

Exploration of Data Shadows in the generation of written and visual narrative

Intro

In previous work I have developed an approach of creating associations using found items to generate visual practice. The methods used as part of my MA Graphic Arts Practice consisted of de constructing found artifacts, primarily found photographs, transcribing them into a visual narrative. I developed 28silverknowes.com as an exploration of found photography, transcribed into an on-line visual detective story to solve the ownership of a found bag of photography. During the project I became aware and interested in the construct nature of building narrative from the photography and began to form alternative theories and stories based on the body of photography. By the end of the project the mystery was solved and bag of found photographs were re united with the original family. However the project made me aware of the notion of found items as palimpsest to create new or embellish existing narrative. Alongside 28silverknowes.com I also created streetgraphic.com a user generated visual language site to encourage experimental visual collaborative projects. Streetgraphic endorsed the notion of graphic collaboration and highlighted the diversity of graphic practise globally.

Research question & aims

I now intend to utilise the research and ideas from both projects to produce both a body of work and collaborative network, exploring constructed narrative and visual language generated through found and bought items. The intention is to resemble fragmented artifacts and create narrative and visual work through imagination and fantasy, creating dramatic juxtaposition of ideas and work. The work will explore the notion of objects as companions in our emotional lives. (S.Turkle.Evocative Objects: Things We Think with.2007). Data Shadows (see glossary) will be used from the objects and transcribed into narrative. The results will be analysed for implications that could influence idea generation in graphic practice and the role of narrative in engaging consumers with products and brands (Speed, An internet of things 2011). Methodologies within current graphic practise will be discussed and analysed in relation to challenging traditional modes of graphic production and definition. The term graphic designer will be investigated for relevance in current and future convergent media markets.

Methodology

Both found photographs, ephemera and visual artifacts will be explored to create constructed narrative. A community of creatives will be established and participants encouraged to collaborate and participate in the construct of stories based on collections of artifacts and ephemera. This form of enquiry will aid the multiple construct of narrative, occurrences and contexts. Generated content will be used to create works and analysed for recurring themes and perspectives from the participants. Research has already begun, with data collections archived ready for analysis and narrative development. 47 Brick Lane, will form the first project, narrative will be developed using Data shadows collected from found artifacts from the establishment during refurbishment. 47 Brick Lane was originally a Bangladeshi textile importers and the artifacts reflect a family journey form Bangladesh to the East End of London. It is envisaged collaboration will be sought with Anjum Malik a

Manchester based poet and writer. (anjummalik.com). The work produced in collaboration will be exhibited and published on line. Ethical issues will be taken into consideration as not to liable a living person's image or reputation by misrepresentation. The possibilities of creating a radio play will be explored with the writer. Potential links with the Huddersfield Literary Festival will be investigated, with a view to developing workshops generating visual and written narrative around the found items. The workshops will also be developed on line and worked published via the site which will be developed as part of the project.

Projects will be underpinned and informed by theoretical principles based around image de construction, codes of language and culture (Barthes, Camera Lucida). Research will be undertaken into interpreting objects and collections (Pearce 1994) Content analysis, semiotics, and discourse analysis will be undertaken. (Rose, Visual Methodologies 2011).

Collaboration

Writers and visual creatives will be invited to collaborate on a number of projects resulting in a digital community exploring collaborative narrative through writing, image making, sound and film. Story groups will be organised to construct and document generated narrative. A target plan is currently under development locating potential collaborators which will include; The Huddersfield Literature Festival, where it is hoped to develop narrative generation workshops. The notion of "collective narrative". will be explored using collected found items. Local and Nationally recognised writers & creatives will be contacted with a view to working on the projects.

Narrative in Graphic practice

The relevance of narrative in the development of graphic language will be explored in relation to developing idea generation and the connection between increased brand engagement. The recent project, "Tales of things", (Speed 2011) highlighted the potential use of narrative to drive traditional and on line sales. With online sales becoming the dominant retail experience, it is becoming increasingly important to add value to the on line customer proposition; by increased engagement with the brand (Crask and Laskey 1990). The story of the Brand is often the connection between brand and consumer (J Edson Escalas 2004). Visual narrative study packages will be developed from the projects to analyse the potential narrative generating possibilities with undergraduate students. Examining how we arrive at written and visual meaning through shapes, perspectives, visual relationships, surfaces and colours etc.

Work flow, timetable & outcomes

It is envisaged over the period of PHD study, four projects, the development of a web site will be undertaken and a write up will evaluate the process. In the first instance **47 Brick Lane** will be developed and published via the internet, exhibition and potentially a radio play. **Belly Gunner** will be the second project, which will be based on a WW11 flying log found in a Co-operative building basement. The flying log documents the off duty life of a Lancaster bomber belly gunner and flying crew. **The Post Office**, will be based around two shoe boxes of ephemera bought from a market, containing data fragments of the, 'day in the life of a post office' in Blackburn in the 60's. The shoe boxes give insights into the private life of the owner and there gambling compulsion. **Reserved Occupation**, work generated from a body documenting a working life on the railway after the Second World War.

