

# PHOTOGRAPHING BORING PLACES

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THE SPOOKY EDITION

JASON RUFFELL



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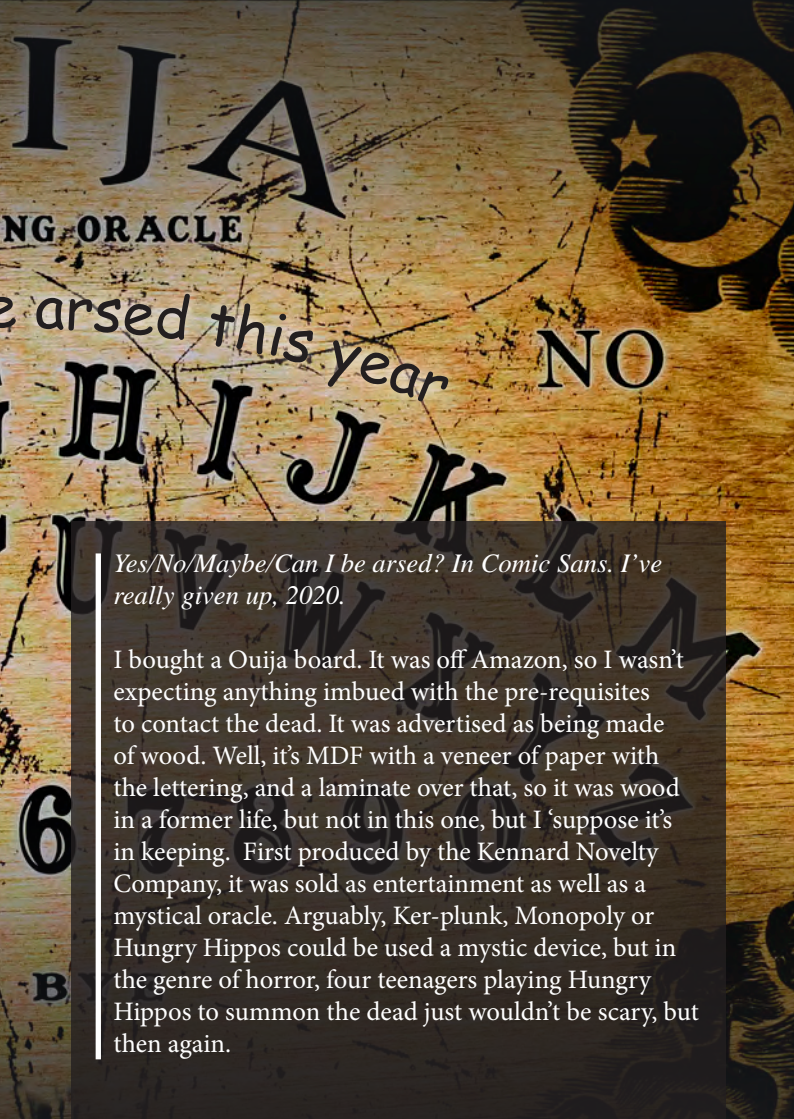
MYSTIFY

YES

I really can't be

A B C D E F G  
H I J K L M N O P Q R S T  
U V W X Y Z





IJA  
NG ORACLE

arsed this year NO  
HIJ

*Yes/No/Maybe/Can I be arsed? In Comic Sans. I've really given up, 2020.*

I bought a Ouija board. It was off Amazon, so I wasn't expecting anything imbued with the pre-requisites to contact the dead. It was advertised as being made of wood. Well, it's MDF with a veneer of paper with the lettering, and a laminate over that, so it was wood in a former life, but not in this one, but I 'suppose it's in keeping. First produced by the Kennard Novelty Company, it was sold as entertainment as well as a mystical oracle. Arguably, Ker-plunk, Monopoly or Hungry Hippos could be used a mystic device, but in the genre of horror, four teenagers playing Hungry Hippos to summon the dead just wouldn't be scary, but then again.



When I was younger, I enjoyed books on mysteries. Authors uncovering the unknown, secrets forgotten through time. Books like The Holy Blood and Holy Grail, The Sign and the Seal and the Fingerprints of the Gods. They were fascinating, but ultimately a load of bollocks, much like real life.

As we approach Halloween I thought it appropriate to cover a subject I've always been interested in, and as ghosts and spirits are more active at this time of year, something for them to read as well, assuming they are literate. Some of the older ghosts may not be.



*Cemetery Road, Sheffield 2020.*

We all end up here eventually, unless one is killed by a serial killer and your remains are flushed down the lavatory, which is arguably a cheaper means of disposal than a funeral.



