



# Editorial

I was struck by a quotation of Anna Bambou in this journal: “Never forget this moment, because it no longer exists” – a trite phrase, creating a mysterious atmosphere out of nothing, but stimulating to a train of thought about photography, the present and the past. Is photography an aid to memory? Does it stimulate it? Does it create it? Or is it independent, an objective illustration of the things we remember?

For the first year of her life my daughter lived on a small island in Indonesia, where her world was encompassed by our house and garden, a swimming pool nearby and occasional trips to the market or beach. Of course I photographed her there, and she grew up with those images of a place she could not directly remember. Twenty years later we returned with her to see the place of her infancy. It had changed: our house was derelict, the pool empty of everything but leaves. She found this disturbing (I have a snapshot of her expression) because she felt her memory was at fault; her ‘memory’ was true, but, by then, was taken only from photographs.

Someone falls in love – the relationship expands in encounters in different places, each one with a surge of new emotions and intense feelings. Looking back (after it has ended?) the sight of those places is irretrievably linked to the other person and how one felt at the time. They can stir feelings, perhaps of loss or happiness. Can one capture those memories and regenerate those feelings with a series of photographs taken later? Of a bus stop, a room, or a coffee cup?

And then again, there are historical events we know have happened but cannot directly remember, and which are closely associated with a particular location. Whatever else a photograph does, it has a link, however tenuous, to a real place and time. Can we, by photography, use the link to the place alone to recall the distant time of the events themselves?

Memory is the thread running through the contributions to this edition of the journal.

Paul Ashley, Editor

# Contemporary Photography

Number 77 Autumn 2019

2	<b>Editorial</b> Paul Ashley LRPS	30	<b>The Ebbing of Memory</b> Marzio Villa
4	<b>When Hannah Left Home</b> Ken Holland ARPS	37	<b>I Walk toward the Sun, which is Always Going Down, by Alan Huck</b> Book Review by Brian Steptoe FRPS
10	<b>Anna Bambou</b> Sabrina and Marianne	38	<b>A View from the RPS Contemporary Facebook Group</b> Tamara Cartwright-Loebl and RomneyTansley ARPS
18	<b>In Contrast...</b> Iam Burn ARPS	39	<b>Group and related Society Events</b>
24	<b>Visual Echoes of the Past</b> Brian Etherington ARPS	39	<b>Listing of Group Officers, Committee members and rôles</b>

© The copyright of photographs and text in this issue belongs to the author of the article of which they form part, unless otherwise indicated.

If you wish to submit articles for the Journal, please send all copy and images to: Paul Ashley (Editor), paultheashley@gmail.com

Text should be in Microsoft Word. Images are preferred in TIFF format, although high quality JPEGs are also acceptable. Images should be at least 2500 pixels on the longest edge. For other formats or to discuss reproduction, please contact the Editor. Large image files may be supplied on disk or memory stick, or by use of on-line file transfer services, such as WeTransfer or Dropbox. Unless requested, disks and memory sticks will not be returned. Deadline for the Autumn 2019 issue is 1 September 2019.

**Contemporary Group ethos - Photography that conveys ideas, stimulates thought and encourages interpretation; photographs ‘about’ rather than ‘of’.**

Cover: © Sabrina and Marianne, *Attractions, Stars* from Anna Bambou,  
Back cover: © Marzio Villa, *A street in Curitiba*, from *The Ebbing of Memory*  
Journal fonts: general, Avenir Lt Std: author name, Letter Gothic Std



# When Hannah Left Home

*Ken Holland ARPS*

In 1914 Seale Hayne opened as a College of Agriculture in Devon. It closed in 2005, due to falling numbers. In 2009, the buildings were bought by the Dame Hannah Rogers Trust, a charity founded in 1767 by Dame Hannah, whose aim was simple: to enrich and empower the lives of children and young adults in need. Although the Trust had a school in nearby Ivybridge, it wanted to expand its premises and facilities.

Princess Anne opened the refurbished buildings in 2010. However, in 2018 the Trust found the site to be a drain on its finances and announced its plans for closure. The doors closed finally on 31st July 2019, affecting more than 100 jobs and 200 clients. Ivybridge remains open and continues to flourish.

I spent many happy days there while it was open. I photographed some of the young people at work and at leisure, as part of a wonderful camera club project; I enjoyed delicious meals in the Bistro; I visited many art exhibitions, and attended concerts in the Great Hall. It was a happy place, full of high spirits and a positive atmosphere.

With a heavy heart I recorded the last few days of Hannahs at Seale Hayne as they moved out. Some equipment was returned to Ivybridge, some was scrapped, and some was abandoned to be dealt with by the new property developer.

