

# NORTH

VOLUME 1

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# Introduction

ADAM MURRAY

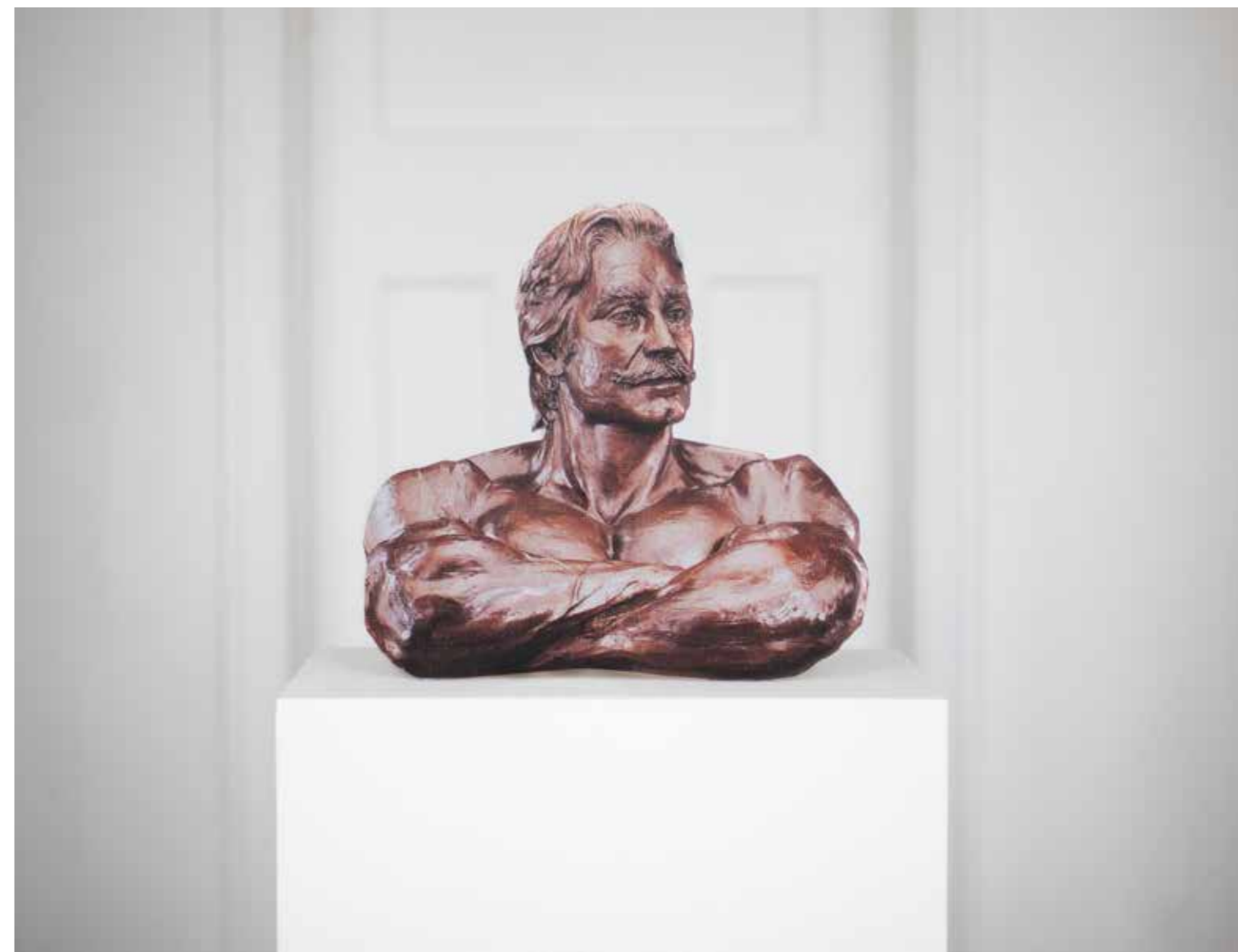
A REGION. A ROUTE. A RESPONSE. — Welcome to the first edition of *North*; a new publication produced by students and staff from the Photography Department at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston. *North* is intended to be a showcase of photographic activity from North West England and a decisive challenge to the traditional degree show model that relies on gallery display as a default.

At UCLan we pride ourselves on offering an open environment for early career practitioners to explore topics and approaches to visual communication however they choose. Our resistance to pursuing a ‘UCLan Style’ can be seen in the eclectic range of work featured in *North* produced by final year under graduate students.

This approach is only possible through the community of practice that has been developed by the combined efforts and diverse interests of an active and committed team of staff. Technical expertise, research informed teaching and contemporary industry links support the work of all students whilst simultaneously generating original work, as can be seen here in the portfolios of John Van Aitken and Brian J Morrison.

Preston may not be top of the list of recognised photography cities, yet it is precisely this anonymity that can give people the space to engage with photography and develop their personal voice with the medium. Jamie Hawkesworth and Ayesha Jones are two recent alumni that used their time of study to work out what it is they wanted to do with photography and are now recognised at an international level. Thank you for joining us; *North* is just the starting point of an archive of the future.

# Brian



# J Morrison

NO PAIN NO GAIN!!!

# LYNNE FANTHOME: 20TH FEBRUARY 2014

The endeavour of this writing is to bring critical and theoretical perspectives that respond to and open up Brian J Morrison's critical photography practice. These reflections are the author's response to the exhibition "No Pain No Gain!!!" (2014) visited in Blackpool, documentation of previous work and interviews and conversations with the artist.

Entering 'No Pain No Gain!!!' by Brian J Morrison, a thin wood bust on a plinth greets the visitor. Arms folded, emphasising pectorals and biceps, the masculine figure holds a confident posture. This is Joe Weider, declared by Schwarzenegger as 'the godfather of fitness,'<sup>1</sup> who built a global bodybuilding empire prompting international competitions, muscle enhancing products and magazines. A photograph of a bronze bust of Weider holding this iconic pose can be seen on his website, which is also the basis of the company logo. At Supercollider, an independent gallery in Blackpool, the grandiose posture is undercut by the use of cheap materials; this is not a bronze statue, but a photo blown up from a newspaper and pasted on MDF. The bronzed skin is ubiquitous of the bodybuilding industry, a surface sheen lacking mettle, value and gravitas.

In this installation from 2014 and in previous work Brian Morrison utilises the archive and icons of the bodybuilding industry, appropriating magazine images from physique magazines. For 'Ripped, Chiseled and Rock Hard' (2013) Morrison created photographic sculptures from sources in Weider's 'Muscle and Fitness' magazines from the 1980s. Images of hyperbolically posed, pumped bodies and body parts were re-contextualised in a gallery setting. An unexpected outcome saw exhibition visitors photographing themselves with these in humorous poses. Class snobbery may come into play in parody, where bodybuilding is currently perceived as an aspirational activity of the unemployed and underclass, unlike Bikram yoga or Pilates. It was significant that in Blackpool a flyer had been left for visitors near the Weider figure, advertising without irony local body building services. Morrison's approach is not to sneer at a hapless consumer, but practice a critical enquiry, which by his account is, '*research led and built on an engagement with the social theory of heteronormative...hegemonic forces in place that instil regressive gender codes*'<sup>2</sup> His recent work focuses on an industry of bodybuilding that builds its commerce by equating muscular masculinity with economic mastery, supported by commercial photography.

It may be thought that gender critique of the hyper-masculine figure of the extreme bodybuilder is late in the day, where fashion has turned toward a less muscle-bound version of masculinity and queer academia has established the camp status of the body builder; physique and muscle magazines are recognised as sources of homoerotic identification and pleasure, and valued in campy appreciation. An enquiry such as Morrison's into the objectification of masculinity and the homoerotic could be subjected to a 'minoritizing' dismissal as homosexual interest.<sup>3</sup> This would be a limiting assessment, however, as the enquiry considers masculine idealisation, including the homoerotic, *within* a majoritarian heterosexual context.