Of course, Halloween is only one term for this time of year, some know it as Samhain, the ancient Celtic festival, usually appropriated by those on the internet to declare their greater knowledge of the undead over us plebs. All Saints is the Church's take on the date, and both were merged to form the modern Halloween, or October 31st as those in the know, know it.

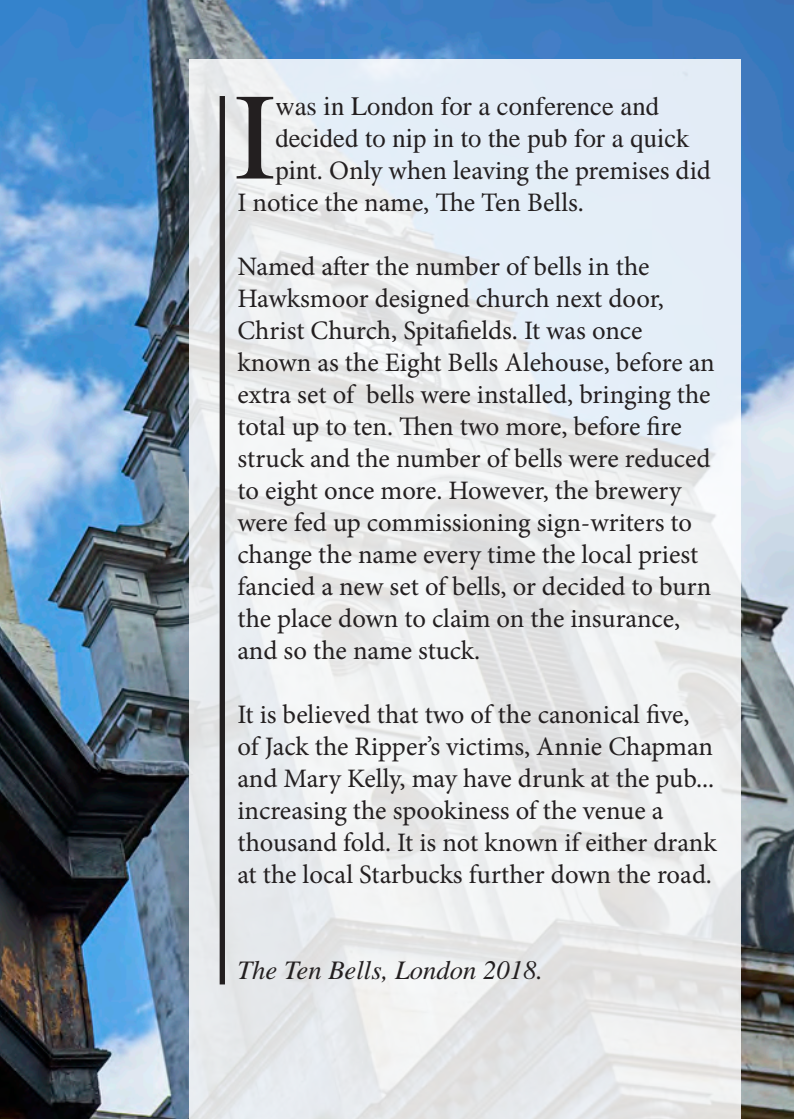
Once a festival to commemorate the summers end, the date that separates the lighter and darker half of the year, now a celebration of plastic skeletons and other disposable crap to pollute the planet and speed the death of us all. So probably fitting.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions I've been finding myself spending more time in graveyards and cemeteries. It seems the one place you can go to get away from people, the living anyway. Even the goths seem to have abandoned these places, so I've been gathering images for this edition. William Mumler would have been proud of my photoshop fakery, P.T. Barnum less so. It's all real, honest.

We like the sanitised, cuddly horror, enough to spook us, but we don't like to confront the real horrors in life. It's too real, too distressing, out of our control. We can't just turn it off like a television. Fade to black, close your eyes, tomorrow will be a new day, one where the horrors will be forgotten. So this edition celebrates that crap horror, time to take your mind away from the real world.



TEN THE BELLS



I was in London for a conference and decided to nip in to the pub for a quick pint. Only when leaving the premises did I notice the name, The Ten Bells.

Named after the number of bells in the Hawksmoor designed church next door, Christ Church, Spitafields. It was once known as the Eight Bells Alehouse, before an extra set of bells were installed, bringing the total up to ten. Then two more, before fire struck and the number of bells were reduced to eight once more. However, the brewery were fed up commissioning sign-writers to change the name every time the local priest fancied a new set of bells, or decided to burn the place down to claim on the insurance, and so the name stuck.

