

Stickybeak is Julie Cockburn's first comprehensive monograph.

'We are all stickybeaks to some extent. Many of my fictional heroes and heroines spend their time sleuthing or, at the very least, nosing around in other people's business; Miss Marple, Lieutenant Columbo, Margo Leadbetter. There are even tales of espionage in my not so distant family history. Anyone with a social media account engages in a bit of stickybeakery – it's human nature to be inquisitive.

The works in this book were made over a period of twelve years, some one-off experiments, others part of ongoing series that I add to over time. Each piece began with the search for the perfect image, setting some vaguely rigorous parameters for myself. I selected used postcards, old photographs, foxed bookplates and my own childhood drawings. And each of these foundlings had a different history, an unknown or forgotten story to tell. By submitting to my interventions, they transformed from silent, redundant, orphans into material objects with a regenerated heartbeat.

I see this book as a continuation of that process. The publishers rooted through the hundreds of images in my archive in the same way I sift through pages of online marketplaces or the jumbled tables at car boot fairs. My industrious hand embroidery and intricate collages are given a light touch here, the sequence of the images alluding to a gentle, humorous narrative. We will all read it differently, pausing on those pieces that speak the loudest to us, in our own preferred language. But broadly, this whittled selection, our chosen game of consequences, investigates how we see ourselves and each other, and the multi-layered ambiguity of life.'

Julie Cockburn

COLOFON

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