FUEL

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By Jon Bottomley

INTERVIEWS WITH:

Katie Davies

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Katie Davies

Katie Davies *– Fine art documentarian and video installation artist Katie Davies emphasises the communal process of commemoration, ritual and performance. Davies explores the politics of spectatorship, her installations valuing what is invisible and experiential, over a definitive image or document of event.*

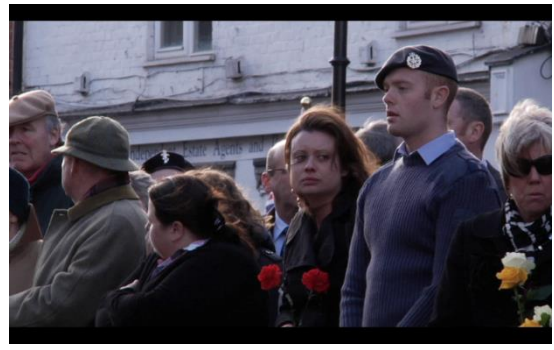
Key Works

The Separation Line *- The video installation 'The Separation Line', bares witness to the repatriation ceremonies of the town of Wootton Bassett in the UK. Initiated by the community to pay respect to British soldiers killed in Afghanistan, this work is not only about representing the polyphonous voices that commemorative ceremonies embody. It is also a document of how the repatriation ceremonies, as a repetitive process, were also a communal witnessing of how state borders are inscribed.*

Commonwealth *- Davies shifts her focus between three distinct types of ceremonial activity taking place within Sheffield Town Hall: the citizenship ceremonies, the council meetings and a one-off brass- band performance, which was orchestrated at the artist's request in one of the Council's ceremonial chambers. Davies draws attention to the points where the collective identity of a group become frayed at the edges to brief interludes within a ceremonial performance when the mask of duty or anonymity momentarily falls to reveal signs of the individual beneath.*

38th Parallel *- Filmed at the Demilitarized Zone on the border between North and South Korea, the work '38th Parallel' seeks to portray the particular reality of this contested site. It is a reality marked by an eerie sense of latency. Constantly alert, constantly inert, North and South face each other in a stalemate situation sealed by a cease-fire agreement 55 years ago. In her video, Davies operates in this void. Working with the United Nations Armistice Commission and the United States Armed Forces in Korea, she shows how political reality manifests itself here, beyond representation, in the ways how space is structured and time is regimented in this militarized environment.*

Source*: http://www.katiedavies.com/work.html*



BEGINNINGS

At the start of my art education I did a BA in metalwork and jewellery design. The idea in design is that there is both a monetary value and a sentimental value to the objects which are loaded with cultural significance and symbolism. The working routine revolves around building, critiquing and pulling apart the creations you make in order to better the design you originally produce, to question the objects identity and its relation to the context it is embedded within. Overtime I realised that my thoughts on design were overrun by my curiosity with fine art and so after finishing my BA I changed creative practices' which led to my work now, sharing characteristics of the interests of place and identity, impacting ideas on how they work.

One of the wake up calls I got as a designer was that you make something and work months and months on it and you build it up, alter it and eventually hammer it to pieces and start again. This is a decision that needs to be undertaken in order to critique the work, in order for it to be something you've made which is communicable and accessible to an audience. It's an honest and open approach. Even now in working with moving image I continue to think like a designer rather than an artist.

CONTENT

My work often revolves around ideas of borders, what a border is, different type of borders, the cultural and historical significance of borders and the restrictions and political difficulties these borders have. The first film I made after my MA was about a demilitarised zone on the border between North and South Korea, the piece entitled 38th Parallel' portrays the reality of the contested site. Constantly alert, constantly inert, north and south face each other in a stalemate situation sealed by a cease-fire agreement 61 years ago. I was fascinated with the zone because, there was only the international military culture that was embedded in the environment, a heavily regimented controlled place which was so literal due to the fact that it's still technically classed as a war zone. The first film I created was about watching the theme and performance, being in a strange space and thinking about what these borders mean for Korea's culture, the players within it and the context it includes. I realised that I was interested in the different ways the border manifests in people's lives, the idea that a border can be as wide as a geopolitical border or as narrow as a family border.

I build my research through the people I am exposed to in the environment. There was a residency I did in Yorkshire with Sheffield City Council where the premise was for an artist to be placed in the city hall for two months and create a piece reflecting the artist's interests. When I had a tour of the town hall I was interested in the citizen ceremonies and found myself asking, 'what's going on over there? Who are these people? Where are these people coming from?' and 'what does it mean to be a British citizen? I was thinking of the visual aspects of the work and linking it back to borders. I decided to focus on the ceremonial activity: the citizenship ceremonies, the council meetings and a one-off brass- band performance, which was orchestrated at one of the council's ceremonial chambers.

BORDERS

I think with borders it's always about these human implications or the effect or affect it has on people and why we as humans want to make that, it's not as if as humans we learn from them, from making these borders, but they are a natural process which constantly repeat. John Welchman said 'they are about repetition and they are about power plays, they don't have to be geopolitical but they constitute elements of power which always manifest into a particular structure that will always form a particular place, structure, history and language. It was that kind of definition that I agreed with and thought 'yes that's it', that structure of power interrupting everything, like the corporate economy, desire, daily routines, it can interrupt anything and form some type of structure and when it eventually disappears it can divide people's attitudes, people's experiences, it's a total dividing mechanism. I have come to realise that for any border to be real it has to have a story, a historical narrative that can be acted out and also acted upon and so to think of a border as a process of power that dictates time, is to realise that borders are time based as well as being geographically present.

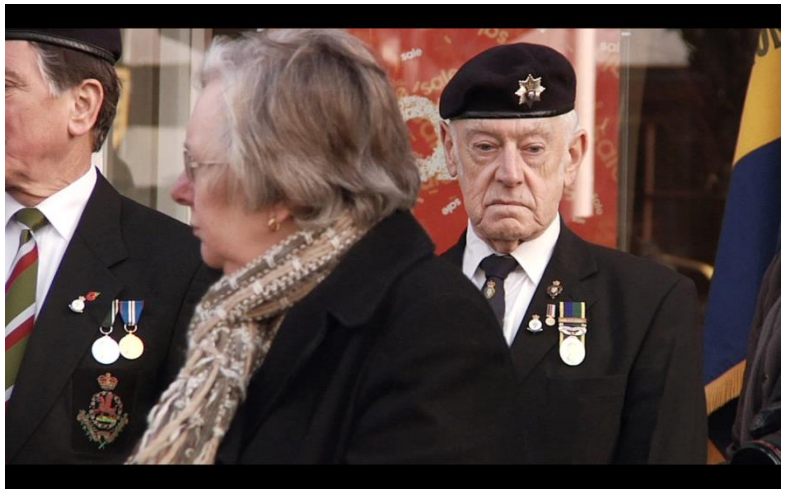
This is what I began to see when starting The Separation Line. Seeing the ceremony as a boarder due to manoeuvres in Afghanistan, where soldiers are being killed, the reparations happened sometimes weekly and so the town has to prepare to deal with these bodies coming back. My question when making The Separation Line was 'what kind of border is this, and how does it appear and manifest, who is acting on this border and what is going to be put in place and what will change?'

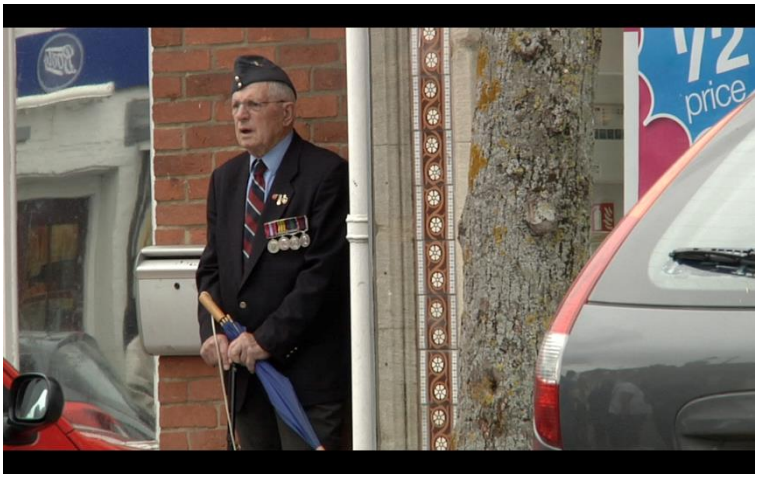
Its noticing things happening when the filming is taking place and trying to find a way to explore it and make it visible to an audience. As the audience watches it back, it can be uncomfortable, but it's a different lens and perspective they are seeing it from, it's about highlighting those aspects and making it a starting point for discussion.

