



2010

29 APR

The Viewfinder Photography Gallery presents a group exhibition of photographic images created using alternative techniques, cameras and media. Taking inspiration from painterly approaches, 'pure' photography and specialist printing techniques, these photographers challenge the potential ease and speed of producing a digital image, and defy picture-perfect effects in favour of more whimsical and mysterious images.

Catlin Harrison is a Londoner by birth and inclination, who finds that the city provides a fresh helping of eclectic people to watch and wonder about every day. She is fascinated with the human form, especially meta-figures such as ghosts, dolls or archetypes. Her approach is akin to the Victorian collectors' sensibility - each piece of work is an independent specimen, a set of examples of a particular type.

Presence, oddity, beauty and humour are important elements in all of Catlin's work: strange objects in jars, classification, crypts, fashion, botany and medieval European painting are just some of the things that inspire her. The exhibited series came about after buying a collection of dolls at auction, and reflecting on the dubious privilege of once living in one of the most haunted houses in Britain.

Christophe Dillinger practices what he calls 'WYSIWIGOTN' photography, which stands for 'What You See Is What I Got on the Negative'. His images are free from digital manipulation and are the result of a single shot. They are a fusion of film-based photography and traditional mark making techniques such as painting and drawing. His photography work features pigments, ink or curry powder, as well as till rolls, sugar paper, receipts, printers' sample rejects and extracts from technical books. Christophe uses paintbrushes, toothbrushes, charcoal, wax pastels and even sticks, superimposing their textures and graphical dynamism onto classical portraits or local landscapes. Randomness is allowed to seep through the image making process so that photography becomes a game, a discovery for the viewer as well as the photographer.

Jo Mills is fascinated by the worlds of the real and the unreal, and the places in which they meet and overlap, such as the mirror. She explores the 'mirror world' where nothing is as it seems, and where nothing can exist without its polar opposite - light and dark, tragedy and beauty, creation and devastation. In fairytales, myths, legends and gothic literature the idea of the 'looking glass world', where nothing is what it seems, is deeply rooted: the beautiful can be deadly, humans can fly, and anything is possible. Her photographic practice stems from this, as she aims to create immersive spaces for the spectator to interact with and explore, or which hint at the unknown space beyond. Jo's photographs are particularly influenced by the surrealist movement, play and the uncanny.

Marysia Lachowicz presents 'Shifting Tides', an ongoing series of work about the coast. The exhibited images were all taken during coastal walks in East Fife, Scotland. This area includes picturesque villages, craggy outcrops and rock pools, as well as long stretches of sand. Marysia has captured the changing nature of the villages and continues to document the coastline both in colour and in black and white. She feels that the tactile nature of liquid emulsions and early photographic techniques bring out the history and physical nature of this environment by producing an often imperfect but unique image. Some of the processes Marysia utilises involve salt prints, cyanotypes and using liquid emulsion.

Nicolas Gonzalez creates abstract images using light within a photograph. The impressionistic portraits are "painted" straight onto the film using coloured lights and extremely long exposures. Nicolas is interested in exploring the texture, intensity and movement of the light in the image, and in creating a painterly effect.

For David Rann, alternative photographic printing processes like Gum Bichromate and Cyanotype are an occasional but welcome diversion from his day to day photographic work. His first series of Gum prints, 'Know the Place', which depicts details of the Hebridean island of Eigg, has inspired further such projects. David finds the uniqueness and unpredictability of these processes is part of their charm.

Curator Louise Forrester comments: this exhibition focuses on the magical side of photography and on the physical process of creating images - don't miss it!

Accompanying workshop: Poetic Photographs

Sunday 9 May, 2-5pm

(free, booking essential - email louise@viewfinder.org.uk to reserve a place)

Poet and photographer Elizabeth Gowing will read the poem she has contributed to the exhibition catalogue, and a selection of other poems relating to the exhibition. Participants will be invited to take their own photographs inspired both by the exhibition and by Elizabeth's poem.

The photographs taken on the day will be uploaded at the gallery and projected, and viewed as a group. Participants can select three of their photographs to be published on a dedicated workshop page. Please bring a digital camera and its cable or card reader, or let us know if you'd like to borrow a point-and-shoot camera.

Participants will also be offered the opportunity to mull over the poems for longer, and to email photographs in by 29 May. This option allows for both immediate responses on the day, and more considered responses over the following weeks.

Workshop funded by the Capital Community Foundation and Grassroots Grants.

Museums at Night: Dance performances in the gallery

Following the success of the "Picture the Moment" performance in 2009, the Viewfinder will again be hosting three evenings of dance in the gallery.

Part of Museums at Night, there will be live performance and short films curated and performed by local artists, sharing an exploration of private histories and home.