



Pearson

# **GCE A Level Advanced Art and Design**

**Photography  
Component 1**

**EDMUND**

**Total Mark 76 (61+PS15)**

	<b>AO1 Develop</b>	<b>AO2 Explore and Select</b>	<b>AO3 Record</b>	<b>AO4 Realise</b>	<b>Personal Study</b>
Total out of 18	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
				Total out of 90	<b>76</b>

[→ Back to contents list](#)

## Beginning My Project

My logical start is the exploration of landscape, people (environments) within my trip to CHINA.

The place itself is flawed somewhat, whether it be surreal in context of what we see inside western culture or just surreal for the context regardless of cultural influence.

This suits nicely as I am interested in surreal photography (or just imagery) as well as dark, moody, unending imagery. So, whilst photographing in China, I tried my best to capture everything using multiple exposures for almost every picture to assume to best of each moment.

Here, on the ~~left~~<sup>right</sup> half way through a two day mountain climb, the scene of goats alongside a brooding sky through mountain peaks instantly creates a surreal scene.

My intention was to have the light on the goats whilst the rocks beside remain dark to accentuate their presence, hence that afterwards I used photoshop to burn the rock area a little.



On the right: On the same mountain climb as above image, similar to the goats, I took advantage of the light hitting the tree making it stand out brilliantly against the misty rolling mountains behind. The scene is automatically surreal through the rare beauty of the landscape and use of lighting. Some adjustments made in photoshop - lowering mid tones, burning sky area.

Although there is no particular direction/movement within these photographs - due to being unaware of how each piece would appear - the images provide a good starting point in presenting my interests and styles from capturing an unknown set of locations.

As I am interested in the surreal, the photographs also act as good source material to use for montages / collages possibly inspired by the likes of Jerry Uelsmann.





# Beginning My Project

My logical start is the exploration of landscape, people (environments) within my trip to CHINA.

The place itself is flowing surreal beauty, whether it be surreal in context or the context itself. This suits me well as well as China, for almost all of my work.

Here, the surreal aspects of my work are the surreal that...

On the similar making behind of the photos...

Although due to provide styles. As I go on by the...

Photos taken at this time - The clouds swamping the mountains alongside unusual light made a remarkable atmosphere - These photos are stronger for atmosphere







With this photograph in the Chinese mountains, it is necessary to list my influences for recording such a scene (below)

In this picture, I took advantage of the brooding clouds which were heavily toned using Photoshop to aid the effect of a really dark, atmospheric image.

### Ansel Adams

Adams remains one of the finest landscape photographers and undeniably best mountain photographers

### (Bio:)

Being an only child, solitary both in this and from shyness + 'obscuring' meant he did not 'fit in'. Consequently all of this brought him closer to nature - nearly every day hiking dunes + meandering along Loos Creek.

Alongside Fred Archer, Adams developed the 'Zone system', being a way to determine proper exposure and adjust contrast in the final print.

- resulting with clarity + depth that has characterized his work.

- Adams also founded the f/64\* group alongside Willard van Dyke + Edward Weston

\* - 20th century San Francisco photographers who shared a sharp, carefully framed style, opposing pictorialist styles + promoting modernist aesthetic based on precisely exposed images of natural forms



Mitch Dobrowies a great admirer of Ansel Adams records brilliant landscapes with primary focus on sky of which is almost always stormy. From 'Dobrowies' (skyscapes) I can easily show great ways to enhance the reality of a sky being dramatic (to accentuate the contrast). By looking at the lighter and darker areas of cloud in his pictures it helps to influence my development of attaining my photographs.

### Don McCullin

McCullin is renowned for his War Photography, but since his landscapes are displays of his melancholy and warped emotion influenced by what he saw in Vietnam, Cambodia, Afghanistan, etc - his recordings of landscape are hellish - large spaces of bleak - definite indication of gloom, storm hidden clouds and winter infected fields + trees.

This 'hell-ish' gloom provides an atmosphere that is more striking for me and is importantly something I have undertaken as a large influence on how I capture skies in particular - A slate monochrome sky is far less engaging for me - usually.

I feel McCullin makes us feel the end of the landscapes and either detest or attracts the viewer - This is my attraction to his work, it is ideal for recording places people wouldn't want to be in - almost like battle scenes after the battle has ended.







(both)  
(Photographs taken in Beijing, China.)



(Above image):  
There is a strong divide between the police and citizens in China.  
The combination of the policeman and ordinary citizen made a good image - I enhanced the contrast and burnt the background a little to accentuate the presence of the two figures.

(Bottom image)  
Again, I photographed a policeman - In China you are not permitted to take photos of police or especially military - the judgement on his face provides a tension juxtaposed with the laughing girls beside.  
Although these photographs are in difference to my landscapes in China, I have continued a particular mood and atmosphere.



(to the left):  
There are many temples in China, all do not permit photography of the interiors and shrines, on occasion I managed to capture such photographs. The metallic shrine offers a deep range of tones - I'm pleased with how I recorded the folds and impressive look of the shrine.







← (left):  
 [Mountains in Yunnan  
 (continuation from Page 2)]

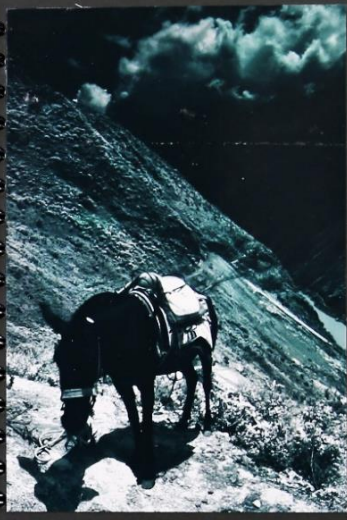
Where the light is coming from one side, my broad high-angle view allowed me to record the right side under shadow also. This is not my best landscape photograph from in the mountains because it is a little busy and the clouds are somewhat flat - a slight high-contrast clarity in the detail of the mountains.




← (left):  
 The light here was not focused on the mountain enough, but the tones in the clouds are deep, yet - (mainly flat in comparison to my photographs) seem alive in the work.



Tibetan photographs can't help but seem to be about something. I noticed in Ansel Adams photos - the effect is the broad focus (filling a range of texture and perspective) - the overall (or extreme) view rocks hit a lot of texture as to how they sit at the top of the image - then is seen across the picture - more interesting.



← (to the left)  
 Horses used for riding through the mountains. In burning the sky area and highlighting contrast, I am pleased with the effect of a darker sky during daytime with the bright white rocks toward the silhouette of the horse - utilizing the environment to make dramatic contrasts.

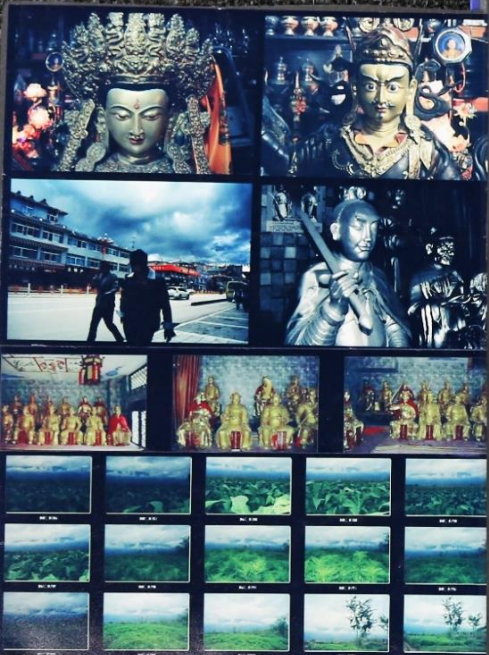


(below)  
 Fields in Yunnan, China



- Using the flash up close to the crops means I can maintain the effect of a dark exposure to bring up all the bases in the skin and background yet have detail within the close-up crops - leaving a certain darkness in the middle of the photographs.

- ~~same~~ A technique I now use often in landscape photos.





(The Dragon Snow Mountain, Kunming, China)  
 From the sunlight sky comprising sharp all details were made especially clear in the morning - the immense mass alongside the pale blue sky contributes to a visual impact.  
 I would be more pleased if I had captured details that looked more together, rather than solely split up clouds.  
 The effect of the clouds, just in front of the peak, adds to the mountain's impressive look.



(Fields in Norfolk)  
 I feel successful in achieving a surreal, brooding atmosphere in 'local fields' - I used a flash to reveal a spotlight on the crops as opposed to a completely lit or completely dark field - the fading light into dark space provides more atmosphere. The reds and blues shining through the stirring clouds at sunset are very effective. I think especially in the film photography. Influence: Don McCullin especially - I wanted to put his moody style of landscapes into color. - In future want to explore more interesting ~~environments~~ environments to complement these sort of skies even more.





↑ Other less successful shots from the shoot on the previous page. You explore for the path being too bright above and too dark in the left - also for the sky looking less dynamic.

For example in this picture (bottom left) Uelmann has extended the image of an ordinary street scene to perhaps reflect a thought of clouds pictures in the mind while in the studio. - He has extended the atmosphere into a more interesting one - we could only achieve from imagination. Can't mention the miniature man on the right. And bottom right: Uelmann proves how using unrelated objects ~~and~~ together can work (here in a) an actor, novel, texture and shape - it is almost for everything is placed to visually please the eye.

**JERRY UELMANN**

Jerry Uelmann is my own mind into 'Surreal Photography'. His clever notion of imagery for the entire picture and after the beauty to have common language, qualitative photographs. So the qualities of them can be image that hints an extension of dreams, impossible textures.



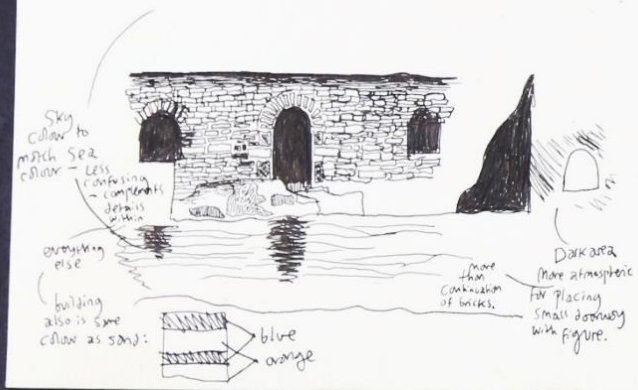
(TURN OVER)

Erhalten - the woman against white sky - the fire against black forest and the mountains in a distance creating interesting context + atmosphere





Another surreal montage attempt but using colour on purpose - this would be less interesting in monochrome - the reds and blues contrast nicely. The emulation of a reflection is a simple enough concept but the fact that the section of the great wall of China now looks just as any old building water is strange - but makes a nice image I think. - the details are intricate and the reflection is believable, though I find the light a little abrupt and prefer atmosphere with this way of work.





