

The Road from Commonplace

Man-Altered Landscape Photography
Post New Topographics

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Abstract

This practice-led research, *The Road from Commonplace*, investigates and explores the zeitgeist and the subsequent evolution of 'man-altered' or urban landscape photography from the landmark *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition into a contemporary photographic and post-photographic context. With its formative title, the exhibition was curated by William Jenkins and marked a point of change in the world of landscape photography, but it also significantly underpinned the modern relationship between the art world and contemporary photography. Whilst the exhibition itself has been well documented because of its pervasive and substantial impact on photography, the analysis of the subsequent influence on photographic approach and aesthetics of the New Topographics Outlook has not. That lasting influence, without the exhibition's original stance and perspective, has had a limiting effect on subject depiction and development within the genre of urban landscape photography. In response, this thesis investigates the notion of, can the photographic representation of the urban landscape, as influenced by the New Topographics Outlook, be shifted from a position at which its derivative approach is commonplace.

The original contribution to knowledge in the field comes from the development of a critical structure that investigates the exhibition's origins and intentions, explores its impact on proceeding photographic practice, and applies its critique, creating new progressive practice using traditional photographic and post-photographic principles. A structure underpinned by analytical investigations in the form of past and current literature surrounding the subject, and primary and secondary research explorations into contemporary practitioners and practice within the context of study. The outcomes of which inspired and created the three new practice pieces, *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), *The Allotments* (2018-19) and *The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020). These were created using both traditional photographic practice such as large format film and cameras, and also further developing subject techniques using post photographic approaches, for example, questions of authorship and representation, with expanded audience engagement methods such as interactive website design and virtual reality. Importantly, the practice methodologies explore the traditional and original photographic Outlook of this genre, whilst maintaining aspects of the influences, motives, aesthetic statements, and sociopolitical integrity of the exhibition's originators but re-presenting these using contemporary creative strategies. These outcomes, whilst without the exhibition's original critical American urban development context, additionally update this position with contemporary environmental concerns and more autobiographically based artistic perspectives.

The research findings indicate that when the approaches and practice, as influenced by the Outlook, seem ostensibly stuck in a cycle of its repetition, the resultant exegesis and three practice outcomes have added new strategies and methods to the photographic portrayal of the urban or man-altered landscape. The photographic genre has maintained its key aesthetics and ideology since the exhibition in the 1970s, but each project here, supported by the critical structure to investigate different themes and concepts within the genre, creates original solutions that will encourage new generations of photographers to broaden their interpretation of the subject for the future.

Keywords: David Lockwood, New Topographics, man-altered landscape, landscape photography, urban photography, environmental photography

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Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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About the Author and Practice Elements

David Lockwood is a Liverpool based photographer who is active in both photography and photographic education, and at the time of the production of this thesis was working as a photographer and course leader of the BA Hons Degree in Digital Imaging and Photography at the Hugh Baird University Centre in Liverpool. Additionally, David manages *Nonpareil Books* - an online bookshop specialising in rare and collectable photographic books and prints.

He has a broad track record of personal, research-based and commissioned projects, having won awards such as the AFAEP (Association of Photographers) Still Life award and the North Staffordshire Arts Society award, and exhibited in a wide variety of solo, joint and open exhibitions. Through his educational career, he has also been a part-time lecturer and research lecturer for Manchester Metropolitan University, working on collaborative research projects funded by North West Arts, such as *A Mind In Your Eye* and *Standing Shift*.

During the course of this study, there was the opportunity to gain valuable experience and feedback resulting from the creation, organising and presentation of the three pieces of practice research through exhibitions, publications, talks and external reviews as follows:

The *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) website (www.findingfangorn.com) was published on 24th October 2017 alongside the *Finding Fangorn* printed map (edition of 5000 x A2 double-sided and folded to A5 maps) funded by and published to support *The Charter for Trees, Woods and People*. *Finding Fangorn* was also temporarily exhibition in the foyer space at the Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool from 26th October – 26th November 2017 and the *Finding Fangorn* talk which was presented at the *Trees, Woods and People* event that David organised at Open Eye Gallery on 6th November 2017 to support the launch of *The Charter for Trees, Woods and People*.

The Allotments (2018-19) (dglockwood.com/theallotments) was exhibited at the Victoria Gallery & Museum, Liverpool, as part of Open Eye Gallery's LOOK Photo Biennial from 29th August - 28th September 2019. The publication - *The Allotments* (edition of 80 x A5, 48-pages) was produced in combination with the exhibition and supported by the Victoria Gallery & Museum and Open Eye Gallery. There was also *The Allotments* exhibition 'Meet the Artists' event at the Victoria Gallery & Museum on 31st August 2019 with David Lockwood and Pauline Rowe.

The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel (2020) (2020.peertopeerexchange.org/david-lockwood/) was nominated by Sarah Fisher (Open Eye Gallery) for the *Peer to Peer: UK/HK Digital Festival* and the project's virtual reality (VR) exhibition was shown as part of the Festival from 11th -14th November 2020. *The New West Archive* website was published alongside *The Journey* video to support the VR exhibition. David also participated in the Festival's closing remarks Zoom call.

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Introduction

Whatever else a photograph may be about, it is inevitably about photography,
the container and vehicle of all its meanings

John Szarkowski from the introduction to *William Eggleston's Guide* (Eggleston and Szarkowski, 1976, p.6)

This statement by John Szarkowski, a defining figure in photography, is simple but deeply astute. As much as we would like the subjects of our photographs to transcend the medium, in time, the photographic choices we make may ultimately say more about photography than anything else.

The subject and overarching aim of this research and practice was to explore the legacy and impact of man-altered landscape photography from the landmark William Jenkins *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition into a contemporary photographic and post-photographic context. This exhibition had a profound influence on photography and advanced the approach to the urban landscape subject genre into a formal, conceptual-based aesthetic; however, this genre of photography appears to have creatively stagnated. The research title, *The Road from Commonplace*, here referencing the ordinary, everyday aspects of the built or altered environment that became the subject of the exhibition photographers. As well as the aesthetics of banality and neutrality, which were central to the New Topographics approach, and the repeated or commonplace representation of this subject matter in that aesthetic style from that point onwards.

New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape (1975) has become the second most-cited photography exhibition in history (George Eastman Museum, 2009) and by default the most cited landscape photography exhibition ever. However, there are still questions as to “why this unassuming exhibition came to be so widely known and understood as the seminal event in which photography’s landscape paradigm shifted away from the sublime, ushering in a new era of theoretical approaches,” as stated by curator Alison Nordström (Nordström cited in George Eastman Museum, 2009). Writer and curator, Britt Salvesen also asks “how can we account for its sustained influence?” adding further retrospective perspective:

In this [New Topographics] coming-of-age story, photography assimilates and also generates new meanings and markets. Harbinger, catalyst, point of departure...these terms, applied retrospectively to New Topographics, suggest a neat trajectory from past to future without adequately accounting for the mess of the present, that is, the moment of coalescence, when aesthetic intuitions

aligned with everyday lived experience and larger cultural preoccupations.

(Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p.12)

Salvesen continues to consider: "Looking back from the perspective of the twenty-first century, we can see New Topographics as a bridge between the still-insular fine-art photography world and the expanding, post-conceptual field of contemporary art" (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p.12). In contrast, photographer and writer Deborah Bright criticised the New Topographics photographers for their inability to historicise their subjects and for lacking a definitive social critique. Considering their work to now be simply art objects which diminishes any social issues that the photographers might have aimed to communicate. Further commenting on photography that either challenges or sustains the subject style and approach established by New Topographics exhibition by describing them as: "practice committed to questioning the conventions of landscape photography and a practice that merely perpetuates or dissolves them into a barren irony" (Bright, 1996, p8). A sentiment also echoed by Robert Adams, which is discussed here later.

Fifty years on from the exhibition brings the question: Has, and can, man-altered landscape photography progress forward from that point - should photography have advanced past the position at which the exhibition was relevant to contemporary 'aesthetic intuitions', 'everyday lived experience' and 'larger cultural preoccupations', from that period in its history. Concerning Szarkowski's statement above, whilst Jenkins and practitioners involved in the exhibition developed an original subject interpretation for the landscape genre at the time, its lasting impact would appear to be less about their subject intentions and more about photography itself. With this in mind, the outcomes of this research investigation were aimed at informing my practice within this genre, so I could better position my work within a contemporary or future-facing context. Extending and further exploring man-altered landscape photography rather than repeating or fixating on its past impression.

Having started practising photography around 40 years ago, I realise that I have regularly shifted between photographic methods, subjects, and genres, but what keeps my attention is the opportunity for creative expression and exploration of the broad practice of photography itself. Examples of this breadth are from creating straight photographic exhibitions to working with composers and performers on live stage productions with computer-controlled projected images or web-based delivery with images, text, and sound, facilitating audience-based interactive participation in the reading and exploration of the work. I have learned that my adventure with photography has generally been beyond the conventional subject and flat image, which may be considered a post-photography agenda. Here, I am using the term *post-photography* not just in a

postmodernist photographic context which might raise questions such as photographic authenticity, author and truth, but also to identify work that is building on the established traditional medium of photography with the use of wider technological media as a means for mechanical or digital creation and distribution. The research and practice development undertaken in this thesis falls very much in line with this direction and play. In later life, the subjects of the works often arise from what constraints exist to limit, challenge, create opportunities or inspire working practice. Being the parent of a disabled child offers many constraints - emotional fortitude, time, and energy - but also many positive experiences and opportunities that come from being in a unique position and viewpoint of the world through this position and my son Hugo's eyes.

My interest in topographical photography started as a student in the late 1980s when I was introduced to the 1970s New Topographics photographers and with great disdain misunderstood their work, consumed by the impression of the overarching banal aesthetic and apparent everyday subject matter. It stimulated the notion of how could this work be so significant if it looks so dull and uninspiring? In later life, I have found I returned to this subject and question through the development of a personal practice that was starting to focus on this genre and working in photographic education, repeatedly seeing their topographic aesthetic and subject approach being often imitated without foundation. Further research revealed the review of John Gossage's (b. 1946) book *The Pond* (1985) by Robert Adams, one of the original New Topographics photographers, and how 10 years after the exhibition, Adams heralded this book to be a groundbreaking publication that challenged their now established approach to urban landscape photography. This posed the question, why did Adams feel things needed to change? His review echoed my sentiment about the exhibition and genre but also offered the potential of moving this subject and approach forward from its position. In it, Adams states: "One is grateful for *The Pond* because we are in trouble, and because irony which focuses on the ugliness of man-made juxtapositions does not at this point, by itself, help." (Adams cited in Brittain, 2000, p. 150). The combination of this interest in topographical landscape photography and my experience of being a father has underpinned both the research subject and practice methods.

When it was launched, the exhibition seemingly rewrote the landscape photography genre, which, around that time, was mainly based on an idealised natural landscape and introduced a movement of theoretically driven photography that focused on the man-altered landscape. The exhibition contained curated works of American photographers Frank Gohlke (b. 1942), Robert Adams (b. 1937), Stephen Shore (b. 1947), Lewis Baltz (b. 1945), Joe Deal (1947-2010), John Schott (b. 1944), Henry Wessel, Jr. (1942-2018), and Nicholas Nixon (b. 1947), and German photographers Bernd (1931-2007) and Hilla (1934-2015) Becher. Whilst these photographers

may have set out to create images of social or environmental comment, at the time they were heavily criticised due to the new aesthetic style and chosen subject matter in comparison to the more widely accepted viewpoint of landscape as natural beauty by established photographers such as Ansel Adams (1902-1984) and Edward Weston (1886-1958).

The exhibition, which was intended to summarise contemporary landscape photographic trends of that period, has subsequently received high stature in its approach and has had an immense resonating effect on photography creating what was coined the “New Topographics outlook” (Foster-Rice & Rohrbach, 2010, p. 54) by Greg Foster-Rice and will be later referred to within the context of this study as just simply the ‘Outlook’. Whilst the subject area around the main exhibition has been covered in detail, the aftermath and impact have been looked at in less detail, through books such as the *Reframing the New Topographics* (2010), edited by Greg Foster-Rice and John Rohrbach, which is a collection of individual discursive papers and short articles, mainly due to its anniversaries, that insinuate the influence that followed. Sean O’Hagan, writing in *The Guardian*, poses the question: “Does it have the same impact today?” (O’Hagan, 2010) but fails to answer it, just suggesting that you could detect its effect in a few mentioned contemporary photographers’ work. It is important to note here that this research will only investigate photography of this subject before and after the exhibition in relation to its context. It will also not consider or raise questions about human anthropology and geography, which may be related to the subject of the exhibition photographers, as it is the significance of the exhibition’s curated practitioners, their subject choice, methodology, and aesthetic style that is considered the influential landmark event.

This study was broken down into three main objectives. Firstly, to investigate the context of William Jenkins’s exhibition *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition to better understand why it made such a resonating impact on the development of photography within this area. This sets the scene for the study to mark a point at which this practice and approach became more formally recognised or categorised. The next objective was then to examine the influence of the Outlook on the evolution of photography around this genre, looking at its aesthetic and subject methodologies by reviewing photographers who were working consciously within this genre to identify the effect on their practice and also practitioners who have created techniques and styles that may have developed beyond and appear to challenge the Outlook. Making connections between the exhibition outcomes and the practice and approaches that could be deemed as commonplace thereafter. The last objective was to develop personal practice informed by these investigations and extended subject research, that explored how photography of this genre can advanced and challenge the commonplace through the creation of new aesthetics, methods, and subject approaches.

The exegesis and contextualizing of the research produced three project outcomes for the practice element - *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), *The Allotments* (2018-19) and *The New West* (2020). A list and digital access to the publications, videos and websites produced for these projects is available in Appendix 5 and 6. All due diligence was given to participants within these projects with regards to ethical procedures for participants where applicable.

Finding Fangorn (2016-17) evolved from documenting my son at play in the small, seemingly uncultivated wooded spaces we found locally, which had survived amongst the Liverpool urban development areas. This was initially a bonding activity aimed at getting him out of the house and exploring the world. Through this process, I was not only visually exploring his imagination based around heroic characters for which these spaces become fantasy environments, but also my interest in a more formal topographical landscape view of the spaces themselves and their battle to exist within their very urban surroundings. As my research and practice developed, the project became supported by The Mersey Forrest organisation and funded by *The Charter for Trees, Woods and People*, which was led by the Woodland Trust. To challenge the commonplace representation of the Outlook, the project explored the concepts of what is left in these small natural wooded spaces after the urban developments (man-altered landscape) using an autobiographically expressive, less neutral and perhaps more audience relatable subject approach. The practice outcome became an experimental website plus a printed visitor map exploring these spaces and trying to capture, support or save their diminishing existence and essence. The work was selected and featured in the November 2017 celebrations for the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Forrest Charter, the new call for a *Charter for Trees, Woods and People*, and was displayed at Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool.

The Allotments (2018-19) was conceived because, like many residents in our area of medium-density housing, we have no garden but have the desire as a family to experience working and maintaining land, planting, and seeing the fruition of those labours. Having been offered a plot in our local allotment, this passion was recognised in common with the other tenants as we worked our space, which opened interesting opportunities to look at the more social aspects of the use of land and landscape. The project started with a set of tenant portraits as solo artist practice. From this starting point I recognised the opportunity of a more collaborative extended project with the engagement of other practitioners to open the work and its methodology up with broader interpretations of the land. Thus, started *The Allotments* (2018-19) with creative writer Pauline Rowe (b. 1963), and my late father, the painter Arthur Lockwood (1934-2019). The allotments can be seen as a space to create with and in nature, escaping from our urban existence. The project, for me, drew inspiration from Gossage's book *The Pond* (1985), which in turn was reflecting on Henry David Thoreau's (1817-1862) book *Walden* (1854), a place of

contemplation about simple living within nature. As opposed to the commonplace subject interpretation and neutrality of the Outlook, it was intended that the different artist perspectives would enrich the subject approach and create a deeper multi-layered mixed media outcome, with an expanded narrative for the audience. This is still potentially an ongoing project, but it was selected for an in-progress exhibition at the Victoria Gallery and Museum, University of Liverpool and produced a publication supported and funded as part of the *LOOK 2019 Photo Biennial*.

The New West (2020) concluded the research practice, again with Hugo as a muse and inspiration. Whilst watching Hugo play the PlayStation game *Red Dead Redemption 2* (2018), in which the player enacts a cowboy avatar freely roaming in its fictionalised open-world version of the mid to late 1800s American West, I noticed that the avatar had a camera in his satchel. It occurred to me that this would give him the potential to make photographs whilst he roams the open world, discovering the unfolding unexplored landscapes of the game. The nature of the game would allow me (via the avatar) to go back in time virtually, to experience the birth of American landscape photography and enact the early practitioners as they charted the open spaces and expanding urban developments. With an understanding of both historical perspectives and current knowledge, I aimed to translate these experiences into a modern environmental context, thereby commenting on our actions and the future of both wilderness and human-altered landscapes to challenging the common outlook. Photographs from the avatar's fictional photographic archives and thoughts from his imaginary diary were then printed, framed and hung as an exhibition at the Open Eye Gallery, captured using a Virtual Reality (VR) camera and the show was posted back online as a VR exhibition. The project was shown and funded as part of the *Peer to Peer: UK/HK Festival* online exhibition and programme, as nominated by Sarah Fisher, Executive Director at the Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool.

The research within this thesis is structured into a literature review, a methodology, and three chapters. The literature review investigates the key writings and practices that informed the project, using this material to identify gaps in existing knowledge and to set out the critical and creative context in which the research is positioned. The methodology details the theoretical and practice-led approaches adopted to address the research question, establishing a framework/structure that supports the creative practice research. It also discusses the application of Csikszentmihalyi's *Systems Model of Creativity* within the development and evaluation of the practice. This creative system shifts attention from the sometimes-insular output of the individual creator to a broader, interdependent system in which original artwork is generated by the individual, evaluated by the field, and absorbed into the domain of cultural knowledge. Chapter

One - The Scene: Exhibition Context, Content and Zeitgeist, investigates the development of artistic, cultural and critical landscape photography in America prior to the exhibition and review the intentions of the exhibition's practitioners that created the important change in subject representation. Next, Chapter Two - The Road: Proceeding Practice Within and Around the Genre, explores the questions the exhibition would raise because of its perspective and methodologies on the subject, and the foundation of its inspiration for future practitioners. Lastly Chapter Three - My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace, discusses and analyses the development and outcomes of the three pieces of practice produced within the context of the preceding investigations, explorations and the research question.

The original contribution to the knowledge in the field stems from the development of practice built on research investigations that revealed the motives, inspirations, intentions, and perhaps unintentional outcomes of the exhibition, its curator and its practitioners. Research that highlighted and identified the gaps in the field that had been left by the impact of its legacy on proceeding photography. For example, the now common aesthetic approach to the photography of urban/man-altered landscapes which could be seen to: "dissolves them into a barren irony" (Bright, 1996, p8). Irony also in the use of the artistic sublime, which was once employed to create impact and beauty in the recording of natural landscape but now used to create awe for the human destruction on the land. Furthermore, the loss of the exhibition photographer's socio-political viewpoint, with regards to the human impact on the landscape that the art world has turned into commodity or from Szarkowski's perspective, now just photographs. To challenge and address these gaps, this research created three new projects that have shifted techniques of man-altered landscape photography into a contemporary photographic and post-photographic context whilst also trying to maintain some of the inspiration and socio-political integrity of the exhibition's originators.

Literature Review

While there has been much literature and practice researched and studied during the development of this thesis, discussed here are the significant writings and works that underpin my research and practice, and had the most impact on its development. It is key that the literature reviewed here has a deliberate flow as well as a hierarchy of importance and that the sources were chosen to build on the development of knowledge and their critical position on the subject to support the investigations and outcomes. Drawn from different times, there is an interrelated chronology, and each source, while perhaps not necessarily directly relating or referencing others, exists within the development of the genre itself and can be traced and connected to the evolving ideas and approaches in the field.

To undertake this review for the proposed study, these texts and practice sources were divided into the three writing and practice research objectives. This allowed for a focus on each specific area of the research so that the study had a strong structure to build its contribution in the form of uniquely combined and developed outcomes. To reiterate, these objectives were designed to fulfil the aim of using research and practice to explore the legacy and impact of man-altered landscape photography from the landmark *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* exhibition into a photographic and post-photographic context.

The first objective was to set the scene for the study by investigating the context of William Jenkins' exhibition through the analysis of the two most significant publications that supported or reviewed the exhibition, using them to draw comparisons between its aims and its outcomes. These were the original 1975 accompanying paperback catalogue, which sets out the original intentions of the exhibition, and Britt Salvesen's seminal book, titled *New Topographics* (2009), develops this position further by documenting the outcomes of the exhibition in detail, both physically and within the context of the period with the hindsight of history.

For my second objective, I then examined the influence of the Outlook on the evolution of photography around this genre. To help me identify gaps in the research and practice, I reviewed the key works and writings that sought to either maintain this approach or to expand and challenge our notions and understanding of the impact of the Outlook within the broader contexts of photography and urban landscape photography. Key works here were Robert Adams' review of John Gossage's considered ground-breaking book *The Pond* (1985), which uses landscape photography to question the borders between humans and nature. Ten years after

the exhibition, Adams, one of the original exhibitors, recognises some of the conceptual issues that the exhibition had created and heralds Gossage's book as critically divergent from the Outlook's path. *Reframing the New Topographics* (2010 edited by Greg Foster-Rice and John Rohrback) was a compilation of essays related to the exhibition. The book intended to broaden our perspective and offer future narratives that might be derived from or challenge the Outlook's position. Suzaan Boettger's article, *Whispers and Cries: Photographic Evocations of the Anthropocene* (2015), had a more pragmatic approach and discusses the style and aesthetic of the New Topographics photographers within the context of the development of Abstract Minimalism as an artistic movement. It also reflected on the hints of Anthropocene - a term popularly adopted in 2000 to describe the epoch when human activity started to substantially impact the planet's climate, landscapes and ecosystems.

For the final objective, I considered the literature that had/would more directly inform my practical investigations and extend my subject knowledge to move the subject genre forward and fill the identified gaps, exploring more broadly than the exhibition's context itself to find new opportunities and voices. Robert Adams' essay *Truth and Landscape* (1981) from his book *Beauty in Photography* (1981) was significant in helping create a new framework that suggests extended approaches to landscape photography and was important in underpinning my practice through its questioning and supposition of what makes a true/good landscape photograph. The writing of Gisela Parak and Bénédicte Ramade explored the impact of the Anthropocene era on climate change discourses and environmental photography, reflecting on the context of contemporary environmental concerns by exploring current and historical practice that have spanned this genre. In a much broader sense, coming full circle, the practice work of Timothy O'Sullivan (1840-1882), now held in the Library of Congress' Prints & Photographs Reading Room, marked the point at which the American landscape was being both formally photographed and planned for urbanisation. This would create the photographic epoch that ultimately started the genre, the works and the writing that followed.

The original exhibition catalogue was a limited publication of 2500 copies (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009) in a very modest 48-page paperback format, with a small selection of images by each photographer and a forward by William Jenkins, interspaced with small statements of intent submitted by some of the participants. In real terms, this catalogue introduction was a review of the objectives of the exhibition and its practitioners and unusually, it did not focus on promoting the photographic outcomes on the wall, and only lightly encouraged the viewer to engage with the interpretation of the man-altered landscape subject. From this position, one gets the sense that the photographic interests or concerns were all about the process and not about

the outcome. The first lines in the introduction to the catalogue by Jenkins read:

There is little doubt that the problem at the center of this exhibition is one of style. It should therefore be stated at the outset that while this introduction will concern itself with the exhibition as a stylistic event, the actual photographs are far richer in meaning and scope than the simple making of an aesthetic point.
(Jenkins, 1975, p.5)

He supports this perspective and approach by inferring it was the current state of photographic practice as inspired by Ed Ruscha's (b. 1937) earlier photographic work - (Twenty-six Gasoline Stations [1962], Some Los Angeles Apartments [1965], and others) which Jenkins suggests as "stripped of any artistic frills and reduced to an essentially topographic, state, conveying substantial amounts of visual information but eschewing entirely the aspects of beauty, emotion and opinion." (Jenkins, 1975, p.5). However, to the new Topographic photographers, Ruscha can be seen as a polarising figure whose image creation was felt to be more about ideas than the subject and certainly not about the unique photographic perspective and representation of the subject, which many of them were exploring (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009).

The emphasis on style above and beyond the actual content and subject of the photographs was an interesting feature of this introduction. He does not discuss the use of subjects, concepts, or new perspectives on the landscape subject matter. He uses or quotes words and phrases such as - neutrality, passive frames laid on a scene without interpretation, truthfulness, and accuracy as part of discussions about the acts of the photographers and their outcomes, quoting contributor John Schott as saying Ruscha's images "are not statements about the world through art, they are statements about art through the world" (Schott cited in Jenkins, 1975, p.5) In this perhaps lies the first indications of the issues that proceeded the exhibition. At this historic juncture, both Jenkins and the participants who added to this introduction were focused on the ideals of the role of photography itself. Nicholas Nixon writes: "The best photographs are transparent, sensual, intelligent, fulfilled, freshly arrived, enduring and, in the deepest sense, are of the world" (Nixon cited in Jenkins, 1975, p.6) Lewis Baltz adds: "The ideal photographic document would appear to be without author or art" (Baltz cited in Jenkins, 1975, p.6) Joe Deal continues: "An early decision was that a formal undifferentiated approach be used 'as a plate to serve up the subject matter'" (Deal cited in Jenkins, 1975, p.6)

Herein lies the intention of the exhibition and perhaps one of its greatest misunderstandings concerning subject depiction and aesthetic approach. Whilst man-altered landscape photography was the central theme, each photographer and ultimately the curator was also explicitly exploring photography's relationship with the documenting of subjects, and this theme was a conduit with which to exercise this perspective and find common ground to draw the participants together.

Jenkins' final sentence concludes: "If 'New Topographics' has a central purpose it is simply to postulate, at least for the time being, what it means to make a documentary photograph" (Jenkins, 1975, p.7). With this in mind, he was right to use the phrase 'time being' as with the changing context of the perception of photographic representation of the subject within the genre that the curating of similar practice achieved in the exhibition has outlived these intentions. This time-changed context has also left a marked approach and style to the subject of the urban landscape photography that does not represent the landscape as a document, as discussed in later texts.

Britt Salvesen's book, *New Topographics* (2009), was the only major review of the exhibition, using both critical writing and pictorial documentation of the exhibition installation and catalogue content. The book was released to support the recreation of the New Topographics exhibition at George Eastman House in 2009. Importantly, it contains a comprehensive essay by Salvesen, which retrospectively places the exhibition into what she sees as its photographic and art context, and whilst she was not specifically forward-looking within this for the purpose of the study, she sets the scene by saying:

Looking back from the perspective of the twenty-first-century, we can see New Topographics as a bridge between the still-insular fine-art photography world and the expanding, post-conceptual field of contemporary art, simultaneously asserting and deconstructing the mediums modernist specificity, authority, and autonomy; and ultimately serving as a progenitor of today's Dusseldorf-inspired school of landscape photographers, whose work is presented as contemporary art.

(Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p.12)

This bridge between post-conceptual contemporary art and the photographic medium was a key outcome of the exhibition, and the passage of time has changed the context and left us with a different picture than Jenkins perhaps intended. The neutrality and documentary intentions were synthesised into the constructed aesthetic of an artistic approach to a subject.

Perhaps to echo Jenkins' thoughts in 1975, it was significant that the book starts with a transcription of an interview with a couple that was made as part of capturing visitor's reactions to the exhibition. The woman (Chris) and man (Jack) responded differently to the work and gave a commentary that was representative of the general reaction to the new and challenging aesthetic approach and chosen subject matter that went against the traditional landscape photography format of that period:

'INTERVIEWER: Do you think the photographer had any intent?

CHRIS: He must have, for a layout like this. He couldn't have been doing it for his enjoyment, because they are very dull pictures in my opinion...

JACK: ... At first they're really stark nothing, but then you really look at it and it's just about the ways things are'
(Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p.12)

The couple's mixed response is a good example of the common reactions that have continued for the years after the exhibition regardless of changes in aesthetic and artistic appreciation, but perhaps Jack, without knowing, references the documentary intent of the work at that time and that the subject surpasses the photograph itself.

New Topographics is a term still used to characterise a specific style and approach to man-altered landscape photography, and its common subject and banal style play a large part in the Outlook's legacy and aesthetic longevity. Both exhibition documents and the essays they contain hold this focus, but whilst Jenkin's was concerned with the documentary nature of photography as they saw it then, Salvesen updates this and sees the work within a contemporary practice which places that style not with a documentary setting, but a fine-art context which would appear closer to the contemporary placing of the work.

Following the investigation of the original exhibition's context, this study's second objective was to examine the influence of the Outlook on the continued evolution of man-altered landscape photography by reviewing the practice of a selection of photographers working within this genre and writers who have continued to look at the subject since the exhibition. The text that perhaps inspired this study most and drives the underlying agenda to this section of the inquiry was by Robert Adams. In Adams' July 1986 *Creative Camera* article on John Gossage's book *The Pond* (1985), he states "One is grateful for *The Pond* because we are in trouble, and because irony which focuses on the ugliness of man-made juxtapositions does not at this point, by itself, help." (Adams cited in Brittain, 2000, p. 150). This was a statement on where Adams thought the social impact of the then-current environmental/urban landscape photography had shifted to in the proceeding ten years since the exhibition, but I believe is also still relevant today. *The Pond* was considered ground-breaking when first published because of its complex underlying themes and challenge to the subject approach and aesthetics of the time. Like the New Topographics photographers, Gossage's photographs did not aspire to the surface beauty of what used to be traditional landscape photography. Looking at the relationship between the man-altered landscape and the natural space of a pond (a reference to *Walden* (1854) [pond], a book by American transcendentalist writer Henry David Thoreau), he produced a very personal, subtle work that appears to build upon the Outlook's subject intentions without the use of its formal aesthetics.

From my research, I found no specific writing that has attempted to associate the many

photographers who followed or found themselves working within a similar approach to the Outlook since those grouped in the exhibition. To investigate these potential connections, I contrasted the approaches and practice of photographers such as Richard Misrach (b. 1949), Jeff Brouws (b. 1955), and Andreas Gursky (b. 1955). But like Gossage, some photographers also set out to challenge it and develop new approaches, some postmodern and some post-photographic. Examples of these were Massimo Vitali (b. 1944), Joan Fontcuberta (b. 1955), and Gursky's post-1990 work sit here, and this study also aimed to identify and analyse this practice to find common or uncommon ground. Texts such as Suzaan Boettger's article *Whispers and Cries: Photographic Evocations of the Anthropocene* (2015) examined the aesthetic and subject approach of the most relevant of the exhibition's photographers to study its impact and journey. This article also addressed the exhibition's problem of style, as William Jenkins puts it. However, Boettger argued that rather than being anthropologically detached, the emotional reserve and disrupting photographic aesthetic to the traditional photographic landscape was a deliberate approach to show human activity as a dominant influence on the environment. She writes:

...their rejection of pictorial conventions of landscape in favour of environments strongly constructed by humans disrupted the ideal of nature as respite. Their banal urban and suburban landscapes featuring arrays of blocky factories and industrially manufactured residences present an early, implicit evocation of the Anthropocene
(Boettger, 2015)

She also references the aesthetic approach by some of the participants on the often uninspiring and everyday, structurally simple/block like architectural nature of the subjects as a visual reference to the fine-art movement of Abstract Minimalism. To clarify, some of the fundamental visual characteristics that Minimalist Art involve, but are not restricted to, the application of basic shapes, hard edges, and linearity (Heatley, 2022).

Suggesting how this formal compositional method to the subject makes visual associations to the work, which further supports Salvesen's suggestion of the exhibition being a bridge between fine-art photography and contemporary art.

Other significant works looked at here were the book, *Reframing the New Topographics* (2013) by Greg Foster-Rice and John Rohrbach, which contains a collection of essays on the subject. For this purpose, the most significant essay in the book was by Christopher Burnett - *New Topographics Now: Simulated Landscape and Degraded Utopia* (2013) which looks to "investigate the role images play in redefining our sense of place" (Foster-Rice and Rohrbach, 2013, p.139) through the reproduction of landscapes as impacted by technology, not on the Outlook's continued aesthetic and ideological approach. Burnett's referencing of works utilising digital

technology has great relevance here as he recognised these developments changing communication frameworks and, in turn, discusses where landscape photography may go in the twenty-first century. Opening up discussions around artists such as Joan Fontcuberta and his use of cartography software to create fictitious landscapes that also question our reading of the photographic document itself.

The third objective of the study was to evaluate, using insight from the previous literature and the development and analysis of my practice, how man-altered landscape photography can or needs to move forward through the transformation of approach/aesthetic, concept/engagement and perhaps technology. In Robert Adams's short essay *Truth and Landscape* (1981), he suggests that a landscape picture can offer the viewer three verities: geography, autobiography, and metaphor. The resulting combination of which will give us in his words: "an affection for life" (Adams, 2005, p.14). He discussed the need for work to go beyond a geographic record and how a more engaging outcome could be derived. Proposing that building on the geographic representation of a landscape through the practitioner's personal mediation of the scene and the introduction of metaphor or concept adds additional layers of interpretation to hold attention and strengthen impact and intention. Interestingly, the essay title implies a search for truth, which could reflect on some of the original concepts he suggests in the *New Topographics* exhibition catalogue, but seven years later, he would appear to be thinking much broader. Considering the experience and intention of the photographer and the perception of the viewer in the mix - pointing the camera in a seemingly objective approach was not enough, and that truth was a plastic concept with many contexts, stimuli, and interpretations.

In 2015, there was a major exhibition/symposium at the Museum für Photographie, Braunschweig, titled *Landscape. Environment. Culture. On the transnational influence of New Topographics* (2015). The papers presented at this added to the aim of the study, but most notably *From 'Topographic' to 'Environmental' - A Look into the Past and the Presence of the New Topographics Movement* (2015) by Gisela Parak. This paper looks at how the term 'topographic' has been slowly replaced by the designation of 'environmental photography', keeping alive the human/nature dichotomy. She writes:

Since 1974, the general discussions of the boundary, shifting with the growth of suburbia, between town and countryside, the arising peripheral structures and the concentration of urban development, have all sensitized the population to the destruction of the environment.
(Parak, 2015, para.17)

The renaming of the genre almost signifies a move forward, not just in photographic terms but

also in environmental awareness, both potentially driving each other now to communicate current issues with contemporary methods.

Bénédicte Ramade writes broadly around the subjects of Art, Ecology, and the American landscape and brought further environmental focus to this critical context. In the initial text of her book *Edge of the Earth: Climate Change in Photography and Video* (2016), she suggests "Human nature has to be faced up to and we need to be equipped with images that show features of this 'new' [anthropocene] planet" (Ramade, 2016, p.11). She did, however, question the ability of photography to do this, looking back to the original West photographers with scepticism on their photographic impact and the political motivation at the time of the creation of the national parks. Also bypassing the work of the mid-20th century and New Topographics photographers, she further questioned the more contemporary tendencies to depict the sublime and catastrophic event in environmentally concerned photography alongside the disjuncture when these types of images/subjects are exhibited and become art objects. More positively, Ramade recognises photography's longer-term narrative potential in combination with communities to make effective statements but also suggests in her final paragraph that *environmental photography is overdue to espouse a degree of fruitful imaginativeness*. (Ramade, 2006, p.23).

Finally, in this review, I want to include the substantial body of work created by Timothy O'Sullivan for the late-19th century Geographical Surveys, as held in the Library of Congress. Whilst this was practice as opposed to literary writing, this work not only had a significant influence on the exhibition photographer's ideas and approach, but also on my practice as my research developed. For this purpose, the Library holds a particular Lot - number 7096, titled *Photographs of the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel* (1867-1872), containing 178 printed and mounted photographs by O'Sullivan from the Clarence King expedition. O'Sullivan was seen as an example of a practitioner working without precedent and his apparent lack of style is recognised by Jenkins as an influential factor for the exhibition photographers' style-less photographic ambitions (Jenkins, 1975). Given the newness of the photographic medium and originality of the task of documenting the unexplored landscape of the American West, and therefore not adopting or being influenced by previous photographic style or aesthetic. In the book *Framing The West: The Survey Photographs of Timothy O'Sullivan* (2010), published by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Library of Congress, Toby Jurovics quotes Robert Adams as saying:

I would not have photographed the West as extensively as I did had it not been for O'Sullivan. I liked him because he seemed more honest about disagreeable fact than did many nineteenth century photographers - less selective in favor of the picturesque.

(Adams, cited in Jurovics, 2010, p.11)

Not only was he one of the first photographers in the late 1800s to photograph the American landscape without man's (non-native Americans at least) alterations, but he also documented the start of the alterations as we know them today. These explorations pioneered the use of photography in geologic surveying and laid the groundwork for subsequent settlement and development of the region. His images as we see them in the Library's collection have the naiveness of the birth of the medium and its unfolding purposes and intentions. The act of recording a previously unexplored or undocumented natural landscape is now rare given the modern-day ability for a person to travel to the farthest regions to record and publish on the Internet for others to see their experience. However, I consider that there was the potential for him to be inspired by the aesthetic of painters of that period, such as the mid-19th century Hudson River School. One can perhaps sense this in the use of composition, as the subject choice was largely dictated by the purpose of geographical documentation. Jurovics supports this point, writing "O'Sullivan was keenly aware of the practical and pictorial demands placed on his skill." (Jurovics, 2010, p.9). History has also shown us that although O'Sullivan's photography as part of these surveys was in fact to document what they found, the resulting outcome was generally intended to have the opposite effect to those now referenced by the likes of Parrak and Ramade in their environmentalist viewpoint.

As part of promoting the 2009 recreation of the exhibition by George Eastman House and the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, the Eastman Museum wrote "New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape is the second most-cited photography exhibition in history" (George Eastman Museum, 2009). This statement would seem a measure of importance, interest, and perhaps influence, but from my experience and research, in general, not through critical appraisal. Although, Remade in her article, *Audacity by Proxy the Reiteration of Exhibitions / Family of Man / New Topographics* (2019) reviews the contemporary reproductions of this exhibition and Steichen's *Family of Man* (the most cited exhibition) and questions the value of re-creating *New Topographics* in 2009, offering a damning statement:

...its history is written counter to its physical existence. Indeed, the eyewitnesses from 1975 who contributed to the imposing eponymous catalogue published in 2009, when the event was reprised, all agree that the exhibition was not a success. There were few visitors, the press was circumspect, and the artists brought together by William Jenkins were little inclined to be grouped in a particular genre.
(Ramade, 2019, para.3)

As writers considered the development and influence of the photography of man-altered landscape from Jenkins to Ramade, we can see that the exhibition sits in a period of change.

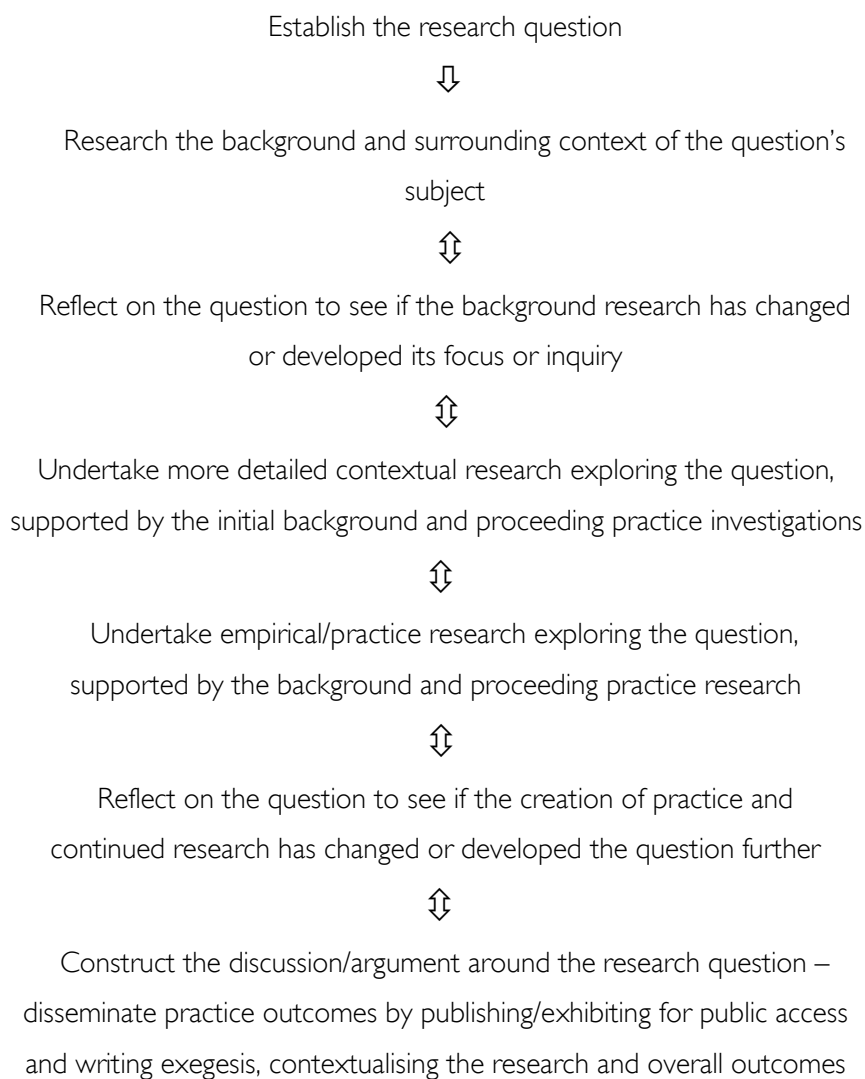
Reflecting the evolution of photographic practice, its new approach to the urban landscape, and the start of environmental concerns as this attention to the subject has continued. However, looking at the thematic and aesthetic connections between the exhibition's photographers and contemporary practitioners, its legacy has left a visual style that now neither captures the subject as they intended nor successfully represents the potential environmental issues or concerns within it. The reviewed literature led me to conclude that this style or Outlook developed now sits within contemporary practice as an artistic representation yet continues to be influential without the original practitioners conceptual intentions of a documentary approach with minimal personal judgements and a prosaic subject (Jenkins, 1975). As a result, this research aimed to confront this position within the genre by experimenting and creating original approaches and styles (perhaps with fruitful imaginativeness) to break the cycle of its established representation and advance it using a practice that explored both the broader contemporary potential of photography and the human-made environment it is depicting.

Methodology

Conducting a practice-led thesis within the creative arts subject area, the research process included methodologies that would provide a framework to tackle the research question and importantly, support the process of creative practice research. The outcome of this process at its most basic was split into two elements - a creative practice research output and a text element or exegesis that critically engaged with the practice - but they were intertwined, interacting to answer the research question. Regarding the general methods within the methodology, the text element was created through targeted subject research and investigations, and the creative output was produced by the practical application of creative skills inspired and informed by those subject research investigations, and often vice versa. These are discussed in more detail and context later, but some examples of these targeted subject research methods are literature review through books, journals and online writings to illuminate and inform the subject. Exhibition visits to observe contemporary practice, archive review of historic practice, observations based on creative student practice and critical reflection on the practitioner outcomes. Some examples of the practice research methods used were the practical application of photography (both analogue and digital), video production, audio soundscape production, graphic design for publications, website design and exhibition design for project display spaces, and experimenting with each individually and/or combined for outcome. Whilst not a research method, a significant amount of management and communication soft skills were also essential for applying these practice methods effectively for their purpose and research results.

Clarifying here some of the goals and roles of practice-led research in creating original forms of new knowledge helps to reinforce the choice and approach of those methods and overall methodology. To explain general research, knowledge and new knowledge (the unknown): "General research uncovers knowledge that was previously unknown to the individual but known to the field – while academic research aims at uncovering/creating knowledge that was previously unknown to the field" (Smith & Dean, 2009, p212). Creative practice must be significantly contextualised through the academic research process to support the claim for originality in the outcome, and so both research and practice were developed with a sense of symbiosis starting with the research question. Given the individual and often unique nature of the creation of artworks, it should be noted that this approach will not often provide global or objective facts, but rather more nuanced, subjective outcomes and meanings. This subjective nature will also continue to be open to interpretation depending on the position of the viewer/reader, but it will still have the potential to transform understanding and create new knowledge.

To support this process, there was a need within the study for the implementation of a methodological structure that would guide the development of the research and practice alongside an understanding of the workings and applications of systems of creativity so that the structure was effective for the creation of practice generating new knowledge in the field. This would give the outcome the contextualisation which was needed to reference the relationship of the practice to the arena (the domain) of the research question and identify the originality of this work. Below is a flow chart illustrating the structure used. It was designed to support this thesis with a framework and flow that not only aided the research and practice but also developed and supported the relationship between the two. At times, the movement of this process went backwards and forwards within the structure as the research was conducted and the practice was developed. Each aspect of this process was not always simultaneous though, and could have reflected back, influencing or steering future approaches to the original question.



This methodology on its own could produce research and practice but may not necessarily ensure it answers the research question with new and original work that adds to knowledge - creativity is not synonymous with innovation. So, in addition, there was a need to employ a system or theory that would be used to critically ascertain and understand the broader context of new creative practice as it was produced.

The theory that appeared most relevant here was the confluence approach to creativity, as demonstrated by the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and others, which acknowledged the multiple factors that contribute to creativity. Csikszentmihalyi's systems model highlights the interplay (flow) between established cultural knowledge, social organisations that manage what is or should be knowledge, and the individual as essential for creativity (McIntyre, 2009).

The flow of the described methodology allows for important opportunities for discovery or insight through luck and accident, as well as focused research to create connections between developing knowledge and practice experience. In Csikszentmihalyi's *Systems Model of Creativity* (1988), there were also opportunities for serendipity to play this role in the act and flow of creativity itself, and it illustrates the circular causality that could result. Looking at the diagram below, based on Csikszentmihalyi's original, we can see the dynamic links between the three central components - Person (researcher/research question, practitioner), the Domain (culturally established subject area) and the Field (people/organisations that establish or maintain the subject's domain).

