concept of perspective.

[illegible]

The contact sheet demonstrates how I first experimented with the coffee cups location, specifically examining whether it should be closer to the camera or backdrop, eventually settling on closer to the camera for clarity when cropped. Additionally, the photographs are still quite blue this is partly due to underexposing where I was having to use a longer shutter speed to get more light in however still at the stage, I was unsure of why it was so blue when printed in comparison to the screen version. In the bottom half of the 2nd contact sheet, it can be seen how I positioned the coffee pot more in the upper corner and I think this worked much better than having the entire pot in frame because the space that I was utilising was limited and therefore lost the white sharp background. A note here could be that I shoot this in the studio or experiment getting bigger white background boards so that I can have more in frame. This could allow for the narrative to change slightly that the coffee pot almost symbolise how outward sources can sometimes penetrate through the hard exterior and can cause overwhelmed or over spelling. However, a decision would need to be made on what I was trying to state within the photoshoot to ensure the message is clear to the audience.

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Due to how under exposed the photographs were initially, I had to increase the brightness significantly which overall lost the pouring line of the coffee. This is represented in the photograph on the left about how faint the pour line is when postproduction was applied.

I experimented by applying a mask to the pour line and decreasing specifically the exposure on this. However as seen in the photograph on the right hand side this caused elements of it to go black and a shadowing effect around the pour line. This ultimately made the photographs look unclean and not very well constructed.

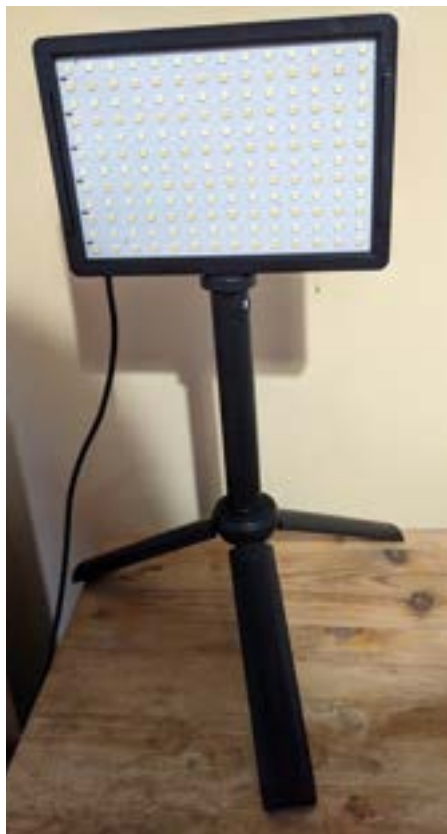


On the left hand side shows how I just spot healed out to the pour line as this seemed the best option. I think this works towards the theme a lot better as the line almost became distracting and a focal point for the eyes to fix on. However, if I was to reshoot this shoot, I think maybe experimenting with the context of the pot could help to solve this if I wanted the pouring effect.

Project review- one

So far, I have a clear understanding of the photobook and have established that my initial concept of handmaking the book, hinders the contextual meaning. Therefore, the plan will be to focus on print on demand services to curate the book, as it can help carry the message a lot clearer. However this puts me on a tighter time scale, and I will need to ensure that the photographs and the format of the book are done five weeks before the deadline. This allows me time to get the book printed and apply the postproduction edits as afore stated.

Yet, at this moment the photographs are a really poor quality and will need reshooting adding further complication to this new personal deadline. To note they are all shot at 1/50th second, F.8 and ISO 400. The aperture is high due to needing all objects to be in focus, and if increased the ISO creates chromatic abortions and noise. These issues with ISO can be easily edited out, yet at this stage I think the first change I will make is with the lights themselves which are as follows:



On the left is one of the two original lighting sources I used, which are 1200 lumens and 168 beads to create an even spread of light. They could be set to a white, warm, or mixed light but for the shoots I used the white setting. In the photograph below I am showing how I had one on the right of the photograph. The other I had one positioned to the side of the camera for even spread of light and the overhead



room
one on.



The lights were not powerful enough, which may be the cause of the brightness and colouring issues. Therefore, I switched the lights to two soft box's which have 5700 Kelvins blubs each. The advantage of these is I can have them at different heights as they are free standing, so even though both sit on each side I will not lose the depth. A soft box has a defuse on them, which will help to stop some harsh lighting lines where light field ends which should relate a smoother light finish in the photograph. Just like the last lights they can be adjusted in temperature, but I will keep them on the white and they are much higher output allowing me to have a higher shutter speed. The upper left photograph is the proposed set up I have, which consists of one on the left angled at a 45 degree tilt onto the scene, and the one on the right at a straight on angle.

Lastly, I had noticed my photographs kept having the edge of the board in frame as it was not big enough. On the right I show how I used an old A3 reflector board, which was rested against an object to create the white background and surface. I decided to get two white prop boards at



16.5in x 23.4in, as seen in the photograph below. Therefore, the issues with edge of the board should be eliminated and be easier to manage as they are clipped together not one long entity that needs to be rested against something.

Photoshoot Six- coffee cup (reshoot)



After the review I thought it would be best to reshoot a concept again, to be able to establish if the changes I made with the lighting were working. I was able to keep the aperture and ISO as afore stated but could increase the shutter speed to 1/125th second. As seen in the contact sheets to the right the lighting was much better, and little tinting to it when printed. Therefore, the changes I made were a success and means the photographs are of a higher quality. A change that I would make is to bring up the light on the right to cause less shadowing in the photograph.

Regarding the shoot itself, the pour line is more distinguish and therefore I do not need to edit it out. When reshooting I had my original contact sheet out to establish what changes I wanted to make to the narrative and composition. From this I have established that the coffee overflowing the cup is best for the narrative, and where it spills over saucer onto the table is eye catching. As a result, these photographs are more likely to captivate the audience into thinking about the concept.

Despite the changes with the shoot there is still elements that do not work to the detriment of the concept. Experimenting with having a crack in the cup for the liquid to seep through, adds visual depth to the overflowing. Similarly having it glued back together so no liquid can escape, creates the notion that being overwhelmed comes after many moments of

trying to get through tough times. Lastly the context of the pot pouring may make it easier to capture a meaning from the shoot, but the boards are still not tall enough for it too work. Overall, the photoshoot works to my original meaning of overwhelm; but if there is time, I will revisit to make such changes to see if I can curate a better photograph.

Photoshoot seven- Jelly and hammer



The photographs intention was to focus on the strength of fragility, where entitles seeming venerable can withstand a lot. On the left hand side are the contact sheet which show that the shoot was successful in conveying the message, where the jelly was the vulnerable yet strong entity, and the hammer was the solid object repeatedly attacking. The process of shooting was challenging as I had a limited space to work in, which meant at times my hand would go in frame. From this I did some photographs where I had deliberately used the hand as the weapon, but this added a different narrative that would negatively impact with the photobooks theme. Therefore, my hand was removed entirely.

Throughout the contact sheet I had selected the photographs I wanted to edit with a purple box. An issue with the shoot is that the lighting came out with a

slight yellow hue, therefore in post-production I will need to edit it to be in a cooler tone. A negative to the shoot is the plate draws the eyes to it leaving one trying to figure how it fits in with scene, and therefore the jelly should

have been shot without it. Lastly, I reflect that some photographs have the motion blur from the hammer moving, while it adds context it looks too visually messy and is not a concept I will use .





- It is the
hand that is
the foreground element
making a focal line
of the photograph



- This is the
story, showing
that the hammer
is the character
in the photograph
it's a story



Really looking at
the other photographs
- The hammer
is out of focus
making it seem
not part of the
scene.



- Hammer is
focal and focus
is on the red
jelly. Shows the
question is a coming
thing or something
is coming again
and again
- It's elements are
there



- It represents
the end of the
light between
the jelly and
hammer but is it
the transition?
- It's about the
end of the
transition
being - not
showing the
transition
question.

- It's about the hammer, after the hammer that could change the scene.
- It's about the hammer which one looks best for the and occasion photos

- If it's showing the hammer, check the white balance of the
camera, and check the lighting of the light
in the photographs turned out slightly too warm
Creating a line that
is light in the light because reflecting off the
jelly as it is red.

The above is the contact sheet of photographs that I applied postproduction edits too. I edited them all to the 4:5 crop for the book uniform look and changed the white to be cooler preventing the yellow tinting. When the hammer was tilted to the foreground it made it looked like it had been photoshopped in, which hindered the ability to draw a message. Additionally, I raised the concern about having the hammer resting in the Jelly being too literal. I think that as a stand-alone photograph it is, however when placed with the others it makes sense, it has come to a rest. In summation as single photograph the hammer being poised in the centre of the frame away from the jelly adds a peaceful pause that leaves room for the spectator to fill the narrative and question what is being discussed in the photograph.

This shoot was successful, the photographs captured work well for the narrative. The plate being in shot is distracting though, it does not add to a message and in fact leaves one focusing on it trying to think about how it could fit in with the scene. If I have time I would like to reshoot without the plate, so that the jelly is sat on a completely white background, allowing for narratives to be drawn from the photograph. A note about the white balance is that the yellow tinting could be some light reflecting out of the jelly making the scene a little warmer. Stopping the white balance down a few stops may correct this, though for any future shoot I need to I check all setting carefully to avoid such simple errors.

Photoshoot eight- Camera deconstruction

This shoot is going to be one of the island pages where they expand out from the book, and therefore I need a series of photographs from the whole camera to the broken form. The contextual meaning will start as a literal representation of deconstruction, and how in semiotics theory, one needs to pull apart all elements of a photograph and apply them to their own beliefs to produce meaning.

However, this photoshoot has a visual influence from artist Christopher Williams's project *Dismantling the spectacle*. The project featured a range of cameras and lenses encased in resin before they were laser cut down the centre. Fig. 21 is a photograph of a Leica Wetzlar Tele-Elmar 135mm F4.5 lens, that has been cut exposing the hidden insides to the spectator. Photographs in this series had similar balanced lighting and were placed on the black background, drawing the viewer's attention only to the camera to draw meaning from the image.



Figure 21 *Dismantling the spectacle*, Christopher Williams, 2014

The project was an exploration into contemporary consumer culture, where there is pressure to buy the latest equipment to show the expertise of a photographer. This notion likely steams from the concept that a camera is a mechanical entity that cannot lie and therefore individuals think that if the photographer does not have the latest equipment, then they are not the best. Heard, C (2015) reflected that Williams seeks to push against this notion, by laser cutting the objects in half for the insides to be viewed and by being held in resin keeps them from falling apart. When a series of these photographs are viewed together, they will show that most of the internal workings are the same, just a few chip or glass differences. This reflection shows how Williams pushed himself in terms of constructing the imagery, to show that human elements play a huge role in photography not just the mechanics of the camera. In essence, establishing that while the camera and lenses do have some impact on quality, ultimately the photographers knowledge in composition, lighting and how the camera mechanically functions are involved for a high quality photograph.

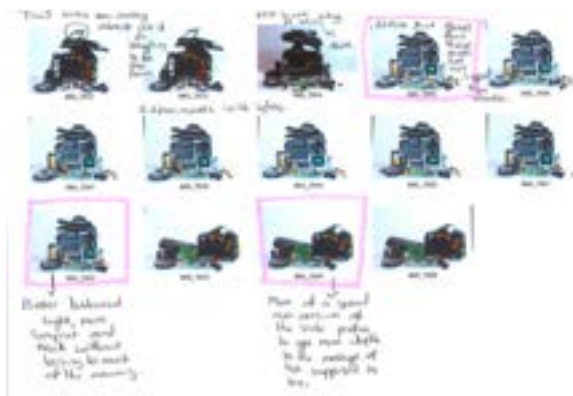
While his project focuses on consumer culture this is not the influence that I draw from Williams work but am focused on the deconstruction nature. He uses simplistic slight changing to show the break down and internal workings of a camera, which reminds me that shoot is complex and making the smallest changes will have the most impact. Lastly the notion of exposing what is inside to the outside is inspirational as I want to explore how humans use internal subconscious and conscious influences too establish a photograph's meaning.



This photoshoot had a lot of issues; however, these did not impact the success of the project. On the left hand side are the contact sheets of all the photographs taken during the shoot. When looking at them altogether it can be seen that there are a range of lighting changes that had happened. I had to photograph this shoot over several days, due to breaking my screwdriver when trying to get a panel off, that I later realised that the screw was thread bear and could not be removed. The issues do not lie in the changing of the day, but my lack of checking my settings carefully and ensuring they were the same when I began shooting. This leads on to the second issue which was not being able to completely deconstruct the camera to just parts like I had hoped. However, this does not matter as the contact sheets show that I have a range of photographs that go through the narrative of deconstruction; showing internal on the external.

The contact sheets are so extensive because I wanted to photograph every single stage of deconstruction. This was to ensure that I captured a series of photograph that really discussed the semiotics breakdown. The photographs that work the best however were ones where they were grouped together as this added structure and cohesion when there were multiple parts shown. Once establishing this parameter I did experiment with different angling of parts, to ensure the depth was still created to the photograph, as this is an essential factor to

how all photographs will fit within the photobook. I established that I had quite a narrow field of where the objects could be placed in the photograph because if they were too close to when they were cropped it would look make the frame look quite messy or crowded.



Throughout the photographing stage I experimented having some objects composed neatly together while others were more scattered. This was to see how such grouping changed the narrative adding different meaning to the photographs. This was successful and helps support the way these pages will be constructed, as this provides more visual intrigue to the spectator, getting them to further question the decisions of layout in the photograph. Once I was done deconstructing, I photographed some component laid as seen in the left hand side contact sheet. This format does not fit in with the overall page construction, seeming too random, as only a few parts were in complete deconstruction. This profiling would have been best if the camera was in complete deconstruction as it would have been more constant.