What Tom pleased with: the atmosphere - the smooth  
 transitions of tones that are ~~perfectly~~  
 predominantly in the clouds are purposefully mostly  
 but strangely comforting - the effect I've achieved  
 is showing the hell of a storm from a warm space.

What I dislike: The top area of clouds are from  
 a photograph that I took using a high ISO -  
 that is too much grain when the rest of the image  
 holds far more clarity - I would in future  
 record/use a clearer, get still stormy sky.



floor appears as sand on  
 the beach - but is in fact  
 a reflective bathroom floor

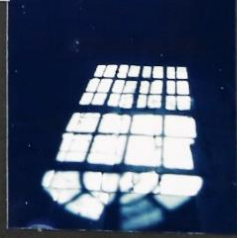
Subtle intricate details can  
 give illusions when just being ordinary  
 surfaces positioned alongside some other  
 photograph - i.e. here: clouds above the bathroom floor  
 looks like a seaside landscape.

Tom intrigued by the idea of the door  
 opening to empty, dramatic landscape and  
 isolated landscape is definitely a theme I  
 wish to explore in more depth.

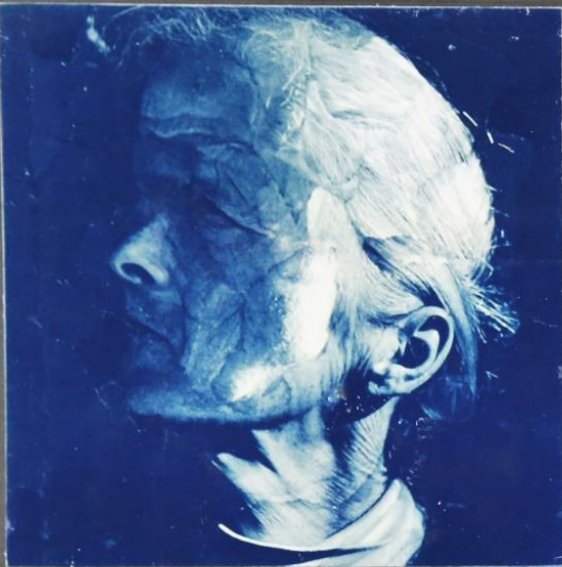


above image: Jerry bellmann - this was the influence for the final image  
 (very top) which is a combination of all the other images on the page  
 (for the wellmann photo). My blinding and selection of photographs does  
 not quite match should with wellmann's image - but reasons why his image  
 is successful are:

this line of light dividing the dark  
 area - he is playing with positive/  
 negative - human silhouette in light  
 and white bird in black - all the parts blend



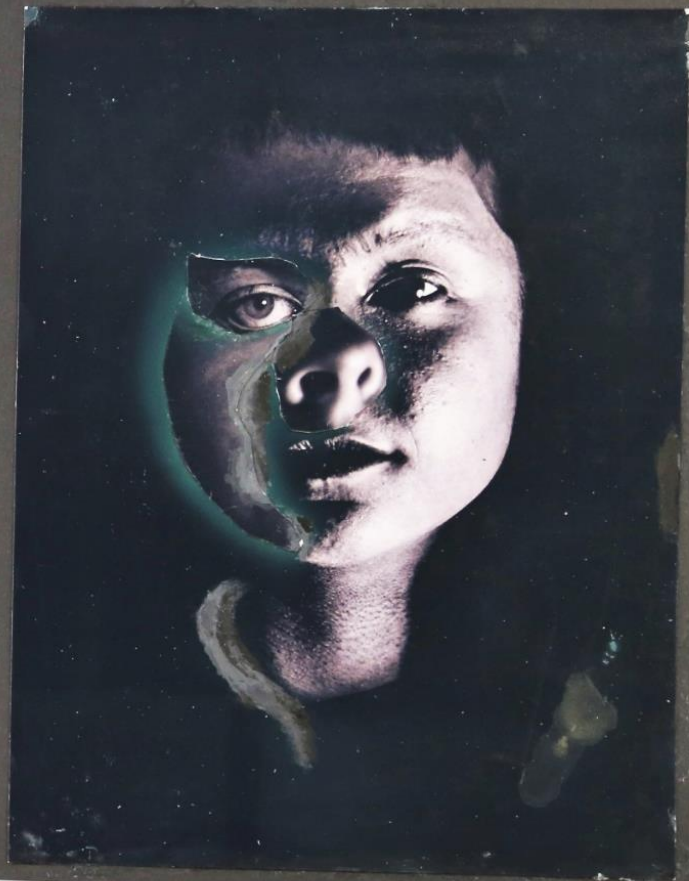
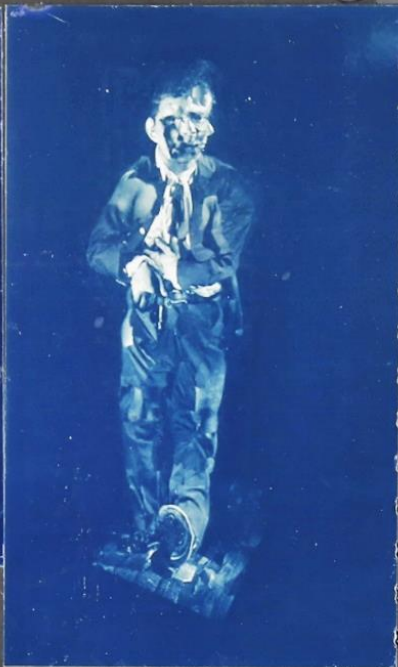




## CHAMBLISS GIOBBI

Giobbi works in the mindset of psychological and physical mutation (obsessive-compulsive) - taking and painting thousands of photographs of his subjects before taping the prints and gluing layer upon layer. Some pieces are first, some with sculpted forms to make 3D surfaces.

He was a prolific music composer of classical music for 15 years - his musical ideas shine through his art that is featured.



Inspired by Giobbi's collage technique and black + white, figuratively distorted approach, I created this. To explore collaging people I decided on working in black and white, not just because Giobbi did, but because it gives me the ability to darken red tones to bring out harsh unseen details of the face [inspiration for this technique taken from Pieter Hugo and Richard Avelon - see next pages for more in depth study] - These terrible looking facial qualities provide further texture and depth for the effect of disproportional separate pieces of different faces being carefully positioned together.

← images used to create the above image (as well as other photos from that shoot).

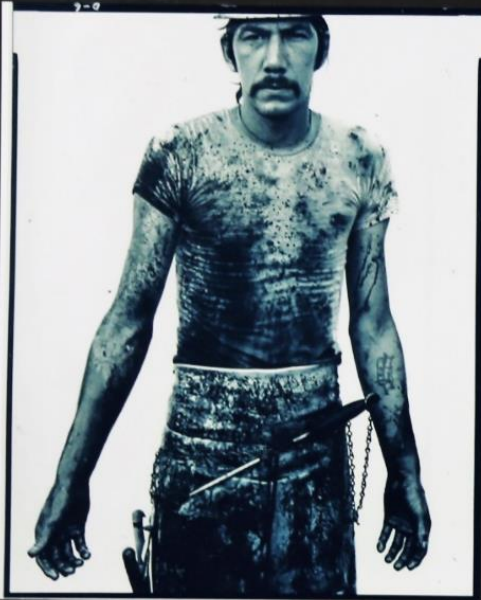


# RICHARD AVEDON

In reference to altering skin so that spots, damage, wrinkles etc are revealed when not seen as such in reality - Avedon rather (in his series of pictures 'American West') captured people with already very obvious signs and affected appearances.

→ Though my direction is to work further from flat portraits (with details made before → ~~adding~~ collaging multiple pictures together, I am assuming original portraits) as they are straightforward striking images.

→ Below: pictures from the 'American West' series.



On the right: →

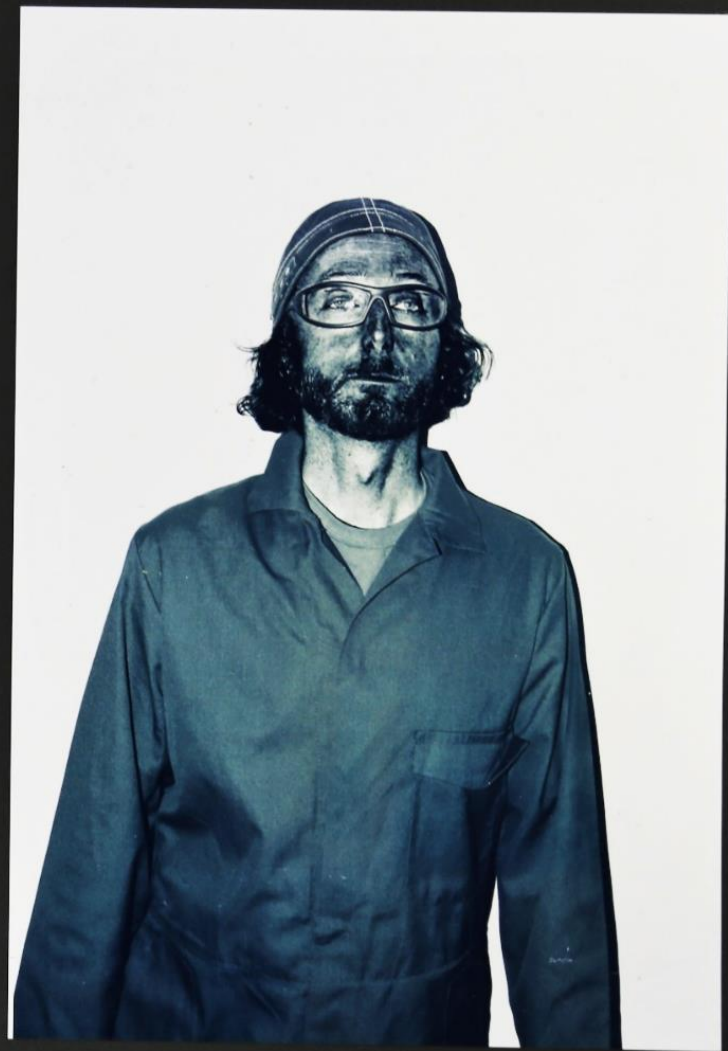
→ On the next few pages I photographed a number of different people, including myself in their natural way and using photoshop, darkened the red tones causing certain details such as skin damage to be revealed and intensified. This is now a project I am to develop in itself, but goes more in depth into a process I am to use in my current developing work - collage.

This in the right is the best image of the shoot as -

- The work outfit is unusual
- The details revealed are ~~more~~ detailed and so the range of tones are varied and appear layered

→ all of these factors against stark white makes quite a striking portrait.

What is unsuccessful:  
unlike in Avedon's 'American West' pictures, my subjects are less striking as they are not covered in blood, holding weapons etc.