It is believed that two of the canonical five, of Jack the Ripper's victims, Annie Chapman and Mary Kelly, may have drunk at the pub... increasing the spookiness of the venue a thousand fold. It is not known if either drank at the local Starbucks further down the road.

*The Ten Bells, London 2018.*





*Grave marker, Sheffield, 2020.*

The dead are remembered, then forgotten then re imagined.



*Shepherd's Wheel, Sheffield, 2019.*

Industry, lost, nostalgic, but also hideous.



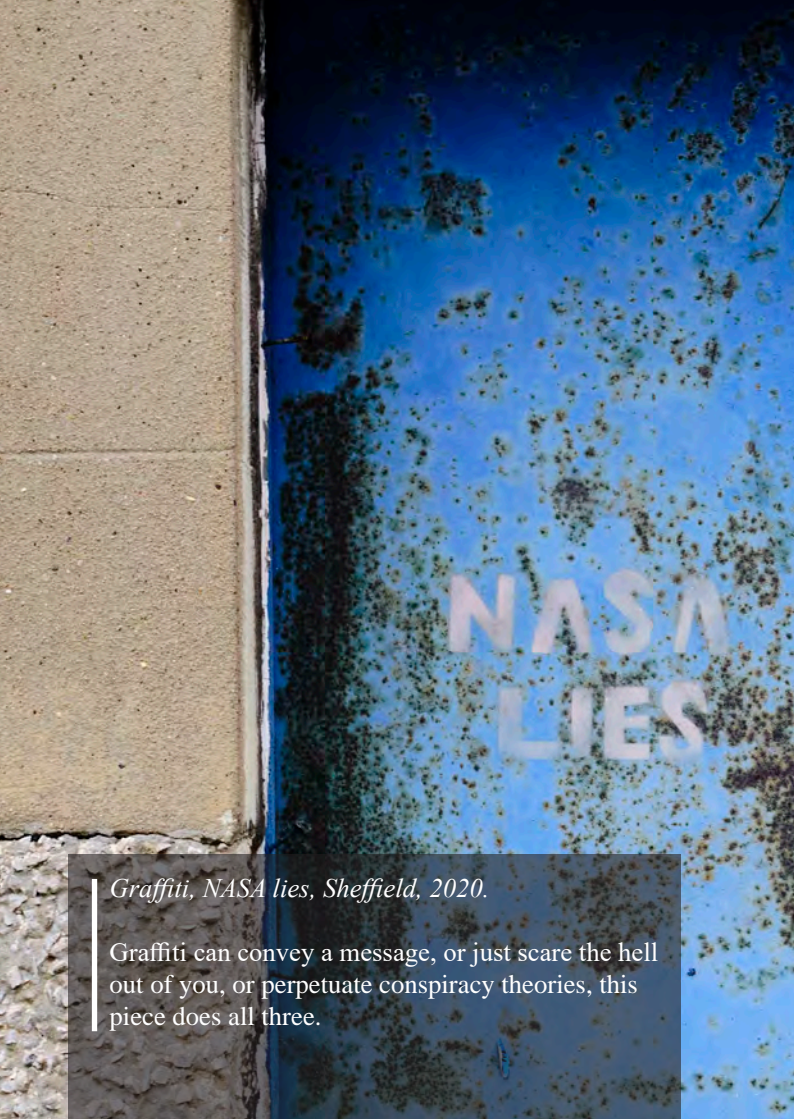
*Extra Life, Sheffield 2020.*

I think we could all do with one, especially in 2020.



*Grave stone, Sheffield, 2020.*

A grave maker having lost it's purpose now lies horizontal as a paving stone.



*Graffiti, NASA lies, Sheffield, 2020.*

Graffiti can convey a message, or just scare the hell out of you, or perpetuate conspiracy theories, this piece does all three.







*Peterborough Cathedral, Peterborough, 2017.*

Most religious building are spooky at night, also trees.



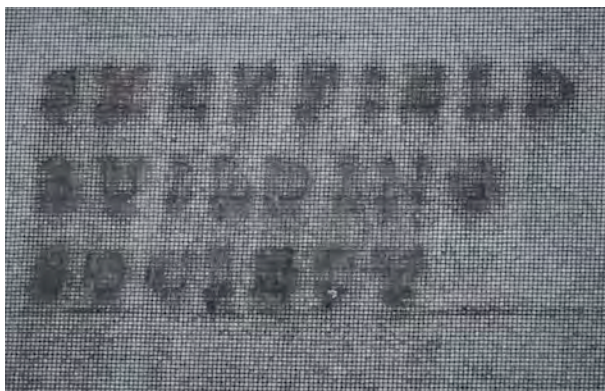
*Eye Witness Works, Sheffield, 2020.*

Derelict buildings bear witness to change.



