

The background is an abstract, textured composition. It features a large, dark green area on the right side, which transitions into a lighter green and then into a vibrant purple and pink area on the left. The texture is grainy and organic, resembling a close-up of a natural surface or a microscopic view. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement.

# Origins

Photography 2024

BA(Hons) Photography  
2024

# Origins

# Foreword

Dr. Duncan Cook

*Senior Lecturer Photography*

The BA (Hons) Photography course at Cardiff School of Art and Design encompasses a broad range of approaches to contemporary photography, facilitating individual student projects and nurturing their emerging concerns. Students are expected to actively engage with the potential of the creative, conceptual, communicative and narrative dimensions of the photographic image.

The three-year programme, taught within the dynamic context of an interdisciplinary environment, allows students to learn within the wider community of art and design practice offered by the School

The projects presented by our graduating students this summer span a wide range of conceptual strategies in image-making that reflect the ever-changing landscape of photography and creative lens-based practice today.

Each student has developed a self-directed body of work that expresses their own particular vision, meditating on, personal narratives and cultural histories, our relationship to the environment, as well as some of the most pressing socio-economic issues affecting UK society, such as housing, the erosion of the high street and the challenges in the social care system.

We are delighted with the achievements of our students this year and the production of the work for this year's Summer Show sees our students completing ambitious and engaging personal projects. Our students have demonstrated creativity and criticality, asserting the important role that the photographic image has in our culture to produce a unique series of projects for this exhibition.

*Cardiff School of Art & Design*  
BA (Hons) Photography

Jessica Belcher  
Holly Blain  
Megan Challis  
Deborah Cumming  
Ellie Darwin  
Krystle Davies  
Pippa French  
Perran Jack  
Robert Kelson  
AJ Laurent  
Emily Fung Yee Tsang  
Lucy Webb  
Olwuaifisayo Jennifer Williams



*@jessmayphotos*

# Jessica Belcher



Through Jessica Belcher's photographic practice, she strives to portray the relationships between a perception of self and the act of inserting oneself into a space. This stems from her personal journey, self-acceptance and understanding of how she interacts with her own environment.

Her scenes consist of isolated, disguised beings presented through self-portraiture.

Surrealism is the key medium in which she works, allowing her to experiment with the unusual to pave a hidden narrative to be depicted by the audience. She strives to portray surreal figures that resemble such feelings of alienation and individualism, this is done using disguises to alter human presence. Imposter syndrome is a key component prevalent in her work shown through using desolate back-drops to accentuate a subject.



# Alien

The structure of my exhibition follows on from my photobook project titled Ephemeral. The meanings behind this project stem from imposter syndrome and feelings of isolation. The new title of *'Alien'* felt fitting for my project as I wanted to portray the topic of social anxiety as a physical being. The aesthetics of my photographs are surreal, using textures and fabric in urban settings that stand out and contrast against the background.

I work with self-portraiture, disguising myself in these fabrics to create uncanny figures, the purpose of which is to portray insecurity and a lack of confidence about inserting yourself into a setting. My work plays with the idiom of 'sticking out like a sore thumb', placing the highly noticeable within everyday situations. Contrast and colour play a vital role throughout my works to accentuate the out of place individual.





*@pictureby.holly*

# Holly Blain



As a nature and landscape photographer, I'm passionate about the beauty of trees and forests, capturing their serenity and quietness. My images invite viewers to immerse themselves in their timeless beauty and boundless diversity. My photography aims to evoke our profound connection to forests, reminding us that beneath its tranquil surface there is an urgent need to protect our fragile natural world.

Using traditional and modern techniques I aim to capture the essence of the forest. Drawing from personal experience, I've witnessed how immersing oneself in the forest provides solace, reduces stress, and promotes mental wellness.

My work serves as a call to action, fostering appreciation for the vital role of trees in sustaining life and advocating for greater integration of nature into our lives.



## roots

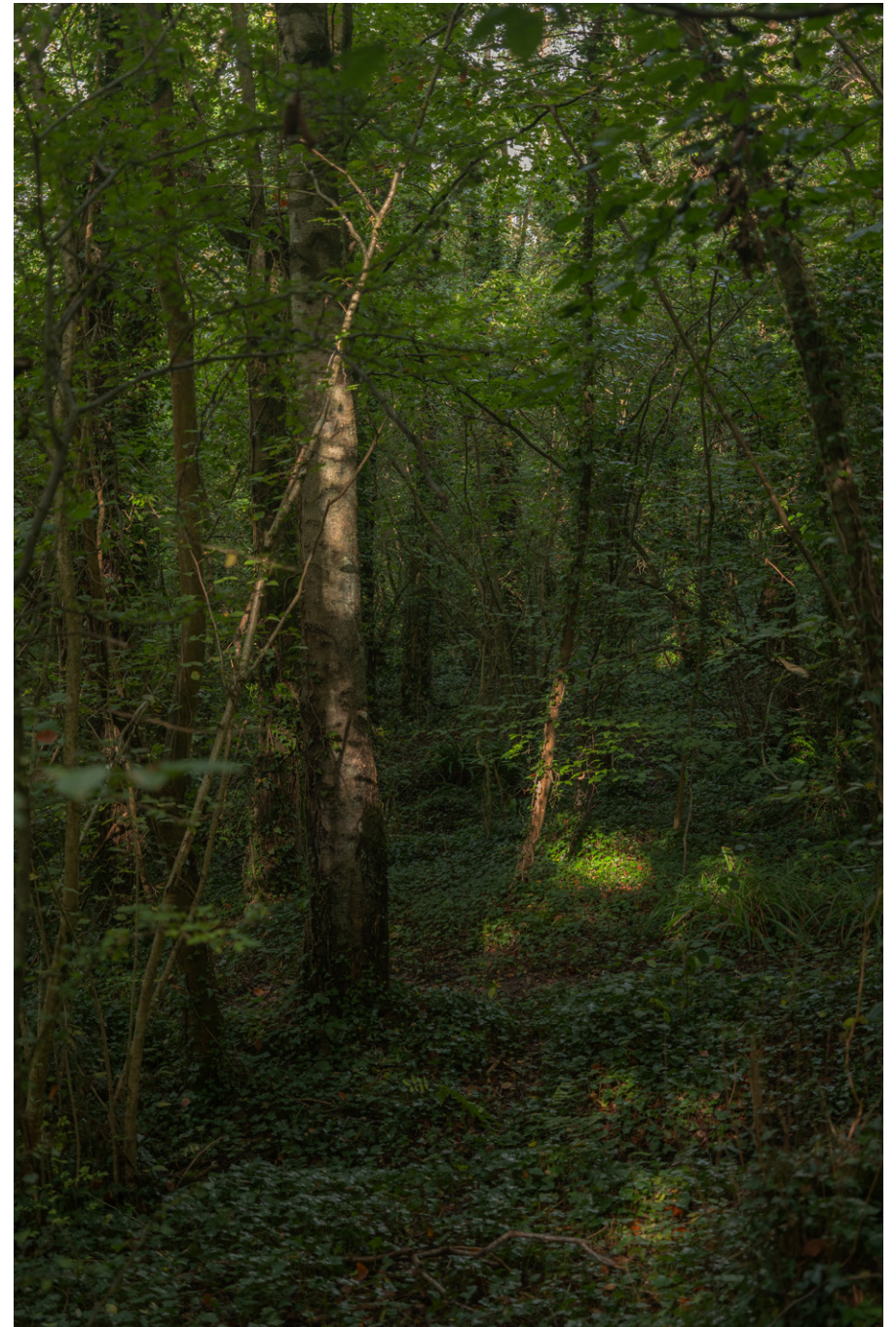
This project implies that there is growth to be done personally as well as there being a continuous connection between mental health and the benefits of being in an outdoor environment.