# PIETER HUGO

Though I find Richard Avedais portraits more interesting creatively for their brutal realism (weird subjects) and contrasts achieved without the editing Hugo and I are using digitally. I am referencing Hugo as an influence for this technique in editing - darkening the red tones to accentuate and create thick skin effect.

(more layers makes revealed than seen with the naked eye)

← Left:  
by ~~pieter~~ Hugo  
pieter

⊗ bottom:  
by pieter Hugo

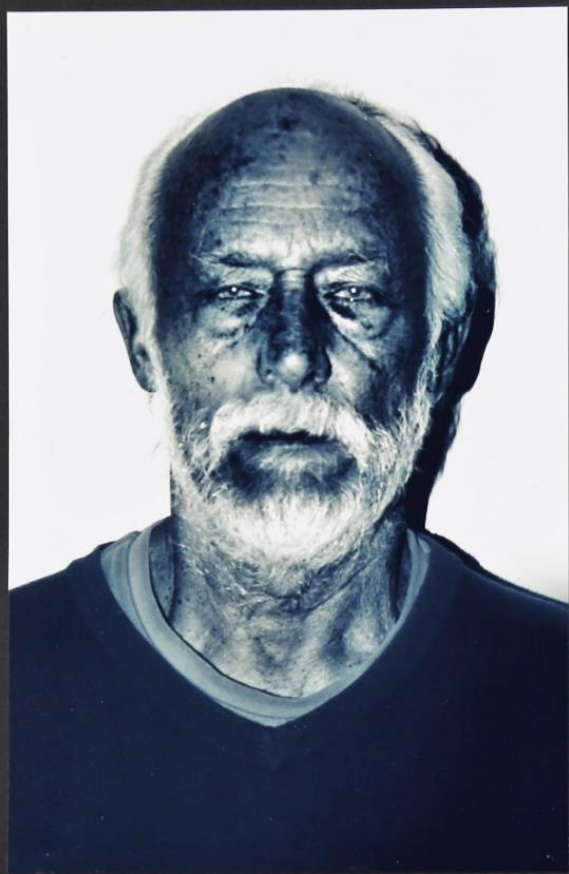
Another of mine →  
- this again demonstrates the effect but as an image it is less interesting as the clothes are more 'ordinary' and the detail revealed is not so clear as my first image.



Why the process? - the effect:

The portraits I have responded to by pieter Hugo are from a series called 'There's a place in Hell for me and my friends'. Converting colour photos to black and white - in process manipulating the colour channels, the pigment (of which I described as 'red tones') is emphasized, exaggerated. The result as I previously described is revealing sun damage and blemishes to be more extreme than in reality. The portraits oppose airbrushed pop-culture beauty whilst also exposing contradictions of racial distinctions based on skin colour.

↳ Although at first glance we may look 'black' or 'white', the components that remain 'active' beneath the surface consist of a much broader spectrum. What superficially appears to divide us is in fact something that we all share, and like these photographs, we are not merely black and white - we are red, yellow, brown and so on; we are all, in fact, coloured. — Aaron Schuman



Why this process for me?

Though Peter Huges racial combinations and show casing of variety in peoples individual skin colours is completely valid and interesting, my interest lies in the disturbing effect and hidden detailing in skin being revealed showing more complicated patterns.

facial qualities within

- My project already establishes my interest and exploration of the surreal, unhearing and dark - this 'side' study series of portraits continues the theme and shows the process I have started to use when making figurative/portrait collages.











Alone: A portrait, using lighting and editing the contrasts to make a complementary portrait to oppose to revealing ugly details - which I find more interesting - Clouds were added in to provide atmosphere and a sense the person is asleep, calm and somewhat clouds.

### Second Collage:

Improvements:  
could have included more indication of a neck, but generally I think it is important in a successful way.

Next steps:  
to camouflage face, but after it to figures, white bodies, still instead by Charabalis Gtobbi.

How shows the result of positioning sections of images taken together in Photoshop - after I joined the individual pieces, cut them out and then applied paint to add and provide further texture (seen on the far right; next page)

I continued to use the technique shown cited previously - of mixing the red face darker to reveal texture in the skin - this collage shows how this is successful - the range of highlights, shadows, pimples, spots, hair, freckles and is engaging to me along with purposefully disparate features made up of more than one person's face







Top right image shows the process of working out where to place the pieces which I separately printed, cut and stuck to result in the collage on the right hand page.

The other photos on this page are some key parts used to make the collage - by taking pictures of myself from multiple angles and sizing parts to non-realistic scales (preparation, a more interesting, unending and "weird" image is created). This technique is definitely taken from Charles GSB though I have used it in many parts at 6.5ft and viewed at a smaller scale - I intend to experimentally work larger scale and with many more photos of one collage - as more textures and uniform, the more depth

The lighting I am using is a continuation of my investigation into Peter Dinklage or Robert Avijan - a flash (initially reveals details and through editing and intensifying the red tones, adding heavy contrast - a clear luminous quality happens - in this image, this luminosity is evident in the shirt and face, the brightest part of the - a result of using flash. The pose of which I assumed in this implies movement through the legs being in a walking position and perhaps arms suggesting pointing from one side to another - for being different body parts, possibly the image really makes questioning











(The photos positioned in Publisher before being printed and assembled amongst collage + paint)

A photograph of a collage positioned large scale (A2)  
 - by working large scale the piece seems to have more impact than when downscaled like here.

In the same way as my previous collage pieces, the multiple cut up parts separately edited to have various and heavy textual details provides further texture in the same way as a drawing with intricate cross-hatching or painting with thickly applied paint does - it is an extension and enhancement of reality - (usually) we wouldn't see a person with so much texture in their face, and never would we see such proportions as I have placed.

As well as creating texture, I am exploring tones within the black and white spectrum and consciously including a wide range of whites to blacks. - e.g. the figure on the far right: the ends of the shirt are light grey, whites and greys as you meet your eyes across the hand is dark grey, black finger tips and the face, a culmination of ever deeper grey.

- by using paint and magazine niters up, I have inspired an environment that merges with the figures to make sense - it makes sense because there is just as much texture as in the figures, and the tones fit around and accentuate the tones of the figures - e.g. the white glow behind the dark fore face on the right.











Here I am continuing from the assembled piece on the previous page

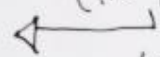
- Subject matter-wise:

Setting an imagined scene and illustrating it through my ability to collect photos of mostly textural, worn surfaces.

I intended to portray a feeling and atmosphere surrounding my ~~experience~~ <sup>experience</sup> and reading on delerium and sickness

- Whilst the environment seems almost heavy, it is light and dreamlike mainly for the limited colour range that spans only across greens and yellows (mainly). - those colours are associated with sickness, nausea and such feelings.

Whereas on my previous pieces, I experimented and placed sections of the collage physically, working the image out on the spot, - this time I arranged pieces on different layers on photoshop...  
(the photoshop version is pictured left)



... before printing the pieces out, cutting and sticking each piece ~~here~~ and assembling as if with a puzzle.

In conclusion, I like the piece for the atmosphere I successfully translated from my head.

I dislike the slight clumsiness that comes with some pieces being too big. Given a second chance, I would perhaps include more smaller cut-outs to add intricacy as well as enlarging the space of the room to impose more drama and impact.

(on left): an extract from 'Crime and Punishment' by Dostoevsky that inspired the 'delerium' theme of the piece.









#### What doesn't work:

The confusion - especially towards the middle and bottom sections, I feel the intensity of so many crops imposes a cluttered sense. The environment is imaginative and only a step away from an existing environment.

In order to evolve my project, I am experimenting with completely different subject matter.

As much as I enjoy including people into my work, I have consistently been primarily attempting to create atmospheres and so see much more potential in achieving this goal by recoding and interpreting the expanse of landscapes (Although I have already explored landscape earlier in this project, I am returning to it after comparing printmaking and figure)

The Process: involves collecting photographs of various landscapes - typically fields that make up my local environment. Similar to on the last page, I assembled cropped sections of my photographs, revealed each one and created an imagined space. It seemed logical to my and imagine an impossible view (without access to extreme height) as well as making crudeness obvious where necessary and including high contrast textual detail across the entire piece.

#### What works:

The physically assembled piece - the extra texture that seems to add an interesting effect but also take away some atmosphere and mood in the flattened original.





Rare moment of light: These pictures document a stunning moment where light broke through  
 a patch in the thick storm clouds. (Alongside my constructed collages, I plan to continue  
 producing straight photographs alongside as both provide just as many good results)  
 — The above picture works well in black and white, providing focus on how the harsh  
 light has picked out certain areas of crops with extreme clarity. The beauty of the light  
 is how the field has been illuminated to become the brightest area, whilst the sky  
 falls back in its darkness of thick cloud.



(Above): Less effective shots from this time. - All of these pictures were taken with a  
 phone camera, having not bought my SLR. The advantage in this situation it  
 seems is that only the strongest pictures really stand out in these other shots,  
 the light had become darker and less intense, so what is left.



(Above): I feel, the best result  
 of this shot - The sky holds  
 immense depth being so dark  
 whilst the light has caught  
 the hay bales and edges of the  
 trees so distinctly that the  
 light almost seems artificial.  
 The contrasting intensity of  
 the light is quite hard  
 to see and accounts for  
 the surreal effect as we  
 are used to seeing a lighter  
 sky and more even casting  
 of sunlight.  
 (left): reference to a painting  
 by Rembrandt - in this Dutch  
 landscape, it seems he also  
 captured this effect of harsh light  
 casting trees on a particular  
 area through the darkness of  
 a storm, focus and attention  
 on particular areas makes for a more  
 interesting + unique image





(Above): photograph by Mitch Dobrowner — who is a contemporary, capturing almost exclusively dramatic stormscapes in California.

— I'm making this reference because Dobrowner brilliantly captures both a sense of vast scale in his landscapes but also the evidence of storms captured at the right moments when light picks out the vast forms and shapes with quick uncontrollable variation between light and dark.



Some less successful pictures — you can see the potential in the lighting and dark storm cloud skyscape. However, the previous images worked far better because the light picked out certain forms with more emphasis, a front-view darkness.



(Above): A photograph I took during my visit in China, I discarded and printed this one black and white, mostly because of the dramatic lighting. Black and white simplifies and allows focus on the distinction between the forms and their varied tones. As with the picture by Dobrowner where the lighting remains just as harsh, yet the atmosphere is much more still and calm — simply for the lack of uncontrollable storm clouds. As said in the previous page, the lighting has allowed particular focus on some trees and the building, the rest remains mostly in darkness, making for a more striking image.





### Tarkovskiy, atmosphere and the emotional landscape

Andrei Tarkovskiy was a cinematographer, but captured many scenes that can be posted to act as great photographs.

As I explore the atmospheres in the landscape, I am marking Tarkovskiy as a huge influence - even the small polaroids above reveal his eye for an expose of silence and space within nature.