I think the narrative of the concept was successfully displayed, establishing how deconstruction is used within photography. I think that I problemed solved some issues successfully such as not being able to deconstruct the camera too entire loose form, and I solve this by changing my composition technique. Though I should have checked my camera and lighting setup between each day I

photographed, to ensure that I got consistency in lighting. This is solvable in postproduction though using masking and increasing background brightness, but for future shoots I need to ensure that I am focused and prepared for photographing. Along these lines I should have checked the external screws of the camera for thread bearing to ensure I could have hot the whole outer case off.

Photoshoot nine- flower decomposition

The photoshoot focus was to create a peaceful destruction to juxtapose the more violent one seen in photoshoot eight. This photo shoot will feature a flower that will remain intact, but I will composite petals falling from it, as if it were rotting. If it is successful, this is to convey how what one may present externally is not always what happens internally.

This photo shoot also has a visual influence from Ori Gersht's project *Fields & visions & (another world)*. Figure 22 is photograph nine from the body of work, which features a vase that has been obliterated and the beginning fragmentation of the flowers that sat within it. Gersht's project was initially filmed and then he takes a photograph from the footage and enlarges them creating them to be low resolution so places them into an AI software to fill in the missing information causing this merge between fact and fiction (Gersht. O, 2022). This reflects how his body of work was intended to have an open conversation about reality and the truth cannon that photography is situated in. His work is a reflection that a photograph created from art is not see as valuable as one created from accurate depiction. Using AI and the stereotypical still life flower scene he creates an open visual dialect of the love for photography as a medium of art but the issues that come along with it, creating this charged energy. In summation the fragile, beauty of the flowers represents how gentle the medium of photography is and the filled in AI parts of explosion with lack of background knowledge offers a representation of how people harshly judge art photography without paying attention to the powerful messages such photographs have.

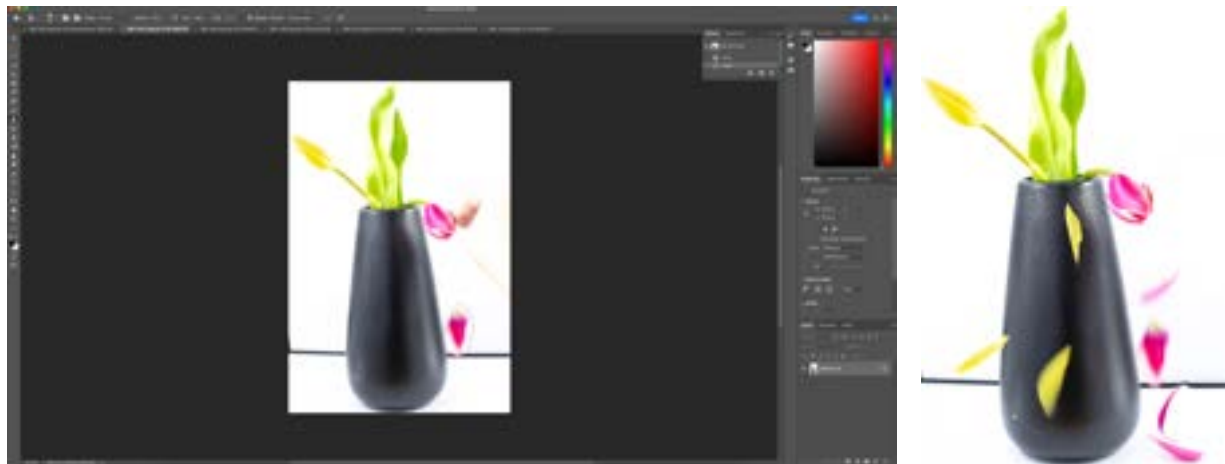


Figure 22 Untitled 09, *Field & visions & (another world)*, 2022

Gersht's still life work features using the flower in an explosive manner, which is something I would like to achieve, through more subtle destruction. This level of juxtaposition curated in using a gentle entity is attention grabbing, drawing the spectator to reflect upon the message of the photograph, because placing the flower under such duress seems unnecessarily. This feeds back to the goal of obtaining viewer attention encouraging them not to be passive but become the active thinker. For my project I would like to captive the audience immediately by the destruction, but as the petals will be falling as small objects the viewer will be drawn in a second time to focus why a whole flower is shedding when it is in a whole form causing longer engagement with the photograph. Lastly *Fields & visions & (another world)* provides insight into how the project can have an overarching context, but that each photograph can tell a narrative too, which my project seeks to achieve.

A lot of the issues with shoot laid within the technical construction rather than not fitting in with the context or lacking in narrative, therefore I will reshoot it. The problems with set up could be solved by moving the bed out of the room to allow for more space for the lights and table. However the more viable option would be to borrow the universities studio, which has the lights mounted to ceiling racks and is a room solely dedicated to indoor lighting so nothing would be in the way. This would prevent my arm being in frame as I would be angled to side or diagonal. I will note that it may not be possible to avoid my hand being in frame as I will be dropping the petal, so I may have to mask remove myself, so for ease of editing I will wear pale plain clothing. In addition, if I take the camera off self-shutter mode then I will have more control over the photograph and would more likely capture the petal falling as I was not very successful this time.

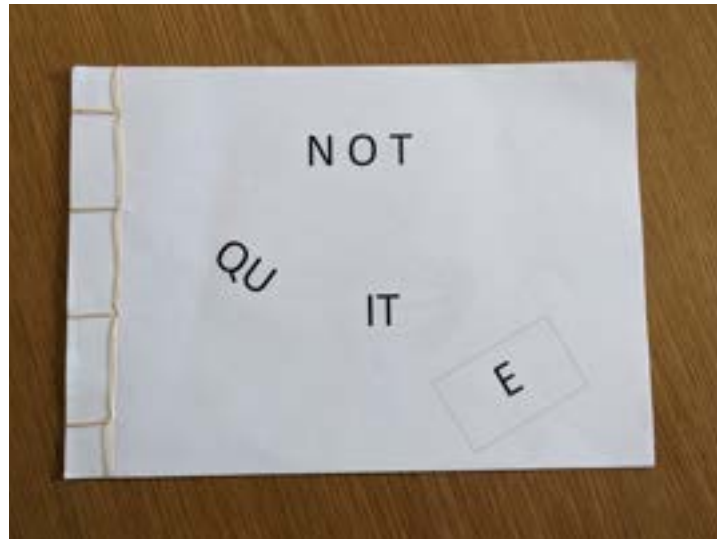
Moreover, using the studio keeps the lights from the sides preventing me casting a shadow, which stops issues with the lighting in the photograph. When I reshoot, I will need to get a vase that has a narrow neck akin to a bottle to allow for more support to the single flower. Additionally, using the studio will allow me not to shoot at an angle, preventing a perspective change, as the backdrop is bigger in the space than I can get in my home. Finally, I will not be using the yellow flower as it is too bright for the scene but will instead choose the pink since it has the proper combination of brightness and contrast to blend into the photograph effectively.



I took advantage of the failing of this shoot too have a Technical Demonstrator in university refresh my knowledge on masking and compositing photographs, as these techniques are needed for a few of the shoots. The screenshot above show to mask I could use the lasso tool to select around it. As it a plain white background akin to the base image then this method works, but If it was different backgrounds object select or magnetic lasso work to provide a neater cut out without the background. To make a composite then I would copy the selected object onto the background image. To make a mask I would select the create mask button from the selection I had made which opens a new adjustments layer allowing for me to make the edits I would need. The photograph on the upper right shows how the composition came together, and an idea about how I want the shoot photograph to come together. Lastly, I was reminding that any edits I make should be done on different layer masks so if I made a mistake then it would be easier to correct.

Reflecting on photobook dummy two

The aim of this photobook was to explore how the photographs so far were coming together in a book format, focusing on the title and how the photographs worked being on a single page each. On the right the picture shows how I opted for a plain white cover, with simple Calibri font in capital letters, with the word 'quite' broken up and the text box visible on the 'e'. The capital letters give the impression that it is being 'shouted' or loudly discussed, which is not intentional adding a new meaning to the context. Having the word spilt works well, as it offers visual representation to the deconstruction outlined in the theme of the photobook. However, this only works when a few words are, so if I wanted to use this option, I would need to make sure my real title was brief. In this manner Calibri works okay, but I think I should do some experiments with different types to find the one that works best to the theme of the photobook.

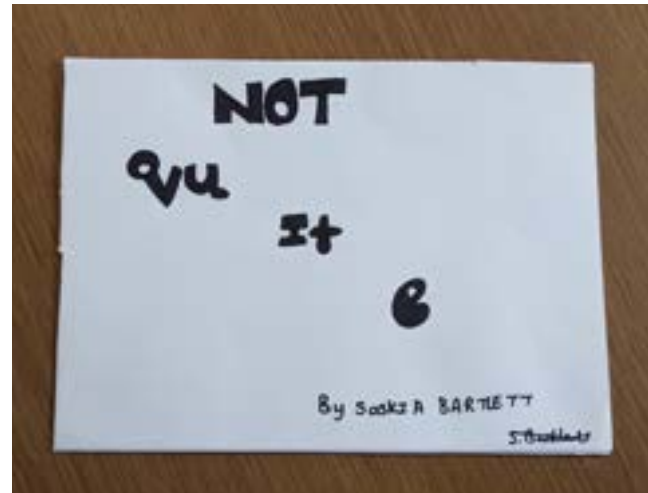


On the left hand side are two examples of the pages. The photograph was put in the centre of the page and then expanded to occupy most of it, with a slight bordering edge to allow for binding and neat display. Overall, this style works well, providing constancy and neatness that links back to the physical juxtapositions that the book is seeking to achieve. An adjustment to the sizing needs to be made, as the images that were smaller or closer to the background like the glass and pear seem smaller in comparison than ones closer to the foreground like the coffee cup page. This can be done by making the shrinking the coffee cup slightly to create consistency of object size in the book. Lastly experiments of applying

two to a page, or two a double spread of a book should be made, to ensure that those formats are not better than one used in this example.

Reflecting on photobook dummy three

Photobook three focuses on exploring making the title cover by hand and a more extensive investigation into the page layouts. To the right shows how I hand drew the letters in a similar fragmented style as seen in book dummy two. The lettering is bold which does draw the eyes into look at it and questioning what it is saying. However, it is too plane, there is nothing that will encourage the spectator to want to explore more. This method works by scanning the



graphic in for the print on demand service to use, most option would be making a dust jacket and add it as part of the postproduction edits, which supports the contextual theme well. While this notion is interesting, it's not feasible, as the graphics will be poorly drawn like in the example making it seem messy and raising too many negative questions.



In photobook dummy three I wanted to test different page layouts. On the upper left hand side photograph I am showing how the spread would look if there was an image on both the right hand side and left hand side of the book when expanded. I also show how the photographs work as two to a page or three to a page. Overall if I was to have the photo book with more than one photo on a page, I would leave one side of the spread blank as seen in the

lower right hand side photograph. This is to ensure the eyes have a chance to process all imagery without being overwhelmed or over stimulated. Additionally, three to a page works significantly better as it creates balance and a natural leading line for the eyes to see, however with two I would need to ensure the photographs lined up neatly otherwise it would lack clarity and direction. Through this investigation I did clarify that having a single photograph to a spread is the best option, as it ensures the viewer can process each photograph without distraction.

Island page construction

At this stage I also wanted to create a mock-up of the island page, to see if the concept could work. I had decided to just do it out of a book for the first test, and in my second version I will create it on cheap print on demand book. Doing it this way gives me direction on how I can apply it within the book, saving me time and money by not rushing into how it fits within the book.

The first test was to see if I could attach two pages onto the 'spread' pages. In the test on the left, it worked well, and I constructed it with a half inch glue tab that was scored to allow it to open easily. For this to work in the book I would need to measure the width of the book and take about a quarter of an inch off each flap, so when the book was closed it would lay without creasing.

The photograph to the right shows a proposed idea of how the whole camera would be displayed on the flaps, so when open it would split the photograph in half. This concept worked well too, and if I got the total flap dimensions into InDesign and expanded the photograph over it then when I cut the flap in half the image would look near than being glued on.



To the left is a demonstration of how the pages would be viewed when opened. Overall, this works in a strip, however for ease when printing with a service there will not be one on the pack of the flap. Having the photographs glued in looks tacky and if it were just two in the set this way then it would degrade the contextual construction. Furthermore, the photograph in a long strip leads the eyes onto the next photograph, creating order and making them seem like they all fit together. However, when I make the second test, I will experiment with staggering the pages, to ensure I have the best page layout to fit with the overall construction and theme of the book. Lastly when making the PDF for the print company to turn into a book, I will need to ensure that I have these pages in the right order for binding rather than what is seen on the screen, as it will be folded in half.

In summation this concept works much better in reality than I thought it would. I have identified that gluing the photographs in will look messy, however with tools like InDesign and an understanding how page construction works I can create a seamless print of the photographs. Lastly in the second test I would like to with using paper fasteners or hand stitching them, to see how they work in connection to the theme to ensure that I am using the right joining method.

Project review- two

From the last review I had employed the outlined changes to the lighting and the set up. As the shoots after the changes show, overall, they were successful; the shutter speed was increased, allowing for more light to be evenly spread across the photograph and a lot of the blue tinting had been eliminated. The main issues now occur with spacing, which often effected how I handle the props that go into the scene, such as pouring coffee or smashing the jelly. Such problems occurred due to physical spacing, as I was in a small room the lights were very close to the table giving me no room on the side to move. Though for shoot nine the hight of the prop board was one of the issues I identified, which degrades the quality of the photograph, rendering it unusable as is. The next steps should be to utilize the studio in hybrid to my home set up. Therefore, photoshoots that are contained in mess but need a wider space to work in or a more constant light than I can produce could be conducted there to get the quality of photograph required in a timely manner. Lastly, I need to investigate why my photographs are still tinting and see if I can prevent this happening in the camera settings; if not, they are at a stage where they can be easily corrected in post-production.

