

NORTH

Volume 2

Featuring

Abigail Moss-Coomes p.17 Becca Wood p.20
Charles Stanton p.24 David Lester p.26
Jason Rose p.30 Kirsty Burston p.32 Ryan Wagstaff p.34
Seing Ta p.36 Tom Rees p.38
Andrea Carroll p.44 Nicola Brophy p.46

With...

Jonathan Purcell p.04 Lauren Jo Kelly p.53
John van Aitken p.58
☐ Kevin Crooks p.64

rophy

Seeing and Unseeing the Urban Environment: A Critical and Contextual Response

gary BratchFord

Since the beginning of the 21st century, more than half of the world's population have been living in cities. Thus, for the majority of us, what we see is, first and foremost, shaped or informed by our now largely urban, everyday experiences. This phenomenon is rapidly becoming a global action. a century ago, only two of every ten people worldwide were city dwellers, now the global majority is urban. While existing cities expand their boundaries, places such as China, which became a majority urban nation in 2011, plan to move another 250 million people to its current and developing city-spaces (Mirzoeff, 2015). To cope with this state orchestrated migration, China, as well as other developing nations, including India, are building ready-made urban environments. In response, photographers have begun to critically and reflectively respond to the homogeneity of the 'new global city'. acknowledging this identikit process, the German artist Michael Wolf's *Architecture of Density* presents the uniformity of cities like hong Kong as utilitarian rather than modernist. others, like Chinese artist Sze Tsung Leong or Israeli photographer Shai Kremer have taken a less direct approach. By examining their own national landscapes as spaces of erasure and development, each photographer subtly highlights how the demands of modernity are in conflict with the past, present and possibly the future site of their landscape.

Moreover, the urban is being replicated in spaces of abjection. on the edge of 'civility' and 'out of sight', temporary urban 'do it Your Self' cities are popping up on boarder regions across europe and the Middle east. From the 'Jungle' close to the Calais port terminal in northwest France to Za'atari in Jordan, the organic development of these spaces reflects some of the formalities of urban planning, including shops and streets, access ways, informal social spaces are clear demarcations between 'public' and 'private'. Thus, it is without refute that the urban landscape now plays a significant role in how we see and understand the world today. It is becoming the backdrop for acts of terrorism and insurgency as well as the setting for the mass movement of people, capital and commerce.

The urban is also the arena from which we learn to see and unsee. It is where we look for inspiration and where we often go if we want to challenge our sense of normalcy. It is often where the most progressive trends are pioneered and where conventions are contested. It is common knowledge that the world's leading fashion houses are located in New York, London, Paris and Tokyo. Moreover, these locations are young and networked; thus, it is no surprise that the inhabitants of these locations became the inspiration for Jason Rose's digital ethnography, *Contemporary Freaks*. a homage to 1980's New York underground disco club culture, Rose's work reflects the multifaceted youth subcultures of a global society that is personal, individual and referential all at the same time. The urban is also present in the work of Ryan Wagstaff's studio practice. Inspired by the Kowloon district in hong Kong, Wagstaff uses studio props and lighting cubes as an allegory for the urban cityscape upon which his muse sits.

Other graduate students have pursued more forthright engagements with the urban landscape, foregrounding urban space as a site of on-going contestation. akin to the images drawn from my on-going photographic survey in the inner-city suburbs of Manchester. The work of Kirsty Burston and Thomas Rees both use their camera to explore and question the social and cultural regeneration of two different areas within Liverpool (UK). a form of social-semiotics, each photographer frames the space of their enquiry in such a way that we are invited to read both the space and the objects within as signs, signs that cannot be divorced from the critical position of the photographer. In this regard, there is a clear intentionality to this type of photography yet the approach is also artistic. By contrast, some students have used photography as a tool for personal enquiry; such is the case of Nicola Brophy's *House of the Lord* series. Focusing on the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Preston, Brophy offers an intimate account of the congregation, its garb and community space. Brightly lit, the concurrent theme of natural light and religiosity is subtly