The excellence of his visuals is utterly dependent on many elements that I have already been searching for - Unique light, the environment itself and other things such as fog, trees, water, the placement of it all.

Take for example the top image - the still from Nostalgia - The sense of space is massive, the dog and man take from focus on everything that reaches further from the lens becomes more faded behind the fog, enhancing the sense of perspective. The arches at the very back dominate this 'large-ness' - the construction is summed in its scale, emerging from the undergrowth.

I plan to find existing visual elements as such - fog is perfect to hide and reveal the contents of the picture frame.

(Above): top: still from 'Nostalgia' all by Tarkovskiy  
below: polaroids



(Above): Exploring fog - inspired by Tarkovskiy, these pictures are good results in finding a spacious atmosphere. In the top picture, my figure in silhouette rises out of darkness as with the trees behind. Everything centres around the brightest area - the light source - the sun. Fog allows the light to spread and break through objects with little clarity - this is the best aspect for working with perspective - my figure is more defined for being closer to the lens. The bottom image reveals the still water as the focus and behind, the marsh stretches to nowhere, allowing for a feeling of being lost. I believe I found what I was looking for in both these photographs - the aesthetic effects of light and perspective hit also the resultant dark, unknown atmosphere - a lone endless marsh, a silent unknown.





The bottom picture here shows the best view of the sky - the glow of light spreads out perfectly from the middle, descending into darkness at the edges.

The road acts as a simple but effective device for perspective and direction in the picture, even element draws attention to the centre of the image. Although this photograph is less topped in the expanse of landscape, the view still feels completely desolate and bounding. I think this works well as a response to Tolstoy in how nature seems to surround and make solitary - the trees are hidden and unrecognising in darkness, reducing in it seems to the road as the only



(Above): Using different format - this is a good experiment with scale - the ground fades into black with my figure coming out of it - this effect is so simple but quite striking.  
 The idea of the figure standing in silhouette is in response to Tolstoy - specifically the famous still from 'STALKER' (pictured below) As mentioned before, I was trying to capture a sense of large scale and empty space in the landscape, provide a sense of isolation.







The Landscape at night: Above are experiments into this long exposure process. I have previously been exploring the physical atmospheres in the landscape - the observing in certain lights or weather hiding or revealing visual elements. Night photography offers a different exciting process - the result becomes more unknown and spontaneous as until the picture is exposed, the view remains mostly black. In both of these shots I used a bright torch to enhance the lighting - rather than only the sky being lit, the blue light upon the ~~grass~~ crops appear surreal underneath the red/pink sky. These are less exciting as my fog pictures, but show a different potential - continuing to reveal areas of ~~dark~~ light, emerging from a darkness.

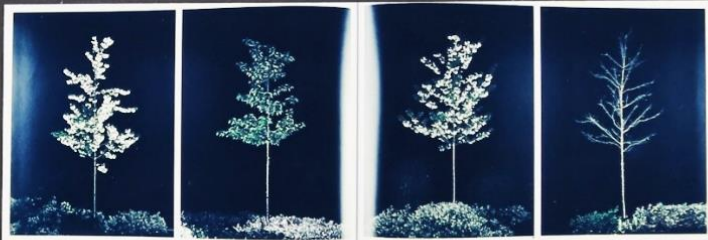


### Sophy Rickett

The photographs on this page are all by Sophy Rickett. I have referenced her photographs because she shows as a inspiration into combining artificial light with the night and the natural environment.

Rickett also explores the drama in what can be revealed contrasting the hidden. - this concept is relevant to as I have also been exploring it.

Photography is all about light - darkness helps to allow choice for the photographer in what can be made distinct - an interesting process beside the unpredictability of natural light.



Rickett effectively makes use of the tripod and sections off the trees as if scientific records to observe, however the harsh artificial light provides a surreal spotlight upon the natural forms, in a beautiful yet troubling way. Her views are enhancements of the real - a vision, baring thought on behalf of what she saw, almost as memories - exaggerations of the real.

The troubling, abandoned atmosphere that I am continually looking for exists in the darkness of the trees - this darkness is emphasised with ~~small~~ light differential light being cast on to the ground and the moonlight giving a haze of blue in the sky. (referring to the bottom tripod)





(On the left) night time long exposures (Above): A photograph by Don Holdsworth from his 'HyperBorea' Series. Although Holdsworth had the advantage of shooting his series in Iceland, my visual intentions were the same for my pictures on the left. Firstly the obscuring of the colours combined with night vision/luminosity in both suggests as a separate reality or even a vision from another planet. — More so in Holdsworth's picture(s), the barren Icelandic terrain isn't far from the moon or other space photographs we have seen, dead, cold rock/earth beneath a luminous sky. In my pictures, I am searching for his phenomenon — a surreal landscape and the unexpected results from the exciting process of shooting long exposure in darkness, and afterwards, seeing the sky.

Luminous ~~from~~



(Above): A close-up, beginning to assemble a collage of collected landscape photographs. Having captured the obscure red glow of the night sky, I figure that if I can't photograph mountainous landscape in reality, I can assemble my desired vision using what I have + imagination + photoshop. — The river is cut from a photograph in China and the rest is built up of cut sections of fields nearby in Norfolk. Each part is rendered to accompany the neighbouring cut-outs, yet this lengthy piece seems worthwhile to prove my vision.





(Above): The Final Colloge  
 (left): Pandemonium - John Martin

Initially setting out influenced by the surreal *surround* in night time sky and the illusion of the landscape being that of an alien planet, I was also conscious of how I wanted the colloge to feel dramatic in scale - the red and black darkness of the sky reminded me of Hell. — leading me on to the reference of 'Pandemonium' by John Martin:

← Martin's visions of the Apocalypse and here pictured, hell are enormous in scale and detail. However, from a distance the shapes and colours seem not far from an abstract work. I aimed to also provide this illusion, I believe I have been quite successful. — When looking closely you can see the grains of earth, the textures of grass, smoke/fog etc, however, the whole piece is tied together by the arrangement of the shapes and colours complimenting each other.











(Above) Continuing in the theme of the last collage - inspired in setting a 'Hell-like' atmosphere. In this one I was trying to interpret an environment of a nightmare - also inspired by a song by Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds entitled 'muddy water' where the lyrics talk about a house ~~near a hill~~ in a valley where the 'muddy waters rising', 'broken farms around me'. The house is bright as a focus beside the dark areas of field cut together. The hill steeply declining is supposed to enhance to the 'all is lost' feeling I have tried to convey. Mostly because there is little variation in the area of land

(this piece is ~~less~~ not so good as the previous)





(Above): Photograph by Bernard Descamps  
(Left): By myself

- This photograph ties well with the previous piece above in the Nightmarish landscape. The photograph is shrouded mostly in darkness with few areas of white, providing no escape. I intended the focus to be in both the gloomy atmosphere as well as the textural differences between the ground and sky. — The earth is gritty and the sky smooth yet heavy, balancing against one another and squashing the form briding in.

The Descamps photo depicts a similarly dark atmosphere with contrasts — I mostly referenced it for the slope, as in my picture the angle is slightly tilted to provide a descending, sinking feeling.





(Above, left): By myself (Above, right): By Don McCullin

In my photograph I used the flash, in order to illuminate the puddle - I like, in landscape photography for there to be 2 focus or at least for the entire view to not be exposed with the same brightness. — The Don McCullin picture is referenced because he has captured the focus on the road, leading out of perspective, as with my puddle. — My picture is not great at all, BUT.. there is much potential in the idea of capturing focus on a path of somewhat leading out of perspective



(Below): A collage — cut ups from all one shoot — there was much variation in the exciting moment of the sky scene, but each photograph was not strong enough individually — assembling them allows me to represent the best parts into one image. — The collage itself though is not my best at all — my imagined, more ambitious scenes are simply more varied and exciting — building mountains + other forms rather than reproducing a flat field.











(TOP): By myself

(bottom, left): By Don McCullin

(bottom right): By Ralf Kuhn

In my photograph - intending to find and capture an 'evocative' landscape given the fallen snow. With the cold weather, the sky during the shoot is perfectly blue, this blue matching the white on the ground triggered my immediate association with ~~the~~ cold weather (my memory of it). In McCullin's picture reinforced, the picture also makes me feel the cold and harshness of the wet environment. - However rather than direct to black and white because McCullin did, I kept the colour because to me it brings depth and intensity that in this situation would be lost if converted to B+W. In my photo and the references, the space is empty, with focus on the withered tree. This simplicity is also effective, the environment is quieter and more atmospheric without crowding.





(left): By Mitch Dobrowner (Below): By myself  
Dobrowner's landscape shows the surreal combination of snow/earth and luminous sky that I was searching for in my own picture below.  
- The snow having evaporated (mostly), provides focus on the remaining areas, whilst the rest sinks back into obscurity. - Whilst I usually rely on the light to pick out certain areas.  
My result is good in wanting to capture a dark, spacious atmosphere  
- the picture would be better given more variation in the sky, such as a glow (as in Dobrowner's) or more variation in the ground area - more risen rocks or masses of earth, but not to disrupt or belittle the spacious quality.







(Above): Painting by Johann Jungblut (left): By myself I like this photograph the (east in this "snow-shoot") the light and view of the road drawing away is effective, but there is much less distraction and focus as in the surrounding photograph.

