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# Imaginative Investigations

**A research student exhibition at University of Brighton, 27 February–18 March 2017**

Imaginative investigators are working beyond the restriction of defined discipline parameters and are guided by questions, issues, and abstractions where new knowledge is seen as a function of creation and critiquing human experience (Sullivan, 2005:181).

In the groundbreaking book, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*, the artist, educator and writer Graham Sullivan provides strong evidence on the transformative potential of practice-based research (2005).

These include approaches from empiricist, interpretative and critical traditions. Key to making in systems is the exploration of interactions and intersections; making in communities is about communication, connection and interpretation. Making in cultures acknowledges dissonance, collaboration, criticality and the visual. Images and artefacts are interrogated as 'visual sources of knowledge' (2005:158) or activated to challenge 'perceptions through visual encounters' (2005:150). Questioning, self-reflexivity, dialogue and critical engagement are part of these processes (Haysom,2005).

Sullivan explores the communicative capacity of artists and practitioners as theorists and relates transformative, reflexive, relational, site-based research practices. He considers art and creative practices as research that are 'grounded in traditions of making [and] can be seen as a viable way to reveal the kind of artistic knowledge that [has] the capacity to change us' (2005:180).

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## Alessandro Esculapio

The garment display is an attempt to materialise the research methodology of my PhD project, which examines strategies of emotional durability in fashion. By rethinking strategies from design that proposed its potential for 'emotional durability,' my

thesis takes a concept coined by Chapman (2005) to describe approaches to product design that aim to encourage, nurture, and sustain long-term, meaningful relationships between users and objects, and assesses its implications for contemporary fashion practice and discourse. Specifically, my methodology relies on the concept of 'mnemonic function' (Cubitt 2007), which describes the designed or unintended ability of



Garment label from Anja Connor-Crabb's Past: Present graduation collection.

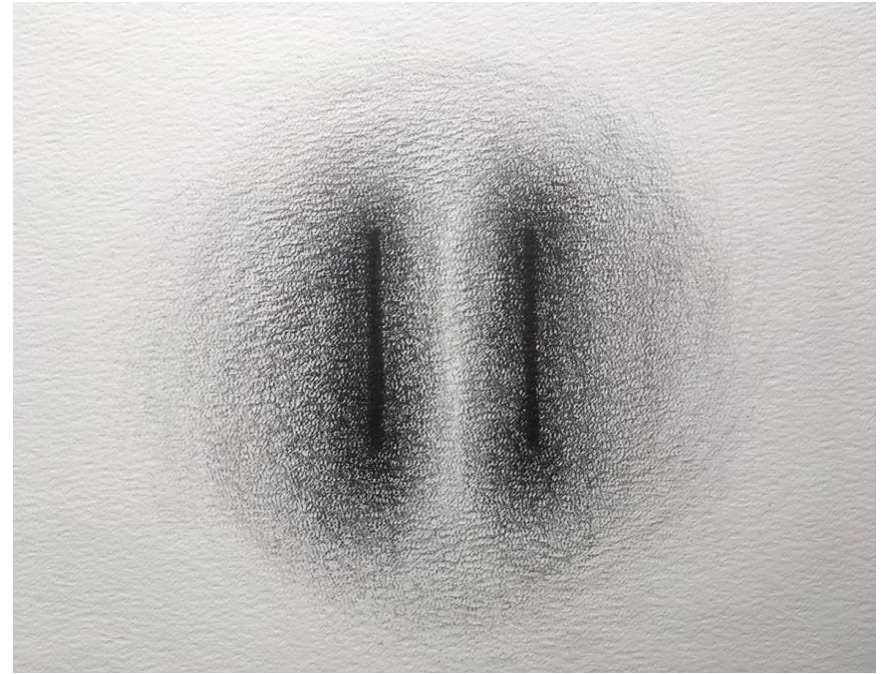
objects to assist remembering. The display consists of a hand-me-down from my grandfather, which represents a case of accidental emotional durability through personal memory, and three designer pieces that materialise the mnemonic function of clothing, each of them representing a different design strategy for emotional durability. The display thus mimics the process of recontextualisation of a term from material culture studies within the field of fashion studies.

Alessandro Esculapio holds a BA in Foreign Languages and Literatures from University of Milan and an MA in Fashion Studies from Parsons the New School for Design in New York City. He worked as editorial assistant to curator, editor and New York Times bestselling author Emily Spivack and has written for Vestoj, Hero, King Kong Magazine, and Fashion Projects among others. He co-authored the books *Just Fashion: Critical Cases of Social Justice In Fashion* (2012) and *The Fashion Condition* (2014), inspired by the work of Hannah Arendt. He has taught and lectured at both undergraduate and graduate level at Parsons The New School for Design and University of Brighton.