This photographic series explores my personal connection with nature documented through the exploration of specific places within a forest. Historically Japanese culture use forests as a place of calmness known as ‘forest

bathing’. This ritual has influenced the aesthetic style of my work.

In this work I have used long exposures to capture my presence within the forest, to connect with what I would consider a safe space that has continuously been a place of serenity.

The quietness of these places is reflected through subtleness of light falling between the trees in an evergreen forest.







*@photosbymeg30*

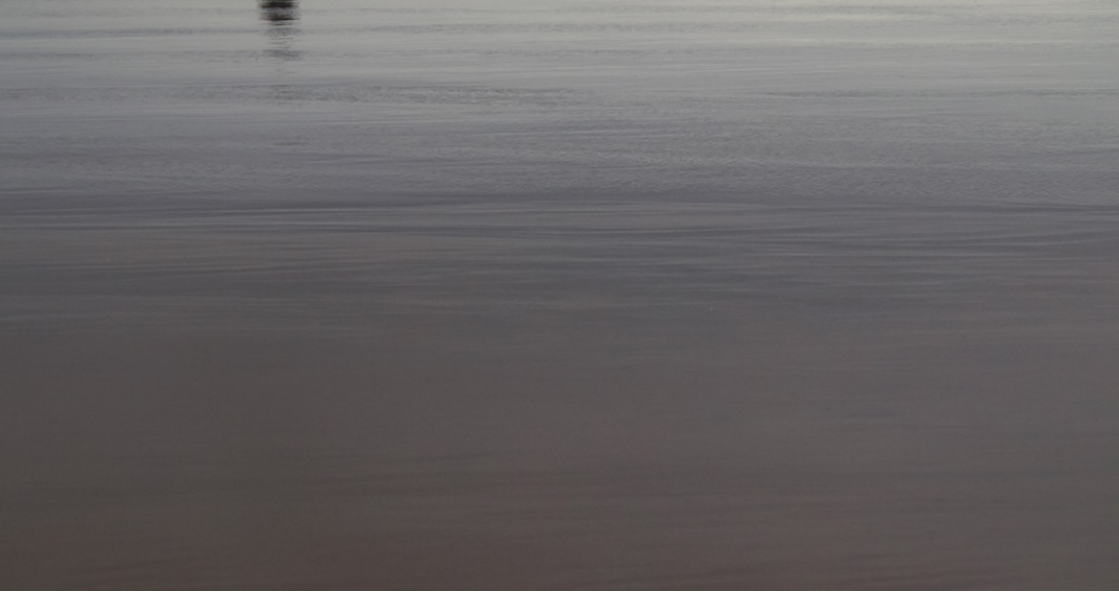
# Megan Challis



My photography aims to create a dialogue between portraits and images of the environment. My recent projects explore the parallels between men's mental health and the mysterious depths of the ocean. By capturing the ever-changing nature of the sea, I draw attention to the unseen struggles faced by men dealing with their mental well-being. The oceans vastness mirrors the complexity of the male psyche, its current, and its hidden depths reflecting

emotional struggles. From tranquil seascapes to destructive waves, each image alludes to strength and vulnerability.

Highlighting these parallels, I aim to challenge stereotypes and encourage conversations about men's mental health. My art strives to promote an openness and understanding, nurturing healing and resilience for those navigating the uncharted waters of their own mental well-being.



## “I don’t like the sea, because I can’t control it”

The title of this work comes from a male friend of mine. The quote itself resonated with me as a metaphor for men’s emotions. The ocean can reflect how emotions change and vary depending on what is going on in life. On a stormy day, the waves are larger, similar to how emotions can heighten during challenging times.

This series of six portraits and three seascapes depict six males who are close to me, alongside

three seascapes. When viewing the portraits become distorted behind the seascapes, highlighting how emotions too can become distorted and confusing to deal with. This project aims to bring awareness and open conversations about the overlooked topic of men’s mental health.

