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Fugitive Testimonies

Su Fahy

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of Westminster for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This research thesis takes the form of a longitudinal fieldwork study (2009–16) to question what is ‘fugitive’ from the family photographic archive. The research borrows the term from Roland Barthes: ‘the Photograph is a certain but fugitive testimony’.¹ The research project relates this idea to what goes missing from family albums and posits that discarded materials from family albums, as found in flea markets, can constitute the ‘fugitive memories’ of family life. As a result, collecting these materials can be used to construct new ‘archives’, named in this project as the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive*. This archive acts as a repository for examining fugitive memories. The ‘sample’ of discarded photographs has been gathered in the practical fieldwork at a regional flea market, located in the southwest of England (specifically at the Royal Bath and West Showground in Shepton Mallet, Somerset) from 2009 to 2016.

The fieldwork method was developed in two phases. The first is collecting and mapping the found materials in fieldwork notebooks (organised as a photo-archive) to form a timeline and survey of encounters, and the annotation of photographs and materials with critical notes on the transactions and encounters. All these notes give extra insight into the flea market as a site of enquiry and fugitive discourse. This work is inspired by the historical traditions of such methods as *bricolage* (Claude Lévi-Strauss) and *objective chance* (e.g. in André Breton and Surrealism).² Examples of contemporary artists also drawing on these tactics and methods of practice are Tacita Dean and Taryn Simon.³ Phase two of the project represents the critical intervention of re-configuring the ‘outtakes’ curated (by me) from selected material prints in the

¹ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Vintage, 2000), p.93: 26–30.

² Claude Lévi-Strauss, ‘The Science of the Concrete’ in *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson Ltd, 1966), pp17–22.

See also André Breton, ‘Surrealist Situation of The Object: Situation of the Surrealist Object’ (1935) in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, translated by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1972), pp255–78.

³ See Tacita Dean, *Girl Stowaway*, 1994, colour and black and white film, optical sound, 8 minutes. Taryn Simon, *Six Projects*, Galerie Rudolfinum, 2016, <http://www.galerierudolfinum.cz/en/exhibition/taryn-simon> (accessed 26.07.17).

Fugitive Testimonies Archive. The subsequent grouping of these 'outtakes' constructs the conceptual assemblages, to reveal and expose from this discarded material what has been censored by families. By presenting and re-reading these found discarded photographs the thesis produces new perspectives on family album photography, by engaging in theoretical discussion of the direct relationships between personal and social memory, and between personal and family identity vested in what is discarded from the family photographic archive.

In a supplementary argument, the thesis argues that the analogue era of photography is what enabled and created - through its material form - the very possibility of this fugitive discarding of 'family material'. The potential for new scholarship about the re-configuration of the photograph within this bricolage mode is in direct relation to the material process of analogue photography. The *fugitive testimonies* of family held on analogue paper substrates offer specific visual image memories whose insistent capture are likely to evaporate, deteriorate, change, fade or disappear.

In consequence, the contribution of this research to new knowledge concerns the importance of this documentation of *private life*, a documentation, which has a disruptive urgency through questioning and investigating affective visual narratives of 'the family' in fugitive prints. Equally significant for this research are the intricate forms of the photographic records, the unconscious escapes from contracts of compatibility (the fugitive stories of family) to inform the tactics of a practice.

Keywords: memory, identity, archive, family, material found photograph, fugitive testimony, affect.



Aerial Photograph, 'An Archaeological Desktop Survey Report 2010', The Royal Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet, Shepton Flea Market Site Map, for the Fieldwork Pedestrian Survey.

Introduction

Fugitive Testimonies, as a practice-based thesis, is composed of two parts, both writing and visual work. *Fugitive Testimonies* contributes to new knowledge through developing a longitudinal fieldwork study (over a period of years 2009–16) on collecting discarded photographs. The research through writing and making addresses this sample of collected found analogue photographic prints. Phase One of the project was the collection, assembling and mapping of the photographs into fieldwork notebooks spanning three volumes, producing a new photo-archive through both a timeline and a survey. My aim is that the research in both the writing and visual work contributes to new knowledge as it develops a new critical perspective on re-reading found photographs. The study is looking in particular at the found material photograph in all its presentational forms and how it projects into the viewer's space.⁴ The viewer's space was identified by Edwards and Hart in 2004 as being overlooked in many analyses: therefore, I intend to interrogate in particular the physical presence of the photograph and its capacity to invoke knowledge.⁵ Specifically as a visual catalyst to personal and social image memories, and sense impressions, related to individual identity within family photographs. I hope, through a methodological shift in focus in studying the found photograph as a site of meaning, to override the assumptions around its purely depictive role.⁶

The research is practice-based in its critical perspective of collecting and re-reading these material photographs and interrogating the personal and social memory they evoke. The terms of reference are built through relations to their material presence within the visual form of the photo-archive titled *Fugitive*

⁴ Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (London: Sage, 2008), Kohler Riessman quotes exemplars of the ways social investigators can interrogate 'found images' (e.g., photographs in archives) and others 'made' in the research situation, alongside the image makers' (and scholars') words about them in Chapter 6 : Visual Analysis, pp144–53, the particular case study here that I draw on in both the writing and visual work is Case study 1: Imaging Japanese America during World War II, pp145–53.

⁵ Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London: Routledge, 2004). See also Edwards, Elizabeth. 'Photographs as Objects of Memory' *Material Memories* ed. by Marius Kwint, Christopher Breward, Jeremy Aynsley, (Oxford: Berg, 1999), pp221–36, 'If the photo-object engages with the body, it also retemporalizes and respatializes the photograph', p.230.

⁶ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, p.156: 2–10.

Testimonies (2009–16). The ensuing research relates to their material presence as a catalyst for a critical articulation of the place of memory meanings where artists are appropriating photographs for their conceptual artworks. The fieldwork notebooks contain critical explanatory notes on the transaction and encounter at the point of collection of these fugitive memories often censored by the family. These notes offer a record of a private re-reading in a public space, standing closer to the photograph. Roland Barthes addresses this concept in *Camera Lucida* (2000) where he states: ‘ Each photograph is read as the private appearance of its referent: the age of Photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private: the private is consumed as such, publicly.’⁷ In this thesis I will refer to these re-readings as both ‘image memories’ and ‘sense impressions’, exploring their role and place in the stories we tell ourselves and others about our identities, about the places and times we have lived in and our destinies. Three writers, Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin and W.G. Sebald, offer an engagement with the photograph either as a personal story of affect as in Barthes’ *Camera Lucida* (2000) or as in Benjamin’s ‘Unpacking my Library’, *Illuminations* (1970) in reference to collecting and identity, and, significantly for this study, Sebald in *Austerlitz* (2001) where he uses embedded found photographs to engage us in this deeply mesmeric story. The research design considers this sense of engagement with analogue photography in the contextual review referencing artists’ key strategies of appropriation and intervention, and identifying these in relation to aspects of presence, indexicality, identity, the role of memory and the family. Materiality is explored as a form of social biography where the research encounters postmemory; this is precisely in reference in this study to the second and next generations carrying the stories and inherited narratives after the event depicted in the photographs.⁸ This recounted narrative is revealed through their accounts and responses to family photographs both social and collective in the absence of the direct heirs of memory. The thesis will interpret the role of the

⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (London: Vintage, 2000), p.98: 7–12.

⁸ See Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

archive both private and public and the artists who introduce the performative into these spaces, working with re-imagined installations and the embedding of found photography in their works, to critique the nature of photography itself, (Christian Boltanski, Susan Hiller, Gerhard Richter, Joachim Schmid, Tacita Dean and Taryn Simon). What I mean by 'critique' here is both a cognitive response to photography and working with the reading of photography; the ability to see and emphasise, to recognise the nature of how the photograph is affective, introduces trauma and the costs of exposure.⁹

A large and growing body of literature has investigated how artists are distinctively looking at the potential use of photographs and could be said to be speaking through the medium of things (haptic material objects), developing their skillset over time and applying their investigative groundwork to new acts.¹⁰ Their concepts are often generated through an opposition between the objective/subjective and the tactile/optical engaging in what can be termed 'the ancient will to art'.¹¹ The sense of touch and direct engagement with the material object offers a closeness and immediacy, which seems to escape technological mediation and evokes a more interior response. Recognising that it is through the live encounter with photography at its location of discard that the encounter with a depicted event occurs, the scene no longer evades us. It is there before us as a new entirely visual encounter retrieving from the cultural artefact, in that private space, the memory and experience of previous generations to sample and critically reflect on, thus contributing to new

⁹ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 'Such images cannot be more than an invitation to pay attention, to reflect, to learn, to examine the rationalizations for mass suffering offered by established powers', p.104: 21–4.

¹⁰ See *Fifty Key Writers on Photography*, edited by Mark Durden (Oxford: Routledge, 2013). Other writers such as Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Ways of Curating* (London: Penguin Group, 2014), Nicolas de Oliveira, Nicola Oxley and Michael Petry, *Installation Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), Susan Bright, *Art Photography Now* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), address how artists work with curating and installation inclusive of the photograph in contemporary art.

¹¹ Michael Guzber, 'Time and History in Alois Riegl's Theory of Perception', *Journal of The History of Ideas* 66(3), July 2005, pp451–74. 'Riegl's work provides models for linking the analysis of specific artworks with a history of perception, exploring the relationship between monuments and memory and analyzing the nature of visual modernity.'

knowledge by developing a new critical perspective on re-reading these found photographs.

Phase Two of the visual part of this practice-based project, the *Portfolio of Small Histories*, contains practice exemplars of the conceptual assemblages re-configured from the outtakes from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16), which articulate this visual encounter with particular family photographs and which attempt to create new evaluations of the found photograph's meaning to us today, in this instance commuted while engaged in the act of creating a photo-archive. The displaced analogue photographs physically insistent in their presence. My argument focuses on photography's capacities to precisely affect our view of the self, the other, at times to startle and to reassert emotive memories, placing us in scenes of both the everyday and darker spaces. This can be seen in the constructed piece *FAMILY X*, (2013–15) – see Outtake 7, based on a real censored family history, and in Outtake 8, *Shine On: A View of the Overlook* (2015), a reconstructed photo album based on the fictional family in Stephen King's *The Shining* (1977), audienced through *World Book Night* 2015.

The critical presence of the practice exemplars is positioned around how the photograph handled in the setting of the family photo-archive is understood as a legitimate object of study. How it may be considered as a position or point of view in the current moment rather than as purely a bygone moment or captured memory as record. Bourdieu in *Photography as a Middle-brow Art* (1990) asserts that 'By capturing the image of the most insignificant places and moments, one transforms them into monuments to leisure, as the photograph is there to certify, for ever, that one has had leisure and the leisure to photograph it.'¹²

In direct contrast to this record of leisure is the handling of family photographs that record censored lineage, and sit outside of the family album as in *Family X* (2013–15), which offers exposure to the photograph's precise contribution to shaping small histories (but also document evidentially through associated marginalia atrocities such as ethnic cleansing). Image memories define

¹² Pierre Bourdieu, *A Middle-brow Art* (Polity Press, 1990), p.36: 9–11.

personal and social identity within collective memory, and photographs help us to have a more active role in that process. Susan Sontag reminds us of this in relation to the photograph as an aide memoir:

Remembering is an ethical act, has ethical value in and of itself. Memory is aching, the only relation we can have with the dead. So the belief that remembering is an ethical act is deep in our natures as humans, who are going to die, and who mourn those who in the normal course of things die before us – grandparents, parents, teachers and older friends ... But history gives contradictory signals about the value of remembering in the much longer span of a collective history.¹³

Bourdieu, in contrast, states that:

Photography subordinated to family functions is different in kind from dedicated practice. In its emphasis on the picture produced, the former cannot, by definition, be intensified *ad infinitum* and, always associated with exceptional occasions, it remains occasional and often temporary.¹⁴

The occasional and the temporary are then subject to the terms of ‘curating’ which always seems appropriate in discussing memory in relation to personal and social identity and the order of the family photo-archive. Specifically in this study in regard to studies of the compilation of family albums, in respect of their rejection of certain significant photographs that this written and visual study focuses on, outside of the album, the fugitive photographs. The use of conceptual tools such as ways of curating for interrogating the past, and for the study of objects, is underscored in the writings of Michel Foucault in *The Order of Things* (1970) and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). Foucault’s methods offer a bearing on this act of curating models of ‘social biography’, which in many cases sit within the family album (the family can be considered an institution) in related discourses, where acquisition, classification and caring for the family archive of photographs and their interconnected traces are housed and evidenced. Foucault expands on this relation to the discourse of the time and its relations to discovering meaning:

In other words the archaeological description of discourse is deployed in the dimension of a general history; it seeks to discover that whole domain of institutions,

¹³ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p.103: 4–13.

¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, p.38: 11–15.

economic processes, and social relations on which a discursive formation can be articulated.¹⁵

In the contextual review I expand on the relations of discourse to the family photo-archive. I argue that in family photography something is at stake, and John Berger suggests that 'a radial system has to be constructed around understanding and interrogating the photograph so that it may be seen in terms that are simultaneously personal, political, economic, dramatic, everyday and historic'.¹⁶ I will treat the found and salvaged photograph in this thesis as raw data, material available for close interpretation, and will utilise the radial system suggested by Berger, taking on board the above attributes for close analysis and reflection in both the acts of making and writing.¹⁷

On Method

The study uses narrative methods to interrogate a small collected sample of found material photographs in order to gain insights into the patterns reflected in a constructed family photo-archive, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16).¹⁸ The sample within the archive form is then available for re-reading and visual analysis, enquiry, measurement and examination in terms of considering simultaneously the personal, economic, dramatic, everyday and historic within the private life of the family. Barthes notes in this respect that narrative is ever-present; he is cited by Kohler Riessman in Chapter 1, 'Looking Back, Looking Forward', an apt chapter title, in *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (2008):

Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime ... conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p.164: 3–7.

¹⁶ John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph*, edited and introduced by Geoff Dyer (Penguin Books, 2013), p.60:21–4.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Steve Edwards, 'Optical Truths and Visual Pleasures: Allan Sekula and a Theory for Photography', *Ten*.8(26), 1987, pp37–9.

began with the very history of mankind [sic] and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative ... it is simply there, like life itself.¹⁹

'Looking back, Looking Forward' relates precisely to the method of capturing an image of the present for the future, to relate to a past, offering an almost sacred aspect in that it assumes an afterlife. In handling the sample of found material photographs taken in the past, in constructing this archive, there lies a greater sense of responsibility instilled into the role of the artist and researcher in this active role of 'curating' the collection into the re-configured small histories formed through narrative encounters with fugitive stories.

The combined methods of the bricoleur and that of objective chance are critically outlined in texts by Lévi-Strauss and André Breton.²⁰ Lévi-Strauss writes on the process of the bricoleur in *The Savage Mind* (1966) exploring the role and significance of these methods of enquiry:

The bricoleur speaks not only with things ... But also through the medium of things ... Giving an account of his personality and life by the choices he makes between the limited possibilities.²¹

and:

The elements the bricoleur collects and uses are pre-constrained like the constitutive units of myth, the possible combinations of which are restricted by the fact they are drawn from the language where they already possess a sense which sets a limit on their freedom of manoeuvre... Oddments left over from human endeavours that is only a sub-set of the culture ... Working by means of signs.²²

The significance in the outline of a bricoleur that Lévi-Strauss interrogates offers into my research methods a theoretical construct that clearly focuses on how images can play the part of signs and enable the bricoleur to work with materials (here read discarded material analogue photographs) which have acquired a significance but in his/her interpretation may still lack comprehension leaving them open to enquiry and a method of continual re-configuration.

¹⁹ Kohler Riessman, p. 4, cites Barthes, as cited in Sontag, 1982, pp251–2.

²⁰ See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, 1966), André Breton, *Mad Love*, originally published in 1937 titled *L'amour Fou*, published in 1988 by Bison Books, translator Mary Ann Caws.

²¹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, 1966), p.21: 22–4.

²² Claude Lévi-Strauss, p.19: 5–11, 21–3.

Photographs remain one of our most valuable guides to the real and, for my practice and research, provide the material which carries a prior significance for my exploration into the exposure of the family within snapshot and candid photography. Collaboration here is with the photographers both experienced and inexperienced essentially amateurs who have provided this document of family invested with significance. There is often an air of unexpected humour captured and the gaze from the photograph speaks to us as viewers. Again, this is related to the chance encounter with a photograph in the case of the flea market as a site of enquiry within the history of objective chance, and within my own written and visual practice. In reference to André Breton and the surrealists, Lévi-Strauss references 'objective hazard' (another term for 'objective chance') to describe the concept of a project that, once materialised, will inevitably be at a remove from its initial aim.²³ Lévi-Strauss states: 'In other words, the intrinsic value of the small scale model is that it compensates for the renunciation of sensible dimensions by the acquisition of intelligible dimensions'.²⁴ The scale of a photo-archive means that it requires intervention as a method to create the small scale histories and to set intelligible dimensions to enable 'a metaphorical order' and audiencing of each artefact as an object in its own right.²⁵

The images I am working with will be treated as research texts to be read in relation to personal and social identity within an imprint of private life held within family photography. The methods employed will be inclusive of the combined methods of objective chance and bricolage and draw on studies into transactive memory where items of information are regarded as connected sets. Here a differentiation will be recorded for individual *fugitive* photographs set against the connected sets stored within edited family albums. This assumes creating an archival collection in the role of custodian for the future containing through the constructed assemblages counternarratives of *family*. The argument to be activated is the importance in this act of curating – curating seen as an active verb, of maintaining *initially* (my emphasis) the open-endedness of found

²³ Claude Lévi-Strauss, p.21: 19–20.

²⁴ Claude Lévi-Strauss, p.24: 27–9.

²⁵ Claude Lévi-Strauss, p.25: 2–3.

photographs, rather than imposing meaning on them without a critical period of re-reading or articulating an affect to them out of context²⁶ The photographs act as 'curatorial triggers', where the fundamental connection in the first reading is about empathy in the present tense. The aim being to connect to the sacred aspect, in this sense of the photograph's afterlife in the imagination of the viewer, in each instance of this study initially the viewer will be myself.²⁷

Collection and fieldwork as methods within my methodology sit at the heart of the practice and take place as a site-specific activity, as an interaction, a survey to enable a reading of the contextual travel of the photograph as a document of record. The fieldwork offers a method of travel into new sets of relationships, generating, often, new associations, the method of material thinking, between assemblages of materials. Geoffrey Batchen argues that 'the photograph as an image can have volume, opacity, tactility and a physical presence in the world'.²⁸ Fieldwork as a method is by its nature practical work conducted by a researcher in the natural environment rather than in a laboratory or office. The encounter here is with the material physical condition of the photograph's presence, the dirt and damage evidencing its encounters with other lives and subtle clues emanating from this purely physical material presence. This sense of trace equals a document of evidence worthy of close research, an original photographic print not always singular in this but absolute in its own presence.²⁹ Field-walking the flea market is the method I have employed, utilising a pedestrian survey which encompasses the method of a single-person exploration of a specific site of enquiry and contributes to the methods of objective chance and bricolage in my method of collecting. The technique forms part of my fieldwork methodology and is defined as follows:

The archaeological technique of pedestrian survey, also called surface survey or reconnaissance survey, involves walking the surface of an archaeological site or large region in stratified patterns, and either marking the location of identified artifacts, or

²⁶ Charlotte Cotton, 'Interview', Curator in Residence, International Centre for Photography, *1000 words* 20, 2016.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Geoffrey Batchen, *Photography's Objects* (Albuquerque: University of Mexico Museum, 1997), p.2.

²⁹ Ibid.

collecting a sample for further investigation. The field method is an established practice for providing data on settlements in large regions, and is usually considered one part of an investigation strategy.³⁰

The survey as a defined method is conducted as an artist and researcher to form an engagement with the concept of time(s), alchemy, re-reading discarded matter and reflecting on the era of the photographic print.³¹ The action of walking of being physically present enables me to reflect on the question of the value of material objects and the discourse of the flea market, where transaction and exchange form the basis of this perceived value. The photograph is what I question here, as I walk the site in a very specific planned routine (a structured pedestrian survey) and conduct the act of rummage or, as I see it, search and rescue. I experience in the photographs I handle the kind of seeing that Barthes notes – that ‘the Photograph sometimes makes appear what we never really see in a real face (or in a face reflected in a mirror): a genetic feature, the fragment of oneself or of a relative which comes from some ancestor’.³²

One of the research aims is to evaluate the collected salvaged photographs against the role of the amateur photographer, in respect of the consideration of the amateur standing closer to the intrinsic nature of family photography.³³ Hence the snapshot commanding a hold on the viewer, the reader, the collector of these coded exposures of family life. The diversity of the images offers a disquieting juxtaposition of found photographic prints as an associative connection, inflected through personal desire, objective chance and the appearances within their surfaces speaking to me, the collector. The found material prints are repurposed by me after this act of salvage as both the artist and collector, in poetic assemblages, to unravel and reveal what is censored by

³⁰ The definition of a pedestrian survey as a contributing technique to my method of fieldwork is to be found within the discipline of archaeology from which I have borrowed the technique. It offers a clear set of values for the structured collecting of my sample of discarded analogue material photographic prints, <http://archaeology.about.com/od/pethroughpgg/p/pedestrian.htm> (accessed 17.07.17).

³¹ Thomas J. King, ‘The Archeological Survey Methods and Uses’, Chapter 2, *A Brief Survey of the Archeological Survey* (Washington, D.C: Heritage and Conservation and Recreation Services, Department of the Interior, 1978).

³² Roland Barthes, p.103: 9–13.

³³ Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History*, Volume II (Phaidon, 2006), p.95: 14.

the family (fugitive stories) extant to the family album. By this I mean the intuitionism of lies, the theory that external objects of perception are immediately known to be real by intuition of visual disruptions in the meaning of a photographic practice, often exposing the repression that shapes my concepts for the small histories.³⁴ Sontag discusses this nature of viewing and the fact that ‘photographs are circulated so diversely; that there is no way to guarantee reverential conditions in which to look at these pictures and be fully responsive to them, there seems no way to guarantee contemplative or inhibiting space for anything now’.³⁵ *Vanity Case* (2014), Outtake 6, is a case study exposing and capturing displacement and social comment, in a particular context of war where the role of women is exposed to societal change. The exposure in this era for women of ethnic minorities is amplified in candid marginalia that exposes the tensions in social relations at the time, expressed here in the private image memories of soldiers. *Small Histories* is the term I will be utilising for the re-configured outtakes from the archive, exhibited as conceptual assemblages, allowing interrogation of the subjective experience of captured behaviours and their exposed narratives. (See *Fugitive Testimonies, Artist Archive Project, Portfolio of Small Histories* (2015), Phase Two for a visual exemplar of each of the outtakes as a conceptual assemblage.)

The *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–15) consists of fieldwork notebooks that are the creation of new objects in their own right as research tools (see visual exemplars in Section One: *Portfolio of Small Histories*). Each notebook is designed to provide new arguments and a level of evidential support to the intellectual and cultural environment of making and meaning that a collection of photographs as public documents does not so easily accomplish. See ‘Scope and Purpose of the Fieldwork Notebooks’ in Phase One of the *Fugitive*

³⁴ Simon Kirchin, ‘What is Intuitionism and Why be an Intuitionist?’ *Social Theory and Practice* 31(4), October 2005, pp581–606, DOI: 10.5840/soctheorpract200531427, review of Philip Stratton-Lake (ed.), *Ethical Intuitionism: Re-evaluations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) This quote references the writing about theories around intuitionism and moral knowledge without going into greater detail within this thesis, ‘Similarly we think that the moral principles that we form such as ‘Lying is normally ethically wrong’, constitute part of our practical knowledge.... ‘intuitionism’ gives a classic account of what moral knowledge is and what sort of things we can have knowledge about, p.581: 5–7, 12–14.

³⁵ Sontag, p.108: 14–20.

Testimonies Archive project interleaved before Chapter 1: *Contextual Review* for a detailed practice analysis of these visual forms. The collection is serendipitous by nature as it evolves through the act of fieldwork and indexed affinities with the overarching methodology of bricolage. This methodology is recognised as an emergent design, enabling the methods employed to offer evolving strategies and sets of values for the sample of photographs, including developing in the written work a critique of family photographs. In terms of the chronology of finds, this allows within the research design a shift in practice where material finds can change the research direction. *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush* (2014) redirected my practice into acknowledging the private life of photography within families, to explore the erotic turn and the nature of the importing of erotic images into the family archive, often as fugitive testimonies interleaved into the archive. Exposure to these very private photographs comes about through my method of collection at a site of discard, the *Shepton Mallet Flea Market* adapted for unfettered encounter and exchange.

The dialogue with traders and the nature of choice affects the method of making of the collection as a smaller selected sample to enable focused analysis. In this personal act of selection, acting as a participant-observer represents the formation of a cultural organisation of personal social memory, albeit existing outside of my family and social relations. I recognise myself as an active agent in the encounter with a remembering process within a memory practice, where both episodic memory and recollection memory processes are operating.³⁶

In this act of collecting and selection there is a recognition of the cultural trajectory from discarded to collected, from public anonymity to singular care, moving from a commodity to an object of cultural significance and capture. The finds do act as a prompt for episodic memory one which involves the recollection of particular life experiences.³⁷ Memory work is concept driven as one is thinking about meanings and concepts in relation to reading a found

³⁶ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp41–2: 2–4.

³⁷ Endel Tulving, 'Episodic and Semantic Memory', in E. Tulving and W. Donaldson (eds), *Organisation of Memory* (New York: Academic Press, 1972), pp381–402.

photograph or series of photographs. The direct comparison between a found, edited and curated complete family album (see Outtake 11, *Allen Family Album: Regret Sold*, 2015) and an unedited family photograph collection is stark in its different portrayal of family. The chance finds – the fugitive testimonies – do underscore the rituals, the social practices that need to be interrogated to determine the factors that affect personal and social identity sheltered in the family archive.

In *A Brief History of the Archaeological Survey* (1978) the method of investigating and constructing small histories is described through the catalyst of finds.³⁸ These constructed small histories are described as being synthesised to permit the development of an understanding of cultural evolution in general. The method described as historical particularist in tradition enabled archaeologists to direct their research towards the reconstruction of the culture – histories of particular selected sites or areas of study, inclusive of background research and deeper questioning of the ‘unknowns’. In Outtake 10, *Keenan Family File: Fifty Years* (2013) in the *Portfolio of Small Histories* there is a wealth of visual history offering significant access to interpret a known material representation of a defined family not through a collated family album but through an informal archive of family photographs inclusive of the fugitive stories side-lined in envelopes. This offers a visual case study to contrast the interpretation of factors that determine a complete archive collection, in direct comparison to the associative construction around the incomplete orphan works, the fugitive photographs in the conceptual assemblages. The project Elena Tajima Creef created in *Imaging Japanese America During World War II* (2004) used found archival images and historical documents to construct a story filling in the gaps (the unknowns) by drawing on textual sources that describe the agency and the political resistance of Japanese Americans.³⁹ This sets up a counternarrative and breaks the silence on these stories reflected through

³⁸ Thomas J. King, ‘The Archeological Survey Methods and Uses’, Chapter 2, *A Brief Survey of the Archaeological Survey* (Washington, D.C: Heritage and Conservation and Recreation Services, Department of the Interior, 1978).

³⁹ Kohler Riessman, Chapter 6: Visual Analysis, Case Study 1: ‘Imaging Japanese America During World War II’, pp145–53.
See Elena Tajima Creef, *Imaging Japanese America: The Visual Construction of Citizenship, Nation, and the Body* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

surviving images. For me the writings on memory practice and the family enable me to draw also on textual sources to construct my own counternarrative on family.⁴⁰ The narrative being constructed through exposing what I encounter as censored by the family, fugitive stories, as Creef has done but in a quieter way, as in her case the impact was 'breaking a collective silence surrounding shameful events in U.S. history'.⁴¹

The term 'small histories' represents the practice method I am working with, combining site-specific fieldwork (pedestrian survey and collection of finds) and re-construction (re-configuring the outtakes as conceptual assemblages). Within this, the qualitative research questions I am addressing in both the written and visual work are: What cultural processes and patterns do the photographs I collect reflect and hence what then is their significance to the research? What other social or cultural values may be attributed to them beyond their research value? The methodology disrupts the accepted hierarchy in which abstract thought is deemed more serious than thought about private life, which this material archive (collected and indexed sample) attempts to visualise, interrogate and evolve to develop a new critical perspective on re-reading these discarded family photographs. There is also aligned to this an inclusion in the fieldwork of the need to make maximum use of background information and to recognise that it is often most effective to conduct the fieldwork in several stages of increasing intensity; encounter, collection, association and order. The research design solution – that is, the bricolage method (in this case my research tools) – takes into account an emerging design that is longitudinal and reflects duration of process subject to change and receptive to new forms.

The fieldwork notebooks as a photo-archive notate the shifts in practice and offer both a chronology for the found photographs and a documented index for the bricoleur (myself as practice-based researcher, engaged in an act of sampling) to add different tools, methods, textual references and techniques of representation and interpretation to the original research design.⁴² The practice-

⁴⁰ See Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (Verso, 1995).

⁴¹ Kohler Riessman, p.146: 14–15.

⁴² J.L. Kincheloe, 'Redefining rigor and complexity in research', in J. Kincheloe and

based methodology pushes the boundaries of traditional multi-method qualitative research to determine the factors that affect reading the family archive using imagination in combination with knowledge tools; ritual, observation, social practices within family photography.

Urban archaeologists are increasingly referencing the work of social anthropologists, ethno-historians, folklorists and sociologists in their studies that combine archaeological methods with facets of oral history, documentary research and ethnography. I will borrow from their practice and include anecdotes and conversation, in the process of reflection on simple random sampling (fieldwork collection), a method that eliminates the biases from sample selection.⁴³

The creation of a personal code of exposure, borrowing methods from different disciplines (archaeology, narrative methods for the human sciences, critical photography theory, the art of memory and its inherent practices and contemporary art and memory practices), as a bricoleur, is relevant to re-purposing the work of this constructed archive containing everyday snapshots and photographs picked over and randomly but, importantly, intuitively selected. Visual analysis as a method within a qualitative research design then pushes the boundaries of the encounter with family photographs as ‘image memories’, where stories can be found in the research process – these are the small histories where I am working at the interface between visual and textual data. Joan Gibbons in *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2009) describes what is at stake today as the way ‘that memory is harnessed and deployed in the negotiations of life, from the “little” moments and events of the private and the everyday to those “grander moments” and events of formalised and public occasions’.⁴⁴ This consideration of how memory is deployed allows me to draw connections between an image and some kind of discourse: a caption, marginalia, anecdotes spoken or written, ephemera, letters and diaries,

K. Berry, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (New York: Open University Press, 2004), pp23–49.

⁴³ Eric S. Wood, ‘Folklore’, in *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain* (Collins, 1963), pp306–7.

⁴⁴ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.1: 15–18.

newspaper cuttings, and annotation in family albums that provide contexts for interpreting the image. The significance of ethics is part of my consideration and sets parameters for the act of collecting.⁴⁵ A method I have used within my practice-based research with found photographs is the character of revelation. Visually, this is enacted through the act of the peepshow created by cutting reveals in a paper sleeve, which exposes only part of a photograph and controls, through this method, elements that I wish to conceal. (See visual exemplars in Phase Two of the Archive Project, the *Portfolio of Small Histories*, Outtakes 1–5).

I have chosen to focus on the very specific site of the flea market for my visual analysis of the material analogue print as it operates as a stage set from early morning to the late afternoon every two months. It is site specific, and open for sifting, drifting, urban archaeology and a form of beachcombing adapted to the flotsam and jetsam of everyday life. Set out as a marketplace effectively operating as a trading post for the day, it is open for the structuring of speculation, thought and an emerging pattern of ideas. There is no stage direction here as in the modern-day auction. The everyday serves as the premise for my authorial ego as artist and collector breathing new life into an outmoded photographic genre. Perhaps the driver here is an internalised polemic about gender, class, personality, emotional life and their intrinsic effect on our identity.⁴⁶ Does it matter at all, yes, and found photography does jerk its audience into critical reflection, into the realm of fugue memories, elusive and transient moments of reflection, if not action. Confessing as I have to a poetic licence on the part of the artist and as authorial ego, each fieldwork visit to the flea market starts at zero expectation, a clean slate to chalk up the finds. It is

⁴⁵ J.L. Kincheloe, 'Redefining and interpreting the object of study, in J. Kincheloe and K. Berry, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (New York: Open University Press, 2004), pp82–102, Selection Criteria of the Bricoleur, pp100–2.

⁴⁶ Sarah Boston, *Women Workers and the Trade Unions*. In 'Their Proper Sphere at Home', there is this statement that as an example caused me to critically reflect on found photographs of the family and of women and women workers: 'Working class women were not only economically oppressed. Their social and legal inferiority inhibited their self-assertion. The fact that Victorian middle class men deified the mother and wife at home and denied middle class women the right to work or to study meant that in the world of work, women had nothing to aspire to. They would merely aspire to marrying a man who would earn enough to support them', pp27–8: 36–42.

similar to the bookies' 'chalk board', a game of chance but focused on a notion of production, a technique based on the finer elements of hunting. Random in nature but, like racing, there is an underlying knowledge of form, studied, rehearsed, performed. The reframing of a story with embedded material in the form of found photographs pays homage to the author W.G. Sebald in his work *Austerlitz* (2001). Embedding photographs within a fiction, selecting images for a new audience, is key to making meaning anew for stray images, as in Sebald's *Austerlitz* (2001): found photographs detached from their back story yet repurposed. The strategy I have evolved of nomadic exhibitions (documented in the *Portfolio of Small Histories*) for the outtakes as conceptual assemblages, employs this method of publication / exhibition / audience of new artefacts in which the photographs are deployed in associative connections. Drawing together two or more existing ideas and showing the combination reveals something new and useful within the development of a performative and conceptual process for producing artworks from discarded images marked out from family archives.

This is a qualitative method, in the manner and act of the survey, such as that conducted by artists Mark Dion and Keith Piper.⁴⁷ The premise is to identify and exploit resources that have historically gone unremarked or which might be perceived as lacking gravitas (vernacular amateur family photography). The method of the survey in fieldwork is critical, timely and offers access to raw data through the collection of photographs.⁴⁸ This is a method where I can use my imagination and analyse the visual resource of these found photographs. Photographs which could be said to have been traditionally overlooked, although publicly available. The artist Keith Piper likens the act of survey to an expedition in the sense of the individual's efforts to uncover and decipher, to accumulate, translate and relocate these remains, traces and ephemera.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Mark Dion, *Thames Dig* (2000) and Keith Piper, in David Chandler, *Relocating the Remains* (INIVA, 1997).

⁴⁸ Claude Lévi-Strauss discusses this use of 'the raw datum as the empirical material of something meaningful', in this quote, 'In so far as early art, primitive art and the 'primitive' periods of professional painting are the only ones which do not date, they owe it to this dedication of the accidental to the service of execution and so the use, which they try to make complete, of the raw datum', p.29: 28–32.

⁴⁹ See Keith Piper, in David Chandler, *Relocating the Remains* (INIVA, 1997).

Borrowing also from archaeology, in its method of the disciplined investigation of actual finds, these being identified as ‘the knowns’ leading to interrogation of ‘the unknowns’ – by which I mean the questions arising from the finds – the survey attempts to confirm knowledge and to shape stories for unearthed finds. The expanded field of investigation includes the method of textual analysis and the emerging questions are investigated in parallel in the thesis within the context of the individual chapter headings.

The practice forms emerge from the methodology of curating the collection through methods of making that are processual of assemblage, collage, folk art, the technique of associative installations that reflect the artist (myself) and social constructs constantly using each other to define themselves in a temporal context. A specific method will be through visual analysis of investigating and constructing *small histories* from the found photographs through background research analysis into the following questions: what cultural processes and patterns do they reflect and, hence, what is their significance for personal, social and collective memory and the inscription of identity? These *small histories* can then be synthesised to permit the development of an understanding of the cultural evolution in general of the material photograph. The instability of memory and the randomness of disorder at the flea market is confined, shaped and mapped through participant observation (the method of talking with people and documenting primary observations at the site) and through the creation of the documentary fieldwork notebooks which index the finds and reference the marginalia and found texts. The notebooks form the core of the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–15) and record all the finds, enabling reference, association and order and the refining of the unstable recall of the collector. The fieldwork notebooks confine the untidy, even disorderly, act of collection and are a specific source to the art practice, returning to Riegl’s point about ‘the ancient will to art’, to authoring a pattern of ideas that structure the precise visual references I am engaged with both tactile and optical.⁵⁰ This is to draw out from an act of visual ecology (the repurposing of found photographs) the adventure

⁵⁰ See Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry* (G. Bretschneider, 1985).

that is material photography especially in relation to its pattern of original production now 'made', reconstructed in the research situation.⁵¹ The images collected are in the main black and white, images that can be said to be theoretical images accessible to logical analysis and not restricted to their index. Through the writing and visual practice, I intend to reveal the critical importance for the act of ecology that deals with the relations of material photographs as relics of society, their relations to each other and their physical surroundings. This will involve touching on the political movement that concerns itself with protection of the environment; so at the flea market there is this element of protection, of the act of recycling prior to disposal, avoiding our visual fossils ending up in landfill, not available for interrogation of personal and social memory and knowledge generation.

Here lies the distinction for my art practice, its active engagement with investigating what I term a living archive (the flea market) to experience photographs and activate their *small histories* at this unlikely site-specific source. For me, this is about scene, mood, affect and families, and to appease a latent curiosity about this form of visual capture, where the output has been a haptic print in the analogue era, which can be appropriated and owned for an act of private speculation. The collection of disparate photographs separates the archive I am constructing from the found or owned family album. It positions it as distinctive in its visual form for my specific practice-based research. The archive and its outtakes as conceptual assemblages are 'made' re-imagined artefacts utilising the found and anonymous photographs, to interrogate difference and expose private captured moments. These are moments in the private life of the family that relate to Barthes' notion of the photograph: 'But History is a memory fabricated according to positive formulas, a pure intellectual discourse which abolishes mythic Time; and the Photograph is a certain but

⁵¹ Reference to visual ecology is related to the practice of Joachim Schmid, *Photographic Garbage Survey* (1996–1997). Over two years, Schmid systematically walked prearranged routes through seven cities, collecting, preserving, and documenting every piece of photographic garbage in his path. In Paris, he gathered 91 objects over 9 days. And while in São Paulo, he gathered 83 objects in 8 days. Other cities included Berlin (43 objects, 6 days); Rotterdam (28 objects, 4 days); San Francisco (28 objects, 6 days); Vigo, Spain (23 objects, 5 days); and Zurich (12 objects, 4 days), <https://schmid.wordpress.com/works/1996-1997-photographic-garbage-survey-project/> (accessed 23.06.17).

fugitive testimony.’⁵² These exposures form a reference for both myself as the artist translator and maker, and the audience, on display of these fictional family artefacts.⁵³ Reflecting alternate discourses disrupting the accepted historicity of the photographs but critically reflecting the specificity of the collection of things as to André Breton in regards of objective chance and Tacita Dean in her methods of intervention with found photographs.⁵⁴ The form of this engagement involves the investigation of subjective states: sleep, memory, social status, love, and personal identity and addresses the question of what other social or cultural values may be attributed to the collected sample of photographs above and beyond their research value.⁵⁵

The thesis will address these specific questions through the structure of four specific chapters, Chapter 1: *Contextual Review*, investigates and conducts a literature review, to analyse the knowledge in this field; triangulating memory, identity and the family archive, as viewed through critical theory on the material photograph. The writing includes designating artists’ practice as a site of enquiry to support the practice-based methodology. Chapter 2: *Trace, Presence and Indexicality*, focuses on the inscription of personal and social memory in relation to the impact of the photograph and its record of absence, presence, its record of time in relation to individual identity. Chapter 3: *Intervention* considers the role of the artist and photographer working with material analogue photography and the essence of the print and Chapter 4: *Collection*, investigates the concern

⁵² Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.93:2–7.

⁵³ John Stathatos, ‘Positively Art’, *Exposed 02*, supplement to *Tate: The Art Magazine* (London, January–April 1998), p.5.

⁵⁴ Mary Ann Caws, ‘Linking and Reflections: André Breton and his Communicating Vessels’, *DaDa / Surrealism* 17(1), 1988, André Breton (Iowa Research Online), pp91–100, this quote reflects on the nature of the found object in direct relation to the desired object, ‘and.. In any case, what is delightful here is the dissimilarity itself which exists between the object wished for and *the object found*. This *trouvaille*, whether it be artistic, scientific, philosophic, or as useless as anything, is enough to undo the beauty of everything beside it. In it alone can we recognise the marvellous precipitate of desire. It alone can enlarge the universe, causing it to relinquish some of its opacity, letting us discover its extraordinary capacities for reserve, proportionate to the innumerable needs of the spirit. Daily life abounds, moreover, in just this type of small discovery...’, p.93 (accessed 15.05.17).

⁵⁵ Annette Kuhn, ‘Photography and cultural memory: a methodological exploration’, *Visual Studies* 22(3), December 2007, Kuhn reflects on this link to cultural memory: ‘Personal and family photographs figure importantly in cultural memory, and memory work with photographs offers a particularly productive route to understanding the social and cultural uses and instrumentalities of memory’, <http://publicsphere.narod.ru/Kuhn.pdf>, (accessed 15.05.17).

and uncertain states created through both the act and nature of collecting, the interpretation of the collection, and the impulse of both collection and archive. The interrogation of the texts offers me a guide to practice motives and how to reconcile conflicting interpretations. Roger Shattuck has explored how a writer reconciles reason and imagination, intelligence and sentiment.⁵⁶ It is the sense of enquiry that Shattuck discusses that relates intimately to my theoretical and practice analysis in repurposing photography, of interrogating indexicality, iconicity, intervention and the nature of collection. The immediacy of experience, the scenes, the sensations and the vivid accounts of characters' presence on the page is underscored for me in Proust's statement about the role photography plays in this revelation of presence, a state of being and sensation. In summary, in his view, only photography can, to so great a degree as a physical kiss, summon forth out of what we believe to be the definite aspect of a thing the hundred other things which it also is, for each one is related to a perspective no less legitimate.⁵⁷

The experience to be explored here is the single image, the still photograph considered to be an orphan, a fugitive meaningless fragment snatched out of a flux of a life, one of a succession of different appearances framed by the operator of the stills camera. The role of the viewer reading the surface of the print is exploring the role of memory, especially involuntary memory, which links past and present into reality and offers up through visual analysis the concept of translation, which links this sense of reality focused in reminiscences and impressions to the work of art. The importance of Shattuck's personal interrogation of Proust is the visual mapping of Proust's methodology of creating a narrative focused on an investigation into personalities and the value of art to enable other worlds, 'we have as many different worlds at our disposition as there are original artists'.⁵⁸ Chapter 4: *Collection* focuses on this set of values highlighted here where the collector utilises both the act of collection and this connection to the creation of their own *small histories*, enabling other worlds

⁵⁶ Roger Shattuck, *Proust's Way: A Field Guide to In Search Of Lost Time* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), pp14–145.

⁵⁷ See Marcel Proust, *In Search Of Lost Time*, trans. C.K. Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, revised D.J. Enright (New York Modern Library: 1992), Chapter II, 365, iii 499.

⁵⁸ Shattuck, pp147–8: 14–15.

created through their narrative encounter with photographs and their evocation of memory.

The triangulation of personal and social memory, identity and the potential narrative power of photography set the scene for my investigation into 'fugitive testimonies' instilled in collections of family photographs. I hope to establish this precise connection to the material photograph of a translation from only its unique relationship with reality, to the emotional charge (affect), generated by the photograph's operation as a memory trace, a 'sense impression'. Joan Gibbons draws on the work of British Empiricist philosophers who, she writes,

laid stress not so much on memory as a vehicle of knowledge but as a type or form of knowledge rooted in experience. Even so, memory was still often characterised in visual terms, with philosophers such as John Locke claiming that the knowledge that is recalled is frequently reproduced through images or sense impressions. Because of this emphasis on imaging or the formation of impressions, memory became closely related to the imagination.⁵⁹

This translation through the imagination could be notated as considering the historical document (read here 'still photograph') as being itself performative suggesting a radical re-configuration of historical practice. In this way the archive could be seen as a space not just for saving but also as a space of performance propelled by imagination. It is the site for the investigation of presence, emanating from the document, the photograph and the ephemera. If we consider the archive to be a performative space, constituted by loss and enactment as well as presence, such a re-configuration may open up new ways of intervening in that space.⁶⁰

My theoretical and practice methodology endeavours to explore new ways of intervening in the space of the archive through making interactive performative pieces to explore presenting this concept to an audience. (See Outtake 3, in Phase Two of the Archive Project, *Portfolio of Small Histories*, interleaved after Chapter 2, one of the *Peepshow Anecdotes Series*, *X111 Can't Take You*

⁵⁹ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory; Images of Recollection and Remembrance* (I.B.Tauris, 2009), p.2: 28–35.

⁶⁰ See J.K. Schael, 'Organising distributed knowledge for collaborative action. Structure, functioning and emergence of organisations transactive memory systems', PhD thesis (Amsterdam: Vossiuspus U.A., 2013).

Leaving Me: A Torch Song, 2014). The piece engages the audience with the nature of curiosity and a set of performative black and white photographs to interact with, through directing a torch beam into a small intimate album interior; the images to be viewed are of celebration and loss. The associated texts were all disparate before its construction, but exhibition feedback reveals that the unity is not questioned in the presence of the documented experience. The archive acted as the space and site of enquiry, for engagement with the small assemblage and was an ephemeral and temporary experience, thus provoking engagement with family photography, performing its presence and forming a site of experience of record and event.

A critical interface here under consideration in both the practice discussions and the theoretical research is the archive as the *locus* of 'the presence' and in this the performance of presence itself.⁶¹ Returning to my earlier point about the flea market as embodying a living archive this I believe justifies the methodology employed of engaging with this immersive aspect of performance as a participant-observer at the flea market. The engagement generates new knowledge through a direct primary study of found family photography at the site of its discard, its trade and exchange value, in a specific social performance space. That art has come through relationships with the archive and how the archive itself has become a social performance space relates to the key exploration in Chapter 3: *Intervention*, of artists like Marina Abramovic, and in particular referencing Keith Piper and his visual practice in the work *Relocating the Remains*, exhibited at INIVA in 1997. The archive for Abramovic performs the institution of disappearance, with the object remains as indices of disappearance and with performance as given to disappear. The notion here is one of persistence that which persists describes the processual characteristic of presence. Processual here means that there is a method of seeing it as the occurrence of persistence between self and other and so in a traversal of difference. Joan Gibbons in this quote again looks at this relationship:

Scepticism towards images is expressed in favour of a knowledge of the past that is more deeply embedded in the psyche and which can be evoked in its complexity not

⁶¹ See Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Re-enactment* (Routledge: New York, 2011).

simply by 'snapshots' of events but by an everyday experience that manages to key into the whole host of sensations and emotions experienced in the moment or event.⁶²

The sense of presence within encounter and exchange is a theme that threads through the chapters of the thesis relating to recording changes in perception to *indexicality, presence, intervention* and *collection*. The drive to collect photographs, the desire to interrogate their 'image memories' and to draw together their value as 'sense impressions'. Creating a timeline is the feature of my practice that requires a methodology inclusive of theoretical positions on the method of collection, visual analysis, making and practice analysis in this case of the material photograph. The changing status of materiality is analysed by Marcel Mauss who looks closely as an observer participant at the nature of the material object and its discourse and currency of exchange. Mauss opens up to question that to oppose the materialism of modern life to a non-materialist past is not just wrong; it actually inverts the relation of capitalism to prior and alternative modes of production.⁶³ Similarly, in the economy of Renaissance Europe, things took on a life of their own. That is to say, one was paid not only in the 'neutral' currency of money but also in material that was richly absorbent of 'symbolic' meaning and in which memories and social relations were literally embodied. New forms of trade, colonial conquests, and political and religious conflict within Europe put increasing strain upon these forms of embodiment, finally leading to the radically dematerialised opposition between the individual and his or her possessions. The replacement of library research as the qualitative methodology of choice by fieldwork is identified as a modern approach to research rather than a reliance purely on textual references and folklore. In 1923 when Marcel Mauss wrote *The Gift*, which focused on fieldwork, his aim was to look into the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies, breaking new ground in interpretive research and developing a corpus of diverse exemplars, which are still relevant to reflect on today. Data gathering at source, which confirms my method of creating a practice-based artist's archive through focused fieldwork at the flea market. As Marcel Mauss puts it in

⁶² Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.3: 30–4.

⁶³ See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, first published in France in 1923–24 (Routledge Classics, 2002).

The Gift (1923), with regard to the act of exchange, objects in such exchanges can be, 'personalised beings that talk and take part in the contract. They state their desire to be given away. Things-as-gifts are not indifferent things; they have a name, a personality, a past'.⁶⁴

The links to changes in perception are then historically inflected through trade and the economy of exchange, moving from embodied objects towards the materialism of the present day. *The Gift* (1923) focuses on a concrete study of different peoples and their systems of trade, barter and exchange as a model for investigation, as well as on the value of the exchange and its nature as a reciprocal encounter. The photograph, since its inception as a material print, a thing, an object, has been party to this exchange as gift, document, as a form of knowledge exchange through mass media and the inverse nature of propaganda. Its essence lies within trade through representations of the psyche, fashion, and a record of behaviour through the documentary and candid reportage of generations from the early nineteenth century until the present day. In the conscious forms of magazines, catalogues, through the medium of photo-journalism and personal and family albums, its record of behaviour, the sum total of which forms the basis of society and customs which constitute our common and family life and its conscious direction. In *The Gift* (1923), Mauss factors together, through observation and fieldwork, the economy, society and kinship. He describes how, at the conclusion of his specific research into different groups, he sees that societies have progressed in so far as they themselves, their subgroups and, lastly, the individuals in them have succeeded in stabilising relationships, giving, receiving and finally giving in return.⁶⁵

Although there are links here to a modern society and its exchange mechanisms and social roles, this is a complex area and the distinctions are not easily drawn. Objects, things in themselves, and especially images, have the ability to compel fear, rage and even violence in their depictions of our selves in uncertain states, which threaten this stability.⁶⁶ The conventions that mediate

⁶⁴ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, p.102.

⁶⁵ Marcel Mauss, p.106.

⁶⁶ See Richard Schechner, *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (University of Pennsylvania, 1985).

proximity and identification are clearly different in real life, in comparison to reading the smooth mirror image of the photographic print. Its record is there in the present and to reiterate Susan Sontag and Michel Foucault, one that we should pay attention to and bring knowledge to its interpretations and develop the concept of 'effective history'.⁶⁷

These objects, things themselves, photographs as material remains within a traditional archive, persist through time and form part of the architecture of access, the physical aspect of photographs, documents, books and ephemera housed in museum-like display cases typically these, being the bookcase, the plan chest and the vitrine. In my exploration of performance this even includes seeing the request desk as forming part of the performance of access and seeing this as akin to a ritual embedded in social practices. The archive its collections as referenced in Chapter 4: *Collection* as a mode of governance against memory, sitting within society as a repository to catalogue division, separation and differentiation for the reception of the phenomena of presence.⁶⁸ The body of truths in our episteme, one that we own I believe always has to be critically revisited in the light of new experiences, opening up new possibilities for social contestation.⁶⁹ What is interesting in Foucault and Yates' key texts, which inform my practice-based research into memory and affect, cyclical in both the written and visual work, is their profound concern with and interrogation of the presence of the archive in history, memory and discourse and of the

⁶⁷ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (Penguin Books, 1979), p.106, Sontag draws attention to interpretations: 'One of the central characteristics of photography is that process by which original uses are modified, eventually supplanted by subsequent uses – most notably by the discourse of art into which any photograph can be absorbed', p.106: 22–6. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), pp135–9.

⁶⁸ Zaha Hadid, 'Hadid's Vision', Genocide Museum for Cambodia, *Guardian*, 11 October 2014. This is a modern-day example of the vision for an archive. Over the last two decades, Chiang and his team have compiled an archive of more than 1m. documents, photographs, tapes and films, and mapped 200 prisons and 20,000 mass graves across the country. From confidential reports describing conditions in the countryside, where a million people died of starvation, to confessions under torture of thousands of prisoners killed by the secret police, the archive provided essential evidence during the trial of two former Khmer Rouge leaders who were convicted of crimes against humanity last August.

⁶⁹ See 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, practice: selected essays and interviews by Michael Foucault*, edited by D.F. Bouchard (Cornell University Press, 1980), p.142.

timeline that indicates the power and control invested in 'image memories'.⁷⁰ This history of the timeline leads from the Greeks into the Renaissance and in particular the Middle Ages in *The Art of Memory* (1966) by Yates, through to Agamben's twenty-first-century text, *The Signature of All Things: On Method* (2009). These texts offer to my methodology a sustained reflection on method, relating in particular to an archaeological vigilance, a persistent form of theoretical thinking, which pays tribute to Foucault, whose third text this thesis utilises as a key source in relation to the sites of context for discourse, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972).⁷¹

⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), and Frances Yates, *The Art Of Memory* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

⁷¹ Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things: On Method*, trans. Luca D'Isanto and Kevin Attell (Zone Books, 2009).
Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), Chapter 4: 'The Comparative Facts', pp157–65.

Chapter 1: The Art of Memory in Contemporary Photographic Practice.

Contextual/Literature Review

1.1 Introduction to the Contextual/Literature Review

The research I undertake through this contextual / literature review primarily investigates *the art of memory* in relation to reading found material photographs.⁷² A particular focus is on exploring what these materials reveal as the archaeology of knowledge – that is, in relation to personal and social identity through reading visual images as memories.⁷³ Photography by its very nature as a purveyor of the world around us offers through its lens a close relation to questions of truth, fiction, aesthetics, narrative ambiguity, autobiography and the nature of the real. In this practice-based thesis, the found photographs referenced will be candid – that is, in most cases natural and open family photographs. The photographs that I have collected in relation to family life are a sample that questions the family photograph in relation to Barthes' designation of the photograph as paradoxical and as 'a certain but fugitive testimony.'⁷⁴

The aim in both the writing and visual work of this research has been to open up a reading of found image memories in terms of a set of encounters in the flea market as a mode of collecting or salvaging fugitive testimonies. These fugitive images are photographs that have wandered from their sense of place, with reference to the family home as their safe location, into a state of transience, passing through or by another place (the flea market), with only a brief stay or sojourn. The flea market is a site-specific location, a temporary holding space for these discarded images. The writing and visual practice draw fact and fiction from these image memories into a suggestive 'uncertainty'. The uncertainty is derived from a sense that many of the found material prints are a result of

⁷² Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Pimlico, 1966).

⁷³ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Pantheon, 1972).

⁷⁴ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Vintage, 2000), p.93: 26–7.

ensorship from the family album. The small installations created as outtakes from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* re-present these discarded images through a contemporary lens. The aim is to revalue their capacity for telling us a story about the family in the plural sense. This process is linked to a range of new strategies developed by artists using photography. T.J. Demos outlines a view of artists re-presenting photography in the Introduction to *Vitamin Ph: New Perspectives in Photography* (2006):

Photography's new ethical engagement is also advanced through the hybridization of the medium, whereby artists situate photography in relation to foreign materials and non-photographic procedures. Photography's shifting make-up, consequently forbids its essential definition by any single technology and invites ongoing transformations. In such cases, the photographic medium faces what is beyond itself – including text, sculpture and video – which opens up experimental ways of perceiving and responding to otherness.⁷⁵

The rise of interest in analogue photographic archives is part of the new 'transformations' in photography. Derrida sees the archival technique as having 'commanded that which in the past even instituted and constituted whatever there was as anticipation of the future ... The archive has always been a pledge and ... a token of the future.'⁷⁶ The sense of drawing on a source for the future from the documentation of a past makes viewing the photographs from the past (now in the archives both public and private) an essential starting point for a singular investigation. The sense of experiment in the investigation of the archive as a container for memory is part of my deep interest in the text *The Art of Memory* (1966) by Frances A. Yates. The text investigates in depth issues of chance in the processes of developing artificial memory systems that respond to the visual (sense impressions) and the practices of the art of memory. Yates discusses mnemonic systems but significantly sets these against the developments in the art of memory that are revealed through her research into

⁷⁵ Introduction, 'The Performative', in *Ph: New Perspectives in Photography* (Phaidon, 2006), p.10: 79–88.

⁷⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), p.18: 27–31.

memory systems. She forges a clear link with the importance of visual memory. This detailed and scholarly narrative on memory practices and the creation of memory palaces⁷⁷ has informed my own narrative encounters with the found material photograph and its prompt to memory. Magical thinking, alchemy and occult practices outlined in relation to memory by Yates feature in texts about early photography and its act of record, its specific sense of record of speaking memories through material things – a visual prompt to memory.⁷⁸ Such references to magical thinking offer a link to folklore and its imaginary architecture of ritual which has particularly helped me in relation to analysing artists' work which references folk art, curating, and the documentation of re-presenting and re-enactment (remembering).⁷⁹ For example, in his work *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001), Deller draws on the grasp of reality through both recall and visual images (image memories) from the time of the event (the so-called 'Battle of Orgreave' having been a violent clash between police and pickets during the 1984–85 miners' strike) and through detailed analysis of the recollected mental images (sense impressions) from the same time.⁸⁰ Through this method, Deller creates a full re-enactment, a theatrical restating of memory, visually documented as a new form of reality within social and political identities, critically within the mining communities, their families and the police. Deller's method develops alternative kinds of ordering for the artist's archive, in this case both collective and personal and social memory of an event, its political implications being a form of practice that relates to aims described by Yates in *The Art of Memory*. In her text Yates singles out for investigation four key areas suggested by one of her colleagues, Gertrud Bing, who sets out a list of aims for

⁷⁷ The method of *loci*, also known as the memory palace technique or the journey method, is considered by Yates to be one of the most versatile mnemonic memory systems.

⁷⁸ Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography: from 1839 – the present* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982), pp9–25.

⁷⁹ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, 'The Ordering of Knowledge', pp118–19, cites Jeremy Deller, *Folk Archive* (2005), with Alan Kane, 'Treading the fine line between art and anthropology, Deller and Kane have selected over 280 elements to form an archive which provides a snap-shot of the state of contemporary folk art in the UK.' <http://www.jeremydeller.org/FolkArchive/FolkArchive.php> (accessed 28.07.17).

Eric S. Wood, 'Folk Lore', in *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain*, Revised Edition (London: Collins, 1967), pp306–7; Margaret Baker, 'Witchcraft and the Supernatural', in *The Gardener's Folklore* (Readers Union, 1978), pp97–126.

⁸⁰ See Jeremy Deller and Mike Figgis, *The Battle of Orgreave*, Film and Video Performance DVD (Artangel, 2001).

memory practice. The list comprises four key aims to strategically structure an enquiry (a study) into image memories acknowledging the problems of its study: 1. the problems of the mental image; 2. that of the ensuing activation of images; 3. the grasp of reality through images; and 4. the problems ever-present in the history of the art of memory. Through this strategy, the author offers insights into acquiring and processing knowledge.⁸¹ The analysis of the archive collection of photographs I have constructed is informed by Yates' strategy of investigation and, in particular, (3) the grasp of reality through images in reference to (4) the problems ever-present in the context of the art of memory, a strategy that I argue opens a critical space for thought to take place about the social and political reality activated by images.

My visual research practice and writing acknowledge these aspects of Yates' strategy for investigating memory, particularly when investigating the different points of view of artists on the subject of appropriating photographs for their own practice. Such practices demonstrate both a grasp of reality and the problems ever-present in working with the art of memory as an inspiration and catalyst for visual works. Key artists whose works I analyse and that I link to the strategies Yates explores in *The Art of Memory* are Tacita Dean, Christian Boltanski, Taryn Simon, Gerhard Richter and, with reference to performativity, Marina Abramovic.⁸² The work of these artists exemplifies interaction with differentiated methods that explore memory but which also allow for the unknowns (the random) as secondary qualities to be exposed. The unknowns are in turn explained by the artists within their works, whether artistic, social or political. Each artist's practice highlights a potential method to explore in developing a methodology for a tactics of practice, each being an exemplar of a method to research for the visual work. For example, Marina Abramovic touches on the source of memories for her artwork *The Kitchen* (2012) as being autobiographical, all her best childhood memories coming from the social life of

⁸¹ Frances A. Yates, p.14: 10–13.

⁸² See the following works of these selected artists: Tacita Dean, *Floh* (2001); Christian Boltanski, *Humans* (1994); Taryn Simon, *A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters I–XVIII* (2014); Gerhard Richter, *Atlas* (1962–2013); Marina Abramovic, *The Kitchen* (2012).

her grandmother's kitchen. In this work, the catalyst is a method of recall and a personal and social investment, unlike in Taryn Simon's collection of significant bloodlines, *A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters I–XVIII* (2014), where there is more of a political catalyst for this work about fate, heredity and the denial of legal rights to both domicile and family in the plural sense (clan, race, household, familyhood). Both works create a dialogue about our origins (personal and social identity) and our place both of and within a family (sense of place).

The artists selected see their work as containing an ethical and political task that is ongoing and deepens the meaning of the work within their primary research encounters.⁸³ The catalyst for the works of the artists cited above is discovery about the narrative encounter with the photograph, both in its singular form and as a set, and its impact as a point of reflection. In all these works, I can relate to a reading of photographs in a direct way as an attempt to get to a point where using material photographs enables something else to be seen, an unfolding of the material to see what is there.

My concern is with the scenes of photographs that I collect, with the unfolding of their subject matter, of their family material, and the capacity for their visual impressions to be experienced with great intensity. Yates writes that 'the classical sources on memory seem to be describing inner techniques which depend on visual impressions of almost incredible intensity'.⁸⁴ We may have lost the art of memory in the sense that Yates uses it, along with the necessity to train our memory, as we have alternative less embodied methods of storing visual memories (e.g. photographs) but the embodied affect of reading visual memories is still, I argue, integrated with our natural memory. Yates likens the art of memory to 'an inner writing', and quotes the observation of Simonides:

⁸³ Joan Gibbons, 'Postmemory: The Ones Born Afterwards', in *Contemporary Art and Memory* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), pp73–95.

⁸⁴ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, first published 1966 (Pimlico, 1992), p.19: 25–7.

For when we go to a place after a considerable absence, we not merely recognize the place itself, but remember things that we did there, and recall the persons whom we met and even the unutterable thoughts which passed through our minds when we were there before. Thus as in most cases art originates from experiment.⁸⁵

The argument here is that, through my review of existing research, there is a gap emerging for significant literature on the art of memory and its importance within the artist's encounter with photography. The key text that I reference in adopting this view is Joan Gibbons' *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007).

Here she states:

In their emphasis on experience as the basis for memory, the works of enactment and re-enactment (even if virtual) fall into line with the category of episodic memory, used in the psychology of memory to distinguish between knowledge that is acquired directly and experientially, as opposed to conceptual or reflexive knowledge known as semantic memory.⁸⁶

Gibbons relates the emphasis on experience to the contingency of place as an essential quality for memory, as noted above in Yates' strategies for investigating image memories. Gibbons underscores the importance of place in works of art, 'that are enactments or re-enactments – works that are dependent on types of location in order to be realized'.⁸⁷ A search for a sense of personal and social identity is certainly linked with a sense of place and the link for me here is to the site of the investigation. My site-specific practice locates the memory of an event with a personal encounter and a sense of place – the flea market being the site that I have been dependent on to have enacted and re-enacted the collective encounter with family material that is freely available.

⁸⁵ Yates, p.23: 18–23, p.37: 19–24.

⁸⁶ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (I.B. Tauris, 2007), p.97: 25–9.

⁸⁷ Gibbons, p.98: 10–15.

The gap emerging in the literature reviewed is opening up around the importance of found narrative as it is performed through the photographic act and the subsequent narrative encounter with the photograph.⁸⁸ However, in the writings by artists who use found material photographs and archives, there emerges an exploration of a narrative as a sequential process and as a method linking encounter, chance and re-presentation.

The development of a method, as a process that links these three tactics of a practice, opens up the consideration of the surrealists' method of 'objective chance' and the practice of surrealist writing by André Breton.⁸⁹ The concern in Breton's work is the chance encounter and, through this encounter, the understanding of inner desire, and how this affects our actions, decisions and surroundings.⁹⁰ The surrealists, chief among them Breton, began to believe that our everyday encounters and chance findings are psychologically activated by the unconscious.⁹¹ This sets up the concept of chance found objects (that is, objects found by chance) as direct, already existing, embodiments of our inner desire that just need to be found in a privileged chance encounter. Mary Ann Caws comments in 'Linkings and Reflections: André Breton and His Communicating Vessels' on 'his illustrations, from his own experience, of the quite remarkable workings of "le hazard objectif" or objective chance as the visible and always surprising link of one world to the other, by chance and by some sort of interior necessity'.⁹²

⁸⁸ 'Among serious scholars working in the social sciences with personal (first person) accounts for research purposes, there is a range of definitions of narrative, often linked to discipline. Readers will find major differences, but all work with contingent sequences. Phil Salmon put it wisely: 'A fundamental criterion of narrative is surely contingency. Whatever the content, stories demand the consequential linking of events or ideas. Narrative shaping entails imposing a meaningful pattern on what would otherwise be random and disconnected.' (Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Sage Publications, 2008) p.5: 20–7).

⁸⁹ André Breton, 'Surrealist Situation of the Object' (Lecture delivered in Prague, 29 March 1935), in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, translated by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972), pp255–78.

⁹⁰ See André Breton, *Mad Love*, first published 1937 (Bison Books, 1988).

⁹¹ Caws, Mary Ann. 'Linkings and Reflections: André Breton and His Communicating Vessels', *Dada/Surrealism* 17 (1988), pp91–100, p.93.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p.93: 28–31.

The flea market as a specific site was seen as a place to trigger such encounters.⁹³ A fascination with objects and their meaning in the unconscious as well as with inner desire and the interpretation of serendipity led to the idea of a re-presentation of chance encounters. The method of serendipity entered the field of practice and, subsequently, works were created by amalgamating found objects into conceptual assemblages, offering a chance to shape the visual form directly from an unconscious directive. Translation, collaboration and inherent serendipity as methods of interpretation set up a methodology that influenced the act of collection and the typology of the finds.

Setting these findings in the context of an engagement with opening up to the performativity within the space of the archive, I refer now to the writings of Jacques Derrida in *Archive Fever* (1996). Derrida argues that the archive is open for translation as a question of the future, the question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise, and of a responsibility for tomorrow.⁹⁴ The family archive is a place within a private domain, such as a family house, and this underscores an archive's need for both a guardian and a localisation (sense of place) to enable access, context, and association and order.⁹⁵ 'The archive' is described as a place to consign memory but, in this practice-based research work and thesis, I reveal it as a space for performance where consigned memory is re-visited, re-interpreted and re-presented. The revelation of a space for performance follows on the question of how the terms of identity are to be defined as found in the family archive, and how the very term 'family' is defined for this thesis. There is a question of translation at work in Derrida's *Archive Fever*, Eric Prenowitz in the 'Translator's Note' concluding that, 'for while an archive may not be an end, it is only a beginning. It can only be a translation of its conception.'⁹⁶ This offers into the methodology of the artist the role of translator of the constructed material objects that are also objects of knowledge, thereby conjoining material thinking with the art of experiment. We

⁹³ See André Breton, *Mad Love*, first published 1937 (Bison Books, 1988).

⁹⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, pp1–5.

⁹⁵ Derrida, p.5: 24–36 and p.7: 15–24.

⁹⁶ Derrida, p.109: 4–6.

may note this even in the work of the realist critic André Bazin, who argues:

all the arts are based on the presence of man, only photography derives an advantage from his absence. This confers upon the photograph an objective nature of record and credibility open to reading an actually represented image memory, one that is open to translation.⁹⁷

The act of translation will form one of my methods to generate theories about the role of the photograph in its analogue material form. Specifically, I aim to do this within the informal family archive and to explore the second-generation postmemorial reception of personal and social identity, family histories and their discourse. I aim to look at the alternative discourse, of re-presented small histories to the second generation or even successive generations in some cases, offering this acknowledgement of postmemorial readings; but, critically, the method used, especially by artists, is one of intervention. Three core texts that I reference and draw on throughout the thesis to gain a deeper understanding of how important thinkers address memory practices are Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007); in terms of specific scientific investigations into memory, Jonathan K. Foster, *A Very Short Introduction to Memory* (2009); and, for a synergy between the theoretical, critical and autobiographical, Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (2012).

In the third key text that informs this thesis, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), Michel Foucault underscores the power of the archive and how we need to pay attention to the discourse of the time when examining the remnants of the past:

The document, then, is no longer for history an inert material through which it tries to reconstitute what men have done or said, the events of which only the trace remains;

⁹⁷ André Bazin, p.7.

history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations ... The document is not the fortunate tool of a history that is primarily and fundamentally *memory*; history is one way in which a society recognizes and develops a mass of documentation with which it is inextricably linked.⁹⁸

In relation to this statement, I am looking at theoretical perspectives on the affect that visual memory invokes, a capacity to channel through transactive memory stores (material photographs as documents) and material thinking. The psychologist Daniel Wegner, in his concern with memory sets, describes transactive memory as group memory behaviour, or series (here read as akin to the family photographic archive, including the family album) and how research is then conducted into individual sensing of personal and social memory drawn from this collective store.⁹⁹

The collected series or sets of found photographs work for me as non-linear, the photographs being snapshots of the real – not in the first instance art-images, but photographs that are re-contextualised, looked at through a contemporary lens but, in my work, intersected with the constructed histories of the times / era. These, the original images, offer a research tool into contexts and the discourse of the times / era. The development of an effective method of memory practice is thus a major focus of the research. In the literature I have reviewed, there is no common thread, idea or pattern linking personal and social memory with a personal and social identity forged through reading discarded family photographs, a supplement to family photography. A record of contemporary memory practice utilising the material photographic print however is to be found in Hirsch, Kuhn and Edwards, writing on material thinking and the photograph as a physical object, even a terrain of personal and social record.¹⁰⁰ Within this

⁹⁸ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p.7.

⁹⁹ See Daniel M. Wegner, *Transactive Memory: A Contemporary Analysis of the Group Mind*, Chapter 'Theories of Group Behaviour', Part of the Spring Series in Social Psychology, (Springer, 1987), pp185–208.

¹⁰⁰ See Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory* (1995); Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (Routledge, 1994).

school of thought of material thinking, there emerges the need for association and order in the reading of family photographs from the family photographic archive as images of the things that denote the things themselves – employing the places and image (*loci* and *imago*, an idealised image of another person, usually a parent, acquired in childhood and carried in the unconscious in later life – this term and its definition is cited within psychoanalysis¹⁰¹), and their visual scenes as a source of reflection. Material thinking incorporates the method of the *bricoleur* who works by means of process as a basic methodology, materially directed in its enquiry. It is clear that process and chance play a key part in the methods employed by the bricoleur. In collecting the discarded family photographs which form the material for this writing and visual work, I adopted the methodology of the bricoleur which offers an advantage in both the writing and visual work, due to the effect of creating a far more structured serial process within the research and practice. The construction of the fieldwork notebooks and the production of a photo-archive created an index of the finds and enabled the construction of a series as the sample accrued over the course of this longitudinal study (2009–16).

My work as an artist and material thinker enables the open-endedness of the found material photograph, but this sets up a tension between the experiment of art and being able to demonstrate a contribution to knowledge through the rigour of a set of methods that act to reveal meaning and contribute to new knowledge. A work that I analyse in a later section of the review is Michael Landy's *Breakdown* (2001) which is a deliberate act of obliteration of a personal and social record of memory, a blotting out of a material reference point for self and family, a physical performance of documenting a potential form of loss of reference. Joan Gibbons also selects Landy's work, 'for raising the question of the significance of objects and documents for memory ... and the value that can be placed on objects as mementos relates to ways in which consumer objects

¹⁰¹ Imago – imagines. (n.d.). *The American Heritage® Science Dictionary*. Retrieved 2 August 2017 from Dictionary.com website <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/imagines>

are valued and given significance above their use value'.¹⁰²

The significant method of translation in Landy's work *Breakdown* is that of the use value of a material object from valued within the private realm, to obliterated, but this act is performed in the public realm, emphasising the sense of loss. In a direct comparison, my sample of photographs held in the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16) were once valued in the private realm, but then rejected, as perhaps selected for censorship in that realm, to then be discarded but placed back on view in the public realm through my Fugitive Archive work. Being qualitative in my method in both the written and visual work enables me to account for secondary qualities that in turn will be explained as they arise through this contextual review, one being the translation of a sense of loss (through the act of discarding) that is in turn influencing and directing my analysis of the archive form. The reference here is to the act of research into the knowns (sample of collected material prints) and the importance of creating an index in parallel of the unknowns (secondary qualities). Thus the enquiry turns back to reappraise the sample set of found photographs indexed within the fieldwork notebooks to set up a dialogue with the finds, in an act of translation. Another facet of this translation in material thinking is that of the bricoleur, working with found or appropriated materials as retrospective in its essential method of enquiry turning back:

to an already existent set (read here found material photographs) made up of tools and materials, to consider or reconsider what it contains and, finally and above all, to engage in a sort of dialogue with it and, before choosing between them, to index the possible answers which the whole set can offer to his problem. He interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could 'signify' and so contribute to the definition of a set which has yet to materialize but which will ultimately differ from the instrumental set only in the internal disposition of its parts.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (I.B. Tauris, 2007), pp142–3.

¹⁰³ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), p.18: 28–37.

Deepening this sense of a serial process, I have found in the journal *Material Thinking* an exploration of the work of Thomas de Quincey, where there is a metaphor to explain a concept of collaboration which I see as akin to the series of journeys that I make during the fieldwork that are then plotted on a map. In *Material Thinking*, 'A Foreword', Duncan Fairfax teases this metaphor out:

Where the plots of all of those individual or singular journeys that have been taken intersect ... The individual journeys are arrested ... and the different lines that mark the individual passages as they expand into a blot, or bubble, of consensual interest/ thinking practice – producing as Carter observes 'an apt image of remembering beyond nostalgia ... And it is out of these implicated processes that a third apprehension emerges. When it emerges in this way, it constitutes material thinking' (Carter, 2004, p. 5). Material thinking is performed in making and this in my methodology forms an inextricable interrelationship.¹⁰⁴

The following sections of the review explore artists' practice that balances the critical writing, addressing personal and social memory in relation to the photograph. I draw on Joan Fontcuberta's writing on photography in *Pandora's Camera* (2014), in which he explores the themes of fugitive identities and our particular relationships with photography as a form of material thinking.¹⁰⁵ The concept of recollection and remembrance being at the heart of memory as processes within artists' practice in contemporary art (and material thinking) are significantly echoed by Joan Gibbons in *Contemporary Art and Memory: Images of Recollection and Remembrance* (2009).¹⁰⁶

The terms of my analysis are to read the artworks of selected contemporary artists whose conceptual practice is inclusive of appropriation of material

¹⁰⁴ Duncan Fairfax, 'A Foreword', in Terry E. Rosenberg and Duncan Fairfax (eds), *Studies in Material Thinking* 1(2), June 2008, p.1.

¹⁰⁵ Joan Fontcuberta, 'Fugitive Identities', in *Pandora's Camera* (MACK, 2014), pp91–103.

¹⁰⁶ Joan Gibbons, Epilogue, 'Oblivion: The Limits of Memory', in *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp141–7.

photographs (in particular, the supplement of family material), translation, memory practice, disruptive narratives, identity, family, archive, and sense of place.

1.2 Memory and Archive

The power of memories is often cited and discussed in association with the notion of an archive, either personal or collective. The medium of radio looks at investing in a programme like *Archive on Four*, which offers an insight into past documents and the personal responses elicited by them from selected interviewees.¹⁰⁷ One of the programmes, 'The Benjamin Broadcasts', opened with a quote from Walter Benjamin referencing 'documents of civilisation' and linking these irrevocably to the notions of 'documents of barbarism'.¹⁰⁸ This link to the power of memory once documented and reviewed demonstrates the impact of events (both good and bad) on individual and collective memory as represented in archives. The idea is of layer upon layer of human events, which are often bittersweet, and of their time, underscoring the moment, the period, evoking the temporality of the document. According to traditional modes of historical enquiry, these so-called 'cultural treasures' need to be viewed with 'cautious detachment', in Benjamin's view. Benjamin goes on to say that 'a historian who establishes a conception of the present as "the time of now" thus works with a notion of a past intruding with "its chips of messianic time" grasping the links of his own era with a definite earlier time'.¹⁰⁹ The minutiae of everyday moments the time of now link to events that took place (world events) and shaped the experience of individuals underscoring their view of the world.¹¹⁰

One individual artist who offers this shaped experience within his archive of images is photographer John Stewart (1919–2012), particularly in his still

¹⁰⁷ See the BBC Radio 4 series *Archive on 4* (2014) that featured an episode titled, 'The Benjamin Broadcasts', presented by Michael Rosen, featuring Walter Benjamin's writing and referencing the 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' in *Illuminations* (London, Jonathan Cape: 1970), p.248:17–19, www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b044b3lj (accessed 11.1.2018).

¹⁰⁸ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.248: 23–5.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.255: 17–19.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 255: 14–17.

lives.¹¹¹ He states that ‘photography should make statements’, in his case, about time, to which in his view everything on earth is subject. He states that he believes that there is a trace in everything that surrounds us. John Stewart is a photographer who was a prisoner of war so his interest in small silences and still life offers for him a meditation on the condition of existence through small slices of time and lived experience, hence my interest in his reflective photography. The preoccupation on a condition of existence is also visible in the work of Arno Fischer who, in 1978, acquired a farmhouse in Gransee, north of Berlin, and began, over the next 30 years, to document traces of his existence in the form of still lifes, plants, stones, tools and his garden furniture with an SX 70 Polaroid Land Camera.¹¹² The photographs in his 2007 series *The Garden* are described in a review of his personal archive as unique and unrepeatable pictures representing a concentration of his viewpoint on a very personal subject. For me, the link here with John Stewart is his position on documenting traces and the notion of all of us being subject to time.¹¹³ The context of time is further exemplified in this series, *The Garden* by Arno Fischer coming to an end in 2007 when Polaroid film went out of production, becoming an obsolescent medium.¹¹⁴ Maybe this is an instance of everyday minutiae and their documentation becoming shaped by an outside event. The demise of Polaroid is the event that shaped the longevity of the project and made it very much of its time. However, concretions of time can be shaped and reviewed in the light of the future (unknown at the time).¹¹⁵ This was, however, qualified earlier in this chapter as needing to be considered with ‘cautious detachment’ in Benjamin’s view, in relation to past ‘cultural treasures’ and their inherent materiality.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ John Stewart, *Guardian Arts Photography* (2010).

