

2018

HIGHER VISION

An exhibition of
outstanding images
produced by SQA Higher
Photography candidates



SUPPORTING
year of young people
bliadhna na h-òigridh
2018



Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP

Presiding Officer
The Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament is proud to host the Higher Vision exhibition. The students featured have focused the lens on what life in Scotland is really like from their experience.

Photography is such a powerful medium and in the Year of Young People it is fitting that the Parliament can celebrate and recognise the outstanding skill and creativity of these amateur photographers.

I hope this exhibition inspires and challenges us to think about what life in Scotland is like from a different perspective. The images offer an honest but also uplifting story of what matters most to people from all corners of the country.



Dr Janet Brown

Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

I am thrilled to be able to introduce Higher Vision; the work of 26 outstanding photographers who have excelled in SQA's Higher Photography qualification over the past year.

Higher Photography is a demanding course, and the images selected for this exhibition exemplify the talent, skill and creativity that the qualification fosters within our candidates at schools and colleges across the length and breadth of Scotland.

I am grateful to the Scottish Parliament for the opportunity it has provided to our outstanding amateur photographers, and I hope you will enjoy the work on display.



Alex Hamilton

Chair
Scottish Society for the History
of Photography



Andrew Cowan

Official Photographer
The Scottish Parliament

SSHOP have been working closely with the SQA to give a new generation of young people a wonderful grounding in the history of photography, especially Scotland's important role in its evolution.

Higher Vision is an exhibition of Higher Photography work selected from portfolios covering all eight parliamentary regions. A curatorial team, organised by SSHOP, chose ninety-six images for the exhibition, to be held at the Scottish Parliament. The three-month duration of the exhibition will offer valuable opportunities to organise talks, run workshops and consider the position of photography in Scotland.

I look forward to meeting many of you at the exhibition — and working with your schools to explore other ways in which we can celebrate Scotland's engagement with this exciting and constantly-evolving artform.

After two days on the judging panel I was so enthused by the quality of the work submitted by these amateur photographers. Portfolios exploiting techniques from classic 35mm film to complex digital composites told stories from across Scotland and beyond.

Each set of images were accompanied by extensive research and planning notes giving an insight into the effort and detailed thought each photographer had put into their chosen project.

Being able to select images from portfolios of such high quality made the final selection of images for Higher Vision 2018 extremely challenging. However, it has resulted in an outstanding exhibition which showcases the talent and skill of young photographers studying in Scotland.

The future of photography is in good hands.

Some of the images in this collection are challenging, and look at significant issues in new and interesting ways. Please be aware that the photography here addresses issues such as mental health, gender representation and mortality.

Anais Bliault

Elgin Academy
Highlands and Islands

'17'

Exploring the genres Portraiture and Conceptualism, with inspiration from grunge and black and white photography, this collection of images depict aspects of teenage life. Adolescence is an emotional time in everyone's life where individuals are defining their own purpose and identity. I strived to capture this journey of emotions in a raw manner that highlights the truth of being a young adult in today's world. The images portray a range of adolescent issues from first love and self-expression to darker themes such as mental health and bullying.





Andy Desceras

Jordanhill School
Glasgow

'Neglect'

Choosing 'neglect' as my theme gave me the opportunity to explore areas of Glasgow and Scotland that had not seen much love for years. I learned a lot about local history in places such as the former Jordanhill College campus and the Govan Dry Docks — both soon to be redeveloped. It was fun to get out of the classroom and do independent photography in different genres, such as still life and landscape. There is beauty to be found in abandoned sites, and photography allows it to be appreciated.



