

The Moon and a Smile

By Anna Fox



Project Details

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Synopsis

The Moon and a Smile is a research output by Professor Anna Fox, comprising the exhibition of a series of nine photographs.

This project was commissioned by the Glynn Vivian Gallery in Swansea. Fox was one of 8 women artists invited to respond to the recent reattribution of the Dillwyn photographs. The Dillwyn archive is a fascinating source of information about early photographic methods and the life of the upper middle classes in Britain in the late 1800s. Particularly pertinent is the revision of authorship in the archive so that Mary Dillwyn is acknowledged as photographer alongside her (better known) father John Dillwyn. The archive demonstrates the highly inventive character of the photographers and illuminates some of the earliest experiments with the medium.

Fox's contribution focused on re-photographing many of the sites photographed by the Dillwyns. Six large and medium scale digitally-joined photographs were made of local public

leisure sites that had in the past been private property or space reserved for the leisured classes. Three further images, shot on a 5x4 camera, were flower portraits from the Penllergare Gardens; this was originally the Dillwyn's garden and is now public. The work thus looks at how such places are used by the leisure industry today as democratised spaces.

The work was disseminated at the Glynn Vivian Gallery alongside work by Helen Sear, Sharon Morris, Neeta Madahar and Sophy Rickett. Fox's work was subsequently exhibited at Photo London and purchased by the Glynn Vivian Gallery for their collection, to sit alongside the Dillwyn archive.

This portfolio of supporting contextual information includes evidence of the research aims, context and processes which led to new insights. It also includes photographs from the series, images from the exhibition of *The Moon and a Smile* and a PDF of the exhibition catalogue.



Sketty Hall



Small text label, likely providing information about the installation or the gallery.

*Installation images of Margham
Hall Orangery and Sketty Hall at
Glynn Vivian Gallery, 2017*



Margham Hall Orangery

Research Questions and Aims

Research questions:

To what extent can the memory/experience of being somewhere be defined in photographs of place?

How has time affected how the places photographed by the Dillwyns are used?

What types of leisure activity are now associated with the private sites originally photographed by the Dillwyns?

Research aims:

To make new work referring to the revision of the Dillwyn archive originally attributed solely to John Dillwyn and now re-assigned to both John and Mary Dillwyn

To investigate the sites photographed by the Dillwyns that were originally private property and to discover how they are being used for leisure today

To investigate time and memory in photographs of the leisure industry

Context

The Moon and a Smile developed from the research and photographs 'Pastoral Monuments' made by Helen Sear in 2011 in response to the photography of Mary Dillwyn. Sear was inspired by Fox's work in the Fast Forward: Women in Photography project, and expanded the research to respond to the wider archive of the Dillwyn Llewelyn family circle in the mid-nineteenth century, focussing on its female members. As a direct result, the Glynn Vivian Museum and Gallery commissioned 8 women photographers and a writer to make new work, resulting in a major exhibition, symposium and publication.

In addition to continuing Fox's work on gender and photography, this project also developed her interest in the contemporary leisure industry as explored in works such as *Loisirs* (2014) and *Resort 2* (2015). Leisure has been an important subject for photographers since the inception of the medium. Recent developments make it a particularly interesting subject in revealing the nature of contemporary life.

The work made for *The Moon and a Smile* also continues the interests ignited in Fox's *Loisirs* project in exploring the relationship between time and memory in documentary photography. This work raises questions around the idea of realism and the 'decisive moment' (as coined by Henri Cartier Bresson in 1952), again in relation to documentary practice. In this respect, one of the most striking things about the Mary Dillwyn photographs is how candid they are; she made the first known photograph of a smile, using innovative technology to capture her subjects in informal poses at a period (the 1840s - 1850s) when most photographs pictured people with stern and solemn expressions; this must have been an exciting event in itself. Searching through the archive reveals that this ingenious family (who were part of the Fox Talbot circle) were exploring two of the most interesting things about photography: the desire to improve the technology, capturing greater and

greater levels of veracity, and the magic of photography and the need to play with all its illusory qualities.

The relationship between time and memory in photography has a further relationship to both changing technology and to the magical qualities of the medium. For years photographers have pursued the capturing of fleeting moments. Freezing an action, however small, has often been considered the most significant aspect of a photograph, the punctum, a poignant note about life summed up in a pregnant milli-second. Roland Barthes pronounced this a miniature death, or life suspended as if in aspic. In her recent work on leisure, including *The Moon and a Smile*, Fox has taken the opposite approach, using digital technology to collapse time in the construction of images from a multitude of frames taken over a period of several hours.

Key Texts:

Barthes, R. (1980) *Camera Lucida* (New York: Simon and Schuster)

Cartier-Bresson, H. (1952) *The Decisive Moment* (New York: Simon and Schuster)

Lowry, J. (2009) 'An Imaginary Place' in *Theatres of the Real*. Brighton: Photoworks

Orwell, G. (1946) 'Pleasure Spots'. In: *Tribune*. London

Parr, M. (1986) *The Last Resort*. [Exhibition]

Ray-Jones, T. (1974) *A Day Off*. NY: NY Graphic Society

Steele-Perkins, C. (2009) *England My England: A Magnum Photographer's Portrait of England*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Northumbria Press



Caswell Bay



Installation images of Llangland's Bay Golf Course, Caswell Bay and Penllergare at Glynn Vivian Gallery, 2017



Penllergare Gardens

Research Methods, Process and Insights

The six large leisure site pieces expand on the work made in *Loisirs*, exploring authenticity in documentary photography through combining multiple images shot over 2 – 5 hour periods and joined in post-production at a later stage. Fox further investigates her interest in the relationship between time and memory in documentary photography as well as recording and observing the way contemporary leisure space is constructed, controlled and used.

Particular attention was paid to developing technical strategies for constructing the backgrounds, which were made of up to 100 single images, as well as to the lighting methods that Fox initiated in *Loisirs*, *Resort 1* and *Resort 2* and developed here to add to the authentic impression in each image.

For *The Moon and a Smile*, this process also included learning to direct a production team in a very different manner to the way Fox has worked on previous projects as a solo documentary photographer.

The flower portraits consider more carefully the actual mode of shooting used by the Dilwynns to record the detail in their garden and re-invent a way of treating plants in the same way as portraits of people. The flower portraits opened a

new avenue of study for Fox that takes into consideration the garden as a space of both leisure and conservation.

Research Insights and Contribution: the research insights and contribution of *The Moon and a Smile* build on those of Fox's project *Loisirs*. As with Fox's research in *Loisirs*, the photographs demonstrate that memory can be more accurately described in these timed and joined images than is the case in conventional 'decisive moment' type images. *The Moon and a Smile* images, despite not being literally 'real', do not deploy the illusory qualities of photography in the way that an image capturing a fraction of a moment does.

The project also extended Fox's investigation of contemporary leisure spaces. This subject continues to be an area of interest for photographers and artists and Fox's work highlighted the changes that have taken part regarding access to leisure between the time the Dillwyn photographs were made and now. Fox developed her observation and recording of contemporary sites of leisure, photographing various leisure activities. These included those associated with weddings; the wedding 'industry' has rarely been taken as a serious documentary subject.

Research Dissemination and Recognition

Dissemination:

There were 10,285 visitors to *The Moon and a Smile* exhibition. The exhibition was accompanied by talks and a symposium titled 'The Lure of the Archive'. This was the first such event at Glynn Vivian, with 93 people attending.

The whole body of work has been purchased by Glynn Vivian Art Gallery. The work was subsequently included in their 2019 group show from their permanent collections, *Swansea Stories*, celebrating 50 years of the Gallery.

The work was also purchased by the Hyman Collection of British Photography and exhibited at *Photo London* in 2018.

Follow-on-activities:

Fox has continued the flower portrait series during the Covid-19 period as a direct response to the idea of regeneration of life within the framework of domestic garden design.

Impact:

This research underpins the Impact Case Study 'Fast Forward: changing attitudes and experiences for women in photography'. It is both an impact in itself, as Helen Sear was influenced by Fast Forward when considering the scope of the project, and has then had further impact as a piece of research.

Fox's *The Moon and a Smile* photographs are held by the Hyman Collection, where Fast Forward has directly influenced collecting policy. James and Claire Hyman state of Fast Forward that 'as well as its wider national and international impact, it has had an impact on our view on collecting photography and desire to champion women photographers. Inspired by Fast Forward, we . . . [are] proud that our collection is committed to including a minimum of 50% women photographers'.

Flowers



Kodak EKTAR 100 1041



Flowers



Cherry Blossom



University for the Creative Arts
Research Portfolios

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Studio Mothership

COVER IMAGES
Installation view of Languard's Bay
Golf Course at Glynn Vivian Gal-
lery, 2017



THE MOON AND A SMILE

SOPHY RICKETT ASTRID KRUSE JENSEN HELEN SEAR
NEETA MADAHAR AND MELANIE ROSE PATRICA ZIAD
GRETA ALFARO SHARON MORRIS ANNA FOX

This catalogue was published on the occasion of the exhibition

THE MOON AND A SMILE

Originated by Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

4 March – 23 April 2017

Curated by Katy Freer

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Sophy Rickett
Caswell Bay, 1
2017, bromide print, 60x60cm

FOREWORD

The Moon and a Smile responds to a period in the 1840s and 1850s, when Swansea was at the centre of early experiments in photography worldwide. In particular, the Dillwyn Llewelyn family circle was prolific in the development of photography.

John Dillwyn Llewelyn (1810-82) played a leading role in nearby Penllergare, as did his wife Emma (1808-1881), cousin of photography's notable inventor, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877). Women in the family were fully engaged in the practice, with Mary Dillwyn (1816-1906), John's sister, capturing the earliest photograph of a smile and his daughter Thereza (1834-1926), the first photograph of the moon.

Responding to this significant period in Swansea's history, the Gallery arranged eight new commissions from contemporary international artists. Each artist has created a distinctly rich body of work following their own practice and inspiration. The exhibition encompasses photography, installation, artist books, moving image, and explores themes of memory, archives, botanics, time, family and industrialisation. Their work is displayed alongside a selection of original 19th century photographs that had particular resonance for their projects.

We would like to offer special thanks to Helen Sear for introducing us to the original idea for this exhibition. Our thanks are due to colleagues at Penllergare Trust for their help throughout the creative process, together with others who have supported new work being made. Warmest thanks also to Kate Best, writer and curator, for her discerning text linking historical photography with contemporary practice, and colleagues who helped with the research, in particular Bronwen Colquhoun, Mark Etheridge, Jaimie Thomas, William Troughton, Kim Collis and their institutions which have kindly loaned the works from their historical collections, Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, National Library of Wales and West Glamorgan Archive Service.

Finally we would like to thank the artists for embracing the project with such commitment and generosity, Greta Alfaro, Anna Fox, Astrid Kruse Jensen, Neeta Madahar & Melanie Rose, Sharon Morris, Sophy Rickett, Helen Sear and Patricia Ziad.

The exhibition is supported by a grant from the Arts Council of Wales; the project and catalogue have also been made possible by the generosity and support of the Institute of Photography/Falmouth University and the Friends of the Glynn Vivian, to whom we are deeply grateful.

KATY FREER, EXHIBITIONS OFFICER
JENNI SPENCER-DAVIES, CURATOR
GLYNN VIVIAN ART GALLERY



Helen Sear
Pastoral Monument No. 5
2012, archival pigment print, 70x70cm

INTRODUCTION

KATE BEST

This exhibition brings together eight new bodies of work commissioned by the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in response to photographs by the Dillwyn Llewelyn family of Swansea and their circle in public collections in Wales.

The family, who lived at Penllergare and Sketty Hall, were amongst the earliest and most enthusiastic experimenters with the new technology of photography, which was announced in 1839. Through photographic albums, prints, negatives, letters, memoirs and other archival materials, as well as the physical remains of their properties, the family left a rich and unique record of their experiments with the medium, perhaps the most complete record of a family's intimacy with photography in the 1840s and 50s.¹

Since the 1970s this legacy has been explored in a number of publications and exhibitions that have focussed on the work of John Dillwyn Llewelyn (1810-1882), whose contribution to early developments in British photography is well established, and whose photographs and life story have inspired and framed the ongoing restoration of the family estate at Penllergare on the outskirts of Swansea.

John Dillwyn Llewelyn was born into a wealthy and prominent Swansea family, the eldest son of Lewis Weston Dillwyn (1778-1855), owner of the Cambrian Pottery, important botanist, MP for Swansea and a founding member of the Royal Institution of South Wales. Dillwyn knew many of the leading 'men of Science' of the 19th century and passed his love of the natural sciences and interest in the arts to his son. On his maturity, John inherited the substantial estate at Penllergare from his maternal grandfather (and so assumed the surname 'Llewelyn'), where he set up home with his new wife Emma (1808-1881) after their marriage in 1833. Penllergare became the Llewelyn's home and a 'research laboratory',² where the family started experimenting as soon as they heard about the invention of the daguerreotype and the development of paper-based photography by Emma's cousin, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877).