*Gallows Knowe, Berwick, 2018.*

Horrors of the past.



*Sheffield Building Society, Sheffield, 2018.*

Echoes of the past, ghosts of a previous age.



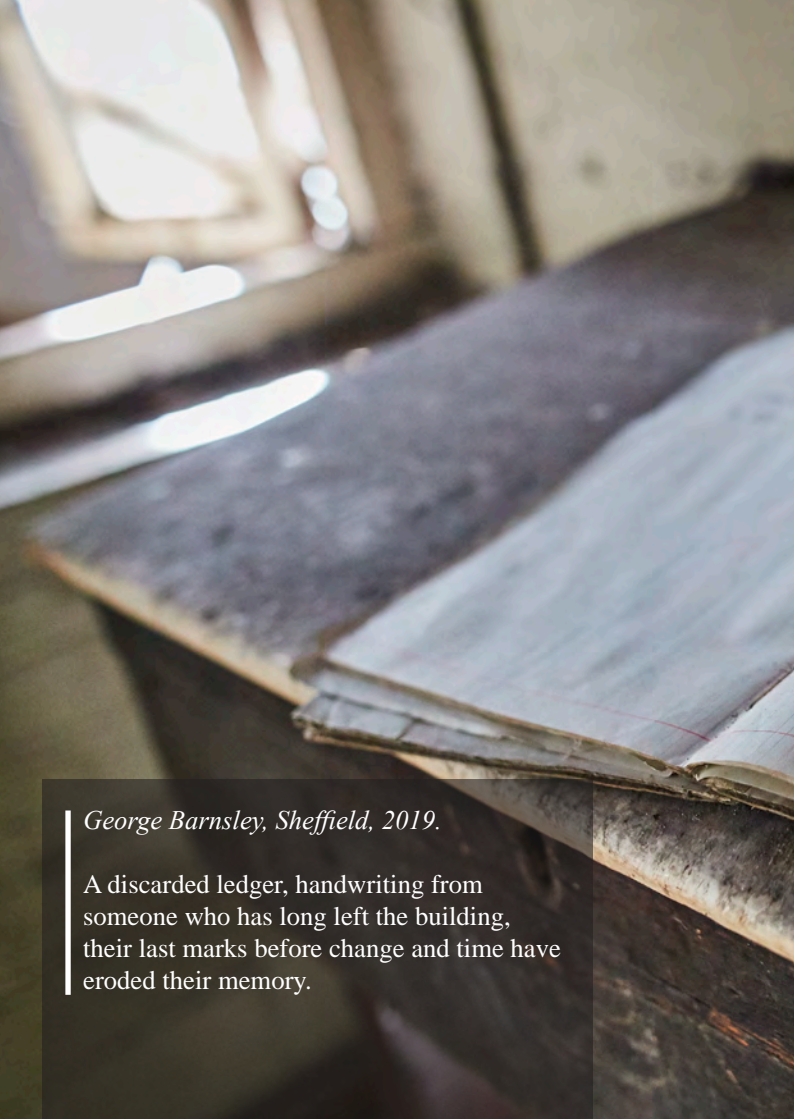


Lighthouses have become a familiar trope in horror films, Berwick, 2018.

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St Anne's, Limehouse, on a spooky night, there were bats too, London, 2016.



*George Barnsley, Sheffield, 2019.*

A discarded ledger, handwriting from someone who has long left the building, their last marks before change and time have eroded their memory.







Trust in God, trust in science, it's your choice, Sheffield, 2008.

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God doesn't live here any more, Sheffield, 2008.