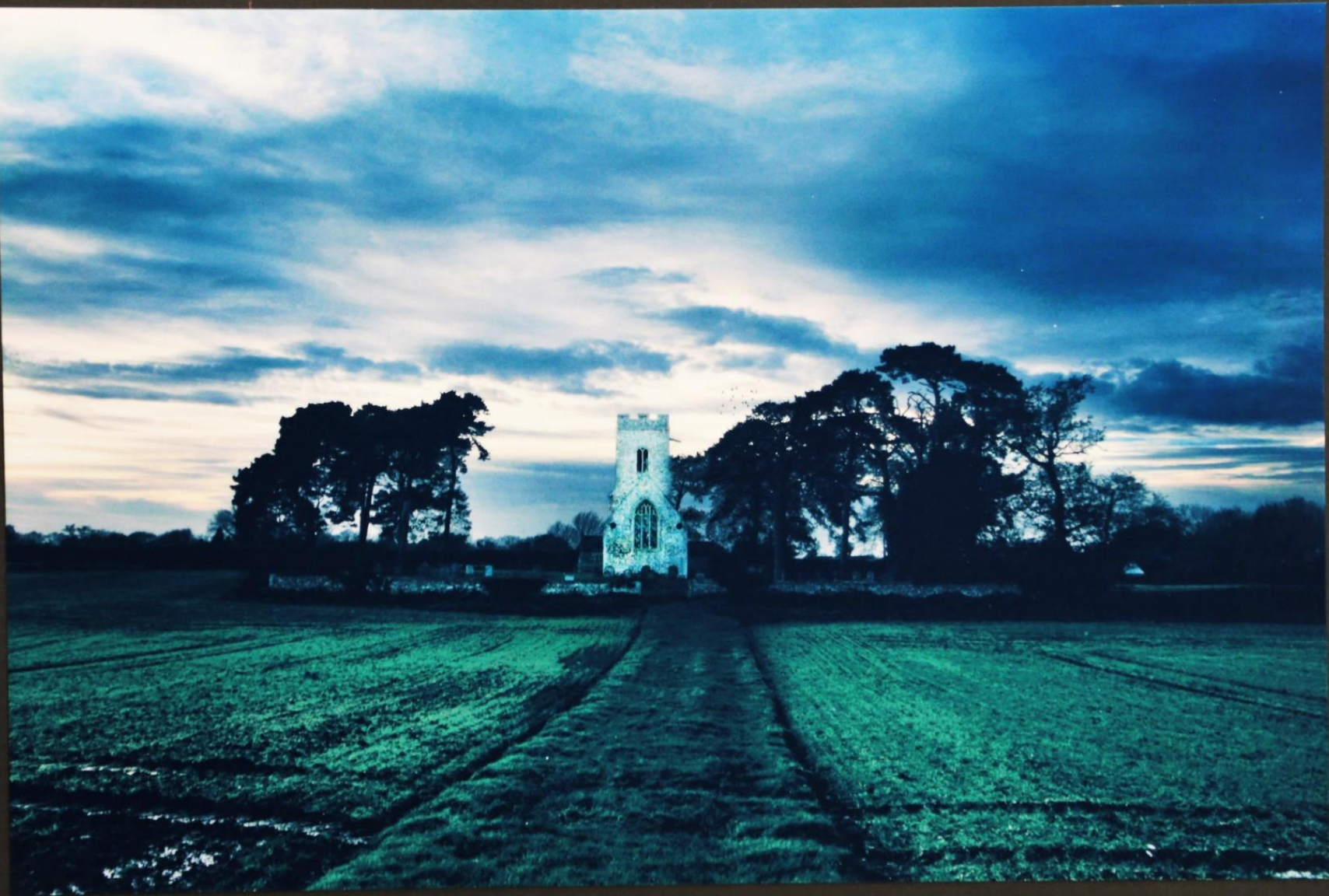
The Jungblut painting is a perfect representation of the atmosphere I am looking for in these - a darkness, with focus cast on a small area of light.

(Below): A good result - through editing the top half of sky was burned to allow the brightest light to shine just behind the tree in contrast with its black-ness and draw attention to its shape - the detail in the branches is impressive.









(Above): Pleased with this one there are nice drifting clouds, setting the dark atmosphere with the sunset light breaking through gaps. While editing this, I brightened the church much more than it was in reality - as with before, I always want a focus in the image and this is it. - The path leading towards it also helps.





(Above, top right): painting by Johann Jungblut  
(Above, bottom right): By Jungjin Lee  
(left): By myself

- Not my finest image - the dodging + burning shows too much - the references show my enjoyment with the visuals of a leading path taking focus with a dense atmosphere surrounding.









(Above, left): By myself  
(left): By myself  
(Above, right): By ~~Thi~~ Felix Thiollier  
Focus on the pool, a hint of light catching it.  
Thiollier captured these intense, brooding landscapes that I strive for  
- I enjoy the pool taking focus beside the sky - it splits a flat landscape up to become much more exciting.









(Above, top): By myself

(Above, left): By myself

(Above, bottom, right): Still from 'The Passion of Anna' - Ingmar Bergman

My top picture is simply focusing on the austere qualities of the tree shapes beside the isolated church, I find, combined with the luminous sky, the atmosphere, very effective - the trees almost foreboding.

The Bergman, referenced for the trees and barren landscape he captured in this film - he found a similar, unsettling atmosphere



(night): stills from  
"The Passion of Anna"  
- Ingmar Bergman

(bottom): by myself

As with the previous image,  
capturing the strange, wretched  
trees hanging above the  
graveyard.

I was trying to capture the  
surreal atmosphere I felt

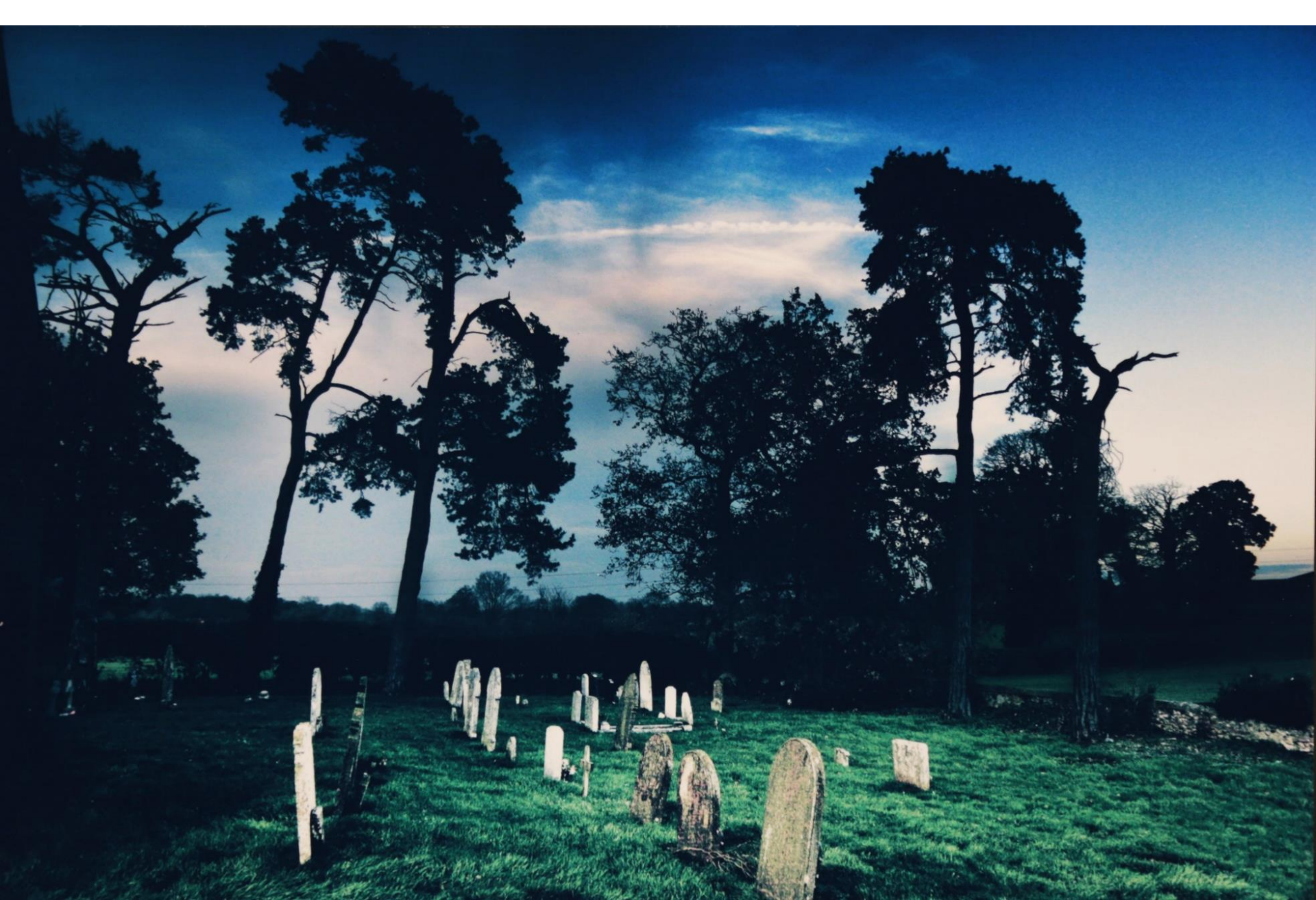
- In editing, the ground  
level is dodged to reveal the  
grave trees - I think they're  
important for the isolated  
sense of the image.

- could have done this a little  
more subtly.

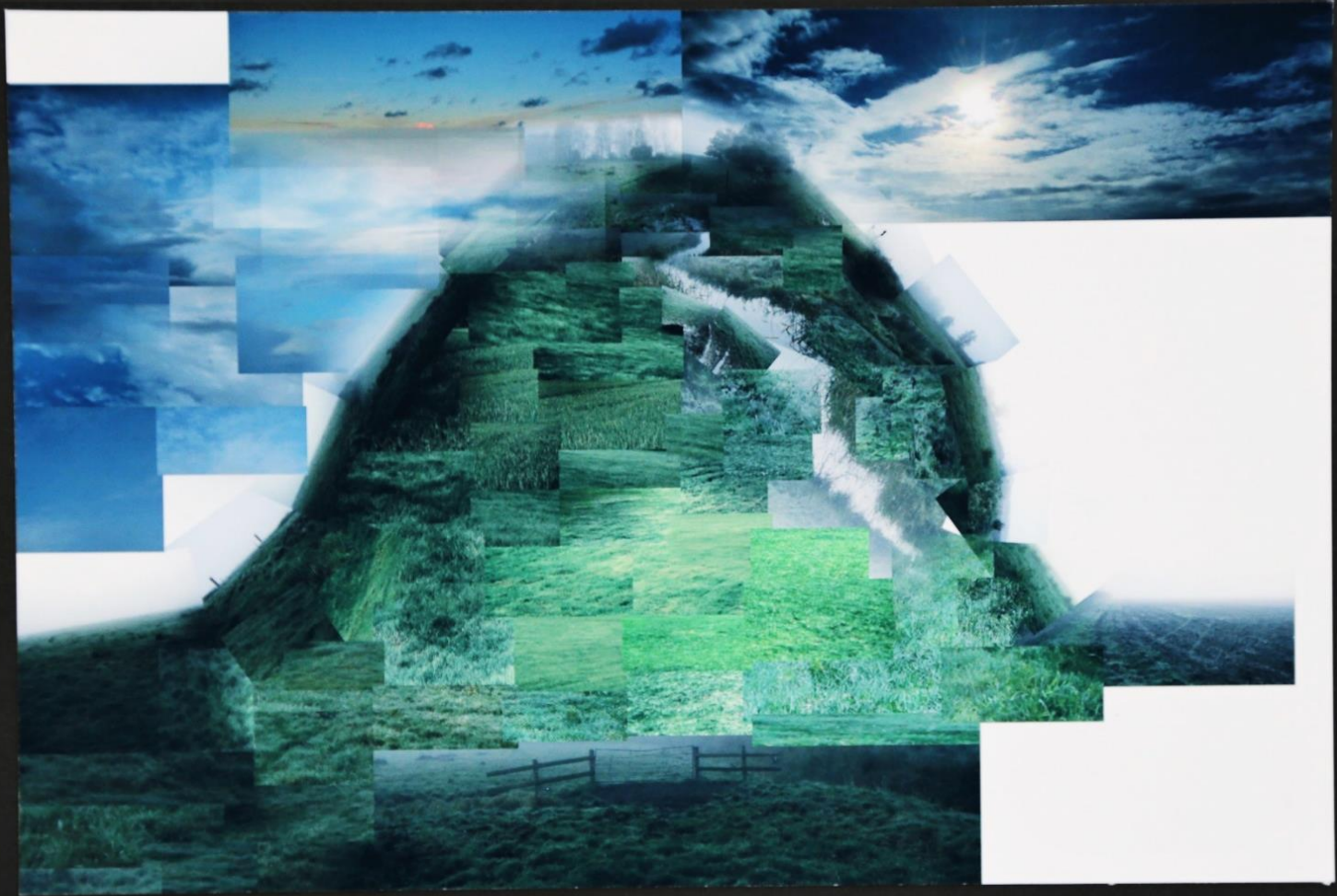
The Bergman stills - provide  
also emphasis on the wretched  
grasses + trees - a barren  
abandoned place, apart from the  
man.