For John Dillwyn Llewelyn, photography was both a family affair and a pursuit that combined the interests in science and art that he shared with a wealthy élite. During the 1840s and '50s photography was not only protected from commercial exploitation by Fox Talbot's patent but required significant financial investment in equipment and chemicals, space for workshops, time for experimentation and a high degree of chemical knowledge and skill. Swansea, then a major industrial city and port, rich in coal and producing the bulk of the world's copper and zinc, and home to a group of wealthy industrialists whose enterprises were supported by scientific and technological innovation, was a fertile ground for photographic experimentation.

The accounts and catalogues of the family's photographs have long prioritised John's activities, attributing the vast majority of work to him. In recent years however, and in the context of an emerging debate about women in photography, there has been a renewed focus on the experiments and achievements of other family members. Among John's most notable photographic collaborators were Emma, who did much of her husband's printing but who also took photographs herself; his sister Mary Dillwyn (1816-1906), who used a small format camera and made portraits and other studies that are noted for their informality and spontaneity and is credited with having taken some of the earliest photographs of smiles; and his eldest daughter Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn (1834-1926), who combined research into botany and astronomy with photographic experimentation, and with her father made some of the earliest photographs of the Moon in the Observatory at Penllergare.

The Moon and a Smile developed from conversations between curators at the Glynn Vivian and artist Helen Sear, who in 2012 had made a series of flower studies entitled *Pastoral Monuments* in response to the Mary Dillwyn albums acquired by the National Library of Wales in 2002 and 2007. It became clear that the dispersed Dillwyn Llewelyn archive had the potential to be used as the starting point for a further series of artist commissions that would form a contemporary response to such a resonant period in the history of both photography and Swansea. As the title implied, the project would also invite an engagement with the spirit of inventiveness and enquiry at the heart of the family's (and in particular its women's) photographic output.

Nine artists, all women whose practice incorporates photography, were selected for the project and first came as a group to view historical material and visit Penllergare Valley Woods in Spring 2015. Since then, the artists have each developed their own projects, spending time in and around Swansea and making use of museum collections and archival resources here and elsewhere. By accident more than design, their projects developed independently, resulting in eight distinct bodies of work of great richness and diversity, with fascinating and unexpected points of overlap and divergence. For this exhibition, their work is displayed alongside original photographs that had particular resonance for their projects, on loan from Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, the National Library of Wales and West Glamorgan Archive Service. At the Glynn Vivian the work can also be considered in relation to the displays of Cambrian pottery, made under the management of Lewis Weston Dillwyn, and the photographs of Richard Glynn Vivian, a friend of the Dillwyn Llewelyn family.

A NOTE ABOUT THE DILLWYN LLEWELYN COLLECTIONS

What is referred to in this text as the 'Dillwyn Llewelyn archive' or 'collections' is a large dispersed collection of photographic and archival material, held across public and private collections, some of it available online and much reproduced in recent publications.

The largest collection, from which most of the source images for the new commissions have been drawn, is the John Dillwyn Llewelyn Collection in the Industry Collections at Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, which comprises hundreds of prints and paper and glass negatives, photographic equipment and documents, probably donated in the 1920s by Dillwyn Llewelyn's nephew Sir Thomas Mansel Franklen.

The National Library of Wales also has a significant holding of Dillwyn Llewelyn photographs and continues to collect material for the National Collection of Welsh Photographs. Other public collections, including Swansea Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Metropolitan Museum, New York, also hold important albums.

A wealth of archival papers, including the papers of Thereza Story Maskelyne (née Dillwyn Llewelyn) (now held in the British Library), Lewis Weston Dillwyn and Lewis Dillwyn's diaries and family correspondence with William Henry Fox Talbot, is also available to researchers.

The physical remains of the family estate Penllergare (the house was demolished in the 1980s) and other properties and places in the Swansea area have also been important sources for the artists in this project.

My thanks to Martin Barnes, Noel Chanan and Elizabeth Currie for their help with the research and writing of this text.



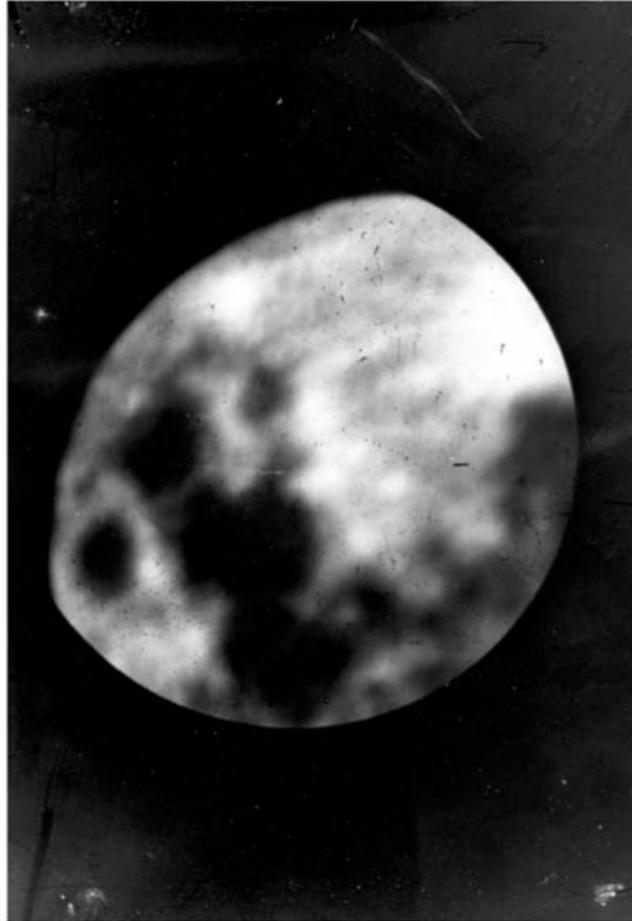
Wisteria on Views of Wales
Vols 1&2 and National Gallery
probably by Mary Dillwyn, c.1853, salt print, Llys dinam album, 7x6cm
© Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/National Library of Wales



The Lake, Penllergare
stereograph from *Five Penllergare Views*, probably by Thereza and/or
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, c.1856, albumen prints, 12x7cm
© Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/National Library of Wales

THE MOON AND A SMILE

KATE BEST



The Moon
Thereza and John Dillwyn Llewelyn,
c.1855-7, 12x15cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales

*Photography is [...] a beautiful necromancy [...] and a Science.*³

This text will discuss the eight commissions in *The Moon and a Smile* in the context of some of the historical material that informed them and will consider ways in which this work proposes new ways of looking at the Dillwyn Llewelyn family's photography and its history, whilst also extending the technical possibilities of the medium now – thus demonstrating what Nevil Story Maskelyne (who married Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn in 1858) described as photography's essential magic, as being both a necromancy (a means of communicating with the dead) and a science.

In recent years, **Sophy Rickett** has made work that engages conceptually with archives 'as a means to explore expanded notions of authorship, ownership, participation and consent [...] and how meaning is contested, continually subject to interpretation'. *The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrows*, her project for this exhibition, is the third in a trilogy of works that use text and image (still and moving) to document archival research and explore specific histories of the visual in relation to her own subjectivity.⁴ The project also explores Rickett's ongoing interest in the ways in which photography and landscape are understood and experienced on both aesthetic and physical levels – a 'mobilisation' that is particularly acute in the landscape garden (such as Penllergare), intentionally laid out as a series of 'pictures'.⁵

From her initial visit to the National Museum Wales collections and the estate at Penllergare, now leased by a Trust to restore the gardens and landscape and remaining structures to 'the romantic style shown in the photographs of John Dillwyn Llewelyn',⁶ Rickett was struck by the breaks and discontinuities in the narratives about the family, such as the demolition of Penllergare House, and the 'politics of assignation' raised by questions of authorship and collaboration. She also became interested in the ways in which the arbitrariness of loss and the dominance of certain narratives 'work alongside the traces of what did survive, forcing hypothesis, conjecture, assumption and the imaginary', all combining to mitigate against the possibility of a 'seamless' reconstruction.⁷

Rickett was drawn to a photograph by John Dillwyn Llewelyn of Thereza looking out to sea with a telescope at Caswell Bay, 'as much for the idea of Thereza' as for the image.⁸ Thereza had a close relationship with her father that revolved around their shared interests in botany, photography

and astronomy, in which they collaborated until she left Penllergare after her marriage in 1858. John encouraged Thereza's studies from a young age and amongst the many portraits he made of her there are several that show her at work, with a microscope, telescope or flower press.⁹ Thereza also became technically proficient and experimental in photography, and it is likely that the observatory with adjacent photographic laboratory (darkroom) that has outlived the house at Penllergare was built for her use. Her father also gave her a stereographic camera for her birthday in 1856.

Rickett made a detailed study of Thereza's papers, comparing diaries from the mid to late 1850s with memoirs from the end of her life, when she self-consciously sought to claim her family's position (in particular the roles of her father and husband) at the beginnings of photography. Informed by the gap between Thereza's testimonies, Rickett's own narrative response is knowingly positioned between historical report and personal reflection. Through text and image *The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrows* suggests an equivalence between the space between diary and memoir and the physical remains and absences at sites described and pictured in the archives, as Rickett visits and discovers (and documents) how these landscapes now exist within an 'awkward combination' of natural and municipal.¹⁰

At Caswell Bay, where the family had a seaside house, Rickett recognises rocks from Thereza's photograph and locates what might be 'escaped' plants from the family's exotic garden, but her efforts to visualise the house are blocked by recent developments. Likewise, at Penllergare a cherry tree is the only feature of the Council Offices car park (apart from the Observatory) that hints at the former site of the mansion. Rickett's attempts to connect with 'Thereza' at a physical level are instead mediated by individuals and organisations involved in custodianship and care whose voices and images punctuate her account, and by her own personal memories and identification.¹¹

Rickett was also photographed as a child by her father, who gave her her first camera, and so became intrigued that Thereza, the inquisitive photographer and scientist, 'is also a beloved daughter, subject of, and also subject to her father's scrutinizing gaze'. Rickett's father, a doctor, kept his camera with scientific instruments, things 'to do with looking inside',¹² and this association leads to a childhood recollection of having her painfully infected ears examined by another doctor. This episode, while referring to deafness and the later breakdown of communication with her father, functions as an abject obstruction in the narrative, pulling the work back from nostalgia. Indeed, throughout the piece, Rickett grapples with the romantic allure of the Dillwyn Llewelyn archive and the landscape at Penllergare, contrasting her own silver-bromide landscapes that make direct reference to John Dillwyn Llewelyn's Caswell Bay photographs and Thereza's technical experiments, with colour photographs and found imagery that have a more detached, literal aesthetic.¹³ As the text implies, these photographs are both 'a capture, but also, a refusal'.¹⁴



Caswell Bay or Wind and Waves
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, 1853, salt print,
14x17cm



Elinor Llewelyn with her doll
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, 1856, salt print,
14x11cm

Inserting her own family photographs into the project, Rickett also finds a visual echo in the way Thereza posed for her father with a photograph of her own daughter at nursery, 'subjugated into obedient conformity through the act of having her picture taken'. The way her daughter is sitting 'somewhere between a pose and the very real sense of her waiting' reminds Rickett of Thereza posing for her father, and perhaps also the transformed landscapes of their collaboration, 'like a document slipping into something else, something more functional, more itself, both staged and not staged, depending on how it is understood'.¹⁵

This description might also be used for the portrait of Elinor Dillwyn Llewelyn with her doll, probably also taken by John Dillwyn Llewelyn, which was one of the starting images for **Astrid Kruse Jensen's** project. The second youngest of Llewelyn's daughters, Elinor usually appears in photographs paired with her younger sister Lucy. Here, instead of supporting her sister, Elinor holds a doll.¹⁶ The photograph was taken in the conservatory at Penllergare and because of the light bouncing off Elinor's white apron, has been overexposed so that the doll's face is obscured. The only part of the image in focus is an orchid at Elinor's side, perhaps also the subject of the same photographic session. Elinor herself, frozen in the pose, seems strangely absent, her challenging gaze creating a sense of resistance that contrasts with the fleeting smiles of other Dillwyn Llewelyn photographs.

The ways that these unintended effects contrast with the majority of carefully staged photographs in the archive struck Kruse Jensen, who perceived a kind of equivalence in the landscape at Penllergare, undergoing a process of transformation from overgrown wilderness to re-established landscape garden, a romantic version of reality known (validated?) through its photographic representation. Kruse Jensen was also drawn to Llewelyn's photographs of the river and lake, where reflections disturb and distort the images and set in play a mirroring of reality.