DIRECTION

In The Separation Line the documentary doesn't have a start, middle and end, its fluid in its structure. The work is intended for an audience to question and understand the rituals presented, which we perceive as something else. When making the work I try to absorb the complex context and think about the position I will be placing an audience in as they are receiving it. Questions such as 'how do I set this work up to ask questions and generate understandings? It can be about the behaviour of the subject, going beyond the meaning and unthreading it to ask an audience 'do you agree with it?' It's about making visible what we don't always see in the press and thinking about it. It can be used to help understand and ask questions around conflict and military intervention and for some reasons I'm questioning I can't believe we've actually been doing this for so many years, which is a pointless conflict.

Mostly, The Separation Line is well received by the public but sometimes the work can have a mixed response, it can polarize people, particularly if the work is difficult. The best responses I had from The Separation Line were the ones, which touched people, and made them feel that they could understand a tiny bit of what the soldiers had been through. It can have many reactions because it's a complicated issue.

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RESEARCH

It's important to do the research because I feel I have a responsibility not to misrepresent the subject in anyway as this is a huge emotional nest for the people involved and their families. The philosophy of history by R. G Collingwood says the most important thing a historian can do is to understand what people thought, not necessarily what people did and it's that aspect that I try to document. As an event happens and time passes everything becomes remembered as a series of facts whereas actually, in reality there is a multiplicity of perspectives on a subject and it's usually only one that will be identifiable as the agent of what happened. I try to find a different perspective on what has happened and that's when I get a response which is 'I never thought of it like that before' or 'I didn't think that was the case' and so the work sits there really.

In Korea, looking at the research and realising the hundreds of years of conflict what's really interesting is that it's so polarised, it's so separate, and the south defines itself by everything the north isn't. The north defines itself by everything the south isn't. They incorporate that between their own identity with a kind of irony that they are mutually separated - they share this - and that's the idea that I take, that it can have that position because the other is there and it's about trying to make that observation present within a piece of work, so it doesn't become about polarising it and not seeing that, it becomes about recognising that it's not possible to identify one without the other and all those values are embedded and mutual.

FEATURE FILM

I think that depends on the subject matter of the film work. I had to edit the sound for The Separation Line when it was being exhibited for installation purposes and so each presentation needs a particular treatment. As the coffin drives past in the hearse, it is draped in the union jack flag, the soldiers stand beside the road and watch as it drives past. It may sound strange but having filmed over 17 repatriations, eventually I began to see this as the dead passing soldiers still being 'on the job' as it were, they were still marked by Empire. The reason the repatriations happened was because the townsfolk, some who had been in these war zones, were opposed to the manoeuvres in Afghanistan and this ceremony was an extension of their respect to the dead individual, dedicated to the soldier who was passing through. So the flag for me visually blocked that gesture as to why they were there in the first place. That's why in the work the image disappears and so as the hearse passes the sound of the hearse is still present. When I was in the sound studio I was asking the sound mixers to place the movement of the sound across the screen. What was interesting about working with the sound studio was that by putting tiny sounds in place, it is possible to create a more cinematic experience and end up changing what's there in the first place, changing the event, changing it as an historical moment. Even though it's tempting to create spectacle this would have been completely inappropriate and this work is as true to the event and the sound as I could make it.

The work has been in galleries and museums but if I was to make something longer, a feature length film I would have to be wary that the feature has to exist in all different environments in different contexts, while maintaining an integrity. The subject matter and narrative of a feature length is something I would have to negotiate with as in my eyes they would be the most difficult thing to work with.

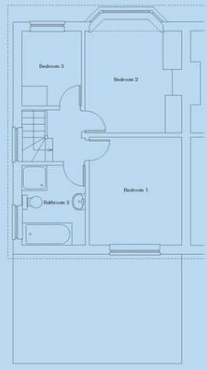
Edmund Clark

***Edmund Clark** - is an artist whose work links history, politics and representation.*

His work traces ideas of shared humanity, otherness and unseen experience through landscape, architecture and the documents, possessions and environments of subjects of political tension. Recent works 'Guantanamo: If The Light Goes Out' and 'Control Order House' engage with state censorship to explore the hidden experiences and spaces of control and incarceration in the 'Global War on Terror'.

Key Works
***Control Order House** - documenting and staying in a house in which a man suspected of involvement with terrorist-related activity had been placed under a Control Order.*

***Guantanamo: If the Light Goes Out** illustrates three experiences of home: at Guantanamo naval base, home to the American community; in the camp complex where the detainees have been held; and in the homes where former detainees, never charged with any crime, find themselves trying to rebuild lives. These notions of home are brought together in an unsettling narrative, which evokes the process of disorientation central to the Guantanamo interrogation and incarceration techniques. It also explores the legacy of disturbance that such experiences have in the minds and memories of these men.*
***Source:** http://www.edmundclark.com/work/*


Bedroom 3
Bedroom 2
Bedroom 1
Bathroom 2

How did you start your career as a photographer?

I came to photography late on. I did a history degree at university but then went off and worked in business for five years, I didn't own a camera until I was in my late twenties. When I was working in Brussels I started to take my own images and began to invest more time in looking at other photographers work. From there I decided to do a photojournalism postgraduate course which was something which interested me - being self-employed and having control over my life.

How important is the research aspect of the projects you're working on?

There is often an implication that the project may not happen because the project is dependent on the research. As well as reading and watching current affairs, peoples experience, critical theory, philosophy, legal matters and testimony, I also work with people who are experts in different fields. For example, I worked closely with lawyers for the 'Control Order House' project. I need to know about the subject and I need to get access to things with layers, finding people who have access to relevant bodies. It's a constant process of absorption. This research and way of working goes hand in hand with the imagery I use to visualise the subject matter through photography.

How do you deal with the level of security that is apparent in the environments you photograph?

Censorship and ease of access are relevant to my work because often the environments I'm photographing are embedded in zones which are heavily guarded with different security measures put in place. It shapes the process of what I do and how I do it. For example when I was in Guantanamo I was shooting the prison camps and every day I had to show the pictures to the consultants - they would take out the images that I couldn't use and accept other images which I could use. With the Control Order House project the images had to be seen by lawyers and the Home Office as everything I produced could potentially become part of the case. I was potentially showing evidence through my artistic practice which is quite a heavy responsibility. You have to be really aware of that because it's a big implication of what you're doing but also shaping what it is that you're doing.

Political opinions often clash. How do you deal with the political fragility in your work?

I think the political nature of the work makes it interesting. I welcome that to a certain extent, I engage with it, partly because the subjects that I deal with are not ones that are seen very much. I try to get people to see these things in a new way but I'm also aware of prevailing representations of these subjects. You have to be aware of what people have seen about certain subjects and how they think about them. I try to short circuit those pre-conceptions and make people think about them in new ways, by presenting imagery to them that they don't expect to see. For the Guantanamo project I was thinking about notions of home, the prisons, the naval bases that are inhabited, where they eat and sleep and it's these spaces that interested me. The work started by photographing spaces in the UK and saying 'this is how people live in the comfort of their own home in the UK' and mirroring that with how people live in Guantanamo Bay. This immediately brought people up short because all they understood about Guantanamo Bay was that it was men in orange jumpsuits who were deemed dangerous, picked up from the conflict in Afghanistan, and actually they are men just like you and me. The fragility of the politics is something I embrace because it's a way of engaging people with subjects in a new way. I'm clearly thought as a political artist but I try to steer people away from that through the historical relevance I put into the work shifting to something that isn't overtly critical. I'm also aware of the idea of history as interpretation and evidence.