## Claire Scanlon

Title: Three Stuttering Starts

I recently heard a story about Deleuze who said that after he published *The Fold - Leibniz and the Baroque* he received two curious letters, one from an organisation of origami experts and one from some surfers. Both said they knew exactly what he meant..." we completely agree, because we never stop inserting ourselves into the folds of nature". In the fold, the philosophy of immanence, origami and surfing meet. The diagram offers a trans-disciplinary form in which to explore the potential of such disjunctive syntheses



Three Stuttering Starts is my unfolding letter to Deleuze.<sup>1</sup>

It is the opening gambit of an emerging MRes practice-led research project entitled- *Becoming Diagrammatic*: in what ways does art praxis meet philosophy in drawing the imagethought?

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<sup>1</sup> Bcc'd to Duchamp

## Claudia Kappenberg

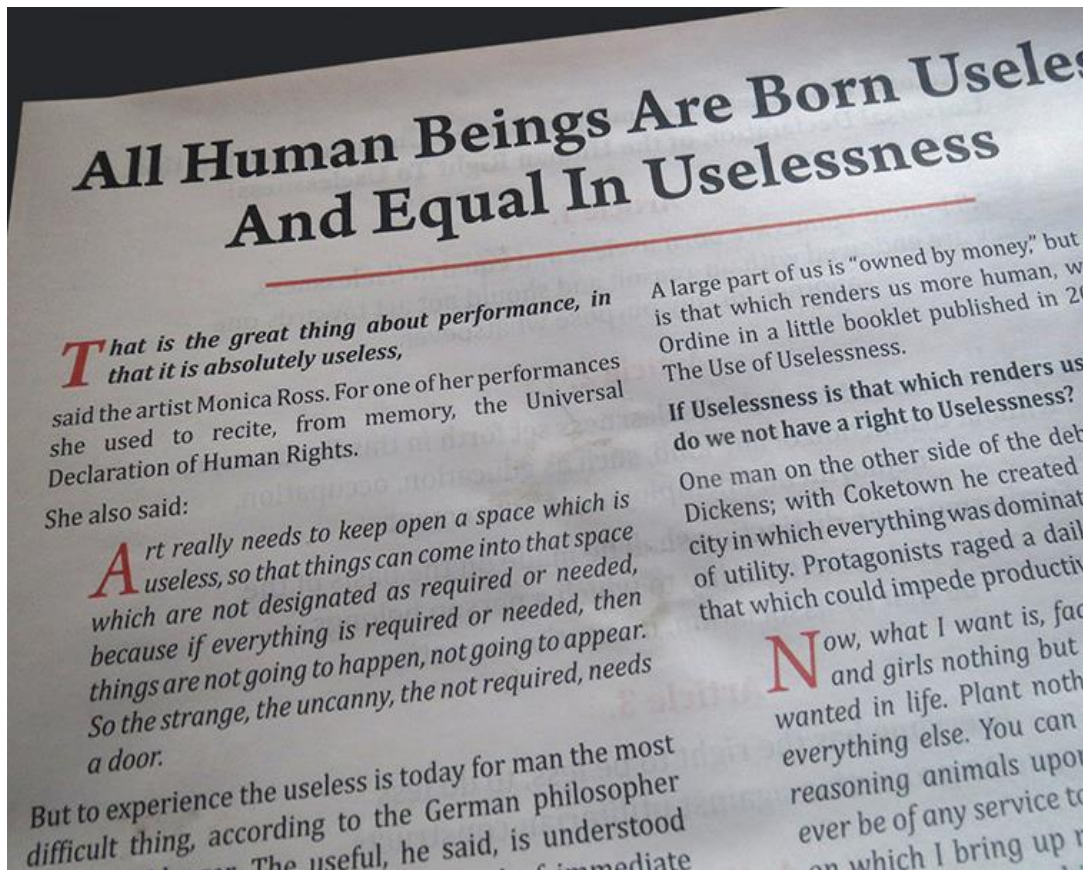
Title: Universal Declaration of the Human Right to Uselessness

This declaration is an artist's response to the fact that most of our activities are dominated by a credo of utility and purpose. We need to demonstrate usefulness, productivity and impact on a daily basis, be that as teenager, employee or chief executive.

Doing nothing, or being seen to be doing nothing is bad. To challenge this predicament a garden gnome intervenes: as an

expert slacker and drawing on a history of debates in philosophy and literature she proposes that uselessness is that which renders us more human. As the General Assembly of Garden Gnomes she upholds the right to dawdle.

Claudia Kappenberg is a performance and media artists. Her work consists of minimal choreographies and interventions into the everyday and have been shown across Europe, the US and the Middle East. She lectures at the University of Brighton, UK and has



published widely on performance and screen-based work, including in *Anarchic Dance* (Routledge, 2006), *The International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media* (2010), *Art in Motion* (Cambridge Scholars, 2015) and the *Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies* (Oxford University Press 2016). She is founding editor of *The International Journal of Screendance*.