I photographed items stored ready for removal and others in the rubbish skips, but the feeling of utter emptiness and melancholy was most profound when I walked through the silent corridors and into rooms; rooms which once rang with laughter and fun and which were now empty and devoid of life. Just a few discarded artefacts were the only evidence that people had been there. It was as if Hannah had left home.

See [www.lowenna.co.uk](http://www.lowenna.co.uk), [www.discoverhannahs.org](http://www.discoverhannahs.org)













# Anna Bambou

*Sabrina and Marianne*

Anna Bambou is the story of an unexplained event. A woman disappears from a village one evening and the inhabitants are strongly affected. They tell us about her during a stay there, and we try to find out more.

Intrigued by the different and inconsistent testimonies about the same person, we decide to work on this story by mixing a true story with our imagination.

We therefore asked everyone who knew her, well or slightly, to tell us an anecdote about her. Little by little, we discover a person with as many facets as people who remember her. Our work is based on memory, its fragility, and on descriptions and events transformed by feelings.

Thus is born Anna Bambou. From each statement, we build a new series of images, each time telling a new vision of this woman.

See: [www.annabambou.com](http://www.annabambou.com)

(Translations by the editor)



## Toxic kindred spirits

Dean Moriarty receives us at home, gives us a coffee and puts a scribbled note on the table. It reads: "Never forget this moment, because it no longer exists. Your love, Anna".

*When did she write this to you?*

"It was right after our first meeting, I had arrived at her house a little early, I was wearing a suit for the occasion, that I had just collected from the dry cleaner. When she opened the door, she handed me a bouquet of red flowers. I was surprised, it's not something women tend to do ... After that, she gave me flowers at each of our meetings ... She said it was so that I would never forget her, because no woman after her would do it. Later I understood her words ... She had always wanted to leave before we stopped loving each other, to preserve the most beautiful memories and never let our love fade.

That's what she did."

Dean Moriarty

## Ames-soeurs toxiques

Dean Moriarty nous reçoit chez lui,  
il nous offre un café et pose sur  
la table un mot griffonné.  
On peut lire : "N'oublie jamais cet  
instant car il n'existe déjà plus.  
Ton amour, Anna"

*Quand vous a-t-elle écrit ça ?*

"C'était juste après notre premier  
rendez-vous. J'étais arrivé chez elle  
un peu en avance, je portais un  
costume, pour l'occasion, que je  
venais de récupérer chez le  
teinturier. Lorsqu'elle a ouvert  
la porte, elle m'a tendu un bouquet  
de fleurs rouges. J'étais surpris,  
ce n'est pas un geste que les femmes  
font habituellement... Après ça,  
elle m'a offert des fleurs à chacune  
de nos rencontres... Elle disait que  
c'était pour que je ne l'oublie  
jamais parce qu'aucune femme après  
elle ne le ferait. Plus tard j'ai  
compris ses mots... Elle voulait  
toujours partir avant que l'on ne  
s'aime plus pour garder le plus  
beau des souvenirs et ne jamais  
laisser l'amour se ternir.  
C'est ce qu'elle a fait..."

Dean Moriarty





## Des attractions, des astres

Témoign de sexe masculin. Dale B.,  
32 ans, thanatopracteur.

Nous avons rendez-vous avec lui  
à 21h, au dinner à la sortie de la  
ville.

Vous connaissez cette femme ?  
Oui, elle disait qu'elle s'appelait  
Marlène.

Avez-vous eu rdv avec elle?  
Ça faisait plusieurs semaines que  
j'essayais d'avoir un rendez-vous  
avec elle. Un soir elle a dit oui.  
On est allé à la fête foraine.  
Elle a disparu quelques jours après.  
Chaque fois que je retourne près des  
attractions, j'ai l'impression  
de la voir partout.  
Et c'est étrange, je la vois de dos,  
comme si elle quittait déjà mes  
souvenirs... comme si elle avait déjà  
disparue.

J'aurais voulu la garder près de moi  
pour la vie peut-être..

## Attractions, stars

Male witness, Dale B., 32 years old, embalmer. We  
meet at 9pm, for dinner at the edge of the town.  
*Do you know this woman?*

"Yes, she said her name was Marlène."

*Did you go on a date with her?*

"I tried for several weeks to get her to go out  
with me. One night she said yes. We went to the fun  
fair. She disappeared a few days later. Whenever I  
go near the fair now, I feel like I see her everywhere.  
And it's strange, I see her from behind, as if she had  
already left my memories... as if she had already  
disappeared.

I would have liked to keep her close to me ...  
perhaps for life ..."





### I believe in the nights

"They say that she left home early in the morning, that she joined us on the road as the sun was rising and starting to caress the plains.

