

## Essay | Ieva Puodziukynaite & Richelle Dobson

### The Brief;

*You have to make a series of three photographs.*

*The same person has to be present in all three photos and the photos have to be shot in different places.*

*The photos have to be about moment and about despair.*

*The title of the series has to start with a K.*



Our SIBI task was assigned in the field of photography, meaning that we had diverse possible subject matters and techniques with which we could use. The constraints given by the brief were perceived rather like guidelines as opposed to limits, which gave us a basic framework to create in. However this framework had several obvious and banal primary visions that we had to re-interpret and approach from a completely new angle creating innovative results. We placed great importance in re-framing the original problem in order to open our eyes to new leads of thought and brainstorming. This proved a challenge to our creativity skills leading into research of new meanings and interpretations of every constraint given, both in psychological and visual contexts. We discovered that the most effective creative thinking was formed through ‘visual conversations’, i.e bouncing ideas off each other while referencing visual inspirations.

During this research combined with individual ‘brainstorming’, we developed several possible interpretation fields using a cognitive map technique. For the semantic areas defined we made mood-boards and inspiration boards of existing images that held importance, visually or conceptually. These steps led us to the “insight” phase: seeing the categorization with visual support really gave us a strong feeling of which direction to take and how to define the primary shape of it. These cognitive maps also brought to light many links between our ideas, and insights we had previously not thought of.

The process of developing our idea was rather casual yet well planned. Through thorough research, our ideas were quite solid at the time of execution, however during the photo-shoot we discovered that changes to original composition ideas had to be made to achieve the best result. We made use of the neo-Lamarckian strategy; having constraints at the very beginning, we developed several ideas that conjoined into one, adhering to the advantages of all previous ideas.

The context of our work was completely basic and universal: the human body, mind and soul. Interpreting these three fields as three different places on human body we created a series of photographs representing the moment of despair in an abstract and visually aesthetic way. We aimed to inspire a sense of anonymity and mystery, capturing a single moment in time intertwined with a disturbance/sense of despair to the perfection of the human form.

Our initial motivation came from the assigned brief. We were both excited at the scope and prospect of such an open task. In the constraints given, we focused on / picked the most important word: despair. The human body was chosen as the place to represent our idea because our group agreed that all human conditions come from the mind of a person, so despair is basically a person affecting himself. However we wanted to depict it in the most unobvious way, using self-assigned aesthetic constraints. We did this to narrow down our thoughts, and decide on a final outcome. Our over-riding idea was a picture perfect composition with a small imprint / disturbance indicating the despair of the whole. We explored numerous ways to solve and re-frame this.

We had a vision of a clean, abstract view that would create the illusion of perfection and add a small detail that would define the moment of despair: static and idealistic perfection with a small imperfection of dynamic movement expressing the despair. The person is not defined within the images therefore becomes as a symbol of a person rather than an individual – leaving space for the viewer to reflect on the images and interpret at free will.

Our group consisted of two people. We chose to play to our strengths and alternate group roles in accordance to the requirements of the task and when producing the work. Although we come from different parts of the world (Lithuania and Australia) we had some fields of interest in common that helped us in understanding the deeper interpretation possibilities through religion or history. The competition was only natural as it comes when working in a group to work as hard as the other and share the weight.

We decided to work together because of our different intellectual abilities: one assumed to have the divergent, other – communicational abilities therefore we thought we would be a good combination. In reality, we both managed to draw upon skills from all three intellectual abilities, providing interesting insights and ideas.

Personal background is constantly affecting all the choices we make and it did affect our work development. Past experience of studying in a catholic school, historical events, paintings, the work of friends, styles of graphic design or just photographs displayed in local bookshop- all these and more affected the shaping of our work.

The role of creativity played a constant role in our process. The process and mechanisms that spurred & formed our project were quite obvious for us to identify, as we were aware of the context of the task and attuned to our creative way of thinking.