Your work often deals with control and incarceration. What is it about these themes that interests you?

There's a consistency in the areas that I'm interested in but I don't set out to do work about control and incarceration that came about through the editorial work I was engaged in: law, order, justice and human rights. With Guantanamo Bay I realised that it's not often a prison becomes a defining event in warfare so I was interested in responding to that environment in a certain way. What I produced was a disjointed narrative.

I created a book showing different spaces; the prison camp, the American domestic and daily spaces, and they are all mixed up so you don't know initially what you're looking at. You have to form your own narrative. That's what Guantanamo's about, it's about creating paranoia, fear and disorientation. That's what I was trying to show in the disjointed narrative in Guantanamo.

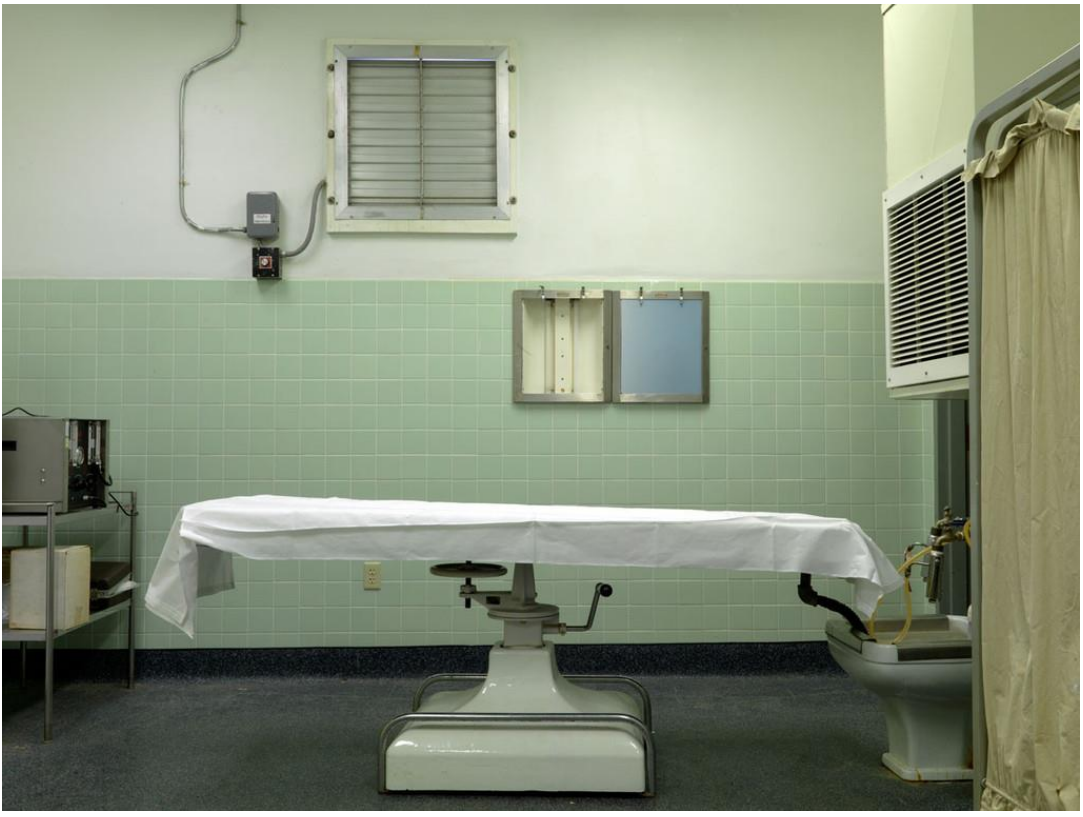
Are you happy to leave projects once you feel they are done, or do you ever try to return to them?

It's difficult to look back on projects because you want to keep moving on and progress yourself. The work on Guantanamo Bay that I produced is part of a moment in its history, but they are ongoing moments in history so I find it difficult to leave those subjects behind because they are so current. It's interesting seeing some shifts in perceptions of those subjects and I don't claim that some of my work has done that, my work's not going to shut Guantanamo Bay but it will add to the discourse at some level. I'm keenly aware of this historical shift all the time.

Aesthetically, what do you try to show?

I don't have full access and unlimited time for these projects so I visualise and deliver what I think is possible and practical for the work. I've not been interested in representing the subjects individual presence, I have instead been interested in how these people experience long-term incarceration through their relationship to time and space. I found that by photographing the spaces and objects it was a more effective way than showing a physical presence as it makes it easier for people to engage with the image - to make them think about the situation happening around them. The way I photograph can be different from project to project, for example, the 'Control Order House' I was thinking of the space in its architectural form so the process was in the way I built and ordered the photographs, thinking about how the prisoner relates to the space.

The work has been described as forensic and I was happy at first with that because I associate it with a clinical, scientific process, but actually the word forensic comes from a forum, speaking to an audience. The rhetorical idea of speaking of an object to an audience and finding traces of an event that you can then communicate is quite interesting and relevant in my work, it adds that relevance of thinking almost theatrically as an exercise through the gestures presented in how you talk about an object.



Angus Boulton

***Angus Boulton** – documenting the footsteps and imprints left on environments embedded with a history of conflict.*

Key works

***Richtung Berlin** - Ten years after the Berlin wall came down, Boulton set out with his camera to capture the charisma and eclecticism of Berlin on film. His images reflect a town no longer regulated by a "wall," and much of what now forms the visual outer layer of the town is part of a larger whole that is in a continuous process of transition.*

***Soviet Legacy** – documenting the legacy of abandoned military sites across Eastern Europe as a direct result of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The images can be seen as a depiction of the material remains of the communist system.*

***41 Gymnasia** - documenting the gymnasiums of abandoned Soviet Military bases in the former Eastern bloc in order to interrogate Cold War history and its ramifications in the present.*

***Source** - http://www.angusboulton.net/*

You studied geology at university, what lead to your change in career to photography and has your study and interest in geology had an effect on how you think about the landscapes you photograph?

Having enjoyed Geology at school, I applied to study at university. I was on field trip to the Isle of Arran when, looking around at my colleagues, the idea of spending my working life as a geologist no longer appealed. Although only six months in, I resolved to at least finish the course and graduate. I'd taken landscape photographs prior to university and continued to for a while before eventually broadening my interest. Even at the time it seemed far too early to have a clear idea about career choices. Consequently, it was some years later, having followed a slightly circuitous route before I actually began to work within photography.

Initially, Geology proved a somewhat revelatory subject to study, giving one very different perspectives on the environment. That said, it initially becomes too all encompassing, finding yourself continually analysing landscapes and their geomorphology from a scientific perspective. Eventually I would revert to a more typical, aesthetic gaze, albeit retaining an understanding of why the world looks the way it does. I try to take an oblique view of my surroundings, but am not sure whether this is specifically the result of a geological background. After all, most of my projects have been undertaken within a more urbanized environment.

The research seems imperative to your practice. Can the research ever overwhelm what it is you initially set out to achieve as a photographer?

I do enjoy researching around the subject. Although the Berlin project was largely dependent on wandering the city streets, I still read some relevant books beforehand and spoke to Berliners about aspects of their city along the way. However, this was more for background, as the project ultimately focused on perceptions and the way our visual understanding of a city develops over time.

The Soviet Legacy depended wholly on prior research and was begun before the internet or Google earth, one reason it took so long to realise. It took time to find relevant maps of East Germany, scouring them for clues and identifying possible sites of interest, before approaching the various agencies overseeing them to allow me access. It was a number of months before I gained entry to the first barracks complex in Potsdam, before spending two weeks exploring. Research hasn't necessarily become overwhelming but often the end result is either unclear at the outset or somewhat different to what one initially thought. Like many, I have begun a number of projects that failed to get much further than the research stage. Despite this, the journey ought to be equally as rewarding as the resulting imagery.

