

Study of the Photographer as a Study: Looking Inside Duncan Winder's Home (sometime between c1962 and 1965)

Peter Wood, School of Architecture, Victoria University of Wellington

ABSTRACT: In recent years there has been a small increase in research addressing the architectural photography of Duncan Winder. While this scholarship adds to critical appreciation of his skill and productivity as a recorder of New Zealand buildings, of his personal life we remain largely ignorant. To know an artist's life well does not guarantee a transparent view into their creative mind, but in the case of Winder we are so bereft of insight into his private life that the only way we have to explore him biographically is through his photographs. Overwhelmingly, Winder's archived oeuvre demonstrates a photographer determined to keep his own image firmly behind the lens. Foreground shadows and, on occasion, a blurred reflection, signal rare glimpses of the photographer at work. But otherwise, his common technique of bringing a hidden character to the camera suggests a determined effort by Winder to not only remain outside the view of the lens, but apart from the entirety of the scene being recorded. Against this pattern, this paper identifies seven images drawn from the Winder archive that present as being of a common domestic interior dated to the 1960s. Contrary to the proliferation of architect-designed rooms that dominate Winder's archive, these photographs show a modest home whose domestic character might be best categorised as "bach-like." Added to this, the composition of each photograph is unusually casual for Winder's work, and they read more as impulsive snap-shots than considered views. When content details are correlated against archival information it can be faithfully concluded that this interior is the home of Duncan Winder. The remainder of the paper interprets one of these images – "House interior, study" – as a knowing self-portrait by the photographer, and the visual scene is interrogated for evidence of Winder's inner world.



Figure 1: House interior, study. Winder, Duncan, 1919-1970: Architectural photographs. Ref: DW-5162-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

WINDER Part 1: Finding Winder's House

This paper takes as its subject a selection of photographs depicting the interior of what I will argue to be the personal home of architectural photographer Duncan Winder. Winder's activity as a professional photographer was short, spanning the period of 1962 to his death in 1970. Yet his archive, which is held in the National Library, represents the most complete and thorough of any individual architectural photographer working in New Zealand. Couple this with the compressed period of his work and he left us an unparalleled visual record of architectural work in 1960s' New Zealand.

But against the vast visual record we have on

Winder's activities as a photographer, very little is known of his personal life. The best biographical detail we have is provided by Perry Martin Hill in the obituary he wrote for Winder in the *NZIA Journal*. For the greater part Martin Hill's memorial is depressingly perfunctory. Of his early life Martin Hill describes in prosaic phrasing Winder's birth and education near Liverpool, hobby interests in sailing, photography and climbing, and his war service as a climbing and ski instructor.

Winder's post-war period starts with immigration to New Zealand in 1955 (to work for Gray Young Morton and Calder), breaking from architectural practice in 1962, brief forays into farming and furniture making,

until soon finding a *niché* in photography. In most ways this reads as an obituary written by a stranger through second-hand accounts, but in his final paragraph Martin Hill throws affectionate melancholy light on why this might be the case, writing:

He worked alone for much of his life and one could not but feel he was the kind of man who, in their time, would have been happy amongst the anonymous craftsmen of the mediaeval churches.¹

Between the end of the war, and his immigration to New Zealand, nothing is recorded. We might assume by his military service in the Royal Engineers that he had some architectural experience at his time of enlistment. However, his birth in 1919 makes him 20 when war broke out. We can add to this a small link to the University of Liverpool, whose alumnae "missing friends" outreach listed Norman Henry Duncan Winder as a graduate of 1948.² If we take a common period of architectural education at

¹ Hill "Obituary: Duncan Winder" p 324. It's impossible to know, but Martin Hill's tone resonates curiously against the protagonist of John Mulgan's novel *Man Alone*, where we also have an English ex-serviceman immigrating to New Zealand, but being unable to settle into a national culture grounded in a collective spirit. Martin Hill, too, was an English migrant.

² "Help us find your missing friends" np.

this time to be five years, then war service interrupted Winder's studies. This places Winder in the Liverpool School of Architecture at a time when Colin Rowe was a tutor, and James Stirling a student (1945-50).³ Also, and this may be spurious to Winder's development as an architect, his father, Leonard Norman Winder,⁴ served in the First World War as a junior officer in the King's Liverpool Regiment, which was the same unit Maxwell Fry joined before attending the Liverpool Architecture School post-WWI on an ex-serviceman's grant.⁵ No architect mentioned here can be traced directly to

³ Of that post-war moment in the Liverpool School, Mark Girouard gives us this account: "Brian Richards vividly remembers the eruption of the ex-servicemen among the students at Liverpool School of Architecture in September 1946, when he himself was a callow boy not far from his schooldays, at the beginning of his second year. The door was kicked open, and the toughies came in. They were still in uniform. They didn't behave like students at all. They wanted to qualify. They weren't going to muck about, and they worked like hell." Girouard *Big Jim* p 27.

⁴ "Lieutenant Leonard Norman WINDER" np.

⁵ It is worth noting that New Zealander George Checkley also studied at the University of Liverpool's School of Architecture School post-WWI on a former serviceman's grant from the New Zealand government. Along with Fry, Checkley would make an important contribution to the arrival of Modernism in the UK.

Winder, but it does usefully paint a picture of the heightened educational environment of which he was part. Under the leadership of Charles Herbert Reilly the Liverpool School determined "the future shape of architectural education in Britain."⁶ So it is no stretch to say that Winder's academic training was superior to that offered in New Zealand during the same period.⁷

I briefly mentioned Winder's war service where, for at least a period, he was a stationed as a mountaineering instructor at the Cedars, Mountain Warfare School, Lebanon.⁸ In his masters dissertation on Winder, Sebastian Clarke has observed that this appointment would have certainly have brought him into close contact with New Zealanders who passed through the school, and this may have contributed to his decision to immigrate.⁹ Indeed, from June, 1943, the chief instructor

⁶ Joseph Powers quoted, Stamp "Book Review: Charles Reilly" p 346.

⁷ As it happens, Cyril Roy Knight, the first Professor of Architecture appointed by Auckland University College, was an Australian who had graduated from the University of Liverpool School in 1923. Gatley "Back to the south" p 412.

⁸ "Norman Henry Duncan Winder" p 5087.

⁹ Clarke "Duncan Winder: Architectural Photographer" p 11.

(snow) was New Zealander John Carryer,¹⁰ who prior to the war was a prominent member of the Stratford Mountain Club¹¹ and where he briefly owned the now historic Stratford Mountain House on the flanks of Mt. Taranaki.¹² I can expand this connection to a number of other New Zealand instructors posted to the Cedars¹³ as recalled later in life by the first unit commander, Major James Riddell.¹⁴ These names include Andrew Robert Michael (Mick) Bowie, who before enlisting was chief guide at the Hermitage, Mount Cook,¹⁵ and Neville Johnson, who was secretary of the New Zealand Alpine Club for 15 years.¹⁶

¹⁰ Lt-Col J. D. Carryer, Ruhotu. Born England, 28 Jan 1911. Hostel manager; 19 Bn Oct 1939-May 1942; seconded to British Army Dec 1943-Jun 1945. Sinclair *19 Battalion and Armoured Regiment* p 35.

