



Open
College
of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Michael Franklin	Student number	517401
Course/Unit	IAP	Assignment number	3
Type of tutorial	Audio-Visual		

Overall Comments

In preparation for level 2 I asked Michael to make notes of our meeting as well. Below are his notes, along with my comments added where needed in italics.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

David and I discussed the six images I submitted for this assignment. In view of the coronavirus lockdown I chose the mirrors option and produced a series of images exploring my perception of my role in my community (family). One of the photographers whose work I had looked at as part of my research was Francesca Woodman and David commented that he was pleased that I had not tried to emulate her work and that the images I had produced were a reflection of my thoughts about myself rather than trying to emulate work such as Woodman's. We discussed at some length the how relevant it is to look at the work of a young American woman in her late teens/early twenties when I am a middle-aged European male. The conclusion was that whilst it is worthwhile exploring her work and her story, it is questionable how relevant they are to most students studying photography with the OCA. *(David: The conversation was quite extended but this reflects the overall thread of thinking, the core of which was thinking about the role of the artist in a reading of their work. There is something quite different in how a female young artist working in the 1970s in the US might regard their work than how it is both looked at by a 50-something British man in 2020 and in how that latter photographer might make their own work. For clarity, the same could be said if you were to spend a long time reviewing the work of a photographer such as Henri Cartier-Bresson. The context in which work is made is relevant to an interpretation of what the artist*

may have intended, although I should add the caveat that there are no rules and as such, nothing telling a viewer that they should attempt to read an image as intended by the artist.)

David commented that he liked the edit and the altering of landscape and portrait images, but he did point out some technical issues that I will go back and look at. In the image Provider he suggested reviewing the exposure as some of the clouds were blown (*David: this may or may not be necessary, my advice was to go and look and tweak, then print out tests both ways and decide which works*) and in Informed and Love he felt that the white balance might need tweaking. David also pointed out that the black borders around the images were not consistent and that some appeared thicker than others. This led to a discussion about presenting the images on my blog and possibly experimenting with changing the background colour, to a light grey if possible. We also went on to discuss how to present the images for digital assessment and in particular how the titles/text should be presented. This was a useful observation as it gives me plenty of time to consider how best to present the images, as for previous modules I have submitted printed images. (*David: with the caveat that it is still a valuable exercise to print your work for your own records and to help you see how they can work as physical objects*).

In discussing the practical difficulties of producing self-portraits, David mentioned the that using a cable release might overcome some of these and it also has the advantage of serving as a signifier to the viewer. This is not something I had considered when working on this assignment, however, I had come across when watching the documentary, *The B-side: Elsa Dorfman's Portrait Photography* and is something I will consider for any future self-portrait projects. (*David: This only works if you make sure the cable is visible to the viewer, a point I feel I should make as infrared remotes are very common now*)

After discussing the images I submitted for the assignment, David went on to talk about a test image that I shot and did not use but had included in my learning log. The image is of myself standing in a semi-rural landscape with my back to the camera. I explained my reasons for not including it as part of the assignment; the image was not in line with my original concept and so I felt the messaging was unclear. David advised that he thought it was interesting, fitted within a tradition of figures in landscape images and was something that might be worth developing, possibly for a future assignment. David suggested I look at the work of Casper David Friedrich and look at the painting *Mr & Mrs Andrews* by Thomas Gainsborough. He also suggested looking at the work of Susan Trangmar and her work *Untitled Landscapes 1985*. David commented that developing a knowledge of photographers, painters and other artists was an important part of developing one's practice and this would be more evident at level two. (*David: yes, I thought the image in question had a lot of potential that, whilst you may not grasp it yet, could prove very interesting as a basis for a later series.*)

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

(David: the exercises online looked fine, but I have a note that there were some holes in part 2 that you agreed to look at)

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

I raised with David a comment from the feedback from a previous assignment about critical studies research as I was unsure of what this meant. David explained that there were primarily two elements to this, first when writing about work and if there is something about it that you particularly like, or dislike, it is important to write why that is. The second point was related to our earlier discussion about developing a greater knowledge of practitioners and previous work in order to be able to place individual pieces of work within a wider context.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

David mentioned two books that were a good starting point when writing critical studies research *Photography: A Critical Introduction* by Liz Wells and *Photography: The Key Concepts* by David Bate.

As discussed, for figures in the landscape in contemporary photography see Susan Trangmar and also Helen Sear.

We discussed briefly the New Topographics exhibition and, whilst not relevant for this assignment, is worth you familiarising yourself with it.

Tutor name	David Wyatt
Date	1/6/20
Next assignment due	17/7/20