In the last review I established how I was certain that the photobook would be constructed through print on demand services, however I had noticed how fragmented and different each photoshoot looked to each other. These issues could likely blend into the book adding to the theme when constructed, though through testing concepts to determine what worked and what needed to be improved or removed, brought forward the notion of the accordion book. This, along with the fact that shoots such as six and eight had a natural visual linking narrative between the photographs, resulted in me creating a test of the accordion book, as seen below:



In my photobook I constructed it in InDesign and then printed it on two A3 pages which I then sewed together. The concept works well to the narrative of deconstruction, as to view the photographs one needs to pull apart the ends of the book. Additionally, as seen in the example the eyes follow the natural progression of the deconstruction of the camera, causing viewer engagement and encourages a natural conversation about what the book is reflecting. In summary, the dummy demonstrates how the photoshoots may be transformed into the accordion style, providing structure to the project is lacking and focuses on a tangible experience to the deconstruction.

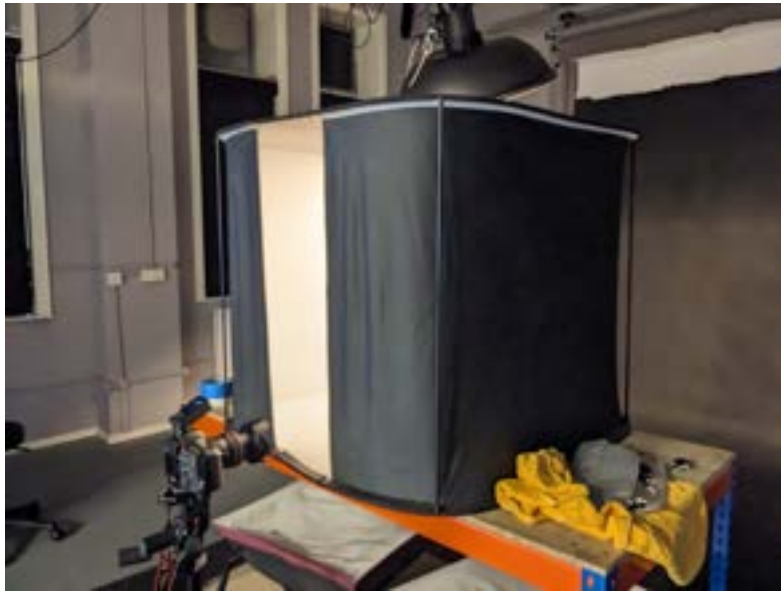
Ultimately the construction of the book will change from this point, back to making the book myself in the accordion style. From this first test dummy I can see that A3 on a standard printer does not fit to scale, therefore I will likely need to print the book on a banner printer to ensure I can get the correct size. Furthermore, I will need to do size tests to ensure that I pick one that best matches my theme. Hand sewing the paper joins together looks messy as the pages curl up, as seen on the right. Therefore, experimentation with joining methods will be required to guarantee that they do not degrade from the overall construction of the book. A note here too is that I need to line the pages up better as they are slightly staggered drawing the eyes to it negatively. Progressing forward I would like to experiment with different types of paper, to see how they relate to the narrative, ensuring I the best option is selected to fit with theme, whilst displaying the colours and quality of the photographs accurately.



This shift in direction results in changes to the photoshoots, where there needs to be more than a single photograph to tell a narrative seamlessly across the accordion style. The accordion book series will have no more than six volumes to ensure that it fits thematically in a succinct and efficient way, as too many books may become confusing or overwhelming to view. Additionally, to keep consistency across all volumes they will have six photographs in the main body of narrative.

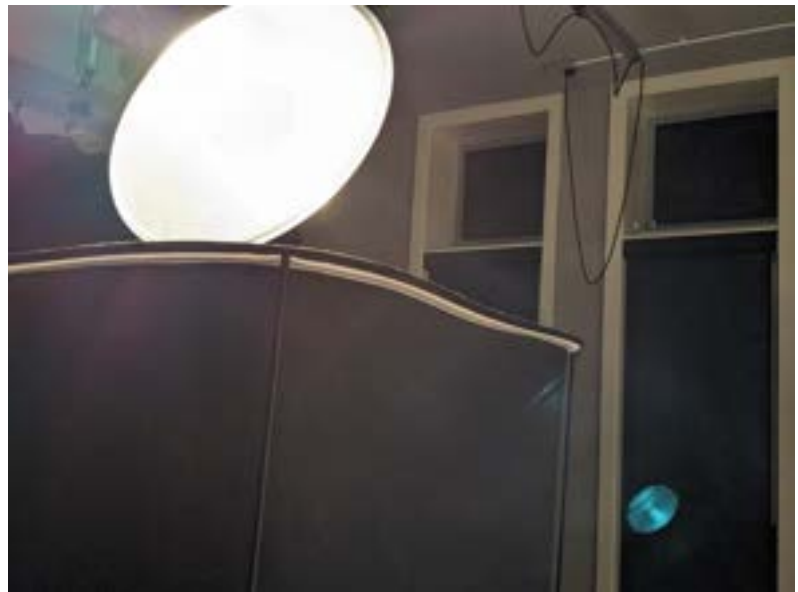
Therefore, photoshoots one to four will not be continued, as their narratives only fit in a single photograph and not a series format. Photoshoot five will not be rephotographed, but elements of what it reflects will be fed into a new shoot with mirrors. Photo shoot six could be rephotographed with the afore outlined changes; however, even with its natural narrative it does not work well for this body of work. Additionally, photoshoot seven works well as it, but I would like to rephotograph to remove that plate to enhance the focal point. There needs to be changes to photoshoot ten in a studio setting and therefore I will be continuing with it for now. Photoshoot eight fits well with the new direction and organically links to the topic of semiotics theory, therefore it will not be reshot predominantly due to time and budget constraints, but it may be edited to a higher quality. Finally, a new shoot of a house that has been smashed then reconstructed will be photographed in the next stages of development.

Set up in studio and understanding the white balance further



On the left hand side photograph I am showing how I used a diffuse lighting background box. This is a basic white backdrop inside A-frame, and the top has an integrated diffuser for the light to enter and cast a balanced light throughout the frame. The camera was mounted on a tripod and directed through the space between the curtains, to allow the photograph to be taken against a white background, as shown on the left

The lighting was produced by a singular studio light Profoto mounted to the ceiling frame. I experimented with having it straight down into the scene, but also at the 45 degree angle with and then a 90 degree angle away from scene. The experimentation was to determine the softest lighting I could accomplish, but that had no effect on the overall brightness of the light, and the 45 degree angle eventually provided the balance required without



being too sharp, having harsh fall off lines or too dark. Experimentation was also given to having a secondary light more on the side but not too close, however this made the photograph look flat and contrasted the intentions I was going for with the lighting and became attention grabbing, making one pay attention to the construction rather than the meaning. Ultimately the single light was powerful enough as I could increase or decrease the brightness depending on the subject matter.

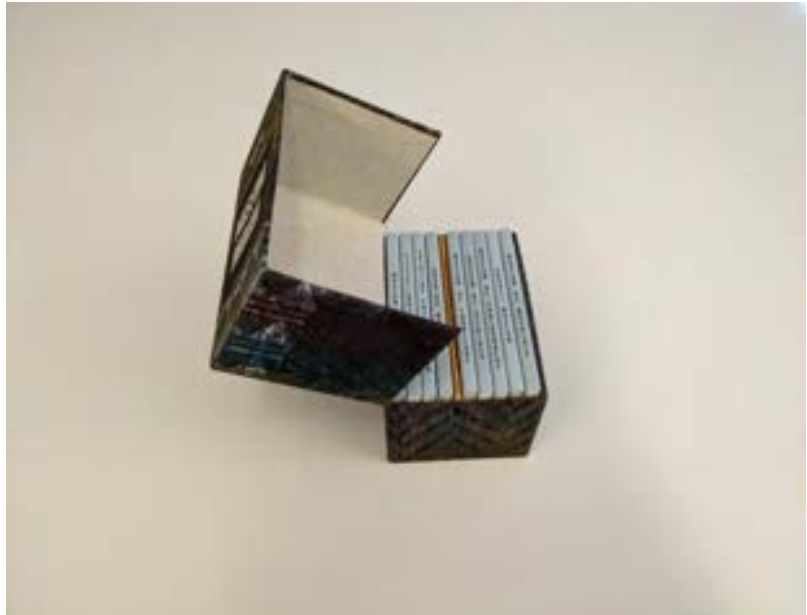


Another aim I specified in review two was to determine why the photographs were having a tint. A Technical Demonstrator explain to me that I was experiencing the tinting due to not having the correct white balance, but reenforced that photoshoots one to six were so noticeable because of under exposing issues. They went on to show me how to use a grey and white card to set a custom white balance, which in a still life photoshoot is the best option as there are a lot of variables from object to backdrop that make obtaining an automatic white balance challenging. On the upper left photograph depicts an underexposed incorrect white balance, but by using the card a custom white balance could be set, and then on the right is a photograph of an underexposed correct white balanced photograph. Having just the photograph under exposed makes it a lot easier in postproduction to fix, as the colours are there it just needs to be increased in brightness, however in the one on the left the colours are off and I would have to do colour corrections to all elements of the photograph to get the desired quality. Through this investigation I have established that white balance is essential to the quality of the photograph, and how to create a custom white balance which is fundamental in studio or indoor settings.

In-depth photobook research- Museum Bhavan Dayanita Singh

When the direction of the project changed Museum Bhavan construction was a hugely influence piece of work. Please note that the photographs in this section are not referenced as I photographed lecturer copy of this photobook.

Museum Bhavan is a boxed set of nine accordion style books of photographic works by Dayanita Singh. The books are housed into a clamshell box so that when closed it acts as a protective house for them (Steidl, 2017), which is reflected in the photograph on the right. The collection presented in this way could mimic a collection that might be found within a museum or gallery. Singh stated that her intention of the works



was to provide an exhibition beyond the square walls, so that it could be accessible for all at a low cost and wanting to provide the feeling of looking through a family album (Qureshi, 2018). This reflection summarises her body of work and how she was thinking not about her photographs but also how they could be viewed in a hybrid style between an exhibition and the traditional book, whilst considering the cost so that it could be viewed more than once off screen. This demonstrates how important the physical construction of the book can influence and telling a narrative either parallel to the photographs or supporting the photographs themselves.



To view a book, they take it out of the box, and they pull out the front and back cover apart to expand the accordion. In total the project consists of 298 pages with 241 images and the total dimension of each book is 9 by 13.7 centimetres (Steidl, 2017). The photograph on the left highlights this and

how the books may look when expanded. Furthermore, in the photo example the title of the book shown is called '*Museum of machines*', which illustrates how they were individually titled but did not have to be exclusively viewed in that context. For example, the viewer pulls out multiple books and simply look at the photographs flat on the table next to each other and avoiding the titles. This reflects Singh's intention to leave as little context to the photographs and groupings as possible to allow the spectator to have a strong connection with the project. In summary Singh challenged established viewing formats to juxtapose the ridged viewing formats traditionally used.

The influence on my specific project is the accordion style and how it allows for the multiple photographs of objects to narrate the intended meaning. When viewing Singh's work, I was put off by how long the accordion books were, they almost needed to be opened with a second person because when they expanded out, they were long. However, upon reflection if I kept my images to no more than ten per booklet then the viewer could view the body of work without getting overwhelmed or disengaging and not looking at it because it's so large. In addition, she creates a unique concept of creating singular narrative spreads that when combined constitute a larger idea. This idea is transferable to my project because it puts the concept of semiotic deconstruction into a tangible context, since each book represents an entity that is broken or flawed in some way and when pulling the accordion out, the individual is physically going through the process destruction. However, when they are combined it should curate the bigger thematical message of finding peace and beauty in the imperfect.

The size of the box is appropriate for her concept, but it may be worth me trying to explore how I may display all my books in other formats in comparison, as the clamshell design will be too cumbersome and not really support the overall message. The idea of putting all the accordion books into one entity could really help convey the meaning of my book project, as one would have to pull the book from the others and that then would be tangibly creating a deconstruction to view that miniseries. In conclusion Singh's project is hugely influential into how I could progress forward with my idea and rather than compressing my concept it is thinking about reshaping to the book to that theme.

Photoshoot seven- Jelly and hammer (Reshoot)



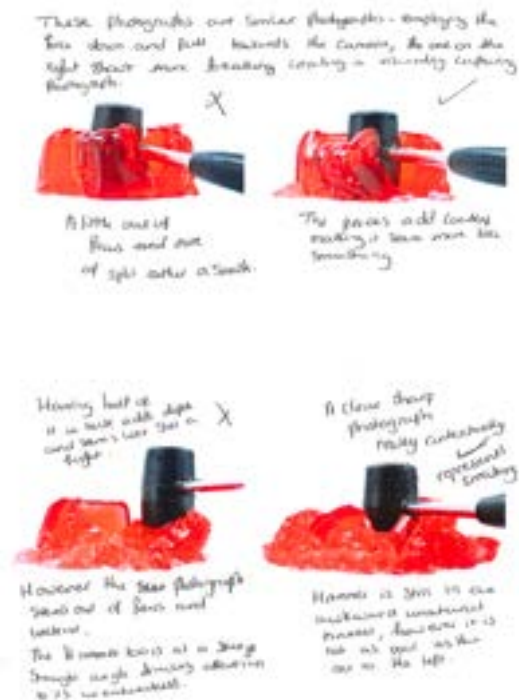
The contact sheets on the left, show how the re shoot went, with the focus on removing the plate.

This adjustment allows for a clearer focus on the crushing of the Jelly resulting in a more visually captivating photograph where the spectator can draw meaning. From the last shoot I

also experimented placing the jelly on top, which adds a level of what happens next after the destruction, adding depth to the depth one can away from looking at this photobook.

