



Studies in Material Thinking

VOLUME 17
*Multisensory materialities
in the art school*

PAPER 05
*Fugitive testimonies:
An artist archive*

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ABSTRACT

How does a whole society or nation remember or forget the age of analogue film photography and its methods of documenting memory and identity? Inspired by procedures such as the sixteenth-century artificial memory systems presented in the writings of Frances Yates, I examine in my research the workings and subversions of memory through appropriation and reworking of fragments from the analogue photographic archive. The material photographic print reminds us of fugitive memories of family, events, wars, propaganda, the role of witness and visual testimony. I construct new artificial memories from the gleanings of the

flea market, second hand shops, the attic, the shoebox, and archival researches. The objects I encounter offer a haptic visual prompt for new works that pose questions of memory and artificial memory, and identity within the visual ecology of a fast-eroding analogue tradition. I present case studies that demonstrate the intimate scale and fragility of such photographic scraps, showing my re-working of found objects to create small visual series accompanied by narrative encounters with each of the photographs. In the process, I also indicate the unique contribution of studio culture in this complex tentative multisensory interrogation.

KEY WORDS

material photographic print, memory, appropriation, haptic, encounter, visual ecology, archive.



Left – Figure 1: Uncredited example of a found discarded Newspaper Archive photograph, contemporaneously retouched with photopaste to create a portrait format (1936).

Right – Figure 2: Uncredited example of a found discarded Newspaper Archive photograph, contemporaneously retouched with photopaste to create an isolated section (circa 1930s).

INTRODUCTION

How a whole society or nation remembers or forgets in an age of film photography (1889–present day) is the question I will address in this paper. This is explored in connection to my own personal encounters with the visual ecology of the material photographic print. The inscription of memory and identity are there to be read, in the form of traces to be interrogated and within the reference contained in this visual form. Analogue prints exist as a record of family events and private life and also of public happenings and personalities. There are many ways to perform for the camera and many ways to be mesmerized by what it seems to tell us about the lives of others. There are role-playing concerns here linked to identity and gender to examine, including the placing of one's self in everyday situations and exploring the absurdities at the heart of everyday life. Marginal photographs could be considered a discarded leftover medium, but my practice as an artist here is to repurpose the found material print—driven by a belief in its intrinsic value as a forensic medium of traces. The traces and fragments held within the print, I believe, prompt our individual and collective memory through the memory images recorded in all its published formats. The idea that a photograph could itself be a performance is a constant in the history of conceptual art as in the work of Yves Klein (1928–1969), where the artist is the archivist of their contrived or appropriated collection, counterbalancing the regulatory side to archiving. Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960) was a performance for the camera but one that remains open to speculation as to its veracity. The products of the camera are materials that transcend the merely documentary as a discourse of verification, one that we need to now analyze and pay close attention

to in an age of digital intervention. In his critical essay 'Photography and Conceptual Art', A. D. Coleman critically places the material photograph as sensorially affecting as 'nothing more nor less than magic' and that 'this magic endures beyond all explanations of the physics and chemistry of the process' (Coleman, 1998 [1979], pp. 72-73).

... a belief in its intrinsic value as a forensic medium of traces.

This means that the encounter with the material physical photographic print also offers to the artist an opportunity for applied intuitive intervention, even magical thinking, where the photograph is appropriated as a drawing board, referencing the past and the practices of recycling material prints. An artist like Tacita Dean in works such as *c/o Jolyon* (2012–2013) introduces media and materials from other disciplines into the surface for the purposes of retouching, overpainting, and reimagining. *c/o Jolyon* features 100 found postcards of pre-war Kassel in Germany that have been appropriated, overpainted with contemporary views in gouache, layering the city views, and creating a set of modern palimpsests. In the past, standard commercial production practitioners elided materials on to the surface to alter, change and define the surface in early retouching methods using photopake, pencil, and other water based surfactants which could be temporary in nature and washed away after reprinting in the darkroom—leaving little

