



SuperMassiveBlackHole

ISSN 2009-2288

ISSUE 1/2009



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

Cover: *Untitled (construction)*, 2009 by Barry W Hughes / Bahs

Theme: Construction

Alissa Kleist - *Building Skies*
Mark Curran - *Southern Cross*
Gigi Cifali - *Absence of Water*
Barry W. Hughes / Bahs - *Selected Photographs*
Daniel Shiel - *Construct 1*
Paul Vivian - *Projections*
Laura Hensser - *Still Life*
Cassander Eeftinck Schattenkerk - *Untitled*
Saskia de Brauw - *People's Pathways*
Yaniv Waissa - *Disintegration of a Revived Nation*
Aisling O' Regan - *Untitled*
Fionnuala Hananhoe - *Sculpting Docklands*
Victoria J. Dean - *Everything Equally*
Cecilia Bullo - *Work in progress (installation)*
Rodolfo Franco - *Tersicore*

Focus:

Eyal Pinkas - *Mitosis*

Talk:

Interview - *Matthew Gamber*
Interview - *Madi Ju*
Exhibit Review - *John Duncan's Bonfires*
Book Review - *I'm a Real Photographer/Keith Arnatt*
Web Review - *RangeFinder Gernerall on YouTube*

Project:

Edward S. Johnston - *Experiential Extensions*
Damian Magee - *Natural History*



Theme

Construction is as much about the act of assembling as it is the finished article. You will see that the following artists have approached the act of construction from various standpoints including both the virtual and the physical; using methods such as computer programming, performance, found objects and buildings, and of course using personal contrivances to construct an abstract form, each work offers an alternative evaluation of the method used. There is a psychological, physiological and also functional interpretation of the theme, questioning both the laws governing the act as well as the understanding of the final outcome.

Alissa Kleist

(b. 1986, The Netherlands. Lives Ireland)

Building Skies

Digital photograph
2009

In her work, Alissa Kleist combines existing imagery – snippets from magazines and newspapers, her own photographs – with drawing, paint and print techniques on wood, paper and canvas, often resulting in strange hybrids inhabiting new worlds.

She is interested in the relationship between man and nature. Humans live longer, progress scientifically and medically and yet inexplicably destroy much of the world around them. Man is developing so rapidly that today's natural, social and economic climates are becoming increasingly unstable.

Are we evolving and simultaneously slowly exterminating ourselves? Alissa attempts to create images that question these concerns, but cannot always offer answers.

The photograph 'Building Skies' addresses some of these issues. Man as the new God, constructing landscapes, environments and creatures. In a world inhabited by GM crops, designer babies and artificial implants, will man soon need to build new skies?

alissakleist@hotmail.com



Mark Curran

(b. 1964, Ireland. Lives Germany/Ireland)

Southern Cross

C-type prints with aluminium frames
1999 - 2001

Southern Cross was a critical response to the rapid development witnessed in the Republic of Ireland – foreign investment brought about the largest economic transformation in the history of a country which never experienced the industrial revolution. The work maps, through the spaces of development and finance, the economic aspirations of a country on the western periphery of Europe. It presents the face and landscape being transformed, in response to the migration of global capital and described as the 'Celtic Tiger'.

The project was completed between 1999 and 2001 in Dublin city and county.

Southern Cross was commissioned by the Gallery of Photography, Dublin as recipient of the first annual Artists Award in 2001 and was presented as a solo exhibition in Dublin in 2002. A full-colour publication accompanied the exhibition with poem by Philip Casey and essay by Justin Carville. The work has subsequently been widely published and exhibited.

www.ctmp.ie/postgraduates.php?id=171

markjc1999@hotmail.com





(Before) *Inner City*, 1999; (Here) *South of the City*, 2000; *Sean from County Kildare*, 2000

Gigi Cifali

(b. Italy. Lives UK)

Absence of Water

Lambda prints, 80 cm x 80 cm

Ongoing

These images are part of an ongoing project called ‘Absence of Water’, which documents derelict lidos and baths in England. The Series is an historical archive and draws attention to the increasing number of public swimming pools that have closed in the last few decades. Deserted of human life these decaying landscapes provoke a profound feeling of human absence and nostalgia for a lost past.

Having been built in the late Victorian period, public lidos and baths were at the peak of their popularity in the 1930s. Gradually, living conditions and tastes have changed, resulting in a drop of attendances, leaving the public pools uneconomical to run. Many fell into decay and were demolished. Symbols of civic and architectural pride in Victorian times, today only a handful of them remain as a representation of bygone era.



www.gigicifali.com

gigicifali@gmail.com



(Before) Moseley Baths; (Here) Soho Marshall pool; Uxbridge Baths shallow end

Barry W. Hughes / Bahs

(b.1980. Ireland)

Selected Photographs

From *Independent Works*

C-type prints, 28 cm x 18 cm

2007 - 2009

Hughes chooses everyday objects and situations to explore ideas such as incidence, coincidence and accident, motivated by a desire to understand the tension between the intentional and unintentional gesture.

The three photos selected for *Construction* explore aspects of that theme: the building of a functional structure, the building of a deliberately useless structure and the accidental building of a structure, or *non-structure*. Each construction is determined by individual circumstances, resulting in works that each describe their coming to being on a fundamental level.

www.barrywhughes.com

bahs3000@gmail.com





(Before) *Dolmen*, 2007; (Here) *Headache*, 2008; *Untitled (construction)*, 2009

Daniel Shiel

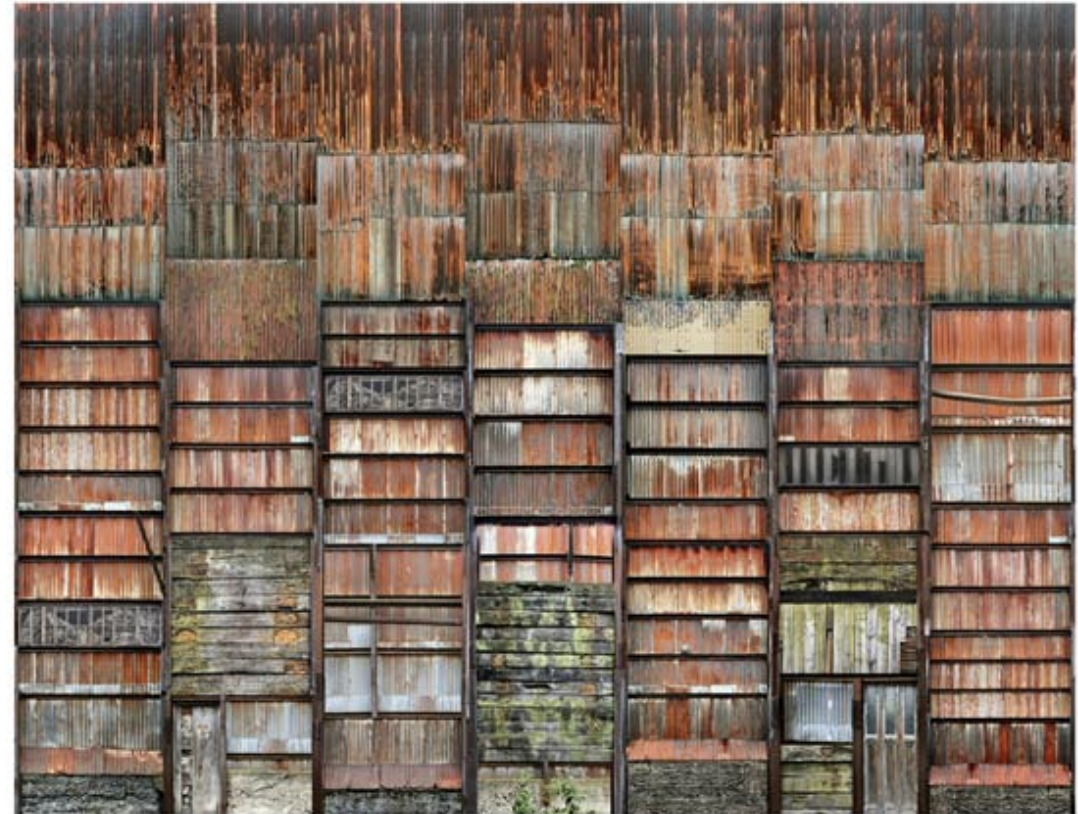
(b.1962, UK. Lives Ireland)

Construct 1

Digital collage from photographs
2008

This is a study of details, structural elements and materials associated with abandoned and decaying structures that have lost histories. The images, assembled into a collage, create a recognisable but abstract or possibly absurdist construction.