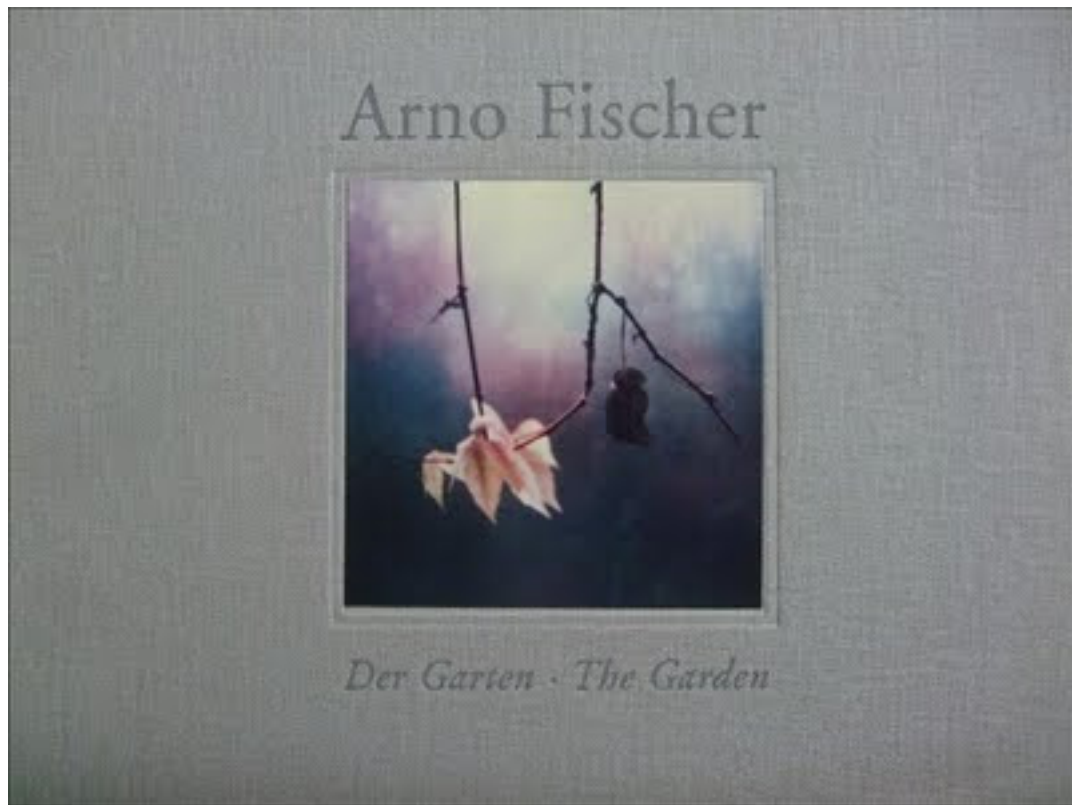
¹¹² Arno Fischer, b. 1927, *Retrospective Exhibition*, Bonn, 2010.

¹¹³ John Stewart, *To the River Kwai – Two Journeys 1943, 1980*. Based on the author’s diary when a POW and a subsequent journey to his old camps on the ‘Death Railway’. A survey of survival in extreme conditions and an investigation into the Japanese Imperial Army’s attitude towards its prisoners.

¹¹⁴ Rosalind Krauss, ‘And Then Turn Away: an essay on James Coleman’, *October 8*, Summer 1997.

¹¹⁵ Polaroid Film returned to the market through *The Impossible Film Project* in 2011.

¹¹⁶ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 248: 23–5.



1.1 Arno Fischer, *The Garden* (completed in 2007)

My interest is in this as an example of the past informing the present and the future, through the materiality of the medium used in constructing a personal photo-archive. Arno Fischer's project connotes a chronology of the medium of film, and its orientation to the past, but also its survival into the near future; evoking all the nascent memories of photographers.¹¹⁷ This includes family photographers documenting their everyday lives and constructing their layered and complex identities through this instant film medium.¹¹⁸ Andrei Tarkovsky followed this through using Polaroid photographs as images of remembrance documenting again details, like the play of light, sense of place and small everyday moments in *Instant Light* (2006). Tarkovsky also created his own 'portable flashback' in the form of a diary in which he had created a sequence of photographs taken from his family album. These were black and white images

¹¹⁷ Giovanni Chiaramonte, 'The Image as Remembrance' in A. Tarkovsky, *Instant Light* (Thames and Hudson, 2006), pp119–209.

¹¹⁸ See Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Cult of Unity and Cultivated Differences', in *Photography: A Middle-brow Art* (Polity Press, 1996), pp13–72.

that he would revisit again and again to replay the precious memories they carried for him. A quote in the essay by Giaroma Chiarimonte in *Instant Light* makes this link: 'It seemed to me important to try to establish the links which connect people ... those links which connect me with humanity and all of us with everything that surrounds us ... I always feel it important to establish that I myself belong to a particular tradition, culture, circle of people or ideas.'¹¹⁹

Tarkovsky amplifies these considerations in his clear need to acknowledge the images of his own genealogy: 'these humble traces of daily life observed through memory, viewed by remembering'.¹²⁰

Benjamin discusses the redemptive nature of a form and how this is glimpsed in its obsolescence; he also recognises that it is by no means impossible for a medium to undergo more than one period of obsolescence.¹²¹ What is lost can be the physical sense of the transcription of an irreversible finite temporality into a medium that is in itself finite and subject to degradation and loss. This is often at the point of the relation to this creative endeavour, this search for identity not simply in terms of a fetishised materiality but because of the relation to the medium. Often mediums like Polaroid film have become displaced from mass cultural use to become a medium for art, which links photographs to their time and the act of consumerism, as the artifice is still constructed in relation to the perceptual apparatus of the viewer. Artists working within this genre often combine their material forms with a narrative that represents the past as present in the trace of its absence. There is then this relation that is built between the spectator, photographer and the camera that comes into play with the artists whose practice I am investigating here, especially where the work is not based purely on production but appropriation of outmoded material (e.g. polaroids, found negatives in different formats, outdated film stock and slides). The artists' personal trajectory of desire, and their work with personal rituals, mean

¹¹⁹ Giovanni Chiaramonte, 'The Image as Remembrance', in *Instant Light: Tarkovsky's Polaroids* (Thames and Hudson, 2006), pp119–209.

¹²⁰ See Chiaramonte, *Instant Light*, p.120: 7–9.

¹²¹ Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*, pp212–35.

investing themselves in the works, creating a personal signature and identity through the making of their artwork.¹²²

These desires and practices of interpretation move memories into their art practice and reconstruct their existence and temporality – an act that may serve to underscore identity and transform our experience of the world. Families here are bodies of work, personal histories, including appropriating the narratives of others into the work. It is impossible to avoid citing the artist and photographer Tacita Dean's practice here, as she works very much with this notion of medium and event in the contemporary present.¹²³ Tacita Dean's work is often discussed as an articulation of time, space and the body that is specific to the medium being used.¹²⁴ Linking the narrative of an event with the history of the medium of photography, which is at a particular stage in its obsolescence (in the twenty-first century), allows us as viewers to experience a flooding of memories that indicate the 'untimeliness' of its presence. The consideration of this 'presencing' as an inherent attribute of its mode of production, and its potential link to fieldwork practice within archaeology is something I now intend to investigate here. Victor Buchli states that 'an archaeological record is not really a record at all, not given data but made'.¹²⁵ He considers it is necessary to invent a story from the remains, or by using the traces of past events. He sees us as producers of archaeological materials adding a new archaeological episode to the existence of places and things that have already a long series of experiences and uses including new data of information and interpretation of objects themselves. Reading into this analysis and the conclusions he posits, I now turn to his findings, as evidence of constructed temporalities, and their inherent artificiality but perceived necessity, for our collective and individual

¹²² Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.139: 32–5, 'For me, emergent memory of this sort is a reminder of two things, firstly that, although memory is predicated on the past, it is always constructed in the present; and, secondly, that memory is a highly and unstable changeable phenomenon.'

¹²³ Tacita Dean, *Recent Films and Other Works* (London: Tate Publishing, 2001) pp24–30.

¹²⁴ Michael Newman, *Medium and Event in the Work of Tacita Dean* (Tate Publishing, 2001) pp26–7.

¹²⁵ Ian Hodder, Michael Shanks, Alexander Alexandri, Victor Buchli, John Carmen, Jonathan Last and Gavin Lucas (eds), *Archaeology: Finding Meaning in the Past* (Routledge, 1995), Part 5: 'Material Culture, Interpreting Material Culture: the trouble with text', p.181. See Mariano Castillio Debal, *Interlude: The Reader's Traces* (Maastricht: Jan Van Eyck Academie, 2005).

heritage and identities. Buchli states: 'By preserving the remains of the past in an artificial state we make them into composite objects in which the past, the present and the image we have of the future are inextricably linked.'¹²⁶

I will now introduce a small number of artists working in this way, touching on their engagement with these concepts to explore their practice methodologies. These concepts have been investigated by Victor Man in an exhibition titled *Sequelism* (2009) which hints at this sense of the order of things.¹²⁷ A precise connection to this sensing of an order of things leads me to a body of work created by an artist like Asger Jorn working within the artist collective of 'The Situationist International' (SI) founded in 1957. The exhibition he held in the Rive Gauche gallery in Paris in 1959 was titled *Modifications*. The collection of work was formed by the purchase of second-hand canvases by unknown painters, which he bought in a flea market (referencing the site of my fieldwork and the method of appropriation within my practice enquiry). The nature of his modification here was to over paint these canvases transforming them by this double inscription. Jorn's art was always described as a process of research rather than confined to the production of finished objects.¹²⁸ This act of layering creates the relationship between event and document through its re-presentation, through an artist's act of transformation. The shaping of this idea is underscored again by Buchli and added to by his concept that by preserving the remains of the past in an artificial state we make them into 'corporate objects', in which the past, the present and the image we have of the future are inextricably mixed. Artists and photographers creating their own personal archives are, through this simple act of documenting, setting in time the disappearance and death of people, of things and everyday events and places where they are invested. The making of artistic images could be said then to

¹²⁶ Ian Hodder, Michael Shanks, Alexander Alexandri, Victor Buchli, John Carmen, Jonathan Last and Gavin Lucas (eds), *Archaeology: Finding Meaning in the Past*, (Routledge:1995), Part 5: 'Material Culture, Interpreting Material Culture: the trouble with text', p.181. Peter Wakelin, 'Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past', *J Des Hist* 15 (1), 2002, pp60–2, doi: 10.1093/jdh/15.1.60 (accessed 21.07.17). Peter Wakelin in this review discusses Buchli 'emphasizing the archeological instinct to examine the broadest possible context for an object's meanings – not just its fabrication or design but its social emphasis, and its whole life history up to and beyond the point when it may be discarded'.

¹²⁷ Victor Man, *Sequelism Part 3* (Arnolfini, 2009).

¹²⁸ Peter Wollen, *Raiding the Icebox: Reflections on Twentieth Century Culture* (Verso, 1993).

symbolise actual life itself, or the hopes the artist embodies in these singular creations. The artist and film maker Tarkovsky exemplifies this notion of the freedom of the artist and the placing of the self at centre stage in the drama of life. In his work he explores the concept of time and considers it as a state of mind that nourishes the human soul.¹²⁹

An artist who tests this concept of time is Michael Landy and the personal body of work I will focus on here (referenced earlier for its sense of obliteration of personal and social identity and sense of memory) is Landy's *Break Down* made in 2001.¹³⁰ This piece was created in a public context in the window of the old C&A shop in Oxford Street in London, at the heart of corporate and retail outlets. In the documentary made in 2003 titled *The Man Who Destroyed Everything*, shown on BBC Four, the accompanying text examines what inspired Landy to take all his 7,000 possessions, arrange them into 8 categories and annihilate them.¹³¹ The articles referencing this work veer away from the concept of identity that I am investigating but make the link instead with the idea of consumerism. Identity in this case is inscribed by his 'life in commerce', so to speak. The act of consuming to collect is at odds with artists like Fischer and Landy who are exploring aspects of identity but from polarised positions. The link referencing consumerism as a catalyst for discussion could also centre on the medium as event. In Fischer's case, this was the Polaroid-branded photographic medium, which ceased to be manufactured, halting his project. This references how when change comes – for example, a financial and economic crash – this can equate to a sense of looking back at the past to ensure survival is engaged with sense of place.¹³² Fischer's project makes a strong link to this theory. For Landy, the medium destroyed was the event. Social artefacts here are both shaping a personal and social identity through a life lived and archiving an individual existence.

The social artefacts that link here to a life lived, shaped by cultural artefacts, are the printed sheets, the inventory of Landy's possessions, which were described

¹²⁹ See Andrei Tarkovsky, director, *Nostalgia* (1983).

¹³⁰ Michael Landy, *Breakdown* (Artangel, 2001).

¹³¹ 'The Man Who Destroyed Everything', (BBC 4, 2003).

¹³² 'Iceland: Financial and Economic Crash', (BBC, Radio 4, 17.05.09).

in the film *The Man Who Destroyed Everything* (2003) as resembling a makeshift war memorial. The public were described as measuring their own personal inventories against his as they questioned whether they could live without their ephemera which offered them an identity, a set of memorabilia of their lives and perhaps status in society.¹³³ The project was attributed as one that touched a rare chord in a society where accumulation of possessions and consumerism dominate people's everyday lives.¹³⁴ At this interstice the interconnectivity of memory to autobiography and the encoding of a life lived is revealed. The social and cultural artefact (inclusive of the family photograph) and how this acts as a visual memory reminding one of a life lived, an autobiography.¹³⁵ A life lived in Landy's case is now forming part of his practice undergoing a transformation in the public realm. Objective chance and discovery may figure in this type of practice where accelerating loss in the spirit of creative enquiry will reveal over time the impact of documenting discard. With the identity of collected life ephemera, this could be analogous with signature and the premise of an autobiography. Richard Eyre discusses whether we can put a value on identity through our engagement in and with art: 'What we hold in our heads – our memory, our feelings, our thoughts, our sense of our own history – is the sum of our humanity. We carry on us what King Lear called "the smell of mortality"; art redeems mortality by giving us a glimpse of eternity. It briefly illuminates something that is more than human.'¹³⁶

There is this art and glimpse of something that is more than human in the work of Landy: the audience are invited into a space to participate in the consideration of the objects, the collections and the setting they encounter. This notion of creating a dialogic work as a platform is, in Benjamin's words, 'one that

¹³³ Homology, the idea that an individual can be explained by reference to social structures and social relations: a similarity often attributable to common origin, 'Homology', *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 19 July 2017 (accessed 19.07.17).

¹³⁴ Leo Walford, 'Letter from London on Break Down Michael Landy's recent Artangel Project', 2001, *artcritical.com* (accessed 19.07.17).

¹³⁵ Benjamin, 'Unpacking My Library', *Illuminations*, p.62: 14–20. Benjamin offers this consideration to our relationship to collected artefacts, 'Naturally, his existence is tied to many other things as well: to a very mysterious relationship to ownership ... also to a relationship to objects which does not emphasize their functional utilitarian value – that is, their usefulness – but studies and loves them as the scene – the stage, of their fate.'

¹³⁶ See Richard Eyre, 'Arts Cuts will lead to Cultural Apartheid', *Royal Society of Literature Review* (2011).

does not merely transmit knowledge but actually engenders it'.¹³⁷ This idea is picked up also in the work of Mark Dion where his staged works *The Epic Archaeological Digs of Mark Dion*, *Tate Thames Dig* (1999) and *New England Digs* (2001) create this platform energising the audience and provoking them into asking themselves a series of questions about what they are seeing and observing and its impact upon them as individuals.¹³⁸ He is cleaning, cataloguing and observing, while Landy could be said to be cataloguing, preparing and destroying, which is antipathetic to this notion of preserving the past, conserving and displaying it. Landy and Dion are equally on display in their site-specific works. This could be said to reveal the interdependence of the site of production or, in Landy's case, destruction, with the site of consumption rendering a breakdown of the traditional boundaries between the two.

The site-specificity is then critical to interpreting the human impact of intervention in the act of preservation, which I feel is analogous to my contention about the personal knowledge contained at the site of the archive. Intervention as a method of investigation into the study of the human past, in relation to identity as inferred from surviving material remains. In his essay on 'The Tate Thames Dig', Robert Williams discusses the project as 'rather than art playing at archaeology, is in practice both art and archaeology in all their respective practices'.¹³⁹ This offers to me in this investigation a reading of these examples from the field, which recognises the significance of temporally undifferentiated material (in this study the method of combining found images) becoming associated with each other. The association as stated I hope will be perceived within the context of my research to open up a different space which suggests new areas for exploration, in particular Foucault's theory of 'the archaeology of

¹³⁷ See Howard Caygill, 'Speculative Critique: The Modern Epic', in *Walter Benjamin: The Colour of Experience* (London: Routledge, 1997).

¹³⁸ Mark Dion, 'Dion, M' (Film), Mark Dion Lecture, CCA Graduate Studies Lecture Series, 15 October 2009.

¹³⁹ Robert Williams, 'Disjecta Reliquiae: The Tate Thames Dig', in Alex Coles and Mark Dion (eds), *Archaeology* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 1999), pp73–101.

knowledge', as a methodological form of enquiry and the question of the not wholly investigated archive.¹⁴⁰

This form of methodological enquiry is clearly articulated in Foucault's treatise on painting (an example of constructing an artwork) in which he discusses how painting is shot through with knowledge and philosophical themes, then with a positivity of knowledge, which he underscores as '*savoir*'. The nature of this '*savoir*' is my starting point for taking the archive as my subject in this study and carrying out an analysis prompted by reading Foucault. The aim is to use this form of analysis to demonstrate whether the inscription of memory relates to identity, by asking whether it is shot through with a particular describable, discursive practice. Foucault suggests using this approach, in looking at the inscription from the outset, in the field of different practices in which it finds its specificity, its functions and network of dependences. (In this thesis the specificity will be inscription in the field of photography within art practices). He states that 'archaeology', as he specifies it, tries to describe not the specific structure of science, but the very different domain of knowledge. In his view, the sciences are not the obligatory domain for archaeology. It is in this area of reconstituting the latent discourse of the individual artist and photographer that I have conducted this contextual review and the transcription of their implicit philosophy, which is intended to form their view of the world. The artists and photographers whom I have described working here dispense with words but employ, in Foucault's words, 'a discursive practice embodied in techniques and effects'.¹⁴¹

1.3 Photography

My purpose in this section is to investigate the problems of defining 'photographs as memories'. There is a history and discourse wrapped around the photograph as a singular image and as a memory.¹⁴² Sources that I can

¹⁴⁰ Foucault, 'The Historical A Priori and The Archive', in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p.131: 3–20.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.193: 20–9.

¹⁴² See Sophie Howarth (ed.), *Singular Images: Essays on Remarkable Photographs* (London: Tate Publishing, 2005).

identify to explain this history include Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida* (2000) and Walter Benjamin's *Illuminations* (1999).¹⁴³ These have in turn influenced recent studies, such as Joan Gibbon's *Contemporary Art and Memory: Images of Recollection and Remembrance* (2009), which attempts to understand the research imagination that creates the connections between defining photographs as images of recollection. I will explore autobiography and indexicality, which will be key terms in navigating this concept. In her chapter on autobiography, Joan Gibbons discusses the current openness of expression in contemporary art where autobiography features in artists' works.¹⁴⁴ She expresses the opinion that this will lead to its tenet being tested in new and significant ways. An aspect that she sets out to explore is the relationship that artists have created in the space between the private and public realms. The ideas that relate to my practice in this field are the methods that individual artists use to represent highly specific personal memories through the choice of an indexical medium. Gibbons concludes her chapter with an opinion on the choice of this medium, 'as affective to the status and impact of the memory represented'.¹⁴⁵ This raises the question of intention.

The question is how we interpret, as the viewer, the intention, the meaning of an image embedded in an artwork or installation. Is this meaning found in the artist's statement, or is this just the conscious intention of the maker in regard to the artwork? Instead can we as viewers find our own meaning in its manifest form, 'its visual rhetorics, its overt and covert references, its cultural context, its potential and actual effects', as raised by Geoffrey Batchen in his essay on William Henry Fox Talbot?¹⁴⁶ A realm of speculation is where interpretation sits, in the sense that we relate to the consideration of the operator – the photographer, in this instance – as not having a full sense of what has been captured and depicted, offering to the viewer outside of the frame of reference,

¹⁴³ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (London: Vintage Press, 2000) and Benjamin, *Illuminations* (Pimlico, 1999).

¹⁴⁴ Joan Gibbons, 'Autobiography: The Externalisation of Personal Memory', in *Contemporary Art and Memory – Images of recollection and remembrance* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), pp9–28.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.9.

¹⁴⁶ Geoffrey Batchen, 'William Henry Fox Talbot: Latticed Window' (with the Camera Obscura), August 1835, in Sophie Howarth (ed.), *Singular Images*, pp15–21.

a chance to interpret what has been documented and thereby create a new meaning. The reframing of an anchor for memory through new readings of works that trace off the actual world. Gibbons tackles this idea through exploring further the medium of photography as being widely used by artists to claim an existential relationship – no matter, in her words, ‘how tenuous this may be with what has actually existed’.¹⁴⁷ The properties of the medium of photography could be said to determine not only the nature of the representation, but also the nature of the memories that are carried by it.¹⁴⁸

In particular, here, I will define that I am talking about the memories carried within the material culture of analogue photography as exemplified by images created through film cameras. Highly evocative readings can be made from images both negative and positive that are moments captured, not edited, not simulacra. The essence of photography lies in its affirmation of becoming. The affirmation is that of its unique ability to capture the almost inexplicable ‘act of presencing’, the capture through a medium specificity of the ‘there-ness’ of a proposition to logic of the presence, absence or event being an essence of reality. It is that rare thing: the capture of a slice of real time. The image becomes a subject and the subject becomes an image open to translation by the viewer created by the operator. Barthes perceives photography to be singular, pervasive and contradictory in character, and discusses revision of the words and concepts which we use to speak and think about images, especially those through which we look at them: ‘Ultimately Photography is subversive not when it frightens, repels, or even stigmatizes, but when it is *pensive*, when it thinks.’¹⁴⁹ Here Barthes is examining his personal preoccupations with a particular image, its referent being a memory of his mother. The indexical character of the photograph stages its presence in the past and its absence in the present. The medium of photography leads, in Gibbons’ analysis, into an examination of memory in the work of selected artists, which she links to the context of family photography. Gibbons moves the discussion through the

¹⁴⁷ Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp29–39.

¹⁴⁸ ‘The Editorial’, *Photographies*, Vol. 4 (2011), p.3, ‘The Analogue Era’ is discussed and linked into the reference of ‘taking the time to read a photograph’ (or a text) an activity that demands a form of attention predicated upon slowness.

¹⁴⁹ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, Part One 15. ‘To Signify’, p.38: 10–13.

categories and types of memory encapsulated in artists' works, and offers the notion of a crossover in operation in 'memory practice', as she terms it.¹⁵⁰

Themes of death and absence are there in the family archive and Gibbons discusses the indexical relation that certain artists have to their subject, which includes these themes. This is a key finding that relates to my mapping of fugitive testimonies and recovered histories and developing a method of memory practice for this study.¹⁵¹ It is one that is fully investigated in this book over several chapters, building the links between autobiographical practice, methods of making work through installation, and thematic constructs within memory practice.¹⁵² This is an important point to amplify, through recognising that the photograph has a particular indexical relation to the real, thus linking into the senses of the memory of the viewer, for whom it serves as a sign. Gibbons investigates the work of C.S. Peirce and his typology of signs, noting his writings on the characteristics of photographs and their links to the physical connection of the thing photographed.¹⁵³

In particular, Peirce is clear in his writings on his recognition that the photograph is 'in dynamical connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses and memory of the person for whom it serves as a sign, on the other'.¹⁵⁴ Here I am discussing the straight photograph, made with a camera, without any post-exposure manipulation, such as cropping of or compositing the image. Family photographs of this type and associated ephemera allow the viewer to revisit a time past to inhabit a family archive. Working with this type of archival material, artists Marina Abramovic and Sophie Calle use the photograph to invoke memories, with themselves in the frame through their constructed narratives or re-enactments.¹⁵⁵ Indexicality is seen as an important

¹⁵⁰ Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, 'Traces', p.30: 10.

¹⁵¹ Rupert Willoughby, *Leaves from a Family Album: the 1890s and 1900s through the Eye of the Camera*, Lecture RWA Bristol (2014).

¹⁵² Gibbons, 'Traces, Memory and Indexicality', in *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp29–51.

¹⁵³ Rosalind Krauss, 'Notes on the Index: Part1', 1977, in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), p.198.

¹⁵⁴ A. Atkin, 'Peirce On The Index and Indexical Reference', *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 41(1), 2005, pp161–88.

¹⁵⁵ See Rebekah Modrak with Bill Anthes, *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice*, (Routledge, 2011).

element for both artists, as it can signify both an existential and spiritual connection to the real. In *Cleaning the House* (1995) there are images attributed as 'Places of Power', to which Abramovic makes the connection in her collection of photographs, which invoke this indexicality.¹⁵⁶ In *Holding the Lamb*, Abramovic constructs and stages a sense impression, an image related to her personal connection with 'Places of Power' as a sense of place (with a mountain top location) and image memory of a performative moment (ritual).



1.2 Marina Abramovic, *Holding the Lamb* (2010)

The transformation into images of the material world is not just a mechanical, analogue process. It can also be described as being alchemical enacting a magical process, investing the images she has collected of people, places and

¹⁵⁶ Marina Abramovic, *Cleaning the House* (1995). This monograph is produced and designed in close collaboration with the artist and forms a personal scrapbook of her life and influences, ranging from Buddhism, the aboriginals of Australia and religious iconography, to Western artists such as Joseph Beuys.
Sophie Calle, *Autobiographies* (2000).

sites with just this inscription. Barthes underscores this: 'Photography offers an immediate presence to the world a co-presence ... it is also of a metaphysical order.'¹⁵⁷ Opposed to this practice, which through intervention entails the process of reproducing a living representation, is the act of reproducing and retelling which asks us to recall details all over again. The study of memory through the science of psychology investigates how the human brain will recall facts more precisely if they are received as a story.¹⁵⁸ If this is the case what are the implications and findings around the artists who remake, restructure and appropriate photographs. In my argument the artwork can be capable of such an evidential force for the duplicate action or intervention as there is for the original.

The exhibition *Haunted; Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance*, held at the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2010, interrogates the nature of appropriation and the archive as part of its exposure of artists who have pursued this archival impulse, amassing fragments of reality either by creating new photographs or by appropriating existing ones. The catalogue for the show sets out to establish that in the early sixties Robert Rauschenberg and Andy Warhol set this trend in motion as they began to incorporate photographic images into their work.¹⁵⁹ In so doing they recast their work as repositories for autobiographical, cultural and historical information. Since then, artists Bernd and Hilla Becher, Sarah Charlesworth, Douglas Gordon, Luis Jacob, Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman and Sara Van Der Beek have created works embodying this type of practice and were therefore represented in this major exhibition and catalogue.

The type of practice outlined is considered by Rebekah Modrak, who examines historic re-enactments, re-photographic surveys and re-enactments of earlier photographs in order to understand how revisiting the past enables cathartic,

¹⁵⁷ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.84: 25–9.

¹⁵⁸ See Benedict Carey, 'This is Your Life (and how you tell it)', *New York Times*, 22 May 2007, *Mental Health and Behaviour*, 1.

¹⁵⁹ *Haunted: Contemporary Photography/ Video/ Performance*, curated by Jennifer Blessing and Nat. Trotman, Guggenheim Museum (New York, 2010).

empathetic or educational possibilities.¹⁶⁰ Two writers, André Bazin in his essay 'The Ontology of a Photographic Image' (1980)¹⁶¹ and Susan Sontag writing in *On Photography* (first published in 1971), explore, in her terms, possessing the subject and the photographic copy. Sontag writes: 'While old photographs fill out our mental image of the past, the photographs being taken now transform what is present into a mental image, like the past. Cameras establish an inferential relation to the present, provide an instantly retroactive view of experience, (reality is known by its traces). Photographs give mock forms of possession: of the past, the present, even the future.'¹⁶² Both theorists consider the nature of photographs, discussing the idea that as their referent disappears the remnants become as important as 'the original'.¹⁶³ In doing so, they essentially become similar to the source itself. Bazin qualifies this aspect of photography when he writes: 'All the arts are based on the presence of man, only photography derives an advantage from his absence ... In spite of any objections our critical spirit may offer, we are forced to accept as real the existence of the object, reproduced, actually *re-presented*, set before us that is to say in time and space.'¹⁶⁴ Sontag reinforces this point of view and underscores this role of the operator of the camera: 'And in the vast majority of photographs which get taken – for scientific and industrial purposes, by the military and the police, by families – any trace of the personal vision of whoever is behind the camera interferes with the primary demand on the photograph that it record, diagnose, inform' (and in my argument) provoke, in reference to the sense of catalysing personal and social memory.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Modrak, *Reframing Photography*, p.171.

¹⁶¹ André Bazin, *The Ontology of a Photographic Image*, edited by Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1980).

¹⁶² Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (Penguin Classics, 2002), p.167: 1–8.

¹⁶³ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, first published 1971 (Anchor Books: Doubleday, 1989).

¹⁶⁴ Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image', translated by Hugh Gray, *Film Quarterly* 13 (4), University of California Press, Summer 1960, pp4-9, p.7: 40, p.8: 6 (accessed 28.04.17).

¹⁶⁵ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, p.133: 25–30.

1.4. Image and Resonance

The similarity ‘to the source itself’ links into my exploration of the idea of affect adhering within memory. Affect is discussed by Frances Yates in the book *The Art of Memory* (1966), in an analysis of the writings of Thomas Aquinas.¹⁶⁶ The solution to memory for words / images considers and accepts that the metaphorical moves the soul more and therefore better helps the memory. This is further described as ‘the wonderful moving the memory more than the ordinary’, in recognition of affect as part of the philosophers’ tradition of using the poetic fable composed of wonders to move their audiences more¹⁶⁷ Barthes reinforces this theory in regard to re-reading a photograph: ‘Always the Photograph *astonishes* me, with an astonishment which endures and renews itself, inexhaustively.’¹⁶⁸ In particular, the earliest quotations recorded regarding Aquinas’ ‘memory rules’, which investigate the distinction between memory and reminiscence, making a division between memory, although more spiritual than the preliminary faculties, as still in the sensitive part of the soul, and reminiscence which is in the intellectual part still retaining the traces of the corporeal forms. Combining the past, affection and the need for association and order into the concept behind the trajectory of desire to hold on to a material culture of corporeally embodied photographs. Given the invocation of images with thoughts and constructed narrative, this is close to the rhetoric associated with memory as an art. The notion of association and order is continually restated in Yates’ teasing out of the writings of Aquinas: ‘Therefore those things which a man wishes to retain in memory let him study to set them in order.’¹⁶⁹ The next statement that would support this is related to the finding out of images described as ‘being useful and necessary to memory’. Thomas Aquinas held the view that pure and spiritual intentions slip out of memory, unless they are, as it were, ‘linked to corporeal similitudes’. The re-configuring of intentions through the method of making with photographs – that leave ‘traces’ that have established narratives associated with them – offers to myself and artists’

¹⁶⁶ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), pp82–104.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.87.

¹⁶⁸ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.82: 10–12.

¹⁶⁹ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.87: 20–4.

practice the development of alternative methods of knowing and remembering.¹⁷⁰ New forms of association and order emerge which reflect the art of memory as an essential study for its experimental approaches to engaging with image memories.

Exploring now this link to association and order through ‘the art of memory’, which has been described as firmly rooted in the medieval ages and related to as a scholastic art. However, although rooted in this era, it was taken out as a practice, and absorbed into the main philosophical current of Renaissance neo-platonic thinking. The notion of memory as an art being transformed through the ages is discussed by Yates in greater depth than I need to record here, but critical to my exploration is the reference to ‘the archaeology of knowledge’ linking into this periodical transformation of the art of memory as a visually inflected practice. A particular piece of work that Yates notes is the *Hypnerotomachia Polyphili* written by a Dominican before 1500.¹⁷¹ Yates describes its peculiar characteristics as within the influence of the visual realm, ‘visual alphabets and memory images’, and the idea of the dream, ‘archaeology mingled with dream memory systems to form the strange fantasia’. A move into memory being linked to memory places (*loci* and memory palaces) stocked with images provides another concrete example of the desire to construct memories to provide ‘an archaeology of knowledge’, related to images selected and contained for a specific mnemonic purpose. I will continue to expand on this idea of continuity between the old view of association and order in the art of memory located in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the new explorations of this art and its continuity in relation to the photograph within (selected) artistic practices in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The old notions of order were seen to contain proportion, harmony and connection with the explication of a series offering a thought pattern of natural necessity.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, p.106: 22–8.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.123 – the author credited for the *Hypnerotomachia Polyphili* is noted here as the Dominican Francesco Colonna.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.160, writing on Aristotle and Simonides as key figures commenting on this notion of order and natural necessity.

1.5 The Art of Memory

The transformation of the art of memory is vested in Camillo's construction of a theatre (1500–44), which forms the starting point of my timeline in the sixteenth century, tracing artistic practices where the construction of the art of memory starts to contain descriptions of artificial memory (constructed memory) and texts start to relate to these constructs. Artists including painters at this point start to be cited as enabling through their vivid (constructed) compositions a fabulous historical reference to memories.¹⁷³ The significance of this is that secular painting became more common. National Gallery publications describe secular painting as developing its own traditions and conventions of iconography. Further to this is the descriptor for iconography as a term, 'a branch of art history which studies the identification and interpretation of the content of images. Translated from the Greek it means literally "image writing".¹⁷⁴ There are also links here to rhetoric again underscoring its position in relation to the art of memory. I have then to surmise from Yates' comprehensive investigations a direct link between critical discourse and memory images. The findings create close links to the writings of Foucault with regard to rhetoric. I also note the rise of the '*imprese*', and must consider whether this correlates to the corporeal similitudes, offering a route to memory practice through constructed memories. This connotes a clear history of the interaction between the visual arts and memory practice. Yates, writing on differential practices, draws this conclusion and differentiates the classical scholastic art of memory from the artificial memory of the rhetorical tradition. This clear distinction offers me the chance to investigate further this search for association and order including a search for method in my personal exploration of photographic images as a catalyst for the imagination, and how they inform present-day artistic practices. Artists now explore and search for methods which enable them to act as engineers of the imagination linking into the idea that 'to

¹⁷³ Painters referenced for fabulous historical memories are Titian (c. 1490–1576) and Rafael (1483–1520).

¹⁷⁴ E.H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Phaidon Press, 1972). Further information related to these paintings, which drew upon a vast number of sources from classical history and mythology, to historical events from the near past can be found at www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/research/iconography (accessed 15.10.15).

think is to speculate with images’, a quote attributed to Aristotle, which Yates underscores as the abstracting intellect working from the images of sense expression.¹⁷⁵ Mary Carruthers, in her paper ‘Mechanisms for the Transmission of Culture: The Role of “Place” in the Arts of Memory’, states:

From the standpoint of our own cognitive psychology, the most astonishing, even alien, aspect of the medieval analysis is how entirely the imagination is implicated in cognition and in memory. In modern psychology memory is cast entirely in the role of passive storage: as a container in which to retain ‘traces’ of events that have happened and content we have learned in the past, which may thus be directly recovered in the present. For more than a century, the fundamental philosophical questions about memory have involved representation: i.e., how accurate and how complete is the ‘trace’ which an event has left in the brain? In present-day psychology, imagination needs to be separated from memory, lest these signature traces, these photographs of past events, be compromised and lose their truth value.¹⁷⁶

Artists working in the twentieth century with signature traces, such as Hiroshi Sugimoto, describe the effect of images on their psyche much as Bruno discussed ‘the umbra’, or image, as ‘a shadow of the light of the divine mind which we seek through its shadows, vestiges and seals’.¹⁷⁷ In his essay ‘Noh Such Thing as Time’, Sugimoto writes:

The medium of photography is a moulding device comprising a paired positive and negative. One takes a direct mould from a living person’s face ... A mask does not age but the living face soon fades away like the portrait of Dorian Gray and finally dies, leaving only the mask (here read photograph) behind ... photographs preserve the husk of human souls now flown off to that boundless freedom such is death.¹⁷⁸

Sugimoto includes discussion of a faded image (trace) that haunted his notion of exploring memory and the image. The significance of a site (*loci*) prompted

¹⁷⁵ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp257–68.

¹⁷⁶ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, Second Edition (Cambridge University Press, 2008). See also, ‘Mechanisms for the transmission of culture: the role of “place” in the arts of memory’, in *Translation, the Transmission of Culture in the Middle Ages*, edited by Laura Hollengreen. Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp1–26.

¹⁷⁷ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.261: 19–22.

¹⁷⁸ Hiroshi Sugimoto, ‘Noh Such Thing as Time’, in Eckhart Schneider (ed.), *Architecture of Time* (Kunsthau Bregenz, 2001).

his essay and the faded image (image memory) was published to reference the prompt.

In direct response to this consideration of 'a moulding device', Perkins, writing on Bruno, objected to his stated conviction that it is in inner images, rather than in objects in our outer world, that we come nearer to reality.¹⁷⁹ The idea that Bruno had, to mould and paint within (himself), was intended to demonstrate the clear links to the muse of memory for artist, poet and philosopher. Equally the artist Sugimoto sees a moulding device in the medium of photography, as quoted earlier in the text, comprising a paired positive and negative, enabling image memories. He sees photographs as preserving 'the husk of human souls', allowing the viewer to enter into that act of memory conjured up by that living face and its sense impression. The concept he describes relates in particular for me to Roland Barthes and his description of his sense impressions on looking at the face of his mother in a family photograph.¹⁸⁰ It is the artist (Sugimoto) and the writer (Barthes) referencing these fugitive shadows in the personal art of memory, where images are given priority as catalysts.

The link here is to the personal art of memory, and the term 'memory artist' emanating from the Renaissance period, in 1583–86.¹⁸¹ This referred to the construction of visual forms to distinguish among particular memories and for them to be useful in making new knowledge. The visual was regarded as the primary instrument of cognition for most people. Mary Carruthers discusses this fact in relation to evidence of scholars from the Later Middle Ages, including Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham and Francesco Petrarca, whose reading and compositional habits make clear that the goal of making a library of one's memory was by no means dismissed in an age when written books were far more plentiful to those who were scholars.¹⁸² This relates directly to a key element explored by Yates about the systems that were written about at this time which consider and introduce us to Fludd and two different types of the art,

¹⁷⁹ William Perkins, *Antidicomus*, dedication to Thomas Moufet cited in Yates, pp272–8.

¹⁸⁰ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp67–70.

¹⁸¹ Carruthers, 'Mechanisms for the Transmission of Culture', p.5.

¹⁸² See Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images 400–1200* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

which were created by again a system using classification, but now introducing method. In the concluding chapter of *The Art of Memory* (1966), Yates discusses the mnemonic image and its power to exercise the imagination.¹⁸³ The memory tradition is historically outlined with its endgame being to create a language to enable memory through the conjuration of specific and particular images. Drawing the book to a close, Yates leaves open the exploration of the history of memory as it unfolds into the twentieth century, summing up with the following statement: 'The serious investigation of this forgotten art may be said to have just begun.' This opens up for me the chance to continue this investigation not into the history of memory practice alone but looking into the development of thinking, with regard to the importance of order for memory and the statement by Cicero on Simonides: 'that the sense of sight is the strongest of all the senses'.¹⁸⁴ This causal link between sight, association and order and memory practice will form my continued investigation into 'the archaeology of knowledge' invested in memory images – in this case, material analogue photographic prints within the construct of the family archive – and subsequently their role in forming our sense of personal and social identity.

1.6 Memory, Association and Order

One question that needs to be asked, however, is whether this causal link, which I have identified through the analysis of Yates' comprehensive research findings, is a constructive path to follow. During the years since its publication (1966), there have been writers such as Barthes who have written in great depth about the relationship between sight, the gaze and the realist view that takes 'the photograph for a copy of reality but one that is an emanation of past reality; a magic but not an art'.¹⁸⁵ Taking the view that the construction of visual forms is then an emanation of the past reality but then contains 'a magic' follows the memory practices of Fludd and the two different visual forms he separated

¹⁸³ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp342–67.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp368–89.

¹⁸⁵ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.88.

'Ars Rotunda' (round art) and 'Ars Quadrata' (square art).¹⁸⁶ The concept differentiates between what was key in each classification, so again we return to this notion of association and order, which I am continuing to investigate in relation to its contemporary material photographic form within a photo-archive. Fludd is creating a classification of images that are conceived in the imagination and are regarded by him as 'potent images', as against 'less potent images' held in square art more akin to the idea of everyday ordinary memory. To summarise here, I could be controversial in stating that 'the circle', cut out to represent a peephole, could correlate to 'round art' and ideas using talismanic images, effigies of the stars, and images of virtue and vice invested with magical power, according to Fludd. The practice can be found being explored in the work of Yoko Ono in the 1960s, working with cut-outs and peepholes within a discursive practice, instructing the viewer on becoming 'the maker of art' and relating her work to magic and viewing the sky.¹⁸⁷ Yoko Ono also created a piece in her series 'imaginary paintings', which connects to the construction of memory practice, that is:

PAINTING TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN YOUR HEAD: Imagine a flower made of hard material such as gold, silver, stainless steel, tin, marble, copper, etc. Imagine it so you count each of the thousand petals of the flower. Imagine that the petals suddenly become soft like cotton or living flesh. In three hours prick all the petals. Save one and press it in a book. In the margin of the page note the derivation of the petal and the name of the petal. At least eight hours should be spent in the construction of the painting.¹⁸⁸

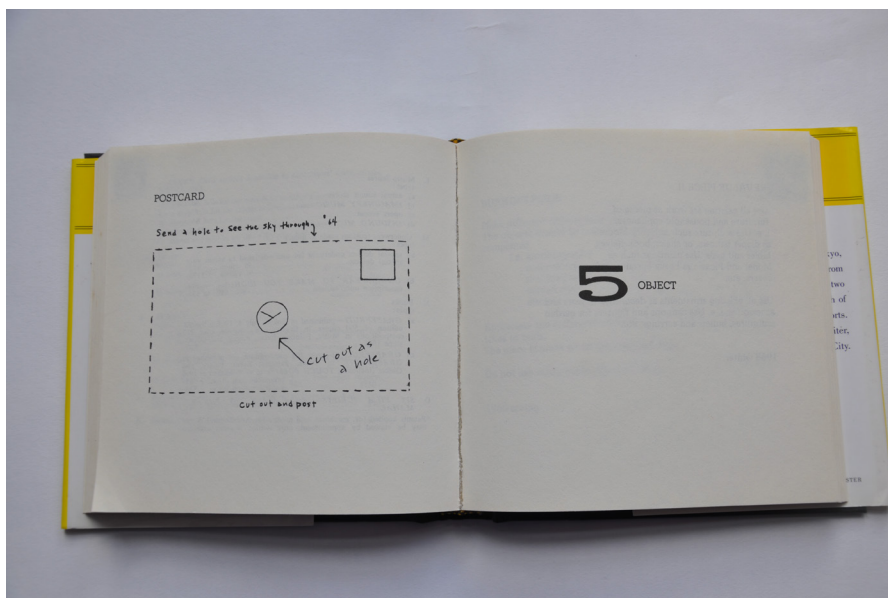
Fludd states that memory can only be artificially improved either by medical intervention or by the medium of fantasy driving the ideas in 'round art' as opposed to the images in 'square art' which he states are composed of corporeal things. Concentrating initially on fantasy driving 'round art' I am exploring further Yoko Ono's paintings, which are described as existing in two

¹⁸⁶ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp315: 24–31.

¹⁸⁷ Yoko Ono 'Cut along dotted line and look at the sky through the hole', *Art and Artists*, August 1966.

¹⁸⁸ Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions and Drawings*, Introduction by John Lennon, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

phases by Anthony Cox, who observes that first is the instruction phase, which may be compared to a musical composition: written, copied, distributed, and generally at large for anyone to perform and show, and second is the existence of the piece, which generally has some aspect which is in a state of flux.¹⁸⁹ The existence of these works, created by Ono but subject to change by non-artists, has been described as auto-destructive. Ono describes paintings as being like events, which eventually end. She sees them as an additional act in life, something in her words 'to solve the temptation of insanity'.¹⁹⁰ Her practice evidences this act of intervention in association and order set up by her as something that emerged from instruction and yet has emerged as 'an unfinished church with a sky ceiling'.¹⁹¹ Fludd separated round art from event and sought to make links to magic and the representation of the zodiac, linking into this engineering of the imagination, mapping into memory practice, as exemplified in the works of Yoko Ono, often set on a stage and invoking memory practice through association and order – in her words, 'instructional art'.



1.3 Yoko Ono, 'Cut along dotted line and look at the sky through the hole' (1966).

¹⁸⁹ Anthony Cox, 'Instructive Auto-Destruction', *Art and Artists* 1(5), August 1966.

¹⁹⁰ Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit*, n.p.n.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Exploring this second visual form, which Fludd set out as 'square art', this could be said to represent now a culture that utilises this format to form its image memories in photographs, paintings and moving images all viewed in this format. Fludd's square art contains images of corporeal things representing their activities as events. Again, this square art refers to a 'sense of place': location and memory practice as it relates to memory places. Fludd's system, which includes his psychology, is one that reflects on the Renaissance with its insistence on relating the magical elements within memory practice as belonging to occult practices rather than to the engineering of memory through the imagination. Psychologists studying memory state that the human brain will recall facts more precisely if they are received as a story. The concept of controlling memory by an individual can be interpreted through artistic practice by re-enactment, to underscore memory using narrative and dialogue.¹⁹² Fludd related his theories to this practice of re-enactment utilising the stage or the theatre as the *locus* for the unfolding recollections. In Fludd's theories it is the memory practice that holds the key to recollection. In Barthes' view, the important thing regarding the photograph as a *locus* for memory is to consider that the photograph possesses an evidential force and its testimony bears on time as the key factor.¹⁹³ Barthes goes on to say that, from a phenomenological viewpoint, the power of authenticity in a photograph exceeds the power of representation. This is the realist's point of view and it enables us to enter into the process of producing a living representation, the act of the photographer (the operator) in photography.¹⁹⁴ This act enables us to recall details all over again in relation to this constructed photographic process. This can then enrich and question individual memories. Family photographs and their testimonies, revealed through the act of reading, enable the observer to return to their past in the present, revisiting time through reflective contemplation of the photograph's surface image and visual content bounded by the frame.

¹⁹² The concept of re-enactment within artistic practice is present in the work of Jeremy Deller, *Battle of Orgreave* (2001).

¹⁹³ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp88–9.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp9–10.

Thus, in creating photographic sequences (series), artists control the deliberation of the association and order of their images for their viewer and, in this, their relation to time.¹⁹⁵ Series can explore issues at the heart of the nature of identity through the construction of a narrative running through time. The artist and photographer Gabriel Orozco, on documenting the artistic process, discusses and explores notions of the artist's trajectory when considering visual forms.¹⁹⁶ Barthes' thinking is important here, as his writings touch on this aspect of the fact that earlier societies managed memory as eternal, his critique being that 'History is a memory fabricated according to positive formulas ... which abolishes mythic Time; and the Photograph is a certain but fugitive testimony.'¹⁹⁷ Barthes views the image as a moment in time without duration, a sense of 'that-has-been' being vividly legible in historical photography. The field of photography to which he alludes is that of the everyday photographer who, he avers, stands closer than does the professional 'to the noeme of photography.'¹⁹⁸ The photograph, Barthes suggests, 'cannot say what it lets us see', but he posits a keystone to identity found in photographic images which is the idea of lineage. This, in my view, keys into the way that a photograph can inform our personal and social identity, becoming, in the words of Barthes, 'a new form of hallucination true to time, and a record of its time'.¹⁹⁹ What Barthes concludes is that to confront the photograph is to realise intractable reality. A large and growing body of literature has investigated this concept of the relation between the photograph and reality, and this informs my exploration of reality in

¹⁹⁵ Modrak, *Reframing Photography*, pp320–8.

See also Minor White, photographer, 'In photography Alfred Stieglitz was perhaps the first to make an overt issue of the fact that a photograph could have several meanings (or that the meaning of a photograph could have several faces) when he called his late photographs of clouds and other common subjects "equivalents," suggesting that they held optional, equal, alternative meanings. The photographer of the past generation who has most tellingly pursued this aspect of Stieglitz's thought is Minor White', in J. Szarkowski, *Looking at Photographs* (Bullfinch Press, 1999), first published 1 January 1973.

¹⁹⁶ Gabriel Orozco, 'Documenting Artistic Process', *Terra Cognita*, Centre Pompidou, September 2010 – January 2011.

¹⁹⁷ Barthes, p.93: 23–7.

¹⁹⁸ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, where Barthes utilises the term *noeme* to define 'the essence' of photography. 'Photography's *noeme* has nothing to do with analogy (a feature it shares with all kinds of representations), p.88.

¹⁹⁹ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.115.

relation to identity, while leaving open my enquiry into reality and its relation to memory.

1.7 Memory, Encounter and Event

I would like to start this section with a quote from Amartya Sen, which I think sets out to raise some of the questions I am considering, in relation to identity, reality and memory, in developing a new critical perspective on re-reading found family photographs. In his book *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (2006), Sen sets out his argument intuitively around the premise that ‘in our normal lives we see ourselves as members of a variety of groups’. I would include the family as one of these groups, but in the view of one of his critics, Kenji Yoshino, Sen does not go on to explain why, at critical junctures, we disown this knowledge.²⁰⁰ Yoshino then sets out the following series of questions in relation to this argued weakness in Sen’s thesis. ‘Is it because human cognition tends to trade in binaries? Is it because violence creates identity as much as identity creates violence? Is it because human beings fear the choices or solitude a more cosmopolitan outlook would force them to face?’²⁰¹

Taking the question posed by Yoshino: ‘Is it because violence creates identity as much as identity creates violence?’, I would like to refer to the work of Gerhard Richter, which uses photography in a personal way to explore the concept of belonging to groups, both family and collectives, provoking questions about the place of photographs as image memories and sense impressions. Two series stand out here: *Overpaintings Series* (1989–2000) in relation to family personal and social identity, and *October 18* (1977) in relation to collective social identity. Richter extends the view that we have different ways of identifying ourselves even in our given locations which relates to Sen’s statement that ‘We have to address the issue of conflict, real or imagined, and

²⁰⁰ See Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (Norton, 2006).

²⁰¹ Kenji Yoshino, ‘Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny, by Amartya Sen, Review by Kenji Yoshino’, *NY Times*, 13 May 2006 (accessed 10 May 2010).

ask about the implications of our loyalty to divergent priorities and differentiated affinities.²⁰²

It is his method of overpainting, of analogue erasure, that is my concern here to come to terms with the 'how' and the 'why' in the making of things. Does an artist like Richter set out with a clear idea of the relationship of photography and painting to identities or through an act of analogue erasure (which could be seen in the genre of a small violence to the image) is he erasing intimate and collective memories here rendering images in his works to a new nature of differentiated appearance. One that is slightly defined, a trace of the event or family moments in snapshot photographs, a glimpse of an identity, distancing image memories. Are we dealing here with 'the encounter between the artist and object as a kind of rendezvous', in the words of Marcel Duchamp?²⁰³



1.4 Gerhard Richter, *Overpaintings Series: Family* (1989–2000)

²⁰² Amaryta Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, p.7: 21–4.

²⁰³ See Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, translated by R. Padgett (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987).

If we are dealing with the nature of a 'rendezvous', then, writing in *Artforum* (2000), David Joselit discusses the encounter with objects of another artist, Gabriel Orozco, as being either the provocation or residue of an event.²⁰⁴ Relating back to this idea of the intuitive and relating this to the artist's encounters, Orozco speaks of our acceptance of 'the real' and its accidents when not expecting anything, not being spectators but realisers of accidents in which reality, when nothing is expected of it, gives us gifts. For Orozco, his practice is concerned not so much with the making of things as with an enquiry into how we might know them, what exactly they are, what kind of autonomy they may have in the world. Joanna Lowry, writing on Orozco's practice in *Photoworks*, echoes this notion of the encounter, this rendezvous:

And his practice suggests that our only knowledge of them must be based on encounters, by the brushing together of two presences, two bodies, and perhaps that process of brushing together can happen through photography. This type of practice where photography plays a key role as one of a series of strategies for 'containing things' could be seen as a rather different way of thinking about its role.²⁰⁵

Orozco's practice has been described as 'straddling the boundary between art and everyday life' (see image 1.5).²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ David Joselit, *Artforum* (2000), cites Marcel Duchamp's quote in his article on 'Gabriel Orozco', 'the encounter between the artist and object as a kind of rendezvous'.

²⁰⁵ Joanna Lowry, 'Portfolio Essay, Gabriel Orozco', *Photoworks* 14, (May 2010), pp42–3.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*



1.5 Gabriel Orozco, *My Office* (1992)

Back to this question then of personal identity and the encounter, which in the work of Richter has echoes of violence in his preoccupation with the politics of the modern world. It is encountered as a trace in the work, but surely exploring this concept of identity and violence even as a trace or encounter, within the media, mediated through photography. Trace and violence are prompted in our memories on encountering this series of paintings, from these iconic images, referencing extension and control. Orozco, in a similar vein, brings this to the readymade through such a consciousness of speed and circulation. This is referenced in the writing of Paul Virilio, reflecting that, in modernity, politics and collectivism must be understood as extension and control.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Paul Virilio, *The Accident of Art*, translated by Mike Taomina (MIT, Semiotext (e): 2005). 'In *The Accident of Art*', his third extended conversation with Sylvère Lotringer, 'Virilio addresses

The sense of needing to acknowledge control is where Vilem Flusser takes up the argument in his book *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (2000), where, in the chapter 'The Gesture of Photography', he discusses photographers having to navigate 'through a jungle of cultural objects'.²⁰⁸ This act of personal navigation enables us, in his view, to read off photographs themselves 'the acts of resistance on the part of culture, the cultural conditionality of things'.²⁰⁹ Flusser then directs our attention to a discussion around the distribution of photographs and the human preoccupation with the disintegration of information. Flusser states that we struggle against this natural entropy not only by actively receiving information, but in the nature of our passing it on to our fellow human beings. The thesis he presents is that there are two key phases: The process of manipulating information – called 'communication' – is divided into two phases: in the first, information is created; in the second, it is distributed to memories in order to be stored there.²¹⁰ Transmission of photographs, he states, belongs to the sender (here read photographer) who transmits the information into space and therefore towards massification. The concept of the translation of memory, or inner dialogue into discourse, enabling the information produced in dialogue to be distributed, is related to the notion of recording and disseminating the encounter, the rendezvous with culture, memory and its translation. At this juncture, the relationship between the monstrous and memory comes back into play, where the rendezvous can be at its most memorable, if we are confronted by images of violence that confound our sense of identity as human beings with a sense of culture and integrity. The idea that there is a field of representational intolerance is complex and relates back to

the situation of art within technological society for the first time', MIT Press. *In Politics of the Very Worst*, An Interview with Philippe Petit, edited by Sylvère Lotringer, translated by Michael Cavaliere (MIT Press, 1999). 'Trajectories once had three dimensions: past, present, and future. But now, the hyper-concentration of time into "real time" reduces all trajectories to nothing. Consequently, an accident of time is bound to affect our entire being as well as the entire planet.'

²⁰⁸ Vilem Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (Reaktion Books, 2000) Chapter 4, pp33–40.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p.33: 8–9.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p.49: 23–6.

this notion of the unseen, the unreported and the forgotten, which when revealed cause us to look away or bear witness.²¹¹

Richter offers us the chance to re-encounter the 'Red Army Faction', also known as the Baader-Meinhof Group, as depicted in the media. In his series *October 18, 1977*, Richter socially re-images the trauma of the portrayal of these terrorists through the affect of our encounter, translated from the media into a gallery context. The works are relocated out of the digital sphere and the reporting of the everyday grammar of political discourse. The exhibition was reported at the time of its first showing to have opened up memories that many wanted to forget and inevitably provoked debate about this period of time in Germany. The works were created from a collection of media images that Richter made in the late 1980s and first exhibited in 1989. Richter is here stating that there is something important in violent spectacle, he is consciously asking us as viewers to see in these works things that demand observation and our contemplation. Sen argues in his book for 'a conceptual framework within which these confrontations are seen and understood, and how the demands of public action are interpreted' – specifically, I would argue here, in relation to Richter's work re-configuring photographs that bear the memory of individual identities inflected by violence.²¹²

Our sense impressions may be subject here to a new language, a translation of violent spectacle into a memorial that bears witness to this through our reading of its surface blurred, disrupted and described in material monochrome. Vilém Flusser discusses the idea that if we could see the world in black and white it would be accessible to logical analysis.²¹³ That if this were the case the mixture of viewing would always be grey, which he discusses as the colour of theory. Flusser sees black and white photographs as illustrating this fact; he sees them as being grey, and therefore representing theoretical images.

Returning to Richter, each of this series of paintings representing the Red Army Faction is grey, some softer than others in depiction others harsher some less

²¹¹ John Roberts, 'Photography and its Violations', *CADRE Lecture Series* (University of Wolverhampton, 2011).

²¹² Amaryta Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, p.76: 6–8.

²¹³ Flusser, *Philosophy of Photography*, pp41–8.

than sharp and disrupted through blur. Richter may well be enacting Flusser's thesis that theoretical images representing our views of the world are inherently grey. Flusser feels that black and white photographs embody the magic of theoretical thought, since they transform the linear discourse of theory into surfaces and clearly reveal the actual significance of the photograph – that is, through the world of concepts. Re-encountering Richter's translations from the original black and white press images into a series of greys may establish this idea of the encounter with theoretical discourse, in this case his own, coming into being through each painting being grey. The series could be said to be an intervention and interpretation into public memory. Appropriation of these encoded images holding the photographers' concepts has offered Richter a set of photographic images that have acted as models for real violent identities immortalising the group in the memory of others, and enabling him as an artist to change their reading and critical distance.

The reference to encounter in the work of an artist is clearly underscored by Orozco, who writes of 'This type of practice where photography plays a key role as one of a series of strategies for "containing things" and how we might then know them.'²¹⁴ The question then to revisit in relation to this idea of the encounter and sites of memory is this one: 'Is it because violence creates identity as much as identity creates violence?' This relates to Sen and his concept that we see ourselves as members of differentiated groups. It also connects to Yoshini's point that we feel we can disown them if we are unhappy with our representational status, and are personally at a critical point in wrestling with our own perception of our identity. It has been argued that Richter wanted to challenge the presumption that painting was incapable of addressing traumatic history (unlike the photograph) and decrying the conventions of the concept of linear interpretation of events through history painting. We come then as viewers to this brushing together of things, no sequence and a series of fragments where you could argue violence has been visited on the appropriated images through their disrupted or defaced surfaces. This artist has offered us a visual essay which for me underpins the relationship I have been investigating

²¹⁴ Lowry, 'Portfolio Essay', pp42–3.

between identity and reality and memory nuanced through his encounter with these photographs.

To explore this relationship between memory and event specifically nuanced through encounter I turn now to Jonathan Meades and his series on *France* (another visual essay) aired on BBC 4 this year (2014).²¹⁵ Critic John Crace, discussing the series, stated that his film was the ideal format to relay that ideas of identity are often incoherent, transitory and contradictory.²¹⁶ He describes the film as using surreal quasi-subliminal images played through projection onto specific locations that were rendered significant by events in France. One such event was the Algerian War of 1954–62, and the threat of violence caused through this appealed to Jonathan Meades at a young age. His desire became to explore identity related to violence and event, contributing to memory and identity, including acts of remembrance. His first film opened and closed with 'the valise', a shot of a suitcase as an icon of remembrance, container of memories and symbol of transition. The practice of using a collage of film footage and still photographs allowed Meades to set out a narrative enquiry. This relates to Brookmeier's writing about autobiographical time, so that 'every narrative about the past is always also a story told in and about the future'.²¹⁷ Perhaps Meades was also, through this mode of filmic reflection, working within the philosophy of Kierkegaard who stated 'that life must be understood backwards. But it must be lived forwards ... it becomes more evident that life can never really be understood in time.'²¹⁸

The sort of memory that Meades is describing is known as autobiographical memory because it is about the narrative we make from happenings of our own lives. These memories are, so to speak, stitched together from information stored within our brain. A question to be considered at this stage is: are these

²¹⁵ 'Jonathan Meades on France', BBC4 (2012).

²¹⁶ John Crace, 'Last Night's TV', *Guardian G2*, 19 January 2002.

²¹⁷ J. Brookmeier, 'Autobiographical Time', *Narrative Enquiry* (2000), pp51–73. Discussing various case studies, 'I shall distinguish six different narrative models of autobiographical time: the linear, circular, cyclical, spiral, static, and fragmentary model. To study how people make use of these models in their autobiographical narratives is to investigate how we become immersed into the fabric of culture and, at the same time, express our unique individuality.'

²¹⁸ See Søren Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, edited by Edna Hartesland Hong and Howard Vincent Hong (Princeton University Press, 1996).

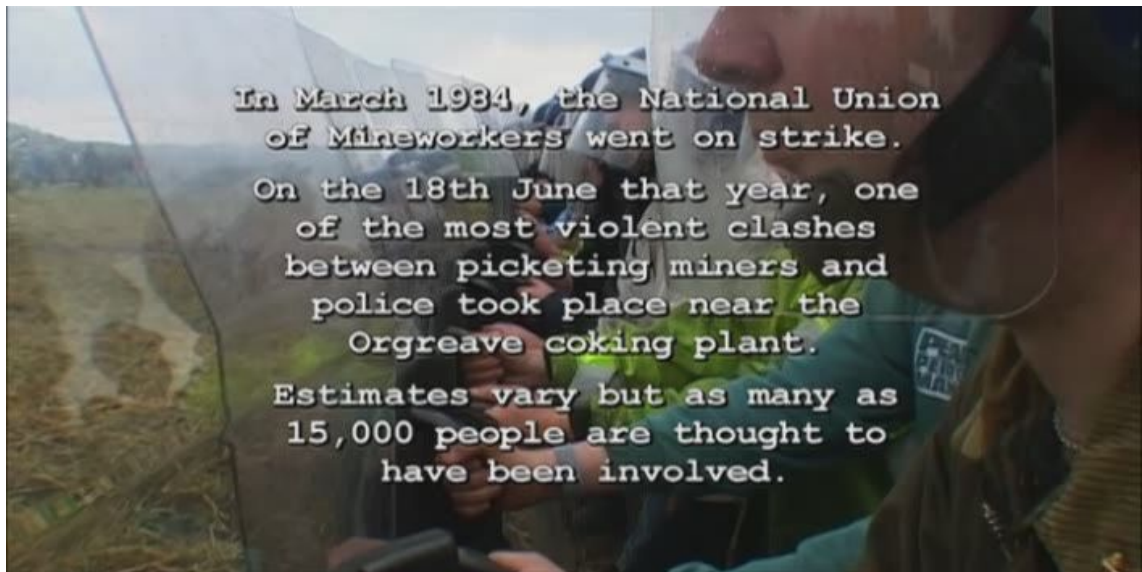
memories reliable? Witness testimonies are often questioned on the premise that witnesses when interrogated over a period of time can be subject to change. Re-construction and re-enactment can seem chillingly real but can be constructed and staged in such a way that key details emerge as different and contradictory.²¹⁹ In the case of *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001), conceived by artist Jeremy Deller, the event was described as ending with genuinely emotional handshakes between the key protagonists in the original event, 'police' and 'miners' (see image 1.7). The re-enactment was reported as having had a major positive effect on the local community and, critically for my research, within individual families. Over 260 local people took part, which may have contributed to the effect (see image 1.6 for a still detailing the involvement of the community). To the pleasure of all, it was reported that a belated healing process had begun for many Orgreave veterans, who until the re-creation had found the memory of June 1984 just too painful to discuss. The impact of memory returns me to the encounter and the role of the artist in working with 'memory practice', recalling, restaging and reshaping, significantly re-configuring collective and individual memories. As Jonathan Meades states in the third of his series on France, 'the past, the past, the past' is something we cannot escape in relation to identity and its construct within our culture, and at times through national identity and events that affect our past.²²⁰ Returning now to the issue of memories and discourse in relation to their reliability. If key details in the memory of events do emerge as contradictory what accounts for this unreliability. This idea of reliability in relation to memory is covered in an example in the writings of Virginia Woolf in a piece entitled *A Sketch of The Past* (1976).²²¹ Woolf comments that her memory of the facts are not true to the facts themselves, but that her desire for coherence and a good story may have changed the facts to suit the fictional narrative she is constructing. This description by Woolf leads me now into consideration of a second question in relation to the reliability of personal recall and a contradictory picture emerging,

²¹⁹ Jeremy Deller, 'Battle of Orgreave: Recreating the climactic clash of the 1984 miners' strike', (Artangel, 2001). See also Jeremy Deller, *English Civil War Part II* (Artangel, 2001).

²²⁰ 'Jonathan Meades on France', BBC4 (2012).

²²¹ Virginia Woolf, *A Sketch of the Past*, edited by Jeanne Schulkind (Hogarth Press, 1976).

to bolster in Woolf's case her fiction, and in our own cases perhaps to suit the self.



1.6 Jeremy Deller, *The Battle of Orgreave* (1) (2001)



1.7 Jeremy Deller, *The Battle of Orgreave* (2) (2001)

The question under consideration is, if this is the case, how many more of our memories are a narrative to suit the self? Is it true to say that, when we are able to encode our feelings into a narrative, it becomes much easier to construct memory? Charles Fernyhough, a psychologist, states that in discussion with individuals about their earliest memories they often say 'I'm sure that several of my childhood memories are actually memories of seeing myself in photos.'²²² Fernyhough suggests that when we look back into the past we are always doing so through a prism of intervening selves. He also states that in his role as a psychologist studying memory he needs to always look for confirming evidence when asking people to recall their pasts. Citing Daniel Schacter, Fernyhough writes that he sees memory as something to be cherished as endlessly creative, and that at one level it functions just as imagination does.²²³ In Fernyhough's view, Schacter feels we should value memory as a means for endlessly rewriting the self. In doing this, he writes that to emphasise its narrative is not a challenge to memory's value, but is simply to recognise this everyday psychological miracle. Referencing Schacter directly from his publication, he outlines in his book how he views memory's errors as fascinating and important. He divides them into seven fundamental transgressions, or in his words 'sins', akin to the ancient and well-known seven deadly sins. His categorisation comprises: 1. transience; 2. absent-mindedness; 3. blocking; 4. misattribution; 5. suggestibility; 6. bias; 7. persistence. He believes the seven memory sins occur frequently in everyday life and can have serious consequences for us all. However, Schacter acknowledges that his categorisation does throw light on how memory draws on the past to inform the present and, in his words, preserves elements of a bridge across time that allows us to link the mind with the world.

²²² See Charles Fernyhough, *Autobiographical Memory, Pieces of Light: How we Imagine the Past and Remember the Future* (Profile Books, 2012).

See Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction*, p.82.

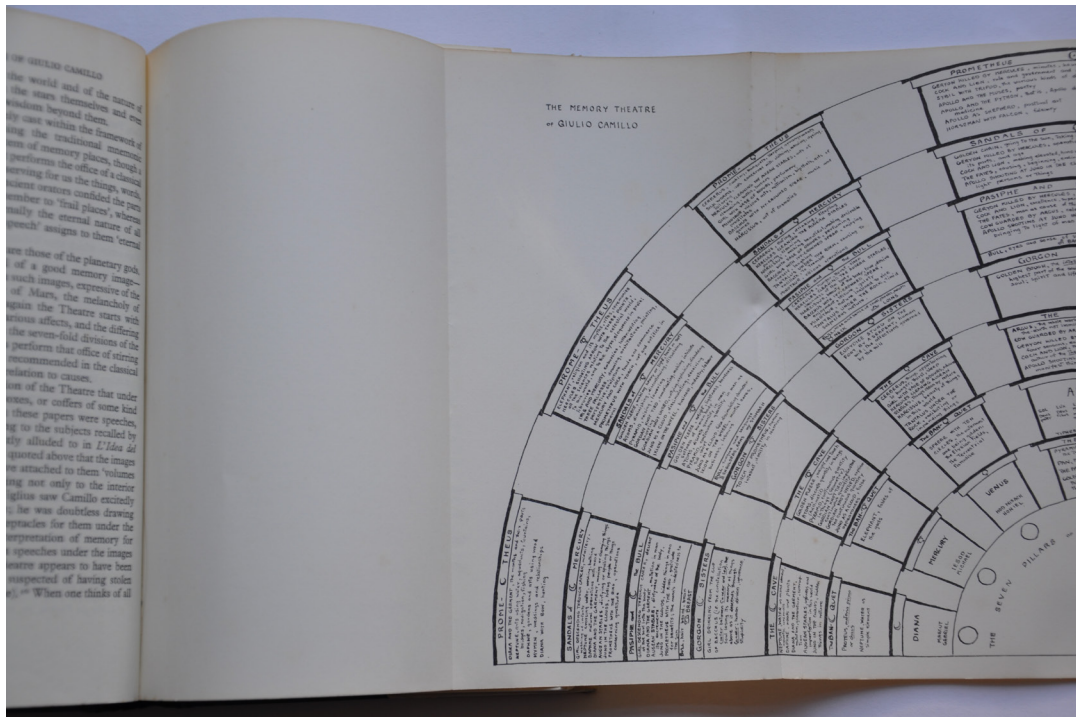
²²³ See Daniel Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory: PhD's, How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (Houghton-Mifflin, 2001).

1.8 Memory Episodes

I am now clear that in the writings of psychologists they do discuss in their findings, give a clear indication of how memory informs the present through drawing on the past. In their research field, it is clear that this finding requires verification through confirming evidence, offering clear lines of reliability within testimony. Contemporary research recently undertaken by the University of Notre Dame and by other academics such as Michael Shanks, regarding archive and memory in virtual worlds, does not link back to the writings of Yates and her investigation of 'memory palaces'.²²⁴ However, it does recreate virtually this notion of going from room to room referencing architecture, illustrating the connections of memory to suggestibility, Schacter's fifth memory sin, and the need for association and order as in the construction of 'memory palaces' in Yates' descriptions.²²⁵ For the project at the University of Notre Dame, the underlying thesis was to question memory in relation to time and place through a constructed virtual map. The idea of compartmentalisation is cited in many research projects investigating memory, with the findings in this recent survey correlating the act of passing through a doorway (virtual portal) as a key to creating a new chapter in our unfolding memories. The key difference here is that the virtual reconstruction is obviously visible to the individual engaged in this memory practice, unlike the practice that Yates describes, which is purely a mental construct akin to creating a photographic memory. However, if we also take ourselves back to Yates' writings on Camillo and his theatre constructions, we underscore this notion of memory linked to time and place, real or imagined, (see image 1.8 for an exemplum of The Memory Theatre in the sixteenth century, diagrammatic construct).

²²⁴ Gabriel Radvansky, University of Notre Dame study published in 2012 looking into 'Memory Episodes', cited in 'Older, Wiser ... and Sharper, Part one: The Science Behind Remembering/How to maximise your memory function', *The Guardian* (19 January 2012).

²²⁵ Michael Shanks, 'Archive and Memory in Virtual Worlds: ichnography and archaeology, in the design of memory and archive', Stanford University Media X Conference (2008).



1.8 Giulio Camillo, *The Memory Theatre* (sixteenth century), artefact.

Thus, research into memory also suggests that humans have long been drawn to the power of ‘transactive memory’. This is considered as memory stored outside the self. Personal archives, not residing in the brain, or mental constructs such as memory palaces, but within shoeboxes, albums, diaries, letters and related ephemera. Memories here are making connections within a complex network of neural memories recalled by external personal archives containing narrative and visual prompts. Showing these material memories and sharing them has always been a social activity within families, with external relatives, when delving into family histories and ancestral links, acting as confirming evidence of testimony, relating back to the words of the psychologist Ferneyhough. This activity could be described as the quest for identity through source memories. At this juncture, it is clear that memories are essentially shaped by the self but clearly subject to change through an individual’s changing beliefs. According to psychologists, confirmed by Schacter and

Ferneyhough, memory is 'a creative process'.²²⁶ Each recalled memory is a new recall of the past event. This then is confirmed to be an act highly prone to suggestion for each individual and their engagement with memory.

The individual keeps their presence intelligible – accessible, as much as the past, of his or her object under memory recall. Events are constructed by ourselves as they occur, remembering involves a clear process of the self as present in re-construction of the event or information. Drawing on Agamben's deliberations on signature, for him it is 'always a paradigmatology, and the capacity to recognise and articulate paradigms then defines the rank of inquirer no less than does his or her ability to examine the documents of an archive'.²²⁷

Agamben goes on to say that, in his view, archaeology moves backwards through the course of history, just as the imagination moves back through individual biography. In Agamben's writing on philosophical archaeology, he discusses the practice of historical enquiry and says that sooner or later it must engage with constitutive heterogeneity inherent in the author's work. He develops this statement by giving two options for critique, either the critique of tradition or the critique of sources both of which he sees as demanding special care. Criticism, in practice, concerns not just the ancient character of the past, but above all the mode in which the past has been constructed into a tradition. Provisionally, he calls archaeology 'that practice which in any historical investigation has to do not with origins but with the moment of a phenomenon's arising and must therefore engage anew the sources and traditions'.²²⁸

Unpacking this statement, he draws together a conclusion with regard to historical process in relation to traditions and sources saying that the invisible goal is the present. When a future reached in the past and a past reached in the future for an instant coincide, for him, this is a realisation of an encounter in the present. The idea is for us, the revelation of the present, as something we are not able to live or think but experience only through our link to the past.

²²⁶ See Charles Ferneyhough, *Autobiographical Memory, Pieces of Light: How we Imagine the Past and Remember the Future* (Profile Books: 2012), and Daniel Schachter, *The Seven Sins of Memory: PhD's, How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (Houghton-Mifflin, 2001).

²²⁷ Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, pp81–111.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.89: 21–4.

Agamben believes that reflection on method follows practical application, including a present reflection on method, which should entail an archaeological vigilance. It is to the philosophy of how to interpret a thought that he turns to and he believes it should never include any concealment of 'the unsaid' but constantly interrogate and elaborate it which may eventually lead to a claim for originality.²²⁹

'Collecting your thoughts' is an age-old phrase which may operate as a link here to the act of, in the words of Agamben, collecting. Reclaiming past objects relates to the signature of the past and the collector or artist assembling the past as a reference to the present. A consideration here is that of collections reference to the 'memory palaces' in medieval times, when the body referenced an embodied collection, internalised and externalised through rhetoric, derived from the images collected, stored and ordered in memory. There then could be a correlation to the fetish character of the collected objects and their importance, which is determined by the character of the collector. Walter Benjamin discusses the value of genuineness, which is decisive for the collector.²³⁰ Heidegger's writing is discussed within this introduction to Benjamin's writings and I believe his view offers some further substantiation for the links I am drawing together with regard to the collection of information and the association and order brought to it by individual collectors.²³¹ There is also a relationship to concerns for the realm of the imagination in exploring personal insights, through the 'memory palace', the home, the location of images and languages, the idea and the experience. Heidegger asserts that each truth has its home, its ancestral palace, this palace being built from the oldest *logoi*.²³²

Objects are studied and loved 'as the scene, the stage of their fate'.²³³ It is illuminating to apply this description by Benjamin to Camillo's construction of a theatre as a site for the transformation of the act of memory (1500–44), as discussed by Yates, and which was seen as a landmark in its time. There is a

²²⁹ Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, pp87–9.

²³⁰ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.51.

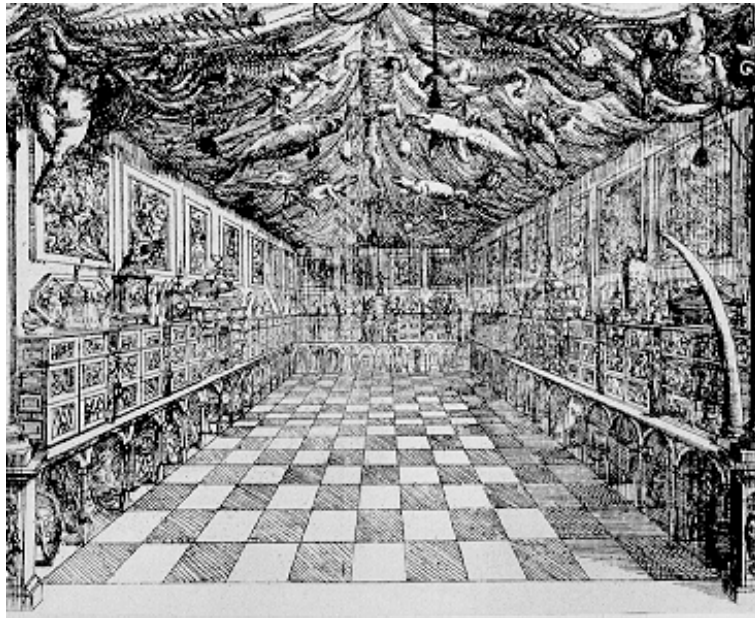
²³¹ *Ibid.*, pp50–1.

²³² *Ibid.*, p.51: 4–5.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p.62: 19–20.

discussion with regard to enchantment, the evocation of a magic circle, and the collectors encounter with his objects. There is the discussion of the renewal of an old world and the connection to an individual's desire to interpret the fate of their collected objects. There is the method of reflecting on the site, of carrying out fieldwork, to reveal and uncover objects from the past. It is one which Benjamin eloquently discusses in what he calls image memories in 'Unpacking my Library', which he then relates to cities, denoting them as sites of his finds. He also talks about memories of rooms and creates for the reader the idea of erecting a dwelling for the collector, which he sees as creating a true intimacy for the collector's relationship with his or her objects of desire. The stage is set, the scene transcribed, the image memories set, the known catalogued, the unknown sought still (see images 1.9 and 1.10 for an exemplar of these alchemical diagrams of the memory arts). Association and order, or classification of finds, is then a mode of translation for the viewer. The 'image memories' can be acutely felt by the collector but critically here reinterpreted, reviewed by the spectator. The image itself viewed through the art of memory can be a questioning act. The image becomes a series of systems, a structure of discourses and codes endorsing either a moment or event within culture and society.²³⁴ I am concerned in this thesis with the realisation of the critical relationship that the image has by being inter-discursive and how it relies on the viewer or spectator to become fully realised.