¹¹ Stratford Mountain Club np.

¹² Carryer is noted as owner of the house between 1935 and 1939. "Stratford Mountain House" np.

¹³ Lieut M. Bowie, Maj John D. Carryer, Private J.H.L. Curran, Private H. Frost, and Capt. Pat Koorey. I would note that to the five New Zealander's he remembers, he names 11 others attached to the Australian Imperial Force. Riddell includes Capt. N.H.D. Winder R.E. Riddell "The Instructors and staff at the Cedars" np.

¹⁴ Samuel "James Riddell" np.

¹⁵ "Bowie, Andrew Robery Michael, 1901-1982" np.

¹⁶ "Obituary: Neville and Joan Johnson" pp 149-150.

Added to this were English service personnel attached to the Mountain Warfare School who made mountaineering trips to New Zealand after the war.¹⁷ The full role of the Cedars as a conduit between English and New Zealand climbers is beyond this account, but I would add some additional connections. When Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay made their successful 1953 ascent of Everest, the leader of the expedition was Sir John Hunt,¹⁸ who had served as chief instructor at the associated Commando Mountain and Snow Warfare School, Scotland. Additionally, the 1953 expedition physiologist was Dr Griffith Pugh,¹⁹ who had been a senior instructor at the Cedars, where he worked alongside ADM Cox.²⁰ David Cox is an especially interesting figure, and while he doesn't lead to New Zealand, he does provide a segue back to

¹⁷ For example, Charles Marriott was an English Royal Artillery officer attached to the mountaineering wing of the Cedar's School based on climbing experience. After the war he spent two seasons in New Zealand where he climbed Mount Graceful, Mount Sidney and Mount Phyllis, and visited Mannering Glacier and traversed Mount Cooper. Atherton "Obituary: Edward Hamilton Marriott 1906-1985" p 127.

¹⁸ "Hunt, Brig (Henry Cecil) John" np.

¹⁹ Ward "In Memoriam: Lewis Griffith Creswell Evans Pugh" pp 326-327.

²⁰ Armstrong "Obituary: A. David M. Cox" np.

architecture as one of Oxford's "night climber" students who scaled the town's architectural features, including Radcliffe Camera, Codrington Library and, in one particularly infamous event, stole the weathervane from the Christopher Wren Sundial, located in All Souls College (Cox covertly returned it to its lofty home upon being made a Fellow of the college).²¹

Cox provides a recollection in which he and Duncan Winder made a somewhat desperate recreational cross-country ski trip between Sannine and the Cedars. Other than describing Winder as "another rock instructor" Cox has little to add to our understanding of him, but the context of the anecdote speaks to fitness, resilience and camaraderie.²²

Cox goes on to describe another adventure afforded by the Lebanon posting. This one did not include Winder (although it did include New Zealander John Carryer) but it serves to illustrate the experiences available to those attached to the Cedars as instructors. In a quiet fortnight between courses, Cox visited

²¹ Hodgkin "In Memoriam: Anthony David Machell Cox" p 334.

²² Cox "The Lebanon: Some Memories of Mountain Warfare Training" p 196.

Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Amman and Petra, getting as far south as Wadi Rumm, noting the understandable absence of tourists.²³ I can't say that Winder explored the Eastern Mediterranean during his time in Lebanon, but it does seem likely that, as a pre-war student of architecture, he would have sought opportunities to broaden his architectural experience.

None of this helps us track Winder, but it does provide circumstantial evidence for a strong ideological link between Britain's intellectual elite, war service, mountaineering and Commonwealth connection. It was out of this cultural fusion that Winder made the decision to immigrate to New Zealand, perhaps not fully cognisant in advance that joining the Wellington firm of Gray Young, Morton and Calder would base him in the wrong island for the best of New Zealand's climbing, but that it would provide a perfect place for a modest life.

The basis for this study is a mere seven images from the more than 5,000 photographs by Winder that are digitally available from the

²³ Cox "The Lebanon: Some Memories of Mountain Warfare Training" pp 196-197.

Alexander Turnbull Library, and to limit things even further, they include three paired variations. The first six pictures are archived sequentially and they present as a common set. The seventh image, which I will focus my attention on, was archived very much later to the first group, and a familial connection will need to be made between them.

The first six photographs are of three views, reproduced in variation. DW-0103-F and DW-0104-F are identical compositions of a two-seater couch in front of paired casement windows and they can only be differentiated by the variation in exposure. DW-0100-F and DW-0105-F are similarly identical compositions, this time of a side table, dining chair, armchair and coffee table, and here the lighting variation contrasts dramatically. The final pair - DW-0101-F and DW-0102 - are compositionally between the outwardness of the first, and the inwardness of the second, featuring two desks and another dining chair, but while the lighting variation is slight, the images are mirrored.

I take these images to be depictions of the same dwelling. Partly the archival sequencing suggests this, but we need to look to the images themselves for confirmation. The

cipher here is the couch featured in the first photograph. Its profile can be found again in the desk and chair view, as too is the casement window joinery. The third pair contains neither the couch nor the window joinery, but, in the armchair tucked behind the coffee table, the distinctive wooden profile of the couch frame can be corroborated. It's not a dangerous leap to conclude that these depict the same interior. The seventh image (DW-5162-F) (**Figure 1**), so out of archival sequence, is titled "House interior, study," and it might easily have avoided correlation to the others were it not for the cameo appearance of a second armchair, joining the previous couch and chair as a unified suite.

The lounge suite ties these images together but it doesn't identify the occupant. Of the first six, they display a common theme of refined artifacts in an otherwise sparse and lifeless domestic environment. That sounds consistent with an aesthete who lives alone, but it's in the detail that we get closer to Winder. The couch is being used to hold objects which, when viewed closely, include a developing tray, proof sheets and a roll of paper. To one side a stationary guillotine rests against the wall. But it is DW-5162-F, "House interior, study," that narrows the search.

Following Martin Hill's list of Winder's interests, we can find here a hanging shelf using nautical fittings, examples of bespoke furniture (upon which are boxes for photographic film are stacked). To the right is an *ad hoc* drawing board, complete with drafting stool. There is a mounted image of a mountain pass, and another depicting Umayyad Mosque in Syria. The backdrop to Winder's armchair is a large format reproduction of an aerial photograph of this. Winder's archive contains only a handful of aerial photographs and while I hesitate before claiming a doppelganger, I would say that it does compare suspiciously well as a cropped version of one of these,²⁴ and brings to mind the large-scale scene of the Tantra Mountains Winder photographed in the Tatra Leather Goods showroom, Wellington, in 1967.²⁵ Similarly, the framed photograph sitting on the hanging shelf depicts ICI House,²⁶ of which a near enough to identical version can also be found in Winder's archive.²⁷ The

²⁴ Winder DW-1296-F

²⁵ Winder DW-3141-F

²⁶ I am grateful to Dr Michael Dudding so quickly and generously identifying this for me.