<http://www.ckappenberg.info/>

## Connel McLaughlin

Title: 'the marks that therefore make moments'

The piece 'the marks that therefore make moments' emerges at a time when the artist is focused on investigating the specific discursive relations of anthropocentrism, ideology and aesthetics; aiming to identify the possibility and necessity of an arts practice within the broader framework of vegan praxis.

The video presented here captures drawing, diagramming and mark making at the

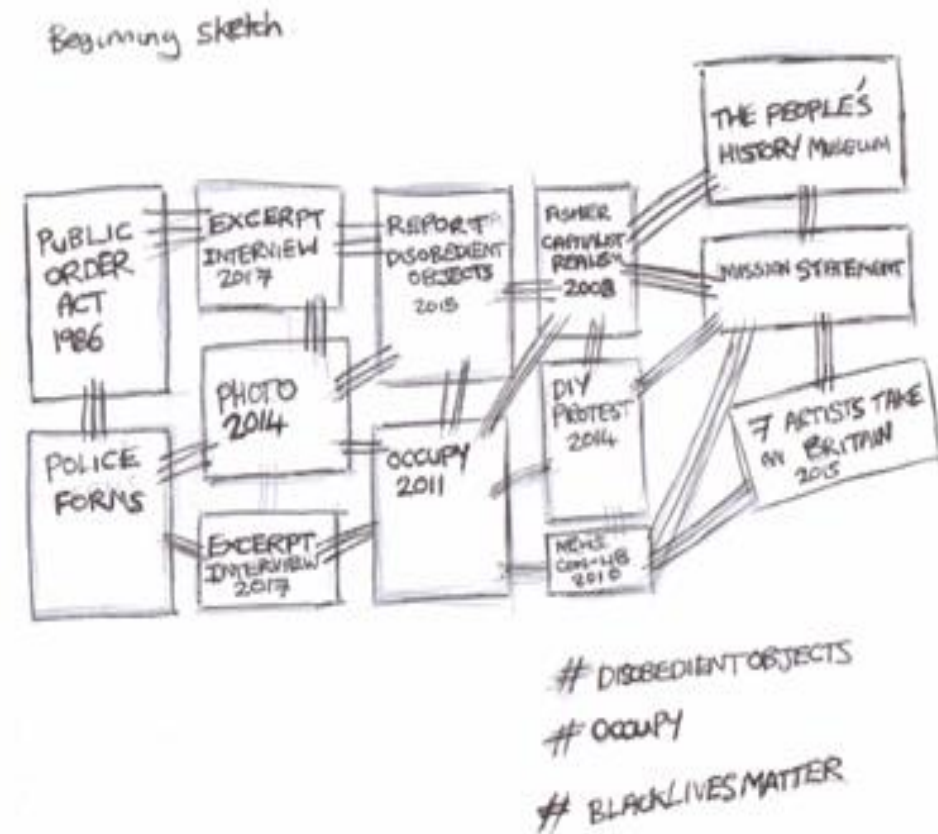
intersection of research and practice. That is, a presentation of the visual as the re-presentation of actions recorded by marks. It looks at intentions of marking and its effects, addressing the motives and methods at the centre of research and practice.

Connel McLaughlin is an artist and researcher. He is interested in the relationship between physical and textual violence, that is, at the interplay of representation and subjugation.





## Conni Rosewarne



Rosewarne's practice is concerned with the representation of political activist histories within institutions such as the museum, university or school. Currently her research is focused on a wave of political exhibitions that have appeared in mainstream public-funded art museums and galleries since 2010; the year that began the Con-Lib Coalition government and saw protests across the country against cuts to the NHS and a cap on university tuition fees. Alongside this wave comes a new debate seen at the 2016 Museums

Association conference of 'The Museum as Activist' in which the museum contributes to issues such as climate change and encouraging participants to get involved with activism. Using the 2014-15 exhibition 'Disobedient Objects' at the V&A as a case study, Rosewarne's project examines these trends and seeks to investigate the potential difficulties that arise with placing activism within – what Kundu and Kalin describe as – the Neoliberal Museum.

## Research Findings, 2015-16

The work on display is a selection of materials Rosewarne has gathered during her research thus far – including interview excerpts – to open-up her research process for further debate in the hope of producing a more democratic mode of academic work.



## Ekua McMorris



Title: Returning the Gaze

This body of work 'Returning the Gaze' is centered on Ekua's mother, her relationship to the British landscape and notions of belonging. Ekua was brought up in a house where family photographs and images were used as an educational tool. Using these images as a backdrop Ekua addresses the impact of growing up with in Britain with a mother and grandmother who viewed and experienced race and belonging differently from each other, this raised various questions, such as how is race performed and what role does memory play in its social construction?

