



SuperMassiveBlackHole

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SuperMassiveBlackHole is dedicated to the photographic imagery resulting from the time-based processes found in many interdisciplinary art practices today. The magazine seeks to engage and represent respective projects and ideas which utilise Photography (digital or analogue), New Media (high or low tech), Performance and Sculpture (through documentation). Fine Artists are encouraged to engage with the magazine as a way of exhibiting, testing, developing and experimenting with new (or old) ideas whether it is through a single image or a structured project.

Time, Space, Light and Gravity are what drive SuperMassiveBlackHole

Submit

SuperMassiveBlackHole is a free online magazine, and is published three times annually. *SuperMassiveBlackHole* accepts almost anything involved with the photographic process, from straight photography to video, performance documentation or written treatments. All submissions should be sent via Email. Please check the submission guidelines at:

www.supermassiveblackholemag.com

smbhmag@gmail.com

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Theme

Scarred Landscape is a term generally

associated with a terrain that has undergone some form of physical or psychological upheaval. From a battle-scarred field or city to an economically deprived environment. The Scarred Landscape can be a metaphor for a single individual or nation's historical tribulations, or a society's failure to implement its own law and order. We can also understand the Scarred Landscape mnemonically, as an aid for memory - from past transgressions and experiments.

Our environments, whether built or natural, bare the scars of our attempts to live with and evolve from those very places. Some places show subtle signs of our interventions while in others it is all too explicit, from the building and erasing of mountains to the discolouration of rock and water; the abandoned homes in disputed territories now left to nature or those that were surplus to requirement, standing like monuments to human folly.

Simon Bates

(Ireland/UK)

Ghost Estates

Photographs

2011

Ireland's economic crisis is visible throughout the landscape. Some 2850 unfinished housing estates, and 350,000 vacant properties lie dormant around the country as a result of the collapse of the construction industry.

The extent and scale of the problem is massive, and the government have yet to come up with a clearly defined solution. Their best offering so far is to establish yet another taskforce - at the taxpayers expense.

People who were unfortunate enough to have bought a house on these unfinished estates have to live with health and safety risks everywhere; some even have open sewers. One ghost estate I visited had a single woman living there. the estate was clearly littered with building materials, and was fast becoming a dumping ground for electrical goods, toys, used nappies, etc. During the boom times, developers received up to 870 million euro in tax breaks, the irish people are now paying for the banks' poor decisions, and now we are expected to fork out more hard earned cash to finish/demolish these ghost estates, this scarred landscape.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Nick Degtyarev

(Russia)

War is Over

Photographs

2011

These photographs are from the series *War is over*. Within it I tried to translate the language of sensation into the language of visual narration. Any conflict's action leaves inward traces - something that changes inevitably one's perception. When 'war' is over, the moment of peace comes. It always precedes something new, a fresh start. However, those scars, which 'war' has left, never disappear and stay as a reminder. Though they may not even hurt anymore, one can stumble upon them from time to time in the backstreets of their soul. This kind of inner state I tried to reveal in my photographs.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

David Farrell

(Ireland)

The Long Grass

Photographs

2011

The Long Grass is a series of post-coital landscapes.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

David Gardner

(United States)

Marking Our Place in the World

Photographs

2011

Marking *Our Place in the World* is a project that looks at how the simple act of scratching or painting on the land can alter its meaning and use - indeed its entire focus. In my photographic investigation of this idea, the marks themselves are more relevant to me than the particular landscape they inhabit. I am interested in how our interventions impact the landscape in ways that are permanent as well as changed by time and nature. I explore themes of history, language and communication, while observing the dynamic of personal and group expression as it plays out on the landscape.

Our need for land—or sky—to reflect meaning is indicative of the same primal impulse we have to leave our presence upon the landscape. We are both compelled to make marks as well as decipher their meanings. By looking at how we have marked the landscape through time, we gain insight into our personal and collective history. To decline such study is to leave to others the control of the world of meanings in which we inhabit.





(Before) *Labyrinth. Lands End, San Francisco, California;* (Here) *Crazy Horse Monument. Black Hills South Dakota; Number Hill. Arco, Idaho*

Emer Gillespie

(Ireland/UK)

Sliced Iceland

Photographs

2011

Sliced and cut, these images reveal a bleak and beautiful Icelandic landscape fed on by the industries that fuel the country. Geothermal energy is Iceland's biggest product, heating 87% of the buildings there, with Hydro Power generating 75.4% of the nation's electricity. By-products such as Hydrogen Sulphide and geothermal fluids is a concern; but the largest is the effect on the landscape as the pipes and plants slice through, causing a loss of vegetation cover. This directly affects mammals and fish and the biodiversity of the entire country.