²⁷ Winder took a set of near indistinguishable photographs relating to Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) House, suggesting that he returned to exactly the same vantage point on a number of occasions. They

evidence is circumstantial, but I think compelling and thorough enough that we can reasonable agree that this is Duncan Winder's home. The quest now turns to where this house was.

Of the photographs archived under Winder's name in the Alexander Turnbull Library, only one is catalogued as carrying a verso inscription. The image is a composite photograph showing New Zealand's parliamentary precinct in Wellington.²⁸ To the left can be seen the Ministry of Works' late modernist icons, Broadcasting House and Bowen State Building.²⁹ To the right, John Campbell's neoclassical Parliament House (1914-22). Photo-montaged between them is a modelled depiction of the proposed new Executive wing, the Beehive. This is a skilled rendition, showing fine attention to composition, perspective, shadow and tonal gradation. Fitting the work of a professional,

appear to have in common an attempt to exactly reproduce the commercial architectural artists render produced for the project. Winder DW-1287-F. See Winder DW-1286-F; Winder DW-1319-F and Winder DW-1319a-F.

²⁸ Winder PA7-22-31

²⁹ A particularly good photograph of these two buildings taken by Winder can be found in his archive: Winder DW-5105-F

the photograph is stamped in ink with the moniker: "Photograph by Duncan Winder 21 Fernhill Terrace Wellington Tel 49-484 Number 1483/a."³⁰

This, on its own, isn't sufficient to settle the identity of the interior under review, but it does lead to property information documents held by Wellington City Council on 21 Fernhill Terrace, Wadestown, which confirm D Winder as the owner for the building permit applications made in April 1961,³¹ and October 1965.³² Furthermore, both these applications indicate that that Winder intended to contribute to the construction work himself.

We can reliably conclude that Winder lived at this address from at least early 1961 until his death in 1970. This information shows that Winder owned 21 Fernhill Terrace, so we should take his occupancy to be one of stability, and that he carried out the building work personally (at least in part). This point only makes the domestic interior depicted in

³⁰ Winder PA7-22-31

³¹ Wellington City Archives, Building Consent: 21 Fernhill Terrace, 20 April 1961.

³² Wellington City Archives, Building Consent: 21 Fernhill Terrace, 08 October 1965.

the photographs under examination here all the more intriguing.

WINDER Part 2: Altered plans.

At the time Winder purchased it, 21 Fernhill Terrace was a modest, two-bedroom cottage measuring approximately 28' by 25' (700 sq ft, or 65sqm). These diminutive dimensions include a shallow glazed frontage of 140 sq ft (13sqm), which was probably an original verandah enclosed in the late 1940s to early 1950s,³³ and subsequently the former exterior wall was largely removed, probably at about the same time. Permits are not on record for this work.

In March 1961, Winder applied for a building permit for the construction of a single garage in concrete block to the front left of the property.³⁴ The permit was approved without amendment, and it remains a feature of the

³³ The Wellington City Archive records for 21 Fernhill Terrace do not hold any records accounting for an enclosure of a verandah, but I would suggest that this was a common modification made to many small bungalows by owners seeking more enclosed space with minimal bureaucratic interference or expense. I am estimating the date of the enclosure based on the type of casement window visible in Winder DW-0104-F.

³⁴ Wellington City Archives, Building Consent: 21 Fernhill Terrace, 20 April 1961.

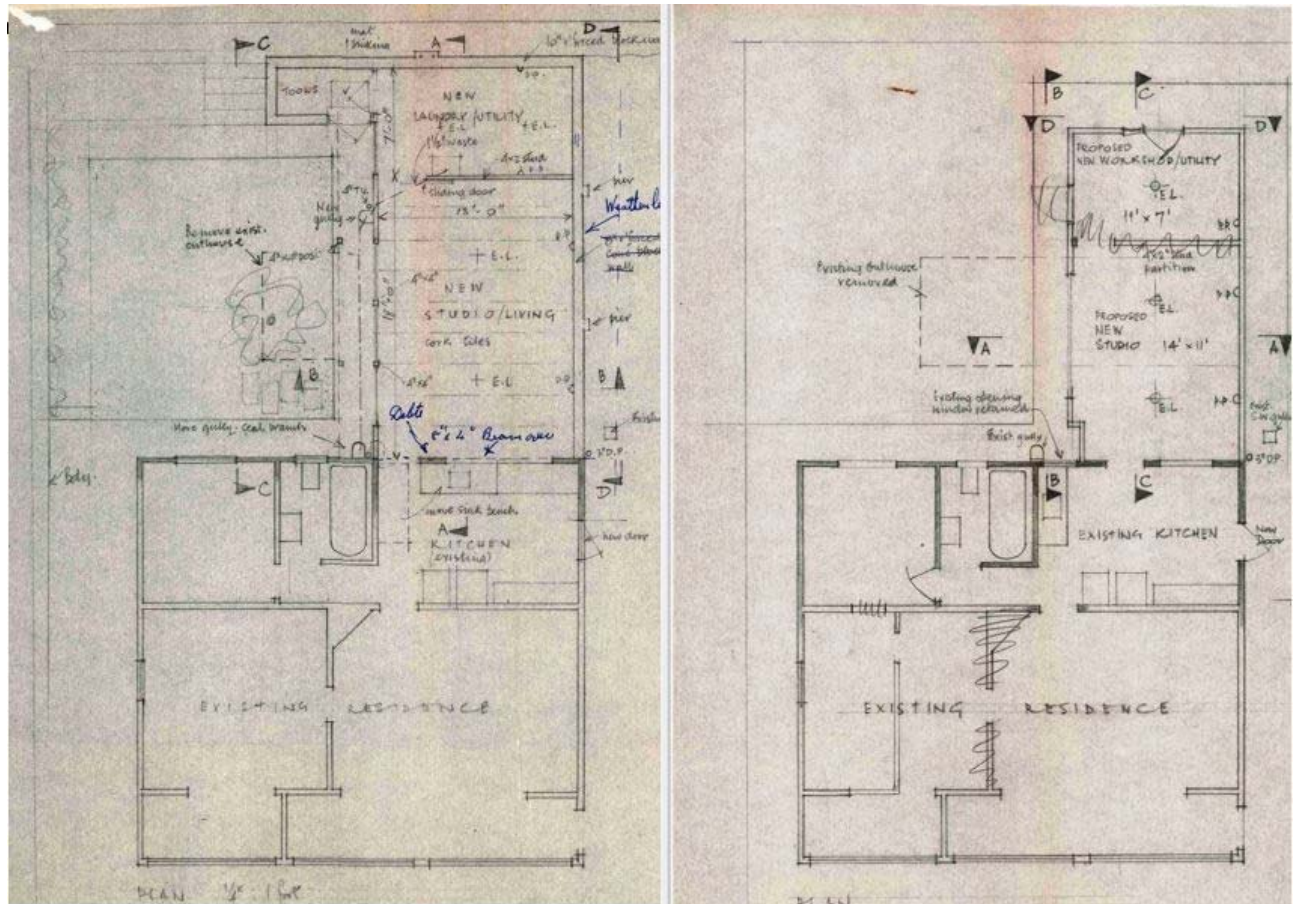


Figure 2: Wellington City Archives, Building Consent: 21 Fernhill Terrace, 08 October 1965. Legal Description: Lot 21 DP 422 Owner: D Winder. Builder: Owner, Application value £450, Ref: 00058-C18036.