There was some difficulty in breaking the Jelly, this is likely due to using too much setting agent. This was not much of an issue as it added to the narrative of

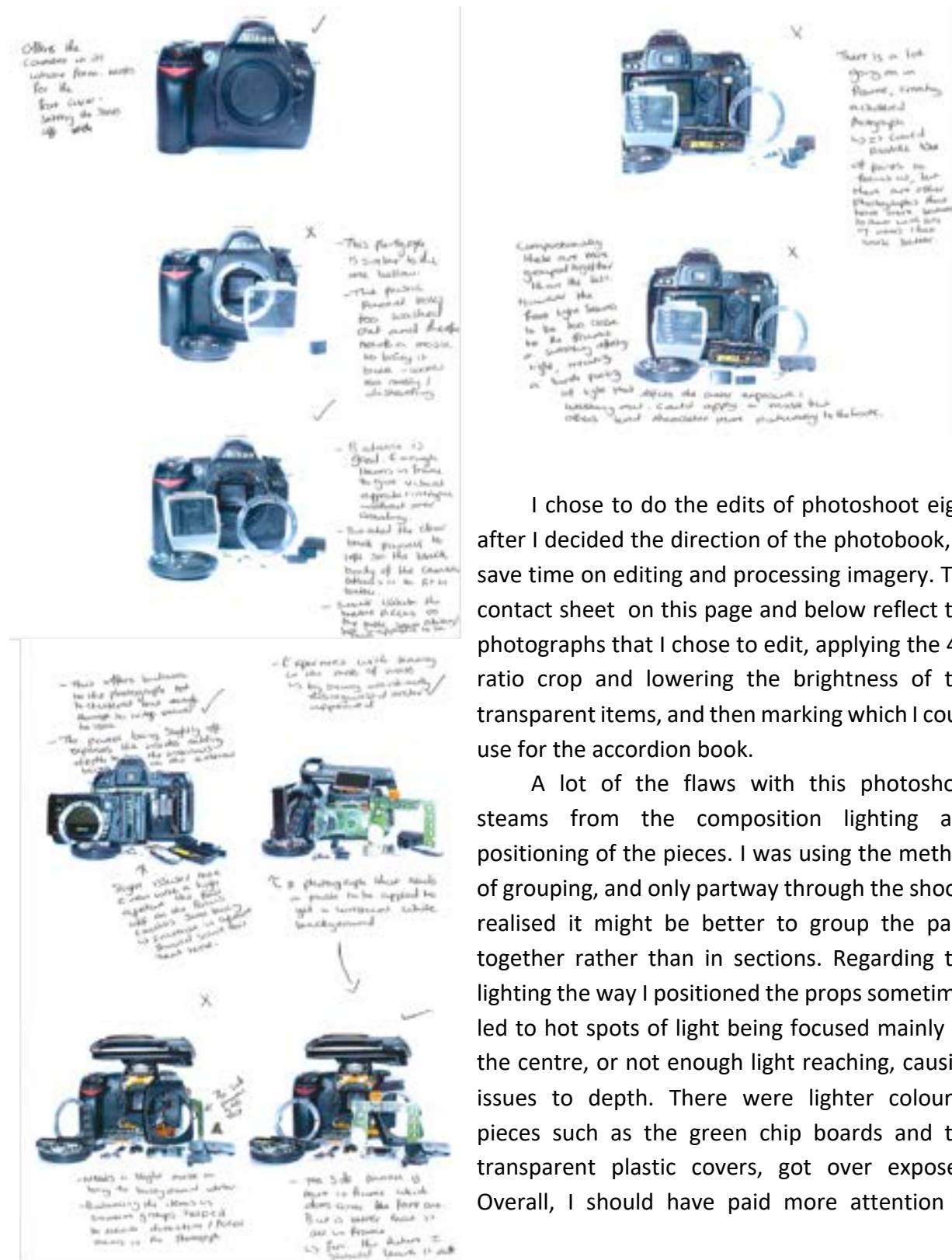
venerable entitles being stronger than they look. In the photo shoot I knocked the lights, and they showed up in the corner of the images. Being more aware of everything in the scene will prevent this for future shoots, but this time applying the 4:5 should remove these errors.



In the last contact sheet, I went through and marked all the photographs that I thought worked to the accordion style. The contact sheets on this page are of the ones I applied post-production edits; the 4:5 crop, and colour correction to the red to red as it was slightly washed out to a pink. Then I went through the contact sheet selecting which ones I wanted to use. As seen, there were a lot that were similar, this was intentional as I wanted to select the one that fitted best within the sequence. When it came to choose the final photographs, I paid attention to the angle of the hammer and the amount of crushing, which helped to create a fluid sequence in which one photograph flowed to the next.

According to semiotic theory deconstruction is not permanent; one looks at signs and symbols, attaches meaning and then they take these messages away. The photoshoot successfully portrayed this element of the theory particularly with the adjustment of the jelly on top of the hammer post smashing. This shoot works as it is and will not be reshot; however, when all the photographs are joined together it looks like there's a perspective change because of how different the hammer is. In future getting someone to smash the jelly will keep the hammer in a consistent place, preventing this slight jarring in perspective.

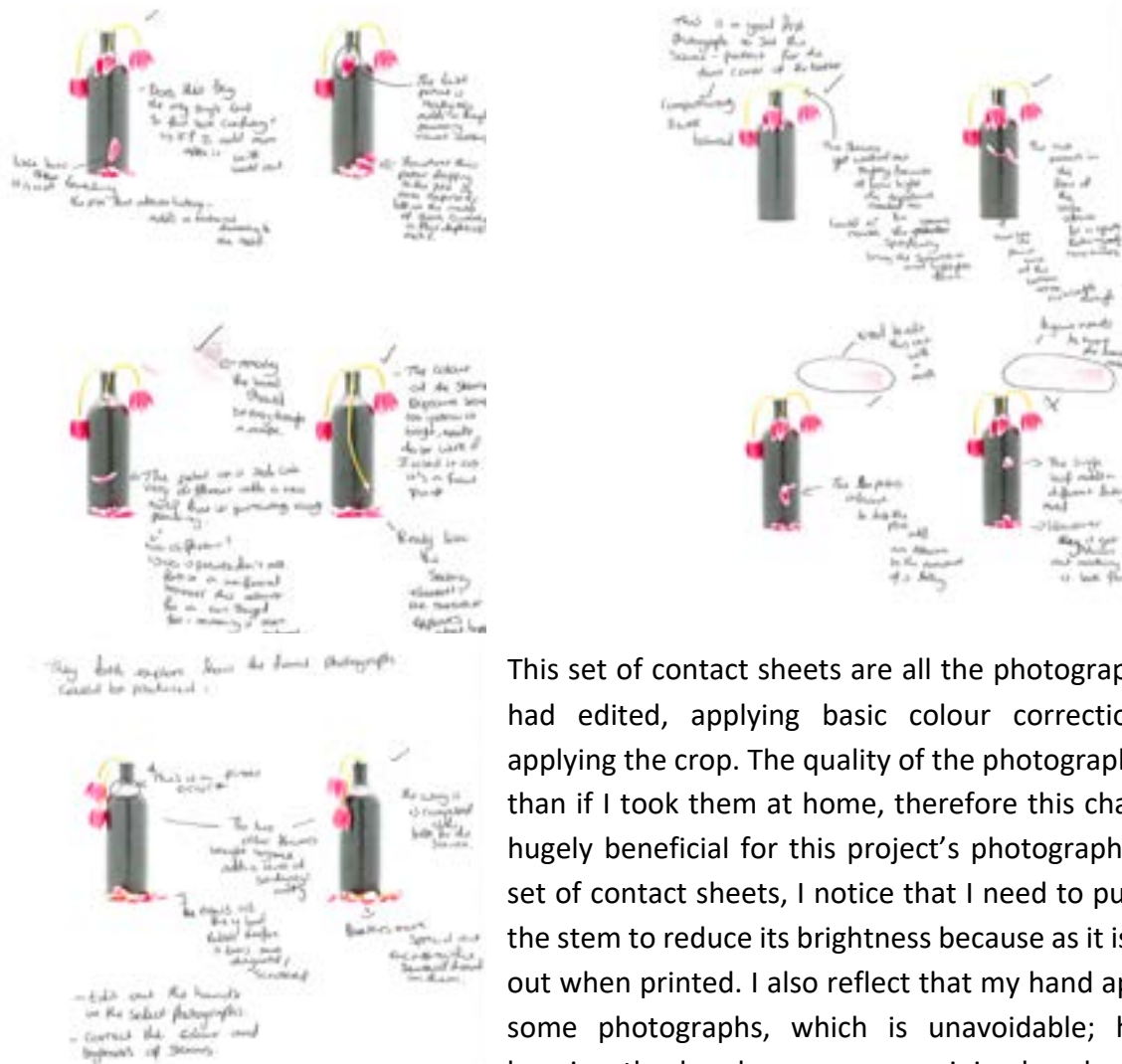
Photoshoot eight- Camera deconstruction (Edits)



Photoshoot Nine- flower decomposition (Reshoot)



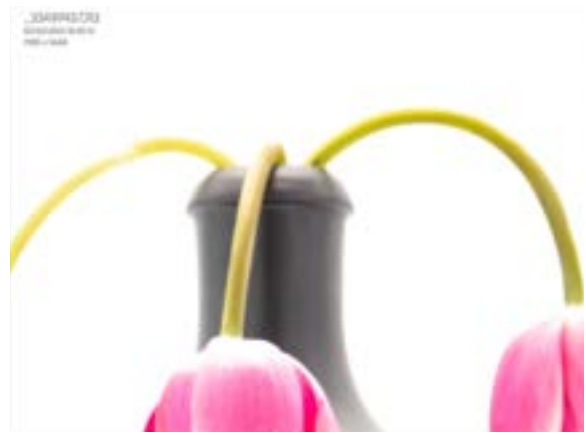
The contact sheets to the left reflects the adaptations that I had incorporated from last time, which created a more successful shoot. In the first three lines of the first contact sheet, it shows how I had tried to just use a single flower. Compositionally this was not working it looked out of balance as the flower was drooping over a lot to one side due to not being in water for several hours, ultimately looking messy and lacking in direction. An amendment I could make in future is to keep the flowers and water which would mean that the flower would stand tall as one and not look lack balance. On set I employed the rule of thirds with the flowers which was a lot more successful it created the balance required without overcrowding. The narrative was not negatively impacted by changing the composition but gave it a clearer direction. The changes to the narrower necked vase worked to holding the flowers better, but also was narrower in body too which looked visually more balanced than the bulging one I used before. Throughout the contact sheets I selected photographs that I thought would be good for editing focusing on the petal position as this was what was changing. I took the photograph at the same time as when I dropped the petal, rather than having it on self-shutter mode. This created more of a succinct contact sheet; however, the petals were not blurry from having a rapidly fast shutter speed, adding to the peace and gentle atmosphere I was trying to create.



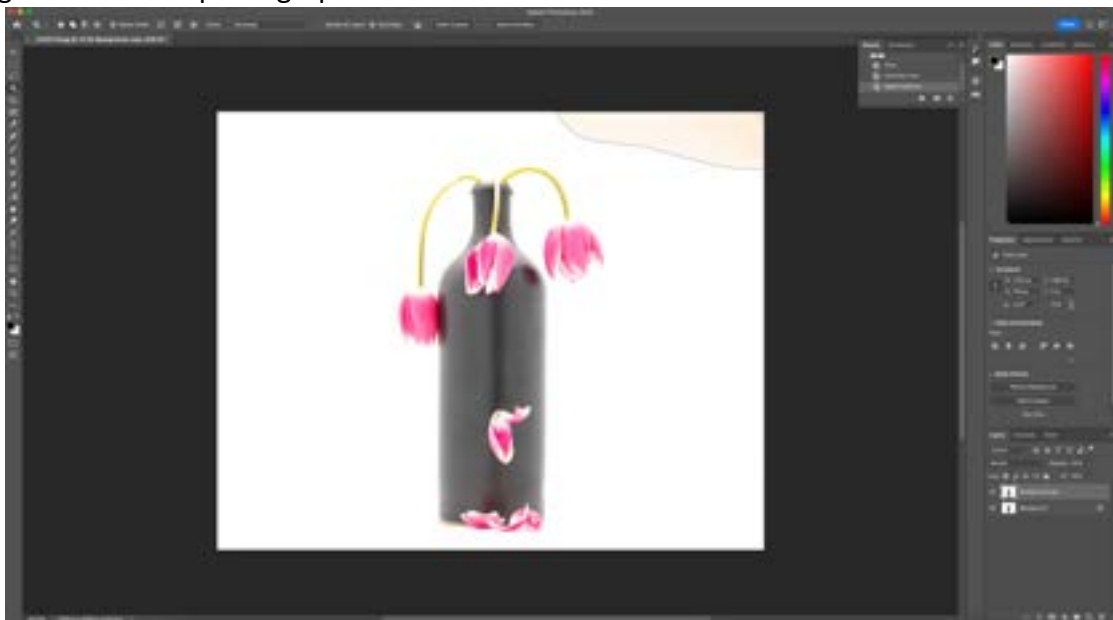
This set of contact sheets are all the photographs that I had edited, applying basic colour corrections, and applying the crop. The quality of the photographs higher than if I took them at home, therefore this change was hugely beneficial for this project's photographs. In this set of contact sheets, I notice that I need to put a mask the stem to reduce its brightness because as it is washed out when printed. I also reflect that my hand appears in some photographs, which is unavoidable; however, keeping the hand appearance minimal and wearing a

lighter coloured top makes it simpler for removal. All the ticked photographs are the ones that will work best for the accordion book. Lastly, there is a shine to the bottle particularly, due to a errors with the printer it is more noticeable than on others.