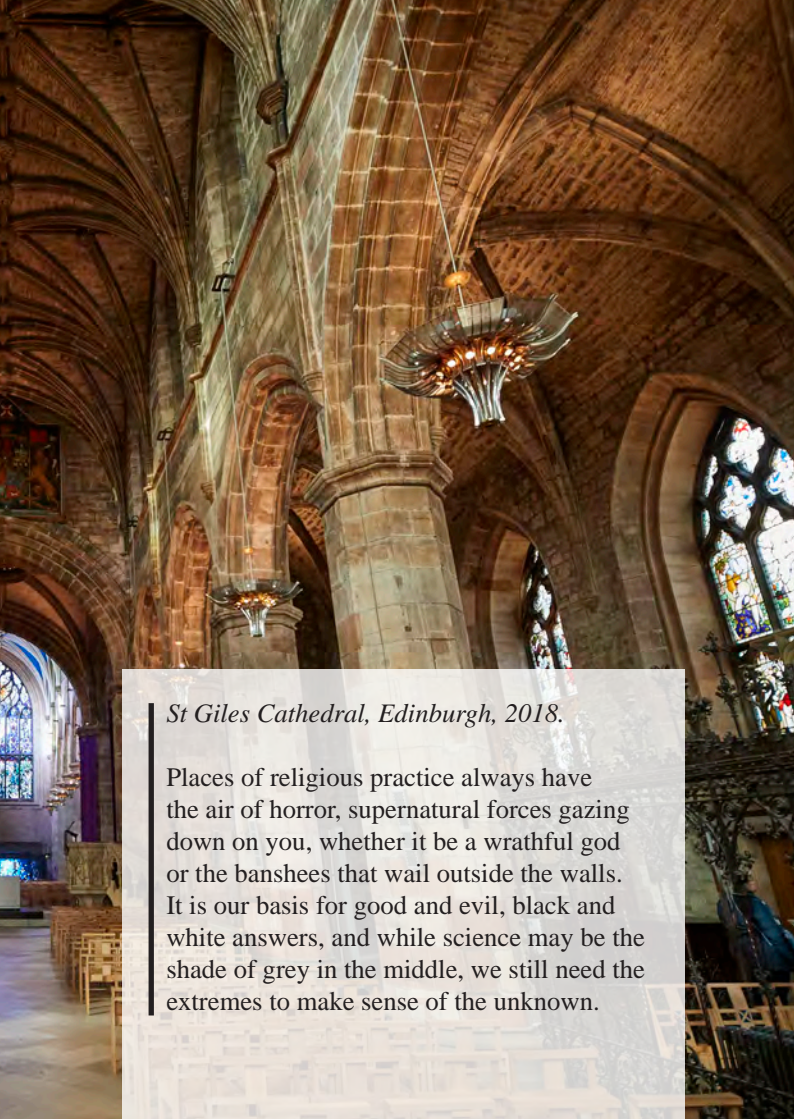
*Another Place, Crosby, 2007.*

Antony Gormley's another place. The watchers forever staring out to sea. Their blank eyes seeing nothing and seeing everything.









*St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, 2018.*

Places of religious practice always have the air of horror, supernatural forces gazing down on you, whether it be a wrathful god or the banshees that wail outside the walls. It is our basis for good and evil, black and white answers, and while science may be the shade of grey in the middle, we still need the extremes to make sense of the unknown.

XIII



♄

Death

♆



This bumper double has been a bit of a mismatch of thoughts on two markers in the year, Halloween and Bonfire night. The next edition will be the next marker, the mid-winter festival some know as Christmas. Happy Santa, shot on Kodachrome,

*"Kodachrome  
They give us those nice bright colors  
They give us the greens of summers  
Makes you think all the world's a sunny day, oh  
yeah"*

