



Formative feedback

Student name	Simon Chirgwin	Student number	512973
Course/Unit	Context & Narrative: Assignment 2 .	Assignment number	PH4CN-2
Type of tutorial	Written / Audio-Visual		

Overall Comments

A really strong sampling of visual languages and approaches exploring *the unseen*. Your development of approach: dealing with personal events but also alluding to the complex relationship that photography has with time is well formed. In addition, your research and application of the various themes in photography is notable (still life, typologies etc).

The leaning Log is extremely clear and what you have been most successful in is summarising your 'reflective learning' journey, then contextualising this with examples of work and reflections on text and image combinations. More of this with links to research to sum up in assessment would be useful.

The 'inspiration' for TS Elliot (time-spoon) and then exploring this everyday life with a more considered, high-production value still life is notable. Some more detail on the ideas inherent in *Still Life* as a genre as well as some revisions in one or two image. As we discussed - and you admitted in your own self-evaluation - 'A Lifeline' doesn't quite fit the series as it's far too illustrative. Revising this but also recognising that it's not wasted; as there are some ideas that provide a springboard to future alternative images (such as the colour registration motif and use of newspaper clippings we discussed). Explore these more and revise the work before assessments. We already talked about the preliminary ideas / shoots for the next project (Summed up at the end).

Assessment potential

Assignment 2

You may want to get credit for your hard work and achievements with the OCA by formally submitting your work for assessment at the end of the module. More and more people are taking the idea of lifelong learning seriously by submitting their work for assessment but it is entirely up to you. We are just as keen to support you whether you study for pleasure or to gain qualifications. Please consider whether you want to put your work forward for assessment and let me know your decision when you submit Assignment 2. I can then give you feedback on how well your work meets the assessment requirements.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Deliberately brief to some up Notes from Google hangout video chat:

Friday 27 May 12 - 1pm

Work is experimental and developmental (not too much worrying about 'solutions') - shows a maturity and a self-awareness of fully conversant with photographic themes.

- Exploring (and commenting upon) the 'indexical' problem (we called it the indexical straitjacket) with photography - thinking more of the interpretation of associations in the image (and allowing ambiguity - the audience needn't 'get it' immediately)
- surface expression depicts complex way that time operates within both the *form* (possible presentation in series) and *concept* (making work less *of* time but *alluding* to it through various means/symbols).
- approach strategies that combine frame & seriality - as we discussed with reference to Taryn Simon, Eadweard Muybridge
- Done well to depict these objects and compose a series based on associations rather than literal or 'reportage' way of working (hopefully inspired by your reading on Tod Papageoge (the Walker Evans v Frank).
- Kzysstof Kieslowki - 'equivalents' "we can not photograph a soul' - all we have is 'things that stand in place of feelings/trauma etc. then finding a form for that then a way to present which allows another context.
- Some of your film/cinema references are useful - *Chin Andalu* -

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

- Technically well accomplished. Some of the detail in the black bottle is lost. This is very difficult and realise its not a 'product shot' as such but part of the conceptual series. However, try and use the highest production values. Not always easy in a makeshift studio and of course depends on cost/equipment available.
- If revising consider use of light and background (black on black not the easiest to light). See readings and various on-line tutorials on how to light a bottle. Of course, keep in mind that the aesthetics need to suit your overall concept; rather than look gin 'gimmicky'.
- Revise the use of text. Understand the notes on the photographs but as you indicated in the google chat the reading of Roland Barthes (included again in readings) is useful. Difference between *anchorage* and *relay* to force the viewer to reflect and open the work to ambiguity.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Some useful exploration of the notion of seriality and on-line viewing difficulties. You are correct it effects the interpretation of the images as the viewer can't choose to spend more time on one image rather than another. Some useful readings on this (see - *Readings*) on *context* as well as the on-going relationship between film and photography.

