Image, perception and the unconscious

Maxine Miller

A thesis submitted for the degree of MA by dissertation in art and design

Design Programme Area, Writtle University College

Awarded by University of Essex

Date of submission March 2019

Abstract

In both my practical work and my written analysis, I investigate the idea of *hiding in plain sight* in art, how an image can be hidden but also right in front of you. I give a narrative account of my own practice which explores how the theme originated, reoccurred and developed in my work over the years and the way it now features in my practice, along with a deep account of the process and my thinking whilst creating the work for my MA exhibition. In exploring my work and the work of others who have influenced it I use particularly the ideas of, the unconscious (especially with reference to Sigmund Freud), chance and randomness in art. I go on to draw some general conclusions about the work I have recently made and its relevance for my future art practice and research and for that of others.

Contents

List of figures

Acknowledgements

Introduction

"Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can speak." (Berger, 2008, p. 1)

Perception and *hiding in plain sight* have been reoccurring themes in my work for a while. I did not fully realise how central they were until the final year of my undergraduate course. I found it fascinating, looking back how constantly present they had been in my work and I decided to spend my master's degree researching into these themes to explore deeper into what has inspired my art and been so prominent in my work over the years. During my undergraduate degree, I was looking into how I perceive the world, how I translate this into my work and what insights the audience gains from my art based on what they perceive. I developed the theme of hiding in plain sight within my work. How an image can be hidden even though it's right in front of you, as though it just needs piecing together? What happens when a spectator does this piecing together?

I've also been interested in for a long time in how our mind works. I like being able to challenge the viewer's way of looking at an object or picture. How one perception of a piece of art can differ so drastically when compared to another person, which has led me to wonder - Is it that people have such varied personalities and have had led separate lives with their personalities formed by widely differing experiences that lead to everyone having a different perspective or opinion, or is there something else that leads us to think differently?

I am going to be investigating the themes that I have discussed above, along with other themes that I have discovered and developed in the process of creating my work: the ideas of chance and how much the unconscious mind is in control when creating or observing art.

I will begin by discussing the key artists and image influences that have inspired my previous and current work that I will be referring to throughout my writing, especially Rachel Whiteread. This will include a brief account analysing their techniques and use of materials when creating their work, along with the concepts behind the work of these selected artists, and critical analysis of some of their art.

I will then explore some of my previous work from before my Masters Degree that has had a big influence on my recurring themes of hiding in plain sight and perception. This will include work from my Undergraduate Degree and Extended Diploma, highlighting the progression of my work and where the ideas began.

This will lead on to a detailed account of the process of my work towards the exhibition. Explaining how my work has progressed through my previous experiments, my thoughts and influences around my work and how this all led up to my final exhibition pieces.

By organising the chapters in this way will demonstrate a clear progression of my ideas around my work and will show how my work has developed and progressed throughout my Master studies.

<u>Artist and image influences</u>

Andy Warhol

Pop Art has been a big influence on my earlier work. I have always admired pop art. How the use of incorporating everyday objects into art and their rebellion to traditional art, which led to changing our views on what art should or could be. Andy Warhol especially inspired me, an American artist who was a major part of the Pop Art movement. Warhol is known for using popular culture, celebrities and products in his work with experimental vivid colours, by using complementary colours with bold details and outlines. Warhol is mostly known for his mass production of screen prints such as in *Campbell's soup cans* (1962) a series of 32 screen prints that are all the same except the flavour titles, one for each flavour they sold at that time, and Warhol's *Marilyn Monroe Series* (1967) (Figure 1) multiple prints of Marilyn Monroe printed after her death. Which raised questions on the mass production of products and how celebrities are perceived in the public eye.

Figure 1. Andy Warhol, *Untitled* from *Marilyn Monroe* (series of 10) 1967, Screen-prints, 36" x 36" (91.5 x 91.5 cm) (MoMA, 2015, Photograph by Jonathan Muzikar) Available at: https://www.moma.org/collection/works/61239?association=portfolios&locale=en&page=1&parent_id=61240&sov_referrer=association&installation_image_index=2

[Accessed September 6th 2018]

To me the Marylin Monroe series stood out as an important piece from Warhol's works. Monroe became well-known for being seen as a sex symbol, with her iconic features blonde hair and bright red lipstick. By producing the same prints over and over he is commenting on how Marylin is being seen as a product like the Campbell soup can. She is no longer being seen as a person but as a consumer product. This can be seen not only in the production of making the silkscreen prints, a machine-like process printing the image multiple times, but also with the use of colour in his work.

In an interview on BBC4 Radio on March 17[th]1981, interviewed by Edward Lucie Smith, Warhol talks about his process and use of colour. "And what do you do when you've got the picture? It It's usually a coloured picture and I turn it into a black and white erm photograph and then from there I erm turn it into a err you blow it up to the size I guess I got stuck to making all the pictures 40 inches by 40 inches, so I blow up to a 40 by 40. And then? And then I erm I have a silkscreen made of it and then I put the paint on, and I paint over it and erm try and get the right colours and sometimes it's hard but sometimes it's easy. What are the right colours? How do you know which are right? Well, I don't know, after you finish it you know whether it's right. You never try to make it look life-like, do you? Ahh, actually I don't know how. Do you always choose artificial colours then? Ah yeah, I use mostly artificial colour, I'm trying to find flesh colour and it's erm, I have so many different colour flesh colours, but maybe one day I'll get the right flesh colour." (Kettymora, 2014)

Even though Warhol didn't intend for the wide range of colours he used to impact his work I still think it did. In some prints he kept her iconic features visible with different shades of yellow and red, making her instantly recognisable. He shows how she is being seen constantly in the public eye and reminds us there is a real person underneath her celebrity status. The black and grey print stands out from the intense coloured prints. This could be showing how the audience watching her on black and white TV would have seen her. The use of darker duller colours within some of the prints is perhaps a sad reminder that Monroe had died.
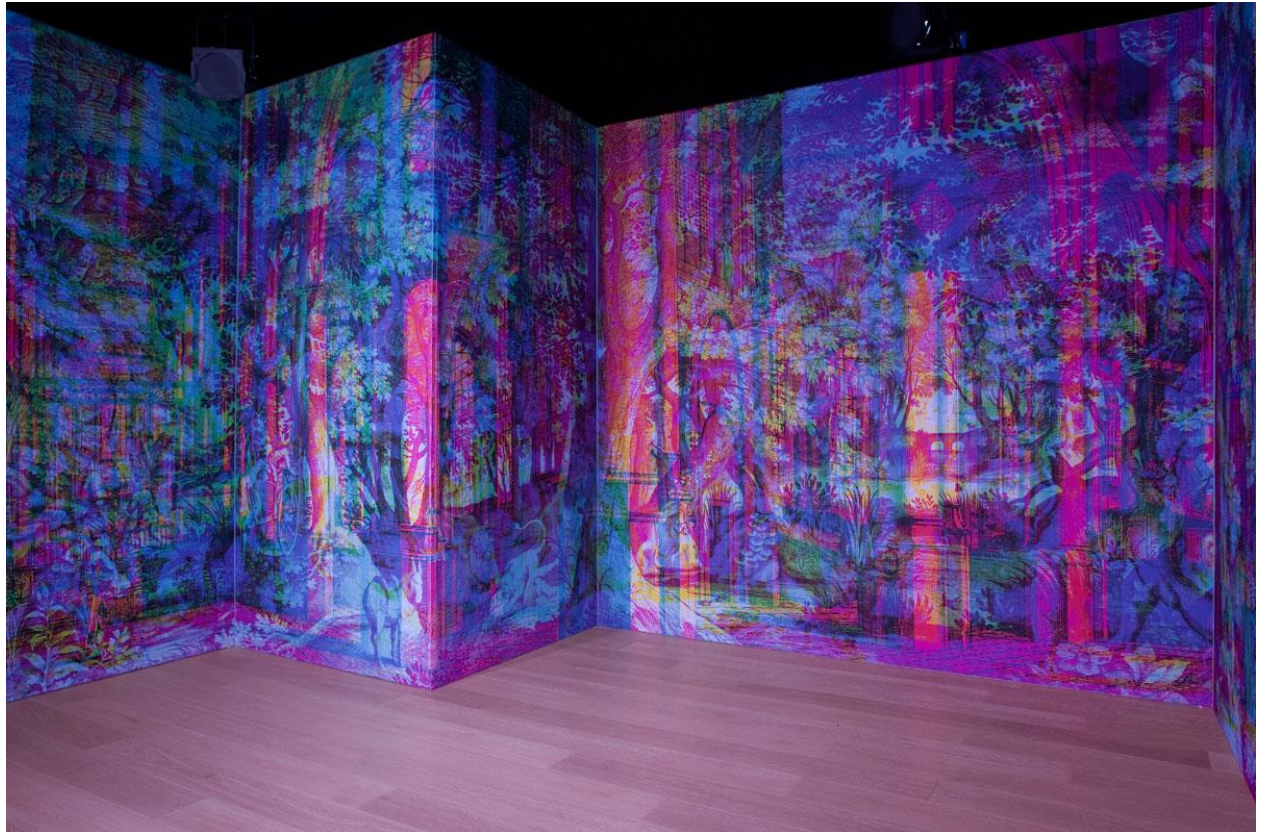
Figure 2. Carnovsky, *Landscape N.1*, 2010, Digital imagery and RGB coloured lighting
(Carnovsky, Photograph taken by Alvise Vivenza, 2013) Available at:
https://www.carnovsky.com/RGB_Fabulous_Landscapes.htm [Accessed September 10th 2018)
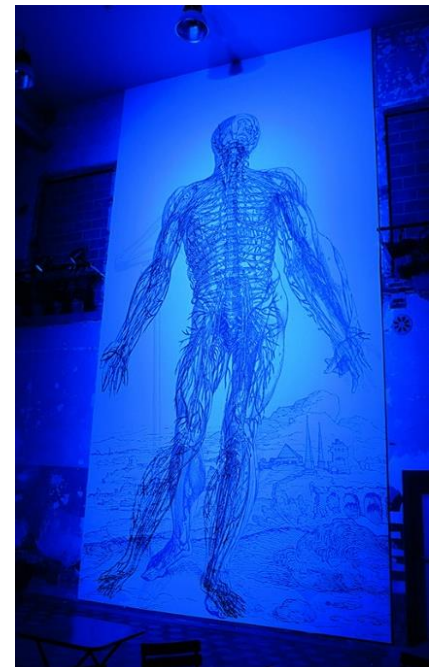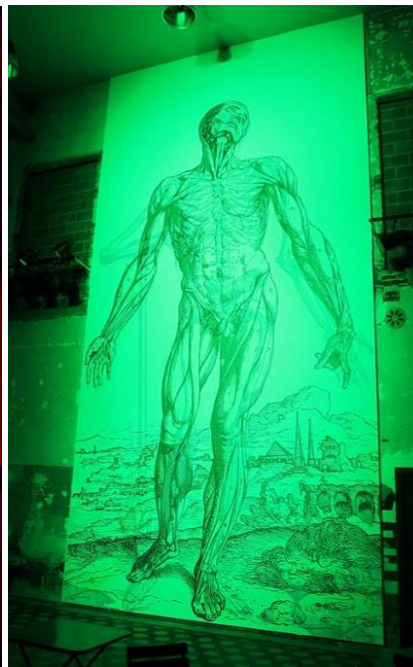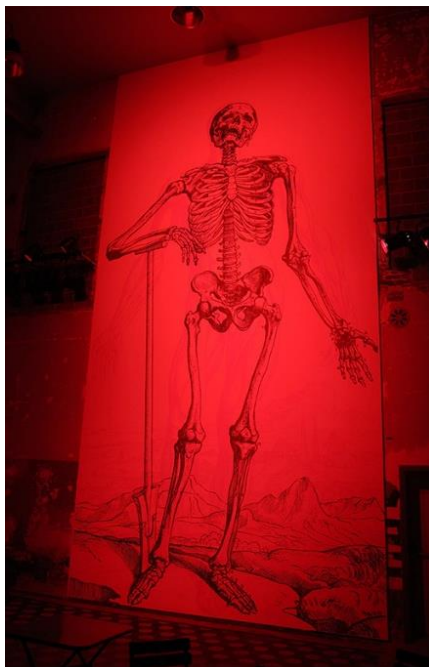
Figure 3. Carnovsky, *Vesalio N.2*, 2015, Digital imagery and RGB coloured lighting, (Carnovsky, 2015) Available at: https://www.carnovsky.com/RGB_Trattoria.htm [Accessed September 10th 2018]

Carnovsky

Carnovsky is the collective name taken by a Milan based duo. Their work inspired me in a more technical way, through their use of lighting which I was experimenting with at the time. Francesco Rugi and Silvia Quintanilla are the artist duo who create large-scale wallpaper installations that change under different coloured lighting conditions (Figure 2). Their RGB (Red, Green and Blue) series consists of three different digital line images overlapping each other, with each image being created in a separate colour. Without the coloured lighting present and with using such a large-scale image that fills a room, the layered images create a disorientated feeling. The way that the overlapping of images mixes up the colours and shapes within their imagery makes it unclear what the images consist off. Once the light is illuminated one coloured image is revealed, one coloured image needs different coloured lighting to reveal that image. Their technique highly influenced my *Childhoods* series that I have given an account for further on.