evidence of altered states and certainly no revealing of the act of layering and intervention (Newhall, 1999 [1937], pp. 73-83). The art of the print was in the hands of the anonymous darkroom printer, their techniques appropriated by artists like Man Ray (1890-1976) into work such as *Violon d'Ingres* (1924) using pencil retouching to alter the context of the portrait (Janus, 1980, p. 42), and by myself as an artist now working in the repurposing of found images. The methods are appropriated through following the techniques of the often anonymous early darkroom studio printer or commercial art department of a print publication, who had in his or her time altered the images of many genres to enhance their appearance cheaply before the invention of more affordable photographic film. These everyday procedures could be considered as a form of 'colouring in a life', amplifying the luminous photograph as a trace from a visible reality. Today this intervention within the production of analogue photography—this act of retouching—is played out in a more differentiated and individual way by both artists and photographers, such as Tacita Dean, Gerhard Richter,¹ and Julie Cockburn.²

MATERIAL ENCOUNTERS: APPROPRIATION AND ENCOUNTER

Newspaper photographic archives, discarded and recycled, form a rich repository as a reliable source of documentary photographs that have been materially altered, retouched and reprinted, utilizing different formats (the crop, the close-up, the isolation of a section) on the same original darkroom analogue material print (see figures 1 and 2 for examples of these methods). In my practice and that of artists like Dean

and Richter, there is a sense of appropriating a material practice long outmoded within the industry for one's own research and practice. This is a form of visual ecology, where this practice formed part of established recycling (or even upcycling) in the newspaper industry where photographers could not always secure the commissioned shoot again. The intervention in itself is an act of appropriation, as there is no darkroom manipulation here—just a visible material alteration and recycling of the developed print(s), (Langford, 1981, p.142). Actions and procedures are here inscribed into the surface, the scene of the photograph. The photographs discarded in this altered state are still in existence due to their material presence, long after the absence of the newspaper that commissioned the images and reportage.

Curiosity is a key factor here in unravelling, through research, a practice that is both an industry construct and one that intrigues artists and photographers today enquiring into the spirit of the material photographic print in its early contexts. Analogue material photography is also perceived as holding its value to that sense of being an artisanal craft, a material labour, albeit a commercially-inflected practice. The found material photograph still retains its sense of a formal document of family, event, and record—a sense which has now given way to the digital snap which conveys place, entertainment, self and friends within their immediate experiences. The differentiation is not just in the value of these two modes of photography, but also in the way the act of touch is not played out in the same manner. This sets up a new audiencing of the material photograph, which offers an engagement with sensory material practices and the photographic print through aesthetic discourse on its presentational forms. My aim as an artist is to question

1 – See Richter's Overpainted Photographs: Family, Urban Landscapes, Rural Landscapes (1989-present).

2 – See Cockburn's Masqua (2014), which introduces ideas to found objects that generate dialogue about modernity and art history, gender and identity, nature and urbanity and the relationship between process and idea. However, it is an instinctive reaction to the found objects that dictates the piece, rather than an underlying intellectual or political viewpoint.

material visual practices within studio cultures that correlate to the encounter with physical photographs and the introduction of altered and uncertain states.

It is the case studies of these forms (intimate and at scale), and their survival as objects that enhance our sense of self, which will form the following small visual series. These are case studies of discoveries in the first instance, introducing the artist Martyn Cross, then myself as an artist (each of us working from different material starting points) to compare and contrast studio practices, accompanied by narrative encounters with each of the photographs, their material culture, their constraints and rites of passage.

CASE STUDY 1: INTERVENTION: MARTYN CROSS, FOUND EPHEMERA

A studio culture and its practices involve the response and engagement with other artists' works. In my practice, I am specifically curious about other artists' impulses around media and materials, and their language of making. In Case Study 1, the anonymous photographers' art of capture of the finished artefact is the point of reference. Martyn Cross (see figure 3) alters in subtle ways the front covers of knitting patterns (portraits of material forms of the jumper), ensuring the viewer is disquieted by his intervention—thus enabling a new reading of the materially-altered image. The introduction of the uncanny through a drawing practice is achieved by the act of manually altering the photograph, which contributes another layer of materiality, extending and emphasizing the hand-made nature and originality of the original photograph. This practice relates to the second case study (below) that, again within my own practice,



Figure 3: Martyn Cross, *Sirdar Design No. 6008* (2014). Acrylic paint on knitting pattern cover. With permission of the artist.

relates to a sensory re-appropriation of the image through the intervention of hand colouring.

