

Definitely not the right season for it

Martha Cattell

*Pieces are available unframed as prints A4 (£20) and A3 (£35) or framed A4 (£35) and A3 (£50). Small sized works are available as (£10) A5 prints. Postcards (£2)
Originals can be discussed and vary in price.*

These works explore the varied plant life that inhabits Scarborough. They explore subject and material and question what might it mean to make work like a plant rather than work of a plant? The title is from Tripadvisor reviews, suggesting green space in Scarborough is only worth seeing in certain 'right' seasons.

The photographs are a mix of lumen prints, cyanotypes, anthotypes and cyan-lumens. I am not interested in perfectly composed 'picturesque,' images, in fact the antithesis of this; the 'anti-picturesque.' These works are worn, aged, smell and slowly change when exposed to light, characteristics very much like the trees they are representing. W.J.T. Mitchell comments on 'the elemental fact that photographs are things.' So how can these 'things' [photography] be used in a more sustainable and curious ways to represent natural organic subjects, as many of the chemicals used in typical photography production and development is harmful.

For the lumen print trees (A4 and A5) the images have been developed by the sun, fixed using salt water and then sat in 'Koda' coffee grounds for varied amounts of time. These have created growths, added texture and even seemingly eaten away the image in parts. This process mimics a moss, ivy or lichen climbing across bark, a fungus sprouting from a branch/root or a disease slowly attacking and changing a tree's appearance.

The cyanotype of the large tree (A3) has been toned in Koda coffee grounds left over night, changing the colour from the rich cyan blue to the darker grey; mimicking almost a seasonal shift. The green anthotype near this is made from wild garlic collected from South Cliff Gardens and shows a hand wrapped in birch bark. This is from a larger series exploring human/natural links.

The last little cluster is images of seaweed, these are layered lumen prints created in situ at Cayton Bay, which have then been printed over the top of with underwater photos. Seaweed is a plant that exists in different layers of tidal zones, so I wanted to think of a way of trying to represent this in a still flat image.

Susan Sontag in her book *On Photography*, states how 'all photographs are momento mori...precisely by slicing out, this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to times relentless melt.' These works all quite literally highlight the 'relentless melt' and trace like value of an image, as are likely to fade over the time and age when exposed to the sun, meaning they play directly on photography's materiality in order to represent a natural subject.

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