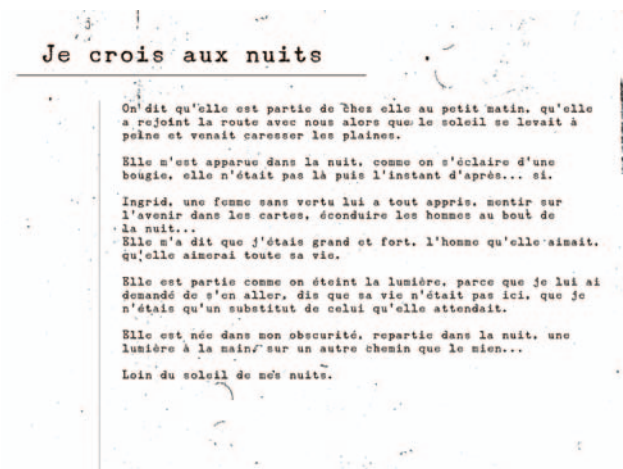
She appeared to me in the night, as one lights a candle - she was not there, then, a moment later... she was.

Ingrid, a woman without virtue, taught her everything, lying about the future in the cards, driving the men away at the end of the night...

She told me that I was tall and strong, the man that she loved, that she would love all her life. She left as one puts out the light, because I asked her to leave, told her that her life was not here, that I was only a substitute for the one she was waiting for.

She was born in my darkness, left again in the night, light in hand, on a different path to mine...

Far from the sun of my nights."









## In Contrast...

*Iam Burn ARPS*

A fundamental issue with my mental health is an unhelpful dependency on 'black and white' thinking. All or nothing. Success or failure. Good or bad. I often lose sight of the many shades of grey that lie between. This has led to a number of dips over the years. I am more aware of it now than ever, though it still doesn't prevent me from stumbling and repeating the behaviour. It is as if I am pre-programmed to this way of thinking. Conversely, I see all shades of grey when it comes to topics that do not impact me personally. I certainly do not practice what I preach. Welcome to my world of mental illness. Step inside to share my challenges with depression and anxiety. It is a constant battle. It can be very tiring.

I live on the north-east coast of England, and when my mental health is suffering I head towards the sea; sometimes to flee from issues, other times to contemplate. These can be both in dark times or times where I am simply overwhelmed. The sea is constantly in a state of flux, of death and life, of decay and repair, of stillness and movement. This echoes my experiences.

I suffered a prolonged period of depression and anxiety in 2014-15. During that time, I visited the coast on a number of occasions. I would simply focus on the sea. The sounds, smells, movements, shapes, colours, calmness and ferocity all engaged my mind. It helped to create episodes of mindfulness for me, allowing me to escape my own thoughts or give my mind room to breathe as I mulled over various difficulties. The recovery process has had a positive effect on my mental health, and my life as a whole. I made some life-changing decisions, such as studying full-time as a mature student to earn my photography degree. I wanted to produce a body of work that marked this period in my life. It seemed fitting that if I am going to convey my feelings, emotions and importance of this challenging period through photography, it should be where I spent numerous hours connecting with the sea.

*In Contrast...* draws on these experiences with the aim to stimulate conversation, debate and discussion. I want to make a connection with





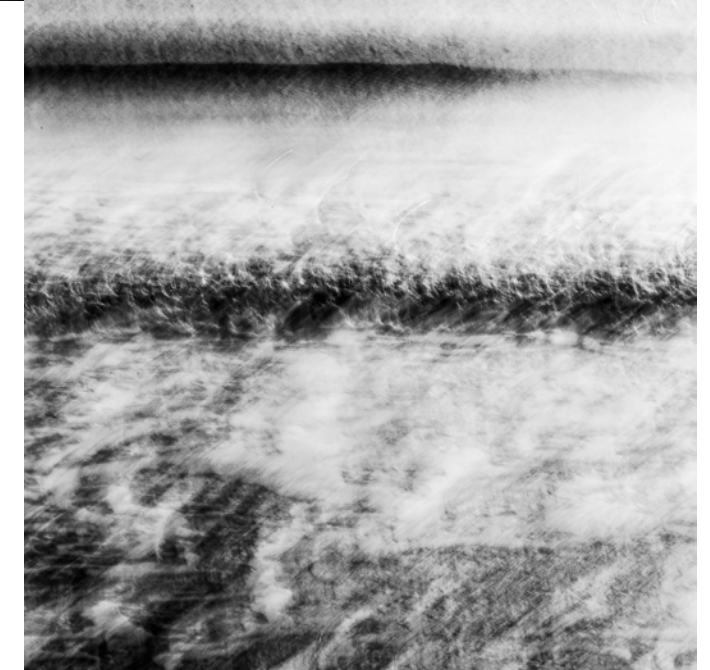
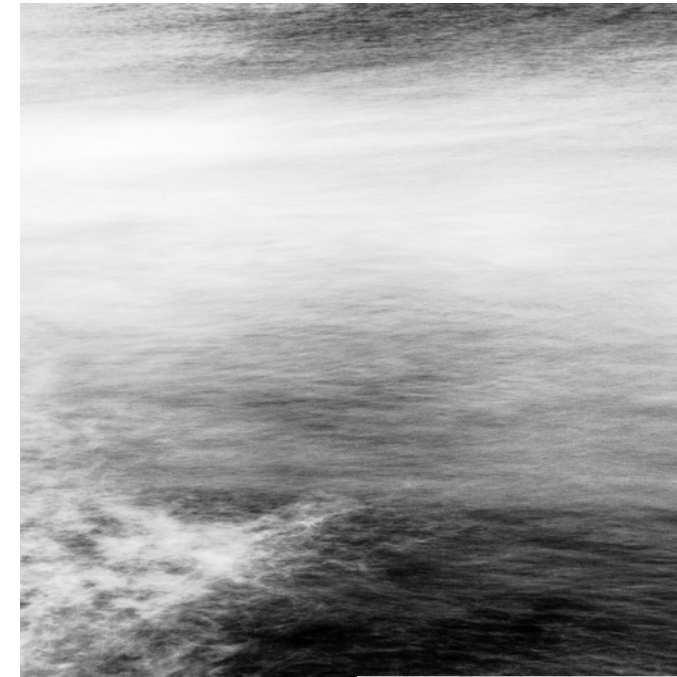
people with mental health issues. I want to provide a voice to show they are not alone. I want to help to break down the stigma around mental health, especially amongst men. This work is also designed to provide a vehicle for those who perhaps do not suffer from mental health issues, or perhaps know people that do, to promote an understanding of depression and anxiety.