present, the signs and icons of worship common with religious representations are replaced with a combination of tightly framed portraits and threshold spaces. Bringing the proximity of the lens, and thus the spectator close to the subject, Brophy's work offers a growing familiarity to the subjects and places that she has documented each time they are revisited. In equal measure is Becca Wood's touching and intimate series, *'Not an average 7 year old'*. In this instance, the urban is omnipresent as a setting but not the focus of the lens or the spectators gaze but rather, we are asked to consider life as sometimes difficult journey. This can also be said for the work of Seing Ta. The 're-housing' of culture is often part and parcel of living in a global society. The migration of people due to war, economics or even love is never straightforward. French historian, Pierre Nora's places of memory or *lieux de mémoire* plays a key role in identifying the importance of place and memory, a notion that is specifically telling in Ta's work. When we go somewhere new the issue of seeing becomes, if only temporally, a complicated process. how we see things, spaces, and objects are never fixed, nor is our approach. We often encounter new spaces, places and communities with caution. Ta's work bespeaks these cautionary tones in a way Woods, Burston and rees do not. The sepia tones, memory like in their presentation are a telling sign of Ta's relationship with space, memory and his subject. In david Lester's piece, *'The Body and the Landscape'*, he actively removes the spectator away from the urban and into the countryside. While we are indeed an urban population, Lester turns his lens to the contours of our rural environment. Lester, like Woods and Brophy provide spaces for reflection on our health, spirituality and our bodies in their own personal, yet creative ways.

Continuing this creativity is the augmented reality of Charles Stanton's 'super structures'. Playing with the notion of reality and perception, Stanton builds new spaces from existing buildings. Shot on location then altered with Photoshop, Stanton's experimental black and white process of image composites questions the form, function and value of the original. Like Stanton, andrea Carroll also uses black and white to striking effect. Focusing on the desolate Ukrainian city of Chernobyl, Carroll's work delineates a practice that can be read as both documentary and art photography. The series depicts the consequences of political and human upheaval consistent with aftermath photography and the expressive and timeless absence felt in a catastrophe site. For the work of abigail Moss-Coomes we are presented with an image of two distinct human tragedies within one single frame. Closing the gap between time and space, Moss-Coomes use of the Farm Security administration's 1937 Great depression photographs and the recent refugee crisis are a comment on the reoccurring theme of human suffering and easily readable visual tropes that ensue. Coomes's creative post-production practice can be understood as part of a broader, on-going examination of photography's relationship with scenes of disaster, migration and the plight of those seeking refuge.

