

Darwell, John ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8746-5315> , Zylinska, Joanna and Cheng, Ting Ting (2014) After Schwitters John Darwell. Photomediations Machine .

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on **15/02/2014**

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AFTER SCHWITTERS

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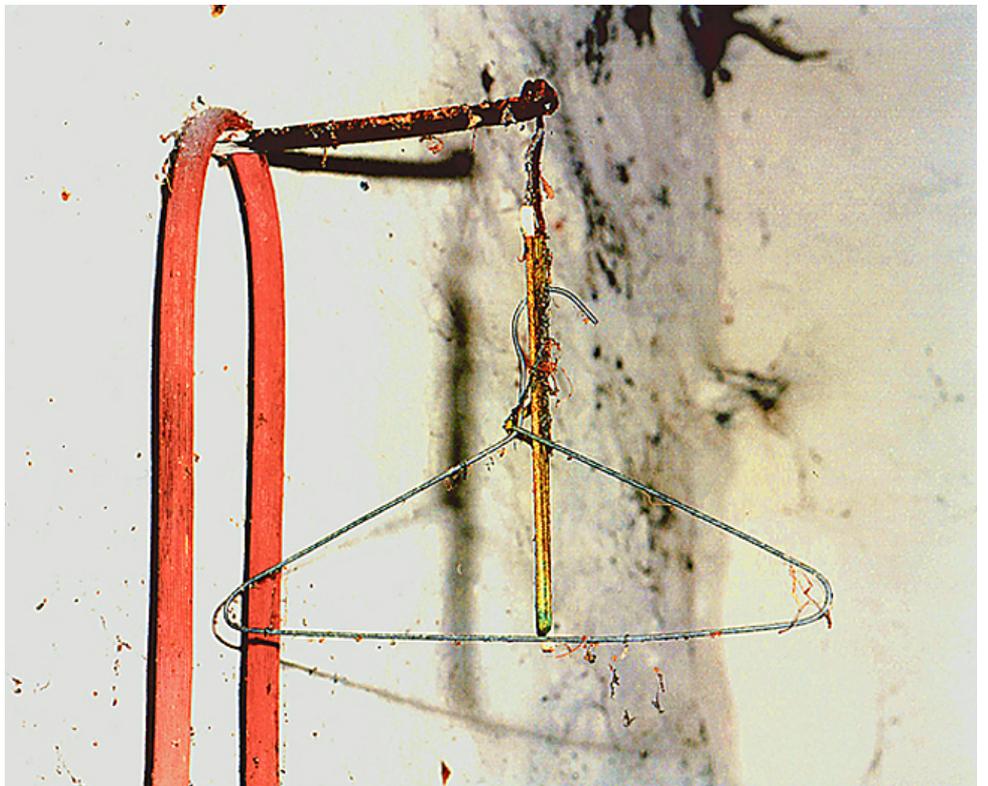
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JOHN DARWELL

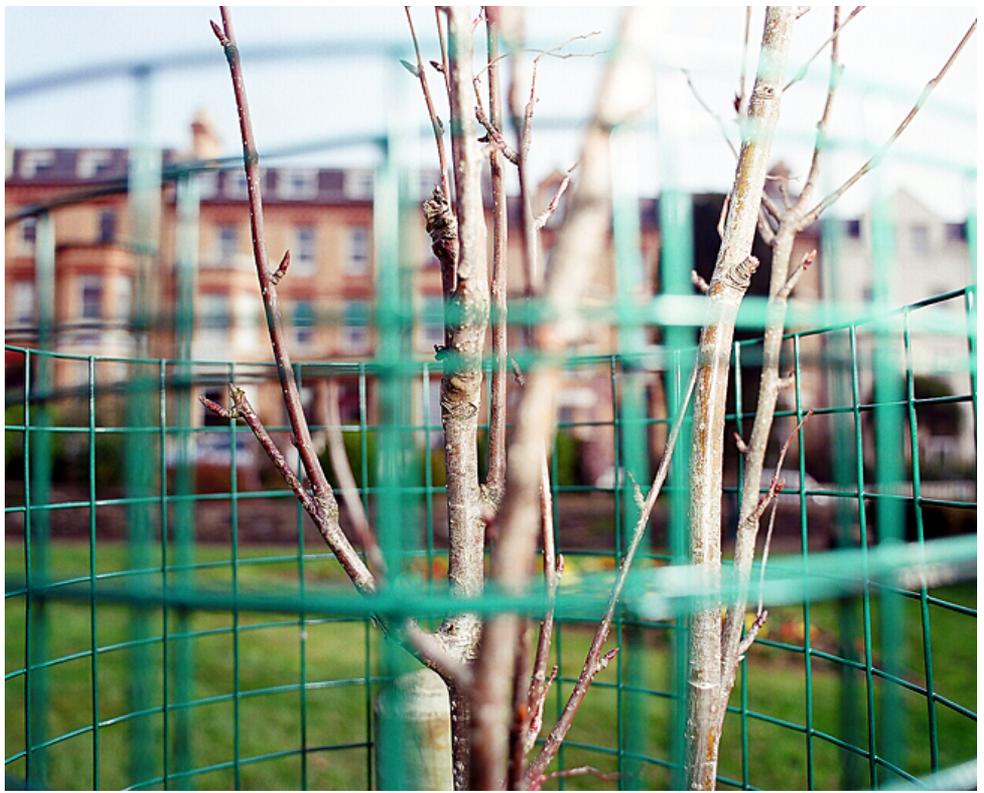


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John Darwell, *After Schwitters (Cylinders)*, 2005-ongoing



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John Darwell, *After Schwitters (Isle of Man)*, 2005-ongoing

This project grew out of an initial invitation asking the artist to photograph the Cylinders Site in the English Lake District (<http://www.merzbarn.net/background.html>). This is where the German artist Kurt Schwitters (<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/kurt-schwitters-1912>), had started work on his last Merz project, the Merz barn, before dying there in 1948, thus leaving the project unfinished.