For further research on men’s mental health, I recommend visiting [helpu.org.uk](http://helpu.org.uk)





*@deborah\_lisa\_cumming.portfolio*  
*debsphotography383753489.wordpress.com*

# Deborah Cumming



Deborah Cumming's photography has developed in recent years by taking her out of her comfort zone and assisting her in establishing who she is as a photographer and what she aims to communicate through her image-making.

Working primarily in digital photography her recent bodies of work explore her own physical and mental growth, by blending images of self-portraiture, archival images, food, nature, daily routines, hours at the gym and intimate

domestic spaces. She seeks to examine her familial connections, personal memories and family history, working with archives photographs and landscapes she uses post-production techniques of overlaying images.

Her photography draws on aspects of her life experience, the issues she faces and how she is growing and changing her life to make her stronger.



## Breaking Down Barriers

This project chronicles my year-long journey of mental and physical growth. Recently, I began visiting the gym and returned to therapy, aiming to foster a more positive, happy life and change my negative habits. The project features photographs documenting my daily routines, including gym visits, home life and meals alongside self-portraits and landscapes from my regular walks.

Throughout the challenges depicted, my personal trainer has been instrumental in my progress, providing training and nutritional guidance. Her insight into my journey is highlighted within my photobook project. This personal project exposes my vulnerability and highlights the personal growth I have made. It represents a significant step towards better mental and physical well-being, reflecting my dedication to personal improvement.

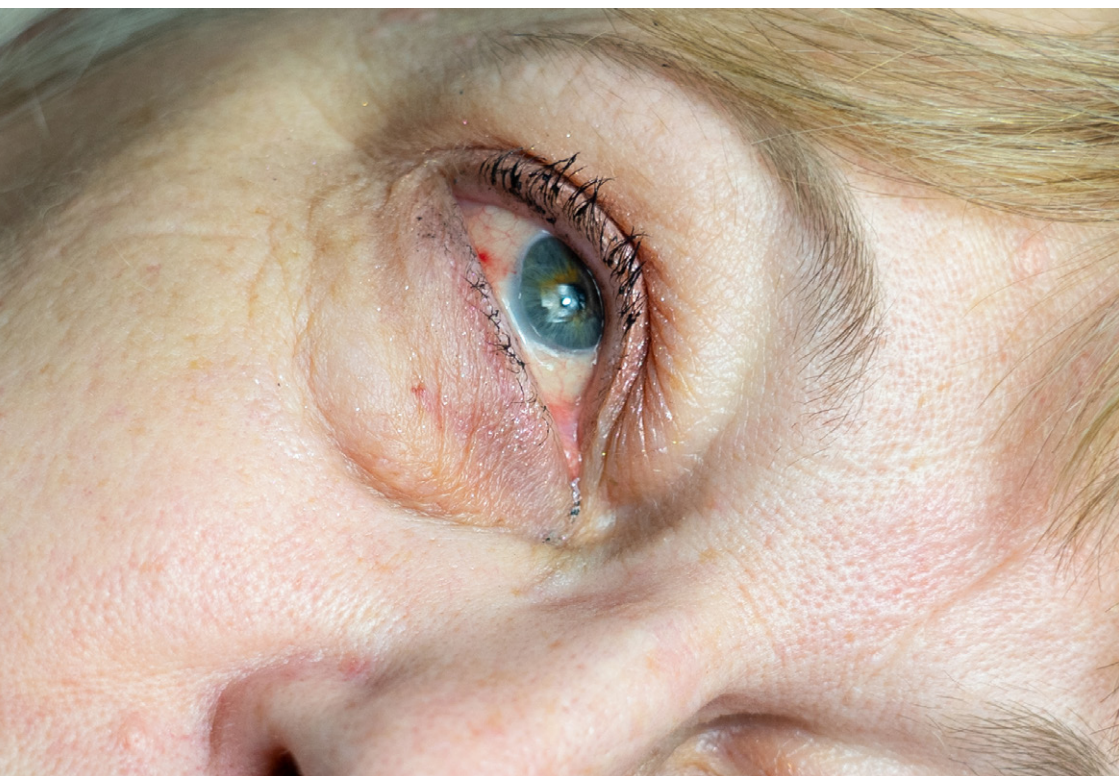




*@eleanordarwen*

*eleanordarwen.myportfolio.com*

# Ellie Darwin



Ellie, a portrait photographer based in Cardiff, Wales, created her photographic journey after leaving her hometown of Worcester. Her passion for photography led her to pursue a BA(Honours) in Photography at Cardiff Metropolitan University, where she refined her craft. Ellie has collaborated with fashion students to capture their designs and worked closely with actors to produce head shots that help with their careers.

Yet, above all, Ellie finds true happiness in creating work that has a narrative and meaning. She's looking for moments that make you feel something, whether it's happiness, sadness, or vulnerability. Looking back at her own life, she finds herself inspired to create work, that others will relate to. She wants to be the voice for those who can't say anything. She wants her audience to know that they aren't alone in this world, no matter how scary it seems.



## Even the Birds Fly Away

In 2014, my Mother was diagnosed with a rare and terminal autoimmune disease, Amyloidosis. Through this photographic project I have explored the idea of anticipatory grief, unable to fully process this, I have used the camera to invite the viewer to experience fragments of my mother's environment that accumulate a new meaning in the face of something so overwhelming.

Her favourite hobby is to cross-stitch. She loves a cream cake. I can guarantee that we'll be listening to 'The Script' on car rides. She loves her cats like they are her babies, always making sure to leave a door open so they can sleep in bed with her.

Photography allows me to connect with my Mum. It gives her one last chance at having a voice.