In an interview with Debbie Lisle I read that part of your work depicts 'the death of a belief system' could you expand on this idea and tell us a bit more what you mean by this?*

I was discussing the various ways the Soviet images had been interpreted. On one level, this legacy of abandoned military sites across Eastern Europe was the direct result of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the subsequent collapse of communism and the USSR. A curator once summed up the project in those words, seeing the images as a depiction of the material remains of the communist system. Historians have argued that, compared to the 5-7% of GDP that western powers were spending on defence at the time, figures for the USSR were unclear but rumoured to be as much as 25%. Either way, it proved unsustainable. These are military sites, the military played a significant role in Soviet society and was beginning to be reorganised when a seismic shift in Berlin set off a chain of events across Europe.

By 1998 it was apparent that the extent of this structural legacy had become somewhat overlooked. A handful of photographers captured the drawdown of certain garrisons and then recorded the actual Soviet withdrawal in 1994. Inevitably the developing events in the Balkans and Chechnya had drawn the world's attention away from what had been a huge logistical undertaking, effectively removing half a million personnel and equipment from East Germany. This was my primary reason for attempting a thorough photographic survey of what remained.

The interiors, such as those from the Gymnasia series, have a past which have dealt with physical strains and political difficulties. How do you decide on the most appropriate way to photograph these complexities and can the subjective angle of the work be difficult at all?

I continued with the same approach adopted for The Homeless series, generally recording what I found in a formal, often symmetrical manner, without altering or rearranging anything. The aim is that, by capturing the scene in a straight forward way, my impact on the resulting image is reduced, leaving room for the viewer to form their own interpretations. Often, I'm aiming to create an image that depicts the scene I initially stumbled across, attempting to replicate, or at least convey, that initial sense of discovery.

*http://www.angusboulton.net/debbie-lisle/

Even though the environment changes within each shot there is also a repetitive nature in the way you compose the images. What interests you in composing the images in similar ways?

It's a methodology that seemed to work in previous projects. Certainly for interiors I would generally include as much as possible, adopting a bit of lateral freedom when photographing the wider landscape. A curator mentioned how I frequently left what they termed 'dead space' in images, something I had failed to notice beforehand. It's perhaps the result of the way I generally use the camera, by relying on hyper focal distance everything is slightly pushed away from my viewpoint behind the tripod; invariably it's the foreground that makes the image.

I've read that there's a typology in the Gymnasia series, what interests you in using such symbols?

I ended up visiting over fifty different installations, of varying size, realising early on that the one constant was the presence of a gymnasium at every site. This was a standing army, mainly confined to barracks yet kept at a constant state of readiness so, when not out on exercise, there was plenty of emphasis towards sport and fitness. I was also struck by the fact that although few of us have been in the military, the majority will have found ourselves in a gymnasium at some point. Consequently, these assorted interiors frequently depict both the unknown and familiar.

The gymnasia stood out as oases of colour amongst the drabness of the routine grey and ochre of the buildings housing them. Once I had accumulated a suitable number, the repetition allowed the gymnasia to be edited in various ways, either by colour, architectural style, even their degree of dereliction. To date they have been exhibited within the broader project or in a grid format. Eventually, having made a series of films on the same subject, I used scans of the images for an installation piece, The Russian palette. This took the form of a looped film in which all the 41 gymnasia appear in a sequence, screened almost to scale, with each image cross dissolving silently over one another.

When first looking at your work the audience may feel that the images are ambiguous or enigmatic to some degree. Once the research comes in then it takes on a different understanding. How do you think about the visual language you present to an audience?

Initially I went through a phase that leaned towards photojournalism, but began to find it a slightly restrictive discipline, with photographers frequently following an acknowledged set of rules when covering any given subject. This impression was perhaps coloured by constantly reading how editorial photography was dead or at least in a general decline. It was around this time that I started to look at the work of practitioners from preceding decades, especially those working within what later became known as New Colour Photography, and discovering a subtly different visual language.

However, the images I began to make were as much influenced by their approach as my own apparent inability to 'capture the moment'. I read one artist succinctly state that this branch of photography is more the decided than the decisive moment. They may initially be viewed as straight forward but there's invariably a deeper meaning underlying this apparent simplicity.

Are you happy to leave projects once you feel they are done, or do you ever try to return to them?

It can prove difficult to finish with a subject, especially if you've invested a lot of time and effort.

I eventually moved on from *The Homeless* series after an ill judged attempt to revisit and photograph some of the sites. Rather unsurprisingly, they proved to be nothing more than empty stretches of pavement, and any meaning they previously held had gone. That is perhaps a sad comment on homelessness in itself.

After publishing *Richtung Berlin* at the end of 1999, I returned to live there intermittently from 2005-7, and did continue to photograph the city when not working at military sites, notionally adding to that body of work. Really the subsequent images were less relevant to the project as by then I had lost the initial sense of bewilderment with my surroundings, that elusive state I had previously tried to depict photographically.

Many of the installations visited for *The Soviet Legacy* were on the point of demolition or refurbishment, so over time that window of opportunity gradually closed. I worked methodically for the best part of a decade, usually alone, exploring the detritus of those previous occupants, something which did eventually become a bit overwhelming. So, from that perspective, I was ready to bring it to a conclusion.

Paul Seawright

Paul Seawright – *fine art photographer documenting the footsteps left on environments that have a history of conflict.*

Key work discussed in interview: Hidden

Hidden was a response to the war in Afghanistan in 2002. Photographs of minefields and battle sites acknowledge that almost everything in the conflict was hidden or invisible. Commissioned by the Imperial War Museum.

Source *- http://www.paulseawright.com/*

What initially interested you in photography?
Photography wasn't part of the curriculum at my school so I used it as a hobby instead. Eventually when I went to university I decided to study photography at Farnham University, which at the time was a great place to be because there were the likes of Paul Graham and Martin Parr there who were creating interesting and diverse work.

Your work seems to stand on its own, detached from photojournalism. What interests you about taking a fine art approach?
I don't have a problem with classic photojournalism it's just my work operates in a different way. Photojournalism is consumed very quickly, it has to be easy to read and it has to correlate to a narrative which is being told. With my work I take the opposite approach, carefully considering each step of the thought process of where to position both myself and my camera.

While growing up in Belfast I staged landscape photographs that played with romantic notions. I was trying to get away from the troubles that were happening in my town. When I moved to Farnham University I realised that art school was a completely different environment to that which I was used to. I reflected back on the environment that I grew up in and became hungry to read and understand Northern Ireland and the troubles past and present. My second year tutor, Paul Graham, was photographing on my street where I grew up making banal images which had these subtle keys which helped to unlock the environment and its struggles, I remember being angered by it. He said, 'why don't you start making work there if you know about it' and that was the start of my project. I then began to work on a project based on a diary I kept in 1981 the year when Bobby Sands died using the hunger strikes and his death as a way to think and create new work.

Is it ever difficult to move away from the research and actually create a body of work?
I book time of work in order to go to a new location even if I don't know what the content will be. It's nice because the research has to stop at a certain point and the photographs have to start at the time allocated.

How long does it take before you actually take the picture?
It's different depending on the place where I am. Afghanistan was incredibly tough because I did all this research and planning of what it was that I wanted to do and then I got there and realised that the environment didn't resemble anything I had imagined. This lead to me being creatively paralysed, not knowing how to successfully build the project that I originally envisioned.

It's important that there is a critical thread in the work. Building a theme which runs in and around the work which has a relevance and consistency of what I want to achieve. In Afghanistan those things remained constant, bringing together elements of what I had learned previously in other projects and applying those things to the work.

Do you ever return to projects years after completing them?
That's the curse of photography. I've heard someone say before, 'what is it with you photographers and projects?' what she is saying is true because we function as fine artists and we bring work together for an exhibition and then a book and that's pretty much job done which is a bit frustrating because there are things that I look at and think 'there's something to be extended here, there's something more to be done' but it's difficult to return to the project that's old and get people interested in it again, to see it in a different way.

Is the work an education tool to understand the subject you're exploring or is it more about capturing an experience?
For me it's always about the experience, for an audience it might prompt them to educate themselves on the subject or think of it differently but that is their own choice. People are critical and say that the work I create is to abrasive, that I'm basically irresponsible, but my argument is that there are many channels dealing with the subject in a straight forward manner, mine just does something different. Anyone's experience of the subject will be made up of a lot of things, mine will be one of them.

