



**Oliver Grabowski
Final Major Project**

**August 2020
MA Photography Falmouth
University**



Darling is a durational and devotional work.

“It is within this bleak natural context that beauty is encountered, and the encounter is by its nature sudden and unpredictable. The gale blows itself out, the sea changes from the colour of grey shit to aquamarine. Under the fallen boulder of an avalanche a flower grows. Over the shanty town the moon rises. I offer dramatic examples so as to insist upon the bleakness of the context. Reflect upon more everyday examples. However it is encountered, beauty is always an exception, always in despite of. This is why it moves us.”

— John Berger, *The White Bird*

ARTIST STATEMENT

The concept that beauty exists as a respite to an otherwise difficult and cruel world is an integral part of my work as a storyteller. John Berger’s theory that beauty is the unpredictable exception in our encounters with nature and each other reflects my artistic approach, constructing narratives of intimacy and hope despite personal and global crises.

To me, hope is a gentle and necessary beauty, a vital sensory respite that I want to replicate through photography. This often subtly visible glimmer of human resilience is what contextualises identity; the spaces we inhabit together, and the world we build both on a small and larger, societal scale.

Darling is a retelling of the relationship I share with my partner; one of the smaller scales of this universal story of human hope. It is also a deeply intimate response to the world around me, and the space I occupy within it. Through constructed and fictional representations of reality, Darling explores acts of devotion and tenderness against the experience of the every day, and the tenuous complexities that form the foundation of real intimacy.

As an intrinsically collaborative work, the project is driven from our lived experience and will continue as we grow old together. This book, as an artefact, contains images from Darling 2018-2020, with text and design by my partner, Karen, contributing her voice to the conversation. Darling uses photography to materialise the mutual adoration we share, as completely different individuals, serving as a testament to devotion, change, intimacy, and love.

OLIVER GRABOWSKI

Final Selected Images

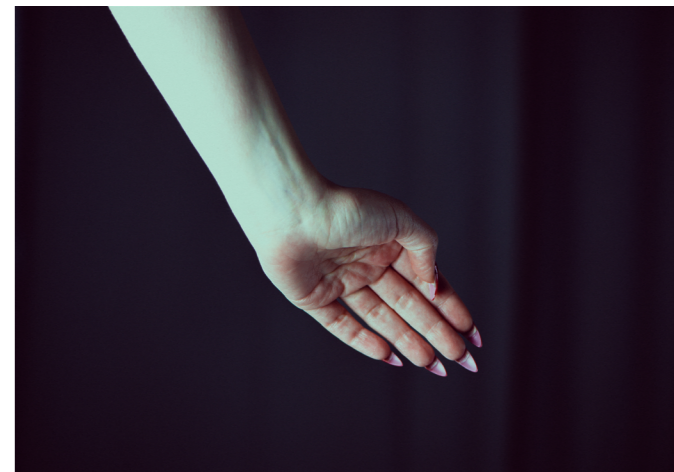


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Fig. 3





Fig. 4

Fig. 5





Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

Fig. 13



Public Outcomes

Book

Darling is presented in an A4 landscape, soft cover, perfect bound book spanning 56 pages.

The book will be self-published though Very Tender Studio in September 2020.



