

Dislocations 1997-1999

The Dislocations exhibition was shown at the Focal Point Gallery in Southend-On-Sea, Q Arts Arboretum space, Derby and the University of Northampton. The work was supported by the Nene Centre for Research and the School of Art and Design. The images explored visual dialogue between photographs taken in wide ranging woodland and coastal settings and medical illustrations, diagnostic images and pictures which included the artist's own blood and saliva.

Theories of psychology and cognitive dissonance describe uncomfortable tensions that may be experienced from having two conflicting thoughts/beliefs at the same time. In this context cognition is defined as any element of knowledge e.g. emotion, belief, attitude or behaviour. At a personal level cognition may support a primary intuitive belief that humans are held within nature and natural order. Increased dissonance can occur for instance through expanded awareness of, and dependency on, science to remedy biological deficiency. An example might be male or female infertility and the need to rely on highly intrusive techniques such as in vitro Fertilisation in order to have children which would normally be thought of as distinctly natural.

The theory suggests that dissonance and conflict can be lessened as the mind feels compelled to modify thoughts and beliefs and create a new psychological equilibrium. The research explored the use of collage to examine visual forms for such a cognitive dissonance. Diverse approaches to photo-collage were incorporated which explored a range from stark juxtaposition through to seamless reconfigurations of objects. The work alluded to taxonomies and display in museums of natural history. The final exhibition incorporated various groups of large scale, monochromatic images.

The work was manifested as darker narratives around the fictional representation of science, human relations with natural spaces and art and *memento mori*.