As an academic what value does this add to your photography?

Keeps me grounded. The art school is really key because the environment allows me to bounce of a vibrancy and urgency which is shown in emerging artists - it keeps me alive creatively.

There's something almost silent about the visuals in your work.

The silence goes back to the conflict situations around me when I was growing up in Northern Ireland. For example if a bomb was to go of it would be layered over TV reports with a heightened surface of drama and craziness - but it was never about that. Those moments were very small and they punctured the silence of the city in almost an obscure way. For me it was normal to wait for things to happen. Those silences and moments in between things happening is important in the work as they are a way of understanding the people who inhabit such landscapes.

How do you deal with the subjective aspect of editing the projects to a desired fit?

It's a tricky and difficult thing to do so I let the project open up until it's almost far too explicit and then I edit it back down. That's how I work really because when you're making the pictures you are not always editing in camera there and then. So you've got photographs that are always varied and open and it's about finding and using images that tip the line into obscurity.

Douglas White

***Douglas White** – creating sculptures which transform, in the movement between absence and presence.*
***Source**: http://www.douglaswhite.co.uk/*

BEGINNINGS

I was always drawing as a child, and always felt close to art from an early age, though as I grew up at school I studied sciences alongside art. I was considering pursuing neuroscience, but the call of art proved too strong. I have always felt that art and science are very close, just different modes of investigating what surrounds us.

I believed very strongly that I would be a painter until midway through my BA. Then one day the feeling for painting seemed to evaporate. The possibilities of a blank canvas were suddenly too endless. My progress to sculpture was fairly slow, through film, performance, installation, but eventually I found a mode of working that arrives from material, from the real world of objects.

PROCESS

I work with many different materials and the working process for each is entirely different. The thing that unites them is a moment of revelation- a sudden flash when a material or object lays bare its possibilities. In some cases this is the work is a found object, and nothing further needs to happen, in other cases that moment could be the start of a relationship with a material or process which could take years to come to fruition.

DEMANDS

My most recent installation works were created from many tons of wet clay, which all had to be mixed, dried and worked by hand. In the end the work that I displayed in the gallery was all built on-site in the space of 3 days, but that came at the end of a year of the most intense and physical preparation and research. These projects overtake you with a kind a mania- the process, the material, the learning feed you with an energy which can feel otherworldly. I remember thinking at the time how it didn't seem possible that I could work at that intensity for that amount of time, but art is its own beast, with its own demands and energies. It is never entirely clear who is in control of whom. Getting lost in that space, where you don't quite know where you end and the work begins, that is what I am looking for.

FLUX

I am interested in transformation, in the movement between states. Inevitably this draws me to materials that are in a state of flux, but I don't think of it as decay. When things break apart they begin to reveal their secrets, and the strongest, most self-assured objects can reveal a previously unknown potency and delicacy. I am interested in that point when something is both familiar and utterly changed. At this point objects can have an uncanny charge, a potential that seems to be beyond their material right, because within them we can see the seeds of our own inevitable undoing.

MATERIALS

The materials I use are constantly changing, though they have certain qualities or behaviours that link together. I am often attracted to materials that have undergone some kind of violent transformation. An example would be the blown-out carcasses of truck tyres I have used in my Black Palm sculptures. A tyre is such a robust and inert object, yet when they blow-out the intricate web of fine steel wires are torn out from inside them. They become amazingly organic structures, like the feathers of dead birds. When I first saw these blown-out fragments, while on a residency in Belize, I knew immediately that I needed to work with them in some way. The project became an alignment of this material encounter and the location in which I was working. When a palm tree becomes diseased in the forest they do not cut it down but rather burn it, so within this lush green environment there are these black apparitions. The tyre fragments seemed to lend themselves perfectly to these charred forms.

ELEPHANT TOTEM

It is always difficult to pin down the beginnings of a project or a series of works. In some ways 'The elephant totem' series began with an encounter with a long-dead beech tree I found in the forest. It was a huge misshapen, elephantine form, with strange trunk-like protrusions and a bark like folded elephant skin. I began to cut into, and work with this form and the process brought to mind a poem I had always held close to my heart- 'Crow's Elephant Totem Song' by Ted Hughes. The poem is a kind of creation myth, or perhaps more accurately a re-creation myth. It begins with God creating an Elephant, but as a tiny, lithe animal. The other animals are jealous of its beauty and grace, particularly the hyenas, so they tear it apart, limb from limb, trying to discover its secret. But the Elephant reforms himself, into the great hulking, impenetrable beast we know today. It's a beautiful and fierce and melancholic piece of work and seemed to describe so much of what I felt about the process of sculpture, of things broken apart and coming back together.

DESIRE

My attraction to object and materials is entirely intuitive and it is this attraction that drives the project. It is simple desire. When it is strongest, after an encounter with some strange object, I am unable to sleep for thinking about that thing. It is tempting to compare the desire with erotic or romantic desire because it feels so physical and present, and it is this desire that has led me to go to some extreme lengths to track down some objects. I had this with Counsel, a pair of arson-struck recycling bins I saw on a South London Housing Estate. I arrived home and was awake all night. Again with a work called Fibrosa which was the half rotted stump of a tree-fern I had once seen in the forest in New Zealand. Three years later I returned to the same spot to hunt it out and ship it back to the UK for my final exhibition at the RCA. Research comes later, in trying to unpick where these feelings might come from. One's subconscious is laced with many possible foundations.

SKIN

Twelve years ago in Africa, while walking with a group, we came across the remains of an elephant. All that remained was a scattering of bones and a huge torn, deflated skin. There were no features, but everything about that skin said Elephant. I walked through the space of that body as one walks through a landscape. That experience described to me the condition that art-making seeks.

I believe all art making is about the play between presence and absence. Art is a summoning up, an invocation, but it can never be the thing summoned. There is a beauty and a pathos in this perpetual failure. For me a work succeeds when it holds both presence and absence- the beauty of the endeavour, and the pathos of the inevitable failure.

Carlie Trosclair

Carlie Trosclair *– installation artist exploring domestic properties of fabrics and their skin like properties. Recent works have also focused on reconstructing the skin of walls; wallpaper, plaster and drywall.*
Source - *http://carlietrosclair.com/*

What has led you to installation and sculpture?

I suppose you could say I was traditionally trained as a painter, but moved into 'three dimensional' paintings when I was in undergrad because I was more interested in experimenting with the physical material that signified painting versus the image. I would dip fabric or canvas in gesso and then wrap it around an abstract wooden form. After it dried I would paint highlights and shadows of the form using a trompe l'oeil technique. That experimentation quickly grew into removing the wooden armature after the gesso dried and just working with the moulded canvas and contorting it in various ways. I then began to create multiples that I would position within a room: attached to the ceiling, hovering over the ground, etc. where the viewer would have to navigate throughout a forest of sculptures. These sculptures blossomed and eventually took up and then became entire rooms.

Drapery is discussed in relation to Greek sculpture, to medieval and gothic art, Renaissance, Baroque art and neo-classicism. Does the history of art play a part in your work and if so how do you use this history to inform your work?

After I did without the armature and started working with hardened fabric I dove deeper into Bernini's work. I was interested in the way that drapery acted as a freely malleable material that was no longer confined to clothing bodies. I was fascinated with the way that fabric took on its own life and defied gravity in addition to the irony of capturing movement in a stagnant medium. I wanted to emulate Baroque representations of fabric to create an emotive gestural experience as a way to shift our preconceived notions of fabric's properties and abilities.

What has led you to create work that involves fabric inhabiting spaces?

I have always been interested in architecture and the way we move through space and how that experience defines our understanding of space/place, therefore constructing our reality. The larger the fabric sculptures grew the more undeniable it became that the spaces they existed in were just as important as the objectness of the work itself. The architecture was initially used as a jumping off point to create larger works that would intercept, disrupt, or enhance the space. Noticing the contrast between the gestural organic forms of the work against the hard geometric lines of the interiors created a desire to reconstruct the space with fabric altogether. Using fabric to soften and round out the hard edges of a room created a physical and psychological shift of the room's overall experience. The fabric installations opened up an interesting dialogue for me between material, the physical body, and architecture. My interest was in exploring ways to re-imagine and re-connect with our built environment using a material that literally acts as an outer layer of skin that we clothe ourselves with daily. I wanted to see how it would feel to clothe the inside of a room; to cocoon oneself within an architectural skin.