The completed image aims at creating and emphasising a third dimension and history that are both obscure but implied and for which a number of narratives could be written.



danielshiel@fastmail.fm

Paul Vivian

(United Kingdom)

Projections

Photographs

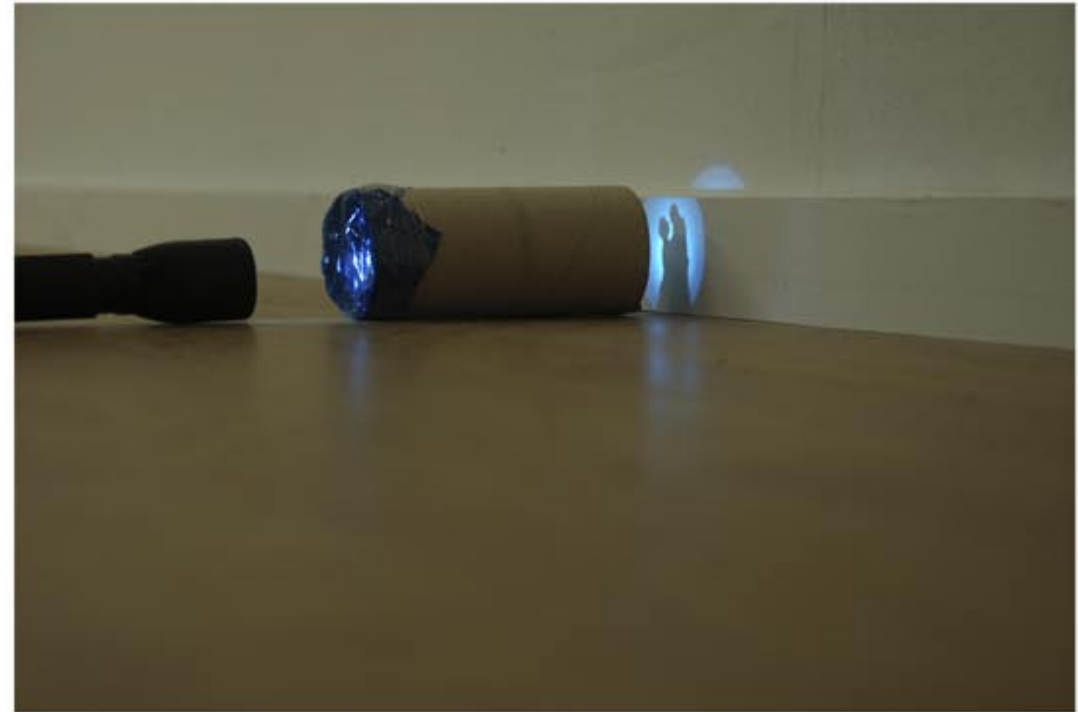
Ongoing

Miraculous imagery is emitted from contingent projectors, created by Vivian from discarded food packaging and household appliances. There is often a surprising interplay between the detritus that he co-opts to construct a projection, and the subject matter Vivian chooses to show.

Conjunction 08 Airspace Gallery, Stoke on Trent November 2008

These works are part of a series of improvised projections. I tend to accumulate images like anybody else, images stick, they get hard to shake off. Whether Burt Lancaster in 'The Leopard', Pink Floyd at the UFO club or a full moon.

Translating these through simple means, homemade constructions, light and shadow provide a most basic illusion, some sense of 'otherness' at its most immediate. A magic lantern for a desktop - temporary and easy to assemble illuminated by a torch or desk lamp. Whether through drawings, photography or projections I am interested in how arbitrary items given a certain construction, a certain space can relay the insistence of an image that in itself may be arbitrary in its initial selection. I also enjoy the fact that with these particular pieces that if you switch the light off or pull the plug there's no more image, just like the inconsistency of memory.



www.paulvivian.co.uk



(Before) *Couple*; (Here) *Liquid Light Show*; *Moon*

Laura Hensser

(United Kingdom)

Still Life

Photographs
2008

Laura's work has a very personal approach to portraiture that crosses the boundaries between actuality and imagination, looking at the relationship between the body and environment. Her work constantly combines her own experiences within her rural surroundings. By using 5×4 Laura is able to produce highly detailed and structured pieces of work, which examine her interests in conceptual and process based ways of working.

Laura's most recent work titled 'Still Life' explores her own childhood memories and challenges the main conventions of performance based self portraiture. Her recollections are illustrated by items which are placed on her face, turning herself from a subject in to an object of that particular memory. By bringing her internal thoughts to the external surface Laura completely strips herself of her current identity and succumbs to her nostalgic self.

Laurahensser@gmail.com





(Before) *Cheese*; (Here) *Cupcakes*; *Map*

Cassander Eeftinck Schattenkerk

(b. 1974, The Netherlands)

Untitled

From the series *The Andromeda Strain*

Photograph

2007

After making many landscape photographs I realized the search for special places is more important than the place itself. The notion of discovery has been always intimately linked to photography. The cliché of the photographer as an explorer of unknown and rough places became a starting point to construct images.

I played with the 'National Geographic' -language essentially without leaving my hometown. I searched for locations that, after small interventions, can fit in an imaginary travelogue. Using low-budget special effects and lighting I staged natural phenomena and imagery.

To this work made on location I added still-lives constructed in the studio. Referring to nature and scientific photography, the tabletop landscapes create confusion on the overall status of the series.

I often choose material that has a perishable or unpredictable quality, like foam or spaghetti. The artificial and the real, and the different sources the image is based on, should be present simultaneously.

www.schattenkerk.nl

cassander@schattenkerk.nl



Saskia de Brauw

(b.1981. The Netherlands)

People' s Pathways

Documented performance and video animation
2008

The square which I use in 'People' s pathways' can be seen as a large, empty stage. At any moment, watched by me, a new player may wander onto this stage and into this never-ending performance.

I observe minutely the lines which the people make by crossing the square and note that people always take the same route. Every day I watch this 'performance' from the same spot and record the movements of the various players on a large sheet of glass.

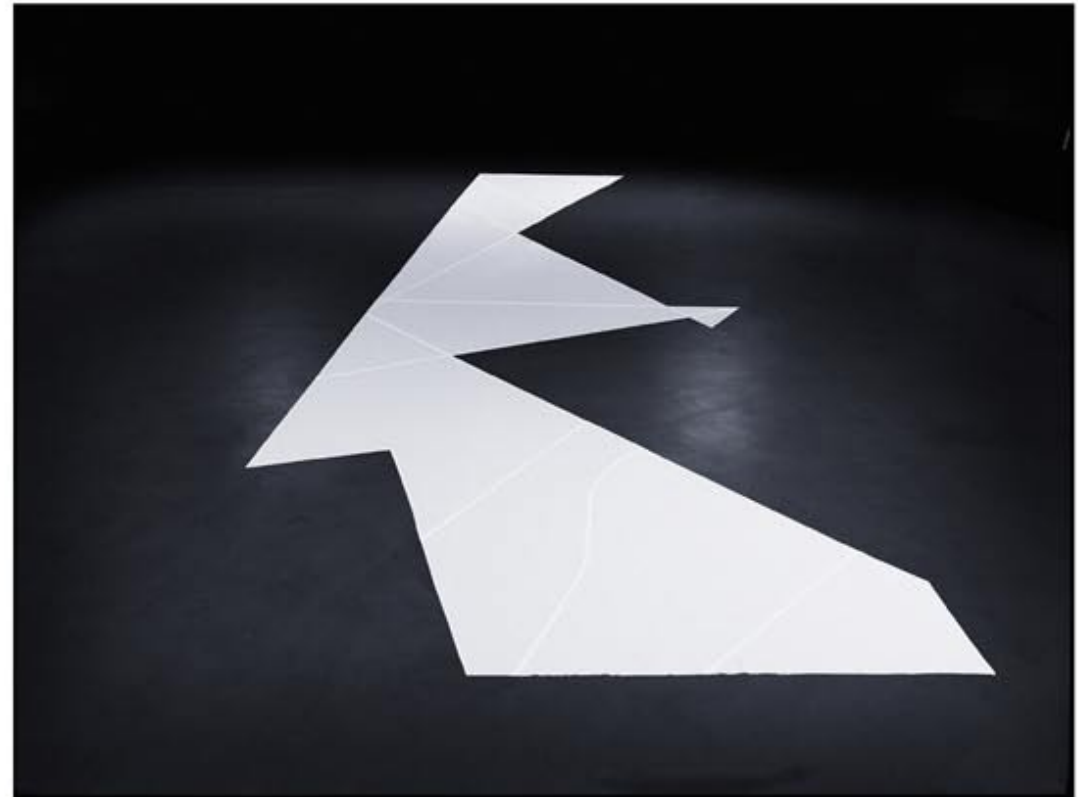
I draw lines on the glass showing in perspective the movements across the square. The place of the players and myself in the square is thus determined by how I see it.