Kruse Jensen's practice explores the ways in which the mutability of memory is reflected or embedded in the constant transformation of landscape and the chemical transformations of photography, both 'a changeable state of organic development that constantly evade control'. Her series of photographs for this exhibition explore the temporal and aesthetic layering at Penllergare, using revived black and white Polaroid 'instant' film and a basic plastic camera. As a 'reinvented analogue' process made in opposition to the digital, the Polaroid suggests to Kruse Jensen a 'longing for a more slow process in a fast medium' and inscribes the work with a lack of technical perfection that echoes and contrasts with the man-made beauty of the landscape at Penllergare.¹⁷

Key to these photographs and the way in which they evoke a 'state of mind' is the use of the female figure in the landscape. For this project, Kruse Jensen photographed her daughter at Penllergare, the photographs 'floating' between figure and landscape, but also between mother and daughter, the mother-as-photographer finding herself reflected in the image of the daughter (as Elinor's image is doubled in that of her doll).¹⁸ Scanned and printed onto transparent fabric

and suspended in the gallery, the images also offer ‘glimpses of memory’, floating between a then of the Dillwyn Llewelyn’s time and the now of the gardens as they are slowly reclaimed and re-established.

The experience of being in the landscape is also an ongoing concern in **Helen Sear’s** work. Her film *Moments of Capture* is framed by an image of a woman in the woods at Penllergare, with her back (hair) to the viewer, holding antlers above her head, thus overlaying references to John Dillwyn Llewelyn’s photographs of women and animals in the landscape with motifs from Sear’s own work.¹⁹ As the woman holds her pose in real time - the length of the film approximating the exposure time of some of Llewelyn’s photographs²⁰ - the camera moves to closely observed events beyond this frame around the park at Penllergare and beyond, at Margam (the home of Emma Dillwyn Llewelyn’s brother Christopher Talbot and now a country park), Port Talbot and Caswell, that build up a mounting sense of anxiety about landscape and technology.

The film follows in the footsteps of Llewelyn, who set out in the summer of 1854 on a photographic ‘campaign on the sea coast’ for which he made use of a drop shutter that enabled him to reduce exposure times to around 1/25th second.²¹ His resulting set of *Motion* photographs, for which he was awarded a Silver Medal at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1855, pictured the movement of clouds, the breaking of waves, a ship in sail and a boat letting off steam and were celebrated as early examples of ‘instantaneous’ photographs that captured ‘fleeting’ moments of passing time.

Perhaps more than any other of his works, these photographic set pieces also reflect the scientific and technological debates of the age. The elemental subjects - water, steam, wind, light, motion – are suggestive of the debates about the chemistry of photography among Llewelyn’s scientist friends, notably his future son-in-law Nevil Story Maskelyne (1823-1911) and Swansea neighbour William Robert Grove (1811-1896), who were fascinated by the way the chemical changes in photography demonstrated light to be an ‘actinic’ (i.e. electric) force acting on objects, equivalent to heat, electricity and magnetism.²²

The concern with ‘capturing’ steam also resonates with Llewelyn’s other notable experiments, harnessing waste steam from a farm traction engine to heat his melon house and applying Grove’s fuel cell battery technology to electrically power a boat.²³ Indeed, the way photographic exposures harnessed the sun’s rays was compared at the time to steam power, with photography described as early as 1843 as ‘the steam engine of the fine arts’, and listed as a new means of production alongside gas works, telegraphs, steam navigation and railways by Karl Marx.²⁴

Optimism about scientific and technological advancement in the mid-nineteenth century was mingled with anxiety about its environmental, social and metaphysical impact, unease that Sear



Tenby Harbour or
The Juno blowing off steam
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, c.1854,
salt print, 15x20cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales



Collage of deer and heron photographs
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, 1856-7,
NLW Album 3, 21x17cm
© Llyfrgell Genedlaethol
Cymru/National Library of Wales



Fern
possibly by Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn,
c.1853, photogenic drawing contact
negative, 5x17cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales

finds echoed in contemporary environmental debates, including the suggestion that humanity's impact on the Earth is now so profound that it has created a new geological epoch, the 'Anthropocene', or the 'age of the human'.²⁵ The geological surveys carried out by Llewelyn's friend Sir Henry de la Beche (1796-1855), the father of his sister-in-law Bessie, had revealed that the world was much older than the Bible and established the case for organic change over time that Darwin built on with his *Theory of Evolution* (published 1857). Llewelyn's concern with 'instantaneity', as his photographs of the Welsh coast suggest (especially those of Thereza and other family members set against the rock formations and breaking waves at Caswell Bay), therefore sits within a wider discourse about deep time and non-human history.²⁶

Informed by this reading of instantaneity as a 'temporal sublime',²⁷ *Moments of Capture* examines relationships between nature and technology and the tension between stillness and momentum through a series of visual episodes that Sear calls 'still, moving images'. Through re-workings of the *Motion* images (substituting the blast furnaces at the Port Talbot steel plant shot from Margam for the steam ship) and animations of Llewelyn's stuffed animal scenes (drawing comparison between photography and the pursuits hunting and fishing (capture) that were enjoyed by the family), Sear unpicks Llewelyn's interest in representing motion and instantaneity, finding moments of apparent stillness and quiet in a world in flux. By contrast, the rhythmical thud of the Port Talbot steel plant forms an industrial soundtrack suggestive of the movement of steam trains or the anvils that chime in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (written 1852-4), adding a sense of urgency to the harvesting/hunting activities of insects, animals, wind turbines and a solitary metal detectorist.

The film culminates with the arrival of a drone, at once terrifyingly other and strangely familiar, as it hovers and hums like an insect, its mirrored legs and wings taking on the 'fearful' symmetry of an exotic orchid.²⁸ Significantly, it was through a detailed botanical study of orchids that Darwin was able to demonstrate his theory of natural selection, and thus the theory of evolution. In *Fertilization of Orchids* (published 1862), he contradicted the prevailing view that flowers were created for beauty, as the handiwork of a Divine Creator, by demonstrating that orchids developed specialized modifications to provide pollinators with different ways to fertilize them, evidence of 'co-evolution'. Darwin initially studied wild specimens like the ones in Sear's film, but he then drew on the many species of exotic orchids that had been introduced by a small number of dedicated enthusiasts, including John Dillwyn Llewelyn, who started collecting orchids soon after his marriage in 1833 and built what was probably the first private Orchid House in Britain at Penllergare, influential for its innovative steam heating system and 'tropical picturesque' interior.²⁹

The family's passion for orchid growing and interest in picturing plants became the inspiration for **Neeta Madahar** and **Melanie Rose's** collaborative project.³⁰ Having visited and photographed

the ruins of the Orchid House at Penllergare, Madahar and Rose studied correspondence about the family's orchids from John and Thereza in the archive at Kew Gardens. In a letter to William Jackson Hooker, the Director of Kew in 1842, Llewelyn enclosed a daguerreotype of orchid *Arides odoratum*, a very early, possibly the first (but sadly untraced) example of self-styled 'Botanical photography'.³¹ Madahar and Rose both have an interest in natural history illustration, and they set out to identify other photographs of Llewelyn's orchids. With the help of orchid experts and existing published research, they also compiled a detailed list of all the forty specimens grown at Penllergare. The names of the orchids had particular resonance for Madahar, who has written of her fascination with 'the associations between naming, representation and meaning', and although only a few photographs of orchids have been identified, Emma Dillwyn Llewelyn's drawings and other contemporary illustrations of the Orchid House, as well as the botanical designs on Cambrian Ware pottery informed this project.³²

Alongside their archival research, Madahar, with her background in photography, and Rose, who usually draws and paints, experimented with the cliché verre process, which combines these processes.³³ They also made test pieces that incorporated plant elements, inspired by the photogenic drawings (camera-less photographs) of ferns in the archive, probably taken by Thereza, and those of Henry Fox Talbot and Anna Atkins that had influenced Madahar's earlier series *Cosmoses*, with their exploration of the alchemical potential of light and the balance between chance and order. However, partly because of the practical difficulties in photographing orchids in bloom, but also in a conceptual step akin to Madahar making photograms of origami rather than actual flowers in *Cosmoses*, for their final piece they selected the twelve orchids they felt were most significant and used low resolution images from the internet as source material.

The final pieces were made with a hybrid process that combines digital image capture and alteration with a positive/negative analogue process, superimposing positive and negative images printed on inkjet film to make one-off gelatin-silver prints. Each image has its own properties caused by the unexpected 'magic' of the darkroom, the misregistration of the superimposed files causing a 'vibrational energy' and giving the flowers an almost uncanny sense of presence.³⁴

For a second piece of work, still in process at the time of writing, Madahar and Rose have sought to identify Emma's watercolour drawings of orchids that were published as lithographs in *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, and will use these as source imagery for a wallpaper design.

Madahar and Rose's collaboration and 'darkroom play' references the way the Dillwyn Llewelyns made many of their images and has led the artists to a rediscovery of the possibilities of the analogue process. Informed by the family's cultivation and observation of plants and birds, their projects also celebrate the Dillwyn Llewelyn's contribution to the art and science of botany, in particular the often-overlooked role of Emma.



Fern
possibly by Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn,
c.1853, photogenic drawing contact
negative, 4x23cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales



The Orchid House, Penllergare
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, c.1853,
albumen print, 29x24cm
© Llyfrgell Genedlaethol
Cymru/National Library of Wales



View of Swansea from St Thomas
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, March 15, 1858,
gold-toned albumen print from oxymel
negative, 14x18cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales

Patricia Ziad's work also takes as its starting point the Dillwyn Llewelyn family's experimental approach to the representation of flowers, particularly the work of Mary Dillwyn. Unlike other family members whose written accounts have informed subsequent histories, little is known about Mary other than what we can ascertain from her photographs. Although these are often initialed 'MD', many of Mary's photographs have long been attributed to her brother, and it is only in recent years that her position as a photographer, perhaps 'the first woman photographer in Wales', has been reappraised.³⁵

Ziad was initially interested in Mary's delicate studies of flowers, posed in carefully-chosen jugs and vases,³⁶ but rejected what she saw as their fragility (in Ziad's earlier body of work on Welsh Chapels, flowers and doilies are a marker of a 'prettification' of the once-austere interior), finding it impossible to look at the photographs without acknowledging what they do not make visible, namely their context in the powerful history of nineteenth century Wales, and addressing the family's privileged position in that world. She therefore made images of 'industrial flowers', by painting with ink on plates of glass tinted a rich copper colour to echo copper production in Swansea and reference both the environmental destruction caused by the growth of industry and the reclamation of the Lower Swansea Valley since the 1960s, where tree planting and conservation work aims to return the valley to its preindustrial 'green' state.³⁷

Ziad's research then concentrated more closely on coal mining and the copper and zinc industry, gathering imagery of the industrial landscape of Swansea and of mining, including photographs and engravings used to campaign for the restriction of child and female labour, as well as work by early-twentieth-century artists who developed a style influenced by Cubism and Futurism to express modernity and mechanisation.³⁸ She also studied accounts of the Rebecca Riots in rural West Wales in the 1840s, when protests against the rising costs of toll roads and deep-seated divisions between the gentry and Welsh-speaking communities boiled over into violence. John Dillwyn Llewelyn and his brother Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn (1814-1892) were both magistrates and were involved in quelling the 1843 protests around Swansea and prosecuting the leaders, and the archives include their written testimony of this tense and dramatic period.

Struck by the fact that Mary Dillwyn lived to the age of ninety at a time when the average life expectancy was around forty, Ziad then made images that express the 'sense of darkness' of industrial Wales and seek to reproduce the repetitive processes undertaken by the industrial work force. Building up these images with gestures that echo what she describes as the 'rhythmic exercise of labour' required by copper smelting, Ziad's images both pay tribute to and perhaps reinstate the body of the worker via a semi-abstract language that hints at the dizzying vortex of scaffold and mine shaft, danger, claustrophobia and subterranean entrapment and suggests the 'shadows' of this experience on lives today.³⁹

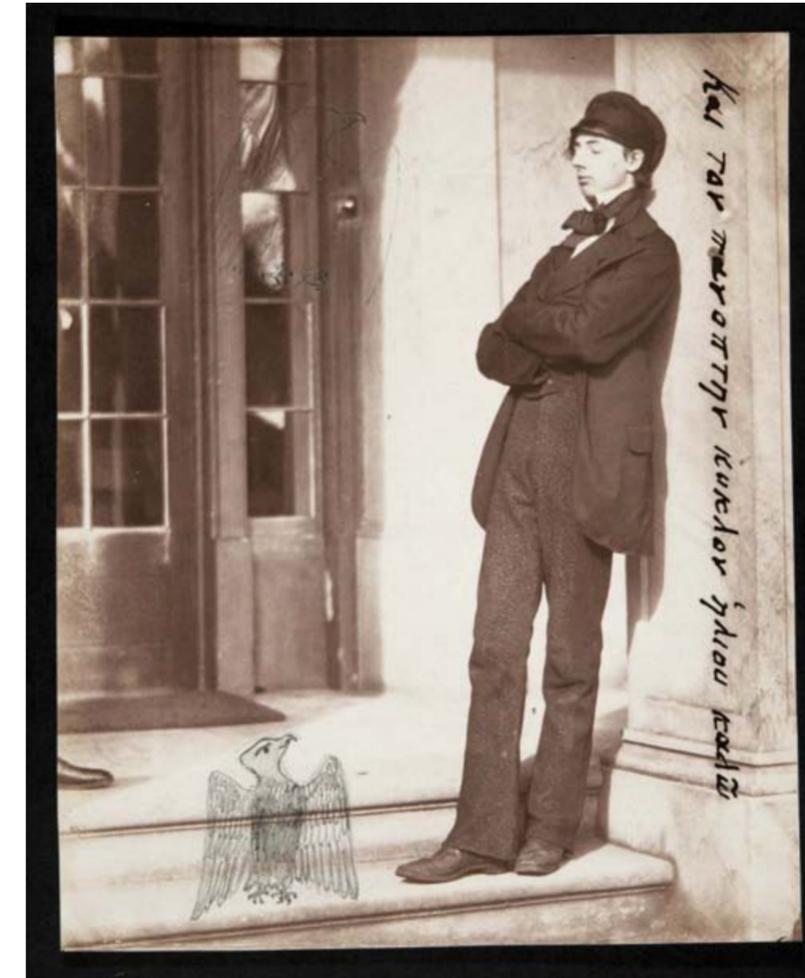
Greta Alfaro's project also deals with the contrast between the 'elegance and refinery' of the Dillwyn Llewelyn photographs and other nineteenth century images and accounts of the poverty and pollution in the city of Swansea. Like Ziad's prints, Alfaro writes of there being 'something dark and foggy, grey and dirty, all around the atmosphere of this project, just like a factory's smoke, a colliery, or an old black and white photograph'.

