



Open
College
of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Pete Walker	Student number	514508
Course/Unit	Expressing your Vision	Assignment number	3
Type of tutorial	(written)		

Overall Comments

Many thanks Pete for sending in your third assignment. You have done well with this in that you have got a set of images that **definitely hang together as a group**. I like the theme of mobile phones that anchors the set. Some images work better than others in terms of the decisive moment and there are **one or two** in your edited out set that I would consider including.

For me it's **catching that fleeting moment** and in some of your images the moment you have caught isn't that fleeting. For example in image 3 you have a good image of the three people in the train but this scene I feel has probably gone on for **several moments and not just one**. And in your contact sheet 2nd cut image one although perhaps not the best composition it has an immediacy and intimacy that I feel is much more fleeting and as such a better image.

Another matter - **why choose Black and White?** I think you need to consider this more carefully and present a more involved and referenced reasoning.

Black and white had a currency as an earlier use in documentary that had an acceptance of truthfulness about it. But that has passed now and it now has the feeling of being used as a throw back to this past era - an imitation - or being 'arty'. Colour as it is all pervasive in imagery today has an air of greater 'truthful currency'.

It's good to see the notes in your blog accompanying each image and the fact that you have taken several days over the project shows that you are giving greater consideration and thought to your work. I urge you to go further with this - **explore in more depth the theme of mobile phones** - OK they are all pervasive but I think that you **could afford to be more creative** with this as an illustration of the decisive moment theme.

Feedback on assignment and supporting work

Technical skills

Your work shows that your skill level is good - **you use good compositional techniques** - the great diagonal in image 1, the low viewpoint in image 3 making a

great triangle of the three people. Also you demonstrate good competence in post production - your use of silver effects pro.

But as I mentioned above you need to consider or at least explain your rationale for your choices. Why do you want to replicate Tri X?

What you need to be concentrating on is developing your ideas so that you can use these skills to good effect in producing more of your original take on a subject.

Quality of outcome

As an illustration or essay on the decisive moment I think your work is patchy - as mentioned earlier you have some good images and some less so. As a set the images are good technically - it would be good to see some prints in the fullness of time. Image 7 is one of your best ones that combines good technique with a good personal interpretation of the subject. Image 6 shows what I feel is not so good in that you have used rather hackneyed, tired techniques - the over obvious tilted angle to make the diagonal that shows not much more than just a woman and her phone - as you point out not an uncommon thing. The decisive moment is catching and highlighting something that is more unique and fleeting which makes it interesting and arresting.

Creativity

Your work is starting to show elements creativity - your own personal voice, what you want to show and also how as an individual. This is where you need to be concentrating on. As mentioned your technical skills are fine. Yes there are a lot of mobile phones being used in Hong Kong; you can use the decisive moment to illustrate all sorts of different situations and emotions. You are getting there - image 2 the man looking up with an expression but also the boy looking at the camera - its the expressions that catch the eye and this occupies a very small part of the image. Could you concentrate more on this aspect...? It's more creative I suggest.

Learning Logs or Blogs/Critical essays

Your log is fine - I suggest that you need to be thinking in more depth about your work and this should be reflected in your blog. For example in your notes about Bruce Gilden - faces compare your entry - what you like about the work, comparisons to other photographers' work with Sean O'Hagan's article. His goes into much more depth. He has an opinion - so do you but you sum up yours in a dozen words. It needs to be expanded. Pick up on the tread of exploitation - read up on what Diane Arbus says about her work consider and reflect on this in relation to your own work.

Suggested reading/viewing

Have a look at Steve McCurry's work - particularly his boy running in Jodhpur, India. He had found the spot and then waited for the event and then had to react quickly to catch the moment. A great colour version of the decisive moment. There are a series of One minute master class video clips that you might find useful.

<http://uk.phaidon.com/agenda/photography/video/2011/october/26/steve-mccurrys-one-minute-masterclass/>

I've mentioned Diane Arbus - her work would bear some comparison with that of Bruce Gilden's. Read Susan Sontag's discussion of her work in her book "On Photography" and then consider Gilden's work. Make up your own mind but do so with a rationalised argument.

Pointers for the next assignment

- Keep working on how you want to represent things - then use your technical skills to implement your point of view
- Try to keep from replicating a particular genre or photographer's approach - use them as an influence to devise your own approach to say something that has a novel twist.
- Think less in terms of the direct an observational description of imagery and more in terms of what may be implied and interpreted from the imagery.

Tutor name	Simon Barber
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Next assignment due	18 Dec 2015