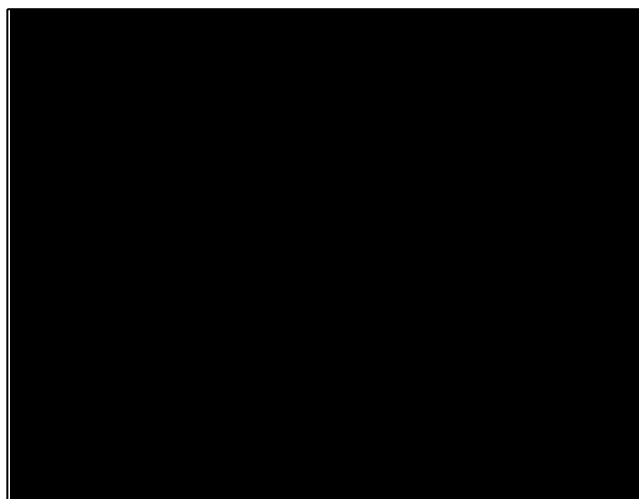


Figure 1 - *Systems Model of Creativity*. (Created by Susan Kerrigan, based on Csikszentmihalyi 1999, p. 315)

Outside of that inner structure, Personal Background, Culture and Society are the larger environmental factors of influence on the inner components and at the centre, Produces Novelty can be considered the resulting outcome of creative practice based on the flow of the system. It is worth noting that the starting point for creativity within this diagram is not important as the system has a non-linear flow, but each component, whilst not able to produce creativity on its own accord, is necessary for the system to work. For creativity to occur in such a system, the action of the three factors could be seen as "a structure of knowledge manifest in a particular symbol system (domain), a structured social organization that understands that body of knowledge (field), and an individual agent (person) who makes changes to the stored information that pre-exists them." (McIntyre 2009, p. 160). It can furthermore be considered that "creative thinking is normal thinking focused on problem-solving" (Weisberg, 2006), but that likewise supports this research process too - there is a question to be solved. We must also acknowledge that there may be levels of confluence with other creative disciplines outside of the original subject area knowledge of the domain and field that will expand this position and influence the direction it took.

For the purpose of this thesis, the methods and systems outlined and referenced will help to develop research/practice and critically support the conclusions of original forms of new knowledge/creative work that are required as an outcome of practice-led research. To explain the application of this methodology, the working of a system of creativity within it and better evaluate the outcomes and how they address the original question, I have broken down each stage with a summary of the rationale/content/context.

Establishing the research question/aims started with the system of creativity component 'person' - myself, the researcher/practitioner. What was it in my past and present experience/knowledge that indicated the research problem/question was valid and interesting enough to research and create practice as a response/solution? This position, combined with some further investigations into the domain gave me an indication of the potential for the research and subject. At this starting point of the study, initial research into the subject facilitated planning and goal setting. The Introduction to this thesis established and gave detail to the research questions and the motivations behind the problem to find solutions for: Explore the legacy and impact on man-altered landscape photography from the landmark William Jenkins *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition into a photographic and post-photographic context. This was then broken down into the three main objectives to be achieved. Firstly, to investigate the content, context and zeitgeist of William Jenkins' exhibition to better understand why it made such a resonating impact on the development of photography within this subject area. This sets the scene for the study to mark a point at which this practice and approach

became more formally recognised. The next objective was then to examine the influence of the New Topographics exhibition on the evolution of proceeding photographic practice within and around the genre. Investigating the legacy of the Outlook's aesthetic and subject approach by reviewing photographers who were working consciously within this genre to identify the effect on their practice and practitioners who have created approaches that may have developed beyond and appear to challenge the Outlook. The last objective was to develop personal practice informed by these investigations and extended subject research that explored how photography of this genre can be progressed through the creation of new aesthetics, methods, and subject approaches. Using as an exploratory framework Robert Adams' theory from his essay *Truth in Landscape*, that good landscape photography should contain "geography, autobiography and metaphor". (Adams, 1981, p.14)

Once the question was established, I researched the background and surrounding context of the question's subject, investigating the domain more comprehensively. This indicated what the field considered innovative and good creative practice based on the contemporary field and what has remained historically significant from past practice. The broadening of my knowledge from these investigations into past and present contexts aided further planning of new future directions of the study for both the research and practice. I adopted specific methods such as literature review for secondary evidence of past practice through books, journals and papers, and exhibition attendance for more primary evidence. Establishing the issues and gaps in the knowledge as highlighted by this research of the domain not only indicated that any new practice was original and novel, but also when serendipitous opportunities/relationships arose, I knew how to apply them to create original practice. These investigations into the subject domain proceeding and surrounding the exhibition and the impact of the exhibition are discussed in Chapter One - The Scene: Exhibition Context, Content and Zeitgeist.

Examples of these investigations were through the study of man-altered landscape photography texts in seminal books such as Britt Salvesen's *New Topographics* (2009), articles in printed journals such as *Creative Camera* and web-based journals/articles, which were often more contemporary in subject and approach as a more accessible medium/platform for writers. A good example of this was the online Dutch journal *ScherpteDiepte* ('Depth of Field') Vol. 7 (2015) and the individual articles/papers published to support the exhibition and symposium - *From a 'Topographic' to an 'Environmental' Understanding of Space* (2015) at the Museum für Photographie, Braunschweig. These were a more contemporary perspective and were sometimes driven from the point of view of practitioners as well as critics discussing the impact of the New Topographics, which was useful as a reflection for my practice.

Primary contextual research as a method also played an important role through viewing the context of work in exhibitions and discovering the past and present practitioners who may not be promoted, in print or across borders. Significant exhibitions attended nationally and internationally of note to date were:

- *Paris Photo* (2013, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2023) exhibitions and seminars - Paris
- Joan Fontcuberta - *Stranger Than Fiction* (2014) - The Science Museum, London
- *FOTOGRAFIA - Festival Internazionale di Roma* (2015) - Rome
- Andreas Gursky - *nicht abstrakt* (2016) - Kunstsammlung, Düsseldorf
- *French Landscapes A Photographic Adventure, 1984-2017* (2017) - Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
- *Into the Woods: Trees in Photography* (2018) - Victoria and Albert Museum, London

When I was unable to attend exhibitions due to chronology, location/logistics or works only being available in book form, being the owner of a bookshop specialising in rare and collectible photographic books had its advantages. I have in my collection original editions of the rare 1975 *New Topographics. Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* catalogue and Britt Salvesen's *New Topographics* (2009) which supported the representation of the original exhibition in 2009. As well as John Gossage's book *The Pond* (1985) and many monographs by the likes of Shore, Adams, Fontcuberta, the Becher's and Baltz, in addition to seminal subject-focused publications. This unique access would facilitate visual/object analysis research methods, allowing the examination of important publications, to interpret their form and meaning, and to create links to the primary contextual research.

Following the research of the background and surrounding context was an opportunity for reflection on the previous findings to date to see if that background research had changed or developed the question. The results of a more comprehensive investigation may have impacted the understanding of the question, changing its nature or developing and refining its direction and outcome.

The next stage in the structure built on the initial research creating an overview of the exhibition and the factors that led to its creation, unexpected zeitgeist and impact and influence on contemporary practitioners. Chapter Two - *The Road: Proceeding Practice Within and Around the Genre*, broadens my exploration of the domain and field in this area, looking for evidence to support the questions supposition, serendipity or opportunities for future planning of research and practice development as a response to the findings.

After these research stages into the domain and field of the question, knowledge gained to review, translate, seek inspiration and recognise serendipity/opportunities were used to facilitate the planning of practice in answer to the question. Chapter Three - My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace, sets out to establish a framework based on Robert Adams' suggested approach for more effective landscape photography using his suggested three verities. These verities - the elements and concepts of geography, autobiography and metaphor strengthen each other within the work to make a more complete outcome for the audience to discover the meaning of place.

The previous broad reading of past and present man-altered landscape photography contexts and the study of contemporary practitioners was designed to ultimately inform the directions of my practice-led element as an outcome. As a research method within this thesis, the practice elements produced new knowledge, creative insights, or techniques, using artistic process as the method of investigation (Smith & Dean, 2009). To achieve this practice element, three new works were planned and completed. As a creative development method, I usually work from experience and intuition for this form of practice and don't use journals or sketchbooks. This was especially so, given that my mediums are either digital, so I was working and refining on a computer/camera screen or working live in camera on analogue film. The documentation of the project developments in the later chapters was also more of an outline of the creative process/flow to indicate the contextual relationships to the aims and does not cover the finer working details needed to produce the outcomes. For example, the VR rendering of *The New West* (2020) exhibition, given this was a new process for me, took a morning and four complete attempts, with the support of the staff at the Open Eye Gallery, before I was happy with the camera positioning, the size/resolution of its images and VR flow/interface for the audience of the site. As such, this level of detail for the working practice methods will not be discussed unless directly relevant to the research context of the work.

As an additional practice principle, each project was designed to be rooted in and explore one of Adams' three verities as a major element. The intention was to encourage differing starting points and development approaches for each of the practice works, *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), *The Allotments* (2018-19) and *The New West* (2020), to explore the research objectives. These practice-led components built on this foundation, responding to the contextual and critical analysis as inspiration and guidance to create the new work intended to move this genre forward. The practice methods used within this stage were primarily the medium of photography due to the core photographic context. However, added to this were broader mediums such as video, graphic design/production, website design/creation, and more experimental mediums such as

video console gameplay, artificial intelligence (AI), VR and collaborative mixed media artist practice and development. Many of these additional mediums were either unexplored or did not exist at the time of the 1975 exhibition, and this position would also help support my intention to create new work or knowledge. "The means of representation are only limited by the imagination of the practitioner-researcher and can readily be found in exhibitions, designs, narratives and other visual-verbal texts as the artist-researcher takes on the roles of the theorist, designer, storyteller and cultural critic." (Smith & Dean, 2009, p51).

Finding Fangorn (2016-17) was more substantially rooted in the element of autobiography of the three verities, autobiography, geography and metaphor, as a method of development. My son Hugo and I actively looked for leftover wooded spaces to explore in urban developed Liverpool, to enact fantasy scenarios as part of our play. Whilst recording this, I also made images of the spaces themselves, reflecting how they visually interacted or conflicted with the urban environment that surrounded them. Producing an outcome in the form of a website and a physical map, as well as a gallery presentation, I employed a post-photographic agenda of non-traditional media as a method to create the new work. This approach meant it communicated and was accessed through multiple mediums/levels and could be construed as being more accessible and relevant to a broader audience than would have been the original exhibition.

The Allotments (2018-19) project was more substantially rooted in the element of geography of the three verities as a method of development, exploring a sense of purpose and value of a place. This project, with its publication and exhibition, explored these spaces of cultivation and society through my work in collaboration with poet Pauline Rowe and painter Arthur Lockwood. Through this practice, I aimed to broaden my approach to the urban landscape with a methodology engaged in social/artistic collaboration and mixed media. The work attempted to transcend the often two-dimensional reading of photographs on their own with collaborative methods combining Pauline's writing and Arthur's painting. Exploring these themes by uniting the individual elements of painting, writing and photography, juxtaposing and/or complementing each other to create a more holistic representation of the subject with its subtle nuances of nature and humankind. This method of working was not only employed by us in the development of the project but also with the cooperation of the allotment holders, who shared their insights and experiences as part of the creative process.

The New West (2020) VR project was more substantially rooted in the element of metaphor of the three verities as a method of development and explored how you can mix contemporary practice with the metaphorical virtual world of gaming. Through the project, I explored the virtual

landscapes in the console game *Red Dead Redemption II* (2018) (RDR2), a cowboy game based in 1800s America, in reference to the work produced by the geological surveyors of the American West in the 1860s-80's. Photographs created using the game's avatar in the game and their imagined AI diary thoughts as they journeyed through the game landscape were printed and temporarily hung on the Open Eye Gallery walls to allow for capture using a VR camera and the show was posted online for 360° virtual access only for its audience. Through this method, the work prompted the viewer to question our relationship with the documenting of landscape and the human impact on the natural world by connecting perceptions of the past with our knowledge of the present.

Following this stage, there were further opportunities for reflection on the more in-depth research and the developing practice findings. As each practice element was created and the contextual research continued, there was a need for additional reflection as a process of refining and contextualising to maintain relevance to the research question and recognise new or changing future practice opportunities.

Lastly, in constructing or concluding the discussion/argument around the research question, it was potentially hard to evidence if the creation of these new works had directly impacted the development and advancement of the genre or domain of man-altered landscape photography. Had it positioned new work which had broken away from the commonplace Outlook, but was still routed within this genre, into a broader, more contemporary and future-facing context? The contextualising within the research question of the three works, which were then selected by organisations within the field for their relevance and/or innovation within contemporary practice and being published/exhibited, may indicate this achievement.

The methodology discussed here, illustrates and facilitates a practice-led research approach in which creative production and critical inquiry inform one another, using structured stages of contextual investigation, reflective refinement, and empirical practice to explore the questions posed about the legacy and evolution of man-altered landscape photography. Interacting research methods, such as literature review, exhibition study, archival analysis, and object-based examination with practical methods including photography, video, web design and experimental media to generate new knowledge. Combining its methodological structure and Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity, also allowed for the research question to be shaped, expanded, and tested through cycles of contextual study and practice, culminating in the three practice projects and the resultant thesis.

Chapter One

The Scene: Exhibition Context, Content and Zeitgeist

Setting the scene for the *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition and exploring the reasons for its zeitgeist, Chapter One investigates the development of functional, artistic and cultural/critical landscape photography in America before the exhibition. The unique trajectory of such prior practice was to both inspire the photographers selected for the exhibition because of its roots in functional objective photographic realism and provoke them because of the limited perspective of the established artistic photographic approach which portrayed landscape as an idealised wilderness. It then reviews the subjects and intentions of the ten practitioners, with reflection on the significant writings of for example Jenkins and Salvesen, to give the reader an overview of the important change in direction it took landscape photography and the marked point in its subject evolution.

Charting the development of the American landscape was not a new subject to photography and can be traced back to early practitioners such as Carleton Watkins (1829-1916) and Timothy O'Sullivan in the 1860s-80s. In this period, as part of Clarence King's *Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel* (1867-1881), teams of artists, photographers and scientists were directed to produce a geological and topographical exploration of this land as mass migration and industrialisation were expanding into these areas (Bartlett, 1962). The photographic images or views O'Sullivan made for these surveys were intended to be objective and have scientific qualities that would make them a description of facts of the landscape, as in Figure 2.

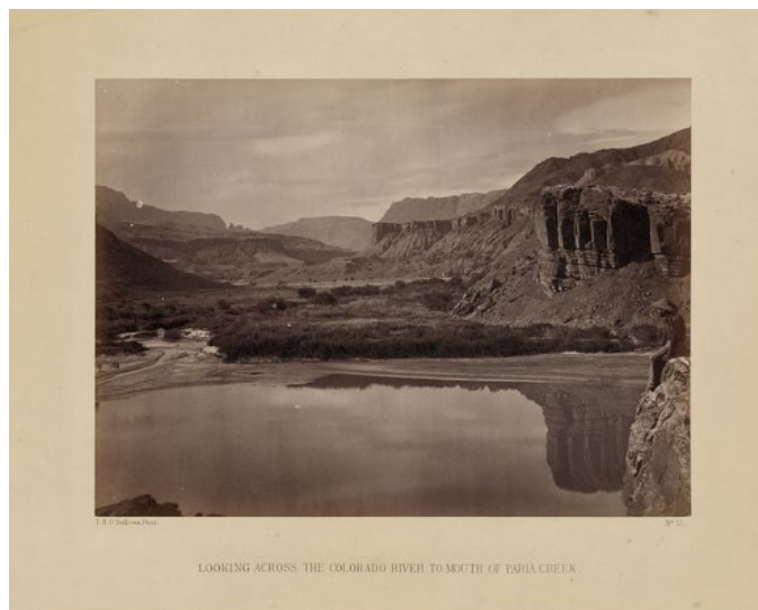


Figure 2 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Looking across the Colorado River to mouth of Paria Creek* (1867), photographic print.

Coming from a documentary background of photographing the American Civil War with Mathew Brady, O'Sullivan had a strong sense of maintaining the truth and accuracy of the subject in his photographs. But much like the work of Carleton Watkins, whose photographs of the West in the same period were made as scientific documents of the natural landscape, the nature of these works changed with time from the original objective motives, with a shift from science to art as they would appear in later museums and galleries. Interestingly, though, the captions printed to accompany the images were selected by the survey team to not just provide geological information but also to appeal to new settlers who may consider it a welcoming place to live as an underlying promotion of these unexplored spaces by the government (Jurovics, 2010).

This photographic work contrasted with much of the contemporary landscape painting of the time, for example, paintings from the Hudson River School led by Thomas Cole (1801-1848) (example by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) in Figure 3). Drawn to the romantic notion of the sublime, Cole and his contemporaries explored the landscapes of the Hudson River Valley and created works that portrayed their feelings about the immensity of the landscape before them and the strength and extremes of nature. This perspective also served to justify the nationalistic interest in the American West at that time. The West being portrayed by white American artists, writers, and explorers as an untamed wilderness that was ripe for the taking, but they ignored the fact that the landscape was carefully cultivated by native peoples for centuries before American colonisation forcibly drove them from their homes. Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School painters romanticised a supposed alternate reality in which people coexisted with and revered nature, but they were unaware of the many things that the native American tribes, whose land they were depicting, had already achieved and sustained (Snow, 2022).



Figure 3 - Albert Bierstadt, *Among the Sierra Nevada, California* (1868), oil on canvas.

Following O'Sullivan's photographic documentation of the West came several notable photographers who each added to the approach of photographing the American landscape and would become influential to future photography as it established itself as a documentary and

artistic medium. Most notably, Ansel Adams, who in the 1920s developed his reputation as an environmentalist, creating iconic landscape photographs in national parks and promoting the conservation of wilderness areas through the recording of the sublime natural beauty of these spaces. His work capturing the qualities, presence and beauty of nature with well-defined natural landforms often illuminated in spectacular ambient light and backed by powerful weather formations (Dennis, 2015). This approach has come to symbolise what we now consider to be straight landscape photography, as can be seen in Figures 4 and 5 below, which highlights the camera's ability to capture the aesthetic beauty of a subject with detailed technical precision, but no implicit social or political message beyond appreciation of nature.

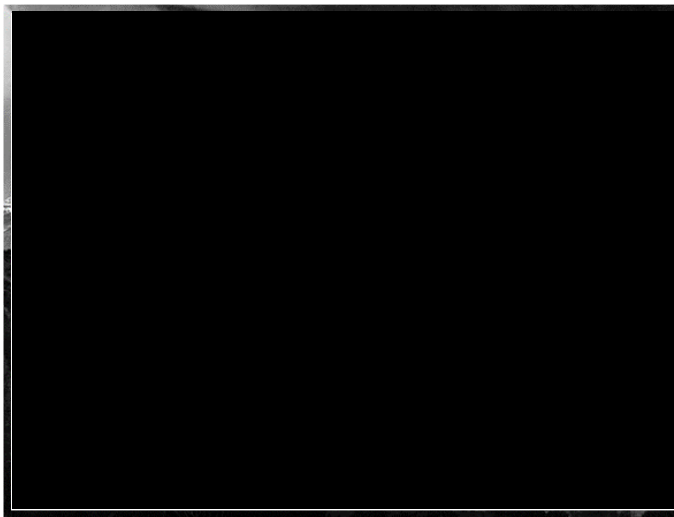


Figure 4 - Ansel Adams, *The Tetons and the Snake River* (1942), photographic print.



Figure 5 - Ansel Adams, *Monolith, the Face of Half Dome, Yosemite National Park, California*, (1927), photographic print.

Adams, alongside other landscape photographers such as Edward Weston, established themselves as the then fine art photographers of the time (in comparison to commercially applied photography) through print editions and exhibitions of their work. This work has much in common with the likes of the Hudson River School in its approach and aesthetic treatment of the landscape. The establishment of this landscape photography technique would continue influence and inspire American practitioners such as Edward's son Bret Weston, Minor White and Harry Calahan who could later be seen to add more personally/conceptually expressive, and in Whites's case spiritual, elements to this approach (Szarkowski, 1981). With changing artistic perspectives, the increased accessibility of remote places and the abundance of this type of landscape photography, this approach is now often considered more craft or possibly commercially based rather than an artistic viewpoint of the landscape. Interestingly, Adams described the work of O'Sullivan as surrealistic and disturbing as these works were not burdened by artistic aspiration and did not fit comfortably into the defining of a new medium emphasised through practice and approach (Salvesen, 2008).

Moving forward to the 1930s, in May 1936, the US Government Agency called the Farm Security Administration employed a group of photographers in its Historical Unit, notably including Walker Evans (1903-1975) and Dorothea Lange (1895-1965), to document the impact of the great depression and survey rural poverty in America. During this period, both these photographers recorded broad subjects from portraits to both rural and urban landscapes from a social documentary perspective. From a landscape perspective, whilst social documentary could be considered similar to straight photography in the technical, possibly objective recording of the scene, it often uses implicit or explicit social or political messages with its subjects, raising questions about social conditions and cultural realities. However, their portraiture had its greatest enduring impact as a recording of this time. Lange's *Migrant Mother* (1936) was perhaps the most significant image to evidence this assignment across all the photographers involved as it captured the sense of anguish and desperation for that period more than any other single image (The Kennedy Center).



Figure 6 - Dorothea Lange, *Migrant Mother*, Nipomo, California (1936), photographic print.

But whilst Lange has been known primarily as a photographer of people, she also made landscape photographs at the time which were virtually unpublished, and these often documented the empty desolate landscape that was left after the Dust Bowl, which was the severe dust storms that damaged the agriculture and environment in the West at that time. Unlike the images of O'Sullivan (see Chapter Three), we can observe a more artistic approach to the landscape representation, based on subject selection, perspective and composition as in Figure 7.



Figure 7 - Dorothea Lange, *Tractored Out, Childress County, Texas* (1938), photographic print.

Walker Evans also photographed the people and places/landscapes impacted by the depression for this assignment, but his approach and recording of urban buildings became very influential to proceeding landscape photography (Coles, 1999). Whilst employed in this assignment as a documenter, his artistic appreciation of commonplace vernacular architecture would merge the concept of objective recording with artistic interpretation, giving the subject aesthetic properties through a methodology that would lift it from the everyday. Evans discussed this relationship in a later interview:

When you say 'documentary,' you have to have a sophisticated ear to receive that word. It should be documentary style, because documentary is police photography of a scene and a murder...That's a real document. You see art is really useless, and a document has use. And therefore art is never a document, but it can adopt that style. I do it. I'm called a documentary photographer. But that presupposes a quite subtle knowledge of the distinction.

Walker Evans (Coles, 1999, p.130)

In Figures 8 and 9 over the page, we can see the subject is geometrically reduced to form, structure and tone, which is a rather unique visually minimalist, objective and perhaps documentary approach. A perspective referenced by Suzaan Boettger as used by many of the New Topographics photographers, such as Lewis Baltz, as being both artistic in approach and documentary style in its representation.

She writes:

The New Topographics' procedure of closed doors and emotional reserve was clearly open to the new formal strategies that came to prominence in the previous decade of rejecting the perceived emotional excesses and non-representational abstraction of postwar expressionism in favour of structurally reductive geometries in impersonal formats.

(Boettger, 2015)



Figure 8 - Walker Evans, *Tin building, Moundville, Alabama (Richard Perkins, contractor)* (1936), photographic print.

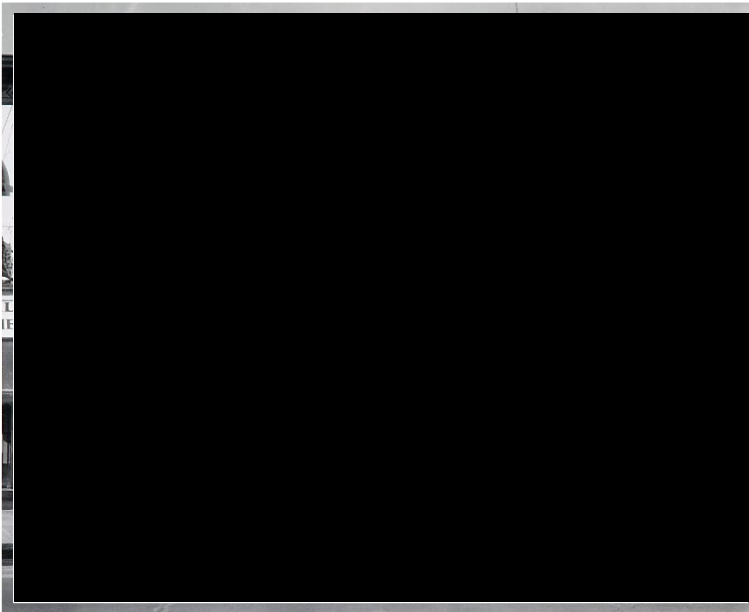


Figure 9 - Walker Evans, *Main Street Block, Selma, Alabama* (1936), photographic print.

Further evidence of Evan's wider approach also reveals a sense of juxtaposition of space and subject within the landscape, which may be seen in the work of Robert Adams (see page 58).

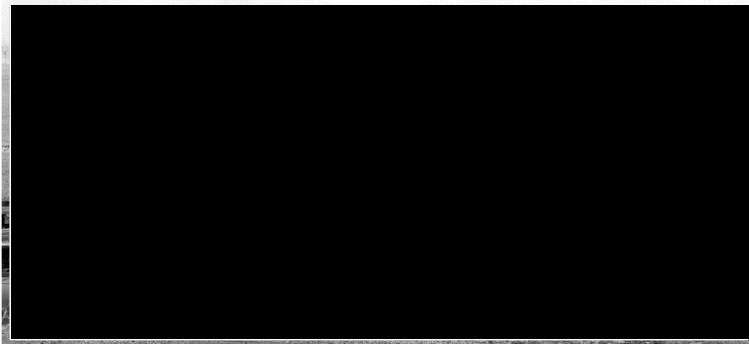


Figure 10 - Walker Evans, *Joe's Auto Graveyard, Pennsylvania* (1935), photographic print.

Another example of a landscape photographer influencing or being influenced by artistic directions and movements of the time is Frederick Sommer (1905-1999), whose broad creative practice in the 1940s-60s pushed the boundaries of photography through experimentation with the vocabulary of the medium. Of particular relevance for this study is the *Arizona Landscape* series produced in the early 40s. Trained as a landscape architect, these images can be seen as map-like and have high levels of detail produced by using a large format camera. With no horizon, foreground or points of reference, these images relate to the development of American abstract expressionism and were recognised by the European surrealists who saw in them "the effect of mental irritation and claustrophobia" as Ian Walker writes (Walker, 2008, p183). Although they precede the all-over field paintings of Abstract Expressionist Jackson Pollock, the work has visually much in common.



Figure 11 - Fredrick Sommer, *Arizona Landscape* (1943), photographic print.

By the 1960s, new approaches to making images were being developed as artists and photographers pushed against the norm and were helped by the advancement of small format film cameras and colour film, which challenged the established artistic approach intrinsic through technique and medium. To build on this, the subject concept of the everyday or commonplace in photography had started to stablish itself. Its value, producing artistic or social comment through making the familiar unfamiliar as discussed by Ben Highmore:

"If everyday life, for the most part, goes unnoticed...then the first task for attending to it will be to make it noticeable. The artistic avant-garde's strategy of 'making strange', of rendering what is most familiar unfamiliar, can provide an essential ingredient for fashioning a sociological aesthetic"
(Highmore, 2001, p23)

This can be seen in work created by photographers such as William Eggleston (b. 1939) and Stephen Shore and more conceptual approaches by artist/painter Ed Ruscha, who were beginning to see the mechanical and aesthetic advantages in the medium and small format

accessibility. In the early '60s, Ruscha produced a series of small artist's self-published books with titles such as *Some Los Angeles Apartments* (1965), *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1963) and *Every Building On The Sunset Strip* (1966) (Figure 12), which had a banal dryness that took advantage of photography's authoritative aesthetics to record the subject matter.

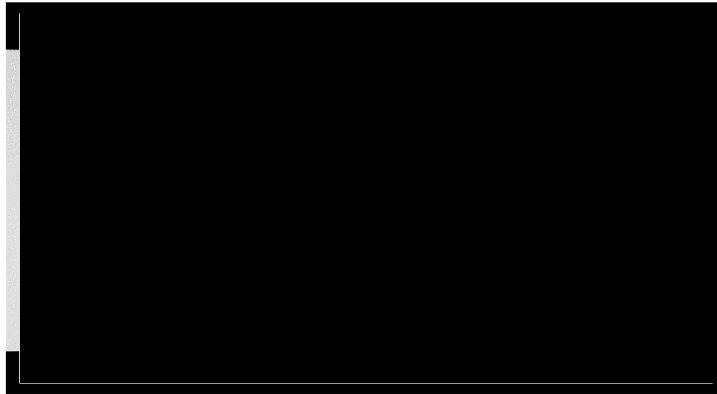


Figure 12 - Ed Ruscha, *Every Building On The Sunset Strip* (1966), Self-published book, offset lithograph, open unfolded.

The Museum of Modern Art describes "their use of photography as a form of map-making or topographical study signals a conceptual, rather than documentary, thrust." (The Museum of Modern Art, 2016) - also see Introduction, p29. There is also a sense of reference to the aesthetic approach of Walker Evans' architectural photographs of the 1930s and the perspective of the "heterogeneous and ambivalent landscape of everyday modernity" (Highmore, 2001, p2) in these works. However, this reference is applied conceptually to create discourse with the established fine-art landscape straight photography of the likes of Ansel Adams as influentially promoted as photography becoming art by Beaumont Newhall at the Museum of Modern Art.



Figure 13 - Bernd and Hilla Becher, *Framework Houses* (1959-73), 21 photographic prints.

In Europe at this time, Bernd and Hilla Becher, borrowing concepts and techniques of typology from photographers like August Sander (1876-1964) and Albert Renger-Patzsch (1897-1966) in the 1920-30s, started to make works focused on industrial architecture, including water towers, framework houses and mine heads. Using this typology technique (taking photographs of visually

similar variants of the same subject or object) their work highlights the taxonomic similarities and differences by always photographing from the same flat vantage point, leaving the viewer to compare the structural differences with a conclusion that what we believed were homogeneous are very individual.

So, we can start to see a diverse change in the development of both artistic and aesthetic concepts and subject choice with these new photographic approaches to landscape photography. Perhaps as a response to this, William Jenkins curated the modest exhibition titled *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape* (1975) at the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House. This exhibition recognised a selection of photographers who shared a common conceptual focus of expanding the artistic potential of landscape photography within a relatively unexplored theme of man-altered landscape and brought them together under the heading of New Topographics. As Salvesen put it: "we can see New Topographics as a bridge between the still-insular fine-art photography world and the expanding, post-conceptual field of contemporary art" (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p12). Jenkins chose photographers who were consciously working outside of the then traditional fine-art landscape aesthetics and ideals, but to also expand on this statement, this work was not just bridging fine-art photography but was also challenging or building on established concepts of documentary photography. The New Topographics photographers considered that, "these emotional pictures [traditional fine-art landscape photographs] seemed overdetermined, overblown, and embarrassingly self-conscious" (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009, p17). Part of this challenge was not just through what was common subject matter but also through an aesthetic approach. The chosen photographers rejected the artistic qualities of established landscape expression and adopted a more scientific and objective approach, similar to O'Sullivan's geographical work. Jenkins remarked: "Rather than the picture having been created by the frame, there is a sense of the frame having been laid on the existing scene without interpreting it very much." (Alexander, 2015, p128). Lewis Baltz as quoted in the catalogue foreword expands on this but recognises that there is an impact on the reading of the document from 'the frame' of the photograph itself: "The ideal photographic document would appear to be without author or art. Yet of course photographs, despite their verisimilitude, are abstractions: their information is selective and incomplete." (Adams, R., & Jenkins, W. 1975, p. 6).

This united the work with a distinct style, which at the time was uncomfortable to many but set the work firmly aside from what had been before. Ten photographers were chosen for the exhibition: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen Shore and Henry Wessel, Jr. Each exhibited ten prints, mostly just 8 x 10" in black and white, except for Stephen Shore who used colour and the Becher's who

displayed multi-image typologies (Adams, Nordstrom, and Salvesen, 2009). Each of these photographers generally approached the landscape from this new viewpoint. They were primarily interested in the space between humans and nature, the edges of urban developments and the country, or the developments themselves. Whilst Jenkins was aware of Ruscha at the time and discusses him as an influence, he ultimately did not include his work. He did, however, include the work of the European photographers Bernd and Hilla Becher, whose work carried a lot of similar artistic values and concepts, and added a European dimension to what was predominantly an American landscape focused exhibition.

To give a brief overview of the work included in the exhibition, I will give an outline here of the participant photographers, subjects and approaches:

Robert Adams photographed the expanding suburban development sites in Colorado, looking for visual beauty and contradictions of modern life in the ordinary and mundane, and revealing what was replacing the cultural myths of the West. Influenced by O'Sullivan, his images appear as documents but are full of paradoxes. What would be a traditional epic Western landscape was a park for mobile homes with similar mountains and sky as you may find in an Ansel Adams photograph (see Figure 14). Along the Front Range of Colorado, he concentrated on the growing suburbs, careless construction, as well as the ever-present light, scale, form, and silence of the natural world. Capturing the architectural forms of the mobile homes and tract housing developments that were changing the landscape in the West. He also looked at how nature's resiliency and humanity's imprint coexist in the larger Western environment.



Figure 14 - Robert Adams, *Mobile Homes, Jefferson County, Colorado* (1973), photographic print.

According to Robert Adams: "go to the landscape that frightens you the most, and take pictures

until you're not scared anymore" (Adams cited in Boxer, 2022) to discover the visual beauty of places that may not fit our conventional concept of the word. His images through this restrained but suggestive narrative were displayed as small, intimate black and white prints (Adams, 2015).



Figure 15 - Lewis Baltz, *South Wall, Mazda Motors, 2121 East Main Street, Irvine* (1974), photographic print.

Lewis Baltz became a central figure in the exhibition. His work focused on the effects of industrial development on the Californian landscape, such as abandoned industrial sites, warehouses and parking lots. Photographing the subjects with the use of minimalist image compositions that look at the relationships of these spatial forms in common industrial architecture. Baltz's approach appears to be documentary in style with the use of small format cameras and high contrast film to make the resulting imagery more graphic. However, the images lack human inhabitants and seem to show the aftermath or state of industrial development as a critique of the altered landscape, giving us evidence of what was being lost and what was changing as a result of human progression. Although working in small format 35mm film, he used high contrast black and white fine grain Lithographic film to record the subjects in sharp focus and deep depth of field, making every small detail significant. His subjects were frequently presented in a visually organised, nearly 'grid' like format with straight, geometrical lines and with a stark appearance created by the reduced tonal range or just black and white tones that were produced using such film.

Bernd and Hilla Becher were the only European photographers included in the exhibition, although their work on show was made on American or Canadian subjects. As discussed earlier (page 56), their work adopted some of the new photographic and artistic conventions of typologies, and whilst the subjects were very much in keeping with the theme of the exhibition, in comparison to the other photographers, the subject approach and resultant pieces were quite avant-garde.

The piece shown in Figure 16 was made in Pennsylvania and shows a 19th-century building as opposed to the contemporary developments being recorded. Their subject approach and the format of the typology give the impression of an objective and scientific character to the work and in many respects, individual images from the sets can be visually related to the work of O'Sullivan. However, the use of multiple images in one piece gives us an almost anatomical viewpoint on the industrial subjects, the series developing a structural grammar for the viewer.

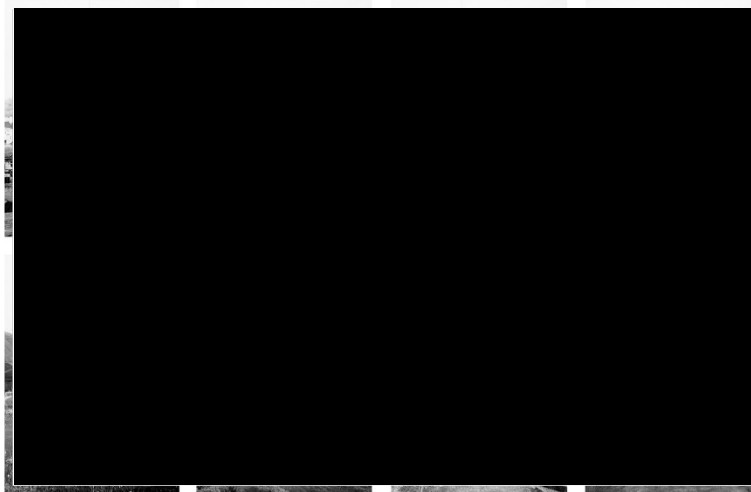


Figure 16 - Bernd and Hilla Becher, *Harry E. Colliery Coal Breaker, Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania* (1974), 8 photographic prints.

Joe Deal's work focused on the newly constructed homes and construction sites in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Situated in the steep foothills of the nearby mountains, Deal deliberately excluded the horizon from his compositions, opting instead to fill the frame with driveways, freshly cut



Figure 17 - Joe Deal, *Untitled View (Albuquerque)* (1974), photographic print.

roads, vacant lots, and untamed expanses of brush. The resulting effect was a compression of the terrain into a two-dimensional flatness, prompting the viewer to engage with the photographs in a manner akin to examining topographical maps. This approach helps to reveal human decision-making within the landscape - the symmetrical patterns in rocks and bushes expose the artificiality of the landscaping. In addition, the presence of ongoing construction sites juxtaposed with piles of refuse and empty lots, served to underscore the wastefulness inherent in abandoned projects. Using this framing technique, Deal documented the environmental cost associated with rapid growth in the delicate desert ecosystem.

Frank Gohlke's photographs were a politically charged view of the relationship between humans and nature, culture, and land, using the photographic frame to see the landscape as a human construction, where the natural world and human aspirations connect. Gohlke saw his work as broader than topography, branching into the realms of geography, land and culture. Using an objective or descriptive approach, he captured the man-altered elements of the Midwestern landscape, including grain elevators, which would sometimes glisten beneath stormy skies, as well as scenes of tornado damage in Wichita Falls, Texas, and the devastated surroundings of Mount Saint Helens. Gohlke's photographs also revealed the presence of human habitation and activity, such as freeway embankments, homemade trailers, and silos, which coexisted with the pastoral environment.

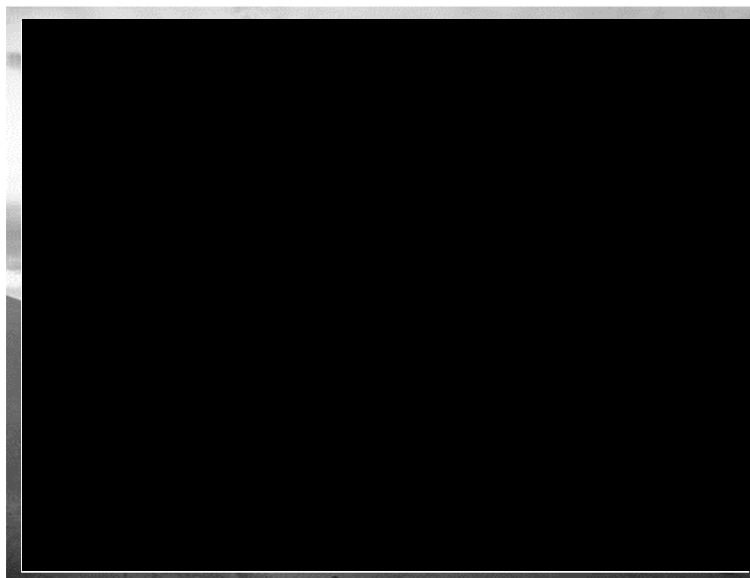


Figure 18 - Frank Gohlke, *Irrigation Canal, Albuquerque, New Mexico* (1974), photographic print.

During the exhibition period, Gohlke developed his concept of examining the world that humans have created, rather than the world they were born into. Initially, his photographs focused on the subject matter from a purely formal perspective, capturing fragmented geometrical elements within a shallow, abstract space. Over time, he recognized that landscape is the largest artifact

produced by any culture, and his exploration of the subject matter became increasingly complex, with geographic and cultural considerations assuming greater significance in his work.

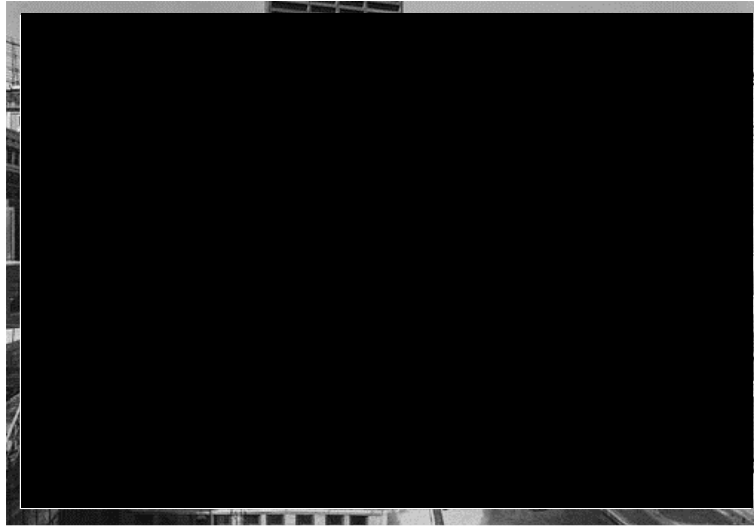


Figure 19 - Nicholas Nixon, *Buildings on Tremont Street, Boston* (1975), photographic print.

Nicholas Nixon used the approach and techniques of the traditional black and white large format photography of Adams and Evans to investigate Boston's changing urban landscape mainly from the rooftops. The images do not perhaps show the same strength of message or concept as the work of the others but were concerned with revealing the formal structure and urban texture of a city - both ordered and chaotic at the same time. In his words: "My idea at the time was to put my feelings in service to clear description. When I moved to Boston in 1974, I was enthralled with it and was trying to figure it out." (Augschöll and Jasbar, 2017) Nixon's subject approach portrayed the development of urban areas by featuring towering skyscrapers that dwarfed ordinary buildings, expansive streets, and highways that reduced pedestrians to intruders in a world designed for automobiles. His work perhaps highlights an anxiety of that generation - namely, the concern that natural elements would be supplanted by concrete structures, thereby alienating humans from their natural surroundings.

John Schott, during the summer of 1973, embarked on a journey along Route 66, traversing from the Midwest to California and back. This work in the exhibition was centred on topographic views of the modest motels that lined this highway, and which serve as distinctive landmarks within the highway's landscape. Schott's photographic documentation encompasses both the motels' appearances during daylight hours and their illuminated state during the night. These vernacular architectural forms were reminders of a specific era, and Schott prompts the audience to recognize the intrinsic connection between the road and its accompanying dwellings, emphasizing their collective contribution to the overall landscape.

The photographs for *Route 66 Motels* (1973-1974) were reminiscent of the work of Evans and Ed Ruscha. Like Evans, Schott often positioned the buildings frontally in the frame, as if drawing their facades in elevation. Occasionally, he used oblique angles, similar to an architect's orthogonal views, which were also carefully constructed. The collection of photographs presents a kind of typological survey that has some parallels with the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher and Ruscha.

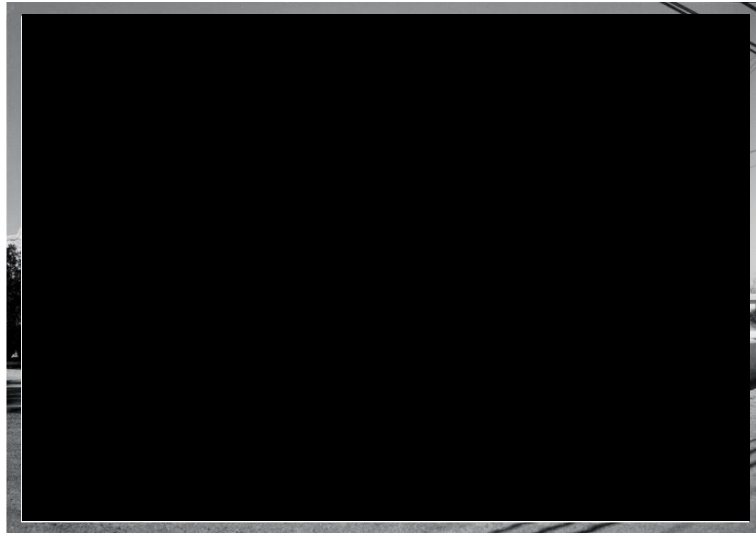


Figure 20 – John Schott, *Untitled*, from *Route 66 Motels* (1973), photographic print.

Stephen Shore, who was the only photographer in the exhibition to work in large format colour, pushed against the belief that fine art had to be black and white and joined the ranks of William Eggleston, who saw colour as a new tool to investigate the unrecognised commonplace view.

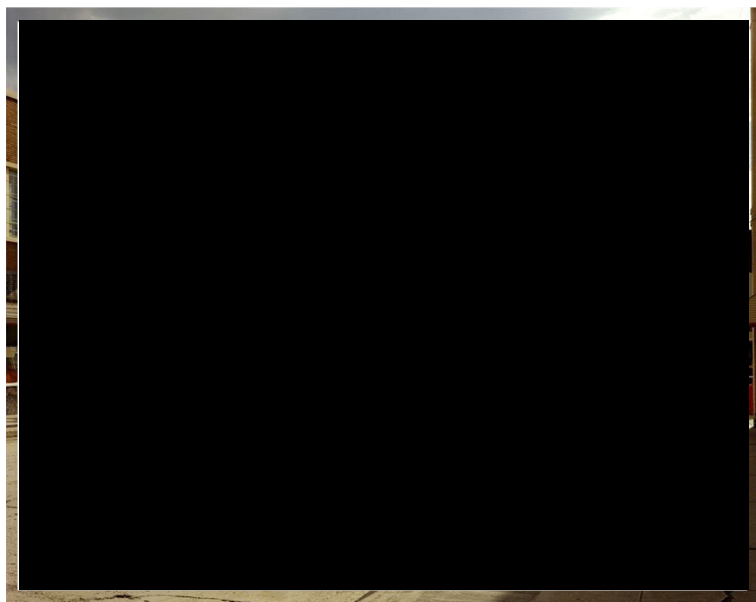


Figure 21 - Stephen Shore, *2nd Street East and South Main Street, Kalispell, Montana*, (1974), photographic print.