According to Adrian Forty, the uncanny in art today is being used 'as a metaphor to describe the more disturbing features of late twentieth (and now twenty-first) century life'. (Forty, 2002, pp. 7-11) The nature of change, the sleight-of-hand of the artist, plays its part in altering the context of this object, for it was through its original material form throughout its own lifespan that its scene and message were read. Cross re-inscribes its value as a cultural artefact whilst restaging its context of possession and social value. There is a connection here to small acts of violence that seem to be played out in the

interruption to the pattern's only-too-perfect mirror-like photographic surface.

Introducing this piece is critical to how I can relate to artists who work in this way to draw on ideas of the unsettling domestic discussed by Freud in his essay 'The Uncanny', in which he suggests that an uncanny experience is 'often and easily produced' when the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced. (Freud, 1919, p. 15) An experience of this nature can arise when a repressed memory is partially recalled or where we encounter irrational ideas disrupting our rational thoughts and accepted views. There is an absurdist nature to this piece conveyed in a collision of the domestic and the filmic through material means, not through digital manipulation. The hand-made nature conveys more sense of menace as there is a directness to the work not filtered by the flatness of the screen or the posterisation of the final image. The resonance of knitting here, in itself as a material domestic pursuit, is hard to ignore through this gaze from the model on the front cover of a paper pattern to our own audience-gaze into the artwork.

As an artist I share these preoccupations with material practices that allow a space for the artist's signature in pulling a new narrative into the framing of the past, as with the example of Martyn Cross's work. This approach encourages my acts of research and questioning of the ephemera pulled into the frame, drawing on art collections within galleries and archives in both the private and public realms, counterbalancing their accepted usage. The vernacular and anonymous photograph itself, which is my focus in this paper, has been reframed by many artists, including John Stezaker,³ and Erik Kessels (see Kessels, 2013). I am keen to interrogate the role of photographs deliberately created for the purpose of recording history for their

effective role, counterbalanced against the ephemera that inadvertently reveal details of our daily lives and things on which we choose to focus

CASE STUDY 2: SU FAHY, *OFF THE RECORD*: *PEEPSHOW BLUSH* (2015)



Figure 4: Su Fahy, *Peepshow Blush*, in *Off the Record* (2015). Found index cards, found circa 1930s index card file box, found photo-postcards, found staged black and white photograph with hand tinting, linen thread, typed text captions. Photograph by the artist.

Case study 2 compares ephemera that here inadvertently enters the family record (a fugitive testimony) to a family portrait not included in the family album (see figures 4 and 5 for the images under discussion here). The finding of the postcard photograph, given

3 – Fascinated by the lure of images. Stezaker makes collages to give old images a new meaning. By adjusting, inverting and slicing separate pictures together to create unique new works of art, he explores the subversive force of found images. Stezaker's famous Mask series fuses the profiles of glamorous sitters with caves, hamlets, or waterfalls, making for images of eerie beauty.

as a gift, relates to its being in some way a marginal object holding the past in the present (a souvenir) accompanied by a narrative securing its part in the future through its recirculation. Marcel Mauss, in *The Gift*, analyses the history of this act of object exchange which often positioned the souvenir and its sense of ritual within the family, the social grouping of people, and their engagement in the act of giving (Mauss, 1990 [1954], pp.3-4). Mauss's primary research revealed the view that the exchange of objects between groups builds relationships between humans.

The hand-tinted portrait of the blushing girl in this work I have juxtaposed with the found erotic peepshow image—making the link visually between the embarrassment of the find interleaved into the family archive, its differential sense of place, and evoking the shyness at this lack of modesty. Other emotions may be inferred from this image of embarrassment, even shame experienced by the inclusion of the peepshow image and others of this ilk in the family record. There is nothing new in the circulatory system serving as a window to the soul—Charles Darwin termed blushing (visually present in the found photograph in figure 4) 'the most human of expressions' (Darwin, 1872, p. 310), while Melanie Klein's insights into the role of projective defenses within the family deepen this exploration of the recent sociological contributions to the role of shame and its document (Klein, 1937).