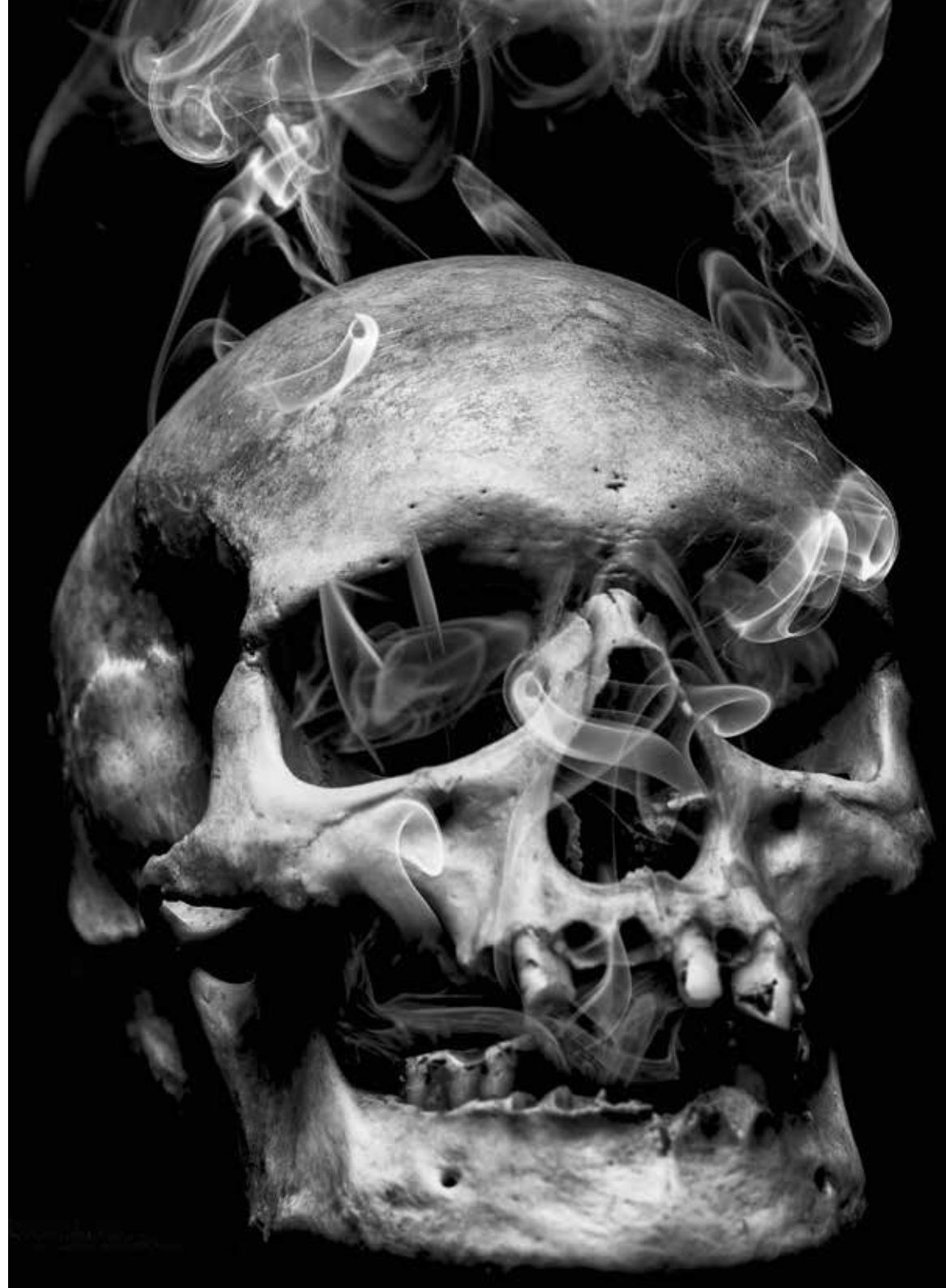


Angus Dunkley

Stonelaw High School
Central Scotland

'A Study of Horror'

After becoming interested in photography, I realised that photographs don't always have to make the viewer feel happy and that discomfort, fear and sadness are all emotions that we experience too and can be elicited in a photograph. This made me think that creating a sinister or unsettling mood to evoke negative feelings might make my photographs more interesting. My collection explores this while enabling me to develop my skills both in capturing the images, and manipulating them in the digital dark room.





Benedict Ray

Lomond School
West Scotland

'Decay and Derelict'

In this project, I took numerous shots of derelict buildings at two different locations, Cardross Seminary and Buchanan Castle. The aim of this project was to expose a hidden beauty in forgotten buildings and document it in an attempt to highlight their haunting elegance. The photos that feature areas of the Cardross Seminary create isolation and atmosphere that empathize the connotations surrounding abandoned buildings while shots including areas of Buchanan Castle form strong relations between the building and time, showing the extent of decay and overgrowth by nature.





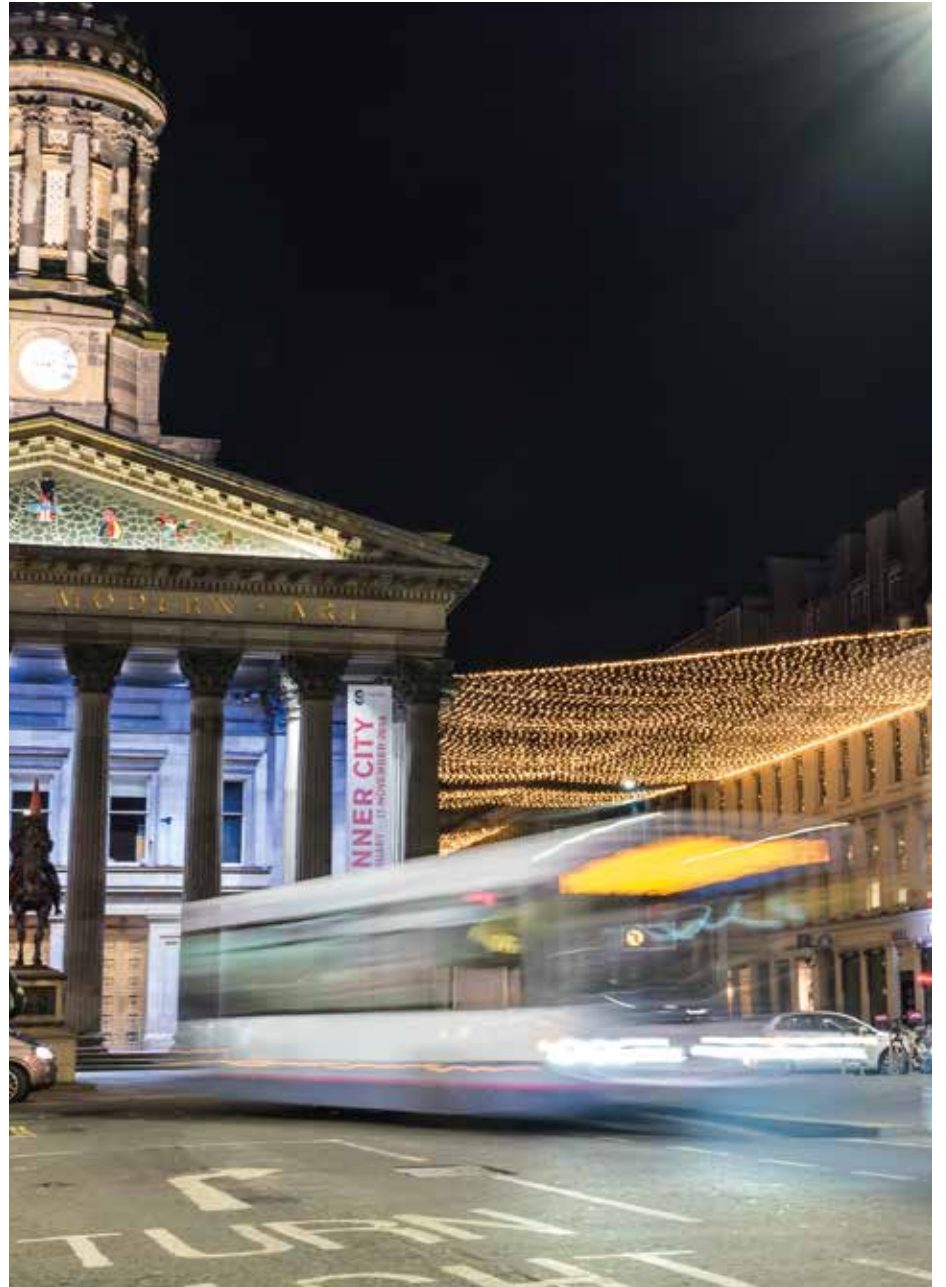
Cameron Ross

Balfron High School
Mid-Scotland and Fife

'Glasgow at Night'

I chose Glasgow at Night for two main reasons. The first is that I enjoy the challenge of shooting at night — the process of taking the photo is different and you can play with the lighting in the photos, whether using a flash gun or creating light trails from car headlights. The second is that I find the photos are more interesting due to the lighting and the vibrancy of the city at night. I am hoping to study architecture at university, so this project also gave me the opportunity to look at some of the stunning architecture in Glasgow.