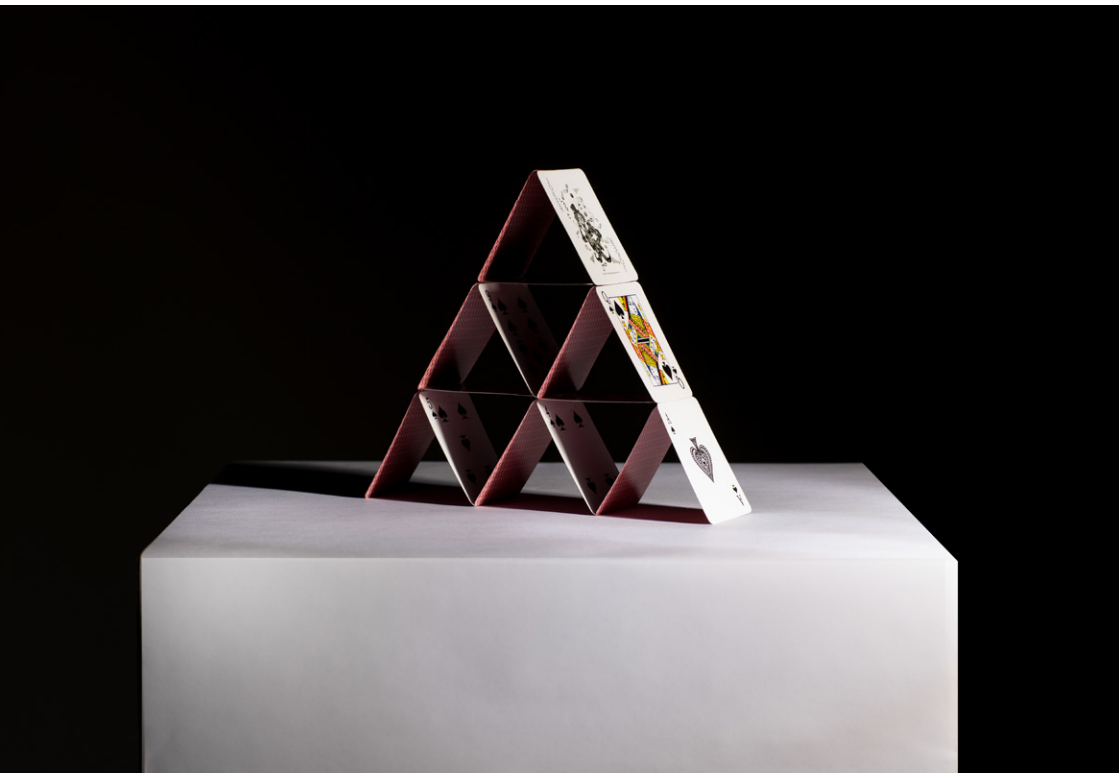


@kd.kodaks

# Krystle Davies

Krystle's photographic practice focuses on telling stories about people, examining social issues, and addressing personal and economic matters. Inspired by her own experiences, she documents daily life through her photographs, capturing herself and others. Her work often incorporates humour, even when tackling serious topics. As an artist, Krystle has developed a profound understanding of the photographic realm, which is evident in her body of work.

Her ability to blend personal narratives with broader social commentaries adds unique depth to her photography. Her keen eye for detail and empathetic approach allow her to authentically capture her subjects' experiences. Using humour as a narrative device, she engages viewers, making complex and heavy topics more accessible and thought-provoking. This combination of technical skill and emotional resonance highlights her distinctive artistic voice.





# My Sweet Slumlord

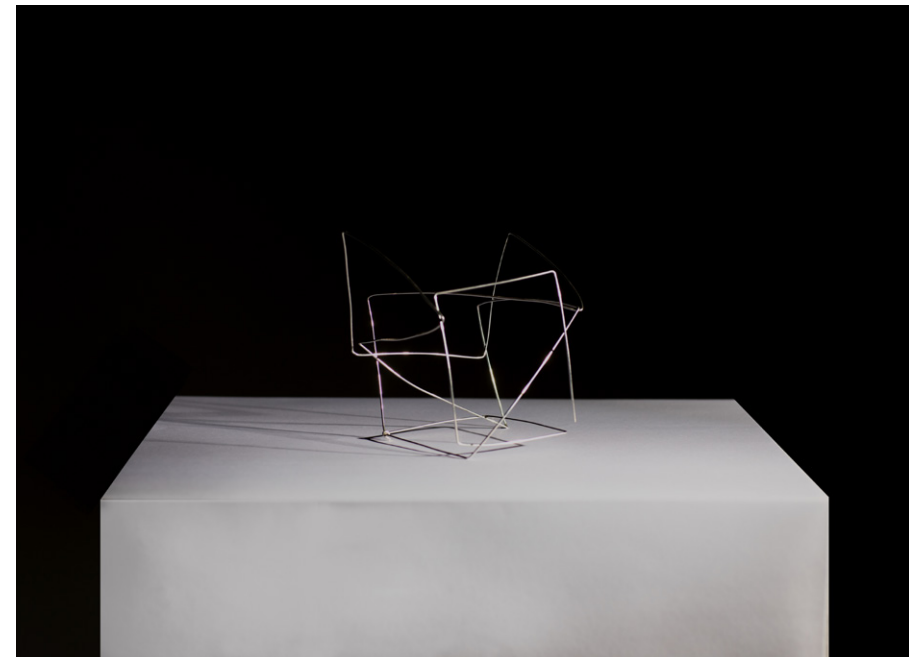
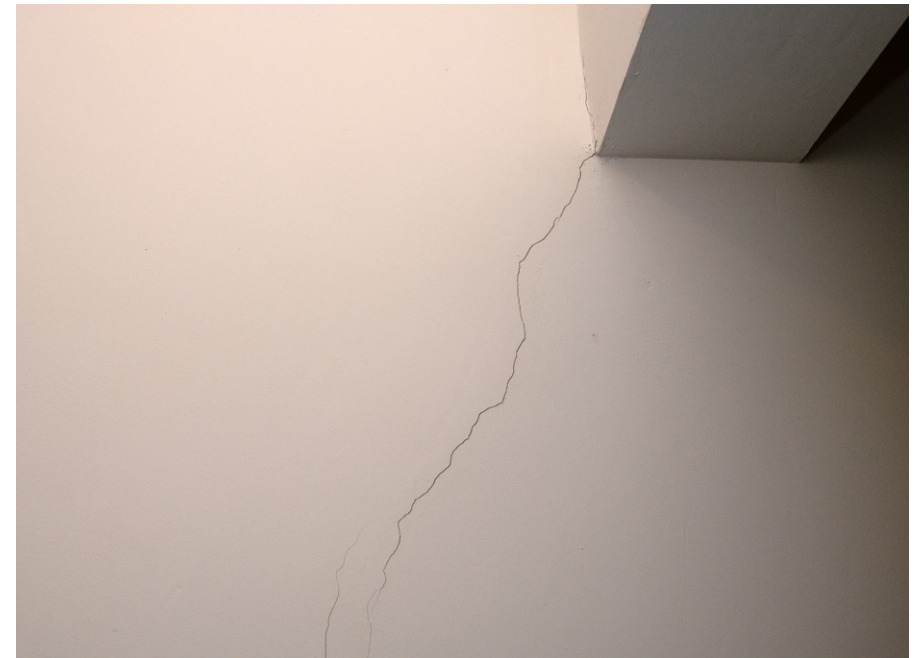
This project explores the current problems faced by young tenants renting private accommodation.