In this instance the photo-postcard offering up its small histories inclusive of affect, and loose connections, is here not a personal gift, but one given to the finder, the keeper, the collector, the artist, be it student or established artist for appropriation and circulation into new contexts of possession, thereby entering into a relationship to myself the artist, the collector and active curator of



Figure 5: Su Fahy, *Off the Record* (2015). Found index cards, found staged black and white photograph, linen thread, found peepshow reveal card mount. Photograph by the artist.

objects and their affective fictions. The act of selection by myself as the artist is a process of transferring rather than producing information defined in many studies as a distinguishing feature of postmodernism in the arts.

The context of the fieldwork I undertake in finding these images sets up a consideration of audience and display after each personal encounter. The act of collecting is inclusive of handling, anecdote, modes of transaction and exchange, and intuitive selection of the physical objects—the photographs. The practice model here is one of a hybrid art, with myself creating liminal works in the studio context, which intersect or balance precariously between

disciplinary modes. My concern with photography is its role as a social practice. I have always wanted to construct works in the studio context from external situations, such as the family, recorded through family photography with all the revealing clashes of everyday representations.

Within the discipline of archaeology there is a tradition of the archaeological survey, the method of investigating and constructing small histories from the examination of material finds (see, for instance, King, 1978). In this overlap I am, as the artist, applying the survey model to develop from these found material artefacts a conceptual archaeology inclusive of background research, and to address two key questions that these surveys are structured around. My studio practices often include an amalgam of disciplines as I develop my own methodology of structuring a material practice as a form of bricolage outside of the site-specific fieldwork. In *Peepshow Blush*, for instance, I am addressing the transfer of information utilizing the following two survey questions in respect of the finds (the found photographs) as a form of instructional art.

1. What cultural processes and patterns do discarded or founds photographs reflect—and hence what is their significance for research?

The small history constructed in making *Peepshow Blush* draws on my encounter with the material artefacts, taking into consideration the knowledge of their production. My research revealed the history of the postcard print and its cultural reference was an international phenomenon, reaching its height in the 1900s. Photo-postcards are still in production today but are printed through digital processes. Even

though the images on linen cards (such as that in *Peepshow Blush*) were based on photographs, they contained the sensory touch in the handwork of the artists who brought them into production (fauvist hand tinting). There is of course nothing new in this; what is notable is that they were to be the last commercial photo-postcards to show any touch of the human hand. I value the material linen rag paper being both embossed and textured, creating an original surface that most likely came from attempts to simulate the texture of canvas, thus relating the postcard to a painted work of fine art (see Smithsonian Institute Archives, n.d.). In the works of Tacita Dean, again the photo-postcard emulates not the study and collection of postcards as an act of *deltiology* (i.e. the study of postcards), but an artist working with found materials prompting new conceptual assemblages for the work, again transferring the information rather than acting as its producer. In this case study for *Peepshow Blush* I felt there was significance in looking at the photo-postcard production era as the connections encountered were not without a real contextual relationship. The soft glamour photography found with the linen postcard could be related to the 'French postcard'. This trade term was applied to early erotic postcards which often showcased photography of nude women, so the contextual pattern for my audience and display found its frame of reference.⁴

In this small installation piece the visual form of an index file offered me a chance to amplify a sense of association and order, a sensory set of perceptions with a loose collection of found photo-postcards. I find the act of forming a collection, of cataloguing finds, chasing the unknowns, formulating the questions set up through material finds, unearthed here, relates to a form of urban archaeology that is far from

4 – According to Erika Lederman (2015), French postcards are 'more accurately described' as 'erotic postcards'. Featuring 'examples of both photographic and illustrated imagery of nudes, sexual activity and sexual symbolism', they were apparently 'very popular during the late 19th century through the early 20th century'.

site or midden (middens are refuse heaps, a word Middle English in origin, and a favoured resource of archaeologists). I relate to the way that artists are often described as hoarders turning their studios into eclectic sites of encounter; modern middens (Art Schools are often described as places of poor housekeeping reflecting the array of materials stored and scattered throughout working studios). I cherish this engagement with multisensory studio practice, visual imagination, and a culture of working with found material, curious to create a personal artistic language that is palpable about harnessing the power of the material in the work (read here the photograph) to cherish context, real or engineered. The questions borrowed from the survey method inform a structured documentation approach contributing to my practice methodology.