Iceland's landscapes are loaded with some of the most stunning beauty. The pipes in these photographs cut across the camera's lens, unsettling the view of the scenery, and are yet strangely beautiful themselves with their clean lines and rigid forms. Strwn across the landscape to distribute the energy throughout Iceland, they are a common sight across sliced Iceland.





(Before) *Lavafield pipe*; (Here) *Factory pipe*; *Snow pipe*

Joshua Dudley Greer

(United States)

Point Pleasant

Photographs

2009 - ongoing

The West Virginia Ordnance Works was an explosives manufacturing facility constructed during World War II just outside Point Pleasant, West Virginia. After the war, the facility was closed and much of the land was deeded to the state of West Virginia to create the McClintic Wildlife Management Area. In the early 1980's, investigations revealed that this area was heavily contaminated with TNT, trinitrobenzene, dinitrotoluene, arsenic, lead, beryllium and asbestos.

Using an 8x10 view camera, I am photographing the ruins of a once monumental military-industrial complex as it tangles with the surrounding landscape of forest, fields and swamp. Viewing the site as a kind of battleground, I use elements such as camouflage, repetition and death to refer to our continued engagement in violence, whether it is directed at other nations or at the very landscape we inhabit. The interplay of visibility and invisibility runs throughout the work, alluding to ways in which we often misperceive contamination and beauty through strictly visual means. The emptiness of the landscape, photographed with a muted palette and diffused light, is meant to evoke a kind of post-apocalyptic environment - one that is at times bleak and somber, yet also strangely resilient and beautiful.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Jean-François Hamelin

(Canada)

Building Mountains

(Asbestos mining in rural Quebec)

Photographs

2011

Despite several controversies during the 70s and 80s and the subsequent removal of asbestos from public buildings the mineral itself, which is exported to other countries, still remains one of Canada and Quebec's valuable resources. 'Embargos' have had a radical effect on demand leaving many mines nowadays at a fraction of their production capacity.

Along with shaping the cultural landscape of the Black Lake region where some of the largest mines in Quebec operate, over time, asbestos exploitation has dramatically reshaped the landscape. Deep pits and high man-made mountains are now common vistas in and around Black Lake.

Although these places will fade from our collective memories in time, the human shaped landscape will remain for centuries to come and these alterations will slowly acquire the status of relics from a vague and long past era.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Roberta Holden

(Canada)