As I had to change the composition the narrative altered, where the two flowers were watching the other flower losing its petals rather than reflecting about having an external front but internally one is struggling. I lean into this new narrative by having the last photographs show how the stem also brakes then falls and the other two flowers join in union. This narrative works better for this composition and overall provides a more cohesive message to be drawn from the photographs, than trying to mould the new composition to the old meaning. Ultimately this is not detrimental to the shoot, it just highlights the fluidity that is needed when working with still life photography, as demonstrated by Suzanne Saroff, who used the set up direct her photographic meanings. Overall, the shoot was successful, and multiple narratives can be drawn from it to produce meaning, which is reflective of the semiotic theory theme.

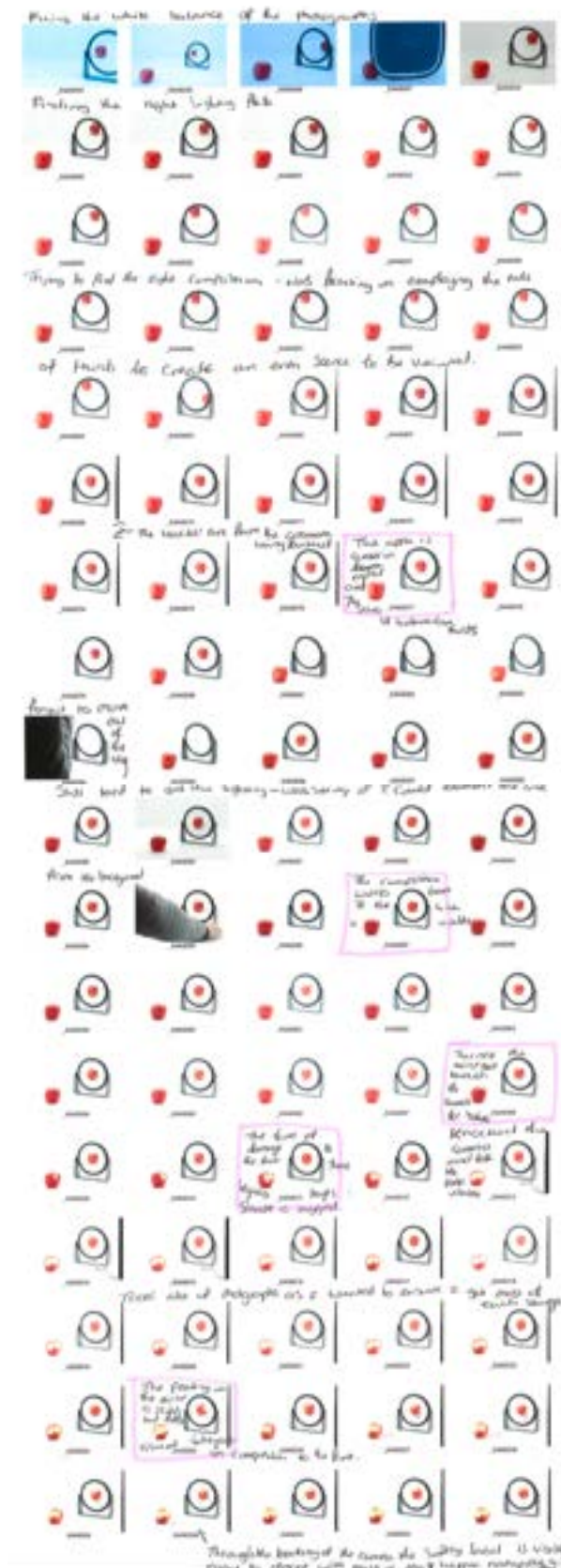


The above screenshots are showing the process I went through to change the brightness of the steam. On the left it shows how I used a brush mask tool in Lightroom to draw over the steam. I opted to create the mask in Lightroom since the colour and exposure tools are much easier to use than in Photoshop. For the purposes of demonstration, I did not mask all the steams in the right hand screenshot, as it shows the changes that the mask did in preventing the steam being over exposed. This overexposure is unavoidable with the style of lighting and backdrop as paler objects would be washed out, therefore using the mask helps to restore its visibility resulting in a seamless photograph.



Lastly in the above screenshot I show how I used the object select mask tool in photoshop to create a mask around the hand. Then I turned the mask into a new adjustments layer, changed the colour of the brush to the same as the background, through using the colour picker tool and painted over the hand. Using this method ensured that the area that I had masked would blend into the background smoothly so when printed it would not be noticeable that I had made such adjustments.

Photoshoot Ten- Apple and mirrors



This photo shoot is an adaptation of photoshoot four, which sought to explore the perspective of 'I' and how it is a biased outlook. In this shoot it explores this notion but in terms of the self-ideologies or beliefs being reflected to the entity. This links back to the theme of the photobook as the shoot is aiming to show how to take something meaning from a photograph, one needs to draw on internal ideas as stated in the semiotics theory.

The first contact sheet illustrates how I am adjusting the white balance and flash exposure to ensure that the photograph is well balanced. Additionally, it reflects how I am trying to apply the compositional technique of grouping. This is to ensure that the apple is an equal distance to the mirror when the photograph is first seen, but when one looks closer the apple is in the centre of the mirror creating intrigue and drawing a longer engagement.

In this photoshoot I had an issue where I kept knocking the camera or the curtains of the box when I went to place the item back into frame. As I am cropping the photographs to a 4:5 ratio it does not matter in this instance, however in future shoot I will need to be more attentive to the environment that I am dealing with to ensure the constancy in the photographs.

Every time I made a change to the angle of the apple or any destructions I took a photograph. This was to ensure I had enough photographs that created a seamless tradition of narrative in the accordion style whilst having changes that were big enough to keep the attention of the spectator.

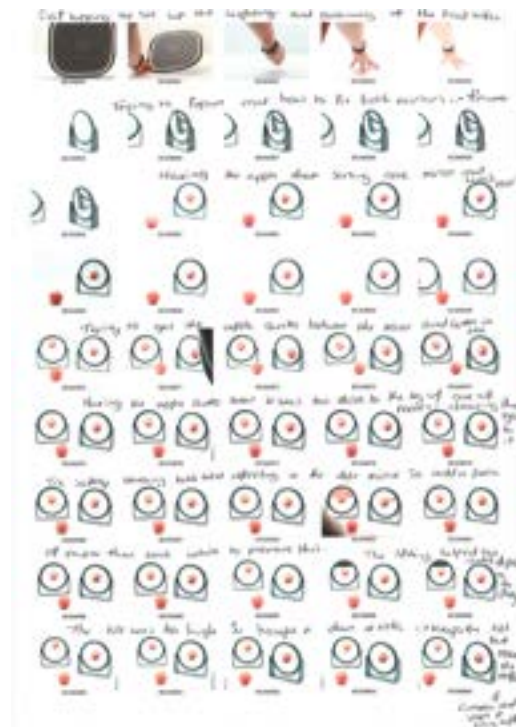


Above are the last two contact sheets which further reflect the experimentations I employed throughout the photoshoot. I had intended in post-production compositing the photograph so that the apple stayed whole, but the reflection would have the deconstruction in it, as seen in the example on the right. While I want to create a body of work that an individual could take a meaning away from it quickly, I also want to be sensitive. When applying these post productions, I realised this idea of reflection could indicate to some individuals about mental health particularly eating disorders and body dysmorphia. I am not against someone drawing this meaning I just don't want this to be the initial message that can be seen, because it takes away from the overall context of semiotics and introducing a new theme of mental health.

In conclusion I will need to change the way the final photographs are viewed by not having these post productions applied. The plan is to reshoot this concept, losing the reflecting of the 'I' being the biased perspective, by adding a second mirror, to emphasise the message that different experiences and cultures have different meanings that can be taken from a photograph.



Photoshoot Ten- Apple and mirrors (reshoot)



Overall, the reshoot was successful as the two mirrors reinforce the concept of the perspective of I and allows scope for different perspectives to be formed but in a more sensitive manner than the initial shoot. When on set I realised that the grouping composition with two mirrors was going to make the scene look cluttered, so I used rule of thirds technique keeping the apple central in both mirrors and off to the left in the actual photograph. Making these changes allows for a visually catching photograph, providing the element of cohesion but also providing points where the spectator could question why the photograph was constructed in the way it was.

The other four contact sheets above and below, showcase how I reflected on the shoot highlighting the mistakes whilst also selecting which photographs I would apply postproduction edits to. In other shoots I had not the camera or the curtains of the box, however in this shoot I took on board these issues and avoided them by being more aware of the space around me.

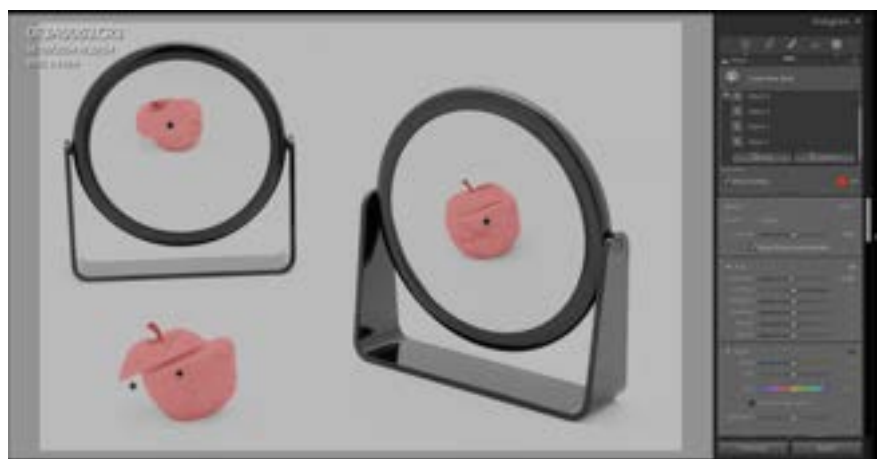


The above contact sheets and the one on the left reflect the photographs that I applied the 4:5 ratio crop, and the exposure masks. A lot of the photographs are similar in destruction, but this was intentional as I wanted to create a cohesive flow between the photographs in the accordion book format. In the above contact sheet, I ticked all the ones that I wanted to place into the accordion, as these three sheets were the best photographs to choose from.

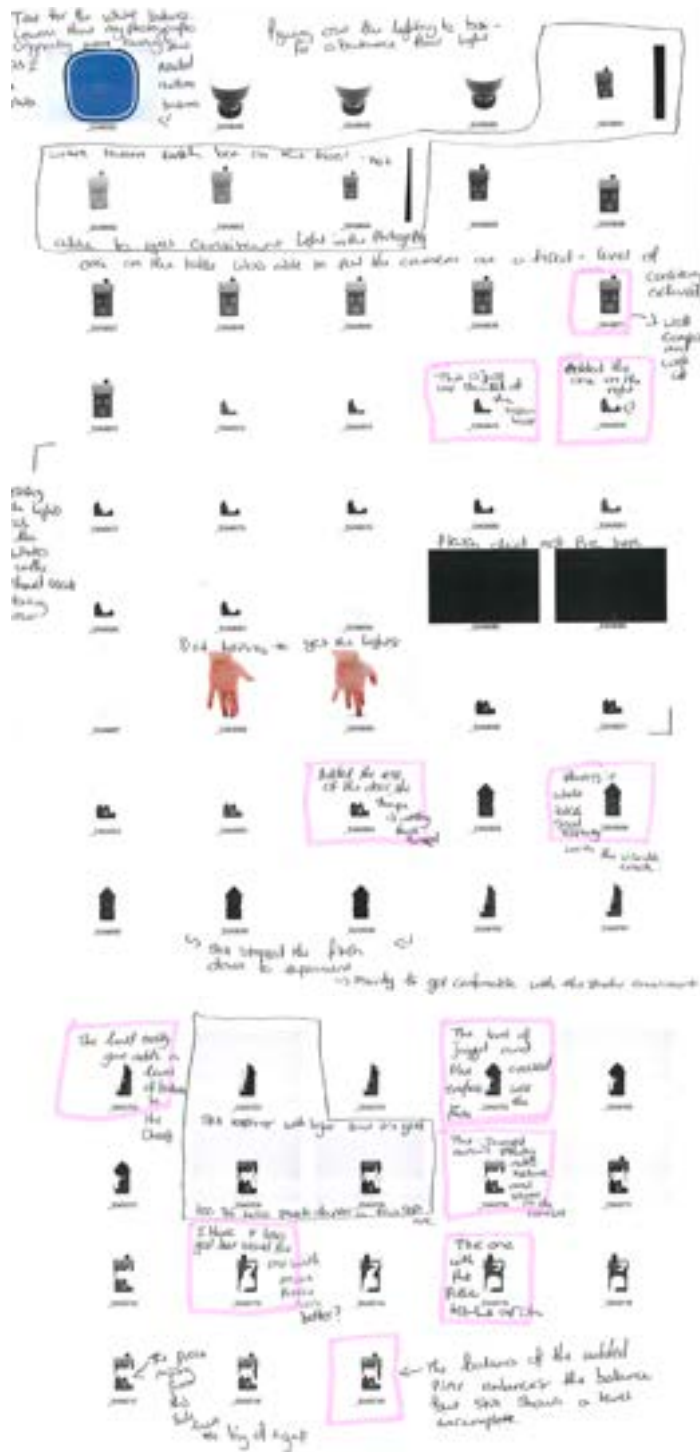
When photographing I wanted to experiment with concept of complete destruction, starting with the whole apple and progressing to pieces, core components and nothing. On the upper left contact shows the core parts, while they look good in the mirror to the right and where the apple was, it does look over exposed and unclear in the back mirror. Adding a mask to lower the exposure could bring back balance, however these photographs leave a negative question of what is being said. The lower left

contact sheet shows how the mirrors look with nothing, though the initial narrative of 'I' to being about destruction. Overall, these alterations on the most part are attention drawing but they do alter the narrative too akin to what other shoots are addressing making them lack in value. In total summation the first three contact sheets display a smooth narrative that allows enough flow for individuals to apply their own experiences to alter the narrative accordingly, and to create an accordion that fits well in the overall project both contextually and aesthetically.