This body of work will contrast text and image to mock the realities of greedy and neglectful landlords.

It communicates how landlords abuse their power against young inexperienced individuals exploiting high rents for sub-standard living conditions.

The exhibition space aims to provide an immersive experience, enabling them to intimately engage with the space and feel as though they are present within it.

The collection of stories and images curated within the accompanying photobook juxtaposes a variety of lived experiences to poignantly underscore the stark realities of this exploitation.







*@pippaphotography\_*  
*pippafrenchphotography.myportfolio.com*

## Pippa French

I am currently a Cardiff and Cornwall based photographer. A fashion perspective drives many of my projects, drawing on inspiration within modern society and my surrounding environment. Themes explored within my work are ideas surrounding gender, representation and femininity, using staged and directorial approaches to create varied narratives. Whilst my focus is mainly on fashion photography, I'm constantly thinking about

creative and inventive ways of creating work that puts my own unique perspective on this genre of photography by working with a creative art direction, striking colours and constructing interesting compositions using models and the environment. I enjoy capturing how fashion can be used as a form of self-expression and thinking about how I can use photography to break and explore the boundaries of fashion.



# I Exist in Two Places

This project aims to reconnect women with nature through photography, celebrating the human form and stripping back female identity. It weaves aspects of beauty and fragility, using aesthetic codes to enhance natural beauty.

In a society dominated by social media and beauty pressures, women often turn to filters and cosmetic surgery. This work captures the honest reality of the

female body, combining abstract body images with landscapes to explore the link between nature and the human form, challenging societal expectations.

The black-and-white format adds a timeless element, highlighting the recurring nature of beauty standards.





*@perranjack*

# Perran Jack



Hailing from Cornwall, my passion for photography is rooted in urban and suburban landscape photography, focusing on the unseen aspects of our surroundings.

My work spans various projects, from documenting the decline of industry in South Wales to capturing the death of Britain's high streets, each aiming to tell honest and compelling stories through my lens.

I am deeply committed to exploring the evolving relationship between humanity and the land we inhabit, striving to provoke thought and reflection on the changing landscapes of our urban and suburban environments.

Through my photography, I seek to shine a light on the often overlooked narratives that shape our world.



# Vacant

Across the UK high streets and cities are dying, this is ubiquitous as a result of the current socio-economic climate.

Throughout my project, I have looked to document this fundamental issue which is something that has been accelerated in the digital and post-covid climate.

This is an issue that is so apparent that it we walk past every day without giving it a second thought. It is something that as a society we have become blind to, often until it is too late. Streets littered with shuttered store fronts and 'To let' signs is an all too familiar sight.

Documenting these vacant buildings is a way to shine a light and draw attention to this overlooked issue and inadvertently finding beauty in the banal.





*rkelson192.myportfolio.com*



# Robert Kelson

I am a photographer with a passion for capturing nature and the depth of human emotions.

My work aims to connect my engagement with the natural world and my interest in portraiture. Nature has always been my sanctuary.

Using lived experience and personal histories as a starting point I blend a range of traditional and modern techniques to create

engaging narratives that allow the audience to partake in my life.

Through my work, I invite viewers to see the world through my eyes, discovering the extraordinary within the ordinary and creating a deeper appreciation for both the natural world and the human experience.



## Case No. \*\*\*0397

Through this project, I explore the emotions surrounding adoption, delving into the subconscious impact of not knowing my birth mother. This is a journey that unravels layers of identity, belonging, and longing inherent in the adoptee experience.

Each image is a visual narrative, capturing moments of uncertainty, introspection, and resilience. Nature emerges as a powerful coping mechanism throughout

this exploration. Immersed in its landscapes and beauty, I find solace and healing. Through my lens, I aim to depict the connection between the natural world and the human spirit, illustrating how nature's rhythms mirror the emotions within. The images serve as a testament to the transformative power of self-discovery and the healing journey of embracing one's past while finding comfort in the world around us.

In the NORTH EAST & NORTH WEST HAMPSHIRE FAMILY COURT PROCEEDINGS COURT at

ALTON FAMILY COURT

ORDER FOR (CARE) OF A CHILD

SECTION 31 THE CHILDREN ACT 1989

CASE No. [REDACTED] 0379

THE CHILDREN ARE LYDIA [REDACTED] A GIRL BORN ON 17.07.00 AND ROBERT [REDACTED] A BOY BORN ON 24.10.01.

FPC/1781/02/135+136

THE COURT ORDERS THAT THE ABOVE NAMED CHILDREN BE PLACED IN THE CARE OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL AUTHORITY.