Within Morrison's installations are photographs of male bodies that have achieved the aspirational musculature of the body building industry. The photographic rendering of male bodies as aspirational objects of desire and identification installs a question of whether to be, or to have such a body; *ripped, chiseled and rock hard*, is the desire for this body so clearly a hetero / homo binary? This question queers the heterosexual male gaze, which is not to manoeuvre the enquiry toward a revelation of homosexuality at the root of such interest. A queering of the photographic gaze explores the homoerotic within the heterosexual framework of objectification produced by photographic technologies to embody, perhaps give body, to particular modes of value and capacity within capitalism. The large wall poster interrogates the viewer: 'Six months from today will you be built up or burned out?' There appears to be little choice in this rhetorical command. Morrison's enquiry into gender conformity and forms of compulsory masculinity points to the association of muscular bodies and free market capitalism, positioning photography as a technology complicit in producing spectacular versions of masculinity to confirm such ideologies.

Morrison's interest in photography as a technology of gender functioning within specific markets is apparent in his artist's statement:

*Predominantly using archive imagery found in gender specific mass-media publications, I create objects, which play on photography's relationship to three-dimensional form. These objects activate a rereading of commercial photography's hyper realities.*<sup>4</sup>

In his turn to sculptural form and photographic installation Morrison repositions photographic objects drawn from commercial body building sources to consider and critique masculine objects, but also the objects of photography. There is a discernable disidentification from gender identification, from conventional genres of photography and by means of a literal cutting through the photographic surface, the illusionism the photograph traditionally offers.

Duality and paradox are prominent in Morrison's work, form and signification struggling against binary separations. Whilst the photographic images are of muscular bodies blown up to much larger proportions in 'Ripped, Chiseled and Rock Hard,' the sculptural objects they produce are slight: thin board and slender supports are used to hold up the large cut out figures, or body parts; in profile these forms and the MDF 'bust' in 'No Pain No Gain!!!' appear only just three-dimensional. In the latter installation the photographic sheet on which the torso is printed is flimsy, draped over a thin wooden pole projecting from a gallery wall. One has to move around the draped photograph to see the upper and lower torso and the partial view disturbs the ideals of display and disrupting identification.

The torso in 'No Pain No Gain!!!' is printed onto a sheet of rubber using an innovative photo printing technology after which material was put under tension causing the surface image to peel away. Subjected to tension the ideal



#### Brian J Morrison

is an artist and lecturer in Photography at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston. His practice is built on an engagement with the social theory of heteronormative masculinity and aims to offer a critical enquiry into the hegemonic forces in place that instil regressive gender codes. Primarily using appropriated, gender encoded, advertising imagery, he creates works that relate to the actions, motions and rituals of extreme bodybuilding. These works attempt to activate an interaction that re-examines a relationship with the visual commercial world. Brian will represent England at the Standpoint futures residency, London, in August 2015.

#### Dr. Lynne Fanthom

trained in Art History and Fine Art practice at BA level. Her MA and PhD research at Goldsmiths Department of Visual Cultures was in contemporary art and critical theory. Her PhD subject explored queer injury and performativity from perspectives of feminism, queer critique and performance studies. Fanthome lectures in critical and contextual practice within a variety of art, design and photography practice areas. She has presented at conferences internationally and published "Am I Still an Artist?" Sustaining Arts Practice in an Age of Austerity' Visual Culture in Britain Journal in 2013. Her research practice asks questions about art and performativity in contexts of culture, ideology and politics.

body is literally ripped, shred and splitting. The process of stretching the rubber strongly alludes to the process of tension, which a body is subjected to in bodybuilding and other athletic exercises, to produce defined musculature. Such tension and splitting would cause pain to the body, but any affective register of physical, psychic and emotional pain is cancelled out by interpellation to achieve masculinity at all costs. 'No Pain No Gain!!!' The exhibition title cites codes of masculinity, identifying pain as central and productive, bringing masculinity into effect. By distressing the surface of an industry perfect masculine body Morrison subjects the masculine ideal to pressure, but also foregrounds the paradox that pressure produces the masculine. The pain of this paradox is indicated, but not expressed at an affective level. Taking this further would lead to a discussion of melancholia and masculinity, which is another critical perspective suggested by this work.

As in previous installations 'Ripped, Chiseled and Rock Hard', 'No Pain No Gain' has several sculptural components. The latter includes an abstract standing frame built from thin wooden posts painted in a constructivist colour scheme, predominantly black and red. There are ready connotations given the subject of bodybuilding, the sculptural form implies a weights machine, or, viewed anthropomorphically this could be a body in tension. There are previous associations of body and machine in Morrison's work, where the male body is made 'hard' by mechanical transformation, or transformed into machines. The painted object's abstract appearance is striking in this context and unlike any in previous work from Morrison. It appears in Michael Fried's terminology from the 1960s, a 'literalist work', or object of minimalism.<sup>5</sup> According to Fried, such work always connotes the spectator's presence, as it requires the circulation of the viewer's body within the work. For Fried this destroys the autonomy of the modernist artwork, instigating a collapse of distance and a creation of a situation that he denigrated as theatrical. Others have since celebrated and perpetuated that collapse of distance, to create situations of social and political engagement though spaces of art and theatre, which Parker and Sedgwick theorised as 'performative... mobilizing and epitomizing transformative and interlocutory space.'<sup>6</sup> It is in this context of the 'interlocutory' and the 'performative' that we may consider Morrison's work, expanding photography as critical practice.

#### Footnotes

1. Angeles, A. P. i. L. (2013). Joe Weider, bodybuilding guru and Schwarzenegger mentor, dies at 93. The Guardian.

2. Morrison, B. J. Bio. accessed 2015.

3. Eve Sedgwick's analysis of the 'minoritizing' and 'majoritarian' views of sexuality is referred to here (p.85): Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the closet*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

4. Morrison, B. J. Bio. accessed 2015.


5. Fried, M. (1998). *Art and objecthood: essays and reviews*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

6. Parker, A., et al. (1995). *Performativity and performance*. New York, Routledge. Pp13-14

# Jamie Hawkesworth

MUMBAI, INDIA





“With fashion photography,  
if I could give people advice, it’d be not to start  
off with fashion photography  
just do photography  
don’t go into the studio and do a test shoot.  
Get out into the world.”



# Graduates

YEAR 2012–15

## Jamie Hawkesworth

graduated from the BA(HONS) Photography programme at the University of Central Lancashire, in 2009. His early practice engaged with regional British towns exploring the residents, architecture and cultures that exist outside of the capital, in a continuation of the British documentary photography mode. His ability to combine fashion and documentary photography, informal portraiture and eccentric

styling has seen Jamie carve out a unique position, respected highly both within and outside of the world of fashion photography. Jamie's editorials have appeared in magazines such as: W, US Vogue, French Vogue, Acne Paper, i-D, W Magazine, Love Magazine, Double, Arena Homme+, Man About Town and The New York Times Magazine. He lives in London and is represented by M.A.P.

