

## Adele Schofield (515897)

### Context and Narrative

#### An overall evaluation

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#### My learning journey as a whole

Context and Narrative has been my second year of study towards BA (Hons) Photography and I feel that I have moved from considering **how** to use my camera to considering **why**. I also feel that I am building up a knowledge of the canon of photography and starting to see an image and be able to say, 'oh that's a Gregory Crewdson' or 'that's a Jeff Wall' and at least getting it right *some* of the time.

I have begun to see photography as being a visual language, and not just a picture of something. I have learned how images can be taken of the same place but created to suggest two different viewpoints. I have learned how the photo essay can be used to tell a story, initiate social change and not only represent the physical world but portray intangible concepts such as grief, illness and nostalgia. I have particularly engaged with the idea of using narrative to add meaning to an image and how different narratives can be added to the same image to manipulate a viewer's response. Regarding portraiture I had never considered the concept of *self-absented* portraiture but have engaged with this and produced a series of images as a result. In part four I learned about deconstruction and feel that it has helped me to construct images thinking that they could be analysed by a viewer in order to understand them. I am encouraged by having participated in assignment five as it seemed so far out of my comfort zone when I first saw it. To have actually staged an image and received good feedback about it has shown me what progress I have made.

#### Taking on board tutor feedback

**Assignment 1 (two sides of the story)** My tutor's feedback on the first assignment has made me focus more on the editing process of choosing the final images and why. It has also made me question my initial choice of using black and white for the first side and colour for the second side. Juxtaposing colour with black & white in this way was my initial idea and I didn't really stop to consider alternatives. Using the presence or absence of people instead, to portray the welcoming versus the unwelcoming side, could have worked well.

**Assignment 2 (photographing the unseen).** The main feedback on this assignment related to exposure and the way that white subjects were making the camera under-expose. I went on to increase the exposure and I could see how the images were improved.

**Assignment 3 (self-portrait)** My tutor commented that this work was not as interesting as my last assignment; it was a bit safe. My learning from this is to research more into practitioners, who have perhaps considered something similar, to help to develop my

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thinking around ideas and creativity. This assignment however, did result in me making my own book in which to present my work, it has made me consider presentation carefully and equipped me with a new skill that I can hopefully use again in the future.

**Assignment 4 (essay)** I was very comfortable with this assignment as I have a lot of experience in writing essays, so I wasn't too far out of my comfort zone. My tutor said that my writing was of a high standard. I was pleased that my citations and bibliographies were 'excellent' as this was something I wasn't 100% sure of. I went on to buy the books that were recommended and research the practitioners that were suggested.

**Assignment 5 (making it up).** My tutor said that this was the 'chance to make up my own ideas into an image'. In my written work I made a few errors where I described the 'what' but not the 'why' and I will be mindful of this in future. After discussion around composition I know that in future I need to place more consideration on the dual need to communicate the message whilst being aware of the image's compositional details.

#### My strengths

I have consistently explored several ideas before deciding on a final one and have made use of either a project evaluation form or a mind map to provide a focus for my thoughts. I have researched practitioners throughout the year and visited exhibitions. I am thorough in completing all exercises and research points which helps me to learn and be aware of ideas and concepts. I have learned to slow down and think before making decisions around projects and like to have an idea, sleep on it, improve it, change it and then reconsider it until finally I decide on the way forward.

#### My weakest point

Assignment one was my most disappointing work. I am still pleased with the *idea* and with the *composition* but after recently having the images *printed* for assessment, I feel that the black and white ones are sub-standard. Image one in particular is a very washed out grey and I am trying to determine why as it didn't look quite so bad on my blog. When I checked, the dpi was 118 rather than 300 and, as it had not been cropped, I am struggling to understand why, and if indeed, it is this that has affected the quality. I need to learn more about colour calibration and how to improve the final printed image. I also think that I should have used exposure compensation to avoid the camera from interpreting the dark scene as mid tone. However, on a more positive note; I am learning all the time and perhaps learn more quickly by making mistakes.

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#### **What I would like to develop further**

I would like to be clearer in what I want to say and how I want to say it. I have interests in gender, literature, art, mental ill health, twins, a portrait without a face, sensory overload and phobias and hope to develop these ideas in the future.

#### **Assess, reflect on and identify my best work**

My best photographic work was 'the unseen' where I presented a series on the difficulties that I imagine may be encountered by someone with low literacy skills. I enjoyed this work and my tutor provided encouraging feedback. As a result, I have already started working around similar ideas in my sketchbook. Specifically, I hope to prepare work surrounding living and suffering with emetophobia.

#### **Finally**

I have really enjoyed this course. It has stretched me and launched me well out of my comfort zone and I am looking forward to progressing and learning with 'Identity and Place'. I know that I am just beginning on this journey and hope one day to be a confident and creative photographer. Overall it has been a great year; very busy but enjoyable and rewarding. Many thanks to my tutor, Derek Trillo, for his feedback and motivation.

It has been a privilege to work with him.