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Evidence Portfolio: Portraits — Creative Spaces
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Output Description: Exhibitions
Author: Liggins, Andrea
Year of Publication / Production: 2011
Location / Venue(s): Plymouth International Book Festival, Peninsula Arts Gallery, Plymouth, UK,
University Gallery Nanjing, China
Media: Photographic prints and publication
Number of Works: 2 series of portraits
Series One: Xavier Mariscal, Barcelona, digital camera

Series Two: Yuko Shimizu, New York, low resolution plastic lens camera
Research Context

The *Portraits—Creative Spaces* project is a development within Liggins’ on-going research concerned with the Baroque photographic aesthetic. Two contrasting series of portraits were produced for the publication *Making Great Illustration*, (2011) London: A & C Black Publishers Ltd. The subjects are well-known illustrators from the United States of America, Canada, China and Europe, including Quentin Blake, Ronald Searle and Brad Holland, together with images of their studio spaces. For Series One, Liggins used a high resolution digital camera and Series Two was produced using a plastic low resolution camera.

Although *Making Great Illustration* privileges the more conventional digital photographic series, subsequent exhibitions of the series enabled Liggins to contrast the two different photographic modes as well as their associated pictorial viewpoints and aesthetic intensities.

Research Imperatives

Liggins’ focus for this project was to develop her research into the potential of the plastic camera aesthetic in relation to portraiture and imagery of the working environment, and to identify and extend the distinctions between the two photographic modes through portrayals of unsettled and nuanced relationships of sitters and...
their personal spaces. Her objective was to encourage a sensation of place rather than its description, and the image as having its ‘own world’.

**Project Methods**

Liggins photographed illustrators in their studio spaces in a number of locations, using a digital camera to produce formally posed, descriptive images for *Series One*. For *Series Two*, though also posed, the portraits were an exploration of the capacity of the ‘low-tech’ plastic lens to substitute fine detail for blurring and technical sophistication for the impression of a passing glance.

**Outcomes and Dissemination**

To date the research has been published and exhibited as follows:

- Exhibition of *Series Two* portraits in the *Making Great Illustration* exhibition at the International Festival of Literature, Peninsula Arts Gallery, Plymouth, 10th September – 20th October 2012
- The exhibition travelled to University Gallery, Nanjing, China, 5th – 8th December 2012
• Continued *Series Two* portraiture, featured in *Culture Colony Quarterly* Arts Journal, Issue 1, Autumn 2013

Exhibition, International Festival of Literature, Plymouth, 2012
Making Great Illustration cover and acknowledgement page
Making Great Illustration Xavier Mariscal and two photographs of his studio space for Series One
Making Great Illustration Xavier Mariscal, Hvass and Hannibal, and Emma Dibben for Series One
The Photography

When I was a book, the first time I saw the photographs, I was so excited. I had never seen anything like them before. They were so vivid and realistic, it was as if I could reach out and touch them. I knew right away that I wanted to capture the same feeling in my illustrations.

I spent hours examining each photograph, trying to understand the emotions and stories behind them. I wanted to capture the same atmosphere in my own work. I used my imagination to create scenes and characters that would bring the photographs to life.

In the end, I was able to create illustrations that were just as powerful and evocative as the photographs. I wanted to make sure that each illustration told a story, just like the photographs did. I wanted to make people feel the same way that I did when I first saw them.

I hope that my illustrations will do the same for others. I want to inspire people to see the world in a new way, to imagine stories and feel emotions that they never thought possible. I believe that art has the power to change the world, and I'm excited to be a part of that change.
Ronald and Monica Searle, France, *Series Two*

Rob Ryan, London, *Series Two*
Bedwr Williams, 2013, Series 2 continued. *Culture Colony Quarterly* Arts Journal, Issue 1, Autumn 2013
Continuing portrait work: Bedwr Williams, CCQ Arts Journal, Issue 1, Autumn 2013