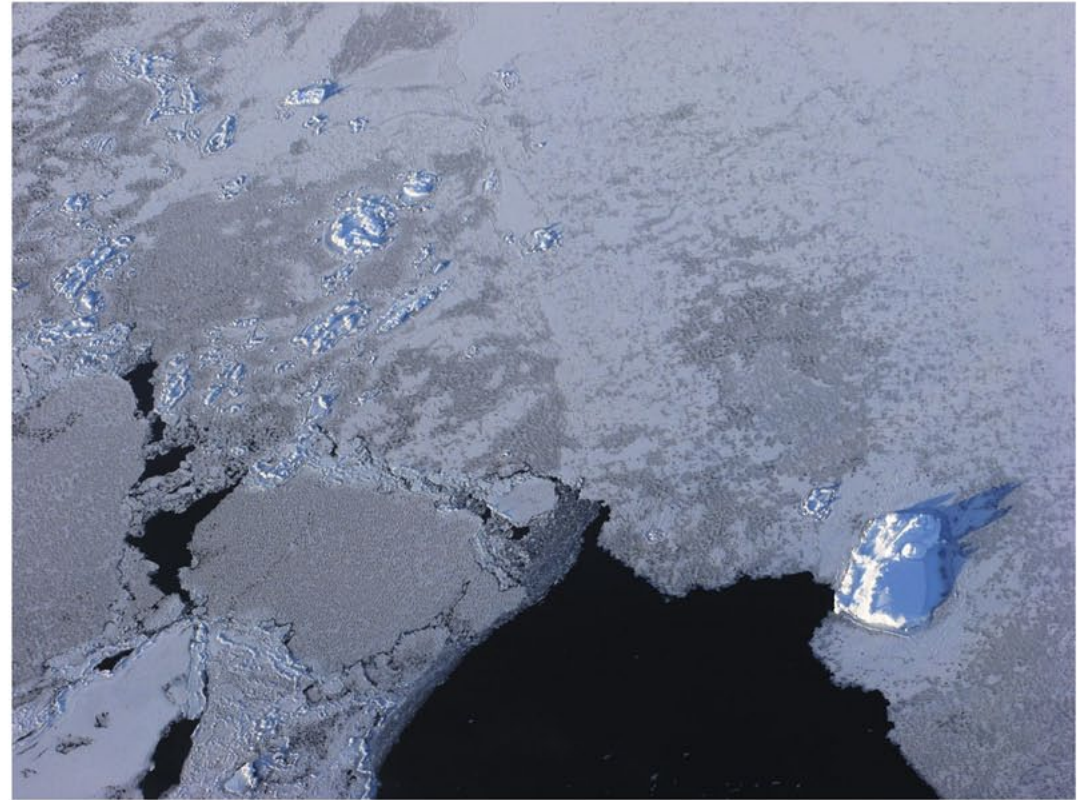
Studies in Sea Ice

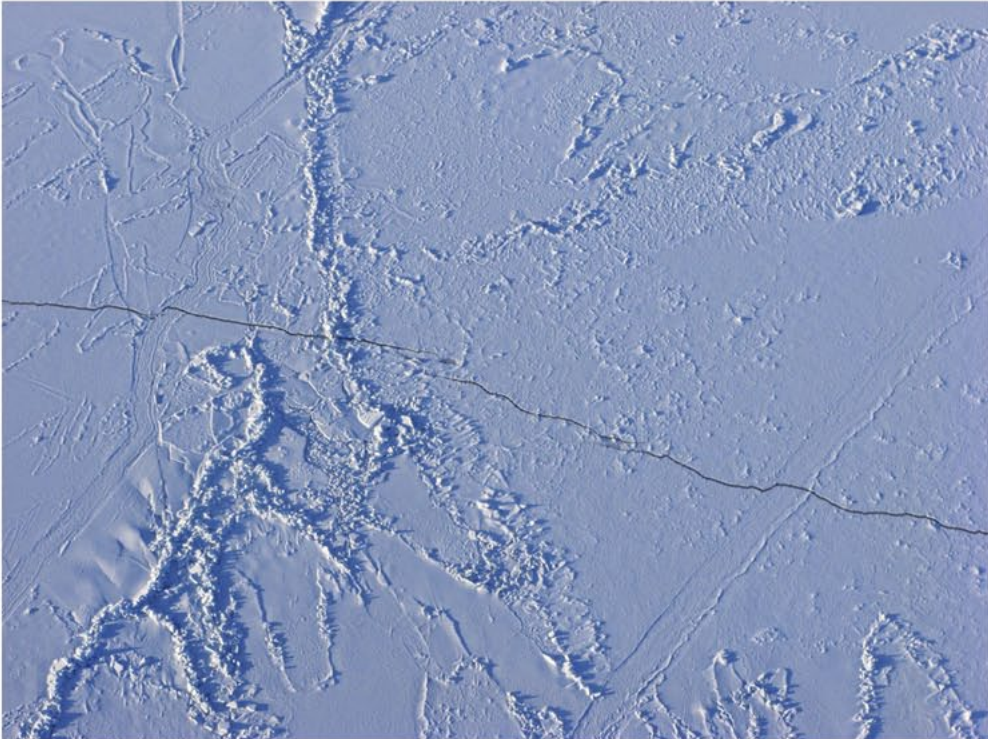
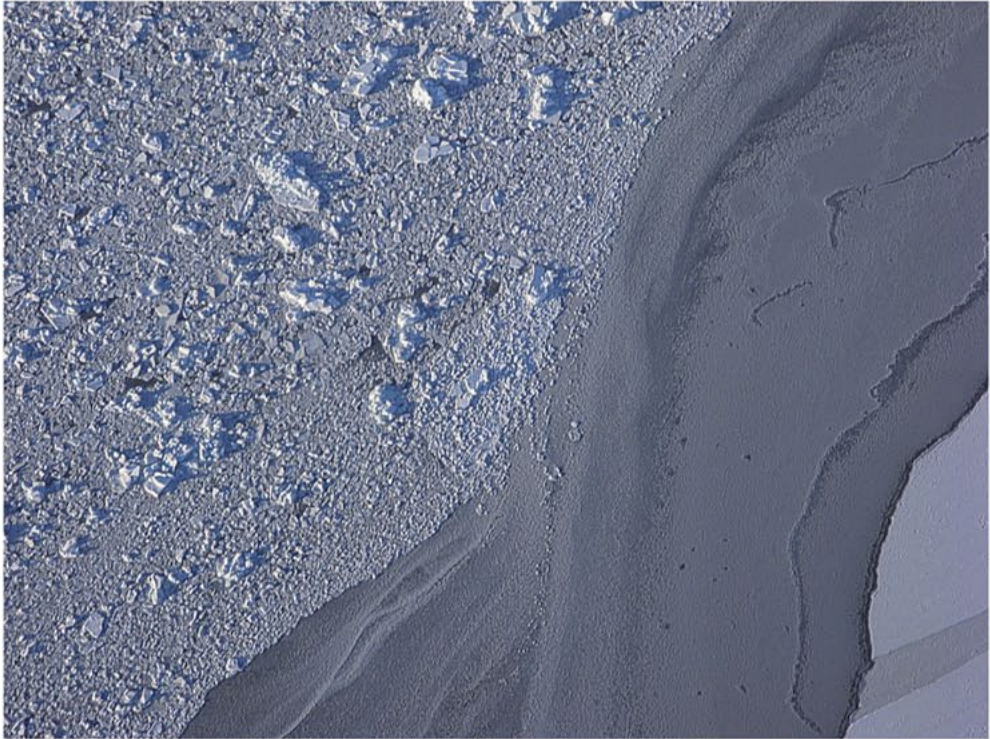
C-print Photographs