Alfaro was particularly struck by a photograph of a young man with his eyes closed (subsequently identified as Theodore Talbot of Margam), inscribed with a quotation in Greek from Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* that translates as 'And to the Sun's all-seeing orb I cry', a phrase which formed the title of her project. Contrasted with the photographs of the Moon taken in the Observatory at Penllergare by Thereza and John Dillwyn Llewelyn, but for Alfaro equivalent to using optical devices to 'turn a blind eye to' the world (the lens abstracting and detaching the object from reality), the photograph seemed to express the apparent 'blindness' of the family's photographs to their industrial context.⁴⁰

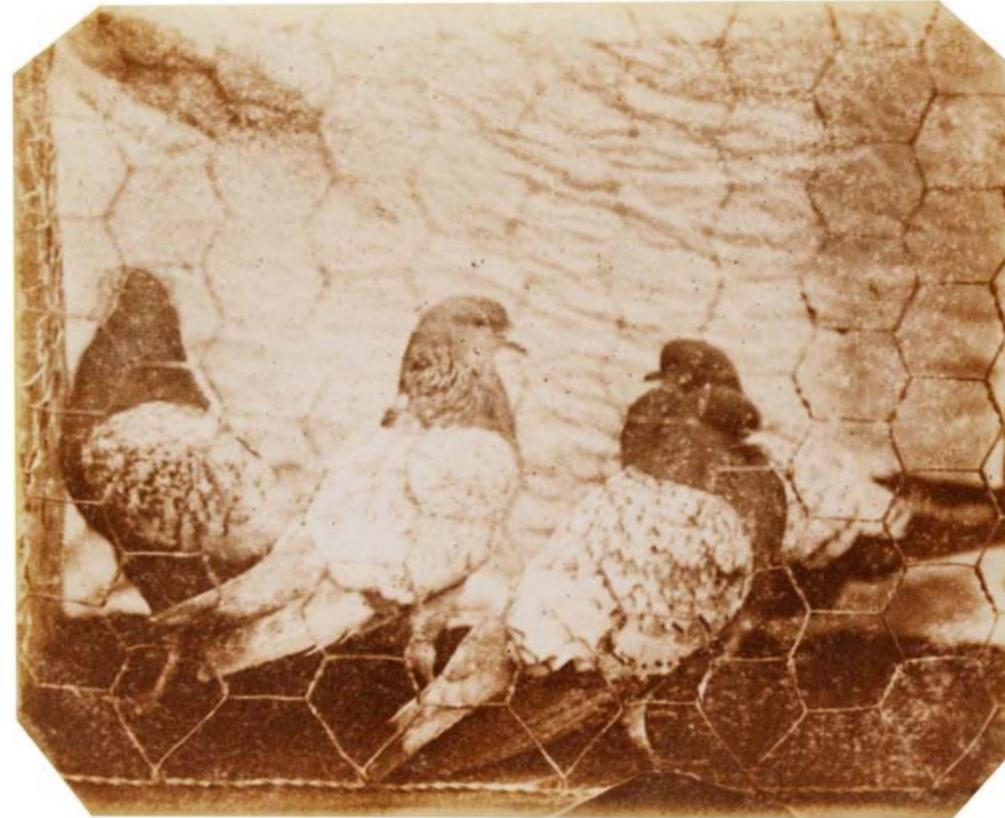
The photograph was made at Penllergare, probably taken by James Knight, the Llewelyn children's tutor and one of John's photographic collaborators and is an example of the ways in which the Llewelyn children acted out 'family theatricals' for the camera. But the choice of text, as Alfaro deduced, is telling. According to Aeschylus' text, Prometheus is the Titan who is punished by Zeus for giving man the gift of fire; 'All human skill and science was Prometheus's gift'. In Ancient Greece he was worshipped by potters, his gift of fire essential to their kiln. In the nineteenth century, with the popularity of Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (1820) that tells of his release from captivity, Prometheus came to symbolise the Romantic hero rising up against oppression. Prometheus is thus a link to the source of the Llewelyn's wealth and position, the Cambrian pottery developed by Lewis Weston Dillwyn, and in Alfaro's eyes, a personification of the 'working-class rights defenders' who participated in the Rebecca Riots, and thus also a parable of modern-day global inequalities.

To explore these connections, Alfaro has made ceramic versions of photographs from the Dillwyn Llewelyn archive and mounted these on slate slabs engraved with sentences from Friedrich Engels' *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (published 1845), which criticised the disregard of the bourgeoisie for the conditions of industrial workers.⁴¹ Suggestive of tombstones, these pieces form a 'vanitas' still life, reminding us of what Alfaro calls 'the permanent bond between life and death, wealth and misery'.⁴²

For the Ash: Yr Onnen, Sharon Morris's series of artist's books, also hinges on the paradox of the Dillwyn Llewelyn's sensitivity to the natural world, in particular what she describes as the 'intimacy of perception' of the photographs attributed to Mary Dillwyn and Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn, and what they leave out, namely 'the industrial source of wealth in the Swansea area'.⁴³ In a series of



Gentleman on the steps at Penllergare or Theo Sunbathing probably by James Knight (1826-1897), c.1856, salt print, 14x11cm © Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales



Hyacinth Pigeons
 Mary Dillwyn, c.1853, salt print,
 Mary Dillwyn album, 9x8cm
 © Llyfrgell Genedlaethol
 Cymru/National Library of Wales

photographs and poems made in Pembrokeshire, where a landscape ‘intimate with its scars of history and labour’ places the 19th century industrial revolution in the context of millennia of human intervention, Morris expresses both admiration for the bravery and vision of the family and unease about their role within a capitalist, industrialist history whose ongoing environmental and social impact are pressing concerns today.⁴⁴

Describing a series of encounters with and detailed observations of the landscape, interwoven with references to events from Welsh mythology and history and personal memory, Morris’s images depict a land where past and present coexist, but which is threatened by our own lack of care or inattention.⁴⁵ The series is structured around a number of visual motifs from the Dillwyn Llewelyn photographs, including the solitary tree; the woman at the water’s edge; flowers; a concern with geology and archaeology; the moon and the smile; and perhaps most importantly, a concern with looking and not looking, key to Morris’s insistence on the importance of ‘facing up’ to the present and not turning away from history. Optical motifs in the landscape – a ‘face of flowers’, ‘heliotropic’ daisies, a hedgehog’s beady eye, circles of cairns, beaker ware, coracles, golden sunsets, islands, wells, the Moon - all recall the ‘astonished gaze’ of nineteenth-century experimental observation (as evidenced in Mary’s photographs of birds and plants, and Thereza’s studies with telescope and microscope) and contrast with images and texts that play with ideas of concealment and the refusal to look.⁴⁶ The landscape is at once view and insistent observer, reminding the reader/viewer to ‘open your eyes to heal your sight’.⁴⁷ With the Welsh language that names and describes it, it contains both rebuke and redemption, like the mythical Welsh tales of the Mabinogion that

opened the forbidden door
 to the flood of memory, history
 fresh and bloody,

 and remembered their acts
 and their tasks.⁴⁸

By ‘daring to look’ closely at the Pembrokeshire landscape now, these poems and photographs resist nostalgia or sentimentality, as if following the Brechtian maxim: ‘to start not from the good old things but the bad new ones’.⁴⁹ Presented as artist’s books in a format that recalls the intimacy of the photo album (they include family photographs), they reveal a subject struck by the ‘unbearable beauty’ of a landscape of shimmering springs, blue seas, fields of barley and wheat, and suffering a deep sense of ‘solastalgia’ – an existential distress caused by the signs of environmental change including ash die-back disease, from which the series gets its title.

The poems speak ‘between’ Welsh and English. As Morris reminds us, Welsh was the ‘language of the home at the time of the Rebecca Riots’,⁵⁰ but was not the language of the landowners

and magistrates, including the Dillwyn Llewelyn family, so this structure both celebrates the richness of the Welsh language and acknowledges its difficult history. Welsh is also Morris's mother tongue and its integration into her poems also alludes to notions of home, origin and sanctuary now.⁵¹ Indeed, the symbol 'Mother' is at the heart of the project, referenced by the photographs of the artist's mother and a series of images of mother/child relations (cow/calf; mare/foal; Rhiannon/Pryderi; 'Rebecca'/rioter).⁵² As Morris suggests, 'Mother' is the primary carer, the 'one who pays attention to the world because they care'.⁵³

In *Smile*, Morris includes a portrait of a woman with the same tentative, half-shy smile that we see in Mary Dillwyn's portraits. This could be an old photograph of her mother or herself as a young woman, but it eludes attempts to date it. Read alongside the text *The First Smile/Begins in the Womb* and the poem *Punctum* that equates the mother with the landscape, it makes a direct reference to Roland Barthes's discussion of the detail or 'punctum' in a photograph that holds the gaze, and captures a true likeness of the mother for whom he mourns. For Barthes, all photographs present the future death of their sitter, the 'punctum' thus capturing a moment that no longer exists, but Morris's images posit a different form of temporality, like the digital print that obscures the time of its origins or the petrified forests revealed at Amroth at low tide in *Stone/Wood*:

the lightest of our flat stones
skimming the surface...

Anna Fox's project also explores 'the mysterious relationship' between time and memory in photography.⁵⁴ Looking through the Dillwyn Llewelyn collections, Fox was intrigued by the ways in which the family's photographs tell of a desire to capture a greater degree of veracity but at the same time, with their careful staging and theatricality, often play with photography's illusory qualities, to create 'a strange mix [...] of alchemy and indexicality'.⁵⁵

Picnic on Goppa is amongst the photographs Fox selected from the archive that demonstrate this duality. One of a series of 'birthday photographs' made for Emma, with the children posing in a variety of places and scenarios, it has been elaborately staged, down to the stuffed pigeon placed in the foreground, yet also functions as a record of the children as they grow up and a memorial to the family picnic. Likewise, the backdrop in *Iris Germanica* lends the illusion of a studio setting to a photograph of plants growing in the garden; a theatrical conceit presumably designed to better record their transient blooms.

Capturing the passing of time, particularly in relation to family life, was central to John and Emma Dillwyn Llewelyn's photography. In a letter to Henry Fox Talbot in May 1853, the year of the first birthday photograph, Emma described portraits of children as invaluable 'records of passing time'



Mrs Vivian and her grandson or
Mrs Vivian and Little Ernest
Mary Dillwyn, 1853, albumen print,
8x6cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales



Picnic on Goppa
 John Dillwyn Llewelyn, September 23,
 1855, salt print, 15x19cm
 © Amgueddfa Cymru - National
 Museum Wales

and discussed how daguerreotypes ‘mark the lapse of time’.⁵⁶ Her 1854 birthday photograph was accompanied by a poem by John describing his desire to create ‘A witness faithful, lasting, true/ A record dear to me and you’, that opens with the exclamation:

See how the chemist’s art can give
 These fleeting shadows power to live
 Can every transient form engage
 And chain them on his magic page.⁵⁷

Fox’s recent work has also been concerned with time and memory and the ways in which this is impacted by both the illusory nature of photography and changing technology.⁵⁸ Building on a technique developed in her 2013 series *Loisirs*, for which she set out to capture time in a ‘documentary’ image, for this commission she visited some of the places that were photographed by the Dillwyn Llewelyns and are now ‘democratised spaces’ of the leisure industry. Working with a production team, she shot photographs there over several hours and then digitally stitched them together to create final images that have the illusion of instantaneity (being taken in a moment) but in fact represent an extended period of time. These are ‘slowed down photographs’⁵⁹ that use new technology to suggest both the duration of memory (how it felt to be there) and the long exposure of early photographs, whilst ‘through the illusion of photography’ presenting a believable representation of space and time.⁶⁰ Fox moves beyond the photographic ‘punctum’ or frozen moment to create an image of duration, positing a new kind of photographic document of lived, embodied time.