April, 2014

Proposal submitted to the University.

Potential collaborators approached.

Web design begun to form a community for collaboration and to promote and store projects.

47 Brick Lane developed.

On line blog developed to document the process, which will form the basis of the final write up.

2015

Web development completed, with on going marketing and networking of potential collaborators.

47 Brick Lane completed and exhibited.

Second major body of work developed.

Collaboration with the Huddersfield Literary Festival.

On going reflective blog, which will form the basis of the final write up.

Progress report: 6000 with presentation.

2016

On line community expanding via web site.

Second major body of work completed and exhibited.

Third major body of work developed.

Collaboration with fellow creative practitioners

Collaboration with the Huddersfield Literary Festival.

On going reflective blog, which will form the basis of the final write up.

2017

On line community expanding via web site.

Third major body of work completed and exhibited.

Fourth major body of work developed.

Collaboration with fellow creative practitioners.

Collaboration with the Huddersfield Literary Festival.

On going reflective blog, which will form the basis of the final write up.

2018

On line community expanding via web site.

Fourth major body of work completed and exhibited.

Collaboration with fellow creative practitioners

On going reflective blog.

Final write up.

Contribution to Knowledge

Analysis of Data Shadows to construct narrative, visual and written narrative evidenced through story groups, collaborative projects, study packages and written reflection.

The contribution of personal background in the construct of narrative from Data Shadows. visual and written narrative evidenced through story groups, collaborative, study packages projects and written reflection.

Narrative Data Shadows as a tool to develop ideas generation in design projects. Analysis via projects with undergraduate students and evidenced through outcomes exhibited on the website and final write up.

The role of narrative in engaging consumers with products and brands.

The atmosphere of the physical and emotional response physical objects.

The evolving nature of the Graphic designer as publisher and author, established through projects, website and write up.

Collaborative practice in the creative industries

The development of successful on-line collaborative networks

Glossary of terms

Data Shadows

A data shadow is a term used to refer to small traces of information that an individual leaves behind through everyday activities. A data shadow is a minute pieces of data created when someone writes, emails, updates social media profiles, swipes a credit card, uses an ATM, and so on. The concept of a data shadow has become a serious concern because it is difficult to control who is looking at a person's data shadow, what conclusions they are drawing and what actions they are taking based on those conclusions.

Palimpsest

A palimpsest /'pælɪmpsest/ is a manuscript page from a scroll or book from which the text has been scraped or washed off and which can be used again. The word "palimpsest" comes through Latin palimpsēstus from Ancient Greek παλίμψηστος (palimpsestos, "scratched or scraped again") originally compounded from πάλιν (palin, "again") and ψάω (psao, "I scrape") literally meaning "scraped clean and used again". Romans wrote on wax-coated tablets that could be smoothed and reused, and a passing use of the term "palimpsest" by Cicero seems to refer to this practice.

Bricolage

A way of combining and recombining a closed set of materials things to generate new ideas.

Bibliography / Key Literature

Local Knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology

Visual Methodologies: Gillian Rose

Susan Sontag: Barthes selected readings

Richard Howard: Roland Barthes Camera Lucida

Magritte: The Mystery of the Ordinary, 1926–1938

Richard Howard Roland Barthes, The responsibility of forms

Marianne Hirsch: Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory.

Dorothy Bohm: Breaks in communication

Collage, Assemblage and the Found Object: Diane Waldman

Ports of Entry: William Burroughs

Evocative Objects: Things We Think with By Turkle, Sherry.

Stuff: Daniel Miller, 2010

Interpreting Everyday Culture, Edited by Fran Martin, 2003

Interpreting Objects and Collections, Susan M. Pearce, 1994
The Transdisciplinary Studio: Alex Coles

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- C. Sas and A. Dix, "Designing for collective remembering," CHI '06 extended abstracts on Human factors in computing systems, Montréal, Québec, Canada: ACM, 2006, pp. 1727-1730.

On-line resources

BBC Radio 4: Digital Human: Value

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/dh>

Haggling and 'fairness' in the internet of second hand things

<http://www.chrisspeed.net>

<https://www.academia.edu>

ADIT Art & Design index

<https://www3.shu.ac.uk/c3ri/adit/search.cfm?Action=ShowSearchForm>

Visualising research: A guide to the research process in art & design

<http://www2.rgu.ac.uk/subj/ats/Research-VisualizingResearch/locating.htm>

<http://designingwithpeople.rca.ac.uk>

<http://www.methods.manchester.ac.uk/methods/collaborative-approaches.shtml>

