

Photograph Analysis Sheet

Composition

How is the pictorial space arranged (foreground, background, points of focus)?

the point of focus in this photograph is the dead girl wrapped in the sheet on the stairs. In the background is the stairs and in the foreground is the stone wall on the left hand side. the sheet that the girl is wearing draped down the stairs and finally rests at the bottom.

How are the visual elements used?

A visual element in the photo is the colour. In this picture seem quite dark and ~~dirty~~ dirty. The colours all seem to come from one colour pallet. There are no colours that stand out or seem out of place. The colours used help make the photo look more dead. Another visual element is the lines. The lines on the stairs that are horizontal and the vertical lines of the stone wall and rail of the stairs. The lines help keep balance in the photo and it's as though your eye follow the different lines to the dead girl.

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Techniques

Use of Black & White / Toning / Colour / Digital: How does this contribute to the message the work communicates?

the colours used in this photo are all quite ~~dark~~ dark. This photo has ~~no~~ toning to make it seem darker and only has greys, white, blacks and a tinge of blue. I think this makes the photo look lifeless which adds to the message that the girl is dead.

Juxtaposition of subject matter: How does this contribute to the message the work communicates?

the juxtaposition in this photograph is the contrast between the stairs/walls and the girl on the stairs. the strongness of the stones that make up the stairs/wall compared to the smoothness of the girl give a sort of balance between innocence and harshness. It gives an edge to the photo without taking the sadness of the girl being dead away.

Production techniques (point of focus, DOF, lighting): How do these contribute to the message the work communicates?

the point of focus in this photo is on the girl on the stairs. the lighting in this photo is mostly on the girl as well. The edges around the photo are dark. This helps make the photo look more dead and adds to the idea that the girl is dead and was dumped there.

Post-production image manipulation (layering of images, cut and paste): How does this contribute to the message the work communicates?

it looks like the colour was manipulated to look more dark and toned. Also the edges of the photo have been darkened helping draw the focus more towards the centre of the photograph. I don't think much else was done post-production. This photo looks staged so all the work would have been done before the photo was taken.



Artist Brooke Shaden
Title uneven staircase

Date

Evaluation

What do you think about the work?

I like this photo. I like how all the elements come together and work perfectly. I think it's cool how Brooke Shaden managed to make the girl look so lifeless. I also like how the colours are so dull but still manage to have 'colour' coming through. It adds to the theme of the girl being dead and makes the photograph look good.

What aspects could you use in your own work? How? Why?

I could use the theme of this photo in my own work. The theme seems to be death, as though the girl has been dumped there. I could also use the same sort of colouring as Brooke Shaden has. I think that the dark sort of colouring goes hand in hand with the theme of death.

Photographer details:

Briefly outline what you have found out about their life and career.

Brooke Shaden was born in March 1987 in Lancaster PA, USA. She grew up near 'Amish Country' until attending Temple University. She graduated from Temple in 2008 with 2 degrees, Film and English.

Meaning/intention

What kind of reality has been presented? What emotive or intellectual response might the artist be inviting from viewers?

In this photo the girl is dead. I think a sort of alternative reality has been presented in the fact that this could happen to anyone. I think the artist was inviting an emotive response to this photo. It seems as though because she's wrapped in a sheet and dumped that ~~something~~ something bad went down, which is sad.

Is the artist trying to communicate a particular idea? What could this be?

Brooke Shaden's photographs always seem to create 'new worlds' through her eye and her photography tends to question the meaning of what it means to be alive. I think that's exactly what she's trying to portray in this photo. The girl looks as though she was killed and dumped, when I look at this photo I see a sort of 'innocence' that has been lost.

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Photomontage Summary

Techniques:

Use of Black & White / Toning / Colour: How does this contribute to the messages the works communicate?

-The use of colour in Ava Seymour's 'The Wall' is minimal, but makes a statement as the only coloured area stands out against the black and white.

-Similarly, Jerry Uelsmann uses minimal colour in his work, choosing to use only black & white and sepia tones, this helps communicate the dark, dream-like world he is creating in his work.

Juxtaposition of subject matter: How does this contribute to the messages the works communicate?