(left): Unfinished, failed collage  
- Using mostly earlier photographs I took in fog,  
I attempted to visualize a hill - my rendition  
here simply looks too unconvincing - I intend  
for marks of assemblage to exist. - the problem  
however is the shape  
- Still, I am intrigued to in future try again -  
better skill might help construct the shape of  
a mountain.





(Above): By Felix Thiollier  
(left): By myself

Thiollier's image provides as a great influence for how he captured a luminosity here - again the writer emerges from dark, and the sky seems imposing, light spreading from the centre.

With my image - I am pleased - There is a definite luminosity - the cloud forms spreading and emerging cast by only the limited morning light.



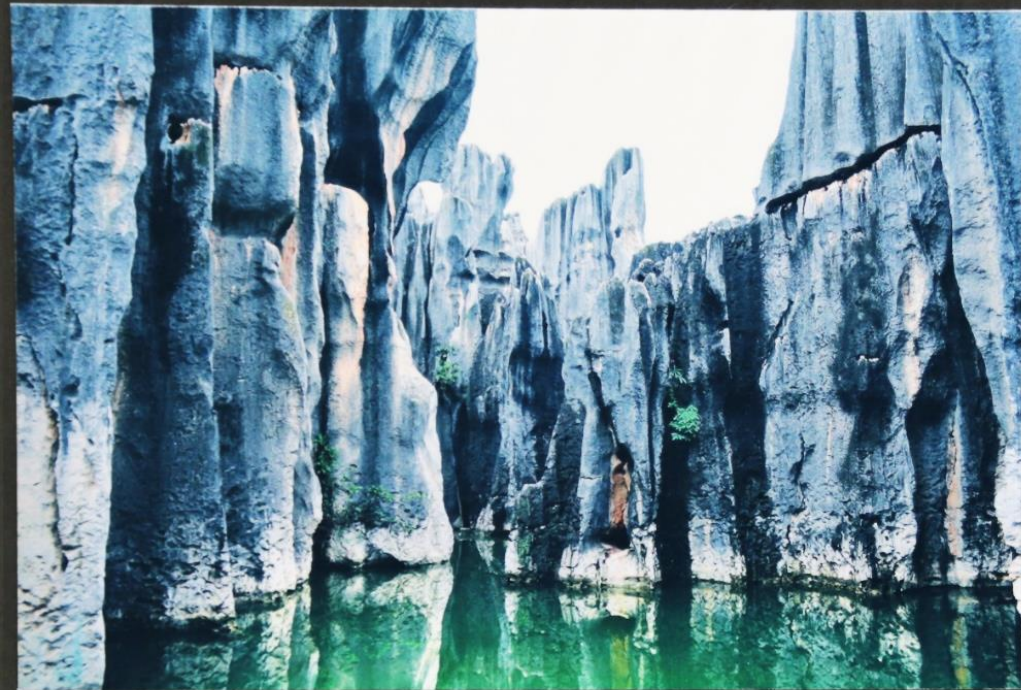


(left): Another photograph from 'The Stone Forest'

(Below): Constructing the mountain - I wanted the piece to remain simple, starting with a very basic abstract shape - initially just leaving the colours as reference for the type of colours I will need to look for to collect from photographs - vesky etc.

The piece becomes a focus on the intricate textures - assembling tiny cut outs from hundreds of pictures of 'The stone forest' - each part is carefully rendered to compliment the neighbouring cut outs.





(Above - left + right): By myself -  
↳ 'The stone forest', China, Yunnan.  
Referencing these pictures mainly as they  
(among many more) were used to be  
cut up for my mountain piece, - beginning  
stages on page below;







(Above, left): By myself - 'The stone forest' from a distance

(Above, right): By Vera Lutter (Egypt series)

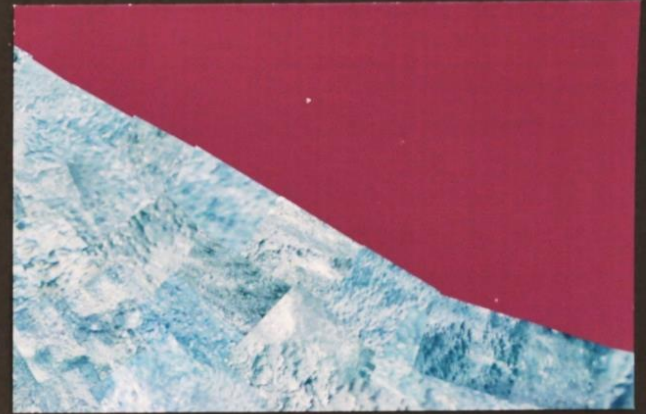
(left, bottom): Closeups of my mountain piece.

Vera Lutter's large scale pinhole showcases the surreal atmosphere and simple focus I intended to convey with my mountain piece. Simply as a negative, the black glowing sky seems automatically surreal behind the already obscure phenomenon - Pyramid.

The distance shot of the stone forest shows the scale of detail in the mass of rocks that I wanted to reinterpret in my mountain.

The closeups show importance of the detail in the piece - the intentional marks of the cut points revealing the handwork in my assemblage - as appear the cloonly, smoothly merging it all which I feel would appear far less interesting.





(left): The final result  
- The sky was left flat red to maintain  
a strange surrealism - & impossible  
reality.





(left): Still from 'Come and see' by Elem Klimov  
In league with Tarkovsky, this film documents war  
with stunningly stark views of Russian landscape,  
this still is a good example of fog in the film.

(Above, left + right): Big myself - good sense of  
movement in the skies. The night hand images - used  
flash to reveal some of the crops rather than the bottom  
half remaining black and less interesting.





(Above, night): Polaroid by Tarkovsky  
- sharing excellent record of fog as a  
perfect way to set a lost ~~and~~  
sensors atmosphere.

(left): by myself - capturing a unique  
moment where the sky was tinted red and  
blue with powerful luminosity, also  
spreading across the field nicely.









(Above/top, left + right): stills from 'Nostalgia' - Tarkovsky - these stills are again stunningly atmospheric, the rolling flat landscape with a spreading of fog splits up the elements within the picture frame - the closest forms revealed most.

(left): by myself - capturing morning fog across a field - the fog was not as intense as I would've liked - as in Tarkovsky's shots. However in the distance, it has hidden the trees well beneath the effectively bright, sparse sky.









(Above) (top, left) ~~photo~~ - By Don McCullin  
(Above, top right) - By Felix Thiollier  
(left): By myself - Inspired massively  
by both McCullin and Thiollier's images  
of industrial sites - I set to photograph  
this sugar beet factory  
Although my photograph is far less gritty,  
including far less smoke than in the  
reference's, the intense brooding story in  
combination is still very striking.  
The success in McCullin's image in  
particular is how the light has caught  
the fence and how the smoke swamps  
the sky - displaying a industry hell  
for the silhouette heading towards.





(left): A farm yard - continuously inspired by especially Don McCullin to capture a ~~dark~~ dark gritty hell in landscape, I have done quite well here - also managing to capture how the light has picked out certain elements brightly, juxtaposing a swamp of dark.



(left): Another view of the sugar beet factory - there are good textures in the area of foliage at the bottom - the grass plain seems almost ready for a warzone, it's so dead and behind exists the gloom of the factory and smoke.  
The dark claustrophobia in this picture works very well - by this I mean there are only hints of brightness - the heavy clouds weigh down allowing little escape.  
Chance of





(left): Tinted editing - the blues were pushed dark and the red/yellows very bright as an attempt to immitate ~~infrared~~ infrared. - Apart from some slight distortion - the effect has worked very well. - This enhances the sharp light that cast on the foliage at the time, providing more than just the real scene, but an enhancement - more dreamlike or as a recollection of the view in 2 memory.

(Below)(right): Photographs by Chris Friel. - Using a tilt shift lens to create manual distortion - Friel also provides character and atmosphere that I am trying to achieve - a sense of movement rather than a quick snapshot - time - the experience of the environment too.



(Above): 120 film enlargement - the  
tree shapes stand out nicely as does the  
water, drifting away from the lens.

A good attempt to capture this stark  
scene, but experimenting with comparing  
the quality of film - working nicely as  
a comparison.







Simply, this picture presents striking light in this moment - without much sitting, the light was already this focused. Against the dark sky, the trees in white seem ghostly and definitely surreal. The reflection also makes this image



(Above): film enlargements - experimenting with burning and attempting to display the sky dark and the trees bright) - this has not worked, but my intentions are evident





(left): A very effective shimmering atmosphere as a result of the sunset light - In the wood, the splits between trees allow interesting effects with light as certain areas are blocked.  
The fence provides a good sense of perspective.

(Below, right): Photographs by Clyde Butcher: These pictures by Butcher are perfect examples in capturing a filter, luminous light, - the variation in tones is enormous but spread smoothly across the detailed environment.  
In my photograph, I was aiming to emulate Butcher's great luminosity.



(Above): 35 mm enlargement - A striking tree shape.







(Above, right): By Don McCullin

(left): By myself


-recording a low, but harsh light, splitting through the trees. I've done quite well to capture the sense of space, quiet atmosphere - w/ the area of clearing etc.

McCullin's image captures the wood as a dark net of textures above a very luminous pool of water. - nice contrast between.





(Above, left): By myself - 12x enlargement

(Above, right (2 images)): By Jungjin Lee - Having referenced Lee before, he presents an original approach to simplifying, abstracting the landscape. In my enlargement, I was trying to bring focus to the textures of the trees in this way. Lee's photographs focus on the basic elements and clever compositions, allowing space to breathe for atmosphere. →  ← trees on right, big space on left





(Above, left): By myself, 35mm scan

(Above, right): By Adam Fuss — As a way to experiment in my project, I have burnt + washed areas of my film — the result is interesting with the holes painting strange textures. Fuss shows how film can be approached in many ways — in this case he had printed the developer, I believe, hence the blurring on the edges — helps focus on the middle.