property today. However, the engineer's requirement that Winder use a sliding track door, "not "tilta door",³⁵ to avoid footpath intrusion, has since been changed. For a modest property, with off-street parking, the projected budget of £350 still feels like a significant investment. Added to this is the date, which is the year prior to his withdrawal from architectural practice. We might therefore conclude that Winder's future plans included the regular need for a vehicle, and that he anticipated he would keep it long enough to benefit from a secure garage as an investment.

Winder's second permit application for building works dates to February, 1965, and was closely priced to the earlier garage at £450. However, the proposed work was significantly more ambitious, with the permit covering the removal of an existing "outhouse," and the addition of a new rearward addition along the southern boundary to create a north facing court.

In the floor plans originally approved, the extension was taken from the rear wall

³⁵ Hand written note by City Engineer's Department on the Building Application form.

centreline and included alterations to the existing kitchen. Circulation aligned along a corridor axis that opens to a courtyard created by the new "L" shape of the plan. The accompanying façade and section details indicate a shallow skillion roof (not flat) and bespoke floor-to-ceiling window joinery, which extended to a fanlight over the external glass door. The extension area traverses a "studio/living" area to lead to a "laundry/utility" (behind a sliding door), culminating at a small hooked alcove labelled "tools." In plan, the extension created a semi-protected garden court not dissimilar to the one that Ernst Plischke experimented with in the Frankel House, Christchurch (1939-40), and which recurs in another form closer-to-home with the Demonstration House (1949), in Karori. As far as the elevational composition is concerned, the design would seem to owe something to the Shuker House, Titahi Bay, which Winder had photographed between 1962 and 1965.³⁶ The proposed design is clever, well drawn, and indicates an educated architectural awareness at work in a timber modernist idiom.

However, in August, Winder submitted

³⁶ Winder DW-1040-F

revised drawings that retreated from the conviction of the first proposal (**Figure 2**). In these, the kitchen remains a contained room in the existing house, and the transition of functions is reduced to "proposed new studio." The single pane glass external door remains, but the fanlight is gone, and the glazed joinery unit has been shrunk so that while it still issues from the floor the panes are visibly shorter and the lintel has a pronounced wall datum. Most notably, the width of the extension is reduced from 13 to 11 feet. This narrowing compromises the original proportions that allowed the extension to exactly replicate half the existing footprint. This also means the new external courtyard wall-line no longer extends the existing bathroom internal wall, which in turn creates a clumsy junction as the new wall is dog-legged to the old house to leave a rear facing kitchen window unaltered. Sadly, the revised design shows pragmatic concessions which, while not significantly challenging the motivations for the extension, do pointedly undermine its architectural integrity.

There is no indication in the Building Permit that any of these changes were prescribed, and I would suggest all the variations can be grouped as common strategies for reducing

construction costs. In this scenario, Winder submitted the design he desired, which was approved. Only after that did he seek a quantity survey for the costs, and on this basis he was obliged to find savings in the works. His reticence about this backward step might be read into the August submission in the slightly cavalier finish to the drawings. The architect's hand is still there, but the drawing also shows rough annotations, most notably to the existing dwelling where a wall left intact in the first proposal now carries a graphic suggestion of being moved.³⁷

If Winder's architectural standards were compromised - as appears to be the case - his motivation behind the alterations remained consistent, with the new extension in both sets of plans clearly labelled as "new studio," and being defined as a working area. We might take from this that during his period as a

³⁷ Other freehand annotations to this sheet include an inward opening door to the end of the extension, which is not shown on the end elevation. Conversely, the new door opening to the courtyard is crossed out despite appearing in the elevation, and the wall dividing the new studio from the utility room has been crossed through. Finally, the smaller room created with the shifting of the existing dwelling wall is indicated as having an internal window through to the next room made.

professional architectural photographer, Winder worked out of his own home. Furthermore, while the extension added significantly to the area of the house, it did not increase the domestic desirability of the property as no advance in the bedroom accommodations were made. This suggests to me that at the time the extension was made, Winder planned to stay at 21 Fernhill long-term, using it as his home and work place, and that he did not foresee a scenario in which he might need to accommodate others in the house. This reading reinforces Martin Hill's obituary description of Winder as a solitary figure dedicated to interests of making, be that photographs or furniture.

With the benefit of the building permit drawings it is now possible to fit the interior photographs to plans, although this is not straightforward. The two exposures of "Interior of living room" (DW-0103-F) and "Interior of unknown dwelling" (DW-0104-F) show the two-seater couch with its back to a glazed exterior wall. This corresponds to the enclosed verandah, and the tiled gable roof visible through the to the left-hand window can still be seen detected across Fernhill Street today.

"Interior of unknown dwelling" (DW-0101-F and DW-0102-F), depicting both freestanding and wall mounted desks, is trickier as it occurs twice in conflicting orientations. However, referencing against the floor plans shows that the only feasible arrangement, given the prominent internal doorway, places the desks to the right of the couch, in the small alcove created against the neighbouring room.

"Interior of unknown dwelling" (DW-0100-F) and "Interior of living room" (DW-0105-F) also present problems, but of a different kind. These appear as identical views using different lighting techniques and exposures. The shadow in both supports alternate uses of artificial lighting, and indeed, the shadow of a standing lamp is recognisable in the second image.

But where these two photographs get interesting is when they are compared back to the floor plans. In simple terms, they don't work as depicted. If we take the example of the edge of the fireplace and the small high window as organisational architectural elements, the only way this scene can be located back in the plans is in a reversed form. This is significant, as it identifies the location as the larger of the two bedrooms, adjacent to

the area the couch faces. While it is not shown on the plans, this reversal backs the squared fireplace to the living room fireplace depicted on the drawings nominally, but not untypically, as a diagonal line across the central internal wall junction. I would also suggest that this explains the high window as a typical bedroom placement for a house of this period, and it makes sense of the bold wallpaper as more befitting to the boudoir.

The consequence of this is that Winder chose to use the smaller of the two secondary rooms as his bedroom. This in turn creates a curious problem for the photograph titled "House interior, study"³⁸ as it can no longer be conventionally accommodated in the remaining space.

