



Open College of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Peter Walker	Student number	514508
Course/Unit	C&N	Assignment	5
Type of tutorial (eg video/audio/written)	Notes for Hangouts		

NOTES FOR TUTORIAL

At first viewing I struggle to find a narrative here. This looks like a random collection of small plastic figures in sand without meaning or narrative. There is a diver which may represent you (I understand you are a scuba diver) and an old man carrying suitcases in the centre which may indicate a kind of self portrait surrounded by various identities or commitments of life: tourist, expatriate, parent, friend, employee etc.

We can discuss what you intended to communicate and whether your intention works. How narrative photography expresses meaning. Personal resonances are not enough. Photography is also about communication and sharing an idea or insight.

The figures are quite generic in their representation of identity and you need to be careful in arranging them. This feels too overwhelming because you have tried to throw too much information together in one place.

You say in your text that these represent influences in your life. But this problem of their being generic means that the influences on your life are pretty much the same as the influences on everyone's life: parents, friends, romantic relationships and work colleagues. It is too general. This is why no final statement or intent, narrative or subject matter can be interpreted.

A single photo is an unlikely vehicle for everything that has influenced you in your life up until now! Just think of how big your life is and how small a photo is! You need specific events, scenes, memories that are telling but you have attempted the epic.

Using these HO railway figures made sense in a previous assignment precisely because it reflected a childhood memory with the toys associated with that time of life. Here you are using the same toy figures to represent your whole adult life, so you are breaking the connection between the signifier (toy) and signified (subject matter).

Visually the image feels too tightly cropped without a deep enough background.

Some of your other images, with focus nailed on the diver feel more communicative". The shots of the single figures are nice too, helping to emphasise the expressive detail of the figurines.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

The point about Nicky Bird's work is to show how valued or devalued these mementos have become. It changes the relationship we have with photos. And at the same time she conjures a "portrait" of an identity that is lost in the past.

Did you do any research into narrative photography or set-ups like this? The reflection suggests a thin level of preparation and little critical reflection on whether this image really works or not.

You write about Barthes notion of anchor and relays with reference to titles and pictures. "Capturing a life in HO gauge" suggests what to you? You are telling the viewer what you are trying to do and how to read the image.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Summarize how you have applied what you've learned from the course to your assignment photographs. Also note down what you've learned from other photographers in executing the assignment.

Check your writing is not getting mangled by a spelling checker or auto-speller. Clarify this: "In previous posts, I have talked about what initial the individual elements stand for to me personally..." What do you mean by "what initial the individual elements stand for...?"

Suggested reading/viewing

I reckon it's time to reflect on what kind of photographer you are. What do you want to do next? What projects do you naturally gravitate towards? What sort of photography? If you can answer these questions you will be in a better place to start consolidating your place in photography and making a consistent project, which is what you should be aiming at.

Summary

Strengths	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technically this is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communicating a narrative or subject.What is this about? And how to express that visually.

Congratulations on finishing the course!

Tutor name	Robert Enoch
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