Fig. 14

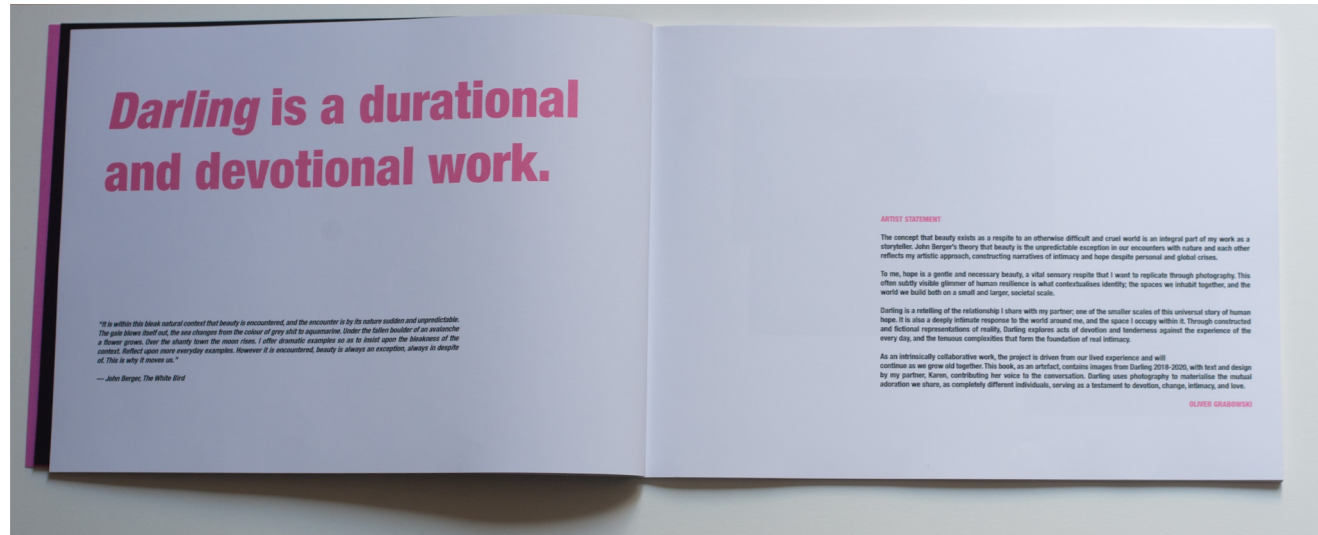


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

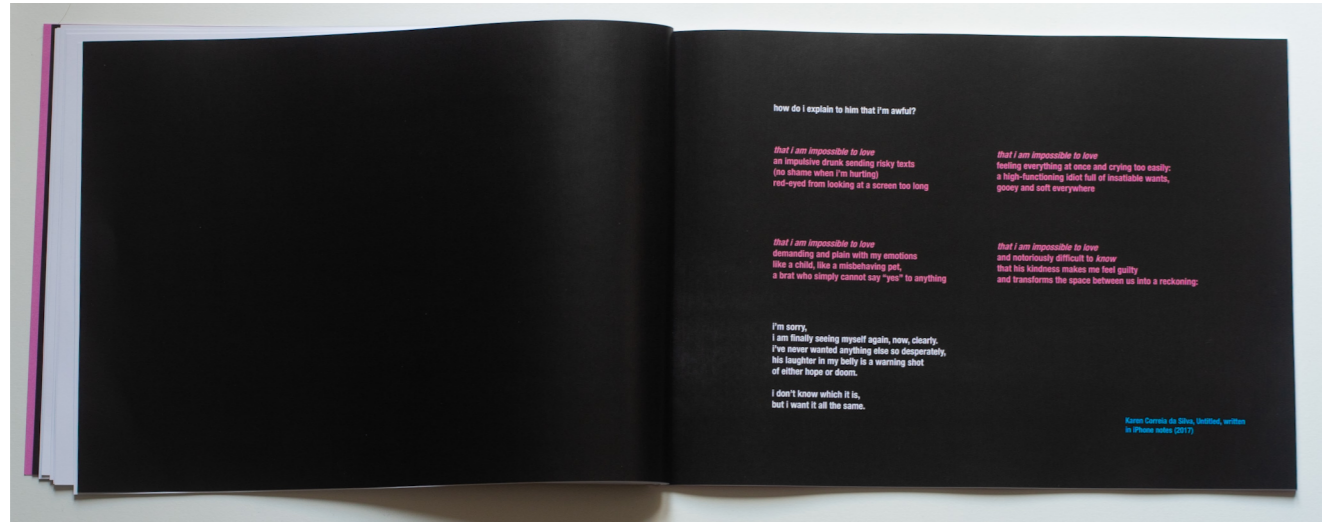


Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 19