I created images in black and white to reflect my black and white thinking. It is also to reflect the emotional changes I felt throughout this period, moving between dark periods of despair to brighter, more positive times – my own dark and light within. The foam, the waves and the tides help to produce a visualisation of my emotions; they are fluid, constantly moving and adjusting. At times more light than dark, sometimes the opposite. Occasionally calm but intermittently savage and destructive. My images also highlight the turbulence of my mind; the overwhelming roars, the confusion, the rapid change of direction, the remaining glimpses of hope in an otherwise dark existence.

I created some of the photographs using slower shutter speeds to blur the image. This helps to represent the both the periods of wellbeing and calm, but also when I was very unwell and everything felt as if it were in slow motion. Other images are sharp and chaotic. This connects to periods of utter fear and panic in my most anxious states. However, it also represents periods of mania felt at the opposite end of the scale.

The sea acts as a metaphor for the fluidity of my mental health. It symbolises my movement between my wellness and illness, my happiness and a torrid existence. The sea cannot be fully tamed. It is never completely predictable. It can be beautiful and nurturing but can change to brutal and destructive in a heartbeat... much like my mental health.

See: [www.iamburn.co.uk](http://www.iamburn.co.uk)









# Visual Echoes of the Past

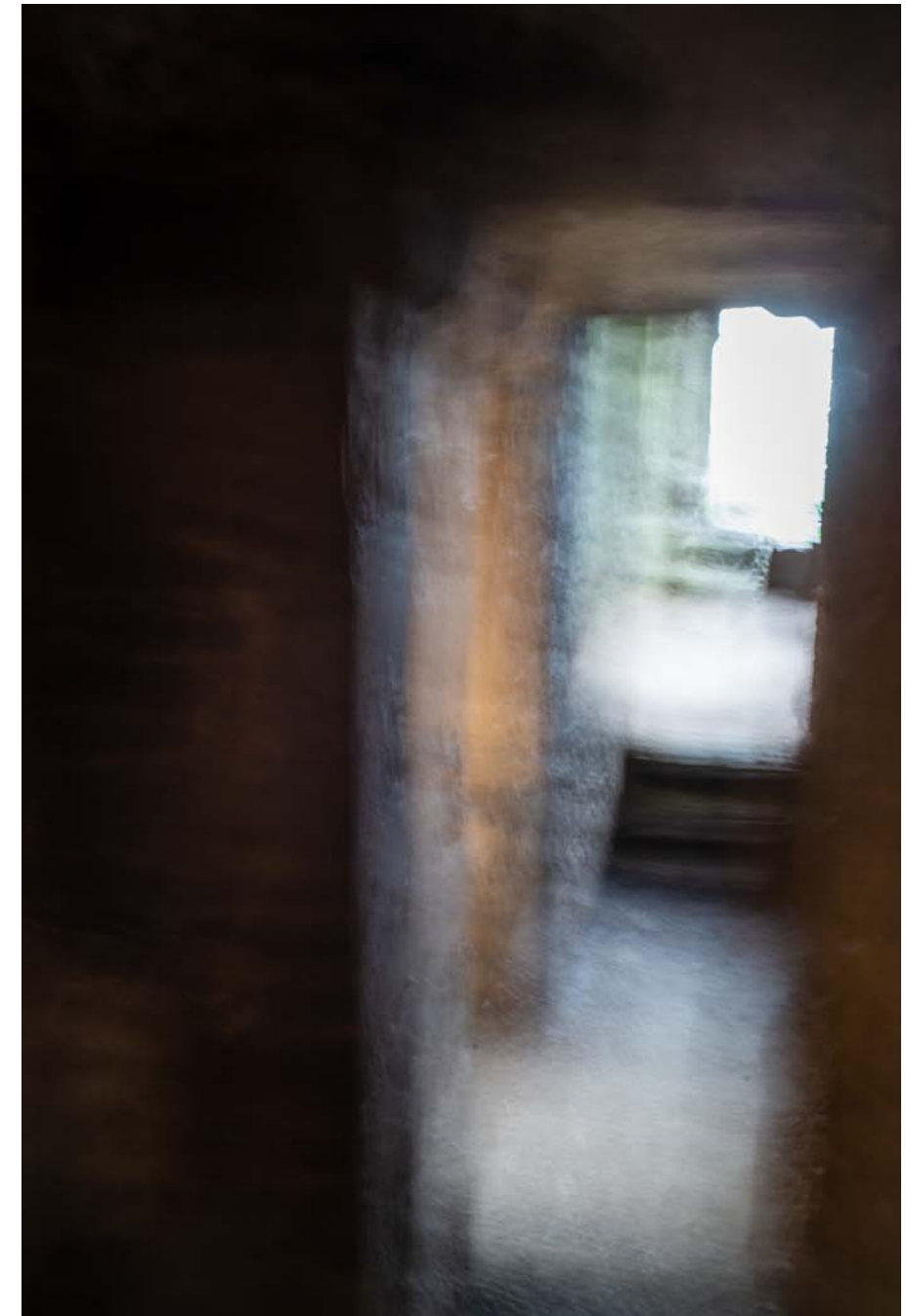
*Brian Etherington ARPS*

History allows us to see into the past. It allows us to objectively consider the available evidence and understand events when there is no longer anyone there to tell us. It brings to life people, their strengths and frailties and the parts they played in real life drama through the centuries.

Yet, sailing upon the ocean of an expanding universe, we exist in the present moment. We see and interact with a world that is happening right now. We live in a space where the future is uncertain and the past is something we can no longer experience. As photographers and artists, we are handicapped with images which approximate to the present, captured in an instant between the opening and closing of the shutter covering our lens.

But stop for a moment and consider that there is more to the present than the present moment. There is the sense that the place where we are currently owns the past. We know of these past events through legends, through stories and through attempts to document them in the written record of history. If we visit a place where some important event has happened in the past, perhaps where people have fought and died or in some way changed the course of the future through a speech or imprisonment, we feel the emotion of what happened. It may even be that we see these visual echoes from the past more clearly if we close our eyes. This engagement with the past gives life to the present. I want to capture this sense of place and the emotion of past lives using imagery with my camera. I want to create photographic memories not of the past, but of the moment when I visited this place and closed my eyes and felt the past touch me. For me, one such place is Ludlow Castle in beautiful Shropshire.

What we now call the Wars of the Roses was a civil conflict for the throne between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists, rival descendants to Edward III. This conflict dominated England in the late 15th Century. Ludlow castle was, in the middle of 15th Century, home to Lady Cecily Neville, Duchess of York and her youngest children; Margaret (13), George (10) and Richard (7). Cecily, the