Darwell was intrigued by the Schwitters story and agreed to explore the site on condition that he would be able to produce a response to what he would find there, as opposed to a series of purely representational images. This work became the first part of his 'After Schwitters' series. (The title implies both a homage to Schwitters in terms of style, content etc. and a physical act of following, or rather retracing, the German artist.)

Further works were produced by Darwell in the Isle of Man, Norway and Germany, as he retraced Schwitters' journey across Europe. The goal of this journey was not to document the places Schwitters had visited, but rather to photograph the echoes of his passing within the small details that held some 'essence of the Schwittersesque'.

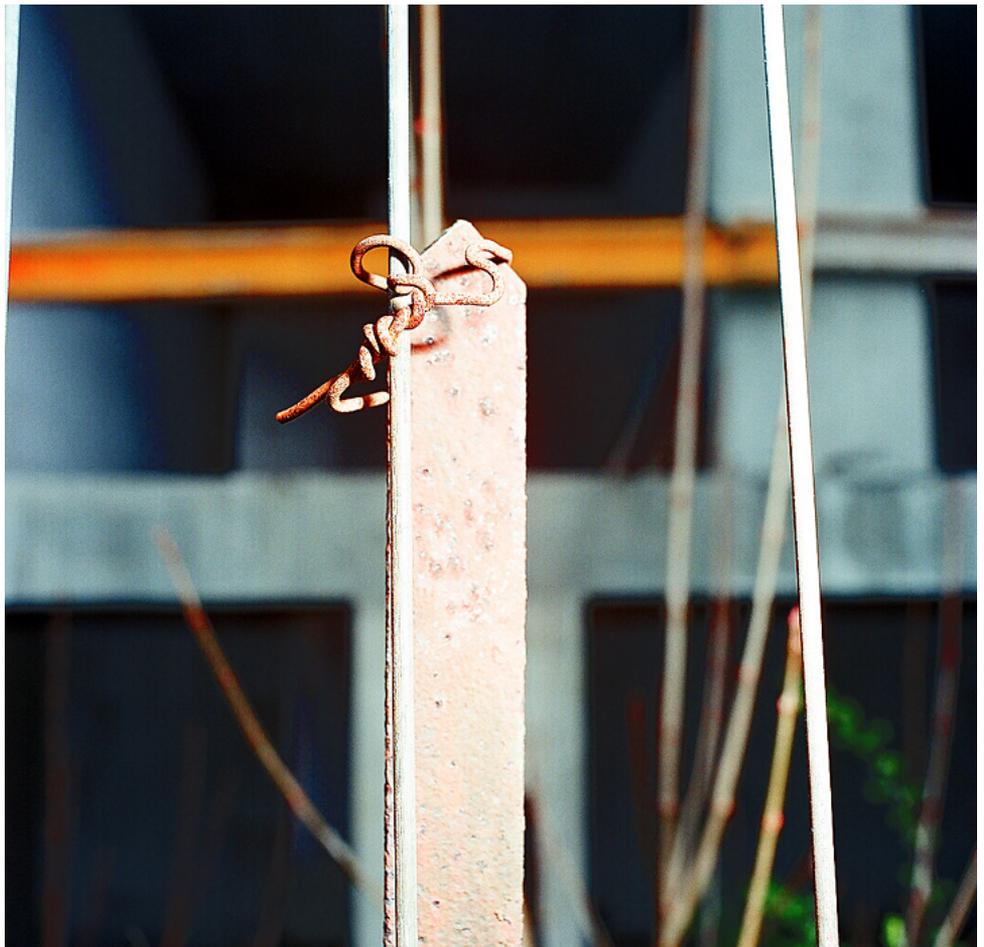
Although Schwitters is the catalyst and thread of this particular journey, he is in many ways primarily a means to allow Darwell to explore his own preoccupation with the creative potential of the photographic medium.



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John Darwell, *After Schwitters (Hjertøya)*, 2005-ongoing

The project was supported by Littoral Arts and the University of Cumbria.

John Darwell is a photographer working on long-term projects that reflect his interest in social and industrial change, concern for the environment and issues around the depiction of mental health. To date he has had eleven books of his work published, of which the most recent are *Sheffield: Hyde Park, Meadowhall and Ponds Forge* (Cafe Royal Books, 2013), *DDSBs* (mynewtpress, 2013) and *Sheffield: Tinsley Viaduct* (Cafe Royal Books, 2013). Previous books include *Dark Days* (Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2007), documenting the impact of foot and mouth disease around his home in north Cumbria, and a twenty-five year retrospective, *Committed to Memory* (Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, 2007). His work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, and is featured in a number of important collections, including the National Museum of Media/Sun Life Collection, Bradford; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. In 2008 Darwell gained a PhD for his research into the visualisation of depression for a project entitled *A Black Dog Came Calling*. He is currently Reader in Photography at the University of Cumbria in Carlisle.

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