Is there a relation between the fabric and a suggested human presence?

My fabric exploration went a number of routes: dipping in latex, freezing, stretching, draping, contorting, etc. Without a definable structural make up, the allusion and relationship to the body became more apparent in the shapes that evolved. Everything about the form and materiality of the fabric eerily felt like a representation of an absent body. The colour, translucency, and layering of the fabric in my work is used intentionally to reference skin. I looked to fabric as a mediator to link the human body and the built environment.

How do you begin a project, does it change all the time or do you have a format which you try to follow?

My work takes its initial jumping off point from the space it will inhabit. With my fabric works I would feel out the space and decide what I wanted the overall experience, or flow, to be. Usually I would start with a gesture, name the verb that would encompass it, then develop the work based on that verb. You'll see titles like "Cascade" "Envelop" "Traverse" and "Entwine" which speak to the way the pieces moved in that particular setting and the experience I wanted to create for the viewer as they navigated in relationship to the work.

My current work within abandoned homes brings attention to layers and patterns that have built up and deteriorated over time. Each building has a unique layered narrative that informs the work. Upon first walking into a house I have an immediate visceral response to the way the wallpaper is peeling or the plaster is bubbling or something about the warped wooden floor will ignite a spark in me. Spending a lot of time in the space helps to unpack everything that is happening because often times there is so much going on texturally, emotionally, historically… it's a lot to take in sometimes. I'll find a small detail to expound on, or notice an uncanny architectural shift to highlight. For example, with Excavate there was a room with about five layers that made up a single wall: plaster, two different wallpapers, concrete, and brick. Each layer was initially placed with the intention to fully cover up the layer underneath. Now due to weather damage and neglect all layers were exposed and seemingly working in tandem to create a new composition. I began cutting rivulets into the deteriorating plaster that mimicked the floral wallpaper and palimpsest of paint. The floral wallpaper felt indistinguishable in design to the deterioration of the wall and I wanted to construct a piece that would set them up as equals. Excavate unveiled the similarities between deliberate and chaotic design to create a new topography of architectural skin.

How has your practice changed over time?

I would say the largest development within my work happened when I shifted from using fabric as an additive skin onto architecture and began using the skins that already exist: wallpaper, plaster, drywall, etc. While the fabric works were influenced by the layout and geometry of the space, my most recent work uses the already existing textures within the wall's layers as a jumping off point. Over time my process has ebbed and flowed between site specific, site responsive, and site sensitive works.

Is there ever a narrative to the pieces you create?

Perhaps not particularly obvious, but the narrative of 'time' seems to always be a component. With the hardened fabric sculptures I was interested in a suspended or frozen moment. The gestural fabric installations captured an action or feeling of movement within the experience of an installation. My current works address the shifts that happen over a buildings lifespan by looking at its deteriorating compositions as ever changing eco systems.

What are your aims as an artist?

My focus is to engineer an experience that re-sensitizes and rediscovers our relationship to the built environment, especially in its deteriorating state. The home is a physical manifestation of the human body. It is built for humans by humans. The narrative that unfolds over its lifespan does not fall far from our own mortality. Within its decomposition there is beauty that adds to the richness of its history that could be missed if we are quick to discard its value. I hope my work ignites curiosity and discovery through a shared experience of these spaces.

Alison Watt

***Alison Watt** – painter exploring suggestions of human presence inhabited by fabric.*
***Source** - http://www.inglebygallery.com/artists/alison-watt/*

When did painting start to become important to you?

My dad is a painter, so some of my earliest memories are of paintings because I spent a lot of time in his studio as a child. I became interested in art through him, he took me to galleries and museums so I've always been immersed in art and painting from an early age. I've never thought of doing anything else.

In the early 80s you worked with a life model. How did that experience help to develop both the construction and technique of your work and how did your thoughts evolve in terms of the content?

When I started making work I was making more traditional representations of myself. Portraiture has always been interesting to me but I think it can be problematic as it carries such a heavy weight from its history in part because of our expectations of it. It's an artistic phenomenon. Gradually, I began to move away from self-portraiture and moved to painting the naked human figure. The whole experience of working with a model is incredibly intense and intimate. It heightened my level of consciousness. Even the smallest movement became something monumental. In that situation, you find yourself regulating what you're seeing, your brain starts to edit what you have in front of you and you begin to look at the body as a series of lines, folds and creases. It turns itself into something of an abstraction. Although I'm now not painting directly from the figure, I'm painting from memory, the human body is implied in the paintings that I make. I'm still fascinated by the human form and there are certain proportions which are satisfying and make sense to me. This has come from years of studying the human figure. So, although within the paintings the figure isn't expressed explicitly there's a definite suggestion of it.

There seems to be something silent and still about your work in the way you present the materials and paint…

I think the difficulty of describing painting itself is that you and I will experience it very differently. I think it's dangerous to prescribe a meaning to a picture because it needs to takes on its own life. In reproduction my paintings look monochromatic but in reality there's a lot of colour in them. If you look at my palette it is full of colour. How the paintings are made is important; they come together very slowly. I probably only make about six paintings a year. When you see the paintings you can actually see the reds, sienna's and ochre's within them, so the colour gives them a depth and depending on how they are viewed, a resonance. That doesn't always translate in reproduction. I am interested in the meditative quality which can come from a painting's physical presence.

How do you compose the fabric and paint in a way that facilitates the idea of the unseen and loss?

The negative space is important, in itself it fascinates me. In recent paintings there are dark areas which correspond to areas of white light. It's those areas of darkness which are difficult for me to describe because often I don't know what they are about, suggesting a space that is perhaps beyond our vision, something other. You could argue that within a painting, the unfamiliar becomes familiar or the inanimate becomes animate. Fabric as a metaphor is quite an interesting idea because it's on a border between figuration and non-figuration and when things start to become blurred in that way I think that's when it becomes more interesting in terms of impressions that the painting may give.

Do you find it easy to make the work?

No, I think actually it gets harder. There's a series of exhibitions happening in Scotland at the moment entitled 'Generation' celebrating twenty-five years of contemporary art. As part of this, I curated a retrospective of my own work in which the earliest painting dated back to 1986. What was interesting for me was seeing an overview of my creative practice. I realised that my work was a whole series of problems that hadn't been solved. This becomes a driver, a reason to continue developing and working, constantly pushing on to the next thing.

Painting produces a restlessness in me. The more I look at it, the more problematic it becomes: It seems to throw up more questions than answers. I've come to realise that even though painting is my life - I've been painting for over twenty five years, looking at painting every day - I realise that I know hardly anything about it. The more you look at it the more out of your reach it is, the more mysterious it is. I think as a medium it becomes increasingly difficult to deal with. On the other hand I feel very strongly about its uniqueness as a medium. Painting is something you have to physically be with, you can have reproductions but it cannot match the experience of being physically in front of the painting. I think that's incredibly important, that act of seeing the mark making that is absolutely lost when looking at a reproduction. With time, painting demands more from you - It questions your capabilities.

What interests you about working on a large scale?

I am interested in how painting is read from different distances. When you're looking at a painting from across a room, in a gallery situation for example, the work retains a certain unity. If you look at a painting at the distance at which it was painted it is entirely different. It becomes physical, immediate, worked. When you're in the studio, depending on the scale, it can almost feel as though you're inside the work. It's like being in a landscape of your own making, because it fills your entire vision.

Do you take on board anyone's opinions when creating new work?

I think you just have to be true to what you're doing, true to your own thoughts and ideas. I spend most of my working life in my studio, Painting is a solitary business and I am on my own every day.
In order to do that you have to believe in what you're doing. So it's often a matter of holding on and that can be difficult.

Is there an importance in working in solitude in the studio space?