Ekua McMorris is a practicing artist and researcher.

Through her practice she explores the performative acts of race by creating work that is centered on the concept of identity and movement. Ekua is currently researching the notion of Blackness in relation to place and how race is performed in front of the lens.

In 2009 Ekua graduated from the Royal College of Art with an MA in photography, and has continued to exhibit work nationally and abroad.



## Gavin Fry

Title: Why did some men choose to use embroidery for art in 1980's Britain?



As a practice based study of the interplay between researcher and practitioner this work uses reflective practice to trigger and provoke new knowledge as to why men choose to embroider. With stitching and collage, in the form of research diaries, as a central integral aspect of that interplay (and the methods) active documentation is used to record creative practice that functions as an agent or tool of ritual reflection that fuels a written outcome.

Gavin Fry is a researcher, a lecturer and an embroiderer.

His areas of interest are gender and stitch, embroidery and hierarchy, and the use of textile arts practice as an operational tool.

2011 onwards PhD candidate/research student University of Brighton: ongoing doctoral research on the reasons men chose to embroider art 1980-89 in Britain

2000 Diploma (Distinction) Mental Health Nursing at King's College London

1993 MA. RCA Embroidered Textiles, RCA London

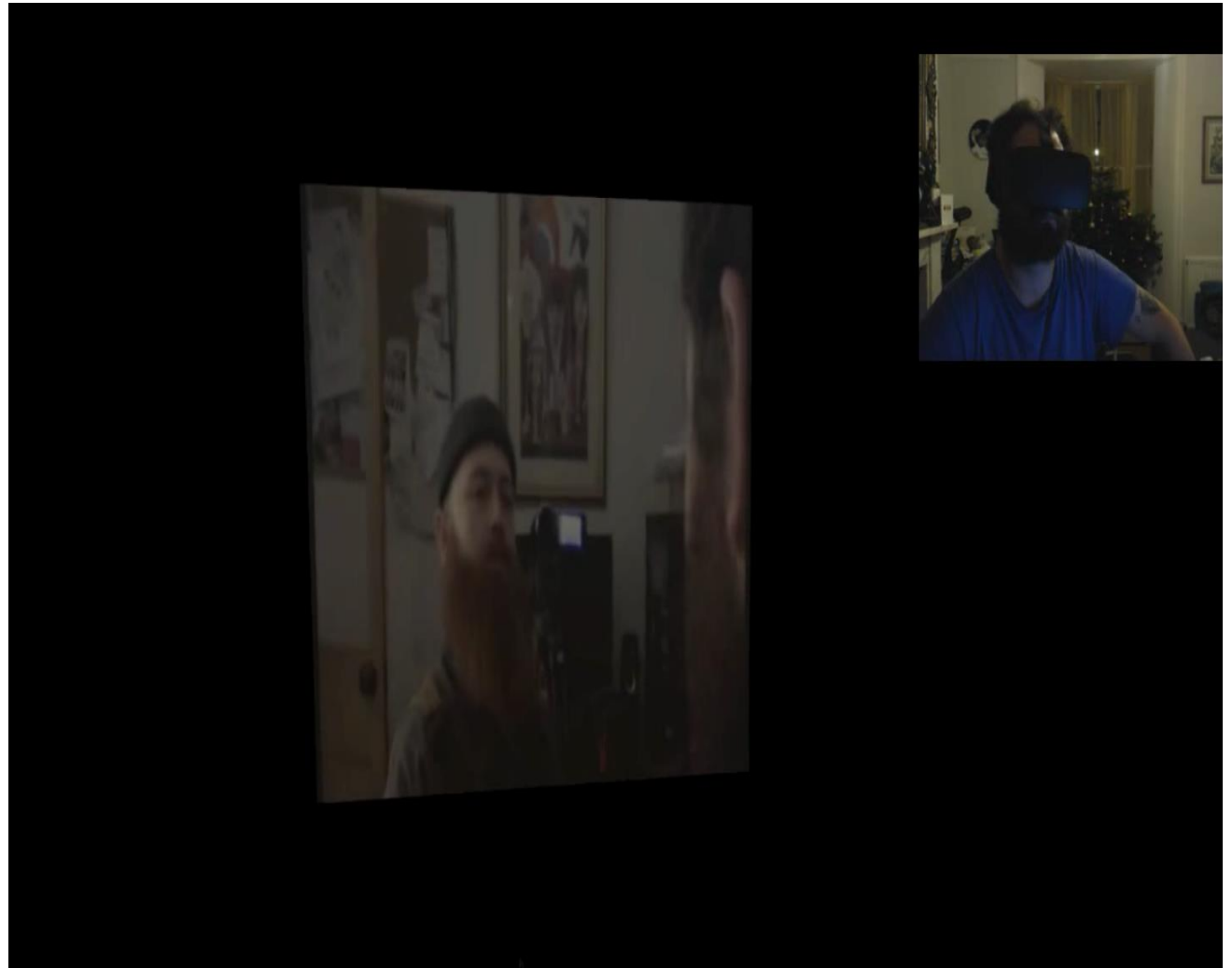
1985\_BA (Hons) Embroidery and Textiles, Goldsmiths College London

G.Fry@brighton.ac.uk

## Jeremiah Ambrose

Title: Synematics: Narrative Experiments using Virtual Gaze Interaction.