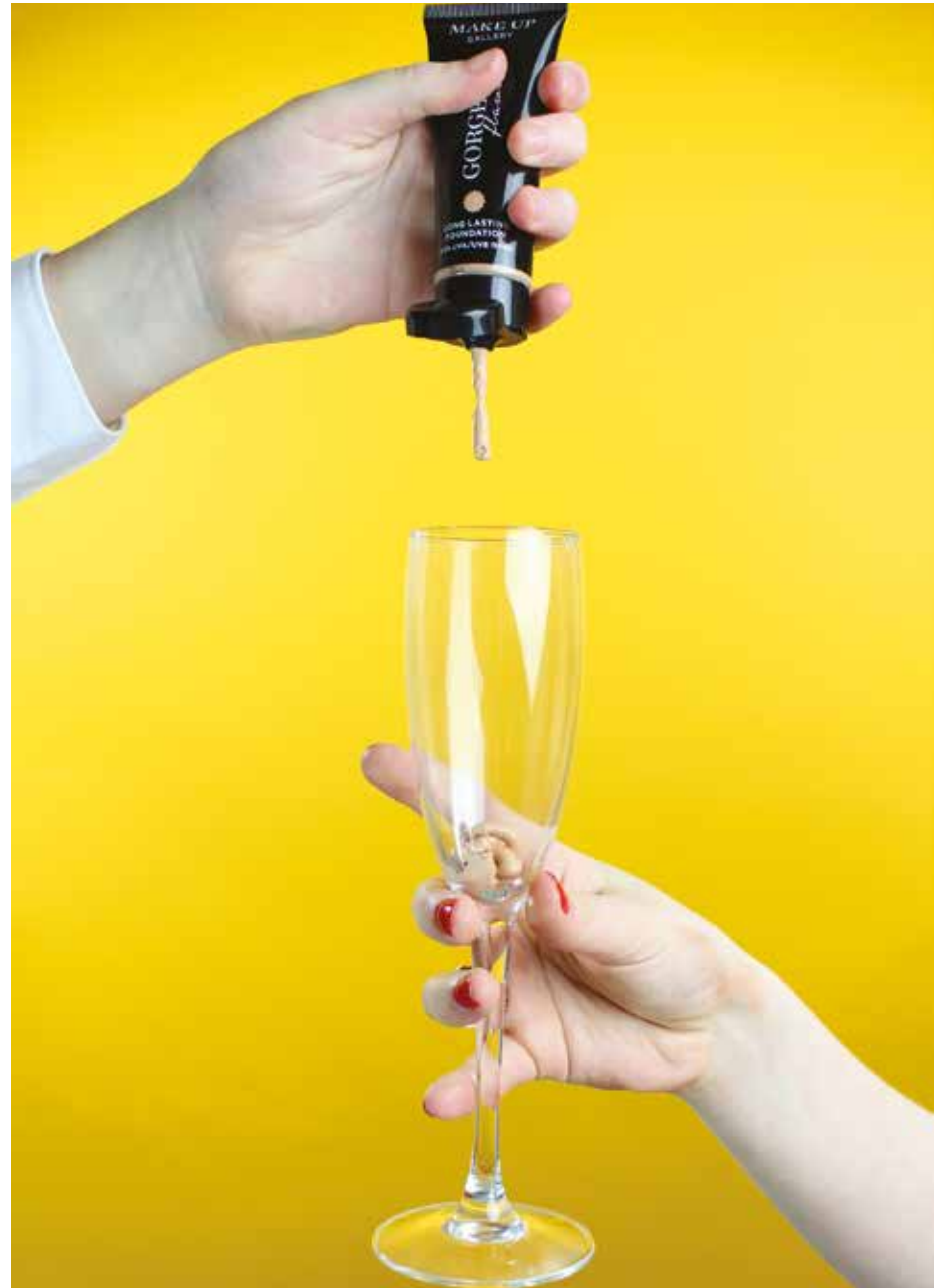
Carenza Dickens

Dollar Academy
Mid-Scotland and Fife

'Beauty Pressure'

In my project I decided to explore people's insecurities about their appearance and how they feel pressured to use makeup and beauty products, as society's view of 'normal' is distorted. By using studio setups and carefully manipulated colour, lighting and props I was able to mimic the airbrushed, 'perfect' images that we are exposed to in the media. I wanted to show the effects of the seemingly harmless advertising we see every day by showing people in their obsession to cover their 'imperfections', our over-dependency on beauty products, and how we try to 'fix' something that occurs naturally.