SARA FORYAME LAWLER

TORIA LOCKYER

ALEXANDER CUTLER

BETH LOUISE IRWIN

LUKE SAXON

GEORGINA RIMMER

MEGAN BAYLISS

LAURA JANE BLAND

DEAN BAYBUTT

VANESSA KUMAH

HAZEL WHITTALL

NATASHA GASKELL

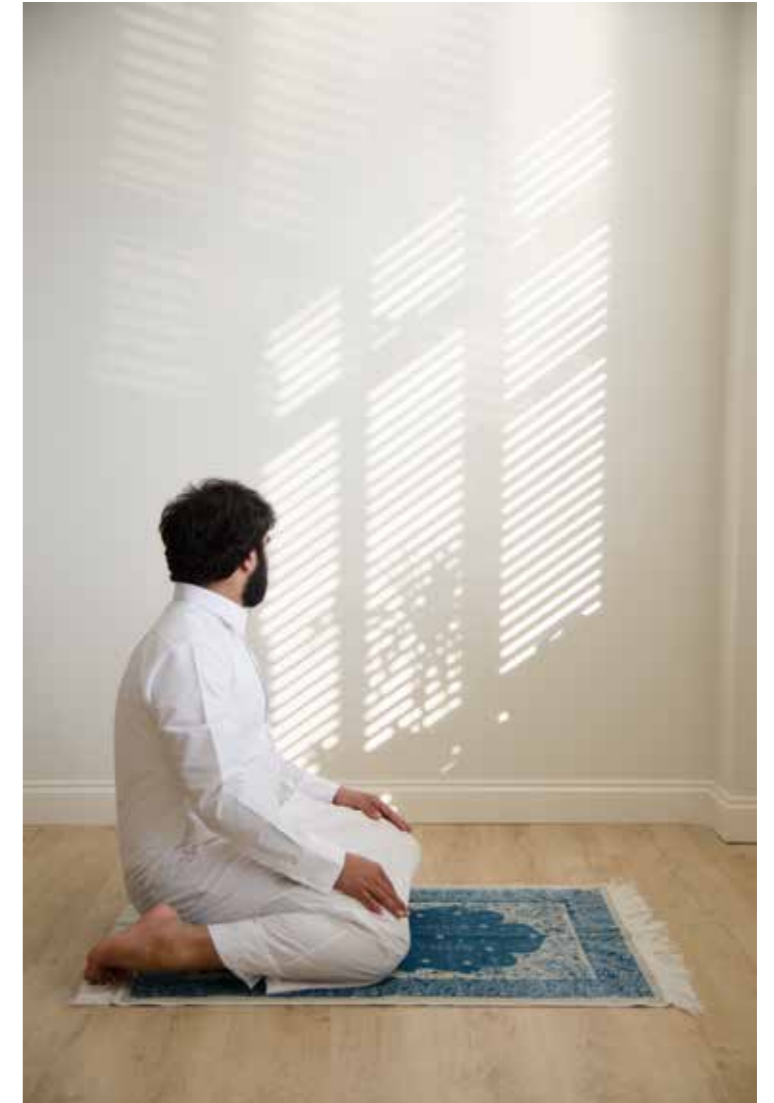
# Sara Foryame Lawler

## The Performance

A series of portraits exploring the concept of identity and gender expectations. A performance is played, acting out the cultural, religious and societal assumptions placed on me by society as an artist of colour and faith. As a female artist who stays anonymous within imagery, my husband takes my role. I create a performance of the everyday. The layout mimics the domestic space of an artist and the certain objects used to signify strength, growth and fragility. Using light and shadow mimicking a stage set, a metaphor for the intensity of the roles that have been placed on us. The question is, how long do we act and how long can we keep on balancing the roles?







# Toria Lockyer



## Glory Hallelujah

With many towns and cities shifting through major urban regeneration and development, many community churches have fallen by the wayside. Once situated in grand, old buildings, many community churches have been forced to relocate into smaller, less grand establishments. The buildings they were once based in are being knocked down – either due to unstable foundations with no money for repairs, or government and land developers buying them out to bulldoze and flatten the land to create in its place another

parking lot, or high street chain store. They have become very makeshift and temporary spaces, far-stretched from the original, more grand establishments they were once situated in. However, the spirit of these tight knit communities hasn't been lost – these churches have still flourished and remain a vital part in the community around them. Their makeshift, almost temporary spaces prove that a place to worship can be found anywhere – even if that place resides above a Greggs, almost invisible above the hustle and bustle of Blackpool's town centre.





# Alexander Cutler



## Urban Recall

Cities are developing at a rapid rate and urban landscapes are transforming before our eyes. Urban redevelopment is the driving force for these changes, but not only do the aesthetics of urban spaces change, so do their functions and meanings. Today an area could be industrial but through urban development the space could be transformed into leisure facilities or homes. Produced in Salford, this work demonstrates the changes wrought by urban renewal, and although rooted in the Northwest it is indicative of

many post industrial cities across the globe. Urban developments create a sense of nostalgia, evoking memories and thoughts of what used to be. At different stages in time documentations of urban spaces adapt different meanings. The photograph is a documentation of the now, showing what is present. The rubble is a symbol of the past, demonstrating what came before. Both pieces work together to evoke a sense of nostalgia and ideas on what urban spaces have become.





# Beth Louise Irwin

## Obsolescent Anxiety

Obsolescent Anxiety is a post-internet art project aimed at predominantly challenging our perception of photography after the event of digitalism and the consequent anxiety that is generated when expectations are juxtaposed with the disappointment of digital specific dialogues. The project is based around a series of commonplace photographic items that over time have been ingrained into our interpretation of photographic practice and are now unnecessary to the definition of photography after the Internet. An online exhibit that

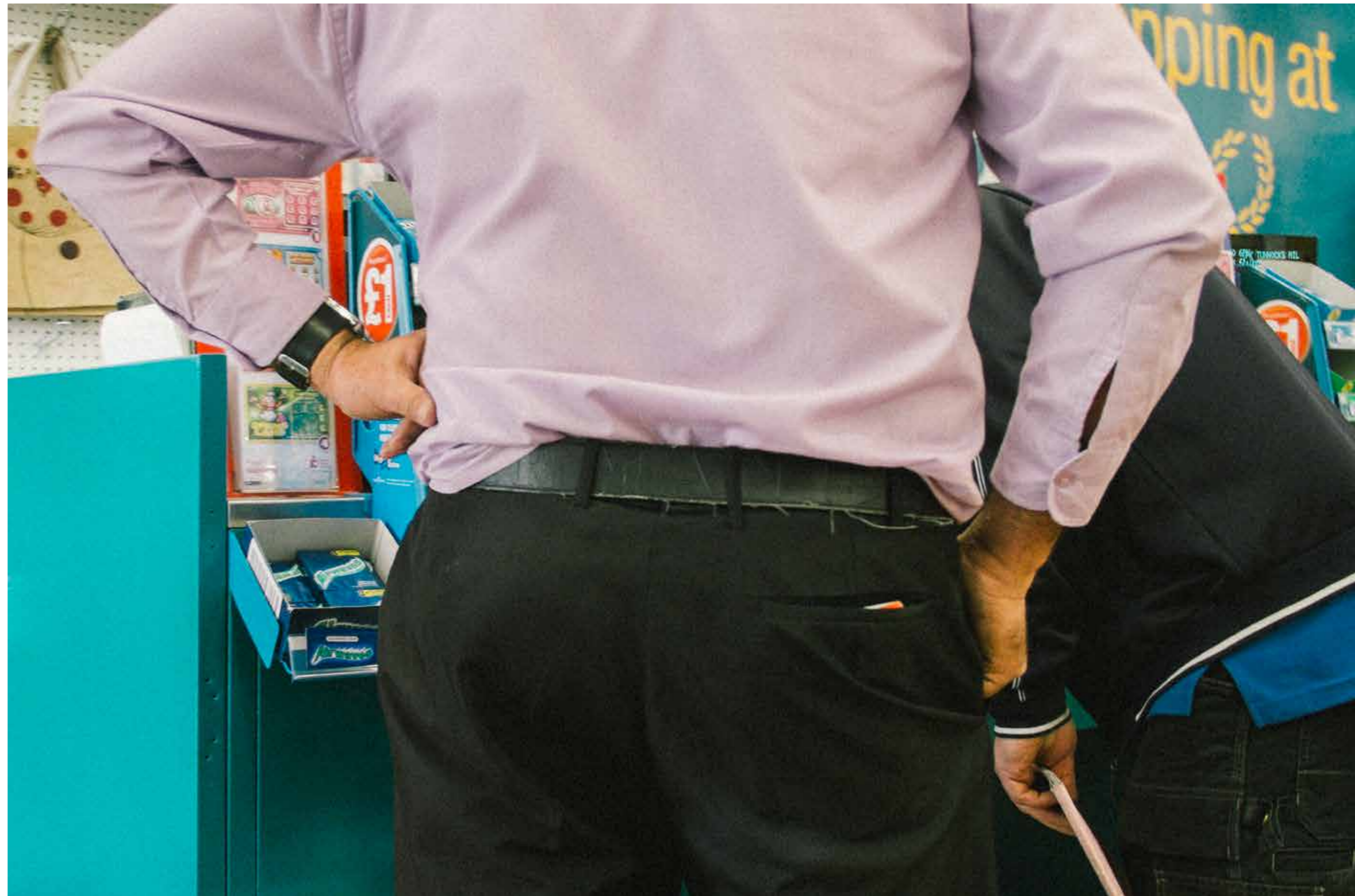
fails to survive beyond the Internet, which, when each photograph is clicked the hidden image content of the item is revealed. Yet, the content is severely obscured by a recognisable digital method to highlight a sense of anxiety built upon disappointment when the viewer cannot access the full image we anticipated. It is an obsolete anxiety as photography after the Internet has already happened; the act of the photograph is now a mere reflex of the digital era... individualism is no longer necessary, oblivion is inevitable.



