

I Thought About Writing A Title

Kevin Steinhardt

In this final major project, I will be attempting and (hopefully) realising the brief titled 'A message to you' which should accompany this document. This document—that being this document here; the one you have in your hand—will form the main bulk of the project's evidence, other than the 'artistic' works of course. The drawings, works, diagrams and text in this document are released under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 licence—one, if one so wishes, is free to share, adapt and frolic around with any part of this publication under the condition that one attributes or cites the author in some way; preferably a quick and painless 'Kevin Steinhardt, *I Thought About Writing A Title* (2010)' would be much appreciated. Details of the licence this work is published under are written in the Appendix of this publication.

I would also appreciate honouring my request for this document and the related works to be assessed independently and impartially. Cambridge Regional College disclaims rights and responsibilities to this document and its associated works.

Contents

1	So where to begin?	4
2	First things first	4
2.1	Methods of communication	4
2.2	Who's communicating with who?	4
2.3	And what is this message?	5
3	So I've had an idea	5
4	The Unorthodox	6

5	One more thing	7
6	What do we need to deal with, then?	8
6.1	Required for the shoot	8
7	Does every artist have a message?	8
8	Let's think alternatively	9
9	Something completely different	10
10	Decisions; decisions	12
10.1	The Identity lightbox	12
10.2	Photographs on perspex	13
11	Shooty-shooty	13
12	After the 'off'	14
12.1	What would you have done, then?	14
13	Post-production	15
13.1	The directory structure	16
13.2	The process itself	16
14	Three weeks to go; somewhat lost	17
15	Sans deux	17
15.1	More rejected frames	18
15.2	Just to fill page-inches	18
16	Following up on section 15	19
17	Influences	19
17.1	Jenny Holzer	19
17.2	Martin Firrell	20
18	The penultimate push	21

19 Regarding the application of frames	21
20 Token conclusions	22
20.1 What materials and techniques have you used over the course of this project?	22
20.2 Did any problems arise?	23
20.3 What did you learn as you developed your project? . . .	23
20.4 How do you think people will react to your works? . . .	24

1 So where to begin?

As the brief sets out, this project is about communication and how we carry messages between one another. Communication and its associations is vital in so-called 'everyday life'—if it can so be called—and without communication, we would have no bus services; no banking infrastructure, and no David Cameron.¹ In this project, I will set out to produce an artwork of sorts; providing and conveying some kind of message... in whatever form I discover to be unique. Obviously not too unique,² you should understand. So... let's begin; shall we?

2 First things first

2.1 Methods of communication

We communicate in oh-so many different ways. Whether that is through written texts or languages...; shorthand, notational forms; the old codes of the early 20th Century like semaphore or Morse. It's hard to ignore a message these days; literally everywhere you go today, I don't know how many hundreds of messages have been passed to you—we interpret and understand these messages without even realising what we are doing. Advertising; the bus timetable; a collection of **man** pages for that command you couldn't quite remember—this is all evidence of just *one* field of communication: that field of *information*. You may use sign language or you might have once³ passed coded notes around to your friends in Pig Latin or a secret alphabet you devised with classmates. Messages are most certainly inescapable, at least in this day and age.

2.2 Who's communicating with who?

You might be communicating with friends, with colleagues or with yourself. It might be a group, or an organisation—the difference being something out of my knowledge.

¹Oh: we can only hope for the best with that one.

²Make it too lone and no-one but you'll understand what it says.

³Back in the days of primary school education.

2.3 And what is this message?

So... the message: will it be of a personal nature?; will it be a moral or ethical message? What information or ideas do you want to get across? Will the message be serious or humorous?; *can* it be humorous?—messages may not be appropriate for some topics; although, a serious message could seem, if the reader was expecting something not from a formal point-of-view, stuffy and somewhat conservative.

Now who said the message had to be human-readable?—forms such as barcodes and OCR can't really be read by us.⁴ One could think about musical notation, or perhaps a round of hieroglyphs. How about something from another alphabet—such as Cyrillic or the old Cuneiform scripts. The use of symbols and glyphs could be developed substantially into an artwork. Have you considered a message in that texting 'language' the Youth are so fond of these days?⁵

3 So I've had an idea

I almost never have ideas; I usually find it very difficult to develop ideas—that's if I have a basic idea to begin with. My first idea⁶ is of a large-scale series⁷ of photographs over either (a) members of the Public or (b) classmates then spreading the rest of the collage's population. Subidea⁸ b is probably the easiest to realise, in terms of logistics and legislation. I'm much more likely to get stopped under the Terrorism Act in town, than I am in college—the College executive probably has its own set of restrictions on photography; I'll have to ask around / look into that subject.

The idea consists primarily⁹ of this series of frames: again... either the Public or the college populous—with, and here comes the detail, ... Actually, it might be better if I just bullet the idea; below is a run-through of the process of the idea:

⁴OCR can be read, of course, quite easily by computers—not so by humans. Certain OCR characters form shorthand for banking terms, like 'branch identifier' or 'customer account number'; look on the bottom of a cheque.

⁵I really can't understand how much effort is saved by missing out every-other vowel.

⁶This idea that I'm about to explain here.

⁷By which I mean a large quantity of frames, not a series of large-size'd frames.

⁸Whatever a subidea is. Is that even a term?; I feel I've made it up.

