

A NEW EUROPE

THEMES AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS



The following resources and activities are particularly aimed at teachers and students working at Secondary and Further Education level. Four separate resource packs are available, of which this is one - MOVEMENT. That said, regardless of age or photographic experience, we invite everyone to delve in and experiment.

Brighton Photo Biennial 2018 draws on one of the most important geopolitical events of our time. In doing so 'A New Europe' offers a powerful (if initially daunting) provocation for teachers and students. Our four key themes set out to unlock meaningful reflection, discussions and action, not just on the current state of national uncertainty, but also on the nature of photography itself.

Importantly, these resources are devised to also benefit those unable to attend Brighton Photo Biennial 2018. **Visit photoworks.org.uk and Photopedagogy.com/BPB2018 for further information.**

BRIGHTON PHOTO BIENNIAL 2018: THEMES FOR TEACHERS

EDGES

Geographical edges, borders and boundaries can define identity. The United Kingdom is currently negotiating its exit from the European Union. Brexit has prompted questions about national identity and belonging. Fierce debates rage about future relationships between the countries of the UK and Europe. We are approaching a point of no return, standing on the edge of a political precipice.

HOME

Home is such a simple word and yet it conjures up a complex range of feelings. A home can be a building or a place. Forced displacement through war, conflict and violence has resulted in a desperate quest by many for new homes, often in unlikely locations. Homes can be static or mobile, safe or treacherous, like nests or prisons.

MOVEMENT

The movement of people and goods is at the heart of the Brexit debate. Movement brings change, a vital energy, new rhythms, new words. Movement can also threaten, destabilise and challenge. Everything moves, not always by choice, and sometimes so slowly as to be imperceptible.

CONNECTIONS

An ability to connect lies at the heart of all understanding, whether forging relationships or connecting knowledge and experiences for creative means. But making meaningful connections isn't always easy. Trust evolves through empathy, honesty and sensitive communication; new possibilities arise by remaining alert to the unexpected and being comfortable with uncertainty.

KEY THEME: MOVEMENT

STILL MOVING

Photographs freeze time yet can often imply movement, either by depicting an object we are used to seeing in motion (for example, an animal, a vehicle or a person) or by capturing the flow of time using a slow shutter speed. The physical movement of a camera in action can also distort and abstract in interesting and unanticipated ways.

It might be suggested that all photographs are abstractions (in that they are made or constructed, rather than being simply a window onto the world). However, movement - whether of subject, time or camera - only draws our attention to this fact.

Photography has almost no reality; it is almost a hundred percent picture.

-- **Gerhard Richter**



Create a set of photographs that explore movement alongside concepts of time and abstraction. Try to think beyond the more obvious starting points (e.g. car lights at night or figures running) to produce something more meaningful. For example, can you produce work in empathy with a refugee forced to move from their home?

You might consider how a sudden displacement becomes frighteningly surreal or dreamlike, or how slow, familiar movements such as walking, the hands of a ticking clock, passing clouds, or the flow of a tide become increasingly agitated. Alternatively, you might respond to something busier, less predictable - a relentless TV screen or social media feed; a sudden arrival in a strange, busy city.

How might you create tension or a sense of restlessness through experimenting with movement?

You might be interested in:

- Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Lake Superior, Eagle River, 2003*
 - Denis Darzaq, from *The Fall, 2005-6*
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Some useful words: aperture, shutter speed, panning; abstraction, representation; fixed, contained, permanent; ephemeral, transient, equivalence

KEY THEME: **MOVEMENT**

MOVING IMAGES

Photographs rely on context for their meaning. The same photograph takes on alternate meanings depending on whether it is seen on its own, with a caption, accompanying a longer text, in a book, in a gallery frame, on a hoarding etc.

...we see things but we don't see them, like things that slid through the mind, one flowing into another.

-- **Marcel Proust**



Choose an existing photograph - this might be a random choice or simply the last photograph that you have taken. Print one copy (or more) to place and re-photograph in an unusual set of locations. Consider the framing and composition of each shot. Will you include the whole image or just a segment? Will you photograph from close-up or further away? How, by varying the location and viewpoint, can you shift the potential interpretation of a photograph?

How might a sequence of images create a narrative of movement - physically, as you move through locations, but also conceptually, as potential meanings shift and alter?

On what kind of journey might you take your photograph?

