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INTERVIEWING IMAGES
Using IPA in visual (arts) research

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The question:

Is it possible to interview images without this being merely or wholly a process of projecting our own perspectives onto them?
The hermeneutic/decolonising circle in phenomenological research

- Encounter with the research material
- Fore-understanding of reader/researcher
- decolonising revision of fore-understanding
ONE: We foregrounded processes of describing
It is a matter of describing, not of explaining or analysing.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Preface, *Phenomenology of Perception*, viii
Description immerses me in the realms of the pre-critical and helps me stay there.
In so doing, description progressively dispossess me of pre-constituted categorizations and judgments
Description teaches me how to attend (and to attend involves positioning oneself in service of another and of a self-showing world)
Description turns things around, inside out, upside down; it expands our vision
TWO: We considered various ways in which description might be practiced
Listing
Transcription
Ekphrasis
Paraphrase
Enactment
Mapping/Drawing
[...]
‘Listing’ Exercise

Please use this image or one of your own choice.
THREE: We asked not ‘what do I see?’ but ‘how is the phenomenon showing itself (to me)’?
As figure / as ground?
As ambiguous figure?
All experience involves a blend of presence and absence (18)
'It is essential to the experience of a cube that the perception be partial, with only one part of the object being directly given at any moment. However, it is not the case that I only experience the sides that are visible from my present viewpoint. As I see those sides, I intend, I cointend, the sides that are hidden. I see more than what strikes the eye ... These other [hidden] sides are given, but given precisely as absent. They too are part of what I experience.' (17)
Perception is dynamic; ‘the saccadic motion of my eyes introduces a kind of searching mobility (18)
What about the varied modalities of perception (touch, smell, hearing, taste as well as sight)?
‘... only vision and touch present the object as a cube; hearing, taste and smell present the material the cube is made of, not its character as being shaped as a cube.’ (18)
Blends of presence and absence

Sides

Aspects

Profiles
Sides
Aspects (the different ways in which the sides of an object can be given to me)
Profiles (‘temporally individuated presentations of an object; private and subjective’
FOUR: We also applied images (and transcriptions of audio-visual material) to the IPA analysis and interpretation grid.
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Descriptive

**Linguistic** (could include: compositional aspects, including figure/ground relationships, use of colour, line, texture, medium/media? Painterly, expressive, linear? Illusionistic? Ambiguous?)

Conceptual

**LIST (or turn these prompts into a narrative account)**
- Splatter
- Mess
- Deep red
- Bloody
- Coagulation
- Forensic scene
- Aftermath of violence
- Disturbing
- Delicacy, too
- Drops
- Unstructured and chaotic
- Filigree effects
- Foliage
...
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<td>Descriptive Linguistic Conceptual</td>
<td><img src="image.jpg" alt="Image" /></td>
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**EMERGENT THEMES**

**ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT/IMAGE**

**EXPLORATORY COMMENTS**

I felt inclined to read the image through a sequence of horizontal scans from left to right – what might this pick up that I hadn’t noticed before?

Modulations of red and white; **different densities**; more open towards the edges; a vertical concentration in the middle; A sense of its having been folded and unfolded? A piece of textile?, A rug? A prayer mat? *Horizontalisty and verticality?*

A stick figure stepping forward energetically! A moving on? A possibility of moving forward. But here the projection issue – anthropomorphising the apparently accidental clusterings of marks?

Having already been made aware of the floral forms: foliage with the white figuring as dapples of light? *Areas of luminosity*
Imran Qureshi, *You who are my love and my life's enemy too*, 2011.
Imran Qureshi, *You Who Are U Love and My Life’s Enemy Too*, 2015, Acrylic paint on canvas, 198.1 x 464.8 cm (78 x 183 in), Courtesy Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac Paris/Salzburg. Photo: Usman Javed