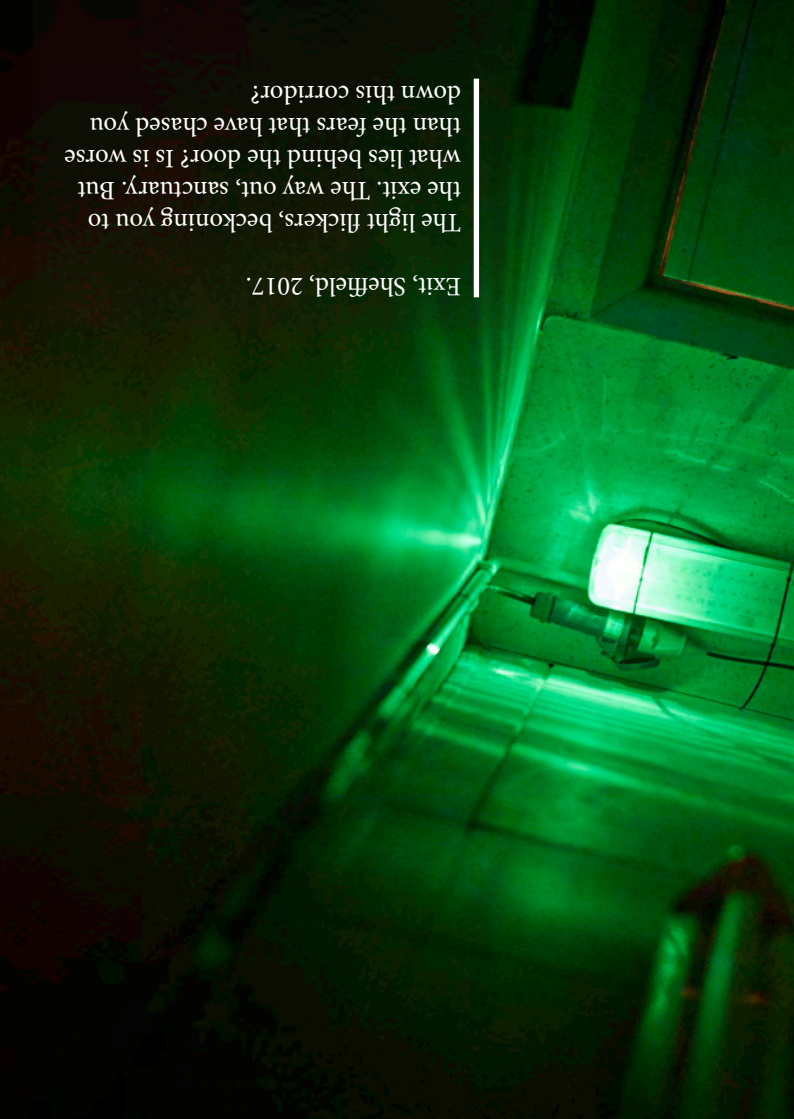
Paul Simon

All content © Jason Ruffell, 2020. Why you'd want to copy any of it is anyone's guess. Maybe bored, due to this hideous year.



The light flickers, beckoning you to  
the exit. The way out, sanctuary. But  
what lies behind the door? Is it worse  
than the fears that have chased you  
down this corridor?

Exit, Sheffield, 2017.





Anyone can end up here. It all depends on perspective, views and belief. Society has become more tolerant, but democracy is fragile and it would not take much for this gate to come back in to use.

At least you'd get a day out in London and a chance to see one of the major tourist attractions from a perspective that tourist's never get to see.

*Traitors' Gate, London, 2018.*





TRAITORS' GATE





*Dark Satanic Mills, Oldham, 2019.*

They may have been dark, been worshipped by Anton LaVay and Aleister Crowley, but they were mills. They clothed us, in their own satanic way, kept us warm and stylish. The devil may now wear Prada, but in the past it was probably Tweed.



*Occupy Sheffield, Sheffield, 2012.*  
Protest, occupy, resist, lie in a pool of your own blood  
when the crackdown comes.



*The Great Bunny God, Wakefield, 2013.*  
Not all gods are scary this one looks quite benign,  
then again, I've seen Watership Down.



*The Half Living Lady, Sheffield, 2011.*  
This may have been true once, but the gender pay gap has been reduced to 4/5ths.