Fig. 20

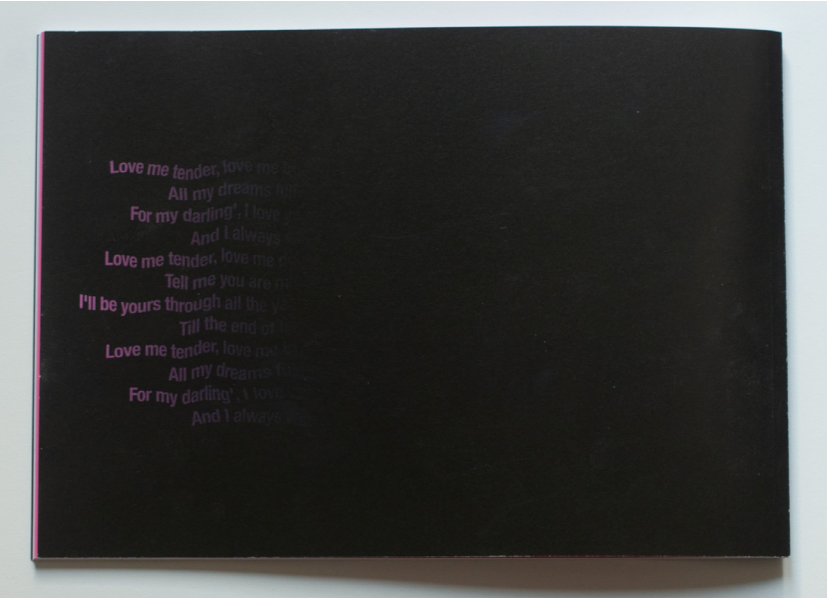
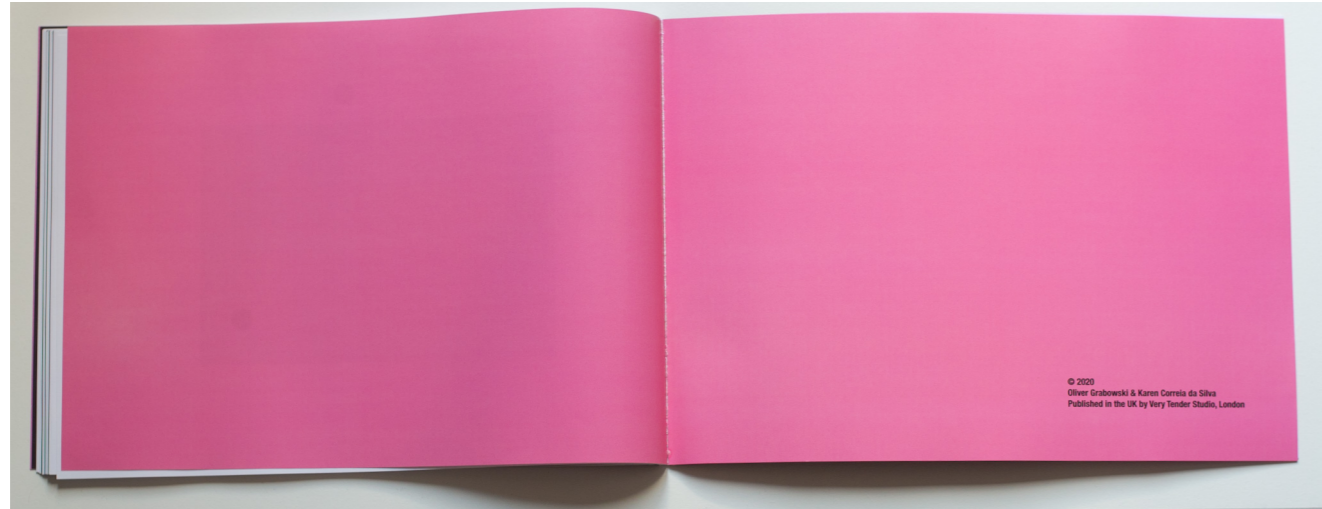


Fig. 21

Video

I have created two cover to cover videos for the book.

