

What Lies Beneath

Project statement:

'What Lies Beneath' expresses my reflections on community using the landscape of an ancient woodland to create a visual model where things coexist and support each other. Here I transform my subconscious thoughts into something concrete.

Though humans provoked the concept of the work, they are not evident in the images. Unlike woodland communities, the local community is often disharmonious and driven by difference. The woodland's harmonious, inclusive characteristics would benefit human communities where sadly 'incomers' like me, are never accepted as local, no matter how long passes, or what they contribute to society - a story common to settings across the world.

Combining in this work the world in my head with the one in front of me, has helped to heal some of the wounds that inspired the story's beginning.

Artist Statement

I use landscape and documentary photography as mediums for expressing my observations and reflections on communities.

My photographic style is shaped by research on 'affect' (expressing what is in a photographer's mind) versus 'effect' (realism); I photograph in a metaphorical manner. Artistically I am influenced by photographers who create images as metaphors for something beyond the subject photographed, such as Minor White and Alfred Stieglitz; and by writers like John Szarkowski who explore the differences between photographs as mirrors for expression, beside images as windows that share reality.

I find the process of internal and external passage through the landscape cathartic- an effective way to filter my subconscious thoughts, that inspires me to express them creatively for others.

Artist Bio

Niki South is a visual artist born in England, now living in Pembrokeshire Wales. When visiting Pembrokeshire she found a hiraeth (deep longing for the place) and spent many years living a 'dual centre' life, between the two places, until relocating there permanently. She is currently completing her BA (Hons) Photography degree with the Open University.

Her previous documentary work 'Layers of Truth' was informed by her 'insider/outsider' position where she highlighted issues arising during Covid 19 from 'incomers' trying to integrate into a small traditional community.