Unlike Eggleston though, Shore used large format photography as the critics and restrictions of the small format colour approach impacted his artistic intentions. In the work, he often tried not to have a single point of emphasis, but the large format allowed for a huge amount of detail for the viewer to read. Setting out with an 8x10" film format view camera, he explored with a formal and impersonal but precise nature, the American vernacular landscape and its transformation through consumer culture filled with subjects such as high streets, shops, signs, and cars. These views did not focus on grand architectural landmarks or meticulously designed parks but rather on ordinary urban settings, unremarkable functional structures, and commercial establishments that have emerged in response to the automobile. Shore's photographs captured the urban and commercial development of land and the economic dynamics of the towns he visited.

Henry Wessel Jr. was already part of a cohort of artists in the 1970s, seeking to challenge and expand the conventional boundaries of landscape and documentary photography, when his work was chosen for the exhibition. Like others on show, he had moved away from traditional portrayals of untouched nature and instead opted for direct and personal depictions of the constructed environment. Upon his arrival in Los Angeles in 1969, Wessel became captivated by the West. He vividly recalls "stepping out of the airport into a clear, sharply defined January day, where the light possessed such a tangible presence that it appeared one could lean against it" (Wessel cited in Gefter, 2018). This physicality of light became a prominent feature in many of his photographs. By exploring the intersection of nature and culture using a more immediate small format 35mm camera, his photographs possess the spontaneity and authenticity typically associated with the understated style of snapshots. These images often combined frankness with humour as they explored the wealth of aesthetic values in the mundane aspects of everyday life, transforming even the most ordinary subjects with complex visual layers.

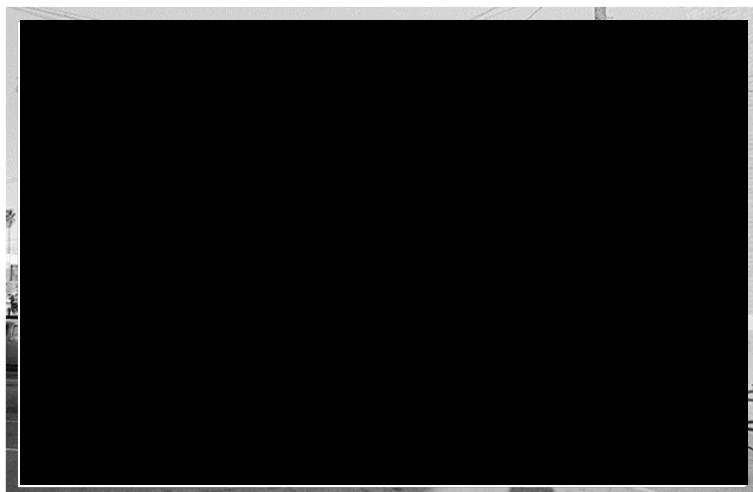


Figure 22 - Henry Wessel Jr., *Hollywood* (1972), photographic print.

Bringing these photographers together, Jenkins created a contemporary photographic survey of the landscape. Unlike Clarence King's geographical surveys though, the work was not looking for the developmental potential of these spaces, but how the landscape has been exploited and natural values changed by humans. This new perspective was also starting to be reflected in the nature of the publications and exhibitions around this time, such as individual photographer's monographs, for example, *The New West* (1974) by Robert Adams.

In the years proceeding the exhibition, more contemporary compilations were also published on the subject of landscape photography, such as *Landscape Theory* (1980), which contained essays and interviews with ten photographers. Of these, Brett Weston (2nd son of Edward) was perhaps the most traditional in approach, but it also contained practice and writing by Lewis Baltz and Robert Adams, who discuss the technical and theoretical elements of their recent work. In 1981 Szarkowski, who was still very much part of the MoMA and traditional photographic establishment of the time, created an exhibition and published a catalogue entitled *American Landscapes – Photographs from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art* (1981). It contained a broad range of fifty-five master photographers, including at its start, work from the surveys by Henry Jackson (1843-1942) and Timothy O'Sullivan, and ending with Robert Adams and Franke Gohlke. As highlighted by Deborah Bright in her article, *Of Mother Nature and Marlboro Men* (1985), it is also worth mentioning that this genre was very much considered a male domain and out of the fifty-five practitioners in the exhibition catalogue, there were only two female photographers, Laura Gilpin (1950-2007) and Dorothea Lange, both of whom were represented by a single image (in the latter case, Figure 7 prior), as opposed for example, Weston (E.) who has five and Adams (A.) who has three. This perhaps elucidates the gendered position in Jenkins' exhibition title, *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) and the selected photographers - landscape was perceived as a male domain, from its construction to its recording. Later, *Landscape as Photograph* (1985), looked at the historical, cultural, and political approaches to the American landscape and originates from the discussion between two photographic historians, Estelle Jussim and Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock. In the book they observed the changing ideologies in American landscape photography, stating in the introduction: *Landscape has become something of a buzz word in recent criticism.* (Jussim & Lindquist-Cock, 1985, pxiv). In contrast, in the same year, the exhibition, *A Vision of Nature* (1985) was mounted by the Photography Department of The Art Institute of Chicago. This exhibition featured works produced between 1910 and 1960 by Ansel Adams, Elliot Porter (1901-1990), Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946), Paul Strand (1890-1976), Edward Weston, and Minor White (1908-1976), and reasserted this more traditional natural viewpoint and approach to landscape within that period.

The works in the New Topographics exhibition introduced a new landscape perspective and adopted or perhaps instigated challenging aesthetic approaches to contemporary norms. With the passing of time though, there was seen to be beauty within the works, which were ironically comprised of the juxtapositions between nature and the formal structures of the human-exploited or constructed landscape. However, Alan Sekula (1951-2013), American photographer, theorist and critic, wrote of the exhibition,

I remember being especially annoyed by the position taken by the 1975 exhibition New Topographics at George Eastman House in Rochester, even though I liked the work of many of the included photographers. Even though the landscape was shown to be humanly transformed, often in absurd ways, there was no strong sense of human or social agency. By 1976, I was joking that this was the “neutron bomb” school of photography: killing people but leaving real estate standing.

(Sekula, 2011, cited in Muracciole, 2012)

To clarify the statement, the neutron bomb was a thermonuclear weapon developed in the 1960s that killed living things with radiation and had little explosive impact on physical objects. Here, Sekula was expounding on the potential issues with the new subject and approach. He implies that the New Topographics photographers, with their objective and neutrally descriptive photography, expressed the change in the landscape but generally erased the human figure along with the social values and political issues of that time. I much concur with this position as one of the lasting features in most of the images is the lack of humans, which I feel gives the work part of its remote and removed perspective of the urban landscape. However, I do think some of them intended to instigate social agency for the urban landscape they portrayed, but their approach was perhaps too conceptual for the subject at the time for this to be recognised.

New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape (1975) emerged from a long evolution of American landscape imagery, from the early scientific survey photography, straight landscape traditions, social documentary work, and later, the more conceptual approaches which collectively shaped the conditions for its zeitgeist. Practitioners from O'Sullivan to Ansel Adams, Walker Evans, Frederick Sommer and Ed Ruscha contributed to the subject's trajectory at which point the exhibition shifted the perspective, intention, and aesthetic language to challenge the idealised wilderness imagery and opened natural landscape. It created a more objective, critical view of human-altered landscape, that examined suburbs, industrial sites, vernacular architecture, and the everyday built environment. The exhibition marked a decisive break from what was commonplace traditional landscape photography and redefined the genre's future direction with a new and challenging subject approach.

Chapter Two

The Road: Proceeding Practice Within and Around the Genre

Chapter Two further explores the paradox of the exhibition and the photographer's intentions, new methodologies, and outcomes that would continue to raise questions but also inspire photographers long after the exhibition. The research considered the impact of the exhibitions ongoing influence, discussing mainly American or European practitioners who have continued create work on the subject of man-altered landscape and use methods and approaches that the New Topographics photographers signposted. In addition to these photographers, the research also investigated practitioners who may have shifted from that direction, in the search for new methods and techniques with which to reflect on the research question.

Looking over the outcomes of the exhibition, we can find common elements that help identify its impact and define the Outlook. Subject selection by Jenkins's curatorial choice was focused by definition on man-altered landscape, and although the individual photographers chose a variety of subjects and approaches within this, they challenged established concepts of traditional landscape photography that depicted landscape as sublime natural vistas. The photographers assumed an objective subject approach similar to the early survey photography of O'Sullivan and the aesthetic style that can be found in the urban landscape work of Walker Evans - see Chapter One. According to Jenkins, the work approached the subject with scientific neutrality and in the opening catalogue essay, he states that there is a problem of style within the exhibition, acknowledging this aesthetic challenge in contrast to previous landscape subject styles, as Deborah Bright explains,

The aesthetic position enunciated by Jenkins pitted the nine photographers represented (only one woman - half of the Bechers - was included) against both the kitschy Kodachrome versions of wilderness immortalized on postcards and calendars and the touchy-feely Nature-worship of the Minor White crowd, which perennially haunts the fringes of art photography.

(Bright, 2020, unpaginated)

This visually objective approach gives the work its neutral, impersonal, and reserved appearance, but rather than being detached from traditional pictorial conventions, it can be seen to be a distinct style of its own. In Susan Boettger's paper, *Whispers and Cries: Photographic Evocations of the Anthropocene* (2015) she discusses: "Its approach was consistent with contemporaneous New York painting and sculpture's rejection of 1950s' Abstract Expressionism's emotional drama and allusive non-objectivity." (Boettger, 2015, unpaginated) Adopting the experimental practices of painters and sculptures of that period, using the photograph to lay a frame on the chosen scenes

which often contained geometric modernist architecture, they echoed the visual language associated with Minimalist art, such as simple forms, hard edges, and linearity. Within the context here, this combination of subject, approach, and style in Boettger's opinion becomes a signal of the reduction and loss of nature.

the artistic language of Minimalist austerity and the subject matter's plethora of charmless boxes for residing and working call up the desolation following the biblical Expulsion from Eden
Suzaan Boettger (Boettger, 2015)

Her use of the word 'Anthropocene' in her title indicates that like Jenkins, but with a more contemporary term than man-altered, she sees the work as starting to reflect upon the human impact on the planet's geology with the use of subject and visual language to signal 'evocations' of change in the human/nature relationship. With this artistic exploration revealing the real American landscape of suburban developments, cities and car parks, it also opened up landscape photography to the constructed environment and the visual impact of a spoiled natural view.

Retrospectively reflecting in addition to Boettger's perspective, John B. Jackson, an American essayist and cultural geographer, discussed the development (and sale) of the American landscape through the grid system in his essay *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time* (1986). Suggesting: "The grid merely made it possible for every future American, settling in the newly surveyed regions, to satisfy two basic individual needs: the need for a place - a piece of land to farm and call home and the need for belonging to a community." (Jackson, 1986). But in turn, this grid that developed the landscape also created the sameness and visual monotony that would also be a stylistic feature of the work of the New Topographics exhibition photographers. I would argue that the formal structure of this urban landscape would also encourage a visually reductive approach to its documentation, as being a commentator on the cultural landscape of America, this could be what it would feel like to be part of. He observes:

When we look down as our plane descends to land at any one of the dozen contemporary cities in the Midwest and West, we see the omnipresent grid from a new perspective: each square a compact composition of modest, one story stucco houses with attached garage and miniature front lawn.
(Jackson, 1986)

The exhibition photographers also worked and exhibited within the world of art (exhibitions and publications) and academia (writing and University based teaching). This also helped establish the links it was developing between photography and post-conceptual art, and using combinations of new aesthetic and conceptual approaches, New Topographics was to make a significant impact on the development of photography as a medium. The new landscape and methodological challenges that the Outlook posed (see Chapter One), have now become very

much part of established practice and can be seen as indicative in contemporary practitioners' work from their subject choice, photographic approach and perhaps sociopolitical position. Investigating this proceeding impact of the exhibition on photographers, some maintained and continued the Outlook's creative direction, and then there are those who have tried to break away from the distinct style but maintain its central subject. Whilst many photographers followed in the footsteps of New Topographics, those of note that can be seen to have maintained the Outlook as part of their methodology and style are American photographers Richard Misrach, Jeff Brouws and Edward Burtynsky (b. 1955), who have continued to work across the themes of human impact, environmentalism and cultural landscapes. As well as these, there are also several European photographers who were students of Bernd Becher at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, of which, most famously, Thomas Struth (b. 1954) can be seen to have worked similarly in his landscape photography to the former position and Andreas Gursky who developed his practice further.

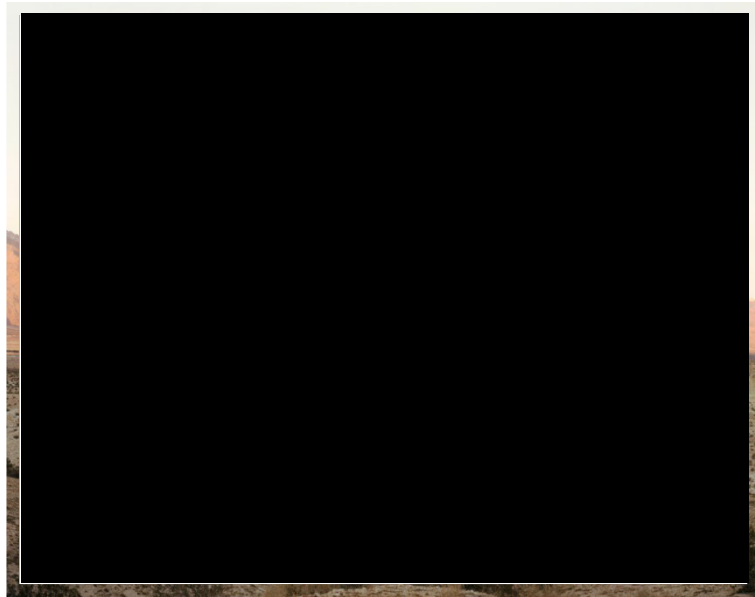


Figure 23 - Richard Misrach, *San Geronio Pass* (1981), photographic print.

Richard Misrach has been working since the late 1970s, photographically exploring human interactions with the landscape. His notable works that relate best to this research topic are *Desert Cantos* (1987) (example from *Desert Cantos* in Figure 23) started in 1979 which searches for "images that suggest the collision between 'civilization' and nature" (Aperture Foundation NY, 2015) and *Petrochemical America* (2012) (example Figure 24 over the page) which investigate the environmental impact of American industry. The latter project, which started in 1998, documents the impact of 'Cancer Alley', an area containing over 135 plants and refineries based along the Mississippi River. Whilst Misrach's technical approach of 8x10" camera and colour film is similar to Steven Shore's from the exhibition, his subject approach concentrates not on the suburban commonplace, but on the more natural landscape and the socially or

politically charged human elements that are uncommon or out of place within it (Aperture Foundation, 2015).

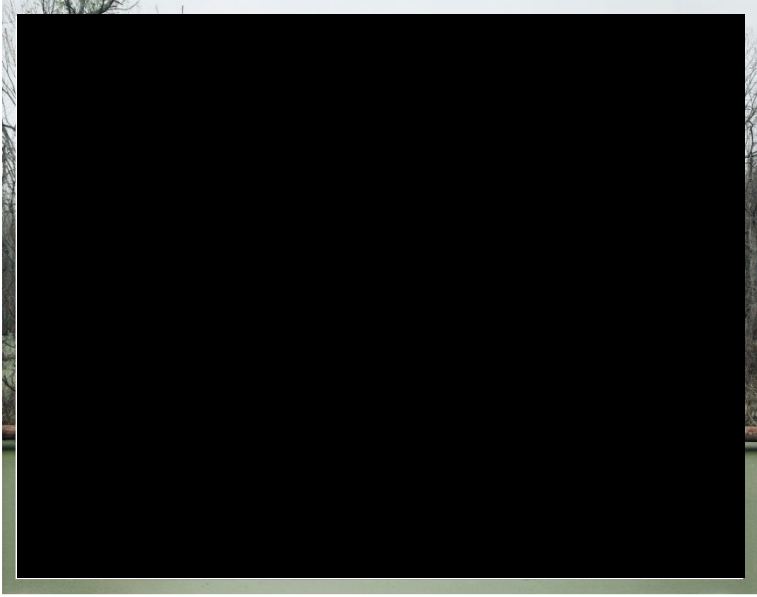


Figure 24 - Richard Misrach, *Swamp and Pipeline, Geismar, Louisiana, 1998* (1998), photographic print.

His images reflect many of the characteristics of the New Topographics style, compositionally following the Outlook with reductive elements and subdued or understated visual language, but Boettger indicates “in both cases, it is a mistake to attribute that reserve to artistic ‘objectivity’ or detachment” (Boettger, 2015) These projects set out to directly confront and explore their themes through his visual narrative. His work was printed large scale up to 2.5x3 meters, breaking from the relatively small-scale prints that were typical of the original exhibition. Shore’s print size at the time was merely 8x10” and although he would print slightly larger given a bigger space, it was his premise that a smaller print commands more detailed attention from the viewer, making something special happen between them, whereas a larger print is always more about the sense of print. This sense of print can also be considered as a method alongside the use of visually

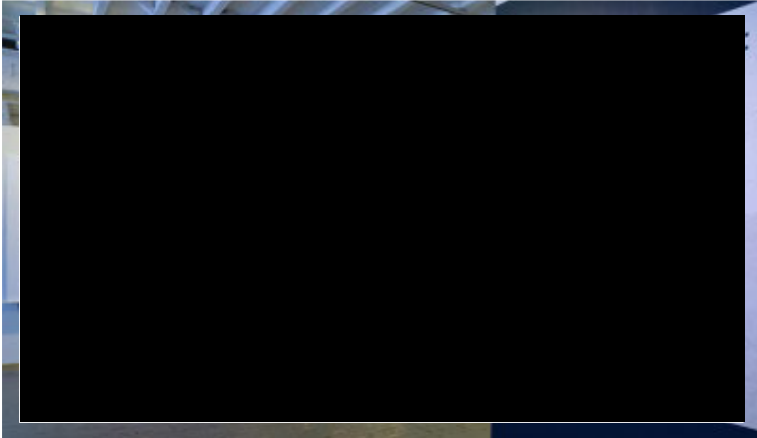


Figure 25 - Image source - <https://www.scapestudio.com/projects/petrochemical-america-project-room/>

reductive and sublime subject selection, approach and technique to create impact for the viewer. The image shown below was taken of a display of *Petrochemical America* (2012) and illustrates the scale of the work when shown.

Visually reductive and sublime subject selection approach and techniques are used by many of the contemporary photographers discussed here and, in his essay, *The sublime as a mode of address in contemporary environmental photography* (2017), Damian Sutton questions this approach when dealing with the environmental subject,

However, if pleasure can be had from gazing upon ecological or even urban distress, how does this pleasure defeat the urge to look away, to be disgusted? How does it seduce enough, to hold attention enough, for the clamour to intervene to take hold?
(Trifonova, 2017)

Additionally, the power of this subject impact may be reduced by the context of the gallery viewing environment and its conventions for the audience. These questions are important to the position of the works in both their environmental context and the artistic practice. Reflecting on artistic practice, one might argue that the ability of photography to create very large prints, exaggerating the subject selection and capitalising on approach and technique, also increases its visual presence within large gallery spaces and its commercial potential.

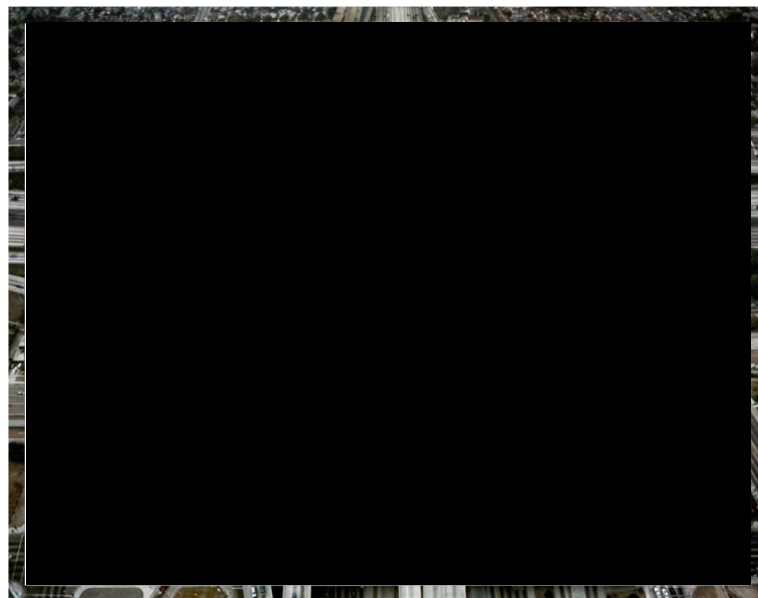


Figure 26 - Edward Burtynsky, *Highway #1. Intersection 105 & 110. Los Angeles, California USA* (2003), photographic print.

Edward Burtynsky is perhaps best known for his work in the book, *Manufactured Landscapes* (2003), which exemplifies his trademark approach of frequently over-scaled, repetitive objects and residual landscapes that illustrate the impact of industrial development. Often, his images are

taken from the high vantage points of helicopters and are printed very large scale, rendering these subjects abstract, often minimal in composition like the Outlook and sublime in prominence. His work brings to the viewer a sense of place that has been ravaged by human development and affirms the Anthropocene (Peeples, 2011).

Oliver Wainwright of the Guardian writes about his work,

gaping scenes plunges the viewer headlong into the dams and reservoirs, aqueducts and deltas of this global survey. It brings a visceral sense of places that have been drained, drilled, excavated and extracted, terrains that have an archaic, almost primordial feeling.
(Wainwright, 2018)

His images are often taken on 8x10" colour film or more recently high-megapixel digital cameras for the extreme recording of fine detail and definition, giving the image the ability to be printed very large.



Figure 27 - David Lockwood, *Burtynsky Print at Paris Photo 2023 a* (2023), digital photograph.



Figure 28 - David Lockwood, *Burtynsky Print at Paris Photo 2023 b* (2023), digital photograph.

However building on the contradictions within his approach to an environment degraded by industry using awe-inspiring aesthetics within subject and presentation, Meaghan Lowe in her article *Dreamworld and Reality: An Exploration of Environmental Aesthetics in Contemporary Photography* (2009) suggests that Burtynsky reproduces a traditional aesthetic stance toward the environment as landscape, treating it as a passively viewed object and consequently produces detached and disinterested representations of industrial environmental degradation (Lowe 2009). Whilst there are some arguments raised by Damian Sutton, that even if intentions don't result in political action or intervention, they are still genuine, I feel the sublime we see in Burtynsky's work is made by artist creation and aestheticised degradation, the nature of which overwhelms the subject when shown as large scale prints in galleries or large format glossy coffee table books.

Jeff Brouws acknowledges the influence of the New Topographics photographers in his photography and continues to work within the Outlook's subject and aesthetic approach, combining "anthropological inquiry and a bleak aesthetic beauty mining the overlooked, the obsolete, the mundane" (Brouws, 2017). His photographs explore the American cultural landscape, and notable works deal with subjects such as consumer culture and the franchise marks left on the landscape. In these images, the major shopping chains and big box stores homogenise the horizon and remove the individuality of the landscape, and much like Robert Adams, depict the sprawl of urbanisation into the wilderness.

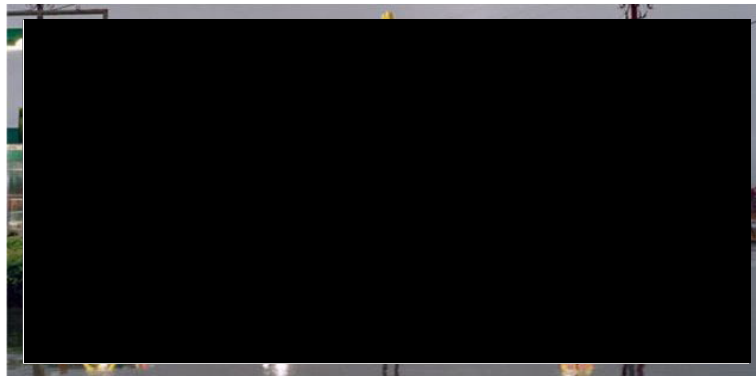


Figure 29 - Jeff Brouws, *Franchised Landscape 8, Tennessee, 1997* (1997), archival pigment print.

In what would look like a direct development, he has also explored the typology format and approach to the subject, similar to the Bechers in the 1960s/70s, in works such as *Coaling Towers* (2013) and *Freshly Painted Houses* (1991). Sometimes visibly mimicking their bland objective black and white style, which strangely makes the photography look period, and then updating this approach with the use of colour, which perhaps better represents the typographical aesthetics of some of the more contemporary architectural forms.



Figure 30 - Jeff Brouws, *Coaling Towers* (2013), 12 archival pigment prints.

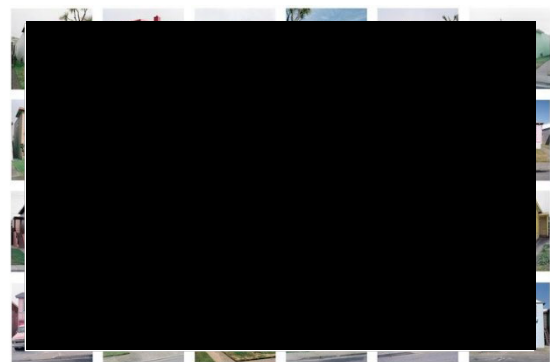


Figure 31 - Jeff Brouws, *Freshly Painted Houses: Twenty Four-Works* (1991), 24 archival pigment prints.

In Europe, from the late 1970s, photographer Thomas Struth started to create cityscapes from around the world, following stylistically in the Outlook's tradition and has continued to do this until the present day, with the development into urban interiors also. Early works predominantly

featured black-and-white images of streets, taken in the middle of the road from neither the perspective of a car nor a pedestrian. The works have a blandness, and the framing of the buildings and structures makes them lack character. A key feature of these works is also the absence of people in these environments, which was due to making the images very early in the morning, perhaps to facilitate working in the middle of the road (This Place, 2015).



Figure 32 - Thomas Struth, *Crosby Street, Soho, New York* (1978), photographic print.

Interestingly, using a different approach, Struth embarked on his project, *Museum Photographs I* (1989-1992), which focused on capturing the visitors to significant museums and architectural locations around the world. In these photographs, the spectators themselves become the focus of the image, while artworks or museum objects can be secondary within the frame. This makes for a strong contrast to his older works, and in a recent interview, Struth said,

I have become less interested in being a landscape photographer. You can only look at landscape as a potential location for human experience. A landscape doesn't need me, you or anybody. It becomes interesting if it can be the ground plan for human experience, projection or desire.
(This Place, 2015)



Figure 33 - Thomas Struth, *Art Institute of Chicago II, Chicago* (1990), photographic print.

Looking at these photographers, although subject angles and points of view may be different, the common aesthetics in the work appear to echo the often banal and formal geometric compositions and depopulated spaces of the work of Baltz and Adams, and with the likes of Misrach and Burtynsky introducing the addition of a stronger sense of abstraction to create more visual impact to their social and environmental concerns. We can see the impact of the Outlook has continued through to further generations of photographers, although they may modernise it with the use of colour, large impactful prints, and a more confident and direct environmental comment as is supported by a contemporary consciousness. Nevertheless, there are still questions about the impact of this on photography and the photographic approach itself, which continually draws upon established visual values to signify to the viewer the message being communicated. Are there other ways to do this that use broader aesthetics and engage the audience in different ways around the same message? When using these large-scale, formally composed sublime prints, what is the audience's understanding of the subject beyond the impression and impact of the photograph or print? Although these works can also be found in book format, the cynics among us may consider the practice of large-scale printing as *art by the meter*, which gives a better feel of value to the print-buying market. A view possibly reinforced by Shore's discussed thoughts on page 72, that the print scale says more about the sense of print than the understanding of the subject. Interestingly, the photographers using colour photography could now be seen to exhibit a more contemporary approach and, in some ways, this gives the impression of a more realistic documentation of the subject matter as opposed to black and white photography, which is now being seen as a more artistic and interpretive method to the medium.

Considering photographers who have challenged the New Topographics concepts, aesthetics and subject approach, a key practitioner who I feel has impacted the genre with an alternative approach is John Gossage in his book *The Pond* (1985). It demonstrated that you could explore the subject using personal intent, concepts and metaphor as an alternative to the objective photographic document of the man-altered landscape. Eleven years after the exhibition, Robert Adams perhaps started to recognise the Outlook's impact on contemporary photography and in July 1986 he stated in a review of Gossage's book: "One is grateful for *The Pond* because we are in trouble, and because irony which focuses on the ugliness of man-made juxtapositions does not at this point, by itself, help." (Brittain, 2000, p150).

The work, which was deliberately in book form only, so it had a controlled narrative and mechanical reproduction structure, comprised of photographs taken of a pond and its wooded surroundings that bordered onto a city. A foundation of the work was the reference to Henry

David Thoreau's book *Walden* (1854), in which Thoreau spent two years recording his experience at Walden Pond, living a simple existence in an attempt to experience life through nature. Being a well-known work, *Walden* had been the previous inspiration for photographer Edward Steichen (1879-1973) in 1936, who illustrated a special edition with images that represented the nature and tranquillity of the space in the spirit of Thoreau.

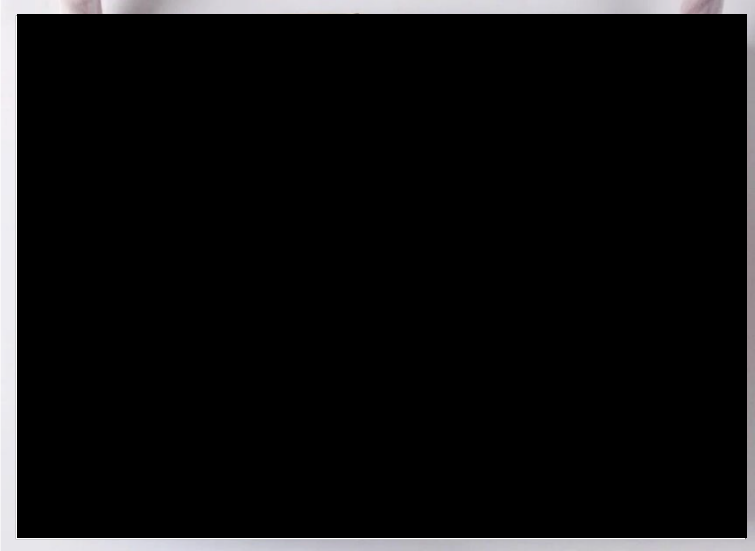


Figure 34 - 1936 Limited Editions Club edition of *Walden* with photogravures by Edward Steichen - image source <https://greg.org/archive/2023/04/15/walden-or-afterlife-of-the-wood.html>

However, Gossage in his interpretation of the theme, was turning the man-altered landscape genre on its head by photographing what was left of the natural spaces and not how 'man' was specifically encroaching on them. With it, he created a simpler view, which references the juxtaposition and context between urban and natural spaces and introduces an underlying more



Figure 35 - John Gossage, *Untitled* (1985), (originally published in *The Pond*, 1985).

personal vision of this position, which extends this genre. This work did not act as a photographic document of a pond but explores how one can convey personal intent and meaning through the visual representation of a concept, both referencing and challenging the Outlook. Robert Adams writes about the work as “believable because it includes evidence of man's darkness of spirit, memorable because of the intense fondness (Gossage) shows for the remains of the natural world.” (Brittain, 2000, p151)



Figure 36 - John Gossage, *Untitled* (1985), (originally published in *The Pond*, 1985).

Szarkowski in *American Landscapes* (1981), writes a foreword that contains a fitting sentiment within which Gossage's book exists,

We have been half persuaded by Thoreau and by the evidence of our own brutal use of the land that the earth is beautiful except where man lives, or has passed through; and we have therefore set aside preserves where nature, other than man, might survive, and which men may visit in reasonable numbers and with adequate supervision, for their education and edification. This is an imaginative and admirable idea, and would perhaps be nobler still if we locked the gates to these preserves and denied ourselves entrance, so that we could imagine better what transpires there. We could then turn our attention to the rest of the earth, the part in which we live, which is not yet devoid of life and beauty, and which we might still rescue as a place worth celebrating.

(Szarkowski, 1981, p14)

Other photographers who can be seen to challenge and go beyond the Outlook's style and thinking, developing new approaches, some postmodern and some post-photographic, are Massimo Vitali, Joan Fontcuberta and Andreas Gursky's work from the 1990s onwards.

Working since the mid-1990s, Italian photographer Massimo Vitali's best-known work has

concentrated on landscapes with figures. His series of Italian beach panoramas observe the nation at play within the landscape and a view of Italian normalities in the light of sociopolitical changes in Italy. The work was not so much about the landscape and environmental concern, as the society and people within it as he states: "its cosmetic fakery, sexual innuendo, commodified leisure, deluded sense of affluence, and rigid conformism." (Vitali, 2018).

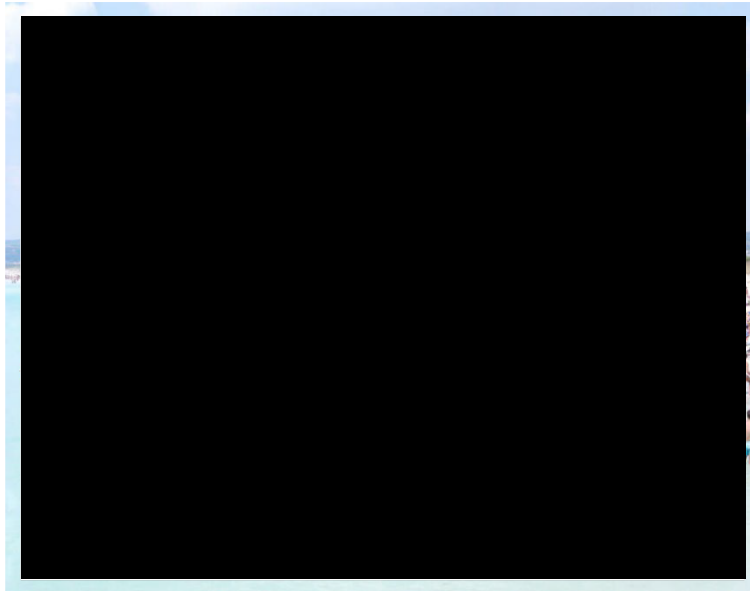


Figure 37 - Massimo Vitali, *Cefalu First Surf* (2008), C type print.

However, the landscape plays an important part in positioning and placing the subject in its cultural environment to help identify the inner social issues and conditions he was concerned with, and his beaches are often on urbanised or industrialised coasts (The Guardian, 2016). The landscape often features the coastline in the background to give the foreground context,



Figure 38 - David Lockwood, *Massimo Vitali Print at Paris Photo 2023* (2023), digital photograph.

juxtaposing humans, sea and urban environment, revealing a voyeuristic but sociological viewpoint. From a technical perspective, he also uses some specific techniques to achieve his outcomes - high viewpoint to allow for front-to-back sharp focus, exposure for the shadow area rather than the highlight, so each image has a pale but still visually correct tonal range and, on the surface, the Outlook's banal, minimalist and reductive composition and subject treatment. However, he also uses large format film or high-megapixel cameras and very large prints, but unlike some of the previous contemporary photographers, the high levels of detail and large scale allow you to see the intimacy in the human relationships within the environment.

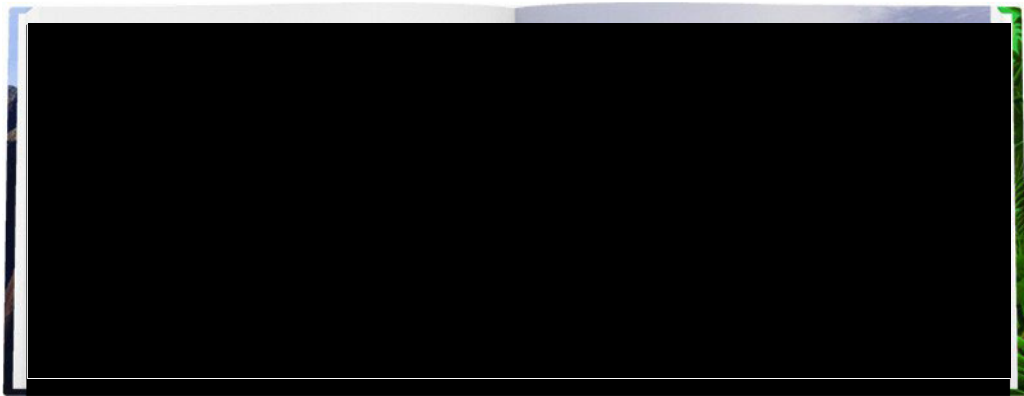


Figure 39 - Joan Fontcuberta, page spread originally published in *Landscapes Without Memory*, 2005.

Joan Fontcuberta is a Spanish photographer whose work and themes are broad and do not specifically concentrate on the landscape but on the subject of photographic fictions developed within the space between art, science, and illusion. In his work the *Orogenesis* series (building mountains, as the result of a collision between two landmasses) shown in his book *Landscapes Without Memory* (2005), Fontcuberta takes the concept of objectivity in creating landscape photographs to a technological extreme through the use of computer software designed to create three-dimensional photo-realistic landscapes from two-dimensional input sources.

He fed the software with fragments of existing pictures by Edward Weston, Turner, Cezanne and others and it made a new three-dimensional landscape and the "vocabulary of art is thus transmuted into that of cartography" (Aperture, 2021) See Figures 39 here and 40 over the page, which show a spread from the book of the same name, illustrating the small portion of artwork on the opposite page to the landscape that was created from it by the software and also the work at the exhibition, again with a small portion of artwork next to the larger framed prints.

Whilst Fontcuberta's landscapes do not explore the same dialogue of man-altered, his post-photographic approach attempts to objectify a landscape by creating it through a digital process,

and the results become man-created or computer-created landscapes. In *Reframing the New Topographics*, Christopher Burnett's essay, *New Topographics Now: Simulated Landscape and Degraded Utopia* (2013), describes Fontcuberta's process as: "The memory of traditional landscape photography - and its own kind of derived cult value - is embedded into the digital work, both revealed and repressed" (Foster-Rice and Rohrbach (eds.), 2013). Comparing this work to that of Ansel Adams and the beauty of the natural landscape, in some respects this work imitates the cult values that you may see in Adams' calendars or books, but it is also designed to question our inherent knowledge with metaphor and provoke a reaction that goes beyond the surface beauty and acceptance of the image.



Figure 40 - David Lockwood, Joan Fontcuberta, *Stranger Than Fiction*, Science Museum 2014 (2014), digital photograph.

Andreas Gursky studied under Bernd and Hilla Becher but shares little in common with their approach and ideology, although superficially he can aesthetically look to fall within the Topographical genre (see Chapter One). Whilst early work had a more traditional landscape approach, Gursky's work from the beginning of the 1990s onwards starts to break away from the objective traditions of the Outlook and introduces a post-photographic agenda where he

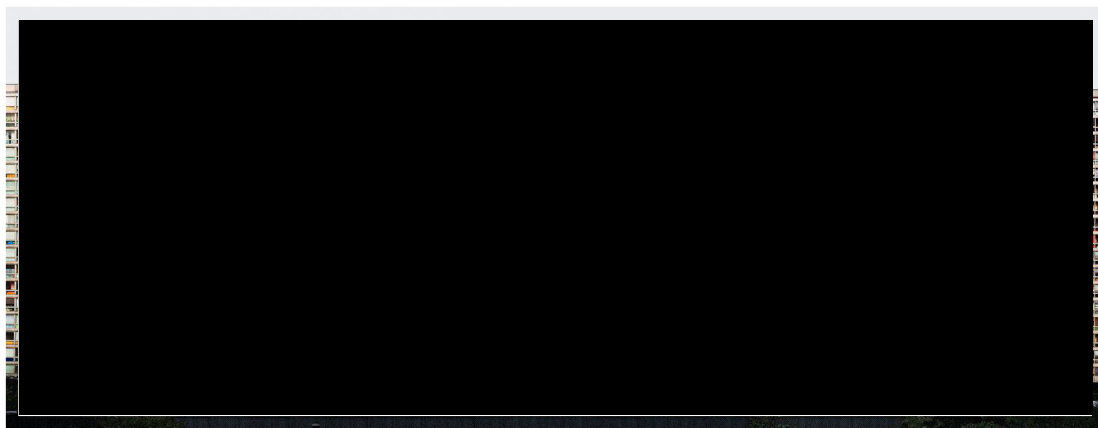


Figure 41 - Andreas Gursky, *Paris, Montparnasse* (1993), photographic print.

started to create landscape images using combinations of camera and computer to produce ideal images, in which he removes aspects or duplicates and repeats image elements to intensify the overall visual outcome (Tate, 1999). Often exploring themes such as globalisation and consumerism through his landscape photography, the images represent his vision of the subject more than the subject in its object form.

His aesthetic and compositional approach also visually references Minimalism's use of simple forms, hard edges, and linearity, and therefore has visual similarities to the banal composition and viewpoint of topographic photographers. However, his works are not a document or realistic representation as the topographic photographers would have intended, but an artistic and conceptual interpretation which on the surface appears real but is actually a subtle and detailed manipulation. His work interweaves elements of form and content, for example, about *Paris, Montparnasse*, he comments: "the focus is less on the structure - certainly interesting from an architectural standpoint - and more on the concentration of so many different ways of living within one image." (Ackermann and Dirani, 2016). Like others here, Gursky uses very large print sizes to display his highly detailed images, which enhance the sublime, banal and abstract nature of the outcome. He suggests in the catalogue of his Dusseldorf exhibition *Nicht Abstrakt (not abstract)* (2016) that too far away and you don't see the parts and too close and you don't comprehend the whole. The exhibition title I guess was a pun, as Gursky has used abstraction throughout his career, possibly as a way of referencing painting to bring photography into the art arena, and this has made him one of the most financially successful photographic artists of our time. One of the six Gursky *Rhine II* (1999) photographic prints (shown below), sold for £2.7m in 2011 (BBC, 2011), closing the gap between the perceived artistic and financial value of contemporary photography in comparison to painting and perhaps reflecting the aesthetic roots and context of its subject approach.



Figure 42 - David Lockwood, Andreas Gursky, *Nicht Abstrakt* exhibition, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (2016), digital photograph.

Whilst I have only covered a small selection of the practitioners that I feel are best representative for the topic and question at hand, the objective was to give a general illustration of the contemporary road of the domain and field that has followed on from the 1975 exhibition. We can see the continuation of style and aesthetics by those following the Outlook, still using objective and neutrally descriptive photography to express change or comment on the landscape. But reinforced now with contemporary equipment techniques and very large print sizes to enhance the sublime qualities of the outcomes and ingratiate the works into a growing art market that the original exhibition started to touch upon. Generally, the erased human figure is also still a signature as part of the contemporary Outlook. There are those photographers discussed though, who can be seen to be pushing boundaries within the genre. Some who have experimented with concepts, aesthetics, and subject inclusions like the more positive introduction of the human element to balance the outcome, and some that have manipulated what we believe are the truths we think we commonly see within this subject and approach. Gursky is perhaps the most successful here with his practice cleverly working on many levels that are visually reminiscent of the genre, but with contemporary comment and technique.

Interestingly though, the drive and dedication of some of those original photographers have also somewhat changed with time and in the case of Robert Adams in particular, Susan Stamberg in her review of Robert Adams's last book *American Silence*, writes and quotes him: "As he gets older, the photographs seem more about beauty. He's looking for 'the things that can give us hope' ... Rather, when you stand and look at one of our still glorious landscapes, it's the feeling of silence, 'that sense of peace and awe that the beauty of nature can give you.'" (Stamberg, 2022).

Chapter Three
My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace
Part I: Establishing New Practice

Chapter Three discusses and analyses the practice elements which were informed by the research into the background and surrounding context/domain of the exhibition contained in Chapter One and the exploration of the relevant preceding practice in the contemporary domain and field contained in Chapter Two. In its four parts, it examines and interrelates the research which underpinned and inspired, with the concepts and results of the practice elements. Starting here with part one, which re-establishes the research question in the context of the personal practice and parts two, three and four which review the development and outcomes of the three practice pieces as critically engaged within the framework of the research.

When we investigate the common and uncommon practices of the photographers identified in Chapter One and Chapter Two, the domain and field of this thesis' question and aims, we find that the traditional aesthetic and subject approach of the Outlook continues to have its position and influence within photography. There are, however, photographers who are looking at new approaches with deeper underlying artistic concepts within their work, but these may not have the identifiable social underpinning of the Outlook and exist in an art and gallery world for which these concepts have a greater appeal and resonance. Those photographers who consciously continued to follow the Outlooks' approach have also developed the subject into the broader area of environmental concern but generally apply those traditional genre aesthetics within their images, signposting and continuing its legacy. As Boettger states: "we can retrospectively recognize latent allusions in the New Topographics' anthropogenic landscapes that have become overt in contemporary environmentalist photography." (Boettger, 2015)

It is also worth noting that as a move from the self-taught practice of the 1800s to mid-1900s photographers, those participating in the exhibition were, or would be involved with education both as students and or lecturers. The influence of this connection would create new critical academic structures from which subsequent generations of photographers would be taught and inspired to create work. As a photographic lecturer myself, the development of these critical vantage points interests me as it is also responsible for the enduring influence of the exhibition. New Emerging photographers seem to continue to adopt the now very established aesthetics of the Outlook, which seemingly positions their work as gallery art through its historic visual foundation. An example of this is a selection from the 43 student projects from the 2015 degree show catalogue of the University of Westminster photography degree (Figures 43- 48), a strongly theoretical and contextually based course in that period. Figures 49 - 51 are also selections from

the University of Central Lancashire BA and MA degree publications *North* and *Further North* across 2015 to 2018 as further examples. Although I am generalising here based on the publication's selected image aesthetics and approach alongside the student statements, I have seen many examples across graduate shows. This adds to the impression that the approach, whilst originally uncommon and socially motivated, has become common in emerging landscape photographers. However, they are often lacking in the original social context, and the motives would seem less about comment and more about the adoption of a visual cliché for want of finding a personal style to voice alternative solutions for the subject expression.