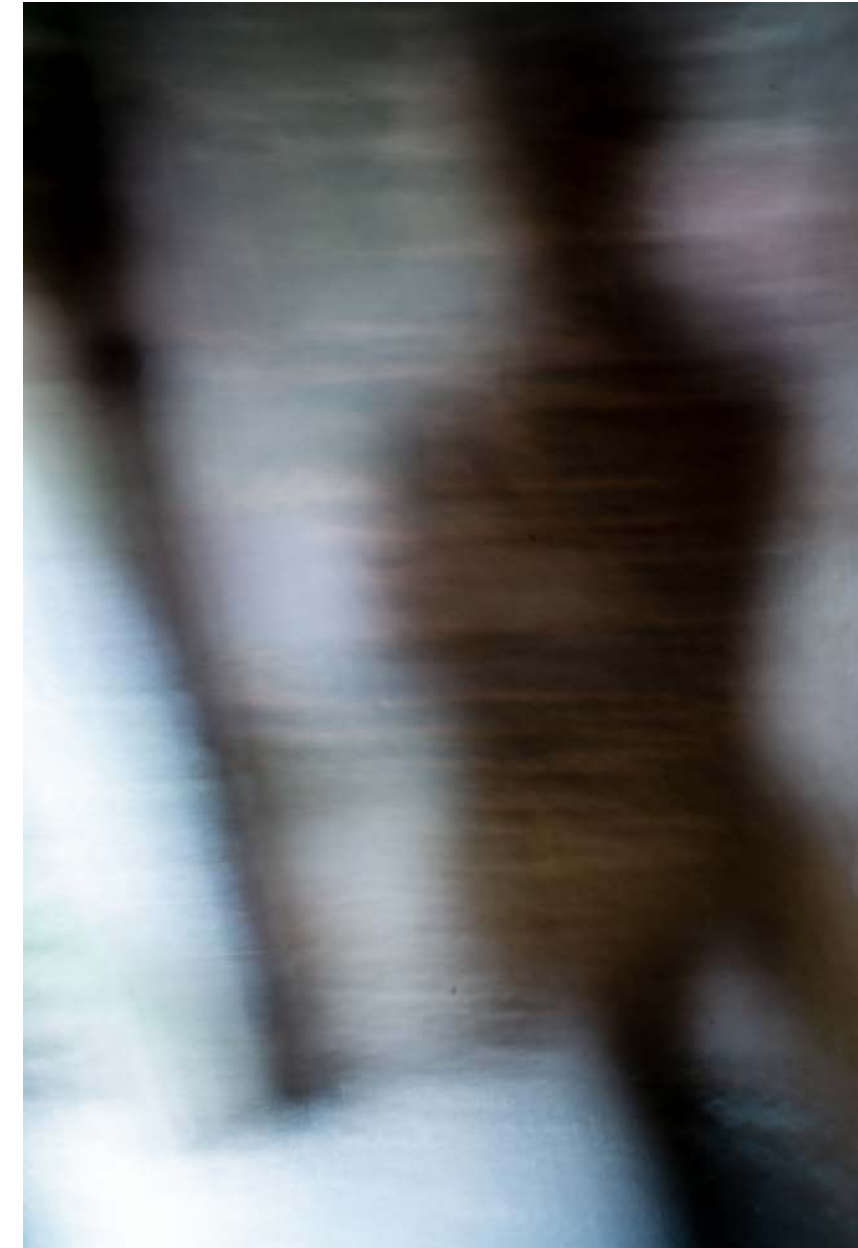


daughter of Ralph Neville and second wife Joan Beaufort, was born at Raby Castle in County Durham in 1415, the same year as Henry V's victory against the French at Agincourt. In 1424 at the age of nine, she married Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York. She would live to see her eightieth year and become mother to two Yorkist Kings of England, Edward IV and Richard III, grandmother to Elizabeth of York wife of Henry VII, and great-grandmother to Henry VIII. Of her three youngest children, Margaret would marry the Duke of Burgundy, George Duke of Clarence would be executed for treason by her son Edward IV and Richard would soon become Duke of Gloucester, the future King Richard III.

