

Author: Caroline Dawson, carolineajd@gmail.com

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Clare Strand, The Discrete Channel with Noise: Information Source #1

I'm going to describe one of Strand's transmitter images called 'The Discrete Channel with Noise: Information Source #1'. It is a found photograph, from Strand's archive of 36 tabloid images, so the date that it was taken is unknown. It was repurposed for use in Strand's project between 2017 and 2018.

It's a black and white photograph, portrait in format ... framed with a thin black frame. The photograph measures 31cm in width and 36cm in height. Which is around the size of a microwave door, turned on its side. A white border runs all around the edge ... between the photograph and the frame.

Each of the initial source images are identical in size. They all have the same framing and they are all black and white prints.

A gridded, acetate sheet has been laid over the silver gelatin photographic print, with corresponding numbers written along the thin cream edge of the photograph at the top and the left side as we face the image. The row of numbers along the top of the photograph run sequentially from 1 to 48. On the left side of the grid, in a vertical line alongside the image, the numbers run from 1 to 61. The numbers correspond to the perfectly spaced thin black grid lines which cover the whole image creating a grid of 2,928 individual squares across the image.

Each of the source images has a near identical grid placed over it ... with each square measuring around 5 square millimetres.

Within each of the thin black grid squares is a small number written in red pen. These numbers go from 1 to 10. Immediately looking at the image ... I

see a huge amount of number 3's and number 2's. This is because the lower numbers represent the lighter areas, and the starkness of the red pen against the paler whites and greys stands out much more clearly. If I look closely at the darker areas, I see 6's and 7s.

It is quite difficult to decipher exact details of the image under the layer of information that has been added to it.

The background is especially tricky to figure out, as it is dark enough ... without the added complication of the grid and the numbers. On the left side of the image there is a thin light grey panel, which runs downwards from the top left corner, and stops one-third of a way down the left side, from the bottom left corner.

A wall, painted black ... or lined with a dark wood fills the rest of the background. The photographer taking the photograph was closer to the wall on their right side ... and it tapers off at an angle ... getting further away to the left of the image.

On the section of wall shown in the photograph, there are six rectangular dado-rail style panels, which stick out from the dark wall. Placed in pairs along the wall ... each pair ... one on top of the other. The edging of the panels appears to be painted in a lighter colour as it reflects a brightness from either the flash of the camera or a light source behind the photographer.

A woman crouches in the foreground of the image, to the centre left of the composition. We see the right side of her body as she faces the panelled wall. She holds some sort of viewing equipment - perhaps binoculars or a camera - to her eyes. This equipment could be attached to the panelled wall.

We cannot see her face, which is hidden by her right hand holding the equipment to her eyes. Her body is in a sort of S shape. Her head leans forward to hold the equipment. Her back is at a diagonal ... half way down the left side of the composition. Her left arm rests on her left thigh. Her bottom,

thighs and calves all touch each other as she crouches low onto the floor. Her feet jut out at different angles to balance the weight of her body.

She wears a dark-coloured, knee-length skirt, pointed leather high heels, and a white long-sleeved shirt. Her skin tone looks to be pale white, and her dark, straight hair is cut into a short bob around her neck. Her clothing and hair style suggest this might be a photograph from the 1950s or 1960s.

It is interesting to look at the image whilst taking in the corresponding grid information. Many handwritten number 3's spread over her shirt like a pattern. Her dark skirt is dotted with number 4's and 5s - 4 where the light from the flash or a light source behind the photographer hits her right thigh. Her bare legs are covered in 2's. Her shoes ... 6's and 7s. Her hair is a mixture of 3's, 4's and 5's. The background a mass of 7's and 6's ... with the exception of 2's ... where the light hits the panelling on the wall.