Carnovsky's *Vesalio N.2* (Figure 3) consists of an enormous human figure, I think this works very well with their coloured lighting technique. Having learned the technique myself I know that the red lighting layer gives the cleanest finish, hiding most, if not all the other layers contents. The green and blue lighting layers show traces of the other layers, blue the most, leading to parts of the other images becoming a part of the main visible image. As the image is showing the different layers within a human body, the Skeleton, muscular and nervous systems, I think that even though you can see the other layers peering through it adds to what the artists are saying in their work, that we are built up from different layers.

Figure 4. Tom French, *Bound* (detail), 2016, Oil on canvas, 120 x 160cm, (Tom French, 2018)
Available at: https://www.tomfrenchstudio.com/duality-paintings [Accessed October 8th 2018]

Figure 5. Tom French, *Bound,* 2016, Oil on canvas, 120 x 160cm, (Tom French, 2018)
Available at: https://www.tomfrenchstudio.com/duality-paintings [Accessed October 8th 2018]

Tom French

"With reference to my illusion paintings, here's a small insight into my own thinking – the figures within these paintings reflect the conscious mind, interacting with people and going about their business, unaware of the bigger picture – the face or skull – which reflects the unconscious mind – the instinctual, yet hidden, human drives which shape our actions." (Odditymag, 2018)

Tom French, a British painter and artist, has been a big influence on my work with his ideas on how much our unconscious mind influences us. He works mainly with human consciousness and the relationship between the conscious and unconscious mind. He is showing how unaware we are of how much our subconscious is in use when making decisions. It's not until looking closer at his work that you can see the intricacy in his paintings (Figure 4 and 5). Up close you can a face within a face, with each time you look seeing a different face that you didn't see before. French's work is a mixture of expressionism and portraiture, by his use of detailed more realistic faces and figures to show the parts of our mind that we know, and the use of expressive brush strokes and mark making as the parts that we don't fully know; the unconscious.

"Having the figures broken up / fractured / partially visible, reflects the way we see things and the way our brains process what is seen. We don't look at a person or an object as a whole, our eyes move from one point to another building an overall picture from many different snapshots. During this process many things are left out of the mental image we've created, only focussing on whichever parts are relevant to us." (Rhodes, 2016)

The figures are unaware of the bigger picture that they create. Some figures are distorted and fragmented, making their actions harder to identify. Which leads to the viewer interpreting different things and having different views on his work, and to have a more personal involvement. His paintings have a lot of movement and life, as though it is telling us a story or showing us the bigger picture of our minds. He works in black and white to not allow colour to be a distraction within his work. Working straight on the canvas without any planning, and with multiple pieces being created together he allows his paintings to evolve on their own, in a less restraining way, whilst also allowing similarities to occur across his paintings.

"I enjoy the timeless quality of monochrome images, and also for whatever reason we seem to associate black and white imagery with memory and to some degree mental processes."

(Rhodes, 2016)

Figure 6. John Stezaker, *Mask XXXV*, 2007, Collage (Guardian, 2011) Available at:
https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2011/jan/30/john-stezaker-in-pictures
[Accessed October 15th 2018]

John Stezaker

John Stezaker, a British collage artist, works with appropriating pre-existing images by making manual interventions such as cutting, pasting, reconfiguring, and reversing. He collects old postcards, book illustrations and old photographs, including images that he grew up around which adds a ghost-like presence to some of his pieces. By making manual manipulations he combines separate images together through cutting and adjusting, creating a new unique piece of art. Which creates new meanings and relationships of objects leading to new ways of seeing people and places within his work. Stezaker explains he doesn't choose the images, instead, the images find him.

"Images in charity shops are like orphans, they've lost their context or culture, they've gone a little bit out of date. They've been neglected and overlooked for years and people have passed them by, then suddenly here I am, the alternative foster home. But unfortunately, I then inflict terrible abuse down in the basement where I cut them up." (Smyth, 2011)

I find Stezaker's series of overlaying postcards on top of a face rather fascinating. The addition of the simple adjustment to the image of covering the face of the person is very gripping. This makes you want to see the person's face, to see what the person looks like. In *Mask XXXV* (Figure 6), the overlaying image is of Lydstep Cavern, near Tenby. The postcard has been placed so that the boulder at the bottom matches up with the woman's mouth which leads us to explore the cave. We are, because of the placement, unaware if we are looking at what is behind the woman's head or if we are looking at one of her memories.

"My ideal is to do very little to the images, maybe just one cut: the smallest change or the most minimal mutilation, what I do is destructive, but also an act of deliberate passivity." (Artnet, 2018)

Figure 7. Mona Hatoum, *Grater Divide*, 2002, Sculpture mild steel, 80 3/10 × 1 2/5 in 204 × 3.5 cm, (Tate, 2016) Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/never-take-anything-what-it-appears-be-ali-smith-on-mona-hatoum [Accessed October 2nd 2018]

Mona Hatoum

"Hatoum is a latter-day surrealist, imbuing the familiar with darker, stranger meanings." (Tate, 2017b)

Mona Hatoum is a Palestinian-British installation and video artist who uses the everyday in her work. She adjusts the size or changes the objects to make them familiar but strange. She has developed a way of transforming the everyday objects into threatening and dangerous things, whilst mostly infusing in some way her personal history and the body. Her work is challenging surrealism and minimalism by changing the way an object is viewed. The exploration of the unsettling in the everyday is shown by her use of household objects in her sculptures which are either scaled up or changed to make them feel familiar but uncanny.

In her *Grater Divide*, 2002, sculpture (Figure 7) of a 6ft cheese grater mimicking a room divider, the sculpture is seen as funny from the enlargement of the object at first glance. By being up close to the sculpture would make you feel as though you had shrunk or that this is a utensil for giants to use. However, the sculpture can also be viewed as lethal. As a human-sized cheese grater, making the holes of the kitchen utensil become threating and potentially harmful to us, it is ready to cut as it towers over you.

"You can't take things for granted, you have to look behind the surface. I want people to have a gut reaction to the work first, and after that initial experience, they can start to think about what it might mean." (The Editors, 2015)
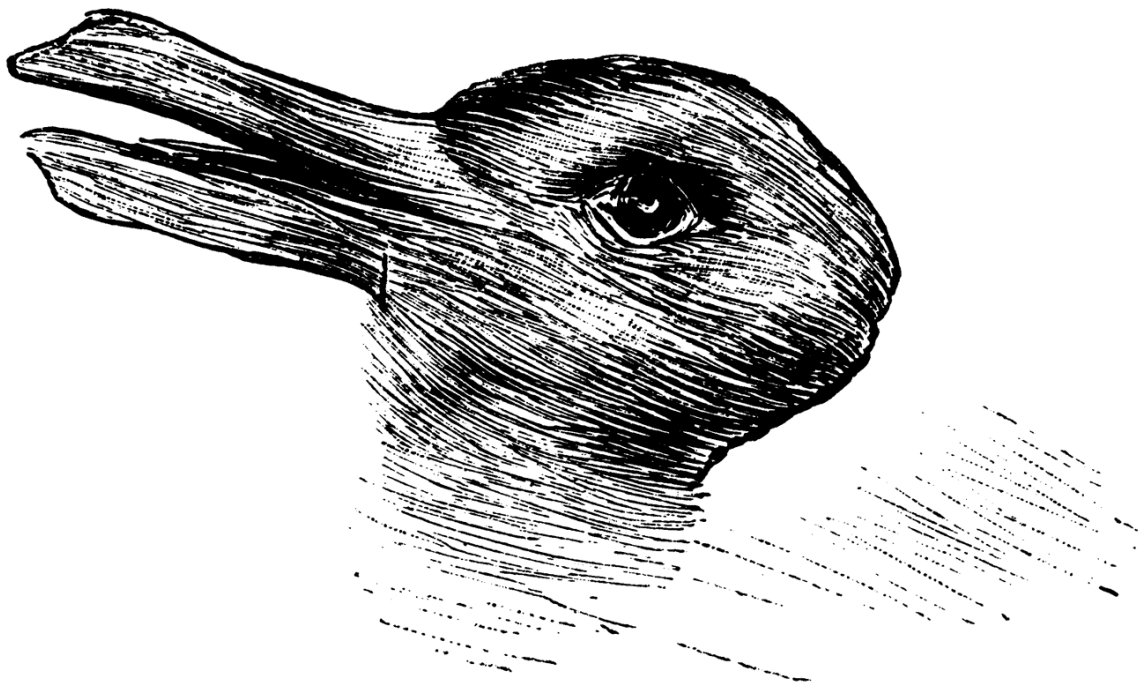
Figure 8. Published anonymously in German magazine Fliegende Blätter, *Kaninchen und Ente* (Rabbit and Duck) 1892, Illusion drawing (Simplemost, 2018)
Available at: https://www.simplemost.com/triangles-puzzle/ [Accessed October 30th 2018]

Rabbit-Duck

I have been investigating into the Rabbit-Duck illusion (Figure 8) which is questioning what it is we do when we look at a piece of art. The first person to use this ambiguous figure was Joseph Jastrow, an American psychologist, in 1899. He was researching if someone could see both animals in the image, how quickly someone could see the second animal and how fast they could change their perception between the two. He was making the statement that perception isn't just about what we can see but also it is a mental activity.

This links strongly to Richard Wollheim's theory of 'seeing in' and 'seeing as'. 'Seeing in' is realistic seeing, it's limited to for instance the objects that are in the piece of work. And 'seeing as' is more of looking at the general scene and situation of the piece. His theory is that there are two types of perception and sometimes you can see both 'seeing as' and 'seeing in'. Such as in Rabbit- Duck. You can see the piece 'as' the duck but you can also see the rabbit 'in' the pictures, or vice versa.
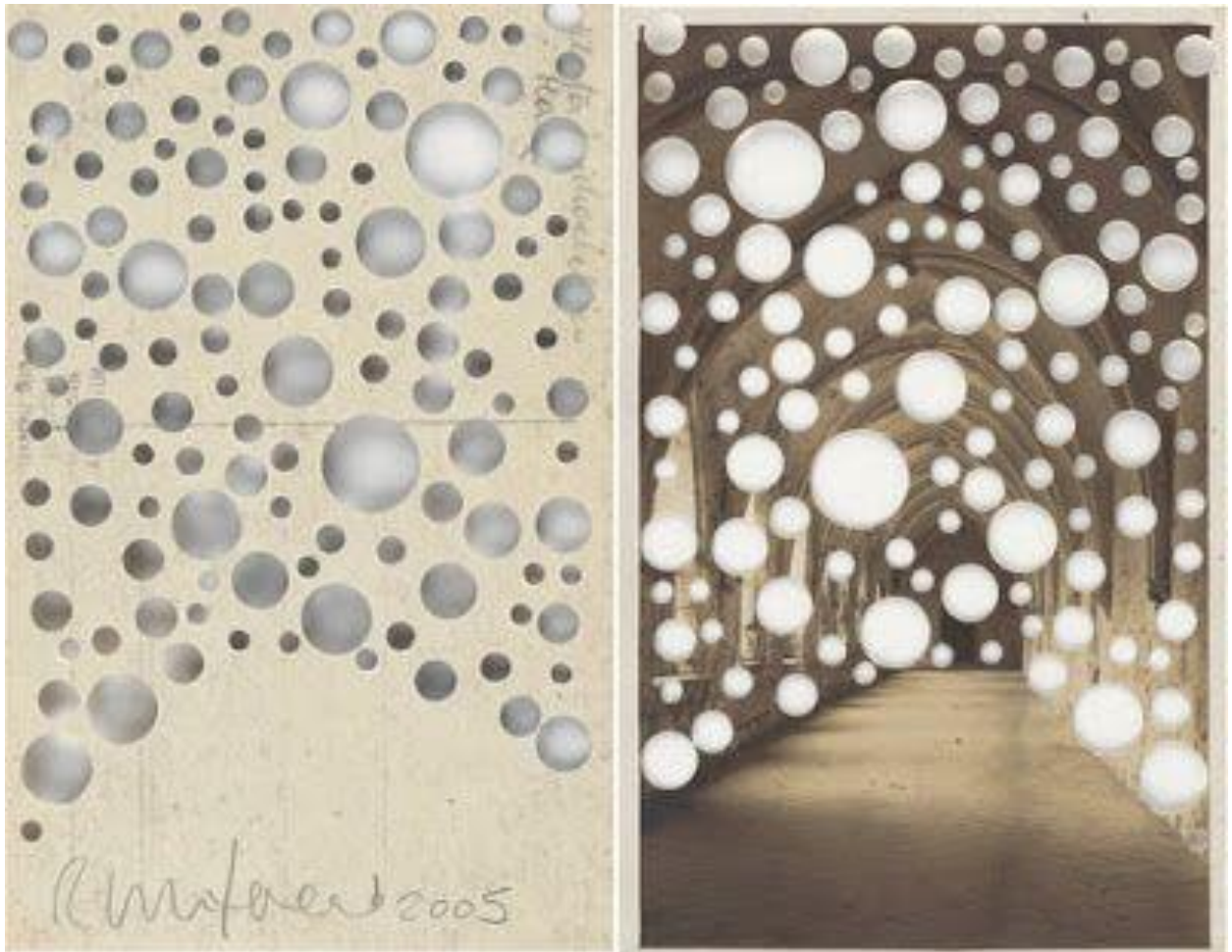
Figure 9. Rachel Whiteread, *Untitled* (*Verso and Recto)* 2005, Postcard with punctured holes,
14 x 9 cm (Tate, 2010)
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/process-drawing-writing-diary-
its-nice-way-thinking-about-time-passing [Accessed November 16th 2018]

