

## Proposal - Museums; 'Performing Temporality'

- **How**
- **When**
- **What/Who**
- **Readings**
- **Why**

My image series will investigate decaying museological practices whilst examining surrealism, narrative, authenticity/artifice alongside temporality and spatial performances. Initial influence came from primary research into industrial spaces, alongside immersive museology covered within my 'Media Culture 2' Module. My photography will be centred on waxwork figures that are housed within an industrial museum situated in Swindon. Broadly examining historical reconstructions and dioramas through photographically critical frameworks will allow me **to re-animate the waxwork figures within their assembled surrounding**. Making the inanimate... animatedly, suspended in motion. Their uncanny and strangely unnerving appearance is juxtaposed by the realistic and odd familiarity that manifest within these figures. This series will playfully examine how these 'performance objects' act to immerse and experiment with authenticity and artifice.

R. Peres, (2013) examined still-life as a theory and practice within photography, outlining the typical characteristics and effective methodological approaches stating the how "natural or artificial light is used to define the subjects texture surface, shape or form. Directional sidelight is used to convey textual quality while emphasising the line and shape inherent in the subject." (2013: 325). This alongside primary artist research tailored a methodology that will allow me to capture the 'uncanny' resemblance of my subjects. 'The Uncanny' originates from "the German word *unheimlich*..." which broadly translates to 'unhomely' (Freud, 2003:124). It belongs to contrasting ideas of familiarity, discomfort, obscurity and deception (2003: 132). Freud, (2003, citing E. Jentsch 1908) whom describes the uncanny as the unsettling ambiguity of knowing whether "an apparently animate object really is alive and, conversely, whether a lifeless object might not perhaps be animate'...", specifically noting waxworks, automata and dolls as a manifestation of this unease.

This theoretical research inspired me, allowing me to create a well-informed image series that investigates and plays with uncanniness within museum exhibits.

When shooting in a public museum, lighting will be poor and shooting is liable to interruption. To combat this I will use my Canon 750D with my EF 70-300mm Telephoto Zoom Lens. My methodology will experiment with camera angle and placement as to manipulate the available lighting in a way that emphasises the human-likeness of these inanimate statues. A larger focal length of roughly 130mm will focus on and isolate specific areas of the body that captures their authentic but uncanny demeanour. Giving my photographs a compressed and shallow depth of field will immerse the figures within their surroundings, perpetuating their human likeness whilst preserving and temporally suspending them within an image. The larger focal length will allow me to achieve detailed images from a distance, reducing the risk of public interruptions. My shutter speed, set at roughly 1/50 – 1/80 will allow me to balance image sharpness against poor available lighting. Aperture will be within the middle ranges, achieving shallow focus whilst administering optimum light to compensate for my restrictive shooting conditions. Light sensitivity will be high as to compensate for poor lighting although a balance between settings will minimise image loss. I will spread shooting across 3 sessions commencing February 24<sup>th</sup> – March 29<sup>th</sup> 2017.

I will process and edit my RAW images in a manner that accentuates available lighting, contrast and tone, making minor adjustments to contrast, shadow and colour curves as to heighten detail, texture and authenticity of my subjects making them appear simultaneously realistic and uncanny.

Word Count – 545