

Arts



Unseen

Unseen is an independent exhibition of second year Photography students' work. It was organised on their behalf by Luke White, James Homer, Kim Weinreich and Maggie Morris.

As I rolled up to 'The Art Organisation' that was the venue for the Unseen exhibition, I could see a lowly bunch of artisans crowded round a puff of smoke! Thankfully, being a second year Photography student myself, I knew most of them and after taking my complementary glass of wine I moseyed on round the work that was on display.

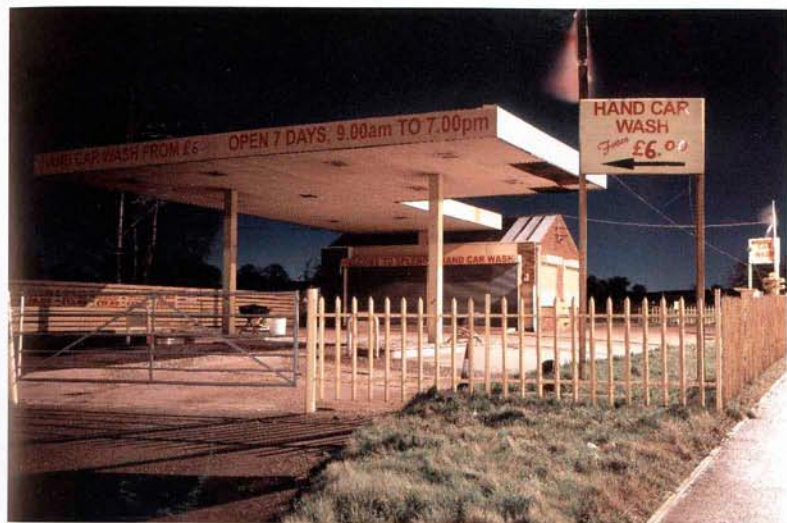
My artistic eye scanned the room for a moment, searching for something to jump out and hit me in the face like a wet fish! Alas there were no fish but I was drawn instantly to 'Hand Carwash' by James Homer. His full colour images of abandoned gas stations at night were stunning. I am a massive fan of the artificial light created by street lamps at night and these images used that light to their advantage.

As I continued, talking with others about the artwork, I couldn't help but feel like one of those pretentious fools that just love to get pissed and chat on for hours about how the art 'changed their life'. However my one glass of wine was dwindling and I was not getting drunk at all, which thankfully helped me appreciate all the hard work that went into this exhibition. For example, Michelle Ridge's 'Beautiful And The Damned' is a fantastic collective of images that looks like it was ripped straight out of Vogue magazine. Her precise and calculated compositions made for stunning images that were reminiscent of photographer Guy Bourdin. She clearly has an eye for high art fashion and knows exactly what she wants her images to say. I'm not going to be surprised if I see her work on the front cover of magazines such as Dazed & Confused in the future.

Upstairs I was confronted by yet more images that were created with an obvious amount of passion, love and photographic ability. 'A Deeper Level' by Amy Baglietto is a series that offers some of the most stunning images at the exhibition in my opinion. The movement in these fashion style images is, of her personal admission, reminiscent of the great Nick Knight. She has got a fantastic eye and created some stunning work. ▶



[Photos, clockwise from top left: Lulu Weston; Sam Jackson; Michelle Ridge; Amy Baglietto.]
[Top eight photos: Laura Carey; Bottom photo: James Homer.]



If street photography is your thing then Sam Jackson's 'Street Spots' would be the most amazing set of images. He has merged his passion for photography with urban sports like BMX and skateboarding to create a beautiful body of work. Photographing the marks created on walls, steps and railings by skateboards to me suggests that each mark tells a different story and is a memory of time etched in stone. Stunningly simple!

'Think Of A Wonderful Thought, Any Happy Little Thought' by Laura Carey is such a fun set of images. Based on the story of Peter Pan, she has created a series that plays with the boundaries of the original story and pushes the 'never grow up' theory to its limits. With an obvious interest in fashion photography, she has the ability to mix this with a well-established narrative and by doing so has created a set of images worthy of any fashion magazine.

While walking around the exhibition I was constantly astounded by the sheer professionalism and photographic excellence that was on display. Perhaps it was naive of me to expect less from the second year work, but any doubt I had was blown out of the water as soon as I stepped through the door. Two pieces that stuck in my mind were

from Lulu Weston's 'Beautifully Bleak', a stunning set of abstract images that I found so aesthetically beautiful. It is one of those series that you could spend hours looking at and be constantly finding new details within each image.

The one piece out of the whole exhibition that I think is worthy of the most attention is 'Your Body Is A Battleground' by Holly Nind. At first look it is a stunning set of images, close-ups which are layered to create the shape of a woman's figure. But it is when you read the text in the accompanying book that you realise the woman in the images is Holly's mother and that this isn't just a portrait but a delicate and beautiful ode to her.

The entire exhibition was of an outstanding quality and, if anything, this makes the prospect of future work and exhibitions from the course very exciting. If you weren't able to make it to the gallery then fear not. All the images are being shown at the Broadway Cinema in a projected exhibition every night in April. Alternatively, visit www.myspace.com/unseencollective.

Edward Smith