The series includes scenes at Penllergare Valley Woods, the car park at Caswell Bay (under which are the remains of the Dillwyn Llewelyns’ holiday home) and Sketty Hall, once the Dillwyn family home and now a wedding venue. As with her previous series on holiday camps and parks, the locations of these photographs and their layered process, which scrutinises pose, gesture and interaction, also allow Fox to develop a collective portrait of contemporary leisure that reveals its curious mixture of performance (perhaps ritual) and chaos.

Compared with the Dillwyn Llewelyn photographs, Fox’s *Penllergare* is bursting with activity, the well-trodden path bringing families, bikers, youths and tourists to enjoy a day by the water. Boys leap into the falls, children and dogs play in the river, while tourists take photographs on mobile phones in front of the waterfall, perhaps confusing this nineteenth century feat of engineering for a natural phenomenon. For *Sketty Hall*, the house that was the home of both the Dillwyn family and Richard Glynn Vivian forms the backdrop to a scene which also mingles the highly theatrical – bride and groom stalked by photographers, groups primping their outfits and posing for their photograph – with the relaxed informality of a family celebration, a combination echoed in the overgrown parterre and confused remnants of Glynn Vivian’s Italianesque gardens. As in

Llewelyn's staged photographs, people appear (here sometimes more than once) as both individual and symbol. In the same way that the backdrop picks out the Iris as both an individual plant and representative of species *Iris Germanica*, they are themselves, and a picture of themselves.

With their seamless collage but hyper-real scenes these images work in the gap between illusion and reality, as examples of what has been called 'post-representationalist' photography, whereby the impact of digital software has shifted the use and experience of the photographic away from simulating the perspective of monocular human vision. Instead, the photograph becomes a 'site of play' whose 'magical charge' derives 'from its capacity both to articulate and to participate in our collective image environment' as artists and viewers explore the possibilities of new digital technology.⁶¹

Like Fox, all of the artists in *The Moon and a Smile* have explored new visual and ontological applications of digital imaging and image capture for their work in this exhibition, finding a kindred experimental approach in the work of the Dillwyn Llewelyn family as they too explored new photographic technologies and opened up new fields of vision. As this text has set out, scrutinising historic photographs and records as evidence of technical process, visual language and historical memory has led to a plurality of projects that build on (and sometimes challenge) existing research and extend our understanding of the Dillwyn Llewelyn's photographs and their relevance now. These projects, which have been made in and around Swansea during a period when discussions about the impact of globalisation and technology have been to the fore, might also be seen together as a document of a historical moment that has challenged us to confront the ongoing legacy of social, environmental and economic transformations of the mid-nineteenth century. Through photography's ability to bring together the past and present in one visual experience (its essential 'necromancy'⁶²) *The Moon and a Smile* is a palimpsest (a layering of present experiences over faded pasts) that invests the Dillwyn Llewelyn archive with a new vitality and urgency for audiences today.⁶³



Iris Germanica
John Dillwyn Llewelyn, c.1853-4,
salt print, 20x16cm
© Amgueddfa Cymru - National
Museum Wales

- 1 For full histories of the Dillwyn Llewelyn family, see David Painting, 'Swansea's Place in the History of Photography', in *Sun Pictures: Images from the Dawn of Photography*, Glyn Vivian Art Gallery/Swansea, 1982; Richard Morris, *John Dillwyn Llewelyn: The First Photographer in Wales*, Welsh Arts Council/Cardiff, 1980; and Penllergare: *A Victorian Paradise*, The Friends of Penllergare/Llandeilo, 1999; and Noel Chanan, *The Photographer of Penllergare*, Impress/London, 2013
- 2 Dr David Painting, transcript of 'The Dillwyn Dynasty', lecture to Dillwyn Day, 22 June 2012, np
- 3 Nevil Story Maskelyne, notes for lecture *On Photographic Phenomena and their bearings on Chemical Philosophy*, 1847, quoted in Chanan, op. cit., pp.216: 'Photography is but a name for a beautiful necromancy, not equalled by any of the wild dreams of Arabian romance in instantaneousness of production and magical brilliancy of effect. But as a science it holds a far higher position – it is [...] the Master key that shall eventually unlock [...] some of the profoundest of all the mysteries that envelope the constitution of material bodies [...].
- 4 *Objects in the Field* (2012) focussed on an abandoned archive of astronomical negatives from the 1990s; and *The Death of a Beautiful Subject* (2015) reworked an archive of photographs of butterflies made by Rickett's father.
- 5 Sophy Rickett describes 'the mobilization of each [landscape and photography] as an aesthetic resource as well as a physical one' in her Artist's statement for this book, 2017. Mark Durden describes landscape as being (for Rickett) 'a motif to play with and against, a romantic and romanticised counterpoint to photography's artifice.' Mark Durden, 'Romantic Artifice' in *Sophy Rickett, Photoworks Monograph*, Steidl/ Göttingen, Photoworks/Brighton, 2005, np
- 6 Quotes from www.penllergare.org/saving-penllergare/restoration/
- 7 Quoted from the artist's project proposal, 2015. As Rickett writes 'A story starts to come to life, but is still partially obfuscated by anecdote.' *The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrows*, 2017, pp.9
- 8 Sophy Rickett, op. cit., pp.8
- 9 Thereza collected meteorological data for the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and had a paper on her herbarium read to the Linnean Society in 1857 (cited in Susanne Le-May Sheffield, *Revealing New Worlds: Three Victorian Women Naturalists*, Routledge/London, pp.197). In her memoirs Thereza states that W. Bentham encouraged her to start collecting pressed flowers when he visited Penllergare during the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Swansea, 1848. The following year her father gave her a copy of William Withering's book (possibly *The botanical arrangement of all the vegetables naturally growing in Great Britain*) and she set out learning the Latin names for plants and observing their structure. She also writes of being taught Latin flower names by Sir Joseph Hooker when he was staying at Sketty Hall.
- 10 Sophy Rickett, from an earlier version of *The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrows*, 2017
- 11 Note the etymology of 'curator' from the Latin *curare*, to care for.
- 12 Quotes from Sophy Rickett, op. cit., pp.7 & 11
- 13 Nevil Story Maskelyne, Thereza's husband, was a pioneer of the silver bromide process and developed his own version of the calotype using silver bromides in 1846.
- 14 Sophy Rickett, op. cit., pp.6
- 15 Sophy Rickett, op. cit., np
- 16 The same doll also appears in Emma Llewelyn's 1853 birthday photograph, perhaps a substitute for Sybella, a daughter who died in infancy. The dolls appear in several photographs in the archive, some of which are attributed to the younger son Willy.
- 17 Quotes from Astrid Kruse Jensen, Project Proposal, 2016. The use of Polaroid 'instant' film has an interesting relationship with John Dillwyn Llewelyn's research into 'instantaneous' photographs. The website of Impossible Project, who now make Polaroid, declares 'We believe in making real photos. Photos with a life after the shutter clicks.' <https://uk.impossible-project.com/pages/about-us>, accessed 19.1.2017
- 18 Carol Mavor's discussion of dolls, 'reciting the mother-daughter continuum' (p.53) and of Lady Hawarden photographing her daughters being like 'girl play with the camera'; 'Together, mother-daughter/daughter mother play in a circle described by mother as camera eye' (p.46) is pertinent. Carol Mavor, *Becoming: The Photographs of Clementina, Viscountess Hawarden*, Duke University Press/Durham N.C & London, 1999
- 19 For examples of earlier series, including *Inside the View* (2004-8), *Beyond the View* (2008) and *Grounded* (2008) see www.helensear.com
- 20 Oxymel negatives required an exposure time of around 15-20 minutes, see below.
- 21 He also developed the 'Oxymel' process to treat collodion negatives so they could be kept for several days, thus freeing the photographer from carrying around a mobile darkroom, so s/he could photograph more spontaneously. However, these negatives required a long exposure time, and the photographs often have a frozen appearance.
- 22 Nevil Maskelyne used the term 'actinic' to describe the force at work in sunlight that caused chemical change during the development of the photographic image in 1847, noting parallels between the effects of sunlight, heat and electricity. Vanda Morton, *Oxford Rebels: The Life and Friends of Nevil Story Maskelyne*, Alan Sutton/Gloucester, 1987, pp.43-48. For William Grove, photography evidenced the ways in which 'light alters the structure of matter submitted to it', thus demonstrating that light (like heat and electricity) were forces. See J.W&J Wilson, *William Robert Grove, the Lawyer who invented the Fuel Cell*, Metolius, 2007, pp.41
- 23 In a letter to Henry Fox Talbot 8 Oct 1858, Emma Llewelyn writes of her husband 'always trying to turn waste steam into account'. See foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk. William Grove's influential 1842 *Correlation of Physical Forces* stated 'Light, heat, electricity, magnetism and chemical affinity are all convertible material affection: assuming either as a cause, one of the others will be the effect'. For an account of this work and his 'Grove cell' battery see chapter on Grove in Ronald Rees, *Heroic Science: Swansea and The Royal Institution of South Wales*, Glyndwr, 2005.
- 24 In *Das Kapital* (published 1861). Steam engine quote by the scientist Sir David Brewster, an acquaintance of the Dillwyn Llewelyns, friend of Fox Talbot and Calvert Jones and leading member of the British Association of the Advancement of Science. See discussion of Brewster and Marx in Introduction and Part One of Steve Edwards, *The making of English photography: allegories*, Pennsylvania State University Press/University Park, 2006.
- 25 See David Farrier, 'How the concept of Deep Time is changing', *The Atlantic*, Oct 31, 2016, www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/10/aeon-deep-time/505922/ consulted 8.2.2017
- 26 'The Llewelyns photographed to make the most of time. They understood that they lived in a newly-revealed and startling dimension of time, revealed by geologists in rocks like the ones they photographed. The fossil record did away with biblical time, proposing immeasurably longer, not only pre-Christian but pre-human vistas. Commentators tell us – glibly – that any photograph is a sign of time passed and thus of death. These photographs suggest that the opposite is true. A woman will always stand beside the ancient rocks to watch the dashing waves'. Mark Haworth-Booth, 'The Llewelyn Album', in *Aperture 158: Photography and Time*, Aperture/New York, 2000. See also Christopher Titterton, 'Llewelyn and Instantaneity', *V&A Album 4*, 1985. Sharon Morris's poems also address the interest in Geology and archaeology and the awareness of 'deep time' in John Dillwyn Llewelyn's photographs, in particular the poems in *Stone/Wood* that describe fossilised forests in Carmarthen Bay, making the connection between Geology and coal mining/industry, and *A Mackerel Sky* that describes a woman ('Mother') at the shore line.
- 27 See Christopher Titterton, op. cit.
- 28 A reference to William Blake's *Tyger Tyger* from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, 1794: *What immortal hand or eye/could frame thine fearful symmetry?* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tyger
- 29 Note, have not found evidence that Darwin visited the Orchid House at Penllergare, but it is known that after her marriage, Thereza corresponded with him.
- 30 As early as 1835 Llewelyn referred to his 'mania' for collecting orchids (letter quoted in Morris pp.10), later using the expression 'Orchidomania' in a letter to botanist George Bentham, March 10th 1849, Bentham Correspondence, Volume 6, folios 2515-2524, Kew Gardens Archive.
- 31 Quoted in *John Dillwyn Llewelyn and His Orchid House at Penllergare*, edited and updated transcript of talk given to The Orchid Study Group by Richard Morris, 2006, accessed at www.orchidstudygroup.org.uk/john-dillwyn-llewelyn-and-his-orchid-house-at-penllergare 16.6.2016, pp.12-13
- 32 Neeta Madahar *Cosmoses* statement, 2007.
- 33 A cliché verre, or 'glass print', is made by drawing a design onto a glass plate which has been painted with an opaque pigment or emulsion (or blackened with soot), and printing this onto light sensitive paper. Fox Talbot called the process 'photogenic etching'. There are a few examples of cliché verre in the Dillwyn Llewelyn archive.
- 34 Conversation with the artists, December 2016
- 35 Mary probably learned photography at the same time as other family members including Thereza and Emma Llewelyn, so it is more likely that she was 'amongst' the first women photographers in Wales. Mary lived at Sketty Hall with her parents, staying on to look after her mother after her father's death. In 1857, against expectations, she married the vicar of Sketty, the Reverend Montague Earle Welby (the couple had no children), and after her mother's death in 1865 they left Sketty Hall. Mary probably stopped making photographs around this time.
- 36 These were the starting point for Helen Sear's 2012 work *Pastoral Monuments*; Sharon Morris's photograph of bluebells in her father's pharmacy jar can therefore be seen as a tribute both to Sear and to Dillwyn.
- 37 'The eighteen-fifties saw the beginnings of a tremendous boom in South Welsh industry. All the world would soon be demanding the coal, the iron and the steel that those once green valleys and their new industries could give. Where the wild flowers had grown in the valley bottoms, furnace and pit-head gear aspired gauntly in their black pride. [...] Above, the mountains stood serenely along the changing skies, and the curlews cried their freedom, but below, where the trout had fed and the kingfishers had flashed, the mountain streams turned black.' C Hamilton Ellis, *British Railway History 1830-1876*, Allen & Unwin/London, 1954
- 38 Ziad looked at work by David Bomberg and CRW Nevinson.
- 39 Patricia Ziad, Artist's statement, 2017
- 40 Quotations and translation from Greta Alfaro's updated project proposal, December 2016.
- 41 Friedrich Engels had known Swansea's Henry Hussey Vivian when they shared lodgings as students in France. Marx actually quotes 'Bourgeois Vivian' (as member of a Parliamentary Commission into the Factory Acts) in his analysis of the exploitation of child and female labour in factories in *Kapital*, Volume 1, accessed at www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch15.htm accessed 20.1.2017
- 42 Greta Alfaro, op. cit., np. A 'vanitas' is a still life that contains symbolic objects to remind the viewer of their mortality and the worthlessness (vanity) of worldly goods and pleasures.
- 43 Sharon Morris, Artist's statement, 2017
- 44 Steve Edwards argues that the values associated with photography were entwined with industrial and commercial practices. Pointing out the agrarian foundations of English capitalism, he suggests that Talbot and amateur photographers from the landed gentry cannot be considered separate to the capitalist (i.e. industrialist) class. Edwards, *Allegories*, pp.32. This argument can be applied to the Dillwyn Llewelyns. Even though John Dillwyn Llewelyn's income came from his estate and he may have been a benevolent country squire (see discussions in Chanan about his interest in prisons and asylums and the foundation of the Church school), the roots of the family's wealth in the Cambrian pottery, and the overlap between land holdings and mining in South Wales, suggest we cannot disassociate the family from Industrial Capitalism.
- 45 Morris's writing is informed by Ezra Pound and 'Imagist' poetry, so 'images' refers here to both text and photographs.
- 46 Carol Armstrong discusses the nineteenth century Positivist connection between photography and an interest in telescopes and microscopes in Fox Talbot's work, 'Throughout, an intimate alliance is posted among photography, instrumentality and the 'astonished gaze' of experimental observation'. Carol Armstrong, *Scenes in a Library: Reading the photograph in the book, 1843-1875*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 1998, pp.63
- 47 Sharon Morris, from the poem *Llygad y ffynnon*.
- 48 Sharon Morris, *Gwales*, 2017. The Mabinogion is a compilation of early Welsh tales combining myth, history and folklore, handed down as an oral tradition before being translated and edited by Lady Charlotte Guest as part of the revival of Welsh language and culture, and first published 1840. Morris's poem refers to Pryderi, son of Rhiannon, who is a central character in the 11th century 'Mabinogi' tales from which the collection takes its name. The name 'Pryderi' means 'care' in Welsh.
- 49 As quoted by Walter Benjamin in 'Conversations with Brecht', in *Understanding Brecht*, translated by Anna Bostock, Verso/London, New York, 1988
- 50 Sharon Morris, Artist's statement, 2017
- 51 Morris will be Poet in Residence during the exhibition, and will hold a series of workshops with asylum seekers and refugees on the theme *Mother and Other Tongues*.
- 52 In her introduction to Amy Dillwyn's 1880 fictional account of the uprising, Katie Gramlich discusses Rebecca as a gendered emblem of roused nationhood, Rebecca as 'mother' to the rebels, whose code for meeting up was 'going to their mother'. Amy Dillwyn, *The Rebecca Rioter*, Honno/Dinas Powys, 2001, pp. xviii. Amy Dillwyn was the daughter of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn.
- 53 Conversation with the artist, 2017. The cattle scenes also point to the decline in traditional practices of farming and animal husbandry (care).
- 54 Anna Fox, Artist's statement, 2017
- 55 Anna Fox, Artist's statement, 2017. The Llewelyns' experiments to improve photographic technology to record greater detail and reduce shutter speeds to take more 'instantaneous' exposures are examples of this drive for 'veracity' in the images.
- 56 Accessed at: foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk
- 57 Quoted in Chanan, op. cit., pp.168
- 58 Anna Fox, Artist's statement, 2017
- 59 Anna Fox, Artist's statement, 2017, note overlap with Astrid Kruse Jensen's statement.
- 60 Anna Fox, Project proposal, September 2015. See also Val Williams' discussion of the way Fox's *Loisirs* series rejects 'both the orthodoxy of the image and the moral strictures and visual structures which have become such an integral part of documentary photography', Val Williams, 'Leisure and Pleasure: Anna Fox in Beauvais, 2013-2014', in *Anna Fox Loisirs*, Diaphane/Montreuil-sur-Brèche, 2014, np
- 61 Charlotte Cotton, *Photography is Magic*, Aperture/New York, 2015, pp.10/18
- 62 See the discussion of the use of the term 'necromancy' by Talbot's contemporaries to describe photography's temporal characteristics in Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire, The Conception of Photography*, MIT, Cambridge MA/London, 1999, p.91-2
- 63 The figurative use of the term Palimpsest from the original that described the wiping and reusing of wax tablets derives from the 1845 essay 'The Palimpsest' by Thomas De Quincey, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palimpsest>, consulted 20.1.17