2009

Focusing her camera on the extraordinarily complex and dynamic qualities of the frozen ocean, *Studies in Sea Ice* by Roberta Holden is a work of colour archival prints taken by helicopter between the communities of Umanaq and Nuussuaq on the northwest coast of Greenland – a region that has undergone a dramatic warming trend over the past ten years – as part of her Artist in Residency at the Upernavik Museum in Upernavik, Greenland in March 2009.

A continuation of a project begun in 2007 as an Official Artist of the International Polar Year, *Studies in Sea Ice* approaches the themes of Roberta's past polar work from a new vantage point, speaking more directly, more urgently, to the essential vulnerability of the planet. Disorientating in its lack of scale (the vast tracts of sea ice could easily be mistaken for the microscopic, emphasizing the multiple layers of our spatial engagement), these abstract images reveal both the power and fragility of the frozen world. The cracking and buckling of sea ice suggest, also, a metaphorical fracturing and compression, a tearing of the fabric of the planetary ecosystem, a rupturing of our symbiotic relationship with nature under intense human-induced pressures.





(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Karolina Jonderko

(Poland)

Szarlota

Photograph
2011

I've been looking at it since I was born. 'Szarlota' - the highest pile (consisting of stones from the Rydultowy coal mine) in Europe made by human is definitely a 'huge' part of my life. You can see it not only from every spot in my hometown, but also from miles and miles away.

134 m of coal waste is a symbol and a pride for citizens of Rydultowy.



Vanessa Kowalski

(United States)

Goodbye

Photograph

This is a more personal image, depicting a mapping of travels and their imprints on our bodies as well as our souls.



Benjamin A Monn

(Germany)

Endor Project

Photographs

Ongoing

Benjamin Monns' latest photo project goes under the title of 'Endor' and has been named after the eponymous planet in *Star Wars 2* whose forests are covered by futuristic space stations. In Monns' photo series, which he is developing within a work-in-progress process, the subject is real functional buildings which similarly contrast with their immediate environment. Here, the image of being implanted takes on a new, monumental dimension: humans place a building into a landscape where nothing has been built for thousands of years. Like an exotic plant in a little local garden, the building then interacts with its environment. In this situation, it is quite possible for a positive and exciting interplay to take place between architecture and nature. Far more frequently, the building and the landscape stand isolated side by side and create a totally dissonant image.





(Before) *Wind farm Southpoint, Big Island, Hawaii, USA*; (Here) *Bergisel-Schanze, Innsbruck, Austria*; *Hoover Dam Bypass, Nevada, USA*

Suzanne Mooney

(Ireland/Japan)

Remnant Mass

Photographs

2011



Due to the active nature of the land of Japan, there is a tendency to view the land and structures as impermanent, and with this comes a particular appreciation for transient beauty. The short-lived cherry blossoms in spring, made so much more sublime with the knowledge that they will last just a matter of days. Post-apocalyptic images have long been a part of the Japanese culture and psyche, but when faced with the source of such imagery, one cannot help but consider the scale of our own existence.

Since March 11th, the media has been saturated with images of the devastated Tohoku region. Two months after the disaster, I visited the town of Kesenuma in Miyagi prefecture. There, I experienced first hand just a fraction of the damage. I was struck by the awesome scale of devastation and the vast quantity of rubble and debris scattered across the land. What was once a beautiful seaside town is now littered with the personal belongings of thousands. The coastline itself has changed and it is impossible to imagine how the area will be restored within a lifetime, but it will be re-built on its new topography and restored to a functioning town, full of resilient people.



(Before) *Untitled*; (Here) *Untitled*; *Untitled*

Bill Nickels

(United States)

Developed Landscape

Photographs

Ongoing

Landscapes have been scraped, cut and dozed for the past two decades at unprecedented rates. Worldwide. Then, it is over. Idle. One can liken it to a game of musical chairs where there are only three or four seats for every ten developers. Now, what is left are scraped parcels of once useful ground. Cabbaged, worthless and littered with concrete scabs and posts with signs announcing the nothing being contemplated. The land lies in wait for the next reaping.