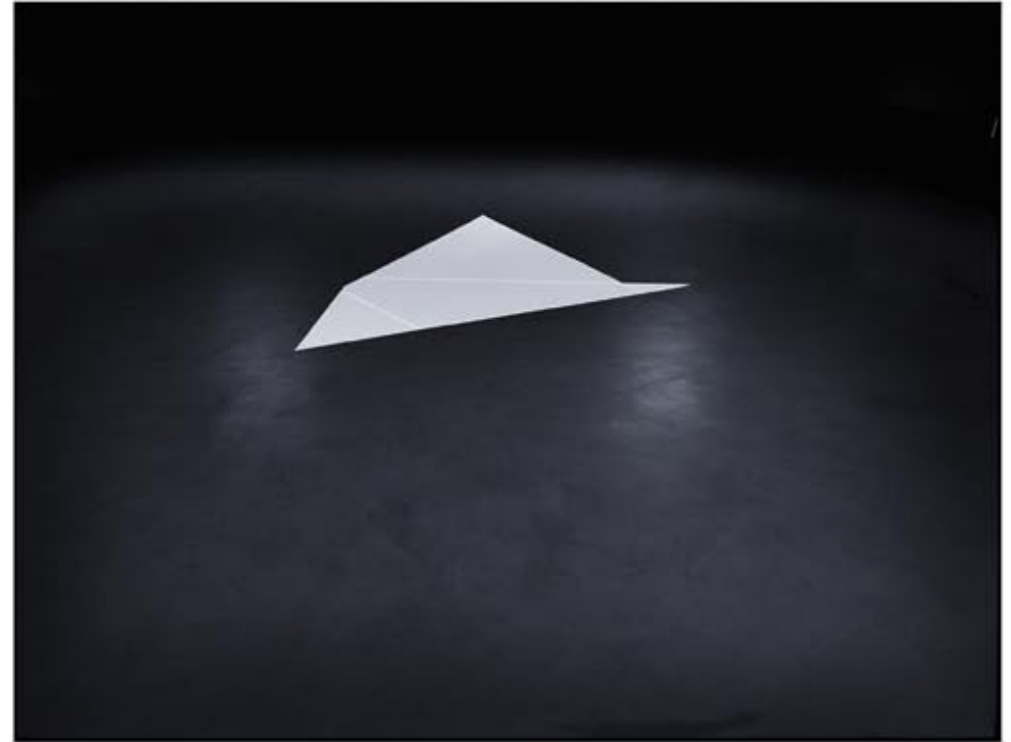
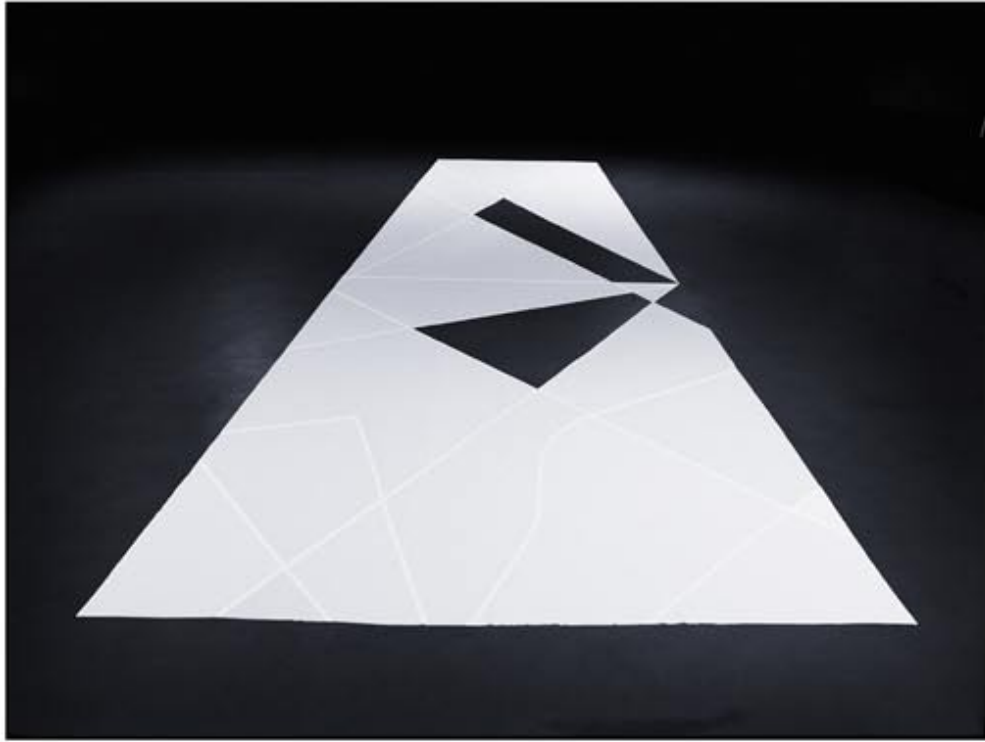
The lines made by the various players intersect each other, thus creating areas in between. These areas are unused, empty spaces which can be fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle; in other words, as a whole they make up the square.

By slowly taking the puzzle apart and putting it together again - taking the whole out of context - I have tried to make an abstract version of the square [and its players] and so create a feeling of space.

www.saskiadebrauw.com

info@saskiadebrauw.com





(Before) *Untitled 1*; (Here) *Untitled 2*; *Untitled 3*

Yaniv Waissa

(b. 1978. Israel)

Disintegration of a Revived Nation

Photographs

2007 - 2008

My photographic journeys lead me to the connection between the city and nature.

I deal with the urban revolution, manifested in the massive construction of buildings, roads, bridges and all kinds of huge concrete structures.

Man is gradually reducing nature and neutralizes the past in its path.



www.waissa.com

waissa.yaniv@gmail.com



(Before) *The Heros Bridge, Haifa 2008*; (Here) *The Strings Bridge, Jerusalem 2007*; *Grand Canyon, Haifa 2008*

Aisling O' Regan

(Ireland)

Untitled

Photographs
2008

These are photographs I created in Beijing in 2008 just before the Beijing Olympics.

Many ancient Beijing neighbourhoods which are called Hutongs were being reconstructed in a major reconstruction frenzy driven on by China's booming economy in 2008 and the drive to present a modern China when all eyes were on the country during the build up to the Olympic Games.

These dramatic changes even left the local Beijing population in anticipation of the new Beijing about to be revealed. Yet one wonders if the reconstruction will erode the character and life of the Hutongs.

aislingoreganphoto@gmail.com





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

Fionnuala Hananhoe

(Ireland)