But what do we really know from this photograph? The framed image of ICI House reliably demonstrates that this image is correctly reproduced and not reversed. The camera's framing offers us the corner of a room that appears cluttered with material, and I suspect we are inclined to assume from the wall placement of the panoramic photomural that it is symmetrically mounted

on the end wall, thus creating a further sense of spatial limit. The overall effect is to evoke a small, busy room dedicated to work. Like a study.

But there are clues that this may not be the case. It is odd that we should find a fixed radiant gas heater in a study, and close inspection of the photograph brings to the fore the photographer's casually placed shoes (removed while seated?), and keys are visible on the drawing table. These details, while minor, speak to an arrival zone rather than a retreat. And what of the cat, so dedicatedly standing sentry at a door frame?

With the print orientation of the photographed confirmed, and the larger of the two bedrooms eliminated from consideration, the only part of the small house able to accommodate this view is the right rear corner the living room. This means that behind the wall visible to the left is the kitchen, and the wall covered by the photomural is an exterior one to the south.

The appearance of the study is made smaller by the lighting graduation, which is noticeably darker to the right and creates the optical sense that this part of the environment

is closed in. This, I suggest, is an illusion created partly by the use of artificial lighting (as seen in the shadow of the cat), and partly by the real location of this space in the house. And if we return to the far left of the photograph showing the couch under the windows, the edge of a weighty curtain can be detected in the middle ground. This would have allowed the living room to be curtained off from the well glazed former verandah.

The machinations involved here should be taken as indicators that this was not a casual snapshot but a carefully-composed and technically-skilled photograph. To prepare it, Winder closed off the glazed verandah using the curtain (and perhaps also closed the venetian blinds), then used a lamp to cast a high artificial light long the full breadth of the living area in simulation of natural lighting. The exposure would have needed to have been long, which would in turn have necessitate a tripod. This is set well back in the room to allow for the framing of the scene, leaving Winder to stand in front of the closed curtains, opposite the door to the kitchen, to operate the shutter well away from the possibility of creating an intrusive shadow. This is hardly a scientific point, but we might look to the feline interloper as a guide to this

³⁸ Winder DW-5162-F

scenario. Stationed outside the kitchen, the attention of the cat directs us to the off-camera presence of Winder who, I suspect, has yet to feed it.

Every image that Winder has left us speaks of a meticulous and economic photographer whose archive of 5,000+ images contains very few that are anything less than technically proficient, and many that are sublime. To think that some of his own home slipped through thoughtlessly is to be willfully naïve. These rooms may lack a homely presentation, but they are a direct insight into Winder's inner world. Considered this way, I find "House interior, study" to be a carefully choreographed self-portrait by Winder. That he is not physically visible here is not the point. As a photographer, Winder understood, and excelled at, disappearing behind the lens, and in the view of Martin Hill, such anonymous craft was his calling. But make no mistake, the contents of this photograph are carefully curated. An empty armchair is the perfect index for the photographer, and around it are representative artifacts of his life.

We expect from an architectural photographer that they record what they find, but here

Winder makes a knowing case for the photographer as a specialist artist, insisting on order, composition, harmony and, if we allow it, meaning. Regarded this way, the causal candidness of "House interior, study" can be compared favourably with the fine art tradition of painters portraying their studios. See, for example, Gustave Courbet's allegorical *The Painter's Studio* (1855), Frederic Bazille's *Studio in Rue de la Condamine* (1870) - which features both chair and couch - or Henri Matisse's *Red Studio* (1911). Recognising this now prefaces further exploration into 21 Fernhill Terrace.

For such a small house, the photographic record Winder left us of his house is thorough, but it isn't comprehensive. We know nothing of the kitchen, bathroom, nor Winder's sleeping arrangements. I've used a coy descriptor in place of "bedroom" here for a reason as the other space we should expect to find in a photographer's work place (which is what 21 Fernhill became) is a darkroom. The photographs show boxes for photographic paper, and a developing tray sits on the sofa, but there is no other evidence of the chemicals and equipment needed for professional activity. Similarly, I cannot find any examples of bedroom items, such as clothing or

bedding. It is also telling that the extension plans did not overtly add to either of these areas of the house. The new rooms are identified as studio space, but the amount of glazing in both versions would have prohibited any darkroom activity. This presents the possibility that Winder planned to continue using facilities in the existing house for his darkroom and bedroom, and that maybe the same unconventional domestic organisation shown in the living room applied to these other two functions also?

The kitchen and bathroom I take to be stable elements due to the specialist servicing each requires. After reviewing the floor plans in light of the lay-out information provided in the photographs, we are left with only two rooms unaccounted for: the minor bedroom to the left rear, and the smaller partitioned part of the old verandah, to the front left, which is accessed off the former bedroom. Conventional domestic logic would hold that that larger of the two would make the better bedroom, but as we have already seen in Winder's house, he was happy to prioritise his professional needs over familiar domestic expectations. If we consider the woeful unsuitability of a small over-glazed porch as a darkroom, and add the value of water and

waste for the process of developing, then the second bedroom, with its small single window, presents as the most expedient room for conversion to a darkroom. This would leave the tiny verandah annex as the only available place for a bed, albeit a single one.

This is not a situation many could tolerate, but it does help explain the impromptu notations Winder made to the second set of permit plans. With the reduction in size of the new wing, Winder's labelling changed from "new studio/living" to "new studio" alone. At the same time he indicates an intention to shift back the existing living room wall visible in the photograph with the alcove desk.³⁹ This would have resulted in the modernised fireplace becoming a part of the enlarged living room, and carved off a new narrow room better suited to containing a single bed. The annotations Winder made to the wall separating this new bedroom from the proposed darkroom can now be read as a potential new door allowing direct access to the darkroom, which could already have been in combination use as a wardrobe. Finally, the alcove desk can be simply relocated to the small verandah annex to make a self-

³⁹ Winder DW-0102-F

contained office off the newly enlarged living area.

When preparing this paper, I spent a great deal of time trying to find an image of Winder so that I might anchor my exploration of his home on a person we might recognise. In my search for his appearance, I was spectacularly unsuccessful, but then our faces are not guarantees of our characters, and in some small way, every photograph by Winder is a form of self-portrait as we see the world through the purposeful lens of the photographer. The last part of this paper will explore this point as a theme.

WINDER Part 3: Room as Portrait

If there is a consistent aesthetic quality to Winder's photography, it is found in the precision and compositional clarity of his photographs. His images are invariably technically proficient, with incorrect focus or poor exposure being very rare instances. Similarly, his consideration of his subject displays uncommonly well-considered compositional arrangements. The proof of his skill can be seen the raw prints where the subject framing is held to the very limits of the negative border. This lends to his photographs an almost clinical clarity and

brings forward a sense of fidelity to the subject. There is a risk that his work may, at first, appear a bit staid, but at its best this approach lends to Winder's images a documentary authority that presents the architectural subject as seemingly encountered in a "natural" state. With this approach Winder's photographs display an informed appreciation of international trends in architectural photography at that time.