²³⁴ Benjamin, 'Spectator, culture, image', p.101.



1.9. Alchemical Diagrams, Occult Diagrams, and Memory Arts (sixteenth century), artefact.



1.10. The Memory Theatre (sixteenth century), artefact.

1.9 Spectator and Viewer

Investing power in the image the spectator meets the visual image with a prior corpus of knowledge, an archive of varying images ready to be drawn upon producing a typology of knowledge based on the visual image they encounter. Walter Benjamin describes this encounter for the spectator or beholder of the photograph as consisting of:

an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the Here and Now, with which reality has so to speak seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long forgotten moment the future subsists so eloquently that we looking back may rediscover it.²³⁵

The 'spark of contingency' is then said by Benjamin to secure the image, as of the past emanating from a specific time and place, fixing the reality of its depiction as a photograph of a past event. Barthes discusses the speculation that it is not the quality of the photograph itself but the product of the spectator's engagement with the image portrayed.²³⁶ The alert which the spectator experiences, noted by both Benjamin and Barthes, enables a connection to be forged with the experiences of a particular era and its history and aspirations (Barthes refers to this innate contextualisation as the 'studium').²³⁷ The encounter here is with a detail or fragment within the image, which can disturb the spectator and enable a personal discovery, which is emotive and is 'the spark of contingency' or, in Barthes' terms, 'the punctum', discovered wholly by the spectator and not the focus of the photographer or camera operator.²³⁸ An example of this effect for the spectator as a result of a personal encounter with images is underlined in the book *Photographic Memory: The Album in the Age of Photography* (2011) by Verna Posever Curtis.²³⁹ Curtis states that whatever the noise and violence around the photographic image, photographs return

²³⁵ 'Pictures of the Past: Benjamin and Barthes on photography and history', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 5(i), 2002, pp5–25.

²³⁶ See 'Pictures of the Past: Benjamin and Barthes on photography and history'.

²³⁷ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp26–7.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.47: 1–12.

²³⁹ See Verna Posever Curtis, *Photographic Memory: The Album in the Age of Photography* (Aperture, 2011).

objects (read here also subjects) to a state of stillness and silence. Curtis states that the photographic image supported in her reading of Baudrillard is 'discontinuous, selective, unpredictable and irresponsible'.

If this is a closely held view, a reality, I would like to draw on the writings of Baudrillard and his analysis in regard to the photograph as an illusion, but one that is balanced by his statement that 'Illusion is not the opposite of reality', but that photography demonstrates the capacity to excise objects from the world.²⁴⁰ Baudrillard also cites its phenomenological reduction of movement and, at times, of colour, which he concludes renders the photograph the purest and most artificial image. In his analysis of the magic of photography he concludes that it is the material object, the image, which does all the work and does not share the view that the photographer or operator holds the key to the image and its subjectivity.²⁴¹

The context of the operator and their role as producer invests the photographic image with a reading then by the spectator of its picture plane or surface, which offers up memory contained in a physical space, but capable of triggering links to mental space. A consideration of the pure and artificial could be becoming emphasised, as everything, including the photographic image, being presented as if it were of the same ontological order. Both are real (pure) and imaginary (artificial simulacra), realistically imaginary or imaginatively real, with the result that there is a skewing of the referential function of the images of events. At this juncture, I am attempting to understand how the visions of the past which I encounter in photographs are moulded by the medium itself. The identification with others in the past through the photographic medium may then be the basis for rethinking or reaffirming our own identity in the present. The specific enquiry I am exploring is that representations of the past have always involved both an intimate interconnection, and a certain tension, between interpretation and identification. A personal connection that can be forged through the projection of imagination into the landscapes, events and image memories of past eras, thus forming a set of personal thematic interpretations within the past and present.

²⁴⁰ Jean Baudrillard, *Photographies*, <http://biglibrary.co/download/jean-baudrillard-photographies-1985-1998.pdf> (accessed 26.6.17).

²⁴¹ Ibid.

Suzuki investigates this sense of the past within us in her chapter on 'History as Identification and History as Interpretation' from her publication *The Past Within Us* (2005).²⁴² Her focus in this section of the book is on the processes by which people in the present try to make sense of the past. Suzuki bases her exploration on 'historical truthfulness' and how it should involve an effort to understand and trace as far as it would be possible the series of mediations through which narratives and images of the past reach us, and our specific responses to these. Suzuki further underlines this point by exploring the museological model of remembrance, which often references encounters with the past through texts and the written word. This, she believes, is different from encountering the past in the artefacts, photographs and ephemera in a museum context. The book has been criticised for Suzuki's attempt to portray history as mediated by everyday experience, which is often described as a narrative at the margins which influences but does not make history.²⁴³ I am interested in her writing as it covers events and the explication of personal interpretation and is describing and interrogating these themes across cultures.

1.10 Concepts of Media, Memory and History

Suzuki reflects on this reference to the historical pasts I am exploring also in *The Past Within Us* (2005), where Suzuki clearly engages us in exploring these particular concepts of media, memory and history, and their relations. These are precisely the concepts and relationships I would like to now further explore in the writings of the archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes as she portrays this empathy with affect, memory, narrative and history. In *A Land* (1951), Hawkes writes that where she has written a chapter on method she feels it has 'ended as a narrative for the subject of study and the study have shown themselves to

²⁴² Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *The Past Within Us: Media, Memory and History* (Verso, 2005).

²⁴³ Elena Tajima Creef, 'Imaging Japanese America During World War II', in Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Sage, 2008), pp145–53. 'Creef uses archival images and historical documents to construct a story. From photographs, drawings and historical documents, she constructs a counternarrative to the established one about the internment of Japanese Americans.'

be one'.²⁴⁴ Her book was criticised at the time as altogether unscientific, but after a review in the *Observer* by Harold Nicolson in 1951, in which he described it as containing 'a weird beauty ... being prophetic and written with a passion of love and hate', the book became widely read and admired for its imaginative range, recondite knowledge, passion of exploration and visionary sense of integration.²⁴⁵ It is the narrative in this book which I wish to cite, as one reflecting on the source of memory. Hawkes writes that, in recalling her childhood, it is 'her desire to steal that emotion which uses our own early memories for a realisation of the most distant past'.²⁴⁶ She goes on to say that, for her, recalling the experiences of her remote, unknown childhood meant finding herself being led back far beyond the bounds of personality and of her own life. It is interesting to interpret her reading here and pose this question in respect of the family archive especially the family album that forced the form of an individual portrait of a life into the consciousness of each family member. Equally important, it is clear that without silver there could be no permanence for these photographs and, as Hawkes states in her capacity as a scientist, there would be no chemistry without invention.

Historically, key developments related to analogue photography were when Albertus Magnus discovered silver nitrate in the thirteenth century and George Fabricius silver chloride in the sixteenth century, with Eastman developing the idea of the dry photographic print in 1884, so found material offers the chance of invention.²⁴⁷ There is also a correlation here with how she sees found material as 'the context of the time'. Hawkes is here discussing fossils as accretions of their time and I am drawing on this finding to consider material photographs as inscriptions of their time, visual fossils revealing the past held in their images. Hawkes interrogates the fossils for their elements and relates them to their time which is a method that could be used with regard to photography and its

²⁴⁴ Jacquetta Hawkes, *A Land* (Collins Nature Library, 2012), first published in 1951, p.25: 24–5.

²⁴⁵ Harold Nicolson, 'Sermon in Stones', review of *A Land*, *The Observer*, 1 June 1951.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Preface to 1951 edition, p.vii:14–17.

²⁴⁷ Albertus Magnus was regarded in the 13th century as an academic who did not only study science as other academics did in their day but actually observed and experimented with nature – rumours then in circulation connected Albertus to alchemy and witchcraft (magic) calling him a magician.

elements and timeline. In response to this relation to time and inscription within the family photograph, an article entitled 'The Power of Photography: Time, Mortality and Memory' (2013) records interviews with a series of artists, film directors and theatre directors about their intimate connection to family photographs. Katie Mitchell, a theatre director, connects her memories to the elements of the material nature of the photographic print and its evocation of a timeline, and considers this in the following description of a casual snapshot of her father. The image memory of her father she describes 'as a rather cruel disconnect to the present world; he seems so vital and alive caught and printed on a random piece of photographic paper, yet he is no longer here'. Another is the lament for grain: 'It's the texture, I miss the grain. These tiny images sometimes only 3in x 1in, with their curled edges, are the only way of touching people in my past.'²⁴⁸ She also writes that:

Like many people, my family was broken up by time, events, place and so on, and looking at these is a way of putting the pieces of my past together, like a jigsaw. When I am doing this, I often think of T.S. Eliot's *East Coker*:

'There is a time for the evening under starlight,
A time for the evening under lamplight
(The evening with the photograph album).'²⁴⁹

A piece of writing such as this, amplified by the quote, offers a clear connection to the past and offers a rediscovery of the ordinary. A selection of family image memories, by a family member, who has chosen to preserve memories in the photographs chosen for the album. Surely then this is a form of authorship tied to this act of selecting and is the point, as Oliver Burkeman states in an article titled, 'Should memory boxes be given the boot?': 'You can choose to preserve memories but you can't really outsource the job.'²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Katie Mitchell interviewed in 'The power of photography: time, mortality and memory', *The Guardian*, May 2013.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Oliver Burkeman, 'Should Memory boxes be given the boot?', Mind and Relationships series, 'This Column will change your life', *Weekend Guardian* (2012).

1.11 Summary

To conclude this literature/contextual review, I would like to underscore the nature of the original material analogue photograph and the importance of its biography cycled through both theoretical writing, and practice-based analysis of its use value, past, present and, significantly for this study, future. Investigating the territory of the theoretical analysis into analogue photographs seems to condense both a sense for the future and an acknowledgement of the finding of these material traces. As found artefacts they offer an insight into the past, the future, memory and anticipation and create a set of critical associations to examine. Material analogue family photographs that we regard as individual are often mass-produced and dispersed to individuals, they then become singularised and represent at this point 'a copy' but are still cherished as original artefacts. These I contest are 'the raw materials of a personal and social identity' (my emphasis) and, as such, they lend themselves to being brought out of the private life of a family into the public domain. The shift in ownership and location offers a rich insight into cultural values in relation to fugitive stories, *Fugitive Testimonies* as I term them, gleaned from discarded appropriated photographs often exposing what is censored in family life. In factual terms anonymous but potentially copyrighted visual images separated from a family of images (in particular the family album and archive) referred to as *orphan works*, separated from their original placement. A predicament arises for this body of discarded family photographs as they too can have contested ownership in the present day, when even visual image memories can become commodities in terms of authorship and the status of the object as an original signature work.²⁵¹ Constructing a photo-archive for these discarded images offers me a research method for development of such an archive, in dialogue with critical concepts within photography, but opposed to the bureaucratic structure of the official photo-archive. The official archive can offer a repressive

²⁵¹ 'Orphan Works', potentially 'copyrighted' works with no record of the owner of the works so are a risk to artists and filmmakers if re-presented in their artworks and may become subject to charges if they are held in archives or private collections without a prior 'diligent search' for ownership. *The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013* is now law with *The Copyright Hub* to follow in July 2013 in the UK.

view of *family* as an institution which I wish to oppose and contribute a new expanded field of and for the family of its fugitive stories.

Portfolio of Small Histories:

Phase One: *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16)

Practice Analysis 1: Collecting

Scope and purpose of the fieldwork notebooks

The contextual /literature review has evidenced through investigating the theoretical, and artists' conceptual practice, the extent to which memories are based on sensory experience rather than abstract events and influenced by situated experience. There is a direct relation here to 'the act of collecting' (passionately advocated by Benjamin in 'Unpacking My Library' for the construction of a practice archive through collecting as an active agent within a longitudinal fieldwork study). Benjamin states that 'Collectors are people with a tactical instinct; their experience teaches them that when they capture a strange city, the smallest antique shop can be a fortress.'²⁵² Here the tactical instinct is at play in my methodology of collecting not specifically in the city but transiently at the flea market, a small temporary city in essence, encountering the traders' complexity as the keepers, the collectors of (image memories) the discarded (photographs). By focusing on the role of the body in 'communicating memories', we are focusing on the embodied experiences that are the basis of memory formation at the point of collecting and re-reading found photographs in a situated experience (an immersive experience with discarded family material) and thereby re-thinking the construct of personal and social memory. In *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), Jonathan K. Foster describes it as more helpful to think of memory as an influence of the world on the individual.²⁵³ He argues that, by taking a constructivist approach, memory is described as the combined influence of the world and the individual's own ideas and expectations. Quoting Bartlett (1930s) he underscores this argument: 'Bartlett argued that, in a more naturalistic setting this *effort after meaning* is one of the

²⁵² Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.64: 31–3.

²⁵³ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.13: 13–16.

most significant features of the way our memory works in the real world.²⁵⁴ The effort after meaning relates specifically to my research into reading the visual image, the material photograph from family material.²⁵⁵ The construction of meaning is described as being built out of the relations of our attitude towards a whole active mass of organised past reactions or experiences, and this is often triggered by a little outstanding detail (Barthes' *punctum*, as discussed above) and hardly ever rendered as exact, even in experimental memory research tasks within laboratory conditions.²⁵⁶

The physical act of collection, and the creation of the association and order of the photographs in the fieldwork notebooks, combine to explore how the body of the viewer is used as a semiotic tool, in the construction of narrative through the concept of embodied cognition. The photo-archive as a performance space is where we can begin to question traditional modes of memory that highlight abstract and analytical cognition, as considered in depth by Allan Sekula in 'The Body and the Archive' (1992) and Jacques Derrida in *Archive Fever* (1995).²⁵⁷ These aspects of memory are in direct opposition to my argument for the critical importance of embodied experience, affect and the force of the imagination (as extrapolated by Yates, Bennett and Sallis) in looking at the private life of the family in visual encounters.²⁵⁸ Each encounter in the archive is with these adopted memories as potentials and powers (not our own personal social memories) which force thought. They question how to inherit histories, inclusive of whom or what generates events. Each encounter is across difference that is eventful, forging knowledge. The contribution to knowledge in both the written and visual work is to create a new critique of family photographs by foregrounding aspects of family knowledge that have been rejected, generating

²⁵⁴ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction*, p.13: 13–16.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.13.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.18.

²⁵⁷ See Allan Sekula, 'The body and the archive', in R. Bolton (ed.) *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992); Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), originally published by John Hopkins Press in 1995.

²⁵⁸ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966); Jill Bennett, *Empathetic Vision: Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art* (Cultural Memory in the Present) (Stanford University, 2005); John Sallis, *Force of Imagination* (Indiana University Press, 2000).

a set of critical themes.²⁵⁹ The fieldwork notebooks attempt to question, through their collated contents (discarded family material prints), the relation of these themes to family histories, how we remember; and to address the question of my curiosity as an artist about how a whole society or nation remembers or forgets – to be specific, in an age of ‘film photography’. An age which documented memory and personal and social identity, and allowed for the random in its method of capture, as clearly articulated by Bourdieu and Fontcuberta in their texts.²⁶⁰

I will negotiate the art of memory as regards an artificial memory system devised in the sixteenth century, which acted as an early embodied form of visual image archive.²⁶¹ I will interrogate its legacy and argue for the fertile territory it offers for current alliances with material culture archives – in precise terms, of *image memories* and *sense impressions* experienced in this archival space open to the performative. Artificial memory systems are not just mnemonic devices, but, I argue, take into consideration the concept of embodied cognition through an embodied experience with ‘interiorised image memories’. These sense impressions are critical to memory and communicating memories, setting the scene for drawing on an internal viewing of scenes, events, family languages and gestures. The sacrifice of a shift from natural memory contained within the body but translated into an artificial memory system to a transactive system like the physical family photographic archive does not render an embodied system as worthless (just a mnemonic device), but also does not predicate the lack of prospect of a return.

The shift in memory practice and thinking about memory takes us from the concept of memory recall as a form of knowledge transfer, mnemonics, to the act of memory practice as linked to the imagination in the form of *sense impressions*, through involuntary memory particular to the writer Marcel Proust, 1908–22). Foster reiterates this emphasis in memory research, where he

²⁵⁹ *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* categories (critical themes), home, society, across geographies, biography, anecdote, popular culture, campaign and exposure, secrets.

²⁶⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: A Middle-brow Art* (Polity Press, 1992) and Joan Fontcuberta, *Pandora's Camera* (MACK, 2014).

²⁶¹ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*.

discusses the levels of processing frameworks, and the fact that ‘we are active agents’ in this remembering process. In precise terms, through ‘(i) the process we engage in when we encounter a thing [read here photograph] or an event, as well as (ii) the properties of the thing or event itself’.²⁶² Recognition memory often has a strong familiar component in personal memory practices. I would argue that this plays a key part in our responses to family photographs. It could be considered ‘cued recall’, with the prompt being the photographs providing the context for the memory practice.

The *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16) fieldwork notebooks are the creation of new objects in their own right to provide new arguments and form a new critical perspective on re-reading found photographs. The notebooks, as a material photo-archive, provide a level of evidential support to the intellectual and cultural environment of making and meaning, to active memory practice, that a collection of photographs as documents does not so easily accomplish. The collection is serendipitous, as it evolves through the methods of fieldwork and collection of discarded material prints.²⁶³ The collecting is then followed by planned association and order, reflecting the levels of processing as *an active agent* described by Jonathan K. Foster in *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009) in the new space of the notebooks as a sheltered photo-archive. The method employed offers evolving strategies and sets of values, as the photographs have been selected by myself from a flea market, sampled from a wider selection available to the collection. My act of collection is grounded in my methodological discipline adopted for encounter and exchange outlined in *On Method* in the thesis, taking into consideration both the theoretical approach and the practice analysis methodology of the bricolage and objective chance.²⁶⁴ As

²⁶² Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.48: 24–8.

²⁶³ Andreas Beyer, ‘Serendipity and “Gute Nachbarschaft”’, Conference Paper delivered at *Aby Warburg 150, Work Legacy, Promise*, Aby Warburg Institute 2015, 13–15 June, Beyer asserted the nature of serendipity as part of a research methodology, ‘serendipity corrects the notion of projection, in a process of research methodology where there is felt to be a (danger) conflict or tension’. Chance is described by Beyer as ‘favouring the prepared mind and this encompasses the setting of pre-existing conditions for fieldwork’, which counters the concept of it being random as if only informed by accident and *sagacity*.

²⁶⁴ See with reference to bricolage Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (1962), and for ‘Objective Chance’, André Breton, *Mad Love* (1937).

an active agent in the fieldwork and memory practice I am clear that what (I) we remember depends on i) the processes that we ourselves engage in when we encounter a thing or an event, as well as ii) the properties of the thing or event itself.’²⁶⁵ The personal act of selection represents the formation of a cultural organisation of personal social memory, although extended to my family and social relations, clearly not as singular personal memory. In this act of collecting and selection (sampling) there is a recognition of the cultural trajectory from discarded to collected, from public anonymity to singular care, moving from a commodity to an object of cultural significance and capture for subsequent re-reading.²⁶⁶

The small histories form the outtakes (outtake being defined as an excerpt; an extracted passage – in this instance, an extracted small history) from the *Fugitive Testimonies Photo-Archive*, and the outtakes are fully documented in the *Fugitive Testimonies: Portfolio of Small Histories (2009–16)* forming one of the documents constructed for the archive.²⁶⁷ Appropriation of the photographs allows for a trajectory in the practice to develop from the simplest form of isolation (extraction) and re-contextualisation. Their visual forms are manifested as sculptural objects, small installations and staged props, with myself as the artist performing a kind of conceptual archaeology on these visual images and their physical manifestation of layers of hidden personal and social histories. Representations from the past, but ones that I can re-present in the purity of what the finds reveal, albeit separated from their original discourses as discussed by Foucault.²⁶⁸ Created distinctively, this is an artist's curatorial directive of these small histories: once private, now set up as alternative discourse, fictions rendering their readings unstable and imprecise (*Marcel*

²⁶⁵ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.48: 24–8.

²⁶⁶ *The Fugitive Testimonies Archive* references the methodology of both Gerhard Richter's *Atlas* (1962–2013) and Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1866–1929) both longitudinal studies.

²⁶⁷ An excerpt; an extracted passage: *Is this an outtake from the \$1.98 Beauty Show?* [1977+; originally, by 1960, a rejected part of a film] outtake. (n.d.). *The Dictionary of American Slang*. Retrieved July 31, 2017 from Dictionary.com website <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/outtake>

²⁶⁸ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Pantheon, 1972), p.209: 2–33.

Duchamp at the Age of 85 (1945), this is precisely a fiction of providing an alternate discourse, and dissected as an artist intervention, a photograph from the future.²⁶⁹ Adopted memories in essence, within small stage sets, offer a theatrical interplay of the performances within everyday (vernacular) photographs, as analysed by Annette Kuhn and Tajima Creef, set up to work with the explanation of how external memory is situated.²⁷⁰ The making is about transactions and exchanges that are meaningful through a process of conceptual development informed by theoretical thinking and material thinking in encountering the fugitive stories providing a supplement to family histories. Productive encounters with relations, forces and powers that are not our own have immense potential for analytical and practice production. To encounter opens up contingencies and processes of life; Deleuze describes an encounter as posing problems, as it reconfigures identities and spaces.²⁷¹

In summary, the purpose of the fieldwork notebooks as a sheltered archive is to enable the exploration of the relations between the capacity of an encounter at the flea market to enable specific finds (supplements to the family archive, fugitive material) and map the archival gathering process. The methods are thus cultivated by direct primary investigation as well as analytically informed and shaped by critical theory into discourse, personal and social memory and artists' methodology of appropriation of found photographs into contemporary art.²⁷² To

²⁶⁹ Herbert Molderings, *Marcel Duchamp at the Age of 85*, An Incanabulum of Conceptual Photography, translated by John Brogden (Walter König, 2013), p.67, 'The deliberately false message – "This is a photograph from the future" – prompts us to reflect on our conventional way of perceiving the photographic image.. it demonstrates the possibility of using photography conceptually, that is to say, not just as a mechanical means of recording factual information but also for visualising artistic fiction.'

²⁷⁰ Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (Verso, 2002) and Tajima Creef, *Imaging Japanese America: The visual construction of citizenship, nation and the body* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

²⁷¹ Gilles Deleuze (1968) *Différence et répétition* (Paris: PUF), translated as *Difference and Repetition*, by Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), Chapter 3, 'Deleuze looks for an "encounter," a sensation that cannot be thought, that cannot find the empirical category under which an object can be recognized, and thus forces the "transcendent exercise" of the faculty of sensibility, when something can only be sensed.' Daniel Smith and John Protevi, 'Gilles Deleuze', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2015 edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/deleuze/>> (accessed 28.07.17).

²⁷² See the Glossary of Terms in Phase One 1: Practice Project for this practice-based study which maps the keywords against the research key texts and artists, for example Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, first published

allow for a sense of capture, a response to discourses of forgetting and fugitive stories, through the acts of encounter, transaction, exchange and collection, even to a sense of stealing from a source (the photograph) ‘a sensation that cannot be thought’, but instead read and experienced.²⁷³

See Fieldwork Notebooks 1, 2 and 3 (2009–16) practice exemplars and *Portfolio of Small Histories*, practice exemplars of the small histories assemblages: *Contextual*.

Outtake 1: *Peepshow Anecdotes* (2012).

Outtake 2: *Severn Sea* (2014).

Outtake 3: *X111 Can't Take You Leaving Me, A Torch Song* (2014).

Outtake 5: *Oh Yeah DECCA!* (2015).

in UK (1955); Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966); Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007); Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (2000).

²⁷³ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton, Chapter 3; Daniel Smith and John Protevi, ‘Gilles Deleuze’, in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Fugitive Testimonies Thesis

Phase 1: Practice Project

Fugitive Testimonies Archive

(2009–16):

Portfolio of Small Histories:

Outtakes 1–12

Chapter 1 Section – Contextual

Su Fahy

Portfolio of Small Histories

Practice Analysis Introduction

Fugitive Testimonies Archive (2009–16)

The aim of this practice-based research study was to create an archive as a model of practice through fieldwork. The study uses fieldwork as a key convention and methodology to survey and reveal the implications of encounter, transaction and collection, and wraps into the tactics of a practice that re-purposes appropriated found photographs, associated marginalia and ephemera. The method employed was to set up a controlled space, an archive as a framework, in which the found photograph as document, as historical material and as a fugitive testimony could be re-read, curated and placed for active research. This is research that creates new critical perspectives on family records, narrative, and the reveal of small histories of personal and social memory, from discarded family photographs.

The archive is often described as a territory of images and the unity imposed by ownership as the clearing house of meanings.²⁷⁴ The outtakes as conceptual assemblages are designed to evolve the conceptual limitations contained in fictional works and explore the insights into the act of curation of models such as the family photograph album and private family photographic collection and archive. Control designs for the research are situated in the forms of case studies: see case study: *The Perspex Crucifix* (2008) in Chapter 2: *Trace, Presence and Indexicality*; and the

²⁷⁴ Allan Sekula, 'Reading An Archive: Photography between labour and capital', in *The Photography Reader*, edited by Liz Wells (Routledge, 2003), p.444: 36–7.

outtakes as conceptual assemblages: see Outtake: 7, *Family X* (2013–15). Both the case study and Outtake 7 contain particular photographs which operate as catalysts, drawing on the aims of constructed narratives around fugitive testimonies. By this I mean that, in both works, found propaganda images act as a document of the protected family group in times of conflict and political turmoil.

The found material photograph sits within an archaeological culture, which is a recurring assemblage of artefacts from a specific time and place, most often lacking any written record. The 'knowns' are the scenes captured by the camera shutter, the 'unknowns' the affect of reading a familiar scene that evokes memory, especially fugue memory (the flight of conscious memory from an individual's life history and familyhood), and draws on an interiorised store of memories linked to a sense of place.²⁷⁵ The connection precisely relates to autobiographical memory that plays a part in episodic memory and is embodied within us. This form of memory recalls events from our earlier life, to borrow from the classical scholars a not wholly artificial mnemonic system, set up around *loci*, places for these memories, collated within a 'memory palace', a place of collection within ourselves to draw on both personal and social memories.²⁷⁶ Within the research findings devolved from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive*, it is important to value this proof of simple things from family holidays alongside other evidential language embedded in the medium as image memories closely related to episodic memory – which 'in particular Tulving has argued involves

²⁷⁵ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp76–7.

²⁷⁶ See Endel Tulving (1972), cited in Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), p.39: 17–24, and Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966).

remembering specific events. Episodic memory includes recollections of *time, place, and associated emotions* at the time of the event.²⁷⁷ This resonates with *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms Series* (2014–16) in the Portfolio of Small Histories that are curated around material photographs documenting just such ‘recollections of *time, place and associated emotions*’ recorded at the time of the event.

Writers have emphasised the engineering of the imagination, as suggested by Seamus Heaney in his statement that ‘the imaginative transformation of human life is the means by which we can most truly grasp and defend it’. This assertion of Heaney’s was quoted by Alex Danchev in the introduction to *On Art and War and Terror* (2009); he went on to say that ‘armed with art... we are more alert and less deceived ... artists being more acute witnesses should be taken seriously as thinkers and moral agents – their works having both political and ethical force’.²⁷⁸ The *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16), and other artworks dealing with appropriated material photographs do indeed combine an imaginative transformation with both a political and ethical force. Many of the works created by Christian Boltanski, Susan Hiller, Taryn Simon and Gerhard Richter as models of a practice are a reflection on their collection and appropriation of found candid family photographs and on the capacity of those photographs to act as a catalyst for bodies of work that reflect on their evidential qualities, their constructed scenes, their personal and social record of external events and their evocation of past lives. The darker side of photography is also often revealed in

²⁷⁷ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), p.39.

²⁷⁸ Alex Danchev, Introduction, ‘Out of the Marvellous, or, Scholarship and Magic’, in *On Art, War and Terror* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp1–7.

salacious or propaganda images, in images of war and conflict, bearing personal witness in a personal social and collective visual record of past events. Trace, presence and absence are often repeated connecting thematic interpretations, open to analysis and offering insights within the research design of the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* of how a visual record of the exterior world can affect our interior world and bring conflict into play.

The sense impressions that are created by holding and reading a haptic material photograph are a rich source for material thinking through individual imagination and memory, for transcribing a personal and social identity.²⁷⁹ The image memories are often transcribed in our memory and through our imagination as their scene lingers in our visual interiorised memory store. We are described as active agents in the remembering process, in that what we remember depends on the processes we ourselves engage in when we encounter a photograph. The remembering process is in tandem with the proportion of the photograph as depicted event, and the memory performance of it as an object similar to that which a physical representation would produce.

Memory work is driven by thinking about meanings and concepts, in relation to reading a photograph or series of photographs. The act of visiting the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Exhibitions* (2012–16) and selecting and reading a photograph offers during the re-reading an experience of remembering connected to involuntary memory, having studied the photograph, or mediates into autobiographical memory or re-collective memory. This is semantic encoding of the

²⁷⁹ See John Sallis, *The Force of Imagination* (2000).

scene in the photograph in terms of its meaning and here in particular of the individual reading of the material family photograph.²⁸⁰ Allan Sekula identifies photography as always involving four spaces: 1. referential space; 2. represented space (apparently the content plane); 3. the space of representation (the expression plane); 4. topological space (the space of the observer or receiver of the photograph). He concludes with the suggestion of an extra framing space that is peculiar to photographs, the combination in one sign relation of indexicality and iconicity.²⁸¹

The research design enabled the research and practice to explore and unravel the purpose of the archive I have built as both an act of salvage for the material orphan photograph and as a physical, material visual repository. The constructed archive form then acts as a source of knowledge where the perceived photograph is read with all the senses as well as with the impression that the perceived leaves on the body. A space is being created for the photograph to be referenced in all its defined spaces, according to Sekula's theory described above, aided by aisthesis – by which I mean perception by the intellect as well as the senses (within the broader realm of contemporary theory).²⁸² This frames the research question and the practice's thematic interpretations of how the

²⁸⁰ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), p.39: 31–40.

²⁸¹ Allan Sekula, 'Reading An Archive', in Liz Wells (ed.), *The Photography Reader* (Routledge, 2013), pp445–51; Allan Sekula, *Photography against the grain: essays and photo works (1973–1983)* (Nova Scotia Publications, 1984).

²⁸² Aisthesis became one of the key concepts capable of productively connecting the disparate realms of thought, knowledge and acting, www.fi2.arc-say.si (accessed 20 March 2015), Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Research Project 'Aisthesis in philosophy, psychoanalysis and politics', Project Lead: Ales Erjavec PhD.

archaeology of knowledge layered in the material family photograph reveals an encounter with personal and social memory which is key to our identity and reflects on biography, affect, geography of kinship and narrative encounter. In turn, this aids our understanding of the complexity of the discarded family photograph in relation to personal and social memory as a catalyst, a frame of reference for event, discourse and record, and a sense of family as a concept in itself.

In conclusion, the value of the research findings as they have emerged are evidenced in relation to the research question and design in this practice-based study. It is a study that interrogates the archaeology of knowledge held within the photographic family archive and its related discourses, as a key to interrogating our personal and social identity, in the context of our times. The archive provides a sheltered space for re-reading discarded family photographs, enabling the development of a performative/conceptual process for producing artworks/conceptual assemblages from discarded images of family archives.

Fieldwork Notes



Fieldwork Site. The Event. Image 1. *Giant Flea and Collectors' Market* – Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet BA4 6QN.



Fieldwork Site. The Event. Image 2. *Giant Flea and Collectors' Market* (2013).

An influential aspect for the fieldwork has been looking at the nature of collecting and interrogating the term 'marginalia'. In *Observer's Marginalia* (2011), Colin Sackett explores the nature of collecting observations.²⁸³ John Bevis in the foreword looks at the term 'spotting', which he feels is given to this activity, consisting typically of monitoring a group of special interest with what may be called triumphant observation. He sees this as collecting at its most existential, free of the sentiment, fetishism or acquisitiveness which can taint the accumulation of objects. His criticism of this particular form of collecting is that it can result in a rather bland end product, such as a list of names, places or, in some cases, numbers. Such an end result, in Bevis's view, has no decorative or marketable value and, even in an information-driven age, only a very small cache of meaning. My interest here though is to dispute this finding through my practice-based study, in both the written and visual work, but also to reference the views of others working with observations in this field. Bevis is worth quoting here for his thoughts on the encounter between the observer and the observed:

What is recorded are the clinching moments when observer and observed coincide. The thrill of the chase is sustained by calculating the probability of those coincidences, to distinguish 'rare' from common sightings and by managing the chances of observing whatever things – flowers, aeroplanes, seashells remain uneven un-'spotted'. The pursuit functions too

²⁸³ Colin Sackett, *Observer's Marginalia* (Sackett Press, 2011).

as a means of bringing order to a personal sense of disorder, of taming the psychological Wild West.²⁸⁴

Bevis goes on to describe this pastime – the activity of ‘spotting’ – as the antithesis of science or espionage, as the collection of sightings is ‘unwitnessed’ and ‘unprovable’. For me, the important factor in his observations is his description of moments that ‘shine in the memory with the greater or lesser intensity of stars’. The concept of the collector’s heightened experience is then let down by his view that the birth of a collection is often ill-defined and therefore, when the endgame is in sight, the momentum of collecting slows and the later successes are the hardest. This point signals the decline and inevitable end of collecting for ‘the spotter’ who has spotted it all, or the collector who has succeeded in defined the ephemera he so eagerly sought, and thus this is the end of an episode.

Each collector then defines the parameters of the collection through a series, as in the case of a ‘spotter’, or as a material set in the case of other collectors who do not use lists but acquire objects or artefacts. Collections that come up for sale in auction houses are often catalogued and indexed in order to identify their timeline and timespan. This takes the private out into the public domain but in a more rarefied setting than the site of the flea market. The site I visited is a former cattle market, a site defined as a point of gathering and transaction (a moot), and the particular event is marketed as a giant flea and collectors’ market. There are two aspects to this site:

²⁸⁴ John Bevis, Foreword, in Colin Sackett, *Observer’s Marginalia* (Sackett Press, 2011).

the inside marketplace where the finds are clearly tagged, researched and recorded for sale to the collector rather than the 'spotter'; and the outside site which is divided into stalls. It is clear from images of the Fieldwork Site (The Event. Images 1 and 2) that the outdoor set-ups are in some cases intended to appear careless and, to the untrained eye, a jumble of artefacts, objects and associated lifestyle ephemera.

In fact, we could say that these set-ups are designed to draw in the collector for a close encounter with memorabilia, objects of desire and chance finds (exploring 2-18.the surrealists method of 'objective chance')²⁸⁵ There is a hierarchy here too with entry to the site only for collectors and the trade at six a.m. with the public gaining entry at nine a.m.²⁸⁶ The fieldwork then clearly takes place at public entry times and ensures maximum exposure to the crowds and the encounters, conversations and transactions that then ensue.

²⁸⁵ André Breton, 'Surrealist Situation of the Object', in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p.268.

²⁸⁶ 'Hierarchy: a system in which people or things are placed in a series of levels with different importance or status', www.merriam-webster.com (accessed 20 November 2012).

Mapping

1. Encounters and Transactions

Benjamin stated that the true passion of the collector is always 'both anarchistic and destructive. For a true collector the whole background of an item adds up to a major encyclopedia, whose quintessence is the fate of his object ... and collectors are the physiognomists of the world of objects – turn into interpreters of fate.'²⁸⁷ Throughout the fieldwork, I am assuming the role of the collector, but I suggest that this is mediated by the research intention of creating an archive based on a fictitious impulse – re-reading discarded photographs, threading the encounters, marginalia, transactions and found photographs into a set of thematic interpretations of the fictitious.

The first act was always the fieldwork set out by date and time and the noting of the finds, 'the known' photographs and ephemera collected from the site. The second act was cleaning, cataloguing and setting out the finds in the fieldwork notebooks (1–3) – this was the first act of display the building of the archive. At this point of the research practice there is no audience and I contemplated and reflected on the finds starting the process of exploring 'the unknowns'.

²⁸⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (Pimlico, 1999), p.62: 26–31.

This was effectively akin to artist practices of indexing the earlier process-oriented stages of the work in the case of artists working on site-specific projects within a methodology where, as in Mark Dion's *Archaeology* (1999), the site finds are often excavated, then taken to another place to be cleaned, catalogued and classified.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁸ Mark Dion, *Archaeology* (Black Dog Publishing, 1999).

The Fieldwork Notebooks – observe/ capture/ receptive state.

Thinking here means thinking about chains of connection and legacy – not just relationality in the immediate sense. Jill Bennett reminds us of that in her words in this summary of mine that ‘All forms of media engage us at the level of sensation and affect. Art and curatorial practice is not distinctive in this respect except to the degree that it opens up and scrutinises the process of engagement. In itself promoting feeling is neither good nor bad’.²⁸⁹ A distinct exemplar of this form of curatorial practice is to be found in Patrick Keiller’s work *The Robinson Institute* in 2012 that attempts to trace the trajectory of objects and materials through the exhibition space and geographical and temporal space, which sets up a narrative of the fictional curator, explorer or archaeologist. The method explored by Keiller set the scene for considering at all stages the building of the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* which is composed of material photographs and follows a timeline set by the external staging of the flea market (mirroring the journey of objects and materials through geographical and temporal space). The intervention and re-purposing of the material photographs will take into consideration the strategies and methods of artists like Patrick Keiller, Laure Prouvost and Mark Dion who are engaged in this practice of conceptual thinking around curation strategies, exploration and archaeology.

Anatomy of an Artwork

²⁸⁹ See Jill Bennett, *Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art* (Stanford University Press, 2005).

The *conceptual assemblages* celebrate objective chance through the *outtakes* from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* collection of discarded family photographs. The archive in itself cannot convey a particular message to posterity unless *interventions* are conducted, utilising these contents through selected and curated *outtakes*. Material technologies could be said to be the organising principle behind the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive*, as it is concerned with the analogue era of photographs, not purely as a collection but as a research sample of the unpublished, or censored, material family record, its supplement of fugitive stories. The *outtakes* are the second stage in the project, drawing on random samples collected first from a space which offers this random encounter (the flea market), and now translated into the archive space to enable a methodology of producing work, using chance and associative connections as a tactic for a practice that had no real sense of the destination when the project began. The *outtakes* are the imprints of acts for me on the opaque stubbornness of everyday life, the significance of which has been to think critically in both the written and visual work about the field of unconscious escapes – the unobserved and the overlooked from the everyday – in some instances capturing autobiographical intrigues that remind us of what we signify in the private life of family (see Outtake 7: *Family X* (2013–15) and Outtake 6: *Vanity Case* (2014)).

Equally important for the project in both the written and visual work have been the definitions of the keywords that have informed the research. These are wide-ranging in meaning and I have therefore included a glossary of terms for the thesis in phase one of this practice project. I

have supplemented the glossary through mapping the key terms with key and core texts and key artists whose works and methods are analysed within the contextual / literature review. The research and practice focus and the methodology have been informed, shaped and defined by these terms, in tandem with the theories driving current research into contemporary art and memory, analogue photography, the archaeology of knowledge within the family archive and personal and social identity. These theories are analysed within the chapters of the thesis, with Chapter 1: *The Art of Contemporary Photographic Practice* which is the contextual / literature review informing the development of Chapters 2, 3 and 4. I anticipated that the review of artists' working methods would be broad and associative in both Chapters 3: *Intervention* and Chapter 4: *Collection* to correlate to the processual archaeological nature of the finds in this longitudinal fieldwork study, and the nature of the finds continually affecting the emerging research outcomes.

Portfolio of Small Histories

Practice Analysis: Peepshow Anecdotes Series – Contextual

See Outtake 1, *Peepshow Anecdotes* (2012); Outtake 9, *Off the Record*; Outtake 3, *XIII Can't Take You Leaving Me, A Torch Song* (2014); Outtake 5, *Oh Yeah DECCA!* (2015).

The act of curating the outtakes in relation to the archive is set up for me by the reference that Hans Ulrich Obrist made to the work of Harold Szeeman's 1983 exhibition, 'The Tendency Towards The Total Work Of Art'. Obrist states in *Ways of Curating* (2014) that Szeeman had the idea of the exhibition as a toolbox or an archaeology of knowledge, linking this to the theories of Michel Foucault.²⁹⁰ This completely supports my profound interest in creating a series of works within the sheltered environment of an archive as an experiential exhibition form. The material contents that have been collected are then open to be viewed, unravelled and, most importantly, curated by myself as the artist and researcher, as this means that my vision is mediated by my role as a curator but not bound to the 'Curator's Vision'. The role of the curator should be more like an enabler interested in realising unfinished projects – while at the same time expanding the notion of curating. An exemplar of this is the *Peepshow Anecdotes Series* (2009–14) with one work analysed here to expand the concepts behind these small histories.

Outtake 9: *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush* (2014)

Exemplar: Intervention

²⁹⁰ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972).

The collection in this small assemblage is composed of a set of found postcard prints comprised of individual family portraits. My research into their chronology and role within family photography has revealed that the postcard print was especially favoured during the late 1800s and early 1900s, taking the place of *cartes de visite* and cabinet prints. Real photo-postcards were technically realised and produced using the Kodak postcard camera, the 3A Folding Pocket Kodak (1903–15), and were more candid family documents. The postcard camera could take a picture and then print a postcard-sized negative of the picture complete with a divided back for text, address and a place for postage. These were subsequently contact-printed and the amateur or popular market created a real range of documents of private life. The historian Richard Evans records in *Pursuit of Power* (2016) 'An Age of Emotion' and documents in this section of his book a preoccupation with affect in the nineteenth century within writers' diaries and lives, which is reflected in this series of family photo-postcards. The photo-postcard carried a romantic theme, as its portability meant that it could be exchanged or carried, and often acted as a receptor for marginalia, private notes or comments around concerns of the time. It was therefore similar to a diary but carrying in this case a visual annotated trajectory influenced by an age characterised by a lack of independence for women – hence the domestic settings in this era.

These photo-cards were domestic objects used to communicate image memories and were retained in the domestic sphere. These photographs I am treating as material artefacts that work by evocation rather than representation, as material memories of the people they have witnessed, are multi-sensorially experienced. I am

here referencing the links between photography and anthropology, especially the creating of a space for reflection, between the artwork and the emerging fields of urban archaeology and archaeological ethnography.²⁹¹ Material traces from various times are at the centre of this emerging interdisciplinary space of enquiry where art is borrowing from these disciplines. The emergence of public discourses, practices and engagement with found material photographs is creating a dialogue with the material past that has been described as creating alternative archaeologies.²⁹²

It appears through the information gathered by modern-day collectors of postcards, or deltiologists, that these photo-postcards were rarely posted and more often retained in the family archive. The conceptual assemblage *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush* (2014) aims through a sculptural transformation to curate real photo-cards as domestic objects including fugitive testimonies (by these I mean the outlier photographs found interleaved into these collections) to reveal the relationships between the candid photograph and the family portrait and their personal significance. The work aims to highlight the relationship between the body and its environment – in this case, domestic interiors, in the home, in the shelter of the family. The works are to be considered vignettes of narrative enquiry – small histories. The small texts and anecdotes set into the conceptual assemblage serve to

²⁹¹ Yiannis Hammilakis and Aris Anagnostopoulos, 'What is Archaeological Ethnography?' www.tandfonline.com in *Public Archaeology* 8(2-3), 2009, Archaeological Ethnographies, pp65-87, published online 2 December 2013 (accessed 15 May 2014).

²⁹² Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', in *Return of the Real* (MIT, 1996), pp171-203.

highlight the sense of witness and revelation that juxtaposed images can create when incorporated in the same collection. The portrait of the blushing girl in this work is juxtaposed with the found erotic Peepshow image, making the link visually between the embarrassment at the find interleaved into the family archive and the shyness at this lack of modesty. Found photographs of this nature are informing a new critique on re-reading found photographs and developing a new perspective on what is censored in the family record – be this within the family album or the family archive.

The conceptual assemblage *Off the Record* exposes in this instance the erotic photographs censored in the family record and engages primarily with the importance of valuing private life – precisely the fugitive stories that invoke affect. In this small history, affect is visually experienced through the juxtaposition of the blush – evoking emotions of surprise, embarrassment, even shame experienced through the inclusion of this image and others of this ilk in the family record. There is nothing new in the circulatory system serving as a window to the soul, in 1872 Darwin terming this – the blush – the most human of expressions. Melanie Klein's insights into the role of projective defences within the family deepen this exploration of the recent sociological contributions to the role of shame in conflict escalation and its documenting.²⁹³

These photo-cards of an erotic nature were often found

²⁹³ See Charles Darwin, *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*, first published in 1872 London, John Murray. Retrieved 21 October 2015 from <https://archive.org/details/expressionofemot1872darw> Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt, and Reparation and Other Works, 1921–1945*, in *The Writings of Melanie Klein*, Volume 1 (1937) (first published by the Institute of Psychoanalysis, Hogarth Press, 1975).

sleeved and filed away – private image memories not for the casual viewer or for the public domain. These images are found interleaved in the family archive of photographs sheltered in the mass of family photographs rather than filed into the family albums. Hence the *Peepshow Anecdotes Series* (2009–16) works with this sleeved format, revealing only certain sections of these found, off-the-record photographs to the viewer. The moral tactics of the family censoring these small histories, these fugitive stories, often involving small violences conducted on family photographs which, from my research perspective, reflects the power of an image memory as a sense impression and the affect it can retain.

Found photographs representing these fugitive stories were often cut up, faces biro-ed out or drawn over, parts cut out or cut away, and yet the artefact has been kept rather than buried or burned, allowing for future viewing, revealing the conflicts in the living of daily lives.²⁹⁴ The impact of this insight shifts the practice research focus through the revealing of family as a dense study, in which personal and social memory resides in a captured photographic material form, open to new readings, and developing a perspective for each association and order, each index of the life of *family* as a concept. The women who feature in the photo-postcards in this era are described in *... and Women' 1874–1906* as follows: 'Women broadly speaking ... are bad subjects. This is due not a little to the dependent and subordinate position the woman has been so long taught to look upon as her proper place. She is difficult to get, and being difficult to get

²⁹⁴ See Tacita Dean, *Floh* (2001).

difficult to keep.’²⁹⁵ The women under discussion were representative of different classes, and members of the Women’s Trade Union League in the 1800s, and their status and preoccupations are pertinent to re-reading these photographs – precisely in order to gain an understanding of the ideas and attitudes towards women, particularly married women, and their role in keeping the record of family at this time (1870–1915) – its images of labour, leisure, domestic interiors, the household and the make-up of familyhood.

Although we are familiar with the aesthetic of the family snapshot and photo-postcard there remains the fact that it is in the views of those studying appropriation of the photograph, such as Martin Parr and Gerry Badger in *The Photobook Volume 11*, ‘one that remains one of the most enigmatic, uncertain and fugitive of documents – its immediate meanings closed and private known only to the individuals involved and their immediate circle’ (in this case the family).²⁹⁶ The photographs on their re-reading in *Off the Record* make physically tangible a re-experiencing of the image, speaking of memory, desire and hope, both as a record of family and its private life encompassing desire. Desire for the loved one, be that wife, mother, girlfriend, lover, bride or familyhood, is interrupted here by desire extant to (existing outside) family.

The photographs curated into this assemblage provide a discursive space to challenge the concept of family as a safe place, a haven for the individual, a place of shelter,

²⁹⁵ See Chapter 2, ‘...and Women; 1874–1906’, in Sarah Boston, *Women Workers and Trade Unions*, p.56: 1–5.

²⁹⁶ Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History*, Volume II (Phaidon, 2006), p.231.

towards one that can complicate the life of an individual through social taboos and the reinforcement, or forcing, of cultural concepts.

The insights gained in re-purposing the outtakes from the archive address my experiential and generative journey, looking into how affective image memories in the form of found photographs lead into critical thought on family photography and its authors. The study method develops the production of a photo-archive to establish primarily the importance of valuing the family supplement, the fugitive stories that offer insights and a new critical perspective on re-reading found and, critically for this study, discarded family photographs.

The form of each of the conceptual assemblages is critical to their audience value in the present. In this respect, Christian Boltanski's work considers the role of the family snapshot as being capable of being read in different ways, as a fount of affectionate memory but also able to be used as a surveillance tool by others in both *Photo Album of the Family D* (1939–64) and *Kaddish* (1998).²⁹⁷ Boltanski's work is also deeply concerned with exposing, through the visual / clandestine discourse and the consequences of its exposure, the truth of the family record and its role in the present. Boltanski's work involves working on the permeable boundary between images that are venerated and those that are looked at, again often appropriating the photographs he works with by chance, which echoes with my research perspectives on articulating the fugitive in the

²⁹⁷ See Didier Semin, Tamar Garb and Donald Kuspit, *Christian Boltanski* (Phaidon, 1997). See also Marjorie Perloff, 'What has occurred only once: Barthes' Winter Garden/Boltanski's archives of the dead', in Wells (ed.), *The Photography Reader* (Routledge, 2003), pp31–41.

family record.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁸ Marjorie Perloff, 'What has occurred only once: Barthes' Winter Garden/Boltanski's archives of the dead', p.33: 1-7.

**Glossary of Terms (A–Z) for Practice-Based
Study: *Fugitive Testimonies Archive (2009–16)***

Key words: *affect, archive, family, fugitive testimony, identity, imagination, material photograph, memory.*²⁹⁹

Affect (noun) – the conscious subjective aspect of an emotion considered apart from bodily changes; *also:* a set of observable manifestations of a subjectively experienced emotion. For the thesis, in both the written and visual work, this is a recorded, subjectively experienced, emotion – documented on reading a visual image, *an image memory* inscribing a *sense impression*, a discernible emotional reaction on reading a material *photograph*.

Key Texts: Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (1997); Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (2000); Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003); Amaryta Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (2006); Jacquetta Hawkes, *A Land* (1951); Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (1995); Jill Bennett, *Empathetic Vision: Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art* (Cultural Memory in the Present), (Stanford University Press, 2005).

Artists/Curators: Christian Boltanski, Taryn Simon, Susan Hiller, John Stewart, Michael Landy, Aby Warburg, Jeremy

²⁹⁹ The Glossary of Terms (A–Z), including the keywords, has been produced through research and with reference to the dictionary definitions to be found at www.merriam-webster.com (accessed 20 July 2016).

Deller.

Archaeology of Knowledge – archaeological thinking was a term employed by Foucault (1972), as a certain mode of approach to interpret and interrogate discourses and context within interpretation, suggesting a vigilance in unpacking history as representative of a particular time through involvement with the struggles taking place in the area under question. It is the shifting nature of identity as it is explored in certain contexts through the material family photograph that is precisely taking this mode of thinking and analysing an archaeology of knowledge held within the family photograph, through exploring the family archive and its particular contexts. Foucault states that the individual with his/her identity and characteristics is the product of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires and forces. There is a relationship here to the problems of a local identity, a regional identity and its conflicts with national identity central to a study of family culture and its relationship with our personal and social identities and sense of place.³⁰⁰

Key texts: Michel Foucault, Chapter 19: Questions on Geography, trans. Colin Gordon in *Knowledge and Power* (2007), edited by Jeremy Crampton and Stuart Eden; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of all Things: On Method* (2009).

³⁰⁰ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1972).

Artists/ Archivists: Mark Dion, Keith Piper, Tacita Dean, Aby Warburg.

Archive (noun) – a collection of historical documents or records relating to a place, organisation or family – in this study, inclusive of the analogue material found photographs, maps, diaries, ephemera, anecdotes and marginalia. *The Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16) is a place in which the collected survey material is preserved, recorded and subject to visual analysis – inclusive of methods of enquiry, measurement, and examination of context through memory work / practice. The snapshot as a performance keeping family values alive in the collection or family archive – itself a space for performance for a re-creation of family or a re-enactment. ‘The archive has always been a pledge, and like every pledge, a token of the future’ (Derrida, 1995).³⁰¹

Note: The map as an instrument of visual cartographic enquiry, and its place in the archive, features here as a source of topological enquiry. The map is investigated for reflecting the measure of identity within place-making in the fieldwork pedestrian survey.

Key texts: Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things: On Method* (2009); Allan Sekula, ‘Reading An Archive: Between

³⁰¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), p.18.

Labour and Capital', ed. Liz Wells in *The Photography Reader* (2003); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (1995); Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (1995); Gerhard Richter, *Atlas: the reader* (2003).

Artists/Archivists: Aby Warburg, Gerhard Richter, Patrick Keiller, Arno Fischer, Hannah Höch, Tacita Dean, Joachim Schmid.

Family (singular or plural noun) – sociology determines family as an intimate domestic group made up of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating or legal ties. A group of people from a common stock related by blood or marriage – concerned with emotional support, economic support, socialisation of children, ascribed status, and control of sexuality and reproduction. Critically, family members share confidences, advice, trust, secrets and ongoing mutual concern, registering an intimacy that stabilises the individual in society. This study conceptualises the family through a visual analysis of material found photographs as a complex, dynamic and changing collection of parts, subsystems and family members. Family secrets are the other side of the family's public face, often forgotten or repressed in how the family record is revealed – these are the fugitive testimonies that often reappear or reassert their place in the concept of family. There is here a clear example of the collective nature of remembering, weaving together individual stories / narratives in the activity of remembering the family. The family can be considered a simulacrum of the very idea of community, and the family photographic archive there for looking at its relationship for personal and social memory

– family photographs coexist in a collective field of memory.

Key texts: Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (1995); Martha Langford, *Suspended Conversations* (2001); Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Jonathan Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2008); John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (2013); Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (1997).

Artists: Trish Morrissey, Hans Eijkelboom, Gerhard Richter, Taryn Simon, Christian Boltanski, Andrei Tarkovsky.

Folklore (noun) – folklore is defined as traditional customs, tales, sayings, dances and art forms preserved among a people. It is also considered to be a branch of knowledge that deals with the above specialist categories. The tales within folklore are often composed of unsupported notions, stories and sayings that are widely circulated. Some of these stories enshrine memories of the remote past, some of them are pure fiction, and some of them may refer to old customs such as rites on ancient sites that may be echoes of old religions. In some histories of anthropology, the main difference between old-fashioned folklore and modern ethnography has been identified as the replacement of library research by fieldwork. But it has been suggested that the main important change came from a new criterion of sound analysis of the fieldwork research.

Key Texts: Marcel Mauss, *The Gift* (1923–24; first published in English 1954); Eric S. Wood, *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain, 'Folklore'*, pp 306–30 (1963); Margaret Baker, *The Gardener's Folklore* (1977); Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2009).

Artists/Curators: Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane, Mark Dion, Susan Hiller.

Fugitive Testimony – evidence or proof of something, in this case displaced and found in relation to an established account or testimony – proof or evidence that something exists or is true. The idea of testimony I am working with is intrinsic to established visual image memories (material photographs) and the idea of the fugitive memory as revelation, whether general or special, that is certifiable and objective as testimony to its giver. The fugitive testimony in image memories and sense impressions contains these aspects of certifiable and objective evidence, although unreliable, as in the constructed and staged propaganda genre of photography. The material photograph is a physical object, a document, a ground for belief or disbelief, and a direct form of evidence through its capture of plainly visible real life as a form of witness. The *fugitive testimony* can be viewed as the latent presence in the content of the collection, but in found photography can often represent this latent presence reunited with the collection.

Key texts: Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (2000); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (1970); Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (1997).

Artists: Trish Morrissey, Hans Eijkelboom, Marina Abramovic, André Breton, Tacita Dean.

Identity (noun) – the distinguishing character or personality of an individual, their qualities, beliefs that make a particular person different from others. Over time, as the individual human researcher for this study, my memory and personal and social identity became bound to the flea market – a place of material encounter with discarded photographs that processes my practice into perception and memory, insinuating the experiential into the act of collecting for the archive. This sense of the experiential is reflected in the texts of both Holland, 2000 and Riegl, 1901. This offers an immediate experiencing of the collection of family as a concept, as an entity, as a co-ingredient, in this act of reading the family archive.

Key texts: Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (2000); Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); *Illuminations*, Walter Benjamin (1970); Marjorie Perloff 'What has Occurred Only Once: Barthes Winter Garden / Boltanski's Archives of the Dead', *The Photography Reader*, ed. Liz Wells (2003); Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry* (1901).

Artists: Michael Landy, Christian Boltanski, Julie Cockburn, John Stewart, Tacita Dean, Marina Abramovic, Jeremy Deller.

Imagination (noun) – the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images, or concepts of external objects not present to the senses. The ability of the mind to be creative, and resourceful, the product of imagining, or forming mental images and concepts, to engineer the imagination. The study also considers the sociological imagination to enable learning about distinctions to be drawn between personal and social levels in individuals who make up the family, their signatures.

Key texts: John Sallis, *Force of the Imagination* (2000); Alex Danchev, *On Art and War and Terror* (2009); Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature Of All Things: On Method* (2009); Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972); Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007); Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966).

Artists/Archivists: Gerhard Richter, Aby Warburg, Laure Prouvost, Hannah Höch, Yoko Ono.

(Material) photograph (noun) – a picture produced by photography in the form of a print on photo-sensitive paper by the chemical action of light or other forms of radiant energy, recorded by a camera. The material photographic print in this study will be regarded as an active rather than passive object. The study specifically explores an object-based study of the material found photograph and its cultural redeployment. This is in response to its capacity to be present in image multiples, although the photograph itself will be treated as singular, as an image memory / sense impression.

Key texts: Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (2000); John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (2013); Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (1977); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (1995); Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (2004).

Artists/ Writers/ Curators: Tacita Dean, Christian Boltanski, W.G. Sebald, Jeremy Deller, Joachim Schmid.

Memory (noun) – personal and social memory is defined in this practice-based thesis as something remembered from the past, the faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information. Analogue material found photographs are described as both image memories and sense impressions linking into the power of our process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned or retained, especially through associative mechanisms.

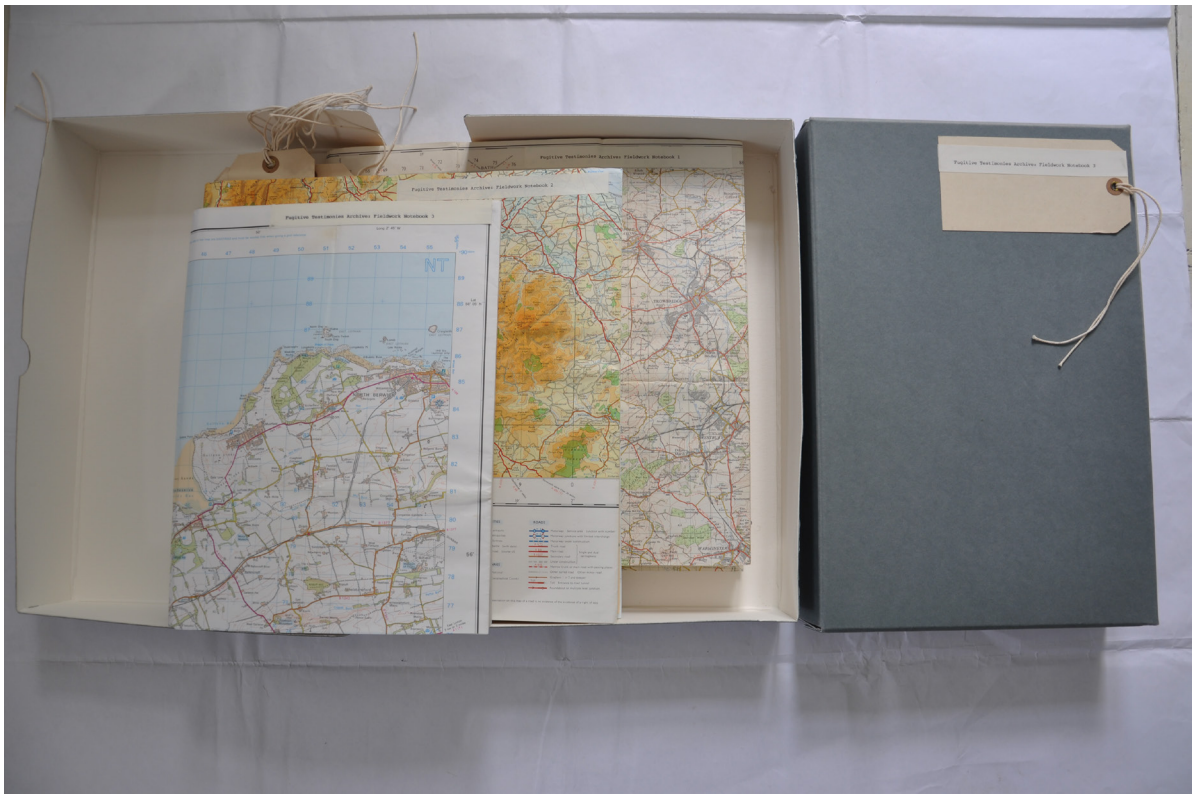
Artificial memory systems in the form of memory palaces (invented in c.556 BC–c.468 BC, and developed in the sixteenth century) are a critical focus to the connections between embodied interiorised memory (our individual memory store) and associative mechanisms, including transactive memory (the physical material photograph being an image memory stored externally). The art of memory is linked with my investigation in this study into the material photograph, as a visual *locus*, a place for personal and social memory within family photography. The method of *loci* is essentially a visual filing system allowing a systematic sense of recall, each location serving as a hook to which you visually connect, creating an image or scene to remember. Photographic memory that can occur naturally

mirrors this sense of visual order, as can episodic and autobiographical memory. In particular, in this study, to include collective memory of event, presence and absence, documented in photographs within the public archive, as this impacts on postmemory and the narratives of the next generation in terms of underscoring their personal and social memory.

Far more than a mere tool for passive retention of information, *the art of memory* had the ambition to be a toolkit for individual creative output and the solving of philosophical questions. The method I am researching in this practice-based study draws on the interdependence between textual and visual codes and the importance of association and order within a timeline for personal and social memory, often starting with childhood incidents which set up a chronology of memory for family.

Key texts: Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966); Roger Shattuck, *Proust's Way – A Field Guide to 'the Search for Lost Time'* (2000); Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (1990); Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007); Jonathan Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009).

Artists: Christian Boltanski, Susan Hiller, Taryn Simon, Jeremy Deller.



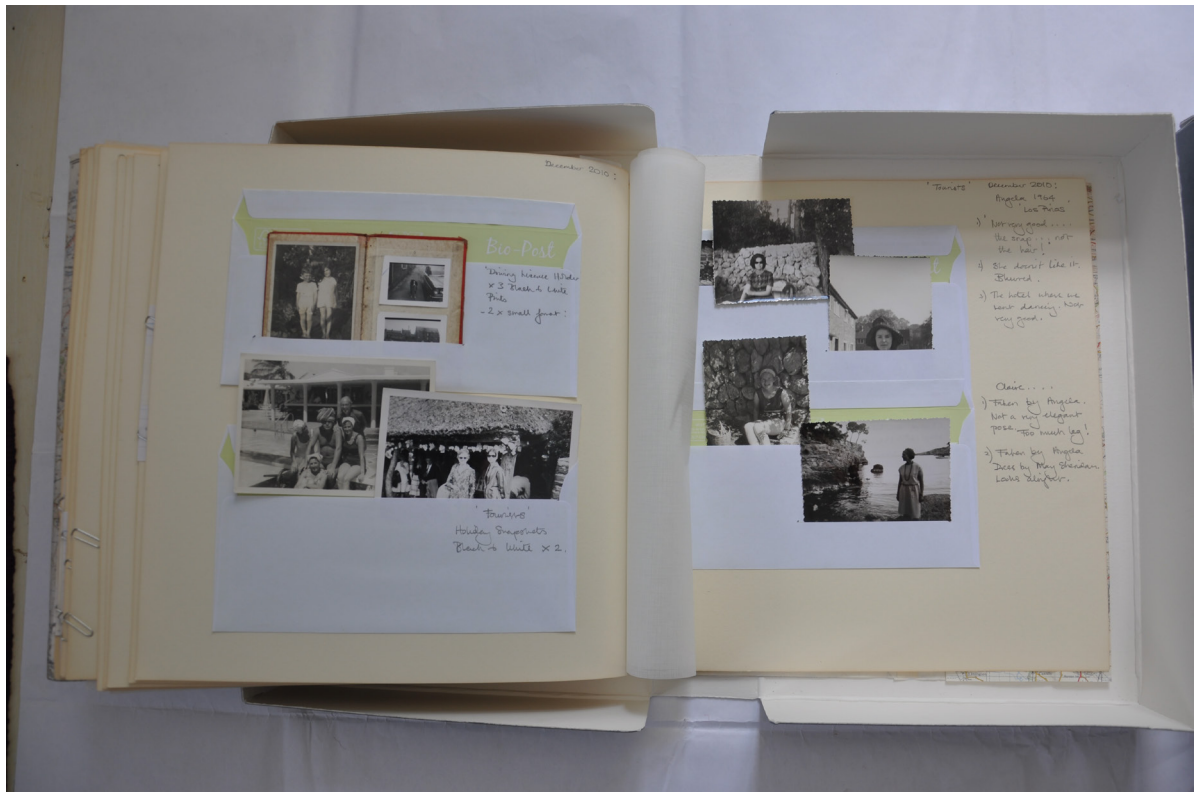
Su Fahy, *Fieldwork Notebooks 1, 2 and 3*, 2009–16.

Media: Found recycled photograph display albums, Ordnance Survey maps, found photographs, ephemera, critical notes – anecdotes, marginalia, snippets of conversation, observations filed in accordance with the fieldwork survey dates and set into cut archival slipcases.



Su Fahy, *Fieldwork Notebook 1*, 2009–11.

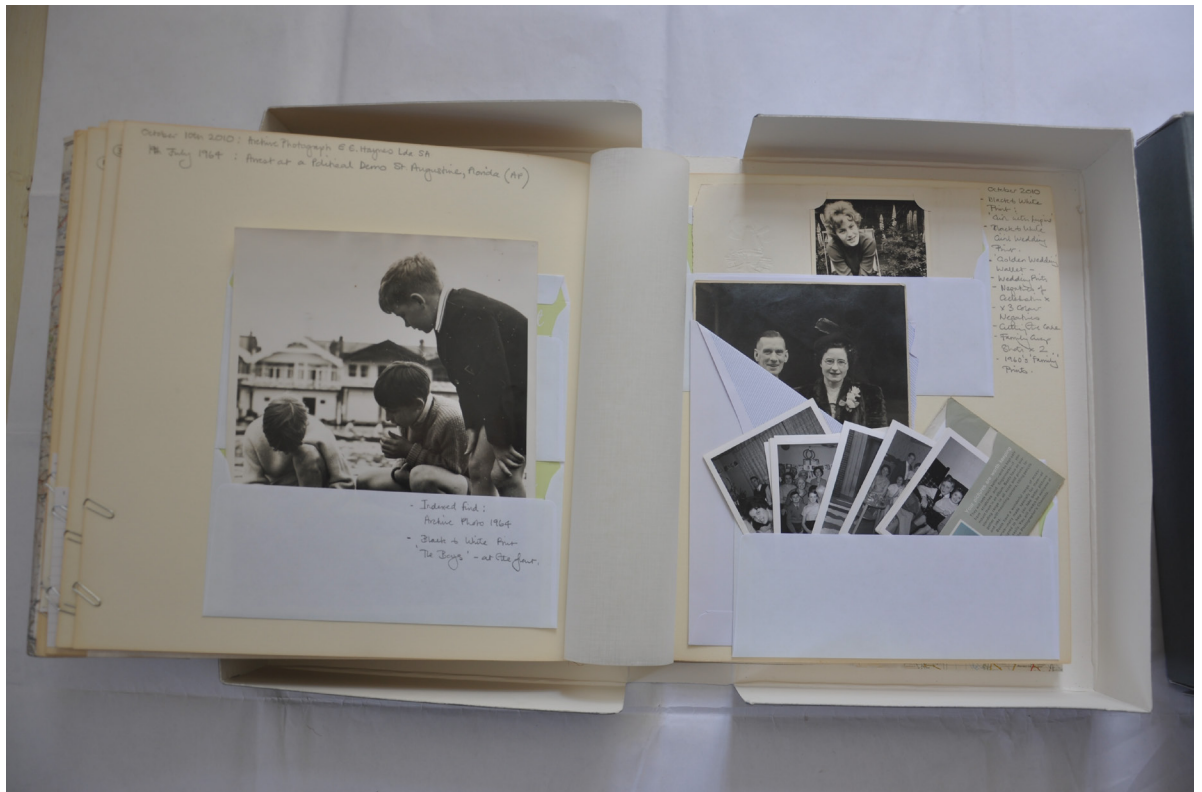
Media: photographs and ephemera assembled and indexed to the dates of the field-walking every two months January to December, with annotated site maps of exterior flea market area and interior flea market surveys.



Su Fahy, *Fieldwork Notebook 2*, 2011–13.

The collected images indexed, inviting further investigation into the small but often, complex histories of the family in all its plural senses – clan, race, household, familyhood, like family.

The *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* in these fieldwork notebooks re-presenting the discarded family photographs as they fade away from the narrative of a private life and for the next generation cuts off from the history that made them – untold or under-narrated but still social



Su Fahy, *Fieldwork Notebook Pages*, 2011 – with pencil notes and the emerging of thematic interpretations and indexing categories for the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive*:

Valuing the discarded – the used snapshots, conversations, anecdotes, concepts, processes, situations, information.³⁰²

Archive Categories:

home

family

campaign

³⁰² H. Szeemann, 'About the Exhibition', *When Attitudes Become Form* (London: Thomas Jenkins Ltd, 1969).

popular culture

biography

across geographies

exposure

society

anecdote (and written marginalia)



Su Fahy, *Peepshow Anecdotes Series*, 2012.

Outtake 1: *Small Histories – Peepshow Anecdotes Series*.

Media: Found colour hand tinted photograph circa 1930's

Recycled paper hand-made sleeve revealing and accentuating the necklace as the detail at the neck of a gown, the anecdote text, bespoke slipcase embossed in gold leaf.

Anecdote:

such trinkets are, after all
just the sort of glamorous

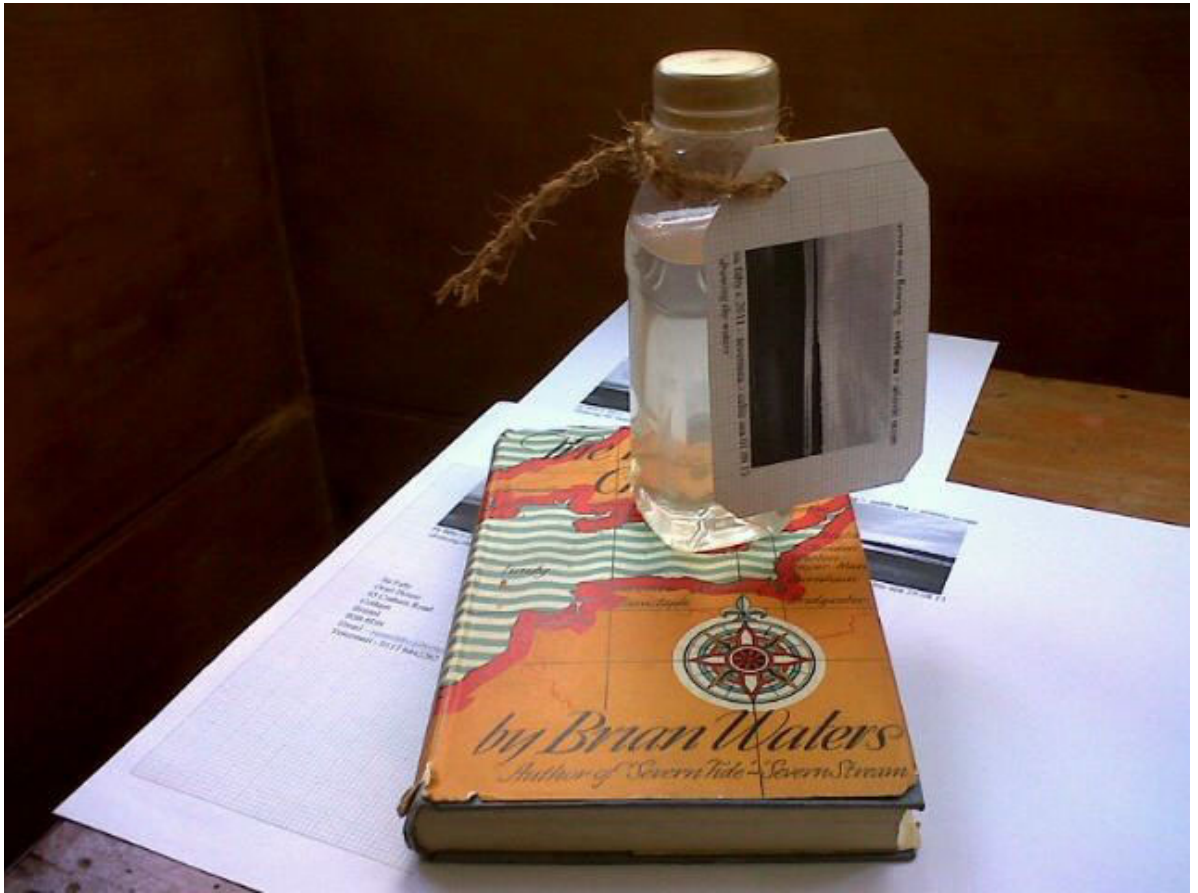
and tasteful talisman that
our broken society needs....

The Peepshow Anecdotes Series references Roland Barthes' textual analysis of the imprint of a detail (described by Barthes as the *punctum*) in reading a photograph.³⁰³ The series was inspired by this close re-reading, revealing the detail that I in particular note in each of the photographs selected for the series.

Barthes states:

A detail overwhelms the entirety of my reading;
it is an intense mutation of my interest,
a fulguration. By the mark of *something*, the
photograph is no longer 'anything whatever.'
This *something* has triggered me, has provoked
a tiny shock, a *satori*, the passage of a void
(it is of no importance that its referent is
Insignificant).

³⁰³ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Vintage, 2000), p.49:1-7.



Su Fahy, *Severn Sea*, 2014.

Outtake 2: *Small Histories – Peepshow Anecdotes Series*

Small Histories – Severn Sea exhibited as part of *Oceans: All the Seas* (2014), in association with Tania Kovats, e-flux project, The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh.

Media: Found text, found photographs, map, recycled label, setting out the history of a forgotten location, site-specific work with collected sea water.

The *Peepshow Anecdotes Series* reference preoccupations with personal and social memory, and anecdote that is prompted by the re-reading of found photographs. Thematic interpretations emerge that reflect environmental, economic and social differences between the coast and

inland. Family photographs through their record of scenes occupy these spaces differently. There are collections of photographs, overlooked and rejected from the 1800s to the 1970s, depicting the output and legacy of family and a sense of place, recording leisure, gender and class in coastal areas with now forgotten small histories.

The *Severn Sea* is recorded on maps and within marginalia on found family photographs but is now a forgotten and overlooked place. Research into the document discarded by families of their leisure on the golden sands led me to investigate its small histories. A desire to inhabit, as Barthes analyses in *Camera Lucida* (2000), in response to reading the scene in a photograph, 'Looking at these landscapes of predilection, it is as if I were certain of having been there or of going there ... Such then would be essence of landscape (chosen by desire).' ³⁰⁴

³⁰⁴ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.40: 1-14.



Su Fahy, *XIII Can't Take You Leaving Me, A Torch Song*, 2015.

Outtake 3: *Small Histories – Peepshow Anecdote Series*

Media: Found Ephemera Installation Work – card carton designed and made to contain: Photo-Album circa 1857, enclosed two black and white photographic prints circa 1940 found at different times, small retro torch to illuminate enclosed peepshow print, small notebook containing notes on books read in the 1930s as a list written by hand.

The piece is constructed from a reflection on collecting. Walter Benjamin in 'Unpacking My Library' provided a textual analysis of the act of collecting, the memories of sense of place and the act of encounter with his finds. Benjamin states: 'I am really concerned with giving you some insight into the relationship of a book collector to his possessions, into collecting rather than a collection ... the spring tide of memories which surges towards any collector as he contemplates his possessions.'³⁰⁵ Benjamin analyses in great detail the relationship of a collector to a collection. I have taken from the text this quote that influenced the order of *XIII Can't Take You Leaving Me, A Torch Song's* small catalogue of items, its small history:

The most profound enchantment for the collector is the locking of individual items within a magic circle in which they are fixed as the final thrill, the thrill of acquisition, passes over them ... for a true collector the whole background of an item adds up to a magic encyclopedia whose quintessence is the fate of the object.³⁰⁶

The found photographs and ephemera on re-reading them as separate outtakes from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* are from the 1850s for

³⁰⁵ Walter Benjamin, 'Unpacking My Library', in *Illuminations* (Pimlico, 1999), p.61: 19–25.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.62: 20–8.

the album, the 1930s for the notebook and the 1940s for the photographs of wartime weddings (without family guests). The aim of the research into collecting was to establish a set of parameters for an analysis of the act of collecting in the production of a photo-archive. The parameters identified were inclusive of the act of encounter for the collector of each of the finds, and the act of translation of 'the whole background of each item', as contextualised by Benjamin in order to develop a conceptual assemblage.³⁰⁷

The methods developed demonstrate the triangulation within *objective chance* of chance encounter, desire, and collection (possession) then the translation into developing a performative/conceptual process for producing artworks from discarded images of family archives.³⁰⁸ Again the assemblage plays with conceal/reveal as a method of drawing the audience into paying attention to the details revealed in the photographs. The assemblage itself is performative and reveals through active interaction (with the torch to view the album photograph) the relationship of the image memories to anecdote and marginalia. The assemblage is constructed to reveal connections to family preoccupations in recording personal and social memory within family photographs even if these photographs are subsequently discarded and become these fugitive stories open to discovery at the flea market. Significantly in most cases free from identification with a family representing in many cases self-censorship by the family within a construct of moral censorship.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ André Breton, *Mad Love*.



Su Fahy, *Oh Yeah DECCA!*, 2015.

Outtake 6: *Small Histories: Peepshow Anecdotes Series*.

Media: close-up view of contents, small hand-made notebook photo-album and pages / record sleeves.

