

BA (Hons) Photography

Reflective Journal Overview

Unit Title: INDIVIDUAL CREATIVE PRACTICE

800 – 1000 words (approx). Complete this form using Microsoft Word and **submit with your Reflective Journal PDF**.

Summary of Requirements

The reflective overview is a summary of your thoughts and reflections on your studies. This should identify and focus on your developing analytical skills and your developing critical understanding of contemporary and historical photographic practices.

This summary should be an analysis and reflection on the material gathered in your research journal.

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1. What are the main written resources you have used to help you develop your work and ideas? List and give a brief summary of their relevance (publications/writers/articles/theories you have focused on over the past year)

I cover this topic in detail in my reflective journal.

To sum up, my essential reading material comes from photographic journals accessed through the university library and several books I borrowed and own on a wide range of topics.

Some titles:

- *Practice* by M. Boon and G. Levine
- *The Edge of Vision* by Lyle Rixer
- *Visual Thinking* by Rudolf Arnheim
- *Moholy- Nagy Experiment in Totality* by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy
- *The Unconscious* - by Sigmund Freud
- *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* - Roland Barthes
- *Surrealism Beyond Borders* by Stephanie D'Alessandro and Matthew Gale
- *Photography is Magic* by Charlotte Cotton
- *Exhibiting Photography* by Shirley Read
- *Czech Photographic Avant-Garde* by Vladimir Birgus
- *Jaroslav Rossler Czech Avant-Garde Photographer* by Vladimir Birgus and Jan Mlcoch
- *Kenneth Martin & Mary Martin: Constructed Works*

- *The paintings of Moholy-Nagy The Shape of Things to Come* - Santa Barbara Museum of Art

These publications are relevant to my explorations within and outside photography and echo my interest in other disciplines like painting and sculpture, as well as reflect my future goals in regular exhibiting. My love for the abstract is the reason I always explore the subject, and my fascination for Czech Avant-Garde photography comes through in my reading. The extensive reading gives me a deeper understanding of present-time photography and possibly even provides me with an insight as to why I love it so much.

2. What are the most important other sources you have used for your research? List key exhibitions/videos/talks/events etc and give a brief summary of their relevance:

Influential exhibitions I attended in the last semester were:

- Surrealism Beyond Borders at Tate Modern
- Postwar Modern at Barbican
- Yayoi Kusama - Infinity Mirrors at Tate Modern
- Yayoi Kusama - You, Me and the Balloons in Manchester
- Reina Sofía Madrid
- Prado Museum Madrid
- Hilma AF Klimt and Piet Mondrian at Tate Modern

All of these exhibitions have been incredibly influential on me, all in a very different way (I reflect on them in detail in my reflective journal). As a result of attending these events, I improved my knowledge of the art world, ways of curating, exhibiting, and I sourced inspiration from the mixture of work I have seen (mostly not photographic - painting and sculpture).

I think it's essential for me as an artist to constantly educate myself and always look outside photography for that knowledge, as it brings a breath of fresh air and unique ideas into my photographic practice.

I also attended several events at the Castlefield Gallery as I was awarded a Fellowship at this institution. Similarly to the exhibitions I visited, they ranged entirely in topics and were all outside photography, which I found beneficial for the same reasons.

3. From the research developed in your journal and through your practice, outline the key areas (the concepts/themes/theories) of interest have emerged this year? How has this helped with the development of your practice?:

The key areas I am interested in are:

1. **Exhibiting:** I want to gain more confidence and knowledge in exhibiting my work, as I plan to do exhibitions regularly when I finish university. I developed this idea in my practice, and during this semester, I co-organised with my partner and exhibition. It was very successful, and we both sold a piece each. It made me feel confident about my future endeavours and keen to continue on that path. I believe that through exhibiting my work, I will be able to reach more audiences to share my art with, make a living and become fluent at talking about my practice professionally.
2. **Large format camera:** this is the year when I decided to progress my skills with large format cameras to a professional level. Since the start of my studies, that was a long-term goal that I have been progressively achieving. I moved from 35mm to medium format (that I now own and use fluently) to baby steps with a large format that I now use comfortably in the studio. These are the two things that I found quite overwhelming and out of my comfort zone (large format and studio), and I can confidently say that pushing myself resulted in achieving the goals that I set for myself. I want to continue shooting in large and medium formats in my future career.
3. **Using my photographs as designs - liberating them from the frame and using other disciplines to give them a new life:** for a while now, I wondered about the longevity of my photography. I contemplated how the photograph is usually the final product and how I wanted to change that. I decided to use my images as designs and create artwork from them - I painted murals and paintings. But my main endeavour for this year, something I came up with last year and have been developing since June 2023, is to turn my images into 3D models. Every week since June, I have been going to Digital Media Bar and learning a 3D modelling program with Dan Hobson.
4. **Video art:** since my exchange in Spain, where I was fortunate to study video art and experimental cinema, I have been increasingly interested in this form of expression. I created more video art this semester and intend to do so in my creative practice in the future as I feel really passionate about it.

Identifying my key interest was essential in the development of my practice as it gave me clarity, a sense of direction and very clear goals that I could then systematically realise. I think it is an excellent and highly effective method, and I will continue to work in this goal-oriented way in my future career.

4. Any other points you wish to discuss:

I really enjoyed the self-directed nature of this unit. I think that after two years of guidance and one year away on exchange, I was ready to take things into my own hands. It also made me feel confident about my future development outside the university and my further education, as I am thinking of doing an MA at some point in the future.