

The New Forest National Park Boundary: Seeing Landscape Differently

Photographer's Statement

The twelve photographs in this exhibition form one of two parts, (the second part being an illustrated written text), of my submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the School of Art and Design, Bath Spa University.

Two of the main aims of the study have been to

- Question the notion of a geo-political boundary (i.e. the New Forest National Park boundary) that acts as a metaphor for landscape hierarchy and establishes ring-fenced categories of landscape
- Expose the camera's inability to represent 'reality' by producing a new anti-pictorial representation of the landscape that highlights the unnecessary division between the 'scenic' and the 'non-scenic' landscape – the 'barricade of beauty'

By living in close proximity to the NFNP, I was able to make frequent visits to specific locations identified in my research as 'non-places' (i.e. sites of no specific scientific or historical significance). Further, it enabled me to utilise my established knowledge of the area and pursue my long-standing continuing fascination for, and study of, the photographic representation of landscape.

Each photograph has been created by positioning the camera directly onto the barbed wire fence - the NFNP boundary - and then taking a series of between fifteen and twenty individual exposures from the same point, to reinforce the notion of what one sees *from*, rather than *of*, a specific location. These photographs were then digitally merged together and stretched in the photo-editing software *Adobe Photoshop* to produce one digitally constructed composite image.

The photographs have been deliberately framed to ensure there was an equal division of 'scenic' (inside the NFNP boundary) and 'non-scenic' (outside the NFNP boundary) landscape, on either side of the centrally positioned barbed wire boundary fence. The prominent 'blurriness' of the 'boundary' carves its way through the picture space acting as an artificial man-made "seam" that binds the two similar landscapes together.

All the photographs in the exhibition were taken in 2012 and have been printed on professional photo inkjet glossy paper.

Ken Marsden

June 2013