Figure 43 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, screenshot by author.



Figure 44 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, spread by Letica Batty, screenshot by author.



Figure 45 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, spread by James Charlie Bennett, screenshot by author.

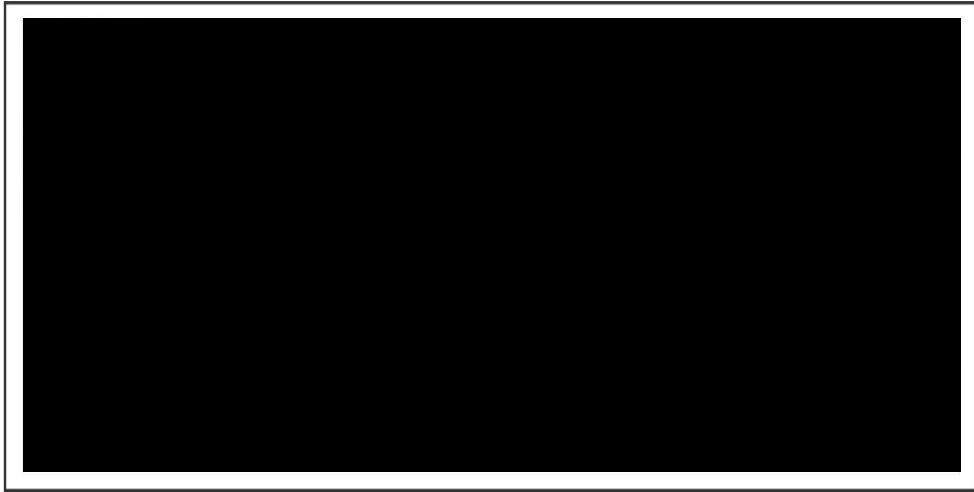


Figure 46 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, spread by Karl Chapman, screenshot by author.

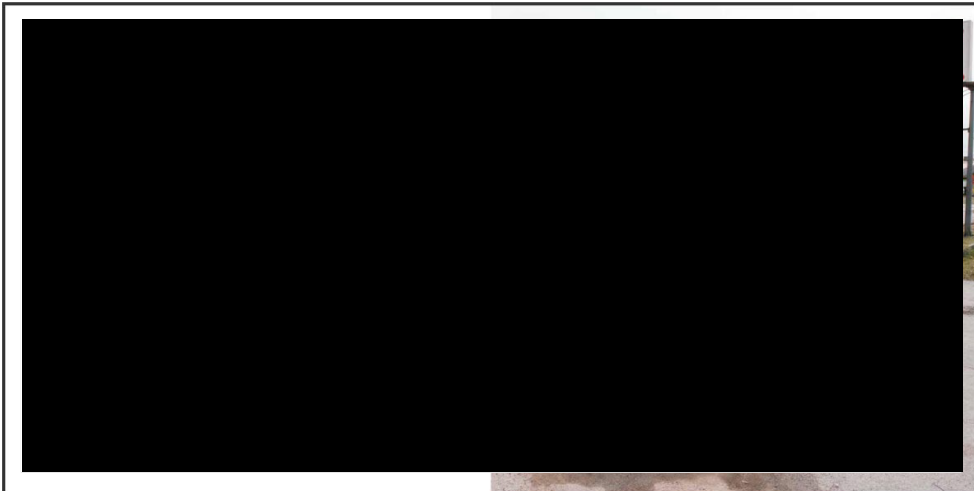


Figure 47 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, spread by Chris Gravett, screenshot by author.

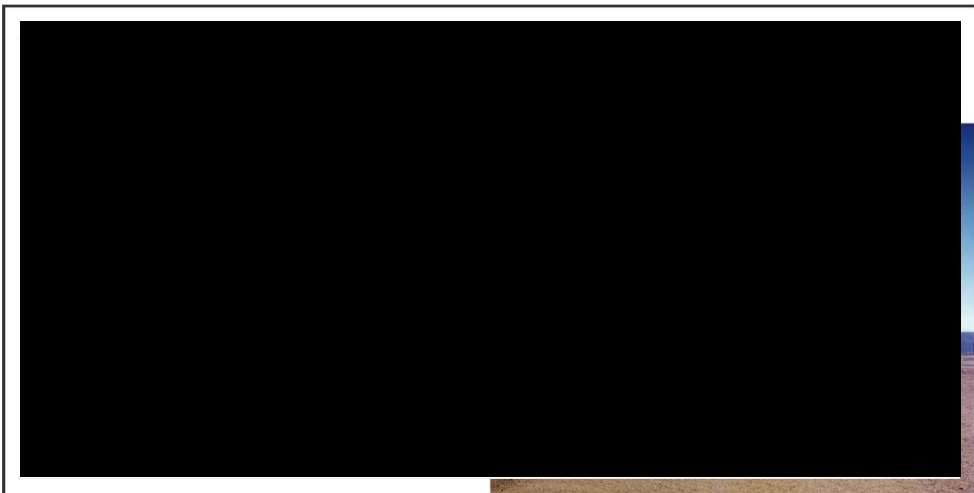


Figure 48 - University of Westminster, *Undergraduate Student Photography Degree Show 2015* On-line Catalogue, spread by Jasper Jones, screenshot by author.

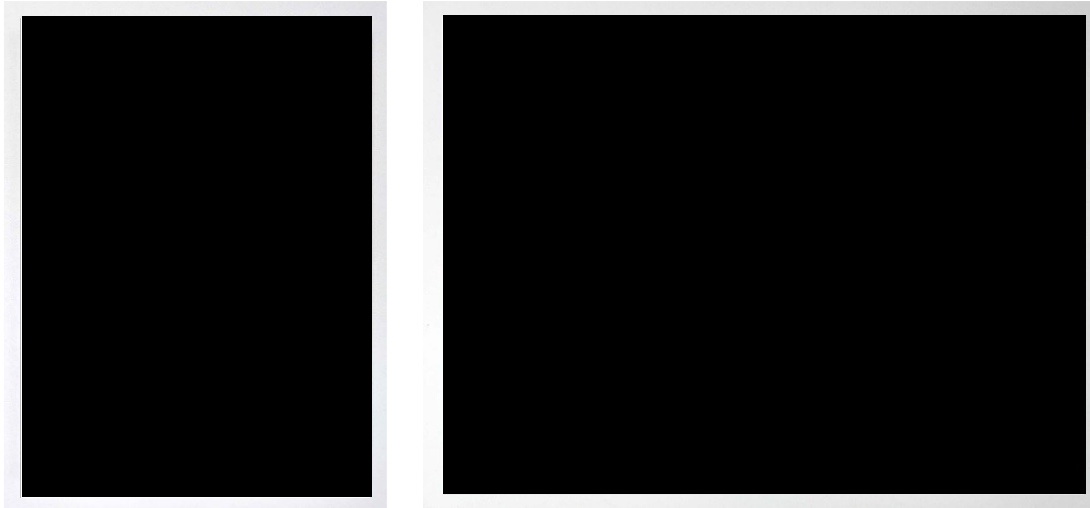


Figure 49 - UCLAN, *North Vol. IV* publication 2018, cover image by Kenny Brown and UCLAN, *North Volume 2* publication 2016, spread by Kirsty Burston.

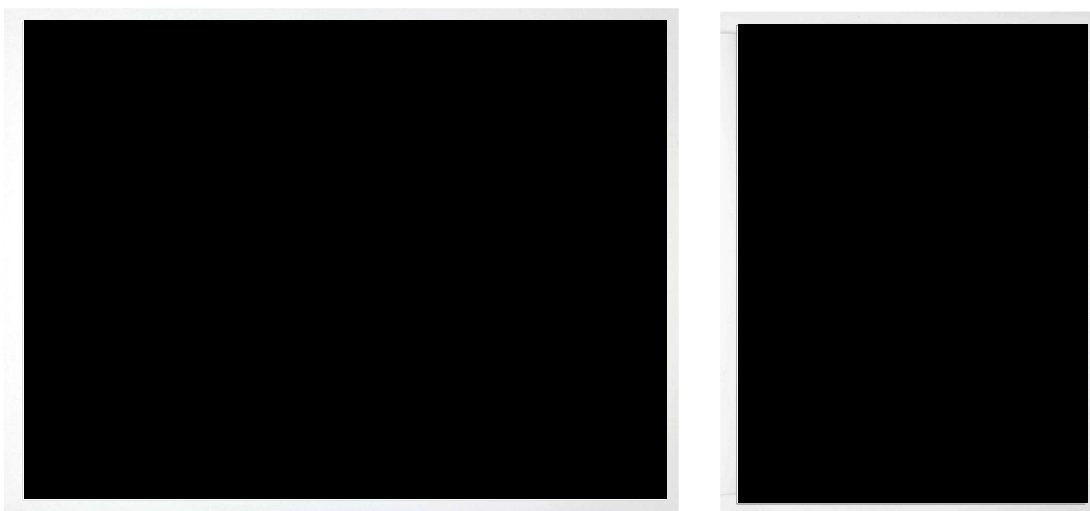


Figure 50 - UCLAN, *Further North* publication 2017, spread by D. Tiemey and UCLAN, *North Volume 1* publication 2015, page by John Van Aitken.

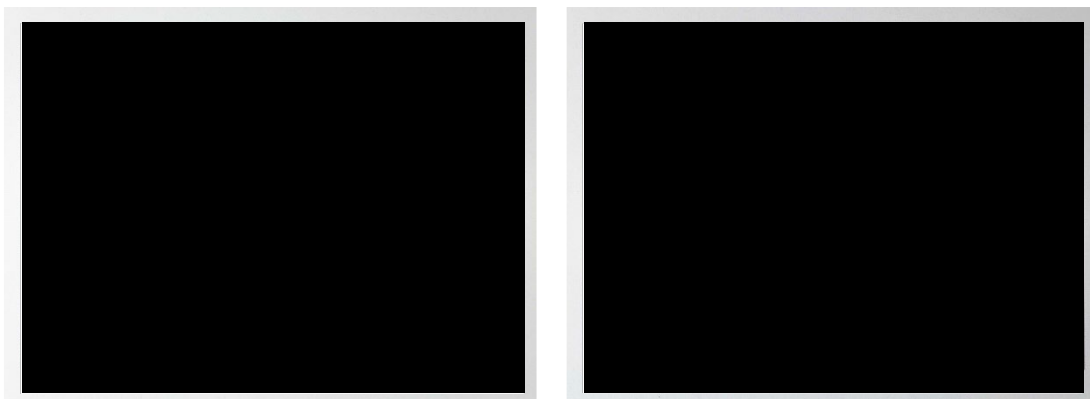


Figure 51 - UCLAN, *North Volume 1* publication 2015, spread by Toria Lockyer and UCLAN, *North Volume 2* publication 2016, spread by Tom Rees.

Importantly, photography much like other arts, moves in trends influenced by cultural shifts and educators, and I am aware that current trends favour more socially orientated agendas. As such, landscape photography has lost some of its representation within the scene, so whilst these prior examples are of a period, the new University of Westminster course for example is now run by a practitioner whose research area is more AI-focused and more students are creating practice that explores the digital world with this influence, meaning this later student work loses its relevance to the study.

The international photography fair, Paris Photo, can also be a good litmus test of who and what international galleries are currently promoting. The 2023 fair featured many notable photographers including Burtynsky and Massimo Vitali as shown in Chapter Two, but also older work by the Bechers and L. Parker Stephenson (b. 1948) (Figure 52) as well as more contemporary work of Ursula Schultz-Domburg (b. 1938) and Juan Travnik (b. 1950) (Figure 53) made between 2012 and 2019 that maintains the Outlook's aesthetic, subject and approach.



Figure 52 – David Lockwood, L. Parker Stephenson Prints (1984) and Bernd und Hilla Becher Prints (1998) at Paris Photo 2023, (2023), digital photographs.



Figure 53 - David Lockwood, Ursula Schultz-Domburg Prints (2012) and Juan Travnik Prints (2019) at Paris Photo 2023 (2023), digital photographs.

Through this study, I have been both inspired by the influence and intent of the New Topographics exhibition and predisposed to see it negatively affecting the future of urban landscape or environmental photography. This was similarly concluded by Ramade in Chapter Two: “environmental photography is overdue to espouse a degree of fruitful imaginativeness.” (Ramade, 2006, p.23). This position drove the practice outcomes of the research by using the investigations and analysis of the subject field and domain to support the critical development of the three new works. Each responding to the contextual and critical analysis as a source of inspiration and direction, often with a methodological approach of review, translation, and recognition of serendipity and opportunities. However, there was a non-linear flow to this process and often factors influence the development of the work from different entry points within the personal, field and domain components as detailed in the Methodology.

Published six years after the exhibition, in his book *Beauty in Photography: Essays in Defense of Traditional Values* (1981), Robert Adams' statement below underpins the approaches of the three practice works and creates for me the start of a considered framework with which to create strong and robust practice work which could challenge the genre and achieve the objectives of this thesis.

Landscape can offer us, I think, three verities - geography, autobiography and metaphor. Geography is if taken alone sometimes boring, autobiography is frequently trivial, and metaphor can be dubious. But taken together...the three kinds of representation strengthen each other and reinforce what we all work to keep intact - an affection for life.
(Adams, 2005, p. 14)

In response, the practice elements will attempt to contain and explore all three of his verities, but have one dominant verity to create different starting inspiration or creative motivations: Autobiography - *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), Geography - *The Allotments* (2018-19) and Metaphor - *The New West* (2020). Naturally, geography forms a cornerstone to all the practice though, being landscape and location based and providing the reference to where we are in the landscape, the physical (or virtual) relationship between us and our surroundings, and the impact of urbanisation that creates or destroys these spaces. Within *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) and *The Allotments* (2018-19), to break the tradition of the grand American vista, I am looking at the small local landscape. The largely unplanned and unmanaged woods left in Liverpool after urban development and the local allotment that becomes a haven for the population, who live in mainly terraced streets with no gardens and want to experience and reap the benefits of growing their own food. In the last project, *The New West* (2020), the geography is that of a virtual game, providing the experience of an unexplored landscape akin to the American West of the late 1800s.

Autobiography encourages us to develop and explore a personal and more intimate perspective with these spaces. Whilst it could be argued that all acts of artistic creation represent the self-expression of the artist, openly evident autobiography within a piece offers the opportunity for the audience to connect and relate to the work from a more personal and thoughtful perspective. *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) was deeply personal to me and explores my relationship with my son as we look for opportunities to enact fantasy play in, for us, the unexplored pockets of wildness left within a city and develop our father-son bond. *The Allotments* (2018-19) was more about the autobiography of others - the tenants. This was drawn out through location portraits and biographical interviews, supported by more traditional landscape photographs, paintings and poems to give a broader context and interpretation of the subject. There were also more personal elements in this project for me, as it was an opportunity to invite my father (a watercolour artist) to work with me on what would turn out to be his last project, within which he died without completing a portion of the project work he started. The third collaborator, Pauline Rowe (creative writer), thoughtfully explored this within some of her work for the project, as it left gaps that needed filling or making sense of within the outcomes. For *The New West* (2020), autobiography as such does not play a major part, given it is based in a virtual world and in a history of which we have little or no personal experience. For the new generations, this idea of virtual space in games is becoming a new familiar landscape that references reality but operates under very different conditions. The player and viewer of these landscapes could experience aspects of what has historically been or is maybe yet to come, and they can recognise the sense of the American Wild West that we have seen in the movies. In the project, the avatars also wrote a fictitious diary of their thoughts and experiences as they explored the landscape of the game to personalise, reinforce and highlight the intended narrative that was created by the photographs they made.

Metaphor allows us to transcend the literal representation of landscape and consider deeper meanings. By developing conceptual or metaphorical layers within the projects, the audience is encouraged to look beyond the surface landscape and consider the role landscape plays in our lives. *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) considers children's fantasies, the importance of wilderness-type experiences, and spaces to explore, play and emotionally grow as a juxtaposition to the surrounding developed environment. *The Allotments* (2018-19) investigates how adults (sometimes families) use the allotment environment to supplement or escape from their living space and lives, giving the opportunity to create, engage and physically grow within the artificial construct of plots of land segregated from their urban surroundings and offered under contract for this purpose. In some respects, for the tenants, it is less of a metaphor and more of a reality, but for the artist interpreter and audience, the metaphor exists, nevertheless. Metaphor is key

to *The New West* (2020) as the concept of the game the work derives from relies on metaphor and the rendering and familiarity of the virtual experience it offers for its engagement. The work, however, takes the selected elements of that virtual world and manipulates them into an alternative commentary that creates a narrative on the broader themes of environmental change and human impact.

As well as investigating these broader themes, there was also an opportunity within the practice development to explore how the audience could engagement with the work, as well as its general accessibility. This was becoming part of a new focus for the contemporary sector and a consideration that might be seen as lacking in the original exhibition (see Literature Review, page 30). Although my projects were created between 2017-20, during the process of writing up and extended research, I subsequently became aware of Arts Council England's *Let's Create* (2020) 2020-30 strategy. Within this they had written an *Investment Principles* statement which highlighted *Environmental Responsibility* and *Inclusivity & Relevance* as part of four principles to help steer the change that was needed to achieve this strategy. In these statements they reinforced the need for funded organisations to promote environmental responsibility: "We also expect them [the organisation] to promote the need for environmental responsibility in the communities in which they work...and they should aim to be innovative and responsive in the choices they make." (Arts Council England, 2020, p.51). As well as building relationships with their communities: "In future, we will judge organisations for the way in which they reflect and build a relationship with their communities, as well as for the quality and ambition of their work." (Arts Council England, 2020, p.53). This indicated that the additional exploration of these broader themes within the projects would help to make the work more relevant within this changing sector going forward.

The proceeding three parts of this chapter outline and evaluate each of the three works against the aims and intentions of the research, exploring concepts and context. Key here is the detailed explanations of the practical development of the projects, giving examples of the decisions that were made in the subject choices, image selections, medium and physical construction conclusions within the outcomes.

Chapter Three
My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace
Part II: Finding Fangorn (2016-17)

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.
Henry David Thoreau, (1936, Thoreau, H.D)

The first of the three projects created for this thesis was *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), which was started in 2016 and completed in November 2017. Having studied the Field and Domain of the research questions and subject area, the serendipitous opportunity for the work came when I made this image when we were walking in a local small wood with my son Hugo.



Figure 54 - David Lockwood, *Childwall Woods_DSC1226* (2016), digital photograph.

Hugo was dressed up in a crimson velvet cloak my mother made for his older sister for play, but he had added a homemade wooden bow and plastic sword and in his mind, he was Aragorn, the Ranger of the North from J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, which we had watched many times at home on DVD. In the image, I saw the potential to mix the root element of Adams' autobiography and critical inspiration from the subject approach and challenge to the Outlook that can be seen in John Gossage's *The Pond*. The seed of the project *Finding Fangorn* was born - the search for fantasy unexplored woodland spaces in the urban environment in which we live.

Hugo was born with epilepsy and developmental delay, which presented itself when he was two and a half years old. This has created lifelong challenges for both him and us as parents as we came to terms with and learned to manage his complex needs. One of the challenges (perhaps with all children) is how to occupy and engage with him on a level in which his mind operates and not resort to television (he cannot read or write) as an easy option. Not originally from Liverpool, I was interested in finding out about nearby places to visit and explore, having spent a lot of my childhood in Richmond Park in London enjoying its loosely managed naturalness. My

wife highlighted some of the local Merseyside wooded areas (not cultivated parks) that she knew as a child, and we set off to explore. Hugo has an imaginative mind, and his thoughts went to dressing up specially for these occasions. As we investigated these spaces further for more to explore, it became apparent that these many small and large wooded areas had been left (perhaps deliberately or not) between the urban developments as the city expanded.

The objective was then to mix the aims with the dominant autobiographic subject matter. Our shared experience and bonding through the challenges of his disability as we looked for and played within the sense of wilderness left in these spaces, combined with the geographical and urban relationship of these small woods and the metaphor of commenting about the urban landscape through the space it had left wild, as in Gossage's *The Pond*, discussed in Chapter Two. These layers, along with the personal and intimate approach to the genre, I hoped would make a more relatable social message and outcome that people could engage with in addition to its photographic result.

As the project developed, I felt the inclusion of an organisation such as The Mersey Forrest (who supports the protection of these wooded spaces) and their additional knowledge would benefit the project's credibility, development and reach. So, I made contact and met with their representative Clare Olver, who was interested in partnering with the work as it mirrored and supported their agendas and plans - *getting more from trees* (The Mersey Forest). Following discussions, fourteen woods within Metropolitan Merseyside were identified to work (play) within and explore. Their connections with other organisations also highlighted national agendas, and I was made aware that on 6th November 2017, it would be the 800th anniversary of the 1217 *Charter of the Forest*. To commemorate this, the Woodland Trust would be launching the new *Charter for Trees, Woods and People* and was looking for regional projects and events to celebrate this and engage the Charter with the public. I applied to the Charter for funding and participation in the celebration, and the project became a Charter 'Branch'.

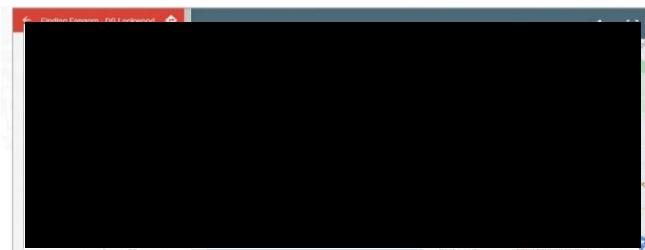


Figure 55 - <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/tree-charter/>, screenshot by author.

By associating with these broader regional and national organisations, the project beneficially gained additional external rigour and focus on the social and environmental concerns that they also held for these wooded spaces.

In total, there were approximately five thousand digital images taken for the project, which were broken down into images of Hugo's fantasy playing in the woods and images of the woods themselves with signs of the surrounding external environmental visual and physical influence, to reference Gossage's approach. There were twenty-seven final images selected of Hugo in the woods, which were made in a 16:9 format cinematic style so they looked and felt like fictional movie images, supporting the approach implied by the title of the project, although they were actually un-staged documents of his or our play.. To highlight an example, see Figure 56, which used an old ultra-wide zoom lens with poor anti-flare capabilities (purchased specifically for this fault), giving the aesthetics of traditional 35mm movie film with the drama of low position wide angle viewpoint, action stance and flared highlights. Figures 57 and 58 are screenshots of general release movies where these techniques can be seen as part of their visual narrative.



Figure 56 - David Lockwood, *Childwall Woods_DSC7289* (2017), digital photograph.



Figure 57 - *Troy - Beach Battle - Achilles* [1080p HD Blu-Ray] (2004), YouTube, screenshot by author.

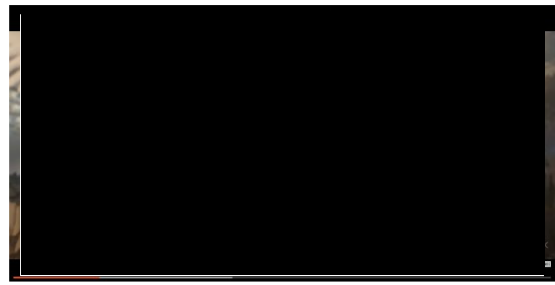


Figure 58 - *Female Avengers Unite Scene - Avengers 4: Endgame* (2019), YouTube, screenshot by author.

Whilst I identified the woods we would visit with the help of The Mersey Forrest, Hugo defined the characters he would enact through the project based on what he was absorbed in at that specific time. His enacted characters varied from cartoons and PlayStation games to movies. Aragorn from *Lord of the Rings* was the initial character portrayed, followed by Raphael, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle. Nathan Drake from the PlayStation game *Uncharted* (2007), Batman and many others featured within the project, all ultimately adding to Hugo's engagement with the process. It was important to me that Hugo was never visually identified within the images and

was generally viewed from behind, or his face was positioned outside or hidden within the image. I was conscious of the legacy of digital photographs of Hugo once published on the Internet and the ability to control their use or reproduction online. The only front-facing image was Hugo dressed up as Batman, and his identity was hidden by the mask as is Batman's.



Figure 59 - David Lockwood, *Clarks Gardens Woods_DSC7644* (2017), digital photograph.

Intentionally, we explored the woods in different seasons, weather conditions and times of day, and dusk, for example, felt particularly exciting to Hugo as we needed to use torches to navigate the environments. Below, Mill Wood in Speke became a favourite haunt as it contained burnt-out cars which had been stolen by thieves, driven around the wood and then set on fire, and it felt like a war zone.



Figure 60 - David Lockwood, *Mill Wood_DSC4972* (2017), digital photograph.

At a point in the project, I became conscious that the images of Hugo were becoming very observational and didn't portray the actual shared experience we had together. In the right conditions and vantage points, I was able to introduce myself as a participant in the fantasy of the images through the inclusion of my own shadow (see Figure 61 over the page).



Figure 61 - David Lockwood, *Black Woods_DSC7424* (2017), digital photograph.

As well as the images of Hugo, there were seventy-nine more topographic styled final images of the fourteen woods themselves that were taken whilst visiting the woods with Hugo, and they explored a more traditional Outlook viewpoint of the landscape but sometimes also played with alternative perspectives as well. Some of these photographs make a direct reference to the visual aesthetics of the Outlook and the work that comes after. For example, Figure 62 has a structured and formal horizontal line composition reminiscent of photographers like Baltz, and Figure 64 reflects on later work by John Gossage with its pond being shadowed through the trees by the presence of the housing developments at its border.



Figure 62 - David Lockwood, *Clarks Gardens Woods_DSC1293* (2016), digital photograph.

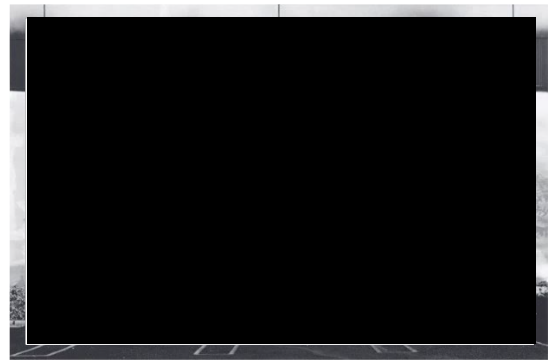


Figure 63 - Lewis Baltz, *West Wall, Semicoa, 333 McCormick, Costa Mesa* (1974), photograph.



Figure 64 - David Lockwood *Dam and Craven Woods_DSC6417* (2017), digital photograph.



Figure 65 - John Gossage *Untitled*, (1985), (originally published in *The Pond*, 1985).

Many of the images play with light intensities both inside and outside the spaces, as in Figure 66. Here, we see the newly developed cul-de-sac with its mature leafy trees that have been isolated from their original wood by an elaborate, domestic-style formal brick wall, built as part of the development to allow access in and out of the wood, their separation reinforced by the darkness and light. Similarly, this was a technique used by Gossage to visually separate the hard unnatural forms created by human developments with sunlight and shadow.



Figure 66 - David Lockwood, *Black Woods_DSC2701* (2016), digital photograph.



Figure 67 - John Gossage, *Untitled* (1985), (originally published in *The Pond*, 1985).

Some images show how nature consumes the human elements as they age, fall into disrepair and the boundaries between the two change, but the shadows of the trees also appear to imitate the formal human-made structures left behind as if they were a fence or barrier.



Figure 68 - David Lockwood, *Stockton's Wood_DSC6973* (2017), digital photograph.

Other images document how people protect themselves from these spaces, often with the use of barbed wire nailed to the trees and fences where the backs of their properties meet the woods, guarding their personal space against the undesirable people who they believe frequent them. Sometimes, though, people physically and visually extend their homes into the spaces in



Figure 69 - David Lockwood, *Dam and Craven Woods_DSC5707* (2017), digital photograph.

what might be seen by some as a positive, welcoming way and by others as further encroachment on what is left of these natural spaces after the developments, as in Figure 69.

Not so welcoming were the unnatural colours and tones of the human pollution that appeared in the woods close to the more industrial areas, such as Stockton's wood near Speke Airport (Figure 70). Echoing the colour palette of Burtynsky's *Nickel Tailings* (1996) (Figure 71), but without the sublime splendour of the large format display print or coffee table book (see Chapter Two, page 74), just an image in a gallery, linked to a map on a website.



Figure 70 - David Lockwood, *Stockton's Wood_DSC6989* (2017), digital photograph.

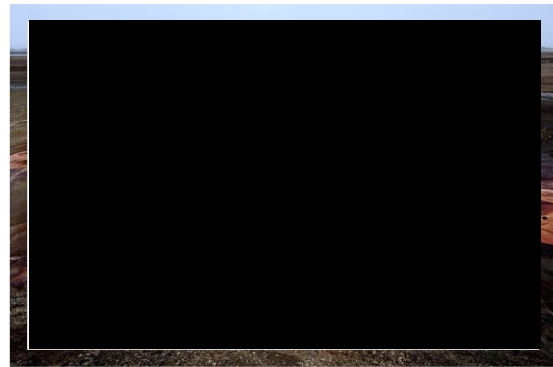


Figure 71 - Edward Burtynsky, *Nickel Tailings #30, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, 1996* (1996), photograph

These final selections of images were then designed into an interactive website and an A2 printed and folded map. The website was funded by myself, but I applied successfully for funding from the new *Charter for Trees, Woods and People* for the professional printing of the map to promote the project, the signing of the new Charter, and to encourage collectors of the map to visit and engage with the spaces which it illustrates.

The design and development of the website and map were complicated by the need to represent the quantity of images contained in the project and the concept of the area and woods explored. After careful consideration, a map of Metropolitan Merseyside was chosen as the background for both works but next came the challenge of how to highlight the areas that we were working and playing within. As Hugo engaged in the project, he started to become interested in the form of maps (any maps) as he saw me use maps as a navigation tool to help get to the spaces we visited. I observed him playing with and mark-making on these A-Z or larger maps, and this then gave them a visual identity (see Figure 72). Following this format, Hugo generated marks in the form of circles, arrows and lines for my use on our map.



Figure 72 - David Lockwood, *Hugo Wall Map_DSC6233*, and *Untitled* (2017), digital photographs.

I designed the *Finding Fangorn* website using Adobe Muse software and the A2 map in Adobe Photoshop. A background map was constructed from multiple small sections screen grabbed from the Ordnance Survey website (copyright ownership has been indicated on both works) of Metropolitan Merseyside, to build a very high-resolution map of that area for both mediums - see Figure 73 over the page. Wanting the viewer to engage with the whole map at one time, rather than multiple web pages, the design of the website was planned to be one very large page with the aim of the viewer interacting with the site by scrolling around, exploring the map to find the images and woods that we had identified, and it contained.

Hugo's marks were then added to indicate the woods visited and routes used, and then the images of Hugo were layered on top with a casual layout feel, and Blu Tack lumps were digitally added to the corners as an imitation of the map page stuck on his wall in Figure 72. The intention of this was to give an informal and ephemeral feel, such as a holiday snap temporarily stuck on a wall to remember the experience. Given the large quantity of more formal topographic images of the woods that would overwhelm the website, I decided to add small digital galleries to the map near the woods they relate directly to, and these galleries would pop open in a digital

lightbox so the viewers could review them at a larger scale to see the fine detail when selected. Lastly, life-size images of the real props Hugo used when we visited the woods were added to the website to give a sense of realism to the fantasy – a toy gun, a sword, a cloak, some toy gun ring caps and foam bullets, etc.

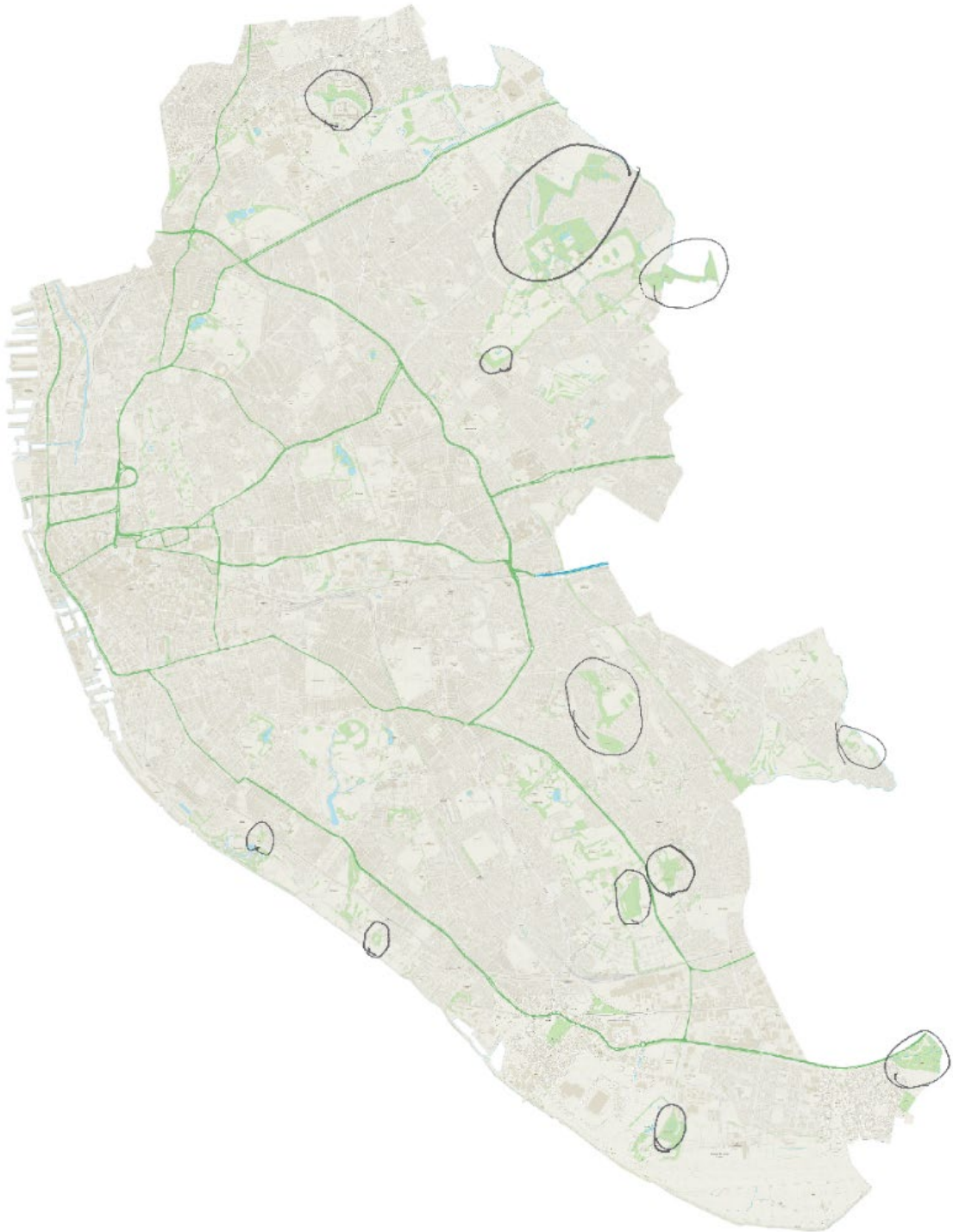


Figure 73 - David Lockwood, *Image built from Ordnance Survey Map online sections of Metropolitan Merseyside (2017)*, screenshot by author.

Below is an image captured of the whole site at once to show the overall construction, relative scales and planning as discussed.

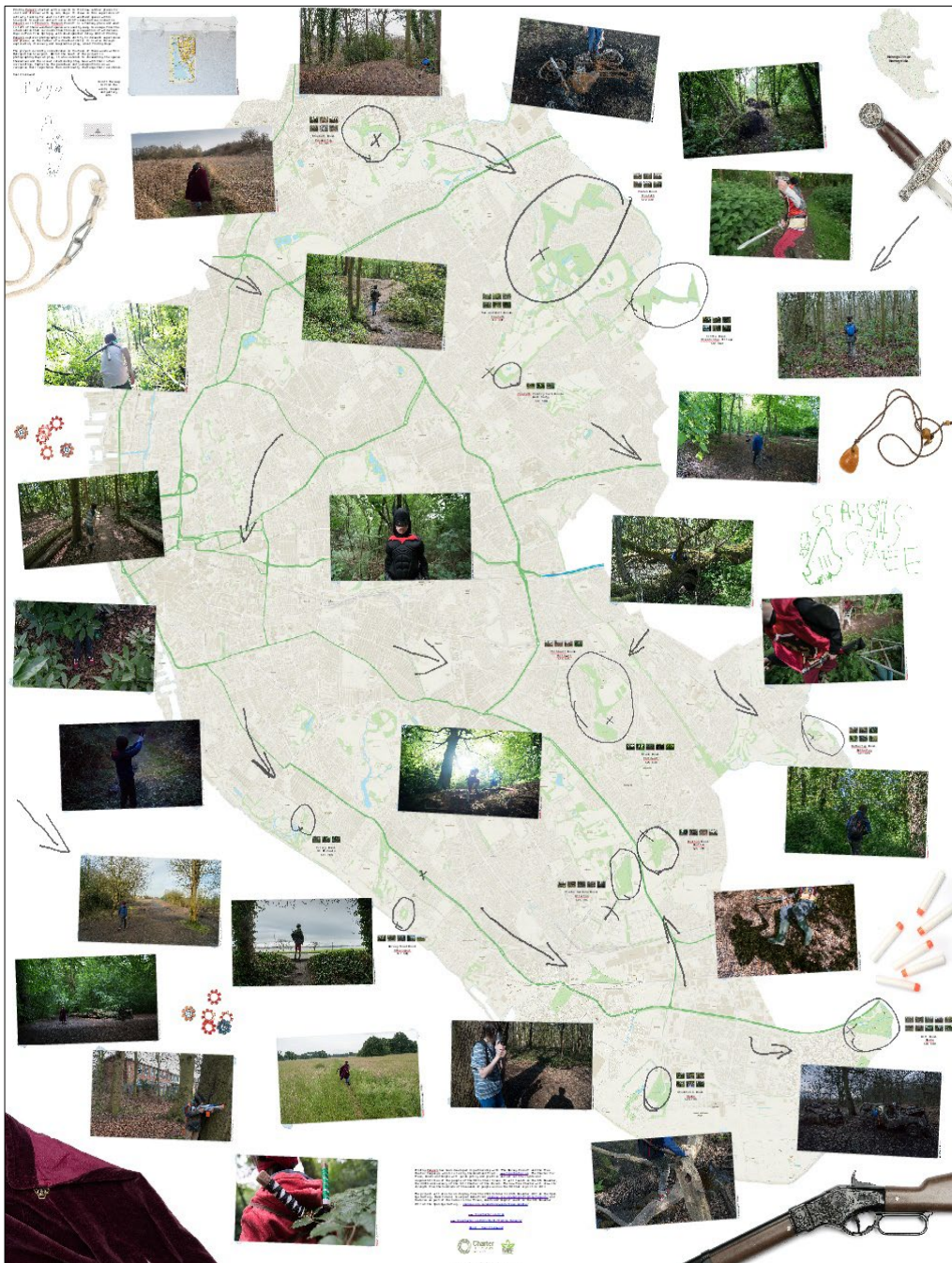


Figure 74 - David Lockwood, *Finding Fangorn* website - full site map showing scrollable area (2017), screenshot by author.

The intention of this extremely large 6,800-pixel wide x 8,200-pixel high single-page site was that when opened, a viewer's browser would only show the initial 1,200-pixel wide top left corner section of the site, which would introduce them to the project at a legible resolution. Given that 1,200 pixels was the average resolution of a computer/phone/tablet screen, the viewer was forced to scroll (explore and look around) from this initial section across to the rest of the site (see Figure 75 over the page).



Figure 75 - David Lockwood, *Finding Fangorn* website - initial section monitor view (2017), screenshot by author.

An audio soundtrack of birds and wood sounds was recorded live in one of the woods and edited into a loop to play in the background of the site once it is open, giving it audio presence and atmosphere. The site is live, but an offline working version of the site can be found in the Appendix 5 and a live link to the site in Appendix 6.

The A2 double-sided, 16-page cross-folded printed map (Appendix 2) was designed to complement and promote the website. My funding application provided enough money to print 1,000 maps for free distribution. The map's design followed the same visual format as the website but had a reduced, selected quantity of images on it and included images of the woods at a large scale as well to represent this side of the project as the web image galleries were not available in this medium.

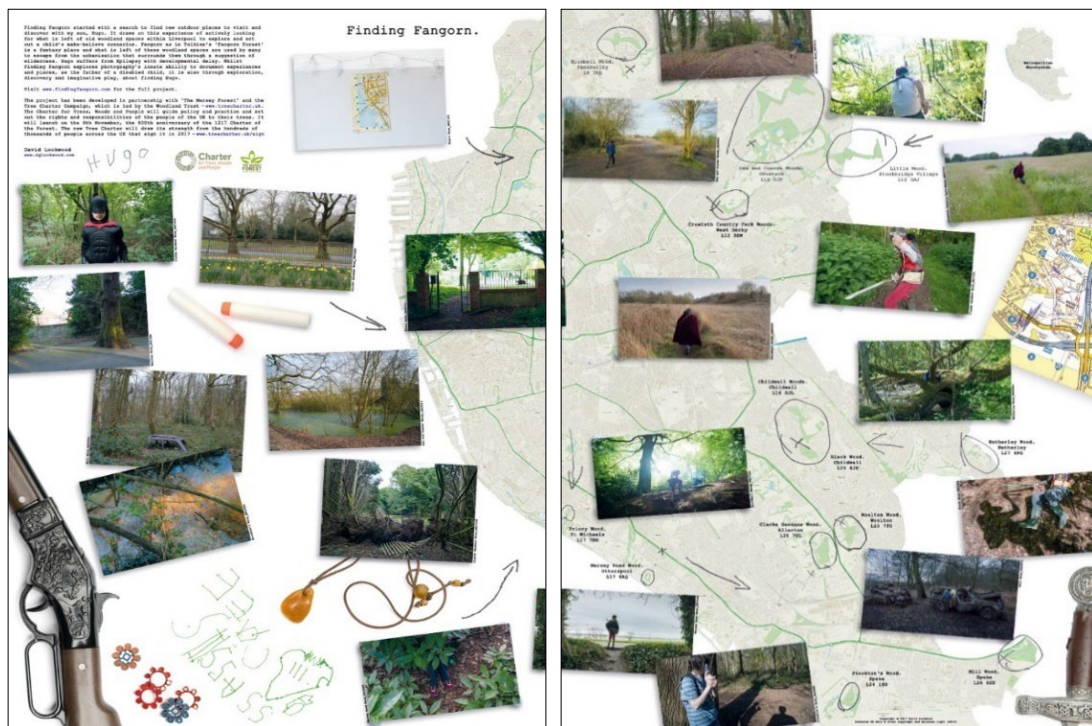


Figure 76 - David Lockwood, *Finding Fangorn* A2 Folded Printed Map – left front and right back (2017), digital image.

To publicly display the project and support the *Charter for Trees, Woods and People* national launch day on the 6th of November 2017, the Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool offered to put on a temporary exhibition in their foyer space from 26th October to 26th November 2017 (Appendix 2). For this, I packaged the website to work offline and installed it on four Apple iPads that were acquired for the purpose and were cable-secured to tables in the foyer. Locked using the iPad's accessibility options, the viewers would scroll their way around the site without being able to exit or access any other sites or apps.



Figure 77 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2017), digital photograph.

A promotional video was also made for the project as a slide show with fast-cut images, text fading in and out, plus audio (Appendix 5, 6). This was also displayed inside the gallery on monitors to encourage visitors to experience the site on the iPads and help themselves to a copy of the map, and on the multiscreen display outside the gallery to attract passers-by to come in.



Figure 78 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2017), digital photograph.

To consolidate the project and celebrate the launch of the new Charter in late November 2017, I also organised a public event, supported by and at the Open Eye Gallery, entitled *Trees, Woods and People* (Appendix 2). For this, I arranged for three other Merseyside based photographers, John Davies, Stephanie Wynne and Steve McCoy, who work with the subject of trees and landscapes, plus Clare Olver from The Mersey Forrest organisation, to talk about their work alongside myself presenting and promoting *Finding Fangorn*.



Figure 79 - David Rawlinson, *Trees, Woods and People* Event, Open Eye Gallery 6_11_17 (2017), digital photograph.

The outcomes of my first practice piece *Finding Fangorn* can be seen to work on many levels to broaden the Outlook from the original white cube space and banal aesthetic (see Chapter One), both artistically and socially, as was my original aim. My approach within it deliberately mixes the visual aesthetics of past and current practitioners who work within the genre but introduces new elements to this arena. The democratic accessibility of a web-based project by design, the added autobiographical/personal subject and approach to engage the genre on a more human level, and the significance of its timing to embed the work into a national philosophy of purpose, builds on these aesthetics.

Making the project web-based gave it free access to all viewers via the Internet without the time, location or financial limitations that one might have with an exhibition or a publication. Below is a screenshot of the Google Analytics report for the site and audience over the period August 31st 2017 to July 31st 2023 and we can see usage spikes when there were associated publicity events and a small but steady usage and access given the sites lack of promotion since late 2017/18, leading to 1,229 users and 1507 pageviews since its launch in this period.

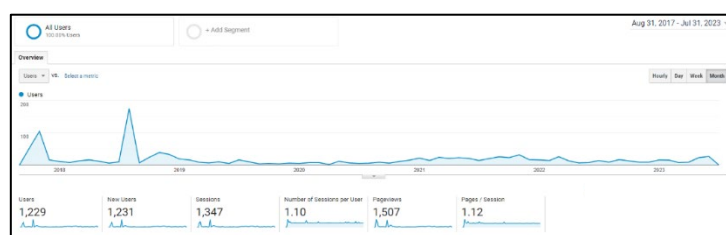


Figure 80 - Google Analytics *Finding Fangorn* site usage report, screenshot by author.

The project partnerships of The Mersey Forrest and the *Charter for Trees, Woods and People* supported and engaged in the project as they saw it as a vehicle by which to promote the use of and therefore the preservation of the woodland spaces within Merseyside. These partnerships encompassed the work within a bigger agenda, and whilst it was always going to be a photographic project, the subject of the work was linked to the agendas of preservation and enjoyment of wooded spaces, which allowed it a larger audience and potentially an impact beyond just the appreciation of an artwork.

