

Embodiment of photographic imagery through the lens of Time + Light + Memory

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Presentation overview

- **Problem**

- This paper is a theoretical discussion about the way memory, experience and vision can connect the photographer to their photomechanical device, the camera as an extension of the body.
- Capturing time, light and memory shapes new states of beings and opens possibilities where by the improbable and the impossible are envisioned as an embodiment of the photographers past, present and future imaginings
- Memory is filtered through the previses experiences, assumptions beliefs, and cultural biases of its creator. The view will also bring their own filtered view to the imager as well

- **Investigation**

- How to develop a reflective pedagogy that harnesses time, light and memory work in tertiary photographic education.

Challenge for Educators

- The challenge for the educators is how to engage the digital native (Prensky, 2007)
- Build a reflective photographic visualization practice for a click and flick generation.
- Centre time, light, and memory work in building an aesthetic and critical photographic digital pedagogy

The Context of new Photomedia

- Where once many people imagined that the future would hold virtual reality and digital stimulation we now have arguable the opposite;
- ‘The visual publication of ordinary life in an ubiquitous photoscape’(Hand, 2012, p. 1)
- ‘Disneyland simulation culture and ‘a stylish promiscuity’ which overloaded the traditional cultural sphere of literary and artistic production.’(Featherstone, 2007, p. xii)

The Context of new Photomedia

- Photomedia education students must grasp the complex way images are used in contemporary society. This involves:
 - nuancing of the historical and cultural legacy of image representations
 - awareness of the role of experience in building photographic awareness
 - understanding the contemporary interplay between historical visual language and current photo aesthetics

Time, light and memory

- Traditionally we see chemical photograph as a kind of writing with light.
- Meaning is based on the Greek word φῶς (phos), meaning "light", and γραφή (graphê), meaning "drawing, writing", together meaning "drawing with light" (Sir John Herschel 1839)
- The indexical photograph is both a trace of an object *and* a record (of the passing) of a fraction of time. (Lister, 2012, p. 55)

Time

- Past, Present and Future
- Period the shutter is open
- Frozen to a sense of liquidity
- Digital paradox of the time based media
- To photograph is to arrange elements within a defined space and capture that composition within a fragment of time

George Lottermoser (2011)

Light

- The moment you take the leap of understanding to realize you are not photographing a subject but are photographing light is when you have control over the medium. — Daryl Benson- Alberta (2004)
- Light, that first phenomenon of the world, reveals to us the spirit and living soul of this world through color.

Johannes Itten, Bauhaus colorist

- Light makes photography. Embrace light. Admire it. Love it. But above all, know light. Know it for all you are worth, and you will know the key to photography. (George Eastman)

The camera captures light, our minds capture images

how our camera and eye understand light

Our understanding of time and light is informed by our past experiences which is reflected in the creation of imagery

Memory

- “You don't make a photograph just with a camera. You bring to the act of photography all the pictures you have seen, the books you have read, the music you have heard, the people you have loved.” Ansel Adams
- “A picture is a secret about a secret, the more it tells you the less you know.” Diane Arbus

Photography using Time, light and Memory

- Over time our brain is trained to instantly recognise parts of the world, so that the world seems to have an already defined personal meaning.(Nichols, 1981, p. 12)
- Accesses our personal image bank?
- The camera in the photographers hand becomes and extension of the body were the photographer mind shapes time and light to create images based on the minds eye.

Aesthetic Experience

- The photograph interacts with both the photographer's memory, environment, camera eye, and most importantly their senses that determine when and how to construct the images and why.
- We rarely look at subjects, seeing them for what they are. Instead what we see is filtered through our previous experiences, assumptions, beliefs, and cultural biases' (Lawrence, 2008 p329).
- Qualitative statement about phenomenology- lived experience and how the photographer researches their world? Or an arts based research statement- Sullivan/ Barone & Eisner (2012)

Aesthetic Experience

- *‘beauty and Goodness’* (See Tractinsky, 1997)
- Photography aesthetics similar to design aesthetics need to utilize areas such as *meaning making, semiotic chains, complex emotions, anticipation, etc* (Xenakis & Arnellos, 2013)

Aesthetic Experience

- ‘a balance between attendance to the more necessary forms of a structural technicity and the desirability of a more aesthetic reflectivity’ (Lovat, 1999, p. 123)
- This builds on phenomenological experience
- ‘interaction aesthetics’ (Xenakis & Arnellos, 2013)

Implications for Teaching Photography in the Digital Age

- Digital Native (Prensky, 2007)
- Artist/photographer process work is through an inner conversation of artistic creation.
- The reflective when the artist 'steps back' to consider thoughts and thinking processes.

(Catterall, 2005, p. p1)

The role of arts based research in exploring this

Questions?



Untitled

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2012