On the right is a screen shot, showing how I applied a mask to the all the apples in the peeled form. This was to bring down the exposure to stop it being washed out in print form. I opted to do this in lightroom as the exposure tool is easier to navigating creating a seamless adjustment. Overall, this enhanced the peeled photographs making them fit better into the overall accordion book.



Photoshoot Eleven- Broken house



The goal of the photoshoot was to contrast the direction of the other shoots, which reflected on deconstruction. The change in direction was to reflect how in semiotic theory for a photograph to have an impact, an individual needs to build upon the fragments of deconstruction to form meaning. The base context was about building on a broken home, that for people from difficult childhoods must pick up the pieces and build their life up to become a functioning member of society. Both concepts together created a successful shoot that explored the notion of what happens after deconstruction.

The contact sheets on the left show the progression of the shoot and which photographs I selected to edit. The first two rows were focusing on finding the best distance to the camera. To provide constancy in shoot I placed masking tape so the object would be photographed in the same place between each photograph. I also experimented with the lighting to ensure I had the flash set to the right speed, as this was going to be a one shot take. Every change I made I photographed to ensure I had enough to build the narrative in post-production seamlessly.



On the left hand side, I show how I got to the point where the house was black. I used acrylic paint to cover a white house as I was not able to buy one that was completely black within my budget. I was concerned that the paint strokes would show up on the photograph, however when printed it is not too noticeable that it impacts on the viewing experience. However, if I was to re photograph then spending the extra money to get a completely black house would be more beneficial have a smoother finish. Moreover, I should have used ceramic paint which may have adhered in a smoother manner to the house. Lastly, I should have painted the inside black as it looks slightly confusing why the inside of the house is white, but the outside is black, but this does not take the message away from the photograph and is small hindrance.

On the right it shows how I needed to use strong glue to join the pieces together. Some pieces were a lot more challenging to glue as there was not much surface to place the glue but holding it together while it dried allowed the glue to act as a harder to support the weight. For future shoots where I use such techniques, I will use gloves, as when the glue it left marks where my fingers had been which slightly degrades the quality. The gloves would act as a clean oil free barrier and not leave as many marks or particles behind.



Figure 23 Example of how I adhered the house back together, Photographed Eszti Fulop (2201085), 2024



To recreate a natural cover of the masking tape I used the clone tool in Photoshop. I took a selection from just above the tape so that it would blend in smoothly, so it wouldn't look like it had been corrected in post-production. Finally, for the corners I took a section

from the white background, to keep the rounded edge for constancy purposed in the series.

Paper and sizing

A4



After establishing that a standard printer did not print to scale, I decided to use a banner printer. In the above photograph it shows how about a printer prints to scale of the file size. I chose to focus on A4 straight away because I knew immediately that A3 would be far too big, and even A4 it is massive and not viewable. Additionally, the GSM of the paper would have to be very heavy for the photograph to stand up in any capacity. In the above example I used 75 GSM, which is too light at this size, which creates a delicate body of work which does not contextually link to the theme. A4 does provide a one to one scale effect, as if the object is directly in front of the spectator, which may draw the audience member to focus on the photography and the meaning. In conclusion despite these engagements factors, A4 size does not function well with the photobook, providing more disadvantages than positives to the viewing experience and drawing the context out of the photo book.

A5

A5 is one size down from A4, which I believed would make it easier to figure out what worked best. I also utilised this size to experiment with other paper weights and material available for this banner printer, since I discovered that standard 75 GSM was too light.



Gloss: As seen above A5 is significantly more manageable than the A4 version, namely being easier to open and view in the hand. Even though the 1:1 scale sense is lost, the photographs seem to fit better in each of their framed pages allowing for a more cohesive photobook. In this example a 190gsm gloss paper was used. Overall, the photographs look nice on this paper as it produces rich colours in a deep finishing manner. Textural it invokes the feeling of something being well constructed and that it does not feel like it is going to fall apart. Due to the gloss itself to fold it is a little challenging, as seen in the example there are slight kinks in the crease line. However this is easy to solve by adding a score line, which creates a cut in the paper taking the pressure out of the fold.

On the right it demonstrates how the book can stand, with no pressure on the centre or ends, resulting in the book not tearing. An issue



with the gloss is that it leaves a 'sticky' feeling, and lots of dirt and marks end up appearing on it from use of the book, which become distracting and degrade the quality.



Matt: The above example was created through 180 GSM matt paper, and it can be seen how the photograph fills more naturally to the paper than the



A4 size. The matt paper provides a sturdy high quality feel to the book, and even though it 10 GSM less than the gloss the accordion book still stands up, as seen on the right.

In summation A5 is a much more manageable viewing experience as its size is significantly smaller, preventing ripping and frustration when opening. Despite this I will experiment with the A6 size as it is again a smaller size and may make opening the book more fluid and approachable. The paper that I will go for is the 180 GSM matt, as it provides a sharp crisp image, the weight of the paper is strong enough to withstand wearing, without getting the scratches and marks seen throughout the glossy one.

A6



I test
printed
the A6
on 75
GSM

paper as seen on the left hand side. This size creates a small body of work that still frames the photographs nicely. At this size it is a lot easier to open and is compact enough that the viewer could either hold it in their hand or stand it on a table. Ultimately this size with the matt paper are the perfect options that support the context of the photobook.

Experimenting with the construction and storage of the book

When researching the construction of the photobook, one of the key factors outlined was how every decision from photograph to paper and book packaging had to relate back to the context/theme for its success. As a result, this section will explore on how the photobook could be constructed and then packaged, to ensure that these factors do not hinder the contextual meaning of the photobook, but rather create the embodied experience this project aims for.

Accordion book with traditional book construction



Figure 24, Concertina book for watercolour, photobook, sketching, scrapbook, (open example)
Martin Hogg, 2024

The aim of this photobook experiment was to take the traditional style of opening and closing the book, and to adapt it to the accordion style. This would have reflected contextually the historical values of a photobook as stated in one of the aims. There also was visual influence as seen in fig 24 and 25 which is of a photobook constructed in this manner. Fig 24 highlights how when the book is opened, the sides extend, and the accordion is attached to the centreboard. The paper may then be pulled out to reveal the photographs comma like a traditional accordion.

Fig 25 illustrates how the book is closed, compacting down to the traditional book style. This creates a sense of ambiguity and mystery to the photo book, since it requires interaction and attention to open it rather than just flipping through. From the example it shows how I could create that encourages thoughtful interaction, which was a goal set for this project; to create an active thinker rather than passive spectator.

The example I have chosen constructed their book with plain white paper, but for mine I will be using matt A6 paper that has already been printed on. Therefore, I will need to ensure that I create my project vertically InDesign rather than horizontally to ensure that work can be pulled out from the centre of board toward the spectator. To create the boards for the project I will make them to the dimensions of the printed paper, to create a flush finish. If some parts are bigger than others then it will look messy and poorly constructed, degrading the project as the viewer will not want to interact.



Figure 25 Concertina book for watercolour, photobook, sketching, scrapbook, (closed example), Martin Hogg, 2024



This experiment was a failure for multiple reasons and if I worked on it few more times then I might be able to recreate something akin to the visual influence. On the upper left hand side, I show how the board was splitting and not cutting smoothly even with a new sharp blade in the Stanley knife. Moreover, when the book was folded over it was bulky and didn't flush as needed. This was due to the GSM being 330, which I selected for the longevity of viewing the photobook. Realistically the weight of the paper is not that heavy, due to its own light gsm, and low number of spreads and will not have enough weight bearing to require such heavy boards. Therefore, I will lower the GSM number to no more than 200 to ensure that the boards cut well and sit nicely in the construction.

Before this experiment, I knew that this sheet of book fabric needed to remain whole, as this provides support to all the loose pieces of book board to ensure it opens and closes properly, as can be seen in Fig 24. However, in the upper right hand photograph I cut the fabric which breaks this tension, which was my other mistake. This meant that the book could not be constructed properly and fell apart when one opened and closed it. Furthermore, the fabric I had brought was a test swatch, and was not big enough to cover all the pieces. In summary I need to cut all the pieces first and measure them adding an inch on all sides, and then order the fabric to those dimensions. This will ensure that I have enough fabric to cover the board and overlap to create strong tension which will make a smooth finish.

In conclusion this concept could work well to respecting the historical practises of photo book making, whilst engagement with the spectator encouraging them to think. Additionally, this concept could work contextually as one would need to pull apart the book akin to deconstruction to view the imagery. However, with financial constraints this takes the project beyond my budget and therefore I will not be progressing with the idea. Through this experimentation I will be taking forward the notion of using book board, as it provides a boundary and structure that supports the context of the photobook well, more than the front being the same continuous strip of paper.

Displaying it in a box



My first consideration to how the books were going to be stored was in a box format, as I am having more than one photobook the spectator needs to know they all link together. The above photograph shows an example of a box that I had considered to use. This concept contextually fits, as to view a book they would need to pull it from the box, then open the book, and once done they would need to put it back in the box; akin to the semiotics theory where the individual deconstructs the signs and symbols and then reconstructs to draw meaning. However, this is very similar to Singh's *Museum Bhavan* and therefore could be seen as plagiarising her concept. Moreover, a custom box would need to be made, as the total width, depth and height of the books would not fit into most standard boxes. This leads to financial and time constraints since I would have to source materials and learn to build a box or pay someone to construct one. Overall while this concept creates a contextually embodied experience it will not be an idea I will be continuing with at this stage.

Book board method



From the traditional book construction, I established that using book boards might be a way to add a nice finish to the photo book. I also took note that 330 GSM book board was too thick and therefore used 150 GSM. The photograph on the left hand side shows how I attached the accordion strip of paper all with a 1 inch flap to allow the book to fold seamlessly. It also shows how I cut the book board to the dimensions of the strip to allow at 2 create a smooth transition. I also coated the board in paper, which was of 220 GSM itself, and to apply it I left a one inch border twofold over and cut out the corner squares to allow it to fit flush against the board. The paper then I stuck over this was made to perfectly fit the board to hide all these elements providing a neat photobook with as little errors to the finish as possible.



The above photograph shows how the book board fits in relation to the accordion paper, providing a structure and sturdiness that helps both the context of the photo book, but also acts as a protector of the book. If I were to use this concept for my final project then the sides of the board facing 'outward' would be of a title page with a photograph of the whole object, and an explanation of the book. This is to create a visual stimulus so that the spectator is encouraged to want to study the book further, because as seen in the photograph above, there is nothing to urge them to open the book, which hinders the interaction aspect required.

Individual book boxes



This photobook experiment originated from the concept of having all the photobooks stored into a big box. With this concept a single accordion is mounted to the front and back of the box, so when the box is opened the accordion expands with it. From my photobook experiment with the book board, I reflected there needed to be more visual stimuli to encourage the spectator to engage with the book. In the above two photographs it shows how I created a front and back graphic and then stuck them onto the box. This concept works to creating viewer engagement, however an amendment would be in InDesign to the add on pages to the dimension

on the box, to create a minimal transition, as now the eyes are drawn negatively to the edges where the box and page does not meet. Furthermore, I need to use a higher GSM paper or a less water based glue to stop the warping and bubbling seen in the above example. In the photograph below I show how the accordion book opens from the box ends and how it provides a firm structure that helps the photobook to stand up offering a viewing experience.



In summary this concept is the best in housing the photo book in an interactive style that speaks contextually to the deconstruction and reconstruction that the semiotics theory outlines. It also encourages viewer engagement particularly to focus on the photobook and to explore why the photo book was constructed in the way it was, how that links to the photographs and how both fit withing the context. For my final edition there are some amendments that are fundamental to ensure that the best photobook can be created. Firstly, upon speaking to a lecturer they suggested that maybe I just have a front graphics on the box and have the 'blurb' of the book as a context card, that sits within the very last box. This suggestion is something I'm going to consider, as it enhances the ambiguity the project once and as it stands there is too much context given. Moreover, to fit with ambiguity I will remove the overall title cover pages. I would also like to make some changes as noted in the upper right photograph to the wording as it is too directional and needs to fit more with the idea that the individual is to use their own experiences.

Additional amendments were suggested to the box size to bring it down a few millimetres as it is quite clunky now, and almost feels too loud in comparison to the soft nature the deconstruction talks about. I will act upon this suggestion as this is something that's solvable, but I also wanted to experiment with different weight box to provide more sturdiness which could help with the context delivery as well as practical reasons. Lastly, along these lines I will use a lower water rate glue to prevent warping and damage to both the box and the paper as this is eye-catching and degrades the meaning of the context.