(Before) *Development*; (Here) *Sold*; *Available*

Úna Spain

(Ireland)

Ten Mile 2

Digitized Analogue Photograph
2011

This image relates to a body of work entitled *Ten Mile 2* created in response to the Battle of Aughrim (1691). Looking at my local environs I endeavour to engage with, and respond to, that which is ever present and yet somehow remains hidden. Themes of memory, forgetting and acknowledgement are central to my art practice.

The sleepy village of Aughrim in east Galway lies 5km outside of my hometown and is site to Ireland's bloodiest battle. This was the decisive battle of the Jacobite/Williamite war where up to 45,000 engaged in what was the Jacobites last stand on July 12th, 1691. 9,000 people were killed on the battlefield that covered just ten square miles (Ten Mile 2). More died at Aughrim than at The Battle of Clontarf, The Battle of the Boyne, Vinegar Hill, The 1916 Rising and The Troubles put together. Despite being dubbed 'The Gettysburg of Ireland' this momentous battle has been all but forgotten by the annals of history.

This quiet landscape has a gentleness to it and functions as a visual antidote to the atrocities of warfare that transpired at this site. The legacy of the Battle of Aughrim shaped, not only this small community, but also the history of this country. And yet it remains virtually forgotten.



Colin Stearns

(United States)

Mason & Dixon Survey

Photograph

Ongoing

I am photographing the Mason - Dixon Line from its formal beginning at Delaware 365 miles to its formal end at the southwest border of Pennsylvania and the northern border of West Virginia. The border was created to find the property line between Pennsylvania and Maryland, a land dispute between two territories created a cultural separation for a country.

I am photographing this border of cultural distinction. I am photographing more than the actual physical line, driving and walking to find what significance appears or if anything with any bearing occurs at the border crossings. The border created separation, not the people of the land insisting for a division.

The Mason - Dixon Line is an actual border, not a mythic barrier of freedom, nor was it intended to be the division of 'North' and 'South' in the United States. The line was created 13 years before the formation this country and had no initial direct connection to the Civil War, which occurred 98 years later. They created the landscape and then the landscape created us.



Dave Walsh

(Ireland/Netherlands)

Urban Ocean: Gulf of Mexico

Photograph
2011

It has taken not much more than half a century to turn the Gulf of Mexico into an Urban Ocean, dotted with 27,000 abandoned wells, and nearly 4,000 active platforms, interconnected by an incredible 40,000km of pipes. At sea, no matter where you are in the northern Gulf of Mexico, you can see the blinking lights of an oil platform, a small steel city unto itself, or perhaps a rusting ghost town. The Deepwater Horizon disaster, in April 2010 drew attention to this industrialisation of the Gulf, and hinted to the public the existence a scarred landscape that exists just over the horizon from the shorelines of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida.

In September 2010, I worked on board a Greenpeace ship carrying research to measure the impact of the oil spill, from where I got to observe the oil rigs drafted into the Deepwater Horizon site dwarfed by powerful rainstorms, and the wildlife that still prevails - the hummingbirds, the sperm whales, the flying fish and the powerful rainstorms.

www.davewalshphoto.com



FOCUS

Patrick Shanahan *Born in Manchester in 1955,*

Patrick Shanahan is an artist-photographer and educator with more than 30 years experience of making work for gallery exhibition, publication and public commission. Having lived in Cornwall since 1994, his work investigates the contemporary cultural landscape, offering a seductive and unsettling re-imaging of modern urban and rural environments. He has an MA and PhD from the Royal College of Art, London and his work is held in many public and private collections.

Making full use of the scenographic, artificial aspects of large-scale photography, Shanahan produces topographic images that are close to the kinds of minimalism found in painting and sculpture. These largely unpopulated compositions are subjected to a pristine finish and treatment of light, colour and space that help to establish a tension between a real and constructed landscape - a landscape in which the distinction between reality and imagination seems to blur and we are left with a peculiar sense of spatial estrangement.

Patrick Shanahan

(United Kingdom)

Rupture

Photographs

2010

Rupture is a poetic response to the post-mining Cornish landscape.

Shanahan has been working on this project since 2009 and it covers an area very close to his home in Cornwall, Great Britain. The region from Falmouth on the south coast to Portreath on the north coast and up to Perranporth was one of the most intensively-mined regions of the Cornish peninsula.

This work is both a metaphorical reflection on the dichotomy between certainty and rupture in the modern world and a critique of the ways in which the landscape can be left scarred in the aftermath of mineral extraction and exploitation. The photographs often convey the beautiful and the sublime, yet at the same time the images are approached in the certain knowledge that they represent a landscape toxic with the remnants of mining waste. This frisson, between an aesthetic response on the one hand and a rational retort on the other, provides us with the intellectual shudder that gives the work its meaning.