The Open Eye Gallery's overall impression of the piece was such that they wrote in an email to the Bluecoat Gallery to promote the work - is about a moving father/son relationship and how it's developed through shared experience. This was an interesting interpretation as I can see this is perhaps the most accessible and instantly rewarding element of the project from the point of view of a gallery to the public. Whilst it was in the gallery on the iPads and display screens, the folded maps were given away, but they were also circulated via the Liverpool Libraries and Hugo's school distributed the maps to the other pupils and used them as part of their weekly bus trips out, so more children could be encouraged and engaged in the local wilderness and imagination experience. Of those maps that were printed, there are perhaps just a few hundred left. Interestingly, further feedback from photographic colleagues who work within the genre commented more about the topographical type images than the images of Hugo at play, as their focus would seem to have been directed by those academic interests and the visual aesthetic that those images draw upon.

Hugo was nearly 13 years old when we made the project, and interestingly, we have started visiting those woods again this year at his request. Although 19 now, he still sees the same sense of escapism in these spaces but now without the need to dress up. However, his mind wanders now more to vandalism and graffiti as a form of expression, but that's teenagers for you.



Figure 81 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2024), digital photograph.

Chapter Three
My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace
Part III - The Allotments (2018-19)

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

Aldo Leopold (1949, cited in Meine, 2013)

The Allotments (original working title *The Allomenteers and Other Stories*) was intended to build on the outcomes of *Finding Fangorn* with a project that was more routed in the traditional techniques of the New Topographics, using black and white large format film, and the formalities of the subject approach when using such a medium. To enhance and develop this position, though, the creative outcome was formed by a collaboration with a writer and a painter, and with the inclusion of previously taken portraits and newly conceived landscape photographs to expand the subject approach and narrative. It was envisioned that the different artist perspectives would enrich the subject interpretation and create a deeper multi-layered outcome for the audience.

Again, serendipity played a significant role in the project's initial concept. We have lived for the last 30 years opposite the Dingle Vale Allotments in Aigburth, Liverpool and having no garden, we had often considered an allotment (the loan of an allotted piece of land) to allow us to have outside space to grow and play. My wife, Geraldine (Ged), put her name down on the waiting list, and several years later she was offered an allotment plot of her own in March 2018. The plot needed a significant amount of work to bring it to a point at which it could grow, and as we toiled with the space, I became aware of the closeness in the community of the potholders supporting each other with mutual ambitions. It registered that the allotment space was not just about the working of the allotted land but also the community of like-minded people who had chosen to undertake this activity. There was an opportunity here to consider this more social context and the importance of the land segregated for cultivation within an urban environment, so I started to experiment with the potential approaches I could take for the portraiture of the plot holders as an expansion on the theme and an expression of this new social element.

There are many tried and tested photographic methods for location portraiture, but I set myself several constraints in an attempt to break away from the norm. Firstly, I wanted the portraits to be made on the plot locations themselves, so they are directly visually related to the physical space and land the plot holder worked. However, this introduces some significant issues. There is the potential for visual distractions in the image from any background behind the sitter, as the plots are confined and often visually and physically messy. They can become a dumping ground

for unwanted household items or found objects considered potentially useful on an allotment to create structures for different growing techniques or plants. So, I needed a portable location backdrop that could be placed behind the sitter to remove these distractions from the portrait. Classic approaches to this, such as those practiced by Richard Avedon using a white sheet in *In the American West* or Irving Penn in *World in a Small Room*, visually remove the sitter from their location environment but lose the sense of place wanted to keep - see Avedon working on *In the American West* in Figure 82 and Penn in Figure 83. There is also the cost and logistics of managing such a setup, as I am working without an assistant.

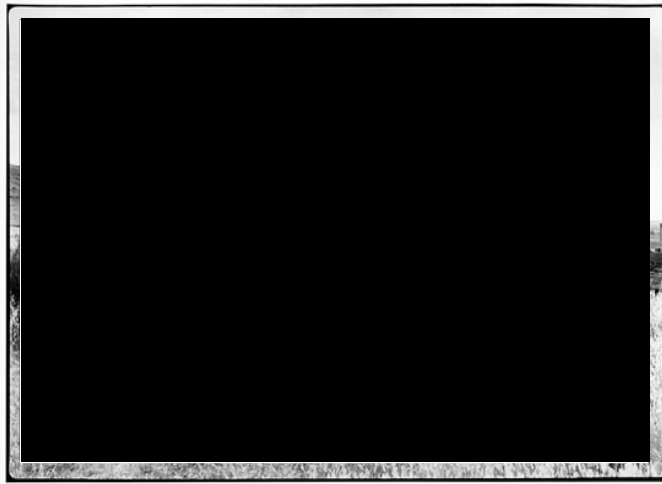


Figure 82 - Laura Wilson, *Jordan, Montana, 6/27/83* (1983), photograph.



Figure 83 - Unknown photographer, *Irving Penn at Work in Cuzco, 1948*. © The Irving Penn Foundation.

After some experimenting with solutions, I decided upon weed suppressant fabric, which is regularly used on allotments to cover freshly dug allotment ground to prevent weeds growing by reducing light and access to the soil. It is cheap, comes in very large lengths and widths on the roll and has the property, although looking dark as a general tone, of being semi-transparent because of lots of small holes in it for moisture penetration. As a result of these holes and with the sun behind it, it will allow the background scene to show through with a muted, darkened and diffused focus image. Below are my initial four 4x5" film test images using this setup.



Figure 84 - David Lockwood, *Ged - Plot 24 for 7 months* (2018), photographic contact print.

Working on 4x5" black and white sheet film using a wooden field camera, I also tested the angle of view created by two different lenses - the top two images show the view with a moderate wide angle which gives a slightly broader perspective on the sitter and allows for an amount of environment and on the bottom two images I used a short telephoto portrait lens which makes a tighter headshot of the sitter. Whilst the tight head shots gave more detail of the sitter's face, the ratio of backdrop and background to sitter in the image becomes reduced and loses the impact in the frame to reflect the environment of the context of the allotment. The wider view conveys much more information about the sitter and their environment, and this would be the general approach I would adopt across future portraits. A 6-foot-wide length of weed suppressant hoisted up using two large lighting stands to create a location backdrop, was to be placed somewhere on a sitter's plot (where there is enough clear room to make the image). On a sunny day, with the sun at the rear of the backdrop to illuminate the background scene behind,

with the sitter placed in front of the backdrop lit by the soft reflected light from the sky, the desired aesthetic and impact could be created.



Figure 85 - David Lockwood, *Ged - Plot 24 for 7 months* (2018), photographic print.

To complement the portraits, I was also looking to make black and white landscape photographs using an 8x10" camera similar to that used by Stephen Shore and Nicholas Nixon to create very formal highly detailed black and white recordings of the allotment landscape scenes but hadn't started to make any yet as I was less confident of my approach to the portraits so wanted to establish my intentions and technique for them first.

Fortuitously, in December 2018, prior to the start of my PhD in February 2019, the Open Eye Gallery proposed three funded opportunities for Associates of the Open Eye Gallery Network to create project work to be exhibited as part of the *LOOK 19 Photo Biennial* at Liverpool University's Victoria Gallery and Museum (VG&M). The *Associates in the VG&M*, as it was called, had very specific application criteria in that each proposal had to be made by two Associates, a member of Liverpool University and someone who uses a different artistic media or discipline than photography. I saw this as a good opportunity to expand the initial ideas and portrait set for the project and wanting to work with broader creatives than just another photographer, I approached Associate member and creative writer Pauline Rowe. Pauline was writer-in-residence at the Open Eye Gallery and a lecturer at Liverpool University. She was also interested in writing with photography and developing collaborative artistic practices. To complete the creative team with an artist working in paint, I approached my father, Arthur Lockwood, who

was a painter specialising in urban topographical subjects. Arthur had spent the time after his retirement in 1990 using watercolour paint to document industrial and social topographical change in the Midlands. Knowing his previous practice, I felt his work would add further breadth to the project and support it to engage with a broader audience. This project fitted with his interest in urban architecture, and given he was starting to experience health and mobility issues that restricted access to his usual subjects of factories or building sites, a smaller, more easily accessible location and subject was appealing to him.



Figure 86 - Arthur Lockwood, *Factory Interior - Nile Street – Birmingham* (2007), watercolour painting.

After submitting an initial proposal (see Appendix 3 - *The Allotmenters and Other Stories* - Original Project Proposal) we were selected to be one of the three funded projects and after some preliminary meetings, work began. Pauline came and accessed the plot, and made arrangements to meet with tenants, to write and to interview them. Arthur came and stayed with us and whilst his health and mobility allowed, he would wander the plot, taking photographs of potential subjects that he would later paint at home (Warwickshire) where he had more time. He spent some time in the plot's main hut and office with some of the tenants, namely Joe, Billy and Ken. Here he sat and quietly observed and sketched how they interacted within the hut, as he was also keenly interested in the people and the dynamic of the social spaces (see later Figures). We continued to meet regularly and discuss progress, approaches and new ideas that might influence or impact each other, but I wanted it to be clear that each participant had the opportunity to engage in their own interests within the subject area. As the project continued, I also became aware of other interesting material that could be used as part of the narrative. Firstly, there was archival material from the plot holders. Once my relationship had developed with some of the allotment tenants, they became interested in the project and started to bring me stories and archival material from their past when working on their plot.



Figure 87 - Author and date unknown, *Billy Murphy and the Dingle Four*, photographic print.

Figure 87 shows Billy (top middle) as part of the Dingle 4, who entered competitions and won prizes for their allotment-grown Dahlias. I also became interested in the other elements of the allotment, such as the plot main hut and office (a steel shipping container with chairs, displays and membership filing systems). In here was a striking sight - two old wooden living room mantel pieces screwed to the wall, on which stood a collection of snow globes that could have a portrait photograph slid into them - Figure 88 below. Many of these had a picture with a deceased pot member in them, but there were several which were as the manufacturer displayed them, with the slide-in card saying, *your picture here*. This display represented both a tribute to the deceased and the dark humour of some of the older tenants alongside a fatalism regarding how much time the older members would live for and continue working on their plots.



Figure 88 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2018), digital photograph.



Figure 89 - David Lockwood, *Dingle Vale Allotments Sty Ltd, Grant Cup 1933* (2018), digital photograph.

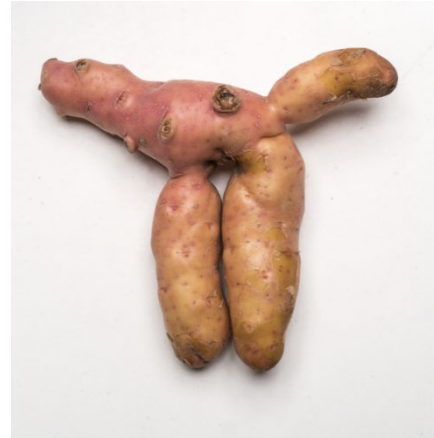


Figure 90 - David Lockwood, *Pink Fir Apple Potato* (2018), digital photograph.

Inside were also displays of archive images from the allotment's past, as in Figure 89, illustrating its historical significance. As well as these, I considered studio-based digital colour still lifes of some of the more interesting produce that came off the plot. These could maybe act as a symbol of the uniqueness of the experience and the opportunity of growing produce that was chosen by the tenant and not limited by the choice of the supermarket buyers or commercial growers on your behalf, Figure 90. These additional subjects and approaches were investigated with the intention of creating layers of material about the allotment that would expand the narrative, but ultimately, I chose not to pursue these any further or use this material in the August exhibition outcomes.

Working with the large format camera equipment and the formalities of the likes of Nixon and Shore discussed in Chapter One, I started to make landscape images to complement the portraits as a portrayal of the broader allotment space and land that the tenants worked. Shore's

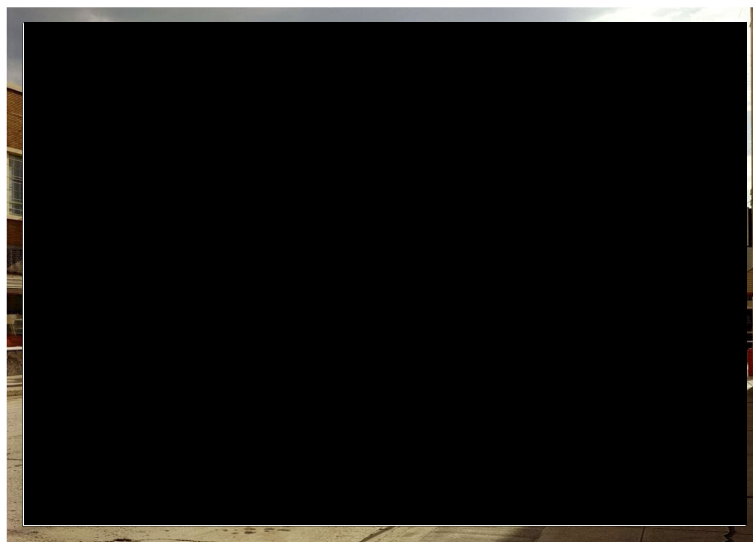


Figure 91 - Stephen Shore, *2nd Street East and South Main Street, Kalispell, Montana, August 22* (1974), colour photograph.

photographic subjects and approach have a strong sense of an American vernacular: “the culture of the useful, the local and the popular, so typical of the United States” (Chéroux, 2024). Nixon’s Topographic images were very much about proximity and relationships of structures within a landscape space, often using a high vantage point and an extreme wide-angle lens to give the image its extended rather than compressed viewpoint - Figures 92 and 93.



Figure 92 - Nicholas Nixon, *View of Mathe Church and Christian Science Centre, Boston* (1975), gelatine silver contact print.

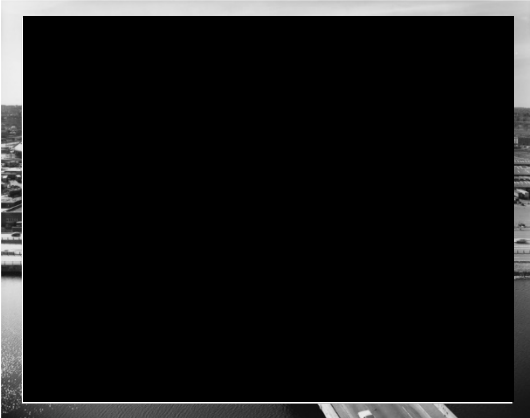


Figure 93 - Nicholas Nixon, *View of Cambridge from Memorial Drive, Cambridge* (1975), gelatine silver contact print.

Taking inspiration from Shore, I set out to try and capture the visual vernacular of a local allotment. Its use and purpose of the land, everyday objects that get repurposed, architectural features such as glass houses and sheds, and general visual identity of both new life and decay. I also employed some of the compositional techniques of Nixon with the use of a wide-angle lens to give a powerful sense of the proximity of the allotments and the objects within it, to the urban space that surrounds and overlooks it. What I did not have was Nixon’s high vantage point, but then the general subject matter was very much lower or ground level and the surrounding area higher so could be seen within the compositional relationship.



Figure 94 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2018), photographic print.



Figure 95 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2018), photographic print.

Working in collaboration, discussions generally surrounded the development of the individual’s practice within the project, and whilst I was keen for each participant to follow their interests,

we also recognised opportunities for interaction between the outcomes as they developed, as it had the potential to make a stronger or more interesting narrative. An example of this collaboration was Pauline selecting four of my landscape photographs to write haiku poems about. This use of text and image creation narrows the audience reading for the work as a whole but enhances the potential interpretation of the photograph itself and its relevance within the project - one of the examples below. The haiku reflects on the location of the allotment and its vicinity to King's Leadership Academy (formerly Shorefields School), which overlooks it in the distance.



voices rise and fall
beyond dahlias and plums -
tunes from the school-yard
Pauline Rowe (2019)

Figure 96 - David Lockwood, *Untitled* (2018), photographic print.

Pauline pursued several different writing approaches. Haiku inspired by my photographs, essay writing about allotments, broader creative writing pieces and interviews with tenants. These would become mini-biographies that would work alongside my portraits of them to create a broader, expanded written and visual portrait (see example on page 102). As part of our collaboration, we also introduced each other to practitioners we were aware of that might be inspiring or broaden approaches. For example, I introduced Pauline to the work of Hamish Fulton, who is well known for his text-only artworks and combinations of text and photography that translate the experience of a landscape space. Ultimately, he became an influence for her to create a wall piece with her text that went beyond the conventional presentation of writing she was familiar with (see the top spread of the publication illustrated later in Figure 106). As with Fulton's work, this experiential writing style would help to give the project a more immersive storytelling impression of the allotment space and experience.

To outline the process flow and concept approach of a tenant portrait through to collaborative outcome, after arranging to meet him for the portrait session on his plot, four 4x5" images were

made of Billy Murphy - Figure 97. The portraits were, by the nature of large format photography, very formal. The camera takes some time to set up for the image, and once the sitter is positioned, posed and the camera is composed and focused, the sitter must stay very still, as when the film holder is inserted into the camera back, the camera can't be looked through to check focus, pose or composition again before the image is taken. The film is also expensive, so only three or four images (individual sheets of film) were taken per tenant. This meant I had to be clear in my mind on the plot position and framing and pose of the sitter within that composition - one they could hold for some time. Water butts are a common feature of the allotments as there is no running water on each plot itself and water taken from a communal standpipe must be stored for use in butts. They offer a visual reference to the working and watering of the land and are often a prop for the older tenants to steady themselves against, as Billie does here.



Figure 97 - David Lockwood, *Billy - Plot 31 for 59 years* (2018), photographic contact print.

In the three to four images, whilst I wouldn't specifically dictate or change pose, I would request some subtle variations based on where the person was looking, as I didn't want all the sitters to look at the camera lens, given that could feel repetitive. As happened in the portraits of Billie, unpredictable things occurred, and in one of his images the backdrop sheet of translucent weed suppressant blew in the wind, and it allowed a shadow from the structure containing seed trays behind it to cast itself on the backdrop and make a geometric shape. For me, this added an additional visual element to the portrait, highlighting the whiteness of his t-shirt against the dark shape on the backdrop and the sense of youth it gave him, given his 59 years on the plot.

Having selected, scanned and edited the image to represent Billie (Figure 98), Pauline chose to interview him to get a broader overview of his story and experience on and off the allotments and then abridged the following text to go with the portrait in the exhibition and its publication as below:

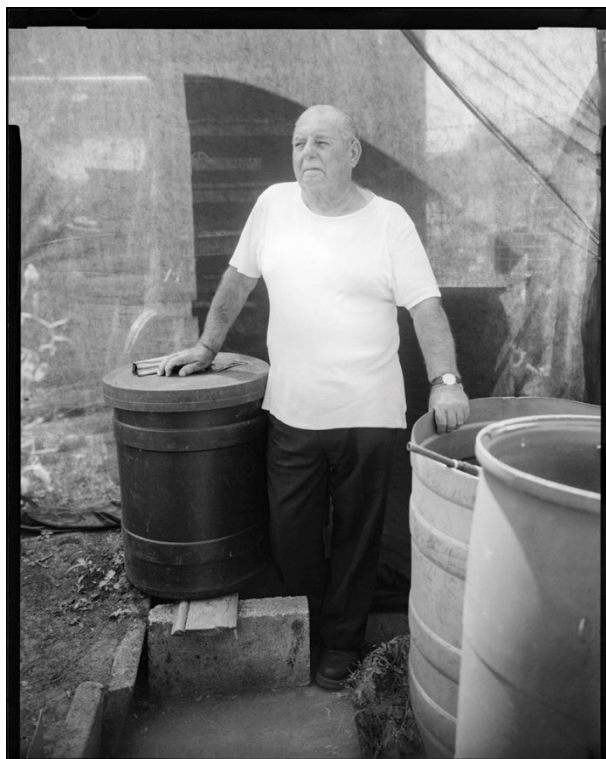


Figure 98 - David Lockwood, *Billy - Plot 31 for 59 years* (2018), photographic print.

I was a bin man, worked for 21 years on the bins in Lark Lane. I packed up when Onyx took over in 1991...Even when we were working we still got down here as my working day was from 7.45 am to 3.45 pm so I had time.

My two brothers got involved to help me - I can't dig now. They do all the donkey work. I've got a big plot with a large greenhouse, a small greenhouse and a shed. I'm glad I've kept it. I lost my partner a couple of years ago. I get a couple of buses to get here...My brothers help. Joe helps as well...I look forward to looking after my dahlias. When I used to show, I grew the lot – giants right down to the pom-poms. They have lovely colours and shapes. There are the giants, medium semi-cactus, medium decs, small cactus, ball dahlias, pom-poms...

I never grew chrysanthemums. I love the dahlia. I get here every day in the summer...I've been coming down here since I was eleven – with my grand-dad. I've had my own piece of ground for 60 years. (I'm now 82)... My granddad's plot was 37. He was a Dahlia grower too. These allotments used to go down to the cast-iron shore...

Murphy, B. Interviewed by Pauline Rowe (2019).

The combination of interview text and tenant image were then used as juxtaposed framed portraits and text panels in the exhibition and text inserts alongside the portraits in the exhibition's supporting publication, as below:



Figure 99 - David Lockwood, Selected Display from the Exhibition - *The Allotments* (2019), digital photograph.

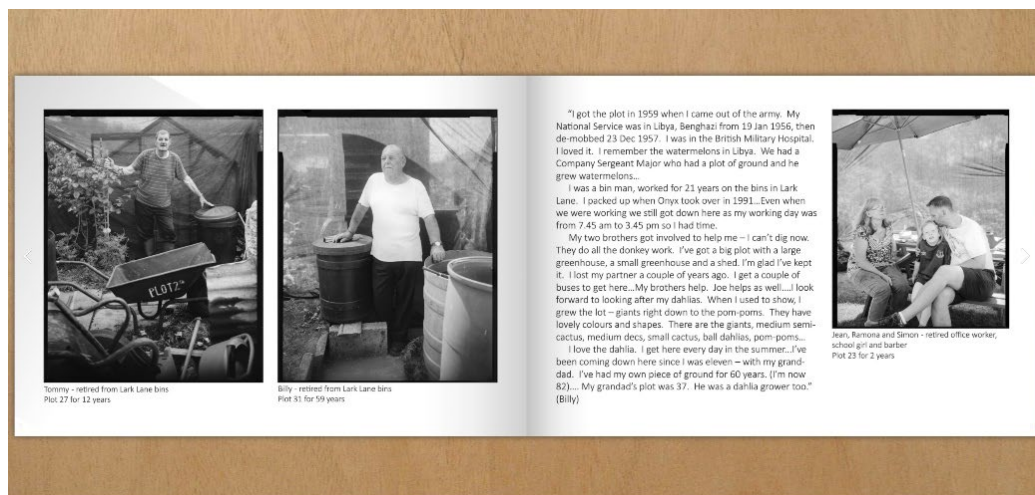


Figure 100 - Spread from the exhibition publication - *The Allotments*, screenshot by author.

Arthur was interested in recording the structures that were built on the tenant's plots using the found remnants of building material in a creative 'Heath Robinson' way. He has started exploring the subject with small, sketched works based on ideas of change, the transient nature of the buildings and constructions, and their purpose and values. Of note here is the adjective 'Heath Robinson', a term I think is soon to become lost from our vocabulary. It is a term used by Arthur and his generation, and in my younger years with his influence, and refers to the cartoonist Heath Robinson (1872-1944) who created illustrations of strange and useless contraptions that were "about temporary fixes using ingenuity and whatever is to hand, often string and tape, or unlikely cannibalisations." (Wikipedia Contributors, 2024)



Figure 101 - Arthur Lockwood, *Untitled* (2019), watercolour painting.

Arthur's practice and plans for new work followed its own path and did not reach a point of considered collaboration before his death prior to the project's end. However, a collaboration of sorts came afterwards in the form of inspiration for others, and Pauline was stirred by a series of studies he made of several tenants in the hut, two or three of which were unfinished. He had

sketched the tenants in the hut on location but was unhappy that the doorway felt like an unoccupied visual space, so he had left the space blank or white in several of these paintings. Not able to return to make more sketches, he had asked me if I could try and take some pictures from his same viewpoint of a tenant standing in the open hut door, with the intention of trying to paint new elements in that space, but he died before he achieved that aim. Three of these unfinished, in-progress paintings existed, and Pauline saw within them the subject for a poem about Arthur, her perception of his intentions and the practice of an artist.

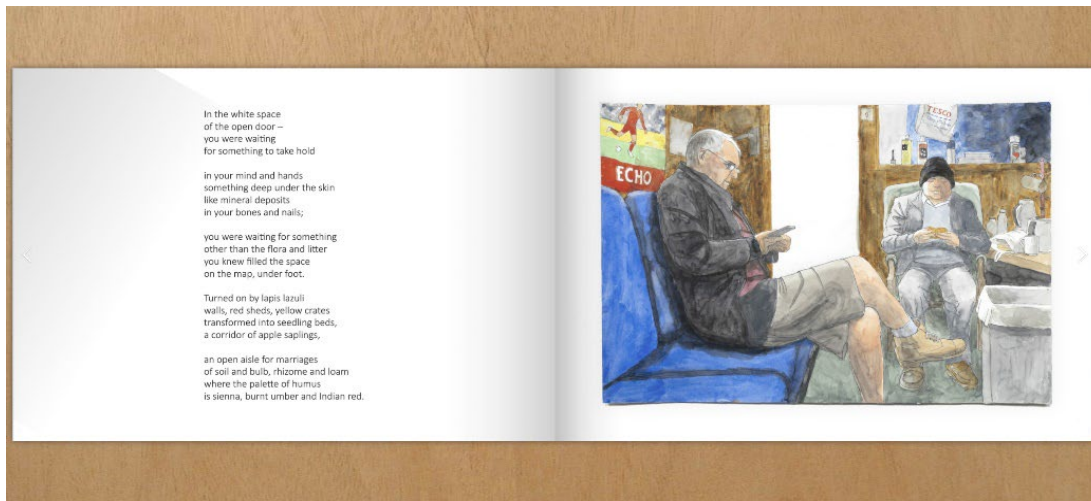


Figure 102 - Spread from the exhibition publication - *The Allotments*, screenshot by author.

In many respects, this was a significant piece as it recognises the artist process we were all going through with our different mediums in the creation of *The Allotments* and in Arthur's case, the unrealised potential of the many works planned, sketched and semi-completed as captured by the final stanza.

an open aisle for marriages
of soil and bulb, rhizome and loam
where the palette of humus
is sienna, burnt umber and Indian red.
Pauline Rowe (2019)

Unplanned for, it was decided later that these many unfinished and part-developed works of Arthur's would be placed into a vitrine in the exhibition space as an acknowledgement of his artist practice and potential on the project (shown in Figure 104).

The exhibition space at the Victoria Gallery & Museum consisted of a large room adjoining one of the larger *LOOK 19* exhibitions. I designed a project layout for the selected outcomes from each participant, which was negotiated with and approved by the Open Eye Gallery's curator, Thomas Dukes (Figure 103). The layout would mix the works of the three collaborators, the

mediums, and the readings or flow of the works, and consisted of:

- 2 x main text panels – one introducing Dingle Vale Allotments and one discussing the project itself
- 14 x framed photographic portraits juxtaposed with 6 x abridged tenant interview texts by Pauline
- 4 x Arthur's finished framed watercolour paintings
- 4 x framed poems from Pauline
- 1 x large framed experimental text piece from Pauline
- 4 x framed landscape photographs, each with a related haiku poem written by Pauline, printed on the print underneath the image

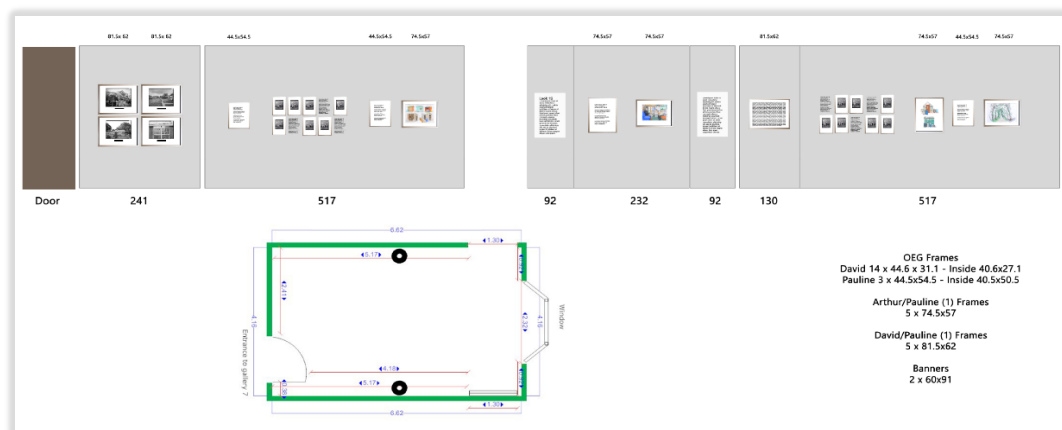


Figure 103 - David Lockwood, *VG&M layout for The Allotments* (2019), digital image.

Once hung, there was a private view on 29th August and a 'Meet the Artists' event on Saturday 31st August, which Pauline arranged and we were available in the exhibition to discuss the project and outcomes with the attending public. In addition, to support the exhibition and to give the tenants and public a record of the project that they could take away and keep, I designed a 48-page A5 publication which contained all the works and writing from the exhibition plus an additional essay by Pauline and extracts from an interview that Pauline had done with Arthur in March 2019 (digital copy accessed in Appendix 5 or 6). A feature of my design for the publication was the interleaving of some pages made from translucent tracing paper on which Pauline's haiku are printed so that the four associated landscape images on the next page show through faintly behind the poem before turning the page to see it fully (much like the weed suppressant backdrop on the portraits). Over the page is a selection of photographs taken of the exhibition with the vitrine containing Arthur's work, plus some examples of spreads from the publication, to give an overview of the form and content of the practical outcomes. Note that the bottom exhibition image here shows Joe, Billy and Ken from the allotment, looking at the exhibition - an unfamiliar territory, but they appreciated the work we had made to record it and them.



Figure 104 - David Lockwood, *The Allotments Exhibition at the VG&M*, (Ken, Joe and Billy from the plot in the bottom image) (2019), digital photographs.

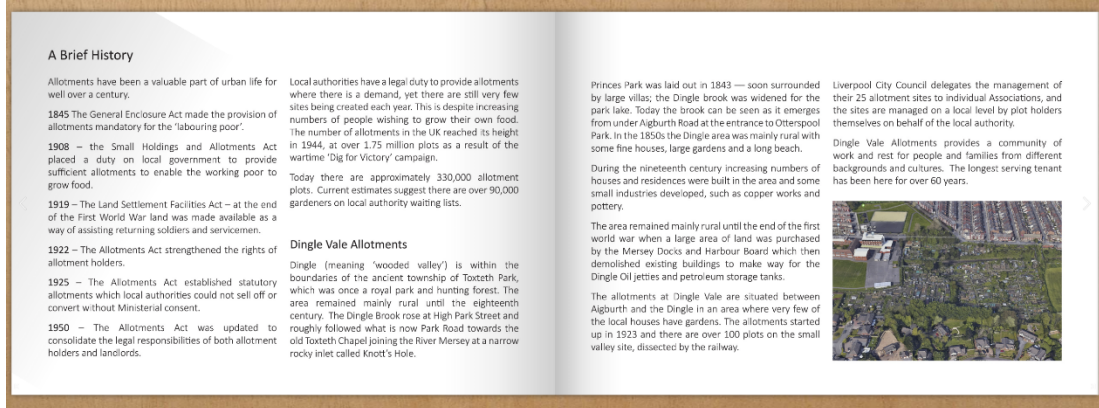


Figure 105 - Spreads from the exhibition publication - *The Allotments*, screenshots by author.

A morning walk around Dingle Vale Allotments to listen to its sounds and consider its harvests, March 2019

Green gates, padlock. Sign: 'Dingle Vale Allotments'. Gas bottles – large orange cone, plastic bag, rotted bin, compost area, broken fence, half a metal barrel. Trees. Cherry blossom. Sign: ASBESTOS LEAVE IT ALONE – red letters faded by sun and rain. **Danger...Leave it alone – Don't move it Don't touch it Don't break it up Don't move it to your plot.** Woodland path, rubbish, shiny piece of mirror, manure ...street houses beyond the fence – bin wagon backing up, shouted conversation. Sign: 'No Dumping Your Rubbish – any offenders caught fly-tipping on this area will be subject to prosecution.' Placard in top of orange cone. Sign: 'Wood chip free'. Wood chip. 2 forks, 2 spades, small purple frame, little blackboard. 'Manure' £3, Joe D. Sign: ASIAN HORNET Please keep a look out for the Asian Hornet. If you see one try to catch it alive in a container and freeze it then email alertnonnative... or tell Paul – at plot – or Barry – at plot 73. Photo: Asian Hornet and English Hornet. Photo with a message: 'Asian Hornet has yellow legs and one yellow stripe near its tail' – The Asian Hornet has been in France for 5 years and lives on honey-bees and other beneficial insects. One nest was found in Somerset and destroyed last year. It is expected to come from France through British Ports such as Dover and Liverpool (no date). A newspaper article on the noticeboard – 'Barry the Bee' Liverpool Echo (2016): SWARMY WEATHER – HONEY WE'RE HOME 'Thousands of bees converge on city restaurant...' ...A man's voice: "Hello, Eddie." Sky – battleship grey. A goldfinch flashes across path. Sign: "the wheelbarrow lives here so please return me and if I get a puncture tell a committee member. Please don't mix cement in me." Rusty wheelbarrow, blue water trough, two full water troughs. Rusty barrow, old barrow, broken chairs, shopping trolley on grass, blue tarpaulin over trailers, metal fence frames. Raspberries. Tarmac path, patches of moss, metal fencing, double fencing. Clean it Up or Pay the Fine Maximum penalty £1000. Liverpool CC. Railway line. Football noises from the playground. Birds singing. Traffic. Cackling muggles. Perimeter paths. Walk. Walk. Litter between the fences, between the school and allotments, hillocks of wild grass. Plastic chair. Broken bench, plastic chair with rusted legs. Path. Yellow bush. Large patch of rhubarb. Walk. Walk. Trees. Bright red 19. Overgrown plots. Daffodils. Rose bush, no flowers. Boys playing football over the fence. Sounds of the railway. Another plot. Greenhouse – panes gone, panel missing. Half a roof, corrugated plastic lying on the ground. Plastic toy, small red shed, tarpaulin. Old industrial clamp. Bits of wood. Trees whispering. **One lone magpie at the top of the tallest tree.** ...Apples, Blenheim orange. Rhubarb, dark ruby stems. Fourteen little raised beds, woodchip. An elegant cherry tree surrounded by pale yellow primroses. Little green shed. Greenhouse. Shed. Overgrown grass. Salmon coloured tulips. Bricks like dominoes. **Pale dwarf daffodils, almost white.** Poly-tunnel full of spades. Bags. Compost. Canes. Houses beyond the wall, fragile tree – magpie's nest. Large patch of brown grass... blackbird sings and sings... Plum tree... An old bath covered in ivy, raspberry, ivy along the wall. A muddy path. Barrow of white and purple crocuses. Muddy path. Panes of glass by fence. **A ghost of a greenhouse, skeletal frame – grass growing inside.** Plastic composter. Concrete fence, a little house on its own...tin bath full of old rain, soggy, muggy decaying leaves... Mossy ground – a path of soft dark, green moss. Chickweed. Canes, an old wheelbarrow...so much depends upon...dark, rusted, decaying wheelbarrows. There are no chickens here, the **rain barrels are broken and old.** Diamond pattern, plastic-covered wire fence. Thick plastic sheeting. Concrete slabs. Part of a wall has fallen down. White flowers. Tiny flowers, ivy on the ground, covering the fence...sheds, greenhouses, little plots, plastic boxes, lots of rain barrows – **a little city left behind.** Bottles on canes, green netting. Green fence. eleven bee-hives. White cherry tree...slope ahead, canes and cutting... **rich smell of earth and juniper...**muddy path, grass, clusters of pink flowers...trampoline. Blue fence, plastic flowers, leaves, plastic bundles of clover, large rusted metal butterfly. Crazy paving in the grass, a gate creaks, blows open. Pigeons circle overhead. Host of yellow daffodils ...peace, quiet. The sun warms the soil. Life moves slowly.



Plots

They have lived forgotten designations,
this small city of men in dens;
in the dirty city streets,
on the smoky river –
they know how to clean ships
with limited implements
how to source trees from every
county in England but Lancashire,
how to hold broken hearts
like familiar coats with many stitches.
Beneath the sun, in praise of rain
they turn the earth for optimistic seeds.
They meet on cold mornings
for warming tea in ancient ceremony.



Paddy - retired dock worker
Plot 20 for 21 years

"I was a ship scaler...and I worked at Cammell Lairds for 17 years. It's cleaning the ship, going down the tanks and that, you know...Does your head in an' all...cleaning a tank out – all the oil – you can do anything scaling, even wash the ship down. I was about 18 when I started – up to the 90s. I wouldn't say I'm retired. I'm 72 now. ...I grow everything bar bananas ...some people say everything but a moustache and a beard...I grow bedding plants. I used to do chrysanthi but it's too much messing...I come about 4 times a week and Joe helps. Onions are my favourite – the giant onions-Kelsae and the ordinary ones are Turbo. We've got apples, plums and pears. Do you like rhubarb, yourself?" (Paddy)



Ken - retired farmhand
Waste land, no number plot on the hill for 6 months



Oz and Beryl - retired illustrator and A&E senior sister
Plot 25 for 10 years



Dave - retired farm and building worker
Plot 34 and 36 for 14 years

Arthur Lockwood - extracts from an interview with Pauline Rowe, March 2019

"I started off at Bourville School of Art an adjunct to Cadbury's who were Quakers – it became Birmingham School of Art – it was an independent art school run by the council in the end...Education in Art has changed so dramatically, this was the very traditional academic training in the 50s – drawing based...
...I'll obviously be doing colour...the things that interest me are the huts themselves. Some are really smart but a lot of them are cobbled together from recycled material, they may have started off as a wooden hut...they've obviously began to leak so they've covered them with plastic or a rubberoid sheeting and put the batons on so they've also got their own kind of structure of their huts. The one thing that turned me on...the pathway, is an extraordinary interesting thing. It's all the photos of the huts. Every one is different. The drums and the seats. Ideally what I'd like to get is the guys sitting on the seats...They've all got different entrances, different gateways. Different kinds of huts. That's probably been painted, that one's covered with green tarpaulin...it's the seats that are varied...
What I'm doing – the basic aim behind everything

is recording...recording THIS time...this point in time, which is quite different from the point of time 30 years ago. If you look at my father's work he saw a different Birmingham, a Birmingham expanding rapidly, moving out of the farmlands. Buying the farms up, building huge estates of council housing, some farms just about survive...my father was catching these last...totally documentary based upon the books I worked on which were documentary books.
In Birmingham...they're very happy to abolish everything. I drew in the Bull Ring as a student. A typical street market when I drew it. It had a man who wrapped himself up in chains – he got himself out of these chains and passed the hat around for pennies. They redeveloped it again and then they redeveloped it again and I drew the third redevelopment. I talked to the surveyor and he said to me if they haven't made their money in 40 years it will be redeveloped again. They only have a short life...The problem with any shopping development is that they get out of date...
[My father] was a commercial artist. These were the farms he painted... ten minutes away...one of his best ones – his kitchen. Stone sink, the copper where

you did the washing, the gas oven and a packet of Lux...it's 1944. The house they lived in was built in the 1930s... of small estate...a standard called Parker Knoll – set down everything – size of rooms. Unfortunately these houses were built out of breeze block and the steel rods rotted – un-mortgageable...they demolished the lot...I actually saw my house demolished. The same philosophy...of what it was – the record of what it was. There's the shed...a record of the bombed building and a record of what had been demolished after the war... again record...
I can't stand technology...half the fun of research was going around to museums and meeting the person...to meet people with knowledge and picking their brains... There are many subjects that have gone, been demolished...we went around factories
In some ways – factories are rather like the allotments...there was one factory which made wire...I went near Christmas and all these guys had little nests, set up as little cocoon-nests, sheltered away from the machines they worked on – and they had got their heaters and their refrigerators and their devices for cooking meals and they were having their Christmas

get-togethers...little habitations...this is the kind of social thing of the men on the allotments, you see. They miss it from the factories or the places they worked in fact." (Arthur Lockwood)



Figure 106 - Spreads from the exhibition publication - The Allotments, screenshots by author.

To promote the exhibition, Pauline sent out publicity packs and organised articles, the most comprehensive of which was in the *Allotment and Leisure Gardener* (below), the online magazine produced by the National Allotment Society and the Liverpool Echo, who sent a reporter down to talk to us in the exhibition (Appendix 3).

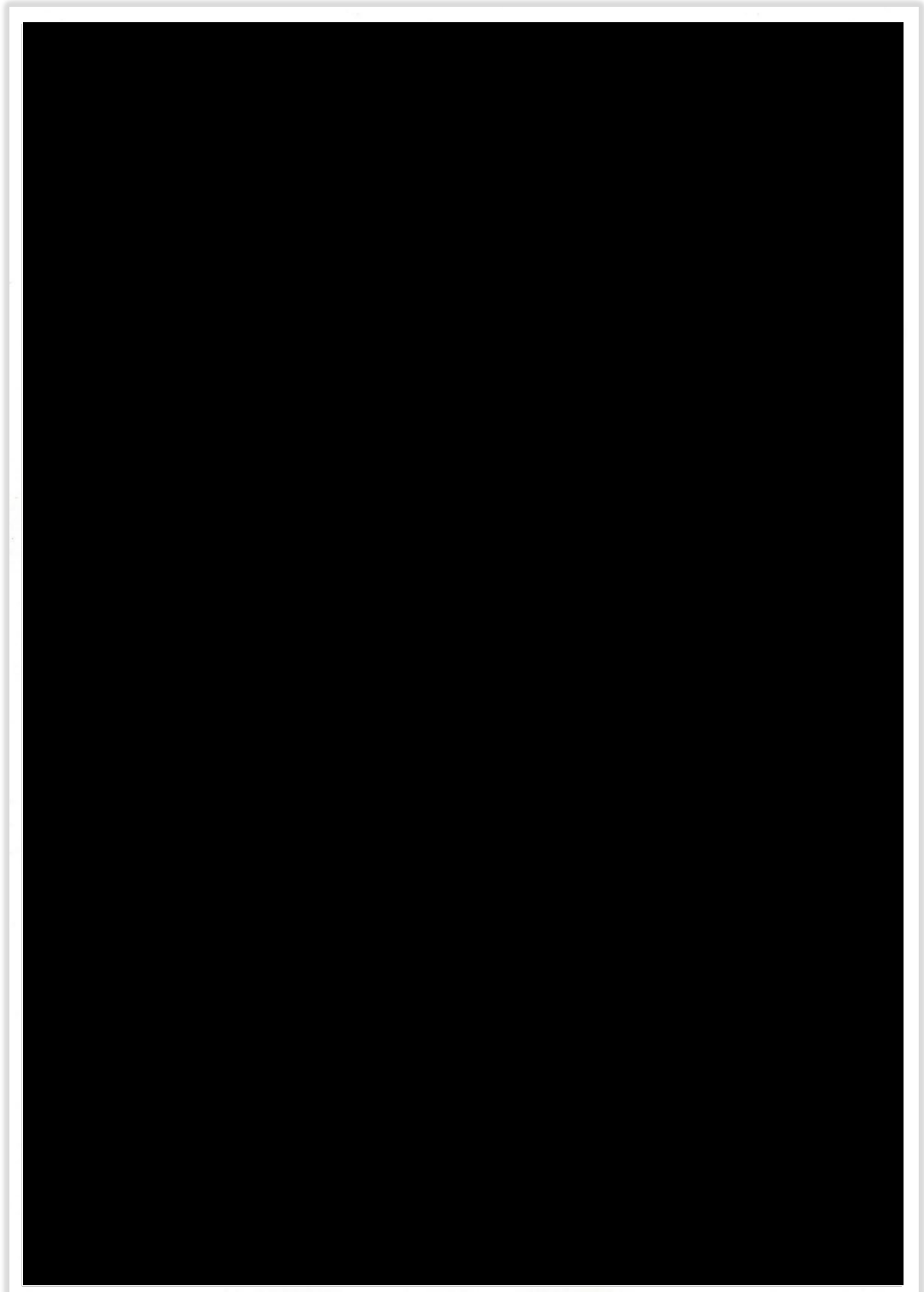


Figure 107 - Article in September 2019 - *Allotment & Leisure Gardener* magazine p.14, screenshot by author.

Finding Fangorn was very much autobiographical as a project and expanded the representation of the urban landscape subject through concept, aesthetics, and delivery method (see Chapter Three, Part 2). *The Allotments* was intended to build on this position by directly working within the aesthetics of traditional camera and film and delivery through physical exhibition space and printed publication. Expanding the subject interpretation through the collaboration of artists and their mediums and methods for a wider and more social audience appeal. Our collaborative approach creating layers of visual and literary interpretation and a broader narrative to represent the purpose and value of this piece of allotment land in this dense urban area. In Robert Adams' terms, the three verities (discussed in Chapter Three, Part 1, p92), are reflected in several ways. Autobiography through the tenants themselves, their histories and experiences of that land, geography through the reflection of the importance of this land in its urban environment for the tenants, and metaphor through the cycle of life, an escape from the every day, a bonding of minds and souls with the purpose to make and grow.

Whilst there was local and national coverage of the exhibition, the success of this wider audience appeal intention was somewhat borne out by the review and interview by the reporter for the Liverpool Echo. Although the Echo cannot be seen as a bastion of the arts, Amanda Draper, Curator of Art & Exhibitions at the VG&M, expressed appreciation of the principle of the position and value of this article as the Echo is very much a local newspaper. The paper had never covered any of VG&Ms exhibitions before. The fact that they were interested in *The Allotments* project implies the subject matter and our approach to it, had real human interest and appeal to that local community, which arts organisations can sometimes find difficult to tune in to, and in the Echo's words they were "championing the Liverpool city region and telling the stories of its remarkable people" (Echo, 2024).