THE ARTISTS

SOPHY RICKETT ASTRID KRUSE JENSEN HELEN SEAR
NEETA MADAHAR AND MELANIE ROSE PATRICA ZIAD
GRETA ALFARO SHARON MORRIS ANNA FOX



SOPHY RICKETT

The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrows

This is a multi-disciplinary project consisting of photography, moving image and text, inspired by the life and work of Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn. The images and text are informed by a close reading of Thereza's accounts of her life, as well as time spent at the Penllergare estate and some of the places she describes in her memoirs and diaries, in and around Swansea Bay.

Thereza was daughter of John Dillwyn Llewelyn, the celebrated Swansea based Victorian photographer and botanist. Taking Thereza's papers, now held in the British Library, as a starting point, the detailed primary research involved in working with this original, handwritten material is disrupted by the artist's own subjective voice, as she inserts her own associations and memories into the context of Thereza's 'original'.

Moving between different geographical locations, points in time, and subjective positions, the text operates both as a source of information about Thereza and her life as well as a distraction away from it; tangents, interruptions and other forms of aside function as a conceptual device through which a distracted and restless, yet pre-eminently embodied self constructs a non chronological version of events much of its own making.

Visually, the project combines photographs taken by the artist at locations associated with Thereza's life, particularly Caswell Bay, Penllergare and Kenfig Burrow, with film stills also made on location, and images sourced from internet searches; photographic representation oscillating between abstraction, pictorialism and illustrative literalism.

The Curious Moaning of Kenfig Burrow explores the relationship between landscape and photography, particularly the mobilization of each as an aesthetic resource as well as a physical one, and the various cultural, political and practical uses to which they can be put. Focusing on a moment in the history of photography, both as a technical process, but also as a visual language, the project explores and expands the dialogue between individuals, institutions and other canonical orthodoxies that are asserted in contemporary life, and normalized through notions of custodianship, conservation and care.

This new work was generously supported by Metro Imaging.

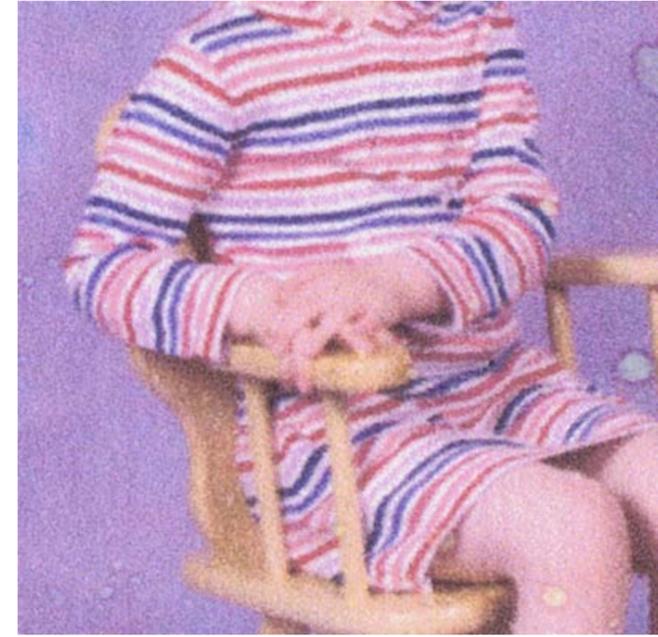
Sophy Rickett is a visual artist working with photography, video installation and text. Much of her work explores the tension between the narrative tendencies and abstract possibilities of the photographic image.

Rickett came to prominence in the late 1990s shortly after she graduated from the Royal College of Art. She has undertaken commissions for several institutions including Photoworks, The Institute of Astronomy and Arnolfini and has exhibited widely in the UK and internationally. Solo exhibitions include Arnolfini, Bristol; Kettle's Yard, Cambridge; De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on Sea; Museum of the History of Science, Oxford. Group exhibitions include MOMA, Moscow; Pompidou, Paris; Baltic Gateshead; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Her work is included in many collections, including The Government Art Collection, London; FRAC, Alsace; Pompidou, Paris; Musée des Beaux Art Nantes, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Recent mixed media projects include *Objects in the Field* (2012), *The Death of a Beautiful Subject* (2015), and an ongoing collaborative project with Bettina von Zwehl, *Album 31*.

She is based in London and teaches on BA (Hons) and MA Photography at London College of Communication/ University of the Arts, London







ASTRID KRUSE JENSEN

Floating

The landscape of Penllergare is slowly being re-established to what the family created and intended. I am interested in this transformation – and also interested in the landscape that is still overgrown, with only traces of the landscape they created. A landscape where the family at Penllergare created their own reality / own nature, because it was possible for them and they had the passion for it.

I have started the working process in a landscape that has some of the same elements as the landscape of the Penllergare Estate. I recently moved into an old castle in the forest of Holbaek forty minutes outside Copenhagen. It is a landscape of lakes, small rivers, trees and forests. I am using the human figure and human created elements as a marker – to mark and sometimes confuse the scale in this manmade landscape – to create images where the figure and the landscape merge. The woman / girl are absorbed within the landscape, disappearing into a state of mind.

I am working with images that revolve around an interest in the man-made beauty of a 'landscape', a controlled landscape with elements of the uncontrolled – and photographing them with a camera that does not provide technical perfection – as a contrast to the motif itself. The absence of anything in sharp focus is due to the limited capabilities of the simple camera used, a small Polaroid SX 70 in plastic. The camera is here reduced to a lightproof box – without the same capacity and the same degree of detail.

In many of the works the reflections break up the subject – and open up to a feeling of infinity. Instead of revealing its own depth, the dark water surface of the lake reflects back the surfaces of the surroundings. The reflection confuses the eye. It becomes difficult to know up from down – hard to distinguish reality from reflection. The reflection distorts and displaces, but at the same time is part of reality. In this way the subjects become abstract – the unreal becomes real, the reflections become the reality.

The reflections become an image of the difficult distinction between illusion and reality. The subject breaks up, the mirrorings take over and create a universe on their own that can only exist for a brief period in this very light – in the reflection right here and now where the light burns through in exactly this way.

As Astrid La Cour has written, 'Photography, landscape and memory are three subjects that characterise Astrid Kruse Jensen's practice as an artist. In uniting them, her works emerge in a constant alternation between physical and mental landscapes ... all three elements appear in a changeable state of organic development that constantly evades control'.

Astrid Kruse Jensen (b. 1975) is a visual artist educated at The Gerrit Rietveld Academie in the Netherlands and at The Glasgow School of Art.

Her work is in numerous public collections including The George Eastman House, AROS, The Nationale Museum for Fotografi, Artotheque de Caen, The John Kobal Foundation, Manchester City Gallery, Vestsjællands Kunst Museum, Statens Kunstfond, Skagens Museum, Kunstmuseet Brundlund Slot, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena.

Her work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions around the world.

Astrid Kruse Jensen is represented by Martin Asbæk Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark and Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden.

Astrid Kruse Jensen's work challenges the idea of photography as a frozen moment. Instead she inscribes the photographic medium in a living process in which the motif, the photographic material and memories fuse – becoming part of a larger narrative concerning the ideas and interpretations of memory.







HELEN SEAR

Moments of Capture

“Yet in the Anthropocene, ironically we humans have become that sublime force, the agents of a fearful something that is greater than ourselves.” David Farrier 2016.