2. What other social or cultural values may be attributed to them above and beyond their research value?

In answer to this question, for myself as an artist the found photograph offers visual prompts, scenes, a catalyst for a conceptual practice. Working in this field and drawing on the resources of the material photograph in this way are artists Susan Hiller and Taryn Simon.⁵ In their installation works they are increasingly, through their methodology, referencing the work of social anthropologists, ethno-historians, folklorists, and sociologists—combining their methods with other facets of appropriation of oral history, documentary research and ethnography. There is significance in works where the artist is in an active role as a curator, creating a personally inflected cultural journey through the material, maintaining the open-endedness of found images rather than imposing

meaning on them artificially. It is through my research into artificial memory systems and their site-specific loci that I see my act of visual curating of memory images as an active verb.

In relation to working through memory, *The Art of Memory* is a key text, in which we read that although the mnemotechnical side of the art (artificial memory system) is always present both in antiquity and into the present day, the exploration of the art of memory must include more than the history of its techniques (Yates, 1966, pp.11-15). A prime exemplar of this more eclectic and active approach to memory and material thinking is Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1924-29), the last project of this German Jewish cultural scientist/theorist and art historian, which has been read as 'an unfinished attempt to map the pathways that give art history and cosmography their pathos-laden meanings' (Warburg Institute, n.d., home page), their affect. Apparently, he 'thought this visual, material, metaphoric encyclopedia, with its constellations of symbolic images, would animate the viewer's memory, visual imagination, and understanding of what he called "the afterlife of antiquity".' (Ibid.).

The classical sources for this art seem to be steering us away from the term mnemotechnics and to be describing inner techniques, which depend on visual impressions of incredible intensity. The concern I have with these artificial memory systems is the importance for myself as an artist to have a confirmation of the importance of visualisation and order for personal and social memory.⁶ As an artist I seek a language to translate my own preoccupations with the visual and, in my case, with the role of the material photograph to prompt personal multisensory memories of place, event and family. These material prints act for me as visual *loci* in my memory system

5 – Hiller's 2015 installation *On the Edge*, for instance, presented 482 views of 219 locations on the edges of Britain where the rough seas meet the land, as represented by anonymous photographers and artists in postcards collected and appropriated by Hiller over many years. See also, Simon's *A Living Man Declared Dead and Other Chapters I-XVIII* (2012).

6 – In *The Art Of Memory* (1966, p. 19) Frances Yates writes that 'Cicero emphasizes that Simonides' invention of the art of memory rested, not only on his discovery of the importance of order for memory, but also on the discovery, that the sense of sight is the strongest of all the senses'.

7 – According to Jonathan Foster (2009, pp. 123-124), 'the oldest mnemonic method is the method of loci, taught from Classical times until the present day.' The technique apparently 'involves knowing a series of places or loci that are familiar yet distinct'. In *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms* 1-3 (2015), the loci are the maps as archive wall charts acting as artifacts to influence or represent the ostensive or performative aspects of a transactive memory system in relation to visual mnemonics.

offering an index to a sense of place, but I believe we are affected by what they capture of a private life, interiorized, but capable through an extant material form to connect to our internal memory capacity.⁷ In my practice, art originates from experiment rather than the adoption of specific techniques, but I believe the artist as producer is affected by a journey through material practice where they experience chains of thought and patterns of behavior that are interrupted by a process of chance encounter and discovery.

