LANDSCAPES OF DESIRE
The Contemporary Tourist: Photographic Performances, the Camera and Place

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An exegesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

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An investigation into the contemporary copied place using practice based research, focusing on two places: Hallstatt Austria and its recently built copy Hallstatt See in China.
Certificate of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief, understand that it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged.

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Signed,

Dated
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Abstract

This thesis examines through practice based visual creative research two places called Hallstatt. One is a fifth century town in Austria and the other the recently built copy Hallstatt See in Southern China. The two places have been variously identified together using terms such as clone, copy, duplicate and fake.

Most existing written scholarship has focused solely on the acceptance of the two places as copies, not questioning whether these two places are indeed copies or whether a new terminology or framework should be invented to describe both their relationship to each other and the behaviour of the tourists within these places.

The thesis uses visual photographic imagery as the framework to analyse the two places and their relationship to each other as copies to investigate beyond written words and physical, political and economic comparisons of place. The research aims, through creative practice, to produce new understandings and new knowledge about the nature of the contemporary copied landscape through photographic research.

The research draws from the theoretical considerations of Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Jean Baudrillard and Michel Foucault. Concepts including heterotopic space, the familiar and unfamiliar, simulacra and the photographic copy are developed into a methodology through thematised immersion and analysis, drawn from the writings of Australian academics Ross Gibson, Jeff Malpas and Paul Carter. The research also developed from the physical embodied process of combining being a tourist with a researcher, creating the concept of being a tourreseacher with a camera.

Contemporary tourists in Hallstatt See are pictured using photography, creating and recording their own new authentic narratives of place. The research reveals, in Hallstatt See China, a place that is both familiar and unfamiliar, an inversion of the original Hallstatt as a new place in a new time.
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Introduction

“We are in the process of inventing new techniques: we are examining the possibilities offered by existing cities, and making models and plans for future ones. We are aware of the need to take advantage of all new technologies, and we know that the future constructions we envisage will have to be flexible enough to respond to the dynamic conception of life, creating our surroundings in direct relation to constantly changing modes of behaviour.”

Figure 1: Hallstatt Austria, Cathy Laudenbach, 30cm x 50cm, 2014.

This thesis centres on the possibilities of using photographic research to understand, interpret and visually illuminate the spatial complexities presented in Hallstatt Austria and Hallstatt See in China: a place built as a copy of the original historical village, something that can be considered similar to what was predicted more than thirty years ago by Guy Debord in his publication Society of the Spectacle. This research interprets and responds, through photographic research, to both the place and the behaviours of tourists in the two copied places. The aim of the research, through creative practice, is to produce new understandings and new knowledge about the nature of the contemporary copied landscape.

This introduction will:

- **Outline** the research project and research questions.
- **Briefly** situate the project within its field of practice.
- **Outline** the overarching methodology of creative practice and methods.
- **Provide** an overview of the structure of the exegesis.

China and the Copy

The path into Hallstatt See is a walking path, although a few small cars appear to be permitted. The path leads past exotic trees and manicured gardens, decorated with flowering plants. The sound of birds come from the trees, although there are no birds. There is also no sign of the doves that were reported to have been released at the opening of Hallstatt See. As we all move along the path, Hallstatt See comes into view. A church spire, a lake and a bridge are visible from the path. The car park and the rest of China almost seem to disappear as the path meanders around and down. The air seems cleaner and fresher. Many people in uniforms begin appearing as the path progresses: gardeners, street cleaners and women in traditional Austrian dress. Similar to the internet articles where Chinese people talk about feeling different in Hallstatt See, I suddenly realise I don’t feel like I am in China anymore.

In 2011, it was reported that Hallstatt, a small 5th century European salt mining town listed as a world historical site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (located in the Salzkammergut Lake district of Austria) was being copied into a new site in Southern China. This was to be completed by the company Minmetals Land China and construction would be totally complete in 2016 (Figure 2). According to the media reports the Chinese copy of the small Austrian town was being constructed without notifying or asking permission from anyone in the original Hallstatt in Austria. The made-in-China version of Hallstatt cost an estimated $940 million, and although not finished, was ready for visitors two years after its existence was announced. Hallstatt See appeared to be a new place for a new time that had been predicted by Guy Debord.

The development is linked to the recent unprecedented growth in China due to a period of sustainable economic growth, the further implementation of the Reform and Open-up policy and a substantial increase in personal income. Chinese modern industrialisation, known as gaige kaifang (reform and open-up), represents the most significant world economic event since Britain’s industrial revolution in the 18th century. This economic growth has also lead to a marked increase in Chinese tourists around the world as well as a dazzling pace of urbanisation in China, including copied urban westernised development.

Modern China has become a nation of imitation, mimicry and theft, according to the popular Chinese novelist Yu Hua in his book China in Ten Words. Copycatting whilst having precedents in history in China more recently reflects the tensions between China’s closed political system and an economy that quickly accelerated, and in doing so, has looked to western society for inspiration. However, as pointed out by Jerome Silbergeld in the forward to Bianca Bosker’s book, the Chinese tradition of appropriation is not new and can be dated to unification under China’s first Emperor in the late third century BC. Copying is part of China’s history.
Figure 2: Double Image, *Hallstatt See China and Hallstatt Austria*, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.

Hallstatt in Austria and the surrounding area was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997 as a cultural landscape with outstanding value, with the following inscription:

“Human activity in the magnificent natural landscape of the Salzkammergut began in prehistoric times, with the salt deposits being exploited as early as the 2nd millennium BC. This resource formed the basis of the area’s prosperity up to the middle of the 20th century, a prosperity that is reflected in the fine architecture of the town of Hallstatt.”

Eight hundred and fourteen cultural landscapes that are representative of different unique regions around the world, with a combination of nature and human influence and that express a long and intimate relationship between peoples and their natural environment, have to date, been listed worldwide by the United Nations Educational Cultural and Scientific Organisation as significant cultural landscapes. Hallstatt has a unique cultural landscape, which includes a long human habitation with an ongoing relationship with people, including artists, which is recognised in the statement from its World Heritage status:

“Because of its special historical evolution, this cultural landscape has retained a degree of authenticity in nature and society that is outstanding in the alpine region. Resulting from a harmonious interaction between man and environment it has preserved its spatial and material structure to an exceptionally high degree. This quality and context has been further endorsed by a large number of visiting artists whose many canvases and representations are additional fitting testimony to its value.”

The new place Hallstatt See took its name from the original, simply adding See to become Hallstatt See. Hallstatt is situated on the Hallstättersee or Lake Hallstatt in Austria. The landscape of Hallstatt See, which is without scenic mountain ranges and a salt mine, includes a constructed lake and a new name that appears to have been carefully selected to recognise the association with not only the lake in the original place, but also the original Hallstatt.

**Duplitecture and Replication**

In English language, a copy is a duplicate, something the same that has been reproduced. In comparison, a fake or replica is an imitation, something forged or made to look like something else. Articles that reported Hallstatt Austria being copied into China described the new Hallstatt

6. Ibid
7. Ibid
See using a variety of words originating from these definitions, including: copy, exact reproduction, a Xeroxed copy, a clone and a replica.

The American journalist and author Bianca Bosker wrote the recently published seminal book on the contemporary copying of places from the west into China. She explains that the copying of places into China is a way for China, which had previously considered itself to be at the centre of the world, to bring the world into its borders through becoming a country “that actually contains the world”.

Hallstatt is not the first town in China to be copied from the west. Ju Jun, also known as Orange Country, generated much publicity when it was built around the time of the Beijing Olympics. The $60 million 143-unit housing development, situated about one hour north of Beijing, consists entirely of expensive American-style houses. All 143 units were sold within a month of going on sale and attracted the name The Orange Storm due to the rate at which they were sold.

The Chinese copycat real estate industry changed the well-known real estate cry of location to replication. In the new copycat towns, the intention is to go beyond the recreation of the superficial appearance to what Bosker notes as “the feel - the atmospheric and experiential local colour - of the originals”. According to Bosker, these new places in China facilitate those who can afford it to go through the familiar paces of life in unfamiliar settings.

Bosker explains that while China has a long history of copying from western culture, this new copying in China goes beyond imported plants, animals and architectural styles to recreated constructed environments: new cultural landscapes. She suggests that what has been transplanted into China resembles the local vision of how the real Hallstatt looks rather than a local accurate imitation. In the same way that a mirror distorts reality, reflecting only what is in front of it, Hallstatt China is not an exact replica. While the team behind China’s Hallstatt spent considerable time in Austria collecting and measuring data about the village, without the knowledge of locals,

"since the essence of a good forgery concerns primarily the subtle question of taste, it is often possible that a fresh and carefully made fake with all its desirable trimmings appears, in the eyes of its intended audience, even more appealingly authentic than the authentic."

As noted by Bianca Bosker, despite literal interpretations of recognisable landmarks in the doubled or copied cities in China, not every feature has been replicated exactly. Just over two hundred kilometres from Hallstatt See are the historical Kaiping Diaolou and Villages. Similar to Hallstatt in Austria, this site is another listed among the 814 most significant cultural and historical sites listed by UNESCO. The listing identifies the Kaiping Diaolou and Villages, which feature the Diaolou multistoried defensive village houses that reflects the considerable role of the people of Kaiping in the development of countries in South Asia, Australasia and North America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

While Kaiping is not a copied place, it is an historic place that contains copied architecture and is also a world listed historical and cultural protected place. I visited Kaiping immediately after my first visit to Hallstatt See. However, Kaiping didn’t have a feel of being a place from outside China and there were few tourists, particularly compared to Hallstatt See.

In the new copycat towns, the intention in the construction goes beyond the superficial or transitory disbelief, to an intention of permanent disbelief. In Hallstatt See, gardens of plastic flowers are mixed with real flowers on the walkways, alongside Austrian style houses. There are

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9. Ibid: p. 1
10. Ibid: 2
11. Ibid
recorded bird noises coming from the trees. Bosker coined the terms “duplitecture” and “simulacrasescapes” to describe the architecture and spaces in the new places in China. Originally Plato had used the word simulacrum in reference to two kinds of image making. The first was faithful reproduction attempting to copy the original, and the second intentionally distorted to make the copy appear correct.

Jean Baudrillard suggests that simulacrum can be understood through an absence rather than as a copy or fake. Baudrillard identified what he called a precession of simulacra, where the model becomes the real without having an origin. While simulacrum have existed throughout history, Baudrillard describes how the meaning and characteristic of each simulacra contains distinctive features according to three different historical periods.

In the first period, from the renaissance to the industrial revolution, the artificially created image is the replacement of the original item, or an ideal image of nature. During this period, art was both camouflaged and manipulated by nature; it is the reflection of a basic reality. The second order of simulacra, according to Baudrillard, commenced in the nineteenth century when the distinction between reality and its representation began to distort due to mass production and a proliferation of copies that looked identical to the prototypes. During this modernist period, the advent of cameras led to the creation of photographs, while the advancement of mechanical engineering made the mechanical reproduction of paintings possible.

The third order of simulacra is the present age, sometimes called the information age, when the simulacra is not a question of imitation or duplication, but instead substitutes signs of the real for the real. According to Baudrillard this is the era of replica and codes, computers, virtual reality, cloning and the news media generating the news. The real and the fake do not exist anymore, but have instead become simulations of reality. According to Baudrillard, it is no longer a question of simple imitation or duplication, but instead substituting signs for the real and these signs becoming the real.

Borrowing from Baudrillard in this era of replication and duplication, the study asks: is the new Chinese copytown a replication, or as Baudrillard states, a simulation of the real or something else? And in an era when the copy or sign has become the real, what is the role of photography which itself is a copy, and how can photography be used to investigate the copied place?

However, Ackbar Abbas who is currently a Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine and who has written extensively on Asian cities, states that the

"Asian cities today (more so than other cities) threatens to outpace our understanding of it."  

Abbas links the development of Asian cities in general to the fake and extends the explanation of the fake place as a social, cultural and economic response to the process of globalization, and to the uneven and often unequal relations that it has created.

He states that while a fake can be thought of as stealing, or something not as well made as the original, irritation about the fake or copied town can lose sight of the structural and historical features of the fake and the paradoxical role it plays in the context of globalization. He states

15. Ackbar Abbas is currently a Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. Abbas was chair of comparative literature at the University of Hong Kong and also Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Globalization and Cultures. His research interests include globalization, Hong Kong and the culture of China, architecture, cinema plus post-colonialism and critical theory. His book Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance was published by the University of Minnesota Press
“Insofar as the fake points to unresolved problems in the world today, it should be analysed, not dismissed.”

He suggests an analysis that needs new terms and frameworks of understandings to be generated. In his own analysis of Asian cities which centres particularly on Hong Kong, Abbas often draws his new frameworks from the creative works of contemporary films by Asian filmmakers, including Hong Kong filmmaker Wong Kar-Wai.

In addressing the call for analysis and new frameworks in researching new Asian places, this research into Hallstatt and Hallstatt See goes beyond written documentation in order to investigate two constructed places: the original Hallstatt and its newly constructed copied place in China.

Doubling Up

The camera, since the day of its invention, appeared to take what is in front of its frame and reproduce it to make a duplicate. The camera has often been referred to as a mirror. At its basic level, the camera is a box that captures light: reflecting light to produce an image. The earliest cameras were Camera Obscures, which simply tunnelled light holding a reflected image back into a box, or in some cases a room without fixing the image. The camera produced an inverted unfixed copy of what was in front of it. Richard Rudisill called his book on the history of the first photograph "the daguerreotype". "Mirror with a memory" is a phrase that was often used to describe the earliest form of a widely produced photograph, the daguerreotype.

A digital photograph exists in an entirely different way from the traditional lens and film based photographic image. Digital images are captured and displayed through sequential scanning. They exist as mathematical data which can be displayed in a variety of modes and can be saved in a variety of formats to produce multiple copies. Digital photography, while borrowing techniques from traditional photography, breaks away from any immediate relationship between a copy. Digital photography, something like Hallstatt See, relies on the idea of the copy rather than the actual copy.

A photograph, whether digital or analogue, captures something that can’t be repeated. Time becomes frozen within the photographic frame and because of this photography, connotes memory and nostalgia. The photograph is connected to both the real and time.

Contemporary western notions of the copy have its origins in western art, architecture and thought. Walter Benjamin predicted in 1936, in his essay Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, a desire by people to bring things closer and in doing so, lose the uniqueness of the original through accepting a reproduction. Benjamin stated,

16. Ibid. p. 252
17. Ibid. P. 244
18. Wong Kar-wai is a Hong Kong filmmaker, internationally renowned as an auteur for his visually unique, highly stylised Asian films.
19. Photography in its earliest manifestations were frequently referred to as “Daguerre’s mirror”. The silvered surfaces and lateral reversals of early Daguerreotypes supported this analogy. As early as 1839 Jules Janin, introducing the invention, urged his reader to “imagine that the mirror has retained the imprint of every object it reflects, then you will have a more complete idea of the Daguerreotype.” Quoted from Buddemeier, H. (1970), Panorama, Diorama, Photographie, Munich, Wilhelm Fink, p. 207. Richard Rudisill’s Mirror Image (1971) (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico) contains, as its title suggests, copious documentation for the photo-mirror analogy.
“Getting closer to things in both spatial and human terms is every bit as passionate a concern of today’s masses as their tendency to surmount the uniqueness of each circumstance by seeing it in reproduction.”

Yet Benjamin noted photographic reproduction caused the loss of something unique retained by the original, which he labelled the aura: the thing that is lost is the relationship of the original to “the realm of tradition.” According to Benjamin, the aura is something that is not seen, but instead is held by an original that is not carried to the reproduction.

When the construction of Hallstatt See was revealed, many of the articles were accompanied with images of the new construction alongside images from the original Hallstatt. The images visually mingled together, and at times were doubled together and mixed with other images from various European towns. It was difficult to detect this loss and at times difficult to distinguish the two places. This study into the two Hallstatts uses the camera and its ability to duplicate to investigate two places called Hallstatt: one built as a copy of the other.

However, while the camera is no longer considered a device that can make an exact replica, it frames what is in front of it and produces a negative or digital file that can be reproduced. This copy or double also offers a compositional device that presents visual difference and something that can be compared. It has a natural fascination for artists, especially photographers. The American photographer Diane Arbus appeared to be obsessed with differences in the human body, particularly in people different to herself. She often used both the double in her images and used images in a way to evoke comparison. In one of her early notebooks she stated,

“A footprint is made by a shoe but it is not the shoe itself.”

Figure 3: Tourists in Hallstatt Austria, Cathy Laudenbach.

In his essay *The Uncanny*, Sigmund Freud refers to the double as something that can cause feelings of the uncanny. It is something both familiar and unfamiliar. It is not something only unknown that enters our consciousness as uncanny. Freud argues that the notion combines the two words of *heimlich* or homely, which relates to something both known and comfortable, and *unheimlich*, meaning hidden or concealed. It is specifically the combination of the familiar and the unfamiliar, or the way that the familiar can become or inhabit the unfamiliar, that causes feelings of the uncanny.

21. Ibid. p. 9
22. Ibid. p. 7
This research through photography is concerned with the familiar and unfamiliar, difference, the mirror and the copy: two constructed places, one a copy of the other. A place considered a cultural and historical site being copied and placed into another country and another culture.

Photography and Imaginative Landscapes

Photography and the camera were discovered around 1839, a time of vast exploration in the world, when new lands were being explored, colonised and discovered. The early photographers brought remote parts of the world into view when they returned from travels with images that had never been seen before. The early tourists became those who viewed these images of distant places back in the comfort of their own homes.

Photography provided a way to picture place and record the previously unseen, and sometimes unknown places as images. Being able to make places visible, or come into view by making the original image come closer to the person taking it in, is something recognized by Walter Benjamin as a characteristic of what a camera can do through photography. It emerged within the period known as Romanticism, a movement that permeated the arts and signified a shift from the literal to a more imaginative interpretation. The word landscape came from the Dutch word landschap and meant to adapt cultural and natural processes to create new territory. Photography also developed as artists began seeking a new realism and western cultures were establishing an awareness of the natural world, recording the landscape as idyll and picturesque, a place where nature and humans interacted. From its early beginnings, photography moved between these two poles of reference: between realism and the imitative, the known and unknown. When combined, it could provide a much more dynamic dialogue than just a representation of reality or a window onto the world. Graham Clarke explained early landscape and tourist photography:

“The picturesque tourist sought out ideal scenes according to specific assumptions: an outlook that became almost pervasive. In this sense, landscape was not viewed so much in relation to its natural features as to the way it offered images of a rural idyll quite at odds with the reality.”

According to Walter Benjamin, photography can reveal aspects of the original place through a lens and allow techniques, such as enlargement or slow motion, to capture images that are quite simply beyond natural optics. This intersection of the seen and the imaginative world through photography is recognised by Australian academic and author Anne Marsh as a more active dialogue than the simple reading of photography as a window onto the world. Photography, as identified by Marsh, can reveal more about the world than can be seen. It can be both a tool for depicting realism and a tool for creating and recreating the imaginative.

As an interested photographic artist with exhibition experience in researching what a photograph can explore and reveal about places and their histories, I was immediately drawn to use photography to investigate these two places called Hallstatt: both the places and the people. I was drawn to the stories and images that I already knew of the copied places. The knowns or the already seen and written about, and the unknowns and unseen in the two places. I wanted to investigate what photography, with its ability to intersect the known with the unknown, could reveal.

The research aimed to investigate the two host sites as copies, and the behaviours or performances of people within each place. Drawing from previous research linking photography and narrative, the aim was not to simply bring into view something previously unseen, but to use the camera to create a vision that could reveal different stories in different ways and thus reveal new knowledge.

In *Interpretations of Authenticity in Tourism*, Ilinka Terziyska identifies a gap in knowledge in what she claims as the least studied area in tourism: an understanding of the relationship between the tourist and the host site. Terziyska argues that such research

"would provide the most comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, as it includes all stakeholders, giving account of the complex relations between them."

Maxine Feifer coined the term “post-tourist” in 1985 as the modern consumer who embraced openly and realistically, although with irony, the increasingly inauthentic, commercialized and simulated experiences offered through contemporary tourism. The post tourist is someone who can travel *virtually* from in front of the computer screen to places they have never been. Maxine Feifer asks of the post tourist, “what are they looking for, apart from *everything*?”

Jonas Larsen identifies the relationship between photography and the contemporary tourist as complex, embodying performed behaviours that are less concerned with consuming place, and more concerned with producing myths, social roles and social relationships, such as family life. However, Tim Edensor proposes more specifically that tourist performances are not isolated complex acts but can be considered in everyday activities. This research through the camera reveals both the complexities of tourist performances, but also the everyday simplicities of tourist behaviours in the two places.

This research, through photography and about photography, provides specific visual research in response to Feifer, Larsen, Edensor, Terziyska and others into both the complexities of the copied place and the behaviours of the tourists using photography in these places.

**Myth Making**

Photography is a narrative medium that can both tell stories about the world and can be used to investigate issues in the world. It is a way to both picture the world and interpret the world. As a visual artist using photography, I consider myself both storyteller and mythmaker using real places with established stories to both expand and extend, through visual imagery, understandings of place. Myths refer to the overarching narratives or stories that make sense of the human condition by weaving together all its disparate strands. The term *myth* connotes not an absence of truth, but a displacement of the literal by the metaphorical through the seamlessness and immediacy of collective stories.

Mythopoeia is the narrative genre in modern literature and film where fictional mythology is used by the writer to create stories. The Australian academic Paul Carter adapted this way of working to creative art practice through *mythopoeic invention*, a way for artists to challenge not only the fixity of history but also the repetitions of myths.

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33. Ibid: 417
35. Mythopoeia is the composition of making of myths from the Greek word mythopoein - mythos: myth and poiein: to make
37. Ibid.
For Paul Carter, using myths in creative practice does not need to create a single viewpoint but instead,

“...creative knowledge cannot be abstracted from the loom that produced it ... (it is) a pattern made of holes, its clarity is like air through a basket.\(^{38}\)”

The research aims to use photographic research to reveal through images this air referred to by Carter, to reveal the two places and the behaviours of the tourists. It adapts mythopoetic invention through creative photographic research, a weaving together of both image and text to create a new way to retell stories and reveal new stories and new knowledge.

Carter expands on the definition, as an artist-researcher, in his description of his own creative work from the Mallee area in the Australian state of Victoria, titled *Truth Grounding*. Carter explained of his work that it was not a regional study, but what he called an essay. For Carter, the study was not intended as a new combination of facts that are already available elsewhere, but instead the study into one region presents a search through creative principles that “bring regions to life”.\(^{39}\)

Influenced by Carter’s research, this creative research extends into two constructed landscapes: one named and one copied from the other, both in different countries, cultures and time periods. The stories on the internet of the two places called Hallstatt, one with a See attached to its name, appeared as both ordinary yet mysterious. A beautiful historical town from Europe copied or cloned into another part of the world, where people could visit and even live as if they are in Europe. When I read the stories about the two places called Hallstatt, the places became visual to me in my mind, even before I visited the two places. I became drawn to them and I wanted to investigate them.

Being drawn to unknown or unfamiliar places, like the early explorers with cameras, is also something that drew the American photographer Diane Arbus to places. While her subject matter was different to mine, Arbus stated, “my favourite thing is to go where I've never been.”\(^{40}\)

The contemporary American photographer Gregory Crewdson expresses a similar working process to Diane Arbus as a motivating force in his working practice. Crewdson states that initially when planning his images, he finds it hard to identify what interests him in a particular place or subject. Ultimately, he realises it is something that is both simultaneously familiar yet unfamiliar to him, the unknown and new. Different to Arbus however, Crewdson often constructs juxtaposed elements into his work through, for example, physically setting things on fire or cutting holes in the floors of homes. Arbus uses the camera to frame both the elements and subjects in the scenes not physically changing locations.

**The Research Questions**

The research began simply through the stories of Hallstatt and Hallstatt See. Through investigating these stories, the words within the stories and the images produced, I used creative practice methods to lead the research and to reveal what otherwise could potentially always remain invisible. The discovery of two copied places as both potentially familiar and unfamiliar sites creating a double, clone or a new place in the world, coupled with my previous research interests, led to the initial research questions which asked:

**How can creative photographic practice negotiate and interrogate the contemporary copied space to visually reveal new insight and knowledge?**

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38. Ibid. p. 1
After the initial research and field excursions revealed Hallstatt See was not a copy of Hallstatt, but another kind of place, the research question was further refined into two questions:

1. How can visible photographic research reveal Hallstatt See as a newly created cultural landscape?

2. How can photographic practice interpret and represent the new place and the behaviours of people within the space to create new knowledge?

In attempting to answer these questions, the research took up the challenge identified by Ackbar Abbas to find new frameworks to investigate copied places. The research aimed to provide a way to reveal the created landscapes, beyond information that was already available, and offer visual research into two places and people's behaviour within each place.

**Methodologies**

For creative research to be scholarly research it requires the maintenance of a critical, analytical distance and simultaneously an immersion into the experience of making and analysing the work. Ross Gibson explains this as a doubling in consciousness that involves

“two modes of cognition [that] are consciously distinct - one immersive, and the other analytical.”

This research adapted the doubled consciousness, suggested by Gibson, and developed through an iterative process the taking of the photographs and later analysing the images. The practical research methodology began with field trips to the two Hallstatts, adapting techniques of standing and picturing tourists using cameras in each place. The methods of research grew, developed and adapted as I visited the places, took photographs and analysed the results. Each stage within the creative research fuelled further questions and analysis.

Being actively involved in the research involved an embodied experience of being both a tourist and a researcher in both places. In combining the tourist role with that of a researcher I became a tourresearcher, walking around each site with a camera, utilising the conscious technique of recording others taking photographs.

**Structure of the exegesis**

The thesis takes the form of an exhibition of photographs and video works exhibited at the H.R. Gallop Gallery, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga Campus, from January 12 to February 9, 2017 which comprises the outcome of the creative practice component, together with the exegesis which documents the nature, development and resulting new knowledge of research undertaken.

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The five chapters presented in the exegesis are as follows:

**Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places**

This chapter presents an overview of my previous research into place and narrative and an explanation of how the new research project extends from this previous study. It provides an explanation of the construction of Hallstatt See and the initial methods established through photographic inquiry in collecting the images.

**Chapter 2: Constructed Realism through the Contemporary Photographic Frame**

This chapter outlines the theoretical underpinning of the project, from contemporary realism to imaginative photography. This chapter also provides an explanation of work authored by major contemporary artists who’s theories are concerned with realism and narrative, and how this project is related to and extends from those concerns. The chapter also outlines the first field trips to each place and the beginning of the creative research.

**Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double**

This chapter provides a discussion of the creative work produced and the rationale behind producing the works. The chapter situates the production of the creative work, both within contemporary photographic practice and within research understandings.

**Chapter 4: Exhibition Landscapes of Desire**

This chapter summarises how the bodies of work generated throughout this research impact on the study and the presentation of final exhibition. This chapter includes a description and justification of works included in the exhibition, and a discussion of the rational used in sequencing the works in the gallery.

**Chapter 5: Conclusions, New knowledge and Further Considerations for Research**

This chapter presents the conclusions to the study using an iterative opened ended approach to the production of creative research, along with theoretical considerations that created five bodies of new creative work. Hallstatt See is revealed as not a copy but a new place, a place that is both familiar and not familiar to the original, where tourists use cameras to record place and record themselves into place. It is also revealed, different to the original Hallstatt, as something akin to a theatre where people perform for photographers. Chapter 5 also outlines areas for further research in this study.
Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

This chapter:

- **Provides** an overview into my previous research into place and narrative.
- **Provides** an explanation of creative research and how this new research extends the conceptual concerns in my previous studies.
- **Provides** an explanation of my first visits to the built environments of Hallstatt and Hallstatt See, China.
- **Outlines** and explains the initial methods used in constructing the images.

This research centres on two cultural landscapes, the built environments of Hallstatt Austria and Hallstatt See, China. The research commenced when I read about the copying of Hallstatt in the same way the residents of Hallstatt Austria apparently heard about their town being copied on the internet. Yet in an editorial introduction to *Built*[^42] in the photofile edition focused on place and space in the built environment - Susan Best questioned if photography can really help us know and understand the built environment.

Through the development of specific methodologies and an immersive and analytical approach, this research provides a way to move beyond written descriptions, through the production of creative imagery, to both address issues raised by Ackbar Abbas about the need for new frameworks for research and to answer Susan Best into how the contemporary built environment can be understood through photography. Both the exegesis and the creative outcomes together provide the full understanding of the outcomes.

Jeff Malpas[^43], currently a distinguished Professor at the University of Tasmania and Visiting distinguished Professor at Latrobe University, introduced the word thematised as a way that photography can be specifically used to

> “reveal aspects of the world that might otherwise go unremarked or un-noticed.”[^44]

For Malpas, when representation becomes representational, then the previously unseen or unknown can be revealed. He states,

> “when representation also becomes investigative it becomes itself a mode of inquiry, of experimentation, of questioning, and, so too, of attending.”[^45]

This research, as suggested by Malpas, progressed from representation to representational inquiry. This occurred through site visits and continual critical inquiry through an immersive iterative process combining the ongoing analysis of images, questioning and critical theory. The research aimed to specifically address issues raised by both Ackbar Abbes about the need for new frameworks of research into the fake place, and to provide an answer to Susan Best about how contemporary built environments can be understood through photography.

### 1.1 Motivations for Research

In mid-2011 China MinMetals Land Limited, the real estate branch of China’s largest metals trader, began construction of the 1:1 scale copy of the Austrian town of Hallstatt. Hallstatt Austria has existed since the 5th century and is listed on many travel sites due to its history and its beauty. Hallstatt See, its copy, is intended as a tourism destination and residential area for the Chinese public.

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[^43]: Jeff Malpas is currently distinguished Professor at the University of Tasmania and visiting distinguished Professor at Latrobe University, Available at: http://www.jeffmalpas.com (Accessed October 1st, 2016)
[^45]: Ibid. p. 1
middle-class and European expatriates living in China. The completion date was set for late 2016, although Hallstatt See was ready for visitors after just two years from when its existence was announced on the internet.

From the beginning the construction of Hallstatt See in China generated worldwide interest on both the internet and in print, with statements like:

“China has pulled off a feat that no other country would even dream of achieving: a cloned village. Every detail of the original Hallstatt village, a UNESCO protected heritage gem in Austria, has been copied in a replica situated one hour outside of Huizhou in Guangdong Province.”

In another article from the BBC, the heading was: “Chinese Replica of Austrian Village Unveiled”. The German magazine Spiegel stated, “a Chinese mining company has created the world’s first cloned village in this perfect re-creation of an Austrian town.” Yet another headline in The New York Times stated, “A Real Copy of Austria in China”. While the articles have the surprised tone of news worthiness, the copy town was also recognised as part of the quick transition of China into a world economic power. (See Appendix 2 for the URL addresses to these and other articles concerning the copied place Hallstatt See.)

The image search engine Flickr revealed, under Hallstatt See, views of mountains and a scenic lake from Hallstatt Austria, alongside images of the new Hallstatt See being constructed. It was difficult to visually separate out the two places on the Internet, particularly without having visited them.

1.2 Academic Research

The German academic and artist Norbert Artner received a grant in 2013 to produce work titled ‘Hallstatt Revisited’. In a year-long project in Hallstatt See, he photographed the construction of the new place. The work was subsequently exhibited back in Hallstatt Austria. The exhibition also coincided with my site visit to Hallstatt Austria in 2015. The statement on Artner’s website about the work states:

“Since 2012, Hallstatt is no longer only to be found in the region of the Salzkammergut in Austria, but also in China. What is the relationship between model and copy, original and quotation? In his photographs Norbert Artner has pursued questions of imagination and globalization, function and surface, inclusion and exclusion, ideal and cliché in both places. The pictures were taken over the course of a year in “Hallstatt Lake” in the Chinese region of Guangdong. Now the photographs invite and inspire an engagement with mirroring and duplication in the original location of Hallstatt in the Salzkammergut.”

While I was not originally aware of Artner’s study, it initially appeared to have similar intentions in his critical inquiry to my own research. However, whereas my research was an extended visual study into the two places, his research methods ended with the one exhibition in Hallstatt

Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

Austria. Large scale printed images taken in Hallstatt See were placed in outside locations in Hallstatt Austria.

The visual outcomes of Artner’s research appeared to presume the two places as copies or else left it to the viewer to decide. As such the research can be considered as an example of what Malpas explained as photographic research being representation, without becoming representational. Artner’s research also lacked the thematised inquiry suggested by Malpas and was something else that separated this new body of research from Artner’s creative inquiry.

In their paper Faking Translation in Hallstatt: A Visit to Hallstatt Revisited I, written in response to Artner’s exhibition, Susan Ingram and Markus Reisenleitner state:

“It feels weird to walk around a place that one knows has been copied”

They acknowledge the feeling is intensified because they are unlikely to visit Hallstatt See. In the paper, Artner’s images are contextualised against their own snapshots of Hallstatt, while there is a reliance on Artner’s accounts of Hallstatt See to inform the writing. Similar to Artner’s exhibition the paper doesn’t attempt to develop deeper research into an understanding of Hallstatt and Hallstatt See as copied places, but refers instead to a place that has been copied. A separate project, concerned with copied architecture in China, was commenced by British artists Sebastian Acker and Phil Thompson. According to their website they travelled to China in late 2012 to research the phenomenon of the copytowns, iconic European buildings and towns which are being replicated in China. While the website reveals evidence of research, the project appears to have halted.

All the articles, including the internet articles and my previous academic studies, contributed to my initial interest and understandings in this research inquiry.

1.3 Practice-based Research

Practice-based research is explained by Linda Candy in her paper Practice Based Research: A Guide:

“An original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice.”

In this research photographic practices, both through still photography and video, were used to inform the research. The research as suggested by Candy aimed to produce new knowledge, not just through the production of photographs, but thorough an analysis of the work produced and then the production of more work and more research as a response. The investigation took three years and involved three major field excursions punctuated with formal academic research and the making of creative work. Each process added to and fuelled the formulation of new knowledge. Overall the investigation adapted two models of research. The first was Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolts’ more linear model for practice research, where the production of studio practice can be used to stimulate research. This initially involved drawing from my previous visual research into places, and using the internet information about the copying of Hallstatt into southern China to investigate the concept of copied places.

52. Ibid
Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

As the research progressed it drew more from a second model outlined by Graeme Sullivan’s *Artist as Theorist* 56, when the creative work is in and of itself the outcome of research. 57 For Sullivan, who is currently the director of the School of Visual Arts at Pennsylvania State University and who has written extensively on creative visual practice, the creation of artwork involves making choices that become informed through ways of working, adapting and seeing from an array of practices. Sullivan states:

“often what is known can limit the possibility of what is not and this requires a creative act to see things from a new view.” 58

I have previously followed both these models for creative research. However, in this new research the process became more immersive and analytical, involving and permitting more time for analysis, experimentation and reading to refine the directions taken in the production of the bodies of works. These directions at times doubled back on themselves before going forward to produce new creative work.

1.4 Previous Creative Research into Place

With an ongoing interest in stories, place and photography, the stories of the two Hallstatts drew my attention in a similar way I had been drawn to particular places in previous research. I hadn’t been to China or Austria but had long-term interest in a photograph capacity for visually revealing aspects of a place beyond words. I was drawn to the story of these two places as copies. Two places on opposite sides of the world, in different cultures and on different continents. Hallstatt See appeared to have been deliberately and transparently appropriated into China.

*Sight Unseen* 59 was the first exhibition that I completed linking narrative and place. This still photographic work juxtaposed stories from newspapers of the isolated Aboriginal community Wadeye, originally called Port Keats, that depicted a violent dysfunctional community through stories and portraits. The work combined storytelling and photography. It was intended as an open-ended visual discussion through the juxtaposition of social documentary reportage and portraiture that presented stories of a place and its people that are rarely seen. Actual newspaper articles about Wadeye were included in the exhibition, with the photographic environmental portraits accompanied with descriptions that identified and personalized each portrait.

While not all my previous work was made in isolated remote locations, the research completed for a Research Masters Degree in Visual Art at Monash University, titled *Please Be Careful* 60 completed in 2011, centred on three sites in Australia that are both isolated and difficult to access: Barrow Creek on the Stuart Highway in the Northern Territory, Cheviot Beach on the southern point of the east coast of Australia and Belanglo State Forest, a dense pine plantation located in rough terrain between the major metropolitan areas of Sydney and Canberra. The investigation through the camera revealed the previously unseen and unknown.

They represent three places where well-publicised traumatic events had occurred, and photography was used to investigate how stories of trauma could be recalled and retold after the event through narrative photographic research. The visual representations drew on interpretations of the stories using my imagination, the photographic frame and the lens to both tell and retell stories in imaginative and visually descriptive ways that had largely been unseen.

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Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

At Cheviot Beach in 1967, the then serving Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt disappeared while swimming alone in rough seas near the rocky shoreline. An extensive search has never recovered his body and many conspiracy theories still revolve around the disappearance.\(^{61}\) In Belanglo State Forest near the Hume Highway, the bodies of seven backpackers were found dead as stories emerged of numerous people being abducted on the Hume Highway south of Sydney.

Barrow Creek on a lonely stretch of the Stuart Highway, is where the British backpacker Peter Falconio disappeared in 2001 after his car was hijacked. His girlfriend Joanna Lees managed to escape after hiding in shadows created by dense saltbush. Their car was later found hidden on a side road. Peter Falconio is still listed as a missing person in Australia, although his body is never expected to be found.

The images in the series became imbued with the possibilities of fear and trauma experienced in each place, through imaginative use of the camera’s various viewpoints and light. I aimed through the research to use photography to reveal the possibilities of the stories of place through visual images.

A large sign at the front of Belanglo State Forest, riddled with bullet holes, reads “please be careful”. Marks that easily can go unnoticed can be made noticeable through the photographic frame. Walter Benjamin noted that photography

> “is able to bring out aspects of the original that can be accessed only by the lens.”\(^{62}\)

Both the words on the sign and the gun shot marks become clearly visible in the image, while the forest in the background remains blurred and looks menacing. In another image in the same series, a tree roughly severed with visual axe blows sits alongside a tree with unfamiliar numbers painted on the side (Figure 4). Again, the slow shutter speed created moving trees in the front and rear of the image and sharp focus on the cut tree trunk, highlighting a sense of unease and the possibility of this being a potentially traumatic place. The viewpoint of the camera also served to replicate the possibilities of a person standing and looking.

Figure 4: Please Be Careful 1, Belanglo State Forest, 2010.

\(^{61}\) In 2016 a new film on the Harold Holt disappearance was announced, titled The Defector Available at: https://www.cinemaaustralia.com.au/2016/11/02/your-first-look-at-scott-mannions-harold-holt-thriller (Accessed October 2, 2016)

Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

The images depict the inside of the forest, often written about but not often seen. The lens of the camera captured the place to include shadows of people, tire-tracks, beer cans and gunshot marks; things both real and imagined. The images in Belanglo Forest, while realistic, were also purposefully theatrical imaginative landscapes, devoid of Australian light with long dark shadows and human track marks used as markers to ignite the stories and create narratives within the images. When these images were initially printed and presented in the Goulburn Regional Gallery, they were one-meter wide and were able to create a strong relationship between the place and the viewer. The large-scale nature of the images allowed the viewer to enter safely into the space and view the details of the scenes.

Barrow Creek on the Stuart Highway feels like a lonely place. Extended photographic exposures, taken in the night, recreated this feeling along with an exaggerated colour cast within the image. In one image, I also used myself as a shadow on the highway, appearing as a ghost with the lines of the highway disappearing in the distance (Figure 5). Again, this image was printed as a large panorama to visually extend the sense of drama and create a larger viewing platform for the audience.

In much of my work I use the scale of the photograph as a device to force the viewer to participate in a certain way in front of the image. Decisions on scale are dictated by the subject matter and how I want the viewer to respond. A small image makes the viewer move in closer to the image, while large scale images force the viewer backwards but also reveal more detail.

Figure 5: Please Be Careful, Alone on the Sturt Highway, 2009.
Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

A following series, The Familiars, contained seventeen large-scale photographic images from various places in Australia that evoked and retold creatively the story of the appearance of ghostly figures continually appearing at each place. These were stories of things both familiar and unfamiliar. The images were never intended to reveal or bear witness to the ghostly presences, like a spirit photographer, but instead to link and potentially reveal something in the actual image of the place that is darker and more sinister: to evoke and reveal the possibilities of the stories. The resulting images speak simultaneously of both the story and the place and together create a new vision of the place.

As explained by Anne Marsh, who is currently Professorial Research Fellow at the Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne, in the publication Look, Contemporary Australian Photography since 1980, next to The Boys Room, an image from the Familiars Series

"[Laudenbach] was not seeking to capture the ghosts that had been sighted in the spaces but instead use the images of unoccupied rooms to: reveal how place can take on its past and be haunted by its history."

Another photograph from The Familiars was taken in the restored house Monte Christo, which has become a tourist attraction located in the small country town of Junee in New South Wales. The presence of ghosts in the house has been reported by many people through stories often linked to foul play. These stories are told repeatedly to all tourists visiting the house, as well as being repeated in literature about the house.

Again, the exhibition of large-scale visual works extended the written and told stories through photographic images to create a reworking and retelling of the stories, through creative practice. Through a combination of the real and the imaginative, and using the technical capabilities of the camera including long exposures and varying viewpoints, the images provided visual evidence to extend and retell the possibilities of the told stories in a creative way.

These images were never about witnessing supernatural phenomenon but about using photography to retell stories in a different, illuminating and imaginative way. The images used photographic devices including movements, colour cast and repetition that helped create feelings of unease to recreate the potential of the told stories, while investigating the stories and presenting new extended versions.

In more recent work, during a residency in Broken Hill, I investigated stories of Daisy Bates, the English woman who lived in central Australia with Aboriginal people. In this visual work I again used myself, as I did on the highway at Barrow Creek, as a figure in the landscape to visually reveal, retell and extend the story of Bates in the outback of Australia.

The initial research motivation and methods for this current photographic research began through drawing on and expanding various imaginative, theoretical and technical themes from these previous studies. Particularly being drawn to elusive, mysterious written stories of places that are not easily accessed and using the camera as a tool for investigation.

There are however many aspects of this new research that extend my previous research into places. The new research involves two places and two cultural landscapes, one a world recognised historical and cultural site. I have both revised and extended my previous role of artist-researcher and taken on a dual role, a blurring between photographic researcher and photographic tourist.

64. Ibid, p. 245
Chapter 1: Landscapes of Desire: Doubled Places

I am a tour researcher with a new embodied approach to become an active tourist researcher, researching place and tourist’s behaviours. I move from using the camera to collect the imaginary, as in my previous photographic research, to being both an embodied tourist photographic artist and researcher in this new research.

1.5 Place and Place Naming: Nomenclature

Place names become an object of knowledge that then enables a place to be located on a map and then explored. The Australia academic and author Paul Carter explains in his book The Road to Botany Bay⁶⁷,

“naming words were forms of social punctuation, transforming space into an object of knowledge, something that could be explored and read.”⁶⁸

Through giving Hallstatt See the same name as a 5th century historical town from Europe, it imbues the new Hallstatt with associations of somewhere else with an already established identity. It embeds associations in Hallstatt See of history, nostalgia and the romantic. Donald Horne notes what he called re-imagining or engaging, in an act of appropriation through naming as something familiar to the early explorations of the world and that later became a vital process in tourism⁶⁹.

Through giving Hallstatt See the almost identical name as a world famous historical town, an immediate line is drawn across the world to the original place. Hallstatt See is infused with an identity through association, beyond China. A specific tag on the internet makes a link that is immediate and lasting. Hallstatt See becomes somewhere that can be explored as a copied place.

Yet Bianca Bosker notes of the reproduced places in China, a more specific modification to suit what Chinese people find iconic, pleasant and striking. Similarly, the Mayor of Hallstatt Austria was reported as being initially concerned when he heard of the copied town Hallstatt See, with an almost identical name. However, he later changed his mind when he saw it. He is reported as saying, after he visited, it was not so controversial.⁷⁰ It was both familiar and unfamiliar but not uncanny. It was obviously not his home town.

1.6 Initial Research Methods

Before travelling, to both places I identified the geographical constraints of the study. The two places, one in China and the original in Austria, were both a long way from Australia. The two places are also a long way from each other and neither place is located near a major city or on major tourist transport routes. Hallstatt is a two-hour local train ride from the Austrian city of Salzburg, while Hallstatt See is located between Hong Kong and the large mega city of Guangzhou in China, with the closest major city being Huizhou.

I decided from the outset of the study that I would if possible make three field trips, first to visit the copied Hallstatt See then Hallstatt and later return to Hallstatt See. I always had the option to again return to both places, however for this body of research this did not become necessary. As well as establishing a timeline, as in my previous research, I established a planned methodology to be immersed into the places.

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⁶⁸. Ibid: 67
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As a researcher with a camera, I consciously adapted two distinct methods through the use of two embodied methods of research: the flâneur and mise-en-abyme that are defined and explained in the following sections.

1.7 The Flâneur: Walking with a Camera

The French poet and writer Charles Baudelaire\(^7\) identified the flâneur as early as 1859 as a new kind of public person, a person who wandered in a place without particular purpose. The casual walker, usually male, wandered and observed street-life and urban space; someone not always necessarily a photographer, but who noticed what might otherwise be obscured. Later the description of the flâneur was adapted and extended by Susan Sontag to a person

“rootless, alone and surrounded, ambivalent and intoxicated. ... They need not be imagined as some specialized observer but rather viewed as a choice available to anyone who inhabits a complex environment: to see what other people ignore.”\(^73\)

This wandering and seeing what other people ignore and then capturing it photographically is what photographers often do, and has been linked particularly to the work of documentary and street photographers. I too am an observer with a camera, a tour researcher and the contemporary flâneur moving around each place, which are in the beginning unknown to me. I was not simply drifting but looking with a purpose, in two places, to use the camera to investigate the contemporary copied place. However, while I have an outward relaxed approach to moving around, the technique contains an intentional consciousness both active and embodied: a contemporary flâneur, a specialised observer.

Contemporary Australian photographer Trent Parke’s photographic method can also be considered as the contemporary flâneur as he roams Australia using his camera with purpose: to reveal what he feels remains unseen or unknown. Parke’s consciousness with his camera involves both walking and driving his car. His aim is not to reveal what can be already seen or has already been photographed but to visually retell and reveal stories of Australia in a different way, his way through the photographic image.

Parke travelled Australia for one year to visually reveal and record his vision of contemporary Australia in his series titled *Minutes to Midnight*. Travelling about ninety thousand kilometres in his search for images, Parke explained that his research aimed to capture

“the bigger picture things: terrorism, racism, poverty, natural disasters and the struggle to survive. So, I found I was using this symbolism to tell a much bigger, epic story of the world through pictures made specifically in Australia. I think people can relate to this work in many ways.”\(^73\)

In this work, his camera captured facets of Australian life through photographs that had not been previously recorded, using a combination of realism and his previsualised imaginative, never just recording what was in front of his camera. He took thousands of photographs as a part of his research that he later spread out in long lines like open books to visually re-examine and relook at them, before selecting works for exhibition and publication.

Diane Arbus can be considered a female photographic flâneur. Arbus wandered New York City in an unconstrained way with her camera, always with a consciousness of looking. However, as revealed in the publication *Diane Arbus Revelations*\(^74\) which contains images of the


photographer's previously unseen contact sheets, when she found what she might be looking for, Arbus intensively pursued the subject, taking many images of the same subject often over a long period of time. In her thematised investigation, like Trent Parke, Arbus would later analyse hundreds of images in the studio to find the one that contained what she was looking for in her image.

While my subject matter is different to Diane Arbus, I was also a walking observer with a camera, always conscious of the intentions of the research. Although I had no map to follow I was led by the intentions of the research: observations through the lens of the camera and taking photographs. As an already experienced photographic artist, I followed the landscape in the two Hallstatts with the purpose of collecting images to investigate what could be revealed. I was conscious that I was performing as a tourist to the outside observer. I looked like a foreigner and tourist with a camera that I was continually using as I stopped and took photographs. I had a set aim, purpose and consciousness in my picture making process.

1.8 The Camera as a Mirror

The second method for taking the images that I adapted, to both reflect the nature of the project of the copy and bring consistency to the initial collection of the images, was the technique of mise-en-abîme. While the idea of the camera has often been framed through suggestions of the camera as a witness or surveillance tool, in literacy criticism the term mise-en-abîme (abyme) occurs within a text with a reduplication of images or concepts that refers to the textual whole. Mise-en-abîme (abyme) is a play of signifiers within a text, of sub-texts mirroring each other.

“In the vocabulary of literary criticism, the phrase en abyme describes any fragment of a text that reproduces in miniature the structure of the text in its entirety.”75

This has over time been adapted by photographers in various ways, including using actual mirrors within a larger landscape and to create doublings and reflections within an image. Although not considering myself or a photograph a mirror, to what is in front, the technique of mise-en-abîme reflects the physical association of the camera and the mirror, and the association of the project to a place that was a copy. It also links to the idea of doubling in a mirror to creating a reflection.

In adopting mise-en-abîme as a photographic method I was influenced by the idea of the first camera, the Camera Obsura, often considered a device capable of duplicating reality. Camera Obsura was like a primitive theatre and had its beginnings in illusion and mysticism. These earliest cameras mirrored the outside through simple tunnelled light that reflected an image back into a box, or in some cases a room wall without fixing the image. The primitive camera produced an inverted unfixed copy of what was in front of it. The shiny surfaces of most of the earliest fixed photographs, invented around the time of the daguerreotypes including the ambrotype and tintypes, also physically lent themselves naturally to being described as mirrors.76

This is also like the viewfinder of the SLR camera that reveals a copy of what is in front of it, as an unfixed image. When the shutter is pressed, the camera captures what is in front of it and makes a copy that can then be reproduced. Inside an SLR camera a mirror reflects light from the lens into the viewfinder through a pentaprism, allowing the photographer to look through the viewfinder to view and frame a shot.

The French photographer Brassai can be considered a photographic flâneur as he wandered Paris at night and often used mise-en-abîme to evoke a sense of doubling and the unfamiliar within his images. Brassai used mirrors to include reflections of people within the frame. In the image

76. In its earliest manifestations, photography was often referred to as Daguerre’s mirror. The silvered surfaces and lateral reversals of these early photographs supported this analogy.
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Lovers Quarrel 77 (Figure 5), Brassai simultaneously pictured a couple looking tense but expanded the image through the inclusion of another person in the image. He used a similar method in the image Group in a Dance Hall 78 (Figure 6). In this project, the technique of mise-en-abyme was adapted as I physically stood nearby others, sometimes behind and sometimes to the side, and photographed what they were photographing. I also often included the other photographers within my image frame.

This technique along with the flâneur provided two initial methods that provided a fluidity and consistency to the study: a way of both working and being immersed in the places, and that motivated me to move around and take photographs with a purpose in initially unfamiliar sites. The methods developed as the study progressed and provided, as Sullivan notes in his model of visual research, both new ways of working and new work.

Figure 6: Lovers Quarrel, Brassai, 1932.

78. Ibid. p. 71
1.9a Visit 1: Hallstatt See

Hallstatt See is located about 20 minutes’ drive by taxi from Huizhou City in Southern China. Although not yet appearing on Google maps, it is located close to the large Chinese city of Shenzhen and the Chinese border with Hong Kong. Nothing of what preceded Hallstatt See on the site is visible, but can be imagined as like the farmland around: Chinese farmland linked by local roads.

Smog occasionally drifts through Hallstatt See although not enough to block out the view on the other side of the lake, a typical high-rise Chinese landscape. Reuters Business Travel\(^9\) reported Hallstatt See cost $940 million to construct and is separated into two parts: a tourist area and residential area. The residential area is guarded and not accessible to visitors, although the houses are visible on the walk into Hallstatt Village.

Outside Hallstatt See, a four-lane highway had replaced the previous cultural landscapes of Chinese farmland; signs of construction and piles of dirt and machinery were everywhere. Off to the side was a car-park filled with buses and cars and an entrance with a large sign that identified Hallstatt See. A man in a uniform supervised the entrance.

Buses, cars and motorbikes crammed into the car-park outside and almost everyone walked towards the site along a very clean, and what looked to be a continually manicured roadway.

Hallstatt See, for tourists and residents, is not intended as the theme park where there is a sense of suspended reality but as noted by Bianca Bosker, a replicated town with the look and feel of

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somewhere else in the world. Instead, Hallstatt See is replicated from another place in another part of the world where people can come to visit and even reside. Although like a theme park or large shopping complex, people are encouraged to park then walk into the site. Only VIP’s appeared to get picked up in golf buggies.

The long walkway into Hallstatt See functions as a physical barrier, providing an invisible fence to the outside. This facilitates both a physical barrier but also a mental shift for people walking in, from being in China to somewhere else. Jean Baudrillard recognized the importance of the difference from the carpark, when visiting the theme park Disneyland, where he noted there is a shift from the real to the hyper real.

“Inside, while panoply of gadgets magnetizes the crowd in directed flows-outside, solitude is directed at a single gadget: the automobile.”

In Hallstatt See each step transports visitors’ closer to the copied European village, or as Baudrillard recognises a simulacra and moves visitors away from the familiar and known world. The walking path slowly slopes down into the village and visitors slowly transition from seeing China into seeing most of Hallstatt See, although China is always a distant view. This process is reversed when leaving.

The bilingual signage inside Hallstatt See is written in duplicate in the most familiar texts to most of the visitors, Chinese and English. Nothing is written in German, a language unfamiliar to the Chinese but the official language of Hallstatt Austria.

This research is confined, through necessity, to the area where tourists can go and where I was permitted access. In Hallstatt Austria, there is no designated tourist area with all areas open to everyone, except private residences. However, in Hallstatt See the residential area is totally restricted. In constructing Hallstatt See, Minmetals have modified the development into two areas, one for tourists and one for residents.

The tourist area of Hallstatt See has a footprint copied directly from Austria with the town square in the centre and a lake on the side. Similar to a mirror image when looking onto a ground glass in a medium format camera, the layout of the town is in reverse. The village church, what could be considered a unique symbol of a 5th century village, contained a closely constructed copy with its copied spire intact at the front of the site, not the back. The bridge that links the walkway and the village is also at the front in Hallstatt See.

Some of the shop fronts in Hallstatt See are facades, although behind most are cafes, restaurants and a gallery where an invited German artist painted and talked to visitors. Elevated and slightly out of view of the main area, a beautician and hire shop provide a place for couples to dress in special clothes, to be photographed around Hallstatt See by professional photographers. This was clearly a popular business. Other couples arrived dressed in costumes and alighted from mini vans: some of the only vehicles allowed past the guard at the entrance.

There are many people in uniforms wandering around Hallstatt See China, men in the guard boxes, gardeners and pavement sweepers who ensure no rubbish is allowed to accumulate. Women dressed in what looked like Austrian outfits attend to potential customers who may hope to buy real estate and live permanently in Hallstatt See.

From the man in uniform at the entrance, the clean uniforms of the gardeners and attendants (Figure 8) the neatly manicured gardens, to the plastic flowers and taped bird noises, all added to the sense of a place removed from the world outside its entrance. Tourists with cameras and iPhones are everywhere.

I initially moved around the space in a random way, being drawn as much to what I saw as the layout of the place. I had no map to follow. I simply followed people. Visitors appeared to be using cameras to photograph the buildings, other groups or themselves, similar to most tourists. I stood behind or near them, often including the other photographer as well as the subjects in my images.

On my initial trip to Hallstatt See I returned to the site on five consecutive days. The weekend was the busiest. I returned to Hallstatt See again 14 months later and after I had visited Hallstatt Austria.

1.9b Visit to Hallstatt Austria

Three months after my first visit to Hallstatt See in June 2014, I arrived in Hallstatt Austria on a small boat that connects with the local train from Salzburg. The railway station is directly opposite Hallstatt and is the second last station on the line. The train on an old one-track line, slowly progressed, clinging to the side of the Alps to finally come to a slow anticipated halt in front of a sign that read Hallstatt. Almost everyone alighted and headed for the boat.

Until the late nineteenth century Hallstatt was only accessible by boat or on foot, as it is one of a number of small similar looking towns, situated directly on the side of Lake Hallstattersee and under the old salt mine. As noted by Inge,81 the Hallstatt lake is so clear that the surrounding mountains are mirrored within it. The town has the look of a direct stencil from one of the many postcards sold in the town.

The name Hallstatt is derived directly from the town: from hall which is a Celtic word for salt and stat Old German for settlement. Hallstatt has been occupied since the Iron Age when salt deposits were discovered and potential for trade provided an opportunity to settle into the area. Hallstatt is the oldest known industrial community in the world82. The salt mine began extraction in the Middle Bronze Age and formed a basis for prosperity in the area up until the mid-twentieth century.

Crammed between the mountain and the lake, and with no place to bury their inhabitants, the town has an ossuary or what is sometimes called a bone house. People are buried until their space

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is needed, although gradually the ossuary tradition is being replaced with cremation. There is also an archaeological museum and visitors can still take archaeological tours of the salt mine.

The architecture in Hallstatt is original and the residents, mostly descendants of original families, maintain the town with what looks to follow a strict heritage rulebook. Each morning the residents in the town can be seen scrubbing, sweeping and literally dusting the village. Similar jobs in Hallstatt See appeared to be done by paid employees wearing uniforms.

Hallstatt Austria has many hotels and guesthouses for visitors, different to Hallstatt See where there appeared to be no hotels or guesthouses. During my visit to Hallstatt See, I had to stay in the nearby city of Huizhou. Whereas in Hallstatt, I stayed in the centre of the town in a guesthouse, where ironically, all the other houseguests appeared to be Chinese.

The owners of the guesthouse were third generation Hallstatt residents and their guesthouse had been handed down through the generations, like most of the buildings in Hallstatt. I reflected in my field notes at the time that Hallstatt See had nothing left to hand on. A generational history of farming the land had disappeared to make way for the new town.

With a population of less than 1,000 people, Hallstatt is a small town and can be easily navigated without a map. There is no walkway unlike in Hallstatt See. While a boom gate at the front of Hallstatt functions to reduce traffic into the village, the village extends beyond the gate. The car park, some houses, shops and a lift up the mountain are all outside the town gate. The old salt mine situated above the town is accessed by cable car. The surrounding mountains contain numerous walking tracks and lookouts that centre on the natural beauty of the area.

The areas around Hallstatt also offer year-round physical activities such as hiking in spring and summer, swimming in summer, skiing in winter and bush walking in autumn. There is also a cycle track around the lake. This is not the case in Hallstatt See that offers no physical activities yet: although I noticed a large football stadium under construction near Hallstatt See.

Summary of Chapter 1

This chapter has provided both an overview into my previous research into place and narrative and an explanation into how this new research expanded and extended the conceptual concerns from my previous studies into place. The chapter also provided a description of the two places central to the study: Hallstatt and Hallstatt See, including my first visits. In the appendix are included articles that describe the construction of Hallstatt See in various ways as a copy of Hallstatt.

This chapter provided an outline of the methodology used in this study where I moved from my previous role of photographic researcher into embodied tourresearcher. In this role, I combined and adapted the role of flâneur, walking with a purpose and observing other tourists photographing and being photographed, and then capturing these performances through my own camera.

I have adapted the method of mise-en-abyme in the research through the method of both photographing other people photographing, and also including what they are photographing. In collecting the images, the research adapted a themed methodology outlined by Jeff Malpas, using photography to go beyond representation to become representational to reveal through photography aspects of the world that might otherwise go unremarked or un-noticed.

Chapter Two will link the early development of cultural landscapes to photographic history, and outline the work of contemporary preeminent photographic artists who have constructed their own contemporary landscapes to research themes related to the veracity of the photography.

This chapter will outline how this body of research into two constructed landscapes, one recently copied from the other, both extends from and expands the work of these artists who constructed their own landscapes for photography and used actors who they directed. This new research into
constructed copied landscapes borrows from some of the concerns in these works, also expanding on them. This new research into constructed copied landscapes both borrows from some of the concerns in these works but also extends and expands on them through the creation of new work.
Chapter 2: Constructed Realism through the Contemporary Photographic Frame

Chapter 2: Constructed Realism through the Contemporary Photographic Frame

This chapter will:

- **Provide** an explanation linking landscape and the constructed places of Hallstatt and Hallstatt See to contemporary themes in constructed photographic narrative, realism, simulation and the construction of new realities.
- **Provide** a description of the beginning of the practice research through photography.
- **Provide** an explanation of the work of some of the major contemporary artists whose work is concerned with constructed narrative, and how this new research links to and extends the concerns in their work.

When the photographic process was revealed around 1839 by Louise Daguerre, it was almost immediately linked with tourism. The tour company Thomas Cook began in 1840. The camera combined a way to both copy from nature and reflect the subject’s own desire to construct realities and fictions.

While the early explorers with cameras initially brought back realistic images of previously unseen places, the early landscape tourists and romantic painters sought out ideal scenes according to specific assumptions; an outlook that became almost pervasive. Landscapes were examined for both their natural features but also to view a rural idyll that was at odds with realism. As noted by Anne Marsh, from the early stereoscopic views, dioramas and panorama cameras of the nineteenth century, through to the family album and the more recent cinematic spectacles and popular attractions,

“the reality of the photograph and the film have been undermined by producers creating imagined realities.”

However, in the recent catalogue essay that accompanied the exhibition *More Real: Art in the Age of Truthiness*, Elizabeth Armstrong identified this as a time when

“the relationship between truth and fiction has never been murkier.”

85. Ibid. p. 9
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Armstrong points out that society and artists have been focused on what she identifies as this “modern conundrum.”86 Some of the world’s most recognised and respected photographic artists, including Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall and Gregory Crewdson have purposefully since the 1980’s combined realism with constructed images to create work that challenges the photographs’ association to realism, and documentary through the construction of imaginary images.

This chapter combines an analysis of the work of these photographers with the aims of this research in Hallstatt and Hallstatt See. The chapter locates the concerns of their work within the visual aims, intentions and outcomes of this research project.

2.1 Tourists Making Narratives

When I returned from the first field research trips to Hallstatt See and Hallstatt, I began the analysis of the work in the studio through physically laying the collected articles from the internet next to the images I had taken. I circled in the articles the words that related to the copy such as real copy, duplicate, exact, Xeroxed village and copy. I directly linked images and text, something I had previously done in the work Site Unseen.

The photographic works are assembled through grouping people using cameras in the two places. The work reflected the assembled images through the internet search Hallstatt See: where images from the two places merge into each other (Figure 9).

![Figure 9: From internet search Hallstatt See, accessed May 2, 2016.](image)

As I assembled and reassembled the images numerous times in various configurations, the groupings began to reveal various similarities reflecting the idea of the copy or mirror (Figure 10).

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86. Ibid
Figure 10: Overlaid image made in the studio from images taken in both Hallstatt and Hallstatt See, 2015.

The images reveal repetition in the behaviours of the people in the two places using cameras and a similarity in the appearance of the tourists, with many appearing to be of Asian appearance. While photographing people who look Chinese was not purposely done in Hallstatt, there are now many Asian tourists in Hallstatt Austria. As noted by Ingram and Reisenleitner, the number of Asian tourists in Hallstatt Austria has increased from fewer than 50 in 2005 to thousands87. The buildings in both places look similar in the photographic images.

Tourists in both places are candidly pictured photographing in each place, using what cultural geographer Jonas Larsen calls preformed tourist behaviour. Larsen states however that tourist photography is not only preformed but performed, and tourist photographers are framing places as much as being framed into scenes. He states:

“Tourist photography is made less visual and more embodied, less concerned with spectatorship and “consuming places” than with producing place myths, social roles and social relationships, such as family life.”

However, these images clearly reveal people picturing place, often using repeated performed behaviour in both places. Through placing the works together and in groups, the images reveal a breakdown of the individualisation of each place, a merging of places and behaviour. While the two places don’t reveal an uncanny resemblance to each other, the images reveal duplicated behaviours, particularly around the town fountain and town square.

Figure 11: *Tourists in Hallstatt See 1*, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.

Figure 12: *Men in Black*, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.
In the images (Figures 11-13), people are photographed holding and using contemporary cameras. The images visually depict people in Hallstatt See using a camera to picture place and picture themselves into place. Figure 14 shows a man in Hallstatt who has positioned himself near the lake and in front of a car to capture the best view across the lake with his camera. In Figure 15 View with Selfie, two people are pictured posing high above Hallstatt Austria. They are taking a selfie, again using what is now globalised preformed tourist behaviour.
A couple are making their own image of place, capturing themselves on the viewing platform high above Hallstatt. As suggested by Larsen, the image reveals the couple less concerned with consuming place and more with their own performance, capturing their relationship and creating stories for themselves.

This is similarly seen in the video work titled Too Many Selfies (CD Video 1) made in a street in Hallstatt See. The video captures a group of girls making selfie images. Although I often am using my camera in close proximity to tourists in Hallstatt See, they don’t acknowledge my presence. The girls in the front of the video appear less interested in place and more in using the place to create their own stories. Roland Barthes noted

"in front of the lens, I am at the same time: the one I think I am, the one I want others to think I am, the one the photographer thinks I am, and the one he makes of to exhibit his art."

Photography is a globalised activity and the people in both Hallstatt and Hallstatt See are captured repeating selfie behaviours, something often now seen in contemporary life all over the world. With a selfie photograph, the subject and photographer are combined: the subject uses the mirror in the iPhone to check their reflection before they capture how they want to be seen. The images are often later exhibited on social media sites. Selfie behaviour with a camera has become preformed, performed tourist behaviour as shown in the video.

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Chapter 2: Constructed Realism through the Contemporary Photographic Frame

2.2 Tourists Performances in Hallstatt See

In the studio I continue the research through visually analysing the images. Another group of images emerge, having no obvious equivalent in Hallstatt: people in dress up clothes being photographed by professional photographers. Some of these people are dressed in traditional wedding clothes, others in ball gowns and suits that are not particularly contemporary, while others are in school clothes. A few couples are dressed in Mao army uniforms.

The people in bridal clothing can be recognised as a part of the international coupling or wedding industry, where since the late 1990's it has become fashionable for newly married couples to have photographs taken outside by professional studios. bridal couples all over the world have moved to outside studios in exotic locations for their photographs. Extravagant and well-off couples including Chinese couples, travel overseas including to Australia.

Xin Huang\(^90\) notes that Chinese studios offer a variety of packages which include both a choice of scenes and costumes that are representative of the different historical periods and gender roles. Apart from the traditional white wedding dress and black tuxedo, Chinese couples appear to choose many other sets of costumes. As suggested by Huang, couples in Hallstatt See appeared to be changing their outfits a number of times and to be acting out roles, directed by photographers.

Being followed by a photographer can take on an added meaning in contemporary society, through visually elevating the couple from others and making them feel like celebrities, and the photographers into paparazzi who follow celebrities. It is a behaviour that the international wedding photography industry has adopted in recent times.

While bridial portraiture is familiar to western cultures, specific aspects of the Chinese wedding photographs are familiar to the western observer, including white wedding dresses and black suits because they are commonly portrayed in magazines. As noted by Nicole Constable, the portraits of Beijing brides

“closely resemble women’s fashion magazine covers, advertisements for bridal wear, glamour photography and other Western media images of models and media stars.”\(^91\)

Using a combination of familiar poses, locations and photographic images from magazines and television, Constable\(^92\) argues bridal portraiture in China is not mimicry and not another form of globalisation or global homogenization. Instead, it is particular to China in ways that indicate modernity, nostalgia, gender and romance that are specific to the current historical and sociocultural context of post-Mao China.

Consistent with what is suggested by Constable, the images in Hallstatt See reveal people (Figure 16) often dressed in clothes not currently fashionable or familiar to contemporary western culture and the subjects often look to be posing in stilted and unfamiliar poses. Some of the images in Hallstatt See also directly reflect the post Mao context referred to by Constable, with couples nostalgically dressed in Mao People’s Liberation Army attire. Chairman Mao was the founding father of the People’s Republic of China, which he ruled with his army as Chairman of the Communist Party of China from its establishment in 1949, until his death in 1976.

What is also revealed as I spread out the images in the studio, is many of the women’s dresses are either tied or pinned at the back to make them look more fitted, and often reveal large pins and stitching holding the clothes together. In addition, the shoes (while mostly invisible in the images) are old or unmatched to the outfit. Many of the men are wearing shoes that have no

backs so they can be easily slipped on regardless of shoe size and the woman are often wearing slippers. These outfits are not familiar to Western weddings where people usually wear new or hired clothes, complete outfits and clothes that are clean and made to fit.

However actors on the stage or on a film set often wear clothes suited to the performance and that only need to be seen from one angle. Through the frame of the camera, in the hands of the professional photographers or in their own hands, Hallstatt See appears like a stage with the tourist as actors. Hallstatt See provides a stage and the photograph captures one angle and moment of the performance. In Hallstatt See the photographers are also often shouting orders, similar to a stage director in a theatre. As the tour researcher, I record these performances.

Hallstatt See is a copied town from Europe but through the lens of the camera, it appears to become a stage for performance. In his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman likens social interaction to the theatre stage where individuals are performers. Terminology borrowed from theatre and the stage, such as ‘performance’, ‘actor’, ‘stage’ and ‘choreography’ has been used to describe general tourist behaviours. For Goffman, a social space or stage is any place that is contained by barriers in which a particular kind of activity takes place.

The people in Hallstatt See are not film stars or stage actors, yet appear as acting out roles seen on television. Just as Erving Goffman borrowed metaphors from the stage to discuss the behaviour of workers in the work place, in Hallstatt See tourists appear like actors on an artificial stage who are using the place and photography to perform and create new realities for themselves.

Dean MacCannell, the American sociologist, was the first academic to recognise that the act of being a tourist released a more authentic self where the everyday mask was discarded. Yet he also acknowledged that it is often difficult to know for sure if the experience is in fact authentic. Donald Horne later stated

“as long as it is confidently asserted and attested by some seal of approval, almost any authenticity might do.”

Even though according to American postmodern theorist Andy Grundberg,

“There is no place in the postmodern world for a belief in the authenticity of experience.”

In Hallstatt See people dress in a mix of outfits and there is a sense of a suspended authenticity enhanced by how people are acting and what the people are wearing. The outfits are neither Chinese nor contemporary but contribute to a performance narrative. In Hallstatt See, contemporary tourists appear to be making their own authentic experience. They are using the place and with the photographers, creating what could be considered a new authentic reality. They are creating new authentic stories, being directed by the photographers.

The image of the woman sitting alone in Hallstatt See, titled *Woman Posing in Pink Dress, Hallstatt See* (Figure 16), appears to be acting out the role of a glamorous movie star. She is not a sophisticated actress acting shown in Figure 17. She is however being directed by a photographer

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93. **Performance** is taken to mean to perform as on a stage or in front of an audience.
94. **Actor** is taken to mean a person who is performing in front of an audience.
95. **Stage** is taken to mean a place where people perform.
96. **Choreography** is taken to mean a plan or scripted performance.
to capture her performance. She is alone posing as a glamorous film star, reflecting what Constable notes as current notions in China of romance.

Figure 16: Woman Posing in Pink Dress, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach 2015.

Figure 17: Dream House, Gregory Crewdson, 2002.

Hallstatt See provides a place where people act out roles in front of the camera and the camera captures these desires and imagined realities. Notions of nostalgia, gender and romance are visible in the images that were not noticeable in Hallstatt Austria and are also not noticeable outside the confines of Hallstatt See, or on the roadway or in the carpark. They are confined to the inside area. I use my camera to frame and photograph the performance.

The photographs from Hallstatt See recall a long tradition of self-portraiture and theatrical role-playing in art. Through the camera and various tools of everyday cinema, including makeup, costumes and stage scenery, illusions are recreated that signify concepts of public celebrity, self-confidence, sexual adventure, entertainment, and other socially indorsed existential conditions.
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The people are not dressed as either Austrians in China or Chinese in Austria. They are instead dressed in clothes from another time and place and are acting out desired roles, directed by the photographer.

Anne Marsh stated of photography that it

“preserves an ancient desire to become Other, to be present in another form, in another time and place.”

The camera, with its ability to produce a copy, is the essential element in the transformation. Marsh recognises the camera as a machine that can “record a selected memory” that shares many of the vagaries of the conscious and unconscious mind. The camera simultaneously encourages people to perform, whether directed or not directed, and facilitates a person becoming where and who they want to be instead of who they are. It is like a primitive theatre or magic that enables one thing to become another.

The tourists in Hallstatt See, taking selfies and performing in images, are never the outsider as a post tourist. They are in their own country, in a place that is both familiar and unfamiliar but where they feel comfortable. They can be considered as a new type of tourist: the post post tourist, using a place that is inside China but replicated on a place from the outside and separated by the walkway, to create their own new realities. Their images reflect the contemporary world as well as identifying photography itself as a medium for constructing stories.

2.3 Recording Real Life

The idea of the camera being the mute observation station or mirror to what is in front of it, recording objective evidence, has already been purposely undermined by artists like Jeff Wall, Gregory Crewdson and Cindy Sherman. They seek to acknowledge that all photographs are staged or framed, either intentionally or not. In their photographic work, these artists combine realism and artifice through staged and theatrical imagery, that borrow from realism and fantasy, to depict both the artifice in photography and the constructed nature of the known world.

While there are numerous artists I could have referenced in the study, I selected three of the most significant, well-known and well-studied artists in the world today who also use construction in their photographic work. Through using the capacities provided through the technical abilities of the camera, these artists use devices to question the relationship of the photograph to real life, often employing actors who they direct in still photographs and making models and constructions of places to depict stories about life and the world.

In what is now considered an iconic series Untitled Film Stills, American photographic artist Cindy Sherman also literally made up film stills as a basis for her staged narratives. Her work exposes the fictional nature of both the photographic medium and also echoes the notion of the simulacra formulated by Jean Baudrillard; that our sense of the world does not come from reality but empty signifiers, copies without originals - like Sherman’s images.

In Untitled Film Still 8 (figure 18), Sherman photographs herself standing at a beach in what looks like a scene from a film. It is in fact a single simple black and white photograph, containing a solitary figure: herself. Sherman is a double, both the model within the image and the unseen photographer. She looks both the familiar film star but also becomes unfamiliar. She is unknown, and then confusing as she becomes recognised as the same slightly changed, re-arranged figure in each image in the series (Figure 19).

101. Ibid. p. 91
102. Cindy Sherman’s Untitled Film Stills, a series of 69 black-and-white photographs created between 1977 and 1980
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By being both the photographer and the photographed, Sherman borrowed, modified and parodied the idea of the photographic. She worked in and around the city but was never the flaneur. She set up her photographs very precisely using herself as subject. However, she always remained in disguise to reveal the camera to be as much a document of truth as a document of trickery. Sherman revealed she was often inside her own apartment or close to home while depicting scenes that looked to be taken far away.

Sherman used an adaption of *mise-en-abyme* by turning the camera’s mirror back onto herself. Instead of creating a picture within a picture, Sherman created the mirror in a different way, through being simultaneously both the photographer and the photographic subject.

Sherman’s images can be considered as readymade film stills, reflecting the cinematic film still yet also simultaneously deconstructing the relationship of the photograph to a real film narrative. This is through the images being taken by her, with the main subject also being herself. These photographic fictions depict untold stories, narrative stills that appear to be cut from real film sequences.

The Canadian artist Jeff Wall, considered similar to Sherman as one of the most important photographic artists of the late twentieth century, also produces images like film stills. Wall’s work is intended to highlight the artifice of the photograph through the recreation of a photographic image as if it were actually taken from real life.

Wall’s constructed images usually come from his imagination and are constructed in his studio. Charlotte Cotton notes in Wall’s work a tension between the look and substance of a candid, grabbed photographic moment with his actual process, which is to preconceive and construct the scene.103

Both Wall and Sherman, through their work, refute the understanding of the photographer working alone in the environment, seeking out evidence of what exists. Instead they are constructing new realities, new stories. As Sherman stated recently of her images,

> “I want there to be hints of narrative everywhere in the image so that people can make up their own stories about them.”

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The working methods of Sherman and Wall and the photographers in Hallstatt See redefine the photographer as a director of imagery through becoming more of a film producer than a director or photographer. The photographer’s role becomes one of a creator to dream up the image and then creatively harness collective fantasies and realities into an image.

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The images refer to the imagined world that looks real and the real world that looks imagined. It reflects, as noted by Elizabeth Armstrong, the erasing of the boundary between the real and imaginary,

"a mounting evidence of deep ontological change that has become increasingly apparent in contemporary art as well as daily life."

While Sherman’s *Untitled Film Stills* (Figure 18 and Figure 19) are exhibited as small black and white traditional photographic prints, Wall continues the artifice inherent in his images into the gallery through the display of the work in huge light boxes, that through emitting light from the

105. Armstrong, E. Ibid. p. 31
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back, again also helps to transpose the works from photography to theatre. In later works, Sherman also made large colour prints for exhibition.

Similar to the relationship between Hallstatt See and distant yet nostalgic romantic associations with Hallstatt’s long history, Wall also acknowledges his sources as disparate as art history and outdoor advertising. Wall’s inspiration is linked to the beginning of modernism, when interpretation of reality through photography began. The Destroyed Room (Figure 21) was inspired by the painting by the French romantic Eugene Delacroix, titled The Death of Sardanapalus (Figure 22) painted in 1827, just before the invention of photography. Wall states the intention in his work is the use of the familiar, and then projecting his own view onto it is as psychoanalysis in reverse. Wall explains how he changes the unfamiliar to the familiar and then unfamiliar unheimlich placing it back in the unconscious and rendering it more accurate, harder to recognise and hence more artistic.

Then occasionally Wall takes the ordinary, the seen, the familiar and through the photographic images makes it unfamiliar. Wall’s image The Crooked Path (Figure 20) is an example of an image that looks constructed because it looks unfamiliar.

Wall’s works can also be compared to the works of the American artist Gregory Crewdson, whose large photographic works are also influenced by the uncanny. Crewdson produces images that again look real, but are constructions from elaborate scenes inspired by unfamiliar psychological drama. The stories contained within the images are based on stories he heard as a child when listening to his father, a psychologist, talking to patients. They are open-ended yet unfamiliar stories from life, that could also be film stills stopped at certain places in the editing.

Figure 20: The Crooked Path, Jeff Wall

106. The Death of Sardanapalus is based on the tale of Sardanapalus, the last king of Assyria, from the historical library of Diodorus Siculus, the ancient Greek historian, and is a work of the era of Romanticism.
Gregory Crewdson physically removes himself from the set and the camera operation, often standing on a cherry picker above the scene. He is both alone and removed, yet his team of actors and assistants are working on his commands. At the back of the book *Twilight*, Crewdson devotes
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numerous pages to revealing the artifice inherent in his image making in a section titled Production Notes and Credits.

Like the photographic works of Jeff Wall and Cindy Sherman, Gregory Crewsdon’s photographs appear deceptively direct and a documentary in presentation, however this is the illusion he wants to create. Gregory Crewdson refers to the people in his scenes as subjects. He is intentionally not familiar with them and states that is necessary to the outcomes of his work that there is a separation between himself and the subject. He is a photographer who acts as a film director.

In what can be considered a similar way, the photographers in Hallstatt See direct the subjects in the photographs to act out roles that are both familiar and unfamiliar. Figure 23 and Figure 24 are two images taken in Hallstatt See which include both the subjects and the photographers. The subjects are being encouraged to act out roles for the camera, being directed by the photographer.

Figure 23: Photographers with People Dressed in Mao Army Liberation Uniform, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.

This body of research *Landscapes of Desire* began like the work of Sherman, Wall and Crewdson, using real people and real places. The intention of those photographers was to create narratives, reject the role of witness or journalist and expose the artifice of photography as a storytelling medium through the deliberate construction of images. My intention was to use photography as a creative device to reveal two constructed places built as copies and the corresponding behaviours of the contemporary tourist in each place.

**Summary of Chapter 2**

This chapter has provided an explanation linking landscape and the constructed places of Hallstatt and Hallstatt See to contemporary themes in constructed photographic narrative and realism, and the construction of new realities. Through an explanation outlining the work of some of the major contemporary artists whose theories are concerned with constructed narrative, using a combination of realism and imagined photography, this chapter has outlined how this research project is both related to and extends these contemporary concerns.

The chapter introduced Paul Carter’s idea of mythopoeic invention as a way that places can be removed from simple facts and creatively brought into life. This chapter also links the work of three contemporary photographic artists considered at the forefront of contemporary photography, to the artifice and construction inherent in the photographic image. Through an analysis of the first works provided in Hallstatt and Hallstatt See, the chapter establishes the links between the constructed image and the constructed place.

**Chapter Three** outlines the continuing development of the creative works and provides an explanation linking the creation of works to critical theory. The study continues to refer to Walter Benjamin, Jean Baudrillard and Sigmund Freud, and in chapter three, introduces Michel Foucault’s heterotopic space.
Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double

This chapter

- Provides an extended explanation and rationale for the creative photographic works provided throughout the research.
- Provides an outline of how the photographic research continues to thematise the creative investigation of the constructed copied place.
- Demonstrates through the production of creative work the visual outcomes of the research.

In conducting the field research, I did two research trips to Hallstatt See and one to Hallstatt. The initial field studies in Hallstatt and Hallstatt See are outlined in Chapter One and the second trip to Hallstatt See are outlined in this chapter. Reflections from the visits documented in my research diary are included at the back of this paper as reflections on the field trip to Hallstatt See, and to understand the emerging creative process.

Up to this point the research has revealed the two constructed places as stages for both performed and performed behaviours, with some behaviours as identical. The research has also revealed a group of people dressed in clothes that are out of time, not mimicking from Hallstatt Austria but performing imaginary narratives being directed by photographers. This research has also revealed how the study extends the concerns of Jeff Wall, Gregory Crewdson and Cindy Sherman away from the purposely constructed image by the photographer, into using two already constructed places.

I return to the research questions of an investigation into the spacial complexities and behaviours of the people in each place.

3.1 Landscapes of Desire. Northern Centre for Contemporary Art Darwin

In February 2015, I was invited to exhibit work at the Northern Centre for Contemporary Art in Darwin Gallery 1 (limited copied of this catalogue will be available in the RG Gallop gallery for the duration of the exhibition). I used the exhibition as an opportunity in the context of the research to both print work and look at the images of Hallstatt See. This opportunity extended the thematised analysis and immersion of the practical research through the decisions made in selecting work and printing it to a much larger scale than the works I have in the studio. Figure 25 provides an installation photograph of one wall of the exhibition.

The exhibition in the main gallery included 10 images of the copied place Hallstatt See and the one video work Too Many Selfies. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue, with an essay written by David Broker, the director of the Canberra Contemporary Art Space (available in the R.G. Gallop Gallery).

Figure 25: Installation, Landscapes of Desire, Northern Centre for Contemporary Art NT, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015
In selecting work for the exhibition, and also enlarging prints, the works began to reveal previously unnoticed qualities. The image *Girl in Green Dress* (Figure 26) reveals a couple holding hands in a way that appears contrived, forced and quaint by western standards. Their facial expressions are tense. The image also reflects the performative nature of the people in Hallstatt See.

![Figure 26: Girl in Green Dress, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.](image)

Three of the images in the exhibition are large tableaus taken above the lake and another is above the large constructed chessboard. These images, like the narrative tableaus of Gregory Crewdson and Jeff Wall, depict people acting out scenes or stories from life. However, unlike the images of Wall and Crewdson, the actions of the people in my images were not directed by me. Instead I stood to the back or side of the images as they were taken.

A pictorial photograph narrative or tableau is a stand-alone picture that contains a story that has its precedents in both pre-photographic art and figurative painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It

“demonstrates a shared understanding of how a scene can be choreographed for the viewer so that they can recognise a story is being told.”

The room sheet for Jeff Wall’s exhibition at the Tate Gallery in London\(^ {111} \) states most of his photographic works are recreations based on situations that he has witnessed firsthand. Images now removed from an original. They are recreations based on his memory of small human gestures that he has seen. They are also gestures that don’t exist. The images have no referent, apart from his imagination, and the artifice of the photograph is made obvious by the fantastic nature of his stories.

In the large photographic tableau, narratives of untold and unscripted stories are revealed. The images also reveal people individually acting out scenes alongside other people being directed by photographers (Figures 27-30).

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111. Wall, J. *Tate Modern Exhibition, Jeff Wall Photographs*, October 2005 - January 8, 2006
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The performances of the subjects were not choreographed for the photograph, but instead physically stand behind, in front or above the scene, usually unseen by the performers and wait to press the shutter at the appropriate time to allow a story to unfold. My camera captures a performance unfolding. A performance of tourists, acting out scenes from unknown narratives, in clothes that are from an unknown time and out of place. With both cameras and photographers being ubiquitous in both places, as an embodied tourresearcher, people appeared to seldom notice that my camera was aimed at them, not at the attraction. However, this would change when I took multiple shots of the same people.
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Figure 27: Lake Tableau Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.

Figure 28: Lake Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.
Figure 29: *Lake 3 Hallstatt See, China*, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.

Figure 30: *Chess board Hallstatt See, China*, Cathy Laudenbach, 2014.
During a floor talk given at NCCA\textsuperscript{112}, I can reflect on my research question of the possibilities of using photographic images to understand, interpret and visually illuminate the spatial complexities and behaviours presented in both places. And ask:

**Why are people using this place as a stage, an unfinished and crowded copy of a European place?**

I have established through the research that Hallstatt See feels different and looks different from the area outside, and the people within Hallstatt See are acting in a different way to those both immediately outside but also in nearby places like Huizhou.

The images reveal that Hallstatt See does not look like Hallstatt Austria but also doesn’t look like the area outside its barriers in China. It is a place that has been created with an appropriated name to be both familiar and unfamiliar to the people who mainly visit; Chinese tourists.

As stated by Zhu Bin, a Huizhou resident:

"The moment I stepped into here, I felt I was in Europe: The security guards wear nice costumes. The houses are built in European style."

While Hallstatt See is a newly constructed place in China, in a radio interview about her experiences in the copycat towns, Bianca Bosker noted that when she is in one of these places copied from Europe, she no longer feels as if she is in China, but instead in Europe.\textsuperscript{114} It is a place with a different feel, and the images reveal a place for people to act differently. It is both familiar and unfamiliar.

I returned to Hallstatt See again two months later.

**3.2 Another Visit to Hallstatt See**

The outside of Hallstatt See was still unfinished when I returned two months after the Darwin exhibition. Almost 12 months passed since the first visit in June 2014, although not much appeared to have changed in Hallstatt See. The lake and areas around it were unfinished, although the number of tourists appeared to have greatly increased. Upon my return, getting a taxi from Huizhou was easy. All the taxi drivers knew where Hallstatt See was located. There were more people and cars outside, and the walkway coming into the village was crowded with tourists (see Notes from field notes Appendix 1 for further description).

The housing area was still closed off and looked empty. An article from the internet published in July 2015 not long after my second visit states the houses were empty,\textsuperscript{115} although this was not obvious as the area was sectioned off to all visitors. This was also outside the scope of the study.

For five days, I again moved in and around the site taking photographs and videos. As well as working within the footprint of the town, I photographed in the outside areas; on the walkway and in and around the areas still under construction. Was there something about the construction of the place that led to the constructions of the narratives and the way people were.
performing? There was no one having photographs taken outside Hallstatt See on the roadway or in the nearby car-parks (Figures 31-33).

Figure 34 shows the entrance to Hallstatt See, which is marked with a guard box and guard. I began taking photographs as soon as I arrived on the newly created avenue where Hallstatt See is located and continue on the walk-way and inside the site. While I hadn’t previously felt frightened, or what Freud called unfamiliar on the first visit, being more familiar with the place on the second visit made me a lot more confident and changed the way that I collected the images, by allowing me to work faster.

I feel both familiar with the layout of Hallstatt See and also familiar with the work I had already made in Hallstatt See. No longer am I simply the observing flâneur, looking through the viewfinder of the camera at the two places. I have become more of the researcher having a more defined purpose: to investigate the performative nature of the behaviours and reveal insights within the images of the performances within Hallstatt See.

I continue with the research methods I have previously used in taking the images: mise-en-abyme and being a flâneur. Both familiarity with the site, alongside insights gained from the images collected through previous visits, enabled me to work in a more controlled way for the five days.

I also observed myself, adapting my methods, physically moving in closer to the people with my still camera. I am continuing to work in and around the other photographers, I move myself physically closer and closer to the subjects. I also circle the site now, returning to particular places and moving continually around. I even find myself following particular people, picked at random.

I worked for 5 consecutive days. I returned to the studio with new rolls of film, digital images and video footage.

Figure 31: Road Outside 1, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.
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Figure 32: *Road Outside 2*, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 33: *Road Outside 3*, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.
3.3 Heterotopic Theatres

On returning to the studio, I again began shifting and considering the imagery and its content. The images are laid out as working prints and then broken into groups. I place the Hallstatt See images next to the previously taken Hallstatt images. While I am still led by ideas of the copy through finding difference, I am also asking myself specifically about Hallstatt See, and looking at why when investigating the visual imagery, people are behaving as they are.

Revealed through the research are the marked physical differences between the inside and outside areas of Hallstatt See and Hallstatt, and the behaviours of the people in these areas. Hallstatt See is a contained place. The whole of Hallstatt See is constructed behind a wall. While the outside is almost always visible, Hallstatt See is a contained space that begins and ends with the guard and guard box. There is no part of it outside the perimeter. This is different to Hallstatt Austria where the village spreads along the lake and up the mountain.

In his essay titled Of Other Spaces116, Michel Foucault describes heterotopic space as a way to discuss social space. Peter Johnson117 notes Foucault outlined the notion of heterotopia on three occasions: the first time being in his preface to The Order of Things published in 1966, the second in the same year on a radio broadcast as part of a series on a theme of utopia and literature, and lastly, Foucault mentioned heterotopic in a lecture titled Of Other Spaces presented to a group of architects in 1967.

The term heterotopic traditionally referred to the presence of a particular tissue type growing at a non-physiological site. A heterotopic space reflects a curious slippage between the familiar and the unfamiliar. The space seems familiar, being

included within a society’s conventional ordering system that connects them to other sites, yet unfamiliar in that they simultaneously refute the properties by which these relationships are sustained.

Although Foucault’s descriptions of heterotopia have been considered at times sketchy and somewhat confusing, he clearly identifies heterotopic spaces as spaces that are different but at the same time mirror what is around them. Physical spaces both reflecting and contesting simultaneously. Foucault identifies a number of these spaces, or what he calls counter spaces, that are in different ways outside the ordinary and that include holiday villages, cemeteries, gardens, theatres and brothels. Heterotopic spaces are contained spaces that have a relationship to another place, like a movie theatre or jail which are inside bigger places like cities, and where people inside behave differently. Heterotopic spaces are according to Foucault, found in given social spaces whose functions are different or even opposite of others.

Danielle Manning notes in her essay linking heteropic spaces and early Dutch painting, that heteropic spaces also reflect this curious slippage between the familiar and unfamiliar.

“Heterotopic sites seem familiar, as they are subsumed within a society’s conventional ordering system that links them to other sites, yet they are unfamiliar in that they simultaneously contradict the premises by which these relationships are sustained.”

Foucault identified four principles of the heterotopic spaces. The first was that they are places where behaviour is deviant to the normal. The second is that a heterotopic space has precise function. The third principle is that the heterotopic space brings into being, in a single space, several different areas that are in themselves not comparable, like a theatre brings onto its stage a series of incomparable places. And the fourth principle is that heteropic places are usually linked to slices of time, in a way that Foucault names as *heterochronies*. According to Foucault, these spaces are not oriented toward the eternal, but instead,

“they are rather absolutely temporal [chroniques].”

Foucault names as example fairgrounds and vacation villages, places that present a place for temporal transformation. Hallstatt See can be considered as a temporal heterotopic space, like a theatre for performance: a place where people can act out different desires of place and time while they are still in China. Hallstatt See provides a place to temporally transpose people in place and time from China, into other imaginations and other landscapes of desire. It can be as

“the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all forms, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time.”

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120. Ibid
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The long walkway into Hallstatt See creates a division between inside and outside. The guard at the beginning of the walkway is a reminder that it is a separate place and perhaps not everyone may enter, although there is no entrance fee. See (Figure 34).

Bianca Bosker also acknowledged more generally the new spaces in China as heterotopic spaces, as they are different spaces with respect to the rest of the spaces around them in China. Bosker notes that they set up what appear to represent

“disruptive, destabilizing juxtapositions of incompatible entities within the social order.”

This research reveals Hallstatt See as a place not just as an incompatible entity, but a place where people appear to feel familiar and are acting out new temporal realities. A place that appears to fit many aspects of the principles Foucault outlines pertaining to heterotopic spaces. A place that has a

“precise and determined function within a society.”

I begin at this point in the research to separate out the photographs of the people performing in front of a camera for the other photographers. I lay out three images from the exhibition in Darwin and begin to match these with new images. These images reveal people acting out roles, that while appearing to be linked to desire and sealing their relationships, also reveal performance and theatre actions directed by both themselves and the photographers. As noted by Ann Marsh,

“Cameras record a selected memory, usually one which we want to preserve at the time.”

The subjects, as suggested by Roland Barthes, use cameras like visual clocks or memory machines. They are literally selecting a moment and slicing it out of time.

121. Bosker, B. p. 56
122. Foucault, M. Of Other Spaces p. 5
123. Marsh. A. p. 91
In Figure 35, a couple are pictured dressed in clothes formerly worn by China’s People’s Liberation Army. These uniforms are representative of a time in China’s past, and as such evoke memories and nostalgia surrounding Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution.

In contemporary China, pictures of Mao are openly displayed in homes and shops. They can be seen to represent both an acknowledgement of the growth of China, plus a nostalgia amongst some sections of the Chinese population for the past.

The couples in Hallstatt See who are photographed dressed in Mao Army clothes, and other out of fashion clothes, are from a younger generation. This generation are taught China’s history through stories and pictures. Ideas of modernity, nostalgia, gender and romance within China are tied to its economic growth and seeming loss of historical contexts.

These ideas are multi-layered and multi-dimensional among disciplines and are considered through photographic processes in the research. Chinese people in out of time clothes, couples holding hands and being photographed in western wedding attire, along-side others dressed for fun in replica Mao army uniforms demonstrate a Chinese response to gender, modernity and history.

For another reason, I often return to this image in my process of immersion in looking at why and how the people are performing in Hallstatt See. The man is caught between two poses. He had stopped posing for the photographer and making his own memory, and has posed for my camera, while the woman looks away. Benjamin\textsuperscript{124} had noted of photography that it is through adjusting

\textsuperscript{124} Benjamin. W. p. 6
the lens and viewpoint that it is able to bring out aspects in a scene that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

In posing for my camera, the man dressed in the Mao army suit slipped from one character to another. A person posing as part of a couple, nostalgically recreating the past, using the camera to create memories, to then becoming himself a Chinese person posing for what he considered the camera of a tourist. The camera as well as framing this scene caught people posing. Roland Barthes explained

“the photograph is the advent of myself as other: a cunning dissociation of consciousness from identity.”

The man has stopped posing as a person in uniform. As he appears to realise my methodology of tourresearcher, he slips from posing, suspended in a performance to posing for my camera.

For Anne Marsh, the distinction between reality and fantasy in the photograph is blurred by an interpretation that is driven by

“the desire of the operator, the subject being photographed and the viewer looking on.”

In Figure 36, the male subject is turning around looking at my camera. His partner has a wedding dress pinned at the back. In the image, the man has stopped posing for the camera of another photographer and is staring at my camera, like an actor on a stage who suddenly has stopped acting or posing. As noted by Barthes,

“once I feel myself in the process of "posing", I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself in advance of the image.”

I begin to group other similar images from Hallstatt See. The people appear caught in suspended time, acting out their desires accidently captured by my camera, when they realise I am not only a tourist but also a researcher. In these images, reality and fantasy collide. Something similar to what Marsh explains as

“photography’s promise to capture the Other in front of the camera’s lens is what makes the medium of photography compelling for all of those concerned in the picture making process.”

125. Barthes, R. Camera Lucida, p. 12
126. Ibid. p. 13
128. Ibid. Marsh, p. 87
Figures 37 - 39 present other examples of couples caught in suspension. They have momentarily stopped posing for the photographers camera and one of the couple look towards my camera. My role of tourresearcher has been revealed. I am no longer just a tourist like them.
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Figure 38: Couple Looking at Me, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 39: Woman on a Boat, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laundenbach, 2015.
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3.4 Inverted Landscapes/Inverted Performances

Michel Foucault identified heterotopic spaces as places in relation to other sites that

"suspect, neutralize or invent the set of relations they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect."

In response to both the two places and the images, I began to construct and invert the relationships in the images through physically assembling two images together; one from each of the Hallstatt places. In this process, I returned initially to the images of the two Hallstatt’s merged into one, found at the beginning of the study in an initial Internet search. The images that I later call composites, fusions or inversions, bring the two places together into another imaginary heterotopic landscape. The new images represent new landscapes, places from the imagination that are simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar. They appear familiar when first viewed yet on closer inspection they are also unfamiliar and imaginary. I make a series of works called Hallstatt See Hallstatt, adding a number to each as I construct them.

In making decisions about how to fuse the images together, I am interested in a sense of juxtaposition of place. In making new heterotopic spaces, I also tried to create what Baudrillard called the third order of the simulacra: substituting signs of the real for the real. The relationships created within the images have a pictorial sense of being real until examination reveals them as fake landscapes.

Consequently, in the process of fusing the images together I consciously use combinations that could be presented as real places. The process sometimes reveals my intent. I am also conscious that the works will be exhibited alongside non-fused images, but images that look surreal. For example, Figure 48 has not been combined from two photographs and reveals what could be described as a construction site revealing the front and back of the site. In the background there is a murky lake while in the mid ground people mix with a man in a hard hat, standing as if frozen in time while a photographer is photographing a bridal couple. A bulldozer is also in the image.

I want the fused and non-fused images to mix together; to create within themselves, through their juxtaposition, a narrative into the real and the constructed. The images add to my developing argument that photography is a document of truth and a document of construction, and both places are constructed landscapes.

Foucault described heterotopic spaces as sites that can undermine stable relations, disrupt the conventions of order and generally refute straightforward categorization. My constructed composites or inverted images from the two places are intended to reflect a slippage in relationships within the image, a place between the familiar and the unfamiliar. “Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality.”

129. Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces," Diacritics 16 (Spring 1986), Pg.26
131. Ibid Pg. 1.
Robert Nelson, the Australian art critic and academic, used the words pressure and inverted in relation to my image Hallstatt See Hallstatt 2 (Figure 40) when it was exhibited in the Darebin Prize. The image depicts a couple sitting on a small piece of sand. They look European. Behind are a group of people on what appears to be a construction site. Some are dressed in bridal clothes and are having their photograph taken while other people are just sitting or standing. The photograph is a construction created using images taken in the two different Hallstatts. However, the image could be totally constructed like the works of Wall and Crewdson or could be taken from a stage or a film set with actors.

The terms used by Nelson, inversion and pressure, are words that dictate both the intentions of the work and the process of how I immersed myself in the work. I continued to respond to these two words as I selected images to combine. I searched through images that I had taken to select photos that can be used together to create new places.

As suggested by Nelson, there is also a visual pressure in the images through many people doing the same thing or conversely, contradictory actions in the images. In addition, the images reveal an open stage on which nothing is concealed. In Hallstatt See Hallstatt 3 (Figure 41) a couple dressed in wedding clothes walk towards European homes through what looks like a construction site. The sky is clear and unpolluted with mountains in the background. The couple could be walking towards a utopia as the Chinese sky is rarely blue.

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132. Robert Nelson is currently the Associate Director for Student Experience, Monash University, Australia and art critic for The Age newspaper, Melbourne
Figure 41: Hallstatt See Hallstatt 3, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 42: Hallstatt See Hallstatt 4, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 43: Hallstatt See Hallstatt 5, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 42 and 43 are presented as doubled images, again intended as another type of inversion where a similar part of the image is doubled or repeated in another image. There is a chessboard with bridal couples in both images, although the images and backgrounds are different. In Figure 43 there are European mountains and in Figure 42, a lake and smaller mountains. Again the idea of the familiar and unfamiliar, uneasiness or pressure, is further enhanced through the different backgrounds. While these works are not exhibited together, some common elements appear in images in the exhibition. In the composites of Hallstatt See Hallstatt 2 and Hallstatt See Hallstatt 4, the sky is similar. The chessboard appears in a tableau and again in Hallstatt See Hallstatt 4, although with a different background. These copied and repeated elements reflect both the nature of photography and also the nature of this study.
Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double

In considering this methodology of working, I was also influenced by the work of pioneering Chinese photographer Lang Jingshan. Jingshan often combined images or parts of images in his photographic works, being influenced by surrealist images from the west. While Jingshan inserted small-juxtaposed pieces into his images, I combined two larger pieces to create new landscapes. The selection I used was a visual process. Like Jingshan, I juxtaposed and combined two pieces of images until I found pieces that worked together visually, and that could create a subtle visual confusion within the images, creating new heterotopic landscapes. Simultaneously, this method of working reflected photography as a medium that appears to mix fact and fiction, a medium of illusion.

In Figure 44, a couple are gazing towards China. They are high above, looking down at a place appearing through the mountains. Again, there is an inversion of reality as the Chinese skyline in Hallstatt See appears through the mountains.

This image was selected for three Australian photography prize exhibitions: The MAMMA 2016 Photography Prize, the Josephine Ulrick Photography Prize 2016 and the Bowness Photography Prize 2015. The image was also used for the invitation cover for the 2016 Josephine Ulrick Photography Prize. Hallstatt See Hallstatt 2 was also selected for the MAMMA 2016 Photography Prize and the Darebin Contemporary Art Prize. Hallstatt See Hallstatt 4 was also selected for the inner North Art Prize at The Front Gallery Canberra 2016.

In another image Figure 45, there are two visual narratives: the bridal couple and also the people obscured on the front left hand side. In examining and reexamining this image I returned to reconsider the smaller more intimate aspects within the images, both as heterotopic spaces and as

134. Kin-Keung, E. and Jingshan Lang, L. *The Life and Art Photography of Lang Jingshan* (1892-1995), University of Hong Kong
Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double

images containing more intimate narratives. I also began to reconsider the video works I made as heterotopic spaces.

3.5 Video Works

On my first visit to Hallstatt See I filmed the video work Too Many Selfies, which was included in the exhibition at the Northern Centre for Contemporary Art. Hallstatt See lent itself to both still and video, while the tourist behaviours could be captured with still photography. This was a subjective decision.

The use of the video camera in Hallstatt See to capture performances functions as an extended still image. Susan Sontag made the distinction between the still camera and the video digital camera. She recognised still photographs as

“a neat slice of time while a video sequence provides a flow or a way to extend a moment of time within an image: to capture a period of time and movement.”

On the second visit to Hallstatt See, I position myself with the video camera on the other side of the lake where I can use the camera to capture a lot of people being photographed simultaneously. I take a wide-angle view with the camera and make 4 x seven-minute video movies showing subjects moving into and out of the frame of the camera. One of these videos is exhibited in the final exhibition titled Theatre of Flowing Water. I select this one for the exhibition mainly due to the symbolic flowing water and the presence of children in the foreground.

In making the video, the camera is held in the same position and purposely begins at a point where some action is starting. Each video ends like a stage production, when someone is leaving the film area or preparing to leave. The video camera frames and contains the scene as if it is a stage, like the still image. However, it also shows an extension of time, a flow as suggested by Sontag. The video captures the performative nature of the subjects.

While making the video works, I am also working in a way similar to Gregory Crewsdon, completely removed from the scene. However, the subjects receive no directions from me. The people in the video works, similar to the people in the tableau works, don’t see me as they enter and leave the viewfinder of my video camera. There is little chance for my presence to interrupt the performance, as in some of the still photographs.

The ideas of pressure and inversion that were used in the fused images continue in the video works. Pressure is at the shoreline as people get photographs taken and as children play while numerous wedding couples pose for photographs. The video works reiterate and expand the concept of the heterotopic space, making a new enclosed theatre within the frame of the video, simultaneously revealing and reinforcing the heterotopic nature of Hallstatt See.

135. Sontag, S. p. 17
Figure 46: *Theatre of Flowing Water*, Still from Video, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

Figure 46 is a still image taken from the video work *Theatre of Flowing Water*. It is also a tableau, a narrative image. Like the still images, the performances within the images are not directed by me.

Figure 47: *Bridge Performance Tableau*, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.
Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double

Similarly in Figure 47, people are seen wandering under the bridge, while others are having photographs taken. The walkway into Hallstatt See is also visible. One couple hold hands and look to be posing for a photographer. Again the performance, while framed by the camera, is not constructed by me. Although, it is similar to a constructed composite or a constructed image like the work of Jeff Wall and Gregory Crewdson.

![Image](image_url)

Figure 48: Reflected Sun and Digger, Hallstatt See, China, Cathy Laudenbach, 2015.

In Figure 48, people within Hallstatt See appeared to on a half-constructed road. The sun is reflected in a murky pond and a bulldozer is nearby. I stood away from the scene, out of view, to both frame and capture the performance.

3.6 Small Heterotopic Narratives

In response to the performative narratives revealed in the video works, I began to assemble another group of images that also reveal Hallstatt See as a theatre. Smaller, more intimate narratives, again not directed by me but composed via my camera. While I had no control over the actions within the images, it is the framing of my camera that reveals these still images as if from a stage; small untold performative narratives where the subject’s performance has not been interrupted.
These images are tableau images taken as my methods developed and as I became more familiar with the site, moving closer and closer to the subjects. These images reveal the performance in a more close up way than the larger tableau images. They also reveal, as Benjamin noted of the camera, the adjustment and selection of different viewpoints.

The images are smaller heteropic images, containing scenes from small theatre productions. Figures 49-52 are examples of these works. The implied narrative is left to the imagination of the viewer.
Chapter 3: Creative Investigations into the Constructed Double

3.7 Landscapes of Desire: Book

The last piece of work I completed in the investigation is the publication *Landscapes of Desire*. A book provided another visual investigation into the two places, another space and another way to present the images and conclusions of the research. The book is an individually produced unique work which is similar to Hallstatt See. The book provided another medium beyond the fused images to make something both familiar and unfamiliar.

The format of the book is intended to reflect the outcomes of the research. The book has no words, beyond the cover. It is up to the reader to interpret. It can however be described using words like place, theatre, performance and narrative. It is both fact and fiction.

While containing images taken from the two Hallstatts, the book is also a *Landcape of Desire* or like something from the imagination. A clue to its meaning is given in the beginning on a mirrored piece of cardboard. When looking into it, you can see a distorted copy of yourself.

The photographs in the book are interleaved with fake Chinese papers that have been randomly cut and pasted into the book, while one is unattached, being simply placed in the book. Similar to the construction of the book, this could look unintended but is intentional. Something
unexpected yet anticipated – something that can also be considered both familiar and unfamiliar. The construction of the book requires the reader to engage with the pages slowly and carefully. This process is also performative, a further reflection on Hallstatt See. The book is intended to both reflect and reinforce the research outcomes while being an individual piece of work.

Summary of Chapter 3
This chapter has provided a written description of the development of the visual works created in this study. In particular, this chapter while continuing to link to the work of Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall and Gregory Crewdson also identified Hallstatt See as a heterotopic stage or theatre as outlined by Michel Foucault. The chapter has outlined with examples the development of this explanation through various bodies of still and video photographic work.

Chapter 4 provides an explanation of the significance of the progression of the production of the creative works, and an explanation of the exhibition that accompanies this exegesis. Chapter 4 also provides a list of the works exhibited in the exhibition.
Chapter 4 Exhibition

Chapter 4 Exhibition: Landscapes of Desire and Performance

This chapter

- **Provides** a summary of the bodies of work generated through this research.
- **Provides** an explanation of the relevance of the works to the study and the production of new knowledge.
- **Provides** a description and justification of works included in the exhibition.

Ross Gibson identified in creative visual research a doubling of cognitive processes of immersion and analysis, two processes that while distinct, work together in the making of creative work and new ways of seeing. The processes create both paths of knowledge and the paths become the signposts to the research outcomes.

When reviewing the works produced in this study, five groups of works emerge that can be considered as the contributing signposts to answering the research questions.

The first was of tourists using cameras and preformed behaviours in both places. This group of works included tourist making selfie images, tourists photographing themselves and friends in place and tourists responding to site markers. These images were evident in both places and I recorded them as documentary photographs. There was little difference in the images taken in both places and they provided evidence that, regardless of authenticity of place, many tourists still participate in preformed behaviours in tourist locations.

However as suggested by Gibson, through being both immersed and extracted in the process of making the work, I also observed tourists dressed and performing for professional photographers' cameras. It was from these observations that the research turned onto a new path: an investigation into the performances and behaviours of the tourists.

The large and small tableau images revealed tourists acting out roles, most often for the cameras of photographers. People dressed in clothes that came from an unspecific time and place that were often tied or pinned together. People were being pictured in places within Hallstatt See that at times looked unfinished. These people appear oblivious in the photographs to those around them, who often appear to be repeating the same robotic behaviours as those next to them.

Through the outcomes of the research, the photographs reveal Hallstatt See as akin to the heterotopic theatre, as identified by Michel Foucault. A place where people act out deviant behaviours to those immediately outside, to Austria and also to other places. Behaviours that appear as unique and individual to the place. These photographs from Hallstatt See led to the creation of another group of works that reflected what I named as an inversion, and resulted in composite images. Works that fused the two places together as one constructed landscape, creating in themselves an imaginary other heterotopic space. These works responded both to the heterotopic space as an outcome of the mirroring, coping and doubling of place, but equally to the works that were viewed and produced in the studio.

Hallstatt See is a place in China both familiar and unfamiliar to tourists, but never so unfamiliar to be frightening or uncanny. It has signposts in Chinese and English, and Chinese guards dressed in European clothes. There is however also the unfamiliar, clean, orderly cobble stone streets lined with facades of European houses, and fake flowers with the familiar Chinese skyline in the distance.

Sometimes my camera caught people posing. These images further reveal Hallstatt See as a theatre where the subjects are like actors.

The video work *Theatre of Flowing Water* reveals the subjects in Hallstatt See like actors as they moved onto the front of the stage. It also showed areas off stage or the backstage, as identified by
Erving Goffman\textsuperscript{37}, where people can be themselves. In the video, this area was in the front where children played in the water and others moved into and out of view. These people are not post tourists, aware of being outsiders. Instead, as suggested by Maxine Feifer, they are insiders still in their own country, comfortable and able to act out new roles and new realities.

The visual research Hallstatt See has revealed identifies a new place for a new time, where people are acting out their own new authentic performances in front of the camera. Hallstatt See has been presented through the visual research as a heterotopic stage or theatre where the tourists become actors.

4.2 Exhibition Landscapes of Desire and Performance

While the works were produced (as described in Chapter Three) in a linear progression, the significance and contribution to the research was made more obvious as the research progressed. The exhibition has been designed specifically for examination and an explanation of the research outcomes, and to fit within the confines and restrictions of the H.R. Gallop Gallery. It is not linear as the outcomes moved forward, but at times folded back on themselves. The exhibition reflects the unfolding of the results of the study.

The works are placed around the walls to invite the viewer to move from the doorway, through the gallery, past the text, and then to the right. The first work in the exhibition is the inverted image (Figure 53) that contains people who look Chinese. While this could easily be a composite image combining two images from the two places, it is actually one image, although has a selection slightly replaced within the same image frame.

This serves to slightly confuse, to make both familiar and unfamiliar. The work also contains people who look of Asian descent but who are in fact tourists in Hallstatt Austria. This image is intended as an introduction to the exhibition, to set the conceptual understandings depicted in the research.

As the exhibition progresses around the walls of the gallery, it is intended to signpost the knowledge produced in the research.

The video \textit{Too Many Selfies} shows people making selfie images in Hallstatt See: tourists performing preformed globalised behaviours with cameras.

Other images depict tourists in Hallstatt See posing in new performances in clothes from another time and place, acting out unfamiliar roles to both themselves and the viewer.

The large tableau images expose Hallstatt See as a heterotopic theatre: the stage and the actors. The tableaus also reveal the front and back areas of the stage. The close-up images of the subjects identify them as actors when they are caught off guard between stage-roles. Some of these images also reveal the constructed clothes being worn, held together with pins.

The constructed inverted composite photographs represent the constructed landscapes of the two Hallstatt places. They also refer to the copy, the double and the mirroring in both places, and also within the photographic image.

The second video work \textit{Theatre of Flowing Water} shows in extended time the performance of the subjects as actors in Hallstatt See entering and leaving the stage. At the water’s edge, children are playing as they would have done before the construction of this simulated place.

\textsuperscript{37} Goffman, E. (1956) \textit{The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life}, Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh
Chapter 4 Exhibition

As well as the still photographs and two video works, the exhibition also has a table containing relevant information about some of the works in the exhibition from other publications. The exhibition also contains, on a separate plinth, a small publication titled *Hallstatt See Hallstatt* that contains a larger selection of work from the two places.

A DVD of the final exhibition is included in the final published version of the exegesis.
Chapter 4 Exhibition

Figure 53: Hallstatt Hallstatt 2/1, Cathy Laudenbach, Hallstatt See, China, 2015
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter:

- **Provides** a final summary for the research.
- **Concluding** thoughts to the body of research, including further research questions.

In concluding the research and summarising the research outcomes and new knowledge, I began by returning to the two initial research questions:

**How can visible photographic research reveal Hallstatt See as a newly created cultural landscape?**

**How can photographic practice interpret and represent the new place, and the behaviours of people within the space, to create new knowledge?**

This body of research, using a methodology of the embodied tourist researcher in Hallstatt Austria and its newly constructed copytown in Hallstatt See China, through techniques including the flaneur and mise-en-abyme, makes a contribution to knowledge through revealing the complex way that photography is both a document of realism and simultaneously a document of construction. The various resulting visual outcomes using different photographic methodologies in two places, one a copy of the other, reveal two places and the behaviours of people in each place. In doing so, the research contributes and expands current contemporary debates concerning how photography continues to combine fact with fiction, original with copy, truth with construction and hence reveals photography as both a document of truth and a document of illusion.

The genesis of this research was two-fold. It began with my ongoing fascination with photography, places and stories, and an ongoing interest in using photography to reveal more about places than what can be written through words. The research offered new fascinations and challenges, combining research into two places with one name: Hallstatt and its newly constructed copy Hallstatt See, a doubling of place and name but on different continents in different cultures.

Graeme Sullivan notes the transformative nature of visual arts research requires a pattern of planning, reviewing, adapting, managing, analysing and revealing.138 This pattern of working, of collating and refining information both visual and theoretical has been outlined in this exegesis.

While it may have an appropriated name from another country and some similar landmarks, Hallstatt See is not the kind of “copy, cut and paste place”139 that Ai Wei Wei summaries as the new Chinese architecture. Instead, it is a new place for new times. It is a place where Chinese people can go to feel they are in another place, a substitute for travelling to the original location, and a place where they can act out their desires in front of the camera. It is a place where they can go to make new authentic photographic spectacles for themselves.

What has been copied, cut and pasted from Hallstatt Austria appears to be the town square with its central statue and fountain, including the building facades and the village footprint. What has also been copied is the feel of another place, something that Walter Benjamin claimed belonged

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only with the original and shrinks with reproduction, the aura. Hallstatt See does not look and feel like China or Hallstatt Austria, but has its own aura, something not mentioned by Benjamin.

Through the photographic frame, Hallstatt See is revealed as a carefully constructed contained space, something akin to what Michel Foucault called a heterotopic space. It has a carpark outside and a long walkway into the village square, with the familiar Chinese high-rise always a distinct view. Hallstatt See is not in Europe. However, it is different to what is immediately outside. It is calm, orderly and has buildings that look European. In what Sigmund Freud identified as the uncanny, it is both familiar and unfamiliar to another place on the other side of the world, with an appropriated name. Hallstatt See relies, as Walter Benjamin noted of the camera, on the abilities of the camera to capture an imaginative landscape. Hallstatt See is a new place, one predicted by Debord but something that didn’t exist in Baudrillard’s procession of the simulacra.

Jean Baudrillard argued in his precession of the simulacra that “today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality.”

The construction of Hallstatt See can be considered a fourth simulacra in the procession. Not a map with no origin, but a model adapted and modified for changing times. Hallstatt See is also a place akin to something Guy Debord imagined when he wrote of inventing new techniques for cities through looking at the possibilities offered by other cities and making new models and plans for future ones. Hallstatt See is a new place modelled, but not copied, from another city. Hallstatt See is a place that has been built, as Debord predicted, to respond to the “dynamic conception of life and changing modes of behaviour.”

However, without its appropriated name, I argue that Hallstatt See could not exist as it does. As tourists, they have been there before, coming, looking and seeing all they need to know on the internet before the visit. In Hallstatt See, the tourists are those who are realistic about themselves and the place they are visiting and are aware that they are not an outsider, or a visitor in a foreign place. The tourists are not the outsider post tourists, as suggested by Maxine Feifer, but insiders using a camera to record both where they are and where they want to be. They can be considered as a new type of tourist, a post post tourist. Hallstatt See both relies on an appropriated name and relies on the camera: making both facts and fictions.

5.2 Concluding Thoughts

To conclude this research, I have relished the opportunity to study this multi-faceted contemporary topic at a detailed level. The research has provided answers to the research questions and has also unbridled new practical methodologies for research and provided questions for further study.

Having had the opportunity to delve deeply into theoretical concepts of place has changed me from an artist who researches place, into an embodied photographic artist researcher, led equally by theoretical concerns as by the photographic image. These two functions are now firmly entwined and have become an essential part of my art practice.

In addition, through the contribution to new knowledge, further research questions have arisen. More immediate, and relating to the knowledge arising from this study into Hallstatt and Hallstatt See, are the further questions that are beyond the scope of this thesis:

141. Debord, G. “A Different City for a Different Life”, in Texts and Documents, p. 96
Chapter 5: Conclusion

- How can Hallstatt See as a copied place be visually compared and investigated, through comparative visual research, to the newly built theme park Shanghai Disneyland?
- And secondly, if as Jeff Malpas notes that place is understood as both shaped by human beings, as well as the shaping of it, how will Hallstatt See be moulded by human beings over time?

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Notes Taken from Field Notes Diary


Before my first visit to Hallstatt See China in June 2014, I looked on a map of China to see where it was located. It is in southern China between Hong Kong and Guangzhou. There looked to be numerous ways to get there but after looking on the internet maps, I decided an easy way was to fly to Hong Kong and catch the bus directly to Huizhou from the airport. It looked like the most simple and cheap option. Even the bus timetable on the internet was written in English.

After going through customs at Hong Kong airport, I looked for the bus terminal signs and walked towards them. No problems so far. The large departure board listed buses leaving all day, going everywhere it seemed. However, it was difficult to know which one was actually going to Huizhou. Everything was written in Chinese.

Finally, the woman behind the counter appeared to understand and directed me to sit in a particular area. The bus would leave in 4 hours. She didn’t seem to know the bus I saw listed on the timetable on the internet. After about 4 hours, a bus pulled in and she directed me to get on board. I looked to be the only foreigner on the bus. Although one man, who smiled at me, looked like he could be American Chinese.

We eventually set off, only to stop after 20 minutes when everyone was told to get off the bus and collect their bags to go through a customs check. Back on the bus, we set off again when we came to what looked like the actual border between Hong Kong and China. Everyone got off again and we repeated the same procedure of having all of our bags searched.

Once I sat down, after a while the bus set off again and the man who had smiled at me moved through the bus towards me.

“Where do you think you are going?” he asked in clear English.

“Huizhou” I replied.

“Where in Huizhou?”

I showed him my hotel reservation. He looked bemused. The bus pulled up at what looked like a hotel. I saw two people get off. Obviously, this way of travelling was for locals.

“No one will know where that is” he said of my directions written on paper and he suggested I get off at the next stop where he was also getting off. He could then hail a taxi for me and explain the directions to my hotel to the taxi driver in Chinese. He told me most taxi drivers in Huizhou can’t read.

Looking out the window now, everything began to look strange. My enthusiasm for my study was beginning to fade. I realised with a jolt I had never been to China before and not only that, I was some distance from the usual tourist routes taken by English speaking tourists. Suddenly the taxi stopped in front of a building and the taxi driver indicated it was a hotel. I had to believe him, although it didn’t look like a hotel, or a place where I would be staying.
2. Hallstatt See: The First Visit, June 2014

I am alone, standing on the street in Huizhou City trying to look confident, waving to catch the attention of a taxi driver. I am not sure where to stand, so I wedge myself into a corner of the road. It is really hot and sticky and cars wizz past me. Taxis drive pass, but the drivers all appear to look the other way. I imagine they don’t want to deal with a foreigner. I have heard many taxi drivers are illiterate and with no Chinese language, it is hard for me with only written information to communicate a destination. I can only rely on my copies from the internet of Hallstatt See and pictures of Hallstatt Austria.

Foreigners are not very visible in Huizhou, even though it is a large city of over 3 million people that is close to the Hong Kong border. A guy in the local bar told me that there are only about 100 foreigners in Huizhou. Then a taxi stops and I show the driver the pictures from the internet, he looks at it blankly. He looks to be staring through the page.

Finally, a taxi driver knows the location and I negotiate a return fare of $10 Australian. This includes returning after 5 hours to pick me up.

As the taxi speeds past the river and out of town onto what looks like a new freeway, I can see the large billboards advertising apartments I had read about in Bianca Bosker’s book. I can also see rows of empty half built apartment blocks. While the foreign press have reported these as evidence of a slow-down in the Chinese economy, Chinese developers are also known to on-sell buildings, selling at lock-up to other developers.

As the taxi rounds a corner, there is the huge sign titled Hallstatt See in the middle of the road, and on the right, a smaller sign with similar writing above a guard box. I feel both amazement and shock simultaneously. After so much preparation I can hardly believe I am here. I renegotiate my return time and get out of his taxi with my cameras and tripod. I pay him the full price and wonder to myself whether he will return in five hours. There are no other taxis in the car park. The car park is full of tourist buses, motor-bikes and a few private cars. I can get a lift on the back of a motorbike if the taxi doesn’t appear again, I reassure myself: .

Many other people, all Asian looking, are also walking towards the entrance. The path into Hallstatt See is a walking path, although a few small cars appear to be permitted. The path leads past exotic trees and manicured gardens, decorated with flowering plants. The sound of birds, come from the trees, although there are no birds. There is also no sign of the doves that were reported to have been released at the opening of Hallstatt See. As we all move along the path, Hallstatt See comes into view. A church spire, a lake and a bridge are visible from the path. The car park and the rest of China almost seems to disappear as the path meanders around and down. The air seems cleaner and fresher. Many people in uniforms begin appearing as the path progresses: gardeners, street cleaners and women in traditional Austrian dressers. Similar to the internet articles where Chinese people talk about feeling different in Hallstatt See, I suddenly realise I don’t feel like I am in China anymore.

By the time I did my second trip to Hallstatt See, things had changed: people in Huizhou knew Hallstatt See. There was a German artist staying in the same hotel, who was being paid to paint in the gallery in the town square and talk to customers.

Even the manager of the hotel told me she was thinking of setting up a bar in the village. She said it was a place Huizhou people could go to get away and relax; a place not far away from Huizhou that quickly transposed Chinese people into another place. And then I ran into her on my second day in Hallstatt See. I was taking photographs as she was looking for a new business opportunity.

Now all the taxi drivers appeared to know Hallstatt See. However, they were reluctant to take me as they said it was too far. Some would agree to take me out, but said they could not wait or come back to pick me up. One day I went in a taxi one way and hoped I would find a taxi in the carpark to take me back at the end of the day. I didn't and I ended up walking for miles until a taxi stopped and took me to the nearest shopping mall. It then took hours to work out how to get back to the hotel. Huizhou, a city of over 4 million people, is a large and chaotic Chinese city for foreign visitors.

The car-park outside Hallstatt See is overflowing with tourist buses and motor bikes. There is a sense of chaotic activity everywhere, although the car-park still looks unfinished. People are getting on and off the tourist buses, walking towards the entrance and people on bikes ask if anyone wants a lift. Yet it is still two years until Hallstatt See is scheduled to be finished.

I recognised the same guard managing the guard box and the same smiling gardeners working next to the walkway. I thought they looked like men who couldn't believe their luck in later middle age being able to work at such a place as Hallstatt See. I knew Hallstatt See was different to the world outside the guard box. It was not just the tweeting birds. The air seemed cleaner and fresher. A calmness was pervasive. There was a sense of order that was not outside.
4. Hallstatt Austria, 2014

A small boat meets the train at the back of the station. As I look across the water, I can see a small village. A church spire, similar to the one I have seen in Hallstatt See China, punctuates the horizon. The village looks like the postcards I have seen. The village sits on the water's edge, almost like it might fall in or be consumed by the lake any minute.

The train on a single track for most of the way from Salzburg has followed the lake for about an hour by the time it reaches Hallstatt. The journey feels slow and steady. Nothing is rushed, it feels as if we don't get there on time, no one will notice. The train ride is one of the great small train rides in the world. The lake is breathtakingly beautiful, being coloured an opulence blue, with both sides dotted with small villages and isolated wooden holiday houses.

When the boat pulls in opposite the station, I get off and begin wandering towards my accommodation. The roads are small and curved but easy to navigate. My homestay host tells me they are third generation owners and that few places in Hallstatt homes are sold outside family connections. The whole week I stay at the homestay, the owner never appears in anything but Austrian traditional dress. At the end of my stay, she walks me to the ferry in her outfit.

Each day I wander around, eating freshly baked apple strudel as I go. The areas to discover in Hallstatt extends way beyond the village. There is a cable car up to the mountain and an ice cave nearby. There is a boat trip on the lake and small paddle-boats for hire near the shore. Each night on the way home, I drink Austrian beer and eat Austrian sausage.

On the Friday night, the town square comes alive. All the workers from the pubs pull chairs and tables into the centre and women in traditional Austrian dress wander around taking orders for beer. As the lights fade, a brass town marches into the square playing what I presume to be traditional Austrian music. Some people get up and dance. The people assembled in the square appear to be a mix from Europe and Asia, similar to the other people at my homestay. Many sound as if they are speaking Chinese and I wonder if they know about Hallstatt See. I can't ask as I don't speak Chinese.

As the light dims and the music gets louder, I sit mesmerised. I am not sure if it the combination of the Austrian sausage and beer or simply being an alone foreigner, but my thoughts drift into dreams. I feel like I am on a movie set or have suddenly been transported back in time. I find myself transfixed and although probably drunk, I order more and more beer and sit watching. I am a tourist on a tourist stage.
Appendix 1

List of URL addresses for internet articles about Hallstatt See, China:


Appendix 2

Ethics Approval for the Research Project

APPROVAL/PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2014/109

PROJECT TITLE:
Landscapes of Desire. The Contemporary Tourist: Photographic Performances, the Camera and Place.

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