Video 1 is a conceptual representation of the project, the video is of my reaction to my partner entering the room with a flip through of the book layered over my face.

Video 2 is a simple flip through of the book from cover to cover.

Both videos are intended to be posted to social media and the Very Tender Website and my own personal website once the book is available to purchase.

Video 1 is available to watch on Vimeo [here](#).

Video 2 is available to watch on Vimeo [here](#).

Fig. 22

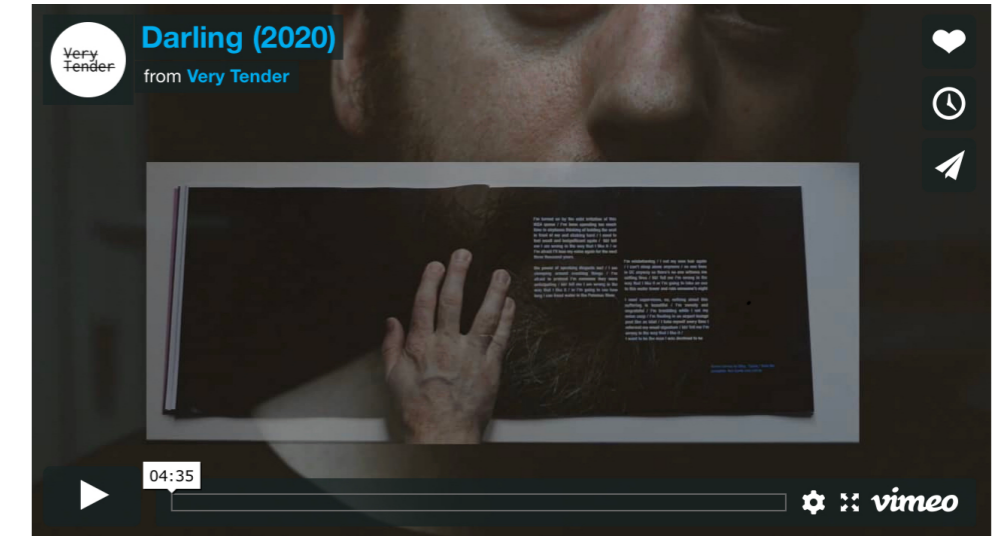
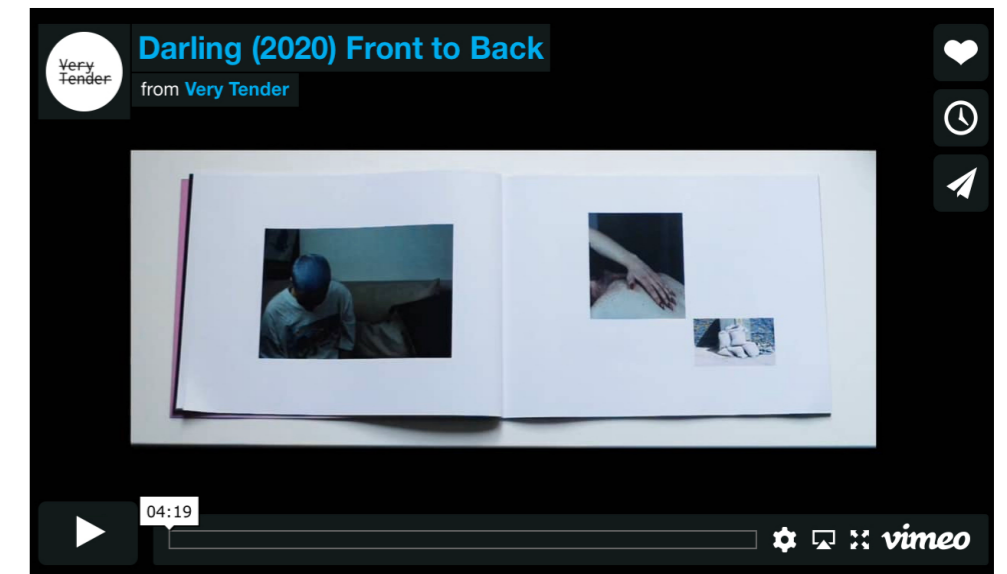