## Luke Saxon

### How Much is This?

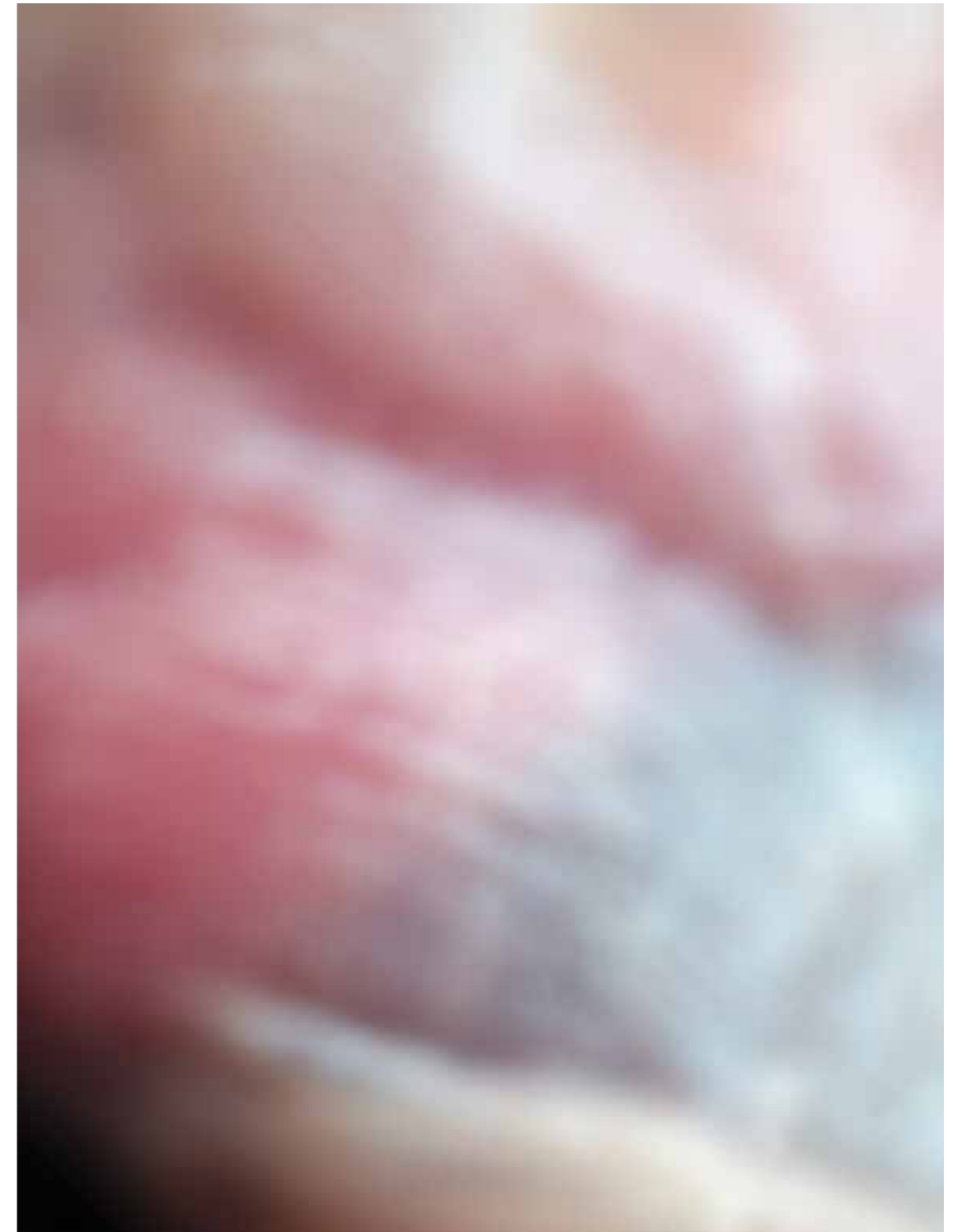
This work responds to the increase of pound stores that are opening all over the UK. During the British recession, Pound shops and bargain stores were one of the only businesses to thrive and grow. With this work I wanted to document the store in a traditional, social documentary sense but present the work using more contemporary methods to create a narrative of consuming in post recession Britain.







## Georgina Rimmer



### The Beautiful

Both Plato and Immanuel Kant put forward theories relating to the beautiful. Plato was interested in the realm of abstract ideas, a world separate to the physical world we interact with. For Plato our physical world contains essences from the world of ideas. The beautiful, in regards to objects, is a predetermined concept from another world.

Kant claims that the beautiful is a 'disinterest', something that we enjoy but do not wish to obtain, and therefore, making it free. For something to be beautiful Kant says it must be free from any ulterior motives and ideas. It is via these theories that my work aims to entice the viewer into questioning the way in which they process something as beautiful.

# Megan Bayliss

## Tore Up

A fashion publication that portrays modern drinking culture through a combination of fashion editorial, appropriated club photos, text and graphics. The project was inspired by my time working as a VIP Waitress at a nightclub in Essex for over 3 years. I witnessed the effects of this drinking culture first-hand, and the types of behaviour, language and excessive spending which have become normality. The imagery within the publication reflects the type of behaviour seen on an average night out, not just in Essex, but all over the UK. The publication is a mixture of club posters, together

with the online output of images used to promote club nights and events, inspired the elements of pixelation, text and graphics. To accompany the book is a club-mix CD produced by DJ ScottyL, an Essex and London based DJ who recently featured on Capital Xtra radio. I encased the book and CD within the plastic sleeve in the same way that club promoters do to combine everything, before they are distributed or attached to cars parked near to their nightclub. The publication is a simple representation of how many people now spend their weekends.



# Laura Jane Bland



## Sunday

"How do you spend your Sunday?" is the subject forming this documentary photography project. After spending my life in a church community, I asked 7 different people/families from the church to document how they spend their Sunday using disposable cameras. Sunday allows you to see into a group of random people's lives and how they all differ, even though their

Sundays all revolve around something similar. The publicly displayed photo book reveals the images taken on the disposable cameras and shows a set of portrait images of who was involved. Sunday works alongside 2 other photographic projects, which carry a similar approach, all of which focus on a sense of community. These 3 bodies of work fit into the project six by four equals 35.