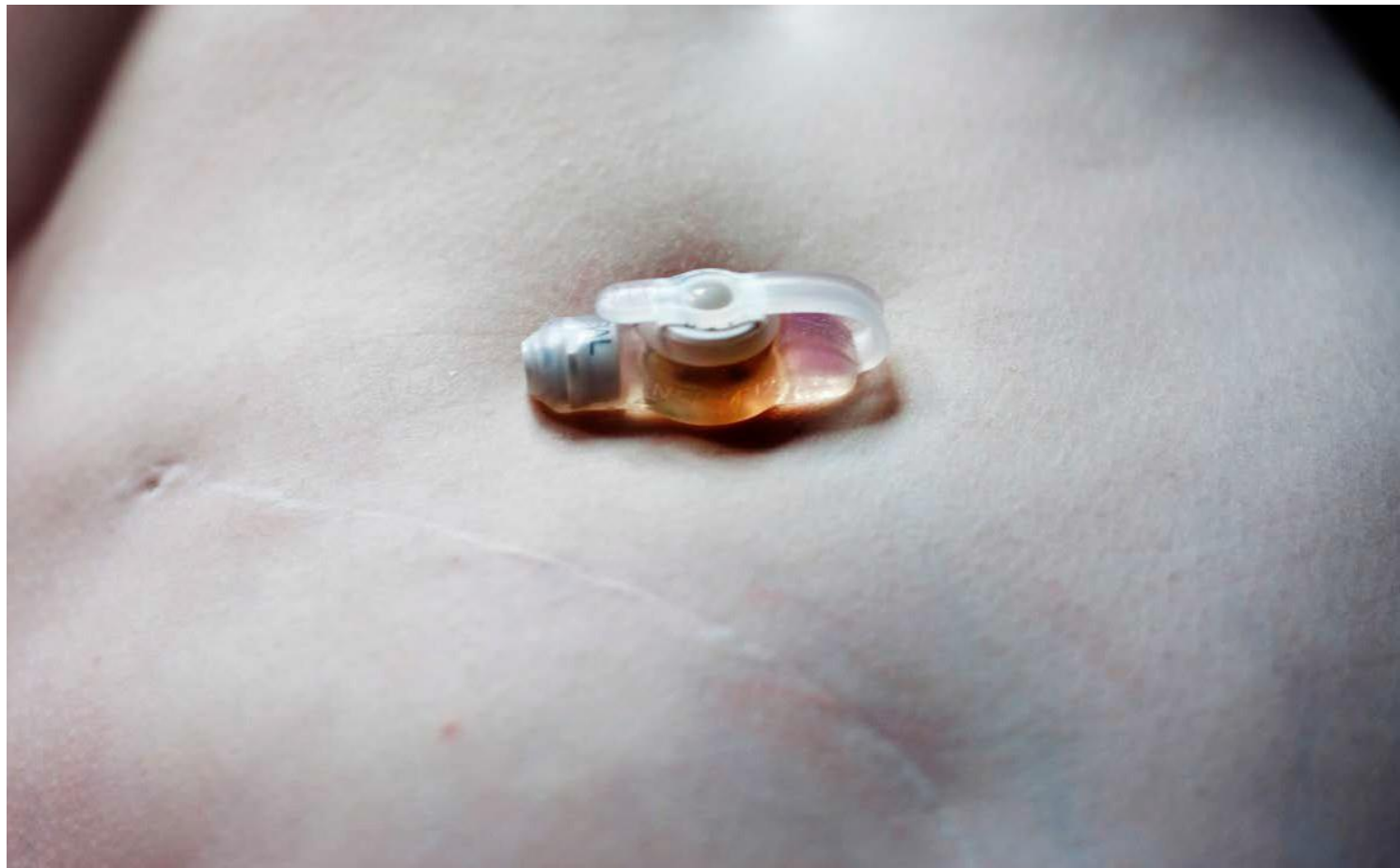
Dr Gary Bratchford
is a senior lecturer at UCLaN
and Board Member: International
Sociological association Visual
Sociology Working Group.
garybratchford.info