-Ava Seymour combines images that could be considered related, such as a post-war setting of the Berlin wall, with images of blood, skulls and guts, to represent death.

-Jerry Uelsmann's images have many examples of juxtaposition within them; light and dark, air and water, and black and white. He combines that you would not expect to see together in a real world.

Production techniques (point of focus, DOF, lighting): How do these contribute to the messages the works communicate?

-Ava Seymour uses colour as her main point of focus, and dull lighting to create her photographs, these techniques make her work more shocking and appealing.

-Jerry Uelsmann uses a central point of focus and large depth of field in his work. The lighting in his work is used to create bold shadows that emphasise the subjects.

Post-production image manipulation (layering of images, cut and paste): How does this contribute to the messages the works communicate?

-Ava Seymour chooses to manually cut and paste photographs on top of others, to create a bold, layered effect like a collage, then she scans her work into a computer and manipulates it further. This works well as her photographs all have a strong and bold idea behind them.

-Jerry Uelsmann makes all of his photographs in the dark room, combining multiple negatives and enlargements to make his final images. His final images appear to be seamless, and look almost real.



Ava Seymour - The Wall, 1993

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Concepts and common themes informing these artists' work:

Are there ideas or themes that these artists often work with? What are these? What are these artists trying to communicate to you or get you to think about?

-Ava Seymour appears to use themes such as war, and suffering a lot in her work, and her use of colour is quite shocking. I think she is trying to get us to think about the story behind her photograph, which is usually political or war based.

-Jerry Uelsmann creates dream like photographs by combining beautiful nature shots with everyday objects or scenes, such as a house, or a chair. When looking at Jerry Uelsmann's work there is so much to think about, and the story behind the photograph is mainly up to the viewer.

Is there particular subject matter or settings that these artists often use? What is the significance of these?

-Ava Seymour's work is generally set in post-war, or suburban places, and the subject matter is usually war, or pain.

-Jerry Uelsmann uses natural 'fantasy-like' settings such as flowing rivers, skies and oceans in his work to create alternate worlds within his photographs.

Other artists there are links to:

Who are other artists that make work informed by similar themes to these artists?

-Ava Seymour uses social political themes like many other photomontage artists. Peter Kennard uses similar themes of war and politics in his work, but the message he is trying to communicate is more obvious, whereas Ava Seymour's work is abstract.

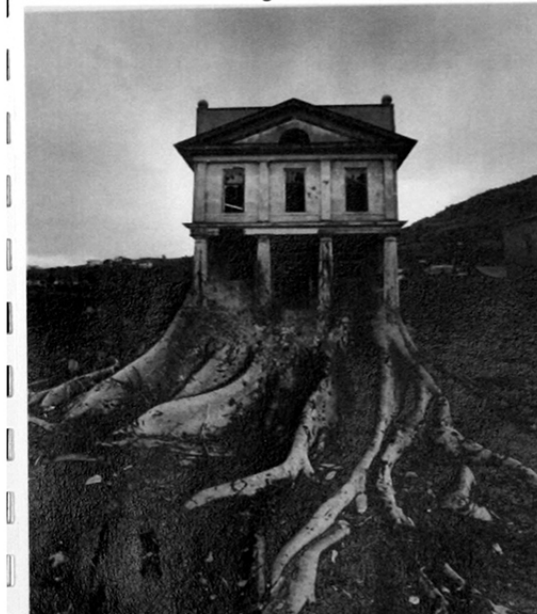
-Scott Mutter is an American photomontage artist who uses similar techniques and similar themes to Jerry Uelsmann. He uses contrasting images to create a dream like perfect world, and has described his work as 'surreal'.

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Who are other artists who use similar techniques when making work?

-Darla McKenna is an American artist who uses the traditional technique of cutting and pasting different images to create her work, like Ava Seymour.

-Oscar Rejlander was a Victorian photographer who had a similar technique to Uelsmann, they both had the idea that a final image does not have to come from a single negative, it can be made up of many.



Jerry Uelsmann - Untitled, 1982



Jerry Uelsmann - Untitled, 1992