

DESN1023

Assessment 3: Portfolio – Digital Photographic Portfolio

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Which Historical and Contemporary visual communicators influenced my portfolio?

Diane Arbos

Historical Photographer
1923-1971



Nathalie Ghanem-Latour

Contemporary Photographer
1992 – Still Alive



How did they influence my portfolio?

Diane Arbus and Nathalie Ghanem-Latour are both photographers who have captured my interest and deeply influenced my own photographic practice. According to Clifford, B (2019), Diane Arbus would often photograph her subjects from the waist, looking down into the viewfinder as a means to maintain intimacy and allow her subjects to remain natural and authentic. This approach, coupled with her use of direct flash and square format composition, created a striking visual immediacy that revealed the vulnerability and complexity of her subjects. Arbus's decision to centre her subjects symmetrically and capture them at eye level blurred lines between observer and observed, establishing a sense of equality and confrontation. Her ability to find beauty in discomfort and humanity in the unconventional has influenced my own approach to portraiture, encouraging me to seek out truth and honesty in my subjects rather than aesthetic perfection.

In contrast, Nathalie Ghanem-Latour's contemporary photography explores fragility and emotional transparency through compositional softness and deliberate negative space. Her series '*6 Months*' reflects her internal struggle with perfection, fragility, and transparency (Phmusuem, 2025). Ghanem-Latour often employs muted tones, natural light, and reflective surfaces, utilising texture and atmosphere as emotive tools to show her own self-reflection and raw mental health within her imagery. Nicole, H (2018), states that Ghanem-Latour work "often focuses on geography, geometry, the ugly side of the quotidian*, and the relationship between people and places."

As such, her photography and character inspires me to approach photography as both self-exploration and communication, using composition not just to document, but to show and feel my inner states and vulnerabilities.

Both of these women have influenced my portfolio, not only in how I take photos but why I take them. Arbus's empathetic framing and Ghanem-Latour's poetic minimalism have encouraged me to combine technical awareness with emotional depth. The stories they have cultivated and the connections they have created through their imagery have expanded my perception of what photography can achieve, transforming it from observation into connection, and from documentation into understanding.

*- Quotidian definition: "A belonging to each day; Everyday", as shown by [www.Merrium-webster.com](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/quotidian) (n.d.)

Client Brief

VisitNSW

Campaign Title:

"Escape Down Under"

Client Information:

Client: VisitNSW.com

Contact: Bluey Hills,
blueyhills@gmail.com

Website: www.visitnsw.com

Project Overview:

VisitNSW has commissioned a photographic series for their Escape Down Under campaign. This series aims to capture the beauty and accessibility of New South Wales' natural landscapes, specifically the Blue Mountains Region, through an emotive and inspiring visual narrative.

The overarching message is reconnection with nature, inviting viewers to discover the joy of stepping away from technology and immersing themselves in the environment.

Campaign Goals:

- Inspire young adults to explore nature and take breaks from digital life.
- Showcase 'beauty' as being within reach, wherever they are.
- Evoke a sense of calm, and escapism through visual storytelling.

Target Audience:

Young adults, approximately 20–30 year of age, primarily urban residents seeking short getaways, mindfulness experiences, or eco-tourism adventures.

Creative Direction:

- Mood: Lost and tired, growing to a more free, organic, and peaceful focus.
- Lighting: Dark and moody, leading into warm tones with a preference for natural lighting.
- Colour Palette: Earthy greens, warm ambers.
- Composition: Balanced and minimalistic, mix of wide environmental shots and intimate moments of human connection with nature.
- Progression: A narrative arc showing the main subject gradually "escaping" technology and reconnecting with the outdoors.

Subjects/Visual Elements:

- One main focal subject to appear throughout series.
- Depicted transition from an indoor setting to full nature immersion.
- Styling and clothing should feel authentic, comfortable, and relatable to the target demographic.
- Natural visual elements to be implemented throughout each image, increasing as the series follows.

Deliverables:

- Full edited photo series delivered by 10th October 2025.
- Delivery via downloadable email or shared drive link.
- Turnaround time: Within 8 business days from the completion of the shoot.
- Format: High-Resolution JPEGs (300 DPI), suitable for web and print use.

Usage Rights/Licensing:

For promotional use across VisitNSW digital, and social media platforms, with additional print services. The photographer retains copyright but agrees to licensing terms as outlined in the contract.

Target Audience

General Target

Psychographics



Nature
Enthusiast



Traveler
Adventure
Seeking



Technologically
Braindead



Energetic,
Seeking Energy



Burnt out
and Digitally
Crispy



Seeking
"Reality"