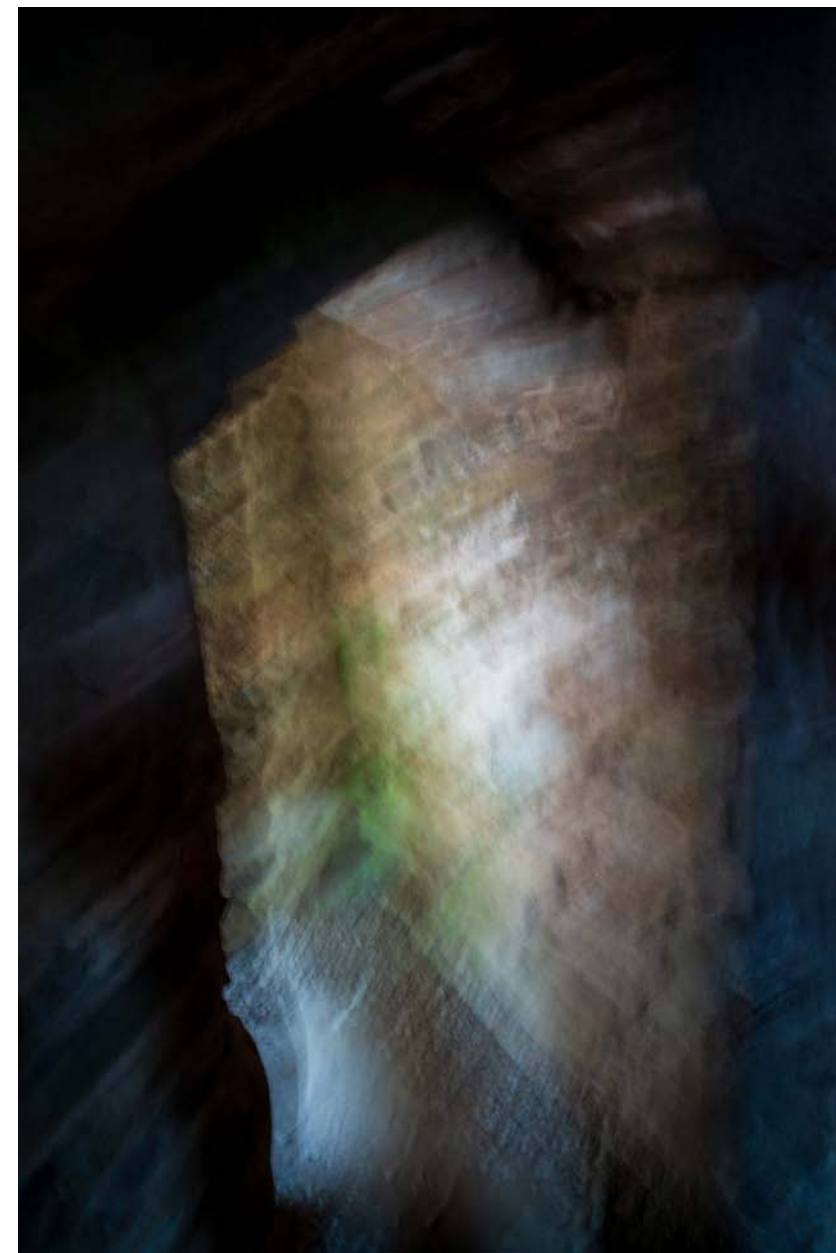
In 1459, after the bloodless Battle of Ludford Bridge, which sits astride the River Teme just outside the castle walls, Richard Duke of York fled in the middle of the night to Ireland and abandoned his wife Cecily and his three youngest children to the mercy of the Lancastrian King Henry VI. As a mediaeval noblewoman in an age of extreme violence, her life choice sliding doors had always been controlled by men: her father, her brother, her husband and now the king. After her husband had slipped out of the castle under cover of darkness, Cecily locked the doors and took control.

When I stood in this place some 560 years later and closed my eyes, I saw clearly the human story of a mother who, with her youngest children, had been abandoned in time of war by her husband. I have tried to tell this story with abstract visual echoes taken within the castle walls and based on the metaphor of the castle door frames; they represent Cecily's emotional state and sense of duty as she prepares to stand alone and defend her children before the King on the morning of 13 October 1459.

See: [www.imagesabout.com](http://www.imagesabout.com)









# The Ebbing of Memory

*Marzio Villa*

On one side, the tide, a natural phenomenon provoked by the force of the moon. On the other, the memory, which is the whole essence of our human society. Memory invades our head at any time of our life like the flow of the sea, erases itself and then comes back to haunt us. It is also cyclical and changes with time like the rocks that are eroded by a constant and persistent current. Memories often come with nostalgia and we try to make them immortal, maybe with a camera. The tide and the memory are very alike: they are predictable because they always come back.

