

A CROWS ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH

What I have done so far:

In the last two trimesters I have tried a plethora of things, from reading new books to filming for the very first time (EYE Festival), and writing a script for a project I intend to start in LB 2. I have conducted research and adopted a new viewpoint on how to be analytical about my own work, although I will admit over the last several months I have been going through a settling process.

So, during this time I built a photo camera out of MDF wood, and shot a small series around Rotterdam. I then began looking for Keith Haring artwork around the city, which I made into a small Zine titled, Finding Haring. I shot a 16mm film on a Bolex and was taught the process of development/scanning. I looked at many films and books when searching for a new project. But now, I believe I have found what I plan to do next.

Brief of New Project:

In this Trimester my research will focus on psychological theory and its relationship with cinema and photography. Previously, I explored the topic of Trauma and Transcendence through the lens of my Hasselblad. The project began last year with photographing Lockerbie, a town where Pan Am Flight 103, a regularly scheduled Pan Am transatlantic flight from Frankfurt to Detroit via London and New York. New York was targeted by terrorist activity on 21 December 1988. The aircraft operating the transatlantic leg of the route was destroyed by explosion, killing all 243 passengers and 16 crew, before landing on the small unsuspecting town of Lockerbie, killing the eleven residents below. The next steps to the project were in attempt to capture photographs of Aberfan in Wales, where the catastrophic collapse of a colliery spoil tip at around 9:15 am on 21 October 1966 crushed an entire school full of both teachers and children. And then finally images of the people and place of Hungerford, in reference to the Hungerford massacre, which was a series of random shootings in Hungerford, England, on 19 August 1987. Michael Robert Ryan, an unemployed antique dealer and handyman, fatally shot sixteen people, including a police officer before shooting himself. Admittedly, this did not work the way I originally intended as they somewhat felt like they held an element of dark tourism when shooting these steps of the project, and almost exploitative of the community. Defining them entirely by something that happened, a stigma which surrounded the town.

In 1953 there was a flood, which was deemed the greatest natural disaster to occur in the Netherlands in the 20th century. The combination of a heavy north-westerly storm and a spring tide caused flooding in large parts of the country. The disaster claimed the lives of 1,836 people and tens of thousands of animals, and many homes were destroyed. The intention of this project is to create exhibitions involving photographs and a documentary surrounding stories of the people affected by the disaster. The photographs I wish to take will both focus on the generations to grow up after the disastrous events, and how they may still be affected as a result

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of 'Transferred Trauma', those directly affected by it and how the land still could still hold traces of the disaster. I eventually would aim to make this into a photo-book, with chance of potentially creating a documentary piece to be shown in galleries, exhibitions and art festivals. One of the outputs for this will directly be a website of my own, which may function as advertisement for my artwork whilst articulating my thoughts and processes in a way which could be used in professional context, such as if viewed by a potential employer. I always find it very difficult to write about my own work, and believe it would be a good opportunity for me to be able to collect my thoughts and show different meanings to what is first seen when viewing my images.

I will have to conduct more research into this study: <https://www.sciencefriday.com/segments/crows-a-bird-thats-not-bird-brained/>, as I intend to use it as basis for my work. To do this, I have written some formal emails to those who conducted the study to get a better idea of what their views are in this topic, as well as reading their scientific reports. The next step is to travel to the Watersnood museum, to document what I see in Photographs. Looking particularly at people and place which will give me access to primary research if I engage those I meet, asking directly about the 1953 flood and how it affected them, if at all. I will gather as much information as possible on the topic from the museum also, and hopefully speak directly with the experts that work there. This is now pending as museums are shut due to COVID19, making it particularly difficult to travel to Zealand and come into contact with people without breaking social distancing parameters.

A lot of the research I have already done firsthand in Lockerbie may be used towards this, here are some of the images I took during this project:



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I feel enticed by these tragic events and subjects as they are significant, at least in the terms of history and many people are aware that they happened, and if not. I think they should be. The events which transpired affected a lot of people, which in its essence is what this artwork should revolve around. People and their experience with place and the disaster incurred. I suppose a lot of my work is about the connection between people and landscape, and this is why this project should be investigated through photography and video, with potential to create a documentary about it. The subject matter will very much dictate how I made the work, but it's still about telling stories, talking about people's lives and what happened to them through imagery. A visual exploration of what happened and how people may still be affected by the event today.

The work will act as a form of memorial for many viewers from the Netherlands, but I think because the aim of my work very open images, neutral landscapes, portraits and text about what happened will provide intrigue for the viewer. Once the audience has seen the work, they're then able to move on to all sorts of other questions, to do with who was affected and how many people struggled because of this. People could very well not be interested, but it is a project I am enthusiastic about.

To watch/read:

- ~~sleeping by the Mississippi—alec soth~~ **[DONE]**
- ~~shot at dawn—chloe dewe mathews~~ **[DONE]**
- ~~tarnation~~
- ~~I have something to tell you—shortoftheweek~~ **[DONE]**
- ~~feathers shortoftheweek~~
- ~~The Shock doctrine—shortoftheweek~~
- <https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/asa09/paper/3800>
- https://books.google.nl/books/about/Images_in_Spite_of_All.html?id=CXuNvssxLIC&redir_esc=y

Equipment:

- Bolex - Black and white film
- Hasselblad 503cx - Colour film, Portra 800 - 80mm lens
- Blackmagic - 80mm lens
- Tripod
- Flashgun for Hasselblad

Steps to take:

- organise + finish website (upload images and information)
- plan shoots to the **day / time** and needs of which **equipment / film** to be used (flash(?))
- ~~contact Zealand museum and talk to them about project / commissioned work / see what books I can get from museum as a student / write formal email~~ **[DONE]**
- research the floods of 1953 **[DONE]**
- look at poetry inspired by the events and translate from dutch
- look at the crow theory and the paper published from it
- write my conclusions and ideas from study and how it could potentially apply to people affected by it
- conduct primary research
- update website with (CATD) after taking photographs