

"The artists intent is to create a narrative as well as visual intrigue".

I capture 'the physical presence of the book'. And create photographic images of these magnified book edges, producing abstract, geometric shapes, revealing the delicate texture and colour of the paper page. These splayed edges remind us of the everyday human interaction we have with the written word and the paper on which it is printed. I believe there is symbolic meaning behind what we choose to read, keep and share with others. On first impressions there is a visual absence of text within my work, thus leaving the image open to interpretation. However, it is through the book's titles, that the viewer can choose to re-construct past memories triggered by titles such as A LOOK AT MY LIFE, A GIRL LIKE I or CRIMSON RAMBLERS OF THE WORLD, FAREWELL and THE WAR'S BEST PHOTOGRAPHS. Alternatively, one can look posthumously at the interacting lives of the books owners, such as architect Ernő Goldfinger and his wife Ursula Blackwell, within the series 2 Willow Road. ART OF THE AVANT GARDE IN RUSSIA, HUMAN RESPONSE TO TALL BUILDINGS, WOMAN IN ART and HUNGARIAN COOKERY BOOK can be read from this alternative perspective. The full titles, for example THE WAR'S BEST PHOTOGRAPHS, Odhams Press, London 1941, include author, publisher, country and date, so building a bigger picture historically of time and place. 2 Willow Road, the title of the series, refers to the Goldfinger house, owned now by The National Trust in London where their private library continues to exist.

The series Hours of Devotion involved historical research into the archive of a 300 year old private bank. The library reflects the spirit of the time: significant change via war, social discontent, economic and technical advancement as well as a collective shift in consciousness through religion, politics, art and culture. On another level the work is also about the devoted life of the wealthy philanthropist Angela Burdett-Coutts, who personally owned some of the books before setting up the bank's staff library in the mid 1850's. The series title Hours of Devotion derives from one of her personal books. This staff library consisted largely of nineteenth century works, many in fine-tooled leather bindings with luscious marbled or gilded page edges, reflecting the wealth of Victorian architectural splendour and decoration. Differing from the abstraction of 2 Willow Road the momentous scale of these prints (pushing the limits of modern printing technology and digital imaging) is befitting of the era from which the subjects originated - The Industrial Revolution, which allowed books to reach a wider audience more than ever before. Their bruised, decayed, colourful edges illuminate the tactile process of reading. Such visual consumption shows why the book as an object will survive; we can almost trace the paths of human knowledge through a paper trail of visual splendour. The short titles CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE - DISRAELI are taken from the spines, whilst the full titles are more elaborate, specifying additional research such as catalogue numbers and book plates:

LECTURES ON ART - WEEKES, Lectures on Art, Delivered at the Royal Academy, London.

With Portrait, a short sketch of the Author's Life and eight selected photographs of his works
Henry Weekes, RA, Professor of Sculpture 1880 Published by Bickers and Son, 1 Leicester Square, W.C. London,
Printed by Chiswick Press: C.Whittingham, Toaks Court, Chancery Lane, London Coutts & Co. Library cat. no.1931.
Bookplate - 440 Strand.

The artist's own exhibition catalogue reveals researched historical notes derived from a variety of underlinings and marks within the text of the chosen books. From them a sub-narrative develops, the linguistics signs unravel and an alternative portrait of a time and place is pieced together.

Selected quotes published

"Projecting an absolute blankness, Bailey's crisp and detailed images, which lend the books an uncanny presence, conjured an occult form of reading, a sort of fingertip divination"
Barry Schwabsky, Art Review, Dec 2005

"Bailey's photographs are linked with the past, with traces of other people's lives and memories. The power lies in the evocation of feeling and in a sense of mystery"
Nigel Warburton, Portfolio Magazine May 2006

"Bailey's photographs, which are figural and non-figural at the same time, are received by the receiver as some sort of visual signs that allows each receiver to apply his or her interpretations and imagination to them"
Hyeyoung Shin, Curator Gaain Gallery 2008