Toaster rack



I considered grouping all my accordion books in the toaster rack a seen on the left. It provides a natural chronological ordering which feeding into the idea of order, needing to deconstruct to view the photographs. If I had chosen the direction using the book boards, this could have worked quite well as the book's fitted nicely into the gaps once

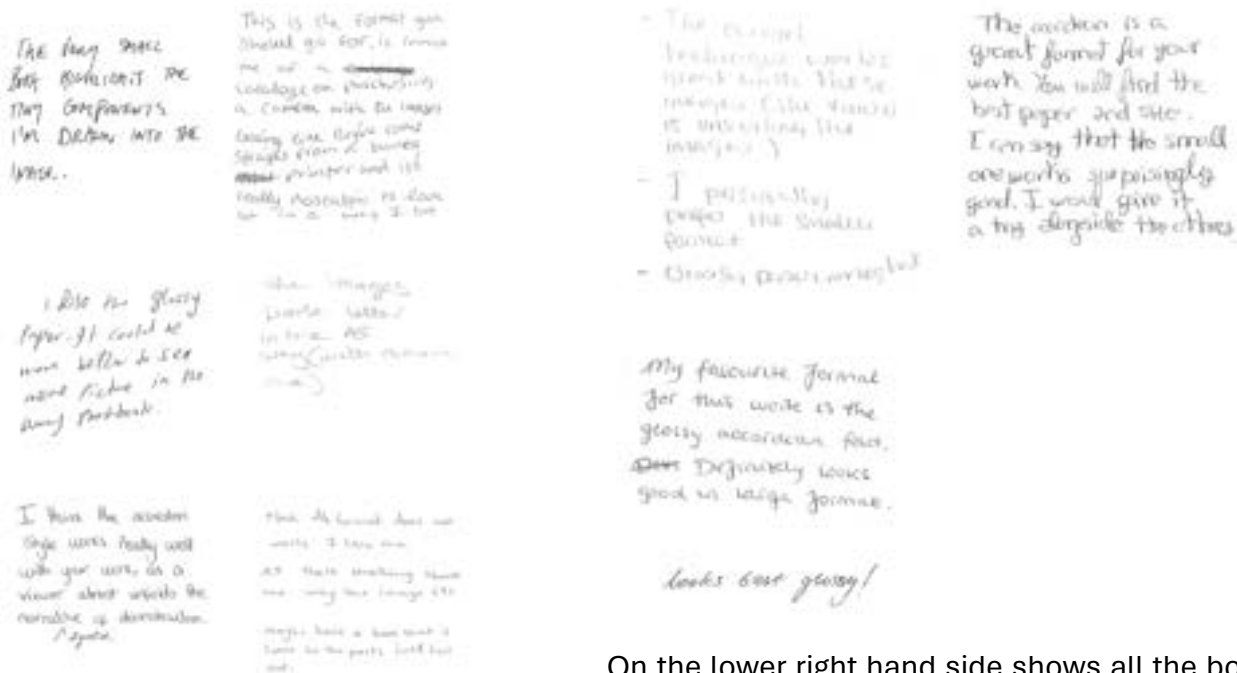
they were folded. However, as I chose to go with the option of putting them into boxes this concept doesn't really work anymore boxes look big and clunky inside this rack, and I would need to get my book box to a minimum of 15 millimetres. As it stands, I cannot get the book box any lower than 17 millimetres and therefore they don't fit in the gaps. Overall, this concept isn't something I'm going to continue with, but it is an interesting notion that I may carry forward into other projects that may contextually and practically work better for.

Ribbon around the boxes

For the final display I settled on the idea of using a ribbon to wrap around all boxes full stop on the right hand side i show how someone stated that when they looked at the box it reminded them of a gift style box, and it made them remember that life is a gift was living. I thought I would lean into this idea as this was someone's own interpretation of the project as a whole and was a way to solve all the boxes falling and not looking like adhesive project. Below are how a 3/8th of inch ribbon tide together it was quite fiddly and ultimately the boxes still slide around just because of the nature of the material used. This idea works as a final project however if I had given myself more time, I could have maybe experimented with different ways of tying the ribbon.



Peer feedback



On the lower right hand side shows all the book dummies that I had taken to the peer review session, which was before I had settled on the final design of the box. Above is a scan of all the comments I got. A lot of comments were saying that the glossy one looked best, which I agree to an extent, but it only fitted with the camera project as it gives off this cooperate connotation. For this book project I will be using the matt as it overall fits, however I will consider the glossy paper when I specifically create the camera sequence a project of its own. Comments on the sizes were useful as I was able to narrow it down to the smaller sizes and helped me to come up with the use of the A6 format. The notion of the pages being loose is an interesting concept that I could have considered, but at the stage of feedback I felt that it was too late to try and scale the project in such a way and thus will be a notion I will work on post submission.



I found the feedback interesting to receive but also it was inspiring to see how the individuals interacted with the book, creating it into different shapes to view. Overall, I should have cultivated more opportunities of spectator feedback, as this is a fundamental component of semiology theory I over looked.

Project title decision

Not quite- this was the project alias; it was used to describe more what the photographs were exploring rather than the overall context and theme of the photo book. It contrasts negatively to what the intention of the photobook is trying to explore, as it offers that the photo book is about destruction rather using signs and symbols to draw meaning.

Fragmented reality- it seeks to emphasise the concept that to draw meaning from photographs one needs to pull apart signs and symbols, they have internalised and apply them. It also offers to explore the notion that the reality of one individual is biased as it is focused on the 'I' and that others have perspectives that differ. However, it still takes negatively away from the context of the photobook (semiotic theory) leading one to believe that it is about individuals state of mind rather than perceiving.

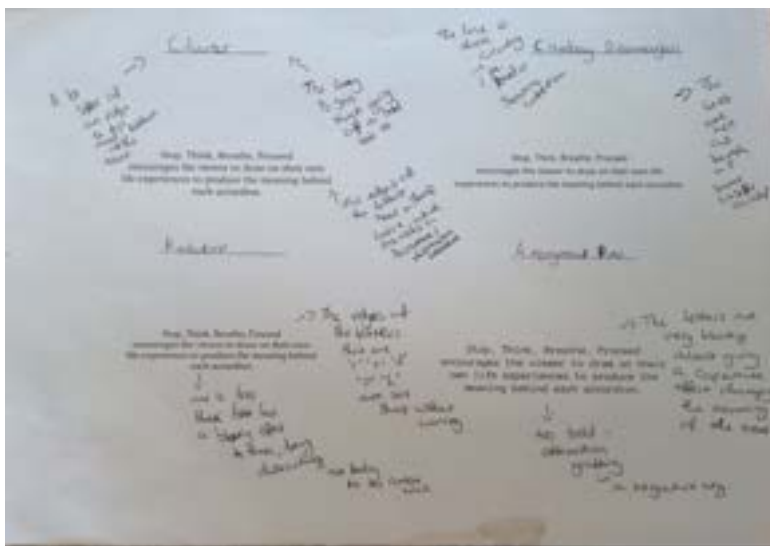
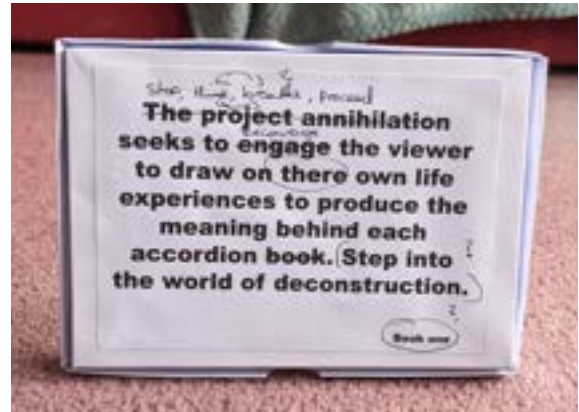
Dismembered reality- from the last title I wanted to keep the word reality in to see if that could act as a directional lead to the context. Dismembered offers a more direct word to pulling apart different signs and symbols in a photograph and applying personal, cultural, social, or religious influences to draw meaning. Furthermore, it draws the spectator to interact with the book, suggesting that to view the photographs the individual needs to pull apart the boxes to see the photograph. Even though it provides a direction, the title is not punchy or flows and takes a while for one to process what the book could be about, which still leaves a level of confusion.

Annihilation- draws on the strengths from the last word particularly about offering a context as to what the individual should do with the boxes to view the photographs. It also provides context of what the photographs will display offering intrigue to the spectator and encourages them to view the project. With the title being a single word it is straight to the point offering flow and immediate interest to the project, encouraging an individual to think about what the work explores.

Stop, Think, Breathe, Proceed- this title stems from the slogan that I had underneath the project. It was to encourage the spectator to reflect upon each book both as its own entity but within the entire project. It provides instructions to the spectator on how their physical being could react to the project, the first book encouraging them to focus on what is before them, then the next to get them to think about the signs and symbols and how their own values can draw meaning. The third book would then get them to focus on processing and sitting with this information while they reconstruct and the fourth emphasises for the spectator to take something away from the project. Overall, this title is the one I will select as it flows and links all the books together providing an understanding of the project whilst keeping a level of ambiguity.

Typography decision

On the right shows the original typography that was used; however, it was pointed out this was too bold of a text. It has a loud or attention-grabbing connotation which can be distracting drawing the attention to it. This is likely due to a bold thick line for the text and a blocky nature to how the words sit. When selecting a new font, I need to pay attention to the curves of the letter, thickness of the stroke and the words relationship to each other.



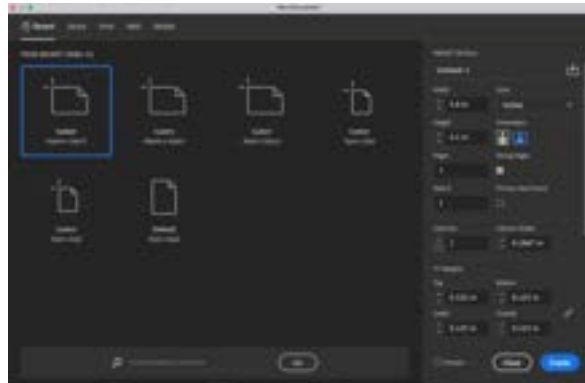
The pages above, is the process I went through to get the most suitable typography to which I left it at size 20 (InDesign) for consistence in comparison. Additionally, it was import I saw the text printed as this is how the final outcome would be viewed and, on the computer, it looks different enough to be harder to choose from. On the left page a lot of the fonts had thick stroke lines, and once I solved this the text became blocky. The issue with blocky is that it gives off an instructional manual or cooperate connotations, and therefore if the project just focused on the camera, then this style could have been beneficial. Getting the text to have a softer finish on the edges of the 'tall' and 'low' letters like 'h' and 'g' was difficult as a lot of fonts just cut it off or provide a harsh curve finish, but this was important to resolve as such ways of typing causes the writing to become seem clipped, giving off a tone unwanted to this project. PSL Ornanong Pro regular which had a thin text stroke, overall softer finish to the letters where it merged into the page and a natural flow between the words, creating the spectators eyes to naturally flow. Overall, this font creates a softer, quieter tone, that supports both the ambiguity and context that is needed.

Constructing the photobook

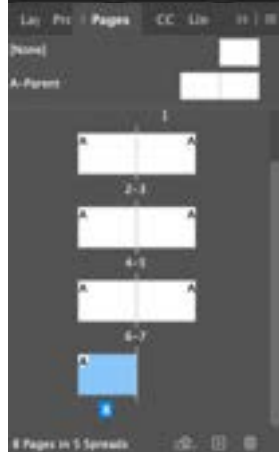
InDesign

To create my book, I settled with using InDesign as this was the best software available to me to create my photobooks in a timely manner. At the beginning of the project, I was unfamiliar with InDesign and watched the video *InDesign for beginners free course* (Envato Tuts+, 2019). This provided me with an overview of all the capabilities available in InDesign, allowing me to have a baseline understanding and then apply them to my specific book format. With this knowledge I was more able to understand videos specific to create an accordion book, as I knew the terminology and placement of tools. I watched the video *Project 6- gate, roll, accordion, and calendar formats using InDesign* (Rebecca Bilbrey, 2017), which visually showed me specific aspects of creating an accordion such as moving the spreads into one long line and how to create multiple spreads on one page. However, this was quite board and jump between various formats so only referred to the areas I needed specific guidance on.

Lastly, I researched into how I could make an accordion photobook. While the final style of the photobook is slightly different, I investigated Travis. D's (2022) article called *making a concertina photobook*. This article established to me how to use InDesign, to print the photo book and then how the photographs could look like in the outcome. All this research has assisted me into creating my photo book as I have taken parts from all of it and adapted it to my specific needs. Below is the visual representation of how I deigned the book in InDesign:



I needed to create a custom size as there was no pre-set for the A6 dimensions I wanted, as seen on the left. Typical A6 size is 4.1 inches (width) by 5.8 inches (height), however I wanted my photobook to be landscape for easier viewing experience, therefore I switched the height and width values around.



For the accordion I wanted to use six photographs to create a seamless deconstruction narrative, whilst keeping the length manageable for viewing. To create a seamless transition from box to paper I needed an additional two pages, as seen on



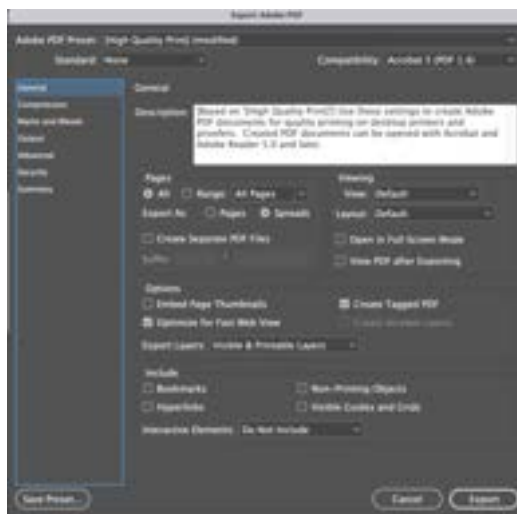
the left. On the right I show how I turned off automatic page clipping to allow for one long spread.



In the above screenshot it highlights how the photographs were placed into the document, filling up most of the page. This was done to guarantee that the image was large enough for easy viewing, centred, and consistently placed throughout the series of books. Overall, this would result in a tidy continuous flow of images in the specific accordion book, not causing any negative eye catches which would take away from the body of work. Finally, all books were constructed in this fashion so that when seeing collectively they all looked the same establishing they were a series of books.

Printing

I knew that the accordion books needed to be printed on the banner printer, but I needed to know how to convert them from an InDesign file to format that the printer could read. Furthermore, that the document had to be printed in one long line rather than split onto multiple pages that needed to be joined, as seen in the InDesign document. Watching the video *2018 F InDesign accordion fold booklet printing* by Scott Kolbo (2018) it visually showed me how I could print to a PDF and have parts of the spread on one page. This video was great at showing me where the print menu was and how to navigate it, particularly highlighting that preview page which would show me how the spreads looked on the page. Despite its benefits I was not able to print in this manner on one long strip for the banner printer which I needed to. From the Adobe (2022) article called *Impose a document for booklet printing* and with a Technical Demonstrator helping me understand the terminology, I was able to create a PDF that would allow me to print in one long line.