- You have alluded to this implicit in this assignment - as the images are not merely a 'window on the world' or 'proscenium arch' as you say but more conceptual 'mirror' of your life made universal by the meditation on time.
- Finding a method to present these is the challenge (See references, as discussed, to Taryn Simon etc).
- Consider the 2 types of *context* (internal and external) as expanded upon by Barrett (see - *Readings*)
- "I had already made the connection between TS Eliot and measuring out a week of my life not in teaspoons but in pills" so quote directly from this poem. "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons" also, as mentioned in discussion you could draw an analogy with your photographic work - in two ways for example:
 1. *Form*: images 'stand in for' feelings or concepts.
 2. *Narrative*: This 'conceptual' way of working alludes more to ideas of images in association rather than linear narrative You make a good point about the difference between Eugene Smith narrative - linear and aristotelian and Briony Campbell's *Dad Project* which is more *associational* - where images link but feed off of each other both formally and in what they depict (this is similar to how poetry works as opposed prose)

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

As above, the most productive aspect of your research/blog is the early on summarising of what you have gleaned from your research. Provide links to the original material if you can. Make more of this as it is true reflective learning. Summarise the key points referring to the main research. Use more visuals.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

Technical and studio

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jri5xqSRYxQ>

Theme and Genre:

Some familiarisation with the motifs of Still Life painting (vanitas) to influence the more conceptual work:

http://www.artfactory.com/art_appreciation/still_life/harmen_steenwyck.htm

and in Graham Clarke's *The Photograph* (1997), particularly chapter 11 *The Cabinet of Infinite Curiosities*.

David Bate: <http://www.davidbate.net/ARTWORKS/new-work-broken-society.html>

practitioners Influence:

Sophie Calle: in particular (with reface to this project) the presentation methods in *The Hotel, Room 28* : <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/sophie-calle-2692> but also in the psychogeography drifting as in your proposal for next assignment (see below)

'Suite Vénitienne' (1980) by Sophie Calle

Vito Acconci, particularly *Following Piece*, 1969

<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/283737>

Sequencing.

- Some more research on this idea of 'sequencing' and typologies:
- see: Joel Smith (Editor), Peter Barberie, Kelly Baum, *More Than One: Photographs in Sequence*, Yale, 2009. <http://yalepress.yale.edu/book.asp?isbn=9780300149302>

Photography and Cinema

Associational Montage: <http://www.rtve.es/alcarta/videos/un-perro-andaluz/perro-andaluz/1570997/>

David Company's book looking at the relationship in subject matter but also formal experimentation and 'associational montage' Photo-stories, sequences and staged tableaux speak of the deep influence of cinema on photography: <http://davidcampany.com/photography-and-cinema/>

Photography and the concept - series/grids

Bloomberg and Chanarin, *Everything Was Beautiful and Nothing Hurt*, FoMu, Antwerp, 2014,: <http://www.bloombergchanarin.com/root/two-eyes-above-a-nose-above-a-mouth/>

Still Life work at the end of they series *Chicago*: <http://www.bloombergchanarin.com/chicago/>

Taryn Simon, both *An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar* (2007) - <http://tarynsimon.com/works/aihu/#1>

and *A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters I – XVIII* in its use if presentation grids and contextual info.

And her approach to work: 'Photography constructs reality": https://www.ted.com/talks/taryn_simon_photographs_secret_sites?language=en

Pointers for the next assignment / assessment

- Reference visually in the Learning log these influences we discussed in your work
- Stress in the learning log that these are to be viewed together as a 'sampling' of contrasting visual languages 1. the snapshot diary form (influenced by Stephen Shore's American Surfaces and Sophie Calle's conceptual art) contrasting with the more constructed surrealist influences (Exquisite Corpse) approach.
- Some research on psychogeography the situationists and derive - would be worthwhile for your snapshots project: <https://mappingweirdstuff.wordpress.com/2009/06/14/mapping-weird-stuff-psychogeography/>
- Lennon and Ono films (as you discussed)
- Sophie Calle:
- The difference in terminology (influenced from Film and cinema) between narrative (the what is depicted and in what order) and narration (the how this is expressed through choice of approach, motifs, visual language)

Tutor name	Garry Clarkson
Date	39 May 2016
Next assignment due	22 July 2016