# Dean Baybutt



**Our Land**

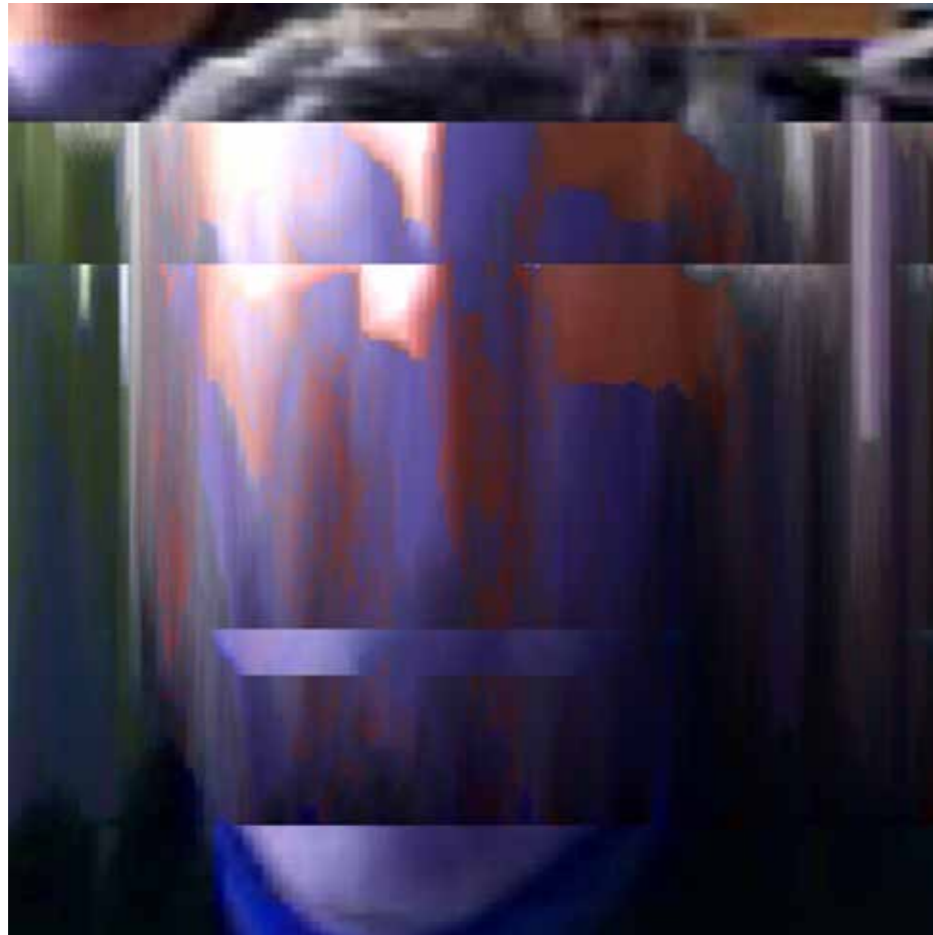
Hydraulic Fracturing is a new and highly controversial form of Shale gas mining in the UK that is now banned in many US states and other areas across Europe. Despite many demonstrated health and environmental concerns including earthquakes and water contamination and a great deal of opposition against it, the government and industry insist that ‘fracking’ is safe. The villages of Roseacre and Wharles (Lancashire) represented in this work, say it is not safe. They state it is an unsuitable process of

industrialisation for both our small nation and the local communities (particularly in the North of England), which it will primarily affect. By looking at the simple and familiar rural landscapes that will be impacted, Our Land invites us to consider the effects that our choices as a society have on our environments, landscapes and social health. This is juxtaposed against public opinion, which is so often disregarded in favour of resource gain, economic influence and whether this is morally right or wrong.





# Vanessa Kumah

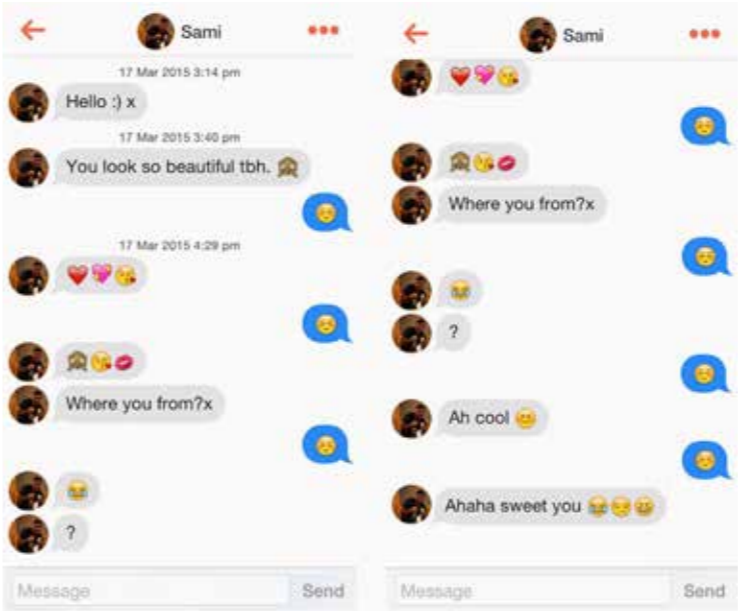
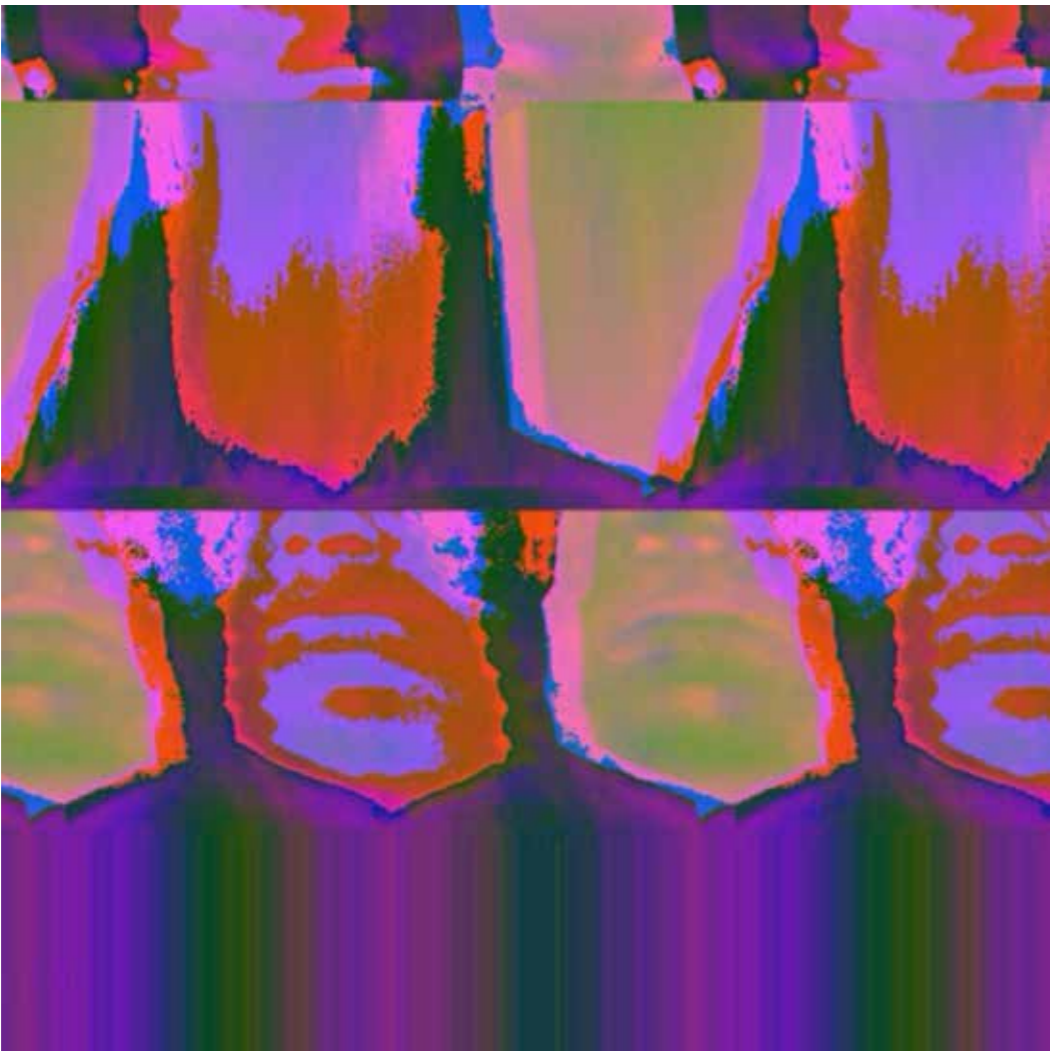


## The Men of Tinder

The men of Tinder is a social media project which studies how men interact with women based on the perception of an image. By creating a fictional identity through Tinder, Jasmine, I began to identify the characters of Tinder and how they portray themselves to engage with her. The images have been distorted into a glitch to represent the malfunction social media has when exposing yourself. The GIFs include

imagery the men have published and sent directly to me. The digital imagery has been supported by quotations from Tinder conversations I had with the men – you can see how they have approached Jasmine when there is a screen masking communication. The colourful imagery is to mask the discomforting idea of not knowing who we communicate with through mass culture and new social media platforms.