Chapter Three

My Journey: Expanding on the Commonplace

Part IV: The New West (2020)

It's a landscape that has to be seen to be believed. And, as I say on occasion, it may have to be believed in order to be seen.
N. Scott Momaday ('The People (to 1806)', 1996)

Here, Momaday was talking about the American West, and its history conjures many images even though I am not American, symbolising a vast wilderness and the endeavours to tame the land along with its native occupants. The explorers who set out knowing nothing of what was ahead, the pioneers who then trailed behind and discovered how to adapt to their new surroundings, and the settlers who followed and learned to develop and utilise or exploit the environment. The West, as was documented by the New Topographics photographers, had significantly changed because of the impact of settlers, and maybe in Momaday's words, you would have to believe in what the West was before to be able to see that position at all now. Pioneer artists and photographers, such as Timothy O'Sullivan and William H. Jackson's early land survey photographs of the 1860s-80s, captured vast areas of land that were previously unrecorded and untouched, but also the very start of the development of the landscape as it was being settled (Chapter One, page 49). In contrast, the images of Robert Adams, 100 years later, can be seen as mirroring our changing concepts of landscape because they focus directly on human impact and the removal of wilderness (Chapter One, page 58).

In my third and final project, *The New West* (2020), I set out to explore the experience of these pioneer photographers of the old West and with perceptions of the past and knowledge of the present, reflect these experiences into a contemporary environmental arena to comment on our actions and the future of wilderness and the human developed landscape. The underlying concepts for the project come from the joining of dots between inspiration from research into the historic American geographical surveys in Chapter One, Joan Fontcuberta's practice in *Landscape without Memory* (2005) discussed in Chapter Two, page 81, and watching my son play the video console game, *Red Dead Redemption 2* (2018), set in frontier America.

Fontcuberta's book *Landscape without Memory* (2005) was examined by Christopher Burnett in *Reframing the New Topographics* (2013) with reference to the exhibition because of his avant-garde experimental notions of creating images that are often fictitious in concept and applying this to the landscape photography genre to break away from the ambition of the objective

document. In the work, he creates images using cartography software to generate virtual landscapes synthesised from small segments of photographs and paintings as an input for the software to translate and interpret. Fontcuberta used *Terragen* software, which from the developers: “is a powerful solution for building, rendering, and animating realistic natural environments...Replicate real-world terrains by loading existing heightfields” (Planetside Software, 2023). In some respects, as the developers probably intended, the software creates pictorial clichés - grand mountainous regions with blue skies presented with a picturesque aesthetic of lighting effects and colour tone. Fontcuberta throws a challenge to the future of photography and questions both nature and the representation of nature through idealised models. As painting was felt to be challenged by photography at its invention, with its ability to accurately document (through the capture of information and detail), the computer and artificial intelligence, with its growing capabilities, may feel like it challenges photography by being able to image the imaginary and seemingly impossible.



Figure 108 - Joan Fontcuberta, page spreads originally published in *Landscapes Without Memory*, 2005.

The game of *Red Dead Redemption 2* (2018) (RDR2) is set in an imaginary open world based on the American West of the late 1800s. Played properly, your initial character, Arthur Morgan, navigates and explores the territories of the game as he undertakes tasks set to develop his notoriety and wealth. As I watched my son play the game, I noted that very early on, a camera appears in your character’s satchel, and given a bit of experimenting, I discovered that Arthur could essentially become a photographer with the ability to document and capture the environments he (you) sees and experiences. The next discovery was that when you start the

game, you are given a small, limited map based on 'as far as you can see' and to grow this map to the ultimate limits of the computer-generated environment, you would have to ride out, explore and find out where these limits are. Thus, ignoring the developer's intention for the game, the concept behind my new project started to evolve as a pioneer and photographer avatar exploring and capturing the virtual landscapes in RDR2. This enabled me to study this experience in reference to the work produced by the geological surveyors of the American West in the 1860s-80s as they explored and documented that landscape for the surveys. Underpinning this activity was also the notion that these original surveys ultimately led to the settling and populating of these Western spaces and the change from wilderness to urban 'altered' landscapes as we know them today and that I might be able to reflect on the impact of these events through the virtual process I was undertaking. In Robert Adams' terms of a good landscape, metaphor was the major element here given the geography was virtual and the autobiography was the memories and idealised concepts of a landscape as it had been (ours and also the avatar's diary entries).

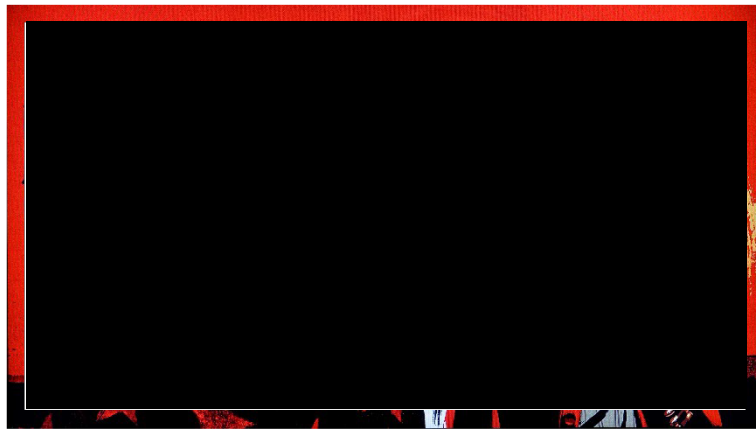


Figure 109 - RDR2 opening intro and loading screen for PS4, screenshot by author.

The narrative of the game centres on the character Arthur Morgan (shifts to John Marston after Arthur was killed later in the games own narrative sequence) and takes place in a fictitious version of the Western, Midwestern, and Southern United States. The user can freely explore the dynamic open world of the game, and the unexplored country offers a variety of landscapes, from deserts to swamps and has a selection of urban areas, from towns and cities to homesteads. RDR2 takes place in five imaginary states of the United States. The states of New Hanover, Ambarino, and Lemoyne are north and east, and the states of New Austin and West Elizabeth are west and south. Areas can be compared to real American locations, such as Lemoyne, which was made up of plantations that resemble Louisiana and the French colony town of Saint Denis, which was comparable to New Orleans - see map illustration over the page.



Figure 110 - Large Detailed Map of Red Dead Redemption 2 World, from <https://www.mapsland.com/games/large-detailed-map-of-red-dead-redemption-2-world>.

To talk through the process of playing and using the game, my avatar Arthur started out in a campsite with a small visible area of the map in the middle of the five states and within a short period of gameplay received the camera in his satchel (Figure 111).

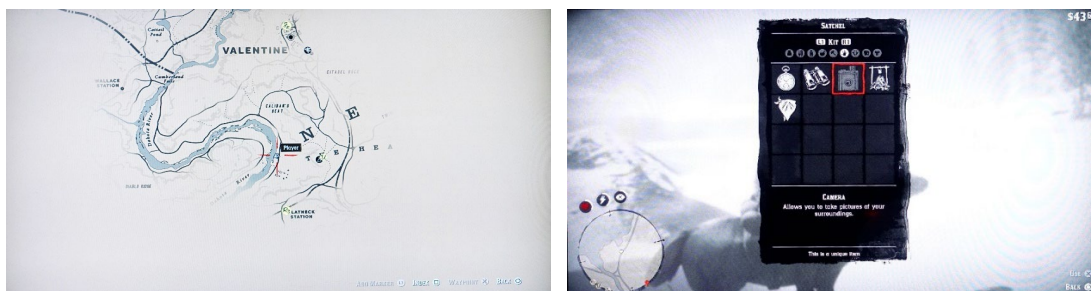


Figure 111 - RDR2 initial map and satchel contents, screenshots by author.

Avoiding the developer's sequenced gameplay and activities, I could just ride out into the terrain, and as I did so the visible map expanded, which allowed me to revisit areas and identify locations where I wanted to make photographs. There was an equivalence of certain realities in the game, such as weather conditions, which could change from sunny to rainy or flat grey, climate conditions from snowy in the North to desert in the South and time of day and light levels, with each day cycle being shortened to approximately 48 minutes of gameplay. So, I might ride out to an area to take photographs but find it has taken so much time that it was nearly dark when I get there, or equally the weather or quality of light wasn't what I wanted for the image. In real terms, this was just like the experience of a landscape photographer as the choice of landscape and composition was one element, but the quality of light and time of day were critical to the

impact, tone and mood of the recording of that view. Just like in reality though, you could wait and observe the changing weather or light and even set up camp and go to sleep, waking up in the morning to different conditions. Additionally, as a pioneer living in that period, you could be killed as you undertook the exploration, either by misadventure, wild animals or bandits, even if you were not playing the official routes of the game. Through my explorations I died at least six times to achieve the outcomes, the strangest of which was being butted off the top of a mountain by a horned goat.

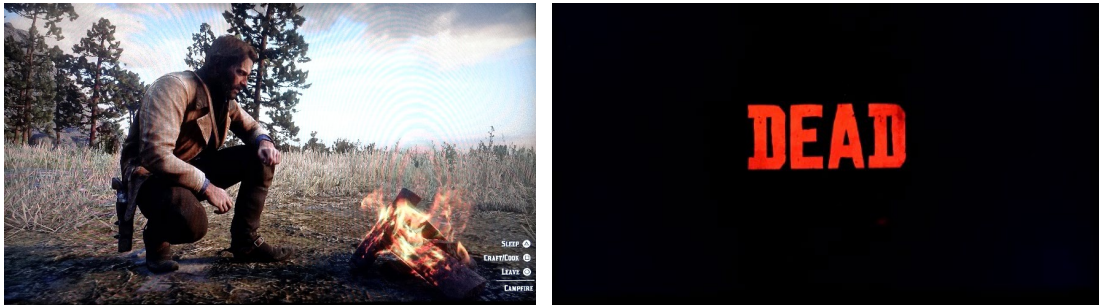


Figure 112 - RDR2 setting up a campsite and *DEAD* screen text displayed when you die, screenshots by author.

To take pictures, you climb off your horse and take the camera out of your satchel. Often my son Hugo would do this activity with me, and I would instruct him where I thought I wanted to go on the map or visual horizon and he would ride the avatar out to the spot and get the camera out ready for my use, much like a traditional photographer's assistant - see the sequence below, from map position, to view through the camera, to final image taken by the camera for download.



Figure 113 - RDR2 *Grizzlies West* map location and view through the camera at the location, screenshots by author.



Figure 114 - David Lockwood, *Grizzlies West*, (2020), digital image.

RDR2 is said to have one of the most dramatic and sublime explorable landscapes in current gaming, and not surprisingly the content, composition and rendering of these vistas would look to have been inspired by the 19th century American art movement, the Hudson River School. The movement has already been touched upon in Chapter One for the importance of its representation of the West and how America saw itself, as artists such as Albert Beirdsadt joined expeditions and drove the movement westward from the 1850s-70s. A key aesthetic and style adopted by the movement and of potential influence to the RDR2 developers was the *illumination* style of the Hudson River School, and the dramatic rendering of light as well as composition to create awe-inspiring landscapes. Rockstar Games, the creators of RDR2, have at times welcomed the comparison and then denied its influence, so any notions of this inspiration are based only on visual comparison to the captured gameplay only, as shown in figures 115 - 116 and 117 - 118.

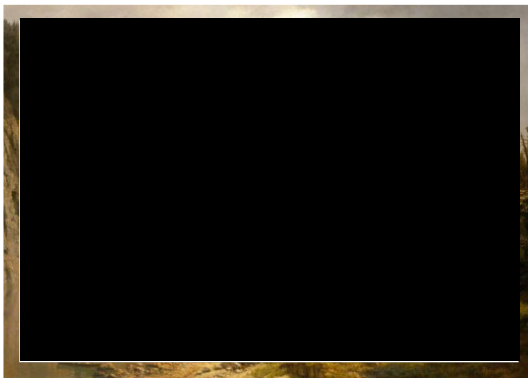


Figure 115 - Albert Beirdsadt, *The Sierra Nevada* (1868), oil on canvas.

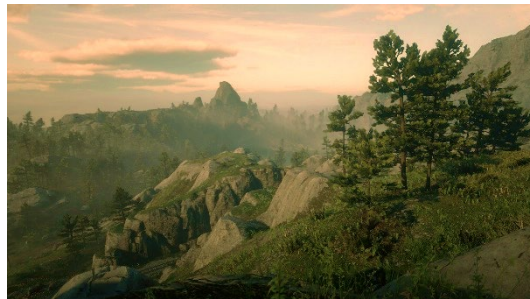


Figure 116 - David Lockwood, *The Loft 2* (2020), digital image.

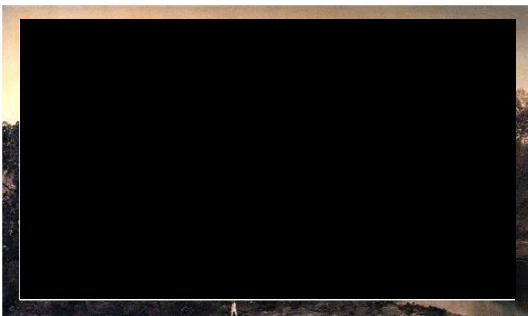


Figure 117 - William Louis Sonntag, *River View* (1864), oil on canvas.

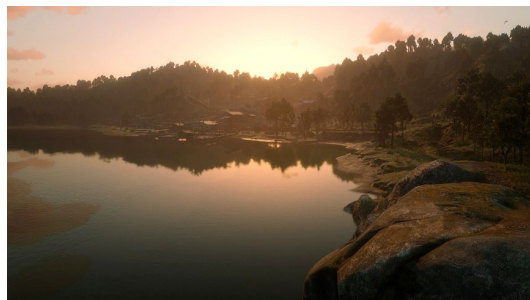


Figure 118 - David Lockwood, *Lannahechee River 5* (2020), digital image.

Having investigated the act of being a photographer in the game and the landscape it places in front of me, I next needed to consider the intentions of the photographers who captured the West in that period. Timothy O'Sullivan was of most interest to me because of the wealth of material he created on the surveys and the influence of the neutral aesthetics and approach of his work to the New Topographics photographers. Jenkins states in the catalogue of the exhibition: "When Timothy O'Sullivan photographed the American West, he was working without precedent. Many of his subjects had never been photographed and he was working in

a medium which had virtually no past.” (Adams, R., & Jenkins, W. 1975, p. 6). Whilst there may have been no precedent for the photographing of these landscapes, there certainly were artist-painted interpretations of it, and I can't but think that O'Sullivan has some artistic sensibility about at least the composition of the subject, as can be seen in his photographs. However, in that period, as Lauren LaFauci discusses: “the perceived ‘author’ of the pictures was not a human, but rather a joint venture between nature and machine” (LaFauci, L. E. 2005). This has led to speculation as to the artistic qualities of such work, including Ansel Adams stating he felt O'Sullivan's images were *surrealistic and disturbing* (Salvesen, B. 2008). Many of the New Topographics photographers considered the images without style as they were about the function of recording a place and valued this approach and aesthetic as it made the images ultimately feel more documentary in outcome.

To better understand how to select and approach the potential photographic subjects within the game, in relation to the content and style of O'Sullivan's works around that time, I looked for a large and accessible collection of his work. Through searching in the Library of Congress online catalogue, I discovered Lot 7096, titled *Photographs of the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel*, containing 179 images taken by O'Sullivan between 1867-72 as part of Clarence King's surveys as commissioned by Engineer Dept.: War Department, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army (Literature Review, page 34).



Figure 119 - Library of Congress, Search for *Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel*, Contributor - O'Sullivan, Timothy H, from <https://www.loc.gov/search/?all=true&fa=contributor:o%27sullivan,+timothy+h&q=Geological+Exploration+of+the+Fortieth+Parallel>, screenshot by author.

As a starting point to understanding the subject choices and frequency, I broke down the subjects photographed in this collection by subject and quantity, with some visual examples below:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Canyons [34] | Buttes [4] | Furnaces [1] |
| Mountains [29] | Mills [3] | Housing Developments [1] |
| Lakes & Ponds [15] | Springs [3] | Railroad Bridges [1] |
| Rock Formations [15] | Deserts [2] | Rocks [1] |
| Frontier & Pioneer Life [8] | Canyon [1] | Sailboats [1] |
| Waterfalls [7] | Cityscape Photographs [1] | Smelters [1] |
| Cliffs [6] | Construction [1] | Volcanic Rock [1] |
| Rivers [6] | Dunes [1] | Volcanoes [1] |

Rock Formations



Figure 1201 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Sphinx Rocks, Idaho* (1868), photographic print.

Lakes



Figure 121 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Lake Marian, Humboldt Mts* (1868), photographic print.

Mountains



Figure 122 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Lake Lall, Uinta Mountains, Utah* (1869), photographic print.

Mills



Figure 123- Timothy O'Sullivan, *Savage Works, Virginia [City], Nevada* (1868), photographic print.

With this list of possible subjects and photographic style in mind, I rode out into the landscape in search of untouched wilderness, but also the evidence of the settling and developing of the land into what we now understand it to have become. Below is a comparative selection between O'Sullivan's images and those I started making in the game.



Figure 124 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Cottonwood Lake, Utah (Wahsatch)* (1869), photographic print.



Figure 125 - David Lockwood, *Owanjila 4* (2020), digital image.



Figure 126 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Virginia [City], Nevada* (1867), photographic print.



Figure 127 - David Lockwood, *Valentine* (2020), digital image.



Figure 128 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Warrenton, Va. Street in front of courthouse* (1862), photographic print.



Figure 129 - David Lockwood, *Saint Denis 21* (2020), digital image.

The game developers clearly understood the economic change of land use to give a more realistic user experience of the different states in that period of history. I discovered both urban industrialisation and industrial processes in unsettled spaces, such as sawmills and Kerosene & Tar oil refineries, as did O'Sullivan in his explorations and photographs.



Figure 130- Timothy O'Sullivan, *Gould & Curry Mill, Virginia [City, Nev.]* (1868), photographic print.



Figure 131 - David Lockwood, *Saint Denis 3* (2020), digital image.

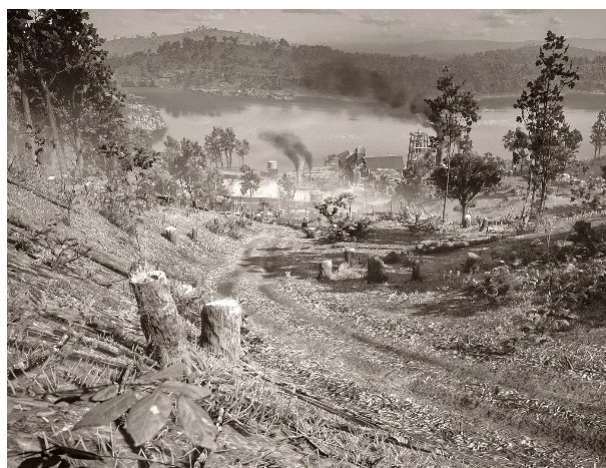


Figure 132 - David Lockwood, *Annesburg 2* (2020), digital image.

There was also the opportunity to not only make images with the style and subject presence of O'Sullivan, but to consider a kind of homage through the visual themes or motifs of other photographers who have appeared in this study. Likewise, preceding photographers have also chosen similar subjects to O'Sullivan. For example, his image of settlers starting occupancy in Nevada in 1868 was echoed by Robert Adams photographing new development tract houses in Jefferson County over a hundred years later. Using a similar subject and viewpoint, I in turn created an image of the housing developments on the outskirts of the city of Saint Denis seen within the game.



Figure 133 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Ft. Ruby, Nevada* (1868), photographic print.



Figure 134 - Robert Adams, *Jefferson County* (1974), photographic print.



Figure 135 - David Lockwood, *Saint Denis 32* (2020), digital image.

There are further examples of visual homage based on the work of Ansel Adams, Richard Misrach and Frederick Sommer below.

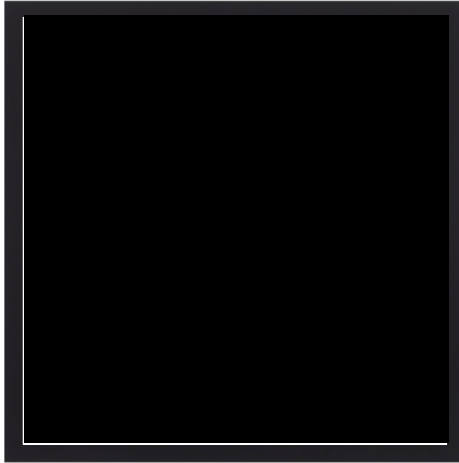


Figure 136 - Richard Misrach, *Saguaro Cactus* (1975), photographic print.



Figure 137 - David Lockwood, *Cholla Springs 6* (2020), digital image

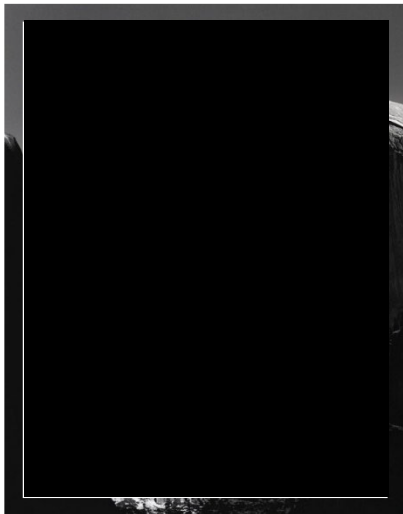


Figure 138 - Ansel Adams, *Moon and Half Dome* (1960), photographic print.



Figure 1393 - David Lockwood, *Aurora Basin* (2020), digital image.



Figure 140 - Fredrick Sommer, *Arizona Landscape*, (1943), photographic print.



Figure 141 - David Lockwood, *Gaptooth Ridge 2* (2020), digital image.

Looking at broader subjects, I was also able to reflect on the documenting of death within the landscape through earlier works by O'Sullivan, taken in the 1861-65 American Civil War, compared with Sommer and later Robert Adams.



Figure 1424 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Field Where General Reynolds Fell, Gettysburg* (1863), photographic print.



Figure 143 - Fredrick Sommer, *Jack Rabbit* (1939), photographic print.



Figure 144 - Robert Adams, *On Interstate 25* (1975), photographic print.



Figure 145 - David Lockwood, *Rio Bravo 3* (2020), digital image.

Having now produced a range of images based on the selected subjects within the game, I started to consider potential outcome formats that could be used to support and construct the narrative I intended. My original thoughts were to turn these digital images of a virtual world into tangible, real physical objects and photographs to experiment with their sense of authenticity as a physical document. The concept of the documentary nature of the photographed landscape has been discussed by Liz Wells in her book *Land Matters* (2011). Writing *Photography is thus powerful in contributing to specifying spaces as particular sorts of places. It constructs a point of view, a way of seeing which is underpinned by the authority of the literal* (Wells 2011, p. 7). She is referencing photography's perceived authority as a mechanical medium, objectively recording what was in front of the camera, but building on the position of Jenkins in the catalogue, she sees the additional opportunity this provides to create similarly commanding work through the

manipulation of this position. *Through re-deploying this constructed sense of authenticity photography can be equally powerful as a means of interrogating environment through experimentation and critical exposures* (Wells 2011, p. 7).

Using the same late 1800s wet collodion photographic process that O'Sullivan originally worked with to make his glass plate negatives when in the field, I could reproduce my digital images on to black lacquered metal plates, which were known as tintypes. The tintype process would create a direct positive of the image as opposed to glass negatives, which would have to be later printed by O'Sullivan on photosensitive paper to get this positive version. From this, I would get a very real physical outcome that would span both the old and the new - an image created using a vintage process on a metal plate that you would hold to look at. I have a whole plate, 6.5x8.5" image size camera that I had recently restored to working condition and having researched the tintype process, I purchased the wet collodion chemicals and blackened aluminium plates needed to make the prints. I planned to set up the camera to copy a digital image displayed on my computer monitor (as if the camera were pointed at a real landscape scene) with the intention that this would enable the reproduction of these game images onto the physical metal plates.



Figure 146 - David Lockwood, *London Stereoscopic Ltd (c. 1895) Whole Plate (6.5x8.5") Camera with Emil Busch 1.6 Inch f/7.7 Bistelar Series II No. 3 Lens* (2020) digital photograph.



Figure 147 - David Lockwood, *Plate Camera / Monitor Copying Setup* (2020), digital photograph.



Figure 148 - David Lockwood, *Plate Camera Viewing Screen Image* (2020), digital photograph.



Figure 149 - David Lockwood, *Collodion Plate Tests of 'Grizzlies West 8'* digital image (2020), digital photograph.

However, after learning and experimenting with this process by producing a range of test plates, I concluded I wasn't happy with the tonal range and pictorial quality of the results, as they didn't feel or look like real subjects. This may have been as a result of the particular collodion process I was using or that I was reproducing the image via a computer monitor rather than a real-life subject. Following discussions with my supervisor Sarah Fisher, she highlighted the facilities of the Open Eye Gallery, its 360° VR camera recording facilities, Matterport digital platform account and the potential opportunity for the work to be submitted to the *Peer to Peer: UK/HK* (Hong Kong) Festival for Digital Arts in November 2020 as represented by the Gallery. Rethinking the outcome and its narrative, I drew upon concepts I had developed in an old project, *Times Past and Present* (1990) that had played on my early employment experience of working for a museum by creating fabricated archivally presented documents and photographs that explored notions of fictions, realities and archive (Figures 150 and 151 below).



Figure 150 - David Lockwood, *Dukes Dressing Room* (1990), photographic print.

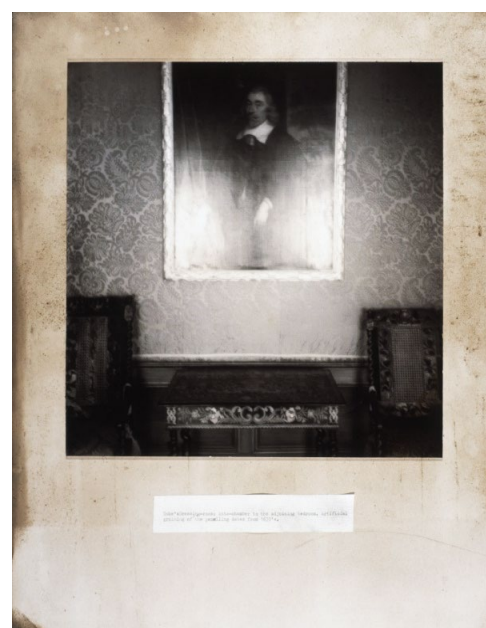


Figure 151 - David Lockwood, *The Museum Room* (1990), photographic print.

With this approach and opportunity in mind, I revisited the O'Sullivan works in the Library of Congress archive to consider the presentation and mounting of his prints, with the idea of turning the digital images made in the game into a fictitious narrative record of an expedition, presented in an era-appropriate format as would be found in the Library archive. His images in the Library Lot 7096 have, as stated, 'No known restrictions on publication', so they were perfect as the basis for this new concept. Using Adobe Photoshop, I copied the textures, tones and transparent corner fixings of the original O'Sullivan mounts in the Library of Congress archive and removed the images and text. These were then replaced with one of my images from the game, and its title (usually the name of the virtual place in the game where it was taken) was written with a

handwriting font to look like pencil writing. Using a similar font, size and style, I also replaced the original title and information text printed on each mount, which said:

GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF THE FORTIETH PARALLEL

CLARENCE KING

GEOLOGIST IN CHARGE

T. E. O'SULLIVAN Phot

With the new project text

EXPLORATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL PARALLEL

ARTHUR MORGAN

PHOTOGRAPHER

Below and over the page are visual examples of the flow of this process from the original O'Sullivan mounted print to the digital replacement of his print with the game image onto his mount and the changing of the text on the mount to my new text.



Figure 152 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Lake Lall, Uinta Mountains, Utah* (1869), photographic print.



Figure 153 - David Lockwood, *Grizzlies West 8* (2020), digital image.



Figure 1545 - David Lockwood, *Grizzlies West 8 edit* (2020), digital image.

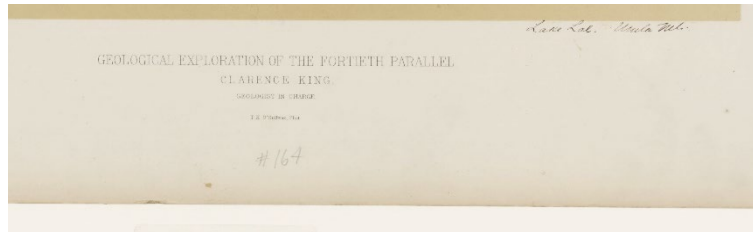


Figure 1556 - Timothy O'Sullivan, *Lake Lall, Uinta Mountains, Utah* (1869), detail of photographic print/mount.

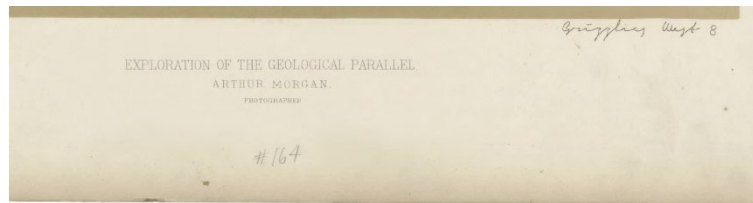


Figure 156 - David Lockwood, *Grizzlies West 8* (2020), detail of digital image.

Arthur Morgan dies at a point, and the avatar character becomes John Marsden as you set off into the desert areas, so the later images were captioned accordingly from this stage onwards.



Figure 157 - David Lockwood, *Rio Bravo 5* (2020), detail of digital image.

The reworked images had the sense of authenticity I originally intended - something that felt on the surface like a tangible historical and archival document to give realism to the fictional narrative they were to construct. However, on their own, the visual-only narrative didn't feel strong enough to convey the concepts of the piece, so I started to consider the additional use of diary-like text in combination to reinforce the personal perspective and journey of the maker. Searching for inspiration for the content and style of this additional text, I went to my research copy of the William H. Jackson book, *Picture Maker of the Old West* (1947).

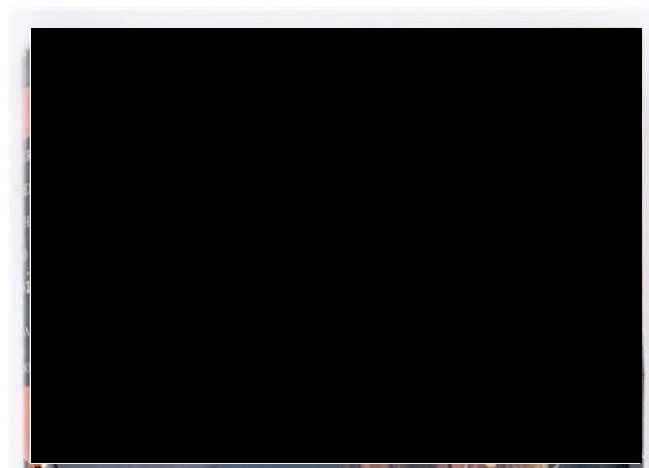


Figure 158 - Jackson, W. and Jackson, C., 1947. *Picture Maker of the Old West*, William H. Jackson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The book uses text written with diary-like prose to support and narrate the photographs it contains, discussing, for example, events on his expeditions, Jackson's intentions and his actions. I also considered other sources of potential inspiration or text. For example, *The New West* (1974) by Robert Adams, contained very personal thoughts about the changing of the landscape, but I ultimately found this too formal and academic in its vocabulary for my purpose. For example, from Adams:

The Mountains

Though the mountains are no longer wild, they still dwarf us and thereby give us courage to look at our mistakes - expressways, Tyrolean villages, and jeep roads. Such things shame us, but they cannot outlast rock; in sunlight they are even, for a moment like trees. (Adams, 2015, p. 125)

I ultimately settled on Jackson's writing as it felt more relevant to the era, a pioneer's photographic experience and was better at conjuring up visual thoughts for a potential audience. Using it as a source to AI rephrase and then re-work within the context of the narrative, I turned selected sections into the diary-like writing I needed to support the narrative of the image structure and sequence for the project. For example, this section of Jackson's writing:

In his pictures the pioneer age would have an immortality...Where else could future generations see the wild majesty of the Western land. High and far, from canyon rim and mountain top, his camera had looked out on the West (Jackson and Jackson, 1947, p. 302)

Became this with an online AI rephrasing tool, some contextual reworking and first-person perspective changes:

The frontier age will have immortality in these pictures. Where else will the wild beauty of the Western land be seen by future generations. High and far, from the canyons and the peaks of the mountains, our cameras looked out to the West.

I then needed a period diary format to display the text, which would also reinforce the fictional story of a photographer in the late 1800s West. Following some research into the form and aesthetic of such a diary, I discovered the *Pocket diary owned by Isaiah Goddard Hacker, a soldier in the Union Army during the American Civil War, 1864*, in the University of Southern California Digital Library. The Library held very high-resolution images of the diary, which were published with public domain rights and are copyright-free. Downloading the digital images of five unused

pages from Hacker's diary, I digitally added my rephrased entries to the pages. Using Adobe Photoshop and a handwriting font which looked visually similar to the original writing in the diary, I wrote and typed with an uneven grey tone to make it look like it was written with a pencil. I was conscious that these diary page images could be barely legible when printed, framed and VR recorded, but this would not matter as the intention was to have a digital pop-up window with fully typed and translated text in the VR presentation for the audience to read clearly when clicked on - it was more about the impression of credibility of the source.

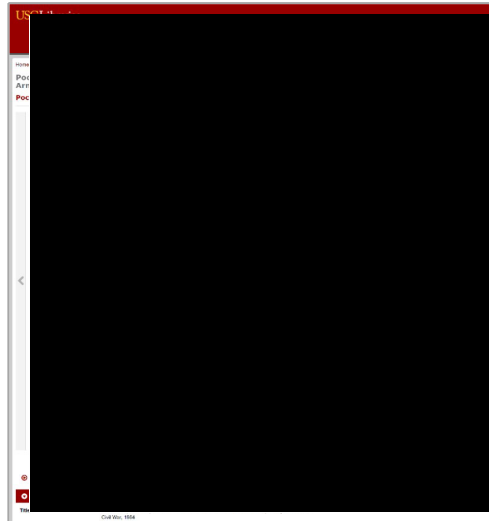


Figure 159 - USC Digital Library, *Pocket Diary Owned by Isaiah Goddard Hacker, a Soldier in the Union Army During the American Civil War, 1864* [Front Cover], from <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll58/id/18639>, screenshot by author.

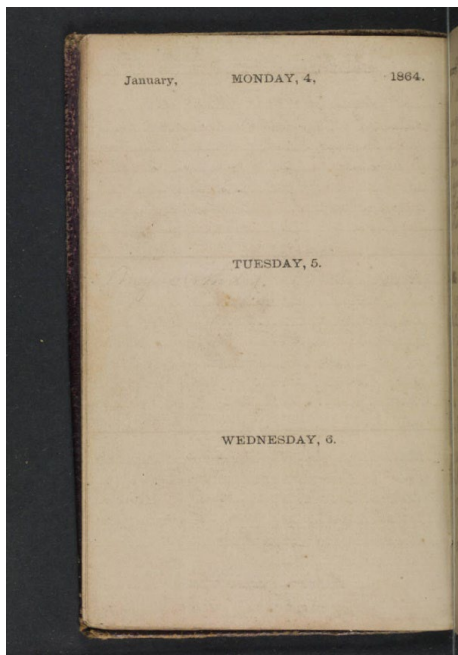


Figure 160 - USC Digital Library, n.d. *Pocket diary owned by Isaiah Goddard Hacker, a soldier in the Union Army during the American Civil War, 1864 January 4 to 6*. digital image.

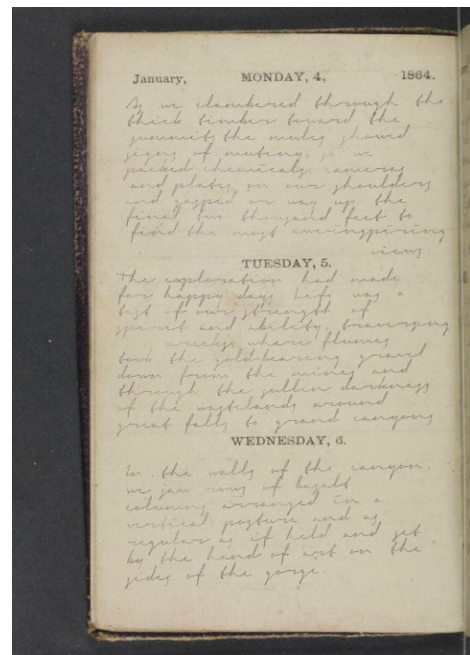


Figure 1617 - David Lockwood (2020) *Pocket Diary Owned by Arthur Morgan - 5 - January 1864*, digital image.

Following are some examples of how the AI rephrased diary text supports the narrative flow and aims of the work. Using a small image selection to outline the intentions and interaction between the two from the beginning image to the last, as the photographer sets out to discover the unexplored natural landscape and recognises the potential changes that have or are coming.



Figure 162 - David Lockwood, *Horseshoe Overlook 3* (2020), digital image.

January

'As we clambered through the thick timber toward the summit, the mules showed signs of mutiny, so we packed chemicals, cameras and plates on our shoulders and gasped our way up the final two thousand feet to find the most awe-inspiring views.

The exploration had made for happy days. Life was a test of our strength of spirit and ability, traversing creeks, where flumes took the gold-bearing gravel down from the mines and through the sullen darkness of the wastelands around great falls to grand canyons.

In the walls of the canyon, we saw rows of basalt columns arranged in a vertical posture and as regular as if held and set by the hand of art on the sides of the gorge.'



Figure 163 - David Lockwood, *Bacchus Bridge 3* (2020), digital image.

March

'It is only through the eye that the mind can gather anything like an adequate conception of the splendour of these waterfalls and we could hear the suppressed rumble, like distant thunder as we approached them today.

The smaller falls broke up into little streams and rushing down from ledge to ledge until they enter the river's bed, it offers a picture of true beauty.

Like the streams, the hastily organised roads thrust rails to the sites of every new strike through the mountains.'



Figure 164 - David Lockwood, *Hennigan's Stead* (2020), digital image.

July

'The real symbol of this land was the railroad and everything related to it. It created a rate of development that seemed almost inhuman, with so much cash subsidy and public land at stake. The movement to the West was going to be bigger than everyone suspected.

I remember the Northern mountains swallowed by starving sawmills, the poisoned rivers on the first frontier, the pale manufacturing smoke lingering over noisy cities.

Looking at the canyons now, the rocks weathered an almost infinite range of ways, and here and there a pine sent its roots into the clefts on the sides as if grappling with its survival.'



Figure 165 - David Lockwood, *Saint Denis 21* (2020), digital image.

November

'I can see there are clear opportunities in this land and imaginations of many men had automatically run to personal benefit schemes - hotels to be constructed overlooking the most preferred geysers, quarter sections to be taken near the canyon, a flock of visitors to be guided at dollars a head. It was a future that was grand and gaudy.

Remembering back to the city, the streets appear as canyons, just as someone once said, but cold and foreboding ones where men grew restless, and the sun shone faintly.'



Figure 166 - David Lockwood, *Cumberland Forest* (2020), digital image.

Memorandum

'To finish the trip we made a two-day journey north through Cumberland Forest, where Adams had stood at the top of the mountains in 1845 and was poet enough to write of a bee buzzing about him as 'a little pioneer of progressing civilizations'.

Looking out at this land, we could but dream of a vast public provenance, secured by a few from ruthless exploitation and exhaustion and whose magnificence would be preserved for the worthy many.

The frontier age will have immortality in these pictures. Where else will the wild beauty of the Western land be seen by future generations. High and far, from the canyons and the peaks of the mountains, our cameras looked out to the West.'

The final selection of forty-eight images was then sequenced by theme and subject and interleaved with the five pages of diary entries that would facilitate the narrative and reading of the work.



Figure 167 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition Image Sequencing Experiments* (2020), digital photograph.

Once sequenced, I designed the exhibition layout for the gallery one space (the first and largest of the gallery rooms) in the Open Eye Gallery, based on each image and diary entry being framed in the A3 black frames I had purchased for the purpose.



Figure 168 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition Layout Plan* (2020), digital image.

To complete the project installation, I also wrote, designed and large format printed a curator's exhibition introduction wall text and a large-scale map of the space in RDR2, with a visual aesthetic to complement the archive image prints (Figures 169 and 170). Additionally, I had been working on a video called *The JOURNEY* (2020) alongside the digital images to help visually illuminate the feel, scale and types of landscape in the game that the character was navigating as I felt this didn't fully come across to anyone who had not played the game. Lastly, I produced a supporting website called *The New West Archive*, which would contain all the digital images taken by the avatars and images of their diary pages so the audience could open and review them in finer detail outside of the VR presentation. The website also aimed to reinforce the work's fictitious historical credibility that would come from accessing it on a site that looks like other genuine institutional image archive sites. Both are discussed in detail later.

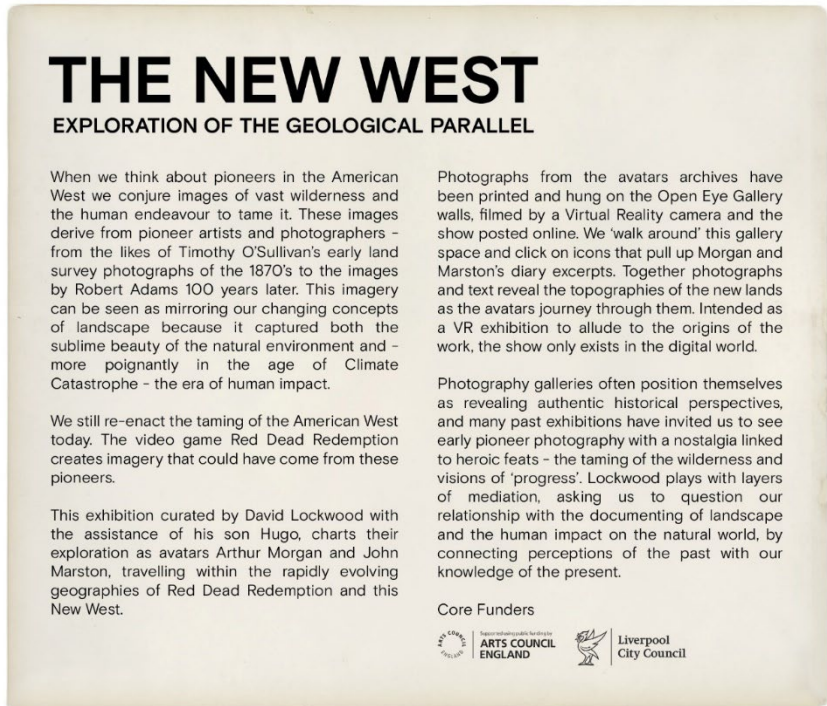


Figure 169 - David Lockwood, *The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel* - Curator's Exhibition Introduction Wall Text (2020), digital image.

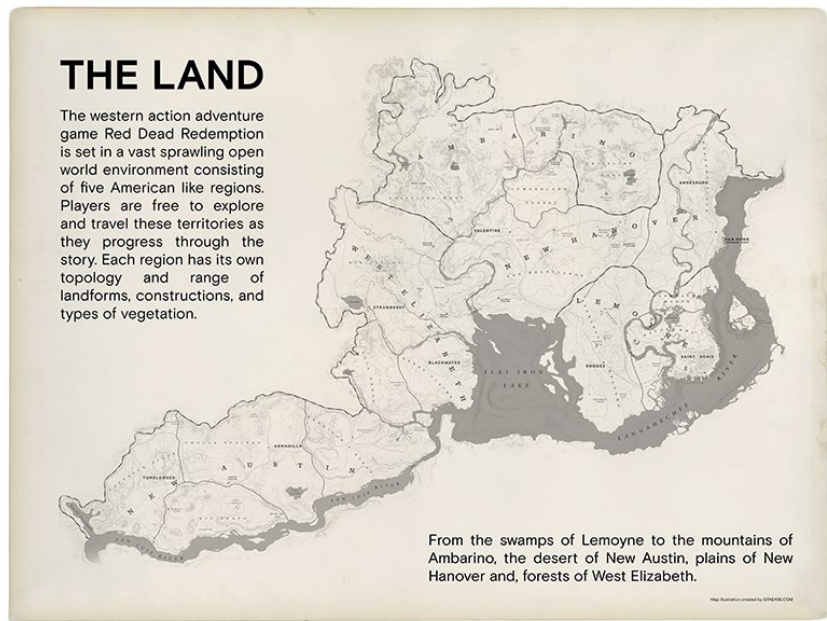


Figure 170 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - The Land Illustration and Wall Text* (2020), digital image.

Over a weekend, we then hung the frames and texts to the layout and also created an additional space with my whole plate camera on a plinth to enable viewers to understand the tools used by the original photographers of the period. A wall-mounted television would be used to show *THE JOURNEY* (2020) video, along with a small bookshelf containing some related books: Robert Adams - *The New West* (1974), Ansel Adams - *Eloquent Light* (1963) and William H. Jackson - *Picture Maker of The Old West* (1947) to make the installation feel authentic.



Figure 171 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Installation Image* (2020), digital image.

Lastly, on the Monday, I utilised the gallery's Ricoh Theta 360° camera with the support of the staff to create a 3D rendering of the exhibition by placing it in multiple defined positions to take 360° images. These separate images were uploaded to the gallery's Matterport active VR space to reconstruct the exhibition back into an online VR site. The exhibition was then taken down, and the space was made good for the next installation.

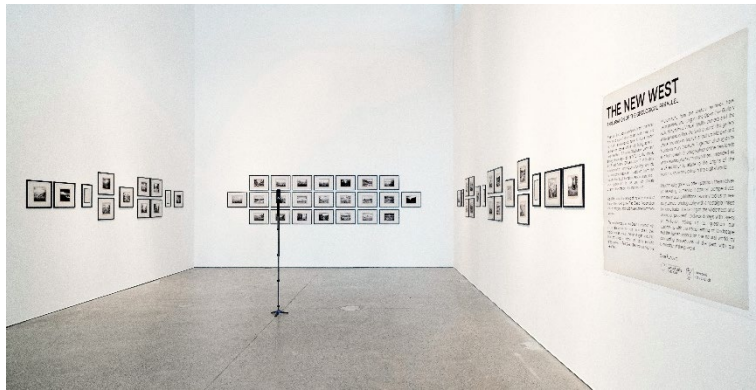


Figure 172 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Installation Showing Ricoh Theta 360 Camera in a Position* (2020), digital image.