⁹We're talking about the primary side, now.

- ask people over¹⁰ and see if they're okay with having their photograph taken; here be the forms and whatnot.¹¹
- give them a small whiteboard;¹² ask them to write on the whiteboard something that they either: (a) dislike in general about life or whathaveyou, (b) something that they oppose¹³—something along the negative.
- take their photograph, with the subject holding up the whiteboard. Take the frame at a high aperture to blur the background out.

These frames, after anything from thirty-odd to a few hundred¹⁴ have been captured, would be (i) printed small¹⁵ and mounted, or (ii) collated into a large artwork. In subsubidea ii, each frame would be printed to a size that was proportionately small but make sure one can still read the whiteboard and its contents.

The set-up would either be against one of those photographer's backdrops, or perhaps we could take frames with something as simple as a window or brick wall behind the subject. Not too sure; in the city scenario,¹⁶ a 'city scene' would be fine and dandy by me—dirty streets, Starbucks wherever you go, bicycles parked against insecure railings and the Homeless.¹⁷

4 The Unorthodox

Considering peoples' views and opinions, I would understandably be expected¹⁸ to screen those whiteboard comments, removing offending or offensive material. If I was undertaking this as an independent project—as in independent from the College—I would, and do,

¹⁰Maybe we're set-up to the side of a corridor, or something.

¹¹Consult the College re: photographs and identity release.

¹²One of those plastic ones; A3–A4 or something in between.

¹³Political opposition?—ranging from the Iraq fiasco to the Digital Economy Bill.

¹⁴A few hundred would be slightly exhaustive, but who said we have to capture it in one session?

¹⁵I'm thinking maybe if each frame was printed at about A6-size?

¹⁶I think that was subidea a.

¹⁷I think the County should invest in putting some more Sheffield stands around the city.

¹⁸The College would expect me to.

strongly *discourage* censorship to any degree or extent. Some people may find censorship¹⁹ to be all well and good. Common sense and legislation protects the innocent, but censorship only—in the opinions of the Collective—inflames; having a generally a hindrance on a community and its beliefs. I could go on for hours about my views on censorship. . . but I'll save you the page-inches.

Anywho: I'll review the frames I use on the final work, but I'm not going to refuse to take a photograph because the views of that person *could* cause someone offence. Sanitisation will be dealt with in post-production; input on offending or inappropriate content will not be gathered from tutors. The final piece(s) will be printed at Ricoh²⁰ at the beginning of week -2.

5 One more thing

Just one more thing on the Idea itself:²¹ one of my colleagues suggested²² framing out the subjects' heads; this would get around the problem of 'subject release',²³ as well as adding unidentity to the matter—the matter being that

There *is* negativity in the World and the
World is far from perfect. This is not some-
thing we should be ashamed of, however,
and we shouldn't continue to hide it.

Just need to get some whiteboards—then we can start shooting and hopefully, everything'll go smoothly to plan.

¹⁹And here, I'm talking about mild censorship—not totalitarian censorship.

²⁰The ex-IKON; the Reprographics department.

²¹Which is now the idea that will most probably be satisfied, and will now be referred to as 'the Idea'.

²²Stephanie Stroud; morning of 29th April 2010.

²³Also known as a 'model release'.

6 What do we need to deal with, then?

For this whole experience to go smoothly,²⁴ I need to begin planning my field sessions—a term I’ll be using a lot, because... well: that’s the correct term to use. These sessions, out on the field,²⁵ will need to be structured and oriented to facilitate orderly running. Below is a brief and (possibly) incomplete list of items required for the mass shoot²⁶ and also any other requirements for the post-production

6.1 Required for the shoot

- a digital SLR: I would prefer my own Olympus DSLR to any of the college’s, simply because I can easily operate my own camera—because I know the menu structure, etc. which will make the shoot more efficient.
- a lens with a large aperture, preferably $f/1.8$ or thereabouts—this will bokeh²⁷ any background features out, in the frame; this will cause the subject and their whiteboard to stand out in the foreground.
- whiteboards—the plastic-and-floppy kind would be best... and some whiteboard markers; really thick drywipe markers, so the writing is visible even if the frame is printed at A6 size.

7 Does every artist have a message?

It is arguable that *every* artist has a variety of messages they want to try and get across, in the form of photography. Everybody—their profession is no matter—wants to influence everybody else; take a long look at the newspaper you buy in the morning.²⁸ There’s no such thing as an impartial newspaper—if you support the views, it’s news; else it’s propaganda.

²⁴And go smoothly it better.

²⁵The metaphysical field.

²⁶This being the event whereby I collect as many photographs, of people holding up random whiteboard scribbles, as I can.

²⁷Bokeh being the (potentially deliberate) blur in out-of-focus areas of an image.

²⁸If indeed you are still into that old-style medium; seriously—newspapers won’t be around for much longer.

There's no such thing as impartial cartography, either. Bias to world dominance was spread all over maps in the the 19th and 20th Centuries; Mercator-projected maps showed Africa and Greenland as roughly the same size, even though the mass of Africa is 14 times greater than Greenland. Mercator was Flemish.²⁹ But anyhow: Africa is considered less significant—even as such a vast continent. It wasn't a good example, but I'm sure you will have understood. What I'm trying to saying is mapmakers of the anti-beyond purposefully bent the truth about the World, to serve the interests of powerful nations; the same, I would consider, is and was applied to the photographic genre.