Rachel Whiteread

Rachel Whiteread, a London based artist, is mostly known for her sculptures made from concrete casts of everyday objects and rooms, showing the residue of years and years of use. Her sculptures are showing the negative space present between humans and the places we are living by making casts of the negative and unseen space around an object. However, I'm more inspired by one of her less-known works. Her postcard series (Figure 9).

In an interview with Tate Etc. interviewed by Brice Curiger, Whiteread, when talking about her work states "*Bice Curiger* -As well as the objects, you had also been collecting postcards… *Rachel Whiteread -* The postcards are part of the same process of picking things up when I'm travelling. Some of the earliest ones I found in Berlin. When I first lived there you could buy these great postcards, which I'm sure you can't find anymore, from all the old museums in East Berlin. They have a beautiful quality. Others are from Russia, from way back in the 1970s. The printing on some of these you just don't get today. " (Curiger, 2010)

Rachel Whiteread uses a hole punch to cut out circles in postcards and sometimes Tipp-Ex to remove certain aspects of the images which are usually made in hotel rooms on her travels. She is trying to make the space disappear but also to preserve parts of the forms in the imagery. We normally see postcards as a way of keeping memories of a place we have visited or a message from a loved one which we treasure. However, by removing parts of the postcard Whiteread isn't preserving our memories, instead, she is permanently changing them, making parts of the memories missing and unknown. She is leaving us with only half of the image leaving a mystery or traces of the full postcard before the alterations.

Previous Work

During the second year of my undergraduate degree, we had an assignment where we switched projects with a fellow student to give each other a different viewpoint and way of looking at our work. At the time I was looking into highlights and shadows of everyday objects by taking macro photographs of objects whilst illuminating them to enhance the highlights, shadows and textures. I then created ten-minute paintings of the enhanced areas from the photographs I had taken. I swapped projects with Lucy who was creating work on sex and sexuality. She was watching erotic movies of various sexualities and seeing how different videos affected her. She concluded that there are no set sexualities instead it is about the person and not their sexuality.

For my response to her work (Figure 10) I wanted to combine the way I had been using shadows and highlights, with Lucy's theme focusing mainly on her concluding idea of there being no set sexualities. I created a series of 4 paintings of people in different sexual positions. I wanted to create a paint style where you were unable to tell the sex of the people within the paintings by using only block colours and no details which I mapped out from the lightest parts through to the darkest. Even though this was only a small exercise I felt this was a very helpful one for me. I had developed a style that I wanted to experiment with more and develop into my work. It gave me the idea of hiding imagery within a painting, the idea of hiding in plain sight. Also, working on a subject using explicit content was something I normally wouldn't have intended on doing. But from doing this and seeing the viewer's reaction to what the images may contain and the shock when they figured out what the images are, made me want to begin experimenting with the imagery that I place in my paintings, to create an image that isn't expected.

Figure 10. Maxine Miller, *Shadow Sexuality 4*, 2016, Acrylic painting, 11.7 x 16.5 in [Author's own]
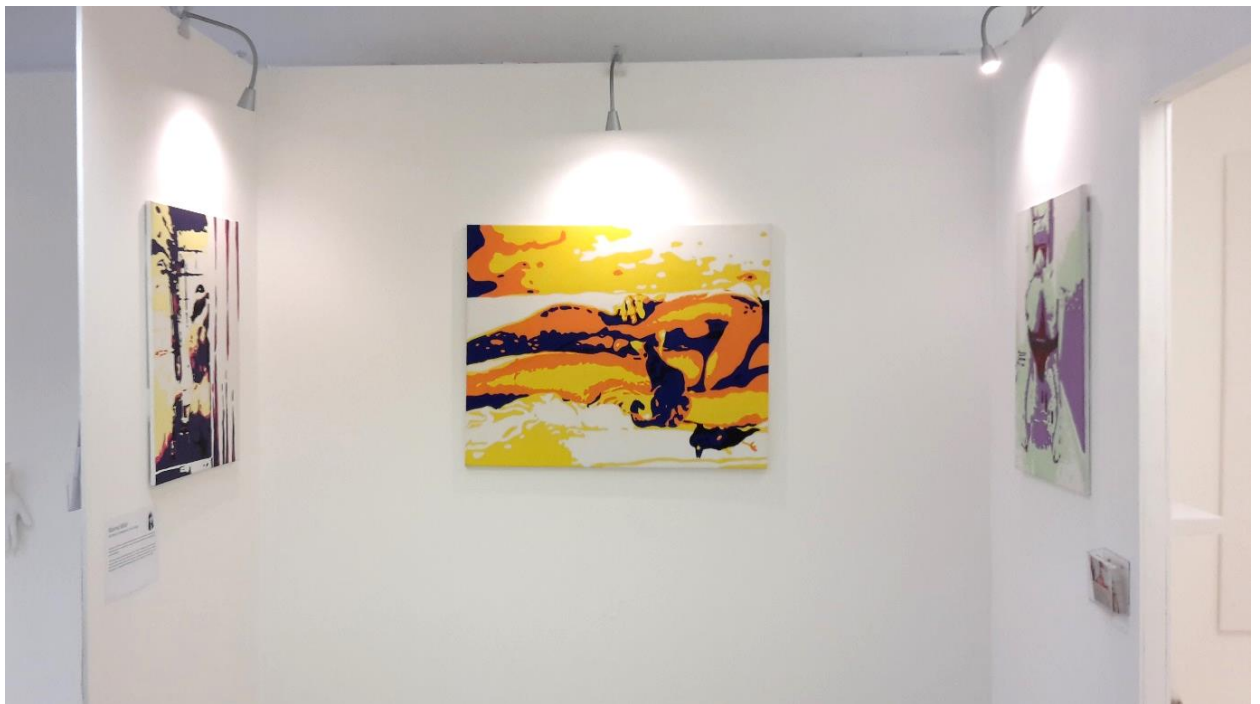
Figure 11. Maxine Miller, *The Everyday (*series of 3), 2016, Acrylic on canvas [Author's own]

Following on from the project I began looking into the theme of hiding in plain sight. I created a series of paintings of everyday objects and activities, by putting together everyday scenarios with uncommon objects within that situation (Figure 11). I asked people if anything unusual had happened in these situations and included their response in my paintings. I was inspired by Andy Warhol through the pop art style and vivid colours, but I was focusing more on the shadows and highlights of the objects and used complementary colours to create a more complex, vivid and bold image.

Before I started the paintings, I mapped out each section starting with the lightest parts of the image and progressing through to the darkest. I decided there would be three colours representing the middle tones, and black and white for the highlights and shadows. I did this through creating a separate image for each colour/tone in the image and once I had drawn them out, I placed them together in one image. This allowed me to check that I have correctly mapped out every piece of the image and if I had missed a piece, I was able to correct it before beginning painting. I painted the pieces in a similar way to how I planned them, from the lightest colour to the darkest, adding any parts I may have missed throughout the planning process. I added a lot of white space to give the viewer room for imagination, to figure out what the imagery is by looking at the shapes and blocks of colour. I was making the images into more than just an everyday object, I was showing how to me they are more, they show parts of our identity and what makes us who we are, we can learn a lot about ourselves through the things we own. It interested me how others interpreted my work in many ways as everyone saw something different. Some viewers knew straight away what the imagery was while others didn't or saw something completely different.

I received the comment that 'my paintings resembled that of a heat sensory image'. A thermographic camera, also known as an infrared camera, is a device that uses heat radiation to capture an image like a camera uses light, using a different colour for each temperature. It detects the heat that we emit from our bodies and from objects in the camera to create a temperature pattern within one-thirteenth of a second. Colder temperatures are usually blue and purple and hotter temperatures red and yellow or white, the hotter an object is the more radiation is produced. I can see how they could interpret my work as heat images through the block colours and my use of colour resembling the heat sensor imagery colours but that wasn't my intention when making this series.

Another comment I received from a different viewer was 'how they found it interesting the way the imagery hoovered in and out of resolving especially as they are giving glimpses of challenging images'. This was the response I wanted, I wanted everyone who viewed my series to see something different. To allow them to take something different from my work, something more personal to them. I also did want the images to be viewed not only as the full picture but as the shapes the block colours made, allowing the viewer to see other things within my series.

This series was a rather important one for me. Not only did I feel proud of my paintings and enjoyed the process of making them, transforming the objects into shapes of colour, but since doing that series of work I was inspired to carry on looking at these themes. I found something that had always stuck in my mind and left me questions and ideas that I wanted to explore further.

I had thought for a while that my *Everyday* painting series was where the first hint of the idea of perception in my work had begun, however looking back through my work over the years I can now see perception had sparked in many pieces before that. This can be seen in my *Camouflage* series from my Extended Diploma end of year exhibition back in June 2014.

Figure 12. Maxine Miller, *Camouflage 1,* 2014, Acrylic on 4 canvases [Author's own]

Figure 13. Maxine Miller, *Camouflage 2,* 2014, Acrylic on canvas, 16.5 x 23.4 in [Author's own]

Figure 14. Maxine Miller, *Camouflage 3*, 2014, Acrylic on canvas, 16.5 x 23.4 in [Author's own]

In this series, I painted three Pop Art inspired animal paintings. I was looking into how animals use camouflage to their benefit using several types of camouflage including concealing colouration, the use of blending into backgrounds by changing the colour of the animal's skin, and disruptive colouration, by using patterns to break up the outline of the animal to confuse their predators. Allowing them to blend into the background to hide from predators and prey making them unseen. I was looking at how changing their camouflage would affect this, to highlight the importance of camouflage. Largely influenced by my admiration of Pop Art and love of animals I was appropriating the animal's original patterns, by using alterations of colour and creating aboriginal patterns.

I began by taking a different animal and experimented with different ways I could change the animal's camouflage. I experimented with altering the colours and shapes, and by adding and reducing the pattern. I was figuring out what worked best with the message I wanted to get across in each piece. My first painting (Figure 12) I focused on big cats and their patterns; this piece is painted on four separate canvases that once completed was screwed together to create one whole image with each canvas representing a different big cat. I used a pale colour pallet for the rest of the animal's fur and used limited details to make the pattern bold and the main part of the painting. I wanted to create a vivid image that wouldn't blend in with the surroundings. The second painting (Figure 13) I took two animals, one that doesn't use camouflage, a horse, and an animal that does, a zebra. The half with a horse I wanted to paint more realistic with a pale blue calm background. The zebra half I wanted to paint the opposite, I changed the traditional zebra stripes into an aboriginal pattern and created a vibrant multi-coloured background. The result was to make the zebra the main part of the painting, which in turn would lead to the horse being overlooked. The idea was to flip the animals, making the zebra's camouflage not work and the horse to appear to look camouflaged. For my last painting (Figure 14) I wanted to undertake a different view, through the eye of the predator looking at his prey. While researching disruptive colouration, and how this breaks down the animal's

outline to the predator, I began experimenting with shapes and exchanging these with parts of the animal pattern. This didn't work too well, it looked as though shapes were placed at random over the animal. So instead I began fading the animal into shapes with the animal still visible, I kept the giraffe black and white to keep the focus on the shapes.