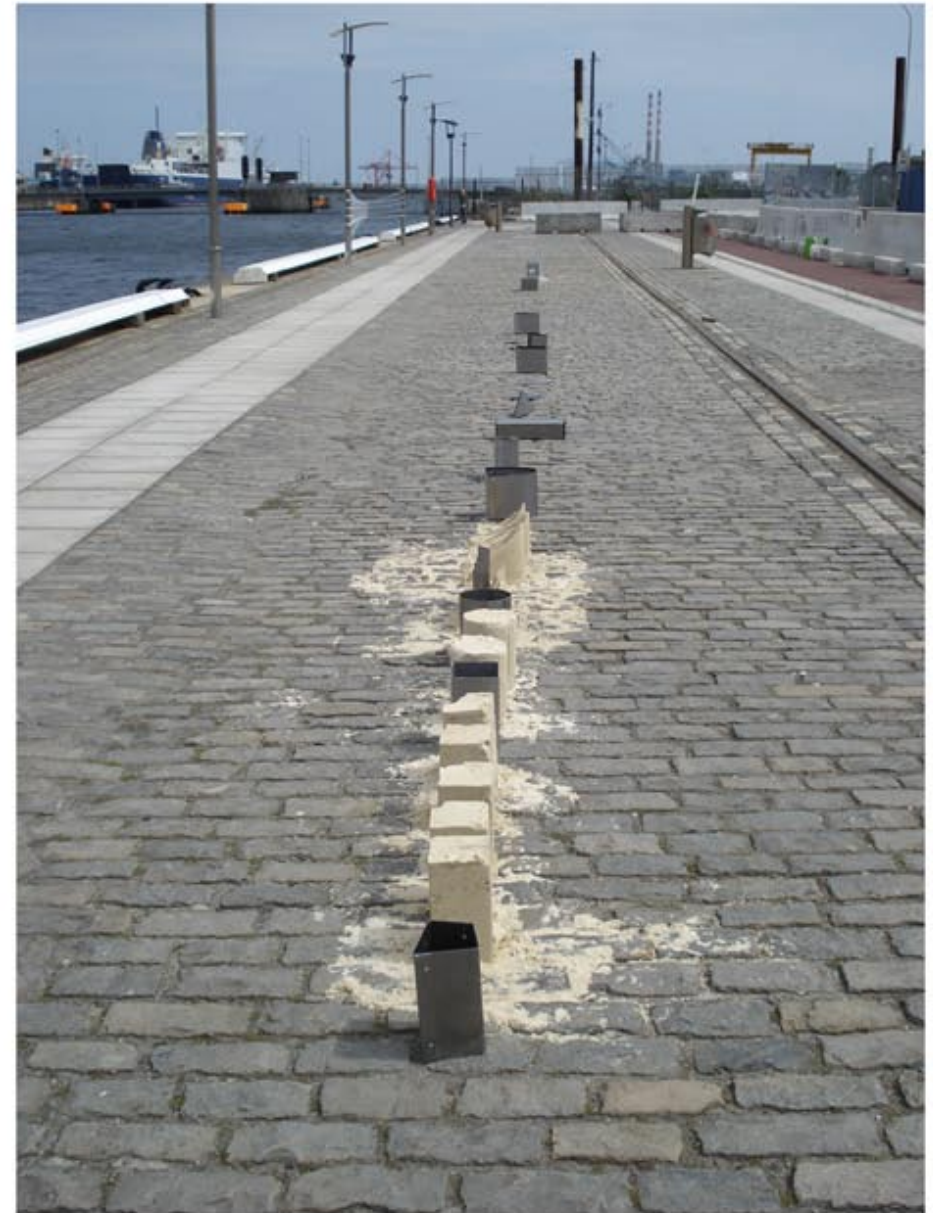
Sculpting Docklands

Documented public installation
2008

Sculpting Docklands was an artwork that took place over the course of one day in May 2008 on the south side of Dublin's Docklands. The work consisted of sand and metal sculptures that could be added to or changed by passers-by and visitors to the site. The materials of the work referenced specifically the construction that is everpresent in the Docklands, and more generally our everyday constructed realities.

The artwork, sited where the old Docklands ends and the new Docklands begins close to the mouth of the River Liffey, was a sculpture in flux offering participants the opportunity to engage creatively, respond to the environment and make their own constructions.

www.fionnualahanahoe.com



Victoria J. Dean

(b. 1980. Northern Ireland)

Everything Equally

Photographs

2007

The ideology of public space consists of the implementation of an environment, usually constructed and maintained by councils, but for use by the general public. Ideally 'equal for all', though realistically tainted by the imposition of restrictions of use, they alienate certain groups within society, leading to a sense of oppression and claustrophobia.

These images are from 'Everything Equally', a series in which I have recorded over time, subtle evidence of the factors that influence the identity of a completely constructed public space, in Donaghadee, County Down in Northern Ireland.

The powerfully oppressive structures of this contemporary urban landscape, when placed in the context of this small vernacular coastal town, appear alien and inhospitable, obstructing the coastline and traditional harbour and lighthouse beyond. By viewing the hard concrete structures, in the context of the surrounding environment over time, we are witness to a mostly empty space resembling a zone of exclusion, and evidence of both the natural environment and humanity attempting to claim ownership, resulting in a public space with an ambiguous purpose. Paradoxically though, it is this that helps to define its identity.

www.victoriajdean.com

victoriajdean@yahoo.co.uk





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

Cecilia Bullo

(b. Italy. Lives Ireland)

Work in progress

Documented installation

2009

Carl Jung suggested that the experience of psychosis is a journey for the individual to rediscover something that has been lost to him and to restore a vital balance back into his life. Doctors refer to this state as Metanoia. Especially in its schizophrenic form, it can be compared to an existential journey that could be a route towards recovery.

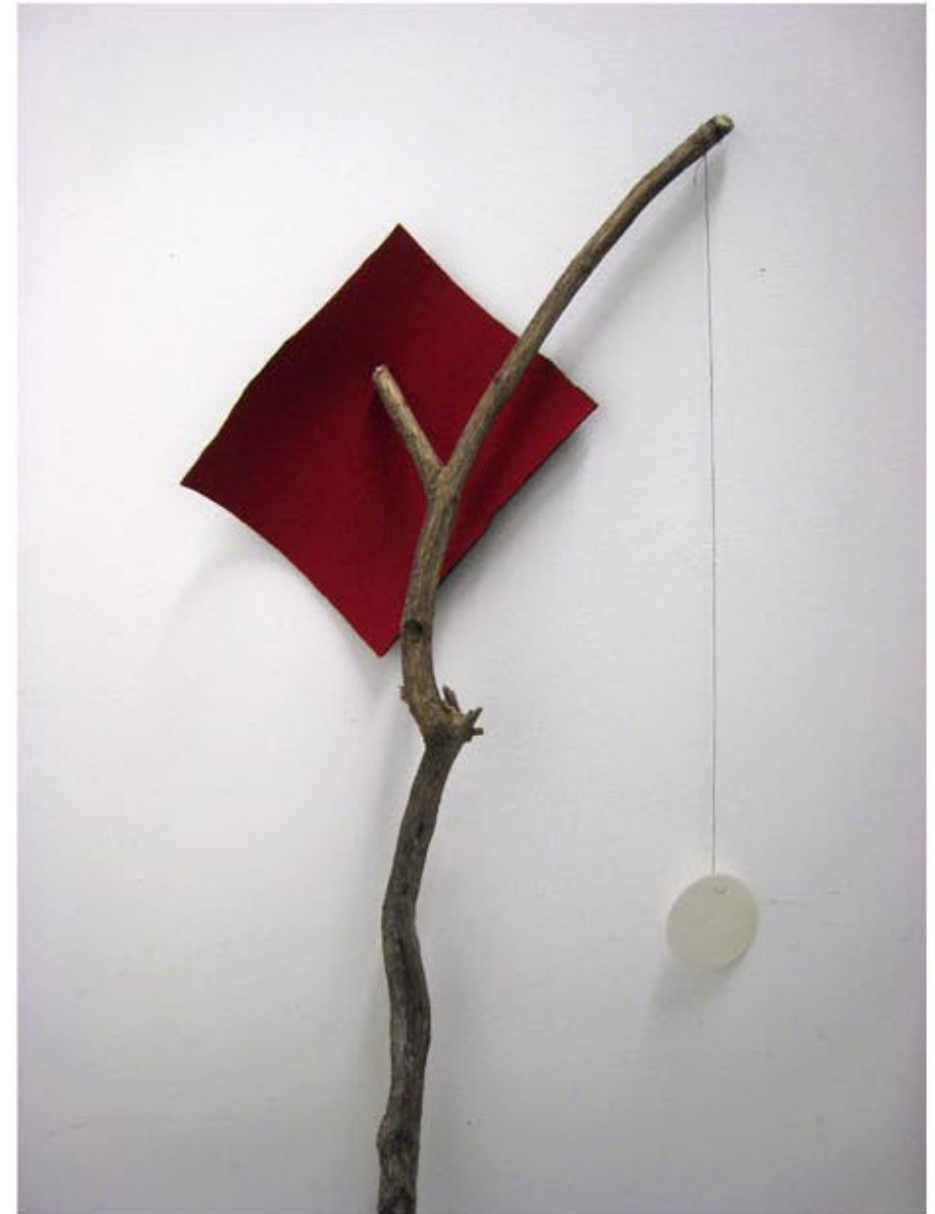
I see it as a sort of dismantling and re-construction of oneself.

I am exploring the relationship between the individual and specific locations as well as objects/amulets, which embody for the holder almost magical properties. My work attempts to engage the viewer into an imaginary inner journey using as triggers objects/sculptures, which have an encoded specific symbolism, as well as allowing free association.