For example, Winder's photographs of Canterbury University⁴⁰ bear favourable comparison with Henk Snoek's record of Cambridge University.⁴¹ In both cases the monumental formal characteristic of the buildings are emphasised ahead of any human presence that might define collegiate life. Iuliano and Penz take up this point with reference to a photograph of the Erasmus Building, Queen's College, Cambridge (1960). Using a magnifying glass the authors are able to detect two figures staring back from an otherwise unpopulated composition. They

⁴⁰ Winder DW-2420-F; Winder DW-3663-F; Winder DW-3665-F.

⁴¹ Snoek "Cripps Building, St John's College, Cambridge"; Snoek "Cripps Building, St John's College, Cambridge: detail of elevation"; Snoek "Laboratories and process building for CIBA"



Figure 3: A study adjoining a dining room. Winder, Duncan, 1919-1970: Architectural photographs. Ref: DW-2317-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

write:

While it is expected in portrait photography to have people looking straight at the camera, in this case it is an unexpected combination because the portrait is that of the building. And by doing so it reveals the artifice of photography, as we don't expect a "building" to look back.⁴²

Iuliano and Penz link this to debate raised in the *Architect's Journal*, in 1979, where photographer Tom Picton voiced his frustration that people were so insidiously eliminated from architectural photographs.⁴³ In a turn of phrase that still reads with bite, Picton categorised such photographs as having "a necrophiliac excellence."⁴⁴ Iuliano and Penz then extend the erasure of occupation to a concept of "emptiness" in architectural photography advanced by Filip Mattens. In this hypothesis, the presence of people demands that we firstly seek function in the architecture depicted. Take the figure away and, with it, functional significance also recedes, leaving pure formal compositional characteristics to the fore.⁴⁵

⁴² Iuliano and Penz "The Cambridge Experiment" p 317.

⁴³ Picton "The Craven Image" pp 175-190.

⁴⁴ Picton quoted, Iuliano and Penz "The Cambridge Experiment" pp 317-318.

⁴⁵ Mattens "The Aesthetics of Space"

Such images show the direction of acclaimed British architectural photographer, Eric de Maré, whose 1961 book *Photography and Architecture* not only made a strong appeal to the role of photography as a critical tool, but also set out the technical approaches and techniques.⁴⁶ It was a guide to becoming an architectural photographer, and given Higgott's claim that de Maré influenced a whole generation of English architects,⁴⁷ we should take it as a given that he would have been an important influence on Winder.

That said, it needs to be emphasised that the conversation I have just presented is very specific to depictions of English New Brutalism (Snoek for, de Maré against). There is, undoubtedly, a familial argument for Brutalism's reception in New Zealand, but I do not wish to hold Winder to this lineage alone. Indeed, as Dudding has argued, New Zealand architects were just as prepared to be influenced by representations of modernism originating from the USA as they were the UK.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ de Maré *Photography and Architecture*

⁴⁷ Higgott "Eric de Maré: Between the functional and the beautiful" p 873.

⁴⁸ Dudding "New Zealand Architect's Abroad"

The most celebrated American architectural photographer of Winder's period was Julius Shulman, and in many of Winder's images visual echoes of Shulman's work can be found. But such is Shulman's status as the premier visual recorder of East Coast Modernism that the claim of influence might be pasted to all those working in his now mythological shadow. In the case of Winder, I feel a much stronger case can be made for the influence of another American photographer, Maynard L Parker. Shulman's name is permanently attached to the heroic domestic projects of American mid-century modernism, particularly through the Pierre Koenig's Stahl House (Case Study House #22), for which Shulman produced a photograph whose architectural influence likely exceeded that of the home it depicted.⁴⁹ Local versions of it can be found in Gordon H Burt's portrait of the house Bill Toomath⁵⁰ designed for his parents, and Winder's view of Bill Alington's own home.⁵¹ For both these architects being able to produce this particular view of their work was an endorsement of their Modernist lineage (although, it might also be observed that *sans*

⁴⁹ Shenk "The Curse of Cool" p 101.

⁵⁰ Burt "Living room and bedroom interior, house for William Toomath's parents, Lower Hutt"

⁵¹ Winder DW-4206-F

an LA backdrop these two Wellington houses highlight their geographical distance from the architectural glamour of mid-century California).

It is noteworthy of Winder's photograph of the Alington House that the inclusion of people is unusual. Not unknown in Winder's photographs, but rare in those directed to specific architectural subjects. He did sometimes include family groupings and, especially, seemed to have an innocent interest in children as a subject. But mostly, Winder's architectural photographs are devoid of occupation. This can lend to his work a sharp melancholy as the camera orientates us to scenes that hint at a life, but which never quite record it. It is tempting to immediately call this quality out as an example of the "emptiness" proposed by Matten's, but I don't detect in Winder's images the sort of nihilistic denial of humanity that so inflamed Picton. Winder may not have sought out people for inclusion in these architectural photographs, but I find in his work a cypher of invitation that offers a viewer a way into the images. To clarify this, we need to turn away from Winder's English architectural genealogy, and look toward the bright post-war optimism of US, but with the important

caveat that we ignore Julius Shulman.

Although less celebrated today than Shulman, Maynard was a prolific photographer of mid-century Californian suburbia. From his breakthrough shoot of the Cliff May residence, in 1940, his work appeared with frequency in the pages of *House Beautiful*, *Architectural Digest*, *Sunset Magazine*, and featured on covers for the Los Angeles Times' *Sunday* magazine,⁵² and we should anticipate that many of his images found their way to New Zealand coffee tables.

On this it is instructive to compare two images representative of the photographers.⁵³ In both a pool dominates the middle-ground, with the rear of a suburban home the backdrop. Maynard's image depicts Olivia de Havilland, and is described by Jennifer Watts as carefully designed to portray the celebrity actor as charmingly down to earth.⁵⁴ Winder's version lacks a star cameo, but it similarly presents the pool as the focus of

⁵² "Maynard L. Parker" np.

⁵³ Parker "De Havilland, Olivia, residence"; Winder DW-1837-F

⁵⁴ Watts "In the Swim: Photographer Maynard L. Parker and the Celebrity Pool" p 326.

suburban glamour.⁵⁵ However, the most interesting commonality between the photographs is the use of foreground foliage to frame the scene. This is a common enough compositional ploy that extends the depth of the pictorial field (Shulman frequently used it), but associating it to backyard bathing invites a viewer to become an unwanted voyeur. It may well be that this only added to the fascination of catching a celebrity at home. As Watt concludes, Maynard presents the pool as a "vacant space" into which a viewer "could project their leisure-filled fantasies."⁵⁶

Superficially "vacant space" and "emptiness" might be conflated. But the significant difference here is that of presence. In Picton's criticism, photography treats architecture as a dormant sculptural world that has superseded humanity. Watt's interpretation is exactly the opposite. "Vacant" space is a loaded pause that implicates prior and future occupation, and if we don't find an obvious figure in an image we might well find ourselves, as viewers, drawn into a photograph as invested participants, be that though celebrity attachment, or as everyday watchers.