Working in the areas of digital art, media futures and experimental practice, Jeremiah's research cements ideas explored in both his M.Sc in Interactive Digital Media and his M.Phil in Film Theory and History. As an exponent of the interaction models developed for interactive cinema, his PhD project consolidates a conceptual framework concerned with overcoming the immersive deficiencies of this genre. Using virtual gaze interaction, his practice explores the



design, application and audience reception of real-time narrative decision points based on a user's ocular interactions. This process expands the discourse of cinematic language via interactive digital narrative systems, that exemplify the crossovers that can exist between the designer, the system and the end-user.

Jeremiah Ambrose BA (Hons), M.Phil, M.Sc.



## Julia Winckler

Title: Fabricating Lureland: a history of memory of place

Julia Winckler is a photographer and senior lecturer at the University of Brighton, School of Media, currently working towards a PhD on Fabricating Lureland: a history of memory of place. She has also been education consultant for Kaitak, Hong Kong



Baptist University for over ten years. Julia's interdisciplinary research focuses on archival traces, memory and migration narratives. Most recent journal articles include (with Adrienne Chambon), 'Compelling Evidence: mobilizing the Carlton Hill photographic archive', in *Visual Methodologies* (2017); and 'Fabricating Lureland: site marking the pioneer bungalows of Peacehaven' in *Journal of Writing in Creative Practice* (2016).

Julia has exhibited widely, including at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS (Retracing Heinrich Barth, 2008) and the Austrian Cultural Forum, London (Traces, 2012). She is co-researcher on the SSHRC funded Children of the City: from street to playground (2013-2017), which mobilizes a collection of archival photographs of urban street scenes taken in Toronto at the turn of the last century and as part of this grant has co-curated an exhibition at City of Toronto Archives Gallery (2016-17), as well as the upcoming Photographic Memories - Lost Corners of Paris: The Children of Cité Lesage-Bullourde opening on 8th March at the Alliance Française gallery in Toronto.



The images selected are from my PhD thesis, which explores the history of memory of place (Gedächtnisgeschichte). In chapter 8, I propose to read the town of Peacehaven itself as archive. Two distinct photographic strategies are mobilized; each explores the intersections of place, memory and archive. Firstly, I show how surviving traces of the town's original vision are mapped and



recorded through documentary photographs.

Photography is used here in a forensic or detective mode to create a photographic record for the future.