These photos are part of a current installation where I have used the 'walking stick' as props to hold pieces of neoprene materials (it is often used by surgeons to practice incisions and subsequently wound sutures as similar to skin), needle instruments hang off some of the sticks suspending host bread, others are connected via medical plastic tubes to a wounded torso. Another work in progress is composed of a body made of white towels taken from hotels around Ireland assembled with High Visibility material, medical bandages and walking sticks.

www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/yourgallery/artist_profile/Cecilia+Bullo/31972.html

ceci.bullo@hotmail.com





(Before) Installation shot I (detail); (Here) Installation shot I; Installation shot II

Rodolfo Franco

(b. Brazil. Lives Spain)

Tersícore

From the series *Pornogramas*
Digital image from photograph
2008

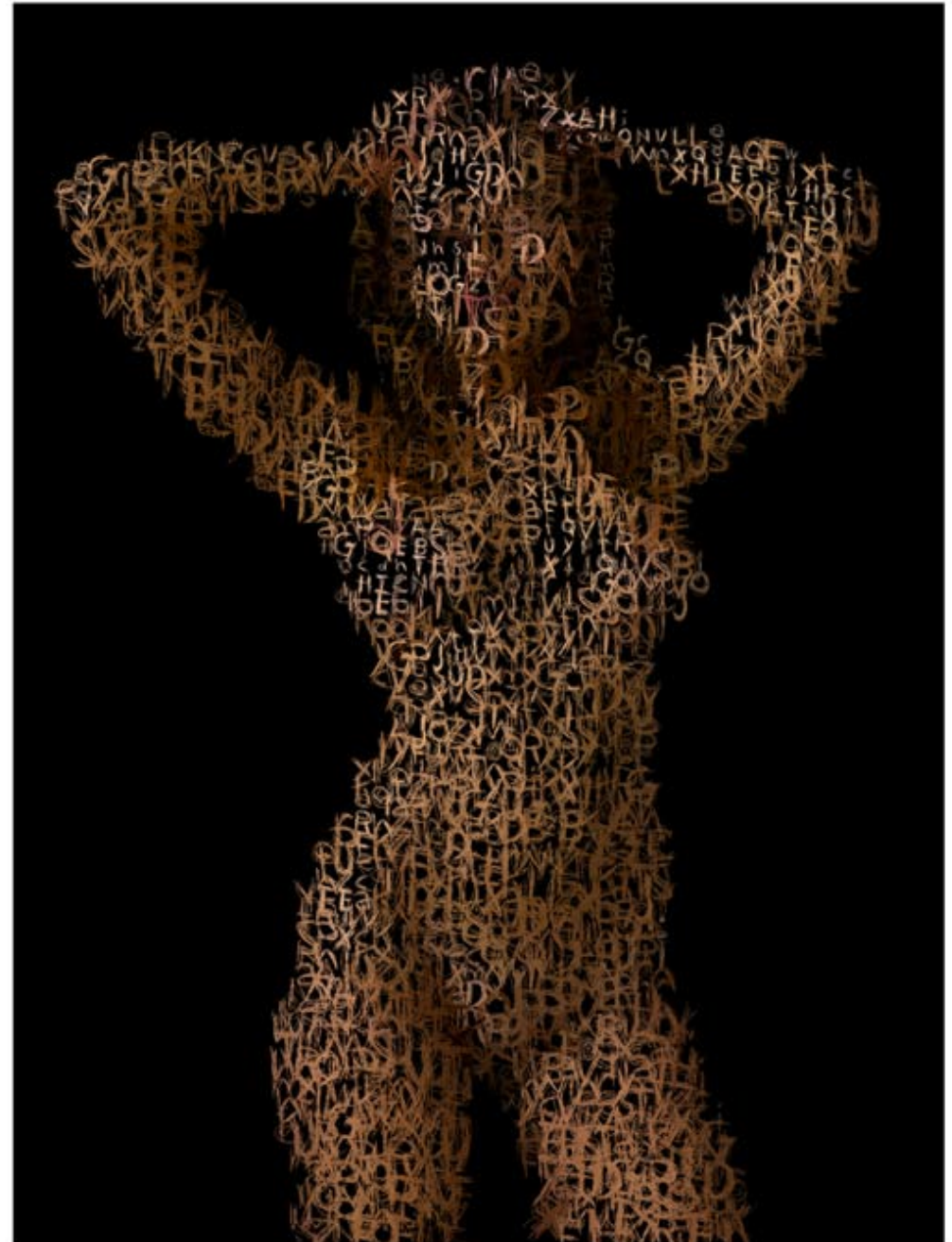
The verb becomes meat: the feminine body is a text that invites that is to say its flavour to us. The disciplined tact is reading, the eyes catch the scents that give off the sexual colours and the cacophonies that suggest the random *consonantales* encounter, the voluptuous vision trained by the typesetter rigor that it seduces to us to penetrate his *entrelínea*.

The capture of the object of desire dividing to him Cartesianly and recomposing to him with cellular letters. Two planes superposed in symbiosis: you can choose to see the composition, where often there is a false effect of tri-dimensionality (2,5D?), or entertain in the bi-dimensional detail.

www.vimeo.com/user1146685

www.myspace.com/doorforfalcon

doorforfalcon@gmail.com





FOCUS

Eyal Pinkas is an Israeli born artist based in Amsterdam, who works mainly with photography and moving images. His work was included in 'New Visions,' Kunsthaus Essen, Germany; 'F/Stop' , 2nd International Photography Festival, Leipzig; he completed a site specific video installation at Ketelhuis, Amsterdam as part of 'Filmisreal' , Israeli Film Festival. He completed his BA at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam (2003-2007).

Eyal Pinkas

(b. 1980, Israel. Lives The Netherlands)

Mitosis

Photographs, 50 cm x 40 cm

2008

'Mitosis is a traumatic process. The cell goes through dramatic changes in ultra structure, its organelles disintegrate and reform in a matter of hours, and chromosomes are jostled constantly by probing microtubules. Occasionally, chromosomes may become damaged. An arm of the chromosome may be broken and the fragment lost, causing deletion. The fragment may incorrectly reattach to another, non-homologous chromosome, causing translocation. It may reattach to the original chromosome, but in reverse orientation, causing inversion. Or, it may be treated erroneously as a separate chromosome, causing chromosomal duplication. The effects of these genetic abnormalities depend on the specific nature of the error. It may range from no noticeable effect, cancer induction, or organism death.'

Quote is taken from the entry Mitosis in Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitosis>

www.eyalpinkas.com

eyalpinkas@gmail.com





















Talk

Interviews

Matthew Gamber

Madi Ju

Reviews

John Duncan - Bonfires

Keith Arnatt - I' m a Real Photographer

Rangefinder General on YouTube

Matthew Gamber

www.matthewgamber.com



Light. Digital Chromogenic Print, 2002

American photographer Matthew Gamber is the Editor in Chief of *bigredandshiny.com* since 2004. He has a wealth of experience as tutor, writer, technician and practicing artist. He is based in the US.

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

Personal projects manifest over several months to several years. In the past, photographs would be made daily. Now, photographs usually are made in a specific set of time, after a period of planning. These particular images aren't necessarily designed or have elaborately set-up, but there is consideration beforehand about how to try to use the photographs in a discussion about history and presentation of culture. I don't pick up a camera as often, but I deal with photography every day, whether it is in teaching, writing, or consulting.

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

For hired work, jobs are mostly digital capture with borrowed or rented equipment. For personal work, typically I'll work with a view camera that I've owned for nearly as long as I've been involved with photography. I still shoot with film, as it is still the best quality for the price with the amount that I shoot. Also, the view camera is embedded in ideas of modernity that I'm trying to engage as part of the image content.

Can film photography survive in the 21st Century?

Film might not be around as we know it, but I believe light sensitive materials will always exist. Many photographic technologies have had a lifespan of about twenty to thirty years, so the current film based system has had a good run in the marketplace.

Digital capture is not the end of photography; it is only the end of a set of ethics and values attached to what is now called traditional photography. To some of photography's earliest practitioners, the philosophy of digital technology represents the fulfillment of photography, not its demise.

Have you had a formal education in photography or film making?

I attended Bowling Green State University for a BFA degree; Tufts/School of the Museum of Fine Arts for my MFA degree.

Photography is everywhere these days, what was the first photo that really got to you?

The first photograph I recall being excited to see repeatedly was a picture made by one of my grandparents of the farm combine, threshing wheat. When I was young, I used to constantly look through the family albums and school yearbooks - the things I cared about and with what I could relate. Even though these aren't the most dramatic realizations about wanting to be a photographer, they have had the most subtle and enduring influence.

What photographers or film makers have influenced you?

Even now, I still feel I am learning. When I see any successful work, I try to analyze it to pick up things that maybe I should notice in my approach. Students are a big motivator. Their energy can be immense when they latch onto something that really gets to them - it makes to try to match that intensity.

Photography tends to remain on the periphery of the broader fine art world, why do you think this is?

I think much of it has to do with its history as an apparatus used on an industrial level. For many, it was merely a copying machine, a tool to present information. Though, on the most exclusive level, debating about whether it is an art this isn't an issue anymore. Over the past century, the medium has been historicized, generating desire the authentic and its connoisseurship. Being in a specific place with at a specific time with a camera now has the same value as an artist putting the brush to canvas. Iconic images and contemporary art photographs can demand critical attention and command high market prices ●



Untitled from *My Gloomy Light*, 2008

Born in Wuhan, China in 1983, Madi Ju is a freelance photographer and Feature editor of *Marie Claire China* since 2007. She came to prominence as one half of *My Little Dead Dick* (the other half was Patrick Tsai) showing their work to the world via the Internet. In 2005 Madi founded the online *After17 magazine*.