I'm sure every artist has a message: Nan Goldin was trying to get across the underlying problem of female abuse in America; Tracey Emin illustrated... nothing really; she's just a lazy arse. Paul Graham's series '*Paintings*' is something that my project can almost related to.³⁰ *Paintings* comes down to a series of untitled frames—consisting primarily³¹ of toilet walls, and in documenting the scribbles and cocks drawn across these canvases, I'm talking critique-esque bollocks out of my hands. The real message of life is hidden; this we all know, but I'm not debating sociology and the Human Condition at the moment.³²

8 Let's think alternatively

In *Paintings*, the messages from the Collective were documented³³ and basically put: the message was already there, and he photographed it. I could do the same and perhaps it would be simpler that way, but I've already written up the proposal—no point going back now; might be a laugh. I could have gone around town³⁴ and photographed the bits of the city that you don't find on postcards; the areas hidden from the eyes of the tourist. In this case, possible entrants for the series have already been captured³⁵ and a 'top-up' situation would have emerged.³⁶ To be honest, I would much prefer this alternative — not because it's

²⁹Oh; I was hoping he'd be Danish—then I could point out some obvious greater-Denmark thing going on. Greenland is part of Denmark, by the way.

³⁰It relates if you squint really hard.

³¹And primarily is where I'm speaking.

³²Let's get the art out the way first.

³³Photographed; whatever. I'm not really in a state to care.

³⁴Town being the city of Cambridge.

³⁵Such as '*I'm Sorry / Pardon*', Kevin Steinhardt (February 2010).

³⁶Because. I'm that much of a laze, it would seem.

easier, and I can go around acting all tits-off³⁷ like most photographers — because, and I'm about to be honest for one of those times:³⁸ I hate working with people. People, on their own and without any of this work of which you speak: that's fine; I just can't stand working with the Public. You've got to be all polite; they just don't seem to get the idea; they always have to input their suggestions—subdued rant over.

Just to tick some more boxes: '*I'm Sorry / Pardon*' was a photograph I took on the top level of Park Street car park, north-central Cambridge. The main subject of the frame is an uppercase writing on the wall: reading "SICK ON MYSELF", a line break then just simply "WANK". Because that makes perfect sense.³⁹

9 Something completely different

We could think really alternatively, by which I mean *I* could think really quite alternatively. My message to you⁴⁰ could be something like

Use public transport instead of your car.

This may not be relevant,⁴¹ but I could use this project to dismiss such myths as

Well... I would use public transport, but there isn't a bus to be seen; not since 1986.

Tory deregulation's to blame, me thinks; anywho—there may be a bus. It might not be at the time you want it to be at, but nothing's perfect. If you want to get somewhere when you want, use a bike—that I think we all know. Buses are useful when you're feeling a bit lazy, and some routes⁴² are relatively cheap and get you where you need to go. That's of course only true if your locale⁴³ is served by an appropriate service.

³⁷What the smeg does 'tits-off' mean? Kevin: what are you typing?

³⁸At one of those times; those times when I'm honest about things.

³⁹Which was indeed the description I wrote.

⁴⁰You being you, the people, the General Public, &c.

⁴¹You might not own a car; you might *already* use public transport.

⁴²Namely the subsidised/contracted services, where the Council set the fares and timetable.

⁴³Both starting point and destination.

But, how will you know if you've never researched it? In an ideal World,⁴⁴ buses would run every ten minutes from numerous stops in your village or town, and get you to your destination for a reasonable fare and in comfort. One could set routes out by means of a grid system—so you could get, for example, from one place in a city to another with a maximum change of once.⁴⁵ This would be satisfiable in a city with what the Americans call a 'grid plan'—this being a city laid-out with the roads and streets at right-angles, forming a grid.⁴⁶ The vertical (*V*) roads would carry a bus route each, or maybe they could go up and down like a lawnmower.

Anyone living or working⁴⁷ on the red line shown on the diagram above⁴⁸ would be able to get from any point on a *V* road to any other point. If interchanges were constructed at each intersection,⁴⁹ a passenger would be able to get from any point on a *V* road to any point on either an *V* or an *H* road—changing, at most, one time only. Though if the city was small enough, you could just walk. But how does this fit into my project, as an alternative idea—I'll tell you for why: unlike rail or tram infrastructure, bus infrastructure⁵⁰ is more-or-less invisible. Buses, especially in the rural parts of (at least) Cambridgeshire, use the same roads as motor vehicles.⁵¹ I could construct a map of sorts showing all the bus routes in Cambridgeshire, the bus routes that only run once a day, the bus routes that only run on a Wednesday, etc.—I could make any manner of maps using Creative Commons-licenced data, from OpenStreetMap. I could develop a map that showed thicker lines for high-frequency routes, and translucent lines for less-well-offly-served routes; rural southwest Cambs would be a-wash with translucency. The message would be something along the lines of

There is an alternative; you're just not looking hard enough.

⁴⁴Something we're very far away from.

⁴⁵Once, as in 'one change' only.

⁴⁶You've all been to Keynes; you know how it works.

⁴⁷Departing from / arriving at, morning peak.

⁴⁸The final document published as purely a document doesn't contain diagrams so imagine with your Mind.

⁴⁹A dirty American term but for our purposes, 'intersection' means a junction at which a *V* and *H* road contact.