We're all bombarded with imagery all the time and most of it is just noise, some of it's great but most of it isn't. All this outside noise is not what it's about for me. When I close the door of my studio, I breathe a sigh of relief because even though I know it's going to be difficult I know I can shut out the things that are distracting. It's only recently that I've had internet access in my studio and even now I restrict myself quite rigidly as to when I'm going to use it. You know how it ticks away in yourself in the back of your brain, emails, phone calls, and you really have to conquer these distractions otherwise you just have no control. One of the things I love about being in a gallery is that you can be emptied of these distractions and are allowed to feel, something that I think is incredibly important.

How do you distinguish between good art and bad art?

That's a hard question. I want to feel something, have an emotional experience with art, so I guess that's my standard. It's a difficult thing to define. Something that makes you feel differently something you haven't felt before.
I think that's what makes something truly great, and I think that's difficult to obtain. It's that conflict of wanting to know everything and wanting to know nothing, to experience. That's what so fascinating about Art, it's never ending.

Rozanne Hawksley

Rozanne Hawskley *- delicate work often comprises assemblages of fragments of lace, wood, embroidery and bones. It tells stories of mourning, grief, commemoration and loss. Sometimes her work refers to tragedies in her own life or broader religious and literary narratives.*
Source - *http://www.rozannehawksley.com/*

HISTORY

Themes of loss, grief and the misuse of power have been consistent in my fine art practice. Being born in Portsmouth in 1931 and growing up in the aftermath of the First World War meant that I would see wrecks of men often without limbs in psychiatric hospitals. The work which I made for these shows would often be refused by galleries or taken out of exhibitions as they would be thought of as too dark.

During the Second World War, I was evacuated from my home and moved to a house that was bought by a naval surgeon. I found these three big volumes of surgery books and began to realise that I had never seen something so beautiful in all my life. I thought the anatomical drawings were fascinating. During my time at art school I learnt about every bone in the body and how each muscle is stressed and stretched in its movement. It was like a detective story and eventually when I was teaching others about anatomy, dragging skeletons into workshops I found that you can get someone to look but you can't necessarily get them to see the object, to understand it. That act of seeing is important in my work and is something which can build and change over time.

To begin with I did a fashion course which I hated. I was hopeless at measuring everything out and made a complete mess of the fabric, I couldn't see a way round it. I left fairly unsatisfied and did all sorts of jobs, working at a man's magazine, designing rugs and canvases and at one point moved to America to work in a needlework centre to make a living. It wasn't till later when I started to teach at art schools that I related fabric to the human form and began to take more of a fine art approach that I began to think of the work differently.

GIFT

After my second husband died I had a breakdown, so I left my teaching position and went as a day patient to a hospital. I started to look very hard at the people in the hospital and began to draw some of the patients. I showed a tutor of mine named David Green and he taught me that it wasn't how you were doing something, it was why the hell you were doing it and what the hell you did with it. There was a fabulous photograph in the Evening Standard of a man who had been left homeless due to houses being taken down in New Cross. I copied the image and David asked what I would do with it, I wasn't sure what to do so David took me to a skip and made me look at all the junk that was there, I took out some materials and realised there and then that the work meant something to me. I started to use a carpenter's term 'offering up to another' and realised that the work could be a gift for those in pain.

AESTHETICS

When I was evacuated as a child I quite liked being scared, I've found that it's the darkness in the pieces that draws me to the work. I've been fuelled by the macabre elements which surround celebrations of death for quite some time. I've been interested in the rituals and visual objects that represent mourning, the only time I thought the queen mother had style was when she was at her husband's funeral dressed in a black coat and veil. At the moment I've come full circle with themes of death. I've been working with it for forty years and I'm at a point where I don't know what I'll be working on next.

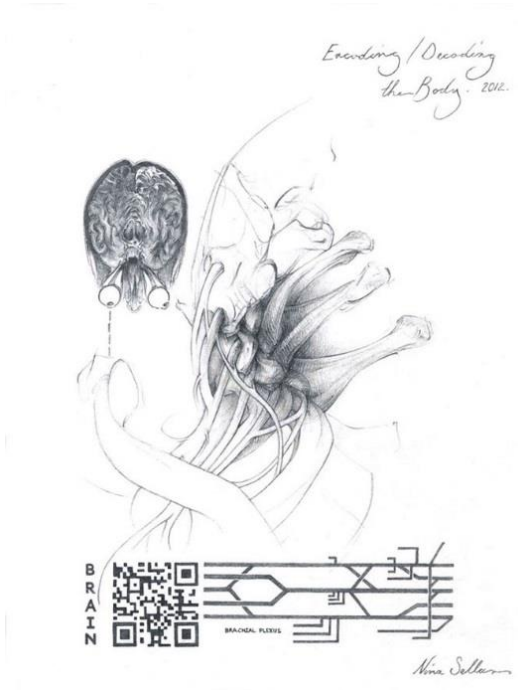
For the Imperial War Museum I created a wreath called 'Pale Armistice' which consisted of a selection of gloves old, new, big, small, they were all gloves that I had collected over several years from the streets, all abandoned in one way or another. A hand is an incredible instrument and every hand is different, with 'Pale Armistice' my aim was to symbolise the fragile nature of such objects.

I usually gage whether a piece is working or not by the emotional response or feeling that I get from seeing the work. It's usually a mixture of the intensity of what I've chosen versus the aesthetic look of it - a balance that plays out. Everything I do has a certain personality about it a personal tie to me - something that reminds me of someone or something.

AUDIENCE

I have a very protective feeling to what it is that I'm doing and I won't show the work to anyone unless I'm absolutely sure that I have reached a certain understanding with what it is that I've done. I made a piece called 'the seamstress and the sea', I invited people to write a personal memorial message on torn pieces of calico that would be collected and tied up in an exhibition space, it was when I saw the first six memorial pieces of calico that I realised that I had nothing to do with the piece anymore, it was an entity, it was theirs. The work sits on its own.

Nina Sellars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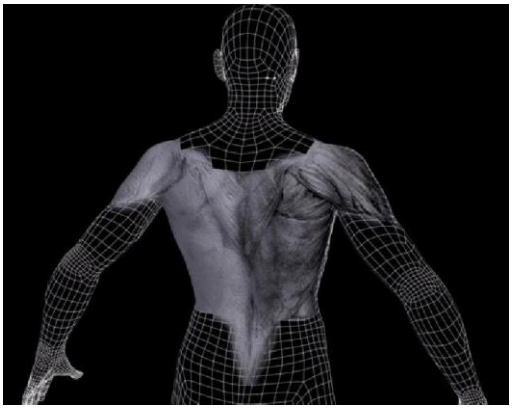
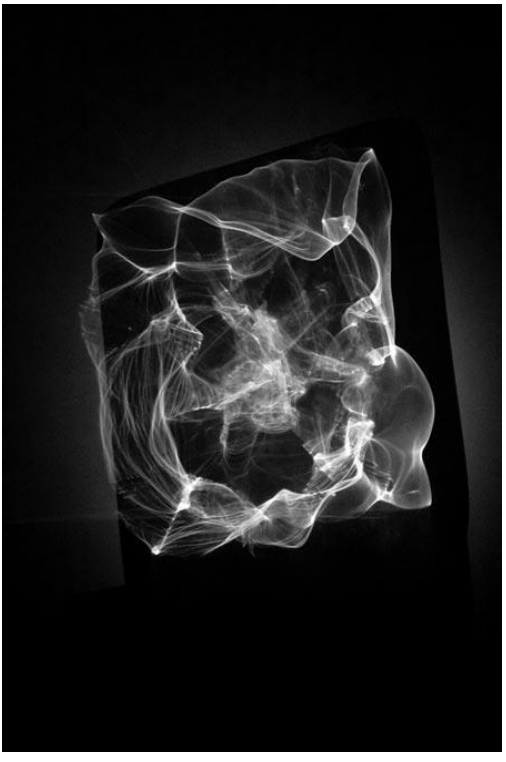
BRAIN
BRACHIAL PLEXUS
Nina Sellars

Nina Sellars *- focuses on human anatomy and its symbiotic history with arts and technology*
Source- *http://www.ninasellars.com/*





Could you tell us a bit about your background, where you were educated, what you studied, and how have these studies helped to facilitate both an interest in science and art?