(left): Exploration of the split light and intricate textures - this works well for how the sections of light illuminates small areas beside darkness inbetween.





(Above) (left): 35 mm scan

(Above, right): By Peter Hoffman. - Hoffman burns areas of his pictures as statements on corruption of the environment.

This particular image is from his series on oil spills - the bubbled areas certainly appear as a chemical reaction. The effect has worked quite well in my own image - there should be more distortion however.



(Above; right) - By Dan McCullin  
(Left): By myself

When editing this image I was instantly reminded of this McCullin image. — the white ground separates the thick darkness between the trees and sky and each contrast to emphasise one another. — (the light + dark)





(left): By Jung jin Lee, (Above, left+right): By myself - 35 mm enlargements  
The warping and distortion from burning the negatives shows mostly on the right -  
suggesting wind or some other moving texture. - the effect is good but the image  
itself is too plain.

Lee's image shows how the silhouette of trees can look very striking, of  
course according to its shape and surroundings - the strip of water is just  
enough to bring us into a sense of the environment.



(Above, right): By Felix Thiollier  
(left): By myself — This is one of my best results — the light brings excellent clarity upon the straight trees, against the ~~dark~~ swirling dark sky behind. — Thiollier reminds always how to best recast the brooding landscape. — Allowing space to breathe — something that my picture lacks — could be even better given some empty land on left + right.





(left): 'The Black Sun' - By Ansel Adams  
(right): Skills from 'The Virgin Spring' - Ingmar Bergman  
- The Black Sun is a great example of a dramatic, yet slightly surreal image - Adams clearly knew how to perfectly capture the elements in this picture - the branch in silhouette, the slightly inverted sun, the light picking out the stream.  
Bergman also displays how to effectively capture a strange and desolate atmosphere, focus on the tree against the sparse plain behind.





(left): By myself (right): By Clyde Butcher

Butcher's picture is extremely original, each element is divided — the textures in the ground, the hovering cloud and then the luminous sky + moon.

In my image I captured the harsh light well — ~~providing~~ picking out the details in the branches with a strange brightness — the paleeness was helped through slightly imitating infrared in photoshop — bright reds/yellows, dark blues.





(left)+(right): 35mm + 120 scans  
Continuing to explore burning textures  
- I feel although these are interesting, they  
don't inspire me greatly to develop  
the process - The rules are too obvious



(left): By ~~me~~ myself - 120 scan (right): By Clyde Butcher  
Butcher influencing on how to capture luminous light and across a  
breadth of space. My scan has worked well - the light picks out  
trunks distinctly and the contrast of colours oranges and blues seems  
surreal.





(Above, right): By Bill Brandt  
(left): By myself — taking advantage of the light and imitating infrared in order to bring the view of the field to a otherworldly vision — the field is so pale and the sky so dark and luminous, that the landscape could almost be of another planet.  
Brandt shows how the landscape can be simple, drawing attention simply to the way light is catching the rocks against the glow of the sky.



(Above, right): By Chris Friel  
(left): By myself

Friel presents my intentions for my image  
— a simplified view, drawing focus on texture  
of the water under sky.  
— I have done quite well — the strip of water  
shines out of the black and the sky is powerful.  
The crows also make Friel's image excellent  
— the natural neon greens.





(Above, right): still from 'The Sacrifice'  
- Andrei Tarkovsky

(left): by myself  
Tarkovsky here captures the movement and  
violence of the fire beside the still atmospheric  
(noir) scene. In my image I wanted to capture  
the violence and movement of the wind - the reeds  
are blown viscerally against the bright in water.  
There is good movement in the storm clouds.



(left): A good shot involving the wind textures - would've been better I feel with a little light picking out the tree shapes - in black they sink back too much.





(Above, right) : By Chris Friel - A good example of a harsh light picking out the shapes leading away in perspective.

(left): 35mm enlargement - foiled experiment to distress the negative



Very pleased with this shot - The crisp light has brought the trees on a stark whiteness. beside the mass of light, the shadow at the bottom and river leaving every help to provide variation.

-The reference on the page below to Tokarsky's silvery trees represents a similar atmosphere - the paleness feels comforting as opposed to the mass of darkness in most woods.





(Above): 120 enlargement. (right): stills from 'Ivan's Childhood' - Tarkovsky.

It's good to compare the same shot in digital and film - the film has nice qualities here, but I prefer the intensity in the digital - the light is much more striking.

Tarkovsky's stills are perfect examples of trees as the environment to quiet atmosphere





(left): A close up of the film scans on the previous page - to show the great atmosphere between the warm dark spaces, the sometimes quality of the grain.



120 film scans (shot on Mamiya RB67) - In color this image gains many qualities - I chose to film this because I live with for different reasons - the "orange/brown" against the cyan of the sky looks beautiful, so does the muted white/grey/brown against deep blue - in each the quality of grain in the film has helped to fill the atmosphere - I can feel the wave of space and time fall back in the distance - the grain is like breathing air, relaxing.



This came out better in color, rather than always perceiving scenes in black and white. - The blue is effective against the strong class shapes. The light has cut through quite strongly on the clouds.





### THE ENDING PATH

(Above, right): By Don McCullin

(left): By myself - my final straight  
photograph as a very good summary of the  
atmospheres and environments I have  
been constantly exploring - the thick snow  
with the hard light cutting through  
and the path providing some of perspective.



McCullin



ME

same effect  
with the surroundings allowing the path to  
stand out.



(reference to a good shot from in the snow)

(Above): Beginning the final piece - my project in summer has explored the emotional, atmospheric and dramatic landscape in many forms. My collages have often looked as very striking 'summaries' of an environment and my vision for a surrealistic, dark landscape.

Returning to draw from one of my favorite shots from much earlier in snow - in the Second Journal. - The imagery of snow is both calm and unsettling for me - I enjoy the combination of colours also - blue + white.





Why a mountain?

(left): By Ansel Adams

- Simply this photograph proves how powerful the visual of the mountain are. Throughout my project I search to find an environment that I can never reach - a vision far greater planet or even Iceland or a mountain itself. The rigid structure of the mountain form is automatically dramatic.



(left): screenshots during marking the image - I chose to keep a darker background with a glow - emphasizing the shape of the mountain which was drawn digitally.

Each small square of snow was cut out from my 159 pictures of snow, each cut out rendered to compliment its neighbouring cut outs. I worked first on the texture of the snow and how it fades to darkness toward the edges.





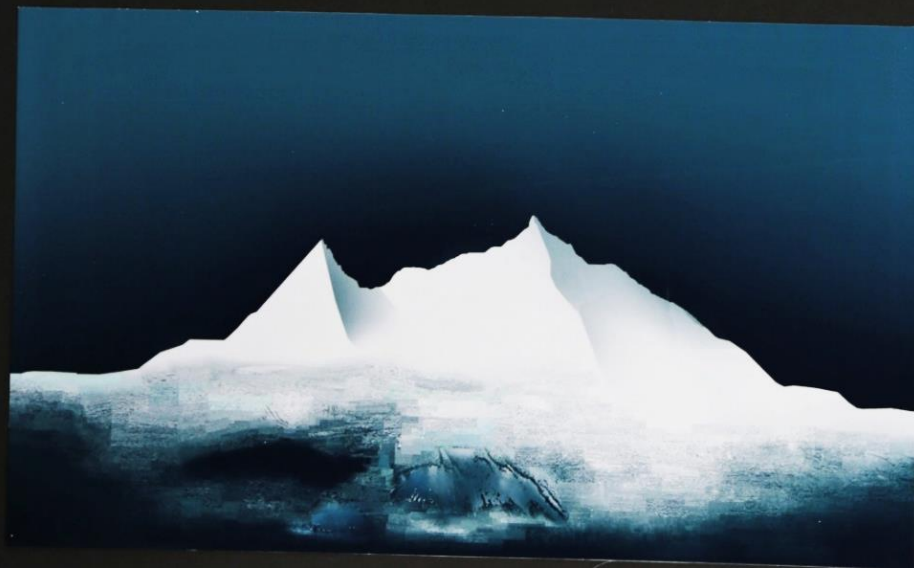


(left): By Ansel Adams - in this long exposure, Adams' photograph seems very surreal - the areas of snow nearest the camera are almost digitalised. The distortion I believe as a result of moving light upon the crevices.

Through rendering my cutouts of snow, I want to have this slightly 'digitalised' appearance - for the viewer to be on real but processed from the real. - The closeup above displays the detail, hence why I intend for the piece to be printed large scale.



(bottom page, below): The final image - A surreal, snow mountainous, vision. I think it is a perfect assumption of the surreal, dark atmosphere I have constantly been exploring, as well as on focus on texture, light and form.









An exploration of how emotion and the surreal is conveyed in traditional, realistic landscape compared to digitally constructed landscape

Landscapes and weather offering natural visuals, such as fog and mist, define our typical thoughts on atmospheric imagery. What I am exploring is a manifestation of this: mysterious floating fog, brooding skies and more, offer an observation beyond just the stated word. A summarisation of my photography is my search for specific moments that reflect my personal feelings and that capture my interests in the constant visual changes in weather and its effect on surroundings, lighting and skies. Rather than settling for a simple grey sky, along a few pretty trees I am more critical, choosing for example a specific times of day where darkness lingers or when light pierces fog. Though importantly there is experimentation too in my search as, without planning, I find new locations and settings all the time.

Guiding my attempt to transpose imagination into photography are of course a range of other photographers, who prove what has already been possible in their visual quests.

Don McCullin

Claustrophobia, pressures of life and darkness from within are examples of some of the emotionally driven feelings occurring in the minds of people. These feelings are often revealed in artistic imagery and consequently they can then act as a therapeutic medium. Photographs of landscapes in their most stormy, unwelcoming states can certainly translate as a metaphor for a distressed mind.

Separately from the imagination, one can so often experience the spontaneous, seemingly 'surreal' pictorial moments that nature offers. Such moments are seen in infinite variations all over the world. Commonly known phenomenon's of nature's visuals include the Northern Lights and anywhere between those neon colours to the gloomy storms of Britain or California, USA. Consequently, when even a flat field, at a very specific moment in time has the potential to look just as impressive as Aurora Borealis, this means nature offers a constantly unpredictable palette just as photography can be unpredictable by default.

For all the sunny images and the immediately associated happiness drawn from such photographed landscapes, I believe it is equally, perhaps even more vital, to utilize the landscape as a visual metaphor for deeper emotions and more complex moods.