⁵⁰Except guided busways, bus gates, bus-only roads and the such.

⁵¹For the most part, they do.

Now, of course, is not a very appealing sentence. In certain circumstances, the alternative may be more expensive,⁵² it might take long, and of course... you can start a car at whatever time you like; you've got to *wait* for a bus. My message could *therefore* be

These bits of the map are faded; you⁵³ need to improve the frequency in *these* areas.

This will get me nowhere, of course; bus operators are notoriously in love with the free market, capitalism, and making a large profit. (Oh; good for them.) It would, however, be an excellent way to explore and develop my currently-underused skills in cartography, data transcription-manipulation and the fact that I know a little about buses—if I didn't have to pay Stagecoach when I got into town, I'd take the bus every day.⁵⁴

10 Decisions; decisions

Should that be a semi-colon?; is there even a hyphen in 'semi-colon'? I don't know; I'm not Jesus.⁵⁵ After consulting with Rigby and sourcing some new ideas, I've decided to go with the Whiteboard thingle.⁵⁶ This decision was taken not before brainstorming some other ideas; radical ideas, and ideas based on previous projects and courses.

10.1 The Identity lightbox

This idea would produce a lightbox⁵⁷ of approximately A2 size—on the front face of the box will be a series of coloured and translucent square panels, formed by transliterating keywords⁵⁸ into colours. This idea would, however, require knowledge in the 3D area⁵⁹ and (among

⁵²Than driving and owning a car, let's say.

⁵³Directed at Cambridgeshire County Council, or the bus operators.

⁵⁴That's not actually true, but certainly the morning run would be a lot more relaxing.

⁵⁵Whoever he is.

⁵⁶What will now be known as the Whiteboard idea, thingle, whatsit and numerous other suffix-doodahs.

⁵⁷Basically, a box with a light in it. You know what a light box is.

⁵⁸Sourced from colleagues and whathaveyou.

⁵⁹Something I don't have.

other things) I don't think I would be able to get the panels accurate enough—accurate in the sense of 'accurate to the colour produced from the word'. It might look alright; I'd have to consult with the technicians to secure a wall near a power source, so I don't leave wires trailing across the room(s).

10.2 Photographs on perspex

This idea involves much the same route as the proposal outlined in this document—though it involves the additional step of printing the photographs not onto A6 paper, but onto a thick(ish) perspex surface. I would need to consult with Ricoh⁶⁰ as to whether or not they would be able to print onto such a material. If they can't, . . . I don't really think it's a viable idea. Photographs on perspex would require some sort of light source behind to illuminate the frames; otherwise, people will be squinting to see them, and everyone will talk about your work behind your back.⁶¹ A couple of floor-located spotlights might do the trick, though they'd have to be angled appropriately, . . .and that angling could take several *minutes*.

11 Shooty-shooty

Whatever that means: not too sure.

A shoot came and went; I'm stressing the 'a' part of the article, because this project will most likely require more than one shoot. I'm just going to list⁶² the faults I found out on the field, below:

- the majority of frames were taken inside; in a darkened ceramics studio. The fluorescent lighting caused for an odd series⁶³ of photographs; mostly a bit too off-cue to be taken as photographs—yet something odd happened; the shots taken inside, versus those taken outdoors or in corridors, seemed to appear to. . . they just looked right, whereas the Others looked a bit too uniform, even though they were almost the opposite. Are you getting what I'm saying?; probably not.

⁶⁰Again: Ricoh is the nearby reprographics 'shop'; a copyshop, if you must.

⁶¹Not the kind of thing I'm willing to withstand.

⁶²Instead of writing and waffling like I usually do. Still awake?

⁶³The final number was in the seventies or eighties, I think.

- (looks like I *am* waffling; oh well) I took a sample of the series and dragged them into Photoshop—CS3 appears to be able, unlike the version I own (CS2), to read raw images; in the case of this series, I used one of the college’s Nikon DSLRs which produce NEFs.⁶⁴ Colour correction⁶⁵ seems to be harder than I thought possible.
- people are a hassle, as I’ve said before—but actually: someone must have warned them all I was coming around with a whiteboard.
- also, the whiteboards gave me a couple of splinters.⁶⁶ Bastard whiteboards.

12 After the ‘off’

I don’t really have much more to say on the process without repeating what I wrote in section 11. I can, however, discuss what I would have done differently if I had been assigned this (or a similar) brief again.

12.1 What would you have done, then?

Differently?; for a start, I didn’t bring in that 35-mil I was planning to use; I ended up using one of the college’s Nikons—well known for their inconceivably puzzling menus—and a boring-old kit lens. I guess the college doesn’t care too much about lenses. Said kit lens had the annoying feature of only being able to step down⁶⁷ as far as $f3.5$; this ‘starting’ aperture was too narrow for the indoor environment. Worked fine elsewhere.⁶⁸ It worked more than fine outside; I had to step the shutter speed up more than ten-fold.⁶⁹

Other than this narrow aperture thing—a narrow aperture lets in less light versus a wide aperture, requiring a slow⁷⁰ shutter speed (also) versus taking the frame with a wider aperture; that’s why it was a

⁶⁴NEF — Nikon Electronic Format; a raw image format, used by Nikon DSLRs.