The *Peepshow Anecdotes Series* was created as a series to reflect on collection as a process of engagement with finds (in this project photographs and associated ephemera) and on the different methods theorists and artists have used to engage with inspiration afforded by collecting. As a method of study, it has evolved into studying, in both the written and visual work, personal endeavour and a set of behaviours involving possession, ownership, use and re-use, re-cycling and visual ecology, indexing and ordering. Reading Roland Barthes on the encounter with the photograph, Walter Benjamin for the act of collecting, and Frances Yates on the art of memory has provided textual analysis to inform the impulses behind the fieldwork and development of the conceptual assemblages for this series.

Equally important for the series has been an analysis of the methods of artists who work with objective chance and the act of collecting from flea markets, some as a form of *urban archaeology* – André Breton, Christian Boltanski, Tacita Dean, Gerhard Richter, Joachim Schmid and Taryn Simon (see Chapter 4: *Collection*). Significantly these artists created collections of found photographs and documented their methods of the act of collecting, the encounter, and the catalytic valuation of objective chance and appropriation for the development of the tactics of a practice and for inspiration. A core text that analyses artists' ways of 'representing personal and societal memories, recalling, retracing, and giving a renewed presence to the past' is in *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2009) by Joan Gibbons.³⁰⁹ In particular, Gibbons looks at 'artists' ways of critiquing methods through which knowledge and data as aspects of memory, are ordered and stored by specialized and authoritative institutions, such as the museum and the archive', which links into Michel Foucault's considerations of discourse to contextualise knowledge held in institutions in *The Archaeology Of Knowledge* (1972).³¹⁰

The Glossary of Terms for Fugitive Testimonies has emerged for this study to define the terminology for the key terms of the project (located in Phase One: *Fugitive Testimonies Portfolio of Small Histories* situated as a section after Chapter 1). *The Glossary of Terms* is accompanied by a summary list of key and core texts and artists to map the development of the project through both textual analysis of theorists and the methods of artists/practitioners.

³⁰⁹ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.118: 7–13.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.118: 8–10.



Su Fahy, *Oh Yeah DECCA!*, 2015.

Outtake 6: *Small Histories: Peepshow Anecdotes Series*.

Media: Details of record-sleeve inserts, sepia family photographs and interleaved text, *The Chalk Mark*, from this artist's photo-book.

Chapter 2: Trace, Presence and Indexicality

2.1 Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to investigate in depth ‘these raw materials of an identity’ (my emphasis); the interrelationship of image as trace, the presence of memory and indexicality, in found material photographs –‘image memories’ – in order to establish its use and value with regard to inscribing our personal and social identity.³¹¹ The research aims to interrogate how memory inscribes our identity through the specificity of a level: that of the statement and the use of the photographic family archive. My practice will, I hope, be inflected and find a new voice through the investigation of the depth of knowledge framed within the material print and the effect of this reading.³¹² In particular, it will investigate the found photograph and what kind of presence it invokes as a fragment rummaged from outside of a state of ownership and history. Benjamin writes of ‘the totality of sensually experienced data’ in relation to material substructures.³¹³ He also discusses how linguistic transference enables us to give material form to the invisible and thus to render it capable of being experienced. This may affect how we read photographs transposed from their contexts and, critically, how we reference their indexicality.³¹⁴ Heidegger shares

³¹¹ John Berger influenced this interrelationship of trace and the raw materials of an identity by his statement in *Understanding a Photograph* (Penguin Classics, 2013), ‘what makes photography a strange invention – is that its primary raw materials are light and time’, p.61: 1–3.

³¹² John Berger, in *Understanding a Photograph*, states that, ‘The task of an alternative photography is to incorporate photography into social and political memory, instead of using it as a substitute which encourages the atrophy of any such memory’, p.57: 24–7.

³¹³ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp7–58.

³¹⁴ Piotr Sadowski, ‘The iconic indexicality of photography’, in P. Michelucci, O. Fischer and C. Ljungber (eds), *Semblance and Signification*, xiii (University of Toronto, University of Amsterdam, University of Zurich, 2011).

this interest in transposition, asserting that objects that can be saved and lifted into the present only by doing violence to their context in interpreting them with 'the deadly impact of new thoughts'.³¹⁵ 'The Task of the Translator',³¹⁶ as discussed in Benjamin's essay in *Illuminations* (1968), could be applied to the material, tangible photograph as a container of its own specificity of language and narrative, its unique combination of the iconic code (resemblance between image and referent) with indexicality.³¹⁷

2.2 Memory and the Photographic Archive

The analogue material photographic print is then the survivor of an era (context) where, until printed from the negative, it is seen as a 'latent image', unconfirmed and tentative in temporality. To clearly state its meaning in photography, it is the invisible configuration of silver halide crystals on a piece of film after exposure to image bearing focused light. It is distinguishable from unexposed silver halide only by its ability to be reduced to metallic silver by a developing image. Barthes discusses this temporality of the image developed into a paper print, by exploring how, in his view, the only way he can transform a photograph is into refuse, as he sees the common fate of a photograph related to its substrate being that of paper as inimitably perishable.³¹⁸ Barthes does, however, see the photograph as mortal, 'born on the level of the sprouting silver grains', existing, then ageing, as we do, attacked by light, humidity and the ravages of time.³¹⁹

This nature of the photograph as bearing witness in our times to its fragility in terms of survival is what relates to my investigation into how our personal and social identity is inscribed through reference to the specificity of personal witness offered by the photographs in a family archive. The personal visual history or witness is an exercise in memory practice by the act of interpreting photographs with 'deadly new thoughts' on each viewing. Building a narrative

³¹⁵ John Sallis, *Force of Imagination*, pp114–15, citing Heidegger, *Sein and Zeit*, pp66–8.

³¹⁶ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp70–92.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.73: 19–39.

³¹⁸ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp92–7.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp92–3.

that is a certain but fugitive testimony, Barthes sees this as acknowledging that there is no longer a certain duration affectively or symbolically for these material witnesses. If the material photograph is a container of its own specificity and language, then the question that Barthes poses in *Camera Lucida* (2000) is an important one to consider. Barthes asks, 'What it is that will be done away with, along with this photograph which yellows, fades and will someday be thrown out', discarded?³²⁰ He sees his own family photographs as 'love as treasure' which, if viewed by others, will not offer the specificity of personal affect and memory.³²¹ Barthes states that this provokes in him intense feelings of loss over the indifference that time brings to bear on images read out of time and context, when they lose that affect and narrative specific to their image memories. Identity is imprecisely related even to the imaginary.

Ulrich Baer underscores this point in his writing and states that photographs compel the imagination because they remain radically open-ended. Baer describes photographs as immutable and discusses our role as spectators or viewers as one of carrying the burden of imagining what could occur beyond the boundaries of the print in terms of spectral evidence unconfirmed and tentative in temporality.³²² Baer describes the striking parallel between the mechanical documentation of a photograph, the first stage of arrest and then the emotive arrest experienced by the psyche as a viewer of the photograph, which he sees as moments that bypass normal cognition and memory in relation to the image memories. Baer takes as his starting point for this line of enquiry the suggestion of Freud that the unconscious is structured like a camera.³²³ Baer, in particular, is focusing on trauma but he does draw on recent work in this field to show how experiences in general may be inherently split between their occurrence and their remembrance and so might register in and as photographic images. The photograph's apparent immunity to time is seen as a call for a future response,

³²⁰ Ibid., p.94: 7–10.

³²¹ Ibid., p.64: 14.

³²² Ulrich Baer, *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma* (MIT Press, 2002), p.9.

³²³ Cited in Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Third Edition, translated by A. A. Brill (New York: Macmillan, 1913).

a response that is prompted by the ghostly afterlife of every photograph's subject matter.

Baer has a persuasive argument about how to read a photograph and take these elements into our subsequent thinking as well as its fragility in terms of survival. Resemblance then refers if recognised to the subject's identity, but not so in a photograph as a truthful likeness, without the reading of it by an individual. The recognition of a genetic feature can recall for the viewer a family trait or narrative, and thereby offer an insight into lineage. This underscores the understanding that photography authenticates the existence of self and family members. This personal reading of images within the private domain offers to the individual the encounter with narratives invested in the events, portraits and testimonies to births, marriages and deaths recorded in these photographs. These are markers of their time and often reveal secrets and lies when revisited as happy image memories, for those scarred by family rifts and small histories revealed in adulthood.³²⁴ It is because of this effect that the photograph is a document of life lived and capable of raising emotions in the viewer of love, grief, desire, an encounter with a state of being. The photograph can then set up a dynamic in the viewer of a recognition of time passing, of the past, of the death of individuals there now in your hand, in the immediacy of reading and holding a photographic print but clearly not there in the present or the future. However, there is also, importantly, a recognition that objects from the past that remain or return into the consciousness of the living, present through a process of decay, which at the same time is recognised as being a process of crystallisation. This crystallisation, which can be of the forgotten and / or the discarded, survives to enter new forms in the considered present.

In this considered present of viewing a photograph, Barthes writes of the photograph separating attention from perception, becoming an action of thought. From a phenomenological viewpoint, he posits that 'in the photograph the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation'.³²⁵

³²⁴ Heidegger shares this interest in transposition and states that objects that can be saved and lifted into the present is only possible by doing violence to their context in interpreting them with the deadly impact of new thoughts.

³²⁵ Barthes, p.111.

Representation can however be affected by the role of the imaginary as related to personal and social identity, imagination is essential in the constitution of experience. The same operation of making present something that is absent is addressed by Albertus Magnus in his writings on the *imaginatio*, where he looks at the capacity for bringing back to presence 'sense images'.³²⁶ This is, in his view, determining that images are retained even where time carries the present being of images away. This operation, as he terms it, is in direct response to making something present that is absent in images 'perceptual passingness'. Magnus is cited by Yates in *The Art of Memory* (1966) as a scholar who revered Aristotle's work *De Anima* as a kind of memory treatise.³²⁷ My consideration at this point is to focus on where in these treatises memory was discussed in relation to the faculty of imagination in particular, rather than a wider reading of these classic texts.

Reading a photograph can then trigger the imagination through its catalyst as a presence, material to the touch and evocative in itself (see Image 2.1. R. Mapplethorpe: *Phil Glass and Bob Wilson* (2000)). Definitions offered by the Merriam-Webster dictionary of presence when perceived include: 'something (such as a spirit) felt or believed to be present' and 'a noteworthy quality of poise and effectiveness'.³²⁸

Related significant words that resonate with me as descriptors when reading photographs are: air, cast, shape, colour, habitus, habit, superficies and visage. Synonyms linked with presence are aspect, dress, figure, garb, look, mien and regard. Barthes links this presence in the photograph with being drawn intuitively to a detail while reading the surface which he calls the 'punctum'. His view is that its mere presence (this detail) which could be an air, a detail of a visage (as in his reading of a portrait of Philip Glass and Bob Wilson, in *Camera Lucida* (2000) changes his reading of the image and evokes a new reading

³²⁶ Albertus Magnus, 'De Apprehensione', pts. 3–4, in vol. 5 of *Opera Omnia*, edited by A. Borgnet (Paris, 1890), pp577–89.

³²⁷ Yates, *The Art Of Memory*, pp46–8.

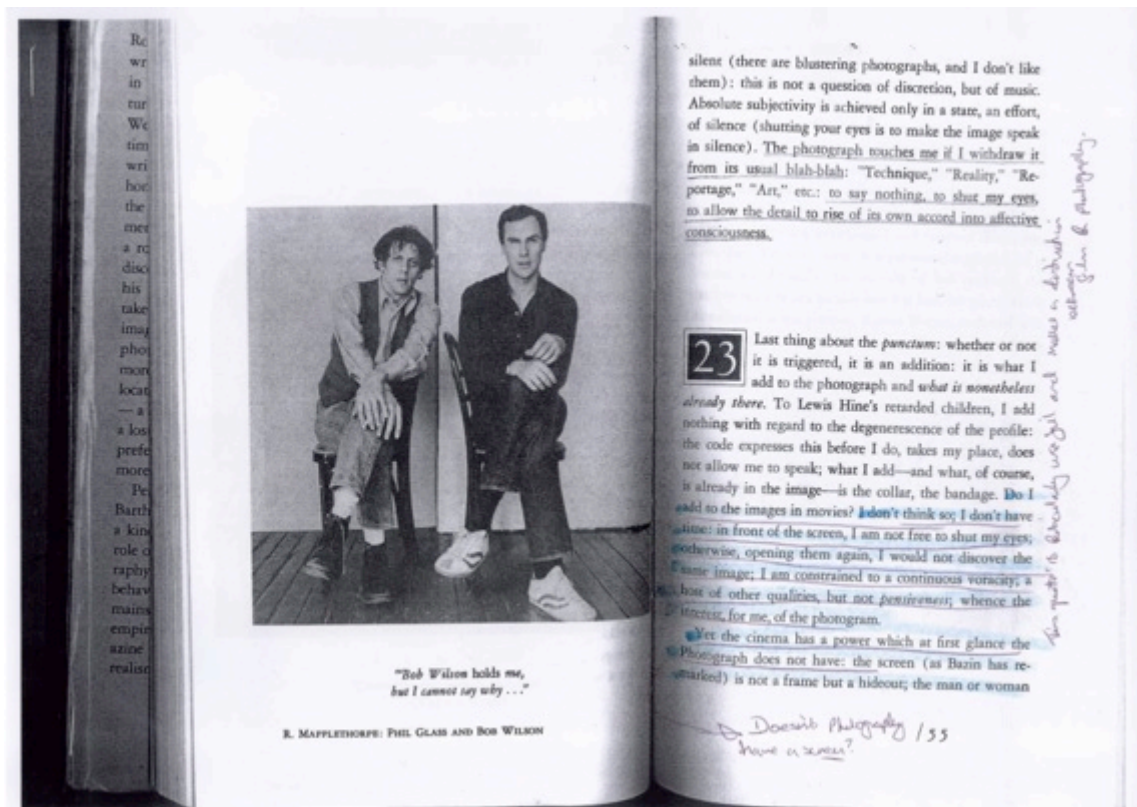
³²⁸ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/presence (accessed 12.5.17).

marked in his eyes with a higher value.³²⁹ Barthes states that this perception is not served by analysis but perhaps memory. He suggests that the 'punctum' has more or less potential for this power of expansion. I would interject here through imagination or memory, which underlines my argument in the reading of photographs that it is affect triggering both the imagination and memory, not its description, art or communication here at play but, for Barthes, 'it is "reference" that is the founding order of photography'.³³⁰ The term 'reference' guides my argument, as it is defined here in terms of this impulse for expiating an identity through its direct and real reference to what 'has been'. In effect, it is this exposure in the moment of viewing and its impact, which is under interrogation here. The tiny shock, moment of affect, intensity of experience underlines the reality of the recorded moments reflected in photographs. The reading of these moments directly links back into the 'sense images' where, in Magnus's view, images are retained even when time carries the present being of images away, 'a perceptual passingness'.³³¹

³²⁹ R. Mapplethorpe: Phil Glass and Bob Wilson, *Camera Lucida* (2000), p.54.

³³⁰ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp6–10.

³³¹ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp78–9.



2.1 R. Mapplethorpe: Phil Glass and Bob Wilson, in *Camera Lucida* (2000), artefact.

Presence is described by John Sallis as other than speech, so that 'One will never have said what presence means for presence is other than what can be meant through speech'.³³² How this presence can be articulated in the present I intend to explore further through considering narrative and aspects that are particular to narrative theories. Investigations enable the researcher to construct 'stories', sequences, even visual forms, from their data and personal imagination. After lengthy periods of observation and through subsequent association and order, compositions emerge to be described or transmitted to an audience. In this form, they become transmissions of culture.³³³

³³² John Sallis, *The Force of Imagination: The Sense of the Elemental* (Indiana University Press: 2000), p.73.

³³³ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Second Edition (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 'In Rhetoric, memory craft is a stage in composing a work...Its practitioners would not have been surprised to learn what was to them already obvious that recollection is a kind of composition and by its very nature is selective and formal', Chapter 4: The Arts of Memory, pp153–94.

Mary Carruthers, in *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (2008), states that, in present-day psychology, imagination needs to be separated from memory and recollection, lest these signature traces, these photographs of past events, be compromised and lose their truth value.³³⁴ However Carruthers recognises and retraces her considerations back to the medieval diagram and discusses the idea that what memory stores and presents again to cognition is an end product of imagination, feeling and prior thought. At the start of this process any direct traces of sensations (intuition and touch being two sensations under particular consideration here) are collected up at the start of the process in the 'sensus communis' and from the instant that they are received in bits and pieces from their various sources a fictive faculty, fantasia or imagination goes to work.³³⁵ The known is here catalogued and the unknown sought still through this dwelling on image memories and thought fragments engineering the imagination. John Sallis, in his book on *The Force of Imagination* (2000), explores this sense of the moment of synthesis. Sallis terms this moment of synthesis as the synthesis of reproduction, which he explains as bringing the manifold into a certain form. The form into which imagination forms, he proposes, is that of an image, so that 'Imagination has to bring the manifold into the form of an image maintaining that imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself.'³³⁶ Sallis then underscores this statement by reference to the writings of Kant, his view being that imagination is a fundamental faculty of the human soul.³³⁷

2.3 Identity, Memory and the Imagination

If it is the case 'that imagination is a fundamental faculty of the human soul' then it seems pertinent to investigate more fully imagination as the intermediary between perception and thought. Aristotle investigated perceptions as they

³³⁴ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (2008), Preface to the Second Edition, 'recollection is an act of investigation and recreation in the service of conscious artifice', which for me precisely relates to the concept of the staged and constructed photograph within propaganda and contemporary fine art photography.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, Chapter 4: The Arts of Memory, pp153–94.

³³⁶ Sallis, *The Force of Imagination*, p.66: 30–56.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.67: 27–9.

entered the thought process through the five senses. He then claimed that they were then first treated or worked upon by the faculty of imagination and the images so formed then became the material of intellectual faculty. Yates draws on her extensive reading of these texts to isolate an important quotation by Aristotle which she believes sets out an early tenet of belief around the relationship between memory and the imagination:

As has been said before in my treatise On the Soul about imagination, it is impossible to think without a mental picture ... Memory belongs to the same part of the soul as the imagination, it is a collection of mental pictures from sense impressions but with a time element added for the mental images of memory are not from perception of things present but of things past.³³⁸

A relationship to metaphor and the creation of a poetic site for recovery and memories is written into and exists throughout the introduction to and critique of Walter Benjamin by Hannah Arendt.³³⁹ Encounters with collections of photographs and ephemera can be said to set up a dialogue for the individual with their imagination and fuel a passion for creating a narrative around personal and social identity, memory and imagination. It is to this act of appropriation that I turn next, drawing on the work of the artist and photographer Tacita Dean, working with found images and ephemera from a flea market resulting in the book form titled *Floh* (2001).³⁴⁰ With these images there are no texts, as Tacita Dean states that she wanted them to retain the silence of the flea market, the silence they had when she found them, what she believes to be the silence of the lost object. Tacita Dean would like the work one day to return ownerless and silent to its origins in the flea market, detached from its maker and re-viewed in its pure present. This artist's body of work is one I discuss in more depth in Chapter 4: Collection.

The method of collecting is important to review in brief here, as Tacita Dean collected the photographs over a period of six years and only at a certain point in her encounters with these images did she realise she was creating a

³³⁸ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp46–7.

³³⁹ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, Hannah Arendt in the Introduction, pp7–55.

³⁴⁰ Tacita Dean, *Floh*, Frith Street Gallery Show (2001). There is also an artist's book in a limited edition containing found images selected and edited into this visual exhibition form.

collection. This could be viewed as an encounter derived from perceptual concerns rather than sociological concerns, and one not directly associated with memory although the images do reflect human presence and the past through their intrinsic nature. The encounter with the images is personal to the collector, the appropriation, then the subsequent order that is chosen for their viewing does establish the artist as editor and maker of a new visual form. It is an act of art direction, which relates to the earlier example of constructing and staging an event with appropriated material imported into the set so to speak. A question to open up the motivation behind making works that evoke memory and speak of the collector's impulse is set out in the text *Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affects and Art after 9/11* (2012), in which Jill Bennett asks this question, perhaps opening up the act of collecting and re-presentation to closer scrutiny: 'If art can in some way evoke "the pure event" as a virtuality, the test is whether the virtual event [read here in the context of my argument as the artwork or installation] is then amenable to different actualities?'³⁴¹ Collecting, especially of quotations, described in this introduction by Arendt as 'thought fragments', was a pattern that became established in Benjamin's work, reflecting his individual passion for connecting to the valuable, the potentially fugitive statements and thoughts which fuelled his own reflections and memories.³⁴² It is to this practice of valuing the fragments of genuine insights into the human condition, image memories and their relation to personal and social identity that offers an investigation into the trajectory of this methodology. Arendt discusses the primacy of this mode of collection: 'In so far as the past has been transmitted as tradition, it possesses authority; insofar as authority presents itself historically, it becomes tradition.'³⁴³

These thought fragments are quotations of their time and Arendt discusses them as having the double task of interrupting the flow of the presentation of transcendent force and at the same time of concentrating within themselves that which is presented.³⁴⁴ The value here of 'genuineness', which is decisive for the collector, is determined by that person and replaces the cult value and its

³⁴¹ See Jill Bennett, *Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affects and Art after 9/11* (I.B. Tauris, 2012).

³⁴² Benjamin, *Illuminations*, Hannah Arendt in the Introduction, p.43: 25–34.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.43: 1–3.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.43: 20–34.

secularisation. It is this set of intellectual journeys of exploration that stand Benjamin apart as a 'flâneur' and collector, making him more like an expeditionary and certainly not in the public realm as a visitor or tourist. Closely connected with this impulse of the collector is the fetish character, which Benjamin explicitly claimed for collected objects.³⁴⁵ This sense of interruption or rupture is in itself an act of intervention, especially the selection process which enables Benjamin as a collector familiar with his objects to influence or alter the situation where he employs these 'thought fragments', changing their inherent indexicality and interrupting the flow of a conversation. This juxtaposition of statements relates to André Breton,³⁴⁶ particularly to the surrealist model of collecting and creating montage, or collaged images and texts, reflecting inner systems of responses (automatism and the exquisite corpse) to imagination and psychological mores.³⁴⁷

Benjamin states that he comes alive as he lives within the objects and not in any sense the other way around, that they inhabit him as the collector. Tacita Dean in contrast uses her encounters with the visual – drawings, photographs and ephemera – to explore the ways that chance and coincidence influence daily life, constructing narratives that connect past and present, fact and fiction,

³⁴⁵ Ibid., p.62: 13–35.

³⁴⁶ André Breton, *Nadja* (Grove Press, 1928), Breton as the artist was able to give his abilities of free association the will to triumph over convention. Breton strings together incidental phenomena into a narrative.

André Breton, *Mad Love*, translated by M.A. Caws (University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

³⁴⁷ Surrealist artists used the technique of automatism to explore fear, desire, fantasy, eroticism and symbolism. They often expressed and pondered images and ideas through writing and making art. Artists who employed automatism investigated the true abstraction of their subconscious, and relied on various forms of chance art such as *frottage*, *grottage*, *decalcomania*, and *exquisite corpse*.

Frottage was a technique of rubbing graphite, crayon, or similar media over different surfaces. Transferring textures would suggest to an artist the most provocative approach to composing an image. This was a process that cultivated natural artistic expression, since the artist did not have any control over the resulting textures.

Grattage was the same technique used in painting.

Decalcomania was a process of smearing paint over a slab of glass and pressing it against paper. Unusual results guided by chance allowed the artists to observe their ideas without controlling the process.

Finally, *exquisite corpse* was a surrealist game that required writers to arrange random words into absurd sentences.

Veristic Surrealism or *Illusionism* was an opposite approach that stressed the importance of depicting the unconscious as concretely as possible. Artists stayed true to their visions, portraying them with academic realism, photographic precision, and clarity. This movement inspired a wide range of creative drives and contributions to the history of art.

private histories and larger events. There are, however, continuities shared between Benjamin and Dean in their compulsion to archive forgotten fragments of history. In 'Unpacking My Library', Benjamin's essay about book collecting, he states that, 'the collector's passion borders on the chaos of memories. More than that: the chance, the fate, that suffuse the past before my eyes are conspicuously present in the accustomed confusion of these books.'³⁴⁸ The life of a collector, says Benjamin, has a very mysterious relationship with ownership; he sees the collector's relationship with objects as not emphasising their functional, utilitarian value but as loving and studying them as the scene, the stage of their fate. For Dean it is the chance encounter which matters, while for Benjamin it is the thrill of acquisition, along with the eventual fate of his object. Dean's *Floh* (2000) silently eulogises analogue photography and its particular capacity to evoke the physical sensation of the snapshot encounter, in relation to Benjamin's text, offers up the notion of the collector as a person possessed with a tactical instinct, experiencing new places through exploration of depositories of ephemera and, in his case, the pursuit of a chance encounter with books. It is the common factor of this idea of rescue and its memory, which mark the find abandoned in the marketplace and bought to give it its freedom.

2.4 Indexicality and Memory

Dean is drawn to objects that bear the indexical marks of weather, age and use for example the well-thumbed print due to love, contact and memory. The distinctive character of the material analogue photograph has prompted here photographic art practices that mine the medium for its specificity. Peirce, in his writing on the typology of signs, recognised that the photograph has a particular indexical relation to the real. Peirce further qualified this statement by noting the important characteristic of a photograph's physical connection to the thing photographed. This recognition offered another observation, that the photograph 'is in dynamical connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses of memory of the person for whom it serves as a

³⁴⁸ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.61: 25–6, p.62: 1–3.

sign, on the other'.³⁴⁹ The openness to chance, and the medium's indexicality twinned with its photochemical continuity with the world, offer to it a definition of a continuous form of inscription involving physical contact. The nature of this capacity within photography is discussed by Sontag, reinforcing this argument:

However carefully the photographer intervenes in setting up and guiding the image-making process, the process itself remains an optical-chemical (or electronic) one, the workings of which are automatic, the machinery of which will inevitably be modified to provide still more detailed, and therefore more useful, maps of the real.³⁵⁰

The collector operates a form of salvage and, through his/her perception and force of imagination, revitalises found material forms (objects), preserving and continuing access to their image memories. This action defeats perceived obsolescence and enables in Dean's work images to be preserved and re-presented to new audiences. In a method deviating from the conventional habituated ways of presenting photographs with associated texts or marginalia to give us a 'hook' or clue to the events and identities on view. The work evokes memory and culture through innovative reuse and re-presentation, testament to the distinct qualities of a medium.³⁵¹ How then to address the notion of nostalgia associated with the collector? Their encounter with an object or medium is an encounter with the real, forcing a migration from the lost to the found retrieving and publishing lost memories. This correlation to nostalgia could be mitigated on considering again the surrealists' favoured attitude, which involved openness to whatever befalls one. Thus, a practice of collecting could be said to involve not nostalgia *per se* but a process of noticing, regarding and editing material

³⁴⁹ Charles S. Peirce, 'Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs, c.1897–1910, in Robert Innis (ed.), *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology* (Indiana University Press, 1985), p.8: 15.

³⁵⁰ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (Penguin Classics, 1977), p.158: 3–9.

³⁵¹ Margaret Iversen, 'On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', *Critical Inquiry* 38(4), *Agency and Automatism: Photography as Art Since the Sixties*, edited by Diarmud Costello, Margaret Iversen and Joel Snyder (University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp796–818. See also Michael Newman, 'Medium and Event in the Work of Tacita Dean', in *Tacita Dean* (Tate, 2001), p.26: 5–18.

memories for future audiences, due to personal preoccupations and force of imagination.³⁵²

Within this tradition, openness, together with the automatism of the camera and the indexical nature of analogue film, result in a genre of photography that is marked by contingency and seared by reality. The recent work of Dean *c/o Jolyon* (2012–13), see images 2.2 and 2.3, looks at images revisited after 70 years, invoking the power of the imagination to re-present these images with subtle shifts of memory and the pace of the real world – not, and I would emphasise this, as a nostalgic tribute.³⁵³ Benjamin states that the phenomenon of collecting loses its meaning when it loses its owner, but we have in Dean's works a clear connection to the objects as well as a direction for the collected items to find a new audience through exhibition or through the intimate viewing of her artist's books, again described as having a clear place in contemporary art collections.³⁵⁴ The concept of intimacy returns us to Benjamin's observation that ownership is the most intimate relationship one can have with objects. Tellingly, in Dean's text on *Floh* (2000), she referred to the found photographs as, 'lost object[s] rather than images'.³⁵⁵ This is the trajectory of a mode of photography that is disappearing: the analogue print, which many artists not only value but are driven to appropriate for, as Dean says, 'the act of a messy and necessary kind of memory'. Dean has written, 'I have always believed that art works best when it responds to the autobiography of the viewer.'³⁵⁶

Benjamin's view that the most distinguished trait of a collection is always its transmissibility, carrying with it a responsibility for its continuation, is reflected in Dean's work.³⁵⁷ Her revitalisation of parts of collections and the reordering of

³⁵² Iwona Blazwick. Introduction to Gerhard Richter, *Atlas: the reader* (Whitechapel, 2003), pp11–13.

³⁵³ Tacita Dean, *c/o Jolyon* (2012–13), 100 original postcards of Kassel in Germany over-painted in gouache by the artist with contemporary views of the same site.

³⁵⁴ Margaret Iverson, 'Analogue: On Zoe Leonard and Tacita Dean', *Critical Enquiry* 38 (4), 2012, pp796–818.

Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.68: 20–3.

³⁵⁵ Mark Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', on Tacita Dean's *Floh*, *October* 114, Fall 2005, p.109: 31–32, p.114: 22–3.

³⁵⁶ Tacita Dean, *An Aside*, exh. cat. (London: Hayward Gallery, 2005), p.5.

³⁵⁷ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.68: 13–15.

their inherent properties are beyond nostalgia for the ending of a set of practices, and are more akin to respect for and, one could say, personal obsession with the accidental skill of amateur photographers to reveal and expose chance memory and stimulate imagination in the viewer.³⁵⁸



2.2 Tacita Dean, *c/o Jolyon* (2012–13)

³⁵⁸ See Mark Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost', On Tacita Dean's *Floh*, October no.114, Fall 2005.



2.3 Tacita Dean, One Postcard Image from the series, *c/o Jolyon* (2012–13)

In regard to imagination John Sallis draws together the argument for disclosure and truth only by the force of imagination and states that imagination sees nothing in advance, if indeed it sees anything at all.³⁵⁹ He goes further, to say that it is by nature tractive and its force solely that of drawing and only by drawing can it bring something forth. He sees the aspects of the original and the memorial as forming the key interplay here. Composition, the forming of a creative disclosure with the self, enables in his view an artist to act at the site of imagination.³⁶⁰ He cites poetic imagination as the vehicle to bring the artwork forth by composing it in such a way that it brings something forth. An exorbitant trait of imagination could be said to be its mixing of presence and absence, making present something utterly absent from view and yet, in Sallis's words, 'only then seen to have been already there'.³⁶¹ Then we could regard the artist's intention as essentially an act of interpretation, allowing for the movement from image to a new visual form, thus enabling a new meaning to

³⁵⁹ Sallis, *The Force of The Imagination*, p.105.

³⁶⁰ See the work of artists Christian Boltanski, Gerhard Richter and Tacita Dean.

³⁶¹ Sallis, *The Force of The Imagination*, pp105–6.

take shape out of another, operating on an 'imaginal margin' particular to the identity and imagination of that individual.³⁶² Identity is imprecise and related to the imaginary, according to Barthes, so we have the beginning of a consensus view that there is a relationship to be investigated between personal and social identity, the force of imagination and the presence of memory.³⁶³

The triangular nature of this relationship is to be found within Tacita Dean's film *JG* (2013), which references personal identity in investigating the artist Robert Smithson and the force of his imagination (related to Sallis's theories) that created the land artwork *Spiral Jetty* (1970).³⁶⁴ The presence of memory in the film work she creates operates as an act of interpretation. The work holds to her concept of working with encounter and developing ideas through research and development of capture through a specific medium which is capable of creating a synergy of composition, particular to presence and absence and its interplay within memory. Allowing Dean to work at the imaginal margin, developing our relation to imagination and images, bringing into play a new way of viewing images through a lens, using 'aperture gate masking', which operates as a labour-intensive process of constructing a composition of images. Unexposed film is run through the camera multiple times giving each frame the capacity to traverse time and location in ways that parallel J.G. Ballard's fiction mixing landscape and time in the same frame. The title of this piece *JG* (2013), (J. G. Ballard) is a homage to this evocation. The short story that is referenced in the work is *The Voices of Time* written in 1960 and itself seeking to unravel the mysteries of constructed landscape and time, evoking the work of Smithson though not revealing a clear parallel with his personal identity. The film now offers a new reading of Smithson's work in particular its absence as Dean never found the location of the *Spiral Jetty* (1973) in Utah, United States of America, so the film references its presence in memory and its absence evoked through an engineering of the artist's imagination. Made entirely on location in Utah, where the jetty is sited, using 35 mm film, the process Dean uses could be said

³⁶² Imaginal: adjective, relating to imagination, images or imagery, first known use 1647, Merriam-Webster dictionary. www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/imaginal (accessed 12.5.17).

³⁶³ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp85–8.

³⁶⁴ Tacita Dean, *JG* (2013).

to restore the spontaneity and invention that distinguished early cinema. Dean herself says about the process that it is clearly about risk, which she feels is now not afforded to the artist by digital post-production. The act of interpretation in response to the landscape also uses the act of drawing and collage, offering a return for film to the artisanal and physical medium it was at its origin – see image 2.4 for this imagined crystal landscape, denying representation itself but in this film still evoking the work’s presence in its literal absence. What is affected here is the flow of history of a medium, interrupted by a re-presentation of a medium, flexible and responsive in the here and now, no longer outmoded and again referencing risk.



2.4 Tacita Dean, *JG* (2013), Film Still.

The ‘risk’ taken by Dean translates into new work, which reflects on the relationship between small histories, traces of obscurity and the idea of the artist as alchemist interpreting the historical process as a magical transfiguration.

Germaine Greer, in a catalogue essay on Tacita Dean as artist, supports this:

Tacita Dean’s art can be thought of as following the ancient narrative of journey, like a picaresque novel without a hero. It is not a Bildungsroman in which the protagonist’s character is delineated and developed because the subject is not the seer but the seen. The presentation is deceptively artless, though one is often conscious of arbitrary discontinuities like eye blinks or the interruptednesses of memory.³⁶⁵

Every artist dealing with the phenomenon of the photograph as an original ‘image memory’ which unfolds across time therefore requires an attention to

³⁶⁵ Germaine Greer, ‘Tacita Dean’, in *Tacita Dean* (Tate, 2005), p.41: 11–17.

documents and diachronic elements that cannot but follow the laws of historical philology. The point here is that this attention relates closely to Foucault and his focus on discourse, with the critical necessity to pay attention to the discourse circulating at the time of production, its written records and their authenticity, offering a determination of meaning relevant to that time, the latent discourse.³⁶⁶ The artist as enquirer is then an intelligible presence as much as the past of his or her object. Critical judgement of a work, in Benjamin's view, turns on a basic question – namely, whether the work's shining truth content is due to its subject matter or whether the survival of the subject matter is due to its truth content.³⁶⁷ The question of the relationship with critique is further explored in the sense of the history of a work of art, with, in Benjamin's view, historical distance increasing a work's intrinsic power. It is perhaps the case that Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1973) has not only this historical distance but has inherited the mantle of an increase in its intrinsic power to captivate the viewer's imagination through the visual interpretation of Dean's filmic encounter. Certainly, it is a piece that exists in our cultural memory as one of the most iconic pieces of land art rather than a scrap of history which, in Benjamin's desire to capture the portrait of history, would be valuable in itself. This constant attempt by the critic to look again at 'the unknowns' created by investigating 'the known' enables the artist, in this case Tacita Dean, to elaborate 'the known' and engage in the creative thinking of a re-framing that, in the view of critics such as Benjamin and Agamben, may eventually lay claim to originality.³⁶⁸

Creative thinking locates the presence of memory for the spectator who invests in the power invested in the psychological and phenomenological effect of the photograph. Investing in the psychological and phenomenological effect of the photograph is at the point for the spectator where they meet the image with a prior corpus of knowledge, an archive of varying images ready to be drawn upon. Affect is a key for the individual encounter rather than only a purely factual or objective encounter with the photograph as a document establishing a

³⁶⁶ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp192–3.

³⁶⁷ Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.11.

³⁶⁸ Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, p.102: 3–20

truth beyond mere appearance (and is related to Barthes theory of the 'studium' and 'punctum').³⁶⁹ The effect of this is to produce a typology of personally inflected knowledge based on the visual image they encounter. Infused in all visual culture is the notion of the body whether it is in its absence, its consumption, its abjection or its seduction. Dean is allowing us to re-experience the past in her work as she interprets it as an individual, which exposes the self and the narcissistic function of nostalgia. However, as proposed before, it is critical to understand the role of nostalgia here as a chance for the individual (in this case the artist, Dean) to reassess the past through a particular perspective discarding this associated label. I would conclude here that it is a powerful mode of practice to construct the art of memory of a past cultural event and its practices in the pursuit of a present truth. Agamben, in his chapter on 'Philosophical Archaeology', discusses the question of gaining access to a past that has not been lived through, and that cannot therefore be technically defined as 'past' but that somehow has remained present:

it is a matter of conjuring up its phantasm, through meticulous genealogical enquiry, in order to work on it, deconstruct it, and detail it to the point where it gradually erodes, losing its originary status. In other words archaeological regression is elusive: it does not seek, as in Freud, to restore a previous stage, but to decompose, displace, and ultimately bypass it in order to go back not to its content but to the modalities, circumstances, and moments in which the split constituted it as origin, only at this point is the unlived past revealed for what it was contemporary with the present. It thus becomes accessible for the first time exhibiting itself as 'a source'.³⁷⁰

This notion of a history, a past and obsolescence threatening a future is interrogated by Dean, working in a moment of time with a portrait of film itself in this moment of time. This work *JG* (2013) and her previous work, aptly just called *Film* (2011), together reference the visual culture and I would posit power of a medium only 125 years old.³⁷¹ Film is a medium that not only holds a

³⁶⁹ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp51–5.

³⁷⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things: On Method* (Zone Books, 2009), p.102: 26–35, p.103: 42–4.

³⁷¹ Tacita Dean, *FILM*, edited by Nicolas Cullinan (Tate Publishing, 2011), 'With an introductory essay on Tacita Dean's work by Nicholas Cullinan and a new text by the artist, *FILM* is an important contribution to one of the most urgent cultural debates of our time.'

history in image-making, inclusive of analogue photography, and in visual culture but in itself references creation and the power of now. This refutes the consideration of nostalgia as the relation between this medium and its referents, in my view. The exploration and critical evaluation of Dean's work underscores this view, as explicated by Newman and Mark Godfrey.³⁷²

2.4 Artists as Collectors

Artists are constantly mining multiple sources and collecting through spotting, chance encounter, appropriation and the re-photographing of original photographs, making the copy of a copy and so creating more images in the public domain. By appropriating mementoes, often of an event or events from other people's lives, and placing them in an art context, Boltanski, for example, explores the power of photography to transcend individual identity and to function instead as a witness to collective rituals and shared cultural memories in private and popular culture. The concepts of collective memory and postmemory are fully explored and expanded in Joan Gibbons and Marianne Hirsch's texts.³⁷³ The collection of images he appropriates is installed at random, thereby consciously prohibiting the implication of a singular narrative.³⁷⁴ Many of his works hint at event, especially in relation to the trauma of the Holocaust, an event that marks the photograph as witness, as testimony, but here the artist, in installations like *Humans* (2004) and *Reflexion* (2000), obfuscates that clarity and provides no context delineating the fates of each individual and in no way valorising their status as victim or criminal, the living or the dead.

³⁷² Michael Newman, 'Medium and Event in the work of Tacita Dean', in *Tacita Dean* (Tate Gallery Publishing, 2001) pp24–31; Mark Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost: On Tacita Dean's *Floh*', *October* 114, Fall 2005.

³⁷³ Joan Gibbons, "'Postmemory: The Ones Born Afterwards', in *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp.73–95; Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

³⁷⁴ Rebecca Caines, 'Christan Boltanski: Representation and the Performance of Memory', in *Afterimage* 32(1), July/August, 2004. Caines discusses the work of Boltanski – 'Boltanski seems happiest articulating, questioning and unsettling the conceptions of mnemonics through the complexities of the photographic medium. Revisiting Boltanski it is thus possible to map memory not just as a host of floating signifiers nested in fragile physiologies, but a performative form, a set of concurrences which hover between original and copy, a theatrical source of creativity', Introduction.



2.5 Christian Boltanski, *Humans* (2004)

In the Installation *Humans* (2004) (see image 2.5 for the scale and presentation strategy of this installation), the scaling of the photographs suggests this equality, despite their random sourcing, and thereby the form of this work endows the images with an intermingling of emotion and history, juxtaposing innocence and guilt, truth and deception, sentimentality and profundity. Utilising in this work a strategy of creating a unity of format which references a history of specific scale and framing in the photographic print (an example being school photographs and passport photographs), it connotes belonging, a group setting and personal identity and intervenes in the way we view the photographs, creating a new context for their reception.³⁷⁵ Hal Foster speaks of the artist as archivist as a new figure who follows that of the artist as curator. A figure who has made or differentiated the processes of archiving central to his or her

³⁷⁵ See for an in-depth interview with the artist, *The Possible Life of Christian Boltanski: Essays, Criticisms, and Biographies*, Christian Boltanski and Catherine Grenier, translated by Marc Lowenthal with a foreword by Luc Sante (Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts, 2009).

methods of practice, developing alternate discourses and association and order, to that of the museum or collection bound by traditional and familiar practices.³⁷⁶

In contrast, Richter's *Atlas* (2007) considers photography and its various practices as a system of ideological domination, more precisely as one of the instruments with which collective social instability, unrest, amnesia and repression are socially inscribed. (See image 2.7 for a sample page set out as an exemplum of this selection and juxtaposition albeit documenting family in social spaces.³⁷⁷) It is to this attribute of photography since its inception that he alludes, the close and revealingly awkward relationship with aspects of social repression and crime, deployed in the identification and classification of transgressions and deviant behaviour, posing evidentiary and procedural problems from the outset in its documentary role. In particular, Richter has used media photographs to re-present his own disquiet with political instability creating *October 18, 1977*; this work recreates scenes from the life of the Baader-Meinhof Gang in Germany in the 1970s.³⁷⁸ This series sees Richter constructing a suite of paintings from a series of live press photographs; although out of focus and monochrome, with their reference to collected photographs they act as an iconic intermediary between reality and representation; see image 2.6.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Hal Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', *October* 110, Fall 2004, pp3–4. Foster cites Tacita Dean and Mark Dion as artists whose practice reflects this engagement with differentiated archival practice among others in this article.

³⁷⁷ *Gerhard Richter: Atlas: the reader*, edited by Iwona Blazwick, Janna Graham, Sarah Auld (Whitechapel Gallery, 2003).

³⁷⁸ Gerhard Richter, *October 18* (1977), a series of paintings acting as an outtake from *Atlas* (2007) created from collected press clippings and photographs from the German media, *Stern Magazine*.

³⁷⁹ See Robert Storr, *Gerhard Richter: October 18, 1977* (Museum of Modern Art, 2000). Also for an in-depth analysis of Richter, both practice and theory – Darryn Ansted, *The Artwork of Gerhard Richter, Painting, Critical Theory, and Cultural Transformation* (Routledge, 2016).



2.6 Gerhard Richter, Baader-Meinhof Photographs, October 18, 1977



2.7 Gerhard Richter, *Atlas*, Family Album Pages (2007)

Both these artists have demonstrated the intention to juxtapose a trace of trauma and crime within the visual beauty of photography to curate and create portraits of people in their uncertain identities. Hirsch places the work of Boltanski firmly within the category of postmemory, his works being seen by her as a positive response to representing the Holocaust; Boltanski is discussed as a producer of postmemory where trauma and the crime of genocide are coexistent.³⁸⁰ The concept does not celebrate crime but utilises its mnemonic trace so that each time these works are viewed there is the chance to see afresh and be open to new interpretations and conclusions. Again, this concept is explored by Joan Gibbons in *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007), in Chapter 5, 'Enactments, Re-enactments and Episodic Memory'.³⁸¹

Richter also expressed this discrepancy between images depicting crime, its events, records and perpetrators, for an audience in *October 18, 1977*, in an interview: 'so of course at the time I had no sympathy for the ideas, or for the ideology that these people represented. I couldn't understand, but I was still impressed. Like everyone, I was touched.'³⁸²

In 2006, an exhibition that reflects this intensity of photography's capacity to capture events and create images of notoriety was *City Of Shadows* at the Police Museum in Sydney Australia, which used their archive of undocumented police photographs taken between the 1900s and the 1950s. Peter Doyle, the exhibition's curator, stated that one of the aims of the exhibition and its installation was to juxtapose the trauma of crime and its capture with the aesthetic of photography and its visual beauty.³⁸³ Jerome Bruner describes narrative constructions as only being able to achieve verisimilitude as versions of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and narrative necessity rather than by empirical verification and logical required-ness. Bruner develops

³⁸⁰ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Harvard University Press, 1997), pp256–64.

³⁸¹ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp96–117.

³⁸² Interview with Gregoire Magnani, 1989, in *Gerhard Richter: Text, Writings, Interviews and Letters, 1961–2007*, p.221.

³⁸³ K. Biber, 'Photographs and Labels: Against a criminology of innocence', *Law Text Culture* 10, 2005.

on this train of thought by saying that we ironically seem to have no compunction about telling stories whether true or false. Bruner describes storytelling as one of the most widely used forms of organising human experience.³⁸⁴ To support this in relation to photographs, Marianne Hirsch argues that the referentiality of a photograph persists even if it is only described and not reproduced.³⁸⁵ Her view is that description itself is always also interpretation, but of course no other viewer can contest this, as in Barthes' photograph of his mother, described as visually present in its affect in the text of *Camera Lucida* (2000), but never reproduced in the public domain.³⁸⁶

2.5 Memory and Inscription of the Image

I now go back to reflect on the juxtaposition of narrative, memory and identity within the work of Sebald, *The Emigrants* (1997), *Austerlitz* (2001) and *The Rings of Saturn* (2002). Here, the narrator's 'postmemory' is seen as a hybrid construction consisting of and mediated through the narratives of others. The narrators implied by continuity, referencing the photographs and captioning of the family album, the many interpretations or stories that the narrator calls on to create their fiction. Sebald will include visual images (embedded photographs), not because they underscore the narrative but because they present the viewer with another imaginary which the text alone cannot provide.³⁸⁷ This introduces the uncertainties of the narrator. The methodology of incorporating these 'stray photographs' (black and white prints) which symbolise the author's story is a specific method of bricolage familiar to artists as a practice, a personal

³⁸⁴ Jerome Bruner, 'The Narrative Construction of Reality', *Critical Enquiry* 18(1), Autumn 1991, pp1–21.

³⁸⁵ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Harvard University Press, 1997), Preface, ppxi : 21–xii: 40.

See also Susan Sontag, 'To possess the world in the form of images is precisely to re-experience the unreality and remoteness of the real ... it is not reality that photographs make immediately accessible, but images', pp164–5.

³⁸⁶ Roland Barthes, 'I cannot reproduce the Winter Garden Photograph. It exists only for me. For you, it would be nothing but an indifferent picture, one of the thousand manifestations of the "ordinary"; it cannot in any way constitute the visible object of a science; it cannot establish an objectivity, in the positive sense of the term; at most it would interest your *studium*: period, clothes, photogeny; but in it, for you, no wound.' *Camera Lucida*, p.73.

³⁸⁷ See Lise Patt, *Searching for Sebald: Photography after W.G. Sebald* (Institute of Public Enquiry, 2007).

embedding of stray images (appropriated), the outcome of a narrative, a story infused with information and photographs untidily setting the plot. See images 2.8–2.13 for examples of these stray embedded black and white photographs that are all unsharp, interspersed in the text, yet evocative of Sebald's inquiry both textual and visual. It is a narrative structure that is non-linear and takes the form of political action albeit set out through this untidy process of questioning, contesting and resisting the status quo. Sebald utilises an investigative approach of storytelling as inquiry. Families share this methodology by creating a corpus of seemingly connected and shared tales. This can be seen as an orderly process of accrual in narrative, forming a series of case studies, which can be set out as received wisdom on the family but are often formed of unreliable and variable narratives, untidy and interwoven into fact, a received family history.³⁸⁸

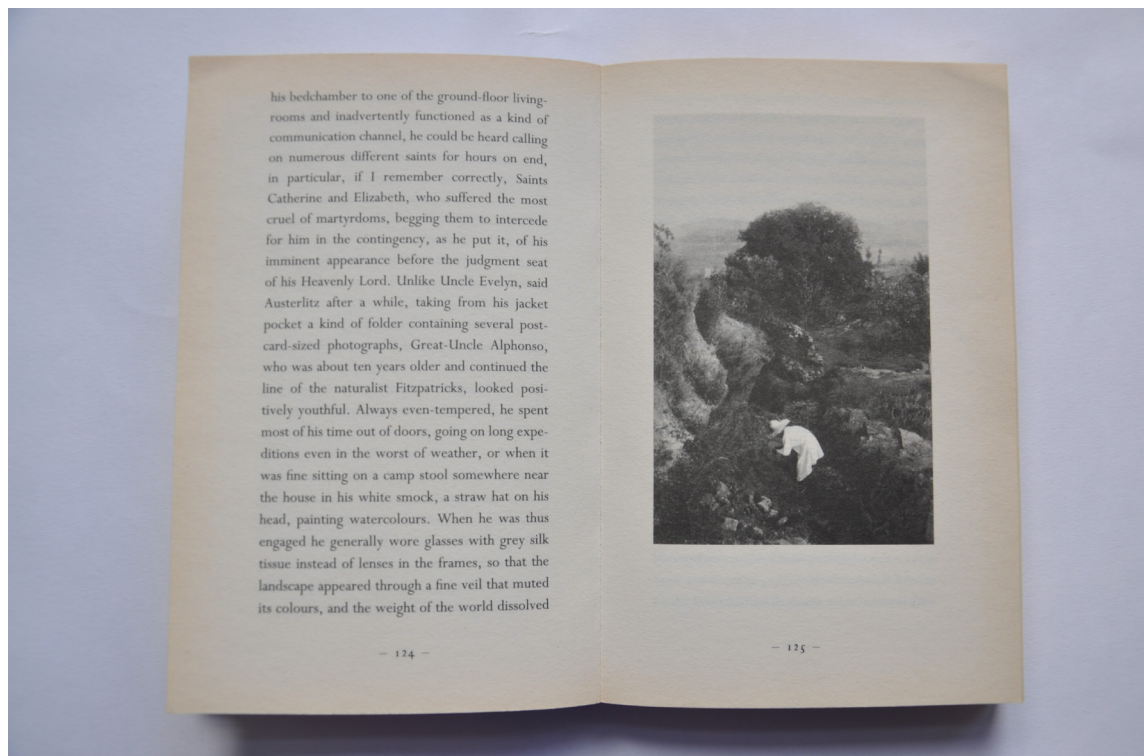
Boltanski has questioned this in works like *Albums de photos de la famille D.* (1939–64), playing with truth, personal and social identity, reliable narrative and the evidential nature of family photographs.³⁸⁹ Boltanski, in remarks about this work, states that 'these images were only witnesses to a collective ritual. They didn't teach us much about *Family D.* but only sent us back to our own past.'³⁹⁰ Boltanski and Richter share with Sebald a sympathy with people who have been oppressed or are at risk of being forgotten and all have touched on their unease with political instability and social unrest. Sebald has had a great influence on writers and artists, emphasised by many as his writer's sympathy with displacement from the present, society itself and the isolation of the self. The conscious forms of Boltanski and Richter in their artworks utilising photographs

³⁸⁸ Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.47: 26–39.

³⁸⁹ Christian Boltanski and his use of 'the inventory', as a conscious art form in installations. The question the inventory poses is whether we can "know" someone through his or her things. If the clothes make the man, as the adage has it, can we recreate the absent man from these individual items or photographs. Or does the subject fragment into a series of metonymic images that might relate to anyone. Didier Semin writes that, 'Boltanski remains in the economy of bricolage; although in an extraordinarily melancholy form; the artist does not invent anything new because there is nothing new to invent. The artist assembles differently, classifies differently... and we know that editing, montage can make images say everything and its opposite', *Christian Boltanski* (Phaidon, 1997), p.57.

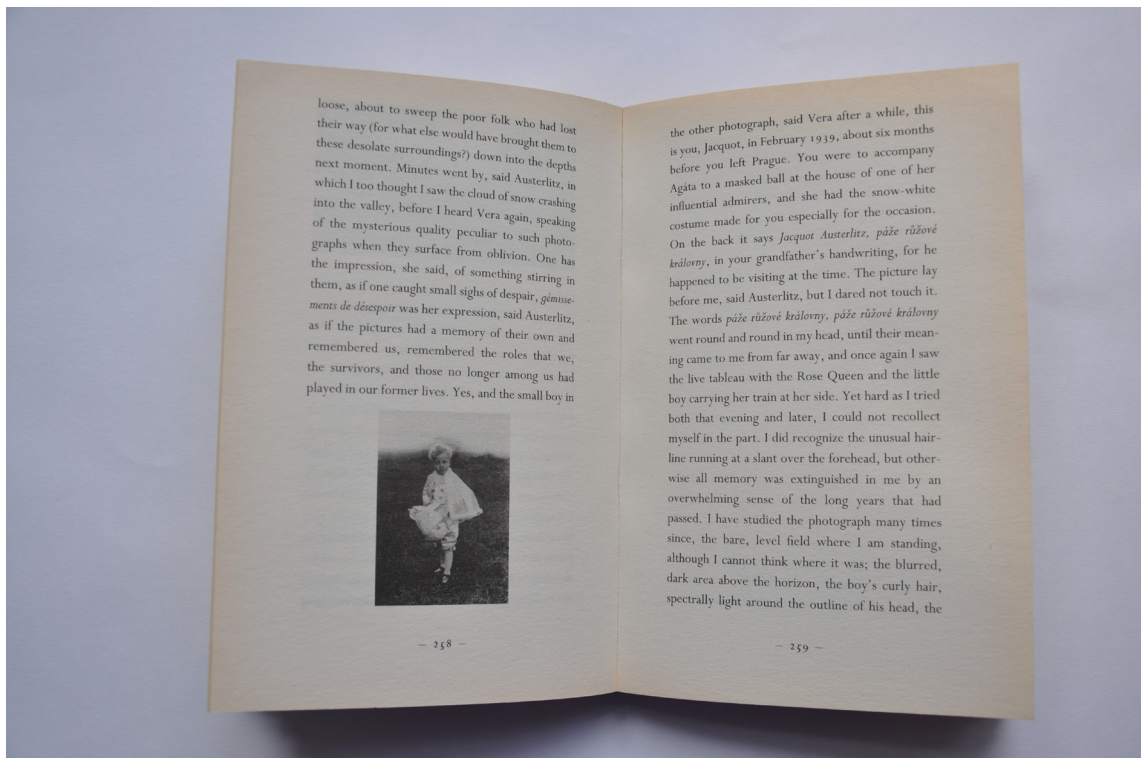
³⁹⁰ Christian Boltanski, interview with Suzanne Page in *Christian Boltanski – Compositions*, exh. cat. (Paris: A.R.C./Musée d'art modern de La Ville de Paris, 1981), p.7, cited in Marjorie Perloff, 'What has occurred only once: Barthes's Winter Garden/ Boltanski's archives of the dead', p.32: 29–32.

references the index and the inventory both representative of association and order and both forms have served as precedents for legal matters within society. Their influence is by their precise nature of acting as organisers of held knowledge or as mnemonic devices related to the art of memory and earlier mnemonic forms like ‘memory palaces’. Yates, in *The Art of Memory* (1966), writes ‘that this classical art is based on workable mnemotechnic principles it may be misleading to dismiss with the label “mnemotechnics”. The classical sources seem to be describing inner techniques which depend on visual impressions of almost incredible intensity.’³⁹¹ Repositories of knowledge are shared across literature and the arts, offering a dialogue between art and elsewhere for artists, artist curators, curators and writers. Exhibitions and installations as conscious forms can infiltrate both social spaces and social constructs holding up a mirror to collecting and the curiosity of the individual.



2.8 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (1) (2001), artefact.

³⁹¹ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, first published by Routledge in 1966 (Pimlico, 1992), p.19: 23-27.



2.9 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (3) (2001), artefact.

1 CD HÖRSPIEL

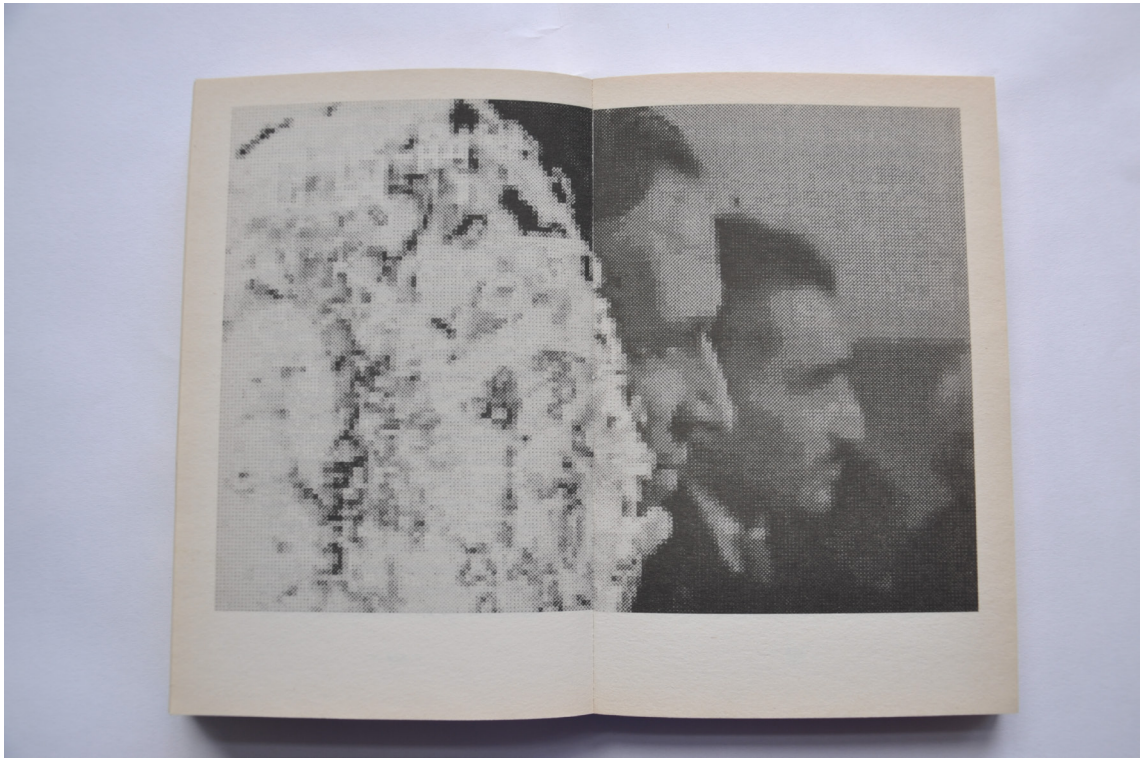
der Hörverlag

W.G. SEBALD

AUSTERLITZ



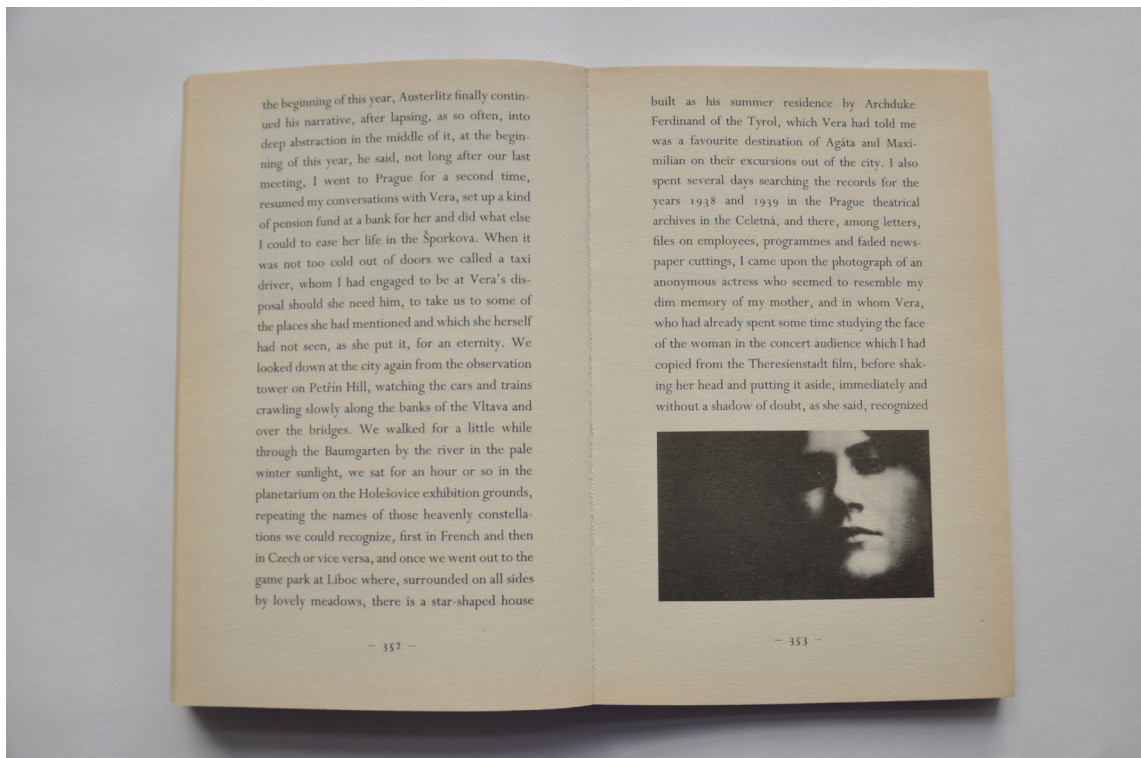
2.10 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (4) (2001), artefact, www.faz.net, retrieved 15.08.17.



2.11 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (5) (2001), artefact.



2.12 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (6) (2001), artefact.



2.13 W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (6) (2001), artefact.

A common element in the way people relate to their personal or inherited collections of photographs and their associated narratives is that they see themselves as temporary custodians of images for others in future times. Inherently this reflects my reading in the literature/contextual review, especially the research and analysis by Marianne Hirsch in *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (1997), and her subsequent publication *The Familial Gaze* (1999).³⁹² These texts on memory practice have informed my own research into family archives, including interviews with their custodians and keepers who have offered interpretive accounts to me. These I have developed through an investigative approach of narrative enquiry, based on these interviews and fieldwork observations.³⁹³ The act of preserving these past collections assumes that they will have audiences in the future similar to that of established archives. Artists by re-presenting and re-framing a new association and order to their collections, creating functional forms in the case of sculptural installations and artists' books as object-exhibitions, may through the contemporary art market be again prolonging the circulation of images both political and personal ordinary and exotic. Joan Gibbons stresses that memory is essentially an unstable and variable phenomenon that, nevertheless, has been captured, represented, tested and contested in multiple ways in contemporary art. Many of the works she discusses in *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007) Gibbons suggests are those where artists utilise methods of

³⁹² Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

³⁹³ Rupert Willoughby, *Leaves from a Family Album: the 1890s and 1900s through the Eye of the Camera*. Having inherited a remarkable collection of family photographs, Rupert set out, with the help of letters, diaries and newspapers, to reconstruct the lives of his ancestors, the Mumbys from Gosport and the de Faletans from eastern France. His collection includes hundreds of spontaneous, natural shots – scenes of them wearing the latest fashions in the Bois de Boulogne, sitting on bicycles, posing with a new motor car or indulging in mixed bathing, all of which offended or even shocked the conservatively-minded at the time. Rupert's talk at the RWA in Bristol (2012), was an extended plea not to throw away old photographs – every one Rupert regards as an historical document, and often, with a little detective work, a fascinating story to tell. The reconstructed stories are available online at: <http://www.rupertwilloughby.co.uk/category/the-incredible-journey-of-victor-hugos-dog/> Mary Drown, 'An exploration of the relationship between family archives and the sense of self': "Photographs, like memories, are precious today and priceless tomorrow", Dissertation BA (Hons) in Drawing and Applied Arts, UWE Bristol, 2007; Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*. Marianne Hirsch, *The Familial Gaze* (University Press of New England, 1999).

remembrance and recollection as processes that lie at the heart of memory. Gibbons underscores this statement in the following quote:

The artist's ability to set the past within a social or collective framework is also vital to the success of memory, but above and beyond this, it is the willingness to explore often difficult or sensitive subject matters and new forms that has given the works I have discussed a cutting edge.³⁹⁴

Gibbons discusses key artists and their practice that I am investigating: Dion, Boltanski, Piper, Deller and Hiller.³⁹⁵

Photographs taken from the past, assigned into the future, reconnected to a new age and context while they are fresh and new, are re-viewed through the viewfinder with us as the readers responding to a very selective and particular version of the world: an authorial process. Next, they are assigned to the contemporary art canon, as they are acquired by museums and art galleries or by private collectors, insistent as a physical material presence. This could be argued to be the critical element of the recycling of material finds and the preservation of the photograph as relic into future ages. My artistic intervention, memory practices and re-presentation of the material finds I make will also take into consideration the methods and strategies of artists such as Patrick Keiller – see image 2.14 for a still from *The Robinson Institute* (2012); Laure Prouvost – see image 2.15 and 2.16 for visuals of *The Artist Book* (2013); and Mark Dion. All are artists who are engaged precisely in this practice of conceptual thinking around memory, curation strategies, exploration and archaeology within specific sites of enquiry, interstitial spaces and peripheries.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.147: 25–8.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Chapter 6, 'The Ordering of Knowledge: Museums and Archives', pp118–40.

³⁹⁶ Patrick Keiller, *The Robinson Institute* (2012). Keiller is best known for his series of film essay-fictions, *London* (1994), *Robinson in Space* (1997) and *Robinson in Ruins* (2010) in which a fictional, unseen scholar, Robinson, undertakes exploratory journeys around England. Robinson's chance encounters with various locations, for example the site of an 1830 meteorite fall and nearby scenes of local rebellion, prompt him to record and reflect on the significance of each to greater global themes.

Laure Prouvost, *Artist Talk* (2012), Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol. A specific work that is worth referencing here is *The Artist Book* (Bookworks:2013) which includes multi-voiced biographies by anonymous contributors, 'that combine illustrated fantasies, anecdotes and vignettes of the artist, alongside collages of the artist's studio, personal communications and a film on paper. These and other sections demonstrate Prouvost's peculiar and complex navigation of influence, humour, art history and methodologies that informs her idiosyncratic language. Insistent



2.14 Patrick Keiller, *Robinson in Ruins* (2010), film still.

'Film Still' from Keiller's essay / fiction. Patrick Keiller's work also asks 'if a state of perpetual crisis contains within it a utopian seed – a trace of the surrealistic 'marvellous' – that might take root in the imagination'.³⁹⁷

gesticulations and perceptual cues guide the reader's attention and transmit information, as the subject, or narrator, merges with the book itself '.

Mark Dion, *Archaeology* (Black Dog Publishing, 1999).

³⁹⁷ David Robinson Interviewing Patrick Keiller in *The White Review*, January 2014, <http://www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-patrick-keiller/> (Accessed 15.5.16).



2.15 Laure Prouvost, *The Artist Book* (1) (2013), artefact.



2.16 Laure Prouvost, *The Artist Book (2)* (2013), artefact.

2.6 Contemporary Debates on the Image

Theorists such as Benjamin, Barthes, Foucault, Agamben, Derrida and Fanon offer us a deep insight into methods of analysis, but I believe this needs to be balanced through consideration of artists' views, from those who are both engaging with and re-presenting images within their individual practices. Hal Foster approaches this concept in *The Artist as Ethnographer* (1996), discussing the ethnographic other as the modern-day focus of the artist's solidarity in the face of dominant culture.³⁹⁸ An important facet of Foster's findings is his concession to the fact that a looser application of this paradigm has allowed some extraordinarily rich projects of social significance to emerge. This perspective of critical literacies leads my research to focus on the artistic

³⁹⁸ Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', in *The Return of The Real* (MIT Press, 1996), pp181–2.

practices of others, while at the same time developing a meta-awareness of dominant and specific methods of artistic practice. This is due to confronting the main thrust of Foster's argument, which is that reflexivity is essential for the artist, lest he or she identify with the other in a way that alienates and compromises the work. Foster identifies this practice of self-othering as important to the critical practice of art but warns it can lead to self-absorption, ethnographical self-fetishising and narcissistic self-refurbishing.³⁹⁹

Ethnography is critiqued by Foster as 'contextual', often an automatic demand which contemporary artists and critics share with other practitioners, many of whom aspire to fieldwork in the everyday.⁴⁰⁰ An artist whose practice investigates the divide between personal experience and public reception (essentially private acts, however mundane and everyday) that become public information is Vito Acconci. In his artistic practice, he privileges activities that are too trivial, or too abject, to enter into the acceptable field of art photography. In so doing, Acconci attempts to alter radically the typical relationship between the artist and his public. As critic Kate Linker has written, 'personal property was thereby conveyed to a publicly visible arena, defined as a kind of extended apartment, employing the city transportation system for access'.⁴⁰¹

Through these works, Acconci was exploring the real space of human interactions, questioning the nature of the art object and the social and geographical separation of the art world. Acconci's idea of the site of interaction was clearly important to frame the work, and led to works that combined fieldwork in the public realm with performative art strategies, documented and sequenced in works like *Room Situation* (1970).⁴⁰² This work combines the photographs with text and ephemera, which document the everyday, albeit constructed by the artist himself rather than observed within the everyday. It is the notion of there being beauty in banality that is contextualising these practices, creating a visual archive of personal experience within the public

³⁹⁹ Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer' in *The Return of the Real*, p.180: 6–12.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.190: 16–26.

⁴⁰¹ Kate Linker, *Vito Acconci* (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), p.20.

⁴⁰² Vito Acconci, *Room Situation* (1970). See J.R. Kirshner, *Vito Acconci: A Retrospective, 1969–1980*, exh. cat. (Chicago, IL: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1980).

realm, self-observing and perhaps, in Foster's words, self-fetishising. Perhaps it is a necessity for artists to create their own visual archive.

The creation of a personal visual archive is represented in the methodology applied in the photography of Oliver Boberg, in a different way from Acconci, with a strong interest in the beauty of banality, in the ability to create your own world, a world where you as the creator can control everything – see image 2.17 for a sense of these reconstructions.⁴⁰³ Both artists could be said to be creating their own sites of interest to explore and reveal ideas they believe to hold social significance. Boberg straddles the line between fiction and non-fiction, using erasure and reinvention to create a reality, a history where one does not exist, reaffirming the notion of photography as a construction and site of an alternative reality rather than a reflection of an objective one.⁴⁰⁴ This removes from photography its primary agency as recording the truth of life, but accords it another status when collecting pictures as objects and evaluating them for what they actually are, as opposed to what they picture. This notion evolved out of the Renaissance tradition of collecting the physical remnants of Greek and Latin antiquity that were being unearthed and rediscovered during this period. The discovery of the fragments of another age led to 'the known' being collected and 'the unknown' being sought: their past re-presented and their cultural significance reframed for the future. Considering that some of these works may help to illuminate the importance of context and identity, as outlined by Foster in terms of anthropology as the science of *alterity* and in partnership with psychoanalysis being the current lingua franca of contemporary art practice. By this I mean it is the currency and adopted language within the field of art practice, which borrows heavily from other disciplines.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰³ Fiona Kearney, 'What is Contemporary?' *Source* 19, Exhibition Review, Kerlin Gallery included a review of Oliver Boberg's work, describing his methodology of creating, 'imaginary scale models' of urban sites.

⁴⁰⁴ 'Boberg creates his structures from photographs but also from memory. These photographs challenge our conceptions about the nature of reality, memory and recognition, and assumptions about the landscape and the photograph as a document.' Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College Chicago, Artist Index, 'About the Photographer'.

⁴⁰⁵ Hal Foster, *The Return of The Real*, pp180–3. 'With a turn to this split discourse of anthropology, artists and critics can resolve these contradictory models magically; they can take up the guises of cultural semiologist and contextual fieldworker, they can continue and condemn

We can consider here the role of art, which is not there to dutifully re-present past experience but to expand the set of possible occurrences. Jill Bennett underscores this role of art by stating that ‘art does not represent what has already occurred’, and this throws into the mix a difference in the reading of photographs within and outside of ‘art’. I feel that this directly relates to ‘the viewing’, the reading of photographs with or without socio-political or art-historical recognition and attending to where they meet might be an entry point to considering how time and its relation to cultural channels organise affect.⁴⁰⁶ In respect of this transition, returning to Benjamin and his concept of transmissibility being the most distinguished trait of a collection, could this be linked into the importance of context, and the power of re-presentation within a socio-political context that artists can tap into?⁴⁰⁷



2.17 Oliver Boberg, *Small Slum 4* (2010)

Reconstruction 47 cm x 62 cm.

critical theory, they can relativise and re-centre the subject all at the same time... Thus did art pass into the expanded field of culture that anthropology is thought to survey.’ p.184.

⁴⁰⁶ Hal Foster, ‘The Siting of Contemporary Art’, in *Return of the Real*, p.184–99.

⁴⁰⁷ Benjamin, ‘Unpacking my Library’, in *Illuminations*, p.68:13-19



2.18 Found Archive Image, Fugitive Testimonies, *The Camp – Slum Dwellings* (1956)⁴⁰⁸

The inherent interest, then, is in the transmissibility through the force of imagination and the encounter of the artist with the physical material fragments that engage memory and enable a reconnection from the past into the present and the future. A question to address is: Where do artefacts go when they die? The question has been posed and the answer that emerges in relation to contemporary artists is that they are remaking them, in many cases securing the narration of their history. Boris Groys describes this methodology, asserting that ‘We tend to resist the radical forces of destruction, we tend to be compassionate and nostalgic towards our past – and maybe even more so to our endangered present.’⁴⁰⁹ A contentious secondary question then in relation to the site of finds is: Where do artefacts go when they are destroyed? Groys’ answer to this is that ‘they enter a void of fabricated narratives and convenient amnesia. Such self-

⁴⁰⁸ E. Haynes Archivo, South America (1950’s–1960’s), ‘Vilias Miserios’(1956).

⁴⁰⁹ Boris Groys, ‘Becoming Revolutionary: On Kazimir Malevich’, *e-flux journal* 47, September 2013, paragraph 6: 12–15.

exposure is bad politics but good art – herein lies the ultimate difference between artistic and non-artistic types of practice.⁴¹⁰

The writer W.G. Sebald holds a different view, seeing time as poetic, irregular and subjective and raises through his narrator Austerlitz in relation to Groys' point, the concept of us 'having appointments with the past just as we do in the future'.⁴¹¹ Sebald posits the view that past and present might be concurrent or not and that they might stop and start with the erratic spasms of the mind and memory. Sebald also employs within his works embedded photographs, the relations between which are nebulous, but clearly related to an auto-poetic practice. In Groys' view, the private becomes public through the artist and this fits with the practice of Acconci, again using photographs to offer this self-exposure in his work *Room Situation* (1970). The subjectivity of the artist, in Groys' view, and their inherent identity do not precede artistic activity, but are the results and the products of this practice. In art, subjectivity comes to self-awareness through self-exposure and communicates itself. Groys argues that it is this radicalised subjectivisation through acute self-exposure that is practised by contemporary art. His view is illustrated by the statement that contemporary art confronts us with even more numerous and nuanced strategies of self-subjectivisation which of internal necessity situates the artist in a contemporary political field. The artist employs strategies that are essentially private, being described by Groys as 'those of private hesitations, uncertainty and despair' the private becomes public without in his view any external pressure and/or enhanced surveillance.⁴¹² To conclude, Groys puts artists at the forefront of utilising their self-exposure, which he sees as bad politics but good art, and he holds to the view that this is the inimitable difference for the artistic practice that this self-exposure offered out into the public domain.

The point underscores the transmissibility ventured by Benjamin as a distinguished trait of a collection and situates the act of the encounter and re-

⁴¹⁰ Boris Groys, 'Introduction: Global Conceptualism Revisited', *e-flux journal* 29, November 2011, paragraph 20: 18–20.

⁴¹¹ W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (Penguin Books, 2001), p.360: 4–9.

⁴¹² Groys, 'Introduction: Global Conceptualism Revisited', *e-flux journal* article (no page numbers).

presentation through artistic practice as clearly auto-poetic.⁴¹³ The specificity of self-exposure and the acute relationship to the inscription of memory within image memories is clearly cited in the writing of Groys and Benjamin. That the force of the imagination plays its part is also brought forth in the writings of Sallis which ventures into the territory of the imaginal margin.⁴¹⁴ The points raised in the writings of Groys, Benjamin and Sallis lend to my argument the consideration of the force of imagination coupled with dominant artistic practices which underline the power of indexicality, sited within the material analogue photograph, and the importance of visual 'image memories' in relation to the interrogation of personal and social identity. Miriam Bratu Hansen in her essay *Benjamin's Aura* (2003) discusses how Benjamin singles out this particular trajectory:

crediting Klages's studies in 'natural mythology' with seeking to restore to human memory 'from an oblivion that has lasted thousands of years' the 'reality' of 'actually existing and formative "images."' These penetrate 'the mechanical world of the senses' through the 'medium of the human being' in states of ecstasy or dreaming. 'Images... are souls, be they of things or people; distant souls of the past [*ferne Vergangenheitsseelen*] form the world in which primitives, whose consciousness is comparable to the dream consciousness of modern man, can receive their perceptions.'⁴¹⁵

In her conclusion, Hansen argues for Benjamin's experimental mode of theorising, interrogating many texts such as those of Klages, and asserting that this is 'a mode of theorising that I consider still, and in more than one sense, "open to the future"'.⁴¹⁶

These findings enable me to return to framing the question: how does memory inscribe our personal identity through the specificity of a level – that of the statement and the 'photographic family archive'. The family archive, I feel, can be seen as a collection, one that can become displaced, the private becoming

⁴¹³ Benjamin, 'Unpacking My Library', in *Illuminations*, p.68: 13–19.

⁴¹⁴ Sallis, *Force of Imagination: The Sense of the Elemental*, pp8–10.