Don McCullin's personal ordeals and darker side centre on a burden of endless nightmares in recalling his experiences as a war photographer and having experiencing the deepest hatreds and confrontations of mankind. Describing war as '*partly madness but mostly insanity*' it is hard to disagree with this when learning his stories involve weeks surrounded by solid killing, seeing bodies trampled by tank tracks into tarmac, a Syrian hospital containing a single nurse incapably managing mentally ill children strapped to beds whilst

wimming in their own excrement in the midst of battle and African boys being skinned alive and murdered for the sake of blood lusting mercenaries.



(Above, left: 'A Dead North Vietnamese Soldier, The Battle of Hue', 1968 - Don McCullin)



(Above, right: 'Dead man. Congo, 1966 - Don McCullin')

Having witnessed a lifetime of such blood spilling, his landscape photographs consequently reveal prominent echoes of his tormented memory. McCullin's '*form of heaven*' is the English landscape as a subject providing darkness's to reflect all stretches of his emotion. Thankfully, in this later stage of his career, no life-lost eyes now stare and draw an unforgettable guilt from the compassionate Don McCullin, but still haunted, his landscape photography involves constant reminders. Sounds of chainsaws remind him '*a tree is dying*' and pheasant shootings remind him '*there's going to be blood somewhere*'.



### West Hartlepool, England (1963) - Don McCullin



(above: West Hartlepool, England (1963) - Don McCullin)

The thick smoke blots and blocks most of the sky view and nothing about the factory smog shows remorse to let in the sun. Chimneys, pumping away with smoke, pollute the landscape at large. Atmosphere is an obvious, but key quality to this Hartlepool scene, it strikes me most of all, how stunningly thick with darkness the scene is. Notice, too, the limited areas of bright white, that nevertheless draws the eye to the fallen fence and to the sun glowing, almost hopelessly, through the sky. There is just enough to keep the range of light exciting and to accentuate the vast contrasting dark space.

The 'atmosphere' is further created through the layers of mist and smog causing the chimneys and silos to fade away. With the off-centre silhouette figure striding into the space, there is no clue beyond a certain point where he is headed – how much further does the industrial hell stretch?

Capturing the light shining upon the fallen fence makes all the difference to this image, not only does it vary the tones seen in the picture, but it gives a sense of time and place – it does seem without knowing the title of the photograph that it was taken during sunrise, when the sky can remain fairly dark but the sun's light hits certain areas to create more interesting visual effects than achieved in full light of the daytime. This quality proves the fact of being in the right place at the right time is key to achieving a unique result. Even so, there is real evidence of McCullin's great skill with the camera here – particularly in terms of the thoughtful composition. Rather than simply taking the picture from the centre of the road (seen on the left side), perhaps with the man walking down the middle,

McCullin ensures that he takes advantage of every detail available, the road, the fallen fence, the intensely bleak muddy plain of landscape and the factories occupying the sky. The silhouette of the man is noticeably the darkest tone in the picture, yet despite being surrounded by darkness he is visible and we are left with a sense of him walking into an even more depressive darkness shrouded in smog.

### Andrei Tarkovsky

Primarily a cinematographer, Tarkovsky works with the moving image. However, his films always contain long, silent, almost still moments utterly dependant on creating an atmosphere. One can pause moments in his films to find stills that prove as immensely powerful pieces of photography. His huge panoramic views of the Russian landscape in all seasons are reminiscent of renaissance frescos, stark yet nostalgic backgrounds. He does not attempt to reveal the world around him in an ordinarily conventional way expected in pop culture film or photography, instead he reveals his understanding of the essence of life through his personal experience and embodies these emotional scenes into his cast and lens. Although Tarkovsky relates his emotions to his visuals, the atmospheres and scenes are constantly interchanging allowing the viewer to often find their own connections and inspirations – an effect I hope to create through my photography.

Examples of existential themes lie in his film 'Stalker' in which there is little



intellectual confrontation – in fact Tarkovsky made a conscious effort to '*focus attention almost wholly on the image itself and avoid entertaining or surprising the spectator*'.

(left: still from 'Stalker' – Andrei Tarkovsky)



Elements of Cinema, 152). In this sense the visuals are centred on escaping a dystopian urban environment into 'the Zone'. The film is based on the novel 'Solaris' by Stanislaw Lem : in which the characters discuss the use of numerous alien devices discovered in 'the Zone' finding human objects reclaimed by nature, 'the divine other'. In 'Stalker' Tarkovsky strips the imagery down even further, as opposed to scattering artefacts there are hints at decaying human traces, pylons and underground rooms, but always becoming absorbed by nature. The internal is bleeding with the external and most importantly, creating a mirror into the human soul as a conduit based on faith, as man and god.

'The Zone' can be seen as an Eden, and is thus representative of the original home of humanity. If, then, as Tarkovsky claims: 'The Zone doesn't symbolise anything, any more than anything else does in my films: *the zone is a zone, it's life, and as he makes his way across it a man may break down or he may come through.*'

Tarkovsky purposefully captures fog, water, hazy sunset light or large space to create atmosphere. As a result the viewer clearly relates or understands, without explanation, that there is an atmosphere because these natural wonders are all typical visual associations.



(Above: still from 'Stalker' – Andrei Tarkovsky)

Instantly the above image tells there is something wrong: the man appears possibly dead or at least not in a functional state lying in the water. However, there is a sense of calm, that is reminiscent of a memorable but hazy moment in a dream. The dog is in silhouette and a perfectly black one against white amongst the rippling of the water. Without knowing exactly why the dog subconsciously gives me the impression of a symbol, a poetic

importance seems to drift with it. A dog is known as man's companion and it remains near the man perhaps for this reason looking out for him with a sense of care and so this could be the only possibly comforting aspect to the scene, but it could simply be wandering past with no sympathy at all

The image does not feel unconventional, but is obvious how Tarkovsky placed the man against the lightest area of the water, where the sun is hitting. Although the original scene in the film is in fact in colour, the still, reduced to black and white, seems to consequently have more effect for how it is stripped down to the monochrome tones: the silhouette is enhanced and the atmosphere feels cold. Added to this the idea that the water is cold for the man is heightened by his crippled frown and huddled position. Furthermore, the water, although calm at this moment, could it eventually wash the incapacitated man away? The composition of the scene reveals no sky and although the light upon the water proves the fact the scene is outdoors, the atmosphere does in result feel somewhat claustrophobic. Also the walls surrounding the water remind us that this stretch of water exists within an urban environment, adding to some questionability as to what the man's story really is, where he came from, especially if one had seen this still without context of the film.

### Construction and the Surreal

Alongside a search in emotional response, through the available aesthetics of nature, there is a point beyond editing the reality where multiple separate images can be cropped and assembled using photoshop or scissors and glue to build desired scenery from the imagination using elements of the recorded environment. As opposed to a more open discovery involving searching reality for a surreal or emotionally reflective view, this process is completely dissimilar in how it involves an almost entirely self-directed approach.

Although this area of my project focuses primarily on building a desired image, I feel that because Vera Lutter works beyond an 'ordinary method' with her photography, she half invents a separate reality in her realm of pinhole negatives. Lutter's large scale pinholes are instantly intriguing to me for their immense detail. This results from her capturing moving life using storage containers, essentially as enormous pinhole cameras. However, the other immediately obvious quality is a simple but brilliantly surreal effect of leaving her pinhole images as negatives. Considering that her subject matter would probably not appear very obscure if captured with an ordinary SLR, Lutter utilises her surrounding space in a clever way to provide unusually scaled views rarely seen in photography. Similarly, given that she works with inverted tones, it's clear she understands how to successfully work within this 'restriction'.





(Above: Chephren and Cheops Pyramids, Giza: April 12, 2010 – Vera Lutter)

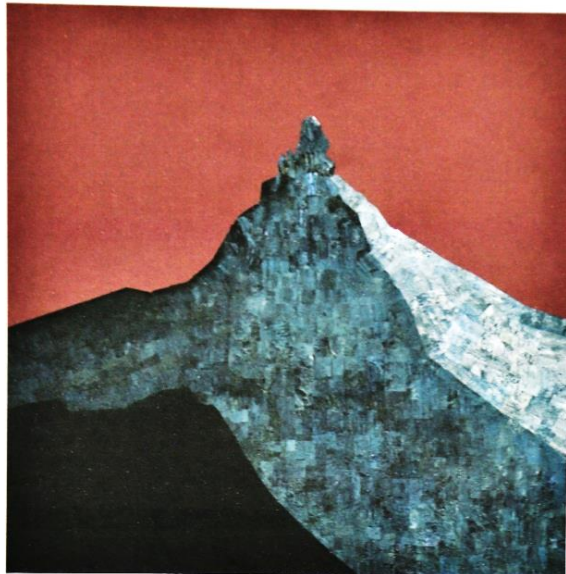
In this photograph from her series in Egypt, Lutter, without manipulation, transforms a recognizable scene into a view that seems as if from another planet in space. Even though the Egyptian pyramids remain as odd phenomena, wonders of the earth, now surrounded by Alien myth and paranormal U.F.O activity, Lutter gives the illusion of the scene becoming an enhancement of the 'alien'. This effect being the simplistic result of inverted tones causing the sky to become black, and the sand bright white, all fading in circular a shape to the sides making it seem to me that we are viewing the focus of the image through a viewfinder on a military camera from a science fiction film of the past.



(Above – detail)

**An abstracted reproduction of a natural form, made of natural elements rendered digitally:**

Above I present a piece of my own, a large scale Photoshop collage made from tiny cut outs of pictures taken of 'The stone forest', Yunnan, China. Added to the slow digital process of cutting a section, adjusting its contrasts and colour values according to the neighbouring cut outs and repeating, when constructing this mountain shape I also tried very hard to emulate the intricate handwork and fine brush marks that a painter would make. Resulting in a visual enhancement, this offers a different image to seeing the real rock formations in a mountain. By intention, the overall shape and palette is simple, almost abstract and the



(Above – Mountain, by myself)

grey tones merge when observing from a distance. However, upon closer inspection you can find hundreds of crevices and textures in the rocks. This is certainly one element of the success of this piece, the second is the achievement of an unnatural, and digital surrealistic feeling, largely because of how the crudely collaged shapes assume the mountain as well as the flat red background. In reality, the sky is never one colour and rarely a deep red. Juxtaposed against the colour, the textures in the mountain are allowed to really stand out. This effect was partly influenced by the referenced Vera Lutter photograph on the previous page – a simplification or adjustment to the sky sets an immediate atmosphere and in both of these examples it is otherworldly.

**Conclusion**

My study provides insight into my interests surrounding my project; the relationship between human emotion and nature channelled through the visuals of all things from the violence of storms to a serene snowscape. Throughout, I have centred on specific atmospheres and most importantly I have sought to find irregular visual moments. I have drawn a parallel between an invented reality, a vision of the mind through the possibilities of technology and the unique moments of light and weather within the inconstant landscape.