

Learning Objective:

WB 13th May 2020

- To investigate a topic for your Personal Investigation Project.

A. Personal Investigation Introduction

B. Brainstorm ideas:

1. Where to begin?

- Look at what you have done already in previous projects.
- Which elements would like to explore in more?

Techniques/ skills/ processes/ subjects / locations/ equipment

- What new techniques and skills would you like to explore and develop?

2. Create a mind-map of initial ideas for your Personal Investigation topic/ question.

Homework: 4 hours minimum.

Look in your Booklets for targets.

Getting Started on Your Personal Investigation

What do you know about it already?

What is it?

The Personal Investigation is in two parts:

- A practical project in which you carry out a personal investigation based on an idea, issue, concept or theme.
- Written material which is linked to and supports your chosen focus for study. (1000-3000 words).

Base your PI on someone or something that really inspires you....

- You will be creating an in depth study into this subject, theme, concept or photographer.
- Make sure it is on something that really interests you to keep you motivated and to allow your passion for this subject to shine through.
- Keep your subject/ theme broad to allow space to explore and develop.
- Are there any new techniques you want to learn? Any artists/designers/photographers you want to find out more about?

This is your opportunity to choose what you want to do. Choose wisely!

The Topic should be something that you are genuinely interested in!

The purpose of your Personal Study is to *teach* you something: to help you develop as an artist and to strengthen your understanding of art-related issues. The most successful Personal Studies communicate '*a strong sense of involvement through personal enthusiasm and a commitment to sustain the investigation*'.

Simply speaking, when you are passionate about a topic, you are more likely to do well.



Artwork by Pat Perry

Personal Investigation:

1. Remember, your project needs to show as many different skills and techniques as possible. Choose a topic that is fairly broad and will therefore allow you to do this.

2. Choose a topic that you find interesting and exciting, you will be doing it for a while.

Ask Yourself:

- What types of photography do you find interesting/ exciting?
- What are you good at/ enjoy doing?
- What techniques/ skills would you like to explore that you have not?
- Have you experimented in the dark room?
- Have you taken photos with an experimental camera?

Brainstorming Ideas:

Task 1:

Brain storm as many skills and techniques you can think of. What have you learnt so far on the course? Are there any techniques &/ or skills you would like to learn?

Task 2:

Brainstorm as many topic ideas as you can that you are interested in.

Your Title ...

Word your title so that it captures the essence of your personal study and indicates a well-chosen focus.

For example:

*'The Portraiture of [artist name]:
An Appreciation of Light and
Colour'*

is more appropriate than

'Portraiture in Art'



Primary Imagery ...

You should choose a topic that allows you to view artwork first-hand. The best A2 Art Personal Studies are produced when students view artwork in the flesh (in a gallery or museum exhibition, for example), and sometimes are able to meet and interview the artist or designer and see their methods of working. This gives opportunity for the work to be understood in great detail (seeing true colours, textural surface qualities and the real scale of the piece) and encourages truly personal responses. Examiners frequently report that lower grade Personal Studies ignore this requirement and depend more heavily on secondary sources: lifeless reproductions from books and the internet.



Contrasting and Comparing Artists ...

Studying the work of a mainstream or critically acclaimed artist alongside a local artist can be beneficial, especially if the local artist is less established. This gives you the best of both worlds (the enthusiasm and first-hand contact from a local artist, plus the insight that comes from studying historical, contemporary and/or international artists who work in another cultural context). You may, for example, choose to focus on two artists who paint the same subject in a different way, or to discuss the influence of a famous artist on a local painter. It should be noted that the examiners understand that many students will not be able to see all of the artworks they study in the flesh, so supporting first-hand study with those viewed in reproduction is absolutely acceptable.



What makes and outstanding Personal Investigation?

- **In-depth mind map of ideas** (include: key themes, type of Photographer, methods they have used, linking Photographers. *Why do you want to look at this Photographer? Explain, show....*)
- **A visual mind map-** a mood board, what do you want to LOOK at, do, copy, explore.
- **Background of Photographer-** (what inspired them, techniques used in detail!, key themes, where did they exhibit? Why? Beliefs,)
- **Good images!** Images of their work that INSPIRE YOU. Only put in photography you wouldn't mind replicating. Copy these images! Discuss composition, equipment, mood, style, lighting, why you like it-be specific, in depth.
- **Note-taking as you go** – Brain storm ideas, camera setting, new equipment, concept. You can do this by hand or typed up on the computer
- **Make links-** what photographers are linked with them? Same techniques, location, movement, ideas?
- **Visit the work in life**, photograph the gallery/studio space. Record your interview or make notes. Video it if appropriate.

- **Where are you going to take this research?** What do you want to make create? Plan it, draw it, describe it with a selection of photos, Describe it with test shoots.
- **Explore techniques!!!** Try as many different techniques/mediums associated with the Photographer as you can and other ones you like as well.
- **Working in the style of the Photographer** – Be as authentic as you can, make notes of how you found this experience, what you discovered, what bits you liked/didn't. Who else has worked in this way?
- **Ask for help!** Teachers are not psychic. You must make it clear what your needs are so we can help you the best we can! We are busy but will always help you as much as we can.
- **Ask Questions.** You might learn better verbally than on the computer, ask, talk, pester, make notes.