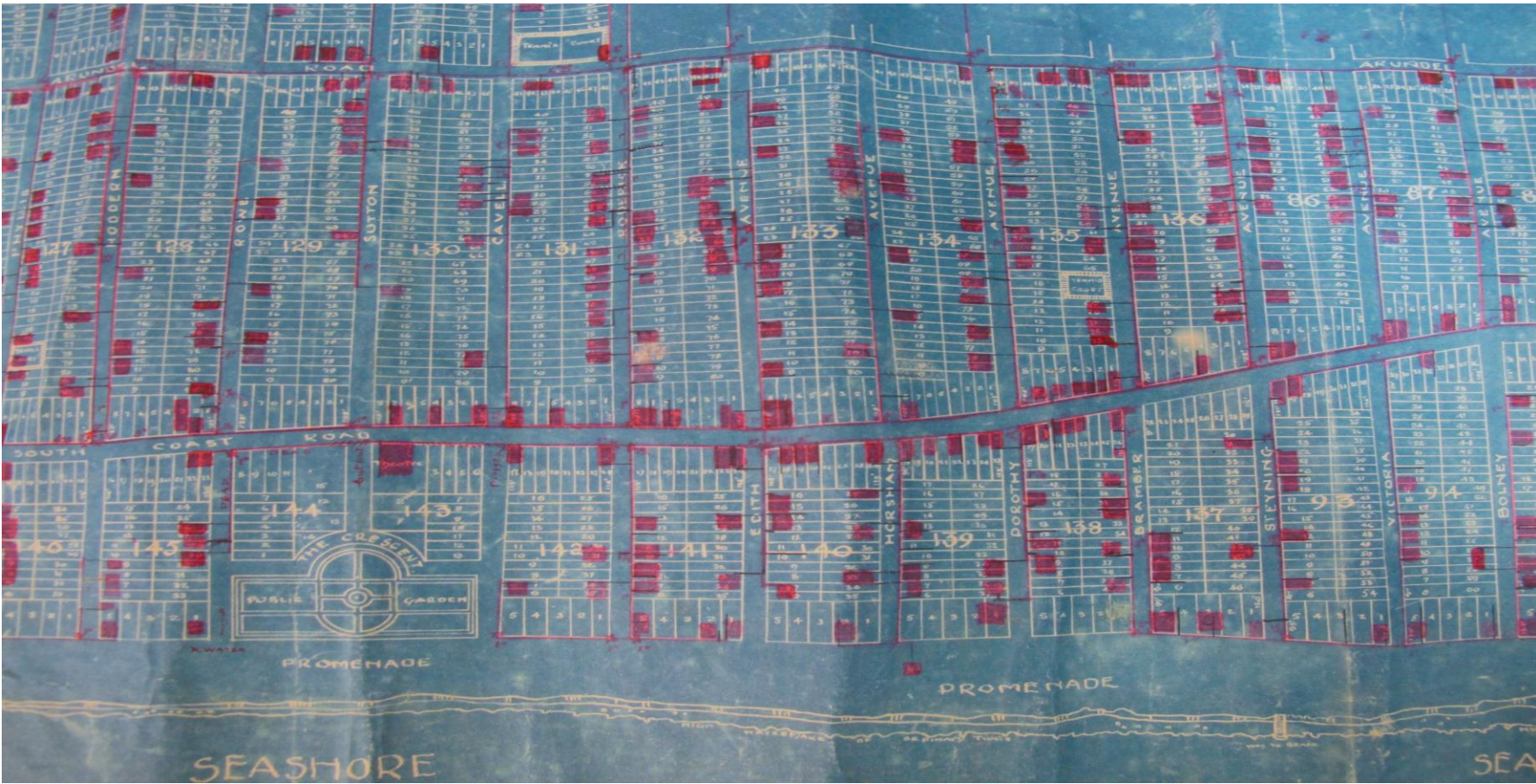
This methodology of site-marking is informed by the technique of site-writing, a term coined by architectural historian Jane Rendell, who has used the process of writing as a form of spatial construction.

This is complemented by a second visual approach that takes the shape of a commemorative site-specific intervention performed as a public outdoor event. As part of this intervention, lost landmarks were

temporarily conjured through the projection of archival photographs onto bare chalk cliffs below Peacehaven's iconic Meridian Monument.

Through this intervention, new, layered images emerged and were recorded. Whilst representing what has been lost, the photographs also seek to reinterpret the archival images in a new context. A space emerged within which lost landmarks of Peacehaven are made visible in the present.

Three of the images shown here are records of this intervention; the fourth is a photograph of an archival blueprint of the Peacehaven Estate (1921).



## Louisa Buck

Title: Why do British political cartoonists use images of Greek mythology?

My research is a critical investigation of the uses and meaning of Greek mythology in the work of British political cartoons.



In my research I apply ideas of classical reception theory and intertextuality in the production of a history of the Myth of Sisyphus, my case study, revealing alterations and shifts of meaning through time and cultures. This is realised as an illustrated journal. It is an

assemblage of texts and images of Sisyphus. My own drawings are included, in my guise as Sisyphus, as he attempts to articulate his own story.

The journal can be seen as a metaphor, in which the layers of repetition mirror the cycle of Sisyphus' punishment, alluding to Nietzsche's theory of Eternal Return and Deleuze's concepts of Difference and Repetition

Louisa Buck works as a researcher, an assistant researcher for a museum, a lecturer and an art practitioner specialising in drawing.

2011- PhD candidate at University of Brighton

2007-2009 MA Sequential Design and Illustration

1988-1989 P/T Post-Graduate study at John Cass School

1985-1988 BA(Hons) Fine Art, Sculpture

L.Buck@brighton.ac.uk

## Lujain Mirza



**Title:** Photographing Saudi Women: A Critical Collaborative Exploration Through Images and Narratives.

**Title of Photographs:** Al-Nisa' "The Women"

In these photographs I explore and evaluate different aspects in which Saudi women are under-represented in a gender-segregated nation. The photographs represented will illustrate and show the diversity of these women, by producing new insights on their diverse identity, and how they want to be visually represented through the medium of photography. These individual representations of Saudi women propose a new form of portraiture in the context of connecting two different cultures. Representing these women visually will enable me as a photographer to articulate aspects of the social and cultural characteristics in context of the Saudi culture, besides forming a contemporary visual representation of Saudi women.

I am a photographer and visual artist from Saudi Arabia; I had both my bachelor and Masters degrees in arts and photography from Australia. Currently, I am doing my PhD in photography in the UK. Therefore, I believe that I have the sense of the Middle East yet the awareness of Western influence, which I try to combine within my work when possible. I am specialized in portraits, but at the same time I enjoy taking all kinds of photographs.