Figure 173 - David Lockwood, *The New West Exhibition - Single 360 Degree Installation Image from the Ricoh Theta 360 Camera* (2020), digital image.

Matterport is a 3D spatial mapping company whose digital platform, also called Matterport, hosts and facilitates interactive virtual reality tours and sites of captured and uploaded spaces created by users. The exhibition's Matterport site first created a Dollhouse overview so we could see the 3D space that has been captured. I then made any edits needed to the VR site and finalised it with 'MatterTag' posts linking to additional content such as enlarged, more detailed images that I took of the exhibition with a stills camera at the time, typed more legible versions of the diary text, video and website links.

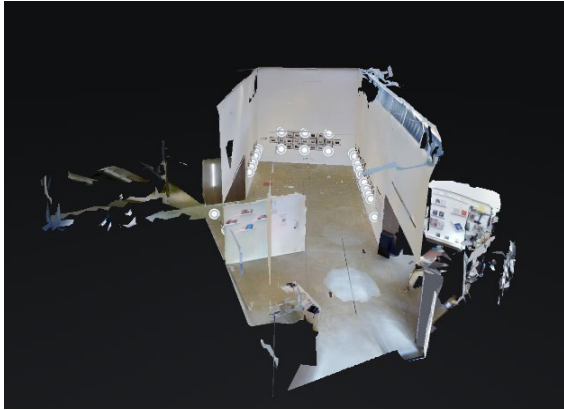


Figure 174 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Dollhouse Views of the VR Space* (2020), digital image.



Figure 175 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - VR Space Showing Mattertag Posts Inserted to Access Additional Multimedia Content* (2020), digital image.

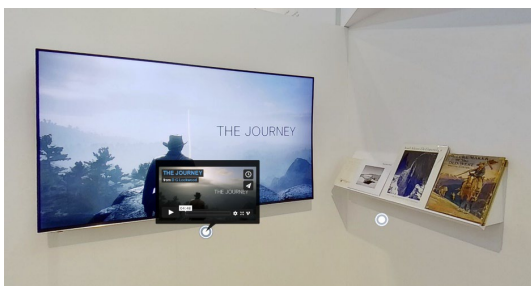


Figure 176 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Mattertag Post Popup for The Journey Video, Vimeo Link* (2020), digital image.

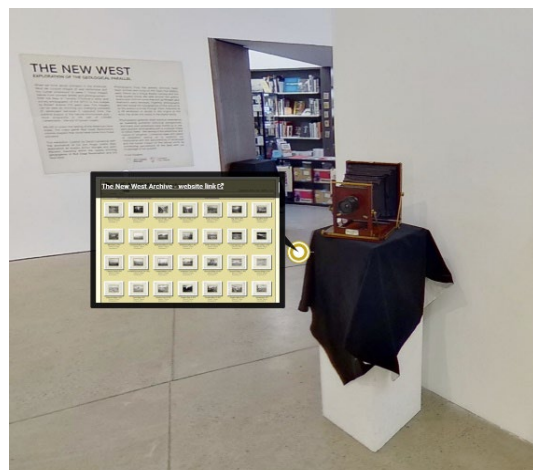


Figure 177 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Mattertag Post Popup for The New West Archive Website Link* (2020), digital image.



Figure 178 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Mattertag Post Popup for Group Image Detail Link* (2020), digital image.



Figure 179 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Mattertag Post Popup Group Image Detail* (2020), digital image.

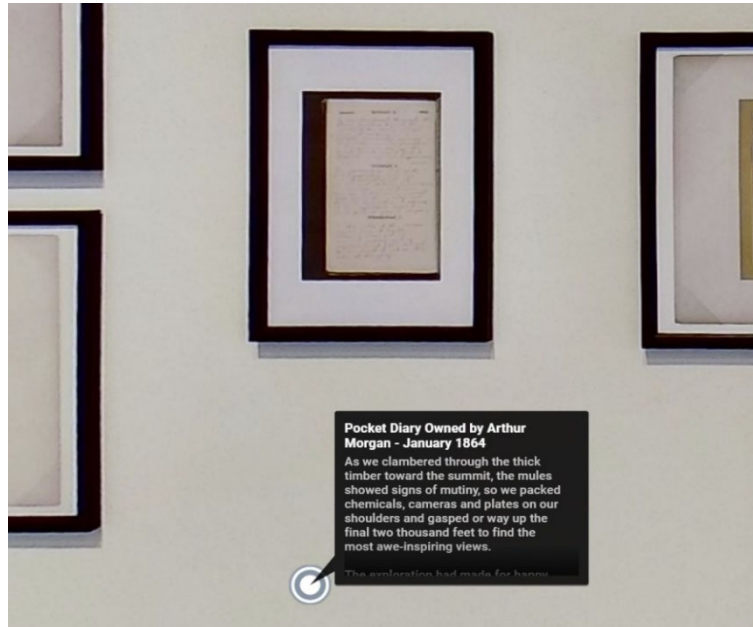


Figure 180 - David Lockwood, *The New West VR Exhibition - Mattertag Post Popup Showing Scrolling Diary Text Detail* (2020), digital image.

Realising there was a limit to the quality and resolution that the Matterport system could display the framed images and given the actual image from RDR2 became quite small within the digital mount board surround, I decided to design and create an additional website to let the audience access and view individual images at a much higher quality and resolution, so the fine detail could be seen. Having spent some time looking at image archive websites such as the Library of Congress and The J. Paul Getty Museum, I decided to design this site as a fictitious archive, in a similar style – layout, access, text content and visuals. Whilst I could have designed it in a much more aesthetic way, once I had registered the name, *The New West Archive* <http://www.thenewwestarchive.com>, I researched different applications for the archive's purpose and found a basic PHP Photo Album application that was most suitable for the purpose, installing this on my hosting account to set the site up. It gave me the ability to create a look, colour scheme and had data fields for image information that matched the real archive sites from which I had taken as inspiration (see Figures 181 and 182). An offline working version of the site can be found in the Appendix 5 and a live link to the site in Appendix 6.



Figure 181 - Library of Congress, Search for Lot 7096, from <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=LOT%207096&fi=number&op=PHRASE&va=exact&col=coll&sg=true&st=gallery>, screenshot by author.

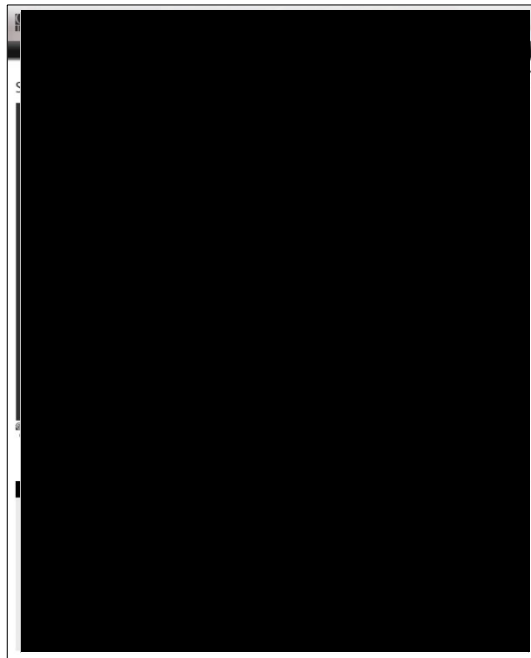


Figure 182 - The J. Paul Getty Museum, *South Side of Inscription Rock, New Mexico*, from <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/40202/timothy-h-o'sullivan-south-side-of-inscription-rock-new-mexico-american-1873>, screenshot by author.

THE NEW WEST Archive

Search Original View Medium View Small View Login

Home | Photoalbum :: Photos previous next

Saint Denis.JPG

Photo details	
Photographer / Writer	Arthur Morgan
Collection	Exploration of the Geological Parallel
Created / Published	1864 - 2020
Online Format	Image
Original Format	Photographic Print
Primary Sources	Red Dead Redemption 2 avatar created photographs / Library of Congress, Timothy O'Sullivan mounted prints
Rights Advisory	© 2020 David Lockwood

Write E-Card previous next

Powered by PHP Photo Album

Figure 183 - David Lockwood, *The New West Archive Website - Saint Denis Print with Archive Information* (2020), screenshot by author.

To complete the project, I finalised *THE JOURNEY* (2020) video to support the concept by showing my real gameplay experience. I was conscious that it might be difficult to comprehend the idea of controlling an avatar to navigate a large and sprawling open-world landscape for anyone who hadn't played first-person character-driven games like RDRII. Positioning the avatar in the same starting position on the screen each time, I used the PlayStation to record short videos of me controlling him to walk into and through the different landscape types of the game, at various times of day and weather conditions to give the broadest feel of the experience and sense of the space and landscape in the game. I also wanted the video to reinforce the different types of landscapes that we experienced and the human impact, from wilderness to industrial, for example. Creating twenty-six individual pieces of this video content, I then used specific thirty-second clips at the start and finish and cross-faded all other clips every ten seconds in an appropriate sequence. The title sequence starts with Arthur Morgan standing in the rain on the top of a large hill looking out at the land in the morning, and then he walks through the spaces until he becomes John Marsden, who walks into the sun setting in the evening on the desert before fading out. The video can be accessed in the Appendix 5 and via link in Appendix 6.

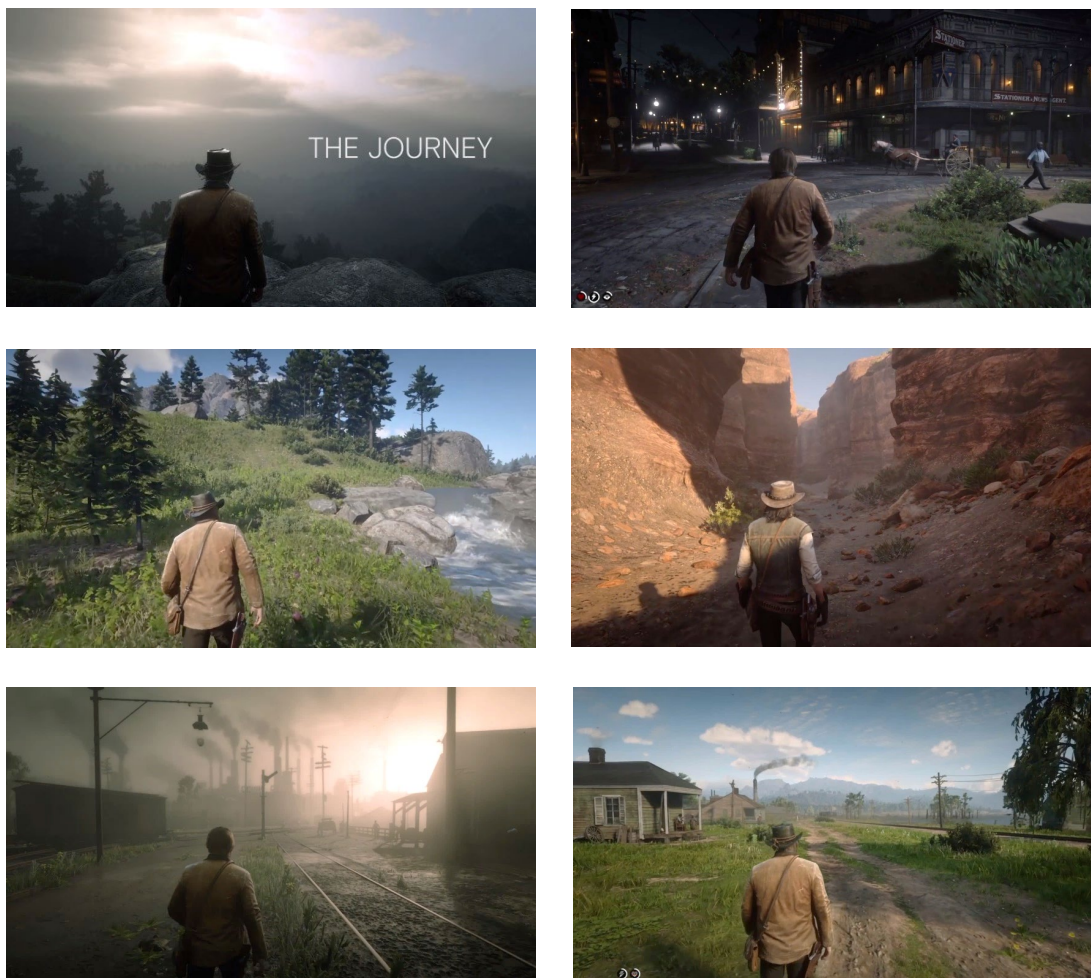


Figure 185 - David Lockwood, *The Journey* (2020), video frame grabs by author.

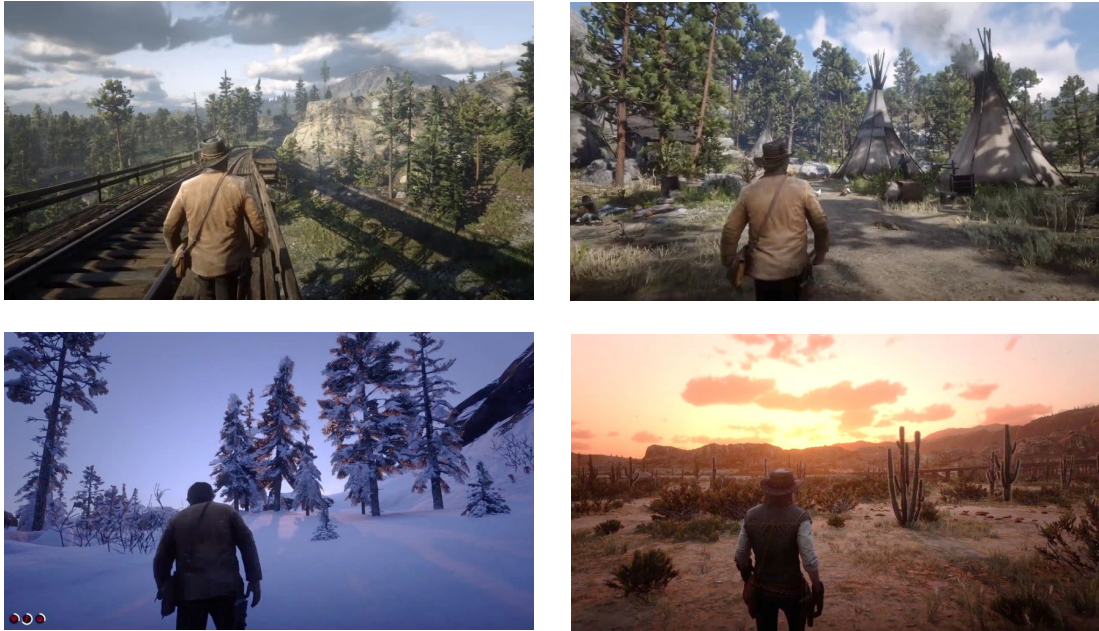


Figure 186 - David Lockwood, *The Journey* (2020), video frame grabs by author.

The outcome of *The New West – Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020) was nominated by Open Eye Gallery Director, Sarah Fisher to be exhibited as part of *Peer to Peer: UK/HK*, an online festival which celebrated cultural exchange between the visual arts sectors in the UK and Hong Kong (see Appendix 5 and 6 for Sarah's video nomination). The festival included an online exhibition, commissioned and existing works from artists nominated by the festival partners, and I also had the pleasure of participating in its symposium and closing remarks Zoom call.

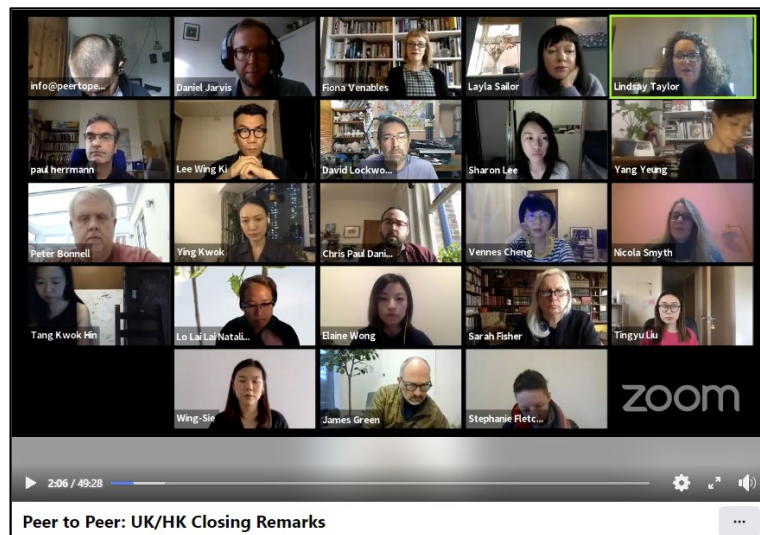


Figure 187 - David Lockwood, *Peer to Peer: UK/HK Closing Remarks* (2020), screenshot by author.

The final project results became sizable and lengthy over its stages of development with the addition of the multi-approached techniques in comparison to the original idea (Matterport VR Link - <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=ncoqj57wXYW>). On the one hand, its intentions

were very simple: take the audience through a narrative journey in which they consider the impact humans had and will have on unexplored/undeveloped landscapes that were once wilderness and are now urban spaces often bereft of nature. On the other hand, there was a deeper play on the contemporary world of virtual spaces, gameplay, and escapism to create layers of metaphor derived from virtual worlds and the audience's prior knowledge and experience of the subject. Its full title, *The New West - Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020), was both a play on words and an indication of the intentions of the project. In the time of O'Sullivan, the land was just the West. When Robert Adams observed the change to the landscape that had happened since that period, he titled his book *The New West* (1974). In this project, the land was again *The New West* as opposed to just the *West*, as like Adams, it was another new perspective, and the Geological Parallel was a reference to the virtual world here paralleling what was the real world.

Extending the urban landscape photography genre and moving it forward in Robert Adams' terms (discussed in Chapter Three, Part One, p92), geography and its navigation are reflected in the virtual landscape spaces of the game and the narrative sequencing of the images. Autobiography was explored in three ways - firstly, through my personal experiences of playing the game and creating the project with my son's assistance. Next, via the fictitious diary entries of the avatar as they navigated the virtual environment, creating a personal narrative for their thoughts for the work. Lastly, the audience's prior knowledge of the concept of the West and its wilderness, as has been cultivated by Hollywood, its movies and the strong sense of key American identity within its history. By its very nature, the virtual world is often a Metaphor for the real world, and the project plays itself out, not just having been created within a virtual world, but also only existing, being displayed and accessed in a virtual online space. Its subject and narrative drawing metaphorical parallels to contemporary notions of the environment through the mirroring of the past.

Conclusion

'Man-altered' or urban landscape photography evolved from a long history of landscape practice and achieved significant recognition as an identifiable subject focus within genre through the *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition. The exhibition raised questions about the nature of landscape photography and challenged the then-established viewpoint of landscape as a subject and its predisposition for the natural landscape by the likes of Ansel Adams and Beaumont Newhall at MOMA. The irony the exhibition exposed was that this popular landscape portrayal of subjects such as the American West, as still natural and sublime, neglected the fact that it was being developed and overrun with modern-day constructs and human ambition. Whilst, as Ramade (2019), would argue, the exhibition was not successful at the time because there were limited visitors and the press was restrained in its reviews, it had a substantial impact and influence on subsequent photography and went on to become the second most cited exhibition in photographic history. Perhaps the exhibition curator, Jenkins was ahead of his time and his audience, as the exhibition was organised in a period of change in the evolution of photographic practice and the beginnings of new interests in the urban landscape combined with environmental concerns. Nevertheless, once they had opened this Pandora's Box of a more modern perspective of land, it would seem hard to put a lid on the Outlook's new viewpoint, its concepts and the intentional documentary style that reinforced their desired objective position on this subject.

The exhibition greatly impacted proceeding photography and developed the urban landscape genre into a formal, conceptual style. It would transpire though, that however much the New Topographics photographers wanted to make objective viewpoints though, it was inevitable that the very selection point/framed photographic crop of the author creates a limited and subjective interpretation of the view with all their personal, artistic, and political influences, as Baltz would reflect on in the catalogue (Jenkins, 1975). This objective style of photographing the urban landscape would become the exhibition's most lasting and misunderstood legacy for future photographers. Post exhibition, it can be seen to have developed into and then stagnated as what might be construed as a commonplace artistic interpretation that conveys little about the subject itself, rather than a factual representation as originally intended. My research revealed that this approach had lost its ability in contemporary photographic practice, to represent the subject as the New Topographics photographer's intended at the time and broader strategies were needed to expand the narrowness of the subject interpretation that had followed.

The aim of this thesis was to explore this legacy and the impact of the landmark William Jenkins' *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition on urban landscape photography, into a contemporary photographic or post-photographic context. The investigation was broken down into three main objectives which were achieved through its development methodology, directed literature/practice research, and the creation of new practice as a response to the findings. In brief, these objectives were to investigate the domain of the question to understand the background scene of the study. Exploring Jenkins' exhibition and what might be the basis of its resonating impact on the development of photography and within the landscape genre. Next was to examine how, within this genre, the road of photographic practice following the exhibition has then established itself in the field. Investigating what the field considers are common and/or innovative practices that work within or are influenced by the Outlook's concepts and aesthetics, and if there is practice that has gone further from this position. Lastly, the significance of this research came from the application of the knowledge gained or gaps identified from the investigations into the domain and field, to plan and create new practice within this genre that could move it forward. Practice that incorporated the use of new aesthetics, methods, and subject approaches to challenge the common ground revealed.

The overall structure for this thesis and the development of its practice was formed by its research methodology based on Csikszentmihalyi's *Systems Model of Creativity* (1988), with its cycle of creativity built on the production of novelty. The novelty or uniqueness/originality created by this cycle and its subsequent flow back into the subject's field and domain was a critical indicator of the significance or success of this research as the aim was not just to create new knowledge but to move or cycle the urban landscape photography genre forward. Within this, there was rigorous and systematic focus on historic and contemporary critical writing in and around the background of the subject in Chapter One: The Scene. Using literature review research methods of primary sources such as key photographic books as well as secondary sources such as critical articles and publications, elucidated the evolution of the landscape genre to the point at which the gathering of the then contemporary practitioners for the exhibition created a strong new perspective and motivation for man-altered or urban landscape. Chapter Two: The Road, focused on practitioner research following the exhibition and its current position, using literature review research methods of primary sources such as key exhibitions and photographic books to inform the research of contemporary practice in addition to further secondary sources such as critical articles and publications which have either a more retrospective or forward thinking stance on the subject that was not available at the time. These investigations confirmed that key contemporary practice within the genre had not moved far in the last 50 or so years since the exhibition although there were practitioners that were pushing

boundaries at the very fringes of the genre. The critical position that evolved across and concluded from both chapters underpinned the intentions and creation of the practice outcomes discussed in Chapter Three. This next chapter engaged practice methods to explore the research position. Using a broader range of media, techniques and methodology that were not available to the New Topographic photographers at the time, such as digital imaging and video, web design and Virtual Reality, was critical for the research to explore expanded modes of artist expression and audience engagement as it looked for solutions to the posed questions. The success of the outcomes of this research methodology and cycle of creativity can be evidenced by the three practice outcomes having entered the subject field and becoming part of its contemporary domain in their form as new practice.

Chapter One investigated the exhibition's position within the development of the landscape photography genre. Researching back over the historical path of American landscape photography, beginning in the 1860s-70s with early practitioners such as Carleton Watkins and Timothy O'Sullivan, who worked on the geographical surveys. Their photographs were characterised by a sense of scientific objectivity and factual recording of characteristics of the landscape that would be used to inform the human settlement of the West. As the field of landscape photography evolved, there was a notable shift to its representation and photographers such as Ansel Adams and Edward Weston started to make more artistic interpretations. These would seem to follow more in the footsteps of the romantic landscape painting schools that tried to capture the grandeur and power of the natural landscape, but perhaps now using photography to highlight and preserve these locations. Further changes in the perspective of the role and use of landscape photography came through the photographers working for the Farm Security Administration in the 1930s-40s, and practitioners such as Walker Evans documented the cultural change in the landscape through the recording of urban developments and vernacular architecture. Instead of employing what he felt were the established artistic aesthetics to the subject, he chose to use photography's natural qualities to be literate and more empirically describe the scene. With the influence of Evans' subject selection/approach combined with O'Sullivan's perceived objectivity, the New Topographics exhibition marked a pivotal moment in the evolution of landscape photography. Confronting traditional notions of the genre and depicting man-altered environments, such as suburban sprawl and industrial sites.

Through Jenkins and the photographers he selected, the exhibition sought to prompt its audience to reconsider their perceptions of nature and the modern developed landscape but also raised critical questions about the documentary role of photography in representing landscape as a

subject. In the catalogue forward, Jenkins (1975) and others reflected on the documentary approach of the exhibition, referencing back to O'Sullivan's objective, scientific photographic method as an inspiration for this perspective on the subject, but recognised this style was an issue in the current field of photography and its audience. At the time of writing, the subject and approach/style weren't well received, though they could not predict the impact in later years of the trajectory they had started. Serving as a critical review of the original exhibition but with the added context of contemporary practice thereafter, Britt Salvesen's *New Topographics* (2010) suggested that the exhibition went on to act as a bridge between the then fine-art photography world and post-conceptual contemporary art because of this approach/style. Suzaan Boettger (2015) also identifies a minimalist or reductive aesthetic that can be seen in the work. This combination of subject/style and changing context of photographic representation influenced the following generations of landscape photographers and in particular some of those who came from the Düsseldorf Art School, whose work is now seen as and sold to the values of contemporary painting.

Following the exhibition, Chapter Two surveyed the proceeding transformation of landscape photography and the impact of the shift from traditional depictions of nature to the emphasis on man-altered environments as a subject. Key contemporary photographers were evaluated, such as Richard Misrach, Jeff Brouws, and Edward Burtynsky, who have continued to explore the themes and styles established by the exhibition, addressing current environmental issues and the impact of human activity. But in addition to the Outlook's reserved objective aesthetic, we can also see a current shift in the artistic use of the effect of scale and the sublime (greatness or grandeur that inspires awe, wonder and/or terror) to portray and add power to a subject, from the sublime natural landscape to the sublime human devastated landscape (Peeples, 2011). The chapter concluded by examining the emergence of more innovative techniques and new directions in landscape photography. Artists like John Gossage, Joan Fontcuberta, and Andreas Gursky have pushed the boundaries of the genre through more personal interpretations and post-photographic methods. These new practices broadened the viewers' perceptions of reality and further expanded the possibilities of landscape representation, inviting a deeper exploration of the relationship between humanity and the environment. Christopher Burnett's exploration of simulated landscapes with reference to Joan Fontcuberta, highlights the transformative role of technology in redefining our understanding of place, suggesting that contemporary landscape photography must adapt to the changing communication frameworks influenced by digital advancements (Foster-Rice and Rohrbach, 2013). Further supporting the need for re-evaluating practice, the writing of Gisela Parak (2015) and Bénédicte Ramade (2016) emphasised the historical and contemporary intersections of environmental photography and climate change

discourse, promoting a more reflective practice that acknowledges the human-caused decline of the planet's ecosystems. The investigation of the work of key photographers in this chapter provided examples of the extent of the proceeding impact of the exhibition and the commonplace approach to the genre that it had established. However the research also considered those working within the theme that used more innovative methods and the chapter sets the stage for further exploration of these themes in subsequent discussions and the new practice, supporting the position for a more critical engagement with the urban landscape.

Lastly, Chapter Three - My Journey, discussed the interplay between the groundwork created in Chapters One and Two and the origins, concepts and outcomes of my three practice projects. To start with though, it built on the evidence provided in Chapter Two of the stagnated photographic approach to the subject within of the genre, with extended examples of this impact on contemporary student practice, recognising the ongoing influence on new photographers in photographic education and the perpetuation of this position within that forum. The research focus then shifted to the practical employment of the knowledge gained from the investigations conducted into the domain and field. Devising and implementing practice within this genre that could advance it by incorporating new aesthetics, methodologies, and thematic approaches that challenge and evolve the commonplace norms identified in the research. Referencing back to Csikszentmihalyi's *Systems Model of Creativity* (1988) - having been inspired (me the Person with my Personal Background) by the Culture/Domain of the subject (transmitting information), I conceived that there was a research question. The Society/Field of the subject then informed and stimulated me with how to create novel practice solutions for that question.

There were some key works researched that inspired and encouraged the development direction of my practice. John Gossage's *The Pond* was recognised by Robert Adams (2005) as changing the representation of the subject of the man-altered landscape in the domain as selected/supported by the publisher Aperture for its novelty in the field. In turn, Gossage recognised Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) as challenging the common concepts of how to live in mid-1800s America by adopting a simple, perhaps more spiritual life amongst nature - again, this was a unique concept at the time but had a lasting influence as a literary notion in American writing. Joan Fontcuberta's use of fiction was also influential as it was a concept I had been previously interested in but applying it to landscape was new and novel to me. His predominant use of fiction as an experimental photographic paradox to manipulate the objective authority of photography has been a thread through his career, and his work is recognised by the field internationally for this. The idea of fiction to reflect our experience of real environments by means of metaphor using AI, VR and Avatars within the game landscapes of *The New West*

(2020), is very far removed from the exhibition's objective documentary landscapes but original in its parallel perspectives. Timothy O'Sullivan, who was not only one of the first significant photographers in America but also one of the first to make landscape photographs of the American West as employed by the US Government, also played a part as an influence on this process. Providing the basis for the perceived objective credibility and experiential symbolism of the work produced - style, subjects and presentation. These works illuminated the importance of personal perspective, concept and metaphor to create new practice that juxtaposed the common approach of the Outlook.

The important experimental practice framework for this thesis came from Robert Adams' (2005) concept that was based on his idea of geography, autobiography and metaphor as three verities. This was used to support and direct the development and investigations of the practice here. The aim was that with it, I created broader works that were not routed in the Outlook's commonplace approach or intended as objective documents, but through experimentation communicated a more openly personal interpretation of the man-altered urban landscape that revealed a deeper perspective or extended truth to an audience. This also gave the work and genre the opportunity to find its place in a contemporary sector that has started to focus on the audience experience, community engagement and the environment as emphasised in Arts Council England's 2020-30 artist and organisation funding strategy, *Let's Create* (2020). Importantly, Highmore (2001) discusses the artistic strategies of 'making strange' to make the familiar unfamiliar as was used by the Topographic photographers to emphasise the everyday man-altered landscape, but now that landscape and their representation of it can both be seen as artistically familiar and the effect has been lost. The practice works created were intended not to engage the audience in new narratives by making the familiar unfamiliar but to engage them by highlighting and exposing the familiar or relatable qualities of that they already know, have experienced or can empathise with.

The first of the three practice projects *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17), was created through the photographing of enacted fantasy scenarios and exploration of newfound small, wooded spaces by my son Hugo and me, that had been left over from urbanisation in Liverpool. The theme was explored by making images of the experience as my son role-played characters and stories of heroic warriors within these unmanaged spaces and their sense of wilderness for us, although they were surrounded by urban landscape. Like Gossage (1986), the work created an indirect reflection of the man-altered landscape subject by focusing on what natural space has been left over rather than directly on the urban landscape itself and the father son relationship to engage the audience with that perspective. Reflecting on the outcomes of the project within the terms

of the research question and methodological framework, the use of Adams' (2005) verities and specifically the intentionally dominant autobiography inspired and gave direction to the broadening and direction of the project's approach, and created a familiar narrative of a father playing with a child through which to consider how urbanisation has changed our landscape and its use. The metaphor explored within the project was about 'finding': who my son was and a sense of escapism from urban life. Geography is illustrated through the images and the use of the map and website for the audience to explore these geographic spaces themselves. The use of a multi-layered and interdisciplinary methodology explored how the genre of the man-altered landscape could be applied to a post-New Topographics and post-photographic agenda of non-traditional media to create new work that was accessible and relevant to a broader audience than would have been the original exhibition. The combination of these successfully challenged the Outlook's traditional perspective by using subjectivity rather than objectivity and the personal rather than impersonal to convey its message. *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) was not intended to be neutral in its outlook, but very much takes a stance with a relatable environmental message that these small, wooded spaces are important to the human experience of what is left of wilderness, as juxtaposed with the homogenous urban environment that surrounds them.

The second project, *The Allotments* (2018-19), was rooted in the verity of geography alongside autobiography and metaphor as a method of development. It was a collaborative artistic meditation about Dingle Vale allotments in Aigburth, one of twenty-five working allotment communities in Liverpool. This project, with its publication and exhibition, explored these spaces of cultivation and society through my work in collaboration with writer Pauline Rowe and painter Arthur Lockwood. Through this process, the work broadened my approach to the urban landscape with a combination of sociological, mixed media and collaborative methodology. With this approach the project outcomes transcended what could be considered the limited two dimensional viewpoint/reading of the original exhibition's images on their own, with the additional relationship of Pauline's writing and also Arthur's painting to generate broader narratives around the subject. Exploring the themes using a collaborative practice that united the individual elements of painting, language and photography, juxtaposing and/or complementing each other to create a more holistic representation of the subject with its subtle nuances of nature and humankind. It was a much more subjective indirect perspective on the urban landscape to challenge the Outlook's neutral and objective approach, by focusing on the geography and function of a piece of allotted land that bought urbanised users of or creators with, together. It highlighted the social value, importance and the care for land, rather than the destruction and decay more commonly found in man-altered landscape photography, celebrating positivity rather than negativity as a method to better engage an audience with its urban landscape themes.

Lastly, *The New West – Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020) was rooted in the element of metaphor alongside autobiography and geography as a method of development and aimed to explore how you can mix contemporary practice with the frequently metaphorical virtual world of gaming. Through the project, I surveyed, photographed and wrote about the virtual landscapes of the console game *Red Dead Redemption II* (2018) (RDR2), set in late 1800s America, in reference to the work produced by the geological surveyors of the American West of a similar period, that inspired and influenced the Topographics photographers through their neutral objective approach. The work used metaphor to prompt the audience to question our relationship with the documenting of landscape and the effect of humans on the natural world by connecting perceptions of the past with our knowledge of the urbanised reality of that landscape in the present. Playing with the audience perception of what appears to be an objective historic photographic archive and diaristic writing formats, the work subverts that periods perceived neutral viewpoint of land which was admired by the Topographic photographers and delivers a subjectively constructed narrative. Focusing on the present era of human impact or Anthropocene and engaging with the globally recognised need to protect the environment. *The New West* (2020) project used techniques and approaches very far removed from the original New Topographics exhibition but remained firmly rooted in its subject matter and origins.

Using Csikszentmihalyi's theory to get an overarching measure of the significance or success of the practice outcome within the aims of this thesis, the Society/Field of the subject would select the novel practice response that is produced by the Person and proceed to flow it back into the Culture/Domain to complete the cycle of creativity. Was the thesis practice, its research concepts and its outcomes considered significant and/or novel enough to be selected by the Society/Field of the subject? Within this context, *Finding Fangorn* (2016-17) was partnered by The Mersey Forrest, supported and funded by The Woodland Trust and selected as a Charter Branch of the Charter for Trees, Woods and People. *The Allotments* (2018-19) was chosen by the Open Eye Gallery/Associates of the Gallery and the Victoria Gallery & Museum (VG&M) as a funded *LOOK 19 Photo Biennial* project. *The New West – Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020) was selected by the Open Eye Gallery and funded as part of the *Peer to Peer: UK/HK* festival. One could also conclude that the work was chosen for its own merits within contemporary practice and/or the values it holds for the organisations and their agendas, as they were not aware of the specific aims of this research to consider the principles it embodied into the work.

A combination of national and regional organisations selected the practice, but did they then promote the work into the next stage of the cycle, the Culture/Domain of the subject? *Finding*

Fangorn (2016-17) and its project website featured in the Woodland Trust's *Charter for Trees, Woods and People* events, which celebrated the 800th anniversary of the *Charter of the Forest*, being linked to, displayed and promoted on their website. The project website, video and free copies of its map were also promoted via access through interactive iPads at the Open Eye Gallery around the Charter event period and featured in a promotional talk I organised at the gallery, alongside three other subject-focused photographers. *The Allotments* (2018-19) featured as an exhibition at the VG&M as part of the *LOOK 19 Photo Biennial* festival and was engaged with and publicised in regional and national newspapers and magazines, and on arts/organisational websites. *The New West - Exploration of the Geological Parallel* (2020) was nominated by the Open Eye Gallery to take part in the *Peer to Peer: UK/HK* festival. As a digital work, it was promoted and accessed via the festival and Open Eye Gallery websites, and as a participating artist, I also contributed to the festival's symposium and closing remarks.

In conclusion, once the research had established that there was common or stagnated practice that had been instigated by and followed from the *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape* (1975) exhibition and the features and motivations of this practice had been identified, original research practice was created that challenged this position, filled the gap in knowledge and effectively advanced the genre with new methodologies. The final practice pieces engaged a variety of organisations and their audiences for a range of different motivations, such as artistic, academic and social, with a view of the man-altered landscape that was perhaps both more indirect but its effect more accessible within the work, in comparison to the original exhibition. It successfully appealed to a broader present-day audience with this agenda, through the new methods the research informed. Using artistic strategies such as metaphor and autobiography as well as the primary geographic representation, and current technological methodologies without relying on the Outlook's historic visual foundation as a crutch to position the work neatly into contemporary landscape photography, which would have from my research findings, limited its potential audience, reading and social message.

The Eastman Museum made a statement about the new presentation of the *New Topographics* exhibition in 2009: "New Topographics' - a suggestive idea more than a precise adjective - is used to characterize the work of artists not yet born when the exhibition was held" (George Eastman Museum, 2009). Based on my aims and research findings, they were right, and there are still artists not yet born in 2026 who will continue to make work characterised by the Outlook. But will they know why they are replicating this approach or understand the context or purpose outside of its establishment? Having felt the powerful influence of the exhibition on my practice as it developed over the years and consistently seeing it in the practice of others,

the research and work created here has evolved my landscape photography and the audience's perception of landscape photography, so that it engages the genre with wider and more complex narratives. Moving it beyond concepts of objective documentation and/or artistic style to explore more personal or shared experiences and perceptions of the human (altered) impact on the environment and society. This position also embraced Parak's suggestion, that audiences have become "sensitized...to the destruction of the environment." (Parak, 2015, para.17), we need different strategies to better engage them with and complimented her hypothesis that the term of environmental photography is starting to replace topographic references as practitioners look for alternative perspectives and at current environmental issues.

Nevertheless, to return to the very start of this thesis, as photographic practitioners we always need to question and experiment to drive our work and photography forward without falling into the cliché of common practice, but whilst doing so, continue to consider the implication of Szarkowski's statement, as to whether ultimately the ideas and concepts of our practice ever transcend the medium of photography itself.

Whatever else a photograph may be about, it is inevitably about photography,
the container and vehicle of all its meanings

John Szarkowski from the introduction to *William Eggleston's Guide* (Eggleston and Szarkowski, 1976, p.6)

Whilst this may be the reality of our photographic outcomes with the passing of time and context, I am content with that position, as the experience of making new practice using photography, with all its still unexplored potential, was ultimately what inspired and drove me to create the work here.

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Appendix I

Technical Notes

Here are the details of the range of technical equipment, software and materials used to create the three practice elements/projects of the thesis.

Project: Finding Fangorn (2016-17)

Photographic Hardware:

- Sony a7RII ILCE-7RM2 Camera
- Sigma AF 15-30mm f/3.5-4.5 EX DG Lens – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter
- Olympus Zuiko 21mm f/3.5 Lens – via OM/Sony E adapter
- Carl Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2 Lens
- Canon EF 35mm f/2 IS USM Lens – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter
- Canon EF 40mm f/2.8 STM Lens – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter
- Sony FE 55mm F/1.8 ZA Carl Zeiss Lens
- Sigma 70mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro Lens – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter
- Canon EF 100mm f/2 USM Lens – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter
- Canon EF 70-200mm f/4L IS USM – via Metabones EF/Sony E adapter

Computer Hardware:

- Zoom H2n Audio Recorder
- Dell T3600 Workstation
- NEC MultiSync PA271W Monitor

Software:

- Adobe Lightroom CC software for all basic image editing and image management
- Adobe Photoshop CC software for map construction and special image editing/cutouts
- Adobe Muse CC software for website design
- Adobe Audition CC software for audio editing for website/video soundtrack
- Adobe Premiere CC software for video editing

Project: The Allotments (2018-19)

Photographic Hardware:

Portraits:

Ikeda Amba - 4x5" Camera
Schneider 75mm f/5.6 Super Angulon Lens
Nikon SW 90mm f/4.5 Lens
Sinar Sinaron W 90mm f/6.8 Lens
Fuji Fujinon W 135mm f/5.6 Lens

Landscapes:

Sinar Norma - 8x10" Camera
Fuji Fujinon SW 125mm f/8 Lens
Sinar Sinaron S 210mm f/5.6 Lens

Film and Processing:

Foma Fomapan 200 18x24cm Film
Foma Fomapan 200 4x5" Film
R09 Developer used for 'Semi Stand' Development with Kodak Deep Tanks

Computer Hardware:

Epson 4995 Scanner
Dell T3600 Workstation
NEC MultiSync PA271W Monitor

Software:

VueScan – Scanning Software
Adobe Lightroom CC software for all basic image editing and image management
Adobe Photoshop CC software for specific edits and adjustments
Adobe InDesign CC software for designing the supporting pamphlet

Project: The New West (2020)

Photographic Hardware:

London Stereoscopic Ltd (c. 1895) Whole Plate (6.5 × 8.5 inches) Camera
Emil Busch 1.6 Inch f/7.7 Bis-Telar Series II No. 3 Lens
Ricoh Theta 360° Camera
Sony a7RII ILCE-7RM2 Camera
Carl Zeiss Batis 25mm f/2 Lens

Materials and Processing:

Leas portrait 3 Wet Collodion Solution
Wetplate developer WD4
Black Aluminium Whole Plates

Gaming:

Sony PlayStation 4
Red Dead Redemption II Game

Computer Hardware:

Dell T3600 Workstation
NEC MultiSync PA271W Monitor

Software:

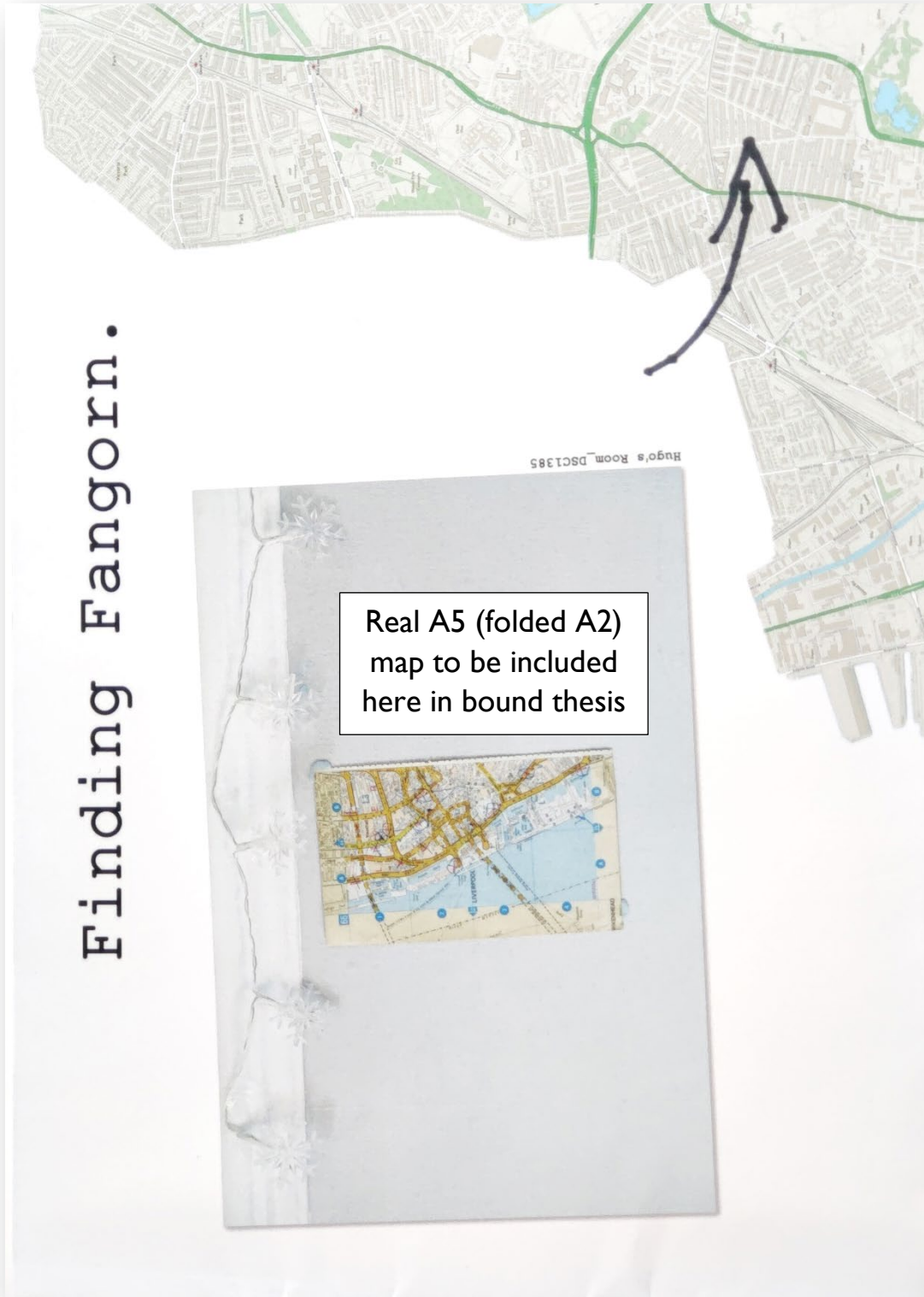
Adobe Lightroom CC software for all basic image editing and image management
Adobe Photoshop CC software for specific edits and adjustments
Adobe Premiere CC software for video editing
PHP for website design
Matterport Website/VR Software

Appendix 2

Finding Fangorn (2016-17)

If you are reading a printed/bound version of this thesis, this appendix contains a physical copy of the Finding Fangorn printed map for the reader to handle and explore in relation to its context in Chapter Three, Part II. It also gives additional examples of the publicity and promotional material that supported the work, illustrating how the project was engaged with and promoted by the Open Eye Gallery and the Art in Liverpool.com website.