The art of memory is seen as a forgotten art now and I am, through my research, being made aware that analogue material photography may be at risk of becoming also a marginal discipline. The historian Frances Yates saw the art of memory as not belonging to any of the normal disciplines, having been omitted as a marginal art. This example of a marginal art with, at its heart, rhetoric and a ritual of visualizing material objects as images, links into sympathetic magic, connecting to the alchemy of the silver print in its material presence. These memory images with their traces of past happenings contain a magical force that is capable of prompting the imagination and enabling discourse both internal and external. This power of presence reaches into works connecting disciplines and their discourses that I would describe here as *interartistic* disciplines, creating connections between the irrevocably separate arts of material practice. A sense of association and order linked into personal embodied memory, often generated by artists themselves within their work (Prinz, 1991, pp.8-10).

CASE STUDY 3: THE PIN-UP READING ROOMS, SERIES 1-3 (2015)



Figure 6: Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Section: The North Sea* (2015). Found black and white photographs, photographs from 2015 photo-shoot, found ordnance survey map, photo corners, recycled paper and linen thread. Photograph by the artist.

In the studio I feel the methodology of mapping introduces these concepts of association and order with a sense of place. Material maps printed on paper create an immediate, more personal, and more precious intimate space. The material nature of the map, cartographic in discipline, is one that Kim Levin comments on as appearing again and again in contemporary art as a metaphor for its own boundary breaking strategies. Levin states that 'perhaps the map should serve as the preliminary emblem of

Figure 7: Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Section: The North Sea* (2015). Found black and white and sepia photographs, photo corners, recycled luggage label, linen thread, small hand-made journal, ordnance survey map. Photograph by the artist.



Figure 8: Su Fahy, detail from *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Section: The Forth Estuary* (2015). Found black and white photograph, photo corners. Photograph by the artist.



postmodernism: indicating boundaries beyond the surface of the artwork and surfaces outside art, implying that boundaries are arbitrary, and flexible, and man-made systems.’ (Levin, 1979, pp.8 -10) The image of the map in this case study reflects my particular style and sensibility as an artist using the appropriated paper maps as a substrate for the poster forms.

The interaction is between photograph and map relayed through the collected photographs, the snapshots, set out in the visual form of an archival wall chart, which offers the method of loci as physical place references (mnemonics) to the context of each photograph (Foster, 2009). Each of the pieces relate to my individual vision of a ‘sense of place’ reflected through the maps of the British coastline and the marginalia that documents the family, the characters portrayed, the visual record of holidays taken by the sea and the capture of these memories on record.⁸ With *The Forth Estuary* (2014) and *The North Sea* (2015), coastal sites feature in the first two works overlaying the third site, the landlocked flea market mapping the act of site-specific fieldwork and point of collection for the formation of these visual fictional stories.⁹ My methods of manufacture result from the individual vision created on the viewing of each single found photograph and the autobiographical memories each evokes and isolates.

My aim, simultaneously as an artist and researcher, is to work at embroidering the photographs as captured in their scenes, making connections to self, the other, and the creating of an association and order, which relates back to the desire to form a personal archive of found photographs dealing with personal and social memory—albeit fictional, not autobiographical. The critical encounter with this archive is one where I hope as an artist curating each of the pieces to draw the viewer into how the found

8 – The 1960s work of the photographer Dorothy Bohm (b. 1924) exemplifies this act of embodying a space for a narrative. Born into a Jewish Lithuanian family in East Prussia, Bohm has spent her lifetime taking photographs and travelling the world, and is driven by a desire to capture the transient moments of life.

9 – The works reference Carleton Watkins’ photographs documenting a sense of place in the 1860’s, Pacific Coast, Columbia River, and Oregon. Although here the presentational format was the Album—later disbound to exhibit each of the photographs individually.



Figure 9: Su Fahy, *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Stewart Christie Archive, The Forth Estuary* (2015). Found black and white photographs, black and white photographs from 2015 photo-shoot, ephemera, ordnance survey map, linen thread, film negative packet, small diary, recycled paper luggage labels. Photograph by the artist.



Figure 10: Su Fahy, detail from *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Stewart Christie Archive, Section 2: The Forth Estuary* (2015). Found sepia photograph, black and white photograph, photograph from 2015 photo-shoot, linen thread. Photograph by the artist.