The archaeologist, anthropologist and nature writer Jacquetta Hawkes explains using recollections of her own childhood in order to “steal that emotion which uses our own early memories for a realization of the most distant past.... in recalling the experiences of that remote, unknown child, I find I am being led back far beyond the bounds of personality and my own life”.¹

The young woman protagonist wears the antlers of a stag, the wood of the deer, antennae of the forest, from the Old French *antouille*, an etymological *in front of or before the eyes*, suggesting headdresses worn by hunter gatherers in the Mesolithic age. Merging with her surroundings she watches almost motionless: clouds falling behind the wind turbine, the break of a wave on the sand, the blast furnace at Port Talbot, a dew covered spider’s web, the boy who jumped the waterfall at Penllergare, the setting moon, and the point of a dog’s tail in a windswept clover field. Hover flies jostle with a bumblebee for the nectar from a poppy, a single crow tracks across the sky and an agricultural machine disturbs dust from the harvested wheat. The industrial leitmotif of the soundtrack drives these still, moving pictures towards greater acceleration.

The man-made lake at Penllergare is described by Richard Morris as the scene of one of the first explorations in the propulsion of a boat by electricity in 1841. John Dillwyn Llewelyn had been experimenting with galvanism, electricity produced by chemical action.² In June 2016 whilst filming a heron catching fish in the same lake, a recreational drone flying overhead startled the bird. This moment opened a window across time, a connecting thread between the 19th century and the present, where I could explore in moving images, stillness and momentum, through relationships between nature and technology and a world in constant flux. Two recurring photographs of taxidermy specimens of a stag and a heron, photographed in the grounds of the family estate persisted in my mind, along with the *Motion* photographs of waves, clouds and steam exhibited in London at the Photographic exhibition in 1854.

Christopher Titterington writes of a profound disturbance that must have occurred for Dillwyn Llewelyn’s generation with the recent awareness of the deep time in geology, of non-human history, and a questioning of religious faith and human domination over nature. He describes a temporal sublime, “an infinity not simply of dimension but also of time”, giving rise to the idea that a human lifetime was itself now a mere instant.³ The suggestion, reflected in the photography of the Dillwyn Llewelyn circle, that the optimism of new technological advancements is mingled with a sense of melancholy relating to the transience of existence, resonates loudly in our present time.

Helen Sear first moved to Wales in 1984 after completing an HDFA at the Slade School, University College London. Her work came to prominence in the 1991 British Council exhibition, *De-Composition: Constructed Photography in Britain*, which toured extensively throughout Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Her work explores the materiality of vision and the nature of experience, our human/animal interactions in rural and “natural” environments. Photography is central to her practice, and often explored as a combination of moving image, sound, drawing and siting. Her work was included in the exhibition *About Face* at the Hayward Gallery London in summer 2004 and *La Mirada Reflexiva* at the Espai D’Art Contemporani in Castellon Spain in 2005. A 90-page monograph *Twice*, was published by Zelda Cheate Press in 2002, and *Grounded* was a touring exhibition curated by Impressions Gallery York between 2003 and 2005.

Recent solo exhibitions include, *Inside The View*, shown at Gallery Harmonia in Finland in 2006, G39 Cardiff who also published the bookwork *Tale* in 2009, *Beyond The View*, Hoopers Gallery London, and Klompching Gallery New York in 2010. Her work is featured in Aperture print collection and magazine. Fotogallery Wales published her first major monograph in 2012 *Inside The View*. GOST published the bookwork *Brisées* in 2013 which accompanied a major national tour *Lure* in the same year.

She is the first woman to be selected to represent Wales with a solo exhibition at *The 56th Venice Biennale 2015*.

Helen is currently Professor of Photographic Practice at Falmouth University

¹ Hawkes, J, *A Land*, Collins, 2012

² Morris, R, *John Dillwyn Llewelyn and the electric boat*, Welsh Journals online, Gower - Vol. 48, 1997

³ Titterington, C., *Llewelyn and Instantaneity*, V&A Album 4, 1985







Neeta Madahar is an interdisciplinary artist, meditation and yoga teacher exploring relationships between nature, artifice and the self through her work. Solo exhibitions include Rencontres d'Arles Photography Festival, France (2004), Iniva, London (2005), Danforth Museum of Art, Massachusetts (2006) and Oakville Galleries, Ontario, Canada (2007). Madahar has also been awarded commissions from organisations such as FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology), Film and Video Umbrella, Harewood House and Photoworks. Her work is held in private and public collections including Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and V&A London.

Melanie Rose is a visual artist whose practice is predominantly drawing; the constant theme running through her work is the relationship between the human form and the natural environment. She graduated from Trent Polytechnic with a BA Honours degree in Fine Art in 1987 then studied at Central Saint Martins graduating with a MA in Fine Art in 2002; she is a member of the practice based research group Land2 and has exhibited extensively and has work in both public and private collections.

NEETA MADAHAR AND MELANIE ROSE

Orchidomania

Orchidomania is inspired by Victorian gentleman botanist and photographer John Dillwyn Llewelyn's (JDL) fascination with orchids and discovering that he and his family produced *clichés verre*, a 19th century technique that combines drawing or painting with photography.

In 2015, during a visit to JDL's estate Penllergare, we saw the ruins of an orchid house that JDL built and for which he pioneered construction of a hot water cascade that created a mist upon which orchids thrived. A 2006 transcript of a talk by Richard Morris about the orchid house referred to an archive of letters between JDL and Joseph Dalton Hooker, Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and esteemed botanist George Bentham. Reading this correspondence, we identified many of the orchids that JDL cultivated, and *Bollea violacea* was the stimulus for building a hothouse in the first place. In 1849, JDL wrote that he was experiencing a bout of 'orchidomania'. This passion for orchids became the inspiration for the title of our series.

After researching contemporary and historic examples of *clichés verre*, we made tests using black ink and acrylic painted onto acetate or glass and then applying pressed orchids or etching directly into the substrate to create a negative from which to make a photographic print. Our experiments evolved from creating conventional *clichés verre* to making prints in the analogue darkroom from translucent film sheets overlaid and slightly out of register in both the enlarger and in contact with the paper. This advance, that also has its roots in the photogram process, came through working alongside master photographic printer Rob Sara and photography technician Michael Coombs at the Arts Institute, University of Cumbria in Carlisle.

Having selected certain prominent orchids from the list of varieties grown by JDL, we took online images of the blooms and digitally manipulated them, removing their colour and making tonal adjustments to create 'positive' and 'negative' files. These files were subsequently printed onto colour separation film. Re-combining the positive and negative film sheets in the darkroom to make fine black and white fibre prints resulted in work with an unforeseen richness and subtlety despite the crude starting materials. The representation of the flowers as photographs that are at once intimate and recognisable, yet strangely three-dimensional, devoid of intense impressions like colour, offers an uncanny interplay between what is real and unreal. This resonates deeply with our fascination with perceptions surrounding the natural world and the transformative power inherent in art and nature.







A graduate of University of South Wales with an MA in Documentary Photography, Patricia Ziad's work explores the boundaries and the relationship between art and photography.

Experimental photographic processes are part of her practice.

Ziad's interests are related to industrial decline and social change, which she finds inspirational for abstract work. Her images defy conventional photographic interpretation through provocative abstraction that requires the viewer to think and think again.

She is currently chair of the Women's Art Association, South East Wales and won the student award for Welsh artist of the year 2013.

PATRICIA ZIAD

Untitled

Welsh history in the 19th century is a powerful story. The growth of industry on an epic scale, plus a massive influx of workers from rural areas in Wales, England and Ireland, Chartism and the Rebecca Riots, changed Wales irrevocably in terms of landscape, language, demographics, culture, religion and politics.

The Dillwyn Llewelyn family had a privileged position, lived on a country estate near Swansea and practiced photography as a scientific undertaking. The backdrop to their lives, the sulphur laden air of Swansea, the coal mines, the copper smelting, the hurly burly of the industrial city, was a powerful lure and the path I chose in terms of a visual response.

In the beginning flowers were on my mind. Not the fragile prints of Mary Dillwyn but something stronger. The flowers produced were imaginary and inclined to industry with petals of metal, glass or wood. They were drawn with ink on glass plates resembling large negatives, reflecting Mary Dillwyn's experimental approach to the representation of flora.

Concentrating on industrial flowers led me to industry itself and the pattern of sounds and movements familiar to workers. Copper smelting was a rhythmic exercise of labour, the unrelenting transportation of coal and ore to forge ingots.

There was a sense of darkness in industrial Wales, not of being underground, but a mental, spiritual and physical poverty, a sullen knowledge of deprivation and this eventually surfaced in the form of political protest.

My work attempts to reproduce the monotonous, repetitive, difficult processes the labour force was compelled to endure in industry and express some of the rhythms and the shadows of their working lives.







SUFFICE TO CONCEAL

GRETA ALFARO

Greta Alfaro (Pamplona, 1977) is a visual artist, working in different media.

She is a MA graduate in Photography from the Royal College of Art, London, and BA from Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Spain.

Her solo shows include La Gallera, Valencia, Spain; Artium, Vitoria, Spain; MoCA Hiroshima, Japan; Invención (2012) at Museo ExTeresa, Mexico City; Fish and Coal Building, London; Huarte, Pamplona, Spain; Galería Marta Cervera, Madrid, Spain and Carpe Diem arte e Pesquisa, Lisbon, Portugal; Dryphoto arte contemporanea, Prato, Italy.

She has exhibited in group exhibitions at Whitechapel Gallery, Saatchi Gallery and Institute of Contemporary Art in London; CCBB Brasilia, Brazil; Bass Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami; Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena; Centre Pompidou and La Conciergerie in Paris; Kunsthaus, Essen, Germany; Trafó House of Contemporary Art, Budapest and La Casa Encendida, Madrid, among others.

And to the Sun's all-seeing orb I cry

Thereza Dillwyn Llewelyn took the first photograph of the moon. But another picture draws my attention: A young man enjoys the sunlight, placidly leaning against a wall. On the photograph's surface is a text written in ancient Greek: "And to the Sun's all-seeing orb I cry".¹

The sun allows us to live and see, makes photography possible and is traditionally linked to the arts. The moon is related to darkness, deceit and passivity. Very symbolically, the youngster has his eyes closed to the sun, and Thereza has her eyes open to the moon.

How beautiful the Dillwyn Llewelyn's photographs are. They depict a bucolic life, leaving us with a vivid impression of their idyllic happiness, of an on-going harmony between family, nature and objects. But then an unknown witness says: *To the traveller who crosses the Landore bridge at night, the livid glare from the numerous chimneys, the rolling, fleecy, white clouds that fill up the valley beneath him, the desolate-looking heaps of slag on either side, recall Dante's line, "Voi che entrate lasciate ogni speranza / Abandon all hope, ye who enter here"*.

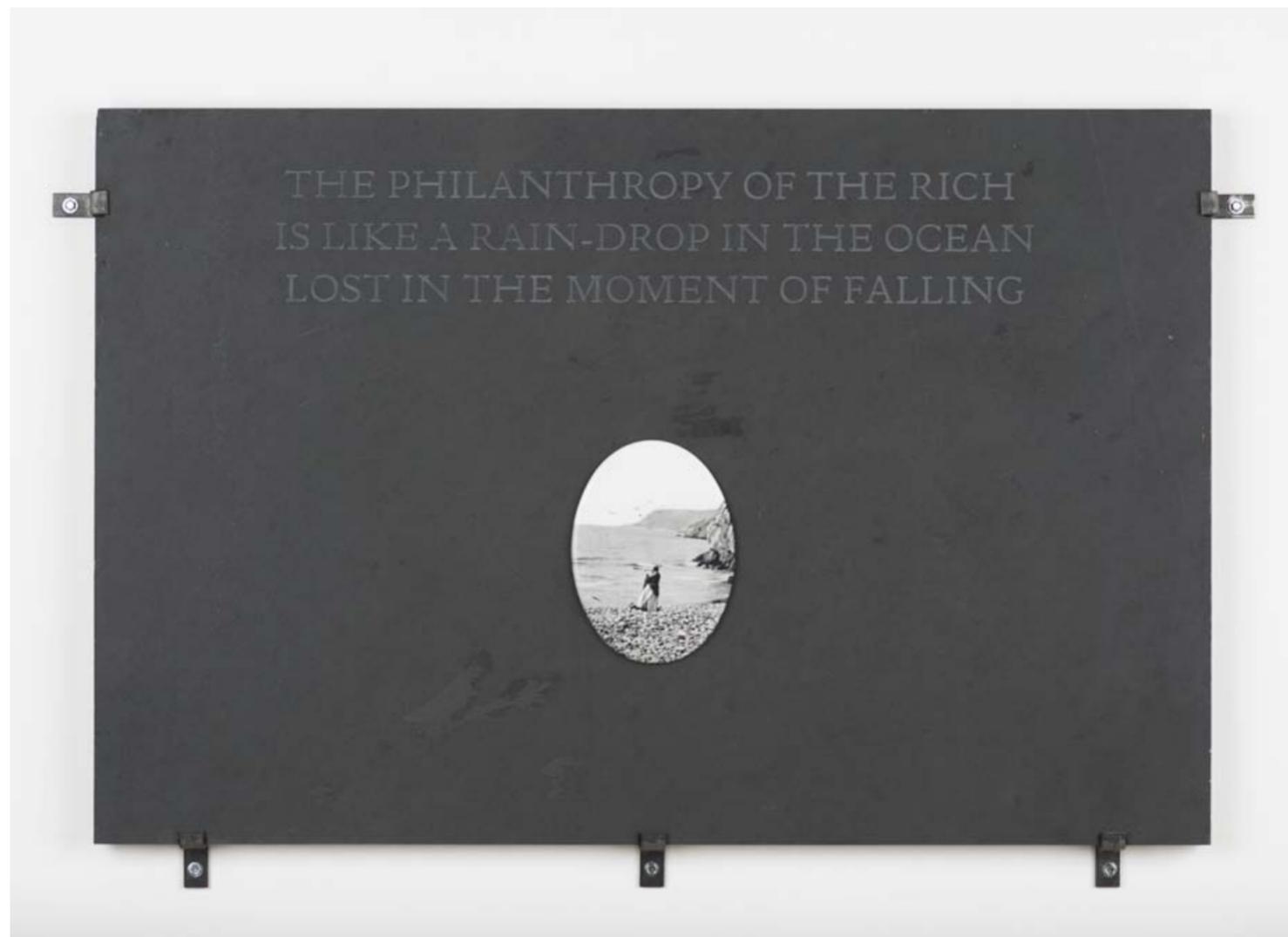
That was the reality behind the pictures. The moment of their photographic production coincides with the height of industrialism in Swansea, with all the misery of human exploitation and nature's devastation. The technical developments in photography are indissolubly linked to those of the Industrial Revolution.