I was born in Brazil in 1987 and adopted by Italian parents at the age of three months. I studied at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts of Milan and currently live in Paris.

This work takes a look back on a four year journey on the traces of my ethnic origins. It follows me in a profound introspection, beginning with the Brazilian suburbs of Curitiba which surround the hospital where I was born, the church where I was baptized and the orphanage where my brother was also adopted. We then emerge in the landscapes of my Italian childhood, on the roads between Milan and the region of the Liguria where I spent all of my summers. I also made a series of portraits of my family and the priest that worked to make my adoption possible. I also portrayed my mother, my father, my uncle and aunt, my grandmother, my stepfather and stepmother and finally my brother with his newborn baby. My iconography is always close to a pictorial aesthetic and is influenced by the Italian painters of the Renaissance. The series is a reconstitution of a dynamic and complex family, yet touching.

See: [hanslucas.com/mvilla/photo](http://hanslucas.com/mvilla/photo), [www.marzioemiliovilla.com](http://www.marzioemiliovilla.com)

right: My Mother







My brother's orphanage from the street

right: The hospital where I was born







A scene from my childhood



The restaurant where I met the mother who adopted me

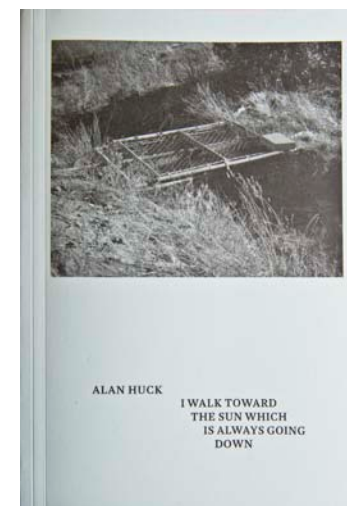


My brother  
with his child



# I Walk toward the Sun which is Always Going Down, by Alan Huck

*Book review by Brian Steptoe FRPS*



"A new benchmark achievement of what the combination of images and text can achieve"

"That voice is one that I'd describe as one of resignation, even though that's maybe too strong a word for what's going on in the book. Maybe melancholy would describe the mood more clearly"

... Jörg Colberg.