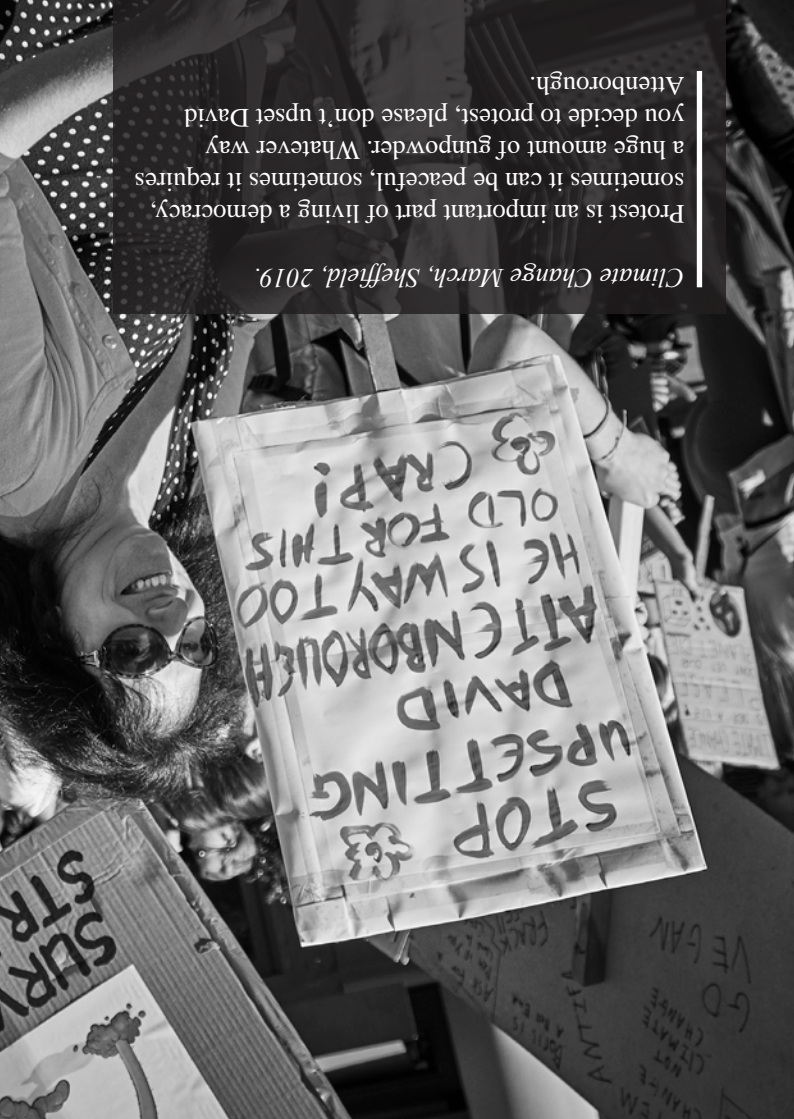


*(C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>)<sub>2</sub>O, Manchester, 2014.*  
Either, one way to create an alternative reality, just ask HST.









*Climate Change March, Sheffield, 2019.*

Protest is an important part of living a democracy, sometimes it can be peaceful, sometimes it requires a huge amount of gunpowder. Whatever way you decide to protest, please don't upset David Attenborough.

Wind Turbines, Leeds, 2011.  
...but it doesn't have to be for the worse.



Petrol pumps, Sheffield, 2012.  
All things must pass...



*Good and Evil #1, Sheffield, 2016.*

It all depends on your perspective...

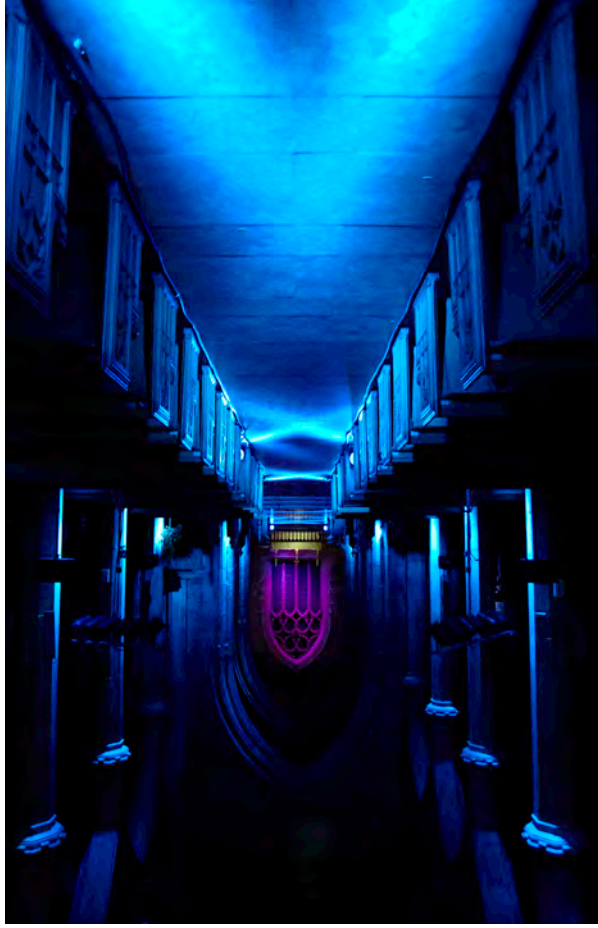


*Good and Evil #2, Sheffield, 2014.*

Nah.... this is evil.







Sheffield cathedral lit up spookily, Halloween? No, just for a fashion show , Sheffield, 2014.

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Please close the door at all times, vampyres like their sleep too, Sheffield, 2016.

easy targets, those that don't conform. Temperance Lloyd, Susannah Edwards, Mary Trembles and Alice Molland, to name just four, see a theme? The last to be executed, but not the last prosecuted, that was, Helen Duncan in 1944.



Religious intolerance isn't just aimed at other religions, it also targets it's own people. Those on the margins, those that are

*The Devon Witches, Exeter, 2017.*







Why would Guy Fawkes want to blow up  
parliament? I can't see the appeal, well, not with  
this one.

*Parliament, Edinburgh, 2017*



After researching the poem I'm unclear as to who we are burning on November 5th. Is it Guido Fawkes, Guy or his pseudonym, John Johnson, or is it meant to be the Pope? The poem has many forms, many themes, but it's good to know that after 400 odd years we're still celebrating religious intolerance, even if we don't understand why. So why not 'throw another shrimp on the barbie', wash it down with a pint of beer. Another mangled expression. Any Australian reading this will be up in arms.