Were the Dillwyn Llewelyns strangers to this horror? An inherited fortune allowed John Dillwyn Llewelyn and his family to devote their lives to photography, and although he is remembered as a philanthropist, not only would he not have been a stranger to the abuses of the system, he would have been unavoidably immersed in them.

With these facts in my mind, one can feel a sense of absurdity, immorality or shame when looking at the images. These photographs may connote as well an underlying desire of evasion, of negation of the world around, by the construction of a parallel reality. And is this attitude not similar to what we do today?

This project is conceived as an elegy to what used to be called progress, to the technological, scientific advances which led to ecological disaster, war, and to the ruthless exploitation of people. The desire to remain blind has but intensified. If the Dillwyn Llewelyns see the world through their lenses, always looking away, the devices we use to avert our eyes have become more sophisticated than ever. Life and images appear as almost indissoluble. Slaves of artifice, we do not look at the real world anymore. Engels' descriptions of society are still important, now maybe more than ever. Inequality grows, while any hope dwindles without a utopia to hold on to.

¹ Και τον πανοπτην κυκλον ηλιου καλω. Aeschylus' *Prometheus Unbound*. Translation by George Thomson.



THE WAR OF EACH AGAINST ALL
IS HERE OPENLY DECLARED.
PEOPLE REGARD EACH OTHER
ONLY AS USEFUL
OBJECTS



THEY SUFFICE TO CONCEAL
FROM THE EYES OF THE WEALTHY MEN AND WOMEN
OF STRONG STOMACHS AND WEAK NERVES
THE MISERY AND GRIME
WHICH FORM THE COMPLEMENT OF THEIR WEALTH





SHARON MORRIS

Born in Pembrokeshire, Sharon Morris is an artist and poet, who studied at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL, London, where she currently teaches.

She is widely published in poetry journals including *Poetry Wales*, 2016, and her poetry collections, *False Spring*, 2007, and *Gospel Oak*, 2014, are published by Enitharmon Press.

Her artworks, installations, film-poems, and live performances, have been shown recently at Camden Arts Centre and Rowing, London, and the Mission Gallery, Swansea.

Sharon is currently working on the relation between words and images as a form of translation and 'macaronic' poetry, juxtaposing different languages, including Welsh.

For the Ash: Yr Onnen

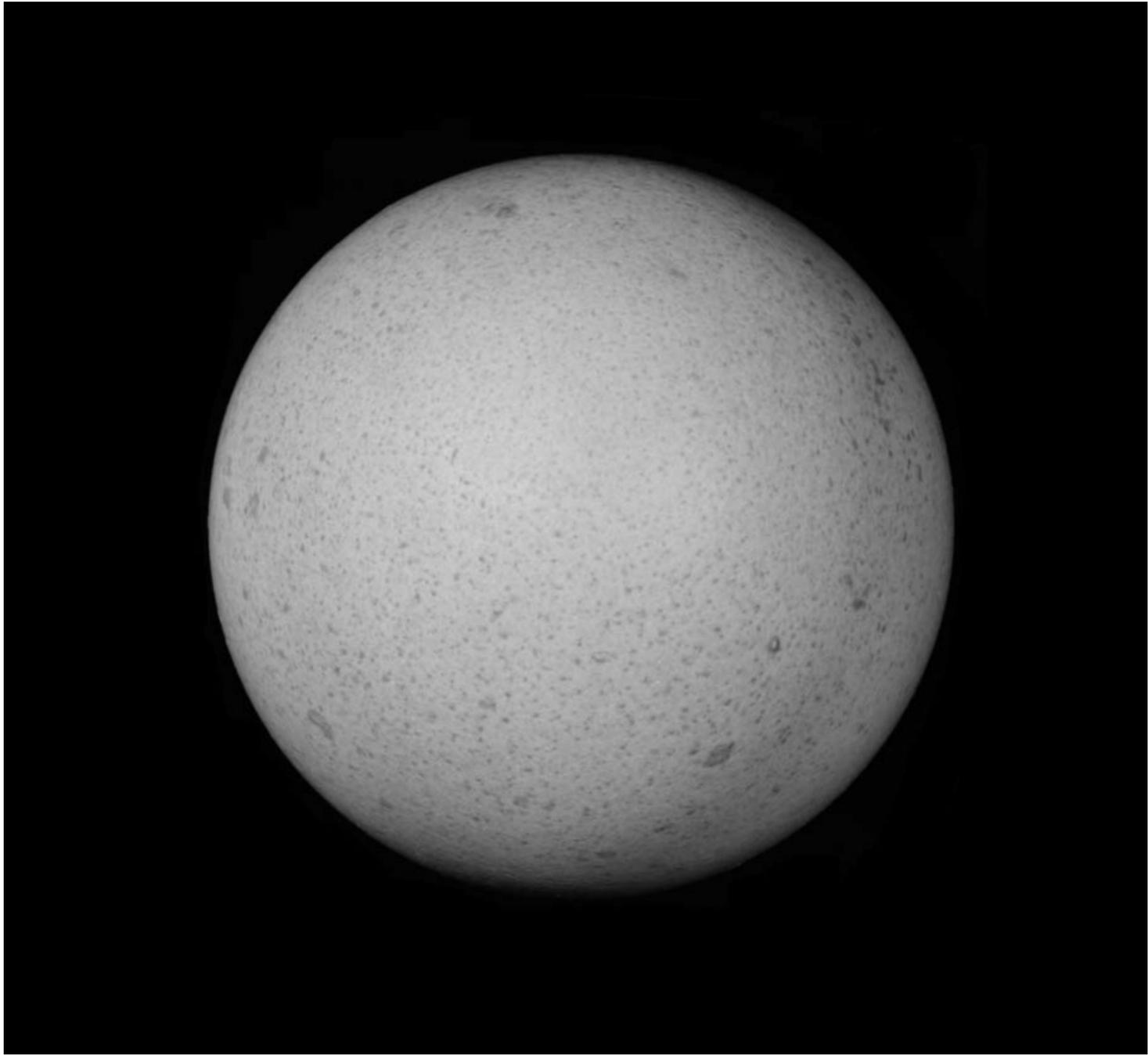
Inspired by the early photography albums of the Dillwyn Llewelyn family, in particular those by Thereza and Mary held in the National Library of Wales, *'For the Ash: Yr Onnen'* is a series of twelve artist's books and scrolls bringing together photographic images, poetry and short texts.

In contrast to the formal imagery of her brother John Dillwyn Llewelyn, for example his placing of inanimate animals in the landscape, Mary Dillwyn, while being equally fascinated with the technical advances in photographic processes, evokes a more ephemeral world of cut flowers, pairs of live birds, the family building a snowman, casual portraits blessed by a fleeting smile: a world characterised by a mind caught up in the Victorian period of enquiry, reaching for the moon, and yet attentive to the detail of the domestic. These small-scale albums convey the intimacy of perception, portraits that serve as period familial documents of the Penllergare estate and the Gower but also, through omission, point to what has been left out: the industrial source of wealth in the Swansea area.

'For the Ash: Yr Onnen', also serves as an historical document of the rapidly changing landscape of west Wales: fields of cattle and sheep as transient as climate change and the cruel vagaries of neo-liberal capitalism, the Ash at the mercy of fungus and beetle, the sea libeled with oil spills and degraded plastic, the silence of the Preseli hills shattered with the sound of warplanes, the puffin and other seabirds placed on the list of endangered species; wildflowers becoming rare in a land in imminent danger of being sacrificed to fracking.

Across the sea from the Gower, the visibility of Pembrokeshire becomes a measure of distance and weather: for our Palaeolithic ancestors the plain and forest extended out under the current level of the sea. This peninsula remains part of the west Atlantic seaboard of Celtic languages and waves of immigration – Neolithic, Roman, Norman, Flemish, Viking, the languages of the port, trade, exile and refuge, *lloches*. These macaronic poems, of *'The Ash: Yr Onnen'*, speak between two languages, a reminder of the language of the home at the time of the Rebecca Riots, 1839, and the dominance of the language of the courts and magistrates, such as John Dillwyn Llewelyn.

Taken from a previous exhibition, *The Moon is Shining on My Mother*, a woman hides her face, glimpsing from behind her hands, daring to look at a landscape of such unbearable beauty intimate with its scars of history and labour: Mesolithic and Neolithic stone quarries, Iron Age field systems, ancient hedges, Roman Roads, coal mines, slate quarries, lime kilns, railways, disused dairies, mobile phone masts, wind turbines... A world that urgently needs our attention.







ANNA FOX

Pleasure Park

Born in 1961 and completing her degree in Audio Visual Studies at The Surrey Institute, Farnham in 1986, Anna Fox has been working in photography and video for over twenty years.

Her solo shows include Impressions Gallery, The Photographers' Gallery, London, The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago and her work has been included in numerous international group shows - Through the Looking Glass, Centre of the Creative Universe: Liverpool and the Avant-garde and How We Are: Photographing Britain amongst others.

She has had several monographs of her work published, Anna Fox Photographs 1983 -2007, edited by Val Williams was published by Photoworks in 2007

Anna Fox is Professor of Photography at University for the Creative Arts at Farnham

One of the most striking things about the Dillwyn photographs is how candid and playful they are; to capture the first smile must have been an exciting event in itself. Trawling through the archive one discovers the imaginative Dillwyn family investigating the development of camera technology and the desire to capture information about life itself, their own lives and the natural world around them. This combined with the the pleasure of playing with photography's illusory quality creates a strange mix in the archive of alchemy and indexicality.

In recent work I have been investigating the mysterious relationship between time and memory in photography and like the Dillwyns' investigations this has a relationship both to changing technology and to the illusory nature of photography. For many years, photographers have pursued the capturing of fleeting moments, freezing action, albeit small, on a plate, film or file as a significant moment, a poignant note about life summed up in a pregnant milli-second. The photograph has been understood as a memento directly out of a time and place and this has been embedded in the medium since its inception, a miniature death or life suspended as if in aspic. More recently a kind of magical realism has arisen out of the coming of the digital age. While we are still wrapped up in photography's indexical relationship to the world, new ways of playing with this illusion are erupting.

Since 1983, when I started photographing, I have been picturing the leisure industry. For this commission I have revisited some of the houses and locations that the Dillwyns recorded. The houses they photographed were private homes and the beaches and hillsides used for leisure purposes predominantly by the moneyed classes. Today these places are open to the wider public and leisure is the pursuit of the masses. My photographs tell a story about the leisure industry as it is today. The work plays with time and illusion, echoing the provocation of the Dillwyn archive. Each image is constructed with dozens of separate images. First a background plate is created and then, together with a team of assistants I photograph what happens in the location over approximately a 3-hour period. Images of the people are selected and then layered in post-production onto the background. This process and its results has led me to think more intently about photography, time and memory, and to consider that a single image, shot at 1/25th of a second, is not necessarily a memento of an event in the way that an image constructed out of many images and in a few hours might be. The picture made up of many images represents what has been seen over a period of time and so has a new relationship to the notion of what constitutes a documentary photograph. These are slowed down images connected to memories of a period of time in a particular place and an event or series of events that happened there.

This work was made with the assistance of Andrew Bruce, Ashleigh Fisk and Amanda Whittle. Digital post production Andrew Bruce.





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ANNA FOX

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