Shanahan has traditionally worked with film and analogue cameras, slowly integrating new technology as it has evolved over recent years. This project marks a complete transition to digital photography with the use of full-frame capture. The result is hyperreal and illusory images that transform familiar environs into something disturbing and strange - images that pose the artificial and natural in opposition to one another.



A selection of photographs from the *Rupture* project was first exhibited at the Kestle Barton Gallery in Cornwall, between 30th May and 17th July 2010.

www.patrickshanahan.co.uk



(Before) *Cligga Head I*; (Here) *Cligga Head VI*



Cligga Head VIII



Goon Gumpas I



Goon Gumpas II



Goon Gumpas III



Wheal Busy



Wheal Kitty II



Wheal Kitty III

Enter Full Screen



Open Call for Submissions

Enter Full Screen is looking for your photographs to show as a digital slideshow projection over a single night in South Studios, Dublin.

We are looking for Irish photographers or photographers living and working in Ireland to send us a finished body of work to be projected with accompanying music while you sit, enjoy and have a drink.

Each photographer gets no more than 5 minutes. If you have music you would like to suggest to accompany your work please feel free to send that too (Mp3, 320kpm).

Please be aware large bodies of work will be edited down.
Images: JPG, 100dpi, sRGB, 768px on shortest side.

Send your files to: enterfullscreen@gmail.com

DEADLINE: 30th September 2011



Talk

Review

Rashida Sadiq

on

Darby & Peters' Saddam's Babylon

Interview

Willson Cummer

Angela Darby & Robert Peters

Platform Arts, Belfast, Northern Ireland
February 2011

Rashida Sadiq

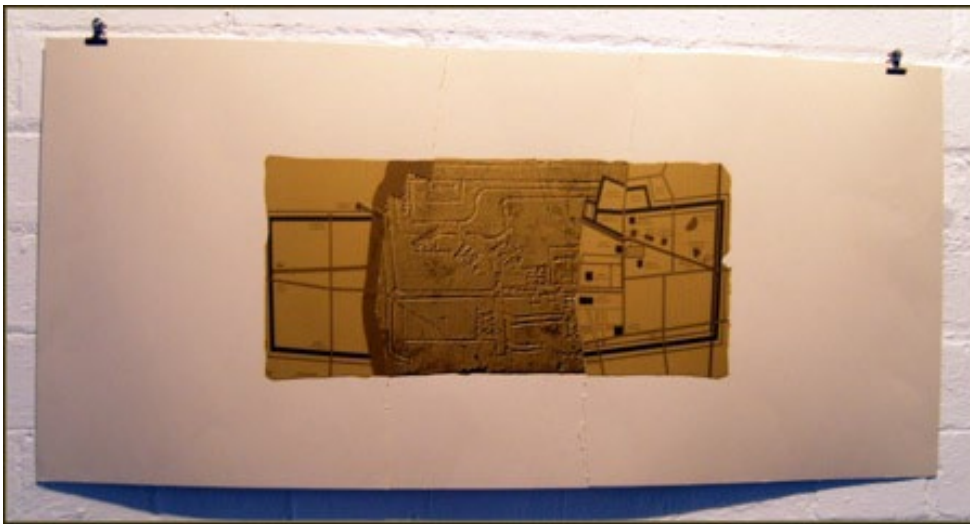


Above: *Saddam's Babylon Mural*, digital print

The Bible adamantly states that Babylon would be destroyed and never rebuilt; the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Revelations are explicit on this subject. The city is associated with the anti-Christ and it is said to be the seat of power for the 'tyrant of the world'. This was a Christian prophecy that Saddam Hussein found irresistible to prove wrong. He began construction of his new Babylon just three years into his presidency. His 'restoration' program would send out a resounding visual message to the Christian Western world that Saddam's power was so omnipotent that he could raise Babylon from the dust, sealing his place in history as the restorer of the ancient city. However Saddam's grandiose plans of resurrection involved building on top of the foundation stones of King Nebuchadnezzar's Palace (c.600 B.C.) with bricks embossed with his own inscriptions.

The text from Saddam's bricks - 'In the era of Saddam Hussein, protector of Iraq, who rebuilt civilization and rebuilt Babylon. SDH', - has been screen-printed onto the walls of Platform Arts Gallery in Belfast in its original Arabic. The artists have left the silkscreen, ink and squeegee used for stencilling the text on a pallet accompanied by a pile of card also printed with the same inscription. The low-tech quality of

the assemblage indicates a quick and inexpensive method for the creation of multiples. It is said that Saddam's bricks were so cheaply manufactured that they were crumbling within a few years of production. Ironically his inscribed bricks have now become treasures for souvenir seekers just like pieces of the Berlin wall.