Along with a written essay, 1000-3000 words (with supporting images)

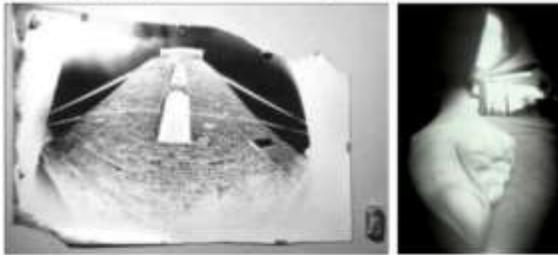
Hannah Rewbury

A2 Photography Proposal Documentary Photography

For my first project of the A2 year I have decided to do something more challenging, with my confidence of various techniques and skills being built from the first year, for example pinhole photography, film techniques, darkroom skills and Photoshop features. With a wide decided theme of documentary photography, it will allow me to explore and expand various ideas and experiment with the different ways in which "personalities" are expressed through body features and style. As I develop through this independent study onto the second half of my project, I hope to advance on from the first half into more depth within the second half developing fresh techniques that I will have learnt during workshops within class such as liquid emulsion, selenium toning, flashing, and a variety of film formats.

My first idea to begin the project is to revisit the basics of photography through expanding my knowledge of pinhole photography by creating a 360 degrees pinhole. I will do this by transforming a round tin to make a pinhole camera through various stages, for example making the Pinholes and also a round barrel within the centre of the camera to attach the paper (explanation of stages within sketchbook). My aim is to document people's feet, by placing the tin within a crowded area and documenting not only their style but also their whereabouts throughout the day.

Justin Quinnell is a professional pinhole photographer who often visits the college and I hope to receive some information, facts and feedback about the creation of my pinhole camera and my images. After a visit within AS photography last year Justin Quinnell showed us a portfolio of his own images and the different angles and paths that images can be created through pinhole photography. Here are some examples of his work...



This is what I love about pinhole photography, the idea that you can capture an image with amazing quality through something as simple as a beer can. These are examples of Justin Quinnell's work; I really like the image of his foot next to the Clifton Bridge, and may develop this idea.

However I also want to get more use out of the college studio, experimenting with various lighting techniques suiting and matching the main feature within the composition. An idea I have for this style of photography would be to document different people's shoes. This would relate well to my initial idea of expressing people's personalities through an angle of fashion. With the use of the studio and a range of cameras I would like to experiment with large format film, enabling the maximum quality to be shown within my images.

With an upcoming trip to Bristol visiting Martin Parr's exhibition at the M Shed gallery, this would be a perfect opportunity to collect information first hand about documentary photography especially when viewing Martin Parr's style and techniques within his images.

Hannah Rewbury

After visiting the exhibition I would like to create my own images within the style of this photographer, taking my digital camera around the city of Bristol documenting people around the city. This would give me a range of images to edit using the programme Photoshop, enhancing my images to the way that I feel an audience viewing my images should feel, complimenting the personality expressed by the subject within the composition of the image.



The two images above are images taken by the photographer Martin Parr. These two images are two of my favorites, with the reason being the relation to my project about documenting people's personalities. Both images may look simple, however they allow the audience to view their personalities mainly in a comical way.

With all of these ideas I want to experiment with various techniques within the darkroom process with toners such as sepia and selenium as well as weak bleach helping to tweak my images enabling contrast to be added and a slightly over exposed print to be corrected slightly. I will demonstrate within my sketchbook my experimentations as well as my development in ideas from various photographers that I like the style of giving my own interpretation.

After viewing and researching the photographer Steve Pike, I really like the idea of combining portraiture with documentary photography. With this I would combine the portraits of various people's faces with a feature that expresses a lot of things about that person's personality and life. A feature that I am considering is the hands, by photographing the hands of a person a lot can be said or interpreted about the person. This is one of my strongest ideas and something that I will hopefully develop by capturing the face and hands of various people that I will pick randomly on the street. This way I will have a variety of different ages, genders and most of all personalities. I would like to capture this through the use of the Bronica camera a medium format film, enabling quality to be given to the image, allowing me to extend my uses within the darkroom.

With various workshops being held within my classes I hope to develop the ideas taught and shown relating them back to my idea and theme. For example one of the main focuses within the A2 year is the demonstration of both medium and large format film as well as the way the camera functions. With all of this information enabling processed and documented within my sketchbook I want to expand this knowledge and practice using the cameras and the film.

This excerpt from an 100% A Level Art Personal Study by Yantra Scott entitled

‘An investigation into gender roles in contemporary art’

I first encountered Sarah Lucas whilst briskly strolling through the crowded rooms of the Tate. Amongst oils and finely crafted sculpture my eyes were transfixed in a two-way glare with a slightly butch, totally intense woman, with eggs for *****. Ever since then I’ve been hooked.

It is evident that Yantra not only visited and viewed artwork in the flesh, but had a strong personal reaction to it. It could never be assumed that this segment had been reworded from a textbook: it is absolutely the words of a passionate high school Art student. Although Yantra uses coarse language within her study (something which should be emulated with caution) this project is an exceptional example of an intelligent and personal response to a topic.



Similarly, this quote from an 88% OCR A2 Art Personal Study (one of the examples given in the OCR A2 Art Exemplar Work – Personal Study document) shows a personal response integrated within the analysis of Damien Hirst's work, illustrated below.

“ A study into conceptual art focusing on the work of Damien Hirst’

The glass is thick, so thick that it is intimidating. It is as if it is holding something terrible back. It makes you question the formaldehyde and query, what if the tank did break? The formaldehyde is not clear as I expected but is quite strongly coloured by a blue and green pigment. This colour is very clinical and has the connotations of a hospital...