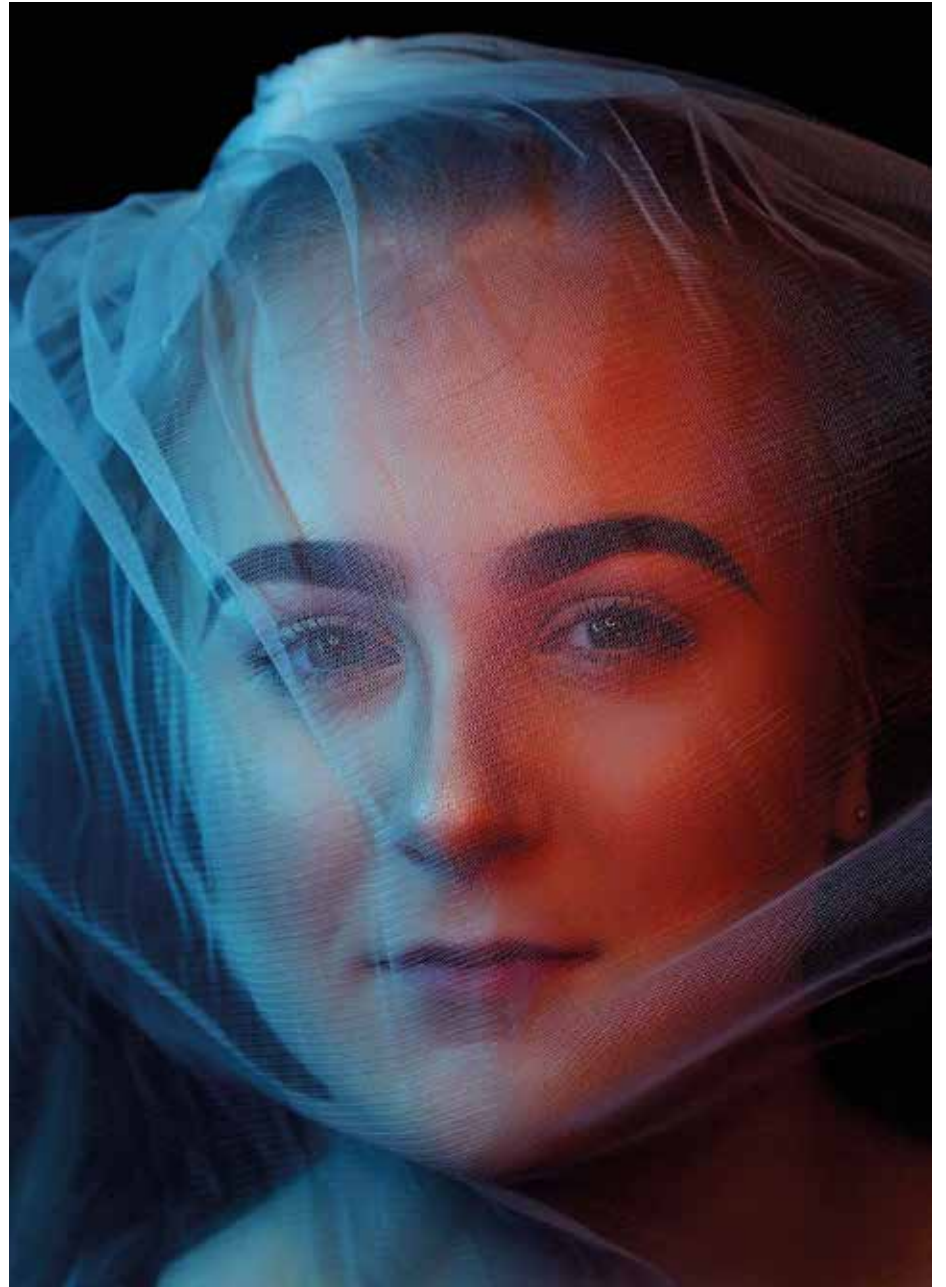
Emily Cumming

Kyle Academy
South Scotland

'As others see us'

My inspiration for this folio came from the way Mental Health is negatively portrayed throughout the media – images of mental illnesses in information leaflets, adverts and helplines are similar, dull, lifeless and boring. I thought that a set of bright, bold and interesting images would provide a much needed relief. This thought brought to life my plan and ideas, to which later formed my Higher Folio. I used multiple techniques, props and models with bright colours and exciting and unique ideas to form a quirky and uplifting take on Mental Health.





Euan Garden

Webster's High School
North East Scotland

'Abstract Nature'

My project was a theme of abstract nature where I would use shallow depth of field, effective composition and interesting lighting to create abstract images. These images I created mean a lot to me as they display my photography skills very well. They are special images that I will look back on which inspires me to learn and adapt more. My work was inspired by two abstract photographers; Dan Baumbach, and Eliot Porter.





Gemma Anderson

Falkirk High School
Central Scotland

'Grandpa'

The images I produced for this project mean a great deal to me. I was able to challenge myself in finding creative and innovative ways to portray the different aspects of my Grandpa's hobby. The steep learning curve in photography on both a personal and creative level was a huge challenge, considering the intimate nature of the chosen subject. My work was inspired by my desire to immortalise the love my Grandpa has for fishing. I hope these photographs can be shared and passed down my future family's generations as an everlasting legacy of my Grandpa.





Georgia McLellan

Dalbeattie High School
South Scotland

'The countryside in miniature'

To me, the Higher Photography course was all about developing my confidence behind the camera and exploring the world around me through a lens. I chose 'The Countryside in Miniature' because I wanted to try and show just how beautiful and delicate nature can be, using macro. I was inspired by photographers like Alberto Ghizzi Panizza. I did some basic research and looked at other photos for inspiration, but I mainly just wandered around looking for interesting things and letting nature inspire me.





Gillian Love

Auchinleck Academy
South Scotland

'The Projected Mind'

I had the idea that these photographs would convey an emotion, create a setting, or even an unusual atmosphere, simply by using a projected image layered over a person. Modelling myself, I would carefully stand against my bedroom wall, and use a mirror to judge the composition, and pose whilst the timer on my camera counted down. While I have seen this technique done before, I wanted to challenge myself with creating my own version of portrait photographs, whilst thinking a bit outside of the box.





Heather Osborne

Mearns Castle High School
West Scotland

‘Structures in Glasgow’

I had a personal interest in photography before undertaking the Higher course, however this allowed me to develop my skills further after I took inspiration from photographers such as Joel Tjintjelaar and Ansel Adams — for example, the way Tjintjelaar uses long exposure for his architecture shots. I did some research and was eventually able to use this technique myself. My images mean a lot to me as they prove that I’m able to achieve the desired effect, even when if it means having to revisit certain sites multiple times.