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

I always have my camera with me, but I'm not a shooting crazy, when I found a photo, I just carefully take few photos of it, I try to not disturb the real life.

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

Mostly, Olympus Mju II, Contax G2, Mamiya 7II.

Can film photography survive in the 21st Century?

I'm not sure. There's a retro-culture in every area, it helps a little bit. But digital is easier, more convenient and does not hurt the environment. I just prefer the films' images quality, like all the film people do.

Have you had a formal education in photography or film making?

Nop.

Photography is everywhere these days, what was the first photo that really got to you?

Hard to tell, I always like images, they have a special way to get you.

What photographers or film makers have influenced you?

A lot. Jurgen Teller, Ryan McGinley, Ye Rin Mok...and many young and talented photographers.

Photography tends to remain on the periphery of the broader fine art world, why do you think this is?

Its good that everyone can have a camera and shoot what they like, cameras are easy to control, but taking photos with your camera is just a lifestyle, you can enjoy it, but in art world, no matter what is your way to express, you need to show your thoughts, in a beautiful way or even in a shocking way.

What photographer (living or deceased) would you most like to work with?

I used to work with a talented photographer for a long time, but finally I found that it's hard for 2 photographers working together. They share the same way to express, but they both have their own ideas and thoughts, when you shoot a picture, you need to be independent and you should be strong to control your thoughts. So I prefer to work on my own. But if someone gives me a really interesting idea to work with someone, I would try ●

John Duncan - Bonfires

Temple Bar Gallery & Studios, Dublin, Ireland
27 February - 4 April 2009

S. Marks

John Duncan is at home in Belfast, it is his birthplace and his workspace; it is his inspiration also. Belfast has been undergoing a major facelift in the wake of the Provisional IRA's decommissioning of 2005 and the subsequent political developments, resulting in not only a more peaceful society but also a more confident and unified outlook. The city is being renovated as a result of this new investment brought about by the so-called Peace Process. Some things will always linger after a new order has been put in place, whether it is a politicised language or personal attitude, or in this case the bonfires built by the Northern Irish Protestant community as part of the annual 11th July commemorations. The bonfires are part of the celebrations commemorating the defeat of James Stuart at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, and serve as symbols of unity or solidarity within the community, of resistance and of warning to the Catholic community who share the same Provenance.

So Duncan has installed a small number of large prints in Temple Bar Gallery from his series *Bonfires*. The space has what seems to be a temporary wall which doesn't lend well to the venues overall look, and the white plastic frame that encases each print is uncomplimentary and I think could have been left out. The images are detailed, so large prints certainly make it easier to read the pictures, but it is not the full series however, and while I would have liked to see the lot, the scale of the works would make this impossible. Duncan has pointed to one specific aspect of Northern Irish Protestantism, the act of building bonfires, which has a universal appeal; their building being an important aspect of Halloween celebrations in the Republic for instance. From entering the exhibition I all ready had a connection with the subject and this was enough to begin with.

The photographs on display are for the most part unpopulated, and what else strikes me is the utter banality of the locations we find these intimidating, totemic structures; teetering on street corners in suburban housing estates, in grassy fields, public parks and on waste ground awaiting development, the brooding wooden mountains stare back from the centre of each print with menace. One image in particular says it all: it is a large pile of pallet wood and car tires resting neatly on the side of a road in a normal residential estate.

Behind the dangerous looking pile are red-bricked houses with front gardens and curtained windows. Next to the pile is a lamp post with two signs affixed, one stating the penalty for not scooping dog poop, the other for consuming alcohol in public. Gently blowing in the breeze, as it hangs from a make-shift gallows at the top of the five-tiered pile is an effigy of a Catholic, which we can deduce from the Celtic soccer jersey it's wearing. Is this not an ironically sinister scene to come across on a Tuesday morning? £100 fine for drinking alcohol in public, but the public burning of effigies of your neighbours, on a bonfire equalling your house in scale is perfectly okay...

This is not lost on Duncan who describes the act as an 'anarchic drive' as up to 100 bonfires are built across the city, 'If I tried to assemble a three-storey pile of pallets and tires in downtown Belfast it would be taken down in hours.' This exhibition shows the ironic and in some cases the comic. It also shows the outright bigotry that still exists in Northern Ireland no matter how many politicians say is gone. There is undoubtedly an element of menace about the whole thing and as an outsider I feel intimidated by a community that still practices such rituals in the 21st century. Be this as it may, Duncan's photographs tell us something about the Protestant community and the rival traditions in Belfast, about its history and its future - possibly about reconciliation as we begin to understand more about the city and its people, warts and all.

It is a good thing to see an exhibition like this in Dublin, and better that it is coming from a photographer who is intimate with the location. Duncan obviously still finds the place interesting and has interesting things to say about it, he states he thinks about these bonfires as 'temporary interventions in the landscape.' This link with the landscape is evident in the omnipresence of a green hill top lurking behind the houses in most of the images, while in others we see the collecting of wood and tires as it progresses, with long open shots of fields covered in small stacks of each material. Like a twisted pastoral scene, the children play with the gathered materials in front of their houses. The landscape is crucial to these photographs, as is territory to the entire Northern Ireland situation. The landscapes depicted in this show are burned and scorched however, but as with all things this will fade and normality will eventually win out; and quite possibly the future building of bonfires will come to mean something other than sectarianism and pomp ●

Quotes taken from Daylight Magazine's August 2008 podcast featuring John Duncan's Bonfires. Bonfires is co-published by Photoworks, Steidl and Belfast Exposed Photography and can be purchased online at www.photoworksuk.org

I' m a Real Photographer: Keith Arnatt 1974-2002

By David Hurn and Clare Grafik

Published 2007 by Chris Boot and The Photographers' Gallery
ISBN 978-1-905712-05-2 (151pp - £25/\$45)

S.M.



The best thing about Keith Arnatt's photography is the authenticity that shines through each series; there is humour and curiosity, experimentation and clarity. Not content to remain an original thinker, Arnatt was an original artist – a real photographer.

The book *I' m a Real Photographer* published by the Photographers' Gallery in London mirrors Arnatt's subject matter somewhat ironically. The book is simply designed, the photographs are beautifully reproduced on quality paper. While it looks inconspicuous with its square format and its white hardback cover, it is the cover image that lays it all out flat on the table – YOU BASTARD! YOU ATE THE LAST OF MY CRACKERS.

The cover photo is one of a later series; *Notes from Jo* (1991-1994) of photos Arnatt took of his late wife's notes which she would leave strategically placed around their home. They are simple, humorous and brutally honest instructions for someone who is obviously preoccupied with something beyond the reach of hum-drum domestic life. Arnatt had saved Jo's messages and shot them straight-forwardly, on blank

backgrounds. This shows a huge leap from his early days as a photographer, when he gave up a very successful career as a Conceptual artist in the 1970s (he had shown extensively in international shows including MoMA in New York, XI Bienal de Sao Paulo, Tate and Hayward Galleries in London) before switching to photography in earnest.

Photography had always been a means to an end for the young Arnatt; it was a tool to document his happenings and gestures on beaches and in the valleys of the British countryside. But he found these documents held a power of their own, and eventually he realised the photograph could remain a document, but also an artwork in its own right.

Arnatt's first series in *I' m a Real Photographer* is *The Visitors* (1974-1976) and displays little of the eventual inventiveness which so coloured his later work. These early black & white photos of day visitors to Tintern Abbey close to his home are charming in a *Last of the Summer Wine* kind of way, as are the dog walkers in *Walking the Dog* (1976-1979) again portraits in monochrome. When he made *A.O.N.B (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)* (1982-1984) something else was beginning to show through the work: these monochrome everyday scenes, captured in the Wye Valley with a 4x5 view camera, depict more than a sense of place, there is a real sense of irony and loneliness about them. They feel forgotten to look at, and this is the intention.

The projects which followed throughout the 1980s and 90s showed a new, self-assured photographer. Arnatt attached himself to a local landfill site and began using his extensive knowledge of Painting History to his advantage; taking beautifully coloured close up shots of decaying rubbish in the dump, they at once seemed enticing and repulsive. In *Pictures from a Rubbish Tip* (1988-1989), decomposing meat on a ripped plastic bag, stale birthday cake and egg shells were photographed to not only remind us of Nineteenth Century Landscape painting but also to consider the landscape in which the real objects were dumped. Arnatt's mischievous sense of humour and his serious artistic discourse is glaringly evident in these later series, as the recovered objects from the local dumps amassed in his studio (a barely converted cow shed next to his house). He found his subject matter staring back at him from the bottom of a bin and made no apologies for it, indeed why should he?