Now looking back at this series, I can see how I was creating a different perspective of camouflage for the viewer, creating an opposite of what camouflage is used for. This made the camouflage unusable; the animals can no longer hide in their environment, leading to the animal instead of blending into the background, to become visible and in the spotlight. I was making the viewer think of what outcome there would be if these animals no longer had their camouflage.
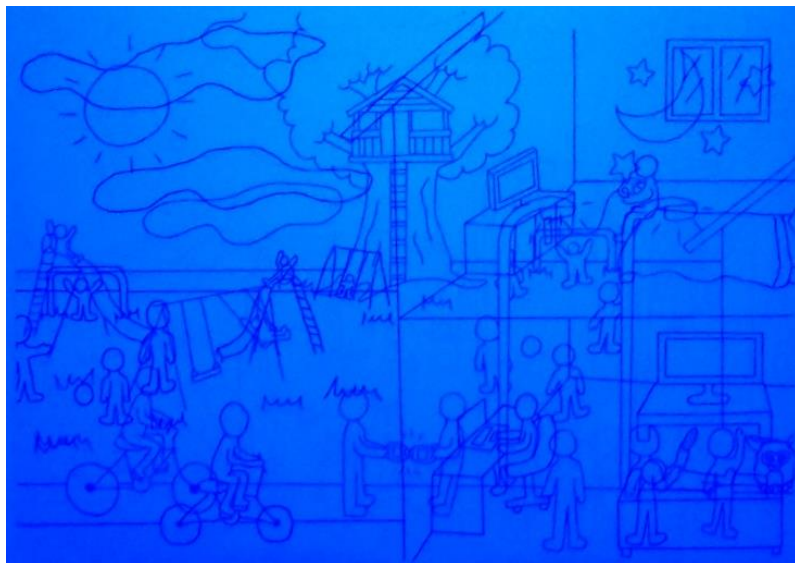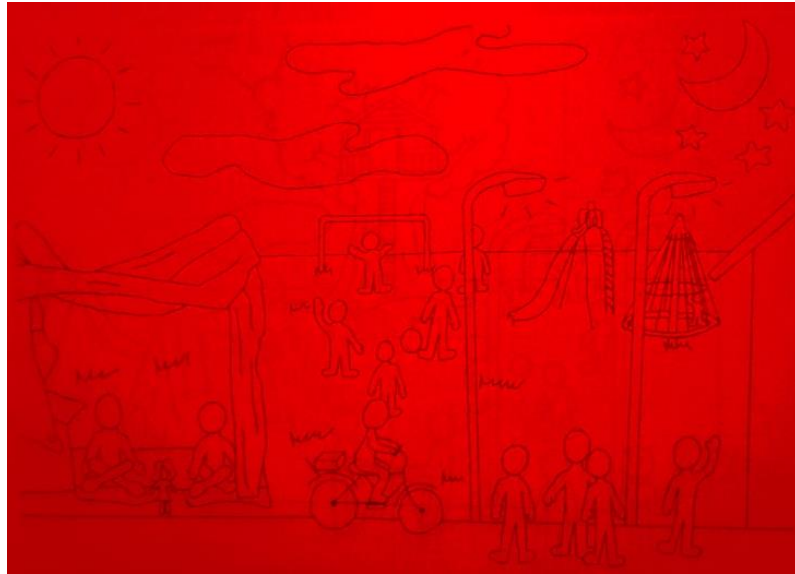
Figure 15. Maxine Miller, *Childhoods – Playtime,* 2017, Digital imagery and RGB coloured light bulb on a timer, 33.1 x 46.8 in [Author's own]

I continued with the ideas of perception and hiding in plain sight into my final year undergraduate work towards my end of year degree show (Figure 15). I was working with different coloured lighting and layered line drawings in digital imagery, playing around with the perception in my work and how to make an image hide into the background. When different coloured lighting was projected on to my work only one coloured layer would be more prominent than the rest, making the other layers seem to fade into the background. I was inspired by Carnovsky, a German duo who used this technique in their work to create large-scale wallpaper installations. I found their technique rather fascinating and wanted to know how it worked to incorporate it into my work. They have much more detailed complex designs, where I wanted to use simple line drawings with minimal added details. However, I was unable to find much information about the process of their work except that they use RGB lighting (Red, Green and Blue) so it was a long process of trial and error. For a while, during my experiments, I thought the coloured lines were red, yellow and blue, unknown at the time that this was my problem, I was using the wrong colours in my digital drawings. After closer observations of Carnovsky's work, I realised that I was looking at where the coloured layers overlapped in their work, which created the red, yellow and blue tones. This directed me to recognise the colours that I was supposed to use to get the technique to work properly was CYM colours (Cyan, Yellow and Magenta).

I had a colour changing light bulb on a timer in this exhibition to allow the viewer to witness the transformation between the images for their self. I was showing the changes and similarities of childhoods over the last few decades, by showing the changes of playtime, school and punishments. Each colour was representing a different year, Red 1960's, Green 1990's and blue nowadays.

My Process

After completing my degree, questions that were left unanswered from previous work around the ideas of perception and hiding in plain sight. I found it curious how perception had recurred in my work over the years, even without me realising it at the time. Because of this, I wanted to explore and research deeper into the idea of perception and how we see things.

Our unconscious mind plays a big role when making art. When we consciously have a plan in our heads of our next piece of art, throughout the making process the vision in our heads keeps altering and the final piece becomes something we didn't see, what we didn't expect. Since the piece is unmade, we can't consciously know the outcome, each mark we make can change our path. Giving us multiple options and instant questions on what marks will follow, which way to proceed throughout the journey of our creative process. "It is never possible to predict which precise shape a brush stroke will form on the paper. It's juiciness, clear definition, gradation of tone depends on the varying consistency of the paint, on the changing proportion of oil and turpentine. These in turn will influence the elasticity of the brush and the pressure required. The wear-and-tear of the bristles during the work and their physical response to paint will also determine the exact shape of the mark." (Ehrenzweig, 1967, p. 58)

Figure 16. Maxine Miller, *Inner Self 2*, 2017, Black ink on paper, 16.5 x 23.4 [Author's own]

Figure 17. Maxine Miller, *Inner Self 5,* 2017, Black ink on paper, 16.5 x 23.4 [Author's own]

With Ehrenzweig's theories in mind, I began creating a series of work from within my inner self (Figure 16 and 17). Allowing my unconscious to take control, with feelings and emotions that I'm unaware of flowing through me. I covered my hands in paint, closed my eyes and zoned out ignoring everything around me. I didn't think about what I was doing, where my hands were, how they were touching the paper, what marks I was making. I was blocking out my conscious mind as much as I could. I didn't want to let anything affect what I was doing except my unconscious mind. I choose black paint because I didn't want to use a colour that would represent an emotion or resemble something different, I think colour can change an image and I thought black wouldn't cause that as much. I wanted the marks that I had made unconsciously to be the focus of my pieces. This series wasn't about the outcome, to me it was about allowing a different part of myself to be in control of my work, to give me a different way of thinking about how I can make art and how strong of a role the unconscious mind plays.

Tom French inspired me to create my inner self prints and to begin investigating the unconscious. His use of brushstrokes and mark making showing the parts of the mind we know and the parts we don't is what inspired me to experiment with allowing my unconscious to take control of my work, to work straight on the piece without any plans.

Because my previous series was more about looking at my work in a different way instead of the outcome, I didn't expect the work to go any further. So instead I put that to one side and began thinking about portraiture, also inspired by Tom French's work with his use of portraits, and a question that has lingered in my mind for a while "how much of a person needs to be in a portrait before it is no longer a portrait?" how far can I push the question till we don't recognise a portrait, what would they become then?

Figure 18. Maxine Miller, *Fold 8,* 2017, Printed photo with folds [Author's own]

Figure 19. Maxine Miller, *Fold 2,* 2017, Printed Photo with folds [Author's own]

I began to experiment with different ways I could reduce the amount of a person being visible in a portrait. For this series (Figure 18 and 19) I was inspired by a random scrunched up piece of paper, the words on the paper were distorted making it hard to read. This led me to wonder what distorted images I could create with manipulating imagery using folding. I selected images of myself and began to make folds in parts of the photos. I didn't have an idea in my mind of where the folds were going to be, I was using chance to a certain extent. I was aiming to reduce the visibility of the facial features to make it less obvious of what the imagery was. I was giving the pieces a new meaning by hiding segments of the images behind the creases, hiding the image within itself. The creases are changing it from a flat image to a sculptural piece to a certain extent. I'm refiguring the way we normally see a face by moving segments from one part of the image to another, creating an abstract piece.

I wanted to continue experimenting with different sized scales to see how that changed the perception of my work. I found that the larger pieces were harder to fold but gave me a lot more room to manipulate the image, this added depth and cast shadows on my work. I felt it made the viewer want to peer around the creases and explore the image further. I was looking at John Stezaker's work while creating this series, inspired by his use of manual manipulations although he uses much more minimal manipulations than I have, sometimes using only one cut. I think that by creating manipulations manually instead of digitally adds something to the work, depth, layers and details which allow the viewer to see what you have done and not just see the outcome. Being able to see all the little changes that have been made would be something that you would lose if this was created digitally, which influenced me to want to carry on with manual manipulations.
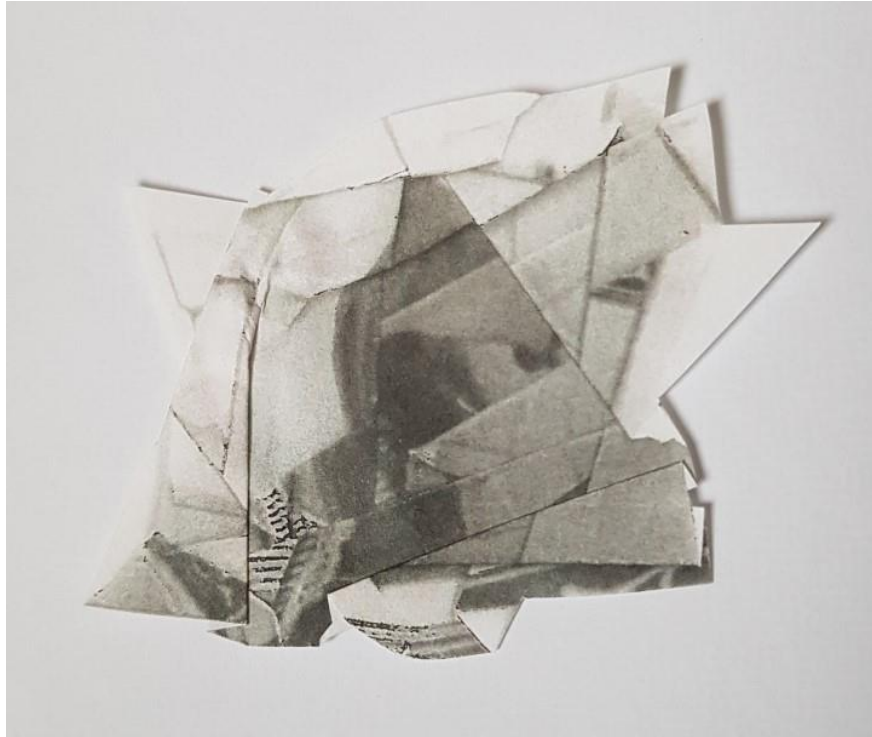
Figure 20. Maxine Miller, *Fold, Scan, Repeat 8 X6,* 2017-8, Photocopy and refold, repeated
[Author's own]

Figure 21. Maxine Miller, *Fold, Scan, Repeat 2 X6,* 2017-8, Photocopy and refold, repeated
[Author's own]

Following on from my folding experiments I wanted to begin a process of scanning in the folded imagery, re-printing to fold again and repeat (Figure 20 and 21). I wanted to see what would happen if I repeated this process and how many times could I keep doing this till it becomes nothing? Or what will it become, is there an end? I repeated the process six times and I noticed that the colours in the images became dull and faded, the dark and black tones became grey. They became grainy and lost the details from the image with each scan I made, it was as though the image itself was slowly fading away. They were becoming blurred with each scan and repeat, losing all the details of previous folds that came before. The images got smaller and smaller with each fold, becoming more abstract and I struggled to tell which way up they were originally, but I think that makes it more interesting. It shows that the manipulation of the images that I made have given the series a different view and another way of looking at a portrait, by the images being redeveloped each time.