⁶⁵Something I was hanging on to, when I was shooting indoors. I was thinking all along “I’ll be able to correct these in Photoshop; don’t worry.”

⁶⁶The price one pays for cheap wood: splinters.

⁶⁷Or up, depending on your education and/or your outlook.

⁶⁸In the corridors of the college and in situations of occasional natural light.

⁶⁹From $\frac{1}{100}$ s to greater than $\frac{1}{1000}$ s.

⁷⁰And, therefore, more unstable...

problem—the kit lens presented another farce that stump’d me oh-so slightly;⁷¹ this being the poor depth-of-field performed. The nature of a lens ‘beginning’ at $f3.5$, again vs. a lens ‘beginning’ at—let’s say— $f1.8$, is that the background⁷² will be more in-focus with a narrow aperture... giving a sense of greater depth (perhaps) and the frame may bring you further towards the point-of-view of the photographer; something like that. A shallower depth-of-field, created by using a wide aperture,⁷³ blurs and bokeh⁷⁴ the background—layering the subject on-top something which the Mind would probably disregard. Just as an additionality, ...this f -number of which I’m speaking can be determined by the simple (yet boring) formula

$$\frac{f}{D} = N$$

in which f denotes the focal length, and D requires a basic understanding of optical mathematics. Like all formulae, $N = \frac{f}{D}$ can be reversed⁷⁵ and transmogrificated into both $D = \frac{f}{N}$ or $f = ND$. There; don’t say I don’t explore alternative angles—no matter how boring they appear to *me*, or to whoever happens to be reading this. Reference these equations for your next optics lecture. (That is all for now.)

13 Post-production

Here is just a quick ‘token’ run-through of the post-production process, a run-through of how the directories are structured, and how I’m going to lay out the process of grabbing NEFs (those being the raw image files from the camera), shoving them through Photoshop (and remember: it has to be CS3 or higher, for some annoying reason) and exporting a few dozen JPEGs—ready to be printed at Ricoh.

⁷¹Apart from that double-length mdash back there.

⁷²By which I mean the layer in space that’s *not* where the subject lies, and *not* the space in between the lens and the subject.

⁷³Wide aperture, low number; the higher the f -number, the narrower the aperture.

⁷⁴Though the use of such a term is only occasionally present.

⁷⁵Though I’m not sure how you would ‘reverse’ a triangle.

13.1 The directory structure

Three directories exist in the world as we see it: **Dealt with** and **Converted frames**, which house the original NEFs after conversion and the newly-spat-out JPEGs, respectively. There's also the **Rejected frames** directory, which is for ...well: rejected frames, or frames that I can't really be bothered to fix at the present time—there are of course, flagged as rejected frames, those shots that are (so to speak) 'irrecoverable'; for example, you can't fix a problem with the focus of a photograph.⁷⁶

13.2 The process itself

I *have* explained the process before, but try not to get angry if you feel like I'm repeating myself here—I most probably am.⁷⁷

The raw images from the camera are opened in Photoshop. The raw images are in the NEF (Nikon Electronic Format) format⁷⁸ and the version of Adobe Photoshop must be greater than CS3 (v10.0, on both OS X and Windows). Adobe Photoshop then reads the file and runs its RAW conversion utility; it probably has a name of its own.⁷⁹ The utility lets you adjust the exposures, white balance, levels and other such values *before* the document 'loads' in the usual sense; the RAW image ideology is that the camera records *additional information* about the scene in which the photograph was taken, allowing the 'correction' of images to take place without damaging the photograph itself. Once in this utility, I'd fiddle about and experiment with the sliders⁸⁰ until the frame in the window looks 'just right'.⁸¹

I would then accept the adjustments, and Photoshop would load in the 'new' image—the image that was created by taking the original photograph (the NEF) and applying the adjustments specified in the conversion utility. I'm not going to fiddle about with anything now: any adjustments after leaving said utility would be performed 'destructively', in the same way that derivative photocopies lose quality with each scan-and-print procedure. To finish up, I just need to export the

⁷⁶Not that I took any out-of-focus shots; I hope you get what I'm saying.

⁷⁷Like that gives me a reason to do or not to do so.

⁷⁸Small case of RAS syndrome, there.

⁷⁹I'm not really an expert in the field of Photoshop, and even less so with CS3.

⁸⁰Controlling a multitude of mathematically-based adjustments.

⁸¹Or as close to 'just right' as is technically feasible.

image in the JPEG format. A simple `File` → `Save As...` will do the trick; I'm also using quite a high quality setting here—to be specific, each shot is being converted and exported at $\frac{11}{12}$ quality⁸² to avoid compression artifacts from appearing in the final product.⁸³

14 Three weeks to go; somewhat lost

The college desperately needs to install `TeX` on its machines; it's getting seriously tedious now. I'm having to type this all out in a raw `TeX` editor—the code combined with the gauss'd-up monitor is amplifying my migraine.

Anywho: enough complaint—I'm currently in week -3; that being the mark of three short weeks before the hand-in date, but I'm aiming to hand the project in before then. Things I need to do in this prepenultimate week include:

- continuing with the post-production of my series of frames. This requires the Mac suite in the F block—as the college can only fund *one* suite full of CS3 licences. Post-production of these frames, however, requires little specialised input—it's mainly a case of adjusting the exposure / contrast / levels, exporting (and the frame's converted). Having said this, the process is quite sluggish; any procedure frame-after-frame seventy-fold can get pretty boring.
- consulting with Ricoh, regarding the so-called 'mass print'—this being the several dozen frames being printed at an accurate ratio, each; I'll need to discuss briefly with them about the cost of such a commission and (also) how long are we talking about in terms of a suitable and appropriate timescale.

15 Sans deux

After a good-deal-more post production in the Mac suite, I had 'developed' enough frames to produce two A1 gridded works. At A1, seven-by-three A6_M frames could well be printed (then arranged) without

⁸²12 being full quality with next-to-no compression.

⁸³The final product being *each* printed frame.

bleeding off the edge and angering the Super Inframan—and by $A6_M$, I mean an A6-printed frame ($105 \times 148 \text{ mm}$) plus a margin of 10 mm each way; $115 \times 158 \text{ mm} = A6_M$, where M stands for 'margin' and not 'marmalade'.

Off to Ricoh I went... and after a lengthy commission and quite a few compromises, I'd got a guarantee of:

- forty-two frames,⁸⁴ printed four-up on A4 card⁸⁵
- a black-and-white test print, just to see what I'll be paying for

15.1 More rejected frames

Apart from the frames rejected (and listed) in previous sections, the following frames have and have been rebuffed for the following reasons:

- frames 0022, 0031 and 0081 failed to open,⁸⁶ probably owing to some corruption or damage to the NEF.
- frames 0075 and 0087 were rejected for reasons relating to the tilt and (mis)angle of the photographs.⁸⁷
- ... and frame 0076 contained a face—and under the Proposal set in section 5,⁸⁸ this behaviour is just out-of-order.

15.2 Just to fill page-inches

Frames⁸⁹ 0011, 0014, 0030, 0033, 0036, 0041, 0043, 0046, 0071, 0073, 0082, 0091, 0092 and 0100 were converted using Adobe Photoshop CS3 and its RAW image conversion whatsit, on Thursday 20th May.

⁸⁴Ten sheets with four frames on each, plus a single sheet with two frames.

⁸⁵Technically it's thick paper, but what's the difference between a frog and a slightly different frog?

⁸⁶They failed to open in both Adobe Photoshop and Preview.

⁸⁷Though only the rejection of frame 0087 was down to tilt.

⁸⁸Or in whichever section I said it was section'd within.

⁸⁹Listed in a sequential order—simply to conform to convention, and nothing less.

16 Following up on section 15

(... as tends to happen in sequential literature.) I did go and evaluate the test print: it was as expected and I signed over the images to be printed; unfortunately, Ricoh's industrial-size colour printer was broken at the time... and it was still broken when I went back on the 25th. This is quite disconcerting; it has been raised, however, that the week between week -2 and week -1 is a week without a week number: for why will be come apparent after this-here m-dash — it's half-term. I will be returning to Ricoh on the first Tuesday back, and I expect forty-two frames... each printed four-to-a-page⁹⁰ and I'll pay the however-many-pounds and yes: all that, and whathaveyou (again). A delay in the project, no-less.

17 Influences

A number of artists and people have influenced me on my actions throughout this-here project of mine; I'm not going to list them all⁹¹ but I will document a few below, just so you can get a flavour of what I'm tasting as I've been producing this document and progressing with my coursework.⁹²

17.1 Jenny Holzer

The artworks of Jenny Holzer have been shown and displayed to audiences across the World, in somewhat eminent locales—her main series of “truisms”⁹³ seem to splice the discernable nature between what we perceive in the 'mass' world (this being advertising, the media; what appears to be “too good to be true”) and the reality of our lives (which happens to be a dull struggle for resources above elsewhat). By inserting reality into ... well: reality... Holzer appears to jar the 'false reality' we all share⁹⁴ and just manages to get some truth... something other than, what advertising presents which happens to be, verisimilitude. Exhibited in London and New York,⁹⁵ her works, though more-so

⁹⁰Except for the 11th page, which will be 2-up.

⁹¹That wouldn't be fair on the Others; would it?

⁹²As we all know, the first bite is with the teeth; the eyes can't taste.

⁹³If that is indeed what she insists on calling them.

⁹⁴And seem to put up with, from day to day.

⁹⁵Among many more locations worldwide.

the process by which she goes about exhibiting, have been focused on the viral approach—how and how-about to get ideas further (still) into the mind of the Collective; spreading her messages within public space. She continues to use media that blends; the kind of things that blend into the modern landscape we have grown up around: she has used large-scale electronic displays in Times Square⁹⁶ and (at the lower end of the scale) posters and stickers in urban contexts, applied to such “elements” of the environment. The text on her works; the “truisms” lie at the boundary between truth and our perception of truth.⁹⁷ The text functions as a series of comments and remarks, “[provoking and] stimulating awareness of our social conditioning”. Somewhen, a phrase will flash across the display too quickly to decipher;⁹⁸ there might be a phrase on-top a phrase. Holzer quickly became a figure in the Arts, though she started out in the field as a street artist: pasting “posters [to the walls of] the streets of New York”—these posters contained the truisms that she adapted in later life, becoming the artworks that are clearly identifiable as Holzer’s. Short and sharp statements that come across as obvious and boring to some—though, sometimes, sensible yet with the potential for contradiction.

17.2 Martin Firrell

The artworks of a Mr. Martin Firrell⁹⁹ are similar in detail to Holzer’s works; I’m going to focus¹⁰⁰ on Firrell’s projection artworks, developed in the last couple-or-so decades. Leaving school at 14, he immersed himself in self-education and literature—specifically and extensively the works of feminist lesbians Woolf and Stein, as well as the books of French author Anaïs Nin.¹⁰¹ One of Nin’s works¹⁰² states bluntly (something along the lines of) that “literature fails to prepare us for [... the ...] challenges of life, and is therefore useless”.¹⁰³ Martin set out to challenge Nin’s words by using art and, by indirect relation, literature

⁹⁶Times Square, New York, was used by Holzer for various artworks.

⁹⁷Though it could be the perception of what we perceive to be true. No; that’s just getting silly.

⁹⁸At least on the first sight.

⁹⁹Firrell with two ‘r’s and two ‘l’s.

¹⁰⁰If it can truly be called focusing.

¹⁰¹My; he had quite a thing for lesbotic literature.

¹⁰²The novel *The Four Chambered Heart*, which you’ve so obviously studied rigorously.

¹⁰³Wikipedia and its contributors, article re: *Martin Firrell*.

to raise “provocative [and potentially controversial]” issues.

18 The penultimate push

Leaving those artists behind,¹⁰⁴ I’m just quickly going to list—an extremely tedious, but box-ticking procedure—what I have yet to do, in the few weeks from now until the end of the project.¹⁰⁵ I have yet to collect my frames from the Reprographics department, and I think I’m going to hold that off for a few days; I have *no* money at the moment.¹⁰⁶ I’ll consider collecting them on either Thursday or some day next week; I’ve left myself a week (this being week 0) ‘spare’, just in case. Evaluating my work, or at least the printed frames, will have to wait until after the frames mentioned have been collected ...though I have been evaluating the project *cum proficere*.

19 Regarding the application of frames

I collected my prints this morning¹⁰⁷ and I’m moderately happy with them; I am happy with them to an extent—that extent being that I’m not too sure, now, how I’m going to exhibit the frames in the end-of-year show. I’ve had several ideas already, but (you know)... none seems to strike out and appear as the obvious solution to the problem.¹⁰⁸ Below is an itemised recap¹⁰⁹ of what I *could* do, and how I *could* arrange my pieces when they’re exhibited upstairs in a few days’ time.

- just in a grid-esque layout; all frames on one upright exhibit board
- sticking the frames around the room, in a seemingly random¹¹⁰ way
- sticking frames onto members of the Public

¹⁰⁴So long, artists; we’ll always remember you and your works.

¹⁰⁵More correctly, I’ve got about *one* week until the pieces need to be up on the walls of the end-of-year show.

¹⁰⁶But this situation will change towards the end of the week.

¹⁰⁷The morning of Thursday 10th June.

¹⁰⁸Problems tend to have solutions—for the most part.

¹⁰⁹As I believe I mentioned some ideas of application earlier.

¹¹⁰I say *seemingly* random; I mean random with no reason.

- hanging frames from a pipe running just below the ceiling—either in one place (in a line or in a clump of sorts) or randomly placed around the exhibition space
- with small magnetic... well: magnets on the back of the frames, then applied to a magnetic board fixed to the assigned vertical board
- ...or I could stick the frames magnetically onto magnetic objects around the room¹¹¹

Now—you would expect me to come to some conclusion on the matter¹¹² and document it here. That’s not happening; that’s not happening because this document needs to be submitted before the show takes place. This needs to be handed-in before the exhibition’s skeleton has even been put up. I will, therefore, have to leave this matter open.

20 Token conclusions

If it wasn’t for this “who owns what part of whose work” battle,¹¹³ I would have written this conclusion earlier on; but if the College insist on wasting my time, I’ll crack on now.

20.1 What materials and techniques have you used over the course of this project?

I’ve used many-a media but I focused my work on digital and metaphysical art in this project, unlike previous projects on the course—where I have been known to use more ‘traditional’ approaches to art, such as the humble paintbrush or writing notes down on paper. I’ve used a great deal of thought rather than the ‘trial and error’ use of paint and paper; my only channel in mind for this project was photography, and with photography, I put in a lot of writing and structure into the process;¹¹⁴ this structure is evident in this-here document¹¹⁵ and I decided not to piss about with moodboards and that kind of thing—moodboards

¹¹¹I don’t think there are too many, however.

¹¹²This being the matter of how I’m going to arrange these prints.

¹¹³Which Cambridge Regional College inevitably lost.

¹¹⁴This being the process by which one produces artworks.

¹¹⁵Which I hope you have been reading.

hinder the Process¹¹⁶ and don't help me; words, on the other hand, and writing like this *do* help and have enabled me to produce my final piece.¹¹⁷ I've used my knowledge in the fields of photography and digital manipulation to realise my idea; the effort was more in the planning than the production and I think I have used my skills in those areas to make this whole process go smoothly and efficiently.

20.2 Did any problems arise?

Two problems arose during the course of the project. The first was a situation in the reprographics department¹¹⁸ in week -3 and -2; this was regarding the breakdown of their industrial-size colour printer. Their monochrome unit was still in working order, so they were able to provide that test print-thingie; the job was honoured once the colour printer had been fixed—this whole situation did, however, cause a delay of sorts. The second problem that happened to arise was a battle over which party¹¹⁹ owned the work in this document, the work in my sketchbook and the outcome of the final major project. This matter was settled by College management but, like the broken printer, caused a delay for the project as a whole. I was able to work around both of these and adjust my plan appropriately.