As an artist, I am a creative person, constantly looking for new creative ideas. My thoughts come from personal experiences or from outer influences. I love to work in a creative environment individually or with other people. My aim is to influence people positively. I also wish to make a difference in how others perceive to understand art, photography or anything creative. The art of photography has always had a positive impact on me personally.







This exhibition presents outcomes from the first 16 months of the on-going study and showcases the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of testing of the systems developed thus far: an 'Emotionally Durable Design Framework' which consists of 9 themes: Narratives, Integrity, Identity, Evolve, Materiality, Relationships, Imagination, Conversations, and Consciousness; with a further 39 strategies that support the creation of an Emotionally Durable Product or Service.

This method was used to direct a design workshop with 45 BSc Product Design students at the University of Brighton to

further test and improve the process but also generate Emotionally Durable light concept prototypes for exhibition which will later be presented at Philips Lighting in Eindhoven.

**Tessa Lewin**

Title: 'Queer Riffs'



The work in this exhibition is taken from a body of work called 'Queer Riffs', produced in conversation with my ongoing doctoral research on Queer Visual Activism in contemporary South Africa. It explores both some of theoretical themes emerging from my thesis, and some of its participants.

Tessa Lewin is a researcher, facilitator, and artist. She is particularly interested in the intersect between art and research, and in cross-disciplinary, and participatory work that tries to engage with issues of social justice.

She previously ran the Digital Arts programme at Lighthouse in Brighton, and is currently a Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