CHILDREN ACT

WHILE A CARE ORDER IS IN FORCE, NO PERSON MAY

- \* CAUSE THE CHILD TO BE KNOWN BY A NEW SURNAME; OR
- \* REMOVE THE CHILD FROM THE JURISDICTION OF THE U.K. FOR A PERIOD OF ONE MONTH OR MORE WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF EVERY PERSON WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OR LEAVE OF THE COURT

NOTE: ANY PERSON WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY MAY ASK THE UNITED KINGDOM PASSPORT AGENCY, CLIVE HOUSE, PETTY FRANCE, LONDON SW1H 9HD NOT TO ISSUE A PASSPORT ALLOWING THE CHILD TO GO ABROAD WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THAT PERSON.

This order was made on DATE: 18/07/03

JUSTICES' CLERK FOR HAMPSHIRE AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT



*@urban\_motifs*

*@ajlaurent\_photography*

*ajlaurent.co.uk*

# AJ Laurent

I am interested in documentary photography of people and their experiences in life. Having worked as a support worker for 15 years, I have witnessed the challenges of providing support when caring for others. I aim to shed light on the often-overlooked aspects of their work, advocating for the support systems they need to thrive. Support workers play a crucial role in society, yet their efforts often go unnoticed or under appreciated.

As I delve into the challenges, support workers face, the deadpan images found in this body of work aim to draw attention to the stark realities that support workers regularly confront. Understanding these challenges helps us gain insight into this profession, creating empathy with individuals who devote themselves to caring for others.



# BASELINE

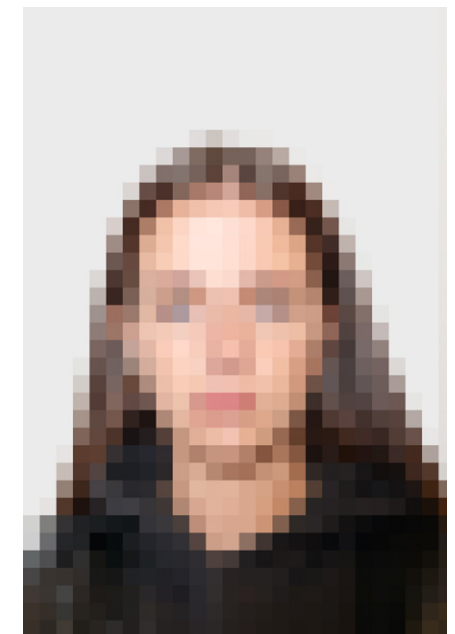
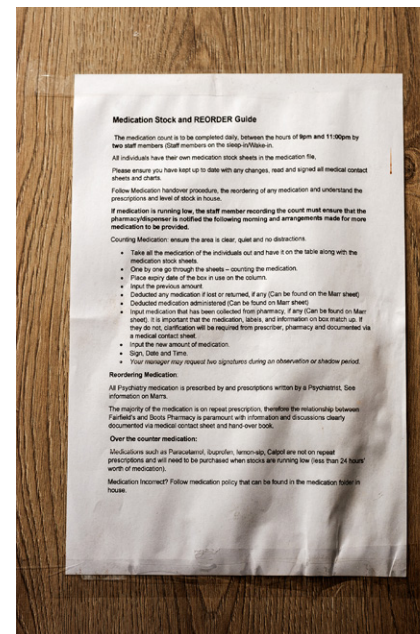
This project documents the lives of support workers as they navigate the challenges of each working day. No two moments are the same and the only constant is the unwavering commitment to their mission. This photographic narrative captures the highs and lows, the joys and struggles and the humanity that binds this extraordinary team.

As this work shines a light on the stories of support workers and the men they aid, it unveils a narrative

of resilience, compassion and the relentless pursuit of creating a haven for those who need it most.

The emotional terrain is as diverse as the individuals themselves.

Amidst the stress that arises when tenants veer off 'baseline', there emerges a tale of unwavering dedication and the power of human connection.







*@fungyee.photography*

# Emily Fung Yee Tsang

Emily Fung Yee Tsang is a Welsh Chinese born photographer who uses her first-hand experiences to tell stories about her personal and cultural history, incorporating studio shots and images of nature.

A recurring theme throughout her current and past projects has been based on her skin health journey and both her Chinese background and her western dominated upbringing.

The project “Metamorphosis” is a body of work that Emily has used to explore more in-depth or skin-deep about herself. In the project Emily juxtapose archive images with close-ups of skin/objects to speak about bullying that took place during her childhood. In which she has been called ‘Snakeskin’, which another project that she has done but it touches the surfaces level of the topic.