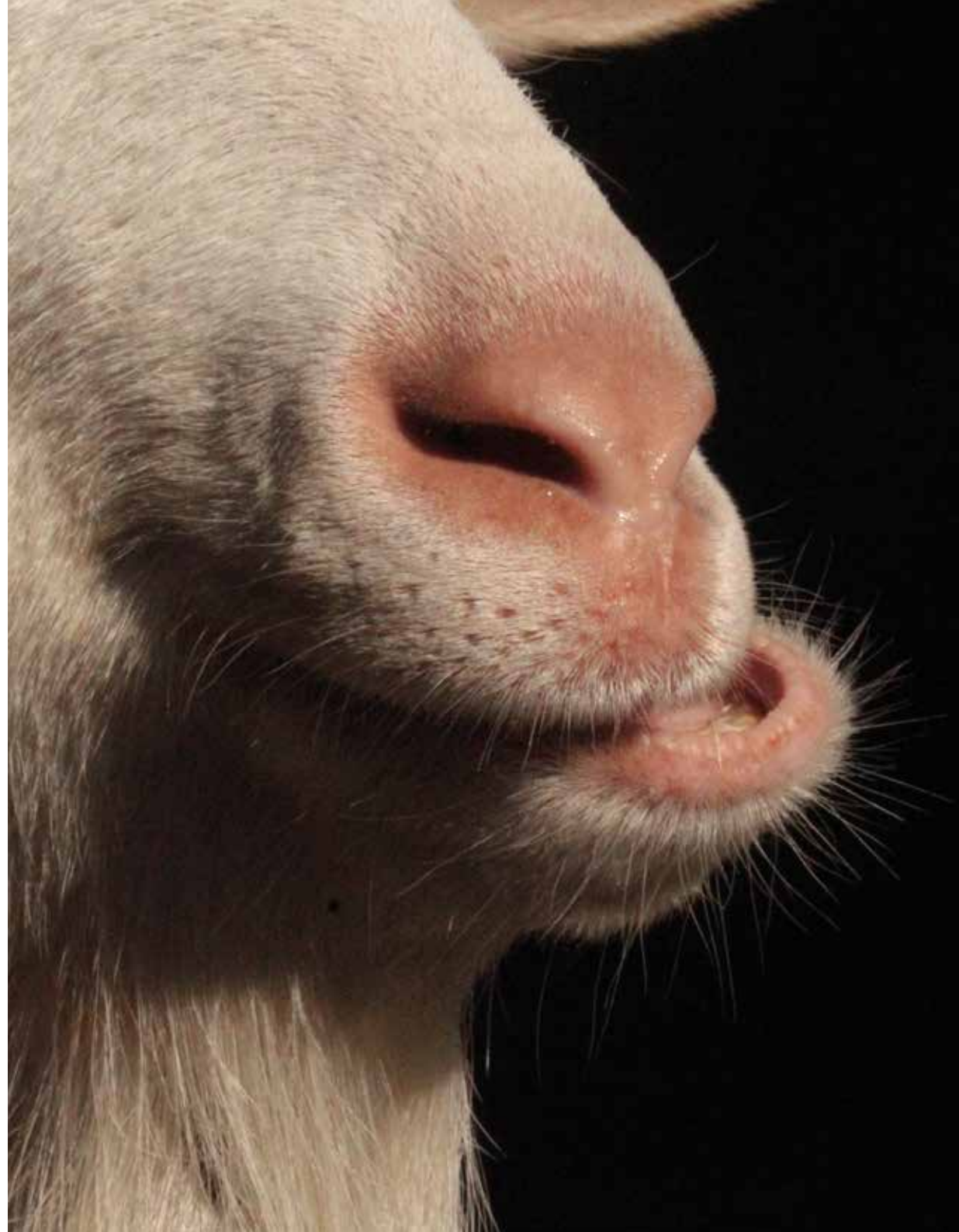


Isla Jack

The Gordon Schools
North East Scotland

'Animals'

I have always adored animals of all shapes and sizes, colours and patterns. For my Higher Photography portfolio, I knew at once that I wanted to do it on my animals — my dogs, cats, pigs, chickens, horses and goats. Every single one of them has its own personality. I was inspired by several animal photographers, namely Ewan Cheyne (Mutley's Snaps Pet Photography) from Falkirk who produces gorgeous, natural images of a wide range of animals. I tried to recreate many of his looks in my shoots from my own perspective, and I think that it really helped me to not just take photographs, but really enjoy doing it!





Jazmin Myles

Blairgowrie High School
Mid-Scotland and Fife

‘Natural World – Flowers’

The images tell a story to the viewer; they start off with full blooms with a calming yet exciting colour scheme. As the images progress, the background colour changes and the images show flowers trapped inside various substances; ice, glass and plastic. This represents man’s control over nature and how we don’t always use it to nature’s benefit. The images then show flowers being consumed by fire. The last two in the set are drained of colour and thus altered after man’s intervention.