2014 onwards, PhD candidate/research student

University of Brighton

2006, MA in Digital Moving Image, London Guildhall

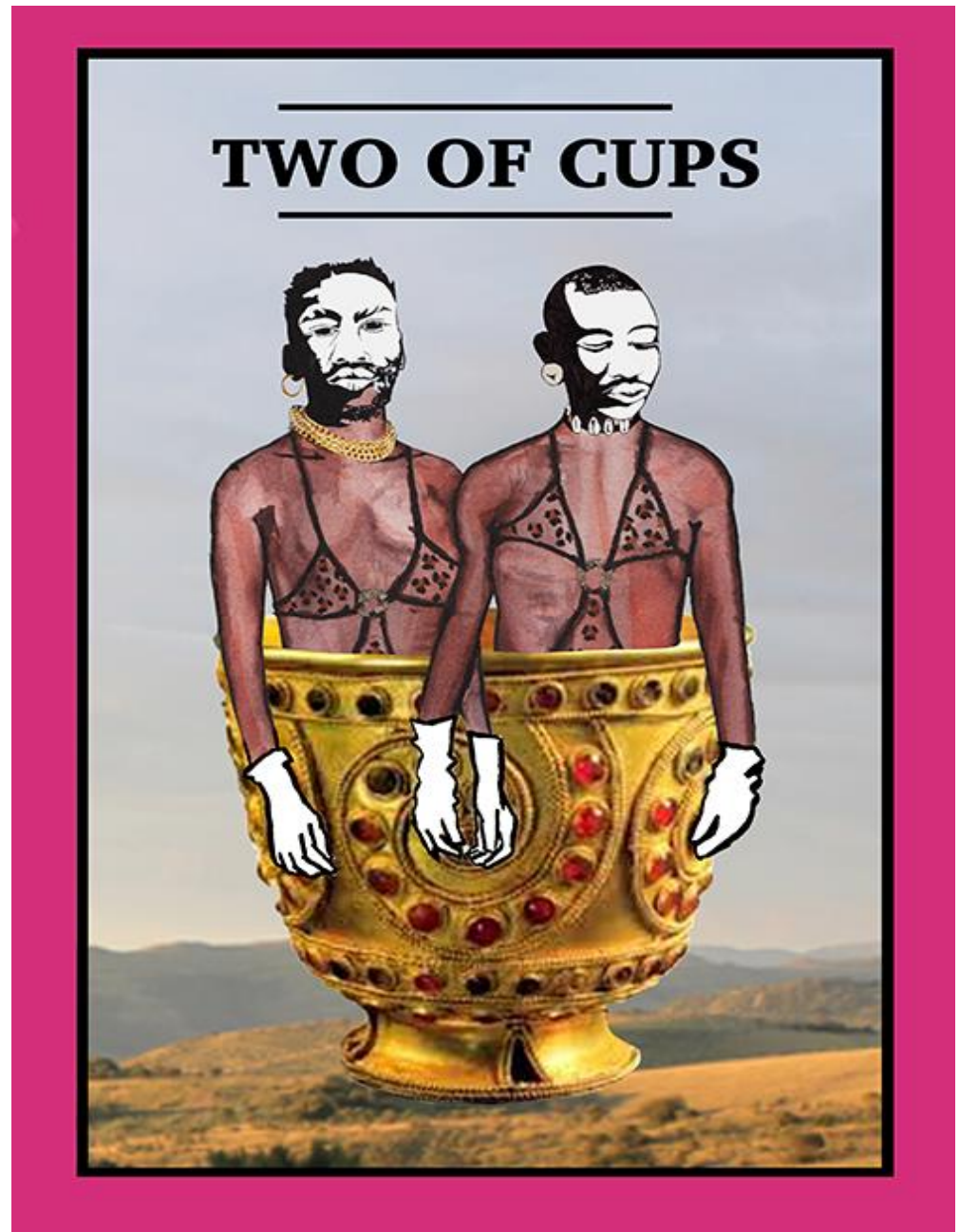
University

1998, BSocSci (Hons) in International and Comparative

Politics, University of Cape Town

1997, BA with a double major in Art History and

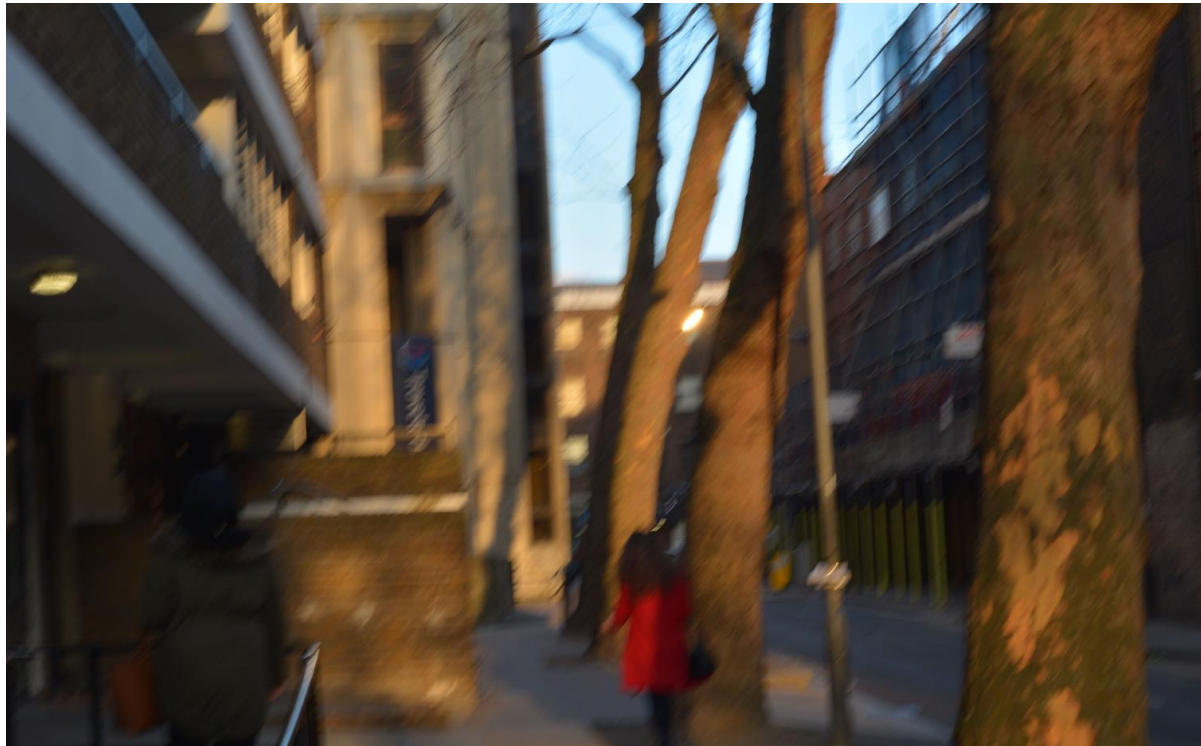
Political Science, University of Cape Town



## Uschi Klein

Title: Everyday photography and young male adults with ASD

My research investigates the everyday photographic practices of young male adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). By drawing on concepts and theories of photography and phenomenology, this image-based, participatory study analyses the ways in which individuals with ASD engage with photography in their everyday lives.



Photograph taken by Vincent S., 2016

The photographs in this exhibition were taken by my research participants, who use digital photography in their everyday lives, but they are not necessarily engaging in online communities that share images repeatedly and extensively. At the same time, these photographs are examples of participants' approaches to, and understanding of, what constitutes their social world.



Photograph taken by Alex S., 2015

Uschi Klein is a PhD candidate/research student at University of Brighton, and works as a photographer and tutor in London. She studied Linguistics and Media Studies at undergraduate level at Victoria University of Wellington, NZ, followed by an MA in Photography at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research interests encompass the relationship between photography, visual communication, representation and visual research methods.



Photograph taken by Joe D., 2014

U.Klein@brighton.ac.uk