# Metamorphosis

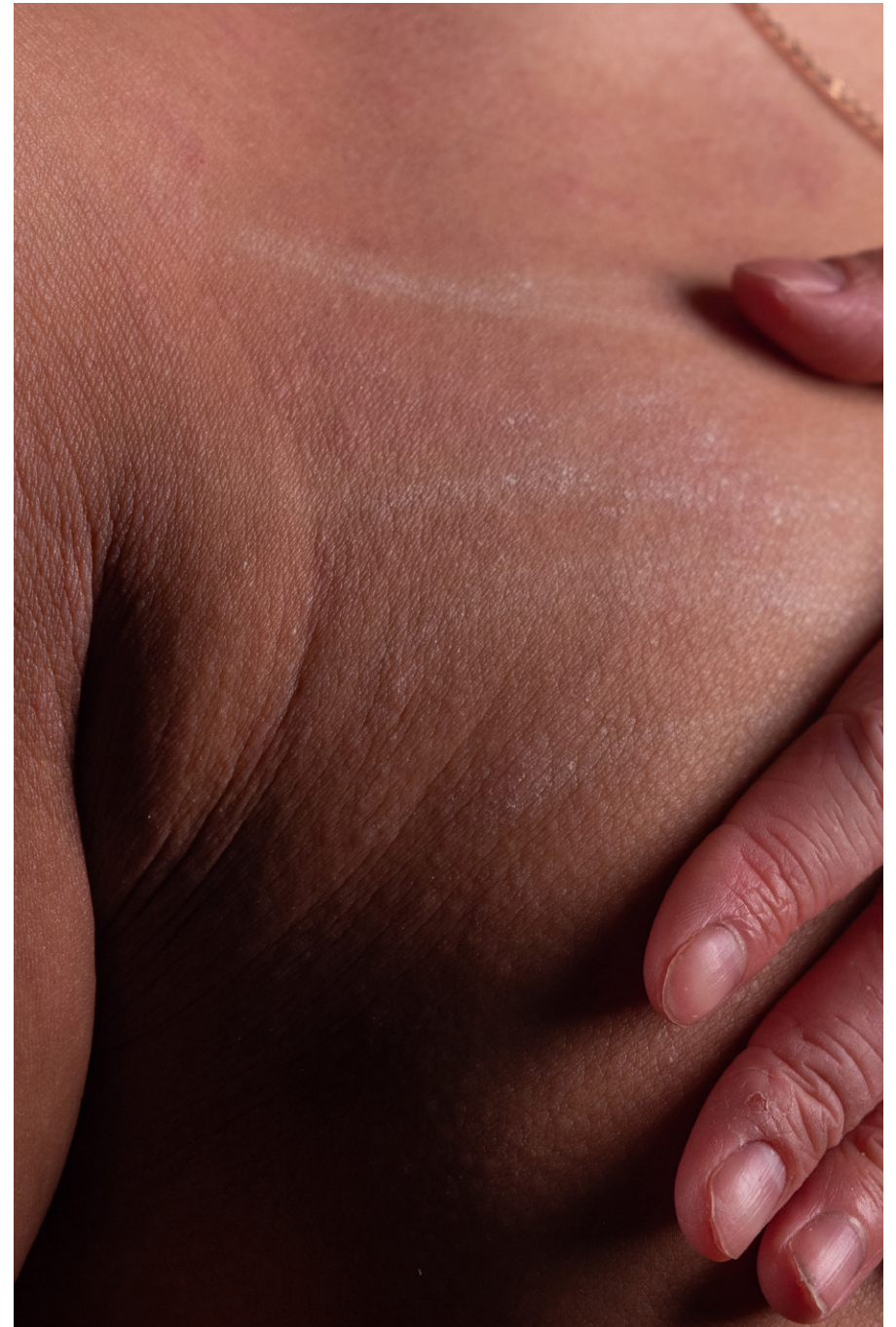
For as long as I can remember I have experienced eczema, a condition which causes my skin to have dry areas that can look red and cause dryness and irritation. This condition means that for the whole of my life I have relied on medication and ointments to treat it.

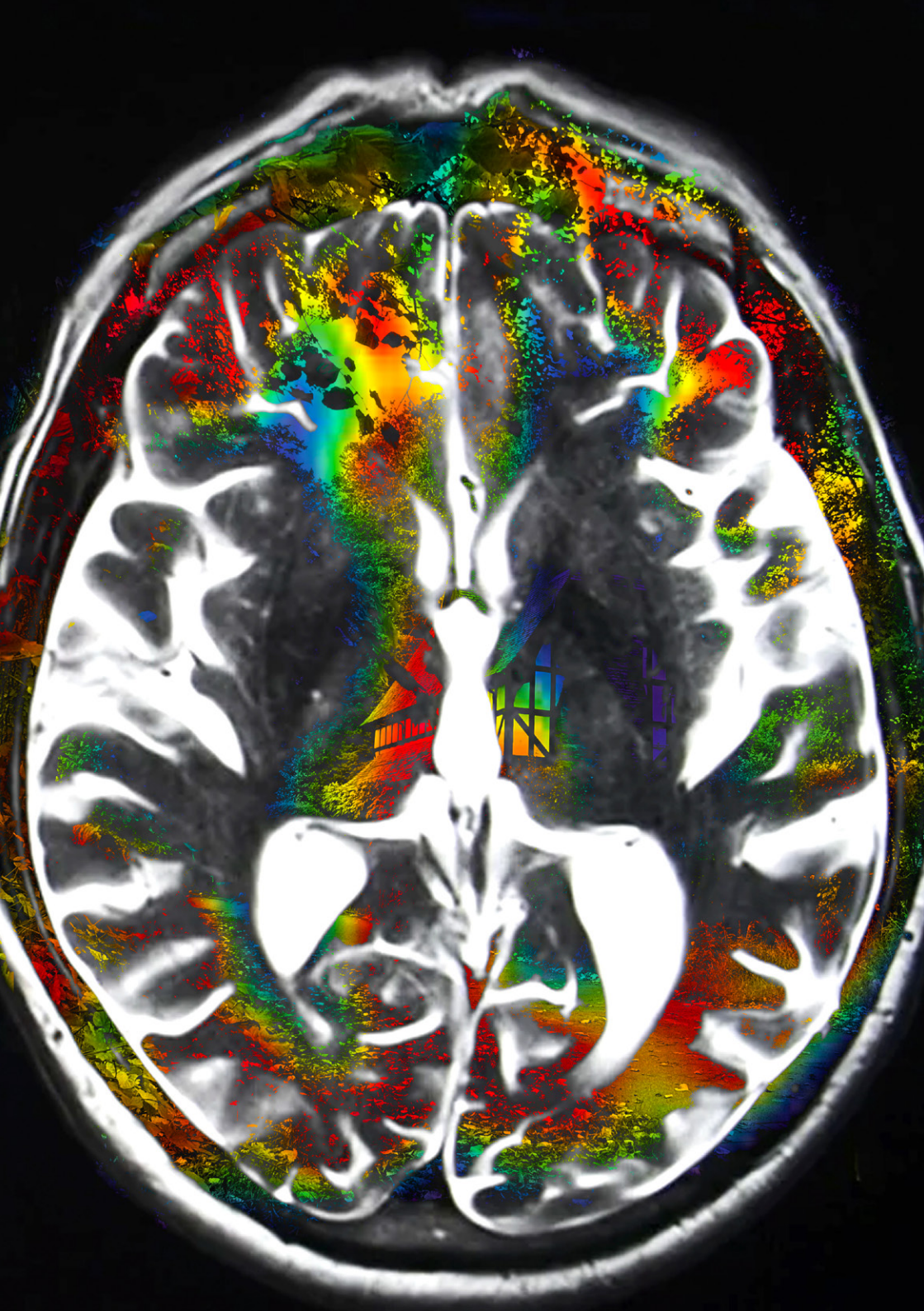
This work uses a combination of still life imagery, portraiture and personal archival material to paint a picture of what it was like

growing up with eczema and to live with it nowadays.

