William Yang
The story only I can tell
A Talk with Eilenburg’s
William Yang started life as an architect and a playwright in Brisbane. He moved to Sydney in 1969 where he worked as a freelance photographer documenting Sydney’s social life which included the glamorous, celebrated set and the hedonistic, sub-cultural, gay community.

William is third generation Australian Born Chinese and due to the way he was brought up, the Chinese side had always been denied and unacknowledged. In the eighties he claimed his Chinese heritage and he called this process “coming out as a Chinese”. He has done many works about his family and the Chinese diaspora. Since 1989 he is best known for his performance pieces in the theatre using spoken word, projected images and music. They are mostly autobiographical, set against specific social backgrounds, and embrace themes of family, place, identity, sexuality, race, philosophy and time. He will talk about his life and the evolution of his documentary photography into this unique, performative, story telling format.

Natalie Robertson
From the Restless Night
In May 2023, cosmologist and science writer Eilenburg’s book “My Paris” was published. In this book, Eilenburg explores the experiences of a young woman experiencing firsthand the chaotic and ever-changing city of Paris. Through her lens, we witness the city’s vibrant nightlife, its rich history, and the diverse communities that call it home.

Tim J. Valery
Presentation title: Orientation / Captivation
My practice is an exploration of the idioms of home, belonging and New Zealand’s social and cultural landscape. In this sense, it is based within the documentary tradition, examining the people and places that surround me.

Over the last decade I have accumulated an archive of work centred in Christchurch, New Zealand. Recent events in Canterbury have forced me to rethink my working methods and processes, reflecting a need to reconnect within a dramatically changed built and physical environment. My presentation will touch on four major projects started in response to living in an unrecognizable city I call home.

Goolphy Batten
Looking askance
Through an examination of the work of Anne Frank, this paper addresses photographic art that seeks to bear witness to particular historical trauma even while refusing to show them to us.

Erika Wolf
Words that Illustrate Photographs: Eilenburg’s Paris (1923)
A controversial Soviet writer who lived in Paris prior to WW2, Eilenburg experimented with photography alongside the book. My Paris, a portrait of the city in opposition to its dominant representation as a tourist capital. Instead of major monuments and tourist destinations, Eilenburg photographed the back streets, flea markets, benches, and passios. Seeking to retain the anonymity of a writer, Eilenburg used a viewer that allowed him to photograph the subjects while facing at a 90-degree angle. Using this tool, he captured his subjects in snapshots of remarkable power. Despite the claims that such candid photography captures “life as it is”, My Paris reveals the extreme subtext of the photographic image. Eilenburg presents “his Paris”, a unique personal vision of the city and its people. Shortly after the book’s publication he explained, “The photographs are the basic text in the book My Paris. Words only illustrate them.” Eilenburg inverted the usual relation of word and image; images are primary, while words have a secondary, illustrative function.

David Cook
Central to the authorship of River Road: Journeys Through Eclogy (Rim Books, 2013) is a collaborative process; three authors in dialogue, taking risks, engaging in multi-voiced storytelling. In this presentation I describe the strategies we, as authors, developed. My contribution was a series of observational photographs modeled on a ‘transect’ method used in ecological sampling. This series was prompted by a search for significance in my all-too-familiar homeland territory. Unsatisfied with the limitations of my own survey I invited Wiennu Pulse (Ngati Whiare water, carver and activist) to engage in reciprocal collaboration and contribute his first person account of the space that he also calls home. The third partner, Jonty Vakamanu, brought his voice to the project as he worked with the design, mapping and materiality of the book. Together we developed strategies to navigate the reader through these complex parallel narratives.

Mizuko Nishioka
Interpreting absence; reflections on the act of recording the built environment
My PhD research responds to the notion that the photographic image could increasingly be seen as moving toward the creation of vast public archives. This research notes that the interpretation of the photographic image is a form of communication that relies equally on the production, consumption and projection of collective information. For this presentation I introduce a series called (Uninhabited space) (2012) which responds to idealised visualisations of landscape photography. These workshops question how a mode of practice can be aligned through active engagement with, or removal from established photographic processes, and investigates how these processes can enhance or diminish a creative body of work in such a way as to examine the complex role of photographic practices in situating photographic practice and archiving.

Jonathan Kay
To the Uttermost End
With all the technological advancements of the 21st century (such as satellites, sonar, and GPS) there still remains a space on earth that has yet to be fully explored, the sea. Covering seven-tenths of the earth’s surface, the sea remains one of the last frontiers on earth. As a vast space it remains strangely outside of our everyday experience but still holds emotional currency in contemporary culture.

This photographic research frames the sea as an ‘elusive space’ of exploration. It is a place of possibility, as imaginative and scientific narratives exert their own power over the precipice of the sublime.

Ryan McAuley
An exploration of colonial and neo-colonial power structures as evidenced through the built environment in post-conflict Timor Leste
With the decline in traditional colonial aspirations and the relinquishing of many existing colonies throughout the mid 20th century, neocolonialist theory began to develop. Neo-colonialism, defined through the seeking power over another state through political and economic hegemony rather than active governing, is a key focus in my investigation of Timor Leste’s post-conflict architecture and built environment. After nearly three hundred years of Portuguese colonial rule and 25 years of Indonesian occupation, the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste gained independence in May 2002. Strategically placed with the Asia-Pacific region and although an independent nation, Timor Leste has been largely reliant on major financial support and guidance from The United Nations, Portugal, U.S.A and major political powers within the Asia Pacific region. Though my work I explore the shifting power relations between Timor Leste and the major influential nations by examining their physical legacy and the colonial and neo-colonial influences evident in the contemporary built environment of Timor Leste.

Alice Tappenden
Approaching the Intimate Portrait: The Place of the Viewer in Peter Peryer’s Ericks.
Over the course of five years in the late 1970s, Peter Peryer photographed his then-wife, Erika Parkinson, multiple times. He later exhibited these photographs in a touring exhibition in 2001, after the couple had separated. In this paper, I will discuss the place of the viewer in approaching the Ericks series, in relation to Roland Barthes’ seminal text Camera Lucida. I will argue that a Barthesian reading of the Ericks series explains how and why viewers interpret the intimate portrait in a subjective manner.