Halloween, a celebration of horror, November 5th a celebration of actual horror, the potential explosion, shattering parliament and probably plunging England into another civil war. Another 200,000 or more dead? Replaced, by the actual horror of the torture and execution of a few, fighting for their beliefs. Whichever way you look at it, not pleasant. There's a good reason to avoid civil unrest, the death toll will be far greater in the long run. The battle of Towton, the bloodiest on English soil, where an estimated 1% of the English population was slaughtered in an afternoon, Palm Sunday, illustrated this point perfectly. Religion and horror go hand-in-hand, and for good reason. Religion offers us damnation if we don't conform, and even more damnation if we don't conform to the right religion.

So, 'I'll slip an extra shrimp (prawn) on the barbie for you', something tasty to eat while we watch the world descend into oblivion, watching the last judgement. Hopefully, Hieronymus Bosch's vision, with all of its weird, twisted imagery... to be honest, it looks like fun.

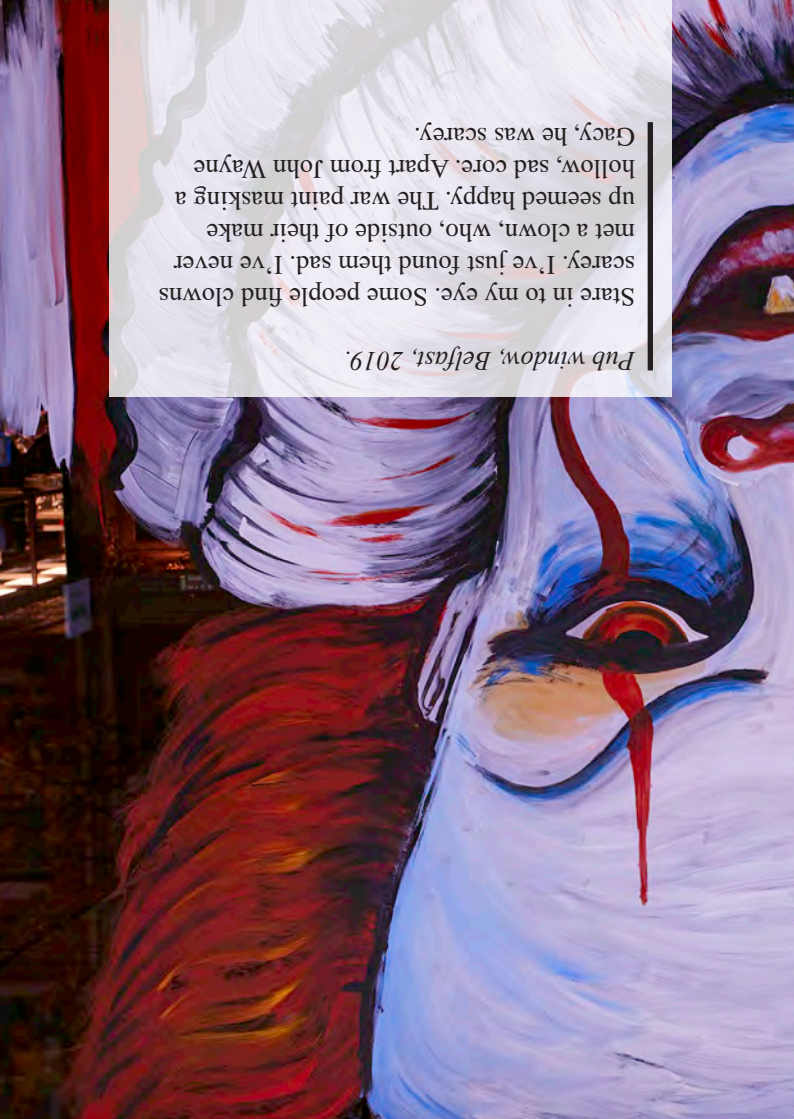
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November the 5th.

Remember, remember,  
The fifth of November,  
The Gunpowder treason and plot;  
I know of no reason  
Why the Gunpowder treason  
Should ever be forgot!

... A rope, a rope, to hang the Pope,  
A penn'orth of cheese to choke him,  
A pint of beer to wash it down,  
And a jolly good fire to burn him.





Stare in to my eye. Some people find clowns  
scary. I've just found them sad. I've never  
met a clown, who, outside of their make  
up seemed happy. The war paint masking a  
hollow, sad core. Apart from John Wayne  
Gacy, he was scary.

*Pub window, Belfast, 2019.*





THROW ANOTHER SHRIMP  
ON THE BARBIE  
JASON RUFFELL

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