

## Current Work

My recently studio and written work has focused around the concept of death and how contemporary Britain copes with this. In a country where we seem to be reliant on medicine and the media for answers, I wanted to find a way to raise awareness of our increasing distancing from death on a personal level and our morbid obsession within the media.

With these thoughts in mind I started to think about how death would look to us now. In the past, works of art have portrayed death in many different ways, all of which have been based upon religion. Story tellers such as The Brothers Grimm have played on these traditional religious themes and tell us of the ways in which death can warn us of our impending fate. Religious sculptures remind us that when our time comes we leave as we came, with nothing.

Today the media seems to be the main way in which we are told of disaster, our own impending deaths and how if we don't listen to their warnings, death will become all the more imminent. So, surely if death were to walk among us now, to warn of our own mortality he would be 'the media' and take on the form of the stereotypical male news reporter.

“Although death may be hidden in some arenas, this is certainly not true of the mass media. While medicine has largely taken over from religion in the practical management of death it does not purport to interpret death's meaning. But the mass media, it may be argued, does precisely this. It is the mass media, not medicine that has inherited religion's mantle as the interpreter of death in contemporary modern societies.” (Walter & Field, <http://www.tandf.co.uk>, 2003)

This statement seems to imply that the media has managed to take on the role of religion, I myself am not religious but I do find this statement somewhat presumptuous. The media could never possibly take on the role of the church in England. How can the media provide the comfort and reassurance that religion has provided when ultimately it always has an ulterior motive i.e. rating, money, political ties.

For my final piece I would like to make a sculpture which would be a man as I feel that death is most commonly represented as a man and most news reporters are male. To link this figure more to death within the mind of the viewer I need to have a symbol, I have chosen black wings as in many of the depictions of death he is seen winged. I think the way in which he will stand is very important and the pose should remind us of a saint /holy figure, as to relate back to the comment made by Walter and Field. Therefore death will be standing with his arms open, welcoming. Finally from his mouth there should be words related to the idea of death and the media's shock tactics. I will take pieces of text from newspapers and create a river of words running from his mouth.

This piece is very relevant to today in our postmodern society. People are now very sceptical of what they see within the media but it still seems to have

an affect in these unstable times. I hope this piece will be able to reach across to everyone and ask them to consider what they are being told. I think that people should do as Christian Boltanski said... "Ask questions...there is not one answer...if somebody thinks they know the answer they are very dangerous"

Copyright Louie Crooks 2008  
[www.louiecrooks.co.uk](http://www.louiecrooks.co.uk)