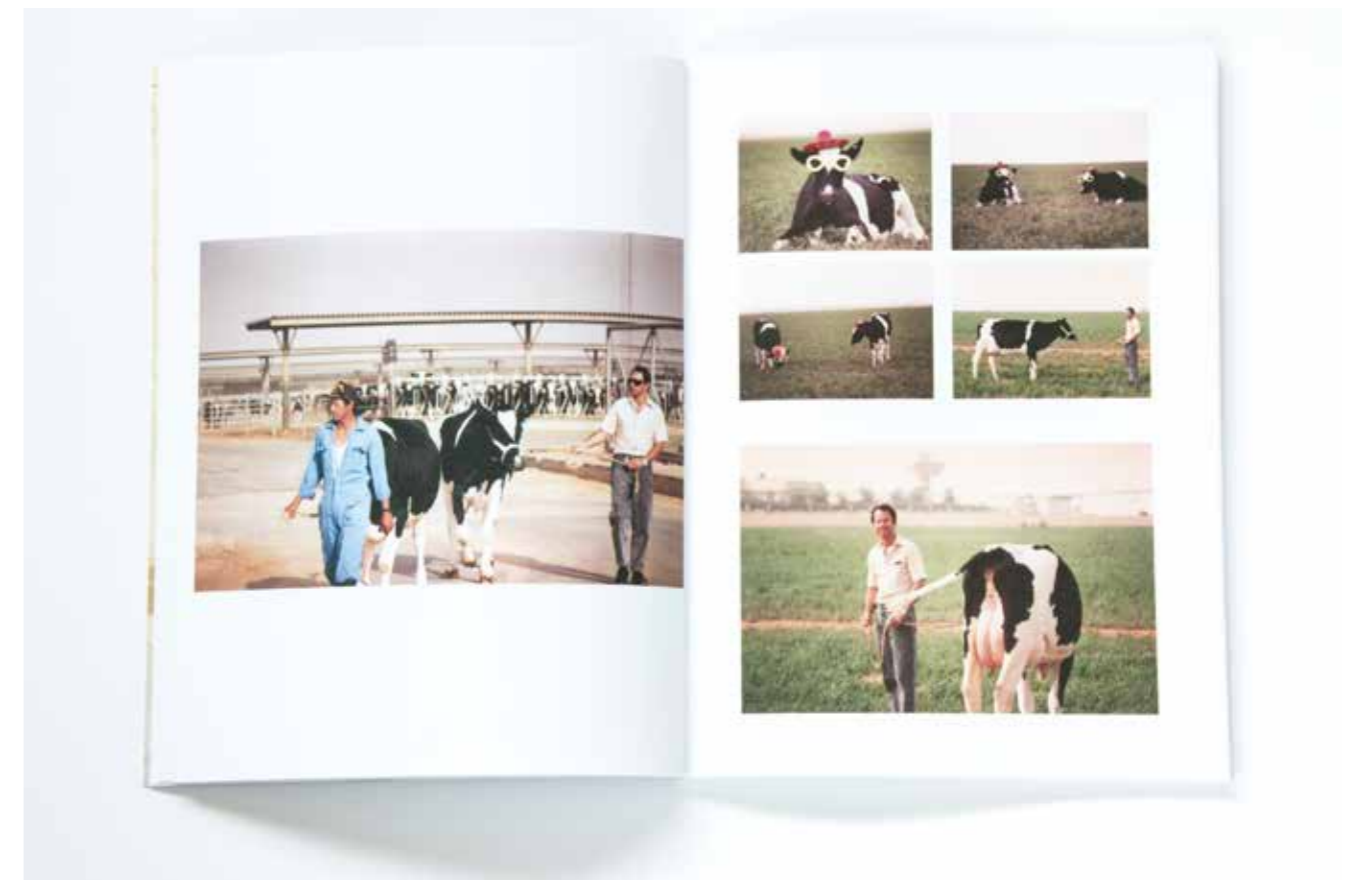
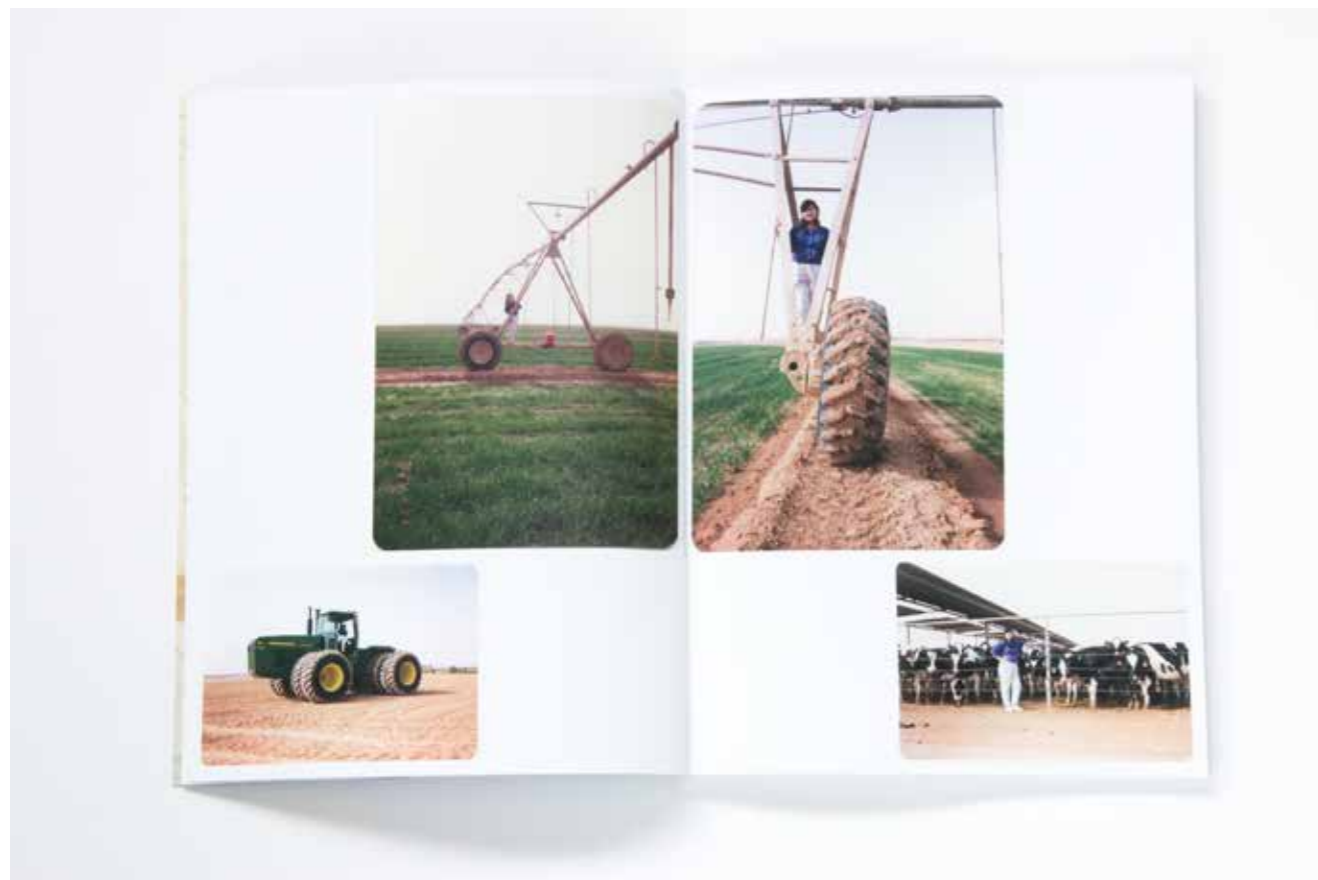
# Hazel Whittall