'A head is a matter of eyes, nose, mouth, which can be distributed in any way you like'. (Tate, 2017a)

Figure 22. Pablo Picasso, *Figure dans un Fauteuil (Seated Nude, Femme nue assise),* 1909–10,
Oil on canvas, (PabloPicasso.org, 2019)
Available at: https://www.pablopicasso.org/seated-nude.jsp#prettyPhoto [Accessed December
5th 2018)

Looking back at my folded portrait pieces I can see a resemblance to cubism. How cubist painters such as Pablo Picasso jumbled the way a face is seen. Even though our eyes are sent on false errands, unable to focus on a point to gain an idea of the image before being drawn to another feature of the painting jumbling the image up some more, we can still see the portrait within the painting even though the features may not be shown as a face. We still recognise a face or figure even if the eyes are spread across the canvas, or even not there at all. Cubist painters used a lot of geometric shapes, lines and outlines in their work giving them the illusion of depth. This allows you to piece together different parts of the painting from different points to see what the content within the image is.

Magritte's *key to dreams* (Figure 23) is a rather fascinating piece. Magritte painted everyday objects with text underneath that is unrelated to the image, commenting on the always present gap between words and seeing. The way we see is affected by what we believe or know, this piece is questioning any previous perceptions of reality that we may have. The viewer's meaning and truth behind each image is personal to them however, words have limited meanings for instance, the top left corner the horse with the words the door. The image of the horse can have multiple meanings amongst a group of people, as it's an image it could trigger other memories or emotions but the words the door will most likely make us just think of a door. Which leads us to be confused about the mixed messages between the images not matching the text. Leading us to ask the questions about what's real and what's not.
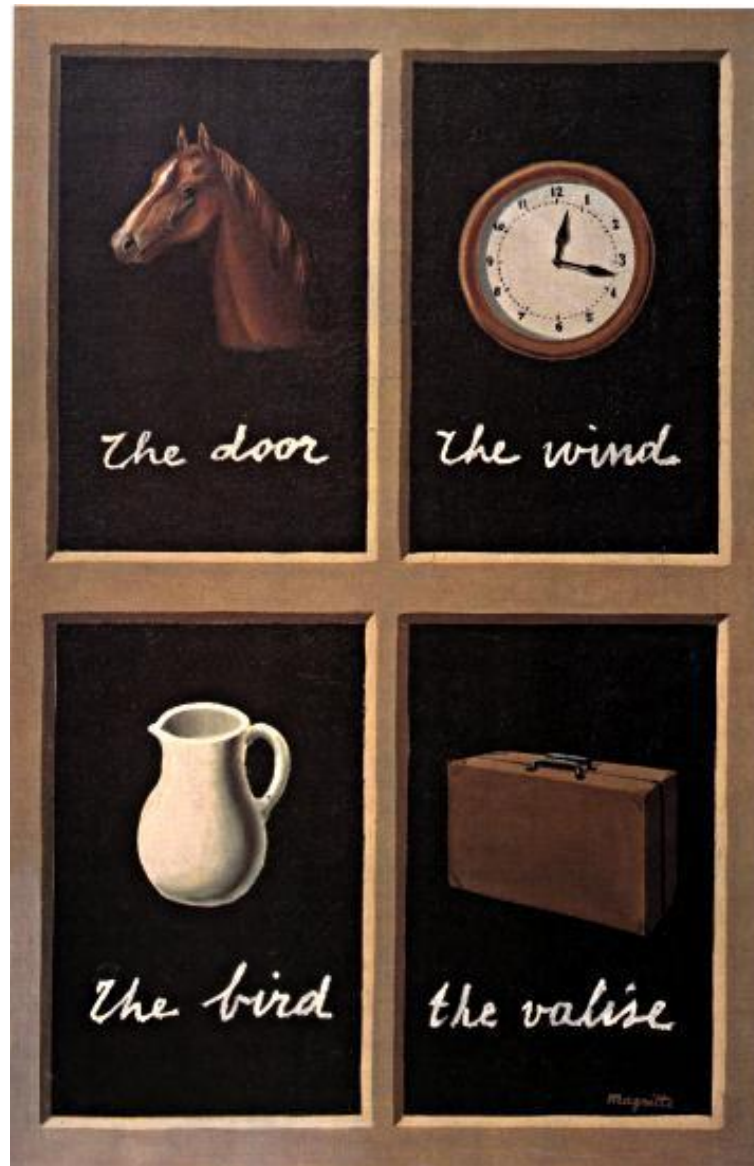
Figure 23. René Magritte, *Key to dreams*, 1935, Oil on canvas (Courses.washington, 2002-3)
Available at: https://courses.washington.edu/hypertxt/cgi-
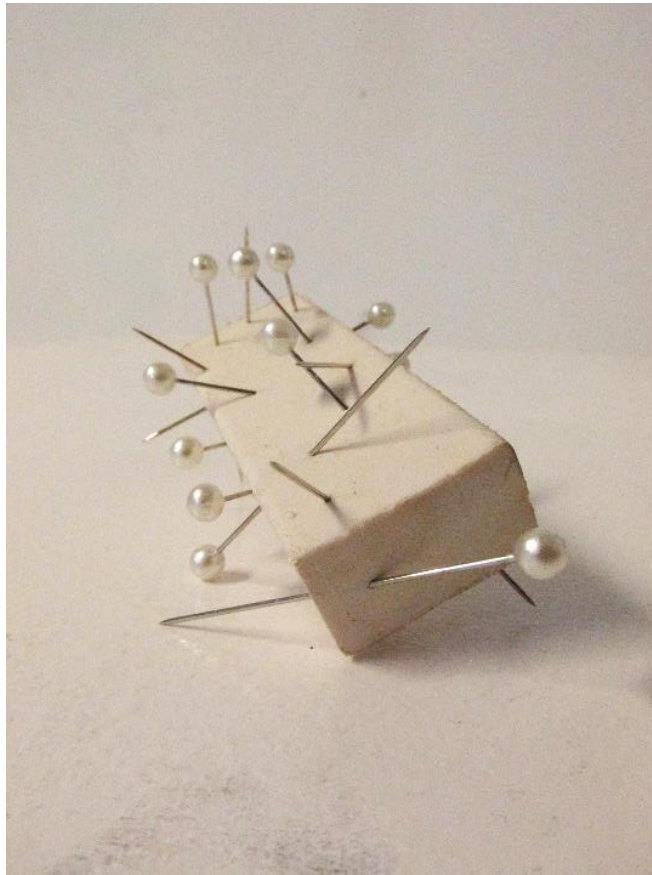bin/book/wordsinimages/magritte.html [Accessed December 5th 2018]

Figure 24. Maxine Miller, *Rubber*, 2017, Rubber with pins [Author's own]

Figure 25. Maxine Miller, *Fork*, 2017, Fork with adjustments [Author's own]

The idea of taking away something from the portraits, taking away the original image to leave traces of what it was before, to give the pieces a new meaning inspired me to try taking away everyday objects purposes. Asking the questions what do they become? What are they now? I began making sculptures by changing the object, either by removing parts of the original object or by adding other objects to change the current object, I'm taking away their functions. For instance, one of my sculptures, *Rubber* (Figure 24), I put pins all the way through the rubber in all directions. You can't pick it up to hold without the risk of cutting yourself. You can't use the rubber to rub things out now, asking the question what is it? What can it be used for?

By doing this, not only was I asking the above questions, but I was also showing how we barely notice the objects we use, we just see them as things. I don't see them like that, I think everyday objects are part of our identity. What we use and do every day that makes and shows a part of who we are and, by looking at the things we own we can tell parts of who we are and what we like to do. The adjustments and alterations I have made to these objects are making the viewer take another look and changing their perspective of these objects.

I noticed that I had developed the idea of danger within my sculptures. A few of them can now be weapons that you could easily injure yourself with. The idea that something that used to be harmless but can now cause you harm leads you to think about the object differently. I was inspired by Mona Hatoum's use of everyday objects in her work. Alike my what do they become series, Hatoum also uses the dangerous and threatening in her work to give the viewer mixed feelings, the feeling of the known but somehow unknown object in front of them, or as Freud would say the uncanny.

Sigmund Freud was investigating how the familiar can become daunting to us. The concept where something that's familiar becomes foreign and frightening. It is the fearsome that leads back to the something that we use to know. The effect of the uncanny is produced by destroying the difference between imagination and reality. Therefore, the events in for instance fairy tales do not make us uneasy, we assume it is an imaginary world separate from our own.

"This is the fact that an uncanny effect often arises when the boundary between fantasy and reality is blurred, when we are faced with the reality of something that we have until now considered imaginary." (Freud, 2003, p. 150)

At this point, I had two different projects going on, my work with manipulating portraits and my altered object sculptures. I had to come to a decision on which series of work to take forward. It took me a while, but I decided to continue with my manipulation of portraits. I felt that there was a lot I could do with them to push further, a lot more exploring and experiments of different manipulation and refiguring that I could try. I also felt that the manipulations were a stronger set of work. I later found out that another artist exhibiting in the exhibition was working with everyday objects in a similar way which lead me to my final decision.
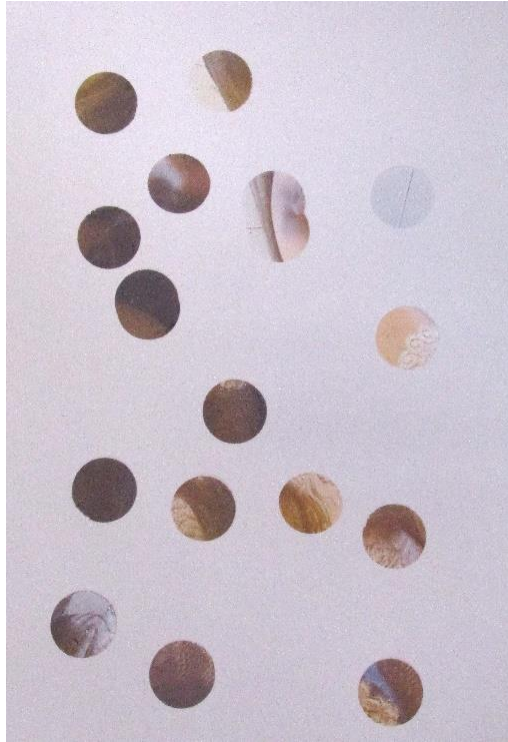
Figure 26. Maxine Miller, *Circle 3*, 2018, Hole punched circle from photograph, 5.8 x 8.3 in [Author's own]

Figure 27. Maxine Miller, *Circle 10*, 2018, Photo with circles hole punched and repositioned, 5.8 x 8.3 in [Author's own]

Continuing with my manipulation of portraiture work I began thinking and researching other ways to manually manipulate portraits, that was when I found Rachel Whiteread's postcard series. I was using a hole punch similar to Whiteread's use of removing parts, leaving the remains of the postcard. Her use of removing and taking away parts of the imagery made me interested to see the parts she was discarding. This led me to want to try the opposite of what she was doing, to keep the circles. This became a big influence for the rest of my process and led to one of my exhibition pieces.

I began an experiment with using a hole punch with my self-portrait pieces on A5 photos. But instead of keeping the remains/background of the image I wanted to keep the circles that I hole-punched out of the portraits and discard the rest of the image. I experimented with different placements and compositions of the pieces such as placing the circles where they would have been in the photo if they hadn't been removed, rotating the positions from where they would originally go, and completely changing where the circles were originally by swapping with a different circle. I also experimented with keeping both the background and circles and rotating the circle where it was originally. Although this was an interesting outcome, I felt the more minimal the piece, with using just the circles, the more powerful the image was, the less you saw the more you wanted to see.

I was again asking the question how much of a person needs to be in a portrait for it to no longer be a portrait and experimenting with hiding imagery in a different way, but I was also trying to say how you only know certain parts of who a person really is. We only know what a person is willing to show/tell us about themselves. Also, we don't fully know who we are until time goes on and we have discovered who we are and what our personality is, which links to my research into Sigmund Freud and his theories on the unconscious.

"Analysis shows that the various latent psychic processes we infer enjoy a great degree of mutual independence, as if they stood in no relation to and knew nothing of each other. We

would therefore need to be prepared to postulate not only a second consciousness within us, but also a third, fourth, perhaps an unlimited series of states of consciousness, all unknown both to ourselves and to each other." (Freud, 2005b, p. 53)

Sigmund Freud believed that most of what we experience every day such as emotions, beliefs and impulses are taking place in our unconscious which we are unable to see in our conscious mind. We are unaware of the influences of our unconscious and how much of an influence it has on our actions. Our feelings and decisions are strongly influenced by our past experiences and stored in the unconscious, which also explains how when something traumatic happens to us, whether we remember it or not, these memories are locked in our unconscious. The memories remain active in our unconscious and can reappear in certain circumstances, in ways that can be unexpected and cause problems for us in our conscious and unconscious mind. Freud believed that in our conscious mind we only know a small amount of our personality because we only know 'the small tip of the iceberg' of what is going on in our minds.