The Tears of Things (Objects from a Rubbish Tip) (1990-1991) is one of Arnatt's finest. It depicts many a discarded toy, toothbrush, light bulb and bottle carefully presented on a rusting plinth and solidly captured using a shallow depth of field. The colours as usual are natural, and the texture is tangible. Again there is an obvious reference to Painting, although the Photography is certain of its place. No series was so plainly about Painting than *The Sleep of Reason* (1990) which shows a small dirty statue of a dog, just about raising its head from the bottom of the frame. A reference to Goya, the accidental discovery of this dog figurine entertained Arnatt as it did inspire him.

Other series that followed include industrial gloves, bricks and old paint cans. *Boxes* (1990) is a series of what could only be described as portraits of banal fruit and cake boxes not doing much beyond slightly stacking against one another or generally looking quite sad. All of these later series are typical of Arnatt in their use of colour and light, the formal presenting of subjects centered in the frame and the acute attention to material in all its states. Arnatt reminds me quite a lot of Peter Fraser, another British photographer who pioneered this colourful 'found object' photography.

Arnatt's use of his dog's totemic turds and urine drawings on a tree, up to the last series of local cows going about their daily life certainly show a sardonic wit, but more importantly they show an artist and photographer not willing to settle for the common path. He suffered many knock-backs (professionally and personally) as he progressed, and he was sidelined by some who should have known better, but Arnatt's work has the last laugh; it questions those individuals and what they believed in, it questions Art and Photography on a number of practical and philosophic levels (what constitutes a valid artistic subject for one). The well written and easily read essay by David Hurn at the beginning of the book explains all this in detail, leaving you with a sympathetic understanding of the artist.

Also contained in the book is a retrospective publication of Arnatt's conceptual prose and published ideas, which when considered with everything else, present a fantastic introduction to a sometimes forgotten yet always fascinating man. After an afternoon with this book you will nod in agreement with Keith Arnatt when he states *I'm a Real Photographer* ●

Rangefinder General on YouTube

www.youtube.com/Rangefindergeneral

S.M.

YouTube is packed with photography of one kind or another, unfortunately the majority is fashion and music with little scope for Fine Art Photography. What is termed 'Fine Art Photography' seems to be a random mass of lurid, stylised advertising shots with no apparent connection to Contemporary Art. I for one am always disappointed by the lack of contemporary photography documentaries, both on the Internet and in general. The thing about YouTube is that while it is packed to the rafters with aimless musings and utter rubbish it does actually have quite interesting and educational pieces worth mentioning.

So, you can imagine my surprise when I discovered Rangefinder General, AKA Si, 39 years old from London, UK, and his 69 videos to date. These videos are not random either; there are BBC documentaries on all the masters including the heavyweight series *The Genius of Photography* and *Masters of Photography*. Also present are documentaries on Annie Liebowitz, Henri Cartier-Bresson, J H Lartigue, Bill Brandt, Ansel Adams, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Andre Kertesz and Andreas Feininger. Series on Helmut Newton and Frank Hurley also add a smile.

What these series, divided into 45-60 minute episodes, offer is a very accessible account of the pioneers of modern photographic practices as well as a history of the medium as a whole. While Rangefinder has posted these series for us all to enjoy (as long as you can master continuous viewing on YouTube), we must be aware that he is breaking copyright laws so every once in a while some videos will be removed and replaced.

Rangefinder states on his profile 'I think this [*Imagine* series] is too important a historical document to be left on the shelves of the BBC, and as it is not available on DVD (I couldn't find it?) I think then that it is fair game to post here.' Admirable sentiments from a genuine supporter of the medium - if only more piracy came with a conscience ●



Project

Edward S. Johnston
Experiential Extensions

Damian Magee
Natural History

Edward S. Johnston

(United States)

Experiential Extensions

I collect imagery from my surrounding environments and manipulate it digitally to be transformed into both virtual, 3D forms and physical sculptures.

Bio

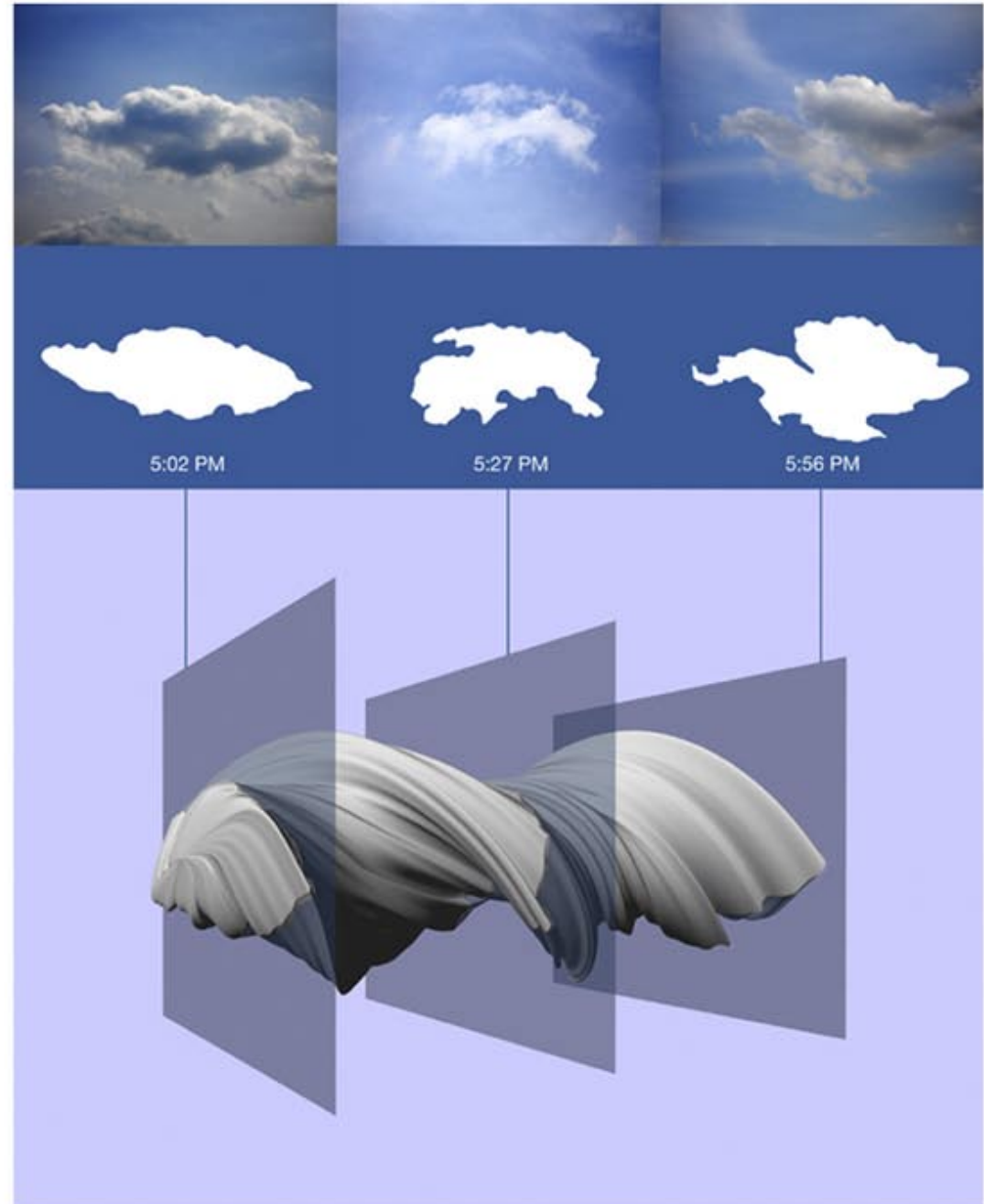
Edward S. Johnston is a visual artist whose work bridges sculpture, photography and 3-D technologies. His works have been exhibited throughout the United States and abroad, including the 2008 Krasl Biennial Sculpture Invitational in St. Joseph, Michigan; the Capitol Hill Arts Workshop in Washington, D.C.; and the Cothenius Gallery in Berlin, Germany.

Johnston's works have been included in Internet venues such as the PLAY Gallery and screened on television through PBS in Michigan and the Michigan channel.

He is the recipient of the 2009 Young Artist's Program Grant Award from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, partly funded by the National Endowment of the Arts.

www.edwardsjohnston.com

www.youtube.com/edwardsjohnston





We are constantly completing visual puzzles. In his book *The Object Stares Back*, James Elkins states, 'If a building is half hidden by the branches of a tree, we literally see it in fragments: subtract the tree and you would have a floating collection of irregular building pieces. But the eye completes the puzzle and sees the building whole.'