⁵⁵ Winder DW-1837-F

⁵⁶ Watts "In the Swim: Photographer Maynard L. Parker and the Celebrity Pool" p 326.

I would suggest that Winder excelled at depicting domestic spaces as "vacant" in the invitational sense provided by Watts. This does not always produce a comfortable image. One photograph, commissioned by Jim Beard of his own home, depicts three children playing unconsciously on the verandah.⁵⁷ But the intrusion of Winder's shadow into the scene presents an unsettling conflict between the innocence of childhood and the threats of an outside world looking on. This is a rare example of the photographer's presence leaking into the visual record. Time and time again in Winder's photography "invitations" to fill the vacant space are constructed by alluding to a human presence that is not directly represented. Visual devices include directed views, staged domestic artifacts, open doors and middle-ground views through windows.

But of all the invitational devices Winder employs, the most effective is the chair. Most items of the interior furniture contain some invitational quality. Our familiarity with the universal rituals of domestic life assures a collective consciousness of engagement. But the individual chair, especially where it is

⁵⁷ Winder DW-1658-F

unique to an image, is precisely placed to act as an anthropomorphic invitation. We can see ourselves in a chair: literally, figuratively, symbolically. Such anthropomorphising is possible because of the intimate relationship between a chair and the individual body that is not found in other furniture items to the same extent. Indeed, it is a feature of the English language that we refer to a chair as a seat – once more, literally, figuratively and symbolically - of individual authority. Against the chair, the couch is a collective vehicle. A form of public transport, if you will, intended to be shared rather than owned. We find couches, in the form of benches, pews or bleachers, in conspicuously communal places: parks, churches, stadiums. A single bed speaks to an individual body, but it can easily do so in terms that evoke childhood or incarcerated isolation rather than commune.

In the living room of the Cockburn House, three overstuffed armchairs pay reverence to an unsabarded sword and animal pelt.⁵⁸ In another anonymous interior, designer icons self-consciously ignore each other.⁵⁹ Another uncredited interior by Winder shows a

⁵⁸ Winder DW-2569b-F

⁵⁹ Winder DW-4085-F

solitary Ole Wanscher-type rocking chair staring soulfully out open French door.⁶⁰ And in a final example, an image of the Day House captures a stout Regency Moderne club chair talks down to a couple of Hollywood Regency wingbacks.⁶¹ Such anthropomorphising on my part is projected, but I do suggest that Winder knowingly manipulated chairs to create theatrical arrangements that would - to use that words again - invite such interpretation. In contrast to his use of chairs, Winder often presents couches with a blandness befitting a public conveyance. In the Utting House the couch strikes across a window.⁶² The same architecturally-indifferent alignment to the building envelope rather than the living space can be seen in the Manthel house.⁶³ This pattern of the couch as intruding upon the mid-century interior takes a further turn into the moribund where Winder photographed couches by Backhouse in a display setting.⁶⁴ But time and time again, Winder's interiors feature a choreography of chairs that offer social interactions to seemingly empty rooms. We can find this pattern in the photographs

⁶⁰ Winder DW-1214-F

⁶¹ Winder DW-4598-F

⁶² Winder DW-3091-F

⁶³ Winder DW-0548-F

⁶⁴ Winder DW-2274-F

he took of his own home, but in a specific hierarchy. Here the couch can be seen to have become a form of public property to the domestic economy. It is a loading bay for the detritus of a professional photographer who lives alone. Proof sheets, a developing tray, a lead-light and a stack of books. To one side a stationery guillotine is awkwardly propped against the wall. The casual clutter and improvised use of the sofa speaks to a man unaccustomed to visitors. The chairs visible in the sequentially-archived photographs display a similar pragmatism. In the view of the desks, it is the purposefulness of the dining room chair and woven waste basket that provide clues to the wall-mounted unit being actually a drop desk. Another dining-room chair is pulled into the table in the interior room, but this again looks like a work arrangement. In this second image the armchair is visible between the table and bookshelf, but otherwise does not bring very much additional personality to the composition. I would suggest that, contrary to my previous argument, in each example from the six sequentially archived photographs the chairs are not at all animated. If anything, they have been de-socialised. When coupled with the variation in the paired images, this suggests to me that these photographs were

causal tests, and were not meant to carry much by representational meaning to an outside audience.

However, the seventh photograph, the separately archived "House interior, study,"⁶⁵ is entirely different. Here the armchair is the central pictorial element. To one side a tall steel-frame stool provides an additional specialist chair to the scene, but it is the formality of the upholstered armchair that controls the composition. The anthropomorphic animation is made more suggestable by the pair of shoes and abandoned newspaper, but most of all it is the orientation of the armchair against the line of the lens that prevails. We are watching the chair, but the chair is watching something to our left and beyond the frame of the lens. To appreciate the biographic resonance behind this gesture we need to step back slightly.

I have presented the case that "House interior, study" is a photographic record by Duncan Winder of his own home, but a question remains just how sentient Winder's intention was. Read literally, it could be dismissed as a casual snap-shot by a photographer at home,

perhaps to test a new lens or studio light, and that it simply managed to slip through to archival permanence. Against this accidental account, I have argued that the construction of the image, the nature of the personal artifacts in the picture, and even the manipulative way it misrepresents the organisation of the house, all speak to a purposeful *mise en scene*. In my view, "House interior, study" is actually a careful and deliberate self-portrait by an artist otherwise pathologically disinclined to leave traces of himself in the world.

To some extent, a photographer always gives something of themselves through their work, but this usually takes the expression of an artist's contribution. But it is to the fore for a photographer that the camera is indiscriminate in what it records. If something lies in the visible field of the lens, this will be transferred back to a photographic register. So it is that, when viewed forensically, biographical evidence of Duncan Winder that can be found in all his images. In specific examples there is an element of self-portraiture as he acknowledges his own image, be that through an incidental reflection, knowing shadow, or heavy-handed erasure. With the set of photographs I take to be made in his own home, we have an

indexical record where Winder's presence occupies the images even if his literal presentation does not. But with any major body of creative work, a biographic portrait of the author finds its way out through the preference and character displayed. The view point, exposure times, lens selection, post-production cropping, and so on, these are all purposeful actions that allow us to share the world Duncan Winder occupies, and therefore provide insight into a version of the person behind the lens.

As Roland Barthes observed, a photograph is always contingent and outside meaning except in so much as it assumes a mask.⁶⁶ Barthes makes this explicit with reference to portrait photographers but his statement is universal in that a photograph is inevitably a technological shadow cast by a photographer's interior motives. The photographs I take to be those of Winder's own house, in their causal origin, as close as we might get to a pure biographical record as they locates us within a psycho-technical shadow called "the home." Again, Barthes speaks to this where he writes:

Each photograph is read as the private appearance of its

⁶⁵ Winder DW-5162-F

⁶⁶ Barthes *Camera Lucida* p 34.

referent: the age of photography corresponds precisely to the explosion of the private into the public, or rather into the creation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private.⁶⁷

Photography makes the private public, and this is especially so for architectural photography where it turns its gaze to the interior. By attributing the otherwise anonymous photographs to Winder's home it is an invasion on the right of Winder to remain an elusive documentarian, providing a clear-eyed record while remaining detached and unaffected by the domestic scenes displayed before him.