Abigail Moss-Coomes





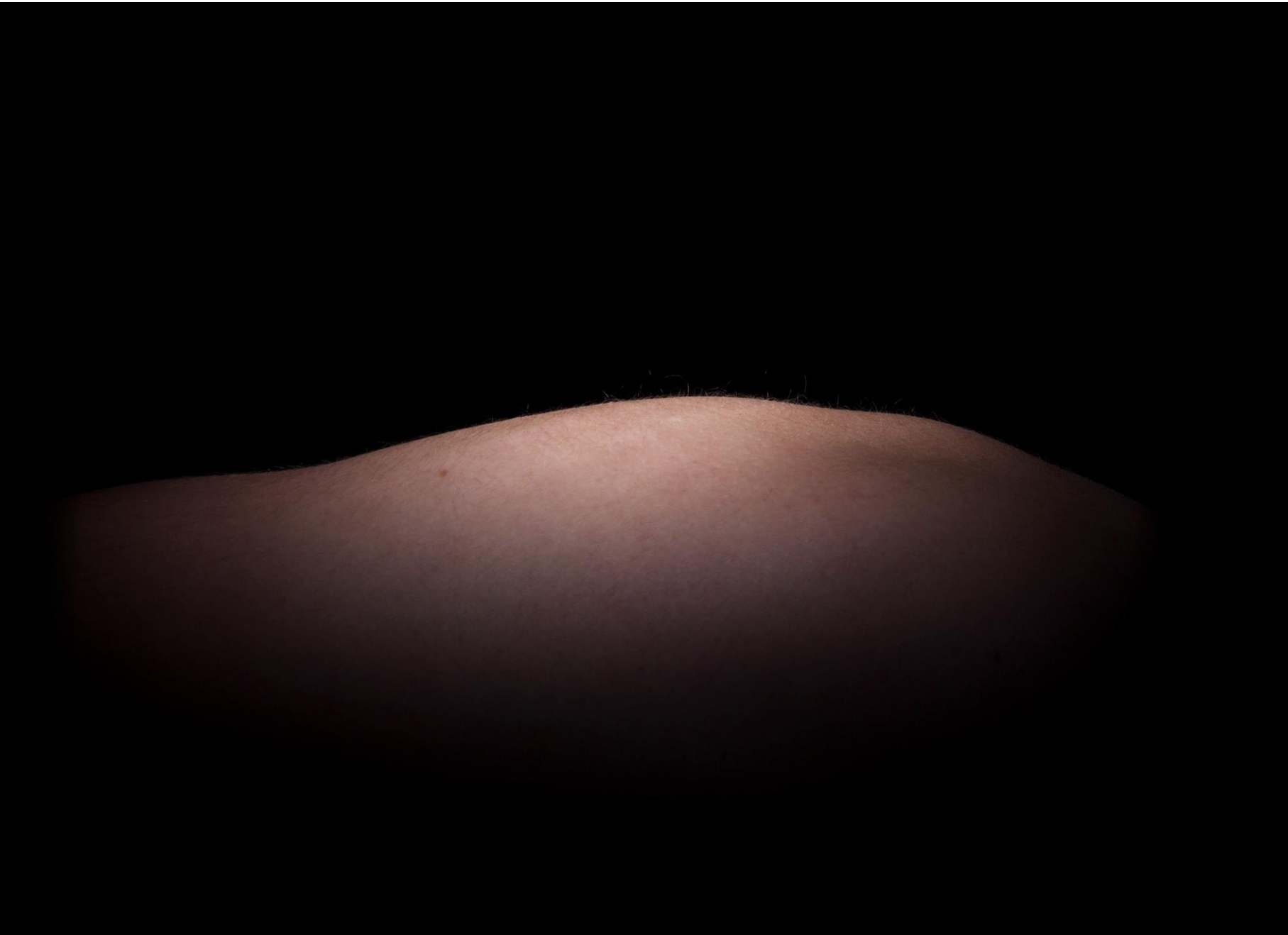
Becca Wood



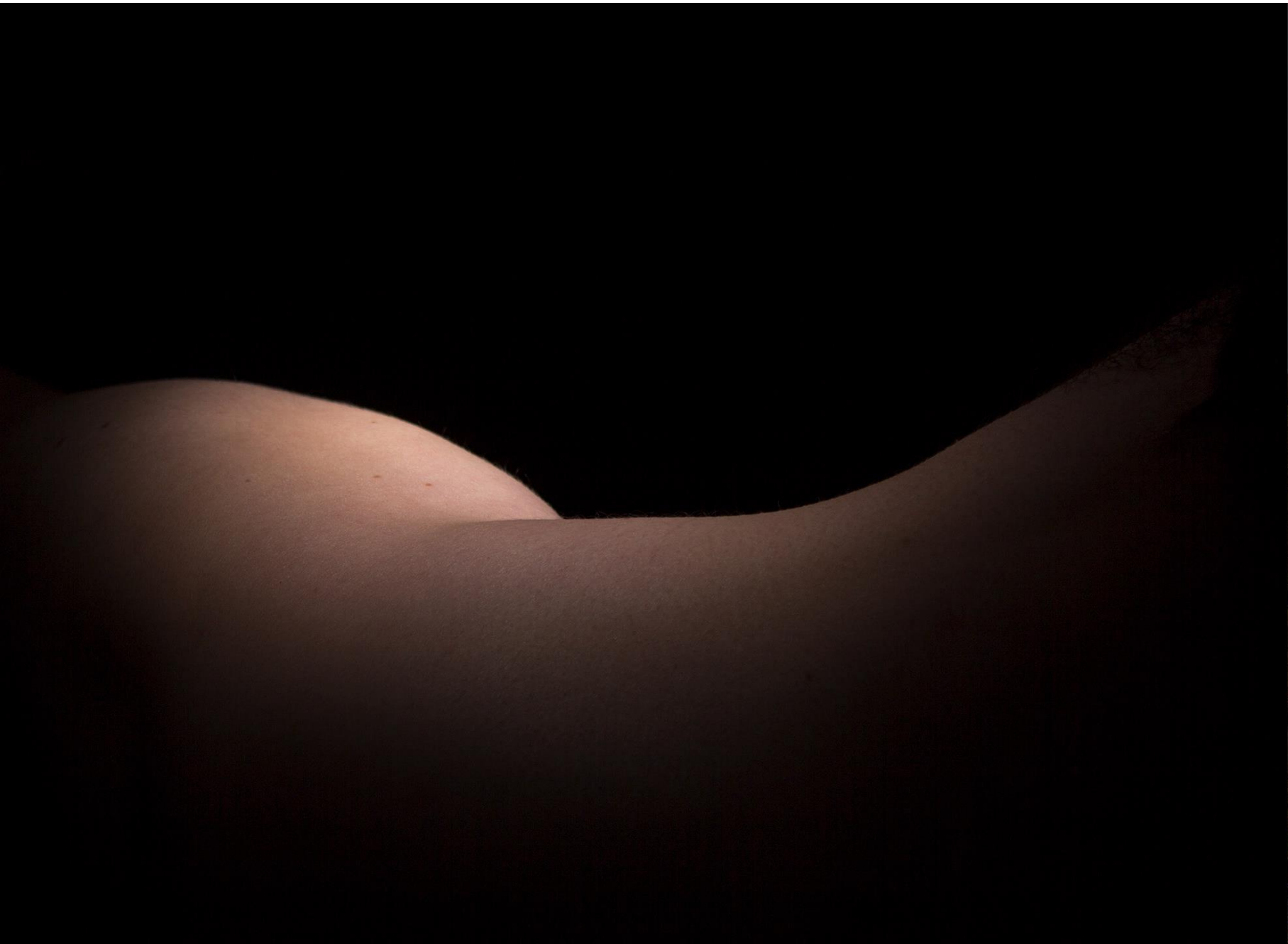


Charles Stanton





David Lester



Jason Rose



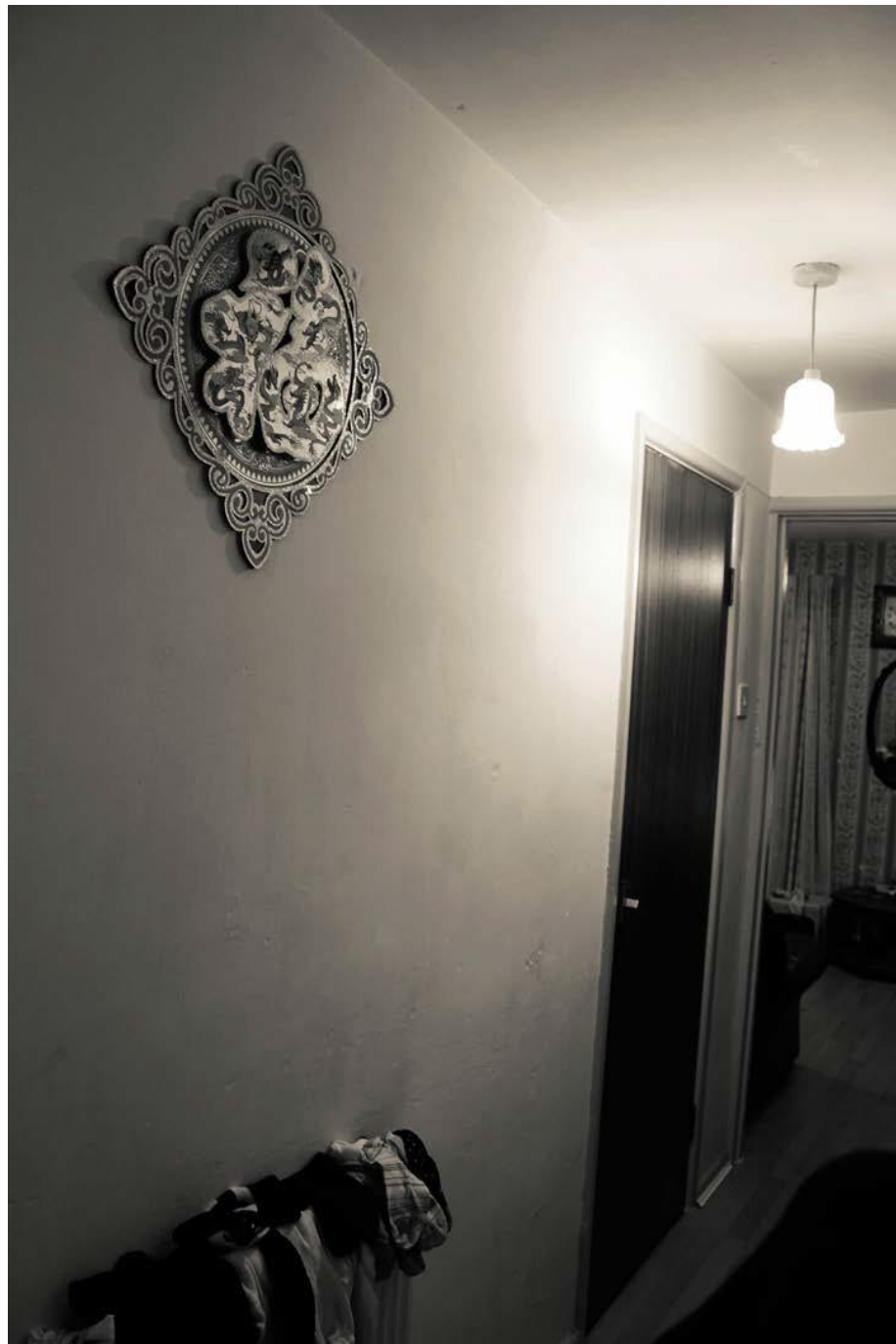
Kirsty Burston

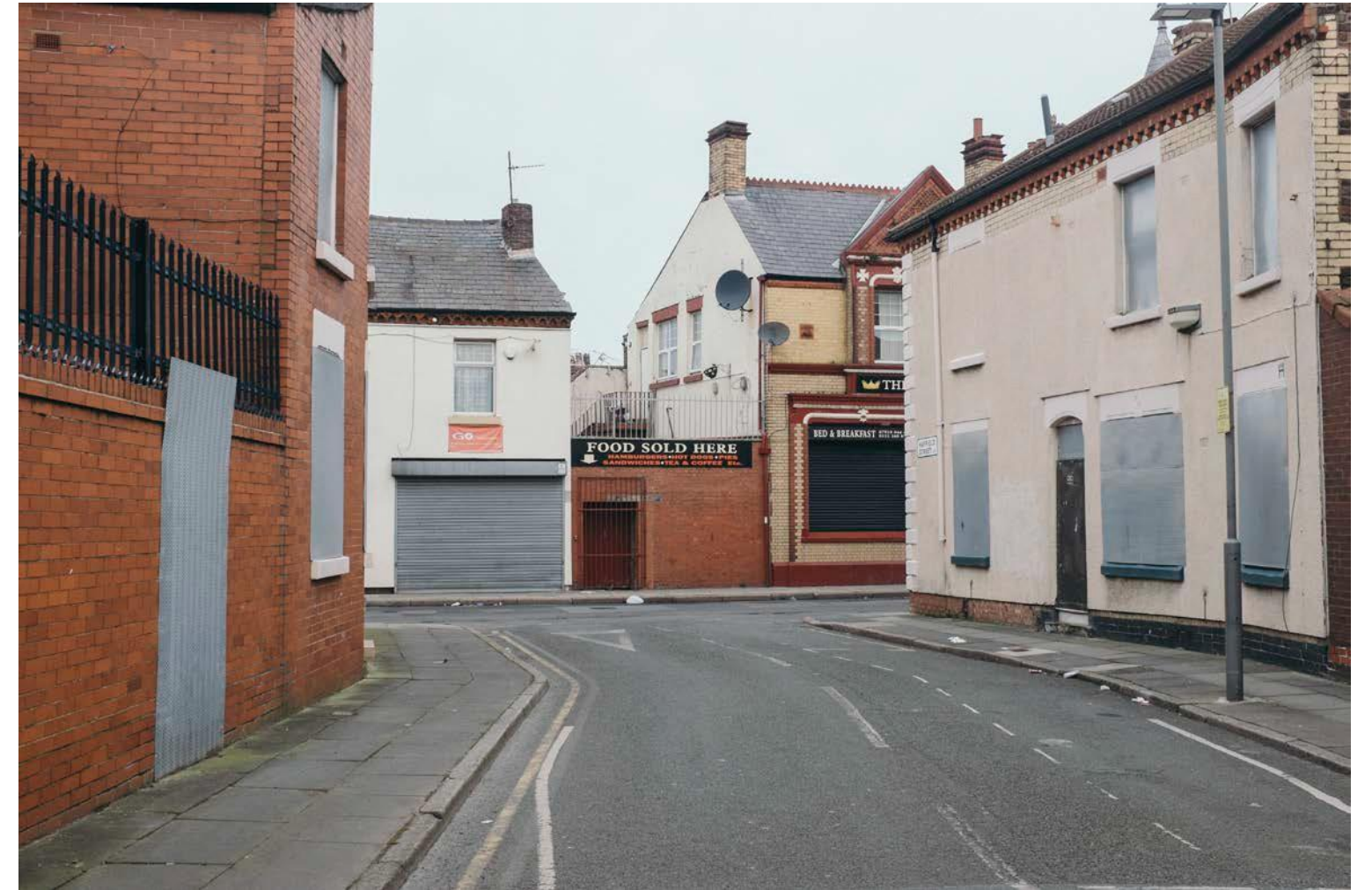


Ryan Wagstaff



SeingTa





Tom Rees







Andrea Carroll

Nicola Brophy







Graduates

abigail Moss-Coomes
(West sussex, 1994)
bmosscoomes@yahoo.com
amosscoomesphotography.com

Becca Wood
(Bury, 1993)
rebecca_wood93@hotmail.com

Charles Stanton
(nottingham, 1994)
charlie.stanton2@hotmail.co.uk

david Lester
(preston, 1993)
davidpaullester@gmail.com
unwrittenphotography.co.uk

Jason rose
(hackney, 1994)
jasonrosephotography@gmail.com