Freud also believed that we have a third part of our mind called the pre-conscious, which consist of all the things that could potentially be brought into our conscious mind. For example, you may not be thinking right now about what you want for dinner but now that it has been mentioned that is now what you are thinking about. The pre-conscious allows us to bring memories into our conscious if we need or want to do so.

"The unconscious is the larger circle which includes within itself the smaller circle of the conscious; everything conscious has its preliminary step in the unconscious, whereas the unconscious may stop with this step and still claim full value as a psychic activity. Properly speaking, the unconscious is the real psychic; its inner nature is just as unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is just as imperfectly reported to us through the data of consciousness as is the external world through the indications of our sensory organs." (Freud, 2005a, p. 138)
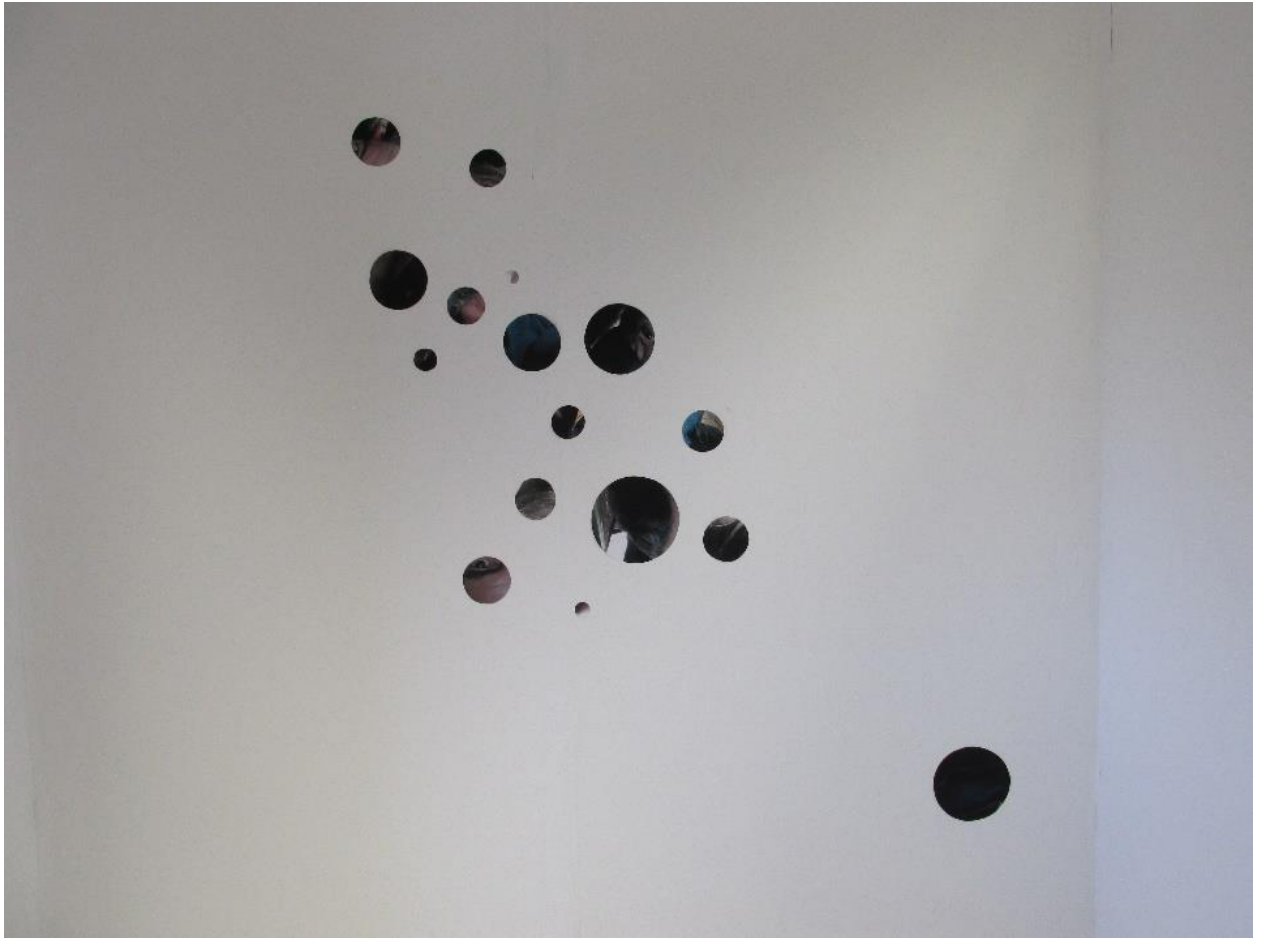
Figure 28. Maxine Miller, *Circle Manipulation Experimentation*, 2018, Circles cut from photograph [Author's own]

My previous circle experiments became one of my final pieces in the exhibition. I wanted to test using different sized circle and see whether big or small or a mixture of sizes gave the best impression (Figure 28). I worked with A0 photographs using a compass to draw out the circles, purposely trying to avoid showing too much of the facial features, to try and keep the intriguing parts of the image. I cut out the circles, the parts I wanted to keep, and discarding the rest of the photograph. Straight after when I fixed the circles to a white background, I felt that compared to my smaller experiments the range of multiple sized circles were more powerful and were rather eye-catching. Not only did I think that having multiple sizes looked better but also, by having different sizes I thought would draw the viewer in to take a closer look at the smaller circles.

I am permanently changing the way the image is perceived, removing memories, leaving a trace of the original photo. Each circle is telling a story, only that segment of the image, leading you to wonder what is going on in the full image. I wanted my work to be seen both as the individual circles, separate pieces when taking a closer look and for the circles all together as a full piece. Therefore, I spread out the circles, not too far but just enough so the piece can have both views. I wasn't only asking the question how much of a person needs to be in a portrait for it to no longer be a portrait, but I was also trying to say how you only know certain parts of who a person really is or who we are. We don't fully know who we are or what is fully going on in our unconscious mind.

I experimented with using different photographs within my work, I decided to use myself as the subject of my photos because to a certain extent you know your mind better than someone else would. Other people may notice things you don't see like your behaviour and how you do things a certain way that seems different or odd to others, but you know better your thoughts, feelings and your opinions. I experimented with using other people and more than one person in the photos, but I decided to stick with using just photos of me.

Figure 29. Maxine Miller, *Circle Manipulation (Details),* 2018, Photograph, Perspex circle
[Author's own]

After I decided the size of the circles, I began thinking about how I would display them (Figure 29), what material would work best. I didn't want to just use printed photos, I felt they would have been too delicate and could possibly rip, I needed to use a stronger material. I wanted the circles to look cleanly cut, perfect circles. I did this because I wanted my work to be seen both as a full image and a finished piece because my work is cut from parts of another image, but I was also hoping it would refer to the image originally being complete. I began looking into getting them printed with different companies on multiple materials and surfaces such as on canvas, acrylic, mount board and more. However, I found that a lot of companies wouldn't print the circular photos, most companies stuck to the normal square and rectangular printing. The companies I found that would print them, as they were circular, the price was rather expensive. After finding this out I thought I would try to create my own acrylic prints using Perspex and mounting the photos on the back. I was very pleased with the outcome and this saved me a lot of money than what I would have had to pay to get this done professionally and in return. I've learned a new skill. I learned how to use a laser cutter to cut out the circles in Perspex and found a company that printed my circles on photographic paper. It took a lot of trial and error to find the right settings to cut through the 5mm Perspex and to learn the laser cutting software. Once I figured it out, I then began to test out different clear drying glues and sprays to mount the photos on the back of the Perspex. I didn't want the glue to be seen because it would ruin the images, a lot off the glues I tried that said they dried clear didn't. The best spray I could find that left the less amount of marks that I used was 3M Photo mount spray, it had the clean finish I was looking for.

Figure 30. Maxine Miller, *Business Cards*, 2018, Perspex circles, sticker decals [Author's own]

Figure 31. Maxine Miller, *Circle Manipulation*, 2018, Perspex circles, Photographs
[Author's own]

To go with my work, I also made circle business cards using Perspex cut again with a laser cutter with my details etched into them and sticker decals that I got printed with two different images stuck on the back (Figure 30). One sticker design of one of the circle images from my *Circular Manipulation* piece and a close-up photo of my other piece, *Cube* that I also exhibited. I did this not only because I thought they looked great and so that viewers could take a piece of my work with them. With my work being around the unconscious mind one day, when the person who took a Perspex circle comes across it where ever they may have put it, they will remember where it came from. My work will remain in their minds even if only for that second.

I then began experimenting with how to position the circles. Before this point I was placing the circles at random, spread out across the wall. A comment from a fellow student, that 'the placement of the circles looks like planets or a star constellation' lead me to research into this and experiment with different positioning. A constellation is a group of stars that appear to form imaginary outlines and meaningful shapes or patterns on the celestial sphere that is concentric to earth, typically representing animals and gods. As constellations are appealing to the eye, I thought maybe placing the circles in the layout of a constellation could work. However, while I found it fascinating learning about star constellations, I felt that this was adding a layer to my work that it didn't need. I felt it was complicating my ideas around my work. So, I forgot about constellations and thought back to my first experiment, my *Inner Self* prints. I came up with the idea of using my unconscious again to plan the layout of the circles, I closed my eyes and made dots on paper without thinking. I repeated this process four times and tried out the four layouts I had created. I then chose which one looked the most visually appealing and was spaced out enough compared to the other three, I felt this was a better way to layout my circles.

I was using chance to a certain extent for the layout of my piece in a similar way to that of John Cage, an American composer and visual artist. He would use chance to create his compositions, the most common method using the I Ching, a book consisting of 64 hexagrams, which involves gaining a hexagram by chance generation, often Cage would use a coin toss to decide, and then finding that hexagram to decide the notes and techniques. Cage's *Etudes Australes* composition was created using star charts, the positions of the stars defining which notes would be played. This created challenging music that was written as duets for two hands. Due to the range of notes for each hand, this caused the hands to be crossed continuously throughout the composition. In an exhibition of his work that was put together a while after his death, 'Every day is a good day', Cage's methods of chance inspired the curators to use a computer-generated random number programme to determine the positioning of displaying his work within the exhibition. This caused the works to be hung and positioned at various heights and resulted in work being put together that a curator normally wouldn't.
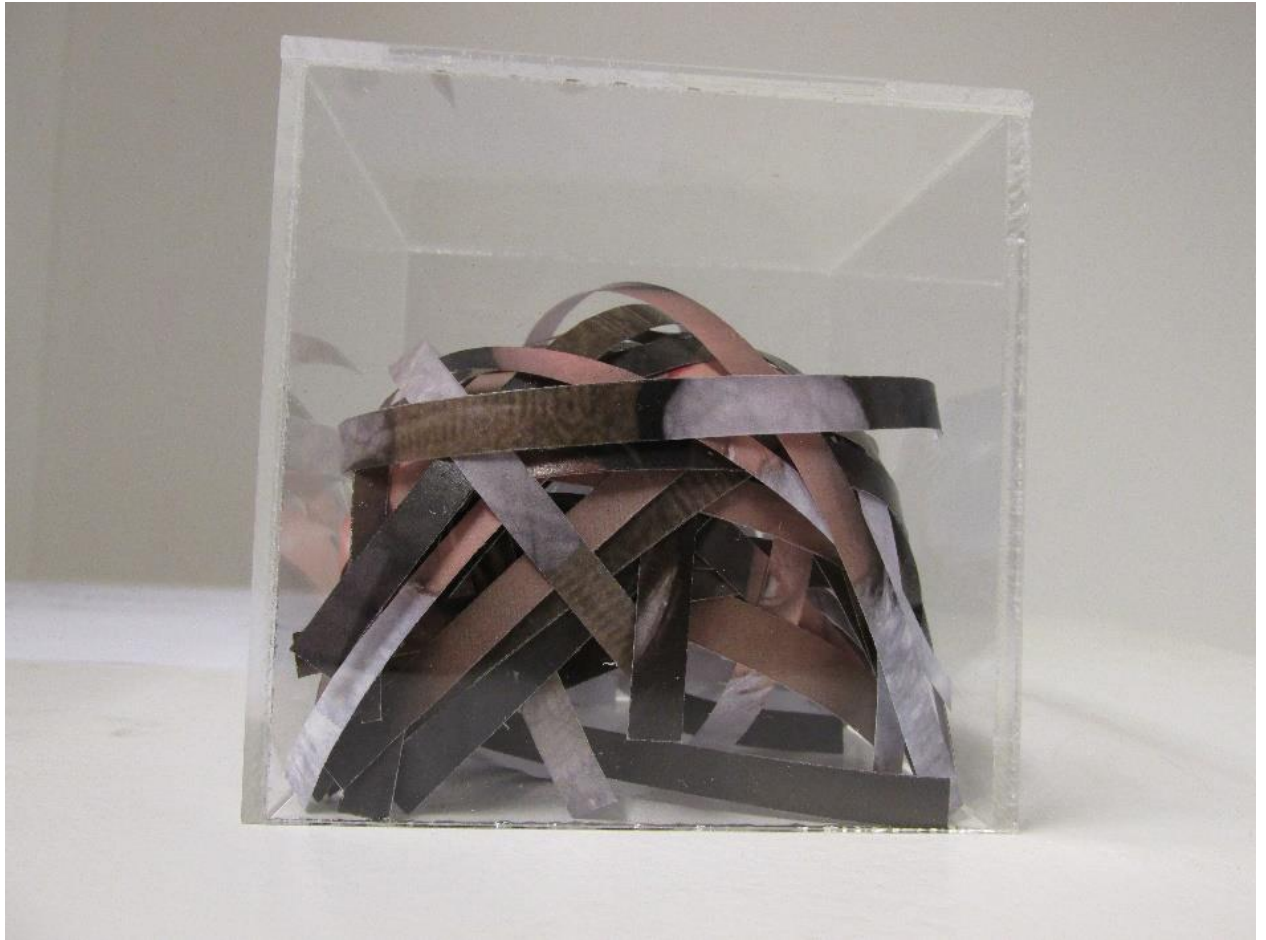
Figure 32. Maxine Miller, *Cube Experimentation,* 2018, Perspex cube, shredded photos strips, 100mm x 100mm [Author's own]