## Dairy Desert

A photobook which personally exposes a timeline of my childhood spent in Saudi Arabia, and how my family were involved with the growth of Al Safi Dairy farm, the largest dairy farm in the world. The photobook was created to give an insight into the various adventures and events that we as a family undertook during our time in the Arabian deserts, and also in the

exotic city of Riyadh. The series of photographs taken were all recorded by my father, who, like any other father would record their life. I have curated a selection of his images in an attempt to retrace this personal history. Both the memory of these events and my new relationship with the imagery has influenced the sequencing and structure of this work.







#### The Tall Boys Were Here

PB Labour Club has always played a huge part in the community. Recently this club has closed down and I have created a documentary piece based on this. It was the Morris Dancers home on a Wednesday night for over 40 years, and the heart of Platt Bridge itself, so I wanted to document this change and how it affected this community. During my research I uncovered a lot of archival imagery which told a story about the club and this community; the difference between men and women using the club and the sense of hierarchy between them. The book documents the different aspects of the club and how it has changed for the Morris Dancers, whilst showing the camaraderie of this community and the end of an era for them.

## Natasha Gaskell





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# Ayesha Jones

INTERVIEWED  
BY BRIAN J MORRISON

BRIAN J MORRISON: You have recently been shortlisted for the Magnum 30 under 30 photography exhibition for a project you began whilst in your final year at University called IMPerfection. Can you tell me about the project?

AYESHA JONES: IMPerfection is a body of self-portrait work that explores my journey as a young woman living with Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis. Idiopathic means my spine curves in an 'S' shape and also rotates, causing a rib hump and an asymmetrical appearance of the torso. Scoliosis is 10 times more likely to effect girls than boys and there is still no known cause. I explore the notion of beauty, female sexuality and body image and the way colonial systems have aided in their distortion. I expose my hidden “disability” from all angles as I learn to find the beauty in life's imperfections.

We are taught to block out pain and avoid struggles, this means we miss a valuable opportunity to heal ourselves and deal with issues at their core. I address social issues from the inside out. I embark on a photographic journey that takes me to the route cause of my pain.

BJM: How did this project begin?

AJ: I wanted to explore the fashion industry as I was also modelling at the time and I had become disillusioned with the way in which certain parts of the industry functioned, specifically the way in which women were represented. Initially I aimed to produce a fashion editorial piece for commercial publication but after some discussion with my tutors, we came to the conclusion that turning the camera (and the project) towards

myself and my experiences could present a more innovative examination of these perceived representational issues.

I decided to look back at my personal archive and examine the photographs, which documented various moments in my life, from the relationship between my mother and father to the way my condition progressed over time. I needed to understand where I was coming from in order to move forward. Humans are just a product of what they are exposed to. Looking through my family archive was a way for me to unpick my experiences so I could get a better understanding of where my ideas and beliefs had come from.

Photography has always played a key role in my life so I have an extensive collection of archive material. Growing up I would have used photography as a method of exploring personal issues so many of the photographs I had would not be typical *family album* photographs. As I mentioned I was also doing a bit of commercial modelling work so I began to think about the images I featured in and that very specific representation of myself. It seemed somewhat disconnected with how I felt. I would be encouraged to pose in a manner that hid any physical signs of Scoliosis and after time this become extremely troubling to me and it was clear that specific elements of my body did not fit this specific idea of commercial beauty. From there I began looking at producing new self-portraiture in a manner which confronted the effect scoliosis has on my body rather than attempt to conceal it.

BJM: I am also aware you carried out a photographic project with people who also had scoliosis can you tell me a little about that, how it was conceived, what was the output?





AJ: When I finished university I was keen to photograph other people who had scoliosis, so I contacted SAUK (Scoliosis Association UK) the summer that I graduated. I organised a location shoot in London with them, they then used those images in their publication's and online to promote their organisation. They told me that after using my images their website hits had doubled, so they were keen to keep in touch. They also used one of the images I took for IMPerfection as the front cover of their members' magazine that is called Backbone. The magazine was even displayed in the hospital I had my spinal fusion surgery in, which was a nice surprise!

The following summer I worked with them again on a studio shoot. On this shoot I was focused on getting shots that really showcased the condition in a new way. One of the frustrating things about scoliosis is that there is not much variation in the images of the condition. The images that you find on the Internet are often clinical looking snapshots of white teenage girls that have mild to moderate curvatures. I wanted to give another view of scoliosis to show how diverse it is. I wanted to take the condition out of the context of hospitals and therapy rooms. I have had messages from people saying how relieved they are to see images that show curvatures that are as large as theirs because they have only been able to find pictures of mild curvatures. I have had so many messages over

the last couple of years from scoliosis fighters saying how much more confident they feel after seeing the work on my website. I can't even describe how amazing it makes me feel when I read things like that!

It is important to work with people and organisations who share a common goal, it makes life easier. I was able to give them good quality images of varied conditions and in return I was able to access a professional studio, volunteers who had mild to severe curvatures and then have those images published and promoted to scoliosis fighters around the country. I have built up a bank of images of other scoliosis fighters and built a relationship with an important organisation. I am currently organising some more photo shoots with the help of SAUK. I am starting to photograph scoliosis fighters in their own homes, or places they feel comfortable, to explore the condition further. I also want to film a series of interviews to look at the emotional impact of the condition. I would then like to put on an event/exhibition in June 2015 to contribute to Scoliosis awareness month.

I think I was in a rush to get IMPerfection out there when I graduated and then got disheartened when things didn't really go as quickly as I would have liked but I'm starting to realise that sometimes projects take time to mature and need developing even further.



**Ayesha Jones**

is a documentary photographer and filmmaker from Birmingham, UK, who graduated from The University of Central Lancashire in 2012.

# John Van Aitken

ARCHITECTURES OF  
DISPLACEMENT – SALFORD

We are witnessing a continuing global phenomenon whereby land inhabited by the poor is appropriated and replaced by financial districts, leisure spaces and investment properties.

The phrase “*accumulation by dispossession*” provides one way of thinking about this process of territorial conflict. Wealth is accumulated in the interests of states and corporations by means of evictions and forms of social and architectural cleansing. For over 10 years we have been conducting fieldwork, archival research and making photographic documents on a council estate in Salford, Greater Manchester, a landscape scarred by multiple processes of disinvestment, ruination and displacement characteristic of accumulation by dispossession.