jasonrosephotography.co.uk

Kirsty Burston
(liVerpool, 1995)
kirsty.burston@gmail.com
kirstyburstonphotography.com

ryan Wagstaff
(Bolton, 1993)
ryan.wagstaff@outlook.com
ryanwagstaffphoto.com

Seing Ta
(greater manchester, 1994)
seingta15@hotmail.co.uk
seingta15.wixsite.com/seingtaphotography

Tom rees
(liVerpool, 1995)
tom@tomrees.co
tomrees.co

Postgraduates

andrea Carroll
(lancashire, 1983)
andreacarrollphotography@aol.com
andreacarroll.co.uk

Nicola Brophy
(lancashire, 1986)
nicolalouisebrophy@gmail.com

Alumni

Lauren Jo Kelly
(manchester, 1990)
lozjokelly@hotmail.com
ljkphotography.co.uk

Kevin Crooks
(st. helens, 1979)
contact@kevincrooks.co.uk
kevincrooks.co.uk

School of Journalism and Media

dr andreW ireland
executiVe dean

John holloWay
head oF school

alan keegan
programme leader

Photography department

John Van aitken
Ba & ma course leader

dr gary BratchFord
senior lecturer

daVid dennison
lecturer

Joanna garrett
technician

adam mead
lecturer &
technical demonstrator

Brian Jmorrison
lecturer

Jonathan purcell
lecturer

markreeVes
lecturer

daVid schoFieId
senior technician

dan tierney
lecturer &
technical demonstrator

North

proJect manager
Brian J morrison

designed By
Ben mclaughlin

printed By
unicum/gianotten printed media

With a special thanks to the
continued support From the uniVersity
oF central lancashire, preston

puBlished noVemBer 2016
isBn 978-1-909755-08-6

First published 2016 by the University of
Central Lancashire, Preston, pr1 2he.

all rights reserved. No part of this publication
may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any
form or by any electronic, mechanical or other
means, now known or hereafter invented, including
photocopying and recording, or in any information
storage or retrieval system, without permission
in writing from the publishers.

a catalogue record for this publication is available
from the British Library.

Part of The Great Northern Creative Festival,
The Fieldworks Conference and the Photography
research Group.

WWW.uc1an.ac.uk
WWW.photouc1an.com



voluMe 2

ISBN:
978–1–909755–08–6