The other piece I exhibited was *Cube* (Figure 32). My first experiment of this occurred at the same time as I was creating my circle work. I extended my experimentation with different ways of manually manipulating and reconfiguring portraits through cutting and folding. I cut photos into strips and placed them, jumbled up, into a small Perspex cube. I wanted to use a transparent material to allow the viewer to have multiple views around the object, and to create a relationship with my other exhibition piece by using the related materials. I wanted to create a manic, confused feel, to try to create a feeling of trapped, racing thoughts and not knowing what's going on in your mind. It seemed to me this method had a lot of possibilities. For example, the way the positioning of the strips shown could easily be changed by a different placement of the paper or slight knock. Occasionally the paper moved slightly on its own or overnight. Even a slight movement of the paper changed the appearance and layout within the cube in a perceptual way. This made me want to carry on experimenting with it further.

Figure 33. Maxine Miller, *Cube Experimentation*, 2018, Perspex cube, shredded photo strips 200mm x 200mm [Author's own]

Figure 34. Maxine Miller, *Cube Experimentation,* 2018, Perspex cube, shredded strips, 200mm x 200mm [Author's own]

My next step was to experiment with different sized cubes so I could test how much paper I could place inside a bigger cube and how the different sizes and amounts affected the piece. I initially found that using a small cube with a smaller amount of paper worked better (when I used more paper in the original smaller sized cube it began to come out the bottom which was also possibly due to the weight of the cube. Of course, I wanted the paper to stay inside the cube.) When I used a bigger cube, the opposite happened. The effect of using less paper made the paper drop inside making the cube seem empty and unappealing. It created a lot of gaps in the arrangement by allowing the blank backs of the image, the white, to show through. But once I had filled the cube it appeared much more alive, the strips of paper twisted and entwined together. The piece looked much busier, which was what I was aiming for, and this led me to feel that the bigger cube would be the best way to create the feeling that I wanted to achieve. The final cube I made myself using 500mm x 500mm, 3mm thick Perspex sheets and plastic glue.

I went on to experiment with how high or low the cube should be placed. I experimented with using plinths of varying heights to see what positioning would work best in comparison with my circular manipulation work. Due to the circles being spread out across the back wall I felt that having a plinth would get in the way of the viewer being able to see them. From experimenting with the plinths, I felt that using the lowest made the cube feel more grounded, to feel trapped to the surface which led me to try placing the cube directly on the floor. This, in turn, gave me more room to try out different positions on the floor to place the cube, exploring closer to and further away from the circles. I preferred having the cube further away, I liked the distance between the two and the connection of the high and low, also this gave the pieces enough space from each other. This allowed the viewer full access around the cube, and to get up close to my circle piece.
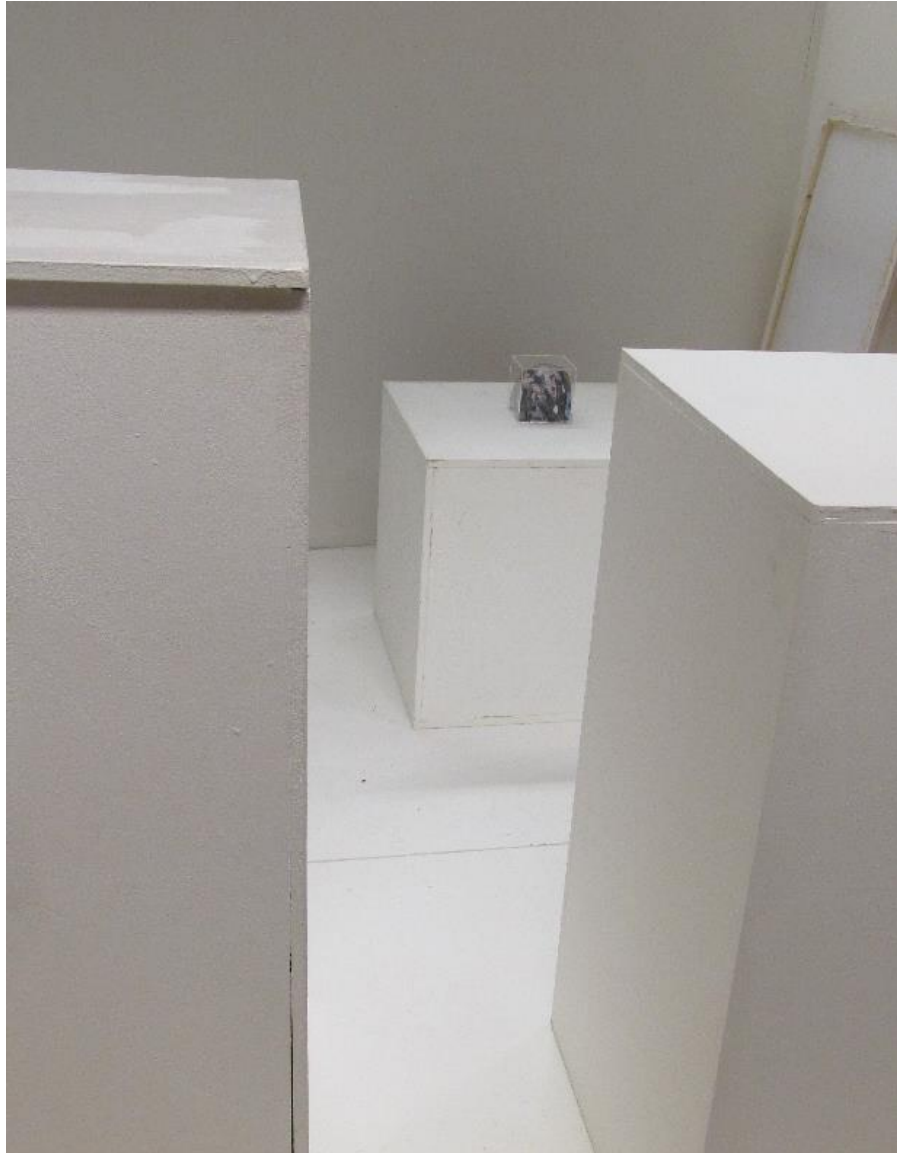
Figure 35. Maxine Miller, *Cube Experimentation,* 2018, Perspex cube, various plinths
[Author's own]

Up to this point, I was using one or two images together in the cube. I began adding more photos within the object which made you unsure if the strips matched up to create a full image. It made the cube more puzzling, making the viewer look deeper into the cube to try and piece it together. I also wanted to try out using different thicknesses of the strips. Before I was cutting the stripes at roughly the same width, so I began cutting a variety of sized strips. While I liked this, I also noticed that it made the thinner and thicker stripes stand out more. I didn't want this, I wanted the piece to be seen as just a whole so I came to the idea of not being as exact with cutting the strips, so they are different widths, but not a large change in size, therefore, none would stand out more than the rest, each strip is as important as the others. Another aspect I wanted to experiment with was the placement of the paper. I was originally just placing the paper in the cube randomly, trying to keep the image side facing out. I was very pleased with the outcome of this process as I didn't even know how it would look till all the paper was in and I flipped the cube over. However, I thought I should give other methods a go in case another way worked better than this one. I tried curling the paper, scrunching up and folding, weaving and even glueing the paper together, but I didn't like any of them. I felt I was making it more complicated than it needed to be. It took away the tangled-up paper and the confused feeling that I wanted, and I felt another layer of manipulating was unnecessary. I liked the original idea of simply placing the paper, so I stuck with that.

Whilst creating *Cube* my ideas were that this piece represents our unconscious mind. The Perspex cube contains shredded photos and portraits of memories from my life. The paper representing my thoughts and memories, with multiple images tangled together creating a chaotic feel. We can only see parts of the imagery because like in our minds, we only know part of what is going on. The paper is all contained in the cube as we don't get full access to our unconscious.

Figure 36. Maxine Miller, *Cube,* 2018, Perspex cube, shredded photo strips, 500mm x 500mm
[Author's own]

Figure 37. Maxine Miller, *Cube (Details)* 2018, Perspex cube, shredded photo strips, 500mm x 500mm [Author's own]

Figure 38. Maxine Miller, *Circle Manipulation* and *Cube*, 2018, Perspex circles and photographs, Perspex cube and shredded photograph strips [Author's own]

The reason I exhibited both pieces together was because of my ideas and thoughts behind my work whilst creating them. Together the pieces are showing different types of thought. The circles are showing free thought or our conscious mind. They are spread out across the wall having plenty of room and space. After staring at the circles for a while it does begin to feel as though they are floating in mid-air instead of being on the wall, as if they have the freedom to move freely around the exhibit space, leading you to feel a little disorientated. The cube, however, is the opposite, it is representing the unconscious mind. Trapped and unknown thoughts and memories, only allowing a selective amount visible, like that of our minds and they are restricted to the cube. The correlation between the two is enhanced by the height difference between them. With the cube being restricted to the floor the contents are unable to be touched, the circles have the rest of the room they have the freedom.

The white space is a big part of my work. I spent a lot of time making sure there was a lot of smooth, pristine white space around my work. I think the white space is very important because not only did I want to give the viewer room for their interpretation for my work, but I also wanted to show the blank space in our mind. The space in our mind for new things, new opportunities and memories, I also didn't want the viewer to be distracted by anything around my work. The white space will help to free the viewer's mind to interpret different meanings around my work, to piece together the images.

Conclusion

As I said in my introduction, both before and then throughout my master's degree, I have repeatedly examined the recurring theme of *hiding in plain sight*. This is especially clear in my exhibition pieces, perhaps because it had become so clear to me how important this theme was. In both of those pieces the images are right there, in theory, they just need be put together, like a jigsaw puzzle. All the pieces are there in front of you! However, in both cases, this is easier said than done. With the circular piece, even though the pieces clearly have been removed from an original image it is still rather difficult to see the pieces together as a portrait. In the cube piece, all the pieces of each image are within the box but are unreachable. No one can touch the contents. If that was possible the images could perhaps, with a great deal of time and patience, be placed back together to create the full images. But as that isn't possible it becomes harder to piece back together just by looking.

Overall, I am rather pleased with how my exhibition went. I've created a series of work that is representing my research into the different parts of our mind; the parts that are accessible and free, the conscious, and the parts that are restricted and harder to access, the unconscious. This thinking about the mind is combined with the theme of hiding in plain sight, the way in which the images are right there in front of us, as though they form a puzzle that needs piecing together. Chance is rather important here; the images were placed using chance like methods. If the images were placed too far apart or to close together the impression of the piece wouldn't have been the same. The whole aesthetics of the two 'puzzle' pieces taken together captured the feelings that I wanted to suggest, the atmosphere that I wanted to create and dealt with the ideas that I had realised were central to my practice as an artist.