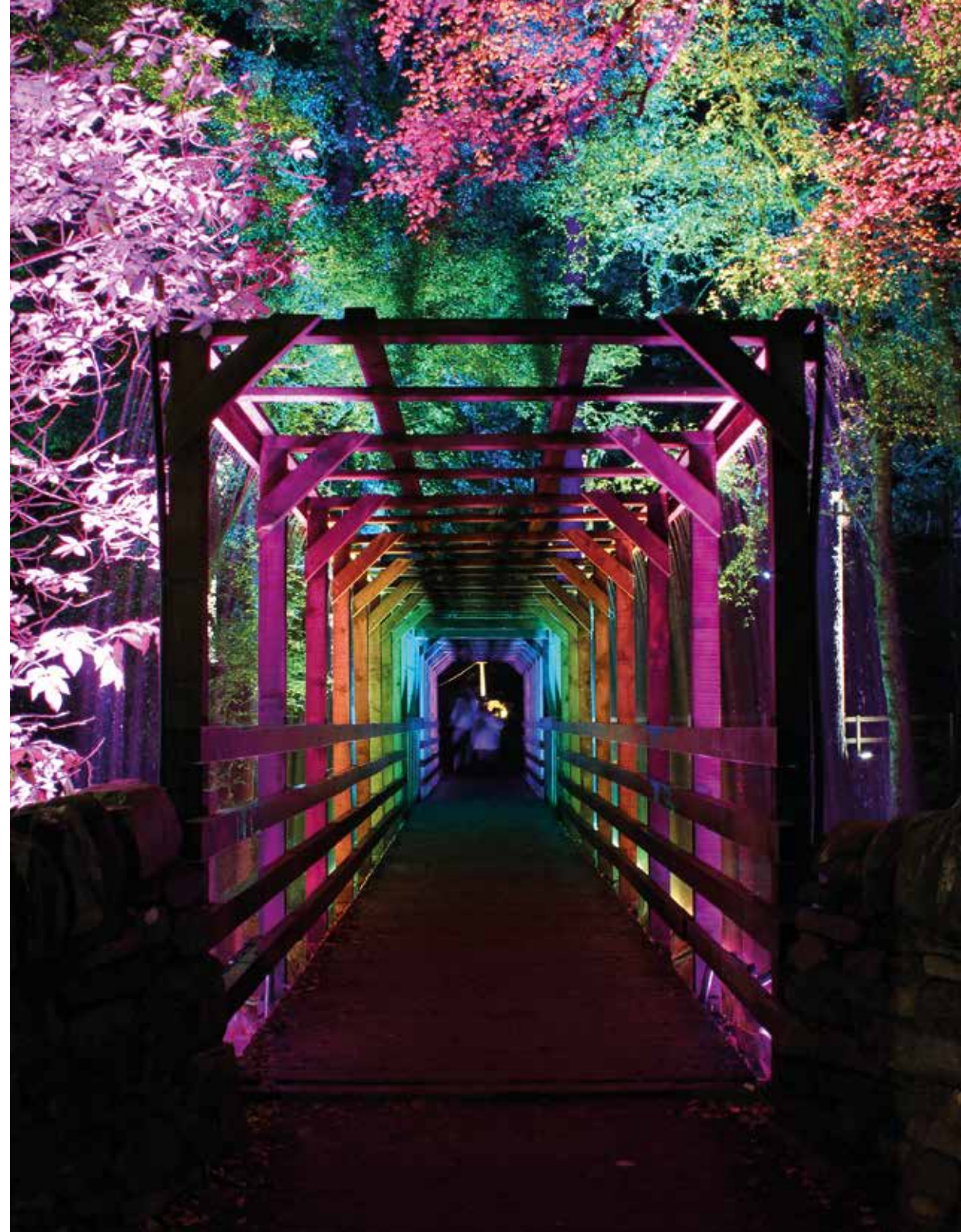


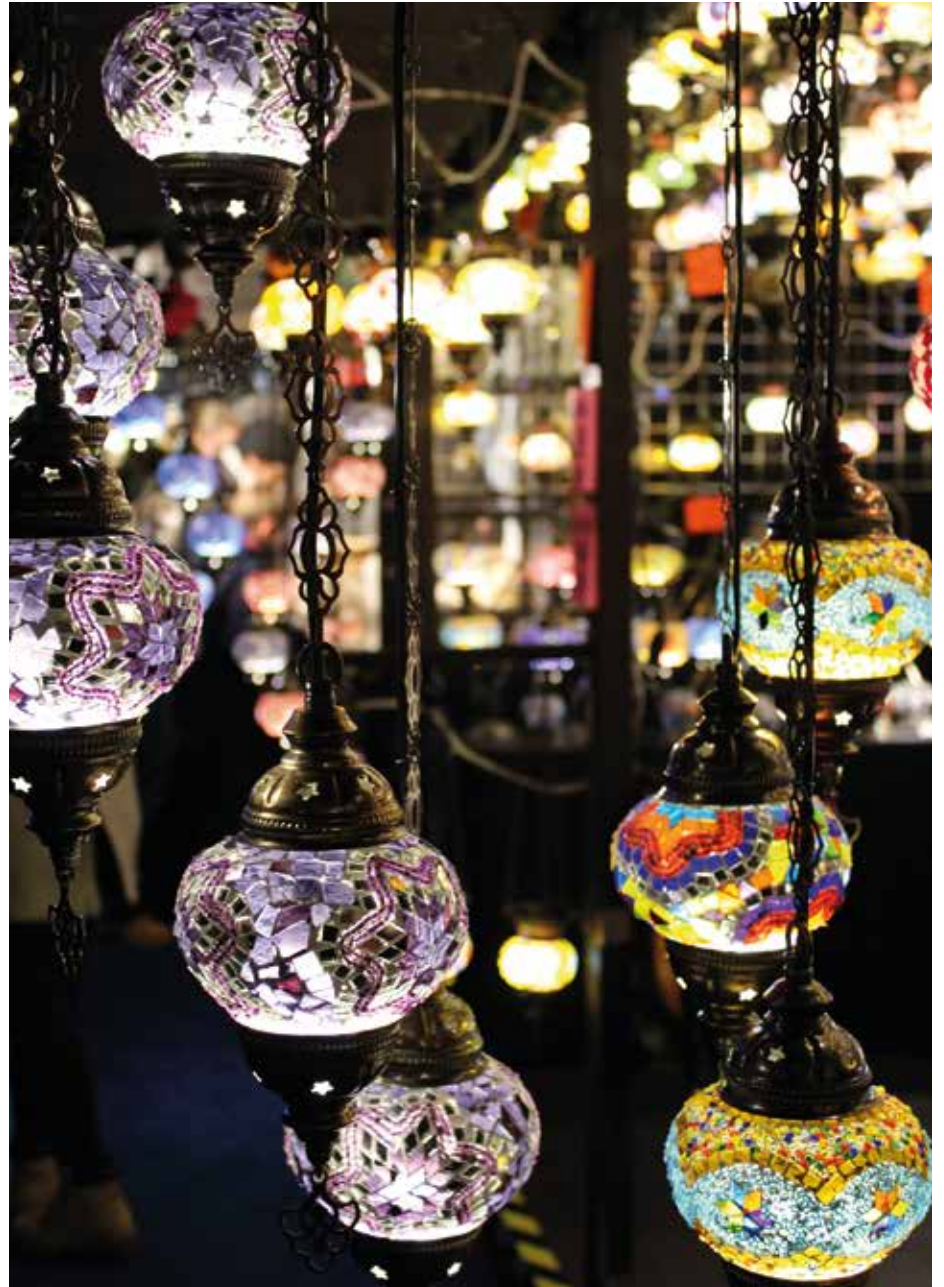
Jennifer Fisher

Glasgow Clyde College
Glasgow

'Light'

I have always had a fascination with light photography, especially long exposures and the creative effects that can be achieved from them. I have attended light shows, and felt this was a great starting point for my Higher. Long exposures take time, thought and consideration to set up and take, but the rewards are priceless — a unique and sometimes unexpected result, which is what I love. Each one of these photos has fantastic colours and some interesting textures and shapes. My favourite is of the bridge at the Enchanted Forest — it was worth missing the bus home!





Megan Leask

Dollar Academy
Mid-Scotland and Fife

‘Lonely Figures’

In my images I wanted to portray not only loneliness and isolation but also its existence in company and other typically social situations — it’s very easy to feel lonely when not alone. I think this message is so relevant with the introduction of technology in society today and the lack of interaction it causes. These images each tell their own story through expression, lighting and composition which shows a broad range of situations that aren’t all typically lonely scenarios and hopefully raise awareness to be kind and inclusive to everyone.





Mollie B Forsyth

Stromness Academy
Highlands and Islands

‘Colour amongst architecture’

My project emanated from my reaction to colour, particularly amongst architecture. From a young age I have been hypersensitive to my surroundings. I’m interested in how colour can transform our perception of urban areas and uplift our mind-sets. I’ve aspired to capturing the exact moment where this feeling is provoked. Photography has helped me to understand the impact of the environment on people’s wellbeing, which is something I want to continue with my future studies.