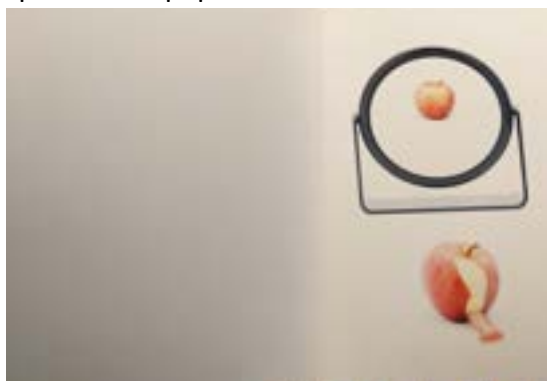
The photograph on the left is a screen shot showing the adobe PDF high quality print settings panel I needed to use to print. In this menu I could change it from pages to spreads, which allows for the accordion to be printed in the one long strip as set up in InDesign. Additionally, I set it to a tagged PDF, which was more important for when printing the cover and context sheet, as it ensures that the font and images are embedded into the document so that it is readable by the printer.

Building the photobook

From the test dummy it was identified that the box at 22mm was too big and in the final version I got it down to 17mm. I wanted to get it to 15mm or lower, but for the style of box I was not able to do due to the way the box closes. However, if I had managed to the pages folded would not have sat flush as the would have been too thick so it did not manner too much. Additionally, the boxes were constructed with 250 GSM card stock with an additional 50gsm reinforcing the sides, and I used a glue with less water to prevent the warping as seen in the first edition. The process of construction is as follows:



The banner printer cut just above the 4.1 height specified to allow room for page to be cut neatly. Therefore, to get it to fit the size of the box I needed to trim it down. Firstly, I outlined the box to get the paper cut down to the outside dimensions as seen on the upper left photograph. Then I took half an inch off to allow for the paper to sit flush when folded in the box as demonstrated in the above photograph. Due to the grain of the paper running down the long edge, I had to hold the knife at a forty five degree angle when cutting the strip to guaranteed that the whole sharpness could eat cut smoothly. Furthermore, placing the flat edge of the blade lightly on the ruler resulted in a nice straight line. Lastly placing a new blade in ensured it was sharp enough and doing light splits of the paper added to a smooth finish.



Between each photograph I measure 5.8 inches to ensure there was a consistent fold between each page. This ensured the book folded neatly into the box and looked neat when opened. I could have opted for a crop and folds line when printing however it would have looked distracting and messy in the outcome. In addition, I scored the page, which is a slight cut, to allow for a neat fold in the photograph as seen in the upper left photograph. On the upper right I show how the line is sharp and messy if not scored as there is pressure build up, preventing a smooth finish. Therefore, the score line eases the tension creating

a smoother and flatter fold. In the photographs to the right, it shows how I used a pointed bone folder to get a smooth flat fold, which would further ensure the photobook laid flat in the box.



To attach the photograph to each end of the box I glued the blank page in the inside as seen on the upper right photograph. To ensure it adhered smoothly I pressed it with a rounded bone folder as a pointed one could have marked or torn the page, as seen on the upper left of the photograph.



Even though I allowed measurements for attaching to the box by the additional pages, I did not add on the folding lines and the depth of the box, or the fact one box is slightly wider to allow for the other box to sit flush in. This issue created a visible joining line of wear the page attached to the box, distracting the mind negatively towards it. On the left above photograph I colour matched as best a piece of paper to the accordion strip of paper, to which I glued on top of the join (see above right) creating a smoother finish. When I remake this photobook, I need to ensure I make the accordion strip to the measurement of the box, rather than constructing the box to fit the strip.

Selecting accordions



Shoot eight (above) provides a literal representation of deconstruction of meaning as seen in the theory. Photographically they are balanced, creating a fluid transition onto the next one, and the colours are overall sharp. It sits well into the body of work, with the photographs fitting well as the second title **Think**, as it encourages individuals to focus on what the work is about.



Shoot nine (above) also is representing the deconstruction of meaning, but in a gentler format. It also extends to the narrative what could happen post deconstruction as the two flowers that not effected join in union. This links to theory, as once the individual as the obtained meaning will be what the individual takes away from the photograph. Even though these photographs work well aesthetically in an attention-grabbing manner, the elements of narrative are better conveyed separate in other series and thus will not be used.



Shoot eleven (above) focuses on building up from the destruction which represents the element of what is taken away from viewing photography which links back to semiology as this meaning drawn is what an individual takes away from the photograph. Visually it creates a balance set of photographs that the viewer can see a level of building back from the previous photograph, causing viewer interaction. Overall, this sequence translates well into accordion series and the advantages of what is discussed visually will become the book four titled **Proceed**.



Shoot ten (above) focuses on different perspectives and how not everyone will draw meaning in the same way due to their own experiences. In the semiology theory it strongly focuses on individual's social, cultural, and religious experiences and how they interpret signs/symbols into meaning. Therefore, this shoot is a fundamental in narrating the photobook, becoming book three titled **Breathe**, as it focuses the spectator to sit for a moment and take in what is before them.



Shoot six (above) reflects thinking the notion of having an external that is tough but there is a lot going on under the surface. The photographs leave a sense of needing to catch a breathe as the coffee spills over the cup, which could have fitted well with the first photobook in the series. This could have linked to the semiotics theory as it could have encouraged the spectator to take a moment to focus on the series of work before them. However, the photographs seem to change perspective throughout too much and the lighting is not stable, causing negative impact on what could be drawn from it. Lastly there is not element of deconstruction featured in the photographs, and therefore does not fit well with the overall body of work.



Shoot seven (above) focused on resilience and how an entity that seems soft, breakable, or fragile can be strong. Visually the colours are sharp and the nature of the sequence the spectator is drawn encouraged to find out what is happening next. It's links to semiology reflects taking a moment to pay attention to what is happening in a body of work, becoming the active spectator rather than the passive viewer. This works well for accordion serries and will become the first book titled **Stop**, due to its attention-grabbing nature and the ability to allow the viewer to take a moment to look at the work.

The aim of this process was to spend some time focusing on how the work I have curated fitted into a cohesive narrative on semiology. Additionally, focusing on how they linked together, realising that I could have an equal balance of food objects and inanimate objects to create a cohesive body of work. While I have my own intentions as to why these photographs were created, the interpretations of the photographs will be personal to the spectator and thus creating an ever-flowing meaning.

Final outcome



Evaluation

At the beginning of the project, I began an investigation into the history of photobooks, outlining how they were created as a need to make photography more accessible. Throughout the investigation it established how the photobook was used as an art medium and a brief exploration into the issues that arose from its dual use as a documentation and art practice. This investigation thus established that photobook was used as a method of viewing and communication, which my photobook represented by ensuring the construction did not distract from the photographs but stimulated viewer engagement. The impact can be seen as I created a photobook that had a high level of ambiguity, requiring the individual to open the book in order to look at the photographs and understand the project.

Despite the apparent success of this influence, I still did not meet my aim of creating a photobook that supported the historical intentions. The fundamental issues steamed from the research beginning too broad, preventing me creating guidance points on how I could respect the history. In future photobooks conducting more specific research such as focusing only on the accessibility of photobooks, or the development of the photobook into an art medium, should allow me to successfully portray the history. Additionally, an investigation into the materials used historically to create a photobook could be of benefit as I could experiment and see how I could use them within my own book. Finally, a massive advantage of the photobook within history was to be reproducible, but my project failed to represent this as it cannot be mass produced ahead of sales. If they were to reproduceable as it stands, I would need to run it at as a limited edition prefunded and then make each too order. Therefore, I would like to work on seeing how I could make alterations to the book that would allow it to be easier to reproduce, to honour this historical element.

Following the investigation into the history, I conducted research into the construction of the photobook, which highlighted early on in the project the importance of everything linking to the context. Collating the information and regularly looking at Brant.A's (2021) article, gave me a check list to refer to every time I made a change to ensure its link back to the context. Moving forward I think I could have looked more into the way the photographs sit within the book and how they all relate to each other under a theme. This would have made me aware sooner in the project that photographically I was over complicating everything, and while the object fitted into the given photograph, they were not linking well together since the objects had too wide connotations.

Along this note I think I should have created more opportunities for feedback specifically on what the objects in the photographs resonated with individuals, as the spectator is what procures the meaning within the semiotics theory. Furthermore, this would have supported the issues related to the complexity of the photographs as a whole, as I would have been made aware of what objects resonated with individuals the most, thus focusing on them rather than the broad range I had. The benefits of this method were useful in the project as I had some feedback written

on the construction of the photobook, thus concluding this idea would have helped keep the spectator at the forefront of the work and helped with time management.

Other photographic issues that impacted the time scale stemmed from lighting, set up and white balance issues. While at the end of the project I understand what was causing these problems and fixed them obtaining the desired crisp white photographs, it took weeks to solve on my own. Therefore, in other projects where I am having large problems reaching out to others who may have the knowledge is not shameful but rather can save valuable time. This point is exemplified by the white balance concerns in the project, I had researched and looked into the settings of the camera, but the only way I knew what was wrong was by someone pointing out the issue. Overall consulting and asking for help is not something that negatively reflects on my abilities but rather shows adaptability and using all sources of research in the project.

The photographs were taken in the style of still life photography, employing a wide range of principles from its own theory. This research conducted helped provide a direction for the project which resulted in the photographs sticking to a cohesive boundary that was replicated across all final accordion books. In future projects looking into photographers who employed still life photography principles, would have visually shown me how each element impacted the photograph, allowing me a firm direction of what techniques I could have used when shooting.

Similarly, creating shoot direction plans particularly through visual mediums would have highlighted some issues of the way the props worked on set. For example, with shoot seven I removed the plate in the re shoot and if I had created a plan then I would have seen it could have been distracting and may not have needed to photograph again. Overall, this reflects about being more conscious and intentional about my photography rather than charging into a shoot.



When photographing in the still life manner I may benefit from someone assisting with the props. In the photograph above shows the **photobook** which the photographs look like they have changed in distance in closeness to the camera. This is not the case; however, the hammer has slightly changed angles as I was unable to get an accurate replication as I needed to deal with lights and camera continuously. Therefore, having an assistant would mean I could focus on the technical elements for the photograph, and they could keep the angle of the props in a constant manner creating a less distracting sequence of photographs.

Ultimately the time management issues impacted the final display of the photobooks. While this visual enquiry reflects the process of iterations that went into getting to the tied bow around the boxes, it is not a satisfactory outcome. It seems arbitrary and does not fully link back

to the context of semiotics, however it is better than having all the boxes loose as this would have been confusing. Therefore, deciding the final outcome of the project at least four weeks before the deadline would have ensured I considered packaging and displaying methods, creating a more seamless project.

I had settled on the book being A6 and then made the box to that size. I would like to make another version of this photobook; where I print the paper to the dimension of the book. This ensures the book fits flush into the box without having to add a paper to cover the connection of the connection. It could have also saved time as the paper would already be fit to size without trimmings. Along these lines I would like to leave at least two weeks before putting the paper into the book, as banner paper is stored rolled and had a slight bowing which after a week of being pressed was still apparent in certain books as the box did not close evenly.

Throughout the project it can be seen how in-depth research was conducted on practicing photographer's photobooks. This established different forms and techniques that have been employed in creating photobooks, providing me visual guidance on what could be possible. While overall happy with this research, maybe looking at books that were more specific to me thematically or in the binding style could have assisted. Additionally having a look into how the photographs were displayed in such books would allow for insight into the importance of the relationship each photograph has to each other and within the overall theme.

Conducting the research into the semiotics theory, outlined key principles that I was able to apply to the photographs and book. I was able to successfully visually show that deconstruction through the objects and the need to pull the boxes apart to draw meaning akin to the theory. Researching Barthes. R (1991) concept of semiology is more about communication of meaning between the photographer and spectator. This notion was additionally seen in the history of the photobook and successfully shown in the project about how I may have a meaning behind a photograph, but what the audience takes a way could be different due to their own unconscious and conscious influences.

However, this was primitive investigation into visually representing semiology and despite the successes there are many improvements I would like to make to develop it within my practice over the years. Specifically, a more in-depth examination into theorists on semiology will provide solid grounds on all aspects of the theory. To which I would create a direction map that uses this research and see how an aspect could be represented visually. Combining this and afore outlined research methods I may end up producing a more cohesive representation of semiology.

Even though I have a photobook I am pleased with there were points in the project where it came apparent that using a range of objects to reflect on the deconstruction seen in semiology, might have been too complicated. In the *Llyf* exhibition (2024) I saw the work of Folium's deconstructed photocopier as seen on the right. I had an opportunity post exhibition to talk to them about how they went about the deconstructing, which had similar parameters to mine and also similar issues with thread bearing screws. They suggested ways that I could potentially work around this in future as well as pointing out the use of a space that could be dedicated to the project which would help with consistency throughout the photographs if I had to shoot on separate days. In essence seeing this in the exhibition as well as



talking to them established that I could have maybe focused my project specifically on one element and could have led to a more cohesive outcome on the semiology theory that did not bring in lots of other theories and research to support the project. In essence establishing that less is more sometimes. Moving this project specifically forward I would like to take the **photo book of the camera** and do an investigation of semiotic deconstruction just specific to this to see how the narrative changes either negatively or positively

To draw to a conclusion, there are a lot of lessons I learnt over the weeks of curating a photobook and can see how there are more lessons that I could take away. I think that creating photobooks will become a part of my practice as this is a great way to embody photography in an accessible communication format. I would like to experiment more with this specific photobook, seeing how the afore mentioned changes could improve the work. Lastly, I would like to see how I can use the medium of photography the semiology theory, and potentially other theories could be converted to a visual format of understanding.

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