Original A2 printed folding map



Finding Fangorn.

Real A5 (folded A2)
map to be included
here in bound thesis

Publicity Selection

OPEN
EYE
GALLERY

What's On Visit Blog Archive About Get Involved Contact



FINDING FANGORN

FINDING FANGORN

26 OCTOBER - 26 NOVEMBER 2017

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION IN OUR NEW FOYER SPACE
DAVID LOCKWOOD

"Finding Fangorn started with a search to find new outdoor places to visit and discover with my son, Hugo. It draws on this experience of actively looking for what is left of old woodland spaces within Liverpool to explore and act out a child's make-believe scenarios.

"Fangorn (from Tolkien's 'Fangorn Forest') is a fantasy place and what is left of these woodland spaces are used by many to escape from the urbanisation that surrounds them through a suggestion of wilderness.

"Hugo suffers from Epilepsy with developmental delay. Whilst Finding Fangorn explores photography's innate ability to document experiences and places, as the father of a disabled child, it is also through exploration, discovery and imaginative play, about finding Hugo."

Whilst the heart of the project is photographing Hugo at play within the woods, it also extends to documenting the spaces themselves and the visual relationship they have with their urban surroundings.

The work will be displayed at Open Eye Gallery from Thursday 26th October to Sunday 26th November 2017 in the foyer area. You can also collect a free 'Finding Fangorn' map which highlights some of the work and can be used to identify and visit the fourteen woods used in the project.

Finding Fangorn has been developed in partnership with The Mersey Forest and is a Charter Branch of the new 2017 'Charter for Trees, Woods and People' campaign led by the Woodland Trust – www.treecharter.uk.

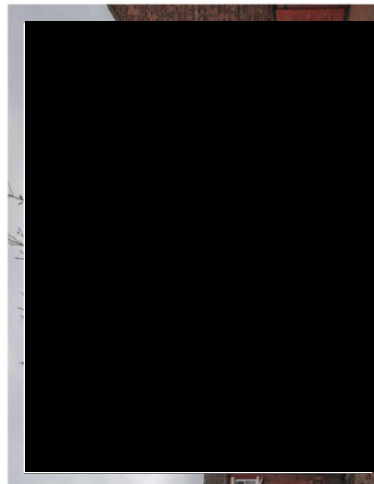
The Charter for Trees, Woods and People will guide policy and practice and set out the rights and responsibilities of the people of the UK to their trees. It will launch on the 6th November, the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Charter of the Forest. The new Tree Charter will draw its strength from the hundreds of thousands of people across the UK that sign it in 2017. To add your name, head [here](#).

Visit www.findingfangorn.com for the full project site.

Open Eye Gallery, *Finding Fangorn* - <https://openeye.org.uk/whats-on/finding-fangorn> (2017), screenshot by author.

Open Eye Gallery: Trees, Woods and People

By admin · November 6, 2017



Location (with MAP): [Open Eye Gallery](#)

Date/Time: Monday 6 November 2017, 10:30 – 13:00

Event: Talk - Open Eye Gallery: Trees, Woods and People

Add event to your Google Calendar:



ical feed: [iCal](#)

TREES, WOODS AND PEOPLE

6 NOVEMBER 2017

MONDAY 6TH NOV / 10:30 – 13:00 / FREE

On 6 November 2017, the 600th anniversary of the influential 1217 Charter of the Forest, the Woodland Trust will lead the launch of the Charter for Trees, Woods and People. The new Tree Charter will recognise, celebrate and protect the right of the UK public to access and benefit from trees and woods.

This event features a series of talks by photographers who have developed projects around and organisations actively involved in the creation and preservation of trees and wooded spaces within Merseyside.

McCoy Wynne – The Urban Forest

The Urban Forest brings together a series of photographs that picture the ‘greening’ of the urban environment. The forest of the title suggests a density of nature, vertical trunks overhanging by green, leafy canopies; a land type in which trees are a dominant feature. Whilst the tree is the intended subject of these pictures, it battles to become the subject; it struggles to be seen.

The images comment not on the erosion of a natural landscape, but on man’s monumental attempt to insert nature back into a hard, urban landscape that has very nearly choked any opportunity for nature to flourish. (Johla Garcia Hernandez)

McCoy Wynne is the partnership of photographers Stephen McCoy and Stephanie Wynne they collaborate on commissioned assignments and personal projects.

John Davies – Trees Save Open & Green Space

John Davies is a documentary photographer and has recorded the changes taking place in our urban landscape and open spaces since the 1980’s. During the last 10 years he has become active in challenging some of the changes taking place in Liverpool with the loss of our open and green spaces. This talk will also explore the relationship between trees and people in the urban setting and the role trees play in politics.

John’s work around this subject involves [Liverpool Open and Green Spaces CIC](#).

Clare Oliver – The Mersey Forest

The Mersey Forest is a growing network of woodlands and green spaces spread across Cheshire and Merseyside, which has been creating ‘woodlands on your doorstep’ since 1994. The Forest is one of the leading environmental regeneration initiatives in the North West. Through working in partnership with local authorities, businesses, landowners, the Forestry Commission and Natural England, they have planted more than 9 million trees – equivalent to five new trees for every person living within the Forest area. Praised as a visionary concept, their ‘more from trees’ approach brings a whole range of environmental, health and economic benefits to the region.

Clare Oliver has been at [The Mersey Forest](#) for nearly 14 years and has had responsibility for liaison with public and private sector landowners. Clare is currently developing the Natural Health Service which uses the power of nature to improve our wellbeing.

David Lockwood – Finding Fangorn

Finding Fangorn is a project started with a search to find new outdoor places to visit and discover with David’s son, Hugo. It draws on this experience of actively looking for what is left of old woodland spaces within Metropolitan Liverpool to explore and act out a child’s make-believe scenarios. Fangorn (from Tolkien’s Fangorn Forest) is a fantasy place and what is left of these woodland spaces are used by many to escape from the urbanisation that surrounds them through a suggestion of wilderness. The resulting website [www.findingfangorn.com](#) and printed fold-out map track the outcomes of the project. [Finding Fangorn](#) is a Charter branch of the new [Charter for Trees, Woods and People](#).

David Lockwood is a Liverpool based photographer and course leader of the Degree in Digital Imaging and Photography at the Hugh Baird University Centre, Merseyside.

Image: © McCoy Wynne

Art in Liverpool.Com, Open Eye Gallery: Trees, Woods and People - <https://www.artinliverpool.com/events/finding-fangorn> (2017), screenshot by author.

Appendix 3

The Allotments (2018-19)

This appendix contains a variety of material relating to and supporting *The Allotments* project. Firstly, the original project proposal for *The Allotmenters and Other Stories*, as was the projects first working title. This gives an indication of the artist intentions proposed for selection as part of the *Associates at the VG&M* opportunity. Lastly is a selection of publicity and promotional material that supported the work, illustrating the how the project engaged external media, for example, the Liverpool Echo and *Allotment and Leisure Gardener* magazine, and arts organisations such as the VG&M and Open Eye Gallery.

The Allotmenters and Other Stories - Original Project Proposal



'Billy, Retired from Lark Lane Bins, Plot 31 for 59 years', DG Lockwood, 2018

The Allotmenters and Other Stories

'Associates in the VGM' Project Proposal

The Allotmenters and Other Stories is the developmental title for a project based on Liverpool's Dingle Vale allotments. Working in a broad collective format, Open Eye Associates, photographer, David Lockwood and poet/writer, Pauline Rowe in collaboration with painter, Arthur Lockwood have been exploring themes of change, life cycles in nature/the allotments and the tenants themselves.

The project engages with people who work on and value allotment land. This land has been historically made available for non-commercial gardening or growing food plants, commonly within urban areas which have no garden space attached to their housing and is often used to maintain a social space within a broader community. As the projects have been developing there is a core theme around the tenants, their lives and aspirations, that entwines itself within the underlying metaphors of the allotment itself – a cycle of life, an escape from the everyday, a bonding of minds and souls with the purpose of to make and grow.

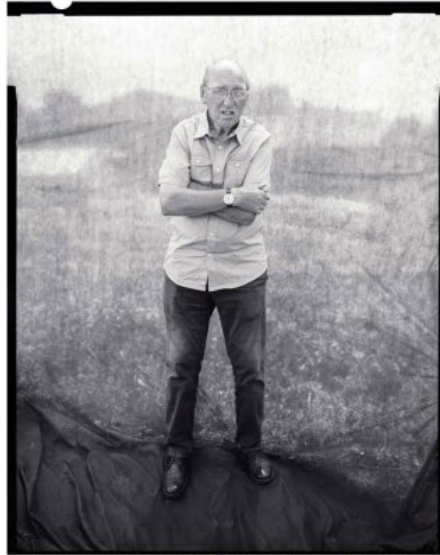
For the 'Associates in the VGM' opportunity, we would like to propose to produce a small interdisciplinary exhibition of selected in-progress works, produced to that date, which explore these themes using a collaborative practice that will unite the individual elements of painting, language and photography, juxtaposing and/or complementing each other to create a more holistic representation of the subject with its subtle nuances of nature and humankind.

David Lockwood

David has been currently working across a range of photographic approaches for the project, from more formal large format location portraits taken of the tenants on their plots to documentary observations, archival material from the allotment/tenants and studio still lifes of the strange and wonderful produce. <http://dglockwood.com/theallotmenters/>



'Tommy, Retired from Lark Lane Bins, Plot 27 for 12 years', DG Lockwood, 2018



'Dave, Retired, Farm and Building Site Worker, Plot 34 and 36 – for 14 years', DG Lockwood, 2018



'Untitled', DG Lockwood, 2018



'Pink Fir Apple Potato', DG Lockwood, 2018



'Billy with the Dingle Vale Four', Author Unknown



'Untitled', Author Unknown



'Dingle Vale Allotments Sty Ltd, Grant Cup 1933', DG Lockwood, 2018

David Lockwood/Pauline Rowe/Arthur Lockwood, *The Allotmenters and Other Stories - Original Project Proposal - Page 2* (2018), screenshot by author.

Pauline Rowe

Pauline Rowe has worked as a poet and writer developing social practice in health and community settings since 2004 and has worked for 8 years as a poet with artists Sue Williams and Steve Rooney to deliver the annual Sudley Art project for Mersey Care service-users. She founded the Liverpool based creative writing charity North End Writers in 2006. Currently she is working with photographers Robert Parkinson and Becky Warnock on the 'Here & Now' project funded by Mersey Care – it's a writing, wellbeing and photography project working with people who have lived experience of mental distress. Pauline has just completed her PhD in Creative Writing at Liverpool University and was appointed as the first Writer-in-Residence at Open Eye Gallery in 2016 having also worked as Poet-in-Residence with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust since 2013.

'The Allotmenters' offers a chance to combine both collaborative and interdisciplinary work with social art practice, a new development in ways of listening and hearing individual voices that matter. The writing for this project will include prose 'self-portraits' developed in collaboration with the subjects, poems, an essay and any other relevant writing.

Examples of previous works:

Pauline worked in collaboration with photographer AJ Wilkinson to produce the poetry and photography exhibition 'Sleeping in the Middle' which was showcased at Open Eye Gallery on Light Night, 2018. She also has 2 pamphlets, 2 poetry collections and is working on a monograph about the American poet, Frank Bidart.

The Unknown Guest

We have made a place for you
no matter how far you have travelled,
no matter who no longer loves you
or once lost you, or found your first name.

It is safe. This seat is yours -
for your desire to be part of our feast,
for your loneliness and silence,
for your fear in the dark.

You have earned this welcome,
fine linen, good company, calm.
We will raise our glasses and listen,
rejoice to break such warm bread.

We have kept a chair. It is yours,
your own place. Here you are, rich with colour
and light, as you once dreamed;
always celebrated, remembered, loved.

Pauline Rowe

From "Around the Table" (Sudley Project, 2009)

Essay: 'The Book As We Have Known It' <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/readwatchlisten/features/the-book-as-we-have-known-it/>

Artist Interview: <https://paulineroweblog.wordpress.com/interviews/interview-with-peter-watkins/>

An interview with Pauline Rowe: <https://humag.co/features/carried-in-your-heart>

The Enigma exhibition (2014):

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/sudley/events/displayevent.aspx?EventId=18376>

Arthur Lockwood

Arthur has spent the last twenty-five years using watercolour to document Black Country industry and topographical changes in the West Midlands. Following visits to the Dingle Vale allotments he found a whole new area of subject matter to explore. At the moment it has started with small sketches showing improvised structures and the allotmenters in their environment, working or relaxing. These may be developed into larger paintings or left as drawings that are a record the Dingle Vale allotments.



Examples of previous works:



'Base of the Furnace - Henley Foundry - Emethwick', AT Lockwood, 2005



'Factory Interior - Nile Street - Birmingham', AT Lockwood, 2007

<https://www.bmagprints.org.uk/search/artist/322251/arthur-lockwood>

Book: Arthur Lockwood - Change in the Midlands: Urban and Industrial Watercolours <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Change-Midlands-Urban-Industrial-Watercolours/dp/1904537723>

Book: Arthur Lockwood - Urban and Industrial Watercolours of Birmingham and the Black Country <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Arthur-Lockwood-Industrial-Watercolours-Birmingham/dp/1908326190>

The Allotments

A small exhibition based on Dingle Vale Allotments
by photographer David Lockwood (plot 24), poet Pauline
Rowe and painter Arthur Lockwood



voices rise and fall
beyond dahlias and plums –
tunes from the playground

Victoria Gallery & Museum

Ashton Street, University of Liverpool, L69 3DR
29th August – 28th Sept 2019

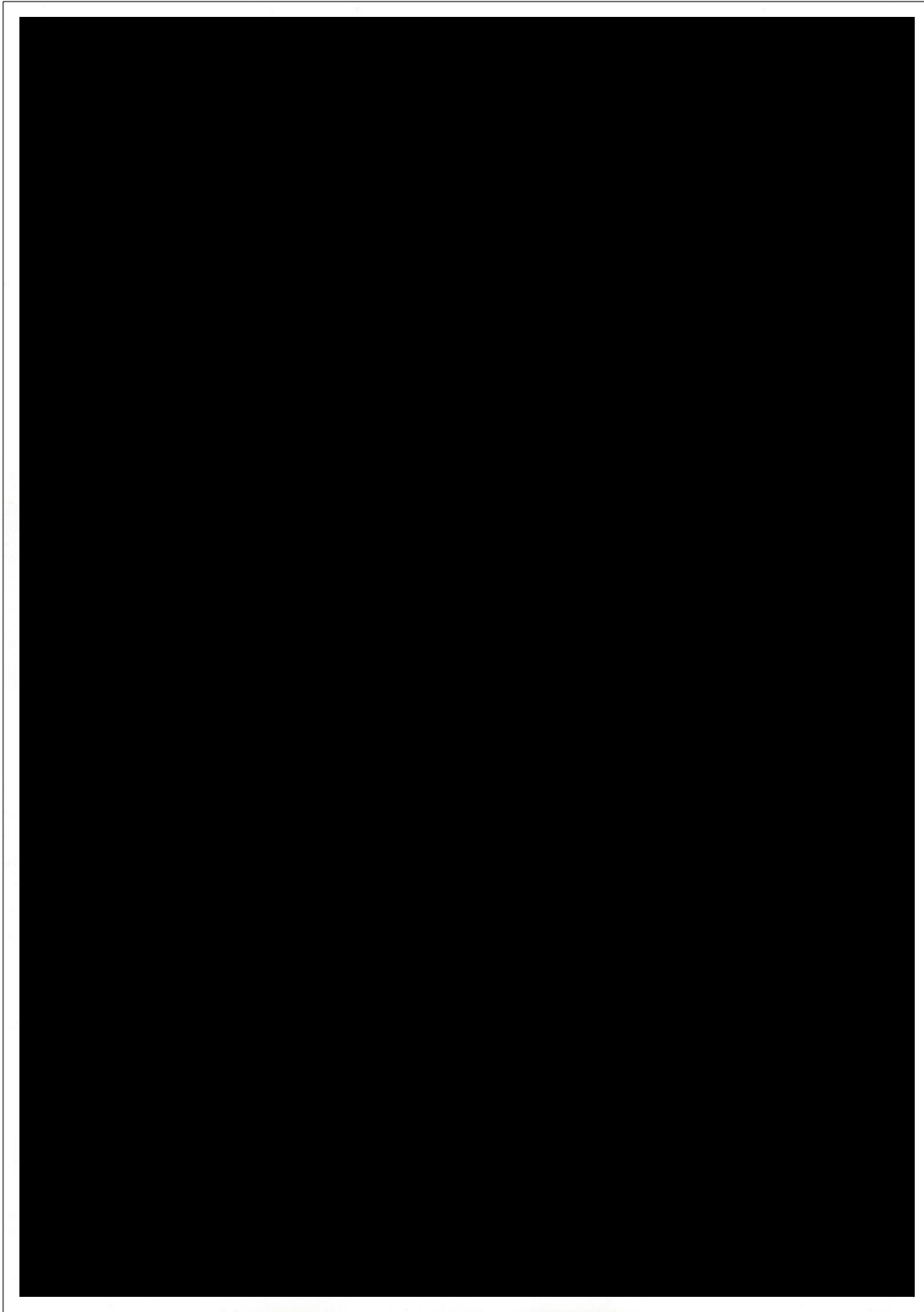
Come and 'Meet the Artists' - Saturday 31st August between 11am and 1pm

The Allotments has been authored with the co-operation of many of the Dingle Vale allotment holders, who shared their insights, stories and experiences — as well as their shared commitment to plots of earth that remain places of belonging away from home.

OPEN
EYE
GALLERY

LOW
PAPER
PRACTICAL
PRESS

VG&M
VICTORIA GALLERY & MUSEUM



Allotment and Leisure Gardener magazine, *Artist Corner Review* (2019), screenshot by author.



Tony, Retired from Lark Lane Rise
Plot 27 for 12 years



Dave, Retired from Building Work
Plot 34 and 34 for 14 years



Billy, Retired from Lark Lane Rise
Plot 31 for 30 years

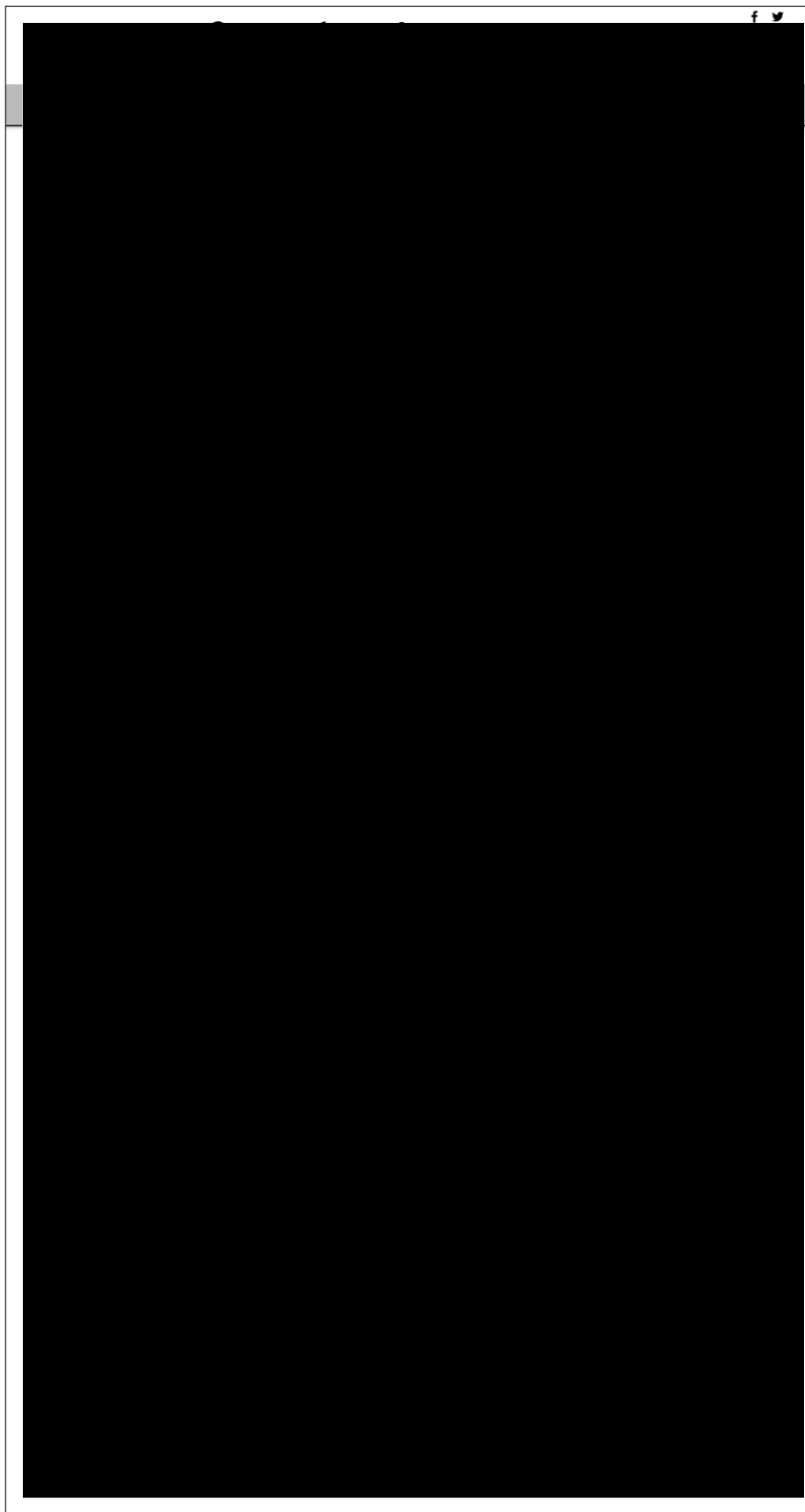
PAULINE ROWE & DAVE LOCKWOOD – THE ALLOTMENTS

POP-UP EXHIBITION: VICTORIA GALLERY & MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

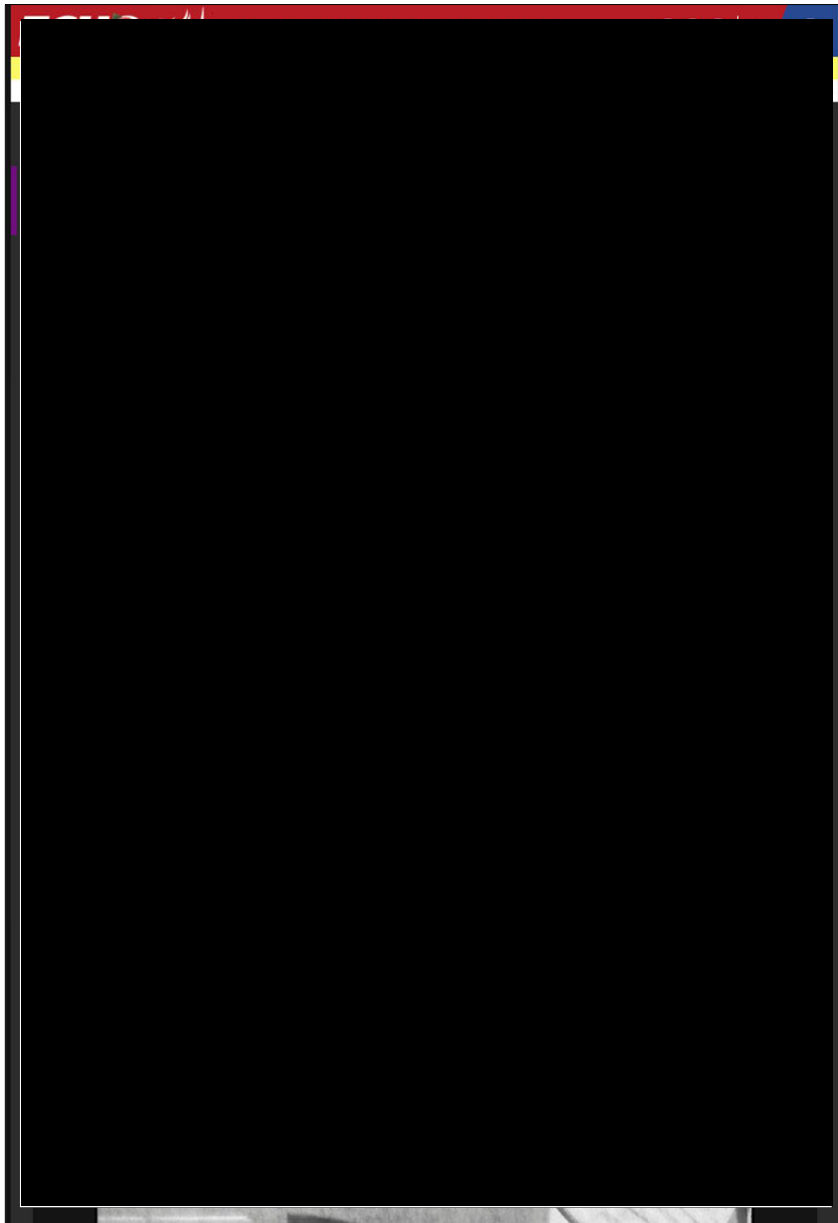
Allotments are spaces in the heart of a city that feel removed from it — places that celebrate and respect the cycle of life, offer escape from the everyday, and provide the opportunity to work alongside others to make things grow.

The Allotments is a collaborative artistic meditation about Dingle Vale allotments in Aigburth, one of twenty-five working allotment communities thriving in Liverpool.

The project explores these spaces of cultivation and society through the work of photographer, David Lockwood, poet, Pauline Rowe and painter, Arthur Lockwood. *The Allotments* has been authored with the co-operation of the allotment holders, who shared their insights, stories and experiences — as well as their shared commitment to plots of earth that remain places of belonging away from home.

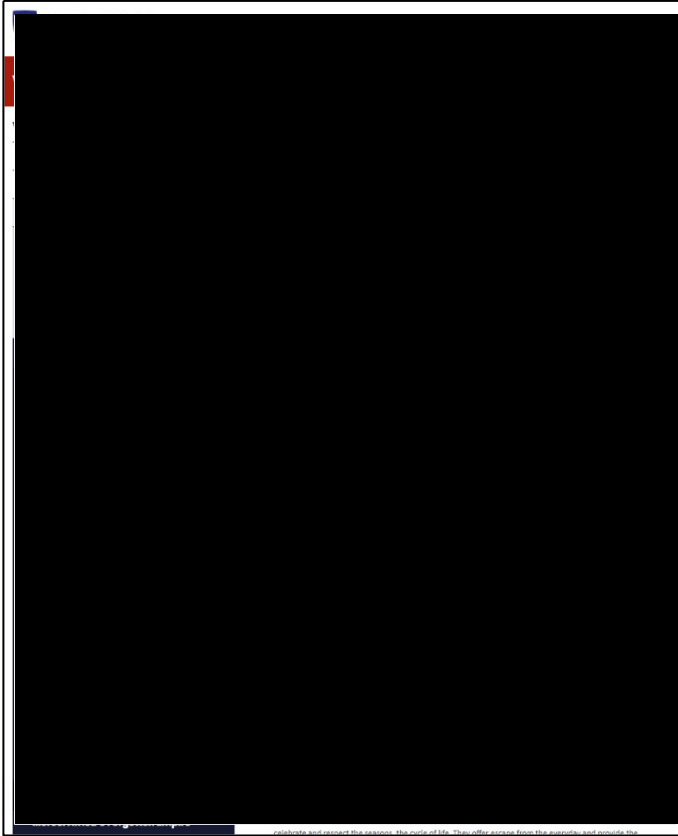


Arts City Liverpool Review, *Allotments Exhibition Aims to Cultivate Conversation* - <https://www.artscityliverpool.com/single-post/2019/08/31/allotments-exhibition-aims-to-cultivate-conversation> (2019), screenshot by author.

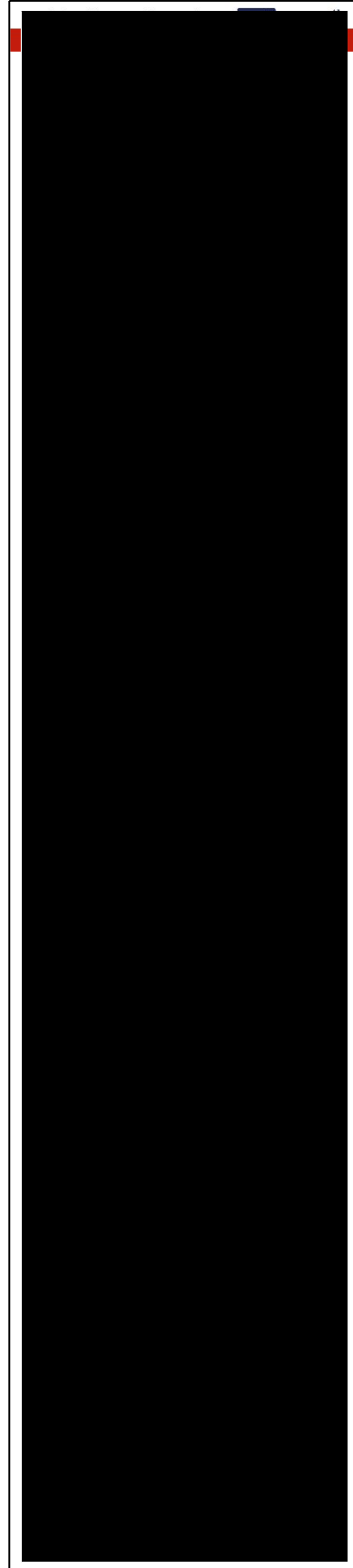


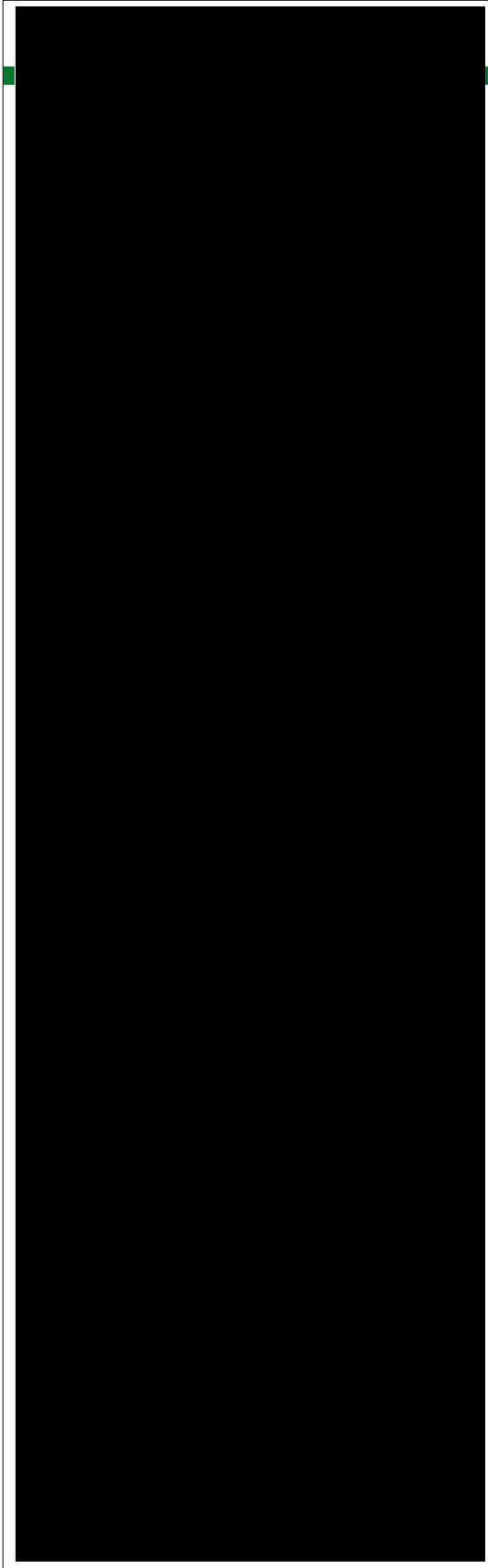
Liverpool Echo, *What's On* - <https://www.liverpooecho.co.uk/whats-on/arts-culture-news/gallery/photographs-show-liverpools-century-old-16839425> (2019), screenshot by author.



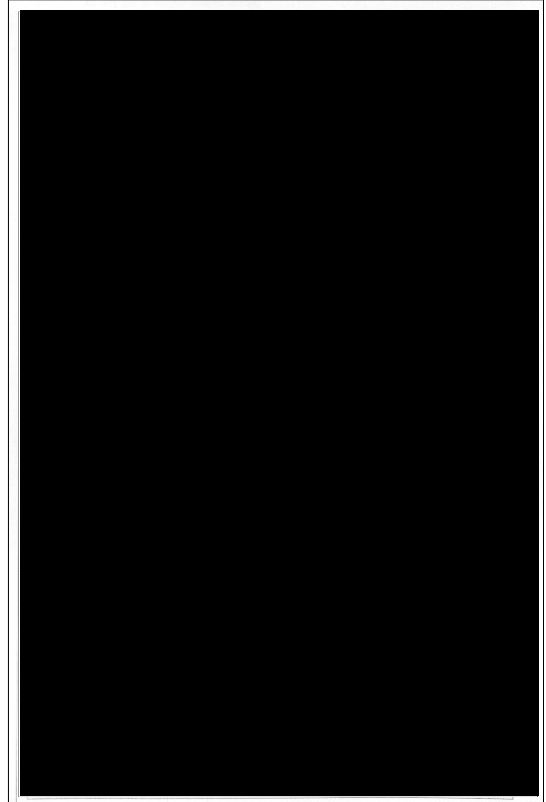


Victoria Gallery & Museum, *Past Exhibitions* -
https://vgm.liverpool.ac.uk/exhibitions_events_tours/past/the-allotments/
(2019), screenshot by author.





The National Allotments Society, *The Allotments* - <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news/the-allotments/> (2019), screenshot by author.



Black and White Photography magazine, *What's On* (2019), screenshot by author.

Appendix 4

The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel (2020)

This appendix contains examples of the publicity and promotional material that supported *The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel* project, illustrating how the project was engaged with and promoted by the Open Eye Gallery and the Peer to Peer UK / HK website.

Publicity Selection



Open Eye Gallery, VR - The New West - <https://openeye.org.uk/whatson/vr-the-new-west/> (2020), screenshot by author.

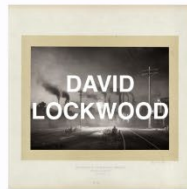
Existing Works

We are delighted to present existing digital artworks by artists based in the UK and Hong, each nominated by Peer to Peer: UK/HK partners.

These works will be exhibited online from 11 November – 13 December 2020.



[Choi Sai Ho](#)



[David Lockwood](#)



[Elaine Wong](#)



[John Wong](#)



[Lai Lon Hin](#)



[Luke Ching Chin Wai](#)



[Megan Broadmeadow](#)



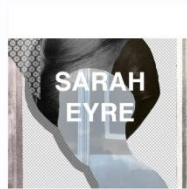
[Parham Ghalamdar](#)



[Rachel Goodyear](#)



[Hui Wai Keung](#)



[Sarah Eyre](#)



[Sarah Friend](#)



[Shezad Dawood](#)



[South Ho](#)



[Suki Chan](#)

David Lockwood



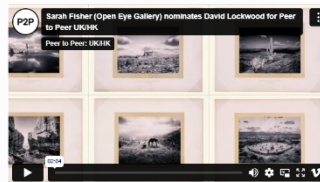
David Lockwood, *The New West: Exploration of the Geological Parallel*, 2020, VR photography exhibition at Open Eye Gallery

Nominated by Sarah Fisher, Open Eye Gallery.

The New West is a virtual reality exhibition curated by David Lockwood (UK) with the assistance of his son Hugo. Echoing the work of pioneering artists and photographers from the 1870s who captured the American West the exhibition charts their exploration as avatars, *Arthur Morgan* and *John Marston*, travelling within the rapidly evolving geographies of the Red Dead Redemption adventure video game. Photographs from the avatars archives and thoughts from their diary have been printed and hung on the Open Eye Gallery walls, filmed by a VR camera and the show posted back online. Here Lockwood plays with layers of mediation, asking us to question our relationship with the documenting of landscape and the human impact on the natural world, by connecting perceptions of the past with our knowledge of the present.

Lockwood is a photographer based in Liverpool and currently completing his PhD at Liverpool John Moores University.

dlockwood.com

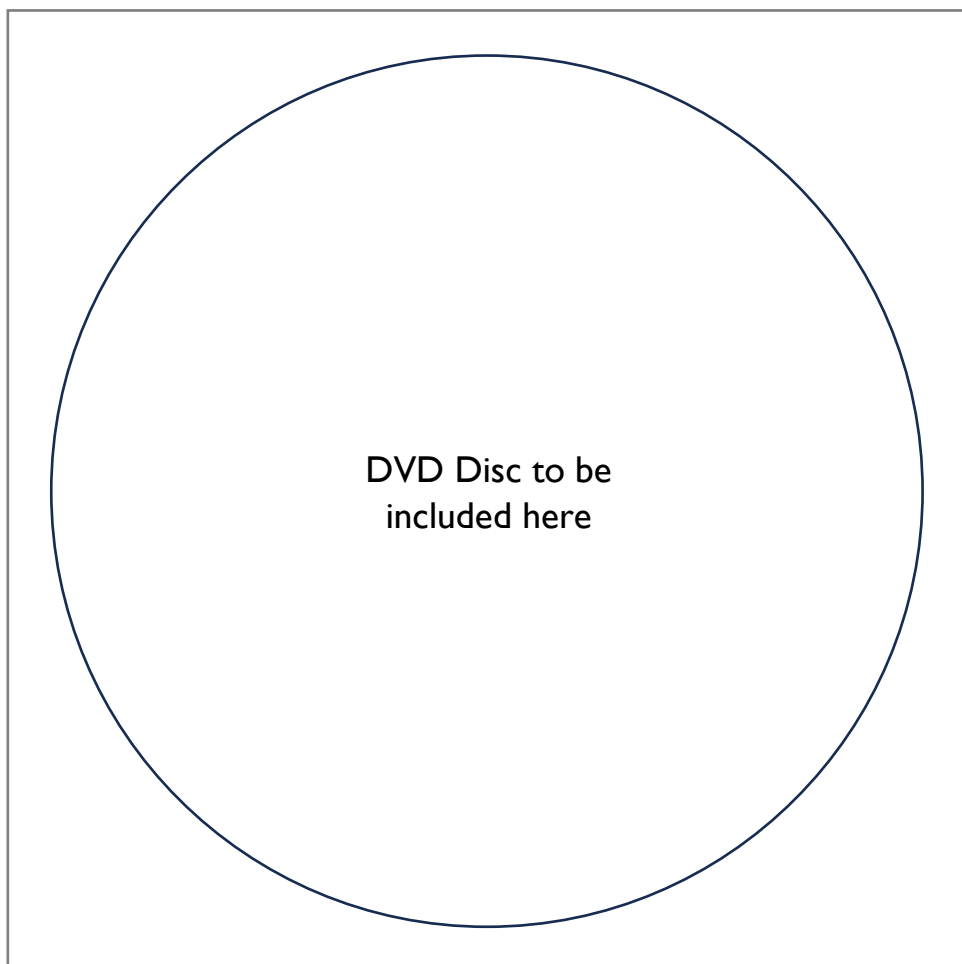


Appendix 6

DVD - Content Disc For Digital Appendix Files and Weblinks

If you are reading a printed/bound version of this thesis, this appendix contains a DVD disk containing the digital files (videos, offline websites etc) and live weblinks associated with the three practice elements/projects of the thesis.

<i>Finding Fangorn (2016-17):</i>	Working Offline Website
<i>Finding Fangorn (2016-17):</i>	Publicity video for Open Eye Gallery Display Monitors
<i>The Allotments (2018-19):</i>	Interactive Version of Pamphlet for the VGM Exhibition
<i>The New West (2020):</i>	<i>The New West Archive</i> - Working Offline Website
<i>The New West (2020):</i>	<i>THE JOURNEY</i> - Video
<i>The New West (2020):</i>	Sarah Fisher (Open Eye Gallery) Nominates David Lockwood for Peer to Peer UK/HK - Video
<i>The New West (2020):</i>	VR Exhibition Weblink Shortcut



Appendix 7

Links - On-line Digital Appendix Files and Weblinks

Here are weblinks for the on-line videos and websites associated with the three practice elements/projects of the thesis.

Finding Fangorn (2016-17): Website Link

<http://www.findingfangorn.com/>

Finding Fangorn (2016-17): Publicity video for Open Eye Gallery Display Monitors - Video Link

<https://dglockwood.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Finding-Fangorn-Video-Website-Page.mp4>

The Allotments (2018-19): Interactive Version of Pamphlet for the VGM Exhibition - Link

<https://dglockwood.com/tap/mobile/index.html>

The New West (2020): The New West Archive - Working Offline Website Link

<http://www.thenewwestarchive.com/main.php>

The New West (2020): THE JOURNEY - Video Link

<https://vimeo.com/473354242>

The New West (2020): Sarah Fisher (Open Eye Gallery) Nominates David Lockwood for Peer to Peer UK/HK - Video Link

<https://vimeo.com/484436699>

The New West (2020): VR Exhibition - Weblink Shortcut

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=ncoqj57wXYW>

Glossary of Terms

This glossary has been compiled as general and/or specific definitions used within this thesis.

Abstract Minimalism or Minimalism

Minimalism surfaced in America in the mid-1960s in retaliation for preceding art movements. Predominant styles such as Abstract Expressionism - artwork dedicated to emotion and self-expression - were seen by budding Minimalists as overly complex, too personal, and inaccessible to the vast majority of people...Fundamental features of Minimalist Art include, but are not limited to, the use of simple forms, hard edges, and linearity. (Heatley, 2022)

Anthropocene

A term adopted around the year 2000 to describe the geological epoch in which human activity became the dominant influence on climate and the environment.

Banality

An aesthetic quality associated with the unoriginal, mundane, ordinary and often commonplace - a state of lacking new or interesting qualities.

Collodion Process

A 19th-century photographic technique using glass or metal plates coated with collodion and silver salts to create negative or positive tintypes.

Commonplace

In this context, 'commonplace' refers to the ordinary, everyday aspects of the built or altered environment that become subjects of photographic inquiry. Here, it is also linked to the aesthetics of banality and neutrality, which were frequently perceived to be part of the New Topographics approach and the repeated representation of the subject matter in that aesthetic style.

Contact Print

A photographic print made by placing a negative directly onto or in contact with photographic paper to give a same sized positive view of the original negative.

Digital Lightbox

Interactive gallery feature of a website for viewing images at larger scale.

Documentary Photography

Documentary photography is a style of photography that provides a straightforward and accurate representation of people, places, objects and events, and is often used in reportage. (Tate)

Environmental Photography

Photography that highlights natural environments or human impact on them, often with ecological or conservation themes.

Haiku

A short Japanese poetic form (three lines, 5-7-5 syllables).

Large Format Film

Photographic film sizes such as 4x5" or 8x10" sheet film, offering higher resolution and detail in comparison to medium or small format roll films.

Neutrality

In this context, a photographic stance characterised by an objective, detached approach to subject matter, avoiding overt commentary or emotional engagement.

Objective vs. Subjective Representation

In this context, the tension between photography as an impartial mechanical subject documenting tool (objective) and the inevitable influence of the photographer's choice of style, approach and personal perspective for a subject (subjective).

New Topographics Outlook (or Outlook)

A phrase or word used to describe the conceptual approach and aesthetic introduced by the New Topographics exhibition to urban landscape photography, characterised by neutrality, lack of artistic frills, and documentary intent as coined by Greg Foster-Rice. (Foster-Rice & Rohrbach, 2010, p. 54)

Post-Conceptual Art

Post-Conceptual Art describes artistic practices that developed after Conceptual Art and continue its core principle that the idea of a work outweighs its material and aesthetic form. Emerging from the 1970s onward, it builds on the earlier movement of the 1960s–70s, when artists shifted attention away from traditional media and toward immaterial concepts. By rejecting beauty, craftsmanship, and conventional media as necessary criteria, Post-Conceptual Art reflects a lasting transformation in how art is created, interpreted, and valued. (Walker, 2025)

Postmodernist Photography

Postmodernism in photography emerged as a reaction to modernist ideals, challenging traditional notions of truth and artistic purity. It embraced ambiguity, irony, and multiple interpretations, drawing inspiration from poststructuralist philosophy and cultural studies. Challenged the idea of photography as a medium of objective truth. (Fiveable, 2024)

Post-Photographic Practice

Post-photography refers to a contemporary stage in visual culture in which digital technology and the Internet have transformed photography from a medium of truthful documentation into a broader practice centred on creating, manipulating, circulating, and interacting with images. It marks a shift away from capturing reality toward engaging with images as fluid, constructed, and networked forms of visual communication. (Aesthetics of Photography, no date)

Straight Landscape Photography

A photographic approach emphasising the camera's own unique qualities to produce images of technical precision, rich in detail, tonal control, and aesthetic beauty of natural scenes. Pioneered by Ansel Adams and Edward Weston in the f64 group with the landscape subject. (Wikipedia contributors, 2026).

Social Documentary Photography

Photography aimed at recording social conditions, human life, and cultural realities, often with an implicit or explicit social or political message.

Sublime

In this context, an artistic concept referring to a quality of greatness or grandeur that inspires awe, wonder and/or terror, often evoking overwhelming feelings or emotional intensity.

Typology

A systematic method of photographing similar subjects in a consistent manner to highlight structural or formal variations when presented as a set of images or prints.

Vernacular Architecture

Ordinary, functional buildings that reflect local traditions and everyday life rather than formal architectural design.

Virtual Landscape

Computer-generated environment explored as a metaphor for real-world geography.