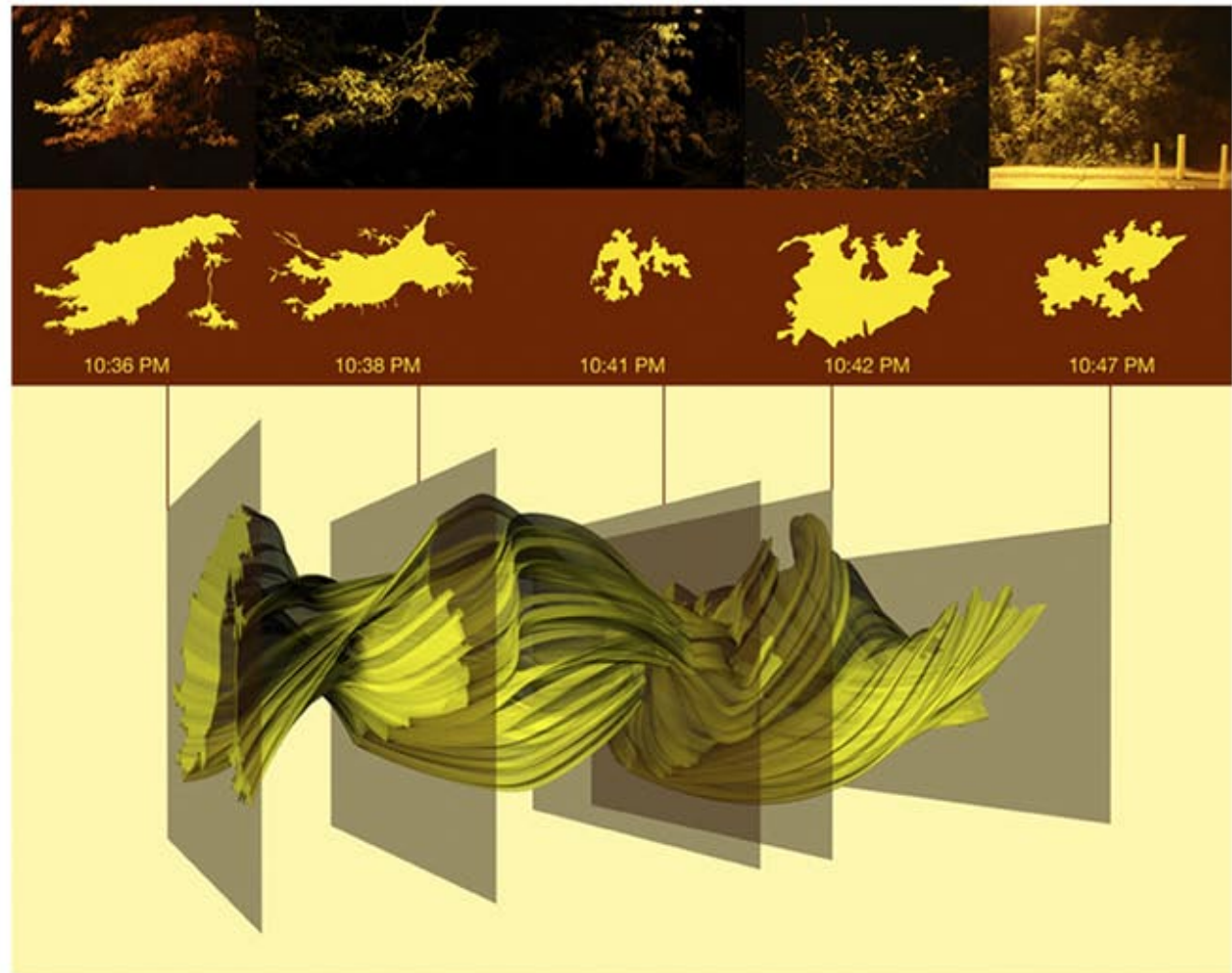
This phenomenon is called subjective contour completion. In photographing my surrounding environments, I tap this phenomenon in order to respond to the contemporary condition. Human experience in contemporary society can be constantly recorded and measured using technology.



(Before) *Looking at Clouds - Variation 2* (*Experiential Extensions* 2006 - 2009). Digital print mounted on Acrylic & Sintra. 40.64 cm x 50.8 cm (Here) *Looking at Clouds - Variation 2* (*Experiential Extensions* 2006 - 2009). Digitally fabricated sculpture, white Nylon. 20.32 cm x 15.24 cm x 10.16 cm

Every action can be analyzed according to various conventions and webs of surveillance. Where in this scrutinized space-time might we construct personal space-times? Where in this matrix of conventions might we express personal experience as paramount?

My response involves a complex, conscious engagement with technology, perception, and the environment. I collect imagery from my surrounding environments and manipulate it digitally to be transformed into both virtual, 3D forms and physical sculptures.



(Here) *Walking Around At Night, Looking At The Edges of Leaves Under Streetlights - Variation 2* (Experiential Extensions 2006 - 2009). Digital print mounted on Acrylic & Sintra. 40.64 cm x 50.8 cm

(Here) *Walking Around At Night, Looking At The Edges of Leaves Under Streetlights - Variation 2 (Experiential Extensions 2006 - 2009)*. Digitally fabricated sculpture, acrylic-based photopolymer. 20.32 cm x 10.16 cm x 7.62 cm



The resultant forms happen both in the virtual space of computers and the physical space of sculptures. These simultaneously virtual and physical objects stand as metaphorical pathways through the chaos of places, thoughts and memories that are experienced each day. In addition, these forms respond to the desire for profound meaning in everyday moments ●

Edward S. Johnston

Damian Magee

(b.1975. Northern Ireland)

Natural History

This project involved the reprinting of damaged photographic negatives and presenting them in second-hand picture frames.

Bio

University of Ulster graduate, 1998.

Previously exhibited: Ireland, Britain, US, Poland, Slovenia, China.

Ninth solo exhibition held at Lemonstreet Gallery, Dublin 2008.

Recent group shows:

(2008) Higher Bridges Gallery, Enniskillen; Lemonstreet Gallery, Dublin. (2007) Basement Gallery, Louth; Exeter Phoenix, Devon; Tulca, Galway; Iontas, Sligo; Engine Room, Belfast. (2006) Tulca; Enniskillen Open, Fermanagh; Claremorris Open, Mayo; Belltable, Limerick. (2005) 411 Galleries, Hangzhou; Iontas; Queens University, Belfast; EV+A, Limerick. (2004) Claremorris Open; 411 Galleries.

Received three General Arts awards and Travel award from ACNI.

Residencies: (2008) Ballinglen Arts Centre, Mayo; Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Monaghan.

Lives and works in Newry, Northern Ireland.

imagosart@hotmail.co.uk



Once I realised I could print degraded film as normal, I developed all of the old negatives I had previously accumulated from my family. The subsequent photographs depicted deteriorated images of figures and landscapes, etc, sometimes unrecognisable amid the colours, shapes and textures the perished film created.

*portend of
inevitable loss and
death,
marked by time
itself*

These photographs seemed ominous, a sinister presence in an everyday scene, portend of inevitable loss and death, marked by time itself. Capturing a moment in someone's personal history and a simultaneous absence, the images became a metaphor for memory loss and mortality.





Placing each photograph in second-hand picture frames enabled me to de-personalise these private, yet archetypal images, to create a cultural counterpart. I considered these frames as discarded receptacles of others' failed efforts to preserve and display their own personal memories.

***our efforts to record
experience and
preserve the memories
of personal histories
with devices that are
themselves as fallible***

The project examines our relationship with the photograph, and our efforts to record experience and preserve the memories of personal histories with devices that are themselves as fallible and fragile as our minds and bodies, consequently creating a visual manifestation of human transience, ephemerality, loss and demise ●

Damian Magee

www.supermassiveblackholemag.com

www.myspace.com/smbhmag



Disclaimer: *SuperMassiveBlackHole* is free and makes no profit from the publication of any materials found therein. *SuperMassiveBlackHole* is a publication for the dissemination of artistic ideas and will not be liable for any offense taken by any individual(s) resulting from any material contained therein. All images in *SuperMassiveBlackHole* are the sole property of their creators unless otherwise stated. No image in the magazine or the magazine logo may be used in any way without permission of the copyright holder. The *SuperMassiveBlackHole* magazine title and logos are copyright ©2008 - 2009 Shallow publications. All rights reserved. shallowpublications@gmail.com Shallow publications and *SuperMassiveBlackHole* are property of Barry W. Hughes.

Submissions: All works submitted to *SuperMassiveBlackHole* must be the sole, original property of the contributor(s), have the appropriate model releases, and cannot interfere with any other publication or company's publishing rights. *SuperMassiveBlackHole* is edited by Barry W. Hughes, Dublin, Ireland.