Historians and archaeologists working in Iraq ridiculed Saddam's project as 'Disney for a Despot'. Saddam only succeeded in defacing invaluable archaeological sites and artefacts preferring to replace them with his own vision of grandiosity. Ostentatious, Vegas style monuments and over exaggerated arches had to be concocted as a blueprint for the ancient city of Babylon does not exist.



Left: *Babylon Theme Park*, digital print collage on paper.

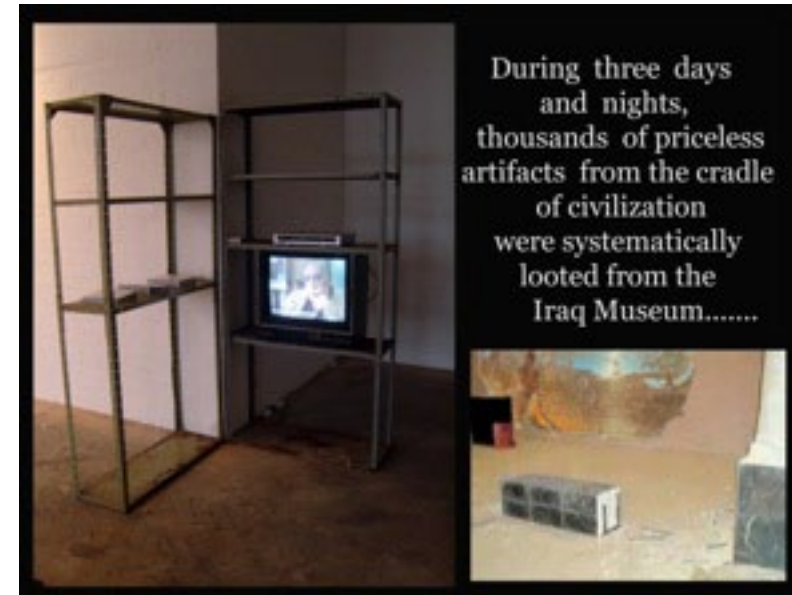
Above: *Saddam's Babylon*, digital photograph & *The Wings of Love* mural, video projection (gallery installation)

The artists have avoided any obvious images of the despot and his reincarnated city, preferring instead to exhibit visual references to the overblown creations of Saddam's ego. The piece entitled *Babylon Theme Park* presents two maps; one of the ancient city, the other of the modern newly recreated Babylon. They are sliced, torn and then attached with one sandwiched between the other. Saddam's vaulting intention was to presumably mimic King Nebuchadnezzar II but his attempts to develop the ancient city eradicated rather than enhanced Mesopotamia's heritage. By associating himself with Nebuchadnezzar, Hussein further attempted to

It is not unusual for certain historical figures to invoke the past to pursue contemporary objectives

convince the Iraqi people, as well as the Arab nations of their rightful place in history. It is not unusual for certain historical figures to invoke the past to pursue contemporary objectives.

This adoption of cultural signifiers is also evident in the photograph of a deteriorated wall painting copied from Stephen Pearson's kitsch original, 'The Wings of Love' (c.1972). Rumour has it that Saddam had the mural commissioned for a wall beside one of his many swimming pools in his palace. An accompanying publication informs us that Pearson sold over 3.5 million prints of this picture during the 70's and 80's. The image of the mural incongruously placed at one of Saddam's swimming pools seems to point to a mismatch between cultural norms, a reflection on some Middle Eastern leader's relationship with Western power. A debased Western cultural form adopted by a secular tyrant seems emblematic of many circumstances in this part of the world. One wonders how Saddam would have fared in the present climate if there had been no invasion by coalition



forces. The mural's central section is also projected onto the back wall of the gallery and presented like an ancient artefact removed from its original setting to be viewed in a museum setting.

An old monitor sitting on a rusty set of shelves displays a documentary featuring Dr. Donny George Youkhanna, former Head of the Board of Antiquities in Baghdad. His voice resonates throughout the gallery. Dr Youkhanna describes the catastrophic events of his return to the Iraq Museum on the 13th April 2003. Between the 8th and 12th fighting had broken out on the museum grounds and the museum employees had fled. Thousands of priceless historic and archaeological relics belonging to the ancient Sumerian civilization and other periods of Mesopotamian history

disappeared from storerooms. Dr Youkhanna believed that approximately 15 thousand items were destroyed or stolen and that bizarrely many of the cuneiform tablets (the oldest examples of writing) were auctioned on e-Bay. Images of the damaged museum are shown revealing the extent of the devastation. The repositories of records have been emptied and left to rot. In the footage the viewer catches a brief glimpse of *The Wings of Love* mural taken from Saddam's Palace. We know that an association with a particular individual makes an object acquire a significance it would not otherwise have; indeed many art works have used this strategy for obtaining wider exposure in a society obsessed with celebrity and fame. By 'salvaging' the mural from the pool wall and placing it in a museum the artists force us to consider this form of cultural weighting by association and possibly its absurdity.

