

Cross Section

The documentary photography of Charles Page

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Charles Page is one of Australia's best itinerant documentary photographers. This exhibition **Cross Section: *The documentary photography of Charles Page*** focuses on 40 years of his superb black and white photography, through five major themes: His work for the International Red Cross in war zones includes images considered too disturbing to print at the time. He was also the only photographer to gain admission to the infamous, now closed, Boggo Road Prison in Brisbane. On the other hand, his Antarctic images are amongst the most sublime of this subject. The street scenes from many parts of the world show his interest in quirky, unusual viewpoints while his steam trains, photographed in Australia, India and China, will appeal to all.

Cross Section

The documentary photography of Charles Page



Why has Charles Page photographed a penguin with a clothes dryer?



How was this photograph taken?

Use five words to describe what you see?

View the Street Scene photographs. Draw a picture of something you have seen on the street.

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The documentary photography of Charles Page

Look at the photographs of Antarctica. How has human occupation influenced the landscape?



Use five words to describe this scene.

Choose two photographs from the Street Scene series. What comment is Charles Page making?

View the Red Cross photographs. What has Charles Page photographed and why has he photographed these people?

Teachers Notes

Suggested questions and activities

Arts

How does this photograph make you feel when you look at it? What emotions and issues are being communicated? What was the intention in capturing this moment?

How has Charles Page used aesthetic elements (line, shape, tone, texture, pattern & colour, composition and cropping) to convey a message?

What role can photography play in documenting and expressing the effects of war?

Isolate an issue or current event that you feel strongly about. How would you communicate it to raise awareness?

Why Charles Page has used black and white photography instead of colour photography?

English

List all the words that come to mind as you study a particular photograph or theme. Use them to create a poem that summarises the ideas and emotions being expressed.

History

Research the effects of human occupation in Antarctica.

Investigate the history of the steam train.

Can photography be regarded as reliable source for learning about world issues and events?

What does this photograph express about the human condition?

Civics and Citizenship

How has human occupation in Antarctica affected the landscape?

What is the function of a prison? How do the photographs taken at Boggo Road Prison reflect living in a prison?

Investigate the role of the Red Cross in Australia and internationally.

Our natural inclination is to immediately pass judgement on something we have never seen before. We either dismiss it if we do not like it, or look longer if we do like it. Sometimes when you have considered an artwork thoroughly, you can actually change your mind and find a lot more to admire and enjoy!

Photographic Visual Analysis

Title: _____

Artist: _____

Date: _____

Medium: _____

Location of the Work: _____

Describe the photograph

What is the major subject or theme?

Where is the main subject placed?

What is the style of the photograph?

Analyse the techniques

What type of photograph is it?

Were any special techniques or special equipment used to produce this photograph? (e.g. sepia toning, tripod)

Where was the photograph taken? (e.g. in a studio)

How has the photograph been lit? (e.g. artificial light, flash)

Does the photograph contain any of the following?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| - a clear sharp image | - a soft focus image |
| - large depth of field | - small depth of field |
| - frozen motion | - blurred motion |
| - interesting angle | - unusual viewpoint |

Has the image been manipulated? (e.g. use of a special lens, digitally)

Analyse the design elements

How has the photograph been composed? (e.g. rules of thirds)

What types of lines have been used? (e.g. straight, vertical, thick, fuzzy)

What types of shapes have been used? (e.g. triangles, natural)

What types of texture have been used? (e.g. smooth, grainy)

Describe the space in the photograph. (e.g. deep, shallow, or flat)

Describe the tone of the photograph. (e.g. highly contrasted, variety of tones, limited tones, high key)

Analyse the meaning and / or intention

How has the use of techniques and design elements influenced the mood and appearance of the photograph?

What is Charles Page primarily concerned with? (e.g. recording, capturing, reflecting, commenting, expressing, creating a reaction, beauty, design, story telling, highlighting issues)

What words would you use to describe this photograph?

What do you like about this photograph?

What do you dislike about this photograph?

Art

Unit 1: Art and Society

Unit 2: Art and the Individual

Unit 3: Interpreting Art

Unit 4: Discussing and Debating Art

Select a work and analyse it through a specific interpretative framework. Choose from cultural, gender, historical, political, post modernism, psychoanalytical or symbolic framework.

Discuss the exhibition as a reflection of social issues.

Compare and contrast two works in the exhibition (different dates and themes)

Discuss the social functions of documentary photography.

Analyse a photograph in order to identify the particular meaning and message.

Conduct a visual analysis of a photograph. How does it make you feel?

Describe and analyse a photograph through the formal interpretative elements and at least two other interpretative frameworks in order to discuss how Charles Page presents social issues.

Discuss the role of an artist (e.g. spokesperson, social critic, or artist as outsider)

Consider why Charles Page has used black and white (silver gelatin) photography instead of Type C (colour) photography.

Studio Arts

Unit 4: Art Industry Contexts

The Role of Public Galleries

Find out the mission statement of the gallery this exhibition is displayed in? How is this achieved?

What is the role of a public gallery?

How relevant are public galleries to communities?

What is the difference between a public gallery and a commercial gallery?

There are other art spaces where an artist can exhibit their work. List other art spaces in your community.

Exhibition Design / Curator

How has the exhibition been hung? (i.e. chronological, shape, medium, series of works, theme, or region)

What factors have influenced this lay out?

How are the works presented and why?

How is this exhibition different from others in the gallery?

Conservation

What are the handling requirements for a framed photograph? Do they differ from an unframed photograph?

What is the most effective way of transporting framed photographs?

Being works on paper, what are the special conditions of display?

Marketing and Publicity

How is the exhibition promoted to the public?

What types of media sources have been used?

Sponsorship

Who are the sponsors?

List the costs involved in running a touring exhibition such as this.

Discuss the importance of sponsorship.