When the exhibition opened to the public, I received comments such as 'your space is so pristine it makes it look as though your work is floating.' (I did find that a few people were hesitant to go into my space because of the white flooring!) Another viewer said: 'It took me

awhile to realise the circles are from a face.' Hearing that comment confirmed that I had gone some way towards achieving my objectives. I wanted my work to be challenging, to make people look a bit closer to try and see what is right in front of them.

Following on from the questions I have posed in my introduction I think I have partly answered the question of how an image can be hidden even though it is right in front of the spectator, as though it just needs piecing together? And what happens when a spectator does this piecing together? This depends on how disordered and readable an image is. If the image is too disordered, then the piece becomes unreadable. You are unable to piece the images back together, but when the amount of disorder is more minimal the spectator can reorder and see the images. Another question I asked was is it that people have such varied personalities and have had led separate lives with their personalities formed by widely differing experiences that lead to everyone having a different perspective or opinion, or is there something else that leads us to think differently? This is a work in progress. I have yet to find the answer. What I have found out is that our unconscious is in use a lot when we make a decision, therefore our unconscious plays a big role in our thinking although we are unaware of how much. I will have to research deeper into how our mind works and how we think to answer the above question.

"It would certainly be wrong to imagine that the unconscious remains at rest while all the psychic work is done by the pre-conscious, or that the unconscious is something discarded, a vestigial organ or a leftover from evolution. It would be equally wrong to assume that interaction between the two systems is confined to the act of repression, with the pre-conscious casting everything it finds disturbing into the abyss of the unconscious. On the contrary, the unconscious is a living thing capable of development, and it maintains a number of other relations with the pre-conscious, including co-operation. In short, we must say that the unconscious remains active though it's so called derivatives, that it is open to influences from life, and that it constantly influences – and, conversely, is even subject to influences from – the pre-conscious." (Freud, 2005b, p. 73)
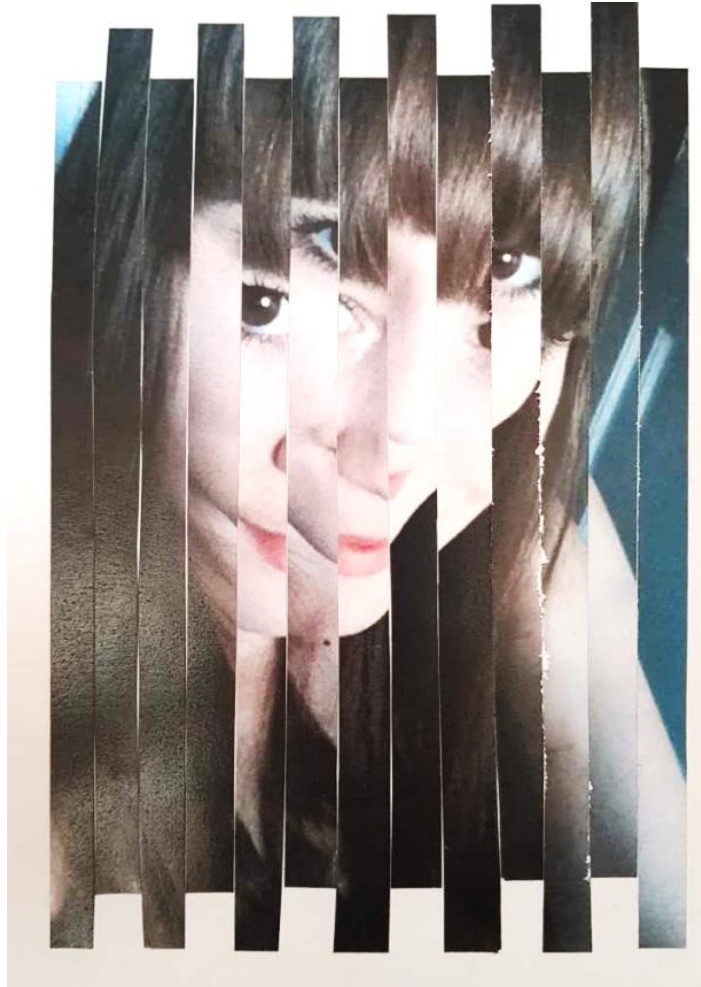
Figure 39. Maxine Miller, *Vertical*, 2019, Photograph cut into strips, 5.8 x 8.3 in [Author's own]

Figure 40. Maxine Miller, *Vertical X2,* 2019, Photographs cut into strips, 5.8 x 8.3 in
[Author's own]

<u>Further Directions</u>

Since the exhibition, I have started participating in some art therapy sessions. I want to learn more about our mind and our unconscious and how much it's in use when we create art. I want to see if there are any hidden meanings behind my work. This has been relevant and fascinating and is something that I will continue to do. Also, since the exhibition, I have carried on with experimenting with manipulating portraiture. I wanted to see if I could push the strips in my cube piece further. I cut photos into strips and placed them back together but with slight alterations to that of the original. I experimented with placing the strips one higher and one lower than that of the one before (Figure 39). This gave the illusion that there are two incomplete faces within the image even though this was from one complete image. I also experimented with placing two images back together with the same strip next to each other (Figure 40). I felt this gave the image a lot of movement that the original image didn't contain. I have more ideas of manipulation that I want to carry on experimenting with. I certainly feel that this new work continues to be informed by my interest in the related group of themes described above: hiding in plain sight, perception, chance and the unconscious. I believe that other work I do in the future is very likely to address these ideas too. One of the outcomes of my practice and my research for the masters is that I have discovered some key interests and themes in my practice and mapped out some productive directions for the future.

References

Artnet. (2018) *John Stezaker* [online]
Available at: http://www.artnet.com/artists/john-stezaker/
[Accessed 15th October 2018]

Artrepublic. (2018) *Tom French artist biography* [online]
Available at: https://www.artrepublic.com/biographies/317-tom-french.html
[Accessed 8th October 2018]

Artsy. (2016) *Tom French Explores the Collision of the Conscious and the Unconscious Mind in "Transcend"* [online]
Available at: https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-tom-french-explores-the-collision-of-the-conscious-and-the-unconscious-mind-in-transcend
[Accessed 8th October 2018]

Artsy. (2018) *Andy Warhol: Marilyn Monroe* [online]
Available at: https://www.artsy.net/collection/andy-warhol-marilyn-monroe
[Accessed 6th September 2018]

Berger, J. (2008) *Ways of Seeing* (1st edition) London: Penguin UK

Carnovsky. (2019a) *RGB* [online]
Available at: https://www.carnovsky.com/RGB.htm
[Accessed 10th September 2018]

Carnovsky. (2019b) *RGB Exhibitions* [online]
Available at: https://www.carnovsky.com/RGB_Exhibition.htm
[Accessed 10th September 2018]

Cohen, A. (2018) *What You Need to Know about René Magritte* [online]
Available at: https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-rene-magritte
[Accessed 5th December 2018]

Curiger, B. (2010) *The Process of Drawing is like Writing a Diary: It's a Nice Way of Thinking About Time Passing'* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/process-drawing-writing-diary-its-nice-way-thinking-about-time-passing
[Accessed 16 November 2018]

Dillon, B. (2010) *The visual art of John Cage* [online]
Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/jul/10/john-cage-composer-drawings-exhibition
[Accessed 14th January 2019]

Ehrenzweig, A. (1967) *The hidden order of art: A Study in the Psychology of Artistic imagination* (7th edition) California: University of California Press

Farand, C. (2016) *Duck or rabbit? The 100-year-old optical illusion that could tell you how creative you are* [online]
Available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/duck-or-rabbit-the-100-year-old-optical-illusion-that-tells-you-how-creative-you-are-a6873106.html
[Accessed 30th October 2018]

Fineartmultiple. (2017) *Mona Hatoum—An Artist in Exile* [online]
Available at: https://fineartmultiple.com/blog/mona_hatoum_multiples_editions/
[Accessed 2nd November 2018]

Fluke. (2019) *How infrared cameras work* [online]
Available at: https://www.fluke.com/en-gb/learn/best-practices/measurement-basics/thermography/how-infrared-cameras-work
[Accessed 3rd October 2018]

French, T. (2018) *Duality Paintings* [online]
Available at: https://www.tomfrenchstudio.com/duality-paintings
[Accessed 8th October 2018]

Freud, S. (1999) *The Interpretation of dreams* (5th edition) New York: Oxford

Freud, S. (2003) *The Uncanny* (7th edition) London: Penguin Books

Freud, S. (2005a) *Dream Psychology: Psychoanalysis for Beginners* (Reprint edition) New York: Mondial

Freud, S. (2005b) *The Unconscious* (19th edition) London: Penguin Books

Fulleylove, R. (2016) *Artist Mona Hatoum electrifies the senses in her first retrospective at the Tate Modern* [online]
Available at: https://www.itsnicethat.com/articles/mona-hatoum-retrospective-tate-modern-050516
[Accessed 2nd November 2018]

Gagosian. (2019) *Rachel Whiteread* [online]
Available at: https://gagosian.com/artists/rachel-whiteread/
[Accessed 16th November 2018]

Gombrich, E. H. (1977) *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (5th edition) London: Phaidon

Guerrieri, M. (2015) *With 'Etudes Australes,' John Cage imagined a boundless world* [online]
Available at: https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/music/2015/06/13/with-etudes-australes-john-cage-imagined-boundless-world/JQBFnzBjDtmb5bzCVuKknL/story.html
[Accessed 14th January 2019]

Harris, T. (2018) *How animal camouflage works* [online]
Available at: https://animals.howstuffworks.com/animal-facts/animal-camouflage.htm
[Accessed 5th October 2018]

Kettymora. (2014) *Andy Warhol BBC Radio 4 Interview (March 17th 1981)* [online]
Available at: https://soundcloud.com/kettymora/andy-warhol-bbc-radio-4
[Accessed 8th September 2018]

Lloyd, C. (2017) *How Does Thermal Imaging Work?* [online]
Available at: https://www.howtogeek.com/294076/how-does-thermal-imaging-work/
[Accessed 3rd October 2018]

MoMa. (2018) *Andy Warhol Marylin Monroe 1967* [online]
Available at: https://www.moma.org/collection/works/61240
[Accessed 6th September 2018]

MomaLearning. (2012) *Campbell's Soup Cans* [online]
Available at: https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/andy-warhol-campbells-soup-cans-1962/
[Accessed 6th September 2018]

Odditymag. (2018) *Tom French - Oddity Magazine* [online]
Available at: https://odditymag.com/blogs/art/tom-french
[Accessed 8th October 2018]

Pablopicasso.org. (2019) *Pablo Picasso and his paintings* [online]
Available at: https://www.pablopicasso.org/
[Accessed 5th December 2018]

Rhodes. (2016) *Artist interview with Tom French on Transcend* [online]
Available at: https://rhodescontemporaryart.com/artist-interview-with-tom-french-on-transcend/
[Accessed 8th October 2018]

Smith, A. (2016) *'Never take anything for what it appears to be': Ali Smith on Mona Hatoum* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/never-take-anything-what-it-appears-be-ali-smith-on-mona-hatoum
[Accessed 2nd November 2018]

Smyth, D. (2011) *John Stezaker, Vandal and thief 28th January 2011, by Diane Smyth, British Journal of photography* [online]
Available at: https://www.saatchigallery.com/artists/john_stezaker_articles.htm
[Accessed 15th October 2018]

Southbank Centre. (2015) *John Cage: Every Day is a Good Day* [online]
Available at: https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/about/touring-programme/hayward-touring/john-cage-every-day-is-a-good-day
[Accessed 14th January 2019]

Tate. (2017a) *Cubism* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/cubism
[Accessed 5th December 2018]

Tate. (2017b) *Who is Mona Hatoum?* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/mona-hatoum-2365/who-is-mona-hatoum
[Accessed 2nd November 2018]

Tate. (2018) *Pop Art* [online]
Available at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/pop-art
[Accessed 6th September 2018]

The Editors of Art News. (2015) *Making the Ordinary Anything But: Mona Hatoum on Her Unnerving Sculptures, in 2005* [online]
Available at: http://www.artnews.com/2015/08/21/making-the-ordinary-anything-but-mona-hatoum-on-her-unnerving-sculptures-in-2005/
[Accessed 3rd November 2018]

Whitechapel Gallery. (2011) *John Stezaker* [online]
Available at: https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/john-stezaker/
[Accessed 15th October 2018]

White Cube. (2019) *Mona Hatoum* [online]
Available at: https://whitecube.com/artists/artist/mona_hatoum
[Accessed 2nd November 2018]