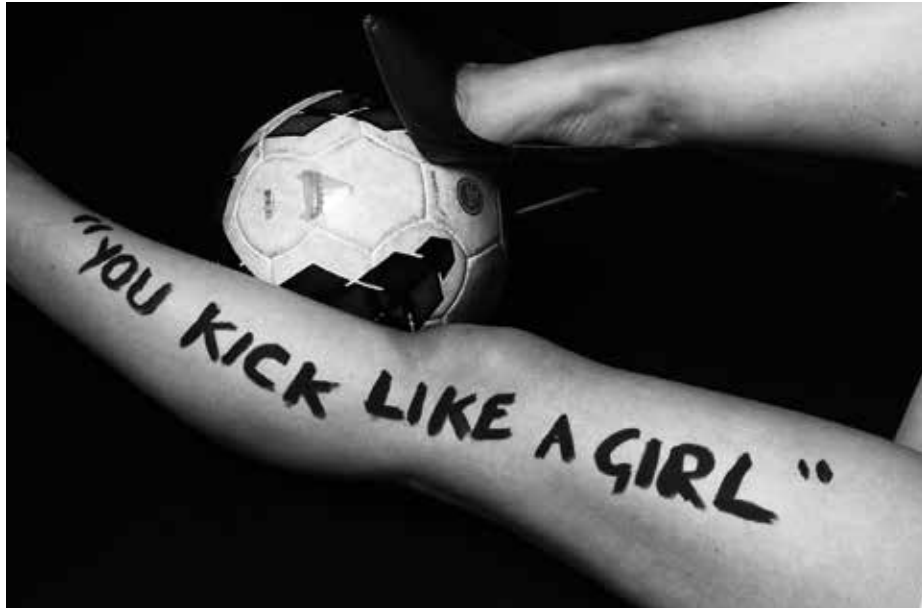
Neve McCrudden

St Ambrose High School
Central Scotland

'Feminine'

I believe my twelve black and white portrait images of all female models explore challenges that typical women may face — the idea that society tells women they need to reach unrealistic beauty standards to be considered attractive and feel accepted. I believe that all forms of media including photography should have meaning behind them to inspire change and spark discussion. By using word art and props creatively I have addressed controversial topics that society often leaves unspoken to avoid uncomfortable conversations — “Gender equality is a human fight, not a female fight!”





Niamh Hamilton

Jordanhill School
Glasgow

'A day at the stables'

I have always had a strong interest in horses. Since I turned 10 I have gone to a stables in Strathblane every Saturday where I help clean up, ride, tack up, groom and feed the horses. I have always admired the gracefulness of horses and just how captivating they can be. This had a big influence on the theme I chose for my portfolio, but from personal experience, I wanted to portray the not-so-glamorous, yet still enjoyable, aspects of working with horses.





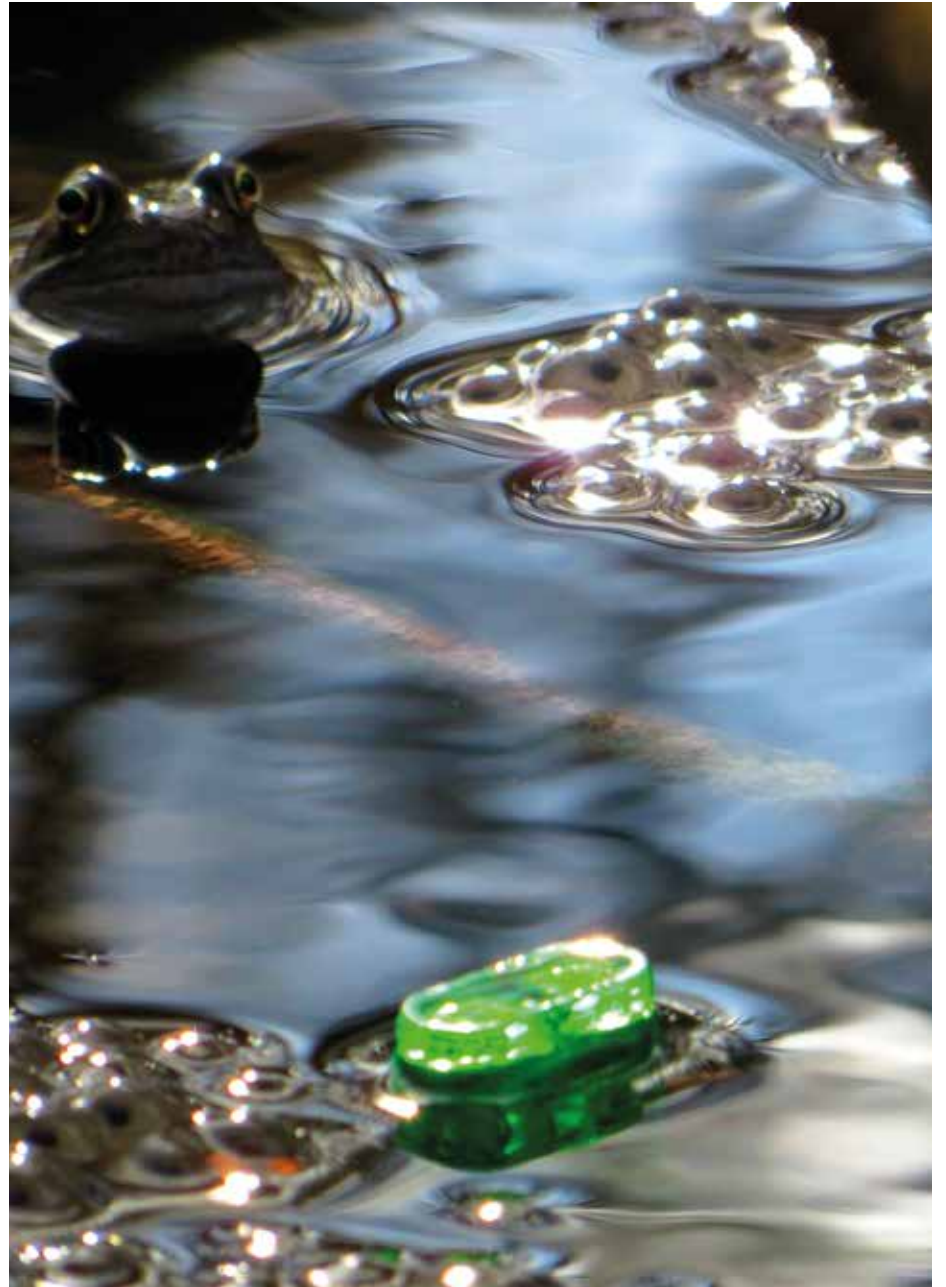
Poppy Dempster

Douglas Academy
West Scotland

‘The Human Impact’

The theme of my project is the harm that we humans inflict on our environments and those who live in them. This subject produces photographs that are more than just nice to look at — they have a deeper and darker meaning. I am particularly interested in the damage littering can do to our planet and the urban problems that have arisen in recent years. I hope that when confronted by images that expose the wrongs we do our planet, we will become more conscious of our surroundings and our impact on them.





