

# Rationale essay examples

[Design](#), [Photography](#)



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The main drive for me joining MA studies was to further my theoretical knowledge development in Art and Architecture outside the commercial context within which I have been working. This journey in my career outside class has been intensive and productive. It has led me to places would never have thought to visit. This journey has also challenged my understanding on what can be considered as photogenic subject matter. The nature of my work initially concentrated around the genre of documentary photography. Consequently, I have found my self delving deeper into its style, methods and story telling values. I was for instance, inspired by the works of Tomasz Tomaszewski, Simon Norfolk and Steve McCurry to name but a few. I have put myself in the alien environments such as Middle East and Post Soviet regions with the intention of capturing everyday life.

While I was away from the narrative elements, examining the composition based on the rules of photography and the arrangement of visual elements, I sought to capture social and historical context within the subjects I have photographed. Consequently, some of the images I have produced have inevitably adopted Cartier-Bresson-esaque style. These images have provided strong aesthetics. When I found out that my photographs were

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being adopted by Cartier-Bresson-eseque style, I made an observation on the fate of different photographs taken. My observation led me to the topic of my research, Memento Mori (Peress, 1995).

Over time, the abandoned places have become part of the fabric that surrounds the environment we live. The economic issues that resonate in current social and political climates can be blamed for this. But the rationale in this case is that these abandoned buildings can serve as Memento Mori of the architecture that was in place so that this architecture may be remembered. As mentioned in the instruction, my research title is Memento Mori. Regarding this topic, it is clear that, back in the 19th century, families used to photograph their dead loved ones shortly before burying them and keep the photos as Memento Mori. These photographs served not as reminders of mortality but as keepsakes to remember the deceased. In a way urban exploration take similar post-mortem idea of a photograph, although of buildings and structures, not people. The purpose of the research therefore, is not to focus on people but on buildings. In other words, it is through the topic that I will focus on the idea of abandonment in architecture and the way both authors of imagery as well as the viewers are or could be drawn to it (Norfolk, 2002).

## **Brief**

I will take an experimental approach in the production of my initial outcomes. The outcomes will be observed evaluated and reflected upon. Furthermore the tutorials will form a crucial part of the process as both peer and tutor feedback will be used in assessing the validity of the work

produced. One of key influences both from the view of subject matter as well as aesthetic is Josef Kaudelka. According to Norfolk (2002), Kaudelka's large panoramic monochromatic images of empty, people-less city streets and landscapes create almost abstract depiction of abandonment. Work created with a panoramic camera of 6x17 formats renders a cinematic view of beautifully realized compositions. The layout of the images in the book transforms the visual vocabulary, challenging traditional methods of showing photographs individually displayed. What fascinated from his work me was the play with the scale and form created through shape and texture and positioned as using more than three vertical images on a single page. They had an extreme format. The viewer created tempo and rhythm through these photographs (Misrach, 1992).

Another example is Simon Norfolk. He is attracted to war ruins with an intensity only comparable to the one commanded by scars; as they mark an area that once held by something that is now absent in the scene.

Determining the history of the conflict is, however, a daunting task because the prolonged war continually ages the structures by collapsing the time frames so that all of the structures, the modern ones, the classical palaces, as well as the historical buildings, almost look similar, midway to going back to the initial landscape from where they stood upon. The tedious and monotonous vernacular apparatus of the common modern life is absent from these images; the cities here are stripped of the bus fleets, the common plane noises at the sky, the electricity poles are not what is to be expected as they are all decapitated, the roads are empty like the ones one would find in a ghost town, and the concrete floors and walls sag and lean against each

other in a manner that speculates their non- functionality. The result of such a detailed photograph is a negative image a structural connectedness of two contemporary urban environments of the developed world; one city being made in the war so as to make sure of the others continued existence. The essence and the theme of abandonment is radically different in context to what Kaudleka depicts and indeed to what kind of work I am proposing to produce. However the key compositional and aesthetic themes as well as methods resonate in my creative intentions (Misrach, 1992).

The proposed project does not plan, challenge, or depict any political issues, though such might be perceived by the viewer without the authors' intention. As outlined, influences might initially suggest the methods, techniques and processes that might be used to produce and present the work as yet these are not confirmed. I wish to explore these through experimentation and evaluation of preliminary tests. Indeed the methods and techniques employed in the production of this project should very much suggested by the manner the project was to be viewed by its audience. I want work to be immersive and allow the viewer to experience in a nonconventional way. Though the key influences stem from photography, this does not mean that the final outcome will be in a photographic form. The idea of defining the line of where still image ends and moving image begins interests me immensely and this will also suggest an area of practice research. However the audience experience is paramount as is my desire to make the viewers active and not passive participants of the work I will produce (Peress, 1995).

The intended audience is a general one. The presentation strategy seeks to explore the nuances between interactivity and immersion. The experience will be visual and possibly aural. I will explore the idea of audience-via-computer control of the internal camera system, lighting and possibly movement. The audience serves as a controlling agent in the sequencing of the narrative.

## **Time Plan**

The schedule below indicates the order and timings of activities as described in the detailed Action Plan. It may transpire, as the project develops, that additional research is required in a particular area or that planned research is no longer relevant. However the stages of the project should largely stay constant and the progress of each research activity will be checked against the Schedule throughout the project.

## **Research & Concept Development**

- Location research & scouting
- Tutorials & Peer Consultation
- Production of Outcomes Testing & Presentation planning
- Documentation of outcomes and Rationale
- Presentation and Submission

I intend to employ critical reflection as the primary method of evaluation for the project. Given that the project is research through image making into a subject related to it this is the most reasonable form of evaluation. This will also be supported by feedback from peers and tutors, which could be facilitated through research blog. The blog will be made public, which may

also invite engagement from the wider research community, creating the potential for diverse sources of feedback. I also intend to compare aspects of my research with other similar projects as part of the basis for my critical reflection.

### **References:**

Misrach, R., 1992. *Violent Legacies: Three Cantos*, Manchester: Cornerhouse Publications.

Norfolk, S., 2002. *Afghanistan Chronotopia*, Stockport: Dewi Lewis Publishing.

Peress, G., 1995. *The Silence*, New York: Scalo Publishers.