Figure 11: Su Fahy, detail from *The Pin-Up Reading Rooms, Stewart Christie Archive, Section: The Forth Estuary* (2015). Found black and white photograph, linen thread. Photograph by the artist.

photograph, as a secondary agent, evokes the need to articulate its historical situation. Each *Pin-Up Reading Room* acts as its own performance attempting to provoke individual social memory through this act of memory work or practice, handling the photographs, and staging ensembles of experience.

... methodology as a form of conceptual archaeology...

I see this as an act of 'elaborate rehearsal' for myself within my studio practice. Such that elaboration, it is claimed, can recode information so that it is retained more effectively (Foster, 2009, p.119; Wegner, Erber & Raymond, 1991, pp. 923-929; and Schacter [2001] in Foster, 2009, p.82). This reflects a key characteristic of personal and social memory being reconstructive as opposed to reproductive. This understanding of how the patterning of episodic memory functions in relation to the self and identity is key to distinguishing my artistic practice that plays with these methods and is inclusive of the desire to channel the imagination of each viewer. In each *Pin-Up Reading Room* my intention is to reveal before us a lexicon of 'private lives' and this to result in the exposure of the hidden depths of the importance of ordinary things. Each *Pin-Up Reading Room* is a survey of sorts where history and social biography co-exist and expose the viewer to discovering if there is a significance in these material photographs to prompt their own memory into their private lives. The archival format offers for me a shift of emphasis from possession of the image content to an exploration of

their scenes.

A question these works raise for me is one of inheritance of photographs, of material objects, which is also entangled with an emotional legacy. As I work through appropriation and reconstruction of such photographs into assemblages I feel the need to recognize the methodology as a form of conceptual archaeology, which places 'finds' into staged ensembles. Thus elaborating 'alternate discourses' on the family and its public and private visual record, emotional legacy and reference.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have attempted to provide fresh insight into the art of memory and the material practices associated with interdisciplinary and interart (hybrid art) practice. The case studies have been set out to reflect on a practice that is concerned with drawing attention to the stimuli of material objects that exist in the everyday world and inform our studio culture and preoccupations. Changing styles in art reflect changes to our everyday lives and the materials we come into contact with and, importantly, touch. There is a sense that dematerialization will lead to a form of perishable art that has no future. In reality the digital document will probably ensure the future life of these ephemeral works, as the material archive will for objects like the analogue material print and associated ephemera. The archive, both personal and public, offers shelter for the visual ecology of the haptic photograph, its language and ability to exist as both copy and original ripe for appropriation, inclusion, reference and as a sometime drawing board. The archive as an art form rather than institution will develop new ways for the photographic

appropriation to survive. This will enable art students, emerging artists and established artists teaching in a studio culture to continue to explore the materiality inherent in both the public domain and situated archive. The gatekeepers of these archives are increasingly keen to open up these repositories and collections to new encounters, interpretations and interventions, to keep the sensory material encounter alive.

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Su Fahy is an artist working in lens-based media, principally photography. Her research utilises the aura of the documentary photographic image in order to interrogate and contextualise our readings of natural or architectural environments. Working principally to commission, Fahy engages with theorists, photographers and archive materials with a view to producing images for collaborative publication or exhibition. Recent projects have included *Fugitive Testimonies* (an artist-led archive with Oh Yeah Decca!, 2015); an artist bookwork exhibited in *Readers Art: Concealed, Confined and Collected*, Minnesota Center for Book Arts (USA, 2015); *OFF THE S(H)ELF—the eclectic in the artist's book* (group show at i-Klectic Arts Lab Space Gallery, London, 2015); a small artist bookwork installation *XIII Can't Take You Leaving Me: A Torch Song* (2015); and *Oceans, The Severn Sea* (an e-flux platform artists' collective project initiated by Tania Kovats, exhibited at the Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 2014).

STUDIES IN MATERIAL THINKING

www.materialthinking.org

ISSN: 1177-6234

Auckland University of Technology
First published in April 2007,
Auckland, New Zealand.
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STUDIES IN MATERIAL THINKING

is a peer-reviewed research journal supported by an International Editorial Advisory Group. The journal is listed in: the Australian ERA 2012 Journal List (Excellence in Research for Australia); the Danish Bibliometric Research Index; and the Norwegian register of approved scientific journals, series and publishers.