## Institute of Urban Dreaming

My practice centres on urban landscape, and the interplay between economics and socio-cultural factors in continuously reshaping everyday city spaces. I am interested in the role photography can play in deciphering urban terrains when combined with practices like site writing and ethnographic fieldwork. I am currently engaged in a collaborative practice with artist/writer Jane Brake and

others, under the name Institute of Urban Dreaming (IUD). Formed in 2004, IUD researches planned environments, visionary urban spaces and everyday utopias such as communist show towns and modernist housing estates, all over Europe and recently in China. We are committed to debating the best way to face collectively the inevitable urban future we are facing. [www.iudblog.org](http://www.iudblog.org)

## SALFORD

Athole Street commences at the junction with Liverpool Street, where the TECCO Off Licence pulls off a cheeky tricolour reference to TESCO'S, and terminates 300 metres later, when it meets the uncompromisingly grim Hodge Lane wall, which conceals the motorway flowing beneath it. A thin wedge lodged between busy roads, this is a place that could easily be, and frequently is passed by.

Heading from the TECCO junction we pass a small new development on the right hand side and on the left the show-room and show homes, with a large hoarding concealing the PRIVATE, PRIVATE, PRIVATE parking spaces for people viewing the properties. The developer's logo borrows heavily from the television test card, presumably to appeal to buyers from Media City just over the way. Signs welcome you to "the heart and soul of Salford"; "discover urban innovation surrounded by green open spaces"; and own your own home for £87,000.

Continuing down Athole Street, beyond the empty residents carpark, above the fence draped with green mesh, is a view of the new housing development's pointy red roofs.

Most of the streets adjoining Athole are through terraces, two up two down, with yards. The ones of the vacant homes contain the parting accumulation of rubbish, things unwanted in the new home, broken toys, drinks cans, stacks of mushy magazines, torn clothes. In the absence of gardeners the small front gardens, which you can still see were once stocked with flowering plants, vines and cypress shrubs are overgrown, running to seed and dank. Between the homes are pedestrianized areas with benches and mature trees, like the tilia with their intoxicating foliage. ALL MATERIALS OF VALUE HAVE BEEN REMOVED is stencilled on the boarded up windows. I listen to Athole Street ventriloquizing the vocabulary of value and worthlessness. I peer through the holes in the board, into the house that shudders.

We are exploring a wall stippled with tiny pebbles, the faint play of a shadow tree, a black plastic number 5 once over painted in yellow, when Rose comes out of her house, walking in our direction. We have previously only ever observed each other from a distance. She is telling us about her immanent move, pointing towards the new flats at the top of the road.

She will be moving to a one bedroom flat soon, not far from her daughter, who will move "over there" says Rose, pointing to one of the unfinished houses on the building site. "I don't know why they wanted to get rid of these houses, there's nothing wrong with them. The council have really let the outside go. All it needs is a bit of work on the outside and this would be great, inside I have everything I want...but they never listened to us." Rose's shy gaze finds the pavement. She is anxious about her six grand children who frequently stay the night all together in her three bedroomed house. A victim of the bedroom tax, Rose cannot pay for, and will not be allocated more than one bedroom. Rose acknowledges that she is lucky to remain near her family. Some elderly neighbours have not been so fortunate. Re-housed in an unfamiliar place, one of them was robbed and others mourn the loss of neighbourly support and familiarity. These are the unremarkable losses of regeneration: incalculable for the victims, they will never figure in any official reckoning.

The streets surrounding Athole have already disappeared from the developer's maps, and gradually the residents leave too. Sometimes when we don't have time to walk around the estate, we drive, and so we discover that the week Rose moves out a film crew moves in. Unexpected activity alerts us: black clad figures, motorbikes, security guards, a huddle of special police. For a brief moment we believe we are witnessing a police raid on one of the remaining tenants. Then we see large vans spewing out cables, tripods and lighting stands, young people with clip and clapper boards, and an ARMED RESPONSE VEHICLE, faked with the help of outsized vinyl lettering. A small front garden is illuminated by a large silver umbrella, as if an extra terrestrial abduction is taking place. The drabness, the weedy, flaking, empty grey streets are momentarily spectacular. The boxy pebbled dashed homes are briefly valued as a location for an urban crime series.

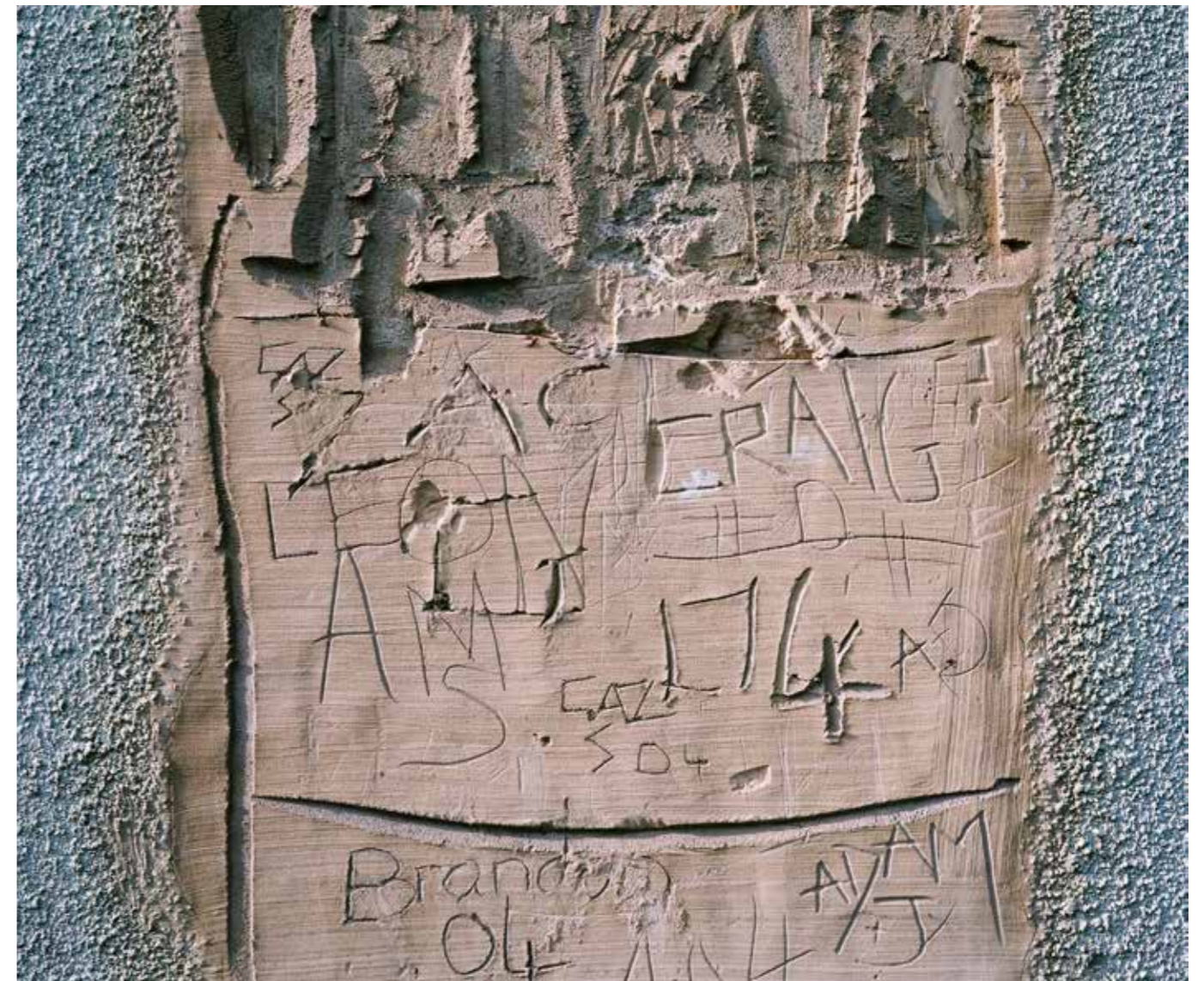
The lots nearest the Hodge Lane wall have already been cleared, levelled and enclosed within the shin high 'prairie' fences. Hardcore reveals the mangled micro-fragments of a life. On this sea of crumbled matter float objects not yet broken down: a child's scooter, takeaway boxes, empty lager cans.





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