Rebecca Littlewood

Montrose Academy
North East Scotland

'Caffeinated'

For my project I researched marketing and advertising, particularly in the coffee industry, to explore how photography is used. My inspiration came from both my love of the beverage and the introduction of a new coffee machine into my place of work (it was also a plus that I got to drink the coffee after the shoots). I was able to capture different stages in the making of coffee, and produced final images that could be used for marketing and advertising as well as for decorative purposes.





Robbie Fowler

George Heriot's School
Lothian

'Portraits of the People'

I wanted to create a collection of portraits of different people, from different places and different professions, taking inspiration from photo-journalists such as Steve McCurry. When taking the photos, I felt it was important to connect with the subject, and this was done through the use of eye contact and the honest expressions used by the subjects. By getting the subjects comfortable with me, and spending time having a conversation with them before taking the photograph, I feel the viewer has a much more intimate experience when looking through the photo set.





Rodger Shearer

West Lothian College
Lothian

‘Abandoned Industrial Landscape’

For this project, I wanted to record some of the abandoned industrial sites in the West Lothian and Lanarkshire areas where I have grown up. So many of the sites I remembered were in fact often cleared and built on. For this reason, it became more important to me that these sites be recorded photographically while they still existed. I had thought about doing this as a monochrome project, but when I found that duotone worked well with the red colour reflecting the colours of shale, rust and brickwork.





Sarah Brown

Balerno Community High School
Lothian

'The Hidden World'

I wanted to photograph details of the miniature 'hidden world' of our native plants and insects, and their amazing colours, patterns and form. I have always had an interest in mini-beasts and their habitats, and I find that macro photography is a way of capturing moments that would usually go unnoticed. Many aspects of this environment and the goings-on within it are too small or happen too fast for us to properly observe. By photographing them, I give people a better understanding and appreciation of it.





Sheila Matheson

West Highland College UHI
Highlands and Islands

‘People at work and play’

I’ve always admired and been interested in both portrait and black and white photography, but with practically no experience of either, decided to incorporate both in a social documentary style for my project. I thought it would be challenging and increase my knowledge while learning about photography. I wanted to show the people of different ages living in our local communities displaying their traditional and contemporary skills. Some are doing something traditional, others something more unusual or new to the area, but together these make rural Ross-shire what it is today.



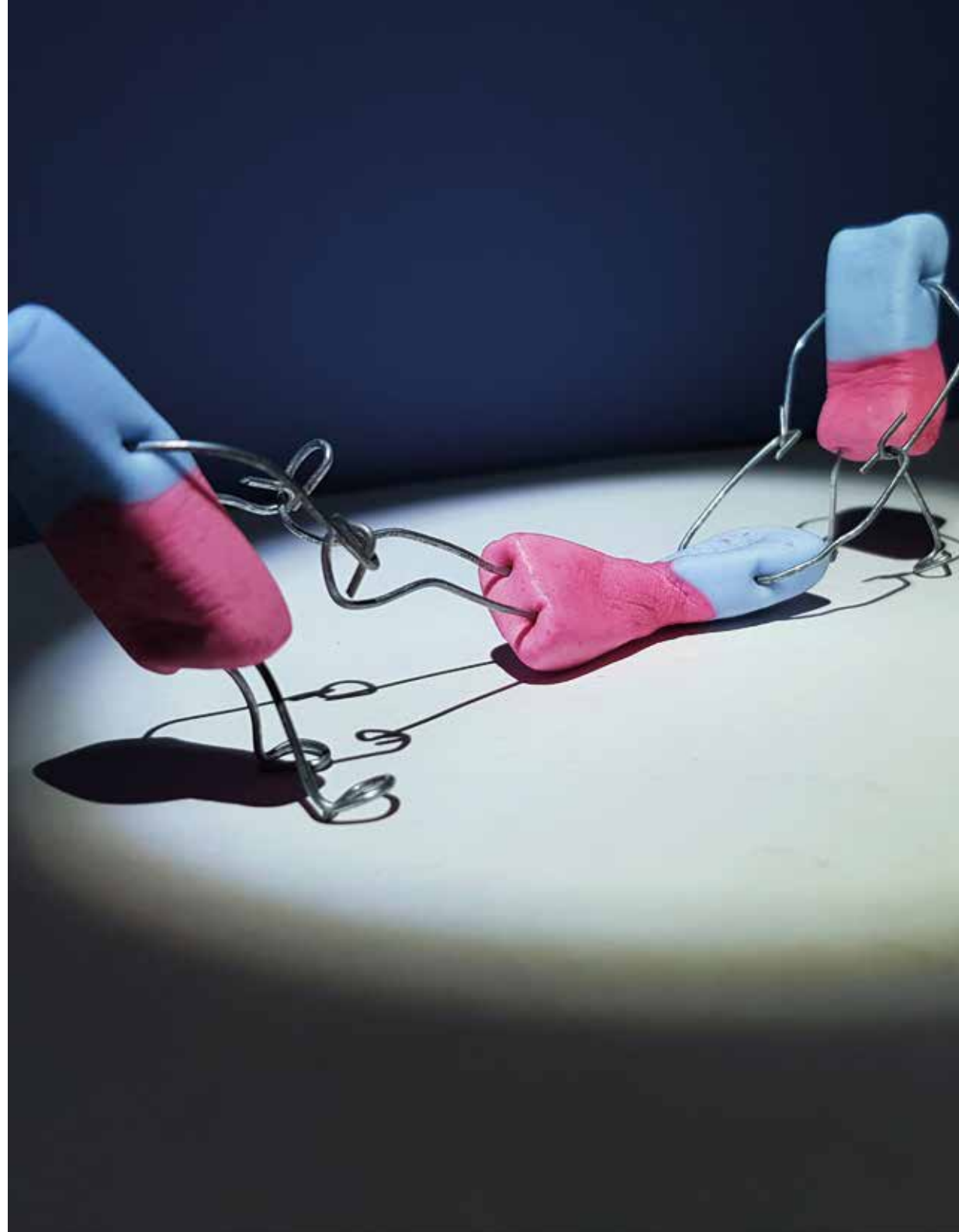


Vijay Chand

Bishopbriggs Academy
West Scotland

'Conceptual Still Life'

These photos were a chance to explore my own limitations and interests. I'd never committed to my creativity at this level before, and these photos will always serve as a reminder that having fun and following your passions is the most important principle of being successful. My inspirations were the photographers Terry Border and Slinkachu. I think their work is incredible, and the way they approach their photos is unique. Their work was refreshing and uplifted my spirits — not something I often felt when looking at other images.







The images in this catalogue remain the intellectual property of the individual photographers, and should not be replicated without their consent.



With thanks to:

