

**Regional Study Day
18th December 2018
Street Level Photoworks
103 Trongate, Glasgow**

Dr. Wendy McMurdo, Neil Gallacher, Laurie Bradshaw, Phil Yeadon and Zoe Wright.



The day started off with us being given a presentation by Rachel McDermott, one of the artists in the Jill Todd Photographic Award 2018 exhibition. Not only were we given an insight into Rachel's entry but we also had great discussion around studying, working, photography and music. This was followed with a visit to the rest of the finalists in the exhibition.

Following this we broke for lunch and had some general discussion about what we were each up to with regards to our studies and about the different stages we were all at. During the discussion the French artist Chrystel Lebas was mentioned in regards to landscape photography. She has recently won the Kraszna-Krausz award with her extensive project of reshooting 100-year-old images.

We also discussed how climate change is represented in landscape photography especially with the use of plastics and more the disposal of plastics is represented. I mentioned my very first tutor Andy Hughes and his work in this field.

We discussed the use of film vs. digital and different formats. Wendy mentioned large-format film and we should check out the work of Karen Knorr, a German-born American photographer who used a large-format camera to provide analogue photography and then combined this with digital images to give a final 'hybrid' image.

We discussed protecting your work and that ever-familiar subject of image appropriation.

Phil Yeardon

Phil showed us his work for assignment four of Expressing Your Vision. This was a particularly impressive piece of work titled 'The loneliness of the Petrol Station' and was based around ideas of the petrol station being transitory places where people were strangers. The petrol station is not a meeting place for people and in his project he wanted to show that they were lonely places. With this in mind he decided to shoot them at night with no cars and no people.

The illumination of the petrol stations was from artificial lighting, highlighted of course by the very obvious corporate identity and advertising.

The series started with the smallest petrol station, Buckie Harbour, and working through his local area ended with the largest of his petrol stations at Prestwick.

This prompted discussion on the works of Edward Hopper (1882-1967) an American realist painter who done some magnificent work on capturing the solitude within the city exploring empty spaces such as petrol stations.

Wendy also mentioned Dan Holdsworth, a contemporary British photographer noted among other things for his unusually long exposures.

Phil mentioned a film starring Tom Hardy driving at night with Olivia Colman as the voice on the end of a phone. Although no one at the time could remember the film I believe they were talking about Locke (2013) and gave some excellent videography of the city at night. Wendy mentioned parking lots photographed from the air at night as a typology.

We asked about printing our photographs and the consensus seems to be that most students use Printspace in London. This company is excellent at providing print profiles and can do test strips at different sizes. Students clearly have to consider the costs as well.

We discussed the work of Richard Mosse, an Irish documentary photographer who uses creative techniques to create new perspectives on his subjects. He has used Kodak Aerochrome, an infrared film that gives distinct reds, pinks and crimsons and latterly a state of the art thermal imaging camera in his work.

Wendy discussed the work of Rut Blees Luxemburg, a German photographer who specializes in taking night photographs whilst exploring the urban landscape.

The students discussed the benefits of using a darkroom, finding your voice, looking for strategies and of trying to fit your studies in whilst still holding down a full-time job. We also discussed the use of film and multimedia, which brought us nicely, round to the work of fellow student Laurie Bradshaw.

Laurie Bradshaw

At our last study day Laurie presented her multimedia project that Zoe and Phil had not seen. Laurie accessed her blog and talked us through her first video clip consisting of the opening of a box accompanied by the sound of her heartbeat. The second video clip was a development of the project and involved a physical installation allowing the viewer to walk through her work suspended from the

ceiling. This brought back memories of the William Kentridge videos we had viewed at a previous study visit. I distinctly remember the 'Felix' animation.

This second video brought us round to the subject of the wind farm. One of the biggest in Europe is not far from Glasgow and both Laurie and Phil had visited it. They discussed the effect the wind farm had on the senses, the sound of the turning blades that changed pitch as the wind changed both in strength and direction.

Zoe raised the question about recording and how we can record sound and sight but can you record touch, feeling? This led us on to a discussion about tactile artworks, e.g. the type of paper used in a project. Phil and Laurie mentioned the visitor centre giving presentations and talks about the wind farm. They seemed to cover every aspect of the wind farm except the sensation one experiences at the site. This led on to student's own exhibition and installation experiences and how we have to be aware of technical issues. Pop-up events were given as an example and using this approach could be of benefit. Following on from Laurie's presentation we talked about the use of sound working along with images and the importance of using good quality recordings.

Neil Gallacher

The intention was to do a quick question / answer session about a critical review essay but as time was pressing and there was a need to discuss issues surrounding the role as local coordinator for the group, we concentrated on this. However very quickly the group mentioned with regard to a critical review, to analyze and contextualize, examine different opinions and do a critical analysis. We then quickly moved on to the group.

We agreed that we should continue with the Regional Study Days of six per year with the suggestion that we follow on the tradition of February, April, June, August, October and December being the best times for dates. We also discussed whether we should look at the possibility of attending an exhibition in the morning with the rest of the day used as the student feedback and sharing session.

There are a great many options for study visits and this list is not extensive but I will check over the Christmas and New Year break to see what is available for the first date and seek opinion from the group. These dates will be posted through the OCA forum site, our own Facebook page. A set of alternative dates will be provided and the students can vote and the one that has the biggest potential for attendees will be the date for the study day.

Galleries to look at:

- Centre for Contemporary Arts – Glasgow
- City Art Gallery – Edinburgh
- City Art Gallery – Glasgow
- Dovecot Studios – Edinburgh
- Fruitmarket Gallery – Edinburgh
- Gallery of Modern Art – Glasgow
- Ingleby Gallery – Edinburgh

- Inverleith House – Edinburgh
- Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum – Glasgow
- National Portrait Gallery – Edinburgh
- Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts
- Royal Scottish Academy – Edinburgh
- Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art – Edinburgh
- Stills Centre for Photography – Edinburgh
- Street Level Photoworks – Glasgow
- Talbot Rice Gallery – University of Edinburgh
- Tramway – Glasgow

Some of the exhibitions and works mentioned were:

- *'At the Gates'* - various artists
- *'The Japanese Garden'* at Cowden, Clackmannanshire
- *'Tremble Tremble'* by Jesse Jones
- *'Hooked'* by Katy Patterson

Neil mentioned a great book that he had bought as recommended by his previous tutor Jayne Taylor titled *'Photographers and Research'* by Shirley Read and Mike Simmons. I have been asked to bring it along to the next study day.

Dates will follow on the Facebook page first then when agreed, forwarded to the forum.