You might be interested in:

- Jiro Takamatsu, *Photographs of Photographs*, 1973
 - Jennifer Bolande, *Visible Distance / Second Sight*, 2017
 - Duane Michals, *Things Are Queer*, 1972
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Some useful words: context, meaning, interpretation; influence, consequence, incidental; narrative, sequence, suggestion

KEY THEME: **MOVEMENT**

MIGRATION STORIES

Every single person living in Britain today is descended from immigrants. From the first settlers about 25,000 years ago people have come here, settled and mixed with each other. All of us, at some point in our family histories, have moved to the United Kingdom from elsewhere.

Moving can be exciting and frightening, a positive embracing of change, or an intimidating experience of difference. We all have some experience of moving, for example moving home, school or work. Photographs can explore this experience of migration and movement in various ways.

This story that I'm photographing is my story also. I am a migrant, too.
-- **Sebastiao Salgado**



Create a series of photographs exploring your personal experiences of moving and/or your family history as migrants.

Trace your family history, talk to family members and/or friends about their experiences. Consider different ways of recording this research e.g. through audio recordings, handwritten notes, photocopied documents, photographs of objects etc.

Consider how you might present this work in a relevant way e.g. a typology of similarly composed images with detailed captions, an alternative family album, or a self-published zine to share with loved ones.

You might be interested in:

- James Mollison, *What refugees carry with them*, 2015
 - Tereza Červeňová, *June*, 2017
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Some useful words: migration/immigration; upheaval, displace, deracinate; settle, abide, reside; document, investigate; lineage, heredity

FIXED OR IN FLUX

Photographs are often described as permanent records, moments fixed in time. However, this isn't necessarily the case. Early pioneers of photography struggled to find the correct chemical solution to prevent fading, while today's digital images remain subject to constant change through processes such as downloading, uploading, re-editing and re-formatting. In addition, faults in technology can sometimes glitch, corrupt and distort images. Low-cost digital printing remains susceptible to fading and wear and tear. How we encounter an image - be it on a mobile phone, as a print, in a book or digital projection etc. - will always alter our experience and perception of it.

The condition of images speaks not only of countless transfers and reformattings, but also of the countless people who cared enough to convert them over and over again, to add subtitles, re-edit, or upload them.

-- **Hito Steyerl**

 Experiment with manipulating printed photographs through tactile interventions such as folding, scratching, screwing-up, rubbing, stretching or puncturing. What is it like to make a difficult journey holding on to a precious photograph? What happens when you expose a photograph to other elements, such as water, heat or prolonged weathering? How might you create a sequence of images that show a gradual distortion or disruption to the photograph/the surface it resides upon? What image would be a powerful choice to emphasise, contrast or connect to the processes you are exploring?

In contrast to these tactile experiments, how might you gradually manipulate a digital image towards abstraction?

Without using popular software or filters, can you alter, obscure, remove or merge pixels? How might you reduce, reproduce, compromise or deteriorate a recognisable image?

You might be interested in:

- Susan Derges, *River Taw*, 1998
 - Marco Breuer, *Tremors, Ephemera*, 2001
 - Anna Atkins, *Cyanotypes of British Algae*, 1843
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Some useful words: deteriorate, attenuate, mutable/immutable; glitch, corrupt, appropriate; evidence, trace; transitory

FEATURED ARTIST: Emeric Lhuisset

In *L'Autre Rive* (2010-18) Emeric Lhuisset explores the lives of first and second generation migrants in Europe. The series is inspired by friends made whilst working in various war zones, many of whom are now on refugee routes. Lhuisset was also inspired by his grandmother, who escaped to North Africa to flee conflict during the Second World War.

The photographs are cyanotypes - a printing process that creates a blue-print. They are not permanently fixed and therefore will evolve as the exhibit unfolds. Lhuisset's intentions are for the images to become blue monochromes symbolic of "the blue of the sea in which so many vanish, but also the blue of Europe."



© Émeric Lhuisset *L'Autre Rive*, Iraq, Turkey, Greece, Germany, France, Denmark, Syria, 2010 - 2018

For me, photography is a medium, like painting or sculpture. You can use this medium in thousands of different ways...

-- **Emeric Lhuisset**



Experiment with the concept of a photograph changing over time. Consider how a thought-provoking image might evolve, develop or deteriorate. This might be via human (or creature) intervention - trampled, gnawed, abraded, manhandled; submitted to natural forces - buried, exposed, submerged, baked, blown-about; or through automatic or mechanical manipulation - attached to a wheel, repeatedly layered through reprinting, put through the spin-dryer etc.

How might you enable others to experience the work in transition, or document the process to then exhibit or share in a poignant way?