My first degree was in Photomedia at the Canberra School of Art, Australian National University. During my undergraduate degree I undertook a student-exchange to attend the Akademie Výtvarných Umění, Prague, Czech Republic. There I studied figurative sculpture, anatomy and classical drawing. After my undergraduate degree I studied drawing at Julian Ashton's Art School in Sydney — JAAS is a private art school in Sydney that specializes in traditional figurative drawing and painting techniques.

I would say that my interest in both drawing and photography is due, in part, to the experience of losing my eyesight for one and half years when I was a teenager. I had a brain tumour located on my pineal gland and to access it the doctors had to disturb the occipital lobe of my brain, which affected my vision. After I regained my sight I used drawing and photography as methods to explore vision. The question of seeing, and the associated states and processes of almost seeing, not seeing, and being blind, reoccur throughout my artwork; as too the subject of anatomy, and anatomical imaging, which is a central theme of my arts practice. In pursuit of anatomy, I also worked for a couple years as a prosector (a dissector of cadavers for medical display). My PhD 'The Optics of Anatomy of Light: A Studio-based Investigation of the Construction of Anatomical Images' is a culmination of these influences and interests.

I'm interested in your idea of baroque light and applying it to new technologies, mixing the historical and contemporary. How do you combine past histories and new technologies to a satisfying result?

In taking an approach to light that is adopted from an earlier era you not only appropriate elements of style, but also a way of seeing inherent to that particular use of light. In the example of the baroque era, I consider baroque space and its dynamic choreography of viewing as being determined by the era's sensibility to the depiction of light. The half-light that appears in baroque images creates ambiguous areas, as visual information appears to be purposefully 'lost and found' in the interplay of light and shadow. Here, light plays the role of bringing forth information, but it also directs the eye of the viewer by withholding information from sight.

How do you distinguish between the scientific research and the art work you produce? Do you see them as the same thing or are they a process which informs the artwork?

As an artist, I tend to work across the arts and sciences, which is not to say that I successfully blend the two separate methodologies, and in fact I increasingly view the arts and sciences as being incommensurable, but in a way this is what works for me, as it sets up a productive tension that never fully resolves, and this enables slippages and meeting points to emerge, exposing inconsistencies, which in turn generate more questions. And the questions that interest me relate to the visualization of anatomy.

How do your projects develop over time? Do you tend to work from your initial instinct, or are your subjects just a continuation of your previous interests, just developed more?

I work relatively slowly. New iterations of an artwork will arise in the process of making. However I think the idea of 'intuition' is just a preparedness to be a good host to ideas. Other times I will stand in a gallery space and imagine what I would like to find within the gallery — an artwork that would astonish — then I go home and begin to make the work.

I've read that you are trained in classical, figurative and anatomical drawing, how do apply each technique to your projects, do they help facilitate a narrative in the work at all?

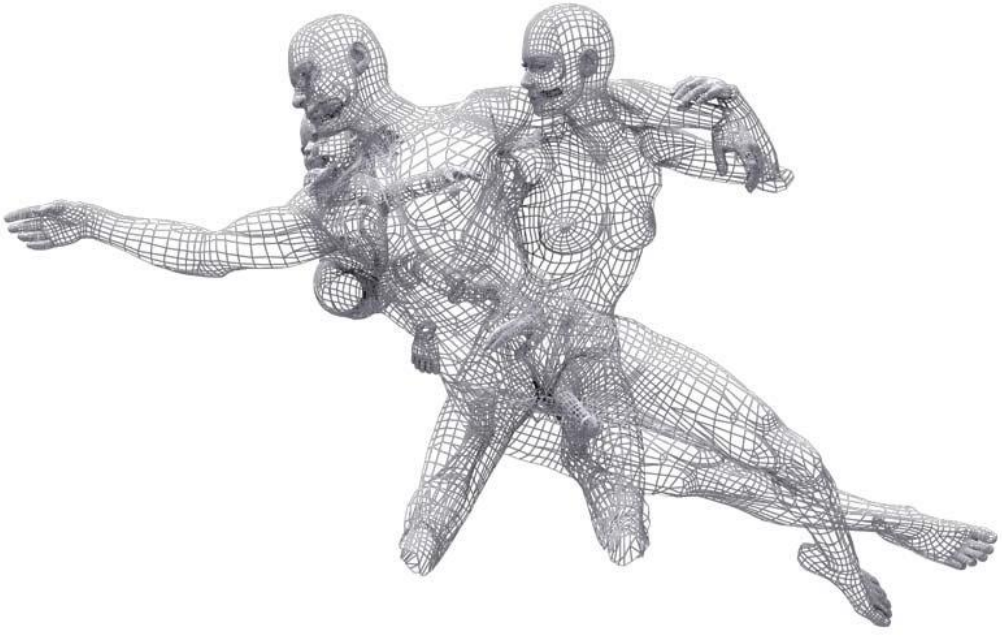
I am interested in hands-on processes of enacting knowledge. My interest in classical, figurative and anatomical drawing allowed me to engage with a particular art historical understanding of the body, approached in practical terms.
Before art, I studied classical music for many years and I think this has shaped my arts practice, also.
Classical training, both in music and art, teaches you an approach to learning that is invaluable for the attainment new skills — patience and focus — and to realize there is no knowing without the doing. Or rather the act of doing provides you with a different kind of knowledge, which is embedded in your actions. When you work over time on a selected skill it sets out a routine that shapes you, and your environment. If we use drawing as an example, when you consciously practice the skill of drawing you are 'drawn into line' with the medium, so to speak. In this way drawing is a medium, an environment and a way of being in the world.
However this effect is not exclusive to visual artists, I am sure a writer would argue the same for their medium, also.

What interests you about translating technologies and science to an audience through different visual mediums?

My working methodology has led me to focus not on things as objects but on our engagement with things. In this way, I tend to appropriate phenomenological experiences, which have been removed from a scientific context and stripped of their original protagonists, so that they can be relocated, and engaged with, in the cultural context of an art gallery. In the process of translation what is made apparent are the slippages and meeting points between different modes of knowledge construction, whereby the underlying conceptual foundations and structures of contrasting methodologies can be exposed, opening them up for critical investigation.

What are your aims as an artist and what do you hope to achieve in the future with your practice?

To be a good host for ideas; generate interesting questions; and to make a difference, no matter how minimal.



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Stills from: Hidden 2003

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Nedlitz 21.10.98.
Perleberg II, 16.3.01.
1941-45 Memorial. Jüterbog-Damm,
27.10.00.
Guard duty is a combat task'. Prison,
Krampnitz, 16.3.99.
'History of the Unit' mural. Altes Lager,
17.7.99.

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http://www.douglaswhite.co.uk/

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http://carlietrosclair.com/home.html

© Alison Watt

http://www.inglebygallery.com/artists/alison-watt/

Suspend, 1999
oil on canvas
183 x 183 cm
courtesy the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh
Deutsche Bank Collection
Alison Watt
Orion, 2014
oil on canvas
122 x 122 cm
Photograph: John McKenzie
courtesy the artist and Ingleby, Gallery Edinburgh
Alison Watt
Phantom, 2008
oil on canvas
213.4 x 335.3 cm
courtesy the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh
Glasgow Museums Collection
Alison Watt
Hood, 2003
oil on canvas
213.5 x 213.5 cm
courtesy the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh private collection

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http://www.rozannehawksley.com/

finishedcollarincalico2003
pale armistice, 1991(1)
Look on small beautiful things, 2008 - 2013
Caiaphas, 2007

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http://www.ninasellars.com/home.html

Encoding/Decoding The Body, 2012, pencil on paper Image size: 25 cm x 20cm
LUMEN - Photographic documentation by Professor Joanna Zylinska and Stelarc: machined aluminium, electrical components, glass, plasma arc light, fibre optics. glass dimensions: 9cm x 9cm projected wall image: approx. 130cm x 130cm stand dimensions 12cm x 8cm
CREATION: was exhibited at the John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University as part of the Perth International Arts Festival, 2005, and funded by an ArtsWA BEAPworks Grant, for research and development of electronic arts.

FUEL: assembled between August 2014 - January 2015 by Jon Bottomley.