

## OCA Thames Valley Group Meeting: 17 March 2018

(Notes taken by Holly)

The weather forecast for this Saturday was terrible, with Amber warnings for wind and snow, so we were expecting a fairly small turnout. However, nine students braved the weather, as did our tutor, Jayne. Bearing in mind the forecast, we decided to keep admin talk to a minimum and to move straight on to showing and critiquing our work. It was therefore briefly noted that Russell Squires would be putting on a large format photography workshop soon and we got started.

First up was Jonathan, who showed us two videos he has been making on the subject of *Atmosphere* for his Moving Image course. We talked about the extra complexity involved in making films as opposed to photographs, with the added variables of sound, colour grading, editing and pacing. We also considered whether monochrome versus colour made a difference to the perception of a piece of film.

Next up was Dawn, who is preparing for the Contextual Essay in Digital Image & Culture. She had been playing with ideas about how digital was different and possibly more ephemeral than analogue photography and the role of the internet in adding further layers of meaning once an image has become part of the digital network. She showed us some photographs of tulips, which she had submerged underwater or manipulated using the app 'Flowpaper'. Both ideas were about exploring distortion and the potentially ghostly nature of the digital afterlife.



Kate then showed us her series on the *Housework Fairies* for Context & Narrative and we discussed whether it would be better to contextualise them with ideas about feminism, or the Cottingley Fairies, or even both. We also looked at her *Period Project* and discussed whether she should submit the entire cycle of images, or just a few key ones.

Holly talked briefly about her exploration of 3D image making and Jayne showed us all some 3D work that she had made. We discussed whether 3D added to a story or was a distraction, and decided that it very much depended on the justification of the process.

Gerry then showed us his preparatory drawings for Assignment 5 of Drawing Skills. His tutor had told him that the technical aspects of his work should form part of the assignment, and he was practising leaving in visible lines, although it felt alien to him. He also reported that he had been told that quite a few students had been marked down heavily on the Drawing assessments because their work relied too much on added colour. Gerry's thought processes for his assignment, *Looking for Simon* were considered, as he planned to use landscape for the assignment, not the more obvious life drawing.



Sue then showed her ideas for Assignment 1 of Landscape Photography. She was interested in considering the sense of the uncanny, unease and fear which are a part of the concept of The Sublime, and was taking photographs of urban underpasses during the day and at night to reference many people's

fear of the dark. We discussed what colours we associated with fear and anxiety and decided that fear was associated with black, while anxiety is generally seen as yellow. This was interesting, as several of us felt that the warm glow of the lights at night was more welcoming than the cooler light of the daylight images. Sue had printed her images in a variety of formats, but everyone agreed that the letterbox panoramas were the most appropriate, with their distorted viewpoint and the analogy of the unconscious which they gave.

David showed some of his work on the suffragette movement for DI&C Assignment 2, in which he has been mixing contemporaneous images of suffragettes with modern photographs of women in some of the same places where significant events occurred. He also showed us a print he had put onto a backlit LED screen for a previous assignment.

Finally, Richard showed us his latest progress on his Body of Work project. He had bought an OS map with his home placed right in the middle, and is walking to where the sixteen points of the compass met a circle drawn five miles around his home, with the aim of documenting the journeys and what he found at the end of each compass point. Jayne suggested he crop his images square and consider the psycho-geography of his journeys as part of the project. We also discussed the use of multiple photographs to make maps in the work of Sohei Nishino.

With the weather closing in, we were able to finish early and to get home without incident. Several of the usual group members were not able to come, but we hope for a fuller turnout next month.