Do you see what I see? Alongsiding;

a shared moment of close looking
through a moving-image lens.

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ABSTRACT

Do you see what I see? – Alongsiding; a shared moment of close looking through a moving-image lens.

Recognising the impossibility of seeing and knowing the same as others, the research uses moments of shared looking at photographs to ask, 'do you see what I see?'.[1]

The term 'alongsiding' refers to a heightened exchange, using the moving image camera to mediate a process of shuffling, layering and juxtaposing photographic images. These small moving image acts are presented as sustained moments of close looking carved out of hectic, media saturated bureaucratic lives. The local, intimate, physical presence created when two or more people are handling images and looking together, enables a different kind of seeing.

Acknowledging screen-based image overload, the research uses analogue photographic imagery that slips between vernacular and composed images, tending towards archetypes such as 'rocks, bodies, trees, water'. The camera is used as a primary research tool attending to the physical characteristics of photographs, light and surface; their 'volume, opacity, tactility, and physical presence in the world'.[2]

Printed photographs are used as prompts for moving image-based processes that draw on the compelling materiality of the photographic. Layers of imagery, embedded in histories and affects, touch double, unfold and overlay. I am interested in how resistance and harmony might manifest within the layers of juxtaposition of images, image and text, image and sound.

Working within studio, art school and situation-responsive contexts, the work employs and deviates from filmic conventions, frequently exposing the manner of making, including apparatus, location and dialogue. Reflexive acknowledgment of context, peer influence and decision-making is manifest through unfixed layered imagery and multiple registers within publications and texts, photographs and films.

Embodied knowledge of handling photographic material, (and cameras) is present in the shared moment with all participants, regardless of experience and expertise. The research identifies and articulates 'tugs'[3] as moments of learning and understanding that occur during collective looking and making. Through creating a certain atmosphere, the camera becomes a simultaneously benign and powerful protagonist providing a framework for participants to feel they can inhabit the space and lose themselves.

Using the double 'look' at a photographic image through another lens draws attention to other modes of working: hierarchically from above or below, face to face, equally and combatively. Alongsiding implicitly asks for reciprocity in the act of re-looking, as 'a feminist act whether it is stated or not, relying as it does on principles of generosity, equality, and communality,'[4] and in doing so hopes to build modestly impactful intimate understandings among people.

Expanding on the notions of 'alongsiding' as an act of reciprocity aims to encourage co-curators and participants (in this project and beyond) to hold it in mind, to recognise and acknowledge the moments in which it occurs; where working with, rather than for one another, can happen.

1
(nostalgia). 1971. dir. by Hollis Frampton (New York: Anthology Film Archives)

2
Geoffrey Batchen. 2002. *Each Wild Idea: Writing, Photography, History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press) p. 60
Vernacular Photographies

3
The 'tug' is my term for an internal realisation that an idea you have felt and articulated as part of the 'noticing' of creative practice.

4
Joyce Cronin. 2019. *How Can We Know the Dancer from the Dance?*, Elektra Essay, Commissioned for *Together With Them She Went*, Tintype Gallery, London 2020

One Second Feature – *Citizen Eldridge* 2017