20.3 What did you learn as you developed your project?

I did learn a few things, but I mostly used knowledge and skills from previous projects and courses. I learnt about organisation (the organisation of shoots; the organisation of people when shooting; etc.) and how one can, in most circumstances, mould their plans around situations—situations that *can* be solved, but not at the time when the situation was discovered. I also learnt a great deal about manipulating raw images in Photoshop—this was an example of something that I had not done before. It was not difficult to acquire these skills and my photography tutor¹²⁰ would have been on hand to provide any

¹¹⁶Whatever the Process is; what does that even mean?

¹¹⁷Not too sure if it's 'piece' (as in "a collection of photographs") or 'pieces' (as in "forty-two photographs").

¹¹⁸Both the department itself and the department of the matter.

¹¹⁹Me, the Academy and the management of the College were the parties involved.

¹²⁰This being the pretty-much amazing Julia Johnson.

assistance had I required it.

20.4 How do you think people will react to your works?

To be honest, I don't think people will get my piece/s—they'll either 'ignore them', 'generally not get the point', 'not *quite* understand' or 'understand it fully'; one of those or somewhere in between is what I'm hoping for. As you can probably tell, I'm not hoping for much from the Public.

Appendices

Project time-plan

- 26/4–2/5 (week -6): finish previous projects before starting 'final major project'; get the brief from Mark Rigby. Gather ideas and w/n. Read through brief. Develop ideas; submit proposal and time-plan.
- 3/5–9/5 (week -5): finalise the idea and begin to plan the shoot out on the field. Perhaps begin shooting in the Photography session on Thursday afternoon.
- 10/5–16/5 (week -4): continue to shoot, if you didn't start in week -5. Near to the end of the week and if the quota is reached, begin post-production: pruning/sifting of frames, sanitisation, adjustments, etc. Begin to research artists who have done similar projects (mass collaboration, public-emotion photography, etc.) in the past.
- 17/5–23/5 (week -3): continue with post-production. Consult with Ricoh of what would be a 'mass print'—several-several dozen A6 images; discuss cost and timeframe.
- 24/5–30/5 (week -2): hand all frames (those being all frames *to be printed*) into Ricoh for printing. Begin writing evaluation of weeks -2 to beginning. Consult with Rigby for an interim assessment.
- 31/5–6/6: this week is half-term week and will be used to catch-up with tasks not yet completed. This week doesn't happen to be included in the sequential back-numbered week referencing scheme; probably, for reasons of laze.
- 7/6–13/6 (week -1): continue to write the evaluation and catch up with any research not completed. Collate documentation, evaluations and research into one easy-to-publish whathaveyou; publish said document.
- 14/6–20/6 (week 0): relax, hopefully. Hand in project for assessment; take final artworks up to 'end of year show' and attach somehow to your wallspace.

- week beginning 21/6: 'end of year show' opens to various parties; public to follow on 28/6. Have a good summer; prepare for next course.

Attributions

I would like to thank:

- Mark Rigby: my 'main programme' tutor and idea generator
- Heather Phillips, who helped a great deal with the first field session
- those people I interrupted to get words and phrases
- the Lord and whathaveyou, who (apparently) has donated this planet
- the technicians and tutors at Cambridge Regional College

References

- Laura Cumming, *The Observer* newspaper (2010)
- Randall Packer of the Johns Hopkins University
- Alison Young—University of Melbourne, Melbourne

Licence

This document and its associated works, including the final piece, are licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 licence. You are free to share, copy, distribute, transmit, etc. and adapt the work under the condition that you *must* attribute the work to Kevin Steinhardt—one can see the licence in full, and maybe get an understanding of how to appropriately licence works, at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>; they'll take good care of you on the other side of the Pond.

My suggestions are: (a) if you're using the final piece in your work or another piece of artwork from the project, a simple "Image: Kevin Steinhardt, 2010" would be enough; I'm not going to get picky about

things. . . . or (b) if you're using an excerpt of documentation from this project, again: "Kevin Steinhardt, 2010" or "Contributions from Kevin Steinhardt, 2010" would feel at home in the footnotes, or in your references section—that's if you were going to put in a references section; don't want to pressure you into making such a section solely for me.

Licence of archived works

I would just like to point out: photographs published by me, Kevin Steinhardt, *before* 23rd April 2010 are covered under a similar Creative Commons licence: that of Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike. This licence applies to archived photographic work, mostly and primarily hosted on the online photo management application Flickr. This Attribution-ShareAlike licence is subject to transmogrification—that being into the Attribution 3.0 licence detailed in the paragraphs above. The ShareAlike portion of this 'archived works' licence is adds the clause, and this is taken straight from the CC guys: "If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one"—simply put, BY-SA goes in, BY-SA goes out. I realised later on, after using this licence for a while, that it is not always possible for an individual to publish the resulting derivative under "the same or similar licence"—this could be regarding executives or higher powers, or they may work for a cooperation with some copyright addiction; some people are just born evil though. This is the main reason why I *now* use the Attribution licence, with the ShareAlike part knock'd off; apart from that clause, the two licences operate in similar fashions.