Jörg Colberg is a tutor on photobooks at Hartford State University, CT, USA and author of *Understanding Photobooks*, published by Routledge.

See <https://cphmag.com>

*I Walk towards the Sun which is Always Going Down* was published by MACK in September 2019





# A View from the RPS Contemporary Facebook Group

*Tamara Cartwright-Loebl and  
Romney Tansley ARPS*

All members are invited to join our Facebook group, where we share and, if requested, critique one another's work, report on exhibitions and workshops across the country and chat about trends in photography and some of the wider philosophical notions involved. We have our deep moments but also a good laugh. We are open to newbies, old hands, hobbyists, students, educators, professionals and those simply interested. The group is deliberately public so anyone can see and learn about contemporary photography in general and the RPS in particular.

Membership of either the RPS or the Contemporary group is not essential for membership of the Facebook group but, of course, we encourage both. We are a new admin team so give huge thanks to the previous admin, Peter Ellis, for leaving us such a well-run group and we hope we can do justice to, and build on his work.

We have spawned a mini group dedicated to producing a book of chairs and are considering more group projects for the future so please come and introduce yourselves, and show us what you do, or what interests you in the field of photography 'about' rather than 'of'.

## GROUP AND RELATED SOCIETY EVENTS

2 November	Contemporary North West meeting. Theme: 'Cycle Lanes'. 1 to 4 pm. Samlesbury War Memorial Hall, Cuerdale Lane, Samlesbury, Preston PR5 0UY. Contact Alan Cameron: email alan.cameron@me.com; tel. 07825 271344.
3 November	Contemporary South West meeting. 10.30 to 16.00, Dartington. Sharing printed images, books and projected images in all stages of preparation. Lunch provided for a small charge. For venue details contact Adrian Hough: email contemporarysw@rps.org.
16 November	Contemporary North meeting at Clements Hall, Nunthorpe Road, York YO23 1BW. 1.30-5pm. Contact Patricia Ruddle ARPS: email patriciaruddle@btinternet.com; tel. 01904 783850.
17 November	SE Documentary Group (including Contemporary Group). 10.30-13.00, Tangmere Village Hall, Malcolm Road, Tangmere PO20 2HS. Contact Jeff Owen, docse@rps.org, for more information.
4 January	Contemporary North West meeting. Details as 2 November.
18 January	Contemporary North meeting. Details as 16 November.
26 January	SE Documentary Group (including Contemporary Group). Details as 17 November.

Contemporary South West – new coordinator  
Ron Fry has stepped down as coordinator of the Contemporary South West group after many years of service. Adrian Hough LRPS has bravely stepped up to take his place. He may be contacted at contemporarysw@rps.org.

AGM notice of rescheduling  
The Contemporary Group AGM has had to be rescheduled owing to a clash of dates. It will now be held at RPS Paintworks on 14 March 2020 at 10.30am. Further details of the event will be provided in Concept and in the next journal.

Chair (until AGM) - Avril Harris ARPS. avrilrharris@blueyonder.co.uk Chair elect - Alan Cameron LRPS alan.cameron@me.com Deputy chair elect- Avijit Datta akd21@hotmail.com Secretary - Howard Fisher handjaf@virginmedia.com Treasurer - David J. Grimshaw ARPS contemporarytreasurer@rps.org Postal portfolio - Duncan Unsworth duncan.unsworth100@gmail.com Event organiser - Avril Harris ARPS avrilrharris@blueyonder.co.uk	Journal editor Paul Ashley LRPS, 59 Gilbert Road, Cambridge CB4 3NZ paultheashley@gmail.com Journal editorial committee - Paul Ashley, editor Brian Steptoe, design Proof reader, position vacant Webmaster, Sean Goodhart ARPS sean.goodhart.contemporary@outlook.com e-Newsletter (Concept) editor, Howard Fisher, handjaf@virginmedia.com Concept designer, Ken Holland, kenholland@lowenna.co.uk	Committee members - Brian Steptoe FRPS bsteptoe@compuserve.com Adrian Hough LRPS contemporarysw@rps.org Patricia Ruddle ARPS patriciaruddle@btinternet.com Tom Owens ARPS tom@tjowens.com Paul Ashley LRPS paultheashley@gmail.com Alan Cameron LRPS alan.cameron@me.com Tessa Mills FRPS (co-opted) tessamills@hotmail.co.uk
---	---	---