To discuss some problems publicising the private brings (and to help bring this essay to a close) I would like to contrast the photograph I take to be of Duncan Winder's study with a similarly themed one taken by Winder in the same period. "A study adjoining a dining room"⁶⁸ is an interior scene organised around a view from a study through a wide doorway to a dining area.

The identity of the house is not recorded, but the use of vanished timber moldings, and

what I think can be called a signature timber datum running below the cornice tie this photograph to at least two other images held in Winder's archive. (The archival cataloguing – DW-2315-F, DW-2316-F, DW-2317-F - for these images indicate sequential lodgement which in turn supports, if not proves, a relationship). From these it is a short step to confirm this as the study of the Richardson House (29 Duthie Street, Karori), by James Beard, which Winder photographed in ca September 1966,⁶⁹ and again in ca October, 1969.⁷⁰

This explains much found in the photograph "A study adjoining a dining room." As a Professor in Science at Victoria University in the 1960s, LR Richardson lived the last days of a rarefied cultural elite life whose defining characteristic was, I suggest, that of social comfort.⁷¹ The generous indentation in the cushion of the plush leather armchair in Winder's photograph goes some way to demonstrating this, but there are plenty of other clues, from the bespoke architectural interior to the loaded fruit bowl, this is a model of domestic respectability. The curators

of the National Library's 1999 exhibition, "Darling, I'm Home!," registered this with the caption to this photograph, which read:

The tapa cloth hanging on the bookshelves is part of the growing awareness of Maori and Pacific art in New Zealand. The Scandinavian style dining room furnishings and fine wooden detailing make this a sophisticated example of the contemporary architect-designed house of the 1960s.⁷²

This speaks to an intellectual and cultural pedigree. Except, that is, when we view the bookcase closely and find that the tapa cloth is pragmatically disguising the otherwise exposed end of a commercial steel bookcase. If we treat this as a portrait of a successful "life of the mind" it's one posing self-consciously about its higher virtues.

To what extent Winder recognised any of this I can't say, but when placing "House interior, study," against "A study adjoining a dining room," it's hard not to be struck by the similarities of composition, and the contrast of domestic standards involved. A lazy reading might emphasise resentment on the part of a photographer obliged to document the homes

⁶⁷ Barthes *Camera Lucida* p 98.

⁶⁸ Winder DW-2317-F

⁶⁹ Winder DW-2327-F

⁷⁰ Winder DW-2327-F

⁷¹ Gusfield "American Professors" pp 595-616.

⁷² This quote is taken from the archival description attached to the entry in the National Library. Winder DW-2317-F

of the rich and comfortable, while returning home to quarters that are domestically threadbare by comparison.

A lazy reading might emphasise that, but Winder deserves better, and we find it in a visual direction every bit as erudite as Richardson. I am evoking here Leonardo da Vinci's axiom that "every artist paints themselves,"⁷³ and aligning this to the surge of interest in the work of Vincent van Gogh after The Great War.⁷⁴ I have already mentioned a history of painters depicting their own studios as a form of biography, but here I want to go one step further and state my view that "House interior, study" is not simply a photograph, but a knowing and purposeful self-portrait that was carefully curated and composed by Winder despite – maybe for – its chaotic character. I raise the figure of Vincent van Gogh partly as a popular personification for the art work as an index to the life of the artist, but also for significant formal similarities between his work and "House interior, study." The painter would write of his desire to produce portraits that would appear to future generations as apparitions in

⁷³ Eisler "Every Artist Paints Himself" p 73.

⁷⁴ Eisler "Every Artist Paints Himself" p 78.

a centuries time: "So I don't try to do this by photographic resemblance, but by our passionate expressions."⁷⁵ But what if we were to pose this task to a photographer? How might a photographic self-portrait escape the limitations of resemblance?

The answer, at least for Winder, is found in a complex choreography between an anthropomorphised armchair in a curated iconographic setting, that resonates against three painting themes van Gogh produced while living in rented rooms in a house on Place Lamartine, in Arles. Widely recognised as "The Yellow House," from a painting van Gogh made of it in 1888, it was infamously the location of the painter's self-mutilation. But for our specific purposes, I would like to start with formal parallels between Winder's "House interior, study" and van Gogh's "Bedroom in Arles" (1888).⁷⁶ For example, the deep perspective across a shallow room that Winder so cleverly composes is a feature of van Gogh's composition for his first and second versions of "Bedroom in Arles," which are paintings that also display the clutter of art, furniture and objects manifest in Winder's photograph. I would add to this Van Gogh's

⁷⁵ Leo Jansen et. al. *Vincent van Gogh, The Letters* p 254.

⁷⁶ van Gogh "Bedroom in Arles"; van Gogh "The Bedroom."

"Chair" (1888-89),⁷⁷ which Martin Bailey has asked that we see as "almost a self-portrait."⁷⁸ But the most compelling comparison is found between Winder's loosely paired shoes and van Gogh's "Shoes" (1888).⁷⁹

The implication of this parallel is fraught as it raises the spectre of van Gogh's mental health and eventual suicide, but nonetheless it is important as it allows us to reconsider the seeming informality of "House interior, study" as something far more purposeful, intimate and meaningful. Rosalind Krauss has made the case for photography and modernism sharing a weight of fraudulence. With their rejection of traditional inheritances, both are formed on an uncertainty between what is fake and what is genuine. Specifically, for photographers, their authenticity as artists is undermined by a claim that operating a camera lacks work and therefore cannot be considered a language for art:

not because it is too private, but because, lacking the requisite forms of transposition and symbolization, photography is not a language at all.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ van Gogh "Van Gogh's Chair."

⁷⁸ Bailey "A separated pair" np.

⁷⁹ van Gogh "Shoes."

⁸⁰ Krauss "Stieglitz/Equivalents" p 130.

Krauss goes on to argue against this bias, but the cracks in photography's fine art legitimacy remain. In most ways Winder escapes such criticism through the care he took to frame his activities as those of a professional documentarian, visually recording New Zealand's late modernist exploits with a neutral eye/lens. But returning to my focus, the fraudulence at the core of "House interior, study" is its claim of anonymity.

The image is a biographical iconography of Winder's life, from the furniture he built, the shoes he wore, framed pictures depicting his life in war, in mountains, in architecture. The improvised drawing board, which holds a "T" square and triangular scale rule, was probably made specifically for the permit drawings to alter 21 Fernhill Terrace. The photomural is literally a Wellington backdrop acknowledging – celebrating? - his adopted home. The armchair is empty, but knowing the provenance of this photograph makes it impossible not to imagine a wider visual frame in which we can "see" Duncan Winder standing beside his tripod, bulb-trigger in hand, reflecting on his life.

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