This project is as much about helping create awareness of the obstacles facing someone with this condition as it is about embracing my own appearance and body.

This project has taught me that I don't have to change my appearance to be happy with myself or to please anyone around me.





@lucy\_images



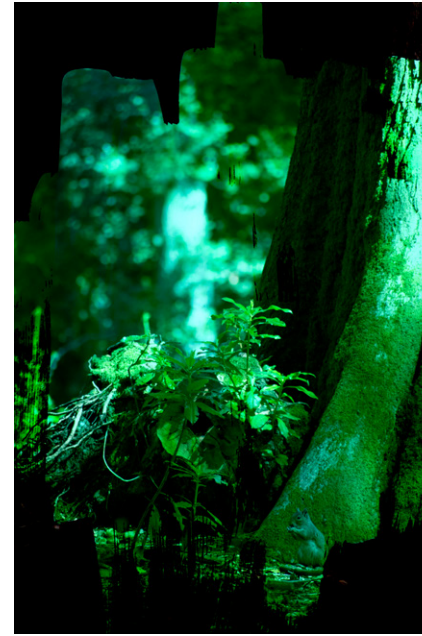
## Lucy Webb

Lucy Webb, a digital photographer from Cardiff, focuses on landscapes in her work using post-production techniques to express her feelings about important personal issues and narratives about ourselves and our natural environments. Lucy has specialized in capturing abstract landscapes, as a way to preserve cherished memories from the perspective of individuals affected by Alzheimer's and Dementia. Lucy has an intimate

connection with people close to her who have gone through these complex conditions. Through the juxtaposition of vivid colours and darker tones, she reveals a dreamlike story that reflects the intricate beauty and complexities of the mind that are slowly being forgotten. Each photograph in her project serves as a narrative, into the emotional metaphorical landscapes traversed by those impacted by these conditions.



Lucy Webb



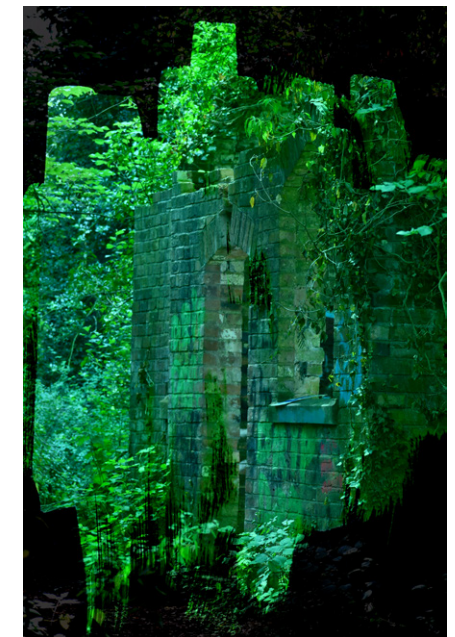
# Cranium After Time

This photographic project is made with the aim of raising awareness about Alzheimer's and dementia through the use of landscape photography. Using an abstract colour palette of vivid greens, reds, and blues, this project aims to create a surreal narrative that captures the ever-shifting mental landscape within the minds of individuals affected by these conditions. Each photograph acts as a window into the intricate tapestry of memories, emotions,

and experiences that characterise the journey of those living with Alzheimer's and dementia.

*'Cranium After Time'* hopes to invite viewers to develop empathy and compassion towards those navigating the profound terrain of the human mind.

For more information about Alzheimer's and dementia please visit [alzheimers.org.uk](http://alzheimers.org.uk)





*@Olwufisayofilms*

# Olwufisayo Jennifer Williams

Jennifer Williams is a photographer with a unique background born in Ireland but ethnically rooted in Nigeria. Her work seeks to explore her Nigerian heritage with the vibrant hues and cultural richness. For her the camera becomes a storyteller, capturing not only the visual allure of garments but also the profound essence of personal identity.

Each photograph unfolds as a distinctive narrative, weaving

together threads of culture, history and individuality. Within the controlled environment of the studio Jennifer carefully crafts images that delve into the intricacies of identity. Staged portraits allow her to create moments that transcend temporal constraints merged with archival images. Through Jennifer's lens, viewers are invited on a celebration of cultural fusion and an exploration of the beauty that emerges.



## Nibo Ni O Ti Wa?

*'Nibo Ni O Ti Wa?'* translates to 'Where do you come from?'

These images are a celebration of my Nigerian culture and heritage which I appreciate deeply despite not being born or raised there.

These images explore the influence of my mother, who has shown me a great sense of self-love and pride in my roots.

Through her teachings and guidance, I have embraced and interpreted Nigerian culture as my own, honouring its traditions and values.

These images serve as a testament to the richness of my heritage and the journey of self-discovery that has led me to embrace and celebrate where I come from.



# Acknowledgements

**Dr. Duncan Cook**

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**Jude Wall**

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**Nigel Bowles**

*Technician Demonstrator in Print*

**Nicole Baker Peterson**

*Technician Demonstrator in Film, Media & Sound*

Cover Art by **Robert Kelson**

Thanks also to Nik Roche, Tony Charles & The Studio team.

And a very special thanks to everyone that has enriched our studies.

@csad\_photography

@cardiffmetcsad

To find out more about Photography at Cardiff  
School of Art & Design, please visit [cardiffmet.ac.uk](http://cardiffmet.ac.uk).

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