Fig. 23



Social Media Presence

I have posted images from Darling on Instagram throughout the course of project and it will be one of the main tools used to promote the book. As part of a campaign on both Very Tender Studio and my own Instagram pages; I plan to post spreads from the book in grids, as well as single images to accompany them with links to the book on the Very Tender Studio Website. I will be posting the video to my Instagram Stories with swipe up links for further information also.

I have included some examples of the images already posted on Instagram along with a mock up example for how I would curate my posts to promote the book.



Fig. 24

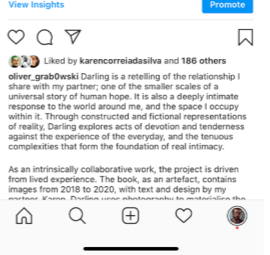


Fig. 25

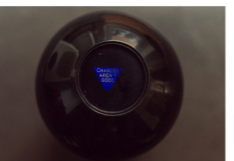


Fig. 26

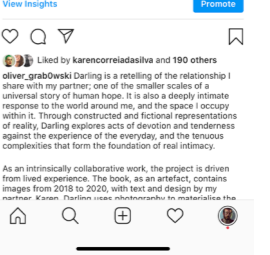
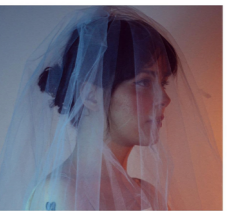


Fig. 27

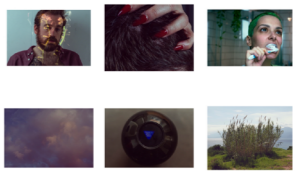


Fig. 28

Website

I have set up a project page on my website that includes the cover of the book, spreads from the book, single images and both videos. Once the book is available for purchase I will include a link to the book landing page on the Very Tender Studio website.



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



Fig. 31



Fig. 32

Distribution

I am currently in talks with and submitting to The Photographer's Gallery Bookshop (London), Donlan Books (Broad Street Market), and Draw Down Books (New York) with the hopes of having the book stocked in their stores.

Feedback

"I felt like the whole thing was a real journey - going through your emotions."

Steve Hodgetts - Anna Barbara Films, Los Angeles

"It is so pure, the tenderness, and the obscurity of self. You have found a way to express love in a way only lovers of love can see. It's such an oversaturated story, so to see it and actually feel it is refreshing. There's nothing sappy or uncomfortable - it's like a discovery of self, like you have opened a vein and poured yourself in."

Vicky Parry - Oneanother Creative, York & London

Figures

Fig. 1 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 2 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 3 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 4 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 5 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 6 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 7 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 8 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 9 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 10 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 11 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 12 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 13 - Grabowski, O (2020), Untitled Spread

Fig. 14 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 15 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 16 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 17 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 18 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 19 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 20 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 21 - Grabowski, O (2020) Copystand book images of Darling

Fig. 22 - Screenshot of Darling Video, Accessed at <https://vimeo.com/448906661>

Fig. 23 - Screenshot of Darling Video, Accessed at <https://vimeo.com/448947011>

Fig. 24 - @verytenderstudio Instagram post

Fig. 25 - @oliver_grabowski Instagram post

Fig. 26 - @oliver_grabowski Instagram post

Fig. 27 - @oliver_grabowski Instagram post

Fig. 28 - Grabowski, O (2020) Instagram mock up example for promotion

Fig. 29 - Screenshot of website, Accessed at ogphoto.co.uk

Fig. 30 - Screenshot of website, Accessed at ogphoto.co.uk

Fig.31 - Screenshot of website, Accessed at ogphoto.co.uk

Fig. 32 - Screenshot of website, Accessed at ogphoto.co.uk