A found photograph showing a Persian rug half immersed in a swimming pool seems to capture a gestalt snapshot of the artists' intentions. An object of possible value is carelessly discarded and left in a susceptible situation - the chlorine treated water damaging the submerged fibres. Without proper assessment and protection objects of cultural importance can be lost, though equally importance can be distorted by context. Traditionally cultural significance is attributed by those in positions of power - that includes curators, critics and collectors. Any unquestioning acceptance of this hegemony should be challenged ●



Before: *During 3 days & nights*, video installation
Above: *Saddam's Babylon Mural*, digital print
All images courtesy the artists

See more work by Angela Darby & Robert Peters at www.adarbyrpeters.com

Rashida Sadiq is a writer based in London.

Interview

Willson Cummer

(United States)

www.newlandscapephotography.com

Willson Cummer is a fine-art photographer and teacher who lives near Syracuse, NY. He founded the blog *New Landscape Photography* in November, 2010 and has featured the work of over 70 photographers, adding new entries each week. The blog has a worldwide readership, with followers in Germany, France, and China, as well as many in the United States. *New Landscape Photography* focuses on work that considers the intersections between the natural world and humans and their built environments. Its format is simple: one image from an artist's project is followed by his website and artist statement.

How often do you take photos either through work or in your personal time?

I photograph once or twice a week, on outings that last a couple of hours. I'm usually working on a project that I engage in for about a year.

Almost everyone has a camera of some sort, what type of camera do you use to take photos?

My main camera is a Nikon D300 digital SLR.

Have you had a formal education in fine art or photography?

No. I've learned what I know through some excellent workshops and through self-education. I study photography monographs and writing about photography, both in print and online.

What was the first photo or photographer's work that really got to you?

When I was a teenager I had a mentor who was a portrait and fashion photographer. On one of my birthdays he gave me a book of Bruce Weber's work, which I loved. The tones in the B&W portraits were stunning. It wasn't until much later that I became interested in landscape photography and color work.

Recent years have seen a boom in online photography platforms from magazines to blogs, what do you think the benefits and drawbacks are as a result of this?

The benefits are clear: people are able to see more work than ever before. I have readers of my blog all over the world. I'm able to share work with a diverse audience in a way that simply wouldn't be possible offline. The huge amount of work can be overwhelming, though, and sometimes I wonder if it has a dampening effect on my own work. I just see so much, that sometimes I'm visually exhausted. It's an effort to see the world with fresh eyes, which is what I feel is necessary for my projects ●

Project

Daphne Plomp
A Disappearing Sea

Daphne Plomp

(Netherlands/UK)

A Disappearing Sea

Photographs

2010

Efforts to save the Northern Aral Sea in Kazakhstan have prevented the larger Southern Aral Sea from receiving any water supply, and it is still shrinking.

Bio

Daphne is a freelance photojournalist based in The Netherlands and London, UK.

In October 2010 she graduated with distinction for her Masters in Photojournalism at the University of Westminster, London.

Recent commissions and publications include *Trouw* (daily Dutch newspaper); *Vrij Nederland* (Dutch news magazine); *De Volkskrant* (daily Dutch newspaper) on London's wealthiest squatter; *De Zaaier* (inhouse magazine by the Dutch Worker's Union FNV Bondgenoten) on the strike of exploited and suppressed Polish employees in Oirschot, The Netherlands, and *Crossing Currents* group exhibition in P3 Gallery, London.

www.daphneplomp.com



Until the 1970s the Aral Sea was the fourth largest lake in the world, now an estimated 10% remains. As the Aral Sea rapidly shrunk in size, the sea divided into two parts: Northern and Southern. The local population fell victim to the constant rising salinity levels and pollution caused by high quantities of fertilizers and pesticides which were used to fulfill the overambitious Soviet plans for cotton production along the Aral Sea's feeding rivers (Amu Darya and Syr Darya).

Dust storms blew the evaporation's remains of salt and pesticides around which caused a wide range of emerging health issues

Most fish perished, the entire ecosystem transformed and desertification of the land prompted a local climate change. Dust storms blew the evaporation's remains of salt and pesticides around which caused a wide range of emerging health issues, including: intestinal diseases, respiratory illnesses, cancer, anemia, a tuberculosis pandemic as well as high maternity and child mortality rates.









Due to these irrigation techniques, the Aral Sea no longer received any water supply from the Amu Darya and became merely dependent on the Syr Darya river (from the northwest via Kazakhstan). Efforts to save the remaining Northern Aral Sea in Kazakhstan have prevented the much larger Southern Aral Sea from receiving any water supply, as it is still shrinking today ●



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