⁴¹⁵ Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'Benjamin's Aura', *Critical Enquiry* 34, Winter 2008, p.365, quoting from Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility', Third Version, translated by Zohn and Edmund Jephcott, in *Selected Writings*, edited by Marcus Bullock et al., 4 vols (Cambridge, MA, 1996–2003), Vol 1, p.427.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.375: 32–5.

public through displacement. Let us acknowledge here a change of ownership, through appropriation, transaction and inheritance. I need to consider here the socio-political channels maintaining their very reception and conjunctive readings. The importance of image memories can be secondary and, for artists (although not exclusively), this self-exposure is somehow heightened through the effect of their encounter with images, displaced photographs as containers of memory and personal narratives even in particular the mode of transcription being to form installations for the spectator to engage.⁴¹⁷ Groys talks about museums as the site of these temporary exhibitions:

Museums have become the sites of temporary exhibitions rather than spaces for permanent collections. The future is ever newly planned – the permanent change of cultural trends and fashions makes any promise of a stable future for an artwork or a political project improbable. And the past is also permanently rewritten – names and events appear, disappear, reappear, and disappear again. The present has ceased to be a point of transition from the past to the future, becoming instead a site of permanent rewriting of both past and future – of constant proliferations of historical narratives beyond any individual grasp or control.⁴¹⁸

To read the photographs is to understand the unwritten logic of personal and social image memories (those of affect, event, record) stored as simply that – embodied personal visual archives with their own precise *loci* (scenes and sense of place) related to ‘the memory palaces’, described in Yates’ *The Art of Memory* (1966).⁴¹⁹ This returns us to the relationship between the photograph (image memory) and the statement, also forming part of early rhetoric, which drew on ‘memory palaces’, which could be described as personal and social image banks to invoke the language and oration of that time.⁴²⁰ Again, in

⁴¹⁷ Groys, ‘Introduction: ‘Global Conceptualism Revisited’, *e-flux journal* article (no page numbers).

⁴¹⁸ Boris Groys, ‘Comrades of Time’, in *What is Contemporary Art*, *e-flux journal* (Sternberg Press, 2010), pp27–8.

⁴¹⁹ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.60: 20–32.

⁴²⁰ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.47: 23–31, quoting Aristotle from *De anima*, ‘Memory, he continues, belongs to the same part of the soul as the imagination; it is a collection of mental pictures from sense impressions but with a time element added, for the mental images of memory are not from perception of things present but of things past.’

relation to the thread I am trying to explore, of the relation to socio-political consequences, I move to consider examining aesthetic emotion.

A proponent of affect and a play on aesthetic emotion in the present is the artist Laure Prouvost, who sees the fictional character as stronger than ourselves through this process of translation – see image 2.20, *Wantee* (2013), a still from the installation documenting the disappearance of her grandfather, which sets up a series of narrative encounters about the absence of a loved family member, a fictional affecting story of potential loss, an installation about a fictional relationship between her grandfather and the exiled German artist Kurt Schwitters, exiled from Nazi Germany. The texts she works with can act as affective triggers to our own memories and our sense of personal and social identity.⁴²¹ In particular, Prouvost cites the power of childhood memories as the memories of the strongest emotions, as latent and mnemonic, challenging us to consider the act of touch and even licking as prompts for self-knowledge. The viewer interaction she encourages uses text, ‘as your own voice’, in association with the language of film and photography to create narrative at times through a conversation of the senses enabling objects to speak; see image 2.19 *Placards Prouvost* (2011) for a series of these texts. Translation is her oeuvre and so the power in the works draws on encounters, memories and personal and social identity, also with the gendered approach of emphasising affect in the viewer reading the image memories rather than listening. There is still here in the work a clear interrogation of personal and social identity using both the statement through texts and the image relationship as a mode of translation. The choice of an indexical medium (still photographs and film) in Prouvost’s work like in *Wantee* (2013) affects the status and impact of the memory represented. These new approaches are related to and shaped by the context of today, but the power of Sebald’s narrator Austerlitz’s view, ‘of having appointments with the past’, as we do in the future, cites this key concept of the importance of time and temporality in the interrelationship between memory and photography.⁴²²

⁴²¹ Laure Prouvost, *The Artist Book* (A Time Machine Artwork, 2013), www.laureprouvost.com (accessed 15.05.16).

⁴²² W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, p. 360: 5–10.



2.19 Laure Prouvost, *Placards Prouvost*, Frieze Art Fair, London (2011).



2.20 Laure Prouvost, *Wanted* (2013), film still.

Sebald utilised embedded photographs to seed memory in his books.⁴²³ Marianne Hirsch refers to images used in this way as decontextualised memory cues, but also reflects upon their status as vehicles that can themselves energise memory.⁴²⁴ Hirsch cites art historian and curator Jill Bennett, who states that photographs, in her view, are of contiguity, of cause and effect, and in this sense do more than represent scenes, events and experiences of the past. She considers they can communicate an emotional or bodily experience by evoking the viewer's own emotional and bodily memories: 'They produce affect in the viewer, speaking from the body's sensations rather than speaking of or representing the past', the feeling that precedes cognition.⁴²⁵ However, Barthes, we should interject here, related the photograph to his past.⁴²⁶ Thus, I would suggest that art historians and semioticians have offered this idea to us of

⁴²³ Sebald, *The Emigrants* (1997), *Austerlitz* (2001), *The Rings of Saturn* (1998).

⁴²⁴ Marianne Hirsch, 'Postmemory's Archival Turn', in *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press, 2012), pp.227–50.

⁴²⁵ Bennett, *Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affect and Art after 9/11* (I.B. Tauris, 2013).

⁴²⁶ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.115: 13–17.

the photograph as a 'trace'. The concept of trace or index describes a material, physical and thus extremely potent connection between image and referent. In the writings of Charles Sanders Peirce, the photograph is defined as an index based on a relationship contrast that insists that photography holds a uniquely referential relation to the real.⁴²⁷ Barthes' famous phrase from *Image, Music, Text* (1977) that 'the photograph is paradoxical: a message without a code' serves to remind us of his ambivalence about this.⁴²⁸

Photographs that constitute this 'indexicality' are often described and defined as holding evidential force. Hirsch cites Zelizer as a writer discussing the symbolic and interpretive power of images who sees photographs as markers of both truth value and symbolism.⁴²⁹ Hirsch utilises these views to outline her argument that we can use photographs to study complex visual relations associated with 'the gaze'. Hirsch sees the viewer as both participating in and observing the photograph's inscription in the gazes and looks that structure it. In her Introduction to *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (1997), Hirsch proposes replacing the regime of 'the gaze', 'with the field of 'the look', focusing on the family look to enable a form of self-reflection that makes the practice of theory a "counterpractice of interference".⁴³⁰ In contrast, Barthes believes that as viewers we reincarnate the subjects in photography, trying to give them life again to protect them from the death we know must occur or which has occurred. It seems that all the views encapsulated here do connect to the transmission of *affect*, with the photograph invaded by language in the very moment it is looked at, in memory and through association. Jill Bennett considers what the political consequences would be of examining aesthetic emotion (affect) before anything else.⁴³¹ Bennett considers the term '*aisthesis*', a term for sensing perception that she narrows down to relationally holding together sense perception and thus the process of experiencing art (read here

⁴²⁷ Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Writings* (8 Vols), edited by Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss and Arthur W. Burks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931–58).

⁴²⁸ Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp42–3: 30–45.

⁴²⁹ See Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget, Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (University of Chicago Press, 2000).

⁴³⁰ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.15: 16–22.

⁴³¹ See Jill Bennett, *Affect, Trauma and Contemporary Art* (Stanford University Press, 2005), and Practical Aesthetics, in *Events, Affect and Art after 9/11* (I.B. Tauris, 2013), p.18.

also photography as part of this genre).⁴³² *Aisthesis* for her gives affect a chance to offer an ethical view of getting at this involved and politically resonant interaction between viewer and subject. The concept touches on the term coined by Hirsch: 'postmemory', a connection to the past, which is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection and creation.⁴³³ The transmission of postmemory locates to the generation after, which bears the personal, collective and cultural trauma of those who came before – to re-experience. They only remember by means of the transmission of stories, images and behaviour among which they grew up. Hirsch in particular examines the space of a family as playing a role in transmissions of memoir – memory and transmission. Hirsch also touches on the concept of embedded photographs and the adoption of public anonymous images into the family photo album in her book *Family Frames, Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (1997).

A question raised by Walter Benjamin is central to my argument about the importance of analogue photography in relation to a study of photography and memory.⁴³⁴ Benjamin considers whether photography has, like other technologies before it, released a fleeting image of the utopian promise it may have contained at the moment when it was still an amateur pastime (and also set within popular culture).⁴³⁵ We are presented now with this thought and Benjamin's contention that, as analogue photography approaches its obsolescence, its armoury may break down and release the memory of this promise.

If we analyse the moment before photography moved from being 'a pastime' to becoming commercialised and hardened into a commodity, we find the moment

⁴³² *Aisthesis* comprises more than just visual perception; it stands for general perception with all the senses, as well as the impression that the perceived leaves on the body. In the original meaning of the concept, tactile and visual perception, constitute a whole, and it was not until later (i.e. in Kantian tradition) that this meaning was reduced to merely an eye that observes without a body.

⁴³³ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, pp22–23: 20–47.

⁴³⁴ Walter Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography' (1931). Radcliffe Science Library, Bodleian Library (accessed 04.11.2010), 'A Short History of Photography' was originally published in the *Literarische Welt* of 18 September, 25 September and 2 October 1931.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.22: 40–6.

is isolated, in Benjamin's view, to a decade when photography was flowering, through the achievements of Hill, Cameron, Hugo and Nadar. At this period photographers were using time lapse and enlargement, which makes the knowledge of people possible in a very precise way. Through these methods, Benjamin clearly articulates the theory of the 'optical unconscious', just as, he says, one learns of the unconscious through psychoanalysis. He believed that the synthesis of expression achieved was due to the long immobility of the model, so that 'This procedure itself caused the models to live, not out of the instant but into it: during the long exposure they grew, as it were, into the image.'⁴³⁶

In *A Short History of Photography* (1931), Benjamin searches the photograph for 'the tiny spark of contingency – a tiny spark of chance', which is the subject's recognition of photographic opacity – the opacity of society revealed by history:

No matter how artful the photographer, no matter how carefully placed his subject, the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the Here and Now, with which reality has so to speak seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long forgotten moment the future subsists so eloquently that we, looking back may rediscover it.⁴³⁷

History subsists in the photograph and it is my contention that every 'small history', to borrow from Benjamin's title, subsists in each photograph that makes up the set of photographs in the family archive. Precisely and importantly, these small histories relate to a quest for identity, belonging, truth and perhaps a mirror to the status of the self. Against the nature of the photograph as a record, as the image of a family member, is Benjamin's contention that, until the advent of the photographic portrait, there had been nameless images of people in paintings for a long time. If these paintings remained in the possession of the family, then people would enquire about the identity of the people represented time after time. But after two or three generations had passed, such interest would wane and the portraits that survived did so only as a testimony to the art

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p.7: 20–3.

⁴³⁷ Ibid. p.7.

of the painter. It seems important here to again quote Benjamin, who writes ‘of the different nature which speaks to the camera than speaks to the naked eye’. He sees it as so different that, ‘in place of a space consciously woven together on the spot there enters a space held together unconsciously’, by a man. Benjamin continues to look at the timeline that separates the two means of representing the subject, the family here in particular. The consideration of the purity of the photographic portrait shifted, in his view, as professional photographers started to retouch the latent image, the negative, setting up a sudden decline in the pure nature of the portrait.⁴³⁸

At this point in the timeline, around 1880, the photographic album entered the family home – the drawing rooms of those who could afford the photographer’s art, where there were frames and decorative elements set out to re-present the family portraits and recorded family groups and events. In these photographs, photography reveals more about the world than the naked eye, and society reveals itself by virtue of the socialised, technologised apparatus of its representation, and it is here that recognition of history intrudes upon the visible world often contained in these small histories, displacing the family as subject into the edited material object of the album. Returning to Hirsch, it is also true that family albums often also contained anonymous public images adopted into the family album as photographs circulated and became more widely available, (photographs that testified to the camera as witness of event, the photograph as record) changing the transmission of memory and, as stated by Benjamin in regard to painting, bearing witness to the testimony of, not the painter in this case, but a spatio-temporal displacement: a fugitive testimony.

The concept of a fugitive testimony is more fully explored in an article by Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer.⁴³⁹ The article argues that the ambiguous evidence contained in found photographs may be a resource for historians seeking to grasp and transmit the past’s emotional truth and yet Hirsch states that photographs may also be limited and flawed historical documents, promising more than they can actually reveal. To summarise, there are artists

⁴³⁸ Ibid., p.18: 1–3.

⁴³⁹ Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, ‘What’s Wrong With This Picture’, *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 5(2), July 2006, pp.229–52.

and writers who employ photographs in their work, revealing them to be both limited and flawed historical documents as well as powerful points of memory. This is true of family albums, where family photographs have both represented the family portrait and through this representation borne witness to events such as evacuation and trauma as feature in Tajima Creef's case study and Sarah Hilary's and also formed artists' works, such as Boltanski's *Photo-Album of the Family D 1939–1964* (1971), or *The Chases High School* (1987–90), that produce postmemory utilising the fugitive testimony of found photographs.⁴⁴⁰ Hirsch cites their practice as 'linking past and present, memory and postmemory, individual remembrance and cultural recall', and cites W.G. Sebald, Christian Boltanski, Lorie Novak and Marguerite Duras, as worthy of note in regard to their practice of embedding photographs in their work, layering memories, events and experiences.⁴⁴¹ Agamben writes of the found object (the photograph) prompting a return to beginnings.⁴⁴² Significantly viewing a material object such as a complete album containing a photograph of a child from early age to identified later life, in an intact but found family album, traces an identity, a set of small histories and sets up reading a character. In essence, this could prompt a sense of individual remembrance and social family history prompted by the sequence of family snaps, a study of materiality, without a set sense of history. Hirsch sees these pervasive photographic images in the works of second and third generation artists, along with associated ephemera, as doing more than supplementing the accounts of historians and the testimonies of witnesses.⁴⁴³

Bearing witness offers one way of working through the difficulties that arise from traumatic experience. Bearing witness enables individuals to come together on their way to collective recovery. Moving individuals from the personal act of

⁴⁴⁰ See Tajima Creef, *Imaging Japanese America* (2004) and Sarah Hilary *The Perspex Cross* (2008).

⁴⁴¹ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, pp265–7, p.20: 8–12.

See also, Geoffrey Batchen, *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography and History* (MIT Press, 2002). Batchen reflects on contemporary art photography, the role of the vernacular in photography's history.

⁴⁴² Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, pp88–97.

⁴⁴³ Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.243: 7–46.

seeing to the adoption of a public stance by which they become part of a collective. Still photographs have been a viable way of encountering events since photography's inception, particularly where these are events requiring a public response. Photographs were quickly recognised as tools of persuasion woven into records of public events, where bearing witness to an event involves both looking at photographs and, in the case of a public event, the taking of photographs at a particular site or place. In each case the act of bearing witness is focused on the medium of photographs as material, actual evidence or as a document within the historical record of an event for example within an archive dedicated 'in memoriam' like the First World War and the Holocaust. Ulrich Baer discusses the documents of postmemory by recognising and examining them in the context of his interrogation into, 'the delimiting of seeing and being'.⁴⁴⁴

Geoffrey Batchen sees photography as something that is simultaneously material and cultural. In his book *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography and History* (2002), he addresses the theme of photography's past, present and future, articulating in his investigation the complex matter of photography's conceptual, historical and physical identity, and in particular the demand made by vernacular photographs for the invention of suitable vernacular histories.⁴⁴⁵

Bearing witness offers one way of working through the difficulties that arise from traumatic experience. Bearing witness enables individuals to come together on their way to collective recovery, moving individuals from the personal act of seeing to the adoption of a public stance by which they become part of a collective.⁴⁴⁶ Still photographs have been a viable way of encountering events since photography's inception, particularly where events require a public response. Photographs were quickly recognised as tools of persuasion woven into records of public events, where bearing witness to an event involves both

⁴⁴⁴ Baer, *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma* (MIT Press, 2002), Chapter 3, Meyer Levin, *In Search / Mikael Levin's War Story*, pp62–87. Drawing on recent work in the field of trauma studies, Baer shows how experiences that are inherently split between their occurrence and their remembrance might register in and as photographic images.

⁴⁴⁵ Batchen, *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography and History*.

⁴⁴⁶ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.267, 'Our entry into the circle of postmemory through the act of familial looking enlarges the notion of family without dislodging it from a historical and geographical specificity that signals its difficult accessibility'.

looking at photographs and in the case of a public event the taking of photographs at a particular site or place. In each case the act of bearing witness is focused on the medium of photographs as material, as actual evidence or as a document within the historical record of an event, for example within an archive dedicated 'in memoriam' of events like the First World War and the Holocaust. Hirsch, in particular, is interrogating works dealing with the Holocaust and traumatic events as they are unpacked through the next generations, but again, this is associated with a search for identity and often looks closely at the family archive and the aftermath of its destruction. Hirsch describes these found photographs as haunting spectres, not only signalling a visceral material connection to the past, but also carrying traces of the past forward, capable of embodying the very factual process of transmission:

This condition of exile from the space of identity, this diasporic experience is a characteristic aspect of postmemory – the photograph's capacity to signal absence and loss and at the same time, to make present, rebuild, reconnect, bring back to life.⁴⁴⁷

Hirsch also acknowledges the capacity of photography in creating trauma too. This capacity for photographs to be points of memory allows them to interpolate the postmemorial subject powerfully. Hirsch cites photographs as communicating in a different register and opening up an alternate memorial discourse. The complications of which Sebald writes in *The Emigrants* (1997), *Austerlitz* (2001) and *The Rings of Saturn* (2002) thus allow the development in his work of a meta-photographic discourse that exposes the complicated relationship between photography and memory.⁴⁴⁸

2.7 Summary

The reference in my research findings of 'an alternate discourse' is, I would argue, at the core of my evidence. It arises out of memory practice, the practice

⁴⁴⁷ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.243: 26–31.

⁴⁴⁸ Sebald, *The Emigrants* (New Directions Publishing, 1997), *Austerlitz* (Penguin Books, 2001), *The Rings of Saturn* (Vintage, 2002). See also Lise Patt (ed.), *Searching for Sebald: Photography after W.G. Sebald* (Los Angeles: ICI Press, 2007). Introductory essay by Lise Patt, 'Searching for Sebald: What I Know for Sure'.

of theory, setting up, as Hirsch cites Foster, 'a counterpractice of interference', engaging with 'the look' in family photographs and the act of self-reflection.⁴⁴⁹ It is collated in this chapter through exploration of artists' and photographers' methods and tactics of a practice, their visual forms inclusive of appropriated material photographs, and memory practices, in the field of contemporary art visually charting new geographies of kinship. I am certain here of my interpretation that the material photographic print is a container for family connections, personal and social identities, familial affinities, narratives and memory, and how this source of reference offers a shaping of individual biographies. The unique visual appeal of family and candid snapshot photography for artists results from this combination of the iconic code with trace, memory and indexicality. Contemporary artists like Tacita Dean have shown us that we, as readers and spectators of her work, are left to shape our own narratives albeit as an act of 'stranger intimacy', and this reflects a current preoccupation in contemporary art practice, noted in Marianne Hirsch, Joan Gibbons and Charlotte Cotton's theoretical writing in relation to the reading of visual work.⁴⁵⁰ The definition of narrative here is 'this alternate discourse' shaped by artists interested in the self as author, reader, narrator or self-seeding storyteller, exploring, as Benjamin outlines, 'the logic of the trace, the indexical dimension or existential bond in photographic signification'.⁴⁵¹ In traditional societies, there is knowledge of 'sympathetic magic' and the emotive and irrational effects produced through its objectively unary but psychologically compelling sense of the causal link between objects (photographs) once physically connected but later separated.⁴⁵²

Chapter 3: *Intervention* and Chapter 4: *Collection* will interrogate why we have this desire to connect with these 'image memories', these material fragments of the past separated from their ontological anchorage in many cases. It is to this

⁴⁴⁹ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, p.15: 19–23.

⁴⁵⁰ See Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*; Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*; and Charlotte Cotton, *The Photograph as Contemporary Art*.

⁴⁵¹ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, translated by Howard Elland and Kevin McLaughlin (Harvard University Press, 2002), p.447.

⁴⁵² Sadowski, 'The iconic indexicality of photography', in *Semblance and Signification*, edited by Pascal Michelucci, Olga Fischer and Christine Ljungberg, p.1: 9–15.

postmemorial reading that we must turn, referenced and written about in depth by Marianne Hirsch whose text is analysed in the literature/contextual review and referenced within the glossary of terms for this practice-based study as closely read in relation to practice research. Significantly for consideration in the postmemorial reading of the found photograph what it entails through the juxtaposition of two, as Hirsch says, 'incommensurable temporalities exposing and keeping open the disjunction between them framing the question why we want and need so much from these material photographic prints'.⁴⁵³ It is critical that in this enquiry the challenge to the viewers (including myself) is not forgotten, that of not imposing retrospection to the point where a photograph's own field of temporality and surface, however delicate and contingent, is erased and lost as a critical visual image memory set in its own cultural memory.⁴⁵⁴ The following case study, *A Perspex Crucifix* offers an image analysis of a cultural memory to support the textual analysis on fugitive image memories. The case study is set before the *Portfolio of Small Histories* Section, Phase Two Practice Analysis, as an important exemplum of both a postmemorial reading of a found photograph and the impact of the fugitive story on postgeneration members of *family*.

2.8 Case Study: Image analysis of a fugitive testimony, *A Perspex Crucifix*.

To clearly explicate this life of the photograph as a carrier of specific visual information, implicit to memory, memory practice and personal and social identity, I am setting up an exemplum of a *fugitive testimony* set out as a case study. *The Secret Life of a Family Photograph* (2008), is the title of an article by Sarah Hilary about her personal exposure to a found family photograph that, as she states, tells a lie:⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵³ Hirsch and Spitzer, 'What's Wrong With This Picture', pp229–52.

⁴⁵⁴ 'Speak, Memory: Conference and Symposium on archives and other strategies of (re) activation of cultural memory', Conference Publication published after the conference in Cairo at the Townhouse Gallery, 28–30 October 2010, www.speakmemory.org (accessed 25.11.2010).

⁴⁵⁵ Sarah Hilary, 'A Perspex Crucifix: The Secret Life of a Family Photograph', *Foto8*, Spring 2009.

The lie it tells is, "All is Well", and like any good lie it contains a grain of truth, the couple are in love, their child is discontented, wearing white and wears a small crucifix around her neck, but the scrubland setting does not resemble a green and pleasant land.

See figs.1 and 2 for the caption and the staged photograph. The place is North West Borneo under Japanese Rule and this staged photograph was taken in 1944:

The photo tells a lie. The lie it tells us is, 'All is well', like any good lie it contains a grain of truth.

Case Study fig 1, caption – The photograph in question was found in her family album. The photograph resembles a family snapshot of the family group.



Case Study fig 2, Photographer Unknown, *A Perspex Crucifix* (1944)

Sarah Hilary had to persuade her grandmother to discuss this photograph, as she was reluctant to view, let alone read it. The fact that the photograph and related ephemera from a traumatic experience survive is telling in itself about the value of the photograph as evidential of event and for later generations there is recognition of discontinuity.⁴⁵⁶ Hilary describes the photograph:

The child is my mother, who is seated on my grandmother's lap. The man whose face is only glimpsed is my grandfather. I never knew him. The photograph was taken to represent that all was well despite internment. No one in this photograph is wearing his or her own clothes. The white shirt, flowered dress and the child's pinafore were loaned by the Japanese and returned at the end of the photo-shoot. Her grandmother was made to wash the make-up off her face before returning to the camp, as make-up had not been seen in the camp for the past four years of their captivity.

In this photograph her mother is wearing a small translucent crucifix. The small Perspex crucifix is still in the family and its history is that it was carved from the Perspex military windshield of an aircraft. Sarah Hilary is clear that if a stranger found this item in a house clearance sale, (or in a flea market as a result of house clearance sales) it would appear worthless and potentially be discarded. There was also a carved pendant heart in the same Perspex, which included a tiny photograph of Sarah's mother's parents that was made in the camp by the Roman Catholic Sisters, also interned. The family photograph in this heart-shaped pendant was more than a keepsake in this context, it was a clear visual prompt for memory and a key to identity and family in a very unpredictable environment where survival was not certain.

The reading of this photograph offers a very different exposure to the family photograph. It is critical, I would argue, that material photographs are kept for later generations to interrogate and to understand the concept of the family's identity and the memories that shape its direction and history, its story. All

⁴⁵⁶ There is the question here of 'the redundancy of photographs', which may be the case in the media, but is this the case with the family archive however modest? Berger in *Understanding a Photograph* (1967) states, 'A photograph preserves a moment of time and prevents it being effaced by the supersession of further moments. In this respect, photographs might be compared to images stored in the memory. Yet there is a fundamental difference: whereas remembered images are the residue of continuous experience, a photograph isolates the appearance of a disconnected instant', p.64.

stories can be said to be discontinuous, but in a constructed sequence of photographs the sequence becomes, in John Berger's words 'a field of coexistence' and attuned to the field of memory.⁴⁵⁷ This is perhaps where the fugitive testimony of the single photograph, the outlier photograph in the family album, stands out.⁴⁵⁸ The ideas of photography's 'usage' and its 'reading' were becoming habitual and this contributed to photography becoming this unexamined part of modern perception itself. What photographs do out there in space was previously done within reflection and memory and, I would argue, critically also within rhetoric and discourse, which formed the methodological theory behind Yates' *The Art of Memory* (1966) and its artificial visual memory systems. Photographs are appearances and sampling these appearances, traces of lives lived offering a window into experience, *behaviours* in particular and a certainty as prompts to memory.⁴⁵⁹ This is experienced precisely through reading the photograph as a 'sense impression' close to an interior index, 'a memory palace' within each individual enabling a personal ontological understanding. Memory works radially, offering an enormous amount of associations all leading to the same event. This enables each individual to see the photograph as a document in terms of the personal, political, economic, dramatic, everyday and historic terms of their own reading which, in Berger's words, 'encourages the atrophy of any such memory'. Revelations do not come easily. Berger sums this up by stating that 'the form of the expectation may historically change, but in itself, it is a constituent of the relation between the human capacity to perceive and the coherence of appearances'.

I link this to the visual trace and its prompt to perception within 'image memories', held in the hand as haptic material still photographs, framed scenes. The photographer and artist Moholy-Nagy in the 1920s made the observation, that those who are ignorant in matters of photography will be the illiterates of tomorrow. Perhaps Moholy-Nagy understood that all photographs are precisely

⁴⁵⁷ John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (1967), p.105. Berger states that the very truthfulness of photography as a new medium encouraged its deliberate use as a means of propaganda.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.50.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp51–5.

retrospective in their format, we search or read the still photograph for what was there. 'The series is no longer a "picture" (*bild*) and none of the canons of pictorial aesthetics (*bild-astetischen maßstäbe*) can be applied to it. Here the individual picture loses its identity as such and becomes a piece of montage (*montageteil*), an essential structural element of the whole which is the thing itself... a photographic series can become a most powerful weapon, the tenderest lyric'.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁶⁰ Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, 'New Instrument of Vision', in *Telehor*, p.36. This quotation, verbatim, can be found again in 'Photography in a Flash', *Industrial Arts (London)* 1(4), Winter 1936, pp244–303.

Fugitive Testimonies Thesis

Phase 2: Practice Analysis

Portfolio of Small Histories:

Chapter 2 Section – Trace, Presence and
Indexicality.

Su Fahy

Outtake 7. Practice Analysis, ~~FAMILY X~~, (2013–15)

Exemplar – Trace, Presence and Indexicality

Practice exemplars: See Outtake 7–~~FAMILY X~~ (2013–15), Outtake 8, *Shine On – A View of the Overlook* (2015), Outtake 4, *SHE: A Keepsake Wallet* (2014).

Without a home at the centre of the real, one was not only shelterless, but also lost in non-being, in unreality.

Without a home everything was fragmentation.⁴⁶¹

~~FAMILY X's~~ archive is exhibited as an art form as a small paper container stitched shut, and exhibited as a sheltering, sealed, yet fragile container. Within the heart of this individual family archive there is a tale of incest, ethnic cleansing, migration and exile, and censorship. The photographs are copies of family portraits of those betrayed, murdered and lost, a generation of this family identified through the marginalia. The story begins with a connection between myself as engaged in fieldwork, and another, a connection made without an exchange of words. The story is one of a quiet unspoken transfer of letters, photographs and a printed correspondence with the Vatican offices in Rome. The missives slipped into my keeping settling into my pockets with no words exchanged, no acknowledgement of the burden this might place on another. ~~Family X~~ (2013–15), is a story of encounter and exchange outside of polite society, outside of friendship or kinship.

The story is too present to be exposed but its existence deserves exposure at the right time – a past, outlier, and raw in this the present but perhaps a tale needing telling in the future. The act of transference of this direct personal

⁴⁶¹ John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief As Photos* (Bloomsbury, 2005), p.56: 6–8.

exchange, to myself as a researcher, a seeker, a collector, at the flea market, perhaps securing a future for this correspondence. The practice findings are here informing the analysis of the individual material family archive to unravel and explore in this case emigration forced or chosen, across national frontiers, discussed by Berger, as 'the quintessential experience of our time'.⁴⁶² The Official Secrets Act keeps information out of the public domain and only allows for the release of the information after a period of 30 years or at times on the death of a named person or family. The folder takes the form of a sealed container placed in the archive not to be opened until a date in the future where the story will still sear the soul but reflection on the context may have moved the tale into another set of connections, affect and family politics.

The reading of the photographs, the intimate family portraits and their accompanying marginalia is an act of unpacking and revealing the secrets and lies at the heart of this tale of power and conflict, within the context of the discourse of its times.⁴⁶³ Encounter and exchange are a form of bearing witness – less formal than the courtroom. In this context according to Barthes, 'the photograph is an extended, loaded, material form of evidence which one could say represents that, 'it has indeed been'.⁴⁶⁴ The photographs in this study authenticate the essence of a certain being and the censorship of family record that occurs through displacement and conflict delivered to the family rather than by the family. The rescue of these photographs and the accompanying correspondence places this family into a history of both conflict and love and echoes of intolerance. The conceptual assemblage is one that exposes what is censored in family primarily the importance of valuing private life and its fugitive stories. The intention for ~~FAMILYX~~ was to call

⁴⁶² John Berger, *And Our Faces*, p.55: 4–8.

⁴⁶³ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp137–8.

⁴⁶⁴ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Vintage, 2000), p.115: 5–8, 20–2.

attention to the small history to perform the act of censorship for the audience, as it is stitched shut in a paper file producing a document of shelter for the supplement to this family beyond official discard. The audience and display of the piece in the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* exhibition (2015) emphasises that there is not only more than one way of knowing, but more than one way of remembering knowledge of a disputed past'.⁴⁶⁵ A.D. Coleman sums this up in his piece on 'Photography and Conceptual Art': 'to hold in your hands a sheet of paper containing a sliver of time is blind. Such a sliver is present in every photograph ever made; such a sliver is lost with every discarded image. Most conceptual artists using the photograph as a documentary method are ... pulling out the rabbits they did not plant ... and it's as hard as hell to put them back.'⁴⁶⁶ However, the production of photo-based archives that shelter these discarded images these 'slivers of time' cannot just place them back into the public realm but need to re-purpose these photographs as a source of discovery, developing new critical knowledge about thinking about family – inclusive of race, class, gender and in the case of ~~FAMILYX~~, genocide across geographies of kinship and familyhood. The production of the conceptual assemblages is to extend a regard, to the photograph to paraphrase Roland Barthes, becoming more 'pensive'. Barthes writes, 'Ultimately, Photography is subversive not when it frightens, repels, or even stigmatises, but when it is pensive, when it thinks.'⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ Joan Gibbons, 'The Ordering of Knowledge', in *Contemporary Art and Memory*, pp124–5.

⁴⁶⁶ A.D. Coleman, *Light Readings: a photography critic's writings, 1968–1978*, pp72–3.

⁴⁶⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.38: 11–13.

Practice Analysis 2: The Pin-Up Reading Rooms Series (2013–15)

The presentational form of *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms* is that of a poster with the substrate formed from a found map. The interaction is between photograph and map relayed through the collected photographs, the snapshots, set out in the visual form of an archival wall chart, which offers ‘the method of loci’ (mnemonics) to the context of each photograph.⁴⁶⁸ Each of the pieces relates to an individual vision of a ‘sense of place’ reflected through the maps of the British coastline and the marginalia that documents the family, the characters portrayed, the visual record of holidays (family leisure and the temporary) taken by the sea and the capture of these memories on record. *The North Sea* (2014) and *The Forth Estuary* (2015) coasts feature in the first two works with the third work mapping the landlocked flea market reflecting the act and point of collection and genesis for the formation of these visual stories (small histories).⁴⁶⁹ The act of making results from the individual vision created on the reading of each single found photograph and the memories each evokes and isolates. There is a conscious definition of the objects that differs from the anonymous photographers who may not have defined practice principles beyond their record of family.

As an artist and researcher, the written and visual work is attempting to embroider their scenes, making connections to self, the other, and the creating of an association and order, which relates back to the desire to form a personal photo-archive.⁴⁷⁰ The critical encounter with this archive is one where the work

⁴⁶⁸ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009). ‘The method of loci: The oldest mnemonic method is the method of loci, taught from Classical Times until the present day. The technique involves knowing a series of places or loci that are familiar yet distinct’, pp123–4. In this series the loci are the maps as archive wall charts acting as artefacts to influence or represent the ostentive or performative aspects of a transactive memory system in relation to visual mnemonics.

⁴⁶⁹ The works reference Carleton Watkin’s photographs documenting a sense of place in the 1860s, *Pacific Coast, Columbia River, and Oregon*. Although here the presentational format was the Album later dis-bound to exhibit each of the photographs individually.

⁴⁷⁰ Aby Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1866–1929). The question often posed is can we learn something from this pictorial atlas? One field of thought offers us the view that positive imagination is brought into play in the history of art and religion through Warburg practicing an assemblage that was constantly in flow based on temporary constructs. Discovery for the viewer

is drawing the viewer into how the found photograph as a secondary agent evokes the need to articulate its historical situation. In which there is a network that comprises; purposes, expectations, readings and intention in the photographs relation to us through the present context of their viewing. Each *Pin-Up Reading Room* acts as its own performance space attempting to provoke individual social memory through this act of memory work or practice handling the photographs and staging ensembles of experience. The work is set out to create an enabled set of exempla that use visual instances in adroit juxtaposition.

The visual practice method can be seen as an act of elaborate rehearsal. Elaborate rehearsal is said through several studies to recode information in personal and social memory so that it is retained more effectively, as described in detail by Jonathan Foster, and Daniel Schacter in their studies. The theory reflects a key characteristic of memory being reconstructive as opposed to reproductive. The effort after meaning is one of the most significant features of the way our personal memory makes meaning through reconstruction of events and information. This patterning of how memory functions in relation to the self and identity is key to distinguishing artistic practice that plays with these methods and is inclusive of the desire to channel the imagination of each viewer. In each *Pin-Up Reading Room* there is before us a lexicon of 'private lives' and this results in the exposure of the hidden depths of the importance of ordinary things. Each *Pin-Up Reading Room* is a survey of sorts, where history and social biography coexist and expose the viewer to discovering if there is a significance in these material photographs to prompt their own memory into their own private life. The archival format offers a shift of emphasis from possession of the image content to an exploration, a close reading of their scenes.

is like his personal library, based on the method of placement of 'the good neighbour', often changing through revision and re-composition, mapping, collecting, exhibiting specific images, a form of elaborate rehearsal. Warburg's combinatory experiments in the *Atlas* follow his own metonymic, intuitive logic, even as it is propelled by decades of rigorous scholarship. Warburg creates a dynamic 'thought-space' [*Denkraum*] where cosmographic and art-historical images reveal how subjective and objective forces shape Western culture.

A question raised by these works is one of inheritance of photographs, which is also entangled with an emotional legacy. Appropriation and reconstruction of such photographs into assemblages needs to be recognised in method as a form of conceptual archaeology, which places 'finds' into staged ensembles repurposing their role as cultural artefacts; thus elaborating 'alternate discourses' on the family and its public and private visual record, emotional legacy and reference. These three works form the first part of a series that will encode 'sense of place' as a response to the finds and the act of retrieval. The method pays homage to the surrealist style of juxtaposition in the work of André Breton (1937), acknowledging methods of chance, the encounter, and the resultant circumstantial / magical connections as in the works of Warburg (1924–29) created through the intervention of the artist as producer.⁴⁷¹

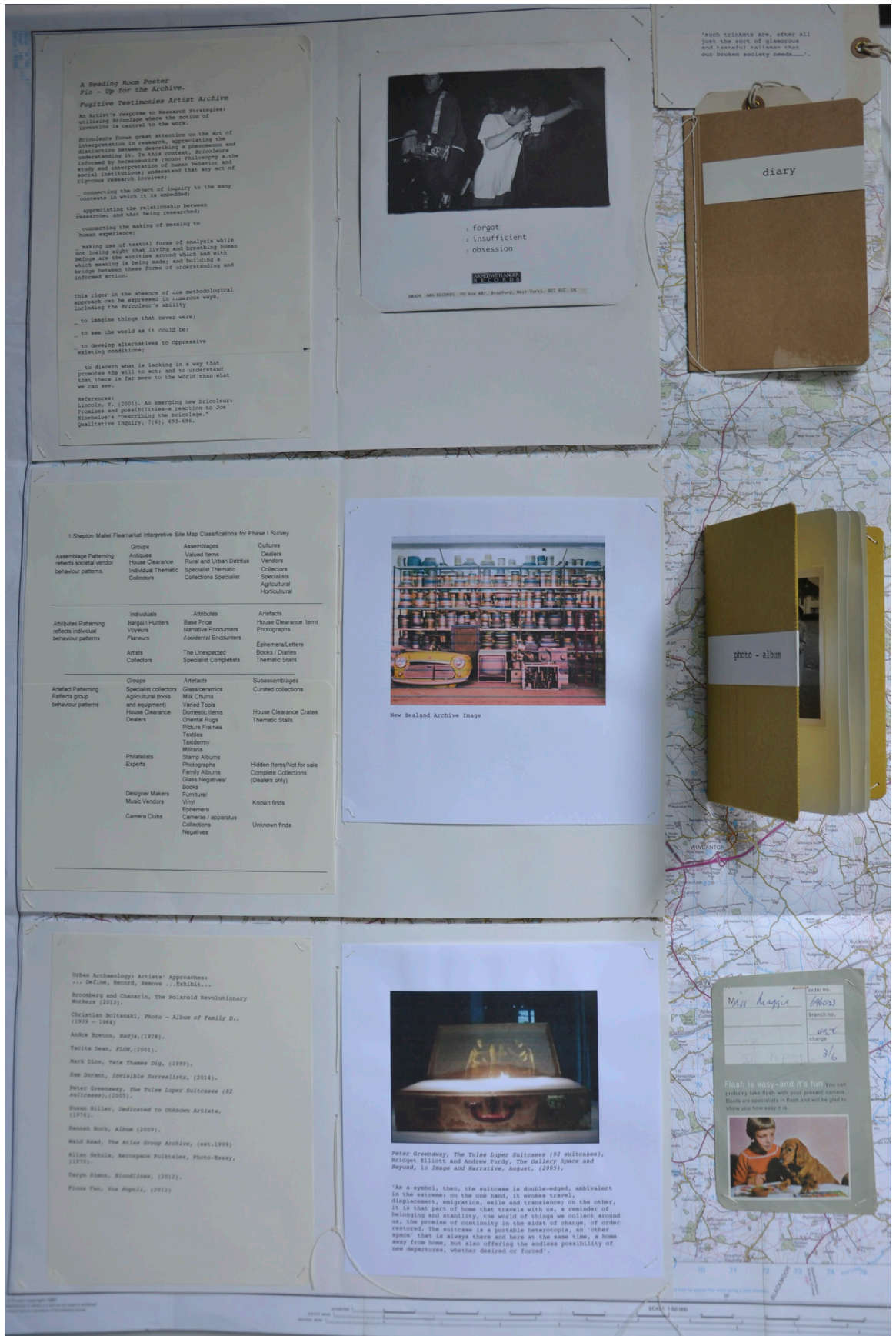
⁴⁷¹ André Breton, *Mad Love*; Aby Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1866–1929).

Practice Analysis 2.1 See *Portfolio of Small Histories* for practice exemplars of *The Pin-Up Reading Room Series* (2013–15) and the *Small Histories: Trace, Presence and Indexicality*.

Outtake 7: *Family X* (2013–15).

Outtake 8: *Shine On: A View of the Overlook* (2015).

Outtake 4: *SHE: A Keepsake Wallet* (2014).



**A Reading Room Poster
Pin - Up for the Archive.**

Fugitive Testimonies Artist Archive
An Artist's response to Research practices: utilizing archives where the notion of invention is central to the work.

Bricolageurs focus great attention on the act of interpretation in research, appreciating the distinction between describing a phenomenon and understanding it. In this context, Bricolageurs informed by postmodernist (often Philosophy as the study and interpretation of human behavior and social institutions) understand that any act of rigorous research involves:

- connecting the object of inquiry to the many contexts in which it is embedded;
- appreciating the relationship between researcher and that being researched;
- connecting the making of meaning to "human experience";
- making use of textual forms of analysis while not losing sight that living and breathing human beings are the entities around which and with which meaning is being made; and building a bridge between these forms of understanding and informed action.

This rigor in the absence of one methodological approach can be expressed in numerous ways, including the Bricolageur's ability:

- to imagine things that never were;
- to see the world as it could be;
- to develop alternatives to oppressive existing conditions;
- to discern what is lacking in a way that promotes the will to act; and to understand that there is far more to the world than what we can see.

References:
Ginslin, Y. (2001). An emerging new bricolageur: Promise and possibilities—a reaction to Joe Kinshel's "Describing the Bricolageur." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 693-694.



forgot
insufficient
obsession

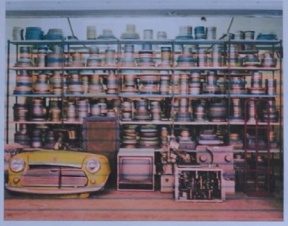
IMAGE: MAA RECORDS, PO Box 487, Bradford, West Sussex, BN1 6JZ, UK

'such trinkets are, after all just the sort of glamorous and 'careful' talismans that our broken society needs...'



1. Shepton Mallet Fleamarket Interpretive Site Map Classifications for Phase 1 Survey

Assemblage Patterning reflects societal vendor behaviour patterns	Groups	Assemblages	Cultures
	Antiques	Valued Items	Dealers
	House Clearance	Rural and Urban Detritus	Vendors
	Individual Thematic Collectors	Specialist Thematic Collectors Specialist	Collectors
			Specialists
			Agricultural
			Horticultural
Attributes Patterning reflects individual behaviour patterns	Individuals	Attributes	Artifacts
	Bargain Hunters	Base Price	House Clearance Items
	Voyeurs	Narrative Encounters	Photographs
	Flippers	Accidental Encounters	Ephemera/Letters
	Artists	The Unexpected	Books / Diaries
	Collectors	Specialist Collectors	Thematic Stalls
Artifact Patterning Reflects group behaviour patterns	Groups	Artifacts	Subassemblages
	Specialist collectors	Glassceramics	Curated collections
	Agricultural (tools and equipment)	Milk Churns	House Clearance Crates
	Dealers	Varied Tools	Thematic Stalls
		Domestic Items	
		Oriental Rugs	
		Picture Frames	
		Textiles	
		Taxidermy	
		Miscara	
	Philatelists	Stamp Albums	Hidden Items/Not for sale
	Experts	Photographs	Complete Collections
		Family Albums	(Dealers only)
		Glass Negatives/Books	
	Designer Makers	Furniture/ Vinyl	Known finds
	Music Vendors	Ephemera	
	Camera Clubs	Cameras / apparatus	Unknown finds
		Collectors	
		Negatives	



New Zealand Archive Image



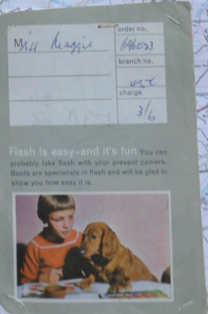
Other Archaeology Artists' Approaches:

- ... Defiles, Record, Renew ... (2011)...
- Bronberg and Chanakia, *The Polaroid Revolutionary Workers* (2011).
- Christiane Boltanski, *Photo - Album of Family D., 1939 - 1944*.
- Andre Breton, *Madje*, (1928).
- Taina Dean, *FLOW*, (2001).
- Mark Dion, *Tate Thames Dig*, (1999).
- Sam Durant, *Invisible Surrealists*, (2014).
- Peter Greenaway, *The Tulsa Luper Suitcases* (92 suitcases), (2005).
- Susan Hiller, *Dedicated to Unknown Artists*, (1976).
- Rosabeth Koch, *Album* (2009).
- Wald Reed, *The Atlas Group Archive*, (ca. 1999).
- Alan Sekula, *Amesgapan Postcards, Photo-Essay*, (1978).
- Taryn Simon, *Blindlines*, (2012).
- Fiona Tan, *Van Pupuli*, (2012).



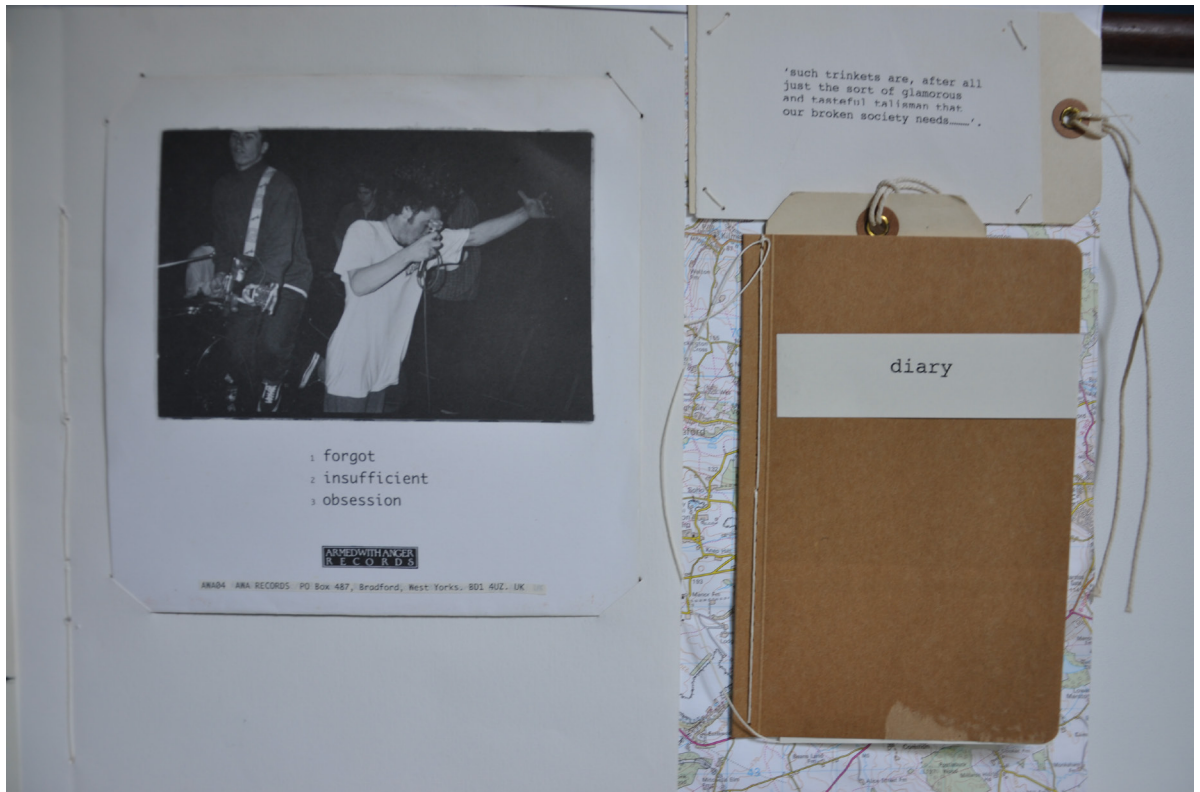
Peter Greenaway, *The Tulsa Luper Suitcases* (92 suitcases), Bridget Elliott and Andrew Purdy, *The Gallery Space and Beyond*, in *Image and Narrative*, August, (2005).

'As a symbol, then, the suitcase is double-edged, ambivalent in the extremes: on the one hand, it evokes travel; displacement, migration, exile and transience; on the other, it is that part of home that travels with us, a reminder of belonging and stability, the world of things we collect around us, the promise of continuity in the midst of change, of order restored. The suitcase is a portable heterotopia, an 'other space' that is always there and here at the same time, a home away from home, but also offering the endless possibility of new departures, whether desired or forced'.



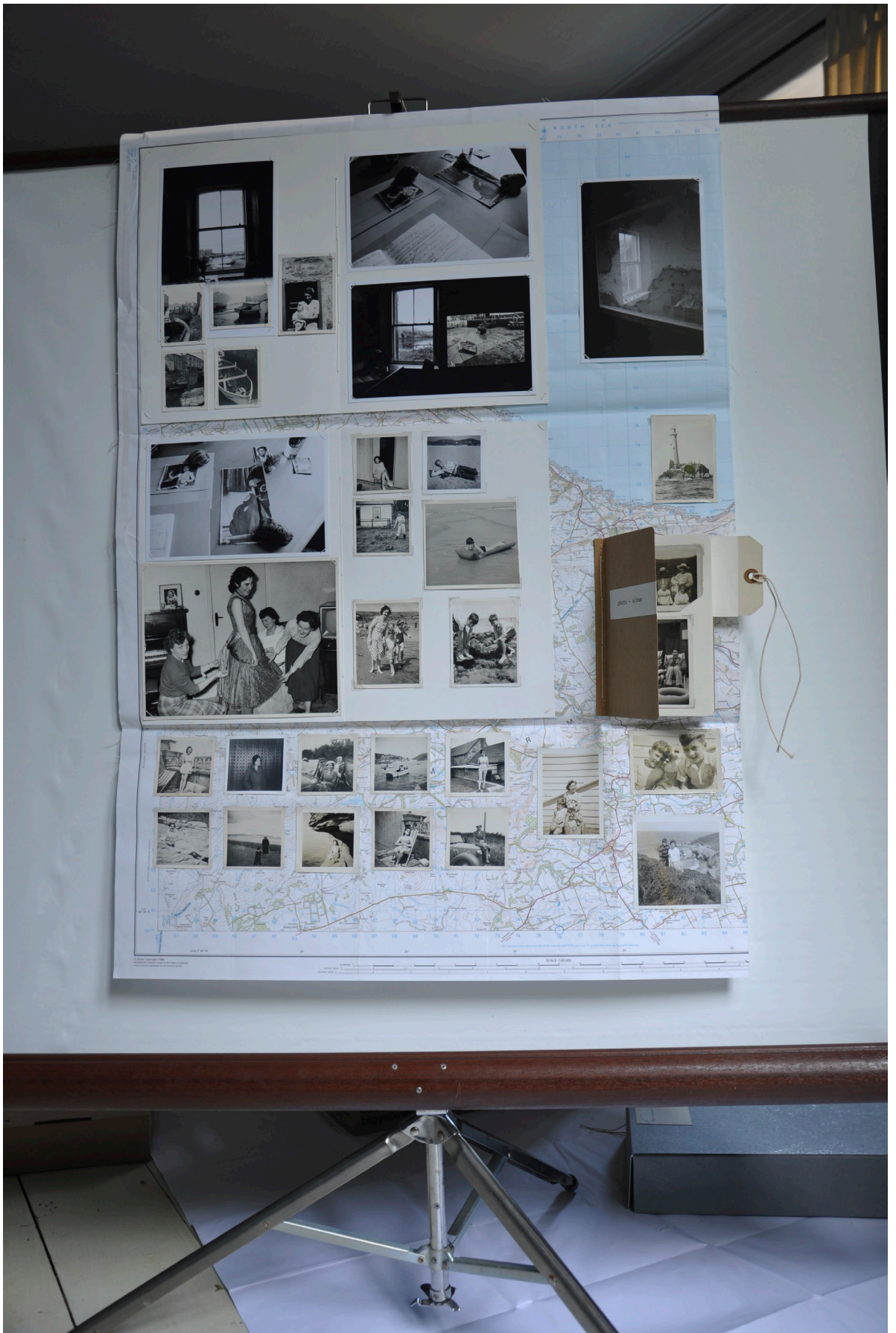
Flash is easy—and it's fun! You can probably take flash with your present camera. Books are specialists in flash and will be glad to show you how easy it is.

Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms Series: The Flea market*, 2013.

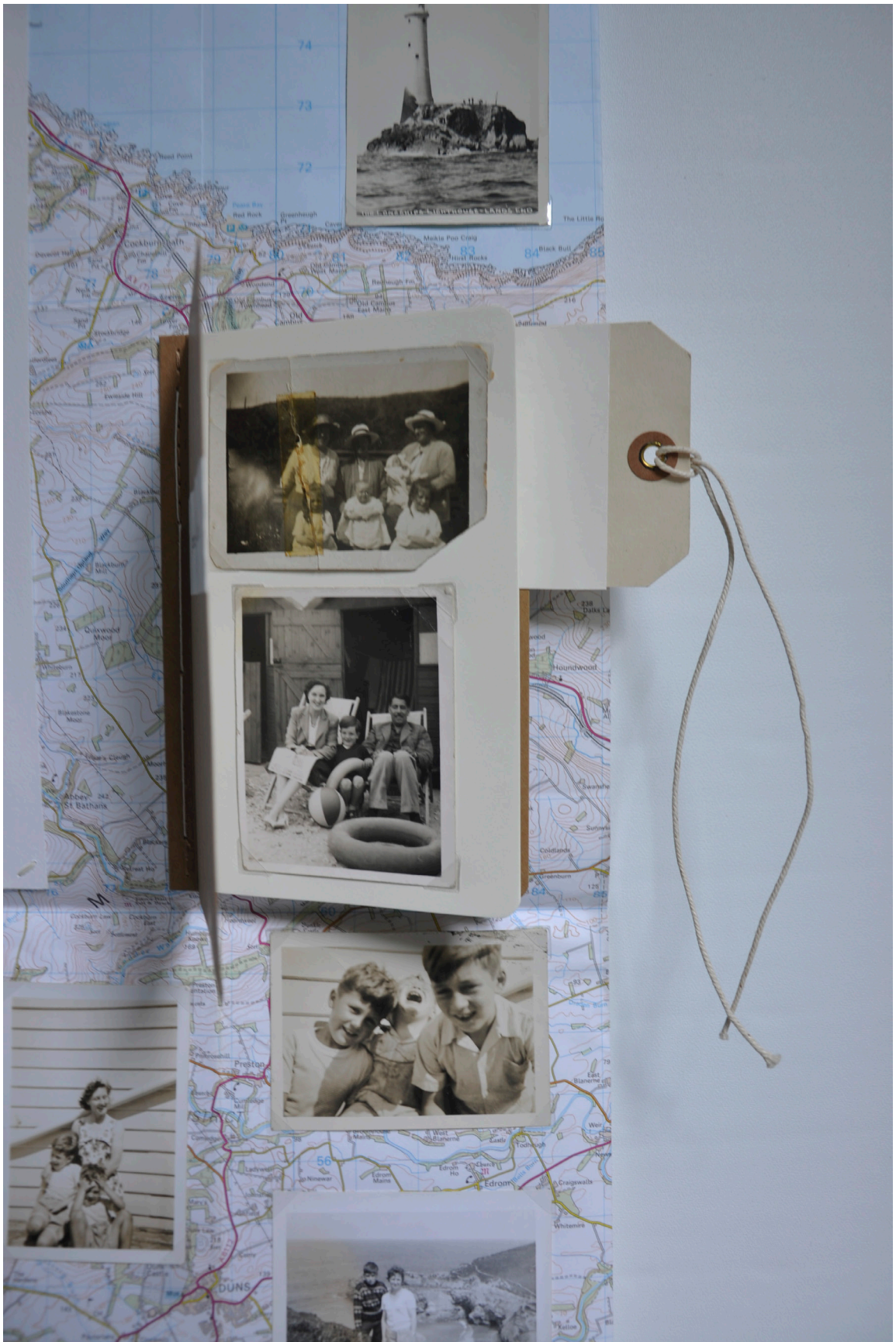


Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms Series: The Flea market*, (detail)
2013.

Media: recycled found OS land ranger map of Shepton Mallet area and Bath and West Showground – site-specific map of the flea market, recycled paper pages, found record sleeve, linen thread, found ephemera, film and print wallet, family photographs and associated newspaper cuttings, luggage labels, found notebooks, archive pages from artists' collections in the public realm, research texts and collection references for the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16) – stitched into a paper map substrate.



Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms: The North Sea*, 2014.



Su Faly, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms: The North Sea* (detail) 2013.



Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms Series: The Forth Estuary*, 2013.



Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms: The Forth Estuary* (detail), 2015

Media: recycled found OS land ranger map of Edinburgh and the Forth Estuary – including site-specific map of the New Town, recycled paper pages, linen thread, found ephemera, film and print wallet, family photographs and associated newspaper cuttings, recycled luggage labels, found notebooks, contemporary analogue black and white photographs of the Stewart Christie Archive and Textile Workshops © Su Fahy, 2014 – stitched into a paper map substrate.

The Pin-Up Reading Room Series (2013–15) are reflective of a sense of place. *The Forth Estuary Pin-Up Reading Room* (2015) includes a document of the textile archive of Stewart Christie Edinburgh a 300-year-old tailoring business. Their archive included a document of employer sponsored outings, offering an insight into the pattern of women's labour and leisure opportunities at the time. The found black and white photographs at the flea market document textile workers outings in the same period 1939–45. In re-reading the photographs and the documents in the Stewart Christie archive the tactics for a practice emerged relating a discourse of the time to the found photographs. These years are still remembered as the time when the discourse was that women not only proved they could do any job but disproved many myths about women workers – that women workers have a high absentee rate, that women cannot keep secrets, that men and women cannot work together, that women do not like responsibility and are not interested in training, that women have a lower productivity rate than men, etc. These years were described by Sarah Boston, in an extract from *Women Workers and Trade Unions* (1980), 'as when society concerned itself, as at no other time, with the dual role of women with jobs and homes'.

The change in labour opportunities was documented within the family photographs of the time, for example factory outings, and women's dress changes due to work practice and occupation (across the class divide), images that redefined the role of women and the make-up of family life and its document of leisure marking out this period.⁴⁷² Sarah Boston writes that 'The Years from 1939–1945 represent a brief

⁴⁷² An example of this is *Women in Shipbuilding* (Ministry of Labour, 1943), a large glossy magazine published by the government containing photographs of women at work doing every kind of skilled or heavy job in shipbuilding. *The Forth Estuary* found family archive contained photographs of textile workers – the marginalia was of 'twisters', and 'wiremen'/ women' in the shipyards.

surge forward for women, (reflected in the family photographs of the time), a bright interlude between the dark days of the thirties and the conservative days of the fifties.'⁴⁷³ Discarded photographs from family archives from this time show women (despite disquiet in their becoming in the forefront of society) addressing meetings, speaking in public and photographed in committees. Marginalia from this time on photographs and in ephemera includes poems published to show how much women, especially textile workers were in the forefront of struggle, also quoted by Sarah Boston:

Be true, be true, you weavers all.

And do not flinch one pick;

And all be well united,

Like female Briton's stick,

And never mind poor Ossey's talk,

About brooches and fine dress,

Work by the statement you have got,

Take not a farthing less.⁴⁷⁴

One of the categories of the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* exhibition was *campaign* to draw attention to the document of protest and struggle that the found discarded photographs document from early photographs to the present day (inclusive of the textile workers as a case study in the social taboos that informed the labour of women).

Fugitive Testimonies Exhibition Images

The six photographs mounted and framed to represent the Categories of the Archive, depicted the family's struggle for shelter and equal rights across geographies of kinship through these images of recollection and remembrance. The photographs are a document of

⁴⁷³ Sarah Boston, *Women Workers and Trade Unions* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1980), pp186–9.

⁴⁷⁴ Sarah Boston, *Women Workers and Trade Unions*, p.39: 28–35.

personal or intimate memories, although as has been noted in both the written and visual work, the personal sits inevitably within a public or collective framework, and despite discard and censorship, broader cultural issues and discourses of the time are expressly a part of the subject matter that is addressed.⁴⁷⁵

The archive categories are; *home, campaign, popular culture, exposure (secrets and lies), biography, society, anecdote, and across geographies*. The intention of the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* project has been to shift the emphasis to the small histories, fugitive stories, and an act of tracing, using the re-reading of the discarded photographs, and the creation of the conceptual assemblages to create a new critical perspective on the re-reading of family photographs.

⁴⁷⁵ See Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, Chapter 3, Revisions: The Reassembling of 'History', pp52–72.



Su Fahy, *FAMILY X*, 2013–15.

Outtake 7: Small Histories

Media: recycled cream cartridge paper, linen thread, small constructed folio file, collected letters, photographs, print outs of email correspondence.



Su Fahy, *Shine On: A View of the Overlook – D.*, 2015.

Outtake 8: *Small Histories*

A small constructed fictional family album wallet composed of image memories representing the family, adapted and imagined from Stephen King's Book *The Shining* (1977). The question addressed for World Book Night 2015 was, What is distinctive about the book? – my findings were that it made me conscious of specific cultural issues surrounding the make-up of the family in isolation and its frailty as a family unit, emphasising specific cultural issues around the fugitive, the hidden histories of the individuals who made up this fictitious family.⁴⁷⁶ The outtakes from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* were a set of velox paper prints of an alpine hotel and combined into the album small family photographs of a young boy taken in the same era and printed on velox paper. The representation of a family and a sense of place identified through visual descriptions was an act of translation of collected visual image memories of family into a small history.

⁴⁷⁶ Stephen King, *The Shining* (New English Library, 1977).

Frances Yates textual analysis of the art of memory being first identifying the sense of place (*loci*), and then placing the image memory (impression) into this place translated into a practice method for the reconstruction of this album. Yates states, 'The art of memory is like inner writing...For the places are very much like wax tablets or papyrus, the images like the letters, the arrangement and disposition of the images like the script, and the delivery is like the reading'.⁴⁷⁷

Media: found ephemera, small thirties paper photo album with original 'Modern Black Veined Mounting Corners', four monochrome prints on velox paper from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16), and recycled luggage label. Includes the limited edition printed artist's book, *Shine On* (50 copies) produced for World Book Night 2015.

⁴⁷⁷ Frances Yates, *The Art Of Memory*, p.22: 18–24.



Su Fahy, *SHE: A Keepsake Wallet*, 2014.

Outtake 4: Small Histories: Trace, Presence and Indexicality.

SHE: A Keepsake wallet is composed of a series of images that were significantly different in status to groups of snapshots of girls and 'women at work' which I collected that were co-existing at the time.

Media: found gold wallet wrap, five small black and white and sepia photographic material prints, mixed formats, representing different ages of girlhood to womanhood from the archive collated into the keepsake wrap.

The small history reflects Barthes statement that, 'Each photograph is read as the private appearance of its referent: the age of Photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the

publicity of the private: the private is consumed as such publicly'.⁴⁷⁸ *The Keepsake Wallet* reflects a form that occupies space in the archive as having been wholly private, looked at alone, emerging at the flea market discarded without a reference to kinship but inviting private speculation into, 'There she is!' as Barthes declares on reading closely a photograph of his mother, in this case, the desire is provoked to know, who she is, as the spectator standing outside of a family in contrast to Barthes knowing his mother in the Winter Garden Photograph.⁴⁷⁹

The Fugitive Testimonies Archive (2009–16) is one of 'a gathering together', in the words of Derrida, 'a consignation through gathering together signs'.⁴⁸⁰ The archive gathers together the discarded photographs and shelters their consignation as visual image memories in which all the elements should have articulated a unity, but in this archive have exposed the censored images of a private life of family, a discard which is a separate supplement to the family archives. Significantly, one that unnaturally combines to disrupt 'the law of the house, of the house as place, domicile, family, lineage, or institution', as it represents censorship of family material extant to the accepted record of family.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁸ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.98: 7–12.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.99: 11–15.

⁴⁸⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p.3: 19–25.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.19: 21–3.

Chapter 3: Intervention

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I continue to generate theories about the role of the photograph in its analogue material form. Specifically, I aim to do this within the informal family archive and to explore the second-generation postmemorial reception of personal and social identity, family histories and their discourse. I aim to look at the alternative discourse, as investigated and revealed in Chapter 2, of re-presented small histories (excerpts from the collated archive) from the first to the second generation or even successive generations, in some cases offering this acknowledgement of postmemorial readings; but critically the method used, especially by artists, is one of intervention, discussed by theorists Joan Gibbons; Hal Foster; and Marianne Hirsch.⁴⁸² The research in this chapter will be concerned with analysing this act of intervention and both textual and visual responses in detail. There is an objective world, but knowledge of it is filtered through the subjective experience of individuals.⁴⁸³ My thesis is that family photographs play a critical role as 'image memories' and depict 'passingness' and the temporalities of our personal human existence. Knowledge is by its nature partial and bound by individual experience. There is a relation to a specific sphere of the ontology of photography for exploration where it impacts on lived experience, memory and personal and social identity. The methodology within my practice will be in nature qualitative, inclusive of textual analysis, the practice of urban archaeology, 'bricolage' and intertextuality. The method of bricolage will be defined here as writing and practice as enquiry, impressionist but inclusive of mixed genres. Precisely by taking a method and critical approach that aims to connect theory, technique and experiential knowledges to explore alternate discourses. Through form and content, I would argue that

⁴⁸² Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*; Hal Foster, *The Return of The Real*; Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory*.

⁴⁸³ Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner, *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p.19, in review essay by Elizabeth Kaplan, www.archivists.org/periodicals/aa_v67/schwartz.pdf (accessed 10.07.16).

myself and the artist as researcher creates the political view of fragmented narrative as it disrupts the flow of argument, revealing disparate and disjunctive influences on their sense-making. In *Family Secrets: An Introduction* (1995) Annette Kuhn opens with this quote which sums up the narratives we seek, often found in folklore, oral traditions, and with artists in 'imagined communities':

Although we take stories of childhood and family literally, I think our recourse to this past is a way of reaching for myth, for the story that is deep enough to express the profound feelings we have in the present.

In turn, this opens up more spaces for the interweaving of fragmented segments of activity and the construction of research findings. This offers a mix of concepts, primary source material, narrative and metaphors enabling the conception of new theories and a focus on webs of relationships. All narratives obtain meaning not merely by their relationship to material reality but from their connection to other narratives. My literature and contextual review has informed me of the way that intersecting intertextual axes influence each other and meaning within the research act.

The construction of research findings informs us that we must as practitioners interpret and understand that utilising 'bricolage' theories structures as 'an untidy process'. Kincheloe writes, 'Thus, an important aspect of the work of the bricoleur involves coming to understand the social construction of self, the influence of selfhood on perception.'⁴⁸⁴

As a method, bricolage highlights the relationship, for me as a researcher, with ways of seeing (qualitative in method) and the social location of my own personal history, within an active agency of fieldwork to shape the research and practice findings, (sample of found photographs, orphan works, fugitive testimonies, anecdotes and encounters). Consideration of this will allow me to hold an appreciation of a collective everyday life, and the difficulty of understanding it, which brings with it a demand for humility on the part of myself

⁴⁸⁴ Joe L. Kincheloe, 'Introduction: the power of bricolage: expanding research methods', p.6, in K.L. Berry, 'Structures of bricolage and complexity', in J. Kincheloe and K. Berry, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (New York: Open University Press, 2004), pp103–27.

as researcher engaged in a complex field of the visual affect of family photography with its conflicting possibilities.⁴⁸⁵

3.2 The Visual Affect of Photography

The conflicting possibilities within this realm of reading affect in particular relate to Hirsch's views on reading found photographs, interrogated in depth in her book *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory* (1997).⁴⁸⁶ This book is a source that I reference throughout this thesis, as it reflects on the themes that form the core of my study. The methods I am working with in reading found and discarded photographs are both field-based and interpretive. The engagement in fieldwork utilising the flea market as the site of inquiry involves construction, re-construction, contextual diagnosis, negotiation and re-adjustment.⁴⁸⁷ The fieldwork is not only concerned with the live encounter setting up divergent methods of enquiry into 'the known' and 'unknown' but with diverse theoretical and philosophical understandings of the various elements encountered in the act of research. These diverse methods encompass experimental techniques and potential results due to the intricacies of the research design, which is both disciplinary and interdisciplinary, within which as an artist I aim to create a synergistic approach and interaction between the two concepts.

A question that has emerged is: Do we study the object or artefact as a thing in itself or as part of larger processes and relationships? To unpack this question will engage me in an enquiry into the nature and effects of the social construction of knowledge, understanding and human subjectivity. Studies that cover this specific ground are covered by Elizabeth Kaplan in her scholarly review of the material object, (as discussed in several studies, in *American Archivist* (v67)) represented in archives, cites as referenced earlier Ruth Phillips

⁴⁸⁵ See Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (2004); Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (1995); Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory* (1997).

⁴⁸⁶ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory*.

⁴⁸⁷ 'Giant Flea and Collector's Market', Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallett, BA4 6QN, on Sundays every two months in an annual published calendar, www.sheptonflea.com.

and Christopher Steiner who have argued (in terms of objects), that authority 'lies not in the property of the object itself, but in the process of collection, which inscribes, at the moment of acquisition, the character and qualities that are associated with the object in both individual and collective memories'.⁴⁸⁸

My first response is to draw on the writing of Kinchloe who discusses the 'bricoleur' as making use of philosophical research into the boundaries between the social world and the narrative representation of it.⁴⁸⁹ The consideration here is extended by Kinchloe who states that in utilising bricolage as an approach it avoids using passive, external and mono-logical research methods but this method brings into play our understanding of the research context together with our previous experience with research methods.⁴⁹⁰ My arena of research continues to look closely at the methodology of individual artistic practice, intervention, effort and strategy. Leading into works that reflect on presence and the photograph as a site of exchange for embodied art, the works of Marina Abramovic link into what could be said to be the archaeologies of presence.⁴⁹¹ This is therefore posing the question of how, when and by which processes phenomena of presence are produced and received in this case through the photograph. It explores the dialectics of shape presence especially in relation to the act or art of photography, between the operator and viewer, addressing experiences of being there. These are described in the following article as the photographs being photograms of a performance: a photographic image made by placing objects, (in this case the presence of the subject Marina Abramovic) between light-sensitive paper and a light source to form an alchemical image. In the text, *Archaeologies of Presence* (2012), the authors contest that archaeology is concerned now as a discipline more in terms of different relationships with what is left of the past. They believe this concept has

⁴⁸⁸ Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher B. Steiner, *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p.19, in review essay by Elizabeth Kaplan, www.archivists.org/periodicals/aa_v67/schwartz.pdf (accessed 10.07.2016).

⁴⁸⁹ J.L. Kincheloe, 'Describing the bricolage: Conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative research', *Qualitative Inquiry* 6, (2001), pp679–92.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Marina Abramovic, *The Kitchen* (La Fabrica, 2012).

foregrounded 'anthropological questions of performance and construction of the past in memory, narrative, collections of textual and material sources, archives and systems of documentation in the experience of place.'⁴⁹² It is possible then to consider concepts of aura and the uncanny, and this links into an emphasis on encounters related to site with the sign and trace. Benjamin asserts:

The trace is an appearance of a nearness, however far removed the thing that left it behind may be ... In the trace, we gain possession of the thing in 'the aura'.⁴⁹³

The work described in the following text is one that works with presence, memory, site and trace through the photographic encounter. This is a key work in visual art in the twentieth century where the experience of presence has often been limited to practices of encounter with one's own sense of self, whereas in this piece the encounter is an intervention with presence and memory. The concept of place, connections to family, memory and identity frame this work for me as an important image memory and sense impression related to the nature of a photograph, its capture of 'trace' and all its implications for the individual's encounter reading that still image at a later date. In the following quote, there is a full description of the encounter with this work:

The Kitchen: Homage to Saint Therese de Avila (2012)

Marina Abramovic

In 'The Kitchen,' time stands still, ceases to exist, appears here and now like an imperious necessity of creation, fruit of a sensory experiment that takes shape through the understanding. Marina Abramovic puts into practice the maxim of Roni Horn: 'I do not want to make anything without being here. The creation of something takes me away from here. I want to manage to make being here enough in itself.' 'The Kitchen' is a simple production; Marina Abramovic does not use an elaborate display of means, rather she works with the essential, inhabits the space, translating it and defining it – making it her own. Each photograph is a photogram of the performance of Marina Abramovic' inside this immense kitchen which fed, first, young orphans, then

⁴⁹² Gabriella Giannachi, Nick Kaye and Michael Shanks (eds.) *Archaeologies of Presence: Art, Performance and the Persistence of Being* (Routledge, 2012).

⁴⁹³ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Elland and Kevin Mc Laughlin (Harvard University Press, 2002), p.447.

young pupils, children from a very concrete period in history, meteorite children, children of pain, children of sperm, children of language and of dreams. Children whom they cure with magical recipes: 'breakfast with a glass of liquid gold. Lunch with fresh fig; dinner with a glass of liquid silver.' The photographs of 'The Kitchen' remind me of Japanese writing (in its fluency), in that they allow us to see art and work; they reach, from their place of simplicity, the deepest recesses of the soul of the spectator. They are photos shot through with silence and immensity. The emotion does not flood, nor submerge; it is meant to be read, the effect of distance traps us with its sensitive abstraction. In the photographs of 'The Kitchen' there are no lies; we perceive a certain departure from all that is trivial; we are the onlookers gazing at fragility, and at discretion. The body is a glorious body that is presented with clarity, agility, subtlety – an appealing body.⁴⁹⁴



3.1 Marina Abramovic, *The Kitchen*, (2012), artefact.

This reflects how generally in the West we transform every artistic impression into a description; whereas on the contrary, in *The Kitchen* (2012) we find

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., also in Abramovic, *The Kitchen*, Introduction by Mateo Feijoo.

ourselves before fact, the apprehension of the moment. Marina Abramovic offers us the possibility of contemplating pure fragments, moments of certainty. Once more her body, in conjunction with the space she occupies, forms what she calls her 'field of representation'. Interrogating this practice offers an understanding that research that fails to address the ontology of the human existential situation, with its pain, suffering, joy and desire ignores affect and its link to the human domain offering little attempt to connect the research act to the emotion and heart of lived experience. Embodied work offers to illuminate this domain, and bricoleurs search for ways to connect with this domain and illuminate it. In the case of Marina Abramovic, researchers are able to interrogate readings of the performance of presence in the recollections, records, photo-documentation and documents that remain in the aftermath of the event. The postcards containing still images of moments in the performances are to be read after the event. In this case the source of presence is read as occurring in this engagement with the trace, the still images selected as photographic records. It is recognised that this engagement produces a complex relationship with the past events, which appear to inscribe into the present. Barbara London suggests the impossibility of recreating earlier performative events and installations in any but new forms.⁴⁹⁵ Derrida argues the photographic document which he terms as 'the supplement' is to be viewed as 'a terrifying menace as it indicates absence and lack, but also the first and surest protection against that very menace, that is why it cannot be given up'.⁴⁹⁶

3.3 The Performative Evocation of Presence

The still photograph could be said to turn the live act of the everyday and the performative into an intervention creating an object for the gaze, an encounter with that candid present moment. It is translated into the careless snapshot or the informed and knowing contemporary print. The privacy of the performative act in family photography has been engaged with in re-presentation of the family

⁴⁹⁵ Barbara London, *Video Spaces: Eight Installations* (New York: MOMA, 1995).

⁴⁹⁶ Derrida, 'That Dangerous Supplement', in J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, translated by G.C. Spinoza (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp141–64.

group by the photographer Trish Morrissey and contemporary photographers playing with the reading of the 'image memory' before us. Trish Morrissey's artist statement below unpacks the methodology behind this particular piece and the intervention into the reading of the family group in the still photograph:

Front, (2005–2007), deals with the notion of borders, boundaries and the edge, using the family group and the beach setting as metaphors. For this work, the artist travelled to beaches in the UK and around Melbourne. She approached families and groups of friends who had made temporary encampments, or marked out territories and asked if she could be part of their family temporarily. Morrissey then took over the role or position of a woman within that group – usually the mother figure. Ideas around the mythological creature the 'shape shifter' and the cuckoo are evoked.⁴⁹⁷



3.2 Image from the series *Front*, Title: Sylvia Westbrook, August 2nd (2005), Print: c-type

⁴⁹⁷ Trish Morrissey Artist Statement, http://www.trishmorrissey.com/works_pages/work-front/statement (accessed 10.5.15).

An important point to underscore here is the fact that in research and writing about presence there is a strongly held belief that to try to plan, choreograph, insert or assert presence in a work does not in itself guarantee it.⁴⁹⁸ Presence is defined 'as something (as a spirit) felt or believed to be present', differentiated from the bearing or carriage of a person but related to 'the air' of a person as Barthes defined in his writing about the affect of a photograph.⁴⁹⁹ Barthes states: 'No, the air is that exorbitant thing which induces from body to soul – animula, little individual soul, good in one person, bad in another... The air is a kind of intractable supplement of identity...' ⁵⁰⁰

Barthes set out in his theory of a 'History of Looking' to account for the fundamental roles of emotion and subjectivity in the experience of Photography. The essential nature or '*eidōs*' of this subjective experience of photography is defined by an irreducible singularity of the photographic image as an image of 'that-has-been', of a presence transfixed. As Barthes affirms, 'Every Photograph is a Certificate of Presence.'⁵⁰¹

Presence, then, I would argue here, is something that happens through interpersonal encounters of its own accord rather than as a manufactured imperative and planned intervention. However, in the finally selected works for *Front* (2005–07) by the artist Trish Morrissey there is clearly presence, but is this more oblique, as we understand the insertion of the artist and the intuitive although highly planned affect this holds. It is the narrative of the piece, its fiction that holds on to our attention, whether it is legitimate or not to exploit the presence already evocative within the family group. The title of each picture again confronts the viewer with the family name but clearly is this evidential, as only in the knowledge of the insertion of the artist can you understand the absence of the named individual. It does engage with the idea of the absent

⁴⁹⁸ J. Feral, 'How to define presence effects, The work of Janet Cardiff', *Archaeologies of Presence*, Chapter 2, Part 1, p.26.

⁴⁹⁹ Presence, Dictionary Definition, Merriam-Webster dictionary, www.merriam-webster.com/

⁵⁰⁰ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp107–10.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.87.

family member who acts as the operator documenting family events and visits to sites such as beaches or sites on the border of land and sea.

Do we need to be critical of these interventions and the erasure of evidence in works that counter their accepted narrative encounters? The documentary exchange between the viewer, the reader and the document is intersubjective in its nature. The patterns of history and context are revealed retrospectively and always I would argue set against new knowledge or an expanded field of knowledge in these encounters. The relations are with the artist here, an uncanny encounter with the idea of self and identity. Found images such as these staged shots, found in the future divorced from their narrative, would still be read as the family, but without this complication of the questions raised by this series of artist-led interventions into the family history and record. 'The strategies of staged photography as we have come to know them since the early 1980s can certainly be argued to be considered as an answer to the perceived aesthetic redundancy of traditional photography, film photography.'⁵⁰²

In Morrissey's work the apparatus comes into play, the exchange of roles, family members as camera operator, the rupture in the act of family photography always staged but somehow compelling in its viewing. The body of work is interpreted by the viewer in this knowledge of a series of encounters, that have been distilled into single composite images of a family group, forming a series. This set up is, we now know, staged and the decisions all lie with Trish Morrissey as the photographer, the camera operator who through careful setting up of her 4x5 camera directs the instant when the shutter is tripped. This is a series of still photographs of a particular format shot on film where a certain setting and available light quality have been carefully planned and shaped. Rather than purely viewing photographs as representations, a controversial proposition from Vilem Flusser describes technical images as projections and illusions. He sees this as participating in 'a telematics dialogue' that produces, 'a

⁵⁰² *Telematics*: n.1. The branch of science concerned with the use of technological devices to transmit information inclusive of images over long distances, www.oxforddictionaries.com Andreas Müller-Pohle, in 'The Photographic Dimension' (1) The Strategies of Staging, 37-41. <http://muellerpohle.net/texts/the-photographic-dimension/> (accessed 15.07.16).

school for creating' and, 'a school for freedom'.⁵⁰³ The freedom to create is key to understanding how works of this nature are viewed and the impulse behind them. The artist is in fact dismantling existing communication codes and setting out to recombine their elements into structures which can be used to generate new images. These images do not conform to set ideas of representation and the truth of the camera to record, due to this planned intervention and rupture to the recorded image, which remains still temporally truthful. Victor Burgin commented on this preoccupation in the early 1970s as denoting the desire of the artist to use the medium and apparatus of photography to structure their expression.⁵⁰⁴

The methodology here of working within a concept of recording everyday life although constructed and staged is key to the success of the images as the viewer's imagination is captivated by the act of intervention and the tacit understanding reached with each family photographed. The idea clearly relates to Benjamin's argument that 'history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence', and the present is the invisible goal.⁵⁰⁵ Morrissey's practice here gives rise to new histories, artist-led in the present and related to the narrative of her encounters, gathering and commenting on the family group and its membership, past, present and future. The engagement of artists and photographers such as Trish Morrissey working with the still image invokes qualities and effects that often lie beyond the traditional field of the family photograph. The method of photographing spaces and places is introduced but also playing with the act of looking itself offers the viewer a number of layers to their reading of the image, discovering the feeling that we are seeing through from one layer to another. The discovery offers family images an even stronger relationship with their charged play on absence and presence. The act of re-presentation is an artist-led strategy, which pulls our

⁵⁰³ Vilem Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (Reaktion Books, 1983), 'The Apparatus', pp21–32.

⁵⁰⁴ Victor Burgin, 'Commentary Part1', in *Work and Commentary* (Latimer New Dimensions, 1973), n.p.

⁵⁰⁵ Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art at the age of its technical reproducibility' (Second Version), (1955), in M. W. Jennings and others (eds), *The Work of Art at the Age of its Mechanical Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*, translated by Edmund Jephcott and others (Cambridge, MA; London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008) p.37.

attention into the frame and the social meaning of what is the truth in the family representation. In Morrissey's work, it represents an ephemeral act within the everyday and a shift of perception into new associations while reflecting on the provocation of an artist in making this connection between fact and fiction and the concept of presence in an image supported by text (the family member's name) creating a faux document.

Morrissey's practice of intervention in the act of photography offers to the viewer an image memory in a still photograph that perhaps ruptures expectations of the family photograph but impresses due to the choreographing of the artist's presence. It is in essence a performative act leaving an indexical imprint of difference. The philosopher Vilem Flusser sets out a model for an interdisciplinary approach a modern take on criticism of photography – 'a technical imagination' that addresses the concept of production as much as the resulting image and explicates the complex relationship between humans and in this case photographic apparatus. Flusser was arguing for a post-industrial consideration of the wider relationship between apparatus, the programme and the effects of the operator in terms of establishing freedom to develop new relationships with technology and subsequently the photographic image in terms of creativity and the intervention and play of the operator. The creativity and play of the operator is exposed in the methodology of the artist Gabriel Orozco. A concept of developing new relationships with the image is invoked in one particular piece through the idea of memory encapsulated in water (recent research disputes the capacity of water to retain trace information but artists have engaged with the capacity of water as an index of life in exhibitions and collective projects). Its relationship to presence and event is interpreted by the artist and photographer Orozco, who presents this insertion, this intervention of the unexpected but everyday, in his image *Breath on a Piano* (1993); see image 3.3 for this visual capture of presence.⁵⁰⁶ The image is in essence performative and does not tell us whose breath is captured through water droplets on a mirror

⁵⁰⁶ Amy Sharrocks, *Memory of Water* (Somerset House, 2014), The stories relating to the donations range from the extraordinarily personal – a hospital water dispenser collected when a woman's father was in A&E – to the more scientific and environmental – boiled rice water collected by a medical scientist to show what the stool of a cholera patient looks like.

like surface, but offers us the chance to notice an embodied act caught within a still photograph representing a timeless and ephemeral moment in everyday life.⁵⁰⁷ As it turns out both works are about the identity and trace of the artist inserted into the image memories. The comparison here is to identify what captures us, in an image attempting to capture the fleeting moment and underscore the precariousness and intangibility of the individual self. The presence in each of the works by Morrissey and Orozco is frozen in time, their active presence in the photographs marks their absence in time.

Orozco's works are described as ephemeral and oblique as at odds with themselves, discrediting and demystifying any claim to full representation, any claim of presence undisturbed by absence. In an article titled 'Cosmic Matters and other Leftovers' (2011), the reviewer Rye Dag Holmbue describes Orozco and his works' relation to trace:

'A trace is ephemeral, a locus of ambivalence suspended in the unstable space between construction and dispersal, presence and absence. A trace is very little, almost nothing. But it is also an index of life.'⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁷ Gabriel Orozco, *Breath on a Piano* (1993).

⁵⁰⁸Rye Dag Holmbue, 'Cosmic Matters and other Leftovers' (2011). in *The White Review*, www.thewhitereview.org

See also Charlotte Cotton, *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (Thames and Hudson, 2004), New Edition 2014, on the work of Gabriel Orozco, pp116–17.



3.3 Gabriel Orozco, *Breath on a Piano*, (1993)

Chromogenic colour print, 16 x 20", (40.6 x 50.8 cm), Edition of 5.

The photographs under discussion are quite different from the spontaneous snapshot and have a different relation to memory and history but do play on the importance of presence and draw on past memories. In *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (2014), Charlotte Cotton writes that:

when photographers have either revived historical photographic techniques or created archives of photographs. They invigorate our understanding of past events or cultures, as well as enriching our sense of parallels or continuities between contemporary and historical ways of seeing.⁵⁰⁹

An example of this approach is to the fable of the family portrait appearing in family albums recording holidays at the beach, outings, and family occasions has even been subverted in *Victorian Albums* by insertion and a clearly focused intervention and juxtaposition of the unexpected is continued in the work of

⁵⁰⁹ Charlotte Cotton, *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (Thames and Hudson, 2014), p.10: 19–24.

Trish Morrissey.⁵¹⁰ Orozco is evoking the idea of presence through trace a contemporary take on a reflection in a mirror, a glimpse of life through the stain, the map of bodily fluids, the archaeological leftover provoking the unknown a contemporary take on the self-portrait perhaps. The works of both artists are essentially private acts, which have become public information. The practice commonalities under discussion are the visual references explored and the exploration of the act of photography and the specific intervention of the artist, the photographer seeking the creation of an image memory, a lasting sense impression. The real world as a personal fiction filtered by our cultural references, race and ethnicity, gender and status in society. The level of engagement with constructing images does reinforce the intrinsic relationship that photography has with memory despite contrary views to how this synergy is created.

In effect this synergy is activated as Rosalind Krauss states ‘that both performance and photography announce the supplementing of the index itself. The photograph needs the body art event as an ontological “anchor” of its indexicality.’⁵¹¹ A starting point, the reference that enables certain works to stand out with their methodology revealed, provoking this further reflection beyond the image. Krauss in a later essay in 1999 asks us to contemplate an expanded definition of the word ‘medium’ as an agent through which we communicate with the absent or displaced presence: a usage she argues can connect us to other worldly presences as in telepathy and the spirit world.⁵¹² Early photographers utilised this methodology to expand the fields of their image-making, creating composite images and double exposures and genres such as spirit photography and constructed composite portraits. Krauss argues that in this instance the double exposure reconnects us with the ability to construct an identity away from a truthful rendition of the self. Here Krauss

⁵¹⁰ Kate E. Gough, ‘1860’s era in the Victoria and Albert Museum Collection’, cited by Susan Bright in *Art, Photography Now* (Thames and Hudson, 2005), p.9, ‘In the domestic sphere there are fine examples of family albums that were elaborately collaged and painted upon with fabulous pre-surrealist narratives, quietly and perhaps unconsciously deconstructing the ideology of the Victorian Family.’

⁵¹¹Rosalind Krauss, ‘Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism’, *October* (Spring 1976), pp50–64.

⁵¹²Rosalind Krauss, ‘Reinventing the Medium’, *Critical Enquiry* 25(2), *Angelus Novus: Perspectives on Walter Benjamin* (Winter 1999), pp289–305.

reflects on presence being argued to be a double game itself playing out, 'what is not present' with 'what is already present'. In relation to the self and the act of both filming and documenting (with still photographs), the performativity of 'the self' should be considered and interrogated. Rather than performance, as the camera offers us an image of self-regard which we need to acknowledge in our reading of images. Can constructed or staged photography be read as being purely performative, or does contemporary photographic practice investigate away from the candid, the snapshot, and in this way expose the performative in relation to identity? I would argue that the earlier genre of the snapshot also offered photographers the chance to be creative either accidentally through multiple exposure or deliberately through image manipulation and constructing and staging scenes for the camera.⁵¹³

A more precise form of innovation and invention is translated in twentieth-century photography to include a mode of re-presentation, appropriating historic images from the past and creating alternative images to be disseminated by artists and photographers who now have a strong role to play in a reflection on culture, gender and performativity within the media.⁵¹⁴ Photographers and artists with political views have set out to create these alternative images to prompt memory and the reflection of past narratives allowing their meanings to traverse borders and both expose and frame identity in the here and now. An example of this approach is to be found in Tom Hunter's work *Persons Unknown* (1996–97), where there is an explicit and direct connection to the value of memory and the past. Narratives from the past re-presented in the future.⁵¹⁵ The sequence of work is supported by two narratives: one from the 17th century and one from today in the 21st century, reflected in the travel of social issues through time. The impulse behind this work is described by the artist Tom Hunter, in his own words:

Through this series of images, I have tried to represent the community where I live in a new and positive way before it is destroyed... I looked back

⁵¹³ In the 1850s, Oscar Gustave Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson made elaborate compositions from multiple negatives within the Darkroom print process.

⁵¹⁴ See Keith Piper, 'A nomad leaves few traces', in *Relocating the Remains* (INIVA, 1997).

⁵¹⁵ Tom Hunter, *Persons Unknown* (1996–97), eight works, each 4" by 5", transparencies with individual light boxes, 8" x 12".

into history to see how other groups have tried to portray themselves to the outside world in a positive light. In this context, I found the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century (one in particular Johannes Vermeer) especially interesting.⁵¹⁶

The body of work again references the divide between public reception and personal experience, and the artist re-presenting the private experience to enable different image memories. Underscoring this with cultural referencing to demonstrate stylistic complexity and the past rooted in classicism, but able to portray scenes of the everyday. This references the unique methodology of how referencing the seventeenth century its texts on memory, and its new emphasis on emotionalism and naturalism within works made now, draws on the Baroque, rooted in classicism.⁵¹⁷ The Baroque movement exhibited both stylistic complexity and great diversity in its subject matter from large religious works and history paintings to portraits, landscapes and scenes of everyday life. The subject matter encompassed and contextualised the times and is evocative now in the present.

The concern with evocation forms part of a debate in the present and is reflected in de-contextualising a document, a photograph in order to make it enigmatic or melancholic, or represent the beautiful. This is a method that prompts David Company, in his article 'Safety in Numbness: Some remarks on the problems of Late Photography' (2003), to write that 'The photograph can be an aid to memory, but it can also become an obstacle that blocks access to the understanding of the past. It can paralyze the personal and political ability to think beyond the image in the always fraught project of remembrance.'⁵¹⁸ In this article, Company discusses social documentary and its 'affective character' but does counter this by his statement that social truth is something other than a matter of convincing style. This is a comment that reflects this concern with making a mark, an intervention that offers a statement, a signature style to a

⁵¹⁶ Val Williams, 'Current Stories', in *Modern Narrative: the domestic and the social* (Artsway, 1997), pp27–8.

⁵¹⁷ See Rosa Giorgi, *European Art of the Seventeenth Century* (Getty Publications, 2008).

⁵¹⁸ David Company, 'Safety in Numbness; some remarks on the problems of Late Photography', first published in David Green (ed.), *Where is the Photograph?* (Photoworks/ Photoforum, 2003).

photographer's canon of work. Company asks us to address the point of what happens in these photographs as they raise these questions.⁵¹⁹

3.4 Where Is the Photograph? Visual Ecology as a Methodology

The approach of an artist into this concept of social truth can be in the form of an intervention, rupture or the act of deconsecrating memory as constructed and contextualised by the archive. Joan Schwartz an archivist and academic on method has stated that, 'the task of looking at family photos – necessitates looking for them'.⁵²⁰ Joachim Schmid is interested in this act of selection from within found and appropriated images, the act of association and order linked primarily to the use of photographs in a recycled format, a form of image ecology, and a method to utilise rather than to their production. His project of creating 'The Institute for the Reprocessing of Used Photographs', stimulated an overwhelming deposit of photographs, negatives and studio collections (raw data). Joan Fontcuberta argues for this method of visual ecology as offering a new way to interrogate the dual value of the found photograph as information and as subject.⁵²¹ Both aspects are part of my preoccupation with the act of appropriation, the research catalyst offered by fugitive testimonies and the record that is family archive, rather than the pragmatic concern with recycling. However, balancing a respect for the discarded needs to be engaged through a freedom to solve our problems now, which can mean artists utilising the method of visual ecology concerned with the existing photograph as object, research catalyst, material practice, living visual evidence to reveal, question and, at times, challenge personal and social identity within historical discourses. Visual ecology as a method offers to practice a set of constructs to clarify, in

⁵¹⁹ David Company, 'Safety in Numbness; some remarks on the problems of Late Photography'.

⁵²⁰ Joan Schwartz, 'The Album, the Art Market, and the Archives'. Paper delivered at the 'Collecting and Curating Photographs: Between Private and Public Collections' colloquium, 3 May 2014, Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto, cited in 'Diasporic Vietnamese Family Photographs, Orphan Images, and the Art of Recollection, Thy Phu', *Photography and the Diaspora* 5(1), edited by Anthony W. Lee, Fall 2014 (accessed 15.06.15).

⁵²¹ Joan Fontcuberta, *Pandora's Camera: Photography After Photography* (MACK, 2014), pp176–7.

Fontcuberta's words, 'the space between memory and forgetting, between useful data and the torrent of indiscriminate information'.⁵²²

However, this bequest of indiscriminate data in the form of photographs to Schmid, also revealed the insecurity of the image within one collection, where all the negatives had been spliced before sending, rendering them asunder from their original pristine portrait reference. Schmid's response was to create a work, an outtake from this faux archive, *Photogenetic Drafts* (1982–2000). In an interview Schmid describes the project as one arising out of disappointment with this act of destruction of the original portraits but realised that he could make a work in response to this act of splicing by considering the splicing of the human gene in the act of research and quest for knowledge and respond through splicing the photographs together to look at age, difference, the genetic trace and create composite images to sequence his own visual research within this studio archive, see image 3.4, for a visual representation of this duality in the image.

⁵²² Joan Fontcuberta, *Pandora's Camera*, *Photography After Photography*, p.180:15–17.



3.4 Joachim Schmid, *Photogenetic Drafts*, (1982–2000), Photoworks.

Schmid moves this approach to visual research further in the work, *Lost Memories, Masterpieces of Photography: The Fricke and Schmid Collection* (1989).⁵²³ The methodology that Fricke and Schmid utilised was the act of searching the flea market and second-hand bookshops for anonymous amateur images. Their second strategy was to pick out images from their finds that directly related to the unmistakable work of a considered master of photography. Resemblance was sought to the themes of works, by masters such as Atget, Sander, Evans, Adams, Moholy-Nagy and Frank. The images collected, to their eye possessed both this thematic approach and the formal elements which could be found in the stylistic repertoire of this group of master photographers, see image 3.5 for the visual representation of *Masterpieces of Photography* (1989). The artist and writer Joan Fontcuberta describes Schmid's

⁵²³ *Lost Memories, Masterpieces of Photography: The Fricke and Schmid Collection* (1989).

projects as espousing a kind of photographic ecology, but sees them as also being concerned with 'the values of creative experience itself, accumulation, chance, authorship, quality and originality'.⁵²⁴ Schmid explores these aspects of his methodology in an interview where he discusses 26 years of findings, in urban centres like Berlin and Paris. He sees the object character of the photograph capturing the imagination and the social act, narratives of the past stimulating the imaginative projector a source for exploring what we know about society. Schmid discusses also the relationship his projects have to his own life in terms of memory and can reconstruct his own travel like a personal diary, or form of mapping through his found objects, photographs and albums. Ownership of these found objects, in essence orphan works, offers a visual memory track of his own project preoccupations. Schmid feels there is a form of energy caught in these ritualistic acts where there have been small acts of violence to photographs to discredit their original forms and conform to the idea of discarding image memories no longer intact and desirable.

These works pose questions about the function of the photograph, how an artist chooses to read them, exhibit them and recognise their value as records of the past, in the present, as both a record and object. Schmid discusses this methodology in this interview for *lensculture*:

On one hand, every single photograph represents or depicts a fragment of reality, while on the other hand that same photograph is a part of reality both as a psychical object and as an image symbol. It is much more interesting to use these existing images and work with them making new photographs, because existing photographs not only represent part of our realities, they are realities.⁵²⁵

⁵²⁴ Joan Fontcuberta, 'Ecology for a Picture', in *Pandora's Camera* (MACK, 2014), pp172–8.

⁵²⁵ Jim Casper and Joachim Schmid, 'Photography should be recycled', *Lens Culture*, <https://soundcloud.com/lensculture/interview-1> (accessed 10.5.15).



3.5 Masterpieces of Photography: *The Fricke and Schmid Collection*, (1989)

The theme of re-representation, the remaking of a new image through the intervention of the artist, is further explored in Julie Cockburn's work, in particular *Family Outing* (2013), (see image 3.6 for this act of intervention to the original image memory) where the found photographs are stitched into, layering a present-day reality, re-representing the work linking into its presence now and the artist's intervention calling a past image into the present tense (see image 3.7). In Sean O'Hagan's article on her work he touches on her methodology:

Cockburn hunts mainly for studio portraits and landscapes photographed from the 1930s to the '60s. With studio portraits, there's a certain enforced naturalness that I can work with. That's what I'm looking for: stillness and a kind of blank poise.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁶ Sean O' Hagan, 'A stitch in time; the dream-like world of embroidered vintage photography', *The Guardian*, 28 November 2014.

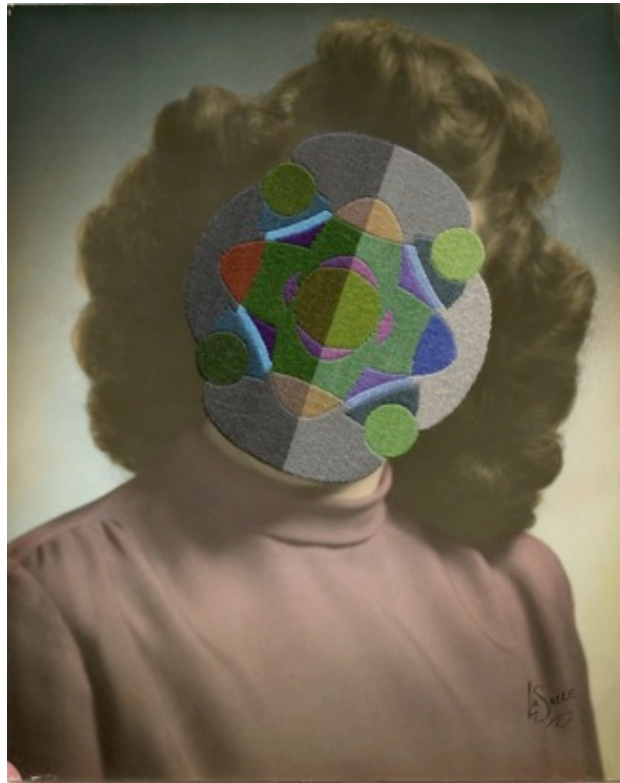
Artist's responses to questions differ but do reveal motivation and intention in regard to working with found and anonymous images, divorced from their original homes. The curator Erik Kessels, interviewed at the Rencontres d'Arles Photography Festival, reveals his views on working with found and anonymous images and discusses the curation of his show *Small Universe* (2014). In this interview a question was posed in relation to why found images can produce a different affect to those images with clear authorship: 'Is there more skill in taking a photograph than appropriating a found image?' This is Kessels' answer:

The vernacular photography almost feels like stuff I've created myself, recycling material to give it a different meaning. The relationship between these different approaches still offers a sense of respect for the found photograph and its existence now in the present, its still presence.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁷ Eric Kessels Interview, 'Rencontres D'Arles', *Small Universe* (2014).



3.6 Julie Cockburn, *Family Outing*, (2013).



3.7 Julie Cockburn, *Masqua*, (2014).

In Cockburn's work with the more formal studio portrait, the act of intervention here reflects a felt, domestic response to the studio portrait and plays both with visage and the disappeared or masked identity, a method that could be said to protect these anonymous sitters from a modern-day gaze in the here and now, (see images 3.6 and 3.7 for exemplars of this method and intervention). The method reflects back to a historical precedent of 'Embroidered Postcards', produced as collectables within popular culture from 1910 into the 1920's, then subverts in many cases the posed identity of the sitter by the embroidering out of their visage in some cases changing their persona anthropomorphically.⁵²⁸ The recognition of this genre of popular cards is there, but subverts their charm and conceptually re-presents their oeuvre. Maurizio Anzeri considers that the different characters of his embroidered portraits create narratives, which intertwine in unexpected ways. He works in series of portraits for the duration of up to three years. Anzeri sees the photograph as an object and is more interested in its use as material rather than its process. As such these original

⁵²⁸ Maurizio Anzeri, www.saatchigallery.com/artists/maurizio_anzeri (accessed 10.03.14).

photographs of a very private family reality become an entirely public fantasy. Anzeri changes the past context, the present and also the future of 'the family group' photograph. See image 3.8 *Family Day* (2011) which exemplifies this direct intervention, utilising the photograph as a substrate or a form of drawing board, to rearticulate the paper image and composition through colliding mediums and materiality from past visual forms. The forms in this piece are the posed family group in a found sepia print format, and the stitched intervention referencing although subverting the embroidered postcard found within popular culture (1910s to 1920s).

The effect of these re-presented photographs is certainly the creation of new images alternative presentations of a photographic format referencing the past through working with images representing photographic conventions of the nineteenth and twentieth century, but disrupting the real record from the past. This intervention could be said to breathe new life into these images disrupting their indexicality, or it could be seen by some as a casual act of vandalism to a historic artefact, and precise knowledge from the past. It returns us to the argument of the photographic print as an object in itself, as a material copy, perhaps one of many, and artists' interest in these found images as discards, offering up to them a material for their creative re-engineering through their individual imaginations. Jacques Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), argues in his essay, 'The Pensive Image', for the role of the reader of such photographs re-presented by artists to be considered in new terms:

The modern aesthetic break is often described as the transition from the regime of representation to a regime of presence or presentation.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁹ Jacques Rancière, 'The Pensive Image', in *The Emancipated Spectator*, translated by Gregory Elliott (Verso, 2009), p.121: 16–18.



3.8 Maurizio Anzeri, *Family Day*, (2011).

Rancière proposes that the mode of exhibitions of found, staged or anonymous photographs in museological contexts tend to make photography, the vehicle of a renewed identification between the image as an artistic operation and the image as production of a representation. Rancière argues that this pensiveness of the image became identified with, 'a power of affecting that thwarted the calculations of thought and art'. This is a premise that I fully concur with where affect is considered as an important part of the reading of a photograph and the individual's process of writing memories within their personal and social memory.⁵³⁰ There is always in this process a consideration of the value of the found photograph's effect within continued circulation. Rancière contributes to this consideration and reflects:

⁵³⁰ Ibid., p.109: 13–16, p.110: 6–8.

The photographer's pensiveness might then be defined as this tangle between several forms of indeterminacy. It might be characterised as an effect of its circulation, between the subject, the photographer, and us, of the intentional, 'the known' and 'the unknown', the expressed and unexpressed, the present and the past.⁵³¹

Photographs are the primary source documents here – setting up the vital position of visual images within wider social and political contexts inclusive of their record of 'family'. Intervention into this record is under scrutiny here as I explore the intentions and strategies of artists' and their contribution to the value of the family photograph to personal and social identity.

How different was the strategy in the 1970s of the Dutch photographer Hans Eijkelboom (see image 3.9) who, in a precursor project to Trish Morrissey's *Front* (2005), invited himself into family homes and inserted his presence into a series of faux family portraits. The intervention sets up a tension for the viewer when the photographer reveals his tactics of constructing and staging these family images. A viewing of these family groups bereft of this interpretation would lead to an acceptance of the staging of a posed family group (the known) but no awareness of the artist photographer's intervention (the unknown). The intervention of Eijkelboom was personal and could be seen as audacious as his methodology and process was to select a group of houses, then he would ring the doorbell during the day, and in this context, it was the housewife who answered the front door. She and the children were home, but the husband was out at work. Eijkelboom then asked if he could make a photograph of the family without the father, and he made a picture with them on the sofa, including himself in the family group. This tactic was repeated in every house. On viewing these images, you look at them, and he looks as if he has been accepted as the father in every picture. the title of the work *Mit Meiner Familie* (1970) underscoring his intentions. Both of these projects by Morrissey and Eijkelboom would be read differently as singular images but when viewed as a sequence the intervention in Eijkelboom becomes singularly visible. This is less so in

⁵³¹ Ibid., pp114–15: 15–21.

Morrissey's series as she in this case actually transforms her portrait each time by adopting the clothes and air of the absent mother or replacement figure.



3.9 Hans Eijkelboom, *Mit Meiner Familie*, (1970s).

The collector and curator Eric Kessels' motivation as a curator of, 'found and often anonymous photography' as a genre, is to reveal a timeline for artists' intervention and expose work taking place in the seventies, which is still being re-presented today as a strategy by the artists I have cited within this chapter. In the exhibition *Secondhand*, staged in 2014 in Pier 24, Kessels sets out the work of a select group of artists from this canon, including John Baldessari, Richard Prince, Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel.⁵³² These works are juxtaposed with

⁵³² 'Secondhand', Exhibition at The Pilara Foundation, Pier 24, The Embarcadero, San Francisco, August 2014 – May 2015.

photographs from archive collections. The juxtaposition allows the curator, artist and viewer to probe the photographs exhibited as evidence and, in many cases, redefine the aesthetic experience through tinkering with the banal or found photograph, making a world of engaging mischief with photography as a medium of anonymity and function redefined and at times exploited within art installations and interventions. The following description of the exhibition *Secondhand* critically underscores the view of artist intervention in this field of appropriation and reinvention:

Secondhand, August 2014 – May 2015

Pier 24 Photography presents *Secondhand*, an exhibition featuring artists who build repositories of found images, from which they appropriate, construct, edit, and sequence in order to create something entirely new. Through this process, their distinctly personal approaches become as wide-ranging as their source material ... While mining these found images to reveal their own perspectives, the defining features of their artistic voices become process, craft, and display.⁵³³

In contrast, there is the other face of exhibiting one where every personal photo album is, of course, a story, a highly personal visual narrative. On average, Kessels tells his interviewer, 'people made eight or nine photo albums in their lifetime, and most of the snapshots in them were taken by men – the boys owned the camera: it was another toy or gadget to play with'. You can track the arc of a person's life through a photo album, says Kessels, and most lives are essentially the same. The first will be about first love: a girlfriend 'photographed excessively and often in unnecessary close up'. The second will be about the wedding day and the third 'another totally obsessive study, this time of the first child'. The fourth to the seventh, he says, are devoted to 'the children growing up', while the eighth is 'a total mess: home life, holidays, parties and gatherings'. The final album is similar to the first one insofar as it is about 'two people alone again after all the kids have left home'. Back when people made

⁵³³ 'Secondhand', Exhibition Review, Pier 24 (accessed 10.11.15).

photo albums, says Kessels, 'they were recording the circle of their lives, so there is a kind of sadness in these images'.⁵³⁴

'The Photograph as Document', explored here in this section on visual ecology as a methodology, taps into the methodologies of (i) witnesses to a recorded performative event, (ii) private collections re-interpreted and made public through exhibition in the public realm. At times, there are political statements interrogated and re-presented through the lens of an artist or photographer's position and interest. Artists and Photographers use a wide range of approaches to interrogate and reflect upon 'how the document functions'. There are questions raised by these works about exactly how the document functions, the intentions of the photographer and the assumed authority of the document as evidential. Critical of the artist and calling into question relational aesthetics, Claire Bishop calls for participatory work that provokes the differences between individuals and troubles the very relations through which the work works. In her essay 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics' (2004), Bishop cites Nietzsche, and offers this quote to underscore this point of view:⁵³⁵

In the being of the artist we encounter the most perspicuous and most familiar mode of will to power. Since it is a matter of illuminating the Being of Beings, meditation on art has in this regard decisive priority.⁵³⁶

3.5 Art and the Archive

The concept of a meditation on art and the artist's priority introduces us to the consideration of the power of artist-led narratives and intervention that considers political statements. An example of this is with the archives in Eastern Europe inherited from the now defunct socialist states, which are now forming the basis for investigation and re-presentation by artists from Eastern Europe. One artist, Agnieszka Polska, has set herself the artistically ambitious task of

⁵³⁴ <http://uk.phaidon.com/agenda/photography/articles/2014/july/03/is-erik-kessels-the-smartest-photo-curator-around/> (accessed January 2014).

⁵³⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volume 1, 'The Will to Power as Art'*, translated by D.F. Krell (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

⁵³⁶ C. Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', *October* 110 (2004), pp51–79.

trying to change the past by deconstructing and reconstructing archival images.⁵³⁷ Polska bends official art-historical narratives, both of Poland's artistic Avant-Garde and the art world at large. In a recent interview Polska states that:

Artists from Eastern Europe have a certain attitude towards the issue of memory. It's strongly connected to the change of the system after 1989. The archival historical information was distorted; it's this unusual thing of living in a part of Europe where your past is not very certain. I analyse the topics of memory and reconstructing the past in many of my works. I try to reshape the past with present activities. The history, context and identity of living in Eastern Europe affects me more than being identified as Polish, it's this analysis that forms the main part of my artistic preoccupation. The usage of the source must be strongly connected to the theory behind the piece.⁵³⁸

In one piece of her work, Polska focuses on Freud and his reflective interrogation on the phenomenon of forgetting and compulsive replacement in memory, of proper names by other names, providing her with an opportunity to analyse the way memory functions as art. Polska draws on Freud and his essay, to draw attention to this issue of what is forgotten or wrongly remembered and recurs subconsciously in a changed ambiguous form. Polska as an artist contends that different often contrary analysis pushes art forward.⁵³⁹ Polska discusses her methodology in reference particularly to found photographic material and her response being to construct spaces in which works of art can be understood; 'these are spaces generated by imperfections of the photographic medium and errors of human memory. This means that my main inspirations are mistakes and confabulation.'⁵⁴⁰

The concern with imperfect and unreliable narrative extends to the nature of our relationship with narrative. As Polska has stated it is the imperfections of the visual photographic medium that prompts her own constructed narrative and many visual artists draw on photographs to create their own narratives and signature. Writers are also often drawn to revealing and re-presenting found narratives and introducing them into the novel. This is an art form which also

⁵³⁷ 'Mark Smith talks to Agnieszka Polska', *Electronic Beats* 40, Winter 2014/15, pp51–3.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ Cited in 'Mark Smith talks to Agnieszka Polska', *Electronic Beats* 40, Winter 2014/15, Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, translated by A.A. Brill (1914).

⁵⁴⁰ 'Mark Smith talks to Agnieszka Polska', *Electronic Beats* 40, pp51–3.

engineers the imagination and embeds photographs as prompts, descriptors or witness-photographs as document to events constructed or recorded. The novelist Kazuo Ishiguro, in response to a question dealing with remembrance states that 'Any of us when asked to give an account of ourselves over any important period of our lives; would tend to be unreliable.'⁵⁴¹ This relates back to Benjamin's reflections and his concern 'with the optical unconscious and the ability of photography, to open up spaces that previously only existed in dreams, things that have never been consciously seen let alone reproduced'.⁵⁴² If the photograph is only used as an illustration of the historical narrative, the photograph is sentenced to silence: its own discourse muted by an explanatory caption consisting of a declarative epigrammatic 'here it is'? The extensive use now of photographs as document rather than as illustration, widens the interest of contemporary historiography into such areas as the history of mentalities, of everyday and material life, which would not have been possible without making use of visual documents such as photographs. The use of photographs in this mode can radically modify our powers and habits of perception. The mode of photography reflects back to Benjamin's insight 'that the camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious insights'.⁵⁴³ Benjamin's theory opens up 'our considerations of behavioural practices, social codes and rituals that make up and direct us to unnoticed and hence effectively the invisible fabric and patterns of everyday lives and social interactions'.⁵⁴⁴ The theorist Kracauer, writing in this period, also made a claim that photography makes possible 'the redemption of physical reality reclaiming from oblivion into "presence", into consciousness, of the contingent world of material and cultural objects of the enormous importance of the seemingly unimportant

⁵⁴¹ Kazuo Ishiguro, 'I'm pretty rocky at writing in English', *Guardian Arts* (21.01.15), in response to the question, 'You once said you'd like to write about how a whole society remembers or forgets? Is this something you've tried to do in the book, *The Buried Giant* (2015)?'

⁵⁴² Walter Benjamin, 'The Optical Unconscious', cited in Gregory Paschalidis, 'Images of History and the Optical Unconscious', *Historein* 4 (2003), p.40, <http://www.nnet.gr/historein/historeinfiles/histvolumes/hist04/historein4-paschalidis.pdf> (accessed May 2014).

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

inconspicuous minutiae of the life world'.⁵⁴⁵ Linked to these insights is the consideration of the most common kind of photo-history being the historical narrative, which perhaps not including a single photograph is presented as a photograph, a snapshot of its time. Kracauer holds a view that in the twentieth century, when historians included photographs in books, they did not approach them with the critical circumspection and interpretive attentiveness applied to other kinds of written and verbal documents. Barthes tackles this relationship between history and photography by dividing their roles in the twentieth century. He writes that 'it is a paradox that the same century invented History and Photography, the former constructing a positive memory rid of "mythic time" the latter providing a certain but "fugitive testimony"'.⁵⁴⁶

A contextual framework that underpins current thinking is that photographs ought to be interpreted by an examination of three types of contextual information; internal, original and external. Photography's indexicality combined with its reproducibility offers to the photograph an ambivalence. Therefore, in reading the photograph, we should be less concerned with diluting its constitutive tensions than with learning to live with its conflicted possibilities. In relation to this Michael Roth states that, 'more generally thinking of being in another place or time can be related to the problematics of empathy, projection and social context. In terms of artist intervention, into disrupting the reading of an image, he cites Marey and Muybridge in their methodologies of isolating moments of human experience in order to better understand it and enable a new reading of human gesture and movement in different social contexts'.⁵⁴⁷ These two photographers introduced iterability and repetition, and utilised circulation in their works, which gave to these mechanical techniques (as they

⁵⁴⁵ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Photography', *Critical Enquiry* 19(2), 1993, p.425.

⁵⁴⁶ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.93: 23–6.

⁵⁴⁷ Michael S. Roth, 'Photographic Ambivalence and Historical Consciousness', *History and Theory* 48(4), 2009, pp82–94.

'From 1863, Marey perfected the first elements of his '*méthode graphique*', which studied movement using recording instruments and graphs. Using polygraphs, sphygmographs, dromographs and other myographs, he succeeded in analysing diagrammatically the walk of man and of horse, the flight of birds and insects. The results – published in *La Machine Animale* in 1873 – aroused much interest and led Leland Stanford and Eadweard Muybridge to pursue their own photographic researches into horse movement. In turn, the influence of Muybridge and of those in Marey's circle, including Alphonse Penaud, led the physiologist to use photography for the study of movement.'

were viewed in this period) an authority to capture the real as episode. This introduced a conflict with regard to the concept of duration and the real. If the photograph makes a claim of automatically registering the real, the original, the body of the subject pictured, then Barthes' statement regarding this quality is important to introduce here as one of this immediacy and capture being 'a certificate of presence' and cited in papers considering photography and its relation to history.⁵⁴⁸ Eelco Runia discusses the importance of presence and articulates that presence is being in touch with subjects, objects, events and feelings that make you into the person you are. Runia states that 'Presence is just as basic as meaning being in touch with reality.' Runia also reads the archive impulse as an expression of desire for presence in addition to its potential for research.⁵⁴⁹ The archive is seen as a touchstone of the real and as artists mine the archive they are made aware that photography is not merely a picture but has become a central practice within contemporary art and conceptual practice. The practice as outlined offers artists the conceptual tools of interrogating the internal, original and external contexts for their finds. The practice of interrogation is often integrated into the concept of chance, and how the medium of photography's openness to chance has been there since its inception by Fox Talbot.⁵⁵⁰

Found photographic images wrapped into this chance encounter, seem to offer the possibility of re-experiencing the past, or of experiencing a past for the first time without a subjective immediacy. The photography world is still able to interrogate Barthes and especially Benjamin, as the latter's writings reveal the importance of considering 'the unseen' and the role of photography in allowing us to glimpse the expansive terrain of the human imaginary. Analysing the textual and the visual responses in detail also requires our response to the exhibition of photography and the conceptual developments in audience and display of both found works, and conceptual projects appropriating photography

⁵⁴⁸ Tim Dant and Graeme Gilloch, 'Pictures of the Past: Benjamin and Barthes on photography and history', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 5(1), 2002, pp5–25,

http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/33411/1/PHOTO2k_eprint.pdf (accessed January 2015).

⁵⁴⁹ Eelco Runia, *Presence, History and Theory* 45(1), 2006.

⁵⁵⁰ Larry J. Schaaf, *Out of the Shadows: Herschel, Talbot and the Invention of Photography*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

and photographic projects in their own space of interrogation within a contemporary debate. An example of this contemporary audiencing of work creating both intimacy, the art of installation and the idea of the bookwork as a vehicle to expand the viewing of photography, and its cultural impact, is the installation by Melissa Catanese, *Dive Dark Dream Slow* (2012), (see image 3.10 for this conceptual assemblage in visual form) described here:

Melissa Catanese's project *Dive Dark Dream Slow* (2012). Here we find no shelf, these are just frames touching each other. The project, which was originally presented in book form, is installed at Pier 24 in San Francisco in the exact sequence of the book, allowing single-page book spreads to be represented on the wall with a single image and double-page spreads in the book are represented with images installed side-by-side:

It was such a great way to organise smaller work giving it power and presence, while also maintaining the integrity of the original sequencing in the book.



3.10 Melissa Catanese, *Dive Dark Dream Slow*, (2012), 'Popular Culture and the Family', through the use of snapshots.

Photographer and bookseller Melissa Catanese has been editing the vast photography collection of Peter J. Cohen, a celebrated trove of more than 20,000 vernacular and found anonymous photographs from the early to mid-twentieth century. Gathered from flea markets, dealers and eBay, these

prints have been acquired, exhibited and included in a range of major museum publications. In organising the archive into a series of thematic catalogues, she has pursued an alternate reading of the collection, drifting away from simple typology into something more personal, intuitive and openly poetic. Her magical new artist's book, *Dive Dark Dream Slow* (2012), is rooted in the mystery and delight of the 'found' image and the 'snapshot' aesthetic, but pushes beyond the nostalgic surface of these pictures and reimagines them as luminous transmissions of anxious sensuality.⁵⁵¹

This is an observation, precisely about the alternative reading that takes place through curating an association and order for an archive, and perhaps opens up this ongoing concern with representation and impact, from Benjamin, who stated that 'in consideration of its representation photography was an evolving cultural form with the capacity to record exhaustively and bring its objects closer to us'.⁵⁵² The act of curating bringing found photography 'closer to us' is certainly the case today, when photography has many facets and formats, which encompass exhaustive recording.⁵⁵³ The material analogue print, which is my main concern in this thesis, also came from a time when families and photographers recorded exhaustively through the snapshot and this resulted in the many archives, collections of prints and family albums still in circulation today. The encounter with these prints is a consideration in Kracauer's writings where he discusses if one can no longer encounter the grandmother or subject in the photograph, the image taken from the family album necessarily disintegrates into the particular. The photographic archive is considered by Kracauer to be a repository that assembles in effigy the last elements of a nature alienated by meaning.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ Melissa Catanese, www.melissacatanese.com (accessed 10.11.13).

⁵⁵² See Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, edited by Michael Jennings, Brigid Doherty and Thomas Y. Levin (Belknap Press, 2008). Benjamin writes, 'For example, in photography, process reproduction can bring out those aspects of the original that are unattainable to the naked eye yet accessible to the lens, which is adjustable and chooses its angle at will', in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations* (Pimlico, 1999), p.214: 26–9.

⁵⁵³ See Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, edited by Michael Jennings, Brigid Doherty and Thomas Y. Levin (Belknap Press, 2008).

⁵⁵⁴ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Photography', translated by T.Y. Levin, *Critical Inquiry* 19(3), Spring 1993, pp421–36 (accessed 28.09.09).

Criticism can be levelled at using photography from the archive to create a history of the everyday popular culture and the family. The artist often utilises the direct and authentic experience of the photograph, its sense of immediacy, intimacy and authenticity to re-present photographs and create meta-narratives to present photographs related to their time, by publishing texts from the original time of taking, set in the language and context of their time. I contend that this is a powerful and potent means of reading these photographs now in the present. Memory does not pay much attention to dates per se; it can roam across temporal distance. Memories are retained because of their significance to or for that person 'image memories' are retained as to their significance. Their significance reflects a different organising principle to photography.

Photography grasps what is given as a spatial and also temporal continuum, reflected in our interest in reading photographs. Kracauer states in his essay on photography 'that we must rid ourselves of the delusion that it is the major events that have the most decisive influence on people'. He believes they are much more deeply and continuously influenced by the tiny catastrophes which make up daily life.⁵⁵⁵ It could be said that only by breaking down the smooth, continuous surface of the photographic image, by disarticulating its apparent unity and coherence, can we hope to succeed in detaching it from the space/time continuum and the scent of nostalgia and reunite it with extra photographic space and time, in other words with its history and with history itself.

The classic photograph with its smooth, continuous surface invents in that it records an already existing process while at the same time causing this other or otherness to be there in the object world as a form of performance, production and manipulation. This view is expressed by the artist Gerhard Richter when exploring this concept of the photograph and invention, in direct opposition to the photograph as a record or a moment in history. Richter writes in his Introduction to Derrida's book *Copy, Archive, Signature* (2010) how he is interested in Derrida's question: 'Is photography simply the recording of "the other" or of the object as he, or is it there, presented to intuition ... or does it

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

rather invent in the sense of technical production?’⁵⁵⁶ The photograph is considered by Richter to be essentially about mourning, precisely in the moment of releasing the shutter and of viewing and circulating the image. Derrida in his writing considers that the spectral is the essence of photography and photography as light writing offers the deconstructive translation of the possibility of invention.

It is the ability of the photograph to offset a play between motion and emotion parts, effecting or affecting, other parts. The ability to offset again raises the question of conflicting realities set up by the photographic image. The original material forms of photography, like analogue film and its material positive prints are now in the twenty-first century almost solely being invented and reinvented within the domain of artists, one being Richter (utilising the material photographic print as a drawing board disrupting that smooth continuous surface and the photograph’s indexicality), and photographers with a point to make, for example Tom Hunter. It is perhaps the reference to the spectral and the intuitive that inspires artists to view analogue film and photography as opening up to invention outside of the programme (more fully formed within Digital Photography Apparatus) that can erode originality and conflict with the medium as material practice rather than record.⁵⁵⁷ Derrida supports the view that photography should preserve its singularity and particularity – whether analogue or digital, while still making visible the ways in which it operates in a certain universality of thinking and of posing questions.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Copy, Archive, Signature: A Conversation on Photography*, edited by G. Richter, translated by J. Fort (Stanford University Press, 2010), Introduction.

⁵⁵⁷ ‘The photograph is not only an indexicality of the objects, or even the photons, but also the properties of the film, the lenses, of the photographic devices generally’, Göran Sonesson, ‘Semiotics of Photography: On tracing the index’, report no.4 from the project, *Pictorial Meanings in the Society of Information* (Institute of Art History: Lund University, 1989), Sonesson is Professor of Semiotics at Lund University.

⁵⁵⁸ Derrida, *Copy, Archive, Signature*, p.xxiii.

3.6 The Photograph as Relic

In terms of documenting this sense of history, the sense of the photograph and its small history, this is seen in the chronology of the development of film with the introduction of colour film in the 1960s where black and white film became less than ascendant. This led to black and white still photographs and film stills being utilised within cinema to create 'flashbacks' to represent past events and evoke memories that were then drawn into the present narratives. The past here is idealised by presenting its faded black and white photographic remains as proof of a lost simplicity and innocence, an alternative to the present. Film plays with this sense of reality by its editing and fusion of disjointed fragments of reality, which is reminiscent of dreams, the insertion of photography could be said to offer the reflection of reality that has slipped away from its form. There are exceptions to this concept of film and memories with Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962), where black and white stills are fused in a sequence that is dream-like but also politically grounded, offering in many ways this enhanced sense of reality and truth to the photographic image that supports the idea of photography offering this reflection of reality:

The originality of Chris Marker's film obviously resides, as has been regularly demonstrated, in the work of the image itself: a framing of the most obscure zones of memory's fragility and unpredictability; and a montage that replicates gaps in recollection. The image itself constitutes an unusual organisation of storyline: Marker invents a type of narration that literature cannot often produce. Literature here appears only in the voice of the narrator-commentator: it borrows its script from the narrative mode of a Kafka.⁵⁵⁹

...the thirty-minute film is composed entirely of still photographs. Yet this succession of disconnected images is a perfect means of projecting the quantified memories and movements through time that are the film's subject matter.⁵⁶⁰

These two selected quotes from short, authored essays underscore the experimental nature of this film, described by many critics as unquantifiable, but

⁵⁵⁹'Passages de l'Image', exh. cat. (Paris: Centre George Pompidou, 1990).

⁵⁶⁰J.G. Ballard, *La Jetée* (Academy One: New Worlds, 1966).

by other viewers seen as in the form of 'a photo-novel' and for others discussed as 'ephemeral theatre'. I am here only touching on this work as an example of this unique methodology of working with black and white photographs as a form of flashback. However, in this film devoid of 'faded nostalgia'. Instead core to the evocation of memory, the search for identity and the archaeology of knowledge invested in layering specifically selected photographs. This technique enables the director to pursue this idea of the investment of memories in the photograph and its record of time and encounter.⁵⁶¹ Marker utilises photography's recording of the event and concept of the event to point out not only something that has just happened but also something that fits into a causal or narrative structure.⁵⁶²

The creative innovation of this montage reflects on the nature of the artefact as a temporal extension, the creation of which reflects and considers the role of perception, which could be said to be always, already infected by memory because the isolated moment does not exist in the real world. Investigating the process, we realise the construction of the story is not in fact quite equivalent to the narration, which is constructed using particular narrative devices like the montage techniques, which utilise images and their continuity, and the form of editing and intervention that produces the activity to the sequence of stills. The still photographs as they appear here offer an endlessly deceptive form of representation announcing their presence but resisting definition. Chris Marker exposes each photograph as a sealed world sequenced to produce a complex play of presence. The movement itself reflects Barthes' description of movement and its horizontal thrust that sees all of narrative's drive towards symbolic efficacy: 'Photography offers an immediate presence to the world – a co-presence, but this presence is not only of a political order ("to participate by the image in contemporary events"), it is also of a metaphysical order.'⁵⁶³ This encompasses the various levels of plot, theme, history and psychology on which narrative meaning operates.

⁵⁶¹ See Catherine Lupton, *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future* (Reaktion Books, 2005).

⁵⁶² 'From the Photogram to the Pictogram: on Chris Marker's *La Jetée*', *Camera Obscura* 24 (September 1990), pp138–61.

⁵⁶³ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.84: 25–9

How do we then progress with our understanding of the power of the still photograph used in this narrative context, which pictures things that exist materially even if they refer to abstract ideas. The methodology and editing exploit the fact that photographs in themselves are a blend of truth (the record) and fiction, reality and artifice. It is precisely because there are ways in which photographs are not just representations that photography creates its status as a theoretical object that has been so important to artists. Thus, photography's complicated status has surely made it so important in art where it plays such an integral part in memory and imagination. The making of 'pictures' by artists working with the language of photography transforms our experience of intimacy with the photographic print, our relationship with paper objects and their tantalising surface image memories. Is this preoccupation with the re-presentation of photographic images due to the permanent presence of photographs in our everyday world at present? The personal, social and collective experience is commented on by Pavel Buchler, who argues that:

It is the permanent presence of the photographic image in the Western cultural environment which has become one of the most visible distinguishing features of our times. It is difficult to imagine a situation which wouldn't involve photographic images in one way or another and virtually impossible to avoid the encounter in our everyday life. It is as though the world was made of them. Through the image, not the physical object of a photograph the world expands, infinitely multiplies, loses its shape.⁵⁶⁴

Buchler argues that photography became one of the major resources in the conceptual practice of 'dematerialised art' in the sixties, taken up as a means of documentation rather than in its picture-making role. Photographs of photographs, or rather photographs discussing the means of photography itself.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁴ Pavel Buchler, Introduction to *Re-visions: Fringe Interference in British Photography in the 1980s* (Cambridge Darkroom, 1985), pp1–2.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.



3.11 (i) Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, (1962)



3.11 (ii) Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, (1962).

Discussing the meaning of photography itself is signposted where images and texts are used in juxtaposition by artists' such as Helen Chadwick in *Vanitas* (1985), and in the work of Mari Mahr in *Idle Times* (1985), constructed images

which imply some kind of fiction.⁵⁶⁶ This raises the question of the conflict between ‘the absorptive’ and ‘the theatrical’ which the artist and photographer Jeff Wall describes as being modes of performance.⁵⁶⁷ The difference here is in how we view these constructed images, which are not snapshots and cannot hold their qualities of the candid, the unsharp and the random, which are seen as hallmarks of the authenticity of the documentary photographer. The photographic medium is described by Lee Friedlander, as ‘a generous medium’, reflecting not only the intentions of the photographer but these unintentional qualities.⁵⁶⁸ The medium specific snapshot then holds its place as a relic of its time with its own temporal timeline and packaging which offers up a view of the relationship between obsolescence and the redemptive possibilities caught up in the outmoded.

There is then I would contend a value in holding on to the outmoded photograph, the photograph as relic. Interpretation of the value of images always establishes the kinds of critical hierarchies that can be considered value judgements, within contemporary art history or critique. Critical constructs to consider here are ‘semantic density’ and/or ‘the philosophical complexities’ of works of art inclusive of the photograph as relic. Arguably art is seen in these contexts as a practice that leads to critical perspectives on the world and inevitably raises the issues of interpretation and sets up a tension between history and value. The tension between these key values is reflected in the value that is put on everyday (vernacular) photography, which was considered as part of popular culture, ‘a middle-brow art’ in its heyday and now has collectors value. As discussed previously, its value lies in its outmoded state, its obsolescence and our interest in its medium specificity as a relic of past cultural activity. The snapshot once ubiquitous and not holding any art market value

⁵⁶⁶ Helen Chadwick, *Vanitas*, Cambridge Darkroom, Dales Brewery, Gwydir Street, Cambridge, 13 July – 25 August 1985, and reproduced in the catalogue to this show *Re-visions*, ed. Pavel Buchler (Cambridge Darkroom, 1985).

Mari Mahr, *Idle Times* (Cambridge Darkroom, 1985).

⁵⁶⁷ Jeff Wall, ‘Restoration: Interview with Martin Schwander’ (1994), in Thierry de Duve et al., *Jeff Wall* (London, 2002), pp126–7. Wall’s reference is to Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1980).

⁵⁶⁸ See Lee Friedlander, in *Documentary Photography* (Time Life International, 1972), p.178.

outside of the personal, the individual, the family album, widely distributed within popular culture in a genre and oeuvre of its own now has a cachet. Photography in this genre could be said to now be grounded in history, rather than in aesthetic value unless appropriated into artworks entering the art history canon. Here I would cite Christian Boltanski, Annette Messager, Tacita Dean and Joachim Schmid, among many working with appropriated (vernacular) photographs.⁵⁶⁹ A modern take on defending this traditional perspective would be the work of Sherrie Levine, who appropriates past photographer's prints from the established canon and re-scales them for a modernist perspective on their aesthetic value and history within the contemporary art field.⁵⁷⁰ This sets up a tension between the original and the copy but in a new way, tackling outright appropriation and authorship head on. The original could be said to be created by 'the artist (photographer) genius', and should therefore be described as homage, however with Levine the aesthetic value is not diminished (except in intimacy) and the original photographer is named, valorising the authorship of its origination, and this shifts the focus to explore another form of social experience. Contemporary art history is now made up of differences, rival and alternative reviews of art's histories. Levine's work is inclusive of the traditions of photography but exclusive of 'the artist as genius', maker of the original artwork, a legitimate artwork obeying the art world's concerns with aesthetic innovation and a non-criminal lineage with clear achievements of the

⁵⁶⁹ See Catherine Grenier and Daniel Mendelsohn, *Art by Christian Boltanski* (New York: Flammarion, 2010) as an exemplar for this act of appropriation of the found photograph and the installations created.

'Boltanski is perhaps best known for his photo-based installations that invoke feelings of loss, fate, memory, guilt and death. Boltanski mines peripheral photographic sources such as family albums, school photos, detective magazines and obituary photographs and re-contextualises them. By re-photographing and enlarging these disposable or forgotten photographs they become iconic celebrations of memory'; Annette Messager, *Sculptural Installation using photographs, My Vows, 1988–1991*; Tacita Dean, *Floh (Artist Bookwork, 2001)*; Joachim Schmid, *Lost Memories, Masterpieces of Photography: The Fricke and Schmid Collection (1989)*.

⁵⁷⁰ Sherrie Levine, *After Walker Evans: 4 (1981)*. 'In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a group of artists including Cindy Sherman, Richard Prince, and Sherrie Levine—at the time dubbed the "Pictures" generation—began using photography to examine the strategies and codes of representation. In reshooting Marlboro advertisements, B-movie stills, and even classics of Modernist photography, these artists adopted dual roles as director and spectator. In their manipulated appropriations, these artists were not only exposing and dissembling mass-media fictions, but enacting more complicated scenarios of desire, identification, and loss', The Metropolitan Museum of Art (accessed 10.03.14).

imagination. New media, alternative discourses, and narratives are setting up a challenge to the value of art through artists' and photographers' practice and research methods questioning the canon and its established historicity and narratives.

Levine, in her artist's statement, acknowledges her appropriation as a highly nuanced practice, forming part of a methodology, which places the original photograph, as in *After Walker Evans* (1980), or the appropriated image in a new relationship with itself. This forms part of the attitude of interrogating 'the notion of invention'. One of the preoccupations acknowledged by Foucault in his own work is 'the notion of invention', critical in his view and central to his work related to setting up a discourse.⁵⁷¹ Levine is interested in the contingent and unstable, enjoying repetition, as in her words, 'it implies an endless succession of substitutes and missed encounters'. Levine would like, 'High Art to shake hands with its cynical nemesis – kitsch', which in her view 'in its sentimentality makes a mockery of desire'. Levine would like the discourse and meaning of this work to reflect 'an over determined and congealed meaning which would cause it to implode and broker a new paradigm'.⁵⁷² The idea of 'archaeological analysis', as articulated by Foucault, is that of having another aim that of investigating the questions, 'that are considered, named and enunciated and conceptualised within a discursive practice'.⁵⁷³ The act of re-photography by Levine is described by critic David Raminelli, as creating initially works that were, in his view, a transgressive gesture to masculine prerogative, originality and authorship, raising many questions.⁵⁷⁴

Appropriation is reflected upon by Levine as unadorned and assertive, which singles her out in this methodology from other 'Picture Theorists', such as Louise Lawler, Sarah Charlesworth, Barbara Kruger, Richard Prince and Cindy Sherman. This 'notion of invention' is carried through by Levine, who is working

⁵⁷¹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Tavistock, 1972), p.164: 24–42.

⁵⁷² Sherrie Levine, 'Artist's Statement', in Ann Temkin (ed.), *Newborn*, exh. cat. (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1993).

⁵⁷³ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, see '(c) Knowledge (savoir) and ideology', pp184–6.

⁵⁷⁴ David Raminelli, 'Sherrie Levine', *Frieze* 16 (May 2004).

with appropriated images out of copyright yet copyrighting her own scaled up re-photographed copies as part of this disruption, this assertive intervention, a catalyst to a discourse investigating the questions around the concept of the original and of the artist as author. Levine is operating a critical intervention, which is both tactical and a political necessity for a female artist who is part of a feminist art movement, challenging 'the master narratives' within postmodernism and its discourse of others. Re-photography is a method that offers an intervention that signifies a desire to change 'the object', the photograph and its social context acknowledging a past context but re-presenting a new context for its viewing. Levine's work seeks to question rather than exploit cultural codes and to explore rather than conceal social and political affiliations. This re-photography of the *FSA* (Farm Security Administration created in 1937) reflects the photographer's intentions then to 'explore rather than conceal' so this is precisely a re-presentation in a contemporary mode of their views of the social context at that time.⁵⁷⁵ A transformed practice into a new era, in harmony with the ideas and concepts today of utilising photographs that already exist, in the present ubiquity of the photograph, rather than making new photographs to explore our narratives past and present.

3.7 Summary

In summary, the research in this chapter has revealed the conceptual mode of enquiry into the language of photography in artworks preoccupied with everyday photography, inclusive of family photography, of record and event. It is a genre that includes the everyday snapshot, found and anonymous photography, and archival images, the photograph as both document and relic.⁵⁷⁶ The

⁵⁷⁵ 'The postmodernist art critic Craig Owens claimed that Levine is stressing the act of appropriation by photographers such as Evans: 'In representing these canonical images of the rural poor – the expropriated – Levine was calling attention to the original act of appropriation whereby Evans first took these photographs [FSA project], as if to illustrate Walter Benjamin's observation, in "The Author as Producer," on the economic function of photography: "[Photography] has succeeded in making even abject poverty, by recording it in a fashionable perfected manner, into an object of enjoyment, i.e., a commodity".' (Craig Owens, *Beyond Recognition*, p.114).

⁵⁷⁶ Ulrich Obrist, *Ways of Curating* (Allen Lane, 2014). Ulrich Obrist argues that our economy's growth functions by inciting us to produce more and more with each passing year. This he says

methodologies employed have broadly fallen into the category of *intervention* where the narrative structure of representation has been interpreted anew, representation questioned, and the outcome of the accrual of interpretive modes of enquiry considered. In all these artist-led interventions it has been confirmed that the outcome of research has formed the critical part of their methods of framing re-purposed narratives and artworks. The approach here concurs with my own practice findings keying into new interpretations and readings that are not referencing history but an attempt at the revelation of the present. The philosophy of archaeology as outlined by Agamben resurfaces here in his argument that:

Benjamin also held the view of an image of the procession of time, the invisible goal of which is the historical process reaching into the present despite our regressive tendency to traverse the past for our understanding of the present and the future.⁵⁷⁷

I am aware that this is contentious and links into an argument about the unconscious and the conscious and the interpretation of whether it is possible to ever think and live in the present, as to do so one needs to acknowledge the role of regression and to traverse the past. I am at this point just touching on this argument as it is relevant to my own explication of relating the photograph to its position as a cultural artefact, holding both the past, and yet here present, often relating to a future'.⁵⁷⁸ In artist interpreted narratives, aesthetically important decisions are made that enable a politics of affect that reflect this sense of the dynamic of the present particularly within visual media, artist book forms, photo-novels and ephemeral theatre. Photographic conventions, technological innovations (and their limitations) and seemingly accidental choices within constructed and staged and everyday photography play a part in how a narrative is shaped and received. I would argue here that photographs do

leads us to require our cultural forms to enable us to sort through this glut. This offers us the chance to direct our rituals towards the immaterial, towards quality not quantity. He sees this as the reason for a shift in our values from the production of objects to the selection from among those that already exist.

⁵⁷⁷ Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, pp97–9.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

offer to these narratives an anchor to memory of events, a geography of kinship and conflicting realities of human agency.

In conclusion, exploring an answer to the question of how we draw now on multiple cultural narratives conforms to ideas in philosophy that the artwork, 'cannot in itself come into being without those that preserve it', and linked to this is the view of whether the artwork 'produces' or 'elicits' its public.⁵⁷⁹ The perpetual construction and reconstruction of the past provide precisely the forms of canonicity that permit us to recognise when a breach or rupture has occurred and how it might be interpreted especially in relation to art and photography.⁵⁸⁰ The theorist Roman Jakobson defines the role of the artist as being, 'to make the ordinary strange', in consideration of the term artist covering both art (inclusive of photography) and literature.⁵⁸¹ Intervention in photographic practice and its relation to the preoccupations of the age and the circumstances surrounding its production allow for the 'strange'. This is comparable, in Benjamin's view, 'to the situation of the work of art in prehistoric times when, by the absolute emphasis on its cult value, it was first, and foremost an instrument of magic. Only later did it come to be recognised as a work of art.' *Intervention* is then a key relation to how precisely to relate to the questions raised by

⁵⁷⁹ Roman Jakobson, 'On Realism in Art', *Language in Literature*, edited by Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy, (Cambridge, MA, 1987), pp25–7; Martin Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, Revised and Expanded Edition, edited by D.F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993), pp191–2; Jean-Francois Lyotard, 'Presence', translated by Marian Hobson and Tom Cochran, in *The Language of Art History* edited by S. Kema and I. Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Alison Ross, 'The Art of the Sublime, Lyotard and the Politics of the Avant-Garde', *Philosophy Today* 49(1), Spring 2005.

⁵⁸⁰ 'Later, in the 1990s, Lyotard would refer to pictures of exhibitions as 'presentations of ideas', which, in contrast to mere 'documentations of history', would suppose another idea of archive, related to theatre (or to sound or music), and of the scripts through which they are reproduced'. *Les Immatériaux* was a 'presentation of ideas' in the specific sense of 'presentation' and 'idea' which Lyotard was trying to articulate at the time. It thus linked to another striking aspect of Lyotard's curatorial experiment – the role and nature of accompanying research, or the role of 'ideas' and their 'address' in the style of philosophical teaching then current in Paris. With *Les Immatériaux*, the philosophical seminar would enter into the context of museum research, creating new relations, which Lyotard would later evoke in his account of the experience. In the 'open' seminar, he would present ideas put forward in a suggestive philosophical text called 'Time and Matter', later published in a collection of essays entitled *The Inhuman... Far from the informational ideals of 'communication', Les Immatériaux presented a condition of unease, a sense of disarray, itself given and facilitated by the great aesthetic figure of the labyrinth*. 'Les Immatériaux or How to Construct the History of Exhibitions', in the Landmark Exhibitions Issue, by John Rajchman, *Tate Papers* 12, 1 October 2009.

⁵⁸¹ Roman Jakobson, 'On Realism in Art', pp25–7.

photographic works incorporating this method of making 'the ordinary strange' within contemporary art practice.⁵⁸²

3.8 See *Portfolio of Small Histories* for practice exemplars: Intervention.

Outtake 9: *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush* (2014).

Outtake 6: *Vanity Case* (2014), *Vanity Case Pages: Anecdote 1 and 2* (2014)

⁵⁸² Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.219:13-17.

Fugitive Testimonies Thesis

Phase 2: Practice Analysis

Portfolio of Small Histories:

Chapter 3 Section – Intervention

Practice Exemplars: *Intervention*, See Outtake 6. *Small Histories: Vanity Case*, and *Vanity Case Marginalia Pages: Anecdote and Biography*, Outtake 9: *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush*.

Practice Statement:

Exemplar – *Intervention*, Outtake 6.1, *Hunter's Moon* (2014)
– *Biography of a Family Garden*.

The work is inspired by the interplay of invisible forces in a visible world, with links between plants and formative influences in soil and atmosphere, and with extraterrestrial agents such as the sun, moon and stars.⁵⁸³ A tradition concerned with making plants grow and the valuable secrets within garden folklore. The folklore of growing things is not contained by frontiers. Outmoded rituals and garden folklore survives with the peculiar power of beliefs woven from memories and union with the past: a living garden is, perhaps the most intimate gift offered by one generation of family to another the tilth being rich in material concerns offering a soil that is a delicately structured biological skin. Thus begins the action of recalling sacred stories, enlarging upon images and metaphors from myth and poetry, restoring some of the vigour of original language to make vivid in the imagination these familiar presences. The oral history evokes the kind of wisdom that preserves the experience of affection, the presence of friendship and the shared experience of them in rituals within the daily passages of family life or in societies festivities.

⁵⁸³ Margaret Baker, *The Gardener's Folklore* (Newton Abbot: Readers Union, 1978), Chapter 1, Moon, Sun and Stars, pp12–42.

The artist's book contains the document of a garden started by Arts and Crafts Artists in the 1930s and continued by the family, the sons, a garden that celebrated the richness of the soil, the rewards of stewardship and a lifestyle bound into the rhythm of nature and a celebration of its rewards. Apple varieties were grown, cider was made, marrows were grown for the county show. Soot and tea, eggshell and ashes were the secrets of the family gardener serving the soil revered as sacred ground essential to water cycles and offering up in return the fruits of their labour. The act of labour in harmony with nature is said to be part of the special unity between a gardener's hearth and his or her garden. Which may have led to the belief that soot from such an intimate source had a particular efficacy and created a bond to the material culture of the soil.



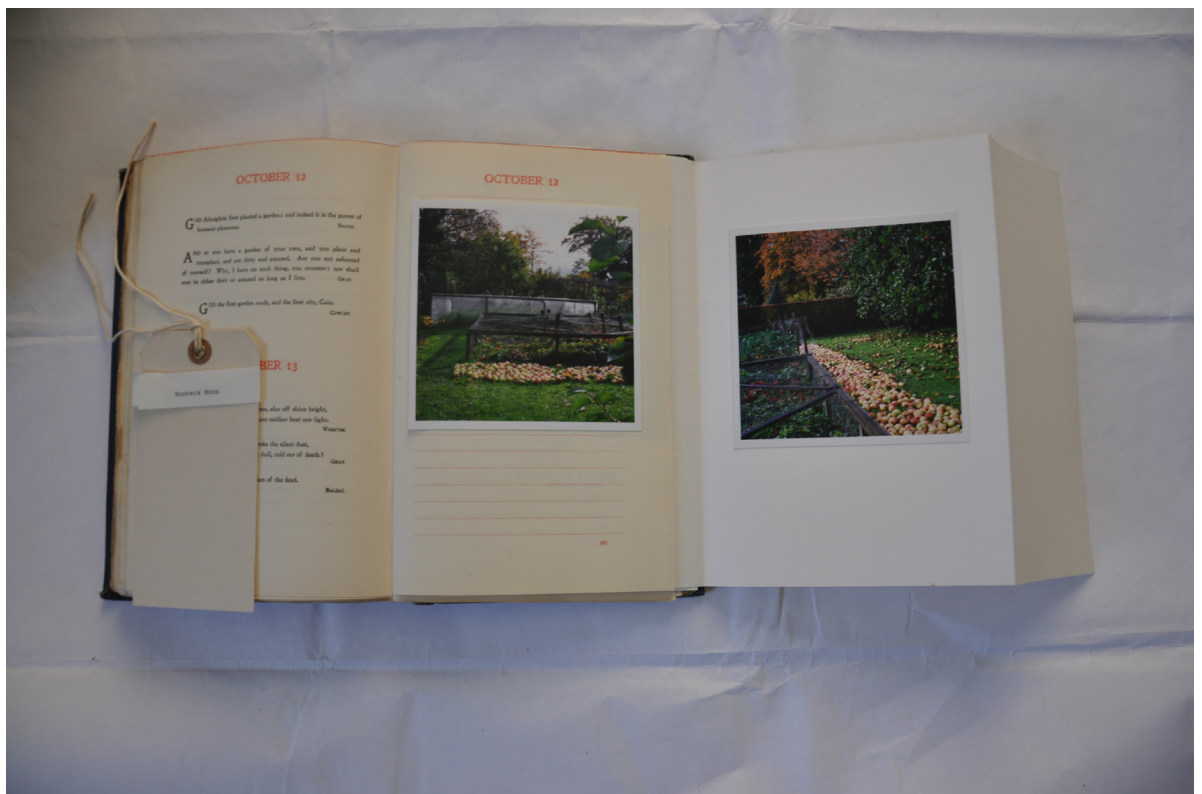
Su Fahy, *Hunter's Moon*, 2014.

Outtake 6.1: Small Histories – inspired by a set of found small black and white photographs and letters of a family garden taken throughout the seasons. However, with only the presence of the family of gardeners represented through – (in Barthes' words) 'an emanation of *past reality: a magic, not an art*', of a biography of production and industry (labour) in a garden – as Barthes writes, 'in the photograph the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation', in this case of the family in person in the garden. Although in this small history disinherited from the garden in the 1990s, within family contestations, but representing through the photographs duration of family.⁵⁸⁴ The work looks at the found photograph in this instance as, 'the somehow natural witness of 'what has been', a testament to family present through a sense of place.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁴ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.88: 25–9, p.89: 3–4.

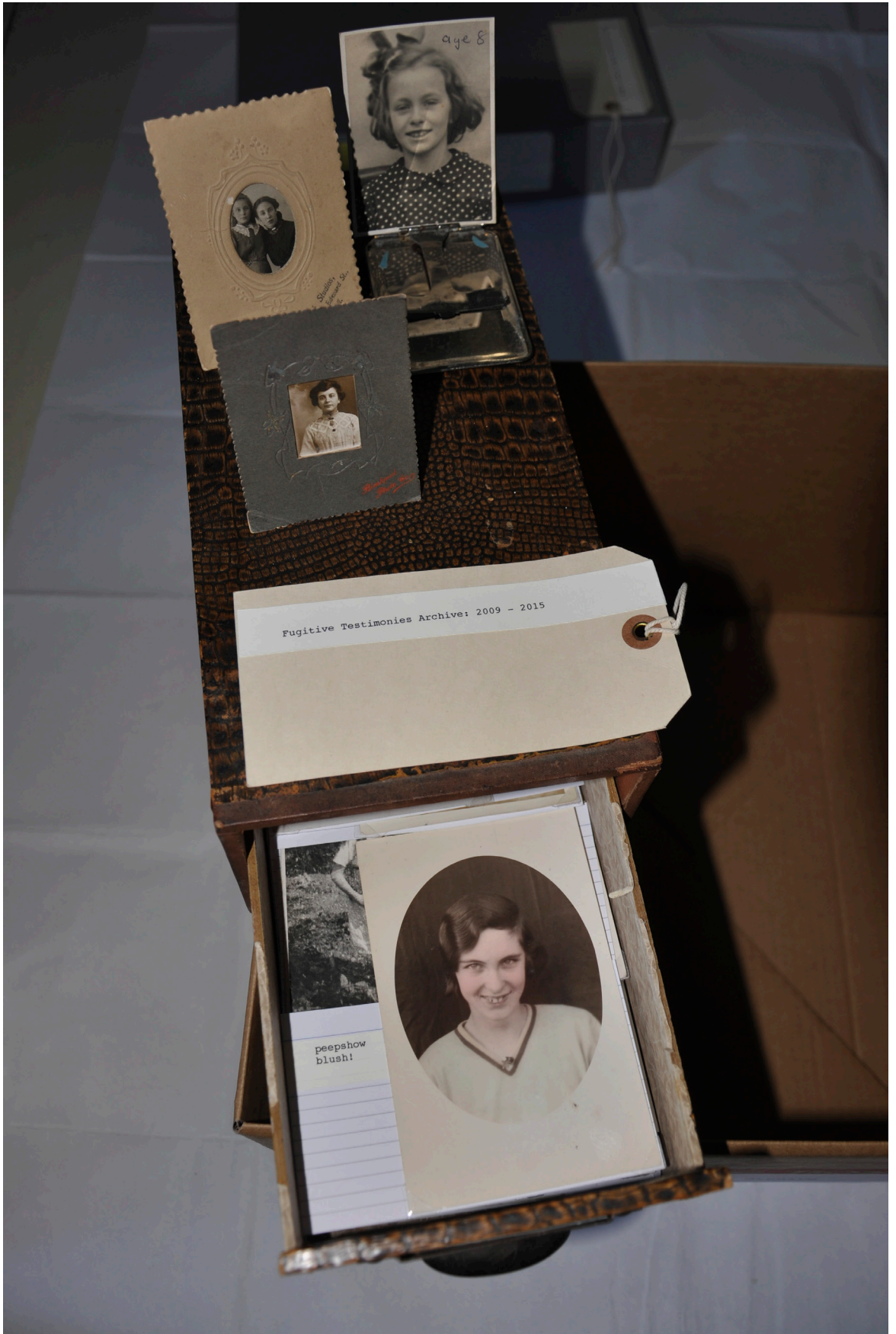
⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.93: 20–2.

Media: Found Birthday Almanac with uncut pages and set out to the calendar of the months, as to the Gardeners' Folkloric Moon Calendar. Medium format colour film analogue photographic prints of the garden at a house called 'Cardunnoch', allowing for the transformative nature of colour to re – document the season of hoard fruit the last harvest from this Arts and Crafts Artists garden (1930's – 1990's), inclusive of texts from the found edition of 'The Gardeners Folklore' inserted as bound concertina pages 1-12.



Su Fahy, *Hunter's Moon*, 2014.

Almanac entry one – Hoard Fruit.



Su Fahy, *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush*, 2014.



Su Fahy, *Off the Record: Peepshow Blush*, 2014.

Outtake 9: *Small Histories*

Media: Found index cards, index record box, real photo-postcards, anecdotes, erotic photographs, family portraits in found paper and metal frames.



Su Fahy, *Vanity Case*, 2014.

Outtake 6: Small Histories

Media: Found Vanity Case inclusive of contents; ephemera, newspaper photographs, personal items, installation of small biographical still lives set up as pages inclusive of anecdotes and found marginalia
 small staged and constructed found album of black and white photographs found over three years.

Small Histories: Vanity Case Marginalia.

Anecdote 1:

Your face beats the bloke in the café,
 And here you are a beauty, just
 In the wrong place.....

Anecdote 2:

Such trinkets are, after all
Just the sort of glamorous
And tasteful talisman that
Our broken society needs....

The small history is of displacement and the marginalia reflects sense of place, migration and loss – a sense of conflict and love.

Joan Fontcuberta's analysis of the impact of a photograph in 'I Photograph, Therefore I Am' reflects: 'Nowadays we exist thanks to images: *Imago, ergo sum* ... where the photograph as a manifestation of life cannot reach, we still have words, which are another effective way of constructing ourselves. And there is also the capacity for empathy from the viewer. In short we humans tend to share a stock of common experiences; joy and pain, happiness and suffering, love and hate.'⁵⁸⁶ In this small history there is a set of photographs depicting a young black woman, a nurse displaced by conflict documenting through the photographs and marginalia a stock of shared common experience of a sense of exile from familial structures and protection. The photographs are always of her in uniform offering a perspective of occupation and labour in the context of the time. The photographs operate as reference to a specific time and place, to a condition of being. Barthes talks about how photography's referent is different from the referent of other systems of representation: 'but the *necessarily* real thing which has been placed before the lens, without which there would be no photograph'.⁵⁸⁷ And critically no reference for the depiction of family through self-portraits that reference gender, occupation, leisure and cultural conditions that cause *affect* within family histories.

⁵⁸⁶ Joan Fontcuberta, 'I Photograph, Therefore I Am', in *Pandora's Camera*, pp20–21: 4–9.

⁵⁸⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.76: 13–19.

Chapter 4: Collection

4.1 Introduction

The concept that emerged from my previous chapter of the role of the artist 'to make the ordinary strange' threads through into the themes of this chapter on collection, reiterating the impact of artists' intervention. Specifically the method of intervention is informing the direction of the research for the art and act of collecting photographs referencing artists' own authored visual photo-archives. However there also exists in the field of my research the condition of the reluctant collector or the accidental collector, where, in my case, I became the accidental collector of a small family history transferred to me, not for comment, but, I suspect, for safekeeping, a kind of transference of a supplement to a family history (a chance find, a fugitive story finding me), one shaped by trauma. As this practice-based thesis argues, there are certainly contemporary preoccupations with individual and group narratives / stories (this thesis concentrates on the individual and family material). To support the theory, Kohler Riessman states: 'In postmodern times, identities can be assembled, and disassembled, accepted and contested, and indeed performed for audiences', influencing the making of small histories such as *FAMILY X* (2013–15).⁵⁸⁸ The visual form was re-purposed after experiencing and directly encountering the problem of objective chance. Here outlined by André Breton, 'as that sort of chance that shows man, in a way that is still very mysterious, a necessity that escapes him, even though he experiences it as a vital necessity'.⁵⁸⁹ Breton felt that to explore this domain it was critical to steer clear of 'historical narration' and 'to appear free of any sort of practical end'.⁵⁹⁰ In this respect my approach to 'the narrative mode' needed to be open to both perception and the unconscious to enable the search for a problematic that could articulate the material collected, expanding the knowledge of working with found photography.

⁵⁸⁸ Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, p.7: 14–16.

⁵⁸⁹ André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p.268: 11–14.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.269: 2–6.

I have divided the chapter into two parts, followed by a summary and reflection. The first part presents an overview of the modes of collection and an emphasis on working *with* narrative methods, a sampling of these methods and modes rather than addressing working *on* narrative methods.⁵⁹¹ The research interrogates the methodology of the desire to collect developing on the theme of the artist as collector in Chapter 2: *Trace, Presence and Indexicality* and includes my own fieldwork and collecting methods of practice and considered methodology around the impulse and act of collection (acknowledging 'objective chance') and narrative encounter. The considered act of wrapping text and anecdote (marginalia and recorded fieldwork conversation) around a photograph as a narrative encounter, provoking an excitement around the found material photographic print. The second part is a close reading of works by artists and photographers for whom narrative practice is an essential constituent part of their art and their practice forms. They convene an interdisciplinary affect for visual material (photographs) within a practice that is inclusive of research as praxis. The point I investigate here in particular is the embodied knowledge that the viewer brings to the photograph as 'an uncertain art', with its scenes depicted that speak to us as the viewers.⁵⁹²

4.2 Artists and Photographers Working with Narrative Methods

Jerome Bruner has argued cogently that there are two sense-making modes, which stand in opposition to each other; one is described as 'the logico-scientific mode', and the one I am concerned with in this chapter is 'the narrative mode': ordinary experience, and making sense of the narrative encounter with the collected photographs.⁵⁹³ It is one that remains open to interpretation and re-interpretation, opening up the perspectives and views from where memory is being conferred and interrogating the methods employed by narrators;

⁵⁹¹ Catherine Kohler Riessman, 'Working with Archival Documents', in *Narrative Methods in the Human Sciences*, pp63–7.

⁵⁹² Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp18–21.

⁵⁹³ Jerome S. Bruner, 'The narrative construction of reality', *Critical Enquiry* 18 (1991), pp1–21; Jerome S. Bruner, *Actual minds, possible worlds* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

witnesses, diarists, collectors, photographers and artists arriving at their narratives and defining the lives so narrativised.⁵⁹⁴ The consideration of the use by artists of embedded photography is important within this field, (including the writer W.G. Sebald who uses found photographs, stray images, embedded in his books, to emphasise a sense of place in historical imagination, for example *Austerlitz* (2001)), in the widest sense of this term, and I will consider and offer up some sense of this expanded preoccupation of working with narrative on the part of visual artists and photographers working within contemporary art.

Defining the use of narrative as a form for interrogation is argued to be constituted from many methodologies, inclusive of the accrual of interpretive modes, intervention (as analysed in Chapter 3) and reinterpretation. The question here to explore is: the nature of narrative – and how do photographs evoke narrative. In the context of the narrator, photographer, artist or storyteller it is a series of events perceived either as meaningful for or by their audience, contingent sequences. Events are selected, organised, connected and evaluated, set out for an audience, often a target audience where the focus is to represent (and record) events, emotions (affect) and experiences.⁵⁹⁵ My investigation of *affect* is to explore how precisely visual images create ‘sense impressions’, ‘image memories’, which impress the mind or move the feelings of the viewer, the reader of photographs, through the interpretation of a sequence of photographic images, which form a temporal narrative that creates an expressed or observed emotional response. The action of photography is described by Roland Barthes as one of a new action documenting everyday life and so accruing of incident and event, a ‘disturbance’. The outcome of this disturbance, this act of record, is ultimately one of ownership in terms of addressing to whom the photograph belongs.⁵⁹⁶ Many different kinds of forms can be viewed narratively, including spoken, written and visual materials (for my purposes here this will be in relation to found photographs and their arrest of event), which I read as interpretive in their mode. Barthes in particular notes the many sites where narrative forms can be found and I would also underscore

⁵⁹⁴ See Aristotle, *The Poetics*, translated by M. Heath (Penguin Classics, 1996).

⁵⁹⁶ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp4–7.

and link into this list the engagement with photographs, memoir, biography, diaries and folklore:

Narrative is present, in myth legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting... stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news, item, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society, it begins with the very history of mankind (sic) and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative... it is simply there like life itself.⁵⁹⁷

Narrative shaping entails imposing a meaningful pattern on material that would otherwise be random and disconnected. The mode of this shaping I want to raise here is the contemporary practice of the spectator, the reader imposing their own narrative shaping upon fragments that are re-presented by artists. The association and order is critical to the researcher and artist who is working with project outcomes, exhibitions and installations that create an interstice between many narrative encounters without the analysis of one particular form, and works with narrative in their contemporary art practice. Especially narrative threads woven from found marginalia, fieldwork observations and ephemera and re-presented in artworks. (Reiterating here the work of Tacita Dean with *Floh* (2001), and Taryn Simon with *Bloodlines; A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters 1–XV111* (2008–11), both narrative encounters, but with the still image, the photograph and the artist's personal association and order working with narrative. The artists take on 'a story', presented to an audience as an encounter, a cultural construction, through the mode of a silent book form in Dean's case, and through an exhibition and book form in the case of Simon. In Simon's work, the portraits are followed by a central text panel, in which the artist constructs narratives, and collects details. On the right of each panel are Simon's 'footnote images' representing fragmented pieces of the established narratives and providing photographic evidence. Simon and Dean's work is then encountered in the public domain albeit at a temporary site of exchange for these encounters in the gallery context. In a similar mode to Simon, I use the practice Fieldwork Notebooks (see 'The Scope and Purpose of the Fieldwork Notebooks' and visual exemplars of the pages in Chapter 1) to note and collect,

⁵⁹⁷ Barthes as cited in Sontag, *On Photography*, pp251–5.

to reclaim the visual evidence, anecdotes and texts, often fragmented narratives that require augmentation through research, to support the act of encounter and collection, and the timelines for the archive *Fugitive Testimonies* (2009–16).

The findings are inherently the result of my research orientation, to work in the natural environment, in real life, although the site of exchange is essentially temporary and performative. The encounter here was with the vendors of others' life containers; discarded material analogue photographs, diaries, ephemera, associated conversations, anecdotes and marginalia. The narrative encounter that I am engaged with in re-reading found photographs could be loosely described as one of 'free association', decontextualised and disconnected from the original source, interactive in its form. One of the central ways that the complexity of working with narratives plays out is to create a definition of the methodology employed in qualitative research. My research is precisely not on narratives, as such narratives are not the object of my study. My investigation is concerned in research *with* narratives, where narratives are the tools to explore aspects of human memory and experience in a clearly connected way to 'image memories', 'sense impressions' set up through interaction with photographs, discussed in Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (2008), also in analytical detail in the texts of Marianne Hirsch and Joan Gibbons.⁵⁹⁸ The research *with* narratives is conducted alongside narrative's use by collectors and keepers of photographs, and within the nature of a collection. Since the sixteenth century narrative has become important to visual artists, developing from history painting as a visual narrative bound to memory and to the event. History and political narratives connect events in specific ways to create an association. This allows for inclusion and exclusion as to the context of a series of connected events that constitute a narrative. All narratives are considered to be co-constructed, even if the audience is oneself internalising the narrative, or as an imaginary other, or the story or fiction is constructed as a daydream.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁸ See Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography Narrative and Postmemory* (1997), and Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2007).

⁵⁹⁹ Jerome Bruner, *Acts of Meaning*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), '[An] extended, contemplative essay on the role played by narrative in the construal of meaning. In

Traditional narrative structures are described as either linear or non-linear in make-up. The non-linear narrative is exemplified by flashbacks, memories and other arrangements of time often open-ended in construction. Freud, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), discussed the dream interpreted not as picture but as internalised narrative, ‘the dream work’, achieved by condensation or compression of conscious narrative, and the displacement of the thematic elements.⁶⁰⁰ Visual narrative analysis considers the implicit theory of the image-maker and researchers in this field to ensure that they analyse what events are included and excluded in an historical written or visual narrative.⁶⁰¹

The methodology of the researcher my practice is following is to sequence images with the research findings, in dialogue with written texts. A precise strength in investigating visual narratives is to pay attention to the contexts of production. In the case of material analogue prints this includes technical information of the published era and should always reflect and be inclusive of the dominant discourses circulating at the time, at the date of the event, as described by Foucault.⁶⁰² These discourses should also take be taken into consideration in relation to the constraints on the artists working within particular contexts in the public domain; like crime scenes, institutional contexts, sites reflective of social taboos, and also include the biographical positioning of the photographers if known.⁶⁰³ John Berger writes that:

the photographed image of an event, when shown as a photograph, is also part of a cultural construction. It belongs to a specific social situation, the life of the photographer; an argument, an experiment, a way of explaining the world, a book, a newspaper, an exhibition.⁶⁰⁴

[this] work, Bruner elaborates on the failure of cognitive science in abandoning “meaning-making” for “information processing”, and its attendant concentration on computational logic.’

⁶⁰⁰ See Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900).

⁶⁰¹ Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Sage Publications, 2008), pp5–19.

⁶⁰² Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

⁶⁰³ Vintage Photography Sales Catalogues back copies provided through Specialist Auctioneers and Valuers can sometimes provide information on archive photographers and background information on contexts of production. Reference Sales Catalogue, Dominic Winter, ‘Photography 1850–2015’, April 2015.

⁶⁰⁴ John Berger, ‘Appearances: The Ambiguity of the Photograph’, in *Understanding a Photograph* (Penguin Classics, 2013), p.67.

We can then narrate an event, as this elucidates its place within history and time and connects and constructs its place. If we explore here the connections to narrative encounter, this acknowledges that all photographs are possible contributors to history, and any photograph can be used to break the monopoly that history has over time, this is the unique power of the photograph and its trace of the event, or revelation, and appearance, as Berger comments.⁶⁰⁵ Photographs have the capacity to interrupt with their own narrative encounter, story, trace, quotation, cherished moment or appearance. Quotations are open to personal interpretation, reading and analysis and, as Barthes stated, photographs can be seen as ‘messages without a code’.⁶⁰⁶ Artists who have worked in this way with appropriated photographs and constructed narratives more as diegesis, are working outside of the established canon of art history and attract criticism as outliers; their practice not clearly defined by original works and often the work operating itself as a form with criticism inherent in its drive. The form that is often commented on as a methodology linked to the disciplines of anthropology and ethnography in approach,⁶⁰⁷ creating enigmatic works which offer new readings, as Sontag states in *On Photography* (1971): ‘In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe.’⁶⁰⁸ The argument here is between the documentary focus of creating *a construction of meanings* through juxtaposing photographs and ephemera in ephemeral theatres against *the construction of forms* in sculptural installations that poses other aesthetic questions.⁶⁰⁹

The enigma of art in its widest practice has been dissected by theorists including Benjamin (specifically with regard to ‘The Work of Art in the Age of

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Roland Barthes, ‘The Rhetoric of The Image’, in A. Trachtenberg, *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven: Leete’s Island Books, 1980), pp277–9.

⁶⁰⁷ Hal Foster, ‘The Artist as Ethnographer’, in *The Return of the Real* (MIT Press, 1996) p.181.

⁶⁰⁸ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, p.3: 9–11.

⁶⁰⁹ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, discusses artists and critics’ envy of anthropologists, and their desire ‘to aspire to fieldwork in which theory and practice seem to be reconciled ... There are many engagements of the other in twentieth-century art, most of which are primitivist, bound up in the politics of alterity: in surrealism where the other is figured expressly in terms of the unconscious;’ p.181: 19–30.

Mechanical Reproduction') and, in particular, Adorno.⁶¹⁰ Indeed, the crucial issue that Adorno addresses is the existence of a relation between the aesthetic and the political in which the former is not sacrificed to the latter as its determination. In other words, what is sought is a relation in which each is determined in its relation to the other, but a relation that refuses to allow one to be determined through or represented by the other. Adorno's argument here remains unmistakably dialectical.⁶¹¹ He writes that, 'the historical unfolding of artworks through criticism and the philosophical unfolding of their truth content stand in interdependency'. Adorno further develops this argument in discussing that enigma cannot be separated from either history or criticism and that enigma constitutes the practice of art as the law of a movement that continually conceals its own determination. Adorno does, however, construct an argument around art as reflective of conflict, art that in his terms he deems to be authentic. He sees artworks of this nature as reflective of tension and conflict within the larger socio-historical process. Adorno expresses the view that these tensions entering the artwork are referencing the artist's struggle with socio-historically laden materials, which can be misread through these tensions or their cultural connections.⁶¹² By its mere existence, Adorno views art as critical and sees art as transfiguring what exists and this establishes the contrast that allows art (here I include the art and act of photography) to be seen as representing freedom, albeit with caveats. One caveat is the act of art's form which is the law of its movements which is then also an unfolding of truth, and Adorno sees what is unfolded in form as the truth of art as criticism. Art then can be said to reveal a power of determinacy in its form, a sign of its material existence in the world.

Form, then, argues Adorno, becomes the basis of the relation of art to the political and social world.⁶¹³ Adorno's aesthetic theory links into John Berger's theory of the forging of relationships for a new and alternative direction for

⁶¹⁰ See Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, and Robert Hullot-Kentor, 'Translator's Introduction' to T.W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, edited by G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann, translated by R. Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

⁶¹¹ See Robert Hullot-Kentor, 'Translator's Introduction' to T.W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, pp194, 128.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, p.194.

photography into social and political memory.⁶¹⁴ Reflecting on this task will influence how photographs are used in my practice and other artists' where there is no prescribed practice only personally inflected tactics of a practice. Marginalised stories documented through the photograph with social and political connotations are those often censored by the family archive. Suppressed themes I was accidentally encountering in re-reading the discarded photographs and have recorded in my fieldwork notes as a set of thematic interpretations are the visually annotated records, of; ethnic cleansing (event), still births (absence), children born out of wedlock (displacement), mixed race relationships (cultural identity), defaced and ripped images (small violences), convalescence (health), erotic and sexually explicit images (social taboos), occupation (labour), leisure (class and organised leisure), home (shelter), war (conflict and love), popular culture (occupation).⁶¹⁵ The theory within archival science is the requirement to study both cataloguing and the means of accession to both private and public collections. For my methodology I adopted the methods of a longitudinal fieldwork study and participant-observer notebooks (fieldwork notebooks) to trace the intricate forms of the finds, encounters and operations that informed the re-composition of a collection to develop the photo-archive. As Hal Foster states, the method of fieldwork is seen by twentieth-century artists as capable of reconciling both theory and practice. I would further argue it exposes the artist to unconscious escapes through our

⁶¹⁴ In *The Fleeting Promise of Art: Adorno's Aesthetic Revisited* (2013), Peter Hohendahl states an emphatic yes which he qualifies as one which is the conclusion of a careful reading of Adorno's work which exposes different questions and arguments than it did in the past. Hohendahl feels the debate now is more multi-faceted and distanced from the shadow of post-modernism so allows us to revisit the arguments and still appreciate their radical and revolutionary approach to an aesthetic theory and the nature of art's double character. John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph*, p.57: 24–9.

⁶¹⁵ Archival Science catalogues according to enduring cultural, historical or evidentiary value often unpublished material seen to be original and not communicating a particular message to posterity unless interventions are conducted within their contents. The *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009-2016) is comprised of material technologies (still photographs) which form the organising principle behind the archive, as it is concerned with the analogue era of photography. I see it as a collection of the discarded and subsequently unpublished or censored record of the private life of the family.

'Evidence in the archival sense can be defined as the passive ability of documents and objects and their associated contexts to provide insight into the processes, activities, and events that led to their creation for legal, historical, archaeological, and other purposes.' in 'The Archival Paradigm: The Genesis and Rationales of Archival Principles and Practices', <https://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub89/archival.html> (accessed 5.06.17).

conscious barriers, directly affecting the capacity for immersion into the realm of the unobserved, the marginalised record from a private life.⁶¹⁶ Equally important is to include and record not just my own findings or thematic interpretations in the fieldwork notebooks but to analyse my findings, ensuring a methodological awareness and ongoing reflexivity of the research procedures.⁶¹⁷

The concept of conflict within artists' chosen visual forms concerned with narrative and photography forms the second part of this chapter taking forward the politics and enigma of art and through interrogating case studies of artist's artwork, to explore the inscrutable, mysterious and difficult to understand. My interrogation will be addressing, through a close reading of works by artists and photographers for whom narrative is wrapped into their practice, those who are working with narrative as an essential constituent part of their art.

4.3 Artists' Forms and the Narrative Encounter with Photographs

For my study the artists that are working in this outlier enigmatic way engaging photographs with constructed narratives are Christian Boltanski, with his installations, for example *Humans* (1994), *Reflexion* (2000), see image 4.2 for the visual form of this installation, and previous works from the 1960s, one example being *Reconstructions of My Youth*, Gerard Richter, with works like *Atlas*, (see image 4.1 for sample pages), created also as an ongoing project /longitudinal study from the 1960s until the present day, with two publications and an exhibition in 2003 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. The album *Atlas* (1960–present) which is compiled using collected and found pictures, also demonstrates the complex dialogues and wrapped narrative encounters which Richter explores between found and constructed images, within painting and photography, history and memory, perception and representation. Iwona Blazwick, in the introduction to Gerhard Richter's *Atlas: The Reader*, writes:

⁶¹⁶ Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real*, p.181: 19–23.

⁶¹⁷ See the Glossary of Terms for this thesis which maps the key terms together with the key texts, and artists practice forms which have underpinned my methodological awareness of both critical theories and artists' acts of intervention.

The project begins with photographs of his family brought with him when he left East Germany in 1961. But rather than keeping these mementoes in an album, he has framed them to public display, as if to keep a link with his origins, yet create some distance.⁶¹⁸

The third artist is Tacita Dean, who again utilises information and ephemera from the past and re-presents this in works like *Floh* (2001) – see image 4.3 for the visual form of the pages, which I revisit here specifically to analyse the work's narrative aspects. The artists' works discussed are cited by Buchloch 'as sharing a type of idiosyncratic probing into particular figures, objects and events in history, philosophy and modern art practices'.⁶¹⁹ Photography and its prompts to narrative is the drive behind these artists' oeuvres. Likewise, these three artists' works could be said to share a history of mentalities and to construct a conscious form, that of a social encyclopaedia, which echoes the use of embedded photography as in the work of W.G. Sebald.

⁶¹⁸ Gerhard Richter, *Atlas: The Reader* (Whitechapel, 2003), p.12: 18–20.

⁶¹⁹ Benjamin J. Buchloch, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', *October*, Vol.55 (Winter, 1990), pp105-143.



4.1 Gerhard Richter, Pages from *Atlas* (2007), artefact.



4.2 Christian Boltanski, *Reflexion*, (2000), installation.

400 black mirrors and 9 wheeled racks with suspended transparencies on cloth sheets. Each rack: 83 x 52 x 20 in. (210.8 x 132.1 x 50.8 cm).



4.3 Tacita Dean, *Floh*, (2001), artefact.

Sebald uses photographs in this way in his books *Austerlitz* (2001) and *The Emigrants* (1996).⁶²⁰ The embedded photographs have been collected by Sebald himself, who stated that what he termed 'stray photographs' hold a great deal of memory in themselves. The method he employs is in direct opposition to the concept of photographs commemorating a set past. The cult of the past as

⁶²⁰ J.J. Long, 'History, narrative, and photography in W. G. Sebald's die Ausgewanderten', *Modern Language Review* 98(1), pp117–13; W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (C. Hanser, 2001); W.G. Sebald, *The Emigrants* (Harvill Press Vintage, 1996).

record and event, and the artefacts of the past can, in the realm of the edited public archive, typify a pervasive nostalgia for a past that is not real and is a refuge from a present state of being. Photography itself is not under threat, but the conditions of its existence are changing and the editing out of a primary material form and sense of record is also changing. I would argue here that the found photograph or photographic print is a source of inspiration for the future, not a diversion from the present. The works that artists are making now which include the material photographic print as a source of inspiration are critically engaging us with the past to understand it and re-interpret the new narrative encounters that these artists expose. In opposition to this is the desire to preserve the past, to enshrine its relics including the photographic relic but cast in aspic, within for example official archives, rather than expanded and interrogated for its trace and counternarratives. I argue here for the place of alternate histories that are part of historic imagination exemplified within Sebald's stories, leading to a new emphasis in the study of found photographs. The found and anonymous print without a named operator or creator leaves the photograph as independent of its function and its valuation, independent of set connections. The source for these photographs has since the 1930s been through private collections, public documentation archives, family albums and archives, second-hand shops, antique and collectables sales and auctions and at the lower end flea markets.

4.4 Interstitial Spaces as a Site of Enquiry: The Flea Market

The photograph as relic is to be discovered and collected for this act of recycling and re-presentation, at the flea market, a primary source for the artist and collector, the flâneur and the urban archaeologist. Narratives of displacement and decline, as well as the heritage of the English journey, also figure prominently in the work of artists like Patrick Keiller, which often reveal the theatres of everyday life to be quite different from how they might appear to the habituated glance. The flea market is the site of enquiry for my own practice and is the main source of my found photographs, incomplete family albums, ephemera and anecdotes, stemming from this, a theatre of everyday life, one

which becomes very different interrogated outside of this concept of the habituated glance. The flea market is at the lower end of the second-hand market, where often the random find (objective chance) is still possible among house clearance stalls where items have not been filtered and sorted, priced up and their provenance determined. Photographers have continuously documented these interstitial spaces. These spaces are often temporary and by their nature transient and spring up in different parts of a city, or are situated in agricultural settings such as cattle markets, again mapping into spaces that can have signage such as 'barren cows here' which offers a surreal touch to the proceedings.

André Breton, the leader of the Surrealist Movement, haunted the flea markets of Paris, in particular that of Saint-Ouen, which operated as an established site after the first flea market was established in 1885, and its considered ambience allowed for urban permanence (see image 4.6 and for the site image 4.15).⁶²¹ Here he collected ephemera and this site of his sojourns also entered into his imagination and contributed to texts such as *Nadja* (1928) a book work where he utilised embedded photographs and ephemera in a similar mode to Sebald, but this was in the early 1920s, although a second revised edition was released in 1964 (see image 4.9 for sample pages). A forerunner or, I would argue, an artist's imaginary form with Breton and Sebald working with text and images outside of accepted genres and creating a new narrative form that values the imagination and intuitive modes of enquiry. An innovative narrative form, that works with adapting trace, and the found, to frame the references of dreams or abstract narrative streams. The photograph, 'can be an invitation to pay attention' as Susan Sontag has written and this is particularly in relation to the framing of the image and the capture of the scenic space.⁶²² Tacita Dean has worked also in this genre through *Floh* (2001) to create a bookwork, a form that references her finds at the flea market and invites us to reconnect with found photographs of the everyday selected and edited by Dean. The invitation takes us into her world of found images and her connections to photographs, but she

⁶²¹A. Breton, *Communicating Vessels* (Paris: Gallimard, 1933) and *Mad Love* first published (1937), translated by Mary Ann Caws (University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

⁶²² Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p.104: 22.

also intuitively considers the concept of her artist's book returning itself to the flea market in the future as 'an artist's album' to be rediscovered in the silence of the marketplace.

In essence, the work *Floh* (2001) is silent in its concept, offering only the sequence of the found images (no accompanying text) and their considered juxtaposition by Dean for our reflection. The flea market resists association and order in many cases and is a space or site of enquiry where the flâneur can behave much like a beachcomber ploughing through the flotsam and jetsam to discover that treasure or sought-after item. Patrick Keiller the artist acknowledges the temporal nature of peripheral spaces:

But there are two sorts of peripheral places – well, there are many sorts, but one can differentiate, I think, between places which are established as such, like container depots or industrial sites on the edge of large cities, and places that are temporary – which have the quality temporarily – which are different, perhaps. People sometimes regret the loss of the temporary ones, when they get developed. But in my experience there's usually another one along in a minute.⁶²³

In his film *Robinson in Ruins* (1997), Keiller demonstrates the ability to uncover hidden links between seemingly disparate historical fragments, and reflects on the genuinely despairing mood and preoccupation around peripheries and ruination, introducing the glimmer of hope that a new industry and urbanism might rise in the ruins of our near future.⁶²⁴

The preoccupation with collecting from peripheral sites and sources and creating artist-initiated archives, as opposed to official archives, is to be found as early as the 1930s with artists like Hannah Höch, who worked with the Dadaists and created her 'Media Scrapbooks' in 1933 – see images 4.4 and 4.5 for samples of the scrapbook montaged pages.⁶²⁵ The images are grouped and

⁶²³ David Robinson Interviewing Patrick Keiller in *The White Review*, January 2014, <http://www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-patrick-keiller/> (accessed 10.11.14).

⁶²⁴ Keiller is described as a genuine, if ironised, seer: a follower of Walter Benjamin's call (in his 1929 essay 'Surrealism') for a 'profane illumination' of mundane existence. This description appears in a review of Keiller's work in the *Arts Guardian* by Brian Dillon, 20 November 2010, (accessed 15.11.14).

⁶²⁵ Hannah Höch, *Album* (Hatje Cantz, 2004), inclusive of text by Gyuna Luyken.

juxtaposed in page format compositions similar to Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1924–29). The conscious form of curating pages which could be described as a taxonomy of imagery, foregrounds Richter, Boltanski and Dean and could be said to foreground photography's archival impulse prevalent today but also to be probing photography's continuing mnemonic competence in the face even then of the rising media culture where photography started on its journey into ubiquity. Hannah Höch's scrapbooks have been reproduced in book form now titled *Album* in 2004 with a text by Gyuna Luyken, demonstrating its continued value as an artist archive. There is an intimacy to how we, as both viewers and navigators, read these collections which due to their scale act as archives, open-ended in nature with curated installations, exhibitions and publications offering access to new elements, insights and interpretations of potentially crucial traits for us as the viewers. The methodology is one that has influenced my process of making the outtakes into curated conceptual assemblages, critically to analyse as supplements to family material, applying, in Sontag's words, 'the conservationist remedy ... an ecology not only of real things but of images as well'.⁶²⁶

⁶²⁶ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, p.180:10-11.



4.4 Hannah Höch, Single Page, Scrapbook, circa 1933.



Hannah Hoch, Scrapbook, 1933.

4.5 Hannah Höch, Double-Page Spread, Scrapbook, (1933)



4.6 Giselle Freund, André Breton, (1954), at the flea market in Paris.

As with Keiller's film stills of peripheries and sites in transition in *Robinson in Ruins* (2010), photographs of flea markets are often untidy in their scenic disposition, reflecting the random nature of these sites, the place of exile uncovered in this research for the discarded supplement of family, confirmed 'as material realities in their own right', by Sontag and, as such, 'richly informative deposits left in the wake of whatever emitted them, potent means for turning the tables on reality'. Sites are often also where transactions are made outside the legal domain, hence a reluctance for vendors to be photographed at the point of exchange and encounter except at a safe distance. There is a connection to the political here, as in Keiller's work where he is visually ruminating on

displacement and states of exile similar to W.G. Sebald and life's journey (fictionally anchored visually by 'stray exchanges' in Sebald's works), but with Keiller anchored by reflections on the power structures inherent in all exchanges and encounters that link the city, country and global capitalism.

The reflections on an internalised narrative preoccupies the flâneur at sites where the power structures sit outside of the mainstream but still have the capacity to intervene with relics displaced from lives lived and the politics of consumption. Breton is portrayed at the flea market among the displaced objects and ephemera, in a portrait of himself as the flâneur, not anonymous, unlike William Klein's portrait of a market vendor (untitled – see image 4.8) as to the territory of transactions on the edges of legitimacy, see image 4.6. We see Breton in this image, but not the photographer making this record of his visit ensuring that there is a record of his participation in this event. An open-ended question to consider here: Is the act of taking a photograph a way of participating in the event? There is an important question raised in Klein's photograph about the relationship between the camera and ethical responsiveness, quite different in its scenic disposition from the portrait of Breton by Giselle Freund. Ethical responsiveness is clearly exploited where the intentions of the photographer are to document against the will of the participants. Although this could be balanced if, as Batchen quotes from Fox Talbot, 'the operator himself discovers on examination, perhaps long afterwards, that he has depicted many things he had no notion of at the time'.⁶²⁷

I remark on this as, in documenting the flea market I visit, this sense of ethical responsiveness plays a part in the disruption of my own intentions to photograph in this environment, where I need to participate not just as a photographer but as an observer participant. This role binds me into its sense of place and unwritten codes of conduct taking candid, often distant, snatched shots and accepting their condition of document rather than their documentary mode – see image 4.7, where I photograph as I walk but still encounter the hostile gaze of one trader.

⁶²⁷ William Henry Fox Talbot, *Latticed Window (with the Camera Obscura)*, August 1835, by Geoffrey Batchen, in *Singular Images: Essays on Remarkable Photographs*, edited by Sophie Howarth (Tate Publishing, 2005), p.21: 19–21.



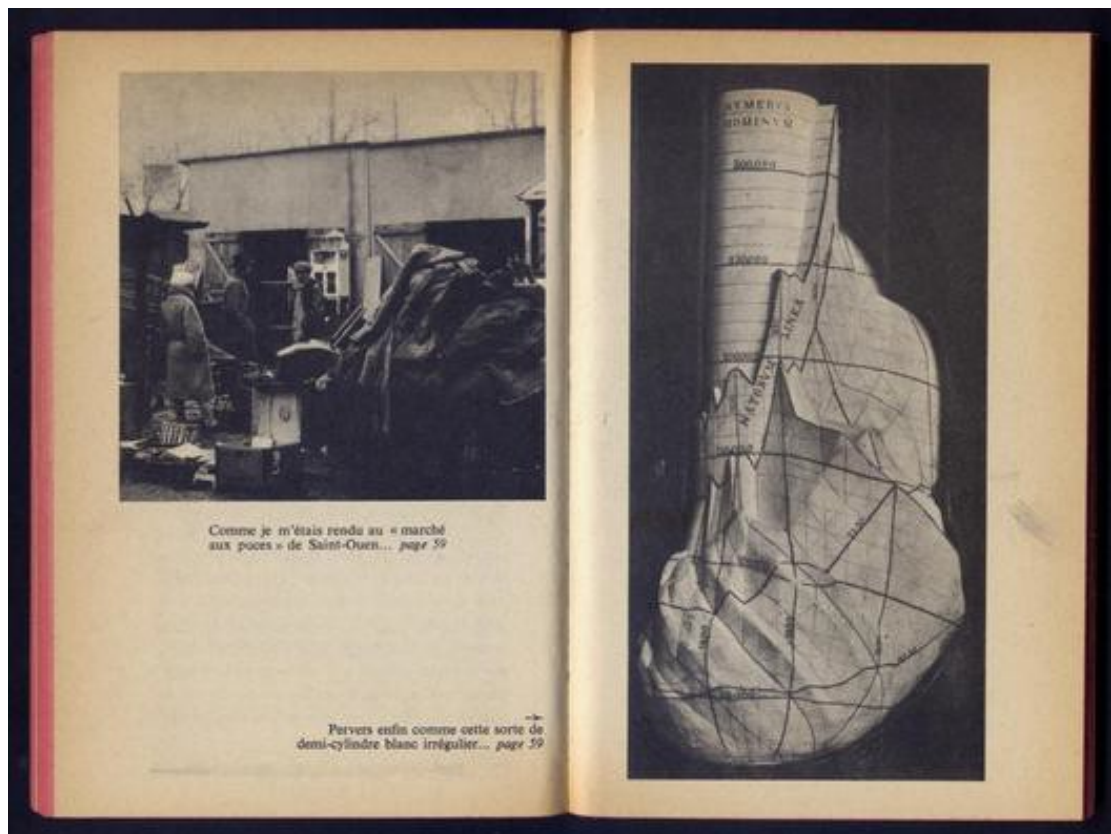
4.7 © Su Fahy, Shepton Mallet Flea Market, (2014)



4.8 William Klein, Untitled, flea market, (no date) New York.



4.9 Saint-Ouen, Notre Marché aux Puces (Our Flea Market), Paris, France.



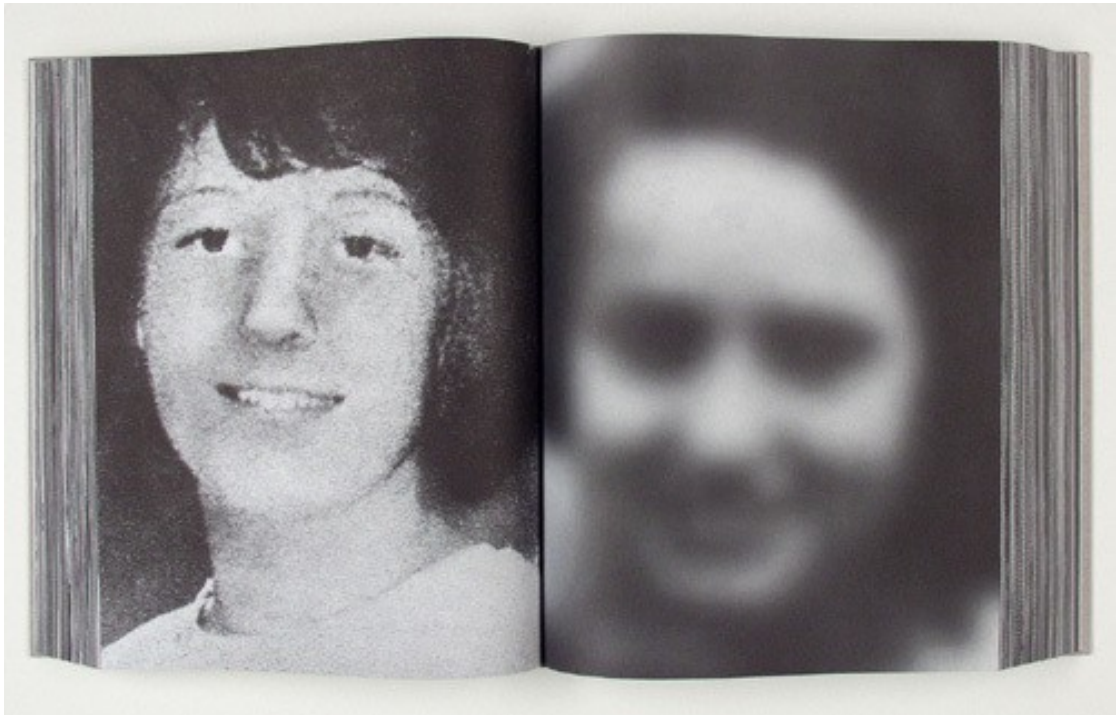
4.10 André Breton, *Le Livre de Poche, Nadja*, with photographs by Jacques André Boiffard, artefact.

The imported and embedded photographs in Boltanski's, Breton's, Sebald's and Dean's work are read and understood in terms of their function within the economy of the personal and family album, which could be said to marginalise their erotic or political impact and constitute the images instead as evidence of a familial ritual of tourism. Photographs as both a record and souvenirs of family, travel and sense of place. In the case of Boltanski's work in the series *Monuments: The Children of Dijon (1986)*, this is still within the realms of the affiliative gaze and the family album despite the fact that the images come from old school yearbooks and are re-photographed.⁶²⁸ The thematic interpretation of familial tourism is particularly the case in reading photographs from the past, as the scene in photographs has changed through time and accompanying narratives can make us understand, 'that photographs do something else' and return us to Sontag's point that they act as an invitation to pay attention to their act of record.⁶²⁹ Photographs must have a transitive function, not merely one of portrayal or representation but one where they relay affect. I would cite here Boltanski's *Missing Person Notice (1995)*, as a work that clearly articulates an invitation to pay attention, as the single-page full bleed shots offer just the visage against the affective title and are not just visages as portraits but as identities (see image 4.11 for examples of these portraits of identities). The aim of the photographs is to raise consciousness and the methodology of the collection of these photographs raises issues for us all about the fate of the lost and missing. The photograph as capture encourages an act of recognition where possible, to mitigate against loss, within the family group. The work that Boltanski has created for these image memories offers this sense of identity and value as portraits of precious lives potentially lost and lived. A difference worth noting here is the argument that Boltanski offers 'the unknown' as a form of spectacle for our personal close reading prompting an internalised narrative,

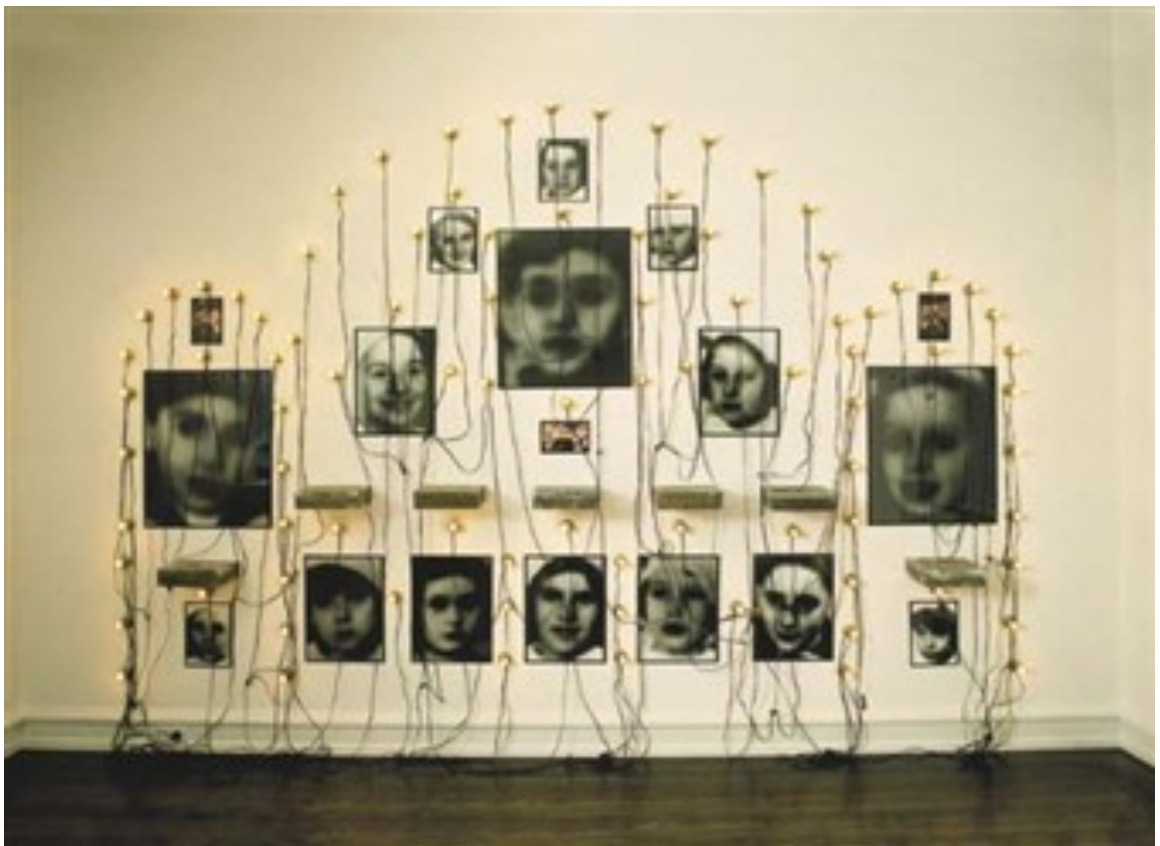
⁶²⁸ 'The photograph remains obstinately fixed-uninformative about the future. Thus the faces have a peculiarly obsolete intensity and intimacy, however much their chiaroscuro – oscillating between the dramatic and the delicate, it makes the surface of the face seem alternately forceful and fading, and thus becomes emblematic of the cosmetic changes time effects giving them an interior life'. D. Kuspit 'Focus', in C. Boltanski (Phaidon, 1997), p.98.

⁶²⁹ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, pp9–10.

discussed by Jacques Rancière in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), whereas Barthes in *Camera Lucida* (1982) valued the very personal intimate reading of an ordinary object, a personal photograph as the valid experience for affect.



4.11 Christian Boltanski, *Missing Person Notice*, (1995).



4.12 Christian Boltanski, an example from the *Monument Series (Odessa)*, (1988).

The triggering of affect is at the heart of the collectors' relationship with their material finds and the act of curation by the artist relates here to the idea of the incorporation of aesthetic material into another system that does not regard 'art' as inherently separate from the world itself.⁶³⁰ The flea market could be said to be a living archive, always in a state of flux but offering access to the materials, which is the crucial part of any effort of an established archive to safeguard the knowledge and memory they contain. It is this contribution to the preservation and enlargement of cultural information in their broadest senses that is inclusive of the particular narratives of each archive set in their own context and time.⁶³¹ There is then the question of bias in any archive as to what is collected and what is discarded. The flea market could be said to contain many multiple micro-histories, including the discarded images from picture archives and archives broken up for sale and in addition the history of everyday life, inclusive of private life. What is discarded can form a capture of a significant set of the everyday and the seemingly banal.

4.5 The 'Role of Flea Markets'

Linked definition from Merriam-Webster dictionary:

Flea markets not only offer a comfortable and interesting place to sell personal belongings, but create a wealth of diversity that is a representation of the surrounding communities. They are storytellers, for as vendors in flea markets stand for a community in which they live; the items they are offering for sale stand for the personalities of the vendors themselves. Each object one person owns, represents one aspect of their being. When one sells objects from their life they are generally a piece of their lives.⁶³²

⁶³⁰ Obrist, *Ways of Curating*, pp163–4.

⁶³¹ Maja Kominko (ed.), *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme* (Open Book Publishers, 2014). 'Much of the world's history lies in vulnerable, little known and often inaccessible archives. Many of these archives preserve information that may cast new light on historical phenomena and lead to their reinterpretation. But such rich collections are often at risk of being lost before the history they capture is recorded. The *Endangered Archives Programme* at the British Library has been established to document and publish online neglected and formerly inaccessible archives from across the globe.'

⁶³² Merriam-Webster dictionary – definition of flea market: 'Origin and Etymology of Flea Market', www.merriam-webster.com (accessed 10.02.13).

The attraction of the flea market is often defined as an invitation to desire where the chance find is predestined to find its acquirer, as there are items that are on view but not for sale. Photographs that are exhibited as precious relics which draw in the passer-by and the flâneur into viewing and conversation with the vendor, much like the reception desk of the official archive where requests are heard by the gatekeepers and often refused. Many vendors are collectors, artists, aesthetes, curators or critics and are definitively gatekeepers in this, their own, realm. The flea market site in the southwest where I conduct my fieldwork conforms to a form of urbanism, as it is set out to a focused exhibition plan, a temporary small habitation of narrow lanes and staged and curated interstitial spaces within vans and trucks, for one day every two months. The exhibitions are staged for the encounter in relation to an ephemeral theatre and the everyday transaction rather than as a conscious art form. The marketplace layout and the array of curated spaces are a catalyst for the collector and the modern-day hunter-gatherer. It is this chance encounter, as referenced by Breton in the Surrealist Manifesto writings, that creates the possibility of opening up something new. This could be a prompt for memory, a setting for impromptu exchanges through conversations, viewings and mutual interests. The organisation of the flea market could be said to mirror a labyrinth of situations, organised in a seemingly random manner but in reality organised by a hierarchy of needs: questions of price, scale of operation, value of artefacts.⁶³³ Flea markets are sites of exchange, of trading, and of the history of debt, that are historically and socially constructed spanning a time period from around 1922 in England which is the date of the earliest known usage of the term outside France. The term flea market is derived from the French '*marché aux puces*', a name originally given to a market in Paris that specialised in shabby second-hand goods of the kind that might contain fleas. The flea market, despite this dubious start, is now a place full of rumours of exchange and whispered successes among the dealers and vendors as one distinct group

⁶³³ J. Zylinska, 'On Bad Archives, Unruly Snappers and Liquid Photographs', in *Photographies*, Vol. 3, September (Routledge, 2010), '...we are presented with an archive of conscious and unconscious choices, decisions and affective reactions that are gathered under the heading of "randomness" (itself perhaps a synonym for the flea market)', p.143.

and among the public as collectors, spotters, flâneurs and artists as the other group.



4.13 Su Fahy © 2013, *Giant Flea and Collectors' Market*, Shepton Mallet, Southwest England.



4.14 Su Fahy ©.2013, *Giant Flea and Collectors' Market*, Shepton Mallet, Southwest England.

The performative nature of the act of auction, the marketplace exchange has featured in the artist Roman Ondák's work *Swap*, at Manchester Art Gallery:

A performer sits behind a table like a vendor, with an object he brings along. Once the first visitor enters the room, the performer tries to swap his object with any object the visitor might be carrying with him and which he is willing to give up in exchange for the performer's object. This sets in motion an endless chain of barter and communication which will go on for the entire duration of the exhibition.⁶³⁴

Roman Ondák takes the familiar elements of everyday life and reframes them to surprise our expectations and perspectives. He investigates social codes, conventions, rituals, and forms of exchange strongly reminiscent of the flea market experience of both audience and display minus the untidiness of these

⁶³⁴ Roman Ondák, '11 Rooms – Group Show', Manchester Art Gallery, Saturday 9 July – Sunday 17 July 2011.

interstitial spaces, as his methodology is working within the white cube of a gallery space, which is more neutral and allows the encounter to be more transparent. His methodology even captures the humour which can infuse these social exchanges, in both an art gallery and at a flea market as sites of exchange. This artwork functions through its photo-documentation of the event after the timed interchanges. This ruptures the terms of inclusion for the museum or art gallery where 'the future's past' is the term used to describe objects or artworks that are museum-worthy and deserve to be in this canon.



4.15 Roman Ondák, *Swap*, (2014), kaldorartprojects.org.au

The museum's role in narrative is to locate objects in a fixed art-historical narrative. The role is disrupted by the proliferation of alternative narratives and artistic practices including ephemeral and performative works, which need the presence of the artist and performer, as in this work *Swap*. Susan Sontag commented on this play with our detritus in *On Photography* (1977): 'we now make a history out of our detritus'. Photographs are of course party to this form of barter and exchange, as 'they in themselves function as artefacts and have the status of found objects collected as representative of un-premediated slices of the world'. At the flea market, there are traces of performative activity in old archival images that are possibly film stills or stills of theatre productions or even staged and constructed shots of performances. The photographic prints discarded as part of this urban debris are themselves becoming instant antiques. A token possession of an un-lived or experienced past inhabited now

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by the collector experiencing these memories through their framing, acceptance and evaluation of the world.

Sontag frames the act of photography as essentially making everyone a tourist in other people's reality and eventually in one's own. The type of encounter by the participant-observer is seen by Sontag as pre-intellectual and in essence as an intuitive mode of encounter with images. Photographic Images that have an 'artisanal quality', as prints on paper supports, and subsequently hold an aura. Sontag offers up the analogy of a photograph as a quotation and the photographer's approach like that of the collector being unsystematic, indeed anti-systematic.⁶³⁵ Collected photographs are pieces of evidence in an ongoing history or archive and can even accommodate the postcard print, the public souvenir of an event as a response to experiencing the unreality and remoteness of the real. Photographic collections can be used to make a substitute world. Objects can be explored as the correlative of memory. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett in an essay, 'Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review', explores the role of objects (inclusive as a term of photographs) their situation and organisation within everyday life.⁶³⁶ Gimblett expands her discussion to the way objects encode memories and stimulate life review and touches on the act of collecting as future oriented. Consequently, it is appropriate that an artist wishing to explore issues of urban archaeology should choose to investigate the material remains of the past and the implications of this for the present on a multiplicity of levels, to make in this case the flea market as my subject and site of practice enquiry. Gimblett uses the terms 'salvage anthropologist' for the collecting and recycling of finds and for the process of making, arranging and remaking of objects that of 'autobiographical archaeology'.⁶³⁷ These terms, I believe, do correlate to the artist practices I am examining and engaging with in both my written research and visual practice, borrowing from these disciplines of anthropology and archaeology. Mnemonics can be a hostile entrance into the recovery of the past in the present and the

⁶³⁵ Sontag, *On Photography*, pp110–12.

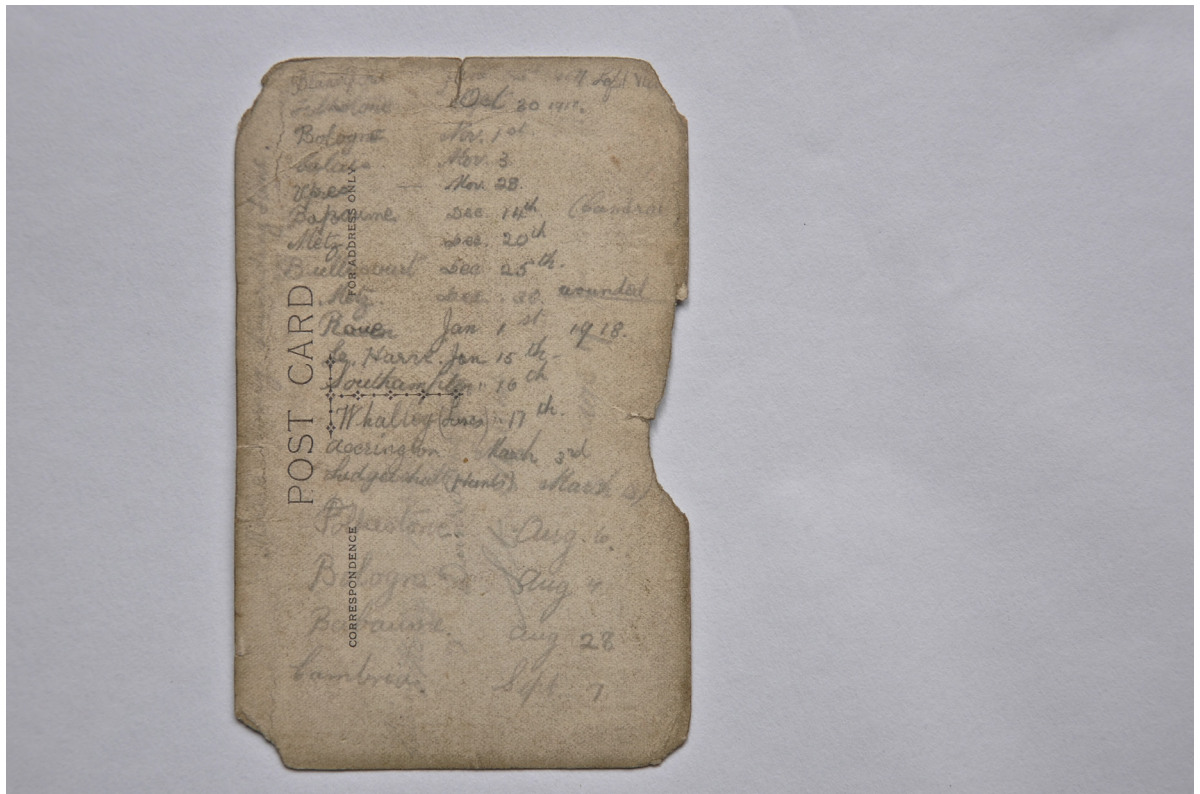
⁶³⁶ See Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review', in *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres, A Reader*, edited by Elliott Oring (Utah State University Press, 1989).

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

present in the past, as by opening up the problems of the past and drawing these into the present, new networks and associated meanings are formed between the past and the present that are often disruptive of established discourses. The methodology of creating exemplars for the thematically constructed interpretations of the discarded family photographs, in the context of the fieldwork, inform the conceptual assemblages, the outtakes forming new connections through a community of experience can cut across the assumed continuity between the past and the present. Therefore the assemblages/small histories become a challenge, a supplement, to the accepted histories that materials are embedded in. Thus, through an artist's appropriation and intervention, this methodology lifts them free of their previous contexts, open to new interpretations and critiques. In essence it is a re-presentation of material from the past and the entering into of a re-narrativisation of past materials in the present.⁶³⁸



⁶³⁸ John Roberts, 'Photography and its Violences', CADRE Lecture Series, University of Wolverhampton, (2011).



4.16 Anonymous Marginalia on reverse of photo-postcard.

The photograph is captioned, 'Age 7'. Salvaged family photo-postcard print (very poor condition due to being kept through the duration of active service) from 1914–18 inclusive of marginalia documenting military action through diary dates of the battles in World War I, inclusive of small notes about being wounded and repatriation then a return to diarising the next actions, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2010).

4.6 Borrowing from Archaeology, the Act of Fieldwork and Classification

The appropriation, re-presentation and re-narrativisation at the flea market, as the site of enquiry, forms the key driver to the construction of my archive form. The creation of which allows me to derive the visual material, the finds which are the raw data to inform my practice engaging with memory, personal and social identity and the narrative encounters offered up by re-reading found photographs. They can be valued for their intimate reading, as with Barthes family photographs in *Camera Lucida* (2000) but divorced from the personal familial connection. The act of fieldwork takes place at the site and the methodology that follows mirrors that of the archaeologist. The daily activity of

the archaeologist is the collecting, the studying, the selecting and isolating of the object of study. However, in terms of urban archaeology these finds are not buried, not painstakingly excavated through the methodology of stratification but found in the main on the surface, urban detritus still offering up the outmoded and referencing man's past. Walking in the flea market is for me a chance to conduct my personal fieldwork survey through a process of collecting (acknowledging the practices of 'objective chance' and personal desire), and studying an immediacy of contact with the past through the material remains, the finds. In particular, I am looking to unearth the material photograph, often degraded through neglect and discard, but not yet in the *midden* conforming to a buried past.⁶³⁹ The 'knowns' are the finds that I can identify often through associated ephemera and marginalia. These finds can raise penetrating questions about the 'unknowns' through the prompts and interrogation of the imaginary as catalysed by the finds. These can be in the form of an address, an unfinished story, a map reference, a letter or diary, marginalia, an anecdote – the short narrative of an interesting, amusing or biographical incident that wraps itself around the photographs. It is staging and constructing through a process that is not an official story as in archaeology, but the staging of the fugitive stories, valuing these emerging from the discard of the private life of *family*..

Archaeology, we should remember, was born of display, of the passion for collecting, linked into cabinets of curiosity.⁶⁴⁰ Such collections of natural forms formed the starting point for later forms of classification of the natural world. Some of these first ethnographic collections contained souvenirs from remote parts of the world, tourist fragments and natural forms were collected prior to photo-collections. The public museum often now housing the archive and showing work from it has its origins in the taste of the discerning private collector. Boltanski has often claimed the anthropological *Musée de l'Homme* in

⁶³⁹ 'Midden'. *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, a refuse heap (accessed 09.08.17).

⁶⁴⁰ 'Cabinets of curiosities, also known as "wonder rooms", were small collections of extraordinary objects which, like today's museums, attempted to categorise and tell stories about the wonders and oddities of the natural world. The illustrations show the tiny scenes created by the anatomist Frederick Ruysch (1638–1731) which were included in his cabinet of curiosities. Ruysch's museum displayed body parts and preserved organs alongside exotic birds, butterflies and plants. His daughter prepared delicate cuffs or collars to be slipped on to dead arms and necks. Small skeletons were positioned crying into handkerchiefs, wearing strings of pearls, or playing the violin', www.blu.uk (accessed 10.11.14).

Paris as a major influence on his work, it was where he discovered a method of classification so museological and outmoded that for him it became stimulating – hence the works *Reference Vitrine* (1970) and *Inventory of Objects that Belonged to a Woman of Bois-Colombes* (1974) dealing with ‘objets trouvés’ as though they were archaeological artefacts. The idea of a collection makes its appearance early in Boltanski’s work, and Didier Semin states that, in his view: ‘it proceeds from a form of neurosis common to all collectors halting the passage of time, out of a fear of forgetting, seeing an identity embodied in labelled and arranged objects that one cannot definitively fix’.⁶⁴¹

Semin argues that this set of works starts the thematic for Boltanski of always working with the accumulation of objects and then their recycling and re-presentation. He cites Boltanski as remaining within the form and economy of bricolage although always with a sense of mourning and a nostalgic play of displacement, which does raise questions of ethical responsiveness. Boltanski starts to work with appropriated photographs in this same way rearranging memories and creating his own fictions and memorial pieces. Boltanski critically situates his practice between the irony of Pop Art and Fluxus and the pathos that Joseph Beuys re-inscribed into his manipulated found objects.⁶⁴² Boltanski is utilising the frames of reference from the museum, the church and through his recasting and specific lighting his relics assume a magical value. Frederic Ruysch utilised this approach in the sixteenth century where his cabinets of curiosity and public shows (small theatres) were illuminated by candlelight and he was viewed at the time as an expert showman as well as a renowned scientist.⁶⁴³ His work reflects also on death and memorial, which links it in spectacle form to Boltanski’s installations and his methodology of staging within

⁶⁴¹ Didier Semin, ‘Survey’ in *Christian Boltanski*, Didier Semin, Tamar Garb, Donald Kuspit, (Phaidon, 1997), pp46–75. See also Hans Ulrich Obrist in *Ways of Curating* (Allen Lane, 2014), p.150: 30–33, p.151. Obrist discusses the platforms he is curating known as ‘The Marathons’, ‘... they are not only about the here and now, but about the present in terms of memory, a “protest against forgetting”, in the historian Eric Hobsbawm’s phrase’.

⁶⁴² Joseph Beuys is especially famous for works incorporating animal fat and felt, two common materials – one organic, the other fabricated, or industrial – that had profound personal meaning and *affect* for the artist. They were also recurring motifs in works suggesting that art, common materials, and one’s ‘everyday life’ were ultimately inseparable. Beuys was a key participant in the 1960s Fluxus movement. <http://www.theartstory.org/artist-beuys-joseph.htm> (accessed 12.01.13).

⁶⁴³ Frederick Ruysch (1638–1731), ‘Cabinets of Curiosity’, www.blu.uk (accessed 12.01.13).

his installations, creating theatres to memory. Boltanski works with fictions that are close to the truth (deaths and memorials, witness testimony of events) and when he moves this association forward with photographs and text, further questions are raised by this artist, as to the veracity of the photograph; how its image can be allied with text or the caption assume another meaning through the artist's manipulation into an adversarial marginality.

His method is referred to as 'bricolage' in terms of his works being akin to a productive activity, a do-it-yourself approach to construction and the use of materials that come to hand and are appropriated rather than made. Boltanski invents his own techniques of the found, the copy, the photocopy so again there is no valorisation of the material photographic print but instead a use of the imagery its ability to cause affect and through ritual and repetition disrupt its assimilation.⁶⁴⁴ The registers in which his work develops include the interstitial spaces of theatre, texts, and the use of ready-made elements, inclusive also of specific venues in the basement or attics of buildings reminiscent of domestic spaces where artefacts are stored, invention in the face of pre-established rules. My particular interest in this method is his ability to ask of the most discerning viewer questions about the value of family photographs as they are re-valued and re-presented appropriated into another space. Boltanski interrogates the ritual basis of artistic activity formed through exposure to popular culture and folklore towards an exemplariness of the banal. Folklore is cited as one of the many useful sources to refer to when building up a detailed knowledge of a locale or sense of place in *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain* (1968).⁶⁴⁵

Finally no opportunity should be lost in talking to those who know the countryside and its antiquities, including country people who may not have any formal training. Some know a great deal... folklore should not be overlooked as a source of one kind of information... some of it enshrines memories of the remote past, some is pure fiction. Stories of fairies and the like may refer to gods or former peoples and old customs such as games,

⁶⁴⁴ See Lynn Gumpert, *Christian Boltanski* (Flammarion, 2001).

⁶⁴⁵ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Folklore: What's in a Name?' *The Journal of American Folklore* 111(441), Summer 1998, pp281–327. Gimblett in the Introduction to her article, 'This explication of folklore as a keyword goes to the root of our history as a field, to the atavism that popular understanding preserves in the notion of folklore as error.'

dances and rites on ancient sites may be echoes of old religions... careful note should be taken of all such stories or customs and expert advice sought as to their value... much remains to be done and much can be done by the amateur.⁶⁴⁶

Careful note should be taken, then, of photographs as everyday material things collected and studied in the context of the flea market inclusive of anecdote and associated rumours and stories. Then through appropriation re-presented by artists through their personal projects, audienced and supported in part by their roots in the everyday, the vernacular. This observation is supported by Joshua Pollard as an archaeologist, who explains that 'by materiality I mean how the material character of the world is comprehended, appropriated and involved in human projects'. Concluding an important article on 'the art of decay and the transformation of substance', he points out that material things, like people, are processes, and that their real agency lies precisely in the fact that 'they cannot always be captured and contained'.⁶⁴⁷ Tim Ingold, an anthropologist writing in a paper published in 2010 about 'creative entanglements in a world of materials', draws together the preoccupations in archaeology, anthropology and art history.⁶⁴⁸ Ingold cites Pollard and is clearly in favour of creating a new platform of enquiry that argues the opposite of 'capture and containment, namely discharge and leakage' and it is in this way he states that we discover the life of things. Ingold's aim, however, is to overthrow the established model of creating 'conscious forms', the production of objects, and to replace it 'with an ontology that assigns primacy to processes of formation as against their final products, and to flows and transformations of materials as against states of matter'.⁶⁴⁹

One of the collector's most entrancing daydreams is the imaginary joy of uncovering the past, its flows and transformations, through discovery of material

⁶⁴⁶ Eric S. Wood, *Collins' Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain* (London: Collins, 1968), p.307.

⁶⁴⁷ Joshua Pollard, 'The art of decay and the transformation of substance', in C. Renfrew, C. Gosden and E. De Marrais (eds), *Substance, Memory, Display* (Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2004), pp47–62.

⁶⁴⁸ See Tim Ingold, 'Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials', (University of Aberdeen, July 2010), p.2, http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/1306/1/0510_creative_entanglements.pdf (accessed 08.07.17).

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

finds as prompts to this imaginary. The sense of discovery links into operating in the guise of an archaeologist borrowing from their preoccupations with rebuilding the past from material finds, traces and sites. Archaeologists collect to protect and preserve the past, as do most collectors, but perhaps artists conform more to interrogating the material past, adversarial on the margins, understanding that their real agency lies precisely in the fact they cannot be captured and contained through the science of classification. The relationship between art and archaeology as a practice has been there since the early days. However, the emphasis on the empirical aspirations of archaeology, which has informed its practice, methods of classification and paradigm as a science has served to create a distance within the two disciplines. Recent archaeological practice has included a more open approach, emphasising a diversity of approaches while not abandoning specific evidential practice. Art has moved into a more interpretive, questioning model of practice where it shares the preoccupation and methodology of collection, assemblage and installation within an expanded field of practice. For example, *Memory Marathon* (2012), curated by Obrist and centred on Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei's Serpentine Gallery Pavilion (2012). The pavilion was one of archaeology and memory, a refuge for thinking. There are elements of sharing where the narratives that are constructed by collections and within the process of forming the new visual forms of *Fugitive Testimonies* (2009–16), the curated outtakes are raised as issues to be considered anew. There are however questions raised by artists about the role of the collector and Mark Dion as an artist working across the fields of art and archaeology believes that the collector's worldview should be preserved in a museum context. 'Dion calls for the display areas of museums to ossify, whilst the field-centres, laboratories, workshops, store rooms and studios should be opened'.⁶⁵⁰ In essence his work and preoccupations are addressing the question of: how do the dynamic forces of materials and the generative power of objects and artefacts influence making research.

⁶⁵⁰ Mark Dion, *Archaeology*, p.90: 15–18.

In his work *Tate Thames Dig Project* (1999), Dion operates what he terms a site-oriented project:

the place – physically, socially, and culturally is significant in his consideration of the strategies and methodologies for practice that he has employed; from the identification of the collection boundaries, the advice sought from individuals familiar with the area, to the involvement of contemporary Southwark residents as fieldworkers ... The Tate Thames Dig rather than being art ‘playing’ at archaeology, is in practice both art and archaeology in all their respective aspects. The project carries with it the values and expectations of interpretation for both disciplines, and perhaps reveals much more about their similarities, than it does their differences.⁶⁵¹



4.17 Mark Dion ‘field-walked’ this same stretch of shore in 1999 for *Tate Thames Dig* (1999) with a group of volunteers.

The Thames Dig artist-initiated project by Mark Dion is important as it links and recognises the significance of temporally undifferentiated material becoming associated with each other, the site acting here as precisely that the linking factor.⁶⁵² The methodology, recognisably bricolage, opens up the space to

⁶⁵¹ Mark Dion, *Archaeology*, pp90–2.

⁶⁵² Michel Foucault, ‘Discourses are neither less nor more orderly than the conventional archaeological “site”; they may be rather “basic.” They should not, however, be confused either with some “ordinary language” or with the ordinary language of everyday experience.

chance encounters and exempts the classification of finds from a chronology. The re-framing of the purpose of the finds collection, which is artist-initiated, is described by archaeologists as a post-processual method which allows for the reveal of associated finds and an interrogation of seemingly open-ended associations that could be described as untidy and creating a different construction away from the site itself. In itself, this reflects the artist as researcher and the archaeologist as working with prior knowledge and mapping this into their site-specific analysis of finds. The final exhibition of this work was set into a gallery context modelled on museological display methodologies, utilising the cabinet of curiosities approach (*Wunderkammern*), the labelled vitrine, but there is a difference and that is the interactive element where viewers can not only touch the items on display but are invited to excavate its contents without labels or a chronology (see images 4.18 and 4.19). The audience and display for this work utilises the study of curiosity and its inherent engagement with traces of the past, linking into the work of Boltanski and his fascination with the methods for audience and display that reference the past but are set within interstitial spaces and galleries echoing a relation to the past, the present and for the future.

They are, rather, that particular linguistic matrix which allows the archaeological historian to “reveal”, between positivities, knowledge [savoir], epistemological figures, and sciences, a whole set of differences, relations, gaps, independences, autonomies, and the way in which they articulate their own historicities on one another. Hence the possibility of the analysis of an “episteme”.’ in ‘Aesthetics, Method and Epistemology’, *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*, P. Rabinov series editor, edited by J. Faubion, p.xxviii.



4.18 Mark Dion, *History of the Wunderkammern (Cabinet of Curiosities)*, *Tate Thames Dig*, (1999), Tate Art Gallery.



4.19 Mark Dion, *Tate Thames Dig*, (1999), Tate Art Gallery.

The use in Boltanski's work of biscuit tins as containers for recognisably everyday objects and the finds that Dion displays, for example fridge magnets, hold us to the everyday, the ordinary, as viable for audience and display. Dion's project creates a museum of objects that will remain intact as to his belief in not changing the face of individual collections but referencing Ingold's argument that 'creative practice begins with generating things, working with and responding to materials'.⁶⁵³



4.20 A double spread of pages and associated maps – from Mark Dion's *Documentation of Tate Thames Dig*, (1999).

These objects stand for particular events evoked in a documentary fashion, as they are stimuli for an evolving network of vivid memories; they are prompts to other memories in an interwoven net that grows rich in associations, moods and thoughts. The nature of prompts is precisely true of our relationship with 'everyday photographs', which are collected now for a multiplicity of reasons as

⁶⁵³ See Tim Ingold, 'Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials', July 2010.

they are now deemed to have entered into an intimate connection to our past as haptic image memories, held in our hand and gazed at by the self.⁶⁵⁴ They play a part in our past even if they are not image memories of our families, selves, friends and events we have been part of.⁶⁵⁵ The critical argument I wish to develop is that by intimately getting to know these image memories, by a re-reading inclusive of their time and their scenes, we may come to feel we have a knowledge now of what it was like to be a part of the social culture and fabric of life then. Langford echoes this in her book *Suspended Conversations* (2001) arguing 'that oral consciousness provides the missing key'.⁶⁵⁶ By correlating photography and orality she shows how albums were designed to work as performances and how we can unlock their mysteries.' As in archaeology, there is a real admiration and awe in the survival of objects as relics, things, their fragility and their survival against the odds making them more extraordinary and sacred than things from the present. Our engagement with these found anonymous images allow us to insinuate ourselves into the life of these images and extend our identity to encompass what we imagine their original era to have been.

A sense of the past is essential to a sense of self and this can be seen in the artists' work I have cited, and clearly in Boltanski, Richter and Dean as visual artists and Sebald as a writer using embedded photographs. The self extends from the present material environment into the past and the future. Memories constitute our lives and their secrets or lies are contained within our material environment outside of the self. This is demonstrated through the consideration of, primarily, artefacts as prompts to memory and narratives evidential of the past, in the present and for the future, offering meanings and the mystery of self and the other.⁶⁵⁷ The following outline offers an insight into field-walking and my

⁶⁵⁴ See Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (Routledge, 2004).

⁶⁵⁵ See Martha Langford, *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photograph Albums* (Montreal: London McGill University Press, 2001).

⁶⁵⁶ See Martha Langford, *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photograph Albums*.

⁶⁵⁷ Colin Renfrew, *Figuring it Out* (Thames and Hudson: 2003) and 'It May Be Art But is it Archaeology? : Science as Art and Art as Science', in M. Dion, *Archaeology*, pp13–23.

enquiry into a fixed environment, open to chance, the flea market at Shepton Mallet in the southwest, which I can map and navigate for the finds. The field-walking at a set location offers a model of practice and developed the tactics of a practice for myself as the artist to create a system for the collection, association and order of my finds to articulate the process of research and interpretation in both the written and visual work.

4.7 Field-Walking and Implications of the Model of Practice



4.21 Bath and West Showground, (2015), Shepton Mallet

Site of the flea market and field-walking survey site for *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Project*, 2009–15.

My enquiry and development of a model of practice using field-walking requires the use of maps and these are described as an essential tool in the *Collins Field Guide to Archaeology in Britain* (1968), and underscored as both document and guide to be freely used.⁶⁵⁸ This activity for an artist can also be related to the Situationists' navigation of cities as sites where they aimed to employ maps as sites of narrative and importantly for my method 'of individual itinerary'.⁶⁵⁹ 'The

⁶⁵⁸ Eric S.Wood, *Collins' Field Guide to Archaeology*, see 'Maps and Records', pp305–6.

⁶⁵⁹ See David Hopkins, *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2004), p.60: 20–32. Also Merlin Coverley, *Pyschogeography* (Pocket Essentials, 2010), pp9–22.

Imagination, it was asserted, is perhaps on the point of reclaiming its rights.⁶⁶⁰ Breton talked of 'the human explorer' carrying out investigations. Significantly to support the premise of my argument about material thinking, he stated at the time 'that the artistic problem today consists of making mental representations more and more objectively precise through the voluntary exercise of imagination and memory (it being understood that only the perception of the outside world has permitted the involuntary acquisition of the materials which mental representation is called up to use)'.⁶⁶¹

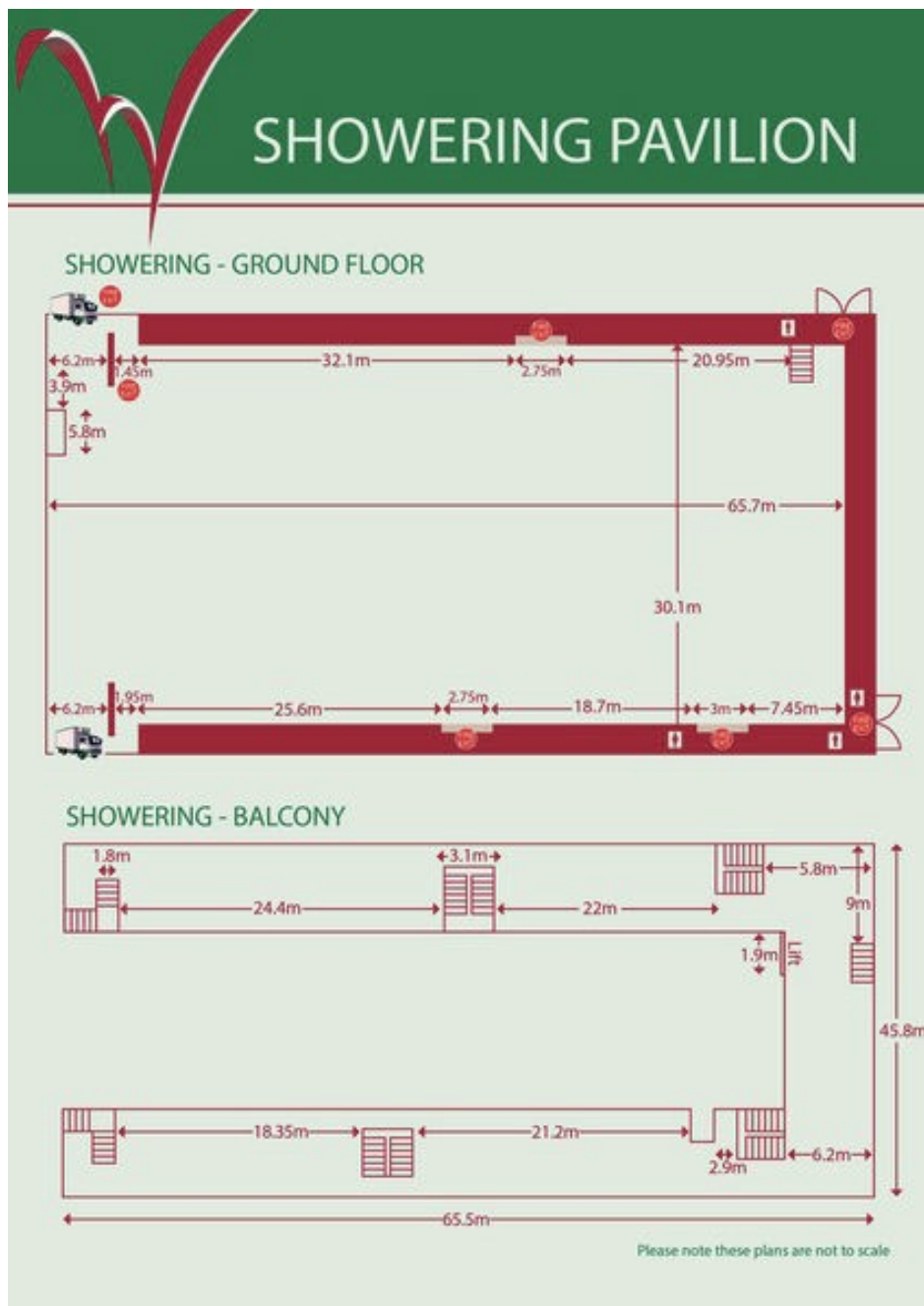
The methodology for mapping material finds cited in the *Collin's Field Guide* (1968) is to have two Ordnance Survey maps, one to be taken on walks and notes made directly on it of all small finds and sites. In this instance, as there are no archaeological landscape features bar the industrial site of the showground built on this open farmland, the record is mainly of finds. Symbols should be used for the different kinds of site or find, to avoid overloading the map with descriptive entries. The second map is the version onto which the key finds and the personal code of symbols are translated neatly and in a format that enables clear reading for the researcher and viewer. This methodology is open to personal coding, as there is no universal code of symbols in use in archaeological field studies, so this enables one's own set to be evolved.⁶⁶²

Mapping and the role that maps play in the contemporary art world offer an interplay of navigation systems and this is central to the fieldwork temporality of the flea market. The role of the curator (vendor) at the flea market is to create a stand in their interstitial space in the outside zone, albeit dependent on weather and space allocation. They regard the space as 'an armature' to hang things on, to create a scene. The inside pavilion space operates to a set plan, so there is less room for initiative and the outlier formats that occupy the outside zone, the open-air market.

⁶⁶⁰ David Hopkins, *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*, p.17: 30–4.

⁶⁶¹ André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p.277: 34–9.

⁶⁶² See Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive*, 2009–16, Fieldwork Notebooks 1–3, Shepton Mallet Flea Market – Interpretive Site Map Classifications for Phase 1, Survey.



4.22 Interior site of 'the flea market' over two floors containing 250 stalls at Shepton Mallet.

The drawing up of site-specific spaces is more akin to memory maps and the role of the sketchbook within contemporary art practice, reflecting drawing, photo-documentation and observation. Part of the fascination of Dion's *Tate Thames Dig Project* (1999), is the mapping, fieldwork notebooks, and his personal artist's interpretation of creating a system for the association and order

of his finds. The index is used in archaeology to map finds; in the past this was through material records of one index card for each find, showing details and location, date, present whereabouts and any published reference if something is known already. The recommendation is that a photograph should be taken and kept with the card index reference. Dion uses photographs, fieldwork notebooks and drawings to map and create this personal set of symbols for his project. The site that he field-walked, surveyed and excavated was a foreshore on a river, with the mapping of the banks as landscape features so there was an expectation as to the type of finds – for example, the flotsam and jetsam common to all peripheries of rivers and seas. However, there were surprising finds that were on paper supports, fragile but preserved within the site. One find was several pages of a paperback book with some readable text, a poem offering reference to the site which lent itself to developing the references of this particular find.⁶⁶³

⁶⁶³ 'The only readable portion of the text was a poem by the classical lyric poet Catullus. Bearing in mind that this part of Southwark was, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the venal capital of London, it is interesting to note that Catullus's poem can be read as a satirical "ode to the erection".' Gaius Valerius Catullus, Poem 11211.



4.23 Aerial View, 'The Royal Bath and West Showground Shepton Mallet: An Archaeological Desktop Assessment' (2010).

The site I am surveying is akin to a *moot*, but differs in that it is temporarily occupied by different events over the year and swept clean after each event so there is no accumulation of detritus. In the past, these were sites where tribal business and festivals could be conducted. *Moots* were held either at sacred

sites or at a convenient or conspicuous spot.⁶⁶⁴ Sometimes this was at a crossroads or where parish boundaries met. I am viewing the Bath and West Showground as a modern version of this meeting place for primarily secular and commercial events, such as fairs and festivals, conferences and livestock markets. It is set at a crossroads in a rural location with easy access from many directions of travel.⁶⁶⁵ In the case of the flea market, people come together for an encounter with urban archaeology akin to the surrealist heritage, where, as artists and in the role of the flâneur, they overtly courted the accidental and welcomed disorderly presences, as do the visitors to this site today on a similar aesthetic pilgrimage.⁶⁶⁶

Site-oriented projects like Dion's and my own are focused on one location for the duration of the project and this differs from Tacita Dean's approach, as she is expanding her field of enquiry and collecting across sites in the flea markets of Europe and America which prioritises and establishes her role as a collector. The collection for *Floh* (2001) was made over six years and Dean acknowledges the role of herself as the collector, implicit in which was her fear of the closure of the project and the end of her journey through the flea markets. Dean is clear then about not classifying her collection: there is no index, no inventory, no text, no signposting; and no distinct category emerges from her final artist book form. Dean, like the other artists discussed in this thesis, is engaged in the process, the artist as researcher, as collector; and her final project presentation is not an installation but it is a container for her collection.⁶⁶⁷ In the collection of essays *What is Research in the Visual Arts?* its contributors consider the artist as researcher's obsessions (the collecting), and encounters (site-oriented) and the incoherence and wonder that lie at the heart of searching for the not-yet-known, that lies at the heart of emotive curiosity.

⁶⁶⁴ Eric S.Wood, *Collins' Field Guide to Archaeology*, Moots, pp185–6.

⁶⁶⁵ (iii) 'That the assessment site is bisected by a parish boundary. Such features hold an important position in the human development of the landscape and may often be based on early territorial divisions. Parish boundaries have sometimes been known to be marked by archaeological deposits including burials, votive deposits or boundary markers', from R.A. Broomhead, 'The Royal Bath and West Showground Shepton Mallet', *Field Archaeologist*, 2010.

⁶⁶⁶ E. Van Alphen, 'Obsessive Archives and Archival Obsessions', in *What is Research in the Visual Arts?: Obsession, Archive, Encounter* (Williamstown: Clark Art Institute, 2009).

⁶⁶⁷ Mark Godfrey, 'Photography Found and Lost: on Tacita Dean's *Floh*', *October* 114, Fall 2005 (accessed 10.03.16).

The publication underscores the use of reflexive reference as a theoretical structure which allows patterns of repetition to emerge that go beyond coincidence and enable 'a magical order' to be inserted into this entropy of matter and re-present a history. Dean, Boltanski, Richter and Sebald operate an aesthetic strategy that underscores the importance of photography as a 'visual image memory' which keys into memory and personal and social identity at a personal and spectatorial level.

The experience at the flea market today discards the subsequent industrialisation of camera technology, which, in Susan Sontag's words, 'only carried out a promise inherent in photography from its very beginning to democratise all experiences'.⁶⁶⁸ Photography as a mass art form is seen by Sontag as mainly a social rite, a defence against anxiety and a tool of power not practised by the majority as art. Sontag sees remnants of the act of photographing and participating in the world as resulting 'in an image world that bids to outlast us all ... photographs are an incitement to reverie'.⁶⁶⁹ It is this reverie that Dean works with in her presentation of *Floh* (2001) (a German word that translates as Flea), as an artist book form without text or any recognisable form of classification.

The photographs selected reflect the flea market as their source, as it includes photographs that vary widely in genre, content, style, temporality and physical condition. Even when photographs are most concerned with mirroring reality they are still haunted by their tacit imperatives of taste and conscience; and Sontag believes that this very passivity and ubiquity of the photographic record is photography's message, its aggression.⁶⁷⁰ Small acts of violence against the image memory, the mirror-like fragile surface of the photographic print, are often to be found in the flea market. These acts deny the photograph access to future viewers who may find the image meaningful, although as in the photograph in Dean's work *Floh* (2001), it is the drawn-over and inked-out faces in a group photograph that are to be evidenced. This is meaningful, as photographs mark the rhythm of individual human lives and their emotional intelligence.

⁶⁶⁸ Sontag, *On Photography*, pp7–18.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.16: 12–15.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.7: 5–6.

Photographs are discarded, and in this very act the snapshot lives on in the marketplace and for the collector, the viewer setting up a new set of narrative encounters. Dean's book *Floh* (2001) does encourage through its form the production of semiotic renewal, as the viewer can ascribe their own readings to the selected images. Dean has ensured that this is the case, as the viewer's being able to read the images either singly or in relation to the others causes their own categories to emerge. Dean's work references the outmoded and the obsolescent, which she has acknowledged with both *Floh* (2001) and *FILM* (2011), both working with analogue photographic materials that carry memory and reference the haptic touch of the artist as producer.⁶⁷¹

The book as an item appears at the flea market in a discarded state and often the container for stray photographic prints and ephemera, which may be the reason for the conscious form of the book chosen by Dean for its historical significance, and in Dean's view its potential return to the silence of the flea market one day. The book as an art form could be considered the most influential method of arranging photographs akin to the family album. A difference between the two is the open-ended nature of the family album and the closed nature of a book form once published. The book also naturally has a beginning and an end read cover to cover, which is discussed by Ernst Van Alphen as relating to its nature as a container, capable of imposing a linear narrative with a beginning and an end which is significant for a book containing little or no text as in *Floh*.⁶⁷² Another critical difference is the digital prints within this publication that are copies of the original finds and reflect the collector holding on to the original found images but sharing through the photo-book these image memories from their collection, their personal archive reflecting the context of a collected everyday life. Dean, I would argue, uses the artist book here as an object-exhibition cast in dialogue, with a focus on shared

⁶⁷¹Dean, *FILM*, 'FILM seeks not only to invigorate debate about the threat that film is under but also to stand as a testament to the distinctive qualities of this unique medium'. The form is a silent 35 mm looped film projected onto a monolith standing 13 metres tall installed in the Tate Turbine Hall as a site-specific commission for Tate Modern (October 2011). See Tacita Dean and Nicolas Cullinan, *FILM*, (Tate Publishing: 2011), which includes a series of essays on analogue media.

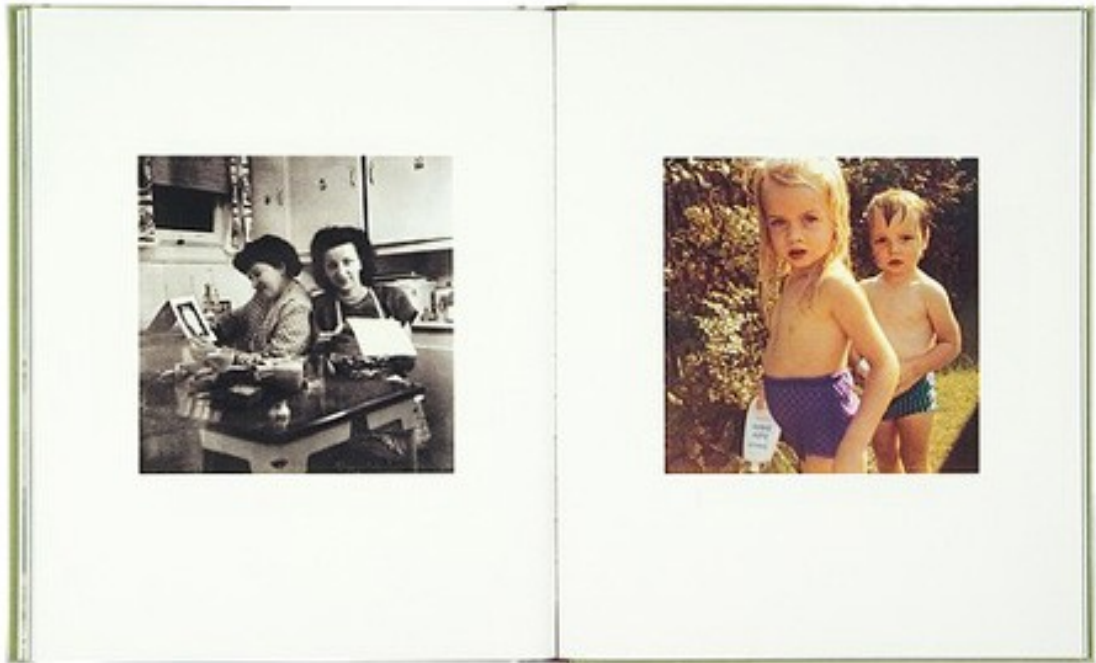
⁶⁷² Van Alphen, in 'Obsessive Archives and Archival Obsessions'.

experiences between individuals. The nature of the chemical and physical processes and their date can still be read into these photographs and the realities they convey, even if there is no text to confirm the documentary reliability of these photographs. In *The Photobook: A History Volume II* (2006) Tacita Dean's work *Floh* (2001) is discussed in the section on 'The Picture Editor as Author'; Dean is cited in this section summarising the work in these words, 'I thought about alchemy, the turning of substance with invisible meaning into something physical and tangible'.⁶⁷³ Here the artist's poetic licence is at play, to work purely with the visual, the copy of the copy as in Dean, Boltanski and Richter's work, although in the case of photographs their framed scene carries far more information to the viewer, and this nuances our dialogue and personal narrative encounter with this collection of photographs in *Floh* (2001), potentially far beyond the artist's expectations and concerns. Artist-initiated projects construct imaginary scenarios outside of specific contextual knowledge and this unfolds and opens up the dialogue between the artist's curated work and the viewer. The contemporary format of the photo-book as a visual form is described as 'a virginal format': one that is seen as sparse, uncertain and enigmatic. The images are there, juxtaposed, selected and edited for the reader to interpret – images that only become fully independent and uniquely established in the mind of each reader a conceptual terrain.⁶⁷⁴ It is clear that the photographer (in this case Dean as collector, author and editor) through the interplay of the photographs, through our experience and imagination, and through the relationships that are built, asserted and insinuated by the structure of the photo-book itself, forges the signature of authorship.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷³ Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History, Volume II* (Phaidon, 2006), 'Looking at Photographs: The Picture Editor as Author', p.231: 28–31.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp6–9.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.209. 'Dean's *Floh* (Flea) 2001, takes a collection of disparate snapshot photographs purchased in flea markets and constructs a loose narrative around photography's perennial themes of time, memory and desire'... 'The books here are amongst the most intriguing in this volume demonstrating clearly that photography is a language, with individual photographs the words. It is only when these individual photographs are combined in the visual equivalents of sentences and paragraphs, either by their maker or by an editor with something to say, that the full complexity and wider meaning of photography comes to be realized', p.211.



4.24 Tacita Dean, *Floh* (2001), artefact.



4.25 Tacita Dean, *Floh*, (2001), the book form as 'an object-exhibition', artefact.

There is a lightness of touch to *Floh* (2001), without its narrative of postmemory. Re-reading the sequence of photographs there emerges from her authorship a quiet pensive narrative composed of recognisable thematic interpretations; of personal and social memory, desire, truth, leisure, revelation, fiction and loss. The pensive narrative is in direct contrast to the ethical dilemma of the collector, the artist working with trauma and using media images as in Richter's work, to note their representation as the memory of an event in political history. This is precisely the case with the Baader-Meinhof Series (1988) and the film *Ophelia*, which reflects the series through a sequence of stills in black and white, reminiscent of Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962) and almost seems to be a set of flashbacks to an event, referencing the unsharp, the uncanny, the traces of a life lived, postmemory.⁶⁷⁶ In my fieldwork at the flea market I encountered photographs and associated ephemera which document atrocity, social unrest, death in notoriety and ethnic cleansing, a series of narratives of loss viewed by me and at times transferred by the mourner, the storyteller, as oral narratives that accompany the photographs. The transference exposes the ethics of the collector, the vendor and the storyteller. As a curator just using the past as a toolbox to construct future narratives, to coldly expose small histories de-contextualised and sanitised, or not accept these collections, thus leaving them to travel into another's hands to perhaps become part of a discontinuous assemblage of possibilities, a curious assemblage of affect, anguish and loss. In *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction* (2004), Hopkins cites the surrealists' appropriation of the images of *The Papin Sisters: Before and After*, published in *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution*, 5 (May 1933). The accompanying narrative is how the impeccably bourgeois young ladies depicted in the first photograph had been placed in service and there developed a loathing for their employers and ended up murdering them. The second image in the diptych portrays an extraordinary change in their physiognomies, which created a visual jolt for viewers through the artful juxtaposition of the appropriated photographs set together. The surrealists were interested, 'in

⁶⁷⁶ Julian Preece, in *Baader-Meinhof and the Novel: Narratives of the Nation / Fantasies of the Revolution 1970–2010* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Marker, *La Jetée*, argues that time and movement may simply be our projection and self-delusion.

engaging with the entire spectrum of social knowledge and representations'.⁶⁷⁷

Michel Foucault writes that:

The domain of ethics is one of preference and choice, passion and sentiment rules everything and argues that ethics is a system whose real function is other than it seems, a different exercise of power and control.⁶⁷⁸

Sontag has written in *On Photography* (1977) about the ethical content of photographs as being fragile, but perhaps I would not concur with her statement that time eventually positions most photographs even the most amateurish at the level of art. This was Sontag writing in the 1970s, and later, in *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), she reconsidered the role of photography and its record of the state of aggression through the recording of torture and atrocities.⁶⁷⁹

Photographs of this nature are most commonly found in the private domain of historical archives as evidence of atrocities and are not often on public view. Hence the image of *The Papin Sisters* (1933) evoked and drew together a whole range of surrealist artists' preoccupations centring on the relations between criminality and morality. The dangers inherent in the public domain of the flea market are the unexpected encounters while field-walking, whether this be through unearthing unopened boxes of photographs or being invited to view the erotic or unusual often to offer provenance to the vendor. Foucault talks about desire as infinite and restless.⁶⁸⁰

The encounters relate to a life being strewn with a stream of lived events within which there is plenty of meaning and this is also reflected through the taking of photographs, the participation in an event is a record of each event or fragment of a series of such events. The flow of details that matter to each of us is a source of desire, of value and questioning. There is now I would argue a more rapid sequence of rediscovery in photography than in any other of the visual arts. This therefore opens up the possibilities of curatorship and historiography within the formal context of the art gallery or museum, but again within the

⁶⁷⁷ David Hopkins, *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*, pp50–2; see also the image published there on p.51 of 'The Papin Sisters: Before and After', circa 1933.

⁶⁷⁸ *Essential Works of Foucault (1954–84)*, Vol. 1 (London: Penguin Books, 2000).

⁶⁷⁹ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2003).

⁶⁸⁰ *Essential Works of Foucault (1954–84)*, Vol. 1.

context of institutional censorship and consideration of the ethical responsiveness of the artist, curator and audience. The flea market is an outlier a place where there are no boundaries unless self-imposed. Contemporary art and its galleries, although less concerned with historiography, are concerned where installations and engagement with photographs as artefacts set up conflict or court controversy.⁶⁸¹ Photography on the outside of the flea market has classifications where image memories of conflict reside with legitimacy, war photography, military history, espionage, propaganda, press photography and photo-journalism. Through photography we have a consumer's relationship to events, events in many cases that are not part of our direct experience. Reality is redefined and re-presented as fragments of continuities. Many of the photographs at the flea market have no provenance or classification. They are separated from their context (unless the marginalia are documentary, which is rare) and seen to be of little value except as visual image memories. They are seen as orphan works, open to offer, with no copyright expected to remain. Sontag warns us that in response to our reading of photographs, 'too much value is assigned to memory but not enough to thinking – to narrate and interpret.'⁶⁸² This explains why photographers, art historians, curators and artists outside of the camera club of the middle-brow art of photography can still unearth the unexpected and recognise the provenance and connection of their finds.⁶⁸³ Many found photographs from flea markets are now being digitally

⁶⁸¹ An example to underscore this point is *Veil*, an INIVA Touring Exhibition, Walsall Art Gallery (2003). The artistic trio known as AES Group were responsible for the censored images. AES is an acronym for the last names of this Russian Jewish art collaboration from Moscow. Tatiana Arzamasova, Lev Evzovitch and Evgeny Svyatsky's contribution to *Veil* is a set of two digitally enhanced images entitled 'The Witness of the Future: Islamic Project' (1996-97). The first controversial image, 'New Freedom, 2006', is an altered image of the statue of liberty veiled with a Qur'an in her arm. The second image, 'London, 2006', features the Houses of Parliament with the domed roof of a mosque. The Walsall Borough Council felt that the images evoked feelings of tension in consideration of the current political situation, although the works have been in circulation and widely exhibited since 1996. What is unclear, and perhaps most threatening about these images, is the ambiguity of their intent. According to the press release, the censored images 'aim to ridicule the idea of an inevitable and cataclysmic confrontation between different cultures, challenging our fears and presumptions about the world.'

⁶⁸² Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p.115.

⁶⁸³ Bourdieu, *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art*, Chapter 3, 'Aesthetic Ambitions and Social Aspirations: The Camera Club as a Secondary Group', 'Photography does not seem to acquire a really new and specific function in the camera club. Everything takes place as if it were rather the means of expression for an aspiration whose origin is not to be found within photography. Photography is never an end in itself, and once it ceases naively to express social relationships

scanned and appear for sale in digital repositories online, allowing an international audience, (inclusive of artists like Joachim Schmid and others), which in many ways offers a greater sense of their value for research and collection but does deny the hunter-gatherer and the field-walker their haptic finds and contact with vendors and collectors for a closer sense of interpretation. Viewing the found photographic print is a haptic experience, an interpretation of the real and is a trace, an emanation however unsharp, formed by light and film, a quality of presence in real time. The found photograph at the flea market is separated from its auteur, although series of photographs and complete bodies of work do turn up over a period of time reunited by the collector haunting the occurrence of the flea market and its episodes.

Reflecting this, Boltanski utilises biscuit tins as containers of memories and iconic reminders in his installations, an everyday artefact which references everyday lives.⁶⁸⁴ Related to this methodology of the container being iconic of its age, in my field-walking I have found a body of work, a family archive over a period of three years all contained in Navy Cut Cigarette Tins from the 1940s, all packed and annotated by the same hand, a kind of small thread of continuity. Unlike Boltanski's method of artificially ageing his found containers, the degradation of the tins has happened naturally over time, a patina again in real time, but I would assert it is the aesthetic that marks out the artist's intervention and conscious method of intervention as replication of time and connection as a model of practice.

it is obliged to rely on a system of norms which are sometimes those of art, sometimes those of technology', p.104.

⁶⁸⁴ See Maurice Berger et al., *Masterworks of the Jewish Museum* (New York: The Jewish Museum, 2004), pp82–3 on Boltanski and his work with mixed media, metal containers and photography in the Monuments Series, *Lessons of Darkness* (1989–2003), <http://thejewishmuseum.org/collection/28216-monument-odessa> (accessed 16.02.16).



4.26 Su Fahy, Navy Cut Tin small archive find 1 1930s–40s (2011) – Negatives



4.27 Su Fahy, Navy Cut Tins small archive find 2 (2015) – Glass Negatives, Negatives 1934–1956

4.8 Implications of Models of Practice

Inscription of the photograph through associated ephemera or transferred material can render the image memory unbearable and certainly not easily audienced for re-presentation as in Boltanski's Piece *El Caso* (1989). This piece, using an easily available magazine, *Detective*, created outtakes which re-present popular culture, media images of murders, the photographs of mutilated bodies.⁶⁸⁵ Boltanski shields the direct gaze from these pieces by veiling the photographs and making his installations in commemorative interstitial spaces such as crypts. Joan Gibbons discusses this mode of presentation as an iconography of mortality, thus informing Boltanski's use of dimmed lighting effects and his use of aged biscuit tins.⁶⁸⁶ Boltanski interrogates the ritual basis of artistic activity, which has travelled from the twentieth into the twenty-first century. Its components or rites, as adopted by the surrealists, tackle institutions and accepted social contexts in a subversive way, using bricolage as a do-it-yourself method, a model of practice that adopts the art of the everyday, popular culture and the banal. Walter Benjamin commented on this when he wrote of the values of 'authenticity and uniqueness', which he articulated as being open to damage by techniques of reproduction: 'But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice – politics.'⁶⁸⁷

Uncertainty is derived from the politics of censorship sensed in the found family supplement, as is the case with my visual form *Family X*. (2013–2015). Even a patina of age cannot render the photographs or marginalia as art as Sontag suggests. I can now reflect on Boltanski's work more in terms of a ritual of affect for the missing, the presumed dead, the mourned, the copied portraits ever

⁶⁸⁵ This body of work reflects similar preoccupations to those of Arthur Fellig (the photographer known as WeeGee's *Naked City* (1945), reflecting the dark side of life. In the publication, *WeeGee and Naked City*, in the series 'Defining Moments of American Photography', essays by Anthony W. Lee and Richard W. Meyer restore the *Naked City* photographs to the mass circulation newspapers and magazines for which they were intended, and they trace the strange process by which the most famous of these pictures – suffused with blood, gore, and sensational crime – entered the museum (University of California Press, 2008).

⁶⁸⁶ Joan Gibbons, 'Postmemory', in *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.80: 13–15.

⁶⁸⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.218: 19–22.

grainier and blurred, after having contact with an older woman who copied her letters and family photographs to me. Her story contained everything a fugitive testimony could: murder, ethnic cleansing, family intrigue, partition and a correspondence with the Pope, but no spoken dialogue to support the encounter. The correspondence spanned three years and was based around its own ritual of no contact, no conversation, just the transference of the letters and photographs documenting a family in crisis, into my pockets or hand. The correspondence, to my eyes, is incoherent, documenting a history of emotive events and loss related to trauma, nationality and personal and social identity, which leaves me with a narrative encounter that is open to question and not one I can work with ethically. There is, however, an invitation to pay attention, as Sontag states in *Regarding the Pain of Others* to the historical relationship, to photographs as proof of identity of individual lives.⁶⁸⁸ People talk about photographs, in this case to photographs and with photographs. The photographs came late into the story to support the narrative and to show the relationships, and in this case the bloodline of *Family X*. (2013)⁶⁸⁹

Consequently, a case study emerges that is triangulating my data: the collecting of photographs as *image memories* and associated ephemera; with *narratives of encounter* and exemplifying the serendipity of *fugitive testimonies*; shaped to make conceptual assemblages to explore interpretation of personal and social identity through these visual case studies. The compiler is known to me through her physical presence; however, the subjects of the narrative and family photographs are unknown to myself as the viewer. I have no permission to publish or exhibit, to investigate, shape or corroborate this story. However, I can utilise the piece in a closed container. 'To improvise is to follow the ways of the world as they unfold rather than to connect up in reverse a series of points

⁶⁸⁸ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p.104: 21–4.

⁶⁸⁹ Taryn Simon, *Bloodlines* (2012), 'Though the panels and their corresponding keys have the appearance of pages from a textbook that have been articulated as austere illustrations of the traditional family tree, at the core they're acts of passionate, exhaustive journalistic storytelling. Some of the image descriptions have blank slots—where portraits should have been and do not exist because of political fears, emergencies or the unknown whereabouts of individuals. There are portraits with names withheld and birth dates unknown. And there are individuals who confidently sit for the camera even though they are descendants of a war criminal or one of nine wives in a polygamous family. Everything, even the conspicuous empty spaces, merges into a detailed story', tarynsimon.com/workslivingmanindex.php

already traversed', in Tim Ingold's words on material thinking and adopting this method would exemplify the material. This therefore precisely relates to information protected by the 'Official Secrets Act', which has a timeline of 30 years or a codicil – 'not to be published within the lifetime of the family or individual'.⁶⁹⁰ Taryn Simon used this methodology in her piece *Bloodlines: A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters 1–XV111* (2011), where there were blank spaces next to image descriptors to protect identities and enable her installation, exhibition and the publication of her photo-book. In a description by curator Simon Baker, he states that:

Simon's work also refutes the long-held notion that a great photograph should speak for itself, much of its impact resting on the interrelation of image and text, the latter giving the former much of its power and resonance.⁶⁹¹

Publication pages with blank spaces reference the need to protect identities.

⁶⁹⁰ Tim Ingold, 'Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials', July 2010, pp10-11.

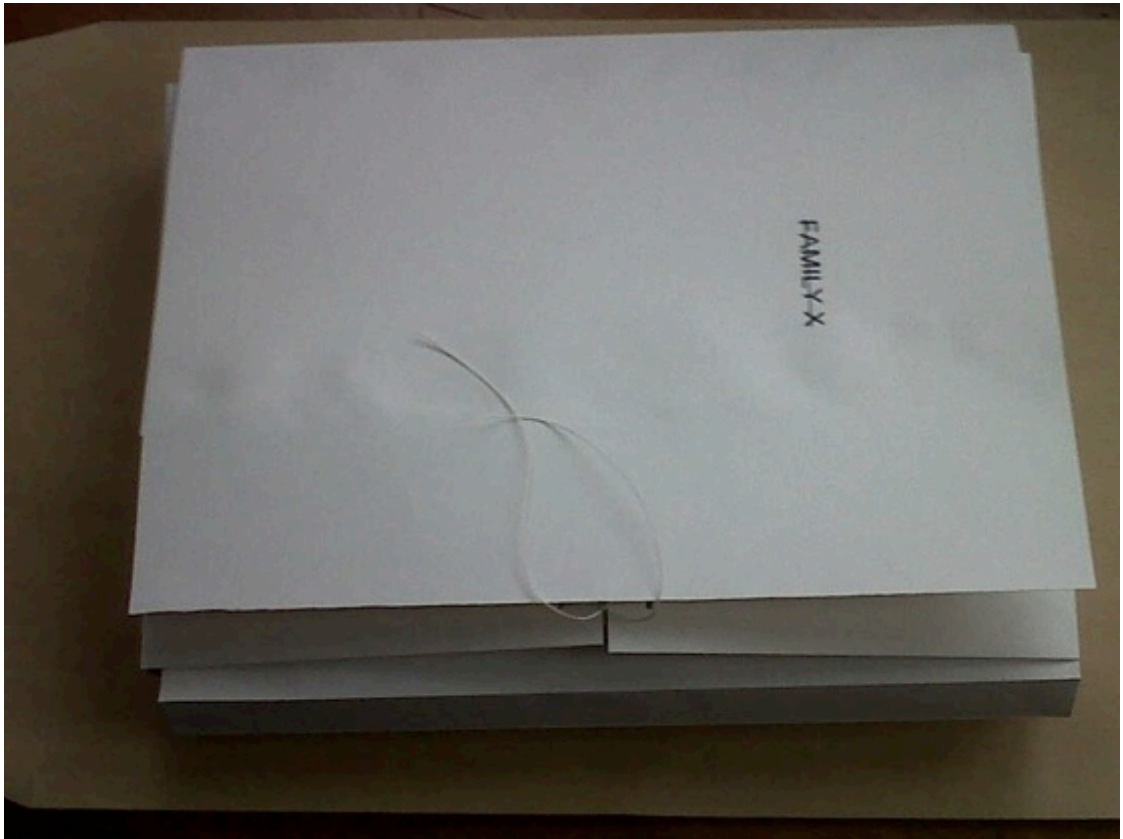
⁶⁹¹ Sean O'Hagan quoting Simon Baker, Curator, Tate Modern, London, in 'Taryn Simon: the woman in the picture', (accessed 22.05.11).



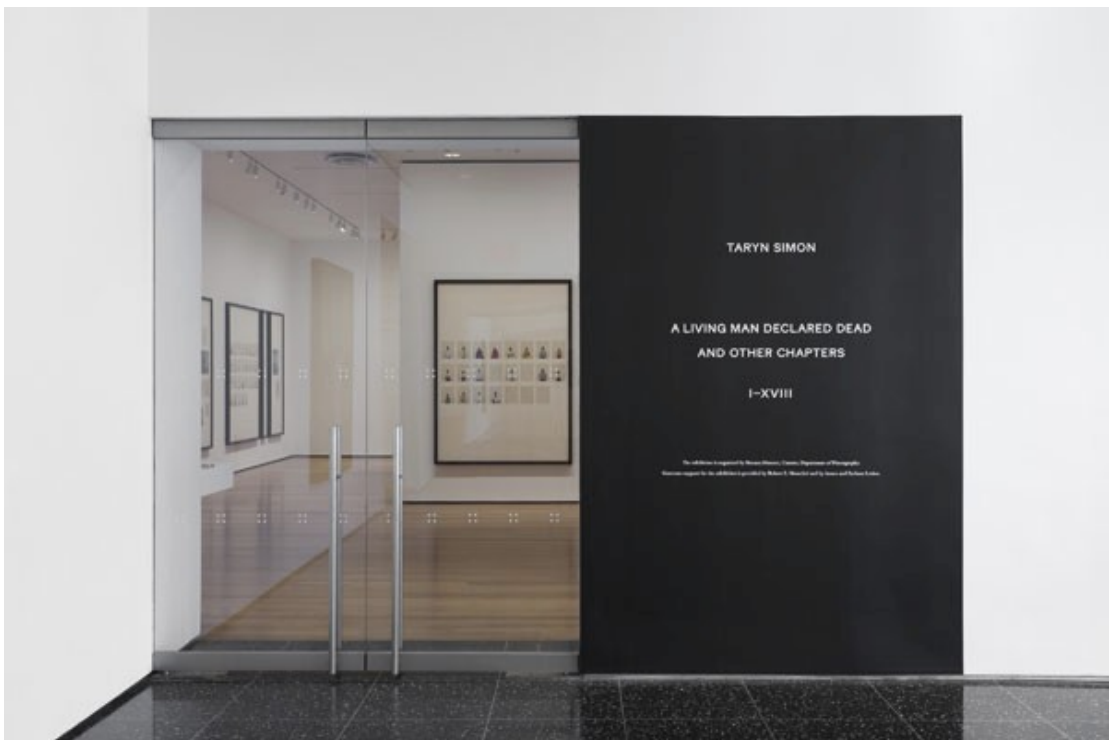
4.28 © Su Fahy, *FAMILY X*, (2013).



4.29 © Su Fahy, *FAMILY X*, (2014).



4.30 © Su Fahy, *FAMILY X*, (2015)



4.31 Taryn Simon, *Bloodlines: A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters 1–XV111*, (2011).



4.32 Taryn Simon, *Bloodlines: A Living Man Dead and Other Chapters 1–XV111*, (2011),
artefact.

Taryn Simon's work represents the narrative encounter and an intertextuality, as Simon Baker comments, which includes photographs offering image memories and a timeline for her artist-led project and investigation.⁶⁹² The model for practice would not, in my view, be as powerful as it is if you did not have to read the photographs for yourself and become engaged through the visual sequences representing family groups and their blood ties. John Berger tackles this concept of familial readings in *Understanding a Photograph* (1967), with strategies that, he writes, 'convey a context and narrative to photographs and that we read them for what they can add to or adjust within that narrative ... such a context replaces the photograph in time ... in narrated time'.⁶⁹³ Berger writes in tandem to this point of context, exploring the question of:

What served in place of the photograph before the camera's invention? The expected answer is the engraving the drawing, the painting. The more revealing answer might be memory. What photographs do out there in space was previously done within reflection.

... Memory preserves meaning and the photograph offers appearances prised away from their meaning. Meaning is the result of understanding functions.⁶⁹⁴

Berger reflects on the process of constructed narrated time and deems it to need to respect the process of memory, critically in a work like *Bloodlines* that hopes to stimulate personal and social memory in regard to individual identity.

Simon is making these portraits towards the end of the four years of this project so is documenting people with whom, as the photographer, she develops a reflective relationship. The method of developing a reflective relationship is mirrored in its value in my work at the site of the flea market, in terms of developing relationships with the collectors and vendors. The photographs that Taryn Simon is working with are not found anonymous images without attached

⁶⁹² Ibid. Sean O'Hagan quoting Simon Baker, Curator.

⁶⁹³ John Berger, ed. Geoff Dyer, *Understanding a Photograph* (Penguin Modern Classics, 2013), 'Uses of Photography', written in response to Susan Sontag's book *On Photography* (1971), p.104: 6–22.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid. p.60: 5–8.

memories, but are precisely set into her narrative encounters. Simon selects the individuals and in many cases cannot reveal their name or birth date, but does reveal their portrait. In other cases, the blank frames (mnemonic devices to prompt the memory of absence) indicate the politics of the photograph as a means of evidencing personal and social identity and connection to a story that may hold the seeds of destruction for an individual's reputation, status or emotional relations. Indicating this close consideration of identity and memory in the composition of lives lived in and outside of political borders. The association and order, the classification, the use of the index all are here in this work, utilising science as art and art as science, drawing in anthropological questions, geographical considerations and the travel of genetic footprints across time interrupted by incident, accident and conflict. I would argue that all artists are on this journey into the incoherent material finds, 'the not-yet-seen', and their interpretation, which continues to undermine established facts and fictions as it creates new conscious forms to be audienced and displayed. These works are not simply subversive; they are utilising photography in its many guises to affect our visual and critical thinking and encourage us all to read photographs, Simon, Hiller, Boltanski, and Dean, in the words of Sontag (in this context *On Photography* was written in the 1970s): force us 'to think and interpret' photographs through their material form and framed scenes...

Photographic images are pieces of evidence in an ongoing biography of history...While old photographs fill out our mental image of the past, the photographs being taken now transform what is present into a mental image like the past.⁶⁹⁵

4.9 Summary and Reflection

In summary for this chapter, as an artist and speaking for other artists working with photographs, we are participating in and representing lived events, within which there is often plenty of meaning to enable the highly individualised evocation of a context. The conscious act of re-presentation is formed through

⁶⁹⁵ Sontag, *On Photography*, p.167: 1–3.

the methods of taking photographs, the act of collecting photographs and re-photography. In my view this forms the re-presentation and interpretation of photographs that record events. However, the power of this work is that artists are analysing their finds, not merely recording, which is the criticism by theorists like Huyssen of the preoccupation of our age with recording memory for the archive.⁶⁹⁶ The participation in the event is a record of each event or fragment of a series of events. The meaning for artists comes with absorption and enjoyment in this flow of details, the process, that matters to each of us as a source of value. Photography has become one of the principal visual devices for experiencing something and for giving an appearance of participation. A narrative is the account, one of connected events, this flow of details that matter to each artist working with narrative as their source of value.

In terms of postmemory and narrative, Sebald's writings involve this exploration of a historical relationship with his environment, and the connection between individual, familial and collective memory and the means by which such memory is passed on from one generation to another.⁶⁹⁷ The innovative form of his works remains highly respected and influential for artists interested in the imaginary and the method of curating embedded photographs. There are links to the preoccupation of artists like Simon, Boltanski, Richter and Dean with the use of embedded photographs. One might question their authenticity as they focus on realities in Simon's and Richter's work, in narrative fictions in the case of Boltanski and Dean, but implicit to all these artists is their role in supporting the interweaving of the stories they tell, the fictions that come with a signature and authorship, a translation by an artist through their imaginary.

Questions of becoming emerge here – for the role of the methodology to have developed and articulated the tactics of a practice. The assemblages were made by grouping together found or unrelated photographs for the specific purpose of developing a performative / conceptual process for producing artworks from discarded images of family archives. A point to reflect on here in this summary is how the image is related to the text that both frames and is

⁶⁹⁶ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p.6.

⁶⁹⁷ See Lise Patt (ed.), *Searching for Sebald* (Los Angeles: ICI Press, 2007).

framed by it. The response to this question is forming the critical investigation for my qualitative research, considering where photographs are embedded into a narrative form, enabling the construction of personal and social memory, identity and the relationship of sense of place.⁶⁹⁸ There is a transaction here between photography and language, functioning as traces of the past, image memories, sense impressions at the point of their re-reading rather than the more conventional form of illustrations of person, place and event, or their singular appearances.⁶⁹⁹

The material photograph is connected to, through the haptic sense of touch, catalysing memory as a process of embodied reflection, this theory is analysed in Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart's writing on the physical photograph as a prompt for memory practice.⁷⁰⁰ The memory systems of Camillo and Bruno interrogated in *The Art of Memory* (1966) by Frances Yates, both of which were secret mnemonic systems, belong in the Renaissance but are relevant here for their premise of the, 'profound conviction that man can grasp, hold and understand the greater world through the power of his imagination'.⁷⁰¹

Representation here is defined through trace and the power of an inner repository of images, akin to the memory palaces written about by Yates.⁷⁰² The art of memory was a medieval and a scholastic art, but one with established theories, (quoted in many studies of photography by writers and theorists, John Berger and Joan Gibbons among them), challenged and interpreted by Yates.⁷⁰³ It still offers us a beginning, a temporal starting point for the use of *loci* as an aid to memory. Episodic memory, according to Tulving cited in Foster includes, 'recollection of *time, place* and associated *emotions* at the time of the

⁶⁹⁸ See Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (Verso, 1995), and Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

⁶⁹⁹ John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (1967), in Penguin Classics (2013).

⁷⁰⁰ See Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (Routledge, 2004).

⁷⁰¹ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p.226: 35–6, p.227: 1.

⁷⁰² *Ibid.*, p.226: 6–8, p.227.

⁷⁰³ See John Berger, *Understanding a Photograph* (1967), and Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory* (2009).

event'.⁷⁰⁴ Autobiographical memory represents a sub-category of episodic memory and is involved with recall of personal and social memories from our earlier life. The *loci* are fictitious places (advised in medieval texts as 'better to be visualised as real places') to aid memory and avoid confusion. The best is 'a theatre', or 'a stage', which I would argue is related to the theory of the scene of the photograph, its *loci* and the 'performative index' articulated by Margaret Olin.⁷⁰⁵ In all the descriptions in the theatre memory system of Robert Fludd, the memory rooms form the basis of 'the artificial memory index system' (see image 4.32 for a visual translation of a memory theatre).⁷⁰⁶ All the *loci* are containers for memory. A modern interpretation of this art of memory and the creation of artificial memory systems could be the archive in its many manifestations. The archive is outside of the human but is still a container for intergenerational memory, recollection, interpretation and reminiscence through its collection of photographs, artefacts and documents. The archive for me represents the art of memory and out of this the inspiration, as in Renaissance times through until today, for artists and writers to offer their imaginative use of material finds wrapped into visual installations. Many of these are performative in nature, reflecting the archive narrative as a focus for their works, antipathetic at times in regard to the power and conflicted nature of individual archives and their memory indexes. National archives and their cultural memory, in contrast, are not intergenerational but trans-generational; and they are no longer mediated through embodied memory practice but solely through symbolic systems akin to the concept of artificial memory systems. Andreas Huyssen asks provocatively: What good is the memory archive? How can it deliver what history alone no longer seems to be able to offer? Andreas Huyssen distinguishes memory from the archive precisely by the former's location in the present, stating:

⁷⁰⁴ Jonathan K. Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* (2009), p.39.

⁷⁰⁵ Margaret Olin, 'Touching Photographs: Roland Barthes's Mistaken Identification', *Representations* 80(1) (University of California Press, 2002), pp99–118.

⁷⁰⁶ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp316–27.

it is this tenuous fissure between past and present that constitutes memory, making it powerfully alive and distinct from the archive or any other mere system of storage and retrieval.⁷⁰⁷

4.9.1 Reflection

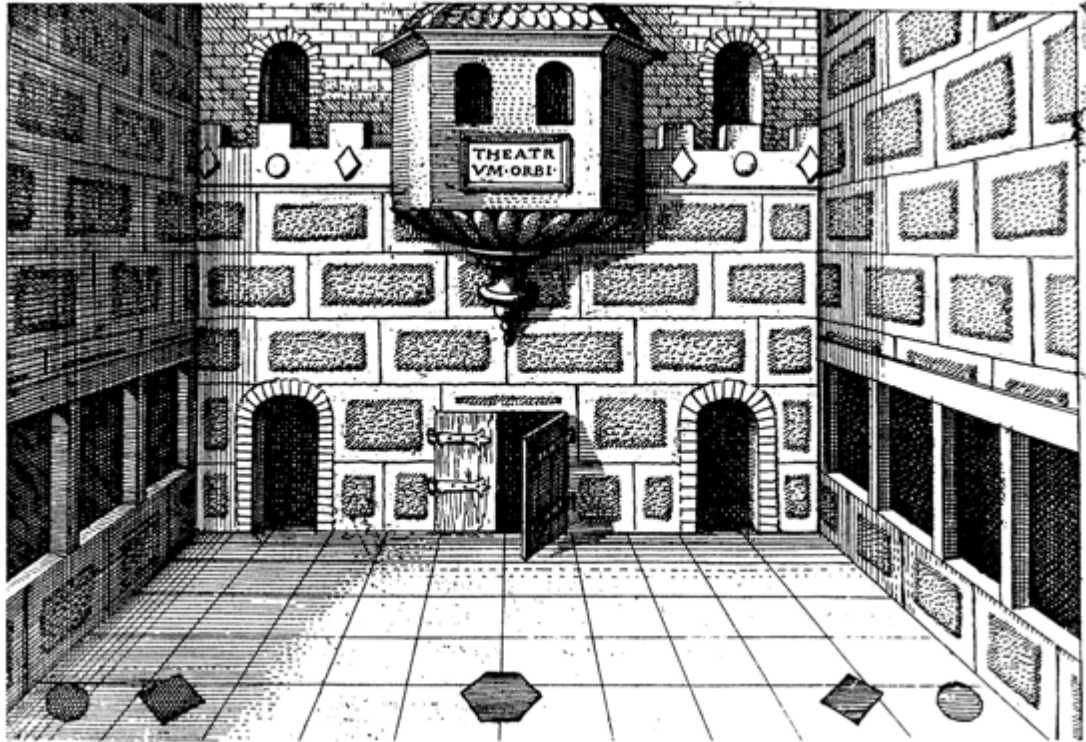
What good is the memory archive? Answering this provocative and direct question is achieved by drawing on the work of artists mining and interrogating archives, to re-present and re-enact material intimately connected to personal and social memory and identity. Artists who, I argue, are precisely offering a new take on material finds, especially photographs, often adversarial and outside of the accepted association and order of history and symbolic systems. The connection here is the analysis of this methodology informing my tactics of practice and the development of the photo-archive *Fugitive Testimonies* (2009–2016). The archive form has allowed for personal interpretation through photographs external to the official archive, image memories representative of dislocation, geographical kinship, cultural displacement, economic migration, exile, death and, in a different ethical stance, racial persecution and the nature of exclusion. A clear example is Sebald's narrator, who seeks to unearth the life stories and biographies of these dislocated lives.⁷⁰⁸ For Taryn Simon in *Bloodlines: A Living Man Declared Dead and other Chapters 1–XV 111*, and myself within my practice, there is applied a methodology echoing Sebald, as he utilises oral means, anecdotes and conversations, letters and diaries allowing for the interplay between real and fictional biographies.⁷⁰⁹ Setting the scene, as in the memory palaces within which to place images of both the inner and outer world, the self and society, setting boundaries or compartmentalising

⁷⁰⁷ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), cited in Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*, p.5: 30–86, p.6.

⁷⁰⁸ See Sebald, *Austerlitz* (2001).

⁷⁰⁹ Sebald, *Austerlitz*, pp43–7, this section of the book exemplifies the relationship to these artefacts for Austerlitz interpreted by the narrator.

to enable remembering and challenge forgetting. Image 4.32 illustrates the embodied theatre stage modelled by Fludd in a memory palace circa 1598.⁷¹⁰



4.32 *Ars Memoriae*, Robert Fludd, *Theatrum Orbi*, Memory Palaces (circa 1598).

Marianne Hirsch sees this methodology as mirroring postmemory practices in constructing narratives and sees it as clearly post-generational, offering generational distance, and from history by deep personal connection.⁷¹¹ The consideration of this type of postmemory narrative is a useful analytic tool connected to identity and the burden of history, but does conform to an ethical code rather than pure historical fantasy. The embedding of photographs, often found and anonymous, into the family photo album finds its counterparts in common use of the private familial image and ephemera in the public domain. Collectors often included these highly personal photographs in their collections, starting with miniatures from the late eighteenth century, which were likenesses

⁷¹⁰ Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp310–29.

⁷¹¹ Marianne Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory' (Columbia University, 2008).

for the affiliative familial gaze collected and then displayed in the public domain, despite their initial highly personal intimate nature within the extended family.⁷¹²



4.33 Self-portrait miniature, Charlotte Jones (1768–1847) Watercolour on ivory (1805), Holbourne House Museum, Bath.

Margaret Olin writes in *Touching Photographs*, Chapter 3, ‘Roland Barthes’ Mistaken Identification’, that this preoccupation should be regarded as ‘the performative index’, an index of identification, shaped by the reality of the viewer’s needs and desires rather than by the subject’s actual ‘having-been-there’.⁷¹³ The desire and need are clearly built around the power of the idea of family, by the pervasiveness of the familial gaze and by the forms of mutual recognition that define family images and narratives, in both the private and public domains, within collections as versions, renderings and adaptations of archetypal image memories and episodes from the past.

In conclusion, my argument rests in this chapter on how photographs change the gaze, from the constructed likeness in the miniature to the presence of embodied experience that is best described by personal and social memory, as

⁷¹² Holbourne House Museum, Bath, houses the collection of Sir William Holbourne, 1793–1874. It was his wish that his collection be left to the City of Bath for everyone to enjoy in the public domain, there are a large number of intimate family portrait miniatures displayed in this collection.

⁷¹³ Olin, *Touching Photographs*, Chapter 3.

opposed to history, and nuanced and mediated by image memories within photographs.⁷¹⁴ This is shaped, as Olin argues, ‘on an index of identification moulded by the reality of the viewer’s needs and desires’.⁷¹⁵ To summarise, memory offers a chance for the reader’s encounter (inclusive of myself) with re-reading a found photograph to play with the coexistence of different times. As a means of expression, this remains connected to our own existence and memory store. The photograph is an experience itself attesting to the arrest of the event, the candid moment of exposure, representing the second chance of *being there* as the photographer was once; exposing popular culture, home, family, society, class, labour, shelter, biography across geographies, a private life of family, all thematic interpretations confirmed within both the written analysis and visual work informing the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16). The record of place and time, a portrait of ‘there-ness’, the gift of arrest represented in the analogue material print itself a medium and ‘the thing itself’ where we can encounter small histories, and shape alternate histories (fugitive stories), which we would have been excluded from, except through the visual document of photography.⁷¹⁶

4.10 See Portfolio of Small Histories for practice exemplars: Collections.

Outtake 10: *Keenan Family File: Fifty Years* (2013).

Outtake 11: *Allen Family Album: Regret Sold* (2015).

Outtake 12: *Across Geographies* (2014).

Fugitive Testimonies Artist Archive Exhibition (2015) and Artist Statement.

⁷¹⁴ Sarah Parsons in the article, ‘Sontag’s Lament: Emotion, Ethics and Photography’, argues that Sontag models a complex if imperfect process by which our emotional reactions lead us to make ethical judgments about photographs. Although she never describes herself in these terms, Sontag shows us how the embodied viewer connects feelings and thoughts through narrative and judgment’, in *Photography and Culture* 2(3), November 2009, pp289–302.

⁷¹⁵ See Olin, *Touching Photographs*, Chapter 3.

⁷¹⁶ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp45–65.

Fugitive Testimonies Thesis

Phase 2: Practice Analysis

Portfolio of Small Histories:

Chapter 4 Section – Collection

Su Fahy

Practice Analysis: Portfolio of Small Histories

Collection

Practice Exemplars: Outtake 10 Keenan Family File – Fifty Years (2013), Outtake 11, Allen Family Album: Regret Sold (2015), Outtake 12, Across Geographies (2014).

The term 'collection' in the practice and thesis covers the closed family archive where the collected sample of photographs is not edited into albums but kept in a constantly shifting archive, serendipitous in its nature and open to re-purposing. A synonym of collection is 'assemblage', which for me underscores the chosen methodology for curating each visual form from re-purposed found material photographs as conceptual assemblages enabling the exploration of each record of family life. The methods developed at this point are the sum of practical primary research in the fieldwork surveys and my recorded observations both in the field and within the constructed photo-archive. The archive offers singular access which enables reflection and shifts the practice into addressing commonalities within family photography through forging links between and around the image memories over the timeline and chronology of each collection. Consequently, this is where the association and order forming the basis of every formal archive come into play and enable *the knowns* to form the core of the reading, allowing the architecture of the archive to emerge through research into *the unknowns*, thereby making critical research connections in both the research and the process of practice. This singular access and reflection has led to discovering and studying trends in the thinking about photography and family and the act of discarding through participant observations at the flea market.

The act of collection in the field is tested against the evaluation and analysis of the creative artefacts, the small histories, which form the basis of the contribution to knowledge of this practice-based thesis, by developing a performative/conceptual process for producing artworks from discarded images of family archives. There is clearly a vexed relationship that emerges between history and fiction in terms of representation in the private realm. The marginalia are often sensitive in reporting the era of their writers, exposing a private life of their time and the era's preoccupations and discourses. Each collection discarded and found leaves a record of private life that emerges into the public realm and allows for a re-purposing of the past – an act of memory practice that involves involuntary memory. Iain Sinclair discusses the act of re-reading photographs from the past with photographer Marc Atkins:

I go back and look at images that have been in a box for ten years, all the other images that are still around, and they've *changed* ... It is our job, as predators who exploit the photographer's skill, to come up with the fictions, essays, improvisations that will grant darkness a history and draw it, tentatively to the light.⁷¹⁷

Jonathan Foster records in *Memory: A Very Short Introduction* that the sensory memory for visual information has been termed, '*iconic* memory ... sensory memories are generally characterised as being rich, (in terms of their content) but very brief in terms of their duration'. The fact that re-reading photographs offers new sensory memory

⁷¹⁷ Marc Atkins and Iain Sinclair, *Liquid City* (Reaktion, 1999), p.11: 23–9.

experiences may explain how photographs as image memories change over time for the individual processing the visual scene. By contrast, *rehearsal* in reading an image through extended re-reading and reflection will produce a relation to long-term memory and enable sustained reflection that enables thematic interpretations, improvisations, fictions, continuities and discontinuities.⁷¹⁸

A key thinker influencing the direction of my practice is Michel Foucault, whose work is imbued with an attention to history as he examines the continuities and discontinuities between epistemes.⁷¹⁹ He focuses on the knowledge systems that informed the thinking during various periods of history, and in particular the impact of these systems on the social context in which certain theories and practices emerged as desirable or permissible. Foucault developed a view of power as exercised within discourses which constitute and dominate particular subjects in their time and individual contexts. Critically, he examined discursive fields (including the family) which, in his view, contain a number of competing and contradictory discourses establishing varying degrees of power to attribute meanings and organise social institutions and processes.⁷²⁰

The questions I believe I need to focus on here, informed by Foucault's approach, is how discourses on the family maintain their authority and contracts of compatibility, and how alternative discourses get heard while others are silenced, through analysis of the collection as a formal

⁷¹⁸ Jonathan Foster, *Memory: A Very Short Introduction*, p.29: 4–9.

⁷¹⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (first published by Tavistock Publications, 1971) (Pantheon Books), pp135–40.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp126–31.

visual record of family (inclusive of the discarded family supplement). Fugitive testimonies, the fugitive stories, are key to creating a rupture in an established view of the family, distinct from the accepted family images within the album or cherished collection, and implicit in this is the capacity they contain to affect our personal and social identity and image memories on record.⁷²¹ This determines my research questions around collections addressing issues of empowerment and disempowerment in establishing personal and social identity through examining the visual image memories within found family archives.

The art-making process is understood as a form of research, both in the method of *rehearsal* and *re-purposing* of discarded photographs. In tandem with making the art objects, the conceptual assemblages emerged as sculptural transformations that created new forms of knowledge for audience and display, the fugitive stories of family, and thus developed a new critique of thematic interpretations of family photography inclusive of censorship – social taboos, gender, race, class and labour. A shift in the practice for me has been the impact of my investigation and reflection becoming that of a differentiated memory practice into all the dimensions of presence, and critically its censorship, within the discarded family supplement. A new set of thematic interpretations are now etched into my memory through this intense exposure to found family photographs.

⁷²¹ Roland Barthes writes in *Camera Lucida*: 'In the same way, I like certain biographical features which, in a writer's life, delight me as much as certain photographs; I have called these features "biographemes"; Photography has the same relation to History that the biographeme has to biography', p.30: 13–17.

The discourses I am interested in revealing are those that enable new knowledge and differences and how they exert a pressure on established discourses or expose their constraints. In Outtake 11, see *the Allen Family Archive: Regret Sold* (2015), there is a memorable and striking visual record of a girl with a cloud of hair which follows through her timeline, creating an architecture of time and lineage. There are even here echoes of Barthes' concern with the *air* (the *expression* or the *look*) in a photograph, 'the something that is carried into our vision by the presence read before us'.⁷²² The memorable family portrait forges links to other found photographs, one being the seer, a girl with a cloud of hair carrying a lamp taken on the banks of the Severn during elver fishing at night. The connection between the two is made through the unique presence (*air*) each girl brings into the image memory and sense impression, creating a serendipitous bond that enables place-making through the links made by the correlation of a visual impression. Barthes writes that the *air* 'is a kind of intractable supplement of identity ... the air expresses the subject, insofar as that subject is not separated from itself: at last it coincides'.⁷²³ The families are different, but the record of family events is similar – the picnics, the rural walks, the engagement in family rituals such as family outings and pastimes, in this instance fishing. It is notable that the edited family album showed a distinctly more sheltered representation of gender than did the discarded images from a rural family, and that the former did not document labour in the photographs – significantly, child labour – due in part to the difference in class between the two families.

⁷²² Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp107–10.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, p.109: 19–23.

The close study of a family record sets up a chain of visual clues to the methods used by other family archives and collections held within the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* (2009–16), in direct comparison to the methods used by artists to represent the nature of family. Two exemplars within the collection are the *Keenan Family File* (2013) and *Across Geographies* (2014). Each family archive contains its own archaeology of knowledge of subjects of the family acting naturally or spontaneously, often without being posed, and elicits connections to the discourse of its time (small histories of class, labour, gender and familyhood), in keeping with the vigilance suggested by Foucault in interrogating the archaeology of knowledge.⁷²⁴ In the *Keenan Family File* (2013), there is the chronology of 50 years, offering a geography of kinship, while in *Across Geographies* (2014) it is the cultural displacement of a French rural family archive into the UK that offers insight into different lifestyles. The status and the politics of a family are exposed in these collections in comparison to the *Allen Family: Regret Sold* (2013), where there is a clearly curated sense of the family not allowing for or including any fugitive testimonies or outlier image memories.

The archive as a performance space is peopled through the found material photographs with the characters, as a direct experience, acting as a catalyst to extend the archive through the act of curating the small histories. The making takes place as a research act to demonstrate what this particular archive form can say in external settings and how I can shape it through the feedback from visitors through its audience and display. A clear consideration is

⁷²⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

recognising the fact a certain melancholy is to be taken into account when reviewing the lives of others, nuancing one's own difficulties and encounters in family life.

This underscores the importance of acknowledging this deep interest in the other to create a picture of ourselves, and the need for a space for talking essentially about the dead in a public way, processing what the dead mean to us and to our sense of autobiographical memory. The discourse of the time contextualises these collections and directly references Foucault's theories around contextualising the archaeology of knowledge held in a certain time.

For Foucault, people (read here the characters I am investigating in these fixed images) do not hold a real identity within themselves, but rather their identity is revealed through their interactions; in this case, their sense of identity is perceived as a shifting and temporary construction. The power held in image memories (material photographs) is implicit in the actions staged and captured through the operators' techniques of portrayal and capture of each individual performance to the camera, setting up and forging a visual presence / identity – an image memory.

The archive, and in particular the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Project*, was set up to clarify the space between memory and forgetting, between pertinent image memories, of family. The project became distinctive in developing a new critique of the disregarding of the family supplement, the fugitive stories, amid the discarding of the analogue era. In the making of the small histories, I critically created conceptual assemblages that offer an intelligence of the material collection and a methodology inclusive of

creativity over the accumulation of information, common to many archives. Joan Fontcuberta has discussed opening up a new dialogue with the archive in these terms with artists: 'on the one hand, they bring out the intricate semantic camouflaging to which the archive submits information; although it presents itself as a method that seeks to embrace reality and systematise knowledge'.⁷²⁵ Key factors are the methods developed on re-reading discarded photographs sheltered in the archive, rather than indexing accumulated photographs of family without recourse to an intelligence informed by both theoretical and creative relations to a personal and social identity – significantly, in relation to episodic memory and defining a space for our own experience of, and search for, *family* and its personal relation to a portrait of the self.

⁷²⁵ Joan Fontcuberta, *Pandora's Camera*, p.180: 11–13.



Su Fahy, *Keenan Family File – Fifty Years*, 2013.

Outtake 10: *Small Histories*

Media: File cut archive box, analogue family prints, mixed print formats forming a collection over 50 years complete with marginalia, enveloped collections of prints, small notebook, and recycled luggage labels.

In the *Small Histories Series*, the photographs as outtakes from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* are juxtaposed from different sources and from different times of collection (2009–16) *The Keenan Family File: Fifty Years* appears within the archive collection as comparatively the only complete archive (containing no family albums) where the vendor was keen to state that this was a family collection that had not been selected from, 'just as it was', from a house clearance. Verifying this would be difficult but re-reading the archive there was a chronology revealed over a period of 50 years. The archive includes some wallets of negatives, (undeveloped image memories) and also some

envelopes of photographs of displacement for this family in the thirties, evocative of evictions, although not marked up as such but set aside in envelopes as perhaps an act of self-censorship from the family record. The family archive contains a document thereafter of home and family with less emphasis on leisure, labour and occupation, demonstrating rather a sense of improved economic conditions, size of family, family health and a record of family births, marriages and deaths.

The *Keenan Family File* (2013) contains within it a record of marginalised stories – a record of still births – documented by birth and death dates and marginalia, ‘only with us’, adoption, displacement, mixed race relationships, migration. The family archive, in Jacques Derrida’s terms, ‘has always been a *pledge*, and like every pledge: (*gage*), a token of the future. To put it more trivially: what is no longer archived in the same way is no longer lived in the same way. Archivable meaning is also and in advance codetermined by the structure that archives. It begins with the printer.’⁷²⁶ An analogue printed archive of this era I propose will be for some time available through the flea market being of an uncertain value to both vendor and collector. However due to the nature of a change in technology and a move away from the material photographic print forming each singular record in a family archive, there may be less access to the ‘private life’ of *family* and its fugitive stories.

The change in both record and apparatus in family photography marks a change, in Derrida’s terms, of ‘the recording and memorization apparatus’, and the fact there would indeed be no archive desire without the radical finitude, without the possibility of a forgetfulness which does not limit itself to repression’.⁷²⁷

The act of collecting of others’ collections requires not only re-reading others’ personal and social image memories but also an act of translation. In the ‘Translators Note’ in *Archive Fever*, Eric Prenowitz writes, ‘It means giving up the dream of an effortless and silent living transfusion, immediate and unmitigated, unmediated.

⁷²⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p.18: 30–5.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.19: 29–31.

Giving up giving, in other words, because in the first place the thing does not belong to you and in the second it will not in any case have been handed over intact'.⁷²⁸

The act of collecting discarded family files and photographs which contain no order, and as Prenowitz observed, 'will not in any case have been handed over intact', enables a new critical perspective of family photographs to be compiled for questioning the archaeology of knowledge present in the family archive. Equally as revealed here comparatively to exposing what is censored in *family* its supplement of *fugitive stories*.



Su Fahy, *Allen Family Album: Regret Sold*, 2015.

⁷²⁸ Ibid., p.105: 8–12.

Outtake 11: *Small Histories*

Media: Sample of complete family album with letter containing auction details, sepia and black and white family photographs with original annotation throughout a timeline of the 1900s, recycled record sleeves, recycled luggage labels, linen thread. The girl in the album is *Audrey* and features throughout the timeline of family snapshot documentation.



Su Fahy, *Across Geographies*, 2014.

Outtake 12: *Small Histories*

Media: found wooden box containing a constructed and staged collection of family archive photographs from France from the 1800s to the 1940s, album pages, notebooks, black and white photographs of different formats, sepia prints and photo-postcards, marginalia document of family in the plural sense – race, class, household, clan, familyhood, like family, exposing its supplement through these thematic interpretations. Rehearsals and versions of family were set up through re-reading these photographs exposing a ‘private life’ of family to analyse, unravel and explore for the overlooked and undiscovered within the everyday life of family, the fugitive stories.

In this collection, *Across Geographies* (2015) these are analogue photographs documenting migration, loss and censorship.⁷²⁹ Susan Sontag reflects on when it comes to remembering, in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, ‘that the photograph has a deeper bite. Memory freeze-frames; its basic unit is the single image’.⁷³⁰ In re-reading the photographs, an uncertainty developed which was derived from censorship sensed in the found material supplement, (in direct comparison to an ordered family record in the archive such as the *Allen Family Album* (2015), having both a timeline and developed chronology). The finding and uncertainties were echoed within the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* collection, traced as a community of experience of family structures although unattributed. Significantly in all cases a person (the camera operator) was there taking the photographs and bore witness to the real allowing in Sontag’s words, ‘photographs to be both objective record and personal testimony, both a faithful copy or transcription of an actual moment of reality and an interpretation of that reality’.⁷³¹ One that is witnessed again and re-read at its point of finding and in this piece offering up to the reader, through its

⁷²⁹ Susan Sontag, in *Regarding the Pain of Others*, comments on the anonymous photographs of war and its aftermath taken in France between 1914 and 1918 being of a certain epic sense, differing from the photographs that were taken despite military censorship at a later date. The photographs were often suppressed and do feature in these discarded family collections often with detailed marginalia as personal testimony (dates of battles and dates of family birthdays juxtaposed) rather than anonymous depictions of the conditions of war and occupation, p.18.

⁷³⁰ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p.19: 19–21.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23: 17–20.

audience and display, connected personal and social memories of family, as this community of experience across kinship. In consequence familiar and in this conceptual assemblage containing the juxtaposed fugitive stories of family survival, in the face of displacement, through occupation and political censorship.⁷³²

⁷³² In *Across Geographies* (2015) the marginalia documented the occupation of France, 1939–40, the dates of inscription on the photographs of a rural family, notes on loss, and displacement to England, pencilled on the back of photographs of family members and of the family estate.

Fugitive Testimonies Archive Exhibition 2015

Archive Categories Installations:

across geographies (Outtake 12: *Small Histories* installation).

anecdote

biography

campaign

exposure

family (image on *Fugitive Testimonies* Exhibition Poster).

popular culture (installation *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, seven framed images).

shelter



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: anecdote*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: biography*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: campaign*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: exposure*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: shelter*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Categories: society*, 2015.



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: one of seven record cover frames inclusive of peepshow reveal black and white photographs documenting a small family event.

Media: found black and white photographs, handwritten anecdote, hand-cut recycled paper sleeve, recycled paper clips, record cover frame.

Anecdote:

Just as people go to the theatre to witness change ...



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: Peepshow reveal family event, image 2 of seven.

Media: found black and white family photographs, recycled card record covers, record cover frames.



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: Peepshow reveal family event, image 7 of seven.

Media: found black and white family photographs, recycled card record covers, record cover frames.



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: Peepshow reveal family event (detail) image 7 of seven.

Media: found black and white family photographs, recycled card record covers, record cover frames.

The small black and white photographs document a humorous family sequence involving three people, cut off now from the history that made them, but re-presented in this exhibition format inviting further speculation on their vignette, a brief sketch creating a scene from the private life of a family. The sequence stood out in the archive for its humour and playful qualities but offered an uncertainty as to the relationship and identities of each to the other. Each installation in the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Show* (2015) invited the audience to adopt a comparative approach to the other archive categories in the exhibition that document *family*. Found photographs exhibited for re-reading offered up the untold or under-narrated aspects of family discard, re-purposing a new social relevance for the found photographs on the narrative of family.



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time, Fugitive Testimonies Archive* exhibition, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: Peepshow reveal family event, image 3 and 4 of seven.

Media: found black and white family photographs, recycled card record covers, record cover frames.



Su Fahy, *Popular Culture: the skin of space and time*, 2015.

Exhibition Installation: Peepshow reveal family event, image 4 and 5 of seven.

Media: found black and white family photographs, recycled card record covers, record cover frames.

Fugitive Testimonies

An Artist Archive

Exhibition by Su Fahy

30 November - 5 December

Open View Saturday 5 December



family

Location: *Iklektik.Art.Lab,*

'Old Paradise Yard', 20 Carlisle Lane,
(Royal Street Corner), next to Archbishops
Park, Waterloo, London SE1 7LG.

Opening Times: Monday 12-5pm; Tuesday -
Saturday 10am-7pm daily

Contact: iklektikartlab.com

Follow on Twitter: [@iklektikartlab](https://twitter.com/iklektikartlab)

Fugitive Testimonies: an artist archive

exhibition by su fahy of the marginal and found photographic print inclusive of small histories.

Artist Statement

I am curious about how a whole society or nation remembers or forgets? – an age of 'Film Photography'.

I am interested in how this question applies to analogue photography where its presence through the photographic print reminds us of fugitive memories of family, events, wars, propaganda, the role of witness and visual testimony when found or collected; in the flea market, second-hand shops, the attic, the shoebox and researched in the archive – a visual prompt for consideration of this question.

In connection with this is the dependence on a reliable narrator; as the writer Kazuo Ishiguro states, 'Any of us, when asked to give an account of ourselves over any important period of our lives, would tend to be unreliable.'⁷³³ Are the found photographs of an age or a discovered family archive likely to yield a greater truth about the past and its relation to our narratives of the past? There is an uncanny presence to the material print that offers the reader a chance to muse on the past, the unique narrative captured within the viewfinder by the camera operator.

⁷³³ Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Buried Giant* (Faber & Faber, 2015).

An example of inspiration for photographers today trying to avoid the pictorial is to create projects that can reference this presence in the photograph. Yet these projects are often counterintuitive as they, for example, set out to document space and a sense of place but also the absence of an event. Empty theatres offer spaces of expectation and waiting, certainly, but often of imagining. The engineering of the imagination does not dispense with a love of light and the scenic but challenges the role of the photograph as a document.

The postponement of the image's resolution in favour of the agency of the one who looks and reads is a homage to this act of transporting, of dispatch and delivery which is intrinsic to the imagination. As data, a visual image is just raw information – it only becomes evidence when it is interpreted in some way. The artist as collector assembles evidence, which offers the audience a critical and creative process of reference and inference that results in a plausible, often a provocative, representation, and also a feel for the unsaid. The evidence thus emerges out of the juxtaposed visual relationships that reveal new impressions and insights that could not have been possible before.

su fahy

email: susanfahy@btinternet.com

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Fugitive Testimonies Archive – outtakes 'Nomadic Exhibitions' for *Small Histories*.

1. *Peepshow Anecdotes*

'Thirty Designers' (2012), Live Auction, Exhibition and Sale, Wolverhampton School of Art. Auctioneer Will Farmer from the Antiques Roadshow
Sold to Private Collector.

2. *Small Histories: Severn Sea*

Oceans, in association with Tania Kovats, e-flux project, The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 2014.

3. *Small Histories: X111 Can't Take You Leaving Me, A Torch Song*

OFF THE S(H)ELF – the eclectic in the artist's book 29/31-05-2015

I'klectik Art-Lab, Old Paradise Yard, 20 Carlisle Lane, SE1 7LG.

4. *Small Histories: Shine On – A View Of the Overlook*

Shine On – World Book Night March 2015, Su Fahy, WBN Small Family Photo-Album, "Look at this view," Jack said.' (p.67), Stephen King, *The Shining* (New English Library, 1983). Exhibition of work at CFPR, May, UWE, Bower Ashton

Campus, Bristol, WBN, *Shine On*, printed zine publication
May 2015. Edition of 25.

The archive for the *Shine On* project is now online for
viewing at: <http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk/shine-on.htm>

5. *Small Histories: Oh Yeah Decca! – original artist
bookwork, single edition*

Reader's Art: Concealed, Confined and Collected, May – July
2015, Su Fahy, *Oh Yeah Decca! – original artist bookwork*,
single edition, Minnesota Center for Book Arts,
Minneapolis, USA.

Open Call Jurors: Cathy Ryan, Susan Herzell and Jeff
Rathermel.

Reader's Art highlights work by emerging book artists
responding to the theme of 'containment'. Presented in
collaboration with the College Book Art Association and
Susan Hensel Gallery, curated by Cathy Ryan.

6. *Reading Room Poster Pin-Up for the Archive.*

Material Culture in Action – Reid Auditorium Gallery Space,
Glasgow School of Art, September 2015.

The poster from a series of three *Reading Room Poster Pin-Ups* (2014–16) will outline the research strategies from the
artist archive *Fugitive Testimonies* (2009–15) and take the
form of an artist's response, using text, drawing,
photographs and collage. The material culture is reflected
in the hand-stitched ephemera stitched into a paper

substrate. It is this notion of research occurring in real-world situations, as naturalistic enquiry rather than controlled environments that encourages, in my view, the artist as seeker, the researcher engaged in a multi-modal method (*bricolage*), a do-it-yourself approach. A methodology that hybridises one's approaches, in response to the emerging needs of the research into practice, and this 'notion of invention' being central to the work.

7. *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* Exhibition (2009–15)

Iklektik. Art. Lab., Old Paradise Yard, London, 30 November – 5 December 2015.

www.iklektikartlab.com – exhibitions archive.

8. *Reclaim the Streets: Reclaim West Midlands* (2016)

International Exhibition, Wolverhampton Art Gallery and University of Wolverhampton, Artefact, Black and White Giclée Print, *Family* (2014).

www.reclaimphotographywestmidlands.com – reference festival 2016 gallery print catalogue, 26. *Family*, Su Fahy.

9. *The Pin-Up Reading Room Series* (2014–16)

The Staff Show 2016, The Long Gallery, June – December 2016, Wolverhampton School of Art, University of Wolverhampton.

10. *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Images*

Exhibited online @64M_artists in association with Hull 17, UK City of Culture, January 2017 – present.

Archive online at www.64millionartists.com

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This research began with the aim of investigating how a family-based photography archive might contain ‘fugitive’ knowledge that helped shape and understand personal and social identity. The research proposal was a practice-based thesis where both the visual and textual components would inform the method and provide direction for the research. In effect, the research is concerned with the relation between photography and the art of memory. The methodology for *Fugitive Testimonies* was defined and developed through the textual analysis of key theorists such as Michel Foucault, Frances A. Yates and Roland Barthes whose work intersects at the interrelationship between discourse, visual memory, practices and the affect of photography. Specifically, this involved the process of critical analysis of key and core theoretical texts alongside the re-reading of *discarded* family material. The importance of the term ‘discarded’ here is crucial. The research is concerned with what *discarded* photographs enable us to analyse (i.e. the relationship between the art of memory and photography) and also as this relates to the field of appropriation in contemporary photographic practice.

In this respect I have learnt from artists’ and theoretical methods: intervention, translation, objective chance, archaeology of knowledge of discourse, participant-observer fieldwork, affect and the art of memory in contemporary art practice.⁷³⁴

The *art of memory* as a method offers an interpretation of visual memory that has evidenced its contextual sense of place, developed as embodied ritual, and inclusive of imagination. The analysis by Yates of the field of memory has offered for my own analysis an understanding of the community of experience within memory practices – the sense of place (*loci*) and the sense impressions both discussed as (*imprese*) and (*imagines agentes*).⁷³⁵

⁷³⁴ See the key texts, Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, and Joan Gibbons, *Contemporary Art and Memory*.

⁷³⁵ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp22–3.

To define this understanding, it was the opaque stubbornness of everyday life experiences that I read within the sample of discarded photographs that highlighted the unconscious escapes, cutting through conscious barriers. The crux of this community of experience drawn from image memories and sense impressions is revealed in Yates discussion of *the imprint of acts* in the rhetoric of the art of memory.⁷³⁶ These imprints, sensed through the process of re-reading the found photographs, their scenes and record of gestures, exposes the real to the performative future interpretations of memory practice. The theories of Susan Sontag and John Berger in regard to re-reading photographs have contributed to my reflection on the practical methodologies of interpretation of visual forms. By exposing the values of visual images to personal research and interpretation of the community of experience, the value of discarded family images is examined in their plural sense.

A family album offers one type of photographic archive experience, and is singular in its exposure to family reading. However, reading across the 'supplement' of discarded family images is therefore in comparison, an exposure to a community of experience and its shifting multiple perspectives.

These perspectives in this study have been situated and challenged by the writing on memory practice by Annette Kuhn, Elizabeth Edwards, Janice Hart, and Marianne Hirsch where the exposition of the role of memory and postmemory presents a problematic to the concept of the family image, exposed as not a clear view.⁷³⁷

The sample of photographs that I have collected for this longitudinal study I acknowledge have shifting meanings over time which is an important finding to experience directly as a catalytic valuation. To understand the catalytic value of these shifting meanings over time, the first method I adopted from textual analysis from Foucault was in analysing *the determination of relations that make it possible to characterise a group* of image memories within family

⁷³⁶ Ibid., p.50: 20.

⁷³⁷ Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*; Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*; Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*.

photographs.⁷³⁸ The second method was *the interpretive decipherment* adopted from Foucault in respect of *the relation of the signifier to the signified*.⁷³⁹

Foucault discusses methodological problems that are encountered when in the process of trying to establish a new history (for this thesis a new critique), out of an established general history.⁷⁴⁰ Significantly, the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive Project* (a very much smaller project within histories of the family as a social institution) develops a new critique of family photographs that is different from the established and accepted general history that exists.

Discarded or *found photography* of the family could be said to disrupt meaningful connections, emphasising another finding that there is no easy correspondence between life and its experience. The finding of this thesis is that the processes have offered insights into censorship as a force, acting on the active removal of photographs from the record of family life and its experience. It is the availability of these forms of censored image that leads to the fugitive stories.

In relation to the *Fugitive Testimonies Project* I have understood that censorship (suppression of personal memory and identity markers – visual records through family photography) is therefore not only conducted by governments and organisations but also by private individuals within the family as an institution. However, there are no laws against self-censorship; therefore, to discard is a conflicted rite in my findings. In many cases, these fugitive photographs are described by those who have seen and remembered them as visual cues in a family history. However now all that remains is the family member's visual description evoking the image memories. What I have discovered in this study is that censorship of family photographs is seen as counterproductive as it prevents the censored topic from being discussed. As in the case study of 'A *Perspex Crucifix: The Secret Life of a Family Photograph*', situated in Chapter 2: *Trace, Presence and Indexicality*, where the discovery of the propaganda photograph and its fugitive story was left to the next generation to decipher

⁷³⁸ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p.11: 6–7.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11: 4–10.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.10: 7–37.

without primary knowledge of the experience it depicted.⁷⁴¹ The type of censorship of family material outlined in the case study can be not only a form of moral censorship and protection, but consequently one that disrupts the context of different discourses on the family.

Once the aim and direction of the research on different discourses within the family framework was established the photographs were re-purposed, developing a performative/conceptual process for producing artworks from discarded images of family archives. The outtakes, which are composed from the selected fugitive photographs, and family material from the *Fugitive Testimonies Archive* were re-purposed into conceptual assemblages to create case studies (the small histories) as the practice-based photo-archive. The conceptual assemblages as 'curated' small histories enable a deeper analysis and close reading as theoretically influenced work (key theorists being Yates (the art of memory), Foucault (archaeology of knowledge and discourse), Benjamin and Barthes (encounter, translation and affect)).⁷⁴² In making 12 outtakes of these small histories into the assemblages, I was searching for coexistent realities of individuals and families that both pulled together and apart, while in contrast I was simultaneously concentrating on material where individual accounts converged in terms of the fugitive stories.

The material in these assemblages was useful to work with extant to the (plural) archive as it was then in the tactics of a (singular) practice in respect to exposing the subject of family censorship. Significantly the image memories censored were disruptive, material in some cases indecent, in others exposing a private life of the family. These photographs are image memories operating in opposition to the contracts of compatibility of both family structure and family status in society. The *small histories* expose these acts of self-censorship by individuals, where an act of self-censorship is suppression within a paradox of memory and forgetting in a visual record of 'family life'. Furthermore, the findings are useful in leading to an understanding that the act of discarding

⁷⁴¹ Sarah Hilary, 'A Perspex Crucifix: The Secret Life of a Family Photograph', *Foto8*, Spring 2008.

⁷⁴² Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*; Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*; and Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*.

prevents family identification with the scenes in them and attempts to prevent damage from them by routing out fugitive stories in establishing a family record.

The fieldwork notebooks document the claims and comments of viewers, including collectors, dealers, and myself, on the found photographs at the point of both encounter and transaction (purchase) in the flea market. These comments inform part of the process of re-reading the discarded photographs. Re-reading the found photographs develops a new critical perspective on what is censored in family images of a 'private life' (fugitive stories). The types of censorship I encountered were of the conflicted 'private life' of family. Examples from the archive collection have images of military and political censorship – private documentation of conditions of war smuggled out as rolls of film and printed at a later date according to marginalia, propaganda family photographs at times of internment and evacuation, photographs of 'conchies' – a term within the marginalia identifying conscientious objectors deemed no longer within the family due to the threat to reputation and status. These insights were developed in the process of re-reading, undertaken throughout the longitudinal study as acts of encounter, translation and reflection offered by the comparatively raw data and photographic images collected, as they were discarded.

The documented interpretations developed from these insights allowed for alternative interpretations to be included, not just my own thematic interpretations in the context of the fieldwork and the collected sample of family material. The fieldwork notebooks have offered to me – and their readers – an ongoing reflexivity and critical self-awareness of the research procedures and the impact of critical decisions emerging through the six-year written and visual fieldwork thesis. The study method developed the production of photo-archives as an immersive experience, a longitudinal study that exposed myself as researcher to the conditions of the discarded and what is censored and discarded from family images. The new knowledge about the importance of valuing the secret life of family (fugitive stories) emerged to inform a new critical perspective on re-reading found photographs. The study I believe exposes the manipulation of the family photographic record by users and how culture manifests itself through the ways of using the family photograph as a product to

sustain contracts of compatibility within the space of the family record be this archive or album.

Close re-reading of the sample in the photo-archive *Fugitive Testimonies* has built upon memory practice within the family but departs from it by analysing the outtakes as marginalised stories, thus clearly moving into the area of the supplement to family photography, that of the discarded and censored in material prints. A critical component of any case study is the editing of the album material included. In the case of family material, consciously moving away from the concept of the family album and its accepted practices of audience and display, this work focuses instead on a performative space for the unconscious escapes from these practices, emphasising the art of memory as inclusive of encounter, translation, affect and discourses around the fugitive.

The investigation into knowledge held within these 'dissident' family-based image non-archives has emerged through a study that had at its heart the question of the archaeology of knowledge held within the photographic family archive and its related discourses. Consequently exposing as a key to interrogating our personal and social identity, the impact of censorship, and the fugitive relative to directing the accretions of lineage. Choosing then to identify its rupture, the concealment and revealing of repressed memory and hidden discourses is made visible through re-reading discarded photographs. The *affect* of the study in both the written and visual work has developed a reflective relationship of unconscious escapes through a conscious barrier – significantly, evidencing both 'the invitation to pay attention' to photographs, in the words of Susan Sontag, and the conceal or reveal in discourses of their time, in the words of Foucault.⁷⁴³ *Fugitive Testimonies* (2009–16) as a longitudinal study has contributed to new knowledge by developing a new critique of family photographs and by developing a new critical perspective on re-reading found photographs as an artistic practice.

⁷⁴³ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p.104: 21–4; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp138–40.

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