Mental
Health
Focused

Demographics



Domestic
Students or
Young
Professionals



Visiting
Travelers or
Freedom
Seekers



Unisex
Singles or
Couples
Without
Children

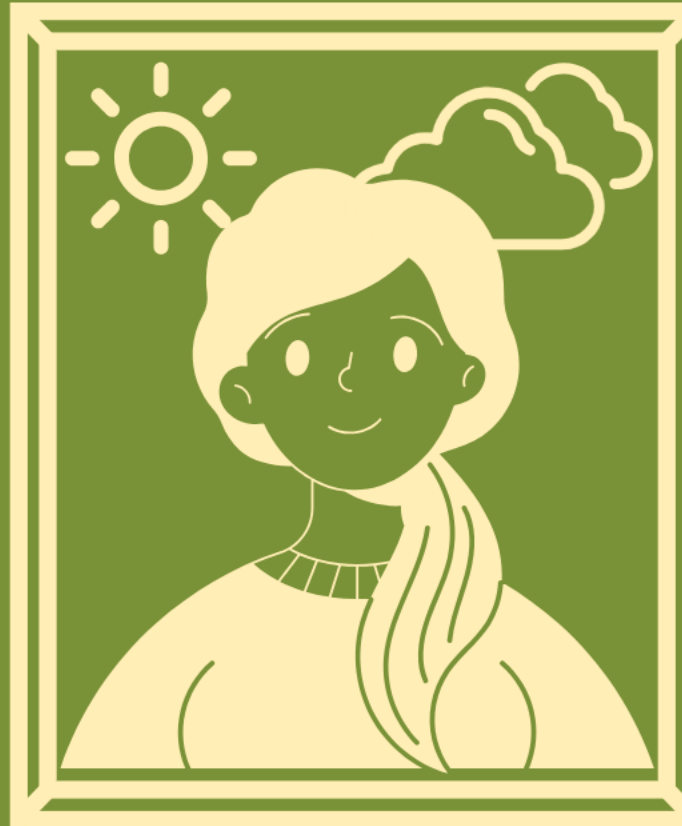


Aged
Between
20 and 30



Heavy Users
of Social
Media and
Digital
Devices

Specific Example Target



"The Mindful Student"
Aged 27, Holland-Day Saus loves studying design and media. Highly active on social media, she craves authenticity. Between watching movies in her bedroom and sitting pondering at the window yearning for more from life, she attempts to reclaim her natural stake in this world, but doesn't know how. As a fan of photography, journaling, and sustainable/affordable travel, she needs motivation and guidance to the greater outdoors.

An introduction to the ability to put down her phone and walk outside would greatly motivate this capable young adult. Overstimulated by online necessity in a technologically growing world, a weekend nature escape to recharge is exactly what she needs.

Example is not derivative of any real person

How does this portfolio align with the client brief and target audience requirements?

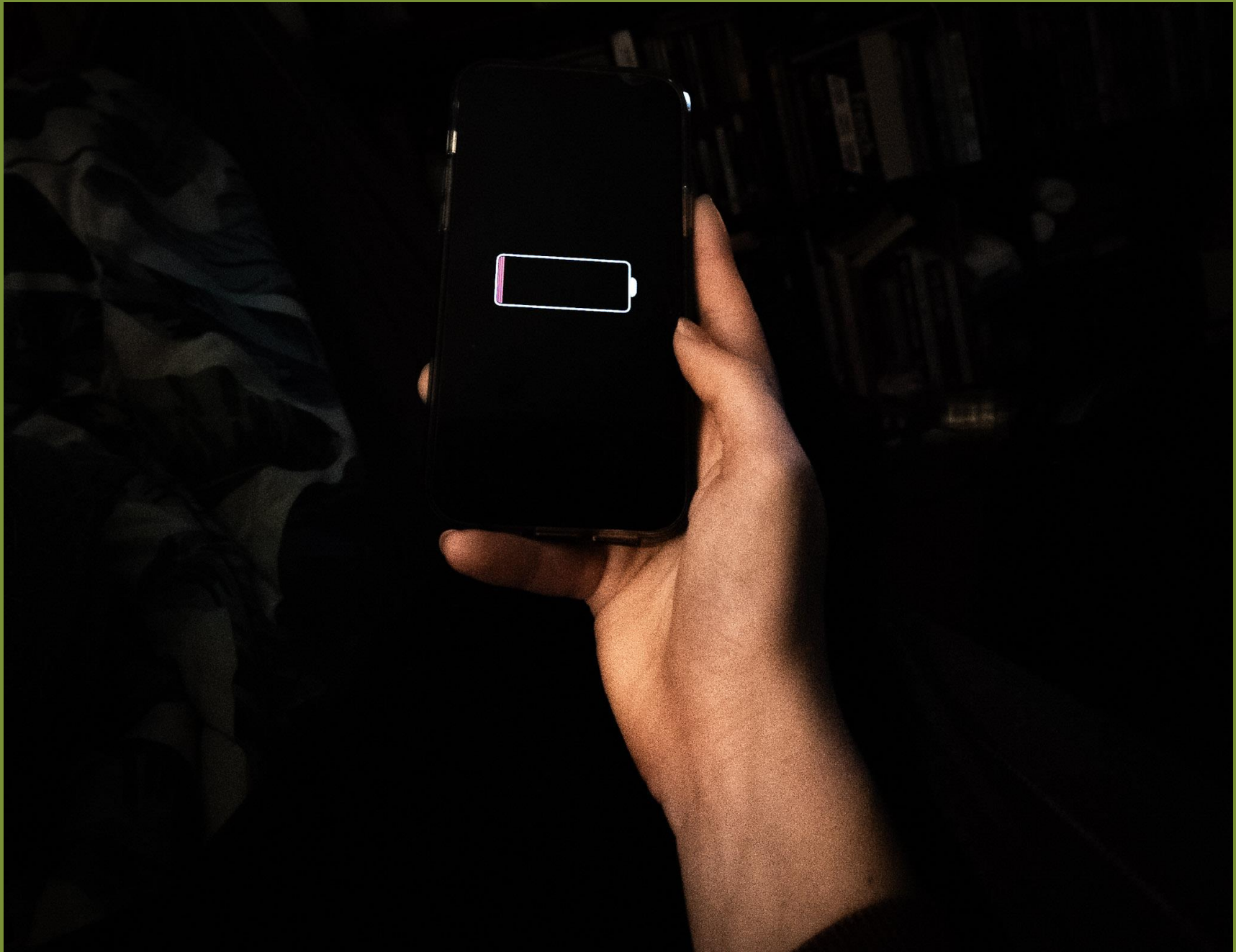
My final photographic portfolio directly aligns with VisitNSW's *Escape Down Under* campaign by visually embodying the journey from digital fatigue to natural reconnection.

The narrative begins with imagery of darkness, low battery, and technological dependence, mirrors the 'lost and tired' mood set forth by the client. Responding directly to the client brief, as the series develops, the singular subject moving from an enclosed, dim interior, to the open light and peace of nature, evokes emotive observation. The visual journey effectively captures the campaigns intended transformation toward energy, freedom, and serenity.

The lighting transitions from artificial and shadowed to natural and warm tones, reflecting the clients' creative directive, reinforcing the shift in emotional weight from disconnection to reintegration and revitalisation.

Compositionally, the series maintains balance and minimalism to keep the main subject as a constant focal point throughout. This consistency tells a cohesive story of escape and renewal, while relatable visual elements, (car keys, the act of driving, the quiet moment standing by the water) makes the imagery accessible to the target audience, "VisitNSW" aims to reach.

Tailored to VisitNSW's target audience, this portfolio speaks directly to the campaigns psychographic and demographic focus; young adults 20-30 years of age who are experiencing burnout and are overstimulated by digital life, seeking mindfulness through meaningful weekend escapes. By using a relatable protagonist carrying a familiar aesthetic, the portfolio encourages viewers to see themselves in the subject's journey, to put down their phones, step outside, and reconnect with the beauty all around them.







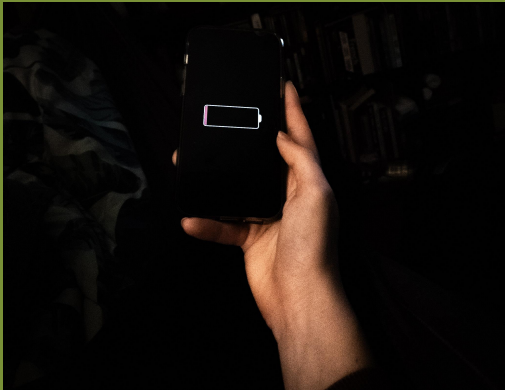








What were the techniques and compositional strategies used in each of the images you have selected from your portfolio?



- Contrast to create connection between the hand and the dark.
- Centered subject to create importance and emotive weight.
- Shallow depth of field to blur background.
- Tight crop and placement to create confinement and overstimulation.



- Leading lines to subtly trap the subject. Reinforcing stagnation.
- Natural light and directional shadows create mood and atmosphere.
- Vignette to draw eyes central to the main visual elements.
- Muted tones and minimal colour reflects campaigns initial dark, reflective phase.



- Rule of thirds to place the focus on the connection between hand and keys.
- Contrast of the natural light by the subjects' emergence from the dark.
- Framing of the plant life and the subject, hand reaching to connect back with nature.

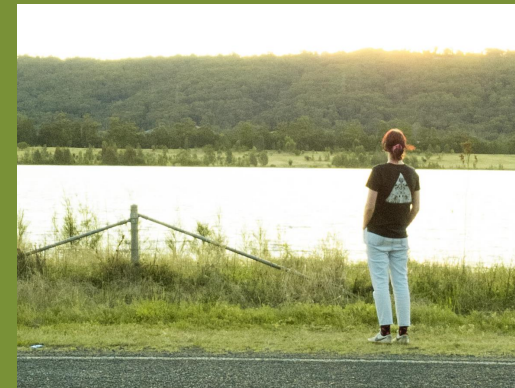
- Utilising the car as a natural frame creates a participatory mood with the viewer. Creating intimacy and immediacy.
- Follows the rule of thirds as the subject is off-centre and to the right.
- Natural light and subtle warmth signals emotional transition.



- Slow increase in zoom to follow the narrative.
- Framing and Contrast of the subject coming from darkness and heading toward the light.
- Visual weight of secondary car to create distance traversed as a narrative tool.



- Frameless to place the viewer within nature.
- Rule of thirds to draw eyes to the subject.
- Wide shot creates spatial openness, while the negative space communicates peace and reflection.
- Natural symmetry between the sky and water persists visual harmony between elements.



THANK YOU

References

In-text citations:

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