## REVERSIBLES The Conservation Zine





## Issue 5: Ghosts

@reversiblezine

## How to Capture a Ghost

#### Vanessa Torres, Conservator, National Science and Media Museum

Being a conservator is at times magical and spooky! I've encountered several ghosts whilst working through the photographic collections of the National Science and Media Museum.

Like ghosts, photographs can be fugitive. At the invention of photography, in the 1820s, photographers struggled to capture people because the long exposure times of several minutes resulted in ghostly figures. Children and animals being famously difficult to capture for their lack of stillness, so if a person moved during the exposure, they would look ghostly.

Photographers took advantage of several techniques to make amusing photographs of 'ghosts'. They also delved into the world of trickery and image manipulation. At times using sophisticated methods of overlapping and retouching negatives. Whilst in other occasions using double/triple exposure to show the spirits of the deceased.



Find out more from Vanessa about ghostly photo deterioration on the following page.





#### MOVEMENT

Science Museum Group National Media Museum Credit Line The Kodak Collection at the National Media Museum, Bradford

#### DOUBLE EXPOSURE

Woman with two boys and a woman's 'spirit'. 2002-5054/ 17/1Science Museum Group Collection Online. https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/ co8228854/woman-with-two-boys-and-a-womans-spiritphotograph.

#### LONG EXPOSURE

Head of High Street. 1987-5201/1Science Museum Group Collection Online.

https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/ co8227077/head-of-high-street-photograph-carbon-print

## Ghost Hunting With Issue 5 of the zine being all about ghosts we have hunted out some of the best places to send chills down your spine



Not just a local museum, Thirsk Museum holds a chair haunted by the ahost of murderer Thomas Busby. The chair is said to curse whoever sits in it. So its displayed mounted on the wall



A coach pulled by four horses which sunk into the pond drownnia all on board is seen repeated every vear at Antrim Castle



The funeral procession of Sir Piers Legh (d. 1422) and his weeping sweetheart Blanch can be seen at Lyme Park ~



You can spend the night in the former cellar morgue at the Hanbury Arms Hotel along with the ghost 'Mary' who is said to be buried there



Why not throw all caution to the wind and visit Pluckley Village. In the Guiness World Records as the most haunted village in Britain.

You can't find a more classic haunted tale than the ghost at the House of Dun a headless horseman is said to roam the lanes seeking retribution on unwary travellers

> The small airl ghost, Annie, can be found at Mary King Close crying over her lost doll. Visitors now leave offerings to the ahost to prevent her feeling lonely.





R A LA

The Great Bed of Ware at the V&A is said to be haunted by its maker Jonas Fosbrooke. Any commoner who spends the night is said to rise the next day beaten scratced and pinched.



Single objects not enough? Why not visit the haunted gallery at Hampton Court Palace. Said to be haunted by the screaming ghost of Henry VIII's fifth wife Catherine Howard



### Ghosts In Conservation



Ghost images can be found in photographic collections where platinum and palladium photos are stored. This is where a mirrored and ghostly image appears over time on the adjacent page in contact with the photo. This reaction occurs due to the acidity of the paper and the platinum/ palladium acting as a catalyst for the reaction. A mirror image is literally burned onto the adjoining paper while the original photo is left unaffected. This damage is irreversible and even pH neutral storage paper can be effected.



Ghost images can be found where paintings have been framed under glass. White deposits form on the interior glazing leaving a hazy copy of the painting on the glass. It is formed via evaporation of fatty acids which have been liberated by hydrolysis, migrate through the paint, and subsequently evaporate to form ghost images. Although an interesting reaction, they are not part of the actual painting and are normally periodically cleaned off the glass due to obscuring the original artwork from being viewed.



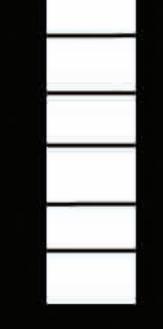
This ahost image of Vincent Van Gogh was discovered in 2022 by the National Galleries Scotland after xraying Van Goah's painting 'Head of a Peasant Women' 1885. Van Goah was known to reuse canvases in order to save money but this hidden image shows him with his left ear still intact so is an early example of his self portrait work. X-raying paintings can help reveal an artist's techniques, pigments, and underpaintings. Primarily by reading the levels of lead white, the principal white pigment used for centuries by painters.

Why not take a break, grab a ghostly doughnut and enjoy our scary

# Word Search

Α	Α	Ρ	0	S	S	Ε	S	S	Ε	D	0	0	S
T	S	Ι	Ε	G	R	Ε	Т	L	0	Ρ	Ε	0	G
G	Ε	Α	Ν	Ε	С	Α	0	U	R	S	D	S	Η
S	R	Ν	Ε	С	U	Ε	G	S	Ε	0	Ε	N	0
С	T	S	T	E	R	Ρ	Η	Ζ	D	Ε	T	L	U
G	С	T	W	L	S	Η	Α	Α	R	Ε	N	Ν	L
G	Ε	S	0	L	Ε	Α	Ζ	I	0	E	U	D	Т
R	Ρ	0	R	0	D	Ν	Α	S	Τ	Ρ	Α	I	J
R	S	Η	Κ	Т	E	T	R	Η	Ε	Η	Η	Ε	Ε
Α	0	G	Ι	Α	С	0	D	D	0	Α	R	R	D
W	G	Α	N	Ρ	G	Μ	S	U	Α	S	N	T	Α
Ν	T	S	G	Ε	Μ	S	Α	L	Ρ	0	T	С	E
G	I	Α	Ρ	Α	D	Α	0	U	I	J	Α	G	E
Т	Т	R	Α	H	S	Α	Α	S	Ρ	I	R	I	T

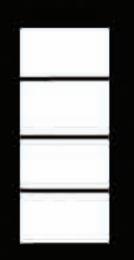
PHANTOM REDROT POSSESSED CELLOTAPE SEANCE HAZARDS



OUIJA CURSED SPECTRE GHOUL SPIRIT NETWORKING



POLTERGEIST GHOSTS ECTOPLASM HAUNTED



Having been exhibited at the V&A and a graduate of the Royal College of Arts, you may be fooled into thinking that David Clarke is just another talented Silversmith. You'd be wrong. Being a self proclaimed 'Delightful Troublemaker and Silversmith' you can definitely expect the unexpected. 'Ghosts' 1997, is produced by using bought ceramic candlesticks and casting the interiors using pewter. In order to release the pewter objects, the exterior has to be smashed (you read that right Conservators!). The pewter forms left behind are the imprint of the original object or the Ghosts - the beauty hidden inside the objects. Clarke's pieces (or 'objects' as he refers to them) often have a traditional silhouette, even using old objects, but